

*Hasiuk N. V.,**Associate Professor,**Department of Foreign Philology and Business Communication**King Danylo University**<https://orcid.org/0009-0003-5641-179X>**Sakhnevych I. A.,**PhD in Pedagogical Sciences,**Associate Professor, Department of Foreign Philology and Business Communication**King Danylo University**<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7783-495X>*

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE POLICY IN MULTICULTURAL COUNTRIES

Summary. The article examines the issues of language policy and their impact on shaping intercultural communication within multicultural societies. In today's globalized world, increasing migration flows, expanding international contacts, and intensified cultural interaction highlight the need for balanced language policies that can ensure the harmonious coexistence of diverse ethnic and linguistic groups. The paper examines both successful examples of language policy implementation (Canada, Finland, Switzerland) and problematic cases (France, Belgium, Ukraine), thus revealing the impact of language-related decisions on social integration, the preservation of cultural identity, and the democratic development of states. Particular attention is given to the Ukrainian context, where language policy has long been at the center of social and political debates, reflecting complex processes of nation-building and the search for equilibrium between promoting the state language and protecting minority language rights. The methodological framework combines analytical, comparative, and interdisciplinary approaches. The empirical basis includes international documents (the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, UNESCO and Council of Europe reports), national legislative acts (in particular, the Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language"), as well as academic works by leading scholars in the field. The analysis of practical case studies made it possible to identify key challenges, such as the risk of linguistic space fragmentation, the marginalization of minority languages, and the potential for social tension caused by excessive unification of linguistic practices. The findings emphasize that effective language policy should take into account both state interests and minority rights, ensuring equal access to education, information, and cultural life. Balanced strategies contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage, the establishment of open intercultural dialogue, and the strengthening of democratic foundations of civic coexistence.

Key words: language policy, intercultural communication, multiculturalism, language rights, integration, Ukraine, globalization.

Introduction. In today's globalized world, multiculturalism is increasingly becoming a defining feature of nation-states. Active migration flows, the strengthening of international cooperation, dig-

ital transformations, and growing mobility contribute to the interaction of diverse ethnic, linguistic, and religious communities within a single societal space. Under such conditions, language policy plays a crucial role, as it determines not only the official status of languages but also the principles of their use in education, government institutions, media, and everyday communication.

Language policy serves as a key mechanism for regulating intercultural interaction. It can either facilitate the integration of linguistically diverse groups or, conversely, create the conditions for social tension. An effective language policy must be based on the recognition of cultural diversity, foster an open intercultural dialogue, promote mutual respect, and ensure the protection of minority language rights.

This article explores the relationship between language policy and intercultural communication in multicultural countries. It aims at focusing on examples of both successful and problematic implementations of language policies, their impact on the communicative practices of various social groups, and the major challenges states face in building an inclusive and harmonious linguistic and communicative environment.

Problem Statement. In the era of globalization, multiculturalism has become a common feature of many nations, leading to increased linguistic diversity within national societies. This trend underscores the need for well-balanced language policies that not only maintain the functionality of the official language but also safeguard the rights of linguistic minorities and promote intercultural communication. However, excessive standardization or, conversely, fragmentation of the linguistic landscape can result in social tensions, distortions of cultural identity, and communication barriers between different population groups.

A major concern is that in many multicultural countries, language policy is often shaped by political or ideological agendas rather than the communicative and humanitarian needs of society. This hinders the creation of an inclusive public space where all citizens have equal access to information, education, and public discourse. Analyzing the relationship between language policy and intercultural communication is essential for developing effective strategies for managing linguistic diversity that support social cohesion, preserve cultural heritage, and reinforce the democratic foundations of civic life.

Materials and Methods. The study employs an integrated approach that combines analytical, comparative, and interdisciplinary methods, enabling a comprehensive research is based on a diverse range of sources, including: legislative and official documents, such as the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language”, as well as national strategies of language policy in Canada, Finland, and other states; analytical reports and international publications, including those issued by UNESCO, the Council of Europe, and leading research centers; scholarly works and monographs by prominent authors focusing on issues of language policy and intercultural communication; practical case studies of language policy implementation in various countries, both successful and problematic, allowing the identification of key tendencies and challenges.

Comparative analysis was applied to contrast different models of language policy in global and Ukrainian contexts, highlighting their strengths and weaknesses. Content analysis was used to examine scholarly publications, official documents, and international reports regarding the implementation of language policies in multicultural countries. Historical-genetic method enabled tracing the evolution of language policy in Ukraine and other states where multiculturalism has shaped national strategies. Systemic approach allowed the consideration of language policy not in isolation but as part of a broader sociocultural and political context. Case study method was employed for an in-depth analysis of specific examples (Canada, Finland, Ukraine) illustrating the practical outcomes of language policy implementation.

A limitation of the study lies in its reliance on secondary sources (academic publications, reports, legislative acts), which may reflect diverse ideological or political interpretations of the issue. Nevertheless, the use of comparative analysis and a multi-source approach minimizes potential bias and ensures a comprehensive perspective on the phenomenon under investigation.

The purpose of the article is to examine the peculiarities of language policy in multicultural countries, to analyze its problematic and successful aspects, and to identify the significance of language policy for the development of intercultural communication and the preservation of linguistic diversity, with particular attention to the Ukrainian context.

Main Body of the Research. We begin by analyzing problematic examples of language policy implementation in both global and Ukrainian contexts. In many countries, language policy often becomes not a tool of integration and intercultural dialogue, but rather a source of conflict, social exclusion, and human rights violations. Ineffective, repressive, or politically motivated regulation of language issues can have serious consequences for civic harmony, access to education, social inclusion, and national unity.

According to the French Constitution, the sole official language of the country is French. Despite the existence of more than 75 regional and minority languages, such as Breton, Corsican, and Basque, French policy for decades was aimed at full linguistic assimilation. Educational programs that excluded minority native languages resulted in generations of lost speakers. Although there has been some softening of this policy in recent years, activists continue to demand stronger support for linguistic diversity [1].

Another vivid example of problematic language policy implementation is India, where multilingualism itself becomes a source of conflict. India officially recognizes 22 languages in its Con-

stitution, yet in practice, English and Hindi remain the dominant languages of government and the judiciary. This creates barriers for speakers of other languages, particularly Dravidian ones. Protest movements, such as the anti-Hindi campaigns in Tamil Nadu, demand equal rights for regional languages across all spheres – from education to the media [2].

In Belgium, language policy divides the state into three linguistic communities – Flemish, French-speaking, and German-speaking. The ongoing rivalry between Flanders and Wallonia extends beyond language to encompass economics, politics, and education. This has led to repeated coalition crises, such as the 2010–2011 deadlock, when the country remained without a government for 541 days [3].

Among contemporary progressive states, it is also important to mention Quebec, Canada. The *Charter of the French Language* (Bill 101) was designed to protect the French language within an English-dominated environment. However, its rigid enforcement – including the prohibition of English-language advertising and restrictions on the use of English in business – has become a source of conflict between French- and English-speaking populations, raising questions about intercultural balance.

In the context of problematic language policy, the situation in our own country deserves particular attention. In Ukraine, language policy demonstrates a complex dynamic shaped by the historical legacy of colonialism, long-standing attempts at Russification, and current challenges linked to the war with Russia. Legislative initiatives aimed at protecting the Ukrainian language are intended to strengthen national identity. However, their implementation often generates mixed reactions both domestically and internationally. In 2019, the Law “On Ensuring the Functioning of Ukrainian as the State Language” was adopted, establishing Ukrainian as the sole state language in the public sphere. On the one hand, this represented an important step toward decolonization. On the other hand, among segments of the Russian-speaking population and other linguistic minorities (such as Hungarian and Romanian communities), concerns arose about the potential loss of cultural identity. This has fueled political speculation and weakened interethnic communication in certain regions [4]. The issue of language policy in the temporarily occupied territories cannot be overlooked. In the Donetsk, Luhansk, and Crimean regions, Russia is actively pursuing a policy of total Russification: banning the Ukrainian language in education, altering terminology, and eliminating Ukrainian media. This represents a case of forced linguistic assimilation, which violates human rights and creates a profound humanitarian crisis.

An analysis of problematic cases in language policy implementation across various countries reveals that the success of such strategies largely depends on their inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, and ability to foster intercultural interaction. When language policies prioritize a single dominant language without recognizing the needs of minority language groups, they often lead to social exclusion, conflict, and limited access to education and public discourse. In contrast, balanced policies that treat multilingualism as a resource help to create a more cohesive society based on communicative equality.

In Ukraine, the issue of language policy is particularly sensitive due to the ongoing war and the linguistic assimilation efforts in temporarily occupied territories. This context demands a thoughtful and flexible approach – one that simultaneously promotes the state language and safeguards the rights of linguistic communities. Such

a strategy not only preserves linguistic and cultural diversity but also strengthens national unity through dialogue, mutual respect, and the reinforcement of democratic values.

Our analysis would be incomplete without detailed examples of successful implementation of language policy in multicultural countries, which have contributed to effective intercultural communication, minority integration, and the preservation of linguistic diversity. We would like to begin with Canada, which is officially a bilingual state, where English and French have equal status at the federal level. Canada's language policy is closely linked to its multiculturalism policy. The Official Languages Act, adopted in 1969 and updated in 1988 and 2005, guarantees citizens the right to receive services in the official language of their choice. Canada also provides significant funding for French-language education outside the province of Quebec. The state established the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, a body responsible for monitoring compliance with language rights. Additionally, Canada offers support for the languages of Indigenous peoples and cultural minorities within the framework of its multicultural policy. Altogether, these measures have strengthened national unity between the English-speaking majority and the French-speaking minority, while also shaping the country's positive image as both multicultural and linguistically inclusive.

Switzerland represents a notably successful and forward-thinking example of language policy. The country recognizes four national languages – German, French, Italian, and Romansh – and embraces linguistic decentralization. Its constitution grants equal status to all these languages within their respective linguistic regions, and actively promotes interlinguistic understanding among citizens. The federal government ensures access to administrative services in all official languages, while education is offered in each language within the corresponding cantons. As a result, Switzerland boasts a high level of social harmony and linguistic tolerance, maintaining linguistic identities without compromising national unity [5, p. 140–158].

Let us also consider how Finland ensures the rights of the Swedish-speaking minority and supports the Sámi languages. Finland has two official languages – Finnish and Swedish – and also grants official status to the languages of the indigenous Sámi people. In this country, the teaching of Swedish in Finnish schools (and vice versa) is mandatory, while legislation requires that administrative services be provided in both languages. All citizens have access to Swedish-language universities, media, and cultural institutions, while the Sámi language and culture in the north of the country receive special support [6]. As a result, in Finland, the preservation of minority linguistic identity takes place without conflict, and there is a positive integration of minorities into society [7].

In Ukraine, language policy remains a particularly sensitive issue due to historical circumstances, political processes, and security challenges. In 2019, the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language” was adopted, establishing the mandatory use of Ukrainian in the public sphere [8]. At the same time, the state emphasizes the protection of the rights of national minorities and indigenous peoples, including Crimean Tatars, Romanians, Hungarians, and others. In 2022, the Verkhovna Rada passed the Law “On National Minorities (Communities),” which allows the use of minority languages in private communication, as well as in educational and cultural institutions [9]. Despite the challenges caused by the politicization of the lan-

guage issue and the ongoing war, Ukraine is gradually developing an inclusive model of language policy that has the potential to become an example for other post-Soviet countries [4].

Examples of successful language policy implementation highlight the necessity of a balanced approach that combines state interests with the protection of citizens' linguistic rights. Effective regulation in this field should be based on the principles of mutual respect, dialogue, and cultural diversity. The experiences of Canada, Finland, and Ukraine demonstrate that well-designed language policies foster not only social cohesion but also the strengthening of democratic institutions and the advancement of intercultural dialogue.

Conclusions. Language policy in multicultural societies plays a crucial role in maintaining social cohesion, ensuring intercultural dialogue, and protecting linguistic diversity. The comparative analysis of global and Ukrainian experiences has shown that an overly rigid unification of the linguistic space often leads to social exclusion and tension, while inclusive and flexible models of language policy strengthen democratic values, promote mutual respect, and foster the integration of diverse communities. The Ukrainian context illustrates the complexity of combining the promotion of the state language as a core element of national identity with the safeguarding of linguistic rights of minority groups, which simultaneously presents both a challenge and a potential for progressive development.

Prospects for Further Research. Future studies should focus on analyzing the impact of language policy on the educational sphere, media space, and digital communication, especially under globalization. Special attention should also be paid to the linguistic practices of migrant and displaced communities, as they reveal new dimensions of inclusion and vulnerability. Expanding comparative cross-country research will make it possible to elaborate practical recommendations for achieving a balance between national identity and cultural pluralism, which remains one of the key tasks of modern societies.

Bibliography:

1. Annamalai E. *Managing Multilingualism in India: Political and Linguistic Manifestations*. New Delhi : Sage Publications, 2001. 252 p.
2. Costa J. *Language Policy and Identity in France*. London : Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. 212 p.
3. McRae K. D. *Conflict and Compromise in Multilingual Societies: Belgium*. Waterloo : Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986. 340 p.
4. Pavlenko A. Language Rights versus Speakers' Rights: On the Applicability of Western Language Rights Approaches in Eastern European Contexts // *Language Policy*. 2011. Vol. 10, № 3. P. 237–258. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-011-9200-8>.
5. Grin F. *Language Policy in Multilingual Switzerland: Overview and Recent Developments* // *Linguistic Human Rights: Overcoming Linguistic Discrimination* / ed. by T. Skutnabb-Kangas, R. Phillipson. Berlin : Mouton de Gruyter, 1999. P. 140–158.
6. Barni, M., & Extra, G. *Mapping Linguistic Diversity in Multicultural Contexts*. Mouton de Gruyter, 2008.
7. Lainio J. *Language Policy and Minority Rights in Finland* // *International Journal on Multicultural Societies*. 2000. Vol. 2, № 2. P. 41–55.
8. *On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language: Law of Ukraine of April 25, 2019, No. 2704-VIII*. Holos Ukrainy, 2019, No. 82. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2704-19#Text> (accessed: 18.08.2025).
9. *On National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine: Law of Ukraine of December 13, 2022, No. 2827-IX*. Holos Ukrainy, 2022, No. 244. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2827-20#Text> (accessed: 18.08.2025).

Гасюк Н., Сахневич І. Міжкультурна комунікація та мовна політика у багатокультурних країнах

Анотація. Стаття присвячена дослідженню проблематики мовної політики та її ролі у формуванні міжкультурної комунікації в умовах багатокультурності сучасних суспільств. У глобалізованому світі зростання міграційних процесів, розширення міжнародних контактів та взаємодія культур створюють потребу у виробленні збалансованої мовної політики, здатної забезпечити гармонійне співіснування різних етнічних і мовних груп. У роботі розглядаються як успішні приклади впровадження мовної політики (Канада, Фінляндія, Швейцарія), так і проблемні кейси (Франція, Бельгія, Україна), що дозволяє простежити вплив мовних рішень на суспільну інтеграцію, збереження культурної ідентичності та демократичний розвиток держав. На особливу увагу заслуговує український контекст, де мовна політика тривалий час перебуває в епіцентрі суспільних і політичних дискусій, відображаючи складні процеси націєтворення та пошуку балансу між утвердженням державної мови й забезпеченням прав мовних меншин.

Методологічною основою дослідження є поєднання аналітичного, порівняльного та міждисциплінарного підходів. Емпіричну базу становлять міжнародні документи (Європейська хартія регіональних або міноритарних мов,

звіти UNESCO та Ради Європи), національні законодавчі акти (зокрема Закон України «Про забезпечення функціонування української мови як державної»), а також наукові праці відомих дослідників у сфері мовної політики. Аналіз практичних кейсів дав змогу окреслити ключові виклики, серед яких – небезпека фрагментації мовного простору, ризик маргіналізації мовних меншин, а також загроза соціальної напруги у разі надмірної уніфікації мовних практик. Результати дослідження підкреслюють, що ефективна мовна політика має враховувати як державні інтереси, так і права меншин, забезпечуючи рівний доступ до освіти, інформації та культурного життя. Збалансовані стратегії сприяють збереженню культурної спадщини, формуванню відкритого міжкультурного діалогу та зміцненню демократичних засад громадянського співіснування.

Ключові слова: мовна політика, міжкультурна комунікація, багатокультурність, мовні права, інтеграція, Україна, глобалізація.

Дата першого надходження рукопису
до видання: 04.08.2025

Дата прийнятого до друку рукопису
після рецензування: 28.08.2025
Дата публікації: 21.10.2025