

BILINGUALISM IN UKRAINE: VALUE OR CHALLENGE?

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According to data from the 2001 census, 80% of the adult population of Ukraine speak (at least) one other language fluently in addition to their mother tongue (Lozyns'kyi 2008: 254). In the country it is clear, that “the reality in most of Ukraine is of bilingualism” (Bowring 2014: 70). “Almost everyone in Ukraine is bilingual, to varying degrees” (Bilaniuk 2010: 109). “A fundamental characteristic of the language situation in Ukraine is bilingualism of society” (Shumlianskyi 2010: 135). In spite of this, due to negative historical experiences, bilingualism is stigmatized in Ukraine (Pavlenko 2011), and that makes codification of bilingualism impossible on the state level (Cserniczkó and Fedinec 2016, Cserniczkó and Ferenc 2016). The presentation shows the attitude of the political elite, that took power after the overthrow of President Viktor Yanukovich, towards the issue of bilingualism. On the one hand, we analyse those drafts of language laws, which were developed in 2016 and 2017 by the MPs of Ukrainian Parliament supporting the government; on the other hand, we present how the linguists and representatives of the intellectuals comment on the bilingualism in Ukraine.