

Between Three Languages, Dialects and Forms of Mixed Speech: Dialect and Language Contacts in Ukrainian-Belarusian Transitional Area

Salvatore Del Gaudio (University of Kyiv “Borys Hrinčenko”)

1. Introduction

The initial idea behind this study was to determine the basis of the Ukrainian-Belarusian transitional dialects¹ spoken in an area covering the north-western part of the region of Černihiv in Ukraine and extending in the contiguous region of Homel’ in Belarus’. The territory involved in the research includes the district of Ripky on the Ukrainian side of the geo-political border and the corresponding districts of Homel’ and Loeŭ on the Belarusian side.

Nonetheless a correct interpretation of the dialectal facts would be incomplete without considering the overall language situation of this border region. The language interaction in this relatively small area, roughly delimited by the rivers Dnipro, Sož and Desna and geo-politically situated between Ukraine, Belarus’ and not far from the Russian Federation, presents a varied picture. Leaving aside a few unsettled questions about the basic characteristics of the transitional dialects², three standard and overlapping languages are used in this territory: Ukrainian, Russian and Belarusian. The distribution and the correlation between

¹ The plural use of ‘dialects’ may be somehow misleading for the average reader. In reality it reflects East Slavic categorization. According to the Ukrainian/East Slavic dialectal tradition each small settlement (village) represents a minimal dialect unit defined “hovirka” endowed with its micro-dialectal system. The sum of an X number of these dialectal units (hovirky) consistently spoken in a more or less homogeneous territory forms a larger dialect structure called “hovor” or dialect. A set of local dialects spoken in neighbouring villages of the same area show a minimal, not significant variation, especially in phonetics and, to a limited extent, in lexis. Although each local dialect presents at its micro-level a minimal degree of variation, one could generally speak in the singular of a “dialect” considered in its entirety. Such a usage would better fit western European dialectal studies. Nevertheless in my paper I follow a term already consolidated in the East Slavic tradition (cf. Del Gaudio 2015a). The concept “transitional dialects” was developed by the Moscow Dialectological Commission (MDK) at the beginning of the 20th century (cf. Durnovo, Sokolov, Ušakov 1915. On the terminological issue, see Wiemer, Erker 2013).

² These problems primarily concern the distinguishing criteria in the classification of these local dialects as belonging to either the Belarusian or Ukrainian language area and the degree of convergent and/or divergent processes they have been subject to in their history.

these standard languages, spoken near the political borders, regardless of their respective official status, is rather peculiar. Each language tends to cover a specific domain and, accordingly, is associated with a varying degree of prestige.

The linguistic landscape (here *latu sensu*) of this territory is further complicated by the occurrence of forms of mixed speech on both sides of the Ukrainian–Belarusian, and probably Russian, political borders.

In this introductory contribution I intend first to give a preliminary insight into the controversial issue of transitional dialects spoken in the district of Ripky (Ukraine). A characterization of the analogous dialects spoken along the dialectal continuum on the Belarusian side of the border will only be briefly hinted at since, at the present stage of the research, empiric materials are not yet available.³

The question of dialect contacts will be briefly outlined⁴ in the next sections within the more general framework of the language situation of this area of transition. Issues such as the asymmetrical character of bilingualism (plurilingualism) with its tri- or polyglossic traits will be likewise mentioned.

2. *Dialect Contacts in the Ukrainian-Belarusian Transitional Area*

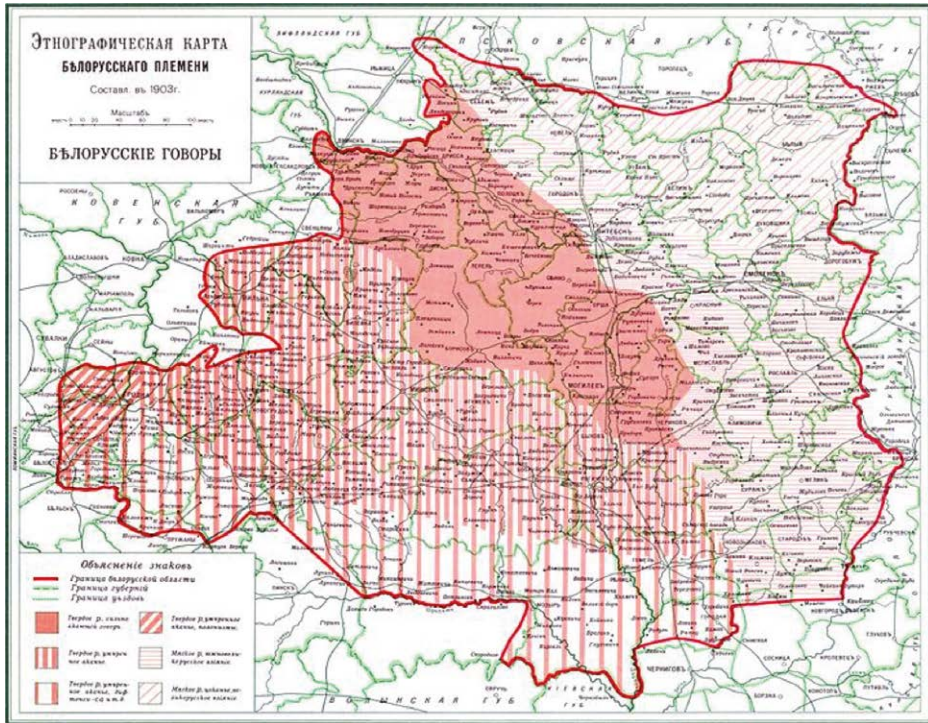
According to a widely accepted classification, the vernacular spoken in this area belongs to the northern Ukrainian – also known as left bank Polissian – dialectal group. The latter includes the area of the district of Ripky in the region of Černihiv. More precisely it occupies its central and north-western zone.⁵ The dialectal continuum, known in the literature as transitional to Belarusian, extends towards the Belarusian language and political territory.

The preliminary research approach was in line with the parameters of Ukrainian dialectology (cf. Žylko 1953; 1966: 138-158). However the initial standpoint may be subject to adjustments in the further development of this study, especially if I am going to consider a broader East Slavic dialectal perspective. The features and isoglosses transitional dialects share with the Belarusian language area seem to cover a surface going along a hypothetical line a little north of the historical town of Ljubeč (district of Ripky), including the village of Malyj Lystven' and extending farther south of the town of Horodnja (adjacent district of Horodnja, region of Černihiv). The demarcation of this dialectal territory relies, to a limited extent, on recent personal observation and, mostly, on an interpretation of already existing language / dialectal data.

³ In this connection it is worth pointing out that this article has to be regarded as a “work in progress” for it represents a small segment of a larger individual project on the study of Ukrainian-Belarusian transitional dialects still underway.

⁴ For reasons of space, only some essential issues will be discussed in this paper.

⁵ In reality a more thorough research should also include the northwestern part of the adjacent district of Horodnja (region of Černihiv) which borders with the Russian Federation.



Map 1

In the main, however, my classification relies on Karskij (1903) and on some facts derived from the Atlas of the Ukrainian Language (AUM), and the Dialectal Atlas of the Belarusian Language (1963).

For the sake of clarity, I show below the original ethnographic map⁶ of the Belarusian ‘tribes’ and Belarusian dialects by Karskij (ibid.) where the strip of Ukrainian territory under investigation was also included (cfr. MAP 1).

In addition to the criteria suggested by Karskij (1903) and successively re-elaborated by the Ukrainian Bevzenko (1980: 207-208; 1985: 10-12), a more clear-cut characterization of these dialects can only follow after the accomplishment of field work and the consequent analysis of the obtained data.

A contrastive approach in the study of the dialectal data collected on both Ukrainian and Belarusian sides of the political border is likewise fundamental to correctly evaluate the core features of these dialects and gain a more precise picture of the dialectal and language situation of the area involved in the research. Along with the question of the dialectal continuum, other criteria of extra lin-

⁶ <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Belarusians_1903.jpg>.

guistic nature should be considered such as, for example, the role played by language and dialect contacts along the border joining two contiguous language/dialectal territories.

This region is in fact characterized by the interaction of dialects, three standard languages and various forms of mixed speech. The dialects are ascribed to either Ukrainian or Belarusian in dependence of the political subdivision between these two historically and linguistically related countries.

The subjective evaluation of my respondents, however, also tends to subordinate the core features of their dialects to either one or the other language.⁷

The standard languages interacting in this zone are Ukrainian and Russian on the Ukrainian side of the border and, Belarusian and Russian, on the Belarusian side. Ukrainian, Belarusian and Russian function, to a greater or lesser degree, as superposed ('roof') languages (cf. German *Dachsprache*). This constant interaction between local vernaculars and standard languages has unquestionably exerted some influence on dialects and it still affects them with effects on the language situation at large.

An essential question aimed at understanding the underlying characteristics (core features) of these dialects is related to a theory posed by some scholars: the dialects spoken in this area (Eastern Polissia) would have constituted, along with other Polissian territories, a more homogeneous linguistic group in the past (cf. Avanesaŭ 1964: 397 ff.; Pivtorak 2014: 88ff.).

This group of dialects would have covered a considerably larger area on both sides of the contemporary political borders. The process of moderate divergence would have been caused by a series of interrelated factors:

- a) the absence of a strong cultural-political centre;
- b) the shifting to different historical-political entities;
- c) intra- and inter-dialectal process of divergence;
- d) convergence towards the respective 'roof' languages.

The existence of a cultural-military pole of attraction situated in the heart of Ukrainian-Belarusian Polissia and the belonging to one political entity (cf. points a, b) would possibly have created the premise for the formation of a more uniform vernacular.

The question of the convergence towards one of the standard(s) is even more complex: which are, as a matter of fact, the 'roof' languages which mostly affect these dialects on each side of the border? At first sight the answer would seem axiomatic but the reality is far more intricate.⁸ One can undoubtedly argue

⁷ This point although equally informative will be omitted in this contribution for reasons of space.

⁸ Historically, these vernaculars were first spoken within the Russian Empire. If at the time of imperial Russia, the more limited means of communication, the absence of modern mass media and the lack of widespread education exerted a minor influence on

about the extent to which standardization processes – independently from the superposed languages – have had an effect on those local dialects spoken in the more isolated country areas of the districts of Ripky, and partially, Horodnja (Ukraine), Homel’ and Loeŭ (Belarus’).

Beyond all doubts, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent Independence of Ukraine and Belarus’ (1991) reinforced a gradual process of convergence of the local vernaculars towards the languages of the titular nation, even though Russian has always acted as a counterweight.

If the process of Ukrainization of the last twenty-five years has, to a certain extent, affected the further development and shaping of the Ukrainian dialectal varieties and, in general, the language situation, the same cannot be said for Belarusian. The abrupt change of the language policy of Belarus’ at the expense of the titular language and in favour of Russian (1996), abundantly acknowledged in the literature on the topic (cf. Zaprudski 2002), has re-orientated the local vernacular towards Russian.

3. *Language Situation in the District of Ripky*

The language situation of Ukraine, as widely known in the specialist literature, substantially differs from that of Belarus’. Two widely diffused languages, namely Ukrainian and Russian, as well as the localized existence of other minority languages co-exist in most Ukrainian regions. The distribution and the prevalence of either Ukrainian or Russian (in addition to regional languages such as Hungarian, Rumanian, Polish etc.) is strictly connected with the history of a given region and a number of other related sociolinguistic parameters.

Besides the occurrence and competition of these two main languages, it is generally agreed that the country, at the national level, is characterized by various forms of Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism with diglossia.⁹ I already argued that Ukrainian society, on the whole, is marked by semi-official bilingualism with triglossic traits. This situation concerns most regions where Ukrainian represents the very high variety, Russian is the high variety and the Ukrainian-Russian mixed speech “Suržyk” covers the function of the low variety (Del Gaudio 2010: 258-261).

In the present taxonomy, however, I did not consider the interaction and the role of other local and regional varieties such as dialects and other intermediate forms of language mixing which are often the result of accommodation strategies (Trudgill 1986: 1-38). In fact, at a micro-territorial and dialectal level, particularly in the peripheral/bordering regions, the language situation is rather multi-

dialects in general, the same cannot be said for the successive process of Russification typical of some phases of the Soviet period.

⁹ On this point and for a more general account on the language situation of Ukraine, see: Besters-Dilger (2009).

layered. At the present state of the research I am only able to appropriately outline the language situation in the area of Ripky. The language distribution in this strip of land partially reflects, at its micro-level, the general language distribution of Ukraine but it also shows its regional specificity.¹⁰ In addition to an asymmetric Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism, typical of some Ukrainian regions, in which Ukrainian and Russian cover different functional domains, the entire area seems to be characterized by polyglossia. The latter can be schematized as follows:

- a local dialect (and/or micro-dialects¹¹);
- different degrees of mixed speech based on the local dialect(s) with an admixture of both Ukrainian and Russian (I defined it “Suržyk prototype”);
- Ukrainian with local/regional features, i.e. ‘regional Ukrainian’ along with standard Ukrainian;
- a Ukrainized or ‘national’ variety of Russian, typical of most Ukrainian regions, defined in the literature Ukrainian-Russian (U-Russian).¹²

In rural areas standard Ukrainian and Russian are used by a small minority of the population in everyday interaction. In the main town of Černihiv, on the other hand, the use of both standards is more the rule than the exception. It is worth pointing out that in Černihiv the functional domains covered by Russian and its variety prevails over Ukrainian. In the regional town one can observe a distribution which was typical for Kyjiv a few decades ago: Russian or, more often, its regional variety, functions as the high variety used in most everyday communication (business/commerce, transport, work etc.) and Ukrainian is the very high variety whose use is restricted to highly formal/ official situations, such as education (teaching, college, university) and by a restricted number of intellectuals. The language situation of Černihiv would undoubtedly deserve a more specific investigation.

The local dialect(s), on the other hand, have been to a certain degree affected by the different waves of standardization carried out in the 20th and the first part of the 21st centuries. Education, and school instruction in particular, have played a more significant role than traditional mass-media (TV and radio broadcasting) in the diffusion of standard varieties. Ukrainian dialectologists have often expressed their concern about the influence that standardization processes and other related factors can have in dialect change. Notwithstanding dialectal levelling (Hinskens 1998), associated with a constant decreasing number

¹⁰ This region (part of the larger Polissian macro area) was the cross-roads of early (East) Slavic tribal settlements well before the formation of the Rus’ of Kyjiv. Throughout its long history different state entities have alternated in these lands.

¹¹ Cf. note 1.

¹² The existence and the status of national and/or regional varieties of Russian in post-Soviet states remains a controversial issue among scholars. U- obviously stands for Ukrainian. Also, see: pluricentricity of Russian (cf. Del Gaudio 2011; 2012; 2013).

of typical dialectal speakers¹³, my pilot study has confirmed that a minority of informants do still preserve a series of distinctive dialectal features as recorded in traditional dialectal works¹⁴ and in the I volume of the Atlas of the Ukrainian language (AUM). These informants, as one could have assumed, can be mostly found among the older generations.

In general terms, one can say that the contemporary language situation in the area under examination, including its linguistic landscape, has been basically affected by three major, sometimes conflicting, factors:

- 1) the convergence towards Russian during the Soviet period¹⁵;
- 2) the fact that Russian remains the major lingua franca across the border areas of the former Soviet Republics;
- 3) the official reorientation towards Ukrainian after 1991.

The current language distribution in the district of Ripky, based on temporary results, can be schematically summarized as in TABLE 1 (p. 86).

The scheme, as already stated, shows that standard Ukrainian and/or standard Russian are used by a minority of local informants. It is mainly spoken by professionals with a middle or higher education, it is often diastatically related to the social ladder and the speakers mostly belong to the middle and younger generations. These respondents select either Ukrainian or Russian in dependence of their work environment. They are mainly mobile informants (commuters) working in larger towns such as Černihiv or in the capital Kyjiv. In other cases they are local school teachers, medical staff etc.

The language selection for children and teenagers is more specific: children learn from their grand-parents the local dialect¹⁶ or a less marked local dialect converging towards forms of Ukrainian-Russian mixed speech (Suržyk).

In another paper I suggested some generic criteria to demarcate dialects from Ukrainian-Russian Suržyk or what was defined “prototype Suržyk” (Del’ Gaudio 2015b: 226-228).

In my view, the definition Ukrainian-Russian mixed speech or Ukrainian-Russian Suržyk appears to be an oversimplification since the forms of mixed speech based on the dialectal substratum in the area where I conduct the research may contain, in a synchronic perspective, Belarusian features.

¹³ Dialectal levelling seems to affect most, if not all, the Ukrainian dialectal territory and is common for the majority of post-industrial societies.

¹⁴ Cf. Žylko 1953; 1966: 147-156; Bevzenko 1980: 200-205 etc.

¹⁵ It must be remembered that in the Soviet period most schools in this area were formally Ukrainian with the exception of certain subjects such as Russian language and literature.

¹⁶ The use of a more or less ‘authentic’ dialects also depends on the age of their grandparents.

<p style="text-align: center;">OLD GENERATION (65+)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly LOCAL DIALECT(s) with evident Belarusian features. • Forms of Ukrainian-(Belarusian)-Russian mixed speech, e.g. “Suržyk” based on local dialects; • U-Russian with marked local features; • Ukrainian with regional features.
<p style="text-align: center;">MIDDLE GENERATION (40+)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOCAL DIALECT(s) with less marked features, i.e. dialect(s) devoid of typical Belarusian features, tending towards either Russian or Ukrainian; • Forms of Ukrainian-(Belarusian)-Russian mixed speech, e.g. “Suržyk”. • U-Russian with marked local features; • Ukrainian with regional features; • Standard Ukrainian (+ rare).
<p style="text-align: center;">YOUNGER GENERATIONS (16+)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U-Russian with marked local features; • Ukrainian-Russian mixed speech “Suržyk”; • Ukrainian with regional features; • Standard Ukrainian (+ rare).

Table 1

Young informants sometimes display limited dialectal features in a more or less Ukrainianized or Russified speech. The asymmetry is even greater since they hear standard Ukrainian or regionalized Ukrainian at school but during the break and outside the classroom hours they often use forms of Ukrainian (Belarusian) Russian hybridization or, in more formal context, a regionalized U-Russian.

4. *An Insight into the Language Situation in the District of Homel'*

The field research on the Belarusian side of the political border in the adjacent districts of Homel' and Loeŭ (southeastern area of the region of Homel') has not been started yet for a number of concomitant reasons. At present, therefore, I am only able to sketch a hypothetical linguistic scenario of this area. This account mainly relies on previous studies on the language situation in Belarus' and, to a small extent, on personal observation which took place during my last short journey through the region of Homel' (October 2016).

At first sight, the southeastern part of the region of Homel' seems to resemble the general language situation of Belarus'. This is commonly associated

with a widely diffused Belarusian-Russian bilingualism with an unquestionable prevalence of the latter over the language of the titular nation. Both languages in fact, since 1995, share the status of official languages and they formally are the ‘high varieties’. In reality Russian, except for restricted social groups who may consciously support the Belarusian language idea, enjoys more prestige and it is *de facto* the very high variety thus replacing Belarusian in most public and private spheres which often functions as a mere “frame language”.¹⁷ The results of the 2009 Belarus’ census¹⁸ provided further evidence of a continued trend of language shift to Russian. This markedly asymmetric bilingualism is more evident in the major towns and most industrialized areas of the country, in my case Homel’.

One can certainly argue that in the last few years there are signs of language revitalization in favour of Belarusian which might supposedly reverse, in an optimistic future, the pro-Russian trend. Yet, as pointed out, a more active use of Belarusian is currently limited to restricted social groups and functional domains (cf. Woolhiser 2013).

This timid revitalization of Belarusian may probably vary according to the cultural milieu and political orientation of the urban settlements as well as the different areas of the country. There are reasons to believe that today the cultural ground is more favourable in Minsk for a revival of Belarusian than in a typical industrialized town such as Homel’, which is a meeting point of labour forces of different provenance. Moreover the border areas, especially those adjacent to the Russian Federation, tend to continue to use Russian as the regional *lingua franca* of intra-national communication. This is noticeable at the Belarusian-Ukrainian state border where even the Ukrainian customs officers tend to use Russian as the first language option.

The real language situation, however, is territorially more composite than delineated above: besides the existence of a series of other minor languages such as Polish, Yiddish, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, just to mention a few, which, with the exception of Yiddish, are mostly localized in correspondence of neighbouring countries, the Belarusian-Russian mixed speech (generally denominated “Trasjanka”) occupies large spheres of everyday communication as demonstrated in a series of studies on the topic (cf. Hentschel and Kittel 2011a; Hentschel and Kittel 2011b; Hentschel and Zeller 2013; Hentschel et al. 2014 etc.).

As far as the dialect situation is concerned, my initial approach based on a comparison of already available Ukrainian data with extant Belarusian dialectal sources (cf. DABM), seems to confirm the supposition that the dialects, on both

¹⁷ Belarus’ is the only post-Soviet state in which Russian covers all social domains. The results of the 2009 Belarus’ census (BC09) provide further evidence of a continued trend of language shift to Russian. Moreover, bilingualism in Belarus’, unlike in Ukraine, tends to be positively connoted (Del Gaudio 2013: 353).

¹⁸ Data demonstrated that the vast majority of Belarusians (over 70 %) reported that they use Russian constantly, while 23% claimed to use Belarusian. Cf. <<http://census.belstat.gov.by/pdf/BOOK-ru-RU.pdf>> (BC09).

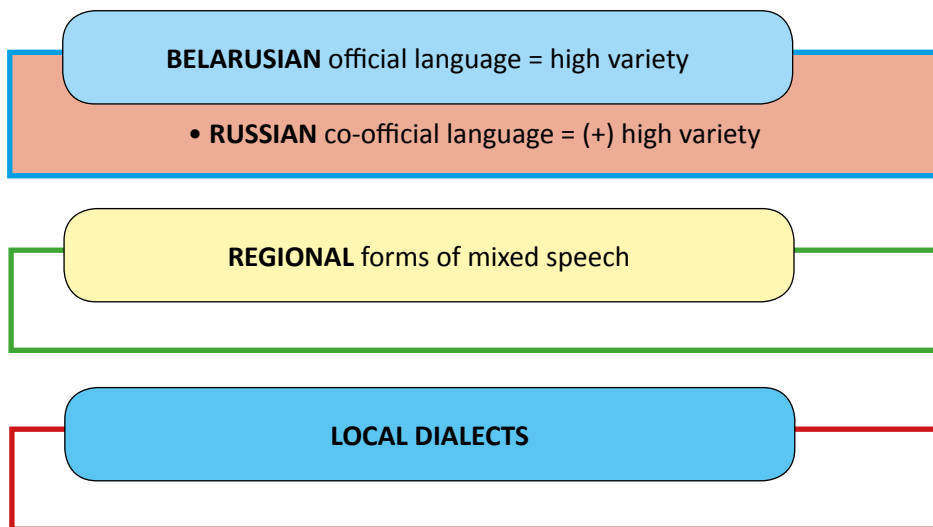


Table 2

sides of the political borders, do not show substantial structural differences. This can be partially explained by the aforementioned historical reasons, by the fact that these dialects belong to two genetic and typologically akin languages and are positioned along two contiguous dialectal territories. To this purpose one can pose two related questions:

- 1) To what extent have the Ukrainian-Belarusian political borders¹⁹ affected the process of dialectal divergence of a historically more homogeneous dialectal continuum?
- 2) What is the real diffusion of local dialects in southeastern Belarus'?

An answer to such questions can only be given at a more advanced stage of the research.

The language situation in the southern part of the region of Homel' (districts of Homel' and Loeŭ), at the present state of the research²⁰, can be schematically outlined as in TABLE 2.

¹⁹ On the relation between political borders and dialectal continua, see: Woohliser 2005.

²⁰ As mentioned at the beginning of the paragraph, this primary schematic outline is based on participant observation and confirmed by colleagues and students of the Homel' State University.

As can be seen from the scheme above, the territory under investigation is diastatically characterized by a kind of polyglossia. Alongside an official and distinctly asymmetric Belarusian-Russian bilingualism coexist various forms of Belarusian-Russian mixed speech whose peculiar features still need to be thoroughly studied, especially in relation to the local dialects. Russian, in border areas, as already stated, is actively used among different ethnic (national) groups as a main language of communication. It is commonly associated with higher communicative prestige than Belarusian in the town of Homel' and in the homonymous district. At the same time it is likewise conceivable that the language distribution, along with the more overt prestige associated to either Belarusian and/or Russian, may present local and individual idiosyncrasies depending on the rural districts of the region of Homel'.

At this stage of the research I can only assume that the number of 'real' dialectal speakers in Belarus' is probably more limited than in Ukraine and that the attitude speakers have towards their dialects may vary between the two countries. Additionally Russian exerts a stronger 'roof' function in the Belarusian dialectal territory than it does in Ukraine where it is counterbalanced by the active process of Ukrainization.

This substantial difference between the language situation of Ukraine and Belarus' implies a series of consequences for the further development of local dialects and the related expansion of mixed speeches.

5. *Temporary Conclusions*

As pointed out in the introductory lines, the aim of this contribution was to highlight some relevant issues on the Ukrainian-Belarusian transitional dialects spoken in the adjacent areas of the region of Černihiv in Ukraine and the region of Homel' in Belarus'.

It ensued that a correct interpretation of dialectal facts needs to take into account a number of related variables and extra linguistic factors in a broader sociolinguistic framework. The major role of dialect / language contacts and language historical antecedents likewise deserves close examination. Local varieties in fact constantly interacted with each other, (especially when the political borders were not as rigid as today), and with the superposed standard languages.

In this early phase of this pilot study I can only make a few generalizations and advance some hypotheses. The language situation of this border area has confirmed that the language distribution and the subdivision of the functional domains between standard languages varies between the Ukrainian and Belarusian sides of the border. In this connection it is equally important to critically interpret the evaluation that speaker-informants themselves express about the use of the vernacular, its relationship to other varieties, their individual language selection and the language situation in their territory.

At the moment I can conjecture that local dialects have a more limited diffusion and are tendentially more stigmatized in the district of Homel' (Belarus') than in the corresponding Ukrainian districts.

Finally, among other points which still await to be adequately correlated to the entire sociolinguistic context of the Ukrainian and Belarusian border regions one can mention:

- a) the role of *lingua franca* Russian plays along the entire Ukrainian-Belarusian-Russian borders;
- b) the status of co-official language Russian or, more exactly its 'national' variety, enjoys in Belarus' along with Belarusian;
- c) the deep-rooted Russification of the Homel' area, consequence of the major professional prestige associated with this language and a more effective pro-Russian language policy.

Abbreviations

AUM:	<i>Atlas Ukrajins'koji Movy</i> , I-III, Kyjiv 1984-2001.
BC09	<i>Belarusian 2009 census</i> , available at < http://census.belstat.gov.by/pdf/BOOK-ru-RU.pdf > (accessed 15.05.2017).
DABM:	<i>Dyjalektalahičny atlas belaruskaj movy</i> , Minsk 1963.

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Abstracts

Salvatore Del Gaudio

Tra lingue standard, dialetti e forme di commistione linguistica: dialetti e lingue in contatto nella zona di transizione ucraina-bielorusa

Il territorio delimitato grosso modo dai fiumi Dnipro, Sož e Desna, situato tra l'Ucraina, la Bielorussia e poco distante dal confine della Federazione Russa, rivela una situazione dialettale e linguistica particolarmente interessante. In questa sorta di "triangolo" geo-dialettale coesistono di fatto tre lingue ufficiali: ucraino, bielorusso e russo, dialetti di transizione ucraino-bielorussi e diverse forme di commistione linguistica. Più esattamente questa area include il distretto di Ripky, (parzialmente quello di Horodnja), ubicato nella parte nord occidentale della regione di Černihiv, sul versante geopolitico ucraino e gli adiacenti distretti di Homel' e Loeŭ, collocati nella parte sud orientale della regione di Homel' in Bielorussia. Premesso che lo studio dei dialetti di transizione dall'ucraino al bielorusso già costituisce l'oggetto primario della nostra ricerca, nel presente articolo ci limiteremo ad esaminare alcune questioni fondamentali legate al contatto dialettale e alla distribuzione linguistica tipiche di questa zona di confine. Questi aspetti saranno messi in relazione alla situazione linguistica dell'area di transizione e discussi in un quadro sociolinguistico più ampio.

Сальваторе Дель Гаудіо

Поміж трьома мовами, діалектами та формами змішаного мовлення: діалектні та мовні контакти в українсько-білоруській прикордонній зоні

Територіальний "трикутник", що розмежовується річками Дніпро, Сож і Десна, який знаходиться між Україною, Білоруссю і неподалік від Росії, показує надзвичайно цікаву діалектну і, в загалі, мовну ситуацію. У цій смузі, насправді, співіснують три офіційні мови: українська, білоруська і російська; українсько-білоруські перехідні говори та різні форми змішаного мовлення. Територія дослідження включає до свого складу Ріпкинський район у північно-західній частині Чернігівської області з української сторони геополітичного кордону і відповідні Гомельський та Лоевський райони у південно-східній частині Гомельської області Білорусі. Незважаючи на те, що вивчення українсько-білоруських перехідних говірок саме у цій прикордонній зоні є основним об'єктом нашого аналізу, у статті ми висвітлюємо деякі релевантні питання щодо діалектного контакту з урахуванням загальної мовної ситуації у широкому соціолінгвістичному контексті. З цією метою ми зосереджуємо увагу на такі аспекти, як а) мовний розподіл у перехідному ареалі; б) співвідношення та взаємодія між мовами, місцевими діалектами та формами змішаного мовлення (пор. "суржик" та "трасянку") на обох частинах кордону.

Keywords

Ukrainian-Belarusian Transitional Dialects; Dialect / Language Contact; East Slavic Dialectology; Sociolinguistics.