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UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE IN THE MODERN LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE OF IRELAND: CULTURAL-LINGUISTIC DIALOGUE AND INTEGRATION PERSPECTIVES

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The Ukrainian language has become increasingly prominent in the multicultural and multilingual landscape of Ireland, especially in the context of recent migration trends. As a result of quite notorious events, namely the full-scale war in Ukraine, Ireland has seen a significant increase of Ukrainian refugees, which – in turn – contributes to the growth of the Ukrainian-speaking community. Ukrainians who have sought refuge in Ireland bring with them their language, culture, and traditions, which undoubtedly has a profound impact on the linguistic landscape of the country and diversifies Irish society even more. Recent migration trends offer an interesting context to analyse how higher education institutions, schools, healthcare facilities, shopping areas, and community centers, respond to changing demographics. These are all places where Ukrainians actively engage with local residents on a day-to-day basis, while trying to preserve their cultural identity. Ukrainian language signs and cultural events are becoming more common. This research explores the cultural-linguistic dialogue between Ukrainian and Irish society, focusing on the integration processes, challenges, and opportunities for language contact. The article delves into the role of the Ukrainian language in Ireland's modern linguistic landscape. Through this study, we aim to shed light on the evolving dynamics of language, identity, and integration in Ireland. In particular, the study explores the role of community support structures, such as Ukrainian schools, churches, Plast and charity and cultural organizations, in promoting language preservation and fostering intercultural understanding. Finally, it examines how Ukrainian immigrants are welcomed in Ireland and the effect it has on Ireland's already great multicultural identity.

Key words: Ukrainian language, Ireland, migration, linguistic landscape, sociolinguistics, integration, cross-cultural communication.

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Introduction and Problem statement. The linguistic and cultural integration of Ukrainians in Ireland has become an important issue in the context of globalization, recent migration trends and above all – the full-scale russian invasion. The rapid increase of Ukrainian refugees, driven by the war, has introduced new dimensions to the country's linguistic landscape, which is already rich and manifests itself in the presence of English, Irish, Polish, Lithuanian, Romanian and other languages. There is undoubtedly a growing presence of the Ukrainian language in Ireland, which serves as a unique case study to examine how linguistic and cultural identities evolve within the framework of migration and integration. Addressing this issue in our article is valuable both for understanding Ireland's multiculturalism and for developing effective policies for the inclusion of Ukrainian refugees.

Review of recent research. The linguistic and sociocultural integration of migrants has been explored in numerous studies, particularly in the works of contemporary scholars such as Jan Blommaert, Monica Heller, Durk Gorter, who are writing extensively on globalization, migration, and linguistic diversity. Within the Irish context, Raymond Hickey, Piaras Mac Éinrí, Anne Barron, Brian Clancy, John Kirk, Markku Filppula and

others specialize in Irish English and linguistic change, which can provide insights into language contact due to migration. Research on Irish-language education has emphasized the role of schools in promoting cultural cohesion among immigrants (Crosbie, University of Galway). Studies and data by the Central Statistics Office highlight Ireland's increasing multiculturalism, with Ukrainians forming a significant immigrant group since 2022.

Relevance of the study. The intersection of Ukrainian and Irish linguistic identities within Ireland's sociolinguistic landscape still remains underexplored. Questions on how Ukrainian immigrants adopt Irish English linguistic elements and how their cultural-linguistic practices influence their integration into Irish society require further exploration. Long-term cultural and linguistic exchange also remain insufficiently addressed.

Aim, subject and object of the research. This article aims to investigate the cultural-linguistic dialogue between Ukrainian and Irish linguistic identities and analyze the integration of Ukrainian migrants into Irish society. It identifies integration strategies, such as participation in educational and cultural events, engagement with local community support and charitable organizations, involvement in '*Plast*', '*Ridna Shkola*' and Ukrainian Greek-Catholic church community. Furthermore, it examines the correlation between recent migration trends and the contemporary Irish language revival providing potential reasons for this phenomenon. Additionally, the study explores sociolinguistic implications of digital discourse, namely how users on platforms like *Reddit* and *Quora* shape public perceptions of Ukrainian immigrants.

Findings and discussion. Recent decades have been marked with a rapidly changing demographic situation in Ireland. The country, which has always been associated with a long tradition of emigration because of geopolitical and economic factors, has now become one of positive net immigration: currently more people are entering Ireland than leaving. The pace of social, political and economic development in Ireland has been particularly striking since the so-called Celtic Tiger period (late 1990s – 2008), a time of great flourishing in various aspects of the country. This period is also defined by the arrival of a significant number of immigrants to Ireland for the first time in history. Later, in 2004, the European Union allowed the free movement of citizens from new member states, which facilitated an increase of foreign labor into Ireland, particularly from Poland, Lithuania, and other predominantly Eastern European countries. Searching for better employment opportunities, a lot of male immigrants came to Ireland and primarily worked in the booming construction industry, while women often found work in the service sector or held administrative positions [8 : 9].

According to the Central Statistics Office of Ireland, which publishes independent statistics and analytics about Irish society and provides reliable data, the number of immigrants in 2024 was the highest since April 2007, comprising 30 000 Irish citizens returning from other countries, 27 000 citizens of other EU countries, 5 400 British citizens, and 86 800 citizens of other countries, a large percentage of whom were Ukrainians. Ukrainians were not a big community in Ireland before the full-scale war: in 2021 there were only approximately 2,000 Ukrainians in Ireland. The most recent statistics pinpoint that over 107 000 people have arrived from Ukraine since 2022 and have been granted temporary protection [7]. This large number of Ukrainians makes them the largest immigrant community in Ireland over the past three years. Their presence is extremely noticeable in numerous public spaces in Ireland, such as specialized shops and centers offering goods and services tailored for the foreign community.

Since 2022, the Ukrainian community in Ireland steadily continues to expand to this day. Expressions of support and solidarity toward Ukrainian immigrants are also evident in media discourse, as seen in the titles of articles such as *‘C  ad m  le f  ilte for hundreds of Ukrainians in North Clare’*, *‘Ukrainians staying in Kilkee given a c  ad m  le f  ilte’*, *‘C  ad M  le F  ilte to Ukrainians’*, and many others. The popular phrase in Irish English, *‘c  ad m  le f  ilte’*, is a literal translation from the Irish language meaning *‘a hundred thousand welcomes’* [9]. It is a traditional greeting that symbolizes warmth and hospitality and often appears on doormats at the entrances of Irish homes, on souvenirs such as postcards and magnets, on road signs in the Republic of Ireland, marking significant tourist routes and locations. Additionally, the phrase is widely used in advertising materials, tourist brochures, and marketing campaigns, reinforcing Ireland’s reputation as a welcoming destination.

On the Reddit forum thread titled *‘Ukrainian refugee in Ireland: first-hand experience’* [10], there is a large number of comments in which users express solidarity with Ukrainians, using Irishisms such as *‘F  ilte, C  ad m  le f  ilte’*, *‘F  ilte agus tabhair aire duit f  in’* (*‘Welcome and take care of yourself’*), and, of course, *‘craic’*. Since the very beginning of the full-scale war, Ireland has demonstrated great hospitality toward Ukrainian refugees, and forum users express warmth and support using affectionate phrases like *‘mate’*, *‘my friend’*, often ending their messages with the words *‘SLAVA UKRAINI’*. Many messages also include common elements of digital discourse, such as iconic signs like emoticons :) , <3, and emojis, which enhance the emotional tone of statements and add friendliness and informality to the texts.

The comment that appears first due to its popularity is the short Irishism *‘C  ad m  le f  ilte’*, which is more than just a phrase: it symbolizes the collective spirit of hospitality. Other users write: *‘I hope you are made to feel welcome here on our island’*, *‘Welcome <3’*, *‘Welcome mate’*, *‘Welcome to Ireland’*, *‘Welcome to Ireland my friend’*, *‘Welcome to the island :)’*, *‘I hope you find some peace here’*, *‘You’re welcome here as long as you need’*, *‘Glad to have you here’*, *‘I hope you are happy here’*, *‘I hope in time Ireland starts to feel like your second home’*.

The Irish demonstrate a proactive approach to helping Ukrainians, often offering personal support: *‘If you ever want to see Belfast just send me a message and I can show you around’*, *‘I am Irish, if you need any help in understanding our culture and our ways, please feel free to message me privately and if I can help, I will’*. They explain that their nation is ready to help Ukrainians due to cultural closeness and a shared history, noting: *‘People sympathize more with people of the same cultural background and we’re very similar to Ukraine, Hopefully, sooner rather than later, you can go back and see your country again. But until then, (I’m sure most will agree) you’re one of us, You are in a country that fought for their existence and culture and won the battle.’*

Another user leaves a long comment, writing: *‘A long time ago, our people suffered at the hands of a greedy empire. There were some people who stepped up and donated food and money to feed our dying people. Our people suffered, and most had no choice but to leave for the USA and Canada... Our Ancient Tribes taught us to help all who need it, as this gift was passed to us, we pass it to you’*. This underscores that the Irish understand how important it is to have support in difficult times.

Some comments express dreams of future trips to Ukraine as a symbol of unity and admiration for Ukrainian culture. For example, the Irish write: *‘Look forward to the day I can visit Ukraine’*, *‘Repay us by rebuilding and I’ll meet ya for pints in Kyiv’*, *‘Beautiful*

Ukraine. I was going to visit this year as there is a mountain bike/trail scene starting up in the Carpathian mountains and looks world class, *'I fully intend to holiday in Ukraine... we can have a pint, a bite and a bit of craic*', *'I've never seen sunflowers as far as the eye can see, your tasty pints, lovely country... how pretty that sky is*'. As we can see from the comments, Ukraine is associated by the Irish with the incredible landscapes of the Carpathians, sunflower fields, endless skies, and gastronomy, while Ukrainians themselves are associated with heroism and resilience: *'Your humility and humor and courage as individuals and collectively remind us of the best in all of us, Ukraine is the hero-country of Europe.'*

This demonstrates that they not only support Ukrainians but also wish to personally explore their country and culture, as Ukrainians form a significant part of Irish society that continues to grow over time: *'We probably will have a sizable Ukrainian population afterward, so the more we know each other the better, and the more we mix, the stronger we are.'* Thus, the comments convey the sincerity of the Irish, their willingness to help, and hopes for a friendship that will last even after the war. The author of the thread concludes the forum discussion with a comment, noting with pleasant surprise and gratitude: *'I couldn't even imagine to receive this amount of support.'* This emphasizes that Ireland truly is the *Land of Céad míle fáilte* – especially for Ukrainians.

The linguistic landscape of Ireland is remarkably diverse, reflecting the multicultural composition of the country. Bilingual Irish and English road signs are a distinctive feature, while Polish and Lithuanian shops contribute to the visibility of these languages in public spaces. As Hickey states, the *'New Irish'* are not limited to recent immigrants from Eastern Europe. Among them are many people from Africa, with the largest group being Nigerians. There are also smaller but significant groups of Asians, including Chinese, as well as some Indians and Pakistanis [8 : 9].

The significant number of migrants in Ireland also means that a new generation of Irish people with Polish, Ukrainian, or Lithuanian backgrounds is emerging. There is a great number of families who have been settled in Ireland for decades and raise their children and grandchildren there. Even if they do not speak their ancestral language, they will likely leave a cultural imprint on Ireland in the coming years. A similar trend is observed in Northern Ireland, which has been the subject of extensive research examining the level of cultural and linguistic integration of second-generation immigrants. Corrigan noted that adolescents and young people who maintain ties to their parents' culture, such as by learning their heritage language, are also the most likely to fully adapt to the finely nuanced sociolinguistic norms of the Irish environment [8 : 9].

This aligns with family psychology: individuals who embrace their parents' culture are more likely to interact freely with the surrounding culture and acquire the sociolinguistic nuances characteristic of the Irish community into which they integrate. Such an approach by the second generation leads to genuine biculturalism and bilingualism [8 : 9]. Ukrainians in Ireland who recognize their heritage contribute to a vibrant bilingual and bicultural community. Many families maintain the Ukrainian language at home, fostering a strong sense of identity among second-generation immigrants. To support the Ukrainian language and culture, Ukrainians in Ireland engage with various institutions, such as *The Ukrainian Community Center* in Dublin, which offers language courses, cultural events, and social initiatives.

Beyond Dublin, Ukrainian cultural and educational initiatives thrive in cities across Ireland, with community groups organizing language classes, traditional celebrations, and support networks. Their initiatives include organizing protests and public events in sup-

port of Ukraine, providing informational resources for Irish families hosting Ukrainian refugees, conducting surveys to assess the needs of displaced Ukrainians, and arranging community-driven activities such as cleanups, hikes, and educational programs. Additionally, they play a crucial role in collecting and distributing humanitarian aid for Ukraine, reinforcing the deep connection between the diaspora and their homeland. Through these efforts, Ukrainians in Ireland not only maintain their linguistic and cultural identity but also integrate into Irish society while enriching its multicultural landscape.

Since September 2023, Ukrainian students in Ireland have the option to study Ukrainian as an elective subject, which is an excellent proof that highlights Ireland's support of Ukrainian refugees. The Minister of Ireland when speaking before the *Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools (ACCS)* said: *'As a nation, Ireland has stood firmly with the people of Ukraine. I wish to sincerely acknowledge and salute the sterling work of ACCS and schools across the country. Thank you for all you have done and all you are doing to provide a place of refuge, security and learning for our Ukrainian students.'* [1].

The Ukrainian community is also highly active online, utilizing platforms such as *Facebook, Instagram, Reddit, Quora*, and others to promote the Ukrainian language and culture in Ireland. Through these digital spaces, they share educational resources, organize events, and foster discussions that strengthen cultural identity and connection among Ukrainians living in Ireland.

Several charity organizations, such as *Effective Aid Ukraine, Ukrainian Voice and Action in Ireland, Ukraine: The Irish Red Cross* and *Palyanytsya* as part of the *Association of Ukrainians in the Republic of Ireland (AURI)*, were established in response to the war in Ukraine by both Irish and Ukrainian volunteers. Their primary goal is to assist Ukrainians in need and foster Irish-Ukrainian friendship. Many of these organizations emphasize their mission as being the *'Ukrainian voice and action in Ireland.'* Some have gained such widespread support that they have expanded, opening various hubs across different Irish counties. For example, *Palyanytsya*, the first Ukrainian Charitable Hub for displaced people from Ukraine, now operates in three locations [11].

The Ukrainian presence in Ireland is also reflected in educational initiatives. One significant institution is the Ukrainian school *'Ridna Shkola' ('Рідна Школа')*, which provides language, history, and cultural education for children aged five and above. Their website provides the information that the first *'Ridna Shkola'* was founded in Dublin in 2009 by *AURI* with the aim of preserving Ukrainian national heritage and keeping a strong cultural identity among younger generations. Following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, many Ukrainians sought refuge in Ireland, escaping the dangers and brutality of war. This increase of displaced individuals significantly contributed to the expansion of *'Ridna Shkola'* and the establishment of new branches in various regions of Ireland. Currently, there are nine *'Ridna Shkola'* branches operating across the country, and their number continues to grow, reflecting the increasing demand for Ukrainian-language education and cultural preservation efforts within the diaspora.

The presence of the Ukrainian language is also seen in religious, cultural, and social contexts. Holy Masses in Ukrainian are held at the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dublin on a regular basis, which is vital for many Ukrainians who practice their religion and look for spiritual support. The Ukrainian Scouting organization *'Plast'* operates in Ireland and engages young Ukrainians in cultural and language preservation. Additionally, thematic festivals celebrate Ukrainian heritage, promoting the language and traditions

among both Ukrainians and the wider Irish community. Events such as Ukrainian movie nights, cultural gatherings, and educational initiatives integrate the Ukrainian language into Ireland's social and cultural environment and therefore strengthen the linguistic ties between the two nations [11].

Ireland surely benefits from migration as people come to the country to fill jobs, bring skills and support its economic growth. The number of non-Irish citizens who work in Ireland is dramatic – half a million citizens – which is about 20 percent of all workers in Ireland. In the past decade, there has been a substantial rise in the number of non-Irish individuals employed within the Irish economy. This workforce has played a crucial role in Ireland's recovery from the global financial crisis, contributing to the country's increased wealth and productivity in recent years. Apart from this, non-Irish workers contribute to Ireland's economy through taxes, work permit fees, immigration registration fees, higher education fees, and personal spending, which is further proof that accepting migrants is beneficial [7].

Additionally, such multicultural nature of the country has played a key role in reviving the interest in the Irish language. Over the past decade, the number of foreigners who have come to live and work in Ireland has significantly increased. Migrants who come to Ireland often begin learning the Irish language because their children study it in school. Research from the University of Galway has shown that for many migrants, learning the language is part of the process of integrating into the local community [5]. The Irish school system indeed plays a key role in reviving interest in learning Irish, which is a mandatory subject in the state curriculum in the Republic of Ireland.

Article 8 of the Constitution of Ireland declares that the first official language of Ireland is Irish, followed by English: *'The Irish language as the national language is the first official language. The English language is recognised as a second official language'* [4]. But the reality is harsh as in the era of globalization, the Irish language could not compete with English, leading to the almost absolute dominance of English in all spheres of life [2 : 71].

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) states in the 2022 Census of Ireland that about 45% of the country's residents have knowledge of the Irish language, although the majority of them (55%) indicated that they do not possess a high level of proficiency. Only 3% of the residents of the Republic of Ireland, mostly concentrated in Gaeltacht areas, use Irish as their daily language of communication [3]. In the Republic of Ireland, the highest percentage of Irish speakers is observed among school-aged individuals, as Irish is a compulsory subject in schools, which contributes to its dissemination among young people. However, as the data shows, after reaching the age of 18, the level of proficiency in the Irish language begins to decline significantly.

The Irish language is partially popular among representatives of other nationalities residing in Ireland. For instance, 15% of Australians, 13% of Poles and Latvians, 12% of Lithuanians, 11% of Chinese, 10% of Americans, and 10% of Africans have knowledge of the Irish language. Among Ukrainians, this percentage is only 2%, but there is reason to believe that this figure may increase over time. This can be attributed to the significant growth of the Ukrainian community in Ireland after 2022, when the country became a refuge for a large number of refugees due to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Conclusions. To sum up, our analysis highlights several research findings regarding the integration of Ukrainian migrants into Irish society and the increase of Ukrainian language presence in the linguistic landscape of Ireland. We can confirm that digital

media and public discourse reflect Irish solidarity with Ukrainian refugees, frequently using Irishisms like '*Céad míle fáilte*' to emphasize hospitality and historical empathy for displaced communities. The Irish education system plays a crucial role in fostering Irish and English language acquisition, as it is both a necessity and a means of cultural adaptation. Moreover, Ukrainian immigrants maintain their own language identity by actively using Ukrainian in family and community settings, establishing Ukrainian-language schools '*Ridna Shkola*', Ukrainian Greek-Catholic church with Holy masses in Ukrainian, cultural centers like *The Ukrainian Community Center* in Dublin, charitable hubs like '*Palyanytsya*' and '*Plast*' organization which plays a key role in preserving Ukrainian traditions. Ukrainians in Ireland regularly host heritage events and support Ukraine in various ways, such as holding charity fundraisers, humanitarian aid drives, and awareness campaigns to assist those affected by the war. At the same time, they engage with Irish society by learning Irish and English. This balance between preservation and adaptation reflects a dynamic integration process that strengthens both Ukrainian and Irish cultural and linguistic landscapes. However, further research is needed to explore the long-term impact of Ukrainian-Irish cultural exchange, particularly in areas such as language contact, community development, and intercultural dialogue. Future studies could also examine the influence of Irish-English and Irish on the Ukrainian language spoken in Ireland, particularly in terms of lexical borrowings or syntactic structures that may have emerged through recent immigration patterns and language contact.

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УКРАЇНЬСЬКА МОВА В СУЧАСНОМУ МОВНОМУ ЛАНДШАФТІ ІРЛАНДІЇ: КУЛЬТУРНО-ЛІНГВІСТИЧНИЙ ДІАЛОГ ТА ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ ІНТЕГРАЦІЇ

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Українська мова стає все більш поширеною в межах мультикультурного та багатомовного середовища Ірландії, особливо в контексті нещодавніх міграційних тенденцій. Внаслідок останніх геополітичних подій, а саме жорстокого повномасштабного вторгнення росії в Україну у лютому 2022

року, значна кількість українських біженців знайшла прихисток в Ірландії, що, безсумнівно, сприяло зростанню україномовної спільноти. Українці, які опинилися в Ірландії, принесли із собою свою мову, культуру та традиції, що має помітний вплив на мовний ландшафт країни та ще більше збагачує ірландське суспільство. Сучасні міграційні тенденції створюють унікальний контекст для аналізу того, як заклади вищої освіти, школи, медичні установи, торгові та громадські центри реагують на зміну демографічної ситуації в Ірландії. Українці щоденно взаємодіють із місцевими жителями, водночас намагаючись зберегти свою культурну, національну та мовну ідентичність та беручи активну участь в організації культурних заходів на підтримку України. Наше дослідження зосереджене на культурно-мовному діалозі між українцями та ірландцями у межах ірландського суспільства, зокрема на процесах інтеграції, поточних викликах і можливостях мовного контактування. У статті аналізується роль української мови в сучасному мовному ландшафті Ірландії. Зокрема, досліджується активність громадських структур, таких як українські школи, греко-католицькі церкви, спільнота «Пласт», а також численні новостворені благодійні й культурні організації, які мають на меті збереження та популяризацію української мови, допомогу Україні та українцям, постраждалим внаслідок війни та сприяння міжкультурному діалогу. Крім цього, у статті висвітлюється, як українських іммігрантів сприймають в Ірландії та вплив цього нового міграційного тренду на мультикультурну ідентичність країни.

Ключові слова: українська мова, Ірландія, міграція, лінгвістичний ландшафт, соціолінгвістика, інтеграція, міжкультурна комунікація.

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