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## ABSTRACT

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The object of research is the transformational processes of the national identity of Ukrainians, the role of language in this process in the context of national security. The methodological base is made up of general scientific methods: an analytical review of scientific works of leading Ukrainian and foreign scientists on the structure, stages of formation and factors that determine national identity; analysis of the results of a survey of Ukrainians during 2005/06 to the present; generalizations and synthesis of the obtained observations and comparisons to clarify the role of language in the process of formation of national identity in the context of national security.

It was found that language is a key factor, which is the basis for identification with a particular nation of an individual, affects the security of the nation as a whole. It has been proven that identification with the Ukrainian nation depends entirely on the level of proficiency, use and knowledge of the Ukrainian language. The regions where the indicator was the lowest gave an erroneous identification, that is, a reason for the neighboring state to consider russian-speaking representatives of the russian ethnic group.

It is determined that one of the key moments in the process of forming a national identity was a full-scale invasion, which prompted a more conscious choice of the language of communication in various areas, in particular, in everyday life, at work. The analyzed data also showed a gradual increase in the competitiveness of the Ukrainian language as a factor contributing to the formation of a conscious nation capable of protecting the security and national interests of the state.

## KEYWORDS

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National identity, identification, security, national security, regional identity, language identity, national values.

## 2.1 THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN THE CONSOLIDATION OF SOCIETY

Today, the world is on the verge of a new geopolitical distribution, where the issues of national security of the state occupy perhaps the most important place, because it covers all spheres of the life of the individual and the functioning of society as a whole. The main components of national security are the security of the individual; state security; public security; technogenic security; ecological security; energy security; information security; cybersecurity [1, 2]. The state language

is an important component of national identity and is intended to become a unifying factor in all areas of functioning and development of a sovereign state.

The so-called language issue and long-term manipulative politics in Ukraine ensure its constant relevance as a factor in the formation of national identity in the context of Ukraine's national security.

The issue of national identity and the factors influencing its formation is complex and multi-dimensional. In Ukraine, it is even more acute, because it is closely related to the processes of formation and development of an integral nation, multi-ethnicity and geopolitical position of the country. In recent years 5–7 in scientific circles, there has been an opinion that the Ukrainian nation has just begun its path of formation.

Gnatenko in the early 2000s argued that uniting the population of Ukraine into a nation is generally unacceptable, since 12 million (at that time) russians live on its territory. However, in the same work, the author says that through language, national feelings, character, spirit are formed and unite the people into a single whole. The scientist agrees with I. Ilyin's opinion that speech «in a mysterious and concentrated way contains the whole soul, the whole past, the whole spiritual structure and all the creative ideas of the people», draws attention to the fact that the upbringing of children up to 4–5 years old should take place on native language, so that the child learns to form his thoughts, to speak freely, that is, a «cult of language» must be formed [1]. Language is an integral part of ethnic and national identity.

The fact is that the concept of a nation is much broader than a people. The dictionary defines a nation as «A specific historical form of a community of people united by a common language and territory, deep internal economic ties, certain features of culture and character» [3]. For a long time, Ukrainian territories have undergone significant changes and the influence of cultures far from Ukrainian – Lithuanian, Polish and russian. The latter dealt a crushing blow to Ukrainian culture and completely halted the formation of the Ukrainian nation with the introduction of russification. For decades, the image of a Ukrainian has been shaped as stupid, inferior, not independent, and so on. Customs, traditions, folklore, national clothes, sights – the entire cultural heritage as a whole was so «adapted» to the Soviet culture, and where it was impossible – distorted beyond recognition that the Ukrainian was embarrassed to identify himself with this nation. Despite the fact that the roots of the Ukrainian language go back to ancient times, it recently received the status of the official (state) language, and therefore could not contribute to the consolidation of Ukrainian society either. So the Ukrainian community, which could be called a nation in the dictionary sense, was out of the question. Rather, it was a pre-active (weak) stage in the formation of a nation in conditions of statelessness.

In the last two or three decades (1990–2022), not only significant historical events for the nation have taken place in Ukraine – Ukraine has become an independent state with a clearly defined territory, but also a number of transformations of Ukrainian society, indicating significant shifts towards the active formation of a conscious Ukrainian nation. The integrity of the nation is important in this case because without its existence there is no point in talking about anything national at all: after all, it is the nation that creates, develops and protects its own values in all areas.

Let's try to analyze the transformation of the national identity of Ukrainians by analyzing statistical data, to determine the role of language in this process in the context of national security.

## 2.2 ISSUES OF NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION IN SCIENCE

Issues related to identity in scientific circles have begun to be discussed relatively recently, in particular, domestic scientists have become more active over the past two decades. The phenomenon of national identity is multidisciplinary, because it covers a wide range of areas of activity of both an individual and its relationship with society, as well as the development of society itself. The concept of «national identity», «identification» is the subject of study of philosophy, psychology, sociology, ethnopsychology, political science, history, linguistics and other humanities. However, there are quite a few complex interdisciplinary studies (Stepiko, M., Vilchinskaya, I., Yegupov, M., Voropaeva, T., Kozlovets, M.).

Most scientists in the field of psychology focus on certain components that make up the integral structure of the process of national identity: cognitive, affective and behavioral (Spivak, L., Stavitsky, G., Grineva, O., etc.). In the definitions of the concept, there is a tendency towards a generalized, broad understanding of the process of national identification as self-identification with a group – ethnic or national. Considering the fact that national identity has a two-dimensional character (a combination of objective and subjective features, relationships), scientists talk about the interconnectedness of the formation of the «I-image» of a person as a representative of a certain nation, feeling a common culture, territory, language, ideas, etc., which will form the formation of a «national we». Considering only the communicative function of language, psychologists do not define its role as decisive in the formation of national identity, rather social or cultural. The language functionality is much larger, and therefore there is a need to consider it in a broader aspect [4–6].

## 2.3 TRANSFORMATION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE CONTEXT OF NATIONAL SECURITY OF UKRAINE

In the early 2000s, scientists actively proposed the creation of a «national idea» as a consolidating factor for Ukrainians. The national idea as a core around which all dominant national values, statehood, religion, democracy, etc. are formed. In turn, all these factors also influence the formation of national identity, therefore, by raising the level of national identity of Ukrainians with a national idea, a high level of national security of the state would also be achieved. However, «Unlike the state strategy, the national idea is not decreed from above, it must mature in the depths of society. It cannot be constructed, it can only be caught in the general public mood» [7]. In the 1990s, such an outburst of patriotism and the creation of the Nazis died out rather quickly, so we can assume that the historical events at the beginning of 2000 gave a serious impetus to the «ripening» of such an idea.

In 2004, the Orange Revolution took place, the slogan of which was «East and West together!». Consciously or subconsciously, this phrase contained the main essence of the conflict of the population of Ukraine – language. One of the reasons for this state is that, having separated from the Soviet identity, the state did not create a basis for creating a national Ukrainian identity, giving the titular language and culture priority, as was done in similar Baltic countries. The priority of the russian language in the information [8], educational, professional, socio-political, everyday sphere creates a priori unfavorable conditions not only for the development, but also for the existence of the Ukrainian language. «Fearing to alienate the russian-speakers, the current state leadership does not actively support the Ukrainian language, but such a policy of non-intervention worsens the unfavorable position of this language in different areas and thus provokes discontent among those part of the citizens who consider it a key element of national identity» [8].

Unlike state bodies, linguistic identity has always been in the center of attention of scientists throughout the existence of Ukraine as an independent state. This indicates that the instability of the status of the titular language was recognized as a factor posing a threat at least to the full existence and development of the Ukrainian language. Research, surveys, and population surveys did not stop even after the occupation of 2014; on the contrary, the range of clarifying questions expanded. Despite the fact that the division into regions was carried out constantly, there appeared statistical data of two parts of Ukrainians – Ukrainian-speaking and russian-speaking.

Volovich, O., Voropayeva, T. apply an integrated approach to the study of the transformations of russian-speaking and Ukrainian-speaking Ukrainians. The importance of such studies lies, first of all, in the fact that the difference in the processes of identifying representatives of one nation by the language factor is recognized: «Ukrainian-speaking Ukrainians constitute a more homogeneous community than russian-speaking ones; that the identification priorities of russian-speaking Ukrainians are more unstable» [9]. At the same time, the authors note that language is a distinguishing factor, but does not exclude the commonality of the so-called political nation, the basis of which is common citizenship. Acceptable for russian-speaking citizens of Ukraine is a national identity of a political-civil type, which «covers, but does not abolish ethnic, linguistic, religious, regional, professional, class, age, gender and other identities» [9]. That is, russian-speaking Ukrainians generally gravitate toward the «Soviet» or «post-Soviet» ideology and are more inclined to consume and preserve cultural heritage in russian. Such preferences and values pose a threat to many factors of national security, the functioning of which is provided by the language (informational, educational, scientific, religious, etc. Let's note that this study was published in 2007.

For a long time, a tolerant policy was pursued in Ukraine in relation to the languages of national minorities, primarily russian. And this is quite understandable, because Ukraine is a multi-ethnic country and has entire regions where the russian language occupies a dominant role, in particular in the Eastern and Northern regions. A poll conducted by the Democratic Initiatives Foundation and the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (DI/KIIS) in April 2005 showed that 76 % of the population voted in favor of granting official status to the russian language – local or nationwide –

in Ukraine as a whole they speak more, incl. e. in the Western region – 43 %, in the Central region – almost 75 %, and in the Southern and Eastern regions – 93 % each.

Previous studies on the peculiarities of the formation of national identity have shown that in scientific circles they quite often appeal to the concept of «regional identity» or «local» (Spivak, L., Kiselev, S., Piontkovska, D., Salnikova, A., Bychko, A.). National identity is not innate, it is the result of the socialization of the individual, and therefore it is not surprising that it can change under the influence of socio-cultural, political, ethnic and other factors. In particular, we are talking about identification, which is associated with a certain territory, language features, social status, etc. According to the sociological monitoring of the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in 2006, in the structure of national identity, regional identity ranks second after national identity – 34 % and 52 %, respectively.

During these years, there is another impressive phenomenon that Ukrainians perceive residents of different regions as representatives of different peoples with different cultural heritage and mother tongue. Moreover, they do not exclude the creation of separate countries. The results of the study concluded that identification with the Ukrainian nation, culture, recognition of the Ukrainian language as a mother tongue are factors that «increase respondents' support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine» [10, 11].

The distribution of a person into «one's own» and «alien» occurs at different levels, depending on personal boundaries and criteria. Within the territorial boundaries, the «alien» will be the one who is further away, social – who occupies the highest / lowest status, cultural – who has differences in traditions, folklore, etc. «Alien» is defined by the presence or absence of common features; in this complex process, both the human senses and his psyche are involved, and what factors have become dominant in the process of forming his identity, what values are priority, etc. For Ukrainians, the language is not a unifying factor in the process of nation formation, on the contrary, it is a dividing factor, because the title language in different regions is a different language – Ukrainian and russian. Identification in this case occurs at the level of the language – the speaker of another language is a stranger. At the same time, Ukrainians do not take into account either common citizenship, or a common territory, or basically a common religion, or many other factors that determine national identity.

Kozlovets, M. considers the phenomenon of bilingualism as ambiguous, having its positive and negative consequences, but one way or another it leads to the oppression of one language and the dominance of another. The dominant russian language becomes a priority in communication, fills the information, educational, cultural space and thus leads to the actual harassment of Ukrainian-speakers in russian-speakers. [12]. In the process of studying public opinion regarding the status of languages – Ukrainian and russian – the respondents were asked the question «How should the Ukrainian and russian languages coexist in Ukraine?». The results are summarized in **Table 2.1** according to different sources. In 2006, the highest percentage is gaining the answer that both languages should be state in Ukraine – 37 %, a slightly lower percentage has an answer regarding the Ukrainian autocracy – 35 %. It is striking that the population of a sovereign state

assumes the answer to the russian language as an autocratic one, where Ukrainian should be the language of everyday communication – 0.8 %, and 3 % of the respondents would give the Ukrainian language only a regional significance! Such figures indicate an extremely low level of formation of national identity, when the distribution of «own»/«foreign» is blurred.

● **Table 2.1** Results of a sociological study of the status of the Ukrainian language in Ukraine (2006–2020), %

Answer options	2016					
	2006	Language of communication russian	Language of communication sometimes Ukrainian, sometimes russian	Language of communication russian	2019	2020
Ukrainian should be the only state and official language, russian can be used at the household level, like the languages of other national minorities	35.0	75.8	46.5	24.9	68.5	66.1
Ukrainian should be the state language, russian may be official in some regions of Ukraine	20.3	16.2	30.7	33.6	15.0	17.9
Both languages must be state languages in Ukraine	37.0	4.1	15.8	32.7	11.5	12.6
Russian should be the state language, Ukrainian may be official in some regions of Ukraine	3.0	0.9	1.3	2.7	–	–
Russian should be the only state and official language in Ukraine, Ukrainian can be used at the household level	0.8	1.1	0.6	1.8	–	–
Difficult to answer	3.9	2.0	5.0	4.3	5.0	3.5

Source: compiled by the authors based on [13–16]

During the data collection process, a difference was noticed in the figures for 2006. So, in No. 1 of «National Security and Defense» for this year, we have the following comparative indicators: the status of the sole official Ukrainian language, where russian, like other languages, was used only at the household level, in 2006–2007 was supported by 39.2 % of respondents, the full rights of two languages – 31.4 %, russian as official in certain regions – 24.3 % of respondents.

In 2016, the survey was conducted in a different way, the respondents were divided into three groups according to the language of communication. As a result, we have 75 % of Ukrainian speakers for recognizing Ukrainian as the only state language and 46.5 % among bilinguals. The status of a russian as an autocracy in Ukraine was supported by 1.8 % of russian speakers. Another indicator causes concern – the percentage of those who have not decided on the status of the language – from 2 to 5 %. This is an indicator of the blurred linguistic identity of persons for whom the language does not embody the spiritual values of the nation, the ethnic group with which they identify themselves. Often, individuals with blurred identities are easy prey in manipulative socio-political games. It is noteworthy that over 14 years of conscious Ukrainians has increased from 35 % to 66.1 %, the ostentatious equal status of languages has fallen significantly (from 37 % to 12.6 %). The results of the 2019 and 2020 surveys were taken from another source for greater objectivity, however, in these questionnaires, options for the state status for the russian were not offered.

Taking into account the analyzed data and the multi-ethnicity of the country, the linguistic identity of the people itself requires a more detailed study. Summary **Table 2.2** presents survey data from the Razumkov Center, the Rating Sociological Group, the Gradus Research company, the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation, together with the sociological service of the Razumkov Center, from 2006 to the present.

● **Table 2.2** Results of a sociological study of language identity in 2006–2022, %

Question asked by the respondents	Years	Ukrainian	russian	Ukrainian and russian	Other languages	Difficult to answer
What is your native language?	2006	52	30.7	15.6	1.1	0.6
	2007	51.4	25.7	21.5	0.9	0.5
	2011	61	36		2	
	2012	57	42			
	2013	62	37			
	2014	67	32			
	2015	66	33			
	2016	68.8	27.0		1.7	2.5
	2017	67.7	13.8	17.4	0.7	0.4
	2018	71	27			
	2019	73	26			
	2020	73.4	22.0		1.7	2.9
	2021	78.3	18		1.1	2.6
	03.2022	76	20			

Source: compiled by the authors based on [13–15, 17, 18]

The first thing that catches your eye is the gradual growth of the population, which considers the Ukrainian language native. This indicates that in 14 years a new generation has grown up in an independent state, where, despite all the tolerance towards the languages of national minorities,

they consider the state language to be their mother tongue. Research conducted by the Razumkov Center in 2006–2007 showed that 30.7 % of Ukrainians speak russian as their mother tongue. And, although this indicator decreased to 25.7 % over the year, the number of those for whom both russian and Ukrainian are native languages has increased. A simple calculation shows that more than 5 % of those who considered russian as their native language began to doubt the priority of their native language, due to which the percentage of bilinguals increased. In the period 2014–2017, the percentage of respondents for whom Ukrainian is their native language has slight deviations in the range of 1–2.2 %. From 2017 to the present, there is a gradual but stable increase in indicators, the difference is approximately 8–10 % (deviations are due to information obtained from various sources).

The results of a survey conducted by the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation, together with the sociological service of the Razumkov Center, showed in 2021 that a young generation of 18–29 years old has indeed formed in Ukraine, for 83 % of whom Ukrainian is their native language. The older the respondents, the lower the percentage: 30–39 years old – 78.1 %; 40–49 years old – 80.7 % (the generation of the 90s, when there was the first surge in the formation of national identity, Ukraine gained independence); over 60 years old – 73.6 %, which is also a fairly high figure, given the Soviet restrictions and the persecution of Ukrainian-speaking citizens.

We have the greatest fluctuations in the results in relation to respondents who recognize the russian language. Various sources give somewhat drastically different percentages, making it difficult to draw conclusions. Taking into account the figures for 2006 and 2021/22, the downward trend in russian speakers is noticeable – from 30.7 % in 2006 to 18–20 % in 2021/22. This is also observed in the results of the study of the Sociological Group Rating from 2012 to 2022. The percentage of those for whom russian is native in 2012 starts from almost half of the respondents 42 % and is halved in March 2022 to 20 %. The number of those who consider Ukrainian as their native language has also increased by almost 20 %.

The indicators of bilingual Ukrainians, for whom both languages are native during 2006–2017, did not change significantly – 15.6 % and 17.4 %, respectively. Special attention should be paid to the indicator of respondents for whom it is difficult to determine which language is their native language. For a conscious citizen, the concept of language is obvious, because it is the language of the clan, the language with which knowledge of the world is connected from childhood, with which you think, with which you feel a spiritual connection, etc. The native language acts as a kind of chain that connects an individual with a group, community, unites the current generation with the past. That is, through the language the basic principles of world perception are formed, the attitude towards oneself as a member of the community, it forms the collective memory, etc. The percentage of such citizens in 2021 was 2.6 %. Losing this connection with the language, the identity of the individual, group and nation as a whole is gradually destroyed. «If the role of language as the main factor in the formation of identity is leveled, ethnic assimilation occurs: losing speech, the people cease to be psychologically aware of their identity, cultural identity and separateness and quantitatively replenish other, majority ethnic groups» [12]. Osnach, S. believes that such citizens, losing their speech, drift towards a decrease in patriotism [19]. Also, the author, using the example of the Crimean Tatars,



proves that language stamina is indeed the key to the viability of the people. A people who realize the value of language cherishes it much more than those who do not have such a powerful unifying factor.

In the past few years, the vector of language policy in Ukraine has changed with the adoption of the Law of Ukraine «On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language» No. 2704-VIII dated April 25, 2019. This law had a significant impact on the distribution of priorities for language communication in various areas. Thus, in 2005 the Ukrainian language was not dominant in many areas: educational, scientific, professional, service sector, information space, etc. Moreover, internal documentation at the enterprises was partly conducted in russian, in particular, in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the eastern regions. Knowledge of the Ukrainian language was required but not subject to any control, so the percentage of communication in Ukrainian and russian is almost the same with a slight advantage of russian 30.2 % and 31.7 % respectively. Only 10 % less is the indicator of bilingual speakers, where the speech of communication is determined by the circumstances, or by the language in which the interlocutor speaks. In 2020, the percentage of Ukrainian-speaking communication is growing by 27 %, while russian-speaking and bilingual communication are declining to 24.1 % and 16.2 % [20, 21].

We observe a similar thing in the domestic sphere (**Table 2.3**). Compared to 2011, in 2020 the Ukrainian language, as a priority in communication at home, increased by 8.5 %, respectively, the indicator of communication in russian decreased by 9 %. Surveys in March and May 2022 conducted by various companies paint an interesting and mixed picture. Thus, the sociological company Rating published information on the results of a survey of respondents over the course of 11 years, the indicators were fixed several times a year. Thus, according to their data, the percentage of russian speakers in everyday life has decreased by more than half: from 40 % to 18 %. At the same time, communication in Ukrainian did not grow so significantly, only by 4 %, but the use of two languages increased significantly from 15 % to 32 % [15].

● **Table 2.3** Results of a sociological study on the priority of the language of communication (2005–2022), %

Question	Year	Ukrainian	russian	Ukrainian and russian (according to circumstances)	Other languages	Difficult to answer
What language do you communicate at work?	2005	30.2	31.7	21.8	0.2	7.0
	2017	48.7	9.4	23.6	0.1	0.3
	2020	57.2	24.1	16.2	1.4	1
What language do you mostly speak at home?	2011	52.4	45.0	–	0.9	1.7
	2016	55.4	41.3	–	1.4	1.9
	2017	52	10.3	20.5	0.4	0.5
	2020	60.9	36	–	1.4	1.6
	03.2022	48	18	33	–	–

Source: compiled by the authors based on [12–16]

Surveys conducted by the Gradus Research research company using the self-filling questionnaire method in a mobile application in May 2022 show that before the full-scale invasion, 41 % of respondents spoke Ukrainian and 58 % russian, respectively, 1 % another language, 3 %, 46 % respectively. The percentage of users in other languages is stable. At the same time, the percentage of those who continue to speak russian in everyday life is extremely high – 98 %. It should also be noted that this survey concerns, as the researchers note, the 4<sup>th</sup> wave of displaced persons, so it is dangerous to regard this indicator as objective [22].

The highest rate of bilingual communication is in March 2022 – 33 %. Polukhtovich, T. calls political processes one of the key factors in the formation of national identity at the present stage, when a significant part of Ukrainians felt the process of changing ideological, cultural, political identification [23]. This fact can be explained by russia's full-scale invasion of the territory of sovereign Ukraine. Russian-speaking citizens actively began to refuse to communicate in russian, but knowledge of Ukrainian still does not allow to fully replace the language of communication, even at the household level. Ukrainian at home is mainly spoken by young people (18–29 years old) and the middle generation (36–50 years old) 86–87 %.

As already noted, for several decades, scientists have been studying issues of national identity in Ukraine and even considering models that are acceptable for Ukrainian society, mainly based on survey data. So, Korostelina, K. identified 6 models of identity «double identity; pro-Soviet existence; struggle for Ukrainian identity; recognition of Ukrainian identity; multicultural civic model; and Crimean Tatars» [24], where the language plays an important role. 28 % of respondents, supporters of dual identity, believe that the russian language is under threat and should take the status of the second state language, while supporters of the 6<sup>th</sup> model (16 %) believe that the Ukrainian language is under threat, and should not be imposed. The goal of the Ukrainian language policy should not be a ban on russian or other languages of national minorities, but a competitive Ukrainian language in all areas, in particular, in cultural and information [12].

The phenomenon of identity cannot be called permanent; it changes under the influence of various factors, primarily socio-political, spiritual and cultural. The growth of the welfare of citizens leads to an increase in attention to cultural and spiritual heritage and values, on the basis of which the formation and interests take place, the vector of development of the nation as a whole is determined. The process of formation of national identity does not occur at an accelerated pace even under favorable conditions (socio-historical shifts) and «it cannot be easily or quickly instilled in the population using artificial means» [25].

Chupriy, L. believes that at present in Ukrainian society we can talk about three groups of identities that strive to become national: national-patriotic, pro-European identities, pro-russian identities [26], opposing each other and creating extraordinary social and political tension in Ukrainian society. The main threat is posed by those who have assimilated with another people up to identification with it. According to statistics, the role of language in this matter is leading, because «a foreign language has always been an instrument of assimilation, designed to blur, or better, forever erase the national self-identification of the conquered people, to promote its

self-identification with the invader people. The assimilated people no longer had the ambitions of their own state, and therefore, lost the motive for the struggle for independence and contributed to the development of another state» [27].

For a long time in Ukraine, the concept of «nationalism» had a negative connotation with an aggressive attitude towards representatives of another nation [28, 29], and therefore, to the question «What content do you put into the concept of «Ukrainian nationalism»?» in 2006, the Razumkov Center achieved stunning results. The majority of Ukrainians are still convinced that Ukrainian nationalism «is an ideology that splits society into ethnic Ukrainians and non-Ukrainians and provides for the restriction of the rights of non-Ukrainians» and only 27.3 % understand that this is «a worldview, the main idea of which – the transformation of Ukraine into a strong state with high international prestige and a high standard of living for citizens» [13]. It is noteworthy that in 10 years the situation is changing. The respondents were divided into three groups according to the language of communication: in Ukrainian, russian and two languages. So, Ukrainian-speakers are 29.7 % inclined to interpret nationalism as the ideology of a strong state, its development and strengthening, and among russian-speakers, 20.2 % more believe that this phenomenon is of a schismatic nature.

For several decades, Ukrainians have not put issues of cultural, ethnic and national identity as a priority, and therefore their own understanding of the Ukrainian nation, for the most part, is not associated either with the language, or with national traditions, or with ethnicity – 43.1 % (2006); 38.8 % (2007), determining the citizenship of Ukraine. The process of identification («On what grounds should nationality be determined?») Ukrainians understand as innate, that is, what is determined by the ethnicity of the parent (39 % (2006); 47.4 % (2007)). The role of language is not a key one at all – 8.2 % (2006); 6.8 % (2007). The second city in terms of indicators is the free choice of each person – 25.6 % (2006); 23.3 % (2007), which by itself crosses out the essence of national identity as identification with a certain nation according to common characteristics, culture, values, etc.

A clear evidence of how the language of communication affects the identification process is the indicators of 2016, where the highest percentage of identification with Ukrainians was demonstrated by Ukrainian speakers – 97 %, the percentage of bilinguals was 89 % and russian speakers – 66 %. 27 % of russian-speakers and 7 % of bilinguals consider themselves russians [14].

The factor of culture in general is no less important than language preferences and national identity. In 2006–2007 cultural identity gravitates toward Ukrainian 56.3 % (2006) and 57.9 % (2007). The second place is occupied by the Soviet cultural tradition, the pro-European one has only 6.6 % (2006), 6.4 % (2007) [16], which fully confirms the classification of identities by Chupriy, L. However, let us return to the actual processes of identification of the Ukrainian people. Throughout life, a person repeatedly asks himself the question «Who am I?» and at each stage the answer may be different. Why? Depending on what priorities and values are important at the moment, identification (identification) occurs within the age category, gender, social, ethnic, national, territorial, cultural, civil, etc. National identity is a complex process and has its own markers, on the basis of which there is a distinction between «one's own»/«alien» and awareness of another self [30]:

- 1) historical territory or native land;
- 2) general myths and historical memory;
- 3) general mass, public culture;
- 4) uniform legal rights and obligations for all members;
- 5) a common economy with the ability to move within the national territory.

So, already in 2006, 31 % of Ukrainians admitted that they are not like any other nationality, but more than half – 54.2 % saw similarities with russians.

In the study of identity, the answer to the question «Who are we?» is also important, to clarify the criteria of generality. According to the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation, the criteria for commonality are primarily citizenship 35.9 % (2013) and 52.3 % (2015); secondly, family ties 53.5 % (2013) and 52.9 % (2015); and thirdly, the age factor of 32.2 % (2013) and 30.7 % (2015); and territorial (residents of one city, village) 30.6 % (2013) and 27.8 % (2015).

To study changes in society in recent years, let's also take data from the Razumkov Center for August 2021. Figures are eloquent about what, according to Ukrainians, now unites people in Ukrainian society. So, if in 2002 the primary factor was faith in the future of 38.4 %, then in 2015 41.7 % are patriotic feelings of a citizen of Ukraine, and in 2021 optimism again becomes the dominant factor in uniting society – 35.7 %. Unfortunately, the language of communication in the period 2002–2015 reduces its importance as a unifying factor: 22.7 % (2002) and 7.5 % (2015), and in 2021 it doubles – 14.8 %. The indicator of general political views is growing only by 2015 (4.7 % (2002) and 13.9 % (2015)), which indicates the formation of a socio-political nation, and in 2021 it is already halving – 6.7 %. Dissatisfaction with the authorities is also reduced by 14 %. All this together suggests that by 2021 the peak of the formation of a socio-political nation has occurred (**Table 2.4**).

**Table 2.5** reflects the transformation of Ukrainian society from 2006 to 2021. Identification civil during a certain period occupies the first positions. Taking into account the fact that the data sample was made from different sources, the indicators are heterogeneous. So, the period from 2006 to 2016 is taken from one source and there is a gradual increase of 8.5 % over 10 years. In the future, the figures range from 57.2 to 74.9 % depending on the year. Of course, there are many factors influencing identification, and one of the most important are socio-political processes, legislative changes that directly affect the standard of living and self-awareness of the individual. In any case, public identity consistently dominates in Ukraine, which since 2014 has a percentage of more than 50 %. Local or regional identity occupies the second step in the hierarchy of Ukrainian identities. Geographically, Ukrainians identify themselves as residents of a certain village, city 27.7 % (2006), over the years the percentage decreases to 20.8 % in 2021, which indicates changes in the minds of Ukrainians. Interestingly, identification at the larger level of an area or region is well below the 6.6 % percentage (2006) and 1 percent less in 2021. In general, such figures give an understanding of why there is a high level of difference between the regions of Ukraine in all areas. The consolidating factor is citizenship, not ethnicity or nationality, so the fact of the development of a political (civil) nation in Ukraine is also obvious.

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● **Table 2.4** Results of a sociological study of the question «What unites people in Ukrainian society today?», %

Answer options for questions	Years						
	2002	2003	2006	2009	2013	2015	2021
Committed to overcoming life's challenges together	24.1	22.8	22.7	24.0	22.7	35.3	22
Feeling the loss of normalcy	29.1	31.3	24.5	32.3	27.7	34.1	19.1
Faith in a better future	38.4	39.4	43.0	31.2	30.6	35.4	35.7
Joint hardships of life	34.9	40.4	35.6	37.7	33.4	29.3	29.5
Family and social feelings	27.9	25.8	35.9	35.2	23.5	23.9	26.9
Dissatisfaction with the authorities	28.5	39.6	29.5	40.6	34.1	36.3	22.3
Fear of the future	28.9	28.7	19.6	30.4	25.2	21.8	14.9
The language of communication	22.7	22.8	20.7	14.7	10.0	7.5	14.8
Patriotic feelings of a citizen of Ukraine	9.0	9.4	12.1	8.7	8.3	41.7	25.5
Political views	4.7	7.7	12.3	9.3	8.2	13.9	6.7
Religion (religion)	11.8	16.0	19.3	11.9	10.5	10.1	12.0
Nationality	9.9	11.4	13.1	11.6	7.4	12.2	14.0
Other	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.5	1.4
Nothing unites	4.2	3.3	3.8	7.5	8.1	3.7	8.3
Difficult to answer	10.0	6.7	6.7	5.7	8.3	1.8	4.9

Source: compiled by the authors based on [29, 31]

● **Table 2.5** Results of a sociological study of the question «Who do you consider yourself?», %

Respondents' answers	Years											
	2006	2008	2010	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2021
Resident of the village, district or city where you live	27.7	24.5	27.3	29.8	28.7	16.1	23.0	22.1	24.7	–	–	20.8
Resident of the region (region or several regions) where you live	6.6	9.3	6.6	7.6	7.9	8.0	6.4	6.9	6.2	18.2	15.6	5.6
Citizen of Ukraine	51.6	51.8	51.3	48.4	50.7	<b>64.6</b>	<b>57.5</b>	<b>60.1</b>	<b>57.2</b>	67.2	<b>74.9</b>	<b>62.6</b>
Representative of their ethnic group, nation	1.8	2.6	3.1	1.8	2.0	2.1	3.1	2.9	3.5	3.2	2.6	2.7
Citizen of the former Soviet Union	7.3	9.0	6.9	8.4	6.6	5.5	3.9	3.9	3.2	2.2	2.7	2.8
European citizen	1.3	0.4	0.9	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.0	1.4	2.0	1.2	0.9
Citizen of the world	2.9	1.7	3.1	2.4	2.4	2.1	4.2	2.6	3.3	1.0	1.5	3.1
Other	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.3	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.6	–	0.1	1.6

Source: compiled by the authors based on [18, 30, 32, 33]

It is also possible to feel the gap in identification with Soviet culture and ideology. So, in 2006, 7.3 % of citizens experienced their belonging to a country that no longer exists, and already in 2021 – only 2.8 %. This indicates that the generation of the «Soviet Union» has undergone a significant transformation of consciousness towards the formation of a civil one. In terms of age, the figures on Soviet identity seem even more interesting: in particular, in 2017 we observe that the older the respondents, the higher the percentage of supporters (18–29 years old – 2.8 %, and among those over 60 years old – 18.7 %). However, at the time of the collapse of the USSR, only a small number of three-year-old children could have memories of life in the USSR, respectively, the identification of this age category should be much lower, because this is a conscious identification of oneself with representatives of a certain group, their cultural traditions, history, etc.

The percentage of those who consider themselves a citizen of the world has hardly changed – since 2006 it has increased by only 0.2 %. Of course, the influence of European culture in the last two decades has also affected the process of identification, but the growth in the number of people who identify themselves as European citizens has decreased by 0.4 %. All this indicates that Ukrainians are increasingly aware of their strength compared to the first years of independence.

Now let's compare how the language of communication affects national identity (**Table 2.6**). Identifying themselves as representatives of the Ukrainian nationality, Ukrainians do not always choose Ukrainian for the main language of communication. In 2005, out of 78.8 % of respondents who identify themselves as Ukrainians, only 30.2 % communicate in Ukrainian during working hours. Accordingly, the remaining 48.6 % are either in russian or in two, depending on the situation. In 2017, it is possible to correlate two parameters – the language of communication at work and in everyday life of ethnic Ukrainians, especially since over 12 years the number of ethnic Ukrainians has increased by 13.2 %. The general trend remains similar: 48.7 % communicate in Ukrainian with 92 % at work and 52 % at home, in russian, respectively, 9.4 % at work and 10.3 % at home. The growth of ethnic Ukrainians and the number of those who began to speak Ukrainian in the period of 2005–2022 by almost 20 % is a positive indicator of the formation of a conscious nation. The number of ethnic russians also decreased significantly from 18.1 % to 5 %, while representatives of other nationalities decreased by 0.1 %.

● **Table 2.6** Results of a sociological study of the national identity of Ukrainians, %

Nationality	Years				
	2005	2006	2015	2017	2022
Ukrainian	78.8	77.2	86.3	92.0	98
russian	18.1	18.3	8.9	6.0	5
other nationality	3.1	–	2.8	1.5	3
didn't answer	–	1.3	2	0.6	–

Source: compiled by the authors based on [34, 35]

Identifying themselves as Ukrainians in Ukrainian society, unfortunately, they still do not fully understand this concept. Identification occurs at different levels, but partly superficial, external. Over the past few years, there have been more people on the streets who openly demonstrate their identity with Ukrainian culture – they wear vyshyvanka, stylize other elements of national clothing, demonstrate the national emblem, the trident in jewelry and on the body. However, all this is not evidence of a conscious identification of oneself with representatives of a certain nation without a language factor, because speech is an internal core around which national interests and values in the state should develop [36].

In recent years, there has been a clear trend towards a decrease in the level of influence of Russian culture on the formation of the political Ukrainian nation. With the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the criteria for the division into «friends» and «foes» became clearer: 12 % of respondents in May 2022 recognize the language problem as serious, that is, posing a threat to Ukraine's national security. However, for 67 % of the problem still does not exist [15]. A significant part of the assimilated Ukrainians do not realize that the most important criterion in the distribution of «us»/«alien» should not be a superficial recognition of cultural values in national symbols, but the Ukrainian language.

Language is a key factor that forms the basis for identification with a particular nation of an individual, affects the security of the nation as a whole. It has been proven that identification with the Ukrainian nation depends entirely on the level of proficiency, use and knowledge of the Ukrainian language. The regions where the indicator was the lowest gave an erroneous identification, that is, a reason for the neighboring state to consider Russian-speaking representatives of the Russian ethnic group. Three months of full-scale invasion prompted Russian-speaking Ukrainians to switch to Ukrainian. And even though this percentage is not high yet, it is evidence that a conscious society is being formed in Ukraine, a nation that identifies itself with one ethnic group has a common territory, national interests and values – everything that is «different» that distinguishes us from a neighbor.

The preservation of the language, its development and the return of the proper Ukrainian vocabulary is the key to the safe development of the nation and the state as a whole.

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