

Bi- and multilingualism between conflict intensification and conflict resolution. Ethno-linguistic conflicts, language politics and contact situations in post-Soviet Ukraine and Russia

Initiative: Trilaterale Partnerschaften – Kooperationsvorhaben zwischen Wissenschaftler(inne)n aus der

Ukraine, Russland und Deutschland

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Strikingly, what should actually be a factor contributing to conflict resolution - multilingualism as a means of interaction - has, in the framework of language policy with its changing measures, more often led to an intensification of these conflicts. Which measures contribute to conflict intensification and which advance conflict resolution, and how do they do so? To what extent do language conflicts actually exist, or are they partially constructed, either by language politics or by sections of the language community? The project investigates these questions using the example of several language situations which, alongside certain differences, also demonstrate sufficient commonalities to render a comparison highly useful: the situation of Ukrainian and Russian in Ukraine and of Tatar and Russian in the Russian Republic of Tatarstan, as well as the multilingual situation with Russian, Ukrainian, and Tatar as components in the Crimea. Today, all these bi- and multilingual language situations are embedded in states which have been shaped by (monolingual) nation state-building. A comparison between them can therefore provide clear and useful insights into the mechanisms, problems and consequences of various language policies. The project provides a synergy of the complementary research competences of the participating partners and seeks to develop these competences into an integrated sociolinguistic research of language conflicts within the context of bi- and multilingualism in Eastern Europe.

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