

## Multilingualism of Ukrainian Humanities: how it is seen globally

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### Introduction

Dissemination of knowledge in the Humanities occurs through the use of different languages and different types of documents. Many studies of recent years consider the issue of proper evaluation of scientific non-English achievements of Humanities (Pedersen, Grønvad, & Hvidtfeldt, 2020). Such a lively interest can be partially explained by many examples of misuse of metrics in order to assess the impact of research in Humanities. In recent years such popular initiatives as DORA, Leiden Manifesto, Metric Tide, Helsinki initiative attracted the attention of the scientific community to the problem of correct evaluation of non-English works.

However, the other side of the coin, which is related to the importance of international evaluation of results in Humanities, is not always properly addressed to by researchers. The exclusive focus on the local level also leads to negative consequences: lack of independent review, decrease of the quality and relevance of scientific results.

The research policy of Ukraine, which became independent in 1991, inherited many Soviet remnants. For a long time scientists in Ukraine have been rewarded primarily for publications in national journals in their native language (Hladchenko, & Moed, 2021). The locally-nested character of research together with such formal stimulations create the preconditions for harmful self-isolation and “invisibility” of Ukrainian Humanities.

The aim of this work is to investigate the volume and language distribution of publications by Ukrainian researchers in Humanities indexed in Web of Science (WoS). Further, a number of other non-English-speaking countries of Eastern Europe with similar post-Soviet background is chosen for comparison.

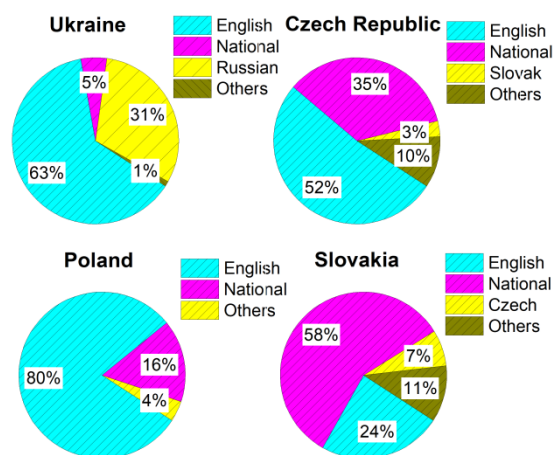
Language is an important factor influencing the coverage of a country's scientific publications by Web of Science, especially in the Humanities (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016) for non-English-speaking countries. However, this database – one of the most used for scientometric studies – can be considered as a prism through which national research output is seen globally. Therefore, despite all cautions, the data from Web of Science Core Collection are used in this work.

### Method and Data

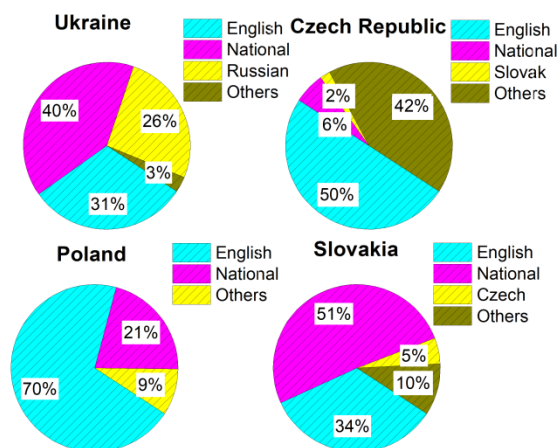
The metadata about publications by Ukrainian authors (at least one Ukrainian affiliation per paper) in Philosophy, History and Literature in 2010-2019 from WoS Core Collection were used: total number of records, language distribution, information about journals where English-language works were published. The comparative analysis was performed using the same data (same period) for few other non-English speaking Eastern European Slavic countries: Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia. An example of search query: CU=Ukraine AND PY= (2019 OR 2018 OR 2017 OR 2016 OR 2015 OR 2014 OR 2013 OR 2012 OR 2011 OR 2010) AND SU=Philosophy. The date of data retrieval is 10.01.2021.

### Results

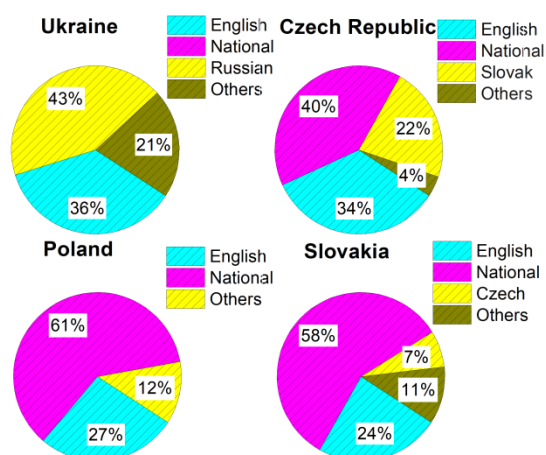
Our results show that according to WoS, choosing different languages for publications is typical for scientists from the analyzed countries of Eastern Europe in the fields of Philosophy, History and Literature (see Fig. 1-3). The share of publications in other than national language is explicitly defined if it is significant: Russian language for Ukraine; Slovak language for Czech Republic; and Czech language for Slovakia.



**Figure 1. Language distributions of publications by authors from different countries: Philosophy (2010-2019).**



**Figure 2. Language distributions of publications by authors from different countries: History (2010-2019).**



**Figure 3. Language distributions of publications by authors from different countries: Literature (2010-2019).**

Depending on the discipline and country, the ratio of English-language publications in other languages varies. For example, the shares of papers in the field of Philosophy written in English by Polish and Slovak authors during 2010-2019 are significantly different: 81% and 24%, correspondingly. At the same time, in the fields of History and Literature, scholars from all considered countries demonstrate similar behavior in the context of publication language choice.

In addition, our results shows that a significant share of English-language papers in Philosophy, History and Literature by authors from Eastern European countries are found in the journals published in the same country.

### Conclusions

The results confirm the findings of previous studies: it is natural for Humanities to publish research outputs in various languages not being

concentrated exclusively on English. This is quantitatively illustrated for Ukrainian, Polish, Slovak and Czech authors. Moreover, language particularities are observed for different countries. Due to historical circumstances, Russian language plays substantial role for Ukrainian Humanities, which is particularly notable and rather counterintuitive for the Literature. But only since 2017 Ukrainian becomes the official language of the educational process. E.g., Russian language is much less influential in Poland, where it was compulsory until 1989, see (Kulczycki, Rozkosz, & Drabek, 2019). Similarly, the mutual language influences are noticeable for scholar publications of Slovak and Czech Republics.

The majority of English-language articles in Humanities by researchers from the considered Eastern European countries and indexed in WoS correspond to the journals published in the country of authors. This practice needs to be studied more carefully, but there is an agreement with conclusions drawn in (Nazarovets, 2020).

Unfortunately, the lack of sufficiently large statistics does not allow to perform the temporal analysis of Ukrainian publication data presented in WoS. The potential changes in language spectrum in response to implementation of new rules would provide an answer to the question about the possible impact of research policy on the scholar publication strategy.

Our preliminary results suggest that natural multilingualism of Humanities has to be taken into account during the process of research evaluations, especially based on quantitative approaches and metrics.

### References

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