

Ukrainian Cinema and the Challenges of Multilingualism: From the 1930s to the Present

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Abstract: *This article discusses the use of multiple spoken languages in Ukrainian cinema, situating it in the context of global and comparative scholarship on multilingualism and film. It traces the historical origins of the practice in early sound film in Soviet Ukraine in the first half of the 1930s, reviews language politics of filmmaking in Ukraine during the rest of Soviet rule, and surveys the dominant practices during the post-Soviet period, highlighting in particular developments since the Euromaidan.*

Keywords: *contemporary cinema, language politics, multilingualism, Ukrainian culture, national identity*

Multilingualism, the concurrent use of more than one language in social contexts, has been the subject of prolific scholarly inquiry in a variety of disciplines spanning the humanities and the social sciences. As a phenomenon, it has been recorded for millennia, but it is especially closely linked with the rise of globalization in the final decades of the twentieth–beginning of the twenty-first century. (It has also been an important characteristic of previous historical periods of increasing globalizing tendencies.) More recently, especially in the context of the European Union, a distinction is often made between multilingualism as a social practice and a language learning capacity and plurilingualism, which is understood as the value of linguistic tolerance within individuals and countries