

Introduction

Tore Nessel and Andrei Rogatchevski

This special issue of *Poljarnyj vestnik* is partly based on the proceedings of the November 2025 conference at UiT The Arctic University of Norway, called “Ukrainian-Russian Bilingualism in Wartime” and sponsored by UKRAINETT+.

The issue has been co-edited by Tore Nessel, co-author of *Ukrainsk grammatikk* (Novus 2026), and Andrei Rogatchevski, co-author of *A War of Songs: Popular Music and Recent Russia-Ukraine Relations* (ibidem 2019).

The issue consists of four articles, arranged in chronological order. Tamara Lönngren presents letters from the Ukrainian linguist Olena Kurylo (1890-1946) to the Norwegian Slavist Olaf Broch (1867-1961), kept at the National Library of Norway (Oslo). Kåre Johan Mjør analyses two novels by the world-renowned author from Kyiv Andrei Kurkov (b. 1961): *Death and the Penguin* (1996) and its sequel, *Penguin Lost* (2002). Yuliya Krylova-Grek examines the transformation of Ukrainian–Russian bilingualism in Ukraine after Russia’s full-scale invasion in 2022, focusing on changes in the dominant language of everyday interpersonal communication and the relationship between language choice and national self-identification. Andriy Krasniashchukh investigates the phenomenon of “language rollback”—the return of some Russian-speaking Ukrainians to the use of Russian language following the initial mass shift to Ukrainian in 2022.

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