



Editorial

Boundaries and Belonging: Language, Diaspora and Motherland

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This Special Issue of *J-BILD* "Boundaries and Belonging: Language, Diaspora and Motherland" is one of the outcomes of a long-term collaboration between the guest editors, Alla Nedashkivska from the University of Alberta, Canada, and Holger Kusse from TU Dresden, Germany. The EU-funded exchange programme Erasmus + facilitated a series of reciprocal research-related visits, in which staff and students from both universities were able to participate.

Together, the research teams participated in the [ASEEES](#) Summer Conventions in Lviv, Ukraine (2016, 2018) and Zagreb, Croatia (2019). In 2016–2017, they collaborated on a project "Ukrainian Identity: the Self and the Other in the context of Ukrainian Diaspora". The conference "[Crisis and Identity: Cultural and Linguistic Perspectives on Ukraine and its Diaspora](#)", organized by Alla Nedashkivska at the University of Alberta in March 2017, as a part of a larger project "[The Research Initiative on Democratic Reforms in Ukraine](#)," was also attended by colleagues from TU Dresden. The idea for the current Special Issue emerged at the ASEEES Convention in Zagreb, after our joint panel on "Language as a Tool to Political and Symbolic Demarcation." At this panel, we (Holger Kusse, Alla Nedashkivska, and Marianna Novosolova) explored and debated the known language conflict in Ukraine, which was and is also a conflict about language identity and language ideologies. In addition, at this venue, particularly during the panel "War of Languages and Language of War in Contemporary Ukraine," we had the pleasure of getting acquainted with the work of Nadiya Kiss and Liudmyla Pidkuimukha. The conference thus marks the beginning of our reflections on the topic of "Boundaries and Belonging."

We wanted to expand our fruitful discussions to include a broader perspective on boundaries and belonging, including the relationship between motherland and diaspora and in a variety of contexts. As a result, in this special issue, we are happy to present invigorating work by our colleagues that focus their inquiries on German (Jennifer Dailey o'Cain and Grit Liebscher) and Italian (Maria Lieber and Christoph Oliver Mayer) diaspora in Canada; French vs Bengali in the writings of the French-Indian writer Shumona Sinha (Srilata Ravi); Arabic in France (Chantal Tetreault); and languages network of the former Yugoslavia (Gal Kirn), in addition to those that focus on Ukrainian (Alla Nedashkivska, Marianna Novosolova, Nadiya Kiss, and Liudmyla Pidkuimukha).

To situate this Special Issue in the context of language boundaries in different multilingual and multicultural spaces, Holger Kusse offers his detailed introductory article. All research articles are organized within two major sections, one focusing on the context of diaspora, and another



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on the context of motherland. Both sections are closely intertwined as authors question constructions of motherland and diaspora, explore language and identity, and thereby discuss the various belongings and boundaries in a variety of contexts.

With this Special Issue, we hope to enrich further discussion on questions of language identity, which is both a function of Belonging and the establishment of Boundaries.

We would like to thank the editors of *J-BILD* for the opportunity to publish our Special Issue in their young, but incredibly rich journal.