



# Deconstructing the Past, Reconstructing the Future

19th Annual Graduate Student Conference  
Graduate Organization for the Study  
of Europe and Central Asia (GOSECA)

February 25-26, 2022

 REGISTER

Even if you are not excited by multilingualism as a researcher, you can't avoid the fact that discussions of Eastern Europe and Central Asia inevitably slide into the murky territory of language policies, identity politics, the soft power of Russian, and script and language reforms. The purpose of this talk is to make you more critical consumers of multilingualism literature, more informed contributors to policy-related debates and more attentive observers of linguistic diversity – or the lack thereof – in the public space. To do so, the well-trodden territory covered in academic literature will be skipped and have a behind the scenes tour of 'multilingualism' as a term, an academic field, and a political and marketing tool. The session will begin with the ambiguities of the term that open it to discursive manipulation and misuse. Then case studies from post-Soviet cities will be used to illuminate the paradoxes of historic multilingualism and its present-day commodification and concealment in the public space.



KEYNOTE ADDRESS:

**"Multilingualism in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: A tour behind the scenes"**

Friday, February 25 | 5 pm EST

**Aneta Pavlenko** grew up in Kiev, Ukraine, and left the USSR just before it collapsed (a coincidence, not a consequence). After a short stay in a refugee settlement in Italy, she came to the United States and, for reasons she is still trying to comprehend, decided to get a doctorate. While in graduate school, she supported herself and her son by working as an interpreter and case worker for the Refugee

Assistance Program in Ithaca, New York. She received her Ph.D. in General Linguistics at Cornell University in 1997. Between 1998 and 2016 she was a Professor of Applied Linguistics at Temple University, Philadelphia and in 2014-2015 she served as President of the American Association for Applied Linguistics. From 2017 she has been a Research Professor at the Center for Multilingualism at the University of Oslo, Norway. Her research focuses on the relationship between multilingualism, cognition, and emotions; forensic linguistics; and language management in imperial Russia, the USSR and post-Soviet states. She has authored more than a hundred articles and ten books, has lectured widely in North America, Europe and Asia and is the winner of the 2006 BAAL Book of the Year award, the 2009 TESOL Award for Distinguished Research and the 2021 AAAL Research Article award.



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