

Didactic potential of historical research of the Germans in Ukraine

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Abstract. In this article the history of Germans, including German and Austrian prisoners of war, on the territory of modern Southern Ukraine was researched. Completely new facts were discovered, which make a significant contribution to the development of historical research. All sorts of things related to the history of one's own hometown were touched upon, as far as the subject is concerned. But on the other hand, these newly discovered materials can be used as teaching material, which realizes the idea of integration of science and education. All the collected material was realized in a series of exercises aimed at the formation and development of various linguistic skills in reading, listening, writing and speaking. This idea has already been practically implemented in the teaching activity: Within the framework of the conducted teaching and research project, places were identified where the German prisoners of war were housed and worked in the Dnipropetrovsk region; buildings built by German prisoners of war according to the projects developed by German engineers; the German traces in different spheres of life in our region and our hometown were researched.

Keywords: Germans · history · Southern Ukraine · teaching material · linguistic skills · German prisoners of war

1 Introduction

Historically, the processes in the society lead to intensification of international relations in all spheres of public life, from economic to social and family life, both at the institutional level – through government contacts, joint projects of social organizations, various forms of formal and informal associations, and at the personal level. So the contacts among representatives of different ethnic groups and/or nationalities, their understanding and mutual influence in the communication process. It is known that Germans lived concentrated in large groups on the territory of today's Ukraine. The settlers from different regions of Germany received some preferences from the Russian government and were able to feel

comfortable: they had freedom of belief, could maintain their language, culture and traditions, and could organize their everyday life the way they wanted. A special topic is also the issue of prisoners of war after both world wars. Since Central Ukraine was an industrial area, many prisoners of war (POW) camps were established here, where Germans and representatives of other ethnic groups lived and worked. In addition, numerous engineers and other specialists participated first in the industrialization of the country and later in the reconstruction of cities and industrial objects destroyed during World War II. They left “traces” of their activity in many areas, which can still be seen today. We can recognize these “traces”, often of a material nature (e.g. architectural objects), in the neighborhood as a German legacy. However, very few young people know by whom and under what circumstances these objects were built, who lived in these buildings; not many are familiar with the history of the hometown because these facts have long been concealed. Therefore, it is important to bring these facts closer to the young generations, to familiarize them with the events, especially at the regional level, so that they understand that, other ethnic groups lived nearby for a long time and together with locals, they built and rebuilt their homeland.

However, it is important that newly discovered facts about the recent history do not remain for science, but are popularized and introduced into teaching, and this is where the project “German Traces in Ukraine” sees one of its tasks. From the very beginning, this project had the following tasks: To discover aspects of the presence of Germans and German in Ukraine, to research them and to use didactic “German traces” in teaching. These aspects could appear in different formats (informative popular science, journalistic texts, scientific articles and monographs, film sequences, documents, archival materials, photos, interviews, etc. and come from different fields (history, literature, art, education, economy, politics, art, etc.

The idea of an interdisciplinary approach of the materials of the project came from the analysis of the didactic potential of the research in the field of history, when this research is organized and carried out by a teacher or a researcher as a project work together with students. This group – since it is about thematic priorities such as “Germans and their history” – can include students of German studies who translate archival materials from German into Ukrainian or from Ukrainian into German, thus making them accessible to the general public.

The *purpose of the article* is to present the results of scientific research within the framework of the project “German Traces in Kryvyi Rih” and to demonstrate the didactic potential of working with the history of the native land for the development of intercultural competence.

2 Method

The long history of the Germans’ stay in Ukraine was very changeable with time and there were both bright and dark sides in it. In the course of the work on the project of the FZ DiMOS “History, Present and Future Potentials of Germans in Ukraine”, certain research work was carried out concerning the traces of Germans

in the history and the present of today's Kryvyi Rih and their present life was considered. During the World War I and the following civil war, a large part of Germans, especially from the upper Dnipro part, moved to other places. The famine of 1921-1923 aggravated the resettlement of Germans to the cities of Germany and America. In fact, in 1926, compared to 1897, the number of Germans in the Kryvyi Rih district was reduced by almost half – from 21,000 to 10,200.

An important point is also the use of newly discovered archival materials and biographies of individuals as a source of authentic intercultural knowledge in the teaching of German.

While searching for German traces in Kryvyj Rih, students researched the history of the hometown, met with the management of universities and schools, businesses and social organizations. During their work on the project, students have come to certain discoveries and findings. In addition, some observations were made by the teachers and conclusions were drawn concerning the content and organizational aspects of the project.

While the research of the problem of the stay of the prisoners of World War I (Germans and Austrians) was thought and carried out purely scientifically and discovered new facts about the history, the project "German traces in the architecture of industrial cities of Central and Southern Ukraine" was conceived from the very beginning as a teaching and research project carried out in tandem with the students. These two activities were not directly connected with each other, although they have intersections in the item "Prisoners of war in Ukraine: places, fates, legacy". Vadym Yashyn's project explores "traces" of German POWs in two industrial cities in Dnipropetrovsk region (Kryvyi Rih and Kamianske) after World War II (i.e.: territorial – concentrated in two cities; temporal – after 1945). Besides, different goals were also set. The aim of the project was to search for German traces in architecture of two cities in Dnipropetrovsk region, namely in Kryvyi Rih and Kamianske (architects, civil engineers, etc.) and for places where Germans lived concentrated. In particular, it was about prisoner of war camps near Dnipro (Dnipropetrovsk) and buildings in industrial cities, which were built according to the designs of German architects and where they housed: German prisoners of war, engineers and their families. Results of the project were presented in the form of a presentation. It is available on the Digital Platform "German Traces in Ukraine" (<https://deutschespracheukr.wixsite.com/meinewebsite-2>).

The project was developed on the basis of previous research by V. Yashyn and was carried out with students of the History Department (Kryvyi Rih State Pedagogical University). The working group consisted of four people: three students – I. Averina, E. Vchorashnia, N. Moskalenko and the lecturer of the Department of History – Vadym Yashyn. Under the leadership of Vadym Yashyn, the group searched for new knowledge, facts, places and objects, collected materials in the form of photographs, copies of archival documents, testimonies of local people who can tell about the history of prisoners of war or publications in newspapers and other media. Accumulated information was processed, analyzed,

summarized and presented. The planning of the project included the following points:

Institution: Kryvyi Rih State Pedagogical University, Faculty of Geography, Tourism and History

Audience: Masters

Duration: two semesters

Subject: history

Topic: “German traces in the architecture of industrial cities in Central and Southern Ukraine”

Learning and research goals:

- search for necessary sources in archives, learn to work with archival documents;
- research in open sources (old newspapers, Magazines, new publications on the Internet, scientific articles, monographs, etc.);
- identify objects, find them on the map, describe them, photograph them;
- ask testimonials, take notes;
- collect new data, analyze, summarize and draw conclusions.

Project phases:

1. Introduction to the topic: Processing of sources offered;
2. Determine possible sources of information (archives, libraries, museums, open sources (media and internet), interviews, etc.). Documenting takes the form of: copies of archival documents, newspaper articles, photos, interviews. Selection of the form of presentation: Internet presentation.
3. Implementation of the project.
4. Processing of accumulated materials, summary. Preparation of a presentation.
5. Presentation of the product.
6. Results evaluation.
7. Evaluation interview.
8. Publication of results.

The sources on the basis of which these conclusions were drawn include the following groups:

- archival materials such as letters, inquiries, etc.;
- narrative, verified sources;
- narrative sources collected by the research group (testimonies from local people);
- photos of objects taken by both groups;
- secondary literature (e.g. monographs, scientific articles).

The work on the project has not only made available new information – primarily archival materials – on the topic of “German Traces in Ukraine”, it has also achieved most of the set learning and research goals, which testify to

the initial success of this initiative. Although some students received orientation and detailed instructions from the project leader, they often acted autonomously during the implementation of the project and had the opportunity to decide for themselves which step and in which direction they wanted to continue working. This led them to discoveries that were presented in the form of a PowerPoint presentation. The entire presentation was then translated for use in German classes. At the same time a small group of students from the Faculty of Foreign Languages worked on two assignments: the presentation “German traces in the architecture of industrial cities of Central and Southern Ukraine” and the summarized presentation of the research results of Andrii Tarasov [9] on German and Austrian prisoners of war in Ukraine (1914-1918) (under the general direction of Valentyna Karpiuk). This larger interdisciplinary project showed that “German traces in Ukraine” in both languages, Ukrainian and German, is an interesting set of topics for teaching and on its basis allows various tasks for communicative skills developing (translating, speaking, discussing, summarizing, presenting). In the presentation, concise blocks of information are used, which can serve as a support for text production.

It should be noted that during the work on the project by the students who participated in the translation, some problems arose, which will be analyzed in more detail and finally solved in the future. Firstly, students are not familiar with the topic of “prisoners of war”, they know almost nothing about the World War I, little about the World War II, and “German prisoners of war in Ukraine” is a new theme for them. In order to immerse them in the topic, they were offered text fragments from articles by German researchers, in which they marked thematic vocabulary and then were supposed to search for Ukrainian equivalents (in the dictionary or in specialized literature in Ukrainian). Technical language from the field of history also formed an obstacle and a lot of effort was made to first appropriate phrases when translating. On the linguistic level, scientific German was also a problem, although the group consisted of seventh semester students.

Despite all the difficulties, it can be said that the project carried out confirmed our prediction that learning and research projects have great didactic potential. They motivate students to scientific explorations, arouse their interest in their own history, they learn to work cooperatively, to plan their work, to set goals and to achieve them. On the other hand, it is very productive when such projects are interdisciplinary in design and students from different faculties cooperate, which is illustrated by examples.

The project has also led Vadym Yashyn, the leader of this sub-project, to some didactic reflections and conclusions. It was conceived, planned and carried out as a research and learning project in which students of history participated. Later it developed into an interdisciplinary project, and this ensured its success. We came to the conclusion that it would make more sense to plan such research projects in an interdisciplinary way from the very beginning and to form project groups of students from a wide range of disciplines (discipline German or English, if documents and sources in other languages are involved; discipline art, if

architectural details are one of the tasks). Also, students need more time to get started, so it is worthwhile to plan more time for this phase. For the successful implementation of the project and the presentation of its results, it is very important that all participants are competent from the technical point of view.

3 Results and discussion

Didactization of materials discovered in the project and the use of this information in the teaching and study process at different levels and in different forms are particularly noteworthy, because the possibility and opportunity to participate directly in the search, collection, processing of the material supports and strengthens the interest of those who learn or study German with different intentions. The peculiarity of this search and research work is its interdisciplinary character and the fact that students with different language levels and personal competences cooperate and interact.

In this section, attention is paid to two areas: based on the research results, historical aspects of the stay of German and Austrian prisoners of war in Ukraine are summarized and, further, possibilities of their use in teaching are analyzed (history and German teaching). This is one of the first attempts of historians to participate in the project on this topic. Some projects have been carried out in Ukraine (e.g. by the Goethe Institute), which have touched upon this topic, but they have been initiated and realized mostly by teachers of German, and have pursued mainly intercultural goals. In our case, we aimed at getting new scientific results, popularizing them and raising interest in the topic. It should be emphasized that newly discovered “German traces” in the history of Ukraine have great didactic potential and can be used both in teaching and in research work of students. These materials are not only new and reveal some gaps in the history of the homeland, they are interesting as teaching material, firstly because they contain facts connected with the history of places where students live, and secondly because they tell about fates of people and historical events, which in any case updates the topic “German traces” and motivates to speak, for example, in the context of German lessons. Facts, dates, events and other details can easily be used as a basis for discussion or as an impulse for communication in German lessons. They contain answers to what, how, when, why, who, which can be expanded by the speaker into a short message or report. The analysis of archival materials and other sources conducted by Andrii Tarasov [9] has revealed new pages in the history of Germans and Austrians in Southern Ukraine. These newly discovered research results are important both for further scientific research and for the teaching of history at universities, since the tasks of a university include two areas: first, to link teaching and research in its activities, and second, to make new knowledge, especially of regional relevance, available to the general public. Therefore, it would be useful to involve students of history in further studies in this field. It would also seem useful to involve students of both history and German studies in researching and popularizing the history of German and Austrian prisoners of war in southern Ukraine, as has actually taken place in the

project on German traces in the architecture of industrial cities of central and southern Ukraine.

Two areas would be productive for students of history, namely: Learning projects according to given specifications (places, objects, sources, solving concrete tasks and achieving goals) for undergraduate students; research projects (a current scientific topic or its certain aspects as a research topic of a short- or long-term project is explored in small groups (for students in the master's degree); certain aspects of current scientific topics are explored in the context of a master's thesis. Many possibilities for teaching history are offered by thematically related learning of certain topics that for a long time belonged to the so-called taboo topics, such as "prisoners of war". Two epochs can be considered in parallel, common and different characteristics can be identified, other aspects can be analyzed. One can also prepare tasks for different groups of students. Each group is given worksheets with excerpts from articles by Ukrainian researchers and a list of primary and secondary literature. The task is for them to support the facts given in the excerpt with documents and testimonies. Students can choose a fragment from three possible excerpts from the scientific article by Andrii Tarasov [9] and use all possible sources of information that are accessible. A small fragment of the worksheet for students of history is given below (figure 1).

Завдання навчально-дослідного проєкту

Оберіть один із запропонованих уривків і знайдіть підтвердження або спростування фактів, наведених в них. Використайте усі можливі джерела інформації (архіви, довідкова література, наукові джерела, періодичні видання, медіа тощо).

Група 1	На початку Першої світової війни з території Півдня України здійснювалось виселення місцевого німецькомовного населення що були військовозобов'язаними Німеччини та Австро-Угорщини. Наявність значної частки підданих вказаних держав серед робітників підприємств регіону зумовила депортацію, в тому числі, і висококваліфікованих працівників. Цей процес супроводжувався чисельними антинімецькими заходами що відобразилось на взаєминах цієї групи населення регіону з рештою населення Півдня України, зокрема на підприємствах. Поіменний аналіз списків виселених з колоній Грюнфельд та Штейнфельд дозволяє простежити віковий склад виселених (від 18 до 45 років). Німецькомовне населення Півдня України виселялось вглиб Російської імперії у східному напрямку. Разом з тим, мобілізаційні заходи російського уряду що проводились протягом війни зумовили гостру нестачу робочих рук на підприємствах краю. Саме тому, протягом війни однією до регіону масово завозяться військовополонені Центральних країн. Російський уряд проводив сортування військовополонених за національностями з метою виділення двох основних груп: лояльних та нелояльних. Так, відомо, що серед перших характеристик які мали бути з'ясовані у взятого в полон солдата, була саме його національна приналежність.
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Fig. 1. Fragment of a worksheet with tasks for students of history.

In the text it is reported that German-speaking population of the southern regions of Ukraine, where Germans lived concentrated in colonies and worked in numerous enterprises, were deported to Siberia and other regions of the Russian

Empire far from the center at the beginning of the World War I. That is why there was a shortage of labor in many industrial sectors in southern and eastern Ukraine, where later (during the war and after it) prisoners of war were used.

Historical topics are also welcome in foreign language teaching because they offer many opportunities for the development of intercultural and also intercultural competence. Theoretical aspects of using historical content, interdisciplinary approach of the topic “German traces in Ukraine” in teaching and the value of teaching and research projects in foreign language teaching have been dealt with in the publications of Vita Hamaniuk [4] and Iryna Piankovska [8], therefore in the didactic part of our contribution we focus on the problem of shaping the content and form of received results.

Conducted research has led us to understand that further work on the project in an interdisciplinary format will open broader perspectives – both for history and for the didactics of foreign language teaching.

The presented material was summarized, translated into German in the cooperation with students of the Faculty of Foreign Languages of Kryvyi Rih State Pedagogical University and prepared for further didacticization. It is also possible to didactize excerpts from articles written by the German researchers as reading texts for various goals: for vocabulary expansion, development of communicative competence, skills in reading, speaking and writing. Within the framework of the project, worksheets for teaching German were developed, one of them is given below, the other worksheets at: <https://deutschespracheukr.wixsite.com/meinewebsite-2>. Theoretical aspects and possibilities of practical use of historical content in the educational process are considered in two other publications: Hamaniuk, Vita: German traces in Ukraine in German lessons: illustrative, interactive, communicative [4] and Piankovska, Iryna: Didactizing the History of the Central Ukrainian Village of Old Gdansk [8]; didactic aspects are shown by Valentyna Karpiuk [5]. Below we present one of the examples of didactic research material on the history of Germans in Ukraine.

Arbeitsblatt 9

Wie ersichtlich wurde, zählten die Kriegsgefangenen bei der Grubenarbeit zu den Besserverdienenden unter den Kriegsgefangenen. Todesfälle kamen bei ihnen kaum vor, außer bei Unglücken. Häufig wird darauf hingewiesen, dass die Bergwerke veraltete Anlagen gehabt hätten. Über die Lebens- und Arbeitsbedingungen der Gefangenen lassen sich in den Quellen höchst unterschiedliche Angaben finden, wobei auch positive Stimmen nicht fehlen. Vor allem dem Tagebuch Eberls ist eine sehr vorteilhafte Beschreibung seines Arbeitseinsatzes in den Gruben zu entnehmen, ebenso einige weitere Erlebnisberichte. So verschieden die Arbeiten waren, die die Gefangenen verrichteten, so unterschiedlich waren auch ihre Lebensbedingungen. Es lassen sich aber einige Grundsätze feststellen: Erstens herrschten außer bei der Murmanbahn (eine Bahnstrecke im Norden Russlands) bessere materielle Verhältnisse als in den Lagern – entweder durch bessere Verpflegung bei den Bauern oder durch den bei anderen Arbeiten ausbezahlten Lohn; zweitens wurden an die gefangenen Arbeiter höhere Anforderungen gestellt als an ihre russischen Kollegen; drittens genossen sie eine große

persönliche Freiheit mit praktisch ungehinderter Bewegungsmöglichkeit am Ort und viertens bestand ein wesentlicher Unterschied zwischen den Gefangenen, die in kleiner Zahl oder allein bei Bauern oder Handwerkern angestellt waren und oft persönliche Beziehungen zum Arbeitgeber entwickelten und solchen, die in großen Partien unter lagerähnlichen Bedingungen lebten. An verschiedenen Arbeitsstellen herrschten aber offenkundig ähnlich schlechte Zustände wie bei der Murmanbahn. Das geht aus einer russischen Quelle hervor, die die österreichische Historikerin Moritz heranzieht: "In einem Schreiben der Abteilung für Evakuierung und Kriegsgefangenenangelegenheiten im GUGŠ [= Hauptverwaltung des Generalstabs] an die Kanzlei des Innenministeriums vom Juni 1917 – wird mit offenen Worten auf den fürchterlichen Gesundheitszustand der Kriegsgefangenen, die von ihren Arbeitgebern an die Militärbehörden rücküberstellt wurden, Bezug genommen. Ein großes Kontingent Kriegsgefangener wurde diesem Brief zufolge von den Arbeitgebern als Invalide entlassen und viele von ihnen starben binnen kürzester Zeit" [11, p. 351].

Aufgabe 1. Lesen Sie den Text und finden Sie Synonyme zu den folgenden Wörtern: *Arbeitskonditionen*, *Inhaftierte*, *Mensch mit Behinderung*, *nicht am Leben sein*, *Mine*, *Verdienst*, *Verköstigung*, *freilassen*.

Aufgabe 2. Ordnen Sie die angegebenen Begriffe den Definitionen zu.

1. der Kriegsgefangene	a) jmdm. erlauben zu gehen, etw. zu verlassen
2. das Lager	b) Soldat, der im Krieg in feindliche Gewalt geraten ist
3. der Lohn	c) natürliche oder künstlich angelegte Vertiefung im Erdboden
4. entlassen	d) Platz mit Zelten, Baracken oder anderen Quartieren, wo eine größere Anzahl Menschen vorübergehende Unterkunft findet a) Unterkunft für Truppen b) Ferienlager c) Gefangenenlager
5. die Grube	e) (tägliche, wöchentliche, monatliche) Bezahlung; Entgelt für geleistete Arbeit

Aufgabe 3. Lesen Sie den Text und beantworten Sie die Fragen zum Text.

1. Was zeugt davon, dass die Kriegsgefangenen bei der Grubenarbeit zu den Besserverdienenden unter den Kriegsgefangenen zählten?
2. Welche Grundsätze wurden festgestellt, dass die Arbeiten und Lebensbedingungen der Kriegsgefangenen unterschiedlich waren?
3. Was war die Ursache des Schreibens an die Kanzlei des Innenministeriums?
4. Welche Folgen hatte dieser Brief für ein großes Kontingent Kriegsgefangener?
5. Welche Tatsachen zu diesem Thema sind Ihnen bekannt? Recherchieren Sie und machen Sie eine Präsentation zu diesem Thema.

Aufgabe 4. Ordnen Sie zu.

1. Erstens herrschten	a) eine große persönliche Freiheit mit praktisch ungehinderten Bewegungsmöglichkeiten am Ort
2. Zweitens wurden	b) zwischen den Gefangenen, die in kleiner Zahl oder allein bei Bauern oder Handwerkern angestellt waren und oft persönliche Beziehungen zum Arbeitgeber entwickelten und solchen, die in großen Partien unter lagerähnlichen Bedingungen lebten.
3. Drittens genossen sie	c) außer bei der Murmanbahn bessere materielle Verhältnisse als in den Lagern entweder durch bessere Verpflegung bei den Bauern oder durch den bei anderen Arbeiten ausbezahlten Lohn.
4. Viertens bestand ein wesentlicher Unterschied	d) an die gefangenen Arbeiter höhere Anforderungen gestellt als an ihre russischen Kollegen.

Since the topic of “Prisoner of war” is one in which students of the faculty of foreign languages are not so well versed (this also applies to specialized vocabulary in the native language, let alone in the field of foreign languages), working on vocabulary is very productive as an introduction to the topic. A small fragment from the worksheet can illustrate this.

Arbeitsblatt 2.

1. Lesen Sie den Auszug aus dem Beitrag von Gerald H. Davis „**Deutsche Kriegsgefangene im Ersten Weltkrieg in Russland**“ und markieren Sie alle Wörter, die zum Thema „Kriegsgefangene“ gehören.
2. Ordnen Sie die markierten Wörter in Gruppen: z. B. Wortschatz zum Unterthema „Krieg“, „Gefangenschaft“ u. a.
3. Finden Sie ukrainische Äquivalente zu den gesammelten Wörtern.

Gerald H. Davis

Deutsche Kriegsgefangene im Ersten Weltkrieg in Russland

Mehr als 2 Millionen Soldaten wurden im Ersten Weltkrieg von den Russen gefangenengenommen, darunter 167000 aus dem Deutschen Reich und vielleicht dreimal so viel Deutsche aus dem Vielvölkerstaat Österreich-Ungarn. Bedenkt man, dass etwa 40% dieser Kriegsgefangenen in Russland verschollen oder ums Leben gekommen sind, dass die Überlebenden unter schlimmsten Lebensbedingungen, gleichgültiger Verwaltung und unter Revolutionswirren gelitten haben, dass die Gefangenen durch Kontakt mit den Russen und durch ihre Arbeiten und Ideen einen beträchtlichen Eindruck bei der russischen Bevölkerung hinterlassen haben und dass der Aufenthalt in Russland umgekehrt die Kriegsgefangenen tief und dauerhaft geprägt hat, so muss man sich wundern, dass es so wenige wissenschaftliche Arbeiten über dieses Thema gibt. Kriegsgefangene sind Mitglieder einer militärischen Organisation, die während eines erklärten

Krieges gefangen genommen und für die Dauer des Krieges gefangen gehalten werden. Es kommt auch vor, dass Teilnehmer in unerklärten Kriegen und Bürgerkriegen gefangen und erst lange nach Kriegsende repatriiert werden. In bestimmten Fällen werden auch Zivilisten — meistens Männer im Wehrdienstalter und deren Familien — als Kriegsgefangene bezeichnet. Durch das internationale Kriegsrecht haben Kriegsgefangene klare Rechte, die allerdings sehr oft nicht anerkannt oder respektiert werden [...]

Quelle: Davis, H. Gerald: National Red Cross Societies and Prisoners of War in Russia, 1914 – 1918 [Nationale Gesellschaften des Roten Kreuzes und Kriegsgefangene in Russland]. In: Journal of Contemporary History. 1993. Vol. 28, S. 31 [2]

New facts discovered on the basis of archive materials are important not only for the history of Ukraine. It is about the fates of German and Austrian prisoners of war who were declared missing, and therefore, perhaps, information about their lives and deaths is sought by their descendants. Some names have already been mentioned in this article and thus became known. Furthermore, we consider it possible and useful to work on the problem in an interdisciplinary way and to translate scientific findings into German in cooperation with teachers and students of the Faculty of Foreign Languages and to make them accessible to all on a digital platform “Missing German and Austrian Prisoners of War”. In the further work on the project “German traces in Ukraine” two ideas will be realized, which have been theoretically justified and practically tested earlier in some publications by Vita Hamaniuk and Iryna Selyshcheva [3]. It is about the use of interdisciplinary learning and research projects on the topic “German traces in Ukraine” (on the example of history and German teaching), didacticization of information from the history of Germans in Ukraine for German teaching and integration of local history into history and foreign language teaching. Results of a realized project are presented in the articles of Svitlana Amelina [1], Nataliya Vyrsta [10], Yuliya Kazhan [7], and Valentyna Karpiuk [6]. Thus, at the Kryvyi Rih State Pedagogical University, a module on local history is offered, within the framework of which the topic of the stay of German and Austrian prisoners of war is updated and further researched.

4 Conclusions and outlook

Conducted research in the framework of the project “German Traces in Ukraine” allows to draw the following conclusions. The subject should be considered in two ways: from the historical point of view and from the point of view of its didactic potential. Historical studies on the issues of the presence of Germans on the territory of Ukraine, purely scientific researches of social, political-economic and other possible aspects have become popular today, because many archives have become accessible after Ukrainian independence and historians can now finally clarify long-silenced, uncomfortable questions about the history of Ukraine, which, moreover, were falsified in the times of the Soviet Union. The topic of German prisoners of war was also an uncomfortable one, so it was considered

undesirable for research. Many aspects were taboo, but today Ukraine is discovering its true history and is trying to make it accessible to the general public. A good method for this is project work, which our experience has proved quite clearly. Research work of scientists in archives, search for new findings, documents, evidences, which are systematized, analyzed, summarized and presented, let students get involved in this process. Historical findings have a great didactic potential because, on the one hand, while still searching for materials and, on the other hand, while working in archives, they involve students who become aware of their responsibility for a truthful representation of the past, who can deal with current problems of history and discover the “other” in their immediate surroundings. This teaches them to be tolerant and to respect and appreciate the history of others.

Interdisciplinary teaching projects, in which students from both disciplines (history and German studies) can participate, also have a good perspective. Researching similar aspects of the presence of different ethnic groups in Ukraine and in other states of Europe in different languages and then summarizing and presenting results can bring surprising results. Research and learning projects of this kind are important because the truth about the past is still to be discovered, because so many things in Ukrainian (Soviet) history were deliberately not brought to light for a long time, and much of what was offered as the final “truth” later turned out to be mere “manipulation”. We see the task of a productive cooperation between students (history and German) in the fact that they can truthfully learn and research the remaining gaps in the common history of the Germans and the Ukrainians.

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