

# Functioning of Ukrainian Phraseological Neologisms in Russian Political Media Discourse

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## Abstract

Russian and Ukrainian political media discourse, despite complex relations between countries, is a part of single information space. As a result, phraseological innovations arising from one of its segments quickly become the property of another. Borrowing a certain neophraseme is possible due to the relevance of the denotations for the political and socio-cultural situation of the country, whose language is borrowed from. Functioning of a phraseological unit in a new environment (in a different segment of media discourse) is subject to certain regularities relating to both form (phrasemes can be translated or transliterated), and the semantics of phraseological unit. There are three possible alternatives: the neophraseme can preserve both the form and the meaning; it can keep the form, but change the meaning; or it can change the form, but keep the meaning. The choice of an alternative is determined by both linguistic and extralinguistic factors.

**Keywords:** phraseologism – phraseological neologism – neophraseme – political media discourse – semantics of phraseologism.

## Introduction

Despite the fact that Russia and Ukraine are in rather complicated relations, the Russian and Ukrainian political media discourse is closely interrelated. This is facilitated by the fact that the Russian language is spoken almost by the entire population of Ukraine, and the Ukrainian language, closely related to Russian, is understandable to the inhabitants of Russia without need for translation. The conflict between the countries, historically closely connected with each other, causes intensified mutual attention – all significant processes or events occurring in one country become important informational occasions in the media of the other. One of the consequences of the foregoing is the exchange of new phraseological units arising in Russian or Ukrainian political media discourse. Acceptance of

neophrasemes is firstly connected with the relevance for the borrowing of a phenomenon, event or process, which is denoted by phraseological units. As V. Mokienko rightly points out, fixing of a phraseological unit, its movement from the periphery to the very center of literary use depends on many objective and subjective factors. Nevertheless, it is precisely the “journalistic” test that is now the first and, apparently, the most important stage of such language selection. After all, journalistic discourse reveals and fixes the main qualities of phraseological units – their expressiveness and characterization (Mokienko 2016, p.14). The cognitive processing of an event, sociocultural, communicative, pragmatic and linguistic information takes place in the media discourse (Alefirenko 2016, p. 51). It reflects the most significant social conflicts. At the same time, the media discourse, combining the informing, influencing and ideological functions, does not exactly reflecting the reality, how it interprets, assesses, comments, sets a certain ideological background and regulates public opinion (Antonova 2017, p.12).

In the study, the author relies on works that explore general trends in the modern phraseology development (Alefirenko 2016; Steyer 2015; Gray and Bieber 2015), the phraseological subsystem of language (V. Melikyan, A. Melikyan and Dzyubenko 2017), communicative functions of phraseological units ( Dobrovolsky 2016), the phrasemes semiosis (Alefirenko 2015), the language policy (Mokienko 2015), bilingual practice in Ukraine (Nedashkivska 2015), the media image of the Ukrainian crisis in the world media (Bushev 2016), the linguistic specificity of the political media discourse (Sivenkova 2016; Gazizov and Nagovitsyna 2017), lexical processes in Russian political discourse (Belov 2016), peculiarities of the phraseological units functioning in the media discourse (Kablukov 2016). Despite the close attention of researchers given to the phraseological components of the political media discourse, the issue of penetration and features of Ukrainian neophrasemes functioning in the language of Russian media remains not fully studied. Now, there are no studies on the ways of borrowing Ukrainian phraseological neologisms by the Russian media discourse. In this regard, the purpose of this study is to:

1. Analyze the variants for borrowing Ukrainian phraseological neologisms by Russian media discourse in terms of form and semantics.
2. Determine the reasons for choosing a specific variant of borrowing.
3. Identify factors that contribute to the penetration of phraseological innovation from one segment of the political media discourse to another one.

Studying the patterns of implementing of Ukrainian neophrasemes in Russian political media discourse will help to contribute to a comprehensive analysis of the mechanisms of interaction between the Ukrainian and Russian languages.

### **Notion of phraseological neologism**

As the notion of “phraseological neologism” in modern linguistics is not sufficiently clear, the author relies on a broad approach to understanding phraseology as a relatively stable, reproducible, expressive combination of lexemes, which has (as a rule) a holistic meaning, as proposed by V. Mokienko (Mokienko 1989, 5). According to this approach,

neophraseology includes winged phrases (usually statements made by politicians or public figures), Internet memes and other stable set phrases, even when they are paremias. The exception is transformed phraseological units (phraseological modifications), even if they have several textual implementations.

## **Material and Methods**

The material for the study was the political texts of Internet media in Russia and Ukraine over the past five years (Ukrainian media were analyzed both in Ukrainian and in Russian). The data collection process was as follows: at the first stage, the content of Russian media was studied using the keyword "Ukraine" by web pages analyzing method, with the result that Ukrainian phraseological units that were popular in the Russian media discourse were found; at the second stage, using the same method, all cases of the use of these phraseological units in the Ukrainian media were analyzed. The study provides examples of 19 Ukrainian Internet mass media and 13 Russian ones. It is important to note that among them there are both national media (Russian "Комсомольская правда", "РИА Новости", "Взгляд", Ukrainian "Сегодня", "Вести", "Обозреватель", "Стана.ua") and regional (for example, the Russian edition "Голос Севастополя" and the Ukrainian "НА Харьков"). In the research, a descriptive method for studying the functioning of phraseological neologisms and their characteristics, a comparative method for comparing the use of neophrasemes in Russian and Ukrainian media discourse, and a component analysis for investigating the semantics of phraseological units were used. The cognitive-discursive approach was also important for research.

## **Results and discussion**

Before the events of 2014 (a revolution in Ukraine and subsequent crisis in relations between the two countries), Russia and Ukraine were in the same information space: the most popular media (primarily television channels) in Ukraine were Russian. Phraseological neologisms that arose in Russian political media discourse as an important component of the media language were actively borrowed by the Ukrainian segment. For example, the famous statement of the first president of the Russian Federation B. Yeltsin "Я устал, я ухожу" (I'm tired, I'm leaving), which was made in 2000, is still actively used by Ukrainian media in the most diverse contexts (concerning different situations and phenomena): *Путин: я устал, я ухожу. Вот мой преемник! (Putin: I'm tired, I'm leaving. Here is my successor!)* (Newsonline24.com.ua, 2016); *Я устал, я ухожу: как решиться на увольнение, когда больше нет сил оставаться (I'm tired, I'm leaving: how to decide on the dismissal, when there is no more strength left)* (Work.ua 2017); *Я устал, я ухожу: Шулявский мост в Киеве закроют на 1,5 года (I'm tired, I'm leaving: Shulyavsky bridge in Kiev will be closed for 1.5 years)* (Украина 2018). It should be noted that Ukrainian political neophrasemes until 2014 were little known in Russian media discourse. So, the legendary statement of the first Ukrainian president L. Kravchuk "Маємо те, що маємо" ("We have that we have"), describing the complex socio-political situation in which Ukraine was after independence, was used in the Russian media only to characterize the Ukrainian politician:

*“Имеем, что имеем”*: 80-летие первого президента Украины Леонида Кравчука широко отпразднуют на государственном уровне (*“We have what we have”: The 80th anniversary of Ukraine's first president Leonid Kravchuk will be widely celebrated at the state level*) (Новая газета 2013). Let's pay attention to the fact that the aphorism is given in the translation into Russian.

After 2014 (the revolution in Ukraine and crisis in Russian-Ukrainian relations), the situation changed radically. Ukraine moved from the periphery of Russian interests to its center – the Ukrainian issue became topical not only in the news, but also in a variety of political talk shows. In addition, a large number of Ukrainian politicians, political scientists, journalists and bloggers who were in opposition to the new Kiev government, immigrated to Russia. These factors influenced the activity of borrowing Ukrainian neophrasemes and the ways of their transfer into Russian-language texts. Before, only translation was used; now many phrases are often transliterated, as the Russian audience understands them without need for translation.

The phraseological unit functioning in a new environment (in a different segment of the media discourse) is subject to certain regularities relating to both form (phrasemes can be translated or transliterated) and semantic. It should also be noted that the same phraseologism is often used by Russian and Ukrainian media discourse segments with different connotations. Analysis of Ukrainian and Russian media material showed that there are three possible variants for borrowing Ukrainian phraseological neologisms by Russian media discourse.

In the first case, phraseologism preserves both form and meaning. As examples, we can quote the words of the Kiev mayor Vitali Klitschko. So, once making a statement, he urged the people of Kiev to prepare not for winter, but for the ground (in Russian *зима* and *земля*). The statement immediately turned into a popular phraseologism with the semantics “to get ready for death”. Neophraseme is actively used in the same form and with the same semantics in both Russian and Ukrainian media. Ukraine media: *Депутат Кадыров в Госдуме посоветовал Зеленскому “готовиться к земле”* (*Deputy Kadyrov in the State Duma advised Zelensky “to prepare for the ground”*) (Обозреватель 2014), *Реформа медицины: пора готовиться к земле!* (*Medicine reform: it's time to get ready for the ground!*) (From-ua, 2016), *Нужно готовиться к земле: Гройсман объяснил обвал цен на Украине ростом экономики* (*We need to prepare for the ground: Groysman explained the collapse of prices in Ukraine by economic growth*) (НА Харьков 2017), *Кличко давно призывал готовиться к земле* (*Klitschko long ago called for preparing for the ground*) (Народный корреспондент 2017). Russian mass media: *Зато честно: Кличко призвал киевлян готовиться к “земле”* (*But honestly: Klitschko urged the people of Kiev to prepare for the ground*) (Pravda.ru 2014), *Правильно “готовиться к земле”: в Венгрии рыли могилы на скорость* (*Correctly “prepare for the ground”: in Hungary, burial graves for speed*) (Rusnext.ru 2016), *Пентагон “готовится к земле” в Сирии* (*The Pentagon “prepares for ground” in Syria*) (Русская весна 2017). In one of the television shows, Vitali Klitschko allowed himself the unfortunate wording: “А сегодня в завтрашний день не все могут смотреть. Вернее, смотреть могут не только лишь все, мало кто может это

делать” (And today not everyone can look at tomorrow. To be more precise, not only can everyone look at it, but few can do it), after which the phraseologism “to look at tomorrow” with the meaning “to assume yourself as a skilful forecaster without any reason to do that” has appeared. Neophraseme is used by Russian media: *Кличко посмотрел в завтрашний день Трампа (Klitschko looked at tomorrow's Trump)* (Дни. ру 2016).

A vivid example of this variant is also the phraseologism “the Kremlin’s hand”, meaning “Russia’s interference in the affairs of Ukraine”. Ukrainian media: *Везде “рука Кремля”: стало известно, как власти Украины подыгрывают Путину (Everywhere the “Kremlin’s hand”: it became known how the authorities of Ukraine play up to Putin)* (Апостроф 2018), *Рука Кремля: военный эксперт сравнил “убийство” Бабченко и отравление Скрипаля (The Kremlin’s hand: the military expert compared “Babchenko’s murder” and the poisoning of Skripal)* (Обозреватель 2018), *Яценюк считает, что “Стену” дискредитирует “рука Кремля” (Yatseniuk believes that “the Kremlin’s hand” discredits “The Wall”)* (Страна. ua 2018), *Ромські погроми. Рука Кремля чи домашня ксенофобія? (Roma massacres. The Kremlin’s Hand or Home Xenophobia?)* (Главком 2018), *Кириленко рассказал о длинной кремлевской руке с бутылкой (Kirilenko told about a long Kremlin’s hand with a bottle)* (Вести 2018). Russian media: *И тут рука Кремля: генпрокуратура Украины заподозрила в публикации “списка 47” Россию (And here is the Kremlin’s hand: the Prosecutor General’s Office of Ukraine suspected Russia in the publication of the “list of 47”)* (Rusnext.ru 2018), *Рука Кремля: на Украине ответили на обвинения американских СМИ в предательстве (The Kremlin’s hand: in Ukraine they responded to accusations of American media in betrayal)* (Русская весна 2018), *Вездесущая “рука Кремля” в Украине (The Omnipresent “Kremlin’s hand” in Ukraine)* (РИА Новости 2018), *Нападение на венгров: в Киеве увидели руку Кремля, а в Москве – “неможные руки” Киева (Attack on the Hungarians: in Kiev they saw the Kremlin’s hand, and in Moscow – the “weak hands” of Kiev)* (Bigmir.net 2018). The popularity of any phraseologism is conditioned by its unconditional relevance – Russia’s aggressive intervention in the affairs of Ukraine is one of the main theses of the Ukrainian political agenda. In addition, the phrase is universal, because equally spelled and almost equally pronounced in both Russian and Ukrainian.

In 2018, Ukrainian political phraseology replenished the vocabulary with one more unit, which has the same meaning as the “the Kremlin’s hand”, but more expressive – “tentacles of the Russian world / Moscow”. Vladimir Vyatrovich, the head of the Ukrainian National Memory Institute, was the first to introduce it, then the president of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko repeated it several times: *Вятрович: Кремль использует Высоцкого и Цоя как “щупальца русского мира” (Vyatrovich: The Kremlin uses Vysotsky and Tsoi as the “tentacles of the Russian world”)* (Сегодня 2018), *В’ятрович: Такі щупальця “русского мира”, як булгакови, висоцькі і цої, в руках Кремля не менш небезпечні, ніж совок і московська церква (Vyatrovich: Such tentacles of the “Russian world” as Bulgakov, Vysotsky and Tsoi, in the hands of the Kremlin are no less dangerous than the Moscow church)* (Гордон. ua 2018), *“Щупальці Москви міцно проникли в соцмережі”: Кремль готується до нової маніпулятивної кампанії – Порошенко (“The tentacles of Moscow firmly penetrated the social network”: The Kremlin prepares for a new manipulative campaign – Poroshenko)* (5. ua 2018), *Порошенко про автокефалію: ми обрубемо щупальця Москви,*

час настав (*Poroshenko about autocephaly: we cut the tentacles of Moscow, the time has come*) (Обозреватель 2018), *Порошенко пообіцяв не втручатися у справи церкви, але й "обрубати щупальця" агресора (Poroshenko promised not to interfere in the affairs of the church, but to "cut the tentacles" of the aggressor)* (BBC 2018). The phraseologism is aimed at dehumanizing the opponent: if "the Kremlin's hand" implies anthropomorphism, then "tentacles of Moscow" represents the zoomorphism of a political opponent. The reaction of the Russian media did not take long to appear: *Порошенко напугали "щупальця Москви" (Poroshenko scared of the tentacles of Moscow)* (Взгляд 2018), *Порошенко нашел "щупальце Москви" (Poroshenko found the "tentacle of Moscow")* (Комсомольская правда 2018), *Порошенко увидел "щупальця Москви" в выборах на Украине (Poroshenko saw the "tentacles of Moscow" in the elections in Ukraine)* (Lenta.ru 2018). The emergence of a new phraseologism is largely due to the fact that the phrase "the Kremlin's hand" (which Ukrainian politicians perceived absolutely in everything, reaching the point of absurdity) acquired an ironic shade even in the Ukrainian media discourse: *Надежда Савченко: У властей Украины один ответ – "рука Кремля" (Nadezhda Savchenko: The authorities of Ukraine have one answer – "the Kremlin's hand")* (Deutsche Welle 2018). In connection with this, a new, more expressive analogue of phraseologism was required. It should be noted that the phraseology of the "tentacles of Moscow" was created in analogy with the phrase "tentacle of mafia". In the studies of the metaphor in the Russian media discourse Yu Fedeneva draws attention to the image of an octopus, all-pervading, predatory animal capable of sucking blood out of its victim (Fedeneva 1999, p. 346). E. Stoyanova notes that the popularity of this image is due to the success of the TV series of European cinematographers that was on the screens in the USSR at the end of the 1980s about the Sicilian mafia and corruption, embracing the highest power, like the octopus. (Stoyanova 2013, p. 76).

It is also necessary to add that these phraseological units are extended political metaphors that are known not only in the above form, but also in others (for example, "рука Вашингтона", "рука Берлина", "рука ЦРУ" etc.).

The second variant of the phraseological unit transition from Ukrainian into the Russian political media discourse presupposes the preservation of the form, but a change in the meaning. An example is the famous aphorism "Ukraine is not Russia", authored by the second president of Ukraine, L. Kuchma. In Ukrainian media, phraseologism is used with the semantics "Ukraine is different from Russia for the better": *Почему Украина – не Россия: Бутусов объяснил на примере трагедии в Кемерово (Why Ukraine is not Russia: Butusov explained in the example of the tragedy in Kemerovo)* (Сегодня 2018) – according to the author, Ukraine is more united, *"Украина – не Россия": Бабченко показал основные различия ... ("Ukraine is not Russia": Babchenko showed the main differences ...)* (Факты и комментарии 2018) – according to the author, Ukraine is freer. In Russian media, the expression has the opposite semantics: "Ukraine is different from Russia for the worse": *Почему Россия не Украина (Why Russia is not Ukraine)* ((Украина.ру 2018), *"Украина" – не Россия, "Украина" – это болезнь ("Ukraine" is not Russia, "Ukraine" is a disease)* (Золотой лев 2016) – according to the authors, in modern Russia color revolutions are

impossible, *Україна – не Росія (Ukraine is not Russia)* (Голос Севастополя 2018) – according to the author, Russia is among world powers, and Ukraine is a poor province.

The third variant assumes that Ukrainian phraseological neologism in the Russian media discourse changes its form, but preserves the semantics. In this case, of the form change refers to the translation into Russian. As an illustrative example, we can quote the phraseologism “Ці руки нічого не крали” (“These hands did not steal anything”) which is used in an ironic sense and has the opposite meaning to the author's assertion, as Viktor Yushchenko's government was remembered for the large scale of corruption. Examples from the Ukrainian media: “Ці руки нічого не крали”. *І не ремонтували?* (“These hands did not steal anything”. *And did not repair?*) (Високий замок 2015), “Ці руки нічого не крали”? *Как Ющенко с сыном проворачивают мошеннические схемы* (“These hands did not steal anything”? *As Yushchenko and his son are turning fraudulent schemes*) (Укроп 2018), *Володимир Гройсман або “Ці руки нічого не крали-2”* (Volodymyr Groisman or “These hands did not steal anything-2”) (Голос 2018), *Ці руки нічого не крали: Аваков пообещал отправить сына в суд* (These hands did not steal anything: Avakov promised to send his son to court) (Ділова столиця 2017). As the examples above show, the phraseologism in the Ukrainian media discourse is used in relation to various politicians. In Russian media, the phrase is translated and serves exclusively to characterize V. Yushchenko: “*Эти руки ничего не крали*”: *Из всех экс-президентов Украины содержание из бюджета получает только Ющенко* (“These hands did not steal anything”: *Only Yushchenko gets the budget from all the ex-presidents of Ukraine*) (Rusnext.ru 2018).

Currently, the third variant is not productive. Now in the Russian media we often meet macaronic texts, in which Ukrainian lexemes and phrases are given in a transliterated form. As an example, we can quote a fragment of the article by journalist of “Komsomolskaya Pravda” A. Grishin “Ukrainian users of the network ridiculed Klimkin for his pants on his arrival in Avdeevka” (Ukrainian lexemes and phrasemes are highlighted):

*Странный наряд министра иностранных дел **незалежної** вызвал смех и недоумение. (...) В общем, все как обычно – **шукайте гроши, панове! Бо Україна ще не вмерла.** А ведь все разгадывается гораздо проще – над костюмами и Климкина, и Порошенко явно поработала “рука Кремля”* (Комсомольская правда 2018).

*The strange dress of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of an independent country caused laughter and bewilderment. (...) In general, everything as usual – look for money, gentlemen! Because Ukraine has not yet died. But everything is solved much easier – over the costumes and Klimkin, and Poroshenko has clearly worked “the Kremlin's hand”.*

The use of the Ukrainian lexeme “незалежна” and the expressions “шукайте гроши, панове!”, “Україна ще не вмерла” in the Russian text suggests that the media audience understands them even without translation. Moreover, if they were translated into Russian, the text would lose much of its expressiveness. The use of Ukrainian phrase also increases the text's emotiveness and evaluation, allows to implement the impact function more fully, which is the main objective of the political media discourse.

## **Conclusion**

The active penetration of Ukrainian phraseological neologisms into Russian media discourse is due, first of all, to the fact that the conflict with Ukraine has become one of the most important events in political life of Russia.

Analysis of the Ukrainian phraseological neologisms use in Russian political media discourse allows us to draw certain conclusions. The phraseologism form is preserved in cases where: 1) the phraseologism was originally used in Russian (“готовиться к земле”, “смотреть в завтрашний день”); 2) differences in spelling and pronunciation of Ukrainian and Russian variants are minimal (“Україна не Росія” and «Украина не Россия”, “щупальця Москви” and “щупальца Москвы”) or none at all (“рука Кремля” is equally spelled in both languages); 3) translation of phraseologism from Ukrainian into Russian leads to significant losses in the expressiveness of the journalistic text (“Маємо те, що маємо” and “Имеем, что имеем”, “Ці руки нічого не крали” and “Эти руки ничего не крали”). Translation of Ukrainian phraseological units is carried out only in the case when it is necessary to convey only the meaning of the statement, regardless of the changes in its expressiveness (“We have what we have” and “These hands did not steal anything”). Translation leads to the loss of an element of exoticism, attribution to Ukrainian realities (as in the case of the translation of the word “пан” as “господин”). Therefore, currently the most popular variant for the transfer of Ukrainian phraseological neologisms is transliteration.

In Russian media discourse, Ukrainian neophrasemes retain their semantics when there is a consensus on audiences that are opposed to each other in relation to the denotations of phraseologism (“to prepare for the ground”, “to look at tomorrow”). The meanings are reversed when the attitudes towards the denotations are fundamentally different (“Ukraine is not Russia” in the meaning of “Ukraine is better” and in the meaning “Ukraine is worse”).

The choice of one of the three variants is determined by both linguistic and extralinguistic factors.

The Ukrainian political neophrasemes borrowing is firstly related to the relevance for media discourse borrowing of the phenomenon, event or process that phraseological units designate. Those Ukrainian phraseological neologisms that either characterize the phenomena universal for both countries, or brightly convey the specificity of Ukrainian political life in the aspect of its influence on Russia's policy, fall in the Russian media discourse and are fixed in it.

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