

# Lexical Borrowings as a Means of Conveying Foreign Concepts in Ukrainian Mass Media

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**Abstract** – The article deals with the problem of lexical borrowings from English into Ukrainian in mass media discourse. Some theories on this matter and their prominent representatives are mentioned. Stylistic features of loan words usage are discussed. Examples of borrowings which imply cultural background are given.

Key words – lexical borrowing, mass media discourse, cultural background, stylistics, language interactions.

## I. Lexical Borrowings as a Linguistic Problem

The problem of lexical borrowings has long been an issue of discussion among linguists. It is impossible not to agree that this process is natural for all the languages (C. Bally) because there is no language without loan words. In contrast to this viewpoint some scholars (e.g. A. Krymsky, I. Ohienko, B. Hrinchenko) do not support loan words usage and support the usage of derivational resources of a native language. According to I. Nechuy-Levytsky, P. Seligey, E. Karsky a native word should always be given priority over its loaned variant [3]. In the modern world of globalization the lexical borrowings are a pressing problem for Ukrainian linguistic science and it should be dealt with because Ukrainian is at risk of becoming difficult to be understood and properly learned.

The number of borrowings rises with scientific progress and social changes. Therefore the most active this process has been in late XX–XXI century. According to the study by O. Styshov, nearly 75–80 % of all newly borrowed in 1980–1990's words in Ukrainian had American and British origins [11]. The English borrowings were studied by B. Azhniuk, L. Arkhypenko, Y. Hodovansky, Y. Zhluktenko, Y. Karpilovsky, N. Klymenko, A. Naumovets, S. Fedorets and others.

Mass media quickly react to changes in the society all over the world. The differences between culture, history, political background and languages cause excessive borrowing by mass media in order to reflect the reality. So, mass media are supposed to be the main source of borrowings and lexical borrowings is topical issue in modern Ukrainian mass media discourse.

## II. Mass Media Discourse as the Source of Borrowings

In the modern information society mass media bear significant meaning because of the growing needs in information making them very important for satisfying these needs. Mass media influence the formation of the world-view, mentality, feelings, ideas. Modern linguistics uses the notion of media discourse by which the process

and results of speech activity in terms of their diversity and complex interactions in the sphere of mass media are meant [5]. The studying of mass media mechanisms of influencing the society has critical importance not only for psychology, political science and propaganda, but also for linguistics because modern media discourse reflects actual tendencies of language development.

Mass media is a many-sided phenomenon, so mass media discourse has some characteristic stylistic features:

1. the material is usually aimed at audience as big as possible consisting of people having different language knowledge, so these texts and messages are oriented at the standard language that implies simple syntax, partial or complete absence of implicatures, connotations, word plays, and clear widespread words are used;
2. accordance to the rules of a standard language;
3. application of expression;
4. employment of resources of other styles;
5. words borrowings and extension of meaning;
6. usage of slang, jargon, argo, cant;
7. gradual worsening of text's editing;
8. economy of language means [9].

These factors help enrich and develop the language, but they have some negative features, one of which is inclination to word loaning. The number of such newly borrowed words, especially those used by mass media, is not adapted to Ukrainian, do not fit Ukrainian phonetical and lexical systems and are estimated as superfluous.

Y. Shevchuk states, that “native derivational patterns are ignored... and paralyzed by lingual schizophrasia, an ukrospeaker chooses an English word” [12]. For instance, for many new popular words of English origin used in mass media there are Ukrainian correspondent lexemes: *digest* → *дайджест* – *огляд*, *news release* → *нюс-реліз* – *випуск новин*, *killer* → *кілер* – *убивця-найманець/професійний вбивця*, *prime time* → *прайм-тайм* – *найкращий час*, *retake* → *римейк* – *переробка*, *action* → *екшн* – *дія*, *make up* → *мейк-ап* – *макіяж*, *mainstream* → *мейнстрім* – *основний напрямок*, *casting* → *кастинг* – *конкурс/відбір* and so on.

In mass media discourse borrowings have special functions not or less common for other functional styles. They are:

- 1) a means of irony and comic effects;
- 2) a component of stylistic figures;
- 3) a means for creating high and low colloquialisms in contrast to Ukrainian;
- 4) a means of creating coloring and tonality [6].

These borrowings influence not only the language system, but also culture. By bringing new words mass media also brings something new to Ukrainian cultural concepts. So, mass media has also a function of conveying cultural concepts which are an integral part of semantics of words.

## III. Borrowings as a Means of Conveying Cultural Concepts

E. Sapir declared, that culture could be defined as what society thinks and does, but language is how it thinks [10]. So, by transfer of words some meanings and

cultural implications are also transferred and then spread among speakers' subconsciousness.

Native speakers always feel when a lexeme is valuable not only for being a part of the lexical system, but also for being a representative of the nation and its values. It is well known that the modern foreign policy of the United States is based on supporting democracy all over the world, and it has become a very important part of American culture. The United States has always been a part of the negotiating process in Israel-Palestinian conflict. In 2003 the document called "Road map for peace" was released. Since then the notion *road map* exists in English. The original meaning of *road map* is "a map showing roads (for automobile travel)" [1]. This document was then a controversial issue in mass media discourse. That caused the fact that this phrase acquired another meaning of "a detailed plan or explanation to guide you in setting standards or determining course of action" [2, p. 1512]. In this meaning it has existed since functioning in English-speaking culture. The cultural background and knowledge of such a phenomenon made the meaning of the concept clear for Americans and Europeans. In Ukrainian mass media discourse the word-for-word translation of the notion *road map* in the meaning of "a plan" began widely functioning as *дорожня карта* only in late 2014. For example, on the official website of Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science "Дорожня карта освітньої реформи (2015-2025)" could be found. The majority of Ukrainians are not familiar with motivation, etymology and meaning of the notion. Such translation is unacceptable, because "because translation is art, in which a lot of aspects are to be taken into attention" (S. Karavansky) [7]. When journalists used lexemes *план*, *інструкція*, *посібник*, *рекомендації*, *поради* etc, the sentence would be clearer and sound more naturally.

One-side interactions between languages cause language's loss of its national peculiarity, it stops being a means of expressing the national conception of the world, culture and spirit [4]. Also, according to Y. Shevelov, unreasonable usage of one language's elements is indication of low assessment of the native language and high – of foreign [8]. According to Y. Shevchuk, "in spite of suppression of Ukrainian from all spheres of life Ukrainian lingual society demonstrates surprising lingual creativity, eccentricity and imagination" [12]. The Ukrainian language possesses a great potential to produce new words for representing Ukrainian cultural and social peculiarities. For instance, after a hooligan Vadym Titushko attacked journalists in Kiev on May 18, 2013, a newly-coined on Ukrainian basis word *титушки* (*titushky*) began to mean "hooligans". There is also a concept of *зелені чоловічки* (*little green men*) meaning "occupants" which was formed during the Occupation of Crimea and represents historical and cultural phenomena in Ukraine of that period. It should be mentioned that these words were also used in English-speaking mass

media discourse, but it was only for a short period of time and only in reports concerning Ukrainian Crisis.

## Conclusion

Today the Ukrainian language suffers from excessive prevalence of useless borrowings and internationalisms which are injurious not only to language but to culture too. The theoretical study of English borrowings and its deep analysis will provide information on how to support the gradual development of Ukrainian language and its positioning as at least an important regional language. Taking into account the ability of television and newspaper to influence the society, mass media are of the greatest importance on the way of popularization of the language and they should support the culture and language by using borrowings wisely and native lexicon properly.

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