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IMAGE OF WARTIME UKRAINE IN THE BRITISH AND AMERICAN MEDIA DISCOURSES

Abstract. *The article centers on the image of wartime Ukraine in media discourses of Great Britain and the USA. The publications, broadcasts and messages concerning Ukraine reveal not only the factual events or phenomena, pertaining to the people of Ukraine or their culture, but also cultural matrices and beliefs that determine how representatives of different countries understand and interpret the world. Media-driven discourses analysed in the article include various outlets that people often choose on the every-day basis: newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and the Internet.*

Key words: *Ukraine, war, media discourse, culture, language, communication.*

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ОБРАЗ ВІЙНИ В УКРАЇНІ В БРИТАНСЬКОМУ ТА АМЕРИКАНСЬКОМУ МЕДІАДИСКУРСАХ

Анотація. *Стаття присвячена вивченню образу України воєнного часу у медіа-дискурсах Великої Британії та США. Медіа-дискурс являє собою складну взаємодію текстів і низки екстралінгвістичних факторів, що відображує численні реалії буття сучасного соціуму у різних аспектах і відбувається через платформу трансляції, усну або письмову, в якій дискурс орієнтований на неprisутнього читача, слухача і глядача. Таким чином, публікації, передачі та повідомлення, що стосуються України, розкривають не лише фактичні події чи явища, але й культурні матриці, вірування та вподобання, що обумовлюють те, як представники різних країн розуміють та інтерпретують навколишній світ. У фокусі уваги знаходиться і мовна репрезентація реалій війни в Україні. Це зумовлено тим, що будь-яка мова є живим організмом, у якому безперервно мають місце зміни, що точно віддзеркалюють реалії життя, історію і культуру народу, який цією мовою послуговується. Нові слова входять до загального вжитку, адже мова називає нові предмети і явища, точніше характеризує і відображує те, що відбувається у новітній історії. Усталені денотати часто отримують нові конотації, а лексичний склад мови поступово уточнюється, терміни конкретизуються. Дослідження проведено на основі матеріалів у засобах масової інформації, до яких люди звертаються щодня: газети, журнали, радіо, телебачення та Інтернет.*

Ключові слова: *Україна, війна, медіадискурс, культура, мова, комунікація.*

Linguistic relativity and linguistic determinism theories, conceptualized in the works by Edward Sapir (Sapir, 1929), Benjamin Lee Whorf (Whorf, 1956a, 1956b), Guy Deutscher (Guy, 2005; 2010), Eric Lenneburg (Lenneburg, 1964), Roger Brown (Brown, 1954) and many illustrious others gave

a powerful impetus for the research of language, communication and culture. There are scientists who believe that every language is a constituent part of a certain culture, while their opponents point out that language and culture are vastly different, though still interrelated. Some argue that

the language is strongly influenced by the culture, and all the realia pertaining to that culture will be reflected in the language. Conversely, there is also a line of reasoning according to which the language and culture influence human thinking and the way people see the world. The realia of Russian-Ukrainian War are reflected not only in the Ukrainian language, but in numerous other languages, and new phenomena are viewed and explained through the magnifying glasses of various cultures.

In the media discourses of Britain and the USA the lexical bulk describing war actions in Ukraine, weaponry used, combatants, terror, trauma, sufferings, peace talks, war economy etc. prevails, but it is far more than that. After the Russian-Ukrainian war broke out the whole world, not only Britain and the USA, seemed to become blue and yellow. We can say that both literally and figuratively:

«No war»: Sport turns blue and yellow for Ukraine (Bangkok post) (AFP, 2022).

Thousands around the world turn streets blue and yellow to support Ukraine (The Mirror) (Warburton, Cardy, Clover, 2022).

Monuments around the world are lit up in Ukrainian flag colors following Russia's invasion (The Insider) (Lakritz, 2022).

The countries and the whole continents were united in solidarity with Ukraine. World-famous sights and iconic monuments, as well as governmental buildings lit up in our national colours. A huge custom-made Ukrainian flag (30 feet by 60 feet) flying over Chicago, reminds the Chicagoans and guests of the city of the war in Europe. This is the largest flag of Ukraine in the USA, and it was raised on 200-foot flagpole belonging to the Sterling Bay Real Estate Company.

The word «Ukraine» became one of most-frequently used in the world. Millions of volunteers, sympathetic with the Ukrainian cause, started working immediately in order to provide food, water, medicines and other essentials. Almost a quarter of Ukraine's population have been driven from their homes, and citizens of other countries gave the refugees food, shelter and assistance needed. The royalties, the governments became involved, giving invaluable help. The US land-lease and military help from numerous European democracies were the things of crucial importance. Deserving people in Ukraine and volunteers from all over the world became super heroes and role-models. Caring and sharing became a new popular trend.

The heroic people of Ukraine became world's A-listers. They were awarded the European Parliament's 2022 Sakharov Prize, and the Time magazine named Spirit of Ukraine and President Volodymyr Zelensky person of the year. Very often Ukraine is mentioned in the media discourses of Britain and the USA due to A-list celebrities who offer their help. For instance, Ashton Kutcher and the Ukrainian-born Mila Kunis managed to raise a huge sum of money for Ukraine, topping \$ 35 mln. Richard Gere sold his luxurious and quite rare Jaguar convertible for \$ 31 mln to help the Ukrainians. The former UK Prime Minister David Cameron drove more than 2,000 miles to deliver donated goods and supplies to the Ukrainian refugees. Pink Floyd, Madonna, Elton John, John Bon Jovi, Stevie Wonder, Metallica, Celine Dion, Bruce Springsteen, Billie Eilish, Maneskin and many other top-notch professionals from various walks of life showed full support for Ukraine. British legendary rock-band Pink Floyd reunited almost after 30 years and released their «Hey Hey Rise Up» – a music video for Ukraine, featuring a famous Ukrainian singer Andrii Khlyvnyuk who sang «Ой у лузі червона калина» (Oh, the red Guelder rose (snowball tree/viburnum) in the meadow). That composition in Ukrainian topped the charts in numerous European countries, Canada, Australia and the USA. Examples like these are numerous and inspiring.

Ukraine became very fashionable, because even the world of glamour reacted to the war. Gorgeous evening gowns made by Ukrainian brands Lever Couture, Frolov, Andre Tan, Oksana Karavanska were triumphant on the most prestigious world stages and red carpet runners after 24 February 2022. At the 75th Cannes Film Festival Sharon Stone stole the show in her business suit tailored in the colours of the Ukrainian flag. Salma Hayek, Maria Chaplin, Greta Lee, Tilda Swinton, Mara Bugarin, Mara Vikol, Lee Jung Che, Mila Jovovich and her daughter Ever Gabo Anderson exuded glamour and chic wearing the colors of the Ukrainian flag on the red carpets. Michael Douglas, Jamie Lee Curtis, Samuel L. Jackson, Douglas Hodge, Lisa Ann Walter, Jon Bernthal, Shari Belafonte, Nicholas Britell, Tyler Perry, Paolo Sorrentino, Diane Warren, Yuh-Jung Youn and many other stars wore a blue ribbon to support Ukrainian refugees. Jason Momoa inspired with his blue and yellow pocket square. Even a world-famous cat from Kharkiv, called Stepan, who is widely known for his

unruffled equanimity and good looks, was wearing a blue-and-yellow bow tie at Cannes.

Quite a number of words acquired additional connotative meanings because of the war. Ukrainian flag features golden wheat that grows under the blue skies. But during the war these two symbols of peace and plenty became associated with freedom, courage and resilience. A Vasytkiv maiolica cockerel came to be the symbol of inviolability and defiance of the Ukrainians in the war. Initially the ceramic rooster was known just as a decorative piece produced by the maiolica factory in the town of Vasytkiv (Kyiv Region) in the 1980-s. The work was erroneously attributed to Prokip Bidasiuk and then the Protorievs family, but the author of the cockerel still remains unknown. The ceramic jug acquired a new connotative meaning when a photo of one of the flats in the town of Borodianka (Kyiv Region) went viral. After the severe shellings lots of apartment blocks there were almost completely destroyed. But amid trauma, misery and chaos one could see a wall with a kitchen cabinet mounted on it. Surprisingly as it may seem, the kitchen cabinet and the plates in it were not reduced to tatters. Upon closer inspection, a ceramic rooster was noticed on top of that cabinet. Due to that photo of the rooster became the symbol of resilience and inner strength of the Ukrainians.

Later on, an artist from Kharkiv, Ukraine's second largest city, presented the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky and the then Prime Minister of the UK Boris Johnson with the two souvenirs full of meaning — the two ceramic cockerels, identical to that one from Borodianka:

Ceramic cockerels surprise Boris Johnson and Volodymyr Zelenskiy on Kyiv walk

'I'm from London' says British PM. 'I know, I'm from Kharkiv,' says bystander proffering traditional jugs that in the war have come to symbolise Ukrainian resilience(*The Guardian*) (Rachwani, 2022).

The «British» cockerel was then auctioned and its Ukrainian ceramic «counterpart» is still in the working cabinet of President Volodymyr Zelensky and can be seen during briefings and numerous TV interviews.

Ukraine itself became a new symbol of bravery.

e.g. *I thought I knew what bravery was. And then I saw Ukraine*(*The New York Times*) (Stevens, 2022); *Brave and unbowed* (*The Sunday Post*) (Aintken, 2022); *Kyiv, the City of Courage* (*the Daily Mail*) (Franey, 2022).

«*To be Ukrained*» means «to be defeated because of the underestimation of a foe/opponent/aggressor» .

During the wartime in Ukraine there appeared quite a number of new realia:

Boris Johnsonyuk (Борис Джонсо́нюк) — a big friend of Ukraine. Mr Johnson became a hero in Ukraine, because his unequivocal support for our country was phenomenal. The surname *Johnson* was transformed to sound like a Ukrainian family name with the typical suffix «юк». *Johnsonyuk* originated from *Johnson*, UK and is used in the Ukrainian language to express gratitude and admiration towards Mr Johnson.

Boris Johnson (croissant). Boris Johnson is not only the former British PM, but also a name of a new treat, also known as the «Johnsonuk dessert». This popular croissant was inspired by English apple pie, topped with a wavy white meringue and a dollop of vanilla ice cream to resemble Mr Johnson's signature hairdo.

Boris Johnson – the street in Ukraine.

Liz Truss (croissant). Its filling is a rose-lavender-blackberry mixture with vanilla custard, that makes the treat tender from the outside, and fiery on the inside, just like the former British PM herself.

Liz Truss was also deemed to be a big friend of our country. Due to that she was also «naturalized» and on social media her family name was transformed according to the most typical derivational patterns of Ukrainian surnames (e.g. *Trassyshyn* (Трасишин), *Trasiuk* (Трасюк), *Liz Trasailo* (Ліз Трасайло), *Liza Tarasiuk* (Ліза Тарасюк), *Liz Trassenko* (Ліз Трасенко)).

Rishi Sunak (pastry). The most recent and the most expensive among the «political» desserts in Ukraine.

Kalush — a pink bucket hat made popular by the Kalush Orchestra band from Ukraine. Kalush is a town in Ukraine that gave its name to the band and to a new hat. Kalush Orchestra won the 2022 Eurovision song contest.

Bledina – a swear word, showing frustration and denoting a Russian air missile.

The phrase of the Ukrainian border guard: «*Russian warship, f**k you...!*» became very popular in its exact wording. It is widely used for various life-

time situations when the response is definitely negative. This quote is also printed on the merchandise including sportswear, bags, T-shirts, long-sleeves, etc. Ukrainian postage stamps and the Easter card by a world-famous political cartoonist Morten Morland featuring the sunk cruiser «Moskva» also proved to be a great success.

Summing up one may say that Ukraine became very dear to millions of people all over the world. Living in different countries they speak the same language of dignity, kindness, mutual support and freedom. That very idea of our togetherness is very precious and should be cherished as much as possible. The good always triumphs over the evil, and the grim reality will definitely give way to prosperous future, much wanted and richly deserved.

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