LEXICAL CHANGES IN THE UKRAINIAN AND RUSSIAN LANGUAGES SINCE THE FALL OF COMMUNISM

The objective of the paper is to trace and analyze Ukrainian and Russian language use, paying particular attention to lexical innovations, neologisms, and satirical allusions. These changes are presented as the continuation of a steady process of democratization or liberalization of the Ukrainian language, a phenomenon some researchers attributed only to Russian. The analysis of new words not registered in the dictionaries is provided.

Key words: lexical and morphological changes, language, lexical innovation, neologisms, satirical allusions.

Ukrainian has managed to develop and re-connotate its vocabulary referring to the new status in the post-USSR period and distancing itself to a certain extent from Russian [the concrete examples of this vocabulary has been presented in the article], though influence of Russian has not disappeared altogether. Trends of extensive borrowings from English in Russian and Ukrainian have been analyzed.

Extreme colloquialization of Russian and Ukrainian press leads to low-level style of the language and further to criminal argot/jargon and vulgarity. What was forbidden and not allowed previously flooded the pages of Ukrainian and Russian press.

Knowledge of political context is required for understanding the language of contemporary mass media. The research is based mostly on the source data taken from contemporary Ukrainian and Russian press (newspapers, magazines, etc.).

Development of the lexical innovations in both Ukrainian and Russian of the 90-ies and the end of the century has been traced and compared with recent (2001-2013) innovations.

Recent publications on Ukrainian language issues in the West. As Michael M. Naydan (2006: 150)¹ remarks: «While the Ukrainian language (like many of the other Slavic «less commonly taught languages» [LCTLs] but from their perspective no less significant languages [NLSLs] of the former USSR) had been relegated to secondary status and was under constant pressure to assimilate to the politically more powerful Russian language, its East Slavic neighbor, it survived and has perhaps been removed from the endangered language list – with at least the possibility of developing in a natural way». The beginning of this century saw (witnessed) some increase in publications on Ukrainian language issues. This macropicture from the sociolinguistic perspective was probably the best covered in Bilaniuk’s (2005) monograph². Articles in scholarly journals complemented this picture. Issues of language and ethnicity (see Kulyk 2006)³, Russian-Ukrainian confrontation (see Fournier 2002)⁴, gender and language (see Bilaniuk 2003)⁵ have been researched and touched upon.

Language Change. We witness unprecedented language change. Researchers pay close attention to this phenomenon. Among the recent publications it is worthy to notice thorough publication by Jonathon Keats⁶. Keats (front cover of the book) talks about «... the interplay between words and ideas in our fast-paced tech-driven use-it-or-lose-it society». For him scientific and technological neologisms are very important. According to Keats (vii) «we live in an age of specialization». We are amazed by «fascinating glimpse of novel language as it comes into being» (Keats, front cover).


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All living languages are susceptible to change. However, specific periods in their development bring more radical dimension to the change than others. Constant change is becoming the norm of life and it is not an easy task to talk about (and even more difficult to reflect on) the current state of a language that is being molded by this ongoing process of change.

Recent literature on lexical and morphological changes in Contemporary Russian and Ukrainian.

Among the recent publications on lexical and morphological changes in Contemporary Russian and Ukrainian the following articles could be commended: Vinogradova Valentina. Slovoobrazovanie i aksiologya [Word-Formation and Axiology] // Reflection of History and Culture... (2010): 60-66; Iermakova Olga. Nekotorye osobennosti russkogo mentaliteta, otrazhennye v slovoobrazovani [Some Peculiarities of Russian Mentality. Reflected in Word-Formation]//Reflection of History and Culture... (2010): 85-90; Karpilov’s ’ka Lehenia. Nova Ukraina u slovoformy nominaitii. Zmyny u movnomu ‘okreslenni’ svitu i movny skai [New Ukraine in Word-Formation Nomination: Changes in the Language «Drawing» of the World]/Reflection of History and Culture... (2010): 91-109. [Karpilov’s ’ka notices that the changes in the society for 19-year independence period have been reflected in Ukrainian language. She comments various types of lexical innovations, reaction of language on sociodynamics. According to Karpilov’s ’ka 92 we have the fund of innovations in the Ukrainian language for the period of independence with over 17 000 units and fund of the Ukrainian language of the Soviet period with over 170 000 units. Sociodynamics of new Ukraine is fascinating. (Karpilov’s ’ka 93); Koriakovtseva Elena. Proizvodnye Nomina Actionis i izaykoviyi obraz postkolostaliticheskogo obshcheista (na materialu russkogo, pol'skogo i cheshskogo izayk) [Derivative Nomina Actionis and Language Image of Post-Socialist Society (Based on the Material of Russian, Polish and Czech Languages)// Reflection of History and Culture... (2010): 133-144 [Mass media are the main «delivers» of neologisms – considers Koriakovtseva 133. Russian nomina actionis ending in –izatsiia are becoming very popular.

Izmenenie obshchestvennogo stroia, povliiavshee na sovremenniu rusksku lingvokul'turui i obuslovivshe smenu leksicheskikh paradgim, privelo k poiavlenniu neologizmov ...

‘Change of the social order, influencing current Russian linguistic culture and determining the change of lexical paradigms led to the neologisms appearance...’.

Koriakovtseva talks about social dialogue aggression11, banditizatsiia vsei strany – ‘banditization of the whole country’, change of political lexicon and political jargon in particular, rapid fall of speech culture and general culture in all social and age groups, including people working in mass media, TV and radio.12

Konfliktno-agressivnyi i konfliktno-manipulatoriiski tip rechevogo povedeniia zhurnalistov, eskalatsiia rechevoi aggressii v SMI vysvobozhdaiet v ikh adresatah otvetnuiu agressii

‘Conflict-aggressive and conflict manipulative type of journalists’ speech behavior, escalation of speech aggression in mass media relieves in their addressees responsive aggression’ – considers Koriakovtseva 137. Internet-forums are full of derogatory terms, the communication style is very aggressive; Lukashanets Elena. Argot and Culture: Word-Formation Aspect]/Reflection of History and Culture... (2010): 155-164; Miloslavsky Igor. Rol’ slovoobrazovaniia v rasshrenii kognitivnogo prostranstva russkogo izayka [Word-Formation Role in the Expansion of Cognitive Space of Russian Language]/Reflection of History and Culture... (2010): 176-180 [Miloslavsky 176 talks about «word deficit». Direct loans and calques – their importance...

On ‘Conflict-aggressive and conflict manipulative type of journalists’ speech behavior, escalation of speech aggression in mass media relieves in their addressees responsive aggression’ – considers Koriakovtseva 137. Internet-forums are full of derogatory terms, the communication style is very aggressive; Lukashanets Elena. Argot and Culture: Word-Formation Aspect]/Reflection of History and Culture... (2010): 155-164; Miloslavsky Igor. Rol’ slovoobrazovaniia v rasshrenii kognitivnogo prostranstva russkogo izayka [Word-Formation Role in the Expansion of Cognitive Space of Russian Language]/Reflection of History and Culture... (2010): 176-180 [Miloslavsky 176 talks about «word deficit». Direct loans and calques – their importance (179)]; Ohnheiser Ingeborg. (Anti-) utopicheskoe slovoobrazovanie v romane G. Orwell-a «Nineteen Eighty-Four» i ego pervovdakh na russkii, pol’skii i cheshskii izaykii [(Anty-) Utopian Word-Formation in G. Orwell’s Novel «Nineteen Eighty-Four» and its Translations into Russian, Polish and Czech Languages]/Reflection of History and Culture... (2010): 222-235. The features of Newspeak (novoiaz), according to Ohnheiser (2010: 223) are: metaphorics based on the opposition «my: onia (we-they)» (based on the opposition «my: onia» (we-they)) (my- otobre, svalka, iazva) – (we- the unified family of Soviet nations; brotherly; dear father (Stalin): they – dump);

Limited choice of lexical material and high predictability of word combinations; active neology, including various types of abbreviations and their derivatives; tautology (demokratia – narodnia demokratia) ‘democracy – people’s democracy’. The author speaks about totalitarian experience of the Ukrainian language during Soviet period (Ohnheiser 224); Ulukhanov Igor. K voprosu ob otrazhenii v slovoobrazovaniia ivlneui real’no mira [On Reflection of Real World Phenomena in Word-Formation]/Reflection of History and Culture... (2010): 298-307.

In his article Ulukhanov (2010: 298) talks about «iazykovaia kartina mira» (language world picture), «model’ mira» (world model), «kartinka zhizni» (life picture).

Kysliuk Larysa. Natsional’nomovni resursy vidobrazhennia sotsiodynamyki [National Language Resourses of Social Dynamics Reflection]/Reflection of History and Culture... (2010: 393-408).The lexeme derzhava ‘state’ got the status of «key word» since 1991.13 Stabili’nym vzhynanniam vidriznial’sia derzhbiudzhet, zaoksviennii v usikh slovyakakh, pochynaiuchy z 1930-kih rr. ‘The word derzhbiudzhet ‘state budget’ has been enjoiing stable usage, fixed...
in all dictionaries, beginning from 1930’s. This statement can be supported by numerous examples: derzhpomohana ‘state support/assistance’ [title of the article Problemy bankom obissyatiat’ derzhpomohana ‘State Assistance has been promised to Problematic Banks’14, derzhbanky ‘state banks’, Derzhslishchba turzymu i kurortiv ‘State Service of Tourism and Resorts’15.

Adjective ukrains’kyi ‘Ukrainian’ as well as acronyms with this component have been widely used (see, for example: Ukrain’ska Hreko-Katols’ka ka Tserkva zminiuie svoie kerivnytsyo ‘Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church Changes Its Leadership’16, UKHTs bula zaboronena ‘Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church was Forbidden/Prohibited’.17

Use of radians’kyi ‘Soviet’ in Contemporary Discourse. Has the adjective radians’kyi ‘Soviet’ (in rare cases adjectivized noun radians’ki ‘Soviet ones/the Soviets’) been enjoying popularity in contemporary discourse (in particular mass media discourse)? Some linguists claim that it is falling out of active use and joining the category of passive lexemes. Our examples show that the situation is opposite (some of the examples only found in the journal15: Tserkva perezhyla radians’kyi represii i zaborony, periody pidpip’ noho isuvannia, ii ne zlamanu radians’ki, ne zamiat’i donets’ki), – hovoryt’ lider V0 «Svoboda» Oleh Tiahybok ‘The church survived Soviet repressions and prohibitions, periods of underground existence, it was not bent/broken by the Soviets, it will not be by Donetsk ones’ – says leader of the All-Ukrainian Union «Svoboda» Oleh Tiahnybok’, p. 5); «Mozhlyvo, hrije rol’ radians’ke mynule – molodym ukraintsiam tsikavo spilkuvatysia z inozemtsiamy’, – reziumuie ekspert ‘Maybe, the Soviet past has some importance – young Ukrainians like to communicate with foreigners’ – sums up the expert’ (p. 15); U sil’s’komu «supermarket» bulo praktychno vse – vid soli do pral’nykh mashyn, khocha siristiu i obsharpanistiu mahazyn nahaduyv radians’ki 80-ti ‘In the rural/village «supermarket» there was practically everything – from salt to washers/washing machines, though by its grayness and shabbiness the store reminded Soviet 80’s’ (p. 34); ‘Tsentr korablebuduvannia Radians’ko Soiuzu, – os’ tak neshchodavno nazyvaly Mykolaiv. A radians’ke korablebuduvannia posidalo odne z chil’nykh mistic’ v sviti ‘The center of ship-building in the Soviet Union,’ – this is how Mykolaiv was recently called. And the Soviet ship-building was one of the world’s leaders’ (p. 36); Radians’ka promyslovist’ vyrobilayta tretyyni viis’kovykh korabliv u sviti i bula v pershii desiatci lideriv iz tysyi’ho snadobuduvannia ‘Soviet industry produced 1/3 of world’s military ships and was among first ten in civil ship-building’ (p. 37).

SRSR ‘the USSR’ is also used (‘Vil’noho rynku novykh avtomobiliv u Venesueli nemaie, iak kolyus’ u SRSR, treba stoiaty v cherzi abo pereplachuvaty’ ‘There is no free market of new cars in Venezuela, the same as it was in the former USSR, one has to be on a waiting list or overpay’ (p. 33). Radians’kyi Soiuz ‘the Soviet Union’ is also known as simply Soiuz ‘Union’:

U den’, koly rozpyvavtsia ‘Soiuz’,
Ia vitshyvsia i vidshuyv smertel’n vu tomu
‘That day when the Union collapsed,
I felt satisfaction and mortal fatigue’.19

Postradians’kyi ‘post-Soviet’ has been used as well (rynyk postradians’ko ho prostor ‘markets of post-Soviet space’)20; postradians’kyi svit ukraints’koj literatury ‘post-Soviet world of Ukrainian literature’21; postradians’ka solomiany na vdo ‘post-Soviet straw regime’22. New discourse brought also derogatory terms: sovdepivs’kyi, komunaly23, Sovdevopia ‘the USSR’, Sovok ‘Soviet Union’, sovok (citizen of the Soviet Union, or post-Soviet states nostalgic about former regime), sovkovyi etc. Vladimir Novikov (2008:144)24 mentions that sovok was one of the main language concepts of Gorbachev-Yeltsin epoch. According to him, it has been actively used for about ten-fifteen years and now has been going to the passive fund of the Russian vocabulary. But not in Ukraine. It has been used even more in Czechland. People are not willing to live according to the emposed Soviet/Russian model regarding development of their country, culture, education, etc.

Internationalisms (primarily English borrowings). Borrowings from English are abundant and quite often their Ukrainian equivalents could be found, but are not registered. Among the internationalisms found in one issue of the journal25: shopinh, mediabainh, loukaster, developers’kyi proekt, developery, rieltory, volontery (though Ukrainian equivalent dobrovoltsi has been provided), maister-klas. TV announcer27 uses the following announcement that does not require any translation: Brend, trend i boifrend.

Activation of truncated components in word combinations. Truncated adjectives/nouns + noun (in rare cases other adjective plus noun) are abundantly used in Contemporary Ukrainian and they find their registration. Typical examples

17 weekly.ua, N. 7, 18-24.02.2011: 5.
22 Kononenko 94.
23 Kononenko 16.
24 Kononenko 17.
27 TSN program, 16.03.2011.

**Vogue words.** Soviet Union concepts/things/are quite often being replaced with more catchy/flashy/prestigious words:

*slovo «magazin» napominalo o zhutikh mnogochasovvykh ocherediakh v GUe i TsUME, a «butik» stalo oboznacheniem zavedenia nebol’shogo, no roskshego i nestandartnogo ‘… the word *store* reminded of terrible lines/queues in State Universal Store or Central Universal Store, and *boutique* became the symbol of small institution, but comfortable and non-standard’\textsuperscript{33}. Among vogue words one can find Maidan ‘square’ in Ukrainian. It has become popular during Revolution where there were protests against Viktor Yanukovych’s manipulations. Maidan means not only the physical space, but ‘revolt of the people fighting for their rights’. This meaning is now present in word combinations like druhyi Maidan ‘second Maidan: Iaksheko vlada ne zygunyt’ sia, bude druhy Maidan ‘If the authorities do not stop, there will be second Maidan’\textsuperscript{34}; «zhilyovi Maidan» ‘accommodation/dwelling/housing Maidan’: Provokuvaty «zhilyovi Maidan» vlad zadar ne z ruky, os’ i vidkladati do zruchnoi shchtyts ‘It is not the right time for the authorities to provoke housing Maidan’, that is why they have been postponing it to a more appropriate situation\textsuperscript{35}; «podatkovy Maidan» ‘otaxation Maidan’\textsuperscript{36}. Unpopular reforms in housing and taxation sectors. Unpopular reforms led to the appearance of neologisms/slangisms like sproshchentsi (pidprieshni zopochuvannya) ‘entrepreneurs on simplified system of taxation’, tedynky (platnyky ivednyoho podatku) ‘payers of the only tax’\textsuperscript{37}.

**Background knowledge.** Background knowledge plays an extremely important role for decoding the meaning of the sentence/text/information. What does the sentence

*Odnii stverdzhuiut’, shcho polityk vidpochyvaiye v Hruzii, za slovamy inshykh – poprosyv politychnoho putuiku v Izraeli, dekho navit’ zhartuvav shchodo povernennia mera v kosmos ‘Some people state, that the politician has a rest in Georgia, according to the words of others – he sought political asylum in Israel, and some have even joked by nachat’ podyskivat’ zhartuvav shchodo povernennia mera v kosmos ‘Some people state, that the politician has a rest in Georgia, according to the words of others – he sought political asylum in Israel, and some have even joked

Political discourse lowered its standard in Ukrainian and Russian: *A iz Tihipka prosto namahaiut’sia zrobyty tsapu-vidbyvala* ‘They try to make Tihipko a scapegoat’\textsuperscript{38}. Serhii Tihipko is Vice-PM in charge of reforms various sectors of Ukrainian social life. Russian: *V politicheskoi smysle perspektivy bezradostny, i chinovniku khorosho no roskushnogo i nestandartnogo* ‘In political sense prospects are bleak and the clerk would better try to seek the spot in the party list by nachati podyskivat’ mesto v partiinom spiske ‘In political sense prospects are bleak and the clerk would better try to seek the spot in the party list.

... shche za kil’ka misiatyi pervy iho vidstavkoi deputat vid Partii rehioniv Volodymyr Iaroshchuk zaiavyv, shcho Sivkovychi sproshchentsi, kryshuie pidprieshny, naprawliaie reideriv na ti chy inshi adminreformy ‘In political sense prospects are bleak and the clerk would better try to seek the spot in the party list.

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* ... a couple of months before his resignation Party of Regions MP Volodymyr Iaroshchuk stated that Sivkovych’s supports raidership, ‘protectos enterprises’ seize, sends raiders to various businesses, actively uses telephone right in his work with judges’\textsuperscript{42}.* Telefonne pravo is an undestructible heritage from the Soviet times. Volodymyr Sivkovych is ex-Vice PM, Deputy Head of the Council of National Security and Defense.
The word "apartment", new adjectives from nouns, verbs from nouns, etc. of Ukraine, quite a long period of time. Further development of new vocabulary is actively taking place (creation of perestroika equivalent of Russian "построику" – vin iz Kharkova. The current problem of «resignee» is that he does not have «Donets’k registrations» – he hails from Kharkiv45. Russian influence on Ukrainian is reflected in informal housing neologisms (see, «dvushka» ‘two-room apartment’, «tr’oshka» ‘three-room apartment’46. Though Ukrainian equivalents exist (see, for example, trykimnata ‘three-room apartment’, odokimnata ‘one-room apartment’47.

INNOVATIONS IN CONTEMPORARY UKRAINIAN AND RUSSIAN

– A kym zh zhin pratsiuie? ‘And what is his occupation?’
– A khto zh tsykh novykh ukraintsiv zaraz rozbere? Chy to dylerom, chy to kilerom... ‘Who can tell for sure about these new Ukrainians? Either dealer, or killer...’48

Lexical innovations as a direct result of post-communist transformations in Ukraine and Russia are abundant. Special attention has been paid to the redistribution of active and passive vocabulary of both languages. Ukrainian has managed to develop and re-comotate its vocabulary referring to the new status in the post-USSR period and distancing itself to a certain extent from Russian, though influence of Russian has not disappeared altogether.. Is the speaker/reader ready to perceive/understand massive lexical innovations? Can they lead to a certain misunderstanding and confusion? Extreme colloquilization of Russian and Ukrainian press leads to low-level style of the language and further to criminal argot/jargon and vulgarity. What was forbidden and not allowed previously flooded the pages of Ukrainian and Russian press.

Mass media nowadays experience not only influx of colloquial and vulgar words, but also slang, foreign borrowings, abbreviations, hidden implied meanings, etc. I want to point out here at two things:

1. Passivization of communist and ideologically charged lexicon, abandoning of the so called ‘ideological vocabulary’, mocking it, etc. Creation of new words, expressions. This process still continues. In the press one can find allusions to the communist past, play with the catchy phrases, famous communist slogans, etc. Role of language play in both languages is enormous. Role of context (political, cultural, you name it) has tremendously increased and is enormous too.

2. But one cannot ignore the second tendency. August 2014 will witness the 23th anniversary of independence of Ukraine, quite a long period of time. Further development of new vocabulary is actively taking place (creation of new adjectives from nouns, verbs from nouns, etc.). Velykyi tlumachnyi slovnyk suchasnoi ukrains’koj movy49 with 170 000 words included presents a new word pi-ar (noun). But other words, based on this one, such as piaryty (verb), piaris’kyi (adjective), piarschyna (noun), piarnyk (noun) are formed.

I can mention here about influx of terminology (business, technical, even medical, philosophic and literary discourse, etc.) into mass media and communication. Late 90’s can be characterized as the period of reevaluation/reinterpretation of «perestroika discourse, perestroika words and expressions». New century witness their falling out of active use or passivization, though some elements obviously remain. VTSSUM has included the Ukrainian equivalent of Russian ‘перестройка’ (perebudova), but does not explain it properly. The word perestroika, which has been used in Ukrainian, is not included. VTSSUM presents the word radians’kyi, but radianschyna is absent. The word isteblishment is also included in the same dictionary, but isteblishment’kyi, istebleishmentstvo are not included. The word diaspora is registered, but diasporonyk, diasport, diasporonyi, diasporintians’kyi are not. Judging from the aforementioned examples one can mention about active process of further development of foreign borrowed words. Previously really alienated, foreign, sometimes dead in the language, now they are adjusted, acculturated through word-building suffixes and prefixes:

Ukrainian noun sekond-khend, adjective developed sekond-khendovyi (звичайнisin’ke sekond-khendove smittia

43 weekly.ua, N. 7, 18-24.02.2010: 12.
44 weekly.ua, N. 7, 18-24.02.2010: 12.
47 Hazeta po-ukrainisky, 19.11.2010: 3.
48 Ternopil’s’ka hazeta, 25.09-1.10.2002.
49 VTSSUM, (Kyiv-Irpin’, 2002).
Language is developing so quickly that even the best dictionaries are unable to register all recent changes in the lexicon. For example: VTSSUM: noun veto is present, but there is no verb vetuvaty: Putin vetovav popravky do zakonu pro ZMI ‘Putin vetoed amendments to the legislation on mass media’53. Traditional word combination naklasyot veto is also used in the article. There is noun potiah ‘train’, potiahovyi (adjective, potiahovyi kradii ‘train thieves’)53, is absent in VTSSUM. Among recent borrowings from English in both languages: raider, snowboarding/ snoubordynh, snoubordist/ snoubordyst (used extensively). Foreign derived words carry some prestige, enigma for the reader:

UKRAINIAN language— Correspondent asks celebrity: U vas bezlich khobi: katannia na lyzhakh, daivinh, kartynh ‘You have lots of hobbies: skiing, diving, cartel’54. It is high time to write the article ‘Sufiks – inh/yh as an indicator of prestige in Contemporary Ukrainian’. Ukrainians try to expand its word-building potential, utilizing analogy. For example, there are such words as ukrainofil and ukrainofob. The students’ newspaper of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy called Koleha/Koliega uses occasionalisms l’vovofil and l’vovofob.


The practice of presenting some English written words continues. For example, Russian:60 Ona sexy ‘She is sexy’.

The acronym VIP is used excessively in both languages, with Russian leading the race. The word is written in Latin as well as in Russian script. The word is not new and has been actually introduced at the end of the 20th century. Now the word expanded its potential from VIP to superVIP.

I want a little bit to dwell on play of language, play with the public, play with the reader. As an example I will use Russian parallel star – [short form of the adjective stari ‘old’ and borrowed from English ‘star’] and superstar [adequately ‘superold’ and ‘superstar’, which in many cases obviously can go together]. All examples are taken from one newspaper ‘KP’. It started the article about Alla Pugachova, comical allusion to her age. Later it continued with the article Belmondo – star... superstar (title of the article, devoted to his 70th anniversary)57, Koz’ mich ne star, a superstar (It is about Valentin Koz’ mich Ivanov; it is devoted also to his 70th anniversary, when he became the head coach of the Russian A-soccer league team «Torpedo-Metallurg»). Neutral Russkii superstar v NBA Andrei Kirilenko58, obviously no allusion to his age.

Certain notions/concepts are not represented in Ukrainian or Russian. Then dilemma appears— to use a lengthy explanation, not actually the term or to use borrowed term (with the problem that readers/speakers mostly do not know it): Ukrainian – Dehon Kerri peremih na poperediirkh vnutrisnih o-partiynih vyborakh (‘primeriz’) ‘John Carry won the primaries’59. Later «primeriz» vidbuhat’sia... ‘Primaries will take place’ Borrowed form is used because of its shortness, original Ukrainian – four words. This is the big difference why borrowed terms have been used. Quite often purists do not take it into account (especially in the Ukrainian context). It is relatively easy to explain most terms and quite awkward (and practically impossible) to use them in an attributive function.

Previous exceptions or abnormalities are often pushed to the forefront of language evolution and become the markers of that period or epoch.

A couple of researchers mention about general tendency towards colloquialisation, vulgarization, lowering the standard of the Russian language, rejection of literary standard in many cases. Ryazanova-Clarke & Wade60 116 present the list of active criminal argot used in contemporary Russian discourse: bespredel ‘lawlessness’, vyruhit’ sia ‘to pass out’, kachat’ prava ‘to throw one’s weight around’, kinut’ ‘to con’, naezd ‘a rough time’, tusovat’ sia ‘to hang around’, etc. My examples show the abundant use of these as well as the other words from Ryazanova-Clarke and Wade’s list. I will try to show certain tendencies on concrete examples taken from contemporary Russian mass media as well as from books by Limonov61 and Karyshev62. I also used the following dictionaries: Skliarevskia63 and Shlyakhov and Adler64.

51 Uriadovyi kur’ier, 28.10.2002.
52 Den’, 27.11.2002.
53 Ternopil’ska hazeta, 6-12.11.2002.
64 Shlyakhov, Vladimir & Eve Adler. Dictionary of Russian Slang & Colloquial Expressions. – New York: Barron’s,
Among the tendencies – abundant use of vulgar words, expressions, allusions, connotations, etc. When Ryazanova-Clarke and Wade 114-115 among the vulgar words list suka ‘bitch’, zasranets ‘shitty person’, morda ‘mug’, padla ‘bastard’ these ones sounds very mild in comparison with my examples from newspapers of the 21st century. Vulgarisms are everywhere:

Oni trakhaiutsia vozle musorok, a v duzhe u nikh tsvetut romashki? ‘They fuck each other close to the garbage bins, and romashki blossom in their soles?’

Etot Fattakh trakhaet vse, chto dvizhet. On trakhaet bab, kak Al’binos – zavody. ‘This Fattakh fucks everything that moves. He fucks women, like Albino plants.’

Skliarevskiaia 791 presents the following meaning of the word trakhta’sia. Razg. Snizh. 1) Vstupat’ v polovuiu sviz’ ‘Coll. Low. 1) To have sexual intercourse.

Vulgarisms are becoming an inseparable part of political discourse. Looks like some of the leaders like the former President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma or Deputy Chairman of the Russian Parliament, leader of LDPR Vladimir Zhirinovskii cannot build a single separate sentence without using them. Just an example of Vladimir Putin’s lowered style: Pochemuu u nas tak (kak v Evrosoiuze – Red.) ne poluchaetsia? Potomu chto, izviniat’sia, vse sopli zhuem i politikanstvuem ‘Why we cannot do it (as in the EU –Ed.)? Because, I am sorry, all the time are chewing sopli and involved in politicking’. Very mild in comparison with Zhirinovskii’s and Kuchma’s ‘pearls’.

The word sranyi ‘worthless, useless’ is used in other contexts: from the interview of Slava Zaitsev, famous Russian clothes designer: Etot sranyi bantik snimu s golovy ‘I will take off that shitty ribbon off the head’ (talking about Nikita Mikhailov’s wife)68.

The expression iaponna mat ‘Japanese mother’ is reactivated and resurrected: Davno pora, iaponna mat’, v finale nam v futbol sygrat ‘It is high time, Japanese mother, for us to play in the soccer final’69; Ne otdadim Kurily, iaponna mat ‘We will not give away Kurily, Japanese mother’70.

In distant 1982 Dreizin and Tom Priestly71 noted: ‘Mat is a shadow-image of the Russian language as a whole’. V. M. Mokienko72 mentions about popularization of argotisms by contemporary writers and mass media. Mokienko (75) talks about 2900 argotisms (~8.4% of their total number) in obshchenarodnyi iazyk ‘popular/national language’.

Indirect allusions are becoming more and more popular:

Bush nakazhet Rossiiu po samye nefedolary ‘Bush will punish Russia up to its oil dollars’73 [po samye iaitsa ‘up to the balls’ is implied]

Another interesting observation has found complete proof in my data: «Nashi politiki matom ne rugaiutsia, oni an nem razgovarivaiaut’ – prishel k vyvodu correspondent «Komsomol’skaia pravda» i bol’shoi liubitel’ politiki Aleksandr Gamov ‘Our politicians do not swear using mat, they talk in it’ – arrived to the conclusion correspondent of «Komsomol’skaia gazeta» and a great lover of politics Alexander Gamov74.

Criminalization of life, business, entrepreneurial, any activity is clearly reflected in the language. Liubov’ Kazarnovskiaia: Segodnia operoi pravit mafia ‘Today opera is being ruled by mafia’75; Artem Troitskii: ‘… nashe televiziono sturosentno korrumpirovano ’… Our TV is 100 % corrupted’76.

Together with politicheskia i ekonomicheskia elita ‘political and economic/business elite’ (Skliarevskiaia 869) more often expression kriminal’naia elita ‘criminal elite’ is used. Mokienko (76) talks about the notion of «bizhargonne pole» (bijargon field) – leksika, obvediniaushchaia rech’ predstavitelei pravookhranitel’nykh organov s rech’iu prestupnikov (bol’nichka, polosatyi, krytka ‘lexicon, uniting speech of representatives of law-enforcement officers with criminals’ speech (hospital, stripped, prison’). The phenomenon of the 21st century is much, much broader: – «bizhargonne pole» combines quite often the speech of politicians, legislators with the speech of criminals. Quite often in the Russian reality criminals become politicians and legislators:


1995.

65 title of the article in Komsomol’skaia pravda, 9 October 2002.
67 Argumenty i fakty #6, February 2003, p.2.
68 Ogonek, #34, September 2000.
69 Komsomol’skaia pravda, 4 December 2001.
70 Pravda, January 2003.
73 title of the article, Komsomol’skaia pravda, 26.03.2003.
74 Komsomol’skaia pravda, 15 August 2002.
75 title of the article, Nezavisimaia gazeta, 21.03.2003.
76 Nezavisimaia gazeta, 21.03.2003.
Zaika rossiiskoi estrady. Ukrainian President Boris, Еlkin, ЕBN' Sheva Sergei Ovchinnikov – «Khoroshii chichik – mertvyi lozungovoi rytoryky, avariina svidomist chipkoiu pryv»язanistiu do radians koi liudyny, infikovanoi from Ostroh – 9: 30 a.m., arrival time to Rivne – 10: 20 a.m. 


What words are used to describe former compatriots (ex-USSR nations and nationalities)? Chechens (standard chechentsy) are called checheny, «chekhi», «dakhki», chechiki (You remember famous slogan of LDPР «Khoroshhi chichik – mertvyi chichik» [Good Chechen is dead Chechen]). People from Caucasus are termed churki, chernomazie, khachiki, urikhi, arbusniki, chernozhypey.

Terence Wade,83 mentions: «… non-Russians are termed chernye ‘blacks’, neros ‘non-Russians’ or zapadnyc (from Western Ukraine)». Ukraine and Ukrainians are derogatorily called churki, kihokhlobaks (from Western Ukraine)». Ukraine and Ukrainians are derogatorily called Khokhliandia, Samostitniaa (chempionat Samostitnoi), khokholoka, etc.

And now a couple of words about nicknames of VIPs. Putin at different stages of his career was termed prodolzhatel’ eltsinskikh idei, «naslednik», Yeltsin posledefoltovskogo perioda, Pauk, Vovan, VVP. Anatoliy Chubais, responsible for the process of privatization in Russia, probably, has the biggest amount of nicknames: Рzhayvi Tolik, Ryzhi, Vaucher, Zheleznyi Drovosiek; Kirenko – Kinder-stipurprz, Boris Nemtsov – Kudriavyi, Dumshti Kazanova, Luzhkov – Luzhok, Kepka, Kolobok, Lavrentii Palych Meria, Boris Berezovenko- BAB, Bereza.

How can you translate into normal language the title of the article Pasha-Mersedes stal Pashe-Katafalkom? (about Pavel Grachev, Russia’s Minister of Defense during El’tsin’s period) [lobbying of the interests of the funeral agency Memorial]. Irina Khakamada – Khriosiina, Grigoriy Iavlinskii – Ivilo. Boris Eltsin – Rukovodiashchii stakan, Alkogolitsmiss Usia Rusi, Ded, Isenordoro izbranny, Garant, Tsar’ Boris, BEN, Elkin, EBN. Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma – Harant, Papa, Pukhan. Sportmen have their nicknames: former Loko’s goalkeeper (Moscow) Sergei Ovechinnikov – Boss, former AC Milan’s (and current «Dynamo» Kyiv’s) striker Andrii Shevchenko – Boss, former AC Milan’s (and current «Dynamo» Kyiv’s) striker Andrii Shevchenko- Sheva, etc. Nicknames are especially popular among actors, pop singers: Zemfira – Zema, Filipp Kirkorov – Zaika, Zaika rossiiskoi estrady, Alla Pugachova – Primadonna. Madonna, excuse me, please, according to:82 Главнаia trakhal’ schitka ‘The main fucker’. The word is a neologism and is not registered in the dictionaries.

My conclusion is pretty optimistic about the development of the Russian language lexicon in the 21st century.

Business terminology.

Ukrains’ka stala movoiu i maloho, i velykoho biznesu ‘Ukrainian became the language of small as well as big business’ – states Antonina Berezovenko (21)85. I cannot agree with this statement. Russian has been mostly used for big business. Berezovenko (22) points out at influence of Internet and parliamentary speech. The second factor nowadays is minor and cannot be considered as a very serious one.

The Language of marshrutka.

In her article86 Lesia Stavyts’ka remarks that marshrutki appeared about ten years ago in Ukrainian urban space. Stavyts’ka (26) talks about ahresvnyi formy povedinkiy, zokrema zastyhloho v chasi sovkovoho khamstva z chipkoiu pryvizeanistiu do radians’koi lozungovoi rytoryky, avariina svidomist postradians’koi liudyny, infikovanoi permanentnym strakhom ‘aggressive forms of behavior, in particular frozen in time Soviet rudeness with tight attachment to Soviet slogan rhetoric, alarming consciousness of post-Soviet person, infected with permanent fear’.

My observation was conducted in marshrutka «Ostroh – Rivne» (Ukraine), February 27, 2011, time of departure from Ostroh – 9: 30 a.m., arrival time to Rivne – 10: 20 a.m.

77 Komsomol’skia pravda, 1.04.2003.
78 Komsomol’skia pravda, 2.09.2000.
79 Fakty i kommentarii, 15.08.2000.
81 Shlyakhov and Adler 140.
82 title of the article, Komsomol’skia pravda, 21.02.2003.
84 Komsomol’skia pravda, 11.08.2000.
The instructor of physical culture of Ostroh School No. 1 is Russian speaking, students (their age approximately 12-15) going to the baseball competition are Ukrainian speaking. The instructor communicates all the time in Russian. The instructor is female, age approximately 25-30 (the students called her «Vasylivna»). She uses all the time slang, jargon, vulgarisms (for example, gani bablo ‘give me money’ — rude, vulgar, used approximately 12-15 times, kapiets vsiem ‘all will be finished’, atpad ‘’, used several times, blin ‘gosh’, rubliei ‘roubles’ instead of hryven ‘hryvnias’). The students also used several times rubliei instead of hryven, but some do not. They used only hryvni. All the students are communicating in Ukrainian. But one of the students in his Ukrainian inserted words like sieichas ‘now’, pazhaluista ‘please’. The instructor only once made an awkward attempt to use Ukrainian word. She said: Dienieg nima’ ‘No money’. (twice). The students immediately started to laugh and said: «Vona nima. Zavzhdy nima ‘She is deaf. Always deaf’. She does not even know the simplest Ukrainian word nemaie ‘there is not’. The instructor did not talk quietly, she was mostly yelling at her students and the whole marshrutka heard this ‘interaction’. The students did not use many slang/jargon words, though there were some, like shyriaieshsia, sharyshsia ‘fussy, running too much’.

Among the recent publications on slang we can mention Mini Dictionary of Local Slang published in Ostroh Academy National University (360 widely used slang expressions in Rivne region). The respondents’ age was 14 – 30. Among unusual ones in this dictionary one can mention: zieliki ‘US dollars’, kafedra filosofii ‘washroom’, mitynhailo ‘talkative person’, monia ‘slow person’, iuki-puki ‘fantastic’, iushch ‘unreliable person’, iaha ‘woman with wrong make-up’.

Conclusions. Ukrainian has been trying hard to overcome its colonial status. For the recent more than twenty years there have been tremendous positive gains as well as sizeable losses. Russian was entering this 20-year period in much better shape and form. But it suffered certain losses as well. The 21st century will be decisive for both languages functioning and expansion the sphere of their application.