

CULTURAL CODE IN FLUX: HOW HISTORICAL EVENTS SHAPE LANGUAGE EVOLUTION

Introduction. The evolution of a language is directly correlated with the mindset of the people who use it, the particularities of existence, communication skills, and historical circumstances. Language is more than just a means of communication. It is also a cultural code shared from generation to generation. Simultaneously, the language impacts the people's worldview, thinking, values, and traditions, giving them continuity of preserving the uniqueness of the ethnic group's mindset while changing its historical forms [1, p. 167]. Language is a heritage of the past and is constantly renewed in the current times.

This work concerns with the impact of historical events on the language and identifying their specific consequences.

Every historical experience, especially large-scale ones such as wars, revolutions, and migrations, which often occur because of the previous two points, significantly impacts the evolution of language. These effects can manifest at different levels: lexical, grammatical, phonetic, and, of course, at the level of people's worldview. However, as mentioned above, the language will certainly reflect it.

As a consequence, warfare creates new concepts about the weapons and equipment used, necessitating the creation of new words. Moreover, wars lead to the migration of large populations, contributing to the spread of dialects and the language itself if we are talking about movement outside the country.

According to the findings obtained during the Russian-Ukrainian war, Ukrainian neologisms are becoming increasingly popular in the English-speaking world. To illustrate, here are the most popular neologisms in English that occurred in 2022.

We begin by looking at the phrase “tractor troops”. The term was given to Ukrainian farmers who have used their tractors to remove Russian military tanks and other weapons from the battlefield [4, p. 108].

“Shoiguing” was derived from the speeches of Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu, who constantly pretends that “everything is going according to plan” amidst apparent failure both on the battlefield and in all other areas. The neologism has acquired the meaning “to pretend with pathetic pathos that everything is going well, when in fact things are going terrible” [4, p. 109].

“Macronite” – a prominent verb interpreted as “to be very concerned but decline to help”. It was coined as a consequence of frustration with the French president’s inaction regarding the Russian invasion of Ukraine [4, p. 108].

Finally, we will discuss revolutions in more detail. They often lead to a transformation of the official language of a state. It may be due to a desire for national self-identification, a new political system, or a commitment to integration with other countries. Throughout its history, Ukraine has experienced several revolutions, each of which has left its mark on the language.

The Revolution of Dignity in 2014 was undoubtedly one of modern Ukraine’s most crucial historical events. It was marked by strengthening national consciousness and the revival of the Ukrainian language. After decades of Soviet (USSR) tyranny and particular neglect of the language issue after the collapse of the USSR, the number of Ukrainian-language media and Ukrainian music, films, and books has increased. The Revolution of Dignity contributed to the Ukrainian language symbolising the struggle for independence and democracy [2, pp. 292-293].

Consequently, laws were passed to protect and promote the Ukrainian language. In addition, the language awareness of Ukrainians has increased, and more people have begun to communicate in Ukrainian in everyday speech [2, p. 294].

Despite all the positive aspects, we still have some negative ones.

Ukrainians needed sufficient Ukrainian-language materials, such as scientific literature and educational books. This issue is still relevant until now.

There is often a strong desire for change and modernisation in the wake of revolutions. Following the Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine, there has been an increased interest in Western values and lifestyles. It has resulted in an appreciation of Anglicisms, perceived as a sign of modernity and progressiveness. Account, bullying, gadget, deadline, drone, coach, like, onion, screenshot, spam, start-up, tutor, fake, fitness, check, shopping – this is just a limited selection of anglicisms that have become commonplace in modern Ukrainian [3, p. 46].

Although Ukrainian words for such realities in our language are available, familiar, and understandable to its speakers, rapid technological progress constantly requires new words to appear and develop. However, they are merely borrowed from the original. At the same time, at the present stage, English is a means of international communication and the language of the leading mass media: major radio and television companies, the global Internet, and many newspapers and magazines, and, therefore, it is impossible to ignore its influence on our language.

Conclusion. Language is not only a means of communication. At the same time, it is a mirror that reflects all the changes taking place in the society. Historical changes, such as revolutions, wars, and migrations, leave a profound mark on the language. Studying these changes allows us to understand better the language and the history of the people who use it.

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