

ANALYSIS OF ADAPTATION AND USE OF SOCIO-POLITICAL CONCEPTS IN RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH DISCOURSES

R. Andashova ¹, Mirzalim kyzy Gulmeerim ²

Abstract:

This article examines the factors influencing the transformation of terminology in media discourse, including historical context, ideological frameworks, national values, and political circumstances. It explores examples of key concepts being reinterpreted depending on social and cultural contexts, as well as their use in propaganda and political discourse. Particular attention is paid to the differences in the interpretation of terms in Russian- and English-language media sources, identifying cases of borrowing, adaptation, and rethinking of concepts depending on the target audience. The role of digital technologies and social media algorithms in spreading new interpretations of terms and shaping the global agenda is also considered. Additionally, the research analyzes the influence of international organizations, political leaders, and social movements on the transformation of key concepts and their perception in different cultural and linguistic environments. It explores how media discourse contributes either to the convergence or the deepening of differences in the understanding of socio-political concepts in the context of global communication.

Key words: media discourse, sociopolitical concepts, linguistic adaptation, globalization, political manipulation, Cross-cultural communication, International terms, semantic transformation.

Globalization, as a comprehensive process of interconnection and interdependence of states and societies, exerts a profound and multifaceted impact on all aspects of human life, including language and political discourse. Its influence manifests in the rapid spread of socio-political concepts, ideas, and ideologies that transform local cultures and political systems. This phenomenon has been made possible by a number of factors that are interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

First and foremost, international organizations such as the United Nations, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund play a crucial role. At the same time, the mechanisms of borrowing and adapting such concepts in different languages remain insufficiently studied, making them an important area of research. These organizations establish global standards and promote specific political and economic models, thereby shaping a unified international political language and discursive frameworks. Their influence extends from the adoption of international treaties and agreements to the financing of development projects, which are often accompanied by the implementation of certain ideological orientations. For example, programs supporting democratization are frequently linked to the promotion of liberal values and institutions, which impacts the political culture of the recipient countries.

Secondly, the development of digital media and the global internet network has become a catalyst for the globalization process. Mass media, social networks, and online platforms ensure the rapid dissemination of information, ideas, and propaganda on a global scale, blurring the boundaries between cultures.

However, the globalization of information flows not only facilitates greater accessibility to knowledge but also presents certain risks. This process has a dual effect: on the one hand, it increases awareness and provides access to diverse viewpoints, but on the other hand, it contributes to the spread of disinformation, radical ideas, and the creation of «echo chambers» in which people encounter only homogeneous opinions, reinforcing their biases [15, p. 137].

In this process, linguistic borrowing becomes one of the key tools through which globalization permeates local cultures. The influence of this phenomenon on the language system is particularly evident in the process of borrowing and adapting terminology. Concepts such as «globalization», «migration», «populism», and «terrorism» actively penetrate national languages. Words that originally have Western origins gradually undergo adaptation, integrating into the norms of Russian and other languages [3, p.98].

¹ Andashova Rahima Musaevna, candidate of philological sciences, acting associate professor KSU named after I. Arabaev Institute of the world languages and international relations named after Sh. Kadyrova

² Mirzalim kyzy Gulmeerim, teacher, Kyrgyz National University named after J. Balasagyn, Target Institute of preparation Pedagogical Personnels named after I. Isamidinov Department of Philological and Socio-economic Education

It is important to understand that borrowing does not occur randomly. It follows certain patterns and is directly linked to areas where contact between languages is most active. Political discourse, being one of the most dynamic fields, is especially susceptible to the influence of global processes. The impact of media and the internet space as the main sources of borrowing in language can be traced through current trends and their effect on political vocabulary.

The modern digital technologies significantly accelerate the process of terminology dissemination, transforming borrowed words into part of everyday language. International news agencies such as BBC, CNN, and Reuters, along with social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook) and political blogs, create a global information environment. In this environment, new concepts spread at an incredible speed, becoming ingrained in public consciousness. This phenomenon is actively studied in linguistics and sociology, where the mechanisms of borrowing and adapting terms from one language system to another are examined [4, p. 132].

One of the most prominent examples of such borrowings are the terms «fake news» and «cancel culture», which emerged in the English-speaking media space and have become an integral part of global political lexicon.

«Fake news» has become widely used in the context of misinformation spread through media or online platforms to manipulate public opinion or the political process. Due to its brevity and universality, the term quickly spread to other linguistic and cultural environments, sometimes without any changes, which indicates its high adaptability. In the article «Fake News: A New Era of Media Manipulation», the authors emphasize that the term not only describes false information but also reflects changes in the perception of public information in the postmodern era, where truth and falsehood are often mixed.

However, the perception of fake news varies across cultures. In Western countries, such as the United States and the United Kingdom, the term is seen as a threat to democratic institutions tied to the independence of the media. In the study «Fighting Fake News: A Data-Driven Approach to Social Media Manipulation», it is confirmed that the Western audience tends to associate fake news with political manipulation, which exacerbates public discontent. In Eastern European and Asian countries, the perception may be less negative, as news is often more situational and dependent on the political situation in each state [9, p. 129].

The term "cancel culture" also emerged in the English-speaking society as a reaction to social and political practices aimed at boycotting public figures or ideas that violate ethical norms. It encompasses the phenomenon of mass condemnation and exclusion of individuals or organizations, which can be seen as a tool for social accountability. In the article «Cancel Culture and the Politics of Public Shaming», author K. H. Fearnley argues that in Western societies, this term is actively used to discuss the consequences of public acts or statements that contradict prevailing moral standards.

At the same time, the perception of cancel culture across different countries also demonstrates significant differences. In English-speaking countries, this term is often seen as a necessary measure aimed at strengthening social justice and equality. Research by R. K. Brown highlights that for American and British audiences, cancel culture is often associated with minority rights movements and anti-discrimination initiatives. In Eastern countries such as China or India, this phenomenon is viewed with caution, as these cultures place a higher value on collective stability and traditional norms, which conflicts with ideas about public boycotts and cancellations.

As a result, the borrowing of terms such as «fake news» and «cancel culture» is not only linked to global processes but also to differences in the perception of these phenomena across various cultures. The influence of media and the internet on the spread of such terms can be seen as a vivid manifestation of globalization; however, this influence has different nuances and interpretations depending on the cultural and political contexts in which these terms are used.

Alongside the media, the academic environment plays a significant role. University programs, research, translations of scientific literature, and international educational initiatives contribute to the incorporation of borrowed terms into professional lexicon. For instance, the concept of «populism» is widely used in political science, and its interpretation can vary across languages. In the English-speaking tradition, the term often carries a negative connotation, associated with the manipulation of public opinion. Meanwhile, in Russian discourse, it may be perceived more neutrally or even positively, which demonstrates the complexity of adapting borrowed concepts.

Furthermore, political institutions are actively involved in the dissemination of international terminology. Official speeches, legislation, and international agreements contribute to the consolidation of foreign concepts at the state level. Organizations such as the UN, the EU, and the WTO introduce standardized terminology, which is then adapted into national languages. For example, the term «human rights» is widely used in international law and diplomacy, but its interpretation can vary depending on the political context of a country.

The term itself was borrowed by numerous legal and political systems, especially after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. It became a key concept in international law, but its interpretation and application can differ significantly depending on the political context of the country. In democratic countries, human rights are understood as universal and inviolable, whereas in authoritarian regimes, restrictions may be placed on these rights or caveats may be made due to cultural and political factors. For example, in some countries, human rights are interpreted in light of traditions and laws, while in others, they are seen as part of a global movement for freedom and equality [12, p. 99].

Consequently, the term «human rights» becomes not just a borrowed term but also an important political tool. In countries with different political systems, its meaning may be adapted, reworked, or reinterpreted. This illustrates how international terminology can change depending on the internal political context and how it plays a role in shaping political and legal identity at a global level [8, p. 115].

However, the integration of international terminology into language is just the initial stage. Once a term enters the language, the process of its adaptation begins so that it can function within the framework of the native language system. This turns international concepts into integral elements of national discourse, requiring certain lexical and grammatical adjustments. One of the most common methods of adaptation is transliteration. This is a process in which the word retains its pronunciation but is written according to the orthographic norms of the target language. For example, the word «globalization» is transliterated as «глобализация», and «migration» as «миграция». Such borrowings remain close to the original in sound but comply with the rules of the Russian language, allowing them to be integrated into everyday use.

It is important to note that the political, social, and cultural environment in which borrowing occurs has a noticeable impact not only on the graphical form but also on the significant shift in the meaning of words. Subsequently, borrowed terms, even if they retain their original meaning in their language of origin, may acquire new nuances in other languages and contexts. This phenomenon is particularly characteristic of political and socio-cultural terms, which are often rephrased depending on the specifics of national identity and political circumstances. Therefore, the study of such words is not limited to their graphic adaptation but requires a thorough analysis of how their meanings change in different contexts.

Thus, the process of adapting foreign words into the native language represents not only a lexical transformation but also a significant alteration of meanings caused by new cultural and social realities. Research in this field shows that borrowings can undergo minimal changes as well as significant transformations, depending on how deeply a term is integrated into public consciousness and political discourse [11, p. 204]. An example of this is terms like «startup» or «liberalism», which undergo changes not only in terms of spelling but also in perception.

In particular, the term «startup», borrowed from English, has adapted to the Russian reality not only in terms of transliteration but has also acquired new nuances in the context of a dynamically developing economic environment. In the Russian language, this word has become not only a designation for startup companies but also a symbol of entrepreneurial activity and an innovative approach to business. Meanwhile, the word «liberalism» is often perceived with a distorted meaning, opposite to the liberal philosophy of the West. While in the West it is associated with progressive social and economic reforms, in the post-Soviet republics, it often takes on the connotation of political opposition and instability. This difference can be explained not only by translation nuances but also by the perception of political movements in different countries [19, p. 115].

The adaptation of international terms may not be limited to changes in form or meaning alone. The influence of cultural and political factors becomes especially apparent when a term begins to be used in the context of phenomena specific to a given culture. For instance, the term «human rights» has been borrowed into various legal systems through international legal agreements, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, in different countries, this term can have various interpretations, taking into account the specifics of the social and political situation. Furthermore, changes also concern the context in which terms are used.

Depending on cultural and political conditions, the same word can carry different shades of meaning. For instance, the concept of «soft power», introduced by Joseph Nye in the 1990s, which implies the influence of a state through culture, diplomacy, and values, is viewed as a positive tool in international relations in English-speaking countries. Moreover, this concept is seen as a way to build «soft» influence, where values and culture help strengthen a state's position in international politics [7, p. 65].

However, in the context of the Russian language and cultural environment, the perception of soft power carries a somewhat different meaning, which is linked to the specifics of foreign economic and political policies. Often, this term is associated with geopolitical competition and strategies aimed at reinforcing national interests in the context of international political tension. In Russian discourse, soft power may be perceived

as a means of resistance rather than merely a tool for peaceful influence. This perception is not related to the rejection of the idea of soft power itself, but rather to the context in which it is applied.

Research shows that the perception of this term in different countries greatly depends on the political situation and historical context. For example, in the post-Soviet space, where geopolitical competition is often emphasized, soft power is viewed more as part of a broader strategy to counter the West. In contrast, in Western countries such as the United States or the United Kingdom, soft power represents a part of positive foreign policy aimed at improving global relations through cultural and educational exchanges, media, and diplomatic efforts.

An example of this is the use of state influence through mass media and cultural initiatives, which are often highlighted in the context of geopolitical competition for influence on the international stage [18, p.113]. At the same time, in Western countries, soft power is actively employed to promote the values of democratic governance, human rights, and international cooperation.

As a result, the perception of the concept of soft power in different cultures and political contexts undergoes significant changes, and its interpretation in Russian and English can vary considerably depending on the political situation, international relations, and national identity. As researcher Joseph Nye notes, soft power fundamentally involves the use of cultural, diplomatic, and informational tools to influence international relations, which in turn affects the perception of terms in various linguistic and political contexts. This process requires not only borrowing words but also their deep adaptation, often with changes in meaning, to account for the political and cultural specifics of a given country [7, p. 72]. Consequently, the perception of the concept of soft power and other terms, such as «democracy», «inclusivity», and «cybersecurity», can significantly differ depending on the political situation and cultural peculiarities.

One vivid example of this influence is the use of the term human rights. In English-speaking countries, it is perceived as a universal and global concept, encompassing a wide range of rights and freedoms, including civil, political, and socio-economic rights. However, in other countries, this term often undergoes localization and modification depending on the political situation. In some contexts, "human rights" may be viewed as a tool of influence by Western countries, reflecting a more complex and ambiguous perception of the term in international relations. This is explored in the works of authors such as Vladimir Kozhin, who analyzes the perception of Western human rights ideals in the post-Soviet space [5, p.73].

The adaptation of borrowed terms into everyday language occurs through various channels, such as the media, social networks, and political or governmental speeches. In public discourse, borrowed terms are not only integrated into national languages, but also play a significant role in shaping public opinion and political preferences. For example, in recent decades, the term cybersecurity has become a key element in both domestic policy and international security. The issue of internet security has become particularly relevant in the context of combating cyberattacks and protecting state information. However, this term has acquired a specific meaning, often being associated with protection from external threats. In Western countries, the term is used more neutrally, where cybersecurity is often seen as part of a broader concept of protecting private interests and data [17, p. 142].

The inclusion of international terms in the linguistic discourse is accompanied not only by the adaptation of their phonetic and grammatical forms, but also by changes in their semantic content. These changes are caused by differences in the cultural and historical development of languages, as well as the peculiarities of social consciousness and the political context. In English, many terms retain a neutral or positive connotation, whereas in Russian, they may acquire additional connotations related to societal perceptions.

This difference is especially noticeable in terms that have socio-political significance. One of the most striking examples of semantic transformation is the term liberalism. In English, liberalism broadly refers to a political philosophy focused on individual freedom, human rights protection, and market economy. In British and American discourse, this term can also refer to support for social reforms aimed at inclusivity and equality [10, p. 134]. In Russian, the word liberalism is often associated with political opposition and negative connotations related to Western influence. This change in meaning can be explained by historical factors, including the perception of liberal reforms in 19th- and 20th-century Russia [21, p. 92].

Another term that takes on different shades of meaning in Russian and English is globalization. In English, globalization is primarily viewed as an economic and cultural process aimed at the integration of countries and the development of international cooperation. In scientific discussions, the term has a neutral or positive connotation, denoting the expansion of interaction between states [14, p. 157]. In Russian, the word «глобализация» often carries connotations of the loss of national identity and a threat to traditional values, which is linked to political discourse and media narratives in recent decades [22, p. 134].

The concept of tolerance also demonstrates significant differences in interpretation between Russian and English. In English, the word tolerance is used in the context of human rights and democracy, denoting respect for differences and the principle of non-coercion to uniformity [3, p. 27]. In Russian, the term «толерантность» is sometimes perceived as an artificially imposed requirement, which is linked to differences in traditional values and public perception of social norms. Research shows that in Russian, the word is more commonly used in legal and political texts but is less frequently found in everyday communication, in contrast to English, where it has broader application [20, p. 44-43].

The examples above confirm that the borrowing of international terms is not only a process of linguistic adaptation but also a semantic transformation dependent on the cultural and political context. The differences in the perception of the same concepts in Russian and English highlight the complexity of interlingual communication, especially in the age of digital technologies, where the spread of terms is accelerated by the global information environment.

One of the key factors influencing the changing meanings of borrowed terms is digital platforms. Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and other social networks have become not just channels for information dissemination, but also arenas for political discourse, where international terms acquire new shades of meaning. Research shows that the algorithms of social platforms contribute to the formation of resonant topics, turning individual political concepts into constructs that are then interpreted differently in various cultural contexts [1, p.912].

Moreover, leading news agencies such as BBC, CNN, RT, The Guardian, and The New York Times play a significant role in broadcasting international political concepts, influencing their perception by audiences. For instance, according to the study «A Decade of Research on Social Media and Journalism: Assumptions, Blind Spots, and a Way Forward», differences in the coverage of the same events in English- and Russian-language media lead to changes in the semantic content of terms. This is especially noticeable in political terminology related to crises, protests, and international sanctions [6, p. 129].

A vivid example of this phenomenon is the concept of fake news. Initially, this term was used in the English-language media discourse to refer to misinformation spread through news sources [16, p. 113]. However, over time, it became a tool of political rhetoric: politicians and public figures began using it not only to describe false information but also to discredit opponents, claiming that their criticism was part of «fake news» [2, p. 23].

In Russian, this term also entered the political discourse, but with certain changes in its perception. While in the English-language context it is more often used in connection with disinformation in the media, in the Russian discourse it is frequently applied in a broader sense, encompassing not only false news but also any information that is questioned in official sources [13, p. 25].

These examples highlight that the borrowing of terms in the media space is not a simple process of translating meanings. On the contrary, in the context of a digital society, international terms become objects of political manipulation, reinterpretation, and transformation, making their analysis particularly important in media discourse studies.

In this context, globalization plays a key role in adapting socio-political concepts to national linguistic and cultural peculiarities. International terms, penetrating various language systems, influence public consciousness, transforming perceptions of political processes, human rights, civil liberties, and international relations. Their use in media and public discussions solidifies these concepts in national discourse, giving them new semantic hues and infusing them with additional connotations.

Thus, language becomes not just a tool of communication but also a powerful mechanism for influencing the worldview of the audience. The interaction of English-language and Russian-language media discourses demonstrates how dynamic the process of forming meanings of borrowed terms is. Understanding these processes is especially important in the context of global information exchange, where the interpretation of the same concepts can differ significantly depending on political context, cultural traditions, and media narratives. Studying such transformations not only helps identify the principles of linguistic adaptation but also deepens the understanding of the formation of contemporary political rhetoric and shows how language influences the shaping of public opinion.

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