

**METAPHORIZATION OF THE PAST IN THE RUSSIAN-
LANGUAGE MEDIA DISCOURSE (BASED ON THE
MATERIAL OF TRANSPORT LEXIS)***

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Abstract: *The paper presents an attempt to study the peculiarities of metaphorization of the past in the Russian-language media discourse based on the materials of transport lexis. The complex analysis of the political media texts makes it possible to highlight transport lexis as a key source of the metaphorization at the explication of social and political realia connected with the past. It has been established that the image of the state in the mass media political texts is objectivized through the extended metaphor of a horse with a coachman. The coachman in the mass media texts may be political leaders, while the cart is the state. The paper underlines that such associations appear on the basis of the integral components with a negative connotation and characterize the return to the past as an undesirable vector of the development for the society and the state. It has been established that despite the low performance of the horse-drawn transport in modern society, this kind of transport at the metaphorical expansion is a valuable source of metaphorical modeling.*

Keywords: media text, political communication, metaphorical modeling, metaphor, connotation, semantic component.

The mass media in modern society are considered as the instrument aimed at imposing the political views and interests on the reader, trying to form the public opinion on the most important political issues¹. From this perspective, the vector of the political development of the society is defined by the fact, on the implementation of which strategies and tactics the media texts are focused, and which images they form in the recipient' mind.^{2,3,4} So, it is quite obvious that the image of a successful state is formed through the language units modeling its aspirations towards the

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¹ I.V. Zhilavskaya, T.V. Ivanova, "The total media theory: The experience of justification", in *Astra Salvensis*, 2018, vol. 6, no. 12, p. 665-677.

² A.D. Vasiliev, *A word on television: essays on the latest usage in Russian television broadcasting*, Flint, Krasnoyarsk, 2000.

³ T.G. Dobrosklonskaya, *Media linguistics: a systematic approach to the study of the language of the media: the modern English media network*, Flinta, Moscow, 2008.

⁴ V.G. Kostomarov, *Language taste of the era. From observations on speech practice of the media*, Zlatoust, St. Petersburg, 1999.

future, and the integration into the new social and political realities.^{5,6} The lack of prospects, the impossibility of constructive development is vice versa objectivized due to a particular layer of lexis appealing to the past as a closed chapter, the return to which is undesirable for the political subject. It is particularly the study of the metaphorical capacity of the language units at their manifestation in the media texts that is a key task for the modern linguistics.^{7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15}

The objective of the research is to reveal the peculiarities of the metaphorization of the past in the Russian-language media discourse based on the materials of transport lexis.

We should underline that the Russian-language corpus of media text is rich in metaphors from the 'transport' lexical-semantic field forming inhomogeneous and sometimes unpredictable metaphorical scenarios. There is certain regularity in it: lexis used in the sphere of policy is reflected in the associative-synonymic sequence of words from the sphere connected with transport and consequently causes the process of its rethinking. The high performance of this source-sphere is explained by the presence of the integral component 'movement' peculiar both for the transport lexis and for the political subjects. The world of policy is

⁵ O.L. Mikhaleva, *Political Discourse: Specificity of the Manipulative Impact*, LIBROCOM, Moscow, 2009.

⁶ S.I. Smetanina, *Media text in the system of culture (dynamic processes in the language and style of journalism of the late twentieth century)*, V. A. Mikhailov, St. Petersburg, 2002.

⁷ N.D. Arutyunova, *Metaphor and discourse. Theory of metaphor*, Moscow, 1990. Available at: <http://www.philology.ru/linguistics1/arutyunova-90.htm>

⁸ A.N. Baranov, *On the types of compatibility of metaphorical models. Questions of linguistics*, Nauka, Moscow, 2003.

⁹ L.E. Bessonova, "Communicative aspects of political discourse", in *Scientific Notes TNU them. IN AND. Vernadskogo. Series "Philological Sciences"*, 2004, vol. 16, no. 55, p. 22-27.

¹⁰ I.M. Kobozeva, "Semantic problems of analyzing political metaphors", in *Bulletin of Moscow State University*, 2001, vol. 6, p. 54-60.

¹¹ E.S. Kubryakova, "To the problem of mental representations", in *Cognitive Linguistics Issues*, 2007, vol. 4, p. 8-16.

¹² T.G. Skrebtsova, "Metaphors of modern Russian foreign policy discourse", in *Respectus Philologicus*, 2002, vol. 1, no. 6, p. 113-125.

¹³ V.N. Telia, *Metaphorization and its role in creating a linguistic picture of the world. The role of the human factor in the language*, Moskva, Moscow, 1988.

¹⁴ A.P. Chudinov, *Essays on contemporary political metaphorology*, Ural. State Ped. Un-t, Ekaterinburg, 2013.

¹⁵ N.G. Osipova, S.O. Elishev, G.B. Pronchev, "Mass information media and propaganda mouthpiece as a tool for manipulating and social inequality factor among the young people", in *Astra Salvensis*, 2018, vol. 6, p. 541-550.

considered as not only hierarchical but also dynamic system: states develop with a particular speed facing various obstacles; the political leaders fade away or lose in the political races; the political leaders are compared with powerful and maneuvering transport capable of outriding and destroying the rivals. These and many other analogies allow describing political events through the language units of the transport sphere.

Analysis of the mass media political texts

By objectivizing the social and political peculiarities of the modern world order, metaphors are obligatory and integral elements of the political reviews. The use of the metaphorical expressions ensuring particular (more often – negative) perception by the recipient of political realia is an integral part of the Russian-language political discourse in the last decade.

Due to the low performance of the *horse-drawn transport* in the modern world, the corresponding metaphorical images are not frequent. By the *horse-drawn transport*, we mean both cargo and passenger transport, where the transport is driven by horses (in the Slavic tradition). As seen from the analysis, it is particularly the image of a horse takes the central position at the formation of the metaphorical image of the horse-drawn transport: *The most important thing is to make the unemployed to pay. It is like making a dead horse to draw the cart. But dead horses don't draw carts. They are transported in the carts themselves*¹⁶. Such a comparison shows the entire invalidity of the decision made by the politicians and the impossibility to achieve positive results. In the naïve worldview the *cart* is undoubtedly an element of the past epoch, so the appeal to this unit emphasizes the backwardness, lack of relevance, and the impossibility to apply to the past scenario: *Where does Russia go in the old cart of the regime?*¹⁷ Using the expression 'first wheel in the cart' one appeals to the set expression 'first violin' and obtains the meaning 'to play the leading role', at the same time, the image of the cart underlines the imperfection of the political system: *Indeed, Duma is far from the first wheel in the Russian political cart*¹⁸.

¹⁶ Carriage under a dead horse. Public Opinion. Available at: <http://omkama.pф/?p=7270>

¹⁷ Where is Russia going on the old mode cart? Arkhangelsk Public. Available at: <http://arhsvoboda.ru/?p=25066>

¹⁸ Putin reserve: who will come to the new Duma? Available at: <https://ru.krymr.com/a/27987735.html>

The mass media political texts present a particular image of *britzka*. This word came to the Russian language from Ukrainian borrowed it from Polish, where *bryczka* came from German and Italian originated from a Latin word *birota*, which literally means ‘a hansom cab’ (*bis* – ‘twice’, *rota* – ‘a wheel’). In the media texts, the key unit *britzka* is manifested with the integral components ‘backwardness’, ‘outdatedness’, ‘poverty’, ‘lack of precise vision of prospects’: *The Russian britzka is going off-road because of the graft and corruption*. In comparison with the modern transport, the bold integral components become more emphasized obtaining a more ironical connotation: *Recently, the ordinary Summit BRICS ended in Durban (RSA), it is high time to discuss the results. What should Kyrgyzstan expect from the development of this organization? Let’s tell you a parable. If you stick your hand out at the empty road for a very long time, there is no difference for you what transport will pick you up. But what if there is a choice between a race car and a britzka drawn by a donkey?*¹⁹

One may observe the contamination of the image in the contexts. So, there is a combination of the meaning of *cart with lading* from the fable of Ivan Krylov ‘The Swan, the Pike and the Crawfish’ and *britzka* with the increasing ironical connotation: *I’m convinced there is no special strategic plan with far-ranging profits from the ‘Philippine ISIS and its disclosure’ in the Pentagon. They just implement the responsive policy there. While those who have the fire initiated are sitting in the neighboring department, but as though on another planet. As a result, these active crawfishes and playful pikes are able just to tear the American britzka apart.*²⁰

Image of state in the mass media political texts

The image of a state in the mass media political texts is objectivized through the extended metaphor of *a horse with a coachman*. Being dependent from the man driving it, the horse comes to his bow and readily does what he needs: *Since the dawn of time, coachmen used a reliable way of making the horse be more productive: they hung a wisp of hay before its neb. The animal went faster even without a whip. And the International Monetary Fund does the same towards Ukraine. The IMF acts as a coachman, while Ukraine is the horse. The horse is undernourished, but the coachman doesn’t feed it with oat, but just ‘motivates’ it with the ‘hay’.* By the oat here the loans are meant, while the hay is the promises of these loans. [...]. *In order to put the draft collar on the horse, first, it was offered a*

¹⁹ BRICS – racing car or squeaky cart of the world economy. Available at: <https://knews.kg/.../briks-gonochnaya-mashina-ili-skripuchaya-brichka-mirovoy-eko>

²⁰ The Philippine Question, ISIS * and the USA: The Enemy Is Everywhere. Available at: <https://jpagazeta.ru/filippinskiy-vopros-igil-i-ssha-vrag-povsyudu/>

generous amount of oat. The horse was getting hungry and weak. Having been caught into the 'draft collar' of the IMF financing program, Ukraine voluntarily deprived itself of many other financial sources and monetary income. We should underline that the tasks set by the coachman are destructive for the horse and may lead it to the inevitable death. It is interesting to observe the opposition of the images of *oat* and *hay* based on the correlation of the bait's quality: *oat* is considered as prioritized, while *hay* is the cheapest and thus the most undesirable kind of bait²¹.

The role of the *coachman* in the mass media texts may be played by the political leaders, while the cart is the state. The texts underline that without the political leader (coachman), the existence of the state is impossible: *How long will Moldova be a cart without the coachman? Valentina Ursu and her interlocutors speak about the importance of the quick formation of the new government*²².

A metaphorical image of a *carriage* is the most actively used with the allusion to the famous passage from the fairytale 'The Cinderella', where the carriage is to turn to a pumpkin at midnight: *The Crimean 'carriage' is turning to a pumpkin well away. The weekly news of the Crimea;*²³ *The 'Carriage' of Timoshenko risks becoming a pumpkin;*²⁴ *The carriage turned into a pumpkin again, while horses – into the mice..., while Santa Claus again became an ordinary Sakhalin lad*²⁵. In a mass media text compared with the fairytale, where the main character had been warned of such a transformation, it ruins the expectations and becomes a disappointment.

Another frequent combination is the expression *the carriage of the past*. For the first time, this unit was observed in the Maxim Gorky's work 'The Lower Depths' in the structure 'One cannot move forward in the carriage

²¹ Strategic Culture Foundation. Available at: fondsk.ru

²² How long should Moldova be a wagon without a cab? Available at: <https://www.europalibera.org/a/27128575.html>

²³ Ukraine – Crimea. Life information on a temporary occupied peninsula. Available at: <https://crimeaukr.wordpress.com/category/%D0%BD%D0%B5%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BB%D1%8C%D0%BD%D1%8B%D0%B9-%D0%BE%D0%B1%D0%B7%D0%BE%D1%80-%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%B6%D0%BD%D1%8B%D1%85-%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%B9-%D0%BA%D1%80%D1%8B%D0%BC/>

²⁴ "Carriage" Tymoshenko risks turning into a pumpkin. Available at: <https://www.ntv.ru/video/109263>

²⁵ Official site of the administration of the Uglegorsk city district. Available at: <http://uglegorsk.admsakhalin.ru/news/vse-novosti/%C2%ABkareta-snova-sdelalas-tykvoi-loshadi-%E2%80%93-myshami%E2%80%A6%C2%BB-ded-moroz-opyat-stal-obychnym-ugl>

of the past'. In communication, this structure is used to show that the new time requires new forms of life and action. In the media texts, the use of this attributive component appeals to the images of the past epochs and emphasizes the positive factors of the past that should be relevant for the present and future: *Migration: one cannot move from the far lands in the carriage of the past. The lack of possibility to ensure the positive natural increment of the Russian population in the nearest future, and moreover to replenish the significant decrease in the labor potential due to the internal resources sharply increases the significance of migration for the state;*²⁶ *'Carriage of the Past' becomes the most popular transport both in the USA and in Russia, and in many other states;*²⁷ *In the carriage of the past – capitalism – it is impossible to eliminate crisis*²⁸. *In the carriage of the past, if not to amend the Labor Code, it will become the break for the economic development of Russia*^{29,30}

In media texts, one may also come across the complete expression *one cannot move forward in the carriage of the past*. This structure is manifested in its initial (*The majority of people have a good sense of the fact that 'one cannot move forward in the carriage of the past', but somehow when they speak about the society in general, this carriage appears to be almost the most important or the only transport for many Russians*)³¹ or transformed (*Migration: one cannot move from the far lands in the carriage of the past; One cannot move to the future in the carriage of the past*)³² form. We should underline that the transformation of the structure leads to the acceleration of the ironical nuance defining the general modality of the text.

Thus, despite the low performance of the horse-drawn transport in modern society, this kind of transport at the metaphorical expansion is a valuable source of metaphorical modeling. The images, formed by the

²⁶ Migration: in the carriage of the past from afar you will not come. Available at: <http://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/2010/0417/tema07.php>

²⁷ Political Foundations of Bad Governance in Post-Soviet Eurasia: Towards a Research Agenda. Available at: <https://grey-dolphin.livejournal.com/tag/%D0%BC%D0%B8%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0%D1%8F%20%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%B0>

²⁸ Capitalism is the carriage of the past. Available at: cprfspb.ru/703.html

²⁹ In the carriage of the past. Available at: <https://profile.ru/ekonomika/item/59940-v-karete-proshlogo-59940>

³⁰ E. Kryukova, M. Vinichenko, S. Makushkin, A. Melnichuk, V. Bondaletov, E. Potekhina, "On sustainable economic development of the mono town of Baikal'sk", in *International Journal of Economic Research*, 2016, vol. 13, no. 6, p. 2409-2424.

³¹ "Carriage of the past" goes to a standstill. Available at: https://republic.ru/russia/kareta_proshlogo_cdet_v_tupik-879378.xhtml

³² Wait a steam train. Available at: <http://cprf.info/projects/vlast/17928.shtml>

language units from the lexical-semantic field 'horse-drawn transport' point at the backwardness, lack of relevance, impossibility to apply to the past scenario, which is peculiar to particular social-political situations.

Railroad as an explicating image in the linguistic view of the world

The first Russian railroad of 1837 predestined the new social-economic, political and cultural plans valuable for the state. The possibility of rapid motions at immense distances allowed not only laying significant routes, but also achieving various touristic and cognitive goals. There is no doubt in the fact that the public attitude towards the emergence of this kind of transport was contradictory – from excitement to panic terror. As noted by the research scientists, among the first the origination of the new 'miracle' was responded by the artists, illustrators, and literary men. Particularly their creative work originates new artistic images and ideas³³. In the literature, the railroad became not just a symbol of the movement along life, but also the incarnation of the rapid and unreversed motion. N.A. Nepomnyaschikh notes that in the 19th-century literary texts, the negative image of the railroad is formed, at the same time, the authors, first of all, apply to several 'obligatory' texts for this theme: 'The Railroad' by N.A. Nekrasov, 'Anna Karenina' by L.N. Tolstoy, and 'At the Railroad' by A. Blok. Over the last years regarding the railroad theme, the creative works of B. Pasternak and A. Platonov have been studied. It is particularly the negative perception of the railroad, with which many authors connect its symbolical meanings in the Russian tradition: 'the road built on bones'; 'inevitability of death/catastrophe at the railroad', 'destruction of the nature and the patriarchal order of life'; 'generalized personification of the evil of the technological progress'.³⁴ Dwelling upon the necessity of the railroad, K. Leontyev, the writer and philosopher of the late 19th century, wrote, "I'm afraid the earth may become a kind of the world's cobweb entangling the entire globe with only the undernourished omnivorous man in it hungry like a spider without any food to eat because he ate, damaged

³³ E. A. Maltseva, *The train as a metaphor in the artistic culture of Russia. Modernization processes in society and in railway transport: historical experience and modern practice: Materials of the All-Russian scientific-practical conference with international participation*, Omsk State. Un-t ways of communication, Omsk, 2014.

³⁴ N.A. Nepomnyaschikh, "Railway as a complex of motifs in Russian lyrics and epics", in *Plot-Motivic Complexes of Russian Literature*, 2012, vol. 1, p. 93.

and bedeviled everything that was natural and alive above ground. Don't these railroad lines resemble the threads of the world's cobweb?"³⁵

The dynamic nature of motion and the rapid change of pictures laid the basis of the cinematograph originated in the late 19th century; it is not accidental that the first movie in history made by the Lumière brothers appeared in 1895 was 'Arrival of a Train at a Station'.

As justly noted by E.P. Pyanykh, the significance of the railroad in the Russian and the world's tradition is caused first of all by the following fact: "where there is a railroad, there is the control over the space: it has been discovered and is subordinated to the man, he has comprehended, acquired, and habituated it. The space is alive (which cannot be said about the air and the water that remain uncontrollable natures)".³⁶ The control over the space in Russia was especially significant: the country with the vast territories was becoming a seamless organism, while the transition from one remote region to another appeared to be not only possible but rapid and exciting. As the analysis of the lexicographic sources showed, particularly for the Russian linguistic tradition the key unit 'train' and its synonyms play a significant role, are the core component of the set expressions (road train, glider train, suburban train, express train, passenger train, long-distance train, tube train, sled train, wedding train, high-speed train, freight train, tram, tourist train; the train of friendship, the train is off etc..) and the basis of metaphorization.

The significance of the railroad in the Russian culture and the fixity of its explicating images in the linguistic view of the world defined the popularity of the associated metaphors in the modern media texts.

Notably, in the world of policy, the *movement* is estimated constructively because it is the basis of any social-political changes. The movement under conditions of social-political decision-making and transformations goes in a particular strategically correct direction leading the political subject to the achievement of the set goal or the approximation to it. The beginning of the movement is progress revealing a series of opportunities for the moving object: *The political steam train of Russia gathers momentum, going to the station 'The State Duma Elections'*²⁹.

At the manifestation of the *steam train* lexeme in the political text, such semes as 'movement', 'speed', 'power' and 'goal' become dominating. This combination of semes is first of all actualized in the *steam train* unit. The lexeme *steam train*, the same as *the train* has a modern meaning in the

³⁵ K.N. Leontiev, *East, Russia and Slavs*, Respublika, Moscow, 2007.

³⁶ Ye.P. P'yanykh, "Railroad in the philosophical dimension", in *Bulletin of the Ural State University of Communications*, 2017, vol. 1, no. 33, p. 98-106.

wide context illustrations, which is revealed at the level of contextual comparisons.

Steam train is a transport firmly following according to the declared route despite the obstacles on its way: *The Ukrainian steam train is stubborn in its way to the West*;³⁷ ...there are several aspects one cannot let off as a harmless steam and to slow down an accelerating steam train of political dynamics.³⁸ Besides, in the political texts, the image of the *steam train* may become a metonymy. The nomination of 'steam train' is assigned to the political subjects having great influence and power: *In all the regional election campaigns, 'Yedinaya Rossiya' actively uses so-called 'steam trains'. 'Steam Trains' are famous people that may provide a serious electoral resource and help to win the elections*;³⁹ *Mironov will become a 'steam train', i.e. he will spearhead the party lists in the elections in all the regions*.⁴⁰ The meyorative connotation manifesting in a series of texts is caused by such semes as 'reliability', 'power', and 'safety'.

Different semantic content in a political text is obtained by lexeme *steam train* compared with lexeme *locomotive*. In such cases, the dominating semes are 'low', 'speed', 'backwardness': ...if Poland and Czechia went to Europe on a modern locomotive, then Ukraine – on a steam train of the early 20th.⁴¹ The comparison of the *locomotive–steam train* takes place due to the actualization of the polar semes 'modern'/'outdated' supported by the context surrounding.

Thus, the study of the metaphorical and metonymical potential of the transport lexis appealing to the past may be defined as a promising direction in the modern political linguistics. The change in the semantics of the words and expressions with the *transport* source-sphere functioning in the mass media political texts, the explication of the new connotative components in the structure of the key units leads to the manifestation of the high level of metaphoricity, the change in the connotative background and dynamics of the value benchmarks of the axiological scale peculiar to the modern political discourse.

³⁷ Ukrainian steam train goes to the West. Available at: <https://ria.ru/analytics/20051207/42355835.html>

³⁸ 2010, post-election scenarios of Ukraine. Available at: <http://vlasti.net/news/73173>

³⁹ Putin scored a team of "locomotives". Available at: <http://weekjournal.ru/politics/28447/>

⁴⁰ Mironov will become a locomotive. Available at: <https://www.mk.ru/politics/article/2010/04/05/462096-mironov-stanet-parovozom.html>

⁴¹ Ukraine went to the Kazakh diesel locomotive sanction. Available at: <http://www.sonar2050.org/publications/v-evropu-na-sankcionnom-teplovoze/>

The words and set phrases nominating the lexis of the past epochs, implement their meaning regarding the political events, persons, actions and situations, state and particular territories and the drawbacks of the social-political order of the states. In the media texts, the change in the meanings of the language units forming the new images and scenarios take place. The stylistic nuance, expressivity, metaphoricity, and policemantics of such words and structures are a powerful means of influence on the political worldview and provide an opportunity of revealing the key parameters for the association, forming the necessary attitude towards the political life of the state and society in the recipient's mind.