

PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS REVEALING THE NOTION 'WAR CRIMES' IN PUBLIC SPEECHES: A CONTRASTIVE STUDY

ФРАЗЕОЛОГІЧНІ ОДИНИЦІ, ЩО РОЗКРИВАЮТЬ ПОНЯТТЯ «ВОЄННІ ЗЛОЧИНИ» У ПУБЛІЧНИХ ПРОМОВАХ: КОНТРАСТИВНЕ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ

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The article examines the use of phraseological units that reflect the Ukrainian war crisis, namely Russian war crimes, in the public speeches of Boris Johnson, Joseph Biden, Andrzej Duda, and Volodymyr Zelenskyy during the first 100 days of the conflict. Throughout this period, the four leaders delivered 291 speeches, in which 793 instances of phraseological units were identified. The research employs contextual-interpretive, descriptive, and contrastive methods. A phraseological unit is understood as a stable and cohesive word combination with either a fully or partially figurative meaning, encompassing idioms, proverbs, sayings, aphorisms, and other fixed expressions. Drawing on the theoretical framework of Anita Naciscione, the study demonstrates that all the analyzed speeches feature phraseological units used in their base form, core form, and in instantial stylistic variations. The findings reveal that, in expressing their personal perspectives on the war and seeking to persuade their audiences, the leaders frequently employ stylistically modified forms of phraseological units – through replacement, insertion, inversion, addition, and phraseological allusion. Common themes expressed through these units across all four leaders include condemnation of Russian military aggression and its war crimes, praise for Ukrainian courage, calls for solidarity with Ukraine, and the moral opposition between good and evil. Thus, one of the common messages, Russian military aggression and its war crimes, is highlighted in the given article. The following phraseological units have been singled out in public speeches of four speakers representing this message – 'war crime', 'war machine', 'commit war crime', 'zbrodnie wojenne', 'zbrodnie przeciw ludzkości', 'воєнний злочин', 'злочин проти людства'; 'lay waste', 'grind into dust', 'ktoś zrownał z ziemią coś', 'coś leży w gruzach', 'стерти з лиця землі', 'не залишити сліду', 'рівняти з землею', 'не залишити каменя на камені', 'обернути/перетворити в попіл'; 'iron curtain', 'żelazna kurtyna', 'залізна завіса'.

Key words: phraseological unit, public speech, base form, core use, instantial stylistic use, phraseological allusion.

У статті досліджено фразеологічні одиниці, що відображають війну в Україні, зокрема військові злочини Росії, у публічних виступах Бориса Джонсона, Джозефа Байдена, Анджея Дуди та Володимира Зеленського протягом перших ста днів війни. Проаналізовано 291 виступ, у яких зафіксовано 793 приклади вживання фразеологічних одиниць. Методологічну основу дослідження становлять контекстуально-інтерпретаційний, описовий та контрастивний методи. Фразеологізм визначається як стале словосполучення з повністю або частково переосмисленим значенням. Виявлено, що у виступах чотирьох лідерів фразеологічні одиниці функціонують як у своїй традиційній формі, так і в модифікованих, стилістично варіативних формах. Для встановлення усталених форм фразеологізмів та їх мовленнєвих реалізацій було використано відповідні фразеологічні словники досліджуваних мов. Доведено, що, висловлюючи власне бачення війни, усі чотири політичні діячі активно використовують трансформовані фразеологізми, що зазнають різних змін – заміни, вставки, інверсії, додавання компонентів або реалізації у формі фразеологічної алюзії. Застосування компонентного аналізу дало змогу виокремити спільні тематичні напрями у виступах лідерів: засудження злочинів російської військової машини, підкреслення хоробрості українців, вираження солідарності з Україною та протиставлення добра і зла. У дослідженні також акцентовано, що використання таких фразеологічних одиниць 'war crime', 'war machine', 'commit war crime', 'zbrodnie wojenne', 'zbrodnie przeciw ludzkości', 'воєнний злочин', 'злочин проти людства'; 'lay waste', 'grind into dust', 'ktoś zrownał z ziemią coś', 'coś leży w gruzach',

‘стерти з лица землі’, ‘не залишити сліду’, ‘рівняти з землею’, ‘не залишити каменя на камені’, ‘обернути/перетворити в попіл’, ‘iron curtain’, ‘żelazna kurtyna’, ‘залізна завіса’ є виразником засудження військових злочинів держави-агресора.

Ключові слова: фразеологізм, публічний виступ, стала форма фразеологізму, стилістичне використання фразеологізму, фразеологічна алюзія.

Defining the problem. Although numerous studies have examined phraseological units, the fundamental issue of their identification and classification remains unresolved. Considerable terminological inconsistency also persists [6]. Western scholars predominantly employ the term *idiom* [5; 7; 9], whereas Eastern researchers tend to use *phraseological unit* [1; 2; 3; 11]. However, this distinction has begun to blur in recent years. In this study, we adopt the term *phraseological unit*, defining it as ‘stable, cohesive combination of words with a fully or partially figurative meaning’ [12, 24].

Various classifications of phraseological units have been proposed based on differing criteria, resulting in a proliferation of related terms. Here, the term *phraseological unit* is used as an umbrella concept encompassing fixed word combinations, proverbs, sayings, aphorisms, and similar expressions. As one of the linguistic means of expressing thought, a phraseological unit provides valuable insight into a speaker’s values, ideas, intentions, and beliefs. It represents ‘the speaker’s reflection in a communicative situation’ [4, 642], since the speaker associates their emotional, evaluative, and axiological stance with the phraseological expression used.

The primary pragmatic goal of public speech is persuasion – influencing the audience and shaping its viewpoints. Therefore, public addresses characteristically combine ‘rigorous logical reasoning, reflecting the objective state of affairs, with strong subjectivity that conveys the author’s personal emotions and attitudes toward the topic under discussion’ [10, 118]. Emotional content thus dominates public discourse and is conveyed through various linguistic means, among which phraseological units play a significant role.

The war in Ukraine erupted unexpectedly, drawing the attention of the entire world. Many global leaders voiced their positions on the conflict, expressing support for Ukraine. As the corpus of these public statements continues to expand daily, it merits systematic analysis. The present article focuses on one such line of inquiry – the use of phraseological units in the public speeches of four world leaders as a means of conveying their perspectives on the war.

Analysis of recent research and publications.

The stylistic potential of phraseological units has been examined by numerous scholars [2; 8; 9]. Anita Naciscione proposed the concepts of the *base form*, *core use*, and *instantial stylistic use* of a phraseologi-

cal unit. The *base form* corresponds to the dictionary version of a given phraseological unit. The *core use* closely resembles this base form, allowing for minor grammatical adjustments (such as tense changes); it is predictable and lacks additional stylistic coloration. In contrast, the *instantial stylistic use*, as defined by Naciscione, represents a unique, context-dependent realization of a phraseological unit that exists only within a specific text. This type of use introduces novelty and expressive impact, emphasizing the speaker’s creativity and emotional involvement.

Common manifestations of instantial stylistic use include extended metaphors, puns, cleft constructions, phraseological allusions, and numerous modifications of the unit’s structure – such as replacements, insertions, inversions, additions, zeugmas, periphrastic forms, and blendings. Naciscione also identifies other types of stylistic realization, including reiteration, saturation, cumulative, concurrent, and comprehensive uses of phraseological units.

In our study, we adopt several of these notions – specifically, *base form*, *core use*, *instantial stylistic use*, and *phraseological allusion*. The latter is defined as ‘a mental, implicit verbal or visual reference to the image of a phraseological unit, represented in discourse by one or more explicit image-bearing components and their contextual links that evoke the image’ [12, 110].

The primary **objective** of this article is to examine the distinctive features of phraseological unit usage in the public speeches of four national leaders – Boris Johnson, Joseph Biden, Andrzej Duda, and Volodymyr Zelenskyy – and to identify the main messages conveyed through these expressions. The analysis draws on 291 speeches delivered by the four leaders during the first 100 days of the war in Ukraine [20; 21; 22; 23], within which 793 instances of phraseological units were identified.

The research methodology is primarily based on the contextual-interpretative and contrastive methods. The contextual-interpretative approach aims to trace the development of central ideas and concepts within specific contexts of phraseological unit usage, as well as to interpret the author’s communicative intentions and persuasive strategies. The contrastive method is used to determine similarities and differences between the compared languages, focusing particularly on their phraseological aspects. Additionally, descriptive, component, and quantitative methods are employed.

Main findings. The analysis of the speeches reveals four recurring themes expressed through phraseological units, namely, the crimes of the Russian war machine, the courage of the Ukrainian people, solidarity with Ukraine, and the moral opposition between good and evil. This article specifically emphasizes the examination of phraseological units that represent Russia's war crimes in the public addresses of the four leaders. Prime Minister Boris Johnson states many times in his speeches that Russian started the war against Ukraine, against a peaceful country. Russia, namely Putin and his government, are to blame for breaking the foundations of the peace on the European continent – 'to launch assault', 'to launch onslaught', 'to launch war', 'to bring war', 'to unleash war': *President Putin of Russia has **unleashed war** in our European continent. He has attacked a friendly country without any provocation and without any credible excuse (GB2). In the 12 days since Russia **launched** this illegal and brutal **assault**, the world has come together in solidarity with the indomitable people of Ukraine (GB9). The friendship between our two countries has become even more vital since Putin **launched** his barbaric **onslaught against** Ukraine, **bringing war** to our continent (GB10).*

All the above-mentioned examples present the instantial stylistic use of the phraseological units. Thus, the base form of phraseological unit 'to launch something against something/somebody' turns into extended form with evaluative insertions 'launched *this illegal and brutal assault*', 'launched *his barbaric onslaught against*'. The base form of the phraseological unit 'to make war' changes in the text into '*bringing war*'. In our opinion, we can speak about using phraseological allusion 'unleashed war'. The original version sounds 'unleash/slip dogs of war', which originates in William Shakespeare's play 'Julius Caesar'.

In Boris Johnson's opinion, Russian troops commit many crimes on the territory of Ukraine against civilians and Russian government denies it. Russian war machine is numerous, but not always successful – 'war machine', 'war crimes', 'to commit war crimes', 'stain on the honour': *Putin's **war machine** will not succeed in holding down Ukraine (GB4). I think what Putin has done in places like Bucha and Irpin, his **war crimes** have permanently polluted his reputation and the reputation of his government (GB17). Russia's despicable attacks against innocent civilians in Irpin and Bucha are yet more evidence that Putin and his army are **committing war crimes** in Ukraine (GB13). And he knows they are **a stain on the honour** of Russia itself (GB14).*

Russian war machine is destroying to Ukraine as it ruins civilian infrastructure, levels with the ground towns and villages in Ukraine – 'to lay waste', 'to grind into dust' (biblical expressions), 'to tighten the vice', 'to bite off chunks', 'to vent fury on', 'to unleash fury': *I do not know whether Vladimir Putin is a Shostakovich buff or not, but is it not a tragic irony that a Russian leader, himself from Leningrad, should now be **laying waste** to cities in Ukraine as Volodymyr has just described (GB23). But we cannot and will not stand by while Russia **grinds** Ukraine's **towns and cities into dust** (GB12). The United Kingdom – and our allies in NATO and the G7 here today – are clear: we will not stand by while Putin **vents his fury** on Ukraine (GB12). We must accept the grim reality that Putin will continue **to tighten the vice**...(GB4).*

There are also some examples of instantial stylistic use of the given phraseological units. For instance, the base form of the phraseological unit 'to tighten the grip' is replaced into 'to tighten the vice' in the text. Phraseological allusion 'to grind into dust' refers to biblical expression 'to grind the faces of the poor into dust' (Isaiah 3:14-15).

The Prime Minister is sure that many Russian soldiers will be killed at the war and their families will be suffering – 'to lose one's life', 'one's heart aches': *The parents of Russian soldiers who will **lose their lives** (GB2). All **our hearts ache** for the Russian soldiers sent to die in this futile venture: we all grieve with their parents (GB4).*

President Joseph Biden stresses in his speeches that Russian government has been preparing for the war beforehand, convincing its citizens and the world, accusing Ukraine of all possible, however, very doubtful, sins – 'to set the stage for', '(staged) political theatre'. These phraseological units are repeated in Joseph Biden's speeches: *And this **set the stage for** further pretexts and further provocations by Russia to try to justify further military action (USA1). And we're in a critical window now of time where that – they're going **to set the stage for** the next phase of this war (USA19). We saw a **staged political theater** in Moscow – outlandish and baseless claims that Ukraine was – Ukraine was about to invade and launch a war against Russia, that Ukraine was prepared to use chemical weapons, that Ukraine committed a genocide – without any evidence (USA2).*

Russia started the war in Ukraine hoping that the world could be divided, but they failed. President Joseph Biden remarks that this war breaks all peace agreements and could destroy the world foundations – 'to shake the foundations of', 'to launch assault', 'to launch invasion', 'to unleash assault':

When Putin **unleashed his assault**, he thought he could divide NATO (USA7). Six days ago, Russia's Vladimir Putin sought **to shake the very foundations of the free world**, thinking he could make it bend to his menacing ways. But he badly miscalculated (USA3). And just as Putin chose **to launch this brutal invasion**, he could make the choice to end this brutal invasion (USA20).

We can observe the instantial stylistic use of phraseological units in the given examples. The base forms 'to launch something against something/somebody' and 'to shake the foundations of' are extended with evaluative insertion 'to launch *this brutal invasion*', 'to shake *the very foundations of*'.

The main challenge for the USA citizens created by Russian war machine is rising of price – *price hike*. Both Prime Minister Boris Johnson and President Joseph Biden often mention president Putin as the main person to blame – *Putin's price hike*. The base form of the phraseological unit is 'to hike something up' (usually prices, interest rates etc.). We observe the instantial stylistic use of the base form presented by inversion: *I'm going to do everything I can to minimize Putin's price hike here at home* (USA5). *The price of gas is up \$1.40 since the beginning of the year when Putin began amassing troops at the Ukrainian border. Th is is the "Putin price hike"* (USA28)

Many actions committed by Russian army in Ukraine violate the accepted rules and customs of war, so President Joseph Biden calls them – 'war crime', 'war criminal', 'commit war crime', 'war machine', 'beyond the pale': *I have one comment to make before I start the day. You may remember I got criticized for calling Putin a war criminal. Well, the truth of the matter – you saw what happened in Bucha. This warrants him – he is a war criminal. No, I think it is a war crime* (USA16). *He's used the profits to drive his war machine* (USA10). *Every day, Ukrainians pay with their lives, and they fight along – and the atrocities that the Russians are engaging in are just beyond the pale* (USA22).

Although Russia has already managed to invade part of Ukraine, its next steps will probably slow down – 'to carve out a chunk', 'to grind out one's advance': *To put it simply, Russia just announced that it is carving out a big chunk of Ukraine* (USA1). *Russia may continue to grind out its advance at a horrible price, but this much is already clear: Ukraine will never be a victory for Putin* (USA5). The evaluative insertion 'carving out a big chunk' is also an example of instantial stylistic use of the phraseological unit 'to carve out something'.

President Joseph Biden is the most realistic and pragmatic speaker of all. His speeches abound

in mentioning practical actions to oppose Russia or to help Ukraine, naming the definite people who will be sanctioned. First and foremost, Russian tycoons are also responsible for this war, as they support and sponsor Russian war machine, fattening their wallets – 'ill-begotten gains', 'to share in the gain', 'to line one's pockets', 'to reap the benefits': *We're coming for your ill-begotten gains* (USA3). *In the State of the Union Address, I announced that the Department of Justice is going after the crimes of Russian oligarchs – the Attorney General spoke to that earlier – who line their pockets with Russian people's money and – while Ukraine and the people are hiding in subways from missiles that are being fired indiscriminately in Russian cities* (USA4). *These officials and oligarchs have reaped enormous benefit from the corruption connected to the Kremlin, and now they have to share in the pain* (USA15). Phraseological unit 'reaped enormous benefit' is extended by inserting evaluative constituent.

President Andrzej Duda calls Russia an evil empire using phraseological allusion 'Imperium zła'. This set expression originated in American president Ronald Reagan's speech, made in 1983, in which he named the former USSR an evil empire. President Andrzej Duda constantly compares today's Russia to the former USSR and fascists Germany. Another phraseological allusion used in Andrzej Duda's speeches is a 'żelazna kurtyna', which originated, as we mentioned, in Winston Churchill's Fulton speech, made in 1946. President Andrzej Duda stresses that modern Russia creates the new iron curtain in the world: *To, co Rosja robi w Ukrainie, pokazuje, że wciąż jest to „Imperium zła”, że ono nigdy nie odeszło do historii i dzisiaj kolejny raz pokazuje swoje najgorsze oblicze!* (PL19). ... *a Polska znajdowała się w sowieckiej strefie wpływów, za żelazną kurtyną* (PL52).

Russian army commits a lot of war crimes in Ukraine, which they try to hide. Phraseological units 'zbrodnia wojenna', 'zbrodnia przeciwko ludzkości', 'ktoś zacierá ślady' in president's speeches emphasize the evil actions of the Russian army. Phraseological allusion 'zbrodnia przeciwko ludzkości' originates in Abraham Lincoln's speech of 1860 devoted to slaves' trade: *To są zbrodnie wojenne, które noszą cechy ludobójstwa, bo zmierzają do zwykłego wyeliminowania, wyłączenia ludności cywilnej* (PL18). *Zapomniane i nieukarane zbrodnie wojenne, zbrodnie przeciw ludzkości budują poczucie bezkarności sprawców* (PL38). *Mordowali bezbronnych wtedy i dziś, zacierali ślady wtedy i dziś, kłamali wtedy i dziś* (PL38).

The main aims of the Russian army in Ukraine are to destroy the country and break the Ukrainians'

morale. Poland survived the same ruins during the WWII – ‘ktoś zrównał z ziemią coś’: *Pamiętamy bohaterstwo Armii Krajowej i Powstańców Warszawskich. Mamy przed oczami ruiny zrównanej z ziemią przez nazistowskie Niemcy polskiej stolicy, Warszawy* (PL19).

Russian troops showed their true colours at war, bombing and killing civilians, this war has a lot of deaths and casualties, people's life is worthless for them – ‘ktoś pokazuje swoje prawdziwe oblicze’, ‘ktoś zrzuca maskę’, ‘ktoś nie liczy się z czymś’. The base form of the phraseological unit ‘ktoś pokazuje swoje prawdziwe oblicze’ changes in the speech into ‘pokazuje swoje *najgorsze* oblicze’ and illustrates the instantial stylistic use of the given phraseological unit: ... *wszyscy widzą, z czym mamy do czynienia, bo Rosja po prostu zaatakowała Ukrainę, zrzuciła maskę, pokazała, jakim jest krajem i jaką rzeczywistość ma władzę – że to jest po prostu imperialne dążenie **nieliczące się z nikim i z niczym*** (PL60). Only Russia is responsible for breaking this cruel war. The president uses phraseological allusion ‘demony wojny’, ‘oblicze wojny’ referring to a war film ‘Demony wojny’ by Polish director Władysław Pasikowski and a famous picture ‘Face of war’ by Salvador Dali.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy states that Russia brought the war, sufferings, destructions and ruins to his country and people. The main aim of Russia is to eliminate Ukraine and the Ukrainians. The following phraseological units are frequent in his speeches: ‘піти війною’, ‘стерти з лица землі’, ‘рівняти із землею’, ‘обернути/перетворити в попіл’, ‘каменя на камені не залишити’: *Але це відбувається тільки зараз, хоч Росія **пішла війною** проти України ще у 2014 році* (UK155). *Це десятки міст, які російські в ійськові намагалися просто **стерти з лица землі*** (UK94). *Я звертаюся до вас від імені українців, звертаюсь до вас від мариупольців – мирних мешканців міста, яке російські війська заблокували **та рівняють із землею*** (UK45).

Constituents of phraseological units can be replaced or extended in president's speeches, all these cases we define as instantial stylistic use of the phraseological unit. Thus, we have ‘обернути/перетворити в попіл’ – ‘знищити у попіл’, ‘руйнувати у попіл’, ‘перетворити на пекло’; ‘встромити ніж у спину/серце’ – ‘бити в спину’; ‘сіяти смерть’ – ‘сіяти бідність, безправ'я та смерть’. We have very vivid examples of phraseological allusions in president's speeches. The biblical expressions ‘не лишити камені на камені’ changes into ‘**знищити до камення**’, or ‘підставити ліву щоку’ (хто вдарить тебе у праву щоку, оберни до нього й другу)

changes into ‘коли нас підло б'ють і по правій, і по лівій щоці’. The speaker just uses some constituent parts of the phraseological unit, which must reveal the whole image in the memory: *Хотіли **стерти з лица землі**. Але не вдалося. **Били в спину**. А ми стоїмо на ногах. Хотіли, щоб ми мовчали. Але нас почув увесь світ* (UK14). *Російські війська свідомо **знищують у попіл** українські міста артилерійськими, авіаційними ударами* (UK82). *Такого не було в історії Європи протягом усіх років після Другої світової війни, щоб якимсь місто **руйнували в попіл**, знищували повністю* (UK87). ***Перетворювали** мирні міста й села **на пекло**. Частину українських міст і громад **знищили просто до камення*** (UK113). *Яка вважає, що має право **сіяти по світу бідність, безправ'я та смерть*** (UK94). *Збережи Україну! Її правий і лівий береги в часи, коли нас підло б'ють і по правій, і по лівій щоці* (UK111).

The number of enemy's troops and equipment is enormous and the comparative phraseological unit ‘як сарана’ illustrates it: *Танки та інша бронетехніка – **просто як сарана*** (UK14). Ukraine and the Ukrainians have difficult times, which is expressed by phraseological units ‘чорний час’, ‘чорний день’, ‘чорні руїни’, ‘руїни Вердена’: *Саме завдяки таким людям ми переживемо будь-які **чорні дні*** (UK36). *Зараз в Україні **чорні часи*** (UK69). *Замість успішних мирних міст – **чорні руїни*** (UK155).

Volodymyr Zelenskyy often turns to phraseological allusions in his speeches, for example, ‘руїни Вердена’ reminds about very long and bloody Battle of Verdun between France and Germany during the WWI, which had about 400000 casualties. He compares battle of Mariupol to it: *Після тижнів російського вторгнення Маріуполь та інші українські міста, по яких вдарили окупанти, нагадують руїни Вердена* (UK58).

Russian army commits many crimes under the eyes of all, in Ukraine Russian troops showed their true colors and the world must know all about it: ‘воєнний злочин’, ‘злочин проти людства’, ‘на очах у когось’, ‘відкрити справжнє обличчя’, ‘називати речі своїми іменами’, ‘втратити розум’, ‘шукати слабке місце’: *Народ піднявся на захист своєї держави, і вони **відкрили справжнє обличчя*** (UK7). *Це **воєнний злочин**, який російські військові здійснюють буквально **на очах** у усього світу* (UK116). *Маємо **називати речі своїми іменами**. Злочинні дії Росії проти України мають ознаки геноциду* (UK7).

Phraseological allusion ‘злочин проти людства’/‘crime against humanity’ originates, as

we mentioned, in Abraham Lincoln's speech of 1860 devoted to slaves' trade: *Те, що російські війська роблять з Маріуполем, – це злочин проти людства, який скоюється буквально в прямому ефірі на очах у всієї планети* (UK69).

At present Russian propaganda does everything to hide the crimes of the Russian army in Ukraine and Russian people are blind or just don't want to see the truth. Phraseological units 'замітати сліди' – 'сховати/приховати сліди' (instantial stylistic use of the phraseological unit presented by the replacement of its constituent), 'заплющувати очі' reveal this: *Настане час, коли й кожен росіянин дізнається всю правду про те, хто з їхніх співгромадян убивав. Хто наказував. Хто заплющував очі на вбивства* (UK81). *Імовірно, тепер окупанти будуть намагатися сховати сліди своїх злочинів* (UK81). *Окупанти зробили висновки з того, як світ відреагував на масові вбивства в Бучі. І тепер росіяни стараються приховати сліди воєнних злочинів* (UK106).

Russian government don't consider the Russians sending troops to this terrible and cruel war – 'кинути у пекло' ('спровадити до пекла', instantial stylistic use of the phraseological unit represented by the replacement of its constituent), 'гарматне м'ясо'. Phraseological allusion 'направити на забій' probably originates in a biblical expression 'як ягня на заклання/забій' ('like a lamb led to a slaughter'): *І Україна ніколи не робитиме, як Росія, яка кидає людей у пекло боїв лише тому, що в Москві побажали щось захопити за декілька днів або до певної дати* (UK169). *По-друге, всі вже побачили, як Росія воює. Недосвідченими строковиками, яких вона кидає у бій, як гарматне м'ясо* (UK148). *Ми знаємо про спроби російських керівників назбирати по всій Росії нових дурнів з-поміж*

курсантів військових училищ, людей із бойовим досвідом та строковиків, щоб направити їх усіх на забій у ще один наступ (UK84).

Conclusions. Although they come from different countries and continents, speak different languages, and address diverse audiences, the four leaders share similar values, interests, and objectives, resulting in a common perspective on the war crisis. This is confirmed through a contextual-interpretative and stylistic analysis of phraseological unit usage in their public speeches. Certain messages appear consistently across all four leaders' addresses.

The focus of this article is on the depiction of Russian war crimes in Ukraine, expressed through phraseological units such as *war crime, war machine, commit war crime; zbrodnie wojenne, zbrodnie przeciw ludzkości; воєнний злочин, злочин проти людства*. Russia's destructive actions are further conveyed through expressions like *lay waste, grind into dust; ktoś zrownał z ziemią coś, coś leży w gruzach; стерти з лиця землі, не залишити сліду, рівняти з землею, не залишити каменя на камені, обернути/перетворити в попіл*. The concept of Russia imposing a new division in the world is illustrated with phraseological units such as *iron curtain, żelazna kurtyna, залізна завіса*.

In expressing their personal perspectives and persuading audiences, all four leaders frequently employ the instantial stylistic use of phraseological units, including modifications such as replacements, insertions, inversions, additions of constituents, and phraseological allusions. This type of usage emphasizes the speaker's creativity and captures the audience's attention, prompting deeper reflection on the message. Further research could extend this analysis by examining additional phraseological units and their usage in other speeches of these leaders or by employing corpus linguistics methods.

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