

CHAPTER 4

CULTIVATING MULTICULTURALISM VIA TEACHING PHRASEOLOGY
TO PHILOLOGY STUDENTS

ABSTRACT

This research investigates the efficacy of teaching phraseology in philology education to cultivate multiculturalism among students. Phraseology, the study of fixed expressions and idioms within a language, reveals cultural nuances and societal values embedded in linguistic expressions. Teaching phraseology as a pedagogical strategy is examined, emphasizing its role in enhancing students' intercultural competence and appreciation for linguistic diversity. Through a comparative analysis of phraseological / idiomatic expressions of the Russian, Ukrainian, and English languages, students are prompted to recognize and reflect on shared human experiences and cultural specificities. The findings obtained from surveys and questionnaires evidence that integrating phraseology into philology programs demonstrates positive impacts on students' cultural awareness and linguistic proficiency. Findings suggest that teaching phraseology enriches students' linguistic skills and fosters an inclusive and multicultural learning environment despite existing or pending military aggressions, exemplified via the Russian full-scale invasion to Ukraine. Incorporating phraseology into philological education emerges as a valuable tool for preparing students to navigate the complexities of a globalized world. By offering a deeper understanding of cultural nuances and linguistic diversity, phraseology education promotes cross-cultural communication and appreciation. This research underscores the significance of integrating phraseology into philology curricula to foster multiculturalism and prepare students for diverse linguistic and cultural contexts, to promote inclusivity and understanding in an increasingly interconnected world.

KEYWORDS

Phraseology, philology students, multiculturalism, intercultural competence, Russia-Ukraine war.

In recent years, the role of phraseology in philology education has garnered increasing attention [1–3] as educators seek innovative ways to cultivate multiculturalism among students [4, 5]. Phraseology, the study of fixed expressions and idioms within a language, serves as a rich

repository of cultural nuances and societal values [6, 7]. These days it is seen crucial to integrate phraseology into the curriculum [8, 9], as educators can provide philology students with a deeper understanding of both their own and other cultures, thereby enhancing their intercultural competence and appreciation for linguistic diversity.

As society grapples with rapid changes – technological advancements, social upheavals, and geopolitical tensions – education must evolve to meet the demands of a more interconnected and multicultural world. This research contributes to the growing body of work emphasizing the transformative potential of education, particularly via phraseology as a pedagogical tool for multicultural education, providing philology students with the necessary skills to thrive in an increasingly globalized and complex world.

4.1.1 DEFINING THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

From a social and professional perspective, the interconnectedness of today's global society has amplified the necessity for individuals who are proficient in multiple languages and culturally literate [10]. Traditional language education often emphasizes grammar and vocabulary while neglecting the cultural elements crucial for effective communication [11]. This approach can result in learners who, while grammatically competent, lack the cultural sensitivity needed to fully engage in intercultural dialogue. Phraseology, with its focus on idiomatic expressions, provides a valuable means to bridge this gap by highlighting the cultural contexts embedded within language [12]. Further, recent research underscores the positive impacts of incorporating phraseology into language education. Studies have shown that students exposed to phraseological content develop a more nuanced understanding of cultural references and idiomatic usage, essential components of linguistic fluency [13, 14]. For example, D. Kuzmanovska et al. [15] report that based on their research with 3rd and 4th year students who were encouraged to raise the level of linguistic competence while studying with a greater number of phraseological units, universities integrating phraseology into their philology programs observe enhanced student engagement and improved linguistic proficiency. Furthermore, G. Zokirova [16] found that students who engaged with phraseological materials exhibited significant improvements in both their linguistic and cultural competencies.

Despite these advancements, several challenges remain. One of the issues throughout continuous years has been the lack of standardized pedagogical approaches for teaching phraseology [17, 18]; another specifies a need for more comprehensive resources and materials that can effectively convey the cultural nuances of idiomatic expressions [19]. The other concerns are that educators must also be trained to teach phraseology in a way that emphasizes cultural sensitivity [20] and intercultural competence, which significance grows its relevance under circumstances of military aggression, military conflicts and wars, accounting for the role of mass media and propaganda [21, 22]. Moreover, understanding how teaching phraseology may cultivate multiculturalism among philology students and support them at moments of stress and abandoned hope is seen as key-centric for this research.

Finally, following the research findings it is also important to highlight the necessity for longitudinal studies to measure the long-term effects of phraseological instruction on cultural competence [23], considering the intersocial values and recognized benefits of such educational practices [24].

4.1.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR PHRASEOLOGY IN PEACEBUILDING AND EDUCATION

It is strongly believed that these studies can provide valuable insights into how deep and sustained engagement with phraseology fosters mutual understanding and respect among learners from different cultural backgrounds.

At the present stage of developments in the world and the current trends in transforming education, promoting Ukrainian phraseology can serve as a powerful tool in mitigating hatred and fostering reconciliation among people from countries in conflict and/or at war, e.g., Ukraine and the Russian Federation. When one country commits acts of aggression and genocide against another, as in the current war, the intentional dissemination and study of the victimized country's cultural and linguistic heritage can humanize its people and highlight their shared humanity. By understanding and appreciating the rich cultural tapestry embedded in Ukrainian phraseology, learners around the world can develop empathy and a nuanced perspective that counters divisive narratives.

From this perspective, educational initiatives that emphasize phraseological instruction can also play a pivotal role in peacebuilding. They offer a platform for highlighting the commonalities and shared values (polyculturalism) that transcend political and national boundaries for Ukraine and the EU, as well as the rest of the democratic world, on the one hand; on the other, they may offer insights into the historical and linguistic differentiators (multiculturalism) that may help understand committed acts of terror and aggression, need for torture and superiority by that "other", which does not necessarily imply that these approaches may be accepted, shared, and integrated / assimilated into languages and cultures.

By examining the phraseology used within the aggressor's language, Russian as part of this study, educators and researchers can uncover underlying cultural attitudes and historical contexts that contribute to aggressive behaviors and ideologies.

This dual approach not only promotes cultural empathy and understanding but also provides a critical lens for analyzing and addressing the root causes of conflict and aggression, ultimately contributing to a more peaceful and informed global community.

4.1.3 BROADER IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

It is well known that through the lens of phraseology, students and educators can explore multiple themes. It is suggested that extending this thematic list may greatly contribute to better understanding of resilience, survival, and cultural pride, fostering a deeper connection to human experience beyond the confines of nationalistic and antagonistic rhetoric.

Next, the recent study by V. Svyrydiuk et al. [25] outlines strategies and tools for cultivating educational-strategic competence among pre-service teachers, emphasizing the importance of digital literacy and pedagogical innovation in teacher training. This framework can be extended by integrating the lens of phraseology as a tool for enriching the educational experience, particularly in fostering a deeper understanding of resilience, survival, and cultural pride.

Phraseological studies provide a unique way to uncover the linguistic and cultural layers embedded within everyday expressions, many of which reflect collective memory, historical struggles, and social cohesion. By incorporating phraseology into teacher education, educators can create a bridge between digital tools and traditional linguistic wisdom. This fusion will enhance the digital literacy discussed by V. Svyrydiuk et al. and broadens the scope of cultural and emotional literacy, helping educators to recognize the resilience inherent in language and culture.

Moreover, the exploration of phraseological units that encapsulate themes of survival and cultural pride can be a vital part of developing educational-strategic competence. These units often carry within them a history of endurance, adaptation, and transformation, offering students and educators alike the opportunity to reflect on human experience beyond a narrow, nationalistic perspective. By fostering an appreciation for these cultural expressions, educators can instill a sense of interconnectedness and solidarity, crucial elements in nurturing global citizenship. Thus, aligning the concept of educational-strategic competence with the study of phraseology enhances the potential for developing well-rounded, culturally aware, and resilient future educators.

Ultimately, integrating Ukrainian phraseology into global educational curricula not only preserves a vital aspect of Ukrainian heritage but also promotes a more compassionate and interconnected world. This approach will help build bridges of understanding and reduce the seeds of hatred that wars and genocides seek to sow. By valuing and sharing Ukraine's linguistic and cultural expressions, the international community can stand in solidarity against cultural erasure and support the enduring fight for justice and peace.

Therefore, this research aimed to address these gaps by teaching phraseology to philology students exploring it as an effective pedagogical strategy for cultivating multiculturalism. By examining the impact of the obtained results on students' cultural awareness and linguistic skills, the study sought to demonstrate the value of phraseology in fostering multiculturalism as compared to polyculturalism and means of lessening negative perceptions that have unexpectedly been brought to the frontline of students' attitudes with the Russia-Ukraine war. In the end, the findings will also highlight the importance of linguistic diversity in promoting inclusivity and understanding in an increasingly interconnected world at a bigger international level.

4.2 EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK AND IMPLEMENTATION

As the study aimed to cultivate multiculturalism through teaching phraseology to bachelor and master students at the *National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of*

Ukraine (Kyiv, Ukraine), or NULES, *Kyryvi Rih State Pedagogical University* (Kyryvi Rih, Ukraine), or KRPU, and *Drohobych State Pedagogical University after Ivan Franko* (Drohobych, Ukraine), or DSPU, the methodology of the research was designed to systematically investigate the impact of such teaching phraseology as an effective means to cultivate multiculturalism among students at the specified universities. The research employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effects of phraseological instruction for purposes of multicultural education.

4.2.1 PARTICIPANTS AND TIMELINE

The study involved a total of 316 participants, from which 252 participants were bachelor students (121 from NULES, 88 from KRPU and 43 from DSPU) and 64 master students (32 from NULES, 17 from KRPU and 15 from DSPU).

In terms of demographics, participants included both male and female students, with a breakdown of 68 % for female students and 32 % for male students, correspondingly, aged 18 to 22, from various parts of Ukraine, with a majority from eastern, western, and central regions. No participant was known from the southern part of Ukraine.

The study was conducted over three semesters, i.e., spring semester 2023 (**Stages 1 and 2**), winter semester 2024 (research work and projects), and spring semester 2024 (**Stage 4**). The study included 4 stages as described below.

4.2.2 STAGES OF THE STUDY

Stage 1. Initial survey and questionnaire. The objective was to assess students' baseline understanding of poly- and multiculturalism, and to gauge their levels of tolerance towards Russians as a nation, the Russian language, Russian culture, and their desire to communicate in Russian, in the light of the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation into sovereign Ukraine and continuing Russia-Ukraine war. This initial assessment was crucial to establish the baseline understanding and tolerance levels, considering that most Ukrainians are bilingual, speaking both Ukrainian and Russian.

Methods employed surveys and questionnaires as administered to all participants who expressed their consent to participate in the survey. These instruments included a mix of Likert-scale items to quantify attitudes, and open-ended questions to capture detailed perspectives. As regards the content, questions focused on students' knowledge and perceptions of poly- vs. multiculturalism, and their attitudes towards Russian cultural elements and language.

Stage 2. Teaching phraseology as part of academic in-class and out-of-class activities. The objective was to research, identify, analyze learning and teaching journeys in individual, pair, and group work, together – lecturers and students, or individually, for phraseological (idiomatic) expressions

in the Russian, Ukrainian, and English languages with a focus on linguistic and cultural codes, linguistic and cognitive worldviews, and representations, as well as intersocial and democratic values.

This stage emphasized intersocial and democratic values embedded in phraseological / idiomatic expressions of the three contrasted languages, with a distinct borderline between contemporary Russian idioms and those in the Ukrainian and English languages. The curriculum included comparative analysis of idiomatic expressions in Ukrainian and English, highlighting the cultural and cognitive dimensions of language. It was observed that even with the core in the lexical and semantic field of so called negatively colored lexeme, including the periphery of the field, the meaning entails empathy and forgiveness.

Methods included the curriculum design referred to certain developed courses, i.e., Comparative Typology of English and Ukrainian Languages, Comparative Lexicology of English and Ukrainian Languages, Ukrainian Language and Literature, Practical Course of L1 (English as a Foreign Language), and Ethnolinguistics, with the amended sections that contained comparative analysis of contemporary Russian idiomatic / phraseological expressions. The basis of the study material rested on the dictionaries of contemporary Russian phraseological expressions:

- 1) *Contemporary (lit. New) Russian Phraseology* by V. Mokienko [26];
- 2) *Phraseological Dictionary of the Modern Russian Literary Language*, edited by A. Tikhonov [27];
- 3) *Dictionary of Modern Russian Phraseological Units* by A. Zhukov and M. Zhukova [28];
- 4) traditional phraseological / idiomatic expressions of the English and Ukrainian languages, i.e., *English-Ukrainian Phraseological Dictionary*, edited by K. Barantsev [29].

The instructional activities included lectures, discussions, reflections, and practical exercises on comparing idiomatic expressions in Ukrainian and English, and contrasting these with idiomatic expressions in Contemporary Russian, emphasizing their cultural and cognitive implications.

Stage 3. Semester projects and essays. The objective was to engage students in practical application and analysis of phraseological / idiomatic expressions in relation to cultural and behavioral patterns, particularly focusing on the Russia-Ukraine conflict, that will lead to their deeper reflection and raise awareness as to the current developments locally and internationally under the circumstance of Russia-Ukraine war; to see the EU and world's respect to democratic and humane values as well as balanced and seasoned approach to support Ukraine and its people rather than reluctance and fear to act in a faster and more responsive way to the Russian aggression, and committed acts of terror not only in Ukraine but also in other military conflicts initiated by this state (e.g., Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Chechen Republic, etc).

Methods included:

- 1) project work, where students worked on projects that involved dictionary research and the collection of Russian, Ukrainian, and English phraseological / idiomatic expressions reflecting behavioral patterns of people who are speakers of the mentioned languages in connection with their origin per geographies;
- 2) essays, as students were requested to write these, analyzing their findings, discussing how these expressions correlate with Russian actions and deeds in the war, comparing and contrasting linguistic and cognitive worldviews of Russians, Ukrainians, and English speakers, and providing recommendations as part of solution-based approach for perspective local and global developments.

This stage integrated linguistic components with socio-linguistic and socio-political contexts, encouraging students to explore the interplay between language and behavior.

Regarding the evaluation criteria, students' projects and essays were evaluated based on depth analysis, relevance, coherence, and originality. The key focus was laid if students mentioned the scope of their research and limitations of their studies.

Stage 4. Follow-up survey and questionnaire. The objective was to measure changes (ascending trend / descending trend in expression of tolerance, equality, and diversity / or none) in students' attitudes and understanding the differences in linguistic and cognitive worldviews among Russians, Ukrainians, and English-speaking world, after the intervention (**Fig. 4.1**).

Methods employed included surveys and questionnaires administered to all participants, mirroring the initial survey to allow for comparison.

Follow-up Survey and Questionnaire

Objective: To measure changes in students' attitudes and understanding of the differences in linguistic and cognitive worldviews among Russians, Ukrainians, and the English-speaking world, after the intervention.

Section 1: Demographic Information

1. Gender:
 - Male
 - Female
 - Non-binary
 - Other
2. Educational Background:
 - a Bachelor student
 - a Master student
3. Origin / place of residence
 - Kyiv and northern Ukraine
 - eastern Ukraine
 - western Ukraine
 - southern Ukraine

Section 2: Attitudes towards Russians, Russian Language, and Culture

4. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being strongly negative and 5 being strongly positive, how would you rate your attitude towards Russians as a nation?
 - 1 (Strongly negative)
 - 2 (Negative)
 - 3 (Neither negative nor positive)
 - 4 (Positive)
 - 5 (Strongly positive)
5. Today, as compared to your communication habits previously, how comfortable would you feel communicating in Russian?
 - A Very comfortable
 - B Comfortable
 - C Neutral
 - D Uncomfortable
 - E Very uncomfortable
6. How interested are you in learning about Russian culture and history? Why?
 - A Very interested
 - B Interested
 - C Neutral
 - D Not very interested
 - E Not interested at all

Section 3: Tolerance and Understanding

7. How important do you think tolerance towards people from different cultures is for maintaining social harmony?
 - A Extremely important
 - B Very important
 - C Moderately important
 - D Slightly important
 - E Not important at all
8. How important do you think tolerance towards the Russian people is for maintaining social harmony? Why?
 - A Extremely important
 - B Very important
 - C Moderately important
 - D Slightly important
 - E Not important at all

9. What factors do you believe contribute to intolerance towards other cultures, including Russian?

Section 4: Impact of Russia-Ukraine War on Attitudes

10. Do you believe the Russia-Ukraine war has influenced your attitudes towards Russians, the Russian language, and culture?
 - A Yes
 - B No
 - C I'm not sure
 - D I don't know
- If yes, please briefly explain how the war has influenced your attitudes.

11. If there have been changes in your opinions or attitudes towards Russians, the Russian language, and culture since the intervention, please describe them briefly.

Section 5: Final Comments

Do you have any additional comments or thoughts on poly- and multiculturalism, tolerance, or attitudes towards Russians, the Russian language, and culture?

This survey aims to assess any shifts in attitudes and understanding following the intervention. Your feedback is valuable for evaluating the effectiveness of the program. Thank you for your participation.

 **Fig. 4.1** Follow-up survey and questionnaire

4.2.3 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The data collection focused on detected changes in attitudes towards Russian culture, language, and overall tolerance levels. Quantitative data referred to pre- and post-surveys that collected quantitative data on students' attitudes and tolerance levels; statistical analysis conducted using software tools to compare pre- and post-intervention responses, measuring changes in tolerance, and understanding of multiculturalism by bachelor and master students. Qualitative data displayed open-ended responses, which were analyzed thematically to identify common themes and insights into students' perceptions and attitudes; essays based on completed projects, which were evaluated qualitatively to assess depth of understanding and ability to apply phraseological knowledge in cultural analysis.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring they were aware of the study's purpose and their right to withdraw at any time. Moreover, participants were assured that their responses would be used solely for academic purposes and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any academic penalty. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the study, with all responses anonymized to protect participants' identities. Next, academic integrity was ensured by adhering to ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects.

This mixed-methods approach allowed for a comprehensive examination of how teaching phraseology can enhance multicultural understanding and tolerance. The combination of quantitative and qualitative data provided a robust framework for analyzing the effectiveness of educational interventions in promoting intercultural competence and cultivating multiculturalism as an effective basis to decrease stress among students and foster more understanding at the cognitive level in situations where empathy as a term may hardly be applicable. By involving students from diverse backgrounds and regions of Ukraine, including those whose families were victims, which experienced humiliation and tortures by Russian soldiers, the study ensured a broad perspective as to the impact of phraseological instruction on cultural empathy and understanding, cultivating multiculturalism, and enhancing intercultural competence among students in Ukraine.

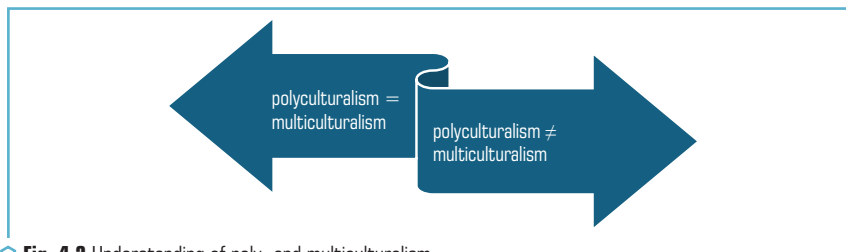
Ultimately, the findings from this study are expected to contribute to the development of more effective language education curricula that foster cultural empathy and understanding not only in Ukraine but also projected for educational contexts in global perspective, where applicable.

4.3 OBSERVATIONS, OUTCOMES, AND KEY TAKEAWAYS

The results of this study are presented in four sections corresponding to its Stages: Initial survey and questionnaire, Teaching phraseology, Semester projects and essays, and Follow-up survey and questionnaire. The findings include both quantitative data from surveys and qualitative data from student projects and essays.

4.3.1 FINDINGS OBTAINED AT STAGE 1

Stage 1 of the research aimed at the initial survey and questionnaire that provided baseline data on students' understanding of poly- and multiculturalism (**Fig. 4.2**), as well as their tolerance levels towards Russians as a people, the Russian language, and culture.



● **Fig. 4.2** Understanding of poly- and multiculturalism

To this part, it is relevant to note the initial lack of clear difference between poly- and multiculturalism as bachelor and master students in majority of cases could hardly see any discrepancy in the terms and their usage. To be exact, 93 % of respondents mentioned that these two terms could be used interchangeably as synonyms (**Fig. 4.3**).

As demonstrated above, **Fig. 4.2** illustrates the dual responses of bachelor and master students regarding their understanding of poly- and multiculturalism, from which the following key insights can be drawn:

- 1) most respondents (93 %) perceive poly- and multiculturalism as interchangeable terms;
- 2) only a small percentage of respondents (7 %) differentiate between poly- and multiculturalism. The latter means that this lack of differentiation suggests a limited understanding of the nuances between the two concepts among the students surveyed.

This is evidenced by another part of the administered survey and questionnaire, focused on students' attitudes towards Russians, Russian language, and culture (**Table 4.1**), where on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being strongly negative and 5 being strongly positive, students were invited to rate their attitude towards Russians as a nation, the Russian language and culture, and communication in Russian.

● **Table 4.1** Attitudes towards Russians, Russian language, and culture, and communication in Russian

Inquiry	Attitude, %		
	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Russians as a nation	96	4	0
Comfort level in communicating in Russian	81	3	16
Interest in learning about Russian culture and history	76	5	19

Source: survey results

Survey Questionnaire: Understanding of Polyculturalism, Multiculturalism, and Attitudes towards Russians, Russian Language, and Culture

This survey aims to assess your understanding of poly- and multiculturalism, as well as your attitudes towards Russians, the Russian language, and culture, in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war. Please read each question carefully and select the response that best represents your understanding and attitudes.

Demographics

1. Gender:
 - Male
 - Female
 - Non-binary
 - Other
2. Educational Background:
 - a Bachelor student
 - a Master student
3. Origin / place of residence
 - Kyiv and northern Ukraine
 - eastern Ukraine
 - western Ukraine
 - southern Ukraine

Understanding of Poly- and Multiculturalism

4. How would you define polyculturalism?
 - A The celebration and integration of multiple cultures into society
 - B The coexistence of diverse cultural groups within a community
 - C The belief in the superiority of one's own culture over others
 - D I'm not sure/I don't know
5. How would you define multiculturalism?
 - A The celebration and integration of multiple cultures into society
 - B The coexistence of diverse cultural groups within a community
 - C The belief in the superiority of one's own culture over others
 - D I'm not sure/I don't know

Differentiation Between Poly- and Multiculturalism

6. Do you believe there is a difference between polyculturalism and multiculturalism?
 - A Yes
 - B No
 - C I'm not sure
 - D I don't know
7. If yes, please briefly explain the difference between polyculturalism and multiculturalism in your own words.

Attitudes towards Russians, Russian Language, and Culture

8. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being strongly negative and 5 being strongly positive, how would you rate your attitude towards Russians as a nation? Why?

9. Today, as compared to your communication habits previously, how comfortable would you feel communicating in Russian?

10. How interested are you in learning about Russian culture and history? Why?
 - A Very comfortable
 - B Comfortable
 - C Neutral
 - D Uncomfortable
 - E Very uncomfortable
10. How interested are you in learning about Russian culture and history? Why?
 - A Very interested
 - B Interested
 - C Neutral
 - D Not very interested
 - E Not interested at all

Tolerance and Understanding

11. How important do you think tolerance towards people from different cultures is for maintaining social harmony?
 - A Extremely important
 - B Very important
 - C Moderately important
 - D Slightly important
 - E Not important at all
12. How important do you think tolerance towards the Russian people is for maintaining social harmony? Why?
 - A Extremely important
 - B Very important
 - C Moderately important
 - D Slightly important
 - E Not important at all

13. What factors do you believe contribute to intolerance towards other cultures, including Russian?

14. Have you personally experienced or witnessed discrimination based on cultural differences?

- A Yes
- B No
- C I'm not sure
- D I don't know

15. If yes, please briefly describe the experience or situation.

Impact of Russia-Ukraine War on Attitudes

16. Do you believe the Russia-Ukraine war has influenced your attitudes towards Russians, the Russian language, and culture?

- A Yes
- B No
- C I'm not sure
- D I don't know

17. If yes, please briefly explain how the war has influenced your attitudes.

Final Comments

18. Do you have any additional comments or thoughts on poly- and multiculturalism, tolerance, or attitudes towards Russians, the Russian language, and culture?

Thank you for participating in this survey. Your input is valuable for our research.

 **Fig. 4.3** Survey questionnaire: understanding of polyculturalism, multiculturalism, and attitudes towards Russians, Russian language, and culture

According to the survey results, the students' attitudes towards Russians as a nation opt to display negativity with most respondents (96 %), who expressed their negative attitudes towards Russians, with only 4 % having a neutral stance and none having a positive attitude. This suggests a significant level of negativity or bias towards Russians among the surveyed individuals.

The other question was to test the students' comfort level in communicating in Russian, especially relevant for eastern regions and the city of Kyiv inasmuch most students are found to be bilingual and feeling at ease to fluently communicate either in Ukrainian or Russian. However, the findings revealed that a large portion of respondents (81 %) reported feeling uncomfortable communicating in Russian; only 3 % expressed a neutral stance, while 16 % reported feeling comfortable. It is followed that the high percentage of respondents feeling uncomfortable indicates their unwillingness to engage in communication using the Russian language because of the current growing trend of intolerance to Russians as aggressors and documented crimes by the Russian soldiers in Russia-Ukraine war.

The other question to discover students' interest in learning about Russian culture and history unveiled a significant percentage (76 %) of answers that indicated a lack of such interest as opposed to 5 % of respondents who expressed a neutral stance, and only 19 % who showed interest in learning about Russian culture and history, respectively. This suggests a limited curiosity or appreciation for Russian culture and history among the surveyed individuals at **Stage 1** of the study.

Overall, the data reflects a predominantly negative outlook towards Russians, the Russian language, and culture, with a notable lack of interest in communicating in Russian and learning about Russian culture and history. These attitudes may be influenced by various factors, including past and present historic events, cultural perceptions, and geopolitical tensions. Addressing these attitudes may require efforts to promote cross-cultural understanding and dialogue among the surveyed population.

4.3.2 FINDINGS OBTAINED AT STAGE 2

Stage 2 of the study focused on inclusion of some Russian phraseological / idiomatic expressions into the curricula and their comparison / contrast with the samplings obtained by students from *Contemporary Phraseological Dictionary* (Russian idioms of 21st century), and phraseological dictionaries (dictionaries of idioms) of the Ukrainian and English languages. The research and academic work stretched beyond the classroom as students were invited to explore linguistic preferences of lay people outside the university walls, focusing on their speeches and idiomatic usage if any.

From the Russian phraseological expressions, the key four thematic groups turned to be highly representative according to students' notes. These groups build around such nuclei of respective phraseological fields, accounting for their lexical and semantic weight:

- 1) HAND(s);
- 2) MILITARY component in idioms used for routine and professional life;

3) verbs such as BEAT, BREAK, TWIST;

4) HELL, particularly.

As demonstrated in **Fig. 4.4**, the phraseological / idiomatic expressions develop round the HAND nucleus, embodying into such units as below:

– RU *тактика выкручивания (выламывания) рук* (taktika vykruchivaniya / vylamyvaniya ruk), literally translated as *tactics of twisting / breaking hands*, means "a method of applying rough pressure, coercion to achieve a favorable solution for oneself" [26];

– RU *выкручивать руки кому, выкручивание (выламывание) рук* (vykruchivat' ruki komu, vykruchivaniye (vylamyvaniye) ruk), literally translated as "to twist someone's hands, twisting (breaking) hands", with its definitions: *expressive usage* 1. Forcibly force someone to do something. 2. *New, journalism*. To use rough pressure or pressure to influence someone, to forcefully achieve a solution to an issue that is beneficial for oneself [26];

As emphasized by Mokienko [26], the expression is associated with the forceful methods of people's struggle (1st meaning) and the way police treat troublemakers and prisoners (2nd meaning).

– RU *пропускать / пропустить через руку (руки) кого* (propuskat' / propustit' cherez ruku (ruki) kogo), literally "to let through the hands of someone", that means "*Slang*. Beat up someone (often in a group)" [26];

– RU *держат руку на кислородном шланге [кого, чего]* (derzhat' ruku na kislородnom shlange [kogo, chego]), literally translated as "to hold a hand on the oxygen hose [of someone, something]" that stands for "*New, journalism*. Hold someone or something in complete dependence, absolute submission, threatening to deprive something, not provide something" [26]; as noted by the scholar, this expression comes from medical practice, where seriously ill patients are supported with oxygen from an oxygen cushion.

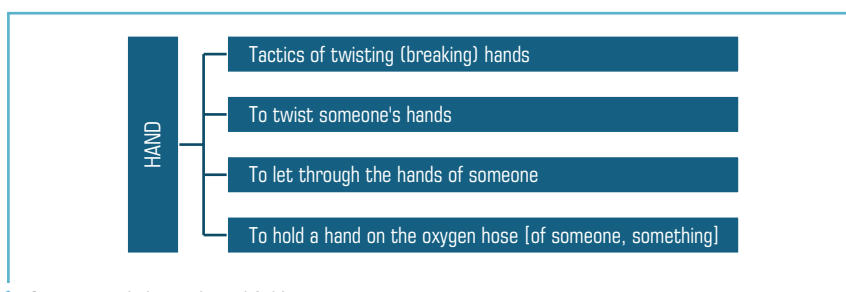


Fig. 4.4 Hand phraseological field
Source: research findings

The analysis of the findings demonstrates that the above contemporary Russian idiomatic expressions, developed around the concept of HAND(s), symbolize absolute power and control, the authority to decide matters of life and death, and the imposition of one's will over others.

They depict a narrative of dominance and coercion, where individuals exert forceful influence to achieve their desired outcomes, as observed in various societal contexts.

The other thematic group centers on lexical units that denote a military component and are frequently used in routine communication by Russian speaking people, often without paying much attention to the etymology of such phraseological / idiomatic expressions. Some are provided below along with the description and in **Fig. 4.5**.

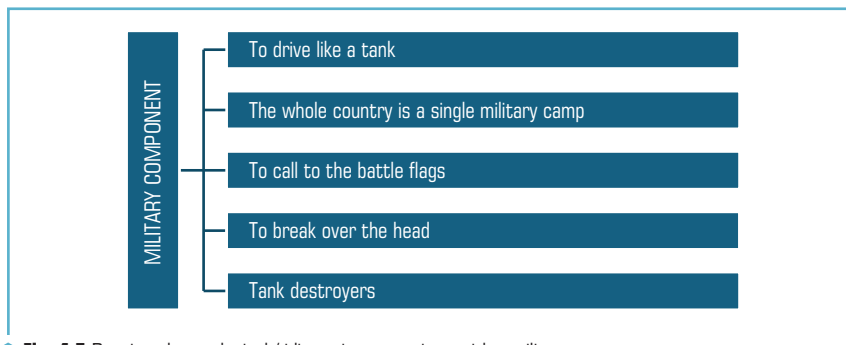


Fig. 4.5 Russian phraseological / idiomatic expressions with a military component
Source: research findings

The representative examples of Russian military-centered phraseological / idiomatic expressions are as below:

– RU *переть как танк* (peret' kak tank), literally translated as "to go / move / drive like a tank" with the definition "to act rudely, harshly, ignoring the reaction of other people" [26];

– RU *Вся страна – единый военный лагерь* (Vsia strana – yediny voyennyy lager'), translated literally as "The whole country is a single military camp"; this expression signifies a unified national effort or mobilization, often used in times of war or crisis to emphasize national solidarity and collective action [30, 31];

– RU *призвать под боевые знамена* (prizvat' pod boyevyye znamena) / RU *вставать (встать) под. знамя (знамена)* (vstavat' (vstat') pod znamya (znamena)), literally translated as "to call to the battle flags" and "to stand under the banner(s)" that denotes the act of rallying individuals to join in a military campaign or conflict, urging them to take up arms and fight for a common cause [27];

– RU *разбить наголову* (razbit' nagolovu), literally translated "to break over the head"; this idiom refers to forcefully defeating or overwhelming someone, often in a physical or metaphorical sense, by striking a decisive blow or delivering a crushing defeat [27];

– RU *истребители танков* (istrebiteli tankov), literally translated "tank destroyers" that typically refers to military units or weapons specifically designed and deployed to destroy enemy tanks, either through direct combat or specialized tactics [32];

– RU *рассечь боевые ряды противника* (rassech' boyevyye ryady protivnika), literally translated "to cut through the enemy's battle lines"; this idiom describes the strategic or tactical maneuver of breaking through the enemy's formations or defenses, disrupting their lines of communication, and creating openings for further offensive actions [30, 33].

Thematic Group 3 of contemporary Russian phraseological / idiomatic expressions includes such verbal nuclei of phraseological fields as BEAT, BREAK, and TWIST presented in **Fig. 4.6**.

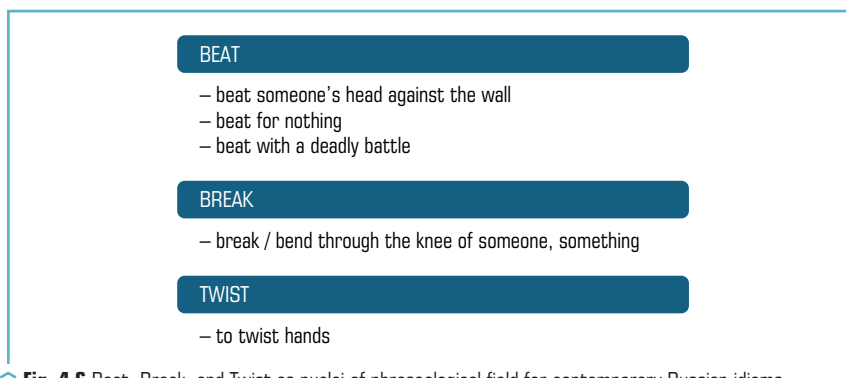


Fig. 4.6 Beat, Break, and Twist as nuclei of phraseological field for contemporary Russian idioms
Source: research findings

The examples of such Russian phraseological / idiomatic expressions are below:

– RU *бить головой о стену кого* (bit' golovoy o stenu kogo), literally translated as "to beat someone's head against the wall", with the definition: *Colloquial*. Used with such subjects of the sentence as life, reality, etc. and meaning "to severely punish, put in an extremely difficult situation" [28];

– RU *бить почём зря (избить), лупить (отлупить)* (bit' pochom zrya / izbit', lupit' / otlupit'), literally translated as "to beat for nothing / to beat up, to beat severely / to beat up, etc.", that denotes "*Colloquial*. To beat very strongly" [28];

– RU *ломать (сломать) через колено кого, что; гнуть (согнуть) через колено кого, что* (lomat' / slomat' cherez koleno kogo, chto; gnut' / sognut' cherez koleno kogo, chto), literally translated as "to break / to bend through the knee of someone, something; to bend / to fold through the knee of someone, something", that means "*Colloquial. Disapproving*. Used with a subject of a sentence, meaning a person. To crudely suppress someone; destroy, nullify something" [28];

– RU *бить смертным боем* (bit' smertnym boyem), literally translated as "to beat with a deadly battle", denoting 'to beat very strongly' [27] that means to inflict severe and relentless physical punishment;

– RU *бить наверняка* (bit' navernyaka), literally translated as 'to beat for sure', which means "to act accurately, with confidence in success" and denotes performance of an action with precision and certainty of achieving the intended result [27];

– RU *бить (прямо) в цель* (bit' (pryamo) v tsel'), literally translated as "to beat (directly) into the target", meaning "to act purposefully, successfully achieving the desired result" that stands for hitting the mark exactly, ensuring successful outcomes through targeted actions [27];

– RU *бить мимо цели* (bit' mimo tseli) literally translated as "to beat past the target", defined as "to act unsuccessfully, not achieving the desired result", that means to fail to hit the intended mark, resulting in ineffective actions [27];

– RU *разделявать (отделявать) под орех кого-л.* (razdelyvat' / otdelyvat' pod orekh kogo-libo), literally translated as "to smash / process (finish off) like a nut someone", defined as "to achieve a complete victory in a dispute or fight over someone" [27], that stands for the action "to thoroughly defeat someone in an argument or physical confrontation";

– RU *выдирать (выдрать) с мясом что* (vydirat' / vydrat' s myasom chto), literally translated as "to tear out / to rip out with meat (= flesh) something", meaning "Colloquial. To completely destroy something" [28];

– RU *выкручивать руки кому, выкручивание (выламывание) рук* (vykruchivat' ruki кому, vykruchivaniye (vylamyvaniye) ruk), literally translated as "to twist someone's hands, twisting (breaking) hands", with its definitions: *expressive usage* 1. Forcibly force someone to do something. 2. *New, journalism.* To use rough pressure or pressure to influence someone, to forcefully achieve a solution to an issue that is beneficial for oneself [26].

What should be noted here is that the Russian scholars themselves may provide different definitions for the same Russian phraseological / idiomatic expressions. For instance, RU *выкручивать руки кому, выкручивание (выламывание) рук* (vykruchivat' ruki кому, vykruchivaniye / vylamyvaniye ruk), literally "to twist hands" denotes:

– "1. Forcibly force someone to do something. 2. *New, journalism.* To use rough pressure or pressure to influence someone, to forcefully achieve a solution to an issue that is beneficial for oneself" [26];

– "*New. Colloquial. Disapproving.* To force someone to agree to something by putting them in a desperate situation. Arm twisting" [28].

As the findings reveal the studied Russian idioms predominantly revolve around themes of aggression, coercion, violence, and negatively colored comparisons. The Russian phraseological / idiomatic expressions like *тактика выкручивания рук* "tactics of twisting (breaking) hands" and *выкручивать руки кому* "to twist someone's hands" depict forceful tactics to achieve one's goals.

Others like RU *пропускать через руку кого* "to let through the hands of someone" and *ломать через колено кого* "to crudely suppress someone; destroy, nullify something" suggest violent actions or severe punishment.

Another thematic group identified with the contemporary Russian phraseological / idiomatic expressions rounds about the HELL nucleus, for example:

– RU *ад войны, сражений* (ad voyny, srazheniy) with its literal translation "hell of war, hell of battles" [27] that refers to the intense and horrifying nature of war and battles, which is a norm for the Russian mindset as the war is the war, and every war incurs victims, sufferings, and horror, which is hell;

– RU *ад огня* (ad ognia), with its literal translation "hell of fire" [27] that refers to the destructive and terrifying nature of fire.

It is followed that these phraseological / idiomatic expressions reflect a linguistic and cognitive perception of Russians connected with imperialistic views and behaviors. The prevalent use of aggressive and intolerant language may indicate underlying attitudes and societal norms. By classifying these idioms into thematic groups, such as coercion, violence, and aggression, it becomes evident that they contribute to a narrative of dominance and control. This correlation between linguistic expression and cognitive perception highlights the influence of language on shaping societal values and behaviors.

Therefore, the prevalence of contemporary Russian idioms centered around aggression and intolerance underscores the importance of promoting empathy, understanding, and peaceful communication in cross-cultural interactions. Addressing the underlying attitudes and stereotypes embedded in language can contribute to fostering a more inclusive and tolerant society.

4.3.3 FINDINGS OBTAINED AT STAGE 3

The primary goal of this stage was to engage students in the practical application and analysis of phraseological and idiomatic expressions, particularly focusing on the analysis of some that could shed light on better understanding of linguistic and cognitive worldviews of Russians, especially in the light of the Russia-Ukraine war. This approach aimed to deepen students' reflection and raise their awareness of current developments both locally and internationally. Additionally, it sought to encourage students to cultivate empathy and tolerance irrespective of the geopolitical developments, foster an understanding of the EU and the world's commitment to democratic and humane values, as well as to highlight the need for a proactive and supportive stance towards Ukraine in response to Russian aggression.

At **Stage 3**, students undertook projects involving dictionary research to collect and analyze Russian, Ukrainian, and English phraseological and idiomatic expressions. They focused on how these expressions reflect the behavioral patterns of speakers from different geographies. A significant finding from this work was that many Russian idioms had no direct equivalents in Ukrainian and English, whereas English idioms often had equivalents in Ukrainian and vice versa.

Besides, students were required to write essays analyzing their findings. They discussed how the collected expressions correlate with Russian actions and behaviors in the war, compared the linguistic and cognitive worldviews of Russians, Ukrainians, and English speakers, and provided recommendations for local and global developments. This stage integrated linguistic components with socio-linguistic and socio-political contexts, encouraging students to explore the interplay between language and behavior.

Of significant value were certain phraseological / idiomatic expressions in the English and Ukrainian languages, as commented by students:

– EN *do not make fish of one and flesh (or fowl) of another* – a proverb, which equivalent is UA *стався до всіх справедливо* (stavsia do vsikh spravedlyvo) "treat everyone fairly" [29];

– EN *hold a candle to one, to / UA допомагати комусь; грати допоміжну роль по відношенню до когось* (dopomahaty komus'; hraty dopomizhnu rol' po vidnoshenniu do kohos') "to help someone; to play a secondary role in relation to someone" [29];

– EN *hold (one, something) dear, to / UA (високо) цінувати (когось, щось); рахуватися з (кимсь, чимсь)* ((vysoko) tsinuvaty (kohos', shchos'); rakhuvatysya z (kymys', chymys')) "to value someone or something highly; to consider someone or something" [29];

– EN *hold (one, something) in veneration / in high veneration, to / UA (глибоко) поважати, шанувати (когось, щось); відчувати пошанність (до когось, чогось)* ((hlyboko) povazhaty, shanuvaty (kohos', shchos'); vidchuvaty pobozhnist' (do kohos', chohos')) "to deeply respect, honor someone or something; to feel reverence towards someone or something" [29];

– EN *hold out / proffer an (the) olive branch, to / UA запропонувати помиритися; намагатися уладнати справу мирно; піти на мирову [маслинова гілка вважається символом миру]* (zaproponuvaty pomyrtytsia; namahatysia uladnaty spravu myrno; pity na myrovu [maslynova hilka vvazhajesia symbolom myru]) "to offer to make peace; to try to settle matters peacefully; to propose a truce [the olive branch is considered a symbol of peace]" [29];

– EN *heart and hand / with heart and hand / UA охоче, з енергією, з ентузіазмом; усім серцем* (okhohche, z enerhiyeyu, z entuziyazmom; usim sertsem) "willingly, with energy, with enthusiasm; wholeheartedly" [29];

– EN *heart and soul / with all one's heart and soul; with all one's soul / UA з ентузіазмом, ревно, щиро; всім серцем; вкладаючи всю душу* (usually used with such verbs as *to go into, to put into*) (z entuziyazmom, revno, shchyro; vsim sertsem; vkladayuchy vsu) "with enthusiasm, fervently, sincerely; with all one's heart; putting all one's soul into" [29];

– EN *heart to heart talk, a / UA щира розмова* (shchyra rozmova) "a sincere conversation" [29];

– EN *man-to-man talk, a / UA щира розмова* (shchyra rozmova) "a sincere conversation" [29].

The analysis revealed that many contemporary Russian idiomatic expressions are centered around themes of aggression, control, and violence. For instance, idioms developed around *the hand* often refer to absolute power and control, as seen in expressions like "tactics of twisting", "breaking hands" and "holding a hand on the oxygen hose", which metaphorically depict coercion and dominance; as opposed to these Russian phraseological / idiomatic expressions, the English and Ukrainian variants also include the core element – HAND, e.g., EN *heart and hand / with heart and hand*, however, used in much more positive light, meaning to do something for somebody willingly, with energy, with enthusiasm, i.e., wholeheartedly.

The thematic grouping of these phraseological / idiomatic expressions suggests a correlation between linguistic expressions and the cognitive perceptions of Russians, reflecting their imperialistic views and behaviors, which strongly contrasts with the more balanced and humane expressions found in Ukrainian and English idioms, often emphasizing fairness, support, respect, and sincerity.

A significant insight from students' project work was that many Russian idioms had no direct equivalents in Ukrainian and English, indicating unique cultural and behavioral patterns in Russian phraseology. Conversely, English idioms frequently had equivalents in Ukrainian, highlighting a closer cultural and cognitive connection between Ukrainian and English speakers.

This contrast highlights the significant role that language plays in shaping and reflecting cultural and behavioral patterns, underscoring the importance of promoting democratic and humane values through linguistic education and analysis.

4.3.4 FINDINGS OBTAINED AT STAGE 4

The objective of this stage was to measure changes, if any, in students' attitudes and understanding of the differences in linguistic and cognitive worldviews among Russians, Ukrainians, and the English-speaking world, after the intervention. We aimed to identify whether there was an ascending trend, descending trend, or no change in the expression of tolerance, equality, and diversity after the students had been acquainted with lexical, including phraseological, corpus of the Russian language, particularly (Table 4.2).

● **Table 4.2** Attitudes towards Russians, Russian language, and culture, post-intervention

Inquiry	Attitude, %		
	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Russians as a nation	96	4	0
Comfort level in communicating in Russian	69	12	19
Interest in learning about Russian culture and history	32	7	61

Source: survey results

Comparing the post-intervention data with the pre-intervention data reveals notable changes in attitudes towards Russians, the Russian language, and culture, except for perceiving Russians as a nation. In this section, there has been no change in attitudes towards Russians as a nation post-intervention. The percentage of respondents with negative attitudes remained at 96 %, while those with neutral attitudes stayed at 4 %, and there were no positive attitudes reported (0 %). This indicates that the intervention did not lead to any significant shift in perception regarding Russians as a nation.

Regarding comfort level in communicating in Russian, there was a noticeable improvement in comfort levels according to the post-intervention findings (Table 4.3). The percentage of respondents with a negative attitude decreased by 12 %, moving from 81 % to 69 % – a descending trend, while the percentage of those with an ascending positive attitude increased slightly – from 16 % to 19 %.

● **Table 4.3** Comparative attitudes towards Russians, Russian language, and culture, post-intervention

Attitude Measure, based on negative threshold	Pre-intervention, %	Post-Intervention, %
Attitude towards Russians (1–5 scale)	96	96
Comfort level in communicating in Russian	81	69
Interest in learning about Russian culture and history	76	32

Source: survey results

With interest in learning about Russian culture and history, the post-intervention results show that there is a substantial increase in positive attitudes towards learning about Russian culture and history. The percentage of respondents with a positive attitude rose significantly from 19 % to 61 %, indicating a greater ascending interest in cultural understanding and more sympathy for Russians, often explained average Russian is seen a victim of Russian propaganda being continuously exposed to "rewritten" historical facts that aimed to whitewash Russian crimes in history. This shift can be attributed to several factors, including a heightened awareness of the importance of cultural heritage, a desire to preserve it, and a recognition of the need to counter Russian propaganda and historical revisionism.

Many students explained that they now see the value in learning about Russian culture and history as a means of understanding their own cultural heritage and the tactics employed by Russia to manipulate historical narratives. They recognize the importance of countering false information and propaganda spread through mass media and digital platforms. This increase in positive attitudes suggests a growing empathy and sympathy towards Russians, often perceived as victims of manipulation and misinformation.

Finally, these changes suggest that the intervention has had a positive impact on students' attitudes and perceptions towards Russians, the Russian language, and culture. The shift towards more positive attitudes and increased interest in learning reflects a potential improvement in understanding and tolerance. However, further analysis is required to assess the long-term effects of the intervention and its sustainability.

4.4 EXPLORING THE EDUCATIONAL IMPACT, CULTURAL INSIGHTS, AND LINGUISTIC CONNECTIONS

Based on the challenges the students found in differentiating poly- ad multiculturalism in **Stage 1** of the study, it was aimed to pay more attention to theoretical backgrounds and deeper reflection what makes poly- and multiculturalism important for the modern world. Thus, poly- and multiculturalism are seen as two approaches to cultural diversity that offer distinct frameworks for understanding and engaging with different cultures. From this perspective, multiculturalism celebrates the diversity of cultures within a society or community [5, 34]; it encourages individuals to embrace their cultural heritage while engaging with others in a respectful and open-minded manner.

In a multicultural context, the focus is on preserving distinct cultural identities and ensuring that various cultural groups coexist peacefully. However, this approach does not necessarily lead to the assimilation or acceptance of the values of other cultures. Multicultural communication denotes a community comprising multiple cultural or ethnic factions where individuals coexist within the same space, but meaningful interactions between cultural groups may not always occur.

Next, polyculturalism, on the other hand, goes beyond mere coexistence and emphasizes the appreciation and assimilation of different cultures as well as their values [35]. Polyculturalism promotes the idea that cultures are not static or isolated but are constantly interacting, influencing, and enriching each other, considering the X, Y, and Z generations in structuring their cultural perceptions [36]. In a polycultural framework, individuals are encouraged not only to understand and respect different cultures but also to integrate aspects of these cultures into their own lives. This approach fosters a deeper level of intercultural engagement and mutual appreciation, leading to a more dynamic and interconnected cultural landscape.

According to the students' initial feedback in the survey and questionnaires, in the light of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, the significance of acquainting the world with Ukrainian phraseology has become more pronounced. It is the insight that is characterized by shared reflection of the students related to the importance of acquainting the world with Ukrainian phraseology as part of the Ukrainian language and culture, standing the linguistic and cognitive frameworks, which strongly supports findings of O. Tarnopolsky and B. Goodman [37], L. Azarova et al. [38], L. Bondarchuk et al. [39].

The students comment that the historic Russian genocide against the Ukrainian people in the Holodomor of 1932–1933 was not the only measure the Russian imperialistic regime would adopt to erase everybody and everything of Ukrainian character [40].

The students bring to discussion that acts of genocide may be encoded in other current deeds of Russians when the Ukrainian children are removed from their homes and are subjected to "russification", thus, forbidden from speaking Ukrainian or expressing their Ukrainian identity. This involves mandatory exposure to the Russian language and culture, pervasive propaganda, Russian historical narratives, requires visits to Russian "patriotic" sites, military training of the Ukrainian children, and denigration of Ukrainian language, culture, and history.

As highlighted in the report of the *Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons*, and oral opinion of the *Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe*, "The full-scale war of aggression waged by the Russian Federation against Ukraine represents a massive and ongoing violation of international law and a tragedy of human suffering. The forced displacement of Ukrainian civilians, particularly of children from an early age up to 17 years, to the Russian Federation or within temporarily occupied Ukrainian territories, is an especially serious feature of this aggression" [41] leads to recognition of the need for immediate international intervention and support. This displacement is not merely a logistical issue but a deliberate strategy to undermine Ukrainian national identity and cultural heritage. It underscores the urgency for global communities to condemn these actions,

provide humanitarian aid, and implement measures to protect and preserve the rights and identities of displaced Ukrainian children.

Moreover, "the practice of "re-education" of the children [...]", known as "russification", "implies a prohibition from speaking the Ukrainian language or expressing in any way their Ukrainian identity and culture, compulsory exposure to the Russian language and culture through classes, blanket exposure to the prevailing propaganda through the media, teaching of the Russian version of history" [41], "the forcible transfer of children to the Russian Federation and with-in temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, to be placed in foster families, Russian-run orphanages or residential facilities, including "summer camps", and the facilitation of adoption of such children by Russian families" [41], "...filtration" of Ukrainian civilians by the Russian military and Russian-affiliated officials, including intrusive searches of their bodies and belongings, aggressive interrogation and the extraction of vast amounts of personal and biometric data" [41] underline the gravity of the developments and endeavours of Russians to erase the Ukrainian language, culture, and history, which highlights the urgent need to preserve and promote Ukrainian cultural heritage. With that in mind, Ukrainian phraseology, rich with historical and cultural references, offers a unique window into the national identity, values, and experiences of the Ukrainian people.

Comparative and contrastive studies of Ukrainian phraseology not only serve to document and preserve this heritage but also to educate the global community about the distinctiveness and resilience of Ukrainian culture. These studies can foster a deeper understanding of the cultural and linguistic diversity that defines Ukraine, promoting empathy and solidarity in the face of aggression. Furthermore, such scholarly work can counteract the narratives imposed by the aggressor, reinforcing the importance of linguistic and cultural preservation in maintaining national identity amidst conflict.

It is assumed under the study that understanding Ukrainian phraseology can play a crucial role in fostering global awareness and appreciation of Ukrainian culture, particularly in the face of aggression and attempts to suppress it. In educational environments, when studying Ukrainian idiomatic expressions and proverbs and integrating some aspects into international curricula, educators and researchers can help to preserve and disseminate the cultural knowledge embedded in the language, ensuring that it is recognized and valued internationally.

Stage 2 of the study focused on analysing Russian phraseological expressions related to aggression and negative behaviours, particularly in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war. The findings revealed that a significant prevalence of the 21st century Russian idioms centred around violence, coercion, and dominance, reflecting a culture where forceful methods are often normalized or even glorified. "The dominant features of phraseological neology are predominantly negative semantic fields (deception, theft, drunkenness, idleness, aggression, etc.)" [26]. Moreover, they exhibit a distinct thematic focus on aggression and irony, reflecting what V. Mokyenko terms as the "anti-culture" and the stylistics of mockery, "a particular activation of spheres reflecting the semantics of aggression ("anti-culture") and the stylistics of irony (mockery)" [26].

We fully agree with V. Mokyenko [26] as he concludes the preface to the dictionary with the following conclusion for the Russian language and culture: "There is a certain specificity of the figurative potential (respectively, motivational dominants) and axiological selectivity of phraseological neology. On this basis, it is still necessary to determine and describe the specificity of the phraseological "worldview" against the background of the corresponding "views" of traditional idiomatics and neological vocabulary" [26].

The follow-up survey aimed to measure changes in students' attitudes and understanding of linguistic and cognitive worldviews following the intervention. The results demonstrated a noteworthy shift in perception, except negative attitudes towards Russians. The lack of change in negative attitudes towards Russians in the follow-up survey can be attributed to the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine. Despite efforts to foster understanding and empathy through linguistic analysis and cultural exploration, the stark realities of the Russia-Ukraine war continue to shape perceptions and attitudes.

The persistent negative attitudes towards Russians likely stem from the ongoing actions and behaviours exhibited by the Russian government and military forces in the war. Reports of torture, killings, shelling of civilian areas, and deliberate destruction of Ukrainian infrastructure, including energy facilities and cultural institutions, have contributed to a deep-seated resentment and animosity towards Russia among Ukrainians and observers worldwide.

Moreover, the deliberate targeting of educational and cultural centres, such as schools, universities, theatres, and libraries, underscores a systematic effort to undermine Ukrainian identity and culture. By destroying educational resources and cultural landmarks, Russia seeks to erase the Ukrainian language and heritage from the region, leaving future generations with limited access to their own history and literature.

In this context, the findings of the follow-up survey reflect the enduring impact of the war on perceptions and attitudes. Despite efforts to promote understanding and tolerance, the harsh realities of war and aggression perpetuated by Russian forces continue to fuel negative sentiments towards Russians. Until there is a significant shift in the behaviour and actions of the Russian government in the war, it is unlikely that attitudes towards Russians will change substantially.

Nevertheless, there was a substantial increase in positive attitudes towards learning about Russian culture and history. This shift suggests a greater interest in cultural understanding and empathy towards Russians, potentially influenced by the intervention's emphasis on understanding the complexities of cultural narratives and historical truths amidst the war.

Overall, these findings underscore the importance of linguistic analysis in understanding cultural perceptions and attitudes. The approach as adopted and aimed to delve into phraseological expressions enabled the research to gain insights into the underlying values, beliefs, and attitudes prevalent within the Ukrainian society; it is followed that Mokyenko's work as well as those by other scholars provided a valuable framework for understanding the intricacies of phraseological neology and its implications for cultural discourse.

CONCLUSIONS

The study highlights the nuanced relationship between language, culture, and the Russia-Ukraine war, which is explained by educational endeavours of university personnel to cultivate empathy and tolerance among students, grow intersocial and democratic values via fostering multiculturalism in academic settings. Through a deeper exploration of phraseological / idiomatic expressions (Russian, Ukrainian, and English as designed by research objectives, particularly), it was possible to uncover the underlying ideologies and worldviews shaping societal attitudes and behaviours. Mokienko's insights further enrich our understanding of the role of language in reflecting and shaping cultural narratives, offering valuable perspectives for navigating complex socio-political contexts.

This study also underscored the profound impact of phraseology as a pedagogical instrument in cultivating multiculturalism among philology students, particularly against the tumultuous backdrop of the Russia-Ukraine war. This war, far from being an isolated incident, serves as a stark reminder that history tends to echo its past, urging societies to remain vigilant and proactive in fostering understanding and tolerance. With that in mind, through the lens of phraseology, the research illuminates the intricate linguistic diversity and cultural awareness, offering a pathway towards greater inclusivity and harmony. It is a testament to the resilience of education in navigating complex geopolitical landscapes and shaping a more enlightened future.

As we reflect on these findings, it becomes evident that by embracing the richness of linguistic diversity, we pave the way for a more interconnected and empathetic society, where differences are celebrated rather than feared. In essence, this research journey underscores the enduring relevance of phraseology in the quest for multicultural understanding. It is a call to action, reminding of the transformative power of education in shaping a world, where peace and tolerance reign supreme.

While this research has shed light on the potential of phraseology in fostering multiculturalism among philology students, it is important to acknowledge its limitations and areas for further investigation. One limitation is the scope of the study, which focused primarily on the attitudes and perceptions of bachelor and master students within a specific academic setting, i.e., only three Ukrainian universities. Future research could explore the efficacy of phraseology in different educational contexts and among diverse student populations to ascertain its broader applicability.

Additionally, the study's reliance on the reported data may introduce biases and limitations inherent to participants and within their ability to critically assess the developments. Incorporating qualitative methods, such as interviews or focus groups, could provide deeper insights into the nuanced ways in which phraseology influences cultural awareness and linguistic skills.

Furthermore, while the research has highlighted the impact of phraseology in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war, there is a need for longitudinal studies to assess the long-term effects of phraseology education on students' attitudes and behaviours.

To conclude, the study results represent an important step towards understanding the role of phraseology in promoting multiculturalism, however, further research is needed to address its limitations and explore its potential in diverse educational settings and contexts.

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