# Трансформація медіарецепції інституту президентства в Україні (за матеріалами європейських видань)

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Дану розвідку присвячено вивченню процесу трансформації медіарецепції інституту президентства України за матеріалами європейських видань протягом 2019 року. Особливу увагу приділено ключовим змістотвірним концептам, які уґрунтовували медіадискурс британських, французьких та німецьких видань у передвиборний та післявиборний періоди. У дослідженні застосовано метод концептуального аналізу, який дозволив виявити ядерні та периферійні сенси досліджуваних концептів, вказати на ключові концептосполуки та зафіксувати явище роз'єднання концептів за умов зміни референтних ситуацій. Ми враховували явище гомогенізації контенту, що наразі є характерним для західного медіадискурсу. Його прояви ми підтвердили майже повною конвергентністю концептуальних уявлень, представлених у медіасистемах Британії, Німеччини та Франції.

У нашій розвідці ми дослідили концепт президентства в Україні, оказіонально представлений іменем В. Зеленського. Здійснюючи концептуальний аналіз, ми перш за все визначали референтну ситуацію, яка спричинила актуалізацію певного концепту, і звертаємо увагу на позалінгвістичні фактори його зміни у медіадискурсі. У ході дослідження ми виявили такі частотні концепти на позначення президента Зеленського, як: «політичний прибулець», «новачок у політиці, який прийшов з шоу-бізнесу», «політик-новачок», «телевізійний клоун», «український телевізійний комік», «кабаре-артист», «жартівник», які репрезентували нетиповий характер українського чинного президентства.

Ми також зафіксували процес переходу від персоналістичних негативно конотованих концептів до інституціональних концептів із нейтральним ядерним змістом. Зокрема вказали на роз'єднання стереотипних концептуальних зв'язків «президент – комік», спочатку через уведення предикату «колишній» і актуалізацію сполучення «президент – колишній комік», а згодом і через затвердження нових смислових поєднань. Ми також вказали на негативну роль концепту «Ukrainegate», яким маніфестовано другорядну роль України на міжнародній арені.

***Ключові слова:*** *медіаконцепти; медіадискурс; інститут президентства; європейські видання; гомогенізація.*

## 1. Introduction

**Problem statement.** Every language in the world is a living, constantly evolving organism, which is sensitive to changes in the society. Any event, especially when it comes to world-wide political events, finds its expression in the language. At the same time, the language of the media has always been the most dynamic and sensitive layer of every national language. It is in the media discourse where language phenomena, which subsequently become constants, appear and spread. They form an actual picture of the world and subsequently replenish the linguistic thesaurus of the society.

The dynamics of the media language is the most clearly reflected in the concepts involved in the formation of media discursive practices. The concept as a key term of sociocentric linguistics allows us to track the existence of the language, to visualize the process of transformation of the meanings through changes in connotations and the emergence of new concepts in the media. Concepts are linguistic-cognitive constructs; they integrate knowledge, associations, and reflections on the reality they refer to as words. They are open systems, because they are constantly replenished with cognitive and reflexive elements. The concept model allows us to see a conditional layer structure, which includes a stable concept core (prototype), layers that have emerged in different periods, and the outer relevant layer represented in the media practices. Therefore, the concept represents the idea of functional and communicative measurement of the language. The conceptual approach is being increasingly used in various fields of humanitarian knowledge, where the focus on continuing discourses is principled. Media discourse is exactly the discourse, formed in the turbulent socio-cultural field, which daily provokes new meanings that are verbalized in the mass-media language.

Attention to concepts as markers of the dynamic and functional processes in the language has led to the emergence of conceptual analysis, which has also become a significant component of the methodology of social communications. The frequency of its use in profile studies is motivated by the attention of communicators to the "living language" of the

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media, which is an important factor in any communication system, because it is directly involved in the process of message encoding.

In the article the process of transformation of media representations of the Presidency Institute in Ukraine, which was highlighted in European newspapers during the year 2019 is under study. Special attention is focused on two conditional periods, which are pre-election, with its active promotion of the political projects in Ukraine, and post-election one. Both periods are reflected in the European media discourse, and their conditionality is associated with fuzzy differentiation of conceptual meanings before and after the presidential election in Ukraine. We assume that politics is a mediated sphere that is the most widely represented in the media discourse.

**Analysis of the latest research and publications.** Concept researchers have developed a considerable number of conceptual analysis algorithms that are dependent on the goals of the study. Scholars A. Vezhbytska [1], R. Frumkina [2], Z. Popova, I. Sternin [3], L. Kompantseva [4], L. Vasylik [5], L. Suprun [6] and T. Kuznetsova [7] proposed their methods.

Researcher S. Holyk insists on the integrated approach to the analysis of concepts, which allows to identify various linguistic means of their representation, to trace the frequency of their implementation in the discourse and, as a result, to highlight the peculiarities of the content and structure of concepts [8]. Researching concepts, scholar I. Kolehaieva proposes to carry out «arrangement of key families according to their semantic potential: what is called, how it is characterized, which transformations occur within the studied field [9]. Scientist Kh. Datsyshyn emphasizes the special role of mass media in the transformation of concepts depending on the chronotope. In her opinion, "the temporal determinism of the mass communication makes it possible to capture the peculiarities of the verbal content of concepts in a certain period of time and, therefore, to realize a diachronic comparative analysis" [10]. Optimal for the completeness of the semantic description of the concept, according to L. Savytska and I. Bezuhla is "selection of three components in its composition: object and imagery, conceptual and valuable one" [11]. According to the typology of the mediatized worlds presented by researcher E. G. Nim, politics is a world-figuration, which can be characterized by several established patterns and frames typical for the thematic discourse [12]. The structure of the concept and the cognitive processes that occur with it in the human mind are described by T. Solonchak and S. Pesina [13]. The Institute of Presidency, which belongs to the mediatized world, also turns towards established models of representation in the media discourse. This is the concept that has a stable core sense, and which occasionally acquires polar values, referenced by atypical phenomena and processes that accompany implementation of presidential power in Ukrainian society.

**Purpose of the paper.** The purpose of the study is to shed light on the process of transformation of media discourse on the Ukrainian Presidency Institute in European newspapers during the year 2019.

**Research object.** The object of the study is the key media concepts that shape the presidency discourse in Ukraine in the European media.

**Research methods.** The strategy of our study involves the interpretation of the concept as a semantic formation that contains passive (literal) and active (meaning, which is formed and legitimized in the media discourse) components. We share the approach of M. Poliuzhyn, who believes that conceptual analysis should be aimed at "identification and comprehension of the structure of a verbalized concept in order to find out the circumstances of its formation, to find its systemic connections and their difference from other concepts; to gain a comprehensive knowledge of the world, lifestyles, traditions and culture of native speakers" [14]. Among the two approaches to conceptual analysis – systemic and textual – we choose the second one, because we focus on the functioning of concepts in the media discourse, the identification of their semantic fields. Scholar J. Furman approaches the method of conceptual analysis through the prism of the philosophical category of evidence, which he views as a method of information research, and vice versa, information is as a prerequisite for the study of evidence [15]. Generally, the conceptual analysis method is complex. It variably integrates a number of techniques that allow one to explore the semantics, syntax, and pragmatics of a particular concept, to show its interrelations with other concepts, and to determine the directions and causes of the transformation of core senses.

The links between other concepts are defined by the following formulas: A is B, A has the properties of B, A is related to B, and we pay attention to the formulas for the destruction of established conceptual relations: A is not B, A has no properties of B, A is not related to B. These formulas point to the transformation of concepts, which acquire situational senses in the media and lose them due to the change of the reference situation.

In the article the concept of the presidency in Ukraine, represented by the name of V. Zelensky is explored. Carrying out the conceptual analysis, we determine the reference situation that caused the concept to be updated first, and then pay attention to the extra-linguistic factors of its change in the media discourse.

## 2. Results

In Western media, the image of the Ukrainian President V. Zelensky is transformed according to the events that determine the attitude towards him at the institutional and personal levels. The conceptual sphere underpinning the discourse that relates to Zelensky undergoes corresponding changes. There is a separation of the "president-comedian" stereotypical conceptual connections, first because of the introduction of the predicate "former" and the actualization of the "president – former comedian" connection, and then through the approval of new semantic combinations.

Gradually, media rhetoric is re-emphasized from purely personal and image approaches to the institutional reading of the character, that manifests itself in the president's identification with the country.

The key geopolitical contexts that determine the extra-linguistic circumstances of the Presidency concept are the relations of Zelensky with Trump, the Normandy Four, the

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Steinmeier Formula, the Normandy Summit, the UN General Assembly, etc.

In the run-up to the elections and after the results of the presidential elections were announced, Volodymyr Zelensky was positioned in the Western media as an atypical president. In the German media, he appears as a comedian and a person with no political experience: "Der künftige Präsident Wolodymyr Selenskyj hat keine politische Erfahrung und wird kaum alles besser machen. Und doch ist die Art und Weise, wie der Machtwechsel stattfindet, eine seltene Errungenschaft im postsowjetischen Raum" ("The Future President Volodymyr Zelensky has no political experience and is unlikely to do anything better. However, a way to change power is a rare achievement in the post-Soviet space") (*FAZ*. 2019. 22 April).

The "president-comedian" concept combination was the most frequent in the media discourse between April and September 2019. And Volodymyr Zelensky was clearly opposed to the former President Petro Poroshenko, starting with the election campaign of the second round of the presidential race. For example: "Selenskyj vs. Poroschenko: Schlagabtausch in der Ukraine" (Zelensky vs. Poroshenko: Exchange of Strikes in Ukraine. *FAZ*. 2019. 22 April).

The representation of the "atypical" presidency in the German press can be shown through the following concepts: "Polit-Newcomer" ("political newcomer"), "Prognosen Präsident" ("predicted president"), "Außenseiter" ("stranger"), "Magier" ("magician"), "Fernsehclown" ("television clown"), "Ukrainische Fernsehkomiker" ("Ukrainian TV comic»), «Showman» («showman»), «Politik-Neuling» («novice politician»), «Sieger ohne Inhalte» («winner without content"), "Kabarettist" ("cabaret artist"), "Spaßmacher" ("joker").

Similar concepts that categorize the perception of the will-be Ukrainian president were also used in high-quality British newspapers: "accidental president," "comedian," "TV comic," "actor with no prior political experience," "a political unknown," "dark horse."

French newspapers use the following conceptual connections: "a newcomer to politics who came from show business" ("un novice en politique issu du show-business"), "is baptized by political fire" ("a connu ces derniers jours son baptême du feu politique"), "comedian Zelensky" ("l'humoriste Zelensky").

The discourse of the series makes it possible to justify an unprecedented change in power in Ukraine: "Der Komiker Wolodymyr Selenskyj hat den Aufstieg seines Serien-Alter-Egos im echten Leben wahrgemacht" ("Comedian Volodymyr Zelensky has realized his TV series alter-ego in real life"); "Ein Geschichtslehrer, der überraschend Präsident des Landes wird. – Das ist eine der Rollen von Wolodymyr Selenskyj. Und im Film fängt er an auf „seine Weise" aufzuräumen" ("A history teacher who surprisingly becomes the country's president. – This is one of the roles of Volodymyr Zelensky. And in the movie, he begins "to clear his way") (*FAZ*. 2019. 5 April).

In the British press, we find such appeals to V. Zelensky's TV series past: "Actor Volodymyr Zelenskiy, who plays Ukraine's president in a hit TV show" (*The Daily Telegraph*. 2019. 21 April), "propel TV comic to presidency". Similar references can be found in the French press: "Zelensky, an

unknown political entity, has no power in parliament, and his party "Servant of the People" is still just the name of a well-known television series" ("Objet politique non identifié, Zelensky ne dispose d'aucune force au Parlement et son parti, Serviteur du peuple, n'est pour le moment que le nom d'une célèbre série télévisée") (Ukraine: début de la présidence Zelensky. *Le Figaro*. 2019. 19 Mai).

The article under the title "From the Joker to the President" published by the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* is an example of author's attempt to reflect on the phenomenon of turning comedy into election weapon (*FAZ*. 2019. 8 February).

The leading feature of the "comedian" as a personal character is gradually being replaced by institutional political senses: "Komiker Selenskyj wird Präsident" ("Comedian Zelensky became president") (*FAZ*. 2019. 21 April); Selenskyj spricht über politische Ziele ("Zelensky talks about political goals") (*FAZ*. 2019. 22 April). They come to the foreground in the discourse of interstate communication: "Die Bundesregierung wird der Ukraine zur Seite stehen" ("The federal government will be on Ukraine's side") (*FAZ*. 2019. 22 April).

The conceptual field is also changing. Zelensky appears in the articles of German newspapers as "Ukrainische Staatschef" ("Ukrainian leader"), "Ukrainische Präsident" ("Ukrainian President"), "Trump ukrainischer Kollege" ("Trump's Ukrainian counterpart"), in the British quality press as "the new President of Ukraine," "he Ukraine president," "Ukraine president Volodymyr Zelenskiy," in the French newspapers as "Donald Trump and his Ukrainian counterpart" ("Donald Trump et son homologue ukrainien Volodymyr Zelensky"), "Mr. Zelensky" ("M. Zelensky"), "heads of two states" ("les deux chefs d'État") (Zelensky and Trump are understood to have the same attitude to both of them), "Ukrainian and American leaders" ("les dirigeants ukrainien et américain"), "his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelensky" ("son homologue ukrainien Volodimir Zelenski"), "President Zelensky" ("le président Zelensky"), "Ukrainian President" ("le président ukrainien").

British media also have internal and external political contexts to highlight the functionality of the Presidency Institute in Ukraine. They have mostly negative connotative meanings: corruption scandals, corruption, prominent oligarchs, rising costs, war, stalling reforms. In the French media there are diachronic contexts that represent Ukraine today and also appeal to the past: "the cradle of East Slavic civilization" ("berceau de la civilisation slave orientale"), "industrial and agricultural flagship of the former USSR") ("fleuron industriel et agricole de la défunte URSS"), "Moscow confiscated Crimea" ("Crimée confisquée par Moscou").

There is a gradual separation of concepts in the "comic-president" concept combination, because such predicates as "former" and "ex-" appear in the media discourse.

The transformation process in the British media is indicated by the following conceptual compounds: "comedian-turned-president," "a television comedian," "comic actor with no political experience," "ex-comedian President Zelensky."

French newspaper *Le Figaro* also writes about the gradual "mutation" of the comedian who turns into the president: "L'affaire est suffisamment sérieuse et l'exploit remarquable pour que l'on laisse de côté durant un temps l'étiquette

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caricaturale de comique troupier qui colle au front de Zelensky, et qui ne parvient pas à retranscrire fidèlement une aventure politique hors norme, alors que le personnage lui-même est en train de muter pour devenir président" ("The affair is serious enough and the feat is so remarkable that one leaves aside for a time the caricature label of a comic trooper, which sticks to Zelensky's forehead, who himself fails to faithfully transcribe an extraordinary political adventure, while his character is mutating to become president" (*Le Figaro*. 2019. 22 Avril).

In the run-up to the parliamentary elections, a discourse emerges in the British media linking Zelensky to his "Servant of the People" party, which is presented as a new phenomenon in Ukrainian politics leading to the destruction of the old political system: "reboot the country's politics," "newcomers into parliament and government," "new generation of politicians," "new face," "young people new to politics," "breaking the system".

The concepts of "scene," "actor," "comedian" in the sedimented form remain in the connotative range of the concept "Ukrainian President," even when it acquires clear institutional features and is somewhat depersonalized. For example, Spiegel publishes an article eloquently entitled "Selenskyj, plötzlich Statist" (Zelensky, suddenly on the sidelines. *Der Spiegel.* 2019. 10 Oktober).

"Er ist Komiker und Schauspieler – und jetzt Präsident der Ukraine. Wolodymyr Selenskyj wollte seinem Land Frieden bringen. Doch dann kam ihm Donald Trump ihm in die Quere" ("He is a comedian and actor – and now President of Ukraine. Volodymyr Zelensky wanted to bring peace to his country. But then Donald Trump got on his way"), – this is how this material begins, where the "scene" concept becomes a pivotal one. It is joined by the predicates "own" and "alien" in order to demonstrate through this opposition the change of status of an actor who, from the usual scene of his own choice, is now forced to "play" exclusively on the alien political scenes. The author uses an intentional approach in trying to identify the implicit behavioral intentions of the Ukrainian president and to establish causality between expectations and reality. Zelensky appears in the article as a former actor who is accustomed to choosing his own scene – whether it is "Evening Quarter" or "Servant of the People". The image of the "scene", which is familiar to the Ukrainian leader, helps the author to convey the main opinion of the article: Zelensky is forced to play not on his own stage. The conditions in which he is to lead the game are dictated by Trump, Merkel and Macron. The worst situation is unfolding around Ukrainian-American relations. In the US, the concept of "scandal with Ukraine" is beginning to appear, which, in the author's opinion, is in itself a huge problem for our country, since it clearly demonstrates the priority of Americans – not Ukraine as it is, but the problems it causes to their president.

The author refers to Zelensky's expectations, which turned out to be incompatible with reality. First, the Ukrainian president wanted peace for his country, and he placed great hopes on Trump. He hoped to stand "side by side with Trump in the Oval Office and convey a message to Putin." According to Spiegel, vain hopes for the US President's help in organization of a US-wide Normandy Enlargement meeting that would put pressure on Russia is one of Vladimir Zelensky's

biggest missteps. An attempt to please D. Trump, who eloquently appeared in a cue about insufficient assistance from France and Germany during the meeting at the UN General Assembly was also criticized.

It is noteworthy that *Spiegel*, like many other European newspapers, compares Zelensky to Trump, seeing the same political character here: "In Grundzügen ähneln sich die beiden Staatschefs: Beide sind als Außenseiter in die Politik gegangen, beide verdanken ihre Wahl dem Verdruss der Menschen, die sich von den politischen Eliten nicht vertreten fühlen, beide mögen kritische Medien nicht unbedingt" ("Basically, the two heads of state are similar: both came into politics as outsiders, both are obliged by their election to irritated people who do not feel as representatives of political elites, neither of them necessarily likes critical media"). It is about people`s initially being distant from politics, the electoral choice due to the irritation of the masses over their predecessors who did not perform their representative function, and about the insensitivity to critical media outbursts.

According to *Spiegel*, one of the reasons for a not very productive tenure of V. Zelensky as President of Ukraine is Trump, more specifically, a telephone scandal that, in fact, brought Zelensky to secondary positions in the international politics.

The phenomenon of politicians-comedians is revealed by the British *The Guardian*, which published an article with the eloquent title "The world is run by comedians, but is anyone laughing?" (*The Guardian*. 2019. 25 August). This topic has also become an important information drive for Ukrainian practitioners, who drew attention to its aspects in their articles: "The dialectical connection between politics and comedy is what pulls the world into the abyss. This idea is proposed by the author, while reflecting on the phenomenon of "new rulers." Among them there are Donald Trump, Boris Johnson and Volodymyr Zelensky. All of them are political leaders of new type who have come out of comedy and embody their viewers' prejudices. The author depicts a grotesque picture: the prime-time television show featuring the new British prime minister, the US and Ukrainian presidents in the Oval Office, swaying with laughter and sharing a worldwide audience. "Wit is the epitaph of emotions," sums up the author, quoting F. Nietzsche. And at the same time, it begs the question: but why do we choose them ourselves?" [16].

Media experts claim that Boris Johnson is an odious figure in British politics [16] and consider him to be a synthesis of a comedian, intellectual and showman. On this basis, they liken him to Zelensky. British journalists also see a similarity between Johnson and Trump.

"Ukrainegate" concept has been gaining a significant share in the representation of the Ukrainian president over the last three months.

Extralinguistic circumstances of the transformation of discursive media approaches include the scandalous telephone conversations of V. Zelensky with D. Trump and the meeting of two leaders in the UN General Assembly. Ukrainian experts also state that ""Ukrainegate" appears in US media discourse as a conditional term denoting President Donald Trump's pressure on President Volodymyr Zelensky's

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administration to investigate the business interests of Hunter Biden, son of the former Vice President Joe Biden, who may compete with Donald Trump during the 2020 elections" [17].

The concept is formed with the help of combination of two subconcepts "Ukraine" and "gate," which is similar to Watergate – the Watergate scandal of the 1970s that led to the resignation of President R. Nixon. For American society, Watergate is a testament to the fact that personal flaws of the politicians can lead to a protracted political crisis and cause a powerful reputational blow to the presidency itself.

Therefore, to illuminate Ukrainian-American relations, "Ukrainegate" concept originally contained historically motivated negative connotations that implicitly indicated Trump's probable impeachment due to pressure on the leader of a foreign state for his own pragmatic purposes. "Immer wieder fällt der Name Watergate" ("The name Watergate keeps coming up") – an article under this title was published by the Frankfurter allgemeine Zeitung. It refers to the precedent for the loss of public confidence by the former US President R. Nixon and predicts that impeachment hearings will not be held without trace for D. Tramp (*FAZ*. 2019. 12 November).

The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* daily publishes articles on "Ukrainegate" in the United States. We pay attention to the columns that categorize the concept through the semantic labels that form the vector of perception of the article. The most frequent of them are the "Case of Ukraine," "In the Ukrainian conflict," "Republicans against impeachment," "Trump and the Ukrainian case," "Impeachment," "Through the cause of Ukraine." Similarly, the content on Ukraine and the Ukrainian president in Die Welt is classified as "Impeachment – Investigation," "Impeachment – Hearings," "Military Assistance Detained," "The US President."

The "Die Ukraine-Affäre" concept becomes dominant in the discourse that is somehow related to the Ukrainian-American issues.

British and French newspapers also have conceptual connections directly related to the semantic fields of "Ukrainegate": "the Trump-Ukraine scandal," "focus on Trump-Ukraine," "Pour son malheur, l'Ukraine se retrouve victime de la fange trumpienne" ("To its misfortune, Ukraine finds itself victim of the Trump's mire").

It is worth saying that the Ukrainian theme is not an autonomous one, it is raised only as a component of a broader complex theme of elections in the US and manipulation of their results with involvement of other countries and pressure on Ukraine in particular.

## 3. Discussion

The conceptual approach in media discourse research remains debatable in the field of Social Communications. Scientists have not reached a consensus on the algorithm and regulatory procedures for conceptual analysis yet. In our opinion, the explication of the concepts should be due to the extra-linguistic circumstances of their functioning in the media discourse. The language of the media as a living language should be explored in dynamics, which will provide an opportunity to highlight the transformations of key concepts in the context of the socio-cultural and political situations that caused them. It is considered to be appropriate to identify concept compounds that allow us to uncover the status of the problem being investigated, as well as to record the process of separation of concepts, which may indicate a correction or complete transformation of the media reception of a particular object.

Analysis of the key concepts that have influenced the phenomenon of the Ukrainian Presidency in British, German and French newspapers throughout the year 2019 indicates a high level of similarity, almost complete coincidence of linguistic representations.

We associate this phenomenon with the process of homogenization of the European press. As we noted in our dissertation, the similarities of journalistic cultures in the online newspapers of the European countries were explored by H. Wessler, D. Hallin, and P. Mancini. The similarity of media content, and therefore of the concepts that underpin it, is, on the one hand, conditioned by the emergence of a homogenized Western style of journalism, which follows the Anglo-American model, and on the other, by the emergence of a European public sphere or the Europeanisation of national public spheres (cited after [18, p. 48–53]). Content homogenization is also closely linked to the processes of vertical and horizontal Europeanisation of the press (mutual coverage by EU countries), and this process is only intensified by the features of online versions of the print newspapers (cited after [18, p. 48–53]).

## 4. Conclusion

Media-discursive practices for the presidency institute are the background of the concepts of "comedian," "showman," "actor," "clown" and such related ones as "scene" and "show." They all verbalize Europeans' perceptions of an atypical presidency in Ukraine. These concepts are of particular importance in the pre-election and early post-election media discourse. Gradually, President Zelensky's personal evaluations are giving way to institutional characteristics, and conceptual compounds with the concepts outlined above gradually separated according to the formulas "A is not B", "A has no property of B," "A is not relevant to B."

"Ukrainegate" integrated concept has also defined the nature of the reception of the presidency institute in Ukraine recently. It testifies to the secondary positions of our state on the European agenda.

The study may be continued, considering the incompleteness of the transformation of ideas about Ukrainian power in European newspapers and the European political community as a whole. Conceptual analysis is a relevant and effective research tool.

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## Harkavenko Y. Transformation of the media reception of the presidency institute in Ukraine (based on the materials of European newspapers)

The research is dedicated to the study of the process of transformation of media reception of the Institute of the Presidency of Ukraine based on the articles published by the European newspapers on their websites during the year 2019. Particular attention was paid to the key substantive concepts that underpinned the media discourse of the British, French and German press during the election and post-election periods.

In the process of study, the method of conceptual analysis, which allowed to reveal the core and peripheral meanings of the concepts under study as well as point to key concept compounds and capture the phenomenon of concept separation under conditions of changing reference situation was used. The phenomenon of content homogenization, which is now the characteristic of Western media discourse was also considered. We have confirmed its manifestations by almost complete convergence of conceptual representations presented in the media systems of Britain, Germany and France.

In the article the concept of presidency in Ukraine, represented by the name of V. Zelensky, is under exploration. Carrying out the conceptual analysis, we first identified the reference situation that caused the actualization of the concept, and paid attention to the extra-linguistic factors of its change in the media discourse. In the process of study, the following frequently used concepts to denote President Zelensky, which represented the atypical character of the Ukrainian incumbent presidency, were found: "political newcomer," "newcomer to politics who came from show business," "politician newcomer," "television clown," "Ukrainian television comedian," "cabaret artist," "joker," etc.

We have also stated the process of transformation from personal, negatively connotated to institutional concepts with a neutral core sense. We particularly pointed to the separation of stereotypical conceptual connections of "president-comedian," first by introducing the predicate "former" and actualization of the combination "president-former comedian" and later by approving new semantic connections. We also pointed to the negative role of the Ukrainegate concept, which manifested Ukraine's minor role on the international arena.

***Keywords:*** *media concepts; media discourse; presidency institute; European publications; homogenization.*

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