

“Antisurzhyk” Purism: its Actors, Role, and Motives in Modern Days within the Ukrainian-Russian Language Contact¹

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This paper focuses on a sociolinguistic analysis of the purist phenomenon under the name *Antisurzhyk*, which we commonly observe nowadays in the Ukrainian Internet space.² The term refers to a negative attitude towards *surzhyk*, generally considered as a widespread vernacular mixed speech of Ukrainian and Russian languages, resulting from long-term linguistic contact between the two languages. The first example of this kind of linguistic ideology bearing the name appeared in the form of a reference book edited by O. Serbenska in 1994, which lists *false* expressions, i.e., examples of the use of Russisms or surzhykisms, together with the correct alternatives, allegedly corresponding to the literary norm of the Ukrainian language.³ Recently, such a purist movement is observed in various fields, including printed educational materials, journalistic articles, social media groups, online videos, and mobile applications providing training in correct speech. After discussing the general characteristics of surzhyk, linguistic purism, and Internet phenomena related to the Ukrainian language, we will examine individual examples of the movement, mainly focusing on its newest forms, taking advantage of modern Internet platforms. The main targets of our analysis are the proponents of Antisurzhyk, their arguments and their role in language contact. In our attempt to provide an exploratory definition to this contemporary example of linguistic purism, we will assume that Antisurzhyk is a social movement advocating for a clear distinction between the two languages, in order to resolve the linguistic insecurity among the Ukrainian-Russian bilinguals.

¹ This paper is a preliminary report of an ongoing research conducted as part of the doctoral thesis project on linguistic ideology in Ukraine. The content of this work is based on the following conference presentation: *Икедзавэ Т. «Антисуржык» как современный пример лингвистического пуризма в украинско-русском языковом контакте // Тезисы докладов 50-й Международной научной филологической конференции имени Л. А. Вербицкой 15-23 марта 2022 года. СПб.: Санкт-Петербургский государственный университет, 2022. С. 265.*

² There are three variants of transcription for the term Антисуржык: *Antysurzhyk*, in which *y* reflects the phoneme /i/ in Ukrainian, *Antisurzhyk*, in which *i* represents the phoneme /i/ in Russian, and *Antisurzhyk*, in which the prefix *anti-* follows the orthography of other European languages and *-surzhyk* keeps the *y* reflecting Ukrainian /i/ phoneme. In this article, we prefer the usage of the last variant.

³ Антисуржык. Вчимося ввічливо поводитись і правильно говорити / За заг. ред. О. А. Сербенської. Львів: Світ, 1994.

1. Ukrainian-Russian language contact and surzhyk⁴

1.1. General context

As it is well known, the linguistic situation in Ukraine is characterized by its complexity. Historically, Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism in the country was influenced by numerous geographical, economic, and political factors, in which centuries-old relations between Ukraine and Russia played and continue to play a key role. Although today's Ukraine is a monolingual state in the strict legal sense, as its Constitution grants the status of official language only to the Ukrainian language, one cannot deny that Russian continues to be widely used, for example, in media outlets, everyday communication, or online resources. Such linguistic contact between Ukrainian and Russian over the centuries has contributed to the emergence of a mixed speech, the so-called surzhyk, constantly used in various social situations. The very existence of surzhyk further complicates the linguistic landscape of Ukraine, as it is often perceived as a threat to the development of the Ukrainian literary language, condemned for the low level of its proficiency among the population.

1.2. Definitions of surzhyk

It should be noted that surzhyk in itself is a complex sociolinguistic phenomenon, and there is no academic consensus regarding its definition. To date, various terms to designate the mixed language have been proposed, such as *form or component of popular speech in the situation of diglossic bilingualism, non-codified vernacular language, idiolect or sociolect, set of idiolects, subcode, mixed language, mixed sub-language, form of language mixture, code-switching, unintentional code-switching, Ukrainian pidgin, semilingualism, insufficient translation*, and so on.⁵ In addition, we observe different attitudes towards this ambiguous term in scientific discourse, where researchers either 1) legitimize the usage of the term *surzhyk* in academic context, 2) expand the usage to designate other forms of language mixture, 3) delimit

⁴ We have partially examined the linguistic situation in Ukraine and the characteristics of surzhyk and Antisurzhyk in our previous work: Takumi Ikezawa, Reinterpretation of Historic Language Valuation within the Pro-Ukrainian Linguistic Ideology. *Slavistika: Annual Report of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology, The University of Tokyo* 36, 2021, pp. 85-102.

⁵ Брага І. І. Термінологізація лексеми суржик: основні тенденції // Ученые записки Таврического национального университета имени В.И. Вернадского. Серия «Филология. Социальные коммуникации». 2013. Т. 26 (65). № 1. С. 94. Every citation from non-English sources in this paper is our translation and will be indicated in italic.

its definition specifically to linguistic phenomenon related to the Ukrainian language, 4) avoid the term by proposing other terminological equivalents.⁶

The reason for such a confusion in defining the mixed language is that it could exist in various forms. P. Auer proposes a typology of interaction between multiple languages by assuming a continuum, where on the one end the alternation of linguistic elements is conditioned pragmatically, and grammatically on the other end.⁷ The former type is labeled as Code-switching (CS), the latter as Fused Lect (FL), and the intermediate variant as Language Mixing (LM). This framework has been applied to the case of surzhyk to determine its nature of mixture, as done by L. Bilaniuk in her typology of the mixed language.⁸ She proposes five classifications of surzhyk variants based on their historical, social, and ideological contexts: 1) "urbanized peasant" FL emerging from the 19th century among the working-class urbanized peasants, 2) "village dialect" FL from the same era spread among villagers in contact with Russian administration and media, 3) "Sovietized-Ukrainian" FL corresponding to the codified Ukrainian language under the planned Russian influence during the Soviet period, 4) "urban bilinguals" CS or LM from the Soviet and post-Soviet era, 5) "post-independence" CS or LM spoken by Russophone urbanities newly using Ukrainian in public. What we find interesting is that the third "Sovietized-Ukrainian" prototype is also classified as a variant of surzhyk, although it could be considered rather as a change in the literary norm of the Ukrainian language, albeit its political nature.

The difficulty in studying surzhyk stems from its enormously diverse linguistic and sociolinguistic features, since the term is applicable to *any* form of linguistic interaction between the Ukrainian and Russian languages. For the sake of our research, however, it is possible to derive some of the generally accepted characteristics, as we find in encyclopedic sources:

A variant of language representing a mixture of the Russian and Ukrainian languages; used in conditions of contact of these languages, characteristic for people with low cultural level and low linguistic competence both in the field of Ukrainian and Russian languages.

⁶ Там же. С. 94-96.

⁷ Peter Auer, From Code-switching via Language Mixing to Fused Lects: Toward a Dynamic Typology of Bilingual Speech. *International Journal of Bilingualism* 3, no. 4, 1999, pp. 309-332.

⁸ Laada Bilaniuk, A Typology of surzhyk: Mixed Ukrainian-Russian language. *International Journal of Bilingualism* 8, no. 4, 2004, pp. 409-425.

*A particular form of social semilingualism.*⁹

*A particular form of social semilingualism; a contact variety of language, representing mixture of Russian and Ukrainian languages, characteristic for people with low linguistic competence in the field of Ukrainian and Russian languages.*¹⁰

*A language, in which elements of various languages are artificially put together without following literary norms. Used mainly in relation to the Ukrainian popular speech, littered with unintentionally borrowed Russian elements (because of Ukrainian-Russian interference) [.....]. Surzhyk is an impoverished language, devoid of national color, beauty, and expressiveness. Most common in everyday speech, whence it penetrates the pages of newspapers and journals, books, and brochures. The fight against surzhyk is one of the main issues in the field of promoting the Ukrainian language culture.*¹¹

*A language, in which elements of various languages are artificially put together without following (lexical, phonetic, and grammatical) literary norms. The term is used mainly in relation to Ukrainian popular speech, littered with borrowed Russian elements [.....].*¹²

Synthesizing these entries, we can summarize that the term *surzhyk* clearly refers to a mixed variant of Ukrainian and Russian languages, emerging from the contact of the two languages, but also that the mixed speech is typical for people with low level of proficiency in both languages. It is the latter point which defines the social nature of *surzhyk*, considered to be a *littered* vulgar speech inconsistent with the literary norm. The phenomenon is interpreted as a manifestation of *semilingualism* (Укр. напівмовність / Rus. полуязычие), meaning that the speakers of *surzhyk* represent an undesirable form of bilingualism, lacking command of the

⁹ Словарь социолингвистических терминов / Под ред. В. Ю. Михальченко. М.: Институт языкознания Российской академии наук, 2006. С. 222.

¹⁰ Словарь лингвистических терминов и понятий / Под ред. Т. В. Жеребило. Назрань: Пилигрим, 2016. С. 472.

¹¹ Ленець К. В. Суржик (Електронний ресурс) // Українська мова. Енциклопедія / За ред. В. М. Русанівського і О. О. Тараненка. К.: Українська енциклопедія, 2000 [<http://litopys.org.ua/krmova/um107.htm>] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

¹² Черсунова Н. І. Суржик // Українська мова. Енциклопедія / За ред. І. В. Муромцева. К.: Майстер-клас, 2011. С. 351.

literary standards of both languages.

However, it should be noted that the concept of semilingualism might only be applicable to the narrow sense of surzhyk, i.e., Ukrainian-Russian linguistic interference tracing its roots back to 17-19th centuries.¹³ Although semilingualism traditionally designates the state of a bilingual not fully competent in any of the languages he/she knows, it is possible to assume individuals who are "*competent enough in each of the languages, but their consciousness is constantly under pressure of choice: which language would be more prestigious in a given case?*"¹⁴ These people would be at risk of alternating lexical or phonetic elements, whenever code-switching is pragmatically required to meet the needs of communication, resulting in speaking surzhyk. We therefore believe that its semilinguistic character implies not only an insufficient knowledge of the two closely related languages, but also an inability to delimit their areas of use.

In philological studies, surzhyk is often negatively characterized, explained by the perception of its undesirable influence on the Ukrainian language. The use of a mixture of two languages as stylization of a character in literary works is regarded as a result of "*negative interference*" of the Ukrainian and Russian languages, occurring from "*long-term unequal contact between them*" and "*massive, unsystematic penetration of Russian elements into the structure of the Ukrainian language.*"¹⁵ From a sociolinguistic perspective, it is suggested that the research on surzhyk should focus on elaborating sufficient measures and recommendations "*aimed at eliminating or at least minimizing its negative impact on the development of the modern Ukrainian literary language.*"¹⁶ The use of Russian colloquialism by university students could be characterized as a "*language disease*" that affects the educational institutions which "*must resist manifestations of ignorance and uncultivation.*"¹⁷ As mentioned in one of the encyclopedia entries, not only does surzhyk present itself and its speakers as *impoverished* or *uncultivated*, but it is deemed unfavorable for promoting the Ukrainian language.

¹³ Курохтина Т. Н. К вопросу об определении понятия «суржик» // Славяноведение. 2012. № 3. С. 93–101.

¹⁴ Матіяш Б. В. Напівмовність і внутрішній конфлікт особистості // Наукові записки. Т. 20. Ч. 1 / Національний університет «Києво-Могилянська академія». К.: КМ Academia, 2002. С. 16.

¹⁵ Врублевська Г. Суржик як мовна характеристика персонажа в сучасній українській мові // Волинь-Житомирщина. Історико-філологічний збірник з регіональних проблем. 2002. № 9. С. 156.

¹⁶ Брага І. І. Суржик в соціолінгвістичному вимірі // Вісник Запорізького національного університету. Філологічні науки. 2012. № 1. С. 86.

¹⁷ Масенко Л. Т. Суржик: між мовою і язиком. К.: Києво-Могилянська академія, 2011. С. 84.

1.3. Purism and surzhyk

Such a negative attitude towards the mixed speech influences the linguistic behavior of the Ukrainian-Russian bilinguals. Since any linguistic elements resembling those in the Russian language could be recognized as *surzhykisms*, the number of potential Russisms increases, as old Common East Slavic word forms are excluded from the modern Ukrainian language and treated as Russian linguistic elements that is “*reflected in the language consciousness of the younger generation, which in formal contexts avoids using in synonymic doublets those lexemes or structures that coincide with the Russian language*”.¹⁸ In this context, we observe a linguistic purism aimed at excluding Russian language elements from the Ukrainian language, or in other words, at *fighting against surzhyk*.

In general, linguistic purism is defined as a “language planning ideology involving resistance to foreign elements.”¹⁹ At the same time, it may be assumed that such an ideology also targets any deviation from the literary norm, that is, any unfavorable elements within the same linguistic system, such as sociolects.²⁰ Linguistic purism usually focuses on a single linguistic variant, meaning that “only one set of corrupting influences is targeted; normally this means that only one foreign language [.....] or sociolect [.....] is identified as a problem for the purity of one’s language, even though there are other varieties with an equal or stronger degree of actual influence.”²¹ Since linguistic purism is a type of ideology, “there is no such thing as ‘pure’ language from a linguistic perspective” and it “as a mental concept is strongly linked to conceptualization and subjective categorization.”²²

Regarding the linguistic purism in Ukraine, it implicates various actors, various types of foreign language influence and various socio-cultural trends.²³ However, the main trend after the country’s independence is that “*the followers of purism are characterized by a predominant aversion to Russisms, as opposed to Polonisms in the Ukrainian language of the late 20th to early 21st century*.”²⁴ Such Russisms can also include the so-called *runenglish*, the

¹⁸ Дель Гаудио С. Украинско-русская смешанная речь «суржик» в системе взаимодействия украинского и русского языков // *Slovēne International Journal of Slavic Studies*. 2015. № 4(2). С. 236.

¹⁹ Endre Brunstad, Standard language and linguistic purism. *Sociolinguistica* 17, no. 1, 2003, p. 52.

²⁰ Nils Langer and Agnete Nesse, Linguistic Purism, in Juan M. Hernández-Campoy, Juan C. Conde-Silvestre, eds., *The Handbook of Historical Sociolinguistics*, Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2012, p. 608.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 621.

²² Brunstad, Standard language and linguistic purism, pp. 52, 54.

²³ Тараненко О. О. Сучасні тенденції до перегляду нормативних засад української літературної мови і явище пуризму (на загальнослов’янському тлі) // *Мовознавство*. 2008. № 2-3. С. 159-189.

²⁴ Яковець Р. П. Пуристичні тенденції в контексті когнітивної лінгвістики // *Науковий вісник*

borrowing of English linguistic elements in the Russian language, which further penetrates into the Ukrainian language.²⁵ We should emphasize that linguistic purism has both negative and positive effects, and it is "neither good or [sic] bad in itself."²⁶ The purist trend in Ukraine, on the one hand, is interpreted as a manifestation of the "search for strategies of modern language development" as a general social attitude.²⁷ On the other hand, critics of purism insist on the problematic hypercorrected word forms or old established norms, which do not correspond to the real language usage of today.²⁸

1.4. Internet and the Ukrainian language

Before analyzing the Antisurzhyk movement, we must note that discussions on language issues are actively held on the Internet. One of the typical examples is the *Azirivka* phenomenon, named after the former Prime Minister of Ukraine, Mykola Azarov. Not being fluent in Ukrainian, he was seen on television and other media speaking in a particular manner, pronouncing unstressed /o/ close to [a], which is a phonological rule observed in Russian (*akanie*), or hypercorrecting Ukrainian terms by mistakenly replacing the /o/ with /i/ (e.g., *krovosisiv* "cruel oppressors [in genitive plural]," whereas the correct literary form is *krovososiv*). The public reacted to Azarov's misunderstanding of Ukrainian grammar and phonology by generalizing the characteristics of his idiolect and making jokes about it, to the point that an article under the name *Azirivka* was made in the *Humor* section of Ukrainian Wikipedia.²⁹

Besides the prevalence of such activities, social media platforms also present such content in a humorous manner. The example below is a post published on *VKontakte* in 2015,

Херсонського державного університету. Серія «Лінгвістика». 2006. № 4. С. 312-315.

²⁵ Ступіка О. Б. Феномен «Runglish» в російській, українській та англійській мовах // Науковий вісник Міжнародного гуманітарного університету. Серія: Філологія. 2014. № 8. Т. 2. С. 227-229.

²⁶ Brunstad, Standard language and linguistic purism, p. 68.

²⁷ Куляєв П. П. Особливості сучасного українського мовного пуризму // Актуальні проблеми теорії соціальних комунікацій: збірник наукових доповідей. Випуск IV: Наша Шевченкіана: Матеріали науково-звітної конференції викладачів кафедри журналістики Інституту української філології та літературної творчості імені Андрія Малишка НПУ / Інститут української філології Національного педагогічного університету імені М. П. Драгоманова. К.: Ореол-сервіс, 2013. С. 49.

²⁸ Мозговой В. И. Культурные парадоксы языкового пуризма в Украине // V Міжнародні Севастопольські Кирило-Мефодіївські читання: збірник наукових праць. Севастополь: Гитпак, 2011. С. 367-374.

²⁹ Монахова Т. В. Азіривка як соціолінгвістичний феномен // Наукові записки НаУКМА. Філологічні науки. 2014. Т. 164. С. 11-15.

which is a parody of the webcomic *Cyanide & Happiness*, explaining the correct usage of comparative clause in Ukrainian (Figure 1). Here, a figure in red attempts to use the conjunction *chym*, originating from instrumental case of relative pronoun *shcho*, as it is the norm in Russian (*chem < chto*). The one in green ends up stabbing him with a knife, since he was supposed to use the conjunction *nizh*, which is not only the literary norm but also coincidentally identical in form to the noun “knife.”



Figure 1: Parody of webcomic *Cyanide & Happiness*³⁰

Transliteration	Translation
- <i>Pryvit, druzhe!</i>	- Hey, friend!
- <i>Pryvit.</i>	- Hey.
- <i>Pravda zh, harna nyini pohoda?!!</i>	- The weather is great now, isn't it?
- <i>Uhu.</i>	- Uh-huh.
- <i>S'ohodni teplishe, chym vchora!</i>	- Today is warmer than yesterday!
- <i>Shcho tse v tebe take?!!</i>	- What is it that you have?
- <i>Nizh.</i>	- Knife.

³⁰ ОКРОП | ОКРеме Об'єднання Патріотів. Запис от 02.10.2015 [https://vk.com/wall-51927345_65] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

- Ne "chym", a "nizh".	- Not "chym", but "nizh."
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The use of social media as a forum for remarking and discussing correct spelling and wording is, admittedly, not limited to the Ukrainian language. For instance, as per *Urban Dictionary*, *Grammar Nazi* is an Internet slang designating “one who uses refined vocabulary, correct grammar, constantly finds themselves correcting grammar and spelling (in forums, chatrooms, Tumblr, YouTube, etc.),”³¹ used in various virtual language zones.³² According to a study on *Grammar Nazis* groups on Czech Facebook by T. Sherman and J. Švelch, the “anonymous and ephemeral nature of online environments enables users, including administrators, to act as language ‘experts’ without actually being them,” and social networks provide “affordance of easy reproduction and sharing of [linguistic] deviations,” as well as “facilitate evaluation and expressions of stance through comments and ‘likes’.”³³ Given that the Antisurzhyk movement is active on the Internet, it is most probable that its creators take advantage of these characteristics of online platforms, on which they themselves are not necessarily experts in Ukrainian grammar or linguistics.

Lastly, the use of the Internet in solving language issues is not limited to ordinary users. The Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs initiated a media campaign titled #KyivNotKiev in 2018, which contributed to the change in the name of Ukraine’s capital in English from Russian *Kiev* to Ukrainian *Kyiv*.³⁴ When analyzing the Antisurzhyk movement, we should be aware that its actors could include both public entities and common individuals.

2. Antisurzhyk movement

2.1. General characteristics

Under such circumstances around the language situation in the country and its academic

³¹ *Urban Dictionary*; Grammar Nazi [https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Grammar%20Nazi] (Retrieved August 28, 2022).

³² The term is known as *Grammar-nazi* in Russian and *Hramnatsyst* in Ukrainian. We could also mention the so-called *Engrish* as an example of an Internet meme demonstrating grammar/spelling policing or humorization. Cf. Jayne H. Ikeshima, Some Perspectives on the Phenomenon of “Engrish”. *The Keiai Journal of International Studies* 15, 2005, pp. 185-198.

³³ Tamah Sherman and Jaroslav Švelch, “Grammar Nazis never sleep”: Facebook humor and the management of standard written language. *Language Policy* 14, 2015, p. 331.

³⁴ Фоменко О. С. Топоніми як маркери національної ідентичності: Київ або Kyiv // Національна ідентичність в мові і культурі: збірник наукових праць / За ред. О. Г. Шостак. К.: Талком, 2021. С. 308-309.

discussions, an interesting object of research would be the purist movement labeled Antisurzhyk, observed commonly on the Internet. Antisurzhyk is a movement in Ukraine where incorrect expressions, i.e., Russisms or surzhykisms, are listed together with their correct alternatives in various websites. The first example of this kind of educational material under the name *Antisurzhyk* is a book edited by O. Serbenska in 1994.³⁵ During this period, the mixed speech finally became the object of linguistic analysis, until which surzhyk, seen as a taboo, was hardly studied in Soviet linguistics due to its contradiction to the “*Communist Party’s thesis on the ‘harmony’ of the Russian-Ukrainian bilingualism and the ‘beneficence’ of the Russian language’s influence on Ukrainian.*”³⁶ O. Serbenska’s work, published shortly after Ukraine’s independence, is regarded as having been “*the first guide to the culture of the modern living Ukrainian language*” for the citizens in both the East and the West of the country, and “*still remains today in the list of the best publications.*”³⁷ Since then, the Ukrainian language has become the only official language of the country according to the Constitution in 1996, and following the political crisis in the years 2013-2014, it is gradually becoming popular among the population.³⁸ Nearly three decades hence, there are journalistic articles, pages and groups on social media platforms, videos on online platforms or mobile applications designated to teach the correct language bearing the name Antisurzhyk.

We consider Antisurzhyk as a type of linguistic purism in Ukraine, aimed to minimize the number of alleged Russisms in the Ukrainian language by proposing more suitable alternatives. For instance, it is claimed in O. Serbenska’s work that the numeral 90 should be pronounced *dev’iatdesiat* instead of *dev’ianosto*, the latter still being accepted in the latest Ukrainian orthography.³⁹

During the last decades, [dev’ianosto] has become widespread in the Ukrainian language,

³⁵ Антисуржик. Вчимося ввічливо поводитись і правильно говорити.

³⁶ Масенко. Суржик: між мовою і язиком. С. 47.

³⁷ Зеліньська Н. Олександра Антонівна Сербенська: у невтомних пошуках нового // Олександра Сербенська / упоряд. В. Лизанчук. Львів: ЛНУ імені Івана Франка, 2014. С. 117.

³⁸ Соціологічна група Рейтинг. Шосте загальнонаціональне опитування: мовне питання в Україні (19 березня 2022) [https://ratinggroup.ua/research/ukraine/language_issue_in_ukraine_march_19th_2022.html] (Retrieved August 28, 2022). Comparing years 2012 and 2022, the proportion of those who consider Ukrainian as their mother tongue has grown from 57% to 76%, Russian has shrunk from 42% to 20%.

³⁹ Міністерство освіти і науки України. Український правопис (електронний ресурс) [https://mon.gov.ua/storage/app/media/zagalna%20serednya/05062019-onovl-pravo.pdf] (Retrieved May 31, 2022). С. 109.

*having replaced, even in the Western diaspora, the previously used Common Slavic word dev`iatdesiat. Dev`ianosto has been used only in the Russian language, and it was included in Ukrainian a long time ago, but in Right-Bank Ukraine it was perceived as Russism. Its origin is incomprehensible even for Russians. Russian academics try to somehow explain it, but those explanations are artificial and not convincing. The old dev`iatdesiat clearly fits in to the numeral series from 50 to 90 not only in Ukrainian but also other Slavic languages. Is it not time to return it to the Ukrainian language?*⁴⁰

The fact that there are two variants of the numeral 90 in the Ukrainian language is often discussed. O. Ponomariv states that the form *dev`iatdesiat* is indeed consistent with other numerals (50 *p`iatdesiat*, 60 *shistdesiat*) and that it has been documented in numerous dialects and lexicographic works, granting "all the reason to become a fully righteous word of the literary language."⁴¹ Conversely, N. Solohub disagrees with the opinion that the variant *dev`ianosto* was borrowed from Russian, and claims that its history is older than the Russian language itself.⁴² Regardless of each claim, the main issue lies in the resemblance of the word form to the Russian counterpart.

From the next section, we will analyze the examples of Antisurzhyk, focusing on its purist arguments, actors, and role in language contact. A linguistic study of the proposed incorrect and correct expressions, on the one hand, allows us to outline the generally accepted linguistic characteristics of surzhyk. On the other hand, examining annotations or comments on Antisurzhyk websites, newspaper articles or Internet resources related to this movement would enable us to characterize its participants, their motives and attitude towards the current linguistic situation. Through our study, we attempt to provide an exploratory definition of this contemporary example of linguistic purism. To gain a broader overview of this form of linguistic purism, our analysis includes not only activities directly named *Antisurzhyk*, but also those which are treated as such in media articles, as well as those which are comparable to the first two types.

⁴⁰ Антисуржик. Вчимося ввічливо поводитись і правильно говорити. С. 104.

⁴¹ Пономарів О. Культура слова: Мовностилістичні поради. К.: Либідь, 2001. С. 51.

⁴² Солозуб Н. Дев`яносто чи дев`ятдесят [http://kulturamovy.univ.kiev.ua/KM/pdfs/Magazine60-13.pdf] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

2.2. Examples of the movement and its actors

During the course of researching online Antisurzhyk resources, we observe not only that puristic activities implicate a wide range of actors, but also that similar movements take place outside of the Internet. Such cases include:

- A poster placed inside a trolleybus in Lviv entitled *Attention! Speak correctly!*⁴³ From an image taken in 2007, we see that several *incorrect* phrases including Russisms are listed with their *correct* alternatives. The political party Svoboda and the Lviv City Council Department of Transportation are mentioned as authors.



Figure 2: Leaflet *So how does your child speak?*⁴⁴ Across two columns, the *incorrect* wordings are listed on the left side and the *correct* wordings on the right side. The text on the lower left side reads “*Let us teach our children to speak correctly by our own example!*” On the lower right side are the logos of Lviv city, local government, children’s clubs’ network, and the news portal website.

⁴³ *Викисклад*. Листовка против суржика [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Листовка_проти_суржика.jpg] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

⁴⁴ *Твоє Місто*. Як розмовляє ваша дитина: у Львові на майданчиках розмістили «мовні» правила [https://tvoemisto.tv/news/na_dytyachyh_maydanchykh?lvova_dity_rozkleily_nalipky_yak_pravylny_govyryty_65293.html] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

- The project *So how does your child speak?* was initiated in 2014 by regional news portal site Tvoemisto.tv in cooperation with the network of children’s clubs in Lviv (Figure 2).⁴⁵ With the support of the local government, leaflets with incorrect and correct expressions, prepared by linguist T. Bereza, were posted on children’s playgrounds.

The intended audience of purist movement, however, is not limited to children and their parents as in the last case. Similar activities are taking place in the field of education, as in the following examples:

- The appendix *Dictionary of surzhyk expressions* in the handbook of Ukrainian language edited by philologist V. Dubichynskyi.⁴⁶ Over thirty pages of the work are dedicated to a list of “*surzhyk expressions*” and “*Ukrainian normative counterparts*” in alphabetical order.
- A series of seminars entitled *Antisurzhyk. Pure Ukrainian* conducted by Ukrainian-Russian translator Vitalii Haiseniuk, which took place in universities, libraries, and museums. National University of Bioresources and Nature Management hosted an event in 2020 for lecturers who “*wish to improve their knowledge of the Ukrainian language, learn to work with practical tools for literate speech.*”⁴⁷

Media outlets actively publish materials dedicated to overcoming the use of Russisms in the Ukrainian language, which are often accessible on the Internet. Although online media do have the tendency to simply reproduce or include links to other Antisurzhyk materials, they could also be creative in promoting the correct speech:

⁴⁵ *Львівська міська рада*. У Львові стартувала промоційна кампанія правильного мовлення «А як розмовляє Ваша дитина?» [https://city-adm.lviv.ua/news/society/social-sphere/219307-u-lvovi-startuvala-promotsiina-kampaniia-pravylnoho-movlennia-a-iak-rozmovliaie-vasha-dytyna] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

⁴⁶ *Дубічинський В. В.* Українська мова. Сучасний довідник. Орфографія, стилістика, граматики, пунктуація, словники. Харків: Клуб Сімейного Дозвілля, 2010. С. 500-534.

⁴⁷ *Сиротенко А.* Антисуржик. Чиста українська [https://nubip.edu.ua/node/70355] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

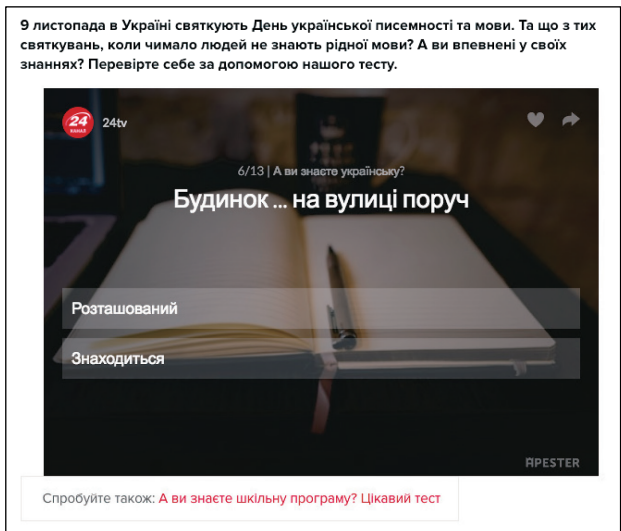


Figure 3: Example of an online quiz.⁴⁸ The question reads, “The building is ... on a nearby street,” and the reader is asked to fill in the blank by choosing either *roztashovanyi* or *znakhodyt'sia*, both potentially meaning “is located in.” Here, the first option is accepted most probably due to the latter’s resemblance to the Russian form *nakhoditsia*.⁴⁹

- Online media often publish news articles inciting their readers to learn the correct

⁴⁸ 24 Канал. На жаль чи нажаль? Наскільки добре ти знаєш українську мову [https://24tv.ua/na_zhal_chi_nazhal_naskilki_dobre_ti_znayesh_ukrayinsku_movu_n887103] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

⁴⁹ After answering the question wrongly, it is indicated that *znakhodyt'sia* could only be used for what is once lost, possibly due to its original meaning (*znakhodyty* “to find” + reflexive pronoun *sia* > *znakhodyt'sia* “to be found,” as in French *se trouver* or German *sich befinden*). The Ukrainian Academy’s *Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language* in 20 volumes (*СУМ-20*) currently under development still mentions the meaning “to be present somewhere (about something); to occupy a certain place somewhere; to have a certain geographical position” for the verb *znakhodyt'sia*: *Український мовно-інформаційний фонд НАН України*. Словник української мови [https://services.ulif.org.ua/expl/Entry/index?wordid=37285&page=1169] (Retrieved August 28, 2022). The option *roztashovanyi* is a past passive participle of the verb *roztashuvaty* “to place” derived from *tash* “booth, tent” borrowed from Middle High German through Polish: *Етимологічний словник української мови*. Т. 5 / Уклад. Р. В. Болдирев та ін. К.: Наукова думка, 2006. С. 530. This suggests the general characteristic of linguistic purism, where usually a single foreign source is targeted, as similar arguments are made in other educational materials, e.g., in a television program *Express Lesson*, featuring linguist Oleksandr Avramenko: *Сніданок з 1+1*. Знаходиться, перебувати чи розташовуватися - експрес-урок [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Nh0snm_pfw] (Retrieved August 28, 2022).

language. These could appear either in the form of 1) informative articles presenting surzhykisms and their alternatives, 2) summary article of an online Antisurzhyk resource, 3) introductory articles of various educational resources intended to improve one's proficiency in Ukrainian language. For the first type, online quizzes are available for the readers to test their knowledge of the language by choosing the correct options (Figure 3).

- From 2017 to 2019, public TV channel UA: Pershyi broadcasted the TV program *Lifehack in Ukrainian*, intended to teach the viewers to “*speak Ukrainian correctly*.”⁵⁰ The show, which is also available on YouTube, was produced in a sketch format, where difficult pronunciations or grammatical elements are introduced as the actors engage in conversation. In the *Antisurzhyk* segment, actors deliberately speak in surzhyk, during which the conversation pauses, and the host provides the correct expressions to the viewers.
- Another example of a TV program presented as one of the “*exercises for Antisurzhyk*” is *Express Lessons of the Ukrainian Language* on channel 1+1, featuring linguist Oleksandr Avramenko.⁵¹ The segment is broadcasted as part of the channel's morning program, and its videos are uploaded on YouTube since 2015, gaining over a million views in total.⁵² On some occasions, there is an interaction between the viewers and the linguist. For instance, in a broadcast from December 2016, the host answered a question posted on the program's Facebook page, regarding whether the word *spasybi* “thank you” exists in the Ukrainian language, due to its similarity to the Russian word *spasibo*.⁵³

It is worth mentioning that online media articles and TV programs are often shared or published on social media, such as Facebook, which provides an opportunity for readers/viewers to discuss the materials with each other, as well as interact with their creators.

⁵⁰ UA: Перший. Лайфхак українською [https://tv.suspilne.media/programs/lifehack_ua] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

⁵¹ Донська І. 6 вправ на антисуржик для уроків української мови [https://osvitoria.media/experience/6-vprav-na-antysurzhyk-dlya-urokiv-ukrayinskoji-movy/] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

⁵² Сніданок з 1+1, Експрес-урок української мови [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLEoEWGEBriPCTBIOQbXIIDzFFakriePu-] (Retrieved August 28, 2022).

⁵³ Сніданок з 1+1, Чи є в українській мові слово "спасибі"? – експрес-урок [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P2JyjP_HBek] (Retrieved August 28, 2022).

While the most common form of Antisurzhyk are websites with simple lists of incorrect and correct expressions, a new trend in recent years is that content creators are becoming active on media platforms that are popular among the younger generation. Consequently, the formats and hosting platforms of electronic resources are highly diverse, as we see in the examples below:

- The most common forms are often found on websites, such as the anonymous *Official website of the Ukrainian language*, on which the page *Antisurzhyk – Correct language* with a simple word list in alphabetical order is posted.⁵⁴ This particular example is a copy of the word list from O. Serbenska’s original book.⁵⁵ *Linguistic Kaleidoscope* is an educational material offered by Lviv National University, designed to “*help eliminate the distortions of the Ukrainian literary language*”.⁵⁶ Along with various resources for university entrants or beginners in Ukrainian, a page entitled *Hypertext manual “Antisurzhyk”* edited by O. Serbenska contains an online version of her book. Unlike the printed edition, the website provides training quizzes, which are unfortunately inaccessible as of the moment of our study.
- The website *Language is the DNA of the Nation* publishes illustrations in which a fictional tongue-shaped character explains the Ukrainian orthography, pronunciation, or confusing paronyms to visitors (Figure 4).⁵⁷ Posts in the Antisurzhyk section are dedicated to calques, Russisms, or commonly mistaken stress positions. The project has also released a mobile application *Mova* which allows users to learn the language on their smartphones or tablets.

⁵⁴ *Офіційний сайт Української мови*. Антисуржик – правильна мова [https://ukrainskamova.com/publ/chinnij_pravopis/leksika/antisurzhyk_pravilna_mova/5-1-0-244] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

⁵⁵ Антисуржик. Вчимося ввічливо поводитись і правильно говорити. С. 121-144.

⁵⁶ *Сербенська О. А. та ін.* Мовний калейдоскоп [<http://prima.lnu.edu.ua/lknp/mova/index.htm>] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

⁵⁷ *Мова – ДНК Нації*. Антисуржик [<https://ukr-mova.in.ua/library/antisurzhyk/?page=5>] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).



Figure 4: Example from the website *Language is the DNA of the Nation*.⁵⁸ The tongue-shaped character Lepetun says “Let’s speak in Ukrainian” in three possible ways: *hovorimo ukrains’koiu / po-ukrains’ky / po-ukrains’komu*. Below it is indicated that *hovoryty na ukrains’kii* is a calque (cf. Rus. *govorit’ na ukrainskom*).

- On various social media platforms, such as Twitter or Facebook, there are communities or accounts either having the name or posting with the hashtag #Antisurzhyk. For example, the group *Antisurzhyk* on Facebook followed by over 600 users presents itself as “a page for those who care” and shares numerous posts propagating the correct speech.⁵⁹
- Ukrainian YouTubers, such as Maksym Prudeus, call for acquisition of the correct Ukrainian language. Initially a Russian speaker, he began speaking Ukrainian in 2012 and now publishes a video series *From Russian to Ukrainian/How to switch and how to do away with surzhyk*.⁶⁰ His work, which

⁵⁸ *Мова – ДНК Нації*. Говорити українською, по-українському, по-українськи чи на українській? [<https://ukr-mova.in.ua/library/antisurzhyk/govorutu-ukrayinskoju,-po-ukrayinskomu,-po-ukrayinsku-chu-na-ukrayinskij>] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

⁵⁹ *Facebook*. Антисуржик [<https://www.facebook.com/movavssurzhyk/>] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

⁶⁰ *Максим Прудеус*. З російської на українську | Як перейти та як прибрати суржик [<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8G81iuoscehp9uk5T0nHYKaflaTfyHC>] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

is hash tagged with *#Antisurzhyk*, offers advice on starting to speak Ukrainian, and presents some of the common mistakes for Russophones.

- Recently, the hashtag *#Antisurzhyk* has made its way to TikTok. Blogger Andrii Shymanovskiy's channel *Creative Dumplings* with over 200 thousand followers uploads sketch videos, where one person talks in surzhyk and the other constantly corrects it.⁶¹ Two of his videos hashtagged with *#Antisurzhyk* have achieved over million views and 100 thousand likes.

As we have seen, this type of Ukrainian language purism is not practiced by one particular group. The actors of this movement include a wide range of social instances and individuals, such as public administration bodies, political parties, educational institutions, mass media, public figures, or ordinary Internet users. The production of materials involves not only linguists, but also ordinary people. Regarding the recent trend, we have observed that *Antisurzhyk* is spreading among popular online platforms, most often used by the younger generation.

Another interesting point is that the creators of *Antisurzhyk* websites and videos do not necessarily act anonymously. Although in some instances, the contributor's names are not mentioned, participants in Facebook groups have their registered names publicly available, and videos on YouTube or TikTok feature the creators with their own personal appearances. These individuals do not claim to be experts in language matters, but rather as people who underwent or are undergoing the process of *switching to Ukrainian* themselves, becoming relatable to their audience. We believe that this sense of relatability plays a major role in promoting the *correct speech* in today's digital society.⁶²

2.3. Linguistic arguments

By examining the linguistic materials offered by some of the *Antisurzhyk* resources, we

⁶¹ *Творчі Варенички*. *govori_harno* [https://www.tiktok.com/@govori_gamo?lang=ja-JP] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

⁶² From a marketing perspective, consumers apparently favor the opinion of social media influencers more than that of traditional celebrities on modern online platforms such as YouTube and Instagram. According to M. Nouri, along with higher authenticity, YouTubers and Instagrammers give access to their personal life, gaining the sense of being more "real": Melody Nouri, *The Power of Influence: Traditional Celebrity vs Social Media Influencer*. *Advanced Writing: Pop Culture Intersections* 32, 2018 [https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/engl_176/32/] (Retrieved August 28, 2022).

see that their linguistic arguments appear in virtually every aspect of language. Below are examples of linguistic elements considered to be part of surzhyk, based on the materials we have seen above.

2.3.1. Phonology

The main attention is paid to the pronunciation of individual words. This could involve different phonological stress positions between the two languages: Ukr. пріяте́ль (*pryiatel'*) / Rus. пріяте́ль (*priiatel'*) "friend"; Ukr. пере́пис (*perépyś*) / Rus. пере́пись (*pérepis'*) "census"; Ukr. спі́на (*spyna*) / Rus. спи́на (*spiná*) "back (of the body)". There are cases, where historical phonological processes are involved: Ukr. строк (*strok*) / Rus. срок (*srok*) "period, date" < Proto-Slavic **sŭrokŭ*, where the Ukrainian form involves secondary glide insertion /str/ < /sr/; Ukr. Вірменія (*Virmeniia*) / sur. Арменія (*Armeniia*) < Rus. Арменія (*Armeniia*) "Armenia", where the Ukrainian form gained a prosthetic consonant /v/ and underwent vowel shift /i/ < /o/ in a closed syllable; Ukr. дзвонити (*dzvonyty*) / sur. звонити (*zvonyty*) < Rus. звонить (*zvonit'*) "to call", where the initial consonant of the Ukrainian verb underwent dissimilation as in Polish *dzwonić*.

2.3.2. Morphology

Several types can be noted, such as different word formation or ending: Ukr. подарувати (*podaruvaty*) "to give (a present)", подарунок (*podarunok*) "gift", подарунковий (*podarunkovyi*) "gift (adjective)" / sur. подарити (*podaryty*), подарок (*podarok*), подарочний (*podarochnyi*) "ibid." < Rus. подарить (*podarit'*), подарок (*podarok*), подарочный (*podarochnyi*) "ibid.", where both sets of lexemes have the same etymological origin (Proto-Slavic **po-* + **darŭ* "gift") but use different suffixes to form each lexicon; Ukr. знімання (*znimannia*) / sur. зйомка (*ziomka*) < Rus. съёмка (*s'iomka*) "taking", representing different suffixes of verb nominalization (Proto-Slavic **-nije* vs. **-ka*); Ukr. тритомний (*trytomnyi*) / трьохтомний (*tr'okhtomnyi*) < Rus. трёхтомный (*triokhtomnyi*) "three-volume (adjective)", where the initial numeral appears in different forms (identical to nominative/accusative in Ukrainian, to genitive/locative in Russian); Ukr. хочуть (*khochut'*) / sur. хотять (*khotiat'*) < Rus. хотят (*khotiat'*) "(they) want", representing different types of conjugation of the same verb (conjugates as first or "e" class in Ukrainian, as second or "i" class in plural for Russian); Ukr. продають у будці (*prodaiut' u budci*) / sur. продають у будке (*prodaiut' u budkie*) < Rus.

продають в будке (*procdaiut v budke*) “(they) sell at a booth”, reflecting different prepositional case endings and the absence of Slavic second palatalization (*/ts/ < /k/*) in the Russian language in this particular case.

2.3.3. Syntax

The use of prepositions or grammatical cases is in the focus: Ukr. з радості (*z radosti*) / sur. від радості (*vid radosti*) < Rus. от радости (*ot radosti*) “from happiness”; Ukr. на його честь (*na ioho chest'*) / sur. у його честь (*u ioho chest'*) < Rus. в его честь (*v ego chest'*) “in his honor”; Ukr. з усякого приводу (*z usiakoho pryvodu*) / sur. по всякому приводу (*po vsiakomu pryvodu*) < Rus. по всякому поводу (*po vsiakomu privodu*) “on every occasion”; Ukr. було тільки два уроки (*bulo til'ky dva uroky*) / sur. було тільки два уроку (*bulo til'ky dva uroku*) < Rus. было только два урока (*bylo tol'ko dva uroka*) “there were only two lessons”, where Ukrainian mandates the use of nominative plural noun with numerals 2 to 4, and in Russian genitive singular is used; Ukr. їздили по селах (*izdily po selakh*) / sur. їздили по селам (*izdily po selam*) < Rus. ездили по селам (*ezdili po siolam*) “went around the villages”, where in Ukrainian prepositional case follows the preposition по (*po*) in the meaning “around or about numerous places”, and dative case in Russian.

2.3.4. Lexicon

Here the arguments are given not only for individual words, but also for phraseological expressions: Ukr. крамниця (*kramnytsia*) / sur. магазин (*mahazyn*) < Rus. магазин (*magazin*) “shop, store”; Ukr. годинник (*hodynnyk*) / sur. часи (*chasy*) < Rus. часы (*chasy*) “clock”; Ukr. крокувати (*krokuvaty*) / sur. шагати (*shahaty*) < Rus. шагать (*shagat'*) “to step”; Ukr. вживати заходів (*vzhyvaty zakhodiv*) / sur. приймати міри (*prymaty miry*) < Rus. принимать меры (*prinimat' mery*) “to take measures”; Ukr. спасти на думку (*spasty na dumku*) / sur. прийти на голову (*pryty na holovu*) < Rus. прийти в голову (*priiti v golovu*) “to come in mind”.

2.3.5. Semantics

We see examples of polysemic influence from the Russian language. For example, the Russian verb считать (*schitat'*, “count”) may denote both the action of counting (считать деньги, *schitat' den'gi*, “to count money”) and the action of having an opinion (я считаю, что..., *ya schitaiu, chto...*, “I consider that...”). However, the corresponding verb in Ukrainian

рахувати (*rakhuvaty*, "to count") is not recommended in the latter case, where other verbs such as вважати (*vvazhaty*, "to consider"), гадати (*hadaty*, "to guess"), думати (*dumaty*, "to think"), міркувати (*mirkuvaty*, "to deliberate") are presented as suitable.

2.3.6. Observations

Thus, we see that Russian-Ukrainian linguistic interference is observed in various linguistic aspects, from stress accents to calcification. Numerous such linguistic arguments are also found in O. Serbenska's book from 1994, which suggests the continuity of the Antisurzhyk movement for nearly three decades, accompanied by broadening of implicated actors, audience, and utilized means of propagation. It is worth mentioning that online resources, in particular, contain various innovations to help readers learn correct variants, which becomes evident in the new forms of Antisurzhyk, where illustrations or videos are provided, rather than simple lists of incorrect and correct expressions. Actors in this movement are actively using new technology and skills to provide access to materials for those who want to begin correcting their language.

At the same time, these linguistic instructions seem to largely limit the variation of the Ukrainian language. While we confirm the general tendency of the Ukrainian linguistic purism to avoid using expressions similar to Russian and, if necessary, to replace them with loanwords from other languages,⁶³ the fact that some Ukrainian dialects share various phonological and grammatical features with Russian appears to be ignored.⁶⁴ This could indicate a somewhat inflexible aspect of Antisurzhyk, firmly rejecting any linguistic elements resembling those within the Russian language.

There are some cases where the criteria for correctness are disputed. For example, some creators would consider "все одно (*vse odno*, 'anyway')") to be the correct variant of "все рівно (*vse rivno*)" influenced by Russian "всё равно (*vsio ravno*)", whereas others propose the adverb "однаково (*odnakovo*)", although similar lemma "одинаково (*odinakovo*)" exists in

⁶³ Examples are substitution of подзвонити (*podzvonyty*) "to call (on the telephone)" by зателефонувати (*zatelefonyuvaty*, cf. Figure 2), магазин (*mahazyn*, itself from Arabic through West European languages) "shop" by крамниця (*kramnytsia*, from Middle High German, cf. Modern German Kram "stuff"): Етимологічний словник української мови. Т. 3 / Уклад. Р. В. Болдирев та ін. К.: Наукова думка, 1983. С. 74, 351. See also note 49.

⁶⁴ Examples are pronunciation of unstressed /o/ close to [a] (*akanie*) in Eastern Polissian or Slobozhan dialects, absence of Slavic second palatalization in particular word forms in Steppe dialect, softening of phoneme /ch/ widely in Southeastern dialects, or the general use of Russisms in dialects in contact with Russian. Cf. Українська мова. Енциклопедія (Електронний ресурс) [<http://litopys.org.ua/ukrnova/um.htm>] (Retrieved August 28, 2022).

the Russian language as well. We could also point out that the verb “узнати (*uznaty*, ‘to find out’)”, frequently used in the media and included in modern Ukrainian dictionaries, is also regarded as an incorrect variant, instead proposing дізнатися (*diznatsiya*) as the correct alternative.

Although it is difficult to verify their correctness, we can still affirm that the suggested incorrect words and expressions are widely used, for example, in the media or in political discourse. It can therefore be assumed that today’s Antisurzhyk movement is aimed at a broad social audience.

2.4. Motives and evaluation of Antisurzhyk

Along with the aforementioned materials, we have also examined the annotations on the resources urging visitors to follow their linguistic recommendations, such as the following example:

Група має на меті об’єднати бажуючих володіти українською мовою у вільному невимушеному спілкуванні, там де ми користуємось суржиком. Вона саме для тих, хто хоче вдосконалити свої знання української мови.⁶⁵

This [Facebook] group aims to unite those who wish to master the Ukrainian language in free and natural communication, where we use surzhyk. It is for those who want to improve their knowledge of the Ukrainian language.

This description problematizes the fact that surzhyk is used *freely* and *naturally* as a mean of communication and asserts that its area of use should be replaced by the *pure* language. Based on the view that surzhyk represents *impoverished* and *uncultivated* speech, as we have discussed before, this replacement is carried out by enhancing the knowledge of the Ukrainian language among the audience:

Посібник покликаний сприяти усуненню деформацій української мови, підвищити рівень мовленнєвої культури.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ *Facebook*. Бориспіль. Антисуржик для всіх [<https://www.facebook.com/groups/612462082518574/>] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

⁶⁶ *Сербенська О. А. та ін.* Анотація [<http://prima.lnu.edu.ua/lknp/mova/sur/in.htm>] (Retrieved May 31,

This manual [i.e., Hypertext manual 'Antisurzhyk'] is intended to contribute to the elimination of deformations of Ukrainian language, and to raise the level of speech culture.

In this context, the speakers of surzhyk could be criticized not only for their lack of knowledge of the Ukrainian language, i.e., for continuing to *deform* it by unknowingly using Russisms, but also for the indifference to reconsidering their own linguistic behavior, as V. Dubichynskyi writes in the preface of his *Dictionary of surzhyk expressions* column:

Носій суржыку – це людина, яка не просто не замислюється над своїм мовленням, а здебільшого навіть і не дбає про взаєморозуміння у вербальному спілкуванні.⁶⁷
The speaker of surzhyk is a person who, besides not being thoughtful of his/her own speech, mostly does not care about mutual understanding in verbal communication.

Considering the fact that surzhyk is widely present in everyday speech, which would not pose a major problem in mutual understanding, it appears that the emphasis is placed on the acquisition of the standard Ukrainian language, which should be free of Russisms or surzhykisms. In this regard, numerous articles in the media recommending the use of these educational materials emphasize the need for the so-called *fight against surzhyk*. The main motive for suggesting readers to learn the language is that the mixed language is either consciously or unconsciously used in broad areas, as we see in a news article carrying illustrations from *Language is the DNA of the Nation*:

Щодня багато львів'ян вживають у повсякденній мові росіянізми та кальки, навіть не помічаючи того. Пропонуємо пригадати основні правила української мови та зробити свою мову чистішою і милозвучнішою разом із Лепетуном.⁶⁸
Every day, many Leopolitans use Russisms and calques in their everyday language, without even noticing it. We recommend remembering basic rules of the Ukrainian

2022).

⁶⁷ Дубічинський. Українська мова. С. 500.

⁶⁸ *Твоє Місто*. 10 найгіповіших росіянізмів у картинках [https://tvoemisto.tv/news/10_naytypovyshyh_rosiyanizmiv_u_kartynkah_69112.html] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

language and making your language cleaner and more melodious together with Lepetun.

Contrary to the *impoverished* mixed speech, Ukrainian is often labeled as the *nightingale language*, hence the notion of its purity and melodiosity, which could be achieved by mastering its *basic rules* ranging from phonology to semantics. However, surzhyk is not always denied its right to exist, as it is sometimes considered as part of the country's culture. Nonetheless, there is a clear distinction made between using surzhyk consciously and unconsciously:

Суржик давно став частиною нашої культури [.....]. Тому вчителям української мови варто прийняти той факт, що абсолютно уникнути суржику — неможливо. Проте не варто плутати мовні покручі та незнання мовних правил. Ось 6 вправ, які допоможуть учням розібратися із цими питаннями в процесі навчання.⁶⁹

Surzhyk has long been a part of our culture [.....]. Therefore, Ukrainian language teachers should accept the fact that it is impossible to absolutely avoid surzhyk. However, one should not confuse language mixing with ignorance of linguistic rules. Here are six exercises that will help students to look into these questions in the process of learning.

This text appears to tolerate using surzhyk as part of everyday colloquial speech, though it emphasizes mastering the standard language, in order to be able to use it in appropriate situations. As it turns out, the perceived problem with speakers of the mixed speech is not simply the fact that they mix linguistic elements of the two languages, but that they speak surzhyk without recognizing that it does not conform to the literary norm of the Ukrainian language. Our last example from a media article, proposing some of the Antisurzhyk materials we described, affirms that “*any living language changes overtime: Ukrainian as well*” and raises awareness of learning the language:

Через це на 100 % знати мову не може навіть філолог. Адже не соромно щось не знати, а соромно – не хотіти дізнатись. Тому пропонуємо вам добірку онлайн-ресурсів для покращення української, бо, як казав Вольтер, свою мову треба вчити

⁶⁹ Донська І. 6 справ на антисуржик.

ВСЕ ЖИТТЯ.⁷⁰

Therefore even a philologist cannot have 100% knowledge of a language. Because it is not a shame to not know, but it is a shame to have no desire to know. We thus offer you a selection of online resources for improving Ukrainian, because, as stated by Voltaire, you must learn your own language all your life.

Given that research on surzhyk has become active since the independence of Ukraine and purist movements such as Antisurzhyk are gaining broader attention, this text seems to invite those who are unaware not only of themselves speaking surzhyk, but also of the newly growing sociopolitical status of the Ukrainian language, to master the latter. Since it is “*not a shame not to know*” and “*impossible to absolutely avoid surzhyk*,” we believe that Antisurzhyk is not necessarily intended to completely exclude the mixed speech or the Russian language from people’s linguistic behavior, but rather to emphasize the distinction between different language codes. In this context, besides promoting abstention of the use of surzhykisms or Russisms in the Ukrainian language, Antisurzhyk also has an inclusive character, urging participants to consciously communicate in a complex situation of language contact. It should still be noted, however, that the linguistic purism in question does not support the use of Russian, but on the contrary, promotes Ukrainian extensively as the country’s sole official language. It is highly probable that the current political climate has intensified the Antisurzhyk movement.⁷¹

3. Summary of the analysis

In the preceding sections, we have presented various examples of Antisurzhyk purism, its linguistic arguments, annotations, and commentaries on the movement. The first thing we notice is the diversity of not only the actors involved in the movement, but also the scope of

⁷⁰ Гал-Інфо. Не підручниками Авраменка єдиними: добірка онлайн-ресурсів, що покращать твою українську [https://galinfo.com.ua/news/ne_pidruchnykamy_avramenka_iedynymy_dobirka_onlaynresursiv_sheho_pokrashchat_tvoyu_ukrainsku_345451.html] (Retrieved May 31, 2022).

⁷¹ The main part of our study as presented in the present article was conducted before the current events unfolding in Ukraine. However, we could point out that the website *Language is the DNA of the Nation* recently posted a new image, in which a family of their characters holds the Ukrainian flag, accompanied by a text saying, “*Ukrainian is the language of free people*.” Below, the creator comments that “*switching to Ukrainian is to get rid of the post-colonial shackles, to break off the relationship with the aggressor country*,” clearly calling upon the site visitors to abandon the Russian language: *Мова ДНК Нації*. Українська — мова вільних людей! [https://ukr-mova.in.ua/library/inshe/ukrayinska-mova-vilnux-lyudej] (Retrieved August 28, 2022).

their activities. While participants of Antisurzhyk vary from language experts to ordinary people, their activities range from promoting the proper language in public places to posting influential videos on online platforms. In addition, various efforts have been made to prepare such materials, by taking advantage of new technologies. Although the tools for creating content on the Internet used to be largely limited, with the rise of social media and hosting services nowadays, enthusiasts can prepare and publish images or videos on the World Wide Web. Antisurzhyk, initially the title of a book, has now become a hashtag raising awareness of the mixed speech among a broad audience, while inheriting the essential linguistic arguments.

As for the linguistic arguments made by these actors, they seem to reconfirm the general tendency of linguistic purism in Ukraine, inclined towards avoiding the usage of any possible elements of the Russian language. It must be noted, however, that the main issue is not necessarily the presence of Russian and its linguistic influence in everyday communication of the Ukrainian people, but rather the indifference among its speakers towards speaking the literary Ukrainian language. The commentaries on Antisurzhyk resources appear to emphasize raising awareness of the importance of literary norms and the problems of language mixing, admitting the fact that surzhyk does represent their cultural heritage to a certain degree.

L. Bilaniuk points out that during the war in Donbass, the two opposing tendencies in linguistic ideologies are “language does not matter” and “language matters.” The first tendency points toward “embrace[ing] the existing widespread Ukrainian and Russian bilingualism,” whereas the latter would “consider a titular language to be an important attribute of nationhood.”⁷² Although the Antisurzhyk resources seem to manifest the latter trend, it should also be noted that the problematic nature of surzhyk consists in “*blurring the line between the two languages and reinforcing linguistic insecurity*” among the bilinguals of Ukrainian and Russian languages, as we have seen in our previous work dedicated to the Ukrainian media discourse on languages.⁷³ We believe that the primary effect of Antisurzhyk as educational material is providing an opportunity first to recognize the distinction between the two languages and to differentiate their literary norms, which would prevent bilinguals from speaking a language mixture. However, regarding the current political climate, we must note that the

⁷² Laada Bilaniuk, Ideologies of Language in Wartime, in Olga Bertelsen, ed., *Revolution and War in Contemporary Ukraine: The Challenge of Change*, Stuttgart: Ibidem, 2017, p. 139.

⁷³ Ікэдава Т. Социолінгвістическіе репрезентації языковых характеристик українського, російського мов і суржика в українському медіадискурсі // Філологічні науки: науковий журнал Полтавського національного педагогічного університету імені В. Г. Короленка. 2021. №34. С. 71.

negative valuation of the Russian language would most probably further promote *switching* to Ukrainian, as some of our Antisurzhyk examples suggest.

4. Conclusion

Following our exploratory analysis, we believe that Antisurzhyk is a modern form of linguistic purism aimed at preventing linguistic insecurity among Ukrainian-Russian bilinguals, predominantly through electronic platforms. The purist movement in question has the potential to counteract the linguistic insecurity by advocating a clear distinction between Ukrainian and Russian languages and, consequently, prevent an unconscious use of the mixed variant. Antisurzhyk is not necessarily an exclusionary movement aimed against every speaker of surzhyk or Russian, but it also has an inclusive character, helping the audience to escape from semilingualism and to master the literary norm of Ukrainian, which allows appropriate language choice and its use.

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(いけざわ たくみ)

Пуристское движение «Антисуржик»: его сегодняшние акторы, роль и мотивы в рамках украинско-русского языкового контакта

Такуми ИКЭДЗАВА

Данная статья посвящена социолингвистическому анализу пуристского движения под названием «Антисуржик». Этот термин указывает на негативное отношение к суржику, который, как правило, считается широко распространенной в украинском обществе просторечной смешанной речью, возникшей в результате

длительного языкового контакта между украинским и русским языками. Первые примеры применения такого рода лингвистической идеологии можно увидеть в книге под редакцией А. А. Сербенской в 1994 году, в которой перечислены «неправильные» выражения, т. е. примеры употребления русизмов или суржикизмов с приведением правильных вариантов, которые соответствуют литературной норме украинского языка.

В последнее время такое пуристское движение наблюдается в самых разных областях: сегодня в рамках кампании «Антисуржик» существуют не только печатные учебные материалы, но и журналистские статьи, страницы в социальных сетях, видеоролики на онлайн-платформах или мобильные приложения, предназначенные для обучения правильной речи.

После обсуждения общих характеристик суржика, языкового пуризма и относящихся к украинскому языку интернет-феноменов мы рассмотрим отдельные примеры деятельности в рамках этого движения, уделяя особое внимание новейшим его формам, пользующимся преимуществами современных интернет-платформ. Основными объектами нашего анализа являются акторы «Антисуржика», их аргументы и роль в ситуации языкового контакта. В нашей попытке дать исследовательское определение данному актуальному примеру лингвистического пуризма, мы предполагаем, что «Антисуржик» представляет собой общественное движение, выступающее за четкое разграничение украинского и русского языков и, следовательно, за устранение по крайней мере неосознанного употребления смешанного варианта.