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WAR LINGUISTICS AS A NEW LINGOSYNERGETIC FIELD: RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGES OF OUR TIMES

Abstract

This study explores war linguistics as a new field in applied linguistics, reflecting the unique characteristics of linguistic representation of military art through mass media. The paper identifies potential approaches that define the substantive and informative aspects of military linguistics, converging with military discourse in an existential challenge addressed by science. Accordingly, the subject of military linguistics research includes linguistic tools of operational art theory (operations and combat actions), tactical theory (preparation and conduct of battle), and strategic theory (military management), oriented towards accurate interpretation of the military context in media coverage. The conceptual framework of war linguistics is outlined, demonstrating that all concepts function cyclically, maintaining a balance between the interrelation and interdependence of political subjects, political processes, and elements of military discourse. Drawing on the methodologies of military strategy and tactics, as well as linguistic pragmatics, the study identifies key concepts such as military communication, military discourse, military-political terminology, military-political text, and military journalism.

It is concluded that within the study of linguistic phenomena in military discourse and military journalism, the political strategies of countries, and corpus patterns, the text is a product of war linguistics and represents the pinnacle of contextual similarity in clustered paradigms in the realms of political linguistics, territory and resources, history and culture, ideology, and economic policy. In military journalism, various linguistic levels are influenced by the Russo-Ukrainian war, characterized by new trends in interpreting linguistic changes due to the numerous appearances of war-related collocations in newspaper publications.

Keywords: war linguistics, military communication, military discourse, military-political terminology, military-political text, military journalism, mass media.

Анотація

Статтю присвячено проблематиці воєнної лінгвістики, нового напряму прикладної лінгвістики, що віддзеркалює особливості мовної репрезентації воєнного мистецтва засобами масової інформації. Виявлено потенційні підходи, які визначають змістовно-інформативну грань воєнної лінгвістики як конвергентну з воєнним дискурсом в екзистенційному виклику, на який зреагувала наука. Відповідно предметом дослідження воєнної лінгвістики є мовні засоби теорії оперативного мистецтва (операцій і бойових дій), теорії тактики (підготовка й веденння бою), теорії стратегій (управління військами), орієнтовані на правильне тлумачення воєнного контексту у висвітленні ЗМІ. Описано понятєвий апарат воєнної лінгвістики й доведено, що всі поняття в його межах функціонують циклічно, завдяки чому зберігається баланс між взаємозв'язком і взаємозалежністю суб'єктів політики, політичних процесів й елементами воєнного дискурсу. З опертям на методологію воєнної стратегії і тактики та лінгвістичної прагматики виокремлено такі поняття, як: воєнна комунікація, воєнний дискурс, воєнно-політична термінологія, воєнно-політичний текст, воєнна публіцистика.

Здійснено узагальнення, що в межах дослідження мовних феноменів воєнного дискурсу та воєнної публіцистики, політичної стратегії країн і корпусних закономірностей текст є продуктом воєнної лінгвістики і вершиною контекстуальної подібності кластерних парадигм у площині політичної лінгвістики, території і ресурсів, історії та культури, ідеології, економічної політики. У воєнній публіцистиці різні мовні рівні перебувають під впливом російсько-української війни, що характеризується новими тенденціями в тлумаченні мовних змін, спричинених численною з'явою *war-related collocations* у газетних виданнях.

Ключові слова: воєнна лінгвістика, воєнна комунікація, воєнний дискурс, воєнно-політична термінологія, воєнно-політичний текст, воєнна публіцистика, засоби масової інформації.

Introduction. In contemporary academic circles, the Russo-Ukrainian war is increasingly viewed as a socio-political process characterized, on the one hand, by Ukrainians' struggle to preserve their state, sovereignty, and resources. On the other hand, Russia is striving for territorial redistribution and formation of a new world order, leveraging its strategic successes in previous conflicts.

To maintain psychological resilience among the population, authorities intentionally obscure certain facts or reinterpret the truth of events. As noted by Taugerbeck in "Military Euphemisms in Media Coverage – Euphemisms in Special Contexts of War Reporting", for many years, scholars have developed methods for constructing complex military euphemisms to facilitate social discourse. These euphemisms serve to soften the impact of taboo topics that could potentially cause offense and social disapproval, as well as to conceal unpleasant or alarming ideas. According to the scholar, these euphemisms diminish the degree of violence, objectify the enemy, as well as the methods of warfare, and may lead to social ambivalence, forming a distinctive code that distorts reality (Taugerbeck, 2013). Consequently, Hamziuk (2022) argues about the technology of manipulating the consciousness of recipients, altering the meanings of words and concepts in the media space in conditions of hybrid warfare. In her scientific paper, the researcher also notes that after February 24, 2022, there has been a reshaping of German language official discourse in the media from ambiguity to condemnation of the Russo-Ukrainian war.

Considering the fact that negative connotations are increasingly being excluded from the press and replaced with neutral language, it is pertinent to investigate the phenomena of war linguistics, as only through language can we reveal virtual discursive reality.

With this understanding, we believe it is appropriate to question the role of the media in collaboration with governments that conceal their actions and goals under euphemisms. To demonstrate the phenomenon of war linguistics, within which war and fragments of reality based on it are presented without interpretations, rather than from a favorable position for the ruling elite, it is necessary to examine all terms that influence accurate understanding of the military context in media coverage over the past three years.

Literature review. Special attention among scholars and journalists has been focused on researching the state information policies of countries involved in military conflicts, particularly wars. For instance, Gruber reveals the discursive practice of criticism undertaken by two prominent public intellectuals, Jürgen Habermas and Timothy Snyder, regarding the German government's hesitancy in providing arms to Ukraine during the initial phase of the Russian territorial war in 2022 (Gruber, 2024). The researcher illustrates how both Habermas and Snyder shift their topics at the meso- and macro-levels in their texts to substantiate their arguments.

Building on the ideas of their predecessors, Martikainen and Sakki (2024) explore visual rhetorical analysis in the work titled "Visual Humanization of Refugees: A Visual Rhetorical Analysis of Media Discourse on the War in Ukraine". They employ visual rhetorical analysis to study the rhetorical strategies used in the journalistic publications of Finland's leading national newspaper from February 25 to May 31, 2022. Their data set comprised 465 images, from which they constructed four visual rhetorical strategies: maternalizing, fragile, agonizing, and activating. Additionally, they identified four subject positions for Ukrainian refugees: vulnerable victims, innocent victims, suffering Ukrainians, and persistent/resilient Ukrainians. The researchers found that all these rhetorical strategies implicitly conveyed a subject position portraying Russia as the perpetrator of evil (ibid.).

In their meticulous scholarly investigation utilizing content analysis and frame analysis, Selvarajah and Lorenzo (2023) established a functional relationship between

the application of international law by the International Criminal Court and international press coverage concerning Russia's war against Ukraine. Their research revealed that these reports prompted people to consider the possibility of Russian war crimes in Ukraine (availability effect) and advocated for the accountability of Putin and his regime under international law (applicability effect). Media coverage could potentially contribute to a broader justification of realpolitik goals concerning Ukraine and Russia, underscored by humanitarian and legal concerns (ibid.).

This paper **aims** to represent the Russo-Ukrainian war and its influence on the language through the lens of war linguistics. Within the bounds of this, two **objectives** are attained: 1) to propose the new lingosynergetic field – war linguistics, 2) to discuss the Russo-Ukrainian war as a socio-political process within the framework of war linguistics.

Results and discussion. The term *war linguistics* in our study is used in two distinct ways. In a broader sense, *war linguistics* is a field within applied linguistics that emerged at the intersection of military science and linguistics. Its goal is to establish patterns of how war, as a complex socio-political phenomenon, influences the dynamics and character of language change. In a narrower sense, *war linguistics* represents a new linguistic-synergetic direction, responding to the challenges of our time by reflecting the peculiarities of the linguistic representation of military art through mass media.

Regarding the definition of the subject of war linguistics, we distinguish between two fundamentally different approaches. The first approach defines the meaningful and informative aspect of war linguistics as convergent with military discourse. This approach is implemented as a section of applied linguistics relying on the method of direct observation (in the form of extraspection) to acquire linguistic data. According to this approach, the subject of war linguistics is military discourse encompassing the totality of discursive events in a specific social space. The main factor in military discourse is the modus of war. Fundamental in this aspect is the criterion of differentiation proposed by Klymanska, Klimanska and Haletska (2023), which forms the basis of analysis in the perspective of war linguistics. Here, it is important to note three typical recipient positions and their attitudes towards war: external observer, optimistic fatalist, and rational optimist. Their scholarly postulate asserts that in the Russo-Ukrainian war, there is a notable tendency shared between military and political discourses towards distancing, if not from the current conflict itself, then at least from reducing the intensity of suffering (ibid.).

The second approach views war linguistics as an interdisciplinary linguistic direction. The specificity of this approach lies in the existential challenge to which science responds. Within the framework of this approach, the subject of study in war linguistics encompasses the linguistic tools of operational art theory (operations and combat actions), tactical theory (preparation and conduct of battle), and strategic theory (military management), all aimed at accurate interpretation of the military context in media coverage.

Therefore, the delineation of war linguistics as a distinct field of applied linguistics aims at identifying linguistic units that represent the art of war through mass media.

Conceptual framework of war linguistics. Examining key concepts and categories used to analyze the new socio-historical and cultural environment, driven by the paradigm shift in everyday life perception triggered by wartime realities, and drawing upon methodologies of military strategy, tactics, and linguistic pragmatics, we can distinguish such concepts as *war communication*, *war discourse*, *military-political terminology*, *military-political text*, *and war journalism.*

An interesting aspect of war linguistics is observing the evolution of concepts in the language of journalistic articles as a dynamic process influenced by war, indicating new integrative tendencies in the language of mass media.

Hence, in our research, these concepts have received corresponding definitions (see below).

War communication – the process of informational influence of war on the target audience during speech acts.

War discourse – the plurality of military-political texts within a pragmalinguistic context, epitomizing socio-political and cultural-historical processes regulated by specific rules and realized in the form of war journalism.

Military-political terminology – a system of knowledge about terms of various origins relevant to military affairs, military science, and political systems and governance.

Military-political text – a structural integrity of expression, an objective space for the interconnected content of military-political terminology.

War journalism – the creative activity of journalists who investigate and summarize significant socio-political doctrines, challenges, and consequences of war.

Summarizing the above, it is appropriate to conclude that the conceptual framework of war linguistics represents not only a cohesive but also a systematic logic-military formation, where all concepts function cyclically, thereby maintaining a balance between the interrelationship and interdependence of political subjects, political processes, and elements of war discourse.

We also propose some areas within war linguistics that include:

1. Study of linguistic phenomena in war discourse and war journalism. As noted by Ushchyna (2022), "Russian war discourse actively employs tactics of producing alternative facts and creating alternative reality" (p. 142). According to the scholar, this phenomenon can be highly dangerous due to its ability to influence cognitive perceptions of everyday life, altering people's worldviews and compelling them to believe in the benefits of killings and torture.

The foundational concept of war linguistics encompasses not only reflecting the militarization of society but also aspects such as military security, military actions, war crimes, and the state of war.

A universal approach to understanding war discourse contributes to the accurate interpretation of expressions. For instance, Khraban (2021), analyzing contemporary Ukrainian non-institutional military discourse within the framework of online discourse, focuses on studying media influence in terms of *mind control*, linking complex structures of the modern (new) media landscape with the use of media and ultimately with numerous ways of influencing consciousness.

In war journalism, various linguistic levels are influenced by the Russo-Ukrainian war, characterized by new trends in interpreting linguistic changes driven by the proliferation of war-related collocations in newspaper publications. In this field, we propose studying war-related collocations as units of the military-political terminological system, thereby defining their linguistic potential, which constitutes a distinct aspect of textual intellectual analysis. Also within this sphere is the study of various data from newspaper publications, which are capable of influencing the formation of these linguistic constructions and defining variable statistical models demonstrating probabilistic variations of the linguistic system models within textual dimensions.

2. Study of the political strategy of countries. This research area focuses on the political strategy of countries based on media analytics, revealing the political-evaluative nuances

of war linguistics and its linguistic expressions. Specifically, it has been found that both positive and negative dynamics of political decisions influence the realization of linguistic units within the system of journalistic discourse. For example, a high degree of positive political decisions in 2023 indicates effective military-political communication between Ukraine and its partners. Consequently, in 2024, negative political decisions weaken the tactical capacity of the state and strategic narratives of cooperation.

Similar studies allow identifying and explaining the prolonged neologization of collocations. It is worth noting that political strategy, operating in a multidimensional space, governs not only political participants (Ukraine, partner countries, Russia, Russia's allies) but also war linguistics (analysis of military-political communication and its new lexical-stylistic components).

As stated by Levkova (2024), tracking the qualitative renewal of vocabulary to denote new phenomena (or those previously not widely dealt with, even if they refer to something existing with an established name), which enhances expression, emotional expression, and often allows distancing from negative phenomena, enables diversification of the synonymic range in wartime language. Thus, new military-political conditions have influenced the expansion of Natural Language Processing methods aimed at finding key words used by politicians in depicting state political strategy. These linguistic phenomena are proposed to be investigated using Cortical.io software (Natural Language Processing APIs).

In Figure 1, we demonstrate extracted key words (Ukraine, Russia, invasion, Kyiv, minister, peace, European Union, border, Moscow, aid), diverse in conceptual and functional spheres but united in one cluster *full-scale invasion.*

Fig. 1. **Keywords extracting (output data)**

Understanding of the semantic fingerprint of the collocation *full-scale invasion* is proposed in Figure 2.

Terms located at dot 29x79 on a semantic fingerprint are *los alamos*, *nuclear-powered*, *nuclear weapons*, *nuclear non- proliferation treaty*, *nuclear*, *npt*, *north korea*, *nonproliferation*, *non-proliferation*, *non-nuclear.* They represent a collection of terms that

are associated with *full-scale invasion*. Dots that are close to one another on the grid are also close in meaning.

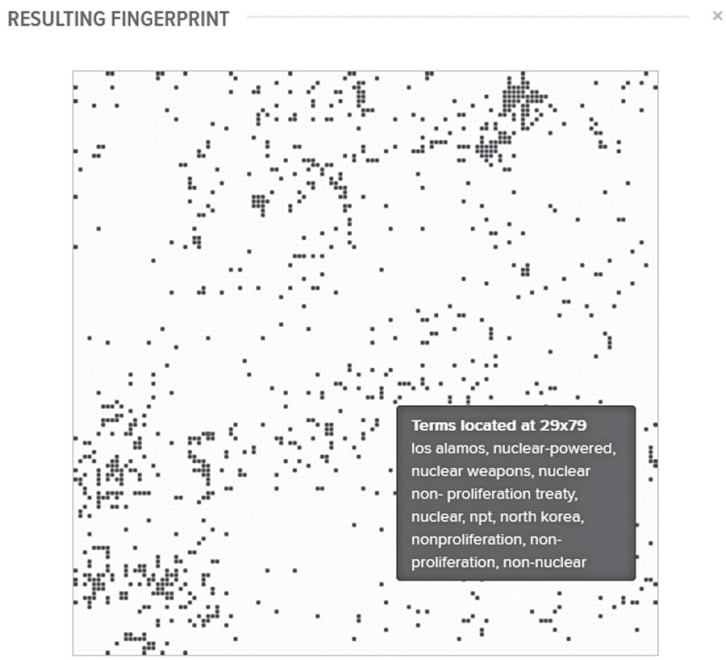

Fig. 2. **Terms associated with *full-scale invasion***

3. Researching corpus regularities. Discussing journalism as a broad concept, Kharchenko points out that civic journalism differs from purely academic work and is a modern phenomenon in Ukraine's multimedia space during the Russo-Ukrainian war. The formation of a new role for journalism lies in speed and mobility, simplicity of publication and material presentation, broad audience coverage, instant feedback, live communication, crowdsourcing, diversity of perspectives, activity, and promotion. According to the scholar, during the Russo-Ukrainian war, civic journalists become accessible to a wide audience in Ukraine, both amateur and professional. The journalistic article becomes a tool for the unrestrained growth of the influence of civic journalism on shaping public opinion (Kharchenko, 2023).

Zecchinon and Standaert (2024) emphasize that today, more than ever, the flow of visual disinformation needs to be analyzed within expanded frameworks of practice and categorization of previous research into the causes of facts and disinformation. Based on five semi-structured interviews and an analysis of 48 fact-checks published from February to October 2022 in the French daily newspaper Le Monde in the context of the Russo-Ukrainian war, researchers concluded that most fact-checks focus on authentic images with deceptive captions rather than complex manipulations.

Therefore, in the sphere of studying corpus regularities, improving the technology of balancing the corpus of war-political texts using a corpus-driven approach appears crucial. In this regard, the trigger influencing the categorization of linguistic information and its expansion are phenomena of socio-political events that impact changes in language and accordingly reflected in the corpus. Analyzing the text as a product of war linguistics, the apex of contextual similarity cluster paradigms can include contexts of war within the realm

of political linguistics, territory and resources, history and culture, ideology, and economic policy. The affiliation of clusters to the war-political context, on the one hand, regulates their consolidation into a common lexical-semantic group, while on the other hand, determines their linguistic potential characteristic of the expression of political processes.

Concluding remarks. Thus, war linguistics is understood as a branch of applied linguistics that pertains to the study of linguistic phenomena in military discourse and war journalism, political strategies of nations, and corpus regularities research. An important feature of war linguistics is its linguistic representation of strategic, operational, and tactical arts through mass media. Consequently, war discourse, similar to mass media, participates in identifying linguistic changes influenced by war concerning socio-political groups.

The conceptual framework of war linguistics has enabled defining lexical units: *military communication* – the process of war's informational influence on the target audience; *war discourse* – the apotheosis of socio-political and cultural-historical processes; *military-political terminology* – a system of knowledge about various terms related to military affairs, military science, and political systems and governance; *military-political text* – an objective space for the related content of military-political terminology; *war journalism* – the creative activity of journalists who investigate and summarize significant socio-political doctrines, challenges, and consequences of war.

Considering that observations on the development of concepts in the process of Natural Language Processing indicate new integration trends in the language of mass media tools, where research into political strategies of countries based on media analytics reveals political-evaluative nuances of war linguistics and its linguistic expressions.

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