

Psycholinguistic Aspects of the Semantic Field of the Concept «War» in Modern Media Space

Психолінгвістичні аспекти семантичного поля поняття «війна» в сучасному медійному просторі

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents modern trends in the change of the semantic field of the concept «war». Based on the analysis of mass media in Russia, Ukraine and the USA, we demonstrated the regularities and interdependences of the mass media content and changes in the conceptual worldview of the people that consume information. We underlined the link between the changes in the forms of international conflicts and the increase of the units contributing to the semantic field of the concept «war». We analysed how the information and communicative space effects the change of the conceptual (mental, cognitive) worldview of the public.

Analysis of the semantic compatibility of the features of the concept «war» in mass media has revealed that apart from the military and armament themes, it contains the semantic units related to informational and psychological tools of influence. In the result of the systematic application of the concept «war» in relation to such semantic units as «informational»,

«psychological», «cyber», «hybrid», «fake news», «sanctions», etc. there takes place a fixation of compatibility of new semantic units with the concept «war».

The broadening of the extent of the concept occurred due to the addition of two objects: «informational virtual component» comprising informational and psychological spheres of influence as well as a «technological component», on which the informational security of the state is based. Thus, the modern extent and intent of the concept «war» includes not only academic dictionary definitions, but also the definitions that refer to the involvement of tools and techniques aimed at the securing an armless victory in the confrontation.

The findings of the research also demonstrated a certain difference in the development of the concept in Ukrainian, western and pro-Russian mass media. While «war» in the pro-Russian mass media is covered in connection with an open aggression accompanied by the use of weapons, this concept in Ukrainian and western mass media is used in relation to psychological and information influence.

Thus, at the current stage, the broadening of the extent of the concept «war» has taken place, which is interrelated with the expansion of the semantic field, and is reflected in the change in the conceptual picture of the world within this concept.

Key words: *concept «war», semantic field, extension and intention, mass-media, worldview, conflicts.*

Introduction

The study of the trends of society development is an insurance of an efficient function of the state bodies. This is the reason for almost every developed country to support the activity of various think-tanks, the tasks of which include the analysis of the prospects for the development of the events both in the global scope and within specific communities. The issue of meaning of such general concepts as «war» and «peace» are brought up for the discussion at a socio-political level and require a close professional investigation, involvement of the results of inter-disciplinary research in their analysis, what makes it possible to increase the validity of knowledge in the field of humanities and social studies.

It should be emphasised that the issue of building, change in the intent and extent of concepts is a subject matter of both philosophy and psychology. Unlike the philosophy, which studies the connection between the single and the general, the psychology concentrates more on the fact, how the features are singled out when the definition of

a certain concept is created (Politzer, 1986). From the point of view of psycholinguistic studies, we are going to review how a conceptual worldview, in terms of war and peace, at the manifestation of the concept, is related to the changes in the extent of the concept and its language expression.

It is common knowledge that changes in the concept depend on a series of extra-linguistic factors that are having an impact on the «broadening/narrowing» of its intent and extent. In this research we are going to review how against the backdrop of a crisis, the media sphere activity effects the extension of the concept «war» and in what way it relates to the increase of the features contained in its semantic field.

Unlike previous conflicts where the open hostilities served as a basis for the military strategy, the major goal of the present war is to get the thoughts, consciousness and feelings of the population under control and to secure the victory above all in a non-military way: «In our sight, wars change their main features. The states influence each other through trade, financial and economic wars... They start including an obligatory humanitarian component, with military goals vividly or invisibly turning into humanitarian ones» (Pocheptsov, 2018). New forms and methods of how to counteract in the crisis states of the society are predetermined by the development and improvement of the ICT, in particular, by the appearance of a new so-called «virtual component» involving the influence via social networks and fake news.

The goal of this research is an overview of psychological and linguistic aspects of manifestation of the concept «war» in modern media space and the analysis of how information messages influence changes in the extent, semantic field of the concept «war» and how this effects a conceptual worldview.

It is reasonable to view the overview of interdependences and interconnection between thinking and speech within an interdisciplinary field of several sciences. At the present stage of the science development the scholars keep emphasising the need for an integrated character of scientific researches, which manifests itself in the creation of new interdisciplinary connections such as linguistics, psychology, philosophy (Kubryakova, 1994, 1999). The leading universities provide interdisciplinary courses underlining common features of these disciplines: e.g. the universities of Oxford, Chicago and Sydney.

In this respect, the linguists state that a new paradigm of scientific knowledge «brings with it both new tasks in covering the issue of language, new methods of its description, new methods in the analysis of its specific levels, categories, units and rules...» (Kubriakova, 1999: 187).

The processes of manifestation of the conceptual worldview through the speech and language are being researched by modern related sciences: in particular, a cognitive approach to the language and speech considers a speech form as manifestation of consciousness cognitive structures of perception and thinking (Kibrik, 1994: 126).

In our opinion, changes in the semantic meaning are related to such psycholinguistic factors as the change of conceptual (mental, cognitive) worldview, which is manifested through a language worldview. The formation of the latter is directly influenced by the peculiarities of the media space, forms and techniques of interstate conflicts and their change.

Based on the historical and philosophic approach to the regularities of the society existence, the notion of the socio-code is viewed as a body of knowledge, which is preserved, spread and corrected by the society in the process of its development. Within the scope of this concept the culture and its phenomena are considered to be a social text, which is decoded through the unity of the language and social context (Petrov, 1991).

Changes in the cultural, political and social spheres effect the change in the definition of the concept, which is realized through expansion or narrowing of its extent and intent. In its turn, the change of the extent and intent cannot but effect the semantic field and conceptual worldview.

Methods and techniques of the research

For the modern semantic field of the concept «war» to be disclosed in an optimal way, we applied the scientific methods of analysis and synthesis, the data collection method and semantic analysis of the dictionary lexical entries. We also applied the method of identification of cognitive classification features of the concept «war» through analysis of the media sphere. The text materials from the news websites of popular Ukrainian, Russian and American media sources obtained through Google search engine: Kyiv Post, 112 International,

Uatoday.tv, Interfax-Ukraina, Ukrinform, Russia Today, Sputniknews, Novorossia.today, Reuters, Radio Liberty, The New York Times, CNN, The Washington Post, The Guardian were used as applicable materials.

Results and Discussions

The concept «war» occupies the leading position in the information messages of the present day Russian, Ukrainian and US press. By analyzing the related to the given concept content, we disclosed that its filling considerably differs from the conventional definitions provided in the academic explanatory dictionaries.

The analysis of the dictionary sources has demonstrated that the concept «war» is mainly viewed as an act of aggression related to the application of military means (Academic Explanatory Dictionary, 1970–1980; Ukrayiny Encyclopedia..., <http://encyclopedia.com>, 2015; Thaler, Cass & Sunstein, 2009). The English speaking sources provide similar definitions: e.g. Cambridge dictionary characterises the concept «war» as a state of armed conflict between different countries or different groups within a country (Cambridge dictionary). The explanatory dictionary by T.F. Efremova in addition to the definition of the «military struggle» underlines that an armless context of the concept is used in a figurative meaning, where the «war» implies the «struggle exploiting the means of economic and ideological influence (Efremova, 2000).

The research of the content of information messages demonstrated that the modern extent of the concept «war» contains new objects that allow us to say about the extension of this concept). In the modern media, «war» is the theme of discussion in various contexts: starting from direct military incursion and ending up with information and browser wars.

To view the semantic field of the concept «war» we differentiated its classifying and differentiating features through the analysis of media sources. When defining the classifying features of the concept «war», we allocated them by the types, forms and duration. The features characteristic of the modern period and the interpretation of the mentioned concept in the media messages of various countries were referred by us to the differentiating features.

Those are various spheres that are affected in the run of the conflict and the war is given its name based on them. Nowadays, the

concept «war» is applicable to characterize such types of confrontation: armed, information, economic, cyber, diplomatic, currency, demographic, browser, etc.

War can acquire the form of a direct military incursion, be waged under application of a bloodless method or it can exist in the form of the combination of the mentioned forms.

From this perspective, it is also important to mention a new type of military incursion, i.e. the so-called hybrid war containing two and more types of confrontation that exist in the typology of wars. It is important to note that an element of informational and communicative influence, which is obligatory available, is a specific feature of wars of a hybrid type. As the goal of such influence serve securing the control over the people's thoughts, consciousness, ideological benchmarks, the processes of perceiving the information by them and establishing the control first and for most in a non-military way.

In terms of its duration, it is characteristic of war in the post-industrial period to have an obscure and unobvious starting point of war, for in many cases it has a preparatory latent phase, which presupposes the activity of thinking tanks, informational and psychological influence via social networks, cyber attacks, economic measures, etc. For example, a hybrid war starts some time in advance of the open acts of aggression. The report of the US military runs about the resort to force of special operations in the political warfare and it is mentioned there that the Russian hybrid war resembles an American political one (SOF Support to Political Warfare, 2015).

For the period from 2014 (the begin of the hybrid war in Ukraine) to 2016, the English language resources in Ukraine, Russia, the USA and the EU were investigated in order to clarify, which image of Ukraine is manifested in the media sources intended for foreign readers. The articles' headlines served as the basis for the analysis due to two following reasons: firstly, the headlines reflect the quintessence of the message, and, secondly, the readers are not always inclined to read the text completely, whereas the headline usually gives the first impression and forms the attitude to an event. Over 10 000 articles' headlines containing the words «Ukraine», «Ukrainian» (English language Ukrainian media: KyivPost, 112 International, Uatoday.tv (closed up at the moment), news agencies Interfax-Ukraina, Ukrinform; English language Russian media: Russia Today, Sputniknews, Novorossia.today;

English language foreign media: Reuters, Radio Liberty, The New York Times, CNN, The Washington Post, The Guardian).

The analysis found out that Ukraine in the English language foreign media is associated with the military actions «fight» (битва), «to kill» (вбивати), «conflict» (конфлікт), «war» (війна), «to attack» (атакувати), «Russia» (Росія). The word «crisis» (криза) is most frequently used in the news headlines of the BBC: e.g. «Ukraine crisis: Crimea in the dark in Russia power row» (Українська криза: Крим у темряві російської влади), «Ukraine crisis: «Russian soldier's» lawyer found «dead» (Monitoring project «Eye», 2017).

It is worth emphasising that verbal aggression the mass media often resorts to in conflict situations results in a so-called consciential war (lat. conscientia is consciousness), which according to the definition of A. Kolodiy aimed at the damage of consciousness, ruination of identity and ability of a person to self-identification. The consciential war is characterised by «a long time latent period; variability, flexibility and unpredictability of the means of effect; application of strongarm methods of media space; removing clear separation between «friend and enemy»; ruination of spiritual values, sense of values, capacity of a person for free self-identification, etc.» (Kolodiy, 2016).

No wonder, according to Collins dictionary the word expression «fake news» was called the main one in the year 2017 (Tweeting the war..., <http://osvita...>).

Specially organised teams are working in social networks creating fake news and spreading the information of this kind; initiating artificial discussions in the comments adds to accumulation of the audience (Keersmaecker, Roets, 2017).

Thus, the mentioned aggressive information messages for the time period from 2014 to 2016 serve as an example of the fact, how an unbalanced coverage of events in Ukraine has built a favorable basis for the fake news to be spread via the media space including news and information attacks in social networks.

The referendum on the issue of the EU-Ukraine Association is an example of a successful informational war against Ukraine. According to the survey carried out in 2015 by TNS company to the order of the Institute of World Politics, the Dutch had such negative associations with Ukraine as conflict/war (34%), the Boeing crash flying from Amsterdam (33%), Russia (23%) (Institute of world policy, 2015).

Based on the contents of Russian Internet sources for the time period from 2014 to 2016 it is possible to state that apart from the traditional lexemes that associate with the fear and force, the semantic field of the concept «war» comprises also the words that are more related to the psychological and informational influence. Among those are religion (релігія), psychology (психологія), illness (хвороба фізична, mental illness (хвороба душевна), interaction (взаємодія), Internet warfare (інтернет-війна) (Kovalev, 2017: 49–51).

Media communication experts note such modern trend in conflicts as involvement of the public into confrontation. In journalistic, there appeared a term «coach troops» meaning that everyone can participate in the war by staying indoors and using online networks as a handy weapon. The declaration of own position at open platforms, trolling, hacker activity, crowd funding (collection of funds for the war participants), recruiting platforms (hiring of volunteers) serves as instrument for such involvement. The expert of London School of Economics and Political Sciences Grigoriy Asmolov underlines an essential difference of modern conflicts from previous ones: earlier the opponents met at the field of war, with the rest of the citizens remaining behind the lines. Nowadays we observe the convergence of physical and virtual spaces. In social networks there took place integration of informing the public by mass media and of personal communication among people, which arose a conflict inside every personality.

Thus, changes in the semantic meaning are related to such psychological and linguistic factor as change of conceptual (mental, cognitive) worldview, which is manifested through language representation.

A person is a carrier of a certain system of knowledge, the structuring of which is influenced by a series of factors. The mass media refer, first and foremost, to such factors. Under the influence of the information and communicative activity of the mass media there take place changes in the sensual experience and generalisation of a concept. At the present stage, there takes place the broadening of the extent of the concept at the expense of adding new components related to virtual space and technological progress, i.e. informational and virtual component (online networks, fake news, manipulations with content related information, etc.). Filling-in of the informational space is a powerful tool of influence on the person's conceptual worldview, which

can change alongside with the precision and change of the extent and the semantic field of the concepts under discussion. In particular, the interpretation of the events by mass media effects the broadening of the extent of the concept «war» in the public's consciousness. Under a systematic influence of the informational and virtual component, the new features that broaden the semantic field of the concept «war» are assimilated by the consciousness based on logical operations of analysis and synthesis.

These are the language images covered in the media, through which the conceptual worldview is organised both in a specific individual and in the mass consciousness (de Saint-Laurent & de Luna, 2017).

The features of the concept «war» derived based on the analysis of the contextual filling of respective information and communicative messages have a direct effect on the formation of the conceptual worldview of the public acting as a consumer.

The analysis of the semantic compatibility of the features of the concept «war» in the media revealed that apart from military and armament theme it includes the features related to informational and psychological tools of influence. This testifies to the fact of broadening of the semantic field of this concept. Due to systematic application of the concept «war» in connection with such semantic units as «informational», «psychological», «cyber», «hybrid», «fake news», «sanctions», etc. the compatibility features are being fixed and a new extent of the concept «war» is being built.

Conclusions

Thus, a modern extent of meanings of the concept «war» contains not only academic dictionary definitions, but also the components implying involvement of techniques and tools aimed at securing the victory in an armless confrontation.

Historical, political and cultural changes are reflected in the extent of meanings of the semantic units, in particular, in the concepts depicting objective processes in the development of the society. Viewing the concept «war» as a specific manifestation of the society in the state of crisis, we can state that at the present stage it broadens the extent of its meaning, what is the result of the expansion of new forms and methods of action in crisis situations, particularly, those related to the activity within an informational and communicative field.

The extent of the concept was broadened at the expense of addition of two objects: «informational and virtual» comprising both informational and psychological sphere of influence and a technological component, on which the informational security of the state is based.

In the result of the research we disclosed a certain difference between the development of the concept in Ukrainian, western and pro-Russian mass media. While in the pro-Russian media «war» is covered in connection with open aggression accompanied by the use of weapons, the Ukrainian and western mass media use this concept in connection with psychological and informational influence. The information space has an impact on the conceptual worldview in the perception of the concept «war» through changes that broaden its extent and addition of new features to the semantic field of the mentioned concept.

The findings of our study serve as a supplementary material for the research of the strategies of behavior at the political arena of other states and of an internal ideological course of a specific country, it is a supplementary tool in the work of think tanks dealing with investigation of strategic issues.

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АНОТАЦІЯ

У статті розглядаються сучасні тенденції зміни семантичного поля поняття «війна». В результаті аналізу ЗМІ Росії, України та США показано закономірність та взаємозалежність контенту ЗМІ та змін у концептуальній картині світу аудиторії, яка є споживачем інформації. Підкреслено зв'язок між змінами у формах ведення міждержавних конфліктів та збільшенням одиниць, що входять до семантичного поля поняття «війна». Було проаналізовано як інформаційно-комунікативний простір впливає на зміну концептуальної (ментальної, когнітивної) картини світу аудиторії.

Аналіз семантичної сполучуваності ознак поняття «війна» у ЗМІ показав, що, окрім військово-збройної тематики, воно включає семантичні одиниці, пов'язані з інформаційними та психологічними інструментами впливу. Через систематичне уживання поняття «війна» у співвідношенні із такими семантичними одиницями як «інформаційна», «психологічна», «кібер», «гібридна», «фейкові новини», «санкції» тощо, відбувається закріплення сполучуваності нових семантичних одиниць з поняттям «війна».

Збільшення обсягу поняття відбулося за рахунок додавання двох компонентів (об'єктів): «інформаційно-віртуального», який охоплює інформаційну і психологічну сфери впливу та «технологічний компонент» від якого залежить інформаційна безпека країни, в сенсі збереження важливих даних. Тобто, сучасний обсяг поняття «війна» включає не тільки академічні словникові дефініції, але й доповнюється судженнями, в яких мова йде про залучення прийомів та інструментів, що націлені на досягненні перемоги у протистоянні не збройним шляхом.

Також в результаті дослідження ми помітили певну відмінність між розвитком поняття в українських, західних та проросійських медіа. На фоні того, як проросійському інформаційно-комунікативному просторі «війна» висвітлюється у взаємозв'язку із відкритою агресією з використанням зброї, в українських та західних медіа дане поняття застосовують у взаємозв'язку з психологічним та інформаційним впливом.

Таким чином, на сучасному етапі, відбулося розширення обсягу поняття «війна», що взаємопов'язано розширенням семантичного поля поняття «війна» та відображується у концептуальній картині світу в межах даного поняття.

Ключові слова: поняття «війна», семантичне поле, обсяг та зміст поняття, концептуальна картина світу, ЗМІ, конфлікти.

Крылова-Грек Юлия. Психолингвистические аспекты семантического поля понятия «война» в современном медийном пространстве

АННОТАЦИЯ

В статье рассматриваются современные тенденции, касающиеся изменения семантического поля понятия «война». В результате анализа средств массовой информации России, Украины и США мы проследили закономерность и взаимозависимость контента СМИ и изменений концептуальной картины мира аудитории, которая является потребителем данной информации. Мы подчеркнули связь между изменением формы межгосударственных конфликтов и увеличением единиц, которые входят в семантическое поле понятия «война».

Мы проанализировали как информационно-коммуникативное пространство влияет на изменение концептуальной (ментальной, когнитивной) картины мира аудитории.

Анализ семантической сочетаемости свойств понятия «война» в СМИ показал, что кроме военизированной тематики, оно включает семантические единицы, связанные с информационным и психологическим влиянием. В результате систематического употребления понятия «война» в соотношении с такими семантическими единицами как «информационный», «психологический», «кибер», «гибридный», «фейковые новости», «санкции» и т.д., происходит закрепление сочетаемости понятия «война» с новыми семантическими единицами, что безусловно, влияет на смысловое содержание понятия. Расширение объема понятия происходит за счет добавления двух компонентов (объектов): «информационно-виртуального», который касается информационной и психологической сфер влияния и «технологического» от которого зависит информационная безопасность страны, в смысле хранения данных. Выйдя за рамки классических словарных определений, понятия «война» включает признаки, касающиеся применения инструментов и методов, нацеленных на победу, без применения вооружения.

Также, в результате исследования, мы отметили определенное различие между развитием понятия «война» в украинских, западных и пророссийских медиа. На фоне того, как в пророссийском

інформаційному пространстві «война» освітається в зв'язі з відкритою агресією на фоні озброєних зіткнень, в українських і західних СМІ дане поняття, в більшій мірі, використовується в контексті психологічного і інформаційного впливу на аудиторію.

Таким чином, на сучасному етапі, відбулося розширення об'єму поняття «война», що взаємопов'язано з розширенням семантичного поля, і знаходить відображення в зміні концептуальної картини світу в межах даного поняття.

Ключеві слова: поняття «война», семантичне поле, об'єм, концептуальна картина світу, СМІ, конфлікти.

