

LEXICAL TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE MODERN UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE UNDER MARTIAL LAW: SOURCES OF ENRICHMENT AND FUNCTIONING OF NEW VOCABULARY

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Summary

The article examines the dynamic changes in the vocabulary of the modern Ukrainian language caused by martial law and large-scale social transformations in Ukraine. The main directions of the renewal of the lexical system are analyzed, including the formation of neologisms, the activation of native Ukrainian vocabulary, the spread of military terminology, the semantic reinterpretation of existing lexical units, the processes of foreign borrowings, and the formation of new phraseological constructions. It has been established that contemporary linguistic processes reflect not only the need to name new wartime realities but also socio-political, cultural, and psychological changes in Ukrainian society. Particular attention is paid to the role of mass media, Internet communication, social networks, and publicistic discourse in the rapid dissemination and consolidation of new vocabulary.

The paper provides examples of current lexical units that have become symbolic of the wartime period and reflect public sentiments, national self-identification, and the emotional and evaluative attitudes of Ukrainians toward present-day events. It is emphasized that the modern Ukrainian language demonstrates a high level of adaptability and the ability to respond promptly to historical challenges through the active renewal of its vocabulary.

Key words: neologisms, military vocabulary, language changes, vocabulary, modern Ukrainian language, martial law, lexical resources.

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1. Introduction

Language is an exceptionally sensitive indicator of social processes; therefore, large-scale historical events inevitably become reflected in its structure, primarily in its lexical composition. Every historical era leaves its own imprint on the language system by generating new linguistic units, actualizing certain concepts, or transforming the meanings of already existing words. Such processes become especially noticeable during periods of social upheaval, when language responds to new political, cultural, social, and psychological realities. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 became not only a political, military, and humanitarian challenge, but also a powerful factor of linguistic transformation that significantly influenced the development of the modern Ukrainian language.

Under wartime conditions, the Ukrainian language demonstrates a high degree of dynamism and an ability to respond rapidly to changes in social life. The contemporary linguistic space is characterized by intensive processes of vocabulary renewal, the activation of nationally marked lexis, the emergence of new nominations, the reinterpretation of existing linguistic

units, as well as the expansion of the stylistic potential of words. The war has not only altered the communicative needs of society, but has also substantially influenced Ukrainians' linguistic worldview, strengthening the role of language as an important means of national self-identification and spiritual resistance.

Linguistic changes are particularly evident in the sphere of vocabulary. The modern Ukrainian media space, social networks, publicistic discourse, and everyday communication have become sources for the dissemination of a large number of new words and expressions. Military terminology, names of equipment and weapons, tactical concepts, terms related to volunteer activities and international support, as well as emotionally charged expressive vocabulary, have entered active usage. Linguistic units associated with wartime realities have become especially widespread, including *Bayraktar*, *palianytsia* as a marker of national identity, *bavovna* ("cotton" used ironically to denote explosions), *donate*, *to volunteer*, *air-raid alert*, *strike*, *counteroffensive*, and others. Some of these words emerged through the reinterpretation of already known concepts, whereas others are neologisms or borrowings adapted to the norms of the Ukrainian language.

Mass media and internet communication play an important role in shaping new vocabulary. Social networks, in particular, have become a space for the rapid dissemination of memetic constructions, ironic expressions, and emotionally evaluative vocabulary that performs not only nominative but also psychological and consolidating functions. Words and phrases reflecting public sentiment, national resilience, faith in victory, and condemnation of the aggressor are actively functioning in the speech of Ukrainians. Thus, language becomes not only a means of communication, but also an important element of informational and cultural resistance.

The relevance of this study is determined by the necessity of comprehensively understanding the linguistic processes that have emerged under the influence of the war, as well as by the need to systematize the newest lexical phenomena in modern Ukrainian linguistics. The analysis of new vocabulary makes it possible to trace the peculiarities of society's linguistic adaptation to crisis conditions, identify the main trends in the development of the modern Ukrainian language, and reveal the mechanisms of new lexical unit formation. Furthermore, the study of such processes is important for the future compilation of dictionaries of contemporary vocabulary, the improvement of language norms, and the investigation of the relationship between language and society.

The aim of this article is to analyze the changes and enrichment of the vocabulary of the modern Ukrainian language under martial law, to identify the main sources of new lexis, and to characterize its functional features and role in shaping the contemporary linguistic space of Ukraine.

2. Analysis of Recent Research and Publications

Recent studies in the field of Ukrainian lexicology demonstrate the active transformation of the lexical composition of the Ukrainian language under the influence of the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war. Scholars emphasize that the lexical-semantic level of language responds most rapidly to socio-political changes, as it reflects new realities, the emotional state of society, and emerging communicative needs. Contemporary linguistic research focuses on the processes of neologization, semantic reinterpretation of words, the activation of military terminology, the spread of Anglicisms, expressive vocabulary, and internet communication.

Particular attention in modern Ukrainian linguistics is devoted to the study of wartime neologisms. In her work *"Enrichment of the Vocabulary of the Ukrainian Language with*

Neologisms of the Contemporary Wartime Period,” Svitlana Buzko analyzes the structural and semantic features of neologisms that emerged after 2022 and function primarily within media and internet discourse (Buzko, 2024). The researcher emphasizes that a significant portion of the new vocabulary is formed on the basis of the word-forming resources of the Ukrainian language, particularly through suffixation, compounding, abbreviation, and semantic reinterpretation.

In the article “*Neologization of the Vocabulary of the Modern Ukrainian Language Through the Prism of Wartime*,” Natalia Yuriichuk and Liudmyla Savenko identify the main sources contributing to the enrichment of the Ukrainian vocabulary under wartime conditions. These include military terminology, English borrowings, authorial neologisms, colloquial vocabulary, memes, and internet slang. The researchers stress that social networks and media exert a considerable influence on word formation, as new lexical units spread rapidly and become established in linguistic practice. The article also highlights the process of secondary nomination, in which existing words acquire new meanings within the wartime context.

An important area of contemporary research concerns the expressive potential of new vocabulary. In the article “*Metaphorization as a Lexical-Semantic Means of Creating Wartime Neologisms*,” H. Horodylovska demonstrates that a substantial number of wartime neologisms arise through metaphorization (Horodylovska, 2023). Such lexical units not only denote new phenomena but also perform an emotional and evaluative function, shaping public attitudes toward wartime events. The researcher emphasizes that metaphorical formations serve as an important means of society’s psychological adaptation to crisis conditions.

Linguists also devote significant attention to the functioning of colloquial neological vocabulary. In his work “*Colloquial Neologisms in the Modern Ukrainian Language*,” Oleksandr Styshov analyzes new words actively used in the everyday communication of Ukrainians (Styshov, 2012). The author notes that the modern Ukrainian language demonstrates a high degree of dynamism, while a considerable number of neologisms emerge precisely within informal communication. Some of these lexical units gradually move from colloquial speech into media discourse and publicistic writing.

A separate group of studies is devoted to the theoretical aspects of neology. In the article “*Neologisms in Modern Ukrainian Linguistics: Definition, Classification, and Translation*,” K. Bezpalova and O. Kovalenko systematize the principal approaches to interpreting the concept of “neologism,” define criteria for classifying new words, and outline the peculiarities of their translation (Bezpalova, Kovalenko, 2024). The researchers emphasize that contemporary neologisms constitute not only a linguistic but also a cultural and social phenomenon reflecting the processes of societal transformation.

Research on internet discourse as an environment for the active production of new vocabulary also remains highly relevant. In the article “*Neologisms in Virtual Discourse and Their Structural-Semantic Characteristics*,” Tetiana Diachuk and Svitlana Lytvynska stress that digital communication significantly accelerates the process by which neologisms enter widespread linguistic usage (Diachuk, Lytvynska, 2024). The virtual space becomes a platform for linguistic creativity, experimentation, and the rapid consolidation of new language models.

Thus, contemporary studies confirm that martial law has become a powerful factor in intensifying lexical processes within the Ukrainian language. The principal sources of vocabulary enrichment include military terminology, Anglicisms, internet communication, colloquial speech, and authorial neologisms. New vocabulary performs not only nominative but also expressive, evaluative, and consolidating functions. Scholars emphasize that the processes of neologization are systemic in nature and require further investigation, particularly regarding the

standardization of new lexical units and their functioning across various styles of the modern Ukrainian language.

3. Main Text

Main Trends in the Changes of the Ukrainian Vocabulary. The lexical system of the Ukrainian language has undergone significant changes under wartime conditions. First and foremost, this concerns the intensification of military terminology, the emergence of new words, the reinterpretation of certain linguistic units, and the expansion of their spheres of usage.

Military events have caused such words as *Bayraktar*, *Javelin*, *air defense*, *drone*, *to volunteer*, *evacuation*, *shelter*, *counteroffensive*, *de-occupation*, and *air-raid alert* to rapidly enter the active vocabulary of society. Some of these words had existed previously; however, it was during the war that they acquired high frequency and new connotative meanings.

For example, the word *air-raid alert* was previously associated mainly with a person's psychological state of anxiety, whereas today it has become an official danger signal. The lexeme *arrival* has acquired a new semantic meaning – “the strike of a missile or shell.” Such processes demonstrate the semantic reinterpretation of linguistic units.

Neologization as a Leading Process in Lexical Development. One of the most noticeable phenomena in contemporary language development has become active neologization. New words emerge as a result of society's need to name new wartime realities.

Among the most widespread neologisms are the following:

- *rashism* – the ideology of Russian aggressive chauvinism;
- *bavovna* – a euphemistic term for explosions on the territory of Russia;
- *mobik* – a mobilized Russian soldier;
- *to Chornobaity* – to suffer repeated defeats;
- *za try dni* (“in three days”) – an ironic designation of unrealistic plans for a rapid occupation;
- *to donate* – to transfer funds for the needs of the army or volunteer initiatives;
- *bankopad* – mass fundraising through online banking platforms (*Masenko, 2023*).

Most of these neologisms originate in social networks and the media space and later spread into broader public usage. A considerable number of these words possess a strong emotional and evaluative coloring and perform not only a nominative but also an expressive function.

Borrowing and Adaptation of Foreign Vocabulary. Martial law has intensified the processes of foreign lexical borrowing, primarily from the English language. This is connected with international military support for Ukraine, the development of digital technologies, and globalization processes.

The active vocabulary has been enriched with such words as *drone*, *lend-lease*, *Starlink*, *HIMARS*, *Javelin*, *IT Army*, *fake*, and *fact-checking*. Borrowed words are rapidly adapting to the Ukrainian linguistic system: they acquire Ukrainian grammatical forms and undergo phonetic and word-formational changes. For example: *donatyty* (“to donate”), *zadonatyty* (“to make a donation”), *dronovyi* (“drone-related”), and *bayraktarshchyna* (“the phenomenon associated with Bayraktar drones”) (*Slovnyk ukrainskoi movy online*).

At the same time, there is a growing tendency to eliminate Russianisms and restore authentic Ukrainian equivalents. In everyday speech, speakers increasingly use such words as *poklykannia* instead of *pryzvannia* (“calling/vocation”), *letovyshche* instead of *airport* in certain contexts, and *svitlyna* instead of *photo*.

Intensification of Military Terminology. The full-scale war has caused the widespread dissemination of military terminology among the population. Whereas previously such words functioned mainly within professional military discourse, today they have become part of everyday speech.

The following terms are now actively used: *artillery, mortar, spotter, assault, rotation, fortification, call sign, offensive, occupier, de-occupation, and unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)*. Some of these terms have also acquired metaphorical meanings. For example, the word *front* is used not only in its military sense, but also in such expressions as *information front, cultural front, and educational front*.

The Role of Media and Social Networks in the Spread of New Vocabulary. The contemporary media space is one of the main sources for the dissemination of new words. Social networks significantly accelerate lexical changes, as new words rapidly gain popularity through memes, posts, videos, and journalistic materials. The media actively shape new linguistic models and reinforce them in public consciousness (Shevchenko, 2023).

For example, such words as *bavovna, rusnia, orcs, two-hundredth, and three-hundredth* became widespread precisely through the information space.

In addition, the war has intensified the development of political and emotionally evaluative vocabulary. In journalistic style, the role of expressiveness, metaphorical language, and evaluative meaning has significantly increased.

Lexical Resources of the Contemporary Wartime Period. Modern electronic dictionaries and linguistic platforms have become important sources for documenting new vocabulary. Among them are:

- *The Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language Online;*
- *Myslovo;*
- dictionary projects of the Institute of the Ukrainian Language of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine;
- media text corpora;
- online resources dedicated to contemporary vocabulary.

These resources record new linguistic units and contribute to their codification. For instance, the word *bavovna* in its new meaning has become one of the symbols of Ukrainian informational resistance and has entered numerous linguistic studies.

The Linguistic Worldview in Wartime Conditions. Lexical changes reflect the transformation of the linguistic worldview of Ukrainians. The war has strengthened national self-identification, which is manifested in the revival of authentic Ukrainian vocabulary, the reassessment of linguistic norms, and the rejection of Russian-language elements (Ponomariv, 2015).

Language has become an important marker of civic identity. A significant part of society is consciously switching to the Ukrainian language, which also contributes to the expansion of Ukrainian vocabulary across various spheres of communication.

In contemporary speech, words connected with the concepts of national unity and resistance are actively functioning, including *resilience, resistance, volunteering, unity, and victory*.

4. Conclusions

Thus, martial law in Ukraine has become a powerful factor influencing changes in the vocabulary of the contemporary Ukrainian language. The most characteristic processes include active neologization, the semantic reinterpretation of words, the spread of military terminology,

the growing number of foreign borrowings, and the intensification of authentic Ukrainian vocabulary.

The contemporary Ukrainian language responds rapidly to social challenges, reflecting the new realities of Ukrainian life. New vocabulary performs not only a nominative function, but also identificational, emotional-expressive, and consolidating functions.

Prospects for further research lie in the systematic study of the codification processes of newly emerged vocabulary, the analysis of its functioning in different speech styles, and the compilation of dictionaries of the wartime period.

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