

## PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES

### EUPHEMIZED CONCEPT OF WAR IN ENGLISH MASS-MEDIA DISCOURSE: EVENTS IN THE EAST OF UKRAINE

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**Introduction.** The modern stage of the development of English mass-media is characterized by substantial changes in the sphere of euphemizing of many linguistic phenomena of journalistic mass-media discourse. It is necessary to observe the requirements of political correctness – pluralistic linguistic and linguacultural tendencies in the editions of modern English press, in its analytical texts and articles dealing with the military subject. The noted process is marked by the intensity during the last decades and is explained by the ability of euphemisms to be the powerful means of forming new public linguacultural standards especially in presentation of operative information «in live» that causes the substantial changes in British and American mass-media. The evident proof of these changes of media discourse in English speaking media audience has become a new linguistic canon to use veiled units for nomination of problematic phenomena, euphemized terms of argotic type and a general «tender manner of paraphrasing» as for linguistic representation of controversial events which often strengthen the so-called «doublespeak» [2, p. 65].

Not for nothing martial journalists in their media reports rather in advance will «see» to «neutralization» and «clearing» of guerrillas, than will assume their murder [3, p. 263]. As the concept and war offences do not come forward as landmarks of tolerance, safety and social prosperity of any society, at the same time they have considerable psycholinguistic, due to using euphemisms, manipulative potential especially in connection with military events including the East of Ukraine.

That is why it is necessary to be absorbed in the media essence of the concept WAR as a bright element of speaking differently with the English mass-media audience. Coming from the above mentioned, the aim of our research is to reveal psycholinguistic features of the euphemized concept

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WAR in the media discourse of English mass-media means in relation to the events in the East of Ukraine. To get valid results the following research methods were used: semantic and cognitive analysis, monitoring and content-analysis, discourse analysis, semantic differential.

Publications in «The Guardian», «The Economist», «Time», «Atlantic Council», «Foreign Affairs», «The New York Times», web sites, platforms of the channels «BBC», «CNN», «Radio free Europe» are sources of our investigation.

**Results and discussions.** Comprehension of the concept WAR in English – language mass-media mainly lines up at terms *«intervention»*, *«incursion»*, *«infiltration»*, *«instruction»*, *«invasion»* etc. For example: British Prime Minister David Cameron has called the current situation in Ukraine a *«large scale incursion»*. A spokesman for German Chancellor Angela Merkel used the term *«military intervention»*. U.S. President Barack Obama, speaking in August 28th, produced the seemingly oxymoronic phrase *«ongoing incursion»* [4].

English military concepts *«intervention»* and *«incursion»* are not new for the description of the events of the concept WAR in English-language mass-media. At the same time equally with *«intervention»* there appeared new nominative units, in particular: *«large scale»*, *«bloody»*, *«the armed insurrection»* and B. Obama's oxymoron *«ongoing incursion»* in mass-media discourse during 2014–2019 years.

In relation to B. Obama's utterance, there is a combination of incommensurable nominative *«ongoing incursion»* as a single action and continuity as a sign of constantly renewed military action in time. On the whole, linguistic models, where the sphere and source is a concept WAR, personifies the conceptual vector of aggression which is usually limited in time. However, «war» as image-taboo and its invariants in surroundings of the adjectives *«large-scale»*, *«ongoing»*, *«armed»* and *«bloody»* in English-language military lexicon of mass-media are transformed into suggestive nominative.

Such meaning is fixed in the following fragment of the text: *...officials have tied themselves in linguistic knots to define what exactly is going in Ukraine. Some agencies later changed their translation from «invaded» to «entered». But the genie was already out of the bottle.* This is more about linguistic trouble in relation to the nickname of the phenomenon of those events which are taking place in the east of Ukraine than the fact of war itself in Donbass.

Thus, euphemisms of the concept WAR as a psycholinguistic phenomenon, on the one hand, preserve the negative associative field, however, such terms as *«encroachment»*, *«interference»*, *«infusion»*, *«visit»*, *«conflict»*, on the other hand, substitute the name of the phenomenon of war.

These nominatives become evaluative-positive, at least, neutral in comparison with those units – components of the image of war which substitute such notions as «blood», «large-scale», «military operation», «losses», «death».

Actually, it is a psycholinguistic effect of emotionally positive «softening» of terms-euphemisms. A term euphemism was explained as a talk with words having a good augury already in Old Greece. Taking it into account, mass-media transfer emotionally positive estimations of military events with obviously negative denotations under the influence of the euphemizing process.

Let's analyze the following example: «*The conflict has claimed more than 13,000 lives, driven almost two million people from their homes, and caused immense material damage*». The numbers of the perished fighters and refugees are striking as for the denial of this fact and war lexeme (13 thousand and 2 million accordingly). Not by chance there appeared the codes of ATO, JFO as a visualization of numbers of perished and losses. We can notice a wide discord of terms in the English discourse of the concept WAR: the separatist war in Donbass, civil war ((BBC, The Guardian); insurgency / rebellion (Radio free Europe, Foreign Affairs Magazine); civil conflict / armed conflict in Ukraine (Foreign Affairs Magazine); Russian special operations forces / hybrid war [5].

A lot of terms concerning the WAR concept sustain the effect of disguise and consequently the neutral connotations. Equally with this there are attempts to discredit the concept due to black humor: «*chivalrous attempts*»; «*makes a mockery*»; «*easy definition... to understand*» (BBC).

The euphemized concept «*geopolitical crisis*» is an analogue of the Minsk process. Obviously, the context of this quotation in relation to a truce, negotiations is saturated by the demilitarized image of the war which influences the English-speaking people's consciousness and is accompanied by fully positive metaphorical models: «*innovative approach*», «*architecture of international safety*», «*future trajectory of world business*».

Such discourse converts the WAR concept into diplomatic conceptual metaphor. Besides, on this background this term in its concept acquires the meaning «*suffered peaceful population*». A great majority of them are depersonalized nominatives and impersonal lexemes: «*collateral damage*», «*civilian impacting*», «*non-military casualties*», «*concomitant losses*» used in English mass-media. By essence these expressions are substandard lexicon or military slang.

**Conclusions.** The results of our research prove that English media discourse of the military events in the East of Ukraine is euphemized, disguising, emollient psycholinguistic system with political correctness of the description the WAR concept in mass-media. English mass-media discourse

tabulates the lexeme «war» and substitutes it by politically correct euphemized invariants.

It transfers emotionally positive estimations of the events with negative denotations based on disguising effects of the «black» English humor, substitutes anthropocentric semantics by depersonalized and impersonal nominatives, converts typical military lexicon into substandard – slang, influences linguistic consciousness of English mass-media audience.

The following psycholinguistic techniques distinguish English-language military lexicon in mass-media discourse of WAR concept as a system:

- 1) Euphemism as a substitute of uncomfortable and unprofitable for mass-media audience's comprehension of the word war;
- 2) Allegory as a displacement of accents of the nominative war on relatively positive lexeme «conflict»;
- 3) Euphemisms-abbreviations ATO, JFO as codes are techniques of transferring from aggressive to disguising semantics;
- 4) Contrast – the vocabulary with positive connotation exceeds the resembling but negative lexemes;
- 5) Data of semantic differential fixed the emollient effect of a euphemizing process.

Thus, it has been determined that psycholinguistic mechanisms of application of euphemized discourse in English-language mass-media are connected with actualization of neutral demilitarized image of war in linguistic consciousness of English media audience.

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