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POLARIZATION IN MEDIA POLITICAL DISCOURSE ON THE WAR IN UKRAINE: CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Стаття спрямована на дослідження ідеологічних структур та лінгвістичних засобів їх прояву в політичному дискурсі на основі критичного дискурс-аналізу дискурсивних стратегій конструювання образів України та Росії в британській та американській пресі. *Метою* роботи є дослідження мовного образу російсько-української війни та її основних політичних дійових осіб у політичному дискурсі британських та американських ЗМІ. Для досягнення мети було залучено *методи* контент-аналізу, дискурсивно-історичний та соціально-семантичний підходи з елементами стилістичного аналізу та критичного аналізу метафор. Війна, розв'язана Росією у 2022 р., широко представлена в онлайн-версіях англомовних газет, а Україна постійно перебуває в епіцентрі світових новин. Дослідження підкреслює як поляризацію у представленні подій, так і головних дійових осіб у дискурсивних стратегіях, що представляють дихотомію Внутрішня група проти Зовнішньої групи, політичний та ідеологічний контексти війни в Україні, соціально-політичні та когнітивні аспекти новин відповідно до міждисциплінарного підходу до мови як соціальної практики. Ми застосовуємо інтегрований критичний дискурс-аналіз до дослідження новин для вивчення дискурсу ЗМІ та мови, де критичний дискурс-аналіз зосереджується на соціальній практиці, соціальній владі та ідеології. Аналіз політичного дискурсу (АПД) використовується для дослідження ідеології образів війни, представлених в новинах. Таким чином, актуальність цього дослідження визначається метою показати основні дискурсивні стратегії поляризації в політичному медіадискурсі. Дослідницькі методи статті об'єднують три вектори аналізу Феркло в поєднанні з пояснювальними засобами (ван Дейк), елементами стилістичного аналізу та критичного аналізу метафори. Ілюстративний матеріал сформовано шляхом інформаційного пошуку та суцільної вибірки з газет і журналів відкритого доступу США та Великобританії (The Daily Mail, The Financial Times, The Guardian, The Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post та інші).

Таксономія виявлених дискурсивних стратегій поляризації політичного дискурсу ЗМІ включає дискурсивні стратегії маркування, доказовості, гри чисел, гіперболізму, віктимізації, персоналізації та аналогії, які можуть використовуватися окремо або в комбінації. Мовні засоби реалізації цих стратегій включають концептуальну метафору, метонімію, порівняння, ідіоми, метафтонімію, інтертекстуальну алюзію та персоніфікацію.

Ключові слова: критичний дискурсивний аналіз, дискурсивні стратегії полярізації, лінгвістичні засоби, метафора, політичний дискурс, війна в Україні.

In recent decades, the mass media have significantly increased their role in forming the image of the country, public opinion; the influence of the press on mass consciousness has greatly evolved. With the beginning of Russian invasion in Ukraine on February 24, media political discourse on the war in Ukraine dominates the world news. The media play a crucial role in covering the main events, discussing the prospects for the Russian-Ukrainian war and a peaceful settlement. How will the events unfold? Will Ukraine, having received the support of the West, be able to repel the Russians from the south? To what extent is it possible for Kyiv to receive security guarantees from international partners?

Modern political media discourses tend to become more polarized creating two opposing sides [Filardo, Morales-López, Floyd, 2021; Morales-López & Floyd, 2017; Romano and Porto, 2021; Savski, 2020], with polarization being "a result of strategic polarizing actions taken by specific actors in order to establish control in their communities of interest/practice" [Savski, 2020].

In the research we apply Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) based on the works of Norman Fairclough [Fairclough, 1995] and Teun Adrianus van Dijk [van Dijk, 1988, 1993, 1996, 1998, 2000] developing the idea of structural forms of discourse related to social practices, as society is not only shaped by discourse, but it also shapes this discourse [Fairclough, 1989]. So, CDA is about deciphering ideologies having impact on the connection of discursive and the social practices [Fairclough, 1995; Jullian, 2011; KhorsraviNik, 2009; Morales-López & Floyd, 2017; Teo, 2000; Thetela, 2002] in accordance with 'ideological square' [van Dijk, 1998] of positive Self- and negative Others-presentation or foregrounding positive practices of One-self and deemphasizing positive aspect of the Other. In other words, "…the strategy of polarization – positive In-group description, and negative Out-group description – thus has the following abstract evaluative structure, which we may call the 'ideological square': 1. Emphasize our good properties / actions. 2. Emphasize their bad properties / actions. 3. Mitigate our bad properties / actions. 4. Mitigate their good properties / actions" [van Dijk, 1998].

Stylistic figures play a key role in creating images in a political discourse [Fairclough, 1995]. According to Lakoff [1991], metaphors are crucial in the "construction of social and political reality" and make it possible for political actors to show their political stances, achieve goals and have an impact on the value judgments that we make. The importance of metaphors as conceptual devices was emphasised in multiple studies [Charteris-Black, 2004; Semino, 2008; Zinken, J. and Musolff, 2009]. This research investigates the discursive strategies and their verbalization at the linguistic level in political media discourse covering war, where metaphor as a conceptual and framing device helps to present the main actors of the war in Ukraine. Also, in the study we apply Critical Metaphor Analysis.

The aim of the study is to investigate the linguistic image of the Russian-Ukrainian war and its main political actors in British and American media political discourse. We intend to highlight political and ideological contexts of the war in Ukraine, the sociopolitical and cognitive aspects of news according to an interdisciplinary approach considering the language as a social practice. We apply the integrated Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach to the research of the news reports to study the media discourse and the language [Tenerio, 2011] where CDA concentrates on social practice, social power and ideology [Fairclough, 1989, 1995; Fairclough, I. & Fairclough, 2012]. With CDA, we will conduct the investigation applying the language in social context and sociolinguistic research by Wodak [2001, 2005, 2005a] and van Dijk [2000]. Political Discourse Analysis (PDA) is used to research the ideology of war images presented in the language of different news reports. Thus, the relevance of this study determined by the aim is to show the main discursive strategies of polarization in political media discourse.

We concentrate on the analysis of both the applied discursive strategies and the linguistic means of their verbalization – stylistic devices (conceptual metaphors, similes, idioms, personification, comparison, metonymy, metaphtonymy, intertextual allusion, personification) – to analyse how they create the meaning of the statements.

CDA has been chosen as a basic approach for this research that allows to conduct the analysis of the media political discourse and conclude about the data in a many-faceted way to identify polarization. According to Mautner [2005], "…the contemporary relevance of the web as a key site for articulation of social issues should make it a prime target for critical discourse

analysts with a political and emancipatory brief". CDA includes CDA analytical categories from the discourse-historical approach (DHA): discourse topics by van Dijk, such as positive Self-presentation and negative Other-presentation [van Dijk, 1991, 1995; Wodak and Dijk, 2000], and the socio-semantic approach of van Leeuwen on the representation of social actors [van Leeuwen, 1996].

KhosraviNik [2018] focuses on the importance of social media in deepening polarization as they not only create the image, but also spread the views of that construct. By Llamas, Morales-López [2022], conflict and polarized positions can be understood as discursive constructs which may be evoked by a number of linguistic structures, rhetorical figures (either creative, or culturally-conventional) and/or argumentation strategies. To shed light on polarization in the discourse analysis of political actors' speeches, we explore the discursive strategies and linguistic means of their realization [Barker, Gabrielatos, Khosravinik, Krzyzanowski, Mc Enery & Nowak, 2008; van Dijk, 1997; Wodak, 2005].

Van Dijk [2006] suggests the strategies of 'negative other-representation' and 'positive self-representation' which are called macro-ideological strategies. The discursive strategies of positive self-representation and negative other-representation identify what is 'good' and 'bad' or 'us' and 'them', and are applied to ideologically present in the discourse enhancement or mitigation of 'our'/'their' 'good'/'bad' traits. In this sphere, van Dijk distinguishes such discursive strategies as "actor description", "evidentiality", "generalization", "hyperbole", "metaphor", "self-glorification", "number game", "victimization" etc., that verbalise the polarity.

The study also turns to historical and cultural contexts and political implicatures. Thus, the research methods of the article integrate three vectors of the analysis by Fairclough combined with explanatory tools (by van Dijk), added by elements of stylistic analysis and Critical Metaphor Analysis.

The illustrative material was formed by information search and continuous sample, generated from the open access newspapers and magazines issued in the US and United Kingdom (The Daily Mail, The Financial Times, The Guardian, The Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post and others).

This research considers polarization being demonstrated in the media discourse on the war in Ukraine in 2022 and argues that the discourse strategies that embody the polarization in the media discourse are the following:

Labelling or tagging people, groups, countries can have either positive, or negative colouring, depending on the social attitude associated with people, groups and nations. Positive labelling in (1-3) approves a group's activities and ideologies, while example (3) also vividly demonstrates negative labelling that as a contrast to valuing the Ukrainian soldiers condemns the Russian army, negatively nominating them with the metaphor "a disorganized horde of amateurs":

1. "The Ukrainians *have so much spirit. Just looking at them gives you strength*. They *are not afraid*, they share everything, they joke around, but also they are very *sharp and willing to fight* anywhere anytime. *It's impossible to win against a country like that."* [Abend, 2022]

2. "When I think about the Ukrainian volunteers who joined the fight after the invasion started, the two words that come to mind are *"stupid brave."* *Ukrainians are stupid brave.* Give them a gun and they will go fight. That can be good and bad, but it's better to be motivated to fight without skill, than to have skill and be afraid to fight." [Abend, 2022]

3. "During the war's first two months, *the Ukrainian army proved to be formidable, courageous and highly innovative* against a better-armed Russian foe, which military experts had almost unanimously expected would prevail. …the Russian army, which had not conducted a major ground invasion since the calamitous war in Afghanistan four decades ago, *resembled a disorganized horde of amateurs.* …there were reports of *low morale, unforced surrenders, even desertion in the Russian ranks. Ukrainian troops,* by contrast, *proved to be fierce, committed fighters* who deftly used the urban terrain to ambush Russian tanks, *turning them into burnt-out husks."* [DePetris, 2022]

The Ukrainian army is labelled as "formidable, courageous and highly innovative", with Ukrainians being presented as "stupid brave" (2) by contrasting modifier. Unlike the enemy, that is "low morale, unforced surrenders, even desertion" (3), the author describes them as neither willing to fight, nor motivated or qualified. The implication is that the Russian army is forced and

made to invade the independent country and has all the chances to lose the war, with negative labelling transferring the assurance in the victory of Ukraine. The lack of the similar ground invasion experience of the Russians adds the evidence to the previous idea and persuades the readers on the professionalism of the Ukrainians "highly innovative." The lexis "foe" used for the Russian army is a bright demonstration of the preference that qualifies their actions as violent and aggressive. The metaphorical comparison of "the burnt-out" Russian tanks with "husks" supports the idea of the Russian army being defeated soon and demonstrates the intervention of labelling strategy with hyperbolism.

The example (4) shows the labelling of the war in Ukraine "World War Three" by simile emphasizing the importance of the war, the scale and its impact on the whole world, and nominating "Putin's actions in Ukraine" as a "genocide" (5) and "Putin's war" as a "crime" (6) conveys the idea of this war being extremely cruel:

4. "What's going on in Ukraine is *like World War Three.*" [Chantler-Hicks, 2022]

5. "President Biden on Tuesday suggested Russian President Vladimir Putin's actions in Ukraine were a *genocide*, marking the first time his administration has used the term." [Siddiqui, 2022]

6. "Putin's war is also a *crime* – the world must punish *Russia* as *a terrorist state.*" [Zagorodnyuk, 2022]

Evidentiality is the mentioning of the proof to allegations with the data from the public official sources, eye witnesses that helps instil confidence in the views and opinions and can greatly impact the mental models of readers about the positive in-group activity and negative out-group, enabling readers to easily visualize and has the power to be easily imaginable as episodic mental models [van Dijk, 2006]. The following example demonstrates the reference to the Ukrainian government officials. Though modified by the indefinite pronoun "some", it is inspiring and supportive for Ukrainians:

"Some government officials in Kyiv have announced Ukraine's aspiration to liberate all territories occupied by Russia, including Crimea."[Soltys, 2022]

So, the reference to the "government officials" in the capital provides the guarantees of the true first hand information that makes the recipients believe. Simultaneously, evidentiality in the above mentioned example negatively depicts the Russian army as invaders and occupants. The Guardian cites the mayor of Kyiv, Vitali Klitschko's, appeal to the Kyivites on the first days of the war who were bravely defending and saving the capital, and represents the Russian army as evil by the idiom "to put the capital on its knees" and the verb "destroy":

"The mayor of Kyiv, Vitali Klitschko, said the city had entered "a defensive phase". He added: 'Shots and explosions are ringing out and saboteurs have already entered Kyiv. The enemy wants *to put the capital on its knees* and *destroy* us.'" [Graham-Harrison, Beaumont, Harding, Borger and Roth, 2022]

The shared ideology by the most part of the world is that Russia is an aggressive occupant invading independent countries, committing criminal and violent actions, killing peaceful civilians and children, which is demonstrated by the above example.

Number game is applied to highlight the objectivity and persuade the news receivers. Numbers unlike opinions and views are credited as they present exact data and demonstrate precision and truthfulness [van Dijk, 2006]. The Guardian news reports on the number of killed after Russian attacks combining number game and victimization strategies (1, 2), where magnifiers "at least" and "rises to" are applied to highlight the huge number of casualties even after a single attack, thus implying the cruel and criminal actions of the Russian army on the Ukrainian civilians:

1. "Russia-Ukraine war: Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant temporarily disconnected from grid; *death toll* from Russian strike on rail station *rises to 25* – as it happened." [Chao-Fong, Ambrose, McSherry and Lock, 2022]

2. *"At least 25 people have been confirmed dead* after a Russian rocket strike on a Ukrainian train station on Wednesday. Russian forces attacked a train in the village of Chaplyne, Dnipropetrovsk oblast on Wednesday. The deputy head of the president's office, Kyrylo Tymoshenko, reported on Telegram that *two children were killed in the attack*. Russia has since confirmed it was behind the attack." [Chao-Fong, Ambrose, McSherry and Lock, 2022]

By contrast, the number game creates the negative mental model of the foe presenting the out-group:

3. "Vladimir Putin has signed a decree *to increase the size of Russia's armed forces from 1.9 million to 2.04 million,* Reuters has cited the Russian state-owned news agency Ria as saying." [Chao-Fong, Ambrose, McSherry and Lock, 2022]

The following news from The Wall Street Journal sheds light on the number of casualties as stated in the report of the Ukrainian president, that being the demonstration of the combined discursive theories of number game and evidentiality with the reference to the highest official, thus applying the strategy of negative Other-presentation and constructing the mental model of Russia as "aggressor" guilty in the death of innocent people:

4. "Ukraine's president, *Volodymyr Zelensky,* said his country had sustained *137 dead and 316 injured* on Thursday, as Russian forces broadened their offensive." [The Russia-Ukraine War: Latest News, 2022]

The discursive strategy of **Hyperbole** focuses on the biased polarization of 'in-' and 'out-group', where the metaphors "pay for every inch of territory", metonymy "to put our bodies on the line", metaphtonymy that combines metaphor and metonymy "cure Russia" are the embodiment of the positive impression of the in-group and negative acts magnification of the out-group:

1. "The Ukrainians are making the Russians *pay for every inch of territory* that they gain." [Eckel, 2022]

2. "Ukrainians *are fighting Russian imperialism*." [Antoniw, 2022]

3. "Only total defeat in Ukraine can *cure Russia* of its imperialism." [Soltys, 2022]

4. "We don't need *to put our bodies on the line. The Ukrainians are doing that for us."* [Taylor, 2022]

Both British and American news reports positively highlight and magnify the actions of the Ukrainian army, condemning and convicting their foes by the elements of exaggeration and comparison, where Russia is personified and metaphorically presented as a person who is ill with imperialism (3). By Lakoff and Johnsen [2003], "Metaphor is one of our most important tools for trying to comprehend partially what can not be comprehended totally: our feelings, aesthetic experience, moral practices and spiritual awareness. These endeavours of the imagination are not devoid of rationality; since they use metaphor, they employ an imaginative rationality." So, presenting Russia as a person being ill with imperialism associates it with someone whose negative actions are emphasized and whose "illness" can be "cured" by Ukraine where it will be totally defeated, with defeat being implicitly presented as a remedy. The created mental model of the future victory of Ukraine is based on the intervention of both hyperbolism strategy and the strategy of labelling.

Victimization strategy is presented by highlighting and magnifying the negative actions of the out-group, presenting the in-group as the victims suffering from these actions with the expanded metaphoric simile "like a baby" and metonymy "on our behalf" in the following examples:

1. "How far will the West allow Ukraine to disintegrate? *Ukraine is like a baby held up from the balcony by a fugitive threatening to drop."* [Afejuku, 2022]

2. "Ukraine is *fighting for a free Europe on our behalf.* Since it is *fighting our war, it deserves everything it asks for."* [Pabriks, 2022]

Deploying a victimization strategy, the authors present Ukraine as a country struggling for its independence and "for a free Europe on our behalf" (2) and suffering the aggression of Russia as the western countries are delaying the decisive supporting actions. The victimization strategy is combined with the strategies of personalization to magnify, exaggerate and add to the created positive image of the country by supporting the idea.

Personalization strategy is about assigning the qualities of a person to non-humans that helps the news receivers relate to the image creating the mind model vividly and lively showing the positive and heroic actions of Ukraine, that are foregrounded, grabbing the readers' attention, evoking the feelings of emotional support, presenting them as remarkable actions, with the enemy implicitly being presented in a negative way:

1. "Ukraine *has taught us all a lesson* in *moral courage.*" [Solnit, 2022]

2. "*Ukrainian cities see* massive destruction." [Mellen, 2022]

3. "After the first few days of shock when Putin's war began, an overwhelming effort is now under way to prepare as best as possible for a potential Russian drive to *the heart of the Ukrainian state.* Emptied of many civilians and fortified with these amateur barricades, *Kyiv waits* for the Russians." [As civilians leave, fortress Kyiv grimly prepares for Russian advance, 2022]

In the above examples, Ukraine is shown by both the British and American press as a political actor who teaches lessons to the international community (1). The strategy of personalization combined with victimization strategy presents Ukrainian cities as the actors that "see massive destruction" and "wait for the Russians", with Ukrainian cities being presented by metonymic personification and Kyiv by the metaphor "heart of the Ukrainian state." By deploying the discursive strategy of personalization, the authors aim at the positive in-group presenting, emphasizing the generalized idea of unification and heroism where agents of actions are cities and the country, implying that these traits are characteristic features for the majority of the civilians.

Analogy strategy is the way of comparing to find some common features between the historical events by actualizing the similarities and creating the mental model by association:

1. "Crisis throws up *four historical parallels between Ireland and Ukraine.*" [Gillespie, 2022]

2. "Last time our capital experienced *anything like this was in 1941 when it was attacked by Nazi Germany. Ukraine defeated that evil* and will defeat this one." [Graham-Harrison, Harding, Beaumont, Boffey, and Henley, 2022]

3. "Will Putin's troops cause *another Chernobyl disaster?*" [Bunyan, Solomons, Salvoni, 2022].

The above mentioned examples demonstrate deploying the strategy of analogy "historical parallels between Ireland and Ukraine", "anything like this was in 1941 when it was attacked by Nazi Germany", "another Chernobyl disaster" realized by intertextual allusion combined with personalization strategy "Ukraine defeated that evil." Thus the strategy revives actions in the history that can become the positive image and the example to follow, where Russia is implicitly compared with Nazi Germany and is nominated by the metaphor "evil" that verbalizes the discursive strategy of labelling.

The analysis of the language material allows to conclude on the discursive strategies of polarization applied in the media political discourse in the British and American press which include labelling, evidentiality, number game, hyperbolism, victimization, personalization and analogy. The discursive strategies of polarization embody the social ideologies and can either be deployed individually or be intervened. Both British and American media show no ideological differences and apply the discursive strategies of positively labelling Ukraine as an In-group and negatively labelling Russia as an Out-group. The discursive strategy of evidentiality refers to authorities, officials and witnesses that are accepted as trustworthy sources of data. The number game strategy combined with the strategy of victimization is realized by metaphoric simile, metonymy, enumerating. They magnify the numbers with the modifying adverbs, transfer implications on the cruelty and aggression of Russia. The strategy of hyperbole embodies the positive impression of the in-group and negative acts magnification of the out-group verbalized by metaphor, metonymy, metaphtonymy. Personalization strategy is deployed with the purpose of foregrounding the positive actions of the in-group that implies negative out-group actions. The strategy of analogy is applied in the comparison of the war in Ukraine and the struggle of the Ukrainians for their independence with the similar historical events, implying the hope for the victory against the cruel invaders. The applied discursive strategies create polarity of positive in-group and negative out-group ideologies or positive self- and negative other-representations. Linguistics means that verbalizing the discursive strategies of polarization include conceptual metaphors, similes, idioms, personification, comparison, metonymy, metaphtonymy, intertextual allusion, personification, as well as lexical modifiers.

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POLARIZATION IN MEDIA POLITICAL DISCOURSE ON THE WAR IN UKRAINE: CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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The war unleashed by Russia in 2022 is widely presented in online versions of English-language newspapers; Ukraine is constantly in the epicentre of the world news. This study highlights political and ideological contexts of the war in Ukraine, the sociopolitical and cognitive aspects of news according to an interdisciplinary approach considering the language as a social practice. The article highlights the polarization in the presentation of the events and the main actors entitled in the discursive strategies, representing the dichotomy In- versus Out-group. The study is *aimed* at the investigation of the ideological structures and their manifesting linguistic devices in political discourse based on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of discursive strategies for constructing the images of Ukraine and Russia in the British and American press. The integrated Critical Discourse Analysis was applied to the research of the news to study the media discourse and the language, where CDA focuses on social practice, social power and ideology. Political Discourse Analysis (PDA) is used to research the ideology of war images presented in the language of news reports. The relevance of this study determined by the aim is to show the main discursive strategies of polaeization in political media discourse. The *research methods* of the article combine three vectors of the analysis by Fairclough with explanatory tools (by van Dijk), and the elements of stylistic analysis and Critical Metaphor Analysis. The illustrative material was collected by information search and continuous sample from the open access newspapers and magazines issued in the US and Great Britain (The Daily Mail, The Financial Times, The Guardian, The Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post and others).

Conclusion. This research argues that polarisation is being demonstrated in the media discourse on the war in Ukraine in 2022. The taxonomy of the identified discursive strategies of polarization deployed in the media political discourse includes labelling, evidentiality, number game, hyperbolism, victimization, personalization and analogy, that can either be used singly or intervened. The discursive strategy of evidentiality is applied to authorities, officials, witnesses that are accepted as trustworthy sources of data; the number game strategy combined with victimization are verbalized by metaphoric simile, metonymy, enumerating and magnifying the numbers with the modifying adverbs; the strategy of hyperbole conveys the positive impression of the in-group and negative acts magnification of the out-group verbalized by metaphor, metonymy, metaphtonymy; the personalization strategy is deployed with the purpose of foregrounding the positive actions of the in-group that implies negative out-group actions; the strategy of analogy is applied in the comparison of the war in Ukraine and the struggle of the Ukrainians for their independence with other historical events. Linguistic means used to realize the discursive strategies of polarization include the conceptual metaphor, metonymy, simile, idioms, metaphtonymy, intertextual allusion and personification.