THE WORD AS A WEAPON (ABOUT NEOLGISMOS BEING A LINGUISTIC REFLECTION OF THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR)

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 The truth about this terrible war was written in bitter lines both in the works of famous writers and those who had never written before. These are very different stories in terms of genre and writing styles varying from military personnel, journalists, doctors, chaplains, and volunteers. Among national writers, it is worth noting such individuals as: Vasyl Shklyar (“Black Sun”), Bohdan Zholdak (“Ukry”), Serhiy Dzyuba, Artem Kirsanov (“Call Sign Banderas”), Andriy Kurkov (“Grey Bees”), Nataliya Vorozhbyt (“Bad Roads”), Serhii Zhadan (“Bread Armistice”), Svitlana Taran (“Naked Nerve”, “Return in the Rain”), Oksana Zubzho (“The Longest Journey”). Oleksandr Tereshchenko has presented the dialogue “Life after 16:30” to the public. The distinctive feature of this author is that he writes while holding a stylus in a prosthesis, since he does not have both hands and lost one eye. So, in a nutshell the authors of war participants (mobilized writers or volunteer writers and social and political processes. The above is also evident from military almanacs or mass media, and especially on the pages of social networks.

 Roads”,
bad thing, but during war it is quite good and even necessary...

The motivation behind the process of creating new lexemes during the full-scale Russia-Ukraine war lies in: surnames, names of prominent political figures or well-known public figures, their character traits, features of appearance, statements made by them, demonstrated actions, etc.; Ukrainian toponymicon; borrowing words etc. Our language knows how to repel enemies and be a firm cover, the so-called “language shield” is a special spiritual weapon against the invader, something that helps to identify the enemy and to express the main idea succinctly.

“What do we call the enemy? What speech features can we easily recognize an invader by? Do we know how to fight with words?” – these and a number of other questions are the object of this scientific research.

The aim is to describe and systematize innovative processes in the national lexical system of Ukrainian language that are taking place today, in particular, directly during the Russia-Ukraine war.

The analysis was carried out on the basis of modern Ukrainian mass media, Internet resources, social networks, conversational and everyday broadcasting of Ukrainians.

Research methods include observation and analysis of linguistic material for the scientific interpretation of actual material, i.e., the descriptive method, methods of component and linguistic stylistic analysis.

Formulation of the problem. The process of neologization is a typical phenomenon for any functioning and developing language system. The corresponding renewal of the lexical composition of Ukrainian language is explained by linguistic and extra-linguistic factors: mental and intellectual features of human existence, rapid development of society, economical and political progress or regression, communicative needs of society dictated by a change in the paradigm of reality perception, key historical stages and living in emergency situations, etc.

Thus, with the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion on the Ukrainian territory, the daily discourse of Ukrainians has undergone changes: users of social networks and mass media partake various means of communication and techniques to convey information to listeners; active creation of new lexemes, sayings and new folklore is observed. Such marker words help to define notions as “own” and “alien/foreign”, reflect the attitude towards what is happening in Ukraine and the world as well as record the most important moments of resistance and struggle.

Neology as a science first arose in the 1950s and is nowadays undergoing rapid development in the 21st century, especially in the current events. New words have been the object of scientific research by many domestic and foreign scientists. Among the Ukrainian researchers studying neologisms were K. Horodenska, S. Hrytsenko, O. Derkachova, L. Dovbnya, S. Yeliseeva, N. Yelnikova, V. Zhavoronok, M. Zhulinska, E. Karpilovska, O. Kirilyuk, N. Klymenko, Zh. Koloyis, O. Styshov, O. Taranenko, N. Tymoshchuk, M. Khar and others. According to most linguists, the emergence of neologisms is explained by: 1) the need to name new concepts, properties, actions; 2) the desire to figuratively nominate an object, phenomenon, process, concept, etc.; 3) replace some names with other notions; 4) supplement what was said with a special expression, etc. Linguist V. Zhavoronok noted: “...either there was a need for a word, a symbol of a new concept, or there was a necessity to replenish this or that semantic field with a new or updated functional unit, or the new meaning of the old concept requires a new form, therefore a new word”.

Scientist N. Klymenko reminded us about extra-linguistic aspects of innovations, in particular, “the emergence of new realities of life”.

Among new lexical units, textual materials testify to the traditional views on new lexeme emergence: a) neologisms (semantic derivation is the emergence of a new meaning in an already known word; word-formation derivation is known as the formation of new words in accordance with the existing word-formation models and morphemes particular to the language system); b) borrowings from other languages; c) revival of long forgotten or inactive words. Regarding the formative ways and reasons behind the appearance of new linguistic formulas, scientists contrast the concepts of occasionalism and neologism, characterizing the first as a component of speech (practical aspect), and the second as a component of language. The importance of such scientific works and corresponding interpretations is invaluable, since they capture ideas, concepts, feelings in the body of language, which quickly respond to the needs of society. Since neologisms are the fastest and the most effective linguistic response to the cognitive and communicative needs of society, therefore, “due to the new word being the basic unit, researchers of language dynamics are able to detect other types of linguistic innovations: spelling (orthographic innovations), morphemes (neomorphemes), word-formants (neoformants, neo-bases, new models of word formation), grammatical (morphological and syntactic), stylistic ones”.

This scientific research is dictated majorly by military discourse. It is about the life of the country in the vortex of war, war events and everyday realities, which are reflected in the choice of language means to avoid negative connotations, to soften the stories about the destruction of infrastructure, psychological and physical injuries, the death of people, etc., as well as to rally the population, support and maintain the fighting spirit, manifest a high national and patriotic position.

Therefore, language was and still is an integral component of national culture as well as history of the Ukrainian people; a special litmus material that reflects everything that happens around and serves the societal needs. It is a powerful means of expressing views, actions and reasons for struggle during the period of armed aggression. This is a vivid example of its rapid development and close connection with people, its creator and bearer.

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2. Zhavoronok V. V. “Leksychna pidsystemy movy i znachennya movnykh odnynts” [The lexical subsystem of the language and the meaning of linguistic units], Mova i movoznavstvo [Linguistics], 1999, № 6, P. 35 [in Ukrainian].


4. Karpilovsʹka E. A. “Dynamika suchasnoyi ukrayinsʹkoi movy v slovnykakh novoho pokolinnia (proekt seriyi slovnykiv novovyh ukrayinsʹkoi leksyky)” [Dynamics of the modern Ukrainian language in dictionaries of the new generation], Ukrayinsʹka mova [Ukrainian language], 2004, №3, P. 3 [in Ukrainian].
Main material of the research. Military and political neologisms arise under the influence of many factors: armed conflicts, the introduction of new technologies (primarily military), the emergence of new phenomena, linguistic economy, psychological support, etc. The language creativity of Ukrainians during the full-scale Russia-Ukraine war improves with its realism, insight, vivacity, wit and sarcasm. The so-called „language shield” identifies the invaders with the help of code words, determines that the speech of your interlocutor is not understandable for him, therefore, not native. This method is called „Shibboleth” and is used to define a non-native speaker of Ukrainian language by a number of „special” words: palanytsia (festive bread), svitytsia (hall in the hut), sunytsia (strawberry), ukrahalizynsia (Ukrainian train station), veselka (rainbow), merezhyyo (lace), terevenyty (to chat), filizhanka (cup), khoanna (love), ryshnutysia (gun), etc.

Since February 2022, many new and reinterpreted words have appeared in the speech of Ukrainians. So, to designate the enemy (Russian occupation troops) we use: zabry (come in), eresfya (from the Russian federation/rf), ruskyy mir (Russian peace), avabadiyeli (liberators), rusnya (Russian), katsap/katsapnya (pers/derogative for Russian), rashisty, svynosobaktu (pig dogs), imbecyly (imbeciles). The semantic neologisms “Orcs” and “Mordor” are borrowed words from the work of the British author J. R. R. Tolkien, which appeared on February 25, 2022, on the official Facebook page of the Ukrainian Ground Forces, and are actively used in everyday speech by Ukrainians.

The emergence and active use of coarse, emotionally colored words and phrases is understandable, given the political situation that provoked their creation. However, we are convinced that in diplomatic communication it is worth using the words Russians, Russian troops, Russian army, Russia, Russian federation, in order to accurately and unambiguously name the perpetrators of this war, who will bear collective responsibility for their actions and the deserved punishment of the military tribunal.

The words Bayraktar, Javelin, Stinger, HIMARS has been popularized to denote military equipment and weapons. With the help of Ukrainian word-formation models, vocabulary was replenished with new colorful verbs: bayraktraty, javelinity. We distinguish even more verbs formed by the prefix method: vidjaveleniynty (zadijaveleniynyty), zastingervyty – “to destroy the invaders with known guided missiles”; othbayraktraty (zabayraktraty) – “to burn enemy fortifications using appropriate aircraft”; vidZSYshyty, vidkatyuzhutu – “to destroy the invaders, destroy the enemy’s equipment”; vidkozonyty, viddvokkhsoty, zatryvhsotyty – “to crush, neutralize the enemy; to ghost somebody”. The neologism “chornobayu” originates from the village of Chornobayivka in Kherson region and is associated with the place where the Armed Forces systematically destroyed enemy equipment. This village has become a symbol of the enemy destruction, and occasionalism was popularized in social networks and means “systematically doing the same thing without getting any different result”. As with the example of vidchornobayuty, with time the following neologisms were formed – nagostomellyty (peregotomellyty), vidziyumyty, zabuchyty, vidyrenyty – from the names of Ukrainian territories liberated from occupation. Such neologisms as mogylizatsiya, mogylizuvaty derived from the word mobilization and mean “disarming of Russian occupiers”.

A considerable layer of vocabulary is not new, but it is perceived and interpreted in a new way today in a society where a full-scale war is going on. Such words have their own new complementations, word-forming series, semantic loads, for example: humanitarian (green) corridor; Teroborona (TrO) – teroboronivets – teroboronivskyi; lendlease (fully borrowed from English) – pertaining to lendlease; pereselents – displaced person, internally displaced person, temporarily displaced person; vygnanets – evacuated, deported, forcibly removed.

The prefix de- is considered as a productive formant and it means “to perform some action”: deaktyvuvaty (deactivate), deblokuvaty (unblock), destabilizuvaty (destabilize), dekomunizuvaty (decommunize), denatsyfikuvaty (un-Nazify), demilitaryuvaty (demilitarize), derusyfikuvaty (de-Russia).

The prefix na- is used in the following words: nadonatyty (to donate), navolonteryty (to volunteer) – “to help, support, pay, find anything, at any price and deliver it anywhere”.

The online dictionary of English-linguistic neologisms and slangisms represents a new word dedicated to Ukraine and the Ukrainian people – zukrayinyty, zaukrauinyty (to Ukrainize) – “to try to take something by force, deception and get a harsh response”.6

The formation of occasionalisms based on anthroponyms has become a common phenomenon in the modern military lexicon, such as: arestovlennyty (arestovstyty) – reassuring message, positive news, desired information;

kimyty – radiate optimism even in difficult circumstances;

dadyrty – to pass off wishful thinking; empty chatter;
bandyryty (vidbanderyty) – to kill, to destroy;
makronyty (promakronyty) – to pretend to be very worried about a certain situation, to show it to everyone, but not to implement anything productive;

merklyuvaty – to be self-interested, to solve profitable issues only for oneself;

shojguvaty – to misinform, to pretend at the workplace that everything is going according to plan, to deny defeat;

pushkinopad – t he demolition of monuments to Russian cultural figures and the renaming of toponyms with their names.

New proverbs, sayings, phraseological units are born in the linguistic space, e. g.:

God wears the uniform of the Ukrainian Armed Forces – boundless trust and gratitude to the defenders of Ukraine;

ghost of Kyiv (Kyivs’kyi Pryvyd) – ace pilot (collective image of pilots of the 40th tactical aviation brigade); a virtuoso of his craft;

Bandera smoothie, Bandera brew – national resistance; like a wardrobe from Borodyanka – survive, endure under any circumstances;

a symbol of endurance of Ukrainians during the war;

a Russian warship – contempt for a thief, a murderer;

courage to resist evil, aggression;

to start a tractor – the most unexpected argument in any dialogue; unpredictable course of events;

in three days – unrealistic, ill-founded ideas, plans and sincere faith in them;

to return to Chornobayivka – to repeat one’s mistakes, step on the same rake.

6Pryama mova Lvova, URL: https://www.nta.ua/zukrayinyty-u-slovnyku-urban-dictionary-zyavylosya-nove-slovo/
There is an addition to the already well-known phrase “give a pumpkin” (to refuse), that is to “give a watermelon” (wait for the Armed Forces of Ukraine – liberation of Kherson).

Semantic contamination is demonstrated in the pejorative puler, which was formed on the merger basis of two surnames: the russian president putin and the German misanthrope hitler. Ridiculous nicknames and paraphrases for the leader of the aggressor country are based on the characteristic features and actions of a certain person: height (kurdapel, lilliputian, nedopalok (lighter), nedomirok (undersized)), mistrust of the environment (bunker worm, styukan (extremely frightful person)), mental state (crazy with a nuclear button), a brutal style of management and disrespect for the rights of others (Cadebist maniac, kremlin terrorist, racist Führer), physical condition (blida pogan (pale heathen), golomozuy vozhd (bald leader)).

We suggest paying attention to expressive and evaluative spelling, or graphoderivation. It is about the peculiarities of writing the words russia, putin, kremlin, russian federation – especially with a lowercase letter as a manifestation of contempt, rage and condemnation.

Conclusions. This scientific work reminds people that the denotation and research of language modifications is an urgent issue of applied linguistics. After all, neologisms play an important role in the linguistic system, allow scientists to analyze the worldview features of speakers, reflect trends inherent in historical changes, current problems, everyday phenomena and processes.

The factual material of the article proves that the word is a special weapon on the linguistic front. The formation and active functioning of new lexical units in military discourse is somewhat a reflection of contemporary events; a vivid manifestation of rich Ukrainian vocabulary and high intellectual potential of the Ukrainian people; attesting to the dynamics, continuity and uniqueness of language as a living organism.

It is worth noting that the layer of vocabulary collected and analyzed in this research is not exhaustive and final, since, unfortunately, the war goes on, therefore, the process of enriching the language with new words and phraseological units is a continuous process requiring further scientific consideration.