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EUPHEMISMS IN THE UKRAINIAN MILITARY SOCIOLECT: SEMANTIC, STYLISTIC AND PRAGMATIC DIMENSIONS OF WARTIME DISCOURSE

Abstract. The lexical system of any language evolves under the influence of various extralinguistic factors, including the dynamics of social development, communicative demands, and the cognitive and cultural characteristics of its speakers. An important problem of modern linguistics is the study of the directions of evolution of the lexical subsystem under conditions of social and political stress. The war, as an extreme communicative situation, has intensified processes of linguistic renewal, particularly euphemization, which this study identifies as a salient feature of the contemporary Ukrainian military sociolect. It is this lexical layer, which reflects the reactions of society to the traumatic reality, that is chosen as the subject of the study. The method of theoretical analysis (to outline the nature and functions of euphemization), methods of systematization and classification (to group euphemisms by structural and semantic features), as well as the interpretive method (to identify semantic shifts and stylistic functions of the studied units) are used in the work. Depending on the semantic and stylistic parameters and the type of connection with the euphemized lexeme, the following groups are distinguished: witty expressions without a direct semantic connection but with a bright emotional connotation (*бавовна, аналоговнет, затридні*); metaphorized commonly used lexemes (*дискотека, пташка*); lexemes derived from the names of movie characters (*кіборги, аватар, орки*); conventional markers of military slang (*мінусувати, нуль, піксель*); derivatives of proper names (*джевелінити, чорнобаїти, макронити*); phraseological constructions or reinterpreted expressions (*клеїти шольца, привид Києва, бандерівське смузі*); words formed by contamination of two lexemes (*русня, рашисти, путлер*); lexemes based on borrowed morphemes with a neutralized emotional charge (*сепари, мультик*). The generalization of the research results allows us to assert that the euphemization of the Ukrainian military sociolect is the evidence of the inner strength, dignity and linguistic creativity of the Ukrainian society. The rejection of vocabulary with excessively negative connotations in favor of ironic, neutral or humorous nominations plays an important role in the formation of a stable psycholinguistic reaction to aggressive reality. A significant part of the newly created words is already penetrating other European languages, representing the Ukrainian linguistic vision of war in the global communication space and expanding the creative potential of the military sociolects of these languages.

Keywords: communication; euphemisms; Ukrainian language; military sociolect; semantics; vocabulary.

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Introduction

Language reflects various social transformations and is a universal tool for constructing reality. In the context of the active military confrontation in Ukraine since 2014, the lexicon is rapidly adapting to new realities, forming a military sociolect. This kind of language, which is typical for military circles, journalists, volunteers, and the general public who are actively involved in communicating military reality, contains, according to our observations, a significant layer of euphemisms – linguistic means that soften, mask, or transform the perception of harsh military reality. In military discourse, euphemisms not only replace undesirable or traumatic concepts but also function as instruments in information warfare, contributing to the shaping of national narratives and supporting the psychological resilience of society.

After the start of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Moscow troops in 2022, the processes of linguistic transformation in Ukrainian society intensified, particularly in public and everyday discourse. Dozens of new euphemistic constructions have emerged – lexemes and phrases that replace harsh, emotionally charged, or taboo statements with softer, figurative, or metaphorical ones. Such units as *демілітаризований* / *demilitarized* instead of *знищений* / *destroyed*, *бавовна, бавовнятко* / *cotton, cottonwood* instead of *вибух* / *explosion*, *від'їхав* / *left* instead of *загинув* or *ліквідований* / *died* or *liquidated* have become not only part of the military vocabulary but also powerful symbols of linguistic adaptation to the traumatic experience of war. Euphemisms perform a dual function. They operate as a psychological defense mechanism that reduces excessive emotional stress and protects the mental well-being of both military personnel and civilians. At the same time, they function within information policy by shaping a desired representation of reality, sustaining morale, mitigating unfavorable facts, or reframing them in a more acceptable way. In the context of information warfare, euphemistic language becomes both a means of self-defense, cultural resistance, and an information weapon.

The study of this lexical layer, which demonstrates speakers' resilience under permanent stress and reflects culturally specific patterns of linguistic adaptation, becomes particularly relevant. Penetrating modern European

languages, some war-related euphemisms have taken on lives of their own in international discourse, being reproduced, translated, or explicitly commented upon in foreign-language reporting and commentary. One prominent case is the Russian Ministry of Defense's characterization of the withdrawal from Snake Island in June 2022 as a "gesture of goodwill" – a euphemistic framing that was widely echoed in English-language news (Reuters, 2022) and subsequently reformulated in other European languages, such as German "Geste des guten Willens" (Tagesschau, 2022) and Lithuanian "geros valios gestas" (LRT, 2022) in regional reporting on the war.

Another widely circulated euphemistic label is Russia's official term "special military operation" (instead of *war*), which entered international media discourse as a cited Kremlin formula and appears across languages (e.g., English *special military operation*, German *militärische Spezialoperation*, French *opération militaire spéciale*) (Reuters, 2024).

A further example of cross-linguistic diffusion involves the euphemistic substitution used in Russian state-affiliated media to refer to explosions. The Russian word *khlopok* ("a pop"), employed to attenuate the violent connotations of explosions, attracted attention beyond its source context. In Ukrainian digital discourse, it was humorously reinterpreted as *бавовна* / *bavovna* ("cotton"), a term that subsequently appeared in multilingual explanatory formats and commentary on wartime language in English and other European media (The New Voice of Ukraine, 2023). Such cases demonstrate that euphemistic expressions are not merely translated but also become objects of meta-linguistic reflection across language communities.

Together, these examples illustrate that military euphemisms generated within the Russian-Ukrainian war extend beyond their source speech communities, being reformulated and critically discussed in English, German, Lithuanian, and other linguistic contexts. Their international circulation underscores the role of euphemization not only within a single linguistic environment but also as a component of transnational media narratives and broader information dynamics.

Although euphemisms have been extensively studied in linguistics, a comprehensive analysis of their role in the military sociolect remains limited. Despite the high frequency and prominence of euphemisms in contemporary

Ukrainian military discourse, particularly in the context of the full-scale war, this area is still at an early stage of systematic investigation and requires further in-depth analysis.

This study is motivated by the social and communicative significance of euphemisms in wartime and by the need to systematically examine emerging language practices in contemporary Ukrainian society. The analysis of euphemisms in the military sociolect makes it possible to examine not only linguistic transformations but also the ways in which traumatic collective experience is interpreted and communicated. The study of these linguistic units further sheds light on the specific features of contemporary wartime communication, traces shifts in the linguistic worldview of Ukrainians, and highlights the social and ideological functions of language in times of crisis. The aim of our research is to analyze the origin and functioning of euphemisms in the military sociolect during the war in Ukraine, to determine their types, communicative functions, and impact on public consciousness. To accomplish this objective, the following research tasks were identified:

- review scientific approaches to the concept of “euphemism” and its functions in language;
- analyze the corpus of contemporary euphemisms used in Ukrainian military discourse;
- systematize euphemisms according to thematic groups and types of substitution;
- identify the communicative, psychological, social, and ideological functions of euphemisms;
- identify the features of military sociolect as part of professional speech;
- identify the key lexical, structural, and pragmatic features that characterize the military sociolect as a specialized professional discourse.

Historiography of the Issue

The problem of euphemism as a linguistic phenomenon has a long tradition of research in linguistics. Back in the twentieth century,

the foundations of the study of euphemisms as means of taboo, social etiquette, and political correctness were laid within the framework of the general theory of language (Ullmann, 1962; Lakoff, 1975; Rawson, 1981; Neaman & Silver, 1983). In the 1990s, Western linguistics began to study euphemisms not only as lexical units but also as a mechanism for manipulating public consciousness, especially in political or military discourse (Allan & Burridge, 1991, 2006).

In linguistics, euphemism is traditionally seen as a means of replacing an undesirable, taboo, or shocking statement with a more neutral or positive one. The classical definition of the term is provided by Allan and Burridge (1991) in their work *Euphemism and Dysphemism: Language Used as Shield and Weapon*. They consider euphemisms as a tool that performs a defensive or aggressive function depending on the context. The authors emphasize that language is both “a shield and a weapon”, especially in situations of social tension. Ullmann (1962) in *Semantics: An Introduction to the Science of Meaning* classifies euphemisms according to their semantic load, noting that they are most often associated with death, disease, sexuality, as well as power and war.

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, researchers' attention has increasingly focused on euphemisms in the fields of war, security, politics, and media. The study of the functions of euphemisms in texts covering conflicts, military operations, and international interventions has come to the fore (Chilton, 2004; Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2006). Such studies focus on the distortion of reality through language, the legitimization of violence, and the creation of a corresponding image of the “enemy” or “victim”. The military sociolect as a subsystem of professional language is characterized by the increased use of euphemisms, motivated by both ethical and strategic considerations. In *The Political Mind: A Cognitive Scientist's Guide to Your Brain and Its Politics*, Lakoff (2008) analyzes how military rhetoric influences public consciousness through metaphorization and euphemization. The author, in particular, draws attention to euphemistic expressions such as *collateral damage* and *target neutralization*, which obscure violent content. In *Analyzing Political Discourse: Theory and Practice*, Chilton (2004) argues that euphemisms in military rhetoric contribute to the construction of an illusion of

control, humanitarian intent, and strategic rationality in representations of war. A conceptual outline of the functions and typology of euphemisms was proposed in the works of Paionkevych (2014) and Korneliaieva (2019). Paionkevych (2014) identifies six key functions of euphemisms, including etiquette, tabooing, manipulative, and psychotherapeutic functions. Korneliaieva (2019), in turn, defines the linguistic nature of euphemism as "a unit with a concealed denotative reference to socially sensitive reality" (p. 70).

In Ukrainian linguistics of the pre-war period (prior to 2014), the majority of works were devoted to the general semantic and pragmatic characteristics of euphemisms (Chabanenko, 2002; Stishov, 2005; Yanush, 2009; Velykoroda, 2009; Dubynets, 2010, 2012). The war in Donbas and the annexation of Crimea served as catalysts for more in-depth linguistic studies of changes in public discourse, particularly in media and military vocabulary.

After the outbreak of a full-scale war in 2022, the relevance of the topic increased significantly. Numerous publications have emerged focusing on the transformations of the Ukrainian military sociolect, the expansion of its lexical composition, and the use of metaphors, humorous forms, and euphemisms. Linguists, journalists, psychologists, and cultural scholars have turned to analyzing linguistic means that have become part of the everyday discourse of war – both in the public sphere and in informal speech.

The study of euphemisms as a linguistic phenomenon that arises in the context of social transformations, in particular, in times of war, has become a prominent vector of modern linguistic science. Euphemisms in military and political discourse are seen not only as a means of communicative mitigation or veiling of traumatic realities, but also as a tool of manipulation, emotional protection, construction of social reality, and strengthening of collective identity. The necessity for a systematic examination of these processes stems from the remarkable productivity of euphemistic formations in Ukrainian military discourse that has intensified since 2014 and reached its peak following Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022.

Contemporary Ukrainian linguistics is actively responding to the emergence of new euphemistic units in wartime language. Several works

analyze the specifics of their construction, functions, and pragmatic parameters. In Ukrainian linguistics, the issue of euphemization in media and military discourse has been addressed by several scholars. Kharchenko (2023) conceptualizes euphemisms as a dynamic linguistic category performing nominative, etiquette, and manipulative functions. Hrytsenko (2022) examines the role of language in the context of hybrid warfare, highlighting the emergence of new lexical nominations, including euphemistic forms, that contribute to the construction of a patriotic narrative. Ilchenko, in *Euphemisms of Modern Ukrainian-Language Media: The Social Aspect*, proposes a classification of euphemistic expressions functioning within contemporary media discourse. The researcher emphasizes their role in constructing a “convenient” information picture of the world: “euphemisms are used to avoid social tension, taboos, and ideological influence on the recipient” (Ilchenko, 2015, p. 120).

Recent research has increasingly examined the role of euphemisms in shaping wartime media and political narratives. Social media also play an important role in the spread of euphemisms, where the use of “humorous” or veiled forms such as *бавовна / bavovna* (cotton – explosion), *мінуснули / minusnuly* (“knocked out”), and *обнулили / obnulyly* (“wiped out”) has become part of the popular discourse of war (Balazh, 2023; Kharchenko, 2023).

In addition to individual scholarly contributions, recent years have witnessed the institutional consolidation of research on wartime language change. Studies addressing neologisms, euphemisms, slang, and elements of folk lexicography have emerged within a broader framework of documenting linguistic transformations caused by the war. For instance, the Institute of Ukrainian Language of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine has initiated projects aimed at recording and systematizing language changes triggered by the conflict. Collections of materials on military lexicography, for example, *Language Transformations in Wartime* (Kyiv, 2023), contain attempts to systematize lexical newcomers, including euphemisms. In Rozhon’s (2023) work *Euphemism Transformation in the Context of Military Language*, the adaptation of English- and Ukrainian-language euphemistic practices in wartime is examined, with an emphasis on their function in masking negative facts, manipulating ideological reality, and creating a stylistic softening effect.

The author draws attention to the culturally determined semantic restructuring of words and phrases that perform a euphemistic function. The researcher emphasizes that euphemisms mask the truth about the war but at the same time create new narratives of resistance and humor (Rozhon, 2023). Attention is paid to political euphemisms in Rud's (2024) study *Euphemisms in Socio-Political Discourse: Analysis of Lexical-Thematic Groups and Functions*, which analyzes the material of Ukrainian news media. The author points out that euphemisms are becoming a means of introducing new meanings and hidden ideologemes into the mass consciousness (Rud, 2024). Kharchenko (2023), in *Ukrainian Metaphorical Euphemisms during the Russian-Ukrainian War*, explores humorous and metaphorical linguistic units that function not only as communicative tools but also as a form of emotional therapy. According to the author, through wit, irony, and linguistic play, euphemisms turn into a weapon of symbolic resistance.

Among the notable contemporary studies of the topic is the work *Computer-Based Linguistic Content Analysis to Discover the Emotional Impact of Military Euphemisms* (Fedushko et al., 2025), which analyzes the emotional impact of military and political euphemisms in web communication. In this study, the authors applied computerized linguistic analysis, including sentiment analysis, corpus linguistics, discourse and pragmatic analysis, to study content from social media, news sources, and blogs. The authors identify several groups of euphemisms actively functioning in the contemporary Ukrainian military sociolect and investigate how these linguistic units shape the collective emotional response to the war, contribute to psychological distancing from shock, legitimize the experience of resistance, and support the morale of the community.

At the same time, the authors emphasize that the primary research focused mainly on lexical and statistical parameters and quantitative mapping of new words in public space. This opens up the prospect for further research in the direction of in-depth semantic and pragmatic analysis, which considers linguistic play, allusions, cultural codes, and situational interpretation of individual euphemisms in real communicative use. Thus, the new study is a logical continuation of the topic, building on previous work and at the same time going beyond the original methodological framework.

As we can see, euphemisms in wartime are the subject of interdisciplinary research at the intersection of linguistics, media studies, sociology, and psychology. Scholars focus on both traditional forms of euphemization and the newest ones related to information warfare, creative practices of social media, and folk language creativity. The systematization of these approaches makes it possible to form an analytical basis for a deeper understanding of the functions of euphemisms in the modern Ukrainian military sociolect, as well as for an in-depth study of the language of war as a means of symbolic action, resistance, and collective self-awareness.

Research Methodology

The study of euphemisms in the military sociolect is based on an interdisciplinary approach that combines the methods of linguistic analysis, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, and qualitative empiricism (field research). This methodological framework allows us to study both the structural and functional characteristics of euphemistic units in their actual use.

The sources of our research were:

- Oral and written interviews with military personnel, paramedics, volunteers, and journalists.
- Media texts: messages from the official resources of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the "South" military command, and the General Staff (about 100 messages).
- Social media content: posts on Telegram, Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, collected in 2022-2024 (over 500 text items).
- Frontline slang and jargon: fragments of conversations from field podcasts, interviews, military YouTube channels, and stand-ups on military topics.
- Memetic resources: images, videos, texts from humorous military publics.

To ensure reliability, the material was selected based on the source, frequency of use, regional and contextual coverage.

The content analysis method was applied to identify, systematize, and classify euphemistic units. The material was analyzed according to thematic domains (death, combat operations, front-line geography, military equipment, morale) and by source type (official statements, media reports, social media communication), which made it possible to determine how euphemistic strategies vary across communicative contexts and to identify the thematic areas demonstrating the highest degree of semantic transformation. Discourse analysis involved an in-depth examination of euphemism usage in context, taking into account pragmatic orientations, speakers' intentions, and the genre and stylistic features of messages (official address, joke, report, meme). Sociolinguistic observation was used to study the variability and functional specificity of euphemisms depending on linguistic identity, social status, and experience in the combat zone. Differences in usage between military personnel, civilians, volunteers, and the media were identified. The qualitative research employed a semi-structured interview format based on open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed and nuanced responses. The data were transcribed and analyzed thematically (euphemism themes, reasons for their use, emotional connotations). Cognitive-semantic analysis was applied to interpret conceptual transfers and metaphorical models underlying euphemistic designations (e.g., *бавовна* / *cotton* → *explosion*, *концерт* / *concert* → *shelling*, etc.).

The study also employed methods of validity verification, namely: source triangulation (combining data from different channels – oral testimonies, public texts, social media); cross-verification (comparing similar examples from different social groups – military ↔ civilians ↔ journalists); and a pilot survey (testing a part of euphemism examples among volunteers and internally displaced persons to assess their level of comprehensibility and perception). It should be noted that ethical principles were observed during the survey: interviews were conducted voluntarily, with respondents' oral consent. Anonymity of participants was ensured during the analysis, and the authenticity of statements was preserved without compromising their safety or identity. Public posts were cited in compliance with current academic and legal standards.

The chosen methodology made it possible not only to describe the structure of the euphemistic lexicon, but also to trace its dynamics, emotional and pragmatic load, and socio-cultural significance in the context of a full-scale war. The integration of corpus-based analysis, qualitative interviews, and digital discourse materials ensured methodological triangulation and strengthened the interpretative validity of the findings. The combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis allowed us to achieve a deeper interpretation and verification of the results.

Results and Discussion

Classification of Euphemisms in the Military Sociolect of the War in Ukraine

The lexicon of the military sociolect, particularly its euphemistic component, constitutes a multilayered and dynamic linguistic phenomenon shaped by both institutional and grassroots factors. In the structure of the Ukrainian military sociolect, euphemisms perform not only communicative but also psychotherapeutic, representative, and ideological functions, reflecting both official strategies of presenting information and spontaneous reactions of speakers to the extreme reality of war. Considering the source of origin and semantic features, euphemistic units can be classified according to two main parameters: origin and semantic and pragmatic content.

By the Source of Origin

Institutional euphemisms are nominations initiated by official structures (government agencies, military command, mass media) to regulate public discourse, minimize emotional tension, or shape information strategically. Such expressions are commonly used within bureaucratic, diplomatic, and journalistic discourse. For example: *оперативна пауза / operational pause* (instead of "suspension of the offensive"), *стабілізаційні заходи / stabilization measures* (instead of "active military operations to clear the territory of enemy soldiers").

Folk euphemisms are spontaneously formed linguistic units that emerge in the space of everyday communication, social networks, frontline humor, and volunteer initiatives. They often have an ironic, humorous, or sarcastic tone. This type includes: *бавовна* / *cotton* (explosion), *нуль* / *zero*, *обнулити, відмінувати* / *cancel* (eliminate an enemy target), *горять сірники* / *burning matches* (successful hit on enemy equipment).

Jargonized euphemisms are lexemes that function mainly within the professional or semi-formal communication of the military, volunteers, and medics. Their semantics is often based on metaphor or contextual reduction, and their function is to maintain internal communicative stability. Typical examples: *їхати на концерт* / *go to a concert* (to go to the frontline), *зеленка* / *zelenka* (refers to an overgrown or forested area perceived as dangerous; the euphemism is based on the visual association with the color green), *залізо* / *iron* (weapons, equipment).

By Semantics

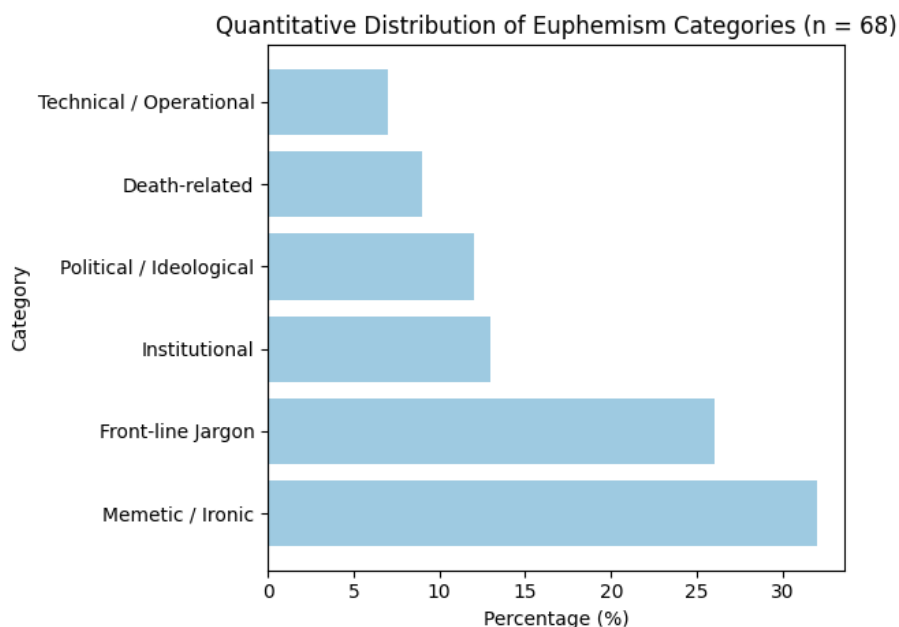
Euphemisms in the military sociolect can be classified according to their semantic functions. **Euphemisms of death and loss** cover lexemes that gently or figuratively convey the fact of the death of military personnel or civilians, including: *не виходить на зв'язок* (*not in touch*), *200-й, вантаж 200* (*200th, load 200*), *поліг* (*fallen*), *на щиті* (*on the shield*), *став ангелом* (*became an angel*). Such expressions provide psychological protection for both the sender and the recipient. **Euphemisms of warfare and violence**, in turn, replace direct nominations of destruction, killing, or artillery strikes in order to soften them pragmatically; examples include: *працюємо* / *working* (conducting fire), *ковбасимо* / *we're rouding* (destroying the enemy), *демільтаризували* / *demilitarized* (destroying the opponent's equipment or manpower). Finally, **euphemisms of the spatial and situational type** refer to a war zone or critical situations with a veiled or humorous connotation, such as: *гаряча точка* / *hot spot* (epicenter of fighting), *нуль* / *zero* / *нульовка* / *zero line* (frontline position), *клітка* / *cage* (trench, dugout).

Semantic and Stylistic Categories of the Ukrainian Military Sociolect

The analysis of euphemisms in the contemporary Ukrainian military sociolect revealed several categories that differ in their semantic and stylistic properties as well as in the type of relationship they maintain with the lexeme undergoing euphemization. It should be emphasized that the classification presented here is not intended as a rigid taxonomic model based on a single parameter. Rather, it reflects the multidimensional nature of the Ukrainian military sociolect, whose lexical units emerge and function at the intersection of semantic reinterpretation, pragmatic motivation, discursive context, and sociocultural experience shaped by wartime realities. Accordingly, the categories outlined in this subchapter are organized according to dominant semantic-stylistic mechanisms motivating the emergence and use of these units, while acknowledging that individual lexemes may simultaneously display features characteristic of more than one group.

Figure 1

Quantitative Distribution of Euphemism Categories (n = 68)



Based on semantic, pragmatic, and functional criteria, eight groups of euphemisms were identified. The detailed classification according to origin and pragmatic function is presented in Appendix A. In total, 68 euphemistic units were analyzed.

The quantitative distribution demonstrates uneven representation across categories. Memetic and ironic formations constitute the largest group (32%), followed by front-line jargon (26%), institutional euphemisms (13%), political/ideological units (12%), death-related euphemisms (9%), and technical operational code units (7%). The predominance of memetic and jargon formations indicates the creative and adaptive character of the Ukrainian military sociolect, where humor, metaphorization, and communicative economy function as mechanisms of psychological resilience and in-group cohesion. Figure 1 visualizes the proportional distribution of euphemism categories identified in the corpus.

The most linguistically engaging stratum of euphemisms consists of witty expressions that, while lacking a direct semantic link to the concepts they denote, evoke distinct emotional or associative responses. These lexical innovations arise from an ironic reinterpretation of contemporary Russian propagandist narratives, for example (see Table 1).

Table 1

Witty Expressions

<i>Euphemism</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>пiти на концерт до кобзона</i> (to go to a concert to a Kobzon) ¹	euphemistic formulas for death framed in a humorous way: Putin's Kobzon performs his concerts already "in the next world"
<i>бавовна, бавовнятко</i> (cotton, cottonwood)	explosions; these euphemisms emerged as a result of a witty reinterpretation of the Russian word "хлопок", which was used by propagandists to describe explosions occurring in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine and within the Russian Federation. In Ukrainian, the literal lexical equivalent

¹ Iosif Kobzon (1937–2018) was a Soviet and Russian singer and public figure known for his strong support of Soviet and later Russian state policies. After his death, his name became part of ironic and euphemistic expressions in Ukrainian wartime discourse referring to deceased pro-Russian figures, implying that they have joined Kobzon "in the next world".

Euphemism	Interpretation
	of this term – <i>бавовна</i> (cotton) – gained a new connotative meaning through a shift in accent and ironic contextual usage
<i>один народ (one people)</i>	an ironic and sarcastic characterization of the Moscow occupiers, who, according to Moscow propaganda, consider Ukrainians to be a “brotherly people”, which does not contradict their desire to kill and destroy
<i>бойові комарі (fighting mosquitoes), бойові одеські мідії (fighting Odesa mussels)</i>	humorous symbols of the fighting spirit of Odesa, referring to the various, often fantastical forms of weapons that Moscow propaganda claims are used against Russia
<i>аналоговнет (analogovnet)</i>	a parody of the Russian propaganda cliché meaning “no analogues” – an ironic designation of pseudo-greatness
<i>затридні (zatorydni) (in three days)</i>	this euphemism conveys ironic commentary on the poor quality and unrealistic expectations of Russian military operations, referring to the failed plan to seize Kyiv – and later Ukraine – within three days
<i>принести унітаз (bring a toilet)</i>	an allusion to reports of Russian soldiers looting Ukrainian homes and removing even toilet bowls, which became a symbolic marker of humiliation and moral degradation
<i>тракторні війська (tractor troops)</i>	a humorous reference to Ukrainian peasants who towed abandoned enemy equipment to help the Armed Forces of Ukraine
<i>негативне спливання / зростання (negative surfacing / growth)</i>	euphemisms in the style of Soviet/Russian bureaucratic new language to hide losses
<i>фея чистоти (fairy of cleanliness)</i>	a euphemism for a cleaner, contextually – for the Armed Forces of Ukraine, which “clean” the territory, liberating it from Moscow's occupiers

Statistics of social media queries related to this category of euphemisms indicate that some expressions have such transparent associative fields that they require no further interpretation. For instance, *вирушити вслід за російським військовим кораблем* (follow the Russian warship) functions as a euphemistic reference to the now-iconic phrase of a Ukrainian border guard – “*Рускій воєнний корабль, пішов наєй*” (“Russian warship, go to hell”). Similarly, *analogovnet* refers ironically to outdated military equipment that,

according to Russian propaganda, supposedly has “no analogues in the world” (Fedushko et al., 2025).

This group also includes such euphemisms as *два-три тижні* (two-three weeks), *гіркий чай* (bitter tea), *батальйон “Монако”* (battalion “Monaco”), *запоребрик* (beyond the curb), *жест доброї волі* (gesture of goodwill), *непрості рішення* (difficult decisions), etc. (see Appendix A).

The second group of euphemisms arises through the metaphorical reinterpretation of ordinary words, in which the primary meaning of a lexeme evokes a clear – and often emotionally charged – association (see Table 2).

Table 2

Metaphor- and Association-Based Euphemisms

Euphemism	Interpretation
<i>дискотека</i> (disco)	massive shelling; based on the acoustic similarity between loud music and explosions
<i>мопед</i> (moped)	Shahed-type drone; due to the comparable sound produced during movement
<i>зеленка</i> (zelenka)	overgrown, bushes, wooded area – derived from the shared green color
<i>пташка</i> (bird)	unmanned aerial vehicle; resemblance in flight and movement; the diminutive suffix <i>-к(а)</i> conveys a positive connotation
<i>ленточка</i> (ribbon)	a column of military equipment; visual similarity in shape and alignment
<i>приліт</i> (arrival)	association with the idea of something that has “arrived”
<i>соняшники</i> (sunflowers)	an allusion to a viral meme in which a Ukrainian woman tells occupiers: “ <i>Put seeds in your pockets so that when you die, sunflowers will grow</i> ” – symbolizing the destruction of invaders
<i>передок</i> (front line)	refers to the defensive line – similarity in spatial positioning
<i>ватники</i> (cotton pads)	a collective reference to Russian pseudo-patriotic individuals – based on the association with inexpensive padded jackets popular among lower social strata in the Soviet era
<i>мамкувати</i> (to “mother” someone)	refers to stereotypical images of the aggressor; carries a coarse, sarcastic connotation

Vivid examples may also include such euphemisms as *залізо працює* (armor/weapon is working), *очі* (eyes), *вата* (cotton wool), *м'ясні штурми* (meat assaults), *балалайка* (balalaika), *розпушили* (softened up), *підзавис, трохи здувся* (hung up, a bit deflated) etc. (see Appendix A).

The third group comprises lexemes borrowed from globally popular films that are semantically transparent due to their international recognizability (see Table 3).

Table 3*Film-Based Euphemisms*

Euphemism	Interpretation
<i>кіборги</i> (cyborgs)	creatures with superhuman strength – metaphorically associated with the extraordinary resilience of Ukrainian defenders of the Donetsk airport
<i>аватар</i> (avatar), <i>смурфік</i> (smurf)	referencing film characters with blue skin – denote individuals whose excessive alcohol consumption causes a bluish tint to their complexion, often implying a soldier with alcohol dependence
<i>орки</i> (orcs)	evil, bestial humanoid creatures from <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> , symbolizing barbarism and savagery – used for Russian invaders characterized by cruelty and lack of moral restraint
<i>Оркостан</i> (Orkestan)	a humorous formation meaning “the land of orcs”, evoking associations with primitiveness and brutality, used metaphorically for the Russian empire of evil

Examples of this group also include the euphemisms *Мордор* (Mordor), *Тіток-війська* (TikTok troops), and others (see Appendix A).

The fourth group consists of symbols that originated in military slang (see Table 4).

Table 4*Military Slang-Based Euphemisms*

Euphemism	Interpretation
<i>мінус</i> (minus)	shells fired at the enemy; <i>мінусувати</i> (to minus) – to eliminate the enemy, from the mathematical sign denoting subtraction

Euphemism	Interpretation
<i>нуль</i> (zero)	frontline positions directly on the demarcation line, reflecting zero distance from the front
<i>піксель</i> (pixel)	Ukrainian military camouflage, metaphorically derived from the smallest digital image unit, due to the pixelated pattern of the fabric
<i>двохсотий</i> (two-hundred)	a fallen soldier, based on the coded designation used for the air transport of bodies
<i>трьохсотий</i> (three-hundred)	a wounded soldier, from the army form number documenting casualties
<i>п'ятисотий</i> (five-hundred)	a deserter or soldier refusing to fight, also from coded military terminology

A number of examples of this group of euphemisms are also presented in Appendix A, for instance: *ухилянт* (draft-dodger), *ковбасити* (to beat, to smash), *зрадойоб* ("betrayal-hunter", pessimist), *від'ємний наступ* (negative offensive), *перегрупування* (regrouping), *мобік* (mobilized soldier), *концерт* (concert), *відрядження* (business trip), *працюємо* (we keep working), *плюс* (plus).

The fifth group includes lexemes derived from proper names – places, surnames, or weapons – that require cultural or contextual background knowledge: *джевелінити* / *dzhevelinyty* (javelinites), *стінгерити* / *stinherityty* (stingerites), *чорнобаїти* / *chornobayity* (chornobaites), *макронити* / *makronyty* (macronites), *кадирити* / *kadyryty* (kadyrites), *арестовлення* / *arestovlennya* (arrests) (see Table 5). The use of this type of lexemes requires additional knowledge about types of weapons, the character or activities of famous people, and situations specific to a particular area.

Table 5

Proper-Name-Based Euphemisms

Euphemism	Interpretation
<i>джевелінити, стінгерити, байрактарити, енлоїти, хаймарсити, хаймерснути</i>	derived from weapon names (Javelin, Stinger, Bayraktar, NLAW, HIMARS), denoting their combat use, euphemistically meaning "to bomb", "to strike", or "to destroy"

Euphemism	Interpretation
<i>макронити (to act like Macron)</i>	to feign concern, from French President Emmanuel Macron's cautious stance at the beginning of the war
<i>кадирити (to act like Kadyrov)</i>	to engage in wishful thinking or self-glorification, from Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov, known for posting staged battle videos
<i>арестовити, арестовлення</i>	(to calm down, to reassure), from the name of Oleksiy Arestovych, whose public addresses during the early phase of the full-scale war evoked a soothing effect
<i>чмоня, чмобик (чмонуа, чмобик)</i>	pejorative forms denoting a poorly equipped, alcohol-dependent Russian soldier
<i>бандеромобіль (banderomobile)</i>	an improvised armored vehicle, from Bandera, symbolizing the destruction of occupiers
<i>шойгунити (shoigunity)</i>	to command incompetently, after Russia's Minister of Defense Sergei Shoigu
<i>чорнобаїти (chornobaity)</i>	to inflict regular losses on the enemy – derived from the name of the village Chornobaivka near Kherson, where Russian occupiers repeatedly stored military equipment at a seized airfield that was subsequently destroyed multiple times by the Armed Forces of Ukraine
<i>ірпінський штам (Irpin strain)</i>	an allusion to a viral mutation, symbolizing the resistance and strength of Ukrainian in Irpin, Kyiv region

The toponym has also given rise to many stable expressions: Chornobaivka Day (evoking the association with the film *Groundhog Day*, in which identical events recur endlessly), Chornobaivka Triangle (recalling the Bermuda Triangle, where everything vanishes mysteriously), and the Chornobaivka effect. These euphemisms – allegorical expressions referring to the repeated annihilation of Russian forces in a single location – have evolved into a toponymic meme symbolizing persistence and irony in wartime Ukrainian discourse.

The sixth group consists of phraseological transformations – reinterpreted idioms and set expressions adapted to wartime realities. Besides examples involving *Chornobaivka*, this group includes:

- *клеїти шольца, валяти шольца* (playing the Scholz) – “to pretend to help while doing nothing”, alluding to German Chancellor Olaf Scholz’s indecisive actions;
- *привид Києва* (the Ghost of Kyiv) – a collective image of Ukrainian fighter pilots defending the sky, reinterpreting the phrase “ghost of communism”.
- *на щиті* (on the shield) – from the Spartan saying “with a shield or on a shield”, referring to a fallen soldier’s return home;
- *бандерівське смузї* (Bandera smoothie) – a witty reinterpretation of Molotov cocktail, meaning a homemade incendiary mixture.

Euphemisms such as *руській мір* (Russian world), *російська весна* (Russian spring), *фортеця Бахмут* (fortress Bakhmut), and others (see Appendix A) also belong to this group.

The seventh group comprises portmanteau words – contaminations of two lexemes that create immediately recognizable associations and require no explanation:

- *русня* (росіяни + хуйня) – *Rusnya*, a portmanteau blending the word “Russians” with a vulgar noun expressing contempt, thus creating a pejorative collective designation;
- *рашисти* (росіяни + фашисти) – rashists (Russians + fascists),
- *путлер* (Путін + Гітлер) – *Putler* (Putin + Hitler),
- *Релаксович* (релаксувати + Арестович) – *Relaksovych* (relax + Arestovych) etc.
- *Терораша* (терор + раша (Росія)),

This group is rapidly expanding with new lexemes, such as *пушкініст* (pushkinist), *бульбафюрер* (bul'baführer, mocking Lukashenko, “potato führer” (leader, ruler)), *бусифікація* (busyfikatsiya), *Луганда* (Luhanda), *Донбабве* (Donbabve), *Лугандон* (Lugandon), *путінізм* (putinism) (see Appendix A).

The eighth group encompasses euphemisms built from borrowed morphemes, generally lacking strong emotional connotations. Many originated

as slang adaptations of socio-political terminology:

- *сепари (sepers)* – from separatism, denoting traitors or separatists seeking secession;
- *мультик (cartoon)* – a universal camouflage pattern, derived from the Latin multi- meaning “many” or “varied”;
- *гауляйтер / haulayter* – *head of the occupation administration of a city or village* (used for Russian proxies). *Гауляйтер / haulayter* was originally a position held by a senior Nazi Party official who headed a territorial-administrative unit. The term comes from German: “Gau” means a party district, and “Leiter” means leader. Since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the term “*гауляйтер*” is also used to refer to the leaders of Russian occupation administrations in occupied Ukrainian territories.
- *Деескалація (de-escalation)* – the process of reducing the intensity of a conflict, crisis, or tension, which involves decreasing the scale of confrontation, halting aggressive actions, and seeking peaceful solutions. In the context of Russian military propaganda, *de-escalation* has been used as a euphemism for retreat after the liberation of Kyiv, Sumy, and Chernihiv regions.

Euphemisms in the Military Sociolect: Field Observations and Empirical Material

To gain a deeper understanding of the functioning mechanisms of euphemisms within the contemporary Ukrainian military sociolect, a field study was conducted using qualitative data collection methods. The empirical foundation was based on semi-structured interviews with combatants, paramedics, journalists, volunteers, and active social media users. The study was complemented by an analysis of over 500 linguistic units from open online sources – Telegram channels, Facebook and Twitter (X) posts, comments under news publications, as well as transcripts of documentary films and podcasts. Diverse thematic groups of euphemisms of the contemporary military sociolect were identified, as presented in Table 6.

Oral Testimonies

To complement the corpus-based analysis and demonstrate the actual functioning of euphemisms in live communicative practice, we include selected examples from oral testimonies and digital discourse. These materials illustrate how euphemistic units operate in authentic wartime communication, reflecting pragmatic motivations such as psychological mitigation, irony, in-group coding, and narrative framing. The examples serve to contextualize the previously identified categories and to show their real-life usage across different communicative environments.

Service member (Armed Forces of Ukraine, Kharkiv direction): "No one here says, *"I'm going on an assault"*. They say – *"I'm going to dance"*, or *"to a concert"*, or *"we're going to work"*. *It's simpler, less scary, and you need to add a bit of humor"*.

Paramedic, volunteer: *"When I call my comrades and ask how things are, I often hear: "Today we had cotton – three events". Or: "No 200s, but one obnulivsyia". That's our code now"*.

Journalist, war correspondent: *"I noticed that in front-line villages, grandmothers already know these words: "Oh, we had some cotton yesterday somewhere", – they say. Euphemisms spread quickly even among civilians"*.

Examples from Digital Discourse

- Telegram, channel "Operational AFU (The Armed Forces of Ukraine)" (05.05.2024): *"The occupiers were given a concert set of "Grads". The hall applauded standing"*. (Ironic euphemism replacing a description of an artillery strike.)
- Facebook post by a paramedic (12.10.2024): *"Minus two at the "zero". We are working precisely, no tea with raspberries"*. (Concise euphemistic message of losses, combined with a domestic metaphor).
- Twitter comment (28.03.2025): *"After last night's cotton, the rashists turned into fertilizer. Glory to the "Orlans!"* (Combination of euphemistic reference, irony, metaphor, and a mention of the drone type).

Table 6 summarizes the thematic typology of euphemisms identified in the analyzed material and illustrates their semantic shifts, contextual environments, and communicative functions.

Table 6*Thematic Typology of Euphemisms*

Category	Euphemism	Meaning	Context
death	обнулився → obnulivsia → got wiped out / reset to zero	killed (military or enemy soldier)	oral messages, radio communications
combat actions	працюємо → pratsiuemo → we keep working / we're on it	shooting, carrying out artillery fire	military speech, social media
explosions	бавовна → bavovna → cotton (explosion / strike)	explosion on enemy territory	Telegram channels, news
victory / enemy destruction	розпушили → rospushyly → softened up / scattered (enemy); всипали → vsypaly → poured on / hit hard	destroyed, ruined enemy position	memes, jargon, publications
war geography	нуль → nul → zero / eliminated	frontline position	military jargon
trip to the front	концерт → kontsert → concert (euphemism: massive shelling / strike); відрядження → vidriadzhennia → business trip (euphemism: deployment to front line) підзавис → pidzavys →	trip to combat zone	oral speech, ironic posts
injury / fatigue	got stuck / stalled; трохи здувся → trokhy zduvsia → lost momentum / got exhausted	injury or psycho-emotional exhaustion	everyday language, comrades' conversations

Linguistic Economy in Military Sociolect: Euphemisms as Operational Markers

An important feature of the modern Ukrainian military sociolect is the tendency toward linguistic economy, manifested in the use of concise code-like units. In frontline communication, a short, easily pronounced, and instantly

recognizable linguistic sign gains significance, as it ensures rapid, efficient, and secure information exchange. In this context, some euphemisms perform not only a mitigating function but also a communicative coding function. A detailed interpretation of this type of euphemisms is presented in Table 7.

Euphemisms in the military sociolect, functioning to achieve linguistic economy, are formed on the basis of semantic condensation, contextual over-informativeness, and the community's habitual practices. These units often have a euphemistic nature while simultaneously belonging to the in-group slang.

Table 7

Euphemisms as Code Names

Lexeme	Literal Meaning	Communicative Function
плюс → plus → plus / advantage / gain	confirmation, agreement	marker of completed action or consent
мінус → minus → minus / loss	loss or elimination	statement of action outcome
нуль → nul → zero / eliminated	frontline position	localization orientation
зеленка → zelenka → brilliant green (occupied territory marked green on maps)	hazardous wooded area	topographic coding
піксель → piksel → pixel (pattern uniform)	military uniform	identification code
працюємо → pratsiuemo → we keep working / we're on it	opening fire	euphemism for active combat phase
обнулився → obnulivsia → got wiped out / reset to zero	killed (humorously)	death euphemism with emotional neutralization

Euphemisms as code-like units function on the borderline of euphemism, jargon and operational code, acting as "quick access" lexemes. Their use evidences the adaptation of language to extreme conditions and serves as a marker of the speaker's professional competence in an environment where a second's delay or an extra word may cost a life.

Thus, lexical items such as *плюс*, *мінус*, *нуль*, *працюємо* (plus, minus, zero, we are working) not only inform, but also signal inclusion in the collective

communicative code, which has features of high pragmatic efficiency and strategic economy of language in military discourse.

Functional Aspects of Euphemistic Lexicon in the Military Sociolect

Euphemisms in the modern Ukrainian military sociolect not only replace direct or taboo expressions but also perform a number of important functions manifested in communicative practices, social interaction, and the psychological self-defense of speakers. Their functional load goes beyond linguistic substitution, embodying cultural, pragmatic, and ideological meanings. In the context of the full-scale war in Ukraine, euphemistic lexicon performs at least four major functions.

The psychological (defensive) function manifests itself in the intention to soften the perception of the traumatic realities of war: euphemistic expressions reduce emotional tension, make it possible to avoid direct confrontation with horrific information, and help maintain psycho-emotional balance in both frontline and rear communications. For instance, the phrase “is not responding” functions as a roundabout substitute for a message about death, aiming to avoid the direct nomination of death and thus reduce the level of shock impact on the addressee.

The manipulative function, characteristic of official and media communication, involves the deliberate masking of events or the reframing of their evaluation: carefully chosen words create a desired version of reality – diminished, softened, or interpreted in a favorable light. For example, the phrase “stabilization operation” instead of “retreat” gives an impression of planning and control, concealing the fact of a tactical defeat or forced defense.

The identification function (the “friend-or-foe” marker) lies in creating linguistic markers of group affiliation: such expressions help community members (in particular, military personnel, volunteers, and participants in online communications) distinguish between “their own” and “others” and foster a sense of collective solidarity. For instance, expressions such as *мінуснули* (minusnuly), *полетів на концерт* (went to a concert), and *їхати до Кобзона* (to visit Kobzon) are understood primarily by an internally

oriented audience and serve as a form of semantic encryption, preventing outside interpretation without access to the relevant context.

Finally, **the creative-memetic function** manifests through humorous, ironic, or parodic reinterpretation of wartime realities: in this case, euphemisms become tools of symbolic resistance, maintaining morale and mobilizing societal energy. Expressions such as *бавовна / bavovna* (explosion), *русня / rusnia* (derogatory term for Russians), and *чмоня / chmonia* (derogatory nickname for a Russian soldier) function not only as euphemisms but also as units of linguistic resistance which, through laughter, neutralize fear and demonstrate cognitive superiority over the enemy. Thus, euphemisms in the military sociolect perform a range of important functions – from psychological self-defense to symbolic resistance, group identity, and strategic communication – reflecting not only the adaptation of speakers to wartime conditions but also a high level of linguistic creativity, flexibility, and the capacity of language to serve as an instrument of survival, resistance, and memory.

Detected Tendencies

The analysis of the corpus makes it possible to distinguish several semantic and stylistic categories based on the dominant mechanisms of semantic transformation and stylistic expressivity observed in the Ukrainian military sociolect:

- **Dependence of the euphemization level on the social role of the speaker.** Military personnel usually resort to laconic and codified forms (*мінус один / minus one, нуль / zero, відпрацювати / work out*), while volunteers and civilians use more figurative, humorous, or metaphorical expressions (*шашлик із русні / barbecue with Russians, пішов услід за рускім воєнним кораблем / followed the Russian warship*).
- **Language as a tool of psychological self-defense.** Euphemisms reduce emotional stress, facilitate adaptation to constant stress, and also create the effect of detachment, promote internal mobilization,

which facilitates the perception of information about traumatic events.

- **Information security function.** Euphemisms are often used to avoid specifying operational data in the public space. Such lexemes serve as a means of covert communication that does not reveal the exact locations, circumstances, or details of hostilities, especially in posts that can be tracked by the enemy. This is extremely important in a vulnerable digital environment.

Thus, the results of field observations confirm the thesis that euphemisms are not only a linguistic but also a socio-cultural phenomenon; not only a way to replace taboo concepts but also a powerful social mechanism for adapting to extreme conditions, maintaining psychological balance, and constructing a collective identity. They perform a range of functions, from psychological mitigation and communicative economy to group identification, information caution strategies, and the therapeutic use of language. Euphemisms in the modern Ukrainian military sociolect are indicators of flexibility, humor, endurance, and the ability of society to create new linguistic resources in the face of extreme communicative tension. Their wide circulation among both the military and the civilian population demonstrates the deep integration of these units into the national discourse of resistance. Their creative evolution and widespread diffusion within and outside the frontline territories are markers of the modern military sociolect of the Ukrainian language.

Research Limitations

Despite the comprehensive scope of the collected material, this study has certain limitations. The corpus is restricted to publicly available media texts, social media content, and semi-structured interviews conducted within a specific temporal framework (2022–2024). Due to security and ethical considerations, access to real-time frontline operational communication remains limited, which may affect the completeness of the data. In addition, the analysis focuses primarily on Ukrainian-language material, while

comparative cross-linguistic perspectives require further investigation. These limitations open prospects for future research aimed at expanding the empirical base and deepening cross-cultural and longitudinal analysis of wartime euphemistic practices.

Conclusions

The study confirms the significant role of euphemisms as a distinct linguistic phenomenon within the Ukrainian military sociolect during wartime. The main findings can be summarized as follows. Firstly, euphemisms perform multiple functions, including psychological (mitigating the traumatic impact of information), communicative (encoding sensitive content), social (maintaining group identity), and defensive (limiting informational transparency for the enemy). Furthermore, the classification of euphemisms demonstrates thematic diversity, encompassing domains such as death, combat operations, explosions, morale, front-line geography, and military equipment, each category being characterized by both stable lexical patterns and contextually creative formations.

In addition, field data (interviews, social media discourse, and memetic content) reveal that euphemisms are actively used not only within military communication but also among civilians, indicating the broad social diffusion of elements of the military sociolect. Moreover, sociolinguistic analysis shows that the form, frequency, and pragmatic orientation of euphemisms vary depending on the speaker's social position, emotional state, and communicative goals. Finally, the study identifies key lexical, structural, and pragmatic features of the Ukrainian military sociolect as a specialized professional discourse, including linguistic economy, metaphorization, code-like nominations, contamination, and context-dependent semantic reinterpretation, which collectively contribute to the adaptive and expressive flexibility of wartime communication.

Thus, it can be argued that euphemisms in the military sociolect function not only as linguistic tools but also as significant socio-cultural resources that reflect specific patterns of war perception and mechanisms of

psychological adaptation. Further research may expand the empirical base by examining the diachronic dynamics of euphemistic processes, their role in shaping public consciousness, and their impact on communicative practices in conflict situations.

The emergence of numerous euphemisms during the war demonstrates the expressive flexibility of the Ukrainian language and its capacity for semantic reinterpretation under conditions of social stress. In many cases, speakers prefer metaphorical, neutralized, or humorously reframed lexemes instead of explicitly negative or emotionally charged designations, which indicates a tendency toward communicative mitigation and collective emotional regulation. Each analyzed euphemism reflects not only situational adaptation but also broader processes of lexical innovation and discursive creativity characteristic of wartime language development.

The process of euphemization within the Ukrainian military sociolect testifies to the dynamic and resilient nature of the lexical system, which actively generates reinterpretations and alternative nominations in response to traumatic realities. Moreover, given the global interest in the Russian-Ukrainian war, certain euphemistic units have entered contemporary European media discourse through translation, reinterpretation, and commentary in English, German, Lithuanian, and other contexts, illustrating their transnational circulation within the modern information space.

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Appendix A

Categorical Division of Euphemisms of the Military Sociolect by Origin and Pragmatics

Euphemism	Literal Meaning	Category
Бавовна <i>Bavovna</i> <i>Cotton</i>	Ukr. ironic euphemism for explosions in Russia-occupied territory	memetic, popular
Нуль <i>Nul'</i> <i>Zero</i>	front line	front-line jargon
Обнулити <i>Obnulyty</i> <i>To reset / to wipe out</i>	kill the enemy	front-line jargon
200-й <i>200-y</i> <i>Cargo 200</i>	deceased	death euphemism, military jargon
Їхати на концерт <i>Yikhaty na kontsert</i> <i>To die in battle (ironic: "go to the concert")</i>	go to the frontline	figurative, emotionally protective
Залізо працює <i>Zalizo pratsyuye</i> <i>Armor/weapon is working (military slang)</i>	artillery shelling	front-line jargon
Ковбасити <i>Kovbasyty</i> <i>To beat, to smash</i>	fire at the enemy	popular, humorous
Гіркий чай <i>Hirkyu chai</i> <i>Bitter tea</i>	message about death	death euphemism, metaphor
Адіннарот <i>Adinnarot</i> <i>"One people"</i>	Russian narrative about "one people"; mockery of Russian propaganda slogan	political ideology, parodic
Аналоговнет <i>Analogovniet</i> <i>"No analogues"</i>	allegedly unique high-tech Russian weapon	sarcastic, institutional
Батальйон "Монако" <i>Batal'yon "Monako"</i> <i>Battalion "Monaco"</i>	1) VIP evacuees; 2) Mocking term for draft-dodgers vacationing abroad	social, ironic
Бледіна <i>Bledina</i>	Insulting slang, mix of "prostitute" and Russian obscenity	phonetic euphemism, parodic social, ironic
Бойові комарі <i>Boyovi komari</i> <i>Combat mosquitoes</i>	mocking Russian fakes about Ukrainian bioweapons	memetic, absurdist
Бронь <i>Bron'</i> <i>Military exemption</i>	postponement of mobilization	institutional, conditional
Бульбафюрер <i>Bul'baführer</i> <i>Mocking Lukashenko ("potato führer")</i>	Lukashenko	political, satirical
Бусифікація <i>Busyfikatsiya</i>	Evacuation/mobilization via buses (slang)	neologism, popular
Валяти Шольца <i>Valyaty Shol'tsa</i>	To procrastinate / stall (mocking Olaf Scholz's delays); be indecisive	ironic, political
Ванька <i>Van'ka</i>	Diminutive of "Ivan" (Russian soldier stereotype)	stereotypical, negatively marked
Вата, ватник <i>Vata, vatnyk</i> <i>Cotton wool</i>	Pro-Russian person, "cotton-padded jacket" (slur)	political characterization

EUPHEMISMS IN THE UKRAINIAN MILITARY SOCIOLECT: SEMANTIC, STYLISTIC AND PRAGMATIC DIMENSIONS OF WARTIME DISCOURSE

Euphemism	Literal Meaning	Category
Відправити на концерт Кобзона <i>Vidpravyty na kontsert Kobzona</i> To send to Kobzon concert	To kill; eliminate the enemy (ironic: reference to dead Russian singer Kobzon)	memetic, death euphemism
Восемь лет бомбілі Донбас <i>Vosem' lēt bombily Donbas</i> Eight years bombing Donbas	1) Mocking propaganda phrase "8 years bombing Donbas"; 2) Russian propaganda cliché about reasons for invasion	ideologeme, propaganda
Гауляйтер <i>Haulayter</i>	head of the occupation administration of the city/village (used for Russian proxies)	political, historical term
Два-три тижні <i>Dva-try tyzhni</i> Two-three weeks	Euphemism for indefinite delays ("2-3 weeks"), very long	memetic, satirical
Деескалація <i>Deeskalatsiya</i> De-escalation	De-escalation (propaganda euphemism for retreat) after liberation of Kyiv, Sumy, Chernihiv regions	institutional, euphemism
Жест доброї волі <i>Zhest dobroï voli</i> Gesture of goodwill	mock euphemism for Russian withdrawal) after liberation of Snake Island	institutional, manipulative
Від'ємний наступ <i>Vid'yemnyy nastup</i> Negative offensive	ironic euphemism for retreat	memetic, sarcastic
Перегрупування <i>Perehrupuvannya</i> Regrouping	euphemism for retreat/losses after liberation of Kharkiv region	institutional, euphemism
Непрості рішення <i>Neprosti rishennya</i> Difficult decisions	explanation by occupiers of battlefield failures after liberation of parts of Kherson region	institutional, euphemism
Ждун <i>Zhdun</i>	Meme figure of endless waiting; resident waiting for occupation	sarcastic, derogatory
Запоребрік <i>Zaporyebrik</i> Beyond the curb	mocking Russia	memetic, geopolitical
Затрідня <i>Zatridnya</i> In three days	unrealistic plan (from "capture Kyiv in 3 days")	memetic, sarcastic
Потерьнет <i>Potër'nyet</i> Will lose	Russian reports about no casualties in their army	sarcastic, bureaucratic
Путлер <i>Putler</i> Blend of "Putin" + "Hitler"	Putin	parodic-political
Чмобік <i>Chmobik</i>	Russian soldier or mobilized from LNR/DNR in primitive gear	front-line jargon, derogatory
Чмоня <i>Chmonyа</i>	Russian soldier or mobilized from LNR/DNR in primitive gear	memetic, derogatory
М'ясні штурми <i>Miasni shturmy</i> Meat assaults	uncovered assaults, assault operations where commanders fail to provide cover for the infantry	front-line, critically ironic
Мобік <i>Mobik</i>	Mobilized soldier	front-line jargon
Піксель <i>Piksel'</i>	form of Armed Forces of Ukraine	neutral, designative
Телемарафонщик <i>Telemarafonshchuk</i>	an optimist who echoes the narratives of the "United News" telethon	memetic, satirical
Рашизм <i>Rashyzm</i>	Russian fascism	ideological term

Euphemism	Literal Meaning	Category
<i>Ruscism</i>		
Російська весна <i>Rosiy's'ka vesna</i> <i>Russian spring</i>	protests inspired by Russia in the cities of eastern and southern Ukraine in 2014, which marked the beginning of the separatism of the so-called LNR/DNR and the war in Donbas	ironic, political term
Тракторні війська <i>Traktorni viyska</i> <i>Tractor troops</i>	Ukrainian farmers who, at the outset of the full-scale invasion, used tractors to tow away the occupiers' tanks	memetic, heroic
Фортеця Бахмут <i>Fortetsya Bakhmut</i> <i>Fortress Bakhmut</i>	the image of an indomitable city; a city for which fierce battles were fought for a long time (later, the word 'fortress' was applied to other cities as well: Fortress Vuhledar, Fortress Toretsk, Fortress Chasiv Yar, etc.)	symbolic, patriotic
Працюємо <i>Pratsyuemo</i> <i>We keep working</i>	1) Zaluzhny's motto; 2) shooting, carrying out artillery fire	jargon, combat euphemism
Концерт, відрядження <i>Kontsert, vidryadzhennya</i> <i>Concert, business trip</i>	Euphemisms for death / deployment / trip to combat zone	front-line jargon
Пташка <i>Ptashka</i> <i>Bird</i>	nickname for drone	technical jargon
Зрадойоб <i>Zradoyob</i>	Slang for chronic complainer ("betrayal-hunter"), pessimist	memetic, derogatory
Зеленка <i>Zelenka</i> <i>Greenery</i> <i>Brilliant green antiseptic</i>	forested green area	front-line jargon
Мопед, балалайка <i>Moped, balalayka</i>	Euphemism for Russian Shahed drone	jargon, metaphor
Іхтамнет <i>Ikhtamnet</i> <i>"They are not there"</i>	A sarcastic description of the denial of the Russian troops' presence on the territory of Ukraine or other countries; Russian military personnel in Crimea and Donbas (in Crimea also referred to as "little green men")	institutional euphemism (Russian propaganda), sarcastic/memetic counter-discourse, an ideologeme containing elements of hybrid rhetoric
Очі <i>Ochi</i> <i>Eyes</i>	drones / reconnaissance	front-line jargon
Плюс <i>Plyus</i> <i>Positive, gain</i>	The word "plus" in the military environment is often used as a universal confirmation marker: "object – plus" → the object is present, detected; "we're working – plus" → action completed / execution confirmed; minus two. Plus" → losses inflicted, task completed	military communication jargon, conditional code, euphemism of operational conciseness
Сепари <i>Separi</i> <i>Separatists</i>	residents of Donbas supporting Russian occupation in 2014	ideologeme, jargon
Колорадські стрічки <i>Kolorads'ki strichky</i> <i>Colorado ribbons</i>	black-and-yellow "St. George" ribbons as a symbol of imperial-Russian identity	memetic, contemptuous
Луганда і Донбабве, Лугандон <i>Luhanda, Donbabve,</i>	ironic names for pseudo-republics LNR/DNR	sarcastic, geopolitical

EUPHEMISMS IN THE UKRAINIAN MILITARY SOCIOLECT: SEMANTIC, STYLISTIC AND PRAGMATIC DIMENSIONS OF WARTIME DISCOURSE

Euphemism	Literal Meaning	Category
<i>Lugandon</i>		
Могилізація <i>Mohylzatsiya</i> "Grave-lization"	mobilization leading to death	memetic, critical
Мордор <i>Mordor</i>	Russia (fantasy image)	memetic, negatively mythologized
Пекельні борошна, державний будуй <i>Pekel'ni boroshna, derzhavnyy buduy</i>	Russian auto-translations (from "adskie muki" – hellish torments and "gosudarstvennyy story" – state system)	memetic, sarcastic
Повномасштабка <i>Povnomasshtabka</i> Full-scale invasion	full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Moscow's troops on February 24, 2022	abbreviation, colloquial jargon
Путінізм <i>Putinizm</i> <i>Putinism</i>	ideological offshoot of rashism that emerged under Putin's rule and is based on the concept of spreading the "Russian world" over as much territory as possible while simultaneously seeking economic cooperation with the West to increase the wealth of the Russian oligarchic elite	ideology, political term
Пушкініст <i>Pushkinist</i>	admirer of Russian culture	cultural, ironic
Терораша <i>Terorasha</i>	a blend of the words "terror" and "Rasha" (Russia) – a terrorist state	memetic, political
Тіток-війська <i>TikTok-viyska</i> TikTok troops	Kadyrovtsy who film "heroic" videos, usually posted on TikTok	memetic, derogatory
Ухилянт <i>Ukhylyant</i> Draft-dodger	A military-age individual avoiding conscription	social jargon, contemptuous
Русскій мір <i>Russkiy mir</i> Russian world	1) a cultural-civilizational and geopolitical concept that envisions the unification of Russian-speaking populations worldwide; 2) Russian military expansion under the slogan of protecting Russian-speaking populations	ideologeme, propaganda term
Чорнобаїти <i>Chornobayity</i>	ironically, constantly repeating same military actions	memetic, symbolic
Обнулився <i>Obnulyvsvya</i>	Reset, "to be wiped out", deceased (military or enemy soldier)	death euphemism, front-line jargon
Розпушили, всипали <i>Rozpushyly, vsypaly</i> softened up, scattered	destroyed the enemy, demolished the enemy's position	front-line jargon, figurative expressions
Підзавис, трохи здувся <i>Pidzavys, trokhy zdUvsya</i> <i>Hung up, a bit deflated</i>	lost combat capability / wounded / disoriented / psycho-emotional exhaustion	front-line jargon, euphemistic

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EUFEMIZMAI UKRAINOS KARINIAME SOCIOLEKTE: KARO LAIKOTARPIO DISKURSO SEMANTINIAI, STILISTINIAI IR PRAGMATINIAI ASPEKTAI

Anotacija. Kalbos leksinė sistema formuojasi veikiami įvairių sociokultūrinių veiksnių, susijusių su visuomenės raida, komunikaciniais poreikiais ir kalbos vartotojų mentalitetu. Viena aktualiausių šiuolaikinės kalbotyros problemų yra leksinės posistemės transformacijų tyrimas socialinio ir politinio streso sąlygomis. Karas, kaip ekstremali komunikacinė situacija, aktyvina kalbinius procesus, ypač eufemizaciją, tapusią esmine šiuolaikinio ukrainiečių karinio sociolekto ypatybe. Šis leksikos sluoksnis, atspindintis visuomenės reakcijas į trauminę realybę, pasirinktas kaip tyrimo objektas. Straipsnyje taikomas teorinės analizės metodas, skirtas eufemizacijos prigmčiai ir funkcijoms nustatyti, sisteminimo ir klasifikavimo metodai, leidžiantys grupuoti eufemizmus pagal struktūrinius ir semantinius požymius, taip pat interpretacinis metodas, atskleidžiantis semantinius pokyčius ir stilistines funkcijas. Atsižvelgiant į semantinius-stilistinius parametrus bei ryšio su eufemizuojama leksema tipą, išskiriamos kelios eufemizmų grupės: šmaikštūs posakiai, neturintys tiesioginio semantinio ryšio, bet pasižymintys ryškiu emociniu atspalviu (*бавовна, аналоговнет, затридні*); metaforiniai bendrinės leksikos vienetai (ukr. *дискотека, мопед, пташка*); leksemos, sudarytos iš kino herojų vardų (ukr. *кіборги, аватар, орк*); sąlyginiai karinio slengo pavadinimai (ukr. *мінусувати, нуль, піксель*); darybiniai vienetai iš tikrinių vardų (ukr. *джевелініти, чорнобаїти, макроніти*); frazeologinės konstrukcijos ar transformuoti pastovieji posakiai (ukr. *клеїти шольца, привид Києва, бандерівське смузї*); kontaminuoti žodžiai, sudaryti jungiant dvi leksemas (ukr. *русня, рашисти, путлер*); bei leksemos su skolintomis morfemomis, neutralizuojančiomis emocinį krūvį (ukr. *сепари, мультік*). Tyrimo rezultatai leidžia teigti, kad ukrainiečių karinio sociolekto eufemizacija yra vidinės stiprybės, orumo ir kalbinio kūrybiškumo išraiška. Atsisakant pernelyg neigiamą konotaciją turinčių žodžių ir renkantis ironiškas, neutralias ar humoristines nominacijas, formuojama stabili psicholingvistinė visuomenės reakcija į agresyvią realybę. Dalis šių naujadarų jau patenka į kitų Europos kalbų leksikoną, reprezentuoja ukrainiečių kalbinį požiūrį globalioje karo komunikacinėje erdvėje ir plečia karinių sociolektų kūrybinį potencialą.

Pagrindinės sąvokos: komunikacija; eufemizmai; ukrainiečių kalba; karinis sociolektas; leksika; semantika.

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**ЕВФЕМІЗМИ В УКРАЇНСЬКОМУ ВІЙСЬКОВОМУ СОЦІОЛЕКТІ:
СЕМАНТИЧНІ, СТИЛІСТИЧНІ ТА ПРАГМАТИЧНІ ВИМІРИ
ВОЄННОГО ДИСКУРСУ**

Анотація. Лексична система мови формується під впливом низки позамовних чинників, зокрема особливостей суспільного розвитку, комунікативних потреб і ментальної специфіки її носіїв. Важливою проблемою сучасного мовознавства є дослідження напрямів еволюції лексичної підсистеми в умовах соціального та політичного стресу. Війна як екстремальна комунікативна ситуація активізує процеси мовного оновлення, зокрема евфемізації, що є характерною рисою сучасного українського військового соціолекту. Саме цей лексичний пласт, який відображає реакції суспільства на травматичну реальність, обрано предметом дослідження. У роботі застосовано метод теоретичного аналізу (для окреслення природи й функцій евфемізації), методи систематизації та класифікації (для групування евфемізмів за структурно-семантичними ознаками), а також інтерпретаційний метод (для виявлення семантичних зрушень і стилістичних функцій досліджуваних одиниць). Залежно від семантико-стилістичних параметрів і типу зв'язку з лексемою, яка зазнає евфемізації, виділено такі групи: дотепні вирази без прямого семантичного зв'язку, але з яскравим емоційним відтінком (*бавовна, аналоговнет, затридні*); метафоризовані загальноживані лексеми (дискотека, мопед, пташка); лексеми, утворені від імен кіногероїв (кіборги, аватар, орки); умовні позначення військового сленгу (*мінусувати, нуль, піксель*); деривати від власних назв (*джевелінити, чорнобаїти, макроніти*); фразеологічні конструкції або переосмислені сталі вирази (*клеїти шольца, привид Києва, бандерівське смузі*); слова, утворені шляхом контамінації двох лексем (*русня, рашисти, путлер*); лексеми з основою на запозичених морфемах із нейтралізованим емоційним зарядом (*селари, мультік*). Узагальнення результатів дослідження дозволяє стверджувати, що евфемізація українського військового соціолекту є свідченням внутрішньої сили, гідності та мовної креативності українського суспільства. Відмова від лексики з надмірно негативною конотацією на користь іронічних, нейтральних або жартівливих номінацій відіграє важливу роль у формуванні стійкої психолінгвістичної реакції на агресивну реальність. Значна частина новотворів уже проникає в інші європейські мови, репрезентуючи українське мовне бачення війни у глобальному комунікативному просторі та розширюючи творчий потенціал військових соціолектів цих мов.

Ключові слова: комунікація; евфемізми; українська мова; військовий соціолект; семантика, метафора.