

Is it 'the Ukraine crisis' or a war in Europe? Multiple frames of Russia's aggression in parliamentary discourse from a comparative MD-CADS perspective

Anna Kryvenko¹

Abstract

This contribution aims to uncover similarities and differences in the construction of war in the Ukrainian and British parliamentary discourses against the dramatic social context of Russia's unfolding aggression since 2014 and its full-scale invasion of Ukraine starting from 24 February 2022. The study adopts a comparative perspective on the onomasiological salience (Geeraerts, 2017) of alternative designations of armed hostilities used in comparable institutional settings. It is primarily situated within the framework of MD-CADS, with its emphasis on the importance of corpus data segmentation from epistemological, methodological and practical perspectives (Marchi, 2018). Naming choices for the armed hostilities in focus are discussed in relation to experience-based schematic representations of real-world situations known as frames (Fillmore et al., 2003a; Ruppenhofer et al., 2017) and framing as a discursive practice of selecting "*some aspects of a perceived reality*" (Entman, 1993: 52) and "introducing some form of cognitive bias" (Charteris-Black, 2019: 16) in parliamentary discourse, which provides valuable data for investigating the intersection between language and social change (Tyrkkö and Kotze, 2023). The data come from two uniformly encoded and comparable corpora under the ParlaMint project: ParlaMint-UA containing plenary proceedings of the Verkhovna Rada, Ukraine's unicameral parliament, and ParlaMint-GB including transcripts of parliamentary debates from the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The findings suggest that naming and framing of armed hostilities in parliamentary debates have to do with the hybrid legal and political nature of parliamentary discourse as well as an interplay between the institutional and individual choices of the speakers. Spatial and temporal proximity or distance between the speakers and the events in focus affects yet does not determine their conceptualisation as proximal or distant from the speakers themselves as well as from their addressees and is subject to change in the constantly shifting political and geopolitical climate.

79

Keywords

Discursive construction of war, frames and framing, MD-CADS, Ukrainian parliamentary corpus, British parliamentary corpus

¹ Institute of Contemporary History (Ljubljana, Slovenia) and NISS (Kyiv, Ukraine), ORCID: 0000-0001-6414-7456, ganna.kryvenko@inz.si

We no longer need to explain why it is ‘Kyiv’ and not ‘Kiev’,
why it is the ‘Russo-Ukrainian war’ and not a ‘Ukrainian crisis’.
Oleksandr Mykhed, *The Language of War*

Introduction

The dramatic social context of Russia’s ongoing aggression against Ukraine since 2014, culminating in its full-scale invasion in 2022, has increased the topicality of interdisciplinary research on the conceptualisation of war and its verbal realisations in public discourse, both within Ukraine and in the international arena. An already ample literature on the language of war, which traditionally focuses on Anglo-American discourses (e.g., Hodges, 2013), has been enriched with a number of theoretical and empirical studies revising the concept of war including challenges to its definition in philosophy (Psarros, 2023), international law (Dinstein, 2017) and linguistics (Yavorska, 2016; Kovbasyuk, 2023; Yavorska, 2024), the demarcation of the division line between wars and other hostile activities as well as the qualification of specific events on the ground.

One of the distinct linguistic markers of the hostilities in focus is the diversity of their nominations observed in national and international public discourse in the last ten years. This diversity has been variably discussed from cognitive semantic, pragmatic and discourse analytical perspectives in terms of a string of linguistic signs, across which the complex concept of war is distributed and through which it is verbalised, e.g., *struggle, confrontation, invasion, hostility* (Vilchynsa, 2017; Maslova, 2023; Melnyk et al., 2023), in terms of conflicting interpretations of the reality from different vantage points, e.g., *international armed conflict, civil war in Ukraine, proxy war, hybrid war, undeclared war, counterterrorist operation* (Yavorska, 2016; Zinevich and Krasavina, 2017), or as a practice of euphemizing the lexicon of war in order to attenuate the transmission of negative emotions associated with the word *war* in the listeners’ perception of the messenger’s personality and policies, e.g., *the great battle for freedom, a battle between democracy and autocracy* (Tymoshchuk, 2023). For comparison, Hughes interprets “the wholesale euphemisation of the terminology of war into the neutral latinisations of *defence, operations, devices, incidents, incursions, engagements and terminations*” (Hughes, 2008: 14) as part of a broader semantic development in the 20th century. Comparatively less attention has been paid to verbalisations of the geographical scope of the hostilities in focus, which may include a narrower theatre of operations by the belligerent parties as well as the potential spread of hostilities, called “the region of war” (Dinstein, 2017: 21). Some scholars singled out a lexico-thematic group of the toponyms associated with specific combat areas or crimes of aggression, e.g. *Ilovaisk, Mariupol, Bucha, Snake Island, Bakhmut* and recognised their symbolic importance in the national socio-political discourse (Zinevich and Krasavina, 2017; Piankovska, 2022; Melnyk et al., 2023), while a few others reported on the uses of *world war, global war, return of the full-scale war to Europe* (Maslova, 2023; Druzhibiak and Frantsuz, 2024).

Empirical evidence for the reviewed studies primarily comes from speeches by state leaders and from the media. The samples are not limited to speeches by Volodymyr Zelensky and

Vladimir Putin as the leaders of the states confronting each other (Chiluwa and Ruzaitė, 2024; Družbiak and Frantsuz, 2024) but also include statements by other world leaders (Bonnet, 2023; Tymoshchuk, 2023). More attention has been paid to media coverage of the hostilities in focus in international (Bylytsia, 2022; Shevchenko et al., 2022; Alyahya, 2023), national and regional print media (Vilchynska, 2017; Maslova, 2023) as well as in international (Piankowska, 2022) and national (Melnik et al., 2023) online news outlets. Recent research has embraced not only the production but also the perception of the news on the Russian-Ukrainian war by the readers (Yemelianova, 2024).

Relatively little attention has been given to the ways war is discussed in parliamentary debates. Harvard (2016) focuses on the concept of “world opinion” in UK parliamentary debates during the Falklands War, Mochtak (2020) and Mochtak et al. (2022) investigate war-related discourse in the post-war Croatian parliament, while Berganza et al. (2018) investigate the impact of traditional and social media on parliamentary debates about violent conflicts. The most relevant for this study is Calzada Pérez (2024) exploring verbal associations with Russia and Ukraine in the UK’s House of Commons and Spain’s lower house, the Congress of Deputies, in the context of the hostilities in focus in ParlaMint-GB v. 4.0 and ParlaMint-ES v.4.0. It is observed that through a number of shared collocates related to the semantic realm of armed hostilities like *aggression*, *attack*, *incursion*, *invasion*, *war*, both *Russia* and *Ukraine* are “primed to be understood as contenders in the military conflict” (ibid.: 89) in the UK parliamentary discourse. In comparison, associations with *Rusia* ‘Russia’ transcend its participation in the armed conflict in the Spanish parliamentary discourse, while *Ucrania* ‘Ukraine’ “is reduced to its role as the invasion victim” (ibid.: 91). However, the dynamics of using different names of armed hostilities is not investigated either longitudinally or with respect to different political actors. Moreover, as far as existing literature indicates, the practice of naming Russia’s hostilities in the Ukrainian parliament as discursive constructions in a wartime society remains unexplored. This study departs from the assumption that uses of various designations of the armed hostilities as well as their localisations are an integral part of framing them in public (including parliamentary) discourse, i.e. selecting some aspects of the hostilities and “introducing some form of cognitive bias” (Charteris-Black, 2019: 16). The following research questions are asked. 1) What nominations of armed hostilities (e.g. *war*, *conflict*, *aggression*) are salient in Ukrainian and British parliamentary discourse and how do they evolve over time in the context of the ongoing Russian war of aggression against Ukraine? 2) How do these naming choices contribute to framing the belligerent sides and the region of war in parliamentary discourse from a comparative perspective?

1. Theoretical background

Section 1.1 briefly overviews legal and lexicographic definitions of the concept of war as well as distinctions between *war* and related lexical units and discusses practices of using *war* and related names in terminological and common senses in public discourse. Section 1.2 outlines relevant literature on lexical variation, frame semantics and framing as a discursive practice, while also highlighting the hybrid nature of parliamentary discourse and its impact on language use in parliamentary debates.

1.1. Speaking about war: between prescriptions and usage

Prescriptions in linguistics are associated, *inter alia*, with determining socially accepted meaning of words and expressions (Britsyn, 2024: 129), which is subject to incessant development or change due to extra-linguistic and linguistic factors. The technocratisation of

contemporary society involves the acceleration of lexical migration processes between the general literary language and domain-specific terminological systems known as the processes of terminologisation and determinologisation (Nakonechna, 2018: 11). Military-related lexicon is no exception. On the one hand, evolution in the conduct of hostilities and numerous technological advancements have been changing the lexico-semantic field of war over time (Hughes, 2008: 14-16) and significant effort has been made to standardise military terminology internationally, e.g., the official NATO terminology database *NATOTerm* (Jones, 2011) or NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions (NATO, 2020)². Along with borrowing, compounding and derivation, terminological systems are enriched through specialisation of common words, when the archiseme is preserved but the range of application of the newly developed terminological meaning is narrower than the range of the meaning of the common word. On the other hand, some military terms are increasingly used outside their specialised field in the texts targeting mass and diverse audiences (e.g., in the media and fiction), undergo metaphorisation or metonymisation and acquire certain connotative properties (Ilchenko, 2023; Polishchuk, 2023). Yet, uses like *war on terrorism* can lose their metaphoricity and become literate and technical to refer to, for instance, the armed response to the 9/11 attack in the USA (Yavorska, 2024: 216-217; cf. Dinstein, 2017: 6).

The terminological status of *war* in legal discourse is challenging (e.g., see Dinstein, 2017: 5-17) and in contemporary international communication, there is a tendency toward its euphemisation. In this regard, at least three linguistic aspects warrant consideration. First, the word *war* is not connotatively neutral. Dinstein (ibid.: 379) underscores its “unsavoury connotation” in the context of international communication and characterises the communication strategy of avoiding this word as hypocritical. That said, a distinction between a war of aggression and a war as an act of self-defence is commonly made. The former is defined as “a crime against international peace” in the UN General Assembly resolution from 1974 (as cited ibid.: 142), although the terms *aggression* and *aggressor* may be employed more broadly to refer to “the unlawful use of force by States” (ibid.: 131), which is “short of war” (ibid.: 142 ff.). The latter denotes “comprehensive use of counterforce in response to an armed attack” (ibid.: 279). However, it has been suggested to use *counterwar* as a sanction in response to war as a delict “to reduce the common psychological resistance to the acceptance of ‘war’” even in the context of self-defence (ibid.: 280). Second, prototypically *war* is associated with the highest degree of intensity of armed hostilities, which are extended in time. For comparison, the term *armed conflict* is employed to refer to armed hostilities that may either amount to “a fully fledged war” or be “a short-lived or minor episode”, which violates peace, yet is “short of war” (ibid.: 3). The terms *total war* and *limited war* were introduced to further differentiate between the scope of objectives attained and resources (human and material) allocated by the belligerent parties (ibid.: 13-16). Third, there is traditionally a strong association between performing the speech act of declaring war and beginning full-fledged interstate armed hostilities (e.g., see Hughes, 2008: 13). However, according to speech act theory “[d]eclarations bring about some alternation in the status or condition of the referred-to object or objects solely in virtue of the fact that the declaration has been successfully performed” (Searle, 1976: 14). A significant decline in declarations of war in the post-1945 period – although not in the number of armed hostilities worldwide – has been discussed in the literature (Fazal, 2021), and the

² NATO (2020) aims to standardise (i) general terminology with a specific military meaning; (ii) specialist terminology that needs to be widely understood throughout NATO, and (iii) terms that are not adequately defined in the Concise Oxford English Dictionary, which is used as the reference dictionary for the English language by the NATO Terminology Programme.

distinction between “war in the material sense” and “war in the purely technical sense” was introduced (Dinstein, 2017: 11-13).

It is worth noticing that the term *war* is not defined in the abovementioned glossary (NATO, 2020). However, it is used as a constitutive element in its eleven glossed terms (e.g., *emergency in war*, *war game*, *war reserves*) and in its multiple definitions (see also Bielykh, 2024 on military terms with the core element *krieg* in German).

In general lexicographic sources, the central sense of *war* is “a state of armed conflict between different countries or different groups within a country” (Stevenson and Waite, 2012: 1627); cf. *війна* ‘war’ is “an organized armed struggle between states, peoples or armed groups within a country” (Shyrokov et al., 2018). Onomasiological reference networks like The Historical Thesaurus of The Oxford English Dictionary (Kay et al., 2009) group *war* along with (*armed*) *conflict*, *battle*, *struggle*, *attack*, *invasion*, *incursion* and *aggression* in the senses of ‘military aggression’ and ‘action of attacking’ under the broad category of “armed hostility” within the macrocategory “society”, while *crisis* in the sense of a ‘difficult state of things’ pertaining to emergency is categorised under “difficulty”, which is included into the macrocategory “world”. In the FrameNet database (Ruppenhofer et al., 2017), the lexical units *war*, *warfare*, *conflict*, *battle*, *clash*, *fight*, *struggle*, *confrontation* evoke the Hostile encounter frame, which is perspectivised in the Attack frame with such lexical units as *attack* and *incursion*. The lexical unit *invasion* is listed under the Invading frame, which inherits from the Attack frame and is a subframe of the Invasion scenario frame. The lexical unit *aggression* is not included in the database; however, there are grounds to analyse it in relation to the Attack and Invading frames. On the other hand, the Catastrophe frame evoked by *crisis* does not have any frame-to-frame relations with the frames above.

Despite clear distinctions between the Hostile encounter, Invading and Attack frames, on the one hand, and the Catastrophe frame, on the other, instances of framing armed hostilities as crises are not unusual in legal and media discourse. For instance, Dinstein advocates for a rigorous rejection of framing Russia’s aggression in Georgia in 2008 as a “crisis between longstanding adversaries” in a report by the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia, because it makes “no real distinction between aggressor and victim of aggression” (Dinstein, 2017: 92). Ironically, later in the same work Dinstein describes Russia’s invasion and annexation of Crimea as “[t]he Crimean crisis of 2014” and epistemically distances himself (in terms of Chilton 2014: 37) from those “unidentified soldiers” operating “covertly within the territory of Ukraine” who are “probably Russian special-forces commandos” (Dinstein, 2017: 235). In the media, mainstream Chinese outlets persistently refer to Russia’s aggression against Ukraine as “the Ukraine crisis” (Ji et al., 2024) even after Russia’s large-scale invasion in 2022 for ideological reasons, while, as Shevchenko et al. (2022: 72-73) report, the nomination of Russia’s aggression as “the Ukraine crisis” was largely abandoned in English-language Western media after 2022 and the Russian propaganda label “special military operation” (see also Chilwa and Ruzaitė, 2024) failed to gain traction.

1.2. Naming choices and framing in parliamentary discourse

It has been suggested that studies of lexical variation should distinguish among its four types: semasiological (when a particular lexical item may refer to different kinds of referents), onomasiological (when a referent may be named with lexical items pertaining to conceptually distinct categories), formal (when various lexical items used to name a particular referent may or may not pertain to conceptually distinct categories) and contextual (when naming choices

above correlate with features of the speech situation or characteristics of the participants) (Geeraerts et al., 1994: 3-4). Importantly for this study, there is corpus-based evidence that “not all ways of lexically categorizing phenomena are equally common”: some are more onomasiologically salient than the others, which can be expressed in terms of the relative frequency of associations between a signifier and a given signified (Geeraerts, 2017: 155-158). Also, a contextualised, pragmatic conception of onomasiology involves “the actual choices made for a particular name as a designation of a particular concept or a particular referent” and investigates factors determining the choice for one or the other alternative (ibid.). If a particular situation or event are referred to, choices for one or the other designation are related to how the conceptualisation of this situation or event is perspectivised.

Experience-based schematic representations of real-world situations, practices, beliefs, etc., known as frames (Fillmore et al., 2003a; Ruppenhofer et al., 2017), are believed to be structured by core and non-core frame elements (FEs), i.e. named participant roles or aspects of a situation (Fillmore et al., 2003b: 305) corresponding roughly to the distinction between arguments and adjuncts in traditional grammatical analysis (ibid., 310). Frames are evoked by lexical units, i.e. words taken in one of their senses (ibid., 297). Importantly, the dominant frame informing the meaning of the sentence is evoked by a noun in political texts (ibid., 324). In the FrameNet database (Ruppenhofer et al., 2017), the core FEs of the Hostile encounter frame include Side-1/Side-2 or Sides; the Attack frame has the Assailant and the Victim as its core FEs; the core FEs of the Invading frame are the Invader and the Land; and the core FEs of the Invasion scenario are the Attacked and the Invader. Conversely, the core FEs in the Catastrophe frame are the Patient and the Undesirable event. This distinction among the core FEs of the frames expressed in relation to the armed hostilities in focus suggests that the belligerent states can be diversely conceptualised as: 1) equal actors, 2) the one that acts and the one that is acted upon, and 3) the one that is acted upon and the bad event that occurs. Place as well as Time are included as non-core FEs into each of these frames.

In political contexts, there is a need to differentiate between frames as established ways of thinking, which are shared in society and evoked by lexical units in language use (after Fillmore et al., 2003a and elsewhere), and framing as an action of representing something subjectively (Charteris-Black, 2019: 16), or “establishing a particular set of frames as the dominant one in the public political debate” (Musolff, 2019; also see a discussion in Klymenko, 2019: 4-5). The latter definition draws on Entman’s (1993: 52) understanding of framing as selecting “*some aspects of a perceived reality*” and making them “*more salient in a communicating text* [emphasis original]”. Of relevance to political discourse is the notion of multiple frames including competing, overlapping and co-existing frames (Gruber, 2021: 37), which the parties involved may use as forms of strategic communication to gain support and legitimacy among audiences beyond those directly impacted (Knüpfer and Entman, 2018: 477-478). In fact, “the naming of the event itself embodies a framing effort by the involved parties and outsiders” (ibid.: 480, cf. Smith, 2021: 62-64, Taylor, 2023: 172). Further problematisation of how armed hostilities are discursively constructed in institutional settings requires a critical perspective for uncovering the power dynamics, ideological underpinnings and strategic goals achieved in specific communicative contexts.

Naming and framing practices as “the interplay between the built-in semantic potential of a name (...) and the influence of surrounding verbal and nonverbal contextual cues (...) that ultimately determines the name’s full communicative potential” (Smith, 2021: 78), as well as

the realisation of this communicative potential in different situations based on the language users' personal or collective understanding of the signifier and the signified and also their intentions to shape beliefs and emotions of the listeners take a specific turn in parliamentary discourse due to its hybrid nature. Parliamentary discourse encompasses features of legal and political (Lastres-Lopez, 2023: 313) spheres of communication. It is both “monitored, agenda-centred and audience oriented”, which is typical of institutional genres, and “spontaneous, improvised and interlocutor oriented”, which is characteristic of conversational genres (Ilie, 2016: 135). It is associated with the tradition of the written word of the legislation as well as the oral tradition of parliamentary debates, with parliamentary dialogue taking shape “as an oral performance that is meant to be eventually written down in the official records” (ibid.).

In the broader landscape, parliamentary discourse provides valuable data for investigating the intersection between language and social change (Tyrkkö and Kotze, 2023). However, a history of linguistic research into parliamentary discourse is relatively short, contributing mainly to pragmatics, critical discourse analysis and cognitive linguistics, as well as rhetoric, both from mono-cultural and cross-cultural perspectives (Bayley, 2004; Ilie, 2010; Ilie, 2016). The growing range of corpora of parliamentary proceedings available via research infrastructures has situated parliamentary discourse within the framework of corpus linguistic studies (Ådel, 2010; Tyrkkö and Kotze, 2023; Erjavec et al., 2024b; Calzada Pérez, 2024).

2. Data and methods

This study adopts a comparative perspective and traces word choices in relation to naming and framing Russia's aggression against Ukraine in parliamentary discourse longitudinally as verbalised in the plenary proceedings of the British Parliament and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

The data for this study come from two uniformly encoded, interoperable and comparable corpora under the ParlaMint project, which are linguistically annotated and enriched with speaker, party and speech metadata, including names, gender, age, roles, party affiliation, power positions, political leanings, speech dates, sessions and terms (Erjavec et al., 2024a). ParlaMint-UA is the first full-text corpus of plenary proceedings of the Verkhovna Rada – Ukraine's unicameral parliament (Kryvenko & Kopp, 2023; Kryvenko, 2025). ParlaMint-GB contains transcripts of parliamentary debates from the House of Lords and the House of Commons. During the second phase of the ParlaMint project, three versions of the corpora were published (Erjavec et al., 2024b). In this study, version 4.0 is used to enable convenient cross-corpus comparisons based on their time span. Table 1 presents basic quantitative information on the versions of the British and Ukrainian parliamentary corpora used in this study. Both corpora were explored via the freely available NoSketch Engine concordancer.

Table 1. Basic quantitative information about the corpora used in this study.

	UK parliamentary corpus	Ukrainian parliamentary corpus
Version	ParlaMint-GB 4.0	ParlaMint-UA 4.0
Timeframe	from 2015-01 to 2022-07	from 2012-12 to 2023-09
Parliamentary terms	4	3
Speeches	670,912	200,650
Paragraphs	1,406,962	686,115
Sentences	5,323,032	1,629,760
Words	124,744,599	18,507,226
Tokens	139,686,402	23,289,170
Mln tokens/year	18.62	2.17

Source: author’s own research

Methodologically, this study is primarily situated within the framework of modern-diachronic corpus-assisted discourse analysis, or MD-CADS, with its focus on concordance and collocation analysis (Partington et al., 2013) and its emphasis on the importance of corpus data segmentation from epistemological, methodological and practical perspectives (Marchi, 2018). In the literature, three types of modern diachronic research were identified: tracking a phenomenon or process over continuous data, comparing between two or more distinct moments, or, less commonly, examining the data before and after some defined “turning points”, with the latter identified in the course of a bottom-up analysis rather than envisioned as part of the research design (see a critical review in Marchi, 2018: 176 ff.). To address the lack of MD-CADS research focusing on “*a priori* critical junctures” in discourse, this study utilises the built-in subcorpora available in ParlaMint-GB and ParlaMint-UA: the Reference subcorpus ending on 30 January 2020, the COVID subcorpus ending on 23 February 2022 and the COVID / War subcorpus starting on 24 February 2022, the day Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

The selection of lexical units designating armed hostilities like *attack*, *battle*, (armed) *clash*, (armed) *conflict*, *incursion*, *invasion*, *war* and their equivalents in the Ukrainian language was informed by the lexicographic sources (Stevenson and Waite, 2012; Shyrovkov et al., 2018; Kay et al., 2009) as well as the definition of acts of aggression in the Statute of the International Criminal Court (cited in Dinstein, 2017: 146-147), including (military) *occupation*, *annexation*, *bombardment*, *blockage*. In the preliminary stage, shared and distinct collocates for *Ukraine* and *Україна* ‘Ukraine’ potentially referring to the armed hostilities in focus were extracted within the 5L/5R search window for the lowercase lemma attribute with 5 as a minimum frequency in the corpus and 3 as the minimum frequency in the given range. Morphologically related words were also considered, when relevant. However, it was decided to report only the preliminary results from ParlaMint-GB in this study for the reasons described in Section 3.2. The results from ParlaMint-GB were ranked by the Log Dice statistical measure, which was chosen for this study as a good balance between unique and frequent co-occurrences in the discourse (Brezina, 2018: 274). The minimal Log Dice value above 0 was used to analyse shared and distinct collocates across the subcorpora and the collocates with the Log Dice value above 7 were considered to be strong associations with the node word, following Jaworska and Kinloch (2018: 122), in this and other searches in the reported study.

In the first stage, ways of joint expression of the belligerent sides in the Hostile encounter frame were examined through an analysis of absolute and relative frequencies of the coordinate compounds and phrases with the components *ukrain** and *russia** in ParlaMint-GB and *україн** ‘ukrain*’ and *росії** ‘russi*’ in ParlaMint-UA. In the second stage, associations between *aggression, invasion, incursion, war, conflict, crisis* and their Ukrainian equivalents, which are consistently used in parliamentary discourse to refer to armed hostilities, and the most salient lexical units designating the aggressor were measured with the Log Dice statistical measure in the extended search window of 9 L/R and the minimum frequency of 2 in the given range. In the third stage, recurrent lexical bundles containing at least one of the six selected lexical units referring to the hostilities in English and Ukrainian respectively were extracted and only meaningful 2-gram – 5-gram patterns were kept for further analysis for the purposes of this study. In ParlaMint-GB, searches for these bundles were filtered to retain only concordance lines containing the node *Ukraine* within a collocation window of 100 L/R. The results of the third stage were reported in the form of collapsed grams, or c-grams (Rayson, 2015: 47), to offer a more nuanced perspective on their collocability. Their absolute and relative frequency in each subcorpus were also provided. In the fourth stage, changes in the relative frequency of *war, conflict, aggression, invasion, incursion* and *crisis* and their Ukrainian equivalents across the subcorpora were examined in the context of *Europe / Європа* ‘Europe’ and *European / європейський* ‘European’ respectively within the search window of 9 L/R. In ParlaMint-GB, searches for these co-occurrences were also filtered to retain only concordance lines containing the node *Ukraine* within a collocation window of 100 L/R.

3. Results

The results reported here are divided into two sections, reflecting the dynamics of the diversity of naming choices for the armed hostilities in focus and the parties involved or affected. These naming choices are examined from the perspective of collective speakers in two distinct locations: one spatially distal from the events, i.e. the British parliament (Section 3.1), and one proximal to them, i.e. the Ukrainian parliament (Section 3.2). It is also worth noting that a few members of British parliament explicitly mention during debates that they had visited Ukraine prior to speaking, which may influence their expression of “symbolic distance crossing” in term of Cap (2013). However, this degree of granularity related to individual speakers on record exceeds the current endeavour and awaits further in-depth examination.

3.1. Constructing the hostilities in focus in the British parliamentary discourse

Selected collocates for *Ukraine*, which have been limited to nouns and verbs, represent a repertoire of naming choices for the hostilities in focus across the subcorpora in ParlaMent-GB (Table 2). The central part of this repertoire is rather stable, as the Reference subcorpus and the COVID / War subcorpus share nearly 60 percent of the collocates related to the hostilities, while the COVID subcorpus shares 90 percent of the collocates with the Reference subcorpus and 80 percent of the collocates with the COVID / War subcorpus. Fourteen of these collocates are consistently shared in all three subcorpora: *aggression, attack, combat, conflict, crisis, defence, defend, destabilise, fight, incursion, invade, invasion, occupation, war*, including two collocates (*aggression, invasion*) that have consistently strong associations with the node *Ukraine* at the Log Dice value above 7. At the same time, some terms referring to armed hostilities such as *clash* or *warfare* were not observed among the collocates meeting the selection criteria in any of the three subcorpora.

Table 2. Selected shared and distinct collocates for *Ukraine* in ParlaMint-GB potentially related to the hostilities in focus.

rank	Reference subcorpus			COVID subcorpus			COVID / War subcorpus				
	collocate	AF	LogDice	rank	collocate	AF	LogDice	rank	collocate	AF	LogDice
5	aggression	41	8.75	2	incursion	49	9.54	1	invasion	443	10.85
9	destabilisation	12	7.71	3	invade	49	9.43	5	war	464	9.12
12	annexation	11	7.35	4	aggression	50	9.07	9	aggression	58	7.99
15	invasion	17	7.32	5	invasion	52	8.96	10	invade	52	7.97
18	destabilise	9	7.11	23	defend	33	6.96	20	defend	61	7.25
19	invade	10	7.09	30	annexation	7	6.75	23	conflict	93	7.21
22	incursion	8	6.87	34	annex	6	6.53	29	attack	85	6.97
32	annex	6	6.47	51	deter	9	6.13	34	crisis	129	6.83
42	occupy	8	6.14	56	destabilise	4	5.99	58	blockade	15	6.21
46	conflict	31	5.97	58	cyber-attack	3	5.86	54	fight	51	6.36
49	fighting	5	5.87	72	tension	6	5.65	66	assault	21	6.06
59	seizure	4	5.67	99	occupation	4	5.15	84	defence	57	5.74
67	cyberattack	3	5.61	103	attack	18	5.05	88	onslaught	10	5.70
78	cyber-attack	3	5.48	113	defence	28	4.91	130	bomb	9	5.13
80	interference	5	5.44	119	conflict	13	4.72	144	occupy	8	5.02
81	occupation	5	5.44	132	seize	3	4.50	149	occupation	8	5.01
82	instability	4	5.42	137	crisis	21	4.40	161	incursion	6	4.89
83	crisis	42	5.39	142	combat	3	4.35	164	battle	10	4.88
84	tension	5	5.36	165	war	12	4.10	266	bombing	5	4.44
121	grab	3	4.81	183	fight	7	3.85	324	struggle	10	4.27
123	interfere	3	4.78		assault	-	-	333	deter	5	4.24
130	defend	7	4.71		battle	-	-	349	hostility	4	4.20
150	combat	3	4.32		blockade	-	-	351	fighting	4	4.19
153	war	14	4.32		bomb	-	-	471	bombardment	3	3.95
208	attack	7	3.68		bombardment	-	-	493	destabilise	3	3.92
218	defence	11	3.56		bombing	-	-	557	combat	4	3.82
341	fight	3	2.62		cyberattack	-	-	759	seize	3	3.48
	assault	-	-		destabilisation	-	-		annex	-	-
	battle	-	-		fighting	-	-		annexation	-	-
	blockade	-	-		grab	-	-		cyberattack	-	-
	bomb	-	-		hostility	-	-		cyber-attack	-	-
	bombardment	-	-		instability	-	-		destabilisation	-	-
	bombing	-	-		interfere	-	-		grab	-	-
	deter	-	-		interference	-	-		instability	-	-
	hostility	-	-		occupy	-	-		interfere	-	-
	onslaught	-	-		onslaught	-	-		interference	-	-
	seize	-	-		seizure	-	-		seizure	-	-
	struggle	-	-		struggle	-	-		tension	-	-

Source: author’s own research

In terms of the dynamic aspect, the collocational strength of *war* and *attack* increased in the COVID / War subcorpus and the range of collocates designating armed hostilities or their specific aspects like *assault*, *battle*, *blockage*, *onslaught*, *struggle*, *bombardment* broadened. While the collocational strength of the stem *defen** has been growing, strong associations with the stem *destabilis** have been weakening over time (see also *interfere** and *tension*). The latter is also true about a group of collocates primarily associated with Russia’s annexation of Ukraine’s Crimea. Cf. *annexation*, *annex*, *seizure*, *grab* in the Reference subcorpus, *annexation*, *annex*, *seize* in the COVID subcorpus and *seize* in the COVID / War subcorpus. These dynamics may have to do with the growing temporal distance between the event of

Russia’s invasion and annexation of Crimea and the time of speaking as well as the attentional shift to Russia’s unfolding full-scale invasion and occupation of a larger part of Ukraine.

Based on her analysis of the top 50 collocates for the nodes *Ukraine* and *Russia* in ParlaMint-GB, Calzada Pérez (2024: 91) concludes that British MPs see Russia and Ukraine in “a more homogeneous manner, as participants in a war” in comparison with the Spanish parliament. However, a closer reading of the contexts surrounding the selected collocates in ParlaMint-GB (Table 3) suggests that a symmetry in featuring Ukraine and Russia as two sides of the hostile encounter is overall not typical in the British parliament, although both countries are consistently mentioned in relation to aspects of international security, primarily with regard to the ongoing hostilities since 2014. To test this initial observation, two further searches were conducted in ParlaMint-GB to examine how often Russia and Ukraine are mentioned as equal parties without a clear distinction between the aggressor and the victim of aggression and whether different names of the hostilities are equally associated with the sides involved. Before reporting the results of these two further searches, it needs to be specified that a separate analysis of the node *Russia* co-occurring with terms related to armed hostilities in ParlaMint-GB was not included into this study for the following reason. In the British parliament, Russia was also extensively discussed in relation to its aggression against Georgia, Syria and other countries or regions. Given that this study focuses on the discursive construction of Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, searches were limited to contexts explicitly related to Ukraine, with mentions of Russia considered only in these instances.

The coordinate compounds and phrases with the components *ukrain** and *russia** make only 1.23 hits per million tokens, or pmt, in the whole corpus as opposed to 68.16 hits pmt only for *Ukraine* and 86.27 hits pmt only for *Russia* (excluding the instances with the coordinate compounds and phrases above). These compounds and phrases are unevenly distributed across the subcorpora: 0.42 hits pmt in the Reference subcorpus, 0.21 hits pmt in the COVID subcorpus and 0.61 hits pmt in the COVID / War subcorpus. Table 3 illustrates the usage of coordinate compounds and phrases with the components *ukrain** and *russia**, including their absolute frequency, in the context of the armed hostilities in focus. As a side note, the use of common words like *situation* or *issue* as substitutions for the names of armed hostilities was not included in this study but would be worth exploring in relation to strategies of euphemisation in parliamentary discourse in future studies.

Table 3. Coordinate compounds and phrases with the components *ukrain** and *russia** in ParlaMint-GB.

<i>Reference subcorpus</i>		<i>COVID subcorpus</i>		<i>COVID / War subcorpus</i>	
Phrases	AF	Phrases	AF	Phrases	AF
war between Russia and Ukraine	1	conflict between Russia and Ukraine	1	war (..) between Russia and Ukraine	5
conflict between Russia and Ukraine	1	conflict on the Russia-Ukraine border	1	Ukraine-Russia war	2
ceasefire between Russia and Ukraine	1	Ukraine and Russia (..) as parties to the conflict	1	Russia-Ukraine war	1
dispute between Russia and Ukraine	1			Russia-Ukraine conflict	4
Russia-Ukraine dispute	1			conflict between Ukraine and Russia	1
				conflict (..) between Russia and Ukraine	2
				Russia-Ukraine crisis	2
				Ukraine-Russia crisis	1
				crisis between Russia and Ukraine	1

Source: author’s own research

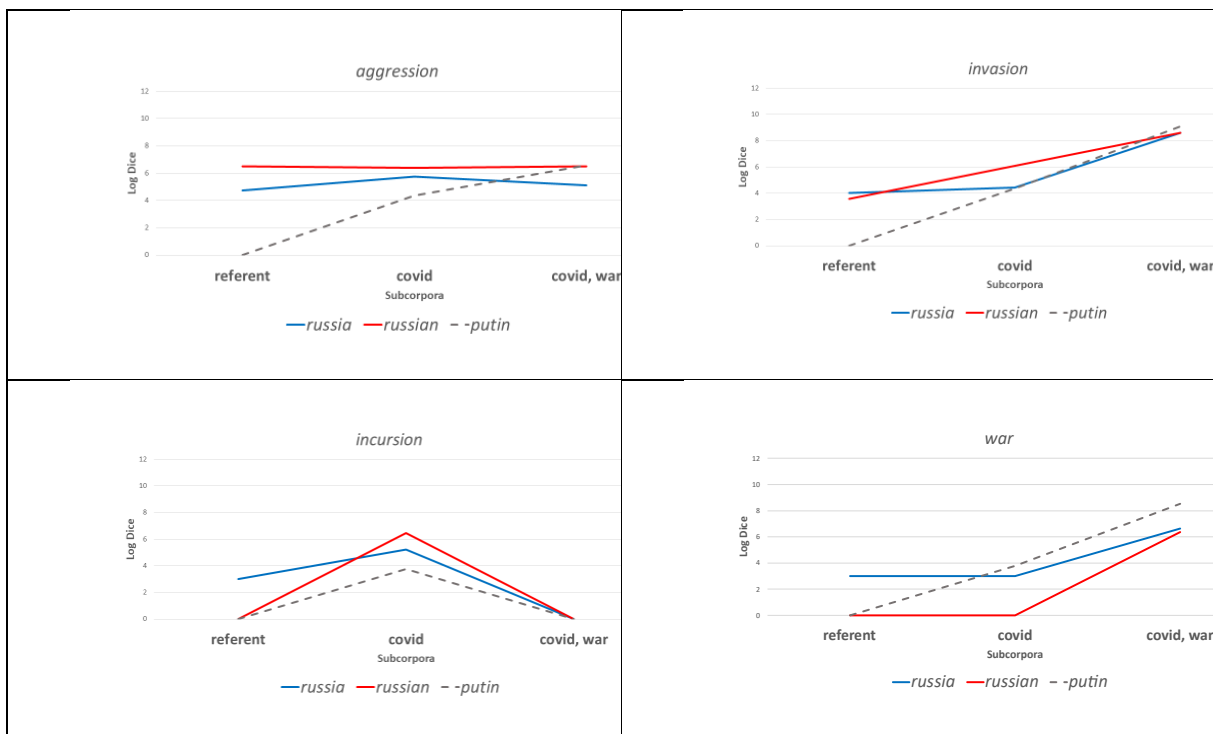
A closer reading of the concordance lines containing these coordinate compounds and phrases confirmed that before 24 February 2022 mentions of Russia and Ukraine as equal sides were more readily associated with *conflict* or *dispute* (1) and a *war on the border between Ukraine and Russia* was not consistently seen as an ongoing event but also as a hypothetical risk (2).

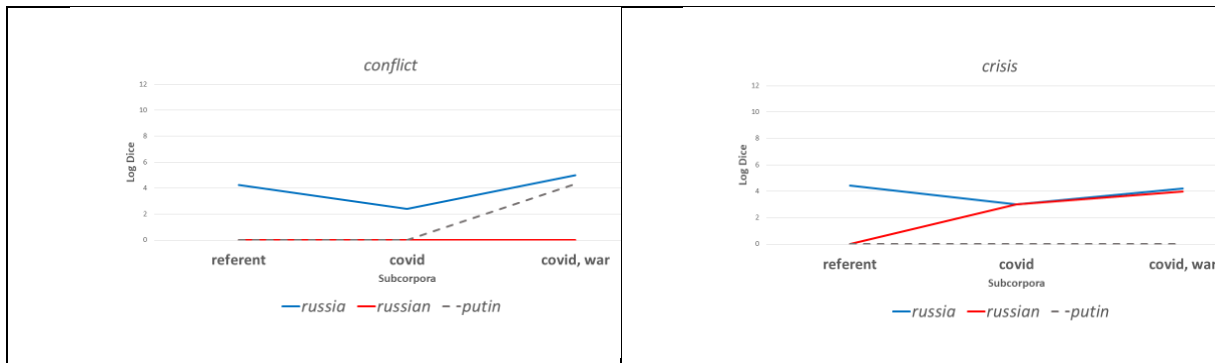
(1) *Clearly, we want a peaceful situation between Russia and Ukraine and for all areas of dispute to be resolved quickly.* (Christopher Stephen Grayling, Conservative Party, 2016-01-14)

(2) *Any war on the border between Ukraine and Russia will be utterly disastrous for the people of Ukraine, the people of Russia and the future of peace throughout the whole continent of Europe.* (Jeremy Bernard Corbyn, Labour / Independent, 2022-01-31)

An analysis of collocates for *aggression, invasion, incursion, war, conflict, crisis*, which appear in the 5 L/R collocation window of the node *Ukraine*, revealed that associations with the attacking side vary both with respect to the names of the hostilities used in ParlaMint-GB and the periods of their use, as seen in Figure 1. The results of the searches in the span above were further queried to examine naming choices for the aggressor and their collocation strength with the terms for the armed hostilities in focus. For this purpose, the search window was extended to 9 L/R and the minimum frequency in the given range was lowered to 2. The three most frequently recurring lemmas explicitly referring to the aggressor were *Russia, Russian, Putin*. Neither *Moscow* nor *Kremlin* were retrieved as collocates under the defined conditions.

Figure 1. Associations between names of the hostilities and the aggressor in ParlaMint-GB.





Source: author’s own research

Inevitably, the search parameters described above have their limitations, and while showing major trends of association between the aggressor and the hostilities they do not capture all the contexts potentially relevant for this study. For instance, the search word *crisis* does collocate with *Putin* in the COVID and COVID / War subcorpora, although this association is quite weak (2.36 and 3.77 Log Dice respectively). As illustrated in (3), the word *crisis* is used in relation to the onset of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, although Ukraine is mentioned elsewhere outside the search window.

(3) *This is not a crisis of Putin versus the West; this is not a crisis of Putin versus NATO; this is a crisis of Putin versus the world.* (John Kerr, Crossbench, 2022-02-25)

Table 4 provides selected continuous multiword sequences containing at least one of the names for the hostilities: *war*, *conflict*, *aggression*, *invasion*, *incursion* or *crisis*, used within a span of 100 L/R tokens around each occurrence of *Ukraine* across the subcorpora in ParlaMint-GB. The data are presented as a c-gram tree view and include absolute frequency of the selected sequences and their relative frequency per million tokens in each subcorpus.

Table 4. Top c-grams with the lexical items referring to the hostilities in focus in ParlaMint-GB.

c-grams	Reference subcorpus		COVID subcorpus		COVID / War subcorpus	
	AF	Freq. pmt in text type	AF	Freq. pmt in text type	AF	Freq. pmt in text type
<i>war in</i>	25	0.27	14	0.36	355	39.30
<i>war in Ukraine</i>	5	0.05	3	0.08	284	31.44
<i>the war in Ukraine</i>	0	0	1	0.03	197	21.81
<i>civil war in Ukraine</i>	3	0.03	0	0	0	0
<i>war in Europe</i>	3	0.03	3	0.08	39	4.32
<i>war in the Donbass</i>	1	0.01	1	0.03	1	0.11
<i>war crime</i>	3	0.03	0	0	210	23.25
<i>war crime in</i>	0	0	0	0	15	1.66
<i>war crime in Ukraine</i>	0	0	0	0	13	1.44
<i>of war crime</i>	0	0	0	0	29	3.21
<i>evidence of war crime</i>	0	0	0	0	9	1.00
<i>war on</i>	4	0.04	3	0.08	57	6.31
<i>war on Ukraine</i>	0	0	0	0	26	2.88
<i>war on the European continent</i>	1	0.01	0	0	1	0.11
<i>war on European soil</i>	0	0	0	0	2	0.22
<i>war of</i>	0	0	5	0/13	49	5.43
<i>war of aggression</i>	0	0	3	0.08	17	1.88
<i>war of choice</i>	0	0	0	0	10	1.11
<i>war of attrition</i>	0	0	0	0	8	0.89
<i>war against</i>	2	0.02	5	0.13	19	2.10

“Is it ‘the Ukraine crisis’ or a war in Europe?
Multiple frames of Russia’s aggression in
parliamentary discourse from a comparative
MD-CADS perspective”

<i>war against Ukraine</i>	0	0	2	0.05	10	1.11
<i>war against the west</i>	0	0	2	0.05	0	0
<i>'s war</i>	0	0	1	0.03	110	12.18
<i>Putin's war</i>	0	0	0	0	90	9.96
<i>Putin's war machine</i>	0	0	0	0	26	2.88
<i>Russia's war</i>	0	0	1	0.03	10	1.11
<i>Ukraine's war</i>	0	0	0	0	3	0.33
<i>Kremlin's war</i>	0	0	0	0	2	0.22
<i>of war</i>	17	0.18	14	0.36	176	19.49
<i>weapon of war</i>	1	0.01	0	0	35	3.88
<i>prisoner of war</i>	1	0.01	0	0	22	2.44
<i>horror of war</i>	0	0	1	0.03	16	1.77
<i>Ukraine war</i>	0	0	0	0	28	3.10
<i>the Ukraine war</i>	0	0	0	0	25	2.77
<i>Ukrainian war</i>	1	0.01	0	0	10	1.11
<i>the Ukrainian war</i>	0	0	0	0	9	1.00
<i>east Ukrainian war</i>	1	0.01	0	0	0	0
<i>Russian war</i>	0	0	0	0	21	2.33
<i>the Russian war</i>	0	0	0	0	15	1.66
<i>conflict in</i>	47	0.51	18	0.47	79	8.75
<i>conflict in Ukraine</i>	14	0.15	3	0.08	56	6.20
<i>conflict in the east</i>	4	0.04	0	0	0	0
<i>conflict in eastern Ukraine</i>	5	0.05	4	0.10	0	0
<i>conflict in Europe</i>	1	0.01	1	0.03	2	0.22
<i>conflict in (the) Donbass</i>	2	0.02	3	0.08	0	0
<i>of (the) conflict</i>	0	0	0	0	78	8.64
<i>impact of (the) conflict</i>	0	0	0	0	6	0.66
<i>beginning of the conflict</i>	0	0	0	0	3	0.33
<i>theatre of conflict</i>	0	0	0	0	5	0.55
<i>area of conflict</i>	0	0	0	0	4	0.44
<i>in conflict</i>	0	0	0	0	46	5.09
<i>violence in conflict</i>	0	0	0	0	24	2.66
<i>armed conflict</i>	2	0.02	0	0	15	1.66
<i>law of armed conflict</i>	0	0	0	0	5	0.55
<i>Ukraine conflict</i>	1	0.01	0	0	14	1.55
<i>the Ukraine conflict</i>	1	0.01	0	0	9	1.00
<i>Ukrainian conflict</i>	0	0	1	0.03	4	0.44
<i>the Ukrainian conflict²²</i>	0	0	1	0.03	4	0.44

1. [from the table on the next page] In ParlaMint-GB, both the Ukrainian transliteration Donbas and the Russian transliteration Donbass appear in the records, although their usage ratio changes over time – from 9 percent Donbas vs. 91 percent Donbass in the Reference subcorpus to 60 percent Donbas vs. 31 percent Donbass in the COVID / War corpus. A similar trend is observed with Kyiv and Kiev, shifting from 2 percent Kyiv vs. 98 percent Kiev in the Reference corpus to 100 percent Kyiv in the COVID / War corpus.

<i>Russian aggression</i>	75	0.82	96	2.48	96	10.63
<i>Russian aggression in</i>	25	0.27	4	0.10	8	0.89
<i>Russian aggression in Ukraine</i>	14	0.15	2	0.05	5	0.55
<i>Russian aggression in (the) Donbas / Donbass¹</i>	1	0.01	0	0	1	0.11
<i>Russian aggression against</i>	1	0.01	4	0.10	5	0.55
<i>of Russian aggression</i>	12	0.13	11	0.28	14	1.55
<i>in the face of Russian aggression</i>	4	0.04	4	0.10	6	0.66
<i>'s aggression</i>	14	0.15	21	0.54	61	6.75
<i>Putin's aggression</i>	2	0.02	9	0.23	45	4.98
<i>Russia's aggression</i>	11	0.12	12	0.31	16	1.77
<i>Kremlin's aggression</i>	1	0.01	0	0	0	0
<i>of aggression</i>	8	0.09	17	0.44	50	5.54
<i>act of aggression</i>	5	0.05	3	0.08	14	1.55
<i>war of aggression</i>	0	0	3	0.08	17	1.88
<i>crime of aggression</i>	0	0	0	0	8	0.89
<i>invasion of</i>	34	0.37	67	1.73	455	50.38
<i>invasion of Ukraine</i>	11	0.12	36	0.93	404	44.73
<i>invasion of (the) Crimea</i>	7	0.08	7	0.18	8	0.89
<i>invasion of Donbas</i>	0	0	3	0.08	0	0
<i>invasion of eastern Ukraine</i>	3	0.03	1	0.03	0	0
<i>'s invasion</i>	4	0.04	2	0.05	143	15.83
<i>Russia's invasion</i>	3	0.03	3	0.05	86	9.52
<i>Putin's invasion</i>	1	0.01	0	0	52	5.76
<i>Moscow's invasion</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0.11
<i>Russian invasion</i>	1	0.01	21	0.54	136	15.06
<i>the Russian invasion</i>	1	0.01	4	0.10	111	12.29
<i>Russian invasion of</i>	1	0.01	12	0.31	92	10.19
<i>illegal invasion</i>	3	0.03	3	0.08	82	9.08
<i>'s illegal invasion</i>	0	0	0	0	40	4.43
<i>Russia's illegal invasion</i>	0	0	0	0	24	2.66
<i>Putin's illegal invasion</i>	0	0	0	0	16	1.77
<i>Ukraine invasion</i>	0	0	0	0	6	0.66
<i>the Ukraine invasion</i>	0	0	0	0	6	0.66
<i>Russian incursion</i>	2	0.02	21	0.54	2	0.22
<i>a Russian incursion</i>	0	0	8	0.21	0	0
<i>further Russian incursion</i>	0	0	4	0.10	0	0
<i>an incursion</i>	1	0.01	22	0.57	2	0.22
<i>an incursion into</i>	0	0	12	0.31	2	0.22
<i>an incursion would</i>	0	0	3	0.08	0	0
<i>incursion into</i>	8	0.09	43	1.11	9	1.00
<i>incursion into Ukraine</i>	2	0.02	38	0.98	6	0.66
<i>incursion into the heart of Ukraine</i>	0	0	1	0.03	0	0
<i>incursion by</i>	4	0.04	6	0.16	2	0.22
<i>incursion by Russia</i>	0	0	6	0.16	0	0
<i>incursion by Putin</i>	0	0	0	0	2	0.22
<i>military incursion</i>	2	0.02	13	0.34	0	0
<i>Russian military incursion</i>	0	0	6	0.16	0	0
<i>any military incursion</i>	0	0	4	0.10	0	0
<i>crisis in</i>	30	0.33	9	0.23	91	10.08
<i>crisis in Ukraine</i>	17	0.18	7	0.18	51	5.65
<i>crisis in Europe</i>	0	0	0	0	7	0.78
<i>refugee crisis in Europe</i>	0	0	0	0	4	0.44
<i>Ukraine crisis</i>	15	0.16	7	0.18	42	4.65
<i>the Ukraine crisis</i>	12	0.13	6	0.16	39	4.32
<i>response to the Ukraine crisis</i>	1	0.01	0	0	9	1.00
<i>Ukrainian crisis</i>	4	0.04	0	0	10	1.11
<i>the Ukrainian crisis</i>	4	0.04	0	0	10	1.11
<i>crisis of</i>	1	0.01	1	0.03	19	2.10
<i>crisis of Putin</i>	0	0	0	0	3	0.33

Source: author's own research

As seen in Table 4, the top trigrams in the COVID / War subcorpus are *invasion of Ukraine* and *war in Ukraine*. The most frequent mentions of the aggressor include *Russian invasion*, *Russian*

aggression, and *Putin’s war* in the same subcorpus. However, *conflict* and *crisis* are more readily used in patterns including Ukraine (cf. Table 3), with the emphasis on the geographical scope rather than the agent-driven causality. Framing the hostilities as happening in Ukraine makes them seem like an internal event or a natural disaster rather than an act of aggression. It obscures agency by not specifying who caused the hostile encounter, allowing Russia’s role as the aggressor to fade into the background, which is explicitly pointed in (4).

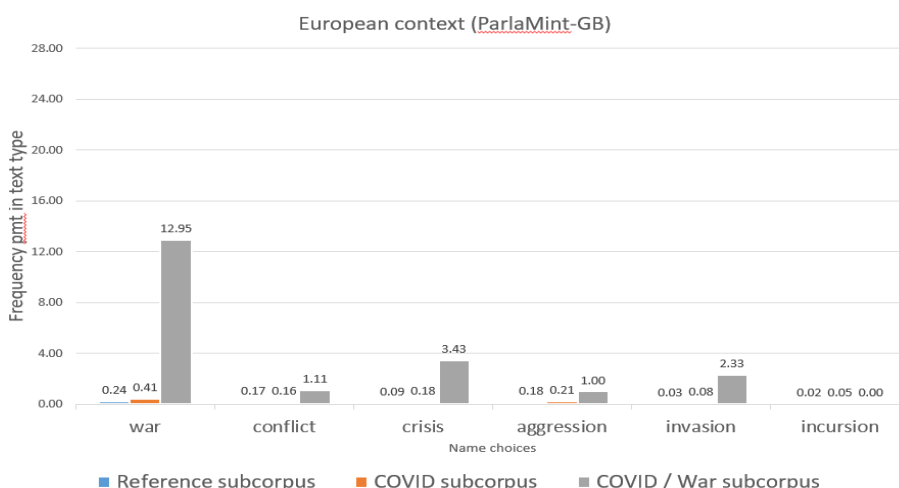
(4) ... *it is clear to the Government that we do not have a Ukraine crisis but a Russia crisis, of which Ukraine is the unfortunate victim* (Joyce Anelay, Conservative, 2015-03-24)

Patterns containing *incursion* are mostly typical of the COVID subcorpus and are used predominantly in the context of the international early warning campaign just before Russia’s full-scale invasion (5).

(5) *President Biden, who as a young senator actively supported Britain during the 1982 Falklands war, can recover his leadership role and, with support from European NATO allies, face down any potential Russian incursion into the heart of Ukraine and, indeed, any further adventurism elsewhere.* (Mark Gino Francois, Conservative, 2022-01-06)

In the fourth stage of this study, changes in the relative frequency of *war*, *conflict*, *aggression*, *invasion*, *incursion* and *crisis* in the context of *Europe* and *European* within a collocation of 9 L/R were examined across the subcorpora. These searches were also filtered to retain only concordance lines containing the node *Ukraine* within a collocation window of 100 L/R. As seen in Figure 2, *war* has the highest relative frequency in all three subcorpora of ParlaMint-GB, followed by *crisis* and *invasion*. Moreover, after 24 February 2022, the armed hostilities in focus are increasingly framed as *war in Europe* (see Table 4).

Figure 2. Naming the hostilities and their effects in the European context (ParlaMint-GB).



Source: author’s own research

After the onset of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the symbolic spatial proximity (Cap, 2013) of the war to the deictic centre was negotiated in the UK parliament. The construal of the

competing versions of the war's central or peripheral location in Europe involved the conventional political metaphor *at the heart of Europe* (Musolff, 2019), as in (6), and its opposite *on the fringes of Europe*, as in (7).

(6) ... *it was inevitable that this debate would focus on the barbaric Russian attack on Ukraine, on the unprovoked violence and war crimes now at the heart of Europe, and indeed on President Zelensky's remarkable leadership.* (David Maxim Triesman, Non-affiliated; Labour, 2022-05-18)

(7) *Nor did we foresee the war on the fringes of Europe.* (Sarah Elizabeth Atherton, Conservative, 2022-03-24)

The construal of the war as spatially proximal was also coupled with the temporal dimension. In multiple instances, the current war was anchored to a specific historical event, especially WWII, establishing a direct comparison between the two, implying continuity and rupture of peace but also putting a strong emotional and moral weight, as in *the biggest war in Europe since 1945*.

3.2. Constructing the hostilities in focus in the Ukrainian parliamentary discourse

A preliminary examination of the collocation strength between the search node *Україна* 'Ukraine' and denominations of the hostilities in ParlaMint-UA has confirmed an initial assumption that this type of measurement may be of little utility for a comparative cross-corpus study at least for two reasons. First, *Україна* 'Ukraine' is the most frequent noun in ParlaMint-UA with absolute frequency $n=181,702$ and consequently has many more collocates than its equivalent *Ukraine* in ParlaMint-GB with absolute frequency $n=9,551$. Second, due to the spatial proximity of the armed hostilities to the deictic centre of the speakers in the Ukrainian parliament, references to Ukraine as a side of or the (primary) location of the hostilities would be redundant in many contexts. For instance, *вторгнення* 'invasion' is used 118.89 times pmt (176 hits) in the COVID / War subcorpus of ParlaMint-UA, with the collocational strength of *вторгнення* 'invasion' as a collocate of *Україна* 'Ukraine' being only 6.81 Log Dice (46 hits) in the 5L/5R span and 7.21 Log Dice (62 hits) in the 9L/9R span of this subcorpus (cf, with the collocational strength of *Ukraine* with *invasion* across the subcorpora in ParlaMint-GB). However, a closer reading of those 176 concordance lines containing the lemma *вторгнення* 'invasion' in the COVID / War subcorpus of ParlaMint-UA revealed that all of them clearly refer to the armed hostilities in focus.

Also, it comes as no surprise that in ParlaMint-UA the frequency of *Україна* 'Ukraine' (7,802 hits pmt) significantly exceeds the combined frequency of *Росія* 'Russia', *Російська Федерація* 'Russian Federation', and its abbreviation *РФ* 'RF' (389.28 hits pmt). The coordinate compounds and phrases with the search components *україн** and *росі** make 12.75 hits pmt, which are most frequently used in the Reference subcorpus (10 hits pmt) and significantly drop in the COVID subcorpus (1.63 hits pmt) and in the COVID / War subcorpus (1.12 hits pmt). In the context of the armed hostilities, they predominantly collocate with *війна* 'war' and *конфлікт* 'conflict'. As seen in Table 5, there is a greater variability regarding the order and morphology of the components in the reference subcorpus, yet the coordinate compound *російсько-український* 'Russian-Ukrainian' in the phrase *російсько-українська війна* 'Russian-Ukrainian war' is preferred across the corpus.

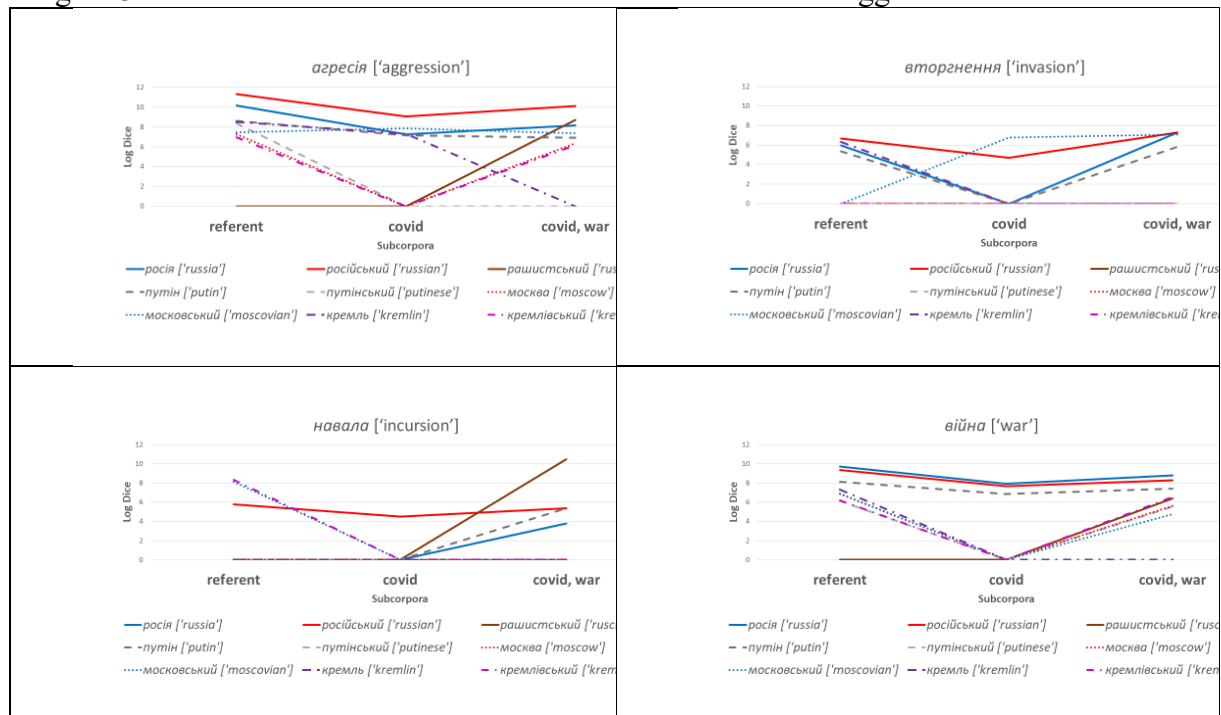
Table 5. Coordinate compounds and phrases with the components *україн** and *росі** in ParlaMint-UA.

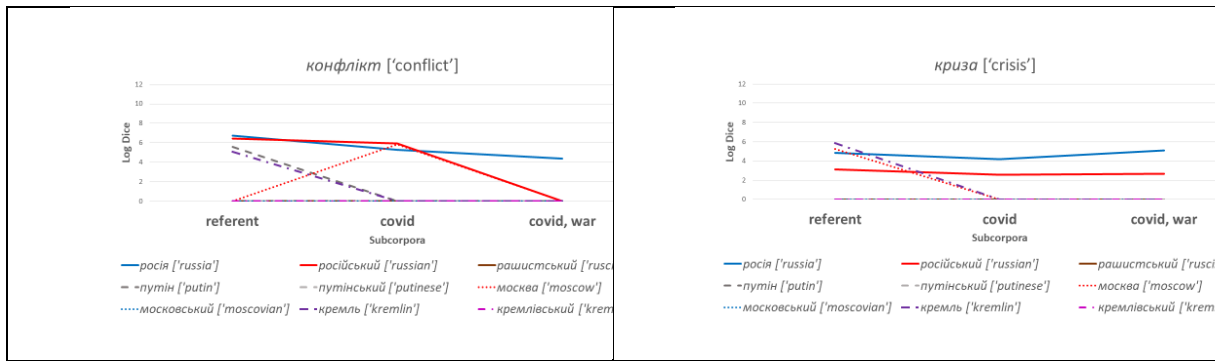
Reference subcorpus		COVID subcorpus		COVID / War subcorpus	
Phrases	Freq	Phrases	Freq	Phrases	Freq
<i>російсько-українська війна</i> [‘Russian-Ukrainian war’]	23	<i>російсько-українська війна</i> [‘Russian-Ukrainian war’]	7	<i>російсько-українська війна</i> [‘Russian-Ukrainian war’]	7
<i>україно-російська війна</i> [‘Ukraine-Russian war’]	12	<i>українсько-російська війна</i> [‘Ukrainian-Russian war’]	2	<i>протистояння України та Росії</i> [‘confrontation of Ukraine and Russia’]	1
<i>українсько-російська війна</i> [‘Ukrainian-Russian war’]	5	<i>україно-російська війна</i> [‘Ukraine-Russian war’]	2		
<i>українсько-російська гібридна війна</i> [‘Ukrainian-Russian hybrid war’]	1	<i>війна Росії і України</i> [‘war of Russia and Ukraine’]	1		
<i>війна між Росією і Україною</i> [‘war between Russia and Ukraine’]	2	<i>російсько-український збройний конфлікт</i> [‘Russian-Ukrainian armed conflict’]	6		
<i>російсько-український конфлікт</i> [‘Russian-Ukrainian conflict’]	1				
<i>міжнародний збройний конфлікт між Україною та Російською Федерацією</i> [‘international armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine’]	1				

Source: author’s own research

Figure 3 illustrates differences in the collocational strength measured in Log Dice between names of the hostilities *агресія* ‘aggression’, *вторгнення* ‘invasion’, *навала* ‘incursion; inroad’, *війна* ‘war’, *конфлікт* ‘conflict’, *криза* ‘crisis’ and the selected references to the aggressor *Росія* ‘Russia’, *російський* ‘Russian’, *рашистський* ‘ruscist’ (adj.), *Путін* ‘Putin’, *путінський* ‘Putinesque’, *Москва* ‘Moscow’, *московський* ‘Moscovian’, *Кремль* ‘Kremlin’, *кремлівський* ‘Kremlin’s’ (adj.) in the 9 L/R collocation window with the minimum frequency of 2 hits in the given range in ParlaMint-UA from a longitudinal perspective.

Figure 3. Associations between names of the hostilities and the aggressor in ParlaMint-UA.





Source: author's own research

The term *рашизм* ‘ruscism’ (noun) or its derivatives *рашистський* ‘ruscist’ (adj.) and *рашист* ‘ruscist’ (noun) are rare in the Reference and COVID subcorpora of ParlaMint-UA, making 0.06 hits pmt and 0.86 hits pmt in the text type respectively. However, its usage sky-rocketed in the COVID / War subcorpus (76.33 hits pmt in the text type) and became strongly associated with *навала* ‘incursion; inroad’ and *агресія* ‘aggression’. In May 2023, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted a resolution identifying the current political regime in Russia as ruscism and defining it as a totalitarian ideology and practice (Kyryluk and Kulish, 2023) with references to the scholarship by Snyder (2022) and other students of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. In the parliamentary debates preceding the voting, ruscism was discussed not only in the context of the ongoing war but also linked to the specific features of Russian statehood, culture and society (8).

(8) ... *нинішня війна – це не просто війна Путіна, ідеологією рашизму глибоко просякнуто все російське суспільство. І хоча рашизм наслідує світогляд і естетику гітлерівського і сталінського режимів, його коріння набагато глибші. Рашизм міцно настоявся на особливостях російської державності і культури, задавнений у соціальній ненависті, неподоланих імперських амбіціях і агресивному реваншизмі. Засуджуючи рашизм, ми констатуємо, що розв'язана проти України війна є його прямим наслідком ...*

[‘... the current war is not just Putin's war, the entire Russian society is deeply imbued with the ideology of ruscism. And although ruscism follows the worldview and aesthetics of Hitler's and Stalin's regimes, its roots are much deeper. Ruscism has firmly infused itself into the very substance of Russian statehood and culture, long steeped in social hatred, unyielding imperial ambitions and aggressive revanchism. While condemning ruscism, we state that the war waged against Ukraine is its direct consequence...’]
(Volodymyr Viatrovych, European Solidarity, 2023-05-02)

Table 6 presents the top c-grams with the lexical items referring to the hostilities in ParlaMint-UA. The frequency data suggest that war is primarily construed with respect to its temporal and spatial proximity across the subcorpora, as in *час війни* ‘time of war’ and *ця війна* ‘this war’. The Instrument frame element is salient in relation to conflict, as in *збройний конфлікт* ‘armed conflict’. Aggression most commonly occurs with expressions of the Instrument and the Assailant, as in *збройна агресія* ‘armed aggression’ and *агресія російськ** ‘aggression of Russian’. The latter is also true about incursion, as in *російська навала* ‘Russian incursion’. The Manner frame element is prominent with respect to invasion, as in *повномасштабне вторгнення* ‘full-scale invasion’.

Table 6. Top c-grams with the lexical items referring to the hostilities in focus in ParlaMint-UA.

c-grams	Reference subcorpus		COVID subcorpus		COVID / War subcorpus	
	AF	Freq. pmt in text type	AF	Freq. pmt in text type	AF	Freq. pmt in text type
<i>час війни</i> [‘time of war’]	278	16.07	61	13.53	324	218.87
<i>під час війни</i> [‘during time of war’]	180	10.40	47	10.42	286	193.20
<i>у/в час(и) війни</i> [‘in time of war’]	86	4.97	13	2.88	28	18.91
<i>ця війна</i> [‘this war’]	210	12.14	40	8.87	157	106.06
<i>у/в цій війні</i> [‘in this war’]	56	3.24	8	1.77	49	33.10
<i>на цій війні</i> [‘at this war’]	11	0.64	4	0.89	5	3.38
<i>війна на</i> [‘war in (at)’]	199	11.50	53	11.76	24	16.21
<i>війна на сході</i> [‘war in the east’]	83	4.80	28	6.21	1	0.68
<i>війна на Донбасі</i> [‘war in Donbas’]	62	3.58	16	3.55	3	2.03
<i>війна з</i> [‘war with’]	175	10.12	48	10.65	29	19.59
<i>війна з Росією</i> [‘war with Russia’]	43	2.49	8	1.77	8	5.40
<i>війна з російськ*</i> [‘war with Russian’]	35	2.02	13	2.88	8	5.40
<i>війна проти</i> [‘war against’]	131	7.57	25	5.55	43	29.05
<i>війна проти України</i> [‘war against Ukraine’]	66	3.81	11	2.44	28	18.91
<i>війна проти наш*</i> [‘war against our’]	11	0.64	2	0.44	5	3.38
<i>війна в/у</i> [‘war in’]	128	7.40	35	7.76	55	37.15
<i>війна в Україні</i> [‘war in Ukraine’]	30	1.73	8	1.77	28	18.91
<i>війна в країні</i> [‘war in (the) country’]	5	0.29	1	0.22	3	2.03
<i>збройний конфлікт</i> [‘armed conflict’]	146	8.44	33	7.32	12	8.11
<i>внаслідок</i> [‘in consequence of armed conflict’]	15	0.87	0	0	0	0
<i>міжнародний</i> [‘international armed conflict’]	3	0.17	7	1.55	1	0.68
<i>військовий конфлікт</i> [‘military conflict’]	52	3.01	18	3.99	1	0.68
<i>зона військового конфлікту</i> [‘zone of military conflict’]	4	0.23	2	0.44	1	0.68
<i>конфлікт на</i> [‘conflict in (at)’]	98	5.66	66	14.64	3	2.03
<i>конфлікт на Донбасі</i> [‘conflict in Donbas’]	38	2.20	37	8.21	0	0
<i>конфлікт на сході</i> [‘conflict in the east’]	49	2.83	16	3.55	0	0
<i>конфлікт в/у</i> [‘conflict in’]	79	4.57	14	3.11	0	0
<i>конфлікт в Україні</i> [‘conflict in Ukraine’]	13	0.75	3	0.67	0	0
<i>збройна агресія</i> [‘armed aggression’]	259	14.97	78	17.30	234	158.07
<i>внаслідок збройної агресії</i> [‘in consequence of armed aggression’]	7	0.40	20	4.44	33	22.29
<i>відсіч збройній агресії</i> [‘repulse of armed aggression’]	41	2.37	5	1.11	13	8.78
<i>військова агресія</i> [‘military aggression’]	189	10.92	17	3.77	52	35.13
<i>російська військова агресія</i> [‘Russian military aggression’]	20	1.16	0	0	6	4.05
<i>час(и) військової агресії</i> [‘time (of) military aggression’]	11	0.64	1	0.22	4	2.70
<i>агресія російськ*</i> [‘aggression of Russian’]	252	14.57	63	13.97	173	116.86
<i>агресія Російської Федерації</i> [‘aggression of Russian Federation’]	244	14.10	63	13.97	164	110.78
<i>агресія російської держави</i> [‘aggression of Russian state’]	0	0	0	0	8	5.40
<i>агресія проти</i> [‘aggression against’]	191	11.04	32	7.10	75	50.66
<i>агресія проти Україна</i> [‘aggression against Ukraine’]	132	7.63	23	5.10	63	42.56
<i>агресія проти наш*</i> [‘aggression against our’]	26	1.50	8	1.77	5	3.38
<i>агресія Росії</i> [‘aggression of Russia’]	120	6.94	10	2.22	26	17.56
<i>агресія Росії проти</i> [‘aggression of Russia against’]	35	2.02	2	0.44	15	10.13
<i>російська агресія</i> [‘Russian aggression’]	528	30.52	74	16.41	134	90.52
<i>від російської агресії</i> [‘from Russian aggression’]	47	2.72	8	1.77	14	9.46
<i>початок російської агресії</i> [‘beginning of Russian aggression’]	35	2.02	2	0.44	4	2.70
<i>вторгнення російськ*</i> [‘invasion of Russian’]	9	0.52	4	0.89	23	15.54
<i>вторгнення Російської Федерації</i> [‘invasion of Russian Federation’]	2	0.12	2	0.12	20	13.51
<i>вторгнення на</i> [‘invasion in (at)’]	11	0.64	5	1.11	8	5.40
<i>вторгнення на територію</i> [‘invasion in (the) territory’]	7	0.40	3	0.67	6	4.05
<i>вторгнення у/в</i> [‘invasion in (at)’]	6	0.35	4	0.89	12	8.11
<i>вторгнення в Україну</i> [‘invasion into Ukraine’]	4	0.23	2	0.44	8	5.40
<i>повномасштабне вторгнення</i> [‘full-scale invasion’]	5	0.29	5	1.11	73	49.31
<i>початок повномасштабного вторгнення</i> [‘start of (the) full-scale invasion’]	0	0	0	0	25	16.89
<i>день повномасштабного вторгнення</i> [‘day of (the) full-scale invasion’]	0	0	0	0	9	6.08
<i>російське вторгнення</i> [‘Russian invasion’]	12	0.69	0	0	12	8.11

<i>повномасштабне російське вторгнення</i> ['full-scale Russian invasion']	2	0.12	0	0	2	1.35
<i>російська навала</i> ['Russian incursion']	11	0.64	7	1.55	11	7.43
<i>від російської навали</i> ['from (the) Russian incursion']	6	0.35	4	0.89	3	2.03
<i>кримська криза</i> ['Crimean crisis']	5	0.29	0	0	0	0
<i>подолання кримської кризи</i> ['overcoming of (the) Crimean crisis']	4	0.23	0	0	0	0

Source: author's own research

The lemma *криза* 'crisis' is in the top 1300 most frequent lemmas in the entire ParlaMint-UA corpus (72.27 hits pmt) and it commonly collocates with the adjectives *економічний* 'economic', *політичний* 'political', *енергетичний* 'energy' and the appositions *в/у* 'in' or *на* 'on/at'. Instances of *гуманітарна криза* 'humanitarian crisis' in Ukraine (or its occupied parts before the full-scale invasion) or *продовольча криза* 'food crisis' outside Ukraine, construed as resulting from Russia's aggression, are also on record. However, uses of *криза* 'crisis' as a designation of the armed hostilities in focus are rather idiosyncratic in Ukrainian parliamentary discourse. The lexical sequence *кримська криза* ['Crimean crisis'], included in Table 7, appears in statements made by a pro-Ukrainian member of the Ukrainian parliament over a two-day span in March 2014, shortly before Russia's annexation of Crimea. Other uses of *криза* 'crisis' to name Russia's armed hostilities in Ukraine between 2014 and 2022 do not appear in any specific lexical sequences, which would satisfy the criteria for c-grams above. Notably, they are more likely to be used in statements made by members of pro-Russian factions and groups (see more on pro-Ukrainian and pro-Russian political forces in Terms 7–9 in Kryvenko, 2025) and are manipulatively contrasted with the concept of peace (9).

(9) ... вирішення ситуації в східних регіонах може бути досягнуто лише через мирне врегулювання цієї кризи.

[... A solution to the situation in the eastern regions can only be achieved through a peaceful resolution of this crisis.] (Serhiy Sazhko, Opposition Bloc, 2018-01-16)

Shevchenko et al. (2022: 72) argue that the choice of *crisis* in reference to armed hostilities is indeed a means of manipulation, since its semantic structure inhibits its construal as belonging to the domain of armed hostilities. However, according to their data (ibid.), starting from 2014 *crisis* was a prevalent nomination for Russia's aggression against Ukraine in the English-language media, which did not account for the aggressive nature of Russia's actions and practically ignored its annexation of Crimea, and its occupation of parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. This misleading portrayal in foreign media did not go unnoticed even in the Ukrainian parliament (10).

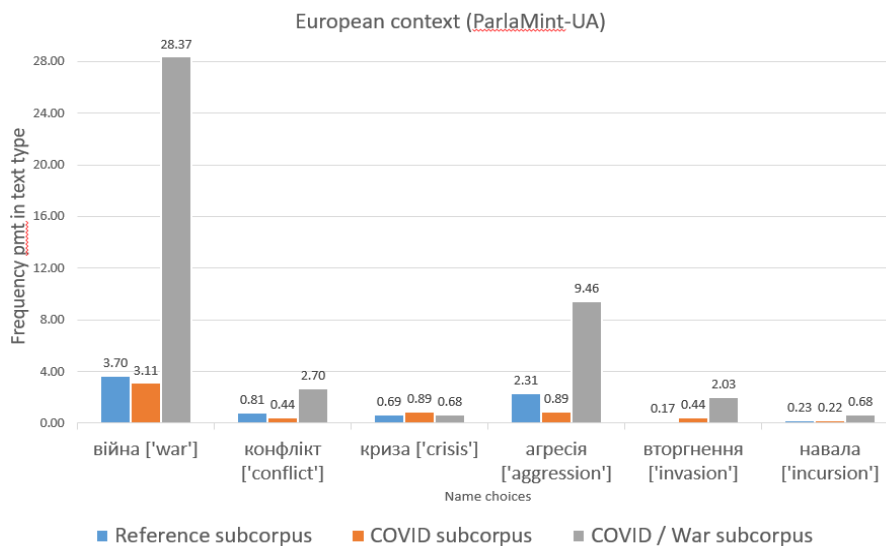
(10) ... наші європейські партнери повинні чітко розуміти, що у нас триває повномасштабна війна. І це саме війна, а не криза і не конфлікт, що доволі часто говориться в іноземних ЗМІ. Адже саме Україна в центрі Європи воює з державою, яка намагається залякати весь світ.

[... our European partners should clearly understand that we are in a full-scale war. And this is a war, not a crisis or a conflict, as is often said in foreign media. After all, it is Ukraine in the center of Europe that is at war with the state that is trying to intimidate the whole world.] (Oleh Kulinich, Dovira, 2022-07-08)

In ParlaMint-UA, *війна* 'war' is the most frequent choice among other names for the hostilities at the distance of 9 tokens in the right and left contexts of the words *Європа* 'Europe' and *європейський* 'European' across the subcorpora, with *агресія* 'aggression' being the clear

second choice (Figure 4). Uses of *війна* ‘war’ in conjunction with Europe predominantly relate to World War II, memories of which are proximised, along temporal, spatial and axiological lines (Cap 2013), to construe Russia’s ongoing aggression. Mentions of the hybrid war that Russia is waging against Europe as well as Europe as the location of the current war are also present but less salient.

Figure 4. Naming the hostilities and their effects in the European context (ParlaMint-UA).



Source: author’s own research

To examine uses of the lemma *криза* ‘crisis’ in the European context, the initial results were manually filtered for their relevance to Russia’s hostile actions affecting the security sector of Ukraine and, more broadly, the whole of Europe. They include references to the energy crisis and concerns about Ukrainian refugees in relation to the migration crisis in the Reference and COVID subcorpora. However, the humanitarian crisis caused by Russia’s aggression since 2014 – and dramatically worsened since 2022 – is discussed primarily as a major social and demographic challenge within Ukraine, rather than as a broader European humanitarian crisis linked to the large numbers of Ukrainian protection seekers abroad.

4. Discussion

4.1. Contesting nominations for armed hostilities in parliamentary discourse

The results reported above, combined with closer readings of selected concordance lines, provide a basis for identifying two important aspects in the analysis of the discursive construction of armed hostilities in parliamentary discourse. First, concepts in the domain of armed hostilities are likely to fall into the category of essentially contested concepts related to value judgements in terms of Walter B. Gallie (see a discussion in Smith, 2021: 31, 53-57). They are constantly challenged and negotiated in contemporary political discourse by means of, *inter alia*, choosing particular names over others and using them in specific contexts to make some dimensions of a concept more salient, while obscuring others. In the parliamentary arena, these choices have to do, on the one hand, with broader processes of terminologisation and determinologisation, and on the other, with the ongoing situated interplay between technical

terms and common words, as well as between the terminological and common senses of the same words. For instance, in ParlaMint-UA there was a competition among the phrases *збройний конфлікт* ‘armed conflict’, *військовий конфлікт* ‘military conflict’ and less frequently *воєнний конфлікт* ‘war conflict’ related to their legal conformity with other laws and conventions (11).

(11) ... термін "воєнний конфлікт" є неправильним, бо в інших законах і конвенціях використовується "збройний конфлікт" або "агресія".

[‘... the term "military conflict" is incorrect, as other laws and conventions use "armed conflict" or "aggression".’] (Mykola Kniazytskyi, European Solidarity, 2022-04-21)

At the same time, the terms with *конфлікт* ‘conflict’ as their component were used in the competing frames of the hostilities in focus as an inter-state versus intra-state encounter by the pro-Ukrainian and pro-Russian factions respectively. Before the onset of Russia’s full-scale invasion, the Opposition Bloc faction used conflict-based terms with a relative frequency of 84.35 times pmt on aggregate and its political descendant, the Opposition Platform For Life faction, used them 29.13 times pmt, with the purpose of shifting focus onto the location of the events (*конфлікт на Донбасі* ‘conflict in Donbas’; *конфлікт на сході* ‘conflict in the east’) and away from the aggressor. For comparison, representatives of the European Solidarity faction used these terms 13.38 times pmt and the Servant of the People faction used them only 10.21 times pmt in the Reference and COVID subcorpora.

In ParlaMint-GB, the strength of the association between *Ukraine* and *conflict* is higher than between *Ukraine* and *war* in the Reference and COVID subcorpora but it is reversed in the COVID / War subcorpus, with the Log Dice value being above 7 for both *war* and *conflict* (Table 2). This dynamic is characteristic of the two leading political parties in the British parliament. In the Reference and COVID subcorpora, representatives of the Conservative party used *conflict* 0.3 times pmt and *war* 0.12 times pmt in the 5 L/F co-texts with *Ukraine*, while representatives of the Labour party used *conflict* 0.34 times pmt and *war* 0.18 times pmt in the same co-texts. In the COVID / War subcorpus, *conflict* was used 0.75 times pmt and *war* 2.75 times pmt in speeches by the Conservatives, while the Labour used *conflict* 0.39 times pmt and *war* 3.19 times pmt in the same co-texts. At the same time, explicit terminological uses of *conflict* such as *armed conflict* or *law of armed conflict* are rare in the UK data (see Table 4). Second, name choices are necessary but not sufficient means of shaping the listeners /readers’ understanding of the circumstances related to the armed hostilities in focus. It is evident that dubbing the armed hostilities in focus as “the Ukraine crisis” evokes the Catastrophe frame, which recontextualises the events as de-agentialised, i.e. “brought about in ways that are impermeable to human agency – through natural forces /./ and so on” (van Leeuwen, 2016: 149) and not through military aggression. Shevchenko et al. (2022: 76) argue that *war* is the most accurate nomination for the hostilities between Russia and Ukraine, “while other concepts distort native speakers’ perceptions of the state of affairs and serve as a means of manipulation, distracting from the aggressor’s war crimes, defenders’ victories and the tragedy of the civilian population suffering from aggression”. However, the results reported in this contribution indicate that the usage of the lexical unit *war* or its equivalent in Ukrainian, as well as the lexical unit *conflict* or its equivalent in Ukrainian, both of which evoke the Hostile encounter frame in terms of the FrameNet compilers (Fillmore et al., 2003a; Ruppenhofer et al., 2017): 1) does not necessarily highlight the Sides of the hostilities (cf. *war in Ukraine* or *війна на сході* ‘war in the east’ versus *war on / against Ukraine* or *війна проти України* ‘war against Ukraine’ in Table 4 and Table 6 respectively); 2) does not necessarily present Side 1 as the Assailant or

Invader and Side 2 as the Victim or the Attacked (e.g., *war between Russia and Ukraine* or *російсько-українська війна* ‘Russian-Ukrainian war’ in Table 3 and Table 5 respectively).

It is notable that in the ParlaMint-GB’s COVID / War subcorpus *war* has a much stronger association with *Putin* than with *Russia* or *Russian* (Figure 1), as in *Putin’s war* (see also Table 4), which suggests assigning primary responsibility to the individual leader, framing the war as his personal project and leaving room for the Russian state or people to be seen as separate from the atrocities of war. On the contrary, in ParlaMint-UA *війна* ‘war’ has the strongest consistent associations with *Росія* ‘Russia’ and *російський* ‘Russian’ across the subcorpora, while the collocate *Путін* ‘Putin’ consistently comes third (Figure 3). The problem of seeing this war as Putin’s is explicitly addressed in the Ukrainian parliament in (8). In both ParlaMint-GB and ParlaMint-UA, *aggression* and *агресія* ‘aggression’ have the most consistent associations with the aggressor across the whole period of observation but various designations for the aggressor are more onomasiologically salient in the Ukrainian parliament, including *Росія* ‘Russia’, *російський* ‘Russian’, *рашистський* ‘ruscist’ (adj.), *Путін* ‘Putin’, *путінський* ‘Putinesque’, *Москва* ‘Moscow’, *московський* ‘Moscovian’, *Кремль* ‘Kremlin’, *кремлівський* ‘Kremlin’s’ (adj.).

4.2. Outlining the region of war in parliamentary discourse

While international law views the region of war as encompassing the entire territories of the belligerent parties (Dinstein, 2017: 21), in parliamentary discourse the region of war is constructed selectively and strategically. In the Invading frame, Land, i.e. the political area crippled by the Invader’s entry, is considered a core frame element (e.g. *invasion of Ukraine / Crimea*, cf. *annexation² of Crimea*), while Place is defined in Fillmore et al. (2003b: 319) as a non-core frame element in various frames, because it is conceptually not necessary for making a frame unique in terms of frame semantics. However, the data show that references to the Place frame element as the location of the Hostile encounter may play an important role in the competing and overlapping framing of the hostilities in parliamentary discourse. Phrases like *conflict in (the) Donbass / the east of Ukraine* in ParlaMint-GB and their Ukrainian equivalents in ParlaMint-UA frame the events as regionally contained. Alternatively, they may imply a civil war or an internal conflict – a narrative actively promoted by Russia (Yavorska, 2016: 15) before its large-scale invasion of Ukraine. Highlighting Ukraine as the focal location of the Hostile encounter (*war in Ukraine, conflict in Ukraine*, cf. *Ukraine war, Ukrainian war*) may also suggest that the armed hostilities are intra-state or at least contained within one state. Even when the international character of this war is not denied, this framing obscures Russia’s role as the aggressor and allows political actors to avoid its strong condemnation. The lack of explicit references to the aggressor can lead to weaker responses from international institutions as well as influence international public perception, making the war less morally clear-cut.

A noteworthy change in the COVID / War subcorpus of both corpora is a significant increase in the co-occurrence of *war* with *Europe* (Figure 2 and Figure 4), including the phrase *war in Europe* (Table 4). Although the degree of narrowing the symbolic distance between the events and the speakers in the discursive space (after Cap 2013) varies in parliamentary discourse, overall, this framing broadens the geographical and political implications, shifting the focus from Ukraine alone to the entire European continent, and suggesting that these armed hostilities

² *Annexation* is not included into a list of lexical units in the FrameNet database, but there are grounds to analyse it as related to the Invading and Taking frames.

threaten European stability, security and values. It mobilises European identity and solidarity and is used to justify stronger European support, including military aid, sanctions and diplomatic pressure on Russia. It also evokes historical memories, primarily of World War II, counters isolationist narratives and supports arguments for better coordinated security and defence policies on the continent.

Conclusion

In conclusion, a comparative corpus-based perspective on the onomasiological salience of alternative designations of armed hostilities used in comparable institutional settings over a period of time, including socially significant turning points, seems to be a promising area of interdisciplinary research with multiple possibilities for combining and cross-fertilising traditional and innovative approaches to lexical semantics, frame semantics, MD-CADS and critical approaches to discourse, such as CDA. The present study, limited to its two research questions, six lexical units in focus, two data sources and a few corpus linguistic techniques and statistical measurements only scratches the surface but hopefully paves the way for further research into the factors influencing the choice of names and frames in constructing Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and Ukraine's war of self-defence against Russia – or any other wars – in parliamentary discourse.

The current findings suggest that naming and framing of armed hostilities in parliamentary debates have to do with the hybrid legal and political nature of parliamentary discourse as well as an interplay between the institutional and individual choices of the speakers, including their references to preceding texts (written or spoken), their performance of follow-up discourses and a degree of improvisation. Spatial and temporal proximity or distance between the speakers and the events in focus affects yet does not determine their conceptualisation as proximal or distant from the speakers themselves as well as from their addressees and is subject to change. The consistency of the applicability of name choices for armed hostilities to real-life circumstances needs to be further examined in relation to the political standing and party agendas of the speakers in the ever-changing political and geopolitical climate.

Acknowledgments

This study was supported by the Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency under Project N6-0288 The Changing Discursive Semantics of EU Representations: Identity, Populism, Propaganda.

References

- Ädel, A. (2010). "How to use corpus linguistics in the study of political discourse". In: O'Keeffe, A. and McCarthy, M. eds 2010. *The Routledge Handbook of Corpus Linguistics*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Alyahya, A. F. (2023). "Critical discourse analysis of newspaper articles declaring the outbreak of war in Ukraine: The Washington Post vs. The Moscow Times". *International Journal of Society, Culture & Language*, 11(2), 47-59.
- Bayley, P. (2004). "Introduction: The whys and wherefores of analysing parliamentary discourse". In: Bayley, P. ed 2004. *Cross-cultural Perspectives on Parliamentary Discourse*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins. Pp. 1-44.
- Berganza, R., Herrero-Jiménez, B. and Carratalá, A. (2018). "The dynamics of parliamentary debates on war and conflict: assessing the impact and role of the media on the political agenda". In: Fröhlich, R. ed 2018.

Media in War and Armed Conflict Dynamics of Conflict News Production and Dissemination. Oxon / New York: Routledge. Pp. 111-135.

- Bielykh, O. M. (2024). “Термінологічні словосполучення із стрижневим компонентом «krieg» та їх переклад на українську мову [Terminological phrases with the core component “krieg” and their translation into Ukrainian]”. *Academic Studies. Humanities Series, 1*, 40-46.
- Bonnet, A.-P. (2023). “War propaganda or political opportunism? How British Prime Ministers have used the war in Ukraine for political gain”. *Close Encounters in War Journal, 6*, 70-91.
- Brezina, V. (2018). “Statistical choices in corpus-based discourse analysis”. In: Taylor, C. and Marchi, A. eds 2018. *Corpus Approaches to Discourse: A Critical Review*. London and New York: Routledge. Pp. 259-280.
- Britsyn, V. (2024). “Мова в час війни: функціонування й мовні проскрипції [Language in time of war: functioning and lingual prescriptions]”. In: Azhniuk, B. M. ed 2024. *Language and War: The Dynamics of Linguistic Systems and Language Policies*. Kyiv: Vydavnychi dim Dmytra Buraho. Pp. 123-189.
- Bylytsia, Y. (2022). “Активізація вживання політичної фразеології в німецькомовному політичному дискурсі в час війни Росії проти України [The activation of the usage of political phraseology in German political discourse during Russia’s war against Ukraine]”. *Transcarpathian Philological Studies, 24(1)*, 61-68.
- Calzada Pérez, M. (2024). “Russia and Ukraine through the eyes of ParlaMint 4.0: A collocational CADS profile of Spanish and British parliamentary discourses”. *Proceedings of the IV Workshop on Creating, Analysing, and Increasing Accessibility of Parliamentary Corpora (ParlaCLARIN) @ LREC-COLING 2024*, 84–93.
- Cap, P. (2013). *Proximization. The Pragmatics of Symbolic Distance Crossing*. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Charteris-Black, J. (2019). *Metaphors of Brexit: No Cherries on the Cake?* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Chilton, P. (2014). *Language, Space and Mind: The Conceptual Geometry of Linguistic Meaning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chiluwa, I. and Ruzaitė, J. (2024). “Analysing the language of political conflict: a study of war rhetoric of Vladimir Putin and Volodymyr Zelensky”. *Critical Discourse Studies, 1*-17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2024.2331186>
- Dinstein, Y. (2017). *War, aggression and self-defence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Druzhibiak, S. and Frantsuz, V. (2024). “Особливості вербалізації концептів «війна» та «мир» у політичному дискурсі [Peculiarities of verbalizing the concepts of war and peace in political discourse]”. *International Humanitarian University Herald. Philology, 68*, 55-60.
- Entman, R. M. (1993). "Framing: toward clarification of a fractured paradigm". *Journal of Communication, 43(4)*, 51-58.
- Erjavec, T. et al. (2024a). Linguistically annotated multilingual comparable corpora of parliamentary debates ParlaMint.ana 4.1, Slovenian language resource repository CLARIN.SI, ISSN 2820-4042. <http://hdl.handle.net/11356/1911>
- Erjavec, T. et al. (2024b). ParlaMint II: advancing comparable parliamentary corpora across Europe. *Language Resources & Evaluation*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10579-024-09798-w>
- Fazal, T. M. (2021). “The decline in declarations of war: an exchange”. *Security Studies, 30(5)*, 893-904.
- Fillmore, C. J., Johnson, C. R. and Petruck, M. R. L (2003a). “Background to Framenet”. *International Journal of Lexicography, 16(3)*, 235-250.
- Fillmore, C. J., Petruck, M. R. L., Ruppenhofer, J. and Wright, A. (2003b). “Framenet in Action: The Case of Attaching”. *International Journal of Lexicography, 16(3)*, 297-332.
- Geeraerts, D., Grondelaers, S. and Bakema, P. (1994). *The Structure of Lexical Variation: Meaning, Naming, and Context*. Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin.
- Geeraerts, D. (2017). “Entrenchment as onomasiological salience”. In: Schmid, H.-J. ed 2017. *Entrenchment and the psychology of language learning: How we reorganize and adapt linguistic knowledge*. De Gruyter Mouton; American Psychological Association. Pp. 153-174.
- Gruber, J. B. (2021). *Troublemakers in the Streets? A Framing Analysis of Newspaper Coverage of Protest in the UK 1992–2017* (PhD thesis). University of Glasgow.
- Harvard, J. (2016). “War and ‘World Opinion’: Parliamentary Speaking and the Falklands War”. *Parliamentary History, 35 (1)*, 42-53.
- Hughes, G. (2008). “Words, war and terror”. *English Today, 24(1)*, 13-17.
- Hodges A. ed (2013). *Discourses of War and Peace*. Oxford / New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ilchenko, O. A. (2023). “Метафорична модель війни в політичному дискурсі українського медіапростору 2014–2023 pp. [The metaphorical model of war in the political discourse of the Ukrainian media space

- 2014-2023]”. *Scientific notes of V. I. Vernadsky Taurida National University, Philology and Journalism Series*, 34/73(1), 21-25.
- Ilie, C. (2010). “Identity co-construction in parliamentary discourse practices”. In: Ilie, C. ed 2010. *European Parliaments under Scrutiny: Discourse Strategies and Interaction Practices*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. Pp. 57-78.
- Ilie, C. (2015). “Parliamentary discourse”. In Tracy, K. ed 2015. *The International Encyclopedia of Language and Social Interaction*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. Pp. 1113-1127.
- Ilie, C. (2016). “Parliamentary discourse and deliberative rhetoric”. In: Ihalainen, P., Ilie, C. and Palonen, K. eds 2016. *Parliament and Parliamentarism: A Comparative History of a European Concept*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books. Pp. 133-145.
- Jaworska S. and Kinloch, K. (2018). “Using multiple data sets”. In: Taylor, C. and Marchi, A. eds 2018. *Corpus Approaches to Discourse: A Critical Review*. Oxon/New York: Routledge. Pp. 110-129.
- Ji, D., Jiang, X., and Wang, L. (2024). “Domesticating international news: China’s media coverage of the Russia-Ukraine conflict”. *International Communication Gazette*, 86(1), 55-72.
- Jones, I. (2011). “The NATO Terminology Programme and NATOTerm”. *Proceedings of Translating and the Computer* 33. London: Aslib. Pp. 1-22.
- Kay, C., Roberts, J., Samuels, M. and Wotherspoon, I. eds (2009). *Historical Thesaurus of the Oxford English Dictionary*. With additional material from A Thesaurus of Old English. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Klymenko L. (2019). “Forging Ukrainian national identity through remembrance of World War II”. *National Identities* 22 (2), 133-150.
- Knüpfer, C. B. and Entman, R. M. (2018). “Framing conflicts in digital and transnational media environments”. *Media, War & Conflict*, 11(4), 476-488.
- Kovbasyuk, L. (2023). “Новітні студії концепту ВІЙНА в сучасному мовознавстві [The latest studies of the concept ‘war’ in modern linguistics]”. *Kherson State University Herald. German Studies and Intercultural Communication Series*, 2023(1), 16-21.
- Kryvenko, A. and Kopp, M. (2023). “Workflow and metadata challenges in the ParlaMint project: insights from building the ParlaMint-UA corpus”. *Proceedings of the CLARIN 2023 Annual Conference*, 67-70.
- Kryvenko, A. (2025). “‘Maidan has become part of Ukrainian identity’: The dynamics of naming and framing civil resistance in parliamentary discourse [Manuscript accepted for publication]”. *Corpora* 20(3).
- Kyryluk, F. and Kulish, R. (2023). “The concept of ‘ruscism’: essence and features”. *Politology Bulletin*, 90, 121-131.
- Lastres-Lopez, C. (2023). “Morphosyntactic and pragmatic variation in conditional constructions in English and Spanish parliamentary discourse”. In Korhonen, M. Kotze, H. and Tyrkkö, J. eds 2023. *Exploring Language and Society with Big Data: Parliamentary Discourse across Time and Space*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins. Pp. 308-335.
- Marchi, A. (2018). “Dividing up the data: epistemological, methodological and practical impact of diachronic segmentation”. In: Taylor, C. and Marchi, A. eds 2018. *Corpus Approaches to Discourse: A Critical Review*. Oxon/New York: Routledge. Pp. 174-196.
- Maslova, Y. (2023). “Вербалізація концептів війна, мир, жінка, чоловік у газетному дискурсі України у воєнний період [Verbalisation of the concepts war, peace, woman, man in the newspaper discourse of Ukraine during the war period]”. *Scientific Proceedings of Ostroh Academy National University: Philology Series*, 17(85), 71-77.
- Melnyk, S., Nazarenko, O. and Sikorska, V. (2023). “Мовна репрезентація концепту «війна» в сучасному українському медіадискурсі [Linguistic representation of the ‘war’ concept in modern Ukrainian media discourse]”. In: (n. ed) *Philological education and science: transformation and modern development vectors*. Riga: Baltija Publishing. Pp. 446-467.
- Mochtak, M. (2020). “Mythologizing war: legacies of conflict in Croatian parliamentary debates”. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 20(3), 491-513.
- Mochtak, M., Glaurdić, J. and Lesschaeve, C. (2022). “Talking War: Representation, Veterans and Ideology in Post-War Parliamentary Debates”. *Government and Opposition*, 57(1), 148-170.
- Musolff, A. (2019). “Metaphor framing in political discourse”. *Mythos-Magazin. Politisches Framing*, 1, 1-10.
- Nakonechna, H. (2018). “Термінологізація і детермінологізація: ступінь опрацювання й вектори розвитку [Terminologisation and Determinologisation: Extent of Elaboration and Paths of Development]”. In: Kunch, Z., Nakonechna, H., Mykytiuk, O., Bulyk-Verkhola, S., Tehlivets, Y. ed 2018 *Term Theory: Specification of Lexico-Semantic Paradigms*. Lviv: Halytska Vydavnycha Spilka. Pp. 11-37.
- NATO (2020). AAP-06 NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions (English and French). (ed 2020). NATO Standardization Office. [https://www.coemed.org/files/stanags/05_AAP/AAP-06_2020_EF_\(1\).pdf](https://www.coemed.org/files/stanags/05_AAP/AAP-06_2020_EF_(1).pdf)
- Partington, A., Duguid, A. and Taylor, C. (2013). *Patterns and Meanings in Discourse: Theory and Practice in Corpus-assisted Discourse Studies (CADS)*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

- Piankovska, I. V. (2022). “Лексичні особливості німецьких медіатекстів на тему «Krieg in der Ukraine» в контексті медіаекології [Lexical features of German media texts on the topic ‘war in Ukraine’ in the context of media ecology]”. *New Philology*, 2022(86), 144-149.
- Polishchuk, N. (2023). “Військова термінологіка в мові сучасних масмедіа [Military lexis in the language of modern mass media]”. *Terminologichnyi Visnyk* 2023(7), 100-110.
- Psarros, N. (2023). “The Nature of War”. *Conatus - Journal of Philosophy*, 8(2), 457-475.
- Ruppenhofer, J., Boas, H. C. and Baker, C. F. (2017). “FrameNet”. In: Fuertes-Olivera, P. A. ed 2017. *The Routledge Handbook of Lexicography*. New York and London: Routledge. Pp. 383-398.
- Searle, J. R. (1976). “A classification of illocutionary acts”. *Language in Society*, 5(1), 1-23.
- Shevchenko, I., Morozova, I. and Shevchenko, V. (2022). “Nominations of Russian aggression against Ukraine in English-language media: a cognitive-pragmatic study”. *Visnyk of V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University. Series: Foreign Philology. Methodology of Teaching Foreign Languages*, 95, 70-77.
- Shyrokov V. et al. eds (2018). *Словник української мови online [Dictionary of the Ukrainian language online]*. Ukrainian Language and Information Fund of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. <https://sum20ua.com/>
- Smith, V. (2021). *Naming and Framing: Understanding the Power of Words across Disciplines, Domains, and Modalities*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Snyder, T. (20 May 2022). "We Should Say It. Russia Is Fascist." *International New York Times*. <https://go.gale.com/ps/i.do?p=AONE&u=anon~a32c388a&id=GALE%7CA704311701&v=2.1&it=r&sid=googleScholar&asid=38480efc>
- Stevenson, A. and Waite, M. eds (2012). “War”. In: *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford / New York: Oxford University Press. P. 1627.
- Taylor, C. (2023). “Disinformation and immigration discourses”. In: Maci, S.M., Demata, M., McGlashan, M. and Seargeant, P. eds 2023. *The Routledge Handbook of Discourse and Disinformation*. New York and London: Routledge. Pp. 171-186.
- Tymoshchuk, N. M. (2023). “Euphemisms in Modern Political Discourse: Joseph Biden’s Speeches in the War in Ukraine”. *Alfred Nobel University Journal of Philology*, 2(26/2), 210-224.
- Tyrkkö, J. and Kotze, H. (2023). “Perspectives on parliamentary discourse: From corpus linguistics to cultural analytics”. In: Korhonen, M., Kotze, H. and Tyrkkö, T. eds 2023. *Exploring Language and Society with Big Data: Parliamentary Discourse across Time and Space*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. Pp. 1-16.
- van Leeuwen, T. (2016). “Discourse as the recontextualization of social practice – a guide”. In: Wodak, R. E. and Meyer, M. eds 2016. *Methods of Critical Discourse Studies*. (3rd ed.) London: Sage. Pp. 137-153.
- Vilchynska, T. (2017). “Концепт «війна»: особливості мовної об’єктивації у газетному тексті [Concept ‘war’: peculiarities of lingual instantiation in newspaper text]”. *Linguistic Studies*, 34, 110-114.
- Yavorska, G. (2016). “‘War’ concept: semantics and pragmatics”. *Strategic Priorities. Philosophy Series*, 1, 14-23.
- Yavorska, G. (2024). “The discourse of war (several methodological questions)”. In: Azhniuk, B. M. ed 2024. *Language and War: The Dynamics of Linguistic Systems and Language Policies*. Kyiv: Vydavnychi dim Dmytra Buraho. Pp. 211-228.
- Yemelianova, O. (2024). “Adjectives as the reflection of the Russian-Ukrainian war perception”. *Contemporary Studies in Foreign Philology*, 2(26), 7-15.
- Zinevich, L. V. and Krasavina V.V. (2017). “Концепт «війна» у сучасному українському суспільно-політичному дискурсі [The concept of ‘war’ in modern Ukrainian socio-political discourse]”. *Odessa Linguistic Journal*, 2017(Special Issue), 70-72.