

Cognition, communication, discourse. 2022, 24: 115-139.

<http://sites.google.com/site/cognitiondiscourse/home>

<https://doi.org/10.26565/2218-2926-2022-24-09>

Received 24.04.2022; revised and accepted 24.06.2022

UDC 811.112.2

UKRAINE AND THE WEST IN PRO-RUSSIA CHINESE MEDIA: A METHODOLOGY FOR THE ANALYSIS OF MULTIMODAL POLITICAL NARRATIVE

Svitlana Zhabotynska*

Doctor of Philology, Professor,

Bohdan Khmelnytsky National University of Cherkasy

(81 Shevchenko Blvd., Cherkasy 18023, Ukraine);

e-mail: saz9@ukr.net ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9841-6335>

Olha Ryzhova

Master student,

Bohdan Khmelnytsky National University of Cherkasy

(81 Shevchenko Blvd., Cherkasy 18023, Ukraine);

e-mail: oliaryzhova123@gmail.com

Article citation: Zhabotynska, S., & Ryzhova, O. (2022). Ukraine and the West in pro-Russia Chinese media: A methodology for the analysis of multimodal political narratives. *Cognition, communication, discourse*, 24, 115-139. <https://doi.org/10.26565/2218-2926-2022-24-09>

Abstract

This study represents a research project done at the crossroads of political, multimodal and cognitive linguistics. In focus is the Russia-Ukraine war featured in March – May, 2022 by the English edition of *the Global Times*, a Chinese media outlet, one of the voices of pro-Russia Chinese state propaganda. The analyzed articles contain political cartoons and thus can be defined as multimodal texts. Together, they mold a narrative, or ‘story’ addressed to international readers and intended to shape their worldview beneficial for Russia. Our study of this narrative aims to reconstruct the mental image it portrays and to expose the ways in which the verbal and visual modes interact to implant this image into the readers’ minds. To fulfil this task, we propose a cognitive linguistic methodology which, applied algorithmically, enables building cognitive ontologies that structure information rendered verbally and visually. The constituents of each ontology have factual and emotive salience, dependent of the number of descriptions provided by empirical texts. We demonstrate how an overlap of the ontologies boosts salience of the key emotively connoted message targeted at the audience. In the study, the interplay between verbal and visual modes in individual texts is characterized in terms of accentuation, elaboration, extension, questioning, and combining considered as universal ways of ‘stretching’ information, which are trackable far beyond the metaphoric domain where they were previously identified by Lakoff and Turner (1989).

Key words: political narrative, media text, multimodality, verbal and visual modes, political cartoons, research methodology, cognitive linguistics approach, propaganda, pro-Russian Chinese media, Russia-Ukraine war.

1. Introduction

Driven by imperial ambitions, on February 24, 2022 Russia launched its military aggression against Ukraine. This aggression had been preceded and is now accompanied by massive information assaults incorporated into Russia’s hybrid warfare that employs a variety of tools, ranging from conventional to irregular combat operations, sponsorship of political protests, economic coercion, and a powerful information campaign conducted predominantly through mass media (Kofman & Rojansky, 2015, p. 1). In the information campaign as a part of hybrid warfare, the media’s rhetoric becomes propagandistic

and combative in nature (Hutchinson, 2008, p. 35). Propaganda, as a systemic communication process, combines a series of activities to convey information, facts and messages to the target audience in order to form its particular worldview or mold the required public values and opinions. Destructive propaganda, smearing the opponent, employs disinformation and fakes intended to influence public opinion by exaggerating or distorting the image of reality (Petrenko et al., 2021, p. 12). The destructive Russian propaganda is broad and complex, exploiting history, culture, and language. Its methods and techniques, supported by emotionally loaded semiotic means, serve to spread information that benefits Russia (but with no clear allegiance to the Kremlin), to convey strong anti-Western and anti-North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) message, to promote conspiracy theories that combine facts and half-truths, and to implant black-and-white ideological simplifications (Kuczyńska-Zonik & Tatarenko, 2019, p. 144).

Russia's information operations have been notably effective in using strategic communications to shape political biases in many countries. Among the most well-known vectors for this strategy are such media outlets as *Russia Today* and *Sputnik News*. But Russia also uses targeted television programs, funds European think tanks to promote its views, and employs large numbers of Internet trolls, bots, and fake news farms. The result is a multichannel media resource used to muddy the waters and cast doubt upon objective truths (Chivvis, 2017, p. 3). Among the constantly repeated messages concerned with Ukraine and disseminated by Russian propaganda are: Ukraine is a failed state (with other messages formed around this one to reinforce and complement it) (Petrenko et al., 2021, p. 19); the 2014 coup d'état in Ukraine resulted in the seizure of power; the coup d'état was organized by the United States, the European Union and NATO (together or separately), while the Ukrainian people opposed it; the coup d'état's goals were diverse: to destabilize Ukraine, turn its population against Moscow, and create a convenient West 'puppet' government; the Ukrainian government is under direct control of the United States (VoxCheck Team, 2022). Via distorting and framing facts, these messages justify the war in Ukraine, unleashed by Russia in February, 2022. The pretext of 'saving' Ukrainians from their 'Nazi' rulers, is now being backed by a new set of propaganda claims about the treacherous West who threatened Russia using Ukraine as a tool, and whom Russia, without any other choice, had to fight back for the sake of its own security (see more in Civil Network Opora, 2022). Russia strives to spread this message worldwide through the foreign pro-Russia media (VoxCheck Team, 2022; Yang, 2022 among others). One of them – the Chinese popular tabloid *the Global Times* (its English version) – is addressed in our research with the aim to understand how the pro-Russian war message assumes the form of a 'story', or 'narrative', beneficial for Russia and intended for entrenchment in the minds of international audience.

The Russia-Ukraine war 'story' told by *the Global Times* and analyzed in our research is relayed in a number of media articles, where the verbal text is supplied with a political cartoon. Such 'story', rendered by different semiotic modes, or codes, is defined as a multimodal narrative. Since it is a relatively new object of linguistic analysis, scholars are in search of plausible methodologies for exposure of the ways in which different modes contribute to the narrative's meaning. These methodologies should be guided by universal principles, applicable beyond a particular case-study. Our paper proposes such principles consistent with a cognitive linguistics approach. Therefore, our research, done from the standpoint of cognitive political linguistics, pursues two major *goals*. The *political linguistics goal* is to register the properties of a multimodal narrative which are relevant for making it a weapon of political propaganda. The *cognitive linguistics goal* is to develop a methodology applicable for arranging and integrating information rendered by the narrative's verbal and visual modes.

The article starts with defining the conceptions of political narrative and multimodality that serve as a theoretical background of our work. Then, we consider the methodological issues deemed relevant for the study of a political multimodal narrative represented in media texts. Application of the proposed methodology is further exemplified with analysis of *the Global Times*' multimodal texts supplied with cartoons. We finalize the article with a concluding discussion that summarizes the findings and outlines perspectives for the next stage of our inquiry.

2. Theoretical background. Political narrative and multimodality

The term *narrative*, conventionally understood as a story, primarily associates with a literary text, where the description of several real or fictive events or situations is arranged in a time sequence. Beyond the domain of philology, narrative refers to the “ways in which we construct disparate facts in our own worlds and weave them together cognitively in order to make sense of our reality” (Patterson & Monroe, 1998, p. 315). In this broad meaning the term *narrative* has been borrowed into social sciences, including political and media studies which nowadays are concerned with both conventional (verbal) and multimodal (mostly verbal and visual) narratives.

Defined as a reflection of current political affairs, the *political narrative* is represented primarily through media. The political narrative affects our perceptions of political reality, which in turn affect our actions in response to or in anticipation of political events. Therefore, narrative plays a critical role in shaping our worldview and in construction of our political behavior, which is true for individuals and for collective units, such as nations or groups (Groth, 2019, p. 3). The political narrative, understood as both a text whose structure represents the teller’s image of the world, and a textually arranged image of the world imposed upon the audience (Zhabotynska & Velivchenko, 2019, p. 365), aims to persuade and garner support, thus providing “mediation of political process in a story form” suitable to harness the narrative strategically (Groth, 2019, p. 8). The *strategic narrative* is the story featuring an official political strategy via constructing “a shared meaning of the past, present and future of international politics to shape the behaviour of domestic and international actors” (Miskimmon et al., 2013). Political strategic narratives correspond to stories about states and their political systems, the citizens’ identity and the world order they need. (Groth, 2019, pp. 8-9). Political narratives in general and strategic narratives in particular are ‘controlled’ with regard to their persuasiveness: if stories are told in the right way and at the right time, if they accentuate the appropriate aspects and address the appropriate audiences, they are effective and can succeed in framing the political positions as favorable ones (ibid., p. 8).

Persuasiveness of the political narrative involves manipulation – an interactional and communicative practice, where one person controls others against their will, and in such a way produces social inequality. Manipulation is prone to tug at the public’s negative emotions grounded on fear (Van Dijk, 2006, p. 360). Duffy (2018) notes that in shaping public opinion objective facts are less influential than appeal to emotion and personal belief (p. 8). Moreover, “emotional response alters our perception of reality” (p. 4). Antagonistic and aggressive political narratives, aimed at destruction of the Other (bad) who is opposed to Self (good), stir our biologically instinctive need “to pay more attention when a clear threat is involved” (p. 116). The innate bias of a human being to focus on negative information for self-preservation is used by opinion-makers when they aim to misdirect for certain political gains. Stirring emotions, especially negative ones, remains a popular strategy in the misdirection and disinformation flows which use another property of negative images – their ‘stickiness’ in mentality (p. 62). Besides, narrative images of the Other often come through stereotypes as simplifications and categorizations of the world that facilitate the limited effort by individuals to process information via mental shortcuts. In political narratives, stereotype is a particular simplification: it is a concept held by one social group about another, and frequently used to justify certain discriminatory behaviours (Hinton, 2017).

In the Russian mainstream media, the antagonistic and aggressive narratives on Ukraine and its partners capitalize on negativity and stereotyping. The purpose of spreading such narratives agrees with what Brankovic (2021) defines as “stakeholders’ securing their influence”, with stakeholders being political and social elites and institutions. The disseminated narratives highlight “the validity of one group’s grievances and the moral superiority of its claims, while placing blame for conflict on the ‘others’. It shrinks diverse and complex group narratives into a simple, self-reinforcing story that side-lines inconvenient facts and evidence”. In this case, the society “tends to be dominated by two or three simple and opposing narratives, in which extreme views eclipse moderate views in public debates and other narratives are hidden from view” (p. 2). Persuasive and manipulative potential of

the media political narrative depends on the successful interaction of its verbal and non-verbal means, which is defined as multimodality.

Multimodality, as a comparatively new field of linguistic research dating back to the 1980s, views a mode as a particular semiotic resource used in communication to express meaning. Accordingly, the term *multimodality* describes (a) a phenomenon of human communication which employs a combination of semiotic media (such as still and moving image, speech, writing, layout, gesture, and/or proxemics), and (b) a diversified and growing field of inquiry concerned with developing the respective theories, analytical tools and descriptions that approach the study of representation and communication considering modes as an organizing principle (Adami, 2017, p. 45). Textual modes are sets of organized resources that societies apply to make meaning and to express and shape values, ideologies, and power relations (ibid., p. 452). In linguistics, the meaning of the term *mode* corresponds closely to the more traditional semiotic notions of ‘code’ or ‘sign system’. Semiotic modes (verbal and non-verbal), being created through social processes, are fluid and context-dependent. “In order for a particular resource to be a mode, the community in which it is used needs to recognize it as a mode and share a cultural sense of how this resource can be organized to construct and convey meaning” (Lyons, 2015, p. 270).

The diversity of interacting modes is represented by their “intrasemiotic / intramodal” and “intersemiotic / intermodal” varieties (Siefkes, 2015, p. 115). The first type demonstrates varieties within the mode (e.g., verbal mode: oral vs. written codes, regular code vs. paralinguistic codes that integrate into linguistic ones). The second type represents various combinations of autonomous modes (e.g., verbal (written) and visual (pictorial) modes employed in media texts).

Multimodal texts include ensembles of modes, and their orchestration determines the communicative intent and the main message (Barton, 2018). So, the term *multimodality* also refers to the “ways in which a number of distinct semiotic resource systems are both co-deployed and co-contextualized in the making of a text-specific meaning” (Baldry & Thibault, 2006, p. 21). The studies of multimodality mainly focus on the interrelationships between various communicative modes, no matter whether they are visual or auditory, words or image (Liu, 2013, p. 1259). When in combination with speech and / or writing, other modes are not a mere accompaniment of, or support to verbal language; rather, each mode concurs with a specific functional load to the meaning made by the overall text – and as such they deserve attention (Adami, 2017, p. 452). Similarly, visual images no longer serve as simply illustrative of the printed text, but add to the story the new and varied dimensions (Serafini, 2012, p. 30). Image and other visual modes have the capacity to form ‘texts’, complexes of signs which internally cohere with each other and externally with the context in and for which they were produced (Liu, 2013, p. 1260).

A particular type of visual image interacting with the verbal text is the political cartoon (a satirical drawing often including caricature) examined in our research as a mode of the multimodal narrative. Political cartoons are intended to transform “complex and opaque social events and situations into quick and easily readable depictions that facilitate comprehension of the nature of social issues and events”. In such a way “they present society with visually palpable and hyper-ritualized depictions (selectively exaggerated portions of ‘reality’) that attempt to reveal the essence and meaning of social events” (Abraham, 2009, p. 119). By their nature, cartoons cannot be ‘neutral’ because they – through provocation – always aim to trigger emotions. A cartoon exposes viewers to an opinion ‘for’ or ‘against’ its subject. In political cartoons, irony or mockery, as the most typical emotive strategies, may render danger and threat, since such cartoons are not humorous, they are sarcastic (Chaban et al., 2019-2020, p. 157-8). According to Chen et al. (2017), irrespective of a steadily growing body of research on political cartoons, their study remains fragmented theoretically and existing largely on the fringes of research in political communication (p. 125). In the domain of multimodality studies, autonomous political cartoons are now being analyzed as multimodal texts (see Đurović & Silaški, 2016; Warwa, 2018; El-Falaky, 2019 among others). Meanwhile, the works considering their interplay with the verbal text they support are sporadic (see as an example Chaban et al., 2019-2020). Similarly, under-researched

is interaction of the visual and verbal in political narratives in general (the review is provided in Pschenychnykh, 2019). One of the reasons, as we see it, is insufficiency of methodological tools applied in an algorithmic research procedure. Our study attempts to propose such tools applicable for a cognitive linguistics analysis of the multimodal media narrative.

3. Methodology for a cognitive linguistics analysis of multimodal media narratives

Methodological premises for the analysis of multimodal media narratives should be concerned with their semiotic and cognitive properties. We maintain that the *semiotic study* of multimodality is to define: (a) the semiotic types and subtypes of modes; (b) their intra- and intersemiotic configurations; and (c) the type of their formal interaction – paratactic (two or more main modes) or hypotactic (the main and subsidiary modes). The *cognitive study* of multimodal media narratives may include: (a) identifying the narrative-based concept; (a) building a cognitive ontology for the information featured by each of its semiotic modes; (c) considering the diverse semantic interactions of these ontologies. The latter topics will be further considered in more detail.

A *narrative-based concept (NBC)* is represented by information retrieved from a bulk of thematically homogeneous discrete narrative texts describing a particular issue, the name of which becomes the name of this concept (Zhabotynskaya, 2017; 2020). Information featured in a narrative-based concept evolves into a ‘metatext’, with its referential and relational coherence: it has a limited number of iterated textual referents linked by different kinds of relations (Zhabotynskaya, 2017, pp. 232-233). An NBC retrieved from numerous thematically homogeneous political texts is defined as a *narrative-based political concept (NBPC)* which, being a subjective construct, exhibits the narrator’s worldview, ideology and bias. Specificity of an NBPC “depends on the ways the ‘meta-text’ interprets an event: information about its constitutive facts can be more and less complete, differently accentuated and assessed” (Zhabotynska & Velivchenko, 2019, p. 366).

An NBC / NBPC has a *cognitive ontology* understood as a particular structural arrangement of thematically coherent information (this understanding, compatible with the one in knowledge engineering, is consonant with Fillmore’s classical definition of a frame) (Zhabotynskaya, 2020, p. 95). In a cognitive ontology, arrangement of information is provided through a hierarchy of thematic chunks. These are: *thematic domains* as the foci of an NBC/ NBPC, *thematic parcels* as the foci of the domains, and *thematic quanta* as the foci of the parcels. Thematic quanta generalize the meanings of empirical textual descriptions and build a ‘meta-narrative’ – an umbrella story inferred from other stories. In the cognitive ontology of an NBC / NBPC, the narrator’s subjectivity shows up in the content of hierarchical thematic chunks, as well as in their *factual* and *emotive salience* defined by the quantity of textual descriptions which depict a thematic chunk (Zhabotynskaya, 2017, p. 233; Zhabotynska & Velivchenko, 2019, p. 366). The emotive plane of a cognitive ontology represents the assessments ‘neutral’ /0/, ‘positive’ /+/, and ‘negative’ /-/- that are either overtly expressed in the text or inferred from its entire emotional grounding (Zhabotynska & Velivchenko, 2019, p. 338). Factual and emotive salience, created by iterations of textual descriptions of the entire narrative, are targeted at the entrenchment of the respective information in the recipients’ minds and triggering steady attitudes and affections. As Duffy (2018, p. 61) puts it with reference to media, “...if we are frequently exposed to the same, or a very similar, story through the media, we are more likely to notice the information in the world around us that confirms the stories we’ve heard and seen”. Entrenchment of information relates to its priming – “activation of concepts in the human memory due to the media exposure resulting in the heightened accessibility to the concept” (Brewer et al., 2003, p. 494).

Cognitive ontologies can be relational, entity-focused, and event-focused. *Relational ontologies* foreground the kinds of links between different entities. *Entity-focused ontologies* foreground a particular actor (node) of the relational ontology. Such actor (node) becomes a target concept, with its relations viewed as subordinate to the target. *Event-focused ontologies* foreground a particular

time-bound event populated by several actors whose properties are particularized with regard to this event. All three types of ontologies may have one or several facets. The notion of facets implies the varieties of an ontology: (a) created by one and the same narrator within different time spans, (b) created by one and the same narrator within different contexts, (c) created by different narrators, especially those with different mind-sets and biases (Zhabotynska, 2020, pp. 20-21).

In a multimodal NBC / NBPC, the information featured by each mode (such as verbal and visual typical of media texts) has its own ontology. An *interaction* of these ontologies exhibits their shared and / or non-shared thematic constituents contributing to the integral text-specific meaning (Chaban et al., 2019-2020, p. 155). Exposure of such overlap is pivotal for multimodal studies. The analysis of interaction between the main (verbal) and subsidiary (visual) modes of a multimodal narrative may also include a survey of assets made by the subsidiary text to the main one. The possible types of assets are accentuation, elaboration, extension, questioning, and combining. These ways of stretching information (except accentuation) were first described by Lakoff and Turner (1989) as the devices for developing poetic metaphors out of conventional conceptual metaphors. *Extending* a conventional conceptual metaphor adds new elements to it. *Elaboration* employs an existing element in an unusual way. In *questioning*, poets call into question the boundaries of our everyday understanding of important concepts. *Combining*, or *composing*, is going beyond the conventional metaphoric thought via formation of composite metaphors (ibid., pp. 67-70). Meanwhile, similar phenomena are tracked far beyond the domain of metaphor, and can therefore be treated as universal. When employed in the analysis of information projected by the subsidiary text onto the main text of a multimodal narrative, the above terms obtain a broader interpretation compatible with that suggested in (Zhabotynska & Slyvka, 2020, pp. 123-124). *Accentuation* is providing ‘visuality’ of the entity described in the main text. *Elaboration* is providing information about an additional property of the entity described in the main text (X_1 and X_2). *Extension* is providing information about a new entity contiguous and congruent with the one described in the main text (X and Y). *Questioning* is providing information about a new entity contiguous but incongruent with the one described in the main text (X but Y). *Combining* is providing information about a new entity noncontiguous with the one described in the main text ((X) and (Y)).

Application of the considered methodological premises will be exemplified with the analysis of empirical data.

4. Data

The data come from the English edition of the *the Global Times* (GT) Chinese daily tabloid associated with the Chinese Communist Party’s flagship newspaper *the People’s Daily*. Thus, the GT is part of a broader set of Chinese state media outlets representing the Chinese government’s propaganda apparatus. The GT comments on international issues from a nationalistic perspective, and often reflects those views of party officials with which they cannot openly come out. The newspaper’s foreign reports are often authored by correspondents from *the People’s Daily* and *Xinhua*, the state news agency (Huang, 2016; China’s Global Times plays a peculiar role, 2018). The Chinese edition of the GT, which started in 1993 as a weekly magazine, is now selling over 2.5 million copies a day (Global Times official site). Through its English edition, launched in 2009, the GT is “bringing its unvarnished opinions around the globe” – to the US, Europe, and South Africa (Huang, 2016). Today, with over 8 million daily page views, the GT’s website has “a strong presence in English-language media” (Global Times official site), and thus becomes a potentially powerful resource for delivering strategic narratives intended for shaping public opinion. The GT is referred to as the source of various incidents, including fabrications, conspiracy theories, and disinformation (China’s Global Times plays a peculiar role, 2018; Hernández, 2020). *The Media Bias Fact Check* notes that the tabloid is known “for its hawkish, insulting editorials – aggressive attacks that get it noticed and quoted by foreign media around the world as the ‘voice’ of Beijing, even as the party’s official statements are

more circumspect” (Global Times (China), 2021). The newspaper is rated as ‘mixed’ for factual reporting due to bias by omission and failed fact checks (ibid.).

The RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR narrative produced by the GT and analyzed in this study is represented by 27 articles published through March–May, 2022 and containing the reference to Russia-Ukraine war in their titles and / or in the text body. All articles, obtained via continuous sampling, include a political cartoon. The 27 cartoons, considered as a visual mode of the narrative, interact with its verbal mode that is approximately 26,000-words long. Therefore, the data furnish an intersemiotic hypotactic multimodal configuration, where the verbal mode is the main one, and the visual mode is subsidiary. The verbal text is constituted by 911 descriptions (the units of our analysis) which thematically equate with a proposition where a particular target concept, or the logical subject, has a particular homogeneous property, or the logical predicate. Among 27 cartoons constituting the visual ‘text’, 25 are metaphoric and 2 are metonymic. One cartoon is iterated thrice, and two cautions are employed twice. Thus, the number of non-repeated images is 23.

5. Analysis

All information furnished by 27 multimodal media texts selected for the analysis is considered as the narrative-based political concept RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR. This concept has a cognitive ontology where the main verbal facet overlaps with the subsidiary visual one. The further study includes reconstruction of these facets and exposure of the way in which they interact.

5.1. The RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR narrative-based verbal concept: a cognitive ontology

The narrative concept RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR has an event-focused ontology which structures information about the referents who, being ‘actors’ of the event, demonstrate different types of interaction (Figure 1).

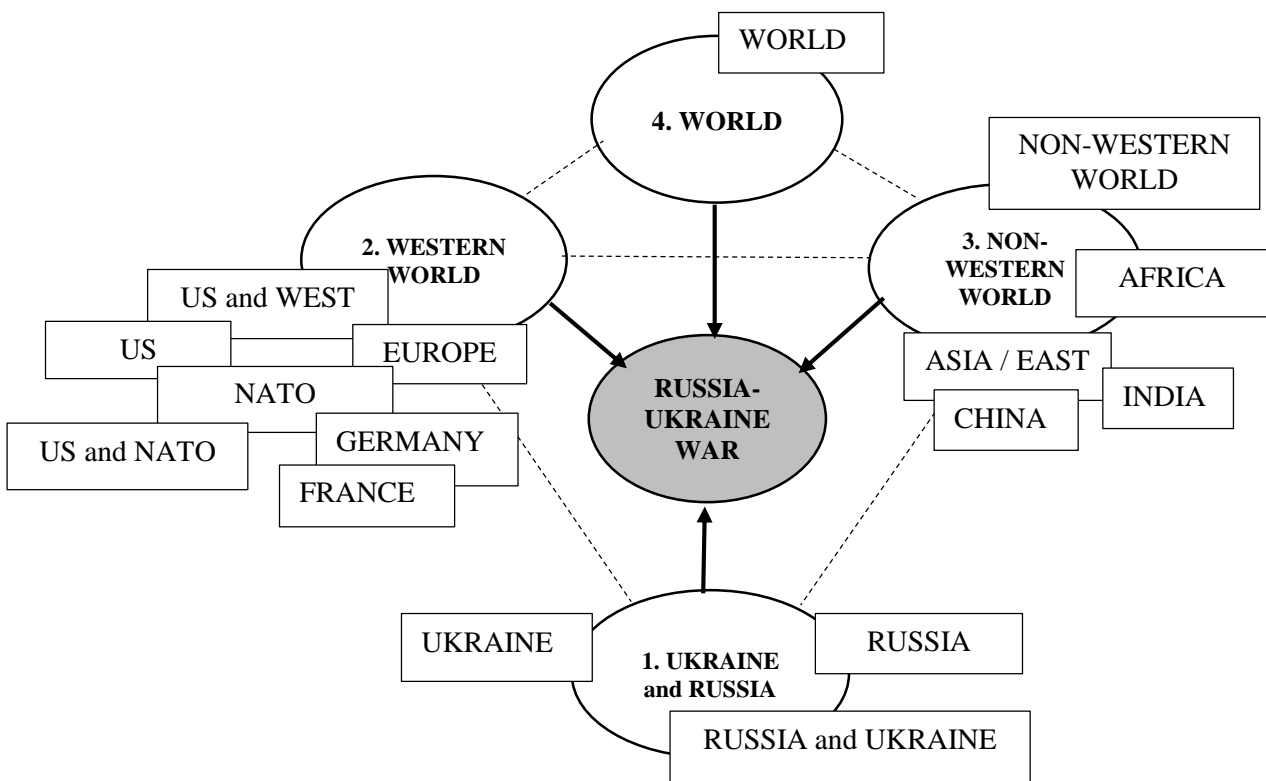


Fig. 1. The RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR narrative-based political concept: domains and parcels

The survey of 911 textual descriptions exposes 16 actors directly or indirectly involved into the event RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR. Information about them shapes parcels distributed between four domains: (1) UKRAINE and RUSSIA (parcels: UKRAINE, RUSSIA, RUSSIA and UKRAINE (together)), (2) WESTERN WORLD / WEST (parcels: US, NATO, US and NATO, US and WEST / WEST, EUROPE, GERMANY, FRANCE), (3) NON-WESTERN WORLD (parcels: CHINA, INDIA, ASIA / EAST, AFRICA, NON-WESTERN WORLD), (4) WORLD (parcel: WORLD).

Each parcel includes thematic quanta (TQ) that generalize the meanings of particular textual descriptions with neutral /0/, positive /+/ or negative /-/ connotations. The number of such descriptions shows factual and emotive salience of a parcel. Below, the thematic quanta of each parcel is supplied with a numerical notation (such as (3 [10/-/])), where the first number shows how many articles mentioned this theme, and the second number, accompanied by an assessment marker, shows how many specifically connoted textual descriptions feature this theme. The italic font signifies *relative salience* of the TQ (the number of its descriptions throughout the bulk of texts approximates or exceeds 10). The bold italic font points to the *absolute salience* of the TQ (the number of its descriptions throughout the bulk of texts approximates 20 or exceeds this number).

(1) **UKRAINE and RUSSIA: 30 TQ**

UKRAINE: 16 TQ [60 descriptions: 6/0/; 7/+; 47/-/]

As a part of the USSR, Ukraine prospered economically (1 [3+/]). Ukraine's poverty is caused by the cut of economic ties with Russia (1 [3-/]). Ukraine has not geopolitically succeeded as a state (1 [5-/]). It is a poor unsuccessful country (1 [3-/]) unable to ensure national unity (1 [4-/]). In 2014, the power in Ukraine was illegally seized by the pro-western regime (2 [5-/]). So, *Ukraine is ruled by Nazis who slaughter the innocent citizens of Donbas, using the tactics similar to those employed by the US in WWII* (1 [10-/]). Ukraine's hatred to Russia is a fragile foundation for building a country (1 [2-/]). Ukraine is responsible for its conflict with Russia (1 [2-/]). Ukraine's politics was balanced before intrusion of the US (1 [2+/]). Ukraine's goals contrast with those of the US (1 [2/0]). In the proxi war waged by Ukraine it is a victim (2 [4-/]). *Ukraine is dissatisfied with and suspicious of its European partners* (1 [9: 2/0; 7-/]). Ukraine may illegally sell Western weapons (2 [2-/]). Ukraine needs a cease-fire (1 [1+/]). Ukraine should be neutral [(2 [3:2/0; 1+/]).

RUSSIA: 11 TQ [47 descriptions: 1/0/; 46+/]

Russia keeps the memory of WWII (1 [2+/]). Russia did not initiate the current war in Ukraine; Russia is ending the 8-year war triggered by the coup-d'etat sponsored by Brussels and Washington (1 [2+/]). Russia seeks Europe's help to stop "crimes" of Ukrainian "nationalists" (1 [1+/]). Russia does not seek reconstruction of the former Soviet Union (1 [2+/]). *Russia seeks security for the Russian people within and outside the country* [(3 [14: 1/0/; 13+/]). Russia has adapted to Western sanctions (1 [3+/]). *By launching a military operation against Ukraine, Russia wants to overthrow the post-Cold War unipolar world order of US hegemony* (1 [13+/]). Russia is changing the world globally (1 [2+/]). Russia suggests replacement of the NATO-led world security framework (1 [1 /+]). Putin is not an autocratic dictator dreaming of a Russian-led global empire (1 [2+/]). Russia is aimed at real international community with equal and fair rules based on international law (1 [5+/]).

RUSSIA and UKRAINE (together): 3 TQ [15 descriptions: 3/0/; 11+/; 1/-/]

Russians and Ukrainians are historically the same folk (1 [1+/]). *Russia-Ukraine issue should have a peaceful settlement* (3 [13: 3/0/; 10+/]). Russia-Ukraine diplomatic efforts fail (1 [1-/]).

(2) **WESTERN WORLD / WEST: 86 TQ**

US: 14 TQ [100 descriptions: 3/0/; 97/-/]

The US with its domestic chaos is not a dreamland (1[3-/]). *To pursue its own geopolitical interests in the search of global dominance, the US creates security troubles* (13 [51-/]) *and manipulates other countries* (3 [13-/]). The US aspires to hegemony in Europe (3 [4-/]) and uses NATO as a political tool to control Europe (1 [1-/]). The US's aspirations to global dominance pose a threat to the world (1 [2-/]). The US supported Nazis in WWII, and supports Ukrainian Nazis now (1 [5-/]). *The US benefits from Russia-Ukraine conflict* (10 [32-/]). The US wages a public opinion war to

defend its interests in the Russia-Ukraine crisis (1 [7: 3/0; 4/-/]). The US mainstream media deliberately exploit the suffering of Ukrainian people (1 [1/-/]). The US is committing genocide in Ukraine (1 [4/-/]). The US is an unreliable partner (1 [4/-/]). The aim of the US is to strangle China (1 [2/-/]). The US is finger-pointing on the cooperation of other countries with China (1 [2/-/]).

NATO: 11 TQ [82 descriptions: 1/0/; 81/-/]

NATO is a dangerous Cold War institution (2 [2/-/]). NATO, led by the USA, creates a unitary security system currently in place (2 [7: 1/0/; 6/-/]). NATO has kidnapped European foreign policy (2 [3/-/]). The US benefits from the expansion of NATO (1 [2/-/]). NATO's influence declined with a parallel decline of the US' strength (1 [3/+]). NATO is a useless and ineffective organization (2 [6/-/]). NATO has been revived due to Russia-Ukraine conflict (2 [5/-/]). ***NATO, led by the USA, moves eastward and threatens Russia*** (7 [19/-/]). ***Expansion of NATO undermines Europe's security, as Russia may severely respond*** (3 [32/-/]). The NATO countries bordering on Russia will be punished first for the anti-Russia campaign (1 [2/-/]). NATO considers China-Russia relationship as a threat to its security and world democracy (1 [1/-/]).

US and NATO: 6 TQ [31 descriptions: 31/-/]

The US and NATO ignore Russia's need in security (2 [6/-/]). They unjustly blame Russia in the sufferings of Ukraine (1 [1/-/]). *The US and NATO do not want peace talks between Russia and Ukraine* (2 [9/-/]). The US and NATO will not guarantee Ukraine's security (2 [7/-/]). The US and NATO may turn other regions into tinderboxes (2 [6/-/]). They are dangerous for Asian countries to cooperate with (1 [2/-/]).

US and WEST / WEST: 36 TQ [331 descriptions: 3/0/; 328/-/]

The West retains Cold-War mentality (1 [1/-/]). The US and the West seek greater geopolitical interests (1 [1/-/]). ***The US and the West established an unfair world order of Western supremacy*** (5 [23/-/]). *This world order triggers conflicts* (2 [9/-/]). *Adhering to its supremacy, the West hypocritically speaks of universal values* (2 [8/-/]). The world order of Western supremacy challenges global peaceful development (1 [2/-/]) and loses trust (1 [3/-/]). — ***The US, the West and NATO are responsible for the war in Ukraine*** (10 [38/-/]). *The US and the West supply Ukraine with weapons* (5 [15: 2/0/; 13/-/]). *The US and the West aggravate the crisis in Ukraine* (6 [11/-/]). *They don't care about Ukraine's sovereignty and economic prosperity* (3 [9/-/]). ***The US and the West use Ukraine as a tool against Russia*** (8 [21: 1/0/; 20/-/]). *The US and the West want to prolong the war and damage Russia* (5 [15/-/]). *Their aim is to weaken and strangle Russia* (2 [9/-/]). *The US seeks to weaken Russia through brain-drain* (1 [11/-/]). The US and the West unjustly blame Putin and Russia in the conflict (2 [3/-/]). They establish a bubble anti-Russia coalition by hyping the slogan of "Russian threat" (1 [3/-/]). They exert excessive pressure on Russia (3 [7/-/]) and impose extreme sanctions on it (4 [6/-/]). The US calls for global sanctions against Russia (1 [3/-/]) and charges those countries who haven't condemned Russia (1 [5/-/]). The US and the West's sanctions imposed upon Russia are illegal (1 [7/-/]). They hinder solution of Russia-Ukraine conflict (1 [1/-/]). ***The West's sanctions against Russia ruin the world economy*** (5 [20/-/]). — ***The West's attitude to Ukraine is a blatant demonstration of white supremacy*** (2 [18/-/]) ***which is fully exposed in accepting Ukraine's refugees*** (2 [21/-/]). The West's white supremacy combines racism and colonialism (1 [5/-/]). *The Western media are racist and hypocritical* (1 [8/-/]). The West's white supremacy is in decline and isolation incompatible with the role of a world leader (1 [5: 5/-/]). — ***The US and the West smear China in Russia-Ukraine conflict*** (3 [23/-/]). The US charges China in taking Russia's side (1 [2/-/]). The US wants to break China-Russian relations (3 [7/-/]). — The US and the West push India to condemn Russia (1 [3/-/]). The US strives to involve India into military cooperation (1 [5: 3/0/; 2/-/]). The US wants to break China-India relations (1 [1/-/]). — The West unfairly blames Russia on 'colonization' of Africa (1 [2/-/]).

EUROPE: 15 TQ [77 descriptions: 34/0/; 12/+; 31/-/]

Europe has unsolved ethnic problems caused by European integration (1 [6/-/]). *The Russia-Ukraine conflict causes contradictions and divisions within Europe* (1 [11: 3/0/; 1/+; 7/-/]). European

countries which have a history of conflicts with Russia see it as a “threat” (1 [5/0/]). Europe is divided into two civilizations (1 [2/0/]). It wants to expand and reinforce its identity (1 [5/0/]). It redraws its ideological boundaries with Russia (1 [3/0/]), and defends its own civilization from Russia (1 [6/0/]). *Europe returns to its old aggressive conservatism* (1 [8: 6/0/, 2/-/]). It strives to recreate the world of the other (1 [6: 4/0/, 2/-/]). *For Europe, the Russia-Ukraine conflict is the foremost security threat* (4 [10/-/]). Europe suffers a humanitarian crisis caused by the Russian-Ukraine conflict (1 [4/-/]). Europe sees that sending arms to Ukraine undermines its security and stability (1 [4 /+]). Not all European states support sanctions against Russia (2 [5+]). To prosper, Europe should be peaceful (1 [1/+]) and maintain neutrality (1 [1/+]).

GERMANY: 2 TQ [14: 1/0/; 12/+; 1/-/]

Germany has always had Russia as an ally (1 [9: 1/0/; 8 /+]), while the UK and the US are German’s permanent rivals (1 [5: 4/+; 1/-/]).

FRANCE: 4 TQ [15: 14/+; 1/-/]

France, a country with influence, is sceptical about NATO (1 [4 /+]) because France disagrees with the US’s leading role in it (1 [4 /+]). Irrespective of the US’s pressure (1 [1: 1 -/]), France may leave NATO because of Russia-Ukraine conflict (1 [6 /+]).

(3) NON-WESTERN WORLD: 24 TQ

CHINA: 12 TQ [56 descriptions: 56/+]

China fought with fascism in WWII (1 [2/+]). China plays an important role in the world economy (1 [4/+]) and provides prosperity of its citizens (1 [6: 6/+]). China is a protagonist of the globalized world (1 [1/+]). It is interested in cooperation with Latin America (1 [5/+]). *China is aimed at real international community with equal and fair rules based on international law* (3 [9/+]). China is not a party to the Russia-Ukraine crisis (2 [2/+]). ***China adheres to peace and talks*** (4 [21/+]). China calls for respecting and solving Russian concerns (1 [1/+]). China and Russia remain partners (1 [3 /+]). China disapproves of the sanctions against Russia (1 [1/+]). China will never dance to Washington's baton (1 [1/+]).

INDIA: 3 TQ [7 descriptions: 5/0/; 2/+]

India pursues its own national interests (1 [3: 1/0/; 2/+]) and avoids sanctioning Russia (1 [2/0/]). India and Russia maintain friendly relations (1 [2/0/]).

ASIA / EAST: 2TQ [6 descriptions: 6/+]

Eastern major powers adhere to peace and talks (1 [1/+]). Asia should build its own security regime (1 [5/+]).

AFRICA: 4 TQ [5 descriptions: 5/+]

African countries’ independent stance toward the Ukraine-Russia crisis is informed by a sober and well-calculated assessment (1 [2/+]). They resist Western bullying into condemning Russia (1 [1/+]) and abstain from or oppose the respective resolution (1 [1/+]). African countries adhere to piece and talks (1 [3 /+]).

NON-WESTERN WORLD: 3 TQ [22 descriptions: 22/+]

Non-Western emergent countries lack trust in the world order of Western supremacy (1 [2/+]). They are aimed at real international community with equal and fair rules based on international law (2 [6/+]). *Non-western countries disapprove of the sanctions against Russia* (3 [14/+]).

(4) WORLD: 10 TQ

WORLD: 10 TQ [43 descriptions: 41/+; 2/-/]

The world is divided by confrontation caused by the Russia-Ukraine war (1 [2/-/]). Most countries of the world maintain neutrality and do not join anti-Russian coalition initiated by the US (1 [6/+]). Many countries of the world disapprove of the sanctions against Russia (3 [4/+]). The world adheres to peace and talks (3 [3/+]). The world, not the West should participate in judgement of the Russian-Ukraine war (1 [3/+]). *The Russia-Ukraine crisis has accelerated the decline of US hegemony in the world* (1 [13/+]). The world gradually discards the US’ appeal and influence (1 [2/+]). *Now, the*

world witnesses a global geopolitical shift from the Western to Eastern dominance (1 [8: 4/0/; 4/+]). The world should be more aware of anti-global nationalistic discourse of any country (1 [4/+]). The world should benefit from global economic interaction (1 [2/+]).

The analysis of data demonstrates considerable differences in *factual salience* of referential parcels (Table 1) established with regard to the number of articles where they are featured, the number TQ portraying the parcels, and the number of textual descriptions implementing such ‘portraits’.

Table 1

**The RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR verbal NBPC:
salience of the referential parcels**

Referential parcels	Number of articles	Number of TQ	Textual descriptions							
			Total		Neutral		Positive		Negative	
			Qnt.	%	Qnt.	%	Qnt.	%	Qnt.	%
UKRAINE	10	16	60	6.6	6	0.7	7	0.8	47	5.1
RUSSIA	8	11	47	5.2	1	0.1	46	5.1	-	-
RUSSIA and UKRAINE	5	3	15	1.6	3	0.3	11	1.2	1	0.1
US	20	14	100	11.0	3	0.3	-	-	97	10.7
US and WEST	8	36	331	36.3	3	0.3	-	-	328	36.0
NATO	11	11	82	9.1	1	0.1	-	-	81	9.0
US and NATO	9	6	31	3.4	-	-	-	-	31	3.4
EUROPE	10	15	77	8.5	34	3.9	12	1.3	31	3.4
GERMANY	1	2	14	1.5	1	0.1	12	1.3	1	0.1
FRANCE	1	2	15	1.6	-	-	14	1.5	1	0.1
CHINA	8	12	56	6.1	-	-	56	6.1	-	-
INDIA	1	3	7	0.8	5	0.5	2	0.2	-	-
ASIA / EAST	1	2	6	0.7	-	-	6	0.7	-	-
AFRICA	1	4	5	0.5	-	-	5	0.5	-	-
NON-WESTERN WORLD	3	3	22	2.4	-	-	22	2.4	-	-
WORLD	6	10	43	4.7	-	-	41	4.5	2	0.2
Total	27	150	911	100	57	6.3	234	25.6	620	68.1

With regard to the *number of articles* featuring an actor, the most representative are: US (20 articles out of 27), NATO (11), EUROPE (10), UKRAINE (10), US and NATO (9), US and WEST (8), RUSSIA (8), and CHINA (8). Among 150 *thematic quanta* (TQ) constituting the NBPC and evolving it into a ‘metatext’, 35 represent the actor US and WEST, which points to diversity of topics related to it. The number of TQ remains relatively considerable for the actors UKRAINE (16 TQ), EUROPE (15 TQ), US (14 TQ), CHINA (12 TQ), RUSSIA (11 TQ), and WORLD (10 TQ). The data show that the longest ‘metatext’ portrays the US considered autonomously and in its cooperation with NATO and the West (55 TQ). The ‘metatext’ about the WESTERN WORLD in toto, including the US, NATO, Europe, Germany and France, gets even more extended (86 out of 150 TQ). Therefore, while describing the Russia-Ukraine war, *the Global Times* is more concerned with the role played in it by the Western world, than with Russia and Ukraine proper (30 TQ) or with the stance of non-Western countries (24 TQ), China included. The frequency of *textual descriptions* subsumed by TQ also exposes an unprecedented ‘visuality’ of the actor US and WEST (36.3% of the total – 911 descriptions), with the actors US (11.0%), NATO (9.1%), and EUROPE (8.5%) to follow. All descriptions of the Western world amount to 71.4% in the data body.

The parcels' *emotive salience* created by textual descriptions with a particular affective slant displays a clear-cut distinction between 'positive' and 'negative' actors obviously identified by the narrator as 'We / Self / Ours' vs. 'They / Others / Theirs'. The '*positive*' actors are RUSSIA, RUSSIA and UKRAINE (in their cooperation), CHINA, ASIA / EAST, NON-WESTERN WORLD, and WORLD. The definitely '*negative*' actors are UKRAINE, US, NATO, and WEST. An intermediate assessment – rather 'neutrally-positive' than 'negative' – is assigned to EUROPE, where GERMANY and FRANCE are, however, viewed as 'positive'. Prevailing factual salience of the 'negative' actors representing the Western world accounts for prevailing negativity of the analysed media narrative in general: 68.1% of its textual descriptions have a negative bias.

The intended 'negative' or 'positive' image of an actor gets entrenched and thus primed in the recipient's mind through iterations of textual descriptions featuring particular thematic quanta. In the data, the intended 'primed' constructs encountered in more than one article are:

✓ Negative: WEST /-/: *To pursue its own geopolitical interests in the search of global dominance, the US creates security troubles* (13 [51/-/]) *and manipulates other countries* (3 [13/-/]). *The West's attitude to Ukraine is a blatant demonstration of white supremacy particularly exposed in accepting Ukraine's refugees* (2 [39/-/]). *The US, the West and NATO are responsible for the war in Ukraine* (10 [38/-/]). *Expansion of NATO undermines Europe's security, as Russia may severely respond* (3 [32/-/]). *The US benefits from Russia-Ukraine conflict* (10 [31/-/]). *The US and the West established an unfair world order of Western supremacy* (5 [23/-/]). *The US and the West smear China in Russia-Ukraine conflict* (3 [23/-/]). *The US and the West use Ukraine as a tool against Russia* (8 [21: 1/0; 20/-/]). *NATO, led by the USA, moves eastward and threatens Russia* (7 [19/-/]). *The West's sanctions against Russia ruin the world economy* (5 [18/-/]). *The US and the West supply Ukraine with weapons* (5 [15: 2/0; 13/-/]). *The US and the West want to prolong the war and damage Russia* (5 [15 /-/]). *The US and the West aggravate the crisis in Ukraine* (6 [11/-/]). *The US and NATO do not want peace talks between Russia and Ukraine* (2 [9/-/]). *The US and the West don't care about Ukraine's sovereignty and economic prosperity* (3 [9/-/]).

✓ Positive: RUSSIA /+/: *Russia seeks security for the Russian people within and outside the country* (3 [14: 1/0; 13/+/]); UKRAINE and RUSSIA ((together) /+/: *Russia-Ukraine issue should have a peaceful settlement* (3 [13: 3/0; 10/+/]); CHINA /+/: *China adheres to peace and talks* (4 [21/+/]). *China is aimed at real international community with equal and fair rules based on international law* (3 [9/+/]); NON-WESTERN WORLD: *Non-Western countries disapprove of the sanctions against Russia* (3 [14/+/]).

The above emotively loaded 'story', being told over and over again, gets appropriated by the readers as their own worldview. To enhance the workings of emotivity rendered verbally, media texts use emotively loaded political cartoons.

5.2. The RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR narrative-based visual concept: a cognitive ontology

In 27 cartoons, the actors of the RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR verbal narrative retain their 'negativity' and 'positivity' and show up as primary or secondary constituents of an image. The visual 'text' of cartoons overlaps with the following parts of verbal text (the indication of TQ's salience is retained):

US /-/: 12 TQ [primary constituent: 18 cartoons]

To pursue its own geopolitical interests in the search of global dominance, the US creates security troubles (in section 5.3 – examples 1, 2, 3, 4, 5). The US's aspirations to global dominance pose a threat to the world (example 2). The US benefits from the expansion of NATO (example 6). *The US supported Nazis in WWII, and supports Ukrainian Nazis now* (example 4). *The US is responsible for the war in Ukraine* (examples 9, 10). *The US supplies Ukraine with weapons* (examples 13, 14).

The US aggravates the crisis in Ukraine (example 14). ***The US benefits from Russia-Ukraine conflict*** (examples 15, 16). The US may turn other regions into tinderboxes (example 17). The US strives to involve India into military cooperation (example 18). The US is finger-pointing on the cooperation of other countries with China (example 19). ***The US smears China in Russia-Ukraine conflict*** (examples 10, 11).

US and WEST / WEST /-/: 6 TQ [primary constituent: 7 cartoons]

The US established an unfair world order of Western supremacy (examples 19, 24). The world order of Western supremacy challenges global peaceful development and loses trust (example 20). ***The West's white supremacy is fully exposed in accepting Ukraine's refugees*** (example 22). The West's white supremacy exhibits its decline and isolation incompatible with the role of a world leader (example 23). The US and the West charge China in taking Russia's side (example 12). The West unfairly blames Russia in 'colonization' of Africa (example 21).

EUROPE /-/: 6 TQ [primary constituent: 2 cartoons; secondary constituent: 2 cartoons]

The Russia-Ukraine conflict causes contradictions and divisions within Europe (example 25). Europe is divided into two civilizations (example 26). It wants to expand and reinforce its identity (example 26). ***For Europe, the Russia-Ukraine conflict is the foremost security threat*** (example 25). The US manipulates other (European) countries (example 3). The US aspires to hegemony in Europe (example 4).

US and NATO /-/: 2 TQ [primary constituent: 4 cartoons]

NATO, led by the US, moves eastward and threatens Russia (examples 5, 7, 8, 9). The US and NATO ignore Russia's need in security (example 7).

FRANCE /+/: 1TQ [primary constituent: 1 cartoon]

France may leave NATO because of Russia-Ukraine conflict (example 27).

RUSSIA /+/: 2 TQ [secondary constituent: 2 cartoons]

Russia seeks security for the Russian people within and outside the country (example 7). ***By launching a military operation against Ukraine, Russia wants to overthrow the post-Cold War unipolar world order dominated by US hegemony*** (example 24).

CHINA /+/: 3 TQ [secondary constituent: 4 cartoons]

The US and the West smear China in Russia-Ukraine conflict (examples 10, 11). The US and the West charge China in taking Russia's side (example 12). The US is finger-pointing on the cooperation of other countries with China (example 19).

INDIA /+/: 1 TQ [secondary constituent: 1 cartoon]





India avoids sanctioning Russia (example 18).






The data show that the cartoons tend to support those TQ of the verbal text that have absolute and relative salience. Among 24 verbal TQ supported by the cartoons, 10 are absolutely salient (bold italics), and 5 are relatively salient (italics). The non-salient TQ are mostly semantically contiguous with the salient ones. Salience of particular verbal TQ is boosted through iteration of the related cartoons. In such a way, multimodality promotes the intended entrenchment of the 'core' story in the reader's mind. The 'core' story is: ***To pursue its own geopolitical interests in the search of global dominance, the US creates security troubles*** (4 cartoons). ***NATO, led by the US, moves eastward and threatens Russia*** (4 cartoons). ***The US established an unfair world order of Western supremacy*** (2 cartoons). ***The US is responsible for the war in Ukraine*** (2 cartoons). ***The US supplies Ukraine with weapons*** (2 cartoons). ***The US benefits from Russia-Ukraine conflict*** (2 cartoons). ***The US smears China in Russia-Ukraine conflict*** (2 cartoons).






Integrated into an individual verbal text, the cartoon interacts with it in a specific way. This interaction is the issue of our further consideration.






5.3. The narrative-based concept RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR: interaction of visual and verbal modes in individual texts






In each individual media article, the visual content interacts with the verbal content via accentuation (making an emphasis on the verbally defined entity), elaboration (adding a new property to the verbally defined entity), extension (adding a contiguous congruent entity to that which is verbally defined), questioning (adding a contiguous incongruent entity to that which is verbally defined), and combining (adding a noncontiguous entity to that which is verbally defined). The ways of interaction between 27 cartoons and the respective verbal texts is represented below. In the illustrations, the verbal TQ, which retains indication of its salience throughout the data, also has the notation pointing to the quantity of TQ's descriptions in the considered text.




<p>(1) <i>To pursue its own geopolitical interests in the search of global dominance, the US creates security troubles</i> [2/-/]. → <u>Elaboration</u> (military security troubles).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US) who is sitting on the throne which is made of missiles (= MILITARY CONFLICTS), and which is on top of the globe (the WORLD).</p> <p>(GT, 2022, April 1)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 
<p>(2) <i>To pursue its own geopolitical interests in the search of global dominance, the US creates security troubles</i> [5/-/]. The US's aspirations to global dominance pose a threat to the world [2/-/]. → <u>Elaboration</u> (the threat is cold war, zero sum, and ideological bias).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US) who is planning to erect a building (the WORLD) made of bricks (COLD WAR, ZERO SUM, IDEOLOGICAL BIAS).</p> <p>(GT, 2022, April 30)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 
<p>(3) <i>To pursue its own geopolitical interests in the search of global dominance, the US creates security troubles</i> [2/-/]. → <u>Extension</u> (security troubles created via manipulations).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A puppeteer (the US) who manipulates the puppets (EUROPEAN COUNTRIES).</p> <p>(GT, 2022, March 13b)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 
<p>(4) <i>To pursue its own geopolitical interests in the search of global dominance, the US creates security troubles</i> [2/-/]. <i>The US supported Nazis in WWII, and support Ukrainian Nazis now</i> [5/-/]. "US works with Nazis to exploit Europe both in WWII and at present." → <u>Extension</u> (security troubles caused by manipulations).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A puppeteer (the US) who manipulates the puppets (EUROPEAN COUNTRIES).</p> <p>(GT, 2022, April 30)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 

<p>(5) <i>To pursue its own geopolitical interests in the search of global dominance, the US creates security troubles</i> [2/-/]. → <u>Extension</u> (security trouble created via NATO expansion).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US) who throws a lighter (NATO EXPANSION) to the powder kegs (RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT).</p> <p>(GT, 2022, March 5)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 
<p>(6) The US benefits from the expansion of NATO [2/-/]. → <u>Elaboration</u> (the US rules NATO).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US) who marks his gains (NATO COUNTRIES) on the globe with the flags stuck in his pocket (PLACE OF NATO).</p> <p>(GT, 2022, May 18)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 
<p>(7) <i>NATO, led by the US, moves eastward and threatens Russia</i> [6/-/]. <i>Russia seeks security</i> [2/+/]. → <u>Elaboration</u> (NATO led by the US is an intruder).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (NATO) who intends to intrude into the foreign territory (RUSSIA).</p> <p>(GT, 2022, March 10)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 
<p>(8) <i>NATO, led by the US, moves eastward and threatens Russia</i> [1/-/]. NATO and the US ignore Russia's need in security [3 /-/]. → <u>Elaboration</u> (the threat is fraught with danger).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US) who throws a lighter (NATO EXPANSION) to the powder kegs (RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT).</p> <p>(GT, 2022, March 22b)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 
<p>(9) <i>The US is responsible for the war in Ukraine</i> [7/-/]. → <u>Extension</u> (responsible because of NATO expansion).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US) who throws a lighter (NATO EXPANSION) to the powder kegs (RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT).</p> <p>(GT, 2022, March 1)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 

<p>(10) <i>The US is responsible for the war in Ukraine</i> [8/-/]. <i>The US aggravates the crisis in Ukraine</i> [1/-/]. <i>The US smears China in Russia-Ukraine conflict</i> [7/-/]. → <u>Accentuation</u> (responsible, aggravates, smears).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US) who adds fuel to the fire (RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR), inviting the other (CHINA) to help put it out.</p> <p>(GT, 2022, March 4b)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 
<p>(11) <i>The US smears China in Russia-Ukraine conflict</i> [10 /-/]. → <u>Accentuation</u> (smears).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US) who is shooting dirty arrows (ACCUSATIONS) at the target (CHINA).</p> <p>(GT, 2022, March 17)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 
<p>(12) The US and the West charge China in taking Russia's side [2 /-/]. → <u>Elaboration</u> (the US and the West are failures).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> The captain (the US) of a crew (the WESTERN LEADERS) in a leaking boat (the WEST) who is shooting at the one (CHINA) standing by his friend (RUSSIA).</p> <p>(GT, 2022, March 22a)</p>	<p>Illustration: Chen Xia/GT</p> 
<p>(13) <i>The US supplies Ukraine with weapons</i> [1/-/]. → <u>Extension</u> (supplies weapons and, at the same time, speaks of the conflict's diplomatic solution).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US) who is a warmonger pretending to be a peacemaker.</p> <p>(GT, 2022, March 3)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 
<p>(14) <i>The US supplies Ukraine with weapons</i> [2/0/; 3/-/]. <i>The US aggravate the crisis in Ukraine</i> [5/-/]. → <u>Accentuation</u> (supplies with weapons, aggravates the crisis).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US) who supplies firewood (WEAPONS) to fan flames that heat a boiling cauldron (UKRAINE CRISIS.)</p> <p>(GT, 2022, April 20a)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 

<p>(15) <i>The US benefits from Russia-Ukraine conflict</i> [2/-/]. "... it [the US] could profit from war for the American military-industrial complex". → <u>Elaboration</u> (monetary profit).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US / ITS MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX) who uses a meat grinder (the WAR IN UKRAINE) to make mincemeat (MONEY).</p> <p>(GT, 2022, March 20)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 
<p>(16) <i>The US benefits from Russia-Ukraine conflict</i> [1 /-/] "making a fortune from war". → <u>Elaboration</u> (the profit of military-industrial complex)</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US / ITS MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX) who uses a meat grinder (the WAR IN UKRAINE) to make mincemeat (MONEY).</p> <p>(GT,2022, March 24)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 
<p>(17) The US may turn other regions into tinderboxes [4/-/]. → <u>Extension</u> (the war in Ukraine organized by the US causes drastic consequences for Europe as the US's ally).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US) who is sticking knives (MISFORTUNES) into the back of his ally (EUROPE) in Ukraine crisis.</p> <p>(GT, 2022, May 13)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 
<p>(18) India avoids sanctioning Russia [2/0/]. The US strives to involve India into military cooperation [3/0/; 2/-/]. <i>The US manipulates other countries to pursue its own geopolitical interests</i> [6/-/] → <u>Accentuation</u> (pooling into sanctions).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US) who tries to forcefully draw the one (INDIA) onto his own territory (SANCTIONS).</p> <p>(GT, 2022, March 13a)</p>	<p>Illustration: Chen Xia/GT</p> 
<p>(19) <i>The US has established an unfair world order of Western supremacy</i> [4/-/]. The US is finger-pointing on the cooperation of other countries with China [2/-/] → <u>Accentuation</u> (supremacy, finger-pointing).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US) who is sitting on top of the bridge (GLOBAL COOPERATION) and warning others (LATIN AMERICA) against China.</p> <p>(GT, 2022, May 9)</p>	<p>Illustration: Xia Qing/GT</p> 

<p>(20) <i>The world order of Western supremacy challenges global peaceful development and loses trust</i> [5/-/]. → <u>Elaboration</u> (supremacy tries to silence others).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US) uses a loudspeaker (WESTERN NARRATIVE) not to let others (NON-WESTERN WORLD) speak.</p> <p>(GT, 2022, May 4)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 
<p>(21) The West unfairly blames Russia in ‘colonization’ of Africa [3 /-/]. → <u>Accentuation</u> (unfair blaming).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metonymy.</u> A NATO representative standing for the WEST.</p> <p>(GT, 2022, March 28)</p>	<p>Illustration: Chen Xia/GT</p> 
<p>(22) <i>The West's white supremacy is fully exposed in accepting Ukraine refugees</i> [13/-/]. → <u>Accentuation</u> (racial discrimination).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metonymy.</u> Putting a barrier at the border stands for DISCRIMINATION.</p> <p>(GT, 2022, April 7)</p>	<p>Illustration: Chen Xia/GT</p> 
<p>(23) The West's white supremacy exhibits its decline and isolation incompatible with the role of a world leader [5/-/]. → <u>Accentuation</u> (decline of supremacy) + <u>combining</u> (Napoleon’s rule, Columbus’s conquering American Indians).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US) who is the captan of a leaking boat (the WEST’S WHITE SUPREMACY) moving ahead to conquire aborigins.</p> <p>(GT, 2022, March 4a)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 
<p>(24) <i>The US established an unfair world order of Western supremacy</i> [11/-/]. <i>By launching military operations against Ukraine, Russia wants to overthrow the post-Cold War unipolar world order dominated by US hegemony</i> [13 /+ /]. → <u>Elaboration</u> (failing supremacy).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (the US) who sees himself as No 1 world leader has a patched burning suit (WESTERN SUPREMACY).</p> <p>(GT, 2022, May 15)</p>	<p>Illustration: Liu Rui/GT</p> 

<p>(25) <i>For Europe, the Russia-Ukraine conflict is the foremost security threat [1/-/]. The Russia-Ukraine conflict causes contradictions and divisions within Europe [3/0/; 1/+/-; 7/-/].</i> → <u>Accentuation</u> (threat, divisions).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> An object (EUROPE) which is hit by a hammer (RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT). (GT, 2022, April 17)</p>	<p>Illustration: Chen Xian/GT</p> 
<p>(26) Europe is divided into two civilizations [2/0/]. Europe wants to expand and reinforce its identity and civilization [5/0/]. “We should not see the Russia-Ukraine conflict as a manifestation of the decline of European civilization”. → <u>Questioning</u> (no decline vs. decline).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A lopsided object (EUROPE) which has shaky supports (IDENTITY AND CIVILIZATION). (GT, 2022, April 20b)</p>	<p>Illustration: Chen Xia/GT</p> 
<p>(27) France may leave NATO because of Russia-Ukraine conflict [5: 5 +/-]. → <u>Elaboration</u> (hesitation as to staying in NATO).</p> <p><u>Cartoon: metaphor.</u> A person (FRANCE) contemplating on the NATO symbol. (GT, 2022, March 7)</p>	<p>Illustration: Chen Xia/GT</p> 

Overall, we can see that in the analyzed data the cartoons tend to add a new detail to the entity described in the verbal text (*elaboration* exposed in 11 articles) or to emphasise such entity (*accentuation* exposed in 8 articles). The cases when the cartoon adds a new contiguous entity congruent with that described in the verbal text (*extension* exposed in 6 articles) are least frequent. The least frequent, represented by single occurrences, are the instances of incongruence, or contradiction, demonstrated by contiguous entities (*questioning* exposed in 1 article) and convergence of noncontiguous entities (*combining* exposed in 1 article).

In example (26), demonstrating questioning, the metaphorical cartoon portrays a lopsided plate (presumably a road sign) named ‘Europe’. The plate has shaky supports pointing to serious troubles experienced by Europe. Meanwhile, the verbal text hardly describes such troubles directly. Here, the description “We should not see the Russia-Ukraine conflict as a manifestation of the decline of European civilization” contradicts the cartoon. The verbal text proper includes such TQ: ‘Europe is divided into two civilizations – democratic and non-democratic’ [2/0/], ‘Europe returns to its old aggressive conservatism’ [6/0/; 2/-/], ‘Europe redraws its ideological boundaries with Russia’ [3/0/], ‘Europe defends its own civilization from Russia’ [6/0/], ‘Europe wants to expand and reinforce its identity and civilization’ [5/0/], and ‘Europe strives to recreate the world of the other’ [4/0; 2/-/].

Neither of these TQ, which are mostly neutral, directly agrees with the negatively loaded cartoon. The latter alludes that ‘though it doesn’t look like a decline, it is actually a decline’.

In example (23), illustrating accentuation and combining, the cartoon features a leaking boat (the West’s white supremacy) with a crew (the Western leaders) whose captain (the US) on deck wears a hat like that of Napoleon, and is looking through binoculars (like Columbus) in search of aboriginal lands (NON-WESTERN COUNTRIES). The cartoon obviously links to the verbal TQ ‘The West’s white supremacy exhibits its decline and isolation incompatible with the role of a world leader’. Here, the cartoon accentuates the idea of decline (= leaking boat) and combines the fact ‘the US leads the West’s white supremacy’ with the precedential facts ‘Napoleon is a famous leader who waged wars’, and ‘Columbus is the conqueror of American Indians’.

Presumably, the narrator’s preference for cartoons that accentuate, elaborate and extend information rendered by the verbal text is explained by their ‘readability’, or meaning transparency, as compared with the cartoons that question the verbal content or combine it with the events deemed similar. The last two types of visual–verbal interaction require more sophistication, which, as it seems, *the Global Times* does not expect from its readers.

6. Concluding discussion

The results of our study are consonant with the conclusions of political analysts who say that Chinese mainstream media echo the Russian narrative on the Russian-Ukraine war, avoids any blame of Moscow for the invasion, and portrays sympathy for Russia’s perspective. Specifically,

Beijing has struggled to maintain a façade of neutrality despite refusing to support or condemn its ally's invasion of Ukraine and has repeatedly blamed the United States and NATO's 'eastward expansion' for worsening tensions (Lewis, 2022).

The Chinese media has peddled the dual narrative of vilifying the West and glorifying China's supposed mediatory role in the crisis, even as the war continues to rage in Ukraine." The coverage of the crisis by Chinese media has been less about Ukraine and Russia and more about China and the West (Banerjee, 2022).

One big point of convergence between China and Russia is the framing of the war as the responsibility of NATO or the West. We see how Russia itself explains this war as being pushed by NATO ...which overmilitarized the region at the border. Chinese state media has taken up a similar threat in different wordings (Chan, 2022).

The ‘wordings’ of the Chinese state media were in focus of our research. The analyzed articles, published in *the Global Times*, a Chinese popular outlet used as a ‘voice’ of Chinese government’s propaganda, depict the Russia-Ukraine war without any reference to the horrific humanitarian and material damage incurred by Russia to Ukraine on the false pretext of ‘fighting with Nazism’. The newspaper does not portray war crimes committed by Russia. Instead, it depicts the ‘crime’ of the West which, ‘striving for the world hegemony’, has ‘unleashed the war’ and ‘escalates it’ through supplying Ukraine with weapons. The main message of the GT addressed to the reader and intended for entrenchment in the public mentality is: ***To pursue its own geopolitical interests in the search of global dominance, the US and the West create security troubles. NATO, led by the US, moves eastward and threatens Russia. The US has established an unfair world order of Western supremacy. The US is responsible for the war in Ukraine. The US and the West supply Ukraine with weapons. The US benefits from Russia-Ukraine conflict. The US and the West smears China in Russia-Ukraine conflict.*** Produced by a governmental media resource, and “aimed at shaping the behaviour of domestic and international actors” (Miskimmon et al., 2013, p. 20), this message can be defined as strategic. And

it turns out to be such, considering the reaction of Chinese social media echoing the government's propaganda (Young, 2022). The GB's strategic message about the RUSSIA-UKRAINE war is to be possessed by the readers not because of persuasive argumentation supplied with evidence (which is not even hinted at), but because of multiple iterations of this message in the verbal and visual 'texts' co-deployed in the GB's articles. Supplied with political cartoons, they form a multimodal political media narrative rendering thematically homogeneous information through verbal and visual codes.

The contemporary studies of multimodal political media narratives, being interdisciplinary, have implications for a number of scholarly domains. Linguistically, they contribute to understanding how different codes co-work to make up the narrative's meaning. Psychologically, the studies of multimodal political narratives employed by media are important for understanding what makes such narratives an efficient tool for manipulating public opinion. Politically, understanding the nature of multimodal narratives is beneficial for PR, propaganda and counter-propaganda. At present, Ukraine has an obvious necessity to develop efficient counter-narratives capable of discarding Russian anti-Ukrainian destructive narratives disseminated worldwide. This task requires understanding the destructive narrative's 'anatomy'.

Our linguistically oriented research proposes methodological instruments to 'dissect' the multimodal political narrative rendered by media texts. We argue that the analysis of such narrative should consider its semiotic and cognitive aspects. The semiotic aspect concerns the types of modes and their interaction – paratactic (coordinate) or hypotactic (subordinate). The cognitive aspect, which is the innovative highlight of this study, embraces (a) definition of a narrative-based political concept as a bounded scope of information rendered by thematically homogeneous multimodal texts; (b) building cognitive ontologies for the information featured by each mode; (c) examination of the ways in which these ontologies interplay. Application of the methodological instruments was demonstrated with the analysis of articles on Russia-Ukraine war published by *the Global Times*. The analysis allowed us to make a number of conclusions as to how the visual 'text' of political cartoons interacts with the verbal text, and how the narrative is made to mold the intended meaning and entrench it in the public mentality. In the newspaper, the fulfilment of this task is facilitated by the visual 'text', which, along with political cartoons, includes photographs. Exposure of their role in the GB's multimodal narrative on the Russia-Ukraine war is the objective of our further study that will employ and specify the methodological apparatus suggested in this paper.

References

- Abraham, L. (2009). Effectiveness of cartoons as a uniquely visual medium for orienting social issues. *Journalism and Communication Monographs*, 117-165.
- Adami, E. (2017). Multimodality. In O. García, N. Flores, & M. Spotti (Eds). *The Oxford Handbook of Language and Society* (pp. 45-472). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Baldry, A., & Thibault, P. (2006) *Multimodal transcription and text analysis*. London: Equinox.
- Banerjee, M. (2022, May 17). Chinese news media narratives on the Ukraine crisis. *The Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses*. Retrieved September 8, 2022, from: <https://www.idsa.in/idsacomments/chinese-news-media-narratives-on-the-ukraine-crisis-mbanerjee-170522>
- Barton, G. (2018, December 17). Multimodal texts surround us. What are they? How can we use them in our teaching? *EduResearch methods*. Retrieved September 18, 2022, from: <https://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?p=3545>
- Brankovic, J. (2021). Media and narrative: Managing conflict in polarised societies, *IFIT Discussion Paper*. Barcelona: Institute for Integrated Transitions. Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355679240_Media_and_Narrative_Managing_Conflict_in_Polarised_Societies

- Brewer, P.R., Graf, J., & Willnat, L. (2003). Priming or framing: Media influence on attitudes toward foreign nations. *Gazette*, 65(6), 493-508.
- Chaban, N., Zhabotynska, S., & Chaban, A. (2019-2020). Visual and emotive: Russian e-news coverage of EU – Ukraine agreement on visa-free entry into the Schengen zone. *New Zealand Slavonic Journal*, 53-54, 147-172.
- Chan, J. (22 June 2022). Deciphering Chinese media discourse on the Russia-Ukraine war (interview with Maria Repnikova). *China Media Project*. Retrieved September 16, 2022, from: <https://chinamediaproject.org/2022/06/29/deciphering-chinese-media-discourse-on-the-russia-ukraine-war/>
- Chen, W., Phiddian, R., & Stewart, R. (2017). Towards a discipline of political cartoon studies: mapping the field khin. In J.M. Davis (Ed.). *Satire and politics: The interplay of heritage and practice* (pp. 125-152). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- China's Global Times plays a peculiar role (2018, September 29). *The Economist*. Retrieved from <https://www.economist.com/china/2018/09/20/chinas-global-times-plays-a-peculiar-role>
- Chivvis, C. S. (2017). *Understanding Russian "Hybrid Warfare" and what can be done about it*. Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand Corporation. Retrieved from: https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/testimonies/CT400/CT468/RAND_CT468.pdf
- Civil Network Opora (12 September, 2022). War speeches. 190 days of propaganda, or "evolution" of statements by russian politicians. *Ukrainska Pravda*. Retrieved from: <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/columns/2022/09/12/7367129/>
- Đurović, T., & Silaški, N. (2016). Multimodality and the construal of reality in political cartoons – The case of Serbia–EU relationship. *Facta Universitatis: Series Linguistics and Literature*, 14(2), 117-128. [10.22190/FULL1602117D](https://doi.org/10.22190/FULL1602117D)
- El-Falaky, M.S. (2019). Caricaturing two revolutions: Multimodal discourse analysis of Egyptian political cartoons. *Proceedings of SOCIOINT 2019 – 6th International Conference on Education, Social Sciences and Humanities 24-26 June 2019- Istanbul, Turkey*, 191-1206.
- Global Times (China) (2021, November 29). *Media bias fact check*. Retrieved September 12, 2022, from <https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/global-times-china/>
- Global Times: official site. Retrieved September 16, 2022, from <https://www.globaltimes.cn/adv.html>
- Groth, S. (2019). Political narratives / narrations of the political: An introduction. *Narrative Culture*, 6(1), 1-20.
- Hernández, J. C. (2020, May 23). China deploys propaganda machine to defend move against Hong Kong. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/23/world/asia/china-hong-kong-propaganda.html>
- Hinton, P. (2017). Implicit stereotypes and the predictive brain: cognition and culture in "biased" person perception. *Palgrave Commun* 3. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palcomms.2017.86>
- Huang, Z. (2016, August 8). Inside the Global Times, China's hawkish, belligerent state tabloid. *Quartz*. Retrieved September 18, 2022, from <https://qz.com/745577/inside-the-global-times-chinas-hawkish-belligerent-state-tabloid/>
- Hutchinson, W. (2008). Media, government and manipulation: the cases of the two Gulf Wars. *9th Australian Information Warfare and Security Conference*. Edith Cowan University, Perth Western Australia, 35-40. Retrieved from: <https://ro.ecu.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1027&context=isw>
- Kofman, M., & Rojansky, M. (1 2015). A closer look at Russia's "hybrid war". *Kennan Cable*, 7. Retrieved from: <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/publication/7-KENNAN%20CABLE-ROJANSKY%20KOFMAN.pdf>

- Kuczyńska-Zonik, A., & Tatarenko, A. (2019). Information security risks in the context of Russian propaganda in the CEE. In A. Visvizi, & M. D. Lytras (Eds), *Politics and technology in the post-truth era* (pp. 143-157). Bingley: Emerald Publishing Limited.
- Lakoff, G., & Turner, M. (1989). *More Than Cool Reason. A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Lewis, L. (2022, March 14). Chinese media echoes Russian narrative on Ukraine war as Beijing struggles to maintain neutral façade while Moscow 'asks Xi to supply weapons'. *Mail Online*. Retrieved September 9, 2022, from <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10610197/Chinese-media-echoes-Russian-narrative-Ukraine-war.html>
- Liu, J. (2013). Visual images interpretive strategies in multimodal texts. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 4(6), 1259-1263.
- Lyons, A. (2015). Multimodality. In Z. Hua (Ed.), *Research methods in intercultural communication: A practical guide* (pp. 268-280). Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Miskimmon, A., O'Loughlin, B., & Roselle, L. (2013). *Strategic narratives: communication power and new world order*. New York – London: Routledge.
- Petrenko, G., Dovzhenko, O., Iliuk O., & Burkosky, P. (2021). *On the other side of the screen: An analysis of media consumption and disinformation in the Ukraine's information environment*. Kyiv: Media Detector.
- Pshenychnykh, A. (2019). Ukrainian perspectives on the Self, the EU and Russia: An intersemiotic analysis of Ukrainian newspapers. *European Security*, 29(3), 41-359.
- Serafini, F. (2012). Reading multimodal texts in the 21st century. *Research in the Schools*, 19(1), 26-32.
- Siefkes, M. (2015). How semiotic modes work together in multimodal texts: Defining and representing intermodal relations. *Living Linguistics*, 1, 113-131.
- VoxCheck Team (2022, May 28). Overview of pro-Russian narratives in Germany and Italy media on the West control of Ukraine and use of Ukraine in its advantage. *Vox Ukraine*. Retrieved September 11, 2022, from: <https://voxukraine.org/en/overview-of-pro-russian-narratives-in-germany-and-italy-media-on-the-west-control-of-ukraine-and-use-of-ukraine-in-its-advantage/>
- van Dijk, T. A. (2006). Discourse and manipulation. *Discourse and Society*, 17(2), 359-383.
- Warwa, D. (2018). Multimodal literacy: Meaning negotiations in political cartoons on the refugee crisis. *System*, 77, 10-18. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2018.02.018>
- Wong, E. (2020, June 2). U.S. Designates four more Chinese news organizations as Foreign Missions. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/22/us/politics/us-china-news-organizations.html>
- Yang, W. (2022, April 6). Ukraine war: How Russian propaganda dominates Chinese social media. *Deutsche Welle*. Retrieved from: <https://www.dw.com/en/ukraine-war-how-russian-propaganda-dominates-chinese-social-media/a-61375386>
- Zhabotynskaya, S. (2017). Narrativnyie politicheskie kontseptyi: metodika lingvokognitivnogo analiza [Narrative political concepts: methods of cognitive linguistic analysis]. In: N. V. Petluchenko (Ed.), *Kontseptyi i kontrastyi [Concepts and contrasts]* (pp. 30-40). Odessa: Gelvetika (in Russian).
- Zhabotynskaya, S. A. (2020). Narrativnyy mul'timediynny kontsept: algoritm analiza (na materiale internet-memov o COVID-19) [Narrative multimedia concept: An algorithm of the analysis]. *Cognition, Communication, Discourse*, 20, 92-117.
- Zhabotynska, S.A. (2020). Types of ontologies for narrative-based concepts (a case of media narratives on COVID-19). *Conference proceedings. 3rd International Conference "Current problems of the Romance and Germanic Philology in Anthropological Perspective"* (pp. 19-20). Kyiv: Mykhailo Dragomanov National Pedagogical University.

- Zhabotynska, S., & Velivchenko, V. (2019). New media and strategic narratives: The Dutch referendum on Ukraine – EU Association Agreement in Ukrainian and Russian internet blogs. *European Security*, 28(3), 360-381. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2019.1648253>
- Zhabotynska, S., & Slyvka, N. (2020). Emotive speech acts and their discourse modifications in the literary text. *Discourse and Interaction*, 13(1), 113-136. <https://doi.org/10.5817/DI2020-1-113>

Sources of illustrations

- Global Times (2022, March 1). Washington bears ‘special responsibility’ for Russia-Ukraine situation: Global Times editorial. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202203/1253542.shtml>
- Global Times (2022, March 3). US economy is reaping benefits from the Ukraine crisis. Global Times editorial. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202203/1253787.shtml>
- Global Times (2022, March 4a). Wang, W. The way West sees the Ukraine crisis reveals its underlying white supremacy. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202203/1253951.shtml?id=11>
- Global Times (2022, March 4b). Jun, L. US stokes China hatred from behind the scenes of Ukraine crisis.. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202203/1253970.shtml?id=11>
- Global Times. (2022, March 5). Gulevich, V. Washington takes advantage of Ukrainian crisis to sustain its hegemony. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202203/1254005.shtml>
- Global Times (2022, March 7). Yifan, D. Russia-Ukraine conflict spurs more sentiment in France to leave NATO. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202203/1254222.shtml>
- Global Times (2022, March 10). Ping, X. War or peace: Uncle Sam's dirty role in the Ukraine crisis. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202203/1254502.shtml>
- Global Times (2022, March 13a). Jianxue, L. Russia-Ukraine tensions an occasion for India to reassess ties with US. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202203/1254750.shtml>
- Global Times (2022, March 13b). Sheng, Y., & Anqi, F. US fans flames with more weapons to Ukraine as Russia, Ukraine, Europe ramp up diplomatic efforts. White House 'wants to keep conflict' while others paying diplomatic efforts. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202203/1254758.shtml>
- Global Times (2022, March 17). Long, Zh. Absurd and nonsense to smear China in Russia-Ukraine conflict. *Global Times*. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202203/1255151.shtml?id=11>
- Global Times (2022, March 20). Ping, X. US hegemony: the culprit of Ukraine crisis. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202203/1255314.shtml?id=11>
- Global Times (2022, March 22a). US is reestablishing a new Inquisition using Russia-Ukraine crisis as excuse: Global Times editorial. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202203/1256468.shtml>
- Global Times (2022, March 22b). Ritter, S. Political constraints within US inhibit critical thought on Ukraine crisis. *Global Times*. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202203/1256693.shtml>
- Global Times (2022, March 24). Washington benefits from Ukraine’s misfortune: Global Times editorial. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202203/1256669.shtml?id=11>
- Global Times (2022, March 28). Kapchanga, M. Africa’s neutrality over Ukraine justified. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202203/1257045.shtml>
- Global Times (2022, April 1). Ning, Y. Ukraine crisis a catalyst for the burial of American hegemony. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202204/1257421.shtml>
- Global Times (2022, April 7). Junxiang, M. Russia-Ukraine conflict exposes West’s double standards on humanitarianism. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202204/1257715.shtml>
- Global Times (2022, April 8). Chesnokov, E. US works with Nazis to exploit Europe both in WWII and at present, now targets Ukraine. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202204/1258861.shtml>
- Global Times (2022, April 17). Junjie, Zh. Russia-Ukraine conflict lays bare brutal divisions among European nations. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202204/1259508.shtml?id=11>
- Global Times. (2022, April 20a). Does peace have any chance with more US military aid to Ukraine? Global Times editorial. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202204/1259870.shtml>

- Global Times (2022, April 20b). Gang, D. Ukraine crisis will revive Europe's conservatism. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202204/1259866.shtml?id=11>
- Global Times (2022, April 30). US moves to 'weaken' Russia by robbing its top scientists, will it work? Global Times editorial. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202204/1260676.shtml?id=11>
- Global Times (2022, May 4). Gang, D. Widening trust gap key reason to our inability to make global decisions. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202205/1264775.shtml>
- Global Times (2022, May 9). Nationalistic, anti-global discourse a real danger to the world. Global Times editorial. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202205/1265199.shtml>
- Global Times (2022, May 13). NATO's northward expansion risks turning Europe into a new powder keg. Global Times editorial. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202205/1265536.shtml?id=11>
- Global Times (2022, May 15). Ning, Y. Will Russia-Ukraine conflict prelude the end of US-led world order? <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202205/1265651.shtml>
- Global Times (2022, May 18). Sheng, Y. & Caiyu, L. Washington hijacks 'collective security of EU' to serve anti-Russia strategy, benefit from NATO expansion. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202205/1266001.shtml>

**УКРАЇНА І ЗАХІД У ПРОРОСІЙСЬКИХ ЗМІ КИТАЮ:
МЕТОДОЛОГІЯ АНАЛІЗУ
МУЛЬТИМОДАЛЬНОГО ПОЛІТИЧНОГО НАРАТИВУ**

Світлана Жаботинська

доктор філологічних наук, професор

Черкаський національний університет імені Богдана Хмельницького
(бульвар Шевченка, 81, Черкаси 18023, Україна).

e-mail: saz9@ukr.net; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9841-6335>

Ольга Рижова

магістрантка

Черкаський національний університет імені Богдана Хмельницького
(бульвар Шевченка, 81, Черкаси 18023, Україна).

e-mail: oliaryzhova123@gmail.com

Анотація

У роботі представлено дослідницький проєкт, здійснюваний на перетині політичної, мультимодальної та когнітивної лінгвістики. У фокусі дослідження перебуває російсько-українська війна, представлена в березні–травні 2022 року в англomовному виданні китайського таблоїду *the Global Times*, одному з 'голосів' китайської державної пропаганди, орієнтованій на розповсюдження проросійських наративів. Аналізовані медійні статті містять політичні карикатури і можуть, тим самим, бути визначені як мультимодальні тексти. Сукупно, вони конструюють наратив, або 'історію', адресовану міжнародним читачам і спрямовану на формування в них світогляду, сприятливого для Росії. Вивчення нами цього наративу має на меті реконструювання портретованого ним ментального образу і виявлення взаємодії між його вербальною і візуальною іпостеями у спосіб, який сприяє укоріненню повідомлення у свідомості читача. Для виконання цього завдання ми пропонуємо лінгвокогнітивну методологію, алгоритмічне застосування якої уможливує побудову когнітивних онтологій, які структурують інформацію, трансльовану вербальними і візуальними засобами. Складники кожної онтології мають фактуальну і емотивну промінантність, залежну від кількості відповідних емпірично наданих текстових дескрипцій. Ми показуємо, як перетин онтологій підсилює промінантність ключового емотивно конотованого повідомлення, адресованого громаді. У дослідженні взаємодія вербальної і візуальної модальностей в конкретних текстах характеризується в термінах акцентуації, нарощування, поширення, зштовхування і комбінування, що розглядаються як універсальні способи розгортання інформації, які виходять за межі метафоричної царини, де вони були вперше визначені Дж. Лакоффом і М. Тернером (1989).

Ключові слова: політичний наратив, медійний текст, мультимодальність, вербальний і візуальний модуси, політична карикатура, дослідницька методологія, лінгвокогнітивний підхід, пропаганда, проросійські ЗМІ Китаю, російсько-українська війна.