Volume 5 Issue 2, 2021, pp. 73-89
doi: 10.22363/2521-442X-2021-5-2-73-89

Original Research

Semantic shift in conflict terminology in contemporary Russian socio-cultural media discourse

by Alina S. Antipova, Maria D. Rabeson and Olga V. Smirnova

Alina S. Antipova Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia antipovaaline@gmail.com
Maria D. Rabeson Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia maria.rabeson@gmail.com
Olga V. Smirnova Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia smirnovaorama@gmail.com
Article history Received April 3, 2021 | Revised May 22, 2021 | Accepted June 14, 2021
Conflicts of interest The authors declared no conflicts of interest
Research funding The study is supported by the Interdisciplinary Scientific and Educational School of Moscow University 'Preservation of the World Cultural and Historical Heritage'
doi 10.22363/2521-442X-2021-5-2-73-89
For citation Antipova, A. S., Rabeson, M. D., & Smirnova, O. V. (2021). Semantic shift in conflict terminology in contemporary Russian socio-cultural media discourse. *Training, Language and Culture, 5*(2), 73-89.

Current socio-cultural means of communication stand no comparison to the ones that existed even a decade ago. Media have introduced new information exchange practices, provided novel areas for communication, triggered wider civic participation in social life worldwide. The increase of digitalised texts available to the public on an everyday basis on the Internet have created media-focused space whose main characteristic is constant content change. Therefore, each specific social sphere may be traced throughout content provided in media sources internationally and locally. Conflict as one of the key ideas of the media zone is not an exception, being one of the most commonly reported topics in the news globally. Our study is based on revealing semantic features of conflict terminology that is understood as the number of related-to-conflict words used together in socio-cultural media discourse. While global contexts are usually more vulnerable to long-lasting meaning change, socially and culturally predetermined local contexts tend to be less considered having shorter time to evolve and be viewed. However, smaller meaning shifts or changes in word usages occur here ubiquitously and may be revealed in short-term perspective of analysing more flexible information slices. The purpose of this study is to reveal contextual short-term meaning changes for conflict terminology in leading federal Russian newspapers and online media sources. The corpus of 10,707 texts was formed based on the occurrence of conflict-related topics as the object of this research. The research period was January-December 2020. The selection and analysis of publications was carried out using Integrum (the information retrieval system for monitoring and analysing the media) and word2vec (an algorithm based on artificial neural networks). The original methodology made it possible to determine the share of publications on conflict in the total mass of media reports to identify key thematic areas of conflict information agenda, features of its geography, to describe the semantic field of conflict and show its dynamics in time.

KEYWORDS: *media discourse, Russian media, conflictology, conflict terminology, semantic shift*

Volume 5 Issue 2, 2021, pp. 73-89 doi: 10.22363/2521-442X-2021-5-2-73-89

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the key trends in modern development is the mediatisation of all social processes (Vartanova & Gladkova, 2020; Vladimirova et al., 2020; Gureeva & Kuznetsova, 2021). *'Conceptualisation of the process of mediatisation primarily occurs within the framework of critical analysis of the relationship between media and society. The role of mediatisation as a theoretical framework is recognised by scientific community and helps to trace the mutual influence and transformation of media sphere and communication process as well as social processes'* (Gureeva, 2019, p. 15).

The high intensity of media informational involvement into the area of social conflicts of various kinds and levels has always been observed. To a large extent, this is due to the fact that in the context of digitalisation, society observes conflicts through mediating lenses (Budka & Bräucher, 2020). Media support becomes a natural part of the conflict throughout its development from the beginning to the resolution including its consequences. There are also tendencies towards the strengthening of media control of conflicts, which creates the basis for manipulation, production of fake news and further intensification of social contradictions. In fact, the media themselves are turning into a kind of conflict terminology factory, constructing key social meanings and creating semantic shifts. All of the above creates the basis for a media-centric approach to the study of social conflicts and conflict terminology in socio-cultural media discourse using interdisciplinary approaches and methodological tools.

The researchers emphasise the nature of the conflict as a purely intangible phenomenon, estimated indirectly through the traces left as the results of conflict interaction in the material world. Such traces in contemporary conditions of digitalisation are recorded primarily in socio-cultural media discourse and seem to be the most important indicators of both the level of conflict in society as a whole and a certain stage of its development. The analysis of these indicators, as well as further comprehension of the role of the media in covering, diagnosing, and developing ways to resolve the conflict and reduce the level of conflict tension in society seem to be important tasks that require serious attention from researchers. In this context, it is the content of the media discourse that is the key source of analysis.

Temporal dynamics of contextual meaning change is usually a characteristic of socio-cultural media discourse and periodical textual units that cover a span of specific social and political phenomena reflected in them.

The regular process of linguistic change in word semantics is analysed throughout different verbal storages based, due to current rapid development of information flow, mostly on big datasets such as corpora of contemporary languages, Google Ngrams and some other specialised frameworks. This approach has shown its significance and value in the case of the process of long-lasting meaning change, although today's world sets new goals presupposed by the major transformation in human and social communication that has become instant and contextualised.

The idea of the relationship between long-lasting meaning changes and word frequencies has been already discussed in a number of computational semantic change detection studies (Hamilton et al., 2016; Kahmann et al., 2017). Compared to long-lasting semantic shifts that take years and even decades, short-term semantic shifts may occur in socio-cultural media contexts in monthly periods reflecting changes in word usage rather than in meaning itself. Conflict-based terminology in this case is viewed as a constantly changing semantic cloud of related-to-conflict words and is viewed with respect to short-term frequencies.

Distributional semantic methods put forward the hypothesis that a word's meaning is conveyed in its co-occurrence relationships (Al Farsi, 2018). Our study, therefore, focuses on local changes to a word's nearest semantic neighbours that are more likely to experience socio-cultural drifts.

It is also stated that nouns are more likely to undergo changes due to irregular cultural shifts while verbs, for instance, more readily participate in regular processes of semantic change (Traugott & Dasher, 2001). Our research, consequently, fo-

cuses on semantically related-to-conflict groups of nouns (N=30) for every media source as we follow the idea of sensitivity of nominal shifts to short-term culturally predetermined contextual changes in the Russian language. We estimate the degree of pair relationships of conflict-related words in each time period stating that in the case of short-term semantic shift, contextual similarity increase in time indicates specific usage of connected pairs.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The objective of the study was to analyse the semantic shift in conflict terminology in contemporary Russian socio-cultural media discourse. The basic methods are content analysis, comparative analysis, descriptive method, continuous sampling method, statistical and historical method of linguistic analysis.

Using *Integrum* – an information retrieval system for monitoring and analysing the media – and the *word2vec* algorithm, we were able to promptly analyse significant volumes of digital texts in order to build models for recording the occurrence of words and identify semantically close lexical units and whole groups (Integrum, 2020). Some previous research analysing the creative potential of Russian political discourse in 2010-2020 using the linguistic material collected from the *Integrum* electronic mass media archive suggested that relevant results can be achieved through this kind of study (Kozlovskaya et al., 2020; Kiose, 2020).

The objects of the study are Russian federal socio-political newspapers *Komsomolskaya Pravda, Rossiyskaya Gazeta* and *Kommersant*, as well as online resources *Lenta.Ru* and *Gazeta.Ru*. Research period covers the months of January through December of 2020.

The selection and analysis of publications on the topic of conflict was carried out using *Integrum* configured to select texts including the key word 'conflict'. The *word2vec* algorithm based on artificial neural networks was used to detect semantically close words to the key concept of conflict. *Integrum* was later applied to detect the change frequencies of the closest word pairs. *Integrum* is the largest factual archive of the mass media in Europe. The system provides the opportunity to search specific materials and create automatised monitoring for more than 120,000 publications, TV channels and radio broadcasts, including selected media. The *word2vec* algorithm based on artificial neural networks allows obtaining vector representations of words, which is currently one of the most regularly applied methods for processing large data arrays in a short time. This fully meets the tasks of analysing media content that changes with high frequency. In our study, we used the method of creating word vectors – numerical representations of words that preserve semantic similarity within and outside contexts. The functionality of the *Integrum* system made it possible to determine the total number of journalistic materials published in the studied media in 2020 (259,227 items in total), as well as select from them publications containing the keyword 'conflict' (10,707 items in total). Sample B1 was formed on the basis of these publications. After that, the proportion of publications of the B1 sample in the total content of both individual media and their aggregate was determined.

Using *word2vec*, we were able to conduct a step-by-step analysis of the frequency of words within the media studied. The main semantic core of 'conflict' was built up according to the principle of including only nouns. The core of the lexical system of the language is most often identified on the basis of the frequency criterion. Therefore, the calculation of the average frequency of words occurrence allows attribution to lexical units the frequency of which is higher than the average to the core, while leaving all of those, which frequency is below the average on the periphery. The frequency ranges of connection occurrence of the word 'conflict' and the keywords in the core are set by the model automatically. The most repeated connections were identified during the analysis according to the principle of reducing the vector connection with the main categorising concept.

Proper names were not excluded from the analysis, which made it possible to identify the links between 'conflict' as a categorising concept and the specific culture-related objects or subjects.

Volume 5 Issue 2, 2021, pp. 73-89
doi: 10.22363/2521-442X-2021-5-2-73-89

In addition, in the content of each example of the media under study, such publications were identified in which, in line with the keyword 'conflict', there were keywords that are parts of the semantic core for sample B1, namely: *Russian, President, USA, Ukraine* and *Karabakh*. These pairs were chosen as having the highest scores. Then the dynamics of pair frequencies for 'conflict' keyword in publications was analysed by months Jan-Dec, 2020 in the *Integrum* database.

3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Conflictology as a field of knowledge is aimed at identifying and explaining factors that systematically generate contradictions, social tension, and collisions in society. Recognition of contradictions as the natural state of any social system is one of the important criteria when considering the causes and circumstances of social conflict emergence. Researchers into various disciplinary directions in the field of conflict management emphasise that the impact on conflict and its resolution is predominantly informational in its nature. In modern conditions of digitalisation of all spheres of social reality, the role of the media in conflicts has critically increased (Smirnova & Shkondin, 2021). However, in the context of mediatisation of all spheres of public life, one can speak not only about the key role of media in informing society about conflicts, but often about their decisive role in escalating, stimulating and even creating conflict situations and processes (Vartanova, 2021; Vartanova & Gladkova, 2020; Smirnova, 2021).

According to the classical paradigm, conflict management is aimed at revealing the reasons and mechanisms that usually induce social tension, contradictions and oppositions in society. The conflictological paradigm, which has been used by researchers for a long time, seems to be the key one today. One of the important criteria of the paradigm was the recognition of conflict as a natural state of any social system (Vladimirov, 2013, p. 176). At the initial stages of conflictology development, the main approaches, as noted, were associated with the study of the causes and functions of the conflict and the construction of the conflict theory (Boulding 1962; Galtung, 2008). Thus, a methodological foundation was formed for *'modelling conflicts through the identification and use of structural and dynamic indicators and indicators common to all conflict types, as well as for examination by assessing their specific state on the basis of certain criteria and for developing recommendations for their constructive settlement'* (Antsupov, 2018, p. 29). Above we have already emphasised the processes of mediatisation of social conflicts noted by researchers caused among other things by the high intensity of media informational involvement in social conflicts of various kinds and levels. The digitalisation of media has created conditions for society to observe conflicts through mediating lenses (Budka & Bräucher, 2020) and for a media-centric approach to the analysis of conflicts and conflict terminology in media discourse.

'Discourse approach in social context examines the interaction patterns between participants, social goals and types of social events. A question of particular interest is how the discursive practice reflects the relationship between text and social practice'

Discourse approach in social context examines the interaction patterns between participants, social goals and types of social events. A question of particular interest is how the discursive practice reflects the relationship between text and social practice. Temporal shifts in the meaning are widely considered in scientific literature. However, other valuable dimensions, such as socio-cultural variability, remain less investigated. One synchronic approach was introduced to detect semantic shifts between different sets of texts that share a specific metadata feature (Azarbonyad et al., 2017). Neural embedded vectors were used to analyse semantic space. This approach captures meaningful semantic shifts and can help improve other tasks such as the contrastive viewpoint summary or ideology detection.

'The semantic field of conflict is extremely diverse. Conflict terminology in media discourse seems to be very sensitive to any changes in the global situation, thus, representing a vast domain for research into the possible semantic shifts in short-term perspectives'

Linguistic research of conflictology is one of the priority areas of study (Palij & Poteryakhina, 2018). We define conflict as confrontation of subjects with its own structure, constituents, and the conflict situation in which an unfolding conflict arises. As the media are not only a means of conveying information, but also a very powerful tool for shaping opinions, linguistic reconstruction of a conflict in media discourse is a way to perceive and interpret a conflict, the characteristics of the sides involved and the stages of its development.

The semantic field of conflict is extremely diverse. The theme of territorial and political conflict is covered within the framework of all the publications presented in the study. Conflict terminology in media discourse seems to be very sensitive to any changes in the global situation, thus, representing a vast domain for research into the possible semantic shifts in short-term perspectives.

Currently, the traditional approach to semantic shift focuses on the resulting changes in meaning as well as on the classification of these changes (Traugott, 2017; Kondratyuk et al., 2021; Shamionov, 2020). At the same time, the particular examples of semantic change are regarded separately from the broad context of their use. However, language represents a specific type of communicative activity which is highly dependent on the contextual parameters, including both the type of discourse and the socio-cultural framework. The general mechanism of semantic change can be to some extent inferred from the laws of common mental changes in the population. Most recent research in the field has aimed rather to reveal the pragmatic factors, leading to semantic shift than to describe the essence of particular changes. Cognitive linguists often approach semantic shift as a reflection or projection of the socio-physical world on the processes of reasoning (Sweetser, 1990). The core postulate of this approach states that words have no set meaning, i.e. they only evoke some meaning and serve as clues to the potential notion, as instructions to meaning reconstruction in the contextual field (Paradis, 2011). These meanings are non-discrete and can be described in a set of prototypical features with core and peripheral areas.

Representing reflections of *'conceptual organisation, categorisation principles, processing mechanisms, and experiential and environmental influences'* (Geeraerts & Cuyckens, 2007, p. 3), linguistic meaning has a perspectivation function. This approach was deeply theoretically elaborated in the philosophical, epistemological position taken by cognitive linguistics (Lakoff, 2008; Johnson, 2013).

Semantic shift is often triggered by the change in language conventions within the group of speakers. This process is deeply rooted in socio-cultural and discursive practices as well as in the other paralinguistic factors. For instance, developing the system of key-words analysis (Wierzbicka, 2006) reveals not only the trends in lexicon along with the change in cultural schemas, but also the way lexical meaning evolves reflecting and promoting cultural change.

Key words reflect the worldview and attitude to certain historical, social, and political issues, determining the specific functional style in discourse. Key words are significant in the description of a historical moment, since they most objectively represent the life of the period under study. Keywords have been studied from a number of perspectives, e.g. linguistic-specific concepts of language (Wierzbicka, 1997; Goddard & Wierzbicka, 2013), though semantic shift mostly remained beyond the scope of attention in this paradigm.

In the 20th century, profound research focused on semantic fields which include interconnected sets of lexical units. The idea of shifts and changes in semantic space was described in the studies of

Volume 5 Issue 2, 2021, pp. 73-89 doi: 10.22363/2521-442X-2021-5-2-73-89

terminology development (Kay, 1975; Williams, 1976). These studies set the scene for the systematic analysis of semantic shifts based on the accumulated data.

Semantic field is a set of actual linguistic units that have semantic unity (a common seme or group of semes). The lexical-semantic field is divided into three components: core, centre and periphery. However, functional-semantic or grammatical-lexical fields often overlap and diffuse, although it is possible to distinguish between functional-thematic and functional-semantic, which emphasises that the semantic field is not determined by general language use but rather appears in particular language material. If the research material is represented as a text or a group of texts, functional-textual fields that do not differ from the linguistic ones in essence are identified, though they often differ from the linguistic field in the composition of the core and the periphery.

Semantic mapping also represents a suitable instrument for semantic change research. Developed as visual representations of interconnections in different concepts (Croft, 2001, p. 96), abstract maps can help to identify related meanings and to assess the extent of their similarity (Auwera, 2013). Moreover, they can be interpreted as references to close semantic clusters.

Research into semantic shift also involves the analysis of collocations, the relationship between words or lexical groups that coincide in the text. As the 20th century saw an immense increase in the availability of historical digital corpora, research into semantic shift gained some new approaches to the data processing. A pool of innovative methodologies was elaborated to explain semantic changes as a motivated construct (Allan & Robinson, 2011) as well as to apply the research into shifts to practice. These methodologies widely support the assertion that a great proportion of change occurs in minor segments that can be observed in clusters of textual shifts in collocations.

Computer-mediated statistical approaches to corpora analysis involve the investigation of collocates and co-occurring units in various contexts. Thus, shifts in collocations reflect the change in meaning if observed in 'diachronic collostructional analysis' (Hilpert, 2008). Semantic shift or change is often associated with the long-term processes in the structure of meaning of a semantic unit (word, or to be more precise, lexeme). However, it is also possible to interpret semantic shift as a phenomenon, manifested in language activity during short time spans (Newman, 2015).

However, short-term effects of change (Hilpert, 2012) have also been observed, which might suggest that the particular context can contribute to long-term semantic shifts. Web crawling techniques are also used for the purpose of applying statistical designs to a broad variety of texts (Kerremans et al., 2012). Distributional modelling of word meaning was also applied to the study of automatic semantic shift detection (Fiser & Ljubesic, 2019).

In recent years, pragmatic shifts in meaning have been regarded as the basis of semantic change (Fitzmaurice, 2016). As the research into variations and discursive specifics of semantics have broadened, it has became possible to combine synchronic and diachronic work in the study of semantic change. In this paper, short-term diachronic perspective is combined with a synchronic perspective to analyse the possible markers and prerequisites for the long-term consequences of contextual factors in semantic change.

Research into semantic change has recently benefited from innovative methodological opportunities. These include the immense development of digitalised corpora, unfolding new possibilities for big data analysis, and innovative computational technologies, providing statistically reliable methods for the processing of semantic information. Combination of the two conditions not only opens up a way to describe particular events within semantic fields, but also to understand core mechanisms of changes in semantics.

Several research approaches have been applied to the study of semantic shifts (Dubossarsky, 2018). These paradigms differ in three dimensions: (1) top-down or bottom-up modes of information processing; (2) large-scale or narrow scope of focus; (3) the use of rigorous statistical method. It is

'Word frequency has even been applied to explain semantic shifts, presumably high-frequency words are more likely to lose extra shades of meaning'

worth noting that all types of research methodologies are currently widely used in semantic research and support rather than replace the others.

The traditional semantic approach provides a valuable source of insights into the mechanisms and trends in semantic change, e.g. the database of semantic shifts (Zalizniak et al., 2012). Another perspective evaluates the shift in terms of the quantitative change in distributional statistics viewed from a diachronic perspective. Several examples can be found in relevant literature: measuring the shifts in target word frequencies (Bybee, 2006), diachronic collostructural analysis which is based on the statistical interdependence of frequencies of co-occurrence of two words (Hilpert, 2014). The quantitative paradigm is often used, though the top-down approach prevails, e.g. detecting semantic shift for further qualitative analysis (Tantucci et al., 2018). Word frequency has even been applied to explain semantic shifts, presumably high-frequency words are more likely to lose extra shades of meaning.

The computational paradigm states that meaning can be inferred from the context of the word use in language. As per the hypothesis of data distribution, close words occur in similar contexts. This postulate constitutes the foundation for most contemporary corpora computational models that focus on contextual clues to interpret meanings.

It is worth saying that none of the paradigms mentioned above deals directly with word representation. Instead, the meaning is either inferred subjectively (as in the traditional model), or interpreted through the strength of association (as in the quantitative approach). In contrast to these two systems, the computational paradigm necessarily first represents word meanings and then defines semantic change as a measurable difference between the two representations.

4. STUDY AND RESULTS

In this research the publications of the selected media were analysed during the yearly period from January to December 2020. At the first stage, the selected methodology made it possible to estimate the proportion of publications containing conflict terminology in the total array of media reports. Thus, in the course of the first procedure, a sample of publications # = 10 707 (sample B1) containing the keyword 'conflict' was formed. This sample correlated with the total number of publications in the selected media for the investigated period (sample B0) # = 259227 publications. Thus, publications containing conflict terminology averaged 4,1% of the total volume of publications. However, significant differences are noticeable in the presence of conflict terminology in the periodicals analysed: the maximum share of texts with conflict terminology is demonstrated by *Kommersant*, the minimum – by *Gazeta.Ru* (Table 1).

The next procedure involved the analysis of the lexical-semantic field of B1 sample using the *word2vec* algorithm, which included only lexical units denoting the actants of situations. The core of the lexical system of the language is most often identified on the basis of the criterion of frequency. Calculating the average frequency of a word allows to reveal the vocabulary that shows the highest frequency if compared to the average. This vocabulary constitutes the core. Words whose frequency is below the average are referred to as the periphery. The procedure made it possible to identify the field around the word 'conflict' that was considered in all forms with flexions. The semantic core was built up out of 30 most common nouns and was generated automatically according to the principle of identifying nominal units for objects and subjects including proper names with the highest scores. The occurrence of words was checked both for the 'conflict' joint category for all periodicals and within each of the media separately. Table 2 presents the data obtained for *Komsomolskaya Pravda, Rossiyskaya Gazeta, Kommersant, Lenta.Ru* and *Gazeta.Ru* correspondingly. Semantic analysis to a large extent confirmed the data obtained with the help of *Integrum*.

Volume 5 Issue 2, 2021, pp. 73-89 doi: 10.22363/2521-442X-2021-5-2-73-89

Table 1
Publications including conflict as the key notion

PERIODICAL	TOTAL NUMBER OF TEXTS IN 2020	TEXTS WITH THE WORD *CONFLICT*	PERCENTAGE OF TEXTS WITH THE WORD *CONFLICT* (%)
Komsomolskaya Pravda	7,366	326	4,4%
Rossiyskaya Gazeta	16,492	584	3,5%
Kommersant	5,576	755	13,5%
Gazeta.Ru	133,221	4,408	3,3%
Lenta.Ru	96,572	4,634	4,8%
∑	259,227	10,707	4,1%

Table 2
Conflict terminology semantic core

KEY WORD	SEMANTIC CORE
Conflict	conflict, president, usa, ukraine, azerbaijan, armenia, head, karabakh, situation, attitude, action, power, decision, turkey, republic, news, territory, state, region, number, vladimir, minister, photo, result, problem, group, representative, court, leader, negotiations

A group of words describing geographical objects is significant for the problem under consideration. It includes 6 words out of 30: USA, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Karabakh, Turkey. Words are listed in decreasing order of frequency, that is, listing the more frequently used words first before the less frequently used ones last. Thus, it can be argued that news reports related to the United States in our study were encountered more often (11,531) than those reporting on Ukraine (9,578), Azerbaijan (8,482), Armenia (8,166), Karabakh (8,166) and Turkey (4,582). In addition to the proper names of specific places associated with conflict, the core includes more abstract nouns associated with location (region, territory) and state system (republic, state).

The semantic field of conflict also contains a large group of words describing various aspects of conflict environment and actions associated with it. This group included: situation, attitude, action, solution, problem, result, number, and negotiation. The subjects of conflict are represented at the core by the words *minister, representative, group* and *power*. This block also includes more specific nouns describing the general subjects of power, including proper names: *president, head, Vladimir* (Putin), *leader*. The aspect of the relevance and coverage of conflict is represented by the words in news and photos.

Further on, within the same methodology, the semantic cores of 30 nouns for the category 'conflict' were identified for each periodical selected for the analysis (Table 3).

Analysing semantic fields for conflict as a categorising category by periodical revealed significant meaning shift between media. This shift may be described in terms of frequency differences in specific conflict terminology combination. The most frequently used units included in the semantic core of the official state periodical *Rossiyskaya*

Table 3
Conflict terminology semantic core (by periodical)

PERIODICAL	SEMANTIC CORE
Lenta.ru	conflict, photo, azerbaijan, president, armenia, karabakh, ukraine, usa, news, power, channel, action, attitude, situation, republic, head, ria, territory, region, turkey, group, man, decision, state, company, leader, donbass, problem, murder, result
Gazeta.Ru	conflict, president, usa, ukraine, head, action, karabakh, armenia, situation, azerbaijan, attitude, turkey, power, decision, republic, state, news, territory, minister, result, negotiations, trump, leader, vladimir, ria, statement, number, representative, region, donbass
Kommersant	president, mister, conflict, head, usa, company, situation, decision, rf, attitude, power, vladimir, project, sergey, market, court, number, elections, ruble, negotiations, representative, government, problem, region, turkey, action, group, million, minister, ukraine
Komsomolskaya Pravda	conflict, family, attitude, karabakh, thousand, president, usa, situation, azerbaijan, armenia, parent, alexander, problem, ukraine, history, ruble, school, power, million, son, turkey, film, month, apartment, territory, court, sergey, state, moment, daughter
Rossiyskaya Gazeta	federation, law, legacy, president, decision, body, article, usa, court, attitude, citizen, power, conflict, situation, number, state, history, territory, head, system, government, organization, service, problem, thousand, action, rf, measure, condition, subject

Gazeta turned out to be *federation, law, law body* and *article*. *Kommersant* most frequently used semantic units such as *mister, company, project, market* and *rouble*. The semantic core of *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, aimed at a mass audience, showed the priority of conflicts related to family and relationships.

The next procedure was to identify the frequency of semantic pairs presumably demonstrating reference vectors in the information agenda in connection with specific people, countries, hot spots, etc. that are relevant in different periods of 2020 and the dynamics of their usage in different publications within the year by month. To test this technique, the following semantic pairs were selected: *conflict/Russian; conflict/president; conflict/USA; conflict/Ukraine; conflict/Karabakh*. To hypothesise short-term semantic shifts, an analysis of pair frequencies throughout each periodical was carried out (Tables 4-8, Figures 1-5).

Volume 5 Issue 2, 2021, pp. 73-89 doi: 10.22363/2521-442X-2021-5-2-73-89

Table 4
'Conflict/Russian' pair frequencies (by periodical, by month)

PERIODICAL	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Komsomolskaya Pravda	9	6	9	6	8	8	7	9	3	21	24	10
Rossiyskaya Gazeta	55	60	39	37	21	52	51	48	42	56	64	59
Kommersant	33	46	28	17	15	25	33	31	44	53	37	59
Gazeta.Ru	150	178	93	102	88	127	122	108	116	193	232	164
Lenta.Ru	115	151	96	91	98	119	155	108	142	183	353	215
∑	362	441	265	253	230	331	368	304	347	506	710	507

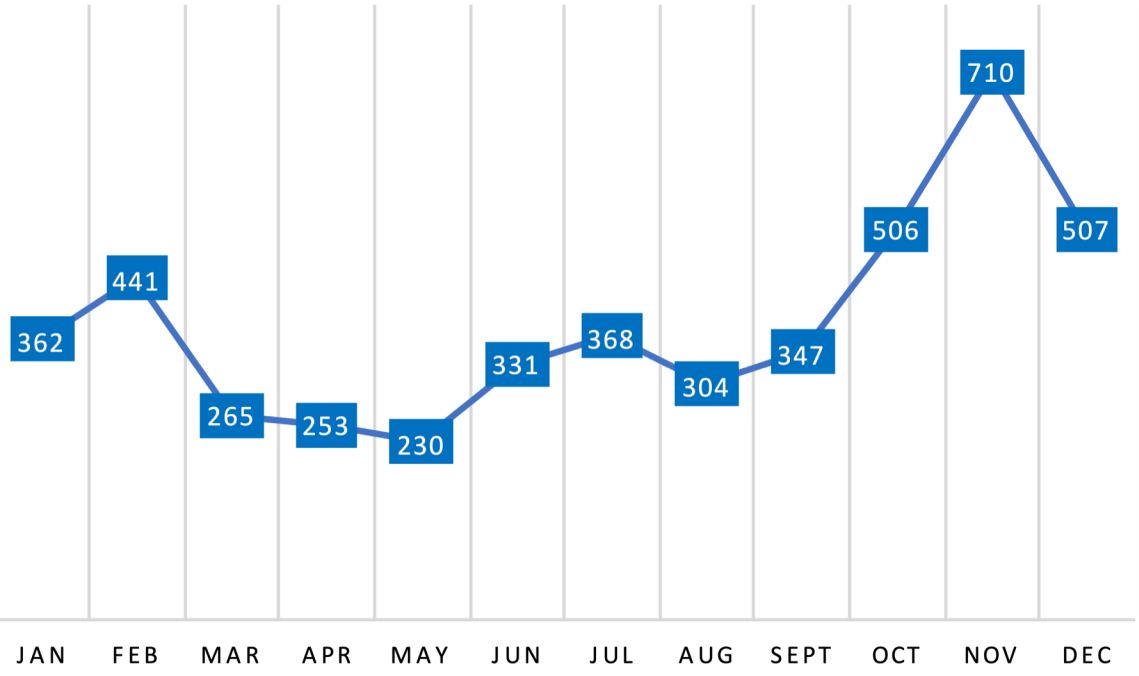

Figure 1. Semantic pair 'Conflict/Russian' (monthly dynamics)

Table 5
'Conflict/President' pair frequencies (by periodical, by month)

PERIODICAL	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Komsomolskaya Pravda	10	8	4	4	0	5	8	13	2	17	14	5
Rossiyskaya Gazeta	29	20	18	12	14	27	22	21	17	21	36	28
Kommersant	35	35	28	18	16	22	32	40	46	64	47	45
Gazeta.Ru	197	186	105	88	97	124	145	128	166	305	221	135
Lenta.Ru	166	184	88	61	99	91	138	112	159	327	269	157
∑	437	433	243	183	226	269	345	314	390	734	587	370

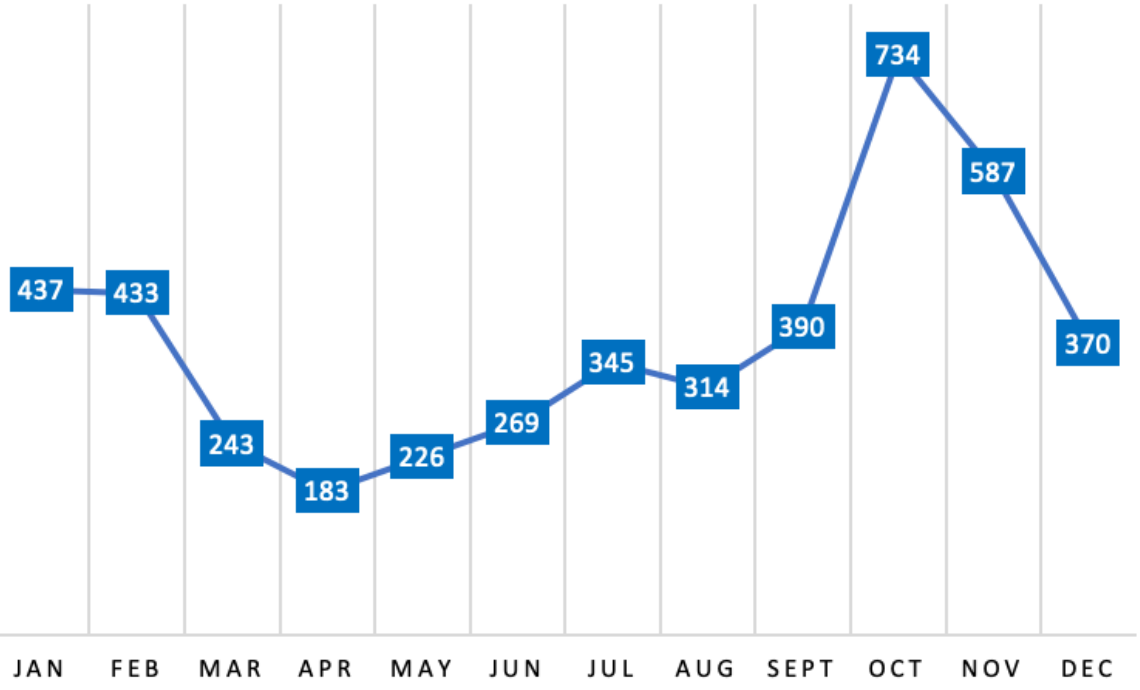

Figure 2. Semantic pair 'Conflict/President' (monthly dynamics)

Volume 5 Issue 2, 2021, pp. 73-89 doi: 10.22363/2521-442X-2021-5-2-73-89

Table 6
'Conflict/USA' pair frequencies (by periodical, by month)

PERIODICAL	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Komsomolskaya Pravda	5	9	5	8	1	8	5	4	2	17	13	6
Rossiyskaya Gazeta	21	20	8	7	7	24	16	7	13	12	11	18
Kommersant	20	25	11	10	10	19	20	18	21	32	23	22
Gazeta.Ru	138	129	54	67	75	111	106	91	98	166	105	70
Lenta.Ru	136	100	45	47	91	90	69	52	87	164	102	89
∑	320	283	123	139	184	252	216	172	221	391	254	205

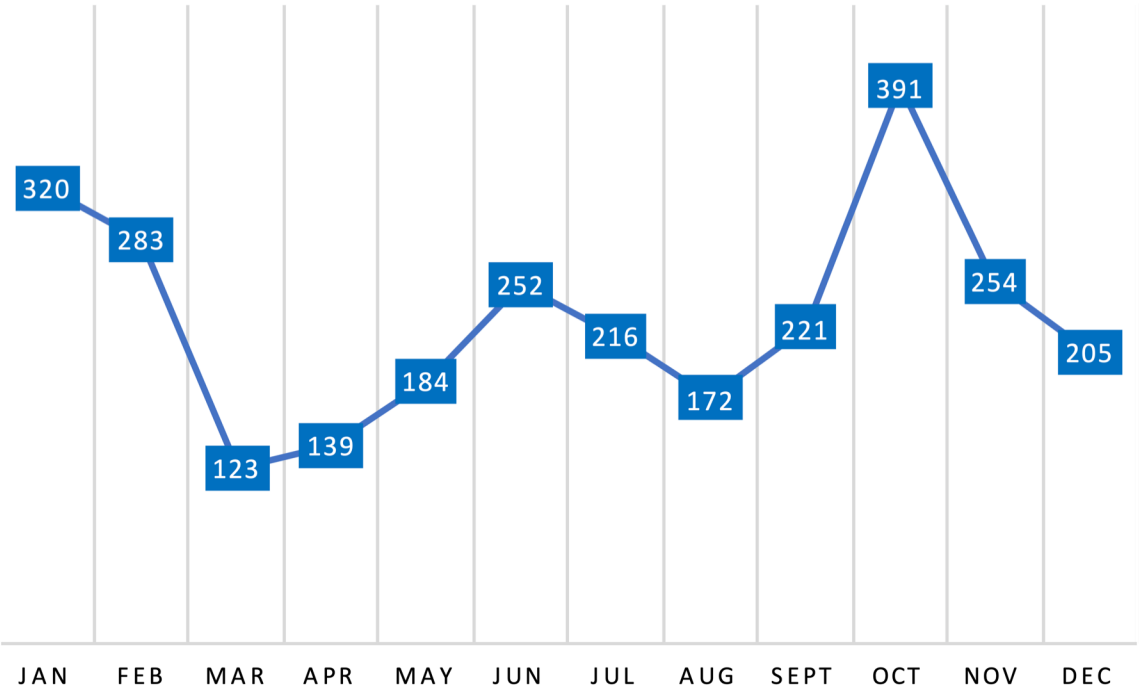

Figure 3. Semantic pair 'Conflict/USA' (monthly dynamics)

Table 7
'Conflict/Ukraine' pair frequencies (by periodical, by month)

PERIODICAL	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Komsomolskaya Pravda	6	6	4	1	1	3	4	7	1	8	5	5
Rossiyskaya Gazeta	8	9	5	8	3	10	7	4	6	3	4	7
Kommersant	13	23	7	8	4	5	9	13	14	7	8	13
Gazeta.Ru	92	111	45	52	54	64	96	81	71	58	64	65
Lenta.Ru	79	99	71	50	90	82	105	66	75	58	62	96
∑	198	248	132	119	152	164	221	171	167	134	143	186

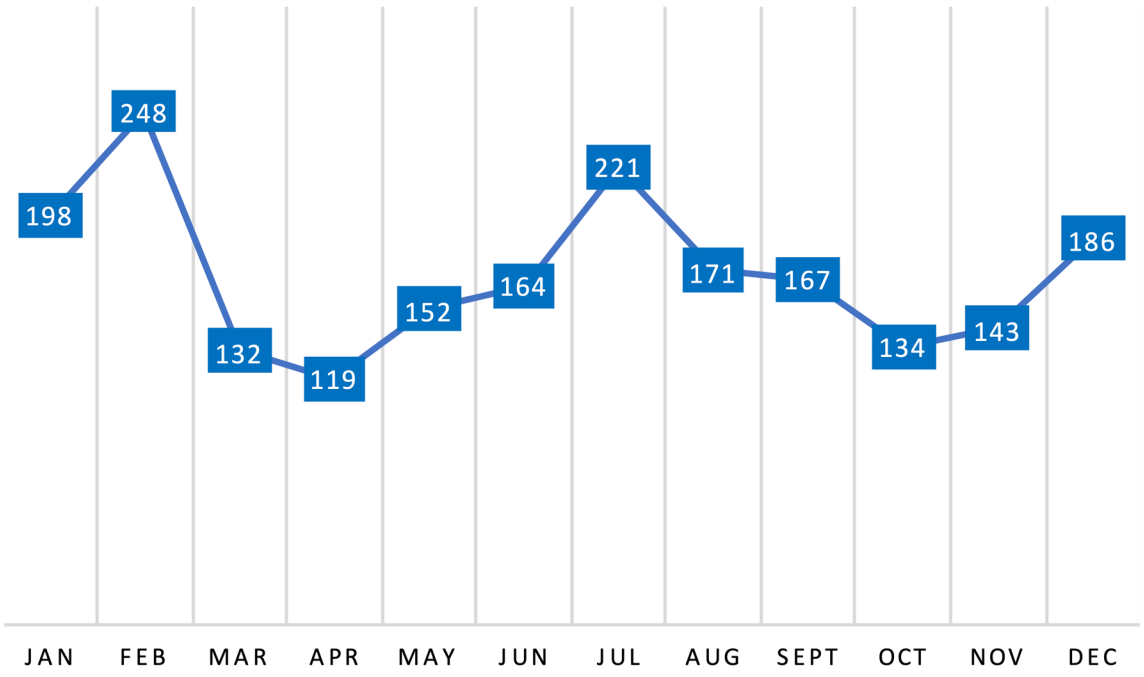

Figure 4. Semantic pair 'Conflict/Ukraine' (monthly dynamics)

Volume 5 Issue 2, 2021, pp. 73-89 doi: 10.22363/2521-442X-2021-5-2-73-89

Table 8
'Conflict/Karabakh' pair frequencies (by periodical, by month)

PERIODICAL	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Komsomolskaya Pravda	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	28	16	7
Rossiyskaya Gazeta	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	13	22	9
Kommersant	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	1	5	28	13	12
Gazeta.Ru	2	1	2	2	1	2	16	3	108	399	169	57
Lenta.Ru	4	2	0	2	3	1	31	2	144	396	299	118
∑	6	3	2	4	4	3	56	7	262	864	519	203

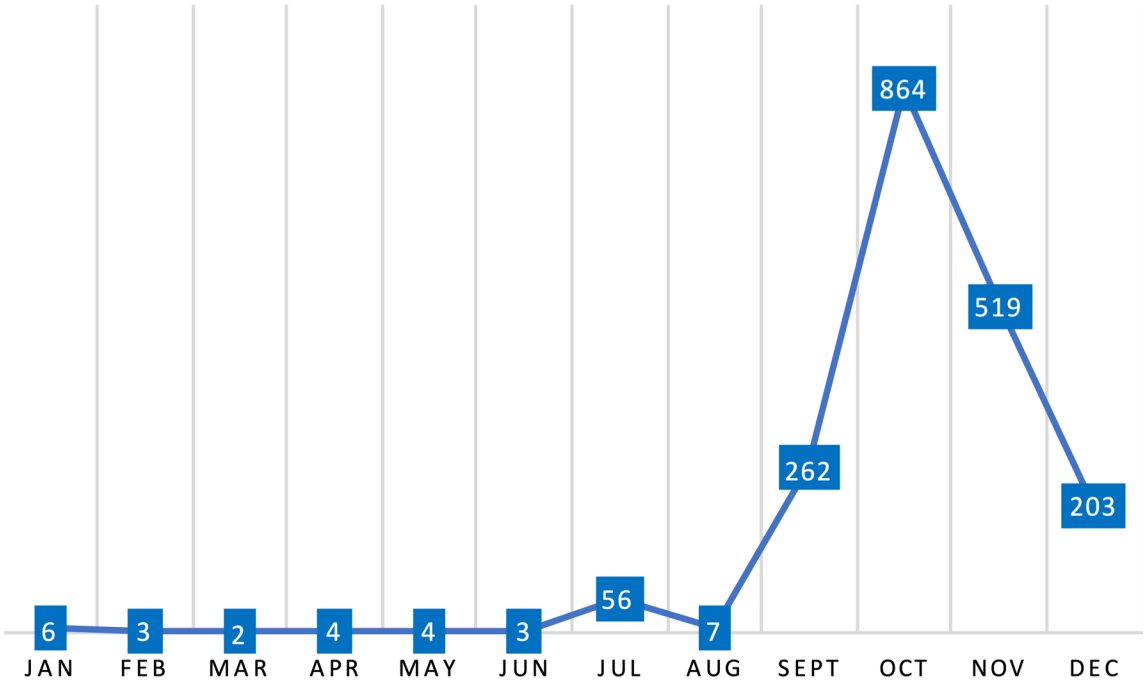

Figure 5. Semantic pair 'Conflict/Karabakh' (monthly dynamics)

5. DISCUSSION

The results of the experimental settings devoted to conflict terminology analysis show that the semantic field of contemporary conflict agenda within our study is extremely diverse. The current findings are the first step in the further research into socio-cultural media discourse within the frameworks of conflict terminology. In the future, we plan to conduct a deeper analysis of the semantic core, as well as identify and analyse semantic pairs formed by subject, geographic and other characteristics. Another possibility is a comparative analysis of the identified results with the current information agenda in the period under study.

6. CONCLUSION

The semantic field of conflict is multidimensional and miscellaneous. Territorial (geographical) and political aspects of conflict are the most regularly covered in all the periodicals under analysis. In addition to the general focus of the media on covering the conflict within territorial and political spheres, there is a certain focus of some publications on highlighting other conflict-related issues such as finance, law, the social sphere, family relations, education, culture, economics and criminal practice (forensic science). The regional relevance of publications is obvious due to the presence of Russian socio-cultural realities, with high frequencies such as proper names belonging to specific political figures in the contemporary regime. The geography of conflict representation in the media extends to several key countries, including the United States, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkey and Russia. Conflict-related materials in *Lenta.ru* cover the area of criminal practice (forensic science) to a greater extent than the other four media outlets. *Komsomolskaya Pravda* focuses on the social sphere and intra-family relations more than the four other media. *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* in its turn presents the legal side of the conflict-based agenda.

The findings prove the existence of certain discrepancies in the semantic fields of conflict-related terminology in different periodicals of the Russian Federation that highlight the topic from different perspectives. Moreover, pair frequency analysis by month and periodical have shown slight short-term shifts in the usage of conflict terminology as interrelated words tend to have frequency leaps and falls due to certain socio-cultural factors underlying this dynamic.

FUNDING

The study is supported by the Interdisciplinary Scientific and Educational School of Moscow University 'Preservation of the World Cultural and Historical Heritage'.

References

Al Farsi, B. H. (2018). Word meaning in word identification during reading: Co-occurrence-based semantic neighborhood density effects. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, *39*(5), 779- 809. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0142716417000583

Allan, K., & Robinson, J. A. (Eds.). (2011). *Current methods in historical semantics* (Vol. 73). De Gruyter Mouton.

Antsupov, A. Ya. (2018). *History of Russian conflictology*. Prospekt Publishing.

Auwera, J. (2013). Semantic maps, for synchronic and diachronic typology. In A. Giacalone Ramat, C. Mauri, & P. Molinelli (Eds.), *Synchrony and diachrony: A dynamic interface* (pp. 153-176). John Benjamins Publishing.

Azarbonyad, H., Dehghani, M., Beelen, K., Arkut, A., Marx, M., & Kamps, J. (2017, November). Words are malleable: Computing semantic shifts in political and media discourse. In *Proceedings of the 2017 ACM Conference on Information and Knowledge Management* (pp. 1509-1518). Association for Computing Machinery. https://doi.org/10.1145/3132847.3132878

Boulding, K. E. (1962). *Conflict and defense: A general theory*. Harper & Brothers.

Budka, P., & Bräucher, B. (2020). *Theorising media and conflict*. Berghahn Books.

Bybee, J. L. (2006). From usage to grammar: The mind's response to repetition. *Language, 82*(4), 711-733. https://doi.org/10.1353/lan.2006.0186

Volume 5 Issue 2, 2021, pp. 73-89 doi: 10.22363/2521-442X-2021-5-2-73-89

Croft, W. (2001). *Radical construction grammar: Syntactic theory in typological perspective*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198299554.001.0001

Dubossarsky, H. (2018). *Semantic change at large: A computational approach for semantic change research* [Doctoral dissertation, Hebrew University of Jerusalem]. Hebrew University of Jerusalem Archive. https://www.cs.huji.ac.il/~daphna/theses/Haim_Dubossarsky_2018.pdf

Fiser, D., & Ljubesic, N. (2019). Distributional modelling for semantic shift detection. *International Journal of Lexicography*, *32*(2), 163-183. https://doi.org/10.1093/ijl/ecy011

Fitzmaurice, S. M. (2016). Semantic and pragmatic change. In M. Kytö & P. Pahta (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of English historical linguistics* (pp. 256-270). CUP. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139600231.016

Galtung, J. (2008). Toward a conflictology: The quest for transdisciplinarity. In D. Sandole, S. Byrne, & I. Sandole-Staroste (Eds.), *Handbook of conflict analysis and resolution* (pp. 511-524). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203893166

Geeraerts, D., & Cuyckens, H. (2007). Introducing cognitive linguistics. In D. Geeraerts & H. Cuyckens (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of cognitive linguistics* (pp. 3-21). Oxford University Press.

Goddard, C., & Wierzbicka, A. (2013). *Words and meanings: Lexical semantics across domains, languages, and cultures*. Oxford University Press.

Gureeva, A. N. (2019). National peculiarities of the mediatisation process. In V. V. Vasilyeva (Ed.), *Media in the modern world* (pp. 15-16). Saint Petersburg State University Publishing House. https://elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=37242897&

Gureeva, A. N., & Kuznecova, V. S. (2021). Conceptualising mediatisation in politics: Basic theoretical approaches. *Theoretical and Practical Issues of Journalism, 10*(1), 191-205. https://doi.org/10.17150/2308-6203.2021.10(1).191-205

Hamilton, W. L., Leskovec, J., & Jurafsky, D. (2016, November). Cultural shift or linguistic drift? Comparing two computational measures of semantic change. In *Proceedings of the 2016 Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing* (pp. 2116-2121). Association for Computational Linguistics. http://dx.doi.org/10.18653/v1/D16-1229

Hilpert, M. (2008). Germanic future constructions: A usage-based approach to language change. *Annual Review of Cognitive Linguistics, 7*(1), 345-356. https://doi.org/10.1075/arcl.7.17ham

Hilpert, M. (2012). Diachronic collostructional analysis meets the noun phrase: Studying many a noun in COHA. In T. Nevalainen & E. C. Traugott (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of the history of English (*pp. 100-124). Oxford University Press.

Hilpert, M. (2014). Collostructional analysis: Measuring associations between constructions and lexical elements. In D. Glynn & J. Robinson (Eds.), *Corpus methods for semantics: Quantitative studies in polysemy and synonymy* (pp. 391-404). John Benjamins.

Integrum. (2020). *Monitoring of media and social media*. https://integrum.ru/monitoring-smi

Johnson, M. (2013). *The body in the mind: The bodily basis of meaning, imagination, and reason*. University of Chicago Press.

Kahmann, C., Niekler, A., & Heyer, G. (2017). Detecting and assessing contextual change in diachronic text documents using context volatility. In *Proceedings of the 9th International Conference on Knowledge Discovery and Information Retrieval* (pp. 135-143). IC3K. http://dx.doi.org/10.5220/0006574001350143

Kay, P. (1975). Synchronic variability and diachronic change in basic color terms. *Language in Society 4*(3), 257-270. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404500006667

Kerremans, D., Stegmayr, S., & Schmid, H. J. (2012). The NeoCrawler: Identifying and retrieving neologisms from the internet and monitoring ongoing change. In K. Allan & J. Robinson (Eds.), *Current methods in historical semantics* (pp. 59-96). De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110252903.59

Kiose, M. I. (2020). Linguistic creativity in discourse: The research perspective of cognitive semiotics. *The Urals Philological Bulletin, 2,* 37-47. https://doi.org/10.26170/ufv20-02-03

Kondratyuk, N. G., Tsyganov, I. Y., Kolesnikova, I. M., & Morosanova, V. I. (2021). Regulatory resources and person's life plans under uncertainty conditions during COVID-19 lockdown in Russia. *RUDN Journal of Psychology and Pedagogics, 18*(1), 7-24. https://doi.org/10.22363/2313-1683-2021-18-1-7-24

Kozlovskaya, N. V., Rastyagaev, A. V., & Slozhenikina, J. V. (2020). The creative potential of contemporary Russian political discourse: From new words to new paradigms. *Training, Language and Culture, 4*(4), 78-90. https://doi.org/10.22363/2521-442X-2020-4-4-78-90

Lakoff, G. (2008). *Women, fire, and dangerous things*. University of Chicago Press.

Newman, J. (2015). Semantic shift. In N. Rimer (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of semantics* (pp. 266-280). Routledge.

Palij, T. P., & Poteryahina, I. N. (2018). Linguistic reconstruction of conflict in media discourse. In Z. A. Zavrumov (Ed.), *University readings 2018* (pp. 52-56). Pyatigorsk State University Press.

Paradis, C. (2011). Metonymization: A key mechanism in semantic change. In R. Benczes, A. Barcelon, & F. Mendoza Ibáñez (Eds.), *Defining metonymy in cognitive linguistics: Towards a consensus view* (pp. 61-88). John Benjamins.

Shamionov, R. M. (2020). The role of civic identity in the preferences of civil and political forms of social activity in Russian youth. *RUDN Journal of Psychology and Pedagogics, 17*(3), 459-472. https://doi.org/10.22363/2313-1683-2020-17-3-459-472

Smirnova, O. V. (2021) Conflicology and the theory of journalistics. In E. I. Orlova (Ed.), *Journalism in 2020* (pp. 314-316). Moscow State University Press.

Smirnova, O. V., & Shkondin, M. V. (2021). Media and journalism studies in the context of conflictology: System-based theoretical aspects. *Theoretical and Practical Issues of Journalism, 10*(1), 5-21. https://doi.org/10.17150/2308-6203.2021.10(1).5-21

Sweetser, E. (1990). *From etymology to pragmatics*. Cambridge University Press.

Tantucci, V., Culpeper, J., & Di Cristofaro, M. (2018). Dynamic resonance and social reciprocity in language change. *Language Sciences*, *68*, 6-21.

Traugott, E. C. (2017). Semantic change. In S. Attardo (Ed.), *Oxford Research encyclopaedia of linguistics* (pp. 319-323). Oxford University Press.

Traugott, E., & Dasher, R. (2001). *Regularity in semantic change*. Cambridge University Press.

Vartanova, E., & Gladkova, A. (2020). Old and new discourses in emerging states: Communication challenges of the digital age. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses, 5*(2), 119-125.

Vartanova, E. L. (2021). Media and social conflict: The dual nature of interconnection. In E. I. Orlova (Ed.), *Journalism in 2020* (pp. 307-309). Moscow State University Press.

Vladimirov, A. A. (2013). *Modernisation in Russia from the viewpoint of social philosophy and conflictology*. URSS Press Group.

Vladimirova, T. N., Panferova, V. V., Smirnova, O. V., Svitich, L. G., & Shkondin, M. V. (2020). Journalism and intellectual potential of society: Theoretical approaches to system analysis of intellectual interaction in media landscape. *Theoretical and Practical Issues of Journalism, 9*(1), 90-105.

Wierzbicka, A. (1997). *Understanding cultures through their key words* (Vol. 8). Oxford University Press.

Wierzbicka, A. (2006). *English: Meaning and culture*. Oxford University Press.

Williams, J. M. (1976). Synaesthetic adjectives: A possible law of semantic change. *Language, 52*(2), 461-478.

Zalizniak, A. S., Bulakh, M., Ganenkov, D., Gruntov, I., Maisak, T., & Russo, M. (2012). The catalogue of semantic shifts as a database for lexical semantic typology. *Linguistics, 50*(3), 633-669.

ALINA S. ANTIPOVA
Lomonosov Moscow State University | GSP-1, Leninskie Gory, 119991 Moscow, Russia
antipovaaline@gmail.com

MARIA D. RABESON
Lomonosov Moscow State University | GSP-1, Leninskie Gory, 119991 Moscow, Russia
maria.rabeson@gmail.com

OLGA V. SMIRNOVA
Lomonosov Moscow State University | GSP-1, Leninskie Gory, 119991 Moscow, Russia
smirnovaorama@gmail.com