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**CONFLICT, CONFRONTATION, AND WAR
REFLECTED IN MASS MEDIA: SEMANTIC WARS,
THEIR VICTORS AND VICTIMS**

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Abstract: War presented in mass media as a piece of hard news has three spaces: military, economic, and informational. From a linguistic point of view, conflict has two constituents: CONFLICT-STATE and CONFLICT-ACTION. The variety of conflict is confrontation, which includes physical collision, armed opposition, verbal collision, collision of outlooks and interests. Each conflict or confrontation has a cognitive script, on which confrontational substrategies are being built.

Key words: conflict, confrontation, war, cognitive script, semantic wars, text categories.

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Résumé

Conflicts, war, invasion, fight, explosion, kidnapping, etc. very often constitute the main hard news in mass media. We may specify three spaces of war: military, economic, and informational. In our research, we focus our attention on the informational space of war and military conflicts and show what techniques are used by journalists to attract the reader's attention. From the linguistic point of view, conflict has two constituents: CONFLICT-STATE and CONFLICT-ACTION. Further subdivision includes HUMAN ACTIVITY event and NON-MILITARY [VERBAL] EVENT. The variety of conflict is confrontation, which includes physical collision, armed opposition, verbal collision, collision of outlooks and interests. Either conflict or confrontation has primary (explicit) and secondary (implicit) markers. Each conflict or confrontation has a cognitive script, on which confrontational substrategies are built. We analyse the two cases (the Iraq war and the Skripal poisoning) presented in media texts, analyse what confrontation strategies are used in them, and how some text categories are used as manipulation tools. Of all the well-known text categories, we have chosen modality, emotivity, and evaluation and using a diachronical approach we highlight how they are reflected in media texts. The analysis of articles in two case studies shows that when something happens and this hard news is on air, the texts abound in emotively charged words, mainly with negative connotations (category of emotivity prevails). Later politicians, authorities, and journalists express their attitude to this event, either positively or negatively (category of modality prevails). When some time passes, there appear publications, which belong to analytical journalism (category of evaluation prevails).

Key words: conflict, confrontation, war, cognitive script, semantic wars, text categories.

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