Framing the war in Ukraine in a time lapse.

Anna Verbytska

Martin Luther Universität Halle-Wittenberg anna.verbytska@medienkomm.uni-halle.de

As previously shown by a number of scholars, media framing for various areas like policy, political arguments, media debates on climate change, or narratives about the war and genocide in media discourse (Kent, 2005) is being effectively studied with the application of computational models for linguistic research, e.g. LDA model with MALLET's, LDA model with spaCy and Gensim, or transformer-based language models.

The current paper offers frame analysis to address the 'ideological orderings' that determine the moral judgment of the war in Ukraine and emotional framing of the war's milestones in European Union and Ukrainian (English version) media outlets in a one-year time span (24 June 2022 – 24 June 2023). These questions will be answered with the help of computational and linguistic methods of Natural Language Processing (NLP), Corpus Linguistics (CL), Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Previously, the innovative interdisciplinary combination of these fields has proved efficient for the studies of terrorist discourse (Francisco et al., 2022), and is to be used again, yet for another life-and-death topic.

The SFL framework offers transitivity, appraisal and affect analyses to identify transitivity patterns of processes, participants and circumstances, appraisal and sentiments. The NLP techniques with employment of transformer-based models provided by Hugging Face (BERT, DistilBERT, RoBERTa) such as topic modelling to extract latent topics, Named Entity Recognition and Sentiment Analysis in Python and CL methodology with LancsBox X corpus analysis tool will identify the broader frames (topics), and more detailed issue-specific frames which, according to Entman (2010), define the problem, analyse causes, provide a moral evaluation to the situation and, finally, recommend treatment. In the end, CDA prompts us to consider potential ideological motivations for the linguistic options chosen to represent the event of utter social importance – the war in Ukraine – from two political perspectives.

References: • Kent, G. (2006). Framing war and genocide: British policy and news media reaction to the war in Bosnia. NY: Hampton Press. • Entman, R. M. (2010). Framing Media Power. In: P. D'Angelo & J. A. Kuypers (Eds.). Doing News Framing Analysis: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives, 331–355. Routledge. • Francisco, M., Benítez-Castro, M.-A., Hidalgo-Tenorio, E. & Castro, J. L. (2022). A semi-supervised algorithm for detecting extremism propaganda diffusion on social media. Pragmatics and Society, 13, 532–554.