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- ◆ to cover scholarly activities of the Russian and international academia.

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Research article / Научная статья

A functional-pragmatic approach to wealth-related euphemisms study in business discourse

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Abstract

In business discourse, euphemisms help alleviate the sensitive topic of material privilege. While previous research has extensively addressed euphemisms denoting various financial phenomena, such as corporate downsizing and recession, the linguistic treatment of wealth has remained comparatively underexplored. The aim of the study is to identify the key pragmatic functions of euphemisms referring to wealth and the wealthy in contemporary English-language business discourse, and to establish how these euphemisms mediate the social perception of affluence. The data comprises publications from prominent English-language business media sampled from a five-year period. Through continuous sampling, a total of 134 occurrences of euphemistic framing were extracted and analysed contextually. The article delineates four primary pragmatic functions of euphemisms denoting wealth: mitigating social sensitivity, strategic reframing, positive image construction, and abstraction. The results demonstrate that these functions are systemic and fulfil distinct pragmatic roles in business discourse. Mitigation strategies soften references to affluence, reframing aligns wealth with meritocratic achievement, positive construction associates affluence with prestige and expertise, and abstraction depersonalises wealth through technical language. The findings suggest that euphemisms denoting wealth and the wealthy in business discourse operate to justify the idea that economic privilege is legitimate. Euphemistic framing contributes to the rhetorical normalization of affluence and configures public perceptions of wealth in business discourse. The study adds to the body of knowledge on euphemism and business discourse and demonstrates the usefulness of the functional-pragmatic approach in identifying the rhetorical devices used in high-stakes arguments.

Keywords: *business discourse, euphemism, pragmatic effect, euphemistic framing, English*



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Функционально-прагматический подход к исследованию эвфемизмов, обозначающих богатство, в деловом дискурсе

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Аннотация

Бизнес дискурсу свойственно оперирование эвфемизмами для нивелирования деликатной темы материальных привилегий. В то время как в научной литературе подробно рассматриваются эвфемизмы, обозначающие различные финансовые явления, такие как корпоративные сокращения и экономический спад, лингвистическая репрезентация богатства остается сравнительно малоизученной проблемой. Цель данного исследования – выявить ключевые прагматические функции эвфемизмов, обозначающих богатство и состоятельных лиц в современном англоязычном бизнес-дискурсе, а также установить, как с их помощью формируется общественное представление о достатке. Эмпирическую базу составили публикации ведущих англоязычных бизнес-медиа, отобранные за пятилетний период. Посредством сплошной выборки было выявлено и контекстуально проанализировано 134 случая эвфемистического фреймирования. В статье выделяются четыре основные прагматические функции эвфемизмов, обозначающих богатство: смягчение восприятия социально значимых тем, стратегическое смещение фокуса, создание позитивного имиджа и абстрагирование. Результаты показывают, что данные функции систематичны и выполняют различные прагматические задачи. Стратегии смягчения позволяют сгладить упоминания о благосостоянии, смещение фокуса соотносит богатство с меритократическими достижениями, позитивная репрезентация ассоциирует состоятельность с престижем и компетентностью, в то время как абстрагирование обезличивает богатство через использование технического языка. Полученные данные свидетельствуют о том, что эвфемизмы, обозначающие богатство и состоятельных людей в бизнес-дискурсе, служат для продвижения и оправдания идеи о легитимности экономических привилегий. Эвфемистическое фреймирование способствует риторической нормализации богатства и формирует общественное восприятие состоятельности в рамках бизнес-дискурса. Исследование расширяет научное представление об эвфемизмах и деловом дискурсе, а также подтверждает эффективность функционально-прагматического подхода для выявления риторических средств, используемых в аргументации в условиях повышенной коммуникативной значимости.

Ключевые слова: деловой дискурс, эвфемизм, прагматический эффект, эвфемистическое фреймирование, английский язык

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1. Introduction

Business discourse is intentionally constructed to measure up against institutional goals and sociopolitical norms. Among the many areas where linguistic manipulation is evident, the representation of wealth and wealthy individuals occupies a particularly complex position. On the one hand, business discourse is often driven towards appealing to affluent audiences through aspirational messaging and financial optimism. On the other, overt references to “wealth” or “the rich” may carry negative connotations in an era that is increasingly concerned with inequality and social justice, as well as corporate ethics. As a result, communicators resort to euphemistic linguistic means to obscure or reframe economic affluence. Such euphemisms contribute to the ideological framing of wealth in the public’s eyes as they have a bearing on the reader’s perception of individuals or entities being described.

Despite extensive research on euphemisms registered as part of language practices in various spheres (including political, healthcare, marketing, corporate discourses, etc.) (Allan & Burridge 2006, Burridge 2012, Litvinova & Larina 2023, Ozyumenko & Larina 2021, Crespo-Fernández 2018, Galchuk 2017, Goddard et al. 2022, Malyuga & Tomalin 2024, Musolff 2019, Mooney 2019), comparatively little attention has been paid to the euphemisms used to refer to wealth and wealthy individuals in the English-language business discourse. Existing studies have been focusing predominantly on negative phenomena, such as euphemisms for corporate downsizing, inflation, or financial crises, while discernibly overlooking how positive or privileged economic status is linguistically managed. This lack of scholarly attention witnessed so far in scientific literature constitutes a significant research gap, especially given the ever-increasing visibility of discussions around wealth disparity and luxury consumption.

To address this gap, the present study aims to investigate the euphemisms referring to wealth and the wealthy in contemporary English-language business discourse. To that end, we shall delineate the key pragmatic functions of such euphemisms and analyse the discursive contexts in which they appear. Using the examples from business media as source material, the study examines how these euphemisms function as linguistic alternatives and rhetorical tools that mediate the social perception of affluence.

The study addresses the following research questions: (1) What euphemisms are used to denote wealth and the wealthy in English-language business discourse? (2) What pragmatic functions do these euphemisms fulfil in English-language business discourse?

The findings hold relevance for scholars of language and communication and for practitioners in marketing, journalism, and finance who in their line of work are required to deal with the sensitive balance between appealing to affluence and maintaining social sensitivity.

2. Theoretical background

A conventional definition of euphemisms characterises them as lexical or phrasal substitutes for expressions deemed inappropriate, offensive, taboo, or socially sensitive. Although traditionally associated with the concealment of unpleasant realities (such as death, illness, or bodily functions), euphemisms also function in contexts where the intent is not just to avoid offense but to tactfully reframe information to serve communicative goals. In such cases, euphemism operates as a discursive strategy rooted in socio-pragmatic conventions and ideological positioning, particularly within institutionalised registers such as business discourse.

The main theoretical framework of this study is the functional-pragmatic approach to discourse, which prioritises the purpose, use, and effect of language in written or spoken communication rather than its formal structure, as posited in Malyuga (2019). The pragmatic emphasis on communicative intention and context-sensitive interpretation (Levinson 1983, Verschueren 1999) and systemic-functional linguistics (Halliday & Webster 2009, Halliday & Matthiessen 2013), which views language as a resource for meaning-making in context, are in line with this viewpoint. This venue of research brings to the foreground practical effectiveness of messages being communicated, as well as contextual appropriacy. This is a suitable lens through which the pragmatic contribution of euphemisms in business discourse can be contemplated. Notably, its relevance is reflected in recent academic publishing guidelines for the humanities and social sciences, where particular emphasis is being placed on research that addresses the functional and pragmatic scope of professional and business language use.

According to Allan and Burridge (2006), euphemisms are not inherently deceptive but are instead pragmatically motivated by a desire to mitigate face-threatening acts or promote specific ideological perspectives. This is arguably particularly relevant in business and economic discourse, because in these contexts euphemistic language often serves to maintain a favourable image of individuals, corporations, or market realities. This is where euphemism finds a close affinity to positive politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson 1987), as it enables speakers or writers to evade topics that can be deemed potentially contentious (such as executive compensation or concentrated wealth) without readily triggering resistance or critique from their audience.

The concept of euphemism has also been examined from the standpoint of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which views language as a socially embedded practice reflective of power relations (Fairclough 1992, van Dijk 2024). Viewed from this perspective, euphemisms are not neutral linguistic choices but

ideologically loaded instruments that can depersonalise responsibility and smooth over the discourse surrounding merit and capital.

Fairclough (1995) emphasises the role of language in the reproduction of dominant ideologies, and euphemisms, by virtue of their ability to mask or reframe realities, are central to this process. In the case of wealth discourse, the substitution of “rich” or “wealthy” with euphemisms like “affluent” or “well-resourced” reflects a tendency to sanitise economic privilege in market-oriented communication. The cultural orientation towards individualism further reinforces the ideological framing of wealth as a personal achievement.

Since discursive strategies like euphemisation and politeness are influenced by culturally specific norms and expectations, cultural factors must also be taken into account in this research setting (Grishechko & Akopova 2015, Eslami et al. 2023). This implies that institutional ideology and underlying ethno-cultural communication patterns are both reflected in the practical use of euphemisms in business discourse. Despite minor shifts toward collectivist tendencies, individualistic values continue to predominate English-language cultural discourse, according to recent corpus-based research (Tamimy et al. 2022). Such cultural predispositions impact the pragmatic choices made in business discourse, so that wealth is ultimately delineated as the result of personal merit and a carefully carried out plan that led to autonomous success.

The current study’s emphasis on euphemistic mitigation techniques is also consistent with findings regarding pragmatic discourse softening techniques. The role of language as a tool for controlling social interaction and preserving face is further supported by research on hedging, which has revealed that discursive practices such as approximating or shielding propositional content serve significant pragmatic functions across genres (Gribanova & Gaidukova 2019).

Furthermore, the phenomenon of euphemistic reframing is closely connected to the concept of framing in cognitive linguistics, particularly as theorised by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). Framing involves the selection and emphasis of certain aspects of reality while omitting or downplaying others, which ultimately influences how that reality is interpreted. While frames are understood as underlying cognitive structures (Fillmore 2006), euphemisms serve as linguistic expressions that evoke or reinforce these evaluative frames in discourse. For example, the phrase “high-net-worth individual” avoids the socially loaded connotations of “rich” and frames wealth as a merit-based financial status, potentially detached from socio-historical contexts of inequality or privilege. Such euphemisms often employ nominalisation and abstraction to distance the subject from interpersonal critique and to foreground economic metrics over social identities (Malyuga 2024).

A complementary perspective is provided by the theory of semantic prosody (Stewart 2010, Hunston 2007), which posits that certain lexical items acquire evaluative connotations through repeated collocational patterns. In business discourse, euphemisms for wealth often co-occur with positively connoted terms such as “success” or “opportunity”, which reinforces the semantic correlation of

affluence with virtue. This cumulative semantic effect contributes to the normalisation of wealth as a desirable and socially unproblematic state.

Recent research supports the idea that evaluative meaning is shaped by linguistic context. The co-occurrence environment of a term systematically constructs its social and evaluative perception, as confirmed by Malyuga and Rimmer (2021), who show how semantic associations can reveal implicit attitudes through an examination of how the term “buzzword” appears alongside specific lexical patterns. This realisation supports the focus of the current study, which is on euphemisms as context-sensitive agents of ideological framing in business discourse.

Research on economic euphemisms so far has typically focused on lexical mitigation of negative financial events, including downsizing (e.g., “rightsizing”, “restructuring”), recession (e.g., “period of negative growth”), or budget cuts (e.g., “cost optimisation”) (Burridge 2012, Crespo-Fernández 2018). These studies have shown that such euphemisms serve to preserve institutional legitimacy and reduce public concern. However, the linguistic treatment of positive financial states (particularly wealth and affluence) has received comparatively little attention. While available studies have noted the various issues associated with euphemisation in business discourse, there remains a gap in the literature concerning how wealth itself is euphemised. This oversight is particularly notable in light of current global debates on income and tax justice, as well as corporate social responsibility, where the representation of wealth plays a central rhetorical and ideological role.

3. Material and methods

This research conducts functional-pragmatic analysis of euphemisms related to wealth and the wealthy registered in English-language business discourse. The aim is to identify how lexical substitutions for wealth and wealthy individuals serve specific pragmatic purposes in the chosen type of discourse.

The empirical material for the study consists of publications from English-language media outlets known for their focus on economics, finance, business strategy, and corporate communication. These include *The Financial Times*, *The Economist*, *Bloomberg*, *Forbes*, *Harvard Business Review*, and *The Wall Street Journal*. These sources were selected due to their wide readership and authority. The sampling is limited to publications produced within the last five years to reflect contemporary usage trends.

The study applies a continuous sampling method: the texts were read in full and all instances of euphemistic references to wealth or wealthy individuals were identified and extracted for further analysis. The authors established the following inclusion criteria: (i) the euphemism substitutes for or indirectly refers to wealth, affluence, or the state of being wealthy; (ii) the euphemism occurs within a clearly identifiable pragmatic context (e.g., investor relations, marketing to affluent audiences, commentary on economic inequality); (iii) the euphemism does not

function solely as a fixed legal or economic term (e.g., “capital gains tax”), but carries a secondary function of reframing or mitigating social perception. The resulting sample represented wealth in varying degrees of abstraction or evaluative framing.

The extracted euphemisms were subjected to functional-pragmatic analysis. Each euphemism was analysed in context to determine its pragmatic function. The analysis draws upon principles of pragmatic theory (notably politeness theory, speech act theory, and facework) and focuses on identifying the communicative purposes served by the euphemistic substitution. The key functions include mitigation of social sensitivity (e.g., avoiding overt reference to privilege or inequality), strategic reframing (e.g., presenting wealth as merit-based or aspirational), positive image construction (e.g., promoting the idea of economic success or empowerment), and abstraction (e.g., depersonalising affluence through technical or bureaucratic language). Each occurrence was interpreted in its immediate textual context to ensure that the function was derived from actual communicative use rather than presumed semantic meaning.

Despite being interpretive by nature, the categorisation of pragmatic functions is supported by well-established pragmatic theory principles and contextual analysis. The most prominent pragmatic objective discernible in the situation (such as depersonalisation, prestige building, ideological framing, or face-saving) was used to identify the dominant function. The classification in this study was based on the predominant communicative orientation seen in the context, even though some euphemisms may potentially serve several pragmatic purposes. This context-sensitive assessment made it possible to determine the main purpose that a euphemism served, such as reducing social sensitivity, reframing wealth, improving image, or abstracting reference. The possibility of cross-functionality was acknowledged but managed by prioritising the most prominent pragmatic goal served *in situ*.

The functional-pragmatic approach was chosen due to its capacity to account for the use of language in goal-oriented discourse. This is particularly relevant in business discourse, since reference to economic reality here must be narrated in consonance with institutional interests and public expectations. The functional-pragmatic approach permits a context-sensitive interpretation of euphemistic meaning, as it recognises that the same lexical item may serve different pragmatic functions depending on the context and intended audience.

4. Results

The sampling process involved the qualitative examination of approximately 400 business articles published between 2020 and 2025, representing an estimated corpus size of 700,000 words. The total sample consists of 134 euphemistic occurrences related to wealth and wealthy individuals in English-language business discourse. These expressions varied in their lexical structure and contextual use but consistently fulfilled distinct discursive purposes. Based on the functional-

pragmatic analysis, four primary pragmatic functions were specified: (i) mitigating social sensitivity (N = 28, 20.9%), (ii) strategic reframing (N=35, 26.1%), (iii) positive image construction (N=42, 31.3%), and (iv) abstraction (N=29, 21.6%).

4.1. Mitigating social sensitivity

This category includes euphemisms that reduce the perceived social distance between wealthy individuals and the general audience. These expressions are particularly frequent in editorial commentary, where reputational risk and public perception are important considerations.

Table 1. Examples of euphemisms serving to mitigate social sensitivity

EUPHEMISM	TYPICAL CONTEXT	PRAGMATIC EFFECT
Well-off	Business editorials, economic opinion columns	Softens direct reference to affluence
Comfortable lifestyle	Commentary on consumer behaviour	Presents affluence as normal lifestyle choice
Financially secure	Commentary on savings trends	Frames wealth as financial prudence, not surplus
Economically advantaged	Business education and inequality reporting	Describes privilege neutrally without judgment
Secure financial future	Retirement planning, personal finance articles	Focuses on future stability rather than current wealth
Living comfortably	Market analysis of consumer behaviour	Depicts affluence in relatable, moderate terms
Economic resilience	CSR reporting, executive communications	Frames wealth as responsible resource management
Privileged background	Entrepreneurial profiles, success stories	Acknowledges a person’s social and professional advantage while stressing the person referred to comes from a rich family background
Financial cushion	Personal finance advice columns	Describes wealth as a protection against the effects of an economic crisis or downturn but not excessive

These euphemisms function to attenuate the explicitness of wealth, making it more palatable within discussions of corporate ethics and income distribution.

4.2. Strategic reframing

Euphemisms in this group serve to recontextualise wealth in terms of planning or autonomy. The purpose is to present affluence as earned and legitimate, especially in entrepreneurial profiles, investment strategy pieces, and leadership-focused discourse.

Table 2. Euphemisms for strategic reframing

EUPHEMISM	TYPICAL CONTEXT	PRAGMATIC EFFECT
Financial freedom	Investment strategy articles, retirement planning features	Reframes wealth as personal autonomy rather than privilege
Financial independence	Wealth management advice columns	Constructs wealth as a prudent long-term goal
High earners	Labour market analysis, tax policy debates	Shifts focus from asset ownership to active income generation
Well-positioned financially	Market commentary, personal finance advice	Frames wealth as the result of foresight and strategic planning
Capital accumulators	Entrepreneurial success stories, venture capital reports	Presents wealth as a result of disciplined financial activity
Wealth creators	Startup profiles, business leadership interviews	Attributes wealthy peoples' success to innovation and entrepreneurial effort
Asset builders	Personal investment advice, real estate investment features	Depicts wealthy people as responsible and achievers of systematic asset growth
Market winners	Financial analysis of top-performing investors	Frames wealth as the outcome of skill and competitive acumen
Financial architects	Executive leadership profiles, business consulting reports	Associates wealth with professional mastery and financial design
High-value individuals	Client segmentation in investment services	Frames wealth as intrinsic worth based on economic contribution

This reframing helps correlate wealth with individual agency and responsibility, avoiding language that might imply inequality or inherited advantage.

4.3. Positive image construction

This category includes expressions that describe wealthy individuals in a way that aligns with professional credibility or market influence. These euphemisms appear in investment commentary, client profiling in wealth management, and executive summaries in CSR documentation.

Table 3. Euphemisms for positive image construction

EUPHEMISM	TYPICAL CONTEXT	PRAGMATIC EFFECT
Affluent client	Private banking, client profiling in investment firms	Commercially elevates the client's status
Premier client	Executive communications, wealth management marketing	Affirms elite status and desirability
Strategic investor	Startup funding reports, M&A coverage	Frames wealthy individuals as drivers of market innovation
Wealth management client	Personal finance advice columns, executive banking	Positions the wealthy as responsible financial stewards

EUPHEMISM	TYPICAL CONTEXT	PRAGMATIC EFFECT
Sophisticated investor	Venture capital reports, hedge fund profiles	Associates wealth with financial acumen and expertise
Impact investor	Sustainability investment articles, CSR reports	Links wealth with ethical responsibility and positive influence
Financial thought leader	Business leadership profiles, keynote event coverage	Equates wealth with visionary economic thinking
Philanthropic leader	Corporate social responsibility communications	Frames wealth as enabling positive societal contributions
Discerning investor	Luxury goods investment, fine asset management reports	Associates affluence with taste, expertise, and exclusivity

These euphemisms help create positive associations with wealth, as they portray the wealthy as contributors to economic activity and innovation rather than as passive beneficiaries.

4.4. Abstraction

In this final category, wealth is referenced indirectly through abstract or institutional language, primarily in economic commentary, financial forecasting, or regulatory analysis. The use of such terms often reflects an intention to preserve objectivity or depersonalise socioeconomic stratification.

In this category, euphemisms reflect semantic abstraction, in the sense that they depict wealth via impersonal, institutional, or statistical language, rather than via personal agency or emotive vocabulary. This kind of abstraction often relies on nominalisations, bureaucratic expressions, or quantitative descriptors that remove the individual from the financial concept and portray affluence as a system-level feature. The function here is not just to be indirect, but to depersonalise wealth-related references.

Table 4. Euphemisms for abstraction

EUPHEMISM	TYPICAL CONTEXT	PRAGMATIC EFFECT
Top income brackets	Tax reform articles, income inequality features	Frames wealth as a statistical category rather than personal attribute
Resource-rich individuals	International business reporting, economic development coverage	Depersonalises affluence into possession of valuable resources, intellectual and possibly economical
Capital advantage	Financial market analysis, economic competitiveness discussions	Frames wealth as an operational economic asset
Strong balance sheet	Corporate performance analysis, executive communications	Transfers personal wealth into the language of corporate stability
Asset concentration	Wealth distribution reports, global inequality analyses	Presents individual wealth as impersonal economic aggregates

EUPHEMISM	TYPICAL CONTEXT	PRAGMATIC EFFECT
Capital allocation efficiency	Investment strategy reports, venture capital evaluations	Treats wealth as a neutral financial optimisation issue
Upper economic tiers	Labor economics coverage, taxation debates	Presents wealthy individuals as fitting into hierarchical economic positions
Investment capacity	Private equity analyses, wealth management articles	Frames affluence as a technical measure of liquidity or opportunity
Financial assets under management (AUM)	Investment fund reporting, client portfolio analyses	Institutionalises wealth within technical asset metrics
Wealth flows	Global financial market reports, policy discussions	Depersonalises wealth into anonymous financial movements

These euphemisms operate to neutralise the moral dimension of wealth by embedding it in technical or operational discourse.

To summarise the distinctions among the four identified pragmatic functions, the following table presents a comparative overview of their communicative orientation, pragmatic effects, and typical examples.

Table 5. Comparative overview of pragmatic functions, pragmatic effects, and typical examples of wealth-related euphemisms

PRAGMATIC FUNCTION	PRAGMATIC EFFECT	TYPICAL EXAMPLES
Mitigating Social Sensitivity	Normalising or downplaying affluence in socially sensitive contexts	well-off, comfortable lifestyle, financially secure, economically advantaged
Strategic Reframing	Legitimising wealth as earned, deserved, or strategically achieved	financial freedom, wealth creators, asset builders, high earners
Positive Image Construction	Valorising wealth by associating it with expertise, leadership, or ethical responsibility	high-net-worth individual, impact investor, financial thought leader, discerning investor
Abstraction	Neutralising personal associations with affluence by presenting wealth as impersonal or operational	top income brackets, resource-rich individuals, capital advantage, wealth flows

The euphemisms identified across these business-oriented sources consistently reflect a preference for measured representations of wealth. The pragmatic functions they serve (whether to downplay, reframe, valorise, or depersonalise) indicate a high level of linguistic control in managing audience perception of economic privilege. This controlled vocabulary is consistent with the rhetorical demands of business discourse, where public image must be carefully maintained.

The tables above show the distribution of euphemisms and the pragmatic impact they have. These findings reveal that euphemistic expressions cluster around distinct communicative purposes, allowing them to be grouped into functionally

coherent categories. Each category demonstrates a typical discursive strategy used to manage references to wealth. The Discussion section will offer further interpretation of these functions.

5. Discussion

The study's conclusions support the notion that euphemistic allusions to wealth are not incidental in business discourse. On the contrary, they fulfil purposeful practical purposes being systematically embedded into the rhetorical construction of economic narratives. The analysis has shown how euphemisms modify the conversation about wealth to meet institutional objectives and control audience expectations. Granted, earlier scholarship has credibly established the face-saving and ideological functions of euphemism in areas such as downsizing or financial crisis communication (e.g., Fairclough 1995, BurrIDGE 2012). To add to the existing body of knowledge, the present findings reveal that the linguistic management of positive economic states – particularly affluence – follows a distinct and previously underexplored set of pragmatic patterns, showcasing that euphemisms related to wealth found in English-language business discourse operate not only to shield but also to affirm and legitimise economic privilege.

This observation adds to previous critical reports and supports findings that covert linguistic structuring can influence how addressees process and evaluate institutional discourse (Grishechko & Tomalin 2025). Although euphemism performs vital social work by handling face-threatening realities, as BurrIDGE (2012) points out, the current study demonstrates that when euphemism is used in relation to affluence, it goes beyond simple social management and participates in ideological reinforcement. Additionally, Holmes (1995) emphasises that institutional discourse tends to normalize power asymmetries, and the present analysis shows how euphemisms for wealth help normalise privilege by rephrasing it linguistically as aspiration, competence, or technical merit. It is noteworthy that Allan and BurrIDGE (2006) noted that euphemism studies have been disproportionately concerned with loss and decline, rather than privilege and gain. Challenging this assumption, this study concentrated on how wealth (a gain-related notion) is discursively treated so that we could broaden the study of euphemism into areas that are typically thought of as ideologically “neutral”.

The implications of each functional category are examined in this section in light of accepted theoretical viewpoints. In doing so, the study provides a more accurate functional-pragmatic analysis that identifies the kinds of euphemistic expressions that are employed as well as their pragmatic effects in formalised business contexts. Euphemisms should be understood as ideologically impregnated forms that fulfil complex pragmatic tasks, as Crespo-Fernández (2014) emphasises. This conceptualisation forms the basis of the multifunctional framework presented here.

The importance of face-saving in business discourse is demonstrated by the use of euphemisms to reduce social sensitivity. Euphemisms in this category are

examples of positive politeness strategies that help to lessen potential friction between corporate or media messaging and public sentiment, according to Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory. These euphemisms reduce the possibility of coming across as elitist and unconcerned with societal issues while enabling organisations and commentators to acknowledge phenomena related to wealth. A purposeful institutional calibration of linguistic tone in light of growing public sensitivity to inequality is suggested by this finding, which also supports Clyne's (1994) claim that euphemisms preserve social harmony by "protecting" interlocutors from uncomfortable truths. As Hanks (2009) rightfully observes, in corporate discourse, face-saving strategies are rarely about individuals; they are about preserving the legitimacy of the institution itself. The wealth-related euphemisms categorised under social sensitivity mitigation in this study clearly reflect this idea. Spencer-Oatey's (2008) more comprehensive understanding of rapport management, which goes beyond face-saving to encompass the upkeep of harmonious social relationships, is also consistent with this pragmatic manoeuvre. In the context of business discourse, where reputational risks are heightened, maintaining positive rapport with a diverse readership becomes a critical concern, which is why the need for mitigated references to wealth appears to be paramount. As Haugh (2015) notes, face management in institutional discourse is often as much about preserving the institution's perceived legitimacy as it is about maintaining interpersonal relations, a point that the euphemistic portrayal of wealth clearly supports. The continued importance of researching the linguistic materialisation of politeness strategies in modern English, particularly through euphemistic practices that seek to strike a balance between institutional messaging and sensitivity, is further accentuated by recent research (Leontovich & Nikitina 2024).

The deliberate rephrasing of wealth illustrates a functional change in language from descriptive to ideologically generative. Discourse not only reflects but also reproduces social structures and ideologies, according to Fairclough (1995). Euphemisms in this instance reinterpret wealth as the outcome of meritocratic achievement. Instead of serving as a symbol of systemic inequality, wealth becomes a reward for individual accountability. Without raising ethical questions, this semantic shift makes it easier to equate wealth with aspiration. Lakoff (2004) noted that framing works best when it goes unnoticed, allowing new cognitive structures to supersede preexisting moral interpretations. This resemanticization of wealth is reminiscent of this. According to the study's findings, euphemistic rephrasing actively contributes to the construction of wealth as a personal achievement devoid of any political contextualisation, rather than a structurally conditioned phenomenon, supporting Hart's (2010) argument that evaluative frames can obscure the agentive origins of inequality. This is also in line with Van Leeuwen's (2008) theory of legitimation through moral assessment and authorisation, which holds that language choices implicitly validate preexisting social structures by portraying them as justified or natural. As Van Dijk (1998) aptly observes, control of discourse means control of the mind, and in this case, the rewording of wealth-

related notions directs public cognition towards acceptance of economic stratification as an outcome of personal virtue rather than structural privilege.

When it comes to euphemisms contributing to positive image construction, in addition to avoiding offense, these euphemisms actively lend authority and prestige and equate wealth with skill. Koller (2005) has noted the centrality of prestige in business discourse, and the current findings suggest that euphemisms perform a similar symbolic function, as they enable the business world to present wealth not as social excess but as a sign of strategic excellence. In business discourse, this intentional use of language is similar to more general trends seen in other persuasive genres. For example, studies of online social advertising have shown that language strategies of persuasion, with carefully constructed expressions intended to motivate action and influence audience perception, predominate in modern promotional communication (Popova 2018). Likewise, the euphemistic reinterpretation of wealth in business discourse serves as a persuasive tool, supporting ideological constructs of legitimacy and meritocracy. Positive image construction through euphemism is not limited to branding or marketing discourse. It also appears in financial and journalistic reporting, as we have seen.

Professional discourses systematically construct expertise and credibility, as noted by Bhatia (2005), and the euphemistic framing of wealth as competence is a good example of this type of image-building in business media narratives. In this way, Bourdieu's (1984) analysis of symbolic capital (which holds that distinction and prestige are socially and linguistically constructed to legitimise differential status) is reflected in the euphemistic construction of the wealthy. In a similar vein, Wodak (2009) points out the practice of discursive self-legitimation by business elites by telling their success stories in a way that disentangles wealth from past inequalities and instead traces it back to social contributions or entrepreneurial ingenuity.

This correlates with the concept of semantic prosody (Stewart 2010; Hunston 2007), where euphemistic terms for wealth routinely co-occur with positive evaluative language (success, freedom, empowerment) reinforcing an association between affluence and virtue. Such framing mechanisms contribute to the naturalisation of socio-economic hierarchy by embedding wealth in culturally valorised narratives. Thus, the current results empirically support Louw's (1993) claim that semantic prosodies align lexemes with ideological preferences, showing that euphemisms associated with wealth are rarely neutral and actually bear an evaluative load that justifies socioeconomic inequality. The recurring positive lexical collocations pertaining to wealth in the business discourse under study demonstrate that the cumulative effect of semantic prosody is ideological reproduction through linguistic habitus, as Thompson (2014) puts it.

Euphemisms that function through abstraction, such as “top income brackets” and “capital advantage”, illustrate another important ideological function: the depersonalisation of wealth. These terms shift the discursive focus from individual agents to statistical categories, economic units, or institutional resources. Van

Dijk's (2011) work on elite discourse shows how such abstraction can serve to distance powerful actors from moral scrutiny, rendering social privilege invisible under the guise of technocratic neutrality. In business discourse, where objectivity and professionalism are paramount, euphemisms fulfil the dual purpose of rhetorical detachment and reputational protection. This abstraction process is a reflection of anonymization strategies, as defined by Wodak (2009), which obscure agency while preserving hierarchical structures. Quite similar to Piketty (2014), who studied technocratic language surrounding wealth accumulation, the current analysis shows that such anonymisation is a proactive reorganisation of discourse that makes inequality legible only through sanitised, impersonal metrics.

Furthermore, abstraction plays a crucial role in institutional self-preservation. If organisations manage to avoid emotionally charged terms like "rich" or "wealthy", they can maintain a tone of impartiality while simultaneously legitimising policies or client segmentation based on financial capital. The term "strong balance sheet", when euphemistically extended to individuals or families, frames wealth as a rational financial outcome rather than a sociopolitical issue. This abstraction, though not too much on-the-nose, contributes to what Bourdieu (1991) refers to as symbolic power: the ability to name and classify reality in ways that reproduce existing hierarchies without overt coercion. Therefore, this study supports Bourdieu's (1991) claim that symbolic power is the power to make things with words, demonstrating how euphemistic abstraction creates an interpretive framework that makes economic privilege seem normal and morally acceptable. Harvey (2005) goes on to say that neoliberal discourse is heavily reliant on this linguistic naturalisation of market outcomes, which is exemplified by the euphemisms analysed here.

Although the four pragmatic functions were considered analytically distinct, it should be noted that some euphemistic expressions showed potential for functional overlap, but their classification was based on the communicative goal that was most contextually salient. For example, although terms like "economic resilience" and "financial cushion" may have connotations of strategic planning or autonomy, their usage in the contexts under analysis primarily served to downplay privilege and mitigate reputational risk. This further supports the notion that pragmatic function is not a lexical item's inherent property but rather arises from the communicative intent.

Taken collectively, the euphemistic representations identified in this study form a lexical repertoire that reinforces the dominant ideological assumptions of contemporary business culture. These include the idea that wealth is the result of individual effort, smart financial planning, objective measurement, or refined consumer taste. Through careful word choices, business discourse often hides how wealth is actually acquired and presents it as fully legitimate and deserved. In this way, euphemisms help reinforce these beliefs by embedding them in the everyday language used to talk about wealth in professional and financial contexts. Given that it incorporates values and presumptions in the language of business discourse, euphemism serves as a discursive tool for ideological reproduction.

6. Conclusion

Euphemisms denoting wealth and the wealthy in English-language business discourse have been investigated in this study using a functional-pragmatic approach. The results show that euphemisms for wealth are used to convey affluence in terms of aspiration and merit and to lessen social sensitivity. These euphemisms associate wealth with qualities such as competence and institutional legitimacy, while replacing terms that might be considered socially sensitive or offensive. Euphemisms fulfil four key pragmatic functions (abstraction, positive image construction, mitigation, and reframing), which puts the spotlight on the relationship between linguistic form and communicative intent in business discourse.

When language is employed to preserve the legitimacy of financial institutions, these patterns reflect the ideological orientations of business discourse in the English language. Euphemisms have been demonstrated to function at the nexus of diplomacy, ideology, and persuasion, helping to discursively manage privilege in ways that are frequently subtle but structurally important.

This study adds to the body of knowledge on euphemism and business discourse by focusing on the positive framing of wealth itself rather than on negative financial events like budget cuts or layoffs. Additionally, it demonstrates the usefulness of functional-pragmatic analysis in locating the rhetorical devices used in a high-stakes argument.

Future research may expand upon these findings by investigating the reception and interpretation of wealth-related euphemisms among different stakeholder groups, or by conducting comparative studies across languages and cultures. A diachronic perspective could also illuminate how the euphemistic framing of wealth evolves in response to shifting economic conditions and public sentiment. Furthermore, a comparative viewpoint across various varieties of English could be advantageous for future research. Considering that English has experienced substantial localisation processes across the globe (Grishechko et al. 2021, Akopova 2024), linguistic pragmatics, including euphemistic practices, can differ significantly based on historical, cultural, and regional influences (Akopova 2021). This implies that, in contrast to the mainstream Anglo-American variety examined in this study, wealth-related euphemisms in business discourse may show distinct pragmatic effects or functional realizations in localised Englishes.

Additionally, findings from studies on other figurative devices conclusively point out how crucial cognitive processes and rhetorical techniques are in influencing language use in various discursive contexts (Murashova 2021). While euphemistic constructions in business discourse are the focus of this study, a similar focus on the pragmatic and cognitive foundations of language could help us better understand how language influences ideology and perception in business discourse.

Given the growing scrutiny of economic inequality and corporate influence, further attention to the language of affluence remains both timely and necessary.

CRedit author statement:

Elena N. Malyuga: Data Collection, Data Analysis, Investigation, Validation, Writing – Original Draft, Writing – Review & Editing. **Barry Tomalin:** Conceptualisation, Methodology, Writing – Review & Editing.

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News media depictions of people with mental disabilities in Indonesia: A corpus-assisted discourse study

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Abstract

The media plays a pivotal role in shaping public perceptions, often contributing to the reinforcement of stereotypes and the dissemination of misinformation about people with mental disabilities. This article aims to reveal how individuals with mental disabilities have been linguistically and discursively constructed by Indonesian online news media over a ten-year period, from 2011 to 2020. Employing an interdisciplinary approach, the study integrates corpus-assisted discourse studies (CADS) and van Leeuwen's social actor network framework (van Leeuwen 2008), alongside news media models of disability drawn from Disability Studies. The findings reveal a dominant medicalised framing, portraying people with mental disabilities as patients or sufferers, and also a recurring tendency to link them to crime in sensationalised narratives. These representations are linguistically realised through *functionalisations*, frequent collocates related to medical terms, and passivation that backgrounds agency, and discursively sustained through role allocations that depict them predominantly as passive patients or as active perpetrators. These portrayals reinforce harmful stereotypes, emphasising danger and deviance, while underrepresenting perspectives that highlight discrimination, stigma, or structural barriers. The analysis suggests that this media coverage is likely to be shaped by commercial imperatives and news values that prioritise profit over progressive reporting. Consequently, narratives aligned with civil rights or social models of disability are marginalised. The persistence of these portrayals contributes to public stigma, limits access to support, and discourages help-seeking behaviour among individuals with mental disorders. The article advocates for more balanced journalism that amplifies real lived experiences, systemic issues, and recovery stories to promote inclusive and equitable representations of mental health in the media.

Keywords: *corpus-assisted discourse studies, social actor network analysis, mental disability, inclusive society, stigmatisation, news media representations*

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Изображение людей с психическими отклонениями в новостных СМИ Индонезии: корпусное дискурсивное исследование

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Аннотация

Средства массовой информации играют ключевую роль в формировании общественного мнения, часто способствуя укреплению стереотипов и распространению дезинформации о людях с психическими отклонениями. Цель данной статьи — выявить, как индонезийские онлайн СМИ (с 2011 по 2020 год) создавали образ людей с психическими отклонениями через язык и дискурс. Используя междисциплинарный подход, авторы проводят корпусное дискурсивное исследование с применением концепции акторов социальной сети (van Leeuwen 2008), а также модели ограниченных возможностей в новостных СМИ. Результаты показывают, что доминирующим является представление людей с ментальными расстройствами как пациентов или больных, в сенсационных нарративах их часто связывают с преступностью. Лингвистически эти представления реализуются через функционализацию, частое использование словосочетаний, связанных с медицинскими терминами, и пассивизацию, которая ставит возможность повлиять на ситуацию на второй план. Дискурсивно они поддерживаются через распределение ролей, в которых люди с психическими отклонениями изображаются преимущественно либо как пассивные пациенты, либо как активные преступники. Подобные изображения закрепляют пагубные стереотипы, подчеркивая опасность и девиантность, в то время как дискриминации, стигматизации или структурным барьерам уделяется недостаточно внимания. В статье делается предположение о том, что такое освещение в СМИ определяется коммерческими соображениями и ценностями, которые ставят прибыль выше прогрессивного репортажа. В результате нарративы, связанные с гражданскими правами или социальными моделями, оказываются на периферии. Сохранение таких представлений способствует общественному стигматизированию, ограничивает доступ людей с психическими расстройствами к поддержке и получению помощи. Авторы статьи выступают за более сбалансированную журналистику, которая описывает реальные жизненные ситуации, освещает системные проблемы и рассказывает об историях выздоровления, способствуя таким образом инклюзивному и беспристрастному освещению вопросов психического здоровья в СМИ.

Ключевые слова: корпусное дискурсивное исследование, анализ социальных сетей, психические отклонения, инклюзивное общество, стигматизация, новостные СМИ

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1. Introduction

Mental disorders rank among the most prevalent health conditions globally, impacting individuals across diverse populations (Dziurkowska & Wesolowski 2021). According to the World Health Organization (2022), approximately 1 in 8 people worldwide lives with a mental health condition, highlighting the widespread nature of the issue. Despite their prevalence, individuals with mental disabilities frequently encounter significant barriers in key areas of life. These include limited access to quality education (Paul 2018), difficulties in securing and maintaining employment (Østerud 2023), challenges in forming and maintaining social connections (Krupchanka et al. 2018), discrimination in intercultural communities (Parrish-Sprowl 2015), and disparities in accessing sufficient healthcare services (Nugent et al. 2021, Sickel et al. 2016). A critical factor underpinning these challenges is the pervasive stigma surrounding mental disorders, which perpetuates discrimination and exclusion (Clement et al. 2015).

Stigmatisation can be understood as a social process through which undesirable attributes or marks associated with an individual or group reduce them from being perceived as “whole and usual” to being regarded as “tainted” or “discounted” (Goffman 1990: 2). This process tends to begin with the labelling of human differences, followed by the application of negative stereotypes to interpret these differences (Link & Phelan 2013). As a result, those labelled are categorised as fundamentally distinct from the normative majority (Link & Phelan 2013), a practice that canonically provokes adverse emotional reactions and reinforces social divisions (Corrigan & Watson 2002). The media significantly influences this process by shaping public perceptions and emotional responses through persuasive communicative strategies (Zappettini et al. 2021). Ultimately, stigmatisation not only marginalises individuals at the interpersonal level but also perpetuates social inequalities and becomes embedded within broader institutional and societal structures.

One significant avenue through which structural stigma manifests is the news media (Corrigan et al. 2005). The mass media plays a central role in shaping societal attitudes toward mental disorders, significantly influencing how the general population perceives individuals living with these conditions (Bilkay et al. 2024, Pratiwi et al. 2018). As a primary source of information on mental disabilities (Aci et al. 2020), the media can perpetuate misconceptions and prejudices about individuals with mental illnesses, fostering a culture of misunderstanding and marginalization (Whitley & Berry 2013). Thus, understanding how individuals with mental illnesses are represented in the media is crucial, given its profound impact on shaping public opinion and reinforcing stigma (Whitley & Berry 2013).

Studies on media constructions of individuals with mental disabilities have been conducted across various cultural and national contexts, including Canada (Whitley & Berry 2013), France (Lampropoulos et al. 2017), Germany (Sittner et al. 2024), Portugal (Rodrigues-Silva et al. 2017), Saudi Arabia (McCrae et al. 2019), the United States (Gwarjanski & Parrott 2018), the United Kingdom (Bowen et al. 2019), and Turkey (Aci et al. 2020, Bilkay et al. 2024). Despite variations in cultural and societal norms, these studies reveal a consistency in the media's portrayal of people with mental disabilities (PwMD), emphasizing negative traits such as danger, violence, criminality, and unpredictability. Such portrayals shape public perceptions, fostering fear, social rejection, and a broader sense that individuals with mental disabilities pose a threat to societal stability, which in turn perpetuates a cycle of stigma, reinforcing existing prejudices and discrimination (Bilkay et al. 2024, Whitley & Berry 2013). Cross-national studies also highlight similarities in how media across different countries depict mental illness. For instance, Zilberstein and Shomron (2024) analysed news media depictions of individuals with schizophrenia in the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, and Israel. They found that, irrespective of cultural or national context, people with schizophrenia were routinely depicted as violent and dangerous perpetrators.

However, it should be noted that in developing and middle-income countries, including in Indonesia, there is little information about the portrayal of people with mental disabilities in the mass media (Grandón et al. 2022). This may be paradoxical as 82% of PwMD reside in developing countries (WHO 2022). In Indonesia, a recent mental health survey found that 1 in 3 adolescents have mental disorders, equal to around 15.5 million people (Wahdi et al. 2022). They also face social stigma, which negatively affects how they experience their illness and access existing mental health services (Wahdi et al. 2022). A correlational analysis conducted by Hartini et al. (2018) emphasises that increased knowledge about mental disorders in Indonesia is linked to reduced public stigma toward individuals with mental disabilities. This finding seems to underscore the prominent role of the news media, as a primary source of information, in shaping public understanding and attitudes toward mental disability. Nevertheless, despite the high number of PwMD and the prevalence of stigma toward them, there is no large-scale study that conducts critical analyses on how Indonesian news media portray individuals with mental disorders. To fill this gap in the literature, this study aims to find out how Indonesian online news media have linguistically and discursively constructed PwMD over a ten-year period, from 2011 to 2020. While most previous studies used content and framing approaches, the present study employs linguistic-based approaches, which are corpus-assisted discourse studies (CADS) (Baker & McEnery 2015) and van Leeuwen's social actor network framework (van Leeuwen 2008), combined with news media models of disability from Disability Studies (Clogston 1994, Haller et al. 2016). Accordingly, this study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. How are people with mental disabilities (PwMD) linguistically and discursively represented in Indonesian online news media between 2011 and 2020?

2. What social roles and identities are attributed to PwMD through linguistic patterns and discourse strategies?

3. To what extent do these representations align with traditional or progressive models of disability in the media?

The findings of this study are expected to enhance the existing body of knowledge regarding the representation of PwMD in the news media by offering insights from Indonesian contexts, where such research remains limited.

2. Literature review and theoretical framework

Previous studies across various national contexts (e.g., Whitley & Berry 2013, Rodrigues-Silva et al. 2017, Aci et al. 2020) have consistently shown that people with mental disabilities are portrayed negatively in the media, often being framed as violent, dangerous, or criminal. These portrayals contribute to social stigma, reinforce public fear, and marginalise individuals with mental disabilities in broader societal discourse. An increasing number of studies have also started to explore how representations are discursively constructed, focusing on the role of language in shaping social attitudes and reinforcing power relations (e.g., Balfour 2023). However, while these studies highlight important patterns, many adopt a thematic content or framing analysis approach (Zilberstein & Shomron 2024) and focus on clinical diagnoses, such as schizophrenia (Balfour 2023). Moreover, research in this area remains concentrated in Global North contexts, with limited attention paid to Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, where different cultural and institutional ideologies may influence media discourse.

To address these limitations, this research is grounded in the Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies (CADS) framework (Baker & McEnery 2015), which enables a systematic and linguistically informed analysis of large-scale media texts. CADS defines discourse as “set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events” (Burr 2015: 74). In the last two decades, it has been widely and effectively used to analyse semiotic data, including news articles, to identify representations or discourses of a particular social group to deliver ‘voices’ for the minority and underprivileged (Nartey & Mwinlaaru 2019). CADS stems from corpus linguistics, an empirical methodology that examines authentic examples of written or spoken language (Bowker 2018). Its integration into discourse analysis is particularly valuable due to the specialised analytical software used, which allows for both quantitative and qualitative analysis of larger, more representative datasets (Brookes & Harvey 2016). This study also incorporates van Leeuwen’s (2008) Social Actor Network model within the broader framework of CADS to support the qualitative analysis. As a framework for analysing the representation of social actors in texts (Bednarek 2020), van Leeuwen’s model provides a socio-semantic inventory that systematically categorises the different ways social actors can be constructed in discourse. Rather than beginning with grammatical or linguistic features, the model first establishes the sociological and critical dimensions of representation across various categories (van Leeuwen 2008: 23). These categories

will be introduced and elaborated upon during the analysis. In addition, the study draws on established theoretical models from Disability Studies that focus on media representations of individuals with disabilities (Clogston 1994, Haller 1995). These models distinguish between traditional and progressive portrayals. Traditional models include the medical, social pathology, supercrip, and business models (Clogston 1994, Haller 1995), while progressive models encompass the minority or civil rights model, the cultural pluralism model (Clogston 1994), as well as the legal and consumer models (Haller 2000). These models are employed to interpret the findings from the linguistic analysis, allowing the study to move beyond surface-level description toward a more critical understanding of how individuals with mental disabilities are constructed in news discourse (Potts et al. 2023), focusing on the social roles and identities attributed to PwMD, and the extent to which these representations align with traditional or progressive models of disability. These models will be discussed as relevant to the analysis.

3. Data and methodology

The data for this study comprises a specialised corpus of news articles published between 2011 and 2020, focusing on individuals with disabilities, including mental disabilities. This decade was selected to capture sustained patterns in media discourse over a significant period, enabling the analysis of long-term representational trends rather than isolated or short-term trends. The articles were sourced from widely read Indonesian online news platforms such as *kompas.com*, *detik.com*, *pikiran-rakyat.com*, *suara.com*, *jpnn.com*, *sindonews.com*, *merdeka.com*, and *tempo.co*. These websites rank among the top 20 most visited Indonesian news portals (ENA, August 25, 2025)¹ and are owned by various media companies, ensuring broad societal influence and diverse linguistic data. To construct the corpus, first, news URLs were collected from the selected sites based on their inclusion of one of the terms referring to disabled individuals, including *gangguan mental* ('mental disorders'), "*orang gila*" (crazy people, derogatory term for individuals with mental disorders), and "*gangguan jiwa*" (mental disorders). The URLs obtained from each news site were reviewed to remove duplicates and confirm the inclusion of terms related to PwD. BootCat software (Baroni & Bernardini 2004) was then used to extract news texts automatically from the verified URLs. The resulting corpus contains 10,688 news texts, and a total of 3,979,662 words.

The data were analysed using a corpus-based approach to discourse studies or CADS (Baker 2023, Baker & McEnery 2015). The analysis process can be broadly divided into four stages after determining the topic of investigation. The first stage involves identifying and describing linguistic patterns through corpus linguistic techniques, with this study employing collocation analysis. Collocation refers to the frequent co-occurrence of one word within the linguistic environment of another (Balfour 2019). From an ideological perspective, collocates are particularly

¹ similarweb.com 2022

significant; when two words are repeatedly associated, their relationship may become reified and accepted as unquestionable (Stubbs 1996: 195). LanksBox software (Brezina et al. 2015), specifically its GraphColl tool, was utilised to identify collocates within a span of five words on either side of the node *gangguan jiwa*. This phrase is selected as it is the most frequent term used to refer to people with mental disability in the corpus. Table 1 describes the frequency of each term used to refer to PwMD. Collocates are included in the analysis if they meet a minimum logDice score of 8 and a frequency threshold of 10. The identified collocates were then manually categorised according to their thematic groups, with grammatical terms (e.g., *tentang/about*, *dalam/in*) and other collocates that provided little insight into the representation of individuals with mental disabilities excluded from the analysis.

Table 1. The frequency of terms in reference to PwMD

Terms	Frequency
<i>Gangguan jiwa</i> (mental disorder)	5448
<i>Autisme</i> (autism)	3506
Bipolar	2701
<i>Autis</i> (autism/autists/autistic)	2433
<i>Skizofrenia</i> (schizophrenia)	2242
<i>Gangguan mental</i> (mental disorder)	2044
<i>Orang gila</i> (crazy people/psycho/lunatic)	1532
<i>Hiperaktif</i> (hyperactive)	692
<i>Gangguan kepribadian</i> (personality disorder)	647

The subsequent stage involved detailed concordance analyses of selected collocates to explore how they contribute to the representation of PwMD. This process examined the broader co-text surrounding the collocates to develop a nuanced understanding of their usage and significance, drawing on van Leeuwen’s social actor network categories (van Leeuwen 1996, 2008). The next stage of the analysis examined the descriptive and interpretive findings within a broader socio-political context. This phase aimed to contextualise the identified language patterns and their implications for representing PwMD. It also situated the findings within established models of disability representation in the news media, as outlined by Clogston (1994) and Haller (2000). The final phase critically evaluates the findings, exploring the implications of language use in representing PwMD. It also offers recommendations for best practices, alternative approaches, or changes in language to foster more inclusive and empowering depictions of PwMD.

4. Findings

The analysis found that PwMD are predominantly represented in discourses of medicalisation, crime, and violence. Table 2 displays the collocates of *gangguan jiwa* (mental disorder), organised according to their thematic classifications.

Table 2. Collocates of *gangguan jiwa* (mental disorder)

Thematic category	Collocates	logDice	Freq
Medicalisation	<i>penderita</i> (sufferer)	10.80	443
	<i>pasien</i> (patient)	10.78	562
	<i>pengidap</i> (sufferer)	9.15	104
	<i>warga</i> (resident)	9.07	155
	<i>gejala</i> (symptom)	9.04	136
	<i>penyakit</i> (disease)	8.72	131
	Diagnosis	8.53	64
	<i>pengobatan</i> (treatment)	8.40	73
	<i>penanganan</i> (treatment)	8.27	58
	<i>faktor</i> (factor)	8.25	65
	<i>kecanduan</i> (addiction)	8.14	51
	<i>Berat</i> (severe)	10.41	306
	<i>ringan</i> (mild)	8.24	53
	<i>sembuh</i> (recovered)	8.08	52
	<i>dirawat</i> (treated/nursed)	8.41	67
	<i>menangani</i> (treat/handle)	8.37	60
	<i>merawat</i> (treat/nurse)	8.10	51
Crime and violence	<i>pelaku</i> (perpetrator)	9.80	201
	<i>korban</i> (victim)	8.13	76
	<i>pria</i> (man)	9.18	154
	<i>Diduga</i> (suspected)	10.28	247
	<i>diketahui</i> (found)	8.65	92
	<i>disebut</i> (said)	8.63	85
Process of having mental disorders	<i>mengalami</i> (experience)	11.49	1,206
	<i>mengidap</i> (suffer)	9.73	169
	<i>menderita</i> (suffer)	9.44	150
	<i>alami</i> (experience)	9.40	128
	<i>memiliki</i> (have)	8.65	188
Others	<i>dipasung</i> (shackled/chained)	9.30	112
	<i>mengatakan</i> (say)	8.48	125
	<i>stigma</i>	8.71	73

4.1. Medicalisation

As shown in Table 2, six nominal collocates that belong to medicalised discourses reflect what van Leeuwen calls *functionalisations*. This category represents individuals with mental disorders in terms of their activities or roles (van Leeuwen 2008). The terms '*penderita* 'sufferer' (443 occurrences) and *pengidap* 'sufferer' (104 occurrences) are employed to describe individuals with mental disorders by highlighting their role as sufferers. These terms carry negative connotations, as they are value-laden expressions that evoke pity and suggest notions of tragedy, weakness, and illness (Haller et al. 2006). They also imply a heightened severity of the condition, as they underscore the active experience of suffering (Price 2022). Moreover, the term *pasien* 'patient' (562 occurrences) is used to designate individuals diagnosed with mental disorders with a focus on their

status as recipients of medical care. This term reflects a medicalised perspective of mental disabilities (Price 2022), portraying affected individuals as passive and dependent on treatment. Concordance analyses of these three collocates reveal their frequent occurrence in articles discussing medical interventions for individuals with psychotic disorders, aligning with the medical model of disability (Clogston 1994). Excerpt 1 illustrates an example of this depiction.

- (1) *Pemerintah daerah juga menyiapkan fasilitas rawat inap khusus bagi para penderita gangguan jiwa. Fasilitas medis tersebut berada di satu atap dengan Puskesmas Karanganyar di Kecamatan Gandusari (detik.com, 2016).*

The local government has also prepared special inpatient facilities for **sufferers** of mental disorders. **These medical facilities** are located under the same roof as the Karanganyar Community Health Center in Gandusari District (detik.com, 2016).

The next set of nominal collocates that reflects the medical model of disability includes *gejala* ‘symptom’ (136), *penyakit* ‘disease’ (131), *diagnosis* ‘diagnosis’ (64), *pengobatan* ‘treatment’ (73), *penanganan* ‘treatment/handling’ (58), *faktor* ‘factor’ (65), and *kecanduan* ‘addiction’ (51). The occurrence of these medical-related terms indicates an emphasis on conceptualising mental disabilities as medical conditions that require appropriate medical and therapeutic responses. Two adjectival collocates, *berat* ‘severe’ and *ringan* ‘mild’, describe the intensity of symptoms. The term *gangguan jiwa* ‘mental disorder’ co-occurs with *berat* ‘severe’ 306 times but only 53 times with *ringan* ‘mild’. This disparity aligns with findings by Wahl et al. (2002) and Balfour (2023), which suggest that media coverage of mental illnesses often highlights the most severe and alarming aspects. Another adjectival collocate, *sembuh* ‘recovered’ (52), appears in contexts discussing recovery or improvement, signalling positive mental health outcomes, whether full recovery or progress towards betterment. By highlighting cases of recovery, the news media can foster hope, reduce stigma, and promote a more optimistic and supportive perspective towards PwMD (McGinty et al. 2015). However, the limited frequency of the collocate *sembuh* (recovered), with only 52 occurrences, suggests that recovery remains a minority discourse. This echoes the findings by McGinty et al. (2016) and Whitley et al. (2015), which indicate that recovery is one of the least reported topics in the US and Canadian press. In addition, verbal collocates that further reinforce the medical discourse surrounding PwMD are *dirawat* ‘treated’ (67), *menangani* ‘treat’ (60), and *merawat* ‘treat’ (52). These verbs present PwMD as passive subjects, highlighting their role as recipients of medical care. Like other collocates linked to the medical model, they predominantly appear in articles discussing the treatment of PwMD in psychiatric hospitals or medical facilities.

4.2. Violence and crime

The next group of collocates pertains to violence and crime. The nominal collocates, *pelaku* ‘perpetrator’ (201 occurrences) and *korban* ‘victim’

(76 occurrences), frame PwMD in the context of criminal activities, positioning them either as perpetrators or victims of crime ‘functionalisation’. A detailed examination of the concordances for the term *pelaku* ‘perpetrator’ reveals that PwMD are frequently depicted as offenders involved in sadistic or violent crimes, as illustrated in Excerpt 2. Moreover, the verbs associated with these acts of violence are notably precise, detailing the nature of the violence, such as *bacok* ‘slash/hack’, *banting* ‘slam’, *tikam* ‘stab’, and *penggal/memenggal* ‘behead’ (refer to Excerpt 2). The employment of highly descriptive verbs to portray violence in news reports may correspond with Jewkes’ notion of “visual spectacle and graphic imagery” (Jewkes 2015: 63–66). Although Jewkes primarily referred to visual modes (e.g., images and videos) when conceptualising this news value, language can similarly evoke vivid mental imagery for readers (Balfour 2023). Hence, through the use of verbs such as *bacok* ‘slash’, *banting* ‘slam’, *tikam* ‘stab’, and *penggal/memenggal* ‘behead’, news reports appear to create sensationalised and attention-grabbing narratives, maximising the newsworthiness of the story, while diverting focus from arguably more critical aspects of the story, such as the mental condition of the perpetrator, systemic failures in mental health services, and the perpetuation of stigma (Molek-Kozakowska 2013). This approach may also result in an overemphasis on the violent actions of individuals with mental disorders, thereby perpetuating negative stereotypes that portray PwMD as inherently dangerous. This finding aligns with prior research conducted across various social contexts (e.g., Aci et al. 2020, Balfour 2019, Bowen et al. 2019, Whitley & Berry 2013), which has consistently identified a tendency in news media to depict individuals with mental disorders as violent offenders or perpetrators of violent acts.

- (2) *Kapolsek Kalianda, AKP Effendi Kotto mengungkapkan, dugaan sementara Yanto telah **memenggal** kepala ayah kandungnya hingga putus karena mengalami **gangguan jiwa*** (ENA, August 25, 2025)².

The Kalianda Police Chief, AKP Effendi Kotto, revealed that the initial suspicion is that Yanto **beheaded** his biological father due to experiencing **mental disorders** (ENA, August 25, 2025)³.

Furthermore, when *gangguan jiwa* (mental disorder) collocates with *korban* ‘victim’ (76 occurrences), only 46 concordances depict PwMD as victims. This appears paradoxical, given evidence from several studies indicating that individuals with mental disorders tend to be victims of aggression or violence rather than perpetrators (Nawková et al. 2012, Prince 2022). The limited occurrence of the collocate *korban* in reference to PwMD as victims, therefore, prompts inquiries regarding the potential neglect of this aspect in news coverage. A detailed qualitative analysis of the concordances demonstrates that PwMD are more commonly depicted as victims of suicide (17 out of 46 occurrences), in contrast to other types of victimisations, such as persecution (7) or rape (5). The recurring

² merdeka.com, 2014

³ merdeka.com, 2014

portrayal of individuals with mental disabilities as having committed suicide can make an implication that their condition is unbearable (Balfour 2023). This representation may reinforce the perception that PwMD endure tragic and hopeless lives, further perpetuating negative stereotypes and the stigma associated with mental health disorders. When PwMD are portrayed as victims of violent crime (14 instances), the action is largely downplayed, typically using verbs like *die* or passive constructions, which obscure accountability. Additionally, violence towards PwMD is frequently depicted as a result of their own aggression (see Excerpt 3), reinforcing the misconception that individuals with mental disorders are inherently violent and reducing the responsibility of those who commit the acts.

- (3) *Tiba-tiba korban yang mengalami gangguan jiwa mendatangi keduanya sembari marah-marah. Keduanya sempat menghindari namun korban menarik kerah baju Brigadir E. Melihat kejadian tersebut, Brigadir R spontan menyerang hingga terjadi penganiayaan* (ENA, August 25, 2025)⁴.

The **victim**, who was experiencing a **mental disorder**, suddenly approached the two while yelling angrily. They initially tried to avoid the situation, but the victim grabbed Brigadier E's collar. Witnessing this, Brigadier R attacked spontaneously, leading to an assault (ENA, August 25, 2025)⁵.

Individuals with mental disabilities are also categorised by gender, with the collocate *pria* 'man' (154 occurrences) suggesting a particular focus on male individuals in the context of mental disorders. This refers to the *classification* category of van Leeuwen's social actor network, in that, social actors are portrayed according to the major categories given by a society to distinguish between groups of people, including age, gender, and religion. This construction may highlight a gender disparity in the representation of PwMD. A similar gender imbalance has been observed in news coverage of other mental disabilities, such as autism, where there is a predominant emphasis on boys and men (Karaminis et al. 2023). Therefore, this finding further supports the notion that news media tend to prioritise men when depicting PwMD. Additionally, analysis of the concordances of *pria* (man) shows that 62% (95/154) of occurrences depict men with mental disorders involved in criminal activities, especially violent acts (see Excerpt 4), while approximately 15% (23) present them in passive roles, as subjected or beneficialised actors. This aligns with Whitley et al.'s (2015) study, which revealed that media coverage of men with mental illness tends to be more stigmatising, with a stronger emphasis on crime and violence. This discourse may reinforce the stigma that men primarily face mental health challenges, and that men with mental disabilities are more dangerous. Such portrayals could impact mental health care, support, and access to resources, potentially resulting in gender-based disparities in treatment and understanding (Price 2022).

⁴ detik.com, 2020

⁵ detik.com, 2020

- (4) Sudi (40), **pria yang diduga mengalami gangguan jiwa** di Desa Kasembon, Kecamatan Bululawang, Kabupaten Malang, Jawa Timur tiba-tiba mengamuk. Sembari menggunakan senjata tajam, Sudi membunuh balita berinisial V (1,5) (ENA, August 25, 2025)⁶.

Sudi (40), a **man suspected of experiencing a mental disorder** in Kasembon Village, Bululawang District, Malang Regency, East Java, suddenly went on a rampage. Armed with a sharp weapon, Sudi killed a toddler identified by the initials V (1.5 years old) (ENA, August 25, 2025)⁷.

The next three verbal collocates, *diduga* ‘suspected’ (247), *diketahui* ‘found’ (92), and *disebut* ‘said’ (85), are used to indicate varying degrees of certainty or sources of information about an individual’s mental disorder. Notably, these verbs are typically used in the passive voice, which obscures or minimises the role of the agents (those who suspect, find, or say). Concordance analyses show that these verbs mainly appear in news articles discussing crime or violent behaviour (see Excerpt 4). The employment of the passive voice with these verbs may divert attention from the individuals or entities accountable for articulating suspicions or declarations regarding mental diseases, potentially diminishing accountability in reporting. An analysis of concordances for the collocate *diduga* (suspected) in crime and violence news articles (183 occurrences) indicates that only one article features medical professionals as the background agents confirming the diagnosis of the perpetrator or the individual’s mental disorder. This highlights the commonality of lay diagnoses by non-medical individuals, who frequently consider aggressive behaviour as a primary sign of possible mental illness. This portrayal risks oversimplifying the complexities of an individual’s mental health condition, potentially leading to misinformed conclusions among the public or readers.

4.3. Process of having mental illness

Six verbs are frequently used to describe the experience of having mental disorders: *mengalami* ‘experience’ (1,206), *mengidap* ‘suffer’ (169), *menderita* ‘suffer’ (150), *alami* ‘experience’ (128), and *memiliki* ‘have’ (188). These collocates reflect varied representations of mental illness in Indonesian news media, including experiencing, suffering from, or possessing it. While all these verbs activate social actors as having mental disorders, they convey distinct nuances in how such conditions are portrayed. The verbs *experience* and *have* are generally preferred over *suffer* in news media when discussing PwMD or other disabilities (Haller et al. 2006, Price 2022). *Experience* conveys a more neutral tone and suggests a sense of learning or adaptation, implying that through experience, individuals may become better equipped to handle similar challenges in the future

⁶ suara.com, 2020

⁷ suara.com, 2020

(Price 2022). In contrast, *suffer* diminishes agency, framing individuals as victims of circumstances beyond their control (Price 2022: 207).

The significantly higher frequency of *mengalami* ‘experience’ (1,206) compared to *mengidap* ‘suffer’ (169) and *menderita* ‘suffer’ (150) in the corpus suggests that Indonesian news media may favour language emphasising the experiential aspect of mental disorders rather than focusing on suffering. However, a collocation analysis of *mengalami gangguan jiwa* (experience mental disorders) reveals a frequent and significant association with *pelaku* (perpetrator) (128 instances), indicating its predominant use in crime-related news involving PwMD (see Excerpt 4). In this way, while *mengalami* (experience) is more frequently used, offering a more neutral tone, the significant association of *mengalami* with criminal or violent behaviour highlights a persistent and troubling link between PwMD and negative stereotypes in media portrayals.

4.4. Restraint, voice, and stigma

The collocate *dipasung* ‘shackled’ (112) indicates the passivation of PwMD. It is mainly used in stories where PwMD are physically restrained or shackled, reflecting a concerning practice in some Indonesian communities where individuals with mental health conditions are subjected to physical restraints, often by families attempting to manage violent behaviours or symptoms. These stories focus on efforts, particularly by the government, to release PwMD from shackling or narratives that can evoke pity (see Excerpt 5), referencing the social pathology model of disability. Meanwhile, only 8 out of 73 articles (11%) address the broader systemic issues related to shackling, such as the lack of psychiatric hospitals, medical professionals, high treatment costs, and societal stigma. Research by Hunt et al. (2023) and Baklien et al. (2023) has highlighted that the continued practice of shackling (*pasung*) in Indonesia stems from inadequate mental health care access and societal stigmatisation. Thus, the limited coverage of systemic issues in these articles may hinder a fuller understanding of the root causes and complexities of shackling PwMD in Indonesia.

The verbal collocate, *mengatakan* ‘say’ (occurring 125 times), typically appears in statements quoted within news reports. The social actors linked to *mengatakan* are predominantly medical professionals, experts, police officers, and other stakeholders. These individuals are cited mainly in articles discussing the medical dimensions of persons with mental disorders, except for police officers, who are featured primarily in reports concerning crime or violence. This pattern aligns with earlier findings indicating that medical professionals are rarely cited in news coverage of violent crimes allegedly involving PwMD. Instead, such reports often prioritize law enforcement perspectives, reinforcing stigmatising associations between mental illness and criminal behaviour. Moreover, concordance analysis reveals a notable absence of voices from individuals with direct experience of mental disorders. This exclusion mirrors Wahl et al.’s (2002) finding that people with mental illnesses are rarely given a platform to share their perspectives in media narratives. The absence of such firsthand accounts further marginalizes these

individuals, limiting opportunities to present more nuanced and empathetic portrayals of their experiences.

- (5) *Tiga orang dengan **gangguan jiwa** (ODGJ) yang telah **dipasung** selama bertahun-tahun di Kecamatan Jatilawang, Kabupaten Banyumas, Jawa Tengah dibawa ke rumah sakit* (ENA, August 25, 2025)⁸.

Three people with **mental disorders** (ODGJ) who had been **shackled** for years in Jatilawang District, Banyumas Regency, Central Java, were taken to the hospital (ENA, August 25, 2025)⁹.

- (6) *Persepsi negatif atau **stigma** masyarakat Indonesia terhadap penyakit gangguan jiwa merupakan **kendala utama** bagi para penyintas untuk dapatkan bantuan yang layak* (ENA, August 25, 2025)¹⁰.

The negative perception or **stigma** of Indonesian society toward mental illness is a **major obstacle** for survivors to receive proper assistance (ENA, August 25, 2025)¹¹.

The final collocate, *stigma* (73 occurrences), highlights the societal stigma faced by individuals with mental disabilities. This stigma is depicted as a critical barrier that impedes access to appropriate and adequate mental health treatment, as illustrated in Excerpt 6. The portrayal of stigma in this context aligns with the minority model of disability, which emphasises the role of societal attitudes and systemic barriers in marginalizing individuals with disabilities. The minority model underscores the need for societal change to address prejudice, discrimination, and structural inequities. Nevertheless, it should be noted that collocates which indicate progressive models are limited, compared with others that suggest medicalised discourses or those that refer to violence and crime.

5. Discussion

The analysis of collocates for *gangguan jiwa* (mental disorder) reveals that individuals with mental disorders are primarily framed within a medical perspective, portraying them as sufferers, patients, and recipients of medical treatment. This narrative emphasises symptoms, diagnoses, and treatments, reinforcing the perception of mental health challenges as purely medical issues. Additionally, the media canonically associates individuals with mental disabilities with criminal activities, predominantly as perpetrators. Their actions are frequently sensationalised with vivid language and lay-diagnoses focus on violent behaviour as an indicator of mental disorders, perpetuating negative stereotypes and fears about their potential danger. Less common representations include portraying individuals with mental disorders as victims of discrimination or stigma, aligning with the civil rights or minority model of disability. However, instances where they

⁸ kompas.com, 2020

⁹ kompas.com, 2020

¹⁰ sindo.com, 2020

¹¹ sindo.com, 2020

are depicted as victims of shackling largely reflect the social pathology model of disability. Only a few articles explore the systemic and societal factors shaping the experiences of people with mental disorders, leaving these broader contexts underexamined. This scarcity of progressive reporting limits public awareness of the structural challenges faced by individuals with mental disabilities and undermines efforts to foster more inclusive and equitable societal attitudes.

The prevalence of traditional models of disability may be influenced by newsworthiness, a key driver of media sales and advertising revenue. Articles that discuss structural issues, such as those aligned with the minority or civil rights model of disability, are frequently sidelined in favour of more “newsworthy” themes, such as depictions of medical aspects, vulnerability or social pathology (Grue 2016). These approaches align with audience expectations and the media’s profit-driven objectives, frequently at the expense of nuanced and progressive representations. In Indonesia, the media landscape has been heavily influenced by economic shifts following the 1998 *Reformasi* era, with large corporations increasingly dominating the market (Sukmayadi 2019). This consolidation has driven a focus on profitability and commercial imperatives, at the cost of the media’s social responsibilities (Ida 2011, Sukmayadi 2019). Consequently, disability-related content is shaped by commercial considerations, reflecting traditional models of disability that align with business goals rather than challenging societal norms (Abwao & Mishra 2021). Online news platforms, in particular, tailor their content to attract broad audiences, presenting disability-related issues in ways that conform to established notions of “newsworthiness”. This approach reinforces traditional portrayals, such as depictions of medicalisation, crime, and tragedy, while largely ignoring narratives that emphasise systemic barriers, equity, and rights-based perspectives. Consequently, the portrayal of individuals with mental disabilities in Indonesia remains constrained by a commercial bias that prioritises profitability over the advancement of inclusive and progressive disability representations.

Media practitioners must be aware of the far-reaching consequences of negative representations of individuals with mental disabilities. Such portrayals significantly shape public perceptions, often reinforcing deep-seated stereotypes and fuelling stigma (Balfour 2023, Potts et al. 2023). Thus, they may experience further marginalisation, both socially and economically, limiting their opportunities for education, employment, and community participation. Moreover, these traditional portrayals can discourage affected individuals from seeking professional mental health care or social support (Bilkay et al. 2024). This not only perpetuates stigma but may also contribute to an internalised sense of shame or fear of discrimination, leading individuals to avoid disclosing their conditions or accessing the necessary treatment and services (Clement et al. 2015), worsening mental health conditions (Price 2022). The consequences of such media narratives extend beyond the individual level, influencing policies, healthcare practices, and broader societal attitudes toward mental health. Therefore, to address this issue, media professionals must strive for a more balanced and accurate portrayal of individuals with mental

disabilities. This requires efforts to feature stories that highlight the systemic barriers PwMD encounter, such as inadequate access to mental health services. Increasing news coverage of successful recovery stories can also play a crucial role in changing public perceptions. By reporting PwMD who have overcome challenges and led fulfilling lives with the right support and treatment, the media can contribute to promoting a more hopeful and realistic view of mental health conditions (McGinty et al. 2015). Journalists should also actively seek to quote PwMD to provide a more accurate and varied understanding of the lived experience of PwMD (Balfour 2023). Additionally, reducing the association of PwMD with criminal narratives in news reports and highlighting stories that reflect the everyday realities of those living with the condition can help to counteract the fear and prejudice that frequently arise from sensationalised or misleading depictions (Balfour 2023).

6. Conclusion

This study addresses how Indonesian mass media portray people with mental disabilities through the choice of words in their broadcasts from 2011 to 2020. Through a combination of CADS, van Leeuwen's social actor network framework, and disability media models, the findings reveal the persistent dominance of medical and criminalising discourses, while progressive portrayals that emphasise rights, agency, and systemic challenges remain scarce. By primarily framing them as either patients in need of treatment or as dangerous individuals involved in criminal activities, the media reinforces stigmas that marginalise and misrepresent this group. Overall, these representations align predominantly with traditional models of disability, particularly the medical and social pathology models, while showing minimal alignment with progressive models such as the minority/civil rights model. This study argues that these patterns are shaped by commercial interests and notions of newsworthiness, which prioritise sensational narratives over nuanced and rights-based reporting. However, the study is not without limitations. The analysis focuses on a specific set of collocates and is restricted to online news sources in the Indonesian language, potentially overlooking alternative discourses in other media formats and languages. Future research could expand by incorporating multimodal analysis and comparing representations across different media platforms. Also, considering the scope of this research is confined to the Indonesian media, future research involving media from other developed countries could provide valuable insights and further substantiate the current findings.

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CRediT authorship contribution statement

Muchamad Sholakhuddin Al Fajri: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Data curation, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. **Arina Isti'annah:** Methodology, Formal analysis, Validation, Writing – review & editing.

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Research article / Научная статья

Negation in thesis and dissertation abstracts by English, Chinese, and Iranian writers from a cross-cultural perspective

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Abstract

The effective use of negation is a critical yet challenging aspect of academic writing, as it influences the clarity and persuasiveness of arguments. Despite its rhetorical importance and the potential impact of sociocultural factors on its usage, cross-cultural variations in the use of negative markers in theses and dissertations—particularly in abstracts, remain underexplored. Abstracts serve as a key persuasive genre, engaging readers by summarizing research findings and their significance. This study addresses this gap by examining how negative markers are used in English abstracts produced by postgraduate students from English-speaking, Chinese, and Iranian academic contexts. A corpus of 300 abstracts was analyzed using a corpus-based approach grounded in an interpersonal model of negation. Quantitative analyses, including descriptive statistics and log-likelihood testing, revealed both shared and distinct patterns across groups. Commonly used markers included “not,” “no,” “little,” and “few,” while markers such as “nowhere” and “nobody” were absent. Notable differences emerged: Iranian students showed more use of “no,” particularly as a consequence marker; English students employed affective negation more frequently; English and Chinese students diverged in their use of “little.” These findings underscore the influence of cultural and linguistic backgrounds on the rhetorical deployment of negation in academic writing. The study advocates for targeted pedagogical strategies in English for Academic Purposes programs that explicitly address the rhetorical functions of negation. Such strategies can improve L2 students’ writing quality, enhance nuanced expression, and reduce pragmatic miscommunication, thereby better preparing students for successful academic communication in diverse English-medium contexts.

Keywords: *abstracts, negation, metadiscourse, academic writing, English, Chinese, Iranian*

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Отрицание в аннотациях диссертаций английских, китайских и иранских авторов в кросс-культурном аспекте

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Аннотация

Эффективное использование отрицания – важный и сложный аспект академического письма, который влияет на ясность и убедительность аргументов. Несмотря на его риторическую важность и потенциальное влияние социокультурных факторов на использование отрицательных маркеров в диссертациях, в частности в аннотациях, которые служат ключевым жанром убеждения, вовлекающим читателей путем краткого изложения результатов и их значения, они остаются недостаточно изученными. Данное исследование устраняет этот пробел, изучая использование отрицательных маркеров в аннотациях на английском языке, написанных аспирантами из англоязычной, китайской и иранской академической среды. Материалом исследования послужили 300 аннотаций, которые были проанализированы с применением корпусного подхода, основанного на межличностной модели отрицания. Количественный анализ, включающий описательную статистику и проверку логарифмического правдоподобия, выявил как общие, так и различные закономерности в группах. Наиболее частотными оказались маркеры «not», «no», «little» и «few», в то время как такие маркеры, как «nowhere» и «nobody», отсутствовали. Выявились заметные кросс-культурные различия: иранские студенты чаще использовали «no», особенно в качестве маркера последствий; английские студенты чаще использовали аффективное отрицание; английские и китайские студенты расходились в использовании маркера «little». Полученные результаты свидетельствуют о влиянии культурных и языковых особенностей на риторическое отрицание в академическом письме. Данное исследование выступает за разработку целенаправленных стратегий в программах по английскому языку для академических целей, которые направлены на изучение риторических функций отрицания. Такие стратегии могут улучшить качество письма студентов – носителей языка и лучше подготовить их к успешной академической коммуникации в различных англоязычных контекстах.

Ключевые слова: аннотация, отрицание, метадискурс, академическое письмо, английский язык, китайский язык, иранский язык

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1. Introduction

Writing a thesis and dissertation is a significant academic achievement, particularly for postgraduate students whose first language is not English. These students must adapt to academic discourse while demonstrating their competence in conducting original research and producing high-quality writing (Paltridge & Starfield 2020, Sun & Crosthwaite 2022a).

Among the multiple sections of master's theses and doctoral dissertations, the abstract is considered crucial. It appears first and engages readers by summarizing the content and highlighting its significance (Bitchener 2010, Jiang & Hyland 2022a). More importantly, the abstract performs a persuasive role by showcasing the study's novelty and significance (Bitchener 2010). It acts as a quality filter, enabling readers to evaluate the study's relevance, purpose, methodology, key findings, and merit for further exploration. An ineffective abstract may signal inadequate academic performance. Consequently, abstracts are characterized as a high-stake genre, where authors should underscore both central arguments and broader contributions to the field (Jiang & Hyland 2017, 2022a).

While the structure and function of research abstracts have been widely studied (Boginskaya 2022, Jiang & Hyland 2017, Jiang & Hyland 2022a, Swales 1990), the use of negative markers remains underexplored (Jiang & Hyland 2022a, Li et al. 2023, Swales 2019). However, linguistic negation, encompassing forms from simple markers such as “no” or “not” (e.g., it was *not* a significant correlation) to complex morphological markers (e.g., *dis-*, *non-*, *-less*) and syntactic structures that negate propositional content (e.g., we *did not* find a significant correlation), plays a crucial rhetorical role in academic writing by expressing contrast, exclusion, and epistemic stance—key elements to the communicative functions of research abstracts. This gap limits our understanding of how these markers shape the academic discourse of abstracts. Despite their frequency and rhetorical salience, especially in signaling limitations, challenging prior work, or foregrounding research gaps, negative markers have not been systematically examined for their linguistic forms or discursive roles within this genre. Understanding their functions in abstracts, therefore, requires examining the broader linguistic phenomenon of negation, of which these markers are specific realizations.

Research has also identified the potential impact of linguistic and cultural backgrounds on writers' perceptions, and communication styles, particularly in the use of interpersonal language strategies such as metadiscourse (Crismore et al. 1993, Gritsenko et al. 2024, Hyland 2004, Hyland 2019, Sun & Crosthwaite 2022a). For example, hedging devices with multiple rhetorical and discursive functions, such as creating dialog, mitigating claims, and building rapport, are shaped by linguistic and sociocultural contexts (Kreutz & Harres 1997). Hyland (2004) posited that self-expression, argumentation, and reader engagement are closely tied to the cultural and professional norms of writing communities. Therefore, understanding sociocultural dimensions is essential for analyzing how writers from different backgrounds utilize linguistic resources such as negation. Nevertheless, the specific impact of sociocultural factors on the use of negation in academic writing remains relatively underexplored.

The present study examined variations in the use of negative markers in English thesis and dissertation abstracts among student writers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Specifically, we studied English, Chinese, and Iranian postgraduate students. Each group represents a unique combination of

linguistic, educational, and cultural backgrounds. English students write in their native language, having internalized academic conventions from early education. In contrast, Chinese and Iranian students, as L2 writers, emerge from different educational systems, linguistic traditions and socio-rhetorical practices. While Chinese and Iranian cultures share common values such as collectivism, humility in argumentation, politeness, and indirect rhetorical strategies (Abdollahzadeh 2011, Deng & He 2023, Hu & Cao 2011), subtle distinctions in orthographic conventions and philosophical beliefs (e.g., Confucianism/Taoism and Islam) may affect how Iranian and Chinese students construct persuasive academic arguments in English. By comparing these groups, this study sought to illuminate how cultural and linguistic factors shape the use of negative markers in English academic writing. This understanding can inform culturally responsive writing instruction and facilitate clearer communication in academic contexts. Moreover, the study identified the most common forms and functions of negative markers in thesis and dissertation abstracts. The following research questions guided the investigation:

1. What negative markers, forms, and functions of negation are utilized in English thesis and dissertation abstracts by the postgraduate students from the three different L1 backgrounds (i.e., English, Chinese, and Iranian)?
2. How do the forms and functions of negation in the thesis and dissertation abstracts of the postgraduate students differ?

2. Literature review

2.1. Negation in academic writing

Negation in English grammar is a dynamic domain characterized by linguistic creativity and the constant development of strategies (Burke 2020). Negative markers express denials and contradictions (Tottie 1991), allowing for asserting authorial voice by rejecting or refuting alternative viewpoints (Sun & Crosthwaite 2022b) and enhancing persuasive argumentation by adding conviction to an argument (Herriman 2009). Negative marking can be divided into affixal negation (e.g., non-, dis-, un-, etc.) or non-affixal/clausal negation (Tottie 1991), which operates at the clause level to negate either the lexical verb or auxiliary (Example 1) or non-verbal elements (Example 2).

- (1) The findings also suggest that the international teaching materials **do not promote** non-Islamic western values. (Iranian abstract)
- (2) The findings reveal that the difference creates -triggers, but **not**-indicators, which depend on affective factors like interlocutors' willingness to signal non-comprehension. (Chinese abstract)

In non-affixal or clausal negation, the negative impact extends to the end of the clause, denying or rejecting the entire statement (Biber et al. 2021).

Negation serves multiple functions within academic discourse, such as rejecting recommendations and denying assertions (Tottie 1991), disclaiming

alternative positions, expressing stances, considering other possible positions (Martin & White 2005), and conveying uncertain concepts or factual information (Swale 2019). Webber (2004) further highlighted eight evaluative functions of negation, including unmet expectations, correcting assumptions, making comparisons, expressing dissatisfaction, disagreeing with others' viewpoints, indicating wholehearted agreement, expressing a cautious attitude, and adopting formulaic structures, although overlap between categories limits clear quantification. (Webber 2004).

Jiang and Hyland (2022a) identified two limitations in past classifications of negation. First, they often neglect the interpersonal roles commonly seen in academic writing (Jiang & Hyland 2022a). These interpersonal roles, however, are integral to successful academic writing as 1) they offer a means of commenting on one's own text and clarifying explanations, contradicting any assumption, and differentiating their standpoint from others, and 2) they help establish a relationship between the writer and the reader, facilitating clear communication of ideas and arguments (Hyland 2019). Second, prior studies have failed to clearly distinguish between the negation used to establish textual cohesion, and that used to express stance and reader-sensitive tone. To address these two limitations, Jiang & Hyland (2022a) proposed an interpersonal model of negation (which we adopt for the current study) comprising both *interactive* and *interactional* dimensions of communication (see Figure 1).

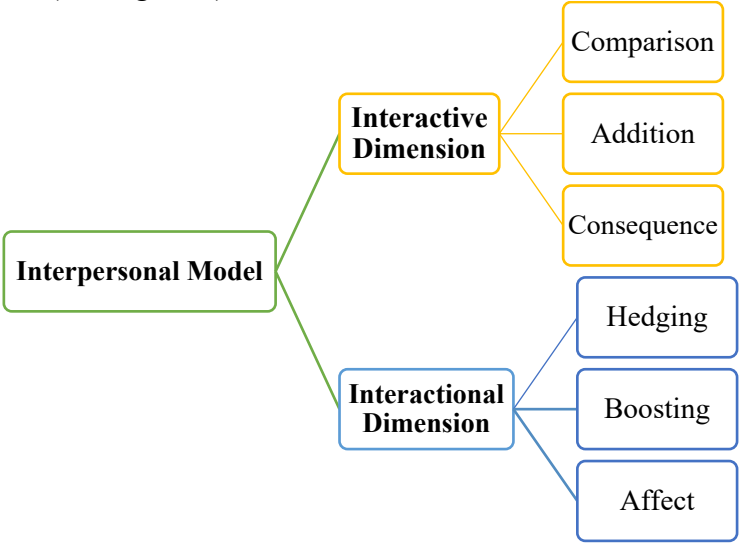


Figure 1. Interpersonal Model Suggested by Jiang and Hyland (2022a)

The *interactive* dimension of the interpersonal model (Jiang and Hyland 2022a: 62) pertains to how discourse is constructed to facilitate readers' comprehension of the intended meaning. In this dimension, negation helps establish connections between different text elements or emphasize the significance of certain elements by utilizing comparative, additive, and consequential relations to enhance the coherence and persuasiveness of information flow. There are three

types of interactive negation: *comparison*, *addition*, and *consequence*. *Comparison* negation highlights contrasting relationships between different elements. For instance, Example 3 reveals that while most studies on TBI have focused on task features and their implementation, they have overlooked the learners and their individual differences.

- (3) Most studies in TBI have primarily focused on the features of tasks and their implementation and **not the learners** and their individual differences (Iranian abstract).

Addition negation presents two interconnected pieces of information that are either surprising or unexpected, with the second piece of information often being even more surprising (Jiang & Hyland 2022a).

- (4) ...but L1 translation **neither** accelerates **nor** hinders the process of English vocabulary teaching and learning in terms of appropriate situational use (Chinese abstract).

Consequence negation is utilized to demonstrate that something is a result or consequence of an argument or study.

- (5) There **is not a significant** disciplinary and cultural specificity in the Chinese L2 English... (Chinese abstract).

In contrast, the *interactional* dimension (Jiang & Hyland 2022a: 63) centers on participants and emphasizes the writer's persona and communication style, aligning with community norms. Within this dimension, negation is situated within the framework of modality and affect, contributing to subjective assessments of the material at hand (Jiang & Hyland 2022a). Specifically, negation may be expressed through hedging, boosting, or other attitudinal signals, all of which serve to convey the writer's stance toward the topic being discussed (Jiang & Hyland 2022a).

The *interactional* dimension consists of three types of negation, namely, *hedging*, *boosting*, and *affect*. Hedging negation plays a crucial role in mitigating the fully illocutionary impact of a statement or evaluation. This helps to express reservations regarding the proposition or to convey a sense of respect toward the reader's potential alternative perspective (Jiang & Hyland 2022a).

- (6) Among the Interlanguage Pragmatics studies which have investigated the differential effect of different instructional treatments, **little** attention has been paid to... (Iranian abstract).

Boosting aims to amplify the expressive impact of a proposition, thereby reinforcing the level of commitment to a statement that would otherwise lack assertiveness or strength.

- (7) Contextual information such as the age, gender and social status of speaker and hearer is **never** presented (Chinese abstract).

Affect negation contributes to the writer's stance toward the presented content by challenging or denying the accuracy, adequacy or clarity of a study result (Jiang & Hyland 2022a). In Example 8, negation is utilized to challenge the idea of language being static and instead expresses the writer's support for dynamicity.

- (8) Human languages are *not* static entities. Linguistic conventions, whose social and communicative meaning are understood ... (English abstract).

2.2. Studies on negation in academic writing

While many researchers have explored genre analysis (Swales 1990), rhetorical functions (Parviz & Lan 2023), and linguistic features (Gritsenko et al. 2024) of abstracts, relatively few studies have focused on the use and functions of negation in research abstracts. Early foundational work by Graetz (1985), examining over 72 academic research abstracts using Systemic Functional Linguistics, revealed a general avoidance of negatives in abstracts across disciplines—characterized instead by past tense, third-person perspective, and passive constructions. Although later studies (e.g., Hyland 2004, Swales 1990) contested this claim by pointing to counterexamples and over assertion, the study by Graetz (1985) set the stage for recognizing patterned rhetorical choices in abstract writing across disciplines.

More recent studies such as Sun and Crosthwaite (2022a, 2022b) have provided more insights into the use of subtypes of negation in doctoral dissertations across disciplines, using the Appraisal framework. For instance, Sun and Crosthwaite (2022a) identified common and discipline-specific properties of negation markers and their coarticulations with other relevant Appraisal devices, but in other sections of research articles, such as limitations and introductions. Sun and Crosthwaite (2022b) revealed that *disalignment* was the most frequently used subtype of negation, along with “not” and “no”. However, the two studies are limited in their sample size (42,106 and 23,477 words, respectively) and focused on sections other than abstracts (e.g., limitations and introductions).

Jiang and Hyland (2022a) conducted a diachronic corpus-based study that provided a more nuanced analysis of negation used in research article abstracts over time. They proposed and employed the abovementioned interactive/interactional model and reported that negation played both interactive and interactional roles in shaping the rhetorical structures of abstracts aiding coherence and conveying the writer's stance. Specifically, negation was most frequently used for consequential connections and least for personal opinions (i.e., affect), although over time, a shift toward more affective and hedging uses emerged, reflecting evolving rhetorical practices in academic writing.

Jiang and Hyland (2022b) further examined trends in four linguistic features—passive, past tense, third person, and negation—in research abstracts from four academic disciplines over three decades. They identified an average of more than one negation in every two texts with sociologists using negation more frequently

than other disciplines did. Despite these insights into the multifaceted roles of negation in research article abstracts and the evolving patterns of usage across disciplines and timeframes, the two studies by Jiang and Hyland overlooked the sociocultural (Crismore et al. 1993, Herriman 2009) and linguistic backgrounds of the writers (Lantolf 1999, Sun & Crosthwaite 2022a)- factors that shape rhetorical strategies. Sociocultural factors play a critical role in shaping rhetorical practices, particularly in negotiating knowledge claims and constructing scientific arguments, which has been supported by multiple studies on metadiscourse. For instance, Noorian and Biria (2010) compared Iranian and American writers and noted similarities in the use of hedges, boosters, and attitude markers and differences in interpersonal marker use. Kong (2006) noted the differences in Chinese and English academic writers' strategies in evaluating others' ideas. Abdollahazadeh (2011) studied American and Iranian academic writers and reported convergences in hedging but differences in the frequency of using emphatics and attitude markers. Nevertheless, the only studies on negation use in academic writing across linguistic and cultural backgrounds are Li et al. (2023) and Sun and Jiang (2024).

Li et al. (2023) observed fewer use of negation markers by Chinese PhD. students compared to their American counterparts, and particularly with respect to interactional and interactive functions. Sun and Jiang (2024) also compared the use of negation in thesis limitation sections by 100 Chinese and American doctoral students and found American students employed more negation, particularly in conjunction with engagement and graduation resources, suggesting cultural and genre-specific expectations. While informative, the two studies, similar to previous metadiscourse studies, examined only two linguistic and cultural backgrounds, limiting generalizability of their findings.

In sum, despite the valuable insights provided by these previous studies on negation use in academic writing, few have directly compared the use of negative markers in abstracts written by students from multiple linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Given that abstracts serve as a critical gateway to research, understanding how negation functions across diverse student populations can reveal patterns of rhetorical awareness, potential challenges, and strategies for expressing evaluation, stance, and engagement. The present study addresses this gap by comparing the use and functions of negation in abstracts written by English, Chinese, and Iranian postgraduate students. By situating negation within broader meta discourse practices, this research contributes to our understanding of how linguistic and cultural backgrounds shape academic writing and offers pedagogical implications for supporting multilingual student writers. In addition, the current study draws on a substantially larger sample size than previous studies (e.g., Sun & Crosthwaite 2022a, 2022b), enhancing the reliability and generalizability of its findings.

3. Method

3.1. Linguistic model

The present study employed the interpersonal model of negation proposed by Jiang and Hyland (2022a), as reviewed earlier. This model is formulated within the social constructivist view and built upon Hyland's (2019) concept of metadiscourse.

3.2. Corpus selection

To minimize potential biases, specific inclusion criteria were strictly applied to each corpus group. First, theses and dissertations were selected from prestigious universities in English-speaking, Chinese, and Iranian contexts to ensure that they reflect standardized academic practices within each region. For the English L1 corpus, texts were sourced from various institutional repositories in the United States and the United Kingdom (see Appendix A), with supplementary data obtained from ProQuest Dissertations, Theses Global, e-theses on-line platforms, OATD.org and ethos.bl.uk.

For the Iranian corpus, we used three online university databases, namely, *Tehran University*, *Tarbiat Modares University*, and *Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz*. The Chinese corpus was also retrieved from *Shanghai Jiao Tong University*, *Zhejiang University*, and *Shanghai International Studies University*. Notably, the first and second authors of the current study are of Persian and Chinese nationalities, respectively, which allowed them to access master's theses and doctoral dissertations written by L2 student writers.

All the universities are accredited to confer postgraduate degrees and are officially recognized as tier-1 institutions by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology of Iran (Appendix A). It is worth noting that focusing on prestigious universities helped filter in samples by writers with similar L2 proficiency and "comparable disciplinary expertise" (Tribble 2017: 34).

In both countries, postgraduate admission is contingent upon meeting specific language proficiency standards. Iranian MA and PhD candidates are required to meet certain language proficiency standards either through rigorous, highly competitive national university entrance exams or standardized commercial tests such as TOEFL and IELTS. Likewise, Chinese postgraduate students from the selected universities must fulfill some type of English language proficiency requirement (e.g., the College English Test, TEM, TOEFL, or IELTS) set by Chinese universities (Jin & Fan 2011, Li et al. 2023). Moreover, Iranian and Chinese MA programs typically span 2–3 years, while PhD programs generally require 3–5 years for completion. These programs involve coursework and empirical research projects guided by advisors or supervisors, allowing students to develop theoretical knowledge, research skills, and practical experience in their respective fields.

To construct the initial corpus, we applied a unified set of search terms- “MA thesis” or “master’s thesis” or “PhD dissertation” or doctoral dissertation” and “English” across multiple academic databases and repositories. This systematic search yielded a preliminary sample of 343 theses. In the second stage, we made sure to include a balanced representation of disciplines and degree levels (master’s and doctoral) within each group to control for potential variations arising from disciplinary norms and differences between academic levels (master’s vs. doctoral).

Third, the nationalities of L1 English student writers were verified via multiple public sources and platforms such as Researchgate, LinkedIn, Academia, Google Scholar, institutional profiles, first name and last name origins, research portals, biographies, and acknowledgements in the writing. In cases where the sources did not suffice, we emailed the writers to confirm their first language. However, it is important to note that any potential differences between American and British English were not considered during the analysis.

In the next step, to ensure consistent and reliable comparisons, we set four key selection criteria on the basis of the fundamental principles for corpus construction, as outlined by Sinclair (2005). First, data-driven empirical studies were prioritized to minimize possible linguistic construction variations. Second, studies published between 2013 and 2022 were selected to allow a sufficiently large sample size. Third, studies adopting a primarily quantitative approach were favored to minimize the potential impact of research topics and paradigms on the use of interpersonal language (Hyland & Jiang 2022a). The researchers assessed the studies based on information from the abstracts, research questions, and methods. Finally, only studies within English language-related majors, such as Applied Linguistics, TESOL¹, and TEFL², were included to control for potential disciplinary effects. Studies containing research reviews, abstracts and lay summaries instead of conventional abstracts were excluded. This multistage selection process yielded 309 studies. To attain a comparable corpus size, we randomly selected 100 theses and dissertations for each corpus corresponding to each L1 background, resulting in a total of 300 abstracts. Table 1 shows the detailed descriptive statistics. Since the chosen theses and dissertations were submitted to their respective academic institutions during the period spanning from 2013 to 2022, the likelihood of them undergoing refinement using AI tools is deemed minimal.

Table 1. Corpus characteristics

Groups	Datasets	Total words	Mean length	Min length	Max length	Standard Deviation
Iranian	100	33,428	334.28	120	704	110.26
Chinese	100	55,905	559.05	180	2123	331.77
English	100	25,488	254.88	69	745	114.49
Overall	300	114,821	382.74	69	2123	247.91

¹ TESOL refers to the field of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.

² TEFL refers to the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

3.3. Data analysis procedure

3.3.1. Taxonomy of commonly-used negative markers

In this study, we utilized a list of negative markers, specifically focusing on non-affixal/ clausal negation, as outlined by Jiang and Hyland (2022a). This list was originally built upon the categorization of *no-negatives* and *not-negatives* by Biber et al. (2021), along with the concept of *broad negatives* (e.g., *rarely* and *little*) introduced by Carter et al. (2011) and Sinclair et al. (2017). Table 2 shows the 17 commonly-used negative markers used in the current investigation.

Table 2. Taxonomy of commonly-used negative markers

barely	little	few	not	no	nowhere	nobody	never	no one
neither	none	nor	nothing	seldom	rarely	hardly	scarcely	

3.3.2. Corpus processing and negative markers extraction

Corpus processing and negative marker extraction involved several steps. First, all samples were converted into Word files. Second, various elements such as titles, key words, footnotes, references, and linguistic examples were removed from the abstracts. The cleaned texts were then saved in plain text format and assigned a reference code (File No. 1 to File No. 300) to ensure the anonymity of the authors. Third, *AntConc* (2024) was used to extract targeted negative markers by importing 50 abstract word.docx files into *AntConc* for each subcorpus. Fourth, we created an advanced Search Query List containing 17 negative markers (Table 2) using the Key Word In Context (KWIC) function. This facilitated automatic searches and generated concordances with the specified negative markers. Fifth, we exported the generated lists to Excel files. Each line in the Excel file includes a negative marker located in the middle row, accompanied by its surrounding context. Following prior studies (e.g., Councill et al. 2010) which typically used a range of 5–10 words, we included 10 words on either side of the negative marker to provide additional context. The window of 10 words also suits our study specifically because it is considered a sufficient length to capture a complete syntactic unit in English and provides a computationally efficient and linguistically reasonable frame for analysis. In case 10 words did not suffice, original texts were retrieved for analysis. Finally, to ensure accuracy, each concordance was manually checked to confirm that the retrieved instances functioned as negations. This involved excluding extraneous cases such as “not least”, and “yes and no questions”. The negative markers were then manually categorized as interactive or interactional based on their functions.

3.3.3. Pilot analysis

To identify negative markers accurately and ensure consistent coding, we developed a protocol that provided clear instructions, criteria, and operational

definitions, supported by illustrative examples of the interpersonal model of negation. To maintain coding consistency, minimize bias, and identify areas for improvement, researchers subsequently conducted two rounds of pilot studies. In the first round, we independently coded 14 master’s and doctoral dissertations from previously excluded studies. Through discussion, we identified several non-negative markers included in the automatic output (e.g., Examples 9 and 10).

- (9) ***Last but not least***, this thesis attempts to suggest efficient methods to improve English teachers... (Chinese abstract).
- (10) ... but the washback was not intense, with most TEM preparation courses covering ***no more than*** half a semester (Chinese abstract).

In the second round, the researchers analyzed a randomly selected subset, comprising 5% of the entire dataset, where we identified more non-negative markers and certain negated phrases pertaining to the treatment and study design etc., as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. **Non-negative markers and negated phrases associated with the treatment and study design**

<i>Quite a few</i>	<i>More often than not</i>	<i>A few</i>	<i>To mention just a few</i>
<i>No-collocation treatment</i>	<i>The past few decades</i>	<i>No citation</i>	<i>No treatment group</i>
<i>No TESOL training</i>	<i>Not with their collocates</i>	<i>No WCF</i>	<i>Always to never</i>
<i>Non-gamified</i>	<i>No cue</i>	<i>Very little</i>	

Following two rounds of pilot analyses, a random 20% subset was selected for detailed analysis. After a four-week interval, the researchers met to compare negative markers, documenting and highlighting them in an Excel file based on the refined protocol. Disagreements were resolved through discussion. Using the “percent agreement” method described by Biber et al. (2007: 35), a high-level agreement of 96% was reached. The remaining data were subsequently coded by the second author. Finally, the first author conducted a comprehensive review of all the coding to ensure accuracy and consistency.

3.3.4. Statistical analysis

Following Jiang and Hyland (2022), we used a series of log-likelihood (LL) tests to statistically compare the use of negation markers across corpora. The LL tests were conducted using *GTest* function provided by the *DescTools* package in R. We also calculated %DIFF to assess the effect sizes of any observed significant differences using the formula $\%DIFF = \frac{(NF \text{ in } SC - NF \text{ in } RC) \times 100}{NF \text{ in } RC}$, where NF denotes the normalized frequency, SC denotes the study corpus, and RC denotes the reference corpus (Gabrielatos & Marchi 2011). %DIFF indicates the proportion of the difference between two normalized frequencies (Gabrielatos 2018). The LL test is widely used in corpus studies and is preferable to other tests such as

Chi-square test when the expected values are small (<5) (Dunning 1993, Rayson & Garside 2000). We also used Rayson’s (2016) log-likelihood calculator to crosscheck the results obtained using *R*, particularly LL and %DIFF; the calculator provides cutoff LL values for only different significance levels, such as $p < .05$, .01, .001, and .0001, respectively.

4. Results

This section presents the frequency, forms and functions of negative markers identified in postgraduate students’ thesis and dissertation abstracts based on the interpersonal model of negation.

4.1. Negative markers, forms and functions of negation

The results revealed a total of 369 instances of negation in the corpora, equating to 3.214 occurrences per 1000 words, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Statistical information on negative markers

	Iranian				Chinese				Native				Overall			
	raw	per 1000	Mean	SD	raw	per 1000	Mean	SD	raw	per 1000	Mean	SD	raw	per 1000	Mean	SD
Sum	112	3.350	–	–	171	3.059	–	–	86	3.374	–	–	369	3.214	–	–
not	60	1.795	.60	.964	108	1.932	1.08	1.368	55	2.158	.55	.821	223	1.942	.743	1.099
no	32	.957	.32	.510	30	.537	.30	.595	13	.510	.13	.485	75	.653	.250	.537
little	7	.209	.07	.293	5	.089	.05	.219	10	.392	.10	.302	22	.192	.073	.274
few	5	.150	.05	.219	13	.233	.13	.338	2	.078	.02	.141	20	.174	.067	.250
nor	3	.090	.03	.223	1	.018	.01	.100	2	.078	.02	.141	6	.052	.020	.162
none	2	.060	.02	.141	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	.017	.007	.082
neither	1	.030	.01	.100	1	.018	.01	.010	0	0	0	0	2	.017	.007	.082
seldom	1	.030	.01	.100	2	.036	.02	.141	0	0	0	0	3	.026	.010	.100
barely	1	.030	.01	.100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	.009	.003	.058
rarely	0	0	0	0	2	.036	.02	.141	3	.118	.03	.171	5	.044	.017	.128
hardly	0	0	0	0	5	.089	.05	.261	0	0	0	0	5	.044	.017	.152
never	0	0	0	0	3	.054	.03	.171	0	0	0	0	3	.026	.010	.100
nothing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	.039	.01	.100	1	.009	.003	.058
scarcely	0	0	0	0	1	.018	.01	.100	0	0	0	0	1	.009	.003	.058
nowhere	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
nobody	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
no one	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

To answer RQ1- what negative markers, forms, and functions of negation are utilized in English thesis and dissertation abstracts by the postgraduate students from the three L1 backgrounds (i.e., English, Chinese, and Iranian)-the results showed that “not, no, little, few” were the four most frequently used negatives across all three corpora, as shown in Figure 2. Interestingly, certain negative markers such as “nowhere, nobody, no one” did not appear in any of the corpora.

The results also revealed that “hardly, never, scarcely” appeared exclusively in the Chinese corpus, albeit with low frequencies.

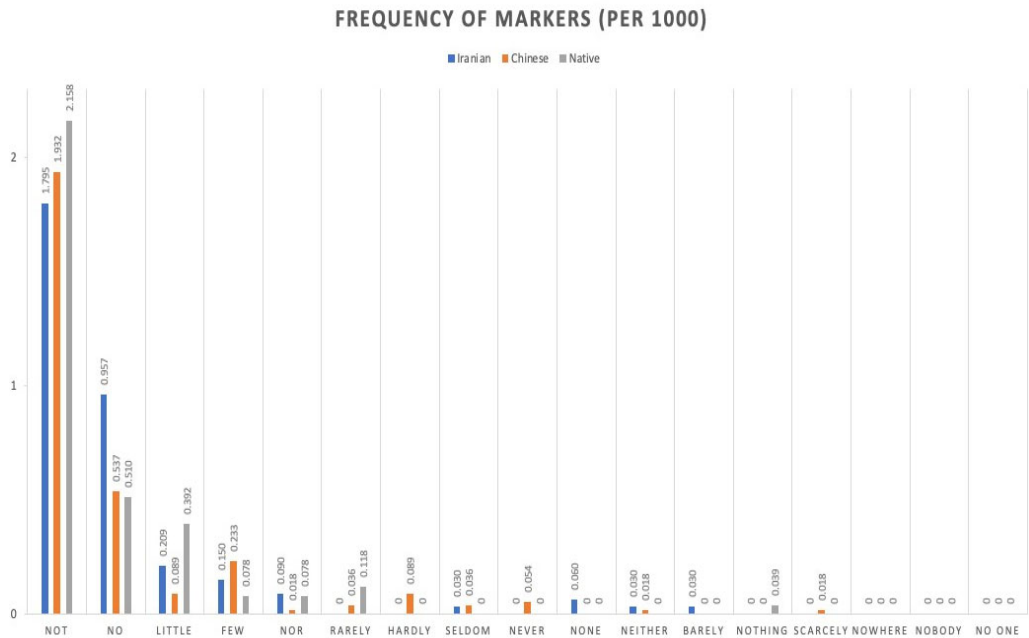


Figure 2. Frequency of negative markers (Per 1000)

Regarding the forms and functions of negation, the results showed that the interactive dimension of negation was more prevalent, constituting 61% of the total functional uses. Interactional use of the markers accounted for 39% of the variance. As shown in Table 5, within the interactive dimension, *consequence* accounted for 42%, followed by *addition* (10%) and *comparison* (9%), whereas within the interactional dimension, *hedging* accounted for 22%, followed by *affect* (11%) and *boosting* (6%). Appendix B contains the log-likelihood test results (LL, p-value, and effect size %DIFF) comparing the three corpora (i.e., Chinese vs. English, Iranian vs. English, and Iranian vs. Chinese) for each of the functions.

Table 5. Percentage of functional use of negation in the corpus

	Iranian			Chinese			English			Total		
	raw	(per 1000)	%	raw	(per 1000)	%	raw	(per 1000)	%	raw	(per 1000)	%
Interactive dimension	74	2.214	66	104	1.8603	61	46	1.805	53	224	5.878783	61
Consequence	56	1.675	50	70	1.25212	41	28	1.099	33	154	4.025923	42
Addition	7	0.209	6	20	0.35775	12	10	0.392	12	37	0.959497	10
Comparison	11	0.329	10	14	0.25042	8	8	0.314	9	33	0.893363	9
Interactional dimension	38	1.137	34	67	1.19846	39	40	1.569	47	145	3.904599	39

Hedging	23	0.688	21	36	0.64395	21	21	0.824	24	80	2.155913	22
Boosting	5	0.150	4	15	0.26831	9	3	0.118	3	23	0.53559	6
Affect	10	0.299	9	16	0.2862	9	16	0.628	19	42	1.213097	11
Sum	112	3.350	100	171	3.05876	100	86	3.374	100	369	9.783382	100

To answer RQ2 (i.e., how do the forms and functions of negation in the thesis and dissertation abstracts of the postgraduate students differ?), the log-likelihood test revealed that only two negative markers—*little* and *no*—were significantly used differently across the L1 backgrounds. Notably, the frequency of “no” in the Iranian corpus (.95 per 1000 words) was approximately twice as high as that in the Chinese (.537 per 1000 words) and English corpora (.653 per 1000 words). A significant difference was also observed in the use of “no” between Iranian and Chinese students (LL = 5.15, $p < .05$, %DIFF = 78.39) as well as between Iranian and English students (LL = 3.95, $p < .05$, %DIFF = 87.69). In the Iranian corpus, “no” was primarily used as a *consequence* marker, indicating the relationship between different elements and signifying the absence of a positive result or a meaningful connection that the student writers seek to convey (e.g., “no” in Example 11).

- (11) *No significant difference* was found between the participants’ oral literacy in L1, prior and after the investigation, nonetheless. (Iranian abstract)

Additionally, we observed a significant difference between English and Chinese student writers in the use of “little” (LL = 7.88, $p < .01$, %DIFF = -77.2). None of the other negation markers were found to be used significantly differently across corpora.

Regarding functions, Iranian students displayed a more pronounced imbalance in the use of negation across the two dimensions compared to English and Chinese students, with the interactive dimension being nearly twice as prevalent as the interactional dimension (Figure 3). Additionally, Iranian students demonstrated a propensity to utilize negative markers more frequently for *comparison* than *addition*, contrasting with English and Chinese students who tended to use more *addition* than *comparison*. For instance, Example 12 exemplifies this tendency by highlighting the influence of L2 glosses on the acquisition of word meanings, rather than the acquisition of word forms or reading comprehension.

- (12) L2 glosses can promote the acquisition of word meanings, **but not** the acquisition of word forms or reading comprehension. (Iranian abstract)

Statistically, there was a significant difference in the use of *affect* between English and Chinese students (LL = 4.81, $p < .05$, %DIFF = -54.41). English students tended to incorporate more affective markers (i.e., personal opinions) and subjective evaluations, emphasizing or highlighting certain aspects. Affective negation plays a role in the author’s evaluation, with an attitude commonly used to offer cautious criticism of or comment on existing knowledge. For instance, in Example 13, the phrase *has not previously been tested experimentally* utilizes

affective negation to highlight the absence of prior experimental tests conducted on this specific aspect, thus underscoring the novelty and significance of their research question.

- (13) Experiment 2 examines social cues and asks whether 2- and 3-year-olds can follow body and head orientation in a referential context. This has *not* previously been tested experimentally. (English abstract)

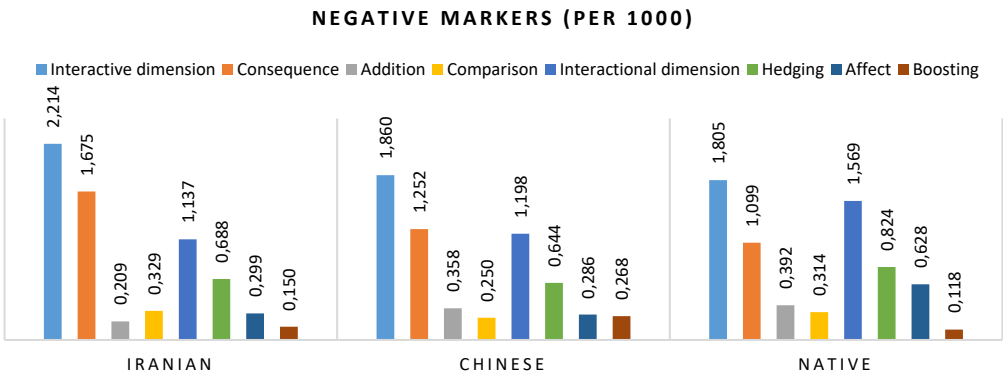


Figure 3. Interactive and Interactional Dimensions of Negation

5. Discussion

The present study explored and compared how postgraduate students from different backgrounds utilized negative markers in their English thesis and dissertation abstracts. Through this exploration, we sought to identify the most common forms and functions of negative markers employed by each group in their abstracts, and ascertain any similarities or differences based on the results.

5.1. What negative markers, forms, and functions of negation are utilized in English thesis and dissertation abstracts by the postgraduate students from the three different L1 backgrounds (i.e., English, Chinese, and Iranian)?

The results revealed 369 instances of negation (3.214, per 1000) in our dataset. This challenges Graetz’s claim that negatives are absent in abstracts and aligns with recent studies (Jiang & Hyland 2022a, 2022b, Li et al. 2023, Sun & Crosthwaite 2022a, 2022b). Among the 17 commonly-used negative markers, “not, no, little, few” were the four most frequently used across all three corpora, which is consistent with previous studies (Jiang & Hyland 2022a, 2022b, Li et al. 2023, Sun & Crosthwaite 2022a). As core negative constructs in English, “not” and “no” are common in formal written discourse and often serve as default options for negation (Biber et al. 2021, Carter et al. 2011), allowing writers to negate alternative propositions and engage readers dialogically (Sun & Jiang 2024). In contrast, “few” and “little” serve as hedging devices creating quasi-negative statements that communicate “reduced intensity and non-prominent pitch” to mitigate

disagreement and maintain social harmony (Larsen-Freeman & Celce-Murcia 2016: 198). Our findings indicated that the postgraduate students in this study were cognizant of this strategy and employed it to enhance their communication with their readers.

Notably, certain commonly used negative markers such as “nowhere, nobody, no one” were conspicuously absent across the corpora. This finding supports earlier research (Jiang & Hyland 2022a) and suggests convergence between L2 postgraduate students with their English counterparts. One possible reason is the shared disciplinary context; they may be aware of English academic writing norms and familiar with shared discoursal patterns in English reading and writing within the global context (Chen & Jun Zhang 2017, Sun & Jiang 2024) and employed this strategy to cultivate solidarity within the research community. Moreover, categorical negatives can be easily contradicted by a single counterexample (Swales, personal communication, November, 11, 2023). Compared with affirmative statement (e.g., “Few researchers support X”), constructing arguments through these negation forms (e.g., “Nobody believes X”) may weaken the persuasiveness and impact of the argument, which is critical to academic writing.

With respect to the forms and functions of negation, interactive uses were more prevalent than interactional uses across the three corpora. This suggests that postgraduate students primarily focused on constructing a persuasive and coherent discourse by assisting readers in navigating texts via enhanced surface textual cohesion (Jiang & Hyland 2022a), rather than expressing personal evaluation. This aligns with the ultimate goal of metadiscourse (Afzaal et al. 2021) to facilitate the creation of a cohesive and well-structured text and provides additional support for earlier studies that reported an overreliance on interactive features in academic writing across various genres and types of metadiscourse markers (Afzaal et al. 2021, Hyland 2004, Jiang & Hyland 2022a, 2022b, Li et al. 2023).

Among the interactive dimensions, *consequence* markers were more prevalent than others, highlighting the significance of asserting cause-effect relationships, effects or outcomes in academic writing (Jiang & Hyland 2022a, Li et al. 2023), including the consequences of specific arguments, experimental results, or theoretical frameworks. On the other hand, within interactional functions, *hedging* was the most commonly used negative marker. It appeared that students used hedging as a rhetorical strategy to create distance from their assertions, thereby protecting themselves from potential criticism while maintaining scholarly caution.

- (14) While some researchers suggest that cooperative learning is an effective instructional strategy, it is worth considering that it may not always lead to positive outcomes in all educational settings... (English abstract)

While such a distancing approach may reduce the writer’s perceived commitment (Hyland 2019), the use of hedging signals L2 pragmatic competence (Chen & Jun Zhang 2017). The writers in this study may not only understand the importance of differentiating between factual information and speculation claims in academic writing but also recognize the necessity of presenting their arguments

logically and persuasively to their intended readership (Abdollahzadeh 2011). Overall, our findings are consistent with those of prior research (Chen & Jun Zhang 2017, Jiang & Hyland 2022a, Li et al. 2023).

5.2. How do the forms and functions of negation in the thesis and dissertation abstracts of the postgraduate students differ?

Consistent with prior research (e.g., Li et al. 2023), which reported more interactional metadiscourse resources used by English student writers, our study revealed that English student writers used more interactional markers than their Chinese and Iranian peers did. The difference may stem from two factors. First, certain interactional markers (e.g., hedging and boosting) are semantically complex (e.g., expressed in more ways or conveying a wider range of meaning), posing acquisition challenges for L2 learners (Hyland 2019). Second, language proficiency plays a crucial role—greater proficiency has been linked with increased use of interactional markers (Hyland 2019, Park & Oh 2018). As L2 writers, especially EFL students, generally have lower English proficiency than their L1 peers do, they tended to employ fewer interactional markers. Furthermore, the results indicated that only one function, namely, *affect*, was significantly different across groups: English student writers tended to use more *affect* compared to their Chinese counterparts, suggesting a tendency to explicitly express attitudes toward propositions and arguments in their writing with a preference for crafting a more explicit persona (see Example 15).

- (15) In this thesis, I argue that learners at this level have figurative resources that have *not* yet been acknowledged. (English abstract)

This inclination may reflect cultural values and rhetorical preferences. Grounded in Aristotelian traditions, Western academic discourse values directness and responsibility in conveying authority and expressing arguments (Abdollahzadeh 2011, Hyland 2019). Conversely, Chinese culture values implicitness and reader responsibility, favoring indirect expressions (Deng & He 2023, Hyland 2019, Paltridge & Starfield 2020). This aligns with the socio-rhetorical framework's view of how different linguistic and cultural contexts shape preferences for either writer-based or reader-based prose (Blagojevic 2004).

Another plausible explanation may stem from broader sociocultural tendencies. Western cultures often emphasize individualism and the free expression of ideas regardless of who the readers are or “how the task is structured” (Crismore et al. 1993: 66), possibly impacting rhetorical strategies in using attitudinal or assertive language in writing (Abdollahzadeh 2011). Moreover, the higher use of *affect* by English students may indicate confidence and a desire to convey epistemic commitment (Hyland 1998, 2019). Nevertheless, other issues, such as limitations in sample size or framework, may also be present, and addressing these issues could aid in detecting differences in the future.

Interestingly, the markers “hardly, scarcely, never” appeared exclusively in the Chinese corpus, although infrequently. While “hardly” and “scarcely” basically serve as hedges, “never” functions as a boosting marker. These markers can serve dual roles: they can decrease authorial certainty or epistemic commitment, and enhance commitment by excluding alternative perspectives (Hu & Cao 2011, Hyland 1998, 2019). Their presence may reflect L1 transfer from the Chinese language, as suggested by prior studies (Hu & Cao 2011, Wang & Jiang 2018). In examples 16–17, Chinese students in the study used “hardly” and “scarcely” to acknowledge research gaps while hedging their own assertions, enabling them to position themselves within the scholarly conversation (Swales 1990, Webber 2004), which represents a tactful way to foster community acceptance and solidarity.

- (16) However, their actual values and the methods and means by which to assess them have *hardly* been touched upon. (Chinese abstract)
- (17) However, the application of FA for process-based academic English writing (AEW) of college students has *scarcely* been studied. (Chinese abstract)

The presence of “*never*” in the Chinese corpus echoes findings from Li et al. (2023), who noted its frequent use in Chinese PhD theses. This finding may highlight the use of “*never*” as a characteristic feature of Chinese academic writing, reflecting distinct discursive practices within the Chinese linguistic context, although overuse of “*never*” risks sounding overly categorical and may hinder reader engagement by excluding alternative views (Li et al. 2023). Nevertheless, the frequency of “*never*” in the Chinese corpus was notably low (0.054 per 1000 words). A larger dataset would help further clarify the discursive significance of this marker, particularly in Chinese academic writing.

Moreover, the frequency of “*no*” in the Iranian corpus appeared to be approximately twice as high as that in the other two corpora, possibly reflecting the linguistic and rhetorical preferences of Iranian students. Primarily used as a consequence marker, “*no*” explicitly signifies the absence of results or associations while building arguments in academic writing (Jiang & Hyland 2022a), with the risk of making overstatements (Herriman 2009). Our findings suggest that Iranian postgraduate students prioritized more emphatic structures and assertive language (compared with using *not*-negations). This also echoes Davoodifar’s (2008) findings on Persian academic writers’ preference for categorical assertions in knowledge-making claims, emphasizing a stable and unalterable reality. However, further research is needed to comprehend these patterns across corpora.

Finally, L1 student writers and Chinese student writers differed significantly in their use of “*little*”. In other words, L1 student writers demonstrated a higher frequency of employing “*little*” compared to their Chinese counterparts. Recognizing the importance of addressing opposing viewpoints and extensive training in presenting and anticipating counterarguments, it is unsurprising that

Anglo-American academic writers employ hedging markers to ensure their scholarly writing reflects an appropriate level of caution, tentativeness, and commitment. By doing so, they aimed to make their positions, arguments, or claims more acceptable and understandable to other members of their discourse communities (Hu & Cao 2011).

6. Conclusion and implications

This study investigated the use of negative markers in thesis and dissertation abstracts written by postgraduate students from English, Chinese, and Iranian backgrounds. The findings indicated that these students employed negation for various functions. The most frequently used negative markers were “not, no, little, few”, while “nowhere, nobody, no one” were noticeably absent. Interactive functions, especially as consequence markers, were more prevalent than interactional functions were, with hedging being the most frequent interactional use. English postgraduate students also used more interactional markers, especially affect-related negation. This pattern likely reflects academic training in Anglophone contexts, which tends to encourage explicit stance-taking, evaluative language, and authorial presence as part of writer-responsible discourse norms. In contrast, Iranian students showed a marked preference for categorical *no*-constructions, signaling a rhetorical tendency toward assertiveness and epistemic certainty. This aligns with Persian academic conventions that often value strong, unambiguous claims as a means of enhancing argumentative force. Chinese students, by comparison, favored a set of negation markers such as *hardly*, *scarcely*, and *never*, using them to subtly highlight research gaps or contrast prior findings while maintaining an overall implicit rhetorical style. This reflects a reader-responsible approach to writing, where indirectness and deference are valued as signs of rhetorical appropriateness.

These findings contribute important new knowledge to the field by illuminating how sociocultural and linguistic backgrounds shape academic writing practices. The inclusion of three linguistically and culturally distinct student populations expands previous research, which was limited to two-group comparisons, and highlights nuanced differences in rhetorical preferences and discursive strategies. Importantly, this study addresses a gap in the literature regarding how negation functions within the high-stakes genre of abstracts. Additionally, the adoption of Jiang and Hyland’s (2022a) interpersonal model of negation provided a richer, more grounded understanding of how students engage with readers, express evaluation, and construct an academic stance. Unlike traditional models focused on surface structure or frequency, this approach reveals how negation supports both textual coherence (interactive) and stance-taking (interactional). By connecting linguistic choices to broader communicative goals, the model offers a more comprehensive account of how students navigate disciplinary expectations and cultural norms in academic discourse.

Pedagogically, the findings suggest the need to incorporate negation more explicitly into academic writing instruction, particularly for L2 postgraduate students. Helping them understand the functional role of negation in academic writing could enhance their use of rhetorical devices, which is linked to language development (Hyland 2004). The study further emphasizes the importance of teaching negation not only as a grammatical feature but also as a rhetorical strategy. While offering valuable insights, the study has certain limitations. To improve generalizations, a larger sample of theses and dissertations is needed. The focus on language-related disciplines may limit cross-disciplinary applicability. Due to limited metadata, factors such as gender and individual writing proficiency could not be accounted for. Future studies with broader samples and richer metadata (e.g., proficiency scores, discipline, gender) are needed to refine our understanding of how negation is influenced by sociocultural and individual variables. Additionally, exploring other sections beyond abstracts would offer a more comprehensive picture of negation use in academic genres.

Availability of data and material

The data are available upon request from the authors.

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CRedit authorship contribution statement

Muhammed Parviz: Conceptualization, Data Collection, Methodology, Writing – Original Draft, Supervision. **Qiusi Zhang:** Data Collection, Data Analysis, Statistical Analysis, Validation, Writing – Review & Editing

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Appendix A

US and UK universities from which masters’ theses and doctoral dissertations were obtained

American Universities	No.	British Universities	No.
Portland State University	20	The University of Edinburgh	21
SIT graduate institute	7	University of Birmingham	10
Purdue University	13	Aston University	9
University of Massachusetts Boston	10	University of Warwick	10

Chinese and Iranian universities from which masters’ theses
and doctoral dissertations were obtained

Chinese Universities	N o.	Iranian Universities	No.
Shanghai Jiao Tong University	21	Tehran University	31
Zhejiang University	12	Tarbiat Modares University	30
Shanghai International Studies University	67	Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz	39

Appendix B

	Chinese vs. English			Iranian vs. English			Iranian vs. Chinese		
	LL	p	%DIFF	LL	p	%DIFF	LL	p	%DIFF
<i>Interactive dimension</i>									
Consequence	0.03	0.86	3.08	1.2	0.27	22.66	1.29	0.26	19
Addition	0.35	0.55	13.98	3.46	0.06	52.49	2.6	0.11	33.79
Comparison	0.06	0.81	-8.82	1.66	0.2	-46.63	1.61	0.2	-41.47
	0.25	0.61	-20.21	0.01	0.92	4.84	0.45	0.5	31.4
<i>Interactional dimension</i>									
Hedging	1.78	0.18	-23.63	2.02	0.15	-27.56	0.07	0.79	-5.15
Boosting	0.79	0.38	-21.84	0.36	0.55	-16.49	0.06	0.8	6.85
Affect	2.02	0.16	127.96	0.11	0.74	27.08	1.4	0.24	-44.25
	4.81	0.03	-54.41	3.5	0.06	-52.35	0.01	0.91	4.53

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Research article / Научная статья

Rhetorical features in academic spoken discourse: The case of attitude and engagement markers

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Abstract

Studying the role of linguistic features in creating bonds between speakers that go beyond simply conveying thoughts helps to highlight how language users express their evaluations and guide others' interpretations. This study focuses on attitude and engagement markers in academic spoken English. It aims to determine whether native and non-native speakers of English differ in their use of attitude and engagement markers across academic fields, levels of interactivity, gender, and academic roles. Data were drawn from the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE) and analysed using Hyland's (2005) taxonomy. The results of the UNIANOVA inferential statistics indicated that the use of these rhetorical markers was conditioned not only by discipline or academic division, but also by level of interactivity, gender, academic role and cultural background. In addition, the results supported the idea that native speakers' research practices within the discourse community influenced the frequency patterns of attitude and engagement markers in their discourse, and that non-native speakers needed to be made aware of adhering to disciplinary standards of discourse. They showed the impact of cultural background as well as situational factors and interpersonal relationships on communication styles and demonstrated that linguistic choices reflect cultural norms and expectations, which is crucial for understanding communication in multicultural academic environments. This study linguistically provides valuable insights into the complexities of language use in academic contexts, highlighting the social and interactive dimensions of communication. It also suggests that awareness of these rhetorical features could help speakers establish within the norms of the discourse community.

Keywords: *academic discourse, rhetorical features, attitude markers, engagement markers, academic spoken English*

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Риторические особенности академического устного дискурса: маркеры отношения и вовлеченности

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Аннотация

Изучение роли языковых особенностей в создании связей между говорящими, которые выходят за рамки простой передачи мыслей, помогает понять, как носители языка выражают свои оценки и направляют интерпретации других. Данное исследование посвящено изучению маркеров отношения и вовлеченности в академическом разговорном английском. Цель исследования – определить, различаются ли носители английского языка как родного и неродного в использовании маркеров отношения и вовлеченности в зависимости от академических областей, уровня интерактивности, пола и академических ролей. Данные были взяты из Мичиганского корпуса академического разговорного английского языка (MICASE) и проанализированы с использованием таксономии Хайленда (Hyland 2005). Результаты инферентной статистики UNIANOVA показали, что использование этих риторических маркеров обусловлено не только дисциплиной или академическим направлением, но также уровнем интерактивности, полом, академической ролью и культурным фоном. Кроме того, результаты подтверждают идею о том, что исследовательская практика носителей языка в рамках дискурсивного сообщества влияет на частотность маркеров отношения и вовлеченности в их дискурсе и что неносителям языка необходимо знать о дисциплинарных стандартах дискурса. Они также продемонстрировали влияние культурного происхождения, а также ситуативных факторов и межличностных отношений на стили общения и показали, что языковые решения отражают культурные нормы и ожидания, что крайне важно для понимания коммуникации в мультикультурной академической среде. Данное исследование предоставляет новую информацию о сложностях использования языка в академических контекстах, обращая внимание на социальные и интерактивные аспекты коммуникации. Предполагается, что знание выявленных риторических особенностей может помочь овладеть нормами конкретного дискурсивного сообщества.

Ключевые слова: академический дискурс, риторические особенности, маркеры отношения, маркеры вовлеченности, академический разговорный английский

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1. Introduction

Recent developments in corpus linguistics have facilitated exploring variation in the use of linguistic features (Poos & Simpson 2002, Farr & O’Keeffe 2002). Studying how linguistic features vary across different contexts, regions, or social groups (Heine et al. 2024, Mohammed & Sanosi 2024) helps researchers gain insights into the diverse ways in which language is used and understood. It also enables them to shed light on different communities’ values, beliefs, and norms and understand the dynamic nature of language and its adaptations to new environments and influences. Linguistic variations analysis (Zbenovich et al. 2024) additionally can result in uncovering how language is used to express individual and group identities, as well as social hierarchies and power dynamics, improving intercultural and interpersonal interactions, and finally leading to more effective communication strategies.

One of the most significant innovations in the field of corpus analysis has been the development of web-based tools and software (Graesser et al. 2004, Graesser & McNamara 2011), and web-based corpora (Michigan Corpus of Upper-level Student Papers) which enabled the researchers to gather large amounts of language data from various sources quickly, to create their visualizations and data representations, and to analyze and process them more efficiently and accurately. These tools can help identify language use patterns, trends, and variations that would be difficult to detect manually.

Interactional metadiscourse features have experienced a dramatic increase in research during the past two decades as one of the linguistic features (Boginskaya 2022, Hyland & Tse 2005, Hyland 2005b). Attitude markers have increasingly been recognized as features that express emotions and help writers or speakers express their attitudes toward their claims and findings. Engagement markers are also fundamental signs of the writer’s /speakers’ recognition of their probable readers. When writing or speaking, the addressers should feel the presence of their audience, incorporate them into their arguments, focus their attention, regard them as discourse participants, and finally lead them to the correct interpretations (Hyland 2005a). Recently, researchers have shown an increased interest in exploring interactional resources of metadiscourse, particularly attitude and engagement markers, because they help text organizers not just convey information but present a reliable picture of themselves while they are acknowledging and negotiating social relations with the audience (Wazni et al. 2023, Solnyshkina et al. 2023, Hyland & Jiang 2023). In addition, the knowledge of attitude and engagement markers reveals the presence of the audience in communications and permits the language users to focus beyond merely presenting factual information and consider how their language creates interpersonal connections in academic contexts.

Despite the rich literature supporting the interactional analysis of academic texts, there has been little concentration on academic spoken English. It seems that only writers needed to convey their attitudes and emotions and engage with their audiences as discourse participants in written academic discourse but not the

speakers in the spoken ones. Therefore, questions have been raised about the use of attitude markers by native and non-native English speakers to express the writer's emotional attitude towards propositions, focusing on feelings rather than evaluating the status or reliability of information in the academic discourse. Moreover, there is increasing concern over the role of engagement markers in their speech to directly address readers, aiming to capture their attention or involve them as active participants in the discourse.

2. Literature review

In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of efforts in literature to theorize attitude and engagement markers of interactional metadiscourse resources. Hyland (2005a) believed that using attitude markers, one of the stance features of interpersonal elements in academic genres, is a significant authorial strategy in argumentative and evaluation-loaded texts to designate evaluation and share this evaluation with the immediate audience in an interactional dimension. He stated that the interactional resources try to involve the audience in the arguments by notifying the audience of the author's views. The authors skillfully comment on the significance, relevance, or difficulty of an idea in the content of a text and pursue the readers' agreement. Fundamentally, attitude markers are words (i.e. agree, surprisingly, significantly, only, important, issue, need) that aid writers to express their evaluation, feeling, and attitudes concerning the discussion in the text. In addition, these markers report to the readers about the author's point of view and his position in the text (Hyland 2005a).

Adel (2006) also described attitude markers as “the importance of something, the interest of something, its appropriateness, and the personal emotional concomitants of linguistic material” (p.174). Hyland and Tse (2005) stated that the writers use attitude markers in their texts to indicate a position and take a stance. They use these markers to formulate evaluation, make readers agree with their points of view, and pull the readers into a scheme of agreement.

On the other hand, engagement markers play an alignment function determining the ways writers or speakers rhetorically distinguish the presence of their readers to actively pull them along with the argument, include them as discourse participants, and guide them to interpretations (Hyland 2005a). He stated that engagement markers help to bring readers into the text, guide readers to do an action or to recognize things in a way determined by the writer, hold the readers' attention and motivate them to consider a vague issue with the writer, and place readers within apparently naturalized boundaries of disciplinary understandings, and permit writers to address readers directly by briefly interrupting the argument to offer a comment on what has been said (Hyland 2005b).

In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of literature on the use of attitude and engagement markers in different types of the texts. Ayad (2022) addressed the increasing interest in how authors engage their readers through Facebook, a prominent platform for users to share personal experiences,

perspectives, comments, and feelings. The researcher used the framework by Hyland (2005a) and investigated the impact of gender and age on the expression of engagement markers in 1500 English-written Facebook status updates by students and academic staff from Egypt. Using AntConc (version 3.5.8), the freeware corpus analytic toolkit, the study found weak distinctions in age and gender regarding the frequency and type of engagement features. Analyzing stance features in academic writing also allowed for a survey of its interactional and persuasive nature. A corpus-based analysis based on the comparison of M.A. and Ph.D. theses/dissertations in applied linguistics written by the same Chinese mainland writers in English revealed developmental progression in stance-making from M.A. to Ph.D. level. It indicated Ph.D. students exhibiting more advanced use of attitude markers and an amplified ability to declare positions and involve readers (Wu & Paltridge 2021).

Previous studies have reported Arabic writers employing more attitude markers and less engagement markers than their English colleagues (Alghazo et al. 2021). The interpersonal aspect of EAP writing, linguistic background, and cultural contexts were also found to be influential on engagement marker's choices in the research article written by Persian writers (Khatibi & Esfandiari 2021). Furthermore, the rhetorical contexts of register, genre, and disciplinary content resulted in more prevalence of stance than engagement markers in presentations from six disciplines (Qiu & Jiang 2021). Moreover, L1 Thai speakers of English indicated more attitude markers in argumentative texts than native English speakers and demonstrated differences in engagement markers, often employing reader references, directives, questions, appeals to shared knowledge, and personal asides. Although the overall stance bundles were higher in Thai, their usage exhibited less variety compared to native English speakers despite similarities in structural patterns (Papangkorn & Phoocharoensil 2021).

Opinion articles analysis from English and Arabic newspapers for stance and engagement markers and their persuasive role in constructing successful arguments demonstrated how their understanding can enhance awareness of intercultural communication in academic and journalistic contexts. It indicated that engagement were less frequently used in Arabic articles and revealed that stance markers were employed significantly more than engagement markers over both kinds of articles, with the most frequently used stance marker being self-mentions (Al-Rickaby 2020). An investigation of stance and engagement markers in argumentative essays written by EFL learners of varying writing quality based on Hyland's (2001) framework indicated no direct correlation between the presence of engagement markers and overall essay quality (Shahriari & Shadloo 2019).

The analyses of attitude markers in different types of texts have also attracted researchers' attention in recent years (Nayernia 2019). Azar and Hashim's (2019) analysis of review articles for identification of frequent attitude markers and their functions exhibited more attitude markers in the conclusion section. It also showed attitudinal adjectives and adverbs being the most common types, used mainly for

evaluating research and giving suggestions. The study of business emails written in English by Spanish and Chinese managers additionally demonstrated that authors with different native languages employed distinct attitude, engagement, and communication strategies based on their language and culture when using English as a common language (Carrió-Pastor 2019). However, the motivation for this study arose from the lack of corpus-based research on academic spoken English. The main objective of this research was to reveal how the use of rhetorical features is influenced by the native language of academic English speakers. Therefore, it quantitatively investigated the use of attitude and engagement markers in the speech provided by the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE) (Simpson et al. 1999) and specifically addressed the following research questions.

1. Are there any differences in the use of attitude and engagement markers across academic divisions in academic spoken English of native and non-native speakers?
2. Is there any variation in the use of attitude and engagement markers across levels of interactivity in academic spoken English of native and non-native speakers?
3. Do gender differences impact the use of attitude and engagement markers in academic spoken English of native and non-native speakers?
4. How do the native and non-native speakers of various academic roles use attitude and engagement markers in their academic spoken English?

3. Methodology

It was necessary to follow a corpus-based analysis, which was both fourfold and quantitative, to examine the use of attitude and engagement markers by two groups of speakers across four academic divisions, five levels of interactivity, two genders, and two academic roles in MICASE. These markers were selected from the taxonomy of metadiscourse features suggested by Hyland (2004), who stated that authorial markers are indicative of the writer’s emotional attitude towards propositions rather than their epistemic stance and express various emotions such as surprise, agreement, importance, obligation, frustration. The language users typically signal these attitude markers metadiscursively using attitude verbs (e.g., agree, prefer), sentence adverbs (e.g., unfortunately, hopefully), and adjectives (e.g., appropriate, logical, remarkable), of which the list can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. List of attitude markers investigated in MICASE

Admittedly, I agree, amazingly, appropriately, correctly, curiously, disappointing, disagree, even, fortunately, have to, hopefully, important, importantly, interest, interestingly, prefer, pleased, must, ought, prefer, remarkable, surprisingly, unfortunate, unfortunately, unusually, understandably

Hyland (2005a) also defined engagement markers as devices that obviously address readers to focus their attention or include them as discourse participants. Table 2 lists the markers considered in this study.

Table 2. List of engagement markers investigated in MICASE

Incidentally, by the way, let us, let’s, ours, our, us, we, you, your, one’s
--

In this study, attitude and engagement markers analysis was performed on native and non-native speakers’ speeches presented by MICASE. The native group examined in this study are American English speakers and non-native speakers have backgrounds in different languages (Table 4). Table 3 shows the language status of the two speakers’ groups, the number of speakers, and the word count of MICASE.

Table 3. Speaker and word counts by speaker categories in MICASE

Speaker category	Language Status	
	Native Speakers	Non-native speakers
Total Speakers	1,449	122
Total Words	1,493,586	201,954
% of total corpus	88%	12%

Table 4 alphabetically shows the first language of non-native speakers in MICASE.

Table 4. The list of the first languages of non-natives speakers in MICASE

Arabic, Armenian, Cantonese, Czech, Dutch, Estonian, Farsi, French, German, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Ibo, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Kannada, Korean, Macedonian, Mandarin, Marathi, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, South African English, Slovak, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Tagalog, Telegu, Thai, Turkish, British English, Ukrainian, Urdu, Ukrainian, Unknown

Table 5 indicates the corpora of each academic division—Biomedical and Health Science, Arts and Humanities, Physical Sciences and Engineering, and Social Sciences and Education—available in MICASE and analyzed in this research.

Table 5. Speaker and word counts by academic division in MICASE

Academic Division	Humanities & Arts	Social Sciences & Education	Biological & Health Sciences	Physical Sciences & Engineering
Speech Events	36	35	32	36
Speakers	349	452	257	314
Words	434,669	420,347	325,456	358,776
% of Total Corpus	26	25	19	21
% Male	56	37	41	55
% Female	44	63	59	45
% Faculty	63	44	55	44
% Students	29	55	42	52

Table 6 indicates different levels of interactivity or discourse modes in MICASE. This study investigated *highly interactive*, *mostly interactive*, *highly monologic*, *mostly monologic*, and *mixed* modes in the use of attitude and engagement markers by native and non-native speakers.

Table 6. *Speaker and word counts by levels of interactivity in MICASE*

PrimaryDiscourseMode	Monologic	Panel	Interactive	Mixed	Totals
Speech Events	61	9	57	25	152
Speakers	472	133	643	323	1,571
Words	554,335	141,505	715,333	284,367	1,695,540
% of Total Corpus	33	8	42	17	
% Male	50	27	46	51	
% Female	50	73	54	49	
% Faculty	84	16	26	54	
% Students	14	76	63	39	

Table 7 indicates the number of female and male speakers and their total words included in MICASE.

Table 7. *Speaker and word counts by speaker categories*

Speaker Category	Gender	
	Male	Female
Total Speakers	729	842
% of Total Words	786,487	909,053
Total Corpus	46%	54%

Table 8 shows the statistics of the academic roles investigated for their engagement and attitude markers in this study.

Table 8. *The academic role of the people in MICASE*

Academic Role		Total Speakers	Total Words	% of Total Corpus
Faculty		160	825,829	49%
Students	Undergraduates	782	368,433	22%
	Graduates	257	373,915	22%

Instruments

The Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE) is readily available without any restrictions at (ENA, August 31, 2025)² (Simpson et al. 1999). It contains transcriptions of almost 1.7 million words of academic spoken English, totaling 200 hours of recordings. The creators of this valuable database aimed to track general changes in speech patterns as individuals gain experience in university culture. While we have extensive knowledge about how academic

² <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/c/corpus/corpus?c=micase;page=mbrowse>

writing develops as students progress, our understanding of changes in spoken language within academic cultures remains limited. MICASE specifically focused on the prevalent speech patterns within the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. The corpus includes speakers from various roles, such as faculty, staff, and students at all academic levels, as shown in Table 8. The creators hope this rich resource will aid developing more effective materials for teaching and testing English as a Second Language and English for Academic Purposes and will help explore the integration of corpus-based approaches into these programs.

Data collection method

This study was based on the data provided by MICASE. To answer the first research question, implying the differences between native and non-native speakers across academic divisions, the researchers filtered the corpus by each academic division and searched the attitude (Table 1) and engagement markers (Table 2) in the speech of native and non-native speakers.

Next, all of the attitude (Table 1) and engagement markers (Table 2) were separately searched for across levels of interactivity, including highly interactive, mostly interactive, highly monologic, mostly monologic, and mixed (Table 6) (addressing the second research question), across genders (Table 7) (the third research question), and across academic roles (Table 8) to find the differences between native and non-native speakers (the last research question).

Data analysis

This study needed the extraction of the frequency counts provided by MICASE into SPSS software for the use of attitude and engagement markers by native and non-native speakers across academic divisions, levels of interactivity, genders, and academic roles. Because the word counts were not equal across the corpora, these frequency counts were reported by per 1000 words. Then, the descriptive statistics, including frequency, mean, and standard deviation, was computed. To indicate the degree of significance or non-significance of the differences between the two groups of speakers across academic divisions, levels of interactivity, genders, and academic roles (independent variables) in attitude and engagement markers (dependent variables) utilization, the researchers used the UNIANOVA (One-way analysis of variance) inferential test.

4. Results

This study intended to investigate a corpus of academic spoken English based on the adopted taxonomy to explore, compare, and contrast native and non-native speakers across academic divisions, levels of interactivity, genders, and academic roles in the use of attitude and engagement markers. To answer each research question, it represented the descriptive statistics, mean and standard deviation, and inferential statistics of UNIANOVA.

To answer the first research question concerning the differences between native and non-native English speakers across academic divisions, this study computed descriptive statistics for 23 attitude markers and 10 engagement markers (Table 9).

Table 9. The descriptive statistics

Academic Divisions	Language status	Attitude markers			Engagement markers		
		Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Biological and Health Sciences	Native speakers	23	56.3	23	872	2210.3	10
	Non-native speakers	1.8	5.40	23	54.2	104.2	10
Humanities and arts	Native speakers	31.2	96.4	23	1187.3	3118.3	10
	Non-native speakers	1.3	3.6	23	28.4	53.5	10
Physical Sciences and Engineering	Native speakers	17.3	49.2	23	1061.5	2740.1	10
	Non-native speakers	1.3	4.4	23	122.7	251.5	10
Social Sciences and Education	Native speakers	39	99.8	23	1144.2	2925.2	10
	Non-native speakers	1.9	5.8	23	97.7	193.3	10

According to Table 9, the native speakers’ means of attitude and engagement markers were higher than the non-natives in all four academic divisions. To examine the degree of significance of these differences between the groups across these academic divisions using the inferential test of UNIANOVA (Table 10) was necessary.

Table 10. The UNIANOVA inferential test

Attitude markers	Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.*	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power
	Corrected Model	37473.125	7	5353.304	1.715	.108	.064	12.002	.690
	Intercept	39414.397	1	39414.397	12.624	.000	.067	12.624	.942
	Academic Divisions	3226.364	3	1075.455	.344	.793	.006	1.033	.116
	Language status	31226.136	1	31226.136	10.002	.002*	.054	10.002	.882
	Academic Divisions Language status	3020.625	3	1006.875	.322	.809	.005	.967	.112
	Error	549491.478	176	3122.111					
	Total	626379.000	184						

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Attitude markers	Corrected Model	37473.125	7	5353.304	1.715	.108	.064	12.002	.690
	Intercept	39414.397	1	39414.397	12.624	.000	.067	12.624	.942
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	Language status	31226.136	1	31226.136	10.002	.002*	.054	10.002	.882
	Academic Divisions Language status	3020.625	3	1006.875	.322	.809	.005	.967	.112
	Error	549491.478	176	3122.111					
	Total	626379.000	184						
Engagement markers	Corrected Model	20260579.600 ^a	7	2894368.514	.752	.629	.068	5.264	.301
	Intercept	26083280.000	1	26083280.000	6.777	.011	.086	6.777	.729
	Academic Divisions	318810.900	3	106270.300	.028	.994	.001	.083	.055
	Language status	19621805.000	1	19621805.000	5.098	.027*	.066	5.098	.606
	Academic Divisions Language status	319963.700	3	106654.567	.028	.994	.001	.083	.055
	Error	277106086.400	72	3848695.644					
	Total	323449946.000	80						
*p≤0.05									

According to Table 10, the difference in the two groups' frequency of attitude and engagement markers in academic divisions was significant ($p=0.002$ and $F=10.002$) and ($p=0.027$ and $F=5.098$), respectively. The value of eta squared was equal to 0.054 for attitude and 0.066 for engagement markers; therefore, the academic divisions accounted for almost 4.5% and 6.6% of the frequency of attitude and engagement markers. In other words, there was a significant difference between the two groups of native and non-native speakers in using the markers across all academic divisions.

To compare the native and non-native groups in the attitude and engagement markers use across levels of interactivity (the second research question), this study used the descriptive (Table 11) and inferential statistics (Table 12).

According to Table 11, the native speakers' means of attitude and engagement markers were higher than those of the non-natives across all of the levels of interactivity. The inferential test of UNIANOVA of which the results were indicated in Table 12 was used to indicate the degree of significance of these differences.

Table 11. The descriptive statistics

Level of interactivity	Language status	Attitude markers			Engagement markers		
		Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Highly interactive	Native speakers	38.2609	110.63339	23	1932.7000	5106.74400	10
	Non-native speakers	.6087	1.61637	23	53.0000	107.68266	10
Highly monologic	Native speakers	11.1739	23.53653	23	306.2000	749.33493	10
	Non-native speakers	.0000	.00000	23	.0000	.00000	10
Mostly monologic	Native speakers	28.5217	80.59995	23	1037.7000	2692.13253	10
	Non-native speakers	2.0000	5.68091	23	70.0000	140.00159	10
Mostly interactive	Native speakers	26.4783	70.37489	23	852.0000	2149.29916	10
	Non-native speakers	2.1304	6.19607	23	95.1000	199.99747	10
Mixed	Native speakers	17.3043	46.08237	23	659.3000	1665.14204	10
	Non-native speakers	1.7391	5.52035	23	97.7000	180.21965	10
	Non-native speakers	1.2957	4.55372	115	63.1600	142.61341	50

Table 12. The UNIANOVA inferential test

	Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig [*]	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power
Attitude markers	Corrected Model	40727.083	9	4525.231	1.710	.088	.065	15.386	.773
	Intercept	37811.309	1	37811.309	14.285	.000	.061	14.285	.964
	Level of interactivity	5295.148	4	1323.787	.500	.736	.009	2.000	.169
	Language status	30555.657	1	30555.657	11.543	.001*	.050	11.543	.923
	Level of interactivity Language status	4876.278	4	1219.070	.461	.765	.008	1.842	.158
	Error	582340.609	220	2647.003					
	Total	660879.000	230						
Engagement markers	Corrected Total	623067.691	229						
	Corrected Model	34880124.410 ^a	9	3875569.379	.936	.498	.086	8.428	.437
	Intercept	26047753.690	1	26047753.690	6.294	.014	.065	6.294	.699
	Level of interactivity	7621294.460	4	1905323.615	.460	.765	.020	1.842	.154
	Language status	19999678.410	1	19999678.410	4.833	.030*	.051	4.833	.585

	Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig [*]	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power
	Level of interactivity Language status	7259151.540	4	1814787.885	.439	.780	.019	1.754	.148
	Error	372453962.900	90	4138377.366					
	Total	433381841.000	100						

*p≤0.01

Based on Table 12, the differences between levels of interactivity by two groups were significant ($p = 0.001$ and $F = 11.543$) and ($p = 0.030$ and $F = 4.833$) for both attitude and engagement markers respectively. The squared value of eta was equal to 0.050 for the former and 0.051 for the latter; therefore, almost 5% and 1.5% of the changes in the frequencies of attitude and engagement markers were accounted for by the levels of interactivity. In other words, native speakers used more attitude and engagement markers than non-native speakers in highly interactive, highly monologic, mostly monologic, mostly interactive, and mixed academic spoken English in MICASE.

To answer the third research question, focusing on differences between native and non-native speakers' use of attitude and engagement markers across two genders in academic spoken English, this study made use of descriptive (Table 13) and inferential statistics (Table 14).

Table 13. The descriptive statistics

Gender	Language status	Attitude markers			Engagement markers		
		Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Female	Native speakers	72.6087	198.88959	23	2717.8000	6996.23043	10
	Non-native speakers	4.0000	10.95445	23	163.9000	317.16398	10
Male	Native speakers	49.0870	128.31138	23	2068.3000	5360.61160	10
	Non-native speakers	2.4783	7.26054	23	151.9000	309.68854	10
	Non-native speakers	3.2391	9.22119	46	157.9000	305.15051	20

According to Table 13, the native speakers' means of attitude and engagement markers were more than the non-natives across the two genders.

According to Table 14, the difference in the frequency of attitude and engagement markers across genders by two groups was significant ($p=0.022$ and $F=5.433$) and ($p=0.048$ and $F=3.566$) respectively. The values of eta squared were equal to 0.058 and 0.067 for attitude and engagement markers; therefore, almost 5.8% and 6.7% of the changes in scores were accounted for by the gender variable. That is, female native speakers significantly employed more attitude and engagement markers than female non-native speakers and male native speakers

significantly employed more attitude and engagement markers than male non-native speakers.

Table 14. The UNIANOVA inferential test

	Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.*	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power
Attitude markers	Corrected Model	82720.783	3	27573.594	1.963	.125	.063	5.888	.490
	Intercept	94464.174	1	94464.174	6.724	.011	.071	6.724	.727
	Gender	3606.261	1	3606.261	.257	.614	.003	.257	.079
	Language status	76331.522	1	76331.522	5.433	.02**	.058	5.433	.635
	Gender Language status	2783.000	1	2783.000	.198	.657	.002	.198	.072
	Error	1236259.043	88	14048.398					
	Total	1413444.000	92						
Engagement markers	Corrected Model	52068926.475 ^a	3	17356308.825	.891	.455	.069	2.674	.225
	Intercept	65073459.025	1	65073459.025	3.342	.076	.085	3.342	.428
	Gender	1093955.625	1	1093955.625	.056	.814	.002	.056	.056
	Language status	49958955.225	1	49958955.225	3.566	.048**	.067	3.566	.505
	Gender Language status	1016015.625	1	1016015.625	.052	.821	.001	.052	.056
	Error	700919071.500	36	19469974.208					
	Total	818061457.000	40						

*p≤0.05

To answer the last research question, investigating the differences between native and non-native speakers' use of attitude and engagement markers across four academic roles, this study made use of the descriptive indicated in Table 15.

Table 15. The descriptive statistics

Academic Role	Language status	Attitude Markers			Engagement markers		
		Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Faculty	Native speakers	62.0435	158.40411	23	2388.8000	6117.91329	10
	Non-native speakers	3.4783	10.70204	23	170.7000	346.27993	10
Graduate	Native speakers	25.3478	66.33428	23	925.3000	2413.25566	10
	Non-native speakers	2.3043	5.61196	23	118.5000	230.47740	10
Other	Native speakers	8.0000	24.27869	23	475.1000	1286.90882	10
	Non-native speakers	.2609	1.05388	23	13.2000	25.81042	10
Undergraduate	Native speakers	26.3478	82.77604	23	998.7000	2544.72435	10
	Non-native speakers	.3913	1.30520	23	13.4000	24.81129	10

According to Table 15, the native speakers' means of attitude and engagement markers were more than that of the non-natives in all four academic roles. However, indication of the degree of significance of these differences needed the inferential test of UNIANOVA (Table 16).

Table 16. The UNIANOVA inferential test

	Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.*	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power
Attitude markers	Corrected Model	73926.000	7	10560.857	2.278	.030	.083	15.949	.830
	Intercept	47232.087	1	47232.087	10.190	.002	.055	10.190	.888
	Academic Role	19939.000	3	6646.333	1.434	.235	.024	4.302	.376
	Language status	38223.391	1	38223.391	8.246	.005*	.045	8.246	.815
	Academic Role Language status	15763.609	3	5254.536	1.134	.337	.019	3.401	.302
	Error	815809.913	176	4635.284					
	Total	936968.000	184						
Engagement markers	Corrected Model	45732325.587 ^a	7	6533189.370	1.014	.429	.090	7.096	.407
	Intercept	32559692.113	1	32559692.113	5.052	.028	.066	5.052	.602
	Academic Role	11957017.838	3	3985672.613	.618	.605	.025	1.855	.173
	Language status	24999598.013	1	24999598.013	3.899	.04*	.069	3.899	.513
	Academic Role Language status	8775709.738	3	2925236.579	.454	.715	.019	1.362	.137
	Error	464028603.300	72	6444841.713					
	Total	542320621.000	80						

*p≤0.05

According to Table 16, the difference in the frequency of attitude and engagement markers across four academic roles by two groups was significant ($p=0.005$ and $F=8.246$; $p=0.041$ and $F=3.899$) for attitude and engagement markers respectively. The values of eta squared were equal to 0.045 and 0.069; therefore, almost 4.5% for attitude and 6.9% for engagement markers of the changes in scores were accounted for by the four academic roles.

In other words, two groups of native speakers and non-native speakers differed in making use of attitude and engagement markers across four academic roles. That is, faculty native speakers significantly employed more attitude and engagement markers than faculty non-native speakers. Graduate native speakers significantly employed more attitude and engagement markers than graduate non-native speakers. Undergraduate native speakers significantly employed more attitude and

engagement markers than undergraduate non-native speakers. Native speakers of other academic roles made use of attitude and engagement markers more than non-native speakers of other academic roles in MICASE.

5. Discussion

The present study firstly intended to determine the differences between native and non-native speakers of English in the use of attitude and engagement markers across academic divisions in the corpus of academic spoken English namely MICASE. The results (Table 10) indicated that native speakers of the soft sciences scored higher in attitude markers because designating evaluation and sharing this evaluation with the immediate audience in an interactive dimension is one of the stance features of interpersonal elements in academic genres and a significant authorial strategy in argumentative and evaluation-loaded texts. By informing the audience of the speakers' opinions, it gives the speakers the opportunity to engage them in the discussion. According to Hyland (2005a), it also helps people comment expertly on the importance, relevance, or difficulty of the ideas of a text and seek the listeners' approval. It can also be linked to native speakers' willingness to express an opinion and take a stand in the soft sciences. In soft sciences more so than in hard sciences, they employ the attitude markers to develop judgments, persuade listeners to agree with their points of view, and draw the audience into a scheme of agreement, according to Hyland and Tse (2005).

Soft sciences tend to use engagement markers more frequently in their academic writing as they try to actively engage their audience, incorporate them as participants in the discourse, and direct their interpretations (Hyland 2005a). Moreover, these sciences are inclined to involve their readers in the speech, guide them to take action or perceive things from the speaker's perspective, maintain their attention, and motivate them to explore ambiguous issues together with the speaker, all while placing them within the disciplinary boundaries. This contrasts with a study by Back (2014), which suggested that non-native speakers tend to display a higher degree of subjectivity and personality by overusing both attitude and engagement markers in research articles.

However, non-native speakers of English not only show lower levels of attitude and engagement markers usage but also use these markers similarly across different academic divisions. This can be attributed to their lack of familiarity with expressing attitudes, involving their audience, addressing objections, and leading them to specific interpretations in English as their second language (Hyland 2005b). This finding aligns with a study by Alghazo et al. (2021), which revealed that Arabic academic writers use engagement markers less frequently than English academic writers.

Hence, this study disagreed with Khatibi and Esfandiari's (2021) suggestion that writers' linguistic background and cultural contexts solely determine rhetorical patterns in their research articles, as non-native group in MICASE did not differentiate their usage of engagement markers across academic divisions. Instead,

we attribute their lower rate of engagement and use of attitude markers to their lack of proficiency or experience in English rhetorical strategies. Overall, native speakers' employment of attitude and engagement markers appears to be influenced by the rhetorical contexts of register, genre, and disciplinary content.

Secondly, the current analysis suggested that native speakers consistently used a higher frequency of attitude and engagement markers compared to non-native speakers across various levels of interactivity (Table 12), such as highly interactive, mostly monologic, mostly interactive, mixed, and highly monologic. This discrepancy can be attributed to the interactive nature of the discourse, allowing native English speakers to skillfully employ listeners' references, directives, questions, appeals to shared knowledge, and personal asides. Additionally, the highly monologic level of interactivity did not require speakers to express their attitudes or actively engage the audience throughout the speech, unlike the interactive level, where both parties need to emphasize importance, constraints, and gaps, compare and contrast ideas, and evaluate the presented points of view to advance the argument.

The study suggested that native speakers in interactive modes tend to highlight positive aspects of negotiation, positively evaluate content, and express assessment and significance more frequently through an increased use of attitude markers. Furthermore, they utilize engagement markers to directly address listeners and provide instructions on actions or preferences. Lastly, this rhetorical strategy is also employed by native speakers to make the audience relate to familiar concepts and involve them by reiterating the truthfulness of the speakers' statements more often than non-native speakers in academic spoken English.

Regarding the third research question, implying the differences between the two groups in the use of attitude and engagement marker across two genders, the results (Table 14) contradicted Ayad's (2022) findings, which suggested weak gender distinctions in the type and frequency of engagement markers. We found that that female native speakers actively engage their listeners in the discourse by anticipating their concerns, expectations, or objections more than males or even non-native speakers. Female native speakers actively involve their listeners in negotiations, interact with them, and prompt responses. On the other hand, male native speakers seem to be less concerned than females about representing dialogues with their audience, making them perform specific cognitive acts, arousing their interest with rhetorical questions, and establishing a relationship with them, leading to a lower use of engagement markers. However, compared to their non-native male counterparts, male native speakers exhibit more concern about these aspects.

The higher rate of attitude markers usage by female native speakers indicates their expression of affective attitudes towards information, conveying emotions like surprise, importance, obligation, and agreement. It also reflects their greater expression of assessment, significance, and position on certain issues to the

listeners, emphasizing the listeners' importance and prompting them to take specific actions in complex academic discussions.

Concerning the fourth research question, focusing on the differences between the native and non-native speakers in the use of attitude and engagement markers across academic roles, this study demonstrated native faculties' increased expression of their evaluations, emotions, and attitudes during their speech discussions (Table 16). They utilized attitude markers to present their viewpoints and positions to the listeners (Hyland 2005a). Native faculties employed these markers more frequently than individuals in other academic roles because they needed to assert a stable position and encourage the audience's agreement, making it challenging to question their views or opinions. Native faculties were more effective in influencing the listeners' responses, urging them to provide solutions or answer questions posed during their presentations, as reflected in their higher use of attitude markers. This enabled the native faculties to emphasize the significance of their research area, validate their expertise, highlight the originality of their perspectives, point out gaps in research development, and evaluate previous works in related fields. As explained by Hyland (2005a), attitude markers help researchers "create a research space for engineers, assert their learned authority and expertise, solicit readers' acceptance of claims, and reach consensus." Furthermore, native faculties employed engagement markers to make the listeners recognize familiar concepts, engage them, and build relationships to ensure their attentiveness and understanding during the presentations.

In contrast to the findings of Wu and Paltridge (2021), which showed progress in stance-making from M.A. theses to Ph.D. dissertations of students, this study indicated that graduate and undergraduate students did not significantly differ in both attitude and engagement markers usage. This finding also contradicted Crosthwaite et al. (2017), who found that professional reports displayed a narrower set of linguistic devices compared to student writers, who tended to use a wider range of stance feature types in discussing both others' and their own personal stance, across whole texts and by section. The study suggests that native faculties established a stronger connection with listeners, essentially instructing them to take specific actions, through their higher use of engagement markers.

The study has some limitations. The scope of this study was limited to two rhetorical features in MICASE and other metadiscourse features or other corpora data were not considered here. In addition, this study presented only a quantitative analysis and a qualitative one was not done to exactly consider the occurrence of these features or control their functions. It does not engage with the age or the intra-analysis of academic divisions in MICASE and was based on four variables and did not consider the speech event type, participant level, or first language of the speakers as other variables determined in MICASE. Another potential problem is that this study only considered two groups of language users, North American English speakers and non-native speakers. It did not focus on the other groups like near-native speakers, native speakers of non-American English, or unknown ones.

6. Conclusion

This research focused on how native and non-native English speakers utilize attitude and engagement markers in academic spoken English. It analyzed MICASE to determine whether these language users differed in their use of these rhetorical features across academic divisions, levels of interactivity, genders, and academic roles.

The results supported the ideas that native speakers' epistemology and research practices within the discourse community influenced the frequency patterns of attitude and engagement markers in their speech and non-native speakers were aware of the need to adhere to disciplinary speaking standards. Additionally, they indicated sensitivity of native speakers to levels of interactivity with their higher use of attitude and engagement markers, indicating a greater awareness of their audience and the purposes of the interaction. The results showed cultural backgrounds influence communication styles; non-native speakers are faced with challenges in expressing interpersonal stances in English; finally, situational factors play a really influential role in communication. This study also highlighted the interpersonal dynamics of academic discourse and how language functions to establish relationships, manage interactions, and convey speaker attitudes. It showcased linguistic choices reflect cultural norms and expectations, which is crucial for understanding communication in diverse academic environments.

A notable finding was the gender-specific use of these markers, with female and male academics employing different strategies to varying extents, resulting in distinct interactive effects. It clarified the influence of gender upon communication styles in academic settings. It highlighted the active role of female speakers in engaging their audience, which can inform future studies on gendered communication. Moreover, faculty native speakers used attitude and engagement markers more frequently to construct persuasive arguments during interactions compared to individuals in other academic roles. This aspect of our study illustrated the effect of authority and expertise on language choices. It empowered our understanding of register, i.e., different speaker roles necessitate varied rhetorical approaches within academic genres.

The study concluded that speakers with different mother tongues, genders, and academic roles used various attitudinal and engagement strategies in English as a lingua franca. While disciplinary community and cultural background played a role in shaping speaker positioning, other factors such as personality differences, stylistic preferences, previous education, and supervisors' feedback also influenced the speakers' use of attitude and engagement markers. Additionally, the research supported the notion that the use of these markers is a form of social commitment, linked to the norms and expectations of specific cultural and professional communities, and influenced by particular settings and contexts.

The findings can be integrated into instructional materials to guide students on effectively using interactive resources such as engagement and attitude markers in their presentations. Students can benefit from being aware of the appropriate use of

attitude and engagement markers to effectively engage with their listeners. The use of engagement markers helps build strong speaker-listener relationships and persuasive arguments, aligning with established rules of English speech.

This research has thrown up many questions in need of further investigation. Further work needs to be done to consider the use of attitude and engagement markers by the people of different first languages, ages, and academic level and across different speech events.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Arkan Alnayily: Conceptualisation, Methodology, Data collection. **Sara Mansouri:** Conceptualisation, Supervision, Writing – original draft, review and editing. **Parivash Esmacili:** Data collection, Data analysis.

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The interplay of conceptual metaphors and evaluation in press reports on the AUKUS agreement

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Abstract

The linguistic literature has shown that metaphor provokes evaluative meanings, but it is unclear how different types of metaphor, as well as different genres of discourse influence the realization of such meanings. To partially answer this question, our study aims to investigate the relationship between conceptual metaphors and evaluation in Australian broadsheet and tabloid articles on the AUKUS alliance, the trilateral security partnership between Australia, the U.K., and the U.S. The data comprise all Australian news and opinion articles gathered from Nexis Uni through the University of Granada’s e-library between September 15, 2021, and October 31, 2021. The study employs a parameter-based approach to evaluation and its methodology involves the annotation of metaphors according to the parameters of creativity/conventionality, as well as the examination of their source and target domains. The quantitative analysis indicates that there is a connection between the types of metaphors (conventional and creative) and the characteristics of their evaluation (polarity and explicitness), which are affected by the genre of the corpus and the topic of the content where the metaphors appear. Additionally, the corpus shows that negative emotivity is a prevalent evaluative component of metaphors in both newspapers. The qualitative analysis demonstrates that conceptualizations of metaphors alternate between biological and mechanistic images of the world, with the dominant metaphor domains being almost unilaterally used in both broadsheets and tabloids. The implications of the study suggest that the complex relationship between metaphor and evaluation should be interpreted in light of the text’s genre and topic rather than separately.

Keywords: *metaphor, conventional metaphor, creative metaphor, evaluation, genre, AUKUS*



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Взаимодействие концептуальных метафор и оценок в пресс-релизах о соглашении AUKUS

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Аннотация

Известно, что метафоры обладают оценочными значениями, но остается невыясненным, как различные типы метафор, а также различные жанры дискурса влияют на формирование этих значений. Чтобы частично ответить на этот вопрос, наше исследование нацелено на выявление связи между концептуальными метафорами и оценкой в статьях широкоформатных австралийских газет и таблоидов, посвященных альянсу AUKUS – трехстороннему пакту о партнерстве в области безопасности между Австралией, Великобританией и США. Данные включают австралийские новостные и публицистические статьи, собранные из Nexis Uni через электронную библиотеку Университета Гранады в период с 15 сентября 2021 года по 31 октября 2021 года. В исследовании используется параметрический подход к оценке. Методология включает аннотацию метафор в соответствии с параметрами креативности/конвенциональности, а также изучение их исходных и целевых областей. Количественный анализ выявил связь между типами метафор (конвенциональными и креативными) и характеристиками их оценки (полярностью и эксплицитностью), которые зависят от жанра корпуса и тематики контента, в котором используются метафоры. Кроме того, результаты свидетельствуют о том, что негативная эмотивность является преобладающим оценочным компонентом метафор в обоих типах газет. Качественный анализ показал, что концептуализации метафор чередуются между биологическими и механистическими образами мира, при этом доминирующие области метафор практически односторонне используются как в широкоформатных изданиях, так и в таблоидах. Выводы исследования показывают, что сложные отношения между метафорой и оценкой следует интерпретировать одновременно в свете жанра и темы текста, а не по отдельности.

Ключевые слова: метафора, конвенциональная метафора, креативная метафора, оценка, жанр, AUKUS

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1. Introduction

Human cognition and communication rely heavily on metaphorical imagery, which holds true in political discussions and international relations as much as in any other area of study. Researchers in the field of international relations have identified metaphors as essential to formulating their explanatory frameworks. For instance, the contemporary framework of international relations incorporates representations that, as Marks (2011: 69–79) points out, depend on both biological/evolutionary conceptualizations (such as ‘community of states’) and conceptualizations of construction (for example, ‘the politics of scale’). In illustration of the former, international norms have been likened to “genes”, an image which emphasizes the inevitability or natural order of how things should be, while in the latter, mechanistic metaphors which focus on “construction” images help to highlight the role of actors; political agents are represented as the creators or builders, “constructing” international relations. Within the context of the aforementioned two metaphor paradigms, the present study explores how metaphor frames coverage of the AUKUS agreement, which is the trilateral security collaboration involving Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Analyzing newspaper genres and media in general is vital for comprehending international relations since public perception, shaped by media representations of other nations, impacts foreign policy. Furthermore, the influence of a specific media format is filtered through the ‘logics’ of that format (Kluever 2002: 499).

This paper explores two lines of research: (1) the connection between metaphor and evaluation in news coverage of the AUKUS agreement, and (2) the extent to which coverage of AUKUS in broadsheet and tabloid newspapers aligns or differs concerning the conceptual and evaluative potentials of metaphorical domains. By addressing the first issue, we add to the broader discourse on the link between metaphor and evaluation, while recognizing prior research in this field that presents somewhat contradictory results. The assertion of Systemic Functional Linguistics that metaphors inherently “provoke” attitudinal meanings underpins this study. This assumption is contested by a later examination by Fuoli et al. (2021), which indicates that incorporating the distinction between creative and conventional metaphors into the Appraisal framework (Martin & White 2005) may provide “a more refined account” of metaphors’ evaluative roles (Fuoli 2021: 100). Hidalgo-Downing and Pérez-Sobrino (2024: 211) suggest considering metaphoricity as a metric of evaluation that will enable researchers to ascertain how often and where evaluative metaphors appear across various discourse genres. The exploration of the association between particular types of metaphors (both creative and conventional) and the evaluative polarity present in newspaper discourse is a topic that has not been explored previously, even though it is proposed that this relationship may differ based on the genre of the text and needs to be studied across diverse discourse modalities (Fuoli et al. 2021: 100).

Our study is divided into two segments. The first segment involves a quantitative examination, while the second focuses on a qualitative exploration of

metaphors. The quantitative portion addresses the following two inquiries with theoretical implications: (1) What is the relationship between metaphors and evaluation in general, particularly concerning the creativity of metaphors on one side, and the polarity and explicitness of evaluation on the other side in broadsheets and tabloids on AUKUS? (2) What are the primary evaluative parameters in both categories of newspapers? We expect that the evaluative role of metaphors in tabloids and broadsheets will differ, and that certain types of metaphors may be more prevalent in one format than the other, based on earlier research by Bednarek (2006) which indicated distinct evaluative styles between tabloids and broadsheets. This research will be discussed further in Section 2.4. The qualitative analysis addresses two additional questions that have practical implications and relate to the study of metaphors in international relations: (1) What specific domains and their evaluative parameters are linked to the coverage of AUKUS in broadsheets and tabloids? (2) How do they align with the conceptual framework of metaphors in international relations?

To the best of our knowledge, the set of questions about metaphor and evaluation has never been used in the broadsheet and tabloid genres, and as a result, it contributes to the broader conversation about their relationship. The qualitative portion of the study focuses on the metaphor domains that draw attention to the news regarding AUKUS in the data that is currently available, thereby advancing the study of metaphors in international relations.

The article is structured as follows: The following section, Section 2, provides some basic information on the AUKUS agreement and the role of metaphors in international relations. This section also describes the relevant metaphor framework and evaluative parameters used in the analysis, and it reviews the literature on the relationship between metaphors and evaluation. Section 3 provides an introduction to our dataset and the annotation process concerning metaphors and evaluation. In Section 4, we provide the results and findings from our quantitative and qualitative analyses, and explore these findings in greater detail. The last section concludes the article by documenting the interplay between metaphor and evaluative devices in the news press on the AUKUS pact.

2. Background

This section gives some background on the AUKUS agreement and discusses the prior research on metaphors in international relations. It explains the evaluation framework we will employ in our analysis, and explores the connection between metaphors and evaluation.

2.1. AUKUS Agreement

In September 2021, the leaders of Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States announced an enhanced trilateral security partnership known as “AUKUS.” The aim of this alliance is to advance research and development for

emerging capabilities essential for maintaining a competitive edge, reinforcing defense connections, and increasing the presence of the three nations in the Indo-Pacific. AUKUS is largely interpreted as a reaction to China's significant naval expansions in the South China Sea and its growing influence in regions bordering the Indian Ocean, including Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East (Barnes & Makinda 2022: 1307). In this context, Australia abruptly canceled its \$90 billion submarine agreement with the French partially state-owned Laval Group, instigating the most profound diplomatic crisis with France since its nuclear testing in the Pacific (Staunton & Day 2002: 1).

According to Barnes and Makinda (2022: 1302), China in particular has spoken out against AUKUS, comparing it to an "Asia-Pacific NATO replica" that jeopardizes its influence in the region.

A concise overview of the events listed above is particularly important for the qualitative part of our research (see Section 4.2), which demonstrates how they are reflected in the source and target domains of metaphors and how they connect to different evaluation criteria.

2.2. Metaphorical framework in the context of international relations

We analyze how AUKUS is conceptualized in English-speaking broadsheets and tabloids through the lens of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT, Lakoff & Johnson 1980), a widely used framework in metaphor research that provides a cognitive perspective on metaphor as a means of representing our perceptions and thoughts about the world. This framework posits that metaphors allow us to understand one concept (including more abstract or intricate elements of our experience) by relating it to another, typically from a more concrete realm (Steen et al. 2010, Fuoli et al. 2021, Kalinin & Ignatenko 2024, Zibin & Solopova 2024). Since its inception, this theory has been applied across various contexts to highlight the tendency to map phenomena, events, or beliefs into existing or conventionalized domains. In critical discourse analyses, CMT can elucidate how metaphorical language and thought may shape opinions, positions, and decision-making, thereby "mobilizing individuals, expressing interests, promoting viewpoints, or generating support" (Marks 2018: 7). As stated by Chilton (1995), the traditional conceptual metaphor framework has been repeatedly utilized in numerous social discourse contexts, reflecting its presence across multiple areas of human activity. For example, Chilton (ibid: 190: 203, 324–384) examines the 'conceptual framing' during the Cold War, from George Kennan's X-article in *Foreign Affairs* (1947) to Mikhail Gorbachev's 'common European house' in the late 1980s and George Bush's 'new world order' in 1990. Marks' *International Relations Theory* (2011, 2018) argues that metaphorical interpretations of issues can profoundly affect deterrence and policy responses. Quoting Judge (1989: 3–4), he gives multiple examples, such as how policy challenges are frequently framed using "geometrical principles (e.g. 'spheres' of influence, policy 'levels'), tools (e.g., 'umbrella,' 'shields,' 'tridents'), or sports (e.g., 'keeping the ball in play,' 'scoring points')."

Both politicians and the media depend on established metaphors to propose solutions by utilizing these metaphors. Recent significant studies on metaphor in international relations include an exploration of the heightened and emotional rhetoric around Brexit (Charteris-Black 2019) and Charteris-Black's (2021) and Musolff's (2023) analyses of international discourse related to COVID-19. The accumulation of conceptual metaphors in International Relations underpins the narratives on which International Relations theories are built (Marks 2018). Our analysis employs Marks' International Relations Theory (2011, 2018), which differentiates between biological and mechanical metaphors. Unlike mechanical metaphors that imply a linear cause-and-effect theory with created and static structures, biological metaphors suggest a mode of causation that encompasses evolution and "life cycle" transformation (Marks 2018: 91–97).

Finally, constructivist theory, based on mechanical metaphors, frames "problems" in international relations and puts forth "solutions." For instance, the metaphor of "anarchy" signifies the fundamental dilemma of international relations, while the metaphor of "security" represents the framing of a response to anarchy (ibid: 30). To expand on the biological metaphor, political systems are metaphorically likened to living organisms that resemble healthy beings vulnerable to illness or infection. Moreover, under the contemporary viewpoint, political systems may undergo evolutionary changes manifested as punctuated shifts (ibid: 58, 77–78).

2.3. Parameter-based approach to evaluation

Evaluation is an integral aspect of human behavior: as we engage with our surroundings, we classify and assess what we encounter. This research utilizes the parameter-based evaluation approach (Bednarek 2006), which synthesizes earlier methods of expressing opinions in written texts (Lemke 1992, Hunston 1994, Biber & Finegan 1989). According to Bednarek (2006: 44), the versatility of this framework, where various linguistic expressions can evaluate across two or more parameters and can be combined to articulate intricate evaluations, provides it with greater adaptability and an edge over alternative concepts such as stance (Biber & Finegan 1989) and appraisal (Martin & White 2005). Bednarek (2006: 3) highlights a significant distinction between what can be termed core and peripheral evaluative parameters.

The core evaluative parameters, as she describes, relate to the evaluative qualities assigned to entities, situations, or propositions being assessed. They can be categorized as follows: comprehensibility, emotivity, expectedness, importance, reliability, and possibility/necessity. Evaluations of comprehensibility pertain to how writers assess entities, situations, or propositions as either within or beyond the limits of human comprehension (Bednarek 2006: 45). The emotivity parameter focuses on how the writer evaluates aspects of events as positive or negative, which reflects writer approval or disapproval. The expectedness parameter involves the writer's assessments of aspects of the world as either expected or unexpected

(Bednarek 2006: 48), while reliability extends this concept to include both the writer's evaluation of a proposition's accuracy and their evaluation of the authenticity of specific entities (Bednarek 2006: 52). Importance evaluations concern how the speaker judges the significance, relevance, and importance of the world. Lastly, the possibility/necessity parameter addresses what has commonly been referred to as deontic or dynamic modality, focusing on the writer's assessment of what is (not) necessary or (not) possible (Bednarek 2006: 50).

Peripheral evaluative parameters do not suggest the same qualitative evaluation of entities, situations, or propositions as core evaluative parameters do. However, they can relate to evaluation in various ways. For instance, the evidentiality parameter pertains to writers' assessments of the 'evidence' backing their knowledge (Bednarek 2006: 53). Evidentiality encompasses six distinct dimensions: hearsay, mindsay, perception, general knowledge, (lack of) proof, and unspecified. The second peripheral evaluative parameter, mental state, references the writer's evaluations of the mental states of other social actors (Bednarek 2006: 56). Subvalues associated with this parameter include the different types of mental states actors may experience: beliefs, emotions, expectations, knowledge, and wishes/intentions. The third parameter, evaluations of style, examines the writer's assessment of language usage, such as comments on how information is conveyed or evaluations of the kind of language that is used (Bednarek 2006: 56–57).

Bednarek's (2006: 194) extensive research on English newspaper discourse highlights that the evaluative style of broadsheet newspapers tends to favor mitigation and negation, while tabloid newspapers are characterized by emotivity and unexpectedness, along with frequent references to emotions. Furthermore, Bednarek's analysis revealed that tabloids demonstrate a tendency towards clustered evaluations, heightened intensity and explicitness of evaluation, frequent negative emotivity evaluations, and a general preference for exaggeration¹. We will address in the Conclusion how metaphors with evaluative functions align with this framework.

2.4. Previous research on the relationship between metaphor and evaluation

Numerous studies have investigated the connection between metaphor and evaluation from various viewpoints. In this section, we highlight only a select number of authors pertinent to our research, many of whom have already been noted in Fuoli et al. (2021: 80–83).

In 2006, Musolff incorporated the concept of 'scenarios' into the discussion surrounding the EU. This term 'scenario' interprets source domains as small narratives that convey evaluative significance. More recently, Littlemore et al. (2023) examined the relationship between metaphor, evaluation, and creativity within workplace conversations. In the discipline of Systemic Functional Linguistics, metaphor is viewed as a method for covertly expressing evaluative

¹ See also Zappettini et al. (2021).

meanings as opposed to overtly (Martin & White 2005, Liu 2018). However, Simon-Vandenberg et al. (2003) provide several examples of conventional metaphorical phrases used to describe verbal actions that contain explicit evaluative meanings. Hidalgo-Downing et al. (2024) argue that typical instances of evaluative metaphors are generally not highly conventionalized, which leads to a greater level of incongruity between the source and target domains or involves an element of dehumanization. They enrich the discussion regarding the relationship between evaluation and metaphor from a methodological standpoint by introducing an annotation scheme designed to identify and annotate evaluative stance and evaluative metaphors within a corpus of four English genres: political discourse, newspaper discourse, scientific popularization in newspapers, and online forums.

Further theoretical support for the relationship between metaphor and evaluation arises from the common use of metaphor to express emotion. Fainsilber and Ortony (1987) note that people tend to produce a greater number of metaphors, especially creative ones, when describing highly emotional experiences. Bednarek (2009) provides instances of conventionalized metaphorical phrases that explicitly express feelings. Conversely, Semino (2008: 31) posits that while metaphor is commonly employed to articulate attitudes and emotions, it also serves several non-evaluative purposes, including persuasion, reasoning, explanation, theorizing, entertainment, and organizing discourse.

Regarding polarity, metaphors are more prone to arise from negative emotional experiences than positive ones, especially within creative metaphors (Sakamoto & Utsumi 2014). Research has revealed a human inclination to assign greater importance to negative entities (Rozin & Royzman 2001, Taboada et al. 2017), with individuals being more attentive to and retaining recollections of adverse experiences and figures rather than beneficial ones. Therefore, as stated by Fuoli et al. (2021: 83), the drive to formulate creative metaphors may partly stem from the need to convey negative evaluations, reflecting the interpersonal roles of both metaphor and evaluation.

Fuoli et al. (2021) discovered that in their corpus of movie reviews, which consisted of 60,000 words, metaphorical language was used for evaluative purposes in about fifty percent of the cases. They noted that creative metaphors tended to fulfill an evaluative role more often than conventional metaphors, a finding the authors connect to the ability of creative metaphors to express evaluations in a vivid manner. In terms of polarity, metaphorical evaluations are significantly more negative than non-metaphorical evaluations, with both creative and conventional metaphors displaying similar patterns. Fuoli et al. (2021) connect this finding to the movie review genre, suggesting that the events evaluated lack the emotional intensity found in more impactful utterings, such as spoken testimonies, which yield a clear association between negative emotions and creative metaphor. For these reasons, both the authors and we believe it is valuable to explore the intricate relationship between metaphor and evaluation in other contexts. The language of newspapers serves as a prime example due to the significant presence of both conventional and creative metaphors in that discourse.

3. Data and methods

3.1. Corpus

To compile our AUKUS corpus from the Australian media (refer to Tables 1a and 1b), we utilized Nexis Uni via the University of Granada’s e-library². This digital platform offers databases for various research areas, including computer-assisted legal studies, newspaper searches, and consumer information. Prior to this, we employed Google Trends (<https://trends.google.com/trends/>), a site that evaluates the most prevalent online search queries, to pinpoint the time frame during which AUKUS garnered significant attention in the Australian media, revealing this period to be from September 15, 2021, to October 31, 2021. Subsequently, we gathered all news and opinion pieces from the Australian media for that timeframe using the search term AUKUS. The articles were sourced from 7 broadsheet and 8 tabloid newspapers. We chose 14 articles from the broadsheet category (two articles from each broadsheet publication) and included every article from the tabloid category to ensure a comparable word count across each corpus (summarized below).

Table 1a. AUKUS Corpus – Broadsheets

Country	Newspaper	Code	No. texts	No. tokens
Australia	Brisbane Times	AUS_BT	2	1.944
	The Sydney Morning Herald-online	AUS_SMHO	2	2.096
	AFR Online	AUS_AFRO	2	3.487
	The Australian	AUS_AU	2	3.137
	The Age	AUS_AG	2	4.747
	Canberra Times	AUS_CT	2	1.461
	WA Today	AUS_WAT	2	1.221
Total			14	18.093

Table 1b. AUKUS Corpus – Tabloids

Country	Newspaper	Code	No. texts	No. tokens
Australia	The Daily Telegraph	AUS_DT	8	5.395
	Herald Sun	AUS_HS	3	1.816
	The Courier Mail	AUS_CM	3	1.023
	The Advertiser (Australia)	AUS_AD	4	2.213
	Newcastle Herald	AUS_NH	1	718
	Hobart Mercury (Australia)	AUS_HM	2	1.797
	The West Australian (Perth)	AUS_WAP	1	779
	The Northern Territory News	AUS_NT	3	2.086
			25	15.827

² For more detailed information about this corpus, see the work by Trnavac and Hidalgo Tenorio (2024).

3.2. Annotation process

The annotation process contained two separate stages: annotation of metaphors and annotation of evaluation. Both procedures were performed with O'Donnell's (2016) UAM corpus tool, specialized software for qualitative and quantitative data analysis.

3.2.1. Metaphor identification

We took the decision to identify metaphors in our corpus based on Fuoli et al.'s (2021) detailed annotation manual. Based on their manual, a metaphor is defined as the following: "A string of one or more words that describes one entity in terms of another, unrelated entity by means of comparison" (Fuoli et al. 2021: 13). Below is an example of a metaphorical expression from our corpora, whereby China is dehumanized, and implicitly compared to a domesticated animal, in its interest in the West's discarded resources:

- (1) ...when large emitters such as China continue to increase emissions and **lap up** the industries and jobs we discard (AUS_DT_01102021).

As shown in Fuoli et al. (2021), metaphors were identified based on both Cameron's (2003) vehicle identification process and Steen and Pragglejaz Group (2007) metaphor identification process (MIP), combining the best elements of both. Entire texts were read to establish the general meaning and metaphors were identified based on meaning units at the level of the phrase within its context. In the same vein as Fuoli et al. (2021), we did not consider historically older words as the most basic and allowed for metaphors that switched word class (see Fuoli et al. 2021: 14). Similarly, if a word had a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts, we determined if there was a contrast between the meanings and whether our example could be understood in comparison to it. Whilst some metaphors were single lexical items, others were larger phrases. If there were two distinct ideas in a single phrase, both were tagged separately as metaphors. Similarly, if a metaphor was extended across a phrase, this was also tagged as two instances as in (2).

- (2) There is also concern the new pact further **raises the temperature** in the already **hotly contested** South China Sea region (AUS_AFRO_26092021).

Unlike Fuoli et al. (2021), we did not include phrases that were signalled with *like* or *as*, deciding that these were strictly similes, which it can be argued, are processed differently, and would be considered explicit.

3.2.2. Identification of creative metaphors

As we wanted to explore if there was a difference in the evaluative function of creative versus conventional metaphors, we had to design criteria for creative examples. Here, we again turned to Fuoli et al. (2021: 88–90) and followed their procedure in which creative use of metaphor "encompasses both novel metaphor

per se and the creative manipulations of conventional metaphor” (ibid 77). We also added some new types of creative metaphor that were not found in their data. Below are some specific examples:

a. Combining two conventional metaphors in a novel way:

- (3) Also, these days the party has a **fair sprinkling** of **bomb-throwers** in its ranks who do what they like (AUS_CT_02102021).

Here, *fair sprinkling* and *bomb-throwers* are two separate metaphors. Their juxtaposition is creative and conjures an image of rebels (hyperbolically described as bomb-throwers) as something to be served up on a plate.

b. A combination of tropes, for instance metaphor and metonymy:

- (4) We have **glued ourselves** (METAPHOR) to **the hip of the United States** (METONYMY) and defined our security interests, our national interests, as being exactly the same as those of the United States when it comes to China (AUS_CT_14102021).

Metaphor, metonymy, irony, and hyperbole are tropes that can combine for a stronger rhetoric effect (see Burgers et al. 2016) and choosing to identify them as creative metaphors allowed us to acknowledge their combinations.

c. Combining metaphor with semantic association:

- (5) **Submarine** muddle never **far from the surface**.

In (5), the metaphor creates a semantic association across the phrase with the submarine and its literal location embodying the disagreement over the contract.

d. What Hoey (2005) terms benign ambiguity; whereby the metaphor works on both a literal and metaphorical level:

- (6) ASEAN states were “already very worried about the China-US rivalry **playing out** in their **backyard**” (AUS_AU_21092021).

In (6), *playing out* refers to the development of the rivalry but also shares a collocate with backyard, conjuring an image of children playing.

3.2.3. Identification of metaphorical domains

As well as tagging the metaphors based on creativity/conventionality, we also tagged them based on source and target domains. For that, we drew on the online corpus software Wmatrix (Rayson 2008, ENA, August 30, 2025³) and its existing semantic categories, where suitable, and amended where necessary. The analysis identified evidence of a range of metaphorical domains which foregrounded the most relevant aspects on the AUKUS agreement. Below is a list of these domains.

³ <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/wmatrix/>

Table 2. Metaphorical domains

Semantic categories of target domains	Target domains	Semantic categories of source domains	Source domains
A11 Importance	POWER, IMPORTANCE, DEFEAT, LOSS OF POWER	B1 Anatomy and physiology	BODY
B2 Health and disease	COVID	L1 Life and living things	NATURE, ANIMALS
E1 Emotional actions, states and processes	EMOTION, DESIRE	A1.1.2 – Fixing and mending	BINDING, TOOL, PROP, CONSTRUCTION, REPAIR, BUILD, CLOTHING
X1 Psychological actions, states and processes	TRUST, BEHAVIOR, DEPENDENCY, DISTRUST, UNCERTAINTY, AGREEMENT, DISAGREEMENT	A1.1.2 Damaging and destroying	PHYSICAL FORCE, BREAKAGE
S5 Groups and affiliation	GOVERNMENT, COUNTRY, ORGANISATION, SOLIDARITY, UNITY	K1 Entertainment generally	GAMES, SPORTS, CHILDREN, MUSIC, GIFT, FESTIVITY
G1 Government and politics	IMMIGRANTS	O4.6 + Temperature: Hot / on fire	PRESSURE, HEAT, FIRE
G3 Warfare, defence and the army; weapons	SUBMARINES, AIRCRAFT, AIRFIELDS	G3 Warfare, defence and the army; weapons	WAR, ARMY
G2 Crime, law and order	MURDER RATES	S3 Relationship	ROMANTIC PARTNER
11.2+Spending and money loss	SPENDING	S9 Religion and the supernatural	RELIGION, MAGIC, RITUAL
13Work and employment	JOBS, CAREER	W2 Light	VISIBILITY
14 Industry	RISKS, DEAL/CONTRACT, BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY, ECONOMIC PRESSURE	W3 Geographical terms	WATER, ICE
N3.5 Measurement: weight	AMOUNT, VOLUME	M6 Location and direction	SPATIAL, DIRECTION PATH/JOURNEY
Q2 Speech	PHONE CALL	I1. Money	COST, SALESMAN, SHOP, COMMERCE
Q4 The media	HEADLINE	O2 Objects generally	OBJECT
T1 Time	TIME, PAST, FUTURE, PROSPECTS	O4 Physical attributes	WEIGHT, STRENGTH, FITNESS, UGLY, BEAUTY, COLOUR, FRAGILITY, TASTE, SENSE, TEXTURE, APPEARANCE, PARTS PIECES, SOUND, STAINED

Semantic categories of target domains	Target domains	Semantic categories of source domains	Source domains
X2 Mental actions and processes	MISTAKES, COMPLICATION, PROBLEM, SOLUTION, ABILITY, MIND, STRATEGY, PROPOSITION, OPINION, IDEA	F3 + Smoking and drugs abuse	DRUG
		X1 Psychological Actions, States and Processes	SAFE
		M7 Places	HOME
		Y1 Science and technology in general	MACHINE

Assigning categories to each source and target was not an unproblematic task; we often found metaphors that straddled two domains, for instance JOURNEY and SPATIAL often overlapped and in the example (7) below, the source could be attributed to either PHYSICAL FORCE or to CONSTRUCTION:

- (7) ...state ALP leader Peter Malinauskas and frontbencher Tom Koutsantonis have **bluntly hammered home** questions about jobs for South Australia (AUS_AD_25092021).

In these cases, we agreed on the most salient image and the overall understanding of the metaphor. So, in (7), the overall message is that the questions were forced upon their audience, and thus the image of physical force, rather than construction, is more suitable.

3.2.4. Identification of evaluation

In this study, we have a very broad understanding of evaluation. Hidalgo-Downing and Pérez-Sobrino (2024: 495–507) noted that evaluative nouns and verbs, like “war” or “peace,” can serve two purposes at once: they can categorize or classify an entity or event while also expressing an attitude toward it. This is known as both descriptive and moral evaluation (see Alba-Juez & Thompson 2014). Sometimes this can be a major problem for evaluation annotation when stance-taking, a discourse-pragmatic phenomenon, needs to be distinguished from defining positive or negative word connotation, a semantic phenomenon (Hidalgo-Downing & Pérez-Sobrino 2024: 211). Therefore, we decided to include both moral and descriptive evaluations in our annotation scheme.

The annotation of the evaluative expressions involved two tasks; firstly, the identification of the expressions and, secondly, their classification into parameter-based (sub)categories. In the initial phase of the procedure, we excluded other components of the syntactic units to which evaluative items belong and limited the

segments to evaluative lexical items. In (8), for example, only the adjective *good* was coded:

(8) I think that's a **good** thing (AUS_AU_08102021).

The following evaluative parameters were excluded from our annotation:

- The parameter of possibility/necessity because it deals with what is sometimes called objective modality the instances of which do not appear to be equally evaluative as instances of other core parameters;
- The style parameter that marks the speaker's own discourse, as well as most of the instances of evidentiality, since in this study we are interested only in positively and negatively oriented 'attitudinal' meanings⁴.

Apart from classifying evaluative items according to the parameter-based approach, we coded evaluations additionally based on the polarity, as positive or negative, and explicitness, as explicit and implicit. The example in (9) illustrates implicit evaluation:

Implicit evaluation

(9) French President Emmanuel Macron **has not returned Mr Morrison's calls** and Trade Minister Dan Tehan has had some in-person meetings cancelled during his visit to Paris this week (AUS_SMHO_16102021).

Manual identification and classification of metaphors and evaluation is a complex task due to the fact that both introduced frameworks are conceived as flexible interpretive tools (see Fuoli & Hommerberg 2015). Consequently, it can be challenging to achieve high inter-coder agreement scores, particularly when researchers cannot agree on how much a particular notion is evaluative⁵ and reflects the writer's stance on the topic. For this reason, we decided to examine every text in this corpus at least twice and at different points in time. The two authors tagged the entire data independently and then discussed all the disagreements until full consensus. Although this sort of procedure is very time consuming, it ensures the quality of the annotation.

4. Results

This section combines the quantitative analysis which focuses on the interplay between the types of metaphors and different parameters of evaluation and the qualitative analysis of the data in broadsheets and tabloids. In the first set of quantitative results, we investigate a correlation between the types of metaphors and explicitness/polarity of evaluation. The tests in this set are identical to those conducted by Fuoli et al. (2021). In the second set, we analyse the association

⁴ Hearsay and mindsay, subvalues of evidentiality, may include 'attitudinal' meanings and they were used in our annotation process.

⁵ For a thorough description of the evaluation and inter-rater agreement annotation process in those cases, refer to Hidalgo-Downing and Sobrino (2024: 211–217).

between the types of metaphors and any of the two formats of newspapers, as well as the distribution of the parameters of evaluation across broadsheets and tabloids. The qualitative analysis deals with the convergence and divergence of metaphorical domains on AUKUS in two newspapers.

4.1. Quantitative analysis

Our annotation scheme contained three kinds of combinations of segments: (1) segments that are both evaluative and metaphorical, (2) only evaluative but not metaphorical, and (3) only metaphorical but not evaluative. Table 3 demonstrates the distribution of these results in broadsheets and tabloids:

Table 3. Combinations of segments

Combinations of segments	Broadsheets		Tabloids	
	N	%	N	%
Evaluation and metaphor	292	16.31%	217	22.33%
Non-evaluative and metaphor	82	4.58%	63	6.48%
Evaluative and non-metaphoric	1415	79.05%	692	71.19%
		99.94%		100%

In the first set of results, we repeated the tests demonstrated in Fuoli et al. (2021) to check whether the correlation between the types of metaphors and explicitness/polarity of evaluation will give the same correlation in the news reports as it did in film reviews.

In Table 4, we demonstrate the percentage of metaphorical items which served an evaluative function. In line with earlier research (Martin & White 2005), our results show that most metaphors in tabloids and broadsheets express evaluation.

Table 4. Metaphors with evaluative function in broadsheets and tabloids

Percentage of metaphors with evaluative function	Broadsheets	Tabloids
Number of items that are both metaphorical and evaluative	292	217
Total number of metaphorical items	374	280
Percentage of metaphorical items that are also evaluative	78%	76%

As for the question of whether creative metaphors are more likely to perform evaluation in the news corpus than conventional metaphors, the answer based on our data is negative. Tables 5 and 6 demonstrate that in the two newspaper formats, both kinds of metaphors primarily serve an evaluative purpose.

Table 5. Creative metaphors with evaluative function

Percentage of creative metaphors with evaluative function	Broadsheets (n)	Tabloids (n)
Number of creative metaphors that are evaluative	26	27
Total number of creative metaphors	34	33
Percentage of creative metaphors that are evaluative	76%	82%

Table 6. Conventional metaphors with evaluative function

Percentage of conventional metaphors with an evaluative function	Broadsheets (n)	Tabloids (n)
Number of conventional metaphors that are evaluative	266	190
Total number of conventional metaphors	340	247
Percentage of conventional metaphors that are evaluative	78%	77%

We also compared the number of positive and negative evaluative expressions involving metaphor with the number of positive and negative evaluative expressions not involving metaphor both in broadsheets and in tabloids. Table 7 illustrates the test results, which show that the metaphorical evaluation did not exhibit a tendency to employ more negative polarity than the non-metaphorical evaluation.

Table 7. Metaphorical vs. non-metaphorical segments with positive and negative evaluation

	Broadsheets		Tabloids	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
Positive evaluation involving metaphor	136	46%	79	43%
Negative evaluation involving metaphor	156	54%	138	57%
Positive evaluation not involving metaphor	468	39%	254	38%
Negative evaluation not involving metaphor	744	61%	408	62%

In addition, we tested the extent to which metaphorical creativity related to the polarity of the evaluation is being used to perform. Table 8 shows the percentage of evaluative creative and conventional metaphors used for positive and for negative evaluation in broadsheets and tabloids.

Table 8. Number of creative and conventional metaphors that were used for positive and negative evaluation

	Broadsheets		Tabloids	
	N	Percentage of total	N	Percentage of total
Number of creative metaphors used for positive evaluation	8	31%	6	22%
Number of creative metaphors used for negative evaluation	18	69%	21	78%
Number of conventional metaphors used for positive evaluation	128	52%	73	38%
Number of conventional metaphors used for negative evaluation	138	48%	117	62%

Creative and conventional metaphors behave similarly when performing evaluative functions, with both performing more negative than positive evaluation.

The vast majority of both creative and conventional metaphors are explicit in our corpus of newspaper articles (see Table 9), which, in our opinion, is conditioned by the very genre of the texts that are primarily informative. This is in contrast with Martin and White's (2005) Appraisal framework that places metaphor within the invoked (implicit) evaluation category, with no mention of metaphor in any other evaluation type.

Table 9. Number of metaphorical evaluative items used for explicit and implicit evaluation

	Broadsheets		Tabloids	
	N	Percentage of total	N	Percentage of total
Number of creative explicit evaluative items	26	100%	27	100%
Number of creative implicit evaluative items	0	0%	0	0%
Number of conventional explicit evaluative items	265	99%	190	100%
Number of conventional implicit evaluative items	1	1%	0	0%

Our study also shows that there is no correlation between the metaphor type and the format of newspapers (Table 10). Similar to the findings of Steen et al. (2010) and Tan (2023) that conventional metaphors are the most frequent and creative metaphors are the least frequent in all analyzed registers⁶, conventional metaphor achieves the biggest proportion and creative metaphor occupies the lowest proportion in both types of newspapers.

Table 10. Number of creative and conventional metaphors that were used in broadsheets and in tabloids

	Raw count
Number of creative metaphors used in broadsheets	34
Number of creative metaphors used in tabloids	33
Number of conventional metaphors used in broadsheets	340
Number of conventional metaphors used in tabloids	247

⁶ Steen's group find that conventional and creative metaphors can perform the ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions and serve different communication ends in different registers. For instance, Hermann (2013) discovers that academic discourse uses many conventional metaphors to build academic theories, while Krennmayr (2011) unveils that conventional and novel metaphors are used more frequently in newspapers than in conversation for deliberate persuasion. Furthermore, Dorst (2011), Herrmann (2013), Kaal (2012), and Krennmayr (2011) detect a very low proportion of creative metaphors, as most metaphors across the four registers are conventional.

The last test that we performed is related to a potential association between the format of newspapers and evaluative parameters. Table 11 demonstrates the number of evaluative instances in broadsheets and tabloids:

Table 11. Number of evaluative parameters in broadsheets and tabloids

Evaluative parameters	Broadsheets	Tabloids
Comprehensibility	8	8
Emotivity	190	183
Expectedness	11	2
Reliability	18	3
Importance	39	13
Mental state	26	8

Their distribution indicates that emotivity is the most frequent parameter in both broadsheets and tabloids.

These general conclusions lead us to the qualitative analysis, which looks at how the different metaphor domains and evaluative parameters are used in the tabloids and broadsheets and how they align with the way metaphors are conceptualized in relation to the International Relations Theory framework outlined in Marks (2011, 2018).

4.2. Qualitative analysis

The qualitative analysis in this study considers which aspects of the newspaper discussion around the AUKUS agreement are foregrounded by the metaphorical domains and what is prioritized as a result. To facilitate analysis, the findings reported in this section are structured according to the most frequent source domains that occur in the press discourse and that are represented in Table 12.

Table 12. List of metaphorical sources in order of frequency

<i>Broadsheets</i>		<i>Tabloids</i>	
Source domains	N	Source domains	N
SPATIAL, PATH/JOURNEY	64	SPATIAL, PATH/JOURNEY	32
NATURE/LIVING	34	BODY	24
PHYSICAL FORCE/BREAKAGE	24	PHYSICAL FORCE/ BREAKAGE	24
TASTE/SENSE/TEXTURE, WEIGHT, FRAGILITY, APPEARANCE, PART/PIECES, SOUND	24	TASTE/SENSE/TEXTURE, WEIGHT, COLOUR, FRAGILITY, APPEARANCE, PARTS/PIECES, SOUND	23
CONSTRUCTION/REPAIR	20	PRESSURE	21
CHILDREN/GAMES	18	VISIBILITY	17
VISIBILITY	17	CHILDREN/GAMES, MUSIC	14
WAR	13	NATURE/LIVING	13
PRESSURE, FIRE, HEAT	11		

The table demonstrates that both formats of newspapers use the domains situated within the biological and mechanistic images of the world (Marks 2011), including source domains such as NATURE/LIVING, PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES, BODY, CHILDREN/GAMES, and WAR as part of the biological image, and CONSTRUCTION/REPAIR, SPATIAL, PRESSURE, VISIBILITY, and PHYSICAL FORCE as part of the mechanistic image. They cover the same domains when assessing the situation regarding the AUKUS agreement, although the frequency of each of them may be different in the two newspapers. The only domains that are present in broadsheets but not in tabloids are CONSTRUCTION/REPAIR and WAR; while BODY is absent from broadsheets but present in tabloids.

The main focus in both newspapers is on the domain SPATIAL, PATH/JOURNEY. The metaphors in this domain are employed to categorize political developments such as: the announcement of AUKUS as a major step for Australia on both defence and diplomatic fronts, a breach of trust between Australia and France and the future of their relationship, the role of Australia in preventing major military conflicts over Taiwan, climate policy, the capacity of ASEAN⁷ to deal with rising tensions in South-East Asia, and the relationship between Australia, the US, and China. Over 20% of all metaphors in this domain have the concept of GOVERNMENT/ORGANISATION as their target concept in broadsheets. The metaphors that are mapping the source domain of SPATIAL, PATH/JOURNEY and the target domain of GOVERNMENT/ORGANISATION frequently evaluate a possibility of “mending/re-constructing a relationship” between France and Australia, for instance, after Australia dumped a \$90 billion submarine contract with Paris, together with the metaphors classified under the domains CONSTRUCTION/REPAIR and CHILDREN/GAME.

- (10) Mr Morrison said on Thursday he welcomed the ambassador’s return to Canberra. “I think that’s a good thing. And I think that was always going to happen. After the consultations that were had, and look forward **to taking the relationship forward** (SPATIAL, PATH/JOURNEY) (AUS_AU_08102021).
- (11) Australians remain our friends but we need among governments **to rebuild the trust** (CONSTRUCTION/REPAIR) (AUS_AU_08102021).
- (12) To be sure, AUKUS, the new subs, and other bilateral initiatives will represent no panacea amid China’s rising might. No such **magic wand** exists (CHILDREN/GAME) (AUS_AFRO_16092021).

More than 75% of the metaphors in the SPATIAL, PATH/JOURNEY category carry a positive implication, with 65% emphasizing emotivity as a crucial evaluative factor and 30% highlighting a sense of importance. The majority of these metaphors characterize the AUKUS agreement as one of the most significant strategic actions Australia has been a part of in generations. Another set of positive metaphors points to the need for Australia to repair its relationship with France. Similarly, positive metaphors are employed for countries aiming for approximately a 50% reduction

⁷ The Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

in emissions by 2030, including the US, Britain, and Japan, while major newspapers criticize Australia for “not committing to exceed its current objective of reducing emissions by 26 to 28 percent of 2005 levels by 2030” (AUS_SMHO_23102021). The prominence of emotive components in this context is evident in tabloids as well, where it reaches 83%. However, in contrast to broadsheets, the evaluative metaphors found in tabloids are evenly divided between positive and negative. The primary domains in this format of newspapers are GOVERNMENT/ORGANISATION and DISTRUST/UNCERTAINTY. The difference in the quantity of positive and negative metaphors suggests a balance between optimistic and pessimistic viewpoints regarding the future of the AUKUS agreement. While tabloids highlight the positive dimensions of the agreement, they also employ metaphors about an aging entity, signifying that the current submarines are outdated and nearing the end of their service life. Conversely, metaphors concerning “distrust/uncertainty” express apprehension about the trustworthiness of the commitment to build at least eight nuclear-powered submarines, which will be significantly larger and require more infrastructure in their place of production (Adelaide). Tabloids emphasize that the Australian government did not consult its citizens on their views on this. They also point out that while AUKUS “places Australia at the center of a new interconnected network of Western alliances that create a united democratic front against China’s increasing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific” (AUS_WAP_23092021), there are opportunity costs associated with the partnership. On one hand, it risks provoking further sanctions from China; on the other hand, it jeopardizes Australia’s relationship with France and complicates efforts to secure a lucrative free trade agreement with Europe.

The next prominent domain within the broadsheets is NATURE/LIVING, which is less dominant in the tabloids. The majority of these metaphors in the broadsheets have a judgment component of emotivity (74%) with a slight prevalence of positive evaluations (53%) in the broadsheets. The tabloids mostly contain negative metaphors within this domain (70%). The metaphors in the broadsheets are employed when discussing issues in the internal politics of Australia, but also external politics. One of the relevant issues is political survival of the Prime Minister Scott Morrison⁸, which was described as being dependent on how he would manage the issues of COVID-19 and climate issues in the Glasgow climate conference. According to the broadsheets, without real action from his government during COVID-19, Australia will slide into “a future of low wages growth, sub-par economic growth and permanent government deficit” (AUS_SH_23102021).

The domain PRESSURE, FIRE, HEAT in both genres of newspapers covers topics of geostrategic conflict, with metaphors which are expressed in terms of heat and high pressure:

⁸ Scott John Morrison is an Australian former politician who served as the 30th prime minister of Australia from 2018 to 2022, holding office as leader of the Liberal Party of Australia.

- (13) And the evidence from the acceleration of China's military posturing and the choreographed sabre-rattling of the AUKUS announcement suggests that is where things are heading. The challenge for all countries now is to maintain **the temperature setting at "warm"** (AUS_WA_23092021).

The prevalent component in the metaphors of the CONSTRUCTION/REPAIR domain is emotivity, present in both broadsheets (58%) and (86%) tabloids, together with a component of a mental state (20% and 9% respectively). 83% and 95% of these metaphors are with negative evaluation and the mapping is mostly happening with the target DISAGREEMENT in about half of instances in the two genres of newspapers. The majority of metaphors describe the Chinese policy towards Taiwan and the relation between China and the US in the context of AUKUS: *to shatter Taiwan's nerves (region's confidence, strategic foundations), clash of ideologies, to smash democratic entities, pushing back, slamming petty move, struggle, aggressively boost, pressed claims, verbal blast, battered by previous diplomatic tiffs*, etc. These topics are supported from the pool of metaphors that belong to the WAR domain in broadsheets: *escalated the attack, potential trigger for conflict, the cavalry has arrived, war footing*.

Slightly different roles from the other metaphors include those which belong to the VISIBILITY domain, with emotivity (65%) and comprehensibility (35%) parameters being dominant in the broadsheets. The tabloids have a more prominent parameter of comprehensibility (47%) than emotivity (29%). Frequently, the metaphors of light mark positive or negative judgments about internal Australian politics (*blind trust, expose the myopia, shines the way forward*).

In the next section, we summarize the results from the quantitative and qualitative analysis.

5. Discussion

The results from the quantitative analysis of our study indicate that the majority of metaphors convey evaluation both in broadsheets and tabloids, thus confirming the previous hypothesis of Martin and White (2005) on the evaluative role of metaphors. The tendencies in our corpus also demonstrate that both conventional and creative metaphors serve primarily evaluative purposes in both newspapers, indicating that creativity is not always a contributing factor to metaphors' evaluative function. Regarding the polarity, metaphorical evaluation was not found to be significantly more negative than non-metaphorical evaluation. Creative and conventional metaphors behave similarly when performing evaluative functions, with both performing more negative than positive evaluation. The majority of creative and conventional metaphors are explicit in our corpus in both types of newspapers. The general findings regarding the relationship between the types of metaphors on the one hand and the polarity and explicitness of evaluation on the other, which deviate from those reported in Section 2.4 of Fuoli et al. (2021), suggest that there is a correlation between the genre of a corpus and the subject

matter of the content in which metaphors are observed. The genre of the movie reviews described in Fuoli et al. (2021) requires vivid language, in which negative affect is more common than in the language of press reports, which is balanced, explicit and informative with more even distribution of evaluative polarity within metaphors. However, it should also be emphasized that the reported results in our study regarding evaluativeness of creative metaphors and polarity of their evaluation may be partially influenced by some additional criteria of creativity used in this work and outlined in Section 3.2.2. The format of newspapers does not seem to be relevant for the distribution of metaphor types: conventional metaphors achieve the biggest proportion in both newspaper types. This conclusion is somewhat logical: creative metaphors are generally less prevalent than conventional ones.

As was mentioned in the section on evaluation of this article, the evaluative function of the broadsheets, described in Bednarek (2006), is characterized by mitigation and negation, while evaluation of the tabloid newspapers is marked by its expression of unexpectedness, negative emotions and emotivity. Our data demonstrates that in both newspapers negative emotivity is a prevalent component of metaphors, while mitigation and unexpectedness were not found as dominant characteristics of metaphors. This confirms that the topic of the data is relevant once the relationship between metaphor and evaluation is investigated.

The qualitative part of this study shows that metaphors in international relations theory have an appreciable impact on how international relations are analysed. As pointed out by Marks (2011), international relations largely comprise abstract concepts and practices, and hence, metaphors are necessary for translating existential impressions into analytical categories. In the present period, according to Marks (2011), changing conceptions of international relations have involved metaphorical perspectives that alternate between mechanistic and biological images of the world, including the organic and construction related metaphors. Our data fits that picture and shows that the dominant domains in the news on the AUKUS agreement are more or less unilaterally used in broadsheets and tabloids with both conceptions of the world being present, which was contributed by the topic and editorial policy of the newspapers themselves.

6. Conclusions

The above findings advance discourse studies research on the relationship between metaphor and evaluation, which began in the Systemic Functional literature with the assertion that metaphors always “provoke” attitudinal meanings. Our research indicates that this is true irrespective of the type of metaphor used or the newspaper format. However, it is important to be mindful of the value of the context and topic itself when evaluating this relationship, as well as the definitions of evaluation itself, its parameters, and the parameters of metaphor. The study also offers methodological contributions, by introducing a refined protocol for the annotation of creative metaphors. In addition, the contribution of this work is

significant from an applied level for studies in international relations since it demonstrated that the representation of AUKUS fits within the previously described framework on metaphors within the International Relations Theory and that the event is uniformly represented in terms of metaphor domains regardless of the newspaper format. A clear drawback of this study is the limited sample size, which resulted in conclusions about the connection between metaphors and evaluation in the newspaper genre being somewhat tentative.

This study's theoretical line can be expanded by increasing the size of the corpus and the number of genres to discuss the impact of genre on the distribution of metaphor and evaluation. From the perspective of International Relations Theory, future research could demonstrate how the use of biological and mechanical imagery in news reports on AUKUS evolves over time.

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CRedit authorship contribution statement

Radoslava Trnavac: Conceptualisation, Writing – original draft, review & editing, Methodology, Investigation; **Katie Patterson:** Writing – original draft, review & editing, Methodology, Investigation

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Image schemas and the semantics of Serbian sports terminology: An innovative approach

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Abstract

The terminology used in specialized areas of study is an essential part of communication among people active in those fields. However, variations in terminology across languages and cultures can hinder communication. This paper aims to outline the potential of using image schema clusters in analyzing (Serbian/English) sports terminology. The image schemas of FORCE <F>, PATH <P>, LINK <L>, and BALANCE , their scalar values, and their corresponding specifiers (<end path>, <cycle>, <up>, etc.) were used to annotate and analyze a group of 140 Serbian language sports terms. An important part of the annotation process was the parsing of the event/movement to determine the number of individual segments included in the performance of each and ascribing to it specific schemas, their level of scalarity, and the appropriate specifiers. The focus was on the dynamic mental simulations of movement in sports, which are described as dynamic events that depict the athlete's body in motion through time and space. The analysis addressed the issue of overcoming non-literal descriptions in sports terminology in favor of conveying the abstract nature of the underlying structures, thus rendering them universal. The findings indicate that the proposed image schema identification protocol can be used to identify the image schema clusters and their scalar values that determine the terms in the corpus. The study contributes to the achievement of transparency and clarity in sports terminology by precisely determining and formulating the meaning of concepts related to specific sports terms, which is essential for unimpeded communication in this area.

Key words: *schematicity, image schema, image schema clusters, sports terminology, Serbian*

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Схемы-образы и семантика сербской спортивной терминологии: ИННОВАЦИОННЫЙ ПОДХОД

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Аннотация

Терминология, используемая в специализированных областях знаний, является неотъемлемой частью общения между людьми, работающими в соответствующих сферах. Однако ее лингвокультурная специфика может затруднять это общение. Цель данной работы – показать возможность использования кластеров схем-образов в анализе (сербской/английской) спортивной терминологии. Схемы-образы СИЛА <F>, НАПРАВЛЕНИЕ <P>, СВЯЗЬ <L> и РАВНОВЕСИЕ , их скалярные значения и соответствующие спецификаторы (<конец движения>, <круг>, <вверх> и т.д.) были использованы в аннотации и анализе 140 сербских выражений. Важной частью процесса составления аннотаций был анализ события/движения для определения количества отдельных сегментов, включенных в выполнение каждого из них, и приписывания им конкретных схем, их уровня масштабируемости и соответствующих спецификаторов. Основное внимание было уделено ментальному моделированию движения в спорте, представленному как динамическое событие, описывающее действия тела спортсмена при перемещении во времени и пространстве. В ходе анализа был рассмотрен вопрос о преодолении небуквальных описаний в спортивной терминологии в пользу передачи абстрактной природы лежащих в ее основе структур, что делает их универсальными. Результаты исследования показывают, что предложенный протокол идентификации схемы изображения можно использовать для идентификации кластеров схемы изображения и их скалярных значений, которые лежат в основе терминов, включенных в корпус. Исследование способствует достижению прозрачности и ясности в спортивной терминологии, т.е. точному формулированию значения понятий, связанных с конкретными спортивными терминами, что необходимо для беспрепятственного общения в данной области.

Ключевые слова: схематичность, схемы-образы, кластеры схем-образов, спортивная терминология, сербский язык

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1. Introduction

The terminology used in specialized areas of study is an essential part of communication among people active in those fields. For instance, Alberts (2014: 6) states that the primary aim of terminology is “to promote communication in scientific and technological environments”. In the same text, he specifies that the principles informing the development of terminology are set and include the following: a term always refers to a concept; a term has a precise meaning and reflects the features of the given concept; the concept denoted by the term is always

clearly defined; and finally, a term represents a link between a linguistic representation and a mental construct.

The transparency of meaning, i.e., the precise determination and formulation of the meaning of concepts related to specific sports terms across languages, would contribute significantly to unimpeded communication. Johnston et al. (2023: 1) state that “various undefined or vaguely defined terminologies have been recognized for causing confusion and contradiction in both research and practice”. They further acknowledge that

“[a]mongst a growing field of research and practice in athlete development, it will be paramount for the sake of all stakeholders to remain attentive to the language they use. We believe the field is at a critical juncture where striking a balance between vagueness and conceptual clarity will be a necessity to advance the field forward in the right direction” (Johnston et al. 2023: 4).

This study relies on image schemas to achieve transparency and clarity in sports terminology. To quote Mandler (2007: 81), image schemas are “a representation one is left with when one has forgotten most of the details of an event.” They represent an ‘abstract starting point’ (Dewell 1997) or underlying abstract configuration for analysis, interpretation, or instruction, irrespective of the language medium. At a more abstract level of analysis, image schemas refer to the mental simulations of movement explained as a dynamic event, describing what an athlete’s body does while moving through time and space. The main innovation of this study is the application of image schema clusters and their associated values to the study of sports terminology. Current analyses of Serbian sports terminology (see Ilinčić 2019, Milić 2006, Milić 2013, Milić 2015, Randelović 2015, Veličković & Janić 2023 *inter alia* for an overview) are overwhelmingly morpho-syntactic in nature. To date, no studies in this linguistic environment have relied on image schema clusters to analyze sports terminology. Consequently, this study attempts to provide an image schema-based account of objective motion as described by sports terminology, with the aim of avoiding ambiguity in communication.

In sports terminology, clarification is relevant to not only athletes or beginner students, but also laymen who do not know much about the topic but would like to be active in the field. Room (2010) indicated that the use of potentially arcane terminology as well as alternate or colloquial terms which can be confusing are some of the issues that render terminology acquisition more complex. There is also the unavoidable issue of potential polysemy, as in the case of the term *asistencija* (in English: *assist*), which occurs in as many as four different types of sport (soccer, basketball, handball, and water polo), or *lopta* (in English: *ball*), which is found in as many as six different types of sport (soccer, basketball, volleyball, rhythmic gymnastics, handball, water polo) according to the definitions provided in *Englesko-srpski rečnik sportskih termina* (ESRST) and *Novi englesko-srpski rečnik sportskih termina* (NESRST). In such circumstances, transparency of meaning related to specific sports terms across languages would contribute significantly to unimpeded communication.

Due to the large number of Anglicisms that have made their way into the field of sports terminology, many terms can be opaque in meaning (a *triple double*, a *hat trick*, etc.). As a result, numerous movements or elements in sports are referred to by more than one linguistic term (sometimes one originating from the Serbian language and one borrowed from English; at times by more than one term from each language, as in the case of the Serbian term *savijanje tela unazad* and the term *most* – along with their corresponding English equivalents *backbend* and *backgrab*). To overcome the opaque nature of sports terminology, paying more attention to universals pertaining to meaning and concept structure would be a beneficial endeavor in achieving clarity in sports communication. Descriptions incorporating image schemas could facilitate comprehension both among athletes and laymen, as well as language instructors, researchers, and students in the field.

This study analyzes the application of a newly proposed image schema identification protocol (based on the work done by the Pragglez Group 2007) on a small-scale corpus of Serbian sports terminology. The protocol was assessed in order to determine its scope of applicability for the purposes of clarification, representation, and description of the concepts referred to by the analyzed sports terms. The premise of this paper is based on the assumption that sports terminology frequently describes force, spatial relations, and movement. These domains are ideally suited for explanations via image schemas. The main contribution would be to illustrate that image schema clusters, and any of their associated values, can be applied to the study of sports terminology.

The structure of the paper is as follows: section 2 provides an overview of the theoretical background, predominantly outlining the specifics pertaining to image schemas; section 3 describes the methodology implemented in the study; section 4 provides the results of the analysis and the discussion. The paper concludes with section 5.

2. Theoretical background

Image schemas are viewed as ‘preconceptual building blocks’ (Popova 2005) involved in concept formation. As previously indicated (e.g. Cienki 1997, Hedblom et al. 2015, 2019, Johnson 1990, 2005, 2007, Lakoff 1990a, 1990b, Lakoff & Turner 1989, Mandler 1992, 2007, 2012, Oakley 2007, Popova 2005 among others), image schemas represent abstract, subconscious patterns that refer both to movement through space and to the manipulation of objects/apparatuses at the same time. The structures created with these building blocks require mutual interaction among the image schemas. This is referred to as “grouping” (Cienki 1997), “image-schema families” (Hedblom et al. 2016), or image schema clusters. Johnson (1990) stated that image schemas are linked to dynamic processes and that they require the presence of a conceptualizer who is actively scanning them. To quote, they are “structures *of an activity* by which we organize our experience in ways that we can comprehend” (Johnson 1990: 29, original emphasis) and are “flexible in that they can take on any number of specific instantiations in varying contexts” (Johnson

1990: 29–30). Due to their dynamic nature, their ability to be presented in the form of scalarized values (see subsequent text), and their inclusion in abstract configurations, it is assumed that image schema complexes might be applied to the study of sports-specific terminology (e.g. Atmawijaya 2025, Hedblom et al. 2016, Martín de la Rosa 2023, Pavlović et al. 2024, Silaški & Đurović 2024, Zibin & Solopova 2024). Ultimately, the basic tool of analysis is a discretized system which refers to the concatenation of individual schemas working together to trigger the appropriate dynamic mental simulation of an event, or in this case, a movement.

When it comes to the relationship between the terminology of choice and image schemas in general, Dewell (2005: 371) warns about concluding that image schemas are merely mapped onto lexical units. In fact, the choice of lexemes plays an important role in how image schemas are organized, i.e., clustered. If that is the case, according to the same author, we can account for the occurrence of ‘universal similarities’ by mapping certain image schema clusters (cf. Cameron & Stelma 2004). To our view, there are reliable indicators which render image schemas suitable tools for the analysis of sports terminology. Image schemas are linked to patterns formed in our subconscious, originating from our interactions with the world around us. This interaction includes our understanding of spatial relations (the layout of the objects around us, our perception of relationships such as *in front of* – *behind*) and informs the way we navigate through our surroundings (i.e., movement in general) and manipulate objects.

The current study relies on the work done by Evans and Green (2006: 190), who proposed the following eight categories of image schemas: Balance, Containment, Existence, Force, Identity, Locomotion, Space and Unity/Multiplicity. Of these, the following schemas were used in the subsequent analysis: FORCE <F>, PATH <P>, LINK <L>, and BALANCE . Our analysis was also informed by Antović (2018), who concluded that

“‘interrupted and continued movement’, just like ‘abrupt and linked movement’ seem strongly schematically motivated: force, distance and path schemas engender the notion of musical motion, while the antonymic adjectives used by the participants are almost synonymous with the presence or absence of links” (Antović 2018: 63).

Scalarized values of image schemas were included in our analysis following the work of Antović et al. (2023), who superimposed the higher order parameter of scalarity on image schemas to indicate possible variations in their intensities (as they pertain to their occurrence as well as to their mutual interactions).¹ The

¹ Since one of the aims of our study was to outline an additional means of describing particular sports terms by relying on image schemas, the movements being referred to by the terms themselves are viewed solely as a physical representation. The distinctive features indicated by combinations of image schemas are meant to be guidelines for the performance of these movements and do not depend on the level of proficiency of individual performers. The level of success of the execution is not relevant for the annotation of each sports term. The annotations are abstract representations,

conclusion drawn by Johnston et al. (2023: 2) that “it would be beneficial to even consider some terms on a scale or continuum instead of being binary and absolute” also considerably informed this aspect of our study. The ensuing valence is either positive (marked by <+>) or negative (marked by <->) and can increase or decrease in intensity. This resembles a gradation process, whereby the increased value of a particular schema can be marked as <+>, < ++>, or <+++> and alternatively its decreased value could be expressed with <->, <- ->, or <- - ->. Specifiers represented another component of our analysis. They indicate movement along both the horizontal and vertical axis (as related to the <P> schema), and are mostly found in pairs: <up> and <down>, <left> and <right>, <forward> and <reverse>, <cycle>, <center-periphery> and <periphery-center>, and <end path>.

Image schemas have the potential to describe the underlying abstract and dynamic structure of various types of movement referred to by the select sports terminology included in the analysis. This could identify what might be referred to as ‘prototypical’ types of movement that are generally found to repeat/recur in sports. These underlying and recurring patterns, once identified and described by means of image schema clusters and their scalar values, should facilitate both the instruction process and the retention process of this particular terminology.

Based on the aforementioned, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

1. As sports activities lead athletes to lose and/or regain their balance during the performance of a particular movement, and to establish physical contact with an apparatus and/or the surface, no differences in terms of frequency of occurrence are expected for the <L> and schemas due to the nature of sports activity in general.
2. Since greater force is required for certain types of movement, in part due to repetition, the scalarized <F> schema will occur more frequently than the scalarized <P> schema.
3. Due to the specific nature of most of the movements analyzed in this study, the non-scalarized version of the <F> schema will occur more frequently than any of its scalarized versions.
4. Due to the nature of human movement in general, the most frequently occurring specifiers will be <up> and <forward>.

3. Data and methods

3.1. The sample of sports terms

The corpus of sports terms was extracted from the *ESRST* and *NESRST* dictionaries. It numbered 140 Serbian sports terms². The selection process was

invoking a perfect and complete performance, as outlined in the two dictionaries of sports terms referred to in this study.

² The complete list of the 140 annotated and analyzed Serbian sports terms is available upon request from the authors.

carried out carefully to include different types of movement performed by a single individual moving in isolation (establishing no contact with others, as in martial arts for example, and no contact with equipment, such as a baton or a ribbon). The selected terms were predominantly nouns or noun phrases, with the exception of *odskočiti*, *odskakati*, *odskok*_{SER.} / *bounce*_{ENG.} and *driblati*, *voditi loptu*, *voditi loptu sa fintom*_{SER.} / *dribble*_{ENG.}. However, since one of the Serbian synonyms for the former is a noun, *odskok*, and the latter is usually used interchangeably with *dribbling*, the corpus predominantly consisted of nouns. None of the items included in the analysis are the authors' personal translations. They were all extracted from the aforementioned dictionaries as is. In instances of multiple entries for one term, the first was taken into consideration.

Sports terms which referred to phases of movement or positions of the body that were meant to be held for a certain period of time were excluded, as they required no movement. Further exclusion criteria encompassed any reference to the location where the sport is played (a pool, a field, a track, pitch, etc.), the equipment that the athletes wear or carry, the equipment used in various sports, etc. No attempts were made to include an equal number of terms from every sport during the selection process, as that fell outside the scope of the paper.

The sample is semantically transparent, homogeneous, albeit not extensive. Since this study represents a first attempt at an image schema-based analysis of sports terminology for the purpose of instruction, we believe that extending the sample size can be achieved in the later stages of analysis, that is, once this type of annotation has been tested for its practical applicability.

3.2. The proposed image schema-based analysis

An important part of the annotation process was the parsing of the event/movement for the purpose of interpretation. The individual segments included in the performance of each element/movement denoted by the sports term were determined, to which specific schemas (as discrete elements) and appropriate specifiers (for clarification) were ascribed. The mutual (dynamic) interaction between the schemas was noted, as was their level of scalarity (a measure/consequence of their dynamicity), as in Antović et al. (2023). Additional steps included determining the duration or possible repetitions of the segments, any potential disruptions to the flow of movement, and whether the entire body of the athlete is involved in the movement. Each of the 140 sports terms were manually annotated individually. Both authors took part in the annotation process, acting as raters and evaluating each other's work over several discussion sessions. The relevant combinations of schemas and specifiers were presented in the specific order in which they were perceived to occur during the performance of the elements denoted by the selected terms. In addition to the dictionary definitions, further means of clarification of the given movements included video recordings readily and widely available on various online platforms. The movement of any apparatus was not annotated.

The first step was to determine the image schema combinations and their scalarity. To begin with, it was assumed (cf. Antović 2018, Antović et al. 2023) that PATH and FORCE underlie any movement. The values of scalarity dictate that FORCE varies in terms of intensity and PATH entails progression along successive points. FORCE has the ability to change during the course of movement or the completion of an element, depending on whether more or less energy is consumed, just like PATH undergoes changes depending on the distance traveled during the execution of an element. If a particular movement was repeated several times, the FORCE schema received higher scalarized values. The same was also the case if the performance of the element itself required considerable force. For example: *demi-plije*_{SER.}/*demi-plie*_{ENG.} was annotated with only <F> considering that the element involved the lowering of the body to a squat-like position, while the elements such as the *naupor jašuci*_{SER.} / *straddle glide*_{ENG.} and *makazice s okretom*_{SER.} / *scissors leap*_{ENG.} were annotated with <F++> due to the fact that they require more than one movement and considerable force to perform. The <--> value was not assigned to either schema due to the fact that voluntary force was produced by each athlete in order to complete the assigned element.

A particularly striking feature of the PATH schema is its internal complexity. There is an implied or perceived beginning and an end to the movement, always associated with a resulting state, which can in some instances even be the focus of the entire movement. This schema was scalarized if the athlete moves away from their initially assumed position during the performance of an element. The scalarized value depends on the length of the path crossed (depending on where the athlete begins the performance of a particular element, as opposed to where they end it). For example, the aforementioned *demi-plije*_{SER.}/*demi-plie*_{ENG.} was annotated with just a <P> since the athlete did not move from their initial position. Among the elements whose annotations included <P++> we find *plivanje nazad u odbranu*_{SER.} / *drop*_{ENG.} (where a player moves across the swimming pool), which requires that the end position not be the initial one.

BALANCE only has a <--> value (a negative valence) as the schema is used to indicate a change in balance, the disruption of what can be named the 'default' position of the human body and its center of gravity. The <B--> schema was included in an annotation if the body of the athlete rotated around either the horizontal or vertical axis, and if the performance of the element itself ended with the athlete standing on one foot. This encompassed the performance of rolls of various kinds, as well as jumps and elements where the athlete had to spend a certain period of time upside down. In other words, this referred to any and all situations where the athlete was not standing upright with both feet on the ground, arms to the side, facing forward. Serbian terms most commonly associated with the use of the <B--> schema included: *luk* (*izrazito uvinuće*, *luk*_{SER.} / *arch position*_{ENG.}) and *poskok* (*poskok raznožnog*_{SER.} / *jumping jack*_{ENG.}). At the same time, indicated that the athlete had regained balance, either in the middle or at end of a movement.

The LINK schema was used to indicate a direct physical connection between the athlete and an apparatus, or in instances of disturbed balance, the floor. The scalarized value <L+> was added to the annotations of terms such as in *zaklon-most raznožno-stav na jednoj nozi / zaklonom kroz most raznožno do stava na jednoj nozi*^{SER.} / *back walkover*^{ENG.} (<F+><P+><spec><down><spec><reverse><spec><end path><L+><B->). In certain annotations, there were repetitions of the <L-> and <L+> scalarized schemas, which indicated that the athlete both lost and reestablished physical contact with an apparatus during the performance of the element, as in *kaskada*^{SER.} or *cascade*^{ENG.} (<F><P><spec><up><L-><L+><spec><end path>). It was also implicitly inferred that balance was restored upon completion of the event.

Just like <F> and <P>, the <end path> specifier also presents a staple of the annotation process of sports terms. It was included in the annotations only when the final position assumed indicated the completion of movement. It was also used to indicate a pause/break in the movement meant for preparation, i.e., an attempt to gain momentum. This accounts for its increased frequency of occurrence.

The <cycle> specifier was expanded to include two additional variations added by the authors for the purpose of this study. This was done to provide clear and accurate annotations for movements involving rotations of 90° and 180°. The decision to do so was made based on the complexity of the movements denoted by the selected sports terms. The view adopted for the analysis of this specifier was that of Cienki (1997), who presented CYCLE as an image schema, one closely related to that of PATH. Specifically, movement in cyclical form implies following a path that returns to its point of origin, thereby implying iteration, set in motion by FORCE.

Instances when the extremities of the human body moved closer to or further away from the body's center of gravity were annotated using the <center-periphery> or the <periphery-center> specifier. The remaining specifiers clearly indicate the direction of movement of the body: the specifier <up>, the specifier <down>, the specifier <forward>, and the specifier <reverse>.

4. The results

What follows is an overview of the results for the frequency of occurrence of individual schemas and all their noted combinations in the corpus (Figure 1) as well as the frequency of occurrence of the specifiers noted in the corpus (Figure 2).

As can be seen from Figure 1, the most frequently occurring individual schemas in the provided annotations were <F> and <P>, as was their mutual combination. The schema occurs more frequently than the <L> schema, which results in the following frequency of image schema clusters in descending order: <F><P>, <F><P><L>, <F><P><L>.

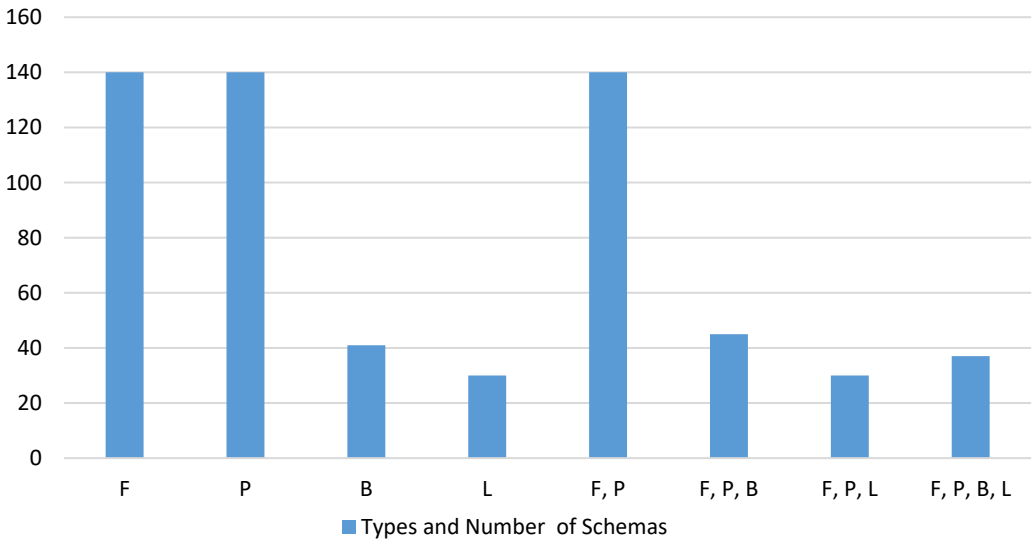


Figure 1. The frequency of occurrence of the annotated schemas, without reference to scalar values or number of repetitions of the schemas themselves in the individual annotations
Source: the authors

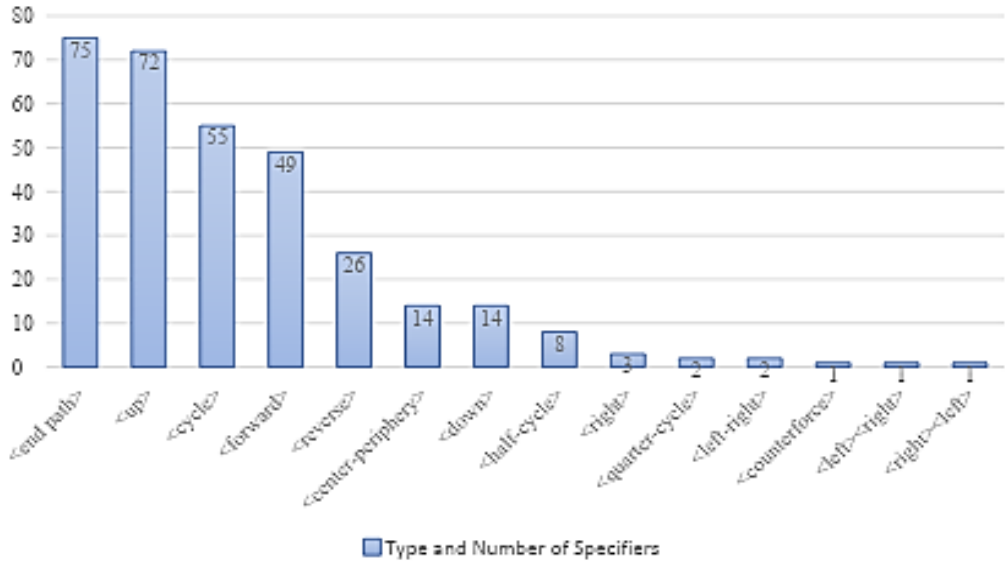


Figure 2. The frequency of occurrence of the specifiers included in the annotation process, irrespective of the number of occurrences in individual annotations
Source: the authors

As can be seen from Figure 2, the most frequently occurring specifier was <end path>, followed by <up>, <cycle>, <forward>, and <reverse> in descending order. When it comes to the remaining specifiers, their frequency of occurrence ranges at approximately ten percent or less.

**4.1. An analysis of the mutual combinations
of the given scalarized schemas and specifiers**

In the following sections, we analyze the schema clusters organized in increasing order of complexity, i.e., the number of schemas contained in the cluster. This section also includes an analysis of the noted specifiers and their combinations.

In terms of scalarity, the types and frequency of the various scalarized image schema combinations can be found in Figure 3 and Figure 4 below. The former represents the scalarized combinations of one of the two most frequently occurring image schema clusters (<F><P><L>), while the latter represents the scalarized combinations of the second most frequently occurring image schema cluster (<F><P>).



Figure 3. Scalarized values of the <F><P> image schema cluster
Source: the authors

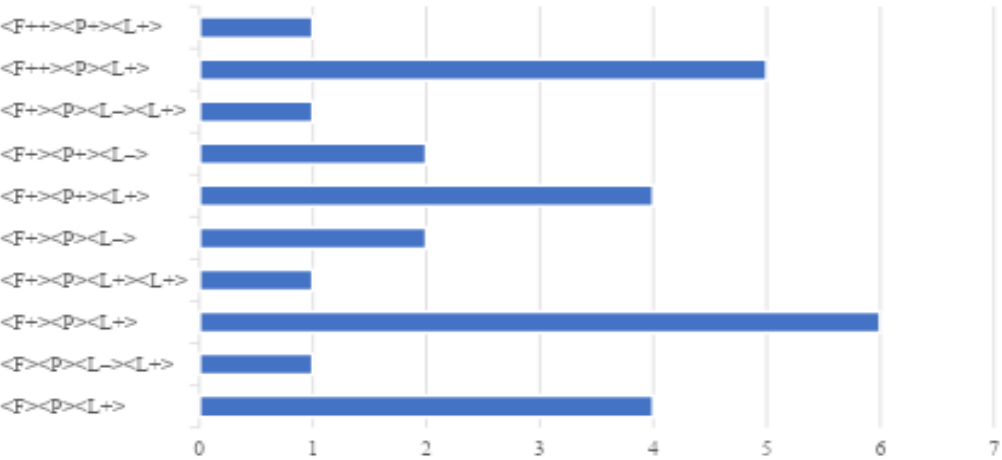


Figure 4. Scalarized values of the <F><P><L> image schema cluster
Source: the authors

A more detailed analysis of each image schema cluster can be found in the following subsections of the paper (<F><P> in subsection 4.1.2. and <F><P><L> in subsection 4.1.3.).

4.1.1. The <F><P> image schema cluster

The basic schema cluster on which all the annotations in this study are based is <F><P>, as stated in the theoretical background section to this paper. In total, the (non-)scalarized schemas in this cluster made up 25% of the overall number of clusters.

The frequency of occurrence of specifiers for this schema cluster points to the complexity of the movements referred to by the analyzed sports terms. They involved rotations along the vertical axis, as exemplified in the frequent occurrence of the <cycle>, <up>, and <down> specifiers, as well as movements along the horizontal axis, illustrated in the frequent occurrence of the <forward> and <reverse> specifiers. Among this particular combination of schemas, there was an instance where more than one rotation was noted within the same movement (*flifis*_{SER.} / *fliffis*_{ENG.}). There were also instances where solely movement of the lower extremities was recorded along the horizontal axis (*makazice s okretom*_{SER.} / *scissors leap*_{ENG.}).

Considering that the <F><P> cluster is found in each of the annotations, the remaining three subheadings will focus mostly on the remaining schemas that were also included in the clusters, namely, the and the <L> schemas.

4.1.2. The <F><P> schema cluster

The most frequently occurring cluster, <F+><P+><B→> (10.71%), describes a complex element. It consists either of several movements or requires the repetition of a single movement with a loss of balance, indicating loss of contact with the ground. Examples include *salto nazad*_{SER.} / *back flip*_{ENG.}. The second most frequently occurring cluster, <F+><P><B→> (7.14%), describes another complex element, but one in which the body of the athlete does not travel through space, such as *izrazito uvinuće*_{SER.} / *arch position*_{ENG.}. The third cluster, <F++><P+><B→> (4.29%), describes an element that requires considerable force, as implied by the scalarized value of <F>, and includes a range of movements or their repetition. Examples include: *skok udalj*_{SER.} / *long jump*_{ENG.}. It is for this schema cluster that we noted the highest scalarized value for the <F> schema, <F+++>, included in the annotation for the term *salto s okretom od 540°*, *rudi*_{SER.} / *full layout*_{ENG.}. As it requires rotations of up to 540°, it was deemed pertinent to indicate the high level of voluntary energy that is discharged in order to perform this element.

4.1.3. The <F><P><L> schema cluster

The <L+> schema occurred in annotations where the athletes establish hand contact with the surface (*kovrtljaj u upor*_{SER.} / *hip circle*_{ENG.}) or an apparatus (*driblati*, *voditi loptu*, *voditi loptu sa fintom*_{SER.} / *dribble*_{ENG.}), while <L–> was used to indicate avoidance or loss of contact with the surface (*eksplozivni sklek*_{SER.} / *explosive push-up*_{ENG.}) or apparatus (*prelazak (prepone)*, *uspešan prelazak (prepone)*_{SER.} / *clearance*_{ENG.}). Examples of the most frequent scalarized image schema cluster (<F+><P><L+>, 4.29%) include elements where the athlete performs a complex movement which requires contact either with the ground or an apparatus: *veleobrt nazad*, *velekovrtljaj nazad*_{SER.} / *back giant*_{ENG.}, *kovrtljaj u upor*_{SER.} / *hip circle*_{ENG.}, *dropkik*_{SER.} / *drop kick*_{ENG.}, among others. The second most frequently occurring cluster is <F++><P><L+> (3.57%), which indicates a similar, yet slightly more complex movement, as in *mađar*, *okret mađar*_{SER.} / *Magyar*_{ENG.} or *podmetni spad*_{SER.} / *underswing*_{ENG.}. The third most frequent schema clusters are <F><P><L+> and <F+><P+><L+> (2.86% each), which indicate similar movements with an increase in complexity, i.e., movements which required physical relocation in space: such as *švedski pad*_{SER.} / *Swedish fall*_{ENG.}.

4.1.4. The <F><P><L> schema cluster

This schema cluster accounts for 26.4% of all the annotated items. The inclusion of all four schemas indicates that the annotated elements include a complex movement, contact with the floor or apparatus, as well as a disruption of balance during the movement. These clusters at times include more than one occurrence of the and <L> schemas, as in *zanjih poskokom u stoj na šakama*_{SER.} / *back toss*_{ENG.}. Considering that only <B–> was noted in the corpus, this means that the prototypical schema cluster would be <F+><P+><L+><B–> (with an occurrence rate of 46% in the entire corpus).

In accordance with the guidelines pointed out for the <BALANCE> schema, it was not surprising to find that the specifiers occurring most frequently with the scalarized <B–> value would be <up> and <cycle>. Any other specifier combinations mostly had to do with changes along the vertical (<down> instead of <up>) or the horizontal axis (<reverse> instead of <forward>).

The scalarized <F><P><B–><L+> cluster mostly occurred in combination with three specifiers: <end path>, <cycle>, and <forward>. Based on the aforementioned finding that <L+> implies direct physical contact, while <B–> implies a change in the body's center of gravity, the types and frequency of the specifiers is not surprising. The main reason is that they indicate various rotations mostly along the horizontal axis (*dotik*, *kovrtljaj bez dodira telom*_{SER.} / *clear hip circle*_{ENG.}) and to a lesser extent along the longitudinal axis (*kovrtljaj nazad do stoja na šakama sa iskretnim ramenima*_{SER.} / *basket with inlocation*_{ENG.}).

To facilitate comprehension, we have provided a visual representation of one of the annotated terms, the *salto napred*_{SER.} / *forward somersault*_{ENG.} (see Figure 5).

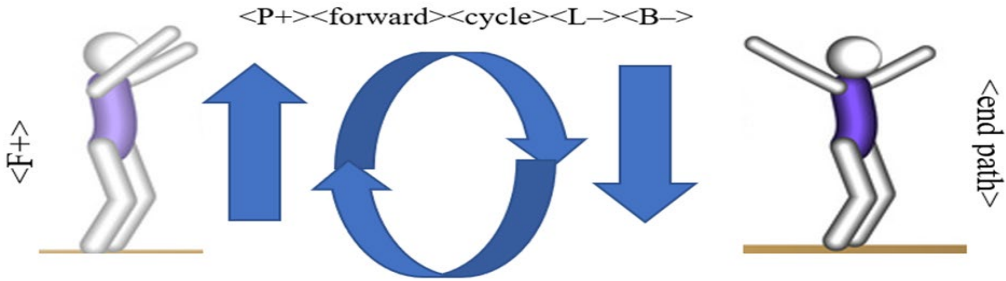


Figure 5: A visual diagram of the term *salto napred*_{SER.} / *forward somersault*_{ENG.} with added representations of image schemas and specifiers

Source: the authors

5. Discussion

In the case of the <L> and schemas, it was determined that occurred with a greater frequency than <L> (at a ratio of 41:30), which was also reflected in the image schema clusters (<F><P> occurred 32.14% of the time, while <F><P><L> occurred 21.43% of the time). This comes down to the nature of the sports activity: it was more often the case that athletes lose and regain their balance during the performance of a specific movement than establish physical contact with an apparatus and/or surface. Therefore, we might be able to further expand the idea put forth by Antović (2018), who indicated that movement is essentially represented by the <F><P> cluster. Based on our findings, it would seem that human movement is more accurately described by an <F><P><L> cluster.

This conclusion is further borne out by the fact that approximately one-quarter of our annotations included this particular cluster. Thus, hypothesis 1 was not confirmed. In the case of clusters containing the <B-> schema and the (non-)scalarized <L> schema, the former occurred most frequently with the specifier <up> (33 instances), and to a lesser extent with the specifier <cycle> (10 instances). This is not surprising considering that following a disruption in balance, usually indicating a movement down or sideways, the athlete would attempt to pull themselves up, or alternatively would have initiated the disruption in balance themselves in order to begin a circular movement. For the (non-)scalarized <L> schema the pattern is the same, but with fewer instances, 7 and 5 respectively. These would be instances where the athlete established contact with either the surface and/or an apparatus in order to propel themselves upward, or begin a circular movement. In the <F><P><L> cluster, we find the frequent occurrences of the <B-><L+> combination, usually associated with a preparatory period prior to the execution of a complex movement. This claim is backed by the considerable presence of the <up>, <cycle>, and <forward> specifiers in the annotations. However, the <B-><L-> cluster was far scarcer among the results and was mostly linked to the <end path> specifier, indicating an overall end of motion, letting go of any apparatus, and re-assuming a fixed, upright position.

When it comes to the scalarized versions of the <F> and the <P> schemas, hypothesis 2 was confirmed in that the former occurs more frequently than the latter. Specifically, in image schema clusters which contain the <B→> schema, the scalarized values of <F> range from <+> to <++++>, while the scalarized values of <P> range from <+> to <++>. It would seem that annotations which include both <F++> and <P++> always co-occur with the <B→> schema. The annotated terms in this case mostly refer to kinds of movement that involve rotations around the horizontal or the vertical axis. The same pattern recurs in the image schema clusters containing the <L> schema, wherein the scalarized values of <F> range from <+> to <++++>, while those of <P> solely include <+>. One of the reasons for this is that greater force is required for specific types of movement, as well as for movement repetition, even if the athlete does not traverse along a path. It is possible for a movement to be forceful but also to be completed in the same space/location. All of the occurrences of <F++++> coincided with the occurrences of <P++> in specific situations which required the performance/completion of more than one somersault, but did not require the athlete to actually move from their initial starting position. The value of the force exerted, as indicated by the scalarized values of <F>, provided the needed space to account for more complex movements.

When it comes to the occurrence of (non-)scalarized versions of the <F> schema, the non-scalarized value of <F> occurred 24 times (17.14%), while the scalarized versions occurred with the following frequencies: <F+> 91 times (65%), <F++> 22 times (15.71%), and <F+++> 3 times (2.14%). Therefore, hypothesis 3 was not confirmed, in that non-scalarized <F> and scalarized <F> occurred at a ratio of 25:115, i.e., the scalarized versions of the <F> schema occurred 4.5 times more frequently. This finding might be ascribed to the fact that the corpus contained a large number of complex movements that required the exertion of more than a little force. Of the 140 annotated items, 27 (19.29%) involved some form of jump (*po-/na-/do-skok*), 16 (11.43%) involved turns, and 14 (10%) involved saltos, which together make up 40.72% of all the annotated items. These are complex turns that include rotating around axes, both horizontal and vertical, as well as movements that require takeoff from a surface that is not necessarily the ground, requiring force to propel the body through the air and counteract the force of gravity. Therefore, scalarized versions of <F> were expected. What is surprising is the ratio between the <F+> and <F++> schemas, whereby the former is four times more frequent than the latter, irrespective of the potential conclusion that complex or repetitive motions would be more frequent. In addition, a considerably greater number of specifiers were found to accompany scalarized versions of the <F><P> cluster. In this instance, scalarity in combination with a greater number of specifiers indicates a more complex movement. Among the non-scalarized clusters, the most frequently occurring specifier was <up> with 9 instances, and among the scalarized, <cycle> with 6 instances.

Interestingly, the frequency of occurrence of the two most frequent specifiers, <up> and all the versions of <cycle>, depends on the type of cluster, irrespective of

scalarity. For example, in the <F><P> cluster there were 30 instances of <up> and 22 of <cycle>. Considering that <B→> was the only noted scalarized value, the frequency of occurrence of <up> may come as no surprise. Considering the disruption in balance, the presence of the <cycle> specifier might also be expected, as <B→> was used to annotate rotations. In the <F><P><L> cluster, <up> occurred 11 times and <cycle> 12 times. And in the <F><P><L> cluster, <up> occurred 16 times and <cycle> 23 times. This might lead us to conclude that a potential link exists between the <B→> schema and the <up> and/or <cycle> specifiers.

Hypothesis 4 was confirmed in part, considering that the specifiers <up> and <cycle> occurred with a frequency of 72 and 55, respectively, outranking <forward> (49 instances). However, ultimately the most frequently occurring specifier was <end path> (75 instances). It was included in the annotations only when the final position assumed indicated the end of movement, i.e., its completion. It was also used to indicate a pause/break in the movement meant for preparation, i.e., an attempt to gain momentum. This is why its occurrence is considered a staple in the annotations. The second most frequently occurring specifier was <cycle>, with a frequency of 55. The nature of human movement in general (a body heading forward, or as the case may be in sport, moving up) rendered the hypothesis a logical initial starting point. However, the fact that many of the sports terms included in the corpus were actually drawn from sports terminology specific to gymnastics and gymnastics elements in general may have skewed the results in favor of the <cycle> specifier.

Based on these findings, what might have initially been assumed to be a prototypical movement (a movement up and forward, exerted with additional force as it required rotation, but one which would not require the athlete to traverse along a considerable path) may not entirely be accurate. The occurrence of the and <L> schemas have not fully been taken into consideration. It appears that it is not the <F> schema or its scalarized values that determine the complexity of a movement or element, but that it is the scalarized values of the <L> schema which indicate a complex group of movements (including grabbing and releasing) during the execution of a single element. The number of specifiers that accompany these clusters could be taken as another indicator of complexity. The <F><P><L> cluster included one to six specifiers, most often three (18 or 48.64%), suggesting its status as the ‘underlying’ cluster describing human movement in general.

Considering the fact that our corpus was extracted from existing terminological dictionaries, and the fact that our analysis was carried out with the aim of making a contribution to facilitating comprehension in what could be referred to as sports communication, we believe that one of the implications of our findings is that they could be added to existing dictionary definitions in order to enrich them. More broadly speaking, these findings could make a contribution to the field of terminography. Our idea is that the enrichment could be twofold: on the one hand, below each dictionary definition, we propose to add the annotation of the term itself, one which would include both image schemas and the specifiers, as needed. The

symbols necessary for interpretation of the annotation would be included in the list of abbreviations and symbols used in the dictionary itself, at the very beginning of the volume. The annotation would be followed by a brief description, which would describe the intended meaning. What would then ensue would be the dictionary definition itself. For example, we provide a sample of how this might be done for term *most napred*_{SER}, *premet napred jednonožno i bez faze leta*_{SER}. / *front walkover*_{ENG}:

<F++><P+><spec><forward><spec><down><spec><up><spec><end path><L+><B->

This movement requires a certain amount of additional force to perform, considering that it involves moving forward, a handstand position (which requires a disruption in balance, i.e., the athlete will no longer be assuming the initial upright position), and then requires both hands and both feet to make contact with the surface, before once again assuming the upright position.

6. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to assess the possibility of analyzing a small-scale corpus of Serbian sports terms (for which their English counterparts were provided) by means of an image schema identification protocol, in order to address the issue of the comprehension and representation of the movements/elements referred to. The focus was on the dynamic mental simulations of movement in sports explained as dynamic events, describing what the athlete's body does while moving through time and space. The analysis addressed the issue of overcoming non-literal descriptions in sports terminology in favor of conveying the abstract nature of the underlying structures, thus rendering them universal. The findings outlined in this paper indicate that it is possible to use the proposed image schema identification protocol to identify the image schema clusters and their scalar values that underlie the terms included in the corpus.

The findings indicate the absence of excessive use of force, which is accompanied by moderate movement in relation to an initial starting point. The perceived core of the analyzed movements and motions seems to be a controlled loss of balance and establishing and losing contact with the surface and available apparatuses. Thus, the prototypical movement is not solely that of moving up, which emerged as the primary direction of movement, and not even by extension moving forward, but also engaging in rotations around an axis and (re)establishing contact with hard objects and surfaces. This provided us with a more detailed image schematic description of human movement in sports, one that extends beyond the initial assumption of a two-schema cluster to a four-schema cluster instead. Based on the existing and predetermined terminological principles, it may even be possible to add the results of the protocol analysis to existing dictionary definitions, working within the set parameters that meanings and descriptions are meant to be concise and aim to grasp the essence of a term. The potential for enriching dictionary definitions could be considered an additional contribution of this paper.

In terms of drawbacks and limitations, one of the pressing issues encountered by the annotators was how to present the order of the schemas and specifiers. This was particularly prevalent when determining how to differentiate between situations where only one part of the body is moving as opposed to the entire body itself. This is a point that does require further study. A potential issue may also have been that the majority of sports terms included in this analysis originated from the field of gymnastics.

Specific analyses of sports terms related to particular fields may be warranted in the future, for purposes of comparison. The study contributes to the achievement of transparency and clarity in sports terminology which is essential for unimpeded communication.

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CRediT authorship contribution statement

Janić Mitić: Conceptualization, Data collection, Data analysis, Writing – original draft and revision; Critical revision of the manuscript; **Veličković:** Conceptualization, Data collection, Data analysis, Writing – original draft and revision; Critical revision of the manuscript, Proofreading.

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Translating the biblical key word *hesed* into Arabic and Japanese: A theological and comparative semantic study

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Abstract

Translating culturally and religiously loaded words presents a challenge for translators. The nuanced meanings of these words risk being lost or distorted in the target language. One such word is *hesed* (חסד), a key Biblical Hebrew word that appears to defy translation. The aim of this paper is to investigate how the biblical word *hesed* (חסד) is rendered in Arabic and Japanese. This word is often glossed in English as ‘mercy’ or ‘lovingkindness,’ but research shows that it means neither and that it does not have an equivalent in English. By examining two Arabic and two Japanese translations of the Bible and applying corpus analysis and the Natural Semantic Metalanguage, this study has found that Arabic has a near equivalent to the target word. This equivalent, however, is not utilized in one of the two Arabic translations and appears in only a few verses in the other. As for Japanese, it does not have a near equivalent to *hesed*. The findings contribute to the field of linguistics and theology in general, as well as to Bible translation in particular. It is hoped that they will help Bible translators to pick the best rendering of *hesed* in Arabic and Japanese. It is also hoped that the discussion of the meaning of *hesed* will help Bible translators gain insights into the meaning of this word and determine whether the languages into which they are translating the Bible have exact or near equivalents of this word.

Keywords: *translation equivalents, Bible translation, hesed, Natural Semantic Metalanguage, Arabic, Japanese*

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Перевод библейского ключевого слова *hesed* на арабский и японский языки: теологическое и сравнительно-семантическое исследование

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Аннотация

Перевод слов, имеющих культурную и религиозную окраску, представляет собой сложную задачу для переводчиков. Нюансы значения этих слов могут быть утрачены или искажены в языке перевода. Одним из таких слов является *hesed* (חֶסֶד) – ключевое слово библейского иврита, которое не поддается переводу. Цель данной статьи – исследовать, как библейское слово *hesed* (חֶסֶד) переводится на арабский и японский языки. Это слово часто переводится на английский как ‘mercy’ или ‘lovingkindness’, но исследования показывают, что оно не означает ни того, ни другого и не имеет эквивалента в английском языке. Исследовав два арабских и два японских перевода Библии с применением корпусного анализа и Естественного Семантического Метаязыка, авторы данной работы обнаружили, что в арабском языке есть слово, близкое по значению к исходному. Однако оно не используется в одном из двух исследуемых арабских переводов, а в другом встречается лишь в нескольких стихах. Что касается японского языка, то в нем нет близкого эквивалента *hesed*. Полученные результаты вносят вклад в лингвистику и теологию в целом, а также в перевод Библии в частности. Они могут помочь переводчикам Библии лучше понять значение этого слова, выбрать наиболее близкий вариант его перевода на арабский и японский языки и определить, есть ли в языках, на которые они переводят Библию, точные или близкие эквиваленты этого ключевого библейского слова.

Ключевые слова: переводные эквиваленты, перевод Библии, *hesed*, Естественный Семантический Метаязык, арабский язык, японский язык

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1. Introduction

Translating culturally and religiously loaded words presents a challenge for translators (e.g. Hassanein 2022, Kabakchi & Proshina 2021, Khukhuni et al. 2019, Najjar et al. 2019, among many others). The nuanced meanings of these words risk being lost or distorted in the target language. The word *hesed* (חֶסֶד) is a key Biblical Hebrew word that appears to defy translation. Taking any two different translations of the Bible in a certain language, one can find that the two translations do not always agree on how to gloss this word in all contexts. Even the same translation may gloss this word differently in different verses, even though biblical scholars

seem to agree that this word is not polysemous, i.e. they agree that it does not have different related meanings.

To give but a single example, consider how different English translations of the Bible gloss the word *hesed* as it appears in one of the most well-known psalm verses, Ps 51:1:

- (1) חַנּוּנִי אֱלֹהִים כַּחֲסֶדְךָ כְּרֹב רַחֲמֶיךָ מִחַה פֶּשְׁעֵי
hānnēnî 'ēlōhīm kaḥasdekā; kārōb rahāmekā
 have.mercy.on.me God like.*hesed*.your like.to.great mercies.your
məhēh pāšā 'āy
 blot.out transgressions.mine
 'Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your *hesed*; According to the
 greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions'

Of the 38 English translations of the Old Testament found on (ENA, August 25, 2025)¹ (accessed on January 4, 2025), 19 translations gloss *hesed* in Ps 51:1 as *mercy*, six as *loyalty*, two as *love*, two as *goodness*, two as *kindness*, two as *loving-kindness*, one as *steadfast love*, one as *faithful love*, one as *constant love*, one as *to be faithful*, and one as *faithfulness*. This demonstrates that English does not seem to have a near equivalent of Biblical Hebrew *hesed*.

Such a finding might not be surprising to those who know that English and Biblical Hebrew belong to two different language families. English is Indo-European whilst Biblical Hebrew is Semitic. At the same time, they may expect *hesed* to have exact or near equivalents in other Semitic languages, such as Arabic.

The lack of an English (near) equivalent of Biblical Hebrew *hesed* highlights one main challenge that Bible translators face, that is the challenge of rendering culturally and religiously loaded words (Bassnett 2003: 53, Scorgie, Strauss & Voth 2003: 22–23, Habib 2019: 21). The nuanced meanings of such words risk being lost or distorted in translation. Therefore, it is important for translators to understand the difference in meaning between these words and their counterparts in the languages into which they are translating the Bible. This can enable them to identify the best rendering and, where possible, to (briefly) comment on the semantic difference between the target word and its rendering.

This paper aims to investigate how the Biblical Hebrew word *hesed* is rendered in Arabic and Japanese Bible translations and whether these two languages possess exact or near equivalents of this word. It further seeks to evaluate the semantic differences between *hesed* and its Arabic and Japanese counterparts and spell out these differences in self-explanatory and cross-translatable terms.

Investigating these two languages stems from four reasons. First, even though Christians form a very small minority in both the Arab world and Japan, Bible translation remains a vibrant endeavor in both regions. Multiple Arabic and Japanese versions of the Bible have been produced over the past century. This demonstrates that translation activity is driven by more than sheer numbers. It can

¹ www.biblehub.com

reflect cultural, theological, and/or missiological commitments, which make studying Arabic and Japanese Bible translations of interest to linguists and theologians. Second, Arabic is the mother tongue of one of the authors, and Japanese is the native language of the other author. Third, while (1) English is a language whose speakers are largely Christians or have a Christian background and who, for centuries, have gone to great lengths to translate the Bible numerous times, and while (2) akin to Hebrew, Arabic is a Semitic language and one can expect finding an Arabic equivalent to Biblical Hebrew *hesed*, Japanese is neither connected to Christianity nor to the Semitic language family. Therefore, it would be revealing to investigate how translators gloss *hesed* in Japanese. Fourth, linguacultural insights can be gained when comparing Biblical Hebrew, MS Arabic, and Japanese. A language is a window into the culture of the people who speak this language natively, and different languages can have different cultural and/or religious key words, such as Biblical Hebrew *hesed*. The meanings of these key words need to be analyzed and explained, especially to people whose languages lack equivalents of these words.

Investigating the meaning of Biblical Hebrew *hesed* and its possible equivalents in Arabic and Japanese can be of importance to Arabic- and Japanese-speaking Christians, who number in millions. The reason is twofold. First, they read the Bible and use it in their liturgies and prayers. Second, Jesus quotes Hos 6:6 twice, in Mt 9:13 and Mt 12:7, and Hos 6:6 includes the word *hesed*. Thus understanding the meaning of *hesed* can help, not only translators and biblical experts, but also ordinary Christians to understand this key word and the verses in which it appears in the Old Testament and in the New Testament.

The structure of this paper is as follows. The next section gives a brief review of studies on the target word. It is followed by the Study Section, which is divided into three subsections. The first two subsections shed light on the data and methodology, respectively. The third subsection investigates the Arabic and Japanese counterparts of the target word. The last two sections are the discussion and conclusion, respectively.

2. Literature review

Before looking into how Arabic and Japanese translations of the Bible gloss *hesed*, it is necessary to understand the meaning of this word. *Hesed* has extensively been studied, and presenting a summary of each study on this word is not practical in this paper, at least owing to space and length constraints. Therefore, only a few studies that have investigated this word will be presented.

One can divide the opinions of biblical scholars on the meaning of *hesed* into two main categories. The first category includes opinions of scholars who argue that *hesed* is closely tied to the concept of *berit* (בְּרִית) ‘covenant.’ The other category includes the opinions of those who argue that *hesed* is either an emotion or a gratuitous act that is not necessarily connected to any covenant.

Several researchers have argued that *hesed* refers to an action that is done owing to a covenant between the doer and receiver of *hesed* (Zobel 1986, Routledge 1995). Zobel (1986) posits two meanings of *hesed*; the first meaning is secular, whilst the other is religious. Both meanings have three constitutive elements: activeness, sociality, and endurance. *Hesed* is active and social in the sense that it is an act by which one person helps another, and it is enduring in the sense that the act of *hesed* is not an isolated act but a lasting attitude toward others. The only three differences between the two meanings, according to Zobel, pertain to the subject of *hesed*, the realm of *hesed*, and to reciprocity. First, in the secular meaning, the subject is a human being, while, in the religious meaning, the subject is God. Second, the secular meaning refers to an act done between members of the same family or clan; the religious meaning, on the other hand, is extended to the whole of Israel. Third, in all the occurrences in which *hesed* has a secular meaning, the contexts implicitly or explicitly imply that the one who does *hesed* for others “is justified in expecting an equivalent act in return” (Zobel 1986: 47). The same does not go for *hesed* with its religious meaning; God does not expect from human beings to repay him, since they simply cannot do that.

Having said that, the secular meaning and the religious meaning should not be viewed as though they were very different. It is instructive to quote Zobel in this regard:

God’s kindness towards an individual places that individual in a new relationship with his neighbor, a relationship based on Yahweh’s kindness; in his daily contacts with others he must keep the kindness he has experienced, he must practice righteousness and justice, kindness and mercy. Thus *hesed* shapes not only the relationship of Yahweh with human beings, but also that of human beings among themselves. (Zobel: 63)

From the quotation above, it can be concluded that the *hesed* that one human being does for another human being should be modeled after the *hesed* that God does for human beings. That is to say, it should extend to all, and it should not expect repayment.

Other biblical scholars did not view *hesed* from the prism of *berît* ‘covenant,’ and still could not agree on whether it should be referred to as an emotion or an action (Shapiro 2013, Routledge 1995, Olbricht 2009). Shapiro (2013: xi), for example, defines God’s *hesed* as the “unlimited, unconditional, unconditioned, and all-inclusive love for all creation.” He explains that God’s *hesed* is unlimited and all-inclusive in the sense that it extends to all his creatures. It is unconditional because one cannot do anything to merit it, gain it, or even avoid it, and it is unconditioned in the sense that it is not restricted by our ways of understanding of what is good and what is evil (Shapiro 2013: xi–x). Thus, from Shapiro’s definition, God’s *hesed* can be understood as God’s love and help that touches everyone and everything everywhere and at all times.

Kittle, Bromiley, and Friederich (2006) point out that the Septuagint (i.e. the BC 3rd-century Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible) uses *éleos* for *hesed*. At the

same time, they remark that the two words are not exact translation equivalents. Greek *éleos* is a *pathos* ‘emotion’ that arises owing to contact with a hardship that another experiences unjustly (p. 477). Biblical Hebrew *hesed*, on the other hand, is an attitude that human beings or God can have because of mutual relationship (p. 479).

Kugler and Magori (2023) use the romanized word *hesed* in their paper arguing that this Biblical Hebrew term embodies many positive attitudes, such as love, mercy, lovingkindness, and faithfulness. Furthermore, as the aim of their paper is to examine the Book of Ruth from the prism of this term, they reach the conclusion that Ruth’s *hesed* is not gratuitous but was a tool for surviving.

Habib (2024) has investigated the meaning of *hesed*, by recording and scrutinizing all 247 verses in which this word occurs. He concludes that, in 245 verses, *hesed* has one meaning, which is a good action that someone does for another who is in need. In other words, this word is not polysemous, as biblical translations may suggest. Using the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (Goddard & 1994, 2002, 2014, Wierzbicka 2021, 2022), Habib explicates the meaning of this word using simple, universal concepts, such as *I*, *you*, *someone*, and *people* (see the Methodology subsection in this paper). These concepts are simple in the sense that they cannot be defined using simpler terms, and they are universal in the sense that they have exact equivalents in (nearly) all languages. Habib provides two explications of the meaning of *hesed*, depending on who the agent is.

If the agent is God, the meaning of the sentence ‘God does *hesed* for people’ can be formulated as:

- (A) God does *hesed* for people
 - a. God knows that it is like this:
 - very very bad things will happen to people
 - they will not happen if good things happen for them
 - people can’t do these good things
 - b. Because of it, God does these good things for people

The explication shows that human life is sustained by God’s good actions. Without God’s *hesed*, humankind would face predicaments that they cannot overcome. Habib justifies the inclusion of the words *people* and *good things* by pointing out that the Biblical Hebrew word for *God* collocates with *rah* *hesed* ‘abounding in ‘hesed’ and *hesed* *la’ă lāpīm* ‘‘hesed’ for thousands.’

If the agent is a human being, the meaning of the sentence ‘Someone does *hesed* for someone else’ can be spelled out as:

- (B) Someone does *hesed* for someone else
 - a. Someone can think like this about someone else:
 - Something very very bad can happen to this other someone
 - It will not happen if I do something good for this other someone
 - I can do it
 - I want to do it
 - When I do it, this other someone doesn’t have to do anything
 - b. Because of it, this someone does something good for this other someone

This explication points out that a person is facing an immanent predicament and that this predicament can be prevented if someone knowingly and willingly performs a good action. This paper will rely on Habib's research and will build on it in identifying the nearest equivalents of *hesed* in Arabic and Japanese.

While the next section will primarily investigate the Modern Standard Arabic and Japanese counterparts of Biblical Hebrew *hesed*, it will offer insights into the meaning of this word, thus confirming whether or not it is related to the concept of *ḥerîṭ* (חֵרִית) 'covenant' and whether it is an emotion or an act.

3. Data and method

This section is further divided into three subsections. The first two subsections discuss the data and methodology, respectively, while the last subsection investigates the Arabic and Japanese counterparts of Biblical Hebrew *hesed*.

3.1. Data

To gain a full understanding of the word *hesed*, the Bible Hub Concordance (ENA, August, 25, 2025)² was used to identify the occurrences of this word. All 247 biblical verses in which this word occurs were examined in the original language. The different verses where this word occurs were recorded, while specifying the different verbs that collocate with *hesed*, as well as – where the context makes it clear – who the doer and receiver of *hesed* are, whether or not the act of *hesed* is related to the idea of a covenant, and whether or not the act can be deduced to be gratuitous. This last element, it should be pointed out, requires examining a certain context while bearing in mind other contexts related to it. To give but a single example, in 2 Chron 24, someone is described as having done *hesed* for another without mentioning the reason for doing so. Since this same incident is narrated in 2 Kings 12, this context, too, should be examined to see whether or not the reason for doing *hesed* is mentioned there.

In addition, the following two Modern Standard Arabic and the two Japanese translations have been examined, while recording how each translation renders *hesed* in each of the 247 contexts:

- The *Arabic Catholic Version* (ACV) is a Catholic translation. It was published first in 1889 but has gone through several revisions since.
- The *Arabic Life Application Bible* (ALAB) is a 20th-century Protestant translation. In addition to the Arabic translation of the biblical text, it provides commentary on most verses while linking them to the daily life of the faithful.
- The *New Japanese Bible* (NJB) is the standard evangelical Japanese Bible; it was published first in 1970 and afterward went through three revisions in 1978, 2003, and 2017.

² <https://biblehub.com/concordance/>

- The *New Interconfessional Translation Bible* (NITB) is widely used among Catholic, Protestant, and other denominations. It was published first in 1987 and was revised in 2018.

Except for ALAB (which was translated from English into Arabic), all the other translations have been translated from the original languages, i.e. the Old Testament was translated from Biblical Hebrew and the New Testament from Greek. Additionally, these Arabic and Japanese translations are among the most widely used translations of the Bible in the Arab world and Japan, respectively.

3.2. Methodology

As mentioned in the Introduction, different translations of the Bible into the same language can render the same word differently. Therefore, exploring the meanings of these renderings and determining which one is the most appropriate becomes necessary. To do so, two tools can be helpful: corpus analysis and the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM).

A corpus is a huge collection of texts written (or uttered and recorded) by native speakers of a certain language. Thus, it reflects how native speakers of that language use their language in different contexts. This paper relies on two corpora, arabiCorpus and the Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese (BCCWJ)³. arabiCorpus is largely a Modern Standard (MS) Arabic corpus that has approximately 173.6 million words collected from newspapers, premodern and modern literary works, and nonfictional works (such as political speeches). The BCCWJ stores data on 14.3 million words across genres such as books, magazines, newspapers, white papers, blogs, online forums, textbooks and law.

The Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) is an approach developed by Prof. Anna Wierzbicka (ANU, Australia), Prof. Cliff Goddard (Griffith University, Australia), and colleagues. It has been used in the semantic analysis of a large number of concepts, including religious ones. It has also been used in unpacking the meanings of biblical texts (Wierzbicka 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2004a,b, 2018, 2019).

Based on rigorous investigation of genetically and typologically distinct languages, NSM researchers have identified 65 words that are simple and universal (Goddard & Wierzbicka 1994, Goddard & Wierzbicka 2002, Peeters 2006, Amberber 2008). They are simple in the sense that they cannot be defined via simpler words, and they are universal in the sense that they have exact equivalents in nearly all languages. These 65 words are:

I, YOU, SOMEONE, SOMETHING, PEOPLE, BODY, KIND, PART, THIS, THE SAME, OTHER, ONE, TWO, MUCH, SOME, ALL, GOOD, BAD, BIG, SMALL, THINK, KNOW, WANT, DON'T WANT, FEEL, SEE, HEAR, SAY, WORDS, TRUE, BE, THERE IS, MINE, LIVE, DIE, WHEN/TIME, NOW, BEFORE, AFTER, A LONG TIME, A SHORT

³ <https://clrd.ninjal.ac.jp/bccwj/en/>

TIME, FOR SOME TIME, MOMENT, WHERE/PLACE, HERE, ABOVE, BELOW, FAR, NEAR, SIDE, INSIDE, NOT, MAYBE, CAN, BECAUSE, IF, VERY, MORE, and LIKE.

The importance of utilizing these words in the semantic analysis of complex concepts lies in the fact that many of these concepts in any given language are language- and culture-specific. Thus, they do not have either exact equivalents or equivalents at all in other languages. When using, e.g., English (as is the case in most academic publications) to describe or define a complex concept in another language via these 65 words, the definition of this complex concept can be readily translated and verified by native speakers of that language. If, however, the definition includes complex English-specific words, translating it can become challenging and may result in meaning loss. This, in turn, can hinder its verification with native speakers of that language.

The next section will investigate the Arabic and Japanese counterparts of *hesed* while making use of corpus analysis and NSM.

4. The Arabic and Japanese counterparts of *hesed*

Using the Bible Hub concordance, *hesed* was located in 247 biblical verses: 11 in Genesis (henceforth, Gen), 4 in Exodus (Ex), 1 in Leviticus (Lev), 2 in Numbers (Num), 3 in Deuteronomy (Deut), 3 in Joshua (Josh), 2 in Judges (Judg), 3 in Ruth, 4 in 1 Samuel (1 Sam), 12 in 2 Samuel (2 Sam), 5 in 1 Kings, 5 in 1 Chronicles (1 Chron), 10 in 2 Chronicles (2 Chron), 3 in Ezra, 5 in Nehemiah (Neh), 2 in Esther, 3 in Job, 127 in Psalms (Ps), 11 in Proverbs (Prov), 8 in Isaiah (Is), 6 in Jeremiah (Jer), 2 Daniel (Dan), 6 in Hosea (Hos), 1 in Joel, 2 in Jonah (Jon), 3 in Micah (Mic), and 1 in Zechariah (Zech).

On two occasions, it has been found to have a negative meaning – the near equivalent of English *disgrace*; these two meanings appear in Lev 20:17 and Prov 14:34. The meaning of *hesed* in Ps 52:1 can also be considered negative. In all the other 244 occurrences, *hesed* clearly carries a positive meaning. Put differently, *hesed* is homonymous, namely it has two different unrelated meanings, one negative and the other positive. These findings align with those of other scholars (Habib 2024, Routledge 1995, Sakenfeld 2002, Zobel 1986). The focus of this paper is on the positive meaning, which is used in 99% of the verses.

Having closely examined all 244 verses in the original Hebrew text, the present authors confirm the conclusion reached by Habib (2024). *Hesed* has only one meaning in these verses, and it refers to an action that someone does for another in need. This semantic consistency in the original text is not reflected, however, in different Arabic and Japanese translations of the Bible. In other words, when investigating two or more translations of the Bible into Arabic or Japanese, one does not find an agreement on how to gloss this word, even in the same translation.

In the following two subsections, the results of how two Arabic and two Japanese translations of the Bible render *hesed* will be presented. In addition, these

renderings will be discussed, highlighting the renderings that most closely capture *ḥesed* in each language.

4.1. The Arabic equivalent of *ḥesed*

In the *Arabic Catholic Version* (ACV), *ḥesed* is translated 246 times; the only occurrence that is not translated is that in Jon 2:8. The table below shows how *ḥesed* is rendered in ACV; the numbers refer to the number of times in which *ḥesed* is rendered as a certain word in Arabic. For example, *ḥesed* is translated as *ʿamānat* (أمانة) ‘loyalty’ once but as *ʿār* (عار) ‘disgrace’ three times. The renderings are ordered alphabetically.

Table 1. How ACV renders *ḥesed*

Rendering	No.	Rendering	No.	Rendering	No.	Rendering	No.
<i>ʿamānat</i> (أمانة) ‘loyalty’	1	<i>jamāl</i> (جمال) ‘beauty’	1	<i>mawaddat</i> (مودّة) ‘friendliness’	1	<i>ṣalāḥ</i> (صلاح) ‘righteousness’	1
<i>ʿār</i> (عار) ‘disgrace’	3	<i>khayr</i> (خير) ‘goodness _{sg} ’	1	<i>niʿam</i> (نعم) ‘graces’	1	<i>taqwā</i> (تقوى) ‘piety’	1
<i>ʿaṭf</i> (عطف) ‘sympathy’	1	<i>khayrāt</i> (خيرات) ‘goodness _{pl} ’	1	<i>niʿmat</i> (نعمة) ‘grace’	1	<i>tatafaddalin</i> (تتفضلين) ‘you do a favor’	1
<i>ḥimāyat</i> (حماية) ‘protection’	1	<i>mabarrāt</i> (مبّرات) ‘righteous deeds’	3	<i>raʿfat</i> (رأفة) ‘great mercy’	4	<i>yarḥam</i> (يرحم) ‘to have mercy’	1
<i>ḥuṣwat</i> (حظوة) ‘favor’	1	<i>marāḥim</i> (مراحم) ‘mercies’	11	<i>raḥmat</i> (رحمة) ‘mercy’	211	–	–

The *Arabic Life Application Version* (ALAB) glosses 243 of the 247 occurrences of *ḥesed* and leaves five occurrences untranslated. Here is how *ḥesed* is glossed:

Table 2. How ALAB renders *ḥesed*

Rendering	No.	Rendering	No.	Rendering	No.	Rendering	No.
<i>ʿahd</i> (عهد) ‘covenant’	1	<i>ḥasanāt</i> (حسنات) ‘gratuitous deeds’	1	<i>marāḥim</i> (مراحم) ‘mercies’	8	<i>riḍa</i> (رضا) ‘satisfaction’	2
<i>ʿaḥsan</i> (أحسن) ‘to act gratuitously’	8	<i>ḥubb</i> (حب) ‘love’	2	<i>maʿrūf</i> (معروف) ‘favor’	13	<i>ṣalāḥ</i> (صلاح) ‘righteousness’	1
<i>ʿaʾmāl ṣāliḥat</i> (أعمال صالحة) ‘righteous deeds’	1	<i>ḥusn al-jamīl</i> (حسن الجميل) ‘good act’	1	<i>niʿmat</i> (نعمة) ‘grace’	3	<i>talaṭṭuf</i> (تلطف) ‘being kind’	1
<i>ʿār</i> (عار) ‘disgrace’	2	<i>ʾiḥsān</i> (إحسان) ‘gratuitous act’	16	<i>raʾafāt</i> (رأفات) ‘great mercies’	1	<i>wafāʾ</i> (وفاء) ‘faithfulness’	1

Rendering	No.	Rendering	No.	Rendering	No.	Rendering	No.
<i>bahā</i> (بهاء) 'splendor'	1	<i>'ihsānāt</i> (إحسانات) 'gratuitous acts'	3	<i>ra'fat</i> (رأفة) 'great mercy'	2	<i>walā</i> (ولاء) 'loyalty'	2
<i>faḍl</i> (فضل) 'favor/grace'	1	<i>khayr</i> (خير) 'goodness _{sg} '	3	<i>raḥīm</i> (رحيم) 'merciful'	1	<i>yatara'af</i> (يتراّف) 'to have great mercy'	1
<i>ḥalīm</i> (حليم) 'patient'	1	<i>luṭf</i> (لطف) 'kindness'	3	<i>raḥmat</i> (رحمة) 'mercy'	162	–	–

The following table compares the renderings of *ḥesed* in ACV to their counterparts in ALAB. For example, the Biblical Hebrew word *ḥesed* is rendered as 'amānat (أمانة) 'loyalty' in one verse in ACV; in the same verse, ALAB renders it 'ihsān (إحسان) 'gratuitous act.' ACV translates *ḥesed* as *raḥmat* (رحمة) 'mercy' in 211 verses; in these same verses, ALAB translates it using different Arabic words, although in the majority of these verses (154), ALAB renders it as *raḥmat* 'mercy.' The null set symbol '∅' is used to indicate that ALAB translators did not gloss the word *ḥesed* in one or more verses.

Table 3. A comparison of how ACV and ALAB render *ḥesed*

ACV: (no. of occurrences)	ALAB counterparts of ACV (no. of occurrences)
'amānat 'loyalty' (1)	'ihsān 'gratuitous act' (1)
tatafaḍḍalīn 'you do a favor' (1)	ma'rūf 'favor' (1)
taqwā 'piety' (1)	∅ (1)
jamāl 'beauty' (1)	bahā 'splendor' (1)
ḥuzwat 'favor' (1)	riḍa 'satisfaction' (1)
ḥimāyat 'protection' (1)	raḥmat 'mercy' (1)
khayr 'goodness _{sg} ' (1)	raḥmat 'mercy' (1)
khayrāt 'goodness _{pl} ' (1)	marāḥim 'mercies' (1)
ra'fat 'great mercy' (4)	'ihsān 'gratuitous act' (1), ḥubb 'love' (1), raḥmat 'mercy' (2)
raḥmat 'mercy' (211)	∅ (2), 'ahd 'covenant' (1), 'ihsān 'gratuitous act' (13), 'aḥsan 'to act gratuitously' (8), talatṭuf 'being kind' (1), ḥalīm 'patient' (1), ḥubb 'love' (1), ḥusn al-jamāl 'good act' (1), khayr 'goodness _{sg} ' (3), ra'fat 'great mercy' (2), raḥmat 'mercy' (154), raḥīm 'merciful' (1), riḍa 'satisfaction' (1), faḍl 'favor/grace' (1), luṭf 'kindness' (3), marāḥim 'mercies' (2), ma'rūf 'favor' (12), ni'mat 'grace' (2), walā 'loyalty' (1), yatara'af 'to have great mercy' (1),
marāḥim 'mercies' (11)	'ihsān 'gratuitous act' (1), 'ihsānāt 'gratuitous acts' (3), raḥmat 'mercy' (2), marāḥim 'mercies' (5)
yarḥam 'to have mercy' (1)	wafā 'faithfulness' (1)
ṣalāḥ 'righteousness' (1)	ṣalāḥ 'righteousness' (1)
'ār 'disgrace' (3)	'ār 'disgrace' (2), raḥmat 'mercy' (1)
'aṭf 'sympathy' (1)	∅ (1)
mabarrāt 'righteous deeds' (3)	∅ (1), 'a'māl ṣāliḥat 'righteous deeds' (1), ḥasanāt 'gratuitous deeds' (1),
mawaddat 'friendliness' (1)	walā 'loyalty' (1)
ni'am 'graces' (1)	ra'afāt 'great mercies' (1)
ni'mat 'grace' (1)	raḥmat 'mercy' (1)

As seen from the table, in 162 of the 247 occurrences of *ḥesed*, ACV and ALAB gloss *ḥesed* in the same verse using the same word. In 154 of these 162 verses, they gloss it as *raḥmat* (رحمة) ‘mercy,’ in 5 verses as *marāḥim* (مراحم) ‘mercies,’ in one verse as *ṣalāḥ* (صلاح) ‘righteousness,’ and in two verses as *‘ār* (عار) ‘disgrace.’⁴

None of these renderings perfectly reflects the meaning of *ḥesed*. The word *ṣalāḥ* ‘righteousness’ refers to morally correct behavior, encompassing both actions and speech. The words *raḥmat* ‘mercy’ and *marāḥim* ‘mercies’ include the word *yash‘ur* ‘feel’ in their definitions, while Biblical Hebrew *ḥesed* does not. Additionally, *raḥmat* ‘mercy’ requires hierarchy. According to Habib (2024: 369), “One has mercy on another only if the former has authority over the latter. This authority can be permanent, as in the case of a king and his servant, or temporary, as in the case of a person who has kidnapped another. In the case of *ḥesed*, on the other hand, one can do it for those who are above, below, or on a par with him/her.”

As for the rest of the glosses, the only ones that refer to acts are *‘iḥsān* (إحسان) ‘gratuitous act,’ *ma‘rūf* (معروف) ‘favor,’ *ḥusn al-jamīl* (حسن الجميل) ‘good act,’ *‘a‘māl ṣāliḥat* (أعمال صالحة) ‘righteous deeds,’ and *ḥasanāt* (حسنات) ‘gratuitous deeds/acts.’

Arabic *‘iḥsān* ‘gratuitous act’ can be argued to be the best translation and even as the Arabic nearest equivalent of Biblical Hebrew *ḥesed*, as it is used to refer to a good act that someone (God or a human being) does for another (a human being) without waiting for any repayment. Here are two illustrative examples from arabiCorpus:

- (1) تأمل عظيم فضل الله وإحسانه
ta‘ammal ‘aẓīm faḍl ‘allāh wa‘iḥsānih
 contemplate great favor God and.gratuitous.act
 ‘Contemplate the greatness of God’s favor and gratuitous act.’
- (2) أمر الله بصلة الأرحام والبر والإحسان
‘amar ‘allah biṣilat al‘arḥām walbirr
 ordered God in.connection the.wombs and.the.righteousness
wal‘iḥsān
 and.the.gratuitous.act
 ‘God ordered [people] to take care of their relatives and act righteously and gratuitously.’

Among Muslims, but not Christians, *‘iḥsān* can refer to worshipping God (Brown 2009: 180). This meaning will not be considered in this paper, because it is an Islamic concept with which – based on anecdotal evidence – native Arabic-speaking Christians do not seem to be familiar.

⁴ As mentioned earlier, Biblical Hebrew *ḥesed* is homonymous, that is it has two different unrelated meanings. One of these meanings is negative while the second is positive. This paper focuses only on the positive meaning, and therefore, the word *‘ār* ‘disgrace’ will not be discussed further.

The word *ḥasanāt* ‘gratuitous deeds/alms’ can equally be used to render Biblical Hebrew *ḥesed*, as it refers to good acts performed by God or a human being for someone in need. Here are two examples from arabiCorpus; they respectively show God and a human being as the agents of the action. Also, the second example demonstrates that the act is done *liwajh* ‘allāh ‘for the sake of God,’ an Arabic phrase that is employed to show that the agent is doing the good act without awaiting any recompense.

- (3) ربنا آتانا في الدنيا حسنة
rabbanā 'ātinā fī 'aldunyā ḥasanat
 lord.our give.us in the.life gratuitous.deed
 ‘Lord, do a gratuitous act for us in this world.’
- (4) من أنفق لوجه الله، ضاعف الله له الأجر، فالحسنة بعشرة أمثالها
man 'anfaq liwajh 'allāh, dā'af 'allāh lah 'al'ajra,
 whoever spent to.face God doubled God for.him the.reward
faḥṣanat bi'ashrat amthālihā
 for.the.gratuitous.act in.ten equivalents.its
 ‘Whoever spends money for the sake of God, God will double their reward, for the gratuitous act [is rewarded] tenfold.’

The word *'ihsān* ‘gratuitous act’ and *ḥasanat* ‘gratuitous deed/alms’ are derived from the same root $\sqrt{hsn}$ (ح.س.ن). There seems to be only two differences between them. The first is that *'ihsān* ‘gratuitous act’ can act as a count or non-count noun while *ḥasanat* ‘gratuitous deed/alms’ is a count noun. Thus, *'ihsān* ‘gratuitous act’ behaves like Biblical Hebrew *ḥesed*. Second, *'ihsān* ‘gratuitous act’ has one meaning, whilst *ḥasanāt* can mean either ‘gratuitous deeds/alms’ or ‘advantages.’

As for *ma'rūf* ‘favor,’ its agent is a human being and not God. The word *ma'rūf* ‘favor’ occurs 33,236 times in arabiCorpus, but in none of these contexts is God the doer of the action. Therefore, *ḥesed* can be glossed as *ma'rūf* ‘favor’ in all the verses where the agent is a human being. Note that, while ACV never uses this word for this purpose, ALAB uses it in 13 verses.

The phrase *ḥusn 'aljamīl* ‘good act’ is used only once in ALAB, and it is not frequent in Arabic. It appears only twice in arabiCorpus. Also, of three Arabic dictionaries consulted (1986, Ibn Manzour 1988, Qazwini 1999), only *Almunjid* (1986: 102) includes this phrase and defines it via the words *'ihsān* ‘gratuitous act’ and *ma'rūf* ‘favor.’ This phrase can still be understood by many Arabic speakers because, in their different non-standard Arabic dialects, there is the word *jmīl* (جميل). In these dialects, this word refers to an act that a human being does for another who is in need of help.

The phrase *'a'māl ṣāliḥat* ‘righteous deeds’ refers to good deeds in general and not necessarily to good deeds that one does for another who is in need. The following example from arabiCoprpus is illustrative. It clearly shows that *'a'māl ṣāliḥat* can refer to prayer and fasting and not necessarily to a gratuitous act done for someone in need:

- (5) كلما أذنب ذنباً، أتبعه بعمل صالح من صلاة أو صيام أو صدقة
kullamā 'adhnaba dhanban, 'atba 'ah bi 'amal ṣāliḥ min ṣalāt
 whenever sinned sin he.followed.it in.act righteous from prayer
wa ṣiyām 'aw ṣadaqat
 and fasting or almsgiving
 'Whenever he committed a sin, he followed it with a righteous act of
 prayer and fasting or almsgiving'

The reader may wonder why ACV and ALAB have opted for *raḥmat* 'mercy' in most occurrences despite the existence of a better rendering. The only explanation appears to be the effect of previous Bible translations on these two translations, particularly the Septuagint. The Septuagint, also known as LXX, is a Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible from the 3rd century BC. Greek does not have an equivalent of Biblical Hebrew *ḥesed*. Therefore, when the Bible was translated into Greek, the translators used the word *eleos* (ἔλεος). The meaning of this word, however, includes the concept of 'feel,' and its normally glossed in English as 'mercy' and in Arabic as *raḥmat* (رحمة) 'mercy' (Bultmann 2006, Habib 2024: 378–380).

To accurately compare the meanings of the Arabic renderings of Biblical Hebrew *ḥesed* to that of *ḥesed*, it would help if these meanings were defined using words that exist in both languages. This ensures that the comparison is based on shared concepts and reduces the risk of misinterpretation. The Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM), discussed previously, offers a set of 65 such shared concepts. Owing to space constraints and to avoid a lengthy discussion of the 30 different renderings, the explications of only two renderings will be presented. The first is *'ihsān*, which this paper argues to be the best rendering. The second is *raḥmat*, which is the most frequently used rendering in both ACV and ALAB. Like Habib (2024), this paper argues that the meaning of each of these words differs depending on whether the agent is God or a human being. Theologically speaking, while human beings think, God does not think but knows.

The meaning of the verb *yuḥsin*, from which the noun *'ihsān* 'gratuitous act' is derived, can be explicated as follows:

- (C) God *yuḥsin* [does *'ihsān*] for people
 a. God knows that it is like this:
 Very very bad things will happen to people
 They will not happen if good things happen for them
 People can't do these good things
 b. Because of it, God does these good things for people
 (D) Someone *yuḥsin* [does *'ihsān*] for someone else
 a. Someone can think like this about someone else:
 Something very very bad can happen to this other someone
 It will not happen if I do something good for this other someone
 I can do it
 I want to do it

When I do it, this other someone doesn't have to do anything

- b. Because of it, this someone does something good for this other someone
- c. When this someone does this, this someone does not think like this:
'I want this other someone to do something good for me because of this'

When comparing these two explications with those of Habib (2024), one can see that the meanings of the Arabic and Biblical Hebrew terms are identical when God is the agent. When the agent is a human being, on the other hand, the two explications are the same except for the last component. Arabic *'iḥsān* refers to an act whose agent does not expect anything in return. The meaning of Biblical Hebrew *ḥesed*, however, does not have this last component because, as Habib explains, in some – but not all – contexts, the agent of *ḥesed* expects something in return (see, e.g., Josh 2: 12).

The meaning of the verb *yarḥam*, from which the noun *raḥmat* 'mercy' is derived, can be spelled out as follows:

(E) God *yarḥam* [has *raḥmat* toward] people

- a. God knows that it is like this:

People often do not live like I want

Because of it, very very bad things will happen to them

They will not happen if these people want to be with me

When they want it, I feel something very good toward them

- b. Because of it, very very bad things will not happen

The explication above captures the idea that God has *raḥmat* 'mercy' toward sinners. A sinner is anyone who does not live according to God's will. If a person sins, they expose themselves to very bad consequences, the worst of which is total separation from God in the case of dying without repentance. On the other hand, if the sinner repents, God forgives, and the very bad consequences are avoided.

(F) Someone *yarḥam* [has *raḥmat* toward] someone else

- a. Someone can think like this about someone else:

I feel very bad toward this someone

I can do something very bad to this someone

I want to do something very bad to this someone

This someone knows this

This someone feels very bad

This someone thinks like this about me:

'This someone is (like) someone above me

This someone can do something very bad to me

This someone wants to do something very bad to me

I don't want this

I want this someone to feel something toward me

because of it, this someone will not do this very bad thing to me'

Because of it, this someone does something

Because of it, I feel something toward this someone

- b. Because of it, this someone does not do this very bad thing to this other someone

A human being (the agent) typically has *rahmat* ‘mercy’ on another human being (the recipient) when the following scenario takes place. The agent feels very bad toward the recipient, due to the recipient’s identity or action. The agent can and wants to punish the recipient; the latter is aware of the imminent danger, so he or she acts in a certain way. As a result, the agent experiences an emotional response that inhibits him or her from inflicting the punishment on the recipient. The component ‘this someone is (like) someone above me’ is necessary because having *rahmat* ‘mercy’ entails either temporary or permanent superiority of some kind. This idea is reflected in the Arabic idiom *taht rahmat fulān* ‘at the mercy of someone.’

It is worth noting that Arabic-speaking Christians use the phrase *a‘māl alrahmat* (أعمال الرحمة) ‘acts of mercy’ to refer to gratuitous acts that one does for other people in need. Arabic-speaking Muslims do not seem to use it; this is attested by its nonexistence in *arabiCorpus*. The explication of this phrase would be identical to that of *‘ihsān* ‘gratuitous act’ with the exception that it will include the word *feel*.

4.2. The Japanese counterpart of *hesed*

Hesed is translated 247 times in the *New Japanese Bible* (NJB). Table 4 shows how *hesed* is rendered in NJB.

Table 4. How NJB renders *hesed*

Rendering	No.	Rendering	No.	Rendering	No.	Rendering	No.
<i>ai</i> ‘love’	3	<i>koui</i> ‘favor’	2	<i>seijitsu na okonai</i> ‘righteous deeds’	1	<i>shinsetsu</i> ‘kindness’	2
<i>chūsei</i> ‘loyalty’	1	<i>megumi</i> ‘blessing’	200	<i>seijitsu</i> ‘righteousness’	10	<i>yūjo</i> ‘friendship’	1
<i>hazubekikoto</i> ‘shameful act’	1	<i>sakae</i> ‘prosperity’	1	<i>shinjitsu</i> ‘truth’	9	—	—
<i>hazukashime</i> ‘humiliation’	2	<i>sei</i> ‘sincerity’	8	<i>shinjitsu no ai</i> ‘true love’	6	—	—

The *New Interconfessional Translation Bible* (NITB) glosses 244 of the 247 occurrences of *hesed*, leaving three occurrences untranslated. Here is how *hesed* is glossed in NITB:

The following table compares the translations of *hesed* in NJB with those in NITB. In one verse, the Biblical Hebrew word *hesed* is rendered as *ai* ‘love’ in NJB, while the same verse in NITB translates it as *itsukushimi* ‘affection.’ In 200 verses, NJB renders *hesed* as *megumi* ‘blessing’; in these same verses, NITB uses different Japanese terms, although in most of these (188 verses), it is translated as *itsukushimi* ‘affection.’

Table 5. How NITB renders *hesed*

Rendering	No.	Rendering	No.	Rendering	No.	Rendering	No.
<i>ai</i> 'love'	4	<i>haji</i> 'shame'	2	<i>koui</i> 'favor'	4	<i>shinjitsu no itsukushimi</i> 'true affection'	1
<i>aijo</i> 'affection'	1	<i>hazubeki koui</i> 'shameful act'	1	<i>magokoro</i> 'true heart'	3	<i>shinsetsu</i> 'kindness'	1
<i>awaremi</i> 'pity'	1	<i>itawaru</i> 'care for'	1	<i>megumi</i> 'blessing'	4	<i>tsukusu</i> 'devote'	1
<i>chūjitsu</i> 'faithfulness'	13	<i>itsukushimi</i> 'affection'	199	<i>śasae</i> 'support'	1	<i>yūkouteiki na taido</i> 'friendly attitude'	1
<i>chūsetsu</i> 'loyalty'	1	<i>keishin</i> 'piety'	1	<i>seii</i> 'sincerity'	4	–	–

Table 6. A comparison of how NJB and NITB render *hesed*

NJB: (no. of occurrences)	NITB counterparts of ACV (no. of occurrences)
<i>ai</i> 'love' (3)	<i>itsukushimi</i> 'affection' (2), <i>tsukusu</i> 'devote' (1)
<i>chūsei</i> 'loyalty' (1)	<i>chūjitsu</i> 'faithfulness' (1)
<i>hazubeki koto</i> 'shameful act' (1)	<i>hazubeki koui</i> 'shameful act' (1)
<i>hazukashime</i> 'humiliation' (2)	<i>haji</i> 'shame' (2)
<i>koui</i> 'favor' (2)	<i>ai</i> 'love' (1), <i>koui</i> 'favor' (1)
<i>megumi</i> 'blessing' (200)	<i>chūsetsu</i> 'loyalty' (1), <i>chūjitsu</i> 'faithfulness' (3), <i>itsukushimi</i> 'affection' (188), <i>koui</i> 'favor' (3), <i>megumi</i> 'blessing' (3), <i>śasae</i> 'support' (1), Ø (1)
<i>sakae</i> 'prosperity' (1)	Ø (1)
<i>seii</i> 'sincerity' (8)	<i>awaremi</i> 'pity' (1), <i>itawaru</i> 'care for' (1), <i>itsukushimi</i> 'affection' (1), <i>seii</i> 'sincerity' (4), <i>yūkouteiki na taido</i> 'friendly attitude' (1)
<i>seijitsu na okonai</i> 'righteous deeds' (1)	<i>magokoro</i> 'true heart' (1)
<i>šejitsu</i> 'righteousness' (10)	<i>ai</i> 'love' (2), <i>aijo</i> 'affection' (1), <i>chūjitsu</i> 'faithfulness' (1), <i>itsukushimi</i> 'affection' (4), <i>keishin</i> 'piety' (1), <i>magokoro</i> 'true heart' (1)
<i>shinjitsu</i> 'truth' (9)	<i>chūjitsu</i> 'faithfulness' (7), <i>itsukushimi</i> 'affection' (1), <i>shinjitsu no itsukushimi</i> 'true affection' (1)
<i>shinjitsu no ai</i> 'true love' (6)	<i>ai</i> 'love' (1), <i>itsukushimi</i> 'affection' (4), <i>magokoro</i> 'true heart' (1)
<i>shinsetsu</i> 'kindness' (2)	<i>shinsetsu</i> 'kindness' (1), Ø (1)
<i>yūjo</i> 'friendship' (1)	<i>chūjitsu</i> 'faithfulness' (1)

Apart from *megumi* and *itsukushimi*, NJB and NITB employ different renderings with little overlap. The terms used as translations are highly diverse, ranging from *ai* 'love' to *seii* 'sincerity', *shinjitsu* 'truth', *shinsetsu* 'kindness', and *yūjo* 'friendship'. While most of the glosses are nouns, only *itawaru* 'care for' and *tsukusu* 'devote' are verbs that refer to actions. However, *itawaru* refers to actions directed towards those who are weaker, such as the elderly or children, and *tsukusu* refers to working or striving diligently for others. Also noteworthy is the use of terms related to *haji* 'shame', such as *hazubeki koto*, *hazubeki koui* 'shameful act' and *hazukashime* 'humiliation', which are culturally specific Japanese emotion concepts (Farese 2016).

Both the term *megumi* and *itsukushimi*, which are mainly used in the two Japanese translations, do not exactly match the meaning of *hesed*. *Megumi* refers to a fortunate event due to something beyond one's own efforts. It is closer to the English *blessing* and differs from *hesed* in two ways. Firstly, the focus in *hesed* is on the bad situation that someone is going through and their need for help. In contrast, the focus of *megumi* is on receiving something good, especially from nature or divine entities. Below is an illustrative example from the BCCWJ.

- (6) *shizen kara nōgyō, suisangyō, ringyō, kankōgyō, shōkōgyō nado de ōkuno*
 nature from agriculture fisheries forestry tourism commerce etc. in many
onkei-o uketeimasu. Kono shizen-no megumi-o ukerareru no-wa,
 benefits-ACC receive.POL this nature-GEN blessings-ACC receive.able-TOP
senjintachi-ga naganen, shizen-o taisetsuni mamottekitekureta okage desu.
 Predecessors-NOM long.time nature-ACC cherish protect.PST thanks COP
 ‘Humans benefit greatly from this abundant nature through agriculture, fisheries,
 forestry, tourism, and commerce. These natural blessings are available thanks
 to the long-standing efforts of our predecessors to protect and cherish nature.’
 (Kōhō Kirishima)

As stated in (6), humans benefit greatly from nature, resulting in many positive outcomes for themselves. The corpus shows that in the construction *N no megumi* ‘megumi of N’ (N is the agent of *megumi*), the most common examples are *shizen* ‘nature’ (74 instances), *kami* ‘God’ (35 instances), and *daichi* ‘earth’ (14 instances). While the three monotheistic religions consider God to be a rational, personal agent, Japanese *kami* ‘gods’ are perceived as sacred beings residing in nature as well as in specific places and objects. This may account for why natural elements such as the sun, trees, mountains, and oceans are often the agents of *megumi*.

Another significant difference is that not only the agent but also the recipient of *megumi* can be inanimate while the agent and patient of *hesed* are always personal agents. In (7), it is the flowers and vegetables that receive *megumi* from the rain.

- (7) *ame-no megumi-o ukete sodatteiru wagaya-no niwa-no hana*
 rain-GEN blessings-ACC receive grow.PROG our.house-GEN garden-GEN flowers
ya yasai
 and vegetables
 ‘The flowers and vegetables grow in our garden thanks to the blessing of the
 rain’
 (Yahoo! Blog)

Megumi can also be used when both the agent and the patient are human. The following example illustrates cases in which a human gives *megumi* to another human.

- (8) *kodomo-wa, me-ni mienai oya kara-no takusan-no megumi-o ukeru.*
 child-TOP eye-DAT invisible parent from-GEN many-GEN blessings-ACC
 receive

‘Children receive many blessings from their parents that are invisible to the eyes.’

(Tanaka Sumie, *shikarikata no umai oya hetana oya*)

The example above relates to parenting and discusses how children are supported in their development when parents spend more time with them. In all the examples above, the recipients of *megumi* receive benefits thanks to circumstances beyond their control.

Another frequently used term is *itsukushimi*. It expresses the feeling of wanting to do something good for someone for whom one has affection. While *itsukushimi* is similar to *hesed* in that it can involve doing something good for others, it differs in that it requires a feeling of affection towards the recipient; a mother’s feeling for her child is a typical example. Below are examples from the corpus.

- (9) *Jitsuno musume dōzen-no o-itsukushimi-o Shōdaijin-sama-ni tamawatteimashita.*
real daughter like-GEN affection-ACC Minister Shōdaijin-POL-DAT bestow-PROG
‘Minister Shōdaijin bestowed affection as if she were his own daughter.’

(Nagai Hidenao, *ōchō no banka*)

- (10) *Akago-o atsukau tegiwa-wa nareteite, shikamo yasashiku, chiisana*
baby-ACC handle skill-TOP accustomed moreover gently small
inochi-ni taisuru itsukushimi-ga kanjirareta.
life-DAT toward affection-ACC feel.PST

‘The way she handled the baby was skilled and gentle, and one could feel the affection toward the small life.’

(Mōri Shioko, *gehōshi meiro no tsuki*)

As shown in these examples, *itsukushimi* is used when a person treats another with kindness and affection, similar to a parent lovingly caring for a child. For this reason, it is unnatural to use inanimate objects as the subject (e.g. ? *shizen no itsukushimi* ‘itsukushimi of nature’).

Based on the discussion above, this study proposes an explication for *megumi* and *itsukushimi*. The following explication for *megumi* refers to its use with the verb *ukeru* ‘receive’, which is the most common co-occurring verb (30 out of 190 instances where a verb follows *megumi*).

(G) Someone receives *megumi*

- a. Something very good happens to someone
- b. It happens not because this someone did anything
- c. It can be like this: This thing happens because of something
- d. It can be like this: This thing happens because of someone else

The explication captures the idea that something very good happens to someone thanks to something beyond their own efforts. As the corpus shows, *megumi* can be received not only from nature and divine entities, but also from other people. Therefore, both ‘something’ and ‘someone else’ are included as sources of *megumi*.

Next, the meaning of *itsukushimi* can be spelled out as follows:

- (H) Someone has *itsukushimi* toward someone else
- a. Someone thinks like this about someone else:
‘I feel something very good toward this someone
because of this, I want to do good things for this someone
I can do these things’
 - b. Because of it, this someone does these good things for this other someone

This explication indicates that the person who has *itsukushimi* feels strong affection towards the recipient and has a desire to do something for them. Unlike *megumi*, *itsukushimi* is not usually used with inanimate subjects. The corpus indicates that the agent is mainly a parent, with some examples involving God, specifically in the context of Christianity.

Thus, various words are used in the two Japanese translations to render *hesed*. Although *megumi* and *itsukushimi* are primarily used, their meanings still differ from *hesed*. This suggests that there is no near equivalent of *hesed* in Japanese.

5. Discussion

This paper has explored the rendering of *hesed* in Arabic and Japanese. It has been found that one of the renderings in Arabic, i.e. *’ihsān* ‘gratuitous act,’ most closely captures the meaning of the Biblical Hebrew word. Nevertheless, this word is not used at all in ACV, while it (or one of its derivatives) is used in only 27 out of the 247 verses in ALAB. It would be revealing to examine more Arabic translations of the Bible and find out whether and to what extent they use this word. It is hypothesized that, like ACV and ALAB, these translations utilize the word *rahmat* ‘mercy’ in most verses. If this hypothesis is confirmed, the explanation would be that these translations have been directly or indirectly affected by the Septuagint (the BC 3rd-century Greek translation), which uses *eleos* (ἔλεος) ‘mercy’ for *hesed*.

Regarding the Japanese renderings, *hesed* is mostly rendered as *megumi* or *itsukushimi* in the two Japanese translations that have been investigated. These renderings, however, do not exactly match the meaning of *hesed*. The term *megumi* refers to a good event taking place due to something beyond a person’s own efforts, whereas *itsukushimi* expresses the desire to do something beneficial for someone one cares about. This suggests that Japanese does not have a near semantic equivalent to *hesed*.

Using Natural Semantic Metalanguage, two Arabic and two Japanese renderings have been explicated. The explications employ words that have exact equivalents in English, Hebrew, Arabic, and Japanese. This makes possible the translation of the explications from English into the three other languages and their verification with native speakers. Additionally, the explications facilitate the comparison of the meanings of the Arabic and Japanese renderings to that of Biblical Hebrew *hesed*.

Exploring the meanings of Biblical Hebrew *hesed* and its counterparts in Arabic and Japanese can contribute to the field of Bible translation. It can assist

translators in gaining a better understanding of the meaning of this word. It can also help them in choosing the best rendering in Arabic and Japanese, as well as in other languages into which they are translating the Bible. This, in turn, can help Christians and Jews who are native speakers of these languages (but who do not know Hebrew) understand the verses containing this word in a better way.

6. Conclusion

There are three main conclusions, one general and two specific. The general conclusion is that Bible translators do not always agree on how to translate a Biblical Hebrew word. This variation is evident when comparing two translations of the Bible into the same language. It is equally evident when examining different verses within the same translation where the target word appears. Such variation can be understandable, given that translating the Bible is a demanding and complex endeavor that may require more than one translator to carry it out.

As for the specific conclusions, it has been found that Arabic has a near equivalent word of Biblical Hebrew *ḥesed*. This word, however, is not used at all in one of the two Arabic translations of the Bible investigated in this paper, and it is used in only a few verses in the other translation. The reason for this apparent oversight is likely to be the influence of earlier translations, in particular the Septuagint. It is hoped that this paper will draw the attention of Arabic Bible translators, prompting them to use the word *ʾiḥsān* ‘gratuitous act’ as a more precise rendering of *ḥesed*. It has also been found that Japanese has no near equivalent of Biblical Hebrew *ḥesed*. In the two Japanese translations, the words *megumi* and *itsukushimi* are primarily used, but both differ significantly from *ḥesed*.

It is hoped that the discussion of the meaning of *ḥesed* will help Bible translators gain insights into the meaning of this word and determine whether the languages into which they are translating the Bible have exact or near equivalents of this word. It is also anticipated that the use of simple and universal concepts in explaining the meaning of *ḥesed*, as in this study, will promote a deeper understanding of this word among Arabic and Japanese Christians.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Sandy Habib: Conceptualization, Methodology, Analysis and Discussion of the Arabic data, Writing – original draft, Writing – Review & Editing. **Hiromichi Sakaba:** Analysis and Discussion of the Japanese data.

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Multilingualism and language commodification in the public signage of Moscow

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Abstract

Linguistic landscape remains an important semiotic resource for tracking socio-political changes and the shifting power dynamics they entail, particularly in contexts marked by superdiversity. As the largest urban center in Russia, Moscow is a multilingual and multicultural city shaped by its unique historical, political, and socio-economic context. However, despite the city's central role in understanding the complexities of post-Soviet Russia, research on its linguistic landscape remains limited, particularly in relation to its stratification amidst monolingual policies, the increasing visibility of English, and active migration patterns in recent decades. This study aims to analyse how the layered linguistic landscape of Moscow reflects patterns of multilingualism, language commodification, and the selective visibility of minority languages. A dataset of 513 photos was compiled between 2022 and 2024. It was analyzed combining ethnographic and quantitative approaches, identifying three key layers in Moscow's linguistic landscape. The analysis reveals a selective and transient accommodation of multilingualism in official policies, which, while allowing multilingualism in some contexts, largely reaffirms Russian as dominant. While semiotic diversity in bottom-up signage presents a grassroots counterpoint to official practices, Central Asian languages have quite limited visibility in top-down signage. Findings highlight the need for a more inclusive linguistic landscape that reflects the city's diverse population, as well as stable top-down policies to sustain the city's global aspirations.

Keywords: *linguistic landscape, Moscow, ethnographic linguistic landscape analysis, superdiversity, language commodification, immigration*

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Многоязычие и коммодификация языка в общественных вывесках Москвы

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Аннотация

Языковой ландшафт остается важным семиотическим ресурсом для отслеживания социально-политических изменений в распределении власти, особенно в условиях сверхразнообразия. Москва, как крупнейший мегаполис России, представляет собой многоязычный и мультикультурный город, сформированный уникальным историческим, политическим и социально-экономическим контекстом. Однако, несмотря на центральную роль города в понимании сложностей постсоветской России, исследования его языкового ландшафта остаются ограниченными, особенно в последние годы, на фоне моноязычной политики, растущей видимости английского языка и активных миграционных процессов последних десятилетий. Цель данного исследования — проанализировать, как стратифицированный языковой ландшафт Москвы отражает практики многоязычия, коммодификации языка и избирательной видимости языков меньшинств. Корпус из 513 фотографий, собранных в 2022–2024 годах, был проанализирован с использованием этнографического и количественного подходов; в результате были выделены три ключевых уровня языкового ландшафта Москвы. Анализ показывает выборочную и временную допустимость многоязычия в рамках официальной языковой политики, которая в целом подтверждает доминирование русского языка. В то время как семиотическое разнообразие неофициальных вывесок представляет собой низовую альтернативу официальным практикам, языки Центральной Азии имеют крайне ограниченную видимость на официальных вывесках. Результаты подчеркивают необходимость более инклюзивного языкового ландшафта, отражающего разнообразие населения города, а также стабильной официальной политики, поддерживающей амбиции Москвы как глобального мегаполиса.

Ключевые слова: языковой ландшафт, Москва, этнографический анализ языкового ландшафта, сверхразнообразие, коммодификация языка, иммиграция

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1. Introduction

Using the linguistic landscape (henceforth LL) as a toolkit for tracing the complexities of contemporary society has continued in recent years, focusing on such cases as the shifts in LL during the COVID-19 pandemic (Marshall 2021, Hopkyns & van den Hoven 2022), changes in LL in response to political upheaval

(Debras 2019, Byrne & Marcet 2022), and the evolving nature of *virtual linguistic landscapes* captured through geotagged content (Hiippala et al. 2019). Due to its ever-changing nature, influenced by socio-cultural and socio-political factors, LL remains an important semiotic resource for tracking societal transformations and the shifting power dynamics they entail, with the distribution of linguistic signs revealing not only the (in)visibility of certain languages in a given space but also social hierarchies, identity negotiations, and the interplay of local and global influences (Pavlenko 2017, Pütz 2020).

A critical aspect of contemporary changes—whether social, economic, political, or cultural—is their emergence against the backdrop of *superdiversity*, a term coined by Vertovec (2007) that refers to an unprecedented level of population diversity driven by contemporary immigration patterns and globalization. Its roots can be traced back to the post-1989 geopolitical context, following the fall of the Berlin Wall and, a few years later, the Soviet Union, giving rise to new migration patterns and the increasing superdiversification of cities worldwide (Maly 2016). While the superdiversity of contemporary society has made the sociolinguistic realities analyzed in LL studies increasingly complex (Van Mensel et al. 2016), according to Blommaert (2013: 3), this complexity has elevated LL studies to a privileged position for detecting the intricate features of superdiversity, with their unique focus on physical space that is “never no-man’s-land, but always somebody’s space; a historical space, therefore, full of codes, expectations, norms and traditions; and...power”.

The purpose of this study is to examine how the layered linguistic landscape of Moscow reflects patterns of multilingualism, language commodification, and the selective visibility of minority languages in relation to the city’s top-down policies and bottom-up practices. As Blommaert (2013) notes, public space is not uniform but inherently layered and segmented, with signs demarcating areas and audiences that range from vast to microscopic. As the largest urban center in Russia, Moscow also represents a stratified public space, shaped by the contrast between monolingual language policies and the multilingual realities of its superdiverse population. In the post-Soviet period, official policies maintained Russian as the dominant language, but the increasing presence of English in both top-down signage (produced and regulated by official institutions, e.g., street signs) and bottom-up signage (grassroots signage created by businesses or individuals, e.g., shop signs) has revealed its commodification as a marker of modernity and global alignment. Simultaneously, minority languages, particularly those of Central Asian migrants, face varying degrees of visibility depending on the socio-economic function of specific spaces.

However, despite the city’s central role in understanding the changes and complexities of post-Soviet Russia, research on its linguistic landscape remains limited (cf. Pavlenko 2009, Fedorova & Baranova 2017, Kibrik et al. 2024), particularly in relation to its stratification amid monolingual policies, the increasing visibility of English, and shifting migration patterns in recent decades. By adopting

a blend of ethnographic and quantitative approaches, this study identifies three prominent layers in the LL of Moscow, focusing on how multilingual signage reflects and reproduces power dynamics, cultural commodification, and linguistic hierarchies. Specifically, it addresses the following questions:

1) What are the prominent layers that constitute the LL of Moscow; what roles do they play in the commodification of languages and the creation of multilingual spaces?

2) How do Moscow's top-down policies on the LL influence the visibility or marginalization of minority languages?

By addressing these questions, this study seeks to contribute to the growing LL research by uncovering how Moscow's linguistic landscape mediates issues of inclusion, identity, and power in a superdiverse urban environment.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Ethnographic Linguistic Landscape Analysis

In the early stages of LL studies, a key analytical approach involved examining the geographic distribution of signs to quantify, categorize, and map them (i.e., *distributive approaches*, Van Mensel et al. 2016, e.g., Backhaus 2006, Barni & Bagna 2008, Zhang et al. 2020). Over time, the analytical framework of *geosemiotics* (Scollon & Scollon 2003), which considers the potential meanings produced by public texts in relation to socio-cultural factors and emphasizes *discourse in place*, has gained increasing attention in LL research, with studies (e.g., Leeman & Modan 2009, Blommaert 2013, Rasinger 2014, Lou 2016, for an overview, see Barni & Bagna 2015) increasingly adopting qualitative and ethnographic approaches. Rather than merely counting and mapping multilingual signs, the analysis of signs started to give attention to the symbolic use of colors, icons, images, sounds, and the dynamics of who resides in the area and how people interact with a given sign (Barni & Bagna 2015).

At the same time, the limitations of solely distributive approaches have become more apparent, with suggestions to also adopt approaches that “provide deeper understandings of the context, including the production and reception of signs” (Weber & Horner 2012: 179). In a similar vein, Blommaert and Maly (2016) critiqued the distributive approaches for inadequately explaining how the presence and distribution of languages relate to specific social groups and their interactions within particular spaces. They advocated for a closer examination of “the patterns of social interaction in which people engage in the particular space” (2016: 199), emphasizing the analysis of individual signs to understand their meanings in detail (cf. Scollon & Scollon 2003) and their connections to broader discourses.

It is now well known that in the structuration of LL, several factors are likely at play, as argued by Ben-Rafael (2009), including the aspiration to use of LL items as identity markers for certain groups, and power relations that determine the differential use of linguistic resources in LL. Since it is difficult to grasp an

understanding of how such factors work through quantitative methods alone, Blommaert and Maly (2016) further proposed *ethnographic linguistic landscape analysis* (ELLA, see also Blommaert 2013) as an alternative approach, which pays greater attention to individual signs and their combination with others as distinct layers (Maly 2016). Within this framework, public spaces are viewed as normative environments influenced by power and regulation. Signs reflect the relationships between producers and addressees, conveying normative and regulative messages, which can be deciphered through qualitative in addition to quantitative investigation. Using ELLA, a sign can be analyzed by considering three key ‘axes’ (Blommaert & Maly 2016: 199–200):

- (i) Signs point to the past, revealing the sociolinguistic conditions under which they were produced.
- (ii) Signs point to the future, indicating their intended future impact on specific audiences.
- (iii) Signs also point to the present, where their placement and relationships with other signs are important.

In extending the analysis of timelines into the past and future, Blommaert and Maly (2016: 200) view signs as “deployed in a field that is replete with overlapping and intersecting norms (...) and not just the norms of a here-and-now, but norms that are of different orders and operate within different historicities”. As a case study, they applied ELLA to the urban working-class neighborhood in Ghent, Belgium, uncovering the layered character of the district. Each layer was analyzed in terms of its historical context and the district’s demographic composition, which encompasses homeowners, shopkeepers, both long-standing and recent immigrants, and visitors from the city’s outskirts. ELLA facilitated an investigation of the layers that remained relatively stable over time as well as those that changed rapidly, revealing how various groups within the district organized the semiotic ‘infrastructure’ to meet the diverse needs of different communities in a stratified manner.

One key premise of ELLA is its comprehensive approach to public signage, which enables an ethnographic observation that goes beyond mere counting and mapping. Instead, it focuses on understanding who communicates what messages, to whom, and with what intent. In this sense, ELLA can be viewed as oriented towards identifying, through a meaning-making process of individual signs, layers of public signage that reflect the integration of different social groups into a superdiverse environment (see Maly 2016).

Together with these, while ELLA and ethnographic approaches in general have gained increasing attention in LL research, quantitative studies are still, as argued by Amos and Soukup (2020: 56), “capable of capturing and explicating details regarding the appearance and context of LL signs and their function in public space, by their power to throw into relief general patterns and trends of distribution and co-occurrence”. Thus, quantitative approaches still remain relevant in LL studies, particularly when considering that a key focus of LL research is to interpret

meaning through what is (in)visible (Blackwood & Amos 2024). Cities are increasingly evolving into “showcases” where languages reflect diverse choices at both individual and policy levels (Barni & Bagna 2015: 9). In these urban environments, where visibility opportunities are limited, and where various languages compete for visibility influenced by a complex range of factors (Ben-Rafael 2009), quantifying which languages are visible and which are not can therefore provide valuable insights into the semiotic structure of a city, although drawing definitive conclusions about ethnolinguistic vitality of the observed languages solely from visibility remains difficult (see Van Mensel et al. 2016).

Aligning with recent studies that have utilized both quantitative and qualitative methodologies (e.g., Suuriniemi & Satokangas 2021, Morlan & Byrne 2023), this paper first draws on the ELLA framework (Blommaert 2013, Blommaert & Maly 2016) to examine how various signs structuralize into distinct layers within the city’s LL and how multilingual spaces are created, and second, employs a quantitative, distributive approach to analyze the extent to which individual languages manifest (in)visibility in the city.

2.2. Background information

Fedorova and Baranova (2017) analyzed the sociolinguistic situation in Moscow, showing how cultural values, stereotypes, and linguistic patterns reflect historical and social dynamics. Their study focused on Central Asian labor migrants (a substantial yet linguistically marginalized group), and demonstrated how official institutions uphold Moscow’s monolingual image by ignoring migrants’ linguistic challenges—evident, for instance, in the fact that official websites intended for non-Russian-speaking migrants are available only in Russian. Moreover, many Muscovites perceive migrants as having ‘poor Russian’ skills, overlooking that Russian is not their native language.

Historically, Moscow has been the economic and administrative center of the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, and the Russian Federation. Its strategic importance, especially after the 1917 October Revolution, spurred population growth through industrialization and economic diversification. Soviet multiethnic policies attracted diverse ethnic groups, reinforcing Moscow’s multicultural nature, with Russian as the *lingua franca* (Pavlenko 2013). The 1991 Soviet collapse triggered economic and socio-political crises, with high unemployment, poverty, and inter-ethnic conflicts across former Soviet republics. This led to continuous refugee and migrant influxes into Moscow.

Today, Moscow stands as the most populous city in Russia, holding federal significance and representing the largest urban area in the Russian Federation by population. According to the 2010 Census, the population of Moscow was 11,503,501, whereas the Federal State Statistics Service reported a population of 13,010,112 in 2021 (Census 2021). Additionally, according to the Census (2021) representatives of 174 ethnicities, with the vast majority being Russian, reside in Moscow. The overwhelming majority (9,594,657) reported to have Russian as their

mother tongue (Census 2021). At the same time, 237 languages were reported as mother tongues spoken by the residents of Moscow.

The population growth in Moscow and its urban agglomeration is closely linked to migration. Over the past three decades, internal and external migration to Moscow has been particularly active, driven by the city's steady development and the emergence of new sectors such as real estate, finance, and entrepreneurship (see Kibrik et al. 2024). Consequently, Moscow has become economically attractive to both internal migrants and those arriving from abroad, often with limited or no fluency in Russian, thus enhancing its status as a modern and cosmopolitan city (Koryakov 2017). In 2012, Moscow doubled in size due to its geographical expansion to the southwest, incorporating 148,000 hectares of new land and becoming one of the largest cities globally. Therefore, it is crucial to examine Moscow as a superdiverse city where multiple languages are spoken across various ethnic communities in order to address challenges related to majority language (Russian) acquisition, cultural adaptation, and the preservation of ethnic languages and cultures.

Russia's language policy emphasizes the primacy of the Russian language as the state language while also acknowledging the linguistic diversity of its ethnic groups. According to the Constitution of the Russian Federation (1993), republics within the Federation are granted the right to establish their own state languages alongside Russian, supporting the preservation of minority languages. However, the practical implementation of this policy has faced significant challenges. In 2018, new legislation made the study of native languages in public schools optional (Federal Law 2018), raising concerns about the decline of minority languages, many of which are already endangered (Grenoble 2020).

While the Russian government officially supports multilingualism, local policies might not always effectively address the multilingual realities of the population. The LL in Moscow serves as a 'microcosm' of such dynamics, warranting closer examination to understand the interplay between the declared and actual policy, language use, and the (in)visibility of languages in local contexts (see Baranova & Fedorova 2019, Kibrik et al. 2024).

3. Data and methodology

In line with past LL research (Ben-Rafael 2009, Blommaert 2013, Van Mensel et al. 2016, Amos & Soukup 2020, Pütz 2020), we analyse the LL through the concepts of *power*, *identity*, and *inclusion/exclusion*. From this perspective, a language's *power* is understood as its differential capacity to claim space and visibility in the urban landscape. This capacity can be assessed through several markers, including the language's presence across a range of contexts and geographical locations; the materiality of the sign, whether fixed and expensive (e.g., a monument) or temporary and inexpensive (e.g., a handwritten note); and its positioning relative to other languages in a multilingual sign (based on code hierarchy, colour, and font size).

We understand *identity* in the LL as negotiated and projected through deliberate linguistic choices on signage. This negotiation can involve constructing an ethnic brand identity for commercial appeal or asserting a migrant community's cultural presence in a location. How a language is used, and the extent to which its arrangement targets a general versus a specific audience, can reveal what *identity* a sign prioritizes indexing. Analysing these dynamics of *power* and *identity* allows us to better understand mechanisms of *inclusion* and *exclusion* in the LL. This is especially possible by contrasting top-down and bottom-up representations. For example, if a language has a notable presence in bottom-up signage (demonstrating the power to be visible and/or reflecting specific identity markers) but is absent from top-down signage, this may indicate its institutional exclusion.

The *power* of a language and the spectrum of *identities* it performs in a LL can be better understood by considering its varied and heterogeneous reality. We therefore analyse variety of contexts, each carrying different significance. For example, ethnic restaurants may reveal community-level power and identity dynamics, malls may reveal commercial-level implications, and migration centres may reveal institutional-level implications. In our analysis of language displays, we therefore pay close attention to the role of specific contextual details.

3.1. Sampling strategy and data collection

Moscow's metro stations are useful in mapping the areas of interest in a systematic manner. Beyond serving as transportation hubs, they function as important socio-geographic markers that include areas with different functions: central hubs such as Arbatskaya and Tverskaya, residential areas like Kon'kovo and Novye Cheryomushki, commercial centers including Belorusskaya and Kievskaya, and peripheral districts such as Vnukovo and Kotelniki.

To ensure geographical and socio-economic diversity, photographs were systematically collected from 31 different metro stations (see Appendix I for a map of Moscow metro stations). This sampling strategy enabled us to capture both high-density central spaces and lower-density peripheral areas, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the LL across Moscow's urban fabric. Each data collector was assigned to a specific region (north-east, north-west, south-east, or south-west) and tasked with gathering data around metro stations within their designated area. The primary sampling criterion was to identify and photograph multilingual signs that stood out and held potential interest for qualitative analysis. Underrepresented languages in the LL were photographed whenever encountered, while less emphasis was placed on English, a commonly observed language in the LL. Data collectors were instructed to photograph English signs, especially if they were relevant for qualitative analysis (e.g., multilingual English signs or those involving stylization, etc.). Monolingual Russian signs were not photographed.

A dataset of 513 photos was compiled between 2022 and 2024 by the authors, with assistance from six master's linguistics students. Students participated in data collection as part of the research project 'The Linguistic Landscape of Moscow'

within the broader HSE University ‘Big Project: Language Practices’. The photographs were first systematically sorted into folders based on their classification as either top-down or bottom-up signage, resulting in 253 top-down and 260 bottom-up photographs.

Top-down signs were important for gaining insights into official and institutional contributions and language policies, while bottom-up signs were of interest for understanding grassroots and commercial practices, and the negotiation of multilingualism in public spaces. Together, these categories provided a lens to examine the interplay between formal authority and everyday linguistic agency in the city’s public semiotic structure.

3.2. Data analysis

A mixed-methods approach was employed to analyze the dataset, integrating quantitative and qualitative methods to unravel the complexities of language practices. The quantitative component provided a macro-level understanding of language use in bottom-up signs ($N = 260$) by systematically coding and analyzing them. This process involved identifying the languages present in each bottom-up sign (listed in order of appearance), noting the closest metro station to the sign’s location, and recording its intercardinal direction relative to the city center. Additionally, presence of stylistic elements such as the use of Greek-inspired Cyrillic script or transliteration were also documented to assess how frequently the semiotic strategy of stylization was employed in the linguistic landscape.

Complementing this, the qualitative analysis focused on both top-down and bottom-up signs, examining what messages individual signs convey, whom they address, who lives in or visits the sign’s location, and, when taken together with signs that share these characteristics, what distinctive layers do they constitute. In the determination of similarities of the signs, features such as text stylization, font and color variations, transliteration practices, and the presence of multiple languages on signage were also taken into account. Drawing on the ELLA framework (Blommaert 2013, Blommaert & Maly 2016, Maly 2016), it was acknowledged that signs point to Moscow’s history, present, and future. Therefore, the interpretation of the meanings conveyed by signs was conducted with due consideration not only of their present conditions but also of historical factors and potential future impacts, whether socio-cultural, political, or economic.

By combining these qualitative and quantitative approaches, the aim was to bridge large-scale patterns with localized sociolinguistic practices, capturing the layered dynamics of Moscow’s LL within its superdiverse urban context. The authors maintained close communication with other data collectors, exchanging field notes, photos, and ideas about what certain signs index and which layers stand out in the LL before deciding which individual signs and layers merit closer focus.

4. Results

4.1. English in Top-Down and Bottom-Up Signage

English plays a prominent role in Moscow’s multilingual public signage, appearing in a wide range of contexts and ranking as the most visible language after Russian in the city (Fig. 1). From small stickers on lampposts and advertisements on billboards to signs for shops and restaurants, it is visibly integrated into the city’s landscape. Observed signs often combine both Russian and English texts, feature English words transliterated into Cyrillic script, or, in some cases, present information exclusively in English using the Latin alphabet.

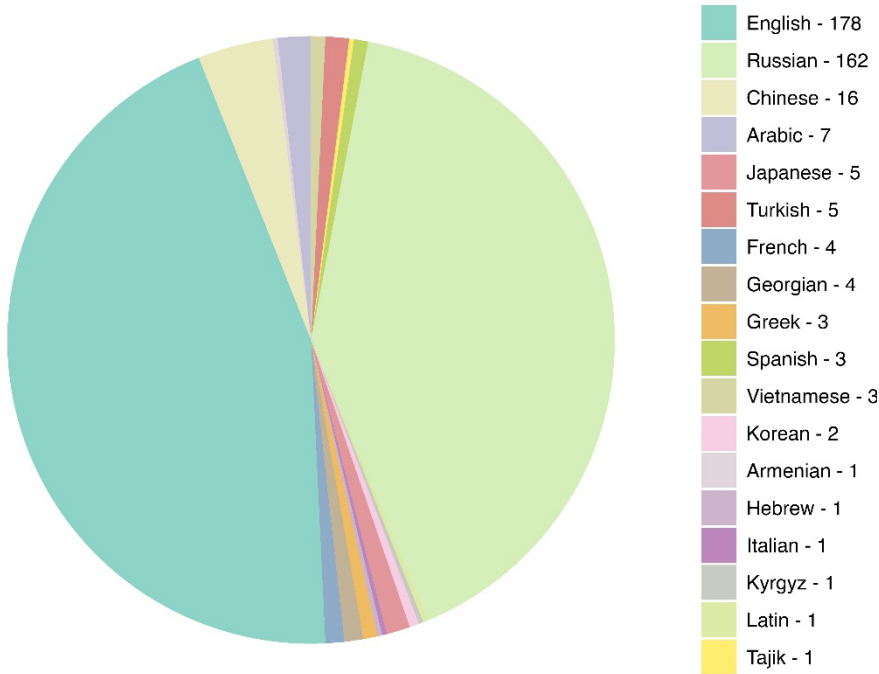


Figure 1. Languages present in bottom-up signage

A key moment in the growing visibility of English in Moscow’s linguistic landscape occurred during the 2018 FIFA World Cup, a major international football event held every four years. In preparation for the influx of international tourists, authorities introduced English translations on metro navigation boards, and metro services began including English-language announcements. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, these announcements were replaced by Russian-language safety messages (see Baranova 2023) and were not reinstated afterward, indicating how the presence of English in the official signage of the city is susceptible to fluctuation depending on external circumstances.

Despite this, English has retained a relatively consistent presence in certain areas, such as on the ‘blue’ top-down street signs, where English translations accompany Russian text (Fig. 2). Typically, all directions in these signs are

translated into English, appearing below the corresponding Russian text, though in smaller font and not in bold. These translations are generally of high quality, though occasional inconsistencies arise — for example, the use of British English on one sign and American English on another directing to the same location. Street names are presented exclusively in Russian, while estimated walking times to the indicated locations are shown in the format ‘X min’.



Figure 2. A typical top-down ‘blue’ sign commonly found throughout Moscow

In addition to the top-down use of English, bottom-up signage has secured a prominent place for English, with many local and foreign shops incorporating it into their signs. Among the shop signs we observed, English consistently stood out as the most commonly used non-Russian language, functioning as a *commodity* in the private sector. In many areas, one can encounter almost exclusively English signs, despite being surrounded by Russian-speaking customers and additional informational signage in Russian. This contrast is illustrated in Figure 3, where English is used for shop names, signaling its popularity and marketability, while essential information, such as the locations of nursing rooms and ATMs, is provided exclusively in Russian.



Figure 3. Use of English in Central Children's Store

The picture was taken at the Central Children's Store on Lubyanka Street, a renowned and historic department store in Moscow, Russia, primarily dedicated to children's goods. Originally opened in 1957 under the name *Detsky Mir* (Children's World), the store became the largest children's department store in the Soviet Union. In 2008, it was closed for renovation and later reopened in 2015. The renovation introduced an international retail environment while preserving certain elements of its Soviet-era design. As a result, it now functions as both a high-end commercial space and a symbol of Russia's transition from state-controlled socialism to a market-driven economy.

This transition is particularly evident in its linguistic landscape. The building, characterized by its Soviet architectural style, still displays the store's name in large Cyrillic letters above it: *Центральный детский магазин* (*Tsentrал'nyi detskiyi magazin* / Central Children's Store). However, once inside, visitors are predominantly surrounded by English-language shop names. Given that the primary audience consists of children and their parents, the prevalence of English can be seen as indexing the store's alignment with global consumer culture. However, in recent years, this alignment might be said to have been disrupted, at least to some

degree. Previously, there was Hamleys, a famous British toy retailer in the Central Children's Store, but it was closed in 2023, due to sanctions imposed on Russia. This represents only one effect stemming from economic restrictions on the linguistic landscape, although there are likely to be other changes arising from it.

The presence of English in Moscow's linguistic landscape is not limited to central areas but extends across a diverse range of locations throughout the city. In many instances, English features prominently in the semiotics deployed, as illustrated by the example of the outer window of 'SO FAR KEBAB' (Fig. 4). Located on Myasnitskaya Street (a historic area in central Moscow, once home to aristocrats, elite manufacturers, and merchants), the shop primarily employs English to present its Middle Eastern street food offerings to potential customers. On the left side of the window, a large 'OPEN' sign immediately draws attention. Below it, the 'BUSINESS HOURS' section details the operational schedule, with the days of the week also listed exclusively in English.

Centrally positioned on the door, the most prominent text, displayed in the largest font, is the restaurant's name: 'SO FAR KEBAB'. The adverbial phrase 'SO FAR', combined with 'KEBAB', creates an interesting branding strategy. Unlike typical restaurant names, which are often straightforward (e.g., 'Best Kebab' or 'Tasty Kebab') and focus directly on the product or experience, 'SO FAR KEBAB' introduces an element of ambiguity and conveys a casual, laid-back tone.

Below the restaurant's name, displayed in English, we see Hebrew and Arabic text positioned in the lower left and right corners, respectively, in smaller font sizes. These elements are placed above a longer inscription in Russian, "ближневосточный стритфуд" ('Blizhnevostochnyi stritfud' / 'Middle Eastern street food'), which provides a direct, comprehensible description of the restaurant's offerings for Russian-speaking customers. This Russian phrase serves a clear functional role, intended to address Russian-speaking customers (who are potentially the primary target audience) and to ensure that the restaurant's offerings are clearly understood amid the multilingual storefront display.

In contrast, the Hebrew and Arabic lexemes appear to be more symbolic than functional, aligning with the restaurant's Middle Eastern theme rather than serving as practical communication. The Arabic text contains the letters ط-ع-ح, which do not form a recognizable word. It seems likely that the intended sequence was ط-ع-م, forming the word طعم (Ta'am, 'taste'), with an error substituting the letter ح (Haa) for م (Meem). On the opposite side, the Hebrew word טרי (Ta-ree), meaning 'fresh', is vocalized with vowel markings. While such markings are typically omitted in everyday Hebrew writing, as native speakers can interpret the word without them, they are often included in formal settings like education, religion, or literature. This addition of vowel markings creates a juxtaposition: the formality in Hebrew contrasts with the informal tone conveyed by the restaurant's English name. However, given the typological error in the Arabic text, it is plausible to suggest that this formality in Hebrew was unintentional. The use of Hebrew, Arabic, and English adds symbolic value, even though the owners may not possess proficiency

in Hebrew or Arabic. Considering the functional message in Russian and the high visibility of English in the display, it appears that the primary target audience consists of Russian-speaking individuals, with English-speaking tourists as a secondary group.



Figure 4. Signage of the ‘So Far Kebab’ Restaurant

The use of English, while serving to address potential customers from other countries, often indexes a laid-back, friendly, and informal tone at the same time. This indexical value becomes more apparent when we zoom in on other signs. At the entrance of a bar located in a residential area, a sign reads, “Warning: No Stupid People”. English is also commonly employed to convey a shop’s dog-friendly policy or to express solidarity through English phrases as part of a commercial strategy (e.g., “#WE LOVE FRESH” in a supermarket sign, where the use of “we” creates a sense of solidarity between the business and its customers, and the hashtag evokes the feel of a social media trend). Beyond its instrumental function, English serves as a means to *add flavor* to signage, evoking a sense of global appeal, high quality product served/sold, and contemporaneity (see Appendix II for additional example). The fact that newer ‘blue’ signs in the city’s top-down signage still

incorporate English translation alongside Russian texts points to an intention to sustain the city's orientation toward internationalization and maintain its touristic appeal. Similarly, new bottom-up establishments continue to make significant use of English, which suggests that it plays an important role in marketing and is expected to remain a desirable and recognizable linguistic resource for target audiences.

4.2. Semiotic diversity in bottom-up signage

The influence of English appears to have permeated the signage throughout the city, serving both its instrumental value in addressing a broader range of customers and its indexical capabilities in creating a friendly and modern atmosphere that helps signage to stand out. However, Moscow's linguistic landscape is shaped by more layers that reflect the city's multicultural dynamics. A substantial part of these layers consists of signs from local restaurants catering to diverse ethnic groups and customers interested in their cuisines, including, but not limited to, Uzbek, Greek, Georgian, and Chinese restaurants. In this analysis, these restaurants are grouped under a single layer defined by diversity, challenging the dominance of English in similar bottom-up signage contexts.

With their widespread presence across Moscow, the city's multicultural landscape is highly reflected in the signage of these restaurants. These signs often use distinctive colors and linguistic features to create strong associations with the cultural identity of specific ethnic groups. They cater to two distinct audiences: ethnic migrants seeking a sense of familiarity and local customers interested in exploring the cuisines of neighboring regions.

Among these establishments, restaurants called *Чайхана* (*Chaikhana*, 'teahouse') stand out as prominent cultural hubs, particularly for migrants from Central Asia, offering menus centered on Central Asian cuisines. Despite the similarity in names, these establishments are not part of a unified chain; they operate independently, offering varying price ranges, with many providing reasonably priced meals. Inside, diners often encounter a mix of Central Asian ethnic groups, and it is often possible to hear Uzbek, Krygz, Azerbaijan, and other languages spoken. The interiors of Chaikhana restaurants are richly decorated with traditional elements reflective of Central Asian cultures, accompanied by regionally inspired music. As such, Chaikhana restaurants serve as places for representing the cultures of Central Asia and fostering a sense of connection and belonging for migrants.

The role of religion emerges as an important connecting factor for the different ethnic groups visiting the Chaikhana restaurants. It is not uncommon to be greeted with the Arabic phrase 'As-salamu alaykum', especially if the staff perceives you as a member of the Muslim community. Often, the symbolic value of Arabic is immediately apparent, as demonstrated by the *Чайхана Sabr* restaurant (Fig. 5), located in a southeastern district of Moscow, far from the city center. This district is known for accommodating residents with lower socio-economic status and offering more affordable housing compared to other areas of Moscow. It was

formerly an industrial area with major factories, most of which closed down after the fall of the Soviet Union. In addition to Cyrillic and Latin scripts, the restaurant's sign features the Arabic alphabet. The word *Sabr*, meaning 'patience' in Arabic, is often regarded as an important element of Islamic teachings. Arabic's symbolic value therefore assumes a prominent role in the linguistic landscape, while also reflecting the unifying influence of religion among Central Asian migrants. The restaurant also prominently uses green in both the sign and interior lighting, which appears to be a deliberate attempt to reflect Islamic identity. Green is frequently used in Islamic art and architecture and is often associated with Islamic history and symbolism, as seen, for instance, in the flag designs of many Arab countries (Podeh 2011).



Figure 5. Signage of the 'Chaikhana Sabr' Restaurant

Other colors are also strategically used to evoke different national flags. For instance, many Greek restaurants feature signage that displays highly stylized Cyrillic letters resembling Greek script, complemented by blue and white colors reminiscent of the Greek flag. Figure 6 showcases an example of a Greek restaurant whose sign not only semiotically references Greek culture but also communicates

a direct message through its name, *ГРЕКИ ЗДЕСЬ* ('Greki zdes' / 'Greeks are here'). The stylization extends beyond the sign to the restaurant's menu on top, which mimics Greek lettering, and even to the refrigerator surfaces inside, adorned with an image of a classic Ancient Greek statue holding bubble gum, imparting a postmodern touch. The restaurant is located in a mall on Vernadskogo Avenue, far from tourist areas and the city center. The multicultural restaurant layer appears to be present throughout the city, not confined to the center or specific districts.



Figure 6. Signage of the 'Greki zdes' Restaurant

In a similar fashion, Georgian restaurants also feature stylized Cyrillic letters that resemble Georgian script, often incorporating red and white colors to evoke the Georgian flag. Similarly, many Chinese-inspired signs in Russian feature intricate, angular strokes that mimic the visual rhythm of Chinese characters. They often use red and white—colors deeply symbolic in Chinese culture and associated with the Chinese national palette. Figure 7 presents a collection of stylized signs from various restaurants in Moscow. Although the signs are written in Russian, they mimic the visual characteristics of scripts associated with different languages, signaling the restaurants' connection to specific cultures and seamlessly integrating

them into Moscow's linguistic landscape while also appealing to the cosmopolitan consumer. Similarly, menus in such ethnic restaurants often feature stylized text as well, but they are still predominantly in Russian, which may suggest that Russian-speaking clients are the primary target audience.



Figure 7. Various Restaurant Signs with Stylized Designs

22,3% of the bottom-up signs were observed to have stylized texts in a way that connotes the script of a language or different cultural elements. Through their stylization, such signs demonstrate how linguistic landscapes are not static reflections of language policy but dynamic spaces where cultural, economic, and political forces intersect. The stylized adaptations in the given examples show the fluidity of language as a *resource* for constructing meaning, identity, and value in a superdiverse urban context like Moscow.

Figure 8 illustrates the spatial distribution of different languages (excluding stylizations such as Greek-looking Russian texts) spotted in the bottom-up linguistic landscape across and near various metro stations in Moscow, demonstrating the stratification of linguistic practices within Moscow's urban landscape. The map reveals clusters of multilingual signage in central hubs, where English frequently dominates as a lingua franca, and contrasts them with peripheral zones, where minority and regional languages gain at least some visibility. As shown in the figure, Russian, English, and Chinese appear across a wide range of metro stations and therefore span different socio-economic zones. Other languages, however, are limited to a small number of stations and remain largely absent especially from central locations. Similar to how the use of English in bottom-up signage reflects an expectation of its continued desirability among future consumers, the presence of other non-Russian languages indicates an anticipation of ongoing migration from different cultural backgrounds. However, their limited distribution, confined to selected locations, points to a more niche appeal targeting

specific demographic segments. Wider use of Chinese across multiple socio-economic zones, on the other hand, signals an intention to engage future audiences on a larger scale, likely driven by economic or geopolitical considerations as well.

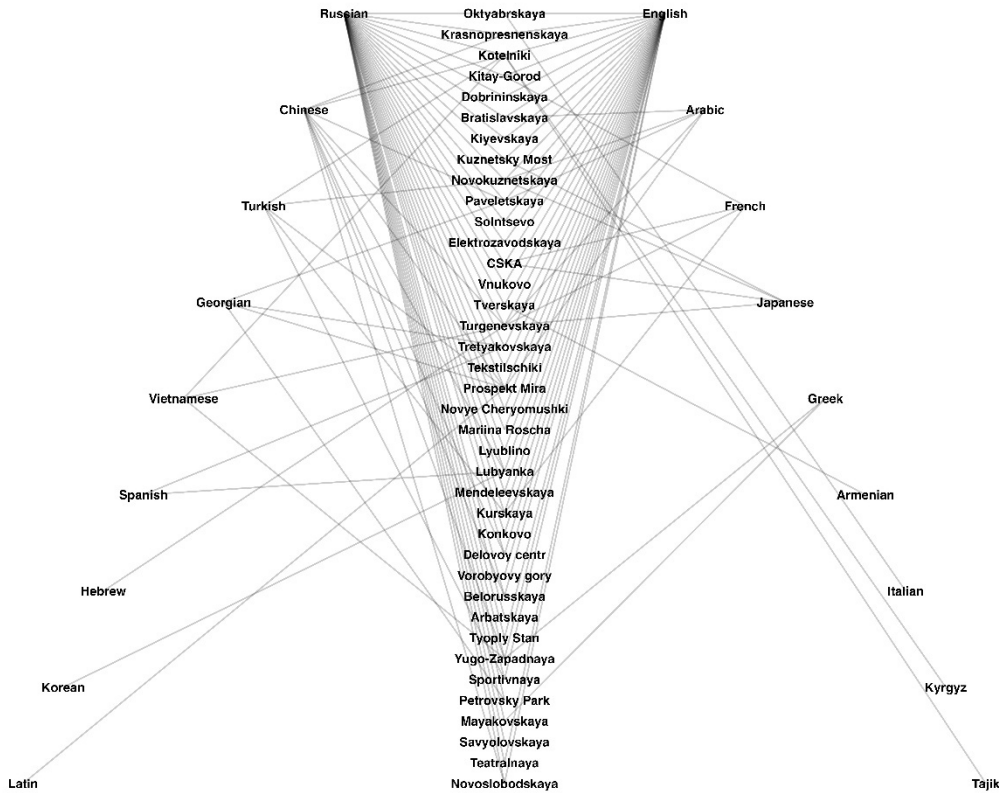


Figure 8. Languages in Bottom-Up Signage Across Places in Close Proximity to Metro Stations in Moscow

4.3. Multilingual top-down signage layer

In addition to the prevalent use of English in street signs and information boards within metro stations, Moscow’s top-down signage occasionally incorporates multilingual elements especially designed to address migrants from Central Asian countries. These signs typically maintain Russian at the top, using a larger font size, with one or two Central Asian languages appearing below. While the standard red “No Entrance” template, commonly seen at metro entrances throughout the city, typically features Russian and English, Figure 9 illustrates a variation where Russian is paired with Tajik and Uzbek instead. Below the red template, however, Russian and English still appear, although conveying a different message: “Hold the door”.



Figure 9. Top-Down Sign with Tajik and Uzbek Elements

The sign is located in the Lesoparkovaya metro station, situated relatively far from the city center. This station is frequently used by migrants, including those from Central Asian countries, as a transit point to the Multifunctional Migration Center, which is about an hour's bus ride away. Following amendments to the federal law *On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Russian Federation* (Federal Law 2022), all foreign students and employees staying in Russia for over three months are required to undergo medical examinations, fingerprinting, and biometric photographing. The Multifunctional Migration Center provides these mandatory procedures, along with other migration-related services, making it an important location for migrants. The information board in Figure 10 also includes Russian, Tajik, and Uzbek, providing details about various bus routes, including the route to the Multifunctional Migration Center.

Notably, this sign also excludes English. The selection of languages seems insufficient, as not all migrants are familiar with Russian, Tajik, or Uzbek; many come from Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, China, and African countries. Also, a significant portion of migrants visiting the migration center are students from around the world, for whom information in English would be useful. In some cases, meso-level initiatives address such gaps, as seen in the sign inside a bus in Figure 11. The bus route operates in Drozhzhino, a southern area known for its relatively low housing costs and home to many Brazilian migrants. The sign seems to have been created by the bus driver in response to instances where passengers attempted to pay with cash instead of a card. Its tone is rather forceful, with large, colorful fonts and the use of exclamation marks. In addition to the warning in Russian and English, the sign includes a Spanish translation rather than Portuguese or Brazilian Portuguese.

Автобусы
Автобусҳо
Avtobuslar

Районные (каждые 10-15 минут)
Номер автобуса
Место остановки

Выходы
Выходы
Выходы

Социальные (каждые 30 минут)
Номер автобуса
Место остановки

Выходы
Выходы
Выходы

Пригородные автобусы
Автобусҳои наздишаҳри
Shahar atrofidagi avtobuslar

Выходы
Выходы
Выходы

359 Автостанция Пушкино
Автостанция Пушкино
Автостанция Пушкино

363 Автостанция Протвино
Автостанция Протвино
Автостанция Протвино

365к Автовокзал Чехов
Автовокзал Чехов
Автовокзал Чехов

397 Обнинск
Обнинск
Обнинск

406 Подольск (Юбилейная площадь)
Подольск (Юбилейная площадь)
Подольск (Юбилейная площадь)

407 Подольск
Подольск
Подольск

410 Кузнецкий
Кузнецкий
Кузнецкий

413 Подольск (Платформа Кутузовская)
Подольск (Платформа Кутузовская)
Подольск (Платформа Кутузовская)

417 Дубровицы
Дубровицы
Дубровицы

423 Добрыничи
Добрыничи
Добрыничи

426 Климовск (Площадь 50-летия Октября)
Климовск (Площадь 50-летия Октября)
Климовск (Площадь 50-летия Октября)

428к Автовокзал Чехов
Автовокзал Чехов
Автовокзал Чехов

430 Фидокново-1
Фидокново-1
Фидокново-1

432 Климовск (Площадь 50-летия Октября)
Климовск (Площадь 50-летия Октября)
Климовск (Площадь 50-летия Октября)

435 Кутузово
Кутузово
Кутузово

446 Подольск (ЗАГС)
Подольск (ЗАГС)
Подольск (ЗАГС)

458 Станция Серпухов
Станция Серпухов
Станция Серпухов

1039 Московский
Московский
Московский

Видное (МКГЗ)
Видное (МКГЗ)
Видное (МКГЗ)

1040 Ватулино
Ватулино
Ватулино

Видное (МКГЗ)
Видное (МКГЗ)
Видное (МКГЗ)

1042 Станция Зарково
Станция Зарково
Станция Зарково

Видное (МКГЗ)
Видное (МКГЗ)
Видное (МКГЗ)

1365 Автовокзал Чехов
Автовокзал Чехов
Автовокзал Чехов

Ф-остановочные пункты расположены на МКАД
Ф-остановочные пункты расположены на МКАД
Ф-остановочные пункты расположены на МКАД

Figure 10. Top-Down Sign without English



Figure 11. Private Bus Sign Featuring Spanish and English

Overall, the analysis of top-down signage across various locations in Moscow reveals a strong emphasis on Russian-English signs. While there are instances where additional languages are included, their use remains limited in both scope and geographic distribution. Given that signs featuring languages other than Russian and English are rare, located in specific areas, and include only a limited number of migrants' languages, Moscow's language policy does not appear to be prioritizing diversification of top-down signage, and different linguistic communities are not envisioned as major target audiences for future city-wide communication efforts.

5. Discussion

The results of this study reveal the LL of Moscow as a dynamic and layered semiotic field, shaped by competing forces of its top-down policies, globalizing trends (or inevitable pressures), and grassroots linguistic creativity. Through a qualitative analysis informed by ELLA and a distributive approach, the analysis identified three prominent layers in Moscow's LL, each reflecting distinct socio-political and economic dynamics that intersect to shape the city's linguistic identity.

The first layer, *English in top-down and bottom-up signage*, underscores its widespread presence in the city's linguistic landscape and its role as a lingua franca for international audiences. Since the 2018 FIFA World Cup, policymakers have embraced rather than resisted English in public signage. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, English-language metro announcements were replaced with Russian and minority languages (see Baranova 2023) and were not reinstated. This suggests that English in official signage is subject to constant regulation and may be transient. While its presence expanded after 2018, it could just as easily recede. Thus, top-down multilingualism in Moscow remains selective, driven by external pressures rather than a lasting policy shift.

The transient nature of top-down signage aside, bottom-up signage offers a different trajectory, providing a sustained and widespread visibility of English. The rapid and widespread integration of English in bottom-up signage reflects Russia's transition from state-controlled socialism to a market-driven economy. This shift is exemplified by the Central Children's Store (Fig. 3), the largest children's department store in the Soviet Union, which has retained its historical building and its focus on primarily selling children's products, while its internal linguistic signage has increasingly incorporated English. The visibility of English appears to be spanning all across the city (Fig. 8). In addition to its commercial value, using English in shop signs (whether in tourist attractions or residential areas) often conveys a friendly and informal tone (e.g., Fig. 4), which appears to be one of the reasons why English is so widely featured in bottom-up signage.

Amid the widespread visibility of Russian and English in the city's landscape, the second layer, *semiotic diversity in bottom-up signage*, reveals Moscow's superdiverse texture. Numerous restaurant signs showcase distinctive colors and linguistic features, fostering strong associations with the cultural identities of

various ethnic groups (see also Jaworski & Thurlow 2010). These stylized signs, as seen in Figure 7, exemplify the semiotic creativity within Moscow's bottom-up linguistic landscape. They demonstrate how language is not merely a vehicle for communication but a *resource* for constructing and projecting cultural and commercial identities. Such signs operate within Blommaert's (2013) layered semiotics, where temporal, spatial, and social meanings converge. Temporally, these signs evoke the cultural histories and traditions of their respective regions (countries). Spatially, they situate these traditions within the globalized urban context of Moscow. Socially, they engage consumers by appealing to their potential attraction to authenticity and cosmopolitan eating experiences. However, this stylization also raises questions about the reduction of complex cultural identities into commodified symbols, reflecting broader dynamics of linguistic commodification (Heller 2010, Kelly-Holmes 2014). The Greek, Georgian, Chinese, and other-language inspired signs appear to commodify their cultural associations, transforming them into marketable symbols that attempt to enhance the restaurants' appeal as a form of clientele attraction.

By using Russian text to mimic other scripts, these signs often illustrate the negotiation between local linguistic norms and global cultural references. This negotiation can be seen as a challenge to the city's top-down language policies, showcasing how bottom-up actors creatively navigate linguistic diversity. In this way, Moscow's superdiversity is most apparent in these signs, which are distributed across the city, from touristic areas to 'sleeping neighborhoods' (*spal'nye raiony*) far from the center. The semiotics employed by these restaurants seem to evoke a sense of familiarity and solidarity, particularly for specific ethnic groups, such as migrants from Central Asian countries. Through their signage and interior designs, these establishments offer an alternative space for Moscow's migrant population.

The third layer emerges in instances where top-down signage incorporates not only Russian or English but also other languages, particularly those of Central Asian origin. Compared to the first and second layers, this layer is weaker, as such signs remain relatively rare. The occasional appearance of Central Asian languages, as seen in multilingual metro signs, for example, near the Multifunctional Migration Center, underscores the pragmatic, yet (geographically) limited, response to migration-driven linguistic realities. These signs are geographically constrained and fail to exhaustively address the linguistic needs of Moscow's diverse population, excluding languages spoken by other significant migrant groups, predominantly, from Central Asia, such as Kyrgyz or Tajik¹. This uneven representation reinforces a hierarchy of languages, with Russian firmly at the top and others relegated to (geographically-restricted) functional or symbolic roles in specific contexts. The role of bottom-up signage in creating spaces of belonging for

¹ Along these lines the State Duma passed the law in the first reading on December 10, 2024, and in the second and third readings the following day on the prohibition of admitting migrant children to schools without knowledge of the Russian language. The law is set to take effect on April 1, 2025 (Ministry of Education 2024).

migrant communities, on the other hand, offers a partial remedy to limited visibility of these languages.

Thus, minority languages frequently lack visibility and remain underrepresented (Fig. 8) in Moscow's LL, which can, in turn, affect their perceived value and long-term vitality (Blackwood & Tufi 2015). Their vulnerability is likely to persist, especially considering that efforts to preserve linguistic diversity are often hindered by limited educational opportunities, insufficient institutional support, and a lack of teaching materials (see Grenoble & Whaley 2006, Zoumpalidis et al. 2024).

As this study is limited to a single city, its findings cannot be generalized to language policies across Russia. Further research comparing top-down and bottom-up linguistic landscapes in various regions is needed to understand the broader patterns, trends, and efficacy of national language policy, which would provide policymakers with more critical insights.

6. Conclusion

Moscow's linguistic landscape is a reflection of the city's language policies and its dynamic space where globalization and grassroots creativity intersect. It serves as a site of cultural negotiation and demonstrates the evolving connections between language, space, and identity in a superdiverse city. Through the identification of three key semiotic layers, this study has shown how multilingual signage in Moscow indexes power, identity, and inclusion/exclusion.

The findings of this study therefore highlight the importance of considering the linguistic landscape as an important site for promoting social equity and cultural inclusion in this rapidly developing urban environment. Policy recommendations based on this study can help create a more inclusive linguistic landscape in Moscow. In particular, the city's policies could encourage more consistent multilingual signage, especially in tourist areas and districts with large migrant populations. The presence of bottom-up and meso-level initiatives points to gaps that targeted policies could address. Recognizing diverse linguistic needs could foster a more inclusive urban space, support the vitality of marginalized languages, and eventually help preserve the city's cultural diversity. Future research may explore how top-down policies and bottom-up practices interact, thus, informing the development of policy frameworks that could balance institutional accommodation of diversity with local communities' ways of expressing themselves. Expanding LL studies to cover more districts could also reveal additional layers of Moscow's complex linguistic landscape.

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RusEmoLex: Russian Emotion Lexicon

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Abstract

Emotion detection in natural language is an important area of computational linguistics. It involves the description, categorisation and systematization of emotion lexicon that can be further employed to enhance the performance of machine learning algorithms. The aim of the study is twofold: firstly, to provide a comprehensive description of the Russian-language resources pertaining to emotion vocabulary, and secondly, to create an emotion lexicon based on these resources. The study describes the following types of Russian-language sources: lexicographic resources (dictionaries and thesauri); data from the semantically tagged part of the Russian National Corpus; datasets consisting of texts labelled by emotion type; and word–emotion association lexicons. The methodology of creating RusEmoLex encompasses the following stages: the creation of initial lists of emotion words derived from available sources; the compilation of the lists; and the selection of lexis in RusEmoLex. A lexical unit has to meet the following criteria to be included in RusEmoLex: repeated occurrence in the sources (a lexical unit needs to be present in two or more sources); the quality of the sources (a lexical unit needs to be included either in a dictionary or a corpus resource and it should not be a translation); the class label (the lexical units have an emotional label established on the basis of the majority of sources). RusEmoLex is an open access resource which includes 1024 lexical units and can be used for linguistic studies and in the field of natural language processing.

Keywords: *emotions, emotion lexicon, semantics, sentiment analysis, machine learning, natural language processing*

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RusEmoLex: эмоциональный лексикон для русского языка

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Аннотация

Распознавание эмоций в тексте – одна из актуальных задач в области обработки естественного языка. Неотъемлемой частью этой задачи является описание и систематизация эмоциональной лексики, которая может служить в качестве маркера, указывающего на то, что в тексте выражается та или иная эмоция. На сегодня уже существует достаточно много англоязычных ресурсов эмоциональной лексики в открытом доступе, однако для других языков, в частности русского, размеченных данных значительно меньше. Цель работы – описать доступные для использования русскоязычные ресурсы эмоциональной лексики и представить созданный на их основе новый объединяющий эмоциональный лексикон – RusEmoLex (Russian Emotion Lexicon). Описаны следующие типы русскоязычных источников: лексикографические ресурсы (словари и тезаурусы); корпусные данные; данные, полученные в результате опросов (зафиксированные ассоциации слов с эмоциями); наборы данных, используемые в машинном обучении. Описана методика создания ресурса RusEmoLex на основе доступных русскоязычных источников. Методика включает следующие этапы: формирование исходных списков эмоциональной лексики на основе доступных источников; объединение списков; отбор лексики в RusEmoLex. Для включения в RusEmoLex лексическая единица должна удовлетворять следующим критериям: (1) количество источников, где зафиксирована лексическая единица (лексическая единица должна входить в два или более источников); (2) качество источников (как минимум один из источников, куда вошла лексическая единица, должен относиться к словарным или корпусным ресурсам и не являться переводным); (3) наличие метки класса (лексическая единица должна иметь установленный на основании большинства источников эмоциональный класс). Основным результатом исследования является эмоциональный лексикон RusEmoLex, включающий 1024 лексических единиц, размеченных по частеречной принадлежности; эмоциональному классу; категории источников, где встречается слово; количеству вхождений в источники. RusEmoLex находится в открытом доступе и может использоваться как для собственно лингвистических задач, так и в области обработки естественного языка.

Ключевые слова: эмоции, эмоциональная лексика, семантика, анализ тональности, машинное обучение, обработка естественного языка

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1. Введение

Эмоции как объект исследования подразумевают междисциплинарность. Изучение собственно эмоций относится скорее к области психологии, в то же время выражение эмоций в языке активно исследуется в различных областях

лингвистической науки: в семантике (Гладкова 2010, Падучева 2004: 273–307, Иоанесян 2024, Gladkova 2022, Wierzbicka 2010 и др.), прагматике (Alba-Juez & Naugh 2025, Ларина 2015, 2019), и др., в том числе в кросс-культурном контексте (Ионова, Шаховский 2018, Gladkova 2010, Wierzbicka 1992, 1999, 2018 и др.). В трудах В. И. Шаховского (2008, 2009 и др.) были сформулированы теоретические основы лингвистики эмоций (эмотиологии) как отдельного направления языкознания. Лингвистика эмоций характеризуется полипарадигмальностью, то есть находится на пересечении целого ряда аспектов – когнитивного, прагматического, культурологического, текстового и др. (Шаховский 2008: 24). Одной из наиболее активно развивающихся областей в рамках лингвистики эмоций является изучение эмоций в коммуникативно-прагматическом и дискурсивном аспекте (Alba-Juez & Larina 2018, Larina & Ponton 2022, Mackenzie & Alba-Juez 2019, Zappettini et al. 2021). Этому направлению, в частности, посвящены специальные выпуски журнала *Russian Journal of Linguistics* (2015, № 1; 2018, Т. 22. № 1; 2021, Т. 25, № 3).

В компьютерной лингвистике значительное развитие получила задача анализа эмоций¹ (emotion analysis), которая подразумевает не только распознавание эмоций (emotion recognition), но также их понимание (emotional understanding) и даже имитацию. Большое количество исследований посвящено изучению эмоционального интеллекта больших языковых моделей, их способности воспроизводить эмоциональные реакции человека (см., например, Dalal et al. 2025).

Анализ эмоций имеет практическую ценность для многих приложений обработки естественного языка: создание персонализированных систем искусственного интеллекта и совершенствование диалоговых систем, распознавание эмоций в текстах отзывов или в комментариях пользователей социальных сетей (Cavicchio 2025: 5–8), классификация текстов в зависимости от наиболее ярко выраженной эмоций (Sboev et al. 2021) и др.

Описание и систематизация эмоциональной лексики могут способствовать улучшению качества работы систем искусственного интеллекта. Лексические единицы этого класса могут служить в качестве своеобразных маркеров, которые указывают на то, что в тексте выражается та или иная эмоция. Список эмоциональных слов или словосочетаний-маркеров может быть полезен при создании наборов данных для машинного обучения, а также может применяться для дообучения моделей. В области обработки естественного языка (natural language processing) такие списки зачастую называются лексиконами². В работе термин «лексикон» будет употребляться именно в этом значении.

¹ Термин «анализ эмоций» в данной статье употребляется в том же значении, что и англоязычный аналог, активно используемый в исследованиях, посвященных обработке естественного языка, — «emotion analysis» (см., например, Plaza-del-Arco et al. 2024). Под анализом эмоций понимается изучение различных способов отображения эмоций в языке.

² См., например, (Cavicchio 2025: 34), где эмоциональный лексикон определяется как список слов, выражений или закономерностей, позволяющих уловить различные оттенки эмоционального спектра.

Как и во многих других областях обработки естественного языка, в сфере анализа эмоций наблюдается активное преобладание англоязычных ресурсов (см., например, Mohammad 2023, Buechel et al. 2020). Для других языков, в том числе и для русского, размеченных данных значительно меньше. Для русского языка существует ряд ресурсов, разнородных как по целям и методике их создания, так и по формату. Можно выделить следующие типы источников:

- лексикографические ресурсы (словари и тезаурусы); корпусные данные;
- данные, полученные в результате опросов (зафиксированные ассоциации слов с эмоциями);
- наборы данных, созданные для использования в машинном обучении.

Предварительный анализ ресурсов показал, что лексика в разных источниках сильно различается, соответственно, слов, которые бы встречались одновременно в большом количестве источников, не так много. Кроме того, не все источники можно считать в равной степени надежными, многие требуют дополнительной проверки.

Целью работы является описание доступных для использования русскоязычных ресурсов эмоциональной лексики и создание на их основе нового объединяющего эмоционального лексикона – RusEmoLex (Russian Emotion Lexicon).

Первый раздел статьи посвящен проблеме описания эмоциональной лексики. Во втором разделе представлены доступные русскоязычные источники эмоциональной лексики. В третьем разделе дана методика создания объединяющего лексикона RusEmoLex на основе описанных источников. В четвертом разделе описана структура RusEmoLex и представлены фрагменты из него. Пятый раздел посвящен обсуждению результатов и дальнейших перспектив исследования.

2. Эмоциональная лексика: к проблеме описания семантического класса

Языковые средства выражения эмоций разнообразны. Эмоциональный компонент может быть реализован в единицах различных языковых уровней: фонетического, морфологического, лексического, синтаксического (Ионова 2023). В рамках нашего исследования будет рассматриваться только уровень лексики. Описание семантического класса эмоциональной лексики³ представляется достаточно трудной задачей, об этом упоминается, в частности, в работе (Апресян 1995: 366–373), где подсистема характеризуется как одна из наиболее сложно организованных.

Не вполне очевидно, каким образом очертить границу для класса эмоциональной лексики, поскольку слова могут непосредственно указывать на

³ Для обозначения этого семантического класса могут использоваться различные термины: «эмотивная лексика», «аффективная лексика» или же «эмоциональная лексика». В настоящей статье здесь и далее этот класс будет обозначаться как «эмоциональная лексика».

эмоции, называть их (*радость, злость*) или же быть связанными с эмоциями более опосредованно. Апресян (1995) разделяет базовую эмоциональную лексику (*беспокоиться, страх*) и лексические единицы, которые не являются обозначениями эмоции в собственном смысле, однако включают в свое значение указание на эмоциональное состояние субъекта (*любоваться* – смотреть, испытывая при этом определенную эмоцию), либо метафорические обозначения физических симптомов эмоции (*засиять* – например, от радости) (Апресян 1995: 366–373).

В.Ю. Апресян (2010) выделяет четыре подтипа языковых средств выражения эмоций:

- клишированные эмоциональные междометия (например, *ого* для удивления);
- свободные контекстуально-мотивированные способы выражения (например, ввод прямой речи глаголом эмоции: *удивилась она, обрадовался он*);
- специализированные слова, закрепленные за той или иной эмоцией (например, *потрясающе* для восторга);
- устойчивые конструкции с прямым указанием на эмоцию (например, *мне грустно*).

Шаховский (2009) отмечает, что эмоциональную лексику можно разделить по следующим группам в зависимости от способа выражения эмоции:

- прямая номинация эмоции (непосредственное указание на эмоцию – *радость, гнев*);
- описание эмоции (жесты, взгляд, характеристики речи и голоса – то есть указание на «симптомы» эмоции);
- непосредственное выражение эмоции (междометия, инвективная лексика и др.).

Место эмоционального компонента в семантике слова также может быть различно. Шаховский (2008) вводит систему терминов для описания трех типов статуса эмоционального семантического компонента – *аффектив* (собственно эмотивность), *коннотатив* (эмотивность как одна из реализаций семантики слова), *потенциатив* (ситуативная эмотивность) (Шаховский 2008: 53–127).

В работах, относящихся к области компьютерной лингвистики, как правило, предлагается несколько более упрощенный подход к описанию эмоциональной лексики. Это объясняется тем, что зачастую задачи компьютерной лингвистики подразумевают обработку значительного количества данных и по крайней мере частичную автоматизацию многих процессов. Например, в (Mohammad 2023) выделяются две категории эмоциональных слов: слова, которые включают эмоциональный компонент в ядро значения (*core meaning*), а также те, что связаны с эмоциями лишь посредством коннотаций (например, слово *вор* может ассоциироваться со злостью, а слово *солнце* с радостью). Обе категории автор рассматривает как релевантные для формирования

эмоциональных лексиконов, которые в дальнейшем можно использовать для различных задач компьютерной лингвистики.

В настоящей работе эмоциональная лексика так же понимается достаточно широко, поскольку доступные источники на русском языке включают эмоциональные слова различных типов – как прямые указания на эмоциональные состояния (*радость, злость*), так и лексику, связанную с эмоцией лишь ассоциативно (*праздник* для класса «радость», *мошенник* для класса «злость»).

Отдельную сложность представляет собой деление эмоциональных слов на классы по типу выражаемой эмоции. При анализе эмоциональной лексики исследователи, как правило, опираются на модели классификации эмоций, разработанные в психологии (например, Izard 1991). Существует большое количество подходов к классификации эмоций, при этом в области обработки естественного языка предпочтение, как правило, отдается работам Пола Экмана (Ekman 1992) и Роберта Плутчика (Plutchik 1980). Например, в работах (Wang et al. 2020, Park et al. 2020) для классификации текстов по эмоции были использованы «эмоциональные векторные представления» (emotional embeddings) на основе колеса эмоций Роберта Плутчика.

Деление эмоций на классы имеет практическую значимость для задач обработки естественного языка. Как правило, распознавание эмоций в тексте подразумевает и их классификацию, требуется не только выявить, выражается ли в тексте та или иная эмоция, но и определить, какая именно это эмоция. Анализ эмоций (emotion analysis) традиционно подразумевает классификацию на большее количество категорий, нежели анализ тональности (sentiment analysis), где в случае классической постановки задачи присутствуют три категории тональности – позитивная, негативная или нейтральная. Например, один из наиболее известных наборов данных, используемых для классификации текстов по типу эмоции – GoEmotions (Demszky et al. 2020), включает 27 эмоциональных классов.

В данной работе рассматривается эмоциональная лексика, относящаяся к базовым эмоциональным категориям: радость, злость, грусть, страх, удивление. Такое решение обосновывается двумя факторами: во-первых, эти классы эмоций наиболее последовательно представлены в доступных нам русскоязычных источниках эмоциональной лексики; во-вторых, именно эти классы эмоций являются наиболее распространенными в исследованиях, относящихся к области обработки естественного языка, согласно статистике, данной в обзоре (Plaza-del-Arco et al. 2024).

Таким образом, класс эмоциональной лексики достаточно широк, лексику можно классифицировать по большому количеству оснований. Определение границ этого тематического класса представляет собой отдельную исследовательскую задачу. В рамках данной статьи предлагается методика создания эмоционального лексикона на основе существующих русскоязычных ресурсов, которая не предполагает отбора лексики вручную.

3. Русскоязычные ресурсы эмоциональной лексики

В данном разделе будут представлены русскоязычные источники эмоциональной лексики. Первая часть раздела посвящена русскоязычным словарям и тезаурусам: «Русский семантический словарь» под ред. Н.Ю. Шведовой; «Алфавит эмоций: тезаурус эмотивной лексики» Л.Г. Бабенко; лексикон оценочных слов и выражений русского языка «РусСентиЛекс» (Loukachevitch & Levchik 2016); а также данным Национального корпуса русского языка (НКРЯ). Во второй части речь пойдет о списках, где каждому слову присвоен эмоциональный рейтинг на основе оценки респондентов: ресурс NRC EmoLex (Mohammad, Turney 2013), база данных ENRuN (Сысоева, Люсин 2024). Третья часть посвящена наборам данных, содержащим тексты, классифицированные по категориям в зависимости от типа эмоции, которая наиболее явно выражена в тексте.

3.1. Словарные и корпусные данные

Наиболее традиционные с лингвистической точки зрения источники для формирования эмоционального лексикона – лексикографические ресурсы и корпусные данные.

«Русский семантический словарь» (ред. Н.Ю. Шведова) (Шведова 1998) представляет собой систематизированный по классам слов толковый словарь русской общеупотребительной лексики. Словарь содержит только имена существительные. Раздел, представляющий интерес для составления эмоционального лексикона, – «Сами чувства, эмоциональные состояния» – включает 235 лексических единиц. Характеризуя стилистику лексики, представленной в источнике, отметим, что раздел включает 12 единиц с пометой «разг.» (*грустинка, кайф*); 8 с пометой «книжн.» (*ненавистничество, нега*), 9 с пометой «устар.» (*сплин, хлад*).

«Алфавит эмоций: тезаурус эмотивной лексики» Л.Г. Бабенко (Бабенко 2022) – специализированный тезаурус списочного типа, где слова разделены на группы в зависимости от того, к какой эмоции они относятся. Всего тезаурус содержит 11 210 лексических единиц различной частеречной принадлежности. Внутри групп лексика дополнительно делится на подгруппы: *эмоциональное состояние; эмоциональное отношение; становление эмоционального состояния и отношения; эмоциональное воздействие; внешнее выражение эмоций; эмоциональная характеристика; эмоциональное качество; человек как средоточие и носитель эмоций*. При этом следует отметить, что эмоциональная лексика понимается автором достаточно широко: выделяются 39 базовых эмоций. Наряду с классическими эмоциями (например, *грусть, страх, удивление*) представлены не вполне стандартные для этого семантического поля категории лексики, например, *настойчивость* или *искренность*, скорее обозначающие личностные характеристики, нежели эмоциональное состояние или отношение. Слова, разделенные на классы,

снабжаются лексикографическими пометами. В том числе в словаре представлена и разговорно-сниженная лексика (*балдеть, везуха, дрейфить*).

Лексикон оценочных слов и выражений русского языка «РуСентиЛекс» (Loukachevitch, Levchik 2016) включает более 12 тысяч единиц. Эмоциональная лексика не делится на классы, а объединяется под общим тегом «feeling», который включает 1760 единиц. Присутствует разделение слов и выражений по тональности: положительная – «positive» (*ароматный, блаженство, веселье*), негативная – «negative» (*вешать нос, испуганный, беспокойство*), смешанная – «positive/negative» (*волнение, жаждать*).

Данные Национального корпуса русского языка (НКРЯ). В настоящий момент в НКРЯ (Савчук и др. 2024) для той части корпуса, которая имеет семантическую разметку, доступна функция поиска по лексико-семантическим признакам. Можно сделать выгрузку лексических единиц с семантической пометой «эмоция». Как и в случае с РуСентиЛекс, слова имеют общий тег и не размечены по классам. Выгрузка включает глаголы (299 единиц) и имена существительные (147 единиц).

Безусловное преимущество словарных и корпусных данных заключается в том, что в них, как правило, включена лексика, формирующая ядро семантического класса эмоций – непосредственное указание на эмоциональное состояние (*огорчиться, радость, злой*), описание его характерных проявлений (*нахмуриться, заплакать, улыбнуться*). При этом доминирует пласт лексики, относящийся к литературному языку, в то время как сленговая лексика или междометия охвачены менее полно, что представляется совершенно естественным для такого типа ресурсов. Однако именно в контексте направления распознавания эмоций доминанту литературного языка можно расценивать и как недостаток, поскольку разговорная лексика может оказаться важна, например, при анализе текстов из социальных сетей. Еще одним недочетом может считаться то, что не всегда эмоциональная лексика разделена на классы, а в случаях, когда разделена, то зачастую используются не общепринятые, упрощенные модели деления на категории, характерные для компьютерной лингвистики. Таким образом, использовать словарные и корпусные ресурсы без дополнительной обработки не представляется возможным.

3.2. Эмоциональная оценка слов-стимулов

Помимо традиционных лингвистических ресурсов можно использовать данные опросов, где респондентам предлагается соотнести слово с какой-либо эмоцией.

«NRC Emotion Lexicon» (Mohammad, Turney 2013) – англоязычный ресурс, созданный с помощью краудсорсинга, на данный момент включает более 14 000 единиц различной частеречной принадлежности. Слова были размечены по 8 базовым эмоциям по модели (Plutchik 1980): классы «злость», «страх», «предвкушение», «доверие», «грусть», «радость», «отвращение».

Кроме того, слова оценивались респондентами по тональности как позитивные или негативные. Оценка по эмоциям и тональности производилась по бинарной шкале 0/1. Одно слово могло помещаться в несколько классов или не входить ни в один из предложенных, если получит нулевые оценки по всем категориям. Этот ресурс включает как непосредственные указания на эмоции или их проявления (*шок* для класса «удивление», *рыдать* для класса «грусть»), так и коннотации (*кораблекрушение* для класса «грусть», *герпес* для класса «отвращение»).

«NRC Emotion Lexicon» был автоматически переведён на 108 языков, в том числе и на русский. Из-за специфики автоматического перевода в русскоязычном варианте лексикона могут встречаться одинаковые слова, которые при этом имеют различные оценки. Так, в оригинальной версии респондентам для разметки по эмоциям предлагались три различных слова – *merciless*, *ruthless*, *unrelenting*, на русский все они были переведены одинаково – *безжалостный*. Соответствующий фрагмент лексикона представлен в табл. 1.

Таблица 1. Пример из версии NRC Emotion Lexicon с переводом на русский язык
Table 1. Example from NRC Emotion Lexicon translated into Russian

English Word	Anger	Anticipation	Disgust	Fear	Joy	Negative	Positive	Sadness	Surprise	Trust	Russian Word
merciless	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	безжалостный
ruthless	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	безжалостный
unrelenting	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	безжалостный

Встречаются и явные ошибки в переводе, особенно разговорной лексики, которая представляют проблему при использовании автоматического перевода (Озюменко, Ларина 2025). Например, слово *john* переведено как имя собственное *Джон*, хотя это слово имеет значение ‘туалет’. У респондентов слово *john* ассоциируется с классами «disgust» и «negative».

Таким образом, автоматически переведенные данные следует использовать с осторожностью: обращать внимание на дубликаты и погрешности перевода.

База данных ENRuN (Emotional Norms for Russian Nouns) (Сысоева, Люсин 2024) содержит эмоциональные оценки 1800 существительных русского языка. Для каждого слова представлены средние значения, стандартные отклонения, минимальные и максимальные оценки по каждому параметру, а также количество человек, оценивших данное слово. Для нашего исследования интерес представляет прежде всего категориальная оценка существительных, то есть степень связи той или иной лексической единицы со следующими классами эмоций: «радость», «грусть», «злость», «страх», «отвращение». Степень эмоциональной окраски оценивалась респондентами по

шкале от 0 до 5. Ресурс включает как прямые номинации эмоций (*веселье, уныние*) или те или иные способы выражения эмоций (*улыбка, слёзы*), так и слова, указывающие на предметы или явления действительности, связанные с той или иной эмоцией исключительно ассоциативно (*виселица* для класса «страх»; *королева* для класса «радость»).

3.3. Наборы данных для автоматического распознавания эмоций в текстах

Еще одним ресурсом могут послужить размеченные наборы данных (датасеты), используемые для классификации текстов по эмоциям⁴. Сами по себе эти ресурсы не содержат готового списка эмоциональной лексики. Тем не менее, эти ресурсы представляют большой интерес для исследователей из области обработки естественного языка. Кроме того, на основе этих наборов данных можно получить список эмоциональной лексики. Наш подход к получению списка размеченных эмоциональных слов путем обучения линейных классификаторов представлен в п. 4.1 данной статьи. Однако прежде всего рассмотрим доступные данные.

В открытом доступе представлены следующие датасеты, содержащие размеченные по классам эмоций тексты на русском языке: CEDR (Corpus for Emotions Detecting in Russian-language text sentences of different social sources) (Sboev et al. 2021), доступная часть набора данных AIST (Kazyulina et al. 2021), русскоязычная часть набора данных для соревнования SemEval-2025⁵ (Muhammad et al. 2025); датасет GoEmotions (Demszky et al. 2020), автоматически переведенный на русский язык.

В датасетах представлены в основном короткие тексты в формате комментария из социальных сетей. Тексты обладают характерной спецификой: содержат большое количество разговорной, сленговой лексики, эмодзи, хэштегов, встречаются также орфографические ошибки или опечатки. Примеры текстов с меткой класса «Грусть» из обучающей выборки набора данных SemEval-2025 (Muhammad et al. 2025). В примере (1) используется англицизм, в примере (2) – опечатка и эмодзи.

(1) *Сижу и жру пельмени, пока гости не пришли. Худший НГ эвер.*

(2) *Вером редко когда хорошее настроение =(((*

В табл. 2 дана общая информация о наборах данных.

⁴ Существуют также наборы данных, нацеленные на задачу распознавания эмоций в разговорной речи, например, DUSHA (Kondratenko et al. 2022), однако в данной работе они не принимались во внимание.

⁵ Ежегодные соревнования по семантическому анализу, которые проводятся в рамках международного исследовательского семинара Semantic Evaluation (<https://semeval.github.io/>).

Таблица 2. Наборы данных для классификации текстов по эмоциям на русском языке
Table 2. Datasets for Emotion Classification in Russian

Набор данных	Классы эмоций	Количество размеченных текстов
CEDR	радость, грусть, удивление, страх, злость	9 410
AIST	радость, грусть, злость, неуверенность, нейтральность	50 750
SemEval-2025	радость, грусть, удивление, страх, злость, отвращение	2 878
ruGoEmotions	27 эмоций + нейтральность	58 000

4. Методика исследования

Для создания RusEmoLex на основе каждого доступного источника были сформированы исходные списки эмоциональной лексики. Затем списки, полученные на основе каждого источника, были объединены. Далее из полученного объединенного списка по ряду критериев производился отбор лексики в RusEmoLex.

Для включения в RusEmoLex лексическая единица должна удовлетворять следующим критериям:

- **количество источников:** лексическая единица должна входить в два или более источников;
- **качество источников:** как минимум один из источников, куда вошла лексическая единица, должен относиться к словарным или корпусным ресурсам и не являться переводным;
- **наличие метки класса:** лексическая единица должна иметь установленный на основании большинства источников эмоциональный класс.

Предлагаемая методика нацелена на то, чтобы формализовать процедуру отбора лексики, сделав ее воспроизводимой и менее зависимой от субъективных суждений разметчика. Далее рассмотрим каждый этап более подробно.

4.1. Отбор лексики из каждого источника

На основе доступных источников были составлены списки эмоциональных слов. Для разных источников методика отбора слов в RusEmoLex различается, поскольку и сами исходные ресурсы отличаются с точки зрения формата и области применения. Лексикографические и корпусные данные требовали минимальной обработки, в то время как формирование списка слов на основе наборов данных, используемых для машинного обучения, потребовало больше этапов обработки.

В список на основе Русского семантического словаря были включены все 235 единиц из раздела «Сами чувства, эмоциональные состояния». Классы лексики представлены в табл. 3.

**Таблица 3. Список эмоциональных слов, созданный
на основе Русского семантического словаря**
Table 3. Emotion word list from The Russian Semantic Dictionary

Класс	Количество единиц
обида, досада, недовольство	23
отвращение, презрение, зависть, неприязнь	28
злоба, гнев, рассерженность	27
сочувствие, жалость	7
страдание, раскаяние; смущение, стыд	22
отчаяние, печаль, уныние	34
восторг, радость, веселье; довольство, умиротворение	30
страх, тревога; нетерпение	22
любовь, нежность, расположение, привязанность; благодарность	42
Всего	235

В список эмоциональных слов на основе ресурса «Алфавит эмоций: тезаурус эмотивной лексики» (Бабенко 2022) были отобраны только те группы слов, относящиеся к пяти базовым эмоциям, которые находятся в центре внимания в данной статье. Во-первых, были выбраны одноименные категории – радость, грусть, злость, страх, удивление. Во-вторых, были также включены категории «горе» (можно интерпретировать как сильную грусть) и «счастье» (можно интерпретировать как сильную радость). Список включает 3241 слово. Классы лексики, включенной в список, даны в табл. 4.

**Таблица 4. Список эмоциональных слов, созданный
на основе ресурса «Алфавит эмоций: тезаурус эмотивной лексики»**
Table 4. Emotion word list from “Alphabet of Emotions: Thesaurus of Emotive Lexis”

Класс	Количество единиц
радость	549
счастье	263
грусть	624
горе	742
злость	451
страх	293
удивление	319
Всего	3241

В списки слов, созданных на основе источников РуСентиЛекс и НКРЯ, где эмоции не делятся на классы, были включены все слова, которым присвоены теги «feeling» и «эмоция» соответственно. Список эмоциональных слов и выражений на основе РуСентиЛекс составил 1760 единиц. Список слов на основе НКРЯ составил 466 единиц.

Для формирования списка эмоциональных слов на основе NRC Emotion Lexicon отбирались такие слова, которые по целевому классу (все категории,

кроме «anticipation» и «trust») имели отметку 1. Количественные данные по списку представлены в табл. 5.

Таблица 5. Список эмоциональных слов, созданный на основе русскоязычной версии NRC Emotion Lexicon
Table 5. Emotion word list from NRC Emotion Lexicon translated into Russian

Класс	Количество единиц
радость	687
страх	1474
удивление	532
отвращение	1056
грусть	1187
злость	1245
Всего	6181

Для формирования списка слов на основе базы данных ENRuN были отобраны такие существительные, которые получили оценку респондентов от 2, 5 (то есть половина или более по шкале от 0 до 5) по целевой эмоции. Список включает 808 лексических единиц. Количественные данные по списку представлены в таблице 6.

Таблица 6. Список эмоциональных слов, созданный на основе ENRuN
Table 6. Emotion word list from ENRuN

Класс	Количество единиц
радость	317
страх	161
отвращение	131
печаль	111
злость	88
Всего	808

Для создания списка эмоциональной лексики на основе датасетов CEDR (Sboev et al. 2021), AIST (Kazyulina et al. 2021), SemEval-2025 (Muhammad et al. 2025), GoEmotions (Demszky et al. 2020) был сформирован общий набор данных, включающий лемматизированные тексты из всех датасетов и метки классов.

Далее для обработки данных были использованы методы машинного обучения, которые позволяют оценить влияние каждого отдельного слова на определение общего эмоционального содержания текста. Оценка реализуется путем автоматического подбора коэффициентов к частотным характеристикам слов на обучающей выборке. На общем наборе данных были обучены два линейных классификатора – логистическая регрессия и метод опорных векторов. После обучения моделей можно получить информацию о весе каждого используемого признака, в данном случае в роли признаков

выступают слова из текстов датасета. Например, три слова-признака с наибольшим весом для класса «Злость» в датасете CEDR при обучении модели-классификатора (логистическая регрессия): *злость* 5.068; *злиться* 4.963; *злой* 4.760. Именно эти слова оказались наиболее значимы для определения текста в класс «Злость».

На основе двух классификаторов были получены два списка наиболее значимых слов-признаков. Затем для дополнительной валидации полученные списки слов были объединены (с учетом общих элементов), а слова-признаки упорядочены в соответствии с усредненным рангом. В результате получился список, включающий 1422 слова.

Три наиболее значимых слова-признака (исключая обценную лексику, которая оказалась характерна для класса «Злость») для каждой эмоции представлены в табл. 7.

Таблица 7. Примеры из списка эмоциональных слов, полученных из датасетов
Table 7. Examples from dataset-based list

Метка класса	Слова-признаки
радость	рад, счастливый, радость
страх	бояться, пугать, страшный
злость	(...), бесить, ненавидеть, (...), (...), злость
удивление	удивить, недоумение, шокировать
грусть	печальный, грустный, сожаление

Полученный на основе датасетов список представляет интерес, так как включает ряд разговорных и сленговых слов (*пасиб*, *лапочка*) и междометий (*ахахах*, *вау*, *оу*), которые не встречались в описанных выше источниках. Однако список нельзя считать готовым к использованию, поскольку данные можно охарактеризовать как зашумленные, среди слов-признаков с достаточно высоким весом встречаются, например, имена собственные (*Владислав*, *Кристина*), фрагменты устойчивых словосочетаний (слово *рождение* из-за того, что в текстах датасетов встречались поздравления с днем рождения).

**4.2. Создание единого списка эмоциональной лексики
на основе всех источников**

На основе доступных русскоязычных источников было составлено семь списков слов, которые затем были объединены. В итоге был получен список из 7937 уникальных лемм. Количественное распределение слов представлено в табл. 8.

Следует отметить, что уровень пересечения слов в списках из различных источников достаточно низкий, имеются серьезные различия как в количественном, так и в качественном аспекте. Самый большой исходный список слов был сформирован на базе NRC EmoLex (6 181 единиц), а самый маленький – на основе Русского семантического словаря (235 единиц).

Различен и лексический состав списков, поскольку сами ресурсы также сильно расходятся с точки зрения цели и методики их создания.

Таблица 8. Количество слов в списках на основе различных источников
Table 8. Number of words in lists based on different sources

Источник	Количество единиц в списке
Русский семантический словарь	235
Алфавит эмоций: тезаурус эмотивной лексики	3 241
НКРЯ	466
РуСентиЛекс	1 760
NRC Emotion Lexicon	6 181
ENRuN	808
Наборы данных для машинного обучения	1 422
Общее количество уникальных лемм	7 937

На рис. 1 представлена матрица пересечения источников (степень совпадения между источниками дана в процентах).

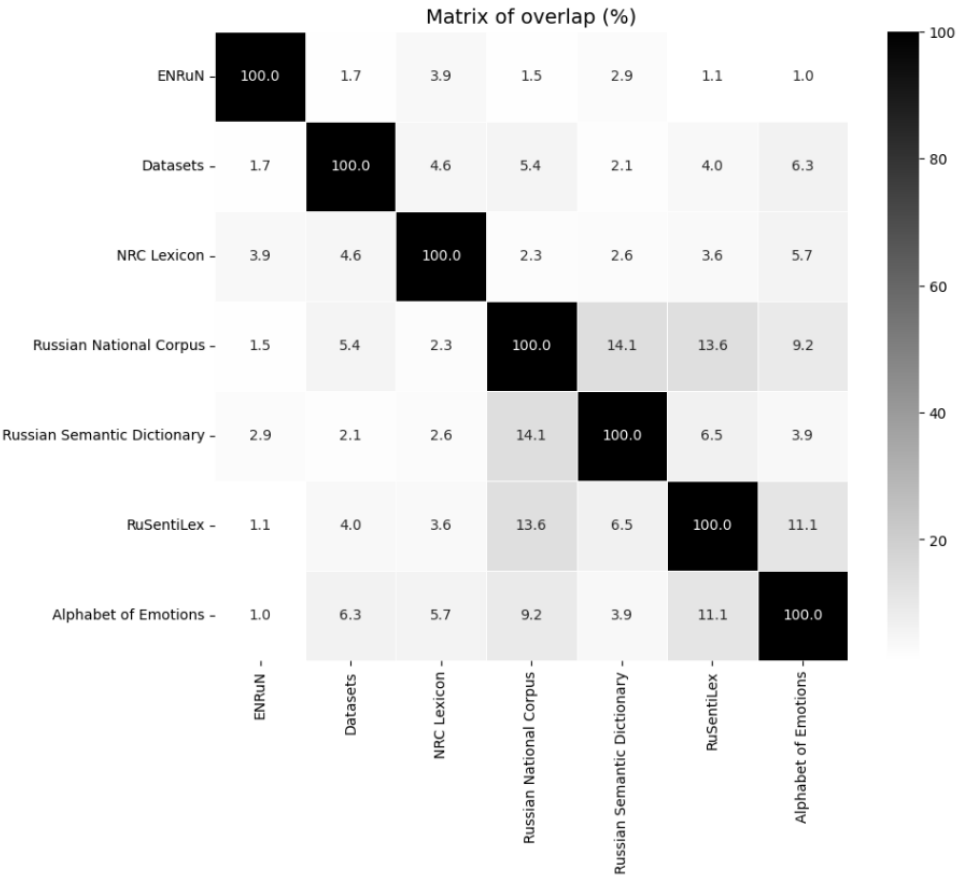


Рис. 1. Матрица пересечения
Figure 1. Matrix of overlap

Для создания эмоционального лексикона объединенный список слов прошел несколько этапов обработки, которые будут описаны в следующем разделе.

4.3. Отбор лексики в RusEmoLex

Количество источников. Как было сказано выше, лексических единиц, которые входили бы в большое количество источников, не так много. В исходном списке слов видим, что в один источник входит 6663 слов; в два источника – 887; в три источника – 251; в четыре источника – 93; в пять источников – 20; в шесть источников – 20; в 7 источников – 3.

Для дальнейшей обработки были отобраны только такие слова, которые входят как минимум в два источника, что позволило отсеять наименее релевантную лексику. Таким образом, количество слов-кандидатов сократилось с 7937 до 1274.

Качество источников. Источники, на основе которых составлялся список слов-кандидатов, были созданы для различных целей. Так, при формировании лексикографических ресурсов специалистами отбирались слова, непосредственно связанные с эмоциями. Совершенно другой принцип лежит в основе формирования списков слов-стимулов для определения их эмоциональной окраски. Например, (Сысоева, Люсин 2024) в ходе разработки базы данных ENRuN список существительных для опроса респондентов составляли на основе частотного словаря русского языка (Ляшевская, Шаров 2009), отбирая лексику оттуда по определенным критериям (например, длина слова). Таким образом, в источниках ENRuN и NRC Emotion Lexicon лексика разнообразная: это могут быть как указания на эмоции и их проявления (то, что представляет для нас основной интерес в рамках исследования) или же слова, которые связаны с эмоциями лишь ассоциативно. Напомним также, что NRC Emotion Lexicon был переведен на русский язык автоматически, поэтому содержит неточности.

Списки слов-признаков, полученные в результате обучения линейных классификаторов на наборах данных, ориентированных на распознавание эмоций в тексте, характеризуются высоким уровнем шума: наряду с целевой лексикой туда могли попасть и случайные слова, не имеющие отношения к эмоциям. Кроме того, один из датасетов (RuGoEmotions) исходно является англоязычным, что также может негативно сказываться на качестве слов-признаков.

Таким образом, было принято решение разделить источники на категории А и В в зависимости от их надежности. В категорию А были включены словари и данные корпуса, в категорию В – данные опросов про ассоциации слов с эмоциями (NRC Emotion Lexicon, ENRuN) и наборы данных для машинного обучения.

Лексические единицы в списке слов-кандидатов в результате были распределены на 3 группы: группа слов А – входят только в источники категории

А; группа слов В – входят только в источники категории В; группа слов АВ – входят в источники обеих категорий. Количественное распределение представлено в табл. 9.

Таблица 9. Распределение слов по категории источников
Table 9. Distribution of words by source category

Группа по категории источника	Количество лексических единиц в группе
А	477
АВ	595
В	202

Принимая во внимание качественное различие источников, в список слов-кандидатов для дальнейшего рассмотрения были включены только такие лексические единицы, которые есть хотя бы в одном источнике категории А – то есть слова групп А и АВ.

Таким образом, количество слов-кандидатов сократилось с 1274 до 1072.

Присвоение меток классов. Несмотря на то, что перечень эмоций, интересующих нас в рамках исследования, был определен заранее, при классификации отобранных слов возник ряд сложностей. Во-первых, некоторые источники высокой степени надежности (категория А) не предполагают деление на классы – в выгрузке из НКРЯ классы отсутствуют, в РуСентиЛекс есть только деление по тональности (позитивная, негативная, смешанная). Во-вторых, классы в источниках различаются.

Были составлены правила по соотношению классов из различных А-источников. Сведение более сложных описаний классов (как, например, в Русском семантическом словаре) к более базовым предполагает некоторое упрощение, однако представляется адекватным задачам настоящего исследования.

Рассмотрим принятое соотношение классов в табл. 10.

Таблица 10. Соотношение классов в различных источниках
Table 10. Class correspondence in different sources

Источник	Класс источника	Базовый класс
Русский семантический словарь	обида, досада, недовольство	Злость
Русский семантический словарь	отвращение, презрение, зависть, неприязнь	Злость
Русский семантический словарь	злоба, гнев, рассерженность	Злость
Русский семантический словарь	сочувствие, жалость	Грусть
Русский семантический словарь	страдание, раскаяние; смущение, стыд	Грусть
Русский семантический словарь	отчаяние, печаль, уныние	Грусть
Русский семантический словарь	страх, тревога; нетерпение	Страх
Русский семантический словарь	восторг, радость, веселье; довольство, умиротворение	Радость

Источник	Класс источника	Базовый класс
Русский семантический словарь	любовь, нежность, расположение, привязанность; благодарность	Радость
Алфавит эмоций	Злость	Злость
Алфавит эмоций	Удивление	Удивление
Алфавит эмоций	Радость	Радость
Алфавит эмоций	Счастье	Радость
Алфавит эмоций	Страх	Страх
Алфавит эмоций	Грусть	Грусть
Алфавит эмоций	Горе	Грусть
РусСентиЛекс	positive	Радость

Наиболее проблемным с точки зрения соотношения классов оказался РусСентиЛекс, в особенности метка «negative», так как среди пяти рассматриваемых эмоций три являются негативными: метка «negative» может соответствовать любому из трех классов – «грусть», «злость» или «страх». По этой причине для РусСентиЛекс засчитывалась только метка «positive» как «радость».

После проведенной унификации классов разметка единиц производилась по следующим принципам:

1. Для единиц из группы А метка класса выбиралась в соответствии с наиболее частотным классом по всем источникам.

2. Для единиц из группы АВ при определении класса мы также ориентировались исключительно на метки источников категории А.

Рассмотрим пример в табл. 11. Слово *удовлетворение* встречается в 4 источниках категории А. НКРЯ не содержит меток классов. В остальных источниках представлены классы, сводимые к категории «Радость». Таким образом, слову присваивается итоговая метка «Радость».

Таблица 11. Пример определения итоговой метки класса для RusEmoLex
Table 11. Example of defining the resulting class label for RusEmoLex

Лексическая единица	НКРЯ	Русский семантический словарь	РусСентиЛекс	Алфавит эмоций
удовлетворение	-	восторг, радость, веселье; довольство, умиротворение	positive	Счастье

При невозможности определить метку класса единица не включалась в итоговый рекомендованный список эмоциональной лексики.

Невозможность присвоения метки класса возникала, например, если слово входило только в источники категории А, не подразумевающие деления на классы (НКРЯ, РусСентиЛекс). В ряде случаев выявлялись противоречия между источниками: лексической единице присваивались разные классы. При этом отметим, что возникающие в источниках противоречия могли быть

связаны со свойствами обозначаемой данной лексической единицей эмоции – в частности, с ее сложным, неоднозначным характером. Например, *страсть* в Русском семантическом словаре относится к классу «Любовь, нежность, расположение, привязанность; благодарность» (соответствует классу «радость»), а согласно (Бабенко 2022) – к классу «страх». Такой результат представляется вполне релевантным, *страсть* можно охарактеризовать как сложную, смешанную эмоцию⁶. Рассмотрение подобных случаев не входит в задачи данной работы, однако представляет отдельный интерес и требует дальнейшего исследования.

Расширение списка слов за счет однокоренных слов. Полученный лексикон дополнялся с помощью поиска однокоренных слов: по каждой лексической единице, которая уже была включена в список, проводилась проверка на наличие однокоренных слов среди тех единиц, которые по тем или иным причинам в список отобраны не были (то есть среди единиц, которые не получили метку класса, а также слов, которые встречались исключительно в источниках типа В). Данный этап позволил сделать процедуру формирования эмоционального лексикона более последовательной.

Рассмотрим примеры. Слову *беспокойство* на основе анализа источников была присвоена метка «Страх», в то же время для слова *беспокойный* метка класса не была назначена, это слово относится к группе АВ и входит в два источника – РуСентиЛекс (категория А) и NRC EmoLex (категория В) – метка класса присваивается по источнику категории А, но в данном случае это не представляется возможным, так как в РуСентиЛекс это слово отмечено как «negative», соответственно нельзя определить, какая именно категория подразумевается – страх, грусть или злость. Однако мы смогли присвоить метку класса слову *беспокойство*, это позволяет нам распространить ее и на однокоренные слова, частности на слово *беспокойный*.

При проверке по однокоренным словам во внимание принимались также и аффиксы. В том случае, если аффикс значительно модифицировал семантику слова, метка класса по аналогии с однокоренным словом не присваивалась. Прежде всего, это приставки со значением отрицания: при наличии такой приставки в одном из слов однокоренные слова могут относиться к различным классам сообразно их значению. Например, *нелюбовь* – класс «Злость», *любить* – класс «Радость». Рассмотрим другой пример, где приставка кардинальным образом не меняет значение слова: глаголу *скупать* на основании источников была присвоена метка класса «Грусть», для глагола *заскупать* метку не удалось определить по источникам, но она была присвоена по аналогии с однокоренным словом *скупать*.

⁶ Более подробно про смешанные эмоции как объект лингвистического исследования см. (Ионова, Штеба 2019).

В ходе анализа списка были выявлены такие случаи, когда однокоренные слова имели различные метки классов и при отсутствии аффиксов, существенно влияющих на значение. Рассмотрим группу однокоренных слов, приведенную в табл. 12.

Таблица 12. Пример с однокоренными словами
Table 12. Example of the word family

Лексическая единица	Метка класса на основании источников
<i>обида</i>	Грусть
<i>обидеть</i>	Не присвоена
<i>обидеться</i>	Грусть
<i>обидный</i>	Грусть
<i>обижаться</i>	Грусть
<i>обиженность</i>	Злость
<i>разобидеться</i>	Не присвоена

Двум единицам из группы метку класса на основании источников присвоить не удалось. Другие однокоренные слова на основании источников имеют различные метки: «Злость» и «Грусть». В таких случаях итоговая метка класса определялась по большинству. В данном примере мы видим одно слово с меткой «Злость» и четыре слова с меткой «Грусть». Итоговой меткой для всех слов этой группы будет «Грусть», поскольку именно «Грусть» зафиксирована в большинстве источников. В том случае, если определить метку по большинству не представлялось возможным, – например, они делились поровну между двумя классами – слова исключались из лексикона из-за наличия неустранимого в рамках нашего подхода противоречия.

После проведения всех описанных этапов мы получили список из 1024 единиц, размеченных по классам эмоций.

5. Результаты исследования

Основным результатом исследования является полученный русскоязычный эмоциональный лексикон RusEmoLex, который включает 1024 лексические единицы из источников различного типа.

По каждому слову в RusEmoLex доступна следующая информация: (1) частеречная принадлежность; (2) эмоциональный класс; (3) категория источников, где встречается слово; (4) количество вхождений в источники; (5) перечисление названий исходных источников, где зафиксировано слово.

Такая структура RusEmoLex позволяет в зависимости от целей и задач исследования отфильтровать и упорядочить лексические единицы по нужному критерию – например, если требуется рассмотреть слова, вошедшие в наибольшее количество источников, или лексику определенного эмоционального класса. По умолчанию слова в лексиконе упорядочены по алфавиту. Структура RusEmoLex проиллюстрирована примером в табл. 13.

Таблица 13. Структура RusEmoLex
Table 13. Structure of RusEmoLex

Слово	Часть речи	Класс	Категория источников	Количество вхождений	Источники
<i>веселье</i>	Существительное	радость	AB	6	ENRuN, NRC EmoLex, НКРЯ, Русский семантический словарь, РуСентиЛекс, Алфавит эмоций

Рассмотрим ключевые характеристики слов, которые вошли в состав RusEmoLex. С точки зрения частеречной принадлежности наиболее частотны оказались глаголы и существительные. В лексикон попало имя существительное с предлогом – *без ума*, остальные же единицы состоят из одного элемента. Выражение *без ума* встречается в двух источниках – РуСентиЛекс и NRC EmoLex. РуСентиЛекс, как было сказано выше, включает не только отдельные слова, но и выражения. NRC EmoLex является переводным ресурсом: то, что было автоматически переведено как *без ума*, в оригинале является именем прилагательным *mad*. В табл. 14 представлены количественные данные по всем частям речи, которые вошли в лексикон.

Таблица 14. Частеречное распределение слов в лексиконе
Table 14. PoS distribution in the lexicon

Часть речи	Количество единиц
Глагол	473
Имя существительное	336
Имя прилагательное	189
Наречие	25
Имя существительное с предлогом	1

Распределение слов по классам эмоций представлено на рис. 2. Классы не сбалансированные, такой результат является закономерным, так как в исходных источниках классы, как правило, также не были сбалансированными.

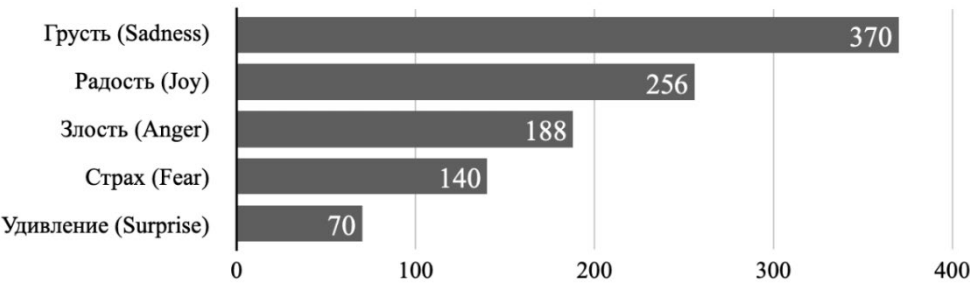


Рис. 2. Распределение слов в лексиконе по эмоциональным классам
Figure 2. Emotion classes distribution in the lexicon

Характеристика слов в лексиконе по категории источников дана в табл. 15. Наименее представлены в RusEmoLex слова из источников категории В, так как они могли попасть в итоговый список только на этапе проверки по однокоренным.

Таблица 15. Распределение слов в лексиконе по категории источников
Table 15. Source category distribution in the lexicon

Категория источника	Количество единиц
А	451
АВ	557
В	16

Характеристика слов по количеству вхождений в различные источники дана в табл. 16.

Таблица 16. Распределение слов в лексиконе по количеству вхождений в источники
Table 16. Emotion words at the intersection of resources

Количество вхождений в источники	Количество единиц
2	653
3	239
4	90
5	19
6	20
7	3

Рассмотрим фрагмент лексикона, где представлены слова, вошедшие в наибольшее количество источников (табл. 17).

Таблица 17. Фрагмент RusEmoLex
Table 17. Fragment of RusEmoLex, which includes the lexical units found in the largest number of sources

Слово	Часть речи	Класс	Категория источников	Количество вхождений
<i>сожаление</i>	существительное	Грусть	АВ	7
<i>удовольствие</i>	существительное	Радость	АВ	7
<i>ужас</i>	существительное	Страх	АВ	7
<i>веселье</i>	существительное	Радость	АВ	6
<i>восторг</i>	существительное	Радость	АВ	6
<i>горе</i>	существительное	Грусть	АВ	6
<i>грусть</i>	существительное	Грусть	АВ	6
<i>злоба</i>	существительное	Злость	АВ	6
<i>злость</i>	существительное	Злость	АВ	6
<i>испуг</i>	существительное	Страх	АВ	6
<i>кошмар</i>	существительное	Страх	АВ	6
<i>ликование</i>	существительное	Радость	АВ	6
<i>отчаяние</i>	существительное	Грусть	АВ	6

Слово	Часть речи	Класс	Категория источников	Количество вхождений
<i>паника</i>	существительное	Страх	АВ	6
<i>печаль</i>	существительное	Грусть	АВ	6
<i>радость</i>	существительное	Радость	АВ	6
<i>скорбь</i>	существительное	Грусть	АВ	6
<i>скука</i>	существительное	Грусть	АВ	6
<i>страх</i>	существительное	Страх	АВ	6
<i>тоска</i>	существительное	Грусть	АВ	6
<i>тревога</i>	существительное	Страх	АВ	6
<i>хандра</i>	существительное	Грусть	АВ	6
<i>ярость</i>	существительное	Злость	АВ	6

Примечательно, что слова, которые встречаются во всех семи источниках (*удовольствие, сожаление, ужас*), нельзя охарактеризовать как наиболее типичные и репрезентативные. На пересечение всех семи множеств не попали, например, базовые обозначения эмоций (*грусть, страх, злость* – эти слова вошли только в шесть источников). Отметим, что схожая тенденция была зафиксирована в работе (Котельников 2020), где рассматривались словари оценочной лексики для английского и русского языков. Так, для шестнадцати англоязычных словарей общими оказались слова *pretty, hell, hurt, sick*. В это множество не попали слова *good* и *bad*. Пересечение одиннадцати русскоязычных ресурсов дало пустое множество.

Таким образом, количество вхождений в источники не является единственным определяющим критерием для характеристики лексической единицы относительно ее принадлежности к ядру или периферии того или иного тематического класса – в нашем случае, класса эмоциональной лексики.

По стилистическим характеристикам слова, представленные в лексиконе, не размечались. Однако можно сказать, что лексический состав достаточно разнообразен: встречается как книжная или устаревшая лексика (*возликовать, кручина*), так и более сниженная, разговорная (*дрейфить, дуться*). Тем не менее, поскольку при создании лексикона мы ориентировались на более надежные источники (категория А), разговорная лексика представлена не очень широко, местоимения не представлены совсем, хотя они присутствовали в списке слов, созданном на основе наборов данных для машинного обучения.

6. Дискуссия

В статье представлен новый ресурс – RusEmoLex, созданный на основе доступных русскоязычных источников. Появление нового ресурса на русском языке особенно значимо в условиях доминирования в области обработки естественного языка англоязычных источников.

К преимуществам полученного ресурса можно отнести следующие пункты. Во-первых, лексикон содержит слова из различных источников,

которые теперь представлены в едином формате, что обеспечивает удобство использование нового ресурса. Во-вторых, преимуществом описанной в работе методики составления лексикона является ее формализованный характер. Такой подход позволяет повысить уровень объективности при отборе и классификации лексических единиц, поскольку мы опираемся не на один, а сразу на несколько ресурсов. Кроме того, предложенная в статье методика создания лексикона эмоциональных слов для русского языка в дальнейшем может применяться и для источников на других языках.

Полученный список эмоциональных слов нельзя считать окончательным. В дальнейшем он может быть дополнен новыми лексическими единицами и расширен за счет добавления новых классов эмоций (например, *отвращение, любовь, стыд*). Словарь может быть также пополнен путем выявления эмоциональной лексики в массивах текстов с помощью векторных представлений (эмбедингов). Однако следует отметить, что векторные представления слов зависят от корпуса, на котором они считаются, от применяемых моделей и их параметров, а также от особенностей контекстов в корпусе, включая вхождение слова в устойчивые словосочетания, это может приводить к ошибочным результатам (Wang 2020).

Тем не менее, на текущем этапе ресурс может использоваться в различных исследовательских задачах. Например, при создании новых русскоязычных наборов размеченных данных для анализа эмоций, а также при работе с большими языковыми моделями в рамках исследований по оценке понимания эмоций (emotional understanding) на материале русского языка.

7. Заключение

В данной статье были описаны русскоязычные ресурсы эмоциональной лексики, находящиеся в открытом доступе. Ресурсы были охарактеризованы по форме представления материала: лексикографические ресурсы (словари и тезаурусы); корпусные данные; данные, полученные в результате опросов (зафиксированные ассоциации слов с эмоциями); наборы данных, используемые в машинном обучении. Также источники были описаны с точки зрения лексического состава – частеречной принадлежности слов, стилистических характеристик и др.

Представлена методика создания нового русскоязычного ресурса RusEmoLex – объединенного списка эмоциональных слов, размеченных по частеречной принадлежности; эмоциональному классу; категории источников, где фиксируется слово; количеству вхождений в источники. Было показано, что RusEmoLex может использоваться как для собственно лингвистических задач, так и в целях обработки естественного языка. Текущая версия RusEmoLex включает 1024 лексических единицы, однако она не является окончательной, ресурс может быть расширен и дополнен путем включения новых источников или расширения списка классов эмоциональной лексики. Предложенная методика позволяет сделать процедуру отбора лексики более

объективной, а также в дальнейшем может быть использована и на материале других языков. RusEmoLex находится в открытом доступе⁷.

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⁷ Текущая версия RusEmoLex доступна по ссылке: <https://github.com/nl-pi/rusemolex>.

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Research article / Научная статья

Linguoesthetic and idiodiscursive dimensions of artistic modelling

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Abstract

The study addresses the issue of the linguistic analysis of artistic discourse in the aesthetic projection of idiodiscursive language modelling, where artistic discourse is understood as a particular aesthetic and ethno-cultural worldview formed through the intellectual and creative interaction between the artist (author) and the recipient (reader). The purpose of this work is to clarify the dimensions of the linguistic aesthetic model of the author's set of techniques and tools based on the linguistic discursive practices of the contemporary Chinese literature (the turn of the XX–XXI centuries). The study analyses six popular works of prose in the form of a lengthy novels by Mo Yan, Liu Zhenyun, Yu Hua, Jia Pingwa, Wang Anyi and Moxiang Tongxiu, comprising a total of about three million hieroglyphs. The study employs a comprehensive methodology underpinned by the concepts of integral linguistics, text linguistics, pragmatics, cognitive and suggestive linguistics, which consequently engenders an interdisciplinary approach. The paper sets out to analyse the influence of ethnocultural features on the formation of a nationally oriented artistic discourse. The concept of national culture is identified through the realms of the linguistic picture of the world, which act as a cultural code or cultural marker. The author's linguistic personality is regarded as a modelling projection of the national language and ethnocultural features. The results of the study demonstrate that the parameters of the linguoesthetic model of the author's linguistic consciousness include: the individual author's linguistic features, which are subjective and syntagmatic in nature; the ethnonational and sociocultural-cognitive author's attitudes; the use of intermediate tools of cognitive-pragmatic psychology to attract multidimensional matrix attention, thereby helping to obtain aesthetic perception from fictitious interaction with the artistic world; the emotive density at points of structural tension; the linguoesthetic discursive markers; the integration of cultural, historical and ethnonational realities. The proposed dimensions require further expansion and detail, but in this form, they allow us to apply them in the methodology of analyzing artistic discourse on the issue of identifying ideodiscursive and linguoesthetic features in the use of writing practices.

Keywords: *idiodiscourse, idiostyle, linguoesthetics, artistic discourse, world modelling, Chinese literature*



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Параметры идиодискурсивного и лингвоэстетического художественного моделирования

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Аннотация

В исследовании поднимается проблема лингвистического анализа художественного дискурса в эстетической проекции идиодискурсивного моделирования языка, где художественный дискурс понимается как особый способ эстетического и этнокультурного мировидения, сформированного при интеллектуально-креативной интеракции автора-художника и читателя-реципиента. Цель работы – уточнить параметры лингвоэстетической модели авторских приемов и соответствующих языковых средств. Источником материала послужили дискурсивные практики современных китайских авторов, представителей новейшей китайской литературы рубежа XX–XXI вв. – Мо Яня, Лю Чжэньюня, Юй Хуа, Цзя Пинва, Ван Аньи и Мосян Тунсю общим объемом около 3 млн. иероглифов. В исследовании используется комплексная методология, опирающаяся на концепции перспективных научных направлений интегральной лингвистики, а также лингвистики текста, лингвопрагматики, дискурс-анализа, когнитивной и суггестивной лингвистики, что обусловило междисциплинарный подход. Анализируется влияние этнокультурных языковых особенностей на формирование национально-ориентированного художественного дискурса; национальная культура раскрывается через реалемы языковой картины мира, которые выступают маркерами культурного кода, т.е. культуронимами. Языковая личность автора рассматривается как моделирующая проекция национального языка и культуры. Результаты исследования показали, что параметры лингвоэстетической модели авторского языкового сознания включают: индивидуальные авторские языковые и речевые особенности, которые носят субъективно-синтагматический характер; этнонациональные, социокультурные и когнитивные установки автора; использование интермедийных инструментов когнитивно-прагматической психологии для привлечения многомерного матричного внимания, помогающих получить эстетическую перцепцию от фикционального взаимодействия читателя с художественным миром; эмотивную плотность в точках когнитивного напряжения; лингвоэстетические дискурсивные маркеры; интеграцию культурно-исторических и этнонациональных реалем. Предложенные параметры требуют дальнейшего расширения и детализации, но уже в данном виде они могут быть использованы в методологии анализа художественного дискурса с целью выявления идеодискурсивных и лингвоэстетических особенностей в использовании авторских практик.

Ключевые слова: идиодискурс, идиостиль, лингвоэстетика, художественный дискурс, миромоделирование, китайская литература

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1. Введение

Исследования принципов конструктивных систем художественного дискурса занимают важное место в современной лингвистике. Автор как субъект создания структуры какого-либо произведения выступает носителем определенной техники вербально-художественного построения и эстетического лингвомоделирования в рамках этнонациональных языковых параметров и языковой картины мира. Язык писателя как индивидуальная система средств и приемов выражения может разворачиваться в нейтральных и эмоциональных синтаксических рамках, иметь своеобразное синтаксическое движение, быть отмеченным высокой плотностью языковой игры и полисемантическими нюансами. Автор может использовать разнообразную лексику и выстраивать по-новому привычные семантические реляции, расшатывая языковые нормы, но при этом продуцируемый им текст развивается в этнонациональной парадигме его представлений о мире как носителя конкретной этнокультуры.

Художественный дискурс объединяет динамические и статические языковые аспекты в интегративное, многоуровневое и сложноорганизованное образование. Наличие в дискурсе полярных позиций – отправителя (создателя текста) и получателя (реципиента) – создает основу для рассмотрения коммуникативного процесса, где каждая сторона задает собственный угол восприятия взаимодействия. Соответственно в дискурсологии можно дифференцировать направления исследований на: 1) те, которые исследуют структурные особенности дискурса; 2) те, которые исследуют механизмы дискурсивного понимания и интерпретации реципиентом; 3) и те, которые рассматриваются с позиций самого текста (его автора). В нашем исследовании за основу принята авторская (писательская) перспектива, поскольку «говорящий» литератор проецирует художественно-дискурсивную уникальную и самобытную языковую форму, порождающую идиодискурсивный план. При этом художественный текст представляет семантический и стилистико-синтаксический языковой каркас, где символичность слова продуцирует дискурсивно-образный уровень. С помощью инструментария метаязыка (система символов, отражающих ценности) можно объяснить многие бессознательные культурные феномены, заложенные в такого рода текстовые каркасы и смысловые узлы.

В кругу вопросов современной лингвистики генезис понятия «идиодискурс» занимает одно из ведущих мест. Оно охватывает всю систему целостных коммуникативных актов в рамках замкнутой системы произведения, учитывая не только лингвистические структуры, но и экстралингвистические

факторы – интенции говорящего/говорящих, этнокультурные коды, ситуативный контекст, имагологические отношения и пр. Идиодискурс как категория художественной образности и форма выражения языковой личности выступает системообразующим в дескрипции национального и индивидуального языка. Анализ идиодискурса должен опираться на широкое понимание его этнонациональной и культурной специфики во всем их многообразии и на понимании закономерностей развития стилистических и жанровых особенностей художественного текста, созданного автором как представителем конкретной культуры. Стилистически маркированные фразы наделяются различными импульсами культурных установок и ценностных понятий. Формой проявления связи семантических элементов в языке может выступать контекст (Лунькова 2020: 63), который в некоторой степени определяет семантические реляции. Художественные особенности не возникают механически из свойств национального языка, присутствуя в нем как набор возможностей и инструментов, они становятся реалемами только в определенном контексте в результате внутритекстовой коммуникации.

Эстетика как наука возникла для описания феномена красоты и всего поля связанных с ней отношений, как одна из онтологических человеческих ценностей (наряду с истиной, добром, верой и т.д.). Под лингвоэстетикой, как молодого направления гуманитарного цикла, понимается лингвистическое направление исследования художественного текста, в центре внимания которого – эстетические средства языка и приемы их использования автором. Предметом рассмотрения лингвоэстетики является художественный дискурс со всем разнообразием эстетического словоупотребления и словотворчества (языковая игра, уникальный авторский синтаксический рисунок, использование неологизмов, фразеологизмов, осознанных речевых ошибок и нормативно-стилистических нарушений и пр.), а также особый лингвокреативный и творческий вид вербальных отношений человека с реальностью в рамках идиодискурсивных и художественных практик (см. Ирисханова 2009, Зыкова 2017, Киосе 2023, Коваль, Фещенко 2014, Соколова, Фещенко, 2024, Фещенко 2023, Gladkova, 2013 и др.).

Роль такого рода опыта лингвоэстетических взаимодействий и коммуникации постоянно возрастает в повседневной жизни, повышается эстетизация различных сфер жизни людей и вербализация этих явлений. Лингвоэстетика как универсальная категория может иметь дискурсивную дифференциацию (например, лингвоэстетика художественного дискурса, церковного обряда, кулинарной передачи, воинского ритуала, спортивной трансляции и т.д.), включая транслируемые языком эстетизированные аспекты, присущие практически любой деятельности человека. Лингвоэстетическое начало при этом осмысливается как результат творческого смыслопорождающего языкового единства в процессе созерцания субъектом определенного явления, при этом идиодискурсивные компоненты и ситуация контакта субъекта и определенного явления принципиально вариативны.

Предмет, категории, содержание, объем и другие характеристики лингвоэстетики находятся еще в процессе формирования. В рамках данного исследования предпринимается попытка обобщить и уточнить имеющиеся представления о лингвистической теории художественного дискурса и проанализировать на примере некоторых произведений новейшей китайской литературы рубежа XX–XXI в. их лингвоэстетический потенциал. Таким образом, цель исследования – уточнить параметры лингвоэстетической модели авторской совокупности приемов и средств на материале китайского художественного дискурса. Под лингвистическим моделированием мы понимаем языковые способы построения дискурсивной образности в рамках замкнутого художественного мира произведения.

2. Теоретические предпосылки исследования

Предмет лингвистических исследований в последние десятилетия сместился от языка к его носителю. Тань Аошуан, рассматривая проблемы скрытой грамматики языка и формы языка, писала, что в порядке слов отражены не только особенности фиксации действительности в концептуальном мире говорящего, но и закономерности процесса коммуникации (Тань 2002: 29). Индивидуальный стиль и дискурс многоплановы и включают персональный, социокультурный, этнокультурный, исторический и пр. планы. Вместе с индивидуальным языковым опытом личность также приобщается к опыту социальному, преобразуя чужой опыт в собственный. Лингвокультурными маркерами и параметрами художественного дискурса, представляющими этнокультурную специфику, выступают взаимообусловленные языковые и метаязыковые семиотические (знаково-символические) компоненты, базирующиеся на осмыслении и вербализации самобытного восприятия и оценивания фактов и категорий действительности в рамках этнонациональных когнитивных процессов. Национальная культура раскрывается через реалемы языковой картины мира, которые выступают культурным кодом или культурным маркером, т.е. культурами (Кабакчи, Прошина 2021).

Художественный дискурс в современном понимании носит дуоцентрический характер. Его существование базируется на двух главных антропоцентрических «конусах» – авторе/творце/адресанте и читателе/реципиенте/адресате, которые связывает вербальный текстовый конструкт и порождаемый им художественный мир (художественная образность). Функции этих двух «центров» различаются, в связи с чем они осуществляют разные виды коммуникации. Внутреннюю коммуникацию с замкнутым пространством художественного дискурса реализует читатель, от когнитивных возможностей и художественного опыта которого зависит интерпретационный потенциал текста. Задача писательского «центра» заключается в создании лингвомодели художественно-эстетического универсума путем вербальной «материализации» сознания. Эстетическое начало, с одной стороны, проявляется как форма рефлексии авторского сознания и способ осмысления окружающей

действительности в рамках уникально-неповторимого идиодискурса. Автор выступает инициатором литературно-семиотического имманентного общения (Ivushkina 2020), в том числе через план стилистической креативности, эстетического выражения, лингвистической инновационности в процессе текстоформирования и прагматических интенций. С другой стороны, реципиент через чувственное восприятие актуализирует лингвоэстетический и дискурсивный потенциал на всех уровнях. Художественный дискурс, таким образом, становится для всех участников нематериальной формой взаимодействия и коммуникации с миром, обеспечивая богатым опытом без необходимости переживать его в реальности.

В основе лингвоэстетического подхода лежит синтез теории языка и теории искусства. Исследователи выделяют три фазы «лингвоэстетического поворота» в теории языка и художественно-языковом эксперименте XX в.: формально-семантическая (1900–1910-е), функционально-синтаксическая (1920–1950-е) и акционально-прагматическая (1960–1990-е) (Фещенко 2023: 18). При этом под художественной коммуникацией понимается «взаимодействие автора-художника и читателя (зрителя, слушателя) посредством произведения искусства как сообщения, или высказывания» (Фещенко 2023: 271). Изначальная дискурсивная многозначность, заложенная естественным образом в художественные тексты (авторское содержание, читательское содержание и пр.), в процессе исторического бытования произведения через идиостилистические и этнонациональные параметры, которые работают на установку определенного понимания, претерпевает постоянную смену интерпретаций. Поскольку от каждого художественного текста читатель ждет чего-то особенного, то справедливо утверждение, что лингвоэстетический метод становится способом исследования писательского идиодискурсивного разума и сознания. Эстетическое начало пронизывает всю цивилизацию и сопутствует любой деятельности человека, одухотворяя ее, поэтому художественный язык (как игра с альтернативной реальностью) и возник в культуре для реализации эстетического выражения. Лингвоэстетика, в свою очередь, определяется гармонизацией человека с вербализацией потенциала лингвокреативного сознания определенного субъекта.

Исторически эстетизм базировался на чувственно-эмоциональном опыте людей. В связи с этим различные языковые уровни текста также способствуют вхождению в эмотивный фон художественного дискурса, который строится на эмоциях. Эмотивность и эмоциональный режим художественного дискурса обладает свойством пространственной связности элементов когнитивного напряжения, функцией сюжетостроения, индивидуальными характеристиками речевого портрета носителей высказывания (персонажей), а также речевым воздействием на реципиента. Становясь важным элементом текста, эмотивность выступает метасущностью. Концептуализация эмоций осуществляется на языковом и параязыковом уровнях (Шаховский 2018). Системные отношения разноуровневых языковых единиц художественного

текста и дискурсивных маркеров отражают общий потенциал корреляции функционально-семантических полей эмотивности, экспрессивности и модальности (Игнатенко 2023).

Лингвоэстетический потенциал идиодискурсивной эмотивности может также достигаться за счет языковой игры и лингвокреативного потенциала (Ирисханова 2014, Игнатенко 2022, Ремчукова, Шевченко 2016, Kiose 2023, Zyкова 2023), основу которых составляет эстетическое начало. Приемы языковой игры, расшатывающие языковые нормы в рамках креативной деятельности и отражающие неоднозначность функционирования лингвистических единиц, являются способом выражения творческого и экспериментального дискурса. Языковая игра, представляющая нарушения привычной языковой логики, раздвигает предел мысли, ориентированный на устойчивые семантические реляции и синтагматические единства. Синтаксическая валентность базируется на лингвистическом поведении в первую очередь носителя конкретного языка и культуры, где любой акт речи в определенном контексте может приобретать новые смыслы, обыгрывая старые или привычные модели языка, формы речи и пр. Примечательно, что в русском языке слово «игра» этимологически принадлежит к языческой сакральной сфере, где по одной из версий оно родственно древнеиндийскому *yájati* ‘чтить божество’. В современном языке практически во всех словарях в коннотации слова «игра» подчеркивается значение деятельности, направленной на удовольствие и наслаждение (Игнатенко 2022). Кроме того, языковая игра в целом полифункциональна и является способом оценочности. Если изначально исследовательское внимание к языковой игре было связано с изучением художественной литературы, то с развитием структурной и постструктурной лингвистики набор приемов, свойственных языковой игре, становится характерным признаком газет и рекламы, социальных сетей, языка СМИ (Bilá & Ivanova 2020), а также кинодискурса (Zyкова 2023).

Сегодня с процессом нивелирования знаний в различных областях гуманитарных наук языковая игра выходит на новый уровень и расширяет привычные границы, выступает полисемиотическим явлением, которое может представлять конструкторы, совмещающие разнородные семиотические и интермедийные языковые коды (Козлова, Кремнева 2024). Явление интермедийности, которое получило широкое распространение в науке в последнее время, на наш взгляд, проступает в современных исследованиях универсальным инструментом перевода с различных языковых кодов культуры и семиотики, объединяя их в едином текстовом пространстве. Основным продуктивным приемом, с помощью которого достигается синтез различных видов искусства, является экфрасис, который может выступать как жанр, на уровне конкретного предмета (вербализация произведения искусства), как прием, на уровне повествования (средство организации текста), а также как дискурс на уровне когнитивных систем понятий (совокупность этнокультурных, лингвоэстетических, психологических и др.) (Игнатенко 2019). Кроме

интермедиальности, сегодня также активно теоретизируется (Козлова, Кремнева 2024) явление синестезии в художественном дискурсе, лингвоэстетической функцией которого является задействование различных органов чувств человека. Дискурсивные синестетические формы сопровождаются зрительными, слуховыми, цветоцветовыми феноменами, которые настраивают субъекта-реципиента на получение определенного лингвоэстетического опыта созерцания и рефлексии.

Эмотивность рассматривается нами как экстралингвистическое смыслопорождающее явление и прагматическая категория, которая включает эмоциональный лексикон, синтаксис, пунктуацию, языковую игру, различные семанτικο-стилистические приемы и т.д., и нацелена на определенный прагматический эффект.

В подходах к эмотивности в художественном дискурсе в рамках лингвоэстетического исследования представляется важным упомянуть последние достижения в области метафорологии. Метафоризация текста и речи может выступать универсальным когнитивным инструментом создания эмоционально-экспрессивного или модального нарратива, воздействующего на получателя сообщения. Она является одним из способов организации культурного опыта человека и неотъемлемой культурной (в том числе эмоциональной) парадигмой для носителей любого языка (Лакофф, Джонсон 2019, Козлова 2020, Сунь и др. 2021, Musolff 2021, Kalinin & Ignatenko 2024, Kövecses et al. 2024, Zibin & Solopova 2024, и др.).

Метафора является одним из самых распространенных и средств в рамках творческого и эстетического лингвомоделирования языковой игры. Она сегодня дифференцируется на когнитивно-образную и концептуальную. Смыслы и коннотации метафор предопределены историческим и социокультурным контекстом. В языке и культуре метафоры выполняют разнообразные функции, оказывая влияние на смыслопорождение, выражение эмоций, процесс формирования идентичности и на восприятие адресатом того или иного явления действительности в различных типах дискурса. Развитие метафорологии сегодня подошло к такому рубежу, на котором интерес вызывают пограничные явления, задавая широкую исследовательскую перспективу. Исследования метафоры в современной науке, на наш взгляд, движутся в двух основных направлениях, формируя условно «технический» подход (концептуальная метафора) и образно-когнитивный подход (когнитивная метафора). С точки зрения условно «технического» подхода, когда с помощью механизма межсемиотического перехода непрямого значения языковой единицы исследователи «буквализируют» семантику слова. В этом случае используется методика соединения прямого значения слова с непрямым. С точки зрения образно-когнитивного подхода через процессы, связанные с мышлением и различного рода ментальными операциями, языковой материал продуцирует образные сравнения различных уровней (когнитивная метафора). Большинство исследователей работает на стыке этих двух направлений,

и практически все сходятся в мысли о том, что метафора способна транслировать ментальные структуры конкретной этнокультуры.

Таким образом, наше исследование нацелено на попытку систематизировать последние достижения в области подходов к художественному тексту, используя комплексную методологию, опирающуюся на концепции перспективных научных направлений интегральной лингвистики, а также лингвистики текста, лингвопрагматики, дискурс-анализа, когнитивной и суггестивной лингвистики, которые обуславливают междисциплинарный подход, а также предложить некоторые универсальные параметры лингвоэстетической модели авторского языкового сознания.

3. Материал и методология исследования

Китайская лингвокультура, во многом также как и русская, логоцентрична, т.е. концепт «слово» является центральным и авторитетным понятием в культуре, нормирующим языковые явления. Становление литературных норм в китайском языке связано с именем Лу Синя (鲁迅, 1881–1936), который выступил новатором и реформатором языка и двинул языковую форму вперед, определив дальнейший вектор развития современного китайского языка *байхуа*. Для данного исследования были отобраны прозаические тексты новейшей китайской литературы рубежа XIX–XX вв. – Мо Яня (莫言), Лю Чжэньюня (刘震云), Юй Хуа (余华), Цзя Пинва (贾平凹), Ван Аньи (王安忆) и Мосян Тунсю (墨香铜臭) – мастеров слова, которые получили международное признание читательской аудитории и критиков, а также были отмечены наградами разных уровней. Были отобраны тексты крупной романной формы – «Устал рождаться и умирать» Мо Яня (莫言 《生死疲劳》, 2005), «Я не Пань Цзиньянь» Лю Чжэньюня (刘震云 《我不是潘金莲》, 2012), «Жить» Юй Хуа (余华 《活着》, 1992), «Циньские напевы» Цзя Пинва (贾平凹 《秦腔》, 2005), «Песнь о бесконечной тоске» Ван Аньи (王安忆 《长恨歌》, 1995) и «Магистр дьявольского культа» Мосян Тунсю (墨香铜臭 《魔道祖师》, 2016). В исследовании использовалась комплексная методология, опирающаяся на концепции перспективных научных направлений интегральной лингвистики, а также лингвистики текста, лингвопрагматики, когнитивной и суггестивной лингвистики, что обусловило междисциплинарный подход.

Объем каждого произведения в среднем от трехсот тысяч до полумиллиона иероглифов. В них рассматривался определенный лингвистический параметр как самобытный идиодискурсивный маркер лингвоэстетической проекции и художественного моделирования. Основное внимание было обращено как на индивидуальные авторские языковые и речевые особенности, которые носят субъективно-синтагматический характер, так и на этнонациональные, социокультурные и когнитивные установки автора. Также рассматривались: использование интермедийных инструментов когнитивно-прагматической

психологии для привлечения многомерного матричного внимания, помогающих получить эстетическую перцепцию от фикционального взаимодействия читателя с художественным миром; эмотивная плотность текста в точках когнитивного напряжения; лингвоэстетические дискурсивные маркеры; интеграция культурно-исторических и этнонациональных реалем и т.д. Основными этапами практического анализа и систематизации идиодискурсивных и лингвоэстетических параметров стали:

1) анализ использования автором лингвокреативных дискурсивных маркеров (языковая игра, неология, фразеология, объем фразы, нарративные особенности и пр.), в том числе с привлечением стилометрии;

2) лингвопрагматический анализ воздействия художественного дискурса на реципиента через персуазивные приемы (эмотивность, использование иронии, культуронимов и пр.);

3) сравнительный анализ авторских практик и сопоставление отобранных произведений на вопрос уникально-самобытных явлений;

4) интерпретация, рефлексия и критическая оценка полученных данных;

5) систематизация и типологизация параметров идиодискурсивности и лингвоэстетики на основе полученных данных.

В качестве анализа художественного произведения нобелевского лауреата Мо Яня был выбран роман «Устал рождаться и умирать» Мо Яня (莫言《生死疲劳》，2005). В ходе исследования частного дискурса писателя были проанализированы парентетические конструкции и структуры в русле проблемы семантико-синтаксических и функционально-стилистических явлений, которые, представляя собой локализованные фрагменты речи в составе основного высказывания, подчеркивают нелинейность языкового мышления, обладают лингвоэстетическим потенциалом и выступают в качестве художественного средства выразительности. Синтаксически парентетические конструкции функционируют на системном (комбинаторика компонентов), изобразительном (стилистическая маркированность) и композиционном (организация пространства текста) уровнях. На фактологическом материале было доказано, что использование практики парентетических конструкций составляет одну из особенностей лингвоэстетического идиодискурса Мо Яня, интегрируя разные повествовательные планы. Также были систематизированы основные функции вставных структур (Игнатенко 2023).

Среди многочисленных работ Лю Чжэньюня был отобран роман «Я не Пань Цзиньянь» (刘震云《我不是潘金莲》，2012), в котором рассматривались лингвокреативные стилистические приемы и средства создания языковой игры. Акцент делался на поиске новых упорядоченностей в языковой игре в рамках художественного моделирования образного универсума. Лингвоэстетические особенности языковой игры в романе Лю Чжэньюня в исследовании последовательно рассматривались на трех уровнях: на уровне использования художественных средств и приемов (метафоры, оксюмороны,

ирония и пр.), на структурно-функциональном уровне (заострялось внимание на формальном строении и организации художественной ткани текста, разбирались некоторые стилистические и синтаксические аспекты языковой игры, параллельные конструкции и приемы, например зевгма, хиазмы, анаколуфы, параллелизмы, экфрасисы и т.д.), на уровне когнитивно-идиодискурсивном (внимание уделялось прежде всего проблеме организации концептуально-семантического пространства текста и раскрытию его закономерностей) (Игнатенко 2022). Используемые в исследовании смешанные методики позволили прийти к результатам, продуктивным с точки зрения возможностей лингвоэстетического и идиодискурсивного анализа художественного материала. Полученные данные и выводы открыли широкие перспективы для дальнейшего анализа языковой игры в художественном дискурсе в рамках лингвоэстетического подхода.

В еще формируемом корпусе работ Юй Хуа было проанализировано знаковое произведение, которое принесло автору мировую известность – роман «Жить» (余华《活着》, 1992). В данном произведении были рассмотрены некоторые теоретические аспекты и намечены практические подходы к анализу эмотивной плотности и ее суггестивности. Сдвиг фокуса внимания на стилистические эмотивные аттракторы и точки когнитивного напряжения текста, которые понимаются как полисемиотические фрагменты, сформировали исследовательский интерфейс и позволили обозначить некоторые подходы к анализу эмотивной плотности, определить функции эмотивности в языке художественного текста с точки зрения национально-культурной специфики, семантической реализации и лингвоэстетического потенциала. Художественный мир романа, представляя замкнутую субъективную модель мира, рассматривался как когнитивная совокупность эмотивных аттракций, переживание и восприятие которых определялось личностно-социальным опытом по линии «автор–текст–читатель». В результате выяснилось, что эмотивность и «эмоциональный режим» (В.И. Шаховский) китайского художественного частного дискурса обладает свойством пространственной связности различных элементов, функцией сюжетостроения, а также речевым чувственным воздействием на реципиента. Системные стилистические отношения разноуровневых языковых единиц художественного текста и дискурса отражают общий потенциал корреляции лингвоэстетики функционально-семантических полей эмотивности, экспрессивности и модальности (Игнатенко 2023).

Идиодискурс Цзя Пинва и особенности его лингвоэстетического потенциала был проанализированы на примере романа «Циньские напевы» (贾平凹《秦腔》, 2005), в котором рассматривалась междисциплинарная проблема конфликта и ее лингвистической специфики как компоненту эмотивного плана в художественном дискурсе. В связи с этим рассматривались аспекты речевой и языковой конфликтности и ее деструктивные формы в лексико-семантических, синтаксических и функционально-стилистических

единицах языка и китайских реалемах. Конфликтный коммуникативный акт понимался как следствие определенных неудач в речевом взаимодействии и нарушение конвенций и правил дискурсивного поведения. Языковые противоречия и конфликты анализировались в рамках эмотиологии, т.е. на уровне эмотивности и эмотивного поля в прагматическом пространстве художественного дискурса, как мультимодальном явлении системных отношений эмоциовербалики. Отмечалось, что дискурсивные противоречия материализуются в качестве стилистических единиц различного уровня, и могут быть использованы как инструмент для создания необходимого лингвоэстетического эффекта в художественном нарративе. Лингвистически конфликт инициировался и диагностировался в нарушении прагматико-семантических и стилистико-синтаксических конвенциональных норм. На фактологическом материале было доказано, что использование конфликтного дискурса в прозе как лингвоэстетическая характеристика составляет одну из особенностей идиодискурса Цзя Пинва (Игнатенко 2024).

В качестве исследования прозаического материала лингвоэстетических особенностей у Ван Аньи был взят роман «Песнь о бесконечной тоске» (王安忆《长恨歌》, 1995), в котором рассматривалась метафоризация города как культурно-семиотического пространства на примере Шанхая. Был проанализирован потенциал образно-когнитивных урбанистических переносов в процессе метафорообразований в художественном дискурсе на примере конкретного города и определена модель метафоры. Метафора определялась дискурсивным эмотивно-оценочным средством, которое оказывает существенное влияние на перцепцию художественного текста и его эстетическую оценку. Рассматривались такие основные когнитивно-урбанистические метафорические модели, как «город – картина/полотно», «город – музыка», «город – архитектура», «город – текст», «город – женщина», «город – сад», «город – машина (механизм)», «город – запах», «город – улей/муравейник» и др. Метафора как стилистико-дискурсивный и лингвоэстетический компонент текста во всех анализируемых моделях выступала объективированной формой номинации феномена города, благодаря которой можно познавать и понимать суть его существования в человеческой культуре. Было доказано, что когнитивная метафора способна транслировать ментальные структуры конкретной этнокультуры, а также может выступать продуктивным инструментом и приемом интермедиальной поэтики художественного дискурса и стиля, используя знаковые системы различных видов искусства, синтетически обрабатывая их и вербализуя в тексте. Роль когнитивно-урбанистической метафоры в романе рассматривалась в качестве моделирования исторической, социальной и культурологической идентичности на художественном уровне частного дискурса, которая способна продуцировать эстетическую перцепцию (Игнатенко 2025).

Из корпуса современной онлайн-романистики Мосян Тунсю для анализа был взят новеллизированный цикл «Магистр дьявольского культа» (墨香铜臭

《魔道祖师》, 2016). При анализе фокус внимания кроме структурных особенностей лингвопоэтики был также направлен на некоторые языковые особенности, связанные с идиостилем писательницы. Текст произведения исследовался не только в его внешнем, формальном, но и внутреннем, содержательном аспектах, приводилось системное описание разноструктурных элементов. Был приведен анализ интермедиальных и интертекстуальных средств и особенностей. Доказывалось постоянное обращение автора к экфрастическому приему в писательской практике при синтетической передаче музыкальной образности, а также к интеграции ресурсов и материалов классической китайской литературы в качестве интертекстуального средства выразительности художественной словесности в лингвоэстетическом ключе (Игнатенко 2024).

4. Результаты анализа

Рассмотрев ряд идиостилевых практик художественного дискурса в новейшей китайской литературе нами был намечен некоторый комплекс универсальных параметров, который формирует лингвоэстетическую модель авторского языкового универсума и частного сознания вне зависимости от структуры или жанровой принадлежности произведения. Такая модель может состоять из: (1) индивидуальных авторских языковых и речевых особенностей, которые носят субъективно-синтагматический характер и путем вербализации материализуют сознание, выражая семантико-стилистический и дискурсивный уровень; (2) этнонациональных и социокультурно-когнитивных установок; (3) интермедиальных инструментов когнитивно-прагматической психологии для привлечения многомерного матричного внимания, помогающих получить эстетическую перцепцию от фикционального взаимодействия с художественным миром; (4) эмотивной плотности текста в точках когнитивного напряжения и сюжетостроения; (5) лингвоэстетических дискурсивных маркеров (на уровне слова, приема, фразы и пр.) и интеграции культурно-исторических реалем и культуронимов. Все эти параметры формируют лингвоэстетический потенциал художественного текста. Рассмотрим подробнее каждый.

4.1. Авторские субъективно-синтагматические и идиодискурсивные особенности текста

Индивидуальное сознание авторского мировосприятия в русле проблемы языкового творчества материализуется в определенных формах художественного дискурса. Как показал проведенный анализ, особый интерес в китайском языке может вызывать использование авторами служебных слов, т.е. тех слов, которые, как отмечают исследователи, не несут никакого содержания, но образуют каркас художественно-дискурсивных линий и могут выступать дискурсивными маркерами (Heine et al. 2024). Они важны для построения

правильных в литературном отношении предложений. Их использование, это своего рода «почерк» автора, «отпечатки» его языка. У одного и того же писателя в различных текстах структурные показатели использования служебных слов примерно схожи, но в то же время индивидуальный «почерк» речи не подделать. В любом языке служебных слов немного, но они часто употребляются, т.к. служат средством «скрепления» речи.

Примером идиостилистических особенностей постмодернистского художественного дискурса также может выступать прием использования парентетических конструкций в прозе Мо Яня (Игнатенко 2023) на уровне авторской практики. Рассмотрим пример:

- (1) 我的哥金龙——呸! 他算什么哥!——还骑跨在你身上¹.
[Мой брат Цзиньлун – тоже мне брат, называется! – по-прежнему сидел у тебя на спине².] (с. 141)

В данном примере (1) инсайтом главного предложения становится эмоциональная вставка, которая разрывает повествование и «цепляется» за дискурсивный маркер «брат» в ядерном предложении. Текст в итоге наделяется чертами парцеллированной объемности, но сохраняет целостность. При этом условное нарушение языковых норм может являться источником эстетического эффекта, а авторский идиостиль раскрываться в виде «стиля мышления». Так, одной из главных черт стилевой системы Мо Яня является лингвистическая свобода, ограниченная индивидуальными творческими установками, которых придерживался автор.

В писательской практике Мо Яня можно также выделить регулярные использования недоговорок-иносказаний (歇后语): 螃蟹过河随大溜 («крабов, переправляющихся через реку, уносит течением», где вторая часть имеет значение «поступать как все»); 石头蛋子腌咸菜, 油盐不进 («камень в соленьях не пропитывается маринадом», где вторая часть имеет значение «упираться, упрямиться»); 抱着书本骑马--走着瞧 («проезжая на осле, читать книгу», в образном значении – «поживем – увидим!»); 瘦驴拉硬屎 («осел тощий как вошь, а навоз – не разобьешь») и т.д.

Кроме недоговорок в его идиодискурсе используются клишированные вставные фразы, которые интересны с точки зрения членения текста. Их можно систематизировать на: 1) вводные конструкции (接着 ‘следом’, 后来 ‘затем’, 第一 ‘во-первых’, 因此 ‘поэтому’ и др.); 2) модальные конструкции, выражающие отношение к высказываемому (实话对你说 ‘по правде говоря’, 似乎 ‘будто’, 很遗憾 ‘к сожалению’ и др.); 3) конструкции, указывающие на

¹ Текст на оригинальном языке цит. по: Мо Янь. Устал рождаться и умирать. [莫言. 《生死疲劳》]. URL: <https://book.qidian.com/info/1016435428?WxUg5ztDmi=1665242847872#Catalog> (на кит. яз.) (дата обращения: 09.03.2025).

² Перевод на русский язык приведен по: Мо Янь. Устал рождаться и умирать. (пер. с кит. И. Егоров). СПб.: Амфора, 2014. 703 с.

источник информации (据他说 ‘по его словам’, 我说 ‘по мне’, 莫言他爹说 ‘отец Мо Яня сказал’ и др.). Их парентетический потенциал не представляет большого интереса в рамках исследования и не рассматривается детально, так как носит, скорее, укоренившийся в языке характер.

Парентетические конструкции используются Мо Янем как элемент театрализации языка и художественных образов, которые он порождает. В контексте магического реализма его проза образует стилистическую многомерность. Мо Янь не ограничивается парентезами на уровне одного предложения или фразы, он выходит на уровень текстовых блоков, отдельных нелинейных глав-вставок и всего романа в целом. Так, например, главы XXVII, XXVIII романа и др. представляют автоинтертекстуальные парентетические конструкции, где речь повествователя может отсылать к другим текстам автора книги и дословно приводить фрагменты этого текста. Интерес также представляют и постмодернистские вставные парентетические конструкции-рассуждения и обращения нарратора к читателю:

- (2) <...> — 听我说到这里，你难道一点都不感动吗？你难道不觉得，我们，虽然是猪，但行为也很高尚吗？—— <...>。
 [<...> – Вот ты дослушал до этого места, неужели тебя все это ничуть не тронуло? Неужели ты не почувствовал, что мы хоть и свиньи, но поведение наше куда как возвышенное? <...>³] (с. 356)

Лингвоэстетическая цель изъяснительного характера дискурса второго плана – сделать высказывание более убедительным, где разного рода поликомпонентные вставки носят самостоятельный характер и имеют прагматическую направленность. В романе отобрано и проанализировано около 50 такого рода прагматических вставок и своего рода дискурсивных маркеров.

4.2. Этнонациональные и социокультурно-когнитивные установки

Этнонациональным и социокультурным дискурсивным маркером лингвоэстетического нарратива может выступать когнитивная метафора. Концептуальная метафора также обладает воздействующим потенциалом (Kalinin & Ignatenko 2024), но в отличие от когнитивной носит, скорее, стертый или «спящий» характер, поэтому функционирует схоже с фразеологизированными формами. Метафорическую плотность продуктивно рассчитывать с помощью метода корпусной лингвистики в рамках идиостилевых и идиодискурсивных исследований. Рассмотрим примеры этнонациональной метафоры из романа «Песнь о бесконечной тоске» Ван Аньи:

³ Перевод на русский язык приведен по: Мо Янь. Устал рождаться и умирать. (пер. с кит. И. Егоров). СПб.: Амфора, 2014. 703 с.

- (3) <...> 那老饭店的建筑，砖缝和石棱里都是有字的，耐心去读，可读出一番旧风雨⁴。

[В зданиях старых гостиниц каждая трещинка между кирпичами, каждая каменная опора были текстом, который он внимательно и терпеливо читал, эти строки рассказывали историю всех испытаний, которые эти здания пережили в прошлом⁵.] (с. 480)

В данном примере разворачивается когнитивная метафора «город – текст», в которой силуэты города рассматриваются как элементы текста: ‘подобно знакам препинания, которые в тексте обозначают границы фраз и предложений’ (‘是文章里标点一类的东西，断行断句的’), ‘мокрые капли рисуют на стекле иероглиф «печаль»’ (‘写在窗上是个水淋淋的“愁”字’) и т.д. Передача коннотативного значения текста проецируется наложением смысла начертанного иероглифа на элементы города, вовлекая их в образную систему города и придавая им многомерную образность. Этнокультурные метафорические дискурсивные маркеры выступают характерной чертой авторского идиолекта Ван Аньи. Подобные когнитивно-универсальные свойства метафоры как лингвоэстетической универсалии и способа преобразования знаний об окружающем мире предполагают особую персуазивно-эстетическую роль метафоры в художественном дискурсе.

Продуктивной также является интермедияльная метафора «город – музыка». В писательской практике музыка постоянно вербализуется на улицах города:

- (4) 隐隐约约地，好像有留声机的声音传来，像是唱的周璇的《四季调》。

[Откуда-то еле слышно доносится звук граммофона, похоже, это «Песня о четырех сезонах» Чжоу Сюань.] (с. 35).

- (5) 收音机是供听评弹，越剧，还有股票行情的，波段都有些难调，丝丝拉拉地响。

[Из приемника поочередно доносятся пинтань, опера Юэцзюй и биржевые сводки, но сигнал нечеткий, и звук то появляется, то пропадает.] (с. 47).

- (6) < ... > ， 这就是这城市的大合唱， < ... > 。

[Это (*полифония*) и есть хор Города < ... > .] (с. 531).

Интермедияльная метафора и поэтика активно использует различные кодовые системы и знаки различных видов искусства, синтетически обрабаты-

⁴ Текст на оригинальном языке цит. по: Ван Аньи. Песнь о бесконечной тоске. [王安忆. 《长恨歌》]. URL: <https://www.xingyueboke.com/changhenge/> (на кит. яз.) (дата обращения: 09.03.2025).

⁵ Перевод на русский язык приведен по: Ван Аньи. Песнь о бесконечной тоске. М.: ИВЛ, 2015. 557 с.

вая их и вербализуя в художественном дискурсе. Другими примерами интермедиальной метафоры могут быть модели «город – архитектура», «город – театр», «город – картина/полотно», «город – запах» и др.

4.3. Интермедиальная поэтика и синергетическая практика как феномен привлечения матричного внимания

Эстетический резонанс от взаимодействия с релевантными художественными текстами может возникать по различным, в том числе метадискурсивным, причинам. Избежать читательского безразличия к тексту, как правило, помогает развернутая идиостилевая система точек текстуально-структурного доминантного (или аттракторного) напряжения, которые через языковые параметры открывают художественную генерацию новых форм и продуцируют художественную полифоническую образность. При этом лингвоэстетический эффект достигается прямопропорциональной корреляцией языкового потенциала с дискурсивной образностью и эстетической концепцией видения этой образности. В этом лингвосинергетическом синтезе, как уже было отмечено, активную роль играет интермедиальная поэтика, в рамках которой взаимодействуют поликодовые системы различных видов искусства. Основой интермедиальности выступает экфрасис, который может быть – текстовым приемом, жанром или дискурсом (Игнатенко 2024). Примером такого рода практик может быть использование экфрасистических дискурсивных описаний в писательской практике Мосян Тунсю:

- (7) 尖锐的笛音如同一道响箭，划破夜空，直冲云霄⁶。
[Резкая трель, словно поющая стрела, пронзила ночное небо и унеслась к облакам⁷.] (Т. 1, с. 100)
- (8) 魏无羡“噗”的吹破了一个音， <...> 蓝忘机指下音律陡转，一拨而下，七根琴弦齐齐震动，发出山崩一般的怒鸣。
[Одна из нот сорвалась на оглушительную свистящую трель. <...> Тон мелодии Лань Ванцзи тут же изменился, неуловимым движением руки он заставил все семь струн одновременно затрепетать и издать яростный звук, сравнимый с внезапным горным обвалом.] (Т. 1, с. 278)
- (9) 魏无羡拔出竹笛，尖锐凄厉的调子撕破降临的夜幕， <...>。
[Вэй Усянь, увидев это, вытащил из-за пояса бамбуковую флейту, и пронзительный резкий звук распорол завесу сумерек. <...>.] (Т. 1, с. 316)

⁶ Текст на оригинальном языке цит. по: Мосян Тунсю. Магистр дьявольского культа. [墨香铜臭. 《魔道祖师》]. <https://b.guidaye.com/wangluo/8523/> (на кит. яз.) (дата обращения: 09.03.2025).

⁷ Перевод на русский язык приведен по: Мосян Тунсю. Магистр дьявольского культа. (пер. с кит. М. Кулишова). М.: Истари Комикс, 2022. Т. 1–4.

Для Мосян Тунсю характерно обостренное эстетическое чувство, которое выражается через постоянные обращения к переводу музыки в словесные описания, создавая, таким образом, посредством идиодискурсивных особенностей лингвоэстетическую многомерную и системно-целостную художественную образность. Заложенный в романе такого рода синестетический потенциал демонстрирует превосходную адаптацию произведений к аниме, манга, дорамам, играм и пр. ориентированным на аудиовизуальный и креолизованный контент формам.

4.4. Эмотивная плотность текста

Эмотивная вербализация формирует модальную картину миру, которая организуется в соответствии с этнонациональными языковыми и культурными правилами и нормами. Культура эмоций китайцев по их речевому поведению довольно экспрессивна и проявляется в коммуникативном оптимизме (Игнатенко 2023). В то же время под влиянием социализации в определенных контекстах они могут скрывать, контролировать, стимулировать и имитировать эмоции (Спешнев 2017: 15).

(10) 家珍那时开口说话了，她声音沙沙地说：

“这孩子生下来没有了娘，就叫他苦根吧。”⁸ (с. 165)

[Цзя Чжэнь хрипло сказала:

– Он сразу потерял мать. Назовем его Кугэнь⁹.] (с. 174)

В примере (8) эмотивная напряженность и внутреннее эмоциональное состояние и переживания (страдание, печаль, грусть, тоска и т.д.) стимулируются этнонациональной спецификой антропонимики – Кугэнь (苦根) в букв. значении «горький корень», переносном – «источник всех несчастий». Эмоциональный план учитывает дискурсивную интенциональность и мотивировку, становится реакцией на воздействие внешних раздражителей и объективируется в прагматической интегрально-суггестивной валентности. Системные отношения разноуровневых языковых и дискурсивных единиц эмотивного режима художественного текста, таким образом, формируют поле лингвоэстетической рефлексии и чувственного резонанса.

Коммуникативная сущность и специфика эмотивных номинаций определяется модальностью, как компонентом оценочности, которая инкорпорируется в семантическую структуру слова (например, экспрессивы и эмоционально-дискурсивные маркеры в романе ‘孽子’ («выродок»), ‘二流子’ («шалопай»), ‘王八蛋’ («ублюдок»), ‘畜生’ («скотина»), ‘蠢蛋’ («дурачье») и т.д.). Прагматическая индуктивность семантики эмоций, как правило,

⁸ Текст на оригинальном языке цит. по: Юй Хуа. Жить. [余华. 《活着》. 作家出版社. 2014. 191 页]. (на кит. яз.)

⁹ Перевод на русский язык приведен по: Юй Хуа. Жить. (пер. с кит. Р. Шапиро). М: Текст, 2014. 190 с.

определяется интенционалом (главные признаки), экстенционалом (вторичные признаки) и импликационалом (потенциально-вероятностные характеристики), например: 粗糙的手指 ‘заскорузлые пальцы’ = «пальцы, загрубевшие и ставшие жесткими от работы и тяжелой жизни» (интенционал) + «это отклонение от нормы и приносит определенные неудобства хозяину рук» (экстенционал) + «что выражается смирением персонажа и никак не удручает его» (импликационал). Такого рода индуктивно-прагматический анализ и понятия, которые он продуцирует, являются производными по отношению к дедуктивно-логическому содержанию.

Эмоциональное состояние локализуется и кодируется также в дискурсивном маркере ‘心里’ (букв. «в/на душе/сердце»). Эмотивность «наводится» на семантику слова ‘心里’, продуцируя эмоциональный контекст и ситуацию. При этом такого рода модальные рамки являются излюбленным приемом и практикой Юй Хуа и используются регулярно. Приведем несколько примеров:

- (11) 看着他孤身一人走去, 我心里是一阵一阵地酸痛。(с. 27)
[Я глядел на его одинокую спину, и *сердце выло волком*.] (с. 43)
- (10) 我心里咚咚乱跳, 不知道该怎么办。(с. 32)
[*Сердце у меня заколотилось*, я стоял как потерянный.] (с. 50)
- (11) 我一直没去龙儿家是怕自己心里发酸。(с. 37)
[А я к нему (*Лун Эр*) никогда не заглядывал – *боялся затосковать*. Я ведь в этом доме родился.] (с. 56)

В примерах (9), (10) и (11) дискурсивные контексты художественного нарратива показывают, что в определенных ситуациях практически любое слово может приобрести эмотивную коннотацию. Дискурсивные маркеры эмотивности ‘酸痛’ (‘ноющая боль’), ‘咚咚乱跳’ (‘колотиться’), ‘发酸’ (‘ныть’), а также ‘发麻’ (‘отниматься’), ‘发虚’ (‘ослабевать’) и многие др. создают модально-эмоциональное отражение действительности.

4.5. Лингвоэстетические дискурсивные маркеры и интеграция культурно-исторических реалем и культуронимов

В художественном дискурсе также функционируют различные лингвоэстетические дискурсивные маркеры на уровне слова, приема, фразы и т.д., которые выступают перцептивными индексами. Так, например, в романе Цзя Пинва «Циньские напевы» (2005) в рамках интермедиальной поэтики лингвоэстетическими дискурсивными маркерами могут выступать лексемы, семантически и коннотативно связанные с музыкой/театром и вербальной передачей музыкальности – напев (‘唱腔’), аккомпанемент (‘伴奏’), ария (‘曲牌’), гонг и барабан (‘锣鼓’), колотушка (‘梆子’) и т.д. Также это могут быть фразовые экфрастические элементы вербальной передачи музыки. Рассмотрим такой пример:

- (12) 音乐一起，满院子都是刮来的风和慢来的水，我真不知道那阵我是怎么啦，喉咙痒得就像唱，也不知道怎么就唱：眼看着你起高楼，眼看着你酬宾宴，眼看着楼塌了……¹⁰。

[Как только зазвучала музыка, весь двор наполнился шумом налетевшего ветра и медленно прибывающей воды, у меня, сам не знаю почему, горло зазудело от нестерпимого желания запеть, и я сам не понял, как запел: *«Того и гляди, взойдешь ты в высокий терем, того и гляди, устроишь роскошный банкет, того и гляди, обрушится терем...»*¹¹.] (с. 100)

В примере (12) экстрадискурсивные особенности фокусируются посредством дискурсивных маркеров, которые связаны с музыкальной семиотикой и образностью. В рамках фикциональных текстов волей писателя могут описываться реально существующие, вымышленные и комбинированные (т.е. вымышленные по мотивам реальных) произведения различных видов искусства. Здесь измененная строчка из песни, выступая лингвоэстетическим дискурсивным маркером, отсылает к арии «Скорбеть о Цзяннани» (《哀江南》) из оперного цикла Кун Шанжэня «Веер с персиковыми цветами» циньской эпохи (孔尚任《桃花扇》, 1699). Такого рода метатекстуальная отсылка позволяет интермедially «наложить» на текст общеизвестный музыкальный мотив. Вербально-музыкальный синтез и эстетический аспект художественной образности становятся индивидуальной писательской моделью и языком, посредством чего реинтерпретируется мир. Таким образом, авторская концепция проецируется на общепринятую, выполняя лингвоэстетическую функцию постмодернистского художественного дискурса.

5. Обсуждение результатов

Выделенные и рассмотренные нами параметры могут послужить основой методологии дискурсивного анализа художественного текста в лингвоэстетической и идиодискурсивной проекции. Направления исследования художественного текста сегодня во многом опираются на семиотико-прагматическое толкование, при котором художественный текст рассматривается через систему знаков, транслирующих индивидуально-личностные и институциональные смыслы, заложенные в эстетико-художественные формы. Каждый писатель, художник слова в рамках этнонациональной парадигмы и авторских представлений о мире, как носитель конкретной этнокультуры, моделирует индивидуальную вербально-художественную дискурсивно-семиотическую систему. Частный дискурс проецируется и разворачивается в собственно-неповторимом уникально-авторском синтаксическом строении,

¹⁰ Текст на оригинальном языке цит. по: Цзя Пинва. Циньские напевы. [贾平凹.《秦腔》]. URL: <https://www.tysk.top/xdwx/6091/> (на кит. яз.) (дата обращения: 09.03.2025).

¹¹ Перевод на русский язык приведен по: Цзя Пинва. Циньские напевы. (пер. с кит. А.Н. Коробовой). М.: ИВЛ, 2017. 406 с.

возможных неосемантических реляциях, напряженности и повышенной плотности языковой игры, ведущей к нормативным расшатываниям и пр. С другой стороны, продуцируемый автором текст как сложный семиотический и этнокультурный объект обладает информационно-интерпретационным потенциалом, который через различные художественные формы языка способствует раскрытию эстетики словесного творчества.

6. Заключение

Цель данного исследования состояла в уточнении параметров лингвоэстетической модели авторской совокупности приемов и средств на материале конкретных языковых дискурсивных практик. Результаты показали перспективность исследования художественного дискурса в кругу лингвоэстетических и идиодискурсивных изысканий. Было уточнено определение лингвоэстетики, под которой мы в самом общем виде понимаем особый лингвокреативный и творческий вид вербальных отношений автора с реальностью в рамках идиодискурсивных и художественных практик. В результате данного исследования, рассмотрев ряд идиостилевых практик художественного дискурса в новейшей китайской литературе рубежа XX–XXI столетий, были предложены некоторые универсальные параметры лингвоэстетической модели авторского языкового универсума и языкового сознания. Эти параметры содержат: индивидуальные авторские языковые и речевые особенности, которые носят субъективно-синтагматический характер; этнонациональные и социокультурно-когнитивные авторские установки; использование интермедиальных инструментов когнитивно-прагматической психологии для привлечения многомерного матричного внимания, помогающих получить эстетическую перцепцию от фикционального взаимодействия с художественным миром; эмотивную плотность в точках когнитивного напряжения; лингвоэстетические дискурсивные маркеры (на уровне слова, приема, фразы и пр.); интеграцию культурно-исторических и этнонациональных реалем, использование фразеологического пласта, применительно к новым ситуациям, и т.д. Предложенные параметры не являются сопредельными и требуют дальнейшего расширения и детализации, но уже в данном виде они позволяют применять их в методологии анализа художественного дискурса на вопрос выявления идеодискурсивных и лингвоэстетических средств, используемых в писательских практиках.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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Book Review / Рецензия

Review of Silvina Montrul. 2023. *Native Speakers, Interrupted: Differential Object Marking and Language Change in Heritage Languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

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In the intricate tapestry of human societies, linguistic diversity stands as a normative and dynamic facet intricately woven into the fabric of countless communities worldwide. The coexistence of multiple languages within multilingual societies forms a captivating mosaic, offering fertile ground for linguistic research to investigate the nuanced realms of language contact, acquisition, and evolution (Isurin 2021, Kumar & Yunus 2014, Maher 2017, Roziņa 2015, Wu 2020, Zabrodskaia & Ivanova 2021). The interconnectedness of languages in these diverse environments creates a complex interplay, where each linguistic thread contributes to the vibrancy of the overarching linguistic landscape. Linguistic diversity is not a mere peripheral feature but an integral part of human experience, reflecting the rich cultural, historical, and geographical tapestry of societies. Multilingual societies present an intriguing milieu for linguistic exploration, offering researchers a captivating panorama to study the intricate dynamics that unfold when languages come into contact (Aronin & Singleton 2008, Karpava et al. 2021, Tameryan et al. 2022). Language contact, a phenomenon inherent in these diverse environments, leads to a fusion of linguistic elements, resulting in the emergence of hybrid forms, creoles, or the adaptation of certain linguistic features.

Furthermore, the evolution of languages within multilingual societies reflects not only linguistic changes but also socio-cultural transformations that communities

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undergo (Aronin & Laoire 2013, Evans 2017, Protassova et al. 2021). The ebb and flow of languages within these environments mirror societal shifts, migrations, and cultural exchanges, providing linguists with valuable insights into the interconnected nature of language and society. As languages adapt and transform, they become living entities shaped by the experiences and interactions of the people who use them (Abbasi et al. 2023, Kravchenko 2019, Lupyan & Dale 2016). In essence, the exploration of linguistic diversity within the tapestry of human societies is a journey that unveils the intricate connections between language, culture, and societal dynamics. The study of language contact, acquisition, and evolution in multilingual settings offers profound insights into the adaptive nature of languages, highlighting their resilience and capacity to evolve in response to the ever-changing landscapes of human interaction and cultural exchange. Silvina Montrul's book, "Native Speakers, Interrupted: Differential Object Marking and Language Change in Heritage Languages", published in 2023, strides into this complex linguistic terrain. It invites readers to unravel the intricacies of mature heritage languages and presents a paradigm shift by steering the discourse away from conventional narratives of heritage languages centered on vulnerability and loss. Instead, the book offers a dynamic understanding of how these languages undergo structural changes.

The book spans twelve chapters, delving into heritage languages, their structural changes, and Differential Object Marking (DOM). The introduction underscores linguistic diversity's normative nature, framing discussions in the context of language contact, acquisition, and evolution.

Chapter 1 addresses characterizing heritage speakers, challenging assumptions about their proficiency. The chapter explores diverse measures—language use patterns, self-ratings, tests—evaluating grammatical accuracy, fluency, vocabulary, and discourse competence. Challenging linguistic norms, a typology includes heritage speakers as native speakers due to early exposure. This foundational chapter sets the stage for exploring heritage languages, emphasizing complexities in heritage speakers' linguistic journey.

In Chapter 2 Montrul examines structural changes in heritage language grammars, focusing on bilingual or multilingual native speakers with early exposure to the heritage language. Highlighting variability in linguistic proficiency among heritage speakers in early adulthood, she emphasizes differences from monolingual native speakers. The chapter investigates alterations in heritage language grammars, drawing comparisons with first-generation immigrants as a baseline. Factors contributing to linguistic transformations include both internal (influence of dominant language, challenges in language processing) and external (linguistic exposure, input factors). The chapter introduces a typology of changes in heritage language grammars, covering various linguistic aspects. Comparing heritage speakers to first-generation immigrants aids in understanding continuity and discontinuity in language transmission. In the chapter, the author advocates for the ecological validity of this comparison, recognizing first-generation immigrants

as primary input providers. This approach provides insight into the structural nature of heritage languages and potential changes transmitted across generations.

Chapter 3 discusses Differential Object Marking (DOM), a linguistic phenomenon observed worldwide in which certain direct objects receive overt marking, rendering them semantically or pragmatically salient. DOM in Spanish, Romanian, and Hindi is introduced in this chapter, with these languages depicted as having two-dimensional systems triggered by animacy and referentiality. Syntactic synchronic analyses and the diachronic evolution of DOM in language contact are examined. While DOM is found in languages such as Turkish, Finnish, Hebrew, Spanish, Romanian, Hindi, Mongolian, Guaraní, and Amharic, it is absent in English, German, Japanese, and French. Diverse means of morphological marking in DOM languages are explained, and triggering factors such as animacy and referentiality are highlighted. Examples in Spanish, Romanian, Hindi, Turkish, and Basque are provided to illustrate differentiation based on animacy and referentiality. Variability across languages is underscored, with restrictive and extensive DOM systems noted.

The relationship between individual language acquisition and macro-linguistic change is analyzed, in Chapter 4, with a focus on Differential Object Marking (DOM). The chapter explores the psycholinguistic aspects of DOM acquisition and its impact on sociolinguistic and diachronic shifts. The author summarizes key parameters defining DOM across languages and reviews research contributing to its understanding in typology, synchrony, and diachrony. The chapter addresses the semantic and pragmatic complexity of DOM and examines its acquisition by monolingual children. The question is raised as to whether principles guiding diachronic DOM developments also constrain individual language development. Emphasizing the role of language contact and bilingualism in macro-sociolinguistic change, the chapter reviews DOM studies in first (L1) and second (L2) language acquisition, alongside sociohistorical language change. Recent research extends beyond Spanish, broadening the scope to include other languages.

In Chapter 5 the author looks into the vulnerability of Differential Object Marking (DOM) in Spanish, Hindi, and Romanian heritage languages. The susceptibility of DOM to language change, particularly in contact situations, is investigated. The chapter notes a diachronic trend in some monolingual Spanish varieties, expanding DOM to include inanimate objects. Conversely, bilingual Spanish varieties exhibit variation and notable omission rates in heritage speakers, possibly influenced by the low acoustic salience of the Spanish DOM marker “a”. A cross-linguistic and cross-generational study on DOM in these languages is introduced, aiming to clarify the linguistic and situational factors contributing to DOM erosion. Key questions address the influence of perceptual salience and childhood language use on DOM vulnerability. Two hypotheses navigate the acoustic salience of DOM markers and the impact of input factors on heritage speakers’ DOM vulnerability. The chapter outlines research questions, hypotheses, and methodology, with main results promised in subsequent chapters. The study, comparing heritage languages using a shared grammatical domain and diverse

bilingual onset ages, offers innovative insights. The cross-generational aspect involves adult first-generation immigrants, heritage speakers, and homeland native speakers.

Chapter 6 examines Differential Object Marking (DOM) in Spanish heritage language, aiming to confirm DOM omission in bilingual individuals. It assesses prior findings on potential DOM omission in Spanish–English bilinguals and young adult heritage speakers, testing the consistency of DOM erosion across various heritage speaker groups. While hypotheses regarding parental influence on heritage language existed, there were no studies on DOM attrition in adult immigrants during the conception of the Spanish study. Including first-generation immigrants tests the language transmission hypothesis. Referring to Chamorro et al.’s (2016) study on adult Spanish immigrants to the UK, the chapter finds no attrition effects in offline and eye-tracking tasks. The conclusion challenges DOM attrition in Spanish and examines factors like bilingualism onset age for a comprehensive understanding of DOM in Spanish heritage speakers.

In Chapter 7 Montrul explores Differential Object Marking (DOM) in Hindi as a heritage language, investigating its vulnerability in Hindi heritage speakers. The study contributes to the book’s argument by showing that some Hindi heritage speakers omit DOM in linguistic tasks. In contrast to Spanish-speaking Mexican immigrants in the previous chapter, there’s no evidence of ongoing language change or DOM attrition in Hindi in the homeland or among adult immigrants. The chapter briefly outlines sociolinguistic characteristics of the Hindi/Urdu-speaking population in the U.S. for context.

Chapter 8 investigates Differential Object Marking (DOM) and clitic doubling in Romanian as a heritage language. It investigates if DOM, vulnerable in Spanish and Hindi heritage speakers, follows similar patterns in Romanian heritage speakers. The chapter notes the smaller Romanian-speaking population in the US compared to Spanish and Hindi speakers but highlights their relatively strong language skills. Results show first-generation Romanian immigrants’ linguistic accuracy comparable to Romanian speakers in Romania. Like the Hindi study, there’s no evidence of language change in the homeland or attrition in sampled immigrants. However, the chapter observes DOM and accusative clitic doubling vulnerability in Romanian heritage speakers, especially those exposed to English since birth. Sociolinguistic characteristics and linguistic tasks provide a comprehensive understanding of the linguistic environment and study results.

In Chapter 9 Montrul compares findings from studies on Differential Object Marking (DOM) in Spanish, Hindi, and Romanian heritage languages, exploring DOM vulnerability influenced by English. The author reveals DOM vulnerability in Spanish, Hindi, and Romanian, with variations in omission degrees, often influenced by DOM properties and situational factors. Notably, language-specific markers (Spanish “a”, Hindi “-ko”, Romanian “pe”) are more omitted in DOM contexts. DOM vulnerability appears linked to syntactic, semantic, and morphological complexity, not acoustic salience. Differences are examined, such as DOM expansion in Mexican Spanish but not in Hindi and Romanian homeland

varieties. The chapter examines these distinctions, considering bilingual onset age, and discusses trends in heritage speakers and first-generation immigrants. Evidence of L1 attrition is found in Spanish-speaking Mexican immigrants, contrasting with the absence of DOM attrition in first-generation Hindi and Romanian immigrants. Background variables related to language use patterns are compared between heritage and immigrant groups. A follow-up study confirms attrition in Mexican immigrants and suggests stable dialectal features in Spanish in the United States.

Chapter 10 scrutinizes Differential Object Marking (DOM) intergenerational transmission in Spanish, Hindi, and Romanian heritage languages in the U.S. It scrutinizes DOM patterns in second-generation immigrants, revealing notable variations. Spanish, having more speakers, shows significant variability and potential change, linked to the Linguistic Niche Hypothesis proposing more speakers lead to morphological simplification. The study analyses Spanish DOM erosion compared to Hindi and Romanian, attributing it to the larger, diverse speaker base. It provides a nuanced analysis, emphasizing DOM vulnerability in Spanish at the individual level. The chapter presents evidence of ongoing language change, with diverse DOM accuracy among speakers and potential shifts observed in the first-generation immigrant group. The implications chapter discusses the intricate link between synchronic variability in heritage language grammars and diachronic language change. The study's implications extend to theoretical linguistic models, understanding language acquisition mechanisms, transmission processes, and diachronic language change. Furthermore, the findings hold broader significance for language policies and the education of minority language speakers in the United States.

The book extensively explores Spanish, Hindi, and Romanian heritage languages in the United States, particularly focusing on Differential Object Marking (DOM) for insights into structural changes. It challenges traditional views on heritage languages, shifting from narratives of vulnerability to a dynamic understanding of their evolution. Employing innovative methods like linguistic questionnaires and tasks, it includes diverse speakers, varying bilingual onset ages, and comparison groups, providing nuanced insights. The cross-linguistic study of DOM in three languages enriches understanding within a shared grammatical domain. The interdisciplinary approach integrates linguistics, language acquisition, and sociolinguistics, enhancing the exploration of heritage languages and their role in language change.

However, the book's emphasis on specific heritage languages and the grammatical phenomenon DOM may limit generalizability to other languages or features. Acknowledging potential variations across linguistic contexts would enhance its applicability. While implications for language policies and minority education are mentioned, a more detailed exploration of recommendations would enrich discussions. The technical nature and linguistic terminology might be challenging for non-linguists; a more accessible presentation of key concepts could broaden the audience. The book primarily focuses on linguistic aspects, lacking exploration of broader socio-cultural dimensions influencing heritage language

dynamics. A more comprehensive examination of these factors would enhance its holistic perspective. Relying heavily on linguistic tasks and questionnaires may limit capturing the full complexity of language use and proficiency. Incorporating qualitative methods or real-world language observations could strengthen the empirical basis.

In conclusion, Silvina Montrul's "Native Speakers, Interrupted: Differential Object Marking and Language Change in Heritage Languages" studies heritage language dynamics, especially Differential Object Marking (DOM), challenging conventional narratives and enriching our view of linguistic diversity. While insightful for specific languages, its generalizability may be limited, necessitating acknowledgment of potential variations across linguistic contexts. The book's implications for language policies and minority education, though mentioned, could be more detailed. The technical language may challenge non-linguists; hence, a more accessible presentation could broaden its audience. The focus on linguistic aspects, with limited exploration of broader socio-cultural dimensions, warrants a more comprehensive examination. Strengthening empirical basis through qualitative methods would better capture language complexity. Despite these, Montrul's interdisciplinary work offers nuanced insights into heritage languages, challenging traditional views and contributing to our understanding of language change.

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Book Review / Рецензия

Review of Sandrine Zufferey and Liesbeth Degand. 2024.
***Connectives and Discourse Relations*. Cambridge:**
Cambridge University Press

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Sandrine Zufferey and Liesbeth Degand's *Connectives and Discourse Relations* (2024) is an insightful and comprehensive examination of the role of connectives in structuring discourse across different languages and genres. The book offers a well-balanced integration of theoretical perspectives and empirical research, making it a valuable resource for scholars in linguistics, cognitive science, and language acquisition. The authors provide a detailed analysis of discourse relations, their explicit and implicit markers, and their cognitive processing. With a broad comparative approach, the book explores cross-linguistic variations and the acquisition of connectives in both first and second languages.

The book consists of nine chapters.

Chapter 1 introduces the main concepts of the book, namely the notions of discourse relations and connectives and situates them within the more general concepts of discourse cohesion and coherence. Chapter 2 presents the main characteristics of four leading models for discourse annotation. Chapter 3 explores the interface between semantics and pragmatics and analyzes the type of meaning conveyed by connectives. In Chapter 4, the authors study the interface between syntax and discourse in order to investigate the role of syntax in the use of connectives. The authors address the question if the grammatical category of a connective has an influence on its meanings and uses. In chapter 5 an overview of the way discourse connectives emerge in language over time is given with a focus on the diachronically well-documented languages French, Italian and English. The



final chapters focus on the developmental aspects of connectives, examining how children and second-language learners acquire discourse markers. The book traces the developmental trajectory of connectives in first-language acquisition, showing that children first acquire basic connectives (e.g., and, because) before mastering more complex ones (e.g., although, however).

For second-language learners, the book explores factors influencing connective mastery, such as negative transfer from the first language and differences in syntactic structures. The discussion on pedagogical approaches is particularly useful for language educators, offering insights into teaching strategies that can help learners including children with impairments use connectives more effectively.

No doubt languages possess a repertoire of connectives and other discourse-pragmatic markers to express discourse relations (e.g. Gritsenko & Kamou 2024, Heine et al. 2021, 2024, Kurtul 2012, Traugott 2022, Victorova 2014, among many others). The definition of connectives can vary depending on the goal of the research and its domain. Zufferey and Degand point out that connectives do not only differ between languages. They are also used quite differently across different genres within the same language. These differences are particularly evident between spoken and written genres. The authors argue that discourse is structured and coherent due to logical connections between sentences. Discourse relations define these links, such as causality, temporality, and contrast, while connectives explicitly mark them. However, relations can also be inferred without explicit connectives. Cohesion and coherence are distinct but related: cohesion refers to linguistic devices that create texture, while coherence is the cognitive perception of logical continuity. Cohesion includes reference, substitution, ellipsis, and discourse markers, with connectives forming a key subcategory.

The book provides a solid foundation in the study of discourse relations by exploring various theoretical frameworks. It introduces key models such as Rhetorical Structure Theory (RST), Segmented Discourse Representation Theory (SDRT), the Penn Discourse Treebank (PDTB), and the Cognitive Coherence Relations (CCR) Model. Each framework is analyzed in detail, highlighting its strengths and limitations, particularly concerning explicit versus implicit relations and cross-linguistic applicability.

One of the book's strengths is its comparative approach, which allows readers to appreciate the diversity of theoretical perspectives on discourse coherence. RST, for instance, emphasizes hierarchical structures, while SDRT incorporates inferential processes. PDTB takes a data-driven approach, focusing on lexically grounded relations. The CCR model, in contrast, explains relations through cognitive primitives. By juxtaposing these models, the authors provide a nuanced understanding of how different perspectives shape the study of discourse relations.

A central focus of the book is the role of connectives in signaling discourse relations. Zufferey and Degand categorize connectives based on their grammatical functions, semantic properties, and discourse-pragmatic roles. The discussion

covers coordinating conjunctions (e.g., *and*, *but*), subordinating conjunctions (e.g., *because*, *although*), adverbs (e.g., *therefore*, *however*), and prepositions (e.g., *before*, *after*).

The book provides an excellent analysis of polysemy and polyfunctionality in connectives, showing how the same connective can signal different relations depending on context. This aspect is particularly valuable for scholars interested in discourse ambiguity and pragmatic inference. The authors also explore how different languages express discourse relations using varying syntactic and lexical means, offering cross-linguistic comparisons that enhance the book's global relevance. They highlight two perspectives which help analyze connectives: (1) Semasiological approach: Examines the multiple functions of a single connective; (2) Onomasiological approach: Studies different connectives that can express the same discourse relation. Understanding the syntactic positioning and morphosyntactic properties of connectives helps clarify their disambiguation and usage across contexts.

The book moves beyond linguistic description to examine how discourse relations and connectives are processed cognitively. Experimental studies reviewed in the book reveal that explicit connectives facilitate reading comprehension, recall, and discourse segmentation. The discussion on individual differences in processing—such as working memory capacity and linguistic proficiency—is particularly illuminating.

One of the book's strongest contributions is its discussion on the implicit versus explicit marking of discourse relations. The authors present evidence from psycholinguistic studies showing that while connectives aid comprehension, speakers and writers often omit them, relying on readers' inferential abilities. This discussion bridges linguistic theory and cognitive science, demonstrating the interplay between language use and cognitive processing.

While the book covers a vast range of topics, expanding discussions on digital communication would further enhance its contributions. Given the increasing reliance on online discourse, a discussion on how digital texts (e.g., tweets, instant messages) influence the use and interpretation of connectives would have been a timely addition. Moreover, it could have explored how the use of connectives changes across different discourse communities. Academic discourse, political speech, journalistic writing, and casual conversation all employ discourse connectives in unique ways, and an analysis of these differences could provide practical applications for researchers and educators in communication studies. Another potential expansion could have been a deeper focus on bilingual and multilingual processing of discourse connectives. The book briefly discusses second-language acquisition but does not fully explore how bilinguals process and switch between connectives in their different languages. Research on code-switching and cross-linguistic influence in discourse coherence could add an important dimension to this field.

Nevertheless, Zufferey and Degand's *Connectives and Discourse Relations* is a well-researched and highly informative contribution to the study of discourse coherence. Its integration of theoretical models, empirical findings, and cross-linguistic analyses makes it an essential read for linguists, educators, and cognitive scientists. It constitutes an indispensable resource for those interested in the intricate relationship between language structure, cognitive processing, and discourse interpretation. Future research building on this work could explore emerging trends in computational linguistics and sociolinguistics, offering further insights into how discourse relations shape communication in evolving linguistic landscapes.

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