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LEXICOGRAPHY AND SEMANTICS OF MILITARY TERMS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY IN RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the lexicography and semantics of military terminology in Russian and English, emphasizing the significance of understanding specialized language in military contexts. It examines how historical, cultural, and operational factors shape the lexicon in both languages. The analysis reveals the complexities of direct translations, polysemy, and the use of acronyms, illustrating how these elements can lead to misunderstandings in cross-linguistic communication.

Key words: *lexicography, semantics, military terminology, comparative analysis, russian language, english language, cultural context, polysemy, acronyms, operational language, translation studies, terminology standardization.*

АННОТАЦИЯ

В этом исследовании рассматриваются лексикография и семантика военной терминологии в русском и английском языках, подчеркивается важность понимания специальной лексики в военном контексте. В нем рассматривается, как исторические, культурные и оперативные факторы формируют лексикон в обоих языках. Анализ выявляет сложности прямого перевода, многозначность и использование сокращений, иллюстрируя, как эти элементы могут привести к недоразумениям при межъязыковом общении.

Ключевые слова: *лексикография, семантика, военная терминология, сопоставительный анализ, русский язык, английский язык, культурный контекст, полисемия, акронимы, оперативный язык, переводоведение, стандартизация терминологии.*

Military terminology is a specialized lexicon that reflects the unique concepts, practices, and cultures of armed forces. Understanding this terminology is crucial for effective communication in military contexts, international relations, and defense collaborations. This article explores the lexicographic and semantic aspects of military terms in Russian and English, highlighting the similarities and differences between these two languages.

This comparative analysis employs a mixed-methods approach, incorporating qualitative and quantitative data. Key military terms are selected from both languages, followed by an examination of their definitions, usage in military documentation, and implications in operational contexts.

Lexicography of Military Terms

Lexicography refers to the art and science of dictionary-making, which involves the collection, compilation, and presentation of words and phrases. In the context of military terminology, lexicography plays a vital role in standardizing terms, ensuring clarity, and facilitating communication among military personnel and stakeholders.

The Russian military lexicon is influenced by its historical context, including the Soviet era and contemporary geopolitical dynamics. Key sources for Russian military terminology include official military documents, training manuals, and specialized dictionaries. Terms such as "войска" (troops), "операция" (operation), and "стратегия" (strategy) form the backbone of military discourse.

Similarly, English military terminology has evolved through historical events such as World Wars, Cold War strategies, and modern conflicts. The lexicon includes terms like "battalion," "maneuver," and "logistics." The English language also incorporates borrowings from other languages due to its global military engagements.

- Командир (Komandir) vs. Commander

- Definition: In Russian, "командир" denotes a leader or officer in charge, often carrying connotations of authority and responsibility.

- Usage: The term is employed in various military ranks, reflecting a hierarchical structure. In contrast, "commander" in English can refer to various levels of leadership but is often associated with a specific rank or position.

- Миротворец (Mirotvorets) vs. Peacekeeper

- Definition: The Russian term emphasizes the role of maintaining peace, often in a diplomatic context, while the English term can include broader implications of active military engagement.

- Contextual Nuances: The interpretation of peacekeeping missions varies significantly between cultures, affecting how these terms are perceived.

Semantic Analysis of Military Terms

Semantics deals with the meaning of words and phrases in context. In military terminology, semantics encompasses not only the literal meanings but also the connotations, cultural implications, and operational contexts of terms.

Comparative Semantic Analysis

1. Direct Translations vs. Cultural Context

- Many military terms may have direct translations between Russian and English; however, their usage can differ significantly based on cultural contexts. For instance, the term "командир" (commander) carries connotations of authority and leadership in both languages but may embody different cultural expectations regarding leadership styles.

2. Polysemy and Homonymy

- Certain military terms may exhibit polysemy (multiple meanings) or homonymy (same spelling/pronunciation but different meanings). For example, the English word "drill" can refer to both a training exercise and a tool, while its Russian counterpart "тренировка" (training) is more specific. Such nuances can lead to misunderstandings in cross-linguistic communication.

3. Acronyms and Abbreviations

- Both languages utilize acronyms extensively in military contexts and exhibit polysemy within military terminology. For instance, the term "операция"

(operatsiya) can mean both "operation" in a tactical sense and "mission" in a broader strategic context. Acronyms also play a vital role; for example, NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) has no direct equivalent in Russian, leading to potential confusion. The NATO phonetic alphabet (e.g., Alpha, Bravo) is standardized in English-speaking militaries, while Russian forces may use abbreviations like "ГРУ" (Main Intelligence Directorate). Understanding these acronyms is essential for effective communication.

Understanding military terminology requires an appreciation of the cultural contexts in which these terms are used. Historical events, national doctrines, and even propaganda shape how terms are defined and understood. For example, the concept of "national security" may carry different implications based on each country's geopolitical history.

A comparative analysis of operational terms reveals significant differences in approach. For example, the term "peacekeeping" in English refers to missions aimed at maintaining peace in conflict zones. In Russian, "миротворчество" encompasses not only peacekeeping but also the broader concept of diplomatic engagement.

The terminology surrounding weaponry also presents interesting contrasts. The English term "drone" refers to unmanned aerial vehicles used for surveillance or combat, while in Russian, "беспилотник" specifically denotes an unmanned aircraft but may not encompass all operational uses associated with drones in English.

Conclusion

This comparative study highlights the complexities involved in translating military terminology between Russian and English. A comparative study of military terms highlights the complexity of lexicography and semantics in this specialized field. While there are overlaps in terminology due to globalization and shared military practices, cultural contexts significantly influence the meaning and usage of terms. Understanding these nuances is crucial for effective communication in international military operations and collaborations. Future research could further explore the impact of evolving geopolitical landscapes on military terminology in both languages, fostering greater clarity and cooperation among armed forces worldwide.