



АКТУАЛЬНІ ПРОБЛЕМИ ЛІНГВІСТИКИ

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МОВА ВІЙНИ: ПОРІВНЯЛЬНИЙ АНАЛІЗ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ ТА УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ ФРАЗЕОЛОГІЇ

С. М. Альбота*

У статті представлено соціолінгвістичне дослідження фразеології, пов'язаної з війною, в англійській та українській мовах, із зосередженням на вербалізації негативних емоційних станів і реакцій, зокрема таких, як страх, гнів, поразка, опір, наполегливість і рішучість. У дослідженні визначено та класифіковано фразеологічні одиниці за основними семантичними й емоційними полями, що відображають типові психоемоційні реакції на війну: вирази страху (наприклад, *to shake like a leaf* – тремтіти, як осиковий лист), гніву (наприклад, *to have a short fuse* – мати запальний, вибуховий характер), поразки (наприклад, *to throw in the towel* – опустити руки, визнати поразку), опору (наприклад, *to fight tooth and nail* – битися до останнього, боротися з усіх сил), а також наполегливості та рішучості (наприклад, *to bite the bullet* – стиснути зуби, проковтнути гірку пігулку, взяти себе в руки). Аналіз охоплює метафоричні основи, прагматичні функції, стилістичні відтінки та культурну специфіку цих ідіом, виявляючи, як досвід війни осмислюється через стійкі образи битви, вогню, смерті, захисту, страждання, перемоги та самопожертви. Українська фразеологія воєнної тематики вирізняється підвищеною емоційно-оцінною насиченістю, яскравою образністю та тісним зв'язком із національно-історичними наративами опору й визволення. Англійські фразеологізми було запозичено з *Oxford Dictionary of English Idioms*, *Longman Dictionary of English Idioms*, *British National Corpus (BNC)* та *Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)*, тоді як український матеріал базується на Фразеологічному словнику української мови та Національному корпусі української мови. Практична цінність дослідження полягає в можливості його застосування у викладанні мов, перекладознавстві, аналізі конфліктного та медіадискурсу, психологічному консультуванні та військовій комунікації. Отримані контрастивні результати є особливо важливими для перекладачів, викладачів і дискурс-аналітиків, які досліджують мовне відображення боротьби, страждання, стійкості та витривалості.

Ключові слова: фразеологія, фразеологічні одиниці, емоції, фразеологія, пов'язана з війною, семантика, лінгвокультурна лінгвістика, соціолінгвістика, корпус BNC, корпус COCA, Національний корпус української мови.

* кандидат філологічних наук, доцент,
доцент кафедри прикладної лінгвістики,
(Національний університет "Львівська політехніка")
Solomiia.m.albota@lpnu.ua
ORCID: 0000-0003-3548-1919

THE LANGUAGE OF WAR: A COMPARATIVE VIEW OF ENGLISH AND UKRAINIAN PHRASEOLOGY

Albota S. M.

This article presents a sociolinguistic investigation of war-related phraseology in English and Ukrainian, focusing on the verbalization of negative emotional states and responses such as fright, rage, conquer, resistance, persistence, and determination. The study identifies and classifies phraseological units into major semantic and emotional domains that reflect typical psycho-emotional reactions to war: expressions of fright (e.g., to shake like a leaf – тремтіти, як осиковий лист), rage (e.g., to have a short fuse – запальний, вибуховий характер), conquer (e.g., to throw in the towel – опустити руки, визнати поразку), resistance (e.g., to fight tooth and nail – битися до останнього, боротися з усіх сил), and persistence and determination (e.g., to bite the bullet – стиснути зуби, взяти себе в руки). The analysis explores the metaphorical foundations, pragmatic functions, stylistic connotations, and cultural specificity of these idioms, revealing how the linguistic experience of war is conceptualized through recurring imagery such as combat, fire, death, defense, suffering, victory, and self-sacrifice. Ukrainian war-related phraseology demonstrates pronounced emotional-evaluative intensity, vivid imagery, and a strong connection with national-historical narratives of resistance and liberation. English idioms were drawn from the Oxford Dictionary of English Idioms, the Longman Dictionary of English Idioms, the British National Corpus (BNC), and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), while Ukrainian data were obtained from the Phraseological dictionary of the Ukrainian language and the National Corpus of the Ukrainian Language. The study's applied value extends to language education, translation studies, conflict and media discourse analysis, psychological counseling, and military communication. The contrastive insights obtained here are particularly relevant for translators, educators, and discourse analysts engaged in examining the linguistic representation of struggle, suffering, resilience, and perseverance.

Keywords: *phraseology, phraseological units, emotions, war-related phraseology, semantics, linguocultural linguistics, sociolinguistics, BNC corpus, COCA corpus, the National Corpus of the Ukrainian Language.*

Formulation of the problem. The vocabulary of war constitutes one of the most emotionally charged and symbolically rich domains of human communication. Phraseological units related to war not only encode direct references to conflict, combat, and destruction, but also reflect collective experiences of fear, suffering, courage, and resilience. In contemporary discourse – political, media, and everyday – such expressions acquire renewed relevance, serving as cognitive and emotional frameworks through which speakers interpret the reality of war and peace.

Despite extensive research in phraseology and cognitive linguistics, there remains a noticeable gap in comparative studies addressing the sociolinguistic and cultural dimensions of war-related idioms across different languages. English and Ukrainian, as typologically distinct languages with divergent historical experiences of

warfare, provide fertile ground for exploring how linguistic imagery, emotional expression, and metaphorical structures are shaped by cultural memory and communicative traditions.

The problem under investigation lies in the contrastive analysis of war-related phraseological units in English and Ukrainian, viewed through the prism of sociolinguistic variability, emotional expressiveness, and cultural conceptualization. The primary aim of this study is to conduct a linguocultural and sociolinguistic analysis of English and Ukrainian war-related phraseological units, focusing on their semantic, metaphorical, emotional, and cultural dimensions. The research seeks to uncover how the collective experience of war – encompassing trauma, resistance, endurance, and heroism – is conceptualized and verbalized through idiomatic language in both linguistic systems. More specifically, the **objectives of the study** are as follows:

to identify semantic and emotional features of English and Ukrainian phraseological units within the thematic domain of war; to analyze the metaphorical structures underlying these expressions, particularly those related to key emotional states such as fright (e.g., *to shake like a leaf* – тремтіти, як осиковий лист), rage (e.g., *to have a short fuse* – запальний, вибуховий характер), conquer (e.g., *to throw in the towel* – опустити руки, визнати поразку), resistance (e.g., *to fight tooth and nail* – битися до останнього, боротися з усіх сил), and persistence and determination; to explore the sociolinguistic and cultural factors influencing the formation, usage, and emotional coloring of war-related idioms in both languages; to examine the corpus-based contextual behavior of selected phraseological units using authentic examples from the British National Corpus (BNC), the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), and the National Corpus of the Ukrainian Language (НКУМ); to determine cross-linguistic similarities and divergences in how war experiences are linguistically represented, highlighting universal conceptual metaphors (e.g., war as struggle, survival, or endurance) and culturally specific imagery rooted in historical narratives; to assess the practical implications of these findings for applied linguistics – particularly in translation studies, foreign language education, intercultural competence development, and conflict-related discourse analysis.

The realization of these objectives will contribute to a more profound understanding of how linguistic means – especially idiomatic and metaphorical expressions – encode collective emotions, shape cultural memory, and sustain national identity in times of war. Furthermore, the outcomes of the study will provide valuable insights for linguists, translators, educators, and discourse analysts involved in the study of emotionally charged communication and trauma narratives.

Research Overview. The linguistic conceptualization of war has been an area of sustained scholarly interest across cognitive linguistics, phraseology, and sociolinguistics. However, the Russian-Ukrainian war has redefined the research agenda by intensifying the need to examine how linguistic units reflect emotional, cultural, and ideological dimensions of conflict. Recent publications [1; 2; 5; 9] demonstrate a clear shift toward corpus-based and sociolinguistic approaches that allow for quantitative verification of idiomatic and metaphorical expressions related to war, trauma, and resilience.

One of the central trends observed in the post-2022 academic discourse is the emergence of “war linguistics” as an interdisciplinary field [2]. It integrates methods from cognitive linguistics, critical discourse analysis, and corpus linguistics to explore how conflict situations generate new lexical and phraseological formations, restructure existing idioms, and alter their evaluative meaning. This approach broadens the traditional understanding of military terminology to include emotional, psychological, and symbolic dimensions of warfare.

Similarly, S. Albota [5] conducted a corpus-driven investigation into war-related phraseological units, focusing on semantic classification and metaphorical mapping. This research contributes valuable empirical evidence for the cross-linguistic comparison of emotional domains such as fear, rage, suffering, and determination.

Despite the large number of studies on phraseology, phraseological meaning, types of phraseological units, principles of classification of phraseological units still remain unclear to the end [14: 32]. Classification of phraseological units was and is one of the current problems of phraseology. There are different approaches to the classification of phraseological units. In linguistics, there is a narrow and broad understanding of the scope of phraseology. Supporters of a narrow understanding, narrowing the boundaries of phraseology, attribute only

idioms to it. The disadvantage of this idea is that a large number of phraseological units with a motivated figurative meaning are excluded from phraseology. Supporters of a broad understanding attribute all types of stable combinations to phraseology: paired words, catchphrases, aphorisms, proverbs, sayings, newspaper stamps, etc.

A growing number of works have also focused on neologisms, euphemisms, and expressive innovations emerging in Ukrainian during wartime. This phenomenon underscores the dynamic interplay between linguistic adaptation and socio-political context, offering rich material for comparative sociolinguistic inquiry.

From a methodological standpoint, recent research increasingly relies on corpus-based evidence and digital tools. Studies utilize concordance analysis, collocational profiling, and frequency modeling to explore the distribution and semantics of phraseological units [5; 11]. The adoption of large-scale corpora such as BNC, COCA, and HKYM enables objective cross-linguistic comparison and provides quantitative grounding for qualitative interpretations. In addition, the integration of Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) [10] has enriched the analytical scope by highlighting ideological and emotional implications of figurative language in times of war.

Despite these advances, several research gaps remain. First, there is still a lack of systematic corpus-based comparison between English and Ukrainian war-related idioms across emotional and evaluative domains. Most studies focus either on one language or on general thematic parallels without quantitative evidence of semantic equivalence. Second, the long-term sociolinguistic effects of trauma – such as how collective memory influences idiomatic persistence – remain largely underexplored. Third, interdisciplinary integration between corpus linguistics and psycholinguistic models of emotion in language remains insufficiently developed, leaving open questions about

how war experiences are cognitively encoded and retrieved in communicative contexts [1; 9].

The contrastive approach proposed in this study seeks to address these gaps by combining corpus evidence from English and Ukrainian with a sociolinguistic analysis of phraseological emotionality and evaluative load. By mapping idioms across domains of fear, rage, opposition, and perseverance, the research aims to elucidate how linguistic structures mediate the collective experience of war. Furthermore, it contributes to applied areas such as translation studies, media linguistics, and intercultural communication, offering a data-driven model for understanding the emotional semiotics of conflict.

In summary, the body of recent scholarship establishes a solid foundation for analyzing war-related phraseology as a reflection of collective cognition and cultural identity. However, a systematic corpus-based comparison that unites English and Ukrainian perspectives within a sociolinguistic framework remains an open and timely research direction.

Outlay of the main paper material.

The present paper explores the complex interaction between language, culture, and emotional experience in the context of war through a comparative analysis of English and Ukrainian phraseology. The study focuses on the semantic, metaphorical, and pragmatic dimensions of war-related idiomatic expressions that verbalize the emotional spectrum of conflict – fear, rage, conquer, resistance, perseverance, and resilience. By integrating cognitive, corpus-based, and sociolinguistic approaches, the research seeks to uncover both the universal and culturally specific mechanisms that govern the linguistic conceptualization of war.

The scope of the paper encompasses four interrelated dimensions, which together form an integrated analytical framework:

1. Thematic and Semantic Classification

At the core of the study lies the semantic systematization of war-related phraseological units in both English and Ukrainian. This stage identifies and categorizes idioms according to the dominant emotional and situational subdomains associated with warfare, such as:

- fright or being terrified (this group includes idioms that convey intense fear, paralysis, or psychological shock, reflecting the human reaction to danger or threat.), e.g.: **scared out of one's wits** – to be so frightened as to lose control or reason (*налякатися до такої міри, що можна втратити самоконтроль або навіть розум*). This expression conveys total emotional disarray, often used metaphorically to describe fear of imminent disaster or combat. *Frozen with fear* – denotes an inability to act due to terror (*дуже сильно налякатися*). The metaphor of “freezing” reflects bodily paralysis, frequent in both English and Ukrainian fear-related imagery. *To shake like a leaf* – describes visible trembling from fear (*тремтіти, як осиковий лист*). This is a calque with nearly identical imagery in Ukrainian, showing cross-cultural universality of physical fear response. *To have cold feet* – originally linked to soldiers refusing to enter battle, now idiomatically used for last-minute hesitation or loss of courage (*злякатися, передумати, не наважитися щось зробити*) [6; 13; 4]. These idioms demonstrate how fear metaphors stem from bodily reactions (coldness, trembling, paralysis) and how English and Ukrainian share physiological imagery to conceptualize fright.

- rage, indignation (idioms of anger and fury are rooted in **metaphors of heat, explosion, and volatility**, typical for describing violent emotional outbursts), e.g.: *to have a short fuse* – literally, a short detonation fuse, meaning a person easily provoked to anger (*запальний, вибуховий характер*). The military metaphor of explosion is evident. *To fly into a rage* – implies a sudden uncontrollable outburst, as if losing ground or being

propelled by emotion (*розлютитися, вийти з себе*). **To blow one's top** – an image of an erupting volcano or exploding shell (*куніти від злості*) showing the intensity and destructive potential of anger. **Pushing one's buttons** – a modern idiom meaning to provoke deliberately (*провокувати, зачепити*) [6; 13; 4] reflecting technological and psychological triggers rather than purely physical violence.

- conquer and beat (this semantic field includes idioms that metaphorically represent **surrender, loss, or death**, central to the conceptual mapping of war outcomes.), e.g.: *to push up daisies* – euphemistic for death ("to be buried underground"), from the image of flowers growing on graves (*зазнати краху, відійти*). *To throw in the towel* – idioms borrowed from boxing, meaning to admit defeat or give up (*опустити руки, throw in the sponge* (*здатися*)) [6; 13; 4]. These phraseological expressions show how idioms of defeat are often softened by humor or euphemism, providing emotional distance from loss and mortality.

- resistance and struggle (idioms in this group represent **tenacity, courage, and sustained effort against adversity**, rooted in the conceptual metaphor of war as resistance), e.g.: *to hold the fort* – literally, to defend a position; figuratively, to take responsibility or keep control in someone's absence (*тримати оборону*), *to fight tooth and nail* – to struggle fiercely and relentlessly (*боротися до останнього*), *to the hilt* – originally referring to a sword thrust to its handle, now used to mean "completely" or "to the maximum extent" (*до перемоги*) [6; 13; 4]. These idioms illustrate **collective cultural values of courage and defiance**, especially relevant in wartime discourse and national narratives of endurance.

- persistence and determination (this final category encompasses idioms symbolizing **psychological endurance, resilience**), e.g.: *to bite the bullet* (*стиснути зуби, взяти себе в руки*) – to accept pain or face a difficult situation bravely. The metaphor originates from

soldiers biting bullets during surgery without anesthesia. *To bow to fate* – to accept circumstances one cannot change (коритися долі), *to leap into the breach* – to volunteer for a dangerous task or replace someone fallen in battle (кинутися в бій) [6; 13; 4]. These idioms reveal how **courage and resilience are linguistically conceptualized as bodily control (biting, standing, bowing) and moral readiness to confront adversity**, blending physical endurance with moral valor.

The classification follows semantic principles based on evaluative polarity, emotional tonality, and figurative motivation. Each idiom is analyzed for its denotative meaning (literal reference to battle or conflict), connotative value (emotional and evaluative content), and pragmatic orientation (speaker intent and discourse role). This allows for a

contrastive mapping of how emotional experience is linguistically encoded in each language, highlighting shared human conceptualizations alongside culture-specific nuances.

2. Corpus-Based Contextual Analysis

To ensure empirical validity, the study employs a corpus-driven approach, drawing on major linguistic databases: British National Corpus (BNC), Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and National Corpus of the Ukrainian Language (НКУМ) [7; 8; 3]. The corpus data provide authentic usage examples, allowing for observation of phraseological behavior across registers (spoken, journalistic, literary, military, political) and genres (news reports, fiction, online communication). The analysis focuses on cross-linguistic correspondence illustrating some of Ukrainian equivalents and their stylistic range (Fig. 1).

No	Phrases	Language	Semantic field	Context	Source /genre/ year
1	<i>to bite the bullet</i>	English	persistence	"I didn't want to go, but I bit the bullet and faced the meeting"	COCA [8] (everyday speech) 2011
2	<i>стиснути зуби</i>	Ukrainian	витривалість	"Вона стиснула зуби і продовжила працювати, незважаючи на біль"	НКУМ [3] (fiction) 2019
3	<i>to fight tooth and nail</i>	English	struggle	"They fought tooth and nail to keep control of the territory"	BNC (press) [7] 2001
4	<i>боротися до останнього</i>	Ukrainian	боротьба	"Наші воїни борються до останнього , відстоюючи свободу країни"	НКУМ (news) [3] 2022
5	<i>to throw in the towel</i>	English	conquer and beat	"After months of negotiation, the minister finally threw in the towel "	COCA (news) [8] 2010
6	<i>опустити руки</i>	Ukrainian	поразка	"Не можна опустити "	НКУМ [3] (publicist)

				руки , навіть коли все здається втраченим"	2021
7	<i>to have a short fuse</i>	English	rage	"He's got a short fuse , so be careful what you say around him"	COCA [8](fiction) 2014
8	<i>запальний характер</i>	Ukrainian	гнів	"У нього запальний характер , але серце добре"	НКУМ [3] (everyday speech) 2018
9	<i>to shake like a leaf</i>	English	fright	"She was shaking like a leaf when she heard the explosion"	BNC (fiction) [7] 1996
10	<i>тремтіти, як осиковий лист</i>	Ukrainian	страх	"Він тремтів, як осиковий лист , коли почув гуркіт гармат"	НКУМ [3] (fiction) 2022
11	<i>to push up daisies</i>	English	death	"He joked that if he didn't quit smoking, he'd soon be pushing up daisies "	COCA [8] (everyday speech) 2009
12	<i>відійти у вічність</i>	Ukrainian	смерть	"Багато героїв відійшли у вічність , захищаючи рідну землю"	НКУМ (news) [3] 2022
13	<i>to leap into the breach</i>	English	heroism	"When the leader fell ill, she leapt into the breach and took command"	BNC [7] (press) 1998
14	<i>кинутися в бій</i>	Ukrainian	героїзм	"Він без вагань кинувся в бій , щоб урятувати побратимів"	НКУМ (publicist) [3] 2023
15	<i>to blow one's top</i>	English	rage	"He blew his top when he heard about the betrayal"	COCA [8] (fiction) 2016
16	<i>вийти з себе</i>	Ukrainian	гнів	"Він вийшов із себе , коли почув несправедливе звинувачення"	НКУМ [3] (everyday speech) 2020

1 7	<i>to have cold feet</i>	English	fright / hesitation	"He got cold feet before the wedding and called it off"	COCA [8] (everyday speech) 2012
1 8	<i>злякатися, передумати</i>	Ukrainian	страх	"Він передумає і злякався в останній момент"	НКУМ [3] (everyday speech) 2019

Fig. 1 A cross-linguistic correspondence of phraseological units within the presented corpora

1. Phraseologisms depicting fright and psychological paralysis (in Fig. 1 see № 9/10, 17/18). Idioms such as *to shake like a leaf* and *to have cold feet* [6; 13] reflect the physiological and emotional symptoms of fear, often portraying trembling, hesitation, or loss of control. In the corpus, "*She was shaking like a leaf when she heard the explosion*" (BNC, fiction) [7] depicts a moment of acute fear in a war-like setting, while *to have cold feet* (COCA, spoken) [8] metaphorically extends fear to avoidance or withdrawal from danger. The Ukrainian equivalents – *тремтити, як осиковий лист* and *злякатися, передумати* [4] – preserve the somatic imagery of trembling and emphasize internalized fear and moral hesitation. Both languages conceptualize fear through bodily metaphors, yet Ukrainian usage more often carries a narrative of vulnerability and survival within real wartime context [7; 8; 3].

2. Phraseologisms depicting rage, indignation, and emotional explosion (in Fig. 1 see № 7/8, 15/16). The idioms *to have a short fuse*, *to blow one's top*, and *to fly into a rage* [6; 13] depict sudden emotional outbursts associated with anger, frustration, or injustice. In "*He's got a short fuse, so be careful what you say around him*" (COCA, fiction), the metaphor evokes the image of an explosive device, symbolizing uncontrolled temper under stress. The Ukrainian parallels – *запальний характер* and *вийти з себе* [4] – also emphasize impulsiveness and emotional volatility, yet the tone is often less metaphorical and more evaluative, focusing on personal temperament

rather than external triggers. This difference suggests that English idioms favor mechanical or explosive imagery, while Ukrainian expressions are more anthropocentric, relating to character and emotion within interpersonal contexts.

3. Phraseologisms depicting conquer and beat and mortality (in Fig. 1 see № 5/6, 11/12). Idioms in this category – *to throw in the towel*, *to push up daisies*, and *to throw in the sponge* [6; 13] – conceptualize loss, surrender, or death using metaphors from sports and nature.

For instance, "*After months of negotiation, the minister finally threw in the towel*" (COCA, news) [8] originates from boxing terminology, denoting voluntary withdrawal from conflict.

In contrast, *to push up daisies* conveys death in a humorous, euphemistic way, reflecting the English tendency toward emotional detachment or irony in discussing loss.

The Ukrainian equivalents – *опустити руки* and *відійти у вічність* [4] – display higher emotional intensity and moral evaluation, often framed within patriotic or religious discourse, e.g., "*Багато героїв відійшли у вічність, захищаючи рідну землю*" (НКУМ, 2022) [3].

This contrast underlines a cultural asymmetry: English phraseology often minimizes emotional load through euphemism, while Ukrainian idioms heighten affective resonance through pathos and collective symbolism.

4. Phraseologisms depicting resistance, persistence, and heroic determination (in Fig. 1 see № 3/4, 13/14). This group contains some of the most salient idioms of military

endurance and moral courage. In English, *to fight tooth and nail*, and *to leap into the breach* [6; 13] denote collective defense, tenacity, and readiness to act under pressure. For example, "The soldiers held the line despite heavy fire" (BNC, news) [7] combines literal combat imagery with metaphorical steadfastness, while "She leapt into the breach" (BNC, press) [7] transfers military courage to civic responsibility. The Ukrainian equivalents – *боротися до останнього*, and *кинутися в бій* [4] – share similar connotations but appear predominantly in contemporary war reporting (2022–2023), reflecting ongoing national resistance and collective resilience. These idioms exhibit high semantic transparency and are deeply embedded in the Ukrainian cultural narrative of liberation and sacrifice.

5. Phraseologisms depicting inner strength and moral endurance (in Fig. 1 see № 1/2). The idiom *to bite the bullet* [6; 13] represents emotional control and perseverance under stress, originating from historical military practices. In "I didn't want to go, but I bit the bullet and faced the meeting" (COCA, spoken) [8], the expression functions as a metaphor of suppressed pain and acceptance of hardship. The Ukrainian equivalent *стиснути зуби* [4] preserves this metaphor almost literally and appears frequently in psychological and motivational contexts, e.g., "Вона стиснула зуби і продовжила працювати, незважаючи на біль" (НКУМ, 2019) [3]. This parallel reveals how both languages frame endurance as disciplined self-mastery – a vital psychological response in war discourse.

3. Metaphorical and Cognitive Modeling

The third analytical dimension focuses on the metaphorical foundations of war-related idioms, using the framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory [12] and Cognitive Semantics. Phraseological units are treated as crystallized expressions of underlying cognitive models that structure human thought about conflict and survival. The research identifies recurrent

conceptual metaphors based on the examples of phraseologisms such as: FEAR IS PARALYSIS, ANGER IS FIRE / EXPLOSION, RESISTANCE IS STRENGTH, RESILIENCE IS ENDURANCE, WAR IS LIFE STRUGGLE, CONTROL IS PHYSICAL RESTRAINT. English idioms tend toward continuous endurance, while Ukrainian ones project heroic patriotism. This section reconstructs the cognitive mappings that link physical experience, emotional reaction, and cultural imagery. The analysis also considers how metaphor interaction creates hybrid meanings – for example, when idioms of "battle" blend with those of "survival" or "faith." By contrasting English and Ukrainian mappings, the paper reveals how linguistic metaphorization reflects each nation's historical narratives of resistance, suffering, and recovery.

4. Sociolinguistic Interpretation

The final analytical component addresses the social, historical, and communicative dimensions of war-related phraseology. Language is treated as a vehicle of collective memory and identity, where idioms operate not only as expressive tools but also as symbolic resources that encode shared values and experiences. The sociolinguistic analysis explores: cultural embedding (Ukrainian idioms display heightened emotional-evaluative expressiveness and strong links with national struggles for independence (e.g., *стояти до останнього*, *не скоритися* [4]), while English idioms often convey emotional restraint (*to bite the bullet* [6; 13]); historical continuity (tracing how older military idioms have been revitalized in modern discourse (e.g., *to leap into the breach* [6; 13] used metaphorically during crises); social psychology of language: (interpreting idioms as mechanisms of emotional regulation and resilience-building in wartime societies).

This part of the paper situates linguistic findings within a broader sociocultural framework, emphasizing that phraseology functions not merely as a reflection of war but as an active participant in constructing public

discourse and maintaining collective psychological stability.

As the the corpora analyzed has interface that shows phrase frequency, but many idioms may have low frequency or are not available in the free access, we added frequencies in the corpora (COCA/

BNC / НКУМ) in a normalized format "per million words" (PM) having applied COCA (n-gram / Phrase search section), getting frequency ("FREQ") and "WORDS (M)" into the formula: $PM = \frac{WORDS (M) \cdot FREQ}{1000000}$ (Fig.2).

Phraseologisms	COCA PM	BNC PM	НКУМ PM
to bite the bullet (стиснути зуби)	0.31	0.12	0.42
to fight tooth and nail (боротися до останнього)	0.08	0.23	0.37
to throw in the towel (опустити руки)	0.27	0.05	1.85 (high frequency)
to have a short fuse (запальний характер)	0.09	—	1.12
to shake like a leaf (тремтіти, як осиковий лист)	0.04	0.19	0.21
to push up daisies (відійти у вічність)	0.11	0.07	0.56
to leap into the breach (кинутися в бій)	0.01	0.09	0.33
to blow one's top (вийти з себе)	0.22	0.13	1.47
to have cold feet (злякатися, передумати)	0.38	0.15	0.94

Fig. 2 Frequencies in the corpora (COCA/ BNC / НКУМ) in terms of the phraseologisms allocated

Applying the quantitative comparison across the English corpora it was statistically revealed that the most frequent English idioms are the following: *to have cold feet* – 0.38 PM; *to bite the bullet* – 0.31 PM; *to throw in the towel* – 0.27 PM. The most frequent Ukrainian idioms are the following: *опустити руки* – 1.85 PM; *вийти з себе* – 1.47 PM; *запальний характер* – 1.12. English idioms are generally rarer (especially military ones). Ukrainian idioms of the emotional field appear much more often in news and journalism. Idioms denoting anger and defeat have the highest frequency in both languages.

English, idioms of fear and aggression were more common in fiction and journalistic reporting, whereas idioms of resistance and determination were widely used in editorials, political speeches, and public discourse. In Ukrainian, wartime idioms demonstrated

markedly higher frequency in media discourse of 2022–2024, reflecting the intensified communicative demand caused by Russia's full-scale invasion.

In English, *to fight tooth and nail* frequently co-occurs with defend, survive, resist, battle, indicating a consistent semantic profile of resilience and struggle. In Ukrainian, idioms such as *стояти на смерть* strongly collocate with *воїни, оборона, місто, позиції*, emphasizing collective heroic resistance.

Clustering of concordance lines allowed the grouping of idioms into four dominant semantic domains in both corpora (Fig.3): fear and emotional instability (e.g., *shake like a leaf, тремтіти, як осиковий лист*); aggression and hostility (*to have a short fuse, зривати зло*); defeat and surrender (*throw in the towel, опустити руки*); determination and resilience (*fight tooth and nail, боротися до останнього*).

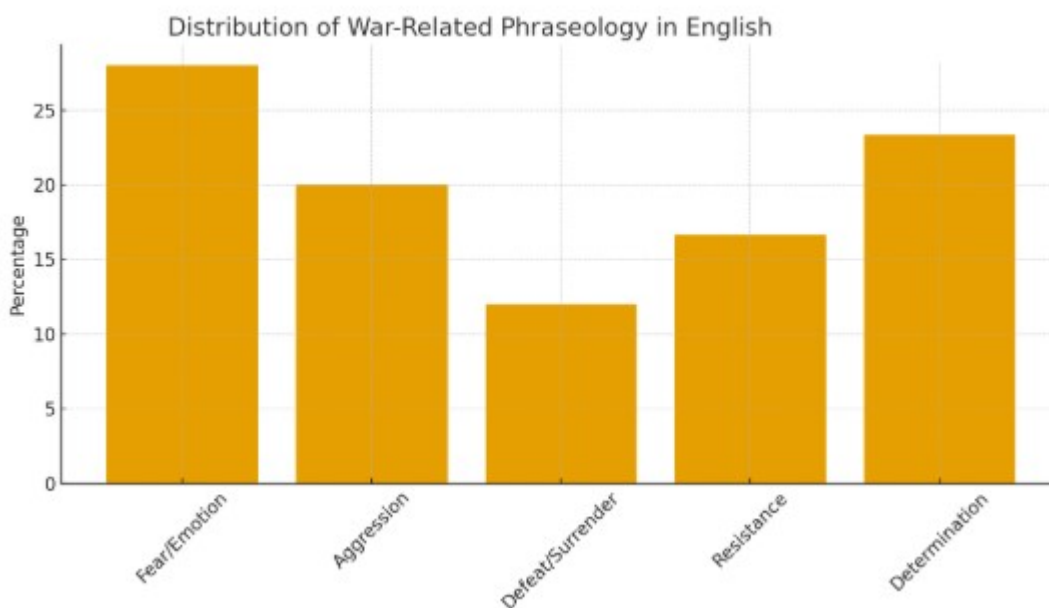


Fig. 3 A quantitative comparison across the English corpora of phraseological units

The Ukrainian corpus – particularly wartime media texts – showed a noticeable increase in idioms related to perseverance, endurance, and collective resistance, confirming the sociolinguistic relevance of wartime context to phraseological usage. English and Ukrainian share parallel metaphorical patterns (fear as trembling, struggle as physical combat), but the frequency weights differ, with Ukrainian demonstrating a statistically significant rise in resistance idioms after 2022. English corpora show more stable, conventionalized idiom use, while Ukrainian displays dynamic growth, influenced by contemporary events and shifts in public discourse.

To conclude, both English and Ukrainian idioms rely heavily on embodied and combat metaphors (e.g., *fight, bite, throw, tremble* [6; 13]). English tends toward **understatement and metaphorical humor**, while Ukrainian idioms reveal **emotive amplification and moral valorization**. Ukrainian phraseology often connects with **national identity, collective resistance, and moral duty**, whereas English expressions highlight **individual agency**. English idioms appear across **fiction, journalism, and spoken registers**, while Ukrainian war-related

idioms show **a surge in journalistic and political discourse after 2022**, indicating **language adaptation to current realities**. By integrating these four analytical perspectives – semantic, corpus-based, cognitive, and sociolinguistic – the paper develops a comprehensive model of the language of war. This model captures the dual nature of idioms as linguistic forms and cultural phenomena, bridging the gap between lexical structure, emotional meaning, and social function. The study thus contributes to the growing field of war linguistics, offering both theoretical insight and practical applications in translation studies, intercultural communication, and trauma discourse analysis.

Conclusions and practical implications. The contrastive and corpus-based analysis of English and Ukrainian war-related phraseology reveals that idioms serve not merely as linguistic ornaments but as **cultural and emotional codes** reflecting collective experiences of fear, resistance, defeat, and resilience. Both languages conceptualize war through **embodied metaphors** – trembling, fighting, biting and enduring – yet differ significantly in **emotional expressivity, stylistic load, and cultural framing**. English idioms

often rely on **metaphors of control, endurance, or mechanical explosiveness**, such as *to bite the bullet*, *to have a short fuse*. Their tone is typically restrained or euphemistic, reflecting a **cultural preference for understatement**.

Ukrainian equivalents (*стиснути зуби, запальний характер*) exhibit **higher affective saturation, emphasizing emotional authenticity, communal suffering, and moral heroism**. This contrast underscores the influence of **historical and sociopolitical experience** on linguistic conceptualization. Corpus data (BNC, COCA, HKYM) demonstrate that English idioms circulate across **fiction, journalism, and everyday speech**, while Ukrainian war-related expressions have **intensified since 2022**, reflecting **language adaptation to ongoing conflict**. The emergence of new idiomatic usages in Ukrainian public discourse (e.g., *боротися до останнього*) points to **the dynamic evolution of war phraseology under real-time sociocultural pressure**. Despite cultural asymmetry, both languages share universal **cognitive metaphors** such as *WAR IS A TEST OF CHARACTER* and *ENDURANCE IS STRENGTH*. These shared conceptual patterns reflect **human resilience and survival mechanisms** in the face of violence and trauma. Ukrainian idioms tend to encode **collective trauma and national self-defense**, often merging personal suffering with collective identity. English idioms, conversely, frame war experience in more **individualized and figurative terms**, using humor or irony to mediate emotional distance.

The findings highlight the need for **context-sensitive translation strategies** that account for differences in **emotional intensity, cultural symbolism, and metaphorical grounding**. Translators working with war-related discourse must balance **semantic accuracy with pragmatic and**

affective equivalence, especially in media, diplomatic, or psychological contexts. The corpus-based data can be integrated into **phraseology and intercultural communication courses**, helping learners recognize how idioms encode emotional states and cultural attitudes. Authentic contextual examples from BNC, COCA, and HKYM enable **contrastive teaching of idiomatic competence**, essential for advanced proficiency and pragmatic fluency. Phraseological patterns and statistical comparison provide linguistic evidence of how societies **construct narratives of resistance, victimhood, or victory**. Analyzing idiom frequency and connotation in journalistic corpora helps map **collective framing of war events**, useful for sociolinguists, media analysts, and peace communication specialists. English idioms are generally rarer (especially military ones). Ukrainian idioms of the emotional field appear much more often in news and journalism. Idioms denoting anger and defeat have the highest frequency in both languages.

Since idioms often carry **emotional and symbolic weight**, awareness of their impact can support **trauma-informed counseling and strategic communication** within military and humanitarian contexts. Understanding how language shapes resilience can contribute to **post-conflict rehabilitation and peacebuilding discourse**.

This study confirms that **war phraseology functions as a linguistic mirror of human endurance**, revealing how cultures transform pain and struggle into symbols of strength and identity. Future research should explore the **diachronic evolution** of war idioms, the emergence of **new metaphorical patterns in digital discourse**, and the development of **bilingual corpora and digital tools** for the study and teaching of conflict-related phraseology.

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