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The Concept of “Volia” in the Modern Ukrainian Language: A Corpus-Based Approach to the Analysis of Conceptual Content

Abstract

This paper presents a corpus-based research on the concept of “volia” in modern Ukrainian language. It focuses on dynamic changes of the concept of “volia” within the context of social, political, and historical transformations of Ukrainian society in the 20th and 21st centuries. The study examines the processes of concept’s metaphorization and shifts in the semantics of concept’s verbalizers. The research utilizes the General Regionally Annotated Corpus of the Ukrainian Language (GRAC) as its empirical foundation. This analysis reveals correlations between the type of context and the concept’s frequency, displaying specific conceptual senses across different periods. Additionally, the study examines the concept’s synonymous verbalizers, including their distribution and rating position within chronological corpora. This allows us to trace tendencies in the dynamics of conceptualization. Six conceptual profiles of the “volia” concept are identified. Concordance and collocation analysis offer insights into the combinability of “volia” and its synonyms within each profile. This approach helps identify core cognitive features of the concept and highlight the specific ways in which the content of the concept has developed. Ultimately, these findings demonstrate the effectiveness of the corpus-based approach in revealing the dynamic nature of the concept’s semantics and its susceptibility to discourse influences.

Keywords: concept / cultural concept, conceptualization, Ukrainian language / identity, language corpus, linguistic studies

Introduction

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The Lingua-cultural studies have become one of the leading directions of modern European linguistics resulted from the fundamental changes of theoretical linguistic foundations that direct the research within the cognitive and anthropocentric paradigms. This research, characterized by great analytical and modeling potential, focuses on culturally determined language forms, the discovery of a huge heterogeneous fund of specific phenomena and facts of national language dynamics, complex and multifaceted linguistic material which reflects changes in collective consciousness and national identity.

In Polish and Ukrainian linguistics, the end of 20th and the first decades of 21st centuries witnessed the development of lingua-cultural studies inspired by the ideas of Wrocław and Lublin schools. The works of Jerzy Bartmiński laid the foundations of novel lexicographic practices of semantic descriptions further known as the methodology of cognitive definition (Bartmiński 1984: 1988a). This new type of definition exceeds the boundaries of a narrow structural framework and includes connotative, cultural, contextual, “pro-linguistic” information (Bartmiński 2018). Bartmiński specified the subject of the research – the language system as an institutionalized social product in all the richness of its varieties, styles, variants related to the system of culture as a specific order of human activities with patterns and values inscribed in these activities, as well as to culture as a product of these actions (Bartmiński 1988b: 5). Ukrainian lingua-cultural studies are represented by works of V. Zhayvoronok, V. Kononenko, F. Batsevych, O. Selivanova, I. Holubovska, and O. Levchenko (Batsevych 2009; Zhayvoronok 2006; Selivanova 2012; Holubovska 2004; Levchenko 2005).

A key characteristic of modern lingua-cultural studies in both Poland and Ukraine is their multidisciplinary nature. Scholars assume that lingua-cultural and ethnolinguistic research inherently involve the study of identity, specifically collective ethnical and national identity (Bartmiński, Chlebda 2008: 13–15). We define national identity as a relatively stable system of multilevel mental constructs, varying in complexity and level of abstraction, within individual and collective consciousness. These constructs are formed based on specific types of intersubjective relations and are realized within a certain historical context. National identity, based on symbolic models of perception and interpretation of the universe in individual and collective consciousness, ensures the rational and irrational identification of a person with a definite national society and catalyzes the formation of integrational and differentiating features that distinguish one nation from another (Romanyshyn 2021: 47).

From the perspectives of lingua-cultural studies, the variegated and multifaceted facts of national language and speech serve as conductors in the world of cultural senses, values, norms, stereotypes and ideals reflecting all aspects of social existence. An all-encompassing entity that reflects culturally significant information is known as a cultural concept. Cultural concepts are the fundamental building blocks of an individual’s mental picture of the world internalized through socializing and cultural immersion. Comprehension of cultural concept from lingua-cultural perspective foregrounds the national characteristics of cognizing. Values, ethnically specific norms, strategies, archetypes play a crucial role in the process of concept’s content dynamics. Thus, cultural concept is a meaningful unit of cultural space, a mediator between a human being and the world (Bartmiński 2018; Bartmiński, Chlebda 2013; Holubovska 2004; Romanyshyn 2021: 34), which is created by beliefs, knowledge, moral norms, and customs. Consequently, it can be assumed, that the concept opens the way to understanding the principles of the cultural system of a certain people, nation, their identity. Scholars claim that it to study the national

system of cultural concepts in all its unity and integrity is practically unachievable task. However, the reconstruction of some selected, basic, socially important concepts by analyzing verbal and cognitive mechanisms of their functioning in language and speech provides the objective ground for conclusions concerning the national worldview and identity (Abramowicz, Bartmiński, Chlebda 2011).

One of the concepts that manifest the Ukrainian national identity is the concept of "volia" (воля). Defining the significance of the concept "wolność" / freedom for Polish culture, Jerzy Bartmiński once stated:

Wolność jest zaliczana do polskich „słów kluczy” (Wierzbicka), słów „sztandarowych” (Pisarek), „symbolikolektywnych” (Fleischer), jest więc czymś więcej niż tylko zwykłym słowem wyposażonym w znaczenie, czymś więcej niż pojęciem odnoszącym się do relacji społecznych. Jest konceptem kulturowym, czyli słowem-pojęciem o bogatych konotacjach poznawczych i emocjonalnych. Uchwycenie pełnego sensu tego rodzaju – niezwykle złożonego, wieloaspektowego – konceptu wymaga wyjścia poza wąskie ramy językowskostrukturalne i nawet poza ramy analizy pojęciowej, wymaga odniesienia do tła światopoglądowego, do historii myśli i do świata idei, więc uwzględnienia rozległego kontekstu historycznego, społecznego i kulturowego. (Cf. Tarsa Mokijenko 2021 : 16)

He further developed these ideas in a volume devoted to the concept "wolność":

Jest hasłem „sztandarowym”, spowitym nimbem heroicznej walki o jego urzeczywistnienie, wartościowanym równie wysoko jak GODNOŚĆ, OJCZYŻNA, NIEPODLEGŁOŚĆ (Abramowicz, Bartmiński 2019: 15) ... WOLNOŚĆ to jedno z najbardziej fundamentalnych pojęć dla funkcjonowania jednostek i społeczeństw w każdej sferze ludzkiej egzystencji, istotne tak w wymiarze indywidualnym, jak i kolektywnym. (Cf. Tarsa Mokijenko 2021 : 16)

The same words apply to the Ukrainian concept of "volia" / воля, which has acquired the status of a determining factor in the culture and consciousness of Ukrainians. This fact has inspired active interest in the concept of "volia" among Ukrainian academics, where it has become an object of psychological, sociological, anthropological, literary, and cultural studies (Holubovska 2004; Kolesnyk 2019; Kosmeda 2010; Vasylenko, Semenishyn 2016; Malenko 2010; Potsiurko 2012; Yatskevych 2009; Betsenko 2017). Ukrainian linguists focus their attention on semantic content of the concept, claiming that historical and political circumstances that defined the existence of the Ukrainian ethnic group shaped the content of the concept, which transcends the meaning of its correlates in other languages (freedom, will, liberty, wolność).

The concept of "volia" has been compared with other related concepts – freedom and slavery / captivity (Vasylenko, Semenishyn 2016; Kononenko 2004), spatial concepts "steppe" and "field" (Mokienko 2004). O.Kolesnyk (2019), analyzing the texts of national anthems, provides some insights into the etymology of the concept and reconstructs its cultural senses in different languages. "Will" and "freedom" as synonymic variants of the concept of "volia" have been scrutinized from the perspective of political and legal discourses (Pysmenna 2022). "Leksykon aksjologiczny Słowian i ich sąsiadów," edited by J. Bartmiński (Bartmiński 2019), and co-authored by a galaxy of Polish scholars, offers a multidimensional analysis of the concept of "wolność" within the field of European linguistic and cultural studies.

Despite the numerous studies on the selected concept, certain aspects of the conceptualization process remain unexplained, as cultural concepts are dynamic entities subject to changes in the socio-political and historical context of national life. Crucial historical moments for Ukrainian society cause

shifts in social discursive patterns and, consequently, in the ways concepts are actualized in national communication and language in general. This results in significant cognitive-conceptual displacements and repositioning of the constituents of the conceptual model in its dynamics. Moreover, the emergence of new tools and principles of conceptual analysis, including the integration of linguistic, mathematical, and corpus-based methods, enhances the objectivity of conceptual studies. This allows scholars to utilize extensive linguistic resources and consider language material from different historical periods. Corpus analysis enables the clarification of results and conclusions from previous studies of the concept of “volia” in the Ukrainian language, as well as the undertaking of new, more systematic studies with a greater quantity and quality of empirical material.

The General Regionally Annotated Corpus of the Ukrainian Language (GRAC) was selected as the empirical basis for our research. As the largest publicly available reference corpus of the Ukrainian language, GRAC is a valuable resource for analyzing language dynamics. The latest version, GRAC 16, contains 1.875 billion tokens, including two large collections of media texts (600 million tokens) and 190 million tokens from the Polish automated web corpus of the Ukrainian language (IPI PAN). GRAC serves as a universal philological tool, comparable to other national corpora such as the British National Corpus, the Czech National Corpus, the National Corpus of the Polish language, and the German language reference corpora DWDS and DeReKo.

Thus, the aim of this paper is to perform a corpus-based research of the concept of “volia” in modern Ukrainian language focusing on dynamic transformations of its content in the context of social, political and historical transformation of Ukrainian society in 20th–21st centuries. Therefore, for the purpose of the research, in GRAC-16 version several subcorpora have been created on chronological principle: the subcorpus 1900–1990 (which volume is 297243612 tokens), the subcorpus 1991–2021 (1253817342 tokens) and 2022 (258461822 tokens). The latter subcorpus includes, among others, the texts representing the war discourse of the full-scaled Russian aggression against Ukraine.

Methodology of the Research

According to Batminski's principles of conceptual analysis, the description of concept's content draws on three types of data. The first type of data is obtained from systemic sources, such as dictionary definitions and concept's etymology analysis, the second one is generated from survey of native speakers (in the form of a questionnaire or psycholinguistic experiment), the third – from the texts of national corpora or contemporary media discourse representing different political and ideological views. Bartminski also highlights that the value of language corpora for ethnolinguistic research is undeniable. However, it requires not only identifying the different types of corpora and the kinds of information each contains but also developing methods for extracting and interpreting this information. This involves not only recognizing the corpus types but also creating effective strategies for “decoding” and analyzing the data obtained and algorithm of actions clearly cut for the intended purposes (Bartminski, Chlebda 2008: 17–20).

Frequency of concept's verbalizers and synonyms, their distribution and combinability in the corpus constitute the quantitative information that can be analyzed diachronically and synchronically. The quantitative indicators are translated into qualitative data that testifies to the dynamics of language

processes. E. Lassan claims that the density of concept’s verbalizers reflects the importance of the concept for a certain linguistic culture in a certain period. The ways concept’s verbalizers combine with their attributes and objects reveals the processes of concept’s metaphorization and sheds light on the role of the concept in speaker’s picture of the world. The interpretation of quantitative data considers whether the names of the concept, its synonyms or antonyms prevail in the titles of articles, books, poems, nominations of ships, clubs, cafes, *etc.* (Lassan 2002). Levchenko (2016) suggests interpreting the frequency with which the name of the analyzed concept appears in associative reactions of native speakers, since the evaluation of “naïve” definitions of the concept (“volia” is ...) provided by the native speakers is essential for conclusions concerning the nature of conceptualization.

In this research the interpretation of quantitative corpus data is supplied by the study of concept’s verbalizers semantics, their combinability and their semantic distance, which enhances the principles of concept’s content modelling. We also examine the attributes (in the broad sense of the term) of the concept verbalizer and their objects to trace the peculiarities of concept’s metaphorization.

Results and Discussion

The first part of the analysis involved interpretation of concept’s name (lemma volia / “воля”) frequency in the created subcorpora.

Table 1. Frequency of lemma “воля” in GRAC 16 Chronological Subcorpora

Time period	Volume of the corpus (number of tokens)	Frequency of lemma “воля” %
1900–1990	297 243 612	15.849
1991–2021	1 253 817 342	66.852
2022 (war time)	258 461 822	13.781

Absolute frequency of lemma volia / “воля” (table 2) indicates that the use of the concept in the first year of war (2022) four times exceeds its possible usage per year during the previous 30 years of Ukrainian independence, and forty times its possible usage per year during the period 1900–1990. This indicates that the topicality of the concept has increased and the concept gained prominent positions in social communicative practices and in national collective consciousness under the current conditions.

Table 2. Absolute Frequency of lemma volia / “воля” in Chronological Subcorpora

	1900–1990	1991–2021	2022
воля / “volia”	60 649	201 134	27 441

The data revealed the correlation between the concept’s frequency and context. Context also influences the emergence of specific concept’s senses in different periods. Thus, for all defined periods, the most typical contexts of concept usage are legal / criminal and political (see table 3). It is also worth mentioning that during 1900–1990 “volia” as a political category of national freedom, liberty and will is used in the

texts published abroad or belonging to diaspora authors. The occurrences of concept of “volia” as political category in Ukrainian domestic media and political discourse dates to 1989. The first year of full-scaled Russian aggression against Ukraine (2022), quite predictably, witnessed the emergence of a new contexts of concept realization; military, diplomatic and moral. This is manifested in the increase of collocations: доброї волі / good will (посол доброї волі) / ambassador of a good will (Log Dice – 11.15); воля до перемоги / will to victory (Log Dice – 6,56); до боротьби / to struggle (Log Dice – 7.12); зламати волю / to break the will (Log Dice – 7.29). In the previous periods, for example, the collocations воля до перемоги / will to victory, до боротьби / to struggle are more frequent in the contexts related to history or politics. The comparative analysis of Log Dice indicators is shown in the table 4.

Table 4. Comparative Analysis of Log Dice Indicators for Collocations воля до перемоги / will to victory and до боротьби / to struggle

	1900–1990	1991–2021	2022
воля до боротьби / will to struggle	5.59	6.88	7.12
воля до перемоги / will to victory	6.0	6.01	6.56

Comparison:

2022

1. І сама бригада, і цей підрозділ вже мають славетну історію **боротьби** за **волю** України і світу. (2) У них є, вони це продемонстрували, дуже сильну **волю** до **боротьби** та бажання продовжувати захищати позиції (E_MEDIA онлайн-ЗМІ).¹

1900–1990

1. Сьогодні справляємо похорони другій жертві нашої **боротьби за Волю** (Гренджа-Донський В. С. Щастя і горе Карпатської України: Щоденник. Мої спогади). (2) Характеризуючи покоління українофілів, Микола Міхновський у своїй праці «Самостійна Україна» писав: «Коли Шевченко своєю смертю освятив шлях **боротьби за волю** політичну, національну і економічну українського народу, то поблизькі до нього покоління з т. зв. українофільського табору на своєму прапорі виписали «робім так, щоби ніхто ніде не бачив нашої роботи» (Петро Голубенко. Самостійна Україна).²

1991–2021

1. Також він наголосив, що володіє залізними нервами і залізною **волею до перемоги**, тому не має наміру реагувати на будь-які емоційні заяви з боку партнерів, а планує в

1 (1) Both the brigade itself and this unit already have a glorious history of fighting for the freedom of Ukraine and the world. (2) They have, they have demonstrated, a very strong will to fight and a desire to continue defending positions (E_MEDIA online media). Unless otherwise indicated translations are those of the authors.

2 (1) Today we are holding a funeral for the second victim of our struggle for Freedom (Grenja-Donsky V.S. Happiness and grief of Carpathian Ukraine: Diary. My memories). (2) Characterizing the generation of Ukrainophiles, Mykola Mikhnovsky in his work “Independent Ukraine” wrote: “When Shevchenko with his death sanctified the path of struggle for the political, national and economic freedom of the Ukrainian people, the generations close to him from the so-called Ukrainophile camp wrote on their flag “we are doing it so that no one sees our work anywhere” (Petro Golubenko. Independent Ukraine).

останній тиждень зосередитися на мобілізації виборців і боротьбі за максимальний результат (E_MEDIAonline-ЗМІ). (2) Ми стали сильною нацією і ми повинні тут, в тому числі і в парламенті продемонструвати єдність, продемонструвати нашу **спільну волю до перемоги**, продемонструвати нашу відповідальність перед країною і майбутнім і тоді перемога буде за нами, а вона буде за нами (Стенограми засідань Верховної Ради України)³

The next stage of the research involved establishing the list of concept's synonymic verbalizers, their absolute and relative frequency in the corpus. This enables us to make conclusions concerning the distribution of concept's verbalizers, to indicate the density of concept's nominations, the dynamics of their “behaviour” displayed as their rating position in chronological corpora. These algorithms disclose certain shifts of concept's content and the tendencies of its foregrounding in the consciousness of native speakers, specific aspects of its comprehension under the influence of historic context.

Based on the dictionaries of synonyms, a list of verbalizers of “volia” concept has been compiled:

бажання / *will, desire*, благодать / *grace, benevolence*, визволення / *liberation*, вимога / *request, demand*, вільність / *ease*, влада / *power*, готовність / *readiness*, довілля, дозвілля / *leisure*, жадання / *craving*, звільнення / *emancipation*, лахва / *respite*, наказ / *order*, наполегливість / *persistence*, настрій / *mood*, невимушеність / *effortlessness*, незалежність / *independence*, обода / *possession*, обшир / *space, vastness*, охота / *lust*, побажання / *wish*, пожадання / *passion, craving*, привілля / *privilege*, призвілля / *free will*, простір / *expanse*, простора / *latitude*, просторище, просторинь, просторість / *vast unlimited space*, прохання / *request, plea*, рішучість / *determination*, роздоля / *vastness or free life*, розкріпачення / *enslavery*, розліг, розлоги, розложисько / *boundless space*, розмах / *scope*, самовлада, самовладання / *self-control*, самостійність / *self-reliance*, свобода / *freedom*, суверенітет / *sovereignty*, схотінка, хіть, хотіння, / *lust*, увілля / *relief, release*, among which, alongside with the literary language units, there are stylistically loaded ones (slang and dialectal units). However, not all these synonymic variants are represented in the GRAG 16 version.

Analyzing the diachronic aspect of concept of “volia”, O. Yatskevich defined three constant semantic zones in the concept profile: “desire / will”, “power, strength”, and “freedom / liberty” (Yatskevich, 2009:7). Instead, the considered lexicographic material testifies to the presence of other profiles of the concept, which are related to spatial representations, psychological states of the subject (readiness, determination, self-control and the enjoyment of feeling free, living without constraints, indulgence). Thus, the synonymic verbalizers of the concepts are represented by the following groups:

1. **“volia” / freedom:** the right and ability to act at one's discretion, power; the right and opportunity to act, free will, lack of limitations; privilege, absence of any restrictions, free life; complete freedom of action; freedom of life, existence, *etc.* independence; the ability to behave at your own discretion;

3 (1) He also emphasized that he has iron nerves and an iron will to win, so he does not intend to respond to any emotional statements of his partners, but plans to focus on mobilizing voters and fighting for the maximum result in the last week (E_MEDIAonline). (2) We have become a strong nation and here, in the parliament as well, we must, demonstrate unity, demonstrate our common will to victory, demonstrate our responsibility for the country and the future, and then the victory will be ours, and it will be ours (Transcripts of the meetings of Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine)

2. **“volia” / independence / liberty:** freedom, the absence of political and economic oppression; the absence of political, social, and economic dependence; the absence of oppression and restrictions in the social and political life of society;
3. **“volia” / self-control / persistence; determination;**
4. **“volia” / wish; desire; demand;**
5. **“volia” / liberation / emancipation;**
6. **“volia” / space / expanse / vastness boundlessness, limitlessness.**

The synonyms of the concept are unevenly distributed in the created subcorpora (the table 5 represents the frequency of some selected synonyms). Synonyms with the highest frequency are will/wish, liberation, power, liberty / freedom, order, sovereignty, independence, readiness, determination. Their absolute frequency in 2022 exceeds the per year frequency of a certain word during the previous periods [1991–2021, the 30 years of Ukrainian independence]) from 4 to 11 times relatively. It means that the formation of the concept’s content has not been completed and is in the process of shaping and foregrounding the most relevant conceptual features under the influence of the changing conditions of the national existence (see table 5).

Table 5. The Frequency of Some Selected Synonyms

	1900–1990	1991–2021	2022
бажання / will, desire	29535	130538	24176
визволення / liberation	14043	13184	4615
влада / power	134549	925178	137694
готовність / readiness	8710	66580	23758
звільнення / emancipation	22457	138061	41690
наказ / order	29689	85280	24089
незалежність / independence	22653	167193	36111
рішучість / determination	2764	7948	4747
свобода / freedom	43725	270689	41973
суверенітет / sovereignty	7878	41509	15156

The diagram 1 below visualizes the concept’s synonyms dynamics.

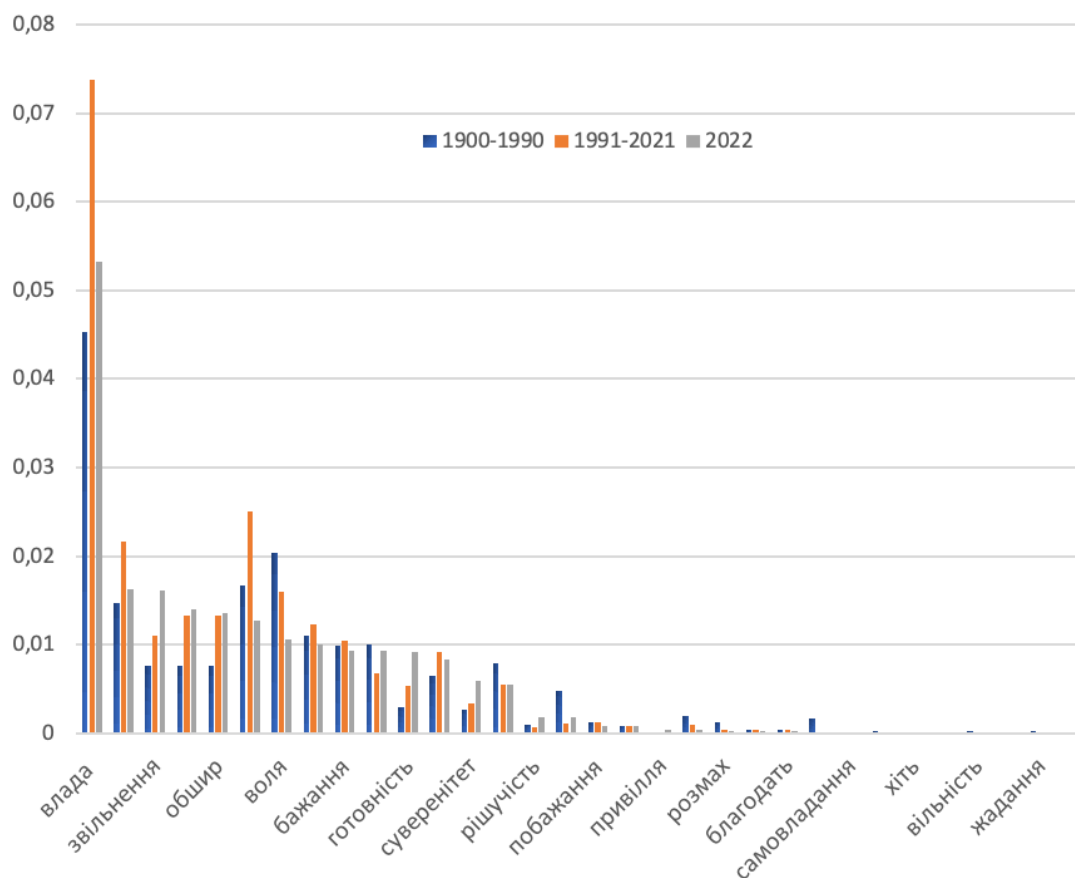


Diagram 1. The Concept's Synonyms Dynamics. Source: authors' own work

However, as the diagram 2 below shows, the general frequency of the main concept verbalizer “volia” / lemma “воля” decreases.

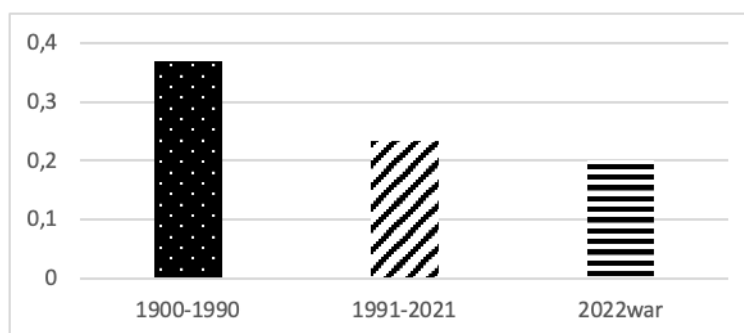


Diagram 2. The General Frequency of the Very Concept Verbalizer “volia” / lemma “воля”. Source: authors' own work

The analysis of relative frequency of the concept's synonyms and calculation of their rating (see table 6 below) allowed tracing the place occupied by each verbalizer in the definite historical period and its topicality for national community. The list of concept's verbalizers that changed (enhanced) their position includes: liberty/ freedom, liberation, independence, order, readiness, sovereignty. It is uniquely specific that the general name of the concept (lemma volia / "воля") shifted to the lower rating position. There is a perceptible decrease in the positions of spatial synonyms of the concept. The rating dynamics of other concept's verbalizers is variable.

Table 6. The Rating of Concept's Synonyms Dynamics

		1900–1990		1991–2021		2022
влада / power	1	0,04526556	1	0,07378890	1	0,053274406
свобода/ freedom	4	0,01471016	3	0,02158919	2	0,016239536
звільнення liberation	11	0,00755508	8	0,01101125	3	0,016130042
незалежність / independence	9	0,00762102	5	0,01333472	4	0,013971503
обшир / vastness	10	0,00762102	6	0,01333472	5	0,013584598
вимога / demand	3	0,01674048	2	0,02501146	6	0,012756623
простір / space	5	0,01104515	7	0,01235379	8	0,010056804
бажання / desire	7	0,00993629	9	0,01041125	9	0,009353799
наказ / order	6	0,00998810	11	0,00680163	10	0,009320139
готовність / readiness	14	0,00293026	12	0,00531018	11	0,009192073
прохання / request	12	0,00645968	10	0,00911879	12	0,008314574
суверенітет / sovereignty	15	0,00265035	14	0,00331061	12	0,005863922
настрій / mood	8	0,00796148	12	0,00550934	14	0,005430976
рішучість / determination	20	0,00092988	19	0,00063390	15	0,001836635
визволення / liberation	12	0,00472441	16	0,00105151	16	0,001785564
побажання / wish. will	19	0,00126899	15	0,00125577	17	0,000865505
дозвілля / leisure	21	0,00076368	18	0,00077531	18	0,000771100
привілля / free time	28	0,00010025	30	0,00002425	19	0,000408571
самостійність / self-reliance	16	0,00194689	17	0,00089447	20	0,000362529
розмах / scope	18	0,00130297	20	0,00045302	21	0,000291339
наполегливість / persistence	23	0,00043365	21	0,00035571	22	0,000266964
благодать / grace	22	0,00045350	22	0,00033625	23	0,000182232
охота / lust	17	0,00169692	23	0,00016868	24	0,000049137
самовладання / self-control	31	0,00007940	27	0,00004474	25	0,000024375
хотіння / craving	25	0,00029033	28	0,00003717	26	0,000017024

		1900–1990		1991–2021		2022
хіть / longing	29	0,00009151	24	0,00006101	27	0,000009286
роздоля / free will	30	0,00008915	32	0,00001651	28	0,000009286
вільність / privilege	26	0,00026006	26	0,00004849	29	0,000007738
невимушеність / easiness	32	0,00005618	29	0,00003222	30	0,000006964
розкріпачення / emancipation	33	0,00005585	31	0,00001834	32	0,000001161
просторість / spaceness	38	0,00000370	35	0,00000247	33	0,000001161

The obtained data disclose the influence of the historic context on the dynamic changes in the content of the concept Volia. The full-scaled russian aggression against Ukraine foregrounded those features of the concept that manifest the changes in collective consciousness, prominence of the basic values of national survival, aspiration for victory. They discloses the features of modern Ukrainian identity as a united modern European nation struggling for: “volia” – свобода (svoboda) / “freedom”; nezalezhnist (independence); executing power / vlad (power); expressing desire, determination / bazhannia (will, desire). The examples below demonstrate the contextual associativeness of “volia” concept’s synonym “svoboda” / freedom with the notions of democracy, Europe, European Union, European community, protection, security, peace and reveal that concept of “volia” is discursively conceptualized as a common value and the foundation of national existence:

1. Уся зброя, якою ви можете допомогти нам, буде використана тільки для захисту нашої свободи вашої свободи.
2. Тільки для захисту тієї свободи та безпеки, якими ви користуєтесь разом з іншими європейцями.
3. Щоб відзначити нашу спільну свободу, наше спільне право на щасливе майбутнє для наших дітей. (Промова Президента України Володимира Зеленського в парламенті Норвегії – Стортингу)
4. Міністр оборони Латвії Артис Пабрікс (і, зізнаюся, мій добрий друг) добре висловив це на нещодавній конференції в Берліні, коли відверто сказав: «Ми готові померти за свободу»
5. Ми не розуміємо, у чому цінність чинного міжнародного порядку, і не в курсі, що успішна атака росіян на сусідні країни ставить під загрозу також нашу свободу, безпеку та процвітання.
6. ...а отже, найвищу цінність— свободу, в Німеччині ці події асоціюють насамперед із максимами «мир» і «стабільність»
7. Вони люто і віддано б'ються за свободу, навіть попри величезну перевагу ворога в кількості.
8. Допомогати Україні—виправдано з політичної й стратегічної точки зору: на карту поставлено нашу свободу й безпеку.
9. Є нації, де цінності усвідомлюються як стрижень ідентичності: «Брити ніколи не будуть рабами», «За вашу і нашу свободу» —там усе простіше.

10. ...прагнучи стандартів свободи та верховенства права Європейського Союзу.
(Український тиждень)⁴

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The next stage of the research involved the analysis of concept's content: the semantics of concept's synonyms were examined and the semantic distance between the verbalizers of the concept of "volia" was calculated using their definitions in the explanatory dictionary of modern Ukrainian (SUM-11). The semantic distance based on dictionary definitions is determined according to the following formula:

$$K = 1 - c / m + n - c,$$

where C represents the quantity of common semantic components (the number of components that diverge); m and n represent the number of semantic components in the dictionary definition of each word (Levytslii 2006: 128). A value of 0 means that these words do not have similar contexts and their meanings are not related to each other. A value of 1 indicates full identity of contexts and, consequently, the proximity of meaning. In practice, values above 0 are considered grounds for conclusions. By applying the aforementioned formula, we obtained data concerning the common semantic components in the definitions of the verbalizers of the concept of "volia" and the semantic distance between these verbalizers. The list of verbalizers and the indicators of their semantic relations are given in order of increasing semantic distance:

влада / power (0,315789), **вільність** / liberty (0,282051), **свобода** / freedom (0,194175), **самостійність** / self-determination (0,192771), **роздоля** / free life (0,133333), **незалежність** / independence (0,121212), **привілля** / privilege, frivolity (free from restrictions or obligations) (0,103448), **суверенітет** / sovereignty (0,101695), **наказ** / order (0,1), **хіть** / lust (0,098361), **звільнення** / liberation (0,097087), **рішучість** / determination (0,086957), **визволення** / emancipation (0,084507), **просторище** / vastness (0,081081), **побажання** / wish (0,072727), **охота** / craving (0,071429), **дозвілля** / leisure (0,070175), **розкріпачення** / release from serfdom (0,066667), **вимога** / demand (0,0625), **простір** / space (0,055556), **обшир** / unlimited space (0,054054), **просторість** / unboundlessness (0,05), **хотіння** / desirability (0,037736), **настрій** / mood (0,033898), **облада** / possession (0,032258), **просторінь** / vast unlimited space (0,029412), **готовність** / readiness (0,025641), **розмах** / scope (0,021739).

-
- 4
1. All weapons with which you can help us will be used only to defend our freedom and your freedom.
 2. Only to protect the freedom and security you enjoy, we all enjoy with other Europeans.
 3. To celebrate our shared freedom, our shared right to a happy future for our children. (Speech of the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyi in the Parliament of Norway - Storting)
 4. Latvian Defense Minister Artis Pabriks (and, admittedly, a good friend of mine) put it well at a recent conference in Berlin when he bluntly said, "We are ready to die for freedom"
 5. We do not understand the value of the current international order and are not aware that a successful Russian attack on neighboring countries also endangers our freedom, security and prosperity.
 6. ...and therefore, the highest value - the freedom, in Germany these events are primarily associated with "peace" and "stability" as the values.
 7. They fiercely and loyally fight for freedom, even in spite of the huge superiority of the enemy in numbers.
 8. Helping Ukraine is justified from a political and strategic point of view: our freedom and security are at stake.
 9. There are nations where values of freedom are perceived as the core of identity: "Britains will never be slaves", "For your freedom and ours" - everything is simpler there.
 10. ...pursuing the standards of freedom and rule of law of the European Union (Ukrainian week).

Power, liberty, freedom, and independence are the closest synonyms in terms of their semantic components proximity. On the other hand, no shared semantic components were found in the definitions of synonyms *grace/benevolence, desire, frivolity, persistence, determination, request, complacency, self-control, and wish*.

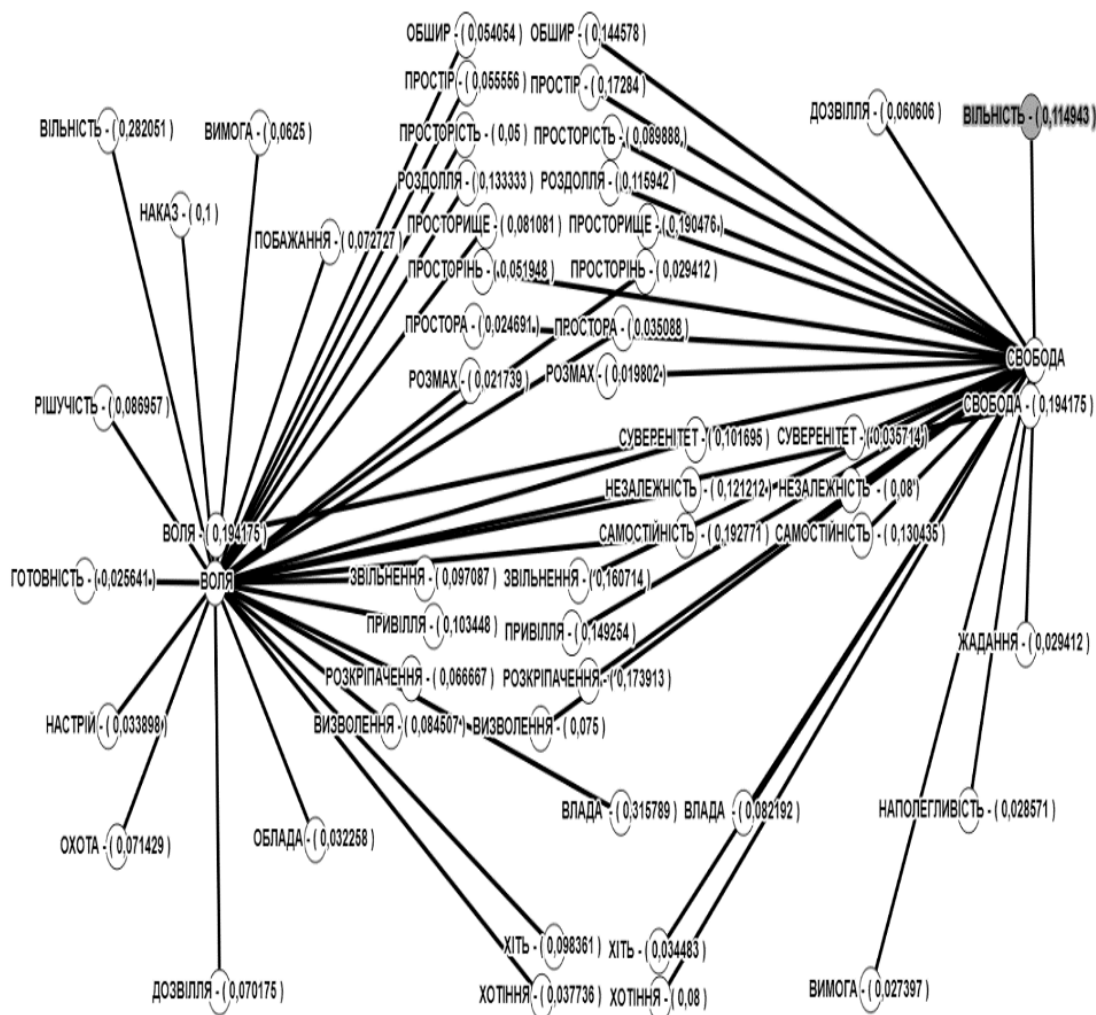
The verbalizer “svoboda” / “freedom” displays the following indicators of its semantic distance with other analyzed synonymous:

воля / “volia” in the of liberty (0,194175), просторище / vastness (0,190476), розкріпачення / emancipation, revealing from serfdom (0,173913), простір / space (0,17284), звільнення / liberation (0,160714), привілля / privilege, frivolity (0,149254), обшир / spaceness (0,144578), самостійність / self-determination, self-reliance (0,130435), роздоля / free life (0,115942), вільність / easiness, naturalness (0,114943), просторість / unlimited space (0,089888), влада / power (0,082192), незалежність / independence (0,08), хотіння / wish, lust (0,08), визволення / liberation (0,075), дозвілля / leisure (0,060606), просторінь / unbounded space (0,051948), суверенітет / sovereignty (0,035714), хіть / craving (0,034483), жадання / passion, passionate desire (0,029412), наполегливість / persistence (0,028571), вимога / demand (0,027397), розмах / scope (0,019802). The verbalizer “svoboda” / “freedom” has no common semantic components with наказ / order, рішучість / determination, побажання / wish, охота / lust, настрій / mood, обладда / possession, готовність / determination, благодать / grace, benevolence, бажання / desire, вольність / freedom as privilege, прохання / request, розліг / spacefulness, scope, самовладання / self-control.

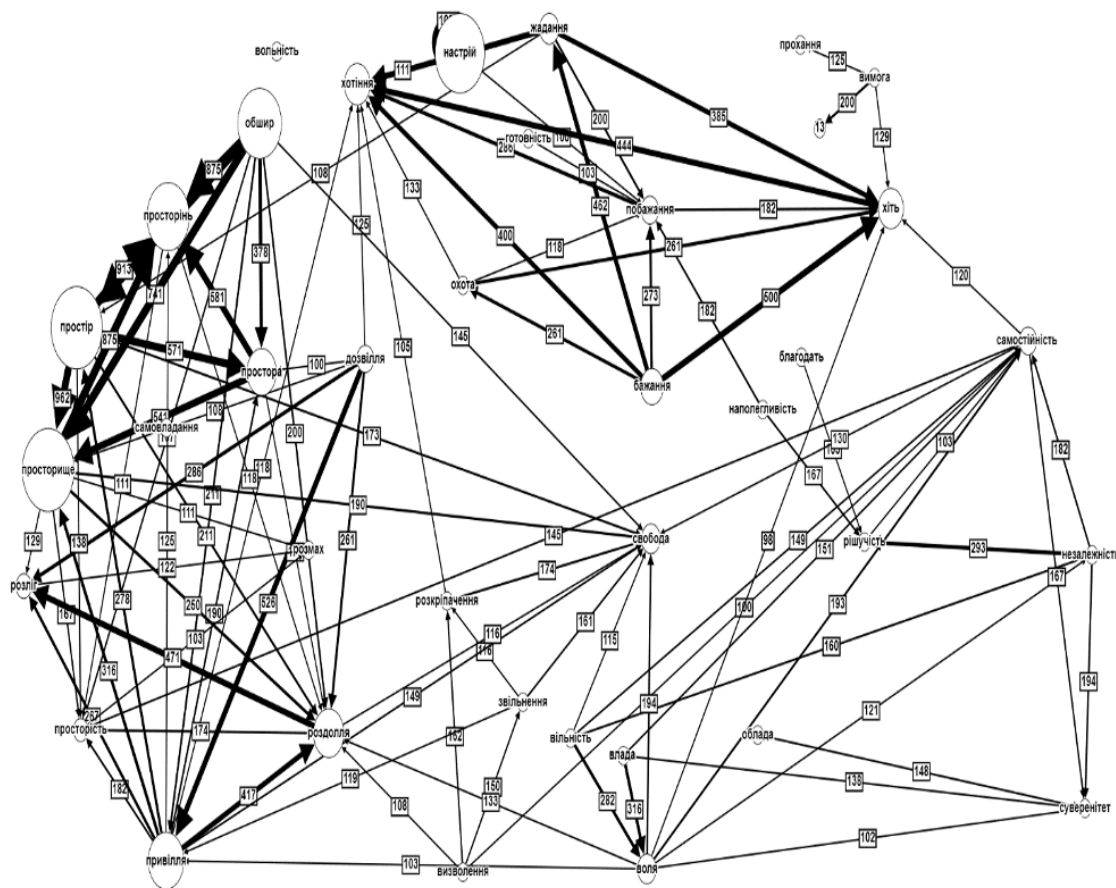
The pictures 1 and 2 below visualize the results of comparative analysis of verbalizers that share common semantic components with the words “volia” – “freedom / liberty” in their definitions.

Thus, the obtained data substantiates that the following verbalizers are the semantically closest to “volia”: *power, easiness (naturalness), freedom, self-reliance, free life (privilege, absence of obligations), independence, sovereignty, order, lust, liberation, determination, liberation (release), space (vastness), wish, willingness, leisure, emancipation, demand, space, extent, spaciousness, craving, mood, openness (open, unlimited space), readiness, scope*. On the other hand, according to lexicographical data analysis, the definitions of the word “volia” and the verbalizers *desire, grace, longing (passion), persistence, request, complacency, and self-control* do not share common semantic components.

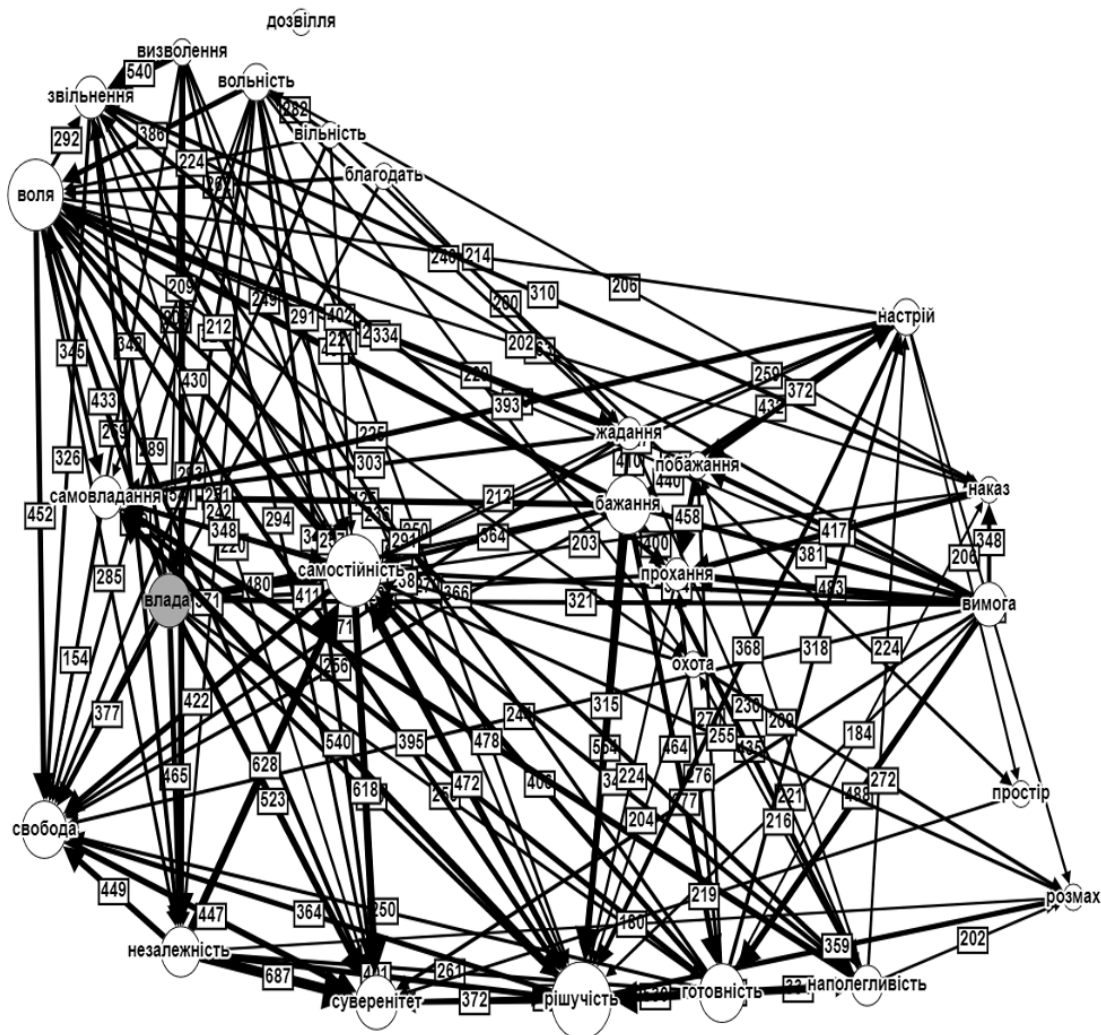
We also supplemented the analysis of the semantic distance between the concept of “volia” verbalizers by calculating their semantic relations in discourse (based on the texts from Wikipedia). The distance between verbalizers was determined using the application Complex information system of scientific research “Automated workplace of a scientific researcher” ([at:] <http://icybcluster.org.ua:34145/word2vec/similar/> [date of access: 15.11.2025]). This algorithm is known as a vector analysis. In distributional semantics, words are usually represented as vectors in the multidimensional space of their contexts. Semantic similarity is calculated as the cosine proximity between vectors of two words and can have values within [-1 ... 1] (in practice, only values above 0 are often taken into consideration). The interpretation of the results, thus, is similar to the previous analysis based on dictionary definitions. It should be noted that only individual verbalizers of the studied concept appear in Wikipedia texts. While Wikipedia cannot be considered a representative source, it does reveal some extent of the semantic similarity of the verbalizers. Picture 3 below visualizes the data of vector analysis.



Picture 1. Semantic Relation between the concept of “volia” Synonymic Verbalizers. Source: authors’ own work



Thus, based on the analysis of Wikipedia texts, the highest semantic proximity is between the word “volia” and the verbalizers *desire, liberty, freedom, power, self-reliance, determination, passion (strong desire)*. By applying both algorithms of semantic analysis we obtained two lists of semantically closest concept’s verbalizers. Both lists contain practically similar words; nevertheless, they differ in the order of the units. In the table 7, which presents correlation of vector and lexicographic analysis, the elements are listed in the descending order of semantic closeness:



Picture 3. Quantitative Data of Vector Analysis of the concept of “volia” Synonymic Verbalizers. Source: authors’ own work

Table 7. Correlation of Vector and Lexicographic Analysis Results

List obtained from Wikipedia texts analysis	List obtained by lexicographic resources analysis
1.бажання / desire	1.влада / power
2.свобода / freedom	2.вільність / ease, naturalness
3.влада / power	3.свобода / freedom
4.самостійність / self-reliance	4.самостійність / self-reliance
5.рішучість / determination	5.роздолья / free life, absence of obligations

List obtained from Wikipedia texts analysis	List obtained by lexicographic resources analysis
6.жадання / passion	6.незалежність / independence
7.вольність / privilege of being free	7.привілля / privilege, release from obligations
8.суверенітет / sovereignty	8.суверенітет / sovereignty
9.наполегливість / determination	9.наказ / order
10.самовладання / self-control	10.хіть / lust
11.звільнення / liberation	11.звільнення / liberation
12.незалежність / independence	12.рішучість / determination
13.благодать / grace, benevolence	13.визволення / liberation, emancipation
14.готовність / readiness	14.просторище / vastness
15.охота / craving	15.побажання / wish
16.вільність / ease, naturalness	16.охота / craving
17.настрій / mood	17.дозвілля / leisure
18.наказ / order	18.вимога / demand
19.побажання / wish	19.простір / space
20.вимога/ demand	20.готовність / readiness
21.визволення / emancipation	
22.прохання / request	
23.простір / space	
24.розмах / scope	
25.дозвілля / leisure	

The comparison of the obtained results substantiates the fact that concept's semantics is of dynamic character influenced by discourse practices and contextual conditions.

At the next stage of the research we aimed to describe the content of the concept of “volia” according to the defined profiles: “volia” – freedom, liberty; “volia” – power; “volia” – will, wish; “volia” – determination, readiness; “volia” – benevolence, grace; “volia” – space. For this purpose, we scrutinize the combinability of the word “volia” / “воля” with its synonyms within the frame of each profile applying the techniques of concordance and list of collocations compilation (as the in-built corpus instrument). The semantics of lexical units (predicates, attributes, objects) with which the concept's verbalizers are combined show the specificity of the processes of conceptualization, which in its turn allows identifying the core cognitive features of the concept according to the defined conceptual profiles.

Conceptual profile **“volia – freedom/liberty/liberation.”** The combinability of the words “свобода” / freedom, “незалежність” / independence, “вільність/вольність/воля/звільнення” / liberation, liberty with attributes, verbs, objects, the meanings of which are “development,” “state,” “conditioning,” “absence of limitations, restrictions and obstacles,” “naturalness,” “conventionality” provides for identifying the cognitive feature “condition and state”: умовний / conditional, безумовний / unconditional, general, limited/unlimited, international, national, human freedom, liberty, etc.).

Respectively, the combinations of the above mentioned synonyms with attributes, verbs, objects of the general semantics “lawfulness,” “regulations,” “power,” etc. provides for identifying the cognitive feature “ability to achieve, grant, get freedom.” These combinations delineate interpretation of freedom as

privilege granted to the subject by the power or obtained as a lawful act (an individual / state / society / social / civil / minority / academic freedom, liberty, *etc.*). Other cognitive features of *volia* identified in “*volia – freedom/liberty/liberation*” profile are:

- actionality (general semantics of collocates: to get, to struggle for freedom, protect freedom; to act, to grant, to win back, to achieve, to choose; determination, readiness, intention *etc.*);
- forms of expression and intensity (general semantics of collocates: to express, to declare, to testify; fullness, completeness, all-embracing character, *etc.*).

For example:

1. Нагадаємо, Нобелівську премію миру в 2021 році було присуджено спільно Марії Рессе та Дмитру Муратову “ за їхні зусилля щодо захисту свободи вираження думок, які є передумовою демократії та міцного світу “ [Онлайн-ЗМІ «Апостроф»]
2. Але, в той самий час, ми розраховуємо на адекватну допомогу від світової спільноти демократичних країн захистити демократію, захистити свободу, захистити Україну [Онлайн-ЗМІ «Житомир.info»]
3. Ви взяли до рук зброю, щоб захистити свободу і рідних [Онлайн-ЗМІ «24 канал»]
4. Адже свобода – це не стан за замовчуванням [Онлайн-ЗМІ «24 канал»]
5. Світ має пам’ятати, що Україна бореться за свободу, і що ця боротьба повинна завершитися перемогою якнайшвидше [Онлайн-ЗМІ «Interfax-Україна»]
6. З моменту окупації навесні 2014 року — тобто вже вісім років — мешканці окупованого Донбасу позбавлені елементарних громадянських прав і свобод [Інтернет-журнал «Український тиждень»]
7. Кирило-Мефодіївське братство ставило за мету ліквідацію кріпосного права, знищення самодержавства, станів, дворянських привілеїв, забезпечення громадянських свобод [Інтернет-журнал «Український тиждень»]
8. Законодавці висловлюють стурбованість з приводу довгого списку основних прав, які, на їхню думку, перебувають під загрозою, включаючи виборчу систему, незалежність судової влади, недоторканність приватного життя, свободу вираження думок, плюралізм ЗМІ, академічну свободу, права ЛГБТК та захист меншин та прохачів притулку [Онлайн-ЗМІ «УНН»]⁵.

5 1. As a reminder, the Nobel Peace Prize in 2021 was awarded jointly to Maria Resse and Dmytro Muratov “for their efforts to protect freedom of expression, which is a prerequisite for democracy and a strong world” [Apostrophe Online Media]
 2. But, at the same time, we rely on an adequate help from the world community of democratic countries to protect democracy, protect freedom, and protect Ukraine [Zhytomyr.info Online Media]
 3. You took up arms to protect freedom and loved ones [online media “Channel 24”]
 4. After all, freedom is not a default state [24 Kanal Online Media]
 5. The world must remember that Ukraine is fighting for freedom, and that this struggle must end with victory as soon as possible [Interfax-Ukraine Online Media]
 6. Since the occupation in the spring of 2014 – *i.e.* for eight years – residents of the occupied Donbas have been deprived of basic civil rights and freedoms [Internet magazine “Ukrainian Week”]
 7. The Cyril-Methodiev brotherhood aimed at the elimination of serfdom, the destruction of autocracy, estates, noble privileges, and the provision of civil liberties [Internet magazine “Ukrainian Week”]

The same algorithm of analysis has been applied to identify the core cognitive features of all conceptual profiles: the semantics of attributes, verbs, objects have been summarized and generalized. The core cognitive features of the concept of “volia” in each profile were identified by defining common semantic components of lexical elements that enframe a certain verbalizer in the context. The cognitive features are listed in descending order according to the frequency and variety of combinations with specific collocates.

The identified cognitive features of the concept of “volia” – conceptual profile “*volia*” – *power*” are the following:

- regulation, governing force, subjectivity / objectivity (general semantics of collocates: the state, power, strength, state body, regulation, lawfulness, legal, right, order; state – individual, state – society relations; sovereignty);
- actionality, privilege (general semantics of collocates: to get, to grant, to authorize, to obtain, to inspire, to desire);
- state and conditions (general semantics of collocates: naturalness, abilities, consciousness, conscious, intentional, thought, idea, psyche);
- forms of expression (general semantics of collocates: official – unofficial, order, regulation, principle).

The identified cognitive features of the concept of “volia” – conceptual profile “*volia*” – *will / wish, desire*” are the following:

- fulfillment (general semantics of collocates: determination, encouragement, intention, aspirations, aim; thoughts, personal, intervention enticement);
- regulation (general semantics of collocates: to govern, to manage, to dispose of, to order);
- forms of expression (general semantics of collocates: to express, to address, to direct; personal / official);
- intensity (general semantics of collocates: passionate, desire for freedom, intemperance, passion).

The identified cognitive features of the conceptual profile “*volia*” – *determination, readiness*” are the following:

- state and conditions, with reference to the subject / a human being (general semantics of collocates: endurance, composure, confidence);
- forms of expression or experiencing (general semantics of collocates: to express, to dispose, to display);
- intensity (general semantics of collocates: categorical, passionate, unviable, excited, energetic, strong, stable);
- actionality (general semantics of collocates: deed, action, thought, aim, movement, development, achievement).

The identified cognitive features of the conceptual profile “*volia*” – *benevolence, grace*” are the following:

- state and conditions (general semantics of collocates: richness, gift, welfare, goodness, calmness, happiness, generosity, mood, luck, fullness of being, naturalness, ease, unconditionality);

8. Legislators express concern about a long list of fundamental rights that they believe are at risk, including the electoral system, the independence of the judiciary, privacy, freedom [liberty] expression of opinions, media pluralism, academic freedom, LGBTQ rights and protection of minorities and asylum seekers [UNN Online Media]

- actionality (general semantics of collocates: experiencing, desire, enjoyment, involvement, passion, rest, leisure, release, indulgence).

The identified cognitive features of the conceptual profile “*volia*” – *space*” are the following:

- mode of representation (general semantics of collocates: unrestricted movement, flying, objective in relation to the subject of experience, unprotected, unrestricted, unlimited, direction, amplification, expansion, openness, scope, distance, naturalness, wilderness);
- size, dimension (general semantics of collocates: vastness, greatness, wideness, length, 2dimention, 3dimention);
- material representation (general semantics of collocates: land, earth, surface, territory, fullness, emptiness, flatness)
- development (general semantics of collocates: changes, movement).

It is worth mentioning, that the content of the concept of “*volia*” in “*volia*” – *benevolence, grace*” and “*volia*” – *freedom, liberty, liberation*” profiles reveals some common features with “*volia*” – *space*” conceptual profile. These features include limitlessness and absence of obstacles, since the subject experiencing the freedom as benevolence or grace exists in the space or is transferred to the space devoid of limitations and constrains. The analysis of combinability disclosed that the action of liberation manifests strong connections with the idea of changing the spatial parameters of the subject’s conditions and state.

1. ... славне козацтво боронило Україну від ворога й братів своїх визволяло — з неволі, з кайданів, з тюрми ... (Андрій Чайковський. Сагайдачний)
2. Черкаські депутати рушили у Київ визволяти Тимошенко із «застінків Генпрокуратури» (MEDIAонлайн-ЗМІ)⁶

The existence of common conceptual feature or their absence in verbalizers belonging to different conceptual profiles disposes content closeness or distance between these conceptual profiles. These common features of the conceptual content lay the foundation for the metaphorization of the concept, which will be discussed later.

At the next stage of the research, we analyzed verbal and attributive combinations Verb + “*volia*” / “*воля*”: *дати / дарувати волю* – give/grant the freedom, *позбавити волі* – take the freedom; *зламати волю* – break the will; *виборювати волю* – fight for freedom, etc. and Adj. + “*volia*” / “*воля*”: *сильна воля* – strong will, *залізна воля* – the iron will, etc. The obtained results also shed light on the peculiarities of conceptualization, the foregrounding of certain cognitive features or a set of features in concept’s content, their dynamic changes in historical contexts. It allowed to establish models of the concept of “*volia*” metaphorization. The presented indicators demonstrate the usage of a combination per one million of tokens in the corpus.

Table 8. Verb + “*volia*” / *воля* combinations

Verb	1900 – 1990	1991 – 2021	2022
позбавити/позбавляти / to deprive	0,10877	0,5945	0,14769

⁶ 1. ... the glorious Cossacks defended Ukraine from the enemy and freed their brothers - from captivity, from chains, from prison ... (Andrii Tchaikovsky. Sahaidachny).
2. Cherkasy deputies marched to Kyiv to free Tymoshenko from “the cells of the Prosecutor General’s Office” (MEDIAonline).

Verb	1900 – 1990	1991 – 2021	2022
давати/дат / to give	0,31512	0,56518	0,06399
мати / to have	0,07517	0,15196	0,03039
втратити/втрачати / to lose	0,016	0,03466	0,00747
обмінювати / to exchange	0	0	0,00693
прагнути / to strive for, to aspire	0,02506	0,3146	0,00267
здобувати/здобути / to get	0,05385	0,07999	0,00106

The figures obtained substantiate the influence of the historical context on the topicality of certain aspects of metaphoric conceptualization. The relative high frequency of combinations *здобути волю* / to get, to struggle for freedom (1991–2021), *мати волю* / to have the freedom, *дати/давати волю* / to give the freedom (1991–2021) reflect the formation of the evaluative component of the metaphor “freedom is a value.” The considerable increase in frequency of combination *позбавити/позбавляти волі* / to deprive somebody of freedom (1900–1990) and (2022) in comparison to the time period of Ukrainian independence (1990–2021) demonstrates that the evaluative component of the metaphor becomes more pronounced in historical contexts of totalitarian regimes and the current war. Thus, these metaphors accentuate that “the subject (the possessor) of the freedom can be deprived of it by force” or “the valuable object is under the threat of being taken by the force.”

“Volia” as power is conceptualized by the metaphoric models

“the will is a power, force, instrument, power of God, will of God, fate”: *прийняти, поважати, виражати, демонструвати волю* / to accept, to respect, to express, to demonstrate the power, *підкорятися волі, коритися волі* / to obey to the power, *вволити* / accomplish, fulfil, *творити волю* / execute power;

metaphoric model “the will / power is a text”: *диктувати волю* / to dictate the will / to exert the power.

“Volia” as power is ascribed the attributes describing intensity of power execution (*непохитна* / steadfast, *сильна* / strong, *могутня* / omnipotent, *жорстка* / tough) or naming the subject / possessor of power (*народна воля* / power of people, *суверенна* / sovereign, *українська* / Ukrainian, *політична воля* / political power). The frequency of these attributive combinations also indicates the topicality of the concept features in the definite periods. A deeper contextual and semantic analysis reveal the dependence of concept frequency and density on political and social communicative practices.

Table 9. Adjective + “volia”/воля combinations

Adjective / attribute	1900–1990	1991–2021	2022
суверенна / sovereign	0,01386	0,06131	0,00693
українська / Ukrainian	0,01707	0,02772	0,00853
політична / political	0,55771	0,07379	0,54012
народна / people	0,22021	0,32843	0,01386

Adjective / attribute	1900–1990	1991–2021	2022
національна / national	0,07304	0,06079	0,0048

As the data in table 9 demonstrate, there is a perceptible increase in the frequency of combinations “політична воля” / “political will / power” in the period 1900–1990 and 2022. However, the senses of the concept vary in different contexts. In the period of 1900–1990, the combinations “political will,” “political power” related to the contexts of Ukrainian national liberation; the subject of the political power or will is the whole nation, the people either aspiring to obtain a political power and the right to execute its power and free will or the people aspiring to social and other forms of realization of their political rights. In the period of 1990–2021, the subject of the political will and political power incorporated both the national government, state, political entity and the nation as a whole. These word combinations realize the senses: “ability / disability to act / to make decisions, to be the agents of changes, *etc.*,” however there is a perceptible imbalance in frequency of both groups of subjects. The number of word combinations “народна воля,” “воля народу” / “power of people,” “will of people” is higher, which manifests transformation in social comprehension of volia as power against the background of enhanced people political activity, their political awareness, formation of civil society in this historical period. In the 2022 discourse, the conceptual senses “ability / disability to act / to make decisions, to be the agents of changes also dominate, but we simultaneously observe that the referential meaning of the nominations of the subject of political power and will has extended. It incorporates state, governmental, social, international, transinternational entities (NATO, EU, allies, Europe, *etc.*). All mentioned above impacts the development of the conceptual features “state and conditions,” “regulation,” “actionality,” “subjectivity / objectivity” under the influence of definite historical and political conditions in which Ukrainian nation exists and struggles for freedom.

The concept of “volia” in conceptual profiles “freedom” and “will / determination” is metaphorized by the model “volia is an object influenced / affected by external / destructive force(s),” which also intensifies the evaluative aspect of conceptualization. The identified model of metaphorization actualizes in the verbal word combinations the frequency of which is presented in the table 10 below. The growing frequency of these collocations in the period of Ukrainian independence and during the war indicates the topicality of evaluative metaphoric senses:

Table 10. Verb + “volia” / *воля* combinations

Verb	1900–1990	1991–2021	2022
зламати/зломити/зламувати / to break	0,12315	0,04639	0,11944
підірвати / to disrupt	0	0,00107	0,01653
послабити / to weaken	0,00053	0,00853	0,00906
придушити/придушувати / to suppress	0,00213	0,01653	0,00586

The analysis of attributes ascribed to the concept of “volia” – “will, determination” (see table 11) also makes it possible to define the metaphoric model “volia is the object with specific property” (metal, strong, unbreakable, *etc.*).

Table 11. Adjective + “volia”/воля combinations

Adjective	1900–1990	1991–2021	2022
залізний / iron	0,06345	0,10717	0,01866
сталевий / steel	0,0112	0,02346	0,05652

Other specific variations of the defined model include:

golden	0,00746
hardened steel	0,00213
silicon	0,00107
copper	0,00107
granite	0,00053
diamond	0,00053

All of them (except golden) actualize a stereotypical image of will and determination as a physically strong material, whereas “golden will” – as both strong and valuable substance.

Indiscriminately the concept of “volia” in all its profiles is ascribed the characteristics of size (which supports the statement that the content of the concept of “volia” in all its profiles retains a spatial metaphoric semantic shades):

great	0,02506
large	0,01387
unlimited	0,00746
huge	0,00320
worldwide	0,00320
the greatest	0,00213
short	0,00159
colossal	0,00107
tiny	0,00107
wide	0,00053
all-embracing	0,00053
minimal	0,00053
limitless	0,00053

We have come across some attributes denoting “taste,” arbitrary colour and gender attributes

sweet	0,00107
salty	0,00053
bitter	0,00053

white	0,00053
green	0,00107
red	0,00266
female (1900–1990)	0,0064
female (1990–2021)	0,02239
female (2022)	0

Definitions of volia provided by native speakers reflect the collective perception of the metaphorized phenomenon. Syntactic units “воля – це” / “volia is” (in which the word “volia” / “воля” is used in different lexical meanings) extracted from the corpus embody the following metaphoric models: “volia” is a plant; a natural power / force; emotion / sensation / state (often love), conditions; irrational (emotional) force opposed to reason; transcendental force governing an individual or social relations; a choice; a word; a karma; a key to success; a natural (physical / mental) state / condition. Syntactic units “свобода – це” / “freedom is” incarnate metaphoric senses: freedom is sacred power; eternal motion / advance; choice; motivation, value; diamond; fragile object; a flower that should be cherished; a privilege to serve one’s own nation; a hard work; the act of God; a creation of something new; a warrior, and Ukraine itself.

The concept of “volia” is extensively represented in Ukrainian toponymical nominations. “Volia” functions as a name or a component in compound geographical names. For instance 22 names of villages, especially in Western regions of Ukraine, rivers, national parks contain “volia” as morphological or lexical component (village Galina Volia (1895) situated in Volia river basin that is the tributary of Pripyat (Lists of Ukrainian historic toponyms). The toponyms of this kind are semantic derivatives of the appellative “Volia” (in the meaning “freedom / liberty / liberation”) that foregrounds socio-economic, and geographical senses: “a free settlement; a village inhabited by free people or people exempted from certain obligations.” The village of Shchytynska Volia, Volyn Lake in the Ratniv district of the Volyn region, and the name of the entire region in the northwestern part of Ukraine – Volyn (Luchyk 2014) – are just a few examples. “Slobidka” is a name of a village, founded in 1883 (Marynych 1990. Vol. 3: 531) (Codem district, Odessa region). The toponym is a diminutive form of an Old Russ notion “sloboda” which is a settlement or part of the village inhabited by free people, free settlement” (Melnychuk 2006, vol. 5: 305). In different regions of Ukraine there are about 50 oikonyms with the component “slobidka” and 40 ones with “sloboda” component.

“Slobidska Ukraine” is a historic region, which included the territory of Kharkiv, parts of Sumy, Donetsk, Luhansk region of Ukraine and Kursk, Belgorod, and Voronezh region of Russia. Its main population consisted of Ukrainian peasants and Cossacks who founded “slobodas” there, united in regiments. Thus, the notion “sloboda” was added to the name “Ukraine” to indicate its status and the status of its inhabitants. “Slobozhanshchyna” is a choronym created from the attribute “slobidskiy” with the help of the suffix -schin(a) (Marynych 1990, vl. 3: 201). Attribute “slobozhansky” in relational-spatial function and the collective noun “slobozhany” (“inhabitants of “Slobidska” or “free” Ukraine”) are common notions in Ukrainian language used to refer to Ukrainian citizens of those regions.

The components “sloboda” are frequent featured of west Ukrainian geographic names, for instance the village Sloboda in Kolomiyski district of Ivano-Frankivsk region. Slobodo-Rungur lowland is the

highest part of the confluence of the Prut and Cheremosh rivers in Precarpathia, the southern part of Ivano-Frankiv region. Oronym arose in the result of lexicalization and onymization of the word combination with the basic component “rungur” / “lowlands” (Haborak 2013: 434–435; Marynych 1990, vol. 3: 201).

The considerable presence of geographical names incorporating the component “Volia” (freedom) in Ukrainian indicates a deep-seated element within the national consciousness. This widespread occurrence substantiates the metaphorization of “volia” by illustrating how the concepts of physical space and freedom are intertwined in the collective identity. The unity of these notions highlights the cultural significance of “volia” as both a tangible and symbolic representation of freedom in the Ukrainian ethos.

Conclusions

The concept of “volia” / “воля” holds a significant position in the mentality of the Ukrainian nation and can be regarded as one of the prevailing elements of Ukrainian identity. Corpus-based analysis offers insights into the verbalization of concept “vola” dynamics. Notably, there has been an increase in the frequency of the concept during the period of Russian aggression, which highlights its relevance in social communicative practices and the collective consciousness of the nation under current conditions. Examination of corpora data reveals a correlation between contextual factors and the frequency of the concept of “volia” across different time periods. The most prevalent contexts of concept usage throughout defined periods pertain to legal, criminal, and political domains. However, in 2022, during the Russian aggression against Ukraine, new contexts emerged that relate to military, diplomatic, and moral aspects.

The research entailed compiling a list of synonymous verbalizers for the concept of “volia” and analyzing their frequency and distribution within the corpus. By employing corpus and lexicographical data, the research expands upon previously established conceptual profiles. In addition to the three semantic zones identified in the profiling of the concept, namely “desire/will,” “power/strength,” and “freedom/liberty,” other profiles associated with spatial representations and psychological states of the subject have been defined. These include readiness, determination, self-control, and the enjoyment of feeling free and unconstrained.

The representation of synonyms for the concept of “volia” in the corpus exhibits variation across different time periods. Dominant synonyms include will/wish, liberation, power, freedom, order, sovereignty, independence, readiness, and determination. The absolute frequency of these synonyms in 2022 surpasses their annual frequency over the preceding three decades of Ukrainian independence, indicating an ongoing process of shaping and emphasizing the concept’s most pertinent features in response to changing historical conditions.

The research has identified the position and relevance of each verbalizer within specific historical periods. Notably, verbalizers such as liberty/freedom, liberation, independence, order, readiness, and sovereignty have experienced shifts in their positions, signifying their enhanced value for the national community. Interestingly, the general name of the concept has been assigned a relatively lower rating position, while there is a noticeable decrease in the positions of spatial synonyms.

The analysis of data reveals the impact of historical context on the evolving content of the concept of “volia.” The year 2022, marked by the Russian aggression, accentuated those aspects of the concept that reflect changes in collective consciousness and the reestablishment of national values, emphasizing

the pursuit for freedom (*svoboda*), independence (*nezalezhnist*), exerting power (*vlada*), and expressing determination (*bazhannia*). Contextual associations of the synonym “*svoboda*” with democracy, Europe, European Union, protection, security, and peace illustrate the ongoing process of conceptualizing “*volia*” as a shared value, the foundation of national existence and geopolitical vector of social advancement.

The research also revealed semantic relations between synonymous verbalizers. The content of the concept of “*volia*” was explored through the analysis of its various conceptual profiles, including an examination of the semantic relations between synonymous verbalizers within these profiles. Concordance and collocation analysis facilitated the identification of cognitive features associated with each profile, such as regulation, actionality, subjectivity/objectivity, state and conditions, forms of expression, and intensity. Commonalities were observed among certain profiles. These findings contribute to an understanding of the conceptual content of “*volia*” and lay the groundwork for further discussions on the metaphorical aspects of the concept.

The combinations of the lexeme “*volia*” with verbs and attributes were analyzed to disclose the metaphorical conceptualization and cognitive features of the concept. The frequency of specific combinations and their temporal variations shed light on the influence of historical context. The analysis identified metaphorical models, such as “*volia* as a value, valuable/desired object,” within the conceptual profile “*volia* – freedom.” Additionally, in the conceptual profile “*volia* – power,” metaphoric models like “*volia* as power/force/instrument” and “*volia* as text” were identified. The frequency of certain combinations indicated the relevance and evaluative aspects of metaphorization. The analysis of attributes also contributed to an understanding of the metaphoric models and cognitive features associated with the concept.

By examining syntactic units such as “*volia* is” and “*freedom* is” in the corpus, additional specific metaphoric models were identified for each concept. Metaphors for “*volia*” included a plant, a natural power/force, an emotion/state related to specific conditions, an irrational force opposing reason, a transcendental force governing individuals or social relations, a choice, a word, karma, a key to success, and a natural state/condition. Metaphors for “*freedom*” included sacred power, eternal motion/advance, choice, motivation, value, diamond, fragile object, cherished flower, privilege to serve one’s own nation, hard work, act of God, creation of something new, a warrior, and Ukraine itself. These findings demonstrate the diverse and nuanced ways in which the concepts are metaphorically reflected and experienced by native speakers.

The concept of “*volia*” prominently manifests in Ukrainian toponyms, with numerous villages, rivers, and geographical locations bearing the names or components “*Volya*” and “*Svoboda*.” These toponyms originated from the semantic meaning of “*Volia*” as “*freedom*” and highlight the socio-economic and geographical aspects of human relations and the revitalization of space. The significant number of geographical names containing the component “*Volia*” (freedom) in Ukrainian reflects a profound aspect of the national consciousness. This prevalence underscores the metaphorization of “*volia*” in all its meanings, uniting the notions of physical space and the concept of freedom as a mode of existence and human relation with the space.

Corpus-based research has proven to be an invaluable tool in the study of cultural concepts and national identity across various contexts. This form of analysis facilitates the identification of significant linguistic markers that encapsulate and reinforce cultural values, beliefs, and practices.

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