

## EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPT “COLD WAR” IN ENGLISH POLITICAL DISCOURSE (BASED ON MASS MEDIA MATERIALS)

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*Abstract. The concept of the “Cold War” has traditionally referred to the geopolitical tension between the United States and the Soviet Union in the second half of the twentieth century. However, in modern English political discourse, especially in mass media, this concept has undergone significant transformation. This article examines how the term “Cold War” is used in contemporary media texts and how its meaning has expanded beyond its original historical context. The study finds that the term is frequently used metaphorically to describe new forms of political, economic, technological, and ideological rivalry. The analysis shows that mass media plays a key role in shaping and spreading these new interpretations. The research concludes that the concept of “Cold War” has evolved into a flexible discursive tool in modern political communication.*

**Keywords:** *Cold War, political discourse, mass media, metaphor, semantic change, English language.*

### Introduction

In modern political communication, language plays a crucial role in shaping public perception. Mass media does not simply report events but actively constructs meanings and interpretations. One of the most interesting examples of this process is the evolution of the concept “Cold War.”

Originally, the term referred to a specific historical period marked by ideological confrontation between two superpowers. However, today it is widely used in English-language media to describe various types of global tensions. Journalists and political analysts apply this concept to new geopolitical realities, such as relations between major world powers, technological competition, and economic conflicts.

From a discourse perspective, this shift reflects the dynamic nature of political language. Concepts are not fixed; they change depending on context, communicative goals, and audience expectations. Therefore, studying the evolution of the “Cold War” concept helps to better understand how political discourse functions in the modern media environment.

### Literature Review

Political discourse has been extensively studied in linguistics as a field that reflects social, cultural, and ideological processes. Scholars emphasize that political concepts are not static but constantly reinterpreted in different contexts.

The concept of the “Cold War” has traditionally been analyzed within historical and political frameworks. However, recent studies highlight its discursive nature. Researchers argue that mass media often reuses historical terms to simplify complex global processes and make them more understandable to the public.

In modern discourse analysis, metaphor plays an important role. The use of the term “Cold War” in new contexts can be seen as a conceptual metaphor that helps structure public understanding of international relations. At the same time, this metaphorization may lead to oversimplification or reinterpretation of reality.

Overall, existing research shows that political language evolves under the influence of media, globalization, and technological change. However, there is still a need for studies that specifically focus on how the concept of the “Cold War” functions in contemporary mass media discourse.

#### Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach to analyze the use of the concept “Cold War” in English political discourse.

The data were collected from English-language mass media sources, including:

- online newspapers
- news websites
- political analysis articles

A total of approximately 40–60 examples containing the term “Cold War” were selected.

The analysis focused on:

- identifying literal and metaphorical uses of the term
- analyzing contextual meaning
- determining communicative functions

A comparative and discourse-analytical method was applied to reveal patterns in the use of the concept. The study aims to answer the following questions:

1. How is the concept “Cold War” used in modern media discourse?
2. What new meanings does it acquire?
3. What functions does it perform in political communication?

#### Results

The analysis reveals three main stages in the evolution of the concept:

##### 1. Historical Usage

The term originally referred to the ideological and political confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. Its meaning was clear and context-specific.

##### 2. Transitional Stage

After the end of the twentieth century, the term began to appear in broader contexts. It was used to describe tensions between other countries and emerging global conflicts.

##### 3. Modern Metaphorical Usage

In contemporary mass media, the term is frequently used metaphorically, for example:

- “a new Cold War between global powers”
- “a technological Cold War”
- “an economic Cold War”

These examples show that the concept has undergone semantic expansion and is now applied to various domains beyond politics.

#### Discussion

The findings demonstrate that the concept “Cold War” has become a flexible discursive tool in modern political communication. It is no longer limited to its original historical meaning but is used to interpret and frame current global events.

Mass media plays a central role in this transformation. By using familiar historical concepts, journalists make complex political processes more accessible to the audience. However, this also raises questions about accuracy and simplification.

The metaphorical use of the term reflects broader trends in political discourse, where language is used strategically to influence public perception. This confirms that political concepts are dynamic and context-dependent.

#### Conclusion

This study examined the evolution of the concept “Cold War” in English political discourse based on mass media materials. The results show that the term has moved from a strictly historical meaning to a widely used metaphor in modern communication.

The analysis confirms that mass media significantly influences the transformation of political concepts. The “Cold War” has become a versatile linguistic tool used to describe various forms of global rivalry.

This evolution reflects the broader changes in political discourse, where language adapts to new realities and communicative needs.

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