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**SEMANTIC TRANSFORMATIONS OF "AVIONICS"
AND "STEALTH" CONCEPTS IN THE DISCOURSE
OF HYBRID WARFARE AND CYBERSECURITY**

**СЕМАНТИЧНІ ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЇ КОНЦЕПТІВ «АВІОНІКА»
ТА «СТЕЛС» У ДИСКУРСІ ГІБРИДНОЇ ВІЙНИ
ТА КІБЕРБЕЗПЕКИ**

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The language diversity of modern media has undergone a significant change as a result of the convergence of military aviation technology and contemporary information warfare. "Avionics" (aviation electronics) and "Stealth" (low-observable technology) are two of the most semantically fluid concepts. These words have moved from the closed-off hangars of aerospace engineering to the fore of journalistic discourse on cyberwarfare, hybrid threats, and clandestine political influence. By examining how the technical accuracy of electronic warfare has been adapted to explain the unseen mechanics of contemporary international conflict, this study investigates the semantic expansion of these ideas.

In its primary technical sense, avionics encompasses the electronic systems used on aircraft, including communications, navigation, the display and management of multiple systems, and the hundreds of systems that are fitted to aircraft to perform individual functions [1, p. 216]. However, in modern publicistic discourse, the term has undergone a process of "functional abstraction." According to J. C. Sager, terms that move from specialized domains into general discourse often undergo "de-terminologization," where the focus shifts from the physical hardware to the

systemic role the technology plays [2, p. 58]. In journalism, "avionics" is now frequently used as a metaphor for the "nervous system" of state governance or critical infrastructure. Publicists describe the "institutional avionics" of a country to characterize the underlying digital and bureaucratic systems that keep a state operational under pressure.

The metaphorical power of aviation electronics is further amplified when integrated with the concept of stealth. Originally, stealth refers to a combination of technologies (geometry, radar-absorbent materials) that significantly reduce the radar cross-section of an aircraft [3, p. 45]. In the specialized discourse of aeronautics, stealth is a physical property. Yet, in modern media, "stealth" has been semantically transformed into a descriptor for non-kinetic warfare. According to G. Lakoff's theory of conceptual metaphor, we understand complex social phenomena by mapping them onto physical technologies [4, p. 112]. Consequently, journalists speak of "stealth maneuvers" in diplomacy or "stealth incursions" in cyberspace. Here, the term loses its connection to radar waves but retains its core pragmatic meaning: the ability to operate within an opponent's territory without detection.

A significant transformation is observed in the discourse surrounding cybersecurity. Publicists often frame cyber-attacks as "stealth avionics breaches" of the modern state. This terminological hybridity reflects the reality that modern warfare is increasingly electronic. As B. Hatim and J. Munday suggest, the choice of such specialized metaphors is a deliberate framing device used to communicate the high stakes of digital conflict to a general audience [5, p. 87]. By using aviation-derived lexis, journalists evoke the image of a "pilotless" state losing control over its flight path due to invisible interference.

The transformation of these terms is particularly evident in investigative reporting on "influence operations." The term stealth is repurposed to describe the hidden nature of propaganda. Much like a stealth bomber bypasses air defenses, "stealth propaganda" bypasses the critical defenses of the public mind. This shift reflects R. M. Entman's theory of framing, where a technical term defines a problem – undetectable interference – and implies a need for better "radar" or societal awareness [6, p. 52]. The "stealth" concept thus migrates from a military advantage to a societal threat.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, the popularity of these terms in Ukrainian and international media reflects a modern reality where the boundaries between "frontline" and "rear" are blurred. As F. S. Batsevych emphasizes, the communicative success of such terms in publicistic style depends on their ability to act as "cognitive bridges" between specialized military science and the everyday experience of a society under threat [7, c. 145]. Terms like "stealth inflation" or "political avionics" allow

the public to conceptualize invisible forces through a lens of high-tech precision.

Furthermore, the "avionics" metaphor is often used to describe the failure of international organizations. Publicists may write that the "diplomatic avionics" of the UN or OSCE have "malfunctioned," suggesting that while the "airframe" of the organization remains, the internal systems of communication and navigation no longer work. This usage is a form of "domestication" [8, p. 29], making the complex and alien nature of international failure understandable through a familiar technological analogy.

In conclusion, the remarkable adaptability of the English and Ukrainian languages is demonstrated by the semantic transformation of "avionics" and "stealth" from aerospace specifications into symbols of systematic functionality and covert aggression. These terms now offer the conceptual tools for understanding the complexities of 21st-century hybrid warfare, rather than just describing how an F-35 evades radar. The development of these ideas demonstrates how the "language of the sky" has evolved into the language of our digital, political, and invisible reality.

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