

## LINGUISTIC MEANS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AT THE COVERAGE OF THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROBLEM

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### Abstract

The modern tendencies of values, life principles and social dogmas development dictate new rules of behavioural norms and public ambitions determination. In conditions of the up-to-date global dynamic struggle against domestic violence, touching all categories of the society through the whole history of humanity, all modern languages, especially English, transform due to actualization of the family abuse topic. While the historical genre represents the tendency of normalization and justification of domestic violence, the sections of politics, law and sociology show more equitable and progressive directions of agitation, invoking the society to combat against this issue. The central target of the article is to analyze lexical modifications of English language to form the common attitude towards the intimate partner violence theme and uncover the ways language makes an impact on people`s thinking referred to this current problem. Using the discourse analysis method, the lexical units of the family abuse topic in different contexts and meanings have been considered, which made it possible to shape the attitude of social institutes and the community in general towards the domestic violence problem.

*Keywords:* Domestic violence, problem, social attitude, linguistic means, struggle

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## 1. Introduction

The discussion of the domestic violence issue on the international scene implement new tendencies to this problem conceptualization processes by maintaining transformational activity of English language. As English is accepted as an international language, any lexical extensional procedures and vocabulary changes, which happen in its structure and relate to the socially keen topics, reflect global courses of the new reality and up-to-date sets of life principles and values formation. The domestic violence theme is not an exception.

According to the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), the frequency of words related to the family abuse issue such as “domestic violence”, “battered woman”, “abuse”, “marital rape” and others increased from 0-3 to 123-1092 (see Table 03) through the historical period from 1880s till nowadays, that witnesses the dynamic actualization processes of the intimate partner violence problem.

The fact of the domestic abuse theme spreading and negotiating evidences the necessity of analysis of English language linguistic means related to this issue in order to uncover and shape the general attitude of the society towards it in the global discourse.

## 2. Problem statement

Domestic violence is an international problem which has been concerning many categories and layers of society during the whole history of human society. The statistics of previous 20 years (from 2000-2018), according to World Health Organization shows that 27% of women and 12% of men worldwide have been/are/will be subjected to intimate partner. Nevertheless, it is only recent days that see an active discussing process of the issue, caused by the new «wave» of feminist movement development. People all over the world are struggling against domestic abuse, toxic masculinity and search the normalization and justification and demand the social, law, political and economic defense from intimate partner mistreatment.

It is indisputable that all these social transformations, shift of values and principles and shift in people`s attitude towards family violence has reflected in English language. Vocabulary changes and the new speech evaluative features related to the domestic abuse global dialogue evidences the fact that this controversial and keen issue is making an impact on the language. This phenomenon can be illustrated by the following lexical units: the expressions such as “battered woman”, “victim blaming”, “family abuse” and “license to rape” The phrases stated reveal actualization processes of the domestic violence discourse. Therefore, it is significant when analyzing social points of view on the problem of family violence, to consider English language means and their influence on common beliefs and opinion.

The language means, taking into consideration the linguistic relativity hypothesis of Whorf – Sapir (Sapir, 1929; Whorf, 1940), influence the human reality perception, public reaction to social processes and problems and, as a result, determine the general path of social development due to people`s beliefs and principles of life, depending of their languages. This approach to studying the linguistic aspect of the domestic violence issue is deeply connected with the cognitive linguistics direction. According to Vyvyan Evans (2012), “cognitive linguistics is one of the fastest and influential perspectives on the nature of language, the mind, and their relationship with socio-physical (embodied) experience” (p. 129). Cognitive linguistic represents the range of approaches to researching the interconnection between language theoretical units (semantics, grammar) and human mindset, covert thinking and analysis processes and overt

forms of their manifestations during livelihoods. In other words, “cognitive linguistics goes beyond the visible structure of language and investigates the considerably more complex backstage operations of cognition that create grammar, conceptualization, discourse, and thought itself” (Fauconnier, 2006, p. 10).

### **3. Research questions**

The domestic violence and linguistics interconnection analysis is to be conducted with consideration of the two key approaches to the study: the general investigation of the problem and the cognitive discourse analysis. Due to this, the following questions are to be answered:

- what are the approaches to the domestic violence issue study;
- how is the theme of family violence reflected in English language;
- what is the society attitude toward domestic abuse issue according to linguistic evaluative units' usage;
- what are the linguistic and cognitive consequences of domestic violence struggle?

### **4. Purpose of the study**

The article aims at social mindset analysis at the coverage of domestic violence issue considering linguistic means of English language, which reflect the attitude of society to the problem and reveal the processes of struggle against family abuse in the English-speaking world.

### **5. Research methods and material**

The key method of the article is the discursive analysis, allowing to find, revise and assess text and audio materials to dissect linguistic means of English language referred to the intimate partner abuse issue and revealing the social attitude to the problem.

At the coverage of socially significant issues and themes like domestic violence, the cognitive linguistics strongly intertwines with the critical discourse analysis method of language study. “Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a research enterprise which critically analyses the relation between language and society” (van Dijk 2001, p. 352). The discourse analysis allows to research words` and expressions` meanings and usage in different contexts, situations, communities and social institutes, which makes it possible to summarize the general public opinion on one or another current and acutely social theme. This method “gives a newer and wider perspective on the issue and exposes the little implications that are hidden behind the words” (Uzokova, 2020, p. 7).

The main aim of discourse analysis relating to linguistic approach is to “shed light on the linguistic-discursive dimension of social and cultural phenomena and processes of change in late modernity” (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002). Due to basic and specific elements and units of language researching, critical discourse analysis owns many “theoretical and methodological» tools for «study of social problems, power and inequality” (Uzokova, 2020, p. 10), which occurs crucial for the domestic violence issue investigation.

This article uses the discursive analysis methodology to reveal, dissect and categorize the complex of English language linguistic means referred to intimate partner abuse with dissimilar evaluative negative/positive, related to abuser/victim characteristics. Besides, the discourse analysis approach allowed to uncover social institutes` attitude towards the family violence issue by critical consideration of social, historical, political and law texts on this topic. Finally, this method played the vast role in tracking the path

of this theme actualization at the coverage of the new words`, expressions` and meanings` related to domestic violence appearance during the first, second, third and forth «waves» of the feminist movement development. The results of the study with using the discourse analysis method are to be provided below at the thematic Tables.

## **6. Theory evaluation**

The domestic violence issue implies a wide range of approaches. Numerous sociologists and psychologists created a range of informative and crucial scientific work on this current problem, which allowed to form the full public view representation.

### *6.1. The historical studies of domestic violence issues*

To acquire the deep understanding of domestic abuse phenomenon, the historical data is prevalent. “Domestic violence has been visible through history” Davis (2019, p. 2) states. The fact is that the legislation tendency of family abuse from male members was already officially noted in the early times of Roman Empire. A husband had a lawful ability to dominate above his wife and children, who were “deemed the property”, by beating or even murdering them (Davis, 2019). In the 15th century, “The rules of Marriage” was one of the main written instructions for engaged people. This scroll of principles was established by the Catholic Church and declared husbands as judges for their wives, which allowed them to commit all possible punishments towards their partners, even the cruelest ones.

The English expression “rule of thumb” denoted the permission of a male relative to beat a female family member with a stick which was no thicker than his thumb. Only in early America some states totally prohibited domestic violence by the law in 1870s. The domestic abuse issues progressed due to the feminist movement during its the second “wave” (Swisher et al., 1994). Since that time till nowadays the issue of partner violence is being actively discussed in all human communities all over the world as this problem touches a wide range of social categories and have taken the more socially equitable form, but still requires reformations and a higher level of people`s awareness.

### *6.2. The social studies of domestic violence issues*

No less important approach to the problem of domestic violence is the social one. The main idea is that the more enforcement and acceptance intimate abuse gets among people, the faster it spreads and the severer it becomes. The institutes of family patriarchal arrangement and masculinity are the key factors for abusive atmosphere in families creation. The patriarchy is a system which is beneficial for men only and gives them an ability to control their wives and children, “women have been treated as child bearing machines, push-over, to nothing but animals at the hands of men” (Mahajan, 2011, p. 3). The masculinity is the central reason for male aggression and violence as it does not allow men to share their emotions openly and transmit them in a healthy and «ecologic» way. The significant place of gender and associated prejudices in society develops the concept of male and female behavioral norms, ambitions and responsibilities. “One of the most crucial factors influencing social acceptance of DV is a society`s understanding of gender roles and the implications of marriage” (Kohlman et al., 2014). Men are considered

to be tough, close, strong and domineering, while women must be shy, obedient and housewifely. This belief creates the environment which allows a male partner to manipulate and batter a female relative.

In many cases, the society considers domestic violence to be a problem of a couple, especially of a woman. “Women are blamed for their own abuse, expected to end the violence...”, - Liana Renee (2016, p.9) states. People believe a woman is responsible for her partner`s aggression as she provokes him and does not give a chance to solve a problem peacefully, besides applying physical or psychological abuse. As a result, community`s social, financial, political and law resources “are allocated to removing those external barriers that keep women in violent relationships” (Worden & Carlson, 2005, p.1240). Such convictions and orders shape toxic attitude to victims of family abuse and make domestic violence legal and acceptable in society.

To raise a level of awareness towards the domestic violence issue, to spread necessary information about the prevention methods and, finally, to solve this keen problem on social basic, it is significant to use all possible algorithms to attract public attention and influence their mindsets in a healthy, but rather agitational way. Worden believes that one of the key methods to achieve the progress in this sphere is to direct all outreach and education efforts “toward better informing the public about practical barriers involved in leaving abusive relationships...” (Worden & Carlson, 2005, p. 1240). Rakovec-Felser (2014) shares this point of view and states: “it is necessary to involve efforts (school, youth settings, work places), which reduce aggressive incidents in intimate partner relationship and family as a whole before they occur <...>, at the same time introduce new values, thinking processes, and relationship skills...” (p. 66) to downgrade the level of domestic abuse all over the world.

Social aspect of intimate abuse includes consideration of mass media impact on public opinion and beliefs as well. Unfortunately, the picture of domestic abuse is incorrectly represented in most mass media publications. Filmmakers create the image of «stock» victims, romanticizing them, which results in misunderstanding of real threat that a battered person can be objected to. Women`s magazines transmit an idea of being a “comfortable wife” not to face to husband`s violence. Men`s journals have a dismissive tone, or only mention abuse in passing, relate it to less significant problems such as comparing it to a sports penalty... writes Nettleton (2011). The magazines and newspapers justify male cruelty towards their partners and promote a positive view on such behavior as a standard and a manifestation of strength, whereas women are taught to endure such disrespectful treatment. Television programs and commercial advertisements depict family abuse as something hilarious or frivolous, transforming this fearful phenomenon from the common to individual problem. Mass media has a propensity for focusing attention on the female victim rather than the perpetrator, which results in victim-blaming, composing a negative, wretched portray of a battered woman and neglecting the responsibility of abuser for uncontrolled aggression and violence (Berns, 2001). Therefore, mass media with its sexist principles and patriarchal hegemony can contribute “to ever-growing problem of normalization and social desensitization” of family violence (Kohlman et al., 2014).

### *6.3. The psychological studies of domestic violence issues*

The psychological approach to the issue of domestic abuse can be considered as the key element for understanding the nature of this phenomenon. The victim`s and perpetrator`s behavioral traits, their

mindsets and views on the keen situation of abuse are crucial in analyzing socially accepted gender roles, finding and assessing the ways of intimate violence prevention and methods of protection sacrifices. The methods of psychoanalysis show that almost all psychological traumas and cruel behavioral traits shape exactly due to unhealthy model of parents' relationships or violence towards a child, that a young person endures in the period of infancy or adolescence: "the family is a major socializing institution and a likely context for relatively high level of aggression" (Rakovec-Felser, 2014, p. 64). The differences between rules of male and female bringing up processes make an impact on establishing the inclinations of invasive or forcible behaviour. Girls are mostly educated to be loyal and calm wives, who must obey men, while boys are said to keep their feelings inside and be brutal. Such upbringing stereotypes do not allow male people to form mentally healthy and sincere relationships with themselves and the people around, maintain emotional and cognitive balance neither in childhood, nor in adulthood. Therefore, they cannot fully realize the origins of negative feelings, keep them under control and transmit them to a partner, thus, they start manifesting violence. This is the central evidence of the statement that, despite the fact women can be abusers, too, the level of their cruelty and aggression is much lower than male partners display. Domestic violence through the prism of psychoanalytic approach can be explained as a result of "specific deficits: deficits in ego skills of coping mechanisms; deficits in anger control; and deficits in communication and cognitive skills" (Peters et al, 2002, p. 256). Besides, psychologists suggest that violence in the intimate partner relationships from the side of a man is caused by difficulties occurred with a maternal figure (mother, grandmother, aunt, sister etc.) in the childhood, and the female unregulated aggression, on the contrary, is the result of complicated perception of a male model (Adams, 1988).

Intimate abuse from the psychological point of view "is rarely constant but alternates between four stages: i) period of tension<...>; ii) acting out period (any type of abuse occurs); iii) the honeymoon period <...>; iii) the calm period <...>" (Rakovec-Felser, 2014, p. 63). This cycle of abusive relationships consists of manipulating techniques which perpetrator can apply consciously or unconsciously to keep a victim nearby. These periods create an illusion of «normal» relationships with some "temporary complications», and «such behavior pattern explains why for the most victims it is so difficult to break their exhausting relationships" (Rakovec-Felser, 2014, p. 63).

It is unquestionable that the likelihood of domestic violence can depend on psychological disorders. Statistics shows that the most frequent disorders which a violent intimate partner can suffer from are: "antisocial, borderline and over-controlled" (Rakovec-Felser, 2014, p. 63). Being aware of all the facts given above, it will be easier to answer such important questions as «how to prevent relationships and marriage with an abusive partner», «how to help victims to leave their abusers», «what are the signals of abuser» and so on.

#### *6.4. The linguistic aspect analysis*

The connection between domestic violence and language is an infrequent theme in scientific studies despite the fact that public view on this current problem represents in human language. The central concept of linguistic approach to studying intimate partner abuse is the linguistic relativity hypothesis. The main idea of this theory is that the language "conditions all our thinking about social problems and processes" (Sapir, 1929, p. 209). Lee Whorf (1940) – a disciple of Sapir- supported this opinion, he believed that there is «deeply rooted» connection between talking and thinking. That means that through the prism of usage of

words and expressions referred to the family violence issue the social perception can be reflected itself. “Our language filters what we want to see, or choose to see, and by doing so it influences what we communicate to others” (Easteal et al, 2012, p. 326). Thus, the way people talk about domestic abuse, its victims and survivors, methods to struggle against it determine the tendencies of the problem elaboration, the place it takes in people`s worldview and the verbal or non-verbal evaluative manifestations of their opinion.

## **7. Findings**

### *7.1. Domestic violence vocabulary investigation*

The domestic violence issue investigation in the paradigm of language should be started with denoting the commonly accepted way of the phenomenon understanding by linguists and, as a consequence, by society in general. There are many definitions for this term, which vary from language to language and depend on communities` mentalities, traditions, culture and historical factor. For instance, the “APA Task Force on Violence and the Family defined domestic violence as pattern of abusive behaviors including a wide range of physical, sexual, and psychological maltreatment used by one person in an intimate relationship against another to gain power unfairly or to maintain that person`s misuse of power, control, and authority” (Rakovec-Felser, 2014, p. 62). According to Oxford Dictionary of Law (n.d.), domestic violence is “any incident of violence, threatening behaviour, or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners of family members, regardless of gender or sexuality”.

When analyzing these definitions, the key characteristics of domestic abuse can be highlighted: 1) domestic violence has the wide range of manifestations including “overt and covert (or quiet) forms of violence” (Santaemilia & Maruenda, 2014, p. 251); 2) the participators of domestic violence are or have been in intimate relationships, which considers wife and husband, parents and children, grandchildren and grandparents and other boundaries; 3) family abuse can touch people of all ages, sexes and genders equally; 4) domestic violence objects a person to the threat of mental, physical, financial or sexual mistreatments or even death.

It is important to mention that notions “violence” and “abuse” were originated to be used in dissimilar ways. Domestic violence includes “wife abuse, woman abuse, battered women, and partner abuse» (Rakovec-Felser, 2014, p. 62), while the expression “domestic abuse” is broader and can include relationships between not only current or former intimate partners, but all members of family. Therefore, if talk about violence towards children or old relatives, it is likely to say «domestic abuse».

The word «domestic» in the expressions «domestic violence», «domestic abuse», «domestic rape» and others plays the symbolic and significant role in influencing people`s mindsets about this issue. This word minimizes the consequences of family abuse, this phenomenon is perceived by society as a “gentle, invisible violence, unrecognized as such, chosen as much as undergone” (as cited in Santaemilia & Maruenda, 2014, p. 252). Patricia Easteal (2012) considers: “the term “domestic violence understates the seriousness and criminality of violence within the home” (p. 328). This word makes the issue private, insignificant, inconspicuous compared to global and more important problems in the world. As a result,

language and its means can lead to neglecting of the family abuse issue, inability to prevent it or to help victims and the low level of awareness and understanding toward this problem in the people`s minds.

In terms of domestic violence dialogue basic and ordinary words and expressions acquire new meanings and shape the upgraded view on this issue in the society. For example, the word “shelter”, which is defined as “protection from rain, danger, or attack” (Oxford Learner`s Dictionaries, n.d.), referring to the problem of family abuse is called “women`s shelter” meaning “a house where women whose partners have been violent toward them can go with their children for protection” (dictionary.cambridge.org). Another instance is the word «rape», which, in the prism of domestic violence, is called as “marital rape”, «rape in marriage», «sexual violence». “Marital rape means any unwanted sexual acts by a spouse or ex-spouse that is committed without the other person`s consent” (definitions.uslegal.com). The word «marital» in this expression contributes the undertone of marriage debt, the responsibility of a person who is espoused to appease another partner regardless sickness or absence of wish or energy to have sex. In the other words, marriage is perceived as “license to rape” wives. The expression “license to rape” is spreading with the process of actualization of the domestic violence problem and means the legal ability to have a physical contact with a spouse at any time and conditions without his or her agreement. The sexual assault can be used as a punishment toward a partner who has committed offense. According to statistics, this form of abuse is usually conducted by a husband to wife (“between 10 and 14% of married women experience rape in marriage” (Bergen, 2006, p.1)).

When analyzing all reports, publications and art works mentioning domestic abuse, «the close connection between «woman» and “violence” appears to be the key factor, creating the stereotype that as many women are beat, they fully deserve violence towards them. The expressions such as “battered woman syndrome”, “women abuse”, “wife battering”, “violence against women”, “women beating”, “violence against wives”, “wife abuse” and others strengthen the cognitive boundaries between notions “allowance to abuse” and “female partners”.

Another misapprehension is that men cannot be objected to violence within the house. Of course, the expression “violence towards men” exists too, but “the link with reality is much weaker, and its use sometimes sounds as an exception or a social reaction” (Santaemilia & Maruenda, 2014, p. 251). As a result, an image of woman as an object for abuse, assault and cruelty appears on the linguistic level, leading to normalization of this issue. “Thus, a third area of sociological significance of domestic violence lies in the politics of its naming and framing” (Jeff, 2013, p. 154).

The processes of the domestic violence problem actualization are accompanied by preventing abuse towards intimate partners, children and other relatives, struggling against this issue justification and neutralization and creating new safe and protective spaces for victims and survivors escaping from family violence and maltreatment. These current trends of public activity, committed on social, psychological, law, political and cultural basis, reflected in English language vocabulary, linguistic means and speech. The vocabulary of English language is expanding and acquiring relevant meanings and evaluative traits, referring to domestic violence perception modern reality.

The Oxford Learner`s Dictionaries (n.d.) and the Cambridge Dictionary (dictionary.cambridge.org) provide a wide range of lexical examples of domestic violence theme verbalization. For instance, the expression “victim-blaming” through the view of intimate partner violence means “a manipulative tactic used by abusers” and public “to convince themselves and <...> victims” of domestic violence “that the



problems lie with the other person, not with” the perpetrator (psychcentral.com). Such social view of domestic violence sacrifices relays the guilt for violence from the shoulders of assaulter to a victim`s ones. “When the cause of the violence is attributed to the victims, incidents are more likely to be trivialized and seen as understandable or deserved” (Gracia, 2014, p. 380). Therefore, the phenomenon of victim-blaming causes not only victims` homicides and fatigue and domestic abuse justification, but recurrence of even more cruel cases of family violence or even intimate partner murders.

The fact of victim-blaming is strongly associated with the word blame-shifting which has a definition as a process of making “someone else responsible for something, especially for something bad that has happened” (Longman, n.d.). In terms of family abuse, this phenomenon manifests in the situation when a perpetrator or the society in general attribute the fault for intimate violence from an abuser to a victim. A person who is enduring domestic violence is said to cause maltreatment towards him\her, to provoke a partner or disappoint a spouse.

The term gaslighting is one of the key lexical items referring to the discussion of domestic violence issue. According to the Oxford Learner`s Dictionaries (n.d.), gaslighting is “the process of making somebody believe untrue things in order to control them, especially that they have imaged or been wrong about what has really happened”. This noun has a symbolic origin connected with the intimate partner abuse. The word «gaslighting» is rooted to the “George Cukor`s 1944 film Gaslight” which tells the story of the young couple with an innocent and defenseless woman Paula and her abusive husband Gregory “who sets about the task of isolation her and making her believe she is insane” (Sweet, 2019, p.1). To achieve such violent target, he uses the unfair tactic which “is to dim and brighten the gaslights and then insist she is imagining its” (Sweet, 2019, p. 1). The name and gist of the movie reflect this manipulative technique, which is aimed at forcing a victim to doubt oneself and his/her adequacy, lowering a sacrifice`s esteem and making them vulnerable and easy to control and maltreat. Nowadays the term «gaslighting» is actively used by activists struggling against domestic violence spreading and negotiating.

The importance of the naming and associating policy of the language makes a significant contribution to forming public attitude towards the problem of domestic violence. The process of family abuse theme actualization shapes the new layer of English vocabulary, which influences the level of people`s awareness, empathy and understanding towards this issue. Thanks to language changes, public mindset is enduring transformations, which eventually results in shaping the new the domestic violence problem reality and the outlook.

## *7.2. Domestic violence discourse analysis*

The following part of the study deals with the discourse analysis held in three stages.

### *7.2.1. Stage 1. The process of the lexical classification implementation*

The collocations and words referred to the domestic violence issue were found and categorized using the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) (<https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/>). This platform provides the wide diversity of words and expressions, their frequency within different periods of history and allows to see the contexts of their use in the genres, which occurred vital for the research.

For the first step, the classification of words related to the domestic violence theme was completed (Table 01, Table 02). The lexical groups illustrated below were distinguished according to the evaluative

characteristics of these expressions (positive/negative shades of meaning) and their relativity to the sides of family violence (to a victim/to a perpetrator).

In column 1 of Table 01 includes positive words and collocations. The vocabulary listed deals mostly with the processes of domestic violence prohibition, raising the level of people awareness and assistance. These tendencies are optimistic as they lead to the domestic violence problem restraining and prevention. The column 2 listing negative expressions is related to the family abuse forms, causes and circumstances. This set of words witnesses that domestic violence has various manifestations and can cause irreversible aftermath.

**Table 1.** The positive/negative classification of words related to domestic violence

Positive contextual words	Negative contextual words
against (domestic violence), national (center for victims), (domestic violence) awareness (month), (domestic violence) shelters, (domestic violence) survivors, hotline (for domestic violence victims), coalition (against domestic violence), (domestic violence) restraining, (domestic violence) prevention, laws (on domestic violence), (Prosecution) unit, protective (services).	against (women), (domestic) abuse, (sexual) assault, (marital) rape, (domestic violence) charge, misdemeanor (domestic violence), crime (of domestic violence), harassment, substance (abuse), perpetrators (of domestic violence), (domestic violence) offenders, (domestic violence) killings, felony (of domestic violence), poverty, battery (domestic violence), alcoholism, stalking (is a domestic violence behaviour).

As it was said above, the Table 02. lists the lexical units connected to a victim and an abuser. The vocabulary of the first column evokes the innocence and misery senses. The words «hotline» and «shelter» denote the state of protection, which outlines the idea of solution seeking and providing safe places for victims. The words from the column 2 belong to the law sphere and represent the process of criminalization of the intimate partner abuse cases.

**Table 2.** The words related to a victim/perpetrator classification

Words related to a victim	Words related to a perpetrator
child, shelters, survivors, custody, hotline, reporting, experienced, battered, complaint,	abuse, cases, assault, rape, charges, misdemeanor, arrested, crime, drug, accused, harassment, substance, committed, perpetrator, killings, felony, alcoholism, stalking, combat, perpetrated.

### 7.2.2. Stage 2. The process of words classification according to genres and platforms.

The second step was conducted with using not only the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) (<https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/>), but also the Corpus of Historical American English (COHA) (<https://www.english-corpora.org/coha/>). which ensures users with the wider spectrum of historical periods (1820-2010) and provides data for analysis of both modern expressions and outdated ones.

The Table 03 introduces the vocabulary used in the represented contexts and connected to different social institutions such as law or politics.

**Table 3.** The classifications of words from the texts of different genres.

Classification of texts	Related words and collocations
Historical publications	To criminalize (domestic violence), fight (domestic violence), eradicate, end, reduce (domestic violence), improved, predict, awareness, prevention, Ordinary, simply (domestic violence), to dramatize (domestic violence), «honor» killings, female-perpetrated (domestic violence), suffer, severely (battered woman), injurious (violence), abuse, assault, victimized (through intimate partner violence), maltreatment, (sexual abuse) scandal.
Sociological/mass media publications	Prevent, end, assisting, criminalize, escape, fight, combat, reduce, confront (domestic violence), help (victims), support, hotline, criticize. Misdemeanor, male, female, female-on-male, male-on-female (domestic violence), sanctioned (domestic violence), mock (domestic violence against men), fatal, deserve (violence), cut-and-dry (domestic violence), instigate, jeopardize, horrendous, little domestic violence, condone, church-sponsored, provoke, decriminalize.
Political publications	Prevent, stop, centralize, escape, felony, eliminate, curb, deter, aware, battle, avoid, establish (domestic violence court), constitute, statistics, severe, fatal, endure, assault, dangers, condemn.
Law publications	Protest, prioritize, prevent, mental health (of victim), adjudicate, battle (against violence), criminal, misdemeanor, offseason (domestic violence charge), felony, investigate, jeopardize, witnessing.

The line 1 containing the expressions from historical texts was formed with detailed reading of COCA publications, especially academic educational, historical, religious magazines and documentary movies texts. The expressions «simple», «ordinary» and «honor killings» witness the fact that in the earlier times domestic violence was not considered as a social or psychological global problem, but as a usual decriminalized deed.

The line 2 represents the topic related vocabulary used in sociological texts and mass media publications of such genres as: TV/movies, blogs, web-sites, spoken performances, magazines and newspapers, which belong to the mass media institution of the society. The words of this unit differ in higher level of awareness towards the domestic abuse issue, they frequently exploit, taboo the themes and promulgate the necessity to antagonize the family violence.

The expressions stated in line 3 belong to the political group of COCA texts: TV performances and interviews, news and opinion magazines, international, national and local newspapers, political and news web-sites and blogs and some academic texts on politics. Political texts and publications are characterized by formal, accurate and agitation lexis and data, which invokes publicity to struggle against domestic abuse.

The line 4 which provides vocabulary from the law section of COCA, deals with academic educational, law texts, Internet platforms, blogs, crime and documentary movies and TV shows. The vocabulary of this section is full of professional words and collocations from criminalistics and advocacy, which refers to judicial cases of family violence and the processes of their investigation and settlement.

### *7.2.3. Stage 3. The frequency of words usage analysis during the historical periods of the feminist movement development.*

Feminism plays an important role in the domestic violence issue actualization process. Thus, the feminist movement followers have made the key contribution to the struggle against the family abuse legislation and normalization (Abrar et al, 2000) by raising discerning and even socially banned themes and using new lexis to attract public attention to the domestic violence issue. Therefore, the vocabulary

analysis of linguistic means frequency is strongly connected with the influence of the feminists` activity on various basis of the social order (court, politics, economics etc.).

The frequency analysis of domestic violence related words, represented in the Table 03., was conducted based on data of Corpus of American English mentioned above (<https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/>) & (<https://www.english-corpora.org/coha/>), as these platforms own significant chronological data about the given words and allow to trace the process of intimate partner abuse problem actualization considering the tendencies of new lexis usage.

Table 04 shows the topic-related keywords were enduring the long and complicated way of popularization. In the first «wave» of the feminist movement most related words did not even exist, whereas the minority of the mentioned expressions were not perceived as something momentous. The second and the third “waves” of feminism are the intermediate stages on the route of the domestic abuse issue spreading, in terms of words frequency. During the last three «waves» the expressions «domestic violence» and «harassment» have been and still are the most recognizable ones, which evidences the fact that the society was gradually making this problem noticeable and keen. The current and optimistic tendency which is seen in the word`s frequency changes during the transition between the third and the forth «waves» is the elimination of the application frequency of the words «battered woman» and “family violence”. This fact testifies reduction of family abuse cases and number of victims, especially among female partners. Therefore, the influencing forces of activists of anti-domestic violence movement make an impact on the prevention and minimization of the issue around the world.

**Table 4.** The frequency of related words and collocations using during the «waves» of the feminist movement

Related words	The average frequency of using in the first «wave» of feminism (the end of the XIX-the middle of the XX)	The average frequency of using in the second «wave» of feminism (1960-1990)	The average frequency of using in the third «wave» of feminism (1990-2008)	The average frequency of using in the forth «wave» of feminism (2008-nowadays)
Domestic violence	3	28	573	1092
Domestic abuse	0	2	77	123
Marital rape	0	5	12	13
License to rape	0	0,3	0,3	7
Battered woman	0	4	139	12
Family violence	0	11	58	46
Harassment	8	194	1596	1788
Gaslighting	0	0,8	1	17

## 8. Conclusion

The paper has revealed the linguistic aspect of the domestic violence issue, which turned out to be an essential approach to analyze the public opinion on this theme in the global discourse. The study deals with the cognitive side of perception of the new reality and its modernized selection of social, ethical, political and law values at the coverage of the domestic abuse in the people`s mindsets. It has been approved that the community`s attitude towards current problems of the contemporary world finds its manifestation

in the linguistic means, which reflect general principles, shades of meanings, tendencies and aims referred to the certain publicly significant topics. The literature and web-platforms used in the study state the central concept of the unquestionable influence of language on people's cognitive boundaries, thinking processes, value acceptance and beliefs and views on one or another theme formation.

The practical worth of the article has been introduced in the specific words and collocations referred to the family abuse thematic researching, defining and classifying. This procedure gives an ability to analyze evaluative traits of English linguistic means, their usage in the texts, speeches and publications within various social institutes, which denotes main directions of the propaganda and agitation processes in the community at the coverage of the domestic abuse topic. According to summaries of the empirical part of the paper, the genres of politics, history, sociology/mass media and law have dissimilar points of view on the domestic violence problem issue, which is witnessed by the lexical set they represent in oral and text publications. When mentioning the historical section, the works show the tendency of the domestic abuse problem normalization and its consequences minimization. As for sociological and media approach, this genre is characterized by a higher level of awareness and confrontation towards this issue. The political section's publications use formal lexica to push people to struggle against violence in families. The law aspect of the issue itself includes mostly specific lexica referred to intimate violence cases proceedings and punishment decisions for perpetrators. The study of the lexical units frequency in the chronological path from 18th century till nowadays allowed to form arguments in favor of the evidences of this theme relevance, prevalence and in globalization process development.

As a result, the public faces the new perception of the socially current problem of the domestic violence due to the transformational tendencies of language, which are proved to be one of the key factors of this issue actualization, contradiction and eradication.

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