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Conceptual principles of analysis and forecasting threats to national security in modern conditions

Princípios conceituais de análise e previsão de ameaças à segurança nacional em condições modernas
Principios conceptuales de análisis y previsión de amenazas a la seguridad nacional en las condiciones modernas


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This study develops and integrates the construct
of "magic weapon" influence operations with
agile threat forecasting, proposing an original
interdisciplinary approach to dynamic risk
assessment and adaptive strategic planning in
modern geopolitical contexts.

ABSTRACT

This study critically examines the evolving landscape of national security threats, arguing that traditional response-oriented strategies are increasingly insufficient in the face of complex, multifaceted, and rapidly emerging dangers, including latent and non-conventional forms. Drawing on a comprehensive narrative literature review and adopting systemic, structural-functional, and phenomenological approaches with realist ontological assumptions, we analyze the dynamic interaction of geopolitical shifts, technological advancements, and the rise of "magic weapon" influence operations, particularly exemplified by China's activities in New Zealand. Our findings illustrate the urgent need for a paradigm shift towards proactive and agile threat forecasting mechanisms, advocating for iterative methodologies and collaborative intelligence models like crowd-forecasting to enhance anticipatory capabilities. This research contributes significantly to the contemporary discourse on national security by proposing a framework for dynamic risk assessment and adaptive strategic planning, essential for fostering resilience and ensuring sustained national development amidst global uncertainty.

Keywords: National security, threat forecasting, agile approach, geopolitical shifts, magic weapon, artificial intelligence, crowd-forecasting, strategic planning.

RESUMO

Este estudo examina criticamente o cenário em evolução das ameaças à segurança nacional, argumentando que as estratégias tradicionais orientadas para a resposta são cada vez mais insuficientes diante de perigos complexos, multifacetados e emergentes rapidamente, incluindo formas latentes e não convencionais. Com base em uma revisão abrangente da literatura narrativa e adotando abordagens sistêmicas, estrutural-funcionais e fenomenológicas com pressupostos ontológicos realistas, analisamos a interação dinâmica de mudanças geopolíticas, avanços tecnológicos e o surgimento de operações de influência de "arma mágica", particularmente exemplificadas pelas atividades da China na Nova Zelândia. Nossas descobertas ressaltam a necessidade urgente de uma mudança de paradigma em direção a mecanismos proativos e ágeis de previsão de ameaças, defendendo metodologias iterativas e modelos de inteligência colaborativa, como a previsão por crowdsourcing, para aprimorar as capacidades antecipatórias. Esta pesquisa contribui significativamente para o discurso contemporâneo sobre segurança nacional, propondo uma estrutura para avaliação dinâmica de riscos e planejamento estratégico adaptativo, essencial para promover a resiliência e garantir o desenvolvimento nacional sustentado em meio à incerteza global.

Palavras-chave: Segurança nacional, previsão de ameaças, abordagem ágil, mudanças geopolíticas, arma mágica, inteligência artificial, previsão por crowdsourcing, planejamento estratégico.

RESUMEN

Este estudio examina críticamente el panorama cambiante de las amenazas a la seguridad nacional, argumentando que las estrategias tradicionales orientadas a la respuesta son cada vez más insuficientes frente a peligros complejos, multifacéticos y de rápida aparición, incluidas las formas latentes y no convencionales. Basándonos en una revisión exhaustiva de la literatura narrativa y adoptando enfoques sistémicos, estructural-funcionales y fenomenológicos con supuestos ontológicos realistas, analizamos la interacción dinámica de los cambios geopolíticos, los avances tecnológicos y el aumento de las operaciones de influencia de "arma mágica", ejemplificadas particularmente por las actividades de China en Nueva Zelanda. Nuestros hallazgos subrayan la necesidad urgente de un cambio de paradigma hacia mecanismos proactivos y ágiles de previsión de amenazas, abogando por metodologías iterativas y modelos de inteligencia colaborativa como la previsión colectiva para mejorar las capacidades anticipatorias. Esta investigación contribuye significativamente al discurso contemporáneo sobre la seguridad nacional al proponer un marco para la evaluación dinámica de riesgos y la planificación estratégica adaptativa, esencial para fomentar la resiliencia y garantizar el desarrollo nacional sostenido en medio de la incertidumbre global.

Palabras clave: Seguridad nacional, previsión de amenazas, enfoque ágil, cambios geopolíticos, arma mágica, inteligencia artificial, previsión colectiva, planificación estratégica.

INTRODUCTION

Analyzing the numerous unfavorable tendencies that occurred within a few years after the conclusion of the Cold War, it is conceivable to conclude that a world worse than today's perilous world might emerge, necessitating changes to existing national security policy and military strategy. The variety of dangers that presently exist in the national security environment and may arise in the future is continually expanding. These occurrences are distinguished by their diversity, intensity, and the unpredictability of their magnitude and repercussions (Wyrebek, 2022). Threats vary because they are the outcome of interconnected political, military, economic and social, demographic, and environmental processes and events. Their nature causes them to increasingly frequently trigger a crisis scenario, so disrupting the state's normal operation.

The processes underway in Europe and across the world, particularly in recent years, are resulting in social-political, economic, and military developments with unpredictable repercussions. The war in Ukraine became a litmus test for European security, revealing a lack of political cohesion among EU member nations, the origins of which lie not only in intricate historical entwinement, but also in geoeconomic interests.

The Middle East region also is extremely dangerous flashpoint of tension. Decades-old geopolitical turmoil (Danelia, 2024; Salloukh, 2013; Liu & Shu, 2023) now led to hot war between HAMAS and Israeli, gradually involving in its orbit other countries of the region – such as Iran and Lebanon.

There are also other threats, which have latent character but are not less dangerous in perspective – this is China's ambitions and its quite successful attempts to use soft power tools and "magic weapon" to achieve its geopolitical interests (Gill & Huang, 2023; Mitter, 2021).

In these conditions, the landscape of national security acquires extreme complexity and "multivectoriness", requiring nation-states to review and reconsider their conceptual principles of analysis and forecasting threats to national security with the purpose of developing adequate measures of prevention and response (Bsumek et al., 2013). In this context, this research aims to discuss and contribute to the current debate in a critical and conceptual orientation about the main trends in analyzing and forecasting threats to national security in modern conditions.

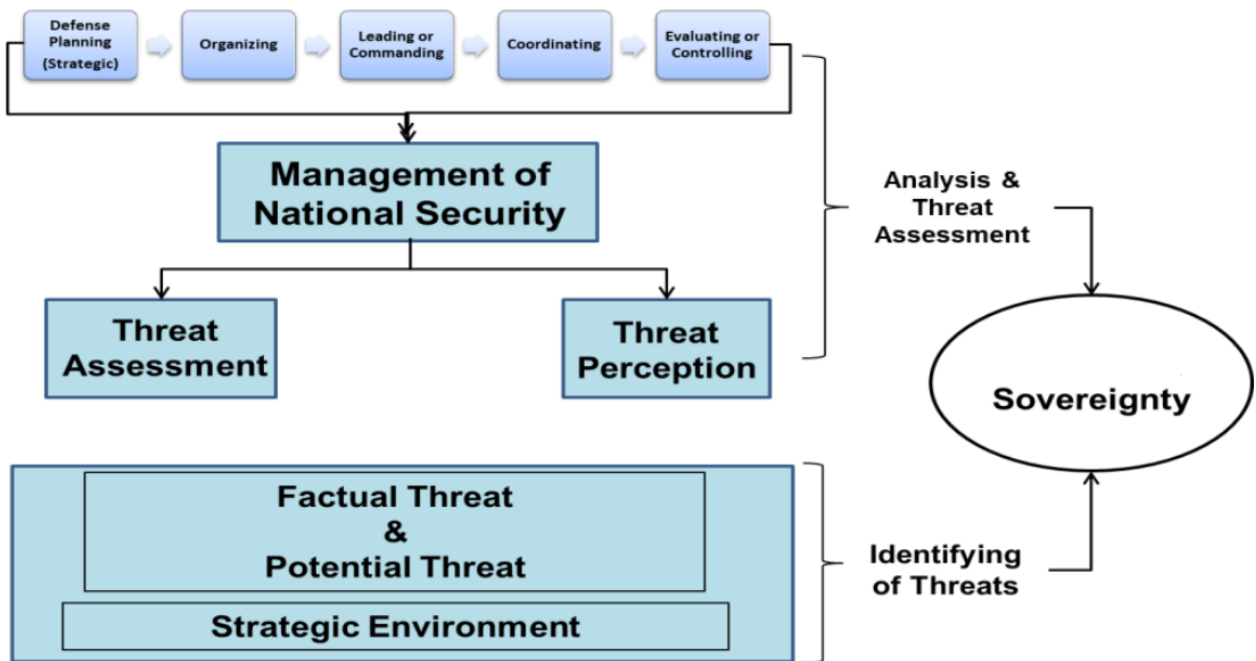
METHODS

The methodological basis of the study is the systemic and structural-functional approaches (Potts et al., 2016). This approach allows, firstly, to "tie" into a certain logically consistent system all known, as well as new facts and patterns, and secondly, to consider national security as an open system. The study is interdisciplinary in nature, relying on the methodology and provisions of several private sciences and disciplines grounded in political analysis, national security theory, international relations theory, world political process, among others (Alvakili & Roşca, 2021; Bogoslavtseva et al., 2021). The use of the comparative method and the method of situational analysis (Clarke et al., 2022) allows studying and comparing the experience of counteracting modern threats to political stability.

As the main argumentative route, a narrative literature review was traced (Byrne, 2016), seeking to logically orchestrate the specialized academic literature and evidence related to the identification of global security threats. For this purpose, several databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, EBSCO and Google Scholar were consulted, in different time dimensions but with a recent temporal orientation to the reality of the phenomenon. The revision and analysis were also guided by the phenomenological principle of research (Tuohy et al., 2013) in conjunction with realist ontological assumptions (Wikgren, 2005), this combination focuses on the understanding of reality from the material and lived experiences, but always recognizing the concrete character of the structural forces that shape society. This type of realist ontological position is also adopted in international relations studies, especially in situations of geopolitical conflict where the artificiality of concepts and ideal epistemic positions tend to clash with concrete and reality in dialectical terms (Guzzini, 2004; Bell, 2017).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

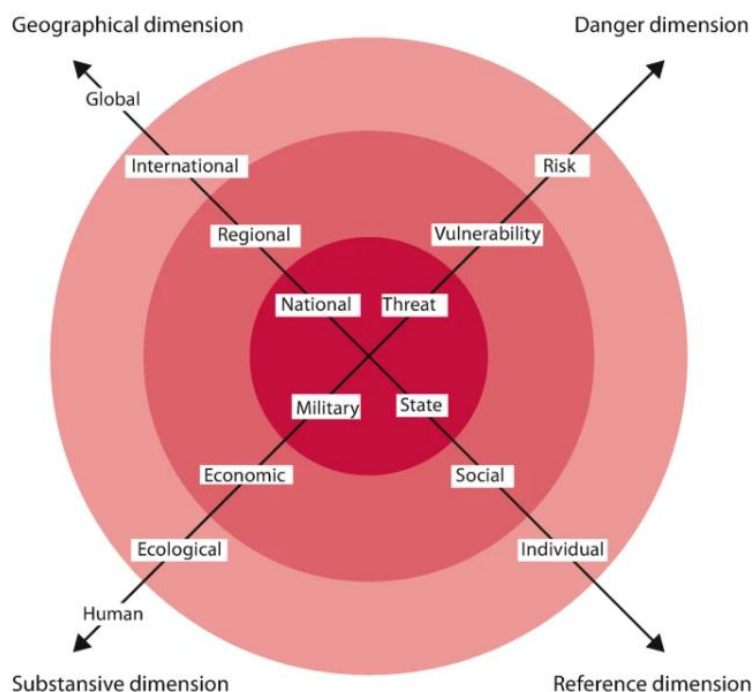
Identifying the kind and scope of threats, as well as the dynamics of the strategic environment, is critical in developing national security management strategies. There are various classifications of dangers. According to Asmoro et al. (2022), threats are classified into two types: factual threats and potential threats. In addition, the dynamics of the strategic environment are understood in the field of defense science to formulate national policies in decision making for the national defense system, which encompasses components of ideology, politics, economy, social culture, and defense (Mattis, 2018). Asmoro et al. (2022) give an instance of the interaction between research variables and analytic techniques for assessing risks to national security (see Fig. 1).

Figure 1. Illustration of relationship between research variables and analysis tools when assessing threats to national security

Source: Based on Asmoro et al. (2022)

Threats can be defined and classified according to their actors, source, and threat. Both international and domestic threats, as well as military and non-military threats and threat actors (state and non-state entities), might be considered sources of threats. Hybrid threats are a unique kind of danger; they are the most complicated and sometimes challenging to identify and understand, at least in the beginning.

Experts now stress that to anticipate danger scenarios, "we need to "think like the enemy"" by comprehending the many sources of threats and their future forms (Viotti, 2017). In this regard, Hirch Ballin et al. (2020) depict their vision of the extension of the concept of security in the form of a diagram (see Fig. 2).

Figure 2. The extension of the concept of security

Source: Based on Hirch Ballin et al. (2020)

According to Hirsch Ballin et al. (2020), who discuss securitization of threats, vulnerabilities, and risks, political actors in nation states actively participate in the “top down” framing of tensions as security threats to gain institutional and public support for their positions. They provide meaning to their surroundings and create order in the global environment by defining the risks, their manifestations, and the person or thing that is in danger. But society itself may sometimes lead to securitization, especially when there are underlying anxieties (Gavkalova et al., 2022; Pavlovskiy et al., 2024). Social actors can call attention to specific problems and pressure policymakers to act quickly and enact more stringent security measures. The topic of who may put specific risks on the security agenda is becoming the subject of a larger public discussion due to the growth of civil society actors, the privatization of various security-related duties, and the media’s constant presence. A broader agenda-setting process then includes politics and governance. Stated differently, security is a social construct that arises from an actor’s ability to persuade an audience that a referent object is in danger and needs to be safeguarded.

Indeed, over-securitization is also a risk, destabilizing society and making it vulnerable to other threats, such as “magic weapon”.

The great power rivalry between the US and China will have a significant effect on both nations’ economic and national security for many years to come. The economic, military, and political axes of this rivalry are all interrelated. Fundamentally, this is a contest between government and ideas. However, the competition with China presents different difficulties than the Cold War rivalry with the Soviet Union in the 20th century. A new national security framework is needed because of the friction that has arisen between the US and China.

To achieve parity with the United States in several military domains, such as air defense systems, land-based conventional ballistic and cruise missiles, and shipbuilding, China has used a whole-of-government approach as part of its Military-Civil Fusion growth plan. One important aspect of this great power struggle is the possibility that China may combine research from its commercial sector with its military and defense industrial sectors to create and deploy new military capabilities. China has advanced significantly in several important technical fields over the last ten years, such as electronic warfare, radio frequency systems, hypersonic, and more recently, quantum computing. For instance, a method for integrating hypersonic weapons into a smart swarm for coordinated strikes was recently reported by Chinese researchers (McCaffrey et al., 2024). The idea raises the terrifying possibility of a saturation strike, which would be challenging to stop even with advanced air defenses. The Beijing Institute of Technology writers’ citations, such as the Raytheon Tomahawk Cruise Missile (RGM/UGM-109) Technical Manual and System Description, are especially concerning (McCaffrey et al., 2024).

Another, and maybe most difficult, component of the great power rivalry between China and the United States is political strength. Using a Gray Zone approach, China has used its military might and political clout in the South China Sea. To accomplish long-term strategic goals without going over the line into a military conflict, this operational area is now defined by a protracted campaign of low threshold measures. It incorporates aspects of soft power and hybrid warfare (Nye, 2023).

China invented effective geopolitical instrument, which International Relations experts call “magic weapon”. At first glance, it may seem as usual soft power, but in reality, it goes far beyond it. Under Xi Jinping, the Chinese government has increased its efforts to exert influence abroad, which might jeopardize the integrity of the targeted governments’ political systems and their sovereignty.

The New York Times and The Economist published articles about China’s political sway in Australia in June 2017. “Are Australia’s Politics too Easy to Corrupt?,” the headline of the New York Times queried, while The Economist mockingly called China the “Meddle Country”. Following internal investigations into the same topic by ASIO and Australia’s Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet in 2015 and 2016, the two publications responded to an investigation by Fairfax Media and ABC into the scope of China’s political meddling in Australia. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was attempting to gain influence over Australia’s Chinese population and penetrate Australian political and foreign affairs circles, according to official reports and the media, which concluded that China was waging a foreign interference campaign in Australia “on a larger scale than that being carried out by any other nation” (Brady, 2017). Brady (2017) uses New Zealand, a highly representative state, as a case study to analyze China’s international political influence efforts under Xi Jinping. The relationship between China and New Zealand is significant because the Chinese leadership views New Zealand as an example of how it wants to interact with other nations (Semenets-Orlova et al., 2022). Brady’ paper “Magic weapons” deeply describes the corrupting influence made by political interference activities of CCP on the political system of New Zealand with the help of blurring of personal, political and economic interests.

Foreign influence by the Chinese Communist Party has had a significant impact on New Zealand. The country is the focus of a coordinated foreign-influence effort by the PRC. The program attempts to advance the CCP’s political and economic goals by coopting local leaders, gaining access to critical information and resources, and controlling public discourse (Kussainov et al., 2023; Gupta et al., 2024). The People’s Republic of China has sought influence through a variety of political, economic, and cultural means. First, focused attempts are being made to coopt New Zealand’s corporate, political, and intellectual elites through business opportunities, investments, accolades, political hospitality, scholarships, party-to-party

relationships, and vanity projects, in order to persuade them to support Chinese objectives. Notably, several former New Zealand MPs have taken high-level posts in Chinese-funded or China-related organizations. Former prime ministers Dame Jenny Shipley and John Key have taken up new roles as chair of the China Construction Bank of New Zealand and advisers to Comcast on its commercial efforts in China. Second, ethnic-Chinese businessmen with close ties to the CCP have made targeted donations of tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars to New Zealand political parties. Several of these contributors have held official leadership roles in economic or political organizations with ties to the United Front Work Department (Shirk et al., 2018). Finally, PRC institutions have utilized mergers, acquisitions, and alliances with New Zealand corporations, universities, and research institutes to establish a local presence, increase their clout, and perhaps get access to military technology, trade secrets, and other critical information.

Some of these acts directly threaten New Zealand's national security, while others have a longer-term negative impact. The influence on New Zealand's democracy has been tremendous.

Many of China's recent United Front measures appear to have been tested in New Zealand. The CCP leadership sees its relationship with Wellington as a model that may be imitated elsewhere, with a special emphasis on setting an example for Australia, the tiny island countries of the South Pacific, and other Western states. Governments throughout the world are unearthing secret efforts to enhance China's influence, which are carried out by the United Front Work Department, a little-known department of the Chinese Communist Party (Avedyan et al., 2023). Australia has updated its rules to prevent foreign meddling, and the United States claims that China is now involved in eight out of every 10 industrial espionage cases. American political scientists warn that the CCP's United Front campaign is increasing mobilization in the United States at colleges and through activist groups to destabilize society (Bray, 2021). The CCP utilizes the United Front to expand its influence without making it appear that the information is coming directly from the Chinese government (Lelyk et al., 2022). Every year, China invests billions of dollars in the united front system and maintains a strong presence in the United States. The unified States has no direct counterpart, and the US government has struggled to resist unified front activities with standard counterintelligence methods.

One of the primary purposes of this CCP's activities is to influence foreign governments and society to support China's interests. Today's influence efforts are substantially based on policies developed by Xi's predecessors, from Mao to Hu Jintao (2002-2012), although their goals are broader than ever before. This underscores Xi's government's rising confidence, as well as its high-stakes policy of retaining power through economic development and tighter control over information (Arivazhagan et al., 2023). In order to coopt foreigners into advancing the objectives of the CCP, Xi's influence activities fall into three main categories: first, a global, multiplatform communications strategy; second, a renewed emphasis on people-to-people, party-to-party, and enterprise-to-enterprise relations; and third, the establishment of a China-centered bloc through the BRI (Shirk et al., 2018).

The magic weapon represents a narrative supported by five fundamental messages (Lee, 2023):

1. Chinese domination is the historical norm and is unavoidable.
2. The CCP's aims are constant and unchangeable.
3. A CCP-led China is inherently unbreakable.
4. Beijing is willing to pay any price to achieve its main goals.
5. The United States is becoming a weaker and less trustworthy ally.

However, China is not the only state which actively uses "magic weapon" to pursue its interests. The same tactics, albeit not yet so 'perfected', is used by Russia in post-Soviet space and in some countries of Eastern and Central Europe.

As new threats emerged, governments began to revise their military and national security programs. In March 2021, New Zealand's most secretive agency, the New Zealand Security and Intelligence Service (SIS), initiated an extraordinary effort to educate the public about the potential of foreign intervention (Protective Security Requirements, n.d.). Numerous records for the campaign were made public by the SIS. The shocking disclosure that it had found a New Zealander "working on behalf of a foreign state intelligence service" gathering intelligence against dissidents based in New Zealand and that another person "closely connected to a foreign state's interference apparatus" was attempting to hijack New Zealand's political and economic elites for a foreign government were buried among them (New Zealand Security Intelligence Service, 2021). New Zealand's strategy towards its main trade partner, the People's Republic of China, has undergone a considerable revision, which includes the SIS's unparalleled public education campaign (Hubanova et al., 2021). A number of adjustments during the past few years have led to the readjustment, which did not occur overnight. As a result, New Zealand has realized that it is necessary to modernize its national security strategy considering these issues. To direct New Zealand's approach to national security, the country's first National Security Strategy (Secure Together Tō Tātou Korowai Manaaki) was published in 2023. New Zealand's distinct geography, history, and values are reflected in Secure Together, which serves as a foundation for the

nation's ability to navigate a more divided and upended globe.

Three major concerns interact to define the security outlook: 1) pressure on a rules-based international system and strategic rivalry, 2) transboundary difficulties, and 3) threats to democracy. Furthermore, according to the Strategy, it is critical that New Zealanders are informed about the issues facing society, the steps the government is taking to safeguard the country, and their own involvement in it (Byrkovych et al., 2023). New Zealanders may support communal security and resilience even though the government oversees national security. National security also depends on New Zealand's robust international network (Secure Together Tō Tātou Korowai Manaaki, 2023).

Considering emerging dangers, Australia also reexamines its national security strategy. The first to be published this year, the 2023 Defence Strategic Review's recommendation for a biannual National Defence Strategy has been approved by the government. With allusions to the need for "a much more whole-of-government and whole-of-nation approach to security", the DSR also sent a clear message about the attitude the government would bring to the creation of any national security policy (McNeill, 2024). The components of national security are said to be expanding and becoming increasingly interconnected in the face of a fast-shifting geopolitical landscape (Gaman et al., 2022). For instance, supply chain dependencies have been brought to light by COVID, and the invasion of Ukraine, technology-enabled foreign influence and disinformation are becoming more widespread, and it is increasingly acknowledged that issues related to energy and climate change will make the security environment more complex.

The Australian government has unveiled a new National Defence Strategy (NDS). The paper, which was issued with a Defense Integrated Investment Program that covers platform and weapons priorities, is in line with the 2023 Defence Strategic Review. One of the document's main tenets is that Australia is embracing a "strategy of denial" as a fundamental component of its military strategy (Bashtannyk et al., 2024). Although the idea of putting deterrence at the core of military strategy is not new, Australian defense thought has not fully developed it. In the Australian context, the term "deterrence" has typically lacked the investment and precision that distinguishes other countries like the United States and the United Kingdom.

However, all these paradigm shifts in national securities strategies are still based on a response strategy development, and not proactive approach. Meanwhile, in today's turbulent environment, there is the need for effective mechanisms of forecasting threats to national security, the mechanisms that would allow applying a proactive and Agile approach.

Discussion

As it was discussed above, the nature of threats faced by nations today is increasingly complex and multifaceted. Traditional military threats are now accompanied by non-conventional threats, which are even more complex and latent than hybrid threats. As a result, modern defense management plans need to be multifaceted. Current research emphasizes the significance of all-encompassing security frameworks that include economic, environmental, health, and military security measures (Clark, 2024). The constant development of new dangers encourages the quest for novel, occasionally very unconventional forecasting techniques. It's interesting that Sarjito (2024) points out that using wargaming and simulations is one creative method for developing strategic policies (Denysiuk et al., 2023). By enabling policymakers to investigate different situations and results, these tools improve their capacity to develop adaptable and successful plans. Defense planners may create stronger policies and gain a better understanding of the ramifications of their choices by modeling possible wars and emergencies.

Wargames are abstracted representations of national security issues in which players make choices and deal with the repercussions of their choices in a rules-based setting (Nekhai et al., 2024). Wargaming is an inherently versatile instrument that may be used to address a variety of problems. Military confrontations, terrorist attacks, and humanitarian responses are only a few examples of the variety of scenarios that might occur (Bae, 2020). Wargames do not forecast the future; rather, they investigate potential outcomes based on investigation and analysis. In a similar vein, wargames do not provide proven answers, but they can draw attention to problems and important choices. Above all, wargaming is most useful when it is included into a research cycle that also includes field exercises, modeling, and simulation.

However, we believe that the use of this tool can be expanded and sophisticated. Potential of MMORPG could be expanded for application in national security agencies. MMORPG implies unexpected alliances, unpredictable behavior, limitation of resources, alternative strategies, bluff, etc., and encourage to make fast but reasonable decisions based on the analysis of various factors (often scattered) and dynamically changing environment.

Chen and Kumar (2022) examined how changing geopolitical environments affect national defense strategies, paying special attention to the emergence of new superpowers and regional wars. Additionally, P. Thompson & Garcia (2021) examined methods for fending off non-traditional security threats including pandemics and cyberterrorism, stressing the value of interagency cooperation and resilience.

In their 2023 study, Davis & Roberts examined how new technologies like artificial intelligence and quantum computing affect the development and application of military plans, emphasizing the necessity of flexible policy frameworks (Pasichnyi et al., 2024; Zayats et al., 2024). With an emphasis on how cutting-edge technologies like artificial intelligence, machine learning, and cybersecurity may be incorporated into defense policy to improve national security, Sarjito's (2024) study attempts to examine how technology improvements affect defense management methods. Additionally, it aims to evaluate how national defense strategies are impacted by geopolitical dynamics, offering insights on adaptable policies that address global affairs. In order to guarantee readiness for a variety of risks, the author also looks for all-encompassing strategies for dealing with non-traditional security concerns including pandemics, terrorism, and climate change.

A crucial component of strategic planning and national security, intelligence forecasting includes the methodical study and forecasting of future events to assist in decision-making. The requirement for timely and accurate intelligence forecasting is more important than ever as the world grows more complex due to rapid technical breakthroughs, geopolitical changes, and unconventional threats (Chahali, 2024).

For millennia, governments have used a variety of techniques to predict possible dangers and opportunities, making intelligence forecasting a crucial component of statecraft. From the use of spies and scouts by ancient societies to learn about enemy territory to the creation of official intelligence organizations in the 20th century, the development of intelligence forecasting reflects the dynamic character of the world. Intelligence skills advanced significantly during the Cold War era as both "camps" made large investments in technology to obtain a competitive advantage. A new era in intelligence collection was ushered in with the creation of satellite images, signal intelligence, and other reconnaissance capabilities, which gave forecasters access to data that was previously unattainable. Human intelligence (HUMINT), signals intelligence (SIGINT), and images intelligence (IMINT) are all used in traditional information collecting. Open-source intelligence has become a useful instrument for intelligence forecasting in the digital era. OSINT entails gathering and examining data from publicly accessible sources, such as news stories, scholarly publications, and social media. OSINT is becoming a more important part of the intelligence community's toolset because of the internet's democratization of information (Shockley, 2024).

Intelligence forecasting has been transformed by developments in data analytics and machine learning, which allow for the analysis of enormous volumes of data at previously unheard-of rates. Among the methods used to glean valuable insights from intricate datasets are sentiment analysis, pattern recognition, and predictive modeling (Ortina et al., 2023). Prediction accuracy and efficiency are increased when artificial intelligence is included into forecasting procedures. The ongoing integration of developing technologies is critical to the future of intelligence forecasting (Poliova et al., 2024). To improve forecast speed and accuracy, artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and sophisticated analytics will become more and more important. However, the direction of technological developments in intelligence predictions will be greatly influenced by ethical issues and the requirement for responsible AI deployment.

However, a major obstacle to intelligence predicting is the intrinsic complexity and unpredictability of world events (Sydorchuk et al., 2024). Because social, political, and economic factors are intricately entwined, it is challenging to forecast how certain events or acts will turn out. Furthermore, the forecasting environment is made more difficult by the emergence of non-state entities and nontraditional threats.

The difficulty for using AI and ML tools for intelligence and forecasting threats to national security is determined by the fact that it is not reliable to lean on Big Data in this domain, due to the exceptional heterogeneity and dissimilarity of events in the global military-political arena in retrospect and at the present time, as well as the exceptional complexity of today's geopolitical realities and the convergence of geopolitics and geoeconomics. Moreover, non-traditional threats arise faster than they replenish the Big Data array.

The only possible effective way to forecast threats is, probably, Agile approach with iterative method, considering all ongoing processes and making short-term forecasts, at the same time formulating flexible long-term strategy which can be easily adjusted if new conditions emerge (Pyatnychuk et al., 2024). This approach would allow more precise forecasting of threats and implementing anticipatory strategies, since it gives the possibility to consider dynamically changing threats and conditions and identify emerging threat already at the stage of its very inception.

Collaborative intelligence, often known as "crowdforecasting for national security", is one of the creative approaches to creating national security priorities (Turan et al., 2024). This method was created in the United States. By presenting risks and trade-offs in an understandable manner, crowd forecasting techniques provide a methodical way to measure the level of future uncertainty within the U.S. intelligence community and predict the effects of interventions (Voronina et al., 2024). This helps decision-makers allocate resources and plan strategies. To improve intelligence analysis and interagency collaboration, it is suggested that ODNI make use of its previous investments in crowd-forecasting research. A next-generation crowd-forecasting program that strikes a balance between academic rigor and policy relevance should be developed by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), according to the statement. The authors of this approach suggest that executive branch agencies collaborate with a Federally Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC) that has experience with

crowd forecasting to create high-value forecasting questions and incorporate targeted forecasts into current briefing and decision-making procedures (Yermachenko et al., 2023). To guarantee that the predictions are policy-relevant, it is imperative that end users (such as those from the NSC, DoD, etc.) be included in the question-generation process. This strategy might greatly improve the caliber and significance of intelligence analysis, resulting in stronger and better-informed national security choices (Turan et al., 2024).

More significantly, a threat is not the same as a danger. Risk is the likelihood that a certain danger will materialize as well as its effects, when it does. A thorough grasp of risks, not just threats, should be the foundation of any national security plan. Additionally, risk assessment and comprehension must be dynamic, adjusting to actual occurrences.

Understanding geopolitical changes is one of the most important aspects of predicting contemporary risks to national security. Changes in regional alignments, alliance structures, and global power dynamics that affect international relations and security are all considered geopolitical changes. These changes may result from changes in the military, economic transformations, geopolitical realignments, or international diplomacy (Muhammad, 2023). It is essential to comprehend these dynamics pointing to evaluate how they affect national security strategies. Policymakers can foresee possible risks, spot new avenues for collaboration, and create plans to protect national interests by examining geopolitical changes (Zilinska et al., 2022). Keeping up with the latest developments is crucial for preserving strategic advantage and guaranteeing security in a world that is changing quickly. For those in charge of formulating foreign policy and military plans, it is crucial to invest in research and intelligence collection to track and analyze geopolitical developments (McCaffrey et al., 2024). Furthermore, developing alliances with nations and organizations that share similar values can strengthen resilience against shared threats and improve collective security initiatives.

Furthermore, studying case studies offers important insights into how changes in geopolitics impact the formulation of national defense strategy. For instance, NATO revised its defensive posture and increased its membership to meet new security threats after the Soviet Union's breakup and the ensuing geopolitical realignments in Eastern Europe (Eichler, 2021). To counter new threats and preserve regional stability, these changes required modifications to military deployments, strategic alliances, and defense budget priorities. Strategic assessments and military plans throughout the world have also changed because of the emergence of new global powers like China and changes in U.S. foreign policy goals. In order to adjust to changing geopolitical realities, nations impacted by these changes must reevaluate their defense strategies, technical expenditures, and diplomatic initiatives.

Limitations and Future Research

This study, while comprehensive in its conceptual analysis, is primarily based on a narrative literature review, which inherently carries the risk of subjective interpretation and may not capture the full breadth of empirical data or specific national contexts. Furthermore, the proposed "Agile" approach to threat forecasting, while theoretically sound, requires extensive empirical validation through real-world implementation and rigorous testing, which falls beyond the scope of this conceptual paper. The effectiveness of such an approach is also contingent on significant institutional and cultural shifts within national security apparatuses, which present considerable practical challenges not fully explored here.

Future research should focus on developing and testing concrete models for implementing agile threat forecasting, potentially through simulation exercises or pilot programs within national security agencies. Comparative case studies examining the adoption and efficacy of proactive security strategies in diverse geopolitical settings would also provide valuable insights. Additionally, further investigation into the ethical implications and potential misuse of advanced forecasting technologies, particularly those involving AI and crowd-sourced intelligence, is crucial to ensure responsible deployment and mitigate unintended consequences.

FINAL REMARKS

As the research shows, today, extremely high dynamics of changing the landscape of threats to national security puts countries in a position of necessity to reconsider their security strategies. Even though developed states managed to identify emerged threats, including those of latent nature, and review their security and defense strategies accordingly, their strategies are still of response nature, and not of the proactive/anticipatory ones. Meanwhile, this lagging can lead to rather critical consequences, as the considered example of New Zealand demonstrated. Thus, new approaches are needed, among which the Agile iterative one seems to be the most optimal for today realities.

Countries may increase resilience against complex threats and guarantee sustained growth in the face of global uncertainty by broadening their security frameworks beyond military capabilities. In order to protect national interests and advance international stability, defense plans must constantly adapt and innovate as the landscape of security threats changes.

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Task	% of contribution of each author					
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A. theoretical and conceptual foundations and problematization:	25%	20%	20%	15%	10%	10%
B. data research and statistical analysis:	25%	20%	15%	10%	10%	20%
C. elaboration of figures and tables:	20%	20%	20%	15%	15%	10%
D. drafting, reviewing and writing of the text:	20%	25%	15%	15%	15%	10%
E. selection of bibliographical references	20%	20%	20%	15%	15%	10%
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