

Abstract

The thesis deals with the Russian intervention in eastern Ukraine, in the period between February 2014 and the first half of 2015, with the focus on the Russian tactical approach in the operation. A chapter describing the context of the pre-war Ukraine, focusing on Russian-Ukrainian relationship and a brief introduction to the events prior to the war in eastern Ukraine, precedes the main body of the case study. I deem this chapter necessary for reader's understanding of the topic. This chapter is followed by the presentation of Russian strategic goals regarding Ukraine, which Russia aimed to achieve using its tactics in Donbas. This helps to determine the relative success of the Russian operation and the chosen tactics in the final conclusion of the paper. The main chapter describes the Russian tactical approach, which divides both the conflict and the structure of the chapter into particular phases. Transition of Russian tactical approach from the use of political warfare tools to the means of irregular warfare and subsequently to hybrid warfare, followed by a conventional, invasive attack by Russian regular troops, is depicted in the main chapter. The case study concludes that the Russian tactical approach in eastern Ukraine was poorly chosen or executed. The very limited achievement of political goals, which Russia wanted to accomplish by its aggression in eastern Ukraine, was only due to resorting to a conventional invasion, which was something Russia sought to avoid in Donbas from the very beginning of the operation.