On coverings of word values in profinite groups

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Let $w$ be a group-word. Suppose that the set of all $w$-values in a profinite group $G$ is contained in a union of countably many subgroups. It is natural to expect that the properties of the covering subgroups have an influence on the structure of the subgroup $w(G)$ generated by the $w$-values. I will discuss some recent results and some work in progress concerning the case where $w$ is a multilinear commutator word and the covering subgroups are nilpotent, pronilpotent or locally nilpotent.