

LINGUISTIC DISGUISE IN POLITICAL SPEECH: THE FUNCTIONS OF EUPHEMISMS

The challenges of a modern globalised world create the necessity to introduce a fundamentally new model of interaction between political actors and their audiences, which is focused on programming the recipients' behaviour and shaping their political and social orientation through communication influence. This influence is of a hidden nature, it appeals to people's subconscious and is aimed at adjusting their views, motivations and goals in accordance with the strategic course of the authorities. Linguistic trends in contemporary political discourse are characterised by the growing frequency of the use of language tools that allow to veil, soften or disguise reality. In linguistic practice, this phenomenon is denoted by the term 'euphemism'.

Modern political communication appears as a multilevel system of communication tools that aims to create a picture of the world in the public consciousness that is relevant and favourable to the political actor, and to form a positive image of the speaker. To achieve their communication goals, politicians actively use a wide range of strategies and tactics, accompanied by the use of specific speech techniques. Effective use of stylistic and rhetorical means in political speech helps to increase the impact on the addressees. In the current global situation, many politicians avoid openly expressing their position on sensitive issues, which leads to the actualisation of techniques of manipulating facts and mass consciousness in order to maintain political legitimacy. One of the most common tools of such influence is euphemism, the process of deliberately obscuring information. As a result, the content of the message either remains undisclosed or is perceived in a way that is favourable to the politician.

Euphemisms constitute a separate layer of vocabulary of the modern English language, which has deep historical roots and accompanies both everyday and public speech at different stages of the social development. These linguistic units are neutrally coloured substitutes for words and expressions with negative, taboo or unpleasant meanings. Each particular society has its own system of euphemisms, which reflects the socio-cultural specifics of the community.

Political communication, due to its semantic ambiguity, theatricality and saturation with various rhetorical techniques, creates favourable conditions for the formation and functioning of euphemisms. In this context, they act as tools to neutralise negative perceptions, contributing to the formation of positive images in the minds of recipients.

Oxford Learner's Dictionary provides the following definition of the concept under study: euphemism (for something) an indirect word or phrase that people often use to refer to something embarrassing or unpleasant, sometimes to make it seem more acceptable than it really is [2].

Cambridge Dictionary provides the following definition: euphemism is a word or phrase used to avoid saying an unpleasant or offensive word [1].

Euphemisms are used by politicians as a means of influencing the formation of public opinion, imposing their views by obscuring the essence of negative phenomena. Here are examples of such euphemisms from political speeches by Joseph Biden, who shared the tendency to avoid the direct nomination of 'war':

- *We won't always be able to advertise everything that our partners are doing to support Ukraine in its **fight for freedom** [4].*
- *We're sending it directly to **the frontlines of freedom**, to the fearless and skilled Ukrainian fighters..... [6].*
- *And now, in **the perennial struggle for democracy and freedom**, Ukraine and its people are on the frontlines fighting to save their nation [5].*
- *In the years before the **invasion**, we, America, had sent over \$650 million in weapons to Ukraine, including anti-air and anti-armour equipment [5].*
- *America's goal is straightforward: We want to see a democratic, independent, sovereign and prosperous Ukraine with the means to deter and defend itself against further **aggression** [3].*
- *The United States is with you in this **fight**. We understand we are with you afar... The **pressure** you will all get will be immense. [3].*

Considering the unambiguous, rough, categorical concept of 'war', the American leader preferred metaphorical phrases such as «fight for freedom», «frontlines of freedom», «struggle for democracy and freedom», «invasion», «aggression», «fight», «pressure» to describe it.

It is obvious that the communicative tasks set by a diplomat or politician cannot be solved without using hints, omissions, and so-called linguistic camouflage. That is why people in these professions actively use euphemisms in their work.

However, it is a mistake to consider euphemisms as a means of concealing something undesirable, negative or taboo. In modern communication, including political communication, euphemism is increasingly acquiring the function of political correctness. The use of politically correct vocabulary ensures inclusive communication, promotes respect for human rights and supports ethical standards of intercultural dialogue.

REFERENCES

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