

EUPHEMISMS IN POLITICS**ANASTASIYA MISHACHKINA, ZOYA TRATSIK****Polotsk State University, Belarus**

This article is about euphemisms in political sphere. In this article we will find out not only what the notion of a euphemism means but also what functions it has and what spheres of life it serves. The main aim is to find certain examples of euphemisms in a political article of newspaper "USA TODAY" and show what they are used for and how they change the language of mass media.

Today we cannot imagine life without mass media. Due to mass media we have an access to any information in the world no matter what spheres of life it tells us about. Moreover, it can be read for just a few minutes. Though there is a huge amount of information which a lot of various sources describe, this information is being processed carefully (journalists chose the most important information, edit the text they write and, finally, create an article that corresponds to some set list of rules). The result of such a long process is an article that is read by us every day in newspapers, blogs, etc.

The language of mass media has a lot of different features, one of them is a feature that is connected to such a notion as "political correctness". This notion means an intention to avoid various words and phrases which could make people feel uncomfortable or even cause offence to a person depending on his or her race, age, sex, color of the skin or some physical features. The notion of political correctness appeared in the 80–90th of XX century in the USA. Afro-Americans spoke against the use of the word "black" in case of their appearance. Later that trend was supported by feminists who were fighting for their rights in different spheres of life and who spoke against discrimination. So that is why some time later the trend of political correctness in the language got a wide spread not only in everyday life but also became a very important element of the language of mass media. The trend of political correctness changed the language of mass media and became an essential feature to look at in case of publication of different articles.

The language of political correctness is first of all a euphemistic language. It means that the basis of such a language is linked to the usage of euphemisms. According to O. S. Akhmanova, a euphemism is "a trope that consists of an indirect, veiled, gentle, softening designation of any thing or phenomenon" [1, p. 521]. Or as A.N. Morokhovskiy writes, it is "a type of paraphrase which aim is to replace rude, obscene and unpleasant phrases with the help of those which are more polite" [2, p. 170]. According to these definitions a euphemism is a stylistic device that makes it possible to avoid different words and phrases by changing them with the help of neutral synonyms that are more suitable for that certain situation. L. P. Krysin writes: "Euphemistic replacement is used because of the intention to avoid communication conflicts and failures and not to make an interlocutor feel communicative discomfort" [3, p. 391].

The notion of a euphemism is quite wide, that is why there are a lot of different classifications of them depending on a thing or phenomenon they replace and moderate:

- euphemisms which are used in order to replace such a notion like "death" (to join the majority, to go the way of all flesh, to pass away, to breathe one's last);
- euphemisms which are used in order to replace some religious notions or names (Heaven, Lord instead of God, or the dickens, old Harry instead of devil);
- euphemisms which are used in the sphere of politics, for example such of them that replace notions describing financial and social status of a person (less fortunate elements instead of the poor or building up of labour reserves instead of unemployment);
- euphemisms which replace names of some professions in order to make their names sound more prestigious (sanitation man instead of garbage collector, or hairstylist, that is used instead of hairdresser; besides a lot of words in the English language have the ending "man", this fact is the reason of disputes among women (especially feminists) nowadays that is why you can see changes of the ending "man" in many words replaced by the ending "person" (chairperson instead of chairman), etc.

V.P. Moskvina distinguishes the following functions of euphemisms in his article "Euphemisms: functions and methods of forming":

- to avoid "certain names of scaring things and phenomena" such as "death" or notions which are connected with diseases leading to death;
- to avoid naming unpleasant or even disgusting phenomena or things;

- to replace notions that are thought to be improper, unacceptable for usage in speech in the society during some certain time (such euphemisms are known also as “everyday”);
- to replace notions which are connected to the rules of etiquette, they have the aim to escape from conflicts or possibility to hurt someone’s feelings (for example euphemisms that replace some words describing mental capacity of people or words describing sexual relationships between people);
- to use euphemisms in order to make periphrasis of names of less prestigious professions, financial and social status of people and, as it was said earlier, such euphemisms have the aim to escape from conflict or uncomfortable situations for an interlocutor [4, p. 62–64].

If to speak about “political euphemisms” or “euphemistic political metaphors”, we need to say that their main aim is to create neutral language. This language should be free from any emotional coloring which can lead to political conflicts not only within a country but also among countries and cause an international conflict. Because of this journalists try to use that stylistic method that is being described in the article and that is able to veil or moderate some information which is thought to be inappropriate. The usage of political euphemisms can be found in any newspaper and one of the examples is the article of the newspaper “USA TODAY”.

In the article “After Trump's victory, Putin wants better relations” we can see the example of a euphemism in the title. In this case we can speak about the phrase “better relations” which could have been used in order to replace some emotionally colored notion connected with sanctions and political conflict between two countries. In this article we can find the phrase “to move to gain the upper hand” that is neutral and could have been used in order to replace such verbs as “to dominate” or “to rule”. The usage of the phrase “deeply strained relations” can be considered as more suitable, neutral replacement of a notion which can wound feelings of a person from different country (in this case of Russia). Describing the conflict of interests of Russia and the USA on the territory of Ukraine we can read the following words: “Those moves led to international sanctions that prompted Putin to retaliate against foreign companies operating in his country”. In this context the verb “to retaliate” can be considered as a euphemism that replaces an emotionally colored verb “to revenge” or “to avenge”. Later, during the description of the same situation, the author of the article uses a sentence: “Washington has consistently accused Moscow of straying from the truth”. In this sentence a euphemism is the phrase “to stray from the truth”. The usage of this euphemism shows us the intention of the journalist to avoid a rude and an inappropriate for the language of political correctness verb “to lie”.

Modern life changes as well as rules of behavior and polite speech. The examples of the usage of euphemisms in political discourse show how important it is to look for suitable for some certain situation words. As it was noted earlier and confirmed with the help of examples, the euphemisms which were found in that article are directly linked to the intention to avoid the usage of inappropriate, emotionally colored words and phrases that can damage international relations and connection between countries.

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