



THE FUNCTION OF EUPHEMISMS IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE

Murodova Bonu Murod qizi

*Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Philology and
Language Teaching (English), 4th-year student*

Email: murodovabonul@gmail.com

Bozorboyeva Ruxshona Abdurakhmon qizi

*Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Philology and
Language Teaching (English), 4th-year student*

Email: bozorboyevvaruxshona4@gmail.com

Sadullayeva Vazira Khudoyberdi qizi

*Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Philology and
Language Teaching (English), 4th-year student*

Email: Saydullayevzafar22@gmail.com

Abstract: This article examines how euphemisms are used in political discourse and explores their communicative and pragmatic functions. The study analyzes how euphemisms are employed in political speech to soften, obscure, or reinterpret sensitive issues, as well as to make them more socially acceptable and influence the audience. It also demonstrates, through examples, how euphemisms can be used as a tool of manipulation by concealing or re-framing real events. The article discusses the characteristics of political language, as well as the semantic and stylistic aspects of euphemisms, and their significance in social and cultural contexts. The findings show that euphemisms are an important linguistic tool for analyzing political discourse.

Introduction

The term euphemism originates from Greek and, according to many scholars, refers to the substitution of an inappropriate or harsh expression with a more acceptable one. A.A. Reformatzky defines euphemisms as “words permitted to be used in place of prohibited (taboo) expressions.” In the Linguistic Encyclopedic Dictionary, a euphemism is described as “an emotionally neutral word or expression used instead of one that is considered rude or inappropriate by the speaker.”

According to A. Hojiev in his Explanatory Dictionary of Linguistic Terms (2002), a euphemism (from Greek euphemismos: eu – good, phemi – to speak) is a softer way of expressing a concept; it involves replacing rude, impolite, or taboo words with more acceptable alternatives. For example, instead of saying



“pregnant” in a direct or culturally sensitive way, expressions like “expecting” or “in a delicate condition” may be used.

Main Part

In politics, euphemisms are not merely a play on words; they serve as an important strategic tool for shaping public opinion and softening complex socio-political situations. They do not deny reality but present it in a form that is easier for the audience to accept. In this way, euphemisms are an essential part of political communication.

The communicative function of euphemisms lies in presenting information in a socially acceptable manner. Politicians communicate more effectively with their audiences by avoiding overly direct or harsh expressions when discussing complex or controversial issues. For example, using the phrase “military exercise” instead of “war” helps prevent strong negative reactions from listeners.

Euphemisms are closely connected to the speaker’s intentions and goals, allowing influence over the audience’s perception. In other words, euphemisms not only convey information but also shape how that information is received.

Another important function of euphemisms is the neutralization of negative content. Politicians tend to avoid words that may provoke fear or strong negative emotions and instead use softer, more neutral expressions. For instance, phrases such as “military operation” or “peacekeeping mission” are often used instead of “war,” giving these actions a more positive or legitimate tone.

Moreover, euphemisms are widely used to mask economic difficulties. During periods of economic crisis, governments employ softer language to calm public concern. For example, instead of saying “price increases,” they may use terms like “price adjustments” or “corrections.” Similarly, “poverty” may be replaced with expressions such as “low-income status” or “social vulnerability.”

Euphemisms also function as a means of justifying unpopular political or economic decisions. For example, the phrase “staff optimization” may refer to layoffs, while “austerity measures” may indicate significant reductions in government spending. Such expressions make these processes appear less severe and present them as necessary and well-considered reforms.

From a semantic perspective, euphemisms involve a re-coding of meaning. They do not express negative or harsh realities directly but present them in a more indirect and less emotionally charged way. For example, using “low-income” instead of “poor” preserves the meaning while reducing emotional intensity.



Stylistically, euphemisms add formality, diplomacy, and balance to political speech. They expand the expressive potential of language and make discourse smoother, more controlled, and strategically structured. In international diplomacy, phrases such as “the positions of the parties differ” help to soften and obscure open conflict.

Overall, euphemisms function both as a communicative tool and as a powerful instrument of political influence. Their semantic and stylistic features play a key role in aligning the content and form of political speech with audience expectations.

Conclusion

Euphemisms are words or expressions that arise as substitutes for those considered rude, harsh, or inappropriate. They are used to avoid directly stating negative realities and to soften their impact. For example, instead of saying “died,” one may say “passed away.”

In political discourse, euphemisms are used to soften controversial situations and express opposition indirectly. Their communicative and pragmatic functions are of great importance. However, euphemisms are not only used to mitigate situations but also to conceal reality. In addition, their semantic and stylistic aspects occupy a significant place in political language.

REFERENCES

1. Allan, K., & Burridge, K. — Euphemism and Dysphemism: Language Used as Shield and Weapon
2. van Dijk, T. A. — Discourse and Power
3. Orwell, G. — Politics and the English Language
5. Fairclough, N. — Language and Power
6. Charteris-Black, J. — Politicians and Rhetoric: The Persuasive Power of Metaphor
7. Encyclopaedia Britannica — www.britannica.com
8. BBC News — www.bbc.com/news