

UDC 811

**EUPHEMISMS AND DYSPEMISMS IN ENGLISH-
AND RUSSIAN-LANGUAGE MEDIA AS A
REFLECTION OF SOCIO-HUMANISTIC PROBLEMS**

**ЭВФЕМИЗМЫ И ДИСФЕМИЗМЫ В
АНГЛОЯЗЫЧНЫХ И РУССКОЯЗЫЧНЫХ СМИ КАК
ОТРАЖЕНИЕ СОЦИОГУМАНИСТИЧЕСКИХ
ПРОБЛЕМ СОВРЕМЕННОГО ОБЩЕСТВА**

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Ключевые слова: эвфемизмы, дисфемизмы, СМИ, табуированные слова, манипуляция.

Abstract. The article describes pragmatic aspects of euphemization and dysphemization in modern English and Russian-language media. Euphemisms and dysphemisms are studied as means to hide true information and in case with dysphemisms – as means of exaggerating social, cultural and political phenomenon to represent it in a less favorable view. The examples analyzed in the research give an opportunity to see a complex of socio-humanistic problems of the modern world.

Аннотация. Статья описывает прагматические особенности процессов эвфемизации и дисфемизации в современных англоязычных и русскоязычных СМИ. Эвфемизмы и дисфемизмы рассматриваются как средство реализации стратегии сокрытия правдивой информации, уклонения от истины, а в случае с дисфемизмами – в качестве средств гиперболизации определенного социального, культурного или политического явления и его подачи в менее выгодном свете. Исследуемые единицы дают возможность увидеть сложный комплекс социо-гуманистических проблем современного общества.

The world people live in today is quite a complicated and diverse system of values that take their roots in intellectual, moral and political foundations of the countries. In today's multiplex environment we observe the nations' complex and contradictory manifestation of humanistic principles of modern society development. We face nowadays a great number of socio-humanistic problems, appearing in different countries all over the globe, that are reflected in special ways in different languages. On the one hand, there is a tendency in the modern

society to veil or soften some troublesome, offensive or socially disapproved terms and phenomena. On the other hand, the principles of tolerant policy are not always followed in modern mass media and the weapon of denigrating, offending and even shocking the opponent is used quite frequently for the sake of those who present information. Thus, the focus of the current research is in studying euphemisms and dysphemisms functioning in the modern English and Russian-speaking mass media discourse.

Ch. E. Kany, an American linguist and the author of the American-Spanish Euphemisms Dictionary, defines the euphemism as «the means by which a disagreeable, offensive or fear-instilling matter is designated with an indirect or softer term» [2, V]. “Dysphemism” is a term which is opposed to “euphemism” and defined by O.S. Achmanova as «a trope consisting in substituting the natural meaning of the object in particular context by a rude and more vulgar unit» [3, 137]. The aim of both linguistic phenomena in mass media texts is to change the real information in order to show it in a more beneficial way for the sender of the information. Thus, the targeted reader faces the problem of truthfulness being given distorting information and furthermore being misled and manipulated.

In the present article we are interested in how social, political and cultural problems of the modern societies are reflected in English and Russian-language media through the processes of euphemization and dysphemization. The study investigates the euphemism and dysphemism as a tool for truth evasion in modern media discourse and its impact on the recipient. The language material was excerpted from news Internet articles published by CNN News, Daily Mail, PoliticoPRO, The Guardian, The New Yorker, The Week, The New York Times, Komsomolskaya Pravda in 2022-2023, discussing social, political and cultural issues. All the units found were classified according to several major categories, that are represented in the further part of the article.

Type 1. Euphemisms that exclude discrimination of any kind, such as race, gender, age, religion, and so on. The most common cases are when euphemisms are used to denote age, gender, race, and physical disabilities. As an example, let us turn to such euphemisms as «elderly», «mature», «senior», «pensioner» instead of «old person» in the English language. And in the Russian language instead of «старый» euphemisms are most often used: «пожилой», «человек в возрасте», «в годах» and others. The Authors of the articles resort to the use of euphemisms in order to refer to a particular group of people, avoiding offense. «Chinese court jails elderly US citizen for life on spy charge» / «Президент Путин поручил представить новые методики по оказанию помощи пожилым людям».

Type 2. Euphemisms for death and illness. In the modern world the topic of death is taboo, that is why in the Russian and English languages there is a large number of expressions replacing this word. Euphemisms «no longer with us», «no more», «lose the wind», «passed away» are used to denote «dying». In

Russian, euphemisms for the word «смерть» include «последний час», «вечный покой», «летальный исход» and others. «A good friend of mine, unfortunately no longer with us, him and I set up a soccer club» / «В Коми зарегистрирован летальный исход из-за гриппа».

Type 3 includes euphemisms denoting the influence of the state on the population. For instance, euphemisms for war, poverty, unemployment and others. The topic of poverty is an unpleasant phenomenon, so people try to hide their financial situation. That is why such euphemisms are most often used to denote «poverty» such as: «the needy», «penniless», «deprived», «low-income family» and others. «First tranche of cost-of-living payments due for low-income families tomorrow».

The following types of dysphemisms can also be distinguished. Type 1. Dysphemisms denoting «смерть», «болезнь», mental and physical disabilities. As an example, let us turn to the concept «dead», dysphemisms for which are: «annihilated», «brown bread», «bump off», «checked out», «croaked», «dead meat» and others. In the Russian language we also find many dysphemisms for the word «мертвый», for example, «дохлый», «сыгравший в ящик», «склеивший ласты», «издохший» and others. «Proposal urges wildfire fix, flatlines funding» / «Жительница Владивостока вернулась к себе домой по улице Сельская, 6 и обнаружила в квартире дохлую змею».

Type 2. Dysphemisms denoting concepts that belong to the criminal sphere. Dysphemisms of «убийства» can be such concepts as «резня», «мокруха», «заказуха», «складка» and others. The following dysphemisms may be used to refer to illegally acquired money: «dirty money», «boodle», «booty». «Резня по-приморски: житель Находки напал на посетителей кафе» / «Hundreds of millions of pounds of dirty money is being laundered via Post Office branches every year».

Type 3. Dysphemisms denoting national belonging. There are many dysphemisms of this category in both Russian and English, such as «чурка», «негр», «черный», «узкоглазый», «white-arsed», «nigger», «blackmoor» and others. «В Пятигорске трое негров «развели» бизнесмена на 190 тысяч евро» / «All niggers will be dead by 2025, president Trump claims that niggers are evil and lgbtq people are going to also be dead by 2025!».

One of the main socio-humanistic and political issues to be concerned in the modern society development is war conflicts in different parts of the world. War is a horrifying event that brings blood and death, but mass media can interpret the events according to the linguistic worldview of the society and often neutralize the real situation. The English-speaking saucers of mass media use a language of so-called «military euphemisms», which hide the truth and make the facts neutral or more terrible (if senders want to emphasize the fault of their rivals). Such dysphemisms as «occupiers», «aggression» are quite frequently used in English-speaking materials to exaggerate the situation whereas euphemisms «losses», «casualties», «conflict», «military conflict» are used to

camouflage the phenomenon that is troublesome and not in favour of the addresser.

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**DEVELOPING TAILOR-MADE MATERIALS FOR
THE STUDENTS OF MANAGEMENT AND
ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT**

**ПРОБЛЕМА ОТБОРА И АДАПТАЦИИ
МАТЕРИАЛОВ ДЛЯ СТУДЕНТОВ,
ИЗУЧАЮЩИХ ЭКОНОМИКУ И МЕНЕДЖМЕНТ**

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*Abstract. English has taken over as the primary language used for worldwide communication in the age of globalization, when individuals from all over the world share information on a regular basis. As a result, there is a growing need for high-quality English language instruction, particularly for English for specific purposes (ESP), where teachers must deal with both the issues of intercultural communicative competence and the specific terminology and skills required of professional intercourse. Utilizing resources created specifically for publishing the book, *Stretch Opportunities: Skills and Language for Your Future Career*, with the co-authors (colleagues of Foreign Languages Chair 1), the following prerequisites and objectives are achieved: ESP materials design*