ТЕОРЕТИЧЕСКАЯ, ПРИКЛАДНАЯ И СРАВНИТЕЛЬНО-СОПОСТАВИТЕЛЬНАЯ ЛИНГВИСТИКА / THEORETICAL, APPLIED AND COMPARATIVE LINGUISTICS

THE USE OF LEXICAL UNITS WITH A NEGATIVE CONNOTATION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MANIPULATIVE STRATEGIES IN AMERICAN POLITICAL DISCOURSE

Research article

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Abstract

In modern conditions of growing confrontation between Russia and the NATO bloc, a number of processes are taking place in American political discourse that are a reaction to changes in the extra-linguistic situation or aimed at its transformation. For example, a number of strategies are being intensified, including a strategy to lower Russia's image in the international arena, which involves the use of numerous linguistic resources to form a negative image of particular states in the eyes of the world community, while simultaneously using a strategy to increase the importance of the United States, as well as a strategy of theatricality.

The relevance of this study lies in the fact that the activation of the strategy to lower Russia's image in American political discourse has led to an increase in the share of vocabulary with negative connotations, such as dysphemisms and pejoratives, as well as the emergence of military, sports, medical terms, etc. Such vocabulary has not been used to such extent in this discourse before. In addition, an active dramatization of events related to Russia using emotional and evaluative vocabulary is being activated, which is of interest from the point of view of language study. This is due to the fact that linguistic strategies, such as the use of lexical units with negative connotations and emotional-evaluative vocabulary, can have a significant impact on the perception of political events and the formation of public opinion. Therefore, this study allows us to identify which linguistic tools are being used in political discourse within its main strategies to spoil Russia's image.

Keywords: political discourse, institutional discourse, vocabulary with negative connotations, manipulative strategies in language.

ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ ЛЕКСИКИ С ОТРИЦАТЕЛЬНОЙ КОННОТАЦИЕЙ ДЛЯ РЕАЛИЗАЦИИ МАНИПУЛЯТИВНЫХ СТРАТЕГИЙ В АМЕРИКАНСКОМ ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОМ ДИСКУРСЕ

Научная статья

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Аннотация

В современных условиях нарастающей конфронтации между Россией и блоком НАТО, в американском политическом дискурсе происходит ряд процессов, являющихся реакцией на изменения экстралингвистической ситуации или направленных на её трансформацию. Так, например, происходит активизация ряда стратегий, среди которых стратегия на понижение имиджа России на международной арене, которая предполагает использование всевозможных ресурсов языка для формирования негативного образа отдельных государств в глазах мирового сообщества, при одновременном использовании стратегии на повышение значимости США. Также широко используется стратегия театральности.

Актуальность настоящего исследования заключается в том, что активизация стратегии на понижение в американском политическом дискурсе повлекла за собой рост доли лексики с отрицательной коннотацией, такой как дисфемизмы и пейоративы, а также массовое вовлечение военных, спортивных, медицинских терминов и других терминологических единиц в политический дискурс. Подобная лексика ранее в данном дискурсе в таком объёме не употреблялась. Кроме того, произошла активная драматизация событий, связанных с Россией, при помощи эмоционально-оценочной лексики, что представляет интерес с точки зрения исследования языка. Это связано с тем,

что использование лексики с отрицательной коннотацией и эмоционально-оценочной лексики может оказывать значительное влияние на восприятие политических событий и помогать политическим акторам манипулировать общественным мнением. Таким образом, данное исследование позволяет выявить, какие лингвистические средства используются в политическом дискурсе в рамках его стратегий для трансформации имиджа России.

Ключевые слова: политический дискурс, институциональный дискурс, лексика с отрицательной коннотацией, манипулятивные стратегии в языке.

Introduction

Political discourse has been extensively studied, and various definitions exist for this term. In this paper, we will define political discourse as a form of practical speech activity wherein individuals engage in "the interpretation of social reality using key political terms and categories" (Pyrma, 2019). According to Nikulina D.E., a distinctive feature of politics is its "predominantly discursive nature: most political actions by their nature are speech actions" [19, P. 147]. Moreover, these actions are aimed at modifying the non-linguistic sphere.

Being one of the institutional discourses, political discourse has a number of linguistic features, for example, it includes specific vocabulary (terms, nomen, professionalisms and professional jargon), special phraseological units and paremias (Sheigal, 2004). According to Chudinov A.P., the language of politics is characterized by semantic uncertainty, fideism, esotericism, phantomism, theatricality and distance (Chudinov, 2006). In addition, an important feature of political discourse is its value orientation.

Research methods and principles

Being a type of persuasive discourse [3, P. 403], political discourse has a pronounced manipulative function, which consists in forming a certain attitude of the target audience to the events presented by the politician. As P.S. Akinina notes, manipulation is the most important function of presidential speeches in the United States [2, P. 7].

According to Yu. A. Gornostaeva, manipulation is a leading discursive practice that allows "hidden deformations in the worldview of the mass addressee" [10, P. 7], due to which the addressee is instilled with predictable assessments and/or actions in the presence of "hidden motives, logical transitions, plot schemes, background of the audience and the author, expectations existing in a particular era" [11, P. 43].

As A. A. Karamova notes, any impact of political discourse has an ideological character, which "dictates" the choice of optimal strategies of political discourse [12, P. 14], and, consequently, the linguistic means of their implementation.

In this work, the author shares the opinion of N. G. Martynenko that vocabulary is "a means of explicating the value paradigm and the emotions associated with it, which characterize the linguistic community" [18, P. 121].

With the help of linguistic means, politicians not only "introduce into the consciousness of recipients their vision of the world picture," but also "an evaluative and emotive attitude towards its elements" [20, P. 6]. Trying to have a predetermined pragmatic impact on their target audience, politicians use certain strategies and tactics in their speeches, doing this more and more aggressively.

Sattarova R.V. notes that aggression grows from the essence of political relations [25, P. 49]. Within the framework of political discourse, it is harmoniously combined with tolerance. However, the study shows that in their speeches, key US politicians demonstrate a tolerant attitude towards Ukraine and open aggression towards Russia.

Main results

The presence of aggression in modern military-political discourse of the United States is noted by K. E. Pavlova, emphasizing that on the most pressing problems of global politics it "is distinguished by its particular lexical aggressiveness combined with the widespread use of falsified information, false accusations and outright deception" [22, P. 130].

There are three main strategies used in political discourse:
1)   Strategy for increase;
2)   Strategy for lowering;
3)   Strategy of theatricality [3, P. 403].

This work is devoted to the second and the third strategies' considering of the specifics' implementation and the tactics that are used within their framework to construct the image of Russia.

First of all, it is necessary to answer that US political discourse is characterized by the active use of a strategy for lowering in relation to states that refuse to "play" by US rules. In particular, as Yu. A. Gornostaeva notes that American politicians in their speeches, covering events related to the Russian Federation, implement 2 main strategies "presenting the opponent in an unfavorable light and positive self-presentation" [10, P. 7].

For this purpose, vocabulary that has a connotative meaning is being widely used, which can have a significant impact on the perception of the generated texts.

The term connotation comes from the Latin preposition con - "together" and the verb noto (avi, atum, are), which, according to the dictionary, has the following meanings relevant to this study:
1) to designate, mark;
5) mark;
6) express;
7) indicate, hint;
9) perceive [10, P. 7].

According to the definition of this word in the etymological dictionary, it came into use in the 15th century: Connotation (n.) - early 15th century. – "a secondary signification, which is included in the meaning of a word besides its primary denotation, from assimilated form of Latin com "with, together" (see con-) + notare "to mark, note, make a note" (Online Etymology Dictionary).

Currently, in the broadest sense, the meaning of the term connotation is reflected in the explanatory dictionary of the Russian language:

Connotation, - And; and. [lat. connotatio] linguistic – additional, accompanying semantic increment of a linguistic unit [7, P. 449].

In the dictionary of linguistic terms, connotation is defined as "associations that speakers have with a given word and reflect cultural ideas and traditions." At the same time, the dictionary distinguishes between evaluative and emotional connotations:

Evaluative connotation is the "feeling component of a word's meaning." Emotional connotation is "a component of meaning associated with the expression of feelings, volitional impulses, sensory or intellectual comparisons" [12, P. 162]. Therefore, connotation is a complex phenomenon.

The works of Arnold I.V. are devoted to a detailed development of the essence of connotation, who identified four main components of connotation:

1) emotional,
2) expressive,
3) evaluative,
4) functional-stylistic.

These components of connotation usually do not exist separately. According to V.I. Shakhovsky, they are often combined with each other, forming combined connotations (expressive-evaluative, emotional-evaluative, emotionally-expressive [36, P. 58].

However, the presence of one component does not imply the presence of the other; they can vary in different combinations. This point of view is shared by Arnold I. V., Buldakova V. A., Sternin I. A., etc. Thus, the emotional component of connotation is considered as an expression of an emotion or feeling by a word, the evaluative component is understood as an approving or disapproving assessment contained in the meaning of a word, the expressive component is conceptualized as an expression by a word of strengthening of features included in the denotative component of the meaning, the stylistic component of the meaning is its functional component. All these components of connotation, as well as the whole variety of types of connotation, are actively used by politicians to exert a manipulative influence on the target audience.

As Terekhova E.V. notes, this occurs due to the fact that "the sum of all connotations (social, cultural, ethical, historical, emotive, expressive, evaluative) constitutes the pragmatic component [30, P. 134].

To create a negative image of Russia in American political discourse, pejorative (negative) assessment is widely used.

Pejoration is a negative, emotionally loaded expressive evaluation. In general, pejoratives, that is, words with a negatively evaluative meaning, constitute a layer of vocabulary that is much more significant than the semantic group of lexical units with a positively evaluative meaning (melioratives).

This may be due to extra-linguistic factors: while positive qualities are perceived as the "norm" and correspond to "normal" behavior, negative phenomena do not correspond to these norms, therefore, they are perceived first of all, since they are potentially dangerous.

Pejoratives serve as a means of achieving an illocutionary effect and provide discursive expectations of the recipient. The "illocutionary effect" is understood as the ability of the addresser to evoke a pragmatic attitude towards the statement in the addressee [31, P. 19].

The illocutionary effect on the addressee is directly related to evaluation, so an utterance with an evaluative component can produce an illocutionary effect. An illocution expresses a certain intention, desire, goal of the speaker. Therefore, the purpose of using pejoratives is to obtain the maximum illocutionary effect using optimally selected linguistic means.

The criterion for selecting pejorative vocabulary only based on marks in dictionaries is insufficient, since the composition and number of pejorative marks differ in different lexicographic reference books. Therefore, following Turetskova I.V., additional criteria were used, the key ones being:

- possible, but not obligatory, presence of a synonym in the layer of neutral vocabulary, since it is not always possible to find a stylistically neutral synonym expressed in one word;
- emotive-evaluative nature;
- the ability to cause negative emotional reactions and express disapproval (at the level of speech).

According to E. K. Pavlova, in connection with the aggravation of military-political conflicts and the US's waging of an information war, American political discourse, among other things, is currently characterized by the dissemination of deliberately false information (disinformation), as well as labeling for the purpose of manipulating public consciousness . Therefore, in the first case, euphemisms are used to hide the truth, and dysphemisms are used to create the image of the enemy [22, P. 131].

If euphemisms are used to veil or embellish something, then dysphemisms are used to demonstrate a negative and/or derogatory attitude towards the communicator and/or communicative situation. When using euphemisms, the severity of the problem is lost, while dysphemisms, on the contrary, allow us to focus attention on it [13, P. 118].

An analysis of the definitions of the term dysphemism showed that this phenomenon is a crude name for something: "replacement of the natural designation of an object in a given context with a more vulgar, familiar or rude one" [4, P. 571].

A more detailed definition of the phenomenon in question is given in the encyclopedic dictionary-reference book: dysphemism is "a word or expression that is opposite in function to euphemism, the deliberate use of rude, vulgar, stylistically reduced (sometimes obscene) words and expressions for the purpose of expressing a (sharply) negative assessment or creating expression in those cases where stylistically and emotionally neutral use is possible" (ESS, 2003).

Thus, dysphemisms are words used instead of stylistically neutral lexical units and containing "connotations that are offensive to the subject of conversation or the addressee (Malyuga, Orlova, 2019).

However, dysphemisms are not always abusive and rude names. Thus, Lysyakova M.V. and Gaevaya A.A. note that dysphemism can also be a stylistically neutral word or expression, sometimes with ameliorative overtones, "used to discredit the addressee or express a negative assessment with the meaning of disapproval, neglect, contempt" (Lysyakova, Gaevskaya, 2018), used in political discourse to influence the target audience in order to form a certain attitude towards something or someone. This opinion is shared by E. F. Bekh, emphasizing that in political discourse the discrediting of a phenomenon / subject occurs through the direct expression of a negative attitude towards this phenomenon [5, P. 63], that is, through dysphemisms.

According to O. D. Pastukhova, in a certain context, even stylistically neutral lexical units can acquire dysphemistic properties, "having undergone changes in the denotative aspect, as a result of which changes occur in the connotative aspect" [23, P. 71].

This position is important for this work, since the top officials of the state cannot use reduced vocabulary in their speech. However, they can compensate for this by using commonly used vocabulary, which, within the context, can acquire features of dysphemisms.

In this regard, it should be mentioned that Cheporukhina M.G. identifies pure and hidden dysphemisms. By pure dysphemisms, the researcher understands words and expressions that have negative semes that are explicitly implemented in a given communicative situation, while hidden dysphemisms are lexical units that "have a neutral or positive meaning in the language, ... but acquire negative connotations in a communication situation and express negative or derogatory attitude..." [34, P. 98-99].

The works are devoted to the study of dysphemisms as a means of discrediting and disinformation T.N. Abakova [1], I.G. Katenevoy [14], L.G. Navasartyan, O.V. Obvintseva [21], etc., which examine the functioning of these lexical units in the media. However, the functioning of dysphemisms in political discourse remains insufficiently studied, which determines the relevance of this study.

Analysis of the selected material showed that American politicians implement the strategies being studied not in isolation, but in an integrated manner.

In this they are helped, first of all, by emotional and evaluative vocabulary.

As a result of the analysis of the selected material in the speeches of top US officials published on the official website of the White House, dysphemisms proper, contextual and semantically derived dysphemisms identified by A. A. Gaeva, V. V. Gurin and I. P. Petrova taking into account their semantic and pragmatic features [8, P. 61].

It was revealed that the group of dysphemisms in American political discourse is gradually expanding. If Gaevaya A.A., Gurin V.V. and Petrova I.P. noted that due to political correctness the share of dysphemisms themselves is small, that the studied material showed that the first US politicians began to express their position much more sharply, including in their speech the words having offensive meaning.

For example, in the following example, instead of the term government departments and agencies, the word kleptocracy is used:

Our measures will continue to sap Putin's military-industrial complex of critical components, prevent the central bank's foreign reserves from propping up an ailing economy and deprive Putin of the resources he needs to wage his war, and hold the kleptocracy to account for its ill- gained gains [39].

Discussion

The presence of semes with a negative meaning is confirmed by the definitions of these words:

Kleptocracy *[informal] a government where officials are politically corrupt and financially self-interested* (Collins).

In Russian this corresponds to the phrase "rule of thieves."

The presence of the mark informal indicates that this word can be classified as a dysphemism.

It should also be noted that the negative impact of the dysphemism in question is enhanced through the context in which a number of words and expressions with negative connotations and related to the colloquial style are used. This, for example, includes the expression ill-gotten gains:

Ill-gotten gains *are things that someone has obtained in a dishonest or illegal way (*Collins).

Thus, *ill-gotten gains* - money or property obtained illegally,

With the help of a chain of dysphemisms, US President Joe Biden creates the image of Russia as an enemy who has invaded the territory of a sovereign state. In this fragment, in addition to the lexical units considered, the US President also deliberately uses the word war, which has a pronounced connotative meaning, instead of the term special operation.

Such cluster use allows you to significantly enhance the "negative charge" of the message, presenting information from the "right" angle.

The following example shows a similar trend: the word *slog*, which is a dysphemism, is accompanied by a chain of military terms that have semes with a negative meaning in their semantic structures.

Ten years later, the Soviet Union collapsed, and Poland and Central and Eastern Europe would soon be free. Nothing about that battle for freedom was simple or easy. It was a long, painful slog fought over not days and months, but years and decades [39].

The central position is occupied by the dysphemism slog:

Slog, *US [informal] noun. 1. hard work done persistently; 2. an arduous, lengthy, and, sometimes, boring trip, effort, or task* (Collins).

It is surrounded on both sides by the military terms battle and fight:

Battle,*noun. – a prolonged engagement between large numbers of opposing troops* [37, P. 25].

Fight, *verb. – to use physical force against another person, army, etc., in order to defend yourself or to inflict injury* [37, P. 94].

The context under consideration also contains commonly used vocabulary that has a negative connotation: collapse, painful, which enhances the impact of dysphemism on the target audience.

The following example uses the term autocrat, which becomes a dysphemism within the context:

President Zelenskyy was democratically elected. He's Jewish. His father's family was wiped out in the Nazi Holocaust. And Putin has the audacity, like all autocrats before him, to believe that might will make right [39].

The definition of the lexical unit autocrat confirms its belonging to the legal terminology system:

Autocrat*, noun (US). 1. an absolute ruler, esp. a monarch who holds and exercises the powers of government as by inherent right, not subject to restrictions; 2. a person invested with or claiming to exercise absolute authority; 3. a person who behaves in an authoritarian manner; a domineering person* (Collins).

However, in the context under consideration, the term takes on a sharply negative meaning – dictator, despot.

This fragment also contains the contextual dysphemism wipe out (cut, destroy):

Wipe out*, verb (US) – a. to destroy completely; demolish; b. (informal) to murder; kill* (Collins).

When used within the immediate context, the considered dysphemisms acquire a synergistic effect, enhancing each other's effect. With their help, the United States openly demonstrates its hostile attitude towards Russia, comparing it with Germany during the Second World War.

In the corpus of selected texts there are also semantically derived dysphemisms that do not have this derogation in their nuclear meaning, for example:

But he, Putin, thought Ukrainians would roll over and not fight [39].

This is evidenced by the definition of the verb roll over, recorded in the dictionary:

Roll over*- 1. Phrasal verb. If you are lying down and you roll over, you turn your body so that a different part of you is facing upward; 2. If a moving vehicle such as a car rolls over, it turns over many times, usually because it has crashed; 3. If you say that someone rolls over, you mean that they stop resisting someone and do what the other person wants them to do* (Collins).

However, in this context, the derivative meaning of this word is realized, which turns it into dysphemism:

Roll over*(slang) – to surrender* (Collins).

Consequently, in the context there is a contrast between the meaning of the term fight and the dysphemism roll over, which enhances the contrast between the actions they denote.

Thus, the study showed that in the speeches of key US politicians there are various types of dysphemisms used with the aim of forming a negative attitude of the target audience towards Russia in the process of information war.

In each analyzed speech, dysphemisms help J. Biden use the "analysis-minus" tactic, expressing his negative attitude towards the situation being described, for example:

I know this Independence Day is bittersweet for many Ukrainians as thousands have been killed or wounded, millions have been displaced from their homes, and so many others have fallen victim to Russian atrocities and attacks [39].

It should be noted that the expression of attitude occurs not implicitly, but explicitly through such words as victim, atrocities, to kill and to wound. These lexical units help politicians express a negative opinion towards Russia's actions.

Blame tactics are used especially actively during a Special Military Operation. It should be emphasized that in most cases this accusation is not impersonal, but targeted:

And just as Putin chose to launch this brutal invasion, he could make the choice to end this brutal invasion [39].

This fragment clearly demonstrates that J. Biden places responsibility on the Russian President. At the same time, in the context there is a pejorative brutal, which gives a negative assessment of the actions of V.V. Putin:

Brutal*,adj. – savage; cruel; inhuman* (Collins).

Also, J. Biden uses the military term invasion, which shows that the entry of military forces was carried out with the aim of conquering the territory of another state:

Invasion*,noun. – an act of invasion. Invade, verb. to enter another state's territory with military forces, in order to conquer it* [37, P. 131].

The use of military terminology as a tool of manipulation is a deliberate action, as a result of which a "frightening image of Russia as an aggressor state" is created [10, P. 146].

Thus, with the help of such lexical units, J. Biden interprets the entry of Russian troops not as a means of denazification, but as an invasion, purposefully forming a negative attitude towards Russia's actions among the target audience.

Such a concentration of linguistic units with negative connotations increases the conflict-generating potential of a politician's speech, making it as aggressive as possible.

Threat tactics are common and include descriptions of what actions the US might take, such as:

That's our goal: make Putin pay the price, weaken his position while strengthening the hand of the Ukrainians on the battlefield and at the negotiation table [39].

Pay the price*- to experience something unpleasant, because you have done something wrong, made a mistake, etc.* [38, P. 1039].

This definition shows that J. Biden openly says that the goal of the United States is to punish the "guilty" party.

Particular attention should be paid to insult tactics. Before the start of the Special Military Operation, key US politicians avoided open insults by using euphemisms, but now dysphemisms (rude names used instead of their existing stylistically neutral counterparts) are widely used:

Russia is the aggressor. No if, ands, or buts about it. Russia is the aggressor. And the world must and will hold Russia accountable [39].

In the analyzed fragment, the word aggressor appears as a dysphemism:

Aggressor*,noun. – a person, group, or nation that attacks first or initiates hostilities; an assailant or invader* (Collins).

Thus, the tactics of accusation, insult and threat are concentrated in a small fragment.

There is an appeal to the feelings, and not to the mind of the target audience. This is fully consistent with the conclusions of E. R. Levenkova that "US political discourse is more clearly focused on irrational ways of influencing the consciousness of the addressee, which is expressed in the replacement of argumentation with declarative repetitions, generalizations, and a more pronounced emotional and evaluative coloring of speech" [17]

The manifestation of emotionality is generally characteristic of political discourse [35, P. 16]. However, in relation to Russia, key US politicians use appeals to negative emotions.

The tactic of creating an image of an enemy from Russia has become widespread, for example:

Last month, when I was in Europe, I announced that the United States would welcome 100,000 Ukrainians so that we share in the responsibility of supporting Ukrainians fleeing Putin's war machine [39].

This example demonstrates how the war machine metaphor creates an image of an invader who will stop at nothing.

It should be noted that American politicians actively use the tactic of turning neutral contexts into discrediting ones [24, P. 95]. For example, in the following passage, Russia's gas supply stops in response to sanctions imposed by NATO allies are interpreted as "gas blackmail":

We're working with other nations – like Korea, Japan, Qatar, and others – to support our effort to help the European allies threatened by Russia with gas blackmail and their energy needs in other ways [39].

The fragment demonstrates that it also combines several tactics to implement a downward strategy: the tactic of reformatting a neutral event into a discreditable one, the tactic of creating the image of an enemy using participle II, formed from the verb threaten 'to threaten'.

The reformatting of neutral news into negative news through vocabulary can be seen in the following example, when those present at the referendums on the accession of the DRN, LPR, Zaporozhye and Kherson regions to Russia declared their legitimacy: Being here, I can see with my own eyes that people are voting voluntarily," a German energy executive, Stefan Schnaller... Schnaller was speaking about people in Ukraine's Zaporizhzhie region (RT).

This point of view was at odds with the concept of the United States, therefore, contrary to the rules of law and the opinion of observers, referendums are characterized as sham 'fake, pretense':

Russia's referenda are a sham – a false pretext to try to annex parts of Ukraine by force in flagrant violation of international law, including the UN Charter [39].

The fragment under consideration contains several lexical units that have a negative connotation. The referendum, as a result of which citizens expressed their position, is positioned as an illegitimate action. This interpretation occurs through the use of dysphemisms *sham and pretext*. They help to immediately "re-qualify" the event by giving it a different name, attaching a label and "helping" the target audience interpret the event in a negative way. The speeches of politicians become full of dysphemisms, with the help of which they purposefully and unambiguously assign a different name to phenomena, as evidenced by the definitions of the words sham and pretext:

Sham, *countable noun [usually singular]. Something that is a sham is not real or is not really what it seems to be [disapproval]* (Collins).

Pretext, *noun. 1. something that is put forward to conceal a true purpose or object; an ostensible reason; excuse; 2. the misleading appearance or behavior assumed with this intention* (Collins).

In addition, the analyzed passage contains the pejorative phrases *flagrant, blatant, violation, by force*. The presence of censure is revealed by the definitions of these words. So, the word flagrant has the mark disapproval: Flagrant, adjective. You can use flagrant to describe an action, situation, or someone's behavior that you find extremely bad or shocking in a very obvious way [disapproval] (Collins).

Emotional and evaluative vocabulary helps to influence the feelings of the target audience, causing the "right" attitude towards the described object, person or phenomenon. However, sometimes it is quite difficult to draw the line between the analyzed dysphemisms and pejoratives, since the former may contain the seme of "disapproval, censure," and the latter may be a crude name for something that has a neutral name. In addition, such vocabulary has significant conflict potential.

It should be noted that dysphemisms and pejoratives are used by clusters to enhance the negative impact on the target audience and shift the focus from an objective consideration of a phenomenon to its emotional component. This is also quite clearly evidenced by the following fragment:

We will act in solidarity and close coordination to address the negative impact of Russia's aggression for global economic stability [39].

The emotional and evaluative vocabulary it contains helps create the image of an aggressor who poses a threat to the entire world community.

In addition, in the analyzed material, dysphemisms and pejoratives are often used in free combinations with military, political, legal and other terminology, for example:

President Biden also affirmed the continued readiness of the United States to impose severe costs on any individual, entity, or country that provides support to Russia's purported annexation [39].

The pejorative purported is used with the lexical unit annexation, which is a political term:

Annexation- Forced annexation by one state of the territory or part of another state, against the will of its population (BES, 12).

In this case, there is a deliberate use of a term, the exact meaning of which is little known to the target audience, which immediately distinguishes this lexical unit in the surrounding context. Thanks to this, the attention of the target audience is concentrated on the term and the pejorative phrase associated with it in the free phrase purported.

Thus, to reformat the history of the unfolding armed conflict in Ukraine, American politicians actively use dysphemisms, pejoratives and terms that have a negative connotation and help to highlight events from the right angle, changing nominations and shifting semantic accents.

In the analyzed texts of American political discourse dedicated to the conflict in Ukraine, the most frequent word with an extremely negative connotation is the lexical unit aggression (usually Russian aggression) – 52-word usages. Typically, the word is used in context with military terms (usually defend), for example:

In line with international law, in particular the UN Charter, Ukraine has the legitimate right to defend itself against Russian aggression and to regain full control of its territory within its internationally recognized borders [39].

To Defend, *verb. 1. to resist an attack. 2. to represent an accused person in a court of law or court-martial (legal). 3. to justify an action or opinion* [13, P. 69].

The words war and atrocities (hostilities) have lower frequency (49 and 36 word uses, respectively). They often occur within the same context:

He also underscored his ongoing engagement with allies and partners to continue imposing costs on Russia, holding Russia accountable for its war crimes and atrocities, and providing Ukraine with security, economic, and humanitarian assistance [22, P. 129–131].

Also, in relation to Russia, such emotional and evaluative vocabulary is used as tyranny, brutality, dictator, intimidate, kleptocracy, fight, etc.

Conclusion

Thus, the analyzed material showed that, within even small contexts, strategies can be implemented in a complex manner, which helps American politicians manipulate the consciousness of the target audience and create a negative image of Russia.

As a result of the analysis, it was revealed that US politicians actively use emotional and evaluative vocabulary. In their speeches, they do not dryly state the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, but depict the actions of the Russian Federation in all possible colors, giving them a negative assessment and interpreting them exclusively as illegal.

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