

FEATURES OF THE USE OF EUPHEMISMS IN POLITICAL DEBATES OF US PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES IN 2024

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The evolutionary nature of political language makes it difficult for voters to critically interpret information. Euphemisms are a powerful tool that helps politicians hide controversial decisions or create a positive perception of their actions. The need for greater awareness of people about communicative strategies in political discourse is important, as this allows people to make more informed judgments about the policies and actions of their leaders.

For the scientific substantiation of political discourse, euphemisms and political euphemisms on a theoretical basis, a descriptive method was used, namely, defining the terminology of phenomena and explaining their structural characteristics.

A euphemism is a softened expression that replaces rude and obscene words. We present 5 groups according to the methods of creating euphemistic units: semantic processes, word-formation processes, phonetic processes, foreign language borrowings, combined methods [1, c. 304].

In addition, we found that among the main categories of the most frequent areas of use is political discourse. It is an act of communication used in a political context, including political debates [2, c. 142].

We examined in detail the term “political euphemism”, which by definition is a tool for political participants used to hide scandals, mask the truth and control public opinion [3, c. 123-137].

This type has three special features: a greater degree of deviation of the signified from the signifier, more vague meanings and a strong characteristic of time. Political euphemisms perform two main social functions: masking-deceptive and persuasive functions.

The material of the study was 28 euphemistic units, determined by the continuous sampling method. Semantic and functional analysis allowed us to classify euphemisms according to their meaning and functions in political debates. To calculate the frequency of use of euphemisms and their prevalence among candidates, we used quantitative analysis.

The analysis of the debates allowed us to identify the main semantic means of creating euphemisms: metaphor (53.6%), metonymy (25%), generalization (7.1%), colloquialism (3.6%), elevation (3.6%), irony (3.6%) and synecdoche (3.6%) [4, c. 47]. Metaphors were the most used. This means that in political debates a vivid image is created that reinforces the message of the speakers.

Biden carefully chooses the wording so as not to exacerbate conflicts. Trump, on the contrary, uses sharp and emotionally charged expressions to attract the audience's attention and provoke a strong reaction. Harris emphasizes social problems, resorting to linguistic means that emphasize her position on human rights and equality.

Functional analysis shows that euphemisms work in two directions: they either soften hot topics or, conversely, manipulate perception, masking the real state of affairs [5, c. 55-56]. Avoiding words that cause panic helps politicians maintain control over the narrative. Hiding facts is a strategic tool that allows you to avoid uncomfortable topics. Hyperbole creates a dramatic effect, mobilizing the electorate.

Biden's use of cautious language, mainly aimed at avoiding panic, reflects his moderate, straightforward approach. Among Trump's pragmatic goals, we highlight the use of hyperbole and innuendo. He aimed to influence perceptions through emotionally charged language, aligning it with a populist strategy. Kamala's speech focused on avoiding panic, demonstrating respect, presenting herself as dignified and sensitive to public issues.

The effectiveness of euphemisms depends on the level of media literacy of society. Where voters think critically, euphemistic techniques arouse doubt and suspicion. In an environment where information is consumed uncritically, they serve as a tool for manipulation and distortion of facts. The results of the study are useful for journalists, political scientists, students, and voters who want to critically analyze political speeches.

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