

LINGUACULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF POLITICAL EUPHEMISMS (BASED ON THE EXAMPLES OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK PRINT MEDIA)

Nozima Normukhamedova
Degree of Bachelor of Arts
1st year master student of UzSWLU
[*m.nozimakhmudova1998@gmail.com*](mailto:m.nozimakhmudova1998@gmail.com)

Abstract: Euphemism is a common phenomenon in human language use and has attracted much attention both domestically and internationally. This article aims to reveal the essential features of political euphemism, expand people's understanding of euphemism, and to some extent, reveal the relationship between language, thought, and existence. This linguistic phenomenon provides evidence that language is not only a reflection of the objective world but also a process of social construction. Linguocultural analysis and comparative methods were used to analyse political euphemisms in English and Uzbek print media such as Newsweek, The Washington Post, The Guardian, The Times and Xalq so'zi, Yangi O'zbekiston, UzA, Davr. Having conducted the research, the following findings were revealed: (1) a range of topics including government actions, military conflicts, economic policies, social groups, age-related discussions, disabilities, and economic challenges. (2) euphemisms serve similar functions in both English and Uzbek political discourse, including hiding scandals, softening language, and guiding public perceptions on sensitive topics. Implication for practice includes communication strategies, public perception, governance, intercultural relations and cultivating media literacy.

Key words: euphemism, political euphemism, culture, political correctness, discourse, English and Uzbek euphemisms.

Introduction. Political euphemisms are a powerful tool for political leaders to control information transmission. The impact on mass audiences through political language is purposeful and should be carried out in accordance with the requirements of cultural correctness. Political speech and writing are largely the defence of the

indefensible ... political language has to consist largely of euphemism, question-begging and sheer cloudy vagueness (George Orwell, *Politics and the English Language*) Each euphemism has its own nationally specific characteristics (Ashurova and Galiyeva, 2019). The usage of polite words depends on different aspects of different culture. As B. Sainte-Marie said that "Language and culture cannot be separated. Language is vital to understand our unique cultural perspectives. Language is a tool that is used to explore and experience our cultures and the perspectives that are embedded in our cultures." Despite the fact that there have been many studies on political euphemisms on wide range of aspects, there are still no clear criteria for determining the cultural sphere of political euphemism. The problem of comparing political euphemisms in different languages remains topical. This paper begins with an analysis on the features of political euphemism and identifies the peculiarities of the use political euphemisms of English print media in comparison to **Uzbek** from linguocultural aspect.

Literature review. The study of linguistic and cultural characteristics of political euphemisms, especially within the context of English and Uzbek print media, offers a fascinating insight into the ways in which language is employed to shape public opinion and perception. Political euphemisms are used to soften or obfuscate the harshness of certain concepts or policies, effectively influencing the audience's understanding of the issues at hand. This literature review aims to provide a comprehensive overview of existing research on this topic, analyzing the specific linguistic and cultural nuances inherent in political euphemisms in both English and **Uzbek** print media.

Features of Political Euphemism Galperin concludes that **Euphemism** is "an understatement of the meaning of words in order to mislead public opinion and express the unpleasant more subtly"

According to J. Niemann and C. Silver, "euphemism is the use of a non-offensive or pleasant term in place of a direct, offensive one, while masking the truth". Euphemism is defined in different ways from the perspectives of pragmatics and style.

Political euphemism is created in political life and serves political purposes. It is a tool for political participants to hide scandals, disguise the truth, and guide public thoughts when discussing social issues or events. In spite of some common features political euphemism shares with others, it has three typical features.

Lakoff (1990) claims that politics is language and language is politics. Political euphemism is similar to political propaganda in that both aim at persuading and influencing the public. Berger and Luckmann (1967) have long before pointed out the important role of language in the construction of social reality. Political discourse is characterized by continuity: it is inextricably linked to the previous stages of its development, but at the same time it acquires new features and takes new forms.

In Uzbekistan, lexicographers began to study this linguistic phenomenon in depth only at the end of the XX and the beginning of the XXI century. The term "euphemism" was reflected in the research and thesis of N. Ismatullaev "Euphemisms in the Modern Uzbek Language" in 1963-1964. A.J. Omonturdiev paid special attention to the basics of euphemistic Uzbek language, language culture, euphemisms, which provide unique beauty and appeal.

George Orwell pointed out two characteristics of political discourse in *Politics and the English Language* (1946), that is the obsolescence and vagueness of figure of speech. Euphemism, characterized by replacing direct expressions with implicative, obscure and vague ones, plays a quite essential role in demystifying the connotation of political discourse when serving political purposes.

Linguocultural Aspects of Political Euphemisms In cultural linguistics, euphemisms are the development of more noble, culturally meaningful words and serves to soften the meaning, to express it in a more cultural form. Euphemisms are regarded as cultural models because, firstly, they realize the principle of politeness, secondly, the use of euphemistic expressions are conditioned by sociocultural factors. According to Ashurova and Galiyeva (2019) euphemism that is used to substitute a coarse, rude word or expression by a more polite and appropriate one, has its own

national specific characteristics in different languages. Its usage is determined by ethic, moral and religious rules of a certain culture.

Comparative Analysis of Political Euphemisms in English and Uzbek Print Media

The study of linguistic and cultural characteristics of political euphemisms in the English and **Uzbek** print media holds significant relevance in the contemporary global context, as it offers a deeper understanding of the ways in which language is deployed to construct political narratives and shape public discourse. The comparison opens the divergences and convergences in euphemistic strategies employed within distinct linguistic and cultural frameworks. By elucidating the intricate interplay between language, culture, and politics, this review contributes to a deeper comprehension of the complexities inherent in the use of political euphemisms, and their implications within the broader spheres of international relations and public communication.

According to the sphere of use, political euphemisms in English are mainly divided into several themes: war and nuclear weapons, taxes, illegal activities, political regimes. In British mass media is preferred more formal terms and expressions. In **Uzbek**, the following spheres of political euphemisms can be distinguished: 1) diplomatic negotiations; 2) pressure from the authorities or penal authorities; 3) military development and secrets; 4) activities of law enforcement agencies; 5) inter-communal relations.

The comparison of the linguistic phenomenon of euphemisation in **Uzbek** and English shows that both languages are rich in euphemisms and actively use them in the sphere of professional communication in order to veil the essence of the denoted. Euphemisms in political discourse have similar functions in **Uzbek** and English, and coincide in some spheres of use.

To conclude, this literature review aims to synthesize the existing research on political euphemisms in English and **Uzbek** print media, leading to a comprehensive overview of the subject, while also identifying potential areas for future research. By elucidating the intricate interplay between language, culture, and politics, this review contributes to a deeper comprehension of the complexities inherent in the use of

political euphemisms, and their implications within the broader spheres of international relations and public communication.

Methods. The primary research methods for this study are linguocultural analysis and comparative method. The linguocultural method was applied to analyse political euphemisms in English and **Uzbek** print media, such as Newsweek, The Washington Post, The Guardian, the Times and Xalq so'zi, Yangi O'zbekiston, UzA, Davr, respectfully. This allowed for a deep exploration of the relationship between language, culture and politics, determine how euphemistic language reflects, shapes and is shaped by cultural values, political contexts and socio-cultural dynamics in linguistic and cultural environments. The Linguocultural method explored the links between language use and cultural context through a combination of linguistic and cultural analysis based on literature sources.

The comparative method to analyze political euphemisms in English and **Uzbek** print media was used as a tool to identify similarities and differences between them. Researchers gained valuable insights into how euphemistic strategies vary across in English and **Uzbek** languages and cultural contexts by using the comparative approach. The main reason why the linguacultural characteristics of political euphemisms (based on the examples of English and **Uzbek** print media) will be investigated by linguacultural and comparative method serves several important purposes. Both methods complement each other and provide a holistic understanding of how language, culture, and politics intersect and influence the use of political euphemisms.

Steps of conducting the comparative and linguocultural method to analyze political euphemisms in English and **Uzbek** print media:

1. Collect newspapers, magazines, and online publications.
2. Select articles containing political euphemistic expressions or taboo words.
3. Find out political euphemisms in collected data.
4. Analyze the semantic content of euphemisms in English and **Uzbek** texts.
5. Consider the cultural and socio-political contexts in which euphemisms are used in English and **Uzbek** media.

6. Evaluate the influence of cultural values and political ideology shape euphemisms in both languages.
7. Examine the functions of political euphemisms in English and **Uzbek** discourse.
8. Explore how cultural-specific political euphemisms can be translated into target language.
9. Identify commonalities and differences of political euphemisms in English and **Uzbek** print media.

Data analysis and Discussion. Euphemism is a tool for political participants to hide scandals, disguise the truth, guide public thoughts when discussing social issues or events. Euphemisms in political discourse have similar functions in Uzbek and English but are also appropriate in some areas of use. The media uses political euphemisms to replace certain words or phrases. This is done for various reasons, including:

1) to describe the actions of government officials.

“The government announced plans to streamline procedures to improve efficiency in public services” (Newsweek)

Refers to cutting bureaucratic processes or reducing regulations. This example showcases how euphemisms are commonly used in articles to soften the impact of certain actions or decisions made by government officials, often serving to downplay negative connotations or present information in a more diplomatic or politically correct manner.

“Хукумат қонун ҳудудлари тақдим этувчи амалларни мавжуд бўлган устувор соҳаларга қатъий чора тушлари келтиради.” (Yangi O'zbekiston)

The euphemisms Actions provided by law areas means the actions of government employees in accordance with the law. The euphemistic expression demonstrates a preference for indirect language when discussing government officials' actions. This choice of language reflects an Uzbek cultural value placed on politeness, discretion, and respect for authority figures.

2) to report on military conflicts.

The examples of "ethnic cleansing" and "Qirg'inlik" in English and Uzbek, respectively, are euphemisms used to cover up the horror of genocide, aiming to obscure the brutality of such acts. These euphemisms are used to cover up the horrors of genocide in media reports on conflict situations.

"Israel driving ethnic cleansing of Gaza through home demolitions, says expert"
(Guardian)

"Yigirma yil davomida Isroil G'azodagi falastinliklarni qamalda, ochiq qamoqxonada ushlab, ularni shafqatsiz qirg'inlar va qurol sinovlariga duchor qildi"
(UzA)

3) to present economic policies.

In English, the word poor in the official media is often replaced by the following: financial difficulty, the penniless, (socially) deprived, the low-income family.

"We encourage people who are in a financial difficulty to make contact with us as soon as possible."(Guardian)

"I am pleased to see more families on lower incomes making the most of the help available once their child turns into two." (Times)

This is a socio-culturally acceptable way of concealing the harsh reality of poverty and avoiding discrimination against disadvantaged groups. Politicians resort to this kind of euphemism in the hope of not appearing insensitive to vulnerable groups and individuals and thus protecting their image.

4) to refer to national or social groups.

Race in the USA and many European countries, the current ideology forbids the use of such a word as nigger, and to say Afro-American instead. (The word "black", which was considered appropriate a few years ago, is now also offensive).

"African Americans are the second largest minority population in the United States." (Times)

5) Mitigating age discrimination

Words related to death are taboo, so politicians avoid using expressions with the word "die" in them. Instead, reaching the end of their life is a linguistic materialization of the conceptual metaphors life is a journey and death is the end of a journey.

"In my years as an MP, I have spoken to many patients [...] many of them have made the argument that when someone is suffering intolerably and when they are reaching the end of their life, they should be allowed to decide." (Newsweek)

"Keksalarning o'rni oilada ham, jamiyatda ham a'lohida o'ringa ega. Chunki ular kelajak avlodni, xalqimizning ko'p asrlik qadriyati va an'analari ruhida tarbiyalashda muhim ahamiyat kasb etadi." (O'zbekiston ovozi)

Keksa odam – old man. In Uzbek culture it is rude to mention an age of an individual, and to respect elders is one of the national cultural value. In this case it is better to say *keksalar* or *Yoshi ulug' insonlar*.

6) For people with disabilities.

In both cultures English and Uzbek any deviation from the established norm is expressed using euphemisms: blind – unseeing, ko'zi ojiz; invalid – disabled and etc. Both cultures try to avoid to name them as an invalids and use as polite words as possible.

*"There is also a branch of the National Home for **disabled** Volunteer Soldiers."* (The Washington post)

*"Qonun qabul qilinishini bir necha yillardan beri kutayotgandik. **Imkoniyati cheklangan**, Karlar va **Ko'zi ojizlar** jamiyatlari Senatga murojaat qildi."* (Davr)

7) distracts from unpleasant events in the economy

Describes difficult economic conditions without specifying negative outcomes. It illustrates how euphemisms are commonly employed in articles to soften the portrayal of unpleasant events in the economy, providing a more neutral or optimistic narrative to discuss challenging economic situations, without directly alarming or alarming readers.

*"The region faces **economic challenges** that require strategic planning and innovative solutions for sustainable growth."* (The Guardian)

*“Xalqaro bozorda yanada boy bera oladigan mahalliy istiqbol vaqtida **ekonomik boshqaruv sohasida** yo'l ochish uchun **chog'likni qiziqtirmoqda.**” (Yangi O'zbekiston)*

This phrase serves as an example of a euphemism in Uzbek. Within the context of "distracts from unpleasant events in the economy," this phrase demonstrates the use of euphemism to soften the content by presenting the idea of diverting attention from challenging economic situations in a more subdued manner, aiming to downplay the negative connotations and steer the focus away from the difficulties being faced.

Political euphemisms in English often use indirect language to avoid directly confronting difficult issues or harsh realities. This allows politicians to address challenging subjects in a positive manner. Politicians can present events or policies in a favorable light by using euphemistic language. On the other hand, political euphemisms in Uzbek often display a formal tone that conveys respect for the subject matter and individuals involved. This linguistic formality is a reflection of the hierarchical and respectful communication norms peculiar in Uzbek political discourse.

Conclusion. According to the conducted research it can be concluded that euphemisms play a significant role in shaping political discourse, maintaining cultural sensitivity, and influencing public perceptions on various issues in both Uzbek and English contexts. Euphemisms have similar functions in both English and Uzbek political discourse. They are used to hide scandals, soften language, and guide public perceptions on sensitive topics.

REFERENCE

1. Ashurova D.U., Galieva M.R. Cultural Linguistics. – Tashkent: Turon-Iqbol, 2019. – 94p.
2. Ashurova D.U., Galieva M.R. Text Linguistics. – Tashkent: Turon-Iqbol, 2016. – 191p.
3. Lawrence J. Unmentionables and other euphemisms. — London, 1973. – 56p.
4. Maslova V.A. Lingvokul'turologiya: Uchebnoye po-sobiye dlya studentov vysshikh uchebnykh zavedeniy. – M.: Izdat. tsentr "Akademiya", 2001. – 48p.

5. Neaman J.S., Silver C.G. Kind words: a thesaurus of euphemisms. – New York: Facts On File, 1990. – 198p
6. Orwell. G. Politics and the English Language. In Paul Eschholz etc. (eds). Language Awareness. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990. – 48p.
7. Sapir. E. Selected writings in language, culture and personality, 1949. – 89p.
8. Vorob'yev V.V. Lingvokul'turologiya: teoriya i metody. – M.: Izd-vo Ros. universiteta druzhby narodov, 1997 – 44-57p.
9. Гальперин И. Р. Очерки по стилистике английского языка. / Изд. Литературы на иностранных языках. М: 1958 г. – 164 с.
10. Исмагуллаев Н. Ўзбек тилидаги эвфемизмлар ва уларнинг классификациясига доир // Ўзбек тили ва адабиёти, 1964. — № 1. – Б. 57.
11. Исмагуллаев Н. Эвфемизмы в современном узбекском языке: автореф. дисс. ...канд. филол.; наук. – Ташкент, 1963. – 19 с.
12. Омонтурдиев А.Ж. Профессионал нутқ эвфемикаси. – Тошкент: Фан, 2006. Омонтурдиев А. Ўзбек нутқининг эвфемик асослари. – Термиз: НС, 2000. – 128 б.
13. Скребнев Ю. М. Основы стилистики английского языка. 2-е изд. испр. – М.: Астрель, 2003 – 168 с. Омонтурдиев А. Ўзбек тилининг қисқача эвфемик луғати. – Тошкент: Халқ мероси, 2006. – 134 б.