

Political Euphemisms and Neologisms in Online Media Content: Amid the War in Ukraine

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Abstract

Political Euphemisms and Neologisms in Online Media Content: Amid the War in Ukraine. *Since February 24, 2022, in many parts of the world, the attention of online media outlets has turned to the events taking place in Ukraine. This period is marked by using political euphemisms and neologisms in online publications and the media for reporting on what is happening, highlighting military actions, and characterizing the political background of current affairs. This article considers neologisms and lights up the functioning of political euphemisms in the English, Ukrainian, Slovak, and Spanish languages in contemporary media on the Internet.*

Keywords: euphemisms, political correctness, neologisms, media.

Kľúčové slová: eufemizmus, politická korektnosť, neologizmy, médiá.

Introduction

Political euphemisms and neologisms exist in online media content. They are spread in the official media discourse of nations around the world like wildfire to cover the events in Ukraine since February 24, 2022.

Euphemisms are an essential means of presenting information through online media. The word “euphemism” is defined in the dictionary as “a polite word or phrase that is used to avoid saying something embarrassing or offensive” (Cambridge dictionary 2022). In the political sphere, the term “euphemism” is closely linked to the use of the phrase “political correctness.” The abbreviation PC occurs mainly in popular science publications instead of this expression, and it is accepted in this article as well. PC is often specified in the journalists’ texts and almost replaces such concepts as “tolerance” and “politeness.” It is worth noting that PC is “the principle of avoiding language and behavior that may offend particular groups of people. This term is usually used by people who do not agree with this principle or think it has been used in ways that are not reasonable” (Oxford learners’ dictionary 2022).

Neologism is “an invented word used exclusively pejoratively to dismiss newly coined words. Usually used to express distaste for words inconvenient to one’s ideology” (Urban Dictionary 2022).

The online content of selected sites is under consideration and underway in an attempt to identify neologisms and euphemisms. The study of the issue will facilitate the use of research results to expand the thematic scope of training programs for university students studying English linguistics. It is worth noting that the authors reflected on their experience in teaching foreign languages in their publications. In their recent studies, the authors of this article looked at different issues concerning foreign language training. In particular, Maria Spišiaková reviewed new vocabulary in Spanish media related to the coronavirus (Spišiaková 2021). Moreover, Slovak scientists, in their joint work, considered labor market requirements for foreign language training (Spišiaková, Kittová 2020). In addition, Natalia Shumeiko explored the content peculiarities of a Master’s professional foreign language education (Shumeiko 2016). Besides, Natalia Shumeiko, in her conference proceeding *The educational potential of innovative foreign language training programs for future humanitarian specialists in Slovak universities* (Shumeiko 2016) highlights the educational value of the content for foreign language training. Moreover, the conference abstract *Language education in the Slovak higher education space* (Shumeiko 2019) by Natalia Shumeiko focuses on the Slovak experience in professional foreign language teaching for specialists in management and economics.

Within the current study and in the framework of looking up neologisms and euphemisms in publications in the Spanish language, we paid particular attention to scientific works that cover the issues of Spanish lexicology (Ulašin 2022, Gomez-Pablos 2016, Marcos-Marín, de Miguel 2009). It is of capital importance that political linguistics and the theme of radical populism in the era of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine being in the spotlight of modern Slovak scientists inspire a deeper study of the language of political communication (Štefančík 2022, Cingerová, Dulebová, Štefančík 2021).

The primary research goals are to give a brief overview of using political euphemisms in the Slovak, Ukrainian, Spanish and English languages in the contemporary media and to provide examples of neologisms that appeared in online media content after February 24, 2022.

To achieve the established goals, purposeful sampling, as a technique, was applied. Qualitative research was conducted by gathering and analyzing data from information-rich websites to select neologisms and euphemisms, as well as phrases and sentences related to the events in Ukraine since

February 24, 2022, confirming store-up tension in the political and military sphere.

The scientific novelty of the research lies in the attempt to provide an overview of political euphemisms and neologisms related to political affairs covering the above-indicated period, spanning four languages: Slovak, Ukrainian, Spanish, and English.

Euphemisms and neologisms in the modern-day political media discourse

In the political sphere, euphemisms represent something better than it is. Compared to the euphemisms of everyday speech, euphemisms of the political scope hide unpleasant facts about military situations and the alleged happenings in combat zones.

In the modern-day political media discourse, euphemisms allow us to stick to indirect strategies for describing negative statements' ideological meaning and significance in the context of wars. Certain content avoids talking explicitly about political and social issues that are taking place in the world. The substitute expressions are used instead.

Euphemisms have manipulative potential in the political media discourse to influence public opinion and form a confident attitude of the masses toward political and military events.

Today political euphemisms are part of online media coverage. They cover facts and events in colors that correspond to journalism's strategies. The use of euphemisms is often explained by the desire to be politically polite since the ideology of correctness is a significant feature of political discourse.

Neologism is "a new word, usage, or expression" (Merriam-Webster 2022). Since February 24, 2022, new words have appeared in the Ukrainian language and enriched the vocabulary. It is worth noting that the fortune of neologisms in the language is unpredictable, so nobody knows if people will use the new word frequently or if it will disappear from the Ukrainian language.

Online content influences mass consciousness in the conditions of martial law. Moreover, it factors into using euphemisms and neologisms in online publications to endow thought with emotional shades.

English euphemisms in political and military content on the Internet

People closely associate euphemisms with the military-political sphere and PC's ideas. Euphemisms aim to soften attitudes to negative social phenomena, inhumane policies, and aggressive military actions. Euphemisms in English devoted to military themes circulate in online media content. Analyzing the various online resources, we focused on English-language political and military content published since February 24, 2022, and later covered Ukrainian issues.

The online media content of “The Atlantic Council,” which is the American analytical center and a nonpartisan organization, covers a wide range of information accessible in English and contains the euphemisms such as (military) intervention, casualty, collateral damage, and surgical strike.

As an innocuous word, intervention alerts the readers to “governmental interference in economic affairs at home or in political affairs of another country” (Merriam-Webster 2022). Underpinning the content of “intervention,” we note that it “is the term used for compromises of sovereignty by other states that are exceptional in some way, yet lines that differentiate and constitute these exceptions are not always clear and have varied over time” (Finnemore 2003). The notion of “military intervention,” in its turn, should be construed as “the deployment of military personnel across recognized boundaries for the purpose of determining the political authority structure in the target state” (Finnemore 2003). As an example of the use of this euphemism, we cite below some sentences from the article “Russia’s invasion has highlighted Ukraine’s nation-building progress” by Anders Åslund. This article was published on August 14, 2022. The article stated that “the past eight years of Russian aggression against Ukraine have helped define the Ukrainian nation. This was already evident in 2014 following the seizure of Crimea and Russia’s military intervention in eastern Ukraine. The consolidation of Ukrainian national identity has become even more pronounced over the past six months since the onset of Russia’s full-scale invasion in February 2022” (Åslund, Atlantic Council, 14. 08. 2022). Another example is in the article “Attacks on hospitals from Syria to Ukraine: Improving prevention and accountability mechanisms”. The authors of the article, Elise Baker and Gissou Nia, stated that “When Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, 2022, it soon began implementing one of its frequent – and criminal – tactics that it had already been using in its military intervention in Syria: bombing healthcare and medical facilities” (Baker, Nia, Atlantic Council, 14. 06. 2022).

The English euphemism “casualty” in political and military content refers to “a military person lost through death, wounds, injury, sickness, internment, or capture or through being missing in action” (Merriam-Webster 2022). In the article “Russian War Report: Russia promotes misleading video accusing Ukraine of using mannequins as casualties” we read that “on April 7, Kremlin-controlled TV channel Rossiya 24 broadcast a video that it claimed was evidence of the Ukrainian military using mannequins to stage war casualties. However, the video was taken in Russia on a set of a TV series” (Digital Forensic Research Lab, Atlantic Council, 13. 04. 2022). In this article information takes actions that manipulate people’s consciousness. The euphemism “casualty” plays an essential role in influencing public opinion. Here is an example from Atlantic Council that published info news on March 16, 2022. We have read that “on March 16, Forward Defense nonresident senior fellow Margarita Konaev was quoted in an article in Stars and Stripes titled “Ukraine’s combat losses strike a painful chord with US military veterans.” MargaritaKonaev explains the difficulties in tracking the number of combatant deaths on either side combined with the incentive to underestimate the number of their own casualties” (Atlantic Council, 16. 03. 2022).

Online media reveal the factual content of the euphemism “collateral damage.” It means “injury inflicted on something other than an intended target. Specifically: civilian casualties of a military operation” (Merriam-Webster 2022). The article “Collateral Damage: The Environmental Cost of the Ukraine War” illustrates its usage. Fred Pearce, the author of the publication, wrote that “as the war in Ukraine drags on, scientists are increasingly concerned about the environmental consequences of the destruction. From forests ignited by shelling to wrecked factories spewing pollution to precarious nuclear plants, the long-term impacts could be profound” (Pearce, Yale Environment 360, 29. 08. 2022).

The euphemism most closely relates to political and military scope considering the thoughts about PC is “surgical strike.” The meaning is the following: “a carefully planned military attack that does not damage the surrounding area” (Merriam-Webster 2022). Peter Dickinson, in his article “Putin’s entire Ukraine invasion hinges on the coming Battle of Kherson,” expresses worry about political issues in Kherson by stating that “Ukraine is unlikely to throw everything into an all-out assault on Kherson. Instead, the Ukrainian strategy appears to be focused on gradual localized advances and surgical strikes to isolate Russian forces on the western side of the Dnipro River by cutting them off from resupply and targeting logistical hubs” (Dickinson, Atlantic Council, 02. 08. 2022).

Euphemisms and neologisms in the Ukrainian and English publications: a shade of military relationships

The use of euphemisms in online media contributes to evading unpleasant statements and concealing reality. However, euphemisms have become especially widespread in the RF media in recent times in connection with the current military developments on the territory of Ukraine.

Since February 24, 2022, the euphemism “the special military operation,” which is translated into Ukrainian as “спеціальна воєнна операція,” has been actively used in mass media today. The contextual analysis of the Ukrainian-language website АрміяINFORM, which is an information agency of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, allows giving examples of the usage of euphemisms (АрміяINFORM 2022). Let us take the content of the article “Як виконується “спеціальна військова операція рф на Україні,” або Про провалені плани кремля.” The author of the article is Kozubenko O. English translation is “How the “special military operation of the rf in Ukraine”, or about the kremlin’s failed plans” (Hereinafter translations by the authors of the article – Spišiaková, Shumeiko). We should note that proper names are written with small letters in online publications due to neglect. The author of the article wrote: “По-перше, треба сказати, що сама назва – “спеціальна військова операція” – створює в голові обивателя асоціації зі спецопераціями зі знищення терористичних угруповань та їхніх лідерів тощо. А законодавча заборона навіть згадки слова “війна” відсікає в мозку росіян саму суть того, що відбувається: неспровокована військова агресія проти іноземної держави” (Козубенко, АрміяINFORM, 25. 08 2022). This sentence states that, first of all, the phrase “the special military operation” creates associations in the mind of a simple philistine and makes him think that this is a special operation for destroying terrorist groups and their leaders. And the legal prohibition for even mentioning the word “war” cuts off the essence of what is happening in the brain of people in Russia: unprovoked military aggression against a foreign state.

The euphemism “спецоперація,” in English “a special operation,” is also widely used in Ukrainian media. For example, Voloshyn N., the author of the article “Військові зс рф масово консультуються з юристами щодо відповідальності за відмову участі у “спецоперації,” (Eng.: “The Russian Armed Forces are massively consulting with lawyers regarding responsibility for refusing to participate in “a special operation”) uses euphemisms “спецоперація” (Eng.: “a special operation”) and “спеціальна військова операція”. It is worth noting that the euphemism “спецоперація” is the shortened form of “спеціальна військова

операція”. Here is a quote from the article: “Найвище військово-політичне керівництво ерефії продовжує приховувати кількість та особи загибли військовослужбовців у “спеціальній військовій операції” на території України. Лише за статистикою російського командування, під час “спецоперації” в Україні загинуло близько 2000 тисяч осіб” (Волошин, АрміяINFORM, 12. 05. 2022). The meaning of written is the following: the highest military-political leadership continues to hide the number and identities of the soldiers killed during “a special military operation” on the territory of Ukraine; only according to the statistics of the Russian command, during “a special operation” in Ukraine, about 2,000 thousand people died.

Neologisms in online publications in Ukrainian and English acquired a shade of events that occurred since February 24, 2022. On July 20, 2022, Yevhen Bouquet, the correspondent for АрміяInform, introduced a Dictionary of neologisms of the Ukrainian language. In this dictionary, the word “Ukrained” (Ukr.: “зукраїнити”) defines the Russian invasion of Ukraine that received a negative assessment at the global level (Букет, АрміяINFORM, 20. 07. 2022). The verb “to be Ukrained” means “when you are Russia and you invade a country and the response is humiliation on a global forum (Urban dictionary 2022). In the above-mentioned “Dictionary of neologisms of the Ukrainian language,” the list of the neologisms with Ukrainian definitions is given. The following words are in the list: “аналоговнет” (щось, вигадане в росії); “байрактарити, енлоїти, джавелініти, стінгерити, хаймарсити” (нищити ворога, ходити на полювання, партизанити); “бандеромобіль” (бойовий автомобіль ЗСУ); “дебахнуло (дебахнулько)” (людина, яка через свій інтерес чи стурбованість може спричинити багато шкоди); “задвохсотити” (знищити ворога); “затридні” (нереалістичні плани); “затрьохсотити” (поранити, нейтралізувати ворога); “іхтамнетити” (знищувати ворогів, видаляти те, чого не повинно бути); “кадирити” (видавати бажане за дійсне); “кіборги” (воїни ЗСУ); “кімити” (зберігати оптимізм); “мамкувати” (не виконувати простих дій для збереження життя); “наволонтерити” (знайти щось потрібне, навіть з-під землі); “рашизм” (злочинна шовіністична ідеологія “русского міра”); “рашисти (русня, рюзкі, свинособаки, чмоні)” (російські військові, прихильники путіна); “термоточка” (пожежа в росії); “українити” (дати жорстку відповідь на невиправдані дії); “чорнобаїти” (наступати на одні й ті ж самі граблі); “шойгувати” (вдавати, що все добре, коли це не так); “хлопок” (вибух у росії, білорусі чи на території, яку тимчасово контролюють окупанти) (Букет, АрміяINFORM, 20. 07. 2022). In the article “Новомова” Орвелла в реальному житті: чому сучасна Росія боїться

слів” (Eng.: “Orwell’s “new language” in real life: why Russia is afraid of words today”), the meaning of the Ukrainian word “хлопок” (Eng.: “clap”) that is used instead of “вибух” (eng.: “explosion”) is the following: “Хлопками” називають будь-які вибухи, загрозу чи наслідки від яких ЗМІ хочуть применшити” (Eng.: “Claps” are any explosions, threats, or consequences that the media want to downplay”) (Суспільне 2022). One of the definitions of the Urban Dictionary for the neologism “clap” is: “to get shot by a firearm” (Urban Dictionary 2022). The dictionary defines “rushism” (Ukr.: “рашизм”) as “a form of fascism, with disdain for liberal democracy and the western parliamentary system. Its extreme nationalism originated in the perceived greatness of the former USSR. It embraces a cult of violence against everyone not identified Russian. It often claims opponents are Nazis. The Rushisti aim to unite all Russian living in historically USSR territory, as well as gain additional lands for expansion” (Urban Dictionary 2022). T. Snyder, the author of the article “The War in Ukraine Has Unleashed a New Word” wrote that “in a creative play on three different languages, Ukrainians identify an enemy: ‘ruscism’” (Snyder, The New York Times Magazine, 22. 04. 2022). This is how the author explained the meaning of the word “рашизм”: “The City Council of Mariupol, Ukraine, was trying to make a point about mass death. Their city had been hit hardest by the Russian invasion, and thousands of corpses lay amid the rubble after weeks of urban warfare. After the revelation of Russian atrocities in Bucha and other cities in northern Ukraine, the elected representatives of the port city wished to remind the world that the scale of killing in the south was still higher. In dry and sober language, they described the fates of Mariupol residents. Occasionally, though, emotion slipped through: In passing, the council members referred to the Russian perpetrators by a term of condemnation that every Ukrainian knows, though it is not yet in the dictionaries and cannot (yet) be said in English: “рашизм” (Snyder, The New York Times Magazine, 22. 04. 2022).

By the way, the word “kiborg” means “... super kind funny guy...” (Urban Dictionary, 2022). But “a cyborg” is “a human who has certain physiological processes aided or controlled by mechanical or electronic devices” (Urban Dictionary 2022). In the context of the military relationship, the word “cyborg” (Ukr. (plural): “кіборги”) means “воїн ЗСУ” in the Ukrainian language and therefore it is translated into the English language as “the soldier of Ukraine Armed Forces” (Букет, АрміяINFORM 20. 07. 2022). D. Brennan and Ye. Kyklychev, the authors of the article “‘Cyborg’ Fighter Rallies Ukraine Counter-Attack Against Russia,” wrote that Roman Kostenko is “one of the famous “cyborg”

Ukrainian troops who defended Donetsk International Airport in 2014” (Brennan, Kyklychev Newsweek, 10. 08. 2022).

Some words gained new semantic meanings after February 24, 2022. A Dictionary of neologisms of the Ukrainian language, that Yevhen Bouquet compiled and published online in АрміяInform, gives a few examples such as “тривога” (сигнал про необхідність прямування до укриття), “чисте небо” (відбій повітряної тривоги), “орк” (російські військові, нелюдська істота) (Букет, АрміяINFORM 20. 07. 2022). The word “ork” (Ukr.: “орк”) is a derogatory term for russian soldiers. A fantasy Ork (or Orc) is traditionally depicted as an uncultured, barbaric, destructive and merciless warrior. During the 2022 invasion of Ukraine by russian forces, numerous instances of Ukrainian social media posts simply called russian invaders Orks” (Urban Dictionary 2022).

Euphemisms and neologisms in the Slovak media: the modern political and media landscape

Since February 24, 2022, the Slovak-language online media has published articles containing information about Ukraine. The euphemism “špeciálna vojenská operácia” (eng.: the special military operation) is used in media content. We provide some examples mentioned in *Týždenník TREND*. The Slovak Internet website “Týždenník TREND” presents the euphemism “špeciálna vojenská operácia” within the content that describes events in Ukraine.

On August 9, 2022, the article “Väčšina Rusov chce mier s Ukrajinou, ukázal prieskum v Rusku” focuses on people’s opinions. The article states: “Prieskum takisto zistil, že 59 percent Rusov je presvedčených, že takzvaná „špeciálna vojenská operácia” trvá už príliš dlho – s takýmto hodnotením nesúhlasí 28 percent ľudí. Približne 30 percent respondentov si myslí, že vojna bude trvať aj ďalší rok” (Týždenník TREND 2022).

On August 11, 2022, the Internet article titled “Ruských brancov posielajú na Ukrajinu proti ich vôli, zistili Bellingcat a The Insider” was published. The euphemism “speciálna vojenská operácia” is in the published text: „Nikto sa ma nepýtal, či sa chcem zúčastniť špeciálnej vojenskej operácie,” písal branec”; “Zo Sýrie na Ukrajinu. Jeden z brancov uviedol, že bol na manévroch na vojnovnej lodi pri sýrskom pobreží, keď nás “podvedli, aby sme išli na Ukrajinu: nikto sa ma nepýtal, či sa chcem zúčastniť špeciálnej vojenskej operácie” (Týždenník TREND 2022).

On September 10, 2022, in a publication called “Rusko oznámilo, že sťahuje vojakov z kľúčových častí Charkovskej oblasti” the above-

mentioned euphemism is also found: “cieľom dosiahnuť stanovené ciele špeciálnej vojenskej operácie a oslobodiť Donbas” (Týždenník TREND 2022).

Neologisms in the Slovak language, being an inevitable part of the modern political and media landscape, are the following: “putinismus” (meaning: Putin’s ideology), “denacifikácia,” “derusifikácia,” “rozpínavý putinista” (meaning: the expansive of Putin’s country). There is also a wordplay. For example, “liliputin” (liliput (Eng.: a midget) and putin).

The Slovak people used some words and expressions during the Second World War. Some words and phrases were revitalized not long ago, becoming relevant again and used in everyday speech in 2022. These words and phrases entered the language in current socio-political conditions. Among them: “agresor”, “vojnový štváč,” “sluha Ameriky.”

The results of our research cover the analysis of the content of the Slovak online edition Actuality.sk. Conducting our scientific study, we found Slovak neologisms related to political issues in the most recent publications in Actuality.sk. For example, “kremel’ský majdan”: the name “Maidan” has become generalized (Dobšinský, Aktuality.sk, 19. 09. 2022). The words and expressions revitalized not long ago were found within the Actuality.sk website’s content. Among them the word “kolaborant” (meaning: collaborator means someone who “cooperates treasonably” and brings to mind the people-collaborators who betrayed their countries to the Nazis during the Second World War, known as “fascist collaborators”); the phrase “adorácia (Hitlera)” (Eng.: the worship of somebody) that was used in the context of coverage the events taking place during the Second World War; the expression “železná opona” (Eng.: the “iron curtain”) that has strong associations with Cold War-era events (Dobšinský, Aktuality.sk, 19. 09. 2022).

Political euphemisms and neologisms in the Spanish media

In Spanish-speaking countries and Spanish-language media, there is the phrase “la corrección política” / “lo políticamente correcto” (the abbreviation PC is used in this article) that is commonly translated into English as “political correctness” or “politically correct.” This Spanish expression is an exact way of saying that somebody is concerned about the democratic minorities, “conforming to a belief that language and practices which could offend political sensibilities ... should be eliminated” (Merriam-Webster 2022). We want to mention in this connection that “lo

políticamente correcto” (in Spanish) stands for “the euphemism” and “the taboo.”

The Spanish scholars also gain a clear insight into the expression “lo políticamente correcto.” For instance, a well-respected university lecturer, doc. Dr. Beatriz Gómez-Pablos, Ph.D., affiliated with Comenius University in Bratislava, believes that PC is a vital concept in a multicultural society (Gomez-Pablos 2016). And Gómez-Pablos B. suggests several examples of using euphemisms such as “ajuste impositivo” (Eng.: tax adjustments) for “aumento de impuestos” (Eng.: a tax increase), “conflicto laboral” (Eng.: a labor dispute) for “huelga” (Eng.: the strike), “daños colaterales” (Eng.: collateral damage) for “muertes o víctimas civiles” (Eng.: civilian casualties), “operación militar” (Eng.: a military operation.) for “invasión” (Eng.: the invasion) (Gomez-Pablos 2016).

Spanish scientists-linguists contemporaries Francisco Marcos-Marín and Amando de Miguel Rodríguez view the phrase “lo políticamente correcto” as an ideological manipulation. They, in our view, consider that there is something that makes ideological manipulation so sinister. It is about the way of bypassing a sense of human mental and behavioral autonomy. Thus, Marcos-Marín and De Miguel claim that “the politiqués “is the apotheosis of the euphemism. What we call political correctness derives, above all, from English that permeates everywhere. PC is already a euphemism translated from English. “It has little to do with politics and a lot to do with social hypocrisy” (Marcos-Marín, de Miguel 2009: 235).

One of the modern Slovak scientists, Bohdan Ulašín, also talks about a vast system of politically correct language and provides examples of using political euphemisms in Spanish media content, such as: “acción” (Eng.: action) / “intervención militar” (Eng.: military intervention), “conflicto armado” (Eng.: armed conflict), “de solución de fuerza” (Eng.: workforce solution) / “militar” (Eng.: military), “daños colaterales” (Eng.: collateral damage) (Ulašín 2022: 147).

Political euphemisms, as a way of manipulation in the contemporary media, have occurred in prominent Spanish digital newspapers and news websites covering events in Ukraine since February 24, 2022. We can state that political euphemisms have become an integral part of the Spanish-speaking media environment. On March 03, 2022, the article entitled “Putin asegura que la “operación especial” en Ucrania marcha según “el plan” previsto” (Eng.: “Putin assures that the “special operation” in Ukraine is proceeding according to plan”) appeared in the online media coverage (EuropaPress 2022). We note that in the Spanish-speaking media, the euphemism “operación especial” is enclosed by quotation marks. Here is another example. A newspaper entitled “El País” published the article

“Prohibido utilizar la palabra “guerra” para describir la invasión de Ucrania en los medios rusos”. (Eng.: In Russian media, it is banned to use the word “war” to describe the invasion of Ukraine) on February 28, 2022. In the article we have read: “..... denominar a la oficialmente “operación especial” rusa como un “ataque, invasión o declaración de guerra” (Eng.: ... officially call it in Russian “a special operation”, implying an “attack, invasion or declaration of war”) (El País 2022).

Today, political language consists mainly of euphemisms that make the speech vaguer, with deliberate confusion and ambiguity. Furthermore, examples from “El País,” an online publisher of news and information, prove it. In particular, we have read in the online edition of “El País” that “Washington observa una nueva dinámica en el conflicto tras los éxitos cosechados por las tropas ucranias en el este” (Eng.: Washington observes a new dynamic in the conflict after the successes, reaped by the Ukrainian armed forces in the East) (El País 2022).

As noted by the Internet edition of “AA” on February 24, 2022, “Rusia realiza una intervención militar a gran escala con ataques en ciudades de toda Ucrania” (Eng.: Russia conducts large-scale military intervention with attacks on cities across Ukraine) (A. Aliyev, AA, 24. 02. 2022).

The Spanish-language website, „20 minutos“, wrote on September 08, 2022: “Cargos rusos acusan de alta traición a Putin por la intervención militar en Ucrania” (Eng.: The Russians have accused Putin in high treason for military intervention in Ukraine) (20 minutos 2022).

Considering the fact that Spanish is one of the most used languages in the network and a lot of Internet users communicate in Spanish, we analyzed euphemisms with political-military meaning from TV news on channels TV1 and 24h. As a result of analysis, the following phrases were collected: “decir adiós a los soldados” (Eng.: saying goodbye to soldiers) for “enterrarlos” (Eng.: bury them); “atender las necesidades de la población” (Eng.: address the needs of the population) for “ayudar a las víctimas” (Eng.: to help the victims); “reforzar otras zonas” (Eng.: reinforce other areas) for “armar” (Eng.: arming); “levantar atestados” (Eng.: raise attestations) for “recoger denuncias / testimonios” (Eng.: collect complaints / the testimonials / evidence); cambiando de rumbo de la guerra (Eng.: turning the tide of war) for “empezar a perder la guerra” (Eng.: start losing the war); EEUU ha pronunciado su preocupación (Eng.: the USA has voiced its concern) for “no está contento / está enfadado” (Eng.: he is not happy / he is angry); “objetivo civil” (Eng.: civilian target) for “población / gente como objetivo militar” (Eng.: the population / military objectives); “reagrupación táctica” (Eng.: tactical regrouping) – in Russian media for “retirada” (Eng.: retreat); “efectivos” (Eng.: troops) for “tropas / soldados”

(Eng.: forces / troops / soldiers); “... antes de que caiga la ciudad” (Eng.: before the city falls) for “antes de que la conquisten” (Eng.: before they conquer it).

The political situation in Ukraine, the reference point of which is considered to be February 24, 2022, has thrust the Spanish online media space shifts the focus of attention to the plane of political and military reality. The events in the Ukrainian cities and the ramifications of the clash of interests have profound economic and political consequences. In this period, new expressions enriched the Spanish vocabulary – neologisms, as well as words and phrases that were revitalized in the Spanish language in 2022, including regarding Ukraine’s events. For example, “turistas energéticos” (Eng.: energy tourists). In the Spanish media, this phrase refers to German tourists who want to come to Spain in winter to save electricity, and the hotels are all geared up to provide amenities for this kind of tourism. The word “desnacidificar” (Eng.: to discredit) was revitalized not so long ago, as people did not use it in communication since World War II, and recently, Putin started using it again. The vivid examples are also the following phrases in Spanish: “abrir el melón energético” (Eng.: opening up the energy melon). These phrases refer to all types of energy coming from Russia, including gas, oil, and coal; “guerra informática” (Eng.: information war/information warfare/cyberwarfare).

Conclusion

Thus, the preliminary analysis of political euphemisms in the Slovak, Ukrainian, Spanish and English languages in the contemporary media reveals their eerie insight into the potential for manipulating the human consciousness, compelling people to believe in media reports concerning political and military events.

Due to the recent political events in Ukraine, euphemisms and neologisms that reflect the atmosphere of present-day world realities are integral components of information-rich websites. Since February 24, 2022, in media coverage, online publications have reflected the political priorities of different countries. Language and politics were united in online media content of English-language websites called “The Atlantic Council,” “Newsweek,” “The New York Times Magazine,” “Yale Environment 360,” and Ukrainian-language website “АрміяINFORM,” which is an information agency of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, “Суспільне”; Slovak-language Internet sites called “Aktuality.sk”, “Týždenník TREND”;

Spanish-language online media such as “EuropaPress,” “El País,” “AA,” “20 minutos”.

Our conclusion is supported by the idea that language and politics are inseparable in online mass media amid political controversy and military clashes. Moreover, neologisms as new words and expressions, introduced into Slovak, Ukrainian, Spanish and English languages in the conditions of martial law, express outrage concerning the ideology of the adversary and admiration for the courage of a warrior.

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