Э.Я. Соколова, А.Е. Хохлов
Национальный исследовательский
Томский политехнический университет

Language specific of social and political communication in modern English

The article deals with the language specific of social and political communication in modern English. The paper emphasizes stylistic heterogeneity of the language. It presents the most productive word-formation models for neologisms derivation. The analysis is performed using the lexical units selected from British and American online published materials of British and American mass media.

Keywords: modern English; linguistic specific; stylistic heterogeneity; word-formation models; neologisms.

A living language can be compared with a dynamic system, which never stops evolving. Enrichment, enhancement and changes of its lexical system are directly related to social processes i.e. are «socially determined» [5, p. 191]. Modern English, which functions as a global language and lingua franca, holds the leading place in the process of language evolution [2, p. 255–256].

The article deals with the analysis of linguistic specific of social and political communication. The research is focused on 176 lexical units unified by their contextual and semantic identity into a thematic group «Neologisms in Socio-Politics» that appeared within the period of 2018–2022. Online English dictionaries with regularly updated corpus: Merriam-Webster online dictionary, Macmillan Buzzword Dictionary (2020), Oxford English online dictionary, a special «New words» blog of Cambridge dictionaries, newspapers and magazines presented in high-quality British and the American newspapers such as «The Financial Times», «The Guardian», «The Washington Post», «The Independent», «The New York Times», and «Bloomberg» served as sources for selection of lexical innovations.

The intentional ambiguity, the imperative tonality, high level of expressiveness, increased degree of accessibility and practical functionality are among the main characteristics of social and political communication. These distinctive features are reflected in stylistic heterogeneity of the language: the tendency towards common speech (informal, conversational and excessive simplification), use of special jargon, mixture of official business and scientific speech, reiterative syntactic structures and «semantic neologisms» (new meanings of already used words). To ensure the impact on the audience expressive means such as antithesis, inversion, ellipsis, comparison, metaphors, euphemisms, and metonymic designations are widely used.

Semantic neologisms include phrases appeared on the basis of metonymic transfer by analogy with «color» or «color revolutions»: e.g. *yellow vest (Gilets Jaunes – Fr.) movement*, *black life matters* (*BLM*), *red states* (U.S. states that mostly vote for Republican Party), *blue states* (red states voting for Democratic Party).

The use of political leaders' nicknames is common for social and political communication. At the intersection of concrete and abstract images, a new semantic texture is created, which reflects sarcasm and picturesqueness: e.g. *Scholzomat* (for his robotic mechanic speaking) or *Teflon Scholz* (unaffected by his own proximity to two major financial scandals).

The pronounced manipulative potential of the specified type of communication predetermines a number of its specific characteristics. Neologisms used in social and political communication, do not only denote phenomena of reality, but also have a certain axiological potential: e.g. *Digital Fakushima* (which means the vulnerability of the digital environment and the danger associated with the advance of artificial intelligence technologies).

Protologisms and author's occasionalisms that can take root in the language or disappear from it are also typical for this type of communication e.g. *Grimbo* (Greece in limbo), *Bidenflation*.

The language expressions are often filled with semantically incompatible components, which create the effect of ridicule, and in a political context, they can take on the meaning of «aggressive-minded»: e.g. What people don't know is that 70 percent of the increase in inflation was the consequence of Putin's price hike because of the impact on oil prices.

Along with above mentioned specific, social and political communication is also characterized by a large number of neologisms formed through lexical manner of derivation. As the study shows, the lexical word formation (derivation) follows five basic models: 1) word combination / word-group / collocation (23 %), 2) compounding / composition (5 %), 3) abbreviation (7 %), 4*) blending* (38 %)*, 5)* affixation (27 %).

1. Word combination / word-group / collocation (40 units / 23 %) – a multi-component model that consists of separate entities which can include from 2 up to 5 components: e.g. *fake news*, *rump state* (which refers to any nation when a large part of its territory is absorbed into another country), *party gate scandal* (the reason for B. Johnson's resignation), *absentee voting* (voting by mail), *Antitramp movement*.

2. Compounding / composition (9 units / 5%) – an integrally formed combination of two or more morphemes acting as root in separate words [1, p. 420]: e.g. *Euroscepticism, blockchain.*

3. Abbreviation (12 units / 7%) is the next model widely used for political terms formation. Main factors, such as online communication increased by

pandemic and Ukraine war-operation-related circumstances with instant nature of messaging and texting, have contributed to a vocabulary newly rich in efficient and abbreviated expression: e.g. *SWIFT* (global bank system used as a critical part of the severe sanction on Russia), *QUAD* (Indo-Pacific Association, which includes the USA, India, Australia and Japan), *AUKUS* (USA-British-Australian military bloc and security pact between Australia, the UK, and the USA, announced on 15 September 2021 for the Indo-Pacific region), *BRICS* (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), *PIIGS* (Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece, Spain group of five heavily indebted Eurozone countries). Being consonant with the English word *pigs*, this neologism has a derogatory meaning in the financial and political spheres. Upon the analysis of the lexical units it is established that alphabetic abbreviation is the most common and has an international character, while maintaining a single semantic structure.

4. Blending (67 units / 38 %) or telescoped word (the term used by E. L. Vasyutina) is the combination of the beginning of one word with the end of full form of another in order to form a new word: e.g. *stagflation = stagnation + inflation* [7, p. 248]. The term «blending» also refers to joining two separate words with different meaning to make a new one: *e.g. youthquake = youth+quake* (the term used to denote a cultural movement that seeks to expose and eradicate predatory sexual behaviour, esp. in the workplace [3]. A good example of blending is the word *clownfall* made of *clown + downfall* which refers to Boris Johnson's resignation as a prime minister of the UK (The Economist, 09 July 2022). As ironical terms recognized as political cliché serve «*whataboutism*» – blending of *what+about+is*, *whataboutery =what + about*, an argumentative tactic of responding to criticism or an accusation of wrongdoing by deflection or making similar criticism [6]. By the analogy with the *Grexit* (Greece + Exit) model, a large number of new words have been formed that serve to designate countries and territorial entities striving for independence and secession: e.g. *Calexit* (an exit by the state of California from the USA), *Scexit/Scoxit* (an exit by Scotland) [4]. There are many neologisms formed from the word «*Brexit*» (first appeared in 2012, named Collins Word of the Year 2016 and Macmillan Dictionary mentioned it as a Buzzword in 2016.): e.g. *Brexiety*, *Brexiteer*, *Brextremist*, *Brexodus*, *Brexchosis*, *Brentry* (merger of Britain and re-entry). The variety of new terms highlights the importance of the UK exit process and its consequences for the EU and the UK. The word «*Brexchosi*» was introduced by Boris Johnson and is used to display feeling of despair among those who voted to stay in the EU (Boris Johnson in Telegraph 2019).

5. 48 units / 27 % of new terms are formed through affixation model by attaching morphemes at the beginning (prefixation), the middle (infixation) or

the end (suffixation) of words to the root of the word: e.g. *Putinization, Finlandization* (refers to a nation that being neutral and independent on the international stage, yields to the policies of a larger, more powerful neighbor for maintaining its sovereignty) [6].

Thus, the palette of expressive means that is able to reveal and demonstrate the features of social and political communication is formed by a group of means to create imagery (metaphor, metonymy, comparison) and to describe and highlight a feature (paraphrases, epithets, euphemisms, litotes, hyperbole). Intra-systemic and intra-linguistic transformations aimed at improving the system of nomination, mediated by an external socially determined stimulus, «launch» the word-formation mechanism. It is recognized that the most common word-building models include: word combination, compounding, abbreviation, blending and affixation. It is established that blending is the leading pattern for social and political innovations and demonstrates the greatest productivity.

Литература

1. Akhmanova, O. S. Dictionary of linguistic terms. – Moscow : Soviet Encyclopedia, 1966. – 608 p.

2. Bovt, Alona. Thematic and structural features of English Neologisms of the second decade of the 21st century / Alona Bovt // Věda a perspektivy. – № 1(8), 2022. – P. 255–268 (https://doi.org/10.52058/2695-1592-2022-1(8)-255-268

3. Collins English Dictionary. 2019. – URL: https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english (date of access: 01.09.2022). – Text: online.

4. Coronavirus and the New Words We Added to the Dictionary in March 2020. – URL: https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/new-dictionary-words-coronavirus-covid-19 (date of access: 02.10.2022). – Text : online.

5. Kobenko, Yu. V. Language and environment. Experience of systematization of interdisciplinary research data / Yu. V. Kobenko. – Tomsk : Publishing House of Tomsk Polytechnic University, 2017. – 214 p.

6. Oxford English Dictionary – (date of access: 20.07.2022). – URL: https://public.oed.com/updates/new-words-list-march-2021/ (date of access: 22 September 2022).

7. Vasyutina, E. V. Peculiarities of word formation of political neologisms in English / E. V. Vasyutina // Izvestiya of VSPU. - 2014. – No. 1 (262). – P. 247–249.