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Features of euphemisms functioning in British sports journalism

Abstract

The current article is an attempt to identify the peculiarities of euphemistic nomination techniques in the texts of online media whose relevance and popularity is steadily growing in the world. The data extracted from the articles in the Sport section related to the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympics were selected on the website of the news service *bbc.com*. During the study, the method of linguistic analysis, distributive and component analysis, continuous sampling and the method of descriptive statistics were applied. Using a modified version of euphemisms classification based on V. V. Panin's model, the identified euphemistic units were assigned to group 1 (created for the reasons of politeness) and further distributed into 4 subgroups with the frequency of occurrence calculated for each unit. The results demonstrate that the euphemistic units used in the sports category were single words and phrases, the latter showing higher frequency. Subgroup 4 – euphemisms designed to soften expressions of sexism and other types of oppression formed on bias or discrimination of people based on gender – turned out the largest. The highest frequency rank among all euphemisms was given for a word group whose building pattern was "adjective + noun", the unit was classified into subgroup 2 – euphemisms mitigating discrimination against people with physical and mental disabilities. The other two subgroups were comprised by euphemisms with single occurrences. In addition to the facts of euphemism, some cases of dysphemism were identified, the corresponding units were distributed into subgroup 4.

Keywords: euphemism, political correctness, media text, dysphemism, journalistic style

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