

Political Euphemization as the Means of Disguise of Reality in German Political Discourse

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Abstract: The study is devoted to the phenomenon of euphemization in German political discourse. Political discourse is regarded here as the unique system marked by its specific linguistic means, speech strategies and tactics alongside with the manipulative techniques, the main aim of which is the indirect formation of public opinion. Being broadly used and not always recognized by the recipient, euphemisms represent one of such techniques. They allow a politician "to veil" the negative sides of unbiased reality and to diffuse the reaction of the audience to the outlined problems. Thus the current research is aimed to reveal the linguistic means of euphemistic disguise in German political texts and is based on the data of public speeches and interviews of the German Chancellor Angela Merkel which were published on the official administrative websites. Our primary task is to reveal the mechanisms of semantic influence of political euphemism on the mass audience. In the framework of our research we are particularly interested in the problem of manipulative capacity of euphemisms. The research of the phenomenon of euphemization in discursive light allowed us to reveal highly productive means of reduction of negative connotation on different linguistic levels in German political texts (for instance the application of semantically diffusive lexemes, diplomatic clichés and set phrases, the introduction of lexemes with positive connotation) and to outline general tendencies in political euphemization. As a result of the analysis made it was revealed that the influential force of different means of euphemization is variable and the frequency of euphemistic markers on different levels is significantly different as well. It may be noted here that the euphemization of the political discourse on the one hand enables easing of the reception of factual information but on the other allows its distortion being adjacent to disinformation. The results of the research (mechanisms of euphemization) can be applied in the further studies of cognitive and pragmatic aspects of formation of the political discourse, theoretical issues of political rhetoric and methods of creation of manipulative techniques.

Key words: Political euphemisms, political discourse, euphemistic disguise, reduction of the negative values, political strategies and tactics, manipulative techniques

INTRODUCTION

In recent years a considerable amount of valuable work has been done in the linguistic field of political communication, what is explained by the rising interest of the society, regarding a language as a means of impact on social mind. Political communication includes a variety of taboo topics which require gentle media exposure. Besides, alongside with the informative role, political texts serve ideological, manipulative and administrative functions. In a number of cases politicians face the necessity to conceal the existing problems and even to delude the audience. That stresses the significance of euphemism application, the necessity of concealment practice selection which develops the attitude to certain facts and events.

The research was conducted to carry out the comprehensive analysis of euphemization as discursive phenomenon in political communication. We are particularly interested in the following: Which linguistic means of euphemization are highly productive in the speech of Angela Merkel and possess the manipulative capacity regarding the impact on mass audience?

The data analyzed represents public speeches and interviews of the German Chancellor Angela Merkel from the period 2011-2015. It was collected from the official administrative websites www.bundeskanzlerin.de and www.bundesregierung.de.

Literature review: There is a vast literature on the euphemization phenomenon of the political discourse in

Russian and foreign linguistics (Baskova, 2006; Mironina, 2002; Obvintseva, 2004; Pavlova, 2000). Since, the end of the XX century a considerable amount of work has been done in linguistics, the phenomenon of euphemisms being covered from different angles. The works by Katsev, Krysin (1996), Moskvina (1999) and Senichkina (2006) are regarded to be among the most prominent studies on the Russian linguistic features of euphemisms. The above mentioned scholars outlined the basic distinctive features of euphemisms, determined their functions and ways of their formation. The researches by Potapova and Korchevskaya focus on the process of functioning of euphemisms in the English language discourse. A work by Prudyvus (2006) represents a multifaceted approach to the study of euphemisms in the German language.

It may be noted that the views of the scholars on the phenomenon of euphemisation were repeatedly reconsidered, considering the nature of euphemisms as both linguistic and sociocultural. Originally the term “euphemism” was associated with taboo notion and the necessity to substitute it. Thus, one of the definitions of the analyzed notion, presented by Katsev in his monograph is as follows: “euphemisms can be defined as indirect milding substitutes of something frightful, disgraceful or odious which are brought to life by moral or religious motives”. In the course of time the notion of euphemism has acquired a broader meaning and is now associated with a great number of sociocultural phenomena, including sociopolitical ones. The term “political euphemism” is defined as “groups of euphemisms used in political communication texts, addressed to mass audience, aimed at smoothing negative associations which are connected with certain facts, in the number of cases due to the distortion of the meaning of the fact described”.

The PhD dissertation of Yu.S. Baskova presents the notion of “euphemism” as “a substitute of any word or expression, unacceptable in the certain situation, by means of a neutral or positively connotated expression aimed to avoid conflicts in communication or to conceal unpleasant phenomenon of reality” (Baskova *et al.*, 2006). We regard the definition of a political euphemism provided by A.YU.Mironina as the most accurate one and our research is based on it. She regards euphemisms as “multifunctional speech units which are capable to perform as means of milding the nomination and veiling the meaning of the expression, in the frames of one and the same statement” (Mironina *et al.*, 2012; Pavlova, 2000).

Based on the definitions provided above we have outlined a number of peculiar features of political euphemization regarded in functional and pragmatic aspects:

- The usage of euphemisms in the texts of political communication is oriented at mass audience and is one of the factors of the direct impact on public opinion
- the main pragmatic function of political euphemisms is connected with the necessity to defuse conflict situations and negative reaction of a recipient
- the euphemization of the political discourse allows not only diffusion but also distortion of facts and in this meaning it is adjacent to disinformation

In recent years euphemization in political discourse of different languages has increasingly frequently become an object of research of modern scholars, what demonstrates the relevance of the issue under discussion.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The peculiarities of functioning of euphemisms in a text are associated with their semantics. Thus the most promising approach to specify the semantic mechanism of the euphemization process is to expose various ways of reduction of negative meaning of a linguistic unit. By “semantic reduction” we mean here “partial decrease of information loading of a euphemism compared to its direct nomination”. As a result of this process euphemisms demonstrate less differential semes and are characterized by the low level of specificity and semantic ambiguity. According to modern linguistic research, one of the significant issues in the field of euphemization phenomena is the broader approach to its definition. Until comparatively recently it used to be studied exclusively on a lexical level and defined as a lexical substitute but at the moment scientists accept the possibility of a euphemization process on different levels of a language: phonetic, graphical, lexical, morphological and syntactical.

Euphemisms are characterized by the variety of their ways of formation. Their first classification in the Russian language, developed by ZH.ZH. Varbot, included borrowed substitutes, descriptive naming units, pronouns, generalizations etc. Another classification of euphemisms presented by L.P.Krysin comprises naming units with general meaning, loan words and terms, abbreviations, some lexemes denoting incomplete actions or weakly expressed feature (Krysin, 1996). We cannot but mention the comprehensive and interesting classification

of euphemisms developed by Nazdracheva in which she unites the ways of formation of euphemisms in four subgroups, according to the dominant semantic feature of a euphemism. She refers all the varieties of semantic reduction of negative connotation, based on their ambiguity (metonymy, metaphor, antiphrasis, a substitute by a concordant word) to the first subgroup. The second subgroup unites all the euphemization techniques, based on semantic diffuseness and ambiguity of denotation (pronominalisation, periphrases, antonomasia, ellipsis, simulated bookishness). All kinds of euphemistic disguise, based on equivocal speech (for instance, synecdoche, meiosis, expressions of incomplete action or a stage of action) were included in the third group. And finally the fourth group unites “all the loan words, unassimilated in a language and thus lacking common associations”.

Our research is based on the classification of euphemisms, suggested by Baskova (2006) in her PhD thesis. According to Baskova the most significant level of euphemisation in the native speakers' discourse is lexical-semantic level, considering the linguistic level of euphemistic realization (graphical, phonetical, morphological, lexical semantic levels). Thus generalization, metaphorization, metonymization, the meanings of lexemes and phrases, the use of diplomatic clichés, terms and loan words can be referred to the main linguistic means on the lexical level. Various transformations of word combinations, ellipsis, the substitute of an affirmative construction for a negative one preserving the meaning (with the negation of the desirable information), the introduction of the additional positive component, the omission of the objectionable component, the collision of contradictory units, the overcomplication of the structure by means of word combinations can be referred to the syntactic means of formation of euphemisms. Graphical ways of euphemization are presented by syncope, apocope, substitution of a word by marks of omission. Phonetic euphemisms include speech analogy involving alteration of the taboo word. As our research demonstrated, graphical and phonetic euphemisms tend to be low frequent in political communication (Baskova *et al.*, 2006).

Based on the developed methodology of discourse euphemization, our research was conducted to identify highly productive ways of euphemistic nomination in A.Merkel's individual style, to outline the technique of euphemistic disguise in each individual case and to specify pragmatic character of euphemisms in political texts. Our data comprises 188 examples of euphemismization applied in political discourse of the

German Chancellor. As the result of our research we have determined the proportion of various ways of euphemization and the degree of disguise of reality and the manipulative impact on a recipient, analyzing euphemization on different linguistic levels.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the conducted research, one of the characteristic features of A.Merkel's individual style is the strategy of power retention which supposes the introduction of the euphemistic linguistic means in the political communication, aiming at “ironing out difficulties” and diffusing negative connotations in the course of discussion of pressing social and economic issues. Table 1 presents the statistics of the conducted research.

As the data analysis has shown, the lexical-semantic level demonstrates the widest variety of means of euphemization and in particular in political statements of the German Chancellor. Among the highly productive lexical units on this level we must mention the system of diplomatic disguise expressions, lexemes with indefinite semantics, image-metaphors, loan words and terms. One of the most productive ways of euphemization on the lexical-semantic level in the speech of A.Merkel is the meaning generalization. By generalization we mean a substitute of a lexeme with the negative connotation by the notion with the wider meaning which is usually characterized by neutral connotation and can be applied to a variety of objects and phenomena. For instance, to avoid the use of the lexeme *Arbeitslose* (“unemployed”) the politician selects the lexical unit *erwerbsfähiger Bedürftige* (“needing a job”) or *Betroffene* (affected by the situation). It is well-known, that the economic crisis presents the central problem, exercising the minds of many European politicians. In the statements of the German Chancellor it is frequently referred to by means of the descriptive construction *eine schwierige (weltwirtschaftliche) Situation* (“complicated economic situation”), *diesen schwierigen Weg gehen* (“to select this challenging way”). The problems associated with the crisis are characterized by means of the complex.

Table 1: Types of euphemisms in A.Merkel's political discourse

Types of euphemisms	Percentage
Diplomatic clichés	27.7
Generalization of meaning	25.0
Units with diffusive semantics	12.8
Terms and loan words	11.7
Metaphorical euphemisms	10.6
Euphemization on the syntactic level	6.4
Expressive phraseological units	5.8

hyperonym Schwachstellen (“weak spot”), what allows the politician to diffuse the situation, to ease tension caused by acute social problems. It is essential to emphasize, that the use of lexemes and phrases with generalized meaning, that compensate for serious political actions or events possess a large manipulative potential, due to the capacity of such substitutes to reduce the negative connotation of the described events and to represent the situation as normal, though complicated one. This point can be illustrated by the following statement by A.Merkel concerning the introduction of foreign troops on the territory of Afghanistan: “Ausländische Truppen hatten sich dort in der Geschichte schon früher schwer getan” (“Foreign troops aggravated the situation in Afghanistan in former historic periods”). The semantics of the predicative construction *schwer getan* (“to aggravate smth”) is vague and may indirectly indicate the negative circumstances of the introduction of the troops on the territory of the foreign state. Answering the question concerning the implementation of military force in Syria, the German Chancellor applies the euphemistic word combination *militärische Anstrengungen* (“military efforts”) which demonstrates the diffusion of negative connotation by means of the lexeme *Anstrengungen* (“efforts”): *Blick auf Syrien habe ich erst mal gesagt: Wir werden militärische Anstrengungen brauchen aber militärische Anstrengungen werden die Lösung nicht bringen, wir brauchen einen politischen Prozess* (“Concerning Syria, I have already touched on this issue, we will have to use military efforts but still military efforts will not bring us the solution, we need a political process”). In the other interview the Chancellor being persuasive concerning the necessity of the presence of military force of Germany and the USA in the Middle East, applies stylistically neutral word combinations: *deutsches Engagement* (“German aid”), *die militärische Präsenz* (“military presence”): *Nehmen Sie unser deutsches Engagement in Afghanistan. Es dauert schon lange an, aber um die Stabilität des Landes wirklich zu sichern, sollten wir zusammen mit unseren Partnern noch länger dort bleiben. Ich bin sehr froh über die Entscheidung von Präsident Obama, die militärische Präsenz der USA deutlich zu verlängern* (Think, for instance of the German aid in Afghanistan. This has been long-lasting, nevertheless we should have stayed longer there with our partners, to preserve stability in the country. I was delighted when President Obama proclaimed his decision to extend the military presence”). As we can observe in the examples above, the euphemistic constructions function to designate the situation of military intrusion in the foreign state policy

and neutralize negative connotation. In the last example due to the context they acquire positive evaluation. The general quantity of such euphemisms is 25 %.

The introduction of the linguistic units with diffusive semantics is similar technique in political communication which allows the politician to avoid specificity of statements and to create ambiguousness of their content. In most cases such effect is achieved by means of the use of an indefinite study or pronouns with diffusive semantics, for example *einige, manche, bestimmte andere* (“several, other, some, certain”). The following statement of the Chancellor illustrates her tactics of evading a question: *Wenn also weder die Kontaktgruppe zustande kommt noch Resultate entstehen, dann werden wir auch dafür eintreten, dass es Reisebeschränkungen für bestimmte Personen gibt und die Konten von bestimmten Personen eingefroren werden, die im Zusammenhang mit den Handlungen in der Ukraine eine bestimmte Bedeutung haben* (If no contact team created and no results achieved, we will be inclined to impose the entry restrictions upon certain citizens and to freeze accounts of certain bodies, who bear certain relation (in original are of certain importance) to the events in Ukraine). In the given statement, the adjective *bestimmte* (“certain”) was used three times and enables the politician to avoid indication on concrete people and circumstances and besides to escape from the negative evaluation of the actions of the designated bodies in the light of the latest war events in Ukraine. The general number of euphemisms formed so constitutes 12.8 %.

Furthermore, the system of diplomatic disguise expressions is widely used in modern political communication. From our point of view in a number of cases diplomatic euphemisms are used by politicians to carry out the strategy of being off the track, as their basic function is to disguise the point on on-going events or carried-out actions and eventually to distort the opinion of the audience of the core of the problem. Thus, Angela Merkel expresses her attitude to the conflict between Iran and Israel in the following way: *«Wir müssen noch größeren politischen Druck aufbauen. Deutschland steht fest an der Seite Israels, aber das iranische Nuklearprogramm bedroht nicht nur Israel, sondern die ganze freie Welt. Deshalb müssen wir alle politischen Mittel gegen den Iran zum Tragen kommen lassen* (“We have to bring more political pressure. Germany firmly upholds the policy of Israel, nevertheless the Iranian nuclear programmes threaten not only Israel but the whole world. This is the reason we have to direct all the political means against Iran”). In this case, the wide range of political actions to the extent of the commencement of military operations is implied by the diplomatic political

euphemisms politischen Druck aufbauen (to bring political pressure) and alle politischen Mittel zum Tragen kommen lassen (to direct all the political means). This group of means of euphemization also includes diplomatic clichés which characterize the Chancellor's individual style: belastbare Fakten (attenuating circumstances), wirksamere Instrumente suchen (seek for effective measures), die notwendigen Gespräche führen (conduct necessary negotiations), Empfehlungen umarbeiten (to formulate recommendations), mit einem breiten Bündel von Maßnahmen antworten (to apply the wide range of retaliation measures), mit Hochdruck verhandeln, diesen Gesprächen Nachdruck verleihen (to pile political pressure) etc.

The proportion of diplomatic clichés constitutes 27.7% in the examined data. A large quantity of euphemisms belonging to this way of euphemism formation in the German language is likely to be accounted for the peculiarities of the Chancellor's individual style: her chasity of style, objectivity, unemotionality.

Figural expressions, in particular metaphor, are significant lexical means of euphemization in political discourse as the created semantic dual-progress allows a politician to avoid direct nomination and to diffuse negative reactions of the audience. This assumption is clearly demonstrated in the following statement of the German Chancellor: «Das Schengen zum Beispiel war immer ein Projekt, wo einige vorangegangen sind andere nachgekommen sind. Wir haben durch den Euro quasi ein Europa der unterschiedlichen Geschwindigkeiten» ("Schengen has always been the project, characterized by the advance of some countries and the overtake of other states. Europe has developed with different speed (at multiple levels) due to euro currency"). In the example given above the politician uses the situation to the best effect by means of the figurative simile Europa der unterschiedlichen Geschwindigkeiten ("Europe functioning with different speed"), attempting to diffuse the negative reaction of the neighboring European states and demonstrating diplomatic inventive power and political correctness.

Answering the provocative question of a journalist concerning Germany becoming a part of "the strudel of the European crisis" the Chancellor applies the figurative expression: Ich sehe wie die meisten Experten zwar eine Abkühlung der Konjunktur, aber keine Rezession. Unsere Wirtschaft wächst langsamer ("As the majority of experts, I observe the deceleration of economic growth but not its recession. Our economy is developing slower at the moment"). In this statement, the politician applies both the figurative oxymoron eine Abkühlung der Konjunktur

(lit. "the deceleration of economic growth") and polarization ("opposition of notions"), one of which, Rezession ("recession") is regarded by the speaker as unsuitable in this particular context.

In the other example, commenting on the political situation in Ukraine, A. Merkel selects the verb with the image-bearing stem bewegen ("to be worried, concerned"), emphasizing her unindifferent attitude to the on-going events and at the same time avoiding any strict assessment of the current situation:

Die Lage in der Ukraine ist etwas, was uns alle sehr bewegt. Wir haben gestern, glaube ich, gute Gespräche geführt, aber wir haben in den nächsten Tagen durchaus auch noch einiges zu leisten ("The situation in Ukraine is what we all concerned about. I believe, we conducted successful negotiations yesterday but will have to achieve more results in subsequent days").

The general number of metaphorical euphemisms constitutes 10.6%. Addressing the image-bearing side of mind, such units arouse associations which are not connected with the real point of the utterance. To comprehend the implied meaning the recipient has to produce suppositions on what was implied by the politician in the figurative expressions of the latter. Besides, various recipients' associations have different connotations.

The introduction of the expressive phraseological units in A.Merkel's speech cannot be called the characteristic feature of A.Merkel's individual style, it is less frequent. Nevertheless, these units as signs of indirect nomination serve the function of undesirable denotate in the politician's speech and thus can be regarded as means of euphemisation. For instance, "Blogger sind nicht gemeint, aber die, die sozusagen das gesamte Geld aus der Vermarktung von der geistigen Arbeit anderer verdienen, müssen da auch einen gewissen Obolus entrichten" ("I do not mean bloggers but those who make their living selling intellectual property of other people must get it on the act"). In the example above the structure of the set phrase einen gewissen Obolus entrichten ("get it on the act") is indefinite and veils the denotate -the definite financial sum, paid for the copyright to use the intellectual property.

Stressing the necessity to pay great effort to overcome economic crisis, the German Chancellor applies figurative expressi, for instance dicke Bretter bohren ("to work hard", lit. "to drill thick board"), schwierige Hürden überwinden ("to overcome barriers") aimed to create positive emotional state, directed to overcome certain difficulties. Besides, phraseological units are characterized by wider semantic meaning, a range of differential semes that produce the effect of polisemy and allow politicians

to characterize some facts of reality in a vague way. In the example above mentioning the hard situation in Ukraine the politician uses the phraseological unit *zur Seite stehen* (to aid smb, to protect someone's interests) which can be interpreted in various ways possessing the co-meanings, denoting various kinds of political support.

This group is of the lowest frequency, (5.8% euphemisms) what is quite logical, as phraseological units serve for expressivity and emotional emphasis of speech. One more wide-spread kind of euphemization of the political discourse is the introduction of terms and loan words. The technique of euphemization is represented by the overshadowing of the inner form of the substitutes applied as the meaning of these lexemes is not clear for all recipients. On the other hand, a politician's speech filled with terminology and loan words may sound more significant and weightful.

Loan terminology is frequently used by A.Merkel to denote the agreements of EU reached at different stages of its development, for instance *Fiskalpakt*, *Fiskalunion*, *Stabilitätspakt*, *Sixpack*, *Euro-Plus-Pakt*, *Freihandelsabkommen TTIP*. As we see these substitutes are represented by compound nouns, the first component of which characterizes the reached agreement as neutral or even positive. Overshadowing of the inner form frequently functions by means of the use of borrowed lexemes: not all the audience is able to realize that bringing the *Fiscalpact* into power can lead to stricter control over European economy.

The usage of overcomplicated terminology and borrowings in A.Merkel's statements is frequently accompanied by abbreviation which is morphological in its nature but nevertheless the technique of the semantic influence on the recipient is identical: «Um das zu verhindern, haben wir erst den Rettungsschirm EFSF verabschiedet und später auch den permanenten Stabilitätsmechanismus ESM, der im Augenblick von den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten ratifiziert wird. Solidarität alleine reicht aber nicht» (“To avoid this we have created the European fund of financial stability and later the running European stabilization mechanism fund, ratified by the single EU countries. But solidarity alone will not suffice”). In the given example the German abbreviations EFSF and ESM are accompanied by the complicated terminological lexemes *Rettungsschirm* and *Stabilitätspakt* which components possess positive connotation and contribute to the formation of positive attitude of the population to the agreements achieved in European Union.

In our data terms and borrowings as means of political euphemization constitute 11.7 %.

Data analysis has revealed the means of euphemization on the syntactic level, though the

quantitative proportion of them is quite small -6.4%. Euphemization here is realized both on the level of a word combination (the introduction of the additional positive component, the omission of the objectionable component, the collision of contradictory units) and on the sentence level. A bright example of the transformation of a word combination is the statement by A.Merkel concerning her attitude to politics: «Wer viel Arbeit und überraschende Wendungen nicht mag, sollte wirklich nicht in die Politik gehen. Für mich kann ich sagen: Es sind große Aufgaben und anspruchsvolle Themen, ich arbeite sehr gerne daran» (“Who dreads hard work and surprising changes (lit.turns) should not go in politics. That implies great and complicated tasks, that I enjoy working at”). In this example, the noun *Wendungen* (“turns”) is accompanied by the adjective *überraschend* (“surprising”), the latter being positively connotated, supposing sudden but pleasant change, a certain surprise. In fact this adjective is a substitute of a synonymous lexeme *unerwartet* (“unexpected”), the meaning of which is wider and can denote any changes, including negative ones. From our point of view the introduction of the component with the positive connotation is a deliberate action of the politician and serves to exclude the possible negative characteristics of the political collisions from the recipient's observation and to create generally positive impression of the perceived text.

The next effective way of euphemization on the syntactic level is the overcomplication of the single structure or of the whole sentence in general. Such techniques are frequent enough in political discourse, their pragmatic function is to distract the recipient from the core of the problem by making the text difficult to comprehend. For instance, A.Merkel gives the following answer to the journalist's question concerning the transparency of actions of the Federal Defence body: «Wir tagen im Bundessicherheitsrat geheim, weil es vor einer abschließenden Entscheidung außenpolitisch im Verhältnis zu unseren Partnern und auch mit Blick auf nachvollziehbare Interessen der betroffenen Unternehmen zum Schutz ihrer Betriebsinteressen gute Gründe für dieses seit langem bewährte Verfahren gibt» (“We have conducted the private meeting in the Defence body as there is a number of serious reasons for this procedure, taking final extrapolitical decisions concerning our partners and also aimed to protect industrial interests of the participating companies and firms”). As we can observe in this example, the main part of the sentence, where the idea of the necessity to preserve the confidentiality of the Defence body meeting is expressed, is overcomplicated by various prepositional constructions, making its comprehension problematic.

And finally a powerful means of euphemization on the syntactic level is represented by negative constructions in particular by the substitution of the affirmative construction for a negative one, what enables the speaker to avoid the usage of pejorative lexemes and to neutralize the general tonality of the statement. Thus characterizing the difficult political situation in her country A.Merkel being a skillful politician, replaces the direct enumeration of negative factors by the positively highlighted negative constructions which are perceived in much more neutral way, arousing the emotion of regret but not disappointment: "Wir in Europa sind derzeit kein sehr dynamisch wachsender Markt, weder haben wir viel Geld auf der hohen Kante, noch sind wir rohstoffreich oder gar besonders jung" ("At present we, Europeans, have no dynamically developing market, neither much money on our bank accounts, nor we are rich in natural resources and not really young"). In a number of cases the politician applies the transfer of the negation in the modus part to diffuse the debated issue, as in the following example: "Ich habe nicht die Illusion, dass die großen Mächte in einem reformierten Sicherheitsrat ihr Vetorecht aufzugeben bereit waren" ("I have no illusions, that the world leaders would be ready to reject the veto in the reformed Defence Body"). This technique allows the politician to express her opinion less categorically and to neutralize the evaluative connotation concerning the position of Russia and China in the Syrian conflict. In conclusion it is important to point out that the linguistic markers of the phonetical and graphical levels are not typical for the politician's discourse, as the indicated variety of euphemisms generally serves to replace obscene vocabulary and jargonisms which are absolutely inappropriate in the speech of a political leader at power and the representative of the nation.

CONCLUSION

Summarizing the basic tendencies and means of euphemization of the modern German political discourse, we have arrived at the following observations. The main distinctive features of political euphemisms are their disguise functions, pragmatic targets to create neutral or positive evaluation of a statement and the ability to manipulate the mass audience. The most frequent techniques of euphemization of the German political leader A.Merkel are lexical means, such as generalization of meaning, lexemes with diffusive semantics and introduction of a large number of terms and loan words. Euphemization on the syntactical level is less varied and is less presented in our data but it must be emphasized

that the units of this level are more complicated in terms of their identification, possess the concealed manipulative force and require further research.

Generally, characterizing A.Merkel's individual style in pragmatic and discursive aspects, it must be admitted that the researched techniques of euphemization are applied by the politician in the frames of the main leading strategy: the strategy of power preservation, as the main aim of the leader of the country is regarded as the avoidance of conflict situations in the world politics, the diffusion of the acute social and economic issues and finally the construction of positive attitude of the prospected audience to the governmental policy. According to the results of the research, the formation and functioning of political euphemisms in A.Merkel's speech are determined by the functional and pragmatic characteristics of the political discourse.

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