AXIOLOGICAL POTENTIAL OF POLITICAL NICKNAMES

The article is devoted to the study of axiological possibilities of political nicknames. Political nicknames are very expressive. They can be personal and impersonal. Some nicknames lose their primary meaning to become a part of evaluative political lexis. In the language of politics nicknames often serve not only as means of assessment, but also as ideological weapon.

As for George Bush – junior and his father George Bush – senior, we noticed that these politicians are sometimes named as the numbers of their presidential periods – Number 41 and Number 43. For example,… Although it is currently fashionable to lampoon Number 43 for his verbal gaffes, we know that Number 41 was in a class of his own (The Daily Telegraph, Feb.14, 2004, p.6).

Anyway, nicknames make presidents closer to people. And it is their main function together with the function of assessment in the language of politics.

In course of our research we also noticed that political nicknames can be personal when there is a reference to a real person and impersonal when it is applied to a group of people or a political party or a political movement.

For example, Robbery Hillham/ Hilla the Hun are offensive nicknames given to Hillary Clinton during the period of political fight when she unsuccessfully attempted to become President of the USA. Both nicknames are personal and characterize Mrs. Clinton from the negative side, eventually contributing to the destruction of her positive political image.

Concerning impersonal nicknames, we also provide some examples. For instance, hawks and doves used to be nicknames but later became ideologically loaded political words.

Hawk – 2. a person who believes in strong action or the use of force, esp. one who supports warlike political ideas.


Other examples are donkeys and elephants, boll weevils and gypsy moths. These are nicknames of American political parties – Democratic and Republican.

Gypsy moths – those liberal and moderate Republicans in the USA House of Representatives who tend to deny support to President Ronald Reagan’s domestic and foreign policies. They are called gypsy moths, in contrast to boll weevils, after a leaf-eating moth found in the north,
because most of these House members represent congressional districts from the Northeast and Midwest (Jay M. Shafritz, 1988, p.259).

Boll weevils. 1. A long used term for southern Democrats in the US House of Representatives who support conservative policies. 2. Southern Democrats in the US House of Representatives who have supported President Ronald Reagan’s economic programs. Boll weevils are insects that feed on cotton (Jay M. Shafritz, 1988, p.59).

We also should mention that some nicknames tend to lose their originality and primary meaning to become a part of evaluative political lexis. Now, let’s consider the examples of such words together with their etymology:

Lame-ducks — The session of Congress which came to a close on the 4th of March in the year following the election of a new president of the USA was nicknamed the Lame-duck Congress because many of those making up this session of Congress had been defeated in the November elections and would be replaced by the successful candidates on March 4th. The session of Congress which convened in 1922 was the first to be called a Lame-duck Congress and members of this Congress were known as Lame-ducks (G.E.Shankle, 1967, p.248).

Egghhead — An intellectual; a politician with a highbrow image. The term was first used in American politics to derisively refer to Adlai Stevenson (1900-1965) when he was the Democratic nominee for president in 1952. The term fit Stevenson because he was all that the word implied, and worse — he had a balding, egg-shaped head (Jay M. Shafritz, 1988, p.184).

Both above mentioned nicknames have negative connotation. Nowadays, the word combination lame duck is used to characterize any American President serving the end of his last term without the right to be reelected. As for the word egghhead, its negative evaluative potential is used while ridiculing any politician having a highbrow image (in our opinion, in modern Ukrainian politics Arseniy Yatsenyuk perfectly fits this image).

In conclusion, it is necessary to underline that any nickname has great evaluative possibilities. The peculiarity of these words concludes in the possibility to express the assessment indirectly through the axiological component of connotation. Moreover, nicknames can form certain opinion about the object of assessment. That is why, due to their persuasive possibilities, nicknames often serve as strong ideological weapon in the language of politics.

References

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"МАТЕРИАЛИЗМ И ЭМПИРЮКРИТИЗМ" В.И.Ленинa - ГЛАВНЫЙ РУССКОЯЗЫЧНЫЙ ПОЛЕМИЧЕСКИЙ ТЕКСТ 1900-Х ГОДОВ

Аннотация
В настоящей статье автор показывает сложную ситуацию, определяющую конфликт в русском философском сообществе в начале двадцатого века. А.А.Богданов и В.И.Ленин, лидеры большевиков, были вовлечены в противоречивую полемику. Одновременно материались были вынуждены защищать свою теорию от постоянных критических выступлений эмпириокритиков. «Материализм и эмпириокритицизм» является главным оружием в этой речевой ситуации. В.И.Ленин ждал объяснить философские противоречия и доказать превосходство своего подхода, поэтому он может найти значительное количество полемических приёмов в его тексте. Анализ фрагментов «Материализма и эмпириокритицизма» помогает читателям оценить полемическое искусство В.И.Ленина. Для аспирантов, лицеистов, ораторов, политиков и студентов.

Ключевые слова: русскоязычный полемический текст, языковая личность, полемика, конфликт, эмиграция, рубашки, различные стили, оппонент, полемический дискур, средства скрытого воздействия, полемический приём.

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Abstract
In this article the author shows the complicated situation determined the conflict in Russian philosophical society at the beginning of the twentieth century. A.A.Bogdanov and V.I.Lenin, the leaders of the Bolsheviks, were involved in the long-lasting polemics. Simultaneously the Materialists had to defend their theory from the constant attacks of the Machists. Monograph «Materialism and Empiric-Criticism» is the main reflection of this speech situation. V.I.Lenin wished to explain philosophic contradictions and to prove prosperity of his approach therefore you can find a great number of polemical methods in his text. Analysis of «Materialism and Empiric-Criticism»’s fragments helps the readers to appreciate V.I.Lenin’s polemical art. For linguists, orators, politicians, post-graduates and students.

Keywords: Russian language polemical text, language personality, polemics, conflict, emigration, manuscript, different styles, opponent, polemical discourse, providers of suggestive impact, polemical method.