
LINGUISTICS & LITERATURE

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF HATE SPEECH ON
SOCIAL MEDIA

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ABSTRACT

This article aims at defining the essence of “Hate Speech” and studying it as a source of neologisms and metaphors depicted on social media. Concerns about the relationship between inflammatory hate speech and violent acts have grown as a result of the rising number of attacks against people of different national, ethnic and religious affiliations, cultures, orientations and beliefs.

The fact that the language of social media is characterized by tendencies to disguise the truth, reveal half-truths and ambiguous expressions and influence public opinion makes us realize that people especially public figures spare no effort to find effective terminology or phraseology in order to cast a shadow, ridicule or humiliate the opposing side through linguistic means.

Therefore, the analysis of such linguistic peculiarities of social media gain a great importance in order to avoid the use of irrelevant terminology aiming at insulting and humiliating people.

Keywords: hate speech; metaphors; neologisms; linguistic analysis; social media

Introduction

Hate speech is considered a means of using one's own feelings, emotions, attitudes rudely, humiliating and belittling the personality of others. Hate speech is often used in emphasizing the predominance of one's power and will. In competitive situations, this form of verbal aggression, as well as the hate speech used by politicians, creates a context that affects society.

Social media has a great role in shaping worldview and attitude towards events. Accordingly, when the broad masses of the population realize how a politician imbued with their sympathy speaks with the language of hatred, how he verbally insults a political opponent or a particular situation through linguistic units (metaphors and neologisms), they also form a certain view of the person or the event.

Hence, the aim of the article is to define the essence of "Hate Speech" and study it as a source of neologisms and metaphors depicted on social media.

Body

It is impossible to explain the modern peculiarities of the English language in media discourse without considering the general linguistic trends brought about by globalization. As far as we are deeply involved in a boundless space of communication, and a special activity of cultural-linguistic contacts is noted, the scale of the actions of social reality on language has increased significantly.

The language competence of the society greatly depends on the political and cultural-educational level of the country.

Society, in terms of speech characteristics and competence, has already been divided into several clearly defined groups and subgroups. While analyzing these groups, we can see that they are mostly located within the boundaries of social division of society creating linguistic subsystems of human social units, which are represented in various social networks.

Literature Review

Hate speech is a form of expression that promotes the establishment of a strongly negative attitude towards groups that are different in particular ways. Hate speech is considered to justify or promote hatred, discrimination, hostility towards people, particularly, racial, religious, ethnic, sexual or other minorities.

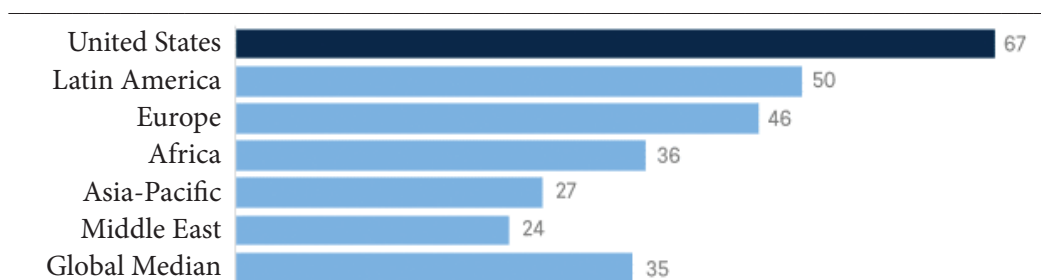
The 2015 UNESCO report “Countering Online Hate Speech” points out how on-line hate speech can be produced and spread at low cost, does not go through an editing process like other written work, experiences vastly different levels of exposure depending on the popularity of the post and can be posted cross-nationally, as platform servers and headquarters do not need to be in the same country as the user and their intended audience.

Laub (2019) considers that hate speech online has been linked to a global increase in violence toward minorities, including mass shootings, lynchings, and ethnic cleansing. However, some scholars believe that online and offline hate speech are not fundamentally different from one another.

According to Delgado (2009), hate speech uses words as a magic weapon to directly harm people. It encompasses words that offend and harm where words, tone and context are important. It is worth mentioning that hatred not only affects the individual victims, but it also represents a threat to vibrant democracies and a pluralistic society (The legal and policy framework in the EU).

In 2015, Pew Research Center conducted research asking participants whether people should be able to make statements that are offensive to minority groups publicly. Surprisingly, a great number of participants stated that insulting and humiliating minority groups of people was normal.

Graph № 1 - People should be able to make statements that are offensive to minority groups publicly



Source: Pew Research Center

Hence, we can define hate speech as usually thought to include communications of animosity or disparagement of an individual or a group on account of a group characteristic such as race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or sexual orientation.

Methodology

The following research methods are used in the work:

1. Analysis of politicians' posts in social networks by categorization (Facebook, Twitter).
2. Linguistic and sociolinguistic analysis of the obtained research units.
3. Description.

Research questions:

1. What causes the use of hate speech in social networks?
2. What type of hate speech do politicians use in their speeches?
3. Does hate speech become a source of neologisms?
4. What are the commonly used metaphors related to hate speech?

Results and Discussions

Hate speech includes all forms of expression that spread, promote, provoke or justify xenophobia, racial enmity, anti-Semitism, as well as other manifestations of intolerance - ethnocentrism, nationalism, discrimination, hostility towards minorities or migrants.

Means of expressing hate speech are - verbal form (verbal aggression - insults, mockery, etc.) written message, making a statement in the media, a message using symbols or a symbolic action, also, racial conspiracy theories, offensive stereotypes, epithets, etc. that contribute to the deliberate discreditation of this or that group, establishment of false views about them, encouragement of violence and endanger a specific group, any part of the society or any strata of the population. Hate speech can be conventionally divided into several parts. The lightest form of hate speech is:

1. Creating a negative image of an ethnic or religious group;
2. Asserting the inferiority of this or that group;
3. Asserting that the representatives of the particular religious group are morally inferior;
4. Mentioning particular groups and its representatives in a demeaning and offensive context;

5. Quoting clearly nationalistic and xenophobic expressions without any comment.

Experts widely note that this form of hate speech is widely noticed on social media. The ideas expressed in different social media are characterized by insulting, nationalistic, xenophobic comments towards people of different races, genders, ages and others.

Table № 1. The examples of light form of the hate speech on social media:

No	Hate Speech Example	Source	Word/Phrase	Form
1	“When Mexico sends its people, they’re not sending their best,” Trump said. “ <i>They’re sending people that have lots of problems, and they’re bringing those problems with us. They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.</i> ”	Twitter: During a June 2015 speech announcing his candidacy, Trump referred to some Mexican immigrants	“Rapists.”	Light form
2	“I’ve followed you for a while, and you are definitely on the side of Ukraine. But what attracts the ire of some Ukrainians, is that you don’t always stick to their narrative. They find only a black/white picture acceptable: <i>All Russians are criminals</i> , all Ukrainians heroes.”	Twitter: Jon Erland Madsen	“Criminals”	Light form
3	As a candidate, he said <i>he would consider surveillance of mosques and shutting some down, and suggested establishing a national database to register Muslims.</i>	Twitter: Trump also made widely discredited claims that American Muslims celebrated the attacks on September 11, 2001, in New Jersey.	“Shutting some Down”	Light form
4	“It’s not only those two parties in Slovakia. It’s also SMER - Social Democracy and Republika (Republic). In Republika, <i>there are convicted criminals</i> , holocaust denier, the right hand of the biggest Slovak ex-mob boss and fascists. But they say <i>Ukrainians are nazis.</i> ”	Twitter: Martina	“Criminals”, “Nazis”.	Light form
5	“ <i>You’re living in poverty, your schools are no good, you have no jobs, 58% of your youth is unemployed – what the hell do you have to lose?</i> ” Trump told a crowd in Michigan.	Twitter: During an August 2016 campaign stop, Trump argued that African-Americans have been struggling and taken for granted by the Democratic Party, and should consider voting for him in the November general election.	“Poverty”, “Unemployed”.	Light form

6	<p><i>“You know, it could mean Brooklyn. But it could also mean go back where you came from — you know, Russian Jews who came to the United States, southern Italians who came to the United States, Puerto Ricans newly arrived,” he continues. “So when this came out of the mouth of this president who’s from Queens, it sounded almost like a child saying that in my memory on the streets of New York.”</i></p>	Twitter: Donald Trump	“Go back”	Light form
7	<p><i>“When Donald and Ivana came to the casino, the bosses would order all the black people off the floor,” Brown said. “It was the eighties, I was a teenager, but I remember it: They put us all in the back.”</i></p>	Twitter: Kip Brown, a former employee at Trump’s Castle, accused another one of Trump’s businesses of discrimination	“Black people off the floor”	Light form
8	<p>In a controversial case that’s been characterized as a modern-day lynching, four Black teenagers and one Latino teenager — the “Central Park Five” — were accused of attacking and raping a jogger in New York City. Trump immediately took charge in the case, running an ad in local papers demanding, “BRING BACK THE DEATH PENALTY. BRING BACK OUR POLICE!” The teens’ convictions were later vacated after they spent seven to 13 years in prison, and the city paid \$41 million in a settlement to the teens. But Trump in October 2016 said <i>he still believes they’re guilty, despite the DNA evidence to the contrary.</i></p>	Twitter: Donald Trump	“Guilty”	Light form
9	<p>In season two of The Apprentice, Trump fired Kevin Allen, a Black contestant, for being overeducated. <i>“You’re an unbelievably talented guy in terms of education, and you haven’t done anything,”</i> Trump said on the show. <i>“At some point you have to say, ‘That’s enough’.”</i></p>	Twitter: Donald Trump	“Unbelievably talented”	Light form
10	<p>In 2010, there was a huge national controversy over the “Ground Zero Mosque” — a proposal to build a Muslim community center in Lower Manhattan, near the site of the 9/11 attacks.</p>	Facebook	“Ground Zero Mosque”	Light form
11	<p>Trump played a big role in pushing false rumors that Obama — the country’s first Black president — was not born in the US. He claimed to send investigators to Hawaii to look into Obama’s birth certificate. Obama later released his birth certificate, calling Trump a “carnival barker.”</p>	Twitter: Barack Obama	“Carnival barker”	Light form

The moderate form of hate speech is:

1. Justifying historical facts of violence and discrimination;
2. Publications and analysis that question historically generally accepted facts of violence and discrimination;
3. Allegation of the commitment of a historical crime by one or another ethnic or religious group;
4. Connection of the particular group with criminals;
5. Assertion of the disproportionate advantage of one or another ethnic or religious group;
6. Proof of negative impact on the state, society, one or another group;
7. Accusation of any group in territorial expansion or capture of state power;
8. Ignoring a person's citizenship because he/she belongs to a group different from the majority.

Table №2. The examples of moderate form of hate speech on social media:

No	Hate Speech Example	Source	Word/Phrase	Form
1	"Fascist Hitler-Russia, all genocidal fascist Russians are criminals against humanity, they are <i>fascists committing genocide, sickening hate crimes, terrorism, torture, home invasion, rape, corruption, kidnapping of children, and murder. Russians are liars, rapists, and murderers.</i> "	Tweeter: PK24	"Genocide", "Hate crimes", "Terrorism", "Torture", "Invasion", "Rape", "Corruption", "Murder".	Moderate form
2	"I know it's easier said than done, but <i>Armenians must leave Turkey ASAP.</i> That's exactly how it all started in 1915:(Turkey crosses every red line and getting to the point that they don't care what others think AT ALL!"	Tweeter: pəɹɪp.	"Cross red line".	Moderate form
3	" <i>Abkhazia and South Ossetia are not part of Georgia, and Crimea is officially part of Russia</i> ".	Tweeter: Kremser Mariana		Moderate form
4	Cher: "Kurds,But I've Heard About <i>"Blood Thirsty TURKS Who Tortured & Murdered Almost 2Million Armenians SINCE I WAS 11.ALSO HEARD IT IN ARMENIA.TURK SOLDIERS ARE STILL BLOOD THIRSTY. NOW THEY WILL COMMIT GENOCIDE ON THE KURDS WITH trump's BLESSING. GOD!"</i>	Tweeter:	"Blood Thirsty TURKS"	Moderate form

5	“ Black guys counting my money! I hate it. The only kind of people I want counting my money are short guys that wear yarmulkes every day. ... I think that the guy is lazy. And it’s probably not his fault, because laziness is a trait in blacks. It really is, I believe that. It’s not anything they can control. ”	Tweeter: A book by John O’Donnell, former president of Trump Plaza Hotel and Casino in Atlantic City, quoted Trump’s criticism of a Black accountant.	“Hate”	Moderate form
6	Federal officials found evidence that Trump had refused to rent to Black tenants and lied to Black applicants about whether apartments were available, among other accusations.	Tweeter: The US Department of Justice — under the Nixon administration, out of all administrations — sued the Trump Management Corporation for violating the Fair Housing Act.	“Accusations”	Moderate form
7	“It is inconceivable that we, the Orthodox people, especially the mountain Georgians, can live as a colony of the country (USA) that preaches homosexual values, hates traditions, campaigns against Christianity... Is this still better than Russia’s alliance?! ”	Facebook: Alt-Info	“Hate”	Moderate form
8	“Not as a Pakistani, but as a practising Muslim one must be against this open violation of stealing territory, taking over the rightfully owned land of Palestine by force. We will always condemn this. Israel doesn’t exist”;	Tweeter: Afsheen Zubair.	“Violation”	Moderate form
9	“Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed a decree recognising the independence of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People’s Republic and the Lugansk People’s Republic in Donbass as independent, avoiding a direct invasion of Ukraine but justifying occupation. ”	Tweeter: The-NewsHawks.	“Justifying occupation”	Moderate form
10	“ Russia did not annex any country the people of Donbas suffered at the hands of the Nazis Russia warned and was ignored, Crimea has always belonged to Russia.”	Tweeter: Paulo Durão.	“Annex”, “Nazis”	Moderate form

The strict form of hate speech is:

1. Calling for violence;
2. Calling for discrimination;
3. Calling for preventing others from settling in the region.

Table № 3. The examples of strict manifestations of hate speech on social media:

No	Hate Speech Example	Source	Word/Phrase	Form
1	“Citizens of foreign countries should not be allowed to buy land in Georgia and settle here for a long time”.	Tweeter: Alt-info.	“Should not be allowed”.	Strict form
2	“Yes. A foreigner is a foreigner. <i>Foreigners must not be allowed to settle down not only in Assam but also in any part of the country</i>”.	Tweeter: Jaivir Singh.	“Must not be allowed”.	Strict form
3	“<i>Foreigners must not be permitted to settle down in our land.</i> THEY MUST STAY IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY AND TAKE SOME RESPONSIBILITIES FOR TAKING CARE OF THE NATION!.	Tweeter: Mus.	“Must not be permitted”.	Strict form
4	In congressional testimony, Trump said that <i>some Native American reservations operating casinos shouldn’t be allowed because “they don’t look like Indians to me.”</i>	Tweeter: Donald Trump	“Shouldn’t be allowed”.	Strict form
5	White People vs. Black People. He said <i>he “wasn’t particularly happy” with the most recent season of his show, so he was considering “an idea that is fairly controversial — creating a team of successful African Americans versus a team of successful whites. Whether people like that idea or not, it is somewhat reflective of our very vicious world.”</i>	Tweeter: Trump publicly pitched what was essentially The Apprentice:	“African Americans versus a team of successful whites”.	Strict form
6	“George Floyd deserved to die for a fake \$20 bill think Donald Trump should get the Medal of Honor for stealing and refusing to return 150 classified secrets”.	Tweeter: Brad.	“Deserved to die”.	Strict form
7	“Syrian refugees are “terrorists”! Ukrainian refugees are “nazis”!	Facebook: Kareem Rifai.	“Refugees are “terrorists”.	Strict form

As we see, hate speech has become an integral part of social media that is profoundly related to political speeches being transmitted by different means of social platforms. All the mentioned examples are intended to spread, promote, provoke or justify xenophobia, racial enmity, anti-Semitism, as well as other manifestations of intolerance - ethnocentrism, nationalism, discrimination, hostility towards minorities or migrants.

Metaphors in Hate Speech

Metaphor is a rhetorical device that has a strategic value during the exchange of arguments. According to Oswald (2013), metaphor is one of the ways to strengthen an argument and its purpose is to convince the addressee.

In research discourses, metaphor is intensively used as a means of managing public (audience/reader) attention (attracting, arousing and/or diverting attention) and using arguments - in this sense, no difference can be observed between politicians. Metaphor, like other linguistic markers, is often presented in the form of hate speech and/or intended to enhance the effect of the use of hate speech.

In terms of the specificity of using metaphors, the discourse of each politician can be characterized as follows:

1. By using vivid metaphors, politicians mainly try to focus the listener's attention in order to strengthen belief to manifest own strength and turn against the opponents;
 - 1.1. *like a red flag to a bull* – Zelensky: “*Our brave actions turned out to be like a red flag to a bull to the occupants*”;
 - 1.2. *go off the deep end* – Boris Johnson: “*the world will witness how Vladimir Putin will go off the deep end when the troops leave Ukraine without gaining victory*”;
 - 1.3. *black mood* – *The parliament advised the prime minister to keep away from the president as he was in a black mood*;
 - 1.4. *Get hot under the collar* – *The officials were trying to get hot under the collar even though they realized the possible consequences of the event*;
 - 1.5. *see red* -*Discrimination of African Americans made Biden see red resulting in adopting new regulations against it.*

2. In the examples found on social media, cases of using metaphors of an intense nature predominate. The use of metaphor serves to emphasize the intensity of the situation:
 - 2.1. *be up in arms* - *The citizens of my country were up in arms over the destruction of the old church*;
 - 2.1. *blow a fuse/gasket/your top* – *The president was offended for the fourth time that made her blow a gasket her top*;
 - 2.2. *eat someone alive* – *The prime minister will eat us alive if we do not manage to bring changes into the new declaration*;
 - 2.3. *go ballistic* – *The government of the People's Republic of China went ballistic when Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan in 2022*;

2.4. *skin someone alive - Donald Trump used to skin alive everyone who dared to oppose his ideas.*

3. We have come across cases when metaphors are mainly used to divert attention to the behavior of the opponents, to the actions taken by them:

- 3.1. *fly off the handle – Boris Johnson flew off the handle when Vladimir Putin refused to meet him to discuss the problems brought by the war in Ukraine;*
- 3.2. *give a piece of one's mind – Zelensky got so irritated by the actions of the Russian government that he decided to give the Russian Officials a piece of his mind;*
- 3.3. *I'm ready to take the gloves off! – When Erdogan and Putin met each other in Tehran, they were ready to take the gloves off;*
- 3.4. *go postal - The government of Israel went postal when Palestine bombed Tel Aviv in 2019;*
- 3.5. *foam at the mouth - The leader of opposing party was foaming at the mouth while complaining about the resolution adopted by the government.*

In the research material, we found examples where politicians mainly try to emphasize their self-confidence, power, intensity of the situation through metaphors.

Hate Apeech Based Neologisms

Neologisms play a significant role in the modern language system and speech. In linguistics, the term neologism refers to new words, phrases, or meanings. Neologisms are often formed by combining existing words or using them in a new context.

Some neologisms have become part of standard English, while others have fallen out of the use. Similarly, some of today's neologisms will enter the vocabulary of the 22nd century, while others will be forgotten and replaced by more descriptive linguistic units.

There are five general criteria for defining neologisms:

1. psychological - "a neologism is a word that is perceived as new by the language community";
2. lexicographic - "any word that does not appear in the dictionary";
3. exclusive definition - "a word not appearing in a pre-determined exclusion

lexicon”;

4. diachronic definition - “any word-form that appears in a recent general language text, and was not previously a part of that language;
5. reference corpora definition – “any word that in a recent general language text and does not appear in an established reference corpus of that language”.

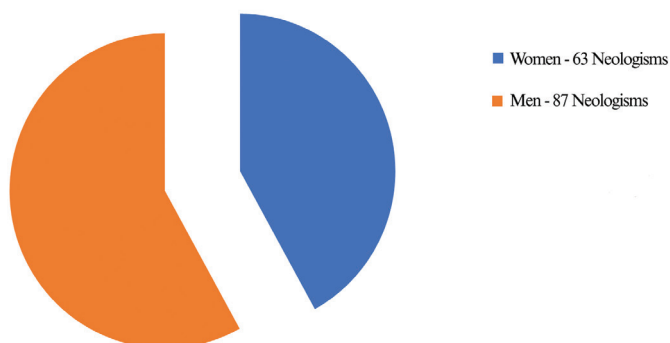
Based on the conducted research covering 150 neologisms derived from the speeches made by politicians, we have found the frequency of the usage of the neologisms according to the above-mentioned criteria:

Table № 4. The frequency of the usage of the neologisms according to the above-mentioned criteria:

Criteria	Percentage %
Psychological	30 %
Lexicographic	8 %
Exclusive definition	12 %
Diachronic definition	40 %
Reference corpora definition	10 %

Out of the studied units, 87 neologisms were created by men, while 63 neologisms were created by women.

Graph №2 – Number of neologisms created by gender



Based on the conducted research, three types of neologism are distinguished:

1. Completely new words;
2. A completely new meaning of old words;
3. New sense in the existing word.

The first type of neologisms contains only those lexemes that did not exist before a certain period of time.

The second type of neologisms represents words that have changed their meaning but remained their old form.

The third type of neologisms consists of lexemes that have only added one or more meanings without losing the old meaning; they represent the pragmatic attitude of polysemy.

It is worth mentioning that political speeches as well as hate speech used in political speeches are significantly becoming the source of neologisms. One of the vivid examples of creating neologisms based on political events is Donald Trump and the speeches made during his presidency.

1. Clicktivism (N.) - a policy of using the internet to take direct and often militant action to achieve a political or social aim.
2. Haterade (N.) - excessive negativity, criticism, or resentment.
3. Otherize (V.) – to view or treat (a person or group of people) as intrinsically different from and alien to oneself.
4. Herd mentality (Idiom) - The tendency of people to adopt or be influenced by the urges, behaviors, or inclinations of their peers, often in contrast to or in spite of their feelings as individuals.
5. Covfefe (N.) - a viral typo for “coverage” from a tweet by Donald Trump. The meaning and intention of the mysterious word was the source of much internet discussion and humor.
6. Nambia (N.) - combining the names of two real African countries, Zambia and Namibia.
7. Two Corinthians (Noun phrase) - referring to “Second Corinthians.”
8. ‘The blacks,’ ‘the gays,’ ‘the Muslims’ (Noun phrase) – distancing people from the group in question while highlighting their differences.

The language used by politicians, as well as the language used to describe and evaluate political persons or events, has specific characteristics.

The group of political neologisms, which carries more weight from the national or

international point of view, becomes an integral part of the language. Hence, those neologisms are not exception. They will become a part of the Standard English in the future.

Conclusion

Based on the conducted research encompassing different means of social platforms, public speeches, interviews and publications, we can say that hate speech has plenty of manifestations related to the animosity or disparagement of an individual or a group on account of a group characteristic such as race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or sexual orientation.

Metaphors and neologisms are integral part of hate speech. English is rich in terms of political metaphors and neologisms. We can find vast metaphors related to anger, hatred, discrimination, bullying in the English language. The use of such metaphors is conditioned by various factors:

1. grasping the listener's attention in order to strengthen belief, to manifest own strength and turn against the opponents;
2. emphasizing the intensity of the situation;
3. diverting attention to the behavior of the opponents and the actions taken by them.

Neologisms are created based on political rallies, speeches and sometimes they are associated with public figures. Three types of neologisms can be distinguished:

1. Completely new words;
2. A completely new flavor of old words;
3. New sense in the existing word.

In order to consider a word as a neologism, it must meet one of the criteria for defining the concept of neologism:

1. Psychological definition;
2. Lexicographic definition;
3. Exclusive definition;
4. Diachronic definition;
5. reference corpora definition;

In short, the generalization of the linguistic features of metaphors and neologisms depicted on social media emphasized the fact that most of them have negative shades of value.

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