

## FORMATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF EUPHEMISMS

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### ANNOTATION

This article discusses the formation and classification of euphemisms throughout the history. In this paper, we will discuss different definitions and groups of euphemisms. Euphemisms serve not only for providing a stylistic synonym or substitute for some linguistic unit, but also giving emotional assessment to certain phenomenon.

**Keywords:** euphemism, taboo, classification, formation, thematic groups.

### INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, the use of language has been shaped by societal norms and cultural beliefs. Taboos and restrictions on language have led to the development of euphemisms, or alternative ways of expressing taboo topics. These euphemisms serve to soften the impact of potentially offensive or inappropriate words and phrases, allowing for more polite and respectful communication. In some cases, euphemisms may also serve to avoid superstitions or beliefs about certain words having negative connotations or bringing bad luck. For example, in some cultures, the word "death" may be avoided and replaced with euphemistic phrases such as "passing away" or "departed."

The use of euphemisms reflects the complex relationship between language and society. It demonstrates how language is constantly evolving to navigate societal taboos and sensitivities while still enabling effective communication. Euphemisms also highlight the power of language to shape our perceptions and attitudes towards certain topics. Ultimately, the presence and evolution of euphemisms in language underscore the importance of understanding the cultural and societal context in which communication takes place. By being mindful of societal taboos and using appropriate language, we can ensure that our communication is respectful and considerate of others.

Speaking in all languages while fully observing the rules of politeness is the main factor that helps the conversation to continue in a positive direction. This

method has been the safest and most effective method of successful communication for centuries. These humble and pleasant words are used in linguistics with the term "euphemisms". Euphemisms are used in speech instead of rude, harsh or unpleasant words.

## METHODS

Looking at the history of euphemisms and their origins, although it is not clear how long euphemisms have been used in speech, there is evidence that they were used among the ancient Greeks. When talking to people or addressing their Gods, the ancient Greeks began to use their 'soft' version instead of bad and harsh words. For example, they called the prison the "room", the executioner the "public man", and the angry Gods the "Eumenides" or "reverend goddesses" [etymonline.com/word/euphemism].

Also, the term comes from the Greek word "euphemos" which means "good" or "good". The Greek prefix 'eu', meaning 'good', is the first element of euphemos. The second element is 'phēmē', a Greek word meaning 'speech' and derived from the verb 'phanai' meaning 'to speak' (Merriam Webster, n.d.). The origin of the word suggests that euphemism has long been used in communication because it makes negative thoughts seem more optimistic.

According to the definition in the Oxford English Dictionary [The Oxford English Dictionary], a euphemism can be defined as a 'soft and indirect word or phrase' used in place of 'something unpleasant or embarrassing'. These phrases used by the speaker should be less offensive or offensive to the listener than the actual word or phrase they replace. Therefore, euphemisms are used in communication situations related to sensitive and forbidden topics that people do not want to talk about freely, for example, "[...] death, diseases and disabilities, poverty, urine and defecation, sex, etc." [14:90]

The study of taboo language and euphemisms has become a significant area of research in linguistics, psychology, and sociology. It has been recognized that the use of euphemisms is a universal phenomenon in human language and serves as a way to navigate social norms and expectations. A lot of researches have been done for identifying the problems of euphemic lexicon and its relation to other languages phenomena. For example: G. Paul, R.O.Shor, B.A. Larin, L.P. Krysin, A.S.Kurkiev, E.P. Senichkina and others.

J. Vandries says, "Euphemism is nothing more than a sophisticated and more civilized form of a banned dictionary" [15:206].

L.A. Bulakowski writes: "Euphemism is a formula for 'preventing danger'..., with changing the original name of a bad thing or event, and talking about them without calling them evil forces." [6:175].

N.A. Samoilovich gives a dictionary of 42 words that Altay women don't need to say. For example, in order not to mention husbands and wives of Kyrgyz women and their siblings' names which end with the words wolf, sheep, lamb, river, they recorded the following words from their speech: The uuwer (wolf's sound) eats the maaa's (lamb's sound) child (lamb) [13:124-125].

E.A. Agayan states that in Armenian villages, the word rope is used instead of a snake [5:269]. A.N. Turbachev notes that European hunters, fishermen and peasants try not to name the fearsome and harmful animals during the hunting season. The author also notes that forest animals (such as bears, wolves) are pampered, flattered and called with ironic names in Sweden, Finland, Estonia and other countries [9:12].

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are more different opinions on the classification of euphemisms. In this area, R. Holder's classification is noteworthy. He divided euphemisms into 60 small classes of lexical-semantic features. This classification indicates that the denotative value of euphemisms is diverse [7:504].

In addition, A.M. Katsev divides euphemisms into 10 thematic groups. It still has a classification of euphemic means in accordance with an ontological nature. Social classification plays a special role in revealing the essence of euphemism. It is classified on the basis of the word, which refers to a particular social group [11:19].

A.S. Kurkiev divides euphemisms into five groups [10]:

- 1) euphemisms that are based on superstition ('under the weather' instead of 'sick');
- 2) euphemisms that arose from a sense of fear ('dearly departed' or 'buy the farm' instead of 'die');
- 3) euphemisms that appeared on the basis of mercy ('physically challenged' instead of 'disabled people');

4) euphemisms that appeared on the basis of shyness (‘correctional facility’ instead of ‘go to prison’);

5) euphemisms that appeared on the basis of politeness (‘senior citizens’ instead of ‘old people’).

According to the English linguists K. Allan and K. Burridge euphemisms can be studied by dividing them into two groups: sweet talking (speak politely, hide guilt, avoid words that hurt the soul) and deception (hypocrisy: mainly in the military field, espionage, not tell political and state secrets) [4:1].

In the Uzbek linguistics, the first who explored the nature of taboos and euphemisms was N. Ismatullaev. Later he studied that this issue was based on euphemisms in the speech. A study of classifications of the phenomenon which was carried out by Ismatullaev was divided into 5 main groups [8:59]:

- 1) euphemisms that are associated with taboos;
- 2) euphemisms associated with superstition;
- 3) euphemisms that are used instead of rude, obscene words and phrases;
- 4) jargon euphemisms that are used to decorate speech and for religious purposes;
- 5) stylistic euphemisms.

It is known that Uzbek euphemisms have been also studied in monographs of Anvar Omonturdiyev, and the taboo and euphemisms in the speech of Uzbek herdsmen have been investigated fundamentally. A.Zh. Omonturdiyev gives the following classification depending on the degree of taboo [12]:

- 1) euphemisms associated with pornographic concepts that are forbidden or cannot be pronounced (names of male members, processes of violence);
- 2) euphemisms associated with fear, with unwanted or unpleasant messages, or with death;
- 3) euphemisms associated with concepts where the name of the phenomenon can be pronounced, but this concept is incompatible with the culture of speech (the treatment of family members with each other, at work and in public places with superiors).

According to the above descriptions and classifications, it became known that euphemisms are multifaceted.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, euphemisms play a crucial role in social communication by allowing people to discuss sensitive topics in a more comfortable and polite manner. They serve to replace taboo language and eliminate vagueness, while also adding elegance and sometimes humour to the conversation. However, it is important to use euphemisms judiciously, as excessive use can come across as insincere or affected. Understanding and mastering euphemisms can lead to more effective communication and also provide insight into cultural norms and values. Therefore, it is essential to pay attention to their usage in order to communicate effectively and respectfully. In brief, understanding and having a good command of the euphemism can be understood more effectively. Moreover, it also has the inspiration and guiding function of the sense of culture.

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