

The Cases of using Eupemistic Vocabulary of the English Language

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Abstract: *This paper is devoted to the study of euphemism and their use in different purposes, such as used to replace the exact names of frightening objects and phenomena, to call something unpleasant, to describe the designation of everything that in a given society can be considered indecent, to comply with etiquette and others. Furthremore, it is explained that euphemisms are subject to two basic rules, such as Gresham's Law and the Law of Succession.*

Keywords: Euphemism, Euphony, Beauty, Variety, Definitiness, Brevity, Relevance.

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the time of the ancient Greeks, euphemisms have been used to denote a stylistic trope that plays the role of verbal politeness. Euphemistic substitution is one of the techniques and means associated with the fulfillment or deliberate non-compliance with the so-called requirements for speech, also referred to as speech qualities. The list of communicatively significant qualities of speech was formed back in antiquity, as evidenced by the works of Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, and other Greek and Roman scientists of the 5th-1st centuries BC [1,2,3].

The main qualities in the Greco-Roman tradition were correctness, unambiguity, logic, clarity, accuracy, euphony, beauty, variety, definitiness, brevity and relevance of speech, as well as the plausibility of its content. Various versions of this list, modified either towards detail, or towards generalization, either quantitatively, or purely terminologically, we find in works of scientists of a later period, for example, in the works of L.V. Shcherba, V.V. Vinogradov, B.N.Golovin, G.P.Grice, L.A. Vvedenskaya, L.G.Pavlova and E.Y.Kashaeva and others).

In linguistic terms, euphemisms began to be studied from the nineteenth century. At the end of the 10th century, the German linguist G. Paul singled out euphemisms in the well-known scheme of semantic changes today. The problems of euphemization began to be especially popular in the 60-80s of the last century. During this period, the works of S. Widlak, J. Lawrence appeared.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The empirical material of the study is "A Dictionary of Euphemisms", "The Wordsworth Book of Euphemisms" and "The Hilarious Guide to the Unmentionable". In this work, the methods and techniques as quantitative and qualitative analysis of the content of dictionaries, classification of lexical units, their linguistic and linguocultural analysis, and also statistical analysis of linguistic and linguocultural data were used.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The problems of euphemistic renaming on the basis of different languages were also considered by J.Williams, I.R.Galperin, V.N.Telia, I.P.Pavlova, and others. As the number of published works on this issue began to grow, disagreements began to appear in the interpretation of euphemism and taboo in general and their aspects. In particular, some scientists (for example, consider euphemism as melioratives in the vocabulary of the modern German language, understanding them as a kind of generic concept that reflects a tendency in language and speech to conscious evaluative overestimation or disguise when designating certain objects of reality.

In order to analyze the euphemisms of the English language as a reflection of the values of English-speaking cultures, there is a great need to

- Identify what methods of word formation are the most productive in the process of formation of the euphemistic vocabulary of the English language;
- Identify the most taboo areas of euphemism in English.
- Establish a connection between the euphemisms of a given language and the system of values of the people speaking this language;
- Establish a connection between euphemisms and political correspondents.

The views of philologists on the main functions of euphemisms are reflected in their proposed definitions of this linguistic phenomenon. Euphemisms are used for the following purposes:

Euphemisms are used to replace the exact names of frightening objects and phenomena, for example, “to pass away” instead of “to die”, “recessions” instead of “depressions”;

Euphemisms are used when you do not want to call something unpleasant by its direct name. For example, “executive action” instead of “assassination”, especially used by foreign political leaders);

Euphemisms are used to describe the designation of everything that in a given society can be considered indecent. They are called everyday euphemisms and they are most characteristic of colloquial speech. For example, “ease your nose” instead of “blowing your nose”;

Euphemisms are used to comply with etiquette: “for fear of offending either the interlocutor or a third person”. For example, “not a great reader” instead of poor reader, “verbally deficient” (suffering from a lack of words) instead of “illiterate”, “chalkboard” instead of “blackboard”;

A large number of euphemisms are also used in order to distort or mask the true essence of the signified. For example, in the speeches of politicians or in the press such words as “force packages” instead of warplanes, “hard targets” (about buildings and military equipment, which needs to be bombed), “collateral damage” (about civilians who accidentally died during hostilities, literally side losses);

With the help of euphemisms, professions that are not prestigious, from the point of view of the speaker or this society, are also described. For example, “building maintenance engineer”, instead of “janitor”, “stylist” instead of a “hairdresser”, “a personal assistant” instead of a secretary. Any changes in the language testify, first of all, that language is not an immovable system, but, in the contrary, is a developing, constantly changing dynamic whole.

The appearance of a new euphemism in a language always leads to more or less erratic shifts in the lexical system. Euphemism often becomes a source of synonymy, by which we mean a type of semantic relations of linguistic units, which consists in the complete or partial coincidence of their meanings. Firstly, the use of euphemisms leads to the replenishment of the already existing synonymous series in the language. Secondly, the appearance of a euphemism leads to the formation of a new synonymous pair or a new synonymous series, for example: pension - well-deserved rest.

Synonymy in this case undoubtedly leads to the enrichment of the vocabulary of the language. However, often the word euphemism, due to the frequency of use, and also due to the influence of the meaning of the taboo word, loses its euphemistic meaning and itself becomes a forbidden word, that is, an obsolete euphemism itself requires further substitution.

Noting this feature of euphemisms, B.A. Larin noticed that the more often a euphemism is used, the faster it loses its “ennobling properties” and the faster it “requires a new substitution” [4]. However, despite the change in semantic meaning, taboo phrases and so called swear words continue to exist much longer than their euphemisms. In our opinion, this a completely natural phenomenon, since no matter what euphemism is used, the subject itself does not change from this Euphemisms, perhaps, are one of the least stable layers in the vocabulary of the English language. They are constantly changing, and some of them “live” only one day.

Hugh Rawson believes that euphemisms are subject to two basic rules: Gresham's Law and the Law of Succession [5]. The first law owes its origin to economic theory and can be summarized as “bad money drives out good”, that is, counterfeit coins displace real ones from circulation, as people begin to save them. As far as language is concerned, the “bad” meanings or associations evoked by certain words can put out of use words that were once perfectly harmless. For example, some time ago such words as coition, intercourse, copulation meant communication, diplomatic relations, but now they have lost this meaning and began to mean only sexual intercourse. Or the word gay is now unlikely to

denote fun, since its new meaning homosexual has replaced the former. The same thing happened to the word “feces”, which once meant a completely harmless sediment of wine or olive oil, but now it is called a bowel movement. Gresham's law caused the principle or law of succession to appear, then its use becomes a taboo for most native speakers. As a result, it becomes necessary to create a new euphemism, and when the same thing happens with the second word, history will repeat itself.

IV. CONCLUSION

In the English language, a huge number of euphemisms have formed around some topics as a result of the above-mentioned laws. Probably, the more euphemisms arise, the stronger the taboo on the denotation of these words in a given culture. Such topics include sex, illness, etc. Euphemisms are undoubtedly used to hide the truth about the negative aspects of the denotation, which sometimes, of course, leads to an inadequate assessment of the latter and even disinformation of an individual or even a whole society. But at the same time, the presence of euphemisms in the language practice of a society testifies to the level of values, education and a wider culture.

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