

Productive Ways of Forming Euphemisms in English

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Abstract: *This paper is devoted to the study of euphemisms and the productive way of forming euphemistic vocabulary in the dictionaries. In addition, thematic groups of euphemisms are clarified with examples.*

Keywords: Euphemism, Euphony, Beauty, Variety, Definiteness, Brevity, Relevance

I. INTRODUCTION

Probably, the number of euphemisms allows us to judge the degree of tabooing of a particular topic in English culture, and hence its values. The author of the dictionary presented a detailed classification of euphemisms in 68 thematic fields, which allows us to most accurately represent the areas of use of euphemistic vocabulary. In our work, in order to make it easier to analyze euphemistic vocabulary, we have combined words and expressions into larger groups. As a result of our classification of euphemistic vocabulary, we received 16 thematic fields instead of 68, each of which contains several verses. They are parts of the body; diseases (abortions and miscarriages; diseases and injuries; low mental abilities; mental disability; obesity; venereal diseases); defecation (diarrhea, flatulence, toilet); death (funeral, murder and suicide); work (language of auctioneers and real estate agents, bankruptcy; commerce and industry, dismissal, trade unions, unemployment), sins (bragging, flattery and lies, bribery, cowardice, poverty and avarice, theft, gambling and deceit, drunkenness; poisonous substances), government (politics), crime (extortion, violence and torture; drugs, police); war (espionage); appearance (clothes, cosmetics); age; animals and their meat; charity - private, state and international; colour, gypsies and slavery; education; religion and prejudices.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

As our research material, we chose dictionaries compiled by native scientists of American culture (J.Nieman and C.Silver) and British culture (R.Holder), and on the principle of a classic encyclopedic dictionary, where all words are in alphabetical order, although with the provision of a thematic index at the end of the dictionary. Based on the above criteria, the following dictionaries were selected. The first dictionary is The Wordsworth Book of Euphemism, a monolingual thesaurus compiled by Judith Nieman and Carol Silver and published in the United States, first in 1983, then in 1990 and 1995. Dictionary targeted at a wide range of readers. We analyzed the latest edition of this dictionary. The second dictionary is the monolingual dictionary of R.Holder "A Dictionary of Euphemisms", also designed for the widest range of readers. This dictionary was published in the UK in 1987, republished in 1989. We analyzed the third edition of this dictionary, published in 1995 [6]. R. Holder's dictionary includes euphemisms that are used mainly in Great Britain, Nieman and Silver's book of euphemisms includes euphemisms that are mainly common in the United States.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The most productive way of forming euphemistic vocabulary in the dictionaries is a metaphorical transfer. In total, 3782 cases of metaphorical transfer were noted, which is 60% of the total number of analyzed euphemisms. Moreover, the largest number of metaphors falls on such thematic fields as sex (1213), sins (810), death (364), crime (330), work (300) and allocations (205). Despite the fact that modern Western society is distinguished by its liberality, openness, however, the high euphemism of such topics as sex, sins, death, crimes, probably indicates that in English and American societies, traditional values continue to retain their significance.

Another productive way of forming euphemisms in R Holder's dictionary is the expansion of the semantic meaning of the word or abstraction. In total, 1780 cases of abstraction were noted, which is 28% of the total number of analyzed vocabulary. This way of forming euphemisms is becoming more and more common in the era of general political correctness, as it is probably the ideal way to say about unpleasant things (physical and mental disabilities, low social status, etc. indirectly, streamlined, without hurting anyone's dignity, but at the same time it is clear enough that the interlocutors can adequately perceive the information received).

Various types of word-formation changes, such as abbreviation, reduplication, truncation, diminutives are also quite productive means of forming euphemisms. In total, 244 cases of word-formation changes were noted in R. Holder's dictionary, which is 38% of the total number of analyzed euphemistic vocabulary in this dictionary. The largest number of euphemisms was formed by truncation of a part of a word (82), initial abbreviation (77) and replacement of letters in words (29). These euphemisms were most often used in the thematic fields of sex, body parts, crime.

Allusion (85 - 1.3%), personification (79 - 1.2%), eponymy (21 - 0.3%), epithets (23 - 0.4%) are noted as ways of euphemias in mainly such thematic fields as body parts, excretions, death and crime. A particularly large number of allusions gives us the opportunity to assume that in modern English society the plots of biblical legends and mythological tales are still popular and well known.

Dictionary analysis also singled out as a fairly productive way of forming euphemistic vocabulary -borrowing words from other languages, mainly Latin, French, less often Talian, Spanish, even less often German. In total, 84 units of borrowed vocabulary were noted, which is 13% of the total number of examined vocabulary.

In R Holder's dictionary, there is a rather large number of vulgarisms (147 ~ 2.3%), which are supposedly also designed to euphemize such thematic fields as sex (62), body parts (55), extrusions (12) etc. In our opinion, it is rather incorrect to consider them as euphemisms, since in this case they do not euphemize, but rather highlight all the ugly sides of the designated object or phenomenon. However, what is a euphemism for one person may be vulgarism for another, depending on the context , gender, and more broadly - education and upbringing of a person.

Based on the analyzed material, we assume that euphemisms, or rather the thematic fields in which they are used, allow us to judge the moral and spiritual values of representatives of both British and American cultures. At the same time, we understand values as “complex principles grouped in a certain way that give harmony, direction to various motives of human thinking and activity in the course of solving common human problems.

Based on the study, all modern euphemistic vocabulary The English language was divided by us into two areas - a permanent and a new one. The permanent sphere of euphemization consists of such traditionally taboo topics as sex, illness, body parts, death, secretions, religion and prejudice, war, sins and transgressions. The second or new sphere of euphemism includes vocabulary , euphemizing thematic fields due to sociocultural changes caused by the ideology of political correctness. To the new sphere of euphemization, we include such thematic fields as work, government, crime, age, animals, charity, education, skin color, or more broadly - the national and cultural affiliation of the individual.

Political correctness and euphemisms have more similarities than differences and the laws of the universal theory of politeness. For English-speaking cultures, only negative strategies of politeness are characteristic of the desire to create a positive image in the eyes of another person or group of people, which is not alien to the considered cultures.

It was the desire to preserve a positive image that became one of the reasons for the emergence and consolidation in English-speaking cultures of euphemisms belonging to the second or new sphere of euphemization, that is, politically correct words and expressions.

In other words, positive strategies of polite behavior, backed up by politically correct euphemisms, allow you to get closer and reduce the distance between and negative ones do not allow to invade the zone of personal autonomy of the speech partner. As a result, through the correct selection of a strategy of polite behavior and the necessary euphemisms, a certain openness is created, the availability of both interlocutors, which can only be achieved without special efforts with the help of a smile, which is a sign that you do not have aggressive intentions, in a way belonging to a given culture, to a given society.

Aggression in the broad sense of the word and its connection with euphemisms deserves separate consideration. As a result of the study, we came to the conclusion that aggression is characteristic of human nature in general, and not of a particular national culture. Just like politeness, it is universal in nature and, undoubtedly, constantly affects the behavior

of individuals, their speech behavior, regardless of their cultural affiliation. However, belonging to a particular culture determines the ways of expressing aggression, as well as ways to overcome it, including with the help of euphemisms.

IV. CONCLUSION

An analysis of both dictionaries showed that the most euphemistic and, therefore, forbidden is everything related to human sins, sex, crime and punishment. That is, in the English-speaking society, such values as prudence and chastity, diligence continue to be of great importance, and love for one's neighbor, as well as equality. In addition to traditional values, the speech behavior of the speakers of the English-speaking culture is currently quite strongly influenced by the ideology of political correctness, which we tend to consider as a new value of this culture. At the same time, the emergence of politically correct euphemisms has become a source of controversy for another value of Anglo-American culture, namely directness and honesty. In other words, directness and honesty are probably no longer the dominant values in the choice of a speech behavior strategy in the modern English-speaking environment.

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