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ЭВФЕМИЗМ ЖАНА АНЫН АНГЛИС ТИЛИНДЕГИ РОЛУ

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ЭВФЕМИЗМ И ЕГО РОЛЬ НА АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

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EUPHEMISM AND ITS ROLE IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Бул макалада эвфемизм жана алардын ролу каралат.

Негизги сөздөр: эвфемизм, англис тили.

Данная статья рассматривает эвфемизм и его роль на английском языке.

Ключевые слова: эвфемизм, английский язык.

In his article there is considered the causes of using euphemisms of their definition and position in English.

Key words: euphemism, english language.

It is more comfortable for people not to talk about unpleasant or embarrassing topics directly. The effort to be polite makes them replace offensive words by more acceptable ones. The purpose of the use of euphemisms is to avoid unsuitable words in order not to offend hearer. According to Enright, the word euphemism originates from Greek, where it means *to speak in a good way*. Primarily, euphemism was a milder term used as a substitution for taboo expressions only. Later, the use of euphemisms was enlarged for any vulgar, offensive, harsh, embarrassing, blunt or other indelicate term. The oldest social taboos that made people use euphemisms, occurred in areas exuding fear and respect such as religion or death. Unlike Enright, Alkire claims that euphemisms have Latin roots..

The term euphemism is derived from two Greek words, eu meaning well or *sounding good*, and *pheme signifying speech*. Many linguists have made an attempt to define this term for clarity. Definitions considering euphemisms do not differ very much. Euphemisms are described as milder or soft expressions used as a substitution to dispreferred terms.. According to the dictionary, euphemism is an indirect term that is used by a speaker to save a hearer from being shocked or feeling embarrassed or upset.

Euphemisms are words we use to soften the reality of what we are communicating to a given listener or reader. They are a universal feature of language usage; all cultures typically use them to talk about things they find terrifying (e.g., war, sickness, death) because, anthropologically, "to speak a name was to evoke the divinity whose power then had to be confronted" Similarly, we use euphemisms to express taboos, as we feel, on some instinctual level, that the euphemism keeps us at safe distance from the taboo itself. Another use of euphemisms is to elevate the status of something (e.g., using educator for teacher, attorney for

lawyer); but in general, we use euphemisms to express what is socially difficult to express in direct terms.

A great number of euphemisms in English come from words with Latinate roots.

Euphemisms can be expressed by many ways. They are figurative and very often are expressed through metaphors (*to go for to die*), they also could be achieved by various processes of word formation. Nowadays, euphemism is widely used as a social tool to avoid offending other people and to be polite. These are to avoid taboo words, to create social politeness, and not to offend other people. In addition, some people believe that euphemism can protect them from misfortune. Even more, the use of taboo words is banned in most societies and those who use them will be reprimanded. Euphemism is used in every level of society. Among proletarians, euphemism is employed when they have to speak to their employers. This is to show their respect, humility, and politeness. Also, the bourgeoisie opt for euphemism to make their language less domineering. This also creates a good relationship between the working class people and themselves. High-class people usually reveal and maintain their social status with the use of euphemism as it is regarded as a social norm that they use well-chosen language. In addition, the use of euphemism depends heavily on context. For instance, politicians employ euphemism in order to make eloquent language when they are in public or the assembly. In diplomacy, euphemism helps maintain a good relationship between nations. Or even in everyday life, people use euphemism as an integral part of their language. Bureaucracies, such as the military and large corporations, frequently coin euphemisms of a more deliberate nature. For instance, militaries at war frequently kill people both deliberately and mistakenly; in doublespeak, the first may be called *neutralizing the target and the latter collateral damage*. *Organizations spawn expressions* to describe objectionable actions in terms that seem neutral or inoffensive, so industrial unpleasantness, such as pollution, may be toned down to out gassing or runoff - descriptions of physical processes rather than their damaging consequences.

Euphemism is an idiomatic expression which loses its literal meanings and refers to something else in order to hide its unpleasantness. For example, "kick the bucket" is a euphemism that describes the death of a person. In

addition, many organizations use the term “downsizing” for the distressing act of “firing” its employees.

Euphemism depends largely on the social context of the speakers and writers where they feel the need to replace certain words which may prove embarrassing for particular situation.

Euphemisms masks a rude or impolite expression but conveys the concept clearly and politely. Several techniques are employed to create euphemism.

- It may be in the form of abbreviation. E.g. B.O. (body odor), W.C (toilet)

- Foreign words may be used to replace an impolite expression e.g. faux (fake), or faux pas (foolish error) etc.

- Sometimes, they are abstractions, e.g. before I go (before I die)

- They may also be indirect expression replacing direct ones which may sound offensive e.g. rear-end, unmentionables etc.

- Using longer words or phrases can also mask unpleasant words e.g. flatulence for farting, perspiration for sweat, mentally challenged for stupid etc

- Using technical terms may reduce the rudeness exhibited by words e.g. gluteus maximus.

- Deliberately mispronouncing an offensive words may reduce its severity e.g. darn, shoot etc.

Euphemisms is frequently used in every day life.

Here some more examples:

- You are becoming a little thin on top (bald)

- Our teacher is in the family way (pregnant)

- He is always tired and emotional (drunk)

- We don't hire mentally challenged (stupid) people.

- He is a special child (disabled or retarded)

A List of English Euphemisms and Their Frequencies Answered by

Native Speakers of English

buttocks:

behind, rear end, bottom, backside, butt, ass, rear, hind, hinny, bum, gluteus maximums, fanny, seat, rump, posterior, tail, tail end, seat of the pants, derriere,

Bosom:

chest, breasts, jugs, tits, titties, knockers, woofers, hooters, nipples, boobs, lamp-chops, bust, poitrine, fun bags, cherries, jubilees, milk

Short:

runt, midget, short stuff, cute, not tall, petite, teenie-weenie, slight, slight in statue, diminutive, short shadow, vertically challenged, Napoleon, mouse, dwarf, small, pocket-sized, tiny, little, quite short, wee, pint-sized.

Ugly:

a dog, butt face, plain, homely, unpleasant face, ordinary, ill-shaped, gross, unattractive, hit with ugly stick, disgusting, wretched, arresting, rugged, craggy, grotesque, fearsome, not attractive, ill-favored, hideous, not good-looking, miserable, unsighted, average looking, an unfortunate face, unconventional looks, challenged for beauty,

missing some handsome, lacking look, beauty impaired, unlovely, unpretty.

Feces:

dung, waste, excrement, stool, defecate, make a deposit, make some fertilizer, log out, drop a bomb, evacuate, bake a brownie, blow mud, chop a log, build a

take a leak, piddle, tinkle, wee-wee, gypsies kiss, spend a penny, Jimmy Riddle, pee-wee.

release the gas, break wind, pass wind, let the bowels' air, gaseous evacuation, butt trumpet, cut the cheese, exhaust gas, butt blast, flamer, anal salute, airbrush your boxers, playing the trousers tuba, raspberry, blow a raspberry tart, guff, pass gas, ***Die:***

pass away, go to better place, not with us anymore, expire, meet his/her maker, buy the farm, depart, perish, decease, go to happy hunting ground, kick the bucket, eat it, go to heaven, join god, pass on, meet his/her demise, lose his/her life, cash in,

Stupid:

dense, slow, mentally challenged, obtuse, one sandwich short of a picnic, booby, foolish, not so clever, idiotic, cretin, imbecile, retarded, moronic, silly, dim,

Having sexual intercourse:

copulate, sleep with, make love, knock off, being with him, have an affair, go to bed with, have sex, getting it on, doing it, playing with, couple, mate, have intercourse with,

Poor:

poor, needy, not to have a pot to piss in, penniless, unfortunate, not well off, feel the pinch, broke, deprived, poor like a church mouse, on the street,

AIDS:

Incurable disease, transmitted disease, HIV, the syndrome, immune deficiency, serious sexual disease, silent killer, indiscriminate killer, a long illness, lung disease and cold, a viral disease.

Recently, I have encountered suggestions that euphemizing should be eradicated, and this became my motive for the closer examination of euphemisms. While writing my paper, I have explored the ways euphemisms are created, the ever-changing essence of both euphemistic expressions and the realities they refer to, the bright and the dark sides of euphemisms. Furthermore, I tried to find my own answers to several questions raised. Firstly, does the society employ euphemisms in order to gradually change its values, or can the “euphemism treadmill” serve as evidence supporting the claim that taboos persist, independent of the words used to talk about them? I believe that language both reflects and shapes thoughts; therefore, euphemisms have the potential to alter the reality. Nevertheless, there are other aspects that influence the priorities, fears or values of a society; euphemisms alone are not omnipotent. That is why euphemistic expressions remain a helpful tool in the process of changing people's attitudes, which is sometimes successful, sometimes not. My answer to the question if euphemisms

should be completely avoided, as some people suggest, calling for being more “direct” and “honest”, is clear: it is impossible, and not even desirable. As I discussed in this paper, euphemisms are a necessary part of every culture, they are probably as old as language itself, and, if used with honest intentions, they are related to speakers’ good manners, express concern for the feelings of others, and show respecting cultural taboos. Moreover, euphemisms can carry amusing aspects, spur the listeners’ imagination, and promote complex thoughts. It is probably due to political correctness and doublespeak that the society is becoming more sensitive to using vague language and demands avoiding euphemisms.

To sum up, I strongly believe that everyone needs to pay attention to language used as a tool of manipulation; language users should be aware that it is not the words

themselves, but the intentions that are good or bad. Education or experience is vital to help the speakers distinguish between naked truths and lies in disguise

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