

EUPHEMISM AS A MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

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Abstract:

The following thesis closely deals with the subject of the notion euphemism and its function in the spoken and written speech as well as it reveals to identify the internal effectiveness of this linguistic device.

Key words: euphemism, circumstances, correctional facility, political correctness, cycle of language, put to sleep.

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Euphemisms are gentle, polite expressions that are used in place of disagreeable language when expressing sadness or discomfort. The word "euphemism" comes from the Greek word "euphēmismos," [1,344] which means "to sound good." In ordinary discourse, euphemisms are frequently employed to defuse awkward situations. A few instances of euphemism are as follows:

Tyler, we have to let you go.

"Letting someone go" equates to firing them. This is a euphemism that sounds far more pleasant than the actual terrible circumstances. One more example for euphemism is below

Jimmy received a letter from a prison.

According to Tom Howard [2;34] "correctional facility" sounds better and more formal term than "jail" or "prison." Euphemisms enable us to soften otherwise unpleasant or difficult topics when we speak, particularly to young listeners or anyone who could be upset or offended by what we are discussing. They can be used to protect kids from adult content, steer clear of awkward confessional moments with loved ones, and keep oneself from using politically incorrect language in public. Both politeness and political correctness are rife with euphemism expressions. We place a great emphasis on politeness, as seen by the widespread use of euphemisms in both formal papers and ordinary speech, both by individuals and institutions. Euphemisms allow us to soften otherwise difficult or unpleasant things when we speak, especially to children, or people who might be offended or disturbed by the situation we are talking about. They can be used to shelter children from adult subjects, avoid awkward moments of truth with loved ones, and avoid politically incorrect phrasings in public. Political correctness and politeness are both filled with euphemistic phrases. The high usage of euphemisms by organizations and individuals in formal documents and everyday conversation alike shows how much we value politeness. Similar to how they are used in everyday conversation, euphemisms are employed in literature to soften otherwise harsh or uncomfortable situations with more pleasant language. This poem serves as an illustration of euphemism:

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In his face, a parallel universe where flesh is a loose shirt dragged to the river and thrashed against rocks, appeared when I stated, "I have to lay you off." I betrayed his faith just by speaking.

In the poem "Dropping the Euphemism" by Bob Hicok, a supervisor substitutes "***I have to lay you off***" for really firing someone. He goes on to talk about "***the cycles of business***," which refers to the necessity of recruiting and firing specific employees based on the company's financial success or failure. As we can see, persons who use euphemisms to dodge the obvious are frequently chastised, particularly if their motivation is to appear more sophisticated. Euphemisms are used in literature just as they are used in everyday speech: to soften otherwise difficult or harsh situations with nicer phrases. In Bob Hicok's poem [3;24] "Dropping the euphemism" a boss uses the euphemism "***I have to lay you off***" for firing someone. He continues to discuss "***the cycles of business***," meaning the need for firing and hiring certain people depending on the financial failure or success of the business. For another example of euphemism in literature, read this extract from George Orwell's [4;56] 1984:

She is feeling under the weather today.

"Feeling under the weather" is a euphemistic way of expressing that someone has fallen ill, without directly saying so. Like euphemisms, innuendos are used to discuss something unpleasant or inappropriate without directly stating the unpleasant or inappropriate subject. Whereas euphemisms soften the harsh reality, innuendos hint at the reality. Although understatements and innuendos work similar to euphemisms, they are different due to the intention: whereas understatements and innuendos can have a variety of intentions, euphemisms always aim for politeness and avoidance of dirty or inappropriate talk. Liars are "creative with the truth," sick pets are "put to sleep," and pregnant women have "buns in the oven." Euphemisms are pervasive in everyday conversation, formal documents, political speeches, and pop songs alike. They soften difficult truths and allow for polite conversation.

Common Examples of Euphemisms.

1. "Passed away" (instead of "died") "Passed away" is a euphemism that is often used to refer to someone who has died. It is a gentler and more polite way of saying that someone has died. Instead of saying "died," which can sound harsh, "passed away" implies that the person has moved on to another place or state of being. It's used to show respect and sensitivity when talking about death.

Example sentences:

- "I'm sorry to hear that your grandmother passed away."

2. Resting in peace (instead of "dead")

"Resting in peace" is a euphemism for being dead. It implies that the person has found peace and happiness now that they are no longer alive. It is often used in a religious context, as it suggests the person has gone to a peaceful afterlife.

Example sentences:

- "He is now resting in peace."

3. "Let go" (instead of "fired")

"Let go" is a euphemism that is often used to refer to someone who has been fired from their job. It is a gentler and more polite way of saying that someone has been terminated from their position.

It implies that the person was released, rather than being sacked or dismissed. It is often used as a way to soften the blow of the news to the person who was let go, as well as to others who may be hearing the news.

Example sentences:

- "I'm sorry, but we have to let you go."

4. Between jobs (instead of "unemployed")

"Between jobs" is a euphemism that is often used to refer to someone who is unemployed. It is a gentler and more polite way of saying that someone is not currently working.

It is often used as a way to avoid the negative connotation that the word "unemployed" may have, and to present the person in a more positive light.

Example sentences:

- "She's currently between jobs but actively looking for a new opportunity."

References:

[1]. *Wikipedia-definition of euphemism, online interpretation of English words.* p344

[2]. *Tom Howard-The thorough definition of euphemism -New York National Press. -New York, 1992.p34.*

[3]. *Bob Hicok - "Dropping the Euphemism"-London National Press. - London, 1990.p24.*

[4]. *George Orwell-Polite words-Oxford Literary Edition. -Oxford, 1984.p56.*