



## COMPARISON OF TABOOS AND EUPHEMISMS OF RUSSIAN, UZBEK AND GERMAN

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### Annotation

Euphemism (from the Greek ἐυφήμη “gloriousness” ← other Greek εὖ “good” + φήμη “speech, rumor”) is a word or a descriptive expression that is neutral in meaning and emotional “load”, usually used in texts and public statements to replace other words and expressions considered indecent or inappropriate. In politics, euphemisms are often used to soften certain words and expressions in order to mislead the public and falsify reality. For example, the use of the expression “interrogation with prejudice” instead of the word “torture”[1], “action” among the Nazis for a veiled name for mass executions, etc.

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An euphemism is a word or phrase used to obliquely describe something unpleasant, impolite, or taboo. Euphemisms are used in daily speech as well as in literature, and in some cases they are so prevalent that people may not even notice that a euphemism is being used at all. For example, there are many euphemisms that people use to say that they need to go to the bathroom:

- Go to the restroom
- Use the powder room
- Visit the little girls' or little boys' room
- Go number 1 or number 2

However, many people may not realize that the word "bathroom" itself is a euphemism used to avoid saying "toilet." All of these euphemisms are used in English because it is considered impolite to discuss bodily functions directly.

### Meaning and Etymology

The word euphemism has roots dating as far back as Proto-Indo-European, the language from which English and many other languages developed. It originated with the root \*bha- meaning "to speak." It developed into the ancient Greek eu- meaning "good" and phanai meaning "to speak." These were combined to create euphemismos, which meant "to use auspicious words in place of ill-omens." Euphemism was first attested in English in the 1650s and its definition has remained relatively stable over





time. The only real change from ancient Greek is that the contemporary use of euphemism does not carry connotations of omens and

### Using Euphemisms

There are many different reasons why an author might use a euphemism in writing, just like there are reasons for people to use euphemisms in everyday speech. These reasons can include the following:

- Euphemisms are polite
- Euphemisms add color to writing
- Euphemisms can create ambiguity
- Euphemisms can provide emotional charge

Polite euphemisms are often used to avoid describing things like death, sexual contact, and bodily functions in detail. When euphemisms are used to add color to a literary work, they may be unusual or humorous phrases. If a euphemism is particularly oblique, readers may have to pay attention to catch what they are actually referring to. Finally, having characters avoid saying what they would really like to say by using a euphemism instead can create tension and heightened emotion in a literary work.

### Euphemism: Examples in Literature

What is an example of a euphemism in a book or poem? There are thousands of different euphemism examples in literature; new euphemism examples can be created in addition to the common ones that are understood in daily speech. There are many different types of euphemisms that serve different purposes, each of which will have many possible applications in literary works. Euphemism types include abstraction, indirection, litotes, mispronunciation, modification, personification, and slang.

Euphemisms are used in spoken or printed texts to replace words that are considered rude or "obscene", such as swear words and obscene words. Sometimes "non-literary" words with less negative "load" are used as euphemisms than swearing and obscenity - colloquial, slang, author's. The use of euphemisms significantly mitigates the negative "load" on the text of swear words, although in most cases it is possible to determine by the euphemism or by the meaning of the text which word it replaces.

At the heart of the phenomenon of euphemism are:

- long-known language taboos that forbade the direct names of such dangerous objects and phenomena, such as gods or diseases, since the act of mentioning them, it was believed, could cause the phenomenon itself. Also known are widely used euphemisms to this day, due to religious beliefs, such as "unclean" instead of "devils".
- factors of social dialectology.

As the forms of human life become more refined, direct designations of known objects and phenomena (for example, certain physiological acts and parts of the human body)





begin to be considered odious and are expelled from the language, especially from its literary reflection. So, for a noble patrician in the era of the heyday of the economic and political power of Rome, some turns of an earlier era become unacceptable: lat. *Noli dici morte Africani "castratam" esse rem publicam* (Cicero, "De oratore", II)[2][source not specified 863 days].

Medieval chivalry avoids in courtly poetry direct designations of the genital organs, demonstratively preserved in their language by the emerging third estate ("The Romance of the Rose"). A particular propensity for euphemisms is usually distinguished by the language at the time of stabilization of culture, for example, linguistic affectation in the aristocratic salons of the 16th-17th centuries, the language of literature of the 19th century.

Not only in communication other forms of address are used, but vices or misconduct are also spoken of in especially softened terms. Forms of satire and ironic antiphrases are often built on the "discovery" of such euphemisms.

Euphemisms of swear words[edit | edit code]

According to Mokienko[3], a popular euphemism for the "first member" of the obscene triad is the phrase "three letters". In addition to the obvious euphemistic variants of obscene words (damn, burnt damn, badge fly, vigorous loaf, japonda biher, Japanese policeman), Mokienko points to the "podkolny snake of the Russian mat" in the harmless-looking euphemisms "Christmas trees are green!" and "my mothers!".

A number of euphemisms (dick, horseradish, fig, gouge, star, etc.) are characterized by almost complete copying of the rich word-formation paradigm of the original swear word while preserving the semantics: garbage, to hell, drop dead, fucked up, star, etc. Such euphemisms have a rather high potential for obscenization. In particular, the root kher (originally the name of the letter X in the Old Slavonic alphabet) has become practically obscene.

Philological researchers working in this field themselves use euphemisms, usually with the aim of "expanding the circle of addressees"[4] of their work. Mokienko points to a curious euphemistic pseudonym in English. Boris Sukitch Razvratnikov, under which the American Slavist Victor Friedman published his works on obscene vocabulary[3]. E. P. Senichkina in her dictionary of euphemisms uses the term "instead of direct designation" and, in isolated cases, the replacement of letters in "direct names" with asterisks to preserve the scientific style; at the same time, lovers of strong words are referred to V. Bui's dictionary "Russian cherished idioms" [5], in which non-literary euphemisms are described with "exhaustive completeness" [4].

A. Plutzer-Sarno points out that, due to the relatively weak tabooing of swear words and the high potential of word formation from swear words, the euphemism of the



swear word can be perceived simply as a more sophisticated and expressive version of the original expression[6].

People whose professions involve risks have superstitious taboos on certain words. For example, some pilots, parachutists, circus performers avoid using the word "last". It is replaced by "extreme" (or "once again", directly in the circus it is customary to say "final" or "encore") - for example, "extreme flight". They also try to avoid the word "death", replacing it with "bony", "noseless", "this one with a scythe". Prospectors instead of "gold" say "yellow metal".

In documents, media reports, euphemisms are often used that change the emotional coloring of the message. For example: "Negro" (American) → "African American", "disabled" → "person with disabilities", "persons with special needs", "other people" (in some countries); prison → "places of deprivation of liberty", "places not so remote". In Soviet times, the words "rootless cosmopolitan" and "Zionist" often served as a substitute for the words "Jew" or "Jew"[7][8][9][10]. Recently, the expression "authoritative businessman" ("authoritative entrepreneur") has been used by the press as a euphemism when the author wants to transparently hint at the involvement of a given person in criminal activity, but is afraid of claims and accusations of lack of evidence.

The names of low-prestigious jobs also receive euphemisms: vacuum cleaner → "gold man", courier → "forwarder", secretary → "office manager", "assistant", room cleaner → "cleaning manager", "professional cleaning operator", cleaning lady → "technician", janitor → "caretaker", watchman → "guard". Such a renaming, leading to a large number of positions with the titles of "manager", is characterized by a joke: "janitor - manager of external ecology" and "housekeepinconweiser", "loader - logistics manager", "security guard - emergency manager".

New designations of "obscene" objects and phenomena over time lose the character of euphemisms, begin to be perceived as a direct indication of an "obscene" object and, in turn, become "obscene". On this property of euphemisms, one of the favorite tricks of "crude comedy" is built - a game with so-called "transparent" euphemisms (for example, chapter IX of Rabelais' "Gargantua").

A similar situation occurred with the chain "negro" → "black" → "afro-american" (American Negro) or "lame" → "crippled" → "handicapped" → "disabled" → "differently abled" (disabled person).

Classical chain from the Russian language: outhouse → outhouse → restroom → closet → toilet.



However, the same situation exists with dysphemisms: dysphemism may eventually lose its taboo, for example, fr. tête, Italian. testa - head < lat. testa - a pot with a neutral caput.

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