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**1. Introduction**

The theme of our report is “Euphemisms: Usage and Classification”. Our investigation is based on studying the main features, etymology and usage of euphemisms in modern English. We analyzed some sources from the Internet, English dictionaries and books.

The object of our investigation is euphemisms as an important part of the English language. The subject of study is the modern English language.

The aims of our report are the following:

1. To sum up the basic features of euphemism.
2. To classify English euphemisms into groups according their meaning.
3. To show the importance of using euphemisms in the modern English language.

Our hypothesis is that euphemisms exist in all aspects of social and cultural lives. The novelty of our investigation lies in the new approach of the world view behind the language through euphemisms.

The actuality of the report is defined by the necessity of studying the nature of euphemisms.

The practical value of the report consists of the application of the results of our investigation.

The following methods have been applied:

1. descriptive;
2. analysis of euphemistic projections in the English language.

The materials of our study are:

1. examples from modern English language;
2. Russian – English dictionaries.

Why is this theme actual for me? Modern English euphemism relates to all aspects of personal as well as social lives ranging from political and economic life to everyday childbirth, death, disease, aging, marriage, and funeral. Since euphemisms are established social speaking and behaving norms, ways of thinking, I think we must study their features and application.

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**2. The Definition of the word “Euphemism”**

**The euphemism** is a substitution of an agreeable or less offensive expression in place of one that may offend or suggest something unpleasant to the listener, or to make it less troublesome for the speaker.[1]

It may also substitute a description of something or someone to avoid revealing secret, holy, or sacred names to the uninitiated. [2]

According to Oxford English Dictionary (2011), euphemism is a mild or indirect word or expression substituted for one considered to be too harsh or blunt when referring to something unpleasant.

There are also **superstitious** euphemisms, based on the idea that words have the power to bring bad fortune, and there are **religious** euphemisms, based on the idea that some words are holy, or that some words are spiritually imperiling .

**3. The main features of euphemism**

During our research we defined the main features of euphemism. They are:

**1)Nationalism**

Due to different natural and social environment, different nationalities and nations differ in terms of ways of life, customs and habits.

**2) Regionalism**

For example, turkey is native to America and a favorite of American people. Turkey is a part of Christmas and Thanksgiving dinner. But the term “talk turkey” has the meaning of speaking frankly.

**3 ) Ambiguity**

Ambiguous words can conceal the cruelty of war, mishaps of disasters, diseases.

**4. The Etymology of the word “ Euphemism ”**

The word euphemism comes from the Greek word euphemo, meaning "good or well” + pheme (φήμη), meaning "speech/speaking". The eupheme was originally a word or phrase used in place of a religious word or phrase that should not be spoken aloud. Since people are often named after everyday things, this leads to the swift development of euphemisms.

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**5. The usage of euphemisms**

Having researched and studied a lot of materials about English euphemisms, we come to the conclusion that euphemism exists in all aspects of modern English in great numbers and we can categorize it into ten types:

1)Death, Aging and Disease

2)Marriage

3)Disability and Handicap

4)Profession

5)Politics

6)Education

7) Religion

8) Military

9) Profanity

**1) Death and disease**

We don't always speak directly about death, but instead use one of the following expressions:

**pass away**: "Her uncle passed away last year" ;

**meet your maker**: "He's gone to meet his maker."

**2) Marriage**  
 Euphemism for the act of getting married is to “tie the knot”.

**3) Disability and Handicap**

In the United States terms such as “mentally challenged, learning difficulties, and special needs” are used to replace the term “retarded”. People with physical handicaps are called: disabled, physically challenged ,people with disabilities. The blind is called as “visually challenged”, stupid as “mentally challenged”, old as “chronically challenged”, short as “vertically challenged”. Similarly, the word “fat” has many polite versions such as “big, heavy, curvy, big bold, differently sized, plump”, the word “bold” - “hair disadvantaged ”.

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**4) Euphemisms in job titles/professions**

The division of profession may make some people feel low in social position, so they need euphemisms to rename their jobs and gain respect from others or avoid embarrassment. Garbage collector is replaced by “sanitation engineer”, automobile mechanic by “automobile engineer”, butcher by “technologist”, rat catcher by “rodent officer”, janitor by “security officer”, housewife by “domestic manager”.

5) **Politics**

Political field is rich in euphemism, so euphemism in politics is called **political euphemism.** Political euphemisms are used for social problems such as poverty, unemployment, crime, racism, bankruptcy, and recession. The poor people are gilded as “economically disadvantaged”, and slum is replaced by “substandard housing“. “Temporary negative cash” is used to refer to the state of being broke. Poor and backward countries are replaced by “undeveloped countries, underdeveloped countries, developing countries, the third world countries, the fourth world”.

**6) Education**

With the development of society and technology, euphemisms abound in education too. For example, a dumb student is called a “slow student”; an idiot is replaced by “person with learning difficulties” and “special needs”. If a student tells lies, he will be said to “misspoke, tell a white lie, color the truth”.

**7) Religious euphemisms**

Religious Euphemisms date to the earliest of written records. Euphemisms for God and Jesus, such as gosh and gee, are used by Christians to avoid taking the name of God in a vain oath.

**8)Military**

Military Euphemisms are prevalent in military language in order to hide the unpleasant nature of the work. This kind of ambiguity can conceal the cruelty of war, mishaps of disasters, diseases. In Iraqi War, American government named the war as “Iraqi Freedom” and it is “for justice and peace”.

**9)** **Euphemisms for the profane**

While profanities themselves have been around for centuries, their limited use in public and by the media has only slowly become socially acceptable, and there are still many expressions which cannot be used in polite conversation.

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**6. Conclusion**

Euphemisms are substitutes for their synonyms. Their use and existence are caused either by social conventions or by certain psychological factors. It helps us to get information of the world.

As you can see, most euphemisms are well-known expressions. Often euphemisms can be somewhat situational; what might be used as a euphemism in a conversation between two friends might make no sense to a third person.

From our point of view, euphemism would be a guide for the language learners to understand the culture and the psychologies of the target culture. In addition, by learning appropriate usage of words and phrases, learners can avoid being misunderstood in dealing with people from other cultures. Presently, more and more people pay attention to researching euphemism. By studying euphemism, learners can not only enlarge their knowledge, but also grasp the social psychology of the user using euphemisms.

In our opinion, euphemism has some advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it puts an end to some embarrassing situations. On the other hand, overuse of it may conceal true facts and lead to confusion. Euphemism helps writers to convey those ideas which have become a social taboo and are too embarrassing to mention directly.

We came to the conclusion that euphemisms are found in all spheres of life.

They may be used to denote the feeling of fear, shame, odium.

Our hypothesis was justified. It is really a universal means of learning the objective global world. With euphemisms we connect very positive emotions that

make our life easier and happier and help us communicate successfully.

6

**7. Literature**

1. Retrieved from en.wikipedia/wiki/ Euphemism

**8. References**

1. Euphemism Webster's Online Dictionary.

2. Oxford English dictionary. (2011). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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