

The Role of Euphemisms in French Language

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Abstract. *The main purpose of studying the semantic properties of euphemisms in French is to gain a deeper understanding of the linguistic mechanisms and strategies used to mitigate or hide unpleasant, taboo or sensitive topics. This includes analyzing the semantic relationships between euphemisms and their referents, studying the types of semantic changes involved in euphemism creation, and studying the social and cultural factors that influence euphemistic language use.*

Key words: *euphemisms, taboo, politeness, social etiquette, metaphor, metonymy.*

INTRODUCTION. The demand for learning a foreign language is increasing day by day. Foreign language science is divided into four aspects (reading, speaking, listening comprehension and speaking), and separate concepts and skills are given for each of them. Educational technologies are effective use of modern information technologies in the educational process. It is also intended to increase the quality and efficiency of education by introducing modern innovative technologies into the educational process.

Euphemism is a linguistic phenomenon that exists in all languages, including French. This means using a softer or more indirect word or phrase to replace a harsh, offensive or unpleasant word. Euphemisms perform various functions in the language, such as politeness, avoiding taboo topics, softening the impact of negative information, conveying complex ideas in a more subtle way. One of the main functions of euphemism in French is politeness. French culture places great emphasis on manners and etiquette, and euphemisms are often used in social interactions to avoid offense or embarrassment. For example, instead of saying “*Tu es gros*” (*You are fat*), a French speaker might say “*Tu as quelques kilos en trop*” (*You have a few extra kilos*) to soften the tone. Similarly, instead of saying “*Il est laid*” (*He is ugly*) to be polite, you can say “*Il n’est pas très beau*” (*He is not very beautiful*) [1, pp. 410].

Results and Discussion. According to the information, “... rude, profane words and phrases that are forbidden to be spoken openly, from the point of view of certain moral standards and certain beliefs, are called taboo. In places where it is necessary to speak more culturally, taboo words and phrases are replaced by convenient words and phrases that are by the norms of etiquette and express the meaning in a hidden manner. Such milder, more cultural words and expressions, used in place of language units that are forbidden in some way, are called “euphemisms”.

This term is derived from the ancient Greek compound word, which means “I speak well” [5, pp. 483, 570]. We know that certain things and actions are forbidden in various periods of development, especially in the primitive stages of human society. Such a prohibition is called “taboo”. This article



deals with the analysis of the concepts of “euphemism” and “taboo” in linguistics, particularly in French linguistics.

The concept of euphemism is an important aspect of language, especially in French. Euphemisms are the use of mild or indirect words or phrases instead of direct or harsh words, often to soften the impact of a potentially unpleasant or offensive statement. They serve a variety of functions in language, including politeness, social etiquette, and avoiding taboo or sensitive topics. Euphemisms are common in French and are used in both formal and informal settings. One of the main functions of euphemisms in the French language is to maintain politeness and social etiquette. For example, instead of using direct or blunt language to express sensitive or potentially offensive feelings, euphemisms can be used to soften the impact of a statement. Another important function of French euphemisms is to convey information diplomatically and sensitively. For example, in a professional or formal setting, euphemisms can be used to discuss difficult or sensitive topics with care and consideration. Instead of using direct and potentially confrontational language, euphemisms allow sensitive information to be conveyed in a less controversial and diplomatic manner. In addition to these functions, French euphemisms also serve to soften the impact of negative or unpleasant language. For example, instead of using harsh or harsh language to describe an inappropriate situation, euphemisms can be used to soften the negative connotations of a statement.

Euphemisms also play a role in maintaining cultural and social norms and expectations. In French culture, certain subjects and topics are considered taboo or sensitive, and the use of euphemisms allows these topics to be discussed in a more acceptable and appropriate manner. It helps support social norms and values and allows for more comfortable and respectful communication about difficult or sensitive topics. Additionally, French euphemisms can also be used to add a level of humor or irony to the language. Using indirect or clever language to convey a message, euphemisms can add a layer of subtlety and playfulness to communication. It helps make language more engaging and enjoyable, and can add depth and complexity to the way you express ideas [2, pp. 216].

It should be noted that the use of euphemisms in French is not without its own difficulties and contradictions. Although euphemisms can serve important social and cultural functions, they can also be seen as a form of language avoidance or deception. Some critics argue that euphemisms can obscure the truth and prevent clear and direct communication, especially in professional or formal settings. The possibility of misunderstanding or ambiguity should also be considered when using euphemisms, as indirect language can sometimes lead to confusion or misinterpretation. Euphemisms are expressions used in place of words or phrases that can be considered too rude or offensive.

Euphemisms in French serve a pragmatic function in speech, conforming to social norms and cultural conventions. By using euphemisms, speakers can follow the expected linguistic and social etiquette in certain contexts. For example, in formal or professional settings, speakers may use euphemisms to adhere to polite and respectful standards of communication. This use of euphemisms allows speakers to adapt to social and cultural demands in their speech, thereby maintaining consistency and appropriateness in their communication. In addition, euphemisms in French serve the pragmatic function of facilitating indirect communication and conveying subtle nuances in speech [3, pp. 530].

Euphemisms also serve to maintain social harmony and politeness in interactions. By using euphemistic language, speakers can show sensitivity and respect for their interlocutors, especially when discussing sensitive or personal issues. For example, instead of telling someone outright that they are wrong, a speaker may choose a polite euphemism such as “*vous n’êtes pas tout à fait sur la bonne voie*” (*you are not on the right path*) This allows the message to be delivered in a less confrontational way while maintaining the relationship between the communicators. In addition, euphemisms can be used to represent cultural values and norms. Politeness and respect are highly



valued in French society, and euphemisms play a large role in reflecting these cultural norms. For example, “*je vous demande pardon*” (*I beg your pardon*) is often used to apologize for a mistake or offense, instead of saying “*je suis désolé*” (*I’m sorry*) [4, pp. 324].

CONCLUSION. By examining the semantic properties of French euphemisms, we can gain a deeper understanding of how language reflects and shapes social norms, values, and communication strategies.

One of the main semantic properties of euphemisms in French is their ability to soften or mask potentially offensive or taboo information. By using figurative language, indirect references, or euphemistic expressions, speakers can convey sensitive topics with more tact and subtlety.

Metaphor and metonymy play a decisive role in this process, which allows speakers to use associations between concepts or to replace closely related terms to convey information indirectly. Through metaphoric and metonymic euphemisms, French speakers can gracefully and sensitively address sensitive topics such as death, illness, bodily functions, or social taboos.

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