

PEDAGOGICAL

AND PHILOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE USE OF EUPHEMISMS AND DYSPEMISMS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

ASPECTOS PEDAGÓGICOS Y FILOLÓGICOS DEL USO DE EUFEMISMOS Y DISFEMISMOS EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS

Shafa Alat Abdullayeva ^{1*}

E-mail: shafa19791@mail.ru

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-8644-2455>

Turkan Ali Guluzade ²

E-mail: guluzadeturkann@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-9255-452X>

Dr. Hafiza Mobil Abdinova ³

E-mail: abdinova2017@mail.ru,

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-3924-1743>

Saida Ramiz Yusifova ⁴

E-mail: saida.yusifova@baau.edu.az

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-5486-8493>

¹ Nakhchivan State University.

² Khazar University, Baku, Azerbaijan

³ Azerbaijan Cooperation University.

⁴ Literature in Baku Eurasian University.

*Corresponding author

Suggested citation (APA, seventh ed.)

Abdullayeva, S. A., Guluzade, T. A., Abdinova, H. M., & Yusifova, S. R. (2025). Pedagogical and philological aspects of the use of euphemisms and dysphemisms in English language teaching. *Universidad y Sociedad*, 17(S1). e5502.

ABSTRACT

This article examines stylistic devices that employ lexical alternatives through euphemism and dysphemism. These linguistic mechanisms are utilized when speakers seek to express identical meanings through alternative words and word combinations. Dysphemism, also referred to as circumlocution, can be classified into two primary types: logical and abstract. In dysphemistic expressions, concepts are articulated through relatively extended word groups that typically function as synonymous alternatives. The study aims to clarify the fundamental distinctions between euphemism and dysphemism. It was found that the primary difference lies in their communicative functions: euphemism serves to mitigate the perceived harshness of words employed across various social domains of language use. Specifically, euphemisms provide polite alternatives for taboo subjects including death, sexuality, bodily functions, and disability. As linguistic units, euphemisms facilitate softer, more socially acceptable expressions of words and phrases that might otherwise be considered harsh or inappropriate. Furthermore, euphemisms emerge as responses to lexical prohibitions—linguistic constraints that develop in connection with superstition, religious beliefs, cultural fears, and similar sociocultural factors that influence the naming of specific objects and events in the surrounding world. These constraints reflect broader patterns of social interaction and cultural sensitivity in language use.

Keywords:

Pedagogy, English language, Euphemism, Dysphemism, Lexical alternatives, Pedagogical analysis.

RESUMEN

Este artículo examina los recursos estilísticos que emplean alternativas léxicas mediante el eufemismo y el disfemismo. Estos mecanismos lingüísticos se utilizan cuando los hablantes buscan expresar significados idénticos mediante

palabras y combinaciones de palabras alternativas. El disfemismo, también conocido como circunloquio, se puede clasificar en dos tipos principales: lógico y abstracto. En las expresiones disfemísticas, los conceptos se articulan mediante grupos de palabras relativamente extensos que suelen funcionar como alternativas sinónimas. El estudio busca aclarar las distinciones fundamentales entre el eufemismo y el disfemismo. Se descubrió que la principal diferencia radica en sus funciones comunicativas: el eufemismo sirve para mitigar la aspereza percibida de las palabras empleadas en diversos ámbitos sociales del uso del lenguaje. Específicamente, los eufemismos ofrecen alternativas educadas para temas tabú como la muerte, la sexualidad, las funciones corporales y la discapacidad. Como unidades lingüísticas, los eufemismos facilitan expresiones más suaves y socialmente aceptables de palabras y frases que, de otro modo, podrían considerarse duras o inapropiadas. Además, los eufemismos surgen como respuesta a prohibiciones léxicas: restricciones lingüísticas que se desarrollan en relación con la superstición, las creencias religiosas, los temores culturales y factores socioculturales similares que influyen en la denominación de objetos y eventos específicos del mundo circundante. Estas restricciones reflejan patrones más amplios de interacción social y sensibilidad cultural en el uso del lenguaje.

Palabras clave: Pedagogía, Lengua inglesa, Eufemismo, Disfemismo, Alternativas léxicas, Análisis pedagógico.

INTRODUCTION

Euphemistic and dysphemistic language is more than a lexical or rhetorical repertoire, it constitutes a pragmatic feature that reflects social norms, face management strategies, linguistic ideologies, and processes of semantic change (Allahverdiyeva et al., 2021). In second language teaching, these expressions pose both pedagogical challenges and opportunities: on the one hand, they are necessary for full communicative competence but on the other, their treatment requires cultural sensitivity, ethical decisions, and appropriate teaching resources. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environments where natural exposure to informal registers and taboos is often limited, targeted instruction on these phenomena can prevent misunderstandings, intercultural incidents, and pragmatic errors that impair the speaker's social perception (Stanley & Neck, 2025). Contemporary research on pragmatic instruction shows that explicit teaching produces sustainable results in sociopragmatic competencies, placing teachers in a key position regarding how (and when) to introduce euphemisms and dysphemisms in the classroom (Huang, 2022).

Traditionally, a euphemism is an expression that replaces another considered offensive, taboo, or too direct, in order to soften the social or emotional impact of the message. Etymologically, it comes from the Greek *euphēmía* ('good speech') and, from a functional perspective, aims at mitigation, preservation of social harmony, and management of the interlocutor's face (Druzhinin, 2021). Dysphemism, by contrast, is an expression used deliberately to increase the negative charge of a referent—insulting, degrading, or underlining disapproval—and functions as a means of verbal aggression, irony, or aggressive humor. However, the boundaries between euphemism and dysphemism are not always rigid: what is euphemistic in one context may be dysphemistic in another, and the same sign can regain its negative force through processes of pejorative (euphemism treadmill) (Vepkhvadze, 2022). But as a general rule, both euphemisms and dysphemisms refer to problems of pragmalinguistics (specific linguistic forms) and sociopragmatics (rules of use according to cultural context). In this sense, classical theories of politeness (Lakoff; Brown & Levinson) provide a theoretical framework by summarizing basic rules of interaction that explain why mitigating forms are used (Khudaybergenova & Penah, 2022).

Research indicates that instruction in pragmatic skills (speech acts, mitigation strategies, register variation) achieves consistently positive effects; the explicitness of sociopragmatic norms and guided practice (role plays, case analysis) increase production and comprehension skills. These conclusions apply directly to the educational treatment of euphemisms/dysphemisms: it is not enough to present vocabulary; it is essential to offer frameworks for use and opportunities for practice in controlled situations (Wang, 2024). On the other hand, recent research in NLP (natural language processing) has made significant progress in the automatic detection of euphemisms (and dysphemisms), both for content moderation and for linguistic studies (Cunliffe et al., 2022; Solnyshkina et al., 2022). It is increasingly proposed bilingual datasets and frameworks for the detection and identification of this structures, however emphasizing that "euphemisms often involve complex contexts and emotions" and identifying their meaning requires contextual understanding, not just lexical lists. These developments are relevant to teaching insofar as they offer resources (labeled corpora) and tools (use examples) that can be incorporated into classroom materials.

Regarding the Republic of Azerbaijan, one of the areas of special attention in the modern period is the education system. Recent decisions made by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan were based on the development

of the education system, the application of new innovative methods and projects in higher education institutions, and the improvement of the social situation of the teaching staff, as well as the promotion of higher education in Azerbaijan to the international level (Isgandar et al., 2024, p. 304). The directions of reforms were determined by Decree No. 295 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated May 22nd, 2009. Projects are being implemented to upgrade higher education to an international level in Azerbaijan. In this sense, the creation of a flexible scientific-research-production system within the framework of applying new innovative scientific and educational principles and technologies in higher education institutions is one of the pressing issues of the modern era (Mammadov et al., 2018).

As stated before, the peculiarity of euphemism and dysphemism is that they reflect socio-cultural and moral values, worldview, and thinking characteristics not only in the speech of individual persons, but also in the speech portrait of a particular modern society as a whole. When translating euphemisms and dysphemisms used in a literary work, the translator's attention to the correct assessment of certain phenomena accepted in the source language society, to determining what is good, acceptable, and what is inappropriate according to their moral standards, is of great importance. The lack of understanding of euphemisms related to cultural and social changes necessitates the systematic study of these changes. In this case, literature, particularly literary translation, appears as the object of study for the problem posed.

Considering the above, the objective of this article is to discuss the phenomenon of changing the negative or positive poles of denotation in the translation process, particularly the exchange of euphemistic and dysphemistic units. Euphemism is used in literary texts as one of the stylistic means of language. In this style, euphemisms not only soften speech but also perform an aesthetic function. However, this cannot be said about dysphemism. The context of its use reveals aspects such as the nature, national culture, and upbringing of the speaker. Whether it, like euphemism, gives language an artistic form or humorous effect, or whether it contributes to the image of the hero in creating vivid artistic images, dysphemism is, in any case, a method that authors have the right to use in their work. However, whether it should be used in translation to convey the source language in figurative language is a controversial issue, since it cannot perform a decorative function in a literary text like euphemism does.

DEVELOPMENT

Most of the difficulties that arise when teaching English to Azerbaijani audiences are related to the significant differences between cultures. It should be noted that English is a language rich in figurative language units that contain the national and cultural values of the people to whom it belongs. As V. Humboldt noted, language is an expression of the spirit of the people (Khaydarova, 2022, p. 258). This spirit is mainly reflected in the figurative means of language. The figurative means of language are considered important carriers of national and cultural values. Among such means, privative phraseological metaphors occupy a special place, and their teaching requires special skill and high language proficiency from the facilitator.

The word "euphemism" comes from the Greek word "euphemos," meaning "happy/good/pleasant speech," which in turn comes from the Greek root "eu," meaning "good/well," plus "pheme," meaning "speech/to speak" (Allan & Burridge, 1991). In all societies, certain words are considered taboo words, not used in "polite society." The word "taboo" comes from the Polynesian language Tonga and refers to actions that are "forbidden" or to be avoided in that society (Allan & Burridge, 2006). When an action is taboo, referring to that action may also be taboo. Thus, sometimes it is forbidden to perform or talk about such actions. Certain taboo subjects, such as body parts, bodily functions, sexual activities and practices, and certain religious and ideological concepts, form a large part of the taboo vocabulary of many cultures and may be socially taboo. Societies differ in which topics are taboo, as taboo topics reflect the specific customs and views of each society (Chamizo & Sánchez, 1994). Therefore, certain topics may be considered taboo in some societies but acceptable in others.

The phenomenon of euphemism and dysphemism was noted in the literature on this subject by linguists such as C. Vandries and L. A. Bulakhovsky in general linguistics at the beginning of the 20th century, and their ideas are of great importance in forming a description of the essence of euphemism. A. Allan and B. Kate can be attributed to scientists who studied this phenomenon using examples from representatives of a specific nation or gender (for example, the speech of Altai women). They attempt to illuminate euphemism and dysphemism as a multifaceted ethnic phenomenon. Due to this fact, the 2002 edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica defines taboo as

"a prohibition of an action or object, based on ritualistic differences, either as sacred and consecrated, or as dangerous, unclean, and cursed." These denotative terms are called expository. Each language chooses different taboo words for this function. The term taboo refers not only to certain words but also to certain activities or customs within society. Therefore, some of these taboo activities or customs are prohibited by law, and violations can lead to serious legal and social penalties. Other taboos result in shame, embarrassment, and social rudeness.

No taboo is known to be universal, but some are found in most societies. Taboos can serve many functions and often remain in force long after the original reason behind them has passed. Some scholars have argued that taboos therefore reveal the history of societies in the absence of other records. Others believe that taboos regulate our sexual behavior, race relations, political institutions, and economic mechanisms—almost every aspect of our lives. Thus, they believe that taboos can be seen as a result of the ecological and economic conditions of their societies.

Crespo (2005, p. 9) believes that the meaning of words changes over time. He points out various reasons for such changes. One of these reasons is related to taboo conditions or the action of taboo. He states that "the reason for rapid change is taboo – a word used for something unpleasant is replaced by another, which is then replaced again." He adds that people will change names to avoid the negative connotations of these taboo words, and this is a natural process of change. On the other hand, Alkire (2002, p. 6) argues that there are social taboos operating within language communities and that these should be studied in the field of sociolinguistics. He adds that the substitution of these taboo words with others is a kind of descriptive or cognitive synonymy. Therefore, the existence of taboo words or taboo ideas gives rise to the emergence of euphemism. Often in formal situations, it is necessary to mention some taboo topics. Consequently, euphemism is a socially acceptable way to refer to taboo things. These topics include technical and medical terms. Thus, euphemism can be used to mention a socially unacceptable topic. Euphemism has been defined according to various perspectives such as social, cognitive, and political.

In any polite communication between speakers and listeners, interlocutors tend to use certain euphemistic strategies to refer to socially taboo topics. Therefore, people use these strategies or forms of euphemism to describe labels that are considered inappropriate for use in polite conversation. Thus, many euphemisms fall into one or more of these categories:

1. Conditions of external and/or technical origin
2. Abbreviations
3. Abstraction
4. Directions
5. Mispronunciation
6. Plays on abbreviations
7. Phonetic alphabet

Asher (1994, p. 120) defines euphemism as "the metaphorical or metonymic use of one expression in place of another that is offensive or unpleasant." Casas (2012, p. 53) gives euphemism a semantic meaning and states that "euphemism is the practice of referring to something offensive or subtle by terms that sound or translate more pleasantly than it actually is". He adds that this technique consists of replacing an expression with an offensive meaning with another expression that does not explicitly refer to the unpleasant aspect of the subject, and may even be a positive misnomer. It is likely that most of these avoided words or expressions are central to our lives, but it is impossible to say them openly because it is felt to be confronting what they refer to. Thus, when there is a taboo against talking about certain subjects, it is certain that such forbidden subjects are difficult, important, and central to our lives. In many societies, for example, death is a frightening thing, but talking about it is not taboo, so there are a number of euphemisms created to deal with this topic (Omar & Medhat, 2017, p. 5).

From a cognitive perspective, euphemisms are used when one wants to name something without invoking a mental image. The main purpose of using euphemisms is to appeal to the human imagination. Euphemisms do not create complete images in the mind or do not fully define the event or object. Thus, without a complete definition, the ability to understand the true meaning of the expression remains obscure (Mihas, 2005, p. 129). In political terms, euphemism is an ambiguous expression used to hide harsh reality and reduce the clarity of thought in the minds of the audience. Thus, political language should consist mainly of euphemisms, and therefore politicians are considered masters of euphemism (Rabiyeva, 2022, p. 152).

Euphemisms and dysphemisms are quite difficult for English language learners to understand. Therefore, students who do not have perfect command of English cannot correctly understand each type of phraseological combination, as well as privative phraseological metaphors, and often make mistakes in deciphering and applying their meanings. This is because privative phraseological

metaphors are complex language units that embody the national spirit and national-cultural characteristics of the people to whom they belong. The differences in the structure and semantics of phraseological metaphors in English are one of the main reasons for this difficulty. The structural and semantic analysis of these language units shows that the component composition of phraseological metaphors in English and Azerbaijani languages most often consists of different words. Therefore, the associations created by the culture-specific aspects of the semantics of euphemisms and dysphemisms in English are understood differently in Azerbaijani. Consequently, it is not appropriate to rely on only one method when teaching English. Taking into account the diversity of these culture-specific aspects, it is necessary to use all methods together for high-quality teaching of the English language; that is, to use a mixed method approach.

Lexical alternative stylistic devices can also be described as wordplay. The main goal here is to create words from words, where expressions consisting of several words are mainly created from one word. One word or phrase is replaced by another word or phrase. The expression of the meaning of a word or phrase with alternative synonyms or words with similar meanings is the object of research in this article. When any word or phrase is replaced by relatively long phrases or expressions, this is called paraphrase. In a certain sense, they can also be considered synonymous expressions. There are some traditional paraphrases in language that cannot be considered stylistic devices; they are simply means of expression. Some of them are used in a literal sense, while others are used figuratively. When used in a literal sense, this is a means of expression, and when used figuratively, it is considered a means of style. For example, in English, "the play of swords" replaces the word "battle" in that language (Demirci, 2008, p. 22). As can be seen from the example above, since there is no figurativeness in the phrase, it is simply a means of expression.

Traditional paraphrases are a very important element of poetry. It can be argued that paraphrase is the renaming of a noun. Stylistic paraphrase is divided into two groups: logical and figurative. For example, in English, the word combination "instruments of destruction" is a very logical and skillful expression of the word "pistol." Another example can be taken as figurative paraphrase. For example, in English, "the punctual servant of all work" replaces the word "the sun." We can also see personification, which is a branch of metaphor, because here the sun, which is an element of nature, embodies human characteristics and punctuality. Paraphrase has recently become a term that makes it difficult to distinguish between plagiarism and

original authorship (Yıldız, 2021). Recently, there has been an increase in authors who try to explain concepts in their own words by changing words and sentences in other people's articles or works.

Another similar stylistic device is euphemism. Euphemism, which has the property of substitution, is a softer and more civilized expression of rude and vulgar words. It can be noted that euphemisms are synonyms used to create a mild effect. Euphemisms can be used in a number of areas according to their scope of use, including religious, moral, medical, and political contexts. Euphemism is a more polite expression of taboo topics such as disability, sex, excretion, and words related to death (Allahverdiyeva et al., 2021). For example, in English, the word "die" is replaced by many word combinations. However, this does not mean that all expressions that replace the word "die" are euphemisms. Although some of them are euphemisms, some show no softening or refinement. For this reason, they should be considered paraphrases. In some cases, not only is there no civilization, but even vulgarization or rudeness is visible, which also needs to be given a new name, both practically and theoretically. For example, alternatives to the word "die" are softened to "pass away," "to be no more," "to join the great majority," and "to breathe one's last," but some words do not show softening. Alternatives of this kind are considered paraphrases. For example, "to go west" and "to kick the bucket" (literally meaning kicking the bucket) should be considered paraphrases. The reason why these words cannot be classified as euphemisms is perhaps that they are idioms that are not understood by everyone when they are first heard and that they are used figuratively.

Despite all this, it is also possible to express the meaning of the word "die" with several rude words. For example, "to go to hell," "to pass on," "to peg out," and others. As can be seen from the names, the examples given above do not contain vulgarism but simply rudeness. Although there are some vulgar expressions that can replace the word "die" in the language, it is not appropriate to give examples of them because they are far from scientific ethics. Sometimes we can also witness the softening of vulgarisms in language. For example, in English, the word "whore" can be replaced with the word combination "common woman." This can sometimes be expressed with the word combination "yellow ticket." Another example can be given for the word "bastard" in English. This word is expressed in English as "love child" or "natural issue." In Azerbaijani, it is expressed with the word combination "from past sins."

Euphemism can sometimes be exemplified by words used in our daily social life. For example, "mental hospital" is a

word that easily replaces “madhouse.” In English, “the big C” is a softened version of the word “cancer.” A similar example can be applied to the word “sanitation worker,” which is also a culturalized expression of the word “garbage man”. An example of a euphemism in both Azerbaijani and English is the euphemism “overweight,” which replaces the word “fat” or “plump”. A similar example can be attributed to the word “employee.” This word is replaced by the word “colleague” to create a more friendly attitude and not to emphasize or make a distinction between social ranks. The reason for the emergence and use of euphemisms in modern civilized society is related to the fear of rude and obscene expressions, along with etiquette. When addressing the topic of euphemism, it is necessary to analyze not only euphemistic expressions but also the socio-cultural and linguistic background in which euphemisms arise. Two contradictory trends are clearly evident in language: 1. coarsening of speech; 2. attempts to euphemize speech.

The first trend arises at the lexical level through the use of rude words, simple colloquialisms, and slang words. For example: “to slip” (to get lost), “to clog” (to eat), “to die.” This is found not only in the everyday environment of oral communication but also in some written works, public speeches, and even in radio and television journalism. Various means are used in language to speak politely. The ambiguity of words, subtleties of meaning, a series of synonyms, and phraseological combinations allow us to harmoniously build our own speech. One of the means of making speech attractive and colorful is euphemisms. Euphemisms are the softening of this or that content, its transformation into a pleasant form. The existence and use of euphemism in language is conditioned by the issue of reducing unpleasant, negative effects to some extent and preventing the emergence of a bad mood. Words, which are of great importance in all areas of life, affect people and, as a result, create various moods—sometimes joy, sometimes restraint, and sometimes high excitement (Xafizovna & Boboqulovna, 2022).

The attitude towards the expressed idea, towards the object in the idea, manifests itself in different ways. There are two types of lexical synonyms, depending on the “negative” or “positive” attitude towards the object. The first of these are synonyms used to express a negative attitude towards the object. For example: “skull” instead of “head”; “to get lost” instead of “going”; “to growl” instead of “laughing”; “to blow” instead of “talking”; “to spend one’s day” instead of “living,” and others. This group of synonyms in language is called cacophemisms (Allahverdiyeva et al., 2021). The second type consists of synonyms used for a positive attitude, respect, and reverence towards the

object. For example: “mentally ill” instead of “crazy,” “visually impaired” instead of “blind,” “not beautiful” instead of “ugly,” and others. Such synonyms are called euphemisms (Alkire, 2002). The existence and application of euphemism is conditioned by the issue of reducing this effect, especially the unpleasant, negative effect, to some extent and preventing the emergence of a bad mood (Allan, 2001). Euphemism is not a source of synonyms but one of the ways of their formation. Euphemisms, like other means, contribute to the growth of synonyms and allow a certain idea to be expressed in different ways (Hai-Long, 2008). For example: instead of “stammer,” “hesitate”; instead of “dying,” “passing away”; instead of “growing old,” “aging gracefully”; instead of “snake,” “serpent”; instead of “wolf,” “predator,” and others are euphemisms. Euphemism is a broad concept: “sometimes conventional signs, conventional names, or words and expressions such as ‘a person,’ ‘someone,’ ‘a city,’ ‘a country,’ which are used in connection with censorship prohibitions or state secrets, or which replace them, are also considered euphemisms” (Alkire, 2002).

The main task of euphemisms and dysphemisms in teaching a foreign language in higher education is not only the theoretical study of the language but also its practical mastery. In addition to educational and pedagogical tasks, an additional objective of foreign language teaching is the acquisition of oral speech skills. The skills and habits acquired in the training process are a means to achieve other goals: the acquisition of new knowledge through oral communication. Therefore, when teaching this subject, the main task is a practical one, that is, the formation of habits for acquiring training material (lexicon, phonetics, grammar), the development of oral speech (speaking and listening), and reading and writing skills. Educational goals are implemented in the process of oral communication. At the same time, it is clear that it is impossible to teach students to speak a foreign language fluently, express their thoughts freely, and read literature without a native-speaking environment. Another main reason is to teach students the basics of various types of language activity in a foreign language using teaching materials intended to teach the fundamentals of the subject.

The materials selected for teaching purposes are training materials that are quite important for the formation of speech automation, unlike materials in scientific fields. The main task of higher education, as we have noted, is to lay the foundation for practical language skills, develop students’ speech abilities, and create optimal conditions for learning, depending on the quality of mastering a foreign language. This training can lead to highly specialized professions (flight attendants, international managers,

postal and telegraph workers, and others); areas related to pedagogical activity (in the training of teachers, translators, diplomats); or forms of self-education depending on the personal, individual needs of the graduate. The next part of teaching the basics of practical mastery of a foreign language is to develop the skills of independent work with the language for students in higher education institutions—to converse, prepare presentations, communicate freely, and so forth. Thus, what is required in this process is to form students who have the ability to independently read more complex texts using the laws of the language system and to express their thoughts in real situations.

Teaching foreign languages by modern methods corresponds to the basic principles of educational development. To ensure the development of independent work by students in lessons through various methods, this is possible only if it is based on conscious study of the language and creative activity of the teacher. Therefore, the most effective methods of teaching foreign languages are those that, on the one hand, allow the formation of automated skills in teaching materials (lexicon, grammar, phonetics), and on the other hand, ensure the development of sufficient knowledge and skills for independent work. It should also be taken into account that in teaching, we teach both the ability to express our own thoughts (speaking) and to understand the thoughts of others (listening, reading), which are inherent in oral and written texts. As we know, teaching methods depend on the goal, content, and level of training. The goal of teaching is the practical mastery of a foreign language, and the content of training consists of the following components: the formation of automated skills in speech material; the development of skills in various types of speech activity (speaking, listening, reading, writing); and certain areas of knowledge at different stages of learning that provide instructions for performing rules and operations to help students develop certain ideas about the system of the target language.

Teaching methods are the main factor in the qualitative mastery of a foreign language. Thus, the method is understood as a system of purposeful actions by the teacher that organizes the cognitive and practical activities of students and ensures the mastery of content. The teaching method implies the interaction between the teacher and the student, and as a result of this activity, the process of language mastery by the student is carried out. The process of forming skills is characterized by different levels of language, which should be reflected in the methods. A necessary condition for mastering a language is the creation of appropriate skills through the training of speech activity. The development of these skills requires the application of new learning technologies in teaching. In general, if we

analyze the process of teaching foreign languages, communicative mastery of the language occurs through the practical application of linguistic materials: it is not about memorizing the necessary features, but about developing skills and the ability to manage them.

In the 19th century, a different cultural lifestyle began to take shape, with men expected to devote themselves to work and production, while women were expected to devote themselves to their spouses and families. Moral and official censorship intensified, and the culture of refinement and speech began to develop further. Thomas Bowdler, who reworked the expressions found in Shakespeare's works that were "not used in polite families and not read aloud," gained great fame in his time. He edited the writer's 10-volume collection of works and changed sentences such as "Who killed my father and who led my mother astray" to "Who killed my father and who spoiled my mother." In the 20th century, euphemisms related not only to human body parts but also to animals and insects, diseases, and events became widespread (Xafizovna & Boboqulovna, 2022). During the World Wars, as human trafficking, orphanhood, and prostitution flourished, euphemisms and slang also multiplied. Their moral characteristics began to take root in time and space in relation to the actions and conditions of humanity.

In order to survive, people need to cooperate with each other in various ways. Thus, to cooperate, it is necessary to communicate using some method to express attitudes, ideas, intentions, etc. This type of communication can be achieved through the oral use of language. Therefore, oral communication plays a very important role in any society. Individuals in any society must have the ability to use the language system correctly as a means of social interaction with native speakers because some words cannot be used in every situation. Thus, language can be considered as an aspect of verbal behavior and the general communicative behavior in which members of a society interact. In any society, people are divided into groups. These groups can be characterized in terms of the accepted behaviors of the group members, including, of course, the common attitudes and beliefs expressed through linguistic behavior. Thus, the common attitudes, beliefs, and values are reflected in the way the group members use language, for example, in what they choose to say and how they say it. However, in all societies, certain words are unacceptable for social or cultural reasons; they are considered taboo words.

The specific customs, beliefs, attitudes, and views of a society in which actions or words are prohibited reflect its own cultural norms and values. Furthermore, some words may be used in certain circumstances but not in others.

In some societies, words with religious connotations are considered impure if used outside formal or religious ceremonies. Another type of word, related to death, sex, and natural bodily functions, makes up a large proportion of the taboo words in many cultures. The existence of taboo words or taboo ideas gives rise to euphemisms. Euphemisms in both English and Arabic can be studied from a rhetorical and figurative perspective. Figuratively speaking, the conventions of figurative language constitute a rhetorical code, and understanding this code is part of what it means to be a member of the culture in which it is used. Euphemisms can therefore be studied through a variety of discourses: social, religious, linguistic, political, and so on. As such, they deserve particularly close scrutiny due to their pervasiveness and weight in all these discourses. This undoubtedly plays the role of an indirect linguistic bridge that dominates human communication in modern times. It is believed that in most languages, euphemisms are used to have an effective emotional impact on the mind of the listener. Thus, a euphemism is an expression that is less offensive or disturbing to the listener than the word or expression it replaces.

CONCLUSIONS

Our analysis confirms that euphemisms and dysphemisms function as linguistic mechanisms with both semantic and sociopragmatic implications. Rather than serving as mere synonyms, these elements operate as discursive strategies that regulate social interaction, manage “face” considerations, and shape cultural representations of taboo subjects. In educational contexts, mastering these discursive variants constitutes an essential component of advanced communicative competence. Consequently, their instruction requires an integrated approach that combines theoretical foundations, contextualized practice, and critical reflection on the ideological and ethical dimensions of language use.

The development of skills related to the appropriate use of euphemisms and dysphemisms should be conceptualized as a progressive, step-by-step process. This process encompasses both the automatic formation of expressive routines and the cultivation of sociopragmatic judgment. In this regard, the four-phase skill mastery framework presented in the manuscript proves particularly relevant: first, perception, comprehension, and memorization of material; second, execution following established models and analogies; third, performance of actions with variations adapted to changing conditions; and finally, creative and independent activity. This sequential approach enables the development of practice exercises across all language skills—speaking, listening, reading, and writing—that

progress from guided repetition to critical and creative production. Such progression promotes the automation necessary for fluent communication while preserving essential contextual judgment capabilities. The four levels of skill mastery correspond to distinct methodological approaches: perception, understanding, and memorization of material; performing actions according to established models through analogy; executing actions with variations that adapt to changing contextual conditions; and engaging in creative, independent activity. Analysis of these methods reveals significant differences in content and outcomes when properly implemented through structured practice exercises within communicative activities.

During the early 1980s, a fundamental revision of foreign language teaching objectives occurred, emphasizing practical tasks as primary goals and increasing attention to oral language development. This shift reinforced the importance of integrating theory with practice. When developing communicative language skills at initial teaching stages, information is typically not presented to students in advance but rather taught through direct engagement during practical lessons, thereby fostering the automation of essential skills. Therefore, for intermediate and advanced level curricula, it is advisable to incorporate explicit modules focused on registers and mitigation/intensification strategies, specifically addressing euphemism and dysphemism usage. These modules should be supported by contemporary corpora and authentic examples drawn from diverse sources including media, politics, and literature. Educational materials should facilitate both contextual identification and appropriate production of these linguistic features. Additionally, materials require periodic updates to reflect the dynamic nature of the “euphemism cycle”—the tendency for euphemistic terms to gradually lose their mitigating power over time. Furthermore, all content should be carefully adapted to specific contextual requirements to ensure maximum pedagogical effectiveness.

REFERENCES

- Alkire, S. (2002). Introducing Euphemisms to Language Learners. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 7.
- Allahverdiyeva, A. M., Aynur, B., Hilal, P., Aytac, E., & Malahat, A. (2021). Euphemisms and dysphemisms as language means implementing rhetorical strategies in political discourse. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 17(2). <https://www.jlls.org/index.php/jlls/article/view/2379>
- Allan, K. (2001). *Natural Language Semantics*. Blackwell.
- Allan, K., & Burridge, K. (1991). *Euphemism & Dysphemism: Language Used as Shield and Weapon*. Oxford University Press.

- Allan, K., & Burrridge, K. (2006). *Forbidden Words: Taboo and the Censoring of Language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Asher, R. E. (1994). *The Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics* (Vol. 3). Pergamon Press Ltd.
- Casas Gómez, M. (2012). The Expressive Creativity of Euphemism and Dysphemism. *Lexis. Journal in English Lexicology*, 7. <https://doi.org/10.4000/lexis.349>
- Chamizo Domínguez, P. J., & Sánchez Benedito, F. (1994). Euphemism and dysphemism: Ambiguity and supposition. *Language and Discourse*, 2, 78–92.
- Crespo Fernández, E. (2005). Euphemistic strategies in politeness and face concerns. *Pragmalinguistica*, 13, 77–86. <https://doi.org/10.25267/Pragmalinguistica.2005.i13.05>
- Cunliffe, D., Vlachidis, A., Williams, D., & Tudhope, D. (2022). Natural language processing for under-resourced languages: Developing a Welsh natural language toolkit. *Computer Speech & Language*, 72, 101311. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.csl.2021.101311>
- Demirci, K. (2008). Örtmece (Euphemism) Kavrami Üzerine. *Milli Folklor*, 10(77), 21–34.
- Druzhinin, A. S. (2021). Euphemisms vs. Dysphemisms, or How we Construct Good and Bad Language. *Constructivist Foundations*, 17(1), 1–13. <https://constructivist.info/17/1/001>
- Huang, N. (2022). Revisiting L2 pragmatic competence through implicit vs. Explicit instructional framework. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 987729. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.987729>
- Isgandar, S. M., Arif, S. K., Server, S. M., Mammad, L. A., & Hasan, J. M. (2024). On the history and role of educational psychology in pedagogy: Based on the example of Azerbaijan. *Universidad y Sociedad*, 16(5), 303–309. <https://rus.ucf.edu.cu/index.php/rus/article/view/4625>
- Khaydarova, L. (2022). Main approaches to communicative language teaching. *Models and Methods for Increasing the Efficiency of Innovative Research*, 1(11), 257–261. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6536935>
- Khudaybergenova, Z., & Penah, N. (2022). To the History of Studying the Communicative Category of Polity. *Synesis (ISSN 1984-6754)*, 14(1), 341–355. <https://seer.ucp.br/seer/index.php/synesis/article/view/2321>
- Mammadov, J., Talibov, N., Huseynov, A., Abdullayev, L., & Mammadova, S. (2018, June 20). Development of a conceptual model of multi-skilled specialist training. *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Higher Education Advances (HEAD'18)*. Fourth International Conference on Higher Education Advances. <https://doi.org/10.4995/HEAD18.2018.8383>
- Mihas, E. (2005). Non-literal language in political discourse. *Workshop In General Linguistics (WIGL), UW-Madison*, 124–139. <https://langsci.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1012/2019/01/10-Mihas.pdf>
- Omar, A., & Medhat, I. (2017). Euphemism and Dysphemism in English with reference to Iraqi Arabic. *Journal of the College of Education for Girls for Humanities*, 24, 57–87.
- Rabiyeva, M. G. (2022). Dysphemism or Euphemism. *Central Asian journal of literature, philosophy and culture*, (3), 6. https://www.academia.edu/download/91083659/61_65_Dysphemism_or_Euphemism_Copy.pdf
- Solnyshkina, M. I., МИШИНА И И., McNamara, D. S., И И И., Zamaletdinov, R. R., & МИШИНА И И. (2022). Natural language processing and discourse complexity studies. *Russian Journal of Linguistics*, 26(2), 317–341. <https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-30171>
- Stanley, M. L., & Neck, C. P. (2025). Euphemism as a powerful framing device that influences moral judgments and punitive responses after wrongdoing. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 110(5), 723–740. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0001233>
- Vepkhvadze, T. (2022). Dysphemism as Main Tool of "Hate Speech". *Environment and Society*, 5(5). <http://www.es.tsu.ge/index.php/es/article/view/84>
- Wang, Y. (2024). Analysis of Euphemism Teaching in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language Under the Environment of Modern Educational Technology. *International Journal of Cognitive Informatics and Natural Intelligence (IJCINI)*, 18(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.4018/IJCINI.360787>
- Xafizovna, R. N., & Boboqulovna, X. M. (2022). Politeness In Literary Works: An Overview. *Eurasian Research Bulletin*, 7, 200–206.
- Yıldız, F. U. (2021). Use of euphemisms in youth language. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 17(2). <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1288311.pdf>