A Comparative Analysis of Taboo and euphemisims in English and Russian languages

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Introduction

Many processes and phenomena occurring in society are reflected in the lexical system of the language, presenting voluminous and interesting information about the peculiarities of the national worldview, culture and thinking, that is, language as a social phenomenon reflects important extralinguistic factors, which include religious, ethical, political and economic aspects of society. One of these peculiar linguistic processes that attract the attention of linguists is the tandem of "taboo and euphemization". Taboos and euphemisms are a complex phenomenon, an integral component of the communication process, acting as a successful means of communication..

Research methodology.

The following research methods were used: the continuous sampling method, the method of quantitative analysis of the presented euphemisms in terms of their topics and methods of education, the method of contextual analysis of meanings, the method of analyzing dictionary definitions, as well as component analysis and interpretative method.

Taboo and taboo vocabulary:

As you know, languages preserve the history of peoples, their culture and archetypal ideas about the phenomena of the surrounding world.
The most ancient facts reflecting the universal and national-cultural in the language include various taboos. This phenomenon presents the features of the mythological thinking of the people, an important part of their culture, religion, lifestyle and way of life.
Mythological thinking was historically the first form of thinking that formed a developed model of the world. In every nation, the primordial images of phenomena were born in accordance with the immediate impression that nature made on man.
Mythological thinking is characterized by several features: it is concrete, undifferentiated, figurative, there is no causal relationship, there is a synthesis of new and old, there is no struggle between them; it is also characterized by the inseparability of rational-logical and figurative-emotional principles in it. The understanding of the world here takes place by associations, analogies, and identity.
Even at an early stage of mythological thinking, it was assumed that the word had enormous, incredible magical power. This is due to the fact that the early stages of cultural development were characterized by the idea of a natural connection between an object and its name. Such views contributed to the identification of the subject and the word and the formation of faith in the magic of the word and the verbal taboo, i.e. the prohibition on the use of names of certain objects and phenomena: the names of gods, spirits and demons, death, diseases, many animals, fire of the sun, moon, parts of the human body. The word, due to an irrational fear of the forces of nature, was considered as the main "tool" of magic.
At first intuitively, and then consciously, a person has always felt the huge role of associative connections between a word and a designated object. The concept of "taboo" came into linguistic and scientific usage as a term borrowed from the religious and ceremonial institutions of Polynesia, and, according to D. Fraser, it was formed from the verb "ta" ("to mark") and the adverb strengthening "pu", which together literally should mean: "completely highlighted, marked". The word was initially understood only as a "categorical prohibition on a religious basis" [1,190].
Today, a broader interpretation of this phenomenon is widespread. Thus, J.J. Warbot emphasizes that nowadays taboo is used in two meanings: 1) a religious prohibition among primitive peoples imposed on certain actions in order to avoid harmful manifestations of supernatural forces; 2) a ban on the use of certain words due to socio-political, historical, cultural, ethical or emotional factors [2,345].

Classifications of euphemisms

Many linguists who have studied the phenomenon of euphemia have tried to classify these units. But there is no consensus on this issue.

The classification of euphemisms can be carried out on several grounds, depending on the aspect of euphemism: linguistic, psychological, social, functional.

An example of a social classification is the classification presented in the work of B.A. Larin. The scientist believes that "the classification of euphemisms "should be based on their social nature," and suggests the following categories of euphemisms:1) common euphemisms of the national literary language; 2) class and professional euphemisms; 3) family and household euphemisms" [3,113].

R.A. Budagov also divides euphemisms into general literary and euphemisms of various jargons. The first type includes "softening" in order not to name too "rude" words ("only people" instead of ("old people"). Such euphemisms, according to the author, getting into a literary language, contribute to the development of its vocabulary, thereby expanding polysemy and increasing the number of homonyms. The euphemisms of jargon are arranged in a completely different way. They differ from the euphemisms of the general literary language in that they are used not only when it comes to words that are simply inconvenient to pronounce. People use jargon euphemisms even when there is no need. Take, for example, the euphemisms of the jargon of the Russian nobility of the XIX century "got by with a handkerchief" [4].

He defines contextual euphemisms into a separate group. Such euphemisms are more complex and require consideration in the context of the situation. Thus, various euphemistic substitutions are conditioned by the difficult situation, the nature of the actors and the general idea" [4].

E.P. Senichkin calls contextual euphemisms occasional [5,23]. They arise in speech constantly and have all the properties of euphemisms, but do not have ready reproducibility. Such euphemisms are often figurative and metaphorical.

The system of euphemization in modern Russian

The tendency of euphemization is clearly manifested in modern Russian speech.

In the various styles of the modern Russian language, two opposite features have formed in the process of its functioning: on the one hand, the coarsening of speech, on the other hand, its euphemization.

The first feature is expressed in an increase in the number of roughly colloquial and slang names, words related to various parts of speech: cool, mani, awesome. Vulgarisms and jargon have become more active not only in everyday speech, but also in the media, in literary texts, and in various genres of public speech. Words that are not included in the literary language have become "printed".

The genre of verbal invective is used, in which various means of negative assessment of the behavior of a person, the appearance of the addressee are used: jargonisms, vulgarisms, colloquial words and expressions.

At the same time, modern society retains some ancient taboos and still avoids directly naming words such as death, to die or the names of certain diseases (cancer, cancerous tumor, etc.). In addition, aesthetic and moral laws of society prohibit talking directly about physiological acts related to the excretory function of the body; it is also not accepted to name directly certain parts of the human body.

Recently, a new function of euphemization of speech has been formed - embellishing some moments of reality. There is also an increase in the number of euphemistic nominations applicable to a wide range of things that you do not want to talk about directly (problem skin, special child, etc.).

Thus, the following attitudes affect the euphemization of speech:

- The desire to avoid communicative conflicts, not to create a feeling of communicative discomfort in the interlocutor. In euphemisms pursuing this goal, the object, action, property are called in a more "mild" form (hard of hearing instead of deaf, full -fat, drunk - drunk, etc.);
- Veiling the essence of the case (correctional institution - colony, prison; organizational charges - punishment of a guilty official; physical elimination - murder, etc.). Such euphemistic expressions to a certain extent hide the essence of concepts and actions unpleasant to the addressee.
- 3. Hide from others what the speaker wants to tell only to a specific recipient. Such "encryption" is usually associated with the publication of such messages, thereby making them available for interpretation to everyone reading and listening. This is typical, for example, for various advertisements ("A young woman will pay attention to a wealthy man"; "Girls without complexes are invited to high-paying jobs", etc.).

Euphemization is also resorted to in cases where the direct designation of an object, action, or property, in the opinion of the speaker, may cause a negative reaction from the mass addressee. Such are, for example, the phrases price liberalization, free prices in the language of the modern press, in the speech practice of government representatives. These revolutions denote higher prices than before, but they denote, so to speak, not directly, but veiling an unpleasant phenomenon for most people.

Euphemisms are a common tool for manipulating public consciousness. Their linguistic nature is such that they distract the recipient's attention from a forbidden concept, and are emotionally neutral designations of undesirable phenomena.

According to Y.S. Baskova, the ability of euphemisms to manipulate the recipient is determined by a number of factors:

- firstly, euphemisms hide the true essence of the phenomenon by creating a neutral or positive connotation;
- secondly, the recipient usually does not have time to isolate euphemisms from the context and make sense of them, since the abundance of information in modern society makes it difficult to navigate the linguistic material and its critical assessment;

-    thirdly, in order to assign the status of a euphemism to a word, it is necessary to identify the taboo denotation hiding behind this word, otherwise the euphemism will not be "recognized";
-    fourthly, a small part of the recipients are familiar with this linguistic phenomenon; without knowing the essence of the phenomenon, it is impossible to understand how manipulative influence is carried out [6,37].

A linguocommunicative feature of the functioning of euphemisms in media texts is the combination of several manipulative methods and means of euphemization at once, which makes manipulation more sophisticated, not so obvious. Thus, the method of generalizing meaning is often combined with the use of borrowed words and terms that sound more formal and noble. For example, when discussing budget cuts, politicians do not use the Russian word "reduction", but talk about the need to optimize, rationalize, restructure or reorganize the budget. In addition, graphic, phonetic, morphological, and lexico-semantic techniques of euphemization can complement the manipulative effects of complex syntactic constructions.

"Political correctness" and the functioning of euphemisms in modern English

Language, as you know, is closely connected with the mentality, culture, and traditions of its native speakers, so many processes and phenomena occurring in society are reflected in the language system. English, as one of the most dynamically developing languages in the world, has undergone significant changes in recent decades, which are largely determined by changes in the public sphere.

In the world of the English language, a powerful cultural, behavioral and linguistic trend has emerged, called "political correctness". As S.G. Ter-Minasova notes in the monograph "Language and intercultural communication", "... this trend was born more than 20 years ago in connection with the "uprising" of Africans outraged by the "racism of the English language" and demanded its "deracialization" [7,215].

"Political correctness" is associated with the new ideology of proportionately presenting works of literature and art, achievements of public and political life belonging to representatives of all ethnic and sexual minorities.

The very concept of political correctness is quite multidimensional and ambiguous. And since this category causes a lot of controversy, there is no single definition of the concept of "political correctness".

The most comprehensive definition of this term is given by S.G. Ter-Minasova. She believes that "The political correctness of language is expressed in the desire to find new ways of linguistic expression instead of those that offend the feelings and dignity of an individual, infringe on his human rights by habitual linguistic tactlessness and/or straightforwardness with regard to race and gender, age, health status, social status, appearance, etc." [7,230].

Linguistic correctness, in her opinion, is "... a very positive effort not to offend, not to hurt a person's feelings, to preserve his dignity, good mood, health, life" [7,232].

N.G. Komlev defines political correctness as "an established concept in the United States-a slogan demonstrating the liberal orientation of American politics dealing not so much with the content as with symbolic images and the correction of the language code. Speech is decoded by signs of anti-racism, environmentalism, and tolerance of national and sexual minorities".

L.V. Tsurikova interprets political correctness as "a behavioral and linguistic phenomenon reflecting the desire of native speakers to overcome discrimination existing in society and perceived by society against various members of this society".

Thus, two of the most significant aspects of political correctness can be distinguished from these definitions:

•   the cultural and behavioral aspect, which is closely related to ideology and politics, especially in the field of education;
•   the linguistic aspect of political correctness, which manifests itself in the search for new means of linguistic expression and correction of the language code [8, 105 - 108].

According to the ideas of political correctness, the norms of linguistic behavior in modern English have been changed.

There are norms of behavior in society that must be followed, and some of these norms are norms of linguistic behavior.

For violation of these norms, penalties are provided, ranging from oral remarks to expulsion from an educational institution. The scope of the bans includes "the use of offensive nicknames", "inappropriate jokes", and even "misdirected laughter" (misdirected laughter).

The charters of many American colleges list various types of discrimination: "ableism" (ableism) - harassment of persons with physical disabilities, "ethnocentrism" (ethnocentrism) - discrimination against cultures other than the dominant one, "heterosexism" (heterosexism) - discrimination against people of non-traditional sexual orientation, "lookism" (lookism) - creation of beauty standards and the attractiveness and infringement of the rights of those who do not meet them.

This mainly concerns restrictions on the use of a particular word or expression in a certain situation.

Due to the spread of the phenomenon of "political correctness" in the United States, the use of euphemisms became more common at the end of the 20th century.

The expression of tolerance was reflected in softened expressions. Euphemisms, due to their ability to mitigate, are the most effective means of eliminating negative associations (for example, instead of "Negro" – "African American", instead of "disabled person" – "person with disabilities") [8, 279-280].

Euphemisms that exclude racial and ethnic discrimination:

"Asian", "African-American", "regsop of color", "Inuit", "indigenous regsop", "member of the African Diaspora", "Native Amegisap", "boat people", "ali", "newcomer", "Jewish regsop", "Israel", "people" (tribe), etc.

For example, "The movement of the peoples of the African diaspora to be culturally and historically aware of their origins" (Guardian, 05/22/15). Such words mainly act as the names of various racial and national groups, emphasizing their identity and equal status.

- ...Amegicap family and still be "disappointed" if their skin is the right color... (Yes, Lack of Quality: It's Far Worse Than You Think).
- The euphemistic expression skin is that right color ("skin of the right or right color") includes the meaning of people of different nationalities, but not representatives of the black race.
- ... the majority of the population will be nonwhite... (Over 50% of Americans Will be Nonwhite Within 30 Years).
- Black hegos and hegos are already being embraced in a new exhibition of comics... (Afro Supa It exhibition embraces black cultural icons).
- ...there are most paltry threads of "justice"- especially women of color. (Many women of color don't go to these policies after sexual assault for a gay man).
- ...Without saying a "dark complex" man walked up behind him ... (Manhunt underground).
- ...brutal prejudice as a dark-skinned woman... (Why Hollywood blows hot and cold with jazz movies).

The phrase dark-complexion ("swarthy") refers to those who do not belong to white people (the white race).

The direct meaning of Hispanics, for a long time, meant absolutely all Latinos, then it became less often used in everyday speech, as it acquired some negative connotation (Latinos do not adapt well to life in the States, and, as a result, often have low-paid jobs and do not succeed in life). Thus, Hispanic was replaced by the euphemism Latino(a), Chicano(a).

For example:

- The Latino population will see the largest growth from now until 2060... (Over 50% of Americans Will Be Nonwhite Within 30 Years).
- ... except less than 5% of those Latino voters, Mexico Amegisaps, who also prefer to them as Chicanos... (From Cesar Chavez to them Denverdate: Mexico Amegisaps Finally Have The Same Say).
- ... happily African-American and Latino community... (Hotelinsider: the Bklyn Noise, New York).

The euphemistic substitution of Afro-Amegicap ("African Americans"), Latino ("Latin Americans") is used in order to observe political correctness.

Conclusion

Taboo and euphemization are universal and at the same time nationally specific linguistic phenomena.

These linguistic phenomena represent the peculiarities of the worldview, culture, religion, traditions and mythology of a certain ethnic group.

In the early stages of human development, irrational fear of natural phenomena gave rise to various religious and ceremonial institutions and taboos. The taboo ones included sacred, exalted concepts and the lowest, shameful ones from the point of view of a particular society.

The essence of linguistic taboo as a term nowadays is represented in two meanings: 1) religious prohibition; 2) prohibition on the use of certain words due to socio-political and national-cultural factors.

Taboo in the second sense is possible at all stages of the development of society. Some taboos disappear from the language, but others appear, associated with a change in ideology and values.

Scientific knowledge changes a person's perception of the world around them, and accordingly, the nature of the ban and its objects change. Currently, the ban on pronouncing certain words is not related to religious beliefs, but to social and psychological reasons, with new ideological attitudes.

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