



EUPHEMISM AS CONCEPTUAL DERIVATION: A COGNITIVE APPROACH TO SECONDARY REPRESENTATION IN LANGUAGE

Rabieva Mokhidil

National University of Uzbekistan

Email: rany85@mail.ru

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19387918>

Keywords: *euphemism, primary concept, secondary nomination, conceptual derivation, mental-cognitive process.*

This article analyzes euphemism from a cognitive linguistic perspective, viewing it as a form of conceptual derivation. Euphemization is interpreted as a process of secondary representation and evaluative transformation of existing knowledge. The study examines linguistic mechanisms such as secondary nomination and metaphorical transfer, showing that euphemisms not only reflect but also reshape the conceptual system of speakers.

Modern trends in the development of language theory are characterized by the combination of classical and innovative scientific directions and approaches. One of such innovative directions is the cognitive sphere, which plays an important role in the development of new methods and techniques for analyzing linguistic phenomena. This approach allows for more accurate and systematic observation of the functional properties of the studied objects, determining the sequence of their formation stages, as well as identifying and analyzing the processes of development and change.

To this day, the euphemization of language units has been studied from the point of view of various directions of linguistics. In particular, within the framework of the functional-semantic approach, the thematic classifications of euphemisms (A.M. Katsev, L.P. Krisin, B.A. Larin, V.P. Moskvina, E. Partridge, Ch. Kany), methods for the formation of euphemistic nominations (A.M. Katsev, V.P. Moskvina, E.I. Sheygal, B. Warren). From the point of view of pragmatics, euphemization is considered as a way of observing the rules of speech acceptability, appropriateness (V.P. Moskvina). Within the framework of stylistics, such issues as the stylistic affiliation of euphemistic nominations, as well as the use of euphemistic vocabulary in various speech styles, have also been resolved (I.R. Galperin, V.P. Moskvina, E.P. Senichkina). The phenomenon of euphemism has also been studied within the framework of gender linguistics (G.A. Vildanova) and discourse analysis (E.I. Sheygal). However, despite numerous studies devoted to euphemism, many issues related to it have not yet been resolved. It can be said that the issue of euphemization of speech from the point of view of human cognitive activity is still insufficiently researched. Today, the fact that the realization of language is inextricably linked with human cognitive activity is recognized by many linguists and is reflected in various studies. However, the opposite is true - that is, the influence of new units appearing in language on the conceptual system of a person is still considered a relevant issue that has not been sufficiently covered in scientific literature.

Unlike traditional linguistics, which interprets the phenomenon of euphemism mainly as a means of synonymy or secondary nomination, cognitive linguistics considers euphemism in a broader theoretical framework and takes the description of the relationships between language units within the framework of euphemism beyond the boundaries of the internal language system. In this approach, euphemism is interpreted as a complex mental-cognitive process characterized by the formation of concepts based on the secondary interpretation of existing



knowledge or changes occurring in their content structure. Therefore, the phenomenon of euphemism can be assessed as a separate type of conceptual derivation. In this case, the language unit acquires a new meaning based on its reinterpretation, and the formation of conceptual content occurs.

Euphemization, as an independent process, is a special case of conceptual derivation, based on the re- (secondary) representation of initial knowledge and the change in the evaluation from the "-" sign to the "+" sign in relation to the object or phenomenon in existence, or the speaker's personal experience. The nature and characteristics of initial knowledge, as well as the reasons for the use of euphemism (euphemistic substitution), influence the choice of a specific linguistic mechanism of euphemization. Such mechanisms include word-formation nomination, borrowings, and secondary nomination. These processes, manifested as linguistic mechanisms of euphemization, are always inextricably linked with the change of conceptual content.

L.B.Babina emphasizes that the linguistic mechanisms of euphemization are directly related to the results of interpretation and the formation of knowledge at the conceptual and linguistic levels. These processes are based on conceptual schemes and models that serve to interpret the knowledge accumulated from previous experience. Their goal is to implement a unique method of linguistic representation of knowledge - metapredentation. Based on the term "metapredentation" put forward by L.B.Babina, we understand the method of linguistic interpretation of accumulated knowledge from a subjective-evaluative point of view and its re-representation. After all, metapredentation is a process associated with the formation of a new meaning based on the interpretation of existing knowledge. The scholar adds: "euphemism is a method of conceptual derivation, aimed at neutralizing the existing negative feature associated with primary knowledge and is a specific method of secondary representation at the conceptual and linguistic levels; euphemisms are the product of this derivation." Thus, euphemism, which is one of the methods of conceptual derivation, is considered as a separate mechanism of thinking, and also stands alongside other mechanisms of thinking - conceptual metaphor, conceptual metonymy, conceptual integration, and conceptual inference. It is based on the use and interpretation of knowledge verbalized through narrowing of meaning, broadening of meaning, generalization, or, conversely, concretization. It also implies the formation of a new meaning through various language mechanisms: secondary nomination, word-formation nomination, euphemization, synonymous or antonymous substitution, etc. In other words, "conceptual derivation is a model of changing a certain conceptual content in order to create a new meaning.

As mentioned earlier, euphemization is characterized by the process of giving a new name to the primary concept. Thus, this concept finds its expression in the language system through another name or content. In this case, the alternative concept already exists in the linguistic worldview of the native speakers (i.e., as a secondary nomination), and in other cases, it enters the language as a new unit, and on this basis, a new content appears (i.e., the borrowed word is expressed).

Secondary nomination is understood by researchers as the use of existing nominative means in the language as a new naming function and the result of this process. In this regard, the opinion of L.V. Babina is of particular importance: "the main condition for the application of secondary nomination is the similarity in the denotations of the combined realities; even if



this similarity is insignificant, secondary nomination can be carried out, which occurs by identifying common (integrating) features that allow combining certain realities into one class. As an example, we can cite the euphemism *a bun in the oven*, which is used in the English language instead of the word *homilador*, based on the similarity between the denotates, that is, formed by means of secondary nomination. Before this, it is advisable to highlight several keywords directly related to the state of pregnancy. These are: fetus, uterus, fetal development process, fetal maturation and childbirth process.

Table 1.

Primary concept <i>pregnant</i>	Secondary nomination <i>A bun in the oven</i>
<i>a fetus (embryo)</i>	<i>a bun</i>
<i>a womb</i>	<i>an oven</i>
<i>embryonic development</i>	<i>dough rising</i>
<i>embryo maturation</i>	<i>bun baking</i>
<i>delivery</i>	<i>removing the bun from the oven</i>

In the table above, we analyzed the metaphorical transfer based on the similarity between the denotations of the word *pregnant* (primary concept) and the euphemism *a bun in the oven* (secondary nomination). In metaphorical transfers, not only external similarity is manifested, but also the commonality of denotative signs, properties, and states. In particular, the characteristics of the *a womb* (uterus), such as ensuring a moderate temperature for fetal development, protecting it until full maturity, and representing a certain temporary stage in the fetus's life, are transferred based on the characteristics of the gas stove used in everyday life. As a result, conceptual derivation arises on the basis of these similarities. In addition, we witnessed the metaphorical transfer of the characteristics of the fetus (embryo) to the bun. In this case, the bun is interpreted as a leavened dough, and it is understood that a certain time, thermal factors, and finally, a favorable environment are necessary for its ripening. Thus, the process of conceptual derivation is carried out on the basis of these common features.

Euphemism should be viewed not merely as a stylistic or lexical substitution, but as a cognitive mechanism of conceptual derivation. It involves the reinterpretation and secondary representation of existing knowledge, often shifting evaluation from negative to neutral or positive. Through processes such as secondary nomination, metaphorical transfer, and semantic transformation, euphemization reshapes conceptual content and influences the linguistic worldview. Thus, euphemism functions as an independent mental-cognitive process that connects language, thought, and evaluative perception of reality.

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