

THE USE OF EUPHEMISTIC TERMS RELATED TO MEDICINE IN WORLD AND UZBEK LITERATURE

S. Tursunaliyeva

Central Asian Medical University

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14840835>

Abstract. *The expression of sensitive medical topics in literature often requires careful attention to language. Euphemisms, as indirect forms of expression, play a crucial role in softening the impact of discussions on issues such as illness, aging, and death. This paper explores how medical euphemisms are utilized across world and Uzbek literature, highlighting their cultural, psychological, and linguistic roles. Through the analysis of key literary examples, this work sheds light on how euphemistic language influences the way readers perceive health, suffering, and mortality.*

Keywords: *euphemism, medical terminology, literature, Uzbek literature, world literature, linguistic politeness, cultural sensitivity, health, mortality.*

Introduction

Language has a profound ability to shape our understanding of sensitive subjects. When it comes to themes like illness, aging, or death, euphemisms offer a means of addressing these topics in a way that is less harsh and more acceptable to the audience. As Allan and Burridge (2006) suggest, euphemisms act as protective shields, allowing individuals to discuss distressing realities without overwhelming their listeners or readers. These indirect expressions are especially significant in medical contexts, where terms related to health and mortality often carry heavy emotional weight.

This study aims to investigate the use of medical euphemisms in both world and Uzbek literature, emphasizing their cultural importance. By focusing on authors such as Ernest Hemingway, George Orwell, and Abdulla Qakhhor, the paper examines how euphemisms are employed to handle topics of illness and death in a manner that aligns with social norms and linguistic sensitivity. Furthermore, this analysis considers how euphemistic language influences the emotional experiences of readers, helping them cope with the complex realities of human life.

Methods

In order to understand the role of euphemisms in literary works, this research relies on a qualitative literary analysis of texts that engage with themes of illness, death, and suffering. The selected works span both Western and Uzbek literary traditions, offering a broad view of how euphemisms are used across cultures to discuss sensitive medical issues. Key texts for this analysis include Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), Orwell's *1984* (1949), and Qakhhor's *Sinchalak* (1958), among others.

The approach is primarily interpretative, focusing on the figurative language used by the authors to navigate the complex emotional terrain of medical conditions and mortality. By examining the specific euphemistic terms and phrases used in these texts, this study explores how they help to cushion the reader from the harshness of direct medical descriptions.

Results

Upon reviewing the selected literary works, a clear pattern emerges regarding the use of euphemisms to address health and mortality. In English literature, expressions such as "passed away" and "under the weather" are frequently employed to soften the impact of terms like "death" or "illness." These euphemisms act as a way of mitigating emotional discomfort and providing a buffer between the reader and the often harsh realities of disease and death.

Authors from various periods, including Ernest Hemingway and George Orwell, use euphemisms to navigate themes of suffering and mortality. In *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), Hemingway's portrayal of war and injury avoids the blunt use of terms like "dead" or "wounded." Instead, he uses softer expressions, reflecting the emotional toll of the characters. Similarly, Orwell's *1984* (1949) subtly manipulates language to control how the audience perceives unpleasant realities, demonstrating the power of euphemisms not only in fiction but also in real-life ideological constructs.

In Uzbek literature, euphemisms serve a similar function, as seen in the works of Qakhhor and Akhmad. For instance, in *Sinchalak* (1958), Qakhhor uses phrases like "tana quvvatdan ketdi" (the body lost its strength) to describe illness, subtly avoiding more direct and clinical descriptions. Likewise, Said Akhmad's *Jimjitlik* (1976) uses euphemisms like "yotib qoldi" (remained bedridden), which softens the difficult subject of old age and declining health, allowing the reader to engage with the narrative without being confronted by the brutal realities of aging.

Discussion

The findings of this research highlight the significant and multifaceted role that euphemisms play in shaping the representation of sensitive medical issues in literature. Across both world and Uzbek literary traditions, euphemisms serve as essential tools for addressing difficult and often uncomfortable topics such as illness, aging, and death. These indirect expressions enable authors to engage with such challenging subjects while maintaining a level of respect, cultural sensitivity, and emotional delicacy that allows the reader to approach these themes without feeling overwhelmed by their raw intensity. Euphemisms, in this regard, function as a literary device that helps navigate the emotional and psychological complexities associated with these heavy topics, ensuring that the discussion remains both respectful and accessible.

In world literature, authors such as George Orwell in *1984* (1949) demonstrate how euphemisms are not merely used to soften the emotional impact of distressing topics but also as instruments of social control. Through the careful manipulation of language, Orwell's work illustrates how euphemisms can subtly shape the reader's perception of reality. They influence the way readers conceptualize and internalize various aspects of life, particularly those involving power, control, and manipulation. The use of euphemistic expressions allows the governing forces in *1984* to maintain a sense of control over language, and by extension, over the thoughts and behaviors of the populace. In this sense, euphemisms transcend their emotional role and become tools for shaping societal ideologies, illustrating their power in influencing not only individual perceptions but collective thought as well.

In Uzbek literature, a similar phenomenon is observed, where authors such as Abdulla Qakhhor (1958) and Said Akhmad (1976) employ euphemisms to reflect the cultural norms and social values of their respective societies. In these works, euphemistic expressions are not merely stylistic choices; they are deeply embedded in the cultural fabric of Uzbek society, where indirectness and politeness are prioritized, especially when discussing sensitive matters like illness and death. These literary works reflect a broader cultural preference for language that tempers the

emotional impact of difficult topics, ensuring that they are communicated with the utmost respect and consideration for the reader's emotional state. In this way, euphemisms help preserve the integrity of social relationships by preventing undue emotional distress or discomfort, aligning with the wider social values of emotional restraint and respect for others.

Psychologically, euphemisms play a critical role in helping readers process and cope with the anxiety that often accompanies direct confrontations with harsh realities. The human mind tends to recoil from direct and unembellished descriptions of death, suffering, and illness, as these topics can elicit powerful emotional reactions. By employing milder, less direct expressions, authors provide their readers with a psychological shield, allowing them to engage with complex and painful topics in a manner that feels less overwhelming. This psychological buffer helps readers to process these difficult realities at their own pace, offering a way to confront and reflect on such issues without the immediate impact of distressing emotions. As noted by linguists Allan and Burridge (2006), euphemisms function as coping mechanisms not only for the characters within the narratives but also for the readers themselves. Through the use of euphemisms, authors provide a means of emotional distancing, enabling readers to engage with the narrative without becoming consumed by the emotional weight of the subject matter.

Furthermore, euphemisms play a significant role in bridging the gap between the emotional world of the reader and the harshness of the subject matter. They act as a mediator between the reader's emotional comfort zone and the challenging realities being discussed in the text. In the process, they help to maintain a delicate balance between truth and emotional accessibility. By presenting sensitive issues in a more palatable form, euphemisms allow authors to delve into complex themes of mortality, illness, and suffering, all while respecting the reader's emotional boundaries. In this way, euphemisms function not only as a linguistic tool but also as a means of emotional regulation, both for the characters within the story and the readers who encounter these narratives.

In conclusion, euphemisms are not merely a stylistic device but serve a profound cultural, psychological, and emotional function in literature. They help shape how sensitive medical and existential topics are represented and understood, ensuring that these difficult themes are approached with respect, cultural sensitivity, and emotional consideration. Through the careful and thoughtful use of euphemisms, authors are able to soften the emotional impact of illness, aging, and death, allowing readers to engage with these challenging topics in a way that is both manageable and meaningful. By examining how euphemisms function in literature, we can gain deeper insight into the ways in which language shapes our understanding of the world, our emotional responses to difficult issues, and the broader societal norms that influence how we communicate about life's most difficult subjects.

Conclusion

Euphemisms play a crucial and invaluable role in literature, especially when addressing sensitive medical topics such as illness, aging, and death. These indirect expressions help authors navigate the complexities of human suffering and mortality in a way that minimizes emotional discomfort. Through the analysis of literary works from both global and Uzbek traditions, it becomes evident that euphemisms serve more than just as a tool for linguistic politeness. They also offer a profound reflection of the cultural attitudes and beliefs surrounding these difficult themes. In particular, euphemisms serve as cultural markers, showing how different societies approach the delicate topics of health, suffering, and the inevitable nature of mortality.

Authors like Ernest Hemingway, George Orwell, Abdulla Qahhor, and Said Ahmad demonstrate the power of euphemistic language in their works. They use these indirect expressions to help soften the emotional impact of challenging and distressing topics. For instance, in Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* and Orwell's *1984*, the use of euphemisms surrounding illness, death, and trauma allows readers to engage with the themes in a less confronting and more emotionally manageable manner. Similarly, in the works of Uzbek authors such as Qakhhor and Akhmad, euphemisms serve to address the emotional weight of aging and physical decline, thus providing a more accessible and compassionate way for readers to connect with these themes.

Moreover, euphemisms play an essential role in facilitating emotional resilience. By using milder, indirect expressions, authors create a psychological shield that enables readers to process and reflect on challenging and uncomfortable realities without feeling overwhelmed. This emotional buffering makes it easier for the audience to navigate the complexities of human suffering and mortality, allowing them to approach these topics from a place of emotional distance, which may be necessary to truly comprehend and accept the harshness of life.

In addition to their psychological function, euphemisms also contribute to the social and cultural context of a given society. They reveal the values and norms of different cultures, particularly when it comes to how death and illness are perceived and communicated. For example, in both Western and Uzbek literary traditions, euphemisms reflect a shared societal desire to maintain respect and sensitivity when addressing suffering and death. These indirect forms of expression also serve as a way to navigate the discomfort or fear that may arise from confronting such painful subjects directly. In this way, euphemisms allow for a more respectful and less threatening engagement with topics that are often considered taboo or too difficult to discuss openly.

By delving deeper into the cultural and psychological roles of euphemisms in literature, we gain a greater appreciation for the ways in which language can mirror and influence societal norms. Euphemisms, far from being merely a tool of politeness, are integral to shaping our perceptions of health, aging, and death. They not only help mitigate emotional distress but also provide comfort and solace to those grappling with the harsh realities of life. Furthermore, through their careful use, authors contribute to the broader cultural understanding of suffering and mortality, offering readers a means of engaging with these complex themes in a more digestible and supportive manner.

In conclusion, euphemisms are not only significant in their linguistic form but also in their deeper cultural and psychological functions. By examining how euphemisms are used in literature, we can better understand the role of language in shaping our perceptions of sensitive issues. Authors such as Hemingway, Orwell, Qakhhor, and Akhmad show us how euphemisms act as a bridge between the difficult realities of life and the reader's emotional and cultural sensibilities. Through their subtle yet powerful use of language, these authors create a space where readers can engage with some of life's most challenging topics while still maintaining a sense of emotional distance and comfort. This serves as a reminder of the immense power that language holds in shaping our understanding of life, death, and everything in between.

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