



VULGARISM: ITS CONCEPT AND CHARACTERISTICS

Elamonova Gulsoatbonu Qahramon qizi

Student English Language Department

Termez Pedagogics Institute

Abstract: This article explores the concept of vulgarism in linguistics, focusing on its social, cultural, and stylistic aspects. Vulgarisms are defined as words or expressions that violate moral or ethical norms and are often used to express strong emotions such as anger, irritation, or excitement. The study discusses the main characteristics of vulgar words, their evolution through time, and their functions in modern English. The paper also compares the role of vulgarisms in English and Uzbek languages, emphasizing their emotional power, social limitations, and cultural dependence. Understanding vulgarism helps to better comprehend how language reflects human behavior, cultural taboos, and social attitudes.

Keywords: vulgarism, taboo words, emotion, culture, profanity, linguistic expression

Introduction: Language is a living system that reflects all aspects of human life, including emotions, social norms, and cultural behavior. One of the most controversial yet fascinating linguistic phenomena is vulgarism. In linguistics, vulgarisms refer to words or expressions that are considered inappropriate, offensive, or contrary to accepted social and moral standards. These words often express anger, frustration, or other intense emotions, and their acceptability depends largely on the cultural and social context. The study of vulgarism is important because it reveals how societies define boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable language, as well as how language changes along with cultural and moral evolution.

The Concept of Vulgarism

Vulgarism is a linguistic unit that violates social and moral norms. It usually carries offensive, rude, or disrespectful meanings. Such words are typically avoided in formal contexts but are widely used in informal speech to express emotions or solidarity among speakers.

Emotional Function

Vulgarisms are emotionally charged words. They help speakers release tension, express anger or excitement quickly and vividly. According to Pinker (2007), swearing



activates deep emotional centers of the brain, which is why vulgar language often feels spontaneous and powerful.

Social and Cultural Aspects

The acceptability of vulgarisms varies from one society to another. In English-speaking countries, mild forms of swearing such as “hell”, “damn” or “crap” are often tolerated in informal speech, whereas stronger forms remain taboo. In Uzbek culture, however, vulgar words are strongly condemned and rarely appear in polite conversation. Thus, vulgarity serves as a cultural mirror, reflecting social values and moral boundaries.

Types of Vulgarisms in English

In English linguistics, vulgarisms are generally divided into several types:

Religious profanity: “damn,” “goddamn,” “hell”

Excretory references: “shit,” “piss,” “crap”

Personal insults: “idiot,” “bastard,” “jerk”

Racial or ethnic slurs: “nigger,” “chink,” “spic”

These categories show that vulgarisms often touch sensitive areas of human experience: religion, body and identity.

Historical Development

Historically, many English vulgarisms originated in religious prohibitions. During the Middle Ages, words related to sacred entities or bodily functions were strictly avoided. Over time, however, these expressions entered everyday speech, literature, and even media, reflecting changing attitudes toward morality and freedom of speech.

Today, vulgarisms perform several communicative functions:

Emotional release: expressing anger, pain, or excitement

Social bonding: creating closeness among peers

Humor and irony: especially in comedy and satire

Insult or aggression: when used to offend others

The rise of social media, music, and film has normalized mild forms of vulgarity, giving them stylistic and humorous value in pop culture.

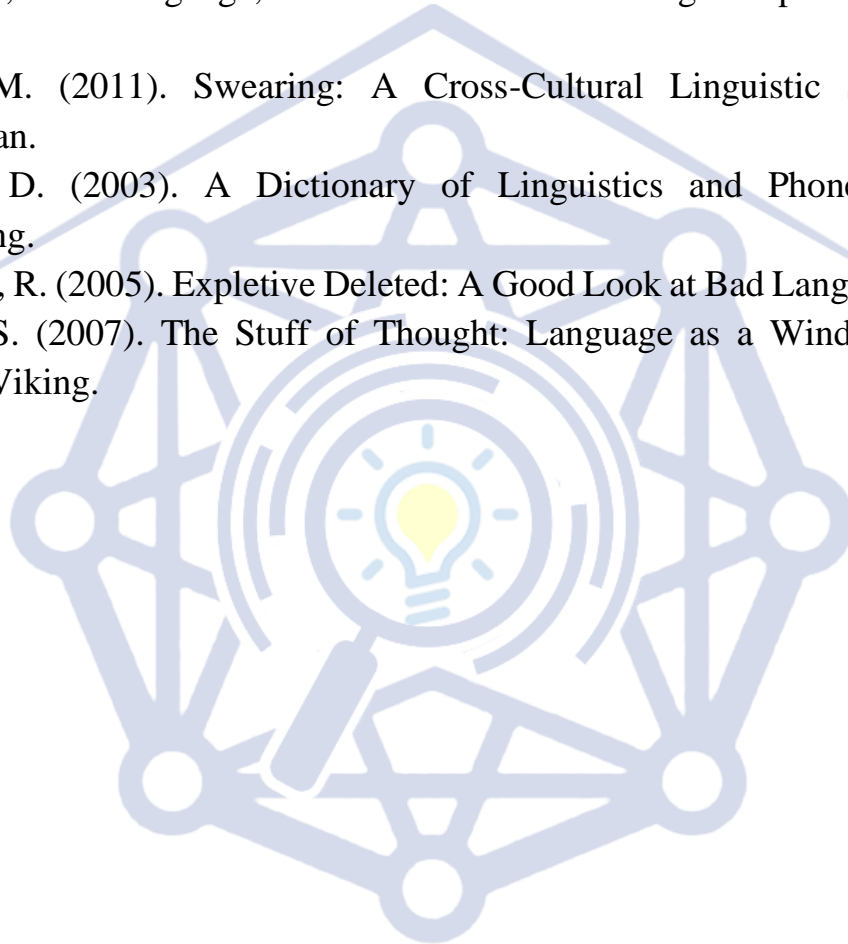
Conclusion: Vulgarity is not just a set of offensive words; it is a linguistic phenomenon deeply rooted in social, cultural, and emotional life. Despite their negative connotations, vulgar words play an important role in human communication by expressing emotions that are otherwise difficult to articulate. Understanding vulgarity from a linguistic and cultural perspective allows us to appreciate how language reflects human psychology, morality, and society’s changing values.



However, it is crucial to remember that the use of vulgarisms in formal, academic, or diplomatic communication remains socially unacceptable.

References

1. Allan, K., & Burridge, K. (2006). *Forbidden Words: Taboo and the Censoring of Language*. Cambridge University Press.
2. Hughes, G. (2006). *An Encyclopedia of Swearing: The Social History of Oaths, Profanity, Foul Language, and Ethnic Slurs in the English-speaking World*. M.E. Sharpe
3. Ljung, M. (2011). *Swearing: A Cross-Cultural Linguistic Study*. Palgrave Macmillan.
4. Crystal, D. (2003). *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. Blackwell Publishing.
5. Wajnryb, R. (2005). *Expletive Deleted: A Good Look at Bad Language*. Free Press.
6. Pinker, S. (2007). *The Stuff of Thought: Language as a Window into Human Nature*. Viking.



**Research Science and
Innovation House**

