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THE FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE EMERGENCE OF ILLNESS-RELATED EUPHEMISMS IN MEDICAL DISCOURSE

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Abstract: In medical discourse, euphemisms have emotional and psychological significance along with linguistic features. Euphemisms used in medical discourse carry not only linguistic but also emotional and psychological weight. Therefore, they help reduce fear, anxiety, and stigma associated with illnesses such as cancer, mental disorders, and terminal conditions.. Euphemisms play a significant role in social interaction. In the current globalized context, their role in medical discourse is increasingly important. This research shows that how euphemistic language emerges and the different ways of euphemization in medical field.

Keywords: Medical euphemisms, illness conceptualization, doctor-patient communication, sociolinguistic factors, pragmatic language use, health discourse, linguistic mitigation, cultural factors.

Annotatsiya.
Tibbiy muloqotda evfemizmlar nafaqat tilshunoslik nuqtayi nazardan, balki emotsional va psixologik jihatdan ham muhim ahamiyatga egadir. Tibbiy muloqotda ishlatiladigan evfemizmlar og‘ir tashxis va holatlarni yumshoq shaklda yetkazish orqali bemorga nisbatan psixologik bosimini kamaytiradi, muloqotni yanada samimiy va tushunarli qiladi. Ular saraton, ruhiy kasalliklar va o‘lim bilan yakunlanuvchi xastaliklar kabi holatlarga oid qo‘rquv, tashvish va ijtimoiy tamg`a darajasini kamaytirishga xizmat qiladi Ayniqsa sog‘liqni saqlash sohasida evfemizmlar bemorning ruhiy holatini barqarorlashtiradi, ortiqcha stressdan himoya qiladi hamda shifokor va bemor o‘rtasidagi muloqotni yaxshilaydi. Hozirgi globallashuv sharoitida ularning tibbiy muloqotdagi o‘rni yanada ortib bormoqda. Ushbu tadqiqot tibbiyot sohasida evfemistik til birliklarining qanday yuzaga kelishini va evfemizatsiyaning turli shakllarini ochib beradi.

Kalit so‘zlar: Tibbiy evfemizmlar, kasallikni konseptual ifodalash, shifokor va bemor muloqoti, sotsiolingvistik omillar, pragmalingvistik til vostalaridan foydalanish, sog‘liqni saqlash muloqoti, til vositasida yumshatish, madaniy omillar.

Аннотация.
В медицинском дискурсе эвфемизмы обладают не только лингвистическими, но и эмоционально-психологическими характеристиками. Они способствуют снижению страха, тревоги и социальной стигматизации, связанных с такими заболеваниями, как рак, психические расстройства и смертельные болезни. Использование эвфемизмов в медицине позволяет смягчить жесткую реальность болезни, облегчая эмоциональное состояние пациента и улучшая качество общения между врачом и пациентом. Особенно

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в здравоохранении эвфемистический язык способствует стабилизации психоэмоционального фона пациента, снижению стресса и обеспечению этичного взаимодействия. В разных культурах эвфемизмы помогают сохранять социальную гармонию, отражая общественные установки по отношению к здоровью и болезням.

Ключевые слова: Медицинские эвфемизмы, концептуализация болезни, общение врача и пациента, социолингвистические факторы, прагматическое использование языка, медицинский дискурс, лингвистическая смягчаемость, культурные факторы.

Introduction.

The use of euphemisms in the medical field—particularly in communication between doctors and patients—is vitally important in today's modern world. The emergence of various diseases, their mutations, and their rapid global spread (such as: pandemics) have created the necessity for physicians to develop both medical knowledge and communicative competence. At the same time, euphemisms used in medical discourse not only enhance medical culture and professional interaction but also play a crucial role in maintaining the patient's psychological well-being. Moreover, the use of euphemistic expressions in communication is not merely about concealing the truth, but rather about conveying the patient's condition in a manner that considers their emotional, cultural, and psychological state, as well as that of their relatives. Concepts like disease, death, disability, suffering, and dangerous diagnoses frequently cause intense emotional reactions in the human brain, according to psycholinguistic research. Doctors, medical personnel, and other healthcare workers are often required to communicate these circumstances with extreme strategies. For example, statements like "a serious illness" may be used in place of "cancer," while "passing away" or "limited treatment options" may be favored over "death." These linguistic decisions help to improve social sensitivity, empathy, and respect for the patient and their family members.

Methods.

The usage of euphemisms in medical discourse in Uzbek and English was investigated in this study using a qualitative and comparative research methods. With special attention to their function in doctor-patient communication, cultural sensitivity, and professional ethics, the study concentrated on recognizing, categorizing, and evaluating medical euphemisms from a theoretical, semantic, and pragmatic viewpoint. The study's primary data came from a range of reliable sources, including:

- Medical dialogues, doctor-patient consultations, and health-related interviews (in both English and Uzbek);
- Medical websites, brochures, and public health campaigns;
- resources in print and digital media that dealt with health issues;
- Hugh Rawson's A Dictionary of Euphemisms and Other Doubletalk.

The study analyzed that in medical sphere euphemisms are mostly used for the following functions:

- To defend the patient`s psychological well-being; for ex: Big C or unknown growth (noma`lum o`simta) is instead of "Cancer"(saraton) .

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- Social sensitiveness: “differently abled” instead of “disabled” or “mentally challenged” can soften the word “insane”.
- "Alignment with ethical principles: “passed away” instead of “died” “he is at the end of his life” refers to “terminal illness” meaning that the patient is going to die.

It is clear that, from the examples provided, every specific function of euphemisms is vital to maintain psychological well-being of the person.

Results.

The analysis combined the following techniques in a descriptive and analytical manner:

- **Linguistic classification** according to semantic domains (e.g., mental health, addiction, disability, terminal illness);
- **Contextual interpretation**, which makes use of discourse analysis to comprehend the pragmatic purposes of euphemisms (such as mitigation, face-saving, and courtesy);
- **Cross-cultural comparison**, showing how Uzbek and English medical communication use euphemisms differently and similarly;

№	Illness types	The name of the illness	Examples	Function of euphemism.	Equivalents in uzbek language
1	Terminal Illnesses	Cancer, advanced heart disease, late-stage organ failure	1.“She’s in a better place” (for death) 2.“He’s fighting a tough battle” (for cancer)	To soften the emotional impact and help patients and families cope.	U olam tashvishlaridan qutuldi. U hayot uchun kurashmoqda.
2	Mental Illness	Depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, dementia	“She’s going through a rough patch” (for depression) “He’s not quite himself lately” (for mental disorders “Memory issues” (for dementia)	Due to stigma and misunderstanding around mental health.	1.“Kayfiyati yo‘qday” “O‘ziga o‘xshamayapti” “Biroz es-hushida muammo bor”
3	Sensitive infection or Transmitted Infections. (STIs)	HIV/AIDS, syphilis, herpes	“He has a condition” (general) “She’s unwell” or “She caught something”	Because of social stigma, shame, or fear of judgment.	Unda bir muammo bor” “O‘zini yomon his qilyapti” “Bir narsa yuqtiribdi, deyishdi”

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4	Disabilities and Neurological Disorders	Autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy.	"Special needs" "Differently-abled" "Developmentally delayed"	To avoid discomfort or perceived offense.	"Tibbiy ko`makka muhtoj" "Alohida e`tiborga muhtoj" "Rivojlanishda biroz orqada"
5	Substance Abuse and Addiction	Alcoholism, drug dependency	"He has a drinking problem" "She's dealing with some issues"	To minimize judgment and protect dignity.	"Ichishga mukkasidan ketgan" "O'z muammolari bilan ovora"
6	Age-Related Illnesses	Alzheimer's disease, general cognitive decline	"She's getting forgetful" "He's slowing down a bit"	To reduce fear and preserve dignity in elderly people.	"Esidan chiqib qolayapti shekilli" "Ancha sekinlashgan" Xotirasi biroz sustlashgan.
7	Contagious or "Feared" Illnesses	COVID-19, tuberculosis	"He's under the weather" "She's isolating"	Out of fear, panic, or to prevent social rejection.	"O'zini yaxshi his qilmayapti" "Uyda davolanmoqda" "O'zini chetga olibdi"

According to this study, euphemisms in medical discourse are more than just stylistic or linguistic devices; they are crucial instruments for morally sound and culturally relevant communication in healthcare environments. In delicate situations like giving diagnoses, talking about fatal illnesses, or dealing with stigmatized issues including mental illnesses, impairments, and substance addiction, their utilization is especially important. From a sociolinguistic and practical perspective, euphemisms help patients feel less psychologically burdened by enabling more cordial and courteous communication between patients and medical staff. Additionally, they help to ensure that information is communicated in a manner consistent with professional standards of medical communication, ethical norms, and cultural values.

Discussion.

The works of Keith Allan and Kate Burridge have laid the foundation for modern euphemism studies. In the book "Euphemism and Dysphemism: Language Used as Shield and Weapon" they emphasize the protective role of euphemisms in medicine and how they lessen distress (pp.

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45–47). Steven Pinker (2007): Pinker addresses euphemistic language in medical settings and how it can affect patients' perceptions in The Stuff of Thought (pp. 218-222). In her book "Putting a Name to It" (2006), Annemarie Jutel discusses medical euphemisms, highlighting how euphemistic language not only reduces stigma but also conveys essential medical truths. Judy Z. Segal, in her work "Health and the Rhetoric of Medicine" (2000), explores how euphemisms influence narratives about health and doctor-patient communication. Michael Hyde, in "Dying Virtues" (2001), discusses the dual role of euphemisms at the end of life — providing emotional relief while also conveying important truths, even though this may delay decision-making processes. In "Scientific Characters" (2013), Lisa Keränen demonstrates the powerful impact of euphemisms in cancer discourse, showing how they shape patients' and their families' understanding of illness and treatment.

The use of euphemism in medical language is not a matter of optional choice but emerges as a necessity. It serves as a tool for expressing sensitivity toward the patient while maintaining professional distance. In global linguistics, alongside the aforementioned scholars, several other prominent researchers in the fields of medicine and linguistics have contributed significantly through their works. Dr. Brian Goldman, in "The Secret Language of Doctors"; Fergus Shanahan, in "The Language of Illness"; Rees Charlotte Knight and Lynn, "Thinking 'No' but Saying 'Yes' to Student Presence in General Practice Consultations: Politeness Theory Insights"; Geoffrey Nunberg in "The Way We Talk Now"; Per-Olof Hasselgren in "Body Language from Head to Toe"; Zsófia Domján in "Applying Linguistics in Illness and Healthcare Contexts"; and Natalie Dalen in "Doctor's Talk" — all shed light on the uniqueness of communicative culture in doctor-patient interaction and the significance of euphemisms. In the influential book "On Death and Dying", Elisabeth Kübler-Ross emphasizes the necessity for medical professionals to communicate incurable or life-threatening diagnoses using euphemisms. Additionally, works such as "Speaking of Disease and Death" by Kathryn Burridge and Réka Ágnes Benczes are considered some of the most important works in the field. Australian scholar Antony Herbert, in his academic articles "The Role of Euphemisms in Healthcare Communication", along with Smith R. and Kelly N. in their article "Global Attempts to Avoid Talking Directly About Death and Dying", and Tyler M. & Ogden J. (2005) in "Doctors' Use of Euphemisms and Its Impact on Patients' Beliefs About Health: An Experimental Study of Heart Failure", as well as "The Impact of Euphemisms in Medical Communication" (Smith J. et al., 2018), and Dr. Shah in "A Guide to Healthcare Euphemisms" — all contribute important insights into the role of euphemistic language in medical settings. Beatrice Warren has also analyzed how euphemisms may lead to semantic ambiguity or misunderstanding.

Conclusion.

Euphemisms help soften the harsh realities of illness and patients' critical conditions, leading to more positive outcomes and reduced psychological burden. Especially in healthcare, euphemisms stabilize patients' emotional state, protect them from excessive stress, and improve doctor-patient communication. Across cultures, euphemisms are used to maintain social harmony, reduce psychological distress, and reflect societal attitudes toward health and illness. This study analyzes theoretical views from scholars to contemporary doctors, the semantic strategies of euphemisms, and their communicative impact in medicine.

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