

THE PHENOMENA OF TABOO AND EUPHEMISM IN FRENCH LINGUISTICS

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Abstract

In French linguistics, like in all languages, the use of euphemism has been formed as a historical ethnographic phenomenon in connection with the phenomenon of taboo. Euphemism is associated with the development of customs, cultural levels, aesthetic tastes, and ethnic norms in nations. With the development of the language, its euphemistic layer also develops. This article explains the concepts of “euphemism” and “taboo”, their place, and their importance in linguistics, particularly in French linguistics.

Keywords: euphemism, taboo, modern French linguistics, a group of euphemisms.

Introduction

There is a close, tight connection between language and speech, language is organized based on speech, it “grows”, enriches, and emerges in speech. Language is both the basis and the product of speech at the same time.

Language, especially a foreign language, and learning it is a social phenomenon that arose out of a natural need. Learning a foreign language was born out of the need for communication between different tribes and people. The emergence of states formed based on tribes and different peoples gave a military and political dimension to foreign language or knowledge of it. Due to the development of trade and commerce between countries, the need for a foreign language is also increasing.

According to the information, “... rude, profane words and phrases that are forbidden to be spoken openly, from the point of view of certain moral standards and certain beliefs, are called taboo. In places where it is necessary to speak more culturally, taboo words and phrases are replaced by convenient words and phrases that are by the norms of etiquette and express the meaning in a hidden manner. Such milder, more cultural words and expressions, used in place of language units that are forbidden in some way, are called “euphemisms”.

This term is derived from the ancient Greek compound word, which means “I speak well” [1, pp. 483, 570]. We know that certain things and actions are forbidden in various periods of development, especially in the primitive stages of human society. Such a prohibition is called “taboo”. This article deals with the analysis of the concepts of “euphemism” and “taboo” in linguistics, particularly in French linguistics.

Main Part

There are scientific works dedicated to the study of taboos and euphemisms in the French language, and euphemisms are studied as a special object of research in French linguistics. Some aspects of this problem have been discussed in the scientific literature. Also, euphemisms and their importance in speech are discussed in textbooks and manuals, and many scientific articles.

In the course of the research, first of all, if we start looking for the French version of the term euphemism, the term euphemism is defined in the French language book "Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des art et des métiers recherche" as follows: "L'euphémisme est un trope, puisque les mots n'y sont pas pris dans le sens propre: c'est une figure par laquelle on déguise à l'imagination des idées qui sont ou peu honnêtes, ou désagréables, ou tristes, ou dures; pour cela on ne se sert point des expressions propres qui exciteroient directement ces idées" [2, pp. 207]. (A euphemism is a figurative trope, word or phrase) in which the words are not used in their correct, original sense: it is a figure that hides (changes) ungraceful, unpleasant, painful, cruel thoughts in the imagination. That is why expressions that convey these thoughts are not used, the original thoughts are not expressed.). It should be said that, unlike the euphemism, taboo covers the event as a whole, and it is not just a speech event, but also includes the actions, behavior, customs and other types of characteristics of a society or an individual.

"The concept of euphemism is characterized by the fact that it is a purely linguistic phenomenon. Early people had to keep in secret not only words but also actions and deeds, depending on certain periods or circumstances. In the early stages of the development of society, the belief in demons, ghosts, and similar divine things was very strong among people. Such nations thought that if the name of a person or object is not close to demons and ghosts, they can be avoided. In ancient nations, as well as in nations that still live as tribes, it is forbidden to touch the belongings of tribal chiefs after their death and to mention their names. They imagined that if their things were touched or the names of these things were mentioned, ghosts and demons would strike and cause some harm. It is also forbidden to mention the names of some wild and poisonous animals. It was believed that mentioning the name of such animals would cause harm. The remains of the taboo can still be found today. Therefore, the finding is not only reflected in words but also covers all aspects of life" [3, pp. 932-945]. In fact, in linguistics, the concept of taboo is usually associated with euphemism, and euphemism is the reflective aspect of taboo. Taboo is understood as a primitive prohibition related to religion, magic, or superstition.

Looking back on history, euphemism is a linguistic phenomenon and is thought to have originated in an advanced society. There are many opinions about euphemism in the linguistics literature. E. Tyurina defines euphemism as follows: "Euphemism is a veiled, soft reflection of language units that are inconvenient to say, and in some cases, rude, unpleasant words and phrases that are considered in some way forbidden, obscene, with other words and expressions" [4, pp. 127].

I. Zabodkina writes: "Euphemism includes many positive qualities: politeness, delicacy, gentleness, manners, etc." [5, pp. 137]. It should be noted that it is impossible to completely stop the use of forbidden or prohibited words and phrases in linguistics. Because the concept of taboo is reflected in modern society as it existed in primitive society. Only the characteristics of its appearance and organization can change for one reason or another.

Depending on social changes, the semantic range of the word "taboo" expands: from prohibitions based on the nature of superstition to general prohibitions, as well as from concepts understood as "divine",

“holy”, “blessed” to the form of concepts “inappropriate, inconvenient to use” [6, pp. 12-13]. The concept of taboo has retained its value in linguistics, and it represents “forbidden” words and concepts in modern linguistics. The concepts of “taboo” and “euphemism” exist from the first stages of the development of social and material culture to the present day and complement each other. In the process of analyzing the taboos of the primitive, early periods, it can be seen that the direction of the taboo has changed. Now, taboo words are understood not as religious words, but as words and expressions in the field of euphemism, forbidden in linguistics, rude, barbaric words, or euphemisms (supernatural creatures, dangerous animals, and partially religious practices). For example, one can observe the use of the French word “le diable” (devil) with various euphemistic units: diantre, diatre, le malin (attacker), le vilain (very bad), l'adversaire (opponent), l'ennemi(enemy), le compère, le cousin, le mauvais esprit (devil, demon).

The above-mentioned use of the word “le diable” (devil) in some social strata has a very strong effect on a person and indicates signs of lameness or indecency in the speech culture and upbringing of the speaker. Prohibitions in linguistics are stabilized in relations between members of society and are directly related to social ethics.

Italian scientist Alfredo Niceforo points out that primitive prohibitions of divine nature are the source of prohibitions in modern linguistics, and says that these prohibitions are manifested in language today in the form of the concepts of shame, decency, and elegance. A.Niceforo says that in primitive society genitals had a divine, sacred character, and the names denoting them were included in the system of taboos, emphasizing that these concepts are still taboo today [7, pp. 268-277].

This scientist, who has studied the taboo system in practice, considers the prohibitions of the primitive era, which have a divine, sacred character, to be the source (basis) for today's new era. Although it is not correct to say that the scientist's evidence-based opinions are typical for all taboo systems, it can be said that a large part of the “taboo” field was created in this way. For example, the French people use *enceinte* (ancient euphemistic unit) and *grosse* [8, pp. 300]. In French, “gravid” is expressed as “*femme est dans une situation intéressante*” – “a woman in an interesting situation” or simply “*elle attend un bébé*” – “a woman is expecting a child”.

Conclusion

In French linguistics, like all languages, the use of euphemism has been formed as a historical ethnographic phenomenon in connection with the phenomenon of taboo. Euphemism is associated with the development of customs, cultural levels, aesthetic tastes, and ethnic norms in nations. With the development of the language, its euphemistic layer also develops. New forms of euphemism appear based on new standards of morality and worldview. There are also euphemisms in the language that arise due to the requirements of a specific speech situation, the meaning of which is often clarified through the text.

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