

**The analysis of phraseological synonymic euphemisms
with the meaning “to die”**

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Abstract: The current article is devoted to the study of one synonymic group of phraseological euphemisms which is investigated from the point of view of different types of synonyms and the synonymic group of phraseological euphemisms with the meaning “to die” and have been analyzed. The analysis of phraseological synonymic euphemisms with the meaning “to die” has shown that the synonymic group consists of different groups of synonyms: equivalent, stylistic and stylistic-ideographic.

Key words: phraseological units, phenomenon, euphemisms, extralinguistic, conventional, ideographic, stylistic, stylistic-ideographic, euphemisation.

Introduction

The term “euphemism” (from Greek “eu” – “well”, “phemi” – “I am speaking”) has been used to express a definite stylistic device for many centuries. As a linguistic phenomenon it has been analyzed since the XIXth century but only in the last decades the problem of euphemisms became popular all over the world.

Linguists analyze different types of euphemisms as parts of lexical system of different languages. The problem of phraseological euphemisms hasn't been in the focus of scientists' attention yet. On the whole, the process of euphemization is considered to be a complex and many-sided linguistic phenomenon characterized by three interrelated and interconnected aspects: social, psychological and linguistic proper.

There is a great variety of opinions concerning social and psychological causes of euphemisms, the most important criteria of euphemization, stylistic reference and the usage of euphemisms in real speech. All these show the actuality of the problem analyzed.

Materials and methods

Phraseological euphemisms were chosen from A.Koonin's “English-Russian Phraseological Dictionary” according to the label “эвф.”, some other phraseological dictionaries and books on phraseology. The author of the above mentioned dictionary includes this label into the system of stylistic labels marking at the same time that the system of stylistic labels is, partly, conventional.

The examples of illustrative quotations are taken either from the above mentioned dictionary or from the book “Exercises in Modern English Lexicology” by L.Grinberg, M.Kuznets, A.Kumacheva and G.Meltser .

First of all, phraseological euphemisms will be studied from the point of view of the notions they express. Secondly, one synonymic group of phraseological euphemisms will be investigated from the point of view of different types of synonyms.[1,p67-70]

From the point of view of their semantics phraseological euphemisms (PE) may be subdivided into several groups, the most important of them is:

Euphemisms naming death and everything associated with it, e.g. “to breath one's last (one's last breath, gasp)”, “to depart this life”, “to pay one's debt to nature”, “to go to one's last home”, “to go the way of all flesh”, “to kick the bucket”, “to hop the twig”, “to join the majority”, “to be no more”, “God's acre”, etc.:

The next day, his parents were flown to New Mexico by special Army plane, and they stayed at their son's bedside, until he breathed his last [8,p. 79-81].

A list of euphemisms for death in the English language, most of which are usually used in the past tense:

Passed on, croaked, kicked the bucket, gone to heaven, gone home, expired, breathed his last, succumbed, left us, passed to his eternal reward, lost, met his maker, wasted, checked out, eternal rest, laid to rest, pushing up daisies, called home, was a goner, came to an end, bit the dust, annihilated, liquidated, terminated, gave up the ghost, left this world, rubbed out, snuffed it, six feet under, consumed, found everlasting peace, went to a new life, in the great beyond, no longer with us, made the change, got murdalized, on the other side, God took him, departed, transcended, bought the farm, with the angels, feeling no pain, lost the race, time was up, cashed in, crossed over Jordan, perished, lost it, was done in, translated into glory, returned to dust, withered away, in the arms, gave it up, it was curtains, a long sleep, on the heavenly shores, out of his/her misery, ended it all, angels carried him away, resting in peace, changed form, dropped the body, rode into the sunset, that was all she wrote.

Results and discussion

Phraseological euphemisms belonging to one and the same phraseo-semantic group may further be subdivided into synonymic groups as there are different grammatical classes in one and the same group – verbal, substantive, adjectival, etc. Phraseological synonyms belong to the same grammatical class and phraseological units which are the same in the plane of content but different in the plane of expression.

The majority of linguists distinguish three types of phraseological synonyms: ideographic, stylistic and stylistic-ideographic. Ideographic synonyms differ in shades of meaning or have different notional components of meaning. Their archesemes coincide but they have one or more minor differential semes in the denotational component of meaning. Stylistic synonyms have the same notional components of meaning but differ in their stylistic reference. Stylistic-ideographic synonyms have some different notional and connotational components of meaning.

There are also synonyms that coincide both in denotational and connotational components of phraseological meaning. Such synonyms are called equivalent (or equipollent) ones.

We have analyzed the synonymic group of phraseological euphemisms with the meaning “to die”. This synonymic group is rather numerous as the concept of death finds its reflection in all languages and the attitude towards this “event” is similar. “All people are mortal” is a well-known expression, so speakers of different languages as representatives of different nations and nationalities try to conceal the unpleasant emotions and painful news. Phraseological units are based on different images, the majority of such images may be considered elevated, as in such units as “go to a better world”, “go to glory”, “go to heaven”, “go to kingdom-come”, “go to one's last (long) home”, etc. Others are based on some “common” images, e.g. “take the ferry”, “be (go) up the flume” (in the second meaning), “to be no more”. Only a very limited number of phraseological euphemisms of this synonymic group “use” the images which can cause ironical or jocular attitude, e.g. “kick the bucket”, “to hop the twig” [6, p. 48].

All phraseological units of this group of phraseological synonyms express one and the same action, that's why their denotational components coincide. Differences may be observed either in emotional evaluation or stylistic reference of phraseological units.

First of all we distinguish equivalent (equipollent) phraseological synonymic euphemisms which coincide in both components of their phraseological meaning (denotational and connotational). Coincidence in their connotational components means coincidence in their evaluation, emotiveness,

expressivity and stylistic reference. Death is presented in them as something positive, going to the better world, to God. Such expressions are etymologically connected with belief in God, with the Bible or were borrowed from Latin, e.g. “go to one’s last (long) home” was used in the Bible, Ecclesiastes XII, 5. The origin of the phraseological euphemism “join the majority” dates to the Latin expression “abiit ad plures”.

Let’s present equivalent phraseological synonymic euphemisms: “join one’s ancestors”, “be gathered to one’s fathers”, “go beyond the veil”, “go the way of nature”, “go to a better world”, “go to glory”, “go to kingdom-come”, “go to one’s last (long) home”, “join the majority”.

It is interesting to note that there are no ideographic phraseological synonyms in this group of PEs. Such cases are very rare, in our group of synonyms it is caused by the fact that all phraseological synonyms have the same meaning “to die” without some additional shades of denotational meaning as it is observed in other groups of phraseological synonyms.

The group of stylistic synonyms constitute the above mentioned PEs (belonging to the group of equivalent synonyms and being stylistically neutral), on the one hand, and such synonyms as “go west” (colloquial), or “go the way of all flesh” (bookish), on the other hand.

The last group of phraseological synonyms – stylistic-ideographic, in our case is presented by phraseological euphemisms belonging to different stylistic layers and differentiating in emotional colouring as a subcomponent of connotation. It means that some phraseological units such as “kick the bucket”, “be (go) up the flume” (in the second meaning), “throw up the sponge” are characterized by a jocular or ironical emotiveness in comparison with other units of this synonymic group. Thus they differ in the emotive connotational subcomponent. Besides such units as “kick the bucket” (jargon), “be (go) up the flume” (American colloquial), “go west” (colloquial), “go hence”, “go beyond the veil”, etc. differs in their stylistic reference. So such phraseological euphemisms belong to the group of stylistic-ideographic synonyms.

A very good way to see the difference between the three groups of phraseological synonyms is to see the behaviour of PEs belonging to different groups in context:

‘You think I’m going to join the majority.’ ‘...Well, put it that way if you like.’

About one year after his wife’s death Mr.Pontifex also was gathered to his fathers.

There is a very interesting illustration of several PEs belonging to this group used in one and the same context:

‘You see, one of the boys has gone up the flume – ‘Gone where?’ ‘Up the flume – throwed up the sponge, you understand.’ ‘Thrown up the sponge?’ ‘Yes, kicked the bucket’ – ‘Ah! Has departed to that mysterious country from whose bourne no traveler returns.’ ‘Return! I reckon not. Why, pard, he’s dead.’ [9, p. 91].

The external structure of the Constitution describes its relationship with other sources of law, the totality of relations, its place and role in the legal system and its significance in the system of social and normative regulation in society.

The article presents the role of family, forming system of upbringing, traditional-educational system and traditions in Uzbekistan.

In an article consistently revealing the principles of the Bologna process for measuring the quality of education, the dynamics of internationalization and the logic of integration in European higher education and in Eurasia.

Conclusion

The analysis of phraseological synonymic euphemisms with the meaning “to die” has shown that the synonymic group consists of different groups of synonyms: equivalent, stylistic and stylistic-ideographic. They describe the same event with the help of different images on which the PEs are

based. A rather large number of PEs of this group shows us the importance of phraseological euphemisms used to satisfy the need, to soften such painful news as somebody's death.

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