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EUPHIMISM, DYSPHEMISM ANTHESIS



The term euphemism refers to polite, indirect expressions which replace words and phrases considered harsh and impolite or which suggest something unpleasant.

Euphemism



Euphemism comes from the Greek word (euphemia), meaning "the use of words of good omen", which in turn is derived from the Greek root-words eû (εὖ), "good, well" and phémē (φήμη) "prophetic speech; rumour, talk". The term euphemism itself was used as a euphemism by the ancient Greeks, meaning "to keep a holy silence" (speaking well by not speaking at all).

Euphemism use ranges from a polite concern for propriety, to attempting to escape responsibility for war crimes.



- ? You are becoming a little thin on top (**bald**)
- ? Our teacher is in the family way (**pregnant**)
- ? He is always tired and emotional (**drunk**)
- ? We do not hire mentally challenged (**stupid**) people
- ? He is special child (**disabled or retarded**)



Euphemism in Life

Dysphemism means reputation or speech. It is a figure of speech which is defined as the use of disparaging or offensive expressions instead of inoffensive ones.

Dysphemism is the use of negative expressions instead of positive ones. A speaker uses them to humiliate or degrade the disapproved person or character. Dysphemism examples may be classified according to the following types.

Dysphemism



- ? Synecdoche – It is used to describe something as a whole like, “she is a prick.”
- ? Dysphemistic Epithets – Animal names are used, like “pig, bitch, rat, dog or snake”.
- ? Euphemistic Dysphemism – This is when a soft expression is used without offending.
- ? Dysphemistic Euphemism – It is used as a mockery between close friends without any animosity.

Types of Dysphemism



- ? “-ist” dysphemism – Targeted at a particular ethnicity.
- ? Name Dysphemism – It is used when someone is called by his name rather than by using his proper title such as “How are you Bill?” (Instead of Uncle Bill)
- ? Non-verbal Dysphemism – It is used when offending someone with gestures.

Types of Dysphemism



OTHELLO: By heaven, I saw my handkerchief in 's hand.

O perjured woman, thou dost stone my heart....

DESDEMONA: Alas, he is betrayed and I undone.

OTHELLO: Out, strumpet! weep'st thou for him to my face?

OTHELLO: Down, strumpet

? (*Othello by William Shakespeare*)

Examples of Dysphemism from Literature

Dysphemism is used as a device for degradation, minimization or humiliation of individuals who are disapproved of or condemned. When a speaker uses this technique, he uses marked form directed towards a group or the listeners. The purpose is to express anger or social distance from a particular group. It is frequently employed in literary texts, political speeches and colloquial expressions. Sometimes, dysphemism could be the result of hatred and fear, though disapproval and contempt might also motivate dysphemism to be used.

Function of Dysphemism

Euphemism is a mild and positive expression used to replace an unpleasant or negative one. Whereas dysphemism is the opposite of euphemism; it is the replacement of a positive or neutral expression with an unpleasant or negative one.



Opposite to Euphemism

? **Antithesis** is used in writing or speech either as a proposition that contrasts with or reverses some previously mentioned proposition or when two opposite are introduced together for contrasting effect.



Antithesis

Antithesis emphasizes the idea of contrast by parallel structures of the contrasted phrases or clauses, i.e. the structures of phrases and clauses are similar in order to draw the attention of the listeners or readers. For example:

“Setting foot on the moon may be a small step for a man but a giant step for mankind.”

The use of contrasting ideas, “a small step” and “a giant step”, in the sentence above emphasizes the significance of one of the biggest landmarks of human history.



- ? *Give every man thy **ear**, but few thy **voice**.*
- ? ***Man** proposes, **God** disposes.*
- ? ***Love** is an ideal thing, **marriage** a real thing.*
- ? *Speech is silver, but silence is gold.*
- ? *Patience is bitter, but it has a sweet fruit.*
- ? *Money is the root of all evils: poverty is the fruit of all goodness.*
- ? *You are **easy** on the eyes, but **hard** on the heart.*

