

Euphemism of Birth
Expressions in
Mousli Speech:
A Sociolinguistic Study

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عبارات التلطيف عن الولادة في الكلام الموصلية : دراسة لغوية- إجتماعية المستخلص

الناس يجب عليهم اختيار الكلام المناسب و الأسلوب المناسب للتواصل بشكل لائق مع الآخرين . التلطيف هو عبارته هو تكتيك يستخدم للتقليل من أهمية أي مواقف تهدد الوجه . التعبيرات الملوطة هي تعبيرات تحل محل المحرمات المجتمعية والألفاظ النابية والتجديف والكلمات المسيئة الأخرى. يحاول الناس أن يكونوا مهذبين ولطيفين قدر المستطاع عند التحدث مع بعضهم البعض لتجنب استخدام عبارات أو تعبيرات فظة أو غير ودية أو محظورة ضد الأعراف والتقاليد. أنها تنطوي على استبدال الدال الأصلي ، الذي يعتبر مسيئاً ، أو غير سار بأخر مختلف ؛ كثيراً ما يشار إليه على أنه "حجاب" أو "كفن" يوضع فوق الكلام وكأنه يخفيه . تقتصر هذه الورقة على مناسبات الولادة في خطاب الموصلية في كانون الثاني (يناير) 2023. ويريد الباحث أن يعرف ما هي التعبيرات الملوطة المستخدمة ، وكيف يتم استخدامها ، وكيف تتأثر الطبقات الاجتماعية والجنس باستخدام التعبيرات الملوطة. المشاركون في هذه الدراسة هم من المتحدثين الأصليين لهجة الموصلية. لا تزال العديد من الدراسات مكرسة لفحص أكبر عدد ممكن نظراً لأهميتها في اللغة. تشرح هذه الورقة أنواع واستراتيجيات التعبيرات الملوطة. كما يسلط الضوء على التعبير الملوّط في لهجة الموصلية. يهدف الباحث إلى التركيز على الحاجة وراء استخدام التعبيرات الملوطة ولماذا من الضروري استخدامها في مثل هذا السياق.

كلمات مفتاحية: التلطيف، عبارات مناسبة الولادة، وجهة النظر اللغوية-الاجتماعية، اللهجة الموصلية

Abstract

People must choose the right words and speaking styles to communicate with others. Euphemism is a tactic employed to downplay any face-threatening situations. This paper is an attempt to investigate some euphemistic expressions related to birth occasions used frequently in daily speech situations within the context of the Mosuli Arabic speech-community. Such linguistic expressions are supposed, here, to be socially and culturally motivated as well as determined by the sociocultural ideology of this community, due to the fact that they are remarkably distinctive as Mosuli expressions used solely by typical Mosuli Arab speakers. The major aim in this paper, though limited in scope and depth, is to uncover the most common and frequent euphemistic expressions used in Mosuli dialect with reference to birth social occasions, how they are formulated linguistically and used socially, and how the use of such linguistic expressions is affected by social variables such as class, age and gender. In this regard, the paper explains the types and strategies of euphemisms. It also sheds light on the euphemism in the Mousli dialect. The researcher aims to focus on the need behind using euphemisms and why it is essential to use them in such a context. To achieve this aim, the paper has adopted, in the first place, Warren's approach (1991), and, to a certain extent, some theorizations from Allan and Burridge's model (1991) insofar as the analysis of the data samples are concerned. The data samples considered here are collected solely by the researchers themselves (being native speakers) who have been relied on as the research instrument supported by the processes of observation and recording. All the participants involved in this study are native speakers of Mousli Arabic dialect. In this sense, the study is basically based on the descriptive qualitative method. The main striking conclusion raised in the study is that euphemisms, in general, and those concerned with the birth expressions, in particular, are a linguistic phenomenon widely occur in the speech of Mosuli arabic community with certain social functions.

Key terms : *Euphemism, Birth Expressions, Sociolinguistic Orientation, Mousli Dialect*

1. Introduction

This paper is an attempt to investigate a number of euphemistic expressions used in birth occasions in the context of Mosuli Arabic speech-community from a sociolinguistic perspective. The expressions selected are analyzed and described on the basis of two distinct models; namely, Warren (1991) and Allan and Burridge (1991). Relying on these models, the paper tries to shed light on the euphemistic expressions related to birth peech in Mosuli Arabic dialect in terms of their linguistic and social properties. In this regard, the paper aims to show the linguistic and structural properties of the euphemistic expressions considered here and the social uses and functions. To that end, The paper raised two research questions: (1) what are the motives behind using euphemisms?; and, (2) what kinds of euphemisms are used in the birth situation? To reach objective and scientific answers for the questions raised, there are two related hypotheses given in the paper; namely, (1) This study hypothesizes that euphemism is a vital technique in our speech, and (2) This paper hypothesizes that women use euphemisms more than man.

As for the methodology and research design, the qualitative method is used in this paper because this study aims to explain and describe the data used in birth occasions. All the data will be presented qualitatively without using a numerical system. The data are taken from proverbs and songs of Mousli speech, which are used in everyday life.

As for the research instrument, this study uses the researcher himself as a premier instrument to collect relevant data. The researcher follows these steps to collect the data: (1) The researcher looks for birth euphemisms in different situations; (2) The researcher reads books in proverbs and songs in the Mousli dialect; (3) Then, he Selects the term euphemism; (4) Analysis of the data to know the kind of euphemism based on types and

needs according to the models of Allan and Burrige (1991) and Warren (1991).

Due to the result of the data analysis conducted here, the paper has come up three major conclusions; (1) Mosuli Arabic speakers frequently use various kinds of euphemistic expressions in birth-speech events to lessen the tension, prevent offense, avoid bad or taboo words, and to cover unpleasant facts; (2) two social factors, gender and age, play an important role in the use of birth euphemistic expressions; in that, women; notably, old ones, use euphemisms in the birth speech-events more than men do, due to their tendency to avoid direct address and face-threatening acts; (3) with reference to ‘overstatement’ and ‘metaphor’ as most common realizations of euphemism, the paper has found that Mosuli Arabic speakers of high social educated class and old ages use euphemistic expressions in their daily conversations more than other speakers in the same community speech.

2. The Concept of Euphemism

Euphemisms are expressions that substitute social taboos and other offensive words, and thus, they have social functions that are determined and motivated by the culture and ideology of the relevant speech community. At the global level, language users try to be polite, friendly and kind, they usually use euphemistic expressions in their speech (Burchfield, 1985 and Warren, 1991). In this sense, euphemism, as a proper language style, is normally pursued in social communicative interactions in order to soften and avoid taboos and sensitive topics. Accordingly, the formulation and usage of euphemism, as a common phenomenon in human language, is influenced by social as well as cultural factors. In this regard, it has been found in the literature that the use of euphemism varies with sociocultural features such as gender, age,

social status and occupation, which indicates that euphemism is deeply rooted in social culture and ideology (ibid).

Allan and Burridge (1991:27) say that "euphemism is used as an alternative to dispreferred expressions to avoid possible loss of face either one's face or that of the audience or some third party." According to Cruse (2006: 57), a euphemism is a phrase that alludes to something that people are hesitant to bring up out of fear that it will offend but does so in a way that diminishes the offense.

Many euphemisms serve as substitutes for actual words. In Simple words, the speaker would prefer not to utilize it when carrying out a specific communicative aim at a particular time or series of times. For instance, Time magazine stated regarding the U.S. House of Representatives that "bribes, bribery, and expenses-paid vacations are never discussed on Capitol Hill." Even among politicians, the terms "bribes" and "corruption" are seldom taboo (Allan and Burridge 1991:28)

According to the cognitive point of view, euphemisms are employed to label objects without conjuring up a mental image of them. Euphemisms are primarily used to attack someone's imagination. Euphemisms don't give the mind a complete picture of an event or thing, nor do they fully characterize it. Therefore, it is challenging to comprehend a statement's genuine meaning with a comprehensive definition (Mihas, 2005: 129).

Crystal (2003, p. 173) states there are some words that many people avoid using because they may offend, harm, or embarrass other members of the society where politeness is concerned. . Brown & Levinson (1987,p. 91) concentrated on "face" as an essential element in politeness. They refer to it as "face-risk-minimization." Enright (1985) (cited in

Alqarni, 2009, p. 13) confirms that using euphemisms can show taste in language and, at the same time, lead to confusion.

According to Mashak et al. (2012, p. 202.), euphemism is an international concept, but it is conveyed according to the conventional norms of particular societies. Euphemisms are emotionally neutral words or expressions used instead of synonymous offensive, too direct, or unpleasant words. Thus they deal with the ambiguous and the undesirable.

Traditionally euphemisms concentrate on the spheres connected with the human body, secretion functions, nakedness, genitals, sickness, crimes, and military action. Still, today they actively invade new spheres – advertising, business, politics – anything “from private pleasure to public pain” (Rawson, 1981). In his turn, Lutz (2000: 231) defines euphemism as “an inoffensive or positive word or phrase designed to avoid a harsh, unpleasant, or distasteful reality.”

3. The Historical Background

The English word “euphemism” can be traced back for the first time in a book written in 1656 by Thomas Blount, Glossographia [Burchfield 1985: 13], and comes from Greek euphèmos, which is itself derived from the adjective euphèmos, “of good omen” (from EU, “good,” and phèmi, “I say”).

Euphemism means “speak fair.” The prefix EU- means “good, well”; the stem pHEME means “speak”; the suffix -ISM means “action or result”; and the word means “speaking well of...”, “good speech,” and “words of good omen” (Rawson 1981). Euphemism was initially used as a substitute for a religious word or phrase that should not be spoken aloud. “Eupheme “ is the opposite of blaspheme.(ibid)

Euphemism can be traced back to ancient civilizations; it plays a vital role in the formation of the manners and behavior of individuals. The Furies were known as the Eumenides by the Greeks because it was their duty to exact revenge for crimes that went unpunished (Bloomfield and Newmark, 1963:358).

Societies that came after them continued this custom of giving terrible words lovely names. Like the Greeks, Romans believed religion was primarily responsible for euphemism's widespread and early use. (Wajnryb,2004: 89).

According to Brown and Levinson (1987: 216), the phenomenon of Euphemism is "a universal aspect of language usage, "Euphemism has always worked in language. It is not a recent phenomenon and likely has existed since the dawn of language (Anderson and Stageberg, 1975: 140).

Some Anglo-Saxon monk was the first to use a euphemism term when they used the phrase "port cwene" (port woman) to refer to a harlot. Jespersen (1967: 227-228) asserts that the puritans' influence was sufficiently potent to change swearing customs. God was changed to other words like "gog," "gosh," and "Gad," etc.

In the 16 and 17 centuries, Middle English class members used euphemisms extensively. To avoid any overt references to sex, God, death, bodily functions, and the like, people were highly conservative (Ayigun ,2018).

In polite company, Victorians might refer to limbs rather than legs. The words "frillies," "unmentionables," and "inexpressible" in the Victorian language reflect the shock that the general public experienced upon learning about topics that had previously been regarded as private. It has been discovered that euphemism is frequently utilized in contemporary

society. It is utilized in many professions, including occupation, health, democracy, disease, death, sex, crime, and politics (ibid).

4. Motivations of Euphemisms

There are many reasons behind using the euphemism

1-The protective euphemism is used to defend and prevent offense. In this respect, language avoidance and evasiveness are traits of euphemisms. When presented with the challenging task of how to speak about topics in various circumstances that, for one reason; or another, we would prefer to refrain from talking about unrestrainedly in the prevailing context, we construct them (Burridge 2012).

2. The sneaky euphemism is to obscure and misrepresent. In a certain sense, all euphemism is deceitful. No euphemism sugarcoats the truth; in a particular situation, it may be acceptable to speak of something taboo using a euphemism rather than plain language. However, the euphemistic vocabulary found in the jargon used in the military, political, and medical fields gives the masquerade more layers of cunning and concealment. (ibid)

3. The upbeat euphemism is to exaggerate and exaggerate. In this sense, many euphemisms are merely substitutes for expressions speakers prefer not to use on a particular occasion in their ability to portray whatever they designate in a positive light (ibid).

4. The collective euphemism is used to demonstrate unity and define the Gang. Taboos, as Burridge (2012) argues, are one of the shared ideals that bind a community's members; they symbolize social cohesion. Many seem ridiculous and confusing to outsiders. The causes that might have inspired their founding are frequently unknown, even to those on the inside. The original meaning is replaced by mindless routine; fear and respect are

obscured by social custom. And what one group respects, another derides. Feelings of individuality shared taboos, and the rites and rituals accompanying our euphemistic behavior reinforce the social fabric and create group identity (ibid).

5- Euphemisms are used to have fun and entertain oneself which is referred to as ludic. According to Crystal (1998: 183), it is evident that many euphemisms are used primarily for humorous purposes. When children enter school, their linguistic lives have already been willingly given to language play. This practice persists throughout their lives; Crystal (ibid) reveals the prevalence and originality of language play among ordinary language users. Euphemism can keep the speaker and the listener in harmony, i.e., harmonize communication to lessen the initial discrepancy on both sides (ibid).

6- In non-hostile verbal interactions, euphemisms serve as practical linguistic tools to facilitate communication and maintain interpersonal connections (Jdetawy, 2019).

7- People voluntarily pursue language civilization to demonstrate their civilized and cultured status as social economies grow. People, therefore, choose to use specific soft, implicit, and euphemistic language when they must refer to something unpleasant (ibid).

5. Functions of Euphemisms

In the available literature, one can find various functions of using euphemisms. The most striking ones can be summarized as follows:

1-A religious aim. Euphemisms are employed to avoid naming certain things. Religious expressions or taboos that are spiritually risky use foreboding language, such as the titles of deities. (Jdetawy2019).

2-Politicians employ euphemisms to protect themselves from responsibility and increase accountability for their unlawful or improper conduct by masking and obscuring the audience.

3-Euphemisms provide a social purpose by helping people deal with sensitive and disgusting subjects. They are meant to prevent Utilizing the terms wound susceptibilities and which are it is not preferred to discuss sensitive issues like death, sex, scat, conflict, disease, blindness, etc. (ibid).

6. Types of Euphemisms

According to Allan and Burridge (2006:29), euphemisms can be created by employing ineffective methods such as:

1-Circumlocutions like little girl's room for "toilet" and categorial inaccuracy or terminological inexactitude for "lie."

2-There are clippings like jeez for "Jesus," bra for "brassiere" (both end-clipped),

3-Abbreviations like S.O.B. for "son-of-a-bitch" or pee for "piss." Also, f-- instead of printing "fuck".

4-Omissions take this kind of euphemism one step further.

5-one-for-one substitutions like a bottom for "arse, ass," casket for "coffin."

6-Euphemisms like the legal term (cf. Pannick 1985:145 for English law, and Vagrancy Act, State of Victoria (Australia), '7, 1(c)) employ a GENERAL-FOR-SPECIFIC strategy; this example is also a one-to-one substitution.

7-Hyperboles (overstatements) are found in euphemisms like flight to glory meaning “death,” or villa in a premier location by the bay referring to a “dilapidated artisan’s cottage, five streets away from the bay”

8-understatements like sleep for “die.” Many general-for-specific euphemisms are also understatements, e.g. the maximally-general ones like thing for whatever (“Watergate break-in,” “genitals”) or deed for “act of murder.”

9-Terms of foreign and technical origin (derriere, copulation, sweat, urinate, security breach, mierda de toro, prophylactic, feces occur)

10-Abstractions (it, the situation, go, left the company, do it)

11-Indirections (behind, unmentionables, privates, live together, go to the bathroom, sleep together)

12-Mispronunciation (goldarnit, dadgummit, freakin, shoot)

7. Birth and Euphemism

As the means of extending the offspring and rebuilding the land, which constitutes one of the primary reasons for marriage, a child is a form of grace that provides happiness to the lives of parents and family. Mohammed said on the occasion of newborn, which is the prayer of a serious child. He said “May God bless you in your gift to you and thank you”

بارك الله لك في الموهوب لك وشكرت الواهب وبلغ اشده ورزقت بره

Avoiding using words like "birth" and "pregnancy" was advised. Numerous euphemisms are illustrated by Robinson (1954:250). Take the phrase "to be born," which is generally preferred to expressions like "to see

the light of the day," "come into the world," and so forth. English language speakers use phrases like:

Congratulations new baby

Baby of happiness

Tiny little baby precious and small, you are loved in the world, we love you

May your new born baby bring joy and happiness for you

We wish you a lifetime of joy and happiness with the new the new born baby

As was traditional in the Victorian era, a pregnant lady is frequently referred to as being in the family way. However, a pregnant woman who is already carrying a child or is about to become pregnant used to confinement to end her condition Today, we see that many topics related to birth and pregnancy are mentioned in a much more direct manner.

According to Allan and Burridge (1991) Euphemisms for pregnancy include: be expecting (a happy event), in the family way, in the (pudding) club; have a bun in the oven; be in trouble (cp. get a girl in trouble); be in a delicate / an interesting condition, be with child (these last two seem a trifle archaic). An expression similar to the last of these is found in Middle Dutch: *met kinde gaen* "go with child". In Modern English we also have the dysphemisms be knocked up, banged up, up the spout, up the duff, up the stump, up a gum tree, up the creek, up shit creek - notice the ubiquitous 'up'; the only exception to it seems to be in the phrase to get caught out (after taking a risk, presumably).

Holder (2002:204) the expression "in the family way refers to pregnancy and it has some equivalents in English as "in the way", "in the increasing way" or "in that way" and all with "in the family way" refer to unplanned pregnancy. In the family way or in the way of having a family are polite ways to say that a woman is pregnant indirectly or politely

8. Mosuli Speech

The people of the northern Iraqi city of Mosul speak a dialect known as North Mesopotamian Arabic (or Moslawi) . It is one of the northern Mesopotamian dialects, which are a development of the Arabic dialects that were the norm in Iraq and on the Euphrates Island during the Abbasid era. The Mosuli dialect shares some of Standard Arabic's old traits with other dialects of northern Mesopotamia, but it also has some distinctive traits that set it apart from the others. This dialect retains the characteristics of urban dialects, such as the letter qaaf, in contrast to the dialects of southern Mesopotamia. Euphemisms are speech utterances that lessen the impact of what is being said on the listener to avoid potentially embarrassing circumstances. It is believed that euphemisms are used to soften the impact of plain speech.

9. Data analysis

The researcher analyzed the euphemism used in the speech of Mousli people by using the kinds cited above and also according to the needs of euphemism. Finally, then he makes a conclusion based on the result of the analysis.

A. Proverb

1.

اسم ولد هز البلد

(The name of boy who shook the country)

According to Allan and Burridge (1991), this expression is considered a metaphor, a speech meaning that is generally implicit and replaced by literary sense, for example, kick the bucket for die; women rather than men usually use this expression. It is used to strengthen the position of the boy . It is said to maintain feeling better.

2.

مبروك وقلنا لكى وحسيني وعلنا لكى

(Congratulation we said to you and Hani we made for you)

According to Allan and Burridge's theory, this proverb is considered a complete -omission of something hidden. It seems less common than quasi-omission, like the phrase I need to go that there is a missing word to the lavatory. It is said by a woman, old ones, because they used this expression when a girl came into the world and they like boys. It is a sneaky euphemism which obscures and misrepresents.

3.

بنت خاتون ولا ولد مجنون (good girl nor a crazy boy)

In Allan and Burridge (1991), this expression is called hyperboles, sometimes overstatements. Hyperboles, like the fight for glory, mean death. Women and men, in general, use it. The high social class uses it because it is believed that the high social class prefers girls more than boys. It is used to exaggerate and exaggerate.

4.

بنات ولا كاعدات (girls better nothing)

In Allan and Burridge (ibid) as well as Warren (1991), such expression is referred to as Rhyming slang, rhyming slang such as whistle (and flute) for the suit. It is a form of phrase forming; the form replaces a particular word with phrases consisting of two or three words. It is used by older women when they talk to others who have not had a child. It is sometimes considered a kind of dissimulation.

5.

(you come and goodness comes) *جيت انت والخير*

This expression seems as hyperboles, in the classification of Allan and Brrudge (1991) . It is used when the baby is born and another event happens in the same time . Thus the two events happen in the same time for example with newborn his father is progressed in this work or his family is buying a house or car. So people say this idiom to refer to the goodness. It is said to exaggerate and exaggerate

B. Songs

1.

قبان رب الخلقا من القمغ كن فلقا
(Oh dear , how the God is created her from the moon he divided)

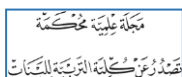
This song is treated as hyperboles, sometimes called overstatements. Hyperboles, like fight for glory, mean death. It is used by women, especially mothers, when they speak with their daughters .It is also used by high social class because they don't differentiate between girls and boys. It is used as means of social communication in order to exaggerate.

2.

(Oh dear lord dont leave my house *قبانو لرب العالي ما خلا بيتي خالي*
empty)

This song is considered a circumlocutions, such as little girls 'room for toilet. Circumlocutions are the use of many words in a speech. It is a typical kind of euphemism. Both old men and women use it. It is used when a baby is born, whether a girl or a boy. It is considered thanks to God for the gift. It is considered good social communication with children. It is used as a good tool of communion in order to maintain feeling better.

3.



(by the name of God i save you from my *حصنتك بالباري من عيني وعين جاري*
eyes and my neighbors)
حصنتك بسم الله من عيني وعين خلق الله
(by the name of God i save you from my eyes and others)

This song seems to be as circumlocutions according to the models adopted here. It is sometime regared as means of a prayer . Families use in order to prodict their chidren from evil and envy. It is used as kind of maintaining feeling better.

4.

بنتي هيل وفستقه تسوى كل المنطقة
(my daughter is vabulable settled all the region)
بنتي فستق حلبي يحفظها الله والنبي
(my daughter is vabulable the God and the Prophet save her)

This a common song in mousli speech . traditionally it is as to exagerate the value and the status of the girl this song is heard when the baby is girl. It is considered as hyperboles .it is also used to exagrate.

5.

الف هلا هليتي حلو النهار الجيتي
(Congratulations, we have a sweet day when you come)
وكانت ظلمه وانداع القمر ابيتي
(It was dark and the moon come to my house)

This song regards as metaphore , as mention above , it is also used to refer to the beautifullness of the girls . as we can say there is a comparisom between the face of the baby and the lihgt of the moon it means that the baby is very white and cute .it is used to have fun.

10. Conclusion

From the data analysis, the researcher finds that mousli speakers use different kind of euphemistic expression in their daily life. A Second matter he notes that there is an important effect is related to gender .it means that Mousli people, mothers, and grandmothers, usually prefer to use euphemisms in their speech more than men because they try to avoid direct address and face-threatening acts. Finally from the analysis of data according to Allan and Burridge (1991) the reaseacherv find that circumlocutions and hyperboles are the common kinds of euphemisms . in addition to what has said ,people of high social class and educated people use more euphemistic expressions than other people.

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