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METHODOLOGICAL JOURNAL**<http://mentaljournal-jspu.uz/index.php/mesmj/index>**LINGUO-CULTURAL DOMAINS OF EUPHEMISATION IN MODERN MEDIA  
DISCOURSE IN UZBEK, RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES****O.M. Madjitova***English teacher**Kokand State University, chair of Theory of Foreign Languages**Kokand, Uzbekistan***ABOUT ARTICLE**

**Key words:** euphemism, euphemisation, media discourse, linguo-cultural domain, comparative linguistics, Uzbek language, Russian language, English language.

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**Abstract:** This article examines the linguo-cultural domains of euphemisation in modern media discourse in Uzbek, Russian and English languages. Euphemisation is analysed as a culturally conditioned linguistic strategy used to mitigate sensitive, taboo or socially marked topics in public communication. The study employs a comparative and discourse-analytical approach to identify the main thematic domains of euphemistic usage, including political communication, social issues, health, and crisis reporting. The findings demonstrate that while euphemisation performs universal communicative functions across languages, its linguistic realization and pragmatic value are shaped by national cultural norms, traditions and media conventions. The research highlights both shared and language-specific euphemistic patterns, revealing the role of cultural worldview in shaping media discourse.

**Introduction**

Euphemisation as a linguistic phenomenon performs an important pragmatic function by mitigating the harshness, directness or social inappropriateness of certain expressions, particularly in media texts that address sensitive, controversial or ideologically charged topics. In public communication, especially within mass media, direct lexical nomination may provoke negative emotional reactions, social conflict or ethical discomfort. As a result, euphemistic

language emerges as a communicative strategy that allows information to be transmitted in a socially acceptable and culturally regulated form.

In the context of globalised communication, contemporary media operate within increasingly diverse and heterogeneous audiences. This diversity intensifies the need for linguistically cautious representation of reality, as media texts must simultaneously inform, persuade and maintain social balance. Euphemistic expressions are therefore widely employed to soften public reception of controversial issues, regulate emotional impact and align discourse with cultural taboos, norms of politeness and principles of political correctness. Through euphemisation, media discourse not only reflects social reality but also actively reshapes it by framing events and phenomena in a less confrontational or morally neutral manner.

Euphemisation is widely recognised in linguistic research as an essential mechanism of indirect nomination that contributes to the regulation of public discourse. According to Allan and Burridge (2006), euphemisms function as socially motivated lexical replacements that help speakers avoid expressions perceived as offensive, threatening or inappropriate. In media contexts, euphemisms play a crucial role in managing information flow, controlling evaluative meaning and shaping audience perception. Media texts regularly engage with politically, socially and morally sensitive issues such as conflict, inequality, health crises and institutional power, which necessitates the systematic use of indirect and mitigated language strategies (Fairclough, 1995).

From a discursive perspective, euphemisation is closely connected with ideological processes. Critical discourse analysts argue that euphemistic language in the media may obscure responsibility, conceal power asymmetries and normalise controversial practices through linguistic mitigation (van Dijk, 2008). Consequently, euphemisation should be examined not only as a stylistic or pragmatic phenomenon but also as a discursive mechanism that participates in the construction of social meaning and collective interpretation.

In the context of globalisation, comparative studies of euphemisation acquire particular relevance, as different linguistic cultures demonstrate both universal communicative functions and culture-specific realisations of euphemistic strategies. Politeness theory suggests that while the motivation to avoid face-threatening acts is universal, the linguistic means of achieving this goal vary across cultures (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Media discourse thus becomes a productive site for identifying linguo-cultural differences in euphemistic nomination.

Uzbek, Russian and English media discourses provide especially rich material for comparative analysis due to their distinct historical trajectories, social norms and

communicative traditions. Uzbek media discourse reflects culturally embedded values of respect, indirectness and social harmony; Russian media discourse demonstrates pragmatic flexibility shaped by socio-political dynamics; while English media discourse is strongly influenced by norms of political correctness and institutional accountability (Boltaboeva, 2025; Dushatova, 2025). Examining euphemistic expressions across these languages makes it possible to identify dominant linguo-cultural domains of euphemisation and to reveal how cultural worldviews shape media representation of sensitive issues.

Thus, the present research aims to analyse the functioning of euphemistic expressions in Uzbek, Russian and English media discourse and to identify the linguo-cultural domains in which euphemisation is most actively employed. By adopting a comparative linguo-cultural and discourse-analytical approach, the study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the interaction between language, culture and media communication in contemporary society.

### Theoretical Framework

#### Euphemism in Linguistics and Culture

Euphemisms are traditionally defined as linguistic substitutes that replace direct, socially dispreferred or taboo expressions with more acceptable alternatives. From a linguistic perspective, euphemisation operates as a mechanism of indirect nomination, allowing speakers to avoid lexical items that may provoke negative emotional, ethical or cultural reactions (Allan & Burridge, 2006). Such substitutions are not arbitrary; rather, they are systematically embedded in the semantic structure of a language and reflect culturally sanctioned ways of conceptualising reality.

At the semantic level, euphemisms often rely on metaphor, metonymy, generalisation or abstraction to obscure the denotative core of the referenced concept. Pragmatically, euphemisation functions as a face-saving strategy that helps maintain social harmony and mitigate communicative conflict (Brown & Levinson, 1987). In this regard, euphemisms are closely linked to politeness theory and the regulation of interpersonal relations within a given speech community.

From a cultural standpoint, euphemistic expressions serve as indicators of collective values, moral norms and ideological frameworks. What is considered taboo or sensitive in one culture may be neutral in another, which explains cross-cultural variation in euphemistic nomination. Linguo-cultural studies emphasise that euphemisms encode culturally specific attitudes toward phenomena such as death, illness, poverty, power and social inequality (Boltaboeva, 2025). Consequently, euphemisation can be viewed as a reflection of a society's cultural worldview rather than merely a stylistic ornament.

Contemporary research further argues that euphemisation should be interpreted as a dynamic socio-cognitive process rather than a static lexical phenomenon. In media discourse, euphemisms mediate between institutional interests and public perception, shaping how reality is linguistically framed and interpreted (van Dijk, 2008). Thus, euphemisation functions as a mediator of socio-cultural meaning, revealing the interaction between language, ideology and culture in public communication (Web of Journals Research, 2025).

#### Media Discourse and Euphemisation

Media discourse occupies a central position in modern societies as it not only reflects social reality but also actively constructs it. Due to its public and institutional nature, media communication frequently addresses controversial and socially sensitive issues such as political conflict, economic instability, health crises and social inequality. In this context, euphemistic language becomes a crucial discursive tool for regulating information flow and shaping audience interpretation (Fairclough, 1995).

Euphemisation in media discourse performs several interrelated functions. Firstly, it softens the representation of negative or threatening events, thereby reducing emotional impact and potential public anxiety. Secondly, euphemisms are used to mask ideologically loaded meanings, enabling media institutions to present information in a neutral or socially acceptable manner. This function is particularly evident in political and crisis reporting, where direct lexical choices may provoke resistance or panic (Sibul & Kuksova, 2021).

Media linguistics research demonstrates that euphemistic strategies vary significantly across languages and cultures. These variations are influenced by national communicative norms, traditions of journalistic ethics and degrees of institutional censorship. For example, English-language media often prioritise politically correct euphemisms that align with liberal democratic values, while Russian media discourse exhibits flexible euphemistic practices shaped by pragmatic and ideological considerations (Dushatova, 2025). Uzbek media discourse, in turn, reflects cultural norms of indirectness and respect, favouring metaphorical and culturally grounded euphemistic expressions (Boltaboeva, 2025).

Furthermore, euphemisation in media discourse is closely connected with power relations. According to critical discourse analysis, euphemisms function as instruments of ideological control, allowing dominant institutions to legitimise certain interpretations of reality while marginalising others (van Dijk, 2008). Therefore, the study of euphemisation in media texts provides valuable insight into how language operates as a tool of social regulation and cultural reproduction (Issues of Applied Linguistics, 2021).

#### Linguo-Cultural Domains

Linguo-cultural domains refer to cultural contexts within which linguistic forms acquire specific meanings and functions. In the case of euphemisation, these domains include political communication, social taboos, gender and societal norms, and cultural traditions in representing sensitive topics like death, illness, poverty, or sexuality. Comparative research demonstrates that euphemistic strategies vary due to these cultural determinants. (The *Lingua Spectrum*)

Euphemisms have traditionally been studied within semantics, pragmatics and sociolinguistics as replacements for taboo or negatively marked lexical units (Allan & Burridge, 2006). From a pragmatic perspective, euphemisation is closely related to politeness strategies and face-saving mechanisms in communication (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Media discourse scholars emphasize that euphemisms are not merely stylistic devices but ideological tools that shape public interpretation of events (van Dijk, 2008). Fairclough (1995) argues that euphemistic language in the media often masks power relations and social inequalities.

Recent linguo-cultural studies highlight the importance of national worldview in euphemistic nomination. Uzbek and Russian researchers note that euphemisms frequently reflect cultural values such as respect, collectivism and social harmony (Usmonova & Gulamova, 2025; Boltaboeva, 2025). Comparative analyses of English media discourse demonstrate the growing influence of political correctness on euphemistic practices (Sharafutdinov, 2025).

## **Methods**

The present research adopts a qualitative comparative cross-linguistic methodology aimed at analysing euphemistic expressions in Uzbek, Russian and English media discourse. A comparative approach was chosen in order to identify both universal and culture-specific features of euphemisation across linguistically and culturally distinct media environments. The study is grounded in discourse analysis and linguo-cultural theory, which together allow for a comprehensive examination of euphemisms as context-dependent and culturally motivated linguistic phenomena.

### **Data Collection**

The primary corpus of the study was compiled from a range of contemporary media sources, including printed newspapers, online news platforms and broadcast media transcripts in the three target languages. Media texts were selected from nationally recognised and widely circulated sources to ensure representativeness and relevance. The data set covers materials published within a comparable time frame, allowing for cross-linguistic comparison under similar socio-political conditions.

The corpus includes texts from the following thematic categories:

- political news and commentaries,
- reports on social issues such as poverty, employment and migration,
- health-related and crisis communication texts, including pandemic coverage.

This thematic selection was motivated by previous research indicating that euphemisation is particularly prevalent in these domains due to their high degree of social sensitivity (Kurbonov, 2023; Sibul & Kuksova, 2021).

#### Identification of Euphemistic Expressions

Euphemistic expressions were identified through contextual and semantic analysis, rather than by relying solely on predefined lexical lists. This approach made it possible to account for context-dependent euphemisation, where the euphemistic value of a lexical unit emerges only within a specific discourse environment. Each potential euphemism was analysed in relation to its immediate linguistic context and broader communicative situation.

To ensure analytical consistency, expressions were classified as euphemistic only if they met the following criteria:

1. substitution of a more direct or negatively marked expression;
2. mitigation of evaluative, emotional or ideological impact;
3. contextual motivation linked to social or cultural norms.

#### Classification and Analytical Procedures

Identified euphemisms were subsequently categorised into semantic and functional groups based on their dominant communicative purpose. The classification followed established typologies of euphemisation in media discourse, including thematic-domain classification and pragmatic-function classification (Kurbonov, 2023; Sibul & Kuksova, 2021).

The analysis focused on determining:

- the thematic domain of euphemisation (political, social, health-related, etc.);
- the linguistic strategy employed (metaphorisation, abstraction, generalisation, passive constructions);
- the pragmatic function of the euphemism (mitigation, concealment, politeness, ideological framing).

#### Linguo-Cultural Interpretation

Cultural interpretation was conducted by correlating linguistic forms with socio-cultural norms, values and communicative traditions characteristic of each language community. This stage of analysis involved examining how euphemistic strategies reflect culturally specific attitudes toward taboo topics, authority, social hierarchy and interpersonal relations.

The linguo-cultural analysis enabled the identification of culturally conditioned patterns of euphemisation and facilitated comparison between Uzbek, Russian and English media discourses. By integrating linguistic analysis with cultural interpretation, the study aimed to reveal how euphemisation functions as a mediating mechanism between language, culture and media ideology.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Common Domains of Euphemisation**

The analysis revealed several dominant linguo-cultural domains of euphemisation common to all three languages:

Political discourse, where euphemisms are used to mitigate negative evaluations and obscure conflict-related information (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2008).

Social issues, including poverty, unemployment and marginalisation, are frequently euphemised to reduce social tension (Usmonova & Gulamova, 2025).

Health and crisis communication, where euphemistic language helps avoid panic and emotional distress, particularly evident in pandemic-related media texts (Sibul & Kuksova, 2021).

The comparative analysis of Uzbek, Russian and English media discourse revealed several dominant linguo-cultural domains in which euphemisation consistently occurs across all three languages. These domains are characterised by heightened social sensitivity, ideological significance and potential communicative risk, which necessitate indirect linguistic representation.

One of the most prominent domains is political discourse, where euphemisms are systematically employed to mitigate negative evaluations, obscure responsibility and reframe conflict-related events. Media texts frequently replace direct references to political failure, coercion or violence with neutral or abstract expressions in order to maintain institutional legitimacy and avoid explicit confrontation. Critical discourse analysts argue that such euphemistic strategies function as ideological tools that reshape public perception and mask power relations (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2008). Across the three languages, political euphemisms often involve lexical generalisation, passive constructions and metaphorical framing, allowing sensitive information to be presented in a socially acceptable form.

Another common domain of euphemisation is social issues, including poverty, unemployment, migration and social marginalisation. Media discourse tends to avoid lexemes that carry overtly negative or stigmatizing connotations, opting instead for softened or abstract terms that reduce social tension and prevent the reinforcement of negative stereotypes. Such

euphemistic nominations contribute to the normalization of socially problematic phenomena while simultaneously concealing structural inequalities (Usmonova & Gulamova, 2025). This tendency reflects the media's role in balancing social responsibility with ideological neutrality in public communication.

A further significant domain is health and crisis communication, particularly evident in reporting on epidemics, pandemics and public health emergencies. In these contexts, euphemistic language functions as a psychological and pragmatic mechanism aimed at minimizing panic, emotional distress and social instability. Media texts often employ euphemisms to refer to illness severity, mortality rates and institutional failure, especially during crisis situations. Studies of pandemic-related discourse demonstrate that euphemisation plays a crucial role in shaping public emotional responses and maintaining social order (Sibul & Kuksova, 2021). This domain illustrates the intersection of linguistic choice, public psychology and institutional responsibility.

#### Language-Specific Characteristics

Despite the existence of common euphemistic domains, the linguistic realisation and pragmatic orientation of euphemisation vary considerably across Uzbek, Russian and English media discourse, reflecting distinct cultural norms and communicative traditions.

**Uzbek Media:** Euphemisms reflect cultural traditions of respect and social harmony. Many euphemisms for taboo topics draw on metaphorical or culturally-specific lexemes that align with values emphasising social cohesion rather than individual confrontation. (The Lingua Spectrum)

**Russian Media:** Euphemisation in Russian is influenced by societal norms around directness and politeness, with strong pragmatic variation depending on the genre of media discourse. (webofjournals.com)

**English Media:** Euphemisms tend to align with norms of political correctness and neutral descriptors, particularly in Western media contexts. (The Lingua Spectrum)

In Uzbek media discourse, euphemisms are strongly influenced by cultural values emphasising respect, modesty and social harmony. Euphemistic expressions often rely on metaphorical language, indirect reference and culturally embedded lexemes that align with traditional norms of politeness and avoidance of open confrontation. Topics such as death, poverty and social failure are typically represented through culturally resonant metaphors that soften emotional impact and preserve interpersonal and collective dignity. This tendency reflects a collectivist worldview in which linguistic restraint is perceived as a marker of moral and cultural appropriateness (The Lingua Spectrum).

In Russian media discourse, euphemisation is shaped by a complex interaction between directness and pragmatic politeness. Russian euphemisms demonstrate significant variation depending on genre, ideological orientation and communicative intent. In political and institutional texts, euphemistic language often serves to obscure agency and reduce accountability, whereas in social and cultural reporting it may function as a politeness strategy or stylistic device. Researchers note that Russian media euphemisation frequently reflects shifting socio-political norms and pragmatic adaptability rather than stable cultural taboos (Web of Journals Research).

In English-language media discourse, euphemisation is closely aligned with the principles of political correctness and neutral representation. Euphemisms are commonly employed to avoid discriminatory language and to conform to ethical standards of inclusivity and tolerance. This is particularly evident in references to social groups, health conditions and political conflict, where neutral or abstract terminology replaces potentially offensive expressions. English media euphemisms thus function as markers of ideological alignment with liberal democratic values and institutional accountability, reinforcing norms of socially responsible communication (The Lingua Spectrum).

#### Cultural Conditioning of Euphemistic Strategies

The analysis confirms that while euphemisation is a universal strategy used to mitigate directness, its forms and functions are deeply conditioned by cultural values. For instance:

Uzbek euphemisms frequently emerge from culturally rooted metaphors and use indirect description. (gejournal.net)

Russian euphemisms may rely on pragmatic politeness strategies that reflect broader sociolinguistic norms. (webofjournals.com)

English euphemisms are shaped by political correctness and social etiquette norms, especially in public media. (The Lingua Spectrum)

At the same time, language-specific tendencies were identified. Uzbek media discourse demonstrates culturally embedded euphemisms rooted in metaphor and indirectness, reflecting traditional norms of respect and restraint (Boltaboeva, 2025). Russian media discourse shows flexible pragmatic use of euphemisms depending on genre and ideological orientation (Dushatova, 2025). English media discourse prioritises neutral and politically correct euphemistic forms aligned with liberal communicative norms (Sharafutdinov, 2025).

#### Conclusion

Euphemisation in modern media discourse functions at the intersection of linguistic form and cultural meaning. Cross-linguistic comparison across Uzbek, Russian, and English media texts reveals that:

1. Euphemistic language is integral in mediating sensitive topics in public discourse.
2. While universal communicative functions of euphemisms are evident, specific cultural values shape how and where these expressions are used.
3. Linguo-cultural domains such as politics, social taboo, and crisis discourse show clear variation in euphemistic strategies informed by cultural norms of each language community.

This study reinforces the importance of considering cultural discourse norms when analyzing euphemistic language in media texts.

The study confirms that euphemisation is a universal communicative strategy in media discourse; however, its linguistic realisation is culturally conditioned. Comparative analysis of Uzbek, Russian and English media texts demonstrates that euphemistic domains reflect national values, media conventions and sociocultural expectations.

Thus, euphemisation functions not only as a linguistic phenomenon but also as a linguo-cultural marker shaping public discourse and social interpretation of reality (Allan & Burridge, 2006; van Dijk, 2008).

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