



Semantic use of medical euphemisms in German

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ABSTRACT

This article covers the semantic analysis of medical euphemisms. In this article, research on euphemisms in German journalism has shown that the use of these euphemisms in the field of medicine helps readers to understand texts faster and serves to embellish and soften difficult-to-speak information.

Keywords:

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Today, the number of euphemisms for health and related conditions has increased significantly. One of the main reasons for this is to avoid causing commotion among the population during the pandemic, and another reason is to try to avoid negative effects on the psyche of patients.

“Das Karlsruher Gericht hatte zuvor auch mit Verweis auf die Behindertenrechtskonvention entschieden, der Bundestag müsse “unverzüglich” Vorkehrungen zum Schutz von Menschen mit Behinderungen im Fall einer Triage treffen – also, wenn Ärzte entscheiden müssen, wen sie angesichts knapper Ressourcen retten und wen nicht. Bei der Umsetzung habe der Gesetzgeber Spielräume [1].”

Triage is a euphemism used in the above-mentioned article to refer to the doctor deciding which of the people to save when the situation warrants it. At first glance, it seems difficult to understand, since it only has a euphemistic meaning in the text.

The corona virus appeared in December 2019 and disrupted life all over the world. New rules and laws have been introduced. In linguistics, new words have appeared to express it and surrounding words, or some of them have a new, different meaning, and some of them can be taken as euphemisms. Among them, the

following euphemistic words can be used as an example.

“Schon in wenigen Wochen könnten in den USA die ersten Kinder unter fünf Jahren gegen Corona geimpft werden [2].”

The original meaning of the word Corona means crown, but the name of this virus mentioned above is similar to it, because the shape of the two is similar. Among people, if it is called a virus, it can cause fear, horror and confusion. In order to prevent them, it is expressed using the word “toji-crown”.

“Auch 30 Jahre nach Öffnung der ungarischen Grenze muss der Kontinent immer wieder entscheiden, welchen Weg er gehen will [3].”

In this article, the word “*Öffnung - Opening*” is used in the sense of opening the borders, i.e., the transition to the policy of openness, and in the period of the pandemic, it means the relaxation of quarantine rules, the return of the life mode to the previous state, and the restoration of communication routes.

“In Spanien steigen die Infektionszahlen immer schneller. Schuld daran trägt offenbar vor allem die Politik, die nicht entschieden genug handelt. Das Epizentrum liegt in der Hauptstadt [4].”

The original meaning of this word in geography is the surface of the earth located

above the epicenter of the earthquake, in the context of today's pandemic, it means an epidemiological center, that is, a center for laboratory work related to viruses, their examination and the search for a cure. means It is considered a euphemism precisely because it is written in abbreviated form.

In the above article, it is also shown that the number of infected people in Spain is increasing, and that the reason for this increase is that the politicians did not do enough.

“Mit einem solchen “Brücken-Lockdown” müsse die Zeit überbrückt werden, bis viele Menschen geimpft seien, sagte der CDU-Bundesvorsitzende am Montag nach einem Besuch des Impfzentrums der Städteregion Aachen gemeinsam mit dem Präsidenten der Interdisziplinären Vereinigung für Intensiv- und Notfallmedizin (Divi), Gernot Marx [5].”

In this article, the word “Brücken-Lockdown” refers to the closing of borders and thereby reducing the risk of virus transmission. It is here that the English word lockdown is used because it has a euphemistic meaning because there are some words that, even if they do not have a positive meaning, sound more appealing when expressed by a word in another language and people reduces counter reactions between. However, as a result of this, there will be a sharp decline in the economy.

“Bei Urlaubsangeboten mit “Corona-Reiseschutz” empfiehlt sich ein genauer Blick in die Vertragsinhalte. Manche Corona-Reiseversicherung wirbt zwar mit Versprechungen wie “perfekte Sicherheit“, doch Verbraucher können bei einer Stornierung ihrer Reise trotzdem leer ausgehen. Darauf weist das Europäische Verbraucherzentrum Deutschland (EVZ) hin [6].”

The word “Reiseschutz” goes hand in hand with the word “Corona” and actually means to inform about the dangers of travel during the pandemic. Its replacement with the word “Schutz” hides certain dangers, and the word "protection" in its place does not arouse negative thoughts in anyone. Therefore, without inherent risks, there is no protection. During the pandemic, it refers to the rules for avoiding Corona.

In the military, “Sonderurlaub” is jokingly referred to as going to prison, but it has changed its meaning a bit during the pandemic today:

“Mit Sonderurlaub das Virus besiegen [7].”

Here it means staying at home and not going out. In part, their meanings are similar because the common feature that unites the two is limitation. In the first case, if he is deprived of liberty for breaking the law, and in the second case, he is supposed to stay at home because the situation related to the virus is not good.

“Wuhan, Ground Zero der Corona-Pandemie, hat den Lockdown beendet [8].”

In this article, Ground Zero is the starting point and origin of the corona pandemic. This word has a euphemistic meaning because the mentioned consequences are skillfully hidden linguistically.

“Auch jetzt, angesichts COVID-19 steigt die Exzessmortalität, sterben mehr Menschen, als man üblicherweise erwarten würden [9].”

In the article, the number of deaths due to COVID-19 during the pandemic is too high the information about the increase is given and it is about human life

is expressed by the euphemism “die Exzessmortalität”. One of the main reasons for this is to prevent panic and fear among people. If “die Übersterblichkeit” were used instead of this word, various negotiations and controversial situations would have started, and the above euphemism was used to avoid such situations.

“Mit dem Gesetz sollen vor allem ältere Verbraucher vor unlauteren Geschäftspraktiken geschützt werden. Zukünftig dürfen deswegen keine Finanzdienstleistungen und Nahrungsergänzungsmittel auf Kaffeefahrten verkauft werden [10].”

The word “Nahrungsergänzungsmittel” refers to various medicines. The fact that they are presented as food supplements does not attract attention, but they are used in the form of various drugs, for example, for weight loss, and such means are harmful to health. The fact that they are not called drugs, but expressed in a euphemistic way, served to reduce the negative effect from the linguistic point of view.

Everyone knows that tobacco and tobacco products are always harmful for everyone. They are not only harmful to health, but also pollute the air. In the article mentioned below, it is also known that smoking is prohibited in six parks in Paris, so it can be understood that human health is important.

“Kein blauer Dunst für grüne Lungen: In Paris ist das Rauchen in sechs Parks in den kommenden Monaten untersagt [11]”.

Two euphemisms are mentioned in the article, “blauer Dunst” - blue haze, referring to cigarette smoke. Its comparison to the fog is euphemistically expressed by comparing how many smokers there are and as a result even the air is polluted. The next euphemism is related to the environment, and “grüne Lungen” refers to green parks. The fact that they are called “green lungs” means that the place is clean and people can enjoy cultural recreation. That is why they are urged to avoid harming them with various cigarette smoke.

“Wirklich verstanden habe sie aber nicht, dass ihr Vater sich damals fast einen sogenannten goldenen Schuss gesetzt hatte und im Krankenhaus wiederbelebt werden musste. “Ich wusste nicht, was ein goldener Schuss ist”, sagte die 19-Jährige [12]”.

The term “goldener Schuss” mentioned in the article actually means a drug, and the article also mentions that the father tried to teach it to his child. Linguistics used such a euphemistic combination to serve as an example to others and to warn about its end.

Euphemisms are used in political discourses to replace words that are unpleasant, rude, insulting, or expressing horror, pain, suffering, fear, disrespect, various discriminations, crime, betrayal, etc. are replaced by words with less secrets. Their importance is considered to be significant, especially for the correct delivery of various political parties and issues to the society, improvement of political relations, and the establishment of friendship and cooperation relations between the countries. The analyzed examples show that the place of euphemisms is very important, because linguistically describing the events in the political environment, including the political language of

medicine, and presenting them to the public is a huge responsibility, and precisely as a result of the use of euphemisms in political discourses, society the negative aspects of the ongoing changes can be reduced and properly conveyed to the public.

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