Analysis of Euphemism Usage of Mental Health Organization Websites in Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the use of euphemisms in the context of mental health by conducting a review of the content on the websites of mental health organizations in Indonesia. The research method used is qualitative, which involves text analysis of the website content. Data was collected from various websites of mental health organizations operating in Indonesia. The analysis was conducted by paying attention to the use of euphemisms in Indonesian used to describe various aspects of mental health. The results showed that the use of euphemisms in the website content of mental health organizations in Indonesia has an important role in conveying information more sensitively and expanding understanding of mental health issues. The findings provide insight into how euphemisms are used in specific cultural and linguistic contexts to overcome stigma and improve public understanding of mental health. The implication of this study is the importance of using euphemisms tailored to cultural and linguistic contexts in an effort to increase awareness and acceptance of mental health in Indonesia.

Keywords: *Euphemism; Mental Health; Indonesian Websites.*

INTRODUCTION

Communication is the foundation of human interaction, enabling individuals to share ideas, emotions, and information. Communication is an interactive and participatory process that occurs in multiple directions over time, arenas of meaning presentation, negotiation. Involving the negotiation and reconstruction of meaning in both internal and external context Van Ruler, B. (2020). Communication is utilized in various ways, regardless of the means employed, to warn, inform, explain, entertain, describe, and persuade others Dimbleby, R., & Burton, G. (2020). In order to circumvent the potential limitations of verbal and nonverbal communication, people may choose to disguise the underlying message by avoiding the use of certain words deemed to be "dangerous".

Euphemisms are characterized by the emergence of forms or words that are considered to have a more polite and subtle meaning than with their substitutes. The tendency to soften the meaning of words is a common phenomenon in Indonesian society (Amilia & Anggraeni, 2017:

168). It functions as a form of expression that aims to preserve the feelings of others and make unpleasant expressions others and make unpleasant expressions more palatable. This can be achieved by choosing favorable words or expressions that are not considered taboo (Fadhilasari & Anggraeni, 2017: 168). considered taboo (Fadhilasari & Ningtyas, 2021). reduce the potential for discomfort, offensiveness, or agitation of the listener compared with the original phrase or word being replaced (Putri & Rahmawati, 2022). With development of language, the layers of euphemism have also evolved. Euphemisms appear in accordance with changing standards of morality and worldview. There are euphemisms that arise in the language due to the needs of a particular communication situation, and their meaning is often explained by the context of the text (Nodirovna, A. N. 2022).

According to Chaer (2016), euphemism is a phenomenon in which words or forms that are considered to have a more subtle or more polite meaning are used as substitutes. For example, the word "babu" was replaced with "housemaid" and has now been replaced with "*pramuwisma*". Sutarman (2017) explains that euphemism or eufemismus comes from the Greek word "eufhemizein" which means using a word with a good meaning or good purpose. Euphemism is a subtle expression or reference used to replace potentially offensive words without causing offense and subtly implying something unpleasant or unwanted by others (Keraf in Ramadhani, 2020). In everyday discourse, euphemisms are often used with the aim of softening speech or utterances to ensure that the information conveyed is not perceived negatively. In other words, euphemisms are used as a substitute for harsh expressions that are considered harmful or unpleasant.

According to Sutarman as cited in Irawati (2016), euphemisms manifest in various forms of expression, which include abbreviations, loan words, foreign terms, metaphors, and periphrases. The utilization and application of euphemisms fall within the realm of language study concerning meaning, specifically semantics. Chaer (2009) defines semantics as a discipline within linguistics that elucidates the connections between objects or symbols that are signified, or alternatively, semantics is a branch of linguistic inquiry that delves into the interpretation or implication of meaning in language. Euphemism is intrinsically linked to semantics as it delves into the realm of meaning, particularly in relation to expressions that avoid being considered offensive or employ subtler forms of expression that are not perceived as crude, intrusive, unpleasant, or harmful to others. Semantics, therefore, serves as the discipline that scrutinizes meaning within language, encompassing the study of euphemistic expressions and their implications.

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of mental health and well-being, both globally and in the Indonesian context. With increased awareness and efforts to address mental health issues, various communication channels, including websites of mental health organizations, have become important platforms to disseminate information, provide support, and raise awareness. In this digital era, where information is easily accessible online, analyzing the content of mental health organizations' websites can provide valuable insights into how mental health issues are portrayed, discussed, and addressed in the Indonesian context. One important aspect of language use in discussing mental health topics is the use of euphemisms. They play an important role in shaping the narrative around mental health, influencing public perception, and reducing the stigma associated with mental illness. However, the level and effectiveness of euphemism use in the Indonesian context, particularly in the content of mental health organization websites, remains under-researched. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the use of euphemisms in the context of mental health by conducting a comprehensive review of the website content of mental health organizations in Indonesia.

METHOD

This research used qualitative methodology, which according to Mamik (2015: 4), is a type of research that does not use numerical data in the process of collecting and interpreting data. The method applied in this research is descriptive method, which according to Fadjarajani (2020:59), is used to describe in detail the problems or events that are currently taking place. This research examines the forms of euphemisms found on the websites of Mental Health organizations in Indonesia. The research data are words, phrases, clauses, and sentences containing euphemisms. The data collection method in this research is the reading and note-taking method. The data analysis technique in this research is descriptive presentation by: (1) categorizing the data, (2) coding the data, (3) interpreting the data, and describing the data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

According to Yıldız, F. U. (2021) Euphemisms are predominantly employed in association with sensitive subjects. It is observed that discussions surrounding sexuality, health, and religion generate euphemistic expressions as a means of avoidance in everyday conversations. Euphemism, being a linguistic manifestation, is intricately linked to various domains of linguistics. Given its nature as a semantic substitution, it warrants examination from a semantic perspective. The following are the results of the research that the researchers found based on five types of euphemisms in the column of the websites of Mental Health organizations in Indonesia, using the theory of euphemism forms according to Sutarman (2017) . These five forms are: use of abbreviations, use of Loanwods, use of Foreign Terms, use of metaphors, and use of perriphases.

- Euphemism in the Forms of Abbreviations (The Forms of Euphemism in The Website of *"Komunitas Peduli Skizofrenia Indonesia")*

Abbreviation involves the process of shortening lengthy terms by combining their initial letters into a condensed form, facilitating easier pronunciation. One common type of abbreviation is initials, which represent shortened versions of multiple words by taking the initial letter from each word to form a sequence of letters (Sutarman, 2017:67). The utilization of initials as a form of abbreviation serves three primary functions: (1) enhancing practicality and efficiency, (2) refining the abbreviated terms, and (3) generating unique terminology (Sutarman, 2017:68). Various examples illustrating the application of abbreviations can be found in the subsequent citations.

In the world of mental health, the use of euphemism abbreviation aims to reduce stigma and increase comfort in communicating about mental health conditions. The researcher took the data below from one of the websites of mental health organizations in Indonesia, namely "Indonesian Schizophrenia Care Community", where the researcher took data from one of the articles published on the website with the title "Mental Illness" [Only] About Brain Chemical Disorders" by Osse Kiki (2023). The forms of using abbreviations that researchers can find in the following quations:

Banyak esai, puisi, karya jurnalistik yang lahir atas apa yang saya alami, rasakan, lihat, dan dari pergaulan dengan komunitas yang anggotanya tak hanya <u>ODGJ/ODS</u> tapi juga keluarga mereka

The euphemism for the abbreviated initials in an article on the Indonesian Schizophrenia Care Community website is marked with the words ODGJ/ODS. Based on the findings in the

writings that researchers found, the words ODGJ/ODS are used here to inform that the *Komunitas Skizofrenia Indonesia* (KPSI) does not only consist of people with ODGJ/ODS, but of course their families are actively involved in it so that the author can gain a lot of knowledge. motivation, advice from their families.

The word ODGJ/ODS is an abbreviation for *Orang Dengan Gangguan Jiwa/Orang Dengan Skizofrenia*. The words ODGJ/ODS are considered more polite and gentle when heard compared to the actual words. This abbreviation can also help avoid repetition of long and complicated words, and save time in daily communication.

- Eufemisms in the Form of Loanwods (The Forms of Euphemism in The Website of "Bipolar Care Indonesia" Community)

Loanwods euphemisms are a type of euphemism in which a more neutral or polite term is used to replace a term considered rude or inappropriate, borrowed from another language or culture. This occurs when a language borrows terms from another language to convey concepts or meanings that the speaker or listener may consider more subtle or polite.

According to Sutarman (2017), the concept of "borrowed" or "adoption" basically has similarities in terms of absorbing or taking words or terms, both from foreign languages and regional languages. The term "borrowed" in Indonesian generally includes: a) the use of foreign terms that do not have exact equivalents in Indonesian, b) terms that cover a broad concept meaning, and c) the use of foreign terms that are considered safer to use in Indonesian. Indonesia. Indonesia. The forms of use of loanwords that researchers can find on the website of one of the Indonesian mental health organizations "Bipolar Care Indonesia" are in the following quote:

"Selain psikoterapi, ODGJ juga harus menjaga kesehatan mentalnya dengan pola hidup yang baik."

Based on the data above, it was found that the use of Loanwods euphemism, namely psikoterapi, is the result of absorption from Greek, namely it is a combination of the words "psycho" (from Greek which means "soul" or "mind") and "terapi" (from Greek which means "treatment"). In the Big Indonesian Dictionary, psikoterapi is defined as "*cara pengobatan dengan mempergunakan pengaruh (kekuatan batin) dokter atas jiwa (rohani) penderita, dengan cara tidak mempergunakan obat-obatan, tetapi dengan metode sugesti, nasihat, hiburan, hipnosis, dan sebagainya.*"

The sentence uses the loan word euphemism euphemism "psychotherapy" to replace perhaps more clinical or technical-sounding terms such as "Terapi Psikologis" or "Konseling Psikologis" The use of "*Psikoterapi*" as a Loanwods euphemism gives a more casual and commonly understood impression to readers who may not be familiar with more formal medical or psychological terminology. This helps in reducing the stigma or concerns that may arise from more medical or technical sounding terms, and makes the message more accessible and understandable to a wider audience.

- Eufemisms in the Form of Foreign Terms (The Forms of Euphemism in The Website of "Bipolar Care Indonesia" Community)

Foreign terms are often associated with English equivalents, despite the fact that their use initially implies a language that may not be understood by many. In reality, foreign terms encompass not only expressions or words from regional languages whose meanings are

unfamiliar to those outside the language's speakers (Sutarman, 2017: 79-80). Examples of the use of foreign terms can be found in the following excerpt:

"Kelopak Bunga adalah mereka para penyintas, <u>caregiver</u> dan yang peduli pada gangguan bipolar, menghiasi kehidupan, dan tumbuh di masyarakat.."

Euphemism for the use of foreign terms in one of the articles on the website of the mental health organization "Bipolar Care Indonesia" made with the words Caregiver. This sentence is the meaning of the community logo. Where the word caregiver is one of the references to the flower petals in the community logo. Caregiver here is a foreign term from English which means "Pengasuh" in Indonesian.

The term "caregiver" tends to be more neutral and broader in its meaning, whereas the term "pengasuh" may have a more limited connotation or be related to work that is routine or daily tasks. By using the euphemism "caregiver," we honor the individual's role and contribution in providing care, and at the same time, recognize that their duties may go beyond just daily caregiving and include broader aspects of care, such as emotional support, medical needs, or daily activities. It can also help remove the stigma that may be associated with working as a "pengasuh" and recognize the importance of the role in society.

- Eufemisms in the Form of Metaphor (The Forms of Euphemism in The Website of "Social Connect" Community)

Fourth, use of metaphor. Etymologically, metaphor comes from Greek, namely meta and pherein. "Meta" means "beside," "after," and "overcoming," while "pherein" means "to carry" and "to divert." So, metaphor refers to the transfer of meaning from one group of words to another, resulting in a new interpretation (Ratna in Sutarman, 2017). The forms of use of metaphor that researchers find on the website of one of the Indonesian mental health organizations "Social Connect" are in the following quote:

"Sebagian orang mampu menghadapinya dengan baik, tetapi sebagian lainnya memendam luka dan berjalan terseok-seok."

The sentence uses a euphemistic metaphor to describe two different ways of dealing with emotional difficulties or suffering. In this context, *"mendam luka dan berjalan terseok-seok"* is a metaphor that describes individuals who are unable to overcome or express their grief, anxiety, or trauma in a healthy or productive way. The term *"mendam luka"* includes the act of hiding or suppressing negative feelings, while *"berjalan terseok seok"* indicates that the individual is having difficulty living their daily life or making progress due to the emotional burden they are experiencing.

By using this euphemistic metaphor, the author conveys the idea that although some people may appear to be functioning well externally, there are other individuals who are internally suffering or struggling with great emotional burdens. These metaphors soften or create friendlier descriptions of these experiences, while still conveying the complexity and seriousness of the conditions faced by individuals experiencing emotional suffering.

- Eufemisms in the Form of Periphrasis (The Forms of Euphemism in The Website of "Social Connect" Community)

Sutarman (2017) explains that periphrase or periphrasis is a way to restate the meaning of a text, both written and spoken, by using words or sentences that are longer than the original.

The forms of use of metaphor that researchers find on the website of one of the Indonesian mental health organizations "Social Connect" are in the following quote:

"Maka dari itu, tidak jarang para pengidap <u>gangguan kesehatan mental</u> tidak berani menampakkan dirinya untuk mendapatkan pertolongan pertama."

Researchers obtained results from the use of periphrases marked with the words mental health disorders. In the findings on this website, researchers found that currently people with mental health are still afraid to get treatment. The finding of the use of the word periphrasis is in the form of a euphemism characterized by the word mental health disorder. The word *gangguan* Kesehatan mental is used to replace the word *gangguan jiwa*. The word *gangguan Kesehatan mental* is used because it has a subtle and more polite value than the word *gangguan jiwa.* Some people may find the term *"jiwa"* heavier or more serious than "mental," which can cause greater discomfort or anxiety when used in a health context.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and analysis above, the researcher concludes that the use of euphemisms has great importance in writing articles on websites and in everyday life. When readers can identify euphemisms in articles on several Mental Health community websites in Indonesia, they will gain new knowledge about language, communication, and language policy. Euphemisms have the ability to reduce words that are considered inappropriate or harsh. In addition, the use of euphemisms can reduce conflicts that arise due to misunderstandings in conveying information or communicating. The use of euphemisms can also help readers better understand the cultural values contained in language. The presence of euphemisms in articles on websites can enhance readers' insights and develop writers' skills in adapting language styles according to context, which in turn can foster a better attitude of tolerance in readers.

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