

ENGLISH EUPHEMISM AS USED BY NATIVE SPEAKERS  
OF ENGLISH AND OF THAI

A MASTER'S PROJECT  
BY  
ROMMAYASIN KAOSA-AD

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Master of Arts Degree in English  
at Srinakharinwirot University  
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AN ABSTRACT

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การใช้คำแสลงพจน์ภาษาอังกฤษโดยเจ้าของภาษาอังกฤษและชาวไทย

บทคัดย่อ  
ของ  
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เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อ เป็นหนังสือ ของการศึกษา  
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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background of the Study

Words are used in certain situations depending on such factors as formality, speaker-listener relationship, and social norms. Take the three sentences below as an example.

Grandmother *died* years ago.

Grandmother *earned her rest* years ago.

Grandmother *passed away* years ago.

The word *die* is often used among friends or acquaintances in an informal setting, while the expression *earn one's rest*, which has the same meaning as *die*, seems to sound more polite and acceptable. In a situation where high formality is required, *pass away* is the best substitute. This awareness is vital in every society, but most people ignore it. As a consequence, euphemism, the use of more acceptable words or expressions in place of unpleasant counterparts, should be systematically studied.

To Thai people, English euphemism seems to be more distant as it is not taught in schools. A lack of this knowledge leads to an ignorance of appropriate language use. Most Thai students cannot make a good word choice in their speaking or writing.

As a result of its importance, euphemism should really be one of the main focuses taught in institutions.

In order to make the use of euphemism better known among Thai educators and students, this study aims to present the use of English euphemism by native and Thai speakers of English.

### Research Objectives

This study has three main objectives.

1. To survey the use of English euphemism by both native-speakers of English and Thais.
2. To figure out frequencies and types of euphemistic words.
3. To analyze and compare the use of euphemism by native speakers of English and of Thai.

### Scope of the Study

The study focused on the use of English euphemism by native and non-native speakers. Nineteen words were examined ranging from sex, death, and disease to excretion, body-parts, and social status. Ten English native speakers and ten Thai speakers were asked to answer the provided questionnaire.

### Significance of the Study

The study is expected to offer the following benefits.

1. A better body of knowledge of English euphemism used by native and non-native speakers of English.
2. A guideline to further studies related to euphemism.

In brief, there are three main objectives: to survey the use of English euphemism by both native and non-native speakers of English, to figure out frequencies and types of euphemistic words, and to analyze and compare the use of euphemism by native and non-native speakers.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, there are five main sections discussing the following topics: definition of euphemism, history and importance of euphemism, types of euphemism, use of euphemism, and previous studies.

#### Definition of Euphemism

The term *euphemism* is derived from two Greek words, *eu* meaning *well* or *sounding good*, and *pheme* signifying *speech*. Many linguists have made an attempt to define this term for clarity.

Euphemism refers to a kind of linguistic elevation or amelioration specifically directed toward finding socially acceptable words for concepts that many people cannot easily speak of (Williams, 1975), while this term, according to Neaman and Silver (1983), is a way to substitute an inoffensive or pleasant word for a more explicit, offensive one, thereby veneering the truth by using polite words. Alternatively, Rawson (1983) describes it as mild, agreeable or roundabout words used in place of coarse, painful, or offensive one. Allan and Burridge (1996) suggest that “a euphemism is used as an alternative to a dispreferred expression in order to avoid possible loss of face, either one’s own or, by giving offense, that of the audience, or of some third party.”

Until 1989, this word became an entry in *Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary of Current English* meaning an “example of the use of pleasant, mild or indirect words or phrases in place of more accurate or direct one” (p. 394).

To illustrate the definitions proposed above, here are certain examples. Those who have lived long lives are usually called *senior citizens*, *Golden Agers*, or simply *the mature*. Politicians speak of *community charges*, *levies*, or even *voluntary contributions*, rather than of taxes or tolls; and the push for nonsexist usage has rendered words like *stewardess* and *actress* taboo, replacing them with *flight attendant* and *actor* under the influence of the feminist movement during 1980's. Mr. Brown gets up from the table, explaining that he has to *go to the little boy's room* or *see a man about a dog*. The two italicized phrases both denote *going to the toilet*.

In short, euphemism can be seen as the use of more acceptable words or expressions in place of unpleasant counterparts.

### History and Importance of Euphemism

Euphemism is believed to date back to Ancient Greek (Neaman & Silver, 1990, p. 1), where the principal purpose for its existence related to religion. *Gods* or *other divines* were words reserved only for the priest to utter in fear of blasphemy and supernatural danger. Therefore, the laymen resorted to using such words as *the Thunderer*, *the Rock*, and *the Lord*. These words were derived from the god's characteristics, such as *the Thunderer*—thunder being the mighty weapon which Zeus used to assume celestial sovereignty.

In the Anglo-Saxon era, the golden age in the expression of language and the source of four-letter words which were innuendos and direct references to sex (Williams, 1975), euphemism was in wide use, as evident in Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. The tales contain a range of euphemisms in place of taboo words, such as *eyelash* for a woman's intimate part (sexual organ). Later in the sixteenth century, euphemisms proliferated, especially those associated with royalty, religion, and sexual affairs. Classic examples are *to put one to misery*, and *put one to sleep*, meaning death.

In the nineteenth century, euphemism had played a vital role for the middle- and lower-classes. The rhyming slang among Cockneys drew on common experience and canny observation. Hundreds of words were coined to replace negative concepts of labor, money, sex, death, and sin. For example, the word *servant* and *garbage collector* were euphemized to *domestic engineer* and *sanitation engineer*.

During the twentieth century, political and cultural influences had an enormous impact on language, especially American English. This led to a linguistic revolution lasting until the present time. One day it may amuse a linguistic historian to note the richest subjects for American euphemism were money, disease, politics, and war.

It appears that euphemism has long been in use as a social device for various purposes. Its principal objective is to avoid offensive words, however. Euphemisms also manifest the society and time in which they are used.

## Types of Euphemism

Euphemisms can be categorized into a variety of groups on the basis of semantic procedure, or how euphemistic words are linguistically created. Euphemism is classified into five types (Williams 1975; Shipley 1977; Rawson 1983; Neaman & Silver 1983; Allan & Burridge 1991) as follows:

### *Shortening*

When encountering words we dare not mention, we replace them with a shortened word. There are a number of different processes:

#### *a. Abbreviation*

Rawson (1983) states that words which may create dismay if used in public are acceptable when shortened to their initial letters e.g. *B.S.* (bullshit) and *T.S.* (transsexual). A shortened word such as *Ladies* (Ladies' room) is also included in this type.

#### *b. Apocopation*

This process can be defined as the way to shorten or omit the last syllable of a word e.g. *Vamp* for *Vampire* (Shipley, 1977).

#### *c. Backformation*

According to Neaman and Silver (1983), to backform words refers to the substitution of one part of speech with a shortened form for another. The word *burgle*, which is derived from *burglar*, is a euphemism for *rob*.

d. *Diminutive*

This procedure is the formation of a new term by shortening a name and adding a suffix to indicate affection or smallness. For example, the word *buttocks* is euphemized by *heinie* which is the diminutive of *hind end* (Williams, 1975).

e. *Omission*

This involves leaving out the letters of taboo words after the initial, such as *f---* for *having sex*, or *s---* instead of *shit* (Allan & Burrige, 1991).

f. *Clipping*

According to Shipley (1977), clipping is the deletion of some part of a longer word to give a shorter word with the same meaning e.g. *nation* (damnation), *bra* (brassiere), *jeeze* (Jesus Christ).

*Circumlocution*

Allan and Burrige (1991) call using longer expressions *circumlocution*.

Euphemisms which have more letters and syllables are deployed in place of a single one.

For instance, *Middle Eastern dancing* sounds better than *belly dance*. *A little girl's room* means a *toilet*. *Postconsumer secondary material* is used instead of *garbage*.

*Excrementitiously human kidney* means *urine*; or *solid human waste* is a euphemism of *feces*.



## *Remodelling*

The sound of words can be altered to conceal something that is offensive. This can involve a variety of processes of largely verbal play (Allan & Burridge, 1991, p. 3).

### a. *Phonological Distortion*

Euphemism can be created when the speakers intentionally distort the pronunciation of words. For instance, expressions for *Christ* are pronounced *cripes*, *crust*, *crumbs*, and *crockery*. Also, *hell* is euphemized by *heck* or *shit* by *shite* or *shoot*.

### b. *Blending*

Blending is formed by squeezing together two or more words both orthographically and phonetically, as in *gezunda* (a chamber pot), which is derived from the fact that this object *goes under* the bed (Williams, 1975). Alan and Burridge (1991) propose that most blendings involve portmanteau words, such as *strewth* (God's truth), *zounds* (God's wounds), and *drat* (God's rot).

### c. *Reduplication*

Reduplication, a repetition of a syllable or letter of a word, is particularly present in children's bathroom vocabulary such as *jeepers creeper* (Jesus Christ), *pee-pee* (piss), *twiddle-diddles* (testicles), *tuzzy muzzy* (vagina), and *rantum-scantum* (copulate).

## *Semantic Change*

A number of semantic processes can be tools to create new euphemisms:

### *a. Semantic shift*

Semantic shift, with reference to Rawson (1983), is the substitution of the whole, or a similar generality, for the specific part we do not choose to discuss. For example, *rear end* becomes *bottom*, or *to sleep with somebody* is transformed into *to go to bed with somebody*.

Additionally, Allan and Burridge (1991) propose the same strategy in euphemizing expressions into two categories: general-for-specific and part-for-whole euphemisms. The general-for-specific strategy is a one-to-one substitution, such as the use of *go to bed* instead of *having sex*. The part-for-whole euphemism is the reference to specific ideas such as when we need to *go to the lavatory*, we *spend a penny*. This derives from the payment for a public toilet of a penny.

### *b. Metaphorical transfer*

This procedure is a comparison of things of one order to things of another such as a comparison of one flower to another variety. Therefore, the word *pimple* is euphemized as *blossom* (Williams, 1975).

Allan and Burridge (1991) exemplify metaphorical euphemism with Barber's *Cockney's Lament* (1979) where *The cavalry's come* means *I've got*

*my period*, and *go to the happy hunting grounds* is a euphemism for *die*. The hyperbole such as *flight to glory* can signify *death*.

c. *Widening*

When becoming too painful or vivid, a specific term is moved up in the ladder of abstraction. According to Williams (1975), widening minimizes the impact of semantic features of a word by moving up one level of generality to name a superordinate set, usually omitting the specific features that would unequivocally identify the referent e.g. *growth* (cancer), *foundation* (girdle), *solid human waste* (feces).

d. *Litotes*

This type of euphemism is created by replacing a word with the negative expression of its opposite. Thus, we may say *untidy* or *unclean* instead of *dirty*, *not bad* for *fair*, *untruthful* for *lying*, *unwise* for *foolish* (Brook, 1981).

e. *Understatement*

Understatement reduces the risk in showing an apparent meaning. For example, a nuclear reactor that is said to be *above critical* is actually out of control, and *an active defense* means an *attack* (Rawson, 1983). To exemplify further, Allan and Burridge (1991) provide the words *sleep* for *die*, and *not bright* for *fool*.

f. *Indirection*

Too touchy topics and terms may be alluded to in various ways by mentioning one aspect of the subject, a circumstance involving it, a related subject, or even by saying what it is not. An *assembly center* is an indirect euphemism for *prison*. Soldiers stop fighting when they *break off contact with the enemy* which means they *retreat* (Rawson, 1983 p. 12).

g. *Abstraction*

Some words (*it, problem, situation, and thing*) help cast ideas in the widest possible terms and make ideal cover-up words. For instance, an economic *thing* might refer to the state of *slump, recession, or depression* (Rawson, 1983).

*Borrowing*

Using words borrowed from foreign languages to function as euphemisms is a common characteristic of many languages.

a. *External Borrowing*

According to Rawson (1983), most taboo words are usually rendered in French or Latin. For example, *affaire, amour, and liaison* are euphemisms for *love*; *personnel, sortie, and triage* for *war*, and *brassiere, chemise, and lingerie* for *women's underwear*. In this case, Williams (1975) also suggests the idea of borrowing words from other languages which are less freighted

with negative associations, e.g. *halitosis* from the Latin *halitus* meaning breath for *bad breath* and *dead* for /tai/ in Thai.

*b. Internal Borrowing*

Euphemisms can also be from different sublanguages such as jargons or technical terms. For instance, a disease such as syphilis can be made less offensive by using technical jargon as *trepennal disease*, *luetie disease*, or *spirachoeetal disease* (Allan & Burridge, 1991).

In summary, euphemism can be created through several linguistic methods. The most effective one is based on semantic procedures which affect the meaning of taboo words. Their meaning may be less direct, understated, or distorted.

### Use of Euphemism

Nowadays, euphemism is widely used as a social tool to avoid offending other people and to be polite. Stern (1968) explains that euphemism is used for three reasons. These are to avoid taboo words, to create social politeness, and not to offend other people. In addition, some people believe that euphemism can protect them from misfortune. Even more, the use of taboo words is banned in most societies and those who use them will be reprimanded. Euphemism is used in every level of society. Among proletarians, euphemism is employed when they have to speak to their employers. This is to show their respect, humility, and politeness. Also, the bourgeoisie opt for euphemism to make their language less domineering. This also creates a good relationship between the working class people and themselves. High-class people usually reveal and maintain their social

status with the use of euphemism as it is regarded as a social norm that they use well-chosen language.

In addition, the use of euphemism depends heavily on context. For instance, politicians employ euphemism in order to make eloquent language when they are in public or the assembly. In diplomacy, euphemism helps maintain a good relationship between nations. Or even in everyday life, people use euphemism as an integral part of their language. Bureaucracies, such as the military and large corporations, frequently coin euphemisms of a more deliberate nature. For instance, militaries at war frequently kill people both deliberately and mistakenly; in doublespeak, the first may be called *neutralizing the target* and the latter *collateral damage*. Organizations spawn expressions to describe objectionable actions in terms that seem neutral or inoffensive, so industrial unpleasantness, such as pollution, may be toned down to *outgassing* or *runoff*—descriptions of physical processes rather than their damaging consequences (McGlone & Pfister, 2006, p. 261). Some of this may simply be the application of precise technical terminology in the place of popular usage, but beyond precision, the advantage of technical terminology may be its lack of emotional undertones, while the disadvantage is the lack of real life context.

### Previous Studies

There are some previous studies which are relevant to this study. They focus on the use of euphemisms both in Thai and in English.

Charncharoen (1989) focused on three main aspects of Thai euphemism: describing the characteristics of euphemistic words in Thai, analyzing their denotative

and connotative meanings, and studying the Thai values and world view reflected in these words. The results showed that there were four ways of forming euphemistic words in Thai: distortion of a taboo word by abbreviation or phonetic corruption, using a foreign word, understatement, and use of metaphor. In the analysis of the meaning of euphemistic words, the study showed that the denotative meanings usually referred to abstract and concrete objects such as animals, nature, happiness and love. The connotative meanings covered politeness, love, happiness, etc. All these meanings reflect significant Thai social values, such as prosperity, happiness, love, power and also reveal two aspects of the Thai world view: the world of discrepancy between men and women and the world of merit and demerit.

Thiyajai (1992) also analyzed the patterns and connotative meaning of Thai euphemism in substituted words or expressions which were contextually taboo, together with analyzing some social values reflected in these euphemistic terms. The findings revealed that these euphemistic terms employed circumlocution resulting in an increase in the number of syllables. Furthermore, there were six structural devices employed in coining the euphemistic terms: the use of words with neutral or good connotative meaning, the use of words implying politeness, the use of words with less specific meaning than the original taboo words, the use of words with negative meaning paired with another one opposite in meaning to the original taboo word, the use of words connoting significance and recognition, and the use of words with a non-accusing tone. Regarding the connotative meaning, the findings also showed that such euphemistic terms were distinctively composed of seven semantic features, which were politeness, positive connotation, personal significance, recognition, work or business features, human characteristics or actions and specificity. Three categories of social values as reflected in

these euphemistic terms included the values of politeness, the values of personal significance and the values of recognition. Such social values were found to be in accordance with the main Thai social values which are distinctively reflected through the respect of seniority, recognition of individuality and equality.

In terms of textual analysis, Thurntor (2001: p. 90-94) studied patterns of communication presented in IRC (Internet Relay Chat) networks. The study indicated that Internet users avoided using impolite words by means of clipping and blending. Furthermore, users employed a way which was distinguished from other media—writing in spelling forms.

With reference to the study of language used on the Internet, Jangjorn (2004) took a close look at Internet users' techniques in avoiding impolite words in discussion messages on the web boards by analyzing the data into percentages. The findings showed that the most common ways to avoid the use of impolite words found were *pausing*, *changing letters*, *clipping*, *spelling in English*, *loanwords*, and *metaphor*. The least found technique was *abbreviation*. The researcher also found additional techniques, such as writing in spelling forms, using slang, reversing words, using signs or icons instead of letters, and using more than one technique.

Ham (2005) diachronically studied the formation of English euphemism by extracting examples from three British novels: Jane Austen's *Emma*, D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterly's Lover*, and Fiona Walker's *Well Groomed*. In studying euphemism formation, Warren (1992)'s *Model of Classification of the Main Devices for Constructing Euphemisms* is examined and the rules and categories suggested by this model are tested against euphemisms from the novels. It transpired that improvements were required of the model in order for it to account for all examples. A modified version of this model is



proposed to encompass all of these euphemisms, as well as other examples from notable sources.

Fernández (2006) explored the euphemistic language on obituary pages from the mid-nineteenth century. The study traced an account of the different conceptual metaphors aiming at substituting the notions of death and dying in Irish early Victorian newspapers within Lakoff (1980)'s *Conceptual Metaphor Theory*. The results obtained supported the idea that there was a tendency to present sentimental obituaries in which the taboo of death can be accounted for by various conceptual metaphors, most of which view death as a desirable event under the influence of Christian beliefs.

The study by Hai-Long (2008) paid particular attention to two topics: the relationship between cross-cultural communication and euphemisms, and the necessity of learning and teaching euphemisms. The researcher studied the intercultural communication of English and Chinese by investigating how meanings changed, how they were coined, and how English euphemisms were assimilated into Chinese culture. Additionally, the application for teaching English euphemism was proposed as there are not enough instances of euphemisms in textbooks published in China. Teachers of English should provide additional materials to students. For example, teachers may have students watch a film full of euphemisms. This would be of great help.

In brief, a large number of past studies have been dedicated to the use, forms, and structures of euphemisms. They have revealed insufficient knowledge of euphemism among non-native speakers. This calls for further study on this topic.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents four main sections of research methodology: research informants, the research instrument, research procedure and data analysis.

#### Research Informants

The informants for this study were ten English native-speakers and ten non-native speakers who were instructors at state universities in Thailand.

#### Research Instrument

The researcher developed a questionnaire to survey the use of English euphemism by the informants. The questionnaire consisted of 19 words covering various topics. These entries were selected on the basis of their frequent use in everyday life (see Appendix 2).

#### Procedures

The study went through the following procedures.

1. The informants were asked to complete the open-ended questionnaire. Each informant was asked to write as many euphemisms as possible.
2. The informants' answers were collected and the data gained was prepared for the analysis.

3. The frequency of use of euphemistic words provided by the informants was calculated as a percentage. The data was then tabulated.
4. The researcher analyzed the data to find out plausible explanations as to why and how often the euphemistic words were used as well as their types.
5. The conclusions as well as suggestions for further study were finally presented.

### Data Analysis

After the information collection, an analysis was made. Each of the euphemistic words given by the informants was first tallied to find out its frequency. At the same time, the answers were ordered on the basis of frequent use. These two pieces of information were applied to analyze and compare the distinctions between the use of euphemism by the native-speakers of English and the Thais. In methodology, the semantic approach was applied to answer why the informants used such words. Finally, the findings of the study were tabulated.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings corresponding to the following research objectives:

1. To survey the use of English euphemism by both native speakers of English and of Thai.
2. To figure out the frequencies and types of euphemistic words.
3. To analyze and compare the use of euphemism by native-speakers of English and the Thais.

For each research objective, the findings are presented in the following tables. Each table presents five euphemisms most used by the native-speakers of English and the Thais. In some cases, the most frequently used euphemisms were insufficient. Therefore, the ranking could be only ranged from two to five.

Table 1 Five Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Buttocks* Used by the Native-Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Buttocks</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	rear end	bottom
2	bottom	backside
3	butt	butt
4	behind	ass
5	bum	behind

As shown in Table 1, the five frequently used euphemisms for *buttocks* by the English native speakers were *rear end*, *bottom*, *butt*, *behind*, and *bum* respectively, while those used by the Thais were *bottom*, *backside*, *butt*, *ass*, and *behind*. Interestingly, the English native speakers used the word *rear end* the most, but it was not present in the Thais' answers. The word *ass* by contrast was not at all used among the English natives. Possibly it was considered an offensive word. Probably, the Thai informants did not realize that it was an abusive term.

Table 2        Three Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Woman's Outer Sexual Organ* Used by the Native-Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Woman's Outer Sexual Organ</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	private parts	that part
2	love organ	garden
3	-	reproductive organ

In Table 2, the English native speakers used *private parts*, and *love organ* whereas the Thais used *that part*, *garden*, and *reproductive organ* to euphemize *woman's outer sexual organ*. Obviously, the phrase *private parts* or *that part* was the substitute that held the highest rank among both groups. In addition, these two groups employed the same word *organ*.

Table 3 Three Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Man's Outer Sexual Organ* Used by the Native-Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Man's Outer Sexual Organ</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	penis	penis
2	weenie	balls
3	John	John

Table 3 illustrates that both English native speakers and Thais used the word *penis* to substitute for *man's outer sexual organ* the most. The second word used by the English was *weenie* and that by Thais was *balls* while the third word *John* was shared by both groups. In fact, the answers were so various that no words could be ranked in the fourth place, for instance, *his gun, pole, wood, weapon, stopper, etc.*

Table 4 Four Most Frequent Euphemisms of *Bosom* Used by the Native Speakers of English and of Thai

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Bosom</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	breast	breast
2	boobs	chest
3	chest	boobs
4	-	tits

In Table 4, the three most frequent euphemisms for *bosom* chosen by the English native speakers were *breast*, *boobs*, and *chest* respectively. The Thais used *breast*, *chest*, *boobs*, and *tits* in place of *bosom*. The first three euphemisms of the Thais and English native speakers were the same but slightly different in ranks.

Table 5 Four Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Fat* Used by the Native-Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Fat</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	overweight	chubby
2	obese	plump
3	chubby	obese
4	plump	heavy

Table 5 shows almost the same frequently used euphemisms for *fat* between the native speakers of English and of Thai. However, there are certain differences. The most frequently used word by the English native speakers was *overweight*, but it did not appear in their Thai counterparts' lists. Likewise, the word *oversized* offered by Thais was not found in the English native speakers' selections.

Table 6 Four Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Short* Used by the Native-Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Short</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	not tall	not tall
2	petite	petite
3	vertically challenged	small
4	-	vertically challenged

As illustrated in Table 6, the English and Thai speakers used almost the same euphemisms for *short*, and they were similarly ranked: *not tall* and *petite*. Yet the words *small* and *tiny* were not at all used by the English informants.

Table 7 Four Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Ugly* Used by the Native-Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Ugly</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	homely	unattractive
2	plain	not good-looking
3	unattractive	homely
4	fearsome	not attractive

Table 7 shows that the English native-speakers chose *homely*, *plain*, *unattractive*, and *fearsome* to replace *ugly* whereas the Thais used *unattractive*, *not good-looking*, and *homely*. It is interesting that the word *homely* and *unattractive* were found, though at different ranks, in both groups. A huge difference is that certain words were only present



in one group, for example, *plain* and *fearsome* in the English native speakers' group and *not good-looking*, *not attractive*, and *beauty challenged* in the Thais' lists.

Table 8 Four Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Feces* Used by the Native-Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Feces</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	excrement	excrement
2	waste	waste
3	stool	stool
4	-	poo

Table 8 reveals a similarity of the selections in both the words themselves and of their ranks. There is one difference, however. The word *poo* was chosen by Thais but not by the English native speakers.

Table 9 Four Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Urine* Used by the Native Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Urine</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	pee	pee
2	#1	piss
3	whiz	liquid waste
4	-	#1

In Table 9, the word *pee* came first in the list offered by both groups of informants as a euphemism for *urine*. Also, the alternative symbol *#1* was included in both groups' answers. The third rank is different: *whiz* by the native speakers of English and *liquid waste* by the Thais.

Table 10 Four Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Fart* Used by the Native Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Fart</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	pass gas	pass gas
2	break wind	release the gas
3	-	break wind
4	-	cut the cheese

Table 10 reveals that the English native speakers' answers were so various that they could not be ranked, e.g. *flamer*, *make wind*, *cut wind*, etc. This phenomenon was a contrast to the Thai counterparts whose answers held both a high level of variety and a low level of frequency. In short, the euphemisms *pass gas* and *break wind* were both present in the two groups' answers but *release the gas* and *cut the cheese* were found only in the Thai answers.

Table 11 Three Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Menstruation* Used by the Native-Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Menstruation</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	period	period
2	that time of the month	menses
3	her time	-

In Table 11, due to limited answers, the euphemisms given could be ranked only at three levels. Both native-speakers of English and the Thais mainly euphemized *menstruation* into *period*. Also, three other euphemisms found were: *that time of the month*, *her time*, and *menses*.

Table 12 Five Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Die* Used by the Native-Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Die</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	pass away	pass away
2	pass on	go to heaven
3	kick the bucket	rest in peace
4	go to heaven	kick the bucket
5	-	decease

As illustrated in Table 12, the English and Thai speakers used almost the same euphemisms for *die*, but they were in dissimilar ranks: *pass away*, *kick the bucket*, and *go to heaven*. The euphemisms *rest in peace* and *decease* were not offered by the English native speakers.

Table 13 Three Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Pregnant* Used by the Native-Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Pregnant</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	in the family way	going to have a baby
2	have a bun in the oven	have a bun in the oven
3	eating for two	in the family way

As shown in Table 13, the euphemisms for *pregnant* used by English native speakers were *in the family way*, *have a bun in the oven*, and *eating for two* respectively while those used by Thais were *have a baby*, *have a bun in the oven*, and *in the family way*. Interestingly, the English native speakers used *in the family way* the most, but it was present in the third rank of the Thais' answers. *Going to have a baby* in turn was not at all offered by the English natives whereas such word was often used by Thais who did not use *eating for two*.

Table 14 Three Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Stupid* Used by the Native-Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Stupid</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	dumb	foolish
2	unintelligent	dumb
3	foolish	unintelligent

Table 14 obviously shows the similarity of the selections of both the words and their ranks. The English native speakers often thought of the word *dumb* when euphemizing the word *stupid*, while the Thai counterparts mainly used the word *foolish*.

Table 15 Three Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Having Sexual Intercourse* Used by the Native-Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Having Sexual Intercourse</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	make love	sleep with
2	have sex	make love
3	sleep together	have sex

In Table 15, the English native speakers mostly used *make love* in place of *having sexual intercourse* while the Thais selected *sleep with*, which was present in the third rank of the English native speakers' answers. The rest of the answers were so various that they could not be grouped. They were *get it on*, *do it*, *go all the way* etc.

Table 16 Five Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Poor* Used by the Native-Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism of <i>Poor</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	broke	broke
2	penniless	impoverished
3	needy	-
4	on the street	-
5	destitute	-

In Table 16, the English native-speakers used *broke*, *penniless*, *needy*, *on the street*, and *destitute* whereas the Thais used *broke* and *impoverished* to euphemize *poor*. Obviously, the word *broke* was the substitute holding the highest rank in the two groups. In addition, the answers of the native speakers of Thai were so various and frequent that no words were ranked third.

Table 17 Three Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Mental Illness* Used by the Native-Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Mental Illness</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	crazy	insanity
2	psychotic	lunatic
3	mentally challenged	psychotic

As shown in Table 17, the euphemisms for *mental illness* employed by the English native speakers were *crazy*, *psychotic*, and *mentally challenged* while those used by the Thais were *insanity*, *lunatic*, and *psychotic*. The English native speakers used the word *crazy* the most, but it was not present in the Thais' answers. The word *insanity*, on the contrary, was not used among the English native speakers. However, such a word was often used by the Thais. The rest of the answers of the native speakers of Thai were so various that they could not be ranked.

Table 18 Three Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Handicapped* Used by the Native-Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Handicapped</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	physically challenged	disabled
2	disabled	physically challenged
3	limited	-

Table 18 reveals that the three euphemisms for *handicapped* most chosen by the English native speakers and by the Thais were *physically challenged*, *disabled*, and *limited* respectively. The first two euphemisms of the Thais and the English native-speakers were the same but slightly different in ranks.

Table 19 Three Most Frequent Euphemisms for *Cancer* Used by the Native-Speakers of English and the Thais

Rank of Occurrence	Euphemism for <i>Cancer</i>	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
1	the Big C	tumor
2	malignancy	the Big C
3	-	CA

Table 20 illustrates that the native speakers of English employed *the Big C* and *malignancy* to euphemize the word *cancer* whereas the Thais chose *tumor*, *the Big C*, and *CA*. The rest of the answers were so various that they could not be ranked. They were *lesion*, *serious disease*, *big disease* etc.

Table 20 The Percentage of Types of Euphemism Used by the Native Speakers of English and of Thai

Types of Euphemism	Percentage of Occurrence	
	Native Speakers of English	Native Speakers of Thai
Shortening	1.12%	0.90%
Circumlocution	8.66%	7.16%
Remodelling	2.51%	2.69%
Semantic Change	85.47%	88.96%
Borrowing	2.23%	0.30%
Total	100.00%	100.00%



The findings showed the similarities and differences of the occurrence of the five types of euphemisms used by both the native speakers of English and of Thai. The findings clearly revealed that both groups of informants employed all five types of euphemisms: shortening, circumlocution, remodelling, semantic change, and borrowing. The English native-speakers' answers tended to use semantic change (85.47%) the most, followed by circumlocution (8.66%), remodelling (2.51%), borrowing (2.23%), and shortening (1.12%) respectively. The Thais preferred semantic change (88.96%) the most, followed by circumlocution (7.16%), remodelling (2.69%), shortening (0.90%), and borrowing (0.30%). The highest percentage of frequency among the English native speakers and the Thai was the semantic change, 85.47% and 88.96% respectively. The second highest rank of percentage was circumlocution, 8.66% offered by the English native speakers and 7.16% by the Thais. The third highest rank of percentage was remodelling, 2.51% by the English native speakers and 2.69% by the Thais. The fourth highest rank of percentage in the English native speakers was borrowing (2.23%) while that of the Thais was shortening (0.90%). The fifth highest rank of percentage of type of euphemism offered by the native speakers of English was shortening (1.12%), but for the Thais, it was borrowing (0.30%).

### Summary

In conclusion, this chapter has displayed and discussed the findings of the use of English euphemisms by the native-speakers of English and by the Thais. These findings revealed a variety of English euphemisms and their types employed by both groups. In terms of types of euphemisms, semantic change played a vital role in euphemizing offensive words or phrases among the two groups of informants. Another frequent type was circumlocution. Other findings included shortening, remodelling, and borrowing. The

results of the findings from both groups were almost the same. Both the native speakers of English and the Thais preferred to use euphemisms based on semantic change, circumlocution, and remodelling respectively. However, the English native speakers used more loanwords or borrowing than the Thais. Shortening was presented by more Thais than the English native speakers.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the conclusion of the analysis, discussion, limitations of the study and suggestions for further studies.

This study examined and compared the use of English euphemisms by native-speakers of English and the Thais. The researcher developed a questionnaire comprising 20 open-ended questions asking the formants to euphemize 20 taboo words. Then all the euphemisms were tallied for frequency and analyzed for types.

#### Conclusion

Regarding the first objective, to survey the use of English euphemisms by both native-speakers of English and the Thais, 20 copies of an open-ended questionnaire asking about the use of euphemisms were distributed to the informants of this study, ten English native-speakers and ten non-native speakers who were instructors at state universities in Thailand. In all, 561 euphemisms received from the two groups were analyzed based on their frequencies of occurrence.

With regard to the second objective, five types of euphemistic words—shortening, remodelling, circumlocution, semantic change, and borrowing—were categorized. The most frequently used type in both groups was semantic change which accounted for 85.47% of the answers of the native-speakers of English and 88.96% of the Thai's answers.

Finally, in regard to the third objective, the English euphemisms acquired from the two groups were analyzed and compared. It appeared that the English native speakers and the Thais had a similar collection of euphemisms. For example, euphemisms found used by both groups were almost the same. These were euphemisms referring to *buttocks*, *man's outer sexual organ*, *bosom*, *fat*, *feces*, *short*, *die*, *stupid*, and *handicapped*.

### Discussion

This section discusses three interesting findings, the ranking of occurrence of English euphemisms, euphemisms themselves, and their types.

First, the ranking of occurrence was slightly different. A number of answers provided by both groups held almost the same ranks. While certain words such as *vagina*, *penis*, *breasts*, *not tall*, *broke*, *excrement*, *pee*, *period*, and *pass away* appeared at the same rank in both groups, other words such as *make love*, *boobs*, *obese*, *physically challenged*, *bottom* and *dumb* were in a slightly different rank. This reveals that the cultural awareness and pragmatic knowledge of both groups was approximately the same.

With regard to the English euphemisms provided, it appears that the native speakers of English and of Thai had a similar collection of euphemisms. For example, the answers for a number of headwords, such as *buttocks*, *man's outer sexual organ*, *bosom*, *fat*, *feces*, *short*, *die*, *stupid*, and *handicapped* presented by both groups, are almost the same. This suggests the Thai informants were competent in finding suitable English euphemisms. Nevertheless, the overwhelming variety of euphemisms offered by the Thais indicates a lack of cultural awareness and pragmatic knowledge, such as the word *ass*. Most of the Thais' selections are not present in the answers of the native speakers of English, such as *reproductive organs*, *privy part for women's outer sexual organ*;

*defecate* and *evacuate* for *feces*; *decease* and *stop living* for *die*; *underresourced* and *impoverished* for *poor*. It is obvious that the Thais' answers tend to be polysyllabic, technical, and highly elaborative, which is a sharp contrast to those used by the native speakers of English. These euphemisms offered by the Thais are *gravitationally challenged* for *fat*, *excrement* for *feces*, *gaseous evacuation* for *fart*, and *underprivileged* for *poor*.

The English euphemisms chosen by both groups of informants reflected the strategies used to euphemize taboo words of each group. According to Williams (1975), Shipley (1977), Rawson (1983), Neaman and Silver (1983), Allan and Burridge (1991), there are five basic types of euphemisms: shortening, circumlocution, remodelling, semantic change, and borrowing. The two groups' most frequent answers were based on semantic change, followed by circumlocution, remodelling, borrowing, and shortening, the last two of which were ranked fourth and fifth for native speakers of English and vice versa for the native speakers of Thai. This result pointed out the coincidence of meaning and euphemism to replace taboo words. The other types were found less frequently because these euphemisms require knowledge and skills other than meaning. Shortening and remodelling, e.g. *CA*, *hind*, and *wee*, have more specificity which makes them less understandable to outsiders. Borrowing such as *petite* for *short* and *poitrine* for *bosom* requires the users' knowledge of foreign languages, so it is less used by most people, especially monolinguals. Circumlocution (*make some fertilizer* for *feces*) is also less used as it seems outdated and too formal.

Interestingly, both groups revealed their misconception about euphemism as evidenced by their answers, for instance, *vagina*, *clitoris*, *crippled*, and *humping*. None of these words are fundamentally euphemisms.

In short, this section presented the discussion of the three interesting findings that the ranking of occurrence of English euphemism from both groups was slightly different, both groups of informants shared a similar collection of euphemisms, and that of the five types of euphemism (shortening, circumlocution, remodelling, semantic change, and borrowing) semantic change had the highest percentage of occurrence.

#### Limitations of the Study

1. The findings would have been more promising if the study had included other groups of informants, such as students or translators.
2. The questionnaire did not ask the informants to order their answers in terms of frequency of use. Therefore, such important information was not obtained in this study.

#### Suggestions for Further Studies

1. The study of euphemism translation in various texts such as movies and publications should be carried out to see the strategies employed and cultural differences.
2. In order to make a sociolinguistic record of English euphemism usage, it is suggested that the research informants be other than native speakers of English and of Thai. This could also include other different ethnic groups.

In short, this chapter has presented the conclusion of the analysis which was conducted along the three main objectives of the study, discussion of the research findings that portrays interesting points of the use of English euphemisms by both groups

of informants, limitations of the study and suggestions to be guidelines for future research in English euphemisms and related fields.

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## **APPENDIX**

## APPENDIX 1

**A List of English Euphemisms and Their Frequencies Answered by  
Native Speakers of English and of Thai**

All the answers are shown below and their frequencies are in parentheses. The first number is the frequency of the English speakers and the second of the Thai.

*buttocks:*

behind (3, 3), rear end (5, 2), bottom (5, 5), backside (2, 4), butt (4, 4), ass (2, 4), rear (2, 0), hind (1, 0), hinny (1, 0), bum (3, 1), gluteus maximums (1, 0), fanny (1, 0), seat (1, 0), rump (1, 0), posterior (2, 0), tail (2, 0), tail end (1, 0), seat of the pants (1, 0), derriere (2, 0), the part under one's waist (0, 1), hip (0, 1), bootie (0, 1)

*woman's outer sexual organ:*

vagina (5, 5), pussy (1, 1), muff (1, 0), mound (1, 0), clitoris (2, 0), love organ (1, 0), privates (1, 0), private parts (3, 0), twat (1, 0), labia (2, 0), box (1, 0), the part (0, 1), that part (0, 3), cunt (0, 1), garden (0, 2), little boat (0, 1), mouse trap (0, 1), trench (0, 1), slit (0, 1), pit (0, 1), cavern (0, 1), furrow (0, 1), ring (0, 1), field (0, 1), fanny (0, 1), privy parts (0, 1), private (0, 1), lips (0, 1), female private part (0, 1), genital (0, 1), reproductive organ (0, 1), flower (0, 1)

*man's outer sexual organ:*

penis (7, 5), cock (1, 2), John (1, 1), testicles (1, 1), balls (1, 2), that part (1, 2), his gun (1, 1), pole (1, 1), tail (1, 1), stem (1, 1), column (1, 1), hanger (1, 1), obelisk (1, 1), shaft (1, 1), pecker (1, 1), stopper (1, 1), Javelin (1, 1), rod (1, 1), weapon (1, 1), peter (1, 1), weenie (3, 1), genitals (1, 2), man's reproductive organ (1, 1), hard bone (1, 1), wood (1, 0), Johnson (1, 0), pecker (1, 0), manhood (1, 0), reproductive organ (1, 0), man gland (1, 0), lizard (1, 0), joystick (1, 0), dick (1, 0), his member (1, 0), gonad (1, 0), nuts (1, 0), family jewel (1, 0), privates (1, 0), private parts (1, 0), crotch (1, 0)

*bosom:*

chest (1, 4), breasts (8, 6), jugs (1, 0), tits (1, 2), titties (1, 0), knockers (2, 1),  
woofers (1, 0), hooters (1, 2), nipples (1, 0), boobs (2, 3), lamp-chops (1, 0), bust (1, 2),  
poitrine (1, 0), fun bags (1, 0), cherries (1, 0), jubilees (1, 0), milk (1, 0)

*fat:*

heavy (2, 2), Pillsbury doughboy (1, 0), humongous (1, 0), larders (1, 0),  
pleasingly plump (1, 0), rubenesque (1, 0), full-figured (1, 0), overweight (5, 3),  
rounded (1, 0), curvy (1, 0), shapely (1, 0), well-covered (2, 0), obese (4, 3), plump (1, 4),  
looking like a pig (1, 0), gross (1, 0), large (1, 0), dumpy (1, 0), frumpy (1, 0),  
large boned (1, 0), giant (1, 0), chubby (2, 7), big as a house (1, 0), well-fed (0, 1),  
a little bit plump (0, 1), big (0, 1), thick (0, 1), bulge (0, 1), oversized (0, 1),  
full bodied (0, 1), wide-ish (0, 1), heavy-weight talent (0, 1), couch potato (0, 1),  
generously proportioned (0, 1), gravitational challenged (0, 1), fleshy (0, 1)

*short:*

runt (1, 0), midget (1, 0), short stuff (1, 0), cute (1, 0), not tall (3, 7), petite (2, 4),  
teenie-weenie (1, 0), slight (1, 0), slight in statue (1, 0), diminutive (1, 0),  
short shadow (1, 0), vertically challenged (1, 2), Napoleon (1, 0), mouse (1, 0),  
dwarf (1, 0), small (0, 3), pocket-sized (1, 0), tiny (0, 2), little (0, 2), quite short (0, 1),  
wee (0, 1), pint-sized (0, 1)

*ugly:*

a dog (2, 0), butt face (1, 0), plain (3, 3), homely (4, 3), unpleasant face (1, 0),  
ordinary (1, 0), ill-shaped (1, 0), gross (1, 0), unattractive (2, 7),  
hit with ugly stick (1, 0), disgusting (1, 0), wretched (1, 0), arresting (1, 0), rugged (1, 0),  
craggy (1, 0), grotesque (1, 0), fearsome (1, 0), not attractive (0, 2), ill-favored (0, 1),  
hideous (0, 1), not good-looking (0, 4), miserable (0, 1), unsighted (0, 1),  
average looking (0, 1), an unfortunate face (0, 1), unconventional looks (0, 1),  
challenged for beauty (0, 1), missing some handsome (0, 1), lacking look (0, 1),  
beauty impaired (0, 1), unlovely (0, 1), unpretty (0, 1)

*feces:*

dung (0, 2), waste (2, 4), excrement (3, 5), stool (1, 3), defecate (0, 1),  
make a deposit (0, 1), make some fertilizer (0, 1), log out (0, 1), drop a bomb (0, 1),  
evacuate (0, 1), bake a brownie (0, 1), blow mud (0, 1), chop a log (0, 1),  
build a dookie castle (0, 1), poo (1, 2), poop (2, 1), droppings (0, 1), # 2 (2, 1),

crap (2, 1), poo-poo (2, 1), Douglas Hurd (0, 1), solid body waste (0, 1), sugar (1, 0), kaka (2, 0), doo doo (2, 0), turd (2, 0), waste matter (1, 0), dregs (1, 0), dog doo (1, 0), dump (2, 0), cow patties (1, 0), cow pies (1, 0), animal droppings (1, 0), animal spores (1, 0), excretia (1, 0)

*urine:*

#1 (2, 1), pee (3, 6), acid fluid (1, 0), pee-pee (1, 5), leak (2, 0), whiz (1, 1), yellow stream (1, 0), piss (2, 4), draining the lizard (1, 0), hit the can (1, 0), water (1, 1), urinate (0, 1), pass water (0, 1), liquid (0, 1), liquid waste (0, 2), living water (0, 1), whizzie winkles (0, 1), take a leak (0, 1), piddle (0, 2), tinkle (0, 1), wee-wee (0, 1), gypsies kiss (0, 1), spend a penny (0, 1), Jimmy Riddle (0, 1), pee-wee (0, 1)

*fart:*

release the gas (1, 4), break wind (1, 3), pass wind (0, 1), let the bowels' air (0, 1), gaseous evacuation (1, 0), butt trumpet (0, 1), cut the cheese (1, 1), exhaust gas (0, 1), butt blast (0, 1), flamer (0, 1), anal salute (0, 1), airbrush your boxers (0, 1), playing the trousers tuba (0, 1), raspberry (0, 1), blow a raspberry tart (0, 1), guff (0, 1), pass gas (6, 6), buff in the ass (0, 1), cut wind (1, 0), fart (1, 0), expelling wind (1, 0), fluctuate (1, 0), make wind (1, 0), stump up the place (1, 0)

*menstruation:*

that time of the month (4, 0), on the ray (1, 0), her time (1, 0), period (5, 1), periodic discharge (1, 0), being on the rag (1, 0), menses (0, 1), riding the cotton pony (0, 1), Kate Bush-ing (0, 1), falling to the communists (0, 1), checking into the red roof inn (0, 1), red skelton dropped by(0, 1), getting down with the O.B. (0, 1), monthly period (0, 1)

*die:*

pass away (8, 9), go to better place (2, 0), not with us anymore (2, 2), expire (2, 2), meet his/her maker (2, 0), buy the farm (2, 0), depart (2, 1), perish (2, 0), decease (2, 1), go to happy hunting ground (1, 0), kick the bucket (3, 2), eat it (1, 0), go to heaven (1, 4), join god (1, 0), pass on (4, 0), meet his/her demise (1, 0), lose his/her life (1, 1), cash in (1, 0), check out (1, 0), go to Davey Jones's locker (1, 0), be taken (1, 0), in the sky (1, 0), sleep forever (0, 1), end (0, 1), be done in (0, 1), be gone (0, 4), stop living (0, 2), rest in peace (0, 3), go for good (0, 1), be deceased (0, 2), breath your last (0, 1), lay down your life (0, 1), come to the end (0, 1), fight a long battle with (0, 1), meet your maker (0, 1), snuff it (0, 1), six feet under (0, 1),

push up daisies (0, 1), be gone to a better place (0, 1), be gone for good (0, 1), go to kingdom come (0, 1)

*pregnant:*

have a bun in the oven (3, 2), knocked up (3, 1), pregnant (1, 1), have a baby (0, 3), expect a baby (0, 2), carry a baby (0, 1), in the family way (0, 4), losing the immunity challenge (0, 1), suing Trojan (0, 1), buying sardine and pickle futures (0, 1), carry (0, 1). Childing (0, 1), conceive (0, 1), enceinte (0, 1), gestate (0, 1), gravid (0, 1), with child (3, 1), baby on board, (0, 1), mother-to-be (0, 1), preggers (1, 0), in trouble (1, 0), expecting (3, 0), up the pole (1, 0), bearing child (1, 0), grand (1, 0), impregnated (1, 0), ready to burst (1, 0), approaching motherhood (1, 0), one on the way (1, 0), eating for two (1, 0)

*stupid:*

dense (3, 0), slow (3, 0), mentally challenged (2, 0), obtuse (2, 0), one sandwich short of a picnic (1, 0), booby (1, 0), foolish (1, 4), not so clever (1, 0), idiotic (1, 1), cretin (1, 0), imbecile (1, 0), retarded (2, 1), moronic (2, 0), silly (1, 2), dim (1, 0), witless (1, 0), slow-witted (1, 0), slow-learner (1, 0), intellectually-challenged (1, 0), dull (1, 2), dumb (3, 2), ignorant (1, 0), unintelligent (2, 1), without clue (1, 0), no one's home (1, 0), in the dark (1, 0), uneducated (1, 1), goofiness (1, 0), thick (1, 1), nonsensical (0, 2), brainless (0, 1), not smart (0, 1), need to be improved (0, 1), not so good (0, 1), simple-minded (0, 1), all foam, no beer (0, 1), his elevator doesn't go to the top floor (0, 1), his yeast went bad (0, 1), the light is on, but nobody's home (0, 1), a few cans short of a six-pack (0, 1), unknowing (0, 1), impolitic (0, 1), unwise (0, 1), asinine (0, 1), senseless (0, 1), slow-learner (0, 1), unlikeable (0, 1)

*having sexual intercourse:*

copulate (2, 1), sleep with (0, 6), make love (6, 6), knock of (0, 1), being with him (0, 1), have an affair (0, 1), go to bed with (0, 1), have sex (2, 2), getting it on (2, 2), doing it (2, 1), playing with (0, 1), couple (0, 1), mate (0, 1), have intercourse with (0, 1), lie with (0, 1), go all the way (2, 1), commerce (0, 1), play the doctor (0, 1), making intimacy with (2, 1), boffing (1, 0), bonking (1, 0), rogering (1, 0), laying a little pipe (1, 0), humping (1, 0), blissful moment (1, 0), bliss (1, 0), consummate (1, 0), get together (1, 0), screwing (1, 0), sleeping together (1, 0), balling (1, 0), fool around (1, 0), play around (1, 0), spending the night together (1, 0), do wild thing (1, 0), fornicate (1, 0), make whoopee (1, 0)

*poor:*

poor (1, 0), needy (3, 2), not to have a pot to piss in (1, 0), penniless (4, 2),  
 unfortunate (1, 0), not well off (1, 0), feel the pinch (1, 0), broke (5, 2), deprived (1, 0),  
 poor like a church mouse (1, 0), on the street (2, 0), disadvantageous (1, 1),  
 destitute (1, 2), economically disadvantaged (1, 0), indigent (1, 0), bankrupt (1, 0),  
 in the red (1, 0), down on his/her luck (1, 0), ruined (1, 0), hard up (1, 0),  
 poverty stricken (1, 0), in a hole (1, 0), in dire straits (1, 0),  
 unable to make ends meet (1, 0), insolvent (1, 0), on the rocks (1, 0),  
 having seen better days (1, 0), doing from hand to mouth (1, 0),  
 don't have much money (0, 1), unwealthy (0, 1), low-income (0, 1),  
 financially advanced (0, 1), under resourced (0, 1), underprivileged (0, 1),  
 miserable (0, 1), impoverished (0, 1), misfortunate (0, 1), pauperism (0, 1),  
 impecunious (0, 1), less fortunate (0, 1)

*mental illness:*

wacko (1, 0), looney tunes (1, 0), no one home (1, 0), to have issues of his/her own (1, 0),  
 crazy (3, 2), psychotic (2, 1), mentally challenged (1, 0), slow (1, 0), insanity (2, 1),  
 madness (1, 1), craziness (1, 0), imbecility (1, 0), dementia (1, 0), neurotic (1, 0),  
 eccentricity (1, 0), quirkiness (1, 0), gone ivory (1, 0), nutty (1, 0), out of mind (1, 3),  
 out of head (1, 0), taken (1, 0), out of touch (1, 0), out of lunch (1, 0), lose sense (1, 1),  
 have loose screw (2, 0), disturbs (2, 0), retarded (2, 0), sick in the head (2, 0), wild (0, 1),  
 eccentric (0, 1), daft (0, 1), having some mental problems (0, 1), lunatic (0, 2),  
 psycho (0, 1), mental health (0, 1), kooky (0, 1), oddball (0, 1), a space cadet (0, 1),  
 a basket case (0, 1), a wreck (0, 1), mental disorder (0, 1), psychosis (0, 1),  
 paranoid (0, 1), mental deficiency (0, 1), demented (0, 1), special (0, 1)

*handicapped:*

physically challenged (6, 1), physically impaired (1, 2), differently-abled (1, 0),  
 mentally challenged (1, 0), unable one (2, 0), blind (1, 0), blind as a bat (1, 0), deaf (1, 0),  
 deaf as a doornail (1, 0), usually impaired (1, 0), hearing impaired (1, 0), limited (1, 0),  
 non-ambulatory (1, 0), disabled (2, 7), crippled (3, 2), non-functional (1, 0),  
 disadvantaged (0, 2), physically disabled (0, 2), differently disabled (0, 1),  
 defective (0, 1), deformed (0, 1), physically ill (0, 1), incapable of (0, 1)

*AIDS:*

incurable disease (1, 0), transmitted disease (1, 0), HIV (5, 4), the syndrome (1, 0),  
 immune deficiency (1, 0), serious sexual disease (0, 1), silent killer (0, 1),  
 indiscriminate killer (0, 1), a long illness (0, 1), lung disease and cold (0, 1),  
 a viral disease (0, 1)



*cancer:*

the big C (3, 2), tumor (1, 3), big disease (0, 1), serious disease (0, 1), malignancy (1, 2),  
lesion (0, 1), growth and dark spot (0, 1), CA (0, 1), malignant tumor (0, 1),  
serious illness (0, 1), fatal disease (0, 1), carcinoma (0, 1), melanoma (0, 1)

## APPENDIX 2

**Questionnaire on the Use of English Euphemism**

This questionnaire is designed to survey the use of English euphemisms by both native speakers of English and of Thai. The informants of this questionnaire are instructors of English at state universities in Thailand.

**Part A: Demographics**

**Directions** Please put a tick (✓) in the box matching your personal information.

## 1. Sex

 Male Female

## 2. Age

 under 20 years 20-30 years 31-40 years 41-50 years more than 50 years

## 3. Years of English Teaching Experience

 1-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years 16-20 years Others (Please specify \_\_\_\_\_ )

## 4. Education

 Bachelor's Degree Master's Degree Doctoral Degree Post-graduate Others (Please specify \_\_\_\_\_ )

## 5. The Length of Your Stay in Thailand: \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Nationality

 British American Australian Others (Please specify \_\_\_\_\_ )

**Part B: The Survey of the Use of English Euphemisms**

**Directions:** Please write as many polite words that correspond to each of the following descriptions as you can in the blanks.

**A. Body Parts**

1. buttocks

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2. woman's outer sexual organ

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3. man's outer sexual organ

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4. bosom

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**B. Physical Appearance**

5. fat

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6. short

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7. ugly

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**C. Body Waste**

8. feces

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9. urine

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10. to fart

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11. menstruation

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**D. Action or State**

12. to die

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13. pregnant

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14. stupid

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15. having sexual intercourse

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16. poor

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17. mental illness

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18. handicapped

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**E. Illness**

19. AIDS

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20. cancer

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Thank you very much for your kind cooperation.

**VITAE**



## VITAE

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