Euphemisms – Sweet Talking and Face Saving in Business Relations

Cristina Mihaela ZAMFIR
"Ovidius" University of Constanța

Abstract: *The paper concentrates on the role of mastering linguistic variations through the practice of vocabulary repertoires. It attempts to provide a careful analysis of the linguistic communication focused on contextual business factors. By using widespread sources of informal language, the article offers a powerful working companion to all those interested in touching base with specialized language communities with a threefold purpose: the first part discusses the essential aspects of informal/'colloquial' language (euphemisms, slang, jargon, colloquialisms) which crop up in corporate communication. The second part highlights the technique of creating euphemisms and inventing a vocabulary of euphemistic verbs and idioms. The third part examines the linguistic concepts of doublespeak, or doubletalk, and doublethink. The findings show that euphemisms are the ace we have up our sleeve to fight against verbal taboos, a form of linguistic polishing/whitewashing language.*

Keywords: *business relations, colloquial language, euphemisms, linguistic polishing, verbal taboos*

Introduction: Mastering Linguistic Variations through the Practice of Vocabulary Repertoires

Attempting to talk about informal language (nonstandard forms, unconventional usages, vocabulary and grammar) that is up-to-date, accurate and enjoyable is one thing; writing a paper out of the material is quite another. Through a careful understanding of the linguistic communication focused on contextual business factors, I have tried to create a working tool that will prove to be a useful companion to all those interested in touching base with specialized language communities.

Areas such as sports, military, law, engineering, or computers have been the widespread sources of informal language. As a result, they generated linguistic variations, often seen as additional complicating factors, like euphemisms, slang, jargon, colloquialisms, or acronyms with a twofold purpose:

1.to set them apart from the language used by the masses;
2.to connect like-minded people and distinguish between in-group members and outsiders.

By using a repertoire of spoken, informal, familiar, or polite levels of usage, our language can influence a situation, either in the positive or the negative way. A scale of contrasting values is marked by formal, stiff, cold elements (dysphemisms and some forms of jargon), polite, tactful or tentative language (extensive use of euphemisms), and informal, casual, familiar language restricted to a specific profession or group (slang expressions, colloquialisms, idioms). In Leech and Svartvik's (2002) highly suggestive words: "Informal language, also called 'colloquial', is the language of ordinary conversation and of private interaction in general" (Leech, Svartvik 30). Drawing on their analysis, we could use the phrase *language behaviour* to refer to the choice of language that each of us has when the occasion demands. Thus, we can switch varieties according to the field of discourse, medium, or attitude. One set of lexical items which traces back to the principle of politeness (Lakoff 1973; Grice 1975; Brown, Levinson 1987; Leech 1983, 2005, 2007, 2014) and indirectness is represented by euphemisms.

Leech considers politeness to be primary, as setting the scene for the cooperative principle to operate on. In his "*The Pragmatics of politeness*" (2014) he advocates the idea of speaking "in such a way as to (appear to) give benefit not to yourself but to the other person(s), especially the person(s) you are conversing with" (Leech 3).

Euphemisms – A Form of Linguistic Polishing

Whether *glittering generalities, purr words* (Mills 2000), *inoffensive expressions* (Chaney, Martin 2007), or *sweet talking* (Allan, Burridge 2006), ***euphemisms*** are the ace we have up our sleeve to fight against verbal taboos and other categories of offensive language (swearing, insults, derogatory comments).

In my opinion, euphemisms take the sting out of harsh words making the unpalatable seem palatable, the offensive seem inoffensive, and the impolite seem polite. Speaking in euphemisms is a shield against *strong*/*dispreferred* language, a form of linguistic polishing. Companies prefer speaking about 'downsizing' or 'restructuring' rather than staff being dismissed, business people will not say that they close, or get rid of a company by selling it, but that they 'divest' downstream businesses. Products are 'low-end' or 'a bargain', not cheap. When we delay talking about an unpleasant subject, we use the fancy expression 'beat around the bush'. And if we cannot continue to operate our business and pay its debts we simply 'go bust', we don't recognize that we are broke, but instead 'have a negative cash flow position'. Why are we doing this? Why are we whitewashing language

like this? In my opinion, a compelling reason would be saving face, on the one hand, and avoid embarrassing or offending the hearer, on the other.

The studies of Lakoff's (1973) logic of politeness (Rule 1: Don't Impose; Rule 2: Give Options; Rule 3: Make the Hearer Feel Good), Leech's "Politeness Principle" which extends Lakoff's maxim of "be polite" by adding six more maxims (i.e. tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement and sympathy), and Brown and Levinson's more modern approach to and more precise formulation of the account of politeness (the 'face saving' view) make us rethink social interactions. Special emphasis is placed on the social norm of 'being thoughtful' to create and maintain positive relationships. That is why it goes without saying why we prefer politeness and a conscious self-censoring of language, although taking them to extremes would make us look ridiculously pedantic. There is no better-known antidote to offensive language and taboo words than the use of euphemisms. The etymology of the term *euphemism* (Greek *eu* "good, well" and *phēmē* "talk") speaks for itself: replacing the original signifier, i.e. the offensive and unpleasant word (taboo), by a vague and indirect expression (euphemism) that sounds good to the listener; or, as Neaman and Silver (1990) put it "substituting an inoffensive or pleasant term for a more explicit, offensive one, thereby veneering the truth by using kinds words" (Neaman, Silver 4). Others are of the opinion that euphemisms obfuscate language:

> Euphemisms are the stealth bombers of rhetoric. At first glance they are not visible, but their attacks are insidious: by the time you become aware of them, the damage is already done. (Krogerus, Tschäppeler 166)

I consider that euphemisms, as a part of the politeness principle, should be used with moderation in business oral and written discourse. A good knowledge of euphemisms shapes a common feature: a polite, friendly version of words/phrases deemed unpleasant, negative, or embarrassing. Euphemisms crop up in corporate communication with reference to describing status, the level of economic and business affairs, losing a job, money, problems at work, and so on. Corporate announcements or financial reports are packed with euphemisms: 'lay-offs' instead of redundancies, 'career counselling' for poor/unsatisfactory performance results, 'adjusting remuneration' rather than cutting someone's pay, 'make a clean break' instead of separate quickly and completely, 'negative growth' for losses in financial accounts.

A phrase like 'hard landing' is arguably a euphemism which describes an economy slowing down after a period of fast growth and going into recession (a period of time with no growth or negative growth).

Lexical (affective words, vague expressions, weakened negative words) and grammatical (passive voice, past tense, conditional sentences) manifestations of euphemisms occur extensively in face-to-face interactions and commercial correspondences.

At first sight we get direct/harsh/blunt/hurtful/upsetting meanings coded into vague/mild/indirect/polite/gentle euphemisms which seem good and positive. Downright, offensive words turn into amusing expressions on the side. Even the most unacceptable, taboo terms can be put into the light of blandness to downplay the gravity of the situation. There is little doubt that people turn a deaf ear to bad words or behaviours which cause discomfort or injury. That is what censoring of language and taboos arise out of.

A discussion of politeness and impoliteness leads to the motivations for preferring orthophemisms, euphemisms, or dysphemisms. As Allan and Burridge (2006) argue, language expressions are constantly subject to censoring and taboo, suggesting that cross-varietal synonymy should predominate in examining the effects on language:

> Discussion of taboo and the censoring of language naturally leads to a consideration of politeness and impoliteness, and their interaction with euphemism (sweet talking), dysphemism (speaking offensively) and orthophemism (straight talking). The term *euphemism* is well known; but its counterpart *dysphemism* rarely appears in ordinary language. *Orthophemism* is a term we have coined in order to account for direct or neutral expressions that are not sweet-sounding, evasive or overly polite (euphemistic), nor harsh, blunt or offensive (dysphemistic) […] Important to this discussion is the concept of *cross-varietal synonymy*, i.e. words that have the same meaning as other words used in different contexts. (Allan, Burridge 29)

I strongly believe that a euphemism is a two-sided coin: one with honest intention, used carefully not to insult or upset, and another castigated as cynical and dishonest, used to avoid accepting responsibility or blame. It is not in vain to say that euphemisms are the most forceful instrument of manipulation through the power of language to control thoughts.

In the business language, for instance, the subject of 'firing' or 'cutting jobs' is so blunt and unpleasant that we have created a series of euphemisms to mask the rudeness of certain words:

e.g.:

- ***to fire***: *to let people go, to lay off, to downsize, to rightsize, to re-engineer* (lose administrative staff), *to streamline, to lever sb out.*
- ***to be/get fired/rejected for a job***: *to be offered a career change/an early retirement opportunity, to receive career/employee transition, to be realigned, to be involuntarily separated, to be partially proficient (you are plain unqualified), left to pursue other interests, made redundant, to be laid off/released/canned/axed, to get /be given the axe (be dismissed, suddenly dismiss/get rid of someone in order to save money), be discharged, to terminate.*
- ***firing****: relayering, a surplus reduction in personnel, workforce imbalance correction.*
- ***to be unemployed***: *(in) between jobs, out of work/job, embarked on a journey of self-discovery (jobless), on the job hunt, without gainful employment.*
- ***to quit****: to resign, to give notice, hand in/tender one's resignation, to change career paths, to pursue other options.*

*The purpose of using such a language is to avoid or shift responsibility, a deliberate concealme*nt of a real and sad reality.

Money and ***pay*** are rarely pronounced in the workplace, for some reason or another, instead they are expressed as euphemisms, such as:

Money: *provide/report/rise* ***income***, *generate* ***revenue***, *increase* ***profit***, *rise/increase* ***wage***, *allocate* ***funds***, *generate* ***wealth***, *stimulate/attract/encourage* ***investments***, *raise/inject new* ***capital***, ***salaries, profit margins, haul*** (a large amount of money, e.g. *a fine haul*), ***flush*** (adj. *be flush*: possessing a lot of money at a particular time, e.g. *Firms are flush with funds and are making new acquisitions*; have plenty of money to spend, e.g. *I'm feeling flush at the moment).*

Money euphemisms are achieved through the use of colloquial rather than formal terms acquiring both positive and negative connotations:

e.g.:

[+] *megabucks* (a very large amount of money), *green/greenness* (n) or *the green stuff* (adj. AmE money); *nest egg* (an amount of money that you keep to use later, especially in retirement:
e.g. *a retirement nest egg – I will use a part of my nest egg for home repairs*).

[-] (*disapproval*) *lucre* (dirty money, e.g. *filthy lucre*); *funny money* (fake money; counterfeit cash, artificially inflated currency: *At the car sale, the buyer was tricked out of $5,000 funny money*); *pocket* (n. money that someone possesses for spending: e.g. *He has to* ***dig deep into his pockets*** *to open a hypermarket*), *be out of pocket* (to remain out of funds after a transaction: e.g. *The warehouse owner claims he was left $50,000* ***out of pocket*** *after paying the fire damage*), *line your pockets* (disapproving, to become richer by dishonest and unfair means: e.g. *Companies are* ***lining their pockets*** *by refurbishing electronic devices*); *be in the hole* (AmE. Owe money).

Pay: *compensation, compensation package/plan*

We find many such "softer" terms in the business environment. We cannot say that we totally agree with some of them, but that we find them rather confusing; one example is the word *compensation*, used as if we needed to award / grant compensatory payments to someone who has been harmed or hurt in some way, suffered injury or loss, or simply to reduce the bad effects of something (*by way of compensation,* used ironically to refer to employees being compensated for doing their job). Some people go ahead and talk about "your compensation plan" meaning, in fact, "your pay". Others, more euphemistically, say *Excuse me. You have an outstanding payment with us*, or *You've got quite a few debts still outstanding with us* (vague, indirect) instead of saying *You owe us money* (blunt, direct). Although none of the mild versions changes the situation, we might persuade our debtors to give/pay us that money back.

Besides the euphemisms related to firing, cutting jobs, money and pay, other euphemisms used in current business usage may refer to people in authority positions, such as:

boss: *manager, executive, superior, director, head (of department), leader, chair, supervisor*

Judging by the number of euphemisms describing homelessness, poverty, various states of employment, we seem to fear the prospect/thought of being in a similar situation:

homeless: *on the streets, urban outdoorsman*;

poor: *economically disadvantaged* (having social problems such as lack of money), *underprivileged* (very poor, with bad living conditions and educational opportunities), *needy, in need*, *low-income* ([only before a noun] especially in the business world, it is similar in meaning with "underprivileged " and "economically disadvantaged", e.g. *low-income*

families), *low-paid* ([only before a noun] used in the business world, e.g. *low-paid jobs*), *not one red cent* (no money at all).

Moreover, the term *underprivileged* is likely to raise a translation problem. If *privileged* means "being treated better than others", then *underprivileged* would simply mean "not being treated better than others". In other words, "normally". But it doesn't. It just means "poor". "Poor countries" and "third world countries" become *developing countries*, whereas the ones in an early stage of development are called *emerging countries*, with *emerging economies* (playing a determining role in trade and finance). People who enter another country to live and work there permanently are not referred to as "illegal immigrants/aliens", but as *undocumented workers*.

Furthermore, business euphemisms approach the subject of 'richness' gently, suggesting indirect, softening phrases which are substituted for the straightforward naming of a boastful term:

rich: *wealthy* (having a lot of money, valuable possessions), *well-off* (having plenty of money and an increased living standard), *well-to-do* (benefiting from a fortunate financial situation and with a high social status), *comfortable* (without financial care/financially secured, able to afford buying whatever thing that you want without worrying about the costs), *affluent* (opulent, abounding in houses and expensive things), *prosperous* (thriving financially and enjoying successful business prospects).

The idea is shared that 'affluent' and 'prosperous' are fairly formal words used to describe societies with a successful economy, reaching a high standard of living.

Besides, among these euphemistic adjectives, *well-off* is particularly common. The four gradable adjectives *wealthy* (wealthier/wealthiest), *well-off* (better off/best off), *comfortable* (more comfortable/most comfortable) and *prosperous* (more prosperous/most prosperous) can be used both before a noun, i.e. ***wealthy*** *investors,* ***well-off*** *families,* ***comfortable*** *retirement,* ***prosperous*** *businessman/commercial district/landowner,* and after it, preceded by an adverb, i.e. *He is* ***really well-off,*** *They're* ***extremely/immensely/fabulously wealthy***, "*Can you really afford this posh restaurant? You must be* ***terribly/ pretty comfortable*** (syn. You must be *comfortably off* – you are fairly rich), *This landowner is becoming* ***quite prosperous***.

In addition, an adjective like 'comfortable', for example, is closely linked to context, time and place. If we walk into a manager's office and

declare that he is comfortable, then people will imagine that we are referring to his furniture (chairs, sofa, desk) or the spacious working area when, in fact, we want to point to his high status.

More acceptable versions of words that are generally considered overly blunt elbow their way through the corporate buzzwords:

super rich people: *job creators*
rich investors: *deep pockets*
superior: *big enchilada* (a person with the highest position in an organization), *show coach* (a true leader who has great accomplishments in his activity and becomes an inspiration for his team), *honcho* (someone who holds a high position in an organization and has a say in the decision making process: e.g. *the head honcho*).

Furthermore, through their different uses, certain euphemisms help us remain in a tone of politeness. This is the case of vague expressions which describe ***old age*** terms: "old" is usually replaced by "elderly person" which, in turn, becomes *senior citizen*, *pensioner*, or *retiree*. Unlike *pensioner*, which is more common in British English, *senior citizen* and *retiree* are restricted to American English. Moreover, a *senior citizen* may split into – "senior" and "citizen"- which might not sound that "old" after all, since a "senior" is also someone who has a higher rank in an organization and knows best how things are in the company.

In addition, the word "retiree" is no worse: it's not necessary to be old in order to get retired/retire. The *retiree* is also someone who manages to reinvent himself/herself by designing something new or breathe life into a new project or business to keep things moving forward (*oxygen move*, euphemistically speaking). From this perspective, a retiree should not be confused with a *retired in place* ("tenured") employee who still holds a position, but keeps counting the days until retirement.

On the contrary, describing workplace problems by shaking off unpleasant phrases which often press the panic button and cause nervousness is likely to ease the strain of employees. Thus, the word "problem" is too negative for some workers. Instead, it is swapped for the milder and more diplomatic *issue*. Still, in a competitive and affirming workplace, the word ***issue*** is regarded as too "unconstructive" and negative, just like "problem"; hence, the word *challenge* is preferred to it given that people always want to turn something negative (*problem, issue*) into something positive, an invitation to test one's strength, skill, or ability in an interesting and constructive way: something to keep them plug-in. In other words,

euphemistic phrases are a useful tool to speak figuratively about what gets us worried or makes us anxious and unhappy (a worrisome problem) in more indirect words: We *don't* say "worried about the new financial deficit". We *say* that we are "concerned".

Creating Euphemisms

As far as the techniques used to create euphemisms are concerned, one of them is to find a longer word/phrase which conveys an idea that has become a social taboo. Many organizations prefer technical terms such as *managing company stakeholders* to distract attention from the act of '***bribing***' their employees. A list of euphemisms for the word 'bribe' makes it less embarrassing for our ears: *grease somebody's palm* (to offer someone dirty money secretly in exchange for some personal benefits), *grease the wheels* (to influence someone by offering money to get advantage), *hush money* (money given to someone to prevent them from divulging information, embarrassing secrets to other people), *kickback* (an illicit recompense that is paid to someone in return for their help: e.g. *accept kickback, take a sum of money in kickback*), *square* (to persuade a high-ranking manager to help you by promising him/her a financial inducement: e.g. *square officials*). But my favourite one is *lunch and learn* (a management approach to extend the employees' working program by scheduling a training event during the lunch period).

On another line of thinking, even describing '***lying***' is not as easy as it seems. Most of those who pretend to talk 'in all honesty' look smarmy, sympathetic, but are totally insincere and outright/complete liars. Since lying is such an ugly thing, we give it different names by inventing a vocabulary of euphemistic verbs and idioms used to avoid offending the hearer: *being economical with the truth* (misrepresenting the truth), *misspeak* (an amusing euphemism used especially by politicians to describe something that seems to have happened accidentally, unintentionally; it is nothing else but a lame excuse for not telling the truth), *fabricate* (to make up a story in order to drive someone on a wrong track: e.g. *fabricate evidence*), *telling porkies (porky pies* – lies, used as a euphemistic dysphemism in rhyming slang), *telling fibs/fibbing* (telling a white lie), *spinning a yarn* (a nautical idiom which means inventing a colourful story with many fancy elements, totally unreal, but pure lies), *perjuring yourself* (telling an untruth and breaking the oath with a false testimony), *a ball of wool* (syn. Yarn in AmE, an untrue statement in order to astutely trick someone to obtain an advantage → *pull the wool over somebody's eyes*), *polite prevarication/equivocation* (trying to hide the truth), *concocting* (inventing an explanation to hoodwink someone), *bamboozling* someone (deceiving or misleading someone), *deluding* someone

(nonchalantly fooling someone into believing an untrue story), *not being transparent* (a lie, excuse that deceives people), *telling/committing a terminological inexactitude,* or *colour the truth.*

Doublespeak, **Doubletalk**, **Doublethink**

The linguistic concepts of ***doublespeak***, or ***doubletalk***, and ***doublethink*** (Lutz 1987; Orwell 2004; Allan, Burridge 2006) shape the context in which they are used by deliberately disguising the meaning of words.

As a result, new expressions take on different connotations depending on the context of reference. They may be bold euphemisms (*delayering*, *streamlining*, *deselecting*, or *capsizing* may be preferred to 'layoffs') or the placement of words/phrases lending to different interpretations (*lead balloon* for 'complete failure', *chasing butterflies* for an 'easily distracted person' or *directionally accurate* for describing a 'failed guess').

Practising idiomatic expressions in business oral interactions has become very frequent and encouraged users to break the barriers of formal communication, improve their fluency, and invent phrases which, unlike standard English, do not comply with/conform to the strict grammatical or logical rules of language.

Having in view that euphemisms lessen the effects of dysphemistic expressions, we can state that taboo language which surrounds certain words and phrases through their power to shock, upset, or offend can be avoided by using equivalent constructions, as follows:

- When we get a fancy job name instead of a pay rise, this is called an *uptitle*, which is almost the same as 'monetary compensation'.
- If a company *pays* its employees *on the lump* (BrE)/*takes the lumps* (AmE), it means that it has serious financial problems and tries to manage a difficult situation when things are not going well: the self-employed receive a fixed payment for each working day.
- Similarly, we are not conducting a crippled business, we are helping a *lame duck* walk again properly and regain power.
- On a lighter note, *golden handcuffs* or *golden hellos*, when speaking of retaining important employees/new employees, are big pay-offs/incentives which chain good staff to the company and persuade them not to go to work for a competitor.
- On the contrary, senior employees/top executives have to be on the look-out if the company they work for says it is ready to offer them *golden parachutes* or *golden handshakes*. Such generous compensation packages account for their layoffs, especially when they are forced to leave, or if the company is sold/taken over.

- If we are a rating agency, superior performing bonds converted into junk bonds due to weakening financial conditions are *fallen angels*.
- Watch out if the company *promotes you to customer*: a euphemism saying you should pack your stuff and go home. You're fired / unable to work here again.

I agree with Buzarna-Tihenea and Nădrag (2018) who view idiomatic expressions as a way to "pervade English with a particular flavor and give it a large perspective, bright character and color" (Buzarna-Tihenea, Nădrag 23). As they aptly state: "The idiomatic expressions with figurative meanings are familiar to English native speakers, often confusing non-native English speakers, who struggle to decipher them" (Buzarna-Tihenea, Nădrag 27). The following examples illustrate this idea: *bull in a China shop* (a person who is very careless and disorganized, having a clumsy manner of dealing with a delicate job situation); *go belly up* (go bankrupt, fail: e.g. *Most startups go belly up because they can't pay their debts*); *wet behind the ears* (a very young and inexperienced or immature employee); *bite the dust* (a business which is on the verge of failing but is saved by a new investor at the last minute); *don't give up your day job* (recommending someone not to get involved in an unrealistic/unsuccessful job plan: e.g. *It's good that you want to become an accountant, but don't give up your day job*); *go pear-shaped* (if a plan/activity goes pear-shaped, it suffers a dramatic reversal: e.g. *The company went pear-shaped due to bad management*); *throw a spanner in the works* (complicate, or destroy a plan/process, thus setting barriers to success); *frogs choose the boss* (delay a decision and terminate unfavourably); *look after your onions* (mind your own business).

Conclusions

Through the paper I have suggested numerous examples of bonding and ingratiating ourselves with our interlocutors. The tactful, tentative language that we use when communicating often goes beyond politeness since it subtly influences the way listeners see reality.

The friendly versions of words/phrases deemed unpleasant or embarrassing are exceedingly valuable tools to help us appear more cooperative and likeable to our listeners and to prevent conflict from arising out of the use of harsh language. It has been proved that verbal softeners are very common in ordinary talk, we probably use them a great deal everyday, although we are hardly aware that we are doing it.

Besides, they crop up in corporate communication where mild, indirect, gentle/vague phrases (as main forms of euphemisms) can contribute a lot to the creation of favourable business relationships.

Findings show that knowing when to use bland expressions and when not to is mostly based on the understanding of and familiarization with the prevailing value systems of particular speech communities as long as the establishment of long-term cooperation relationships is business people' ultimate goal.

Works Cited

Allan, Keith, Kate Burridge. *Forbidden Words: Taboo and the Censoring of Language*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Brown, Penelope, Stephen C. Levinson. *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Buzarna-Tihenea (Gălbează), Alina, Lavinia Nădrag. *A Study on English Idioms*. București: Editura Universitară, 2018.

Chaney, Lillian H., Jeanette S. Martin. *Intercultural Business Communication*. 4th ed. New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007.

Grice, H. Paul. "Logic and Conversation". *Syntax and Semantics*. Vol.3: Speech acts. Eds. Peter Cole and Jerry L. Morgan. New York: Academic Press, 1975. 41-58.

Krogerus, Mikael, Roman Tschäppeler. *The Communication Book: 44 Ideas for Better Conversations Every Day*. United Kingdom, London: Penguin Books Ltd., 2018.

Lakoff, Robin. "The logic of politeness, or minding your p's and q's". *Papers from the 9th Regional Meeting, Chicago Linguistics Society*. Eds. Claudia W. Corum et al. Chicago: Chicago Linguistics Society, 9 (1973):292-305.

Leech, Geoffrey. *Principles of Pragmatics*. London: Longman, 1983.

Leech, Geoffrey. "Politeness: is there an East-West divide?" *Journal of Foreign Languages 6* (2005): 3-31.

Leech, Geoffrey. "Politeness: is there an East-West divide?" *Journal of Politeness Research* 3 (2007):167-206.

Leech, Geoffrey. *The Pragmatics of Politeness*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Leech, Geoffrey, Jan Svartvik. *A Communicative Grammar of English*, 3rd ed. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2002.

Lutz, William. *Doublespeak: From "Revenue Enhancement" to "Terminal Living": How Government, Business, Advertisers, and Others Use Language to Deceive You*. New York: Harper & Row, 1987.

Mills, Harry. *Artful Persuasion: How to Command Attention, Change Minds, and Influence People*. USA, New York: Amacom, 2000.

Neaman, Judith S., Carole G. Silver. *Kind Words: A Thesaurus of Euphemisms*. New York: Facts On File, 1990.

Orwell, George. *1984*. London: Penguin Books, 2004.