

Euphemism

(Greek 'fair speech') The substitution of a mild and pleasant expression for a harsh and blunt one, such as 'to pass away' for 'to die'.

Cuddon, J. A. *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*. 3rd ed. London: Penguin, 1991, p. 313.

Further examples:

A man is helping the police with their inquiries	a suspected criminal is detained by the police and probably under close arrest
A large accident	the explosion of a nuclear power station
A member of the lower socio-economic bracket	a poor person
Lower ability group	slow learners
Terminal illness	a fatal illness