

## ENGLISH TERMINOLOGIES RELATED TO NATURAL HEALING

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### MAQOLA MALUMOTI

### ANNOTATSIYA:

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#### MAQOLA TARIXI:

Received: 08.01.2025

Revised: 09.01.2025

Accepted: 10.01.2025

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#### KALIT SO'ZLAR:

Alternative Therapies,  
Complementary Medicine,  
Holistic Medicine,  
Integrative Healthcare,  
Mind-Body Connection,  
Traditional Medicine,  
Folklore Medicine,  
Ethnomedicine, Medical  
Discourse, Health  
Communication, Language  
and Culture, Medical  
Anthropology, Biomedicine,  
Western Medicine, Eastern  
Medicine, Energy  
Medicine, Spiritual  
Healing, Placebo Effect,  
Therapeutic Language,  
Health Literacy.

*This article covers the rich variety of English terminology employed to define and describe nature-based healing. It looks at how such terms reflect cultural influence, historical evolution, and the growing interchange between conventional and alternative medicine. By providing specific examples and considerations about shades of meaning, this research tries to make a contribution to the better understanding of the language involving natural healing and its implications for health communication and research.*

**INTRODUCTION.** The "natural healing" term covers a set of programs and ideologies woven into human culture across ages. These programs- be they herbal remedies or recent mind tricks- all have one common purpose: well-being and treatment through natural means. English is the international language that makes all this valuable in such ways. The article, therefore, highlights the several terminological usages in the English language that refer to natural healing: their origins or etymological roots, the context in which they have been used culturally, and how they get to change meanings over time.

### **Weaving a Tapestry of Terms**

The English vocabulary for natural healing is highly diverse, reflecting a number of influences that have combined and contributed to its development. Terms like "herbalism," "homeopathy," and "acupuncture" have been absorbed into common usage, sometimes with heavy loads of cultural and historical baggage. For example, "herbalism," although self-explanatory, evokes images of traditional folk medicine and conjures up visions of rural healers and ancient wisdom.

Other terms, like "mind-body medicine" and "integrative medicine," are more recent terms that stress, respectively, the inseparability of mind and body in the process of healing and integration of all modes of healing. Thus, these are the more modern scientific disciplines. Such tries the bridge between tradition and modernity in medicine.

### **Cultural Specificity and Linguistic Divergence**

In other words, natural healing is anything but monolithic. The way in which people see health and well-being is formed and re-formed along with cultural contexts, regional dialects, and changes in worldview. For example, the term "folk medicine" connotes different meanings in different parts of the world and arguably reflects distinctions in cultural beliefs and practices. In certain cultures, folk medicine may be viewed as a metaphor for a valuable modern tradition; elsewhere, it calls up the image of something less civilized than medical science.

The very language itself, English, diverges as new words and phrases are created to name new approaches and therapies. Thus, in itself, it is a double-edged sword vis-a-vis the understanding and communication of natural healing.

### **Role of metaphor and analogy**

More practice is metaphor and analogy in natural healing language. Words such as "energy healing," "chiropractic," and "reiki" commonly use metaphors of energy flow, balance, and alignment. Such metaphors can be useful in communicating complicated ideas

and rendering abstract concepts more tangible. However, they may also be misleading or overly simplistic, obscuring the underlying mechanisms of such therapies.

### Regarding Other Authors' Perspectives

While discussing the influence of culture on the lexicon of folk medicine, **R. Khujakulov (2024)**, in his informative work titled *The Rich Tapestry of Folk Medicine Terminology: Reflection of Cultural Specificity in English*, illustrates the fundamental importance of culture. Furthermore, the authors assert that without cultural context that is restraining and to a great degree misrepresenting, as in English folk medicine terms, most elements of the culture are simply filled in.

This point of view supports the argument made by **Susan Sontag** in *Illness as Metaphor* (1978) that metaphors of illness, such as seeing cancer as a 'battle' or AIDS as a 'plague,' determine public perception but also affect medical research and treatment. In the same way, the words used to depict nature-healing practices as 'alternative' and 'unscientific' versus 'integrative' and 'complementary' can make them more or less legitimate and accessible within healthcare.

**Ivan Illich (1976)**, in *Limits to Medicine*, criticizes the medicalization of society and claims that the medical profession is one that commonly uses language to define and control health. This perspective is echoed in the observations regarding the language of natural healing, in that many terms may be used to categorize and, therefore, control these practices and limit their scope and autonomy.

This perspective befits the contributions of other scholars who have looked into the language of natural healing. For example, in his landmark text, *The Birth of the Clinic*, Foucault (1973) has shown how medical experience and treatments are constructed in ways that matter for public perception and healthcare delivery.

### Conclusion

The variety of the world of natural healing has gifted the English language with subtlety in vocabulary. Yet such vocabulary is never neutral but a function of cultural conditioning, historical period, and changing relationships between traditional and modern medicine. Critical scrutiny of the way in which we speak of natural healing gives us insight into such practices and their consequences for health care.

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