

A STYLISTIC STUDY OF EUPHEMISM IN JOHN DONNE'S SELECTED POEMS

دراسة أسلوبية لظاهرة التلطيف في قصائد مختارة للشاعر الإنجليزي جون دون

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ABSTRACT

John Donne is known as the founder of Metaphysical poetry .He chose poetry as a medium of expressing emotions, ideas, and transmitting attitudes which require skillful and powerful use of language. Donne's language is known for its richness with figures of speech that actually enables him to refer and discuss matters which otherwise are not published due to strict social censorship. Such libelous issues are (religious fanaticism, political theories, sexuality, death etc.) which with euphemism the poet can freely tackle.

The present study investigates the linguistic act of euphemism in John Donne's three selected poems (The Flea, Death Be Not Proud, and The Good – Morrow) stylistically to see the types and the pragmatic strategies used for showing the act in his poems. The study basically aims at analyzing the types of euphemisms used in the poems. It also aims at investigating the strategies used for expressing the euphemistic expressions in the poems. The study hypothesizes that (1) metaphor is the main pragmatic strategy used for showing euphemisms in Donne's poetry, (2) Sexual and Death euphemisms are given more attention than political and religious euphemisms in Donne's three selected poems, and (3) the interpretation of euphemisms in the three poems is contextually determined.

The present study verifies the hypotheses and yields that: (1) metaphor is the only strategy used by the poet for showing euphemistic expressions of 'sex' and 'death' in the three poems.(2)

The poet has only limited his usages of euphemisms to the sexual and death ones in his three poems.(3) The interpretation of the euphemistic expressions used in the three poems greatly relies on the context.

1. INTRODUCTION

Users of language communicate with each other using various expressions. These expressions are either explicitly or implicitly used depending on whether they are face saving or face threatening acts. Sometimes, the users attempt to maintain social harmony between the participants by switching up the unpleasant or embarrassing terms with pleasant and polite ones using a powerful linguistic mechanism. This mechanism is called 'euphemism' (Ham 2001:9). Euphemism plays an important part of English. Basically, it is a crucial mean which is used by most people, especially, politicians, journalists, writers and others to perform various functions. Additionally, it can be utilized to express various daily realities like the business world, broad communications, and so forth. Hence, achieving reasonable command of euphemism is prerequisite to comprehend such realities.

The linguistic act of euphemisms can be problematic because most of them are inherently ambiguous or vague. They can shift the recipients' thinking to wrong lines. Grasping the user's implicated meaning of euphemistic expressions requires resorting to context which plays a vital role in this perspective. As for forming euphemism, users of language have to violate at least one or two of Gricean maxims of the cooperative principle (quantity, quality, relevance and manner) which give rise to conversational implicature. As stated previously, speakers always euphemize for many considerations that one of them is politeness. So, there is a close interaction between politeness and Gricean maxims. Thus, euphemism is a pragmatic mechanism which reflects the organic interlock between politeness and conversational maxims.

The present study is limited to dealing with euphemistic expressions in only three poems by John Donne: *The Flea*, *Death Be Not proud*, and *The Good – Morrow*. The researcher has chosen only

three poems of John Donne because they only contain euphemistic expressions among the rest of the poet's poems. Moreover, they provide enough material for analysis. The models adopted in the study are: Grice's (1989) theory of implicature, and Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness and notion of face.

The present study aims at identifying the euphemistic expressions used in the three poems. Additionally, it aims at identifying the strategies used in the three poems for showing the euphemistic expressions.

This study is based on three hypotheses: (1) *Metaphor is the main pragmatic strategy used for showing euphemisms in Donne's poetry.* (2) *Sexual and Death euphemisms are given more attention than political and religious euphemisms in Donne's three selected poems.* (3) *The interpretation of euphemisms in the three poems is contextually determined.*

1.2 Defining Euphemism

For Rawson (1981:1), euphemism is a powerful linguistic mean which speakers resort to for switching up unpleasant or harsh words with something thought to be pleasant or less direct. Additionally, Leech (1974:53) semantically defines euphemism as the practice of referring to something offensive or delicate in terms that make it sound more pleasant or becoming than it really is. He adds that the euphemism is "the linguistic equivalent of disinfectant" (ibid). Lyons (1981:151) states that the phenomenon of euphemism refers to "the avoidance of taboo words". Moreover; Simpson and Weiner (1989:210) assume that euphemism is "that figure of speech which consists in the substitution of a word or expression of comparatively favourable implication or less unpleasant associations, instead of the harsher or more offensive one that would more precisely designate what is intended". Poole (1999:119) confirms that euphemistic expressions are words which are normally softer than the original ones. Additionally, Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1978) defines the communicative act of euphemism as the use of a

pleasanter, less direct name for something thought to be unpleasant. Although the act of euphemism has been defined differently; all of them share one common concept that there are some references in our life should not be ostensibly or bluntly mentioned for politeness considerations. Hence, euphemism is a mask of using a sweet-coated expression to hide the unpleasantness the referent naturally has for sake of maintaining the interaction between the participants, and reflecting a 'positive face' which is the public self-image that every person tries to maintain (Brown and Levinson, 1987:61).

1.3 Strategies for Formation of Euphemism

Scholars, like Warren (1992:133), point out that English euphemism takes various forms in interactions.⁽¹⁾ Some of them may take one of the followings:

A-Abstraction: It functions as a tool of avoiding the recipient from any unpleasant or an embarrassing truth. Speakers may replace the word 'die' with 'pass away' or 'sleep'. For instance, Larson (1994:117) gives a nice expression for the word 'died' saying: "He is sleeping with his father in heaven".

B-Abbreviations: Durell (1968: ix) assumes that users of language sometimes resort to use the initials of words as a euphemism strategy for referring to the bluntly offensive referent instead of saying that referent completely. For example, saying: 'SOB' for 'Son of Bitch' or 'GD' in cursing for 'God Damn it!'

C-Terms of foreign and / or technical origin: For example: (derriere, security breach, feces occur).

D-Mispronunciation: Sometimes, speakers intentionally resort to alteration of pronunciation as a mean of euphemism to distance the interlocutors from profanity. For example, saying: 'freaking' instead of 'fucking' or 'shoot' for 'shit' (Rawson 1981:254).

(1) There are other syntactic and semantic categorizations of euphemism set by Warren (1992) and others, but the researcher has picked up what fits the practical part of his work.

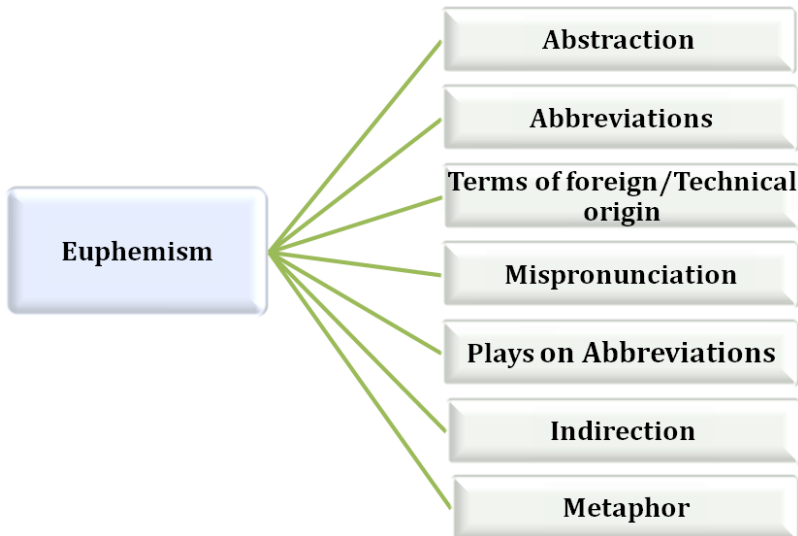
E- Plays on abbreviations: For example: ('barbecue sauce' for 'bull shit', 'sugar honey ice tea' for shit, 'catch (or see) you next Tuesday' for "cunt"), etc.).

F- Indirection: Speakers may replace an explicit description of an action. For example, when participants speak of going to the bathroom or of others sleeping together.

G-Metaphor: Warren (1992:133) categorizes 'metaphor' under the semantic features of euphemism which she calls the 'semantic innovation' in her model. According to Warren (ibid) , metaphor refers to an implied comparison between two similar things – with an analogy that identifies one object with another and either ascribes to the first with connotation inherent in the other. For instance, speakers may the word 'melons' as a euphemism of ' women's breasts'.

The scheme below illustrates the types of euphemisms following Warren's (1992) classification after modifications:

Figure (1): The Researcher's Classification of Euphemism



1.4 Types of Euphemism

Scholars refer to various types of euphemism in their studies .Some of these types are:

1.4.1 Political Euphemism:

Generally speaking, politicians are the masters of remodeling ideas and hiding harsh truths. They purposefully attempt to make their lies look more real to the recipients by euphemizing them (Murphy 2000:17).For instance; when US government declared the war on Iraq in March 2003, they referred to the attack operation as “Operation Iraqi Freedom”, and the ‘invasion’ as ‘rescue mission’. So, euphemism can serve as a powerful tool for politicians to intentionally hide lies, disguise the truth, and guide public thoughts when discussing political or social matters.

1.4.2 Religious Euphemism

Generally speaking, people are sensitive to certain religious terms. They usually attempt to maintain the sacredness of religious names when conversing. For example, participants do not prefer to use certain holy religious names, like “God, Jesus, Lord, etc.”, in certain interactional occasions. So, to make using these religious expressions accepted, participants usually resort to cover up these original religious names by euphemizing them. For instance, the Americans sometimes say ‘gee’ for ‘Jesus’ and ‘gosh’ for ‘God’ when conversing.

1.4.3 Sexual Euphemism

People find it difficult or embarrassing to talk about topics of sex directly. Instead, they normally resort to various expressions which denote that topics. For example, they might say ‘making love’, ‘sleeping with’, ‘go to bed with’, or ‘laid’ to figuratively mean ‘having sexual intercourse with’. Moreover, people may also use euphemistic expressions as: ‘the great divide’ for ‘divorce’, ‘gay’ for ‘homosexual’, and ‘lost girl’ for ‘prostitute’. Thus, the linguistic phenomenon of euphemism is an effective tool which assists users of language in using embarrassing topics, like topics of sex, after making these socially accepted as possible.

1.4.4 Death Euphemism

Basically, the word 'death' is unfavoured to be explicitly mentioned in many societies due to the fear of many people from this natural phenomenon. So, the users of language normally resort to indirect expressions or seek pleasant one for the idea of death. Some common euphemistic expressions for death are: (*breathe one's last, fall asleep, pass away, pay the debt of nature, reach a better world, return to the dust, etc.*) (Rawson, 1981:228).

1.5 Features of Euphemism

Nilwati (2012:52-53) points out that the linguistic phenomenon of *euphemism* has three prominent features:

A-Euphemism is a universal phenomenon: It means that all languages or cultures have certain taboo expressions which are unfavoured to be mentioned explicitly. So, to make the conversation goes smoothly and to achieve social solidarity, speakers should resort to alternative words for the taboo ones.

B-Euphemism is culturally specific: The universality of euphemism in all languages does not mean that euphemism is identical in different cultures. But, it means that euphemism has a strong relevance to culture. For example, it is unfavoured for many Iraqis to say that someone died of 'cancer' due to the bad omen relevance; however, it is acceptable to mention the name of 'cancer' ostensibly for many others in the same society. Moreover, considering the acts as face saving or face threatening acts vary from one culture to another. For instance, it is proper to converse about marital status or age with Iraqis; whereas it is an embarrassing and offensive act when conversing with English- speaking community.

C-Euphemism is a dependent phenomenon: Scholars like, Allan and Burridge, point out that considering the phenomenon of euphemism is good or bad depends on who is the euphemizing and what is being euphemized (1991:11). Euphemism can be either delicate or dangerous. For instance, it can be delicate

when the act is associated with politeness so as to maintain both the one's face and the social harmony among interactants. Whereas, the act can also be dangerous when it is manipulative. For example, politicians may deliberately use euphemism as a deceiving tool for hiding or lessening the actual values of the things euphemized. They sometimes distort reality by making the bad looks good or acceptable for political purposes. For instance, calling some attacks as 'friendly fire'. This deliberate use of euphemism is linguistically known as 'doublespeak' (Katamba 2005:192). Additionally, the Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (1991:329) confirms that the term 'deception' refers to any attempt to provide false impression or 'to cause to accept as true or valid what is false or invalid'. Thus, the act of euphemism is dangerous when it hides or distorts reality.

1.5 Functions of Euphemism

Following some prominent authors, Al- Rifai (2007:142-143) issues ten general purposes for using euphemistic expressions in interaction:

- 1- Interactants sometimes resort to euphemistic expressions to soften the reality of what is going to be delivered to the recipients.
- 2- Euphemistic expressions are utilized to state what is socially difficult to express explicitly.
- 3- Euphemism is used as a strategy for disguising ideas which are unpleasant in reality.
- 4- Users of language sometimes utilize euphemistic expressions as a mean for softening negative connotations.
- 5- Euphemistic expressions are used to refer to forbidden objects without naming them explicitly.
- 6- Euphemistic expressions can be used for talking about topics which might be regarded as distasteful.

- 7- Euphemistic expressions are sometimes used to make something bad look better.
- 8- Conversants sometimes deploy some euphemistic expressions to prevent unwanted connotations.
- 9- Euphemism can be used as an intelligent method of generating new ideas perceiving things.
- 10- Some euphemistic expressions are used to prevent strong negative stereotypes from prejudicing a recipient.

1.6 Euphemism and Politeness

Scholars and pragmaticians, like (Lakoff (1973), Grice (1975), Searle (1975), Brown and Levinson (1987[1978]), Leech (1983), and so many others), dedicated considerable efforts to tackle of 'politeness in their studies for examining the right way to get successful in interaction. These pioneers have left an impact on many researchers to investigate the interpretation of politeness, its linguistic realization in different cultural frameworks, and the universality of the politeness theory.

Hornby (1988: 646) points out that being *polite means* "having, showing the possession of good manners and consideration for other people' verbally, i.e., performing polite expressions like 'how do you do?' and/or nonverbal, i.e., (greeting to a person with a bend or a node'. These two aspects (are observed in all communities though with slight differences in realizations and manifestation. (Lyons, 1981: 188). Idle (1988: 371) relates *linguistic politeness* to the appropriate use of language and successful communication saying:

"We speak language not only to transmit information, but also to establish the appropriate interactional relationship.... In speaking, we think of the content of what is to be conveyed, and at the same time of the linguistic expressions that will make the utterance appropriate to the given situational context. Appropriate speech establishes smooth communication. The language use associated with

smooth communication is what is referred to as linguistic politeness."

Concerning the linguistic phenomenon of euphemism, it is basically associated with the phenomenon of 'taboo' in sense that there is no need for euphemizing something unless it is unpleasant or offensive. Generally, in English-speaking contexts, people expect their public self-images to be appreciated in interactions. Saying something offensive may jeopardize the public self-images of the speaker and listener, because (1) it may put the speaker in a negative status among the recipients, and (2) it may run in a contrary to the recipient's expectation. Therefore, participants sometimes resort to euphemistic expressions as a mean for minimizing any potential threat the act may have, and hence, to achieve politeness. For example, someone may euphemistically say 'making love' as an indirect reference to 'having sexual intercourse' for politeness purposes. So, euphemism is sometimes utilized to reduce the weightiness of the threat the act may have. But, the question is how do the speakers evaluate the seriousness of the act so as to euphemize? The answer is that there three contextual factors which are crucial for the choice of indirectness (i.e., indirect reference to the possibly offensive act), and the maintenance of the relationship between participants. Those factors are of **status** (i.e., superiority, equality, and inferiority of positions), **distance** (i.e. familiarity and unfamiliarity), and **power** (i.e. solidarity or non-solidarity) (Trosborg 1995:209-218). Thus, speakers do not always euphemize when they refer to unfavoured topics all the times according to these contextual factors. For example, when the relationship between participants is close like close friends, the users do not resort to euphemism when conversing in sensitive topics and the recipient then do not count the speaker's utterance as impolite one. But, sometimes the speaker is of a low position compared to the interlocutor, like talking with his/her teacher .In this case, euphemizing is crucially needed. Otherwise; the act is counted as impolite one. Additionally, the speaker could be of a high social level compared to the recipient, like a teacher talking to his /her student. In this respect, the speaker (teacher) needs to euphemize for deference

purposes. So, using euphemism varies within the variation of the contextual factors which consequently label the act as either polite or impolite.

1.7 Euphemism within Grice's Maxims

It has been stated previously that euphemism is a linguistic mechanism by which speakers reshape the unpleasant ideas with pleasant ones for many considerations such as politeness. This means that the speakers use implicit expressions for the unfavoured explicit ones. Consequently, the recipients have to search for appropriate interpretations to the utterance(s) preformed.

According to Grice, participants can achieve a successful communication by cooperating with each other in their speech. This cooperation requires observing a set of communicative rules known as *Gricean Cooperative Principle* (CP) that reads: "Make your contribution such as it is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged." (Grice, 1989: 26). The cooperative principle includes four main maxims with sub-maxims which users of language need to follow to make their intentions direct and explicit. These maxims are:

A- Maxim of Quantity: Give the right amount of information:

- 1- Make your contribution as informative as is required.
- 2- Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

B- Maxim of Quality: Try to make your contribution one that is true:

- 1- Do not say what you believe to be false.
- 2- Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

C- Maxim of Relation: Be relevant.

D- Maxim of Manner: Be perspicuous:

- 1- Avoid obscurity of expression.

2- Avoid ambiguity.

3- Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).

4- Be orderly.

As for euphemism, speakers violate at Gricean maxims because euphemism is the implicit reference to the explicitly unfavoured ideas. Consider the following examples:

- 1- His father is **gone**. ('Death euphemism'. Violating maxim of manner 'avoid obscurity of expressions').
- 2- She **slept** with him. ('Sexual euphemism'. Violating maxim of quality 'do not say what you believe to be false').
- 3- A news reporter said "the troops have launched the **rescue mission**". ('Political Euphemism to mean 'the **war** has started'. Violating the maxim of manner 'avoid obscurity of expressions').
- 4- Oh my **gosh!** What are you doing? ('Religious euphemism to mean 'oh my **God!**'. Violating the maxim of manner 'avoid obscurity of expressions').

Sometimes, speakers violate more than one maxim at the same times. Consider the following conversation taken from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* cited in Hamza (2014: 79):

Hamlet: ...Have you a daughter?

Polonius: I have, my lord.

Hamlet: Let her not walk i' the sun: **conception is blessing**, but not as your daughter may conceive:-friend, look to't.

Clearly, Hamlet violates the maxim of quality (do not say what you believe to be false) and the maxim manner respectively (avoid obscurity of expressions) to euphemize the sexual act of pregnancy with his beloved Ophelia.

2. DATA ANALYSIS AND MODEL OF ANALYSIS

2.1 Data

The data of analysis are Donne's: **The Flea, The Good – Morrow, and Death Be Not Proud**. They have been chosen for the analysis as they only have euphemistic expressions among the rest of the poet's poems. Also, they all belong to the same period respectively. Moreover, they provide enough material for analysis.

2.2 Model of Analysis

As what has been stated previously in the theoretical part, the models of the analysis adopted for the purpose of investigating the euphemistic expressions will be selective. They are: Grice's (1989) model of Cooperative Principle, conversational maxims and conversational implicature, and Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness and the notion of face. They will be applied to the three poems: *The Flea, The Good – Morrow, and Death Be Not Proud*.

Text Analysis

Text no.1: *The Flea*

“Mark but this flea, and mark in this,
How little that which thou denies me is;
It suck'd me first, and now sucks thee,
And in this flea our two bloods mingled be.
Thou know'st that this cannot be said
A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead;
Yet this enjoys before it woo,
And pamper'd **swells with one blood made of two;**
And this, alas! is more than we would do.”

Taking context into account, the speaker is the poet and the listener is supposed to be his beloved. He presents his beloved an image of how a little flea has bitten them and mixed their blood together. Then, their hands will get swells.

Donne euphemistically hints for sexual intercourse he wished to have from his beloved. He attempts to convince his beloved to let him

have sex with her by portraying of how a flea has bitten them both and mixed their blood. Furthermore, the poet euphemizes 'pregnancy' by referring to the swell caused by the flea biting and their hands and mixing their blood. This 'metaphorical depiction' embodies a typical sort of sexual euphemism. In return, it requires an appropriate context to its interpretation. As far as the pragmatic strategies are concerned, the poet utilizes 'metaphor' for showing euphemism of sex.

In term of Gricean maxims, Donne infringes the maxim of quality (do not say what you believe to be false) and maxim of manner (avoid obscurity of expressions). However, he is still cooperative to make the verbal contribution successful. As for politeness, the poet purposefully avoids referring to explicit sexual terms for politeness consideration. The poet euphemizes the sexual intercourse image to achieve face saving act.

Text no.2: *The Good – Morrow*

I wonder, by my troth, what thou and I
 Did, till we loved? Were we not **weaned** till then?
 But sucked on **country pleasures**, childish?
 Or snorted we in the Seven Sleepers' den?
 'Twas so; but this, all pleasures fancies be.
 If ever any beauty I did see,
 Which I desired, and got, 'twas but a dream of thee. (1-7)

Donne begins his poems with rhetorical questions examining his prior life with his beloved. According to the context of the poem, the addresser is the poet and the addressee is his beloved. The poet describes the pleasurable the sexual intercourse he had with his beloved euphemizing it with the expression of not **weaned**. The poet continues describing his beloved's breast as **country pleasures** which he sucked like a child and they both slept like the catholic legend of Seven Sleepers, which tells of seven early Christian children who slept in a cave for nearly 200 years to escape persecution.

Clearly, Donne uses metaphor again for euphemizing taboo expressions. The type of euphemistic expressions found in the present

poem is *sexual euphemism*. The euphemistic expressions here greatly rely on the context in which the utterances are performed. Isolating the euphemistic expressions from their contexts will cause misinterpretation to the poet's intended meaning. In term of Gricean maxims, Donne violates the maxim of manner (avoid obscurity of expressions) by describing the breast of his beloved as *country pleasures*. The poet intentionally resorts to indirect reference to his beloved's breast to achieve *face saving act*.

Text no.2: Death Be Not Proud

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou are not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From **rest and sleep**, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do **go**,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
Thou'art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy'or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?
One **short sleep** past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

Donne refers to death as a bad person that everyone is afraid of except the poet himself. The poet looks at death as nothing more than short sleep and rest before waking up eternally. According to the poet, death brings pleasure that best of his men will go for. As far as the context of the poem is considered, the speaker is the poet and the addressee is the death. Donne refers to death implicitly with certain euphemistic expressions as 'rest and sleep', and 'go' (die) in line (5-7) to mean that death is not as powerful as many people think:

From **rest and sleepe**, which but thy pictures bee, Much pleasure, then from thee, much more must flow, And soonest our best men with thee doe **goe**, (5-7)

Additionally, the poet keeps euphemizing 'death' using terms like 'sleep' and 'rest' in lines (13-15) to mean that death is a deeper form of 'sleep' in sense that both death and sleep provide 'rest'. The various references to death are interpreted according to the context in which the utterances are performed:

One **short sleepe past**, wee wake eternally,

And death shall be no more; death, thou shalt die. (13-14)

Finally, Donne ends up his poem euphemizing 'death' by using the metaphorical expression of 'short sleep'. In term of Gricean maxims, Donne infringes the maxim of manner in all the euphemistic expressions used for death in this poem (avoid obscurity of expressions). Here, the process of euphemizing serves to avoid mentioning the taboo expressions which threatens face. Hence, the use of polite and indirect expressions diminishes this threat to face in spite of the visible violation of cooperation. As far as the strategy used for showing euphemistic expressions in this poem, the poet utilizes metaphor as a frequent pragmatic strategy for expressing 'death euphemism'. Table below (1) lists the types of euphemisms found in John Donne's three poems analyzed:

Table (1) Types of Euphemisms and Strategies Manipulated by the Poet

Poem	Type of Euphemism	Frequency	Pragmatic Strategy
The Flea	Sexual	+	Metaphor
	Death	-	-
	Religious	-	-
	Political	-	-
<i>The Good – Morrow</i>	Sexual	+	Metaphor
	Death	-	-
	Religious	-	-
	Political	-	-
<i>Death Be Not Proud</i>	Sexual	-	-
	Death	+	Metaphor
	Religious	-	-
	Political	-	-

Beside the types of the euphemism discussed and the pragmatic strategies used for the euphemism, the researcher has found that there are certain euphemistic expressions employed by the poet to discuss certain topics which are not favoured to be used overtly. These euphemistic expressions are intentionally utilized to meet the temperament of the readers or the listeners. Below, Table (2) illustrates the euphemistic expressions used in each poem analyzed respectfully.

Table (2) The Poet's Formulaic Expressions Employed

Poem	Formulaic Expression	Analogy
The Flea	Sucked me/ Sucked thee	Having sex
	bloods mingled	
The Good – Morrow	weaned	Wooing for having sex
	country pleasures	Sexual description for the beloved's breast
Death Be Not Proud	Short sleep	Death
	Rest	
	Go	die

Throughout analyzing the three selected by poems, the researcher has found that the poet resorts to violating the Gricean maxims to break the linguistic norms and communicate the act of euphemisms freely. Table no. (3) below illustrates the flouted maxims and sub-maxims of Gricean Cooperative Principle found in the three pomes:

Table (3): Gricean Cooperative Principle Flouting in Donne's Selected Poems

Poem	Euphemistic Expression	Maxim Violated	Sub-maxim
The Flea	Sucked me/ Sucked thee	Quality	Do not say what you believe to be false.
	bloods mingled	Manner	Avoid obscurity of expressions.
The Good – Morrow	Weaned	Manner	Avoid obscurity of expressions.
	country pleasures		
Death Be Not Proud	Short sleep	Manner	Avoid obscurity of expressions.
	Rest		
	Go		

Evidently, the practical part analysis reveals that 'metaphor' is the only strategy used by the poet for showing euphemistic expressions of 'sex' and 'death' in the three poems. This validates the first hypothesis of the study which reads: **Metaphor is the main pragmatic strategy used for showing euphemisms in Donne's poetry.** The practical part also reveals that the poet has only limited his usages of euphemisms to sexual and death euphemisms his three poems. The reason behind that restriction might be attributed to the poetic themes the poet wants to tackle to his listeners. Hence, this also validates the second hypothesis of the study which reads: **Sexual and Death euphemisms are given more attention than political and religious euphemisms in Donne's three selected poems.** Furthermore, the practical part of the study reveals that the interpretation of the euphemistic expressions used in the three poems greatly relies on the context. This means that stripping the euphemistic terms from their contexts will cause misinterpretation to the poet's intended meaning he wants to deliver. Hence, this validates the third hypothesis which reads: **The interpretation of euphemisms in the three poems is contextually determined.**

الخلاصة:

يعرف جون دون بمؤسس مدرسة الشعر الميتافيزيقي. فقد اختار الشعر وسيلة للتعبير ونقل العواطف والافكار التي تتطلب استخداما لغويا قويا وماهرا. تعرف لغة الشاعر دون بغناها بالتعابير البلاغية والتي تمكنه فعلا من مناقشة ومعالجة قضايا حيث بدون تلك اللغة [لا] يمكن نشرها بسبب الرقابة الاجتماعية الصارمة. من بين تلك القضايا الصارمة المعروفة هي (التعصب الديني، النظريات السياسية، الامور الجنسية، الموت، الخ.) حيث يمكن للشاعر تناولها بحرية من خلال استخدام اسلوب التلطيف.

تستقصي الدراسة الحالية أسلوب التلطيف في قصائد مختارة للشاعر جون دون (يا موتُ لا تفخر، البرغوث، طاب الغد) وعلى المستوى الاسلوبي من أجل معرفة انواع التلطيف والاستراتيجيات المستخدمة في توضيح تلك الانواع في قصائده. تهدف هذه الدراسة بشكللا اساسيا الى تحليل انواع التلطيف المستخدمة في هذه القصائد. كما وتستقصي هذه

الدراسة الاستراتيجية المستخدمة في تلك القصائد. تتبنى هذه الدراسة الفرضيات التالية: (١) أن المجاز هو الاستراتيجية التداولية الاساسية المستخدمة في توضيح عبارات التلطيف في شعر دون، (٢) أعطيت عبارات التلطيف الجنسي والموت اهتماماً أكثر من تلك السياسية والدينية منها في قصائد دون، و(٣) يعتمد تفسير عبارات التلطيف في القصائد الثلاث على السياق.

اثبتت الدراسة صحة فرضياتها واقتضت بأنه: (١) المجاز هو الاستراتيجية الوحيدة المستخدمة من قبل الشاعر في توضيح عبارات تلطيف "الجنس" و"الموت" في القصائد الثلاث. (٢) أقتصر الشاعر في استخدامه على عبارات التلطيف الجنسي وعبارات تلطيف الموت فقط في قصائده الثلاث. (٣) أن تفسير عبارات التلطيف المستخدمة في القصائد الثلاثة تعتمد بشكل كبير على السياق.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The present study has yielded the following conclusions:

- 1- Generally, Donne resorts to 'metaphor' as a powerful pragmatic strategy for showing the linguistic act of euphemism in his poetry. This conclusion is supported by validating the first hypothesis of the study which reads that **Metaphor is the main pragmatic strategy used for showing euphemisms in Donne's poetry.**
- 2- The present investigation reveals that Donne's manipulation of euphemism types is limited to sex and death. This is due to the poetic themes (sex and death) the poet wants to discuss in his poems. This can be clearly approved by validating the second hypothesis of the study that **Sexual and Death euphemisms are given more attention than political and religious euphemisms in Donne's three selected poems.**
- 3- It has been concluded, through analyzing euphemism stylistically, that context plays a crucial role in the interpretation of the meanings of the euphemisms. Without context, the recipients can very hardly capture what is intended by the speaker's utterance. However, when the role of the context comes to the domain, issue will be largely solved. Thus, this validates hypothesis (3) of the study which reads as: **The interpretation of euphemisms in the three poems is contextually determined.**

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