

دراسة لغوية إجتماعية لعبارات التلطيف اللفظي للمتحدثين العراقيين

A Sociolinguistic Study of Euphemistic Expressions Used by Iraqi Speakers

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Iraqi speakers tend to use euphemistic expressions in different social situations just like the speakers in many other cultures. This study aims at explaining and analyzing the techniques that are used by Iraqi speakers in order to conduct a smooth conversation and maintain good relationships with others. Expressing taboos may cause problems in many cultures, and the present study answers the question of: how could Iraqi speakers express taboos?. Positive and negative euphemistic techniques are used by Iraqi speakers in different social situations, and this paper shows that within four tables. The expressions that are presented in the four tables are analyzed within a qualitative approach. For some social and psychological reasons; Iraqi speakers tend to make ordinary and natural things look better, greater or more important than they really are, so positive euphemism is used in such situations. On the other hand, taboos, things that are painful, disgusting and

embarrassing are presented by Iraqi speakers with some strategies to make them look less painful or decreasing the bad side. In this way, negative euphemism is used for some social and psychological reasons to make it easier to talk about diseases, deformations or physical disabilities. The way of using these techniques shows that Iraqi speakers are skillful speakers; they are capable of conducting different topics in different social situations.

Keywords: Euphemism, linguistic phenomenon, negative euphemistic technique, positive euphemistic technique, taboo.

الملخص:

يميل المتحدثون العراقيون الى استعمال التلطيف اللفظي في كثير من المواقف الاجتماعية كما هو الحال بالنسبة للمتحدثين في كثير من الثقافات. تهدف هذه الدراسة الى شرح وتحليل اساليب التلطيف اللفظي التي يستعملها المتحدثين العراقيين من اجل حوار ناجح وللمحافظة على علاقات ناجحة مع الاشخاص في مجتمعهم. إن هذه الدراسة تركز على التلطيف اللفظي بنوعيه الإيجابي والسلبي الذي يستعمل من قبل المتحدث العراقي وقد تم توضيح ذلك في اربع جداول. قد يكون الدافع الرئيسي لإستعمال التلطيف اللفظي هو أسباب اجتماعية ونفسية، حيث يميل المتحدث العراقي لتلطيف بعض المصطلحات الأعتيادية وجعلها تبدو افضل، اعظم أو أكثر أهمية مما هي عليه، وفي هذه الحالة يتم إستعمال التلطيف اللفظي الايجابي. وفيما يتعلق بالمحظور من المفاهيم والمواضيع والمواقف الإجتماعية؛ يميل المتحدثون العراقيون الى استعمال ما يسمى بالتلطيف اللفظي السلبي، حيث يتم التعبير عن الامور المؤلمة، المقرفة والمحرجة من خلال التلطيف اللفظي السلبي الذي يهدف الى جعل الموضوع أكثر تقبلا للمتلقي وأكثر ملائمة للشرح والتوضيح. مثل بعض الامور الخاصة بالامراض والاعاقات وما الى ذلك. إن طريقة

استعمال المتحدثين العراقيين لأساليب التلطيف اللفظي في مواقف اجتماعية مختلفة تبين إن المتحدث العراقي هو متحدث ماهر يستطيع ادارة حوار ناهج والمحافظة على علاقات جيدة مهما كان موضوع الحوار غير مريح.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التلطيف اللفظي، الظاهرة اللغوية، التلطيف اللفظي السلبي، التلطيف اللفظي الإيجابي ، المحظور .

Introduction

A very important aspect of Iraqi culture is the euphemistic expressions used by Iraqi people (speakers). Just like any other culture, Iraqi speakers tend to use euphemistic expressions in different situations of their everyday life. They tend to make things and people look better, greater, more important , essential, or they tend to hide the bad or painful side of someone or something by describing these harmful, disgusting or embarrassing things in a way that make them natural or more acceptable to the hearer or to other people in the same social circle.

Mentioning certain expressions or topics freely by their real names may cause problems according to the norms of Iraqi culture. Certain topics and expressions may cause discomfort or damage to people's relationships... how could speakers express or mention taboos? Speakers cannot simply stop mentioning or talking about certain topics just because they are taboos. Iraqi speakers tend to use euphemistic techniques to express certain taboos.

Iraqi speakers usually dislike mentioning the names of serious diseases, serious body damages or deformations; instead, they often use negative euphemistic expressions to make diseases or deformations look better or more acceptable to be told or heard. Sometimes people are very sensitive concerning their physical appearance, they could

be embarrassed to be described as fat or skinny, bald or with frizzy hair, very tall or short. So in order to describe people with such features, Iraqi speakers prefer using negative euphemistic expressions to make it acceptable or even nice to have such features. On the other hand, positive euphemistic expressions are also used frequently by Iraqi speakers; they use this type of euphemistic expressions to make people or things look greater than they really are, more important or very elevated. For example, instead of saying 'shop', speakers may use 'small company' to make it looks more important.

In fact, this linguistic phenomenon (euphemism) is part of the Iraqi culture; it has been transmitted from one generation to another. People of this culture prefer to describe people and things nicely and they want to be described in the same way. Consequently, this linguistic and cultural process of using "Euphemistic expressions" can affect both participants (speaker and hearer) in any social situation. The speaker is trying to be nice (use euphemistic expressions) in order NOT to hurt, offend or embarrass any one, and in order to be acceptable for others. Likewise, the hearer wants NOT to be embarrassed or offended, and of course doesn't want to hear unpleasant things. So, "Euphemism" is the key to have successful and smooth conversations in different social situations.

Euphemism

Euphemism as an aspect of a language means representing or saying things in a mild, less offensive or gentle way. It is a word, phrase or a communication style used to soften or conceal hard, painful, embarrassing and unpleasant things. In this respect, it is possible to say that "Euphemism" as a concept is part of any human language or culture. Enright suggested that "A language without euphemisms would be a defective instrument of communication" (Enright, 1985, p. 29). Likewise, Rawson said "euphemisms are embedded so deeply in our language that few of us, even those who pride themselves on being plain spoken, ever get through a day without using them"

(Rawson , 1981, p. 3). As a concept, many linguists define euphemism like Allen and Burridge who said “euphemisms are alternatives to dispreferred expressions, and are used in order to avoid possible loss of face. The dispreferred expression may be taboo, fearsome, distasteful, or for some other reasons...” (Allan & Burridge, 1991, p. 11). Rawson also continued to define euphemism as “euphemisms are mild, agreeable, or roundabout words used in place of coarse, painful or offensive ones” (Rawson , 1981, p. 1).

Allan and Burridge suggested that these roundabout expressions (euphemistic) are very related to politeness; “that which is polite is at least inoffensive and at best pleasing to an audience, and that which is offensive is impolite” (Allan & Burridge, 2006, p. 30). It means that speakers are trying to avoid saying ugly and unpleasant things or they are trying to hide, conceal or reform things in order to make them acceptable for hears.

The way of beautifying a language could also be described as prevailing semantic instruments that “ are embedded so deeply in our language that few of us, even those who pride themselves on being plainspoken, ever get through a day without using them” ((Linfoot-Ham, 2005, p. 228).

Taboo and Euphemism

“Taboo” as a word is originally taken from Tongan, a language spoken by Polynesians in the pacific archipelago; where sacred, harmful and fearful things are forbidden to be touched or to talk about. So according to their culture, “Taboo” means “holy” or “untouchable” (Gu & Lu, 2002).

Wardhaugh suggested that taboo could be the avoidance of behavior by any society members to things that are harmful, or may cause anxiety, embarrassment or shame. In this respect, cultural aspects make certain things (could not be said or referred to) like:

sex, death, illness, excretion, religious matters... (Wardhaugh, 2000). According to the new oxford dictionary (2001) taboo is the restriction of social or religious custom, or forbidding association with a particular person, place or thing.

In many cultures, the aspects that are related to sex and body parts are “Taboos”. Deng commented on these aspects and said that sex, anatomy words, and even vaguely suggesting anatomical or sexual matters are taboos. In the 19th century, ladies could not say “breast” or “leg” not even of chicken; instead they used terms like “white meat” and “dark meat” (Deng & Liu, 1989). In addition to sex, death, illness and religious matters, the concept of privacy could also be considered as a “Taboo” in many cultures. There is an English saying “A man’s home is his castle”, it means that a man’s home and any other related thing is sacred and no one should come in without permission (Deng & Liu, 1989). Things that are considered as taboos are culture specific, they may vary from one culture to another; things that are taboos in one culture could be quite normal in another. But despite these differences, taboo words appear because of three reasons that are based on psychological motivation. The first one is the existence of something scary (taboo of fear), the second is what makes you feel bad (Taboo of delicacy), the third and last is inappropriate things (taboo of propriety). (Wijaya & Rohmadi, 2006) In some cultures, the direct disclosure of the names of God and spirits could be a taboo of fear; while illness, death could be taboo of delicacy. As for the taboo of propriety, sex, body parts and swear words are quite related.

Just because there are things that are not easily said or explained; the need for euphemistic expression aroused. According to Wardhaugh, euphemistic words allow us to talk about unpleasant things to conceal or neutralize discomfort (Wardhaugh, 2006).

The cultural phenomenon

In discussing euphemism and taboo, the idea of culture is very highlighted. These two concepts (euphemism & taboo) are universal concepts; they could be used in all existed human societies. At the same time, they are culture specific, in which the notion that is a (taboo) in one culture might be very normal notion to be discussed and explained in public in another culture. The same is true for (euphemism), what might be a (euphemistic expression) in one culture might not be the same in another culture. In this way, culture plays an essential role in such type of studies.

Culture in sociolinguistic studies is not the scientific knowledge in different fields, and it is not the old scientific practices. Culture in this concern refers to the ideas, thoughts, traditions and social practices that the speaker has acquired from his own society and will affect his way of expressing ideas, thoughts, the choice of expressions and the way of communicating with others. (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015) These aspects are used by the speaker depending on the social situation and the listener. The speaker will choose the proper expression to make things look better (euphemism), and the proper expression to hide the ugly or painful side when the topic under discussion is a (taboo).

The speakers in all societies acquire traditions, social norms and many ideas from their own culture and this process starts from the childhood till adulthood. In order to handle a good, smooth conversation, the speaker uses what he has acquired in different stages of his lifetime. So the way of expressing Euphemistic expressions and Taboo expressions is very related to what the speaker has acquired and inherited (his own culture). Accordingly, euphemism & taboo in addition to their being sociolinguistic concepts; they are also cultural phenomena. It is possible to say that the expressions and the techniques that are used by speakers are the result of what they have already acquired and inherited from their culture.

Sociolinguistic concepts are highly affected by human cultures. To study any sociolinguistic concept, one must deal with the dimensions of the speaker's culture. What the speaker has acquired and inherited during his life made him use certain expressions and techniques. In this way, euphemism & taboo are cultural phenomena because they are highly affected by culture and culture here is highlighted before any other aspect since culture is the area in which these sociolinguistic concepts work through. So euphemism and taboo are truly cultural phenomena.

Iraqi culture as the field of this study is a culture that basically ruled by religion and social traditions. Accordingly, the speakers' expressions and techniques are being selected and used according to their suitability to religion and traditions. Just like the speakers in many other eastern countries, Iraqi speakers are conservative and very attached to their social norms, traditions and religion, and they tend to use euphemistic techniques in different social situation to handle a good conversation and to reach certain goals on different levels. In this way, it is possible to say that culture is the base for any sociolinguistic study.

Concerning taboo expressions, just because the Iraqi culture is a conservative culture; many ideas, notions, and thoughts are taboos in Iraqi culture. Diseases, body parts, certain religious ideas, the physical appearance, certain types of relationships, politics in certain situation, certain expressions about gynocentric health... and many other notions that could not be taboos in other cultures with extrovert ideas. When the speaker tries to talk about one of these notions, certain euphemistic techniques work in his mind to avoid any embarrassment and to hide the bad side. In most situations, the speaker tries to avoid hurting or embarrassing the listener and tries to avoid mentioning something that may affect the course of the conversation, or the speaker might be shy or embarrassed to speak in public about some notions or to mention their real names.

Cultural heritage plays a very essential role in the way of expressing taboos in the Iraqi culture. In most social situations, the speaker deals with some ideas as “taboos” just because he has been raised in a culture that consider them taboos, sometimes without asking about the reason of considering certain ideas as taboos. The speaker starts to acquire ideas and traditions from his own family (part of his own culture) from childhood till adulthood; this cultural heritage is being used by the speaker in different social situation according to what he has acquired. In addition to culture; education, social status, and the social environment are also factors that may affect the speaker’s euphemistic techniques. Logically, an educated speaker will not use the same euphemistic techniques that are used by uneducated speaker; a speaker with social status will not speak like any simple one. In many social situations, certain ideas and expressions are considered as “taboos” by an educated speaker, in which the speaker will be very careful about choosing his euphemistic techniques, and sometimes less free to mention or discuss certain ideas in public. The same ideas might be discussed more freely by uneducated speaker in which these two speakers do not have the same sense of expressing these techniques. Social status as a factor that affects the speaker’s sense of producing expression, works almost in the same way. A speaker with social status or higher position will be more careful about choosing and producing euphemistic expressions and taboo expressions. Any mistake or inattention may embarrass the speaker or affect his status.

The speaker’s environment is also a factor that may affect the choice of expressions and the speaker’s sense of producing euphemistic techniques. A speaker who has been raised in an environment with educated and high class people will not use the same techniques that are used by a speaker from a humble environment. The two speakers will not have the same awareness of producing euphemistic expressions and the way of expressing Taboos. It possible to say that culture is the most essential aspect in

sociolinguistic studies; education, social status and environment come after the cultural importance.

Methodology

The data in this paper are expressions taken from different types of conversations and social situations that are produced by Iraqi speakers. These expressions are chosen because they represent the most common taboos (and euphemistic techniques) that are used in Iraqi culture. These expressions are used by Iraqi speakers with negative euphemistic techniques or positive euphemistic techniques to achieve certain goals or to avoid misunderstanding problems.

Many writers have classified Euphemism into different types. According to Rawson 1981, euphemism can be generally classified into two types: positive and negative. Positive euphemism is a way of making referents look grander and more acceptable, while negative euphemism is a way of decreasing the negative value of unpleasant things ((Rawson , 1981). In this way, positive euphemism is very essential to show respect and politeness in any conversation, and negative politeness has the same importance to make unpleasant and harmful things more acceptable to hear. For example, people sometimes use expressions like 'sanitary man' instead of 'cleaner', 'golden years' instead of the 'old age', 'low-budget' instead of 'cheap' (as positive euphemisms). They also use expressions like 'conflict' instead of 'war', 'family' instead of 'mafia', 'third world' instead of 'poor' (as negative euphemism).

This study is based on the qualitative content analysis of Positive and negative euphemistic expressions used by Iraqi speakers in different social situations to achieve a better effect (for the speaker and the listener) and avoid embarrassment and discomfort. Two tables are being analyzed and discussed for each type of euphemistic techniques.

Table 1 and 2 shows the negative euphemistic techniques that are used with taboo expressions; with five expressions in each table. Table 1 shows some serious diseases that are considered as taboos in Iraqi culture, with the euphemistic expressions that are used to reduce the negative effect of these taboos. Table 2 shows some features of the physical appearance that are considered as taboos in some social groups, and again with the euphemistic expressions that are used to decrease the negative sense of such taboos. Both table 1 and 2 represent the negative euphemistic techniques since the speaker is trying to decrease the negative value of certain taboo expressions by using euphemistic techniques.

Table 3 shows the second type of euphemism that is called positive euphemism or positive euphemistic techniques. This technique is basically used with expressions or topics that are not taboos; very normal topics to be discussed and mentioned without any embarrassment, but speakers tend to make them look better, greater or even valuable (like the jobs and the places in table 3).

Table 4 also shows some expressions with positive euphemistic techniques; again to make certain expressions or topics look valuable and important, despite their being very normal and applicable expressions that could be used in different social situations without negative effects. Accordingly, this study has discussed two types of euphemism (positive and negative) and analyzed expressions within four tables, two tables of negative euphemism and two tables of positive euphemism.

Examples and Analysis

In any culture, there must be some annoying, embarrassing things that speakers tend to avoid mentioning or discussing. speakers tend to hide the bad side or decrease the negative value of some annoying aspects in some situations (negative euphemism) and

make them acceptable for the hearer, or they are trying to make good and normal things look better or greater than they really are (Positive euphemism). For Iraqi speakers, diseases (especially very serious ones) are very unlikely to be mentioned or discussed in public because they cause emotional discomfort for both speakers and hearers. The Serious diseases are considered “taboos”.

Table 1: Negative Euphemism

Iraqi Euphemistic expressions	Their meanings in English
هَذَاكَ الْمَرَضُ بَدَلًا مِنْ سَرَطَانٍ	cancer
مِتَلَازِمَةُ دَاوْنٍ بَدَلًا مِنْ مَنَغُولِي	Down syndrome
اِنْحِرَافٌ بِالْعَيْنِ بَدَلًا مِنْ حَوْلٍ	squint
نَوْبَاتٌ اِغْمَاءٌ بَدَلًا مِنْ صَرَعٍ	epilepsy
مِنْ ذَوِي الْاِحْتِيَاجَاتِ الْخَاصَّةِ بَدَلًا مِنْ مَعَاقٍ	handicapped

Table 1 shows a number of serious diseases like (cancer, epilepsy, Down syndrome...), Iraqi speakers tend to use negative euphemistic strategies to talk about diseases; with the presence of the patient or without it, speakers mostly use euphemistic expressions to talk about the diseases. They are trying not to mention the diseases names because that will be very discomfoting for the speaker and the listener. So for psychological and social reasons, speakers are using better expressions to reduce the sense of emotional pain and embarrassment. In this way, instead of saying (cancer- سرطان) Iraqi speakers use (هَذَاكَ الْمَرَضُ). A very serious disease like cancer is very unlikely to be mentioned by Iraqi speakers, a very fatal disease that even discussing or mentioning its name may cause discomfort and emotional pain for both the speaker and the listener (whether they have the disease or even just discussing its nature). To reduce the negative effect that is caused by mentioning the name of such a serious disease, Iraqi speakers prefer to use negative euphemistic expression like (هَذَاكَ الْمَرَضُ) instead of the real name of the disease. Sometime, people may become very pessimistic when they hear the names of fatal and serious diseases, so in order to keep smooth communication with people, Iraqi speakers prefer to use negative Euphemistic expression when the talk about such a disease.

The same is true for (down syndrome- منغولي) speakers tend to use (مِتَلَازِمَةُ دَاوْنٍ). This genetic mutation with all its physical and mental negative effects on people is very unlikely to be discussed by Iraqi people. Families who have a member with Down syndrome have enough struggles that they cannot hear any hurting expression about that

family member even when the expression is one of the syndrome names. They will get hurt to hear (منغولي) about that family member; accordingly, they use a better expression to reduce that sense of emotional pain for those people and for any listener. The same sense of discomfort and embarrassment might be caused by some imperfect features or even physical problem like (squint). Instead of saying (squint- احوّل), speakers use (انحراف بالعين). Those people with such eye problem have enough struggles and embarrassment in their life, so mentioning the real name of their problems will make things worse for them. Just because it is part of Iraqi culture to be socially tactful, it is better not to mention the name of such eye problem and use a negative euphemistic expression.

one more serious disease is (epilepsy- الصرع), Iraqi speakers prefer to say (نوبات اغماء) instead of the real name of this disease which is (الصرع). Euphemistically, it is part of our culture to hide the bad side of this disease or even decrease the negative side that is psychologically unacceptable for some people. And again, in order not to embarrass people with such disease. People with physical disabilities also have enough suffering and embarrassment because of their physical conditions. It is very unacceptable to say to someone that he is (handicapped- معاق), this will hurt him psychologically and socially; instead, Iraqi speakers prefer to use negative Euphemistic technique to reduce that sense of discomfort, so they use (من ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة). Just because mentioning these taboos in public or calling them by their real names cause immediate bad feeling and discomfort, so Iraqi speakers find it very necessary to use negative euphemistic expressions to decrease the negative effect of these taboos.

Table 2: Negative Euphemism

Iraqi Euphemistic Expressions	Their meaning in English
عظمه خشن بدلا من سمين	fat
ناعم بدلا من ضعيف	Thin or skinny
مربوع بدلا من قصير وسمين	chunky
شعره خفيف بدلا من اصلع	bald
شعره بي كسرة بدلا من مجعد	Frizzy hair

In Iraqi culture, some features of the physical appearance are also considered as taboos. In table 2 there are examples of some features that are taboos in Iraqi culture. Such features are very unlikely to be used to describe someone or even to be discussed in public. To describe someone as (fat) is very inappropriate in Iraqi culture in which the (fat one) would feel embarrassed and uncomfortable and the speaker would be

considered as ‘untactful’ to describe someone as (fat). Accordingly, Iraqi speakers tend to use other expression to describe ‘overweight’ people like (عظمه خشن). The same for people who are (skinny), it is not preferable for many people to be described as (skinny), instead Iraqi speakers use negative euphemistic expressions to handle a good communication with other people. Iraqi speakers use (ناعم) instead of (skinny) since such expression could be psychologically and socially unacceptable. Within the field of body weight features, Iraqi speakers use (مربوع) instead of (chunky). Euphemistically, (مربوع) is a euphemistic expression used to decrease the negative sense of a word like (chunky) when it is used to comment on someone’s weight. Concerning the nature of the hair, people in Iraqi culture mostly prefer straight thick hair, so features like (bald- اصلع) and (frizzy- شعره مجعد) are not quite preferable and might cause discomfort or embarrassment for the one with such hair features. To deal with such expressions euphemistically, Iraqi speakers use (شعره خفيف) instead of (bald) and (شعره بي كسرة) instead of (frizzy) to make such features socially acceptable to be discussed and mentioned without causing any social or psychological discomfort.

Both tables 1 and 2 deal with negative euphemism in which speakers are trying to hide the bad side of something or decrease the negative value by using other expressions to make that thing acceptable to be discussed and heard.

Table 3: Positive Euphemism

Iraqi Euphemistic expressions	Their meaning in English
مركز تجميل بدلا من صالون	Beauty center (salon)
شركة بدلا من محل	Company (shop)
كابتن بدلا من سائق	Captain (driver)
ماكينة بدلا من عاملة صالون	Makeup artist
ميكانيكي بدلا من فيتر	mechanic

Table 3 shows the second type of euphemism (positive euphemism). In Iraqi culture, there are many things or topics that are not taboos, things that are very normal and not embarrassing, things that are very acceptable to be discussed in public, but speakers tend to make them look better, greater or more important than they really are. Sometimes, instead of saying (salon- صالون), nowadays, speakers prefer using (beauty center- مركز تجميل). Such euphemistic expression is being used to make the same place look more important than it is. In the same way, speakers may address some small businesses as (company- شركة) instead of (shop- محل) just to give the same place importance and makes it valuable. Logically, to run a company is more significant than running a shop and of course socially more valuable. Socially and psychologically, speakers tend to be proud when they have bigger business; they feel that they are more active and presenting valuable services to their society. Accordingly, the owners of such places and people who work there tend to use positive euphemistic expressions to make such places more important. Consequently, people who go to such places to get services that they need, for social and psychological reasons, they use such positive euphemistic expressions to feel and make the listeners feel that they are going to a highly important and elevated places to be served. Saying that someone is going to a salon or shop is not bad or embarrassing, but saying that someone is having, working or going to a beauty center or a company is euphemistically more important and make speakers feel better about the places that they own or going to; they are considered chic just because they have or go to such places.

Another positive euphemistic expression is used highly nowadays which is (captain- كابتن) instead of (driver- سائق). To be a driver of a car is not a taboo and not something to be ashamed of. But speakers in Iraqi culture frequently use positive euphemistic techniques to make such a job looks more important and highly valuable. In Iraqi society, to say that someone is (makeup artist- مأكيرة) makes that job more important and valuable.

Those who work as makeup artists will feel that they are presenting valuable services when they are being addressed as (ماكيرة) instead of (عاملة صالون). The same for (mechanic- ميكانيكي) instead of (فيتتر), for the same social and psychological reasons; they prefer to be addressed as (ميكانيكي) instead of (فيتتر), such euphemistic expression makes the same job which is already acceptable looks better and more important.

Table 4: Positive Euphemism

Iraqi Euphemistic expressions	Their meaning in English
ماركة اقتصادية بدلا من رخيصة	Economic brand (cheap)
تصفية اوربية بدلا من ملابس رخيصة	European clearance
مول بدلا من مجمع تجاري	mall
عوائل متعففة بدلا من عوائل فقيرة	Poor families
عوائل ميسورة بدلا من عوائل غنية	Rich families

Table 4 shows other examples within the field of positive euphemistic expressions. Iraqi speakers use the expression (economic brand- ماركة اقتصادية) instead of (بضاعة) (رخيصة) to refer to the goods and products that are affordable for most of the society members. In many societies, addressing a brand or some goods as (cheap) will make them undesirable for many people (for social and psychological reasons). Many people will not feel comfortable to buy cheap things or to go to places that display cheap products; as if this will affect their social status. But when the same goods or brands are euphemistically addressed as (economic) this will make things better for many people. This will encourage people to go and buy such products. So speakers prefer to say that they buy from economic brands instead of saying that they buy cheap products.

In the same way, Iraqi speakers may use (European clearance- تصفية اوربية) instead of (ملابس رخيصة). In fact, both expressions give almost the same meaning, but Iraqi speakers use positive euphemistic technique to address outfits that are outlet as (تصفية اوربية) instead of cheap clothes or outlet. Again, it is not bad to have clothes that are not

expensive or even cheap, but many people will feel better to wear European made things and saying that their outfits are European. Socially, such a thing makes them feel better and more comfortable; psychologically, such expression will not make them feel that they have limited financial abilities. They will feel that they can buy and wear European brands (without mentioning that they are in fact cheap or very affordable).

Concerning the names of buildings, again Iraqi speakers may use positive Euphemistic techniques to make some buildings look better or greater just like saying (مول- mall) instead of (مجمع تجاري), even for those buildings with a few shops that are not really large. Iraqi speakers prefer to address such buildings as (malls) just to give them importance. Saying that someone is having (مجمع تجاري) is not bad or something to be ashamed of but again for euphemistic reasons, speakers prefer the expression (مول). The owners of such places also feel that their buildings are more important when they are addressed as (malls), so again, for social and psychological reasons; speakers use such expressions to make the same place look greater.

To be poor or with limited financial abilities is not something bad to hide or cover but in Iraqi culture, speakers prefer to say (عوائل متعففة- poor families) instead of saying (عوائل فقيرة). Iraqi speakers use the expression (عوائل متعففة) in order to make the same reality look better or in order not to embarrass the members of those families. Despite the fact that to be with limited financial abilities is not a taboo; Iraqi speakers use this positive technique to make this very normal reality looks better. The same technique could also be used with the rich families; Iraqi speakers sometimes may use the expression (عوائل ميسورة- rich families) instead of (عوائل غنية). It is not bad or a taboo to be rich but to make the same normal thing look better or even greater, Iraqi speakers may use positive techniques to add Euphemistic effect on the same reality.

Conclusions

Euphemism as a linguistic and cultural phenomenon is highly used by Iraqi speakers. In Iraqi culture, speakers over generations express their opinions, thoughts or their ways of describing someone or something by using euphemistic expressions for some social and psychological reasons. This study suggests that Iraqi speakers are gifted speakers, otherwise how they could express different types of taboos. This study aims at investigating the techniques used by Iraqi speakers in order to conduct good conversations with others. They try to hide the bad, painful or embarrassing side of a specific aspect by using negative euphemistic expressions in order to decrease the negative value of certain taboos in Iraqi culture. Mentioning the real names of these taboos may hurt the listeners psychologically or embarrass them socially. These taboos may also affect the speakers who are mentioning them; they might be considered socially unwelcomed or disliked because of their choice of expressions that lack euphemistic techniques.

On the other hand, Iraqi speakers are very skillful at making normal aspects look greater, more acceptable or more important than they really are by using Positive euphemistic expressions. Even things that are not (taboos) in Iraqi culture could be modified by Iraqi speakers and presented as greater or more important. In this way, Iraqi speakers are culturally and socially adapted to use euphemistic techniques in different situations in order to handle smooth communication with people in their society.

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