CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSION

6.1 Preliminaries
This study focuses on taboo words and euphemism in English and Arabic. It is an attempt to throw light on linguistic and cultural dimensions of this topic in these two languages. This chapter summarizes the most important results this study has come up with. The pedagogical implications of this study and suggestions for further researches in this area have also been given at the end of this chapter.

6.2 Major Findings
The following are the major findings of the present research:

1. The word 'taboo' has entered into English in the 18th century from a Polynesian origin. The term in Arabic is either translated or transliterated. The influence of recent studies carried out in Europe in this field on modern Arab linguists is reflected in the way the Arabs deal with its areas and themes. It was discussed twelve centuries ago by early Arab linguists under metonymy and other rhetoric devices. Some recent Arab linguists have transliterated the terms 'taboo' and euphemism' into Arabic.

2. Taboo, prohibition against saying or doing something, has the same concept in English and Arabic. The definitions given by linguists refer to the idea that some acts or things are prohibited to be said, touched, or done. The usage of the term 'taboo' initially was confined to certain areas like religion, sex, and human body. Recently, it is manifested in relation to a wide variety of things, conditions, deeds,
values, words, naming and addressing, aging, death, politics, and some other social issues.

3. Religion, norms and traditions, and psychological aspects are behind prohibition mentioned in (2) above. In other words, these reasons encourage speakers to avoid the direct reference to taboo issues. For example, to avoid violation of the sacredness of a religious matter, or fear of punishment that brings wrath of God is the motivation that encourages people to respect religious rites and teachings. Similarly, norms and values imposed by society prohibit people to speak of sex in a mixed company. Likewise, people may get teased if you talk to them of a serious disease. This fact and what is mentioned in (2) above are the framework of motivations to use expressions as substitutes for ones that may offend or suggest something unpleasant. This statement confirms the first hypothesis of the study.

4. The ineffable movement from religious to secular areas in taboos is obvious. To cope with this tendency, people deal with new matters and use new devices to express them. Historically, taboo and euphemism were discussed under certain semantic devices like metonymy, simile, and metaphor.

5. Dysphemism is a way used to convey emotional state; it is the opposite of euphemism though it has the same motivations of euphemism. When speakers are annoyed and frustrated, dysphemism becomes a resort to talk about people or things that frustrate them. The expression expected while using a dysphemism will be harsh though it is to express speaker's emotions. As an impolite alternative, dysphemism is seen as taboo.
6. The exact history when the term 'four-letter word' (any bad word written with four letters) appeared for the first time is unknown. This term was used interchangeably with 'taboo'. It appears that there was only a group of eight words of obscenities contained four letters like cunt, shit, hell, damn, fart, fuck, cock, and piss.

7. Words related to human body parts like breast, buttock, and leg, or functions like shit, piss, fart, are taboo and unpleasant.

8. The word 'God' is dealt with differently in languages under study. It is forbidden to mention the word in West society without distorting or changing a part of it. To take the name of God in vain is taboo. In Arabic, the issue is different; deforming or distorting any of the ninety-nine names of Allah (God), or attribute them to anybody besides Him is taboo. These names should be preceded by the word 'عبيد' (slave or worshipper of) when they are given to a person.

9. Age, power, and solidarity (intimacy) are the factors which govern the use of address forms (names and titles) when addressing others in these two languages. Arabic uses particular titles that characterize culture of Arabs like the formula (father or mother of so and so). Speakers have to observe established rules and norms of the usage of names and titles in daily life because violation of these rules is taboo in these two languages.

10. Dog-based insults are avoided in the two societies. However, in Arab society, religion-based insults, especially those related to Allah and His prophets, are very offensive and avoided. Mother-based insults which are specifically vaginal are one of the gravest insults in
Arabic. Talking of someone's mother from a sexual point of view is taboo and dangerous.

11. Unlike English culture which believes in individuality and nuclear family, Arab culture encourages family values which enable senior citizens to enjoy their golden age, as respect and reverence are shown towards them. So hoary age is a privilege for senior citizens and the word "old" is void of any bad connotation. This fact, undoubtedly, emerges from the traditional extended family system Arabs have and their religious beliefs.

12. By the same token, as the majority believes in the great certainty (death), Arabs, being Muslims, believe strongly that death is inevitable, so they commemorate it in their everyday life as a way to reconsider sins and bad deeds. They are familiar with the scene of death; joining processions of funerals, participation in burial, and going to gardens of remembrance (graveyards) are usually practised, as a part of worship. Normally, people are afraid of death but Arabs seem more anxious about what happens after death than death itself as they believe that dead people are either rewarded or punished in the life after death.

13. Both the languages are similar in the field of disease and recognizing its seriousness. However, they differ in the way sufferings are viewed by sick people. To some, disease is attributed to malfunctioning of a certain part or an organ of human body. These people feel so uncomfortable that they live under fear and uneasiness. On the contrary, the others who believe, whether seriously or not, that diseases and ailments are like bliss to purge the
souls from sins committed in worldly life so as to become more righteous. This category of people, though they suffer from very painful diseases, their belief alleviates their sufferings.

14. Human reproductive organs (cunt and cock), sexual acts (fuck), and areas around them are the most taboo ones in human body in English. Less than sexual organs are some parts of human body like breasts, legs, hips, and the rear end. The closer we get to the body's trunk, the more we are reduced to some kind of body talk. Sex topics in general are taboo to talk of in public due to the shock and embarrassment these topics bring.

15. Sex-related area is wide since it covers sexual organs, acts, homosexuality, incest, adultery, and prostitution.

16. Both languages under investigation use many euphemistic expressions in the field of sex to avoid the direct reference to such taboo words. The references used in this study have shown a wide range of vocabularies that can be employed to hide matters related to sex compared with any other topics. This fact validates the second hypothesis of the study.

17. Unlike male human body parts, their female counterparts are more unspeakable and mentionable. Doctors, lovers, close friends, and relatives are the only people who can speak of them.

18. Similarly, females in English society are keener for personifying male genitals than males are.
19. Compared to English which views sex at the top of the most tabooed subjects, the violation of some rules and restrictions of Islam in public like blasphemy is more dangerous than sex. This confirms the third hypothesis of this study.

20. It is a matter of delicacy not to refer directly to people of humble occupations, since directness hurts their feelings and dignity.

21. Considering the change in values and traditions, vulgar expressions including even the sexual ones, have become permissible in Western societies in the last decades whereas racial and ethnic expressions are avoided. What is avoided in one society may be permissible in the other, and even to the next generation of the same society.

22. Arabic employs 'minimizers' or 'euphemizers' in speech when mentioning taboo subjects like unclean places, metaphysical creatures, and while expressing admiration to avoid envy. For example, if a dirty thing like footwear is mentioned directly, the expression محشوم (dignified) is used for this purpose in Arabic but English does not.

23. Morphologically, taboo words are uttered in the form of one word (prick) or a compound word (asshole), and occupy the position of a verb (fuck), noun (death), adjective (pussy), or adverb (bloody).

24. In semantics, the cultural changes cause a motivation to bring change in language. The background image that motivates the figurative shift is an aspect of the culture of a given linguistic society. One of the most powerful sources for semantic change is
taboos. In fact, semantic change in general is concerned directly with the connotations of expressions rather than their denotations.

25. Euphemisms are emotionally neutral words and expressions used instead of synonymous structures (taboos) that are perceived as impolite, rude or indecent.

26. Taboo expressions are employed to achieve 'FTA' and 'in-group' strategies. Face means the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself while in-group strategy means how a person is linked to a certain group or circle. The use of taboo words indicates that the speaker does not care about the addressee's feelings, wants, etc. Taboo words should be expressed directly by a person within his/her circle. In a mixed company, one has to adopt a pragmatic approach while uttering taboo expressions. In such a case, the speaker is viewed as a polite and decent one.

27. Metonymy is the most widely used device in Arabic to express taboo matters euphemistically.

28. Tabooness of some areas, like sex, depends on the context they are used in. If used in a slang way (any vocabulary which is at the extremely informal end of continuum), they are taboo. While in standard Arabic, they are not. The same is applied to taboo in English. In English, these examples in sex field state the difference between standard English and slang expressions. To name a few, womb vs. pot or oven; house of prostitution vs. fuckery; penis or male organ vs. bone; prostitute vs. whore; and vagina vs. cunt, etc.
6.3 Pedagogical Implications

Problems related to taboo words and euphemism surface in language teaching. One of these problems is when and how to start presenting taboo words and euphemism. In the light of the present study, these questions have to be answered and some suggestions are to be given. In the initial stages of language learning, euphemism has to be presented to students as they are polite expressions used to express unmentionable topics. In the course of time, as learners advance in the process of learning, taboo words should be presented with intensive explanations by teachers. The significance of reading skill has to be realized by teachers as it enables students and teachers alike to get the most appropriate meaning of these words. A sound knowledge can be accumulated through raising questions about these words and expressions to give students a chance to think of them. Moreover, teachers can allocate lessons to discuss themes, areas, and ways of creating and forming euphemisms. Students are expected to explore different implications among a group of words which refer to the same idea and expected to understand how these words are interlinked.

The task of the teacher is to explain grammatical, semantic, and pragmatic aspects. Most importantly, the cultural context is presented to know norms, traditions, and values that govern the use in the target language (TL). Teachers should focus on the everyday use of euphemism in order to make a concrete base for their students for further studies in this area. Students of English as a foreign language have to be careful and aware of the use of taboo words in their speech since they do not know the gravity of such expressions. The context plays a vital role here.
In the field of translation, learners can be advised to render taboo and euphemistic expressions into TL to develop their ability and master such important topics. The context in which these expressions are used should be explained to avoid any misunderstandings. The style of language (formal or informal) has to be taken into account. The wide range of vocabularies offers multiple options in the meaning of a word depending on its contextual pressure.

6.4 Suggestions for Further Studies
The researcher recommends some further studies in the field of taboo and euphemism because it is still an unexplored field to be investigated, especially in the field of translation and language teaching. Additionally, it can be studied from a historical and non-historical point of view. They are as follows:

1. In the field of translation, a study can be carried out to investigate the translatability of Arabic taboo or euphemistic expressions into English and vice versa.

2. A further study can be conducted to target certain areas in these two topics in language, like sex, human body, and religion, to explore linguistic, cultural, religious aspects, and the motivations behind the use. Areas like them rarely receive due attention in this perspective.

3. In the field of language teaching, a study could be carried out to examine the problems and difficulties foreign language students encounter in using taboo words and euphemism at the levels of production and recognition.

4. From a historical point of view, a study is made to investigate the changes in taboo words and euphemism and how they were viewed
by their society in history. It is possible to select a certain area in taboo words and euphemism to be studied historically.

5. Similarly, from a non-historical or descriptive point of view, the two topics in question can be investigated in detail in certain periods of time like Renaissance, the Elizabethan, the Victorian, the 20th century and so on.

**Summing Up**

This chapter includes the most important results of the study. Taboo words and euphemism in English and Arabic are investigated and compared to bring out their cultural and linguistic differences and similarities. This study has further scope to do research in the fields of taboo and euphemism in these two languages considering various other dimensions. Some pedagogical implications are also suggested here.

This study is not more than an attempt to explore the various aspects of taboo words and euphemism in two languages- English and Arabic. Though the researcher has faced some difficulties due to the lack of availability of enough references in certain areas like taboo in Arabic, this study is still a modest attempt to throw light on the topic in question. Of course, there is no claim that it is the only or the best kind of dealing with taboo and euphemism. Undoubtedly, a lot of work can be done in this area in the future. What the researcher hopes is to find a small place in this body of research concerned without making any claims.

The researcher has left no stone unturned to bring newer insights into this topic of research to match the expectations of the reader as far as novel
inferences and ideas are concerned in the areas of 'taboo' and 'euphemism'.

The success of any research can be measured in terms of two criteria. The first is the new insights, perspective, and horizons that the researcher brings to attention. The second is from the reader's perspective; i. e., what invaluable insights into the topic under investigation that the reader is expected to gain.