ABSTRACT

Introduction
The aim of the present study is to make a comparative analysis of the use of taboo words and euphemism in English and Arabic. Though there are some common features in these languages, particularly related to the themes of taboo words and euphemism, there are some marked differences. These differences are mostly related to the cultural factors. The researcher probes into these variables and arrives at certain concrete findings. The researcher first deals with the phenomena of taboo and euphemism in English as well as Arabic. This includes their historical development and treatment by respective linguists in various periods of history, their areas and topics and characteristic linguistic features.

Taboo
Taboo generally describes that which is unmentionable because it is either ineffably sacred, like the name of God, or unspeakably vile, like incest. Though historically, taboos have tended to move from topics of religious to secular and sexual to racial in nature, they can manifest themselves in relation to a wide variety of things, creatures, human experiences, conditions, deeds, and words. As a topic in linguistics, taboo has received more attention by modern Arab linguists who translated, transliterated, or coined the term into Arabic. Many definitions have been given of the concept of taboo in both languages (English and Arabic). They all refer to the fact that taboos are actions or words that refer to any forbidden behaviour for religious or social reasons that may result in punishment.

Both languages in question have taboo words in various fields. The following are examples representing these areas. In the field of sex, for example, cunt, motherfucker, and fuck, compared with prick and whore are
the most taboo words. *God* and *Jesus* are the taboo words in religion because they should not be taken in vain. Direct reference to human body organs, like *breast, leg, belly,* and *buttock* are impermissible unless they are used in their appropriate context. By the same token, *funeral, die, corpse, coffin,* and *undertaker* are unmentionable in the area of death. Moreover, diseases which death is associated with, like *cancer* and *AIDS,* are unspeakable. The role of culture is significant in the process of considering a word or an action taboo. The similarity between English and Arabic consists in the forbidden use of words related to sex and some body organs, diseases, and body functions.

What is specifically prohibited in Islam, for example, is associated with the mispronunciation of the Names of God (Allah is used in Arabic), the divine Unity of Allah, and not showing deference and respect to the teachings of Islam in general. Taboo expressions, when they are used, can achieve in-group and FTAs strategies. It depends on the context where they are employed, by who, and to whom they are spoken.

**Euphemism**

Euphemism, the use of a word which is thought to be less offensive or unpleasant than another word, on the other hand, is employed to avoid the confusion and embarrassment resulting from reference to taboo words or acts. Thus, the taboo expressions mentioned below become speakable through euphemism as follows:

- Breast (ثدي) = chest, front, or bosom (صدر أو مقدمة البدن أو نهد)
- Buttock (اﻟﺼﺮم) = rear end or posteriors (المؤخرة أو العجز)
- Legs (اﻟﺴﺎق) = lower limbs (الاطراف السفلى)
- Whore (ﻗﺤﺒﺔ) = lady of the night or call girl (غانية أو بائعة الهوى)
- Cancer (سرطان) = the big C or growth (نمو)
The use of euphemisms is attributed to the motivations, like fear, delicacy, and decency, which encourage people to create and avoid referring to taboo topics.

Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that there is no difference between English and Arabic as far as the themes of taboo and motivations of euphemism are concerned. The two languages use more euphemistic expressions in the field of sex than in any other field of taboo subjects. 'Religious taboo' in Arabic is so harmful as 'sex' in English.

Aims and Objectives

The main aims of the present study are:

1- To investigate taboo words and euphemism in English and Arabic.
2- To show the points of similarity and difference between these two topics in English and Arabic.

The objectives of the study can be listed as follows:

1- To present a theoretical background of the notions of taboo, euphemism, other related issues and the motivations (religious and social) behind avoiding the use of taboo words.
2- To discuss the major fields of taboo words and euphemism in English and Arabic and some semantic and pragmatic aspects.
3- To show the points of similarity and difference between the two languages under investigation.
4- To present some suggestions and recommendations for further studies for researchers and pedagogical implications for learners and teachers.
Methodology
The procedure of the study consists of several steps. It begins with the theoretical background of the notions of taboo, euphemism and other related terms. The themes of taboo and euphemism in English and Arabic with classifications are presented. It explains morphological, semantic, and pragmatic aspects with respect to taboo and euphemism in these two languages. A contrastive analysis is conducted to find out the points of similarity and difference to test the validity of the hypotheses of the study.

Structure of the Thesis
The thesis has been divided in six chapters as follows:

Chapter One is an introductory chapter. It gives a general idea about the notion of taboo and euphemism in language. It states the problem and how to address it. It shows the procedures to be followed, scope, significance, hypotheses, data, and the research methodology of the study.

Chapter Two deals with taboo in English. The etymology, history of taboo in English and the most important areas of taboo are discussed. Terms related to this topic, like four-letter words and dysphemism, are explained.

Chapter Three throws light on taboo in Arabic. How early Arab linguists dealt with the topic, the influence of Western linguists on modern Arab linguists to study this topic, definitions, and the most taboo areas in Arabic form the core of this chapter. Besides, taboo matters in old civilizations along with their morphological, semantic, and pragmatic aspects are investigated.
Chapter Four is on euphemism in English. The origin, meaning, and definitions of the term are given. The motivations behind the use of euphemistic expressions, morphological, semantic, and pragmatic sides are discussed. The importance of culture is also discussed in detail.

Chapter Five focuses on euphemism in Arabic. The contributions of early Arab linguists to this topic, definitions given by early and modern linguists, and the meaning of euphemism are presented in this chapter. Cultural, social, semantic and pragmatic aspects are discussed too.

Chapter Six summarizes the most important results of the research study. This study suggests possibilities of further research in this area and the pedagogical implications of the present study.

Conclusion
This study has yielded valuable results. Some of them are as follows:

The word "taboo" has entered into English in the 18th century from a Polynesian origin. The term in Arabic is either a matter of translation or transliteration, or coinage. The ineffable movement from religious to secular areas in taboo is clear. Compared with English which views sex at the top of the most taboo subjects, for Arabic counterparts the violation of some rules and restrictions of Islam in public is more dangerous than sex. Both languages show similarity in the field of disease and recognition of seriousness of some diseases; however, they differ in the way sufferings are viewed by sick people. Human reproductive organs and areas around them are the most taboo parts in human body. Unlike male human body parts, their female counterparts are more unspeakable and unmentionable.
Similarly, females in English culture are keener for personifying male genitals than males are. It is a matter of delicacy not to refer directly to people of humble occupations; it hurts their feelings and dignity. Morphologically, taboo words are uttered in the form of one word or a compound word, and occupy the position of a verb, noun, adjective, or adverb. The cultural changes cause a motivation to change in language. Taboo expressions are employed to achieve FTAs and in-group strategies. Whereas indirectness and politeness are expressed through the use of euphemisms since unpleasantness is diminished by speakers in this respect.

The thesis ends with some recommendations and suggestions for further studies. Pedagogical implications of the present study are also stated.