

An Investigation of the Semantic Opaqueness and the State of Affairs of English Euphemisms in the Iranian Educational Context

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Abstract: This study aimed to take a close look at the semantic opaqueness as well as the pedagogical and sociopragmatic status of English social euphemisms in the Iranian EFL context and to investigate which maxims of Cooperative and Politeness principles are flouted most and least during the use of euphemisms and direct expressions. For this purpose, data from 100 participants on 60 bipartite English direct and euphemistic expressions in terms of flouting of the PP and CP maxims were collected and analyzed. Considering rate of flouting of the CP maxims in euphemisms, the manner maxim ranked first and the quantity maxim ranked last; and in the case of the PP maxims in direct expressions, the tact maxim ranked first and the generosity maxim ranked last. Then again, concerning learners' recognition of semantic opaqueness in English euphemisms, the supremacy of flouting of the manner maxim, connoting opaqueness and ambiguity, revealed that interlocutors may not always observe the CP maxims but frequently do flout and say something vague to avoid embarrassing issues. So it supported the idea that learners' recognition of English euphemisms could characterize the semantic opaqueness of social euphemisms in English. Finally, by conducting structured interviews, data on the social, pragmatic and pedagogical state of English euphemisms were collected and content analyzed, the results of which unraveled prominent realities on the current status of euphemisms in the Iranian EFL contexts. The findings of the present study are hoped to be of use in uncovering the implications of English euphemisms and direct expressions in the process of translation and lend a hand to the fields of Applied Linguistics including English Translation, Pedagogy and Teaching Methodology.

Key words: Euphemism • Cooperative Principle • Politeness Principle • Maxim • Semantic opaqueness

INTRODUCTION

It is almost axiomatic that in every society there are certain things that are not supposed to be speakable or mentioned directly. Also, there are a fair number of words labeled as frivolous, vulgar, or at least inconsiderate. This type of language is known as "euphemism" in linguistics, which comes in a variety of forms and is used for a variety of reasons.

In the realm of English euphemisms, people *get selected out* or *downsized* rather than dismissed or fired; a man may get up from the table, explaining that he has to *see a man about a dog*; a young woman announces that her father *is getting on in years*; an undertaker asks deftly where to ship the *loved one*; and a young boy may *depend on others to pass his exams*. The above expressions are examples for the application of

euphemistic language, in which mild, agreeable, or roundabout words are used in place of painful and offensive ones.

At educational level, learning euphemism well means more than merely mastering the pronunciation, words and grammar. Based on Allan and Burridge [1], it means learning to see the world as native speakers see it and their language reflects the ideas, customs and behavior of their society.

As a social tool, euphemism is widely used in every level of society to show respect, humility and politeness. Also, the use of euphemism could make our speech more expressive, vivid and colorful, since it could adapt speech to different situations (Allan and Burridge [2]).

The relationship between euphemism and culture is also noticeable. According to Rawson [3], euphemism, as a cultural-linguistic product, displays its multiple mapping relations with culture.

In diplomacy, euphemism helps maintain a good relationship between nations and as Rawson [3] believes politicians employ euphemism to make eloquent language when in public and bureaucracies, such as the military, frequently coin euphemisms of a more deliberate nature.

In brief, though "euphemism" has been defined differently from various perspectives (e.g., Allan and Burridge [1, 2], Rawson [3]), all definitions seem to share some features, as follows:

- Euphemism is a kind of polite, roundabout and gracious mode of expression.
- Euphemism is used to mitigate or beautify the unpleasantness of reality.
- The main purpose of using euphemisms is to shun directly speaking out the unpleasant or taboo reference like death, the dead, the supernatural, etc.

Statement of the Problem: Despite the momentous prominence of euphemisms, it seems that very slight attention has been paid to them at different levels in EFL contexts. In this vein, a potential threat to the Iranian EFL learners could be that they might be unenlightened about the implications of shades of meanings of euphemisms during the time they are exposed to them, or when they are recognizing or producing discourse. This may be mainly due to an important feature of euphemisms called semantic opaqueness or non-compositionality, defined by Moon [4] as "the degree to which a multiple-word item cannot be interpreted on a word-by-word basis, but has a specialized unitary meaning" (p.44). In the same vein, as for the significance of the study, considering the assumptions that fluency in English cannot be achieved without a reasonable command of euphemisms and that euphemisms represent a part of language largely untaught, serious demand for further research on euphemisms in Iranian EFL context seems indispensable.

Considering the above caveats, this study aimed to investigate the status of euphemisms and the current mindset of the Iranian graduates on the recognition of euphemisms in practice. In this vein, the semantic opaqueness of euphemisms was regarded as a basic feature to mull over. Thus, it was attempted to probe into the semantic opaqueness of English social euphemisms and scrutinize it in view of the maxims of Cooperative Principle and Politeness Principle. Obviously, the eventual implications of the research in pedagogy were not ignored either, as the results could pave the way for subsequent studies at discoursal and socio-pragmatic levels.

Objectives of the Study: The current study primarily attempted to probe into the semantic opaqueness of euphemisms as a part of linguistic function of euphemisms in English and investigate it through Grice's maxims of Cooperative Principle (CP) and Leech's Maxims of Politeness Principle (PP). We were also interested in realizing how frequently learners via euphemisms and direct expressions flout one or more of the maxims of conversation and politeness and which maxims of CP and PP could be flouted most and least by learners. In this way, the results could provide the interested readers with a lucid idea about the importance of euphemisms and direct expressions while flouting the CP and PP maxims. Another objective of the current study was to take a step forward to account for the status of euphemisms to illuminate their appreciation in pedagogy and education.

Research Questions: In the research study, the following research questions were made out of the current needs:

- Which maxims of CP and PP are flouted most and least by Iranian Translation and TEFL learners?
- Does Iranian learners' recognition of English euphemisms characterize the semantic opaqueness of social euphemisms in English?
- What is the status of English social euphemisms in the current Iranian educational context like?

Research Methodology

Participants: The data for the study were collected from 100 participants ranging between 23 to 35 years of age in the Spring and the Fall 2012. The participants comprised 68 MA students of Translation at Islamic Azad University, Fars Science and Research Branch and 32 MA and PhD students of TEFL at Islamic Azad University, Shiraz Branch and Fars Science and Research Branch. The major reason for selecting the participants from the graduate programs was their higher experiences in language learning, their higher analytic abilities and their detailed familiarity with linguistic and pedagogical issues. It was expected that participants from graduate levels could develop their insights into more effective procedures related to the recognition of euphemisms, since they could be conscious of different aspects of the linguistic, historical and cultural overtones in the structures with euphemistic expressions.

Materials: In the current research, instances of euphemisms and euphemistic expressions used in the questionnaire were taken from *Rawson's Dictionary of Euphemisms and Other Double talks* [3], Allan and Burridge's *Euphemism and Dysphemism: Language used as shield and weapon* [1] and Allan and Burridge's *Forbidden words: Taboo and the censoring of language* [2]. Likewise, multiple maxims of PP proposed by Leech in *Principles of Pragmatics* [5] and 4-odd maxims of CP proposed by Grice in "Logic and Conversation" [6] were employed as frameworks for developing questionnaire items. Also, some authentic sources such as online data banks and the relevant internet sites were used through the study. In addition, for analyzing the collected data the SPSS software was employed.

Instruments: A pertinent questionnaire containing 60 bipartite items on euphemisms and direct expressions in view of the CP and PP maxims was designed and validated under the supervision of some experts. To check the content validity, a number of experts were asked to judge whether the items selected covered all aspects of the domain intended to measure and whether they were in appropriate proportions relative to the domain selected. To improve the quality of data obtained, the relevancy and clarity of questions were taken into account as well. In addition, to demonstrate the internal consistency of the items, the Cronbach's alpha reliability was calculated which yielded a reliability estimate of 0.86 for the questionnaire that was statistically satisfactory regarding the purpose of the study. The questionnaire survey was then complemented with a comprehensive list of interview questions comprising relevantly euphemistic issues on the pedagogical, social and pragmatic functions of euphemisms.

Framework of the Study: A long list of questions on the dichotomous categorizations of euphemistic and direct expressions to be investigated in view of the CP and PP maxims was developed. It was then complemented with structured interviews with 50 participants via collecting their personal opinions on the pedagogical, social and pragmatic state of English euphemisms and direct expressions on relevant issues such as semantic opaqueness, linguistic features, educational problems, etc. The students were required to elaborate on the recognition, interpretation and implication of English euphemisms and direct expressions and whether they believed those expressions could flout or follow the

maxims of CP and PP. The responses and comments given by participants were collected and then analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Data Collection Procedures and Data Analysis: To collect the data, both questionnaire surveys and interview sessions were employed. The questionnaire comprised an inventory of 60 bipartite questions on English direct expressions and their counterparts in euphemisms together with the maxims of PP and CP. The participants' option was based on their recognition of the observance or flouting of the Leech's six-fold maxims of PP and Grice's four-fold maxims of CP respectively. They were required to decide on the matter of the observance or flouting of each expression and in the case of flouting any maxim (of PP or CP) choose one or more of the options in front of the respective item. Besides, the opinions of the participants were collected through structured interviews. The main aim of the interviews was critically investigating the mindset of graduates about the social, pragmatic and pedagogical state of English euphemisms regarding the context of ELT in Iran. To analyze and interpret the quantitative data, the frequency of each response was computed on the basis of descriptive statistics. The frequencies were then presented on a graph to report the percentage of flouting of the maxims of CP and PP. Concerning the qualitative data, the responses and comments given by participants from different personal, educational and social backgrounds were collected and then content analyzed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data Analysis: The data provided within an enlarged scaffold of an amalgamation of the euphemistic and direct (non-euphemistic) expressions and the manifold maxims of CP and PP were expected to lend themselves to a mixed method analysis. For this purpose, the data from the participants' responses to the questionnaire items and the comments given in interviews were collected and combined in order to analyze the results both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Results of the Data on the Survey Questionnaire

Results of the Data on the Flouting of the Maxims of CP:

In attempting to find answers to the first two questions, a point was noteworthy. Due to the lack of mutual exclusivity in the participants' options of the maxim categorizations, also the existence of some overlaps in the

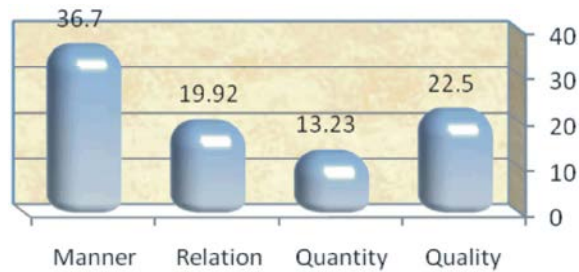


Fig. 1: CP maxims and percentage of the frequencies of flouting

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the Flouting of the Maxims of CP

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Number	5530	792	2198	1572.53	535.036
Valid N (listwise)	5530				

participants' choices of frequencies of flouting of the CP maxims, the application of Chi-square test was practically impossible. This was because based on the assumptions of χ^2 procedure, all the categories have to be considered mutually exclusive and each observation could appear in one and only one of the categories in the table. As a result, the frequency of each response was computed on the basis of descriptive statistics, taking into consideration the participants' recognition of nonobservance of the maxim(s) of CP.

Considering the second question in the study, particular attention was paid to the maxim of *manner* as it could be, by definition, an illuminating factor in introducing and revealing the semantic opaqueness of euphemistic expressions. Descriptive statistics of the flouting of the maxims of CP indicated that the minimum occurrence of the flouting of the CP maxims was 792, which belonged to the maxim of quantity, while the maximum occurrence was 2198, which belonged to the manner maxim. In addition, with reference to the percentage of the frequencies of flouting for each maxim it was shown that Manner (36.7%) > Quality (22.5%) > Relation (19.92%) > Quantity (13.23%).

Discussion on the Use of Euphemisms and Flouting of the CP Maxims: Based on Figure 1 it is understandable that the maxims of CP in the use of euphemisms cannot be persistently observed and people sometimes do flout one or more maxims of the CP to meet certain communicative needs. This is because of the conversational implicature that allows a speaker of any side to convey meaning beyond what is literally expressed. So to speak, speakers can often use euphemisms or euphemistic expressions to

produce conversational implicature or more meaning that the hearers can figure out its real intentions rather than the literal meaning by flouting some certain maxims.

Conclusion on the Use of Euphemisms and Flouting of the CP Maxims: As mentioned above, the manner maxim ranked first in terms of flouting of the CP maxims, while using euphemisms (M>Ql>R>Qt) and 36.7% of the cases of flouting of the CP maxims allocated to the maxim of manner, which, by far, put it in the first rank in comparison to the other maxims of CP. On the other hand, the quantity maxim with 13.23% ranked last among other maxims of CP. However, it is noteworthy that thanks to Grice's four categories overlapping with each other, euphemisms may flout more than one maxim of the CP at the same time. For example, when the maxim of quantity is flouted, the expression will be unclear and not concise by providing less or more information and hence, the maxim of manner is flouted immediately. From this view, almost all examples cited above primarily flout the maxim of manner when they are placed under the flouting of other maxims.

Flouting of the manner maxim, by definition, refers to giving obscure and ambiguous information. Sometimes under particular communicative circumstances, the speaker says something obscurely and ambiguously to avoid mentioning unpleasant and embarrassing things in a direct way. Thus, the hearers should carefully infer the conversational implicature and what their real intentions and meanings are, according to the specific context. This is the reason why we may find many euphemisms tending to flout the maxim of manner so as to achieve the mild, agreeable, roundabout and pleasant-sound effects.

Results of the Data on the Flouting of the Maxims of PP:

To find the answer to that part of the research question concerned with the PP maxims, data on the flouting of the PP were collected and exposed to the analysis in order to shed light on and widen perspectives to the status of direct (noneuphemistic) expressions in view of the flouting of the PP maxims. Just like the data on the flouting of the CP maxims, due to the existence of overlaps in the participants' choices of the PP maxims and lack of mutual exclusivity in the participants' options of categorizations, the application of Chi-square test was practically impossible. Thus, the frequency of each response was computed on the basis of descriptive statistics, considering the participants' recognition of flouting of the maxim(s) of PP. The frequencies were then presented on graphs and tables to report the percentage of responses concerning various occurrence of flouting

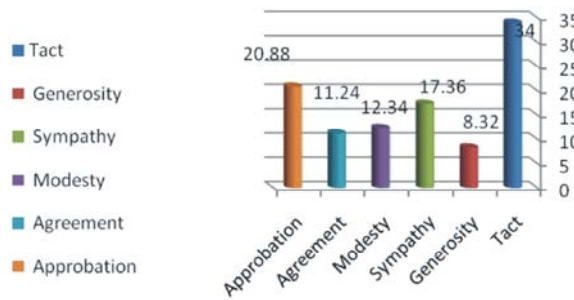


Fig. 2: PP maxims and percentage of the frequencies of flouting

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the Flouting of the PP Maxims

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Number	6202	498	2038	1289.49	570.131
Valid N (listwise)	6202				

(nonobservances) of the maxims of PP. Descriptive statistics of the flouting of the maxims of PP indicated that the minimum occurrence of the flouting of the PP maxims was 498, which belonged to the maxim of generosity, while the maximum occurrence of the PP maxims was 2038, which belonged to the tact maxim.

As illustrated in Figure 2, the percentage of the frequencies of flouting for each maxim indicated that Tact (34%) > Approbation (20.88%) > Sympathy (17.36%) > Modesty (12.34%) > Agreement (11.24%) > Generosity (8.32%).

Discussion on the Possible Flouting of the PP in the Use of Direct Expressions: On the basis of the percentage of flouting for the PP maxims in Figure 2, it is clear that the maxims of PP in the use of direct or noneuphemistic expressions can be occasionally flouted so that by flouting people could meet certain communicative needs. Yet we have to bear in mind that not all of the maxims are equally important and as a whole, the core objectives of the multiple pairs of PP might be interpreted like this: to minimize the expression of impolite beliefs and maximize the expression of polite beliefs.

Conclusion on the Use of Direct Expressions and Flouting of the PP Maxims: The results of the study on the use of noneuphemistic expressions and flouting of the PP maxims corroborated the Leech's (1983) claim that not all of the maxims and sub-maxims are equally important. In addition, based on the results, the tact maxim ranked first in terms of flouting of the PP maxims, while using direct expressions (T > Ap > S > M > Ag > G), so that 34% of the cases of flouting of the PP maxims allocated to the maxim of tact, while the generosity maxim with 3.32% ranked last among other maxims of PP.

The results of the study also confirmed Leech's (1983) claim that of the twinned maxims of tact, generosity, approbation and modesty, the maxim of tact appears to be a more powerful constraint on conversational behavior than the maxim of generosity and the maxim of approbation more powerful than the maxim of modesty, since comparing the percentage of frequencies of flouting of the PP maxims, we could readily come to conclude that Tact > Approbation > Sympathy > Modesty > Agreement > Generosity. This reflects a more general rule that politeness is focused more strongly on "other" than on "self". Moreover, it is obvious that within each maxim, sub-maxim (b) seems to be less important than sub-maxim (a), which illustrates the more general rule that negative politeness or avoidance of discord is a more weighty consideration than positive politeness or seeking concord.

Results of the Data on the Structured Interview: The main aim of the interview was to carry out a meticulous inquiry to the pedagogical and socio-pragmatic state of euphemisms in Iran. In order to probe into the interviewees' commentary, the participants' comments on diverse issues of euphemisms-including the status and the application-were warily collected, recorded, sorted out and content analyzed.

Results of the Data on the Pedagogical State of Euphemisms: Analysis of the responses concerning the pedagogical state of English euphemisms revealed some evocative points, as follows:

- One of the greatest problems with English euphemisms was reported to be inadequate inclusion of euphemisms or too little attention paid to them in the syllabus. As one of the participants asserted "The concept euphemism is odd for EFL students and they rarely face this concept while learning language." Another interviewee complained "Most of the learners are ignorant of them because there is little emphasis on them in teaching. Another maintained "learners do not become sufficiently familiar with euphemisms, especially through direct teaching".
- Some of the participants groaned that English euphemisms are, by nature, replete with a large degree of semantic opaqueness, which could be misleading: "The problem is that euphemisms are misleading. They obscure meaning and are a form of disinformation and those who wield them want others to believe something that is not true." Another grumble was concerned with recognizing them:

"Because in the first vision, we cannot distinguish that they are euphemisms, in order to find their meanings we face some difficulties."

- Another grumble was concerned with the absence of euphemisms from English textbooks and also lack of notice to euphemisms: "The [current] courses and textbooks, suffer from lack of English euphemisms. We have little part that euphemisms are on them." Another interviewee believed that "As understanding euphemism is hard for EFL speakers, so they ignore it unintentionally." Still, another participant remarked "Maybe they are unintentionally absent from English courses and textbooks, but it can also be due to the lack of research or knowledge or notice."
- Considering the role of euphemisms in improving language skills and promoting educational standards, there appeared to be a remarkable consensus among interviewees that no language fluency was imaginable without a logical degree of euphemisms; likewise, having no knowledge of euphemisms, the learners will be unable to appreciate texts; and also excluding euphemisms from language classroom will be a threat to the lofty pedagogical standards. In regard with the effect of euphemisms on language fluency some remarkable comments were given. For instance, a participant offered "Getting a reasonable command of euphemism can help learners very much to gain a perfect fluency", while another thought "I believe fluency is a main feature of a language and in particular we should notice fluency in euphemistic expressions." And finally, considering exclusion of euphemisms from language classrooms some remarks were noteworthy. An interviewee maintained "By doing so, learners won't become familiar with them and cannot use them in the appropriate contexts, so they should not be excluded from English courses." Another participant asserted "It is a threat to the lofty pedagogical standard if euphemism is not considered as an essential part of a language. Thus, ignoring it may cause the language learners not to learn that language well." Still, another commented "I believe that if euphemisms are not considered in English courses and textbooks, cultural aspects cannot be conveyed appropriately through the message."
- Some participants claimed that during and even after their [undergraduate] college studies, they could stumble on little exposition to the English euphemisms. Therefore, they craved for further

inclusion of aspects of euphemisms into the language courses. One participant proposed "To promote and ease the process of learning it is good to include more aspects of euphemisms in language courses in Iran." And another one maintained "There is not enough attention to English euphemism in language courses of EFL in Iran. If more aspects of it are included, it can be hopeful to reach the goal of improvement."

A major logic behind the inclusion of further aspects of euphemisms to the classroom is that they are deemed as an inseparable part of language teaching. In this vein, an interviewee claimed "Euphemism is an inseparable part of a language and it is necessary for everyone to know them if he/she wants to learn English language."

Likewise, the assumption that euphemisms could make language learning process easier was mainly established through comments such as the following: "By knowing about euphemisms you can understand the text better and become familiar with different words and cultures."

Also, there were mostly positive reactions to the postulation that euphemisms are part of the necessities of a proficient language learner, as the following comment: "They are part of language and you can't separate them from language. So while teaching English, you should pay attention to euphemistic expressions."

In the same vein, concerning learners' need to learn and respect euphemisms in their local language, some notable comments were offered, as follows: "Learners should use and respect euphemisms in TL as they're inseparable part of language."

In general, the above points could be suggestive in a large degree. Yet the data on the socio-pragmatic state of euphemisms would be enlightening, as it could reveal potential factors that may act as critical barriers and inhibit the process of learning in EFL classroom.

Results of the Data on the Socio-Pragmatic State of Euphemisms: Analysis of the responses in the interviews with reference to the sociopragmatic state of English euphemisms uncovered the following motivating and evocative points:

- Most participants maintained a confirmatory attitude that little knowledge of euphemisms could create misunderstandings in communication. For instance, it was claimed that "If there is not enough knowledge about them, it may cause problems to perceive and

convey some messages correctly." Also, it was confirmed by another participant that "Knowing little about euphemisms, not only creates various misunderstanding in communication, but it can be threatening in communication."

- Most participants strongly held that euphemisms most often lead learners to appreciate social and pragmatic values; also, EFL learners need to become familiar with the change(s) each word or expression can bring about; in addition, their familiarity with euphemisms could make them conscious of the linguistic, historical and cultural overtones. Considering social and pragmatic values it was maintained that "The way people speak or communicate is part of social behavior" and that "Knowing about English euphemisms in language courses causes motivation or interest in learning about social or pragmatic values."

Regarding learners' familiarity with the effect of euphemisms on the meaning of each word or expression, one respondent believed "If we want to learn and understand a language perfectly, we should know what happens in it and be familiarized with all changes and know them." Likewise, concerning learners' consciousness of the linguistic, historical and cultural overtones, it was held that "By knowing English euphemistic expressions, learners can be familiar with different aspects of the linguistic background and cultural overtones."

The interviewees' following comments were also noticeable in this regard:

"Since languages have a very high rate of vocabulary change, so EFL learners should be familiarized with the enormous changes that individual words bring about."

"Euphemisms are a main part of language and they show cultural, historical and social values of language and society. So I think they are ethical codes of a language and society and are in close relationship with Linguistics."

On the contrary, there were some comments which were divergent to the above ones:

"I think euphemistic expressions have nothing to do with different aspects of the linguistic background and the historical and cultural overtones and they are two different issues."

"I myself know lots of euphemisms but I know nothing about the historical and cultural overtones. Some euphemistic expressions may have such information but not all of them."

- Many participants asserted that by tracing euphemisms learners could get what's going on in the language and culture, as a participant claimed "Because cultures have something in common, learners can become aware of similarities by extending their knowledge about source and target cultures, but if there aren't many similarities, this process becomes difficult." Another respondent argued "As euphemisms inspire from cultures, religions, taboos and aesthetic features of a society, by knowledge of euphemisms learners can feel writer's aims more tangible." Nevertheless, there were some opposing comments to the above assumptions. For instance, an interviewee objected "Euphemisms may not consider all aspects of language and also the users of one language may have different cultures." In this vein, the following deviating viewpoints were presented by another respondent: "Some euphemistic expressions may serve this function, but mostly they are two different issues."

Another issue that engrossed many proponents was that English euphemisms promote socio-pragmatic behavior of learners. For example, a participant maintained "Euphemisms can help learners to get familiar with different meanings in different contexts, so they can promote the socio-pragmatic behavior of learners." And another assenting remark was made as follows: "Euphemism can help us realize our communicative intention so it plays a significant role in maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationship."

- A number of students groaned that most EFL students are unenlightened about shades of meanings of euphemisms during the exposition, as a student thought "I think most of EFL students are unaware of euphemisms while they are producing discourse or during the time they are exposed to them. For example, they may use euphemisms in their speech but they do not know what a euphemism is." Another interviewee believed "Without familiarity with euphemisms or just knowing little about them, learners cannot use or even understand them accurately. But if they learn euphemisms critically, they have little problem with them."

On the contrary, there were comments a bit different from the above ones, as follows:

"I think it depends on each individual. Maybe there are some students who are not familiar with euphemisms and their meanings in mother language and foreign language."

"Knowing about all euphemisms is really hard. For knowing all euphemisms EFL students should know about their culture in order to understand their meanings and using euphemisms needs a lot of time."

"Learners are usually aware of what they produce. And they know when they should use appropriate words. For example, we can use some inoffensive words in a situation that may become offensive by using taboo rather than euphemism."

With reference to the students' needs to a critical look at euphemisms besides being exposed to them, an interviewee responded "Taking a critical look at English euphemisms and comparing them with euphemisms in their language can be effective and helps EFL learners understand English euphemisms better." And another responded "By looking analytically at euphemisms, learners can feel their use more perceptibly and they become more practical, rather than just memorizing some words or expressions."

Similarly, in regard with the need to critical thinking for EFL learners to reflect on both local and English euphemisms, a respondent maintained "Providing learners with critical thinking is helpful, as when they know local euphemisms, it will help them to learn English euphemisms easier." And another participant claimed "If learners have critical skills, they can understand and recognize both local and English euphemisms and compare them together."

- A large number of exciting comments were offered concerning euphemisms being alluring in a range of emotions, reactions and attitudes and also as an aid to learners' becoming better world citizens, as a participant believed that "Euphemistic expressions carry emotions, reactions, attitudes and opinions within them, so that using them makes us more familiar with exact feelings of the speaker." In this vein, another participant maintained "When real emotions, attitudes and opinions are conveyed, the receivers get the same effect as producers, which is very appealing, as they use euphemism in their actual language use."

By the same token, with reference to euphemisms as a help to learners' becoming better world citizens, an interviewee asserted "By knowing about English euphemisms, learners can use the appropriate status of

social class." And another one claimed "They can know about their culture, ideas and customs and they can use them for themselves."

- Analysis of the participants' responses demonstrated striking points concerning euphemisms and direct expressions in view of the maxims of CP and PP. Based on the interviewees' responses it was witnessed that the questions concerning the observance/nonobservance of the maxims of CP and PP and their relation with English euphemisms and direct expressions proved to be among the most sophisticated issues that engrossed a lot of pros and cons. In this regard, some responses were ingenuously irrelevant while others could signify the shallow knowledge of the participants on the above issues. The reason for superficiality of the responses on the above issues could be partly attributed to the hazy nature of euphemisms and partly to the interviewees' lack of awareness of CP and PP and their related maxims. Also, it could be somewhat ascribed to the participants' being short of notion and knack to make decision on the impeding or facilitating role of euphemisms and direct expressions as to the observance or nonobservance of the maxims of CP and PP.

With reference to the impeding use of English euphemisms to observe the maxims of CP, a number of responses seemed to be more logical and relevant, which could show participants' relative degrees of awareness to the euphemisms and CP maxims. For instance, a participant maintained "Because euphemisms make ambiguity, it violates the maxim of manner. For example, acronyms and abbreviations, as ways of the formation of euphemism, are the two main ways of violating the quantity maxim. We may still find that some euphemisms as cases that violate both the quality maxim and the quantity maxim. Hence, in a broad sense we may say that euphemisms that violate the quality maxim can also be regarded as special cases that violate the quantity maxim because the two maxims are closely related."

However, some interviewees seemed to be too conservative, conformist and middle-of-the-road, taking no sides in their responses: "I think it depends on the audience and their knowledge of understanding the euphemisms."

On the other hand, some responses appeared to be too general, hazy, shallow and even irrelevant wherein the participants could not present a plain piece of their mind. Comments such as the following would be put in this category:

"Learners can use euphemisms to achieve the maxims of CP. It improves their social status."

"As CP deals with clarification and relevancy it can help to understanding of euphemisms."

"I think the maxims of CP are subordinate to euphemisms and euphemism is a polite and indirect language and CP is a part of it. We observe quantity, quality, relation and manner, these are subsidiary for euphemism."

"Because English euphemism is an inseparable part of English language, so by ignoring it we cannot be faithful and also we don't pay attention to maxim of quality which is part of CP."

Regarding the impeding use of English direct expressions to observe the maxims of PP some responses seemed to be more pertinent, reasonable and defensible, which indicated the interviewees' perceptiveness of the PP maxims and noneuphemistic (direct) expressions: "In some cases we should impede use of English direct expressions to observe the maxims of politeness principle. Since one part of this principle is "maximize cost for self" which means the strategy of attending to hearer's interests, wants and needs. And because the hearer likes to hear polite expressions we should use euphemism instead of direct expressions."

However, some interviewees appeared to be too conservative in their remarks:

"Although we can show politeness without using euphemisms (by using other linguistic features), euphemisms help to be polite in speech and behavior."

"Because some phrases or expressions have negative meanings and may show impoliteness, in order to respect the others it is better to use euphemisms."

Alternatively, a number of responses seemed too general, indistinct and obscure in which the participants did not provide a lucid idea as to whether to impede or facilitate the use of direct expressions. Some comments in this category were as the following:

"In the language communication, euphemisms always observe the PP. In order to observe the maxim of PP, learners should use euphemisms and they shouldn't use direct expressions."

"It is better to use euphemism rather than direct expressions, because it shows politeness and it may lead to increase social class and make him more admirable."

"We observe the maxims of politeness principle to consider polite and indirect language and make a good and idealistic society. So the learners should reject use of direct expressions."

CONCLUSION

Summary and Results: In the present mixed method research study, it was aimed to find to what extent Iranian learners flout the maxims of CP and PP while using euphemisms and direct expressions in English. It was also attempted to discover if learners' recognition of euphemisms characterize the semantic opaqueness of social euphemisms in English. In the study, particular attention was paid to the maxim of *manner* and the extent to which it was flouted by use of euphemisms. A major reason for this prominence was that the maxim of manner, by definition, could directly deal with the issue of semantic opaqueness in euphemisms, which was of great significance to the researcher. In this vein, the study of the flouting of the manner maxim could, by and large, play a central role in revealing views to appreciate and widen perspectives to the semantic opaqueness of euphemistic expressions.

According to the results of the study, the percentage of frequencies of flouting of the CP maxims indicated that Manner>Quality>Relation>Quantity. Thus, the manner maxim ranked first in terms of flouting of the CP maxims while using euphemisms. So to speak, 36.7% of the cases of flouting of the CP maxims allocated to the maxim of manner, which, by far, put it in the first rank in comparison to the other maxims of CP. On the contrary, the quantity maxim with only 13.23% ranked last among the CP maxims. Considering the supremacy of the manner maxim one point is noteworthy. Since flouting of the manner maxim, by definition, refers to giving obscure and ambiguous information, every now and then under particular communicative circumstances, the speaker may say something obscure and ambiguous in order to avoid mentioning unpleasant and embarrassing things in a direct way. Thus, the hearer should carefully infer the conversational implicature of the speaker and his/her real intentions and meanings, according to the specific context. This is the reason why we may find many euphemisms tending to flout the maxim of manner so as to achieve the mild, agreeable, roundabout and pleasant-sound effects. From this view, almost all cases cited in the study primarily flouted the maxim of manner when they were placed under the flouting of other maxims, which could recurrently verify that learners' recognition of euphemisms could characterize the semantic opaqueness of social euphemisms in English.

It was also indicated in the study that due to the overlapping of the CP maxims, euphemisms could flout more than one maxim of the CP simultaneously.

For example, when the maxim of quantity was flouted, the expression was considered as unclear by providing less or more information and hence, the maxim of manner was flouted immediately.

Considering the use of noneuphemistic expressions and flouting of the PP maxims, the results corroborated the Leech's [5] claim that not all of the maxims and sub-maxims are equally important. In addition, the tact maxim appeared to be the most important maxim among other PP maxims and ranked first in terms of flouting of the PP maxims, while using direct expressions i.e., Tact>Approbation>Sympathy>Modesty>Agreement>Generosity, since 34% of the cases of flouting of the PP maxims allocated to the maxim of tact, which, by far, put it in the first rank in comparison to the other maxims of PP. On the contrary, the generosity maxim with 3.32% ranked last among other maxims of PP.

The results of the study also confirmed Leech's [5] claim that of the twinned maxims of tact, generosity, approbation and modesty, the maxim of tact appeared to be a more powerful constraint on conversational behavior than the maxim of generosity and the maxim of approbation more powerful than the maxim of modesty. This reflected a more general rule that politeness was focused more strongly on "other" than on "self". Moreover, it was obvious that within each maxim, sub-maxim (b) seemed to be less important than sub-maxim (a), which illustrated the more general rule that negative politeness or avoidance of discord was a more weighty consideration than positive politeness or seeking concord.

Pedagogical Implications: Euphemisms are rooted so deeply in any language that few of us go through a day without using them. As a part of language, they have obtained a remarkably widespread application in human societies and interactions. In fact, the relation between language and euphemism is so intrinsically close that it is impossible to study one without an analysis of the other.

First of all, language is the vehicle of euphemism. We can say that where there is language, there is euphemism, as Wardhaugh [7] said "Language is used to avoid saying certain things as well as to express them." In our daily life, usually certain things are not said for some reasons. If they are said, they should be said in roundabout ways. In this case, we have the use of euphemisms so as to avoid mentioning certain matters directly.

Secondly, euphemism is one form of language; we can derive euphemism from family talks, official meetings, literary words, scribbles on walls, telephone talks, television programs, letters, cards, advertisements, E-mails, etc. A casual look at language will show that there are a host of linguistic devices, which are habitually adopted in presenting euphemism. Such figures of speech as hyperbole, metaphor, understatement, circumlocution are so commonly used in euphemistic utterances that when people discuss euphemism, rhetorical analysis takes up the whole picture of euphemistic language analysis.

Thirdly, as far as the change of euphemism is concerned, euphemism has experienced the process of growth, development and decline. Thus, it not only enriches English vocabulary but also contributes to the appropriate and effective use of language. And what is more, euphemistic effect enables language communication to go smoothly and successfully.

Theoretically speaking, studies of this kind can shed more light on the current literature on pedagogy. Moreover, due to its concern with cultural qualities, the findings can be applied for the enrichment of the theories of language learning such as Language Universals and Acculturation. Besides, the issues provided could provide the readers with the ability to enhance effectiveness, consistency and comprehensiveness in detecting inculcations beyond idiomatic power of euphemistic expressions. More specifically, it encompasses a whole range of emotions, reactions, attitudes and opinions on the part of the participants.

Concerning the development of a theory of SLA, the findings of this study can enrich the typological linguistics studies to offer new ways of categorizing languages. The semantic opaqueness feature of euphemisms used in the research can suggest criteria for classifying languages based on the techniques they provide for reality distortion. Another important insight gained from the research is to unravel how language could be a strong device in distorting the unwelcome realities; also, in covering social bigotry, social and political taboos, as well as cultural conflicts.

Also, the current study is closely concerned with pragmatics which comprises a number of phenomena such as conversational analysis, speech act theory, conversational implicatures, conversational maxims, politeness, relevance theory, critical linguistics, CDA, sociolinguistics and social pragmatics. Fundamental to the understanding of all these phenomena is having a

profound understanding of the cultural traditions and values in different sociolinguistic background. Bitterly ironic though, these aspects of language have not received the attention they deserve in our academic settings.

In the same vein, a critical approach to English euphemisms can be used as a powerful device for deconstructing such expressions to come up with their intended ideologies. Also, it can be a theory for finding the manners in which the attitudes and identities causes sociolinguistic variations and mismatches in different communities.

To wind up the argument on the practical significance of the present study, the researchers cannot help discussing the effect of such a study on translation studies and practices. The findings of the present study can give some insights into the linguistic, pedagogical, socio-pragmatic and even ideological factors which determine the strategies applied in translation. For the most part, the act of translation is not an exclusively purely linguistic enterprise; the translator must attend to political, social and ideological backgrounds of the writer to be able to render a message from the source to target language and as Venuti [8] maintains, due to the fact that translation encompasses the close link between language and culture, critical discourse analysis researchers should aim at accurately analyzing the translated rendition to see how much the ideology of the writer is visible in the translated text and to what extent cultural points affect the process of translation.

As for implications of the study in translations, there are a number of different factors, including rhetoric, stylistic and contextual ones that could affect the pragmatic inference of euphemism by its receiver and eventually the understanding and expressive effect of it. Therefore, it is advisable for the learners to attach great importance to these factors while paying constant attention to cross-cultural differences in uncovering euphemisms.

Considering stylistic factor, while translating euphemisms, translators should always bear in mind the stylistic differences in rendering the same euphemism into different writing styles. With reference to rhetoric factor, one should try to employ the equivalent of euphemistic expression in target language. However, it should also depend on the response of the prospective receiver and the condition of the target language, because not every euphemism in the source language has its equivalent in

the target language. And concerning contextual factor, appropriateness to the occasion and contextual cohesion are two major concerns to the translation of euphemisms. By the way, "the former one calls for the consideration of the translator of the contextual factors conducive to the realization of the implicature of euphemisms while the later requires the translator to be aware of the acceptability of the renderings in target language" [9] (p.125).

Language translators, teachers, material developers and learners can benefit a lot from studies on the linguistic dichotomy of euphemistic and non-euphemistic expressions as well as extensions of the multiple maxims of Grice's CP and Leech's PP. As a whole, based upon the above discussion and analysis, the following pedagogical statements can be made:

- The Iranian EFL teachers should make the learners aware of the cultural differences so that when the students are reading or translating English texts, they don't become surprised about the way the euphemistic expressions are used in that language.
- The students should be encouraged to enhance their ability in identifying euphemisms in authentic texts, as well as boosting their awareness of them since it makes them better learners so that they would use language more fruitfully and to the point.
- Learners are advised to learn the contrast between the use of euphemism and direct (non-euphemistic) expressions in language; they should also be able to distinguish the taboo and uncomfortable subjects in English that give rise to most of euphemisms in language.
- The students should recognize basic rules and principles of euphemisms' formation; likewise, they ought to identify different classifications of English euphemisms based on the scope of source, scope of sense and sphere of application.
- Learners should be able to recognize euphemisms' properties including semantic opaqueness, beautification, politeness and disguising; also, they should surmise why a euphemism is used and what it connotes as compared to the original word it stands for.
- EFL learners are advised to appreciate the application of CP and PP in euphemistic and direct language as two primary principles guiding people's communication to maintain the social equilibrium and the friendly relations between interlocutors.

- As the field of translation would benefit from translators' awareness of English euphemisms and the differences in SL and TL cultures, so it is evocative to put further emphasis on the cultural aspects of euphemistic expressions in the translation works in future.
- In order to develop their insights into more effective learning techniques related to euphemisms, learners are advised to become conscious of different aspects of the linguistic, historical and the cultural overtones in texts with euphemistic expressions.
- It seems axiomatic that all learners, via dealing with and probing into euphemisms, develop the essential power for critical thinking, fostering thoughtfulness, profundity and perceptiveness. For this purpose, they should integrate different stages of educational levels into a pattern for critical thinking and ultimately 'self assessment' and 'evaluation'.

Recommendations for Further Research: This study could be a preliminary point for conducting further research on the linguistic, pedagogical and sociopragmatic functions of euphemisms in EFL contexts like Iran. In this vein, more detailed research could be done on the related issues such as adopting strategies for translating euphemisms and taboos in particular genres, employing other pragmatic theories or theoretical frameworks and investigating the impact of euphemisms on language awareness and language acquisition. In addition, the study could raise some more interesting and challenging questions for the continued research such as the following:

- What is the role of euphemisms in enhancing 'critical thinking' among Iranian translators as an important indication of cognitive competency?
- How could Iranian translators' awareness of direct and euphemistic expressions be reflected in ordinary or everyday use of language?

In the same vein, the following topics and issues are proposed as further suggestions:

- Performing a comparative study can reveal many similar and/or different aspects of English and

Persian euphemisms in use, means of formation and communicative functions.

- By conducting a comparative study the cultural differences or the national characteristics reflected by euphemisms in Persian and English could be disclosed.
- A comparative study may reveal the effect of euphemisms on the EFL learners' awareness of the English language skillfully in cross-cultural communication.

It should be noted that the research made is undoubtedly open to further discussions and there could still be some relative problems to be solved out of the researcher's restricted knowledge and materials. Thus, the author hopes it could evoke more attention on the recognition, perception and interpretation of euphemisms and noneuphemistic expressions.

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Appendix I

A Survey questionnaire on the state of the English direct and euphemistic expressions in view of observance or flouting of the maxims of PP and CP

No	Direct (Non-euphemistic) Expression	The Type(s) of Maxims of PP Flouted						Euphemistic Expression	The Type(s) of Maxims of CP Flouted			
		T	G	S	M	Ag	Ap		Qt	Ql	R	M
1	Liz looks <i>fat</i> .							Liz looks <i>traditionally built</i> .				
2	Some office workers had to be <i>fired</i> imminently.							Some office workers had to be <i>rightsized/downsized</i> imminently.				
3	Bill is in his <i>old age</i> .							Bill is in his <i>golden years</i> .				
4	The immigrants came from an African <i>poor nation</i> .							The immigrants came from an African <i>emerging nation</i> .				
5	Her house is two years <i>old</i> .							Her house is two years <i>new</i> .				
6	The conscientious teacher attempted to push the <i>poor students</i> .							The conscientious teacher attempted to push the <i>underperformers</i> .				
7	He was working as an <i>illegal worker</i> abroad.							He was working as an <i>undocumented worker</i> abroad.				
8	The soldiers were being accused of <i>genocide</i> .							The soldiers were being accused of <i>ethnic cleansing</i> .				
9	The young man <i>failed</i> to meet the required qualifications for job.							The young man <i>fell short/went out of business</i> to meet the required qualifications for job.				
10	-Do you think she is pretty? - <i>No, she isn't</i> .							-Do you think she is pretty? - <i>She is quite knowledgeable</i> .				
11	The schoolboy was <i>clumsy</i> in his writing skills.							The schoolboy was <i>gravitationally challenged</i> in his writing skills.				
12	Where could I find some <i>toilet paper</i> ?							Where could I find some <i>T.P./bath tissue</i> ?				
13	The dishonest student had a constant tendency toward <i>cheating</i> .							The dishonest student had a constant tendency toward <i>peer homework help/ comparing answers</i> .				
14	Sorry. <i>Your zip is down</i> .							Sorry. <i>Your fly is undone</i> .				
15	The patient suffered from <i>simultaneous existence of mental and physical health issues</i> .							The patient suffered from <i>co-morbidity</i> .				
16	Unluckily, he has fallen into <i>drug addiction</i> .							Unluckily, he has fallen into <i>chemical dependency/ substance abuse</i> .				
17	The <i>war</i> between the two opposing sides lasted for some eight years.							The <i>force/peace process/ conflict</i> between the two opposing sides lasted for some eight years.				
18	He had to confess under <i>torture</i> .							He had to confess under <i>persuasion</i> .				
19	For over 25 years, he has been working as a bin man/garbage man.							For over 25 years, he has been working as a <i>garbologist/ sanitation engineer/sanitation officer</i> .				
20	Mary is a <i>picky eater</i> .							Mary is <i>specific about what she eats</i> .				
21	The doctors diagnosed her disease as <i>cancer</i> .							The doctors diagnosed her disease as <i>the big C</i> .				
22	He is interested in <i>used cars</i> .							He is interested in <i>pre-owned</i> .				
23	His main job was to work in a <i>garbage dump</i> .							His main job was to work in a <i>sanitary landfill</i> .				
24	The army officer banned soldiers from <i>killing of innocents</i> .							The army officer banned soldiers from <i>collateral damage</i> .				
25	The patient was <i>having both mental illness and drug problems</i> .							The patient was <i>dual-diagnosed</i> .				
26	The sick man enjoyed <i>benefits and treatments in times of sickness</i> .							The sick man enjoyed <i>wellness</i> .				
27	It was entirely inconsiderate to show individuals <i>having sex</i> together.							It was entirely inconsiderate to show individuals <i>acting like rabbits/ getting it on</i> .				
28	He was provided with some <i>bribe</i> to do the job right away.							He was provided with some <i>motivation</i> to do the job right away.				
29	She is known to be a <i>lesbian</i> .							She is known to be a <i>woman in sensible shoes</i> .				
30	It didn't appeal to her whatever to look so <i>short</i> .							It didn't appeal to her whatever to look so <i>vertically-challenged</i> .				
31	The poor man had to live in a <i>ghetto/ slum</i> .							The poor man had to live in a(n) <i>economically depressed neighborhood/ culturally-deprived environment</i> .				
32	The imprisoned man could no more resist against <i>torture</i> .							The imprisoned man could no more resist against <i>enhanced interrogation technique</i> .				
33	The proposed suggestion was a <i>very poor/ bad</i> way to deal with the problem.							The proposed suggestion was an <i>ill-advised</i> way to deal with the problem.				
34	He had to be kept in a <i>mental illness center</i> for several years.							He had to be kept in a <i>mental health center</i> for several years.				
35	It is startling that <i>sex change</i> is on vogue in some communities.							It is startling that <i>gender reassignment</i> is on vogue in some communities.				
36	The man met his <i>divorced</i> spouse by accident.							The man met his <i>pre-loved</i> by accident.				
37	A new series of <i>attacking</i> was on track by military forces.							A new series of <i>active defending</i> was on track by military forces.				
38	Where can I <i>find a toilet</i> ?							Where can I <i>powder my nose/meet john/wash my hand</i> ?				
39	The passengers were informed how to use <i>vomit bags</i> .							The passengers were informed how to use <i>motion discomfort bags/ air-sickness bags</i> .				
40	All her friends surprised when they heard she was <i>pregnant</i> .							All her friends surprised when they heard she was <i>in the family way</i> .				
41	The newly-employed clerk proved to be <i>lazy</i> .							The newly-employed clerk proved to be <i>not working to the full potential/having a rather relaxed attitude to work</i> .				
42	Unfortunately, the number of <i>poor people</i> is increasing rapidly.							Unfortunately, the number of <i>under-privileged/economically deprived</i> is increasing rapidly.				
43	The doctor was a <i>supporter of woman's having abortion</i> .							The doctor was a <i>pro-choice</i> .				
44	Louise Braille was suffering from <i>blindness</i> .							Louise Braille was suffering from <i>visual impairment</i> .				
45	-Are these fruits luscious? -Some are very luscious, <i>but others are not</i> .							-Are these fruits luscious? -Some are very luscious, <i>but others could be better</i> .				
46	Don't be such a <i>liar</i> .							Don't be such <i>economical with the truth</i> .				
47	The children were banned from watching <i>pornographic movies</i> .							The children were banned from watching <i>adult movies</i> .				
48	My cousin is presently <i>unemployed/ jobless</i> .							My cousin is presently <i>between jobs</i> .				

Appendix I

A Survey questionnaire on the state of the English direct and euphemistic expressions in view of observance or flouting of the maxims of PP and CP

No	Direct (Non-euphemistic) Expression	The Type(s) of Maxims of PP Flouted						Euphemistic Expression	The Type(s) of Maxims of CP Flouted			
		T	G	S	M	Ag	Ap		Qt	Ql	R	M
49	She failed the test because of being <i>disruptive</i> .							She failed the test because of being <i>unable to concentrate</i> .				
50	Frank is <i>loud and arrogant</i> .							Frank is <i>having strong opinions about everything and not being afraid to voice them</i> .				
51	The natives were <i>killed/ massacred</i> .							The natives were <i>neutralized</i> .				
52	He is acting as a <i>spy</i> .							He is acting as a <i>source of information</i> .				
53	The murderer was sentenced to the <i>death penalty</i> .							The murderer was sentenced to the <i>capital punishment</i> .				
54	The people protested against increasing <i>taxes</i> .							The people protested against increasing <i>user's fees</i> .				
55	She was so adamant that everybody knew her behavior out of control.							She was so adamant that everybody knew her behavior <i>above critical</i> .				
56	The police accused the thieves of <i>burglary</i> .							The police accused the thieves of <i>covert operation</i> .				
57	The president was well-known for his <i>official lying</i> .							The president was well-known for his <i>plausible denial</i> .				
58	Some people collect huge wealth through <i>cleaning dirty money</i> .							Some people collect huge wealth through <i>launder</i> .				
59	The employee was given <i>death insurance</i> .							The employee was given <i>life insurance</i> .				
60	John's mother <i>has been dead</i> for almost five years.							John's mother <i>has gone the way of all flesh</i> for almost five years.				
Total												
Percentage (%)												

Appendix II

Interview questions on the pedagogical and socio-pragmatic aspects of euphemisms

Euphemisms At Pedagogical Level:

1. Do you think that the majority of Iranian EFL students are presently ignorant of euphemisms?
2. Do you guess English euphemisms are *adequately* addressed in English language courses in the Iranian colleges or not?
3. Do you think a main problem with euphemisms is their semantic opaqueness?
4. To what extent may euphemisms and euphemistic expressions remain semantically opaque for language learners?
5. For what reason(s) could euphemistic expressions remain semantically opaque for language learners?
6. Can Iranian EFL learners surmise to a reasonable degree, why a euphemism is used and what it connotes as compared to the original word it stands for?
7. In your opinion, can fluency in English be achieved without a reasonable command of euphemisms in language?
8. Do you believe that lack of notice to the dichotomy "euphemisms vs. direct expressions" in language use and usage has created an 'academic lacuna' in the Iranian EFL context?
9. Do you believe that presently a large part of English euphemisms is unintentionally absent from current English courses and text books?
10. Is it obligatory to include aspects of English euphemisms to textbooks due to their compatibility with learners' social values?
11. Can language learners use and appreciate English texts perfectly with knowing *little* about English euphemisms?
12. Do you think excluding English euphemisms from language courses and textbooks is a threat to the lofty pedagogical standards?
13. Do you consider teaching about English euphemisms as an inseparable part of English language teaching?
14. Do language learners need to learn about English euphemisms while learning to respect euphemisms in their local language as well?
15. Do you think the ability to understand and respect English euphemisms (i.e., developing intercultural competence) is one of the necessities of a proficient language learner?
16. Do you think knowing about English euphemisms makes English language learning process easier?
17. In general, is there an integral need to include more aspects of English euphemisms in language courses in Iran?

Euphemisms At Socio-Pragmatic Level:

18. Will knowing about English euphemisms in language courses lead learners to appreciate their social and pragmatic values?
19. Do you believe that knowing *little* about English euphemisms and derogations might create various misunderstandings in communication?

20. Is it important to make EFL learners familiarized with the enormous change(s) that each individual word or expression can bring about?
21. Can familiarity with euphemistic expressions make learners conscious of different aspects of the linguistic background and the historical and cultural overtones in texts?
22. Is it possible that learners by tracing euphemisms could see what is going on in the language, language user's minds and their culture?
23. Can knowing about English euphemisms promote socio-pragmatic behavior of learners in English contexts?
24. Do you think that students need to learn how to take a critical (analytical) look at English euphemisms besides being exposed to more of English euphemisms in language courses?
25. Do you think in order to observe the maxims of Cooperative Principle (CP) learners should impede use of English euphemisms?
26. In order to observe the maxims of Politeness Principle (PP), should learners impede use of English direct (non-euphemistic) expressions?
27. Do you believe most EFL students seem to be unenlightened about the implications of shades of meanings of euphemisms while they are producing discourse or during the time they are exposed to them?
28. Do you believe the study of euphemisms is appealing in that it encompasses a whole range of emotions, reactions, attitudes and opinions on the part of the participants?
29. Do you believe language learners should be taught critical thinking skills to reflect on both local and English euphemisms?
30. Do you believe knowing about English euphemisms helps learners to be better World citizens?