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Differences in the Use of Euphemisms of Criminality in *The Thief and Dogs* and *Thistle Flowers*: A Stylistic Study

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Abstract

*The phenomenon of euphemism often appears in literary works; this element appears to prioritize aesthetic values and taste. Euphemism in literary works is also used as a rhetorical tool that functions to express meanings containing hidden intentions, both implicit and figurative. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to classify the types of euphemisms found in the novels *The Thief and The Dogs* and *Thistle Flowers* and to describe the patterns of euphemism in the novels in depicting crime. By using a descriptive qualitative approach with a stylistic analysis method, this study identified 64 euphemistic expressions in the novel *The Thief and The Dogs* by Najib Mahfouz and the novel *Thistle Flowers* by Muhammad Farid Abu Hadid, then analyzed using interactive qualitative analysis in the form of data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions. Ten types of euphemisms were found in both novels, namely metaphor, understatement, hyperbole, one-to-one substitution, frivolity, general-to-specific, part-to-whole, simile, personification, and irony. The euphemism patterns of these two novels tend to differ in their narratives, which lie in aspects such as theme, euphemistic symbols used, narrative style, and story background. In addition to disguising the implied criminality, euphemism also serves to highlight the emotional side of the characters. This study contributes to Arabic literary stylistics by offering a comparative framework for analyzing euphemism and recommending further research on the role of euphemism in representing social and moral tensions in Arabic narrative fiction.*

Keywords: Criminal, Euphemism, *The Thief and The Dogs*, *Thistle Flowers*

Abstrak

*Fenomena eufemisme sering muncul dalam karya sastra, unsur ini muncul untuk mengutamakan nilai estetika dan rasa. Eufemisme dalam karya sastra juga digunakan sebagai alat retorika yang berfungsi mengungkapkan makna yang mengandung maksud terselubung, baik implisit maupun figuratif. Maka dari itu, tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah: mengklasifikasikan jenis-jenis eufemisme yang terdapat pada novel *The Thief* dan *The Dogs* and *Thistle Flowers* dan mendeskripsikan pola eufemisme novel tersebut dalam menggambarkan kriminalitas. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan metode analisis stilistika, penelitian ini mengidentifikasi 64 ekspresi eufemisme di novel *The Thief and The Dogs* karya Najib Mahfudz dan novel *Thistle Flowers* karya Muhammad Farid Abu Hadid kemudian dianalisis dengan analisis kualitatif interaktif berupa reduksi data, penyajian data dan penarikan kesimpulan. Sepuluh*

jenis eufemisme yang ditemukan dalam kedua novel tersebut, yaitu metafora, pernyataan yang diremehkan, hiperbola, substitusi satu-satu, kesembronoan, umum-ke-khusus, bagian-ke-keseluruhan, simile, personifikasi, dan ironi. Pola eufemisme kedua novel ini cenderung memiliki perbedaan dalam menarasikan eufemisme yang terletak pada aspek-aspek seperti tema, simbol-simbol eufemisme yang digunakan, gaya penuturan, dan latar belakang cerita. Selain untuk menyamarkan makna kriminalitas yang tersirat, eufemisme juga berfungsi untuk menonjolkan sisi emosional tokoh. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada stilistika sastra Arab dengan menawarkan kerangka komparatif untuk menganalisis eufemisme dan merekomendasikan penelitian lebih lanjut tentang peran eufemisme dalam merepresentasikan ketegangan sosial dan moral dalam fiksi naratif Arab.

Kata Kunci: Kriminalitas, Eufemisme, *The Thief and The Dogs*, *Thistle Flowers*

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of using euphemisms is found in many literary works such as novels. Novels are referred to as literary works that prioritize elements of beauty as well as aesthetic values and taste. Thus, readers can enjoy the aesthetic value in the novel. This specification is a basic need needed to package the story to make it more interesting and able to shake the reader's emotions¹. Euphemisms in literary works are used as rhetorical tools and containers from linguistics that function to reveal implicit and figurative meanings². Euphemism is often used in society consciously or unconsciously. This euphemism language style is classified as a subtle form of symbolic metaphor and is one of the characteristics in literary works ³.

Literary works often use euphemisms to express politeness. Authors compete to apply their creative power, imagination, knowledge and experience to pour it into writing. The diversity of stylistic expressions is one of the important elements in literary works to make the story more interesting based on the ideas developed by the author⁴. Euphemism focuses on politeness in language. Literary works that use euphemisms aim to replace harsh words such as those related to the body, sex,

¹ Yuliana Maya Sari, Susan Neni Triani, and Lili Yanti, "Penggunaan Eufemisme Pada Novel *Sunset Bersama Rosie Karya Tere Liye*," *INNOVATIVE: Journal Of Social Science Research* 3, no. 6 (2023).

² Muhammad Luqman Ibnul Hakim Mohd Saad, Zulazhan Ab. Halim, and Nurazan Mohmad Rouyan, "Penterjemahan Eufemisme Al-Qur'an Ke Bahasa Melayu: Analisis Pendekatan Semantik Newmark," *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES, PHILOSOPHY AND LANGUAGES (IJHPL)* 5, no. 19 (2024): 35-46.

³ Noor Hatini Zolkifli and Siti Saniah Abu Bakar, "Unsur Eufemisme Dalam Novel *Papa Dan Azfa Hanani*," *Jurnal Bahasa DBP*, 2011.

⁴ Buhari Norazilah, Nor Azlili Hassan, and Nik Norazila Abd Aziz, "Unsur Disfemisme: Ragam Bahasa Dalam Novel '*Kasyaf Ain*' Elements," *Sains Insani* 5, no. 1 (2020): 157-66.

disease, death, rudeness, and so on. Euphemisms replace words that are considered to offend a party with more polite words that do not contradict the actual meaning ⁵.

In practice, the wider community often uses euphemisms in both written and spoken form ⁶. The use of euphemisms in language was originally based on historical ethnographic phenomena associated with the phenomenon of taboos ⁷. Euphemisms are usually related to the development of customs, cultural levels, aesthetic tastes, and ethnic norms prevailing in society. As the language develops, so does the layer of eloquence. Ethical forms of expression emerge based on the norms of morality in the social environment. In addition, there are also euphemisms in language that arise due to the demands of certain speech situations, the meaning of which often has to be clarified through the text⁸. Therefore, the use of euphemisms is very important in revealing the meaning that the author wants to convey and at the same time does not ignore social norms ⁹.

The phenomenon of euphemism has existed based on the history of language. Euphemisms are used among educated people, and may have existed since the evolution of human language. Euphemisms are also often associated with educational, economic, social, political, and other circumstances¹⁰. Many studies have been conducted on politeness in various fields, such as daily conversation, cross-cultural communication, science, literature, business dealings, and even media language such as magazines and advertisements. Therefore, it is very important to examine research on euphemisms more deeply ¹¹. The discussion on euphemism deserves special attention because of its wide and great influence on all these discourses. Undoubtedly, this theory serves as a linguistic bridge to the indirectness that tends to

⁵ Siti Norashikin Mohd Khalidi and Ernawita Atan, "Unsur Eufemisme Dalam Novel Jalan Retakkarya A. Samad Said," *Journal of Business and Social Development* 5, no. 1 (2017): 88–101.

⁶ نور الحائلة بنت محمد اصمد, "لطف التعبير في رواية أ. درويش 'جاغن بيار دي ماسوق' في نور عين هائيس بنت رحيم تيرينجانو: كلية اللغات والتواصل, (٢٠٢٢), (٩٣٢-٤٠) in *Icmael*, "ضوء علم اللغة الاجتماعي

⁷ Alieva Nargiza Nodirovna and Feruza Urakova Botirjonovna, "Euphemisms in Uzbeki and English Languages, Phenomenon of Euphemism and Its Functions in Speech," *JournalNX- A Multidisciplinary Peer Reviewed Journal* 9, no. 5 (2023).

⁸ Aliyeva Nargiza Nodirovna, "The Phenomenon of Euphemism and Its Study in Linguistics," *Galaxy International Interdisciplinary Research Journal (GIIRJ)* 10, no. 12 (2022): 1460–62.

⁹ Balakrishnan A/L Arumugam, Mashetoh Abd. Mutalib, and Melor Fauzita Md Yusoff, "Unsur Eufemisme Dalam Novel Ranggau," *International Journal of Language Education and Applied Linguistics* 10, no. 1 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.15282/ijleal.v10.1680>.

¹⁰ Xuefeng Wang, "The Discourse of Euphemism," in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Critical Discourse Analysis: Theory into Research*, ed. Thao Le (Australia: Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania, 2005).

¹¹ Meihua Wang, "Corpus Analysis of English Euphemism in College English," *English Language Teaching* 6, no. 8 (2013).

dominate human communication in the modern era. It is believed that euphemisms in most languages are used to provide effective emotional power in the mind of the listener, such as a novel ¹².

A novel is a prose literary work that tells a long story told by one character to several characters. The storyline in novels is usually more complex than in short stories, and this is one of the things that distinguishes novels from short stories ¹³. Novels also usually tell stories about events that occur in the world, and then undergo a process of redrawing these events in an imaginary world. The author can explore various aspects of life such as social, psychological, cultural, and others. This is what makes this novel deep and meaningful ¹⁴.

Nowadays, politeness is often used by various groups as a way to express something that is considered impolite and taboo. The meaning of taboo here refers to the expression of words, phrases, and sentences by raising sensitive issues such as the media. With gentleness of expression, the handling of words or dictation delivered becomes softer and smoother¹⁵. In literary works, euphemisms are often used as a tool to replace expressions that are considered rude with more appropriate expressions. In the process of creating literary works, authors have a unique style of language and use euphemisms to apply them to their works¹⁶.

There are several studies that have discussed euphemism, there are several trends from previous studies, such as research that has been reviewed by Bamlaku ¹⁷ which discusses Amharic language regarding sexual organs and actions in the scope

¹² Hashim Aliwey Mohammed Al-Husseini, "Euphemism in English and Arabic: A Contrastive Study," in *Conference: The First Scientific Conference of College of Education in Babylon University*, 2007, 326–246.

¹³ Sulthaanika Ferdy Syahwardi et al., "Eufemisme Dalam Novel Iyan Bukan Anak Tengah Karya Armaraher," *Jurnal Basataka (JBT)* 6, no. 2 (2023): 329–36, <https://doi.org/10.36277/basataka.v6i2.288>.

¹⁴ Anis Soraya, "Eufemisme Dalam Novel Buku Besar Peminum Kopi Karya Andrea Hirata," *BELAJAR BAHASA: Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia* 6, no. 1 (2021): 95–106, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.32528/bb.v6i1.4154>.

¹⁵ Haidar Jaganegara and I Dewa Putu Wijana, "Euphemism Roles as a Disguise Tool in Political Texts: A Case Study of Tempo Online Political Articles," *Suluk: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Budaya* 5, no. 1 (2023): 94–104, <https://doi.org/10.15642/suluk.2023.5.1.1-19>.

¹⁶ Ifra Yunda Mardani and Asnawi Asnawi, "Eufemisme Dalam Novel Layangan Putus Karya Mommy Asf," *Sajak: Jurnal Penelitian Dan Pengabdian Sastra, Bahasa, Dan Pendidikan* 3, no. 1 (2024): 132–44, <https://doi.org/10.25299/s.v3i1.16577>.

¹⁷ Bamlaku Endegen Zegeye, Samuel Handamo Godisso, and Endalew Assefa Temesegen, "The Socio-Pragmatic Analysis of Amharic Euphemisms of Sexual Organs and Sexual Acts," *Cogent Social Sciences* 9, no. 1 (2023): 1–20, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2231620>.

of euphemistic construction strategies, research reviewed by Eliecer¹⁸ discusses the role of euphemism language in pornographic films specifically for male consumption, research reviewed by Vita¹⁹ which discusses how language is produced by netizens with the content of euphemisms and dysphemisms in the tempo Instagram account posts. co, research reviewed by Rita²⁰ which discusses translation strategies and implications of use in movie series takarir, research reviewed by Aulia²¹ discusses the types of euphemisms in the Instagram caption of Lambe Turah account with a Semantic approach, then Ermira researchs²² which explains the function of euphemisms and dysphemisms in a Deddy Corbuzier podcast, research reviewed by Tirta²³ which analyzes the forms of euphemism along with the factors of translating expressions of sexuality in Eka Kurniawan's novels into English, research reviewed by Syahwardi ²⁴ which discusses the use of euphemisms in the novel Iyan bukan Anak Tengah, research reviewed by Syaifudin²⁵ which describes the forms of changes in the meaning of euphemisms and dysphemisms of Indonesian society in speech acts in a podcast, and research reviewed by Soraya²⁶ which describes the forms and functions of euphemisms contained in a novel by Andrea Hinata.

Previous studies on euphemism have examined various media, such as novels, podcasts, and social media, often focusing on themes like sexuality or translation

¹⁸ Eliecer Crespo-Fernández, "Provocative Euphemism in Pornographic Film Titles: A Critical Analysis," *Journal of Language and Sexuality* 12, no. 1 (2023): 46–72, <https://doi.org/10.1075/jls.21001.cre>.

¹⁹ Vita Kusumaningtyas and Sulis Triyono, "Bentuk Respon Netizen Terhadap UU Cipta Kerja Pada Postingan Tempodotco: Eufemisme Dan Disfemisme," *Sawerigading: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra* 29, no. 2 (2023): 247–58, <https://doi.org/10.26499/sawer.v29i2.860>.

²⁰ Rita Lestari and Adi Sutrisno, "Euphemism of Taboo Translation in the Big Little Lies Series," *Diglosia: Jurnal Kajian Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Pengajarannya* 6, no. 3 (2023): 711–22, <https://doi.org/10.30872/diglosia.v6i3.677>.

²¹ Aulia Juli Saputri, Anna Riana Suryanti Tambunan, and Fauziah Khairani Lubis, "Euphemism in the Instagram Captions of Lambe Turah: A Semantics Approach," *Journal of English Language Studies* 6, no. 2 (2021): 158–70, <https://doi.org/10.30870/jels.v6i2.10761>.

²² Ermira Nilansari Putri and Laili Etika Rahmawati, "Fungsi Eufemisme Dan Disfemisme Dalam Sinar 'Close The Door' Deddy Corbuzier," *Jurnal Onoma: Pendidikan, Bahasa, Dan Sastra* 8, no. 1 (2022): 168–80, <https://doi.org/10.30605/onoma.v8i1.1643>.

²³ Tirta Ningtyas Alifia Putri Sutaji and Suray Agung Nugroho, "Eufemisme Penerjemahan Ungkapan Seksual Novel 'Seperti Dendam, Rindu Harus Dibayar Tuntas' Ke Dalam Bahasa Inggris," *Literasi: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Bahasa, Sastra Indonesia Dan Daerah* 14, no. 1 (2024): 274–81, <https://doi.org/10.23969/literasi.v14i1.10795>.

²⁴ Syahwardi et al., "Eufemisme Dalam Novel Iyan Bukan Anak Tengah Karya Armaher."

²⁵ Mochamad Nurul Syaifudin, Yarno Yarno, and Ngatma'in Ngatma'in, "Penggunaan Eufemisme Dan Disfemisme Dalam Kanal YouTube Podcast Kaesang Pangarep 'Podcast Depan Pintu,'" *Disastra: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia* 6, no. 2 (2024): 209–28, <https://doi.org/10.29300/disastra.v6i2.3768>.

²⁶ Soraya, "Eufemisme Dalam Novel Buku Besar Peminum Kopi Karya Andrea Hirata."

across languages. However, none have comparatively analyzed two Arabic novels with a focus on euphemisms in criminal contexts. This study fills that gap by examining how euphemistic expressions related to criminality are stylistically constructed in *The Thief and The Dogs* and *Thistle Flowers*. The novelty lies in its comparative approach and its emphasis on the intersection between euphemism, criminal themes, and Arabic literary style. The objectives are to classify types of euphemism and to describe their narrative patterns across both novels.

Then, the objectives of this research are: to classify the types of euphemism contained in *The Thief and The Dogs* and *Thistle Flowers* novels; and to describe the pattern of euphemism between *The Thief and The Dogs* and *Thistle Flowers* novels in describing criminality. This research contributes to euphemism studies in Arabic literature and offers practical insights into how language softens expressions of violence while enriching emotional and rhetorical depth.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a stylistic analysis framework to examine euphemisms related to criminality in two Arabic novels: *The Thief and The Dogs* by Najib Mahfudz and *Thistle Flowers* by Muhammad Farid Abu Hadid. The primary data are the novel *The Thief and The Dogs* by Najib Mahfudz and the novel *Thistle Flowers* by Muhammad Farid Abu Hadid. First, the novel *The Thief and The Dogs* consists of 180 pages and is divided into 18 sub-chapters, the novel was published in Egypt in 1961. Second, the novel *Thistle Flowers* by Muhammad Farid Abu Hadid consists of 112 pages and is divided into 16 sub-chapters, and the novel was published in 1953 and updated by Hindawi in 2021. Meanwhile, secondary data in this study are in the form of research results that are related to the research topic to obtain additional references to this research. Secondary data should be used as supporting data to understand the problems and clarify the formulation of problems in this study.

Data collection was conducted through careful reading and note-taking, focusing on expressions that contain euphemistic elements. Researchers repeatedly examined both texts to identify relevant stylistic features.

Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model: (1) data reduction to select relevant euphemistic expressions, (2) data display through categorization and

interpretation, and (3) drawing conclusions based on thematic patterns and contextual meaning, supported by both textual evidence and theoretical insight.

DISCUSSION

Type of Euphemism Analysis

The results in this study found several types of crime genre euphemisms contained in the novels *The Thief and the Dogs* and *Thistle Flowers*. The researcher has found as well as classify the types of euphemisms located in *Thistle Flowers* include: 1) Metaphor, 2) Understatement, 3) Hyperbole, 4) Flippancy, 5) Omission, 6) Simile, and 7) Personification. While in the novel *The Thief and the Dogs*, researchers classify the types of euphemisms, including: 1) Metaphor, 2) Understatement, 3) Hyperbole, 4) Flippancy, 5) General to Specific, 6) Part of Whole Euphemism, 7) Simile, 8) Personification, and 9) Irony. The following is a chart of euphemism between *The thief and the Dogs* and *Thistle Flowers*.

Chart 1. Type of Euphemism in Novel *The Thief and The Dogs*

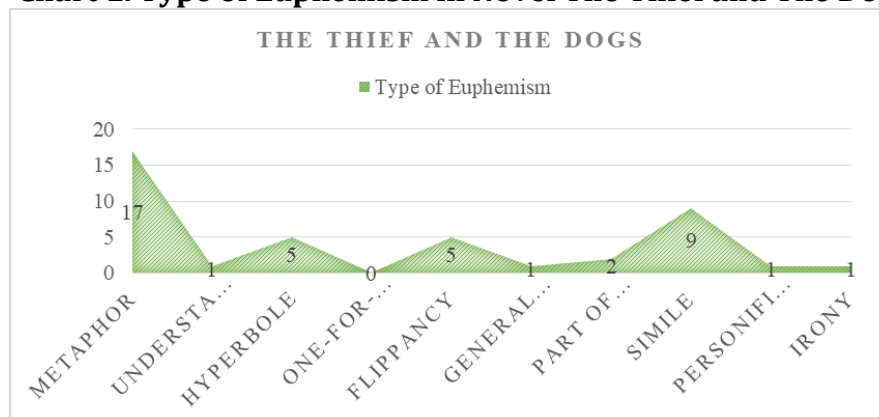
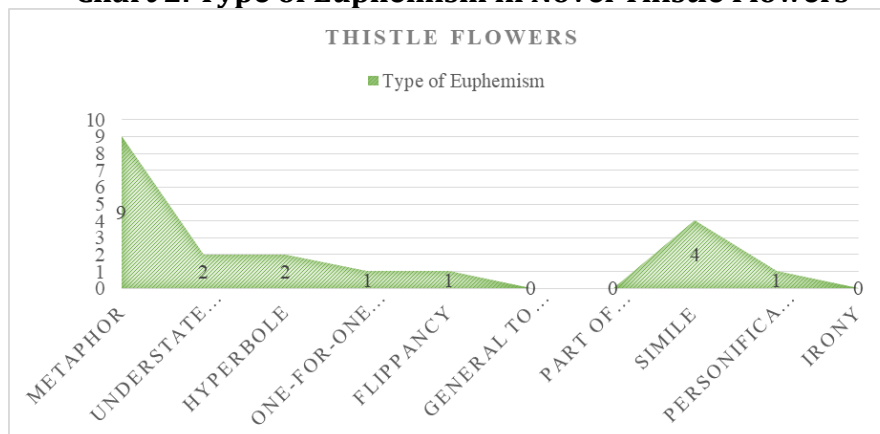


Chart 2. Type of Euphemism in Novel *Thistle Flowers*



From the picture, we know that In *The Thief and The Dogs*, euphemisms related to criminality are predominantly expressed through figurative language, especially metaphors (17 instances) and similes (9 instances). Other types include hyperbole (5), flippancy (5), part of whole (2), personification, irony, understatement, general to specific, and omission (each 1 instance). These findings indicate that Najib Mahfudz heavily employs stylistic devices to soften or obscure harsh realities of crime, using symbolic and emotionally charged expressions. The dominant use of metaphor reflects the narrative's effort to convey psychological tension and moral conflict while maintaining aesthetic depth.

The percentage between the novel “*Thistle Flowers*” and the novel “*The Thief and The Dogs*” is presented as in the following table:

Table 1. Percentage of Type of Euphemism in novel *The Thief and The Dogs* and *Thistle Flowers*

The Thief and The Dogs			Thistle Flowers		
Type of Euphemism	Data count	Percentage	Type of Euphemism	Data count	Percentage
Metaphor	17	41%	Metaphor	9	43%
Understatement	1	2%	Understatement	2	9%
Hyperbole	5	12%	Hyperbole	2	9%
One-for-one substitution	0	0%	One-for-one substitution	1	5%
Flippancy	5	12%	Flippancy	1	5%
General to specific	1	2%	General to specific	0	0%
Part of whole euphemism	2	5%	Part of whole euphemism	0	0%
Simile	9	22%	Simile	4	19%
Personification	1	2%	Personification	1	5%
Irony	1	2%	Irony	0	0%
	42	100%		22	100%

Based on the percentage in the table above, it shows that the use of euphemism tends to be used with figurative expressions dominated by “*The Thief and The Dogs*” which is found as much as 17 data (41%), while “*Thistle Flowers*” is found as much as 9 data (43%). In addition, simile is also the next dominance, where this type is also part of figurative expressions, in “*The Thief and The Dogs*” found as much as 9 data (22%), while “*Thistle Flowers*” as much as 4 data (19%). The presentation of the data results between “*The Thief and The Dogs*” and “*Thistle Flowers*” is presented in the following sub-chapters.

Table 2. Domain Euphemism in novel The Thief and The Dogs and Thistle Flowers

Type of Euphemism	The Thief and The Dogs		Thistle Flowers	
	Source Domain	Target Domain	Source Domain	Target Domain
Metaphor	ونظرة عينيه الباردة زادت قلبه المهزوم برودة	Killing desire	كمن يريد أن يطلع على وحش في قفصه من وراء قضبان الحديد	A killer/feared figure
Understatement	لزوم العمل	Killing activity	إنساناً	Murderer
Hyperbole	لو اندك المقطم عليها دكا ما شفيت نفسي	Great revenge for betrayal	لهباً	Angry and want to kill
One for one Substitutions	-	-	تبدلاً عجيباً	Differences in the general human figure (killer)
Flippancy	وتشب أنت إلى قصر الأنوار والمرايا	Mansions	-	-
General to specific	مطارد وسيظل مطارد إلى آخر لحظة من حياته، وحيد عليه أن يحذر حتى صورته في المرأة، حي بلا حياة كجثة محنطة	Escape and solitude	-	-
Part of whole euphemism	ومأساتي الحقيقية أننى رغم تأييد الملايين أجدنى ملقى فى وحدة مظلمة بلا نصير	Despair	-	-
Simile	الفئران والشعابين	Fugitive	جرو الأسد	Murderer
Personification	نامت الخيانة في هدوء	Unjust behavior	وثار الدم في رأس فؤاد	Emotional side of wanting to kill
Irony	مم تخاف! ألا تدري كم يحبها؟	Fear	-	-

Table 2 is a presentation of data that describing the types of euphemisms between the novels “The Thief and The Dogs” and “Thistle Flowers”. There are 10 types to be analyzed that describe criminal euphemisms, as in the following sub-chapters:

Metaphor

The Thief and The Dogs

ونظرة عينيه الباردة زادت قلبه المهزوم برودة، وانطبق شفثيه الناطق بالعداوة والكراهية

(His cold eyes made his defeated heart even colder, and his lips closed, expressing hostility and hatred)

Thistle Flowers

كان — وهو يسير نحو السجناء — يدفعه ميل عجيب كمن يريد أن يطلع على وحش في قفصه من وراء قضبان الحديد

(As he walked towards the prisoners, he was driven by a strange tendency, as if he wanted to see a beast in its cage from behind the iron bars)

There are many metaphorical expressions found in the novel *The Thief and the Dogs*, such as one of the expressions used as an example that reads “The Thief and the Dogs”. used as an example that reads “ونظرة عينيه الباردة زادت قلبه المهزوم برودة” which depicts the emotional situation of the character named Sa'id. In the sentence, it is interpreted that he has a desire full of hatred and wants to slaughter the camp. hatred and wants to slaughter the opposite camp from him, namely Nabawiyya, Rauf Ilwan, and Illish Sidra. The form of this expression is referred to as a metaphor which “His cold eyes” and subsequent expressions such as “made his defeated heart even colder” which are supporting expressions of his hatred for his towards his enemy. This expression can also be referred to as an expression for Sa'id's desire to kill by Sa'id.

While in the novel *Thistle Flowers*, there are also many expressions that contain metaphors. For example, one of the phrases is “كمن يريد أن يطلع على وحش في قفصه من وراء قضبان الحديد” which illustrates that a human being resembles a beast/monster. In the phrase that means “as if he wanted to see a beast in its cage from behind the iron bars” this could imply that the character named Salouma is a person who is very scary and feared by the surrounding community for the several murders that he has committed.

Understatement

The Thief and The Dogs

- لم تريد المسدس والسيارة؟

- لزوم العمل ...

(- Why do you want the gun and the car?)

(- It's necessary for work...)

Thistle Flowers

حاول أن تجعل منه إنساناً

(Try to make him a **human being**.)

Expressions that illustrate understatement is also found in the novel *The Thief and The Dogs* in the utterance “لزوم العمل”. In the dialog, Sa'id Mahran, as the main character, is actually answering a question from a woman who is Sa'id Mahran, as the main character, is answering a question from a woman named Nur. She asks why Sa'id has to carry a gun by his side. While Sa'id's answer is for his job. Thus, this expression becomes an understatement, where Sa'id seems to trivialize a murder, where the word “murder” is transformed into a “job”. This phenomenon is also supported by the background of his work as a thief and various other criminal acts are not something taboo for him.

On the other hand, the novel *Thistle Flowers* also found expressions that contain understatement, in the word “إنساناً” which describes the figure of Salouma who is very cruel and has no feelings for her fellow living beings. Thus, the word “human being” here acts as an understatement, the reason is because the speaker underestimates the serious situation to be more relaxed to be expressed. serious situation to be more relaxed to express. In this expression, the speaker wants to convey to make the behavior towards the figure mentioned better than before.

Hyperbole*The Thief and The Dogs*

خيانة لئيمة لو اندك المقطم عليها دكا ما شفيت نفسى

(A vile betrayal, **if Al-Muqattam was crushed to the ground, I would not recover.**)

Thistle Flowers

فاتقد قلبي لهباً

(My heart burned with **flames**.)

In the euphemism that is of the type hyperbole in the novel *The Thief and The Dogs* describes the main character's unwillingness to accept what his betrayed enemy, Rauau, had done to him. Rauf Ilwan. As the phrase says, “لو اندك المقطم عليها دكا ما شفيت نفسى”. This expression belongs to the category of hyperbole because of Sa'id's insincerity over Rauf's behavior in betraying his best friend. So Sa'id expressed his opinion his heart, even though “Al-Muqattam was crushed to the ground, I would

not recover". The expression is conveyed in an exaggerated manner by describing Al-Muqattam as a parable.

Meanwhile, the novel Thistle Flowers there is also an expression that contains hyperbole, namely in the word "لهبًا" which describes the figure of Fou'ad who is very full of anger towards the people who humiliate him. The word "fire" which is conveyed gives an impression that has a type of hyperbole, this expression is conveyed in an exaggerated manner. This is because, in literal terms, there is no "fire" that can burn fire.

One for one Substitutions

Thistle Flowers

وما مضى عليه إلا أعوام يسيرة في عزبة ميسور حتى تبدّل تبدلاً عجيباً

(Only a few years had passed since he was in the Mysore estate, when he underwent a strange transformation.)

In euphemism expressions that have the type One-for-one substitution is only found in the novel Thistle Flowers. The expression in the novel Thistle Flowers is described in the utterance "تبدلاً عجيباً" which functions to replace an extreme expression with a more subtle one. In the context, "a strange transformation" is interpreted as a change of mentality that is transposed as a case of "killing" in Salouma's character. Thus, the purpose of the word "strange" in the novel Thistle Flower aims to replace Salouma's "brutality" activity.

Flippancy

The Thief and The Dogs

أندفع بى إلى السجن وتثب أنت إلى قصر الأنوار والمرايا

(You throw me into prison and you jump into the palace of lights and mirrors.)

The euphemisms in the novel The Thief and The Dogs found many forms of flippancy. This implicit expression can be known because the character named Sa'id has a grudge and hatred for the enemy who has betrayed him. In the expression above, it has been described that Rauf Ilwan has luxury and wealth which, according to Sa'id, he should not get. Sa'id that he should not get. While Sa'id himself actually became an easy target to be accused and thrown into prison. Thus, the meaning of the phrase "وتثب أنت إلى قصر الأنوار والمرايا" is not using the meaning of the actual statement.

General to specific

The Thief and The Dogs

مطارد وسيظل مطارداً إلى آخر لحظة من حياته ، وحيد عليه أن يحذر حتى صورته في المرآة ، حي بلا حياة كجثة محنطة

(Hunted and will remain hunted until the last moment of his life, alone he has to beware even of his image in the mirror, alive and lifeless like a mummified corpse)

In the expression general to specific type of euphemism has been found in the novel The Thief and The Dogs. As the utterance which has been written above. In the phrase "Hunted and will remain hunted" it is explained that the figure of Sa'id will always be pursued due to his own mistakes because he has targeted the wrong person, so that he will always be hunted as a fugitive by the police. Overall, the phrase above hints at the figure of Sa'id to always be aware of the search activities conducted by the police with the symbol of the phrase " وحيد عليه أن يحذر حتى صورته في المرآة ، حي ". "بلا حياة كجثة محنطة".

Part of whole euphemism

The Thief and The Dogs

ومأساتي الحقيقية أنني رغم تأييد الملايين أجدني ملقى في وحدة مظلمة بلا نصير
(My true tragedy is that, despite the support of millions, I find myself lying in a dark hole with no supporter.)

In the euphemism expression of the type Part of whole euphemism, has been found in the novel The Thief and The Dogs. As the utterance that has been written above. The expression says that "My true tragedy is that, despite the support of millions, I find myself lying in a dark hole with no supporters", which means that the emotional side that is raised by Sa'id is despair, a condition of mental weakness and hopelessness for the struggle he has done to conquer the world. The struggle he has done to conquer his enemy. The phrase describes the overall mental state of his downturn towards the Sa'id's character.

Simile

The Thief and The Dogs

فشارك الفئران والبعابين مشاعرها حين تتسلل. وحيد في الظلمة
(He shared the feelings of the mice and snakes as they crept along. Alone in the dark)

Thistle Flowers

ثم ما لبث أن ذاق طعم الدماء كما يذوق جرو الأسد دماء أول ضحاياه
(Then it soon tasted blood, just as **a lion cub** tastes the blood of its first victim.)

There are many simile-type expressions found in the novel *The Thief and The Dogs*, such as one of the expressions used as an example that reads used as an example that reads “الفئران والثعابين” which describes “the mice and snakes”. This is a form of euphemism in the form of similes, where humans are likened to animals. The reason is because animals like mice and snakes live in dark and dirty environments. So that, this is likened to Sa'id because he always avoids crowds to avoid being caught by the police due to his status as a fugitive.

Meanwhile, in the novel *Thistle Flowers* there are also several times found expressions that contain similes, for example from one of the expressions is “جرو الأسد” which means “a lion cub”. This is also a euphemism type of simile, because it likens a human being to an animal. This is because of the sadistic killings that Salouma has committed against his prey who was ferocious and brutal in finishing off the victims he had killed by him.

Personification

The Thief and The Dogs

نامت الخيانة في هدوء بديع لا تستحقه ألبته
(**Betrayal slept in a beautiful silence** that it absolutely did not deserve.)

Thistle Flowers

وثار الدم في رأس فؤاد وهو واقف في مكانه شاعرًا بما يشبه أن يكون إهانة
(**Fouad's blood boiled** as he stood there, feeling what seemed like an insult.)

Phrases that describe personification is also found in the novel *The Thief and The Dogs* in the utterance “نامت الخيانة في هدوء” which translates to “Betrayal slept in a beautiful silence”. This expression means that the word “betrayal” can sleep. This is a form of satire against his own friend Rauf Ilwan, who has luxury and is in contrast to Sa'id, who is actually Sa'id, who has always been a police fugitive and has had to in hiding all his life. The word “betrayal” seems to play the role of personification, because “betrayal”, as if it resembles a creature that can experience the activities performed by humans, namely falling asleep.

On the other hand, the novel *Thistle Flowers* also found an expression that contains personification, namely in the expression “وثار الدم في رأس فؤاد” which translates to ‘Fouad's blood boiled’. The word blood in the phrase is juxtaposed with the next word “boiled” being a natural trait that human beings have emotionally is emotion, anger, and hate. This is attributed to the character of Fou'ad reaches the point of wanting to kill due to the loss of a woman who has been snatched away by the a woman who has been snatched away by his good friend Qawiy. The word “blood boiled” acts as personification, because blood, as it were, resembles a creature that can experience changes in temperature, just as water can boil.

Irony

The Thief and The Dogs

مم تخاف! ألا تدري كم يحبها؟

(What are you afraid of! Don't you know how much he loves her?)

In the euphemism expression type Irony, has been found in the novel *The Thief and The Dogs*. As the utterance that “مم تخاف! ألا تدري كم يحبها؟”. This expression contains an ironic euphemism. Because, in the story that attached is Sa'id, as a father, who loves his daughter, named Sana. However, the reality is different and does not match the reality. In fact, the affection given by Sa'id made Sana afraid. Sana actually feels the need for protection from Sa'id because she feels a threat to her father who is a criminal. There is a contradiction between the affection of her father, Said, and her daughter, Sana. Thus, the statement includes irony because the activities and movements carried out by Sa'id are contrary to his words. Sa'id's expression becomes a form of satire towards Sana, where Sa'id loves his daughter very much but his daughter is afraid of him.

Euphemism strategies in Arabic novels have a tendency to use the concept of figurative expression, such as metaphor, personification, simile, hyperbole ²⁷. In both *The Thief and The Dogs* and *Thistle Flowers*, figurative expressions dominate to be used as a means of protecting vulgar expressions. Both tend to use figurative expressions in the form of animal words to describe murder. Because Arabic often

²⁷ Hamsah Mohamed Sayed Hassan and Mohamed M. Tohamy., “A Contrastive Study of Euphemism and Dysphemism in Arabic and English Mass Media Concerning COVID-19 Pandemic,” مجلة العلوم الإنسانية جامعة قناة السويس 6, no. 44 (2023): 100–133, <https://doi.org/10.21608/jfhsc.2023.297276>; Mustafa Shah, *The Arabic Language* (Routledge, 2013).

uses animals to describe something. Like a lion or tiger to describe courage ²⁸. It becomes a culture and theoretical consistency as it has existed in the science of balaghah. The science of balaghah is one of the foundations of Arabic literature ²⁹.

Balaghah is a form of expression that has a very effective concealment of the meaning of vulgar expressions. As a result, euphemistic such as figurative expressions are able to distract readers from the intended meaning of the phenomenon being described ³⁰. This is attributed to the indirect strategy of language use, where the writer seems to provide an interpretation of the written textual phenomenon to the reader through the message conveyed ³¹. In addition, it is also regionally known that Arabic tends to apply metaphorical expressions, because the Qur'an was written in figurative writings ³². Likewise, the descriptions of Arabic language in the social and religious spheres have caused figurative language to become a major foundation in literature ³³.

The pattern of euphemism between The Thief and The Dogs and Thistle Flowers in describing crime.

Table 4: The pattern of euphemism between The Thief and The Dogs and Thistle Flowers in describing crime

Aspect	The Thief and The Dogs	Thistle Flowers
Main Theme	Criminality is the main theme.	Romance is the main theme, but has a sub-theme of crime.
Symbol euphemisms	Animals, firearms, supernatural beings, blood.	Animals, blood, sharp weapons.
Narrative style	Narrative style Hatred, revenge, downfall for betraying the oligarchic system.	Village culture.
Background	Political base.	Cultural base.

²⁸ Maisarah M. Almirabi, "When Metaphors Cross Cultures," *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* 6, no. 1 (2015): 204–9.

²⁹ Amidu Olalekan Sanni, "Arabic Rhetoric. A Pragmatic Analysis," *Middle Eastern Literatures* 15, no. 1 (2012): 97–98, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1475262X.2012.657397>.

³⁰ Aleksandra Burkhalo, "Metaphorical Euphemisms in the Original Text and Italian Translations of FM Dostoevskij's Novel Crime and Punishment," *Athens Journal of Philology* 6, no. 4 (2019): 255–66, <https://doi.org/10.30958/ajp.X-Y-Z>.

³¹ Sadam Issa, "A Socio-Pragmatic Investigation of the Persuasive Strategies in" Al-Ittijāh Al-Mu'ākis" ("The Opposite Direction") on Al-Jazeera TV," *Pragmatics and Society* 6, no. 4 (2015): 517–37, <https://doi.org/10.1075/ps.6.4.03iss>.

³² Marwan Dwairy, "Culture Analysis and Metaphor Psychotherapy with Arab-Muslim Clients," *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 65, no. 2 (2009): 199–209, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.20568>.

³³ Bakri Al-Azzam et al., "Social and Cultural Euphemism in Saudi Arabic: A Semantic, a Pragmatic and a Sociolinguistic Analysis," *Advances in Language and Literary Studies* 8, no. 2 (2017): 64–69, <https://doi.org/10.7575/aial.v8n.2p.64>.

The theme of *The Thief and The Dogs* is crime. Sa'id, as the main character in the novel, feels that he does not get justice from the oligarchy. He is always cornered for the cases he has committed. After getting out of prison at the beginning of the story, he decides to deal seriously with people who are directly involved in politics. This only made the situation worse for him and led to his own downfall. The revenge narrated in the novel *The Thief and The Dogs* is Sa'id's desire to kill the people who cornered him into prison. Meanwhile, in the novel *Thistle Flowers*, a character named Salouma is a dynamic side character. He was originally a figure of integrity as a soldier, but turned into an arrogant person who dared to carry out murderous activities because he had privileges in his neighborhood because he was directly related to people who had great power in his neighborhood. Meanwhile, Fou'ad is a figure who has integrity as a prosecutor who cracks down on crime cases that occur in his neighborhood. Fou'ad has a love story with several women, but ends up unhappy in his love story relationship.

The two novels used as objects in this study have their own euphemism patterns. The novel *The Thief and The Dogs* has a tendency to use expressions that have elements of animals, firearms, supernatural beings and blood. This is directly related to the culture in the Arab region, which is closely related to religion as the main foundation of social life, especially the influence of Islam. Supernatural beings and animals are the main supporting factors in Arabic literary writing, because often the allusion to something is always associated with animals. Blood and guns play an important role in the crime theme of *The Thief and The Dogs*. As for the novel *Thistle Flowers*, it also has a tendency to use expressions that have animal elements, this is still related to regional factors in the Middle East region which are still related to religion. The use of sharp weapons also plays an important role in the writing of crime novels. Knives and swords are symbols that are very close to conservative areas. In accordance with the setting of *Thistle Flowers*, which is very close to customs, culture and rural areas.

The narrative style presented in *The Thief and The Dogs* tends to reveal the situation of the main character, Sa'id. A character who feels betrayed by those closest to him. Sa'id has an emotional tendency to be filled with hatred, this is related to the reason he was thrown into prison caused by those closest to him who are political regimes. Revenge became the main goal and reason for Sa'id to live. However, he does

not have enough strength to continue his revenge, but instead falls into the pit of his own death. Meanwhile, the novel *Thistle Flowers* tends to raise issues of problems and dynamics that occur in conservative areas. The novel discusses more about the problems that occur in a village where there is a brutal killer. So the storyline presented in this novel is more complex, because crime is not the main theme in the novel *Thistle Flowers*.

In *The Thief and The Dogs* and *Thistle Flowers*, both novels tend to often express expressions that contain euphemisms. Because euphemisms tend to have various factors in hiding expressions based on their true intentions and purposes. Euphemism plays an important role in terms that are unpleasant or want to make the political sphere more stable ³⁴. Through language styles such as euphemism, it can accentuate the emotional side and clear character building construction as a complement to the basic elements of writing literary works ³⁵. Therefore, readers are required to think critically in exploring and absorbing the meaning contained in the story contained in the novel. Reading euphemisms can foster sensitivity and appreciation of literary values such as euphemisms ³⁶.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings above, it can be concluded that the novels *The Thief and The Dogs* and *Thistle Flowers* have differences in the disclosure of euphemisms although in many ways they are quite similar. This is because, regionally, the Middle East strongly adheres to figurative expressions. Both novels show how euphemisms are used in novels with crime and murder genres. The use of euphemisms in both novels is to hide something quite crude, as well as a language style used to enhance the emotional side of the characters.

The expressions that contain euphemisms are not only limited or only to hide meanings related to the theme of sexuality. In addition, euphemism is also not limited to formal media such as news. Although the language style used in newspapers is

³⁴ Ahmed Ahmed and Nayef Jomaa, "Euphemistic Expressions in The American Mass Media: A Qualitative Study of Types and Functions," *Eurasian Journal of English Language and Literature* 4, no. 2 (2022): 65–77.

³⁵ Saskia Noviyanti, Siti Ansoriyah, and Shafruddin Tajuddin, "Peran Gaya Bahasa Dalam Membangun Wacana Pada Novel *Rasa Karya Tere Liye*: Kajian Stilistika," *Jurnal Onoma: Pendidikan, Bahasa, Dan Sastra* 9, no. 2 (2023): 1226–44, <https://doi.org/10.30605/onoma.v9i2.2993>.

³⁶ Anita Candra Dewi, Usman Usman, and Andi Asrifan, "Peran Sastra Dalam Membangun Karakter Mahasiswa Pada Sebuah Pendekatan Pendidikan," *AIJER: Algazali International Journal Of Educational Research* 7, no. 1 (2024): 42–46, <https://doi.org/10.59638/aijer.v7i1>.

quite formal, euphemism provides another side, namely as an aesthetic influence related to the emotional character to the reader. Language styles such as euphemism can be used as a fairly broad study material. Especially in Arabic novels.

Therefore, researchers hope that there will be further research on euphemisms in Arabic novels related to the theme of crime. It may be necessary to give an idea to the readers of novels, how to interpret euphemism expressions in various ways as well as to understand the types of euphemism in literary devices used in poetry and prose.

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