

Semantic Analysis of Using X-Phemistic Expressions in Saudi Health Minister Speeches during Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

On March 11, 2020, World Health Organization (WHO) declares Covid-19 disease as global pandemic. Accordingly, the style of linguistic or verbal communication between governments and nations has been highly affected. Therefore, this paper aims to investigate resources where X-phemistic expressions come as characteristics of the speeches of Saudi Health Minister during Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, it examines how Warren's euphemistic strategies (1992) have appeared in the minister's speeches. The collected data are the eight speeches delivered by Saudi Minister of Health during Covid-19 pandemic. They are analyzed qualitatively using thematic analysis (TA) approach. The results show that Saudi Health Minister manages to deliver the messages about Covid-19 crisis through applying variety of linguistic devices which sound to be euphemistic, dysphemistic, and orthophemistic representations of the pandemic. The employment of each X-phemisms choice is mainly occurred within certain thematic fields. Euphemism is used in presenting unpleasant messages, naming the health crisis, and comforting the public. Dysphemism is applied in one specific theme of describing the virus. Orthophemisms is found in themes of declaring facts about the pandemic, warning the public, and requesting to follow instructions. It is also found that implication, reversal, particularization, metonymy, and metaphors are the most frequently used euphemistic strategies among Warren model (1992). This analysis contributes to the limited examination of pandemic discourse by understanding how X-phemistic expressions and euphemistic strategies are used by Arabic speakers during international crises like Covid-19.

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the centuries, the world has experienced episodes of infection disease outbreaks such as, Ebola, SARS, and HINI influenza. Nowadays, the ongoing spread of Covid-19 disease, which is triggered by the novel coronavirus, has currently developed to cause a serious public threat to human health. According to the Chinese government data seen by the South China Morning Post (2020), the first known case who infected with coronavirus (patient zero) can be traced back to November 17, 2019. In a very short period of time, the disease spreads very quickly and extends to almost every country in the world. Accordingly, the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared Covid-19 disease as global pandemic on March 11, 2020. This is to say, the existence of this disease unprecedentedly affects all aspects of human life including the style of linguistic or verbal communication between governments and their nations in the whole world.

Such crisis directs the scientists and researchers' attention all over the world from different fields toward stepping up in response to this challenge for the purpose of understanding it from multiple point of views. From linguistic side, there are different modes of communication between governments and nations using verbal and non-verbal messages

in order to strengthen the solidarity in such critical situations. Due to the sensitivity and risk associated with this pandemic, the leaders' speeches have incurred varieties of public responses as they have used different linguistic strategies to deliver the comprehensible message. Olomat (2018) states that the verbal communication in time of pandemic usually tend to be expressed through employing various linguistic devices. In the case of the Saudi Minister of Health, Tawfig bin Fawzan Al-Rabiah, the Saudis found his speeches to be milder and more comfortable. This can be attributed to his careful use of linguistic mechanisms or choices.

While addressing the Saudis, there is an implementation of indirect, direct, or formal language by Saudi Health Minister. This linguistic act is recognized as the theory of X-phemisms. X-phemisms is the process of employing euphemisms, dysphemisms, and orthophemisms while using the language in any type of communication (Allan & Burrige, 2006). Rababah (2014) states that for the purpose of showing their politeness and indirectness towards delicate issues, speakers usually employ euphemistic expressions. However, when they want to offend taboos or listeners, they resort to use dysphemistic expressions. As for orthophemism, it is often used to present literal and formal speaking about something.

Euphemism is a semantic tool by which the speaker substitutes one word or expression with another in order to achieve the perfect influence on the communication (Allan & Burrige, 1991). According to Warren (1992) euphemism can be formed by some strategies including formal innovation, phonemic modification, and semantic innovation strategies. On the other hand, Allan & Burrige (1991) define dysphemism as an expression that holds offensive connotations either about the referent of the audience by replacing the neutral or euphemistic items for just that reason. In their investigation, Allan & Burrige (2006) introduce the term orthophemism to refer to the straight-talk that are neither polite nor blunt or harsh. Therefore, applying different linguistic choices carefully while speaking to the public, especially in challenging circumstances like Covid-19 pandemic, leads to a successful and great management of the communication.

X-phemisms as communicative tools are applied everywhere in all human's types of interactions. In this regard, the current paper examines the formation of X-phemistic expressions produced by leader in formal and medical interaction. More specifically, it takes as its main aim to investigate resources where euphemistic, dysphemistic, and orthophemistic expressions come as characteristics in the speeches of Saudi Minister of Health during Coronavirus Pandemic. It also attempts to examine how Warren's euphemistic strategies (1992) are appeared in the Saudi Health Minister speeches during the crisis through analyzing his discourses via thematic analysis method (TA).

The significance of the current paper is included in its contributions to the limited examination of pandemic discourse and to the understanding of X-phemistic tendencies of Saudi formal and medical communication during global crises. It is also hoped that it adds more knowledge to our understanding of euphemistic strategies used by Arabic speakers during international crises like the spread of Covid-19 disease. Moreover, this analysis provides readers with the importance of applying different linguistic devices while addressing the public about global crises.

1.1. Research Objectives

This research examines the issue of applying X-phemistic expressions while delivering medical discourses to public during times of crisis such as Covid-19 pandemic. In particular, it provides analysis of the way by which X-phemistic expressions are managed and introduced by leaders in such critical situation.

Specifically, the present paper aims to:

1. Investigate how Saudi Minister of Health delivers the health message about Covid-19 crisis to the Saudi people.
2. Provide an analysis of how Saudi Health Minister deal with euphemistic, dysphemistic, and orthophemistic expressions in his speeches during the health crisis.
3. Examine the most frequent strategies for forming euphemisms in the speeches of the Saudi Health Minister during the crisis.

1.2. Research Questions

The present paper seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How does the health message about Covid-19 crisis delivered to the Saudi people by Saudi Health Minister?
2. How does the Saudi Health Minister deal with the euphemisms, dysphemisms, and orthophemisms in his speeches during Covid-19 pandemic?
3. What are the most frequent strategies for forming euphemisms in the speeches of the Saudi Health Minister?

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Theoretical Background of the Theory of X-phemisms

The process of communication relies mostly on figurative speech, metaphorical expressions, rhetorical tropes and connotational markers (Gibbs, 1994). Allan & Burrige (1991; 2006) evaluate the way in which language mediates the sociocultural production of offensive or religious expressions in situated context of use. They examine the association between language taboos and the appropriateness of social and linguistic expressions. Eventually, they categorize the linguistic expressions or choices into three main classes, namely, euphemisms, dysphemisms, and orthophemisms, which leads to create the concept of X-phemisms. This term refers to the union set of the three linguistic classes, namely, euphemism, dysphemism, and orthophemism (Allan & Burrige, 2006).

The etymological root of the term euphemism is from Greek language. The element eu denotes (good) and pHEME means (speak), the two words combined mean pleasant language. In their linguistic study, Allan and Burrige (1991) define euphemism as “an alternative to a dispreferred expression, in order to avoid possible loss of face: either one’s own face or, through giving offense, that of the audience, or of some third party.” (p. 26). Similarly, Olimat (2018) describes euphemism as a metaphorical resource that provides the language users with the mean of addressing sensitive or inappropriate issues. He argues that euphemism is considered as an intentional substitution of the embarrassing or offensive expressions with more socially or religiously agreeable ones in order to convey a certain meaning implicitly. According to Hugh (1981), euphemism is a linguistic process in which speakers round about certain word or expression to turn it into more mild and agreeable ones. Hence, it may be naturally stated that euphemism serves good purposes because it is used as a way of speaking words with the avoidance of offending or hurting other people.

Accordingly, Hugh (1981) classifies euphemism into two types: positive and negative euphemism. Positive euphemism refers to magnifying or making the euphemized items seen as much important or larger than they really are. The purpose of this kind of euphemism is to give the word the sense of positive semantic prosody. Positive semantic prosody refers to the process of putting words in a pleasant environment instead of an unpleasant one (Motlagh &

Nezhad, 2021). Therefore, positive euphemism includes the use of various occupational titles in order to protect the worker's ego by elevating their job status. For example, saying “access controller” as a substitution of “doorman”, or using the expression “Health Care Professional” as a reference to “Nurse” or even “Doctor”. On the other hand, negative euphemism indicates deflating or diminishing the euphemized reference; it holds a defensive nature. Negative euphemism functions as offsetting or eradicating for the power of the taboo terms or avoidable words that people do not prefer to deal with directly. For instance, using the word “harvesting” as replacement for “killing”, or using “intestinal fortitude” instead of “guts” (Hugh, 1981).

In contrast to euphemism, Allan and Burridge (1991) describe dysphemism as “an expression with connotations that are offensive either about the denotatum or to the audience, or both, and it is substituted for a neutral or euphemistic expression for just that reason.” (p. 26). Likewise, Crespo-Fernández (2015) reports that dysphemism sheds light on the most pejorative property of a certain taboo or expression with an offensive purpose. In order to talk about things that annoy or frustrate people, speakers usually resort to employ dysphemism. Dysphemism includes expressions like name calling or any kind of derogatory comments directed towards other people or certain topics. Thus, in social communication, speakers would have more expressive flexibility according to the nature of issue or the target audience (Olimat, 2020).

On the other side, the term orthophemism is quite different from euphemism and dysphemism. It is first introduced by Allan and Burridge in 2006. The term orthophemism means the straight, direct, or neutral talk or expressions. Orthophemism is neither sweet-sounded or polite expressions as euphemism, nor offensive, blunt, or harsh as dysphemistic expressions. It is typically more direct, formal, or literal use of words. For instance, one might call someone “fat”, in this case, the speaker is speaking directly which means he has used an orthophemism. To sum up, orthophemism is as alternatives to offensive expressions as euphemisms, since it would typically be desirable or appropriate terms used instead of using dysphemistic expressions. X-phemism expressions would be like, “pass away” used as a euphemism, “snuff it” used as a dysphemism, and “die” used as an orthophemism.

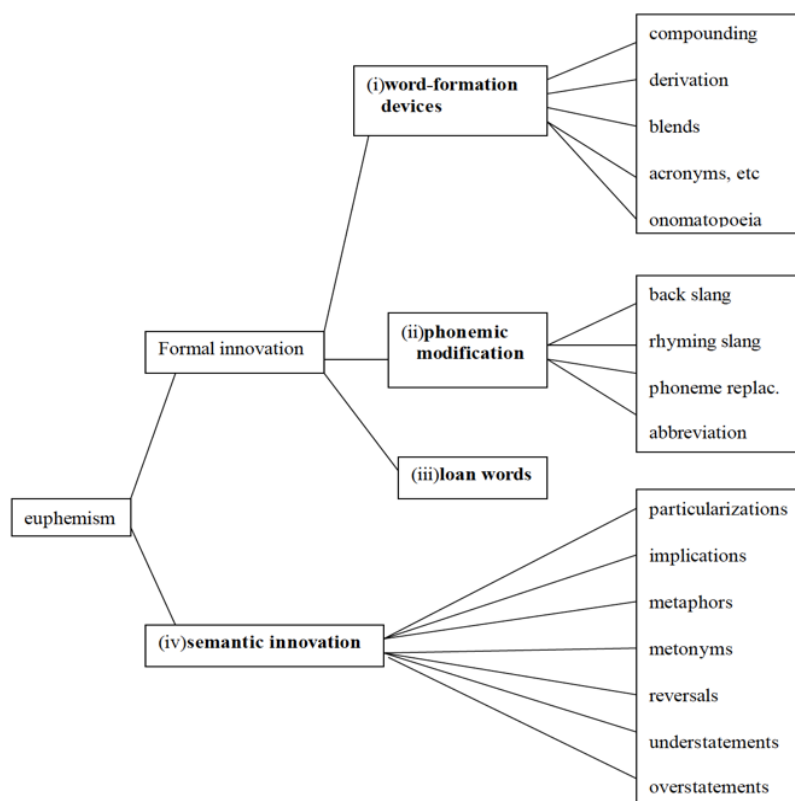
In his discussion on the concept of X-phemism, Allan (2012) describes this union set as observed sides of the same coin. They are principally determined by the linguistic choice of words within a given context. Crespo-Fernández (2005) argues that all the three concepts of X-phemism are common verbal behaviors of the speaker controlled by politeness convention and face concern. Thus, it can be stated that euphemisms, dysphemisms, and orthophemisms are examples of linguistic control that could be arisen consciously and unconsciously according to the social or cultural context in which the expressions are uttered.

In light of the previous discussion, Allan and Burridge (1991) introduce ‘diseases’ as a diachronically and cross-culturally taboo demanding for substantial use of euphemisms to diminish its potentially undesirable impacts, or dysphemisms to offend the taboo topic or the addressees, or orthophemisms to express the seriousness and importance of the disease sincerely. Allan and Burridge (2006) also emphasize that when expressing emotional and social aspects of any disease, people have the tendency to use different linguistic expressions like euphemisms, dysphemisms, and orthophemisms. Therefore, applying different linguistic choices while discussing a delicate issue, e.g., Covid-19 disease, is considered as a powerful tool for circumventing the taboos surrounding this crisis.

2.2. The Formation of X-Phemistic Expressions

In both spoken and written discourse, X-phemisms can be created through different ways and strategies. Thus, it is necessary to explore the forms X-phemisms can take at the word or sentence levels in order to provide an adequate analysis of X-phemisms strategies in any type of discourse. The use of the different kinds of X-phemisms involves the employment of number of linguistic devices or tools. Various linguistic tools have been provided by researchers especially for the formation of euphemisms (e.g., Burchfield 1985; Allan and Burrige 1991; Warren 1992; Allan 2012). Linguistically speaking, the use of dysphemisms and orthophemisms do not need any employment of tools or devices other than using the direct literal or blunt form of the words. However, forming euphemisms require applying different linguistic strategies to revolve around the words meaning in order to create the new expressions. Therefore, the main focus of these previous mentioned researches is to examine linguistic strategies for forming euphemisms. One of the most detailed taxonomies of X-phemism formation has been suggested by Warren (1992). She develops her model of euphemistic strategies on the basis of Allan and Burrige's model (1991). The main idea of Warren's model is that 'novel contextual meaning', which are the new meanings of words in a specific context, are continually produced in any language. This production is governed by certain rules and the acceptability of this new meaning is conditioned upon the strength of the relations between the novel words or expressions and their referent (Warren, 1992). Such relation leads to the creation of the euphemistic terms. Eventually, she subdivides the strategies of creating euphemisms into three main categories including formal innovation, phonemic modification, and semantic innovation strategies.

Figure 1. Warren's Model of Euphemistic Strategies



Formal innovation category involves strategies of the mechanisms of word formation like compounding, derivation, blends, acronyms, and onomatopoeia (Warren, 1992). Compounding indicates the process of combining two or more words together in order to

create a new word which has entirely new meaning such as “sunflower” (sun + flower). Derivation denotes the process of changing the form or inserting an affix to the root of the word as “celibacy” from “celibatus” meaning (life without love or marriage). Blends refers to a process of word formation in which the beginning of a specific word and the end of another certain word are combined to form a new word holding the meaning of the two words together like “brunch” (breakfast + lunch). As for acronyms, they are a pronounceable word formed by combining the first letter of each word in a phrase, for example, “UNESCO” for United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. Onomatopoeia is the process of formulating word that phonetically resembles or imitates the sound associated with what is named, such as “miaow” for “cat” (Allan & Burridge, 1991; Warren, 1992; Rabab’ah & Al-Qarni, 2012).

The second category of Warren model is phonemic modification strategies which refer to modifying structure of the offensive tabooed word or expression. This category includes strategies of back slang, rhyming slang, phoneme replace, and abbreviation. Back slang refers to the process where words are pronounced as if they were spelled backwards like “redraw” for “warder” (Warren, 1992). Huang (2005) defines the strategy of rhyming slang as creating euphemism through replacing an unpleasant coordinate with another word or phrase rhyming with it, for instance, the rhyming slang “trouble” means “wife” from the original phrase “trouble and strife”. According to Allan and Burridge (1991), phoneme replacement indicates the remodeling of tabooed words through joining part of them with semantically unrelated ones. For example, the word “God” is remodeled in euphemistic expletives by using different forms of oaths “Gad, Gash, or Goodness”. As for abbreviation, Allan and Burridge (1991) classify it as a morphological technique for constructing euphemisms. Accordingly, Rabab’ah and Al-Qarni (2012) argue that abbreviation in euphemism is as an indirect and inoffensive substitution for expressions that are considered tabooed or offensive such as using “AIDS” instead of saying “Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome”.

The last category of Warren's euphemistic strategies is semantic innovation in which the euphemisms are created through symbolism and exposed to semantic change (Warren, 1992). This category embraces strategies of particularizations, implications, metaphors, metonyms, reversals, understatements, overstatements. Particularization is device to create euphemism by using general term within particularized context to indicate a topic said to be taboo, such as using “dump” for “vomit” or any content of stomach (Warren, 1992). Rabab’ah & Al-Qarni (2012) suggest that implication refers to a strategy by which the dispreferred meaning is implied by the speaker and in order to reveal the exact meaning of this implication several steps are needed, e.g., “the natural daughter” for “illegitimate child”. Metaphor is defined by Neaman and Silver (1985) as a formulation of a new concept, usually euphemistic, standing for the forbidden topics or expressions through comparison. As an example of metaphorical concepts, “red” or “cavalry's” come for “menstruation” (Allan & Burridge, 1991). According to Warren (1992), metonyms is a strategy in which the conventional meaning of a term is referred to by the contextual meaning because there is a closely association between the contextual and conventional meanings. For instance, saying “He looks slim” instead of saying “He is sick” (Mohammed & Majeed, 2018). Rabab’ah and Al-Qarni (2012), note that metonyms are different from particularization in that both the euphemism and the tabooed term are belonging to the same semantic field; however, in particularization both terms are semantically unrelated. Burridge (2012) defines reversal strategy as a process where the affirmative statement is expressed through the denial of its reversal or opposite statement. Another name for this strategy is litotes. Crespo-Fernández (2014) claims that litotes is mainly used to maintain the verbal criticism in the limits of what is considered as polite or pleasant behavior. For example, using the expression “not making progress” is euphemistically used to substitute “failed”. Baldick (2004) defines understatement as euphemistic strategy for discussing the forbidden issues through making them seem as less

important than they actually are, such as using “sleep” for “die”. It also can be called general-for-specific euphemism because it expresses only part of the truth (Allan & Burrige, 1991). In contrast to understatement, overstatement is defined as the way of exaggerating the forbidden and tabooed terms for emotional purpose by presenting them bigger and better than they really are, for instance, using “fight to glory” for “die” (Allan & Burrige, 1991).

2.3. Related Studies to X-phemisms Theory in Medical Discourse

The amount of the studies in the literature that examined the X-phemistic expressions and euphemistic strategies in the context of medical communication are little comparing to other types of discourse. Rababah (2014) argues that although the issue of X-phemisms has been marginally mentioned in some studies, it has not been basically studied enough in the field of medical discourse.

Dunn et al (1993) teste some assumptions which are made about using euphemistic language while communicating with cancer patients. The first assumption is whether using explicit statements about cancer diagnosis leads the patient to respond with a higher anxiety level than using implicit or euphemistic expressions. The second assumption is whether patients believe they adjust better with cancer when the diagnosis is explicit. Results reveal that the distinct exposure to the word ‘cancer’ has increased both STATE anxiety and TRAIT anxiety level for the patients. However, using the word ‘cancer’ does not report high influence on the psychological adjustment of the patients. The researchers conclude that if health professionals are unambiguous and not using euphemism in the words they use, cancer will continue to provoke anxiety in the short-term, but patients will feel more capable of coping with it. Mostly, it is advised to employ euphemisms in medical communication with patients. However, this paper introduces evidence that euphemism may be detrimental to the honesty of doctor-patient communication. Findings of this study have provided people generally and oncology departments' practitioners particularly with the appropriate contexts or situations of using euphemistic language because sometimes talking without applying euphemism about cancer may help the patient to reduce the fear and encourage more people to seek medical advice earlier.

In another experimental study, Tayler and Ogden (2005) examine whether GPs use or avoid the term ‘heart failure’ while consulting the patients. Additionally, if they avoid it, what are their preferable euphemisms? It also seeks to evaluate the relative impact of the term ‘heart failure’ versus the GPs proffered euphemism on the patients' belief about the illness. To achieve these goals, the author has run two studies involved a cross sectional survey and an experimental study. The statistical analysis of the GPs demonstrate that GPs rated euphemisms more than the term ‘heart failure’ and the majority prefer the euphemistic phrase ‘you have fluid on your lungs as your heart is not pumping hard enough’. It is notable to mention that related suggestions by other researchers have stated that this behavior of preferring to use euphemism by the GPs is because they believe that the term ‘heart failure’ is too emotive and upsetting for the patients (Ogden et al., 2003; Buetow & Coster, 2001). Regarding the assessment of the relative impact of the patients, results reveal that the term ‘heart failure’ made them believe more in the seriousness and consequences of the illness and generated more fear of more variable over time and would last for longer. Notably, the study has highlighted a new perspective about what the preferable way by the doctors to approach the patients, since mostly the studies just focus the attention on patients’ perspectives other than doctors’ such as Dunn et al (1993).

Rababah (2014) studies the motives, forms and frequency of using euphemism, dysphemism, and orthophemism expressions in the medical discourse of health care providers while communicating with patients and their families. He also seeks to investigate the

translatability of X-phemization from English into Arabic and vice versa. To achieve this end, he has conducted this qualitative and quantitative paper on the spoken discourse (conversations) of 50 health care providers in Jordan. The analysis of the data shows that euphemistic expressions have been manifested by using an indirect language for the purpose of softening the impact of the health care users. For the dysphemistic expressions, it is found that they are detected by the direct language and information realized by health care providers, whereas orthophemism expressions were employed by the use of formal language in the medical discourse. Thus, this study offers a practical understanding of the X-phemization when applied in medical communication.

In the same vein, Batibo and Kopi (2016) investigate the neologisms that have been developed in Setswana culture to denote the HIV/AIDS pandemic in terms of euphemisms and idioms. Therefore, a sociolinguistic survey was carried out, focusing mainly on groups where such new expressions were likely to emerge. Major findings from the study indicate that strategies used to create euphemisms have largely followed the processes of extension of meaning, compounding and borrowing. This could be attributed to the fact that words whose meanings have been extended or borrowed hold non-offensive connotation more than their original terms. This finding is in line with other studies about euphemism strategies such as (Batibo, 1992; Chiwome, 1992). As for idioms, it is found that the strategies used to create them were mostly the usual method of combining the words to form the idiomatic meanings in order to tone down the sensitivity of the referent. In this study, the findings have provided a notion of how euphemisms and idioms are considered as strategies for meaning making in social and cultural contexts.

In another research Olimat (2020) studies how the Jordanian society applied euphemistic and dysphemistic techniques while communicating about Covid-19 crises. Through running a qualitative research approach, the author has applied Allah & Burrige's (1991) model of euphemism and dysphemism along with Warren model of euphemistic strategies (1992) to analyze how the Jordanian public employed them. To examine the participants, who are 200 Jordanians, a two-section questionnaire have carefully developed. The statistical analysis illustrates that in their daily conversations about Covid-19 pandemic, the Jordanian people have employed different euphemistic techniques, namely, shift from Arabic to English, metaphor, abbreviation, or medical terms. On the other hand, they hardly applied dysphemism while speaking about the crises. The writer has attributed this difference to the reason that choosing the appropriate linguistic aspects or words, including euphemism and dysphemism, to express what speakers intend to say and to reflect what they value, or disvalue is a basic part of communication for individuals and communities.

Number of other previous studies in the literature have investigated the use of X-phemisms and euphemistic strategies in different kinds of discourse, especially in political discourse and public speeches (Duda, 2011; Burrige, 1996; Hojati, 2012; Linfoot-Ham, 2005; Vande Kopple, 2007). However, few researchers have examined the same phenomena in the pandemic or medical discourse. Moreover, even the studies on the medical discourse, most of them have basically just investigated the use of euphemisms without the other sides of the coin which are dysphemisms and orthophemisms (Dunn et al, 1993; Tayler & Ogden, 2005; Batibo & Kopi, 2016; Olimat, 2020). Based on our knowledge, there is no previous studies that have examined the theory of X-phemisms of Allan and Burrige (1991; 2006) and Warren's euphemistic strategies (1992) in the context of Arabic formal and medical discourses, especially the Saudi medical communication. Therefore, it is hoped that this paper fills in the literature gap on the linguistic analysis of X-phemisms in Saudi Arabia in particular and the limited investigation of pandemic discourse in general.

3. METHODOLOGY

This paper investigates the implementation of euphemisms, dysphemisms, and orthophemisms language in the Saudi Health Minister speeches during coronavirus crisis. Moreover, it provides an analysis of how Warren model of euphemistic strategies (1992) appear in Minister speeches. It applies a qualitative research approach anchored by a descriptive analytical method. It employs inference from Minister speeches deductively as it sought to find linguistic patterns in the form of euphemisms, dysphemisms, and orthophemisms.

3.1. Materials

The collected data of this research are the eight speeches delivered by the Saudi Minister of Health, Tawfig bin Fawzan Al-Rabiah, during the current Covid-19 pandemic. Tawfig Arabiah is the current Saudi Minister of Health who was appointed on the position on May 7th, 2016 as part of the Saudi Vision 2030. Among his achievements, Alrabiah focuses on improving the quality of medical services in Saudi Arabia as well as on building new medical centers and centralized systems (Saudi Ministry of Health, 2020). The source of the data is taken from the official channel of Saudi Ministry of Health on YouTube platform.

The eight speeches are combined in an approximately 24 minutes duration. The delivery dates of these speeches are between March 15th, 2020 to January 31st, 2021. The basic content of these speeches is the minister addressing the Saudi community concerning coronavirus crises. Throughout the speeches, the minister is updating Saudi people regarding the pandemic or giving them instructions about how to deal with this novel virus.

3.2. Data Analysis

The obtained data for this research are analyzed qualitatively by using Allan and Burrige's theory of X-phemisms (1991; 2006) along with Warren's model of euphemistic strategies 1992. Accordingly, thematic analysis (TA) method is conducted to tackle the themes of euphemisms, dysphemisms, and orthophemisms and identify the euphemistic strategies that implemented in the minister's speeches. TA is a methodological technique used to examine research data in order to identify any common themes, ideas, or patterns of meaning that show up repeatedly (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It includes coding and categorizing all the transcribed data before identifying the key themes then analyze them accordingly.

The analysis of the data of the present study involves transcribing all the minister's speeches then coding and categorizing the transcribed speeches manually to identify the linguistic themes of euphemisms, dysphemisms, and orthophemisms. Then, each theme within the codified data is closely examined and interpreted with provided examples that are transliterated using International Journal of Middle East Studies (IJMES) Transliteration System for Arabic along with its English translations (Shaw & Joseph, 1977). Moreover, the euphemism theme is further analyzed based on euphemistic strategies of Warren model (1992), taking into account the provided strategies in the literature review section, in order to examine how these strategies are appeared in the minister's speeches.

4. RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

The transcripts of the collected data show that the Saudi Health Minister in his speeches during Covid-19 crisis manages to deliver the crucial messages through applying variety of linguistic choices which sound to be indirect, direct, or formal presentation of the sensitive issue. This act is included under what is linguistically known as the use of euphemisms, dysphemisms, and orthophemisms. Accordingly, the transcripts can be classified thematically

into three main linguistic classifications, namely, euphemisms, dysphemisms, and orthophemisms. The formation of each classification is related to some specific themes or context in the speeches. Some examples of the implementation of euphemistic, dysphemistic, and orthophemistic expressions from the minister speeches are described and analyzed with examples below.

4.1. Euphemisms and Frequency of Using Euphemistic Strategies

The speeches allow us to identify three main thematic areas require employing euphemisms by the minister, they are presenting unpleasant messages and news, naming the health crisis, and comforting the public. Each euphemistic expression in those themes is formed and created by specific euphemistic strategies.

4.1.1. Presenting Unpleasant Messages

One of the most popular themes for creating euphemisms is to substitute the harsh or unpleasant subjects with more comfortable and suitable ones. Deng (2016) states that the use of euphemistic alternative instead of the unpleasant ones is essential in any type of communication since the direct expressions in such context by the speaker would make the listeners feel in danger or frightened. As can be noticed, when the minister presents the unpleasant or harsh news about coronavirus, he substitutes them with other euphemistic utterances. In such situation, the euphemistic expressions are implemented in the minister language in order to sound more polite and avoid being harsh while addressing the public about the delicate health crisis. According to Warren's model of euphemistic strategies 1992, it is noticed that there are two main euphemistic strategies within this theme by which the minister delivers the unpleasant messages, they are reversal and implication strategies.

Reversal or as so-called litotes is a strategy of forming euphemism in which the affirmative statement is described by using its negative form to make the utterance sounds more milder and less direct and harsh. This strategy is employed in the speeches by the minister while presenting the unpleasant news regarding the crisis. The following examples are extracted from the speeches and show the formation of euphemisms by reversal strategy:

Table 1. Euphemisms Formed by Reversal Strategy

Example No.	Transliteration (IJAMES)	Translation
1	lakin 'ismaḥū lī 'an 'ataḥadath ma'akum bikul shafāfiyyah wa 'in kānat mu'limah lil' asaf 'in 'ba'd min 'afrād 'mujtama' lam yutabbiq shi'ār kulunā mas'ūl.	But allow me to speak to you with transparency even if it is painful. Unfortunately, <u>some people did not apply</u> the motto (we are all responsible).
2	wa lam ya'khudhū 'tta'āmul ma' khuṭūrat 'wabā' bi 'jiddiyyah 'kāfiyyah.	<u>And they are not being</u> serious enough with the danger of the pandemic.
3	kamā 'annahum lam yaltazimū bimā yaḥdur min taḥdhīrāt tushaddid 'alā khuṭūrat 'mukhālāth wa 'ttajammu'āt.	<u>They also did not comply</u> with the warnings that emphasize the danger of the contacting and gathering with people.

In these expressions, the minister is opening up frankly with the public and conveying to them the fact that some people have not followed the instructions of being serious about the health crisis. The utterance is initiated by saying that he has an unpleasant and harsh message with painful transparency. In example (1), instead of directly saying that 'some people are irresponsible', he employs the negative form of the statement by saying 'they did not apply

the motto (we are all responsible)' which makes the sentence more polite and acceptable publically. As for example (2), the fact that 'some people are reckless' is substituted with the more euphemistic one when he uses the reversal expression which is, 'they are not being serious enough with the danger of the pandemic'. Similarly, example (3) shows that the phrase 'they did not comply with the warnings' comes with negative form as euphemized replacement of saying the affirmative and direct phrase that 'they are negligent about the warnings'. Therefore, he conveys the harsh messages by applying euphemistic expressions through reversal euphemistic strategy. This result supports Fernandez's claim (2014) that litotes is used to keep "verbal criticism within the limits of what one would conventionally consider polite behavior."

The second euphemistic strategy implemented by Saudi Health Minister within this theme is implication. It involves implying the dispreferred meaning by the speaker in other milder expression. This strategy is also used by the minister in his speeches when a harsh message regarding coronavirus updates or news is needed to be conveyed to the public. Examples of euphemistic expressions formed by implication strategy are shown in the next schedule:

Table 2. Euphemisms Formed by Implication Strategy

Example No.	Transliteration (IJAMES)	Translation
4	wa hadha yaj' alunā nantaliq bishakil 'akbar fi 'fuḥūṣāt liktishāf' 'akbar 'adad mumkin min 'ḥālāt li' inqādhihā <u>qabil fawāt</u> 'awān.	And this makes us start to extend the examinations broadly in order to discover the maximum number of infected cases to rescue them <u>before it is too late</u> .
5	hadhih 'marāḥil tabda' tadrījyyan min yawum 'khamīs 'muqbil wa tatawassa' <u>lihīn</u> 'awdah lil'awdā' 'ttabī'iyah <u>bimashī'at</u> 'allāh fī <u>mafhūmihā</u> 'jadīd 'qā'im 'alā 'ttabā'ud 'ijtimā'ī.	These stages start gradually from the next Thursday and expand <u>until going back to the normal situations with God willing in its new concept of depending the social distancing</u> .

In example (4), the minister informs the public that the examinations of infected cases with Covid-19 have extended broadly in Saudi Arabia. This is because the Health Ministry wants to find them as fast as possible in order to cure and save them before it is too late. The minister chooses to employ the euphemistically alternative 'before it is too late' instead of saying 'before they die'. By doing so, the dispreferred meaning of explicitly saying 'before they die' is implied in the phrase 'before it is too late'. In such cases, the unpleasant expressions or messages are usually implied by the minister in other euphemized expressions for the purpose of circumventing the taboo subjects such as death. This result is consistent with Burkhalo (2019) in that death is considered as a frightening phenomenon for various cultures that requires creating lots of euphemisms while talking about it. Another example of implication strategy for forming euphemism is shown in example (5). The minister is telling the public the news about the stages that Saudi government initiates in order to go gradually back to the normal life after having quarantined for four months because of the spreading of Covid-19 disease. The sentence indicates that when the minister tries to inform the public that the life is going to be completely changed and it will not be the same as before any time soon, he implied that meaning by using the euphemistic expression 'in its new concept of depending on social distancing'. Such expression implies that the normal life is going to be back with new different characteristics of being in social distancing. In this situation, the minister avoids being direct with people because this fact about the new normal life might hurt and frighten them.

4.1.2. Naming the Health Crisis

Another thematic field resulting the implementation of euphemisms in Saudi Health Minister speeches is naming the virus. More specifically, euphemisms are usually employed by the minister when describing or referencing Covid-19 crisis by using more milder and indirect words due to the need to avoid referencing the fear-based taboo topic directly, which is coronavirus. Mocanu (2017) illustrates that one essential function of euphemisms is to make listeners forget about the linguistically tabooed or hard terms; therefore, it is preferable to employ other euphemistic words or phrases that less specific than the direct name of the avoidable subject. Data from the speeches reveal that the most used euphemistic strategies within this theme is falling into two categories, namely, particularization and metonymy.

In the case of describing or referencing the health crisis, the data show that general terms within particularized context is used to indicate the pandemic taboo euphemistically, both the euphemism and the taboo term are semantically unrelated. The minister's employment of these particularized expressions in the context of certain reference to the pandemic allows us to categorize such phrases as particularization euphemistic strategy. In such cases, the minister provides list of euphemistic references to discuss Covid-19 pandemic indirectly. Utterance like /taḥaddī kabīr/, (big challenge) exemplifies this strategy in that the term challenge is applied in particular context as a reference for Covid-19 pandemic without any related meaning between them. The expression /muḥimmah waṭaniyyah/, (national mission), is also considered as a particularization euphemism because the certain context of being described as matter of national mission is used to indicate coronavirus crisis even though the two expressions have totally different meanings. However, it is implemented in such context in order to influence the public nationality and to make them feel more responsible about following the government guidance and instructions. Another example of this strategy in the current theme is /marḥalah ʿṣṣaʿbah/, (the difficult stage). In this phrase, the pandemic is particularly referred to as a hard stage of life in order to convey the fact that this pandemic is not a permanent situation, yet it will be passed like any other stage of life. The expression /tajrubah jadīdah/, (new experience) is also found in the speeches as particularized euphemism in that the virus is described in specific context of being something new instead of mentioning the name of the virus directly to avoid having negative effect upon the addressees.

The second strategy used by the minister to construct euphemism in this theme is metonymy. It is a process of replacing the conventional meaning of a certain term said to be taboo with another one that hold a contextual meaning with this taboo. Metonymy strategy is different from particularization in that the conventional meaning of the taboo and the contextual meaning of the euphemistic term are semantically related to the same field of meaning. In the speeches, instead of saying the name of the virus frankly, the minister uses metonyms when he addressed coronavirus with alternative utterances for the virus. Allan (2012) introduces this strategy to be used in such situation when the speaker avoids to directly mention the taboo subject but instead just refer to it by the metonymic concepts for the purpose of fulfilling the euphemistic function. It is observed from the data that words like /fāyṛūs/, (the virus) and /marad/, (the disease) show up repeatedly in the speeches. This is attributed to the fact that as a substitution of literally mentioning the name of the disease, the minister provides indirect terms to deal with Covid-19 term. This linguistic act has been commonly used in Arabic societies such as the famous example of using /marad ʿkhabīth/, (the malignant disease) as a replacement of saying /ssaraṭān/, (cancer). This finding is in line with Olimat (2020) in that referring to the diseases by such metonymic concept is because it holds less negative connotation and have more assuring nature.

4.1.3. Comforting the Public

The third distinguished theme that requires forming euphemisms within the data is comforting the public about the health crisis. Deng (2016) clarifies that in some critical occasions, the use of euphemisms in the process of communication helps in building good relationship with others and in accepting the hard matter with more comfortable way. The analysis of the data presents evidence that Saudi Health Minister employs the most proper euphemistic language in the speeches to express his support and to comfort the Saudi people about coronavirus outbreak. Deng (2016) also reports that euphemisms is not just used to replace those vulgar and rough topics but also to beautify the speech to make it more proper and comfortable by the use of figures of speech. In this regard, it is apparent in the speeches that the strategy used to create euphemisms in this theme is through metaphor strategy.

One way of presenting euphemistic expressions with rhetorical effects is through metaphorical forms. Metaphorical euphemism is the process of producing new expressions for taboos or rough subjects by creating a comparison. The transcripts of the data introduce that the minister presents number of metaphors while trying to comfort the people and calm their fear about Covid-19 disease. This finding resembles Sontag' result (1989) in that the emergence of new diseases usually motivate the creation of multiple euphemistic metaphors while discussing the disease. The bellow-mentioned schedule demonstrates examples of metaphorical euphemistic utterances that created by the minister in his speeches:

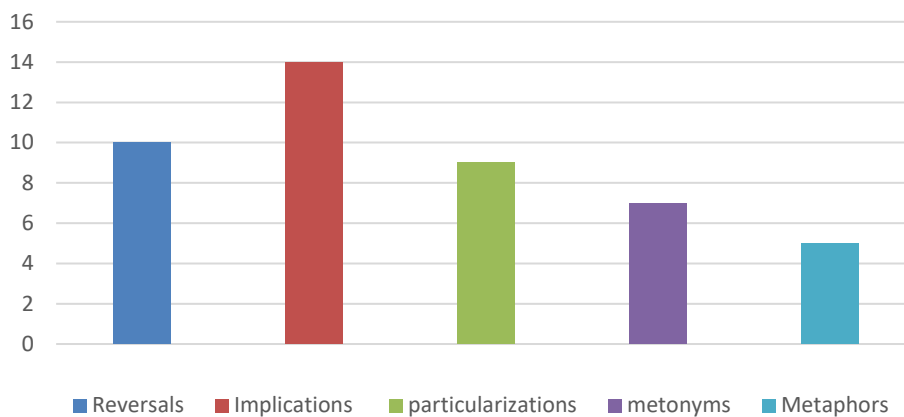
Table 3. Euphemisms Formed by Metaphor Strategy

Example No.	Transliteration (IJAMES)	Translation
6	fanahnu fi markib wāḥid wa ʾttaqṣīr min ʾbaʿd yuʾaththir ʾalā ʾjamīʿ.	We are in the same boat and the recklessness from some people will affect all of us.
7	biʾiltizāmīnā maʾan sanaṣil ʾilā bar ʾamān.	We will reach the safe shore through our commitment.
8	ʾfaḥṣ ʾmuwassaʿ fī ʾjamīʿ manātiq ʾmamlakah lam naqum bih ʾillā thiqatan fī wujud junūd min ʾamthālikum yajʿalūn niẓāmanā ʾṣṣihhī qawwyan.	The expanded examination in all Saudi regions was initiated because we have confidence in the existence of such soldiers who make our health system strong.

The sentence in (6) is taken as an example of metaphor strategy for forming euphemism. In this example, the minister tries to provoke the feeling of solidarity between the public, so he compares the rough subject of health crisis to the boat that carry the whole society in it. Using such comfortably linguistic choice makes every member in the society feel responsible for protecting the society. Another example of metaphorical euphemism is shown in example (7). In this expression, the minister resembles the hard health crisis to a journey in the see and our commitment is the way of reach the other destination safety. Such metaphor is employed rhetorically to comfort the public that there is a way of ending this crisis which is our commitment of following the instructions and social distancing. The expression in example (8) is also considered as a metaphorical euphemism. The minister also compares the health pandemic to the battel and the health practitioners to the war soldiers in order to beautify the speech and to comfort the public that they are being protected by strong and responsible health soldiers. These result support Charteris-Black's finding (2011) in that metaphorical euphemism is important to provoke emotional responses on the listeners by exploiting the power of language.

In this light, number of strategies occur vividly in the minister speeches while creating euphemisms as explained before. The employment of those strategies may differ according to the theme in which the euphemisms are introduced. The distribution of the most used euphemistic strategies by the minister is presented in the following figure:

Figure 2. Frequency of Using Euphemistic Strategies



The figure indicates that there are five main strategies found to construct euphemisms in the transcripts of the speeches. It is clearly shown that from the total number of euphemistic expressions in the speeches, reversal strategy ranks the highest frequency level by 14 times among all other strategies. In contrast, metaphorical euphemism has the lowest level by 5 times. With regard to other strategies from high to low, reversal strategy is employed to construct euphemisms about the pandemic by the minister 10 times, followed by particularization strategy with 9 times, and finally metonym which occurs 7 times. As explained in the Literature review, Warren model of euphemistic strategies (1992) has three main categories, which are formal innovation, phonemic modification, and semantic innovation. Each category consists of several strategies by which the euphemistic alternatives are created. It is evident from the data that these five main strategies used by Saudi Health Minister is falling into the semantic innovation category. In other words, the euphemisms found in Saudi Health Minister's speeches are essentially created through symbolism or exposed to semantic changes by the minister.

Taking into consideration the abovementioned results of the use of euphemisms in Saudi Health Minister speeches during Covid-19 outbreak, it can be stated that the minister provides list of euphemistic expressions while discussing certain themes regarding Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, each theme is associated with specific euphemistic strategy to create the euphemized expressions.

4.2. Dysphemisms

The second linguistic classification found in the minister speeches is dysphemistic expression. It is noticed from the data that the implementation of dysphemisms is associated with one main theme in the minister's speeches, which is describing the virus.

6.2.1. Describing the Virus

In contrast to euphemisms, dysphemism is essentially used to minimize or offend a certain taboo or a given subject. It includes expressions like derogatory blunt comments or name calling directed towards certain taboo topics. In other words, dysphemism sheds light on the most offended features of specific topic. In the case of Saudi Minister of Health's

speeches, sometimes instead of using euphemisms, he resorts to this linguistic device only when he wants to attack and dysphemize the taboo topic, which is coronavirus crisis. This finding is consistent with Allan and Burrige (2006) argument that people sometimes lean to use dysphemisms when expressing emotional and social aspects of disease (p. 203). Thus, the use of dysphemisms by the minister within this theme is sometimes motivated by the unpleasant feelings, such as fear, hatred, or contempt toward the topic of Covid-19.

The transcripts of the speeches show the expression /famā yamur ‘alā ‘ālam huwa jā’iḥah bikul maā ta’nī ‘kalimah min ma’nā/, (what passes on world right now is a pandemic in every sense of the word) is adopted by the minister to express his apprehension of negative attributes of the health crisis by saying that the current health situation is national pandemic in every sense of the word. Names like /hadhiḥ ‘jā’iḥah/, (this pandemic), /hadhiḥ ‘‘azmah/, (this crisis), and /‘wabā’/, (the epidemic) are other dysphemistic descriptions implemented by the minister and directed towards coronavirus pandemic as an attempt to dysphemize and offend its negative effect of being in time of intense difficulty for the whole world. Other phrases that represent the use of dysphemistic language in the minister speeches are /wa huwa khaṭar ‘alā ‘jamī’/, (it is a danger on all of us) and /wa lā ziltu ‘aql ‘inn ‘khaṭar lā zāla qā’iman/, (I am still saying that the danger is still exist). The use of the word danger denotes disparaging meanings directed toward Covid-19 health crisis and motivated by the minister hearted of this pandemic. To summarize, the minister introduces number of dysphemistic descriptions for reducing the negative influence of Covid-19 disease in the national communication through the use of blunt or hard substitution for the pandemic mane.

4.3. Orthophemisms

The third main linguistic classification found in the speeches’ transcripts is orthophemisms. Allan (2012) mentions that orthophemism and euphemism are both considered as typically polite speaking. However, they differ in that while euphemism distances the speaker from the topic through figurative language, orthophemism is straight bold-on-record to a topic. Given the nature of the orthophemism, it is confirmed from the data that the employment of this linguistic choice by the minister in the speeches appears in certain themes that need to be conveyed in direct and straight language. They are declaring facts and updates about the pandemic, warning the public, and requesting to follow instructions.

4.3.1. Declaring Facts and Updates about the Pandemic

It is well-known that when delivering facts about specific news, it is better to skip the sweet small talks and go to declare the news directly and formally. In this regard, it is found in the data that there are direct, formal and official expressions applied by the minister in his speeches when he wants to convey some facts about the last news regarding the pandemic.

Table 4. Orthophemisms in the Theme of Declaring Facts and Updates about the Pandemic

Example No.	Transliteration (IJAMES)	Translation
9	laqad lāḥaztum ‘izdiyād ‘ḥālāt fiī ‘‘isbū‘yn ‘māḍiyah wa ‘latī tajāwazat ‘akthar min ‘alf ḥālah yawmyyan.	You have noticed the increased in the infected cases in the past two weeks which exceeded one thousand cases daily.
10	‘ann ‘marḥalah ‘muqbilah sawfa takūn ‘akthar ṣu‘ūbah ‘alā ‘mustawā ‘‘ālamī.	The next stage will be harder in the international level.
11	‘annanā biḥājah litikhādh ‘ijrā‘āt taḥmīnā wa taḥmī ‘mujtama‘.	We need to take more procedures to protect us and the society.

12	'ushaddid 'ann 'ashkhās 'akthar khuṭūrah lil' iṣābah 'shadīdah bi'fāyrūs man hum 'akbar min khamsah wa sittīn sanah 'aw ladayhim 'amrād muzminah 'aw ladayhim su'ūbāt tanaffusyyah.	I emphasized that the most danger people to being hardly infected with this virus who are more than fifty-six or who have chronic diseases or respiratory difficulties.
13	min 'aham 'asbāb 'irtifā' 'ttajammu'āt bi'nwā'ihā wa 'tarākhī fī taṭbīq 'ttadābīr 'wiqā' iyyah.	The most important reasons of the increasing in the infected cases are people gatherings and the negligence of following the preventive measures.

The previous table consists of examples of orthophemistic language appears in the minister speeches within this theme. Expression (9) is regarded as an orthophemism in that the minister tells the fact about the increase of infected cases without any attempt to soften the speech by directly declaring that (you have noticed the increased in the infected cases). Using such an expression makes people feel the importance and seriousness of the situation. More examples of orthophemisms are illustrates in (10) and (11). In these sentences, the minister uses a straight-forward language to inform the public of the difficulties that the world will face in the next stage and to notify them to the importance of taking more measures to save them from infected with coronavirus. Declaring such facts need to employ the formal and straight to the point speaking to influence the public responsibility in such delicate crisis.

The data demonstrate that orthophemistic language is also used for updating the people about dealing with Covid-19 disease. Using sentence like (12) exemplifies the use of orthophemism by the minister within this theme. He frankly reports that the most people who will be hardly and riskily affected by Covid-19 disease are those who are more fifty-six or who have chronic diseases or respiratory difficulties. Using this kind of direct language without softening the description helps in increasing the public awareness about the importance of avoiding being infected with coronavirus by such people. The example in (13) expression reveals that the minister states the reasons of the increasing in infected cases by pointing to the people negligence of following the preventive measures. Employing neutral language without making the speech sound sweeter or milder leads to make people feel the consequences of doing such reckless actions. The implementation of orthophemism in such situation by the minister comes in line with Rababah's finding (2014) in that the truth about the subject of fatal and serious diseases needs to be declared in formal and official way.

4.3.2. Warning the Public

The theme of warning is considered as one of the subjects that require using literal or direct but at the same time polite wards to express its significance. The transcripts of the speeches provide evidence that in the situation of give warnings to the public, the minister implements orthophemistic language which can be characterized as direct but polite expressions. The following table represents the constructing of orthophemisms by the minister in the theme of warning the public.

Table 5. Orthophemisms in the Theme of Warning the Public

Example No.	Transliteration (IJAMES)	Translation
14	wa bilā shak fa'inn 'adam 'iltizām sawfa yaj'alunā naḍar litikhādh 'ijrā'āt 'iḥtirāziyyah liḥimāyat 'mujtama'.	in case of lack of commitment will make us compelled to take precautionary measures to protect the society.
15	tahāwun 'ba'ḍ min 'afrād 'mujtama' bi'iltizāmāt wa 'ijrā'āt 'iḥtirāziyyah qad yu'addī 'ilā wuṣūl 'a'dād 'muṣābīn kamā 'akkadat 'ddirāsāt 'ilā mustawā laā yastaṭī'	the negligence of committing with the precautionary measures by some people can lead, as the studies confirmed, to increase the infected cases to the extent that the health

	ʔqitāʔ ʔṣṣihī muwājāhatuh.	system cannot face.
16	ʔann ʔadadan min duwal ʔʔālam tashhad mawjah thāniyyah wa qawiyyah lifāyrūs kūrūnā wa ʔaḥad ʔasbāb dhalik ʔrraʔ isiyyah huwa ʔadam ʔiltizām biʔttabāʔ ud ʔijtimāʔ ʔaw ʔttaʔ āwun bilibs ʔkammāmah.	some countries in the world witnesses a strong second wave of coronavirus and the main reasons behind that is lack of maintaining the social distancing and wearing masks.

For instance, sentence (14) is regarded as warning for people that if they do not follow the instructions of maintaining social distance and avoiding gathering with others, the government will demand more precautionary actions to force the reckless ones to the commitment. The employment of direct, literal, and polite language while warning people aids in making people feel the seriousness of the warning. It is shown in example (15) that the minister tries to warn the Saudi people that the infected cases will reach an extremely high numbers if they did not be careful by following the government instructions. Introducing the sentence with such formal and serious language leads to deliver the importance of the warning so the sense of responsibility will be provoked in people. Similarly, example (16) provides an orthophemistic expressions used by the minister while warning about the second wave of the pandemic if they did not wear the masks and maintain the social distancing. The minister states the reasons as warning through applying straight words in order to be direct about what will happen if the people were not careful and cooperative with the government.

4.3.3. Requesting to Follow Instructions

Another theme in which orthophemism is associated with in the speeches of Saudi Health Minister is requesting the public to help by asking them to follow certain instructions. Milani & Pinho (2012) argue that orthophemisms is considered as linguistic device used to support some contexts like the act of request. Requesting to do some actions usually demands for direct and literal language to make the order clear and understood. The obtained data present that within this theme the minister resorts to the direct language without using any figurative expressions for the purpose of the order to be clearly understood. The next table presents the examples of orthophemistic expressions employed by the minister in this theme.

Table 6. Orthophemisms in the Theme of Requesting to Follow the Instructions

Example No.	Transliteration (IJAMES)	Translation
17	ʔaṭṭub minkum taʔ āwunakum fī ʔarbaʔ ʔumūr: ʔnnuṭṭah ʔūlā tajanub ʔmuṣāfaḥah biʔlkāmil. ʔnnuṭṭah ʔththāniyyah ghasīl wa taʔ qīm ʔyadayin bistimrār liḍamān salāmatikum khuṣūṣan ʔann ʔyadayin hiyah ʔakbar nāqil lilmaraḍ. ʔnnuṭṭah ʔththālithah tajanub ʔttajammu ʔāt biʔ nwāʔ ihā faʔttajammu ʔāt hiyah wasilah linaqil ʔmaraḍ liʔ iddat ʔashkhāṣ. ʔnnuṭṭah ʔakhīrah wa hiyah nuṭṭah kadhalik muhimmah ʔidhā ladayik ʔaʔ rād ʔaw ʔanta qādim min khārij ʔmamlakah fayajib ʔann taʔ zil nafsak fī ghurfatik baʔ ṭdan ʔamman ḥawlak limudat ʔarbaʔ at ʔashar yawm.	I ask you for your cooperation in four points: First, avoid shaking hands completely. Second, clean and sanitize your hands continuously. Third, avoid gathering with people in all kinds because it is a mean to infect people with coronavirus. Fourth, if you have symptoms or if you are coming from another country, you have to quarantine yourself in your room for fourteen days.
18	yataḥattam ʔalaynā jamīʔan ʔann nataʔ āmal bijiddiyah maʔ mustajiddat ʔjāʔ ihah wa ʔann naḥriṣ ʔalā ʔiḥtirāzāt ʔṣṣihīyyah wa biʔ akḥaṣ libs ʔkammāmah ʔttabāʔ ud ʔijtimāʔ ʔ nazāfat ʔyadayin wa ʔadam ʔmuṣāfaḥah.	We all need to take the pandemic developments seriously and do the precautionary health measures especially wearing masks, social distancing, cleaning the hands, and avoid shaking hands.

19	ʾāmul min ʾikhwānī wa ʾakhawātī ʾmuwāḥiḍīn wa ʾmuqīmīn musāʿadatanā fī tanfidh ʾijrāʾāt ʾmaṭlūbah bidīqah kāmilah wa ʾalā ʾakbar qadir min ʾmasʾūliyyah ḥattā laā naṣil ʾilā marḥalah mutatawwirah min ḥayith ʾadad ʾiṣābāt.	I want from that my citizens and residents to help us in following the demanded measures with complete accuracy and high responsibility to avoid reaching developed stage regarding the increase of the infected cases.
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Example (17) provides orthophemistic expressions used when the minister request for the cooperation of Saudi people with specific four things. He states the four requests clearly and literally by applying official language avoiding any rhetorical expressions in order to make the addressees fully understand what he wants them to follow. In example (18), the instructions that the minister requests people to follow is directly stated by literal words. Using such formal language helps more in understanding the importance of wearing masks, social distancing, cleaning the hands, and avoid shaking hands. Likewise, example (19) demonstrates that the minister literally demands the citizens and residents to carefully follow the health measures. Asking the request with official and neutral expressions without any revolving around the words motivates people to follow his demand. In this light, it can be summarized that the use of orthophemisms in Saudi Health Minister speeches during Covid-19 pandemic is mainly applied through using formal and direct expressions due to expressing the seriousness and importance of the current health situation to the Saudi people.

5. CONCLUSION

The conducted paper aims at investigating the way by which Saudi Health Minister delivers Covid-19 news to the Saudi people and at providing a linguistic analysis of how he deals with X-phemistic expressions in his speeches during the crisis. Additionally, this research explores the most frequent euphemistic strategies employed to create euphemisms in the minister speeches during the crisis. Findings from the analysis confirm that the crucial messages about Covid-19 pandemic have delivered essentially by three main linguistic variations of X-phemisms theory by Saudi Health Minister according to the context in which the utterances are introduced. In order to avoid a taboo subject like coronavirus, the minister appeals to euphemisms as an acceptable alternative to circumvent the unpleasant aspect of the pandemic. On the other hand, when it comes to offend the taboo term of Covid-19 disease and express his apprehension of the negative attributes of the crisis, the minister resorts to employ dysphemistic language. As for orthophemisms, it appears that the implementation of this linguistic choice by the minister in some situations is meant to express the seriousness and importance of the current pandemic and to assure that certain messages are conveyed clearly. On this basis, this paper concludes that various use of X-phemisms by the minister is obviously attributed to certain reasons as elaborated above.

Moreover, the analysis provides evidence that the Saudi Health Minister has dealt with the production of X-phemistic expressions thematically. In other words, the employment of each X-phemisms choice is mainly occurred within certain thematic fields. Introducing each theme in the speeches is evidently associated with using certain linguistic class of the X-phemisms. The results show that euphemisms were used by the minister within the themes of presenting unpleasant messages and news, naming the virus, and comforting the public. However, he tends to apply dysphemisms in one specific theme which is describing the health pandemic. In addition, the implementation of orthophemistic expressions by the minister is presented in the themes of declaring facts and updates about the pandemic, warning the public, and requesting to follow instructions. Accordingly, it can be concluded that euphemisms, dysphemisms, and orthophemisms in such formal situation are not difficult to handle. In light of these results, the implementation of X-phemistic language by the minister is evidently depending on the themes in which the expressions are produced to provide a better understanding of the health matter. This conclusion appears consistent with

Rababah (2014) in that the speaker in the medical field selects the suitable X-phemism expression according to the circumstances of the given communication.

Furthermore, our results provide basis for stating that the more frequent euphemism strategies employed by the minister in his speeches during the pandemic are included under the third category of Warren model of euphemistic strategies (1992) which is semantic innovation. They are implication, reversal, particularization, metonymy, and metaphor strategies. It is viewed in the discussion that implication strategy was the most frequent used among the five strategies due to its ability to imply the hard meaning in other alternative expression without being harsh to people. The results reflect that reversal and implication strategies are found to create euphemisms in the theme of presenting unpleasant messages and news. Particularization and metonymy are applied more frequently to euphemize utterances within the theme of naming the virus. However, metaphor is the only used strategy to create euphemisms in the theme of comforting the public. These findings allow us to conclude that euphemistic strategies usage in the Saudi Health Minister speeches is connected to the themes; different strategies are used due to the different themes.

As with any research, the findings of this paper hold some limitations. They cannot be generalized to all Health Ministers speeches during coronavirus pandemic for other countries because the current study just focuses on the use of X-phemisms by single minister, who is the Saudi Health Minister, Tawfig bin Fawzan Al-Rabiah. The data have been collected from the Saudi Ministry of Health official channel on YouTube, so the findings are only limited to this selected dataset. Another limitation is that this study concentrates only on the Saudi cultural context. Consequently, other ministers of other cultures may have different strategies for introducing the X-phemistic expressions or other linguistic devices in their formal and medical communication according to their cultures.

In light of these limitations, it is highly recommended to conduct a comparative study by examining how X-phemisms are produced by another Health Minister in another culture within the same current Covid-19 pandemic in order to gain better understanding of the cultural differences in the use of linguistic varieties in times of health crises. Such future research will permit other language speakers to enhance their awareness of similar and different usage of pandemic X-phemisms in varied cultures. Linguists are further advised to explore paralinguistic features of Saudi Health Minister, such as hand gestures, eye movements, facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice when introducing the X-phemisms regarding Covid-19 issues. This will provide wider view of the linguistic devices used by leaders to persuade, react, control, or behave in pandemic discourse, such as Covid-19.

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Appendices
Appendix 1: Categorization of the Transcribed Data

Euphemisms		
Presenting unpleasant messages	Naming the health crisis	Comforting the public
<p>1. Reversal Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - أن البعض من أفراد المجتمع لم يطبق شعار كلنا مسؤول - ولم يأخذوا التعامل مع خطورة الوباء بالجدية الكافية - كما أنهم لم يلتزموا بما يصدر من تحذيرات تشدد على خطورة المخالطة - عدم توافر معروض كافٍ في الأسواق العالمية من الأجهزة والمستلزمات الطبية - معرفة أماكن الكثير من الحالات ومعالجتها وضمان عدم انتشارها بشكل كبير - للحفاظ على عدم انتشار العدوى بين الناس - وأحد أسباب ذلك الرئيسية هو عدم الالتزام بالتباعد الاجتماعي أو التعاون بلبس الكمامة - وعدم الالتزام بتقليل التجمعات ومنع المصافحة - وعدم التهاون في اتخاذ كافة الاحترازمات التي تكفل بإذن الله مواجهته والتصدي له وعدم توفر الخدمة الصحية <p>2. Implication Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (إذا لديك أعراض) المعنى المتضمن المقصود: (إذا كنت تشك بأنك مصاب) - (بالرغم من التطورات المتسارعة في انتشار هذه الجائحة) المعنى المتضمن المقصود: (الخطر المتزايد لهذه الجائحة) - (كل هذه الإجراءات عملت بهدف تقليل المخالطة) المعنى المتضمن المقصود: (بهدف تفادي إصابة الناس بالمرض) - (ليكون المواطن على علم واطلاع بأخر المستجدات) المعنى المتضمن المقصود: (بأخر الصدمات والمفاجآت التي نعرفها عن الجائحة) - (وكلكم شاهدتهم مثل هذه الممارسات والسلوكيات) المعنى المتضمن المقصود: (هذه الأفعال الخاطئة والمستهترة من البعض) - (سعيًا لتقليل الحركة وتقليل الاختلاط) المعنى المتضمن المقصود: (سعيًا لتفادي إصابة الناس بالمرض) - (وبالرغم من الاحتياجات المالية الكبيرة) المعنى المتضمن المقصود: 	<p>1. Particularization Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - نحن نعيش تحدي كبير - التحدي كما ذكرت كبير - فهذه مهمة وطنية - ومن أول يوم في هذه المرحلة الصعبة - فهي تجربة جديدة علينا جميعًا - هذه الفترة صعبة جدًا - أشير إلى الجوانب المتعلقة بالآثار الاقتصادية - كما لا يفوتني هنا أن أشكر زملائي وزميلاتي أبطال الصحة - أوجه الحديث إلى أبطال الصحة في المستشفيات والمراكز الصحية <p>2. Metonym Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - وسيلة لنقل المرض لعدة أشخاص - من بعد انتشار الفايروس - فأنتم شركاء لنا في مواجهة الفايروس - ختامًا أشكر كل من واجه هذا الفايروس وضحى في سبيل صحة الجميع - فقد أصبح المجتمع والله الحمد أكثر وعيًا بهذا الفايروس - يجب علينا التعامل مع هذا الفايروس بكل جدية 	<p>1. Metaphors Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - تحت ظل قيادة وضعت صحة الإنسان أولًا - (شبه قيادة الوطن بالشجرة التي يستظل الناس بظلها) - وأيضًا الفحص الموسع في جميع مناطق المملكة لم نغم به إلا ثقة في وجود جنود من أمثالكم يجعلون نظامنا الصحي قويًا - (شبه الأطباء والعاملين في المجال الصحي بجنود المعارك الذين يحرسون نظام الدولة الذي هو النظام الصحي في هذا التشبيه) - بالتزامنا معًا سنصل إلى بر الأمان - (شبه الأزمة الصحية التي نواجهها حاليًا بالرحلة البحرية والانتهاؤ منها يعتبر كالوصول للبر الأمان بالنسبة للرحلة) - نحن في المملكة والله الحمد نجني حاليًا ثمار التزامنا - (شبه التزام المواطنين بالشجرة وقلة عدد الإصابات بالثمرة التي نجنيها من هذه الشجرة) - حفاظًا على سلامة وصحة كافة أفراد المجتمع فنحن في مركب واحد والتقصير من البعض يؤثر على الجميع - (شبه المجتمع بالمركب الواحد الذي إذا غرق يغرق كل أفرادها وإذا نجى ينجوا كل أفرادها سويًا)

<p>(الضائقة المالية)</p> <p>- (لرفع جاهزية القطاع الصحي) المعنى المتضمن المقصود: (لنكون على استعداد لأكثر خطر ممكن)</p> <p>- (لاكتشاف أكبر عدد ممكن من الحالات لإنقاذها قبل فوات الأوان) المعنى المتضمن المقصود: (قبل الموت)</p> <p>- (لحين العودة للأوضاع الطبيعية بمشيئة الله في مفهومها الجديد القائم على التباعد الاجتماعي) المعنى المتضمن المقصود: (إن الحياة ستتغير تمامًا)</p> <p>- (والحالات في العناية المركزة بشكل خاص) المعنى المتضمن المقصود: (الحالات الحرجة)</p> <p>- (ويحتتم علينا جميعًا أن نتعامل بجدية مع مستجدات الجائحة)</p> <p>- (ونحن بمشيئة الله قادرين على مواجهة أي صعوبات) المعنى المتضمن المقصود: (أي ظروف صحية عسيرة)</p> <p>- (بعد مضي خمسة أشهر على هذه الجائحة والتي واجهت خلالها الأنظمة الصحية العالمية صعوبات كبيرة) المعنى المتضمن المقصود: (ظروف صحية عسيرة).</p>		
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Dysphemisms

Describing the Virus

- هذه الجائحة (١٩ مرة)
- جائحة كورونا
- هو جائحة بكل ما تعني الكلمة من معنى
- هذه الأزمة
- خطورة الوباء
- انتشار الوباء
- إن رفع منع التجول لا يعني زوال الخطر بل أكد أن الخطر لا زال قائم
- وهو خطر على الجميع
- ولا زلت أقول إن الخطر لا زال قائمًا

Orthophemisms

Declaring facts and updates	Warning the public	Requesting to follow instructions
<p>- لقد لاحظتم ازدياد الحالات في الأسبوعين الماضيين والتي تجاوزت أكثر من ألف حالة يوميًا</p> <p>- وأشدد أن الأشخاص الأكثر خطورة للإصابة الشديدة بالفايروس من هم أكبر من خمسة وستين سنة أو لديهم أمراض مزمنة أو لديهم صعوبات تنفسية</p>	<p>- تهاون البعض من أفراد المجتمع بالالتزامات والإجراءات الاحترازية قد يؤدي إلى وصول أعداد المصابين كما أكدت الدراسات إلى مستوى لا يستطيع القطاع الصحي مواجهته</p> <p>- أن عددًا من دول العالم تشهد موجة</p>	<p>- أطلب منكم تعاونكم في أربعة نقاط النقطة الأولى تجنب المصافحة بالكامل النقطة الثانية غسل وتعقيم اليدين باستمرار لضمان سلامتكم خصوصًا أن اليدين هي أكبر ناقل للمرض النقطة الثالثة تجنب التجمعات بأنواعها فالتج فالتجمعات هي وسيلة لنقل المرض لعدة أشخاص</p>

<p>- إن العودة للأوضاع الطبيعية يتطلب أن نكون جميعًا على قدر عالٍ من المسؤولية والاهتمام واتباع الإرشادات الصحية خصوصًا الفئات الأكثر خطورة ممن هم أكثر من خمسة وستين سنة والمصابين بالأمراض المزمنة والمصابين بأمراض تنفسية وضعف في المناعة</p> <p>- كما يلاحظ الجميع أن عددًا من دول العالم تشهد موجة ثانية وقوية لفيروس كورونا وأحد أسباب ذلك الرئيسية هو عدم الالتزام بالتباعد الاجتماعي أو التعاون بلبس الكمامة</p> <p>- وبناءً على ما نراه في هذه الدول ونحن جزء من هذا العالم والتساهل لدينا في تطبيق الاحترازات فإننا نتوقع لا قدر الله عودة الإصابات للارتفاع من جديد في المملكة خلال الأسابيع القادمة</p> <p>- تلاحظون أن كثيرًا من دول العالم تعيش الموجة الثانية من الجائحة وبشكل أكبر من الأولى</p> <p>- لقد رصدنا وللأسف خلال الأيام الماضية زيادة ملحوظة وارتفاع مستمر في أعداد الإصابة بالفيروس ومن أهم أسباب هذا الارتفاع التجمعات بأنواعها والتراخي في تطبيق التدابير الوقائية وهذا أمر خطير ولا نرغب في حدوث تفشيات مرة أخرى لا قدر الله</p>	<p>ثانية وقوية لفيروس كورونا وأحد أسباب ذلك الرئيسية هو عدم الالتزام بالتباعد الاجتماعي أو التعاون بلبس الكمامة</p> <p>- فالفيروس ينتشر في جميع دول العالم ولا زال متواجد لدينا وفي جميع مناطق المملكة</p> <p>- عدم الالتزام سوف يجعلنا نضطر لاتخاذ إجراءات احترازية لحماية المجتمع</p> <p>- نحن في المملكة لسنا بعيدين عما يحصل في الدول الأخرى وقد يحدث لدينا لا سمح الله مثل ما حدث في كثير من الدول من تفشي للفيروس وانهيار للنظام الصحي.</p>	<p>النقطة الأخيرة وهي نقطة كذلك مهمة إذا لديك أعراض أو أنت قادم من خارج المملكة فيجب أن تعزل نفسك في غرفتك بعيدًا عن حوك لمدة ١٤ يوم لسلامتك وسلامة من تحب</p> <p>- وأمل من إخواني وأخواتي المواطنين والمقيمين مساعدتنا في تنفيذ الإجراءات المطلوبة بدقة كاملة وعلى أكبر قدر من المسؤولية حتى لا نصل إلى مرحلة متطورة جدًا من حيث زيادة عدد الإصابات</p> <p>- يتحتم علينا جميعًا أن نتعامل بجدية مع مستجدات الجائحة وأن نحرص على الاحترازات الصحية وبالأخص لبس الكمامة التباعد الاجتماعي نظافة اليدين وعدم المصافحة</p>
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Appendix 2: IJMES Transliteration System of Arabic Consonants and Vowels

Consonant	Symbol
ء	'
ب	b
ت	t
ث	th
ج	j
ح	h
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	ṣ
ض	ḍ
ط	ṭ
ظ	ẓ
ع	'
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
ه	h
و	w
ي	y
ة	a ²
ال	³

Short vowels	Symbol
ا (فتحة)	a
و (ضممة)	u
ي (كسرة)	i

Long vowels	Symbol
آ	ā
ؤ	ū
ئ	ī

diphthongs	Symbol
أ	au/aw
إ	ai/ay