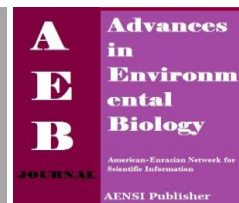




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A Comparative Study and Translation of Linguistic Taboos in Persian, English and Yemeni Language

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ABSTRACT

The author in this paper investigates linguistic taboos in Persian language and comparing them with English and Yemeni in light of politeness theory of Brown and Levinson (1987). It is worthwhile to say that studying Nada Yahya Qanbars' article (2010) about sociolinguistic study of linguistic taboos in Yemeni society by researcher was the major spark to compare linguistic taboo words between Yemeni, English and Persian language. So the theoretical framework of mentioned article is used to classification taboo words in Persian language. Then by analysis of extracted data and comparing them with Yemeni, many common belief were found between two language in view of type of taboos (due to close culture and religion) and using different strategies to avoid them. An attempt is also made to describe different types of taboos in Persian and strategies to avoid them such as euphemism, synonym, Generalization, complicate, reduction, figure of speech, connotative meaning, and censoring under different motivation of using them as cultural, social, ethical, political, and psychological issues. In addition to subjects mentioned, the role of cultural invasion, religious innovation and heresy on taboo words is inspected by evidential realities in the society.

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INTRODUCTION

According to definition in dictionary taboo is "a ban or inhibition resulting from social custom or emotional aversion or a prohibition, especially in Polynesia and other South Pacific Island, excluding something from use, approach, or mention because of its Sacred and individual nature". In view of sociologists there are four types of norms: folkways, mores, laws and taboos. Folkway refers to customs or conventions that society has admitted but it is not according to moral issues. Mores relates to morality. Breaking mores bother people of a culture. Laws are rules established by states. These laws partly stated to avoid taboo behavior or words. It is obvious that some of these rules are against behavior or words that are not really offensive for most of people but to state and political conditions. Taboos refer to some words and behaviors that are forbidden. "A linguistic taboo is any words or phrase or a topic that if mentioned in public causes embarrassment and feeling of shame or provokes a sense of shock, and it is offending to the hearer's sensibilities or his beliefs". Besides punishments, fines, and even imprisonment may be considered as social control due to use taboo words. These norms specially taboos should be internalized from childhood by families and then socialized by people and states. Cultural, social, aesthetic, moral, psychological and political motivation cause to use strategies to avoid taboo words in society [1]. Certainly translation of taboo words by translator such as what is done in this paper must be according to culture of target since some of taboo words in one language may not be taboo in another language and so do strategies to avoid.

Theoretical framework:

Politeness is the expression of speaker's intention to mitigate face threats carried by certain face threatening acts to ward another. [5] Another definition is "a battery of social skills whose goal is to ensure everyone feels affirmed in a social interaction". Being polite therefore consists of attempting to save face for another (encyclopaedia). "The politeness theory "by Brown and Levinson (1978) is as universal nature in all languages and cultures. Tune of every language in daily speech relationship deals with speech act such as request, complaint, criticism, compliment, admiration and promise that each of them can be threatening for "face" both

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for speaker and hearer. Then preserving of "face" is main goal in politeness "discourse. In another word, applying" politeness" manner in discourse either in speech or in writing will mitigate threatening of face about hearer and speaker and makes speech acceptable and gentle for both sides of conversation [5]. In view of researchers like leech [4] politeness is as strategy that speakers of one language apply to get to their goal such as making a peaceful and continuance relationship with their addressers. The "face" initially used by Ervin Goffman [3] in sociolinguistics and discourse analysis. "face" in his view meant magnanimity of taste or temper that everybody images and grants for himself or herself in society. In another words, members of society have images from themselves which make their "face". "Face" is a humanistic characteristic which become manifested as an internal need in all human being. According to Brown and Levinson [2] individuals need to "face" in two ways: first each person likes to have independence in their private affairs without other's interference. this is kind of negative face like when one promise to do something, his or her freedom will be limited. Second everyone interested in being admired by other people. It is named positive" face". For instance apologizing or asking pardon due to do wrong thing.

Comparing Linguistic taboos between Yemeni and Persian:

In this part by using the division of different classification of taboo words made by Nada Qanbar, researcher is going to enlighten different strategies used to translate and present them in table.

A. Context-specific Taboo Words:

A. Non-taboo words:

this category consists of some words which are neutral but they are considered taboo if one uses as swear like pig in English/khenzir in Yemeni/ (khuk in Persian), dog/kalb in Yemeni/(sag in Persian), Jews/yahoodi in Yemeni/ (yahudi and johud in Persian). In English there is animal taboo such as pig and ass. Due to similar religious reasons between Yemeni and Persian society, the first two words are symbol of uncleanness and impurity and third one as treachery and meanness

b. Words related to the hearer's physical or social defects:

i. Social Defect:

Words related to social defects like divorced woman (motalagheh-talaghgerfeh in Persian) euphemized by (jodashodeh and motarekeh) which has less negative load in Persian culture. Also using (motarekeh) is synonym of former word and more formal and politeness. /Separation/ in English is said without using strategy to avoid but this word is aversive.

ii. Physical Defect:

A'ama as Yemeni taboo word (blind man) or (kur in Persian) translated from (basir (sighted) euphemized by antonym) to (nabina in Persian euphemized by synonym) and also translated to (roshandel in Persian euphemized by defamiliarization strategy). A'awar as Yemeni taboo word (one-eye person) or (yecheshi in Persian) translated from (kareem alain (the owner of honourable eye) euphemized by antonym) to (naghse ozve in Persian euphemized by generalization), or translated to (isargar or malule jangi (if defect caused by fighting at front) euphemized by standard Persian term). It is obvious that translator had to use different strategy to translate from Yemeni to Persian. Speaker of Yemeni euphemized the taboo words by antonym while Persian applied generalization, metaphor and standard terms related to Persian culture.

B. General Taboo Words:

The unmentionable referring to absolutely forbidden words which euphemized by polite speech. This part consists of:

i. Private organs and their function:

Word like (Xara Yemeni taboo word (dirt in English)) or (Nejasat taboo word in Persian) translated from (Wasax euphemized by jargon (faeces in English)) to (Madfu or Ghaet (loan term) in Persian). Another Yemeni taboo word like Yebul (piss in English) or (shash taboo word in Persian) translated from Yemeni word (Yereqalma'a euphemized by construction (to spill water) and (urinate in English) to (edrar euphemized by connotative meaning bul (loan) and pishab (informal) in Persian). Certainly strategies to change taboo words to non taboo words were different; one by using jargon word and construction but another by using loan and connotative meaning. Another taboo word which means (emptying the bowls) or (Karkardane shekam) in Persian) translated from Yemeni non-taboo word Yatbraz (euphemized by jargon) or (defecate as medical expression in English) to ((Ejabate mezaj euphemized by metaphor strategy and complicate in Persian).

ii. National, historical or present political figures:

Political figure like president (euphemized by cordial Yemeni words as Alafandam(the officer),Alakh (the brother),Amana(our uncle), and Alragel (the man)). (Alafandam) translated to Persian literally as (Afsar), but this word never used for the president in Persian culture and so does Amana. But Hami (protector) euphemized by generalization is used for Amana. Baradar or rais jomhure mahboob euphemized to cordinal manner in Persian used for Alakh (the brother). Alragel (the man) translated to (dolatmard) euphemized in Persian).

iii. The first name of female if mentioned in public or before a stranger:

(Umfulan(the mother of male son)euphemism for first name of female as Yemeni taboo word) translated to (Madare fulan, Ayal, zaiefeh (metaphor) in Persian). Also referring to first name of female (as taboo word in Yemeni culture) euphemized by metaphor Albeit(the house)and translated to (Manzel (generalization) or Ahlobeit (loan) in Persian). (Algama'a (the group) in Yemeni euphemized by generalization), translated to (ahleoayal(loan) , khamom bacheha, in Persian).

iv. Words against religious figures:

Mentioning holy names solely like Allah is forbidden. (Subhanahu wa taala (all glory to him) is polite speech and addition in Yemeni) translated to ((Khodavande sobhan, Khodaye azza vajal and Khodaye mehraban) polite speech in Persian). Mohammad(name of prophet) followed by (Sala allah elieh wa sallam (peace be upon him) polite speech by circumlocution in Yemeni) translated to (Hazrate Mohammad sal allah, khatamolambia (metaphor), and Peighambare akram) official and polite speech in Persian.

v. Referring to things you give to poor or to friend as a gift:

Naming the things or to say the price of something you are going to give to poor is as taboo words in Yemeni like Sadagheh as taboo word in Persian which translated from Yemeni words Gebtu haga or Gebtu sadaka(i gave something alms)euphemized by standard Arabic term) to (khoda ghabul koneh or kheirat euphemized by implication and synonym in Persian).Naming gift or to say the price to friend is as taboo in Yemeni culture .Gabarna or Salamnato (share his or her happiness and we/I greeted her/him)euphemized by generalization are used to avoid naming things in Yemeni. Cheshm roshani , Naghabel , Yek pare kah ,Barge sabzi tohfeye darvish or khalati euphemized by metaphoric expression and understatement are used in Persian.

b. Mentionable Taboo Words:

This part consists taboo words which are mentionable if they are accompanied with conventional phrases.These phrases are as minimizers. This part divided to:

i. Unclean objects or places:

The minimizers directly address the hearers and aim at saving their face from being injured by unclean. The words themselves become contaminated as they are associated with the dirty things they stand for(cf.Hongxu et al 1990:73)cited and referred by Nada Qanbar in MJAL 3:2 2011.Referring to sewages,bathroom and footwear is taboo in Yemeni. So they are euphemized by minimizer such as (Azakum allah or Azqadrakum (may God dignify you).Among three cases referred,just sewages or(Fazelab,in Persian)are brought with minimizer).So for dastshoie (toilet). Minimizers such as(Golab be rut ,Khalaphe adabeh,badharfieh).It should be said that due to decrease the effect of referring to unclean object or places, minimizers are topicalized in Persian speech).

ii. Words referring metaphysical things (supernatural creatures)or diseases and accident:

In view of ((cf.Apte 2001)cited by Qanbar,N) some words seem to have magical power when they are uttered by speaker.Words which refer to diseases, accident and so on. To mitigate the effect of these words, the speaker should use some minimizers.For instance (Leprosy and cancer,...as taboo in Yemeni) or (Jozam and saratan as aversive words in Persian)translated from(Wa eleyathu be allah(God'sprotection is sought), horem waladi (may God protect my child), Afana Allah (may God cure us all), Moghawareen be Allah (we are in God's affinity) euphemized by minimizers in Yemeni speech) to(Khoda nasib nakoneh , nasib nasheh, Door az jan,Khoda hameye marizha ra shafa bedeh, Panah mibarim be khoda,ghoran mohafezat koneh that euphemized by minimizers and circumlocution in Persian). Words referring to death,murdur and cancer are considered as aversive things in English. (Naming metaphysical things like jinnies, ghosts and afreets in Yemeni) or (Jen,Arvah and efrin in Persian translated) euphemized by (Aauthu be Allah men ash-shaitan(I seek protection of God from devil)in Yemeni) to (az ma behtarane,Besme Allah and Panah bar khoda) minimizers in Persian). Referring to possibility of death and accident must be accompanied by one of these phrases like (Allah laqaal (God forbid), La samah allah (may God not allow that), Baad omr taweel (after a long time) and Baad al-shahr(may evil be far away from us) as minimiser in Yemeni which can be equal to (Khoda nakhad, Khoda ruze bad nakhad, Zabunam lal, Baade sad sal, Dur az gushetan) as minimizers in Persian speech.

iii. Expression of admiration:

Expression of admiration is accompanied by minimizers which causes protection from bad or evil eyes. In other words the speaker can refer to admirable things with minimizer otherwise they may be ruined or wasted. For instance Masha Allah (God's will is to be done) and Allahma salli ala Mohammad (o God prayers on mohammad) as minimizers in Yemeni speech can be equal with (Hezar masha Allah, Fallaho khairan hafezan (loan), tabaraka Allah (loan), Bezanam be takhteh (metaphor) as minimizers in Persian speech. It is worthwhile to say that repetition of some sounds in Persian due to being surprised and astonished by seeing beauty things or person enjoyed power and skill is not appropriate and common. Sounds like Oooo or Aaaa. Therefore utterance the minimizers mentioned above are necessary and present polite manner.

Comparing Yemeni and Persian words related to Death and its ceremonies:

It is considerable that words related to death and its ceremonies in Yemeni are not as taboo words but about highly educated one. This category causes distinction between Yemeni and Persian.

Maat (died) in Yemeni speech is not taboo word and used for all but for important one. So its synonym as euphemism is uttered such as Towafa (passed away). But Mord in Persian is taboo in formal situation for all people to be uttered. Then it is replaced by (Dar gozasht, Vafat yaft, Dare fani ra veda goft, Be didare Hagh shetaft and Daavate Hagh ra labbaik goft) euphemized respectively by metaphor, expression of termination instead of referring directly in order to mitigate negative load and circumlocution in Persian speech). Gutha (corps) is non taboo word in Yemeni speech equals to (Jenazeh, naash and Jasad as taboo words in Persian in formal situation for all the people) which euphemized by (Peikar, Badan and badane motahar as non taboo words by using synonym in Persian speech. Qabr (grave) as non taboo word in Yemeni translated to (Ghabr as quazi taboo word in Persian) and (Aramgah, Maghbareh, Khaneyeh abadi and khak as non taboo words and phrases euphemized by connotative meaning, metaphor and generalization in Persian).

Different Motivations using Euphemism:

i. Ethical Motivation:

Moral issues causes to avoid using taboo words and make us to refer them in different ways. Considering moral virtues, force one not to be frank and straightforward to refer things such as unclean objects, sex or private organs. Also it never allows to use all words and terms to present one's intention and make one to euphemize unmentionable words by metaphor, synonym, antonym, jargon, censoring and even by borrowing words from another culture to mitigate or remove negative effect on hearer and speaker's face. [1].

ii. Psychological Motivation:

Internal and psychological issues like fear, tranquility, humiliation, honoring, and makes one to choose words and phrases among mass of terms and words [1].

iii. Cultural Motivation:

Depending on different culture or cultural identity, some words are unmentionable and needs to be euphemized and accompanied conventional words. For instance in Yemeni's culture, due to considering women as (aar), their name also are (aar) so, referring to their first name is forbidden. On contrary, in Persian culture, not mentioning to female's first name is due to men's prejudice to women and also having respectful manner for them in public or before stranger. So according to mentioned reason, addressing women's first name by their husbands is common but in public. Evidently cultural identities and their effects on society changed by passing time. Another example in Islamic culture can clarify the subject; when Holy prophet Mohammad sal Allah elieh va aleh, after establishment of Islam, changed the word Abdi (slave) or as taboo word to fatay cited in [1] (euphemized by metaphoric expression).

iv. Political Motivation:

In all the time, to state political situation, using euphemism, censoring and ... has been inevitable. After revolution in Egypt by leadership of Abdonnaser, many titles like Bek and Basha were abolished and replaced by the name of leader (Jamal and Abdonnaser) that admitted by people. (Alsaaran, 1958:49) cited in [1].

v. Social Motivation:

Language of every nation is reflection of their experiences from the world. So in confrontation of unpleasant events, they can create different words by purification and decrease their unpleasant effect on human. For instance Maat (died) replaced by Entaghala Rahmate Rabbehi (Aljorjani, A. 1985:67) cited in [1] (to go the way of all flesh).

Cultural invasion and religious heresy:

Cultural invasion has been nation's concern for ages .It is said to every kind of imposing and obtruding from one culture against another culture so as to gradual substitute, deviate or ruin ideology ,thought and moral norms of aimed culture. It is obvious that cultural interaction is positive and different from cultural invasion that has perilous nature .It can reveal itself to many ways like imported products ,media, satellite program , internet and publicity by presenting words and behavior which may be as taboo for aimed culture. Many words and sentences written on imported dresses easily turn tabooed words to non taboo which used gradually by people specially teenagers. On the other hand many program performed by media publicize new things about religion entitled modernity, priority and time exigencies. They make heresy and innovation to religious precepts and add, remove or change thoroughly religious speech and values .Gradually, things used to be really taboo words and forbidden, become non taboo words and are mentioned without any limitation by members of society.

Conclusion:

In this paper by comparing linguistic taboo words in two nations as Yemeni and Persian ,researcher found many similarities between two cultures. Also we observed similar strategies in translation of words from Yemeni to Persian .Some words translated to phrase and some phrases were shortened to words in translation. It is interesting to say that death and its words related to which are taboo in Persian society,are considered non taboo in Yemeni society. As a whole ,there is close relationship between two cultures and less difference due to religious similarities. Also investigation shows the negative role of heresy and cultural invasion on creating taboo words or turning taboo words to non taboo words.

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*Data:***Table 1:** Comparative Analysis of Taboo Words in Yemeni English and Persian.

Taboo words model	Yemeni(taboo words)	Yemeni(strategy)	English	Persian(taboo words)	Persian(strategy to avoid and in translation)
Context specific neutral but they are taboo if are considered as swear or religious reason	/Khenzir/Pig (as swear) /Khenzir Pig as impurity and uncleanness(r eligious reason) /kalb/Dog (as swear) / kalb /Dog as impurity and uncleanness(r eligious reason) Jew(religious reason) Treachery and meanness	Avoid using	Pig and ass(taboo as swear) Dog(taboo as swear)	khook(as swear) khook as impurity and uncleanness(r eligious reason) sag(as swear) sag as impurity and uncleanness(r eligious reason) johud(swear) yahoodi(religious reason) Treachery and meanness	Avoid using
Context-specific Words related to physical or social defects	A'ama (Blind man)	Basir (Sighted) euphemized through its antonym		Koor	1.Nabina(euphemized by synonym) 2.Roshandel(euphemised by defamiliarization) 1.Naghse ozv dashtan(generalization) 2.Maalule jangi

	A'awar(one-eyed person)	Kareem alain(The owner of honourable eye)		Yecheshi	3.Isargar(standard Persian term)
	/marizan/Sick person	Assalim(The healthy) euphemised by antonym	separation	- Dardemand	1.Jodashodeh(less negative load) 2.Motarekeh(synonym)
	divorced woman			1.Talagh gerefteh 2.motalagheh	
Taboo words model	Yemeni(taboo words)	Yemeni(strategy)	English	Persian(taboo words)	Persian(strategy to avoid and in translation)
General (Unmentionable and forbidden)	Emptying the bowels	yatbraz (Strategy:jargon)	Defecate(medical expression)	Karkardane shekam	Ejabate mezaj(metaphor & complicate)
I. Private organs and their functions	Xara (dirt)	wasax (Strategy:jargon)	faeces	Nejasat	1.Madfoo 2.Ghaet:loan
	Yebul(piss)	Yereqalma'a(construction)	urin	shash	1.Edrar(connotative meaning) 2.pishab(informal) 3.bul(loan)
II. political, historical and national figures	President	1.Alafandam(The officer) 2.Alakh(The brother) 3.Amana(Our uncle) 4.Alragel(The man) Euphemism(polite & cordial manner)	president		1.Baradar 2. reis jomhoore mahboob (euphemised term) 3.hami(generalization) Dolatmard
III. Name of one's female members of the family	Calling to First name or addressing to name of female in family before stranger	1.Um fulan(The mother of a male son) 2.Albeit (The house) 3.Algama'a (The group) 4.Kareematkum (Your honoured daughter)	First name	Name zan(referring first name in public)	1.Madare fulan, ayal zaiefeh(metaphor) 2.Manzel(generalization) ahlooyal, ahlobeit(loan) Ahle manzel 3.Khanom bacheha
IV. words against religious figures	Allah(holy words mentioned solely)	Subhanahu wa Taala (All glory to him)	God Gosh	Khoda	1.kheirat(synonym) 1.Khoda ghabool koneh,
	Mohammad(name of prophet mentioned)	Sala allah elieh wa sallam (Peace be upon him)	Just the name	Mohammad	1.Cheshm roshani 2.Barge sabzist tohfeyeh darvish 3.Naghabel(understatement) 4.Yek pare kah (understatement) 5.Khalati (metaphoric expression)
V.referring to		1.Gebtu haga or gebtu sadaka(I gave something alms)	Aid Present gift	Sadaghe	1.Golab berutoon 2.Bad harfieh

<p>things you give to poor or to a friend</p> <p>General (mentionable with minimizers)</p> <p>Unclean objects or places</p>	<p>solely)</p> <p>Naming the things or to say the price to poor</p> <p>Naming gift or to say the price to friend</p>	<p>2.Gabarna (Share his/her happiness)</p> <p>3.Salamnato aliha (We/I greeted her/him)</p> <p>1.Azakum allah</p> <p>2.Azqadrakum (May God dignify you)</p> <p>3.Hashakum(may God exclude you from this dirt)</p> <p>4.Akramakum allah(may God glory you)</p>	<p>sewages</p>	<p>Naming gift</p>	<p>3.Khalafe adab (topicalized Minimizer)</p> <p>Minimizer:</p> <p>1.Khoda nasib nakoneh or nasib nasheh</p> <p>2.Door az jan</p> <p>3.Khoda hameye marizha ra shafa bedeh</p> <p>4.Panah mibarim be khoda</p> <p>5.ghoran mohafezatet kone</p>
<p>II.words referring metaphysical things(supernatural creatures) or diseases and accident</p>	<p>Sewages</p> <p>a.Diseases Leprosy,cancer,.....</p>	<p>Minimizer: Wa eleyathu be allah (God's protection is sought)</p> <p>Hurem waladi(may God protect my child)</p> <p>Afana allah(May God cure us all)</p> <p>Muggawareen be allah (We are in God's affinity)</p> <p>Yaseen aleina(a chapter in Holy Quran is on us)</p> <p>Aauthu be allah men ash-shaitan(I seek the protection of God from the devil)</p>	<p>Diseases Leprosy,cancer(aversive)</p> <p>Jinnies,ghosts,afreets</p>	<p>fazelab toalet dastshoie</p> <p>Jozam saratan</p> <p>Jen Arvah</p>	<p>Minimizer:</p> <p>1.Besme Alla(sacred word)</p> <p>2.Panah bar khoda</p> <p>3.Az ma behtarun(connotative meaning)</p> <p>Minimizer:</p> <p>1.Khoda nakhad</p> <p>2.Khoda rooze bad nakhad</p> <p>3.Zaboonam lal</p> <p>4.Baade sad sal</p> <p>5.Door az gooshetan</p>
	<p>b.Metaphysical Jinnies,ghosts,afreets</p> <p>c.Possibility of the death and accident</p>	<p>Minimizer:</p> <p>1.Allah la qaal(God forbid)</p> <p>2.La samah allah(May God not allow that)</p> <p>3.Baad omr taweel(After a long time)</p> <p>4.Baad al-shar(May evil be far away from us)</p> <p>1.Masha allah(God's will is to be done)</p> <p>2.Allahma salli</p>	<p>Death,murdur(aversive)</p> <p>Referring to things directly without minimizer</p>	<p>1. Aaaa</p> <p>2.Oooo</p>	<p>1.Hezar masha allah,cheshme bad dur</p> <p>2. Falaho khairan hafezan va howa arhamor rahemin(loan)</p> <p>3. Tabarak Allah(loan) 4.Bezanam be takhteh(Metaphoric expression) (Minimizer)</p>

III.Expression of admiration	Not using minimizer after seeing admirable things	ala Mohammad(O God 's prayers on Mohammad)			
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	Yemeni Non- taboo words	Yemeni (strategies)	English	Persian (taboo word)	Persian(strategies to avoid)
Comparing Yemeni and Persian words related to Death and its ceremonies	Maat (died) :not tabooed. used for All Gutha Qabr	Towafa(passed away) (used just for highly educated person and euphemized by synonym) — —	Die(aversive) Corps grave	1.Mord 1.Jenazeh 2.Naash 3.Jasad Ghabr(quasi-taboo)	1.Dar gozasht(metaphoric expression of termination) 2.Vafat yaft 3.Dare fani ra veda goft 4.Be didare hagh shetaft 5.Daavate hagh ra labbaik goft (euphemism) 1.Peikar(synonym) 2.Badane motahar 1.Aramgah(connotative meaning) 2.Khak(generalization) 3.Maghbareh 4.Khaneye abadi(metaphor)