

## THE ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN SAHEEH INTERNATIONAL TRANSLATION OF SOME VERSES OF AL – QUR’AN DEALING SEX RELATION

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### ABSTRACT

Talking about sex is a taboo because there are understanding that sex is dirty and porn. In case, what if sex is spoken by the Scriptures? Al-Qur'an and Bible discuss it. This research focuses on the verses of Al-Qur'an. There are some surahs of Al Qur'an explain about sexual relations : Al – A'raf verse 189, Al – Baqarah 187, 222,223,236,237, Mujadallah 3, 4, Ali Imran 47, An Nisa 21, 23, and Maryam 20. These verses have interesting meanings to study with semantics approach because language in Al-Qur'an has literal and figurative meanings. Literal language, words are employed to convey meaning as defined, while figurative language is words are employed to provide room for interpretation. In the Al Quran, there are some verses that need more explanation or display in figure context; one example in verses that explain about sex relation. Therefore, the problem of this research is what are the figurative languages used in some verses of Al Qur'an dealing sex relation which translate by Saheeh International and what does the utilized figurative language mean? This study is aimed to analyze figurative language described in some verses of Al-Qur'an dealing marital sex which translate by Saheeh International and to know what is the meaning of figurative language used. The benefit of study is giving information to get knowledge about figurative language. This research employed a qualitative approach using document analytical methods. The data collected from Saheeh International translation. In analyzing the data used McArthur theory. Then the result there are 3 kinds different of figurative language found; Metonymy is replacing word with another word that has a meaning close to the original word, metaphor is describing things in a way that the reader can visualize, euphemism is replacing a word or phrase with another in order to make the sentence sound more polite and soft.

Keyword: Figurative Language, Al Qur'an Translation, Semantics

### ABSTRAK

Membicarakan seks adalah hal yang dianggap tabu karena pemahaman sex adalah kotor dan porno. Bagaimana jika kitab suci berbicara tentang seks? Al-Qur'an dan Alkitab telah membahasnya. Penelitian ini fokus pada ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an. Ada beberapa surat dari Al Qur'an yang menjelaskan tentang hubungan seksual, diantaranya: Al – A'raf verse 189, Al – Baqarah 187, 222,223,236,237, Mujadallah 3, 4, Ali Imran 47, An Nisa 21, 23, and Maryam 20. Ayat-ayat ini memiliki makna yang menarik untuk dikaji dengan pendekatan semantik karena bahasa dalam Al-Qur'an memiliki makna harfiah dan kiasan. Bahasa harfiah adalah kata-kata yang digunakan untuk mengungkapkan makna sebagaimana didefinisikan, sedangkan bahasa kiasan adalah kata-kata yang digunakan yang menyediakan ruang penafsiran. Dalam Al Quran, ada beberapa ayat yang membutuhkan penjelasan atau tampilan dalam konteks gambar; Contohnya dalam ayat-ayat yang menjelaskan tentang hubungan seks. Oleh karena itu, rumusan masalah pada penelitian ini adalah bahasa kiasan apa yang digunakan dalam beberapa ayat Al Qur'an berhubungan seks yang diterjemahkan oleh Saheeh International dan apa arti bahasa kiasan tersebut. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan dan menginterpretasi data kitab suci yang membahas hubungan seksual dalam pernikahan pada terjemahan Saheeh International. Manfaat penelitian ini adalah memberi pemahaman tentang teori figurative language. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode qualitative dengan dokumen analitis. Data penelitian diperoleh dari terjemahan Saheeh Internasional. Analisa data menggunakan teori McArthur. Hasil dari penelitian adalah ditemukan tiga jenis figurative language yaitu metonimi yang merubah kata dengan kata lain yang maknanya dekat, metafora yang menggambarkan sesuatu agar pembaca dapat memvisualisasikan, dan eufimisme yang mengganti kata dengan kata lain agar membuat maknanya menjadi sopan dan lembut.

Kata Kunci: Figurative language, Al-Qur'an Terjemahan, Semantik.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Al-Qur'an was revealed for all mankind until the Day of Judgment and it's not limited by time, place, gender, or class. As stated in Surah Al-Qalam verse 52 in The Qur'an English Meanings, Saheeh International (1997) that "But it is not except a reminder to the worlds".

Muslims believe that God's message is found in the Al-Qur'an. which can be the best guideline for their lives. Al Qur'an has 30 chapters, 114 surahs, and 6,236 verses. Al Qur'an came in Arabic, about 80% of Muslims does not speak Arabic as their mother tongue and cannot understand the meaning of their scripture without a translation (Ahmed, 2014). Therefore, Al-Qur'an has translated in 114 languages (Rana in africa.upenn.edu). One of language is English. Saheeh International is one of the institutions that translate Al Qur'an from Arabic to English. It is the most popular translator, the translation uses modern English.

The scope of the Qur'an is very broad, include discussing science as much as 750 verses, covering various branches of science, such as natural events QS. Al-Anbiya': 30, The branch of astronomy is contained in QS. Yasin: 38-40, Branch of geography QS al-Hijr: 22, botany QS. Al-Anam: 99, QS, chemistry QS. A-Nahl: 66 and many more (Syukur, 2007) In addition, the Qur'an contains complete meanings to regulate everything related to humans such as faith, worship, jihad, property, buying and selling, law, (Setiawan, 2018), and it is no exception for husband and wife. The relationship between husband and wife, especially sex relation.

Even so, talking about sex is a taboo, many people are reluctant to talk and discuss about it. This is caused by various factors. Those are the understanding that sex is dirty, porn, and only connotes intercourse between men and women. As stated by (Mujtabah 2010) that there is an assumption from some people that sex is taboo and should not be discussed. Moreover, it is related to religion. It is feared that it will damage the sanctity of religious values. Additionally, sex is an intimate and personal thing which is relate with human biological needs.

What if sex is spoken by the Scriptures? Al-Qur'an and Bible discuss it, this research focuses on the verses of Al-Qur'an. There are some surahs of Al Qur'an explain about sexual relations : Al – A'raf verse 189, Al – Baqarah 187, 222,223,236,237, Mujadallah 3, 4, Ali Imran 47, An Nisa 21, 23, and Maryam 20.

These verses have interesting meanings to study with semantics approach. Semantics is defined as the study of meaning in language (Hurford and Heasley 1983 in Acheoah, et., al. 2018). In semantics, there is sub material that needs to be studied, it is figurative language.

Figurative language is a means of self-expression that does not make use of a word's literal or realistic meaning. (Higgins, 2023). Figurative language serves to contrast or analogize one thing with another in order to make the depiction more understandable, engaging, and real-world (An-Nasa'i, 2020).. Besides, figurative language is used a language to build images to deepen public understanding and help give power to words

using various emotional, visual, and sensory connections (indeed.com). In addition, according to Defisyani, et.al. (2018) Figurative language refers to the use of words that require the reader to interpret correctly, not only by seeing what the words refer to or what it is said on the text, but also by interpreting it from the context. In consequence, it can create a misinterpretation. It is necessary to analyse more about figurative language especially in Al-Qur'an.

In Al-Quran there are some verses that need more explanation or display in figure context; one of example in verses that explain about the rules in marriage, especially sex relation. Along with, some researchers have been researched figurative language that contained in Quran English translation. They are Muhammad Imam An-Nisa'i, with title; "An Analysis of Figurative Language in the English Translation of Al-Quran by M.A.S Abdel Haleem". In his research, he limits the research only in Surah Al-Waqiah and Surah Ar-Rahman. He analyzes and find out the types of figurative language that contained in both surah. Then he find out which dominant of figurative language between both surah. Then Kusuma Dian, with the title "The Analysis of Figurative Language in Amir Ali's English Translation of Al- Qur'an Surah Al Kahf about the Story of Prophet Musa and Al-Khidr" In her research there are seven kinds of figurative language in English translation of surah Al-Kahf. The most dominant of figurative language is metonymy consist of 4 sentences. It is the highest number in percentage of 28.6%.

While the different of this research with them is describing the figurative language contained in some verses of Al-Qur'an dealing sexual relation which translate by Saheeh International and what are the meaning of the figurative language used in some verses of Al Qur'an dealing sex relation which translate by Saheeh International. The study aims to explain scriptural data and interpretations of the Qur'an as holy book on the subject of marital sex because it is considered as dirty and taboo thing. In addition, this research contributes to academics to be used as material for consideration in carrying out similar research on other scriptures or for further development, as well as being a reference for similar research.

There are many theories of figurative language, from Leech, Periene, Keraf, and McArthur. This research used Mc.Arthur theory, McArthur in Aprisnindianingrum, et al.2015, categorizes the types of figurative language into thirteen types; antithesis, euphemism, hyperbole, idioms, irony, metaphor, metonymy, paradox, personification, pleonasm, simile, sarcasm and synecdoche.

1. Antithesis

Antithesis is a figurative language where incommensurably opposed or sharply opposed ideas are juxtaposed and maintained in tension. For example in proverb "Art is long, and Time is fleeting." (Britanica).

2. Euphemism

Euphemism is the use of a mild, comforting or evasive expression that takes place of one that is taboo, negative, offensive, or too direct (Mc.Arthur 1996 in Krisnawati 2017). The example of euphemism: If we say "the sun blossomed out the horizon," we really mean "the sun rose."

3. Hyperbole  
"Hyperbole is a figure of speech that uses an exaggerated or extravagant statement to create a strong emotional response" (Trisnantasari 2016). For examples: "When she was in Paris, she spent ton of money".
4. Idioms  
An idiom is an expression that has a unique meaning that cannot be deduced from the meanings of its individual words. (Merriam Webster) for example: "To eat like a horse means to eat a lot"
5. Irony is when a reference attempts to convey a message that goes beyond or contradicts the meaning of the words that make up the reference. (Keraf 2010). For example: your voice is so good like a crow.
6. Metaphor  
"A metaphor is a figure of speech that omits a comparative (like, as, than) and suggests that one item is similar to another: "All the word's stage." Since it implies one thing while actually meaning another, this is a metaphor." ( Rahman 2018). For examples: Rani is a star in her class.
7. Metonymy  
Metonymy is a rhetorical technique that alludes to nearby things to explain something while obliquely characterizing the subject of the reference, like when describing someone by their apparel.. Metonymic is an adjective (Nordquist, 2018). For example: "The pen is mightier than sword"
8. Paradox  
Paradox is generally used to convey amazement or disbelief at something odd or surprising in common language (According to the Encyclopedia of Rhetoric, Sloane 2001). For example: "Some of the biggest failures I ever had were successes." (Pearl Bailey in Nordquist 2020)
9. Personification  
Personification is a type of language in which an animal or an abstract concept (such as reality or nature) is humanized.. (Meilani, 2009). For example: The clock sings to wake me up every morning.
10. Pleonasm  
Keraf (in Tarigan, 2013 in Mulyadi 2021) argues that pleonasm is a use of the word excessive that is actually unnecessary. If the excess word is removed, the meaning will remain intact. This language style has the peculiarity of adding indications, the use of words synonym, as well as forms on the elements that contain the same information as those added. If reviewed in terms of meaning, does not change meaning to become more clear or detailed. Change is just an increase in intensity. This is because of the repetition or the addition of words (Mulyadi 2021) the example: I heard it with my own ears (Literaryterms.net)
11. Simile  
A simile is a type of figurative language that compares two unrelated concepts using the conjunctions as, like, look, and other like words. (Iazar 2003:5). The example is : Rani is sweet like candy

12. Satire

Satire is a language technique that uses irony, sarcasm, and parody to suggest something or someone (Simpson, 2003). For example: Hi, your eyes are made of sludge, right? You can't see that bag is big!

13. Synecdoche

Synecdoche is a kind of figurative language which a portion of anything is used to symbolize the entire thing (Norquist, 2019). For example: ABC for alphabet.

## **METHOD**

This research used qualitative approach with document studies. Document studies are a type of qualitative study in which the researcher interprets documents to give a topic under evaluation voice and meaning (Bowen, 2009). Therefore, according to Gay (2006) in Nur and Miranti (2018), qualitative research aims to increase knowledge about a specific phenomenon, such as an environment, a process, or even a belief, by understanding social phenomena from the participant's point of view.

The data source is from Al-Qur'an, in surah Al – A'raf, Al – Baqarah, Mujadallah, Ali Imran, An Nisa and Maryam. To compile the data used some steps: the 1) gathering verses that have an explanation for sex according to the reference, many words relating to sexual words such as gender, sperm, desire, this study focuses on a sexual relationship because its role is so important to human life, and educative but still considered a taboo.

Then, for analyzing data, 1) the data read carefully and supported with various references to understand its meaning, 2) identifying the types of figurative language according to McArthur theories. There are many categories of figurative language such as of antithesis, euphemism, hyperbole, idiom, factoring, metonymy, paradoxes, paradoxes, paradoxes, paradoxes, similes, siphons, similes, parallels and synecdoche.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **RESULT**

#### **Data 1:**

Surah Al-Baqarah verse 187 in *The Qur'an English Meanings*, Saheeh International (1997:26).

187. It has been made permissible for you the night preceding fasting to go to your wives [for sexual relations]. They are clothing for you and you are clothing for them. Allāh knows that you used to deceive yourselves,<sup>56</sup> so He accepted your repentance and forgave you. So now, have relations with them and seek that which Allāh has decreed for you [i.e., offspring]. And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct to you from the black thread [of night]. Then complete the fast until the night [i.e., sunset]. And do not have relations with them as long as you are staying for worship in the mosques. These are the limits [set by] Allāh, so do not approach them. Thus does Allāh make clear His verses [i.e., ordinances] to the people that they may become righteous.

### **The Analysis:**

The sentence "To go to your wives" is categorized into euphemism. Euphemism is used to replace or mask words and expressions that are considered taboo, rude, and inappropriate. The meaning of "to go to your wives" is come closer to the couple to have marital sex. Then the next sentence is: "They are clothing for you and you are clothing for them", this is categorized into metonymy. Metonymy is replacing the word by another word which is the meaning is close. The meaning of "clothing" is serenity. Clothing is attached to the body, in direct contact with the skin. So close. Husband and wife should do the same. There is physical closeness and inner closeness. Then the next word is: "have relations with them" it is categorized into euphemism. Euphemism is a style of language that replaces an expression that is considered bad with softer expression. The meaning "have relation" is having marital sex.

### **Data 2:**

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ  
236. There is no blame upon you if you divorce women you have not touched<sup>82</sup> nor specified for them an obligation.<sup>83</sup> But give them [a gift of] compensation – the wealthy according to his capability and the poor according to his capability – a provision according to what is acceptable, a duty upon the doers of good.

Surah Al-Baqarah verse 222 in Saheeh International, the Qur'an English Meaning (1997:32).

### **The analysis:**

The sentence "do not approach them" Is categorized euphemism. It is indirect reference. The meaning "approach" Is having marital sex. Then the next sentence is " come to them from where Allah has ordained for you" also euphemism. The meaning is having marital sex.

### **Data 3**

Surah Al-Baqarah verse 223 in The Qur'an English Meanings, Saheeh International (1997:32).

222. And they ask you about menstruation. Say, "It is harm, so keep away from wives<sup>71</sup> during menstruation. And do not approach them until they are pure. And when they have purified themselves,<sup>72</sup> then come to them from where Allāh has ordained for you. Indeed, Allāh loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves."

### **The analysis:**

The sentence above is categorizing metaphor because it explains or describes something by referring to other things that are considered to have similar characteristics. "Place of sowing of seed for you" means a place to give birth to children, women are equated with fields, because the land when planted will grow plants, it is the illustration for sexual relationship.

### **Data 4:**

Surah Al-Baqarah verse 236 in The Qur'an English Meanings, Saheeh International (1997:35).



223. Your wives are a place of cultivation [i.e., sowing of seed] for you, so come to your place of cultivation however you wish and put forth [righteousness] for yourselves. And fear Allāh and know that you will meet Him. And give good tidings to the believers.

**The analysis:**

The sentence "you have not touched" Is categorized into euphemism. The meaning is related to sexual relation.

**Data 5:**

Surah Al-Baqarah verse 237 in The Qur'an English Meanings, Saheeh International (1997:35)

237. And if you divorce them before you have touched them and you have already specified for them an obligation, then [give] half of what you specified – unless they forego the right or the one in whose hand is the marriage contract foregoes it. And to forego it is nearer to righteousness. And do not forget graciousness between you. Indeed Allāh, of whatever you do, is Seeing.

**The analysis:**

The sentence "you have touched" Is categorized into euphemism. The meaning is related to sexual relation.

**Data 6:**

Surah Ali-Imran verse 47 in The Qur'an English Meanings, Saheeh International (1997:50).

47. She said, "My Lord, how will I have a child when no man has touched me?" [The angel] said, "Such is Allāh; He creates what He wills. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, 'Be,' and it is.

**The analysis:**

The sentence "man has touched me" Is categorized into euphemism. The meaning is related to sexual relation.

**Data 7:**

Surah An-Nisa verse 23 in The Qur'an English Meanings, Saheeh International (1997:73)

23. Prohibited to you [for marriage] are your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your father's sisters, your mother's sisters, your brother's daughters, your sister's daughters, your [milk] mothers who nursed you, your sisters through nursing, your wives' mothers, and your step-daughters under your guardianship [born] of your wives unto whom you have gone in. But if you have not gone in unto them, there is no sin upon you. And [also prohibited are] the wives of your sons who are from your [own] loins, and that you take [in marriage] two sisters simultaneously, except for what has already occurred.<sup>152</sup> Indeed, Allāh is ever Forgiving and Merciful.

**The Analysis:**

The word "gone" in the verse above is categorized into euphemism.

**Data 8:**

"She said, "How can I have a boy while no man has touched me and I have not been unchaste?" (QS.19 : 20)

20. She said, "How can I have a boy while no man has touched me and I have not been unchaste?"

**The analysis:**

"Touch me" this is euphemism in this context. The meaning of this verse according to Ministry of Religion of Saudi Arabia, Maryam said to the angel, "How can I have a son, when no one touches me by marriage, and I am not a wicked woman?"

**Data 9:**

Surah Al-Mujadillah verse 3 in The Qur'an English Meanings, Saheeh International 1997:555).

3. And those who pronounce thihār from their wives and then [wish to] go back on what they said – then [there must be] the freeing of a slave before they touch one another. That is what you are admonished thereby; and Allāh is Acquainted with what you do.

**The analysis:**

"They touch one another ". This sentence uses euphemism. The meaning is marital sexual.

**Data 10:**

Surah Al-Mujadillah verse 4 in The Qur'an English Meanings, Saheeh International 1997:555).

4. And he who does not find [a slave] – then a fast for two months consecutively<sup>1529</sup> before they touch one another; and he who is unable – then the feeding of sixty poor persons. That is for you to believe [completely] in Allāh and His Messenger; and those are the limits [set by] Allāh. And for the disbelievers is a painful punishment.

**The analysis:**

"They touch one another ". This sentence uses euphemism.

**Data 11:**

Surah An-Nisa verse 21 in The Qur'an English Meanings, Saheeh International 1997:73.

21. And how could you take it while you have gone in unto each other and they have taken from you a solemn covenant?



**The analysis:**

"Gone in unto each other" This sentence uses euphemism. The meaning is sexual relations between husband and wife.

**Data 12:**

Surah Al-A'raf verse 189 in *The Qur'an English Meanings*, Saheeh International 1997:157.

189. It is He who created you from one soul and created from it its mate that he<sup>393</sup> might dwell in security with her. And when he [i.e., man] covers her,<sup>394</sup> she carries a light burden [i.e., a pregnancy] and continues therein. And when it becomes heavy,

**The analysis:**

"And when he covers her" This sentence use euphemism. The meaning is sexual relation.

**DISCUSSION**

The data analyzed by using McArthur concept; that there are thirteen different kinds of figurative language: euphemism, hyperbole, idioms, irony, metaphor, metonymy, paradox, personification, pleonasm, simile, sarcasm, and synecdoche. The findings revealed that there are three categories of figurative language: metonymy, metaphor, and also euphemism. Therefore, most frequently is euphemism. Euphemism is one of the language styles that replace words that are considered less good, rude or taboo with more subtle matches, Metaphor utilizes a term as an illustration based on comparisons or equations rather than in its literal sense. Then, metonymy is a name used to replace the reference to something else that is closely linked.

**CONCLUSION**

The meaning of sex is relating to intercourse between man and woman, talking about is taboo, people tend to think that sex is a personal things which should not be discussed in public. Some of scriptures talking about it, including Al-Qur'an. Al-Qur'an describes about sex is very subtle way so that the readers does not feel that it is a taboo because it used figurative language. What types of figurative language employed? It is used metonymy, metaphor, also euphemism. What does the utilized figurative language mean? Metonymy is giving a deeper and interesting meaning in a discourses, providing a meaning and connection to concept, metaphor is explaining abstract or complect concepts in a way that is easier for readers to understand and remember. Metaphor also used to create vivid images or imaginations to captivate readers, so it make easier to communicate and the euphemism is to make smooth the expression, giving a respect to the interlocuter so as not to humiliated by the use of existing terms.

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