



Language, Power and Gendered Silence through Hegemonic Euphemism in Gul's *A Pathan Daughter*

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ABSTRACT

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Language shapes and is shaped by society. It is rarely neutral as it affects norms, perception, and veils power asymmetries. Euphemistic language often masks hegemony and inequalities particularly in patriarchal societies. This study examines the hegemonic function of euphemistic language in Gul's *A Pathan Daughter* (2024). The researcher utilizes mixed method. AntConc 4.3.0 (Anthony, 2024) is used for frequency count and Lutz's (2016) doublespeak framework is employed to examine how linguistic manipulation obscures gendered victimization and oppression. Findings of the study reveal that a persistent use of euphemistic language confines women within the walls of domesticity, while parental control is framed as compassionate guidance; obedience negotiated as honor, education labelled as dangerous, and impractical and forced marriage as a tradition. These linguistic manipulations are utilized to normalize obedience, neutralize resistance, and to internalize the patriarchal control. Euphemistic language operates as an effective weapon of hegemony as well as an internalized mode of compliance. The study exposes how patriarchal hegemony is sustained and inequalities are naturalized through everyday language in *A Pathan Daughter* (2024). The findings of this study add valuable insights to the context of sociolinguistics and feminist theory by providing a comprehensive and empirical data about the hegemonic function of euphemistic language in enforcing patriarchal control in certain Pakistani fiction.

Keywords: *euphemism, doublespeak, hegemony, patriarchy*

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Introduction

Language is not a simple medium of transmitting information but a process which develops social reality, supports norms, and can tend to strategically plant the veils of truth (Gee, 2010 p. 3). In other forms of discourses like in political speech, or even in families, language tends to make otherwise unattractive facts attractive, justify disparities of power, and render processes of coercion natural. Doublespeak is a powerful linguistic means of exerting influence on people and their opinions, manipulating, and skillfully obfuscating them. Analysis of language means, and stylistic devices of expressing doublespeak in publicist discourse, is mainly based on news reports, newspaper, magazine articles, speeches, and advertisements. It is essential for an individual in the modern world to be aware of the persuasive technique like doublespeak which is employed in language of politics, law, business, and marketing, as well as in everyday life (Gee, 2010, pp. 1-3). Euphemism is one of the language strategies within doublespeak that is perceived as a courteous method, therefore, its capability to influence an ideological manipulation is a subject of study for scholars. Because euphemism is utilized with an aim of never offending anyone but rather deliberately bending facts the wrong way around, it is what is described as doublespeak (Lutz, 2016). It is a language that aims to deceive and yet at the same time show itself as valid.

Such a position of language is a matter of concern in patriarchal and postcolonial contexts like Pakistan where control, surveillance, and restriction systems are redefined in the vocabulary of virtues such as protect, honor, tradition, and family duty. They are not passive indicators of culture but inherently agents of reproducing power regimes. The question of language and power is still important and urgent in twenty-first century, but there have been substantial changes in social life during the past decade which have somewhat changed the nature of unequal power relations and therefore the agenda for the critical study of language. Fairclough (2001) covers the issue of globalization of power relations in relation to Language and Power. Doublespeak, being a misleading persuasive technique, exerts influence on people and their opinions, manipulating and skillfully obfuscating them to only pretend to communicate truthful messages. Primarily, it is aimed at blocking critical thinking due to utilization of half-truths by giving fallacious arguments, providing veiled facts and factoids, thus, limiting and preventing further thought which illustrates the importance of information literacy. Production of literary texts in these conditions transforms them into critical spaces of learning as they project such language into the personal space of the everyday world.

Recent feminist scholarship addresses the historical, cultural, and epistemic erasure of Black women within White feminist discourse, highlighting how ideological stereotyping establishes controlling images—such as the Jezebel, mammy and welfare mother—to suppress Black subjectivity (Noreen, 2025, p. 15). Similarly, Marya Gul (2025) explores slam poetry as an essential medium of counter-discourse against mainstream literary feminist narratives that frequently homogenize Muslim women into passive, marginalized entities lacking subjectivity (p. 55). While, Chaudhri et al. (2025) challenge monolithic conventions surrounding Indian womanhood by examining the traditional institution of

marriage and its role in women's enslavement and how gender, class and silence interact to shape the multilayered identities and differential experiences of women of color (p. 66). Furthermore, Khalid et al. (2026) examine the existence of a society in which the traditional division of genders prevails with females being forced to marriage and motherhood above all other aspects, including education and economic autonomy. The paper argues that the narrative of Etaf Rum's novel, *A Woman is No Man* (2019) forms a binary view of the value of women, recognizing them only with their family roles. Such undermining of the potential that women might hold beyond the domestic roles, supports the hegemonic relations of power that limit access to education and financial independence (p. 1703).

Nabeela Gul's novel *A Pathan Daughter* (2024) holds a unique value within the genre of Pakistani Anglophone literature focusing explicitly on gender, identity, and power asymmetries. Its autobiographical narration reveals pneumas of the Pashtun tribal community and entails gendered disparities that are imposed on the family, tradition and society. More importantly, this novel presents these restrictions not through word of mouth but through a less obvious yet more insidious medium, the language. The control is disguised as care, confinement as security, and silence as respect. It is this vein that makes this novel a vital source of information on the functioning of euphemism as a form of doublespeak used as a hegemonic tool in the literary discourse. This eventually brings the focus of analytical interest directly to the point of weaponization of the everyday language.

Euphemism

Doublespeak is defined as speech that pretends to mean something, but in actuality, means something else. Doublespeak is inclined to evade responsibility, conceal unpleasant news, or to gain an unjustified commitment. The analysis of euphemism is transformed from how it was believed to be a strategy of politeness, to its knowledge of ideology and ideological strength (Lutz, 2016 pp. 1-2). Early works by Allan and Burrige (1991, 2006), placed euphemism in a social taboo context and face-saving etiquette. However, Lutz (2016) discovers that it is this mechanism which becomes ethically charged and turns into a doublespeak when its mission becomes more sensitive than when it is obfuscated.

In the context of gendered control, euphemism is the most crucial tool for oppressing women bodies, free will, and social status. The dominance of the abstractions of the word modesty, respectability, and virtue in controlling women has long been familiar among feminist linguists since the seventies to restrict voices and acts of women (Lakoff, 1975; Mills, 2008). These concepts are highly institutionalized in a Pashtun society that has been subjugated to a moral code of Pashtunwali. Social responsibility of maintaining collective izzat (honor) is rooted in unequal treatment of women according to anthropological study, as the responsibility is normally enforced by a vocabulary of moral protection rather than a commanding language (Grima, 1992; Lindholm, 2008). Therefore, Bhatia (2015) remarks that although the Lutz's model was an outcome of the criticism of political and corporate rhetoric, its relevance to narrative fiction is stunningly substantial. In literature, doublespeak is not only reported but also exercised by characters and inbuilt into the culture of specific narratives, thus gaining an emotional gravity.

What it renders as effectiveness in a novel such as *A Pathan Daughter* (2024), is its power to reveal the fact that its characters can be truthful in believing the euphemisms they are using. This also make us recall Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony, where the mainstream ideologies are internalized into a common sense. Thus, previous studies demonstrate how the applicability of repetition, the culturally acceptable euphemisms that are not coercive, can, nonetheless, normalize the asymmetries of power. In her novel, Nabeela Gul manages to root out practices that limit and bar education or forceful marriage or seclusion practices, via this vocabulary on a regular basis. A restriction is then introduced into the language as a family requirement or cultural protection. Applying such expressions to a context of Lutz (2016), one can speak about them not as the examples of an unbiased expressions of cultures, but as the objects of fraudulent doublespeak which permit the manipulation.

A Pathan Daughter (2024) has attracted scholarly interest in terms of its female resilience and cultural conflict themes. Khan (2025) examines it in terms of complex interplay between traditional gender roles and individual autonomy within the socio-cultural context of Pashtun society, specifically focusing on how the female protagonist navigates and asserts her personal agency through the application of morality and ethics (p. 2958). However, there is a gap in the critical analysis of its linguistic architecture. This paper, therefore, examines the function of euphemistic language as employed in Gul's novel that permeates in-house conversation as well as in family narratives, thus playing an active role to maintain patriarchal hegemony. Being considered a cultural color or even a civil indirectness, this euphemistic language has not been thoroughly examined in previous studies as a tool to maintain hegemony in available literary contexts. Such omission gives an incomplete picture of such functioning of power at the most intimate, discursive level. This study systematically exposes the hegemonic function of persistent use of euphemistic language in this novel by applying doublespeak framework as proposed by Lutz (2016). It offers a precise and descriptive assessment of the manner in which the asymmetries of power conceal the use of euphemism as a particular figure of speech in this Pakistani novel. Analyzing these euphemistic devices help to understand how, through manipulative language usage, the consent of the characters who are being manipulated, is achieved.

The novel is appropriate not only for its thematic content but for its source. Gul, an educator and researcher, who writes explicitly as an activist for women's empowerment. This duality of author as both social commentator and storyteller, makes the novel's euphemistic dimension especially revealing. *A Pathan Daughter* (2024) necessitates this study because it does not only reflect patriarchal euphemism in Pakistani Pashtun society from the outside, it also scripts the very speech-acts that produce it. When the protagonist, Gulwarena's mother states that "a girl's honor lies in her obedience" (Gul, 2024 p.9), the narrative is not reporting on doublespeak, rather it is performing it and rendering the particular ideological substitution evident in text (obedience-as-honor) that this study sets out to trace.

Lutizian Euphemism

Euphemism as a linguistic strategy effectively hides or distorts or otherwise manipulatively reframes real-world realities so as to mislead or even mollify (Lutz, 1989; 1996; 2016). According to Lutz, doublespeak is a cognizance that feigns communication better said than done, in essence perplexing reality with a pretense of righteousness. In this context, euphemism is turned into a strategy of courtesy but a strategic, amicable process of moral and social obscurity. Lutz (2016) states that euphemism enters into domain of doublespeak when euphemism is not aimed at avoiding embarrassment but is carried out to make the unpleasant seem nice, unappealing appealing, and the negative positive. This expression is acutely relevant to literary accounts of patriarchal societies in which the acts of restriction and oppression are virtually always expressed in a culturally approved currency of virtue and not in the currency of expressive violence. In this situation, euphemism does not destroy meaning, but is a strategic repackaging of that meaning, changing perceptual and emotional value of actions and intentions. This perspective can be affirmed by recent studies of linguistic discipline, which serve to prove, that the process of moral reframing with the help of language is a potent means of gaining compliance and minimizing cognitive dissonance (Feinberg & Willer, 2019; Crick, 2022). An example of this would be a 'curfew' that becomes more of a protective moment of making sure you are safe that helps appeal to the emotion of protection instead of control.

Such Lutzian point of view is a clear contrast with more conservative pragmatic views which largely present euphemism as a cooperative, face-saving means, which can be described through the theory of politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Although these theories represent the social lubricant role of euphemism, the framework presented by Lutz (2016) forensically pre-empts its possibility of willful misrepresentation and ideological revealing. It concurs with, and elaborates further, the description of euphemism as a shield or a veil (Allan & Burridge 1991, 2006), but Lutz (2016) gives more polemical attention to the possibilities of euphemism to be a deception, a manipulation and a normalizing stimulus in power structures. Moreover, Bhatia (2015) argues that this priority is rediscovered in (re)descriptions of contemporary political discourse, business relationships and media opinion shaping, where euphemisms such as downsizing, collateral damage, or alternative facts are used as red carpets in attempts to avoid responsibility.

The Equation of Hegemony and Euphemism

Language in a context of established power is not often an imperative delivery of message but also manipulated to establish power, where resistance is inevitable and social reality is structured strategically. This linguistic engineering usually works in the societies, which are patriarchal and traditionally rigid, to have a lexicon that legitimizes coercion and transforms control as virtue. The concepts of hegemony, ideology, and patriarchy have become real driving forces in which the euphemistic language receives its specific power and performs its specific role. This concept of hegemony found in Gramsci (1971) is very relevant in a sense that the establishment of hegemonic structure cannot only take place through use of brute force, but also through establishment of consent where groups that are subordinated learn to view the status quo in society as being normal and legitimate.

The intellectuals are the dominant group's 'deputies' exercising the subaltern functions of social hegemony and political government. The function of organizing social hegemony and state domination certainly gives rise to a particular division of labour and therefore to a whole hierarchy of qualifications in some of which there is not apparent attribution of directive or organisational functions. (Gramsci ,1971, p.1)

Modern researchers have projected it to the field of discursive hegemony in which language can be viewed as a means through which certain worldviews can be established as inevitable common sense (Fairclough, 2001; van Dijk, 2015).

CDA/CDS is *not* a specific method of discourse studies but makes use of all relevant methods of the humanities and social sciences in studying important social problems. Unlike most other approaches, CDS framework not only relates discourse structures to social structures but does so through a socio-cognitive interface that links mental representations of communicative and other social situations and events with the cognitive structures underlying discourse. Power is conceptualized as control – for example, control of the structures of context, text or talk and thus indirectly of people's minds. (Van Dijk, 2015, p.1)

The culturally accepted words such as honor, tradition, protection etc. are discursive stabilizers in a patriarchal society as portrayed by Gul (2024). They internalize power practices into a kind of moral and cultural syntax that discourages defiance actively as it establishes the idea of control as an act of care, responsibility, or preservation of the world (Yaqin, 2022). The recent research on honor-based communities confirms that this lexical framing is not coincidental but structural and it functions to bring the behaviors of individuals in line with a collective thinking. As Kandiyoti argues:

I propose that policing gender norms and enforcing conservative family values constitute central nodes of AKP ideology and practice in at least three crucial domains; first, in shoring up a populism that privileges gender as a marker of difference, pitting an authentically national 'us' against an 'anti-national' (gayri-milli) 'them'; second, in the marriage of convenience between neo-liberal welfare and employment policies and(neo)-conservative familism; and finally, in the 'normalization' of violence in everyday political discourse and practice. (Kandiyoti, 2016, p. 105)

Feminist linguistic theory also shows that the subtle, normal and emotionally charged language trotted out modern gender inequality (Lakoff, 1975; Mills, 2008). It is also an important aspect of a recent study by Wodak (2020) that focuses on explicit theory formation and analysis of the relationships between the structures of text, talk, language use, verbal interaction or communication, on the one hand, and societal, political or cultural micro and macrostructures and cognitive social representations, on the other hand. Wodak (2020) studies society through discourse and discourse through an analysis of its socio-political and cultural functions or implication. In this context, Lutz (2016) emphasizes that strategic politeness and benevolent sexism is frequently packaged as a discourse of love and

care, which is exceptionally relevant to the Pashtun situation where restrictions can be explained by the love of relatives and the wisdom of ancestors. Such conscious narrowing enables the application of closer, forensic scrutiny of the way this ideological work is itself carried out as a specific linguistic act, a use of euphemism as such. It does not allow the analytical gaze to permeate through various discourse structures but rather grounds it on the process of semantic substitution and moral reformulation that is the focal point of the model.

Euphemism in Postcolonial Feminist Literature

The anthropological and sociolinguistic study of honor codes, such as the, so-called, Pashtunwali shows that the euphemism is not a minor aspect but an integral organizational element of honor system. Lindholm (2008) notes that the language of honor is a totalizing field of discursive practice and any direct resistance is quite difficult since to challenge a particular practice (e.g., gender disparity) is to place oneself against a position of power that is central. This forms an ideal set-up of doublespeak: an ordered employment of agreeable words (hifazat/protection) in order to conceal the awful facts (denial of freedom). Lindholm (2008) discusses the intersection of cognitive science and religious studies as to how religious knowledge is shaped by social interactions and cognitive processes. He critiques the notion of learning in religious contexts, emphasizing intentionality, social relationships and the challenges posed by reducing religious experience to neurological explanations.

He states: “Notable contributions explore the dynamics of religious rituals, the implications of cognitive theories and alternative frameworks for understanding how individuals construct religious meanings within their cultural contexts.” (Lindholm, 2008, p. 1). According to Zuckerman (2023) the primary role of euphemism as an encoding power technique is proved by a concentrated analysis of existing literary scholarship on related texts. When examining novels that address prevalent issue of gender in conservative cultures, scholars have followed the ways euphemisms are used as points of resistance. In *Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007) by Khaled Hosseini or *My Feudal Lord* (1995) by Tehmina Durrani, critics observe that female protagonists tend to be in conflict between the structures that define patriarchy and a growing awareness of the harsh reality on the ground (imprisonment), frequently mediated through a conflict of meaning: the euphemistic framing of the patriarch (because it is in your best interest) and the increasing recognition of the crudeness of the reality on the ground (imprisonment) (Malak, 2004). This is explained by the narrative theory, specifically, the ideas of focalization (Genette, 1980; Rimmon-Kenan, 2003). Similarly, Burke (2022) contends that the reader is in a parallel process of semantic re-assessment when they follow the narrative of narrator.

Doublespeak Criticism of Literary Texts

This study is rooted in the interdisciplinary research on language, power, and literature. Although the analysis of doublespeak by Lutz (2016) has been applied widely and successfully to study political, corporate, military, and media discourse (Bhatia, 2015), the systematic analysis of literary texts, especially those focusing on issues of women, is still under researched. Discourses shape and are shaped by

societal practices. With an ever-growing free flow of information-sharing and opinion-based platforms, enabled by the rise of new media technology, now more than ever before, it is important to bring about an awareness of how our expectations, opinions, and perceptions are shaped by a plethora of existing public discourses. Different groups in society, colored by their respective ideologies, form discursive arguments in the context of relevant and critical socio-political issues, such as terrorism, revolution, and climate change; arguments that eventually trickle their way down to the general public. Using the framework of Lutz (2016) to *A Pathan Daughter* (2024), the current study posits that euphemism is not a background but foreground; it is one of the main drivers of the plot and a major challenge the protagonist has to go through both physically and verbally.

Consequently, this study has a two-sided intervention. First, it acknowledges that the framework of doublespeak of William Lutz (2016) has a massive and under-realized explanatory value on the literary analysis, particularly on the texts that dramatize the clashes between subjective and tyrannical community discourse. Second, it offers a methodological model of study with narrow and replicable scope on the lexicalization and naturalization of patriarchal control in fiction and provides the critical emphasis on what is said, how it is said and to what deceiving end. Therefore, it fills the gap between critical linguistics and literary criticism, a stinging instrument of deconstructing the intimate, everyday language of power in the fictional world, and, through it, in the social realities it embodies.

Research Methodology

The researcher applies mixed method approach. This study offers a corpus assisted qualitative interpretation of the selected text with reference to Lutz (2016) doublespeak framework. This approach is best applied in literary analysis because it involves discussing the construction of meaning using language (Fairclough, 2001). The design emanates out of the fact that in *The Pathan Daughter* (2024), language plays an active role in influencing the view of authority and duty.

Sources of Data

The selected text of *A Pathan Daughter* (2024) is taken as the primary source of the data. The analytical attention is devoted to specific passages, words, or dialogues in which authority is established.

Data Collection

The data was selected by means of a close reading of the text. First, a preliminary reading was made to define major themes and culturally relevant ideas. Later, more focused readings identified all the instances of language softening or moral re-framing acts of control, duty, or limitation. A corpus was created using AntConc 4.3.0 (Anthony, 2024) for identifying the frequency count of euphemistic language instances. All the textual evidences were logged with the information of the speaker, its narrative setting and the page number. This was narrowed down to expressions that were viewed as deceptive doublespeak by the definition of Lutz (2016).

Data Analysis

Each euphemistic instance in the text was analyzed and interpreted in systematic three-stage qualitative framework grounded in Lutz's (2016) taxonomy of doublespeak stages to provide a thorough discussion of form and purpose. According to Lutz, a linguistic expression qualifies as euphemism when it performs a deceptive or softening layer that changes our perception of reality, typically to make a hostile or coercive truth appear acceptable, moral, or natural.

Stage 1: Identification via Lutz's Criteria. The text was screened for linguistic exchanges that obscure restrictive or coercive truths. Instances from the text were identified if it minimized conflict, shifted accountability away from dominant members, or repackaged structural limitations as rights.

Stage 2: Formal/Structural Analysis. The identified euphemistic instances were examined for their semantic and syntactic structure e.g. identifying passive voice constructions that remove agency or metaphorical framing that recontextualizes control.

Stage 3: Functional Interpretation. This stage moved past literal meaning to evaluate the narrative and ideological effect. It examined whether the euphemism functioned defensively to silence female resistance or proactively to normalize patriarchal power dynamics within the domestic space.

Theoretical Framework

This study employed Lutz's (2016) doublespeak framework as theoretical lens. Doublespeak is a language that claims to convey something but, actually, does not. It identifies euphemism as a particular kind of doublespeak which attempts to transform the un-pleasant into the pleasant (Lutz, 2016). Lutz remarks that euphemism enters into domain of doublespeak when it does not aim to avoiding embarrassment but to make the unpleasant seem nice, unappealing look appealing, and negative seem positive. This expression is acutely relevant to literary accounts of patriarchal societies in which the acts of restriction and oppression are virtually always expressed in a culturally approved currency of virtue, and not in the currency of expressive violence. In this situation, euphemism does not destroy meaning, but is a strategic repackaging of that meaning, changing perceptual and emotional value of actions and intentions. This paper operationalizes it by defining words or phrases that strategically rebrand restriction as protection, coercion as duty, or inequality as tradition.

Analysis And Discussion

The analysis of euphemistic language in *A Pathan Daughter* (Gul, 2024) follows a consistent interpretive procedure grounded in Lutz's (2016) framework of doublespeak. Each euphemistic expression was examined in three stages: first, the

concrete social reality obscured by the language was identified; second, the linguistic or moral reframing of that reality was analyzed; and third, the functional consequences of the reframing were assessed, particularly in terms of how it shapes perception, suppresses resistance, or normalizes inequality. This approach demonstrates that euphemism in the novel operates as a powerful instrument of linguistic governance rather than merely a marker of politeness or style.

Euphemistic Language Sustaining Hegemony

A persistent pattern throughout this narrative is the substitution of direct restrictions with morally neutral or nurturing expressions. For instance, Gulwarena's father asserts, "Your place is here, Gulwarena, within these walls, where you will learn to be a good wife and mother" (Gul, 2024, p. 7). The euphemism "your place" conceals forced domestic confinement and the denial of educational freedom which reframes coercion as a natural, morally appropriate allocation of space and destiny. This softening discourages resistance by presenting obedience as alignment with one's proper role and transforming potential defiance into moral deviation and illustrating doublespeak by masking exclusion under the guise of affirmation and belonging (Lutz, 2016). Similarly, expressions of parental benevolence, such as "We only want what's best for you" (Gul, 2024, p. 9), obscure the suppression of autonomy and invalidate Gulwarena's aspirations. By emotionally recoding coercion as care, these phrases induce guilt and internalized self-doubt, making resistance psychologically costly while aligning with Lutz's description of doublespeak as language that removes choice under the guise of compassion.

Equally influential are the abstract frameworks of honor and shame, exemplified by statements such as "A girl's honor lies in her obedience" (Gul, 2024, p. 9), which embed behavioral regulation within unquestionable cultural values. Here, obedience is elevated to moral virtue, rendering power invisible, and shifting responsibility from patriarchal authority to the individual, thereby subtly normalizing compliance through seemingly ethical self-discipline.

Euphemistic minimization is also evident in education, where phrases like "What use is education for a girl?" and references to danger or impracticality (Gul, 2024, p. 7), obscure the deliberate denial of intellectual empowerment. Rather than issuing a direct prohibition, such language reframes ambition as foolishness, consequently discouraging pursuit of knowledge. Marriage, too, described through terms such as "tradition," "family decision," and "arrangement" (p. 44), strategically transforms coercion into cultural continuity and foreclosing resistance by positioning dissent as a challenge to normative values.

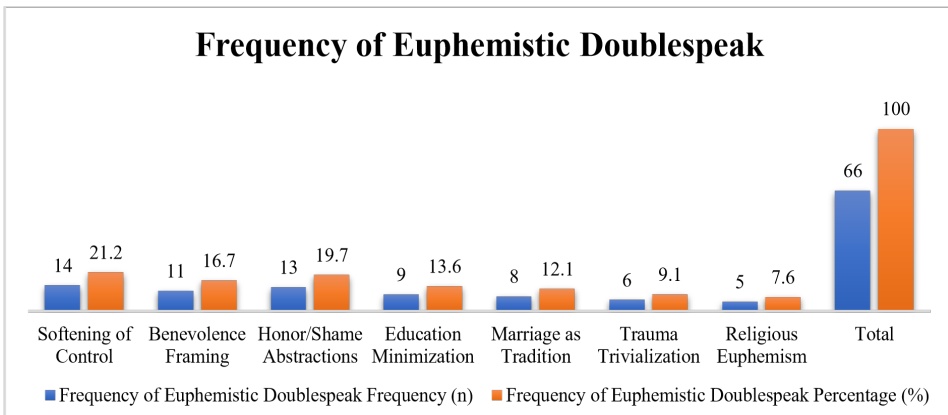
The euphemistic trivialization of trauma including phrases like "overwhelmed" or "going through a phase" (Gul, 2024, p. 23), normalize psychological suffering and discourage disclosure, thus rendering abuse invisible. While references to divine protection and spiritual "covering" (p. 62) sometimes replace material safeguards with abstract reassurance. This precisely aligns with Lutz's notion of functional doublespeak.

Crucially, this novel shows that these linguistic strategies are internalized. Gulwarena herself occasionally describes restrictions as "difficulties" and

“challenges” rather than injustices (Gul, 2024, p. 25), exemplifying the ultimate success of doublespeak; the normalization of oppressive language to the point that it appears natural and unquestioned. Across the narrative, euphemism functions as both an external instrument of authority and a mechanism of self-regulation which systematically shapes perception, moral judgment and the internalization of gendered norms. Following is the frequency-based representation to prove the systematic and patterned character of the euphemistic doublespeak. The counts are obtained based on the final filtered corpus of euphemisms that only fit the Lutz (2016) criteria of hegemonic euphemism. The following table 1 and the subsequent diagram analyzes the euphemistic doublespeak categories and frequencies, respectively.

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Euphemistic Doublespeak Categories

Euphemistic Strategy	Description of Function	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Softening of Control	Confinement framed as “place,” “role,” or “guidance”	14	21.2
Benevolence Framing	Coercion masked as care (“what’s best for you”)	11	16.7
Honor/Shame Abstractions	Control justified through moral ideals	13	19.7
Education Minimization	Education framed as useless or dangerous	9	13.6
Marriage as Tradition	Forced marriage reframed as “arrangement”	8	12.1
Trauma Trivialization	Abuse framed as “phase” or “overwhelm”	6	9.1
Religious Euphemism	Faith language masking material risk	5	7.6
Total		66	100



A total 66 euphemistic examples, which serve as doublespeak, are identified in this novel. Softening of control (21.2%), which measures that spatial and behavioral control, is most commonly normalized in a morally neutral or nurturing language. This is seen as the most common category. Closely following this, comes honor and shame abstractions (19.7%), which underscore the key role of moral ideology in supporting gendered regulation. The presence of benevolence framing (16.7%) and honor-based euphemism (19.7%), with combined frequency of 36.4, proves that patriarchal control is most often masked by emotions and moral justification instead of a direct command. This is in line with leading argument by Lutz (2016), that successful doublespeak works by refusing to be coercive. The following table 2 depicts euphemisms of control and ideology.

Table 2: Euphemisms of Control and Ideology

Category	Strategies	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Control-Oriented Euphemisms	Softening of control, education minimization, marriage framing	31	47.0
Ideology-Oriented Euphemisms	Honor/shame, benevolence, religious framing	29	43.9
Trauma-Management Euphemisms	Trauma trivialization	6	9.1
Total		66	100

Almost fifty percent of the instances of doublespeak (47.0%) directly concern behavioral control, especially by limiting movement, education and marriage. Another similar percentage (43.9%) is on ideological level where control is deemed appropriate with values like honor, care, and faith. This close equality indicates that euphemistic doublespeak in this novel is actually a two-way process of restricting the process and indirectly providing moral persuasion. Euphemism in relation to trauma is less prevalent (9.1%), but it has a substantial effect because it helps to silence pain and deny its existence. It is depicted in the following diagram.

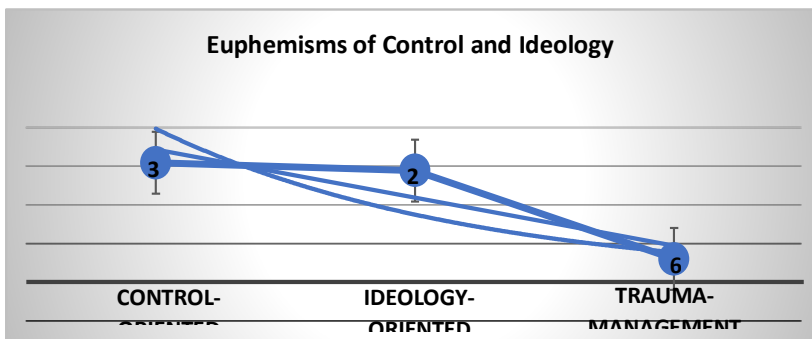


Table 3: Distribution of Speakers

Speakers	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Male Authority Figures (father, elders)	34	51.5
Female Enforcers (mothers, older women)	18	27.3
Narrator / Gulwarena (internalized language)	14	21.2
Total	66	100

Table 3 gives the distribution of speakers where it may be seen that the majority of euphemistic doublespeak instances (51.5%) are uttered by the figures of authority that are male, which proves their primary role in controlling language. Nevertheless, a large part also belongs to female enforcers (27.3%) which proves the ways in which patriarchal discourse is distributed and kept within society. It is interesting to note that more than a fifth of euphemistic language gets internalized by Gulwarena herself which means that doublespeak has been normalized to a considerable extent. This self-adaptation corroborates the argument by Lutz (2016), that the best doublespeak does not seem to be deceptive when it is self-reproducing. The following pie diagram depicts the percentage of speakers.

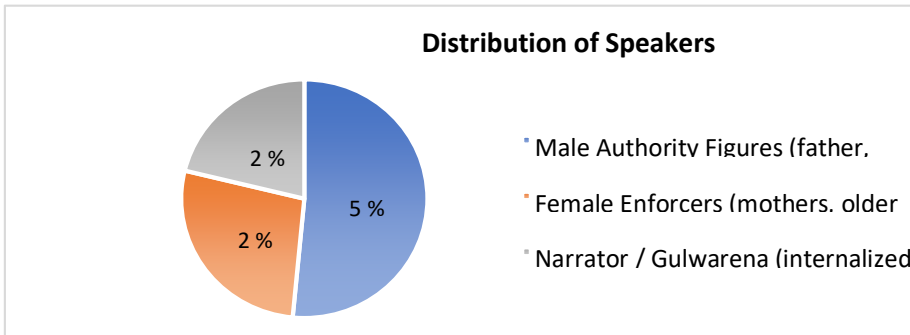
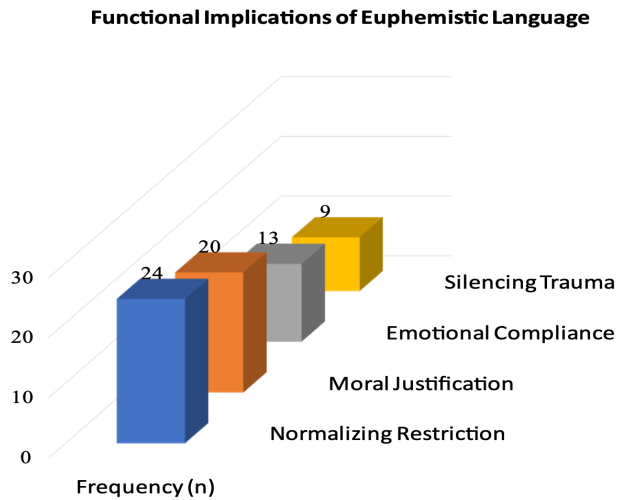


Table 4: Functional Implications of Euphemistic Language

Function	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Normalizing Restriction	24	36.4
Moral Justification	20	30.3
Emotional Compliance	13	19.7
Silencing Trauma	9	13.6
Total	66	100

Speaking about functional implications of euphemistic language, the above table 4 shows the normalization of restriction (36.4%), followed closely by the moral justification (30.3%). These two are the predominant functional outcomes of euphemistic doublespeak. Collectively these functions make over two-thirds of all instances which highlight the role of language in reinventing perception as opposed to working with force. The other cases are emotional compliance and silencing trauma which show that euphemism does not only rule behavior but also response and dissent in a manner of emotional control. Graphically, it may be depicted as follows.



CONCLUSION

This study has examined the hegemonic role of the euphemistic use of language in Nabeela Gul’s *A Pathan Daughter* (2024) through the lens of Lutz’s (2016) doublespeak framework. The findings reveal that euphemism in the novel does not represent a mere stylistic choice or a culturally neutral mechanism; rather, it is a systematic linguistic practice utilized to hide coercion, evade responsibility, and normalize gendered limitations. Quantitative trends demonstrate that euphemisms diluting control are the most pervasive, particularly those that reframe obedience and confinement as a safe natural living space for women. This numerical dominance proves that patriarchal hegemony is largely sustained through softening, repetition and linguistic normalization rather than blatant physical rejection. Furthermore, the high prevalence of benevolence-based euphemisms which introduce restriction as care or protection points to the centrality of emotional reframing in securing female compliance. These observations align directly with Lutz’s (2016) assertion that doublespeak acts as a humane-sounding language that ultimately restrains choice. While less frequent, euphemisms tied to honor and shame carry a deep ideological impact; their abstract constructions establish patriarchal control within deeply accepted cultural values, effectively camouflaging

the exercise of power. Similarly, the euphemistic delegitimization of female schooling functions as a secondary tool of control where intellectual ambition is not directly forbidden but is instead depicted as unrealistic or unnatural. At crucial narrative occasions, a small number of marriage-related euphemisms delicately transform elements of raw coercion into traditional cultural milestones. Most notably, the protagonist internalizes this doublespeak, occasionally using softened language to articulate her own suffering. This internalization represents the ultimate success of patriarchal hegemony, as domination becomes linguistically obscure and self-imposed. By applying Lutz's framework to literary discourse, this study approves its utility beyond institutional discourse, and exposes how everyday language preserves patriarchal power, and thus, contributes to critical linguistics by locating the euphemism as a primary apparatus for making inequality moral and natural.

The findings of this study offer critical implications for how readers and literary critics engage with the rapidly expanding corpus of the Pashtun women's memoir tradition. Historically, criticism in this genre has focused on overt or visible forms of subjection such as physical violence, forced marriages, or explicit tribal decrees. However, this study recommends that only a surface-level reading causes to miss the more deceptive and imperceptible mechanics of suppression. It is imperative to look past the binary of compliance and resistance to decode the vocabulary of care, protection, and cultural preservation that often hides systemic marginalization. This study offers a direction for future scholarship in Pashtun women's life-writing, which needs to shift its focus from what is overtly prohibited to what is euphemistically normalized by demonstrating how patriarchal hegemony operates through linguistic soft power.

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