

A Thematic Analysis of Taboo Discourse in Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* Novel

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Keywords: Taboo discourse, literary genres, thematic analysis.

ABSTRACT

Objectives: This study has two main objectives: the first objective is to identify and analyse the major themes and sub-themes of taboo discourse in D. H. Lawrence's (1928) *Lady Chatterley's Lover*; and the second one is to examine how taboo expressions are discursively constructed to convey underlying meanings and communicative functions in the selected excerpts from the novel.

Methods: To achieve the objectives of this study, the paper encapsulates ten excerpts taken from Lawrence's novel including taboo discourse. The study uses a qualitative descriptive data analysis research method. This paper draws on Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework of thematic analysis to explain the themes and sub-themes of these selected excerpts and explain the underlying meanings of the intended excerpts.

Results: As a result of the thematic analysis of the selected excerpts, it was found that the taboo discourse is represented by the number of themes, such as desire, love, solicitations, and sexual expressions.

Conclusions: Thus, it can be concluded that the taboo discourse is a necessary part of the literary language and is used for different thematic and communicative functions. It can be stated that the results of the current research will be useful for linguists, translators, literary scholars and others.

تحليل موضوعي للخطاب المحظور في رواية عشيق الليدي جاترلي للكاتب د.ه. لورنس

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معلومات البحث	المستخلص
تاريخ الاستلام: 18 تموز 2026	الأهداف: تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحقيق هدفين رئيسين: يتمثل الهدف الأول في تحديد وتحليل الموضوعات الرئيسية والموضوعات الفرعية لخطاب المحظورات في رواية عشيق الليدي جاترلي لـ د. ه. لورنس (1928)؛ أما الهدف الثاني فيتمثل في بحث الكيفية التي تُبنى بها التعبيرات المحظورات خطابياً لنقل المعاني الضمنية والوظائف التواصلية في المقاطع المختارة من الرواية.
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تاريخ النشر: 20 أيلول 2026	
Doi: https://doi.org/10.59750/jbrhs.2026.51.1.193	المنهجية: ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة، تتناول هذه الورقة البحثية عشرة مقاطع مقتطفة من رواية لورنس تتضمن خطاباً محظوراً. وتعتمد الدراسة المنهج الوصفي النوعي في تحليل البيانات. كما تستند إلى إطار براون وكلاارك لسنة (2006) للتحليل الموضوعي من أجل تفسير الموضوعات الرئيسية والفرعية في المقاطع المختارة، وبيان الدلالات الكامنة والمعاني الضمنية التي تنطوي عليها.
البريد الإلكتروني للباحث المرسل: dhahir.jafar@uobasrah.edu.iq	
الكلمات المفتاحية: الخطاب المحظور، الأجناس الأدبية، التحليل الموضوعي.	النتائج: وأظهرت نتائج التحليل الموضوعي للمقاطع المختارة أن الخطاب المحظور يتمثل في عدد من الموضوعات من أبرزها: الرغبة والحب والإغراء والتعبيرات الجنسية .
	الاستنتاجات: وبناءً على ذلك، تخلص الدراسة إلى أن الخطاب المحظور يُعد جزءاً ضرورياً من اللغة الأدبية، ويُستخدم لأداء وظائف موضوعية وتواصلية متنوعة. كما يمكن القول إن نتائج هذه الدراسة ستكون ذات فائدة للغويين والمترجمين والباحثين في الأدب وغيرهم من المهتمين بهذا المجال.

1. Introduction

As the 20th century came to an end many academics turned their attention to studying taboo literature because it was becoming a crucial area of study. Scholars from all over the world are drawn to the genre because of its rich scope and cultural significance, and the study of eroticism is now a large and developing field (Brulotte & Phillips, 2006)

By the end of the previous century, erotic literature had become an important field of study, and many scholars started concentrating on it. Researchers from many nations were drawn to the genre due to its broad appeal and cultural significance, and the study of erotic communication has grown significantly (Brulotte & Phillips, 2006). Every use of language has clear objectives. One of the best ways to examine the discursive construction of taboo language is through thematic analysis, which enables researchers to explore the underlying themes and meanings embedded in discourse. Therefore, According to Fairclough (2003), "discourse is an expression of facets of the social world from specific points of view." For the purposes of the current research, the notion will be utilized as a general theoretical basis for discourse analysis, while the analysis of taboo discourse will be based on research dedicated to taboo language. From the same point of view, taboo discourse is the reflection of socially and culturally conditioned standards for the use of prohibited language.

According to Kendrick (1997), Hardy (2009), and Atwood (2010), this aspect has particular sociocultural characteristics that have a significant social impact in addition to having an impact on an individual's life. Specific forms of taboo discourse writing, such as short stories and novels, have received some critical attention when they intersect with established research traditions; for example, work from a lavender linguistic perspective has investigated the ways in which gay, lesbian and queer identities are constructed in discourse of sexual genres (Baker, 2005; Bolton, 1995; Jacobs, 2000; Koller, 2015; Morrish & Sauntson, 2007). On the other hand, scholars of a primarily historical and literary bent have explored the evolving shapes of sexual genres (Frantz, 1989; Hunt, 1993; Moulton, 2000; Viridis, 2014).

Given the on-going diversity of modern taboo literary works like novels and short stories, which are distinguished by "different strokes of different folks" (Mazieres et al. 2014, p. 80), the range of sexual interests that underlie erotic writing would be obscured if its essential characteristics were reduced to a single central tendency. Since erotic writing in literary texts has grown to be a crucial area of study, many academics have generally focused their attention on it since the end of the 20th century (Brulotte & Phillips, 2006).

Additionally, from antiquity to the present, erotic writing has been a global cultural expression in almost every literary genre. Scholars from all over the world are drawn to the genre

because of its rich scope and cultural significance, and the study of erotic writing is now a broad and developing field (Brulotte & Phillips, 2006). Therefore, it is important to note that sexual discourse is likely as old as the human race. Numerous erotic novels and short stories have been written, and they have had a significant impact on society and culture (Brulotte & Philips, 2006).

On the same argument, sexual discourse is most likely as old as humanity. Numerous erotic novels and short stories have been written, and their influence on society and culture has been significant (Brulotte & Phillips, 2006).

As a result, sexual expressions are now common in various erotic literary works, especially novels and short stories. However, because of cultural and social limitations in various societies, such sexual discourse may be regarded as taboo. Many people believe that sexual discourse and sexual expressions in literary works like novels and short stories are a part of other societies' social and cultural cultures. However, because of their significance in linguistic and translation studies, many researchers would concentrate on the benefits of handling such expressions (Karras, 2000).

Even though erotic writing has drawn more attention lately, (Brulotte & Phillips, 2006) believe that new studies on erotic writing can make significant contributions to the field of sexual discourse studies and translation. Additionally, in order to add analysis, (Karras, 2000) urges further research on erotic writing and clarifies the field of sexual discourse. The majority of research on this subject, in my opinion, focuses primarily on forbidden terms and expressions that have nothing to do with the sexual discourse of erotic writing, especially in novels and short stories.

The study reported in the present paper is one contribution to this view. Thus, the first aim of the present paper was to analyse the selected examples of sexual discourse and expressions in selected novel and to show their effects on the readers. The second aim of the paper was to analyse the main functions of using such taboo expressions in literary texts such as short stories and novels.

Thus, the paper aims at analysing selected taboo discourse in chosen novel as genre to find out the sexual expressions used by the authors to raise the readers' erotic appeal and to hold the readers' interests. To this aim, the following research questions have been posed:

1. What are the words and expressions used by the authors to evoke the sexual desire in the readers?
2. How are the taboo words and expressions functionalized for constructing the taboo discourse in the discourse community?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Discourse and Taboo

Allan and Burridge (2006) define taboo discourse as anything that is genuinely or possibly prohibited, as well as the mechanisms through which this discourse takes place. However, according to Allan and Burridge (2006), taboo discourse is "a prescription of behavior for a specifiable community of one or more persons at a specifiable context." (p. 11) In their view, taboo can be defined as discourse that is forbidden, especially when it comes to discussing sex or our bodies and their functions. Additionally, Wardhaugh (2006) clarified certain words that might be taboo for particular individuals within a particular discourse. As a result, he attempted to link people's perspectives within a particular discourse in order to assess the situation based on the context in which these taboo expressions were used.

In certain types of discourse, words, phrases, or subjects that are deemed offensive, improper, or delicate in a specific culture or setting are referred to as taboo expressions. These components pose face special difficulties in uttering them publicly because of cultural and social restrictions and traditions.

On the same argument, These taboo words and expressions present difficulty for translators since they must be accurately translated, for example, from English into Arabic while honoring cultural customs and avoiding offending anyone. It seems crucial to consult a fundamental definition provided by Crystal (2003, p. 8) According to the Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language, the word "taboo" is a Tongan word that means "holy" or "untouchable.". All known cultures have taboos, which refer to specific behaviors, items, or interpersonal connections that society prefers to avoid, as well as the terminology used to discuss them. According to the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (2000), a taboo is defined as a "ban or inhibition resulting from social custom or aversion.". Because it is assumed that speaking a taboo word or expression will cause harm, taboo expressions in taboo discourse are either approved or prohibited at the institutional and personal levels. It has never been totally clear what kind of harm the speaker, listener, or society would suffer (Heins, 2007; McEnery, 2006).

Generally speaking, emotions such as rage, offense, surprise, excitement, and other heightened affective states frequently prompt speakers to employ taboo expressions, the use of which represents a departure from socially accepted linguistic norms and moral conventions. According to Jay (2009), offensive language can be described using both taboo and swear words. He classifies offensive language into ten categories: cursing, profanity, blasphemy, obscenity, vulgarity, slang, epithets, insults, slurs, and scatology are among the ten categories of taboo words according to Jay (1992). Four main taboo subjects are identified by Napoli and Hoeksema's (2009)

condensed typology: sex, religion, health, and bodily excretions. In a similar vein, according to Crystal (2003), verbal taboos typically focus on sex and related topics.

2.2. Taboo Discourse in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

Despite the limitations placed on it by social and religious norms, taboo discourse has garnered significant scholarly attention. However, taboo language is still widely used to discuss human behavior and the human body and is an essential part of daily communication. Santaemilia (2005) explains this:

It is present in some words that serve to describe our body, to prescribe medieval care, to arouse readers erotically, etc. It is also present in a series of genres such as erotic novels or pornography, and even in most contemporary fiction; also in endless series of discursive situations. (p. 4)

Literary genre frequently aims to shed light on facets of human sexuality that are usually hidden or ignored. Many novels that question the social mores and religious convictions of the communities in which they are set exhibit this tendency. In this sense, Lawrence's works offer a noteworthy illustration of how sexual language can be used to scrutinize and challenge individual and societal moral presumptions regarding sexual behavior. As such, it has been said that *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is "full in four-letter words" (Santaemilia, 2005, p. 4)

According to Blanchard (1975), Lawrence was acutely aware of the relationship between language and sexuality. She mentioned the following in reference to Foucault's reading of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The tension between these two concepts is examined in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, where it is acknowledged that the re-creation of sexuality in language must always, at the same time, resist language and that sexuality must be rescued from secrecy and brought into discourse. (p. 433).

According to Bell (1992), Lawrence uses a variety of approaches to present taboo discourse in the novel, highlighting the distinction between the body and the mind—whether the body is viewed as a physical entity or as a source of feelings, desires, and passions. Bell further argues that Lawrence consistently uses the sexual relationship between Oliver Mellors and Connie Chatterley as a means of revealing these impulses. As Bell (1992, p. 221) observes, "*Lawrence surely exercises considerable delicacy in keeping the subsequent vision of desire within this dramatic or responsive understanding.*"

In a similar vein, Mezei (1996) contends that Lawrence offers a novel representation of both heterosexuality and female sexuality by establishing a close relationship between narrative

progression and sexual climax. Mezei (1996) further argues that because scenes of sexual activity align with significant narrative developments and orgasmic culmination moments, they play a central role in the book. Lawrence frequently highlights that words are not intrinsically offensive; rather, what makes them taboo is human perception. This viewpoint, which challenges the constrictive ideals of Victorian morality, becomes a defining feature of much contemporary fiction.

Herbert (1998) claims that Lawrence saw taboo discourse as a sign of larger problems in Western society, problems that people frequently try to hide or repress. The role of taboo language in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* has been studied by many critics, who contend that Lawrence purposefully uses explicit sexual vocabulary to challenge censorship.

As a result, the book was outlawed in a number of places and illegally distributed so that English readers could get copies. Way (1964) pointed out that Lawrence uses a lot of allegedly obscene and sexual language in the text. However, Way stressed that Lawrence's deliberate choice of characters and the language they employ is one of the book's unique qualities. Instead of being used as gratuitous obscenity, these expressions are purposefully used as tools for examining sexuality. Way claims that Lawrence's goal was to rid these terms of their derogatory connotations so that readers could re-evaluate them and have more candid conversations about sexuality.

Lawrence, according to Bleich (2013), uses profanity to express "a claim of sexual domination, authority, or superiority" (p. 465). The use of profanity in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* "thus seems heroic, daring, willing to say the unsaid, and thus lifting both men and women to a new truth," (Bleich, p. 465).

It is clear from analyzing the sexual discourse that permeates the book that Lawrence, like many authors of the early twentieth century, aims to challenge male concerns about female sexual expression and raise awareness of the phallic aspect of sexuality. In addition, he sought to free readers from the limitations of Victorian euphemistic language, which frequently prevented authors from speaking candidly and directly about sexuality.

2.3. Previous Studies

Sexual discourse has not been extensively studied, especially in literary genres like novels and short stories. To the best of my knowledge, the majority of research done thus far has focused primarily on forbidden terms and expressions in movies or television shows. A few studies have been carried out to examine erotic discourse, especially in literary genres like novels and short stories.

More recently, Utami, Tarjana, and Subroto (2015) studied the associative meaning of pornography in sex-related product advertisements, including those for condoms, supplements, herbal remedies, medications, soaps, and so forth. The study's main goal was to identify anything pertaining to sex. The study's data came from tabloids, magazines, newspapers, and other relevant printed materials. The study's findings demonstrated that the associative meaning of pornography refers to anything associated with sex, including touching to arouse sexual desire, sexual strength and power, and satisfaction in having sex.

Sisko (2004) investigated the sexual languages employed by homosexual individuals in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* novel based on the same premise. According to Sisko, the primary effect of using sexual language in Oscar Wilde is to elicit bodily expressions, such as how those words can cause the body to cry or become sexually aroused. The study's conclusions demonstrated that Wilde employed objects as a kind of homosexual argot in which certain terms and phrases used by a particular community to communicate and identify with one another. Sisko's (2004) study, however, did not take into account any particular expressions relevant to a particular society when discussing the translation of sexual languages for heterosexual people.

Additionally, Linfot-Ham (2005) examined a few chosen novels to identify recurring sexual themes and to look into how word choice had changed over time. The study's data was chosen from a novel, and the findings demonstrated how word choice in erotic writing can be used to create sexual discourse.

Reicher et al. (2001) conducted a second study to examine how sexual imagery is used in advertising. The study sought to establish a relationship between brand recall and sexual appeals. The study's findings demonstrated that common food product seduction messages may arouse hedonistic fantasies. The lack of research on erotic writing was the primary driving force behind the current study.

Generally speaking, the reviewed studies have examined sexual or erotic discourse in a variety of contexts, including advertising, media, and literary texts. However, they have primarily focused on the meanings, functions, or persuasive effects of sexual language rather than on the systematic analysis of taboo discourse in literary fiction. Moreover, little attention has been paid to identifying the themes and sub-themes of taboo discourse and examining how taboo expressions are discursively constructed to convey underlying meanings and communicative functions within a literary work. This gap is particularly evident in research on D. H. Lawrence's (1928) *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, despite the prominence of the novel for its explicit treatment of sexuality. To address this gap, the present study conducts a thematic analysis of taboo discourse in selected excerpts from *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, identifying its major themes and sub-themes and

examining how taboo expressions are employed to construct meaning and fulfill communicative functions within the narrative.

3. Methodology

This section is devoted to describe the methodology which is employed in this paper. Furthermore, the method adopted in the paper is qualitative and the methodology is discourse analysis, which principally aims at revealing how the various sexual expressions in the taboo discourse found in the selected excerpts from Lawrence's (1928) *Lady Chatterley's lover* are linked up with the main theme and sub-themes of these excerpts.

This study analyses the thematic expressions of the taboo discourse taken from these excerpts in a bottom-up mode. The taboo discourse of these excerpts in the intended novel would be examined to explore and explain the functions, themes and sub-themes they depict, in the hope of ultimately developing a bottom-up classification of the most targeted sexual taboo themes and sub-themes depicted through taboo discourse chosen from the excerpts of the novel under investigation.

3.1. Data

The corpus of this paper was composed of ten excerpts purposively selected from Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* novel (1928). This novel was taken from formal publications. Braun and Clarke's (2006) model of thematic analysis was adopted to identify and analyse the sexual taboo expressions and discourse in these selected excerpts (see appendix) taken from Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* novel. After knowing the brief synopsis of these excerpts, it can be seen how taboo themes and sub-themes are constructed through taboo discourse to bring the readers' attention towards the text.

3.2. Procedures

The data collected consists of 10 extracts purposely selected from the novel to identify the themes were inductively generated using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis in these taboo excerpts taken from Lawrence's (1928) novel. They were analysed based on Braun and Clarke's (2006) model of thematic analysis. The main theme and sub-themes in each excerpt were identified and marked.

The procedure was applied to the English taboo excerpts taken from Lawrence's (1928) novel. The analysis revealed that the corpus comprised a number of themes and sub-themes. Extracting the main themes was a process of classification and categorization. The researcher

grouped the taboo discourse and expressions on the basis of the common issue they sought to depict.

The main themes were then divided into smaller sub-themes based on more subtle differences. The obtained groups were then labeled according to the specific topic they addressed and emphasized. To fully understand the themes, the researcher had to study and analyse the various incidents which might have led to the appearance of such taboo subjects. This context-driven thematic analysis helped the researcher develop his own classification of the most targeted themes dealing with the context under investigation

4. Results and Discussion

This paper seeks to answer a number of questions about the themes in Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* novel which were posed by the researcher. Thus, in this section the researcher tries to describe the results obtained from the qualitative analysis of taboo themes and sub-themes of these selected excerpts taken from the *Lady Chatterley's Lover* novel.

Table (1): Seducing Moments

Title of the Novel	Main theme	Sub-themes	Sexual items	
			Lexical items	Taboo discourse
Lady Chatterley's Lover	moments of seducing , ecstasy and desire	Unsatisfied man , desire, sadomasochism	breasts loins, stroked	“and he took no notice of Constance or lady Chatterley, he just softly stroked her loins or her breasts”. (Lawrence, 1928,P. 132)

As can be seen table 1above, the main extracted theme and sub-themes derived from excerpt (1) focus on portraying the enticing moments of sexual interactions. The writer selects highly sensitive lexical taboo items connected to taboo discourse to elicit visceral emotional and

sensory engagement from the reader through vivid depictions of intimate moments, as evidenced in this taboo discourse from the chosen novel: "... and he paid no attention to Constance or lady Chatterley; he simply caressed her loins or her breasts softly."

The reference to "loins" and "breasts" emphasizes the physical aspect of the seduction. In the scope of the novel, Constance's body is being "revived." Before encountering Mellors, she sensed her youth and physical being diminishing. This particular instant of contact emphasizes the core of desire and fertility, representing her shift from a state of intellectual dullness to one of lively, physical reality.

Table (2): Sexual inclination and intimate relationships

Title of the Novel	Main theme	Sub-themes	Sexual items	
			Lexical items	Taboo discourse
Lady Chatterley's Lover	Sexual inclination and intimate relationships	Arousal, vulnerability, and restrained sexuality	balls ,penis	"she softly rubbed her cheek in his belly, and gathered his balls in her hand. The penis stirred softly, with a strange life but did not rise up" (Lawrence, 1928,P. 247)

This excerpt mainly sheds light on the physical closeness and sexual matters, yet it is presented in a soft, subtle manner. The excerpt shows the passion and closeness between the two characters. The thematic structure in this discourse illustrates a scene of intimacy between the two individuals, highlighting tactile connection, tenderness, and erotic intimacy.

Furthermore, the analysis of this taboo discourse revealed a range of sub-themes, including excitement, sensitivity, and controlled sexuality. The depiction of the lexical items “ penis”, "stirring gently", yet "not rising" implies a multifaceted reaction and the inherent unpredictability of sexual excitement. The expression "with a peculiar life" imparts a contemplative or somewhat enigmatic essence to the moment instead of being entirely sensual.

This taboo discourse depicts sexuality as delicate and complex, emphasizing emotional and physical closeness over overt sexual activity. Also, the direct taboo terms in the excerpt such as: “Balls” , “Penis” serve as salient markers that capture the reader’s attention towards the situation . Other lexical items refer to body parts such as (cheek, belly, hand) are fundamentally functionalized by the author metaphorically to refer to the sexual situation in this taboo discourse taken from Lawrence’s novel.

Table (3): love , intimacy and sensuality

Title of the Novel	Main theme	Sub-themes	Sexual items	
			Lexical items	Taboo discourse
Lady Chatterley’s Lover	love , intimacy and sensuality	Desire and passion, Adoration of the body, Tenderness and affection, Progression of intimacy	Breasts , Navel , Maiden-hair	“... And kissed her breasts, and kissed her navel, and kissed her maiden-hair” (Lawrence, 1928,P. 260)

Regarding table (3), the emphasis of this taboo discourse deduced from selected excerpt of “ Chatterley’s lover” novel by Lawrence is on physical intimacy and lustful desire. The phrase "...and kissed" is used repeatedly to emphasize sensual attention and admiration by creating a slow, lingering movement across the woman's body in order to bring the attention of readers

The main theme deduced from the excerpt is the two characters' passionate love and sensual closeness. As can be seen, this taboo discourse mainly sheds light on “kissing” as a means of expressing sexual attraction and physical affection. In addition, a number of sub-themes, including passion and desire, manifests in the kiss sequence, which implies intense arousal and longing.

Also, enchantment of the body is another sub-theme that emphasizes appreciation of physical beauty by describing various body parts one after the other.

Tenderness and affection are additional sub-themes that can be inferred from the taboo discourse under investigation. According to the situation, “kissing” can express emotional intimacy and gentleness in addition to lust. Thus, a feeling of growing intimacy is created by moving from one body part to another.

Stylistically speaking, the repeated use of the lexical items "and kissed" can heighten the sensual atmosphere and highlight each act separately. Moreover, sexually suggestive references are mentioned by using a number of taboo lexical items such as "breasts," "navel," and "maiden-hair," refer to a woman's pubic hair or genital area in many literary or archaic contexts. Thus, these lexical items and kissing each one of them can be considered as taboo terms functionalized in the excerpt to draw the readers' attention towards the action.

Table (4): Natural Sexuality

Title of the Novel	Main theme	Sub-themes	Sexual items	
			Lexical items	Taboo discourse
Lady Chatterley's Lover	Natural Sexuality	Tenderness vs. Industrial Alienation, Paganism and Aesthetic Beauty	Bush of red gold hair (Pubic hair), Penis	“she threaded two pink champions in the bush of red gold hair above his penis” (Lawrence, 1928,P. 257)

For table (4), the analysis of the excerpt chosen from the novel indicate that the respect for the physical body and the transformation of sexual desire into something sacred, unadulterated, and in harmony with nature are the main themes.

The author, in this taboo discourse, presents the penis and the act of intimacy as a site of vitality and inherent beauty between the two lovers in spite of its a forbidden love. the author tries

to intermingle between humanity and nature by using "red gold hair" and "pink champions" as a reference to the wildflowers. He, metaphorically, makes a similarity between the beauty of nature and attractiveness of human body.

On other hand, a number of sub-themes can be inferred from the taboo discourse such as tenderness which is a combination of sexual potency and softness. Furthermore, the taboo lexical items "penis" highlights phallic tenderness, and adultery. Thus, the theme and sub-themes are evoked by the use of colours ("pink," "red," "gold") to make a connection between red lexical items with taboo lexical items metaphorically frame sexual intimacy as a natural ritual of crowning or adorning the body nature and sexual reference as an act of crowning or adorning the body.

Table (5): love and sexual intimacy

Title of the Novel	Main theme	Sub-themes	Sexual items	
			Lexical items	Taboo discourse
Lady Chatterley's Lover	love and sexual intimacy	Emotional intimacy, Compassion and kindness, Authenticity	Fucking, love	"I believe especially in being warm hearted in love, in fucking with a warm heart “(Lawrence, 1928,P. 232)

As indicated in Table 5, the main theme of this taboo discourse chosen from Lawrence's (1928) novel is the idea that love and sexual intimacy should be guided by genuine warmth, care, and emotional connection, rather than being purely physical or detached.

Concerning the sub-themes, plethora of ideas can be deduced based on the prompts and the context related to the situation of the taboo discourse mentioned above.

First of all, the first sub-theme is emotional intimacy can be understood via feelings and affection within romantic and sexual relationships between the two characters. Another sub-theme can be inferred represented by integration of love and sexuality in which it suggesting that the

physical intimacy between the two characters in the novel is the most meaningful when accompanied by emotional warmth.

To sum up, the author emphasizes that both love and sex should be approached with a “warm heart,” meaning genuine emotional care and connection.

For Sexual items in the taboo discourse found such as “fucking”, can be capitalized explicitly as a sexual act. Furthermore, the lexical term “**love**” can be functionalized metaphorically as taboo term when it refers to sexual affection based on the overall situation of the taboo discourse.

Table (6): Male Arousal and Sexual Activity

Title of the Novel	Main theme	Sub-themes	Sexual items	
			Lexical items	Taboo discourse
Lady Chatterley's Lover	Male Arousal and Sexual Activity	Personification / Anthropomorphism Courtship or Sexual Initiation, Embodied Desire, Agency of Sexual Impulse		“the penis rouses his head and says: how do you do?” (Lawrence, 1928,P. 40)

Regarding table (6), the main theme represented by author of this taboo discourse selected from Lawrence's (1928) novel “*the penis rouses his head and says: how do you do?*” is the male sexual arousal and sexual readiness.

In addition, the author functionalizes metaphorically taboo sexual lexical item “penis” to describe a sexual situation. The taboo word “penis” used explicitly to show the sexual relationship between the two characters. As a figure of speech, the author personified “penis” by giving it human quality to talk and address its speech to the woman as if it were a human being.. This

indicate the sexual intimacy and the physical tenderness between the two characters. Moreover, the lexical items “Rouses his head” utilized implicitly by the author as a metaphorical expression to suggest an erection as a sexual reference to the male organ.

Concerning the sub-themes in this taboo discourse, there are many suggested ideas deduced from these sub-themes. The first one is the sexual initiation represented by the context to can symbolize the beginning of a sexual encounter or an invitation to intimacy. The second sub-theme is embodied desire in which the penis acts as a stand-in for the speaker's sexual desire. Also, the author explicitly shows the sexual relationship between the two characters.

Generally speaking, the main theme and sub-themes in the taboo discourse of this excerpt show the sexual intimacy and desire between the two characters. This idea can be understood via lexical taboo items as well as the context of the taboo discourse under investigation.

Table (7): sexual desire and arousal

Title of the Novel	Main theme	Sub-themes	Sexual items	
			Lexical items	Taboo discourse
Lady Chatterley's Lover	sexual desire and arousal	Reawakening of desire, Embodiment of emotion, Vitality and instinct, Human sexuality as a natural force	penis (anatomical/sexual term) desire...	“The desire rose again, his penis began to stir like a live bird.” (Lawrence, 1928,P. 130)

Regarding table (7), the main theme of the taboo discourse in this excerpt is the sexual desire and arousal. It depicts the return of a strong physical and emotional urge, emphasizing the body's response to desire.

There are different sub-themes can be realized either via the context of this discourse or the taboo lexical items functionalized by the author to represent the thematic structure of the excerpt mentioned. The first sub-themes is reawakening of desire in which the lexical items in this

the phrase "The desire rose again" suggests a recurring or renewed feeling of longing or attraction. The second sub-theme is embodiment of emotion stating that desire is shown not just as a mental state but as something expressed through physical changes in the body. Moreover, arousal is used as another sub-theme to show the spontaneous and natural aspect of human experience imbedded in the human beings.

Generally speaking, this excerpt include plethora of taboo lexical items that refer directly or indirectly to sexual desire and arousal. Also, these taboo lexical items can be considered socially and culturally restricted and sensitive such as "penis". While other lexical items apparently are not taboo words, metaphorically and implicitly are taboo words such as "live bird", "desire", "rose" and "began to stir".

Table (8): Lust or excitement for intimacy

Title of the Novel	Main theme	Sub-themes	Sexual items	
			Lexical items	Taboo discourse
Lady Chatterley's Lover	Lust or excitement for intimacy	Physical arousal, Passion and intensity, Awakening or activation, Masculine sexuality	Penis, Loins, Fire in his loins	"The stirring restlessness of his penis, the stirring fire in his loins." (Lawrence, 1928,P. 131)

Regarding table (8), the main theme of the taboo discourse in the excerpt mentioned above is sexual desire or arousal. Both lexical terms "desire" and "arousal" describe the awakening of physical and emotional sexual energy raised and inferred via the context of this taboo discourse. On the same argument, there are variant sub-themes can be realized from the taboo discourse such as "Physical arousal" in which the expression "*The stirring restlessness of his penis*" focuses on a bodily response and growing sexual excitement. Another sub-theme can be deduced from the taboo discourse mentioned is "Passion and intensity". Thus sub-theme can be understood from the context of the taboo discourse "*The stirring fire in his loins*" in which the author uses the metaphor of fire to suggest strong desire, passion, and urge.

The repeated lexical item “stirring” implies another sub-theme “awakening or activation” in which these feelings are emerging, increasing between the two characters and these feelings focus on male sexual experience and the body's response to attraction or desire.

Generally, this taboo discourse includes vivid bodily and metaphorical language to emphasize the onset and intensification of male sexual desire. This idea was represented by the author via functionalizing explicitly or implicitly a number of taboo lexical items and expressions such as “penis”, “loins” and “fire in his loins”.

Table (9): Sexual objectification of women

Title of the Novel	Main theme	Sub-themes	Sexual items	
			Lexical items	Taboo discourse
Lady Chatterley's Lover	Sexual objectification of women,	male desire, bodily evaluation, gender hierarchy, and vulgarity.	Fuck, Cunt	“A woman's a lovely thing when 'er's deep ter fuck and cunt is good” (Lawrence, 1928,P. 139)

Concerning table (9), in this excerpt, "A woman's a lovely thing when 'er's deep ter fuck and cunt is good," is extremely vulgar and sexually explicit. It assesses a woman mainly based on how useful she is to men sexually.

This taboo discourse's central theme is the sexual objectification of women. The author uses a woman's sexual characteristics and performance to define her worth almost exclusively. The concept of this taboo discourse illustrates the woman's sexual gratification rather than acknowledging her as a complete person with thoughts and feelings. The main idea of these excerpts from the novel is enhanced by a multitude of sub-themes. In the first sub-theme, "Reduction of identity to sexuality," the author highlights the woman as a sexual object rather than an individual, and her desirability is determined solely by sexual standards.

Additionally, the author improved this concept by functionalizing explicit sexual lexical items that defy polite speech norms and have shock value. Depending on the context of the taboo discourse, such language may indicate intimacy, dominance, or hostility between the two characters. Once more, in order to draw readers' attention to the event, the author uses explicit and direct taboo words like "fuck" and "cunt" to illustrate the sexual and adulterous relationship between the two characters in the context of the taboo discourse.

Although they subtly and indirectly contribute to the overall sexual evaluation being expressed, other lexical items in the discourse, such as "woman," "lovely," "deep," and "good," are not sexual items in and of themselves. In summary, the idea in this discourse mainly focuses on the author's use of taboo discourse to express sexual objectification, with sub-themes of male desire, bodily evaluation, and vulgarity.

Table (10): Sexual intimacy and arousal

Title of the Novel	Main theme	Sub-themes	Sexual items	
			Lexical items	Taboo discourse
Lady Chatterley's Lover	sexual intimacy and arousal	Affection and Physical Tenderness, Sexual Desire and Attraction, Arousal and Physiological Response, Initiation or Encouragement of Sexual Activity, Power, Agency, and Interaction	Penis, stir	"...and she quickly kissed the soft penis, that was beginning to stir again." (Lawrence, 1928,P. 237)

As can be seen in table (10), The sexual intimacy and arousal between the two characters in Lawrence's (1928) novel Lady Chatterley's Lover can be considered as the main theme that was taken from the taboo discourse of the chosen excerpt.

Additionally, the taboo discourse's concept of sexual intimacy was strengthened by a number of sub-themes. The first is affection and physical tenderness, where kissing implies more than just physical contact but also a level of care, intimacy, or affection. The desire and attraction for sexual activity is the second sub-theme. This can be inferred from the situation in which mutual or perceived sexual interest is highlighted by the focus on a sexual body part and its response.

Furthermore, the third sub-theme is the initiation or encouragement of sexual activity, which was strengthened by the act of kissing as an action that might promote, rekindle, or prolong a close relationship.

From the standpoint of taboo discourse, the author advances a scene focused on sexual interaction and rising arousal while highlighting the intimacy between the two characters through sensory descriptions like "soft" and physical action like "quickly kissed".

In the context of the taboo discourse, "penis" is a direct sexual reference was functionalized by the author to draw the readers' attention towards the situation in the excerpt as a taboo discourse.

Generally speaking, the analysis demonstrates that Lawrence employs both explicit taboo lexical items and figurative expressions to evoke sexual desire. The explicit lexical items mainly consist of direct references to sexual organs and sexual acts, such as penis, breasts, loins, cunt, fuck, fucking, and balls. These taboo words immediately foreground the sexual nature of the discourse and intensify the emotional and physical immediacy of the scenes.

Alongside these explicit terms, Lawrence also employs numerous implicit and metaphorical expressions that indirectly construct sexual desire. Expressions such as stirring gently, not rising, fire in his loins, the desire rose again, began to stir, rouses his head, live bird, and kissed metaphorically represent sexual arousal, intimacy, and emotional connection without relying solely on direct sexual vocabulary. Furthermore, references to colours and nature, including pink, red gold hair, and pink champions, metaphorically associate sexuality with natural beauty, fertility, and vitality. The combination of explicit taboo words and figurative language enables Lawrence to portray sexuality as both physical and emotionally meaningful.

The findings reveal that taboo words and expressions are not employed merely for shock value; rather, they perform several important discursive functions throughout the novel. First, they explicitly represent sexual intimacy, physical desire, and bodily experience. Second, many taboo expressions are metaphorically functionalized to symbolize emotional intimacy, affection, tenderness, fertility, and the harmony between human sexuality and nature.

The analysis further indicates that Lawrence frequently uses literary devices such as metaphor, personification, symbolism, repetition, and sensory imagery to transform taboo expressions into meaningful narrative tools. In addition, several apparently neutral lexical items become taboo only through their surrounding context, demonstrating that the interpretation of taboo discourse depends largely on discourse context rather than isolated lexical meaning. Consequently, taboo discourse in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* functions as a literary strategy that constructs sexual identity, emotional relationships, bodily experience, and the characters' resistance to conventional social and cultural restrictions on sexuality.

The thematic analysis identified ten major themes with several recurring sub-themes, including sexual desire, intimacy, passion, tenderness, emotional connection, physical arousal, reawakening of desire, affection, sexual objectification, and the naturalization of sexuality. Across the ten excerpts, Lawrence consistently combines explicit taboo vocabulary with metaphorical and symbolic language to construct taboo discourse. Explicit lexical items (e.g., *penis*, *breasts*, *loins*, *fuck*, and *cunt*) directly represent sexual acts and anatomy, whereas metaphorical expressions (e.g., *fire in his loins*, *began to stir*, *rouses his head*, and *the desire rose again*) indirectly evoke desire, emotional intimacy, and bodily experience.

These findings demonstrate that taboo expressions in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* perform multiple communicative and literary functions beyond mere explicitness. They contribute to character development, portray emotional and physical relationships, symbolize the harmony between sexuality and nature, and challenge the social conventions governing sexual discourse. Consequently, the study concludes that Lawrence systematically functionalizes taboo language as a central narrative and stylistic resource for constructing the novel's discourse on sexuality.

5. Conclusion

In this research article, this study investigated the taboo discourse found in selected excerpts taken from Lawrence's (1928) *Lady Chatterley's Lover* novel.

I can conclude that taboo discourse goes beyond literal expressions by using metaphorical allusions to taboo concepts, rather than being restricted to the direct use of taboo words. Taboo discourse has a sexual purpose as well as a social and cultural one. The corpus was examined with an emphasis on the metaphorical meanings that underlie the use of taboo lexical items in the chosen excerpts. The explicit and implicit meanings of these lexical items, as well as how they are functionalized within the taboo discourse of the chosen excerpts from Lawrence's (1928) *Lady Chatterley's Lover* novel, were given special consideration.

Regarding the first research question "What are the taboo words and expressions used by the authors to stimulate the sexual excitement in the readers?", at the first step of analyzing the 10 excerpts and I found that it might account for the emergence of different themes in these excerpts of this taboo discourse context. The most themes and sub-themes in the taboo discourse of these excerpts show sexual excitement and desire to rouse the readers' attentions by using different sexual lexical items directly or metaphorically to be interpreted by readers, for instance, "*she softly rubbed her cheek in his belly, and gathered his balls in her hand. The penis stirred softly, with a strange life but did not rise up*", "*the penis rouses his head and says: how do you do?*", "*A woman's a lovely thing when 'er's deep ter fuck and cunt is good*" ...,etc.

These taboo sexual items used directly to readers so as to bring their attentions in the context of the intended taboo discourse. In view of that, the emergence of such themes in taboo discourse can be an indication of the resulting expectations for more sexual excitement that targeted readers for sexual arousing and making pleasure.

Regarding the second research question posed as follow "How are the taboo words and expressions functionalized for constructing the taboo discourse in the discourse community?" One of the interesting findings of this research is the careful selection of the sexual taboo items in the taboo discourse context. While themes and sub-themes are likely used to show the taboo atmosphere underlying in these selected taboo discourse, taboo words and expressions, directly or metaphorically, were functionalized by the author to enhance and justify the taboo discourse implied in these selected excerpts from Lawrence's novel. Although the metaphorical expressions implied of these lexical items in the taboo discourse might indicate sexual considerations and reservations, assuming that all existing lexical items are due to their metaphorical references.

Furthermore, all these metaphorical references implied in these excerpts are rooted in religion and culture of the shared discourse community. For instance, lexical items "fuck", "breasts", "penis", "cunt" can be understood as taboo expressions directly based on the traditions and culture of the discourse community.

On the other hand, other lexical items can be understood metaphorically as taboo expressions deduced from the context according to the shared knowledge of the discourse community such as words in the expression "...rouses his head" apparently are not taboo words, but metaphorically within the context of the discourse community indicate as taboo expression, for instance, "*the penis rouses his head and says: how do you do?*" can directly understood as taboo discourse. In the same way, the words "stir" and "a live bird" in the context of the discourse "*The desire rose again, his penis began to stir like a live bird.*" Can be considered as taboo words based on the shared knowledge in the discourse community.

To sum up, this study demonstrates that taboo discourse in Lawrence's (1928) *Lady Chatterley's Lover* extends beyond the direct use of explicit sexual vocabulary to include metaphorical and context-dependent expressions that acquire taboo meanings through the shared cultural and social knowledge of the discourse community. The thematic analysis identified sexual desire and excitement as the dominant themes, together with related sub-themes that reveal how taboo discourse is strategically employed to evoke readers' emotional and sensual engagement. The findings further show that taboo words and expressions perform important discursive functions by constructing intimacy, intensifying erotic meaning, and reflecting the cultural and ideological values embedded in the novel. Both explicit lexical items and metaphorical expressions contribute to the construction of taboo discourse, demonstrating that the interpretation of taboo language depends not only on the lexical meanings of individual words but also on their contextual, cultural, and communicative functions. Consequently, this study contributes to the understanding of taboo discourse in literary texts by showing how sexual language and metaphor interact to create meaning and by highlighting the value of thematic analysis as an effective approach for examining the linguistic, cultural, and discursive dimensions of taboo expressions in literary discourse.

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Appendix: Taboo excerpts

- 1.” ... and he took no notice of Constance or lady Chatterley, he just softly stroked her loins or her breasts.” (Lawrence, 1928,P. 132)
- 2.” she softly rubbed her cheek in his belly, and gathered his balls in her hand. The penis stirred softly, with a strange life but did not rise up.” (Lawrence, 1928,P. 247)
3. “.... And kissed her breasts, and kissed her navel, and kissed her maiden-hair ...”(Lawrence, 1928,P. 260)
4. “she threaded two pink champions in the bush of red gold hair above his penis.” (Lawrence, 1928,P. 257)
5. “I believe especially in being warm hearted in love, in fucking with a warm heart.” (Lawrence, 1928,P. 232)
6. “the penis rouses his head and says: how do you do?” (Lawrence, 1928,P. 40)
7. “The desire rose again, his penis began to stir like a live bird.” (Lawrence, 1928,P. 130)
8. “The stirring restlessness of his penis, the stirring fire in his loins.” (Lawrence, 1928,P. 131)
9. “A woman’s a lovely thing when ‘er’s deep ter fuck and cunt is good.” (Lawrence, 1928,P. 139)
10. “...and she quickly kissed the soft penis, that was beginning to stir again.” (Lawrence, 1928,P. 237)