FUNCTIONS OF EUPHEMISM
IN PUTU WIJAYA'S SHORT STORY *GURU*

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Abstract: Euphemisms in the form of non-offensive or subtle expressions to replace the one felt to be insulting or unpleasant become guidelines in social interaction, essentially, using words with good meanings or intentions. Euphemism can also be interpreted as an expression that is not straightforward, the driving motive behind the development of pejorative, motivated by a natural human attitude, avoiding conflict by not hurting or offending other people. If there were no euphemisms, there might be depression or demeaning of meaning. This research is focused on the functions of euphemism in the short story entitled *Guru* written by Putu Wijaya with the concept of the functions of euphemism in speech acts. The research is conducted by descriptive qualitative method related to social phenomena, in this case the uses of euphemism either in a literary or social text.   The results show that out of the 15 data obtained, there are 12 data referred to the function of euphemism as a means of speech refinement (80%), 2 as a means of diplomacy (13%, and 1 keeping something secret (6%).
Keywords: *euphemism; pejorative; social interaction; language refinement; diplomacy*

INTRODUCTION

Humans are social beings who must interact with one another in meeting various needs of life. Therefore, a person cannot possibly live alone without interacting with other people. In everyday life, humans recognize culture and create various forms of ideas, activities, and artifacts to fulfill their needs (Korneeva, 2019). Related to this, humans highly need language, as the most important element that affects life and culture. Language has an important role in human life because it is the main communication tool. As a means of communication, language includes words, collections of words, clauses and sentences that are expressed proportionally (Candria, 2019). While the notion of language as a human communication system language is expressed through the arrangement of sounds or written expressions that are structured to form larger units, such as morphemes, words, and sentences. Meanwhile, in the perspective of Functional Systemic Linguistics (FSL), language is a form of social semiotics that is working in situational and cultural contexts, which are used both orally and in writing. In the LSF

perspective, language is seen as a construction formed through simultaneous functions and systems (Endarto, 2017).

Language is also part of the most basic human abilities, as well as being the main feature of the Homo sapiens species. Although animals have the ability to use symbols or signs to communicate, the communication system is not a language. Different from animals, humans are able to exchange speech through language to interact with one another. By this it is seen that the main function of language is to meet the needs of communication among human beings. In addition, in human life, language is also closely related to cultural development (Cahyaningtyas, et.al, 2015).

There are three factors that show the roles of language in cultural development. First, language is a cultural element. Every activity in human life has an element of language in it. So, to understand the development of a culture, it is necessary to first examine the development of language in society. Second, language is a marker of social stratification. Language can show patterns of relationships and social stratification in a society. Third, language is a symbol of ethnic culture. Language can show cultural symbols in an ethnic group. This is evident from the existence of various dialects or from various ethnic groups. This is caused by geographical differences and the stratification of the social environment among ethnic groups in people's lives (Boltayevna, 2020).

Obviously, there is a reciprocal relationship between language and culture. What is more, people's cultural background and behaviors shape the way they interpret the world around them and since language we use and the social contexts in which it occurs are mutually related, language should be treated "not only as a mode of thinking but, above all, as a cultural practice (Kavakli, 2020).

Therefore, language plays an important role in human life because language functions as a means of communication among humans. It is considered so commonplace that it is rarely thought about, as is walking and breathing. If we look further, the influence of language on human life is so strong, that it is not uncommon for disputes to occur in society or in other words, any kind of symptoms that arises in human life is caused by language (Banga, 2015).

It is 'natural' people say "language is power". This word is so simple, but it has a complex meaning. This statement is put forward by Norman Fairclough, one of the founders of critical discourse analysis as applied to sociolinguistics (Bulan and Kasman, 2018) as Fairclough is so concerned about language. In connection with this, on the other hand there are those who argue that: "we think with the word, and with words we form concepts". (Erkoci and Bushgjjikaj 2019).

Based on the description above, it is clear that the role or function of language in human life cannot be doubted, as whatever our activities are, starting from the morning: at school, at the office, at the market, and so on, it is always colored with "language" as a means of communication. Even whatever the name of the scientific discipline is, absolutely uses language as an introduction for a writer to convey ideas readers. However, in certain circumstances many people still ask about the function of language. This is possible if answered with a statement that the function of language is as a means of communication. Language is a crucial tool for human communication, central and most important among all human semiotic systems. Language is created by human civilization in a row with the development of culture, thought, and also technology. It is one of the most important things in human life because humans are social beings, humans cannot live without having an interaction with other living things. Language becomes a medium for the human to communicate with each other (Kanaza, 2020).

Without language, science and technology cannot grow and develop. In addition, language in the cultural structure has a dual position, function, and role, namely as the root and product of culture which also functions as a means of thinking and supporting the growth and development of science and technology. Therefore, if we are careful in using language, we will also be careful in thinking because language is a mirror of the power of reason or mind. Language can be said to be a very effective social control tool because every day we use language as a means of communication among one another, both orally and in the form of writing (Baydak, 2015).

Crystal in Mansoor (2019) believes that politeness, in Sociolinguistics and Pragmatics, is a term that signifies linguistic features associated with norms of social behavior, in relation to notions

like courtesy, rapport, deference and distance. Such features involve the usage of specific discourse markers (please), suitable tones of voice, and tolerable forms of address. Theories of politeness are involved in what belongs to either of these linguistic subfields for politeness is specifically concerned with language use that is connected with pragmatics-and it is a phenomenon that represents a link between language and the social world.

Language is a reflection of one's personality; even language is a mirror of the nation's personality. The meaning of this statement is that through the language used, a person or a nation can know the level of their personality. The quality of the personality of a person or group of people will be difficult to measure, if they do not express their thoughts or feelings through language acts (both verbal and nonverbal) in a polite manner (Caplan, Adams, Boyd, 2020).

Language politeness is a reflection of a person's character. Therefore, the character of

a person can be built through one of the abilities of language skills, i.e. the ability to usepolite language. The strategy of language politeness as one of the efforts to build the

character of a nation can be effected through: 1) family education by having habitual, creating a conducive atmosphere and guidance; 2) positive language attitudes, both local and national languages, by building cognitive, affective, and conative aspects, and 3) mastery of polite vocabularies, both receptive and productive (Sulastriana, 2018).

Politeness plays a crucial role in all cultures and societies for maintaining relationships and for face saving. Although politeness is common to all cultures and languages, how it functions and is realized varies from one culture to another. Politeness exists as a result of interactions between people and culture, and politeness is acquired with the passage of time through the socio-cultural coexistence of people with one another. People perform functions of politeness to various degrees to successfully communicate with each other (Shalihah and Zuhd, (2020).

Accordingly, it can be said that politeness is not a natural phenomenon, but it is acquired gradually and programmed in terms of social norms in the mind of the individual who is going to express them through his behavior .This indicates that the social rules of a society are specific for that society, and

the rules enable the individual to use his speech acts appropriately (Al-Duleimi, 2016)

Language politeness is closely related to euphemism. As a symptom of language, euphemism is a kind of reference in the form of expressions that do not offend people, or subtle expressions to replace references that may be felt insulting, offensive, or suggesting something unpleasant. In everyday communication, both spoken and written, we often hear or read words or sentences that contain such euphemisms. However, it feels natural, considering that communication requires the accuracy of message disclosure so that the intended message can be understood by those who receive the message properly (Sibull, et.al. (2019).

The use of euphemism can avoid conflict and this is the main function of euphemism which is under the umbrella of sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistics is an interdisciplinary science or a combination of two disciplines, namely sociology and linguistics. This science explains the human ability to use language rules appropriately in different situations. Using polite language through euphemism is a picture of the language maker to use good and polite language, but the messages contained in it, both implied and explicit, can be conveyed properly. Euphemism through a sociolinguistic approach and based on the concept of the function of euphemism becomes the object of this research, with the aim of identifying and analyzing the functions of euphemism in Putu Wijaya's short story *Guru* (2011) so that the readers, especially the academic community, understand and apply the functions of euphemism in spoken or written language. The concept of euphemism as a means of avoiding conflict by means of smooth expressions are also supported by two relevant studies. The first is conducted by Khedir and Almoayidi (2018) stating that euphemisms are sweet-sounding, or at least inoffensive, alternatives for expressions that speakers or writers prefer not to use in executing a particular communicative intention on a given occasion; and the second conducted by Iswara and Sastaparamitha (2020) stating that euphemisms are the replacements of taboo, rude and inappropriate expressions. From the two previous studies, it is clearly pictured that the main function of euphemism is to sustain harmony in social interactions by polite appropriateness of language use.

Putu Wijaya is a top Indonesian writer who is often called Putu. Putu Wijaya is known as a playwright, novelist, short story writer, and journalist. He starts writing since junior high school and he always says "Writing for me is not an easy job", as a way to remember anyone who has contributed to his writing development. For Putu, writing is not just telling stories, but also expressing opinions with calculated strategies but without losing sense and spontaneity. Putu Wijaya does a deconstruction. He floods his readers' heads with works of this kind, with unexpected themes. Some of Putu's works depict a world that is turned upside down, which is strange and miraculous, and beyond common sense. It is appropriate to say that Putu's works are modern fairy tales.

In his career Putu Wijaya is famous as a playwright. From his hands have emerged several modern drama scripts with the flow of consciousness. The drama scripts he writes are not the same as conventional drama scripts. In addition, Putu Wijaya also writes several novels with new genres. His novels are also "stream of consciousness", "absurd". Novels with psychological and philosophical patterns are the characteristics of Putu Wijaya's writings. Putu Wijaya also writes short stories. A number of short stories appears, both in the form of books and published in various magazines and newspapers. Just like his dramas and novels, Putu Wijaya's short stories also have a new style, new streams of consciousness, and reveal many streams of consciousness. Putu Wijaya is a very energetic and versatile person.

The element of alienation as a characteristic of modern man is increasingly evident in his novels. This is where he shows his talents as a novelist to the fullest. Putu Wijaya received several awards and prizes for his works. In 1967 Putu Wijaya's script "The Singing Ocean" won the third prize from the Indonesian National Theater Development Board in the Play Writing Competition. In 1980 he received the Asean Literature Prize (SEA Write Award) held in Bangkok, Thailand for his work 'Telegram" and in 2008 he received the Indonesian Theater Federation Award at Taman Ismail Marzuki (Kasmanah, 2021).

The short story entitled *Guru* tells the story of a father who is restless and angry at the wishes of his son, Taksu. This father is not happy that Taksu aspires to be a teacher. According to the father, teachers have no future, teachers are jobs for people who fail. He has tried everything, such as buying a car for Taksu so that Taksu would change his mind not to dream of being a teacher anymore. However, his efforts fail. Taksu is adamant that he wants to be a teacher, no matter what his father says. Then after ten years, the father is no longer restless and angry. Taksu has become a teacher, a teacher for young people, the nation and the country for transmitting the work ethic.

In today's era, the teaching profession is still often underestimated. There are still many people like "bapak" character in Putu Wijaya's short story in the real world; people who think that teaching is not a profession that should be coveted. Through this short story we can take a message. If we have a dream for our future, we must focus on that dream and ignore any negative words that other people say, as in the end, we will live our own lives. If we succeed in achieving the dreams we have, other people will automatically realize our abilities. Putu Wijaya's short story deserves thumb-up. Through this short story he tells the real things in people's lives, the things as they are in society, including the language used, and certainly related to sociolinguistics.

Sociolinguistics, under which lies the research, is a study that compiles theories about the relationship between society and language. Based on the previous understanding, sociolinguistics also studies and discusses social aspects of language, especially the differences in language related to social factors (Nisa, 2019). Based on some of the opinions above, it can be concluded that sociolinguistics does not only study language but also learns about aspects of language used by society. Sociolinguistics is an interdisciplinary science between sociology and linguistics, two fields of empirical science that are closely related. Sociology is an objective and scientific study of humans in society, institutions, and social processes that exist in society.

Sociology seeks to find out how society comes into being, lasting, and persisting. By studying institutions, social processes and all social problems in society, it will be known how humans adapt to their environment, how they socialize, and place themselves in their respective places in society. On the other hand, linguistics is a field of science that studies language, or the science that takes language as the object of study. Thus it can be said that

sociolinguistics is an interdisciplinary field of science that studies language in relation to the use of that language in society (Ginting, 2020). From the description above, it can be concluded that sociolinguistics is an interdisciplinary study of language in relation to the language used in that environment.

The use of sociolinguistics for practical life is very much, because language is a means of human verbal communication. In its use, sociolinguistics provides knowledge of how to use language in society. Sociolinguistics provides knowledge about the various language variations that exist in society. We as humans who live in society, sociolinguistics provides knowledge about how we can place ourselves in the use of our language in a particular society. Sociolinguistics also provides a description of language variations in relation to users and their uses. In addition, sociolinguistics allows us to examine the phenomena and symptoms of language that exist in society through sociolinguistic "glasses".

As a science that studies language in society, sociolinguistics is able to "melt" with other fields of science. This is because language is a human verbal tool that exists in various other fields of science. As a means of communication, of course, language cannot be separated from other sciences as a means to express the results of thought. In addition, the object of sociolinguistic study is language in society. Surely. it is very possible for sociolinguistics to be interrelated with other fields of science such as politics, culture, economics, and so on (Akhtar, 2020). From the description above, it is illustrated that euphemism is part of sociolinguistic studies with the thought that euphemisms are part of language customs that are found in all cultures and are part of etiquette or language manners in interpersonal or group interactions at the level of power such as social, position, or age or solidarity.

Euphemism
Language is not just a means of communication. The relationship between a speaker and his interlocutor can be strengthened because of the use of the right language, on the other hand, if the language is used politely and appropriately, social relations can stretch and even break. Polite and proper language refers to euphemism which is a characteristic of all languages. This statement does not imply that all languages have the same part of euphemism, which means that statements contained in one language and considered a form of euphemism are not necessarily the same as those in other languages. Euphemism is a way of conveying information to audiences in the form of words, phrases or in a broader grammatical unit because euphemism is essentially using language politely without losing the concept of meaning it contains.

The beginning of meaning is conceptual meaning, that is, meaning based on language conventions. Conceptual meaning is the most important element in conveying messages because it includes logical, cognitive, and denotative meanings. In other words, the conceptual meaning is the meaning according to the concept, according to the referent, and there is no association or other meaning. However, in a certain text, euphemisms that are present may contain associations or other meanings because humans as reporters are creative through language. Therefore, words, phrases, or sentences may experience changes in meaning and there is a tendency to manipulate reality because of this form of creativity. This can happen according to the practical interests of language users, including expressing arguments for social and cultural problems (Mohammed and Majeed, 2018).

Euphemisms give color to the use of language and reflect the attitude or policy of a person in presenting a message between uncertainty in facing facts and the need to convey information. This is related to the value of the taste of the language. Choices of words that have a high sense of value tend to stick in the minds of listeners or readers than choices that have low value. The choice of words (diction) that has a high sense of value shows respect for the person or institution that is being discussed. Euphemism can be positive because people, groups, institutions, authorities can use euphemisms to reconcile the atmosphere and stability, but it can also be negative because the reality is not known for certain.

It is undeniable that the use of euphemisms in language is found in almost all ethnic groups in the world. Its use is increasingly spreading to various fields of life and professions in our society. Euphemisms which are part of language politeness are seen as important to use to maintain relationships with friends, work partners, relatives, and superiors. The use of euphemisms in language can be identified from the use of certain words in

communication. The right choice of words or diction marks the use of euphemisms in each professional field and life activity (Al-Khasawneh, 2018).

The study of euphemisms is able to describe various uses of word meanings related to the tendency of language culture in modern society in general. Changes that occur in a society can also be seen from the frequency with which certain words are used in everyday life. The emergence of new meanings in language, especially literary texts, indicates a change in the value system in the language that is closely related to the culture of the speaking community. Avoiding language taboos and using euphemisms in communication is a form of politeness in language. The expression of euphemistic words makes us feel comfortable to express things that we feel are inappropriate, and neutralize them, for example topics about death, unemployment, taboos, and animals. We are constantly naming and labeling the words with expressions that make them sound better (Serli, 2018).

The function of euphemism
The functions of euphemism according to Bachriani, et.al. (2018) include: (1) As a means of language refinement. Euphemism is used in the form of words or expressions that have indecent, unpleasant or terrible denotations, low connotations or dishonor which are replaced with other expressions to avoid various obstacles or social conflicts. (2) As a means to keep something secret. This euphemism serves as a tool to keep something secret, for example in the field of medicine where doctors cannot provide actual information to patients whose disease cannot be cured or is fatal. (3) As a means of diplomacy. This euphemism is usually used by leaders or officials to appreciate or satisfy their subordinates or people in order to avoid unwanted things. (4) As a means of education. Euphemism is an educational tool. This is to avoid direct mention of words that are impolite or recognize words that are previously rarely known by the public at large because of the influence of the use of foreign words. (5) As a means of danger repellent. This euphemism used as a tool to ward off danger is a concept that reflects human efforts to obtain peace, safety, and welfare.

METHOD

This type of research is qualitative research with content analysis method. Qualitative method that requires categories as units of analysis, various categories made based on theoretical references, both categories of form and purpose and of meaning which are then simplified in steps by rational thinking (Moleong, 2018); while the design uses inductive and deductive design models. The object of this research is related to euphemism. The data of this research are words, phrased and sentences that contain euphemisms. The data source is the short story *Guru* by Putu Wijaya and the data are taken randomly in the forms of words, phrases and sentences oriented to euphemism.

The data collection techniques used in this study are observation and recording. In order for this research to be more accurate, the writer (1) reads the the short story intensively, (2) notes the use of euphemism in the storyline, (3) sorts out the types of data that contain the functions of euphemism to be further presented in the form of discussions. The data analysis procedures in this study are related to the symbolic message of information with the following steps. 1) determine the form and function of each euphemism, 2) explore and reveal each euphemism meaning. 3) express the purpose or function of the euphemism used. 4) and based on these steps, conclusions are drawn which are then used as the basis for realizing the research report (Busetto, 2020).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Humans as cultured social beings have to pay attention to how expressions are presented in good language, especially regarding the uses of words that have cultural meanings. Expression of language that is expressed in the form of words must remain in the corridor of social and cultural norms that can be accepted by the wider community. There are certain words that must be avoided, because they are considered taboo and are prohibited from being disseminated. By using euphemism in speaking and writing, social conflicts can be avoided.

Euphemism, a subtler expression instead of a harsh one and considered harmful or unpleasant becomes the object of this research based on the short story *Guru* by Putu Wijaya. The data studied are in the form of words, phrases and sentences taken from the short story focused on the functions of euphemism, among others: language refinement,

keeping things secret, diplomacy, education and hazard repellent.

Language refinement
Data 1:
> *"Anak saya bercita-cita menjadi guru. Tentu saja saya dan istri saya jadi shok."* (Wijaya, 2011, p.1)

Analysis:

The word *shok* in Data 1 is included in the euphemism category because it is considered a subtler expression to describe an atmosphere or situation that is very stressful. The word shok above itself comes from the English word "shock" which means unpleasant experience. This expression occurs when Bapak characters knows the desire of his son who aspires to become a teacher. For Bapak character, this is something that really surprises him and to hinder his son's dreams he is willing to do anything even if he has to drain the entire contents of his deposit.

Data 2:
> *"Kami dengar selentingan, kamu mau jadi guru, Taksu?"* (Wijaya, 2011, p.1)

Analysis:

The word *selentingan* in Data 2 is euphemisms because it is felt to be subtler in expressing an utterance that has the meaning of being the subject of public discussion.

Data 3:
> *"Guru itu hanya sepeda tua."* (Wijaya, 2011, p.1)

Analysis:

The words *sepeda tua*, meaning old bicycle in Data 3 is a euphemism to say a junk that has no value at all. Junk refers to something so worthless that no one wants it.

Data 4:
> *"Ngapain jadi guru, mau mati berdiri? Kamu kan bukan orang yang gagal, kenapa kamu jadi putus asa begitu?!"* (Wijaya, 2011, p.1)

Analysis:

The word *gagal* or failed in the above expression shows a word refinement or euphemism to replace a harsher word, namely the mention of a person who has no future or a loser.

Data 5:
> *"Yang dijadikan bulan-bulanan, saya."* (Wijaya, 2011, p.3)

Analysis:

The word *bulan-bulanan* is a euphemism because it is considered to be a refinement of the condition of someone who is a victim of anger venting.

Data 6:
> *"Sekali ini kami tidak muncul dengan tangan kosong."* (Wijaya, 2011, p.3)

Analysis:

The words *tangan kosong*, or empty handed is a euphemism. The word empty-handed is used to avoid saying that we do not bring anything when we visit or meet someone so that we do not seem to respect the person concerned.

Data 7:
> *"Taksu senang sekali. Tapi kami sendiri kembali sangat terpukul."* (Wijaya, 2011, p.3)

Analysis:

The word *terpukul*, which also means offended in Data 7 is a euphemism of a disappointing situation. In addition, the word terpukul is generally used to refine words that have a sad or dissatisfied meaning

Data 8:
> *"Dipuji sedikit saja sudah mau banting tulang, kerja rodi tidak peduli tidak dibayar."* (Wijaya, 2011, p.3)

Analysis:

The words *banting tulang* or toiling is a euphemism to express working very hard regardless of time. The use of the words indicates a very unpleasant situation for a person to be able to meet the needs of his life or his family, so the word toil can be used to smooth out the meaning.

Data 9:
> *"Puji-pujian itu dibuat supaya orang-orang yang lemah hati seperti kamu."* (Wijaya, 2011, p.3)

Analysis:

The words *lemah hati* or weak-hearted in Data 9 is considered a softer word to express the word not having a stand or determination, so it belongs to the category of euphemism.

Data 10:
> *"Pesawat penerimanya sudah rusak."* (Wijaya, 2011, p.6)

Analysis:

The word *pesawat* conveys a subtler meaning for the expression or utterance using the word "brain". The word "brain: is considered a word with harsh connotations, so that the word pesawat sounds smoother to replace it

Data 11:

> *Ketika kami tanyakan bagaimana hasil perenungannya selama dua bulan, Taksu memberi jawaban yang sama.* (Wijaya, 2011, p.3)

Analysis:

The words hasil perenungan, which means reflection result is a euphemism that falls into the category of smoothing words from thoughts or situations in undergoing the process of determining a difficult choice.

Data 12:

> *"Sudah waktunya membuat shock therapy pada Taksu."* (Wijaya, 2011, p.4)

Analysis:

The words shock therapy is an expression of refinement of the word to put pressure on someone so that they want to do an order, a euphemism.

Keeping things secret
Data 13:

> *Kami berobat ke sana-kemari, sampai berkali-kali melakukan enseminasi buatan.* (Wijaya, 2011, p.9)

Analysis:

The word *inseminasi* or insemination has a euphemistic meaning because it basically refers to an artificial pregnancy, an unnatural pregnancy; then the word insemination is a closure of the meaning of artificial pregnancy which is considered uncomfortable for the perpetrator.

Diplomacy
Data 14:

> *"...padahal kamu masih muda, otak kamu encer, dan biaya untuk sekolah sudah kami siapkan."* (Wijaya, 2011, p.2)

Analysis:

The expression above is a category of euphemism used as a means of diplomacy. The expression above occurs when the Bapak character persuades his son not to become a teacher because for him the teacher is a job that has no future. By using the expression in Data 14, the Bapak character tries to persuade his son not to do things

that he thinks very bad as the son will plunge into life difficulties.

Data 15:

> *"Kamu kan bukan jenis orang yang suka dipuji kan? Kamu sendiri bilang apa gunanya puji-pujian, yang penting adalah sesuatu yang konkret."* (Wijaya, 2011, p.4)

Analysis:

The expression in Data 15 is a refinement or euphemism in the diplomacy category because the series of expressions is a way to neutralize the situation or calm someone so that the person pays more attention to the expressions conveyed. In this case the above expression is conveyed by the Bapak character to his son, Taksu so that Taksu can consider his decision to become a teacher.

CONCLUSION

Euphemism is an integral part of social interaction. Humans as social beings must have social interactions to maintain life. One important means of sustaining life is the use of language, which must be polite, kind, and to the point and, more importantly, not offending others. Thus euphemism is a must to be implemented by language users.
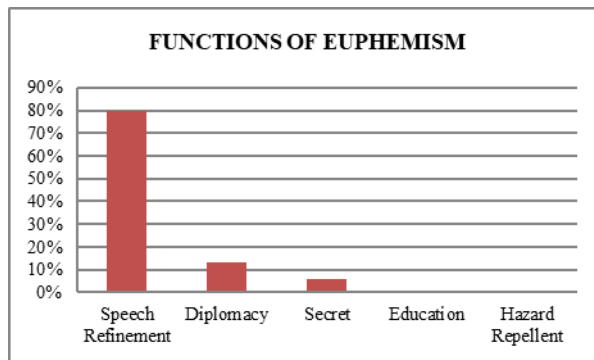

Figure 1. *Functions of euphemism*

The focus of this research is to identify and analyze the functions of euphemism in short the story of *Guru*, based on the concept of euphemism initiated by Wijaya and Rohmadi (2011). There are five main functions of euphemism in oral and written speeches: as a means of language refinement, keeping things secret, diplomacy, education and hazard repellent. Of the 15 euphemism data taken from the short story, 12 data of language refinement are found; 2 of diplomacy and 1 of keeping things secret; while no data is found for education and hazard repellent functions. Thus, it can be seen that euphemism as a means of

language refinement is the most dominant one used at 80%, followed by diplomacy at 13% and keeping things secret at 6%;

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