

Soothing the Bereaved: Stylistic-Rhetorical Devices Functioned in English Eulogies

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Abstract

*When encountering with death or loss, people often endeavor to lessen the influence of what they actually want to convey, i.e. to eulogize the loss of a deceased person., To do so, in their eulogies, people resort to certain stylistic-rhetorical devices (such as metonymy, metaphor, mitigation, hedging, mitigation apology expression, and hypophora) to downgrade death and pacify its austerity. In other words, these variations are utilized to make eulogies more expressive and more touching and to help people feel great sense of loss – soothing the agony of death. Thus, this paper intends to shed light upon the use of stylistic-rhetorical devices in eulogies as they are seen as essential practices in the western society manipulated in a burial of a departed person. The data consist of twenty eulogies taken from *The Book of Eulogies* by Phyllis Theroux / 1997.*

The study concludes that figurative language (involving stylistic-rhetorical devices: metonymy, metaphor, mitigation with its two types, hedges and mitigation apology expressions, and hypophora) can be powerful in the selected eulogies. Further, these devices are socially developed as mitigation tools to reduce and placate the soreness of death on the bereaved and audience. They provide a more expressive and pleasant revelation of the deceased; i.e. they are identified as adulatory and consolatory strategies for appeasing and calming the feelings and moods of the bereaved.

Key Words: *Eulogy, Stylistic-Rhetorical Devices, metaphor, mitigation, metonymy, hedging, hypophora*

I. Introduction

Death is a worldwide phenomenon; it is a compulsory end of a human, it is a goblin which dreads all spiritual, cultural societal spheres. Humans are conventionally unenthusiastic to cope with the theme of death by means of traditional expressions. It is often known that humans' life is recognized to center on "birth, marriage, and eventual death". Death, above all, in most communities gets much consideration. One major social proceeding associated with passing away is eulogy; it is "a speech or writing in praise of a person(s), especially one who recently died or retired or as a term of endearment. Eulogies may be given as part of funeral services. They take place in a funeral home during or after a wake" (Moses and Morelli, 2004, p. 124). Eulogies are produced in a method "that does not only create grief in the audience but also presents the deceased in a way that evokes appreciation for him/her" (Fernandez, 2007, p. 8).

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Above all, eulogies are written to express the main facts and happenings in the dead's life, i.e., to eulogize the human soul. These written eulogies are carefully crafted to provide coziness or stimulation in addition to an association with the person for whom the eulogy is written. In western world, a practice is "asked to come up on stage and say a few good words about the deceased during his/ her funeral" labelled as eulogy (Goatly, 1997, p. 57). Examine this eulogy:

"So let us celebrate his death, and not mourn. However, those who appear to be a little too happy will be asked to leave." (Jack Handey)

"How I Want To Be Remembered." (*The New Yorker*, March 31, 2008)

Nonetheless, designing eulogies necessitates a definite elegance and fashion to bid particular purposes envisioned to make softer the melancholy impacts of the occasion on his/her bereaved. In contemporary communities, people often find it difficult to ponder and talk about death and dying without having recourse to certain stylistic-rhetorical devices which are identified as establishing the figurative language used in eulogies. These devices (such as metonymy, metaphor, mitigation, hedging, mitigation apology expression, and hypophora) are tools for impressing the audience (i.e. influencing their thoughts and emotions) and evoking the social position or the characteristic behavior of the dead. More specifically, these tools are primarily intended to hold greater respect of the audience and to strengthen their participation in the burial or entombment ceremony of the dead.

Thus, the present paper aims at:

- 1- Identifying the type of the stylistic-rhetorical devices utilized in the selected twenty eulogies.
- 2- Determining the social roles and functions these devices perform as employed in these eulogies.

II. English Eulogy

People all over the world , and particularly those in western communities, find it compulsory to venerate, to memorialize, to rectitude, to devote, to grieve the dead's life. Among the various practices devoted to funeral services is spoken or writing eulogy which implies responses to the specific anticipations of the listeners. Of course, these responses revolve around the main facts and events in the deceased's life. These eulogies are prudently created to provide wellbeing or inspiration of the deceased.

Commonly, a eulogy is a "speech or writing in commendation of a person on an account of his valuable qualities or services" (*The American Heritage Dictionary*, 2011, s.v. *eulogy*). It "is the oldest and, in some ways, least valued of the literary forms". It is accomplished by laypersons, when a person deceases; it is expected "for a member of the family or a friend to 'say a few words', composed under great duress about the deceased" (Theroux, 1997, p.14). Although a eulogy is a prerequisite for burial services, it can be also used to applause compliment of living people.

Traditionally, the current practice of the term "eulogy was first documented in the 15th century and came from the Medieval Latin term *eulogium*" (*Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, 2012, s.v. *eulogy*). At that moment, the term "*Eulogium*" has then transmuted into the smaller "*eulogy*" of nowadays. As a ceremonial event, the conveyance of eulogies "dates back to the first time one person stood above the body of another and friend to say,

in so many words, who that person was and what his or her life signified". However, eulogies must not be "confused with *elegies*, which are poems written in tribute to the dead; nor with *obituaries*, which are published biographies recounting the lives of those who have recently died; nor with *obsequies*", which commonly signal the services concerning burials (Theroux, 1997, p. 14).

Elaborately, Jamieson (1978, p. 40) maintains that "eulogies were created as a response to the death of loved ones". They conventionally confirmed the truth of demise, relieved the conflict with individual's own humanity, and "psychologically transformed the relationship between the bereaved and the deceased and refashioned relationships of members of the community in the absence of the deceased". For Jamieson and Campbell (1982, p. 147), eulogies serve the following purposes: "(1) to acknowledge the death, (2) to transform the relationship between the living and the dead from present to past, (3) to ease the mourner's terror at confronting their own mortality, (4) to console them by arguing that the deceased lives on, and (5) to re-knit the community".

Respectively, Kent (2007, p. 2) contends that eulogies draw substantially on religious issues connected with their intents, and adds that "the comforting quality that has been ascribed to eulogies in the literature" is conveyed principally from the additional linguistic hallmarks of burial practices, as illustrated in these eulogies:

"It's our painful duty to announce the death of EDWARD HACKETT, Esq., Mayor of Cork, which took place at his residence ... (TCE, April 14)

[...]. Early this morning, he was found dead lying on the road, a short distance from the house he had left, quite dead, his horse grazing near the body.

[...]. Previous to his departure he complained of slight illness, which immediately on his arrival at Bristol, eventuated in malignant fever, by which he was carried off in the prime of life". (TCJ, April 30).

III. Stylistic-rhetorical Devices

Organizing a eulogy is critical and people often find it unbendable and uneasy to express themselves in issues related to the subject of death in a straightforward manner. That is, with the use of language, they wish to mollify the influence of what they want to express about the deceased. To this end, they resort to certain stylistic-rhetorical devices to attain this purpose. The devices that eulogies are characterized by and that help people to lay emphasis on the messages they want to convey are the following.

3.1 Metonymy

Metonymy is a referential semantic relation by which an entity refers to another on the basis of the association between these two entities (Lindquist, 2009, p. 118). Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 37) add that metonymy is, furthermore, "part of the ordinary, everyday life, and not just a matter of language", which is engrossed "in our experiences in the world". According to Crystal (2004, p. 291), metonymy is a word that is employed in semantics and discourse to refer to "a figure of speech in which the name of an attribute of entity is used in place of the entity itself".

On his side, Yule (2006, p. 108) expounds that metonymy is a kind of relationship between lexical items grounded basically on "a close connection in everyday experience ,such as container- contents relation (*bottle / water, can / juice*) or a whole- part relation (*car/ wheels, house / roof*) or a representative- symbol relationship (*king / crown, the President/ the White House*)". More elaborately, focusing on the concept of "domain", Casnig (2006, p.1) describes metonymy as "an introspective equation where an item which exists in one domain is replaced with another in the same domain". The replacement of "a term for another" occurs in a similar realm in terms of "material, causal or conceptual relationship between terms". Nevertheless, a metonymic practice integrates semantic features that are not straightforwardly signified in a sequence.

- ***"I ate the whole plate. ('all the food on the plate')"***
- ***"The half-back played a long ball to the center-forward. (played the ball a long way')."***

Practically, metonymy can be exploited to prompt several lingo-stylistic functions. Rubba (2006, p. 2) suggests the seven major functions of metonymy. These are: (i) "classification of identity of referent", (ii) "abbreviation", (iii) "focus", (iv) "attribution or mitigation of credit or blame", (v) metonymy as a "lexical operation of zero derivation" of credit or blame" (vi) "metonymy as a means for expressing personal attitudes", and (vii) "metonymy used for dubbing".

The main focus of this paper is on (iv) cited above: "attribution or mitigation of credit or blame when wishing to praise or blame someone for something", metonymy is used to serve as a technique of identifying the referent completely or partially which is in charge of the thing completed. For instance, in

- ***"The Congress passed the law",***

the word "*the Congress*" exhibits a metonymic use in "that the political institution is used to stand for the people who operate it: The body of legislators, who are the members of 'the Congress', have the exclusive authority to pass or block any law" (ibid). Yet, in a second instance, the blame is merely directed to one individual whose name has been manipulated to point to "a whole government institution", i.e. "*Hitler*":

- ***"Hitler killed millions of people."***

Here, the responsibility is entirely placed on "*Hitler*" although "he was not the only one who committed those heinous crimes". In actual fact, the suitable name of "*Hitler*" designates the whole German armed forces including "*Hitler* on top" of it. The speaker identifies "*Hitler*" as absolutely responsible for the slaughters perpetrated for the period of his reign.

3.2 Metaphor

One of the stylistic-rhetorical implements that are common in obituary texts is metaphor; it is a figurative technique that is employed to reveal a "comparison between two unconnected things" by asserting that "one thing is another thing, even though this is not literally right" (Norgard, Montoro and Busse, 2010, p.108). Metaphors

often occur when a thing is expressed under the label of another thing akin to it in one regard or more. The two entities associated are of different nature, yet "they have something in common". The main function of utilizing metaphors is to produce a vivacious image in the receiver's mind and to stimulate imagination, as in "*She has a heart of stone*". Here, comparatively, her heart is comprised of stones. In "*We are all shadows on the wall of time*", we are compared to shadows on the wall.

Stylisticians or literary writers use metaphors in an artistic way to disclose that the two entities have the equivalent potentials and to make the speech or written text more influential and more convincing. This idea of persuasion is accentuated by Lakoff and Johnson (2008, p.

4) who endorse that "metaphor is pervasive in every life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature." According to Galperin (1977, p.126), 'metaphor' specifies transmission of "some feature from one thing to another". In other words, a metaphor should be described as:

"a stylistic device when two different phenomena (things, events, ideas, actions) are simultaneously brought to mind by the imposition of some or all of the inherent properties of one object on the other which by nature is deprived of these properties."

Sponsoring Galperin's vision, Yoos (2009, p.104) maintains that metaphor is meant to "bring to our attention things difficult to summarize or express in literal words, flatter a reader's sensibility and sensitivity and bind author's and readers together in shared feelings and in familiar held agreements". Additionally, Mio (1997, p.130) elucidates that the prominence of metaphors in daily conversations is pertinent to fact that they allow a language user to hold the meanings of social happenings and mostly feel having a share in the concerned happenings. In a more elaborate manner, using Arinola's (2009, p. 119) words, metaphor is defined as a "make-believe comparison of one thing or idea or action rather than direct statement".

3.3 Mitigation

Mitigation is commonly treated as part of politeness phenomenon. Fraser (1980, p. 344) stipulates the notion of mitigation in relation with the intent of the speaker to decrease the undesirable consequences of his/her execution of a specific sort of speech act. The resultant intentions the speaker hopes to attain, encompass, "among others, making it more acceptable for the listener to encounter bad news or to react cooperatively to a criticism and to accept the authority of the speaker in case the latter issues a command". For Fraser (ibid, p. 345),

mitigation is a special type of politeness, it "occurs only if the speaker is also being polite". Since there are various choices available to the speaker to reduce the effect of the

unpreferred act, mitigation can be articulated in a variety of mitigating strategies, such as, "Indirect performance of the speech act, Non-specific reference to the speaker or the hearer, Disclaimers, Parenthetical verbs, Tag questions, and Hedges" (ibid).

Pragmatically, mitigation is a case whereby the head act is modified to attenuate or mitigate its illocutionary force (Barron, 2008, p. 47). Put it another way, it is "the strategy of linguistically repairing the damage done to someone's face (self-image)" by what someone else says or does. Additionally, Fraser (1980, p. 341) affirms "mitigation can be 'self-serving,' in which case it aims at avoiding possible unwelcome outcomes for the speaker, or 'altruistic,' in which case it aims at reducing negative effects for the hearer". Likewise, Holmes (1984 cited in Mey, 2009, p. 645) identifies mitigation as a precise instance of reduction, taking place when the expectable impacts of an illocutionary act are undesirable.

Linguistically, Holmes (ibid) suggests the following devices as the most characteristic mitigating ones in English:

"indirect acts and justification moves (especially for directives), passive and impersonal constructions where references to speaker and hearer are deleted, epistemic disclaimers (e.g., If I'm not wrong) and non-epistemic disclaimers (e.g., I hate to do this, but. . ., you know...., If you wouldn't mind. . .), parenthetical forms and modal adverbs reducing

commitment to the proposition (e.g., probably, possibly, I guess, I suppose... etc.), tag questions, and hedges (e.g., technically, reportedly, allegedly)."

To this list of mitigation devices, Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 174) add another mitigating discourse device, *digression indicators* (e.g. *by the way*). Two types of mitigation devices are often manipulated in obituaries: *hedging* and *mitigation apology expressions*.

3.3.1 Hedging

In our daily conversation, we cannot say what we want to say in a way free of risk of entering in a conflict with our conversers as, for instance, we want to criticize, agree, disagree, and persuade a member of the community. In this case, we resort to hedging to avoid the risk of getting in a conflict with our interlocutors. Language is lifeless without hedging, or as Salager-Meyer (2000, p. 176) puts it, "language is pervaded by hedging". To hedge means "to avoid giving a direct answer to a question or promising to support a particular idea" (*Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary*, 2010, s.v. *hedge*). If one uses hedging, he intends to escape the danger of "commitment (especially) by leaving open a way of retreat" (*Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 2008, s.v. *hedge*). Further, for Skelton, (1988, p. 38), it is an obvious fact that "without hedging, the world is purely propositional", an inflexible and stiff residence where stuffs "either are the case or are not"; with a hedging scheme, language is made more elastic and the universe more delicate.

From another perspective, Hyland (1998, p. 3) argues that hedging devices are used to reveal that there is reluctance to adopt an obvious and "complete commitment to the truth of the proposition". Moreover, he (ibid, p. 1) argues that hedging is "any linguistic means used to indicate either (a) a lack of complete commitment to the truth value of an accompanying proposition, or (b) a desire not to express that commitment categorically". In line with Hyland's view, Boncea (2014, p. 7) holds that hedging devices reflect a great point of efficacy in "social interaction" by signifying the ability of language users to "express degrees of certainty" and by understanding

rhetorical tactics essential for conversational situations to maneuver their attitudes. Pragmatically, Hübler (1983 cited in Nikula 1997, p. 192) maintains that the function of hedging within politeness theory is "to make sentences more acceptable and thus increase their change of ratification by hearer"

In reality, a hedge expression is a moderating term used to decrease and pacifying the weight of an expression or an utterance. Hedging can be realized in certain syntactic forms: adjectives, adverbs and sometimes clauses, as shown in the following examples respectively:

- *"There might just be a few insignificant problems we need to address."*
- *"The party was somewhat spoiled by the return of the parents."*
- *"I'm not an expert but you might want to try restarting your computer."*

As stated by Yule (1996, p. 38), hedges are careful proceedings in social utterances. They are employed to specify "the maxim of quantity and relevance in our speech". Terms such as "(i) 'to my mind' (ii) 'as far as I know', (iii) 'to guess', (iv) 'I may be mistaken', and words like (v) 'but', 'so', etc." are regularly handled as mitigating hedges in English language. Furthermore, expressions "well" and "anyway" are moreover utilized for mitigation "when a speaker (a) is confused or (b) does not want to commit himself in utterances". Hedges can too, be influenced by language users to display "the extent to which they are abiding by the maxims of quantity or relevance". Therefore, we say "It is quite dangerous to come now", in place of "It is dangerous" and "I really appreciate it", rather than "I appreciate it".

In brief, Hedges may purposely or accidentally be utilized in both oral discourse and written text; particularly they are significantly substantial in conversation. They aid speakers and authors to designate the intended message. Consider the underlined hedging expressions:

- *"All I know smoking is harmful to your health".*
- *"They told me that they are married".*
- *"I am not sure if all of these are clear to you, but this is what I know".*
- *"By the way, you like this car?"* (ibid)

3.3.2 Mitigating Apology Expressions

Mitigating apology expressions are employed "to mitigate and serve as an apology" for offensive or unpleasant subject. Socially, these "euphemistic strategies" are straightly interested by "the politeness principle" to establish preceding or consequent "apologies for potentially conflictive speech acts", and consequently participate

to minimize the disapproving aspect of the offense. In eulogies and obituaries, mitigating apologies are utilized to maintain "the conventions of social tact and respect" anticipated in the ceremonial social situations of death declaration, as illustrated in the following two examples (Brown and Levinson, 1987, pp. 162-163):

- ***"We regret to have this day to announce the death of a zealous and exemplary young Clergyman, the Rev. Patrick M'HALE, which took place..."*** (TCJ, April 30)

- ***"It's our painful duty to announce the death of EDWARD HACKETT, Esq., Mayor of Cork, which took place at his residence ..."*** (TCE, April 14)

Noticeably, these italicized "mitigation apology expressions" are employed when the communal or financial position of the dead in the society requires a more intricate mitigation.

Particularly, the obituarists intend to minimize their compliments, i.e., to downgrade the exaggeration stemming from their eulogies. See these two examples:

- ***"We regret to state that his Grace the Duke of Northumberland departed this life at an early hour on Thursday morning ..."*** (TCE, February 15)

- ***"In the domestic and social life, we are guilty of no exaggeration in saying that there never lived an individual who enjoyed more largely than he, the respect, the confidence, the love of his friends and associates-nor one whose qualities more richly deserved the sympathies of friendship and the devotion of love."*** (TCJ, April 16)

3.4 Hypophora

Hypophora is a figurative device in which the speaker posits a question and then gives a reply to it. It includes of a "single question answered in a single sentence, a single question answered in a paragraph or even a section, or a series of questions, each answered in subsequent paragraphs" (Cudden, 1991, s.v. *hypophora*). Hypophora is employed "(1) as a transitional device, to take the discussion in a new direction, (2) a device to stimulate interest, since a reader's curiosity is stimulated by hearing a question, and (3) to suggest and answer questions the reader might not have thought of" (Eidemuller, 2008: 205). Consider

- ***"but what are the implications of this theory? And how can it be applied to the present problem?"***

- ***"Where is it that the animal falls short? We get a clue to the answer, I think, when Hunter tells us . . ."*** (Jacob Bronowski)

- ***"How then, in the middle of the twentieth century, are we to define the obligation of the historian to his facts? The duty of the historian to respect his facts is not exhausted"***

by . . . " (Edward Hallett Carr)

(Harris, 2010: 3)

IV. Methodology

This paper utilizes the qualitative method which helps the researchers to provide descriptive-explanatory analysis of the data and to explicate the aspects that affect the several truths gained concerning the data analysis of the selected eulogies. Twenty various eulogies (taken from Phyllis Theroux, 1997, *The Book of Eulogies*) are analyzed in terms of the stylistic- rhetorical devices: *metonymy* (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980 and Rubba, 2006), *metaphor* (Lakoff and Johnson, 2008 and Norgard, Montoro and Busse, 2010) *mitigation*

(Holmes, 1984 and Brown and Levinson, 1987), *hedging* (Hyland, 1998 and Yule 1996), *mitigating apology expressions* (Brown and Levinson, 1987) and *hypophora* (Eidemuller, 2008 and Harris, 2010). The model used for the stylistic-rhetorical devices is illustrated in Figure 1.

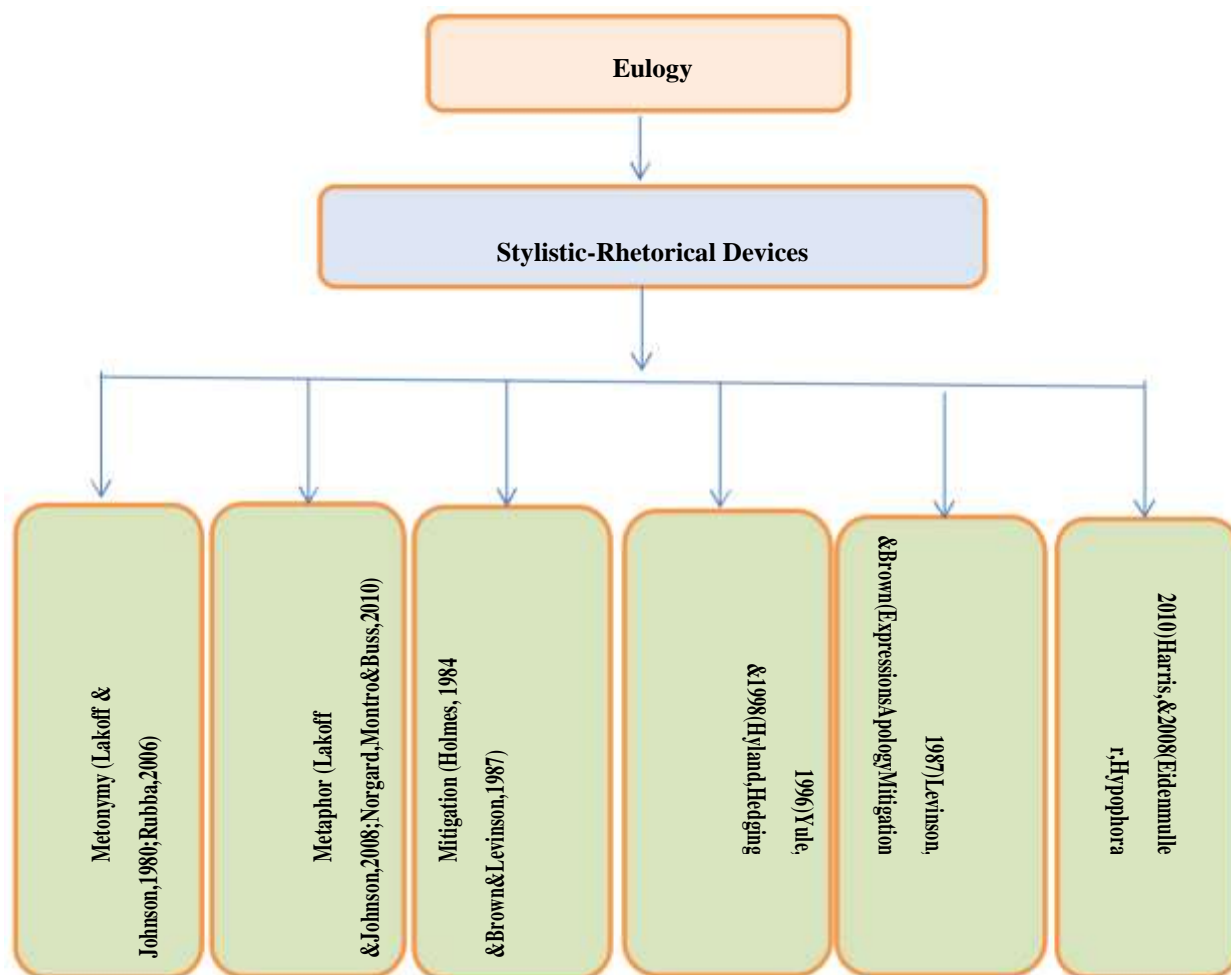


Figure (1) Model of Analysis: Stylistic-Rhetorical Devices

The data analysis includes twenty eulogies of diverse examples, i.e., eulogies for a family including, a mother, father, son, daughter, grandfather, friend, well-known leader and a prominent figure.

V. Data Analysis

The stylistic-rhetorical description of the chosen data involves extracts taken from these eulogies; an identification of the used stylistic-rhetorical tools is followed focusing the functions behind the use of these tools as associated with lessening and mitigating the effect of the deceased on the audience and the bereaved.

5.1 Eulogy for Mahatma Gandhi delivered by Jawaharlal Nehru on February 02, 1948

[“Jawaharlal Nehru was a close associate of Gandhi during India's freedom struggle. At the time of this famous speech he was serving as the first Prime Minister of independent India”.]

1-“A glory has departed and *the sun that warmed and brightened our lives* has set, and we shiver in the cold.”

The *metonymy* (“*the sun that warmed and brightened our lives*”) typified in the association between Mahatma Gandhi and “the sun” seems to be so powerful to the presence, and particularly to the bereft. In this eulogy, this metonymic relation reveals the affection of Gandhi's friend who sees him as significant as “the sun”. The leaving of Gandhi is likened to the scene of “the sun”. They both have left India in a “shivered cold”. The exploitation of metonymy in this eulogy creates a sort of plummeting or pacifying the anticipated magnitudes of Gandhi death by means of raising his standing and associating him with “the sun”.

2- “Great men and eminent men have monuments in bronze and marble set up for them, but this man of divine fire managed in his lifetime to become enshrined in millions and millions of hearts so that *all of us became somewhat of the stuff that he was made of, though to an infinitely lesser degree.*”

In this part of the eulogy, the phrase (*all of us*), *non-specification reference*, involves both the eulogist and the listeners together. The eulogist here wants to *mitigate* the consequences of becoming deprived of the headship of “Gandhi” by giving reference to generalization. In addition, the use of the *hedge* (*though to a really slighter degree*) helps the speaker to *mitigate* the menace to the other party's 'negative face' in a hidden manner. Here, too, the speaker intends to reduce the vulnerability of the conveyed message on the hearers and to ease the aftermath of death-pain.

3-“*He spread out in this way all over India, not just in palaces, or in select places or in assemblies, but in every hamlet and hut of the lowly and those who suffer. He lives in the hearts of millions and he will live for immemorial ages.*”

Through the utilization of *hedges* (*He spread... who suffer*), the speaker of this eulogy attempts to linguistically ease and to reduce the effect of the departure of Gandhi on people who feel his existence after his death. That is, he lives in all over India, especially with those who are in need for him. With these mitigating hedges, the writer wants to reduce the loss of such a great person whose symbolic image is still active in all locations ("*hearts of millions*"). The stylistic-rhetorical device *metaphor* is, too, indirectly exploited to display the resemblance between everywhere settings and Indian people's hearts. In both images, Gandhi's vision can be originated endlessly. The use of *hedges* and *metaphor* helps the speaker to give an obvious image about the loss of Gandhi.

4-"What, then, can we say about him except to feel humble on this occasion? To praise him we are not worthy--to praise him whom we could not follow adequately and sufficiently. It is almost doing him an injustice just to pass him by with words when he demanded work and labor and sacrifice from us; in a large measure he made this country, during the last thirty years or more attain to heights of sacrifice which in that particular domain have never been equaled elsewhere."

Hypophora is presented in this eulogy by which the sophisticated annexation of the response ("*to feel humble on this occasion, to praise him...*") could be found within the question itself ("*what can we say about him*"). By the use of this device, the speaker wants to bring importance and focus on the great loss of Gandhi that in the meantime even praising and venerating him is not sufficient. In addition, a sense of *mitigation* is established by the use of the phrase (*we are not worthy*), i.e., the speaker affirms that the deceased person has got a high status that it is injustice to put others at the same status.

5.2 Bill Bradley Eulogy for Dave Debusschere

"Dave was a man of action, not words. He was above the petty things in life, and he wasn't impressed easily. Power, fame, money, were not the currencies he traded in. Friendship, loyalty, hard work, were what he placed the greatest value in. If Bush or Madonna or Rockefeller walked into a bar, I bet he'd barely look up from the beer he was sharing with a friend."

"If I had \$100 for every night Dave played hurt, I could buy a nice car. One night, Dave caught an elbow in the face that broke his nose. The pain was obvious. I didn't see how he was going to play the next night. But, there he was, ready to go, when the buzzer sounded--with a strip of plastic over his nose, held in place by white adhesive tape forming an ``H" above and below his eyes."

Mitigation, realized in the italicized words, is employed here to maintain the manners of social delicacy and esteem which are anticipated in a formal social location such as that of a loss or death utterance which is concerned with the presentation of the virtues of the deceased person as shown in the first paragraph "*Power, fame, money ... Friendship, loyalty, hard work, were what he placed the greatest value in*". The second paragraph of the eulogy "*If I had \$100 for ever night . . . the next night*" is related to memoirs of the dead person. The use of *mitigation expressions* in these two paragraphs is to soften and reduce the feebleness of the audience attending the funeral.

5.3 Oprah Winfrey Eulogy for Rosa Parks

"God uses good people to do great things." *I feel it an honor to be here to come and say a final goodbye.*"

In most cases, *Mitigating apology expressions* are utilized to lessen the praises the speaker gives. In death issues, the speaker utters or reads his eulogy to play down the overemphasis coming from the conveyed message. The existence of this *mitigation apology expression* ("*I feel it an honor to be here*") in this eulogy is due to the social or financial standing of the departed in the society which requires a more elegant mitigation. It is a great loss and the speaker indirectly, shows her sorrow to "*say a final goodbye*" to Rosa Park.

5.4 Eulogy For Jacqueline Perez In memory of Jacqueline Perez-1973-2009 by Sandy Gurgul

1- "*Being the humble person she was I feel she would be amazed by the amount of tears, sadness and tremendous loss we feel here today. She brought true joy into my life in good times and bad. Her life was not always a walk in the park but her coping mechanisms were just remarkable.*"

2- "*We never really had to worry because Jacqui worried enough for all of us. Her husband Louie was the love of her life for the past 27 years.*"

May God bless all of you and grant you comfort."

Two *Mitigation apology expressions* are employed in both the above extracts. The purpose of using these expressions (*Being the humble... here today*) in paragraph (1) is to offer a more sumptuous kind of mitigation that is attributed to Jacqueline Perez who is introduced in this eulogy to catch the true meaning of "family, unconditional love and support". In paragraph (2), the mitigation apology expression ("*We never really had to worry because Jacqui worried enough for all of us*") is manipulated in this formal communicative situation to mollify the sad effect of the melancholy situation of death, and to offer an apology as a sort of relief to the audience at the funeral ceremony of the deceased person.

5.5 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's Funeral Eulogy by Robert F. Kennedy

1- "*Martin Luther King dedicated his life to love and to justice for his fellow human beings, and he died because of that effort.*"

Mitigation, as a figurative device, is achieved through attribution or alleviation of credit which is often used in English eulogies when the obituarist intends to praise the works of the deceased person ("*Martin Luther King dedicated his life to love and to justice for his fellow human being ...*"). The precious memories of Martin Luther King circuitously yield the impression for both the eulogist and the audience that he had done his social role in his life fabulously, and therefore, this would release the grief of the death.

2- "Let us dedicate ourselves to that, and say a prayer for our country and for our people."

In this funeral setting, non-specification *mitigation of apology expression* ("Let us dedicate ourselves to that") is a second device used to reflect a sort of regret by the speaker (including the audience). This device implies a more elegant mitigation serving as a strategy of lessening the effect of the sorrow of the death by getting the speaker and the audience involved in the melancholy situation.

5.6 Queen Elizabeth's Eulogy by The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. George Carey

1-"It was here that Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon was married and became Duchess of York; it was here that she was crowned Queen; it was here that, as Queen Mother, she attended the coronation of her own daughter. It is fitting, then, that a place that stood at the centre of her life should now be the place where we honour her passing."

"In the 10 days since she left us, there have been countless tributes and expressions of affection and respect — including those of the many people who have queued and filed patiently past her coffin lying-in-state."

"How should we explain the numbers? Not just by the great length of a life, famously lived to the full. It has to do with her giving of herself so readily and openly."

"There was about her, in George Eliot's lovely phrase, 'the sweet presence of a good diffused'."

A *hypophoric* question ("How should we explain the numbers?") is exploited in this eulogy to evince an important issue concerning the dead person. The eulogist raises a question, immediately followed an embellished answer by quoting an attractive phrase from George Eliot to provoke curiosity and inquisitiveness to the readers, i.e. she was "*the sweet presence of a good diffused*". With the technique of *hypophora*, the speaker attempts to remind the audience of the good deeds of the deceased in a manner to lessen the impact of mourning on the bereaved.

2- "Something of it is reflected in the fact that for half a century we knew her and understood her as the Queen Mother. It is a title whose resonance lies less in its official status than in expressing one of the most fundamental of all roles and relationships — that of simply being a *mother, a mum, the Queen Mum*."

A *metonymic* relationship holds between the three expressions: "*mother, mum*" and "*the Queen Mum*". The three expressions are used to refer to the same entity ("Queen Elizabeth"). This would give an attribute of motherhood to the Queen Elizabeth. Recalling such a characteristic of wellbeing would indirectly soothe the consequence of death on her family and the audience.

3-"Like the sun, she bathed us in her warm glow. Now that the sun has set and the cool of the evening has come, some of the warmth we absorbed is flowing back towards her."

The stylistic-rhetorical device of *metaphor* ("*she bathed us in her warm glow*") is again used here to hold the attributive relationship between the sun and Queen Elizabeth. To give more benevolent attributes to her character, Queen Elizabeth is viewed as the sun that never stops to provide them with everlasting warmth and sympathy, and even after her death, they still preserve a part of this warmth and emotion.

5.7 Eulogy of Leonhard Euler by Nicolas Fuss / April 2005

"After such a brilliant period what could Mr. Euler expect? Could he hope that Nature which is not generous with her gifts might provide him with a miracle after having placed so many mathematical heads together at one time? He felt especially inspired by Nature and what she had done for him; so much so that he entered into this career with the absolute assurance that only the knowledge of a decided inspiration can provide, and he showed to all that his predecessors had not exhausted all the riches of geometry and analysis."

Hypophora is manipulated here to go in a new direction of argument about Leonhard Euler. The speaker introduces two questions ("*what could Mr. Euler expect? Could he hope that Nature ... at one time?*"), and then answers them in details ("*He felt especially inspired by Nature and what she had done for him ...*") in order to bring interest and to open a new discussion with the audience. With the use of this strategy, the speaker wants to draw the audience's attention towards the detailed information of Leonhard Euler in a very stylish way (i.e. rhetorical questions) and in return to pacify the bereft.

5.8 Eulogy for Pastor John by Phil Lineberger Senior Pastor

1- "The family has asked me to talk a little bit about some of what John was going through. Patrick asked the question, 'Why is John gone?' All of us want to know, 'Why is John gone?' We can't answer all of the whys. Paul wrote in I Corinthian's 13:12 in the New International, 'Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part and then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known'. The King James Version says, 'For now we see through a glass darkly but then face to face. Now I know in part but then I should know, even as I am known'. We can know in part. And this is the part we know. John suffered from a terrible illness that we label depression. It is called a time defying sadness. It's unlike the sadness that you and I, in the normal sense, have when we are sad and then we are glad and then we get over it and then we go our way."

In this eulogy, *hypophora* is introduced by the rhetorical question "*Why is John gone?*" to lament on his departure and recall the audience of what good deeds he has done in his life time. This general question is here manipulated to be the starting point to what details he would give about Pastor John. Then, the eulogist gives a detailed information about Pastor John as an indirect answer to his question, claiming that "*John suffered from ... dying sadness*". This answer (which seems to be a reason for John's death) is addressed by the eulogist in a way to arouse the audience feeling and emotion towards the deceased person, John, and this would conciliate the bereaved and minimize the impact of his death on them.

2- "Why did John go this way? Why did he choose this? He didn't. The choice was being forced upon him by an overriding and overwhelming darkness. It is not a willful fault nor is it a sin. It is a signal that something is wrong. It is a signal that we need help and we need hope."

To draw the audience's attention towards the death of *Pastor John*, once more, the eulogist here introduces two other questions about John's death-journey and his choice of death ("Why did John go this way? Why did he choose this?"). The answer to these questions was a kind of justification ("He didn't. The choice was being forced upon him by an overriding and overwhelming darkness. It is not a willful fault nor is it a sin. It is a signal that something is wrong. It is a signal that we need help and we need hope."), given to the audience to make them get involved in this catastrophe (loss of the dearest John). The purpose of this *hypophora* is to evoke inquisitiveness among the presence which would implicitly lessen the weight of this loss on *Phil Lineberger*.

5.9 Barack Obama for Senator Edward Kennedy

"As you know so well, the passage of time never really heals the tragic memory of such a great loss, but we carry on, because we have to, because our loved ones would want us to, and because there is still light to guide us in the world from the love they gave us."

A mitigation expression of non-epistemic disclaimer ("As you know so well...") and four types of hedges ("but we carry on; because we have to; because our loved ones ..." and "because there is still light ...") are intentionally employed in this eulogy to soften the grief of the painful event of the death of Senator Edward Kennedy. Obama uses this mitigation expression to get audience involved in the depressed setting and to inspire them to share in this mournful situation. Then, he uses the contrasting (*but*) to show a positive side of the issue (keeping on working and sacrificing for the country), giving reasons and justifications for this deed by the utilization of the result-reason device (*because*). These reasons are given to exhort the audience to carry on working earnestly for building the country, owing to Kennedy's will and guidance. In sum, all these five devices are developed by Obama to diminish the consequence of death on the mournful people.

5.10 Charles Spencer for Princess Diana

"We are all united not only in our desire to pay our respects to Diana, but rather in our need to do so. For such was her extraordinary appeal that the tens of millions of people taking part in this service all over the world via television and radio who never actually met her, feel that they too lost someone close to them in the early hours of Sunday morning. It is a more remarkable tribute to Diana than I can ever hope to offer her today."

Two devices of mitigation are functioned in this eulogy concomitant to the memory of Princess Diana. The opening sentence establishes *mitigation of apology* device (realized by "We are all united not only in our desire to pay our respects to Diana") in which Spencer offers a type of indirect apology targeting at touching the audience's feeling and pacifying the awful situation of death. Spencer also annexes the *hedge* expression ("but rather in our need to do so") to augment the sympathetic tone of his speech which has a touching influence on the audience and, too, reduces the calamity of decease on them.

5.11 A Eulogy for Grandfather

"It is an honor to be here before you. An honor to have the opportunity to give my family words of peace and encouragement. And it is a pleasure to share with you stories of this extraordinary man. But it is daunting to do justice to a life that spanned 89 years. *Do I know enough about the whole of Grandpa George's life? Probably not. I can't tell you what he was like as a young man during the Depression. What do you say about a man who had all of this? Well done, certainly.*

Great job, of course, and even congratulations."

In this paragraph, the eulogizer here raises two *hypophoric* rhetorical questions directed to the audience concerning his grandfather ("*Do I know enough about the whole of Grandpa George's life?*" and "*What do you say about a man who had all of this?*"), and then answers these questions to create curiosity and to present important aspects and materials about him. That is, he intends to placate the pain of death by attracting their attention to what he has done in his life-time ("*... he was like as a young man during the Depression. Well done, certainly. Great job, of course, and even congratulations*").

5.12 Son Celebrates His Mum

1- "*She was a vibrant soul, one who literally lit up the room whenever she entered. And right up until she became less able to get around, Mum was full of joy and always eager to help out, no matter what the problem was.*"

The stylistic- rhetorical device of *metaphor* is introduced at the beginning of this eulogy to convey the good and useful things the mum used to do in her life time ("*She was a vibrant soul, and one who literally lit up the room whenever she entered*"). Through this metaphor, the son compares his mother to both "*a vibrant soul*" and a light that illuminates places whenever it is switched on. This comparison is made to emphasize the role-model that his mother had played in his life when she was alive; he explains that his "*Mum was full of joy and always eager to help out, no matter what the problem was.*"

2- "*It is a great privilege to write this eulogy to express the sadness that all of us boys share over her loss. Mum, thank you for everything you've given us – and the warmth we shared during your precious time on earth. God bless you. Always.*"

In this paragraph, *mitigating apology* sentence ("*It is a great privilege to write ...*") is utilized to serve a twofold function in this eulogy, i.e. to mitigate or ease the soreness of the loss of the mum and to function as an apology for the offensive or unpleasant subject matter of death. In other words, the mitigating apology strategy is employed by the son to mitigate the effect of losing his mum and probably to maintain the principles of social discretion and

deference which are often probable the ceremonial event of death. To attenuate the tragedy of the situation, the son continues to express his thanks to his mum and prays to God to bless her.

5.13 Traditional Eulogy for Dad

"As we gather here today to remember and commemorate his life, let bid him farewell as we mourn the loss of a lively, dignified soul. A soul that brought joy and fulfillment to many, and whose legacy will live on forever."

Mitigation apology expression ("As we gather here today to remember and commemorate his life") is exploited in this influential and compassionate eulogy for a dad. Through the existence of the first person plural pronoun 'we', the writer wants to inform us that both he himself and the audience should share the mourning of the death of the dad. In other words, he wants to disclose that *"we should bid the dad farewell as we mourn ..."*. This mitigation apology strategy followed by the farewell and lamentation for his father's loss of is utilized as a sort of coping or adjusting with the sorrow and stress of the situation.

5.14 A Mother for a Young Daughter

"It is with so much sadness that I am here today to farewell our only child, Louise. She was a lovely and vibrant daughter who has been taken away from us much too early. But the memory of Louise will live on in us forever. We were so proud of her and know that she is in peace."

In this eulogy, two devices are manipulated by the mother to mourn her young child. The first is the opening *mitigation apology* sentence, (*"It is with so much sadness that I am here today to farewell our only child, Louise"*). By this device, the writer offers a kind of apology by which the mother would soothe the influence of death calamity on her. The second device lies in the *metaphoric* sentence (*"But the memory of Louise will live on in us forever"*). Here, the treatment of (*the memory of Louise*) as an animate thing that can live forever discerns the agony and calamity of the mother for the loss of her indispensable young daughter from one angle and reduce her pain from another.

5.15 A Father Farewells a Teenage Son

"Standing before you today to farewell our son William is one of the hardest things I've ever had to do. Words cannot describe the sorrow and loss that I am feeling, but I will try."

"My family wishes to express our heartfelt thanks to all those who have given their support, compassion and love throughout this very difficult time."

The writer uses two examples (*"Words cannot describe the sorrow and loss that I am feeling, but I will try"* and *"My family wishes to express...this very difficult time."*) of *mitigating apology* technique for the sake of

declining and softening the effect of the sad event of the funeral on the family. Through the words of this eulogy, the father expects to receive support, compassion and love from the audience's distress and misfortune. Resorting to the second mitigation apology example, the father expresses his thanks and regards to the audience for their efforts and endurance of the burden of attending the funeral in very difficult time.

5.16 A Daughter Celebrates her Father

"Dad was the light of my life. Even as a little girl, I remember him making me laugh so much I would nearly cry. He had a wicked sense of humour that rubbed off on anyone that was near him."

Likening an animate entity "Dad" to an inanimate entity (torch which eternally gives light) is the core function of *metaphor* in the beginning of this eulogy "Dad was the light of my life". This use may denote the closeness of the speaker to the deceased person. Such a sort of praise and compliment of the dead person offers an opportunity for relieving and releasing the feelings and thoughts in the hearts of the father's family, and this might ease the harshness of the tragedy of death for them.

5.17 A Daughter Says Farewell to Her Mum

"Mum has always been my support, strength and comfort when times have been tough. I don't know how I will cope without her – it leaves a massive hole in my life. But I will draw strength from the things she taught me and live by the words from Desdemona that my mother always quoted, as if her own: 'Accept the things you cannot change and change the things you can.'"

"It is an honour to stand before you and share my precious memories of my mother. She will be missed by all, but her memory will live on in us all forever".

Decreasing the sorrow of the sad experience of the death of a close person, like a mum, can be expressed in this eulogy through the use of the coordinating conjunction word (*but*), which is used to give two conflicting ideas "...it leaves a massive hole in my life. But I will draw strength from the things she taught me..." i.e. to lessen the negative effects of the mournful events and at the same time arousing the positive feelings towards tolerating the ordeal. The use of the *hedge* expression (*but*) gives the impression that this loss at the same time provides her with strength and power that she exploits to overcome her difficulties and burdens she encountered in her life time. Moreover, the speaker utilizes another *hedging* expression (*precious memories*) in the clause "It is an honour to stand before you and share my precious memories of my mother..." to mitigate the severe situation of death and to soothe the audience's irritated state.

5.18 A Wife to her Husband

"My husband was such a wonderful man. I'm not sure I can really express just how much I will miss him..."

"Paul may be in heaven now, *but I know he is looking down at us with a big smile on his face saying, 'Forge ahead – make the best of life – and I'll see you soon. We have worked to do up here ...'*"

In this eulogy, the wife utilizes two *hedging* clauses ("*I'm not sure...*" and "*but I know ...*"). The first is intended to show the irritated state of the wife after the loss of her husband. The second *hedge* is recognized by the conjunction (*but*) which serves as a technique employed to mitigate the negative effect of the loss of the close husband. Briefly, these two hedges are indirectly manipulated to alleviate the outraged psyche of the wife.

5.19 Eulogy to My Little Sister

"When I first found out about the accident I found myself asking: '*what if I'd never moved away, or what if my siblings had never seen me as such a troubled teen, may be things would be different.*' I remind myself that she no longer has to endure the pain of this world. We all must find peace knowing that she is still a light in our hearts."

The speaker raises two rhetorical questions ("*what if I'd never ...*" and "*or what if my siblings...*") followed by an answer (*I remind ... this world*). This *hypophora* is made use of to relieve the inner conflict inside her due to her great loss of the little sister. In addition, *mitigation of apology* of the type of non-specification reference, highlighted by the first person plural pronoun "We" (in "*We all must find peace knowing that she is still a light in our hearts.*") is introduced to multiply the speaker's effort for the extenuation of the loss of the sister.

5.20 Saying Goodbye to My Brother (-in-Law)

"The reason we're here today is twofold. We want to take comfort in one another after the passing of Rick. But it's important for us to remember that though we grieve, we also should celebrate his life. I'm having a hard time imagining mine without him in it. He was a brother-in-law in name, but really a brother to me. I've been lucky to know him since I was fourteen or fifteen."

The speaker begins his eulogy with the two reasons for attending the funeral of his brother-in-law. The first reason implies "*mitigation of apology*" headed by the non-specification reference with the first person pronoun "We" (in "*We want to take comfort in one another after the passing of Rick.*") which is used to reduce the effect of death on himself and the bereaved. As a way of assuaging the melancholic situation of passing away, he deliberately uses the plural pronoun "we" to get the audience participated in the tragedy he got. Getting others involved in one's death calamity is one conventional way of soothing his bereaved. The second reason is attained via the *hedging* conjunction (*but*) which functions as a device employed to direct the audience attention towards (something contrary to the message presented) recalling the dead brother-in-law's reminiscence and rejoicing his past time ("*But it's important for us to remember that though we grieve, we also should celebrate his life.*"). And this in return will obliquely relieve the cloudy atmosphere of the death situation.

VI. Conclusion

The stylistic- rhetorical analysis of the twenty eulogies has demonstrated that figurative language (involving metonymy, metaphor, mitigation with its two types, hedges and mitigation apology expressions, and hypophora) can be influential in these eulogies. Technically, these devices are functioned to add a sort of delicacy and embellishment, and socially, they are developed as mitigation tools to reduce and placate the pain of death on the bereaved and audience. They provide a more emotional and friendly interpretation of the late as they are identified as consolatory and praising strategies for assuaging and comforting the feelings of living family members and the bereaved.

These devices are presented eulogies in a way that does not only generate sorrow in the attendance but also presents the departed in a manner that induces indebtedness for him/her; they serve particular purposes anticipated to unstiffen the depressed impact of the event on his/her family or friends. They are instruments manipulated for influencing the audience (i.e. affecting their views and passions) and beckoning the social place or the distinctive behavior of the deceased person.

The substitutional relation of *Metonymy* is developed in eulogies to reveal a characteristic of entity utilized in lieu of the entity itself. In most eulogies, metonymic relation is manipulated to give good attributes or praise the deceased person, particularly in his past life-time. *Metaphors* are observed in the data to yield a lively image in the receiver's mind and to arouse imagination. They allow the audience to grasp the meanings of social events; they mostly give benevolent attributes and images about the deceased person. In some cases, the eulogist resorts to metonymic and metaphoric relations to praise the dead person or his/ her past works and deeds. *Mitigation* is functioned in eulogies to lessen the unwelcome consequences of his/her death, and makes it more satisfactory for the listener to encounter the unhappy news or to react positively to it. *Hedging* expressions are utilized in the data to decrease and soften the effect of death calamity on the presence and the bereaved through having recourse to certain circumventing expressions. Through hedging, the speaker intends to diminish the susceptibility of the transmitted message to the listeners and to allude the aftermath of death-agony. *Mitigating apology expressions* are employed to mitigate and offer a kind of excuse for unpleasant issue. They are employed to maintain the conventions of public delicacy and deference accustomed in the ritual situation of death announcement. In death matters, the eulogist utters or reads his eulogy to underestimate the overemphasis coming from the carried message and to pacify the gloomy effect of the downhearted situation of death, and to indirectly offer an apology as a sort of relief to the audience at the burial ceremony of the deceased person. The technique of *Hypophora* (introducing a question followed by an answer) is employed to arouse the hearers' curiosity and draw their attention towards certain aspects of the deceased person. Through hypophora, the eulogist can lay significance and focus on the big loss of death and to remind the attendance of the good deeds of the departed person in a way to reduce the effect of bereavement on the bereaved.

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