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The Connotations of CTs in Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*: A Pragmatic Perspective

Safa Mawlood Hadeed and Juma'a Qadir Hussein

Abstract *This study aims to investigate the connotations of colour terms in Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter from viewpoint of pragmatics. As connotations of words, in general, and CTs, in particular, are context-based, pragmatics implicates assumptions suitable for the interpretation of the connotations of colour terms in The Scarlet Letter, and how Hawthorne used them in expressing their pragmatic meaning. In this regard, a qualitative analysis is used depending on Allan's (2007) proposition that connotations are pragmatic effect and not semantic. Considering the types of connotations in terms of their function, negative or positive attitude the study will adopt Allan's (2009) concept of X-phemism with its types-dysphemistic, orthophemistic, and euphemistic. All colour terms, basic and secondary, used in the novel: black, white, grey, red, scarlet, crimson, yellow, blue, green, purple, golden and brown, will be counted manually and, then, analyzed. The typology of colours is based on Berlin and Kay's (1969) classification. The connotations are judged by analyzing colours in context with special attention to words collocated with CTs. All the colours in the novel have orthophemistic uses; black, grey, red and brown have dysphemistic uses.*

Key Words: CTs, connotation, X-phemism, euphemism, dysphemism, orthophemism.

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1.Introduction

Literature is a reflection of our life and the literary writer is an artist who puts some secrets in his work which are not explicitly revealed. Colour terms (henceforth CTs) are manipulated by literary writers to convey complex ideas rather than merely their conceptual meanings. CTs is one of the ways used to communicate and convey ideas without using many words. The use of colour can compensate for using many words to convey certain ideas and emotions. Thus, colours are associated with certain objects or concepts in the real world. For example, red is associated with danger, black with evil or devil, white with peace. The interpretation of a certain colour differs according to the culture in which it is used. CTs are widely used in such a way that it may be collocated with any object. Besides, our feelings and emotions are affected by the colours around us. They sometimes affect our psychological state (Qatatsheh:2015)

CTs have been an important area of investigation in contemporary linguistics. The importance of CTs lies, according to Gaballo (2013), in offering insights into the categorization of reality and human cognition. CTs constitute a recognizable part of any language's vocabulary. The study of CTs is fascinating because each language divides the spectrum of colours in different ways (Janziz, 1997). Thus, CTs are considered as an interesting area of investigation since they have been dealt with by anthropologists, philosophers, scientists and linguists. Following Berlin and Kay's (1969) study, thousands of works have been written in which CTs are their major focus, in particular literary studies. However, most of which are context-free studies and some have been tackled from an anthropological perspective (Gaballo:2013). Where literature is a reflection of life literary writers have always been inspired to produce their works. Therefore, the use of colours in the literary context is not surprising since colours are considered to be one of the ingredients of reallife (Qatatsheh:2015). Some words and expressions are rich in connotations. CTs are a lexical field which is considered very rich in connotations. Some colour connotations are considered language-specific or culture-specific, while others are universal. Thus, colour connotations and colour symbolism are an interesting area of study. (Gage, 1999).

The result, then, is that thousands of literary studies have been conducted exploring the use of CTs in different literary works inspired by colours. Out of this excessive concern with colour terms, Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (the corpus of the study) is no exception. Among other pieces of American literature, *The Scarlet Letter* might be mostly distinguished in the use of CTs. Evidence in literature explicitly attributes Hawthorne's distinguished concern with colours to the impact of his society, which is, in turn, closely reflected in his careful choice of the lexical elements, colour symbols, and metaphors throughout *The Scarlet Letter*. Research on Hawthorne's works especially *The Scarlet Letter* has shown that Hawthorne is deeply affected by the American social context mainly the religious context, the Puritan. Such impact, many researchers argue, is closely reflected in his careful and excessive choice of colours in his pioneer work *The Scarlet Letter*. The frequent use of colours throughout the novel was the very reason behind researchers' insightful argument that Hawthorne is suffering and struggling a society complex. Nonetheless, researchers rely exclusively on literal or denotative meaning and textual information rather than thematic inferencing (connotation) or pragmatics in the interpretation of colours throughout his novel. Such

heavy reliance on *textual information* is clearly due to the researchers' restricted interest in the literal meanings (denotative) of colours rather than the intended meanings, hence connotative.

However, none of the past related literature on Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* has referred to the possibility of involving pragmatics in addressing CTs. That is, previous studies devoted to the use of CTs in *The Scarlet Letter* have always been interpreted literally. This study argues that the meaning of CTs in *The Scarlet Letter* cannot be interpreted literally unless we go beyond the literal meaning, and thus, much of the aspects of CTs have not yet been revealed. To this end, this study attempts to reveal the colour connotations via a pragmatic perspective. Pragmatics is considered to be a powerful tool used to analyze literary works because it accounts for not only elements present in the literary work but also for the intended or inferred meaning. Based on the aim of the study, the following research questions are raised:

1. What are the frequencies of CTs used in *The Scarlet Letter*?
2. What are the connotative meanings implicated in CTs used in *The Scarlet Letter*?

2. The Pragmatics of Connotation

In this section, a brief account of past studies and related views of literature are presented due to their relevance to this study. Many studies have been conducted tackling the connotations of CTs from different perspectives (Gillian Philip, 2003; Gill Philip, 2006; Allan, 2009; Zhau, 2011; Al-Adaileh, 2012; Rababah and Al-Saidat, 2014; Yu, 2014; Al-Bzour, 2015; Yoon, 2018). However, less linguistic studies have been undertaken especially those related to the connotations of CTs in literary works. In particular, little linguistic studies on CTs used in literary works, such as Hawthorn's *The Scarlet Letter*, have been attempted, especially from a pragmatic perspective. CTs have little interest linguistically, particularly a pragmatic point-of-view as pragmatics has been given much less attention than other areas of linguistics. Consequently, addressing pragmatically the connotations of CTs selected from *The Scarlet Letter* would contribute to a wider debate over linguistic meaning connoted in CTs.

To the best of the researchers' knowledge, few (Xing 2008; Alousque 2011; Btoosh, 2014; Qatatsheh 2015) studies have dealt with the connotations of CTs from a pragmatic perspective. Xing (2008), and Alousque (2011) investigated CTs from a semantic and pragmatic perspective. Xing (2008) investigated the "Semantics and Pragmatics of Colour Terms in Chinese". He states that many Chinese CTs show different extended meanings from unrelated languages such as English. Through diachronic and synchronic evidence, the study shows that Chinese and English are the same in employing the same mechanisms of CTs (e.g. metaphor, metonymy, pragmatic inference, and sense of opposite relation,) in developing variously extended and abstract meanings. As for Alousque (2011), he conducted a study entitled "A Semantic and Pragmatic Analysis of English Colour Idioms". He explored the semantic and pragmatic dimensions of a small corpus of English colour idioms with data drawn from *The Times*. The semantic analysis showed that there are two types of motivated idioms: culturally motivated and metaphorically-motivated, while the pragmatic analysis revealed that of colour idioms in the British press had a communicative impact, as demonstrated in their high occurrence and degree of variation.

Contrary to Xing (2008), and Alousque (2011), Btoosh (2014), and Qatatsheh (2015) explored the connotation of CTs of two different literary works from a pragmatic perspective. Btoosh (2014)

explored the connotations of white and black colours in Antara's poetry, a pre-Islamic poet, adopting a psycho-pragmatic model of analysis. He found out that much of the connotations of CTs in Antara's poetry goes beyond their denotative meaning. In his study, Qatatsheh (2015) investigated the pragmatics of CTs in Shakespeare's *Venous and Adonis* poem. Qatatsheh investigated the frequencies of CTs in the poem analyzing the connotation of each colour whether it is used to convey a negative or positive connotation. The red colour is most frequently used in the poem denoting many connotations or pragmatic meanings, positive and negative. Whereas purple has permanently a negative connotation as well as black, white, green, and blue are employed to evoke positive connotations in this context.

Although many studies have adopted pragmatics in the analysis of the connotations of CTs, some of them have not yet considered the fact that connotations are pragmatic effects and not semantic. However, Allan's 2007 assertion, there has been no extended discussion elsewhere that connotations are pragmatic effects, though it is often implicit. Until the publication of Allan's (2007) article, "The Pragmatics of Connotation", connotations had been considered as semantic effects. Allan's thesis changed the direction of research that researchers have adopted his proposition to be the theoretical framework of their researches, hence the theoretical framework of this study. Allan (2007:1047) argues that the connotations of language expressions are the "pragmatic effects that arise from encyclopedic knowledge about its denotation (or reference) and also from experiences, beliefs, and prejudices about the contexts in which the expression is typically used". In line with Allan, Crystal (2003) explains that connotative meaning refers to the emotional associations whether personal or communal as part of the meaning suggested by a lexical item. In the same token, Leech (1974:14) defines it as the "communicative value an expression has by virtue of what it refers to, over and above its purely conceptual content".

Therefore, in the process of interpreting meaning, one should distinguish between denotation and connotation. Allan (2009) defines denotation as the entity to which a lexeme is usually used to refer, for example, *my mom* denotes *the woman who bore me*. In the same vein, Crystal (2003) states that denotative meaning is the meaning identified by the "relationship between a linguistic unit (especially a lexical item) and the non-linguistic entities to which it refers". Therefore, the equivalent term to the denotative meaning is the referential meaning. For example, the denotative meaning of the word *pen* might be *an instrument used for writing*. Consequently, the sense, denotation and reference of language expression are different from its connotation. For example, *Mike* and *Michael* can have different connotations with the same reference. *John* cannot be a suitable name for a new-born daughter, and, in the same token, *Springtime* in Paris in an unsuitable name for an autorepair shop.

This means that identifying the connotations of a word, according to Allan (2007), means to identify the attitude of the community towards it. For instance, the connotations of the English word *octopus* and *tako*, the equivalent Japanese translation is very different; in English, an octopus is a sinister, alien creature, whereas, in Japanese, *tako* is edible and endearing. This means that a word is replaced because of its negative connotations. That is, various connotations lead to different pragmatic effects. Connotation, then, is a comprehensive pragmatic category of meaning. The connotations of colours, in this sense, vary across cultures as they show specific cultural meanings. That is, Kress & Leeuwen's (2006) assertion, different colours show different effects in

different cultures. According to Eiseman (2009), the red colour denotes negative and positive meanings. In Western culture, for example, Smith (2009) states that the red colour is used positively as it represents Valentine's Day, love and negatively representing energy. Connotations of the red colour in other cultures were investigated by Paul & Okan (2010); they found out that, in Nigeria and Germany, "red" means unlucky, whereas as, in China, Denmark and Argentina it means lucky. On the other hand, it represents desire and ambition in India and love in Korea, China, and Japan. However, in Arabic culture, according to (Al-Adaileh 2012), it refers to negative meanings. Based on the idea that connotations are pragmatic effects that arise from encyclopedic knowledge about denotata (Allan, 2007), colour-bearing objects has to give rise to the connotations of CTs.

In this sense, Allan (2009) classified the connotations of CTs in English: black, white, grey, brown, yellow, red, green, blue in terms of 'X-phemisms'. X-phemisms is a term used by Allan and Burrige (2006) for the amalgamation set of dysphemisms (offensive language), orthophemisms (straight-talking), and euphemisms (sweet-talking). Orthophemisms and euphemisms mean the use of words or phrases as an alternative to a dispreferred expression. However, a euphemism is typically less formal and less direct (or literal) than the corresponding orthophemism. A euphemism is used as an alternative to a dispreferred expression. Typically, a euphemism is more colloquial and figurative (or indirect) than orthophemism. A dysphemism is a word or phrase with offensive connotations either about the denotatum and/or to people addressed or overhearing the utterance. These are the criteria which operate on the judgments made in this study. All the colours surveyed have some, often many, orthophemistic connotations; euphemistic connotations of colours are rare, but dysphemism is common. Allan found out that black is used dysphemistically more than other colours. Besides, it is used orthophemistically and not euphemistically. The connotations of black are darkness, decay, death and evil deeds. The most frequent use of black is dysphemistic of human skin colour. However, it can be retrieved as a mark of honour, as well as can be orthophemistic. By contrast, white is mostly used positively; it is linked to purity, light, and freedom. It is rarely used dysphemistically or euphemistically. Yellow is dysphemistically used of cheap paper and cowards as well as its orthophemistic use of light coloured African-Americans. Red is linked to blood, fire and danger. Therefore, it is clear that the meanings of CTs, positive or negative, are determined by the context in which they occur.

To shed light on this problem, this study investigates the pragmatics of CTs through their use in Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. As CTs are loaded with multiple connotative meanings, as conventionally realized in linguistic expressions, literary writers, Hawthorne is no exception, of different literary forms extensively use them to connate purposively some hidden meaning, hence intended meaning. Accordingly, this study proposes a novel pragmatic approach to the connotations of CTs used in the novel accounting for their pragmatic significance of using. The purpose of this research is to study the pragmatic significance of using CTs in Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. Considering the fact that connotations are pragmatic effect, the study will adopt Allan's (2007), and Allan's (2009) proposed classification of the connotations of CTs in terms of the concept of X-phemisms which, in turn, includes: dysphemisms, orthophemisms, and euphemisms, the theoretical framework of the study. To give a comprehensive assumption about the pragmatic effect of using color in the novel, the study will consider all basic and secondary CTs used in the novel based on Berlin and Kay's (1969) classification.

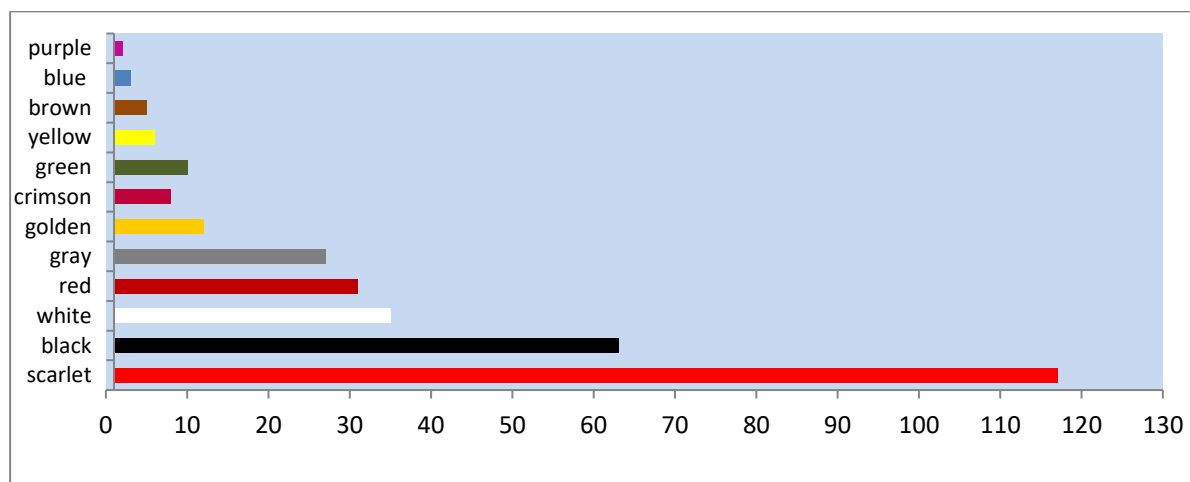
3. Methodology

Although some linguistic research in CTs has been undertaken, an in-depth linguistic study of the CTs used by a literary figure such as Hawthorne has not previously been attempted. The research investigates the pragmatics or connotative meanings of CTs in Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. To this end, a qualitative analysis is used depending on Allan's (2007) proposition, the theoretical framework of the study, that connotations are pragmatic effect and not semantic. Considering the types of connotations in terms of their function, negative or positive attitude, they perform in the context used, the study will adopt Allan's (2009) concept of X-phemism in terms of which he proposed a classification of the connotations of meaning include: dysphemisms, orthophemisms, and euphemisms, hence the connotations of CTs. The data of this study are collected from *The Scarlet Letter*. The textbook of the novel used is the (2007) edition of Oxford University. Therefore, all CTs, basic and secondary, frequently used in the novel will be analyzed. The classification of CTs into basic and secondary is based on Berlin and Kay's (1969) classification, 9 are basic and 3 are secondary. The basic CTs are black, white, grey, red, yellow, green, blue, purple and brown, while secondary CTs are: scarlet, crimson, and golden. Before analyzing these CTs, they will be counted manually, hence the answer to research question one. CTs are counted by using the 'Find Text' icon of the PDF file of the novel, *The Scarlet Letter*.

4. Analysis and Discussion

CTs have two types of meanings, denotative and connotative meaning. Denotative meaning is defined by Sinclair (2004) as the place which the word occupies about other words, it is classificatory to classify the word within the language. The literal meaning of CTs is their denotative function only. For example, the sky is *blue*, *the blood* is red, the *snow* is white. Therefore, CTs have no denotative meanings other than the colour itself (Philip: 2003). As far as *The Scarlet Letter* is concerned, this novel is highly symbolic and colour terms are manipulated to connote meanings other than their denotative meaning. For instance, black and white are very frequently used to symbolize the conflict of life between good (white) and evil (black). The following figure and table illustrate the frequency of CTs used in the novel that is counted manually.

Figure (1) and Table (1) show the frequencies of CTs in the novel: -



CTs	scarlet	black	white	red	gray	golden	green	Crimson	yellow	brown	Blue	purple
frequency	117	63	35	31	27	12	10	8	6	5	3	2
percent	36.7	19.7	11	9.7	8.5	3.8	3.1	2.5	1.9	1.6	0.9	0.6

1- Black

The denotative meaning of black implies the reference to the coal; the blackest looking object which reflects the least light, dark, the absence of light, the opposite of white, enveloped in darkness and lacking in hue. Technically, "black" is not a colour, instead, the absence of any colour (Paterson, 2003). Many associative meanings are linked to black colour in different cultures. It may be associated with bad deeds, evil and the ugliness of the world as it is considered a sign of darkness (Al-Adailah, 2012; Btoosh, 2014).

It is the most frequent colour term used throughout the novel besides the scarlet. It was mentioned 63 times in different positions to connote different meanings. Generally, black colour is mostly associated with negative connotations as it is physically linked to darkness, the absence of light, sadness and gloomy things. Thus, it used to evoke negative connotations more than other colours. Besides, it is used orthophemistically but not euphemistically (Allan, 2009). It is used orthophemistically to describe Hester's appearance mainly to convey a positive connotation implying Hester's beauty. "Deep black eyes" connote that she has beautiful and attractive eyes. This context is one of the few positions in the novel that the writer uses black to refer to a positive connotation as in: "...had the impressiveness belonging to a marked brow and deep black eyes" (p.44).

In addition, black is used dysphemistically to connote negative notions. Throughout the novel, black is mostly used dysphemistically to refer to evil and bad deeds as in: "...the black flower of civilized society, a prison" (p.39), where the black flower used to describe the prison in which bad deeds happens as punishment or death by members of a civilized society as the writer intends to criticize that society with its strict and hypocritical rules. Black art means the practice of a witchcraft as black is associated with the forest where devils were believed to live in, especially at the time in which the novel is written. The forest is seen as the devil's authority where witches and black-magicians were believed to meet at night as in: "often performing seemingly miraculous cures by their skill in the black art" (p.100).

Besides, it is collocated with the word *man* for 15 times mostly associated with the forest where devils live and to emphasize the idea of evil and bad deeds as in: "Art thou like the Black Man that haunts the forest round about us?" (p.62), The *Black Man* is used to refer to the Satan or his representative who keeps chasing Hester trying to increase her agony. In some positions, it is used to refer to Chillingworth, her husband, who attempts at revenging upon her and her partner.

2- White

White is the colour of snow. It has no hue; light in colour as related to tea or coffee, having milk added. Accurately, white is not a colour. Instead, it is the combination of all the colours in the way that when white light is seen through a prism, the rainbow effect is formed representing all the colours of which white is comprised. White paint is produced more than any other colour

paint (Paterson, 2003). White, being the opposite of black, is mostly used positively. It symbolizes purity, innocence, cleanness, goodness and peace. There is an agreement among most of the cultures that the connotations of this colour are positive as the use of white in "*The mother's impassioned state had been the medium through which were transmitted to the unborn infant the rays of its moral life; and, however white and clear originally, ...*" (p.72) where *white* is used positively to refer to the goodness of Hester's personality despite her bad deeds and sins as if the writer tries to show the inner conflict inside everyone's personality between good and evil. *White lie* is considered an acceptable lie and socially speaking *white collar* workers are superior to *blue collar* workers. The bride tends to wear white as a symbol of purity and chastity (Rakhieh and Al-Saidat, 2014; Allan, 2009). White colour is mostly used orthophemistically and there are few dysphemistic uses. The most famous connotations of white are: old people, referring to white race, light, beauty, cleanness, goodness and purity (Allan, 2009).

In the novel, white is sometimes used to refer to illness, being tired and cowardliness when used to describe Dimmesdale as in "*He knew that it was himself, the thin and white-cheeked minister, who had done and suffered these things, and written thus far into the Election Sermon!*" (p.173) where Dimmesdale is suffering without having the courage to confess his sin, his psychological agony is reflected by his physical appearance which Chillingworth noticed. Besides, it is also used to refer to the white race when referring to white persons accompanying Red Indians. The white man is used frequently to refer to Chillingworth to distinguish him as being different from the Red Indians as in "*By the Indian's side, and evidently sustaining a companionship with him, stood a white man, clad in a strange disarray of civilized and savage costume*" (p.50). Red Indians are believed to be sons of the devil at that time as if the writer wants to say that he is standing with the devil's side alluding his next actions.

In addition, it is collocated with *head, brow, hair* and *beard* to refer to the notions of old people, wisdom, preaches and dysphemistically used to refer to the notion of weakness (Allan, 2009; Btoosh, 2014) as in the extract "*Now came the dead friends of his youth, and his white-bearded father, with a saint-like frown, ...*" (p.114) in which the writer describes Dimmesdale remembering his father with a white beard expressing his need to the help or a piece of advice from an old, wise person. Consequently, white colour mostly has positive connotations, negative connotations are few.

3- Red

Red is the colour of blood. Red stems from an Indo-European root meaning *ruddy* and possibly from the more direct Sanskrit word *rudhira* meaning *blood*. Of the visible spectrum, it has the longest wavelength; within the range of around 760 and 630 nanometres. Besides, Red is one of the three *additive primary colours*. It is the colour of communism and revolution; of fire appliances and stop lights. It is considered a sign of danger, a symbol of revenge as well as courage, associated with the "red planet" - planet Mars. In English folklore, red represents happiness, good luck and health even though it is also linked to the devil, blood and as an evil omen. As said by W.B. Yeats (1865-1939) red is the colour "*of magic in almost every country*". The research mentioned in an article in the Journal "Nature" in (2001) shows that the human eye can recognise the colour red more easily than the colour white, against a green

background. Probably, this facility developed because of the primates' need to distinguish red from green leaves. However, writing to someone in red ink is considered sometimes as insulting (writing in the blood). In India, red is the colour of personal greeting cards as well as many official documents (Paterson, 2003).

The red colour is considered the most salient colour and the first to be recognized by human's eyes and mainly by infants due to its psychological and physiological reasons. *Red* is frequently described in English as a *warm* colour. Its conceptual link with fire might explain that. Fire is visually more salient than blood although blood is also highly obvious. It is also considered a natural signal of danger; something that people have to pay attention to in the same way as they required to pay attention to fire. Blood and fire is the most obvious related objects to red colour. Besides, prohibition and stop signs are normally coloured with red such as in the traffic lights and in electrical wires, the red wire is the positive or the active one, and also red alert means the severest risk (Allan, 2009) (Benjamins, 2006).

The connotations of red differ according to cultures. In English, it has more dysphemistic uses than euphemistic. In *The Scarlet Letter*, three types of red are used; the basic red colour and the non-basic colours related to red which are scarlet and crimson. Red is mostly collocated to: clothes, token and symbol to refer to the shameful sign which Hester was sentenced to wear. Red is chosen for many reasons: first, it is the most recognizable colour by human eyes (Bornstein, 1975; Ratcliffe, 1976; MacLaury, 1997; Miller, 1997 cited in Allan, 2009). Therefore, the red symbol will be the first thing the people's eyes will recognize when seeing Hester. Second, red is a hot colour due to its physical characteristics and being related to fire and energy (Allan, 2009). In the novel, certain collocations of red are noticed clarifying the colour's nature such as hot, iron, light, flame and heat as in “—it seemed to me, then, that I experienced a sensation not altogether physical, yet almost so, as of burning heat; and as if the letter were not of red cloth, but *red-hot iron*” (p.27). *Red hot* means “heated to such a temperature as to glow red” (Paterson, 2003). These collocations are employed to emphasize Hester's feeling as she wears the letter which is described as a hot iron or a flame burning her body not just a red cloth. It gives a hint to Hester's psychological and inner agony. Hester's punishment was not physical, rather it was psychological. One of the dysphemistic uses of red is used to refer to race discrimination in the novel which is the “Red men” referring to the red Indians. Paterson (2003) says that *Red Indian* is “An offensive term for North American Indians” as in “An Indian, in his native garb, was standing there; but the *red* men were not so infrequent visitors of the English settlement...” (p.49), Red Indians, the primitive inhabitant of America, were considered the children of the devil because of their red skin.

Red is also collocated to the words: *infamy*, *ignominy* and *stigma*. Three different words with similar meanings which are the shame represented by the scarlet letter such as in “... it is but the shadow of what he bears on his own breast, and that even this, his own *red stigma*, is no more than the type of what has seared his inmost heart!” (p.198), where red is used to describe Hester's feeling of shame and agony as the red token is not merely a piece of red cloth; instead, it is red infamy seared on her heart.

Scarlet is a non-basic colour term derived from red. It has a higher degree of brightness and a lower degree of saturation than red. Scarlet means a “bright red colour” (Cambridge Advanced Learner's dictionary). Scarlet is used as an adjective before the noun *woman* or before a name of a

woman to refer to "immoral" woman who has relations with a lot of men; a symbol of shame (Cambridge Advanced Learner's dictionary). Therefore, scarlet seems to be a euphemistic form used to refer to a bad woman: "*Nay, we might have judged that such a child's mother must need be a scarlet woman, and a worthy type of her of Babylon!*"(p.86); scarlet is not merely colour, it is highly symbolic and employed to refer to the idea of sinful women with all its implications.

Another non-basic colour term derived from red is used in the novel which is crimson. Crimson is "A bluish-red" (Paterson, 2003). It is mentioned for 8 times in the novel with positive connotations: "*A crimson flush was glowing on her cheek, that had been long so pale*"(p.158), when Hester throws away the scarlet stigma and feel freedom again after being a long time on her bosom with all its shame and agony. Her cheeks become crimson again after being so pale a long time ago. As a result, red colour has an orthophemistic, dysphemistic and euphemistic uses in this novel and was employed to convey many connotations.

4- Grey

Grey is the colour of ash, of lead and the hair of the middle-aged. It is a mixture of white and black. It is also considered a bleak colour with an achromatic and neutral hue (Paterson, 2003). Grey is a shade within the range of black and white. It has a variety of degrees as the dark grey, light grey and very light grey. Grey has the connotation of vagueness as it represents an in-between system, between white and black, light and dark, good and evil, purity and guilt. Thus, the combination of grey with the words: *area, sand, houses, midnight, twilight, ruins and stone* evokes the sense of vagueness, invisibility and old sad places (Janziz, 1997) as in the extract: "*The room itself is cobwebbed, and dingy with old paint; its floor is strewn with gray sand, in a fashion that has elsewhere fallen into long disuse; ...*"(p.8), where the writer describes the Custom House as being an old place reflecting the feeling of depression and monotony.

Qatatsheh (2015) says that grey is mostly used orthophemistically. Grey eyes are used in Elizabethan English to refer to the blue eyes. It is used positively in this context to refer to the physical beauty: "*while his gray eyes, accustomed to the shaded light of his study, ...*" (p.53), where the writer describes the physical appearance of John Wilson. Grey is also collocated with *head, hair and beard* to refer to old people who have white hair mixed with their black hair to give it a grey look: "*From father to son, for above a hundred years, they followed the sea; a gray headed shipmaster, in each generation, retiring from the quarter-deck to the homestead...*"(p.11). In other positions, white is mentioned with these words to refer to old aged people who have their hair all turned white. So by the use of colours, the writer can discriminate among age stages without using many words.

When describing Hester's clothes, the writer uses grey many times to modify the words: robe and cloth. Due to the physical characteristics of grey, the writer may intend to reflect Hester's wish to be invisible, to be noticed by no one as she carries a shameful sign on her chest as in "*On this public holiday, as on all other occasions, for seven years past, Hester was clad in a garment of coarse gray cloth*"(p.177). In some positions, the writer employs *black, grey and brown* to evoke the feeling of sadness, monotony, gloominess and the joylessness of the Puritans society: "*The picture of human life in the market-place, though its general tint was the sad gray, brown, or black of the English emigrants, was yet enlivened by some diversity of hue*"(p.180), the writer describes the gloomy scene of the Puritans' life by the use of such colours.

5- Brown

Brown is the colour of the wood and earth; in the wavelength range of about 620-585 nanometres. However, Latin had no particular word for brown. Its initial meaning was "dark" (Paterson, 2003). Brown is also related to dying plants, sunburn whites. It may be linked to pollution when it is used to describe sites which were used for commerce and industry (Allan, 2009). Brown has mostly negative connotations and very rare positive ones. It has a dysphemistic use referring to gloom and dimness (Janziz, 1997). In the novel, *brown* was used to evoke negative connotations when it is collocated with *sand* or when it is used with *white*, *black* and *grey* to describe a gloomy and sad scene. Brown has a dysphemistic use when linked to industrial or commercial pollution. Brown is used orthophemistically when used to describe some physical features of persons such as the eyes or the hair. Some positive connotations of this colour are used in the novel to connote physical beauty in two positions: first to describe Pearl as having brown hair and when describing Dimmesdale as having brown eyes as in: "*He was a person of very striking aspect, with a white, lofty, and impending brow, large, brown, melancholy eyes, ...*" (p.54). Therefore, brown was used in *The Scarlet Letter* to convey both positive and negative connotations.

6- Green

Green is the colour of growing grass comes from the Old English "gréne" from which the word "grass" is derived. Green is assumed to have more variations than other colours. Ranges from about 575 to 500 nanometres. It is one of the three additive primary colours. A symbol of hope; associated in medieval times with the planet Venus. Besides, it is the holy colour in Islam. Thus, it is used on the flags of many Muslim countries. It is also linked with fertility and springtime as well as with environmentalism. In English folklore, green is widely believed to be unlucky mainly concerning items of clothing (Paterson, 2003).

Green is the colour of nature and plants. It can be described as the colour of rest and mediation. Besides, it connotes youth, balance, health, renewal, calmness, peace, stability, spring, good luck and safety, as when it is used in the traffic lights (Allan, 2009; Jackson, 2011). However, green colour is used in the western cultures to allude negative meanings such as lack of experience and immaturity as well as it is used for unripe apples or peaches. Another negative use of green is to denote jealousy and envy; as describing someone of having green eyes (Janziz, 1997; Allan, 2009).

In the novel, it is used both orthophemistically and dysphemistically, positively and negatively. Green is employed to refer to Pearl's immaturity and lack of experience. Positively, it was used to denote nature, plants, grass and calmness as in: "*Pearl gathered the violets, and anemones, and columbines, and some twigs of the freshest green, which the old trees held down before her eyes*" (p.160); when the writer describes Pearl enjoying the beauty of nature after being released with her mother from the shameful sign.

7- Yellow

Yellow is the colour of the daffodil, the rind of ripened lemons and egg yolk which has a wavelength in the range of approximately 585 to 575 nanometres. It is one of the three subtractive primary colours. In China, this colour was used by the emperor however in the West it has pejorative connotations. It is used as a slang term for cowardly or jealous, hence having a yellow streak and yellow-bellied. Yellow represents cowardice, jealousy, and adultery in symbolism. In

electrical wiring, yellow indicates the earth. Yellow stems from the Indo-European *gel, ghel* or *gohl* from which many associated words such as gold, glaucous, glistening and yolk have evolved. yellow ochre refers to a yellowish-brown colouring (Paterson, 2003).

Allan (2009) finds that yellow is mostly used orthophemistically but there are very little dysphemistic uses. Yellow is linked to green in the way that they both carry similar connotations such as jealous, envy and fear. To call someone *yellow* is considered a dysphemistic use since it means "coward and craven". This colour is also connected to illness; people who have a disease in their liver tend to be seen as having yellow skin. Janziz (2007) says that yellow is also used as skin colour in addition to black, white, red and brown. Yellow was used negatively in the novel to describe plants and leaves as yellow, Yellow leaves denote the dying leaves: "*Deeper it goes, and deeper, into the wilderness, less plainly to be seen at every step; until, some few miles hence, the yellow leaves will show no vestige of the white man's tread*" (p.154), where the writer describes the first private meeting between Hester and Dimmesdale in seven years. They meet in the forest as they both look lifeless without spirit. The yellow leaves described in the scene shows their state as if they were shadows without life and feeling hopeless. The "white man" in this position describes Dimmesdale's sickness as being pale as if there is no blood in his body. In addition, it is used to refer to ancient things when describing the scene in the Custom House: "*I chanced to lay my hand on a small package, carefully done up in a piece of ancient yellow parchment*" (p.25).

Golden is a non-basic colour term related to yellow. It is a bright, metallic, or lustrous colour, like gold. It is the colour of a valuable mineral. It derives its value and significance, as being precious mineral, from the social prestige and commercial value. It symbolizes wealth and elegance, high status and spiritual purity (Jackson, 2011). In the middle ages red and gold are used in a combination to refer to religious art (Philip, 2003); in the novel, the red letter is embroidered by a golden thread which increases its prominence as a symbol of shame: "*On the breast of her gown, in fine red cloth, surrounded with an elaborate embroidery and fantastic flourishes of gold thread, appeared the letter A*" (p.44).

Accordingly, golden is used orthophemistically in the novel, no dysphemistic use is found. Almost, golden is used to connote positive meanings especially when collocated with the words: year, day, truth, love, fancy, image, light and beam: "*...they make merry and rejoice; as if a good and golden year were at length to pass over the poor old world!*" (p.178); in this extract, Hester asks Pearl to observe how a new man would begin a new rule and is set over the people.

8- Blue

Blue is the colour of the sea or the sky. The word blue as the name of colour has had an undefined history. In some languages, no name is used for this colour and it was not considered as a primary colour by the ancients. In the Russian language, there are two words to refer to the word blue, one meaning light blue and the other dark blue; which are viewed as different colours. It has the wavelengths between approximately 480 and 445 nanometres and considered one of the three additive primary colours. It is a symbol of piety associated in medieval times with the planet Jupiter and with darkness. In English folklore, blue represents loyalty, it is also the colour for baby boys and is assumed to bring good luck to brides (Paterson, 2003).

Blue is mostly used orthophemistically. It is the opposite of red in the way that it is the coolest colour on the contrary to red which is the hottest colour. Blue being a cold colour arouses the feeling of calmness and rest. It has many positive connotations such as loyalty, sincerity, justice, truth and intelligence. Some negative connotations are attached to this colour such as melancholy,

blue Monday and feeling blue. In some cultures, wearing blue protects from the evil eye and witches as it is the colour of heaven and witches do not like it (Allan, 2009; Jackson,2011).

Throughout the novel, blue is mostly used negatively. In the following extract, blue is the colour of the serving men clothes: “*The serf wore the blue coat, which was the customary garb of serving-men at that period, and long before, in the old hereditary halls of England*”(p.82). In addition, blue is used negatively to refer to a blue flame that results from the burning hellish brimstone (Wentworth and Flexner, 1967 cited in Allan, 2009). Shakespeare uses fire and brimstone as euphemistic forms for "hell" in *Twelfth Night*(Allan, 2009) as in: “*Sometimes, a light glimmered out of the physician’s eyes, burning blue and ominous, like the reflection of a furnace, or, let us say, like one of those gleams of ghastly fire that darted from Bunyan’s awful door-way in the hill-side, ...*” (p.102), where the writer describes Chillingworth’s eyes as burning blue suggesting a connection to the hell and devils represented by his desire to revenge and destroy Hester and Dimmesdale.

9- Purple

Purple is defined in the New Oxford Dictionary as "a colour intermediate between red and blue". Blue is defined as "a colour intermediate between green and violet" and violet is "a bluish-purple colour". Purple is used to indicate nobility and luxury (Paterson, 2003). Jackson (2011) explains that this colour is associated with spirituality, sacred, inspiration, wealth, creativity and enlightenment. Purple being the result of a mixture between red and blue, it may symbolize the "aggressive of red and the calmness of blue".

In the novel, purple is used for two times to symbolize luxury and royalty as in the. Born in the purple means born into an influential or a wealthy family. It has also a reference to the purple robes preferred by the nobility in ancient times. It has the connotations of to accede or be promoted to and to achieve high office (Paterson, 2003). In the following extract: “*He might truly be termed a legitimate son of the revenue system, dyed in the wool, or rather, born in the purple; since his sire, ...*”(p.15), the writer is describing the father of the Custom House as living a luxurious life. Having analysed the connotations of CTs, the following table shows the negative and positive attitudes that they perform in the context used.

Table (2) the use of CTs in Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*: -

CTs	scarlet	black	white	red	gray	golden	green	crimson	yellow	brown	Blue	purple
Positive(+)		+	+	+	+	+	+	+		+		+
Negative(-)	-	-	-	-	-		-		-	-	-	-

5. Conclusion

This study has attempted to investigate the connotative meanings of CTs, *black, white, red, yellow, grey, green, scarlet, golden, crimson, brown, purple and blue* in Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. The study classified the connotations of CTs in the novel under investigation adopting Allan’s (2009) approach: positive and negative, in terms of “X-phemisms”. X-phemism is a term used in Allan – Burridge (2006) to explain the union set of dysphemisms, orthophemisms and

euphemisms. The words collocated with CTs in the novel facilitate and influence the analysis of colour connotations.

Almost all colours have orthophemistic connotations. Black is mostly used negatively and dysphemistically, very few positive connotations are found. White is used orthophemistically but not euphemistically nor dysphemistically and mostly has positive connotations. *Black, scarlet, blue* and *red* predominantly have dysphemistic and related with mostly negative connotations. These findings confirm that of Allan (2009) who finds that *red* has more dysphemistic uses than euphemistic ones; *Red Indians, to be in the red, red tape* are examples of dysphemistic uses. *Green* is found to connote both positive and negative connotations. *Black* has more dysphemistic connotations than *red, yellow* and *blue*. Euphemistic connotations of *black* are relatively few and only one example was found as having positive connotations when collocated with *eyes: black eyes*. *Golden, purple* and *crimson* are used positively, and may have euphemistic connotations, but not negatively or dysphemistically. *Grey* is used orthophemistically and dysphemistically but not euphemistically. Dysphemistic uses of *grey* are expressions associated with a gloomy, dismal or dull environment. Yet, *yellow* is almost orthophemistic but rarely dysphemistic.

Black is the most frequently used colour term in the novel with many connotations. It is employed to create a sense of sadness, gloominess, monotony, evil, bad deeds and psychological agony. Neutral colours, *black, white* and *grey*, are used more frequently than other colours (except *scarlet*) to reflect the feeling of gloom, monotony and sadness; black and white are employed to symbolize the conflict between *good* and *evil* in the life of the puritans in which black seems to be dominant over white. The use of colours is a tool used by the writer to criticize certain aspects and highlight others.

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