



Rhetorical Analysis of Abu Al-Taib Al-Mutanabbi Selected Poems: The Case of Metaphor

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Abstract. In order to understand the concept of poetry, a good perception of its metaphor, the structure as well as the affiliation, would be a significant contribution for a better perception of this form of literature. This study aims to acquire an understanding of how Mutannabi describes the way of humanism in his poetry by portraying the concept of metaphors. The analogies from the representation of metaphors in his poetry are entangled with his view in encompassing regular wonders. In other words, the metaphors that he utilises in his poetry are based on the indirect interaction between human and the natural surroundings. The significance of this study is to analyse the deeply the actual meaning in the context of poetry, especially the inability of many students to fail to understand the meaning of metaphors, specifically in Arabic poetry. This study is conducted in hope for a better sensitivity of the reader in exploring and seeing the interconnection between the harmony of life and the art of poetry through its verses. This study utilised a qualitative content analysis framework with literary ecology and literary semiotics strategy. Mutannabi is known for his poetry pieces that are strongly correlated with natural elements, meaning that the verses can be depicted through the form of literary ecology. Hence, this study will present an explanation of how people understand the essence of life through the natural realms that are naturally created by God.

Keywords: Metaphor, Poetry, Natural Elements, Mutanabbi, Literary Ecology

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INTRODUCTION

The interpretation of the metaphor in a literary work could not be excluded from the context, because the fundamental meaning is not based on the surface of the text, but instead, it is embedded in the literary piece as a whole. The contexts in the work of literature can be represented in the form of (1) linguistic context, (2) physical context, (3) social context, and (4) spiritual context (Simawe 2001). The concept of metaphor is freely embedded in almost all type of literary works. In this study, the representation of metaphor in poetry would be examined based on the pieces of poetry by Mutanabbi (Arberry 1967). As the representation of metaphor, poetry depicts the poet's thoughts regarding his way thinking, from connecting one word to other representations by conveying minimal terms but nevertheless have broad, significant meaning to the literary work. One way to lead a study on the human relationship with the natural environment is by implementing the ecological theory. Based on Wahab (1990), he defined that theory of ecology is the study on how the interaction took place between human and the environment. The analysis of poetry can be adapted through this theory by exploring the way the author incorporates the real natural objects such as the earth, stars, sky and sea, in the context of metaphors. It can be said that metaphor symbolises the essence of poetry arts (Unis 2002). In this study, Al Mutanabbi poetry has been chosen concerning two factors, which are: (a) to examine the representations of metaphors implemented in the poetry, and (2) to examine the ecology of Arab's community through the metaphors (Coletta 2015). This is qualitative research in which the writer is utilising the theory of sociological literature (Dunne 2011) and Pierce's semiotic framework (Stables et al. 2018). These two approaches were decided to be implemented together, as this study is concerned with the context's meaning and human's experiences. The methodology for data processing is by utilising the Haley classification from a literary semiotics viewpoint.

Metaphor and Innovation in Classical Arabic Poetry

The article "A Comparative Study of Figurative Language and Metaphor in English, Arabic, and Persian", Mohaghegh & Dabaghi (2013, 276-278) gave a glimpse of the historical development of figurative language and especially metaphor in Arabic studies. They note that there are many scholars and linguists that have

dealt with the figurative side of language and tropes since Abu Ubayda, Ibn Qutayba, Al-Radi, and others who emphasized on the force that meanings can have, all of which have contributed in the development of Arabic rhetorical studies to some extent which later becomes agreed upon the main constituent disciplines of Arabic rhetoric, namely word order, the figure of speech, and embellishments. According to Abdul-Raof (2006), Arabic rhetoric is a linguistic discipline distinct from Arabic Grammar, which provides language users with the efficacious stylistic mechanisms for an eloquent and robust discourse. Hussein adds that it seeks to develop the linguistic competence of speech and writing skills. Arabic rhetoric clarifies the relation between syntax and semantics and reveals the way linguistics, pragmatism and aesthetics are entangled. Badawī & Badawi (1975) describes that Arabic rhetoric gives a reasonable consideration on the communicative meaning for a specific discourse action and the functional roles of a shift of sentence structure in the Arabic script and is divided into three clear-cut major disciplines: "ilm al-ma'ānī, 'ilm al-bayān, and 'ilm al-badī'".

The historical emergence of Arabic speaking figures shows that metaphor is formed from the invention of subtle creativity and optimistic semantics and syntactic occurrences. Back to the time when the holy Quran was introduced to the Arab community, many poets and speakers were amazed by its evolutionary linguistics, and metaphorical aspects that eventually made them believed that it was a sacred art or satanic work (Al-Azzam 2017) by the thought that it is not possible for a human being to be able to create a beautifully written masterpiece, not even close to it. The Quran was then viewed as a threat and/or a blessing and sparked literary populism that introduced the concept of interpretation, which generally gave rise to literary criticism (Sardaraz & Ali 2019). The significant part of the Quran's intense expressiveness is no other than its metaphorical expression. Profound Quranic interpreter desperately attempted, for instance, to explain for the incredible strength of the holiness and incomparable texts, stating that there is no way the verses did not come from God, or that God could not, in normal circumstances, grant a human being the ability to create a script comparable to the Quran scriptures in its metaphysical potential (Khan & Ali 2021).

The pre-Islamic metaphor was even seen as an obsolete metaphor by the literary ideal of Medieval Arabic poetry, and writers explored different forms of referring to a comparatively more complicated life. Al-Mutanabbi was regarded as the most influential Arab poet throughout history, the epitome of one of the most lavish and most intense literary controversies in history, predominantly by its progressive metaphorical invention (Arberry 1967). Other prominent poets in the era such as Abu Nuwas, Abu Tammam and Bashar Ibn Burd, in which being categorised as modern poets or 'muhdathun' during the earlier decade of Abbasid, were being criticised harshly by many conventional poets and critics during the time. It is being regarded that the reasons for the backlash they experienced were due to the swift in the implantation of metaphors in their literary works (Heinrichs 1984). Arabic poetry has started to pick up its pace and transforming its poetry styles and themes during the early Abbasid era, along with the urbanisation of modern life, active development of translating movement, and the exhilarating interactions with advanced civilisations at that time (e.g., Greece, Rome Empire and Persia) (Mugair et al. 2020). Especially with the newly arise type of poetry called muhdath or in another word, 'novels', and its writers called muhdathun (inventors of novels), demands the invention of new critical discourse and critical terms.

Metaphor or Al-istiara is a type of linguistic symbolism that is known to be the key element of expression in which the speaker may transform an idea that is conceptual or abstract into a tangible idea that can be sensed, seen or smelled. The only Arabic word that is seen to be able to hold almost the same concept as the English word metaphor is 'Al-istiaraa', that means 'borrow' (Mohaghegh & Dabaghi, 2013). They also mentioned that "al-Radi claims that isti'ara is the foundation of rhetorical diction (balagha) and the inner core of sophisticated speech (fasaha)". Metaphor can be described as almost has the same meaning as simile, but it is to be shed out with the other end. Thus, the correlation of the semantic context consistently depends on its resemblance. Hussien (2006) further describes that there are a few primary categories of metaphors, which are: (1) explicit metaphor, (2) implicit metaphor, (3) proverbial metaphor, (4) enhanced metaphor, (5) naked metaphor, and (6) absolute metaphor. In Arabic, hypallage or al-majaz al-mursal applies to a term when its underlying sense is not being portrayed (Obeidat 1997). The semantic connection between the hypallage term and the non-intrinsic expression is not based on resemblance, like the concept of metaphor possessed (Al Jumah 2007). Nevertheless, a lexical hint should be present that impedes the accomplishment of the intrinsic essence. There are many types of the semantic relations between the lexical item and the non-intrinsic context (Murphy 2003).

Al - majaz al -aqliy (cognitive metaphor)

In Arabic rhetoric, cognitive metaphor assigns a verb's significance to an object or a person other than what it actually relates to (Ahmad Hussein 2018). In this context, we can refer to the semantic-selection in which the verb chooses or imposes some restrictions on the subject, meaning that the verb comes with a package, namely the experiencer or agent and the theme or the patient (Zibin & Altakhaineh 2018). The experiencer or the agent of the verb is dependent on the action of the verb. For instance, when we say John came, we have attributed the action of coming denoted by al-musnad Came to the agent John (i.e. al-musnad ilayh) (Zibin & Altakhaineh 2018). Hence, the relationship between the verb and its allegorical subject, in cognitive allegory, takes the following forms in which there is always a cognitive clue that enables the recipient to discern the implicit underlying subject: cause relationship, time relationship, place relationship, morphological relationship, and subject/object relationship (Hussein, 2006: 212-216).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the process of choosing the appropriate and desired data for this study, selected poems by the most influential poet among the Arabic poets "Abu Al-ttaib Al-mutanabbi" were adopted. The choice was motivated by the strong effect of the figurative language used in these poems, the emotional effect on the reader, and the pleasure one can find while unravelling the significances hiding within the verses. The study is qualitative research in which is conducted by applying the content analysis method. Based on Hamdy & Goma (2012), content analysis refers to the study methodology that fully renders texts (or in another word, as a whole) generalisable and true deduction to their application contexts. Hence, content analysis is also a tool implemented to interpret the abstract meaning, in the case of this study, it would be the poetry, of discourse or text. Two excerpts from the poem were carefully chosen for this process. The metaphorical expressions found within these passages were analysed following the framework of Grice's cooperative principle and on the two semantic and pragmatic approaches, focusing on the pragmatic interpretation that puts the reader in the context of the poems. This study also utilises the semiotic strategy, along with Haley's classification method of analysis. Few essential steps are undertaken in this study, which are:

1. Writer had to continually read and analyse the poetry chosen for this study in order to understand the critical concept of the literature work.
2. Once the concept and meaning had been fully understood, the multiple metaphorical terms were to be highlighted.
3. After all the metaphors have been analysed, the writer then categorised all the terms in the groups based on Haley's (1980) ecological categorisation.
4. All the data collected were then analysed and interpreted for its meaning based on the context of poetry and its representation to natural elements.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This stage illustrates comparisons with something hypothetical. Based on the poetry analysed in this study, 12 data comprised of death (2), humiliation (1), corpses (2), sweet (1), bitter (1) sickness (2), friendly (2), and frustrated (1). Cosmos: The resemblance of human beings that inhabit the world or void available to physical perceptions: the sun (1), the moon (3) and the stars (1). Energy: Resemblances related to humans' senses to things that can move: clouds (2), white clouds, bonfires, lion's eyes and water (2), and wind. Substance: Anything that travels is fragile and takes volume. Terrestrial: Earthly spaces, with rough, sharp and hazardous instruments, such as coral reefs, swords, and so on. Words like the sea (2), land, shroud, far, near, and cliff were included in the poem's quotation. Object: Represents all things that are could be broken instantly, for example, the eyes, bones, and heart. Through the analysis of the poetry, no such representations were found. Living: The elements could be represented by anything alive, usually related to flora. Through poetry, few representations were found, which are grass and grey hair (2). Animate: this metaphor is related to living organisms (fauna). A few words could be found through the analysis: dogs, lion's fangs, and birds. Human beings: This representation could be related to living things (human) and that anything associated with human actions—for example, thief, beautiful princess, Jhizah, and smiling.

Based on the information collected on the poetry, it can be concluded that Al Mutannabi were more inclined to create poetry that has an abundance of metaphors of live related to spirituality, sorrow, and abstract representations. For example, he illustrated how someone could never predict the time of death, in

which he represented using the metaphor word "thief". The second category that has been analysed to be of high occurrences is energy. The purpose of this metaphor is mostly related to how everything could give power to human beings. For example, the metaphor "sun" was used by Al Mutannabi to indicate how sunlight could give everything to the livings on the earth, in which this depicts the element of generosity. He takes the most remarkable insights from the sun. It is being described that Al Mutannabi knew the concept and inexplicable meaning of sun before portraying the word into his poetry.

Similarly, the "wind" metaphor is the fostering of human imagination. Be revolutionary, not stagnant. As an illustration to never give up for victory. This analysis's results are based on functional analysis that also explores the importance of metaphorical modifiers in the poetry book Diman Iman Syafi'iy, which represents the morals and suggestion of state-society (Arianto, 2018). Same goes to Arianto study, in which there is a correlation between practices and the theoretical process utilising the Haley model.

This is Mutanabbi's imaginative method of developing his poetry into a profound spectrum that helps readers to perceive it correctly. The elegance of his poems can be seen as a magnificent and valuable piece of literary work. This definition is compatible with the perspective articulated in Abadi (2019), that metaphors help not only to evaluate verses but also to establish metaphors centred on the perceptions and insights of poets in the setting. The Haley model was used as per the category specified in the technique to examine the metaphor in Mustahabb poetry. Haley believes that the incorporation of metaphors will demonstrate social contact in this world. Human beings dream about what they perceive, what they desire and what they feel of their natural world as an individual. They are obligated to use the expression metaphor to convey their resemblance. Below is the analysis of the study in which utilises the Haley' categorisation model based on the list of metaphors portrayed in Al Mutannabi poetry.

Analysis

1. Verse:

وما الموت إلا سارق دق شخصه يصول بلا كف ويسعى بلا رجل

Translation: The death is like a thief, pulling out without the palm, walking without legs.

Analysis: The metaphor in this verse is "thief", which symbolises death. What is the reason why death is equivalent to the thief? This is based on the concept of which someone would not know when his life would be taken away. Same goes to the concept of the thief. A thief 'steals' something by secret without anyone would take notice of the whole situation. If he has a hand, people will definitely throw him back if he wants to take our life. Also, if he has legs, his steps will make some noises, and people can fight against him. Thieves are in the category of humans with life and thought forecasts.

In the below verse, there are a number of three metaphors that were mentioned in the poetry that depicted the concept of generosity of something: the moon, sea and sun.

2. Verse:

كالشمس في كبد السماء وضونها يغشى البلاد مشارقا ومغربا

Translation: Like the sun in the heart of the sky, the rays spread throughout nature from east to west.

Analysis: The sun is a metaphor used in the poetry to explain generosity and supply light for humans, flora and fauna that dwell on the earth. All living things could thrive well on the earth, all because of the existence of the sun. All living things would not be able to survive without it.

3. Verse:

كالبدر من حيث التفت رأيه # يهدي إلى عينيك نورا ثاقبا

Translation: Like a moon when he glances at you

Analysis: People might wonder how the moon could represent the concept of generosity? The answer could be portrayed through the understanding the concept of the moon, on how it is a beautiful light that radiates during the night time to all, living things and non-living things. It gives out light equally from the beach to the highest point of the hills.

4. Verse:

كالبحر يقذف للقريب جواهره # جودا ويبعث للبعيد سحاب

Translation: Like a generous sea for the one near he gave pearls for the far away, he sent black clouds.

Analysis: The poet uses the term "sea" to characterise an individual's patience and kindness. The sea genuinely embraces everything that has been delivered to it like dust and rotting corpses concerning endurance. The sea's nature that demonstrates kindness can be seen when humans can take sparkly pearls and any fish from it. In the meantime, the sea brings dark clouds through the far-off regions, carrying moisture to the arid locations.

5. Verse:

ومن الخير بطء سبيك عني أسرع السحب في المسير الجهم

Translation: The best for me is you postpone your gift ...

Isn't the fastest cloud being the white clouds?

Analysis: The definition of the gift that is instantly offered, when anyone asks for it, is then provided. It's an unusual occurrence if someone calls for a postponement. Nevertheless, for the metaphor of the rapidly flowing clouds that are represented as white clouds that seem to have no water in them, in which case it is possible. The poet uses the metaphor "white clouds" to show how the categorisation of energy in which something can move very fast, compared to 'black clouds' that carries water and is by far heavier.

6. Verse:

وأصبح شعري من هما في مكانه وفي عنق الحسناء يستحسن العقد

Translation: This poem is created suitable for the two of them like a necklace around a beautiful princess's neck.

Analysis: A beautiful poetry for its creator is like the beautiful necklace around a beautiful princess's neck. The metaphor of "a beautiful necklace around the princess's neck" portrays how suitable and lovely the couple together, the poet/someone who reads the poetry and the person he/she reads it to. The term 'beautiful princess' is categorised under the human category, symbolising life and thoughts.

7. Verse:

إذا نلت منك الود فالمال هين وكل الذي فوق التراب تراب

Translation: If I get your love, my treasure is small, even everything on land is land.

Analysis: The metaphor "land" symbolises anything meaningless; even it can be seen as something loathsome/awful. The word "land" belongs to the terrestrial category with its metaphor, with the prediction that there is something expanding.

8. Verse:

أين أزمعت أيهذا الهمام؟ نحن نبت الربا وأنت الغمام

Translation: Where are you going, Sir? We are like grass on the edge of a cliff while you are the cloud.

Analysis: "Like grass on the edge of the cliff" is used to explain the powerlessness of a person who is deteriorating and falling, without clouds. Clouds, too, are representations to depict someone who is a guardian. The grass on the edge of the cliff in the Haley classification belongs to the category of energy with "in motion" a category of existence with expectations of growing and quiet.

The poet's use of mythical imagery, on the other hand, is one of the elegant ways of achieving the uniqueness of his style. Jaafar (1999: 104) notes in this matter that calling upon the myth is not only a piece of ornament or decoration, but it is a response of both the psychological and artistic contexts of the poet. Al-Mutanabbi's case proves that his use of the mythical symbols and other symbols in his work is meticulous because he knows how to exploit the old dimensions of the mythical stories along with bringing a modern touch to them or giving them an appropriate modern significance. From the thorough analysis that has been conducted, it can be concluded that Al Mutanabbi implemented numerous types and formats of metaphor in his poetry. Initial and in stock are the most popular types presented in his poetry, and the most commonly represented formats are implicit and explicit. Implicit metaphors might not be readily understood since the vehicle is not provided, and so the illustration is not obviously evident. However, implicit metaphors are not easily translated or may vary from one translator to another in their interpretations.

CONCLUSIONS

Metaphors are rhetorical devices which are considered the most fundamental aspects of figurative language and are seemingly prevalent in both literary discourse and common language. In order to catch meanings carried out by them, we must follow a process whereby we combine the semantic and pragmatic approaches together. What this paper mainly tries to point out is, firstly, putting metaphors within the right scope; secondly, investigating how metaphors are yielded, recognized, and interpreted; thirdly, exploring the main issues revolving around the theory of implicature and the semantic traditions due to their deficiency in terms of giving an appropriate account of metaphors and how to interpret them; and finally, establishing the indispensable verity of taking the context and cultural elements into account to truly comprehend and appreciate metaphors. Even though we did not really grasp it, metaphorical appearance can not be interpreted when we read just at a glimpse and could not be quickly grasped. The study's findings suggest that the metaphors of interpretation in Al Mutannabi's poetry are close to how we assign an expression to life.

Al Mutanabbi encourages people subtly to fascinate themselves at this life. Both God's inventions could not be compared close to anything. Everything will offer the people metaphorical relevance. Poetry has more significance, meaning that could not be explained just by reading sciences' books. This study may be expanded, keeping in mind other linguistic figures, such as simile. Other studies of metaphor can tackle the issue of translating metaphors into English from syntactic, stylistic, or pragmatic aspects.

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