

*A Stylistic Analysis of Nature in Two Selected, English and Arabic,
Pastoral Poems*

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31973/295jnm76>

ABSTRACT:

Since stylistics is concerned with studying styles, the present paper is an analysis of the styles in selected poems. Style is grasped by analyzing the choice and use of stylistic devices; therefore, this study investigates the lexical items and the figures of speech in two English and Arabic pastoral poems, namely Matthew Arnold's *The Scholar Gipsy* and Kahlil Gibran's *Al-Mawakib*. These poems share the same theme which is nature. Both idealize nature by praising it as being a source of imagination and inspiration. Yet, the poems also describe a city in a different description. Therefore, contrast is the style adopted in pastoral poetry and it is achieved by manipulating some stylistic devices. The study adopts Leech and Short's (2007) checklist of stylistic markers as a framework for analysis. The findings of the analysis show great similarities in using the same stylistic devices in a contrastive manner in both poems with differences only in the frequency rates.

Key Words: Stylistics, Pastoral Poetry, Lexical Items, Figures of Speech

1. INTRODUCTION

Poets share many features of similarity regarding themes or styles. The theme of nature, for instance, is common among poets whether in English or Arabic language. Nature is the main theme in pastoral poetry in which poets rely heavily on contrast as an effective style to draw differences between nature and city. The main purpose of contrast is to underline ideas or highlight differences between two realms or notions. Through opposite ideas, poets make their arguments more convincing and shocking. Therefore, style is not only an ornament; instead, it carries important details of meaning. Because language is the means followed in expressing emotions, it is significant to find out whether English and Arab poets use the same styles in composing pastoral poetry. In this regard, the current study aims at investigating the language of two English and Arabic pastoral poems by conducting a stylistic analysis. It also aims to find out whether poets in the two different languages write their pastoral poems similarly. The study hypothesizes that English and Arabic pastoral poetry has more features of similarity than those of difference. Both English and Arab poets employ similar stylistic devices in expressing the theme of nature. Such stylistic devices reflect the style of contrast with differences in the distribution of these devices. The significance of this study lays its treatment of a field of study that has never been treated by researchers. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no studies have investigated the theme of nature in pastoral poetry stylistically. More specifically, no previous studies have carried out a stylistic analysis of Arnold's *The Scholar Gipsy* and Gibran's *Al-Mawakib*. Therefore, the present study is hoped to be of benefit to those interested in stylistics and poetry.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Style

The term style is an open register; therefore, it has many different implications and definitions. Leech and Short (2007) suggest that style can be said of the way language is formulated by specific people in a certain context for some purpose. They go further and assert that it is safer to think of style as "the linguistic characteristics of a particular text" (Leech & Short, 2007: 11). In the same line, Verdonk states that "style is a matter of a motivated choice among other possibilities" (Verdonk, 2002: 3). Therefore, in production of style, a choice or different choices are involved. Style, according to Lehman (1996: 303), is not confined to a single author; rather it can refer to individuals, genres, eras or languages. In other words, style might be a feature or features of an author, a character or a specific text, therefore, style has many dimensions based on the genre or text. In this regard, Enkvist (1973) refers to style as a label of identity that

differentiates one author from another since style is the characteristics of someone by which he/she is known.

2.2 Stylistics

Stylistics is a linguistic branch that is concerned with studying styles of language. For Simpson (2004: 3), stylistics works in investigating creativity in the use of language and its contribution to creating of meaning. Further, for Leech and Short (1981: 74), a stylistic analysis of any text, is an attempt to explore the aesthetic and artistic values reflected in a writer's choice of language. Being concerned with the artistic use of language, Short (1996: 1) proposes that stylistics is mainly interested in the analysis of language in literary texts using linguistic tools since literary language is more aesthetic than other language uses. In line with this, Widdowson (1975) suggests that stylistics is the analysis of literary texts in a linguistic way, thus it differs from literary criticism and linguistics but functions to mediate between the two and connects them. Therefore, stylistics links two subjects which are literature and linguistics so it can sometimes be comprehended as either linguistics or literary criticism. Short (1996) goes in line with Widdowson and affirms that stylistics is the connection between language and aesthetic function and that a stylistic analysis of style aims at investigating the artistic elements underlined in the author's choice or choices of language.

2.3 The Style of Contrast

In literature, contrast is a style that is followed in order to evaluate two of things side-by-side by stating differences instead of similarities. This style can help to show the details of one or both of the things that writers are contrasting. Cuddon defines contrast as “the juxtaposition of disparate or opposed images, ideas, or both, to heighten or clarify a scene, theme or episode” (Cuddon, 2012: 178). The significance of contrast lies in its ability to highlight arguments, strengthen ideas or create memorable images to readers. In addition, contrasting ideas can be shocking and entertaining for the audience. Besides, it also heightens drama, and produces balanced structures in stories. Therefore, the placement of two different things together can definitely draw attention to their differences and this can make an atmosphere or imagery to focus on an idea or theme.

2.4 Pastoral Poetry

The term 'pastoral' refers to a literary convention of writing in which the innocent life of shepherds is celebrated whether in poetry, novels or plays (Baldick, 2001: 186). Therefore, pastoral is a kind of literary writing that idealizes rural life in the countryside, and the natural world in general by contrasting this world to the corrupt and rough life in city (Vandana, 2019: 131). In pastoral poetry, the poets tend to express their nostalgia for the peaceful and simple life in

nature which has been unfortunately lost (Abrams and Harpham, 2005: 268). Pastoral poetry then is a literary work which opposes serene and simple life in nature to complex and torn life in city. This kind of poetry functions as a criticism of the false values, conceptions and hierarchical class structure in societies. Poets rely on contrast in the language use of their pastoral poetry that in one hand they criticize city life, and in another hand they idealize natural life (Abrams and Harpham, 2005: 269). The theme in most pastoral poetry is the search for the kind of simple life in which humans lived in harmony with nature; a life which remained intact from any kind of struggle like wars, corruption and materialism (Abrams and Harpham, 2005: 647).

2.5 The English Pastoral Poem

A biography of the poet and a general introduction to his poem will be presented next.

2.5.1 Biography of the Poet

Matthew Arnold was a Victorian poet, critic and a philosopher who was born in Laleham, Middlesex, England on December 24, 1822. Arnold has several works of poetry and prose in which the social structure of England was the focus. In his literary works, Arnold was very much bound to the problems of his age (Keenan, 1965: 9). His poetry is considered as a record of the conflict between many things like faith and skepticism, emotion and reason, youth and old. His poems are critically acclaimed for their eccentric language and thoughts. In addition to this, his religious essays are still studied as major sources of the life and culture of the Victorians. Arnold died on April 15, 1888, and he was buried at Laleham.

2.5.2 General Introduction of 'The Scholar Gipsy'

The Scholar Gipsy was written in 1853 based on a story found in a book called *The Vanity of Dogmatizing* (1661) by Joseph Glanvil. The poem has 250 lines and 24 ten-line stanzas. It retells the story of a poor Oxford student who abandoned his university and joined a group of traveling "gypsies". Being burdened with the conflicts of modern life, the scholar gipsy decided to retreat to nature to find serenity and peace. In the poem, Arnold discusses the condition of modern life with its feverishness, sick hurry and its 'divided aims'. He also reveals the conflict between science and religion, and doubt and faith. The life of the Victorian people contrasts the life of the scholar who had a creative imagination but could not find any scope in Oxford, thus he left his city and settled in nature with the gypsies. (Mahalakshmi, 2014: 42) The title of the poem itself reflects the contrast where scholar and gipsy, seemingly opposed yet juxtaposed and combined in one person. (Nebeker, 1971). The poem, therefore, is a criticism of modern life where people have no faith, aims or ideals in contrast to the scholar gipsy (Vandana, 2019).

2-6 The Arabic Pastoral Poem

A biography of the poet and a general introduction to the poem are given next.

2.6.1 Biography of the Poet

Gibran Khalil Gibran (جبران خليل جبران) also known as Khalil Gibran, was a Lebanese poet, writer, artist and philosopher. He was born in the town of Bsharri in northern Lebanon in January 6, 1883 and died in New York in April 10, 1931 of tuberculosis. When he was young, he immigrated to USA in 1895 where he studied art and began his literary career. Gibran was the prominent contributor in the establishment of The Pen Association which helped in the development of modern Arabic literature (Najjar, 2004: 99). Gibran wrote in Arabic and English and he had two trends of writing; one takes action and rebels against beliefs and the other enjoys life and nature. Gibran is best known to the Western world for his book 'The Prophet', which was the best-selling book in America and was translated into more than twenty languages with 9 million copies sold in the United States alone (Najjar, 2004: 212)

2.6.2 General Introduction of 'Al-Mawakib'

The poem 'المواكب' (The Processions, Al_Mawakib) was published in 1918, it has 203 lines and 18 stanzas. In each stanza there is an opposing of ideas in nature and city (Najimi et al., 2021: i). The poem has two different voices; one represents modern life with all its complexities while the other represents the serenity and spontaneity of nature. Gibran expresses two different dimension of life: the complex life in material civilization with its false values and the real original life in nature (Ghazwan, 2000: 27). The poem, thus, is based on a contrast between civilization and nature or reality and dreams. The contrast is reflected by the two voices in the poem, the first voice presents the societal dichotomies that distinguish between opposites like strength and weakness, sadness and joy, soul and body etc. The second voice accounts for the life in the forest, where dichotomies disappear and harmonize since the forest is the realm of unity. After these two voices come the final refrain, which resounds at the conclusion of stanzas, as a call for singing and rejoicing in order to detach from the world of reality with all its conflicts (Mustafa, 2018: 733).

3. THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section describes the data used to conduct the analysis of the current study, as well as the methods used to do so, as shown in the following sections.

3.1 The Research Design and Collection of Data

This study adopts a mixed method of analysis which is qualitative and quantitative in order to analyze selected pastoral poems. According to Leech and Short (2007: 38), the quantitative method is necessary since it provides insights and indications for researchers and it can show important features about styles. However, statistics alone are not enough for a comprehensive analysis of texts because nothing can be predicted from them alone (Leech and Short, 2007: 41). Therefore, there is also a need for a qualitative method since it allows researchers to explore the meaning that writers assign to texts and interpret it. Regarding the data of this study, two English and Arabic pastoral poems are chosen to be analyzed stylistically due to their similarity in genre as being pastoral poems, the theme which is nature and style of writing which is contrast. The English poem is *The Scholar Gipsy* by Matthew Arnold and the Arabic Poem is 'المواكب' (*The Processions – Al-Mawakib*) by Kahlil Gibran. From each poem, 12 stanzas will be selected as samples for analysis. The units of analysis in this study are the lexical items such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and the sentence.

3.2 The Framework of Analysis

This study relies on the framework of stylistic analysis presented by Leech and Short (2007) to investigate the language of selected pastoral poems to find out the stylistic devices used to reflect their style in representing the theme of nature. In their framework, Leech and Short state that stylistics investigates "the relation between the writer's artistic achievement, and how it is achieved through language.... It studies the relation between the significances of a text, and the linguistic characteristics in which they are manifest" (Leech & Short, 2007, pp. 55-56). They call these linguistic characteristics 'markers' or 'features' which are classified into four categories: lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, and cohesion and context. Leech and Short assert that the selection of these features for analysis is a difficult task if it is intuitive. Therefore, they suggest that it is important to have "a checklist of potential style markers... so that a reader may carry out a linguistic survey of the text, searching for significant features" (Leech & Short, 2007: 56). Leech and Short add that proposing this checklist makes the stylistic analysis of a text "very selective indeed: some studies concentrate on just one feature, and others on a mere handful of features" (Leech & Short, 2007: 55). Accordingly, the present study will not cover all the

categories given by Leech and Short's (2007) checklist; rather, the emphasis will be on the lexical level and figures of speech because they are the most important style markers in the selected data. Thus, the analysis is specified to the investigation of the lexical features which are nouns, verbs and adjectives in addition to the figures of speech such as repetition, parallelism, simile, metaphor, personification and hyperbole. The procedure followed in analyzing the selected data is based on the steps presented by Leech and Short (2007: 66). The analysis will begin with a table of quantitative data whose insights and indications are analyzed in the qualitative analysis followed by making a selective use of the checklist of style markers to show the most significant of them. The following sections will provide an account of the lexical categories and figures of speech to be investigated in the analysis.

3.2.1 Lexical Categories

Carnie (2013: 35) classifies lexical categories into two types: content words which are parts of speech like nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, and function words such as prepositions, pronouns, determiners, conjunctions, auxiliary verbs, etc. The lexical items to be examined in the data of this study are the nouns, verbs and adjectives as shown in the following table.

Table 3.1 The Lexical Items Under Analysis

Lexical Items					
Nouns		Verbs		Adjectives	
Abstract	Refer to ideas or feelings e.g. love, happiness, beauty.	Stative	Denote states or conditions e.g. know, love.	Physical	Describe physical attributes e.g. green, tall.
Concrete	Refer to concrete things e.g. book, pen, tree.	Dynamic	Denote actions or events e.g. drink, work.	Psychological	Describe mental or emotional state e.g. sad, happy.
Nature	Related to natural objects e.g.	Transitive	Need an object to complete the meaning	Evaluative	Denote subjective judgment e.g.

	flowers, field, woods.		e.g. I have an apple.		good, bad.
Human	Related to humans e.g. man, shepherd	Intransitive	Do not need an object to complete the meaning e.g. they laughed.		

3.2.2 Figures of Speech

In discussing figurative language, Shaw states that "figurative means not literal that is metaphorical, ornate, rhetorical, and based on or making use of figures of speech, while literal means true or fact, actual, not exaggerated, and in accordance with strict meaning" (Shaw, 1972: 159). Therefore, figures of speech are expressions that deviate from the 'ordinary' uses of language (McArthur, 1992: 402). There are two types of figures of speech; schemes (from the Greek word for "form"), in which the departure from standard use is in the order or syntactical pattern of words, e.g. repetition and parallelism, and tropes (meaning "turns", "conversions"), in which words or phrases are used in a way that makes a conspicuous change in what seems to be their standard or literal meaning e.g. simile and metaphor. The following table presents the figures of speech analyzed in the current study.

Table 3.2 The Figures of Speech Under Analysis

Figures of Speech	
Repetition	The use of a word, phrase or clause more than once for emphasis or music.
Parallelism	Re-utilization of words or structures in different forms e.g. out of sight, out of mind.
Simile	Explicit comparison by a word such as "like" or "as" e.g. she is like a rose.
Metaphor	Implied comparison e.g. he has a heart of lion.
Personification	Denoting human qualities to non-human objects e.g. the house appeared depressed.
Hyperbole	A sort of exaggeration e.g. the workers could move the mountains.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

This section presents the findings of analysis on the lexical level and figures of speech in the two selected English and Arabic pastoral poems.

4.1 Analysis of Lexical Categories

This section is the stylistic analysis of lexical items in the selected poems.

Table 4.1 Distribution of Lexical Categories in the Selected Poems

Lexical	The Scholar Gipsy	Al-Mawakib
	Frequency	Frequency
Nouns	205	432
Verbs	128	212
Adjectives	98	67
Total	431	711

The table shows that the English poem has fewer nouns and verbs and more adjectives than the Arabic poem. In total, the English poem has less lexical items since it tells a story, while the Arabic poem has more lexical items since it states many concepts in each stanza. For *the Scholar Gipsy*, the frequency of nouns and verbs is not very distant, 205 and 128 respectively, adjectives occur 98 times. For *Al-Mawakib*, nouns are the most frequent lexical category followed by verbs which are far behind by almost the half, and then adjectives. Both poets employed these categories to show contrast between city and nature. In favorite of nature, the poets assigned positive words i.e. positive nouns like *hope, joy* and الغنا' (*singing*), or positive adjectives like جميل' (*beautiful*), صحيح' (*true*), enchanted, and etc. Contrastively, the poets used negative lexical items when they refer to city life like *shocks, suffer, dying, sick, divided, حزن' (sadness), كدر' (distress), جهول' (ignorant)* and جانيب' (*criminals*). Therefore, such findings imply the poets' styles in presenting the theme of nature. Whether in English or Arabic, the selected pastoral poems describe natural life by using positive lexical items in contrast to city life.

4.1.1 Nouns

Table 4.2 Distribution of Nouns in the Selected Poems

Nouns Types	The Scholar Gipsy	Al-Mawakib
	Frequency	Frequency
Abstract Ns.	75	196
Concrete Ns.	130	233
Nature Ns.	52	74
Humans Ns.	64	73
Total	205	432

As the table illustrates, both the English and Arab poets use concrete nouns more frequently than abstract nouns in their pastoral poems. They both employ concrete nouns more often when referring to nature to show its realistic, reasonable, and energetic aspects, in contrast, they tend to use abstract nouns when mentioning city life to show sensations, thinking and intellectual conflicts. Concerning nature and human related nouns, both poets are almost similar in their use of these nouns to contrast between them. However, there is a tendency from both poets to exclude nature-related nouns when they refer to city life to show that humans are no longer connected with nature in their modern life.

4.1.2 Verbs

Table 4.3 Distribution of Verbs in the Selected Poems

Verbs Types	The Scholar Gipsy	Al-Mawakib
	Frequency	Frequency
Stative Vs.	54	97
Dynamic Vs.	74	115
Transitive Vs.	45	86
Intransitive Vs.	83	162
Total	128	212

The table shows a great tendency of both poets to use dynamic verbs rather than stative verbs. That is because the poems belong to the pastoral poetry which idealizes natural life that has many activities and work, so logically it is more dynamic. In contrast, city life is more associated with stative verbs in both poems than action verbs. The table also displays that transitive verbs used in the poems are less frequent than intransitive ones. In describing city life, the poets try to show their sad feeling; therefore, they use more intransitive verbs with it to say that city life has fewer objects and things to do (more frequent intransitive verbs) in contrast to nature (more frequent transitive verbs).

4.1.3 Adjectives

Table 4.4 Distribution of Adjectives in the Selected Poems

Adjectives Types	The Scholar Gipsy	Al-Mawakib
	Frequency	Frequency
Physical Adjs.	52	23
Psychological	46	44
Evaluative Adjs.	37	22
Total	98	67

The numbers in the table above indicate that the most frequent adjectives in *The Scholar Gipsy* are physical adjectives whereas in *Al-Mawakib* psychological adjectives are the most frequent. Arnold tends to describe natural settings therefore there are more physical adjectives. Nevertheless, psychological adjectives are not far behind, 46 and 52. For Gibran, he tends to describe many abstract notions and concepts like *love* and *happiness* and contrast them in city and nature; this is why he uses more psychological adjectives than physical ones. Both poets used physical adjectives more frequently with nature in contrast to psychological adjectives which appeared more in the description of city. The third frequent adjectives in both poems are evaluative adjectives which are used contrastively by the poets; they used positive evaluative adjectives when describing nature and negative evaluative adjectives when describing city.

4.2 Analysis of Figures of Speech

Table 4.5 Distribution of Figures of Speech in the Selected Poems

Figures of Speech	The Scholar Gipsy	Al-Mawakib
	Frequency	Frequency
Repetition	21	36
Parallelism	7	9
Simile	5	38
Metaphor	10	4
Personification	3	10
Hyperbole	3	3
Total	49	100

The table reveals that the use of figures of speech in the English poem is more than half far behind the Arabic poem which has 100 figures of speech, while the English one has 49. In light of these statistics, we can infer that Arabic pastoral poetry tends to use more figures of speech than English pastoral poetry. The table shows that repetition is the most frequent figure in the English poem, while it is simile in the Arabic one. We can entail the style of both poets that Arnold tends to repeat his words in order to emphasize and convey his message, on the other hand, Gibran prefers to use simile in order to draw his message closer to his readers. Parallelism and hyperbole have almost similar distribution in both poems. Metaphors are more used in *The Scholar Gipsy* and personification is used more in *Al-Mawakib*.

5. Conclusions

The paper has concluded that features of similarity between the styles of English and Arabic pastoral poetry outweigh features of difference which are found only in the distribution of some stylistic devices. In describing nature, English and Arab poets have used the style of contrast between city and nature in their pastoral poems to show the significance of nature. For example, at the lexical level, Arnold and Gibran used more concrete than abstract nouns when they referred to nature in contrast to the city to indicate that nature is more realistic and energetic. Contrast was also found in the use of verbs when the poets tended to use dynamic verbs with nature more than concrete ones to refer to its dynamism and activeness. As for adjectives, both poets had a tendency of describing nature with physical and positive evaluative adjectives, however, they used psychological and negative evaluative adjectives when describing the city. Finally, there are marginal differences in the use of figures of speech between the two poems in the case of repetition, parallelism, simile, metaphor, personification and hyperbole.

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تحليل أسلوبية للطبيعة في قصيدتين رعويتين مختارتين، باللغتين الإنجليزية والعربية

ملخص البحث:

بما ان الأسلوبية تهتم بدراسة الأساليب، فإن البحث الحالي هو تحليل لأساليب بعض القصائد المختارة. يتم التعرف على الأسلوب من خلال تحليل اختيار واستخدام الوسائل الأسلوبية، لذلك تتقصى هذه الدراسة الفئات المعجمية والأساليب المجازية في قصيدتين رعويتين باللغتين الإنجليزية والعربية، وهما قصيدتي الباحث العجري لماثيو ارنولد والموكب لجبران خليل. تشترك هذه القصائد في نفس الموضوع وهو الطبيعة. كلا القصيدتين يخلدان الطبيعة من خلال الإشادة بها باعتبارها مصدرًا للخيال والإلهام. على التضاد من هذا، تصف القصيدتان المدينة بأسلوب مختلف. لذلك فإن التضاد هو الأسلوب المعتمد في الشعر الرعوي ويتحقق من خلال استخدام بعض الأساليب الأسلوبية. تتبنى الدراسة الحالية نموذج *Leech and Short (2007)* كنموذج للتحليل. تظهر نتائج التحليل أوجه تشابه كبيرة في استخدام نفس الأساليب الأسلوبية بطريقة متضادة في كلتا القصيدتين مع وجود اختلافات في التوزيع فقط.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأسلوبية، الشعر الرعوي، الفئات المعجمية، الأساليب المجازية