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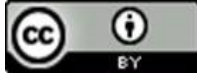
Cross-cultural Stylistic analysis of British and Egyptian National Anthems

A B S T R A C T

The study explores cross culturally the aesthetic stylistic features and values in two famous English and Arabic national anthems, namely the British and the Egyptian national anthems which represent two distinct ruling systems i.e. royal and republican ruling systems. The quali-quanti analytical framework involves (Verdonk, 2002), as a tool for stylistic analysis, as well as (Risager, 2005) conception of languaculture. The former provides tools such as the lexico-grammatical and intertextual sources central to stylistic analysis while the latter relates to how language is a socio-culturally bound concept. Assuming that the two anthems exhibit various interesting features, the study found that there are interesting differences and similarities between the two anthems especially with respect to the cultural resonance and poetic images, the issue which projects how to famous nations reflect their pride i.e. in the British national anthem, the concepts of monarchy, social structure and reverence for the monarchy is emphasized, whereas in the Egyptian national anthem, Egypt's, glory, resilience, cultural heritage as well as aspirations for a better future are strongly highlighted.

تحليل أسلوبي تقابلي للثقافات في النشيدين الوطنيين البريطاني والمصري

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الخلاصة:

تستكشف هذه الدراسة وعبر الثقافات السمات والقيم الأسلوبية الجمالية في نشيدين وطنيين شهيرين من الانجليزية والعربية، وهما النشيدان الوطنيان البريطاني والمصري اللذان يمثلان نظامي حكم مختلفين، وهما الملكي والجمهوري. يشتمل الإطار التحليلي الكمي على فيردونك (2002)، بوصفه أداة للتحليل الأسلوبي، فضلا عن مفهوم ريزاجر (2005) للثقافة واللغة. يوفر الأول أدوات مثل المصادر المعجمية النحوية النصية للتحليل الأسلوبي بينما يتضمن الأخير كيفية كون اللغة مفهومًا مترابطًا اجتماعيًا وثقافيًا. وبافتراض أن النشيدين يحملان سمات ثقافية واسلوبية مختلفة مثيرة للاهتمام، فقد وجدت الدراسة أن هناك اختلافات وتشابهات مثيرة

للاهتمام بين النشيدين خاصة فيما يتعلق بالصدى الثقافي والصور الشعرية، وهي القضية التي توضح كيف ان الأمم تعبر عن اعتزازها بوطنها. فمثلا في النشيد الوطني البريطاني، يتم التركيز على مفاهيم الملكية والبنية الاجتماعية وتبجيل الملكية، بينما في النشيد الوطني المصري يتم تسليط الضوء على مجد مصر وصمودها وتراثها الثقافي وكذلك تطلعاتها لمستقبل أفضل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأناشيد الوطنية، اللغة والثقافة، الأسلوب، القيم الجمالية، تسليط الضوء.

1. Introduction

In this theoretical stance, three interrelated concepts are presented, namely; language and culture (languaculture), style\stylistics and national anthems. Each term is presented with its full theoretical load.

Starting with the first concept, it should be mentioned that the term culture refers the knowledge that is acquired socially (Hudson, 1996). With respect to culture, it can be seen that in social sciences, especially language studies, the interest in cross cultural language issues has been growing more and more important. The concept of languaculture is central to the preceding statement. Several scholars have tried to model languaculture but the most famous is (Risager, 2005) and his publication " *Languaculture as a key concept in language and culture teaching.*" in which she views this term as being essentially composed of three intermingled dimensions which are the semantic\pragmatic potential, secondly the poetic potential and finally the identity potential (Risager, 2005, p. 185). According to (Risager, 2005), language necessarily presupposes culture and the latter is the clearest projection of the former.

Due to this clarity of conception, (Risager, 2005) is adopted in this study to be the higher node of the adopted model illustrated in a later section. Below are very brief summaries of the three potentials that constitute this model:

1-   The poetic potential: This refers to any aesthetic value in the text, which arises from the language choices and the manner in which they are combined or uttered.

2-   The identity construction potential: this refers to the way language projects the identity of its users i.e. in-group versus out-group presentation. (Risager, 2005, p. 191)

3-   The semantic\pragmatic potential: all the lexical and grammatical sources that give rise to co-text as well as context dependent meanings. For instance whether a sentence directly or indirectly realizes a given speech act.

Moving to style, this term equates to the poetic potential as illustrated in a later section. Style is a wide and diverse concept which is salient in everyday life. Style, as indicated by (Coupland, 2007, p. 1) is a salient in fashion, architecture, language use, and even in the way a human being looks.

Turning to stylistics, (Toolan, 2014, pp. 30-31) maintains that doing stylistics is basically the participation in an ongoing discourse, which has its reflections on the various language functions in our cultures and its exerted attempts to revise and renew our common understanding of language forms and functions. Toolan confirms that this field is far away from being objective, definitive and rigorous, due to the fact that not only literary texts are variously contextualized and variously interpreted, but also "language is endlessly potentially variable in forms and functions, languages are not finally codes, and human beings are not machines for processing those not-codes".

(Trask, 1999, p. 197) States that stylistics refers to the study of the aesthetic uses of languages, in particular, the literary use of language. The linguistic tradition in Europe has always viewed the study of the purely structural aspects of language as bound up with the study of its aesthetic aspects; as in the contributions of Roman Jakobson (i.e., poetics), one of the founders and leading linguists of Prague school. Within the middle of the 20th century, Jakobson contributed both to theoretical linguistics and to the critical examination of literary works. (Simpson, 2004, p. 2) Defines stylistics as a method of textual interpretation in which language is given a primary position. Assigning such a position for language in stylistic analysis is motivated by the fact that "the various forms, patterns and levels that constitute linguistic structure are an important index of the function of the text" (ibid).

Suffice it to say, stylistics can be seen as the inherently functional domain of linguistics that provides the basis for investigating the aesthetic values of any text. It is from this point that one can propose that a stylistician is a person whose main interest is in the manners through which a text is produced; hence, stylistics draws upon the highly subjective response to the text on part of the stylistician and\or reader. (Jasim, Muhi, & Sharhan, 2012, pp. 42, 43) argue that:

 "Stylistics has received much more interest during the last decades of the twentieth century since it touches upon various approaches concerned with particular aspects of text .Some of these approaches were made by linguists , psychologists , literary critics , anthropologists , and the like . Stylistic analysis contributes much to the development of literary criticism . Critics argue that a literary text can be comprehended better if it is studied in parallel with stylistic analysis"

The final relevant concept to be presented theoretically is national anthems or songs. These anthems are modern totems or signs by which nations can distinguish themselves from one another or reinforce their identities (Cerulo, 1989, p. 76). It should be noted that national anthems are seldom written for aesthetic reasons. Rather, they are written to serve specific communication functions. National anthems are used by governments to strengthen bonds, encourage patriotic actions, honor and appreciate the efforts of citizens, as well as to ensure that formal authority is legitimized (Cerulo, Symbols and the World System, 1993). (Silaghi-Dumitrescu, 2020, p. 288) Confirms that national anthems are occasionally quoted for the most part based on anecdotal evidence or arguments, as correlated with societal features.

The study adopts the operational definition and conception of style as perceived by (Verdonk, 2002) who sees style as a distinctive manner of expression. He also considers any type of text as being related to a special genre, a text with special goals and features.

The subject of national anthems has been the target of many interests in linguistics, however being under a stylistic cross cultural lens forms a gap within the related literature. The study is an attempt to fill in this gap. Based on that, the study research questions can be summed up as follows:

1. What are the cultural differences that overwhelm the two anthems as representing the royal and the republican systems?

2. What are the salient aesthetic features that characterize the style of each anthem?

Stemming from this, the study aims to unravel the cross cultural differences among the anthems in question and which stylistic aesthetic features are salient and constitutive of either anthem.

1.1 Previous studies

In this section, the relevant related literature about national anthems is presented to show the value and the gap to be filled in the current study. (Gulden, 2017) conducted a study entitled Study on the Words and Musical Patterns of the National Anthems of the Middle Eastern countries". In this study national anthems of the Middle Eastern countries are the data of analysis. They project in terms of music and lyrics many important conflicts that occurred for year. The study follows random sampling in order to form the sample group consisting of the UAE, Israel, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey. The musical criteria which were followed in this study were: tone, tempo, meter signatures and patterns of rhythm. (Sharhan, 2020) conducted a genre analysis of two English (British-American) and two Arabic (Jordanian-Iraqi) national anthems representing royal and republican systems respectively. The study was designed in a way to explore if the genre of national anthems is different or similar cross-linguistically concerning discourse organization and linguistic features.

Thus the aim of this article is

- To investigate the historical, political as well as cultural sources of these anthems.

- To analyze the thematic focuses of these anthems.

2. Methodology

The study is qualitative in nature supported by quantitation (taken here to be the relevant frequencies of stylistic implications) using the ANOVA (analysis of variance) program. As mentioned earlier, the data of analysis are the two full texts of the British and Egyptian anthems hence (BNA) and (ENA). The adopted model is an eclectic one; it involves Risager (2005) concept and categorization of the three potentials of languacultur along with the stylistic tools proposed by Verdonk (2002). As shown in figure (1) the stylistic features equate to the poetic dimension of Risager (2005):
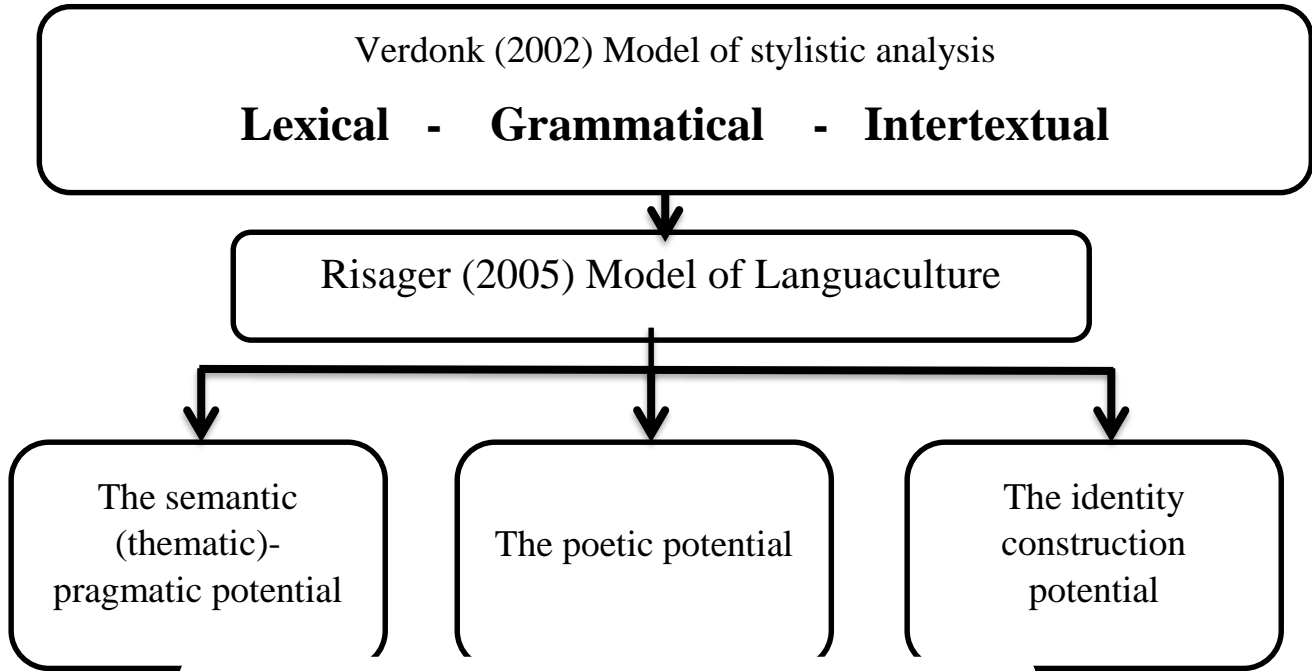
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┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│         Verdonk (2002) Model of stylistic analysis         │
│                                                            │
│    Lexical   -   Grammatical   -   Intertextual           │
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        │     Risager (2005) Model of Languaculture  │
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| The semantic (thematic)-pragmatic potential | The poetic potential | The identity construction potential |

Figure (1) the adopted model

3. The analysis

This section involves statistical and qualitative analysis of the British and Egyptian national anthems, as representatives of two distinct ruling systems, on light of the adopted model.

3.1 The Analysis of the British national anthem

This section involves tables and figures which represent the stylistic features and the languaculture potentials following the adopted model. The text of the BNA is presented here with its two versions i.e. the king and the queen version adopted from (Fox, 1994)

God save our gracious King (Queen)!

Long live our noble King (Queen)!

God save the King (Queen)!

Send him\her victorious,

Happy and glorious,

Long to reign over us:

God save the King (Queen)!

Thy choicest gifts in store,

On her be pleased to pour;

Long may he\she reign,

May he\she defend our laws,

And ever give us cause,

To sing with heart and voice,

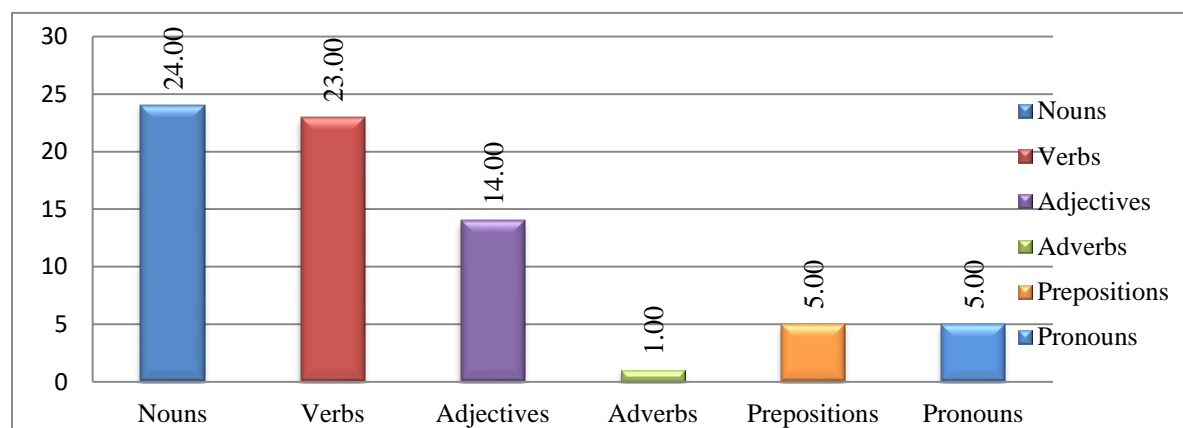God save the King (Queen)!

3.1.1 The lexical categories

Figure (1) the frequencies of lexical categories in the British national anthem

Based on figure (1) there is a frequency dominance by nouns and verbs where the latter slightly outscores the former (24.64) to (23.19) followed by adjectives prepositions and pronouns (the same score 5.80) and finally with adverbs.

As the top scoring category, nouns are significant to project the themes and the anthem, as in *King/Queen*, *laws*, and *voice*. Such nouns emphasize allegiance. The aesthetic value of verbs lies in the fact that they express actions and divine wishes as in *save* and *live*. This manifests the call for divine blessing and protection upon the king\queen, and loyalty to the nation. Finally Adjectives in this anthem add to the ceremonial tone by emphasizing description of the qualities

of the king\queen and the nation as in *gracious*, *victorious* and *glorious*. As for the most common words, *long live* and *God save* are the most commonly used with 83.33 of percentage.

3.1.2 The grammatical categories

In this section, the relevant grammatical features with stylistic significance are explored.
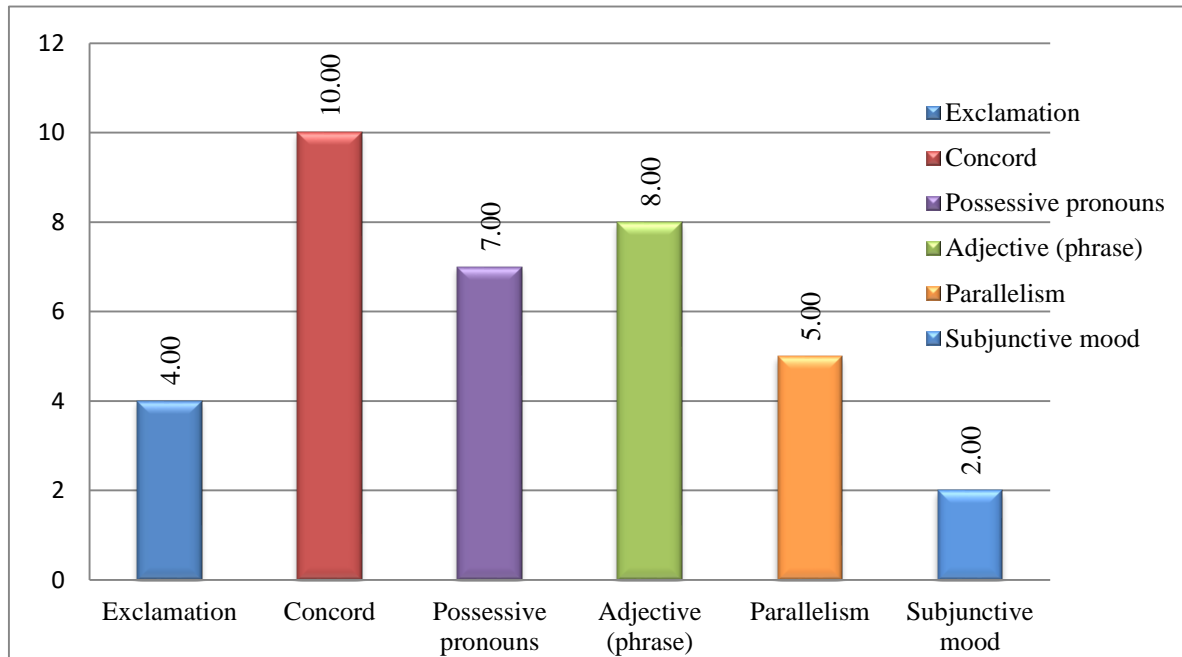

Figure (2) the frequencies of grammatical categories in the British national anthem

The BNA has recurrent salient grammatical features of style as represented in the above figure.

The top scoring category is that of concord, such feature is maintained within the intertextual subjunctive reference *God save our gracious King (Queen)!* In order to assure verbs matching of the singular or plural subjects they denote. For instance, *God save our gracious King (Queen)!* The singular verb *save* is used to match the singular subject *God*. Turning to the second top scoring group, the anthem involves a special exclamatory tone as several exclamatory verbs, such as *God save*, *Send, Be pleased*, and *May she\he reign* are utilized. These exclamations to the divine power reflect the reverent tone of the anthem. With respect to possessive pronouns: The use of possessive pronouns, their frequent use establishes a sense of affiliation and solidarity. For example, *our gracious King (Queen)* and *her victorious* emphasize loyalty for the king\queen. Adjective

Phrases like gracious, noble, victorious, happy and glorious, and choicest gifts show the ceremonial nature of the anthem. The parallel structures like ***Long live our noble King (Queen)!*** And ***Happy and glorious*** enhance the rhyme scheme and eventually quality of the rhythm. Finally, the subjunctive mood which is manifested in expressions like ***Long may she reign*** and ***May he\she defend our laws*** construct what people desire for their rulers such as open ended reign.

3.1.3 Intertextuality

Having the score 4.0, intertextuality in the BNA, "God Save the King/Queen," is a salient feature of the song. This allusion to the older British heritage is deeply intermingled with historical and cultural contexts. Historically, the anthem dates back to the 18th century being loaded with historical events, traditions and monarchs which implicitly provokes a sense of continuing the glorious past.

3.2 The Analysis of the Egyptian national anthem

The ENA was written by Muhammad Younis Al-Qadi and composed by Sayed Darwish. It was derived from words delivered by Mustafa Kamel in one of his most famous sermons in 1907 AD, in which he said: "My country, my country. You have my love and my heart. You have my life and my existence. You have my blood. You have my mind and my tongue. You have my heart and my heaven. You are life... and there is no life without you. Oh Egypt. It was officially adopted in 1979, and the Egyptian musician Mukhtar Al-Sayed redistributed it at that time under the supervision of the musician Mohamed Abdel Wahab, under the guidance of the late President Mohamed Anwar Sadat (Ahram.org, 2024). The English translation of the anthem is presented here for the purpose of clarity and it is adopted from the Egypt State Information Service (Egypt State Information, 2019)

English	العربية	
My homeland, my homeland, my homeland	لكِ حبي وفؤادي	بلادي بلادي بلادي
You have my love and my heart.	أنت غايتي والمراد	مصر يا أم البلاد
Egypt! O mother of all countries,	كم لنيلكِ من أيادٍ	وعلى كل العباد
You are my hope and my ambition,		
And above all people,	لكِ حبي وفؤادي	بلادي بلادي بلادي
Your Nile has countless graces	فوق جبين الدهر غُرَّة	مصر أنتِ أغلى دُرَّة
My homeland, my homeland, my homeland	واسلمي رغم الأعادي	يا بلادي عيشي حُرَّة
Egypt! Most precious gem,	لكِ حبي وفؤادي	بلادي بلادي بلادي
A blaze on the brow of eternity!		
O my homeland, be for ever free,		
Safe from every enemy		
My homeland, my homeland, my homeland		
Egypt, noble are your children.		
Loyal, and guardians of the reins.		
Be we at war or peace		
We will sacrifice ourselves for you, my		

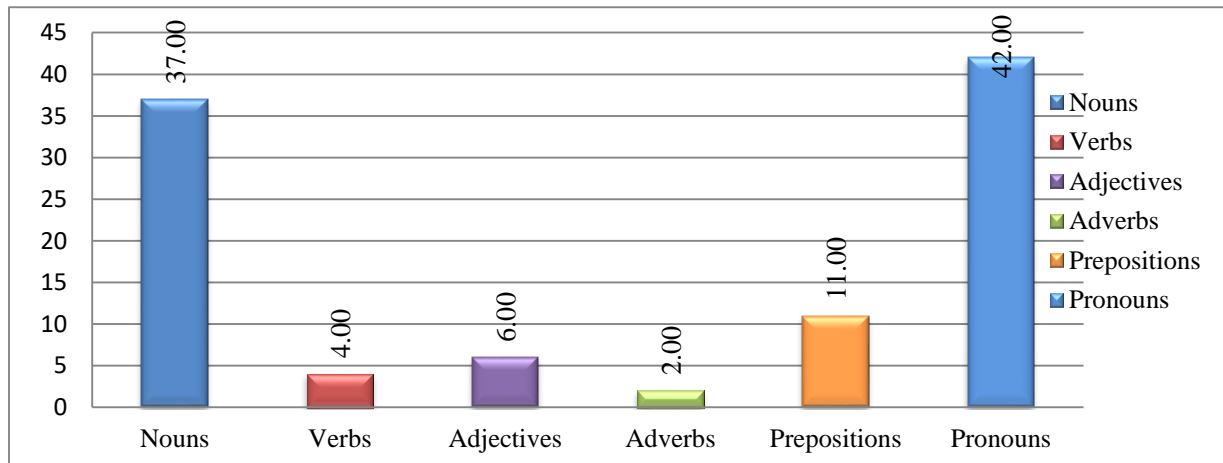|	
فزت بالمجد القديم	مصر يا أرض النعيم
وعلى الله اعتمادي	مقصدي دفع الغريم
لكِ حبي وفؤادي	بلادي بلادي بلادي
أوفياء يرعوا الزمام	مصر أولادك كرام
وفداكِ يا بلادي	نحن حرب وسلام
باتحادهم واتحادي	سوف تحظى بالمرام
لكِ حبي وفؤادي	بلادي بلادي بلادي

3.2.1 The lexical categories

Figure (3) the frequencies of lexical categories in the Egyptian national anthem

As figure (3) shows, within the Egyptian national anthem there is a heavy reliance on nouns with 37.00 of frequency. Contrary to the English data, the Egyptian data shows a very low use of verbs with only 4.00.

Prepositions, with their highest frequency 42.00 exhibit important relationships between words in the anthem. It can be seen that prepositions like "لكِ" *(for you),* "من" *(for),* and "باتحادهم" *(with their unity)* contribute to the anthem's emotional resonance and coherence.

Nouns are the second overwhelming category within the lexical markers of style. The stylistic indication of such higher reliance on nouns can be attributed to the fact that the Egyptian anthem reinforces Egypt's significance and identity. This can be seen in terms like "مصر" *(Egypt),* "بلاد" *(land/country),* "نعيم" *(blessings),* and "مرام" *(aspiration).*

Adjectives and pronouns with the same frequency 6.00 also has stylistic indications by adding to the emotional and patriotic sense when they describe the qualities of Egypt as "أُغْلى" (dearest), "حُرَّة" (free), and "القديم" (ancient).

Although verbs and adverbs have a very low frequency, 4.00 and 2.00 respectively, they express and modify actions and sentiments, giving rise to the themes of loyalty, freedom, and aspiration. This can be seen in "عيشي" (live), "اسلمي" (submit), and "تحظى" (attain). And for adverbs, "الى الابد" (ever) and "حُرَّة" (freely)
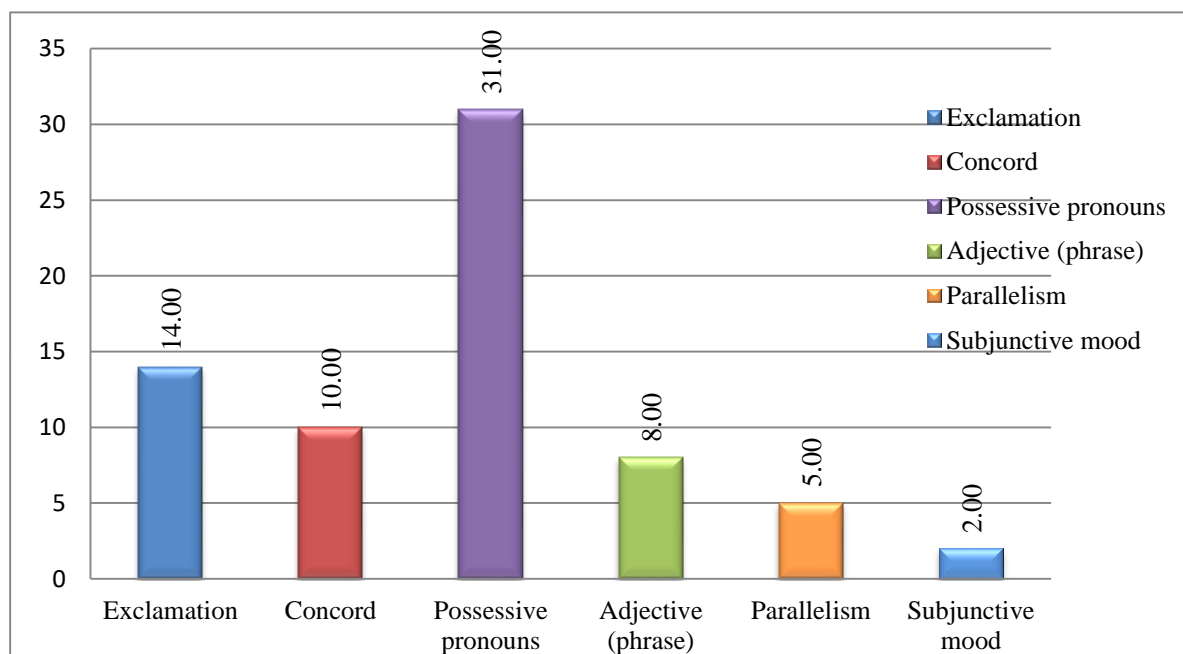
3.2.2 The grammatical categories

Figure (4) the frequencies of grammatical categories in the Egyptian national anthem

In Arabic in general the use of pronouns is more flexible and creative as they can be dependent, attached or hidden There are 6 instances of pronouns in the anthem, including possessive pronouns like "لكِ" (for you) and "أولادك" (your sons). The repetition of the phrase "بلادي بلادي بلادي" (My country, my country, my country) at the beginning of each stanza is a form of parallelism which shows the deep attachment and solidarity with the country.

With respect to the sentence mode, the anthem has 14.00 instances of apostrophic tone manifesting the entire text to the dear land.

In Arabic, concord operates on the level of masculine and feminine subject, hence (with the highest score 9.00) in this anthem it is utilized in harmony with the rhythmic structure of the lines in such a way as to conform to the masculinity and feminine of the subject as in "سلمي," "عيشي" *(live),* "(submit), and "تحظى" *(attain)* in an apostrophic mode of address.

As for the subjunctive, there are two instances, "عيشي حُرَّة" *(live freely)* and "سلمي" *(be safe)*

3.2.3 Intertextuality

In the ENA, the reference to the River Nile is noticeably loaded intertextual reference which reminds the audience of the deep attachment of the land and the great Egyptian culture and civilization. The Nile here is a sign of greatness as associated with eternity. There is also an implicit allusion to the old glory in the line فزت بالمجد القديم *(you won the old glory).*

4. Contrastive analysis

In this section, all the sorted out stylistic features are contrasted along with the languaculture dimensions in the BNA and Arabic BNA.
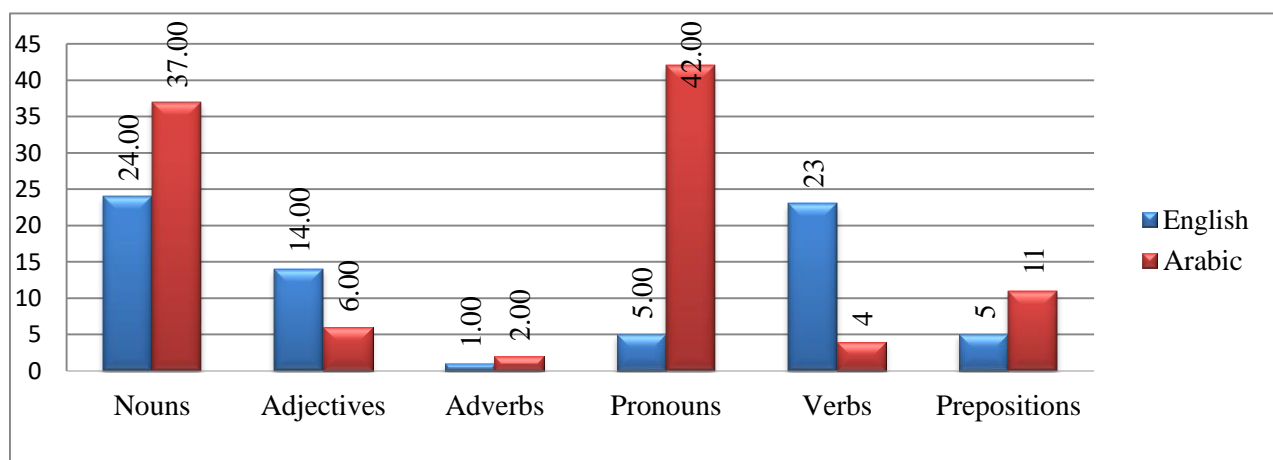
4.1 The Lexical contrastive analysis

Figure (5) the frequencies of lexical categories in the British and Egyptian national anthems

As shown in figure (5) and using the ANOVA program, the overall lexical variance is 12.00 mf (hence mean frequency) for the BNA and 17.00 mf for the ENA, whereas the sub-variance is as

follows: the British anthem outscores the Egyptian anthem in the following groups: adjectives and verbs while the ENA exceeds the BNA with respect to nouns, pronouns, prepositions and adverbs.

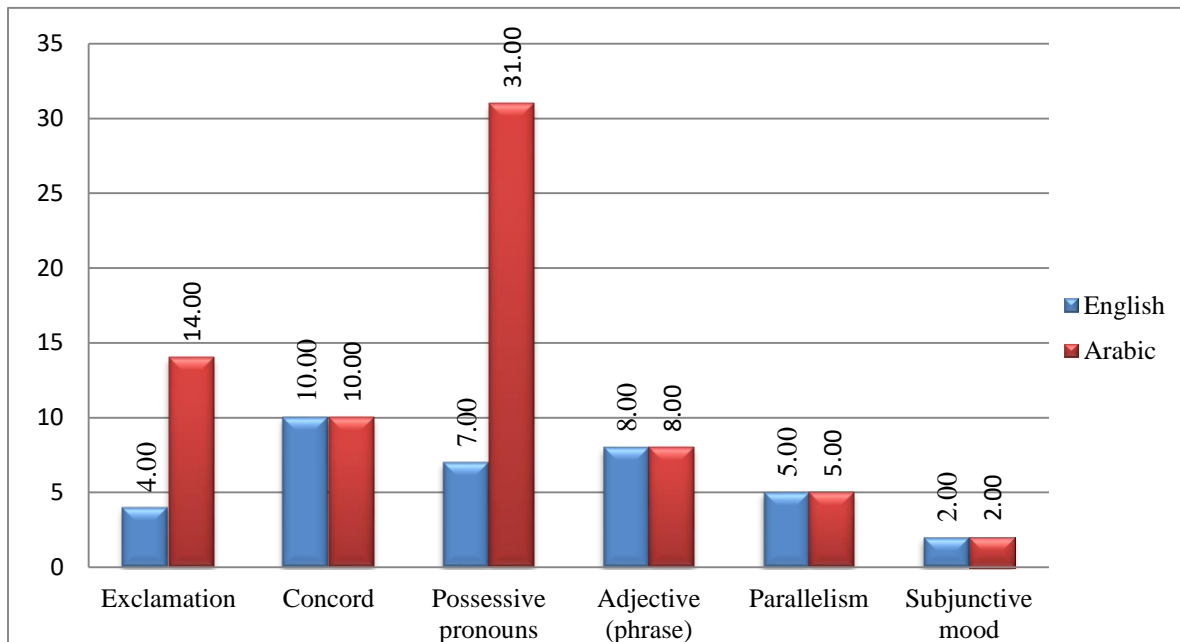4.2 The Grammatical contrastive analysis

Figure (6) the frequencies of grammatical categories in the British and Egyptian national anthems

As shown in figure (6) and using the ANOVA program, the overall grammatical variance is 6.00 mf for the British anthem and 11.67 mf for the Egyptian anthem, whereas the sub-variance is as follows: the Egyptian anthem outscores the British anthem in the following groups: exclamation and possessive pronouns while they show equal scores in the remaining categories.

As for intertextuality, the BNA reinforces and emphasizes the feature of the royal ruling system with the four times repeated subjunctive *God save the king-queen.* The ENA has only two intertextual references to the great Nile and the old glory.

4.3 The languaculture dimensions

From a contrastive perspective, the interaction of style as realized by the lexical, grammatical and

intertextual categories with languaculture dimensions can be illustrated as follows:

4.3.1 The poetic dimension

For the ENA, the distinguished commonalities in the Egyptian anthem are really attention getting. To mention few, the noun with the possessive pronoun بلادي *(my country)* 17 times throughout the anthem spreads the loaded emotions of affiliation and solidarity. One can also notice the creative functioning of pronouns already mention before. Grammatically speaking, the parallelism in the phrase بلادي *(My homeland)* is crucial to the arrangement of the rhythmic structure of the anthem and also enhance its poetic dimension by creating a sense of cadence and musicality. As for intertextuality, it can be seen that it is present both explicitly and implicitly. Explicitly, it is present via the mentioning of the great Nile River which is a symbol and an icon of the great Egyptian culture and civilization. Implicitly, there is an allusion to the many brave attempts to push back and defend the country from many outside attacks.

As for the BNA, the frequent use of adjectives and nouns adds aesthetic value to the poetic dimension by establishing vivid imagery along with emotional resonance as shown within the statistical analysis. As for the grammatically enhanced style, tools like parallelism and subjunctive mood contribute to the poetic dimension by setting the rhythmic patterns which eventually aspirates to the highest sentiments. Intertextuality with its socio-cultural and historical allusion raises the poetic dimension connecting the anthem to the broader cultural and historical contexts that enrich its poetic significance.

4.3.2 The identity construction dimension

For the BNA, the lexically enhanced style as represented by nouns, adjectives, and possessive pronouns builds up a sense of fidelity to the king\queen as well as to the nation. Grammatical features of style such as exclamation and concord also ensure the construction of collective memory by expressing exclamations, wishes, and unity under the leadership of the monarch. The British past glory is also reinforced by intertextuality in the anthem. This can be seen in the allusion to historical events, cultural symbols, or literary traditions (especially within the line *God save the king\queen*) which adds to the structuring of world colonizing power as well as collective memory.

For the ENA and as mention in a previous section, the lexical choices of nouns and (attached) pronouns show a sense of personal and collective identity, loyalty, and deep attachment to Egypt. These lexical choices reflect a strong connection to the homeland and a sense of affiliation. With respect to grammar, features like subject-verb agreement and apostrophe emphasize the building of identity via expressing integration, loyalty, and commitment to the dear nation. The reference to the River Nile and the old glory of the Pharos civilization creates a very strong sense of collective memory and belonging both with the nation and the consequent generations within the eyes of the utterer of the anthem and in the eyes of the hearers.

4.3.3 The semantic (Thematic) pragmatic dimension:

Themes like monarchy, pride, patriotism, and the royal system are reflective of the BNA tone. Many lexical choices like *king\queen* and *live* contribute to the anthem's thematic potential. Pragmatically, they help the audience to model their interpretation with the deep thematic values in the anthem as in the implied reference for colonization in *send him victorious*. The grammatically based style like adverbs and prepositions contribute to the anthem's thematic potential by presenting manner, degree, or relationships between elements in the text as in *on her* and *over us*. Intertextuality as a pragmatically and semantically motivated choice in the anthem raises its thematic potential by anchoring it to broader cultural and historical contexts, and also connects it to symbolic meanings that enrich its interpretation and pragmatic significance. For instance the exclamatory first line *God save the king* shows the deep strong connection of people to the ruling authority throughout history.

Turning to the ENA, the selection of specific lexical items in the anthem conveys semantic (thematic) meanings related to themes of patriotism, pride, and resilience. Unlike the British anthem, the Egyptian anthem includes an explicit reference to the country مصر and no reference for any authority. The pragmatic dimension can be summed up by saying that the apostrophic mode of the speaker-to-nation scene is really indexical of the patriotic feelings and thematic resonance of pride and resilience. As for the grammatical features, it can be said that the sentence mode and repetition of certain phrases like بلادي بلادي بلادي is really reflective of how Egyptian culture is indexed. As mentioned in a previous section, intertextuality is utilized in an impressive way by connecting the reader to the broader context of cultural in a form of cultural narrative of historical contexts i.e. the old glories and the River Nile.

Conclusions

On light of what has been said, several conclusions can be reached. Stylistically, the ENA is more lexically dense and uses more nouns and pronouns for descriptive states of attachment and belonging to the land (explicit reference to Egypt) while the BNA is less lexically dense and uses more verbs and adjectives to reinforce structure of monarchy and national pride as a world power (there is no reference to Britain). Grammatically, while many categories scored the same, others have interesting differences like the ENA`s high score of possessive pronouns and exclamations which both show the sense of affiliation to the country, not to forget the highly elevated style of the subjunctive in the BNA which reinforces the royal authority. Both anthems include intertextual reference but the BNA uses a more stylistically dense intertextual reference which is also interdiscursive as it represents how, throughout Britain`s history, the monarchs used to be hailed in Britain.

With respect to the languaculture, the poetic dimension has already been tackled above. As for the identity construction dimension, it should be stated that the type of national pride exists in both anthems however in the BNA it is more affiliated to the monarch whereas for the ENA it is more affiliated to the land. Finally, the thematic (semantic-pragmatic) dimension, it can be seen that there are common themes in both anthems like national pride, wealth, resources, gratitude and loyalty. While the BNA is more ceremonial and has themes of monarchial traditions,   reverence for the ruler and divine blessings, the ENA is more emotive and more patriotic, alluding to ancestry, struggle for independence and Egyptian identity.

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