



دراسة الاختيارات المعجمية والنحوية في لغة الحنين في القصة القصيرة العراقية

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ملخص:

يحاول كاتب هذه الورقة البحثية استقصاء لغة الحنين في القصص القصيرة العراقية المعاصرة، مع التركيز على الاختيارات المعجمية والنحوية التي تثير مشاعر الشوق والذكريات. تحلل الدراسة بعض القصص القصيرة العراقية الحديثة لتحديد العناصر اللغوية المحددة مثل اختيار الكلمات، وبنية الجمل، والتقنيات الوصفية التي يستخدمها الكاتب للتعبير عن موضوعات الذاكرة، والفقد، والحنين إلى الماضي. يعتمد الباحث على القراءة المتعمقة للقصص القصيرة المختارة لدراسة كيفية عرض اللغة المستخدمة لحالة من الحنين الجماعي الناجمة عن التجارب التاريخية والاجتماعية والسياسية في العراق. تسعى هذه الورقة البحثية إلى المساهمة في فهم كيفية قدرة الاختيارات اللغوية في القصص القصيرة على احتواء مشاهد عاطفية معقدة وتوفير فرصة للقراء للتفاعل بعمق مع الذاكرة والهوية الثقافية..

كلمات مفتاحية : معجم ، نحو

Studying Lexical and Syntactic Choices in the Language of Nostalgia in Iraqi Short Fiction

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Abstract:

The writer of this research paper attempts to investigate the language of nostalgia in contemporary Iraqi short fiction. The focus is on the lexical and syntactic choices that elicit feelings of longing and remembrance. The study analyzes some recent Iraqi short stories in order to identify specific linguistic elements such as lexical choice, sentence structure, and descriptive techniques that writers use to express themes of memory, loss, and yearning for the past. The research writer uses close reading of the selected short stories to study how the used language demonstrates a collective nostalgia caused by Iraq's historical and socio-political experiences. This research paper is an attempt to contribute to an understanding of how linguistic choices in short fiction can encapsulate complex emotional scenes and offer readers the opportunity to an engage profoundly with cultural memory and identity.

Keywords: Lexical, Grammar

Introduction

In literature, Nostalgia has been considered as a powerful tool to depict the relationship between a person's memory and collective history. It can be said that nostalgia in contemporary Iraqi short fiction, appears as a reaction to trauma, displacement and the changes caused by long years of war and social and political upheaval. It is plausible to think that the language of nostalgia in this context is expressive and may be used as a scaffolding to have a panoramic view of the Iraqi complexities of Iraqi identity, heritage and the collective longing for stability and



peace. In this regard, we can form the opinion that the lexical and syntactic choices used in Iraqi short stories are echoes of deeply rooted yearning for the past. Here, nostalgia is used as a critical mode by means of which short story writers explore personal and national identity. The writer of this paper examines the linguistic markers of nostalgia in some selected Iraqi short stories. The focus is on the use of lexical and syntactic choices by the short story writers as means to evoke memory, loss and belonging.

The primary aim of this study is to analyze the language of nostalgia as presented in contemporary Iraqi short fiction. Specifically, it seeks to examine how lexical and syntactic choices contribute to the evocation of nostalgia and what these choices reveal about the themes of memory, displacement, and resilience within Iraqi cultural narratives. By focusing on the linguistic features of nostalgia, this study aims to offer insights into how Iraqi writers deploy language to articulate the emotional landscapes of a society marked by profound change and loss.

It is believed that the study of nostalgia in contemporary Iraqi short fiction is significant. For one thing, it contributes to the understanding of Iraqi cultural identity as it shows how nostalgia is used as a coping mechanism in response to conflict and instability. For another, examination of the linguistic features of nostalgia may show clearly some stylistic trends in Middle Eastern literature especially how language is used to investigate complex emotions.

As Moretti (2005) states "literature often reflects the sociopolitical context from which it emerges, embedding within it the emotional and cultural zeitgeist of its time" (p. 134). In contemporary Iraqi short fiction, the use of language mirrors individual longing and signifies a collective desire for a past that, whether real or idealized, offers solace amid disruption as well.

In this study, a qualitative linguistic analysis is used. It focuses on lexical and syntactic choices in a selection of Iraqi short stories. In its analysis, the study uses stylistic and discourse analysis frameworks, particularly those that examine how language can express affective states. It is hoped that the analyzed Lexical choices will determine the prevalence of words associated with memory, home, and loss. The study also examines some syntactic structures such as repetition, parallelism, contrast and complex sentence forms to reveal their role in creating an immersive sense of nostalgia.

Selection of data and Analysis

The writer of this paper has selected three contemporary Iraqi short stories as a representative sample for analysis. These three short stories are:

1. **"The Shadow of Baghdad" by Ahmed Saadawi**
2. **"Memories of the Tigris" by Sinan Antoon**
3. **"The Alley of Forgotten Dreams" by Diaa Jubaili.**



These short stories are selected because of their thematic focus on memory, identity, and belonging. Moreover, they are characterized by their reflection of a collective yearning for the past. Each one of these short stories shows a unique perspective on the Iraqi experience of nostalgia, expressed by employing distinctive lexical and syntactic choices that evoke a sense of longing and displacement.

Analysis:

1. "The Shadow of Baghdad" by Ahmed Saadawi

The writer in this short story uses language to portray a bittersweet memory of Baghdad. Saadawi stresses the nostalgic atmosphere by his descriptions of the city before it was buffeted by turmoil. In these descriptions the writer uses specific lexical choices to evoke a sense of loss and longing.

A. Lexical Choices:

The lexical terms used in this short story concentrate on sensory details in order to invoke Baghdad former beauty. Words like lush, vibrant, and fragrant describe gardens and riversides that certainly invoke a time when Baghdad's natural landscape was tranquil and flourishing. This is evidenced by the following quotation from the story: "The lush gardens of Baghdad, now forgotten, held a fragrance that clung to the night air – a perfume lost to time, much like the city's peace."

Saadawi frequently personifies Baghdad to lend the city a sense of life that makes its current state appear as a fallen character. He writes: "Baghdad was once a wise old friend who knew how to heal it; now, it's a shadow, silent and wounded."

Saadawi uses emotionally charged words like abandoned, shattered, and echo so as to give a haunting depth to the nostalgia. In his own words: "Echoes of laughter still linger in the cracked walls of old homes, as if trying to cling to what little life remains."

B. Syntactic Choices

The author uses complex sentence structure. For example, he uses long, meandering sentences that mirror the flowing memories of the narrator. Pauses and commas are used to create a rhythm that imitates reflective thought.

"In those days, before the city grew silent, children laughed freely, and markets buzzed with colors and scents that now linger only as faint memories, shadows of what was once a vibrant life."

Saadawi repeats phrases to emphasize the city's past vibrancy and to reinforce the contrast with its present state:

"Once, there were families on every corner, once there was peace, once there was hope."



2. "Memories of the Tigris" by Sinan Antoon

In Sinan Antoon's "Memories of the Tigris," the Tigris River symbolizes a deeply nostalgic connection to the past. Antoon's lexical choices center on water and nature, associating these elements with cultural identity and memory.

A. Lexical Choices:

Words like flow, ancient, and eternal relate to the Tigris as they symbolize a past that remains ingrained in cultural memory in spite of the passage of time. "The river flows, carrying within its depths the voices of generations, voices that whisper of ancient times."

Antoon contrasts words that symbolize past richness, such as fertile and bountiful, with words that imply loss, like dry, silent, and desolate.

"Once a river of life, the Tigris now flows with a sadness that echoes through its silent banks."

Antoon uses language associated with sight and sound to recall sensory experiences of the river, painting it as a living memory.

"The Tigris shimmered in the golden light, its waters laughing as they danced over stones."

B. Syntactic Choices:

The author frequently uses poetic structures, with fragmented phrases and pauses to create a meditative rhythm that imitates the flow of the Tigris. "The river... it remembers, it knows. It has seen us all, seen the days of glory, the days of grief."

Ellipses are used to convey a sense of unfinished thought, reflecting the narrator's contemplation and longing for a past that cannot be redeemed completely. "We would sit by the Tigris... waiting for the future, unaware it would change so soon... unaware the river would carry away our memories."

3. "The Alley of Forgotten Dreams" by Daa Jubaili

Daa Jubaili's "The Alley of Forgotten Dreams" uses lexical and syntactic choices to explore nostalgia as it relates to community and daily life. His descriptions of the alley serve as a microcosm of a past life, now distant.

A. Lexical Choices:

Jubaili uses objects and places associated with community life, such as lanterns, markets, and courtyards, to evoke the spirit of an era when community ties were stronger. "Under the light of old lanterns, we gathered in the courtyards, where laughter echoed off the walls and dreams took shape."

Words like alive and thriving are contrasted with deserted, empty, and forgotten to stress the stark difference between past and present:

"What was once a thriving alley is now a forgotten place, where only shadows remember?"

The writer integrates specific cultural references, such as traditional foods and music, to recreate a lively, culturally rich past. "The smell of kebab lingered in



the air, mingling with the melodies of the out from a distant shop, a scene now lost to silence.”

B. Syntactic Choices:

Jubaili frequently shifts from long descriptive sentences to shorter, disconnected sentences in order to raise the emotional impact of the contrast between past and present:

“Once, it was alive. Now, it is empty. Forgotten

In this short story, the author uses syntax that often mirrors the disjointed nature of memories, with sudden shifts to past tense so as to produce a jarring, fragmented experience for the reader. His aim is to imitate the selective nature of nostalgia:

“We laughed. We shared. Now, the alley is quiet, and memories are all that linger.”

Concluding Remarks

It seems that each one of these analyzed short stories employs distinct lexical and syntactic elements to create a unique expression of nostalgia; this reflects personal longing and also a collective yearning for the Iraq of the past. The reader is able to feel a textured sense of nostalgia produced by a combination of poetic language, personified settings and reflective syntax. The result is that each short tale is grounded in a culturally rich past but now it has faded away. However, it can still be remembered vividly.

Conclusion

It is abundantly evident that our analysis of lexical and syntactic choices in "The Shadow of Baghdad" by Ahmed Saadawi, "Memories of the Tigris" by Sinan Antoon, and "The Alley of Forgotten Dreams" by Diaa Jubaili has shown how these three authors skillfully use language to elicit a warm feeling of nostalgia in contemporary Iraqi short fiction. In spite of the fact that each story is unique in its setting and narrative focus; nevertheless, it reflects a shared longing for a time and place altered beyond redemption by the violent historical and social disturbance that buffeted Iraq and particularly Baghdad. The three contemporary Iraqi authors whose short stories have been analyzed in this paper use specific lexical items and



sentence structures to vivify the Iraq of the past and stress the psychological impact of loss on individuals and communities.

Ahmed Saadawi's "The Shadow of Baghdad" pictures Baghdad as a once-living entity. He uses emotive language and complex, flowing sentences to show memories of a lively city changed into a mere shadow. Saadawi's personification of Baghdad and his descriptive words produce an intimate and unhappy reflection on urban decay. In this way, the writer mirrors the collective grief of those who have seen and suffered its decline. The writer uses syntactic choices such as long, reflective sentences and anaphora to emphasize the sense of continuity between the cities' past and present. In this way, he has reinforced the idea that these painful memories remain a part of the city's identity.

Sinaan Antoon focuses his short story 'Memories of the Tigris' on the Tigris River as a symbol of perseverance and cultural continuity. His use of symbolic words like eternal, ancient, and flow enables the river to embody the memories and voices of generations. In this way the city is positioned as a repository of cultural identity. Antoon's poetic syntax, with its pauses and ellipses, produces a meditative tone that mirrors the river's contemplative flow, beautifying the narrative's nostalgic quality. The river becomes a powerful metaphor for the resilience of memory. The suggestion is that, like the Tigris, cultural memory persists even in times of loss and change.

Diaa Jubaili's "The Alley of Forgotten Dreams" brings nostalgia to life by means of the example of a once thriving community alley but now deserted and silent. His lexical choices, from cultural references to everyday objects, paint a vivid picture of communal life, grounding nostalgia in the familiar sights, sounds, and tastes of the past. Jubaili's syntactic shifts between long, descriptive passages and short, impactful sentences produce a rhythmic contrast to emphasize the grim difference between the alley's past liveliness and present desolation. It is clear that this fragmented syntactic style imitates the disjointed nature of memory, suggesting that nostalgia itself is an incomplete reconstruction of a past that cannot be recovered completely.

The above analysis has shown clearly that these stories demonstrate the role of nostalgia in preserving cultural identity in the face of societal transformation and personal displacement. The Iraqi authors use language to build bridges between past and present, illustrating how memories of places, people, and everyday experiences linger in spite of a change that cannot be recovered. The skillful use of lexical and syntactic choices by Saadawi, Antoon, and Jubaili has captured the essence of a shared cultural loss but still honoring the endurance of memory. This linguistic approach to nostalgia as used by these Iraqi writers has enriched the narrative experience and also manifested the resilience of Iraqi identity and cultural



heritage. Although these memories have been altered, they will continue to shape the future.

Final Thoughts: Nostalgia as a tool for deep Thought

This research paper has demonstrated that each investigated story embodies the theme of nostalgia as an urgent longing for the past and also as an instrument by means of which the writers critique the present. The writers' portrayals of previous Iraq in these short stories are nuanced. The stories blend affection for cultural and historical richness with a painfully impactful awareness of what has been lost due to war, violence, and displacement.

The nostalgia expressed in these short stories is deeply personal but it can be seen that it goes beyond individual experiences to become a collective contemplation on identity, memory, and resilience.

The analysis in this research paper has manifested that the short story have succeeded in evoking nostalgia for a pre-war Iraq by grounding their stories in deeply symbolic elements such as the shadow, the river, the alley so much so that they have resonated with personal and national significance. These three short stories do not shy away from the complexities of memory; on the contrary, they acknowledge the impossibility of fully recovering the past but they celebrate its enduring impact on identity and hope.

The Iraqi writers in these three short stories made sure that Iraq's cultural and emotional heritage lives on, even in the face of ongoing challenges.

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