

STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE MODERN ARABIC NOVEL *AUDAT AL-FIRDAWS*: A STUDY OF DICTION, FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE, IMAGERY, AND DIALOGUE

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the stylistic elements found in the modern Arabic novel *Audat al-Firdaws* through an examination of diction, figurative language, imagery, and dialogue structure. Stylistic analysis is essential because language in literary works functions not only as a medium of communication but also as a means of constructing meaning and creating aesthetic effects. This research employs a qualitative descriptive method using a stylistic approach. The data consist of words, phrases, sentences, and dialogues containing stylistic features in the novel *Audat al-Firdaws*. Data were collected through intensive reading and note-taking techniques, while analysis was conducted through identification, classification, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that the author employs diction rich in emotional and ideological meanings, utilizes metaphors to strengthen the expression of meaning, presents vivid imagery depicting social realities, and extensively uses dialogue as a medium for conveying social criticism and cultural conflict. The study demonstrates that stylistic elements in the novel function not only to create linguistic beauty but also to represent the social realities of contemporary Arab society. Therefore, the language style in *Audat al-Firdaws* serves as an important instrument for constructing meaning, cultural identity, and social messages intended by the author.

Keywords: *stylistics; modern Arabic literature; Arabic novel; figurative language; Audat al-Firdaw*

INTRODUCTION

Literature is a manifestation of human expression conveyed through language as the primary medium for communicating ideas, experiences, emotions, and cultural values. In modern literary studies, language is understood not merely as a tool of communication but also as an aesthetic device capable of constructing meaning and producing particular effects on readers. Therefore, investigating the use of language in literary works is an essential aspect of understanding the characteristics and uniqueness of a literary text.

One of the most widely used approaches for examining linguistic features in literary works is stylistics. According to Leech and Short (2007), stylistics is the study of the relationship between linguistic form and artistic function in literary texts. This approach enables researchers to understand how authors utilize linguistic elements such

as word choice, sentence structure, metaphor, imagery, and figurative language to create aesthetic effects while simultaneously conveying particular messages to readers.

In the development of modern Arabic literature, the use of language has undergone significant transformation. Contemporary Arab authors are no longer entirely bound by the formal and rhetorical conventions of classical Arabic literature. Instead, they have developed modes of expression that are more closely connected to social realities. These changes have been influenced by cultural developments, media expansion, globalization, and socio-political dynamics throughout the Arab world. Consequently, modern Arabic literary works exhibit language styles that are more communicative, contextual, and dynamic than those found in classical Arabic literature.

This phenomenon indicates that language in literary works cannot be separated from the social and cultural contexts in which it is produced. Studies on the existence of Egyptian Arabic (‘*Ammiyah*) in popular culture and digital communication suggest that colloquial Arabic functions not only as a means of everyday communication but also as a representation of the cultural identity of modern Arab societies. This perspective reinforces the assumption that language use in literary texts reflects the social and cultural realities of the communities in which the language is spoken.

The novel *Audat al-Firdaws* is one of the modern Arabic literary works that deserves examination through a stylistic approach. The novel presents various social, cultural, and humanitarian issues through expressive and communicative language. The author employs a range of linguistic strategies to portray characters, construct narrative atmosphere, and express criticism of social conditions.

Numerous stylistic studies have been conducted in the field of Arabic literature. Ramadani (2021) found that the dominant stylistic features in the short stories of Najib al-Kilani include semantic, syntactic, and imagery-related aspects. Julian, Saryanti, and Yusliza (2024) demonstrated that metaphor, irony, repetition, and semantic ambiguity are frequently employed in modern Arabic short stories to convey social criticism. Likewise, Tuharea, Yuwana, and Rengganis (2023) identified various forms of figurative language, including comparison, contrast, emphasis, and satire, in the literary works of Habiburrahman El Shirazy.

Despite the growing body of research on Arabic literary stylistics, studies specifically focusing on *Audat al-Firdaws* remain limited. Most previous research has concentrated on poetry, short stories, or general stylistic analyses. Therefore, this study offers novelty by examining the stylistic characteristics of *Audat al-Firdaws* through an analysis of diction, figurative language, imagery, and dialogue.

Based on the considerations above, this study aims to analyze the stylistic elements employed in *Audat al-Firdaws* and to explain their aesthetic functions and social meanings within the narrative.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The term *stylistics* is derived from the word *style*, which refers to a distinctive manner of expression. Ratna (2013) explains that stylistics is the study of the distinctive use of language in literary works. Stylistics not only examines linguistic beauty but also investigates how linguistic elements are employed to construct meaning. According to

Nurgiyantoro (2019), language style serves as the primary medium through which authors communicate ideas and create aesthetic effects. Consequently, stylistic analysis encompasses various linguistic aspects, including diction, syntactic structure, imagery, figurative language, and dialogue patterns.

Keraf (2010) defines diction as the selection of words employed by an author to achieve specific effects in conveying meaning. Appropriate word choice can strengthen the emotional, ideological, and aesthetic dimensions of a literary work.

Figurative Language and Metaphor

Metaphor is one of the most frequently employed forms of figurative language in literature. According to Keraf (2010), metaphor is a direct comparison used to intensify meaning and generate imaginative effects. Through metaphor, authors are able to present abstract ideas and social realities in a more vivid and engaging manner.

Imagery

Imagery refers to the use of language that evokes readers' sensory experiences. It enables readers to visualize objects, settings, and events while also stimulating emotional responses. Imagery plays a crucial role in enriching literary expression and enhancing readers' engagement with the text.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method using a stylistic approach. The approach is utilized to identify and describe stylistic characteristics in the novel *Audat al-Firdaws*.

The primary data source of this research is the novel *Audat al-Firdaws*. The data consist of linguistic units found within the text, including words, phrases, sentences, narratives, and dialogues containing stylistic elements. These units were selected because they represent literary language characterized by aesthetic value and meanings relevant to stylistic analysis.

Data collection was conducted through several stages. First, the researcher performed intensive and repeated readings of the entire novel to obtain a comprehensive understanding of its content and linguistic characteristics. Second, observation and note-taking techniques were employed to identify and document textual data containing stylistic features. Third, the collected data were classified according to the analytical categories of diction, figurative language, imagery, and dialogue to facilitate further analysis.

Data analysis was conducted using a qualitative descriptive procedure. The first stage involved identifying stylistic elements within the novel. The second stage consisted of classifying the data according to predetermined analytical categories. Subsequently, the data were analyzed and interpreted to reveal their aesthetic functions, social meanings, and underlying messages. Finally, conclusions were drawn based on the findings to provide a comprehensive understanding of the stylistic characteristics of *Audat al-Firdaws*.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Diction (*al-Ikhtiyār al-Mu‘jamī*)

One of the primary stylistic characteristics of the novel is its use of diction that carries strong emotional and ideological significance.

Example

إن التاريخ ليشهد بأن هذه البلاد قد عرفت الحضارة قديماً

Translation:

"Indeed, history bears witness that this nation has known civilization since ancient times."

The words *al-tārīkh* (history) and *al-ḥaḍārah* (civilization) represent lexical choices rich in historical meaning and cultural identity. Such diction does not merely convey information; it also constructs collective awareness and national pride. These lexical selections contribute to the ideological and emotional dimensions of the narrative.

Metaphorical Language (*al-Isti‘ārah*)

Metaphor is employed to portray social realities in a more vivid and imaginative manner. The author associates struggle, poverty, and social transformation with symbolic representations that enable readers not only to understand events rationally but also to experience their emotional dimensions.

The use of metaphor strengthens the aesthetic function of the text while deepening the narrative meanings conveyed by the author. Through figurative expressions, social experiences are transformed into powerful literary representations.

Imagery (*al-Taṣwīr al-Fannī*)

Social imagery appears prominently throughout descriptions of community life.

Example

يعيشون في الجوع والشقاء والحرمان

Translation:

"They live in hunger, suffering, and deprivation."

This sequence of words creates strong visual and emotional imagery. Readers can vividly imagine the difficult social conditions experienced by the community while simultaneously feeling the atmosphere of hardship depicted by the author. The imagery enhances readers' emotional engagement and strengthens the social themes of the novel.

Dialogue

Dialogue constitutes one of the dominant stylistic features of the novel. Conversations among characters are used to express social criticism, cultural conflicts, and ideological perspectives existing within society. These dialogues are presented in a communicative and realistic manner, reflecting a characteristic feature of modern Arabic literature that closely engages with contemporary social realities.

From a socio-stylistic perspective, the use of diction, metaphor, imagery, and dialogue functions as a means through which the author conveys social criticism, constructs cultural identity, and depicts social transformations occurring within society.

CONCLUSION

The stylistic analysis of *Audat al-Firdaws* demonstrates that the author employs various linguistic elements to construct both aesthetic value and social meaning within the narrative. The most dominant stylistic features include emotionally and ideologically charged diction, metaphors that intensify meaning, social imagery that vividly portrays societal conditions, and dialogues that function as vehicles for social criticism and cultural conflict.

The findings indicate that stylistic elements in the novel serve not only as aesthetic devices but also as representations of the social realities of contemporary Arab society. Therefore, the language style employed in *Audat al-Firdaws* plays a significant role in constructing meaning, cultural identity, and humanitarian messages intended by the author.

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