

Iraqi EFL University Learners' Use of Poetry-Specific Terms: A Stylistic Study

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استخدام طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية على المستوى الجامعي لمصطلحات محددة في الشعر:

دراسة اسلوبية

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Abstract

This study aims at finding out Iraqi EFL college learners' abilities and potentials to recognize and produce the technically linguistic terms as invested in poetry to reveal their stylistic competence in this regard. To do so, the work in question is divided into three sections in accordance with the linguistic area to which these terms belong: phonetically-based terms, semantically-based terms and pragmatically-based terms.

In order to solidify the learners' performance in this paradigm, a two-part questionnaire is designated for a sample of (100) subjects in the 4th year classes of English Department, College of Education for Human Sciences, Al-Muthanna University to come up with tangible evidence that depicts the students' linguistic knowledge and use of poetic terms. The first part of the questionnaire is meant for the recognition and the second for production with the hope this test will carry out its ends.

المستخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة للتعرف على قابليات و امكانيات المتعلمين العراقيين الدارسين اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة اجنبية على المستوى الجامعي على ادراك و انتاج المصطلحات اللغوية المستخدمة في الشعر لغرض الكشف عن معرفتهم الاسلوبية في هذا المجال. و للقيام بذلك فأن البحث قسّم المصطلحات ضمن ثلاثة فروع لغوية و التي تنتمي لها هذه المصطلحات: المصطلحات المشتقة من علم الصوت و المصطلحات المشتقة من علم الدلالة و المصطلحات المشتقة من علم التداولية. و لغرض الوصول الى نتائج عملية في هذا المجال، فقد تم تصميم استبيان مكوّن من جزأين لعينة من طلبة المرحلة الرابعة عددها (١٠٠) طالب من قسم اللغة الإنجليزية - كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية - جامعة المثنى للتوصل الى دليل قطعي في المعرفة اللغوية و الاستخدام لقابليات اولئك الطلبة في التعامل مع المصطلحات الشعرية. إن الجزء الاول من الاستبيان يهدف الى معرفة في حين يهدف الثاني الى معرفة الانتاج على أمل إن هذا الاختبار يحقق غايته المنشودة.

1. Poetry

According to Sequeira et al. (2008: 11), poetry is "the art by which feeling is conveyed by author to reader in metrical languages". Described as the imagination and passions, poetry is the beauty of the world and a matter of sensations and emotions, expressing the internal world of reality objectively in terms of words and linguistic forms. Consequently, readers are greatly fascinated by poetry, admiring the person who creates it since it renders the audience to get acknowledged with processes and events involved into the make-up of a poem. Such a magnificent impression is engendered thanks to the phonetic and pragmatic devices that a poet employs in his/her poem the most important of which are rhyme, rhythm, metaphor, simile, pun and so on.

Following Yeganeh (2010: 198), the poet's task is to make new impressions in the reader's mind arising from the sound and images used in his/her poem. Being so, the poet is regarded as a seer who suggests, rather than names, objects on the behalf of the reader whose personal mood is ready to accept the new images provoked by the poet. That is to say, the writer of a poem would create sensuous reverie in the reader's mentality so that the latter admits the magical images newly formed and aroused by virtue of the poet's words that are deftly produced. Seen as amalgamation of various emotions and sensations alongside other images of love, sorrow, excitement and disappointments, the poet's language is not descriptive, but a sequence of symbols and words that trigger sentimental and delicate atmosphere on the part of the reader and audience,

having nothing to do with objective description and didacticism in line with what Yeganeh (2010: 199) says of human being as living in "a forest of symbols".

2. Phonetically-Based Terms

Utilized the beauty of sound features of the words that poems contain, poets do their best to create a mesmerizing effect in the reader, getting him greatly fascinated. Following Rajimwale (2001: 206), a poet is entitled to display his artistic ability of capturing the sound characteristics of the language system and use them clearly to get the audience enjoyed by an interesting rainfall of deftly organised sounds. Key to phonetic properties inherent in poetry are the following terms:

2.1 Rhyme

Viewed as repetition of syllables found at the ends of final words in lines of a poem, rhyme is the leading feature in poetry that differentiate it from other types of literature. Closely associated with this technique, rhyme schema is regarded as a means of counting for identification of the rhyme pattern employed in poems. To do so, letters of the alphabet are adopted in signalling rhyme schemata (Simpson, 2004: 16). As a case in point, the researcher considers the first stanza in Emily Dicken's poem which reads as follows:

There is a certain Slant of light a

Winter afternoon b

That expresses, like the Heft a

Of cathedral Tunes b

Rhyme is said to perform a variety of functions in poetry; it introduces harmonic resonance and musical tones on the behalf of the audience. In addition, it is seen as a coherent tie linking the lines of a poem as a unifying whole both in shape and essence. Being so, the idea of (light) in the aforementioned stanza, later on, notably in line 3, is intensified as heft and this semantic intensification, which binds line 1 with line 3, is evaluated as a coherent device, which is also reflected in winter afternoons and cathedral tunes, both of which, draw upon worship and devotion of Almighty. These implicit relationships which are triggered by virtue of rhyme schemas, should be

discovered by the audience depend on one's experience of the knowledge of the language and world as Yule (2010: 144) concedes. In short, rhyme is considered as a covert link provoking a new sense thanks to its phonetic form as observed in the above-mentioned excerpt from Dickens.

2.2 Onomatopoeia

Characterized by its iconic function, onomatopoeia is a term used by poets and writers to exhibit the resemblance between form and meaning. According to Lyons (1981: 27-30), there is no direct and iconic connection between words and their meaning, except for very few words that show symmetrical correspondence between the phonetic form and the physical entities that they refer to as in buss, cuckoo, hiss, howled, sigh, whisper, jangle, etc. Consequently, poets save no effort to invest the potentiality of this phonetic feature of these words whose lexical structure suggests their conceptual and denotative meanings.

Leech and Short (1968: 40) argue that the semantic structure of such words is bound to activate and arise their imitative power, affirming the futility of the sounds that do not exhibit this potentiality in this regard. They (ibid.) claim "This power of suggesting neutral sounds or other qualities is relatively weak". This phenomenon can be exemplified by Tennyson's well-known "murmuring of innumerable bees", where the humming sound of the bees is evoked by the recurrent use of the nasal sounds [m] and [n] (Rajimwale, 2002: 210-2011). Though typified by the subjective evaluation of the content of the words in which it occurs, onomatopoeia jolts the reader's attention and emotional overtones and there are no objective assessment that provide an opposing interpretation to the ideas suggested by this phonetic technique.

2.3 Alliteration

Closely connected with rhyme, alliteration is described as the repetition of the same sound at regular intervals. Despite the fact that rhyme is related to line endings, alliteration is reflected in initial sounds in a line of poem. Causing a musical effect on the part of the reader, it also deepens the sense of the topic that the poem talks about. This phonetic mechanism can be clearly expressed in "The Ancient Mariner" by Coleridge (Alexander, 1963: 20).

The fair breez blew, the white foam flew

Here, the alliteration, represented by repeated [b] and [f], suggests the speed at which the ship runs and the ease of the movement of both the poem and the ship it describes, indicating the absence of any obstacles that impede. On the contrary, the line that says: "*Day after day, day after day*" presents the difficulty in movement and the delay that the ship passes through while travelling, an immobility that is brought about by means of the repetitive [d] sound (ibid.).

It is claimed that alliteration acts as a cohesive device since it operates with the syntactic structure of a line. For instance, the following line which is adopted from the poem by Thomas Gray entitled "Elegy Written in Countryside Church" that reads:

"The ploughman homeward plods his weary way" stands for alliteration functioning as a cohesive link relating the components of this line altogether. Put differently, the repetition of [p] phones combines the subject 'the ploughman' and the verb 'plods' altogether while the [w] phone relates the complement clause elements to one another. Taken together, these repetitive devices assign what is referred to as *acoustic punctuation* to the line in question. Conversely, if the line was written in such a form as '*The ploughman plods his weary way homeward*', there is no need for *acoustic punctuation* because the

adjunct 'homeward' is no longer there, an action which is at odds with the metrical schema that poem lines are firmly abide by (Simpson, 2004: 16).

2.3.1 Consonance

Defined as the repeated consonant sounds in a line of a poem, consonance is seen as a figure of speech subsuming under the umbrella term of alliteration (Sequeira, et al., 2005: 20).

Largely used as a phonetic technique in poetry, consonance is also realized in words that share sibilants. Accordingly, the audience or the reader is bewitched by this figure and its motivating nature. One example denoting such a technique can be found in the following couplet:

*Proud and unafraid he stood
nor said a word to those around* (ibid.)

2.3.2 Assonance

Envisioned as a complementary device of consonance, assonance is triggered by the repeated vowel sounds that entertains the reader and attracts his attention. In fact, this phonetic technique is used to tackle imperfect rhymes and used to abandon insistent patterns of rhyme to render the lines run smoothly (Alexander, 1963: 21).

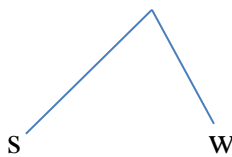
Typified by recurrence of accented vowels within words as in "quite right", assonance is a poetic device used by skilled poets in a bid to spark change in the mood of a poem. In this respect, it is worth stating that long vowels would dwindle the energy at that point in a poem. On the contrary, vowels would amplify the phonetic effort, enlightening the mood. Put differently, poets are eclectic to select words that incite the atmosphere needed by the audience, which gets him fascinated and interested of what he reads (William, 1987: 121).

The researcher considers the following excerpt by Edgar Allan Poe's poem that is entitled "Bells" where the short vowel [e] is used repeatedly:

Hear the mellow [e]
Wedding bells, [e]
Golden bells! [e]
What a world of
Happiness their harmony
foretells.

2.4 Rhythm

Characterized by its musical tone, rhythm can be defined as a relative occurrence of stressed and unstressed syllables across a line at regular intervals of time (Roach, 2010: 107). Put differently, stressed syllables are found at regular spans irrespective of whether they are separated by unaccentuated syllables or not. As a key unit of rhythm, foot metrically which pertains to the span of accentuated and weak syllables, which constitute a rhythmical pattern. Accordingly, the rhythmical structures can be diagrammed as follows (ibid.):



In this regard, a group of rhythmic feet would emerge on the basis of the number and ordering of their component strong and weak syllables, the most important of which are iambic, which comprise two syllables the first of which is less accentuated than the second, and the trochaic which exhibits a reverse ordering (the second syllable is weaker than the first). Thomas Gray's poem of Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard has the following line which conforms to the first type of feet mentioned above (Simpson, 2004: 15):

The ploughman homeward plods his weary way

which can be rhythmically decomposed into:

The plough || man || home || ward plods || his || wea || ry way

W S W S W S W S W S

This line is described as an 'iambic pentameter' because it contains five iambic feet as illustrated by the units indicated by vertical lines above, a segmentation which shows no identity between the metrical boundaries and word boundaries because rhythm has more to do with meaning potential than lexical or grammatical structure and, being so, it either supports a lexical grammatical construction or segments it (ibid: 15-16).

3. Semantically-Based Terms

Some of the terms that are used in poetry fall within the scope of semantics, particularly cognitive semantics which depend for its interpretation on considering the embodiment of the terms under scrutiny. That is to say, those labels' interpretation demands reference to the body; personification, for instance, is only accounted for with respect to the human body because human characteristics are given to non-human entities. The same thing is applicable to other sub-branches of semantics (Simpson, 2002: 31-3).

3.1 Oxymoron

Simply defined, oxymoron is juxtaposition of two expressions that exhibit semantic incompatibility. That is to say, the expressions juxtaposed do not share mutual semantic feature at all (Rajimwale, 2002: 235). In Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, one comes across the statement "Parting is a sweet sorrow" where the two words do not show congruence in meaning when used apart from the context. However, the phrase in question is meaningful once placed in the

context because amalgamation of joy in some other examples of oxymoron lie in cold fire, bright smoke, heavy lightness is quite common in our daily life.

Morner and Rausch (2017: 158) point out that oxymoron is a figure of speech where two juxtaposed words show contradiction to each other, arguing that this linguistic technique, which is deliberately made as a kind of novelty of a certain concept, provokes a strong effect on the part of the reader. Oxymoron, clarify Richards and Schmidt (1983: 89), functions to get the audience paid attention to a situation that cannot be labeled and accentuates the values of contradiction involved in emotional context; many writers have employed this figure of speech, particularly in conservative societies to encode powerful messages. One of Tolstoy's publications is entitled as "A Living Corpse", a powerful expression that renders the reader pause for a while to consider the meaning of such an oxymoronic content involved. In the same vein, the effective character of oxymoron is suited in its provocative sensibility which coincides with the poem's rhythm to punctuate an idea. In support of such exegesis, Chaunya (2008: 7) stresses the duality of a concept, object or a phenomenal expression resulting from oxymoron; "Poor Millionaires". For example, is a title of a novel written by Robert and Kimpur which depicts a contrastive notion. Nonetheless, this phenomenal expression is meaningful since it is understood as expressing that the rich people in the novel in question are poor in spite of collecting a considerable amount of money because their money doubled their responsibility and, hence, they were unhappy with their lives empty of pleasure and relaxation.

Concerning the types of oxymoron, Shen (2015: 311-13) affirms that there are two kinds of oxymoron: direct and indirect. Direct oxymoron involves juxtaposing two words which explicitly exhibit contradictory semantic content

while indirect one pertains to less obvious contradiction since the meaning is arrived at after the knowledge of the context is constructed as a part of the meaning of the oxymoronus expression. The expression "war games" is seen as an indirect oxymoron because war is a serious term, while games is a word with no consequential results. This interpretation demands indulgency by the reader and more consideration and analysis so as to grasp the term appropriately and that is the reason that indirect oxymoron is called 'opinion oxymoron'.

3.2 Personification

Defined as a figure of speech where an object, an animal or a thought is attributed some human features. Viewed as a literary means, personification enables poets and writers to create life and activities in non-human beings since it sparks effective reaction and influence on the behalf of the reader or audience. Additionally, personification helps to visualize some elements of the poem more clearly. Put differently, it is thought of as a way of motivation because it activates many elements turning up in cities, continents, seasons of the year, months, winds and other natural phenomena. Accordingly, there is a picture created by virtue of personification in the reader's mind to relate what is said to the referent intended. Exemplified in The snow whispered as it fell to the ground, personification serves as an entertaining and creative technique utilized by poet in order to get the reader fascinated, ruling out the boredom and monotony (Alexander, 1963: 19).

Looked at from another angle, personification is regarded as a part of the reader to render him/her stick to the theme of the poem and the topic under discussion. Simultaneously, it brings about the audience's suspense needed in the poem, keeping him/her in the track the poet basically sets up to develop the theme (s) (Goosens, 2002: 27-32).

As a device for simplifying comprehensive of a certain entity or phenomenon, personification is meant to provide the described ideas concrete basis so as for the audience to get access to the thoughts and objects under scrutiny (Leech and Short, 2007: 12-19). Consequently, personification draws upon the agentless entities which are thought of as agent as in "My car refuses to start this morning". In support of the previous accounts, Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 20) describe personification as an ontological metaphor encompassing a cross-domain projection in which an entity or idea is imputed human features.

Accordingly, personification, like metaphor, has two domains where mapping should be made between two members, one from each, are to be compared. One of these domains involves human features while the other non-human entities, roughly referred to as source and target respectively, which can be represented by the following example:

She studied the drug, you know? Like it was her enemy (ibid.)

The utterance above which is seen as a vivid example of personification, can be diagrammed as follows:



Figure (1): Personification (Following Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 20)

3.3 Metonymy

As a cognitive process, occurring in a single conceptual field, metonymy is concerned with the meaning that is triggered by virtue of relatedness as in 'The have a hand in it' (Rajimwale, 2002: 230). In this example, the word 'hand' has a

metonymous sense associated with a human being. According to Yule (2010, 121), metonymy is realized in a part-whole relation as in the pairs wheel/car, roof/house, juice/can, crown/king, etc., a trope referred to as synecdoche alternatively, this trope can be conceived of in terms of a location representing the institution or the official who houses it, e.g., 'The white House announces his determination to fight terrorism everywhere in the world', where white house stands for the American president. Additionally, metonymy is triggered by means of a producer and the produced relation, e.g., 'Have you read the new Kate Atkinson?', an utterance in which 'the new Kate Atkinson' refers to a literary work issued by the well-known British authoress (Simpson, 2004: 43).

Drawing on the difference between metaphor and metonymy, one can say that the former concerns itself with a certain distance between the sources (target and source) it alludes to, the latter up-scales certain outstanding features from a single domain to represent that domain as a whole (ibid.). The proverb that reads "The pen is mightier than the sword", for instance, depicts a metonymic utterance because the 'pen' stands for the written word and the 'sword' for armies and, hence, the proverb as a whole can be interpreted as the written words are more powerful and effective than the armies which have weapons and ammunition.

It is worth mentioning that some metonymic expressions are so conventionalized and established due to their extensive use in our everyday life that language users no longer think of them as metonymy. For instance, those who are fond of music cannot think of strings as a metonymic symbol for a musical instrument when they come across such an utterance as 'The strings are too quiet'. The language users' knowledge of metonymy depends largely on contextual factors and shared knowledge in addition to inference. Another

example that exhibits conventionality comes from the British mid-fielder who describes his team's fans who have not enthusiastically encouraged the team as 'prawn sandwich', a term which is later on used for any set of supporters (Yule, 2010: 121).

3.4 Motif

Defined as a repeating image recurrently found throughout the literary works, including poetry, a motif serves to uphold the deep meaning that the poet or novelist tries to accentuate (Baldic, 2008: 195-6).

In his novella entitled 'Hills Like White Elephants' Hemingway, for example, expresses this figure of speech when two of his fictional characters, while waiting for a train at a station, talk about weather, drinks and how the hills in Spain are similar to white elephants to reinforce the main topic raised in the story in question. It follows that motif in this story and other literary works consists in many activities and conversational actions and turns that fictional characters perform in a bid to foster and strengthen the main theme (s) involved (ibid.).

Following Abrams and Harpham (2012: 229), a motif is perceived as an event, device, reference or a symbol happening recurrently in literary works; the 'loathly lady' who morphs into a pretty woman by virtue of a kiss from a man is seen as a motif in *folklore*, and the man fascinated by a fairy woman serves as a motif adopted from folklore in 'Keat's Ballad' whose title is 'La Belle Dame sans Merci' in 1820, two motifs who share 'where – are' formula in admonishing the disappeared past (Hawthorn, 1994: 121-2).

Characterized by its symbolic essence, motif serves to accentuate the images and symbols that constitute its make-up which, in turn, contributes substantially to support and enhance the theme (s) involved in a poem or a literary work. It is

claimed that two criteria should be considered in the identification of a motif: recurrence and unavailability where the former refers to a motif irrespective of the number of times, this device exists while the latter draws upon the contextual variables determining the motif identified. Additionally, the coherence of the elements demands that the motif should be taken into account in line with the principle that states the more relevant the components of a motif, the more unified the impact of the motif. Consequently, motif can be manifested by any repeated symbol ranging from a sound to image or event and the like; in 'Slaughter House' a novel written by Vonnegut, for instance, the utterance "so it goes" is echoed so many times to be specified a motif with symbolic importance associated with the theme of death as an inevitable end to human beings (ibid.).

3.5 Pleonasm

According to Myrers and Mukasch (2003: 279), pleonasm is a figure of speech where repetition of an idea occurs by different forms or different syntactic structures, a verb, for instance, can be reflected by an adverbial as in in the following sentence: '*I saw it with my own eyes*', where the prepositional phrase (*with my eyes*) that functions as an adverbial is identical in semantic content to the verb (*saw*); that is to say, the adverbial phrase is surplus in the example sentence at issue since it provides no new information (ibid.).

As a form of redundancy, pleonasm is considered as a bad style since repetition is an undesirable habit especially in writing and, hence, teachers usually asked their students to abandon it. Nonetheless, pleonastic forms serve as an emphatic device that one cannot make up for. Besides, it functions to keep on communication between interlocutors involved in a communicative event when the parts of linguistic messages sent are distorted; that is to say, the

receiver can depend on pleonasm to restore the deleted elements of a distorted pleonastic message so as to appropriately understand and respond what lost or unclear (Glucksberg, 1993: 5).

Gruse (2006: 128) contends that pleonasm is inherent syntactically and semantically, arguing that syntactic pleonasm is manifested by repeating a subject in such spoken sentences as *'That man, he can play on Sunday'*. Additionally, double affirmation, stresses Crystal (2003: 357), is a type of pleonasm where there auxiliary (do) as in *'I do come early'* is superfluous. On the semantic level, when the meaning of one word is mentioned elsewhere on the same sentence, e.g., *'Michael Jordan, it is claimed, is a famous superstar'* in which *'superstar'* has the same meaning as *'famous'*. By the same token, pleonasm is grounded in what is referred to as prolixity, which is seen as the mention of elements that are not worth mentioning as in *'They are four species: two non-different species are dealing with one single phenomenon'*. Here the word *'different'* in the example above is of no semantic content because its meaning is included in the word *'species'* and, consequently, should be not raised.

Looked at from another angle, pleonasm violates the quality maxim that is proposed by Grice (1975) because it provides more information that is needed. However, it is acceptable in literature. The researcher considers what Shakespeare said in this regard in his 'Twelfth Night':

Clown: *"If he mends, he no longer dishonest
if he cannot, let the botcher mend it
Anything that is mended is best patched"*

Here the clown introduces pleonasm inherent in the italicized line above to explain what is contained in the word **'botcher'**.

4. Pragmatically-Based Terms

There are a number of terms, which are pragmatically oriented labels, that poets and orators try to invest in their contributions to poetry because of their communicative value. Following Mulken (2003: 116-17), poets depend on two types of figures of speech: tropes and schemes, arguing heavily that the former is more significant than the latter since it involves a variety of kinds that are largely reliant on pragmatic character of linguistic expressions in which these tropes occur. By the same token, he (ibid.) classifies tropes into two groups: destabilization and substitution, affirming that the former group pertains to the indeterminacy and flexibility of the meaning of a linguistic construction in its context. This type involves metaphor, pun, and irony.

The second group of substitution, McQuarrie and Mick (1996: 429) concede, includes hyperbole, litotes, and metonymy. This kind is intended to spark more processing on the behalf of the reader/listener to get the writer's/speaker's intended meaning. The following subsections would be a detailed discussion of the tropes aforementioned along with illustrative examples where necessary.

4.1 Metaphor

Turning up our daily uses, metaphor is simply defined as a comparison between two different conceptual domains, namely target and source ones, with the former concerned with the concept that metaphor triggers and the latter the topic we depend on to produce a metaphorical expression (Simpson, 2004: 41). This concept may be exemplified by the linguistic expression '*She blew her lid*' where the target source can be spelt out as "anger" since it is the concept the speaker is after in metaphor, while the source domain can be recognised as "heated flood in a container" for it is the concept that supplies the vehicle for the transference responsible for creating metaphor (ibid: 42).

As a source of creativity and novelty, metaphor abounds in poetry; Thomas Gray, for instance, says "a grief ago", a phrase which cannot be accounted for literally because "ago", as an adverb of time, can only collocate with words pertaining to time like 'days', 'months', etc. In a consequence, the audience uses his imagination for a metaphorical interpretation of the phrase at issue to arrive at such an explanation as "the unhappy time following a sad event" (Fromkin, et al. 2007: 183).

It is worth mentioning that metaphoric expressions, because of their extensive use in various occasions and situations, get so familiarized that language users later on do not think of them as having metaphorical interpretations and use them unconsciously like any other ordinary expressions. Such constructions as "*it escapes me*", "*I can't follow*", "*petticoat government*", etc. are no longer thought of as metaphorical expressions due to their enormous recurrence in our daily use of language, a development that causes them to lose its metaphorical content. On the other hand, metaphorical expressions are favoured in literature, especially poetry, because of is more creative and less clear for the audience and the reader to decipher (Rajimwale, 2001: 230).

4.2 Simile

According to Alexander (1963: 21), simile is an explicit comparison which is linguistically realized by means of 'as' or 'like' as in Robert Burn's line in well-known poem 'A red, Red Rose' that says "*O My Luve is like red, red rose*".

Included in metaphor and seen as a part of it is simile which is seen as a figure of speech and a literary trope poets, orators and laymen use in their contributions in a specific communicative situation on a particular occasion to bring about equivalency between two objects, actions or events. Interestingly enough, simile can produce an overt comparison between two things which are

dissimilar from one another such that their comparability is not possible as in "this poem is like a punch in the gut" (ibid.). similarly, simile can be detected in the response of a child, who first tastes custard when he says "**it is like a drink**". The same baby's verbal response consists in his utterance "**It is like my grandmam's walking stick**" once described the letter 'J' he first observes on a keyboard (Bloor and Bloor, 2007: 69).

Simpson (2004: 43) contends that simile is an affective trope serving as a useful test to differentiate and discriminate between metaphor and metonymy. Worded differently, when confusion arises as to whether an expression such as '**The regime is finished**' (said by a newspaper on the War on Iraq in 2003) is a metonymic or metaphorical construction, the solution one resorts to is to convert the utterance into simile which depicts the relationship as metaphor by means of the 'IS LIKE formula'. In this way, the resultant utterance that proves the metaphorical essence of the statement at hand would be something like this: '**The process of crashing the regime is like coming to end**'.

4.3 Meronymy

As a significant type of lexical relationship drawing upon part-whole relation, meronymy is a term widely used in literary language including poetry. According to Halliday and Hassan (1989: 81), meronymy discuss part-whole relationships that are organised in a hierarchical way; limb and root, which are meronomic elements, are regarded as co-meronymys for the superordinate tree. It is widely held that meronymy is a topic which is supposed to be discussed within Halliday (ibid.)'s theory of transitivity that recommends that this figure of speech act as substitution of a body part of the human being for the role of an actor, sensor, sayer, etc. (terms created by Halliday in his transitivity approach to semantic roles). One example, comes from the use of hands in the sentence

we need more hands to finish the project, where (hands) represents people (ibid.).

According to Lyons (1977: 87-7), there are two types of meronymy necessary and optional. The former can be illustrated by the inevitable connection between the part and the whole as in eye/face pair and the latter does not presupposes such a connection as in cushion/chair pair since some chairs have no cushions.

Interestingly enough, meronymy can consist in caricature simply because caricature portrays a distorted variant of some parts of man. Some artists render the nose as a pointed form to imply that the face of the person criticized is no longer welcomed by the audience (Simpson, 2004: 44). He (ibid.) argues that caricature is a detextual form dealt with semiotically, emphasizing the close affinity between it and meronymy.

4.4 Hyperbole

Following Cruce (2006: 80), hyperbole, which is also terms as overstatement deliberately expresses the positive or negative exaggeration in an attempt to deepen the influence on the behalf of the reader. Pragmatically analyzed as infringement of quality maxim proposed by Grice (1975), hyperbole is a common phenomenon used in all walks of life and in our daily use of language. This strategy, Leech (1983: 145) argues, is justified because it is associated with the possibility of gradual telling of truth; that is to say, truth is not a matter of X or Y, but it can be told in degrees. As such one can consider You made my blood boil as a hyperbole since the speaker does not observe the truthfulness (quality) maxim.

Described as a figure of speech that encompasses the force of powerful emotion, hyperbole is an effective device designated to arouse the audience's

emotion concerning a certain phenomenon, maximizing the size of the action or event under discussion. In his poem 'Scorching Trails', James Tate says "She scorched you with her radiance" to describe his sweet-heart's phenomenal beauty, and this exaggerated description stirs up the readers' latent emotions and broadens this characteristic by expanding its merits and this sentence, accordingly, can be spelt out as "You are greatly influenced by her charming beauty" (Claridge, 2010: 57-9). Furthermore, he (ibid.) remarks that hyperbole is a type of figurative language which is more extreme than what is devoted by the state of affairs, arguing that it is indicative of exaggeration, a shift from the denotation of the topic or idea described to the speaker's intention of expression due to the importance of what is talked about as in 'It took him a whole day to type three words' which suggest the writer's feeble ability to type quickly.

In poetry, hyperbole is a basic component of the content of a poem to incite ever-lasting passion, love, feelings of intimacy or despair via amplifying the reader's imaginative powers and enthusiastic desires. For instance, Homer, in his epics, opts for hyperbole to maximize and deepen the influence of the described actions about which he prolongs talking. In the Iliad, Homer said that god Mars cried out as loudly as nine or ten thousand men', an exaggeration that is easily detected by the reader since it is impossible for a single man to create such a noisy action. However, such an amplified cry is depicted as so due to the way the poet feels from the bottom of his heart.

4.5 Irony

Defined as a 'discordance' between what is openly articulated and what is really meant (Xing, 2008: 5), irony is brewing controversy since there is no unanimous agreement over its character. In general, irony is formulated when the speaker over-characterizes an action, event and/or evaluative decision in a

bid to stick to politeness principle which all speakers do their best not to refrain from.

According to Leech (1983: 142), irony is an alternative to impoliteness and such an insincere technique is realized by flouting the quality maxim, which is proposed by Grice (1975), as in Don't mind me, will you? When directed to someone that has already barged into the speaker. This concept is reinforced by Grice (1975: 53) who maintains that irony is endangered when violation of conversational maxim occurs, insisting that the intended meaning conveyed by the speaker concerning irony impels the listener to search for an extra interpretation other than the literal meaning. That is to say, the hearer believes that the speaker would say something true and information-bearing, but when the latter says something false, the former can generate one or more interpretations by obviously violating the co-operative principle to communicate something else that is to grasp by the hearer on the basis on the contextual factors alongside the background and assumption that the participants share (ibid.).

Following Reyes et al. (2012: 2-3), irony is typified by two variables: the pragmatic mechanism by which an ironic utterance is made and the kind of the person against whom the proposed action is obviously directed or the person other than the addresses the intended attack is waged against (third party), affirming that this trope is typified by its secret character between the speaker and the addressee and the receiver is invited to understand the communicative values involved in this ironic utterance. The secret implied in ironic utterance is motivated by politeness, to which all people make appeal; that is to say, rendering the ironic expressions secret, especially with respect to their

proposition, would finally get the speaker free from hostile reactions by the address since there were no direct insults or offenses are made.

4.6 Pun

Drawing on the humorous way of word use, pun is concerned with utilization of words that exhibit homonymy, homophony or polysemy in their relationship (Bussmann, 1996: 968). For instance, the word 'bank', Yule (2010) contends, is one form but with more one meaning; 'bank' may refer to a 'financial institution' in one sense of it, and to 'river shore' in another. Here, the context interferes to settle this conflict in meaning by ruling one of their senses out as an inappropriate one and consolidating the other as a contextually operative option.

Hailed as a foregrounded feature mainly used in literary language, pun impels the reader for further processing to arrive at the poet's intended meaning; that is to say, more interpretations of a certain word would emerge and it is the receiver's duty to erase the absurd meaning, inculcating the meaning which fits in the context of poem. Such search for the designated meaning will be of interest to the reader removing the banal and prosy flatness that the reader might encounter in the process of ongoing interpretation (Rajimwale, 2002: 242-3). The following lines that are adopted from Shakespeare's Richards II exhibit this trope successfully:

Surrey: *Dishonourable boy!*

That lie shall lie in my sword.

Here the word 'lie' has two senses: in the former use in the second line above it is taken to mean 'to tell something untrue' while in the latter use it is understood as 'the position where the boy rest' (ibid: 242).

In support of these claims aforementioned, Simpsons (2004: 45-6) argues that pun, as a form of word-play, involves a linguistic feature that integrates two

or more unrelated meanings, affirming that this trope is not necessarily confined within the limits of individual words but it can be realized across word boundaries. Assuming this phenomenon as a chance-connection, pun, he (ibid.) points out, sometimes makes a link between two different levels of linguistic organization. This is largely manifested in famous hairdressing saloons titles in Belfast like "Curl up Dye" where the word 'dye' is either meant 'paint' or as opposite to 'live', a procedure that results in the punning character of this word. Similarly, the word 'Shylock', which is also a name of a saloon, either refers to one of the outstanding fictional characters in Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice, or pertains to 'locks of hair'.

4.7 Litotes

Frequently known as 'understatement', litotes is defined as a pragmatic strategy employed for an ironic comment, in particular by using a negative utterance to indicate the opposite meaning of what is said. Being so, the utterance 'I shan't be sorry when it is over' to be interpreted as 'I shall be very glad when it is over'. Similarly, the utterance 'It was no easy matter' when issued in an appropriate context is to be taken as 'It was very difficult' (Hornby, 1974: 503).

Hornby (1974)'s definition is reinforced by Webster (2004: 512)'s account on this technique which holds that litotes is analyzed as a statement with the scope that does not include the entire truth, leaving a portion of fact uncovered by the utterance, a technique which serves to intensify the reader's awareness of the context and environment in which the utterance is formulated. Here, the audience is required to differentiate between what is said and what the real situation is in order to detect the understatement of what is uttered.

As a trope inciting charm and interest on the behalf of the beholder, litotes is indirectly found in the deep structure of poems when the audience connects the

meaning of words and stanzas of the written lines with the situation of use, in conjunction with the contextual factors, to decode the understatement signs involved in a poem; the reader saves no effort to differentiate between the right interpretation of a poem and its defective counterpart to spot litotes used by the poet (Stageberg, 1952: 121). Consequently, the poem enables the receiver to anticipate what is not said in the poet's description, especially the parts that are not tackled, i.e. the gaps. Hence, this insufficient description suggests understatement (ibid.).

5. The Test

Described as a quantitative questionnaire aimed at discovering Iraq EFL university learners' use of poetry-specific terms, this type of test, contends Williams (2011: 14), pertains to measure and analysing variables to arrive at specific outcomes. This is usually accomplished by numerical values assigned to the learners' responses in reaction to the question items of the questionnaire. This claim is reinforced by Johnson and Christenson (2008: 90)'s proposal that quantitative test is employed to check the hypotheses adopted at the opening phase of research. Looked at from another angle, this kind of research is to be applicable to studying randomly chosen groups selected for this purpose, drawing upon certain factors by raising data by means of statistical values.

In this work, the questionnaire adopted comprises two questions: one for recognition and the other production. The two questions at hand are based on three linguistic variables each, viz. phonetics, semantics and pragmatics. That is to say, the testees, who are one hundred EFL students chosen randomly in the Department of English, College of Education for Human Sciences, Al Muthanna University from the fourth year, are required to answer the questions regarding poetry terms (ibid.).

Concerning the validity of the test, the researcher consulted a number of experts (professors whose experience in this regard is remarkable) and their remarks are taken into account and, the questions are modified accordingly since such a procedure is necessary and in line with what Heaton (1974: 21) proposes when emphasizing the role of this technique.

As regards the items included in the questionnaire, the topics and terms are mainly adopted from the following resources:

- Abrams, M. H. and Geoffrey, Galt Harpham (2012). **A Glossary of Literary Terms.**
- Alexander, L. C. (1963). **Poetry and Prose Appreciation for Overseas Students.**
- Rajimwale, Sharad (2001). **Elements of General Linguistics.**
- Roach, Peter (2010). **English Phonetics and Phonology: A Practical Course.**
- Simpson, Paul (2004). **Stylistics.**

Such a procedure approves the content validity of the test in question because the test items can cover all the key poetry terms intended to be measured (ibid.).

Concerning the mathematical instrument employed, simple calculations and percentages are adopted to judge the learners' ability to comprehend and produce suitable poetic terms that suitably fit in the concepts and texts concerned. Before sitting for a test, the sample members are requested to feel relaxed and not to write their names. Later on, the subjects deal with the test seriously and have answered comfortably after they are told this test is devised for scientific research purposes. The first question, which is designated to check

the students' perception of literary terms used in poetry, comes up with the statistical outcomes that emerge in the following Table and Figure:

Item No.	Linguistic Area	Poetic Terms	Number of Correct responses	Percentage %
1	Phonetics	Consonance	52	52%
3	Phonetics	Onomatopoeia	48	48%
10	Phonetics	Rhythm	50	50%
The average of correct responses in phonetically-based terms			50	50%
4	Semantics	Oxymoron	30	30%
6	Semantics	Personification	36	36%
7	Semantics	Meronomy	30	30%
The average of correct responses in semantically-based terms			32	32%
2	Pragmatics	Metaphor	14	14%
5	Pragmatics	Hyperbole	8	8%
9	Pragmatics	Pun	10	10%
8	Pragmatics	Litotes	12	12%
The average of correct responses in pragmatically-based terms			11	11%

Table (1): Iraqi EFL University Learners' Recognition of Poetic Terms

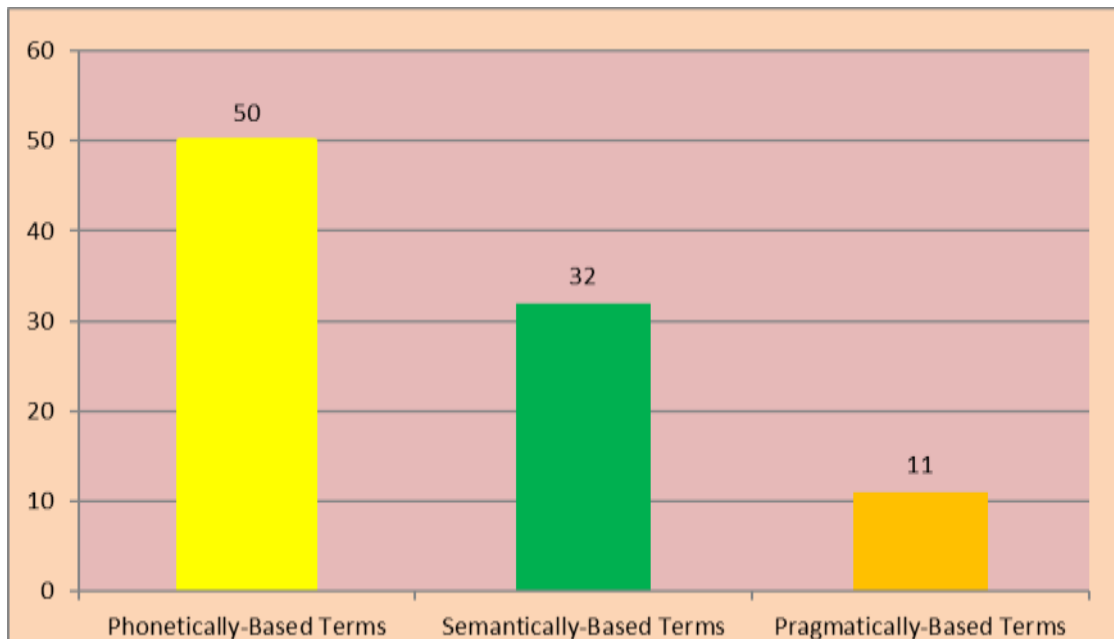


Figure (1): Iraqi EFL University Learners' Recognition of Poetic Terms

As far as terms concerning phonetics, Iraqi EFL learners face some sort of difficulty in responding to the items (1, 3, and 10). However, this failure, which is manifested by the number of mistakes committed (50%) as illustrated in Table (2) and Figure (2), is better than those made in either semantic and pragmatic areas. Of the three terms used in phonetics, it is the onomatopoeia label that causes problematic responses by the subjects (48%). This relative success in this linguistic field is attributable to the fact that Iraqi EFL university learners are more accustomed to phonetics and phonology than other linguistic disciplines, a claim upheld by Schmidt (2002).

Switching to semantically-based terms where deteriorated responses have emerged, it has been pointed out that meronymy and oxymoron are a daunting challenge for those learners and hence, they have each scored only (30%) of the correct answers. On the other hand, personification obtains (36%) of the correct answers by the subjects at hand. This deterioration of linguistic performance

pertaining to poetic terms, asserts Chomsky (1965), indicates linguistic incompetence on the part of these learners.

What is worse those learners' defective performance in pragmatically-based terms where the scores range between (14% - 8%) of the correct answers, an indication of these learners' communicative incompetence. Communicative competence, Yule (2010) points out is different from linguistic competence. Depending on contextual factors and expectation, pragmatically-related terms are not easily captured by undergraduate students and such a weakness is demonstrated by the low percentage (11%) by which the students at issue have made the correct answers. Hyperbole, as Table (1) and Figure (1) suggest, is the big challenge for Iraqi EFL college learners where they can score only (8%) of the correct responses.

Concerning the production part, which is manifested in Question Two, Iraqi EFL college learners' performance is quite discouraging as shown in Table (2) and illustrated in Figure (2) below:

Item No.	Linguistic Area	Poetic Terms	Number of Correct responses	Percentage %
1	Phonetics	Assonance	40	40%
3	Phonetics	Onomatopoeia	30	30%
4	Phonetics	Rhythm	30	30%
The average of correct responses in phonetically-based terms			33.33	33.33%
8	Semantics	Pleonasm	20	20%
9	Semantics	Oxymoron	20	20%
10	Semantics	Motif	10	10%

The average of correct responses in semantically-based terms			16.66	16.66%
2	Pragmatics	Irony	10	10%
5	Pragmatics	Hyperbole	8	8%
6	Pragmatics	Metaphor	15	15%
7	Pragmatics	Pun	13	13%
The average of correct responses in pragmatically-based terms			11.5	11.5%

Table (2): Iraqi EFL University Learners' Production of Poetic Terms

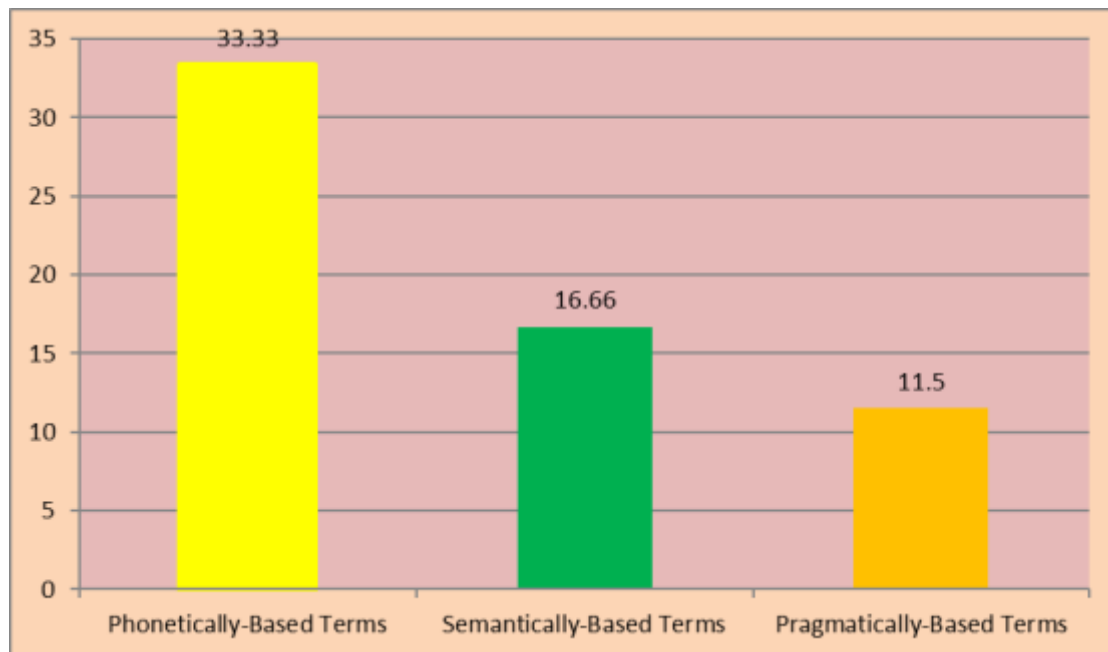


Figure (2): Iraqi EFL University Learners' Production of Poetic Terms

As shown in Table (2) and illustrated in Figure (2) above, the learners' performance in phonetically-based terms ranges between (40%) of the correct responses to (30%), an unsatisfactory outcome that indicates the learners' feeble

potentials in producing stylistic terms which have long invested phonetics to affect the reader and motivate him/her to indulge into poetry and poems as Rajimwale (2002) concedes. The Iraqi EFL college learners' productive ability in stylistic term assonance, which is to an extent not desirable, but better than other their correct responding terms of rhythm and onomatopoeia, is justified on the basis of these students' mastery over the basic components of phonetics, i.e. consonants and vowels. As a result, the subjects obtain (40%) of the correct answers in this paradigm. On the other hand, onomatopoeia counts as a great challenge for the learners in question where only (30%) are scored out of the correct answers. The reason for this defective performance lies in the fact that the term mentioned is not frequently occurring in the text-books devoted to them. By the same token, this term is orthographically long and learners are psychologically, Schmidt (2002) stresses, not prone to such terms whose pronunciation and spelling are not easily manipulated. As regards rhythm, which is preoccupied with segmentation of words into weak and strong syllables, is seen as a difficulty that cannot be addressed by these learners and such deficiency in both rhythm and onomatopoeia terms is demonstrated by the low percentage of right achievements (30% for each).

Moving to the second area of linguistic postulates of semantics upon which poetic terms rest, it has been observed that the respondents' ability gets worse in producing the right terms where only (16.66) of the correct responses are made as shown in Table (2) and illustrated in Figure (2), a crisis that demands an urgent solution by the learners themselves as well as the instructors, Al Jubory (2014) emphasizes. It has been observed that pleonasm and oxymoron constitute a big challenge for Iraqi EFL college learners and this is empirically reflected in the very low percentage of the correct responses (20% for each), a detrimental

performance subjected to bitter criticism by the specialists, educationalists, scholars and analysts. In fact, the two terms of oxymoron and pleonasm are not found in the learners' mental dictionaries, as Rajimwale (2002) sustains. As one moves to the third semantic of motif, the subjects' reaction is growing worse because only ten subjects (out of 100 ones) come up with the correct. The low percentage (10%) of the correct answers is indicative of the learners' inability to express the appropriate term referring to frequent occurrence of an action (i.e. motif). However, few responses reported here state "paradox" instead of oxymoron and the researcher marks them correct simply because such an answer is also a poetic term equivalent to oxymoron in essence.

Regarding the pragmatically-based terms, the respondents' contribution is utterly failure, which is embodied by the very small number (11.5%) of the correct responses issued by the learners at hand as illustrated in Table (2) and Figure (2). Hyperbole, which stands at just (8%) of the correct answers, depicts deficiency in the pragmatic portion of the learners' linguistic competence. Nonetheless, a creative response occurs of "overstatement", an equivalent term accepted as a pragmatically-based alternative, argues Leech (1983). In the same vein, irony registers only ten correct terms (10%) in their answers, a number that suggests limitation in this paradigm. The failure also expands to metaphor (15%) and pun (13%). Such a detective accomplishment reflects the sizeable impediment the learners in question have long suffered from in expressing and producing pragmatically-dependent terms naming the poetic concepts that evoke the reader's attention and jolt his emotions and feelings in this trend as Rajimwale (2002) frequently affirms.

Conclusions

Investigating Iraqi EFL learners' abilities to recognize and produce poetic terms, this study arrives at the following conclusions:

1. Iraqi EFL learners' performance at recognition level is much better than that of production level concerning poetic terms.
2. As regards phonetically-derived terms in poetry, Iraqi EFL learners' performance scores higher marks than that in semantically and pragmatically-based terms as far as poetry is concerned.
3. The problematic contribution to the poetic terms by these learners is mainly manifested in terms that are derived from pragmatics. Accordingly, there is a pressing need to handle this deficiency.
4. Of the terms that fall within the scope of pragmatics, metaphor witnesses a better performance in both recognition and production levels by the learners in question than the rest of the labels of the same linguistic area.
5. Hyperbole, as a pragmatic term utilized in poetry, sees much more deteriorated achievement by those learners than all other terms. Such failure is attributed to the respondents' incompetence of pragmatic terms during their four-year academic study of English.
6. Semantically-based terms show failure by these learners in recognition and production of poetic terms, but these failed attempts are not as great as those in pragmatically-derived labels.

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Appendix

The Questionnaire (Test)

Question One: Choose the most appropriate option in the following items.

1. Coleridge, in his poem Ancient Mariner, says:

"The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew"

In this line, Coleridge uses

(onomatopoeia, consonance, assonance, simile)

2. Wordsworth, in his poem Lucy, describes the girl he madly loves by saying:

**"A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eyes"**

Here, the poet uses the device to express the girl's beauty.

(metaphor, simile, pun, oxymoron)

3. Shakespeare, in his poem entitled 'Winter', says:

**"The nightly sings the starting owl,
Tu-whit; Tu-who, a merry note"**

The poet utilizes to suggest the sound of owl.

(simile, onomatopoeia, consonance, assonance)

4. John Milton, in Samson Agonists, employs the expression:

"To live a life-dead, a living death"

Here, the italicized expression is poetically called

(oxymoron, metaphor, pun, hyperbole)

5. In the poem 'As I Walked Out One Evening' by W.H. Auden, the poet describing his ever-lasting love to the girl he madly loves by saying:

**"I'll love you dear, I'll love you
Till China and Africa meet"**

This description counts as

(hyperbole, metaphor, metonymy, personification)

6. Denise Rogers says in his poem entitled 'Take a Poem to Lunch' :

**"I'd love to take a poem to lunch
Or treat it to a wholesome brunch"**

The poem draws upon to create humorous effect in the reader.

(hyperbole, personification, metonymy, pun)

7. In Julius Caesar, Shakespeare says:

"Friends, Romans and countrymen, lend me your ears". Here, the use of 'ears' stands for

(meronymy, hyperbole, metaphor, oxymoron)

8. T.S. Eliot describes death by the following lines

**"I am not prophet – and
here's no great matter"**

In this excerpt, Eliot uses to embody an inevitable morality of human beings.

(hyperbole, litotes, metaphor, simile)

9. Shakespeare said **"A young man married is a man that is married"**. In this line, is used.

(metaphor, oxymoron, pun, hyperbole)

10. In his poem 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard', Thomas Gray wrote the line below segmented as:

The plough || man || home || ward plods || his || wea || ry way

This process of repeated segmentation into weak and strong syllables respectively is called

(onomatopoeia, rhythm. Consonance, assonance)

Question Two: Fill in the blanks with the suitable terms that are used in poetry.

1. Juxtaposed vowels in a line as in **"rise high in the bright sky"** is a sound device referred to as (assonance)

2. is a figure of speech in which the poet describes something or a phenomenon which is totally opposed to the state of affairs as in Coleridge saying

"Water, water everywhere

And not a drop to drink"

(Irony)

3. is a figure of speech where the phonetic form of a word suggests its meaning as in 'crash', 'cuckoo' and so on. (Onomatopoeia)

4. The stressed and unstressed syllables that form the organisation of a line or a verse is a poetic device which is labeled (Rhythm)

5. is a trope in which an entity or action is described in an exaggerative manner; that is to say the object's description is greater than what is indicated by the state of affair as in **'You made my blood burn'**. (Hyperbole)

6. is a poetic device pragmatically approached where an object is compared to another entity which is not related. The comparison is seen as an indirect one as in **'reading is food'**. (Metaphor)

7. is a literary device depending on the homophonous, polysemous or homonymous character of words to present terms that have the same form but different meaning as in **'Her cat is near the computer to keep an eye on the mouse'**. (Pun)

8. is a technique used by poets, writers and speakers to the use of more words or phrases than is needed as in '**Kick the ball with your feet**' and '**The doctor who looks after the patient**'. (Pleonasm)
9. Is a figure of speech mostly used in poetry where two contradictory terms are juxtaposed to arouse some sort of humour on the behalf of the reader or audience as in '**bitter**' and '**awfully good**'. (Oxymoron)
10. is the recurrence of an image, event or action supporting a theme adopted by a poet, author or writer when writing a poem. (motif)