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Research article

The Unsaid in the Proverbs of Al-Harafish Novel: A Pragma-Rhetorical Approach

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ABSTRACT

Proverbs are important elements of any language which are frequently used in every day interaction in different situations. The problem of the current study rests on the different illocutionary acts proverbs perform. Moreover, proverbs may encompass rhetorical devices which give texts their rhetorical flavors. This study aims at disclosing the most frequently used speech act type in the proverbs under focus, figuring out the most frequently utilized rhetorical devices in the proverbs and revealing the functions performed by the proverbs. The study adapts an eclectic model, namely: Searle's model (1979) and Leech and Short's model (2007). The conclusions arrived at are: firstly, the most repeatedly utilized speech act category in the proverbs under study is assertives. Regarding rhetorical devices, the most frequently used device in the proverbs is metaphor. Thirdly, the study also concludes different illocutionary functions used by proverbs in literary works.

المسكوت عنه في أمثال رواية الحرافيش: منحى تداولي _ بلاغي

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المُستخلص

تُعدّ الأمثال من أهم عناصر اللغة، إذ تُستعمل يوميًا في مختلف المواقف. تكمن مشكلة الدراسة في أن للأمثال مؤديات أفعال مختلفة في سياقات معينة. فضلًا عن ذلك، فإنها قد تتضمن أساليب بلاغية تُضفي على النص طابعًا بلاغيًا. تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى: الكشف عن أكثر أنواع أفعال الكلام استعمالًا في الأمثال و تحديد أكثر الأساليب البلاغية استعمالًا فيها و الكشف عن الوظائف التي تؤديها هذه الأمثال. ولتحليل البيانات فقد تبنت الدراسة نموذجًا توليفيًا وهما سيرل (1979) و ليج و شورت (2007). خلصت الدراسة إلى النتائج التالية: أولًا، إن أكثر أنواع أفعال الكلام استعمالًا في الأمثال قيد الدراسة هو الفعل التوكيدي. ثانيًا، فيما يتعلق بالأساليب البلاغية، تبيّن أن أكثرها استعمالًا في الأمثال هو الاستعارة. ثالثًا، خلصت الدراسة إلى أن الأمثال تؤدي وظائف متنوعة في الأعمال الأدبية..

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأمثال، التداولية، تصنيف أفعال الكلام، البلاغة، الأساليب البلاغية

1. Introduction

Lots of attempts though have been exerted by scholars to accurately and comprehensively define proverbs, yet none of them have succeeded (Coinnigh, 2014). This issue has brought scientists from different fields a lot of disappointment for centuries. (Mieder, 2004). In this regard, Taylor (1931) explains that it is difficult to offer a suitable definition for this term unless it comprises all the basic features of the elements required for this purpose. One of the problems is related to ‘incommunicable quality’ which tells us that these expressions are proverbs and the others are not.

Whiting (1932, p. 302) has stated that:

A proverb is an expression which, owing its birth to the people, testifies to its origin in form and phrase. It expresses what is apparently a fundamental truth-that is, a truism,-in homely language, often adorned, however, with alliteration and rhyme. It is usually short, but need not be; it is usually true, but need not be. Some proverbs have both a literal and figurative meaning, either of which makes perfect sense; but more often they have but one of the two. A proverb must be venerable; it must bear the sign of antiquity, and, since such signs may be counterfeited by a clever literary man, it should be attested in different places at different times. This last requirement we

must often waive in dealing with very early literature, where the material at our disposal is incomplete.

Mieder (1985, p. 119) defines a proverb as "a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorizable form and which is handed down from generation to generation". On his part, Norrick (1985, p. 78) explains that it is "a traditional, conversational, didactic genre with general meaning, a potential free conversational turn, preferably with figurative meaning". A proverb is "a unit of meaning in a specific context through which the speaker and hearer arrive at the same meaning" (Mollanazar, 2001, p. 53). A proverb can be defined as an essential linguistic component of any language which is daily utilized by people in different situations.

This paper attempts at shedding light on the pragmatic dimensions of Arabic proverbs used in Mahfouz's novel (1977) "Al-Harafish". Also, it aims at disclosing the rhetorical devices found in the proverbs. The problem of the study rests on the various illocutionary acts proverbs perform. Moreover, proverbs may encompass rhetorical devices which give texts their rhetorical flavors. The model of the present paper is Searle (1979) and Leech and Short's (2007). The former concentrates on speech act classification, whereas the latter deals with rhetorical devices. The research questions this study puts forward are:

1- What are the most frequently utilized speech acts in the proverbs in the novel under focus? And why?

2- What are the most frequently used rhetorical devices in the proverbs in the novel under investigation?

3- For what purposes or functions are proverbs used in novels?

2. Proverbs

A proverb is regarded as one of the language components, that is used every day and expressed briefly and figuratively, representing experiences and facts (Hammad, 2026). Proverbs are usually employed for two different functions: literary and practical. For the former, a proverb is used for giving an emotional and aesthetic effect. As for the latter, it has metaphorical, established and memorable characteristics which, in turn, make it suitable for daily purposes. Such characteristics greatly suggest that a proverb can be used for facilitating teaching, memorizing, and other processes (Mollanazar, 2001).

3. Main Characteristics of Proverbs

A proverb is "self-contained, pithy, traditional expressions, fixed–form with didactic content wisdom and culture free and culture specific" (Norrick, 1985, p. 31). In light of Norrick's words, the distinguished features of proverbs will be explained in the following subsections.

3.1 Syntactic Characteristics

Seiler (1922) states that a proverb is a self-contained expression. This means any of its grammatical units can be substituted for others if they belong to the same category. For example, **"القافلة تسير والكلاب تنبح"** (**The caravan goes on while dogs are barking**). One or more than one of the grammatical units of this proverb can be replaced. Thus, the proverb can be written as "القطار يسير والكلاب تنبح" (**The train goes on while dogs are barking**).

3.2 Semantic-Based Features

Proverbs usually exhibit some semantic aspects (Coinnigh, 2014). This can be seen through a number of semantic indicators like:

1- Equality or Identification. For example **"قلب المؤمن دليله"** (**The believer's heart is the best guide**).

2- Cause and Effect. As in **"اكبر منك بيوم يعرف اكثر منك بسنة"** (**An individual who is a day older than you is a whole year wiser**).

3- Contrast and Antonymy. As in this proverb **"باب النجار مخلع"** (**The door of the carpenter is broken**).

3.3 Traditionality

Norrick (1985) opines that traditionality is an essential merit of proverbs. It closely relates to proverbs as an expression of folklore. Folklore has been defined as "traditional items of knowledge which arise in recurring performances" (Abrahams, 1969, p. 106). This highlights the tight relation between traditionality and folklore.

3.4 Predetermined Form

Glazer (1987) has said that a proverb has a fixed form. It usually comes in a specific set of structures and forms. Thus, if the proverb is not in a permanent form, it cannot be considered as a proverb.

3.5 Didacticity

It is commonly known that proverbs have a didactic trait. Didacticity has consistently been seen as one of the most crucial features of proverbs. Obviously, writers or speakers utilize proverbs for teaching

purposes. To put it differently, the basic role of a proverb is to instruct or teach the listener/reader. A proverb regularly directs in forms of clear instructions or warnings. Accordingly, it plays a vital role in conveying wisdom and knowledge to society members (Norrick, 1985). It is worth stating that the didacticity of a proverb can be stated directly or indirectly.

The following examples explain this issue: **"لا تؤجل عمل اليوم إلى غد"** (**Do not delay today's work till tomorrow**). This proverb can directly be used by an individual or writer. On the other hand, a proverb as **"في التأني السلامة"** (**Better safe than** sorry) can indirectly be utilized by a speaker or writer.

4. Pragmatics

Pragmatics was first used as one of the fields of inquiry in Morris' (1938) threefold division of semiotics which studies semantics, syntax and pragmatics (Archer et al., 2012). Huang (2017, p. 1) states that it " the study of language in context". Also, it can be defined as the field concerns the way people code their messages and the hearers should decode the messages correctly in a particular situations. Different topics have been tackled in pragmatics such as: implicature, politeness, presupposition, deixis, relevance theory, speech acts and so forth. As the current study deals with speech acts theory, it will be explained in what follows.

5. Speech Act Theory

The notion of speech act plays a crucial role in pragmatics. The term designates "the sense in which utterances are not mere meaning-bearers but rather in a very real sense do things, that is, perform actions" (Huang, 2017, p. 199). The pioneer of this theory is the British philosopher Austin who wrote 'How to do things with words' in (1962). Then, the American philosopher Searle has expanded the theory in his book 'Speech Act'. Searle (1979) has divided it into five types: assertives, commissives, directives, expressives and declaratives.

5.1 Assertives

Assertives usually "commit the speaker … to something's being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition" (Searle, 1979, p. 12). They essentially show words – to – world fit. The standard verbs of this category are: 'explain', 'state', 'assert', rebut, inform, etc. In order for the validation to be achieved the sincerity condition must be found.

5.2 Directives

Directives attempt to get the hearer do an action. The direction of fit is world to words. For instance, **'Will you open the door?'**. Verbs demonstrate this class are: 'ask', 'demand', 'command' and so forth. This type requires the hearer to perform a future act (Searle, 1979).

5.3 Commissives

This type of speech act obliges the speaker to some forthcoming curse of actions (Huang, 2014). The direction of fit is world to words. The standard verbs of this category are: 'promises', 'pledges', 'threats', etc.

5.4 Expressives

This category is utilized to "express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content (Searle, 1979, p. 15). This type shows no direction of fit. The paradigmatic verbs involve: 'thanking', 'apologizing', 'praising', etc.

5.5 Declaratives

This type causes agreement between the world and the propositional content. It exhibits both world to words and words to world fit. Moreover, this type produces 'no psychological state'. The verbs of this kind are such: 'name', 'declare', 'sentence' and so on. It is to be noted that this category requires certain circumstances to be accomplished (Searle, 1979).

In this regard, the choice of a specific speech act varies among readers. The reason behind this issue is that identifying a particular speech act is really a reader-related process. To put it differently, it relies on how the text under scrutiny is realized.

6. Direct and Indirect Speech Acts

Searle (1979) has highlighted two types of speech acts: ***direct speech acts*** and ***Indirect ones***. The former is realized by expressions designed particularly for these acts, whereas the latter can be accomplished via other utterances,i.e., there are no specific utterances required to do specific acts (Clark and Clark, 1977). Let us consider the following examples:

a. Close the door. (Direct)

b. The weather is cold here. (Indirect)

In (**a**) the word (**close**) has been used by the speaker as an order. Thus, it is the hearer's role to do the act (**closing the door**). On the other hand, in example (**b**) the speaker uses a **declarative sentence**. Accordingly, s/he just expresses her/his idea about the weather or s/he may intend the hearer to close the door and so no.

Norrick (1985) states that if the wording of proverbs mean what they say literally but expand this meaning idiomatically in texts, then they are classified as indirect speech acts in the view of Searle (1975a). This means that the literal meaning of proverbs sometimes corresponds with the intended meaning. In such a case, they are considered direct speech act. On the contrary, most of the proverbs belong to indirect speech act in which the literal meaning does not match the intended meaning.

7. Rhetoric

Rhetoric is commonly defined as "the study of effective or persuasive speaking and writing" (Crystal, 2008, p. 416). It is considered as linguistic analysis to pragmatic explanation. This field of linguistics fills the gap between syntax and semantics. It demonstrates the overlapping among linguistics, pragmatics and aesthetics. Rhetoric equips language community with the vital ***'rhetoric devices or figures of speech'*** demanded for effective writings or speeches (Abdul-Raof, 2006).

8. Figures of Speech (Rhetorical Devices)

A figure of speech is really an utterance or expression which deviates from the literal language to produce emotional, rhetorical, or vivid effects on the part of the reader/listener. It is employed in various genres or conversations to make communication more persuasive and imaginative rather than explaining facts plainly. On their part, Leech and Short (2007) has classified figures of speech into two main categories: ***schemes*** and ***tropes***. The former consists of ***grammatical and lexical schemes*** and ***phonological schemes***, whereas the latter comprises only ***tropes***. These two main categories will be dealt with in some details below.

8.1 Schemes

A '***Scheme***' is a term taken from the Greek language which means 'to form or to shape' (Burke, 2014). This type of figures of speech is divided into the following:

8.1.1 Grammatical and Lexical Schemes

This kind involves cases of 'formal and structural' repetition as: ***anaphora***, ***parallelism***, etc. (Leech and Short, 2007).

8.1.1.1 Anaphora

A figure of speech that can basically be explained as an intentional repetition of words or phrases at the beginning of sequential sentences or clauses. It is usually employed by writers for producing rhythm, building emotional intensity, helping people to memorize the text or message easily. Let us consider the following example from Dickens (2023, p. 9): " **It was the** best of times, **it was the** worst of times, **it was the age of** wisdom, **it was the age of** foolishness, … ". Clearly, the repeated words give the text rhythmic dimension and thus affect the reader/listener.

8.1.1.2 Parallelism

Parallelism is known as 'the repetition of the same syntactical structure in two or more succeeding sentences' (Ahmed, 2022). Its function is to cause either the similarity or the difference between the objects. Parallelism creates specific rhythms in the texts under investigation. For example, **" واللي انكتب على الجبين لازم تشوفه العين"** (**Whatever is written on the forehead must be seen by the eye**).

8.1.2 Phonological Schemes

This type encompasses some phonological devices as: alliteration, assonance, rhyme, etc. (Leech and Short, 2007).

8.1.2.1 Alliteration

Alliteration is a rhetorical device in which consonants, particularly at the initial of words, are repeated. Its main function is to produce rhythm and make texts easy memorized. For example: Coleridge describes the river **'Alph in Kubla Khan'** as: "Five **m**iles **m**eandering with a **m**azy **m**otion" (Cuddon, 2013, p.22).

8.1.2.2 Assonance

It can basically be defined as the duplication of comparable vowel sounds, closely placed, to accomplish a specific effect of euphony. A writer usually employs this device to produce a lyrical expression. For instance, Tennyson in his ***'Lotos-Eaters'*** poem says: "The Lotos bl**oo**ms below the barren p**ea**k – The Lotos bl**ow**s by every winding cr**ee**k" (Cuddon, 2013, p. 56).

8.1.2.3 Rhyme

Rhyme is known as the repetition of the same sounds in two utterances or more. In the same vein, rhyme is usually "either of two or more words which have identical nuclei in their stressed syllables and identical sequences of segments after these nuclei" (Trask, 1996, p. 311). For instance: " **عادت حليمة لعادتها القديمة**" (**Halima went back to her old habit**).

8.2 Tropes

A '***trope***' is a word dating back to Greek language, which means '***to turn***'. It is a semantic deviation which entails a transfer in meanings (Bruke, 2014). Tropes can be traced via different devices such as: metaphor, simile, personification, irony, hyperbole, etc. (Leech and Short, 2007). These devices will be illustrated below:

8.2.1 Metaphor

Ahmed (2022, p. 141) defines metaphor as "substituting words for others with which they share characteristics of meaning". Four essential elements should be seen when using metaphor. They are: 'image', 'object', 'sense' and 'metaphor'. Consider the proverb: **"لكل جواد كبوة"** which means '**every horse may stumble**' as an example to explain the four components. Firstly, ***image (mistake)*** 'which is the source of metaphor'. Secondly, ***object (horse)*** 'which is the idea, person or thing that has been depicted'. Thirdly, 'the direct meaning of metaphor, i.e., ***sense***' which means that **'even those who are strong or talent may make mistakes'**. As for ***metaphor***, this proverb states that no one is perfect. In other words, '***perfection is an exclusively Divine attribute'***.

8.2.2 Simile

Simile is the explicit comparison between two things. It is achieved by employing words as 'like' and 'as' (Ahmed, 2022). For example, **"مثل السمن على العسل"** (**like bread and butter**). This proverb is commonly issued to illustrate people's social relation. In other words, if someone says **'أحمد وعلي مثل السمن على العسل'** (**Ahmed and Ali are like bread and butter**), s/he means that their relationship is tightly bound. It is worth mentioning that both metaphor and simile rely on comparison but in the former the comparison is implicit, whereas the latter is explicitly achieved (Ahmed, 2022).

8.2.3 Personification

This device can mainly be defined as "given human characteristics to inanimate objects or abstract ideas" (Ahmed, 2022, p. 160). For instance: **'على نفسها جنت براقش'** (***Baraqish brought ruin upon herself***). The human attributes are symbolized via using the word **'جنت' 'brought'** assigned to non-human thing **'Baraqish''a dog'**.

8.2.4 Irony

Abrams and Harpham (2009) explain that irony is an expression or utterance in which the meaning that speakers intend completely differs from the meaning that is explicitly produced. For example, **" أصوم وأفطر على بصلة"**, (**It is unreasonable to fast all the day then break it on only an onion**).

8.2.5 Hyperbole

Cuddon (2013) has defined hyperbole as a rhetorical device which includes exaggeration employed to emphasize ideas. People usually utilize proverbs such as: **"لا تجعل من الحبة قبة"**, **"Don't make a mountain out of a molehill"** (Cobham, 1993, p. 190). Hyperbole is generally employed for different purposes as: emphasizing, adding humorous values, overstating and so on.

9. Functions of Proverbs in Literary Works

Kizi and Fayzullayevna (2025) state that proverbs are important tools employed by people when they communicate with each other. They do various communicative functions. Proverbs are used to convey a deep message in a brief expression. They are employed by writers/speakers as a persuasive device. Further, their linguistic merit makes them effective expressions to capture attention and leave a permanent impression on the part of readers/hearers. In the same vein, proverbs are usually employed by writers of literary works for various purposes. They are used as a mosaic for tessellating or decorating texts and hence they become tidier and more unified. Also, proverbs are utilized as a decisive device in different types of discourse. Besides, they are considered as a power which is commonly used to add a rhetorical dimension or a new value to a particular text. Moreover, writers use proverbs to create an aesthetic sense in their texts. Pragmatically speaking, proverbs are frequently employed for some pragmatic functions such as: a mitigating element. Lastly, proverbs are seen as economic strategies, that is, they are brevity devices used for summarizing particular situations.

10. Methodology

The method adopted in this paper is qualitative based in nature. As for speech acts, the data will be examined in accordance with Searle's classification of speech acts (1979). Besides, the study adapts Leech and Short's model (2007) to analyze the rhetorical devices. It has utilized seven rhetorical devices or figures of speech of Leech and Short's model (2007). The following figure shows the model of the current study.

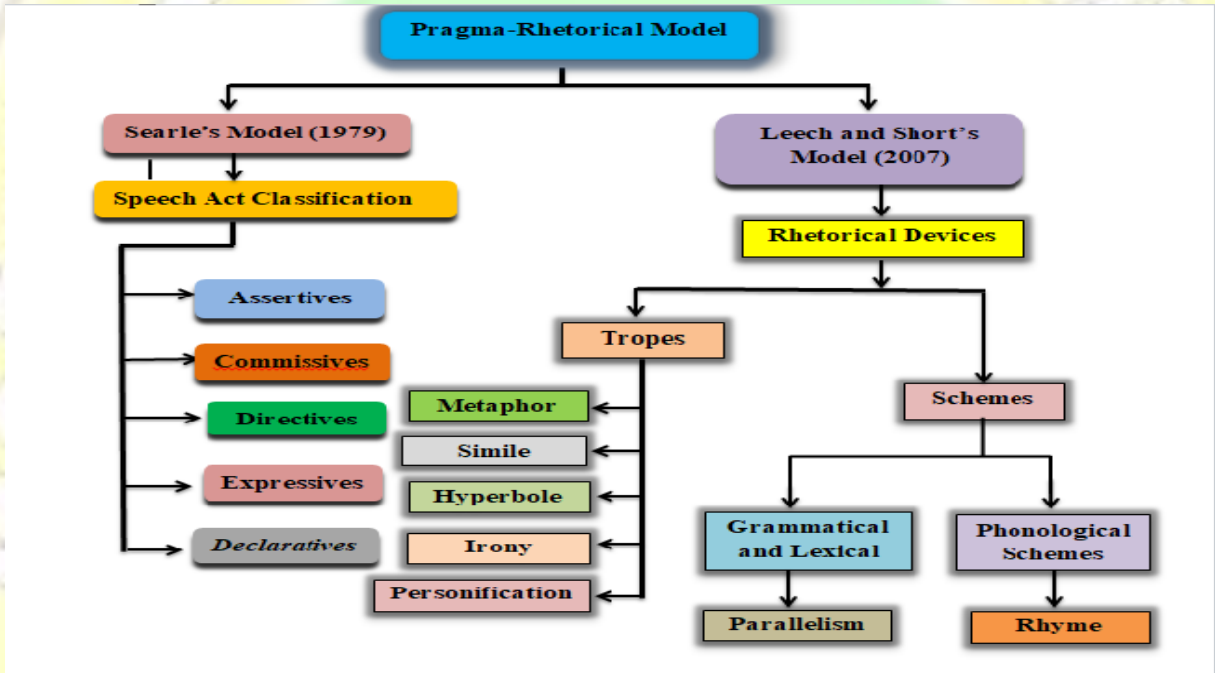


Figure (1) The Pragma-Rhetorical Model of the Study

11. Data Analysis

The data of the current study have been collected from Mahfouz's masterpiece novel (1977) ***'Al-Harafish'*** . Moreover, the study will throw light on four aspects when analyzing the data. These are: ***the situation***, ***speech act***, ***rhetorical devices*** and ***function***. The total number of proverbs found in the novel is only ten (**10**). These proverbs and their contexts are presented in the appendix. Further, The proverbs with their English translations (***the undocumented translations are the researcher's***) are illustrated below:

Table (1) Proverbs and their translations in Mahfouz's (1977) 'The Harafish'

No.	Arabic Proverbs	English Translation	Page No.
1.	الزواج قسمة ونصيب.	Marriage is destined to fate.	167
2.	ليس ’للحيطان أذان	Walls have no ears.	171
3.	الظفر لا يقتلع من لحمه.	The nail is not pulled out of its flesh.	222
4.	ما كل مرة تسلم الجرة.	The pitcher is not always being saved.	314
5.	لا تجعلي من الحبة قبة.	"Don't make a mountain out of a molehill" (Cobham, 1993, p. 190).	317
6.	لقد أعذر من أنذر.	He who warns is excused.	325
7.	أذكروا حسنات موتاكم.	Mention your dead's good deeds.	472
8.	أول ما شطح نطح.	The first moment he was allowed to roam free, he started pushing people around.	487
9.	انفق ما في الجيب يأتيك ما في الغيب.	Spend what is in the pocket; You will get what is unseen.	494
10.	ترجع ريمة لعادتها القديمة.	Reema returns back to her old habit.	578

11.1 Proverb No. 1

"الزواج قسمة ونصيب" (Mahfouz, 1977, p. 167) (**marriage is destined to fate**).

a. The Situation

This proverb has been issued by Sunnia to her son Khadir, whereby his marriage is being discussed.

b. Speech Act

Here, the proverb belongs to the speech act of assertives, specifically stating. In this category, the interlocutor expresses that a specific matter is true. Further, this proverb represents a shared view towards marriage. This type of speech acts actually shows words to world fit. Here, Sunnia states that ***marriage is destined to fate***. Moreover, this proverb is an indirect speech act.

c. Rhetorical Devices

The rhetorical device utilized in this proverb is metaphor. The speaker, Sunnia, ***covertly compares marriage to luck***.

d. Function

This proverb is used by the speaker as a brevity device. In other words, the speaker, Sunnia, implicitly says to her son: '***Be relax, you are going to marry the one whom Allah has chosen for you***'.

11.2 Proverb No. 2

"**ليس للحيطان آذان**" (Mahfouz, 1977, p. 171) (**walls have no ears**). It is worth mentioning that the origin of this proverb is '**للحيطان آذان**' (**walls have ears**). The writer has oppositely used this proverb due to fit the context and the conversation between the interlocutors.

a. The Situation

This proverb has been said by Ridwana, Bakir's wife, to Khider. She requests Khider to express his feeling toward her frankly. She has mentioned this proverb to remind him that no one can hear us and so he can express his feeling freely.

b. Speech Act

The speech act category of this proverb is directives, in particular urging. In this type, the interlocutor tries to encourage or get the hearer to do an upcoming action (expressing his feeling freely). It, in fact, shows world to words fit. As for direct and indirect speech acts, this proverb belongs to indirect speech act.

c. Rhetorical Devices

This proverb includes personification. The walls which are inanimate have been given human attributes. Thus, the speaker asserts to hearer that ***there is no one hearing us except the walls which have no ears***.

d. Function

It has been utilized by the speaker, Ridwana, as a persuasive device, that is, she attempts to get Khider say that he loves her. Although Ridwana is Baker's wife, yet she loves Khider.

11.3 Proverb No. 3

"الظفر لا يقتلع من لحمه" (Mahfouz, 1977, p. 222) **(The nail is not pulled out of its flesh)**.

a. The Situation

Samaha and his brother, Ridwan, want to marry and their uncle Khider begins looking for good girls in order to ask their hands for his nephews. Khider has decided to get Samaha marry Onnsia, a daughter of Mohmmad Al-Bissuni, the spice dealer. But, unfortunately, Samaha has refused this offer because he has fallen in love with Muhallbia, the daughter of Sabah, the palmist. Though Khider has not totally agreed with Samaha's choice, yet he will attend Samaha's wedding party. Thus, Khider has issued this proverb to Samaha showing his acceptance to attend Samaha's wedding party.

b. Speech Act

This proverb belongs to the speech act of commissives, specifically accepting. It has been used by the speaker to commit himself to do something in the future, attending his nephew's wedding party. It shows world to word fit. In other words, acceptance means if someone gets an invitation s/he may reject or accept it. In both cases, the speaker is being committed to a future action. Further, this proverb belongs to indirect speech act.

c. Rhetorical Devices

This proverb comprises a metaphor. In other words, the speaker, Khadir, portrays their relationship as '***the nail is not pulled out of its flesh***', i.e., ***it is very strong***.

d. Function

This proverb has been used as an aesthetic device. Moreover, it is utilized as a verbal economic expression, that is, the less words are, the more the meaning can be derived by a hearer/reader.

11.4 Proverb No. 4

"ما كل مرة تسلم الجرة" (Mahfouz, 1977, p. 314) **(The pitcher is not always being saved)**.

a. The Situation

This proverb is issued by Rummana to his wife Raifa. They talk about 'Aziz, Qurra's son. Raifa tries to convince Rummana to murder 'Aziz, his brother's son in order to stay the master of the family business. But Rummana refuses her suggestion to avoid repeating a past action, i.e., murdering his brother Qurra.

b. Speech Act

This proverb belongs to the speech act commissives, particularly refusing. Here, the speaker commits himself not do something in the future, viz. he will not agree with his wife's suggestion (murdering 'Aziz). This kind of speech act shows world to words fit. In addition, this proverb is an indirect speech act.

c. Rhetorical Devices

This proverb encompasses parallelism and rhyme. In addition, it involves a metaphor. The speaker, Rummana ***likens the secret of killing his brother, Qurra, to a pitcher and the secret may be known by all people, as the pitcher is not always being saved***.

d. Function

This proverb has been used as a mitigating device. It mitigates the act of the refusal to Raifa's suggestion. Raifa wants to exclude 'Aziz away from his father business even by killing.

11.5 Proverb No. 5

"لا تجعلي من الحبة قبة" (Mahfouz, 1977, p. 317) "Don't make a mountain out of a molehill" (Cobham, 1993, p. 190).

a. The Situation

The conversation here is between 'Aziz and 'Aziza, his mother. They talk about his business and it is the time that 'Aziz should work alone apart from his uncle Rummana. But his mother 'Aziza has noticed that 'Aziz is absent-minded with something else (being a chieftain) and he is not ready to manage his business alone at the moment.

b. Speech Act

This proverb represents the speech act of assertives, in particular denying. Here, the speaker, 'Aziz, denies his mother's claims that he is absent-minded to be a chieftain rather than managing his business alone. As for the direction of fit, this type of speech act exhibits words to world fit. Besides, this proverb belongs to indirect speech act.

c. Rhetorical Devices

Regarding rhetoric, this proverb comprises metaphor, irony , hyperbole and rhyme. Metaphorically speaking, it means that ‘do not magnify simple things’

d. Function

This proverb is used to add humorous flavors to the conversation. Further, it has been utilized as a decisive device for strengthening 'Aziz’s point of view.

11.6 Proverb No. 6

“لقد أعذر من أنذر” (Mahfouz, 1977, p. 325) **(He who warns is excused)**.

a. The Situation

This proverb has been issued by Mr. Mohammad Tawkul, the sheriff of the neighborhood. Mohammad has come to Rummana’s house to tell him that Waheed, Rummana’s big brother, is very angry with him because Rummana tries to convince 'Aziz (his nephew) to be a chieftain instead of his uncle Waheed.

b. Speech Act

This proverb belongs to the speech act of directives, specifically warning. In such a category, the speaker, Mr. Mohammad Tawkul tries to get the hearer, Rummana, to do a future action (to stop convincing his nephew to be a chieftain to avoid his brother’s anger). It shows world to words fit. Furthermore, this proverb belongs to direct speech act in which the literal meaning corresponds with the intended meaning.

c. Rhetorical Devices

From rhetorical standpoint, this proverb has one rhyme only.

d. Function

This proverb has been employed as a mosaic for decorating the text under focus. Moreover, it has been issued as a brevity device by Mr. Mohammad Tawkul to direct Rummana to do something and excuse his big brother Waheed.

11.7 Proverb No. 7

“أذكروا حسنات موتاكم” (Mahfouz, 1977, p. 472) **(Mention your dead’s good deeds)**.

a. The Situation

The conversation, in which the proverb is uttered, is between Mujahid Ibrahim, the sheriff of the neighborhood, and Jalal Abdullah. Jalal's mother, Zainat Al-Ashaqir, has passed away few months ago. She has gained bad reputation. Thus, Jalal, her son, talks badly about her in front of Mujahid Ibrahim.

b. Speech Act

This proverb belongs to the speech act of directives, particularly prohibiting. The speaker (Mujahid Ibrahim) tries to get the hearer (Jalal) not to do a future action which is talking badly about his dead mother. This speech act kind shows world – to- words fit. Additionally, this proverb belongs to indirect speech act.

c. Rhetorical Devices

Here, one can drive a metaphor. The metaphorical sense can be traced by **'حسنات' 'good deeds'** which implicitly ***compares with good actions of the dead people***.

d. Function

This proverb has been used by the speaker as a persuasive device. In other words, Mujahid Ibrahim tries to persuade Jalal to stop talking about his mother. It is worth mentioning that this is a religious-oriented proverb. Further, the word **'محاسن' 'good'** is usually used instead of **'حسنات' 'good'**. It is worthy to state that this proverb is based on a weak Prophetic Hadith: "اذكروا محاسن موتاكم، وكفوا عن مساوئهم" (At-Tirmidhi, 892, p. 242), ***'Mention your dead's good behaviors but not bad ones'***.

11.8 Proverb No. 8

"أول ما شطح نطح" (Mahfouz, 1977, p. 487) (**the first moment he was allowed to roam free, he started pushing people around)**.

a. The Situation

This proverb is issued by Mujahid Ibrahim, the sheriff of the neighborhood, to Shams Ud-Din. The conversation is about Samaha, Shams Ud-Din's son. Samaha, a teenager, begins dating an old widow woman, Kareema Al-'Annabi. She is sixty years old and Samaha, without his father's permission, dates her.

b. Speech Act

This proverb belongs to the speech act of assertives, specifically informing. In such a type, the speaker (Mujahid Ibrahim) informs the hearer (Shams Ud-Din) about his son's relation with the old widow

(Kareema Al-'Annabi). As for the direction of fit, this type shows words to world fit. This proverb is an indirect speech act.

c. Rhetorical Devices

Three rhetorical devices are found in this proverb. These are: metaphor, irony and rhyme. As for metaphor, it can be traced by implicitly comparing two things: 'نطح' '***pushing people around***' with '***the bad behavior of, a teenager, Samaha***'.

d. Function

This proverb is said by the speaker as a mitigating device. It softens the directness of saying: 'he is a bad boy'. Thus, Mujahid Ibrahim avoids embarrassing Shams Ud-Din about his son's bad actions. Further, it adds an ironical sense to the given text.

11.9 Proverb No. 9

"انفق ما في الجيب يأتيك ما في الغيب" (Mahfouz, 1977, p. 494) (**spend what is in the pocket; You will get what is unseen**).

a. The Situation

This proverb is said by Samaha to his father, Shams Ud-Din. After stealing an amount of money from his father's pocket, Samaha goes to the bar for drinking wine and he spends his father's money carelessly. Thus, his father tries to prevent him doing such actions.

b. Speech Act

This proverb belongs to the speech act of assertives, particularly rebutting. Here, the speaker (Samaha) argues against his father's argument about his bad behavior which will expose his father's business to the danger of losing. Assertives speech acts show words to world fit. Besides, this proverb belongs to an indirect speech act.

c. Rhetorical Devices

This proverb encompasses on metaphor, parallelism, irony and rhyme. From metaphorical point of view, it relates two things: '***generosity***' and '***getting money from the heaven***'

d. Function

Obviously, this proverb has been issued as a satirical strategy to add ironical senses to the text under focus. Moreover, it is used a mosaic for tessellating the given text.

11.10 Proverb No. 10

"ترجع ريمة لعادتها القديمة" (Mahfouz, 1977, p. 578) (**Reema returns back to her old habit**).

a. The Situation

The conversation is between 'Ashour and the men of the neighborhood. 'Ashour talks about his desire to be the chieftain of neighborhood. He discusses the situation of the neighborhood and how it will be flourished. After that, 'Ashour says: what will you do after my death? One of the attenders says **'Reema returns back to her old habit'**.

b. Speech Act

This proverb belongs to the speech act of assertives, specifically predicting. The speaker (one of the attenders) predicts that the neighborhood will get worse if 'Ashour passes away. This speech act type shows words to world fit. Further, this proverb is an indirect speech act.

c. Rhetorical Devices

Concerning rhetorical devices, this proverb involves metaphor, parallelism, irony and rhyme. As for metaphor, the speaker compares '***the situation of the neighborhood***', if 'Ashour becomes the chieftain and after while he passes away with '***Reema***' a very stingy woman. She becomes a generous person for a short time then she returns to her bad behavior, stinginess. The man who has used this proverb intends that even if the neighborhood witnesses a prosperity period during the role of 'Ashour, but it will return to its bad situation after his death.

d. Function

This proverb is used as a brevity device, that is, the less the words are, the more the meaning may be decoded by the hearer. Further, it adds an ironical sense to the given text.

12. Results and Discussions

The main results this study reaches are as follows:

12.1 Speech Act Types

The speech acts found in the proverbs under focus are assertives (6), directives (3), expressives (1) and commissives and declaratives (zero). The following table and figure depict the total number and percentages used by Arabic proverbs in Mahfouz's novel (1977) 'The Harafish'.

Table (2) The total numbers and percentages of proverbs in Mahfouz's novel (1977)

No.	Speech Act Type	Total Numbers	Percentages
1.	Assertives	**5**	**50 %**
2.	Commissives	**2**	**20 %**
3.	Directives	**3**	**30 %**
4.	Expressives	**0**	**0 %**
5.	Declaratives	**0**	**0 %**
Total	**5**	**10**	**100 %**

As illustrated in table (2), the most frequently used speech act types are assertives and directives. They represent (50%) and (30%) respectively. On the other hand, commissives represent (20%), whereas, expressives and declaratives constitute (0%). As for assertives, they have the highest percentage among other types, since they encompass verbs such as: ***state, deny, inform, rebut*** and ***predict***. People urgently need such verbs in their daily conversations. Novels are not written haphazardly but they are written to depict real life. Regarding directives and commissives they are also of great benefit so they have the second and third highest percentages. Concerning the ***zero*** percentage speech act types, expressives and declaratives, they usually require specific circumstances to be realized. ***Here, question no.1 has been answered***.

12.2 Rhetorical Devices

The rhetorical devices found in the proverbs under investigation are (**8**) metaphors, (***zero***) simile, (**3**) parallelisms, (**1**) personification, (**4**) ironies , (**1**) hyperbole and (**6**) rhymes. To get the percentage of each rhetorical device, the number of times of a device will be divided on the total number of times of all the devices together, which is (**23**). Thus, for example, the percentage of irony is as follows: **Percentage** = $\frac{8}{23} = 34.78\ \%$.

Thus, the total numbers and percentages of rhetorical devices will be summarized in the following table and figure.

Table (3)Rhetorical devices used in the proverbs found in Mahfouz's novel (1977)

No.	Rhetorical Devices	Total Numbers	Percentages
1.	Metaphor	**8**	**34.78%**
2.	Simile	**0**	**0.00%**
3.	Parallelism	**3**	**13.04%**
4.	Personification	**1**	**4.34%**
5.	Irony	**4**	**17.41%**
6.	Hyperbole	**1**	**4.34%**
7.	Rhyme	**6**	**26.09%**
Total	**7**	**23**	**100%**

As clearly explained in table (3) above, the most frequently used rhetorical device is **metaphor** with percentage (**34.80%**). **Rhyme, irony** and **parallelism** constitute (**26.09%**), (**17.41%**) and (**13.04%**) respectively. On the other hand, **personification** and **hyperbole** have the same percentage (**4.34%**), whereas **simile** is (**0.00%**) percentage. The total number of times and percentages state that ***metaphor is the highest rhetorical device*** utilized by Arabic proverbs in Mahfouz's novel (1977). ***This is due to the reason that metaphor is seen as the peak of figures of speech***. Arabic proverbs rely heavily on it to express abstract ideas or thoughts and change them into concrete which can be seen, smelt or even felt. As for **rhyme**, it has ***the second highest*** percentage (**26.09%**). ***Rhyme*** usually ***produces echoes which bring about long-lasting effects on the part of hearers/readers***. It is relied by Arabic proverbs for ***evoking emotions of hearers/readers***. By and large, ***rhyme gives enjoyment to the given text***. Regarding ***irony*** which is (**17.41%**), Arabic proverbs frequently use irony because ***it is a powerful figure of speech which effortlessly highpoints the contrast between what is expected and reality***. Further, ***it accentuates themes and gives depth to the text under focus***. ***Subsequently, it forces the reader/hearer to look beyond the surface structure of the given text***. **Parallelism** has represented (**13.04%**) in Arabic proverbs in the novel under study. Arabic proverbs rely on parallelism because ***it organizes thoughts and ideas and contributes to memorizing them easily and quickly***. To put it dissimilarly, ***parallelism gives balance, rhythm and memorability to the given text***. With respect to **personification** and **hyperbole**, they both constitute (**4.34%**). ***Personification makes the text more vivid and connected***. Also, ***it transforms abstract ideas/***

views into concrete images and hence they can easily be deduced by the readers/hearers. On the other hand, ***irony is used by Arabic proverbs to bring about a contradiction between expectancy and truth***. In addition, ***it adds emotional depths to the given text***. As for **simile**, it has (***zero***) percentage and ***this is due to the fact that Arabic language frequently prioritizes implicit comparison***, ***metaphor***, over ***explicit one***, i.e., ***simile***. Arabic proverbs are brief and concise expressions. Thus, they ***tend to utilize minimal words***, ***metaphor***, which in turn does not use words such as: '***like***' or '***as***'. As a result, ***the speaker/writer can code a hard-hitting idea in a straightforward way***. **This section has come as an answer for question no.2**.

12.3 Functions of Arabic Proverbs

The study has reached a result that proverbs play an essential role in literary texts. They are utilized by writers/speakers for various functions. Proverbs are used as decisive devices to support one's opinion in a particular issue. Also, they are depended on as a brevity device or economic strategy, viz., the less the words are, the more the meaning can be realized by hearers/readers. In addition, proverbs are used as satirical devices and thus they add an ironical flavor to the given text. Besides, they are utilized in literary genre to add aesthetic values to the texts under investigation. They are relied on by writers as a mosaic to decorate or tessellate their texts.

13. Concluding Remarks

The current study arrived at the following conclusions:

1. Concerning pragmatics, the study has disclosed that the most frequently utilized **speech act** type in Arabic proverbs in the texts under study is **assertives**. The writers of literary works rely on it due to the fact that it depicts different aspects of people's real life. On the other hand, expressives and declaratives have not been found in proverbs under focus. They require specific conditions to be achieved.

2. Regarding **rhetorical devices**, the most repeatedly employed device in the proverbs under focus is **metaphor**. This is because that Arabic proverbs heavily depend on metaphor to convey ideas, attitudes or thoughts. **Rhyme** is the second frequently used device. The reason behind such a high use is that rhyme usually creates echoes which bring about long-lasting effects on the part of hearers/readers. It is relied on by Arabic proverbs for evoking hearers/readers' emotions. Also, rhyme gives enjoyment to the given text.

On the contrary, **simile** has not been observed in the data. Arabic proverbs tend to use implicit comparisons rather than explicit ones.

3. In relation to the **functions** Arabic proverbs play in literary works, they may be used for different purposes. They are used as decisive devices for supporting people's opinions towards particular issues. Also, they are utilized to add ironical sense to the texts. Moreover, they are relied on as brevity devices and economic strategies. In addition, they add aesthetic values to the given text. Finally, they are used by writers to decorate or tessellate their texts.

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Appendix

The proverbs and their contexts collected from Mahfouz's novel Al-Harafish (1977) are as follows:

1- **الزواج قسمة ونصيب (محفوظ،1977، ص167):**

وانعقدت بين رضوانة وخضر صداقة وأخوة. وكان يقوم بخدمتها كلما غاب بكر في إحدى رحلاته التجارية. وفي أثناء ذلك عرف شقيقتها الصغرى وفاء. كانت صغيرة الجسم، باهرة الجمال، ولكنها ذات شعر كستنائي وعينين عسليتين. وقام بخاطره أن رضوانة قد تقترحها عليه زوجة بطريقة أو بأخرى، فأشفق من أن يغضبها رفضه.

وسألته أمه ذات يوم: هل تعجبك وفاء ؟

فقال بحزم: فتاة ممتازة، ولكن ليست لي..

فتمتمت أمه بأسف: أراها ممتازة حقا....

وعند ذاك قال لأمه: أخشى أن تغضب رضوانة إذا علمت...

فقالت سنية : رضوانة ذات كبرياء وهي لا تعرض شقيقتها للبيع، ثم إن **الزواج قسمة ونصيب!**

2- **ليس للحيطان آذان (محفوظ،1977، ص171):**

فقالت وهي تحدجه بنظرة ماكرة وجريئة: سأجاريك ليس إلا ، ذات يوم أخبرتني أمي أن سنية هانم السمري خطبتني لابنها..

رفعت عينيها إلى السقف حتى ترامى جيدها كالشمعدان الفضي. شيء هتف به أن الجمال الآسر قد خلق للقتل. وأن الأسى أثقل من الأرض وأشمل من الهواء. وأن الإنسان لا يتنفس بحرية إلا في منفى الهجر.

واعترفت قائلة في استسلام ناعم عذب: بصعوبة شديدة واريت فرحتي!

ثم فيما يشبه الغناء:

– ولم يداخلني شك في أنه أنت!

خرس وجفل، فقالت وهي تحدجه بجرأة: هذه هي القصة، فهل فهمت ؟

فقال بصوت متهدج: ساق الحظ إليك خير الشقيقين..

فقالت برقة وعتاب: لا تسمعني صوت الخوف!

– إنه صوت النجاة..

– طالما أشعرتني بودك.

– طبعا، فإنك زوج أخي المحبوب!

فنهضت نحوه بحركة رشيقة ومالت قليلا حتى غزته بشذاها الطيب وقالت: بل حدثني عن مكنون قلبك..

فوقف مذعورا، وتباعد قائلا: صارحتك بكل شيء..

– أنت خائف!

– كلا.

– تخاف أخاك، تخاف أباك تخاف نفسك..

– كفى عذابا..

– **ليس للحيطان آذان** ولا عيون..

فانفلت نحو الباب وهو يتمتم: وداعا..

وغادر البهو أعمى العين والقلب والبصيرة.

3– **الظفر لا يقتلع من لحمه (محفوظ،1977، ص222):**

ولم يفرط خضر في أنسية كريمة محمد البسيوني العطار فتزوج منها رضوان، وأقام بنيانه على أساس متين..

وسأل سماحة عمه: هل تشهدون زفافي ؟

فأجابه خضر بلا تردد:

– نحن أهل **الظفر لا يقتلع من لحمه**..

4– **ما كل مرة تسلم الجرة (محفوظ،1977، ص314):**

وكان يكاشف رئيفة بهواجسه، وكانت تقول له : طالما حذرتك بما تعده الأفعى..

فقال بضيق: لم أكن بحاجة إلى تحذير!

– ولا أنت في حاجة إلى من يرشدك إلى ما ينبغي عمله ..

ما أكثر ما تردد ذلك بينهما ! ها هو ذا الشيطان يطل من عينيها الجميلتين.

قال بحنق:

– **ما كل مرة تسلم الجرة**..

فقالت ساخرة: فلننتظر المصير.

5– **لا تجعلي من الحبة قبة (محفوظ،1977، ص317):**

و ذات مساء قالت عزيزة لعزيز: جاء اليوم الموعود.

أدرك ما ترمي إليه ولكنه انتظر فقالت:

– تستطيع الآن أن تضطلع بشئونك، لم تعد صبيا، استقل بتجارتك، عندي من المال ما يضمن لك نجاحا مثل نجاح أبيك..

فهز رأسه موافقا ولكنها لم تلمس الحماس الذي توقعته فقالت:

– ابعد عنك عدو أبيك، وحسبه ما نهب من مالك..

– هذا متفق عليه!

– ولكنك لا تبدي الحماس الواجب..

– الحماس متوافر، طالما انتظرت هذا اليوم..

– ستنفذه فورا ؟

– أجل..

– ولكنك مشغول البال، أكثر من مرة لاحظت ذلك فعللته بمتاعب العمل..

– هو ذلك!

فقالت بارتياب: كلا يا عزيز، عيناك تحدثانني بأن هناك شيئا آخر..

فضحك قائلا: **لا تجعلي من الحبة قبة**..

6– **لقد أعذر من أنذر (محفوظ،1977،ص325):**

عند ذاك اقبلت جارية لتستأذن في حضور محمد توكل. استقبله في بهو الاستقبال بالدور الأول. جاء الرجل في هالة من العجلة والاهتمام والقلق حتى انقبض قلب رمانة. وجلس وهو يتساءل بلا أي تمهيد: هل أغضبت أخاك وحيد ؟

فذهل رمانة وقال:ما بيني وبينه إلا كل خير!

– رأيته الساعة في البوظة هائجا ثملا ، يلعن ويسب، متهما إياك بأنك تحرض عزيز عليه!

فانتتر منفزعا وهو يصيح: افتراء وكذب..

فبادره محمد توكل: لا تتوان عن إقناعه.. عجل...

فتساءل رمانة محتدا: ماذا تعني ؟

– إن لم تسرع فسيصيبك أذى لا تتصوره...

– ولكنه أخي!

فقال توكل وهو لا يفطن إلى أبعاد قوله: ليس نادرا أن يقتل الأخ أخاه في حارتنا!

فازدرد رمانة ريقه بامتعاض وغمغم: هكذا ؟!

فقال شيخ الحارة: **لقد أعذر من انذر**...

7– **اذكروا حسنات موتاكم (محفوظ،1977، ص472):**

ومرة كان يجالس مجاهد إبراهيم شيخ الحارة فقال له:

– كانت أمي ذات صفات كريهة وسمعة سيئة ونوايا خبيثة..

فدهش شيخ الحارة وقال له: لا أكاد أصدق أذنيّ

– أومن الآن بأنها حقا قتلت أبي. وقد كانت عربيدة مدمنة للمخدرات. إني أتقزز من ذكراها..

– **اذكروا حسنات موتاكم**..

فهتف بحقد لم يعرف عنه: لا حسنة واحدة لها!

ثم بغيظ أشد: لقد تمتعت بعمر طويل مربح لا تستحقه...

8– **أول ما شطح نطح (محفوظ،1977، ص487):**

ورغم أن الفتى لم يكن يغيب عن عيني أبيه من الصباح حتى النوم فإنه لم يطمئن إلى أحواله تماما، فآنس منه جموحا وتوقع منه المتاعب. وذات يوم جاءه مجاهد إبراهيم شيخ الحارة وقال له:

– **أول ما شطح نطح!**

شعر بأنه يعني ابنه سماحة ولكنه لم يصدق لشدة إحكام قبضته حول الفتى. وتساءل عما هنالك فقال شيخ الحارة: هل تصدق أن ابنك مرافق كريمة العنابي ؟

فذهل شمس الدين. متى يفعل ذلك؟ قال: إنه لا يغيب عن ناظري حتى أودعه فراشه!

فضحك مجاهد إبراهيم وقال: ثم يتسلل من البيت وأنت نائم..

9– **أنفق ما في الجيب يأتيك ما في الغيب (محفوظ،1977، ص494):**

واكتشف المعلم شمس الدين سرقة قدر من مال العمل لا يستهان به . عرف في الحال ما يعنيه ذلك. وأدرك أنه قد يفلس يوما من جراء حماقة كهذه. ولم يتردد فذهب من توه إلى البوظة. وجد سماحة يجالس سمعة الكلبشي ورجاله كأنه واحد منهم. أشار إليه أن يتبعه ولكن الفتى لم يستجب. تاه في سكره وطالع أباه بنظرة متحدية. وكظم الأب غيظه وقال له: أنت تعلم بما دفعني إليك...

فقال ببرود: إنها نقودي كما هي نقودك، وإني أنفقها على خير وجه..

فقال سمعة الكلبشي: أحسنت..

فقال شمس الدين لسماحة: إنك تعرضني للخراب..

فقال سماحة بلسان ملتو: **أنفق ما في الجيب يأتك ما في الغيب..**

10– **ترجع ريمة لعادتها القديمة (محفوظ،1977، ص578):**

وذات يوم طرح هذا السؤال على الحرافيش في سوق الدراسة: ماذا يرجع حارتنا إلى عهدها السعيد؟

وأجاب أكثر من صوت: أن يرجع عاشور الناجي!

فتساءل باسما :هل يرجع الموتى ؟

فأجاب أحدهم مقهقها: نعم.

قال بثبات: لا يحيا إلا الأحياء.

– نحن أحياء ولكن لا حياة لنا..

فسأل: ماذا ينقصكم ؟

– الرغيف..

فقال عاشور: بل القوة!

– الرغيف أسهل منالا..

– كلا!

فسأله صوت:

– إنك قوي عملاق، فهل تطمح إلى الفتونة ؟

وقال آخر: ثم تنقلب كما انقلب وحيد وجلال وسماحة ؟!

وقال ثالث: أو تقتل كما قتل فتح الباب...

فقال عاشور: حتى لو صرت فتوة صالحا فما يجدي ذلك ؟

– نسعد في ظلك!

قال آخر: لن تكون صالحا أكثر من ساعة!

فتساءل عاشور: حتى لو سعدتم في ظلي، فماذا بعدي ؟

– **ترجع ريمة لعادتها القديمة**..

وقال رجل: لا ثقة لنا في أحد، ولا فيك أنت!

فابتسم عاشور قائلا: قول حكيم.

وقهقه الحرافيش...