

Travaux du 19ème CIL | 19th ICL papers

Congrès International des Linguistes, Genève 20-27 Juillet 2013
International Congress of Linguists, Geneva 20-27 July 2013



Rafika NAJJAR

Université de la Manouba, Tunisie
rafikanajjar@yahoo.fr

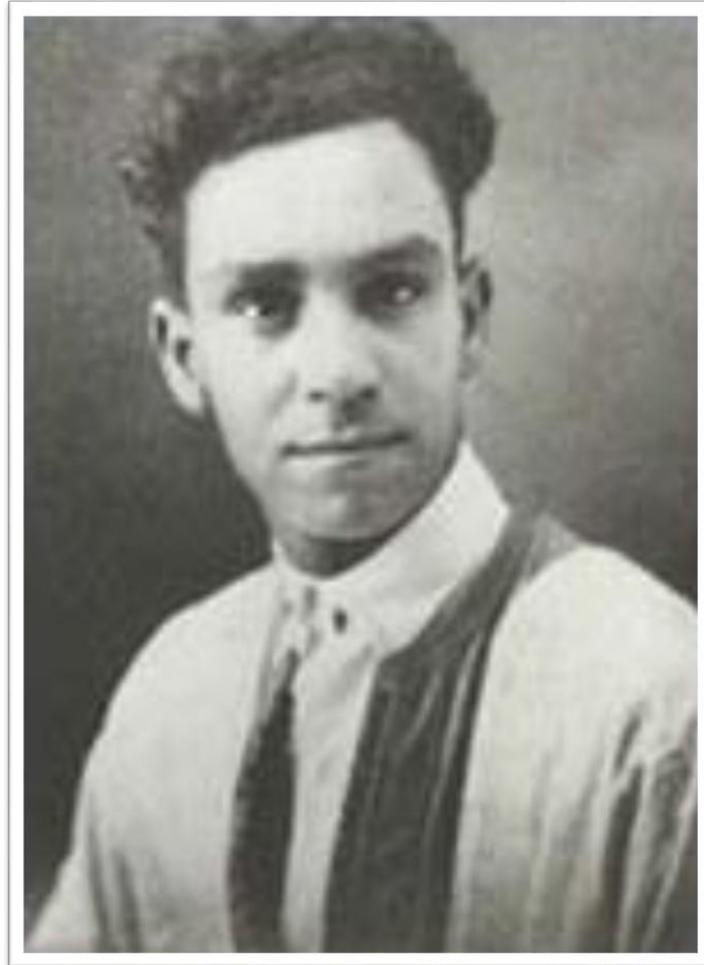
*Expressions of Emotion in Abu El Kacem
Chebbi's Poetry collection: Aghani ELhayah.
Exclamation as a Model*

oral presentation in workshop: 106 Emotions in Lan-
guage, Culture, Cognition [EmiL] (Barbara LEWANDOWSKA-
TOMASZCZYK & Paul WILSON)

Published and distributed by: Département de Linguistique de l'Université de
Genève, Rue de Candolle 2, CH-1205 Genève, Switzerland
Editor: Département de Linguistique de l'Université de Genève, Switzerland
ISBN: 978-2-8399-1580-9

**Expressions of Emotion in Abu El Kacem Chebbi¹'s Poetry collection:
Aghani ELhayah. Exclamation as a Model**

Rafika NAJJAR – Université de la Manouba - Tunisie



¹ Abou el Kacem Chebbi (1909 – 1934) is a Tunisian poet, known for writing the final two verses of the current National Anthem of Tunisia, Humat al-Hima (Defenders of the Homeland). Chebbi was born in Tozeur, South of Tunisia, on 24 February 1909, the son of a judge. He obtained his attatoui diploma (the equivalent of the baccalauréat) in 1928. In 1930, he obtained a law diploma from the University of Ez-Zitouna He was very interested in modern literature, in particular, translated romantic literature, as well as old Arab literature. His poetic talent manifested itself at an early age and this poetry covered numerous topics, from the description of nature to patriotism. His poems appeared in the most prestigious Tunisian and Middle-Eastern reviews. He was dead on - 9 October 1934.

Expressions of Emotion in Abu El Kacem Chebbi's Poetry collection: Aghani ELhayah. Exclamation as a Model

This research is an exercise to present a modern linguistic research approach that has long excited and lured us which is the "Expressions of Emotion."

Our choice of a poetry collection resides in our belief that poetry is a translation of the poet's psychological state and expression of her or his emotions. This becomes more visible in Romantic Poetry in particular. We therefore chose the collection of Romantic poet, Abu El Kacem Chebbi, as a model, with the aim of following the traces of emotion and ways expressing it in his poetry. This is for two reasons.

First, we have always read Chebbi's poems with great admiration, interaction with meaning and sense of pride that an endowed Tunisian poet wrote poems that have imposed themselves in Arab poetry; yet the splendour of those poems and the way they were shaped invite us to pay further attention to meanings than to the forms of expressing these meanings.

The second reason behind our choice of the 'Songs of Life' Collection is that Abu El Kacem Chebbi often expressed his emotions in his poetry exposing a certain urgency and awe. He seemed in his poetry bewildered and surprised by what was surrounding him. Exclamation is one of the most important forms expressing Chebbi's confusion, astonishment, recognition and repulsion.

This explains the many forms of exclamation in his collection, he was filled by bewilderment by the lack of communication between him and the rest of the people, the pessimistic reality, the greatness of his ambitions and dreams simply going beyond his reality, the beauty of nature and women, the greatness of death, the mystery of existence, people's vulnerability and surrender to the French colonizer, etc.

These meanings in Songs of Life, which have a cosmic and global dimension, Chebbi uses to tell every colonized people that determination is an intrinsic condition for freedom. His poems, hence, continued to fuel determination in his time as well as our time, such as the verse from his poem "The Will of Life" which he wrote on 13 September 1933:

If the people will to live. Providence is destined to favorably respond

This would turn, after nearly seventy years, into a verse that is emblematic of the revolution, and mark its presence in all the Arab revolutions that have lately taken place in some Arab countries (Cf. Annex).

It was as if the Arab peoples were listening to Chebbi's verse when they were rising up telling them, "If the people will ...," and then the Arab street would rise shouting, "The people want to overthrow the regime." The "proposer-responder" duality is a spiritual one that goes beyond the limits of time and space, and confirms the presence of Chebbi's verse in the Arab collective mind-set that fuels the people's determination and urges them to persist and resist.

What is exclamation?

Exclamation is a form of emotion. It is a condition of conscience accompanied by verbal expressions, a condition that abruptly emerges from individuals when they find themselves confronted with a surprising and perplexing issue. Classical Arabic grammar defines "Exclamation" as "a denial of what is not usual." (Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, Volume 10, p.38)

Exclamation for them is also "a meaning that takes shape in the bewildered person when observing something that is either unknown or rare, and that meaning is perplexity and confusion [...]." (Ibn Yaich, *Charh al-Mufasssal*, Volume 7, p. 142).

Al-Astarabadi's definition of exclamation, on the other hand, has a greater degree of accuracy: "you have to know that exclamation is an emotion we are confronted with when we feel something whose origin is unknown to us; that is why it is said, 'If the reason is apparent, astonishment is null.'" (Al-Astarabadi, *Sharh al-Kafiya*, Volume 4, p. 228).

Linking the linguistic enactment with the deliberative dimension is of an extreme importance in analyzing the linguistic forms. Exclamation is a grammatical meaning and it is also a linguistic act resulting from a psychological emotion. Being a manifestation of a certain emotion, the different forms of expressing it vary and differ according to the speaker's position and psychological state as to defining the form used to express this exclamation.

The different expression forms in the field of poetic discourse may initiate a new discourse system based on mainly the emotion. Therefore, the emotion is the instigator of the form of expressing exclamation, and the process of the structure and syntactic selection by the poet, whether consciously or subconsciously, is defined by the magnitude of emotion.

We insist that our research would be statistical and analytical especially that the enumeration of the sentences expressing different forms of exclamation

allowed us to stop at the existent differences and try to analyze it, look for the reasons behind the multiplicity of some forms and scarcity of some others as well as the way the context and psychological emotion contribute to the speaker's selection, whether consciously or unconsciously, of a specific form to realize the act of exclamation.

We have divided the different forms of exclamation into two categories: "Direct Form of exclamation" and "Indirect Form of exclamation."

The direct forms of expressing exclamation are as follows: Standard formulation of exclamation: "ma af'ala" as well as exaggeration "kam". The standard formulation of "ma af'ala" has been developed to express exclamation, whereas exaggeration goes beyond the simple referral multiplicity to become therefore a form that the speaker uses to express her or his exclamation at multiplicity.

However, we will concentrate in this intervention on exaggeration because this form of expressing exclamation is more present in Aghani ELhayah

Exclamation in Aghani ELhayah

We have shown in our research that the most common direct forms of exclamation in the poetry collection are set around formulations of exaggeration (50 sentences out of 66 sentences expressing direct forms of exclamation representing 76.0%). The poet distinguishes himself from the ordinary Man in the evaluation of what exists around him and in the interaction with the world; what a human being considers excessive, the poet sees as extremely excessive to the point of provoking exclamation.

The indirect forms of expressing exclamation are as follows: formulations accepted by hearing and interrogations. We have opted for disclosing the meaning of the exclamation situated in the context and dynamics as well as in the wave of emotions in the poem since these forms were not originally used to express exclamation but acquired exclamation as a second meaning because of the context.

we will focus in this intervention on interrogation as it is more used in Aghani ELhayah, The most common indirect form of exclamation is the interrogative form (120 sentences out of 145 sentences expressing indirect forms of exclamation representing 83.0%) which is explained by the poet's psychological disorder, confusion and concern in his relation with a world causing his bewilderment and wonder.

Direct Form of exclamation:

We consider exaggeration a form directly expressing exclamation especially that the speaker does not disclose his sense of the abundance of the thing unless it is an extreme abundance causing exclamation. Exorbitance and exaggeration appear to be the most important conditions for to make the exclamation act happen.

The frequency of “how much/ many” ’kam’ preceding the verb in one poem

In the following poem – “Young eternity”, the form “how much/ many” does not appear in just one verse in the poem, but is repeated in other verses in the same poem, such as in the following examples:

1- O heart! How much you are fed up with life, and how much
You made it dance with joy without falling prey to boredom

How much of night and dusk did you wear
And morning whose end is covered by nebulae

How many dresses did you weave from dreams
Torn by nights, while smiling
How many tiaras did you weave with roses
Were made to fly by shaking and raging shocks

How many paintings did you make, not similar to any of
These worlds, dreams, and systems

Like paradise silhouettes, crowded with
Poplars, then faded away, and the dream disappeared
(“Young eternity,” Verses 20 - 25, P. 157).

In the previous example, the poet emphasizes exaggeration: He is not content with the use of “how much” which stands for exaggeration, but makes it preceded by an emphatic form to emphasize an extreme multiplicity that stimulates exclamation.

Indirect Form of exclamation:

Interrogative forms join the exclamation family when they deviate from their original meaning, which is the speaker’s inquiry about something she or he ignores, and therefore accomplish a second meaning which is the exclamation, leading therefore to an overlap between the request structure and the non-request structure. The exclamation, on the other hand, is a non-request form because it reveals an emotion.

In the following verse, we cannot consider the interrogative act as accomplishing inquiry about an unknown thing. Its objective is to express a feeling of despair that is similar to exclamation resulting from a long miserable life undermined by death and annihilation – so the exclamation becomes the outcome of that despair:

2 -O death! My self is sick and tired
Of life, so hasn't my turn come?
(“O death,” Verse 35, Page 144).

In the following verse, we notice the use of the interrogative word “has...” to express exclamation at the cruel and uncompassionate death, and contribution of the metaphor in this verse in the achievement of the awe act through the interrogative form:

3- O poetry! Has fate been created without feelings like an object?
Don't his hands jerk at the flattering of the heart?
(“O Poetry,” Verses 53-54, Page 59).

In the following verse, Chebbi uses the interrogative auxiliary verb to express exclamation at the colonizer subduing the colonized people:

4- Does it make you feel proud that people are enduring their pains
And that the horizon is asleep, dark?
(“To the Tyrant,” Verse 7, Page 64).

We cannot consider the interrogative in the preceding verse a question asked by Chebbi to the colonizer expecting him to respond; it seems to us an exclamation act related to awe at the colonizer subduing the colonized people. Chebbi did not express his awe at the colonizer only, but also at the people's silence at, abiding by and surrender to colonialism which is visible when he says:

5- O my God! Don't you feel? Don't you desire?
Don't you complain? Don't you speak?
(“To the people,” Verse 12, Page 251).

In the following verses, Chebbi expressed his exclamation at the weakness of the people and its incapacity and despair using the WH-question word “where”, this people that used to be strong, creative and ambitious, so he surprisingly asks it where its qualities went:

6- Where is, O people, your beating mild heart?
Where is ambition, and the dreams?

Where is, O people, your poetic artistic soul?

Where are imagination and inspiration?

Where is, O people, your charming creative art?
Where are your paintings and melodies?

The deluge of life is beating around you
So where is the brave adventurer

Where is the determination of life? Nothing but
Death, silence, sorrow, and darkness
(“To the People,” Verses 1-5, Page 250).

The WH question word “how” turned from a word expressing the manner and situation into a word performing the act of exclamation. This is a common language phenomenon shared between languages, including, for example, the use of “comment” (how) in the French language to ask about the manner and express exclamation.

Many scholars were interested in this phenomenon and studied the transformation of this word expressing interrogative into a word expressing exclamation. Among these scholars we mention Valérie Wielemans who, in her study, showed that this word has been, at the origin, an expression of interrogative then became a word indicating the interrogative or exclamation (Wielemans Valérie, « L'évolution de comme et comment : le témoignage des grammaires et des dictionnaires de l'époque », in *Circulo de lingüística aplicada a la comunicación*, 22/2005), according to the context, This is also noticeable in the Arabic language.

The following examples show that the WH question word “how” expresses exclamation and not the interrogative:

7- So ask her: “You see how the scent vanished?
And how the charm of that brightness faded?”

“How the smiles of life sank
With its eyelids, and covered by an eclipse?”

“How the events turned her neck
And made that sweet stature turn?”
(“Remnants of Autumn,” Verses 26-28, Page 100).

In the previous verses, the poet expressed exclamation at the mortality of beauty.

In general, we can say that the interrogation in the Songs of Life collection is used to express the concern of Chebbi, the Romantic poet and the visionary thinker who is different from other people and whose awareness of his uniqueness and exceptionality made him attentive and alert to everything around him including both positive and negative factors.

Chebbi, while wondering, was expressing awe rather than wondering; he is not expecting answers, rather he is raising ideas and concerns that cause his confusion about himself as well as the world around him. This is what justifies, in our opinion; the large number of sentences whose meaning is accomplished using the interrogative form in comparison with the rest of the sentences.

Conclusion

This study aims at examining the different forms of expressing emotion from a linguistic approach. We did a grammatical and semantic analysis of the emotion expressions with the objective of contributing to the detection of the grammatical structures used to express exclamation being a form of emotion. We also sought to highlight the emotion charge existing in the exclamation act which is an emotional expression as it discloses what the grammarians call “bewilderment, surprise and exaggeration.” When we talk about emotion, we evoke immediately in mind the psychological state generating exclamation. Our purpose indeed, as mentioned in the introduction to this study, is to confirm the existence of a close relationship between the psychological state and the forms of expressing it. Grammarians themselves categorized the speaker’s exclamation when expressing surprise and bewilderment about multitude and exaggeration bearing in mind that bewilderment is the psychological state of the speaker when confronted with something unusual.

When studying and analyzing the grammatical forms, we tried to focus on the psychological emotional aspect. Grammarians for ages have been explaining the harmony between the structure and the meaning. The ways of expressing exclamation vary according to the intensity of its charge. The speaker, in our view, chooses whether consciously or unconsciously, the right exclamation formulation that helps him evacuate the exclamation charge inside him and accomplish the right impact on the listener.

Our primary goal of this research is to confirm the complementarity and harmony between language and context and Man’s psychological state. We noted the need to analyze the different forms of expressing exclamation from a grammatical and semantic point of view at the same time, with the aim of

diversifying the approaches of analyzing the exclamation sentences: Our study of the extent of using exclamation, grammatical functions of the different components of the exclamation sentence, structural and semantic continuity between some grammatical meanings expressing exclamation, and interrogative tools indicating exclamation.

It is important to mention at the conclusion of our research that we tried to identify the different exclamation expressions and analyze them while relating structure to meaning, showing the inter-relatedness between ideas and emotions and forms accomplishing them.

Bibliography :

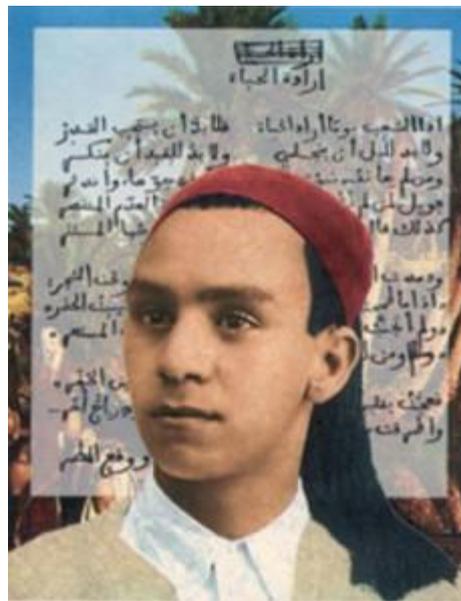
- Al-Astarabadi, *Sharh al-Kafiya*, Benghazi, éditions kar Younes, édition 2, 1996.
- Chebbi, Abou El Kacem, *Aghani ELhayah: songs of life*, Tunis, Société tunisienne de distribution, édition 2, 1970.
- Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al- 'Arab*, Beirut, éditions dar Sader, édition 4, 2005.
- Ibn Yaich, *Charh al-Mufassal*, Beirut, éditions 'Alam al kutub.
- Wielemans Valérie, « L'évolution de comme et comment : le témoignage des grammaires et des dictionnaires de l'époque », in *Circulo de lingüística aplicada a la comunicacìon*, 22/2005.

ANNEX

The verse in Arab revolutions :



<http://adf.ly/1138794/http://panofo.blogspot.com/2011/07/la-revolution-tunisienne.html>



<http://musique.arabe.over-blog.com/article-la-volonte-de-vivre-poeme-d-abou-kacem-chebbi-70498895.html>



<http://tabarani2011.blogspot.com/>



<http://sh22y.com/?p=102816>



<http://www.rohama.org/ar/news/7112> تكريم-أبي-القاسم-الشابي-لدور-مفي-الثورات-الأخيرة/



<http://www.onislam.net/arabic/newsanalysis/analysis-opinions/rowak-alfkar/127908-2011-01-17-12-03-16.html>



http://faroukit.blogspot.com/2012/02/blog-post_3018.html



<http://anniebannie.net/2012/10/10/>