تحليل الخطاب النّصي في قصة الشفيع لمحمد خضير
دراسة لغوية

م.م. علي بلاسم حويس
جامعة البصرة/ كلية التربية للبنات/ قسم اللغة العربية.

البريد الإلكتروني Email : ali.balasim1990@gmail.com

الكلمات المفتاحية: الخطاب ، النّص ، الأمر ، النفي ، الاستفهام .

كيفية اقتباس البحث
حويس ، علي بلاسم، تحليل الخطاب النّصي في قصة الشفيع لمحمد خضير دراسة لغوية، مجلة مركز بابل للدراسات الانسانية، تشرين الثاني 2026،المجلد:16 ،العدد:11.

هذا البحث من نوع الوصول المفتوح مرخص بموجب رخصة المشاع الإبداعي لحقوق التأليف والنشر (Creative Commons Attribution) تتيح فقط للآخرين تحميل البحث ومشاركته مع الآخرين بشرط نَسب العمل الأصلي للمؤلف، ودون القيام بأي تعديل أو استخدامه لأغراض تجارية.

مفهرسة في Indexed
IASJ

مسجلة في Registered
ROAD

Discourse Analysis in Muhammad Khudair's "The Intercessor": A Linguistic Study

Assist lecturer: Ali Balasim Huwais
University of Basra\College of Education for Women

Keywords : speech , Text , Imperative , Negation , Interrogation.

How To Cite This Article
Huwais, Ali Balasim, Discourse Analysis in Muhammad Khudair's "The Intercessor":A Linguistic Study, Journal Of Babylon Center For Humanities Studies, November 2026,Volume:16, Issue 11.

This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.

الملخص:

يتناول هذا البحث دراسة لغوية نقدية ترتكز على تحليل الخطاب النصي في قصة الشفيع للكاتب العراقي محمد خضير، إذ تُعد اللغة في هذا السياق الجوهر الأساسي للفن الأدبي والأداة الحيوية التي تمنح النص أبعاده الجمالية والدلالية. تهدف الدراسة إلى سبر أغوار الخطاب القصصي من خلال تفكيك الأساليب اللغوية التي وظفها الكاتب، والتي تسهم بشكل مباشر في دفع القارئ نحو الغوص في المعاني العميقة واستكشاف المقاصد والرؤى الفلسفية الكامنة خلف السطور. ينطلق البحث من رؤية تعد اللغة وسيلة تواصل بشرية عامة، لكنها في النص الأدبي تتحول إلى لغة ذات دلالات خاصة تعكس موهبة المؤلف وقدرته على صياغة أثره الفني في صورة مبتكرة تجذب انتباه المتلقي. فاللغة هنا ليست مجرد أداة نفعية للإبلاغ، بل هي غاية فنية وانفعالية في آن واحد، تسمو بالعبارة من عموميتها إلى خصوصية التعبير الإبداعي.تركزت محاور الدراسة على تحليل عدة مستويات للخطاب؛ منها ما يرتبط بالبنية القصصية العامة، ومنها ما يختص بالأساليب الإنشائية واللغوية الدقيقة. وقد أولى البحث اهتماماً خاصاً بأساليب (الأمر، والنهي، والاستفهام)، وكيفية اشتغال هذه الأدوات داخل النسيج النصي لتحقيق التأثير الدرامي وتوجيه مسارات التأويل لدى القارئ. إن هذا التحليل اللغوي يسعى

في النهاية إلى إبراز الكيفية التي استطاع بها محمد خضير تشكيل عالمه القصصي عبر لغة مكثفة ومشحونة بالدلالات التي تجعل من الشفيع أنموذجاً ثرياً للدراسات الأسلوبية والنصية المعاصرة.

تخلص الدراسة إلى أن التلاحم بين المبنى اللغوي والنمط القصصي في الشفيع قد أنتج خطاباً يتميز بالثراء الدلالي، إذ ساهمت الأدوات النحوية والأساليب الإنشائية في بلورة الفكرة المركزية للنص، مما يجعل من هذه الدراسة اللغوية مدخلاً ضرورياً لفهم التقنيات السردية المعقدة التي يتبعها محمد خضير في صياغة عوالمه القصصية الفريدة، محققةً بذلك الربط المنشود بين اللسانيات وبين النقد الأدبي الحديث.

Research Summary

This research offers a critical linguistic study based on an analysis of the textual discourse in the story "The Intercessor" by the Iraqi writer Muhammad Khudair. In this context, language is considered the essential center of literary art and the vital tool that grants the text its aesthetic and semantic dimensions. The study looks at the narrative discourse by deconstructing the linguistic techniques employed by the writer, which directly contribute to making the reader discover deep meanings and uncover the underlying philosophical meanings and visions.

Language transforms specific connotations that reflect the author's talent and ability to craft his artistic work in an original form that captures the reader's attention. Here, language is not only a tool for communication, but also an artistic and emotional force that promotes expression from its generality to the specificity of creative expression.

The study analyzed the overall narrative structure and those associated with the precise stylistic and linguistic techniques. The study pays specific attention to the devices of command, prohibition, and interrogation, and how these devices function within the textual fabric to achieve dramatic effect and guide the reader's interpretation. This linguistic analysis highlighted how the author was able to construct his narrative world through a dense and rich connotative language, making "The Intercessor" a rich model for contemporary stylistic and textual studies.

Finally, the cohesion between the linguistic structure and the narrative style produced a discourse characterized by semantics. Grammatical and stylistic devices have contributed to forming the central idea of the text, making this study an essential entry point for understanding the complex narrative techniques that Khudair employs in

Journal of Babylon Center for Humanities Studies: 2026, Volume: 16, Issue: 11

his unique narrative, thus achieving the link between linguistics and modern literary criticism.

Introduction

Language is the material of literary art, indeed, it is an essential element and a vital means of life because it serves as a common tool for understanding and communication among people. However, in literary texts, language takes on a unique character, and the author's task is to elevate it from its general form and transform it into a language that conveys special connotations, drawing on his vision, personal talent, and ability to present his artistic work in a new and attention-grabbing way.

Language, in general, is a double-edged sword: utilitarian and emotional. It is both a means of "communication and an artistic end"[1]. Therefore, language has a communicative purpose that is, communicating with others and at the same time, it also has an influential purpose. Language serves as the fundamental material for shaping our intellectual existence through discourse, which has the ability to influence the recipient. The writer, particularly in narrative discourse, deploys a marked and rhetorically effective form of language, as linguistic impact cannot be achieved through ordinary or unmarked expression. Rather, the writer's aim extends "beyond the mere articulation of personal ideas to encompass the deliberate influence of others"[2]. In this regard, emotive language constitutes a central mechanism through which ideas are communicated with greater force and persuasiveness. As has been noted, "Language is the fundamental instrument of human cooperation. For this reason, man cannot think of truth except as an expression in language, and truth is largely the product of unity and cooperation." [3] At the same time, language can form that distinctive mark by which we can distinguish the writer from others, because language is the tool that provides the writer the identity of specialization that distinguishes him from the general public. Language is also the mirror reflecting poetic creativity.

Therefore, classical critics set many conditions to define its limits, because it is characterized by artistic features that would enrich the depth of the moral meaning and organize the different verbal patterns on all phonetic, semantic, and suggestive levels, because language is closely linked to the poet's culture and his intellectual and cultural references. Therefore, language is a translation of those human feelings.

Across his fiction in general, and in "*The Intercessor*" in particular, Mohammed Khudair has devoted all the nuances and techniques of language to achieve the profound and symbolic meanings he desires. He enriches his discourse by employing various linguistic devices to express the reality he experiences. "The central idea dominating all of

Journal of Babylon Center for Humanities Studies: 2026, Volume: 16, Issue: 11

Mohammed Khudair's stories is the vision of Iraqi reality as it has been subjected to destruction, whether by internal or external forces powerful and oppressive forces that affect people, memory, objects, and history itself, as well as narratives and modern modes of storytelling".[4]

It is clear to the reader that *"The Intercessor*" is one of the stories in *"The Black Kingdom*," a collection of stories written by Mohammed Khudair. It possesses "a mythical title and a complex semiotic structure drawn from the worlds of nocturnal imagination, inspired by *One Thousand and One Nights,* the labyrinthine corridors of Arabic storytelling, and tales of princesses, sultans, genies, and the final journey of Sinbad's contemporaries, lost to contemporary wars. Here, we encounter a narrative system composed of realistic, symbolic, pictorial, figurative, and imaginative elements. Unbridled in the details of the artistic image and its poetic linguistic structure"[5], the story of *The Intercessor* comes as it deals with the moments of waiting for the absent hero (*Al-Shafi'i/The Intercessor*). The narrative element is dominated by a group of narrators, as the story contains more than one voice, including what is called the omniscient narrator, who followed the characters, including the pregnant woman, as the hour of labor approached with the arrival of the procession she was waiting for (the procession of Samawah).The narrator of events who was aware of the pain the characters were hiding, such as the pain of childbirth, with the connection of the pain to the sacred event that gives birth to the status of a symbolic alternative to the martyred child on the day of the event. The narrator, an observer, reveals the events for the first time through colors, clamor, reactions, raised arms, and the sound of them striking bare chests. He is an implicit narrator who shows us the events through his own eyes, without us seeing him [6]. The story also presents a different perspective on the Iraqis, as they revisit the tragedies of the Karbala epic. It offers an artistic reading of the events of a single, tumultuous night, resembling a waking dream, dominated by clamor and colored lights, accompanied by the blaring of trumpets.[7] the story, in its entirety, is a kinetic and auditory image that recalls the coordinates of the historical event. In reality, what is required to be recalled and embodied in these clamorous activities is the confrontation of fear [8], as the story concludes with the arrival of dawn. Therefore, the analysis of this story will focus on its linguistic devices: the imperative, the negative, and the interrogative due to their frequent use in the story of "*The Intercessor"*. However, this does not mean that it lacks other devices such as exclamation, question, and prohibition, as will become clear in the following pages.

Linguistic techniques:

First requirement: The style of negation.

Negation is one of the techniques that Muhammad Khudair's stories in general, and the story of *"The Intercessor*" in particular, are rich with. The writer intended to use it to negate undesirable qualities and things, such as greed, dishonesty, and ignorance, which are often depicted in the characters of his stories. If we want to present a simple concept of this technique, we say the following: Negation is the opposite of affirmation and is intended to negate and deny. It is explicit and is done with tools that are (ma, la, in, lam al-juhud, laysa, la, ghayr, and la al-nafiya lil-jins). The speaker uses the technique of negation in order to distance himself from unpraiseworthy qualities and affirm their opposite.[9] In the story of *"The Intercessor*", the technique of negation arose not to negate the occurrence of the action, but the storyteller used it to create deep psychological effects within the arcs of the story. Sometimes this negation is an affirmation of the complete absence of something basic and important in life, such as hope, security, or happiness. This technique, in turn, makes the characters within the story live in a state of existential loss in their lives.

This style, employed by Muhammad Khudair, expresses a loss of hope in life, driving the characters to despair and a state of helplessness in the face of changing circumstances. They become powerless, resigned to the imposed reality they are forced to accept against their will. In the story "*The Intercessor*," the imperative mood takes a different form, negating certain truths and common sense. This technique, in turn, affects the reader, arousing their curiosity and prompting questions about how certain fundamental aspects of life could be absent. The surrounding circumstances have turned reality upside down in Muhammad Khudair's story. Because the story of *"The Intercessor*" accurately, yet symbolically, reflects the Iraqi reality, it is considered "the truest expression of the nation's current feelings, the people's emotions and anxieties, and a portrayal of the inner turmoil of souls as they waver between doubt and courage, the arduousness of the path, the potential outcomes of the situation, and its impact on the souls of the generation embarking on life in the future." [10] This is because the story, as a literary art form, is closest to the human psyche, most intertwined with the spirit, most engaging with emotions and imagination, and most accessible for understanding life in all its nuances, colors, joys, and sorrows, depicting all aspects of life, circumstances, problems, and events, whatever they may be [11] In "*The Intercesso*r" story, we find it expresses this reality symbolically through linguistic techniques, including the frequent use of

negation. For example, the writer negates self-evident truths when describing the arrival of the processions and large numbers, saying, "...to observe in silence, with constant turning and the continuous flow of banners and signs that do not seem to begin at a visible point, nor end at a specific visible boundary, but rather seem to connect in a sacred fluttering that has been going on for years, numerous, at night and day [12]. It is noted that the writer has used the style of negation in order to deny an obvious fact, which is the connection of the banners and signs, and they are coming because of their large number. It is known that the number of banners and signs has a known starting point and an end point, but because of the large number and the direct observation, their connection appears because of the large crowds coming.

We also observe negation in the dialogue between the characters: the girl who is trying to write what she hears, the pregnant woman, "in a group of women and young children leaning against the high roof parapet, a little girl was writing in a pocket notebook what she could barely hear of elegies passed from one group to another below. A pregnant woman was helping her with her work, asking her occasionally what she was writing. The girl would reply, "I can't hear well." They are chanting together, and the chanting is mixed up, and I don't understand well. [13] The negation here is emphasized through the particle (Ina), which indicates emphasis on the event, by saying "I can't hear, and I don't understand", using the particle (laa), which is not operative. This makes the reader wonder why the girl cannot hear those voices well, even though they are repeated frequently and loudly. This makes us realize that the story expresses the reality of Iraq symbolically and that the voices of the oppressed people, no matter how loud they become, will not be heard by anyone. We also find negation when the pregnant woman called the boys to go down to the street, but they did not answer. "...on the fifth step of the stairs, three boys sat talking quietly, and when the pregnant woman called them to go down to the street, she received no answer. And she found no one in front of the door of the last room." [14] Here, all these questions come to the reader's mind: Why didn't the boys answer the woman? Why were they speaking in a low voice? And why didn't she find any one at the door? Negation also came when the pregnant woman was waiting for the arrival of the *Samawah* procession and became tired of standing because of the weight of the pregnancy. "... I am tired of standing on the roof, and I fear that the roof's railing is not strongly built. [15] The negation in this context signifies fear and anxiety stemming from the lack of cohesion and weakness in both life and the current situation faced by the characters, reflecting the circumstances in Iraq.

The negation in the story of *The Intercessor* serves to negate a well-known and self-evident universal truth: the continuous and uninterrupted processions and the disregard for time. The narrator states, "...and there, no one will notice the absence of daylight" [16]. This implies that the vast crowds present will be oblivious to matters supposedly known and self-evident to everyone, and time will pass unnoticed. The reader then wonders why no one notices these things. This type of negation appears in several places, including the dialogue between the pregnant woman and the girl engrossed in writing. When the pregnant woman asks if they have all left the rooms, the girl replies, "Not these people" [17]. It also appears elsewhere when the narrator describes the crossing and what the woman sees along the way: "...and to the faces that do not recognize their children" [18]. How can they forget and fail to recognize their own children? This is a self-evident truth that the writer negates. Furthermore, the narrator states, "...she could no longer know where her feet were" [19]. How can a person walk without knowing where they are standing? This evidence indicates that the characters live in a state of confusion within the general framework of the story because of what they suffer in their lives and because of the surge of ideas and what they face, which makes them walk without knowing where to put their foot, simply because they are going with the flow.

It is also noticeable that the negation in the story of *The Intercessor* came with the style of repetition, and this would confirm the negation, as is the case when the pregnant woman went down the stairs and the signs of childbirth began, which made her call out, saying, "Not now, not now." [20] The repetition of the negation is in order to emphasize a certain matter, which is the occurrence of something that she does not want, as she does not want to give birth at this time, as if she were waiting for a certain time for the birth that she thinks is salvation. We also find that negation expresses a loss of desire and apathy to the point of despair, helplessness, and surrender, a loss of interest in what is happening, and a lack of desire for what is happening. "...surrounded by faces she never cared to look at, not now, my lord.[21]. This caused the character to experience this anxiety and internal conflict, which led to her not being alarmed when she heard loud noises, the source of which she did not know. She had lost the desire to know what was happening around her and the noise. "And she was not alarmed by the loud sound amidst the rustling." [22]. Because of what the character was experiencing, she denied the occurrence of anything or any change that might alter the course of her life. This is what we find in her conversation with the ship's captain when she asked him to leave because she was confident that nothing would happen to her: "Go, and nothing

will happen to me now." [23]. She is resigned to the changing circumstances. Thus, we find that the style of negation in the intercessor's story expresses a denial of self-evident truths or a surrender to despair in the face of these difficulties.

Secondly: The interrogative style.

The story of *The Intercessor* is replete with this style, which is highly engaging for the reader, particularly during the dialogues between the characters. This, in turn, reinforces the depth of the story's central idea. The author poses numerous questions, leaving them unanswered, symbolizing the characters' inner turmoil and anxiety. This leaves the reader open to interpretation and further inquiry, as most of these questions remain ambiguous, prompting rereading, reflection, and contemplation. Faced with a series of enigmatic questions, the reader is compelled to seek the more profound meanings and symbolic connotations intended by Muhammad Khudair within the story. The interrogative style further emphasizes this ambiguity; the author avoids providing direct information, instead posing further questions and inquiries. This immerses the reader in a web of questions, challenging the notion of certainty, much like the characters themselves. Herein lies the significance of the interrogative style in the story: it lends a unique and philosophical dimension to the concepts of existence, life, and death.

Before discussing the interrogative style in *the Intercessor*, we must define interrogation. We say, "It is the seeking of knowledge about something previously unknown, and it is the inquiry that has been described as seeking information about something you do not possess, i.e., seeking understanding." [24] That is, it is the seeking of understanding. [25] It aims to elicit an answer from the listener regarding something unknown in the speaker's mind. It is "a structural pattern of imperative sentences, as it is the seeking of knowledge about something that was not originally known." [26] The interrogative style is one of the methods that seeks an answer from the listener; it is the question about something unknown. This style may also serve various other purposes, such as denial, exaggeration, magnification, rebuke, belittling, negation, regret, and lamentation. [27]. Interrogation appears more prominently in the story of the Intercessor than in other styles. Therefore, it has been divided into two categories: the first is the interrogative that comes without an answer, and the second is the interrogative that comes with an answer. We note that the larger category is left without clear answers.

The first type of question, which carries ambiguous connotations and is left unanswered, came when the pregnant woman was talking to the other woman who was with her in the same house "... The processions have not

Journal of Babylon Center for Humanities Studies: 2026, Volume: 16, Issue: 11

stopped since yesterday, but they will end tonight. They say the Samawah procession is the last of them... Have you visited?" [28]. Here the dialogue between the two women ends, and the narrator does not complete the answer to the question, which makes the recipient wonder why? Here the writer's purpose appears, which is to pose more questions in order to form an aura of questions before the reader. This is because Muhammad Khudair is highly mature and aware in writing the story, as he possesses sharp intelligence and is distinguished by a rich and evocative language. His worlds are dense and intertwined with things visible to the naked eye, and his artistic and intellectual capabilities demonstrate a superior ability to dissect parts of reality. [29] The writer is fully aware of what the story offers to the reader and how it affects him. We also find the use of the interrogative style when the pregnant woman was listening to the chants of the approaching processions and the tears pouring from the camel litters onto the pebbles ((...but was that the joining of thin chains and their clanking on the ribs of the shoulders or the sound of whips?)). [30] The purpose of the interrogative is to seek an answer; however, we observe that the writer has employed the interrogative particle in a way that extends beyond its typical use, leading to negation and consequently raising additional questions for the reader. What is the sound that the pregnant woman hears? Is it the sound of hands on the chests or tears? Or the sound of whips?

The interrogative style came in another place when the narrator was telling the story by describing the moaning of the pregnant woman as she was climbing the stairs "Is this her moaning?" The moaning of the fetus? The moaning of the chests of the mourning supporters outside following the end of each lament? O my intercessor… O stranger of Karbala, is it the moaning of the bodies buried in the soil of Karbala, preserving the sharpness of the last breath and the moment of approaching death that remained fixed without ending for a thousand and some years, waiting for the final resurrection? [31]. The interrogative came four times, and he did not answer any of them, so what is this moaning that is heard when the pregnant woman climbs the stairs? Muhammad Khudair did not reveal all these deep and mysterious questions that he presented in the story of the intercessor, and each time he used the interrogative letter, the Hamza. As in this question that came during the pregnant woman with the ship carrier who came with the Samawah procession "...are they not the first supporters?" [32], through the dialogue between the characters, we find that the style of questioning was ambiguous and left without a satisfactory answer, which increased the complexity of the matter and deepened the meaning more. Who are those who are speaking in whispers? The world

that the writer presented through the story is "a world dense with images and atmospheres and regulated by symbols and signs" [33], and such a question came a lot in the story of the intercessor and is predominant in it. The second type of questioning, clearly initiated by the speaker seeking information about something unknown and requiring confirmation, is less common in the story. It appears in several instances, including when the pregnant woman descends the stairs and encounters another woman anxiously awaiting her child. The woman asks, "Has your son's diarrhea stopped?" and the pregnant woman replies, "Better than before, sister." [34] The speaker employs a questioning technique to inquire about something unknown. The pregnant woman's question stems from a desire to check on her sick child, as she was unaware of his condition. The mother's response confirms that he is better than before. The question serves as a narrative device to advance the story's events. Instead of simply recounting the events, the narrator uses questions to capture the reader's attention and encourage greater engagement with the characters. We also observe this type of questioning, which implies an answer, in the dialogue between the pregnant woman and the university student when the latter asks, "...Are you a student?"

- Yes, at the university.
- From Baghdad?
- No. From Nasiriyah.
- And they noticed the young woman writing elegies on the rooftop looking down at them, so the pregnant woman called out to her:
- Has the Samawah procession arrived?
- The young woman shouted back: No! [35] The dialogue between the story's protagonist, a university student, and the girl writing elegies contains numerous questions that directly convey answers, enabling the information to reach the reader effectively through this question-and-answer format. This dialogue arises from the protagonist's inquiries about the identities of the other characters within the story, as she seeks to understand the nature of the people around her. The questioning is not merely a tool for asking questions but rather an important means of expressing profound matters.

The interrogative form also serves as an important and effective tool within the story, as seen in the dialogue between the protagonist and the university student when she learns she is from Nasiriyah: "Is this your last month?" "Yes." [36] During her conversation with the girl who writes elegies, she prepares to leave. "He said to the girl, 'I'm going down. Are you coming down with me?' 'I'll stay here writing the laments.'" [37] And in her conversation with the man who was carrying the ship, he asked her,

"Where did you see me from?" "From the roof. You were spinning it around so fast as if you were going to throw it on the people and burn them. I went down to observe you closely." [38] The interrogative form in the story of *The Intercessor* is not merely a linguistic device; rather, the writer uses it as the foundation of the story and a mirror to its characters. It is an important tool that prompts the reader to question, reflect, and pose further questions.

Third: The imperative style.

The textual structure of the story of *The Intercessor* is rich with linguistic devices, including the imperative mood. We observe commands exchanged between characters during their conversations and interactions, so it is essential to examine and understand this style. The imperative is defined as "a request for an action expressed with authority and obligation, the opposite of prohibition, and it indicates the future because it requests an action that has not yet occurred." [39] It has also been defined as the opposite of prohibition, a request to perform an action, and technically, a request to bring about an action or a statement from a superior to another, such as "Do it." Al-Alawi, a rhetorician, defines it as "a form that calls for an action or a statement that indicates a request for an action from another in a position of authority." [40] In essence, the imperative is a request to perform an action, and its execution follows its utterance; thus, its temporal meaning points towards the near or distant future.

The imperative mood may sometimes deviate from its literal meaning of request, taking on figurative meanings which the recipient understands through the context. These meanings include: permission, entreaty, threat, sarcasm, guidance, and other figurative meanings. [41] Based on this, the writer used the imperative mood in the story, and it appeared in the characters' dialogues, in its familiar form, carrying the same meaning of a command, as in the heroine's dialogue with the girl when the procession from Samawah arrived and the people went out to watch, and no one remained at home. "...Then she returned and said: No one remained at home. And the pregnant woman said in astonishment: Look!" [42] Here, the command came in the same form; it is a request from the woman to the girl to look at the procession as it passed before them. It came again in the form of repetition to emphasize the control by the speaker during the heroine's visit to the holy shrine "...she was surrounded, then she heard someone telling her: Enter, enter" [43] The command here came as an emphasis and was issued by a person whom the writer did not specify, so he is unknown. He issued the command to the heroine to emphasize the control and that the heroine must comply with these repeated commands.

This repetition would lead to emphasis, so it is an emphasis through the repetition of the command verb. Here she carries out the commands issued to her automatically, and this highlights the absurdity of the situation and puts the reader in front of a new challenge to understand this deep world that the writer created.

The order also came in the story during the pregnant woman's dialogue with the ship's captain when they were sitting "and the one sitting on the deck said, 'Get up now and let's go down, and I will bring you dinner, and then you can sleep" [44]. An order was issued by the man to the heroine, and here it came to create a state of fear and anxiety for her because she was in the last moments of her pregnancy, and he was afraid that she would give birth at any moment, which prompted him to use the imperative form, and it was the heroine's duty to comply with his words, as he was in a position of control and she had to respond. We also find the command issued by the heroine to the man when she asked him to look at the visitors coming to pay their visit, saying, "Look at all these visitors; how loyal they are." [45]. And her saying at the end of the conversation with him, "...I am not asleep. Go and nothing will happen to me now." [46] The command came from the heroine to the man as she spoke with defiance, strength, and confidence that she would not give birth at this time, meaning that the time was not right for the arrival of the expected guest. All of this prompts the reader to ask more questions because the style of command in the story was more than a request style; rather, it is an artistic tool that Muhammad Khudair used in order to express the state of the characters' internal conflict, and its power lies in creating deep artistic effects on the reader.

Conclusion and Research Findings

This research addresses an important linguistic issue: the linguistic devices employed in Muhammad Khudair's story *"The Intercessor."* The author frequently utilized these devices, including negation, interrogation, and command, as well as other devices such as vocatives and prohibitions, though these were relatively few compared to the overall number of devices analyzed. The purpose of these devices was to pique the reader's interest, provoke questions about the characters, and encourage interaction with the events within the story's overall framework. The research concludes on the following results:

• The use of negation in the story once expresses a profound sense of hopelessness and despair, bordering on helplessness in the face of circumstances.

Journal of Babylon Center for Humanities Studies: 2026, Volume: 16, Issue: 11

• Negation also negates fundamental and self-evident truths, things considered constants in life. This approach, in turn, affects the reader, prompting them to question how such basic necessities could be absent.
• The use of the imperative mood is not merely a command but a stylistic device employed to convey the characters' internal conflict and to influence the reader.
• The use of questions is deliberately ambiguous and profound, avoiding a clear answer. This is the author's intention: to deepen the idea and pique the reader's interest in what lies within the narrative.
• The author doesn't provide direct information but instead offers numerous questions and inquiries, immersing the reader in a series of questions. This is where the importance of questioning lies: in adding a philosophical dimension to the story.

Footnotes

1- Literary Theory in Aesthetic and Structural Criticism in the Arab World, Dr. Shiyaf Akasha, p. 4.
2- Saussure and Contemporary Linguistics, A Collection of Scientific Research, p. 13.
3- The Philosophical Elements Underpinning the Function of Literature, Faris Aziz Al-Mudarris, p. 195.
4- What Reading Conceals, Yassin Al-Nassir, p. 477.
5- Visual Narrative in the Black Kingdom, Shaker Hamad, p. 8.
6- See: Ibid, p. 136.
7- See: Ibid, p. 138. 8. See: The same source, 138.
9. See: Grammatical Styles: Presentation and Application, Muhsin Ali Atiya, 185.
10. Sources of Short Story and Novel Criticism in Iraq, Karim Al-Waili, 37.
11. See: Ibid, 41.
12. The Black Kingdom, Muhammad Khudair, 54.
13. Ibid, 54.
14. Ibid, 56.
15 Ibid, 56.
16. Ibid, 58.
17. Ibid, 61.
18. Ibid, 67.
19. Ibid, 70.
20. Ibid, 64.
21. Ibid, 67, 69.
22. Ibid, 73.
23. Ibid, 75.
24. Rhetorical Styles, Ahmad Matloub, 118.
25. Styles of Request among Grammarians And the rhetoricians, Qays Ismail al-Awsi, 307.
26- The Interrogative Style in the Poetry of Antarah ibn Shaddad: A Grammatical Study, 1344.
27- See: The Interrogative Style in the Holy Qur'an: Its Purpose and Grammatical Analysis, Abdulkarim Muhammad Yusuf, 17, 18.

28- The Black Kingdom, 57.
29- Issues in the Contemporary Iraqi Short Story, Abbas Abdul Jassim, 28.
30- The Black Kingdom, 59.
31- Ibid., 60.
32- Ibid., 74.
33- Issues in the Contemporary Iraqi Short Story, Abbas Abdul Jassim, 30.
34- The Black Kingdom, 55.
35- Ibid., 58.
36- Ibid., 59.
37- Ibid., 63.
38- Ibid., 73.
39- The Style Containing the Secrets of Rhetoric and the Sciences of the Realities of Inimitability: 1/43.
40- See: Ham' al-Hawami' fi Sharh Jam' al-Jawami': 1/16. See also: Al-Nahw al-Wafi, Hassan Abbas: 4/366. See also: Miftah al-'Ulum, al-Sakkaki, 318. See: Constructive Methods in Arabic Grammar, Abd al-Salam Muhammad Harun, p. 15. See also: The Imperative Sentence in Uyun al-Basair by al-Bashir al-Ibrahimi: A Study in Semantic Structure, Ammar Saeed Toumi, p. 24. See also: The Imperative Sentence in the Qur'an: A Theoretical and Applied Grammatical Study, Muhammad ibn Abdullah Suwailih al-Maliki, pp. 39-40.
41. The Structure and Meaning of the Imperative Sentence in the Medinan Surahs*, Dr. Belkacem Wafa, vol. 1, p. 21.
42. The Black Kingdom, p. 63.
43. Ibid., p. 69.
44. Ibid., p. 75.
45. Ibid., p. 75.
46. Ibid., p. 75.

List of Sources and References:

First: Books.

1. Constructional Styles in Arabic Grammar, Abd al-Salam Muhammad Harun, Al-Khanji Library, Cairo, 5th edition, 2001.
2. Styles of Request among Grammarians and Rhetoricians, Qais Ismail Al-Awsi, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, University of Baghdad, Bayt al-Hikma, 1988.
3. Grammatical Styles: Presentation and Application, Muhsin Ali Atiya, Dar al-Manahij for Publishing and Distribution, Amman, Jordan, 2007.
4. Rhetorical Styles: Eloquence, Rhetoric, and Meaning, Ahmad Matloub, published with the assistance of the University of Baghdad, 1980.
5. The Interrogative Style in the Holy Qur'an: Its Purpose and Grammatical Analysis, Abd al-Karim Muhammad Yusuf, Al-Sham Press, 2000.
6. The Structure and Significance of the Imperative Sentence in the Medinan Surahs, Dr. Belkacem Wafa, Publications of the Laboratory for Research in Algerian Language and Literature, Mohamed Khider University of Biskra, 2008.
7- The Figurative Narrative in the Black Kingdom by Mohamed Khider, Shaker Hamad, Al-Rawasem for Press, Publishing and Distribution, Baghdad, 2016.
8- Saussure and Contemporary Linguistics, a collection of scientific research, edited by Youssef Shirin, translated by Tahseen Razzaq and Ashwaq Mohamed, scientific

Journal of Babylon Center for Humanities Studies: 2026, Volume: 16, Issue: 11

review by Dr. Reda Al-Mousi, Bayt Al-Hikma, Department of Studies and Translation, 1st edition, 2014.
9- The Style Containing the Secrets of Rhetoric and the Sciences of the Realities of Inimitability, Yahya bin Hamza bin Ali bin Ibrahim Al-Alawi Al-Yamani, Al-Muqtataf Press, Egypt, 1965.
10. The Philosophical Elements Underpinning the Function of Literature, Faris Aziz Al-Mudarris, Iraqi Scientific Center, Baghdad, 2016.
11. Issues in the Contemporary Iraqi Short Story, Abbas Abdul Jassim, Dar Al-Rashid Publishing, 1982.
12. What Reading Conceals: Studies in the Novel and Short Story, Yassin Al-Nassir, Arab Scientific Publishers, 2008.
13. Sources of Short Story and Novel Criticism in Iraq, Karim Al-Waili, Dar Wael Publishing, 2008.
14. The Key to the Sciences, Abu Yaqub Yusuf Al-Sakkaki, edited, annotated, and commented on by Naeem Zarzour, Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiya, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st edition, 1988.
15. The Black Kingdom, Muhammad Khudair, Ministry of Information, General Directorate of Culture.
16. Comprehensive Grammar, Hassan Abbas, Dar Al-Maaref, 3rd edition, n.d.
17- Literary Theory in Aesthetic and Structural Criticism in the Arab World, Dr. Shiyaf Akasha, University Publications Office, Algeria, 1992.
18- Ham' al-Hawami' fi Sharh Jam' al-Jawami', edited by Abd al-'Al Salim Makram and Abd al-Salam Harun, Scientific Research House, Kuwait, 1975.

Second: Theses and Dissertations:

1- The Imperative Sentence in the Qur'an: A Theoretical and Applied Grammatical Study, Muhammad ibn Abdullah Suwaylih al-Maliki, dissertation submitted to the College of Arabic Language, Department of Arabic Graduate Studies, Umm al-Qura University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2010.
2- The Imperative Sentence in 'Uyun al-Basa'ir' by al-Bashir al-Ibrahimi: A Study in Semantic Structure, Ammar Sa'id Toumi, thesis submitted to the Faculty of Languages and Literature for Social and Human Sciences, People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, Larbi Ben M'hidi University/Oum El Bouaghi, 2013.

Third: Periodicals.

1- The interrogative style in the poetry of Antarah ibn Shaddad: A grammatical study, Omar Abdel-Moati Abdel-Wali, Journal of the University of Babylon, for Humanities, Volume 22, Issue 6, 2014.