

# *Ahazeej Recited by Iraqi Soldiers during the Liberation of the Occupied Lands in 2017*

## *A Semantic Study*

Ahmed Sahib Mubarak \*

Sameerah Atshan Al –Fayadh

University of Babylon - College of Education

### article info

Article history:

Received 25/2/2019

Received in revised form --

Accepted 19/3 /2019

Available online 4/7/2019

### Keywords:

Ahazeej

Folklore

jihd

mehwal

fatwa

### abstract

The present study fulfills a semantic analysis study of ahazeej recited by Iraqi Soldiers During the Liberation of Occupied Lands in 2017 . The study attempts to answer the following questions ; 1- What is the structure of ahazeej ? 2-For what purposes have they been used ? 3-What are the semantic devices used in ahazeej ? 4- How have they been influenced by Iraqi folklore ?

The study aims to find the how ahazeej are structured and specifying their functions . It also aims to identify the semantic devices that are used and figuring out how they have been influenced by Iraqi folklore .It is hypothesized that ; ahazeej have a certain structure ;( three rhymed lines concluded by a fourth one said in a different rway . They have a number of functions like ; wedding celebration , declaration of wars , etc . many devices have been used like ; metaphor and simile , etc . . Ahazeej have been influenced by Iraqi folklore such as in ; equestrian , hospitality , bravery , Ahlu Al- Bayyeat ' courage , etc . The analysis of the selected data leads to the following conclusions ; ahazeej have a certain structure , they are recited to serve certain purposes, devices like simile , metaphor , etc are used

## Introduction

Ahazeej are defined as a collection of songs, performed with a certain type of melody. They have been widely employed in different situations for the essential roles they play in many aspects of life. However, they are closer to tribal life than to the urban one. Ahazeej have been used by Iraqi people in many occasions and for many reasons. They are used in sad and happy events, warbled in the harvest seasons, recited to demonstrate generosity, the nobility of lineage and parentage and boasting hospitality, and last but not least, they are used in wars to motivate the soldiers and ignite their enthusiasm. Some of these ahazeej are very historic and old; others are modern and new.

Sha'llan Abu Al-Joon, the leader of the 1920<sup>s</sup> Revolution<sup>(1)</sup> in Iraq, in his attempt to instigate his followers recited:

(web source 1)

*(Be ready! It is time of Jihad).*

Jihad is the fifth religious duty that Islam imposes on its believers when the Islamic state is endangered. Hence, Abu Al-Joon utilizes this religious issue to recite this Ihzooja.

Although very rich, this topic still receives little or no attention thus there is a need to answer the following questions:

1-What is the structure of ahazeej ?

2. For what purposes have they been used?

3. What are the semantic devices used in ahazeej ?

4. How have they been influenced by Iraqi folklore?

## 1.3 Aims of the Study

This study attempts to achieve the following aims:

1-Identifying the structure of ahazeej .

2. Specifying their function(s).

3. Identifying the semantic devices that are used .

4. Figuring out how they have been influenced by Iraqi folklore ?

## 1.4 The Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that:

1-Ahazeej have a certain structure ; ( three rhymed lines , ending with a fourth one said in a different way ) .

2- Ahazeej have a number of functions like ; declaration of war , wedding celebration , greeting guests , etc .

3- Many devices have been used like ; metaphor , simile , etc.

4-Ahazeej have been influenced by Iraqi folklore such as in ; equestrian , hospitality , Ahlu Al- Bayyeat ' courage , etc .

## 1.5 Procedures

The procedures to be followed in this study can be summarized as follows:

1. Presenting definitions for ahazeej , and identifying their style .
2. Analyzing ahazeej performed by our soldiers in the liberation battles semantically , focusing on symbols , images , devices used .
3. The data under scrutiny are translated by the researchers and some specialized experts in the field of translation . They are Asst. Prof Salih Al –Mamoory ( Ph. D) / University of Babylon and Mr . Abul-Khaliq Az -Azuhary ( a Member of the Association of Iraqi Translators ) .
4. Issuing ahazeej's function , structure and concepts that are influential .

## 1.6 Value of the study

Concerning ahazeej used by soldiers in the wars, it is hoped that the findings of the present study will be useful to those who are interested in the semantic field , literature , syllabus designers and texts writers .

## 2.1 Definitions

Ihzooja is a type of the Iraqi folklore. It is written in all people's poetry meters . It has no more than three lines , concluded by a song . The fourth one is to be said in a different way , with a certain rhythm . A group of people gather with a bard ( Al-Mihwal ) to perform certain movements which are in harmony with the ihzooja . It is called Al – Riddsa, it is performed by

men . They hit the ground hard by their feet , jumping quickly and moving their hands upon heads .

(web source 5)

Ihzooja is a type of public songs . It is not accompanied with any musical instruments . In reciting it , ihzooja depends on the long extension of words with a certain voice raise and fall . ( web source 6) .

Iraqi people call ( ha , ha , ha ) or ( ha ikhooti ha, which means Oh my brothers! , ha) if they want to start reciting any ihzooja . Consequently ,the group of people around the poet reply ( ha) . This group of people is agreed to be called ( hizzam ) . To give a suitable

description , ahazeej are just like a sharp sword , they fight and achieve victory . In order to support what is said ( Renkema , 2004 :11) , states

that songs are a form of speech and words are their instruments , therefore , ahazeej have used their tools well as it will be seen .

## 2.2 Purposes of Ahazeej

" Like life-sustaining breath , communication is ever –present in our lives . That makes understanding and improving how we communicate with others a basic life skill " (Mehel , 2017 : 2) . Songs or ahazeej are one of the communicative means that play a very important role in the Iraqi society specifically .They are sung for many purposes ;

wedding celebration , greeting guests , harvest seasons , showing off and evoking enthusiasm .

Ihzooja is sometimes a declaration for war i. e fight . It is utilized to instigate others to do something . It is called ( fazzaa) . It is called for when something violent takes place ; e.g. an enemy assault or encroachment , the bard ( Al- Mihwal) announces this calamity by ihzooja .

It is highly represented in the songs of our soldiers . They are so proud of their power that vanishes their foes.

They sang , being proud of their power saying :

تشهد للحشد تكريت والأنبار

زرعوهن رعب بكلوب هالأشرار

بأمر المرجعیه<sup>2</sup> (2) ثورة المختار<sup>3</sup>

عادوهه وسروا مهدينه<sup>4</sup> web source 7

***Tikrit and Al- Anbar confess that popular's mobilization has planted terror in the hearts of the wicked foes .***

***In accordance with directives of the religious authority , popular's mobilization has done exactly the same thing as Al- Mukhtar 's Revolution did and pleased Imam Mahdi ( p b u h ) .***

When the legendary Iraqi soldiers received the fatwa of fighting ISIS , they soon responded , reciting :

الامر منك يسيد چنه منتظريه

اليمس تربة ولينه من الارض نفيه

وحگ جدك يسيد للعدو نمحيه

( مامونه ديرة والينه8 web source )

***We were waiting for your fatwa , Sayid Ali Al- Sistani .***

***We will send who mitigate our land behind the sun !***

***By prophet Muhammad , we will demolish the enemy.***

***The land of AL Imam will remain safe<sup>4</sup>.***

### 3.The influence of the Iraqi Folklore on the Ahazeej

#### 3.1 Language and Folklore

Anthropologists believe that folklore is the expressive body of culture shared by members of a society . It encompasses the traditions common to that culture , subculture or group . Tales, proverbs , songs and jokes , as parts of oral traditions , are included ( web source 11 ) . Folklore is oral history .It is conserved by the people as their culture . Traditions are its components . Traditions almost include music , history , songs , legends and myths .Folklore is inherited from generation to generation . It is kept alive by the people in that culture . ' Meaning ' is allowed to be added to people's live and to their surroundings through folklore . Every

culture has a different definition to the term *folklore*, depending on their historical backgrounds and traditions. (web source 12).

Man, during his career, has attempted to explain the natural phenomena that affect and surround him. When these explanations are accepted by any tribe or group of people, they constitute the mythology and to some extent their religious beliefs (Geomme, 1890: 1). Arabic world is exotic since it is full of myths and lore and it is full of inspiration as well. Arabian folk tales and fairy stories initiate the reader into mysterious kingdoms of untold wealth and unmatched beauty. They contain tales of genies and goblins, talking animals and heroic princes and princesses that charm and delight (web source 13), that have a great influence on the Arabic culture. "complex interrelationship between language and culture is very fascinating."

(Ottenheimer, 2013: 18). For this reason, culture and folklore has a very obvious influence on language used in tales, songs, poems and surely on

ahazeej' the theme of this study. Language is considered the heart of human life. Many of our most important actions are inconceivable without language (Cook, 2003: 3). From what is mentioned above, the reader may realize the importance of language and folklore.

### 3.2 Concepts that influence ahazeej

**3.2.1 Equestrian** : is another aspect in the Arabic folklore. It means : horse – riding. Horses have a distinctive role in Arabs life. They were, and are, still inspiring poets. They wrote long poems describing and boasting their beauty and power.

**3.2.2 Hospitality**: honouring is one of the commendable values that Arabs had inherited and they are famous for. Many Arabs are proverbial for honouring in pre – Islamic era such as Hatem Tai who is well-known for his generosity. Islam assured and called for honouring guest. Prophet Mohammad was so generous to give whatever he owns. He regards honouring the guest as one of the believer's traits. He said : " One who believes in God and in the Judgment Day, then he should honour his guest."

**3.2.3 Lamentation** : it is the passionate expression of grief or sorrow, weeping because of the death or departure of a dear person or lover. It a habit in the south of Iraq when the head ( leader ) of the tribe dies, heads of other tribes, honorable men and tribes' young and old men gather in ( Arradha ).

Bards start reciting ahazeej lamenting the dead person.

For example :

أجاويد العشائر كلفه من تجفون  
أ و فجه اتصير عدنه والله من ترحون  
او عليكم يا رجال الزود ظل كل السلف محزون



ها ها ها : إ سباع ابيوم اللازم عازتكم عازه .

*Best men of the tribe , it is too difficult when you depart .*

*A big chasm will be left .*

*All members of the tribe are in deep sorrow .*

*Brave like lions you are , we need you in crises .*

**3.2.4 Showing off:** It is the act of talking with excessive pride and self-satisfaction . It is a statement expressing excessive pride in oneself , mentioning the tribe's glory , courage , bravery , heroism , open-handedness . The speaker praises his antecedents , showing his and their identity . He also exaggerates cracking them and himself as well .

! For example :

بن السهل وابن الهور وابن دجله وفرات آني

روح انشد عايه الضيف وانشد عني عدواني

بكاعي تسكن الغيره موش الليبي والافغاني

ها ها ها : اليوم نلقن داعش درس الشيعة الماتتساه

*I am the son of the plain , the marsh , the Tigris and the Euphrates .*

*Both friends and enemies confess .*

*That my land is the cradle of dignity and not a place for terrorist .*

*Today we shall teach ISIS the severe Shia lesson that it will never forget .*

**3.2.5 Bravery :** Courageous behavior or character .It is the quality of being brave . This characteristic is the most representative one in describing the Iraqi soldiers . They are proud of being brave and singing their bravery in their ahazeej .

**3.2.6 Ahlu Al- bayyeat and their courage :** Imam Ali and all the Impeccable Imams ' bravery and courage have a prominent influence on the Iraqi poetry in general and ahazeej specifically . Many bards ( mahaweel) describe Imam Ali ' s bravery , generosity , honor ,etc . This bard describes Al Imam saying :

علي آيه من ربه وللأرض ميدان

علي هوه السفينة وعلي للغركان

علي تشهدله التوراة والانجيل والقرآن

ها ويلايوها الجن وابن آدم

*Imam Ali is a proof from All –Mighty God*

*He is the life boat for those who are drowning .*

*Imam Ali has been mentioned in the Old Testament , Bible and The Glorious Quran .*

*He can fight both humans and Jinn .*

**3.2.7 The Tragedy of Karbala :** *The Battle of Karbala* took place on Muharram 10 , the year 61 AH of the Islamic calendar in Karbala . The battle took place between a small group of supporters and relatives of Muhammad's grandson , Hussain ibn Ali ,

and a larger military detachment from the forces of Yazid 1 , the Umayyad caliph . It ended by the death of Imam Hussain , his sons , brothers and followers . All women and children were taken prisoners .Hussain's suffering and death became a symbol of sacrifice in the struggle for right against wrong , and for justice and truth against wrongdoing and falsehood . This tragedy with all its scenes had well represented in soldiers '

ahazeej . ( الحيدري ، 2015 : 7-8 ) .

All these aspects ( mentioned above ) influence the wording and meaning of " ahazeej" recited by Iraqi soldiers .

### 3.3 Data Analysis

A poem is only words , and each has been carefully chosen . Ihzooja , the main concern of this study , is a type of slang poetry that is usually composed by people who live in local areas , with a humble education .

Starting to analyze ahazeej , we must understand the meaning of every individual word , use an encyclopedia or internet to look up people and places mentioned in the ihzooja . What language the bard has used ; slang , formal , or jargon . Then , we have to determine the theme ( the purpose the bard has in writing his poem) , the ideas he wants to express . In order to reach this goal , we need to look at the poem as a whole .

Ahazeej are rooted in music . We may learn to scan ihzooja to accented or unaccented

syllables and feet . They have different types of meter .They , sometimes , have rhyme scheme that has an effect on our response to the poem or ihzooja .

Language and imagery are essential in every poetic piece .We should look for the concrete pictures, or images , the bard has drawn . Symbolism is also often used in ahazeej . A *symbol* is an event or a physical object (a thing , a person , a place ) that represents something non-physical such as an idea , a value , an emotion ....etc . Bards use devices like metaphors , simile , personification , symbolism and analogies to make a comparison . Poems , ahazeej are like music videos and movies . They contain a series of images and symbols to build up mood and meaning . ( web source 14) .

### 3.4 Text Analysis

*انقاتل البسما ونقاتل البلگاع (1*

*ولا بينه الجبان ولا بنا اليرتاع*

*واليجفل يخوتي يرخص المبياع*

*ها حميد جينا نموت اهنا*

*We fight whoever on heavens and whoever on earth*

*No place for coward or those who are frightened among us*

*Who has fear or anxiety is easily driven out*

*Listen " Humaed " , We come to die here , in the battle field .*





Imam Ali ( p – b –u –h ) , he is the symbol of bravery and heroism . Soldiers obeyed Fatwa of Ayatolla AL –Sisstani , the supreme religious scholar according to Shiat Muslims . The four lines are well tied to each other . They express one clear idea . Iraqi soldiers are so proud of their identity and of their being brave as well .

(4) يالعايش ابرمشي وأبد متفارك العين

يالرسمك ابكلمي بضل طول العمر يحسين

ما ننساك وانت انتة الأصل بالدين

(( والدين اباسمك اينادي )) (( يحسين ويا روح الهادي ))

*You ....who don't disappear from my sight*

*In my heart , I keep you till I die ,*

*How can I forget you and the source of religion you are ,*

*It always calls by your name '*

*O Hussein , O Hadi's soul .*

The four lines of this ihzooza express one idea . It is the ' love ' of Imam Hussien . He represents a symbol for humanity , bravery , reformation and revolution . He is the sacrificer for message , principles and morals . The soldier uses a *metaphor* that their eyes are just like a house and Imam Hussein lives inside them . Hussein's image is fixed inside the soldier's heart .Hussein will never ever be forgotten as he is the religion . He is the leader of Shiaa cult . A *personification* is used in the fourth line . ' Religion' is like a person who has a mouth and shouting Hussien . He is compared to

the ' soul ' of Prophet Mohammad in another *metaphor* .

#### 4.Conclusion

This study elaborates features , definitions of ' ahazeej ' . Iraqi soldiers are reciting these ' ahazeej ' while they are liberating the occupied lands . Iraqi folklore has influenced them . This is very obvious in the language ( the use of a certain variety that is used in the southern areas of Iraq ) , and in the concepts that are essentially influential , like honouring the guest , bravery , the tragedy of Karbala ...etc . Iraqi soldiers have been highly influenced by Iraqi folklore . Ahazeej have a very noticeable role in the motivation and encouragement of soldiers in the liberation battles . Ahazeej have a certain structure and they serve many functions .

#### List of References

المصادر العربية

الحيدري ، ابراهيم .(2015). تراجيديا كربلاء : سوسيولوجيا الخطاب الشيعي . لبنان : دار الساقى .

#### English References

Al-Hilali ,Dr. Mohammad.T .U (n.d ) .*The Nobel Quran* . Typese thing by : Al Furqan Advertising Agency.

Burton , S.H ( 1970 ) . *THE CRITICISM OF POETRY* . Longman .

Cook ,G.(2003) *Applied Linguistics* .London : Oxford University Press .

Comme , George , L . ed.( 1890) . *The Handbook of Folklore* .London.

Dickson , Paul ( 1998) . *Slang* : The authoritative Topic – by –Topic Dictionary of American Lingoes From all walks of life . USA :

Ernawati, B.D .(2005) "*Speech Acts of War : An Analysis of Speech Acts in the film ' Platoon'* ( A Socio-Pragmatic Approach ) .vol.9 no2 –October 2005.

Mehl, Martin .(2017) *Principles of communication : Public Speaking . "Identifying foundations of Human Communication " unit 1*. Parson Learning Solutions.

Renkema , J.( 2004) *Introduction to Discourse Studies* .John Bengamins : Publishing Company.

Rosenberg , J .C (2010) *The twelfth Imam : A novel* .Library of congress Cataloging –in –Publication Data.

## Web sources

1-www.iraqikhair.com) accessed at Feb.19-2018.

هوسات و أهازيج عشائر العراق

2- www.mollajalil>.netmollajalill58177) accessed at Feb.19-2018 .

هوسات حماسية بحق غيارى ومتطوعي الحشد الشعبي  
https://sunnah.Com>riyadussaliheen )

3-accessed at Mar.17, 2018

4 -(dorar –aliraq.net .

5 -(https://alarab.co.uk> . .)

6 -(ar.m.wikipedia.org . )

7-https://www.dorar-aliraq-net>ihreads>).

8-formus.alkafeel.net.

هوسات لوطني الحبيب العراق

9-https://en.m. Wikipedia .org> wiki> .)

10 مصطلحات اسلامية- mawdoo3.com.

11 -https://en.m.wikipedia.org> folklore .

12 -https://study .com>academy>.) What is folklore ? Definition , Legends & Myths.

13)-https://study .com>academy>.Category: Arabian legendary Creatures .

-(14https://www.matrix.edu.au/analysis - literary -techniques -in poetry -and prose .Accessed on Apr 20,2018.

( 1 ) The Iraqi revolution against the British . It is also known as the 1020 Iraqi revolt , also known as Great Iraqi Revolution . It started in Baghdad , May 1920 , including protests by officers from the Ottman army who were embittered .

) Ayatollah AS-Sistani , The Supreme religious authority ( 2 according to Shiat .<sup>2</sup>

(3)Al- Mukhtar Al – Thaqafi , was an early Islamic (2) revolutionary based in Kufa , Iraq . He led an abortive rebellion against the Umayyad Caliphs in vengeance for the death of Hussain ibn Ali ( p – b – u – h ) at the Battle of Karbala to the south of the capital Baghdad (web source 9) .

(4) Mahdi ' is the twelfth Imam of Al- Shiaa . He is the eschatological redeer of Islam who will appear and will rule before the Day of Judgment and will rid the world evil ((.Rosenberg (2010: 9) .

### الملخص :

يقدم هذا البحث دراسة في التحليل الدلالي للأهازيج التي القاها الجنود العراقيين في حروب التحرير عام 2017 . تحاول الدراسة الاجابة عن الاسئلة التالية : 1- مم تتكون الاهزوجة ؟ 2- لاي الاغراض تستخدم ؟ 3- ماهي الادوات الدلالية المستخدمة ؟ 4- كيف تأثرت الاهزوجة بالفولكلور العراقي ؟

تهدف هذه الدراسة لتحقيق ما يلي : 1- التعريف بتركيب الاهزوجة . 2- تحديد اغراض الاهازيج . 3- تعريف الادوات المستخدمة . أكتشاف كيف ان الاهازيج قد تأثرت بالفلكلور العراقي . لقد بنيت الدراسة على الفرضيات التالية : 1- للأهازيج تركيب خاص ( تتكون من ثلاثة ابيات موزونه ، مختومة ببيت رابع يلقي بشكل مختلف ) . 2 - للأهازيج عدد من الوظائف كالفخر والرثاء و اعلان الحرب . 3- استخدمت في الاهازيج الاستعارة والتشبيهة .... الخ 4- لقد تأثرت الاهازيج بالفلكلور العراقي ، مثلا : الفروسية والشجاعة والضيافة ومديح اهل البيت ع

من خلال تحليل البيانات ، كشفت الدراسة ان للاهازيج تركيبا خاصا و إنما تلقى لاغراض خاصة . استخدمت في الاهزوجة ادوات دلالية كالتشبيه والاستعارة وغيرها .