

Lecture Five: Poetry

*Lesson Plan

- 1-Introduction
- 2-Definitions
- 3- Features of Poetry
- 4-Devices of Poetry
- 5-Evaluation

*Lesson Objectives

- To understand what poetry is and what it includes.
- To read verses poetically differently from reading prose texts.
- To recognize the various aspects of given poems.
- To classify poetry into regular, blank and free poems

*Keywords

Poem, Stanza, Verse, Line, Prosody, Blank and Free Verse, Rhyme, Meter, Rhythm

1-Introduction

What is poetry? It sounds like a simple question with a simple answer, but the answer is actually quite complex. So what exactly is poetry? Everyone seems to have their own description of what it is. Even if you ask three different poets, they will all give a different explanation than the others. However, there are always some similarities between definitions. Moreover, defining poetry is an ambiguous task like defining literature, very vague and open.

2-Definition

A poem is more than just rhyming. In point of fact, poetry need not even rhyme. Sound and movement are the primary components. A definition of poetry that is somewhat dysfunctional includes these two things and "feeling." Poetry is considered to be part of literature because it refers to the poetic works of a particular author, group, nation, or type. It includes literary works written in meter; verse implying beauty and harmony among words, emotions, and concepts.

“All good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility.”

William Wordsworth

Poetry is an art form that gives writers the freedom to express their imagination and creativity in a way that other forms of literature do not. You are given access to a significantly broader selection of elements, styles, and techniques. In any case, you should utilize them cautiously, remarkably, and admirably. Although it is a difficult act to perform, many artists enjoy it.

Poetry, according to many authors, is both the most challenging and rewarding form of literature. In the world of prose, there are an infinite number of elements, methods, and creative ideas. Poets put a lot of pressure on themselves to produce work that adheres to a particular rhythm and style. They consider every word that should be used for countless hours. The poetry community generally agrees that, regardless of its length, a poem ought to take the same amount of time to write as a novel or short story.

3-Features of Poetry

a- Prosody

The study of speech rhythms and versification is known as prosody. The majority of poetry is a rhythmical utterance, or it uses rhythmic elements that are part of language: variations in stress and non-stress, vowel length, clusters of consonants, pauses, and other features. People who read or hear poetry are affected in different ways by the various rhythmic patterns. Finding out what role these rhythmical elements play in each poem is the central question in meter and rhythm analysis. There are no universal guidelines for these functions. After identifying a particular pattern, its function must be determined for each text and context separately.

b- Meter

Meter is the measured arrangement of accents and syllables in poetry. In any kind of utterance we stress certain syllables and not others. For instance most people would probably stress the phrase 'And how are you this morning' something like this: And HOW are YOU this MORNING? Or possibly: And how ARE you this MORNING? Poetry employs the stresses that occur naturally in language utterance to construct regular patterns.

c- Free Verse

There is no particular stress pattern or number of syllables per line in Free Verse. A sort of stanza has been broadly utilized exclusively since the 20th 100 years. In spite of the fact that without ordinary meter, it isn't without musical impacts and association. Free refrain can be

coordinated around syntactic units, word or sound reiterations, or the musicality made by a line break.

d- Rhythm

Poetry makes use of the rhythms found in all languages to convey additional meaning “a series of alternations of build-up and release, movement and counter-movement, tending toward regularity but complicated by constant variations and local inflections” is the general definition of rhythm. (Attridge:3). The rhythm of a poem is influenced by poetic meter and metrical deviations, but rhythm itself is a more general phenomenon that primarily relates to the various speeds at which a poem is likely to be read. This speed is particularly influenced by: pauses, elisions, and expansions, vowel length, and modulation of consonant clusters.

e- Rhyme

Rhyming words are those that begin with the last stressed vowel and end with the same sound (phoneme). The consonant that comes before the last stressed vowel of the two words in a full rhyme is different: power/flower, night/delight, and so on.

There are a few different rhyme forms that don't exactly follow the full rhyme: When the consonant preceding the last stressed vowel is also the same, it is said to be a rich rhyme: stick/ecclesiastic, lap/clap. It is an identical rhyme when the two rhyme words are actually the same. Homonyms are words that sound and look the same but have different meanings in rhyme. Both identical rhyme and rich rhyme have been criticized at times.

f- Verse Forms and Stanza Forms

Within a poem, a sequence of lines is frequently divided into sub-units known as stanzas. The analysis of poetry is particularly relevant to two aspects of stanza form: First of all, a poem's stanza structure is always used for a specific purpose. There are no general guidelines for these functions; the student or critic analyzing the poem must determine which function it is for each poem individually. Second, well-known stanza structures are rooted in a particular tradition. For instance, the sonnet was first published as a love poem in English poetry.

g- Blank verse

It is a non-rhyming **iambic pentameter**, usually stichic. Under the influence of Shakespeare it became a widely used verse form for English dramatic verse, but it is also used, under the influence of Milton, for nondramatic verse.

h- Couplet

It refers to two verse lines that rhyme immediately after each other. Two lines of rhyming iambic pentameter make up the heroic couplet, which became popular in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A short couplet is another name for an octosyllabic couplet. The ordinary meter and the rhyme example of the couplet, as a rule with end-halted lines, gives nearly little units (two lines as a matter of fact) in which to come to a meaningful conclusion.

4-Devices of Poetry

a-Content: It is what the poem is all about; the ideas, themes and storyline that it contains. One way of approaching a poem is by getting a general idea of what it is about and this is sometimes called the surface meaning of the poem on which to build more complex ideas that form the analysis of it.

b-Poetic Voice: It is also known as the speaker, mask, or persona (Latin for mask) refers to the voice that speaks a poem; this speaker is not usually identical to the author who writes the poem. The author assumes a role, or counterfeits the speech of a person in a particular situation.

c- Structure: The structure of a poem: **Stanzas**

- **Stanza:** a group of lines in a poem.

-**Verse (=line):** It refers to the one line. Roger Fowler defines verse as: “It is the minimal condition of poetry if poetry is to mean anything even as a metaphor. The degree of expressivity of language depends upon the frame of mind in which we approach it and that frame of mind is in turn determined by conventions of presentation, lay-out, etc “: (2006: 249)

d-Run-on line (=Enjambment): A line that ends without a pause and continues into the next line for its meaning. (# **End-stopped line**)

-**Refrain:** The repetition of the same line or lines regularly in a poem.

-A stanza is either:

- **Couplet:** 2 successive lines which rhyme with each other;

- **Triplet:** 3 lines;

- **Quatrain:** 4 lines (especially lines that rhyme alternatively);

- **Cinquain:** a five-line stanza.

5-Evaluation: A Global Task

1-Define the following terms:

Prosody, Stanza, Sonnet, Couplet, Rhyme, Meter, Line, Diction

2-Compare between the stanza and the sonnet, then between the rhyme and the rhythm

3-What is the difference between the free verse and the blank verse?

4- Give examples from Arab poetry of rhymed poetry and non rhymed poetry.