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The Pragmatic Dimensions of Intertextuality in Mohammed Meftah's Work in Light of His Critical Experience

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***Abstract*—**Professor Mohammed Meftah devoted considerable attention to the phenomenon of intertextuality in his writings, both theoretically and practically. He developed terminology and concepts to express its various manifestations in textual forms and literary expressions, relying in his analysis on a composite methodology that continuously evolved and drew inspiration from multiple and diverse epistemological and critical references. He adopted the concept of intertextuality and invoked other parallel and compatible concepts with a critical perspective, considering intertextuality to be the interrelationship of a group of texts with a given text in different ways. Within this framework, he endowed it with considerable methodological potential, enabling it to intersect with several concepts, particularly coherence, dynamism, and isotopy. The latter was addressed as the common thread connecting all the concepts he employed in analysing discourses and phenomena, according to a systematic perspective based on the assumption that a system consists of a group of elements that interact with one another while remaining relatively independent.

***Keywords*—**Intertextuality, stereotypical reading, double coherence, intentionality, isotopy, text, discourse, local interpretation, sociality.

Introduction

All contemporary critical-theoretical approaches seek to formulate answers to a central question: What are the artistic principles governing the construction of a literary text? Within this context, intertextual studies have argued that the artistic principle governing the construction of a literary text is generation, which is founded on the idea of interpenetration and interaction between texts. In this regard, almost all literary criticism methodologies agree that literary creativity rests on two fundamental activities: writing and reading. Consequently, the literary text becomes writing from the perspective of production and reading from the perspective of reception.

Following this approach, the vast majority of intertextuality scholars maintain that the essence of the creative process lies, first, in the generative activity performed through writing and, second, in the literary text itself, which is not a purely creative text. Rather, it is intertextuality: a system of texts layered over the surface of the actualised text in different ways.

This study seeks to examine the phenomenon of intertextuality in all its dimensions, at both the theoretical and practical levels, in the work of Mohammed Meftah. Its central problem is framed through the following interrelated questions: What are the formative foundations of intertextuality theory? What are the mechanisms through which it operates as a set of linguistic forms with different functions within realised texts? What is the thread connecting the concept of intertextuality with the concepts corresponding to its epistemological foundations in Mohammed Meftah's writings throughout the different stages of his critical experience?

The themes addressed in this article are expected to provide answers to these and other questions.

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1. The Meaning of the Word “Text” in Arab Culture

It is well established that Western intertextuality theory emerged from an in-depth investigation of text theory. We shall therefore attempt to identify the lexical and terminological meanings of the word “text”.

1.1. The Lexical Meaning

The linguistic meanings of the word “text” in Arabic lexicographical works can be traced back to the notions of “elevation” and “manifestation”, as well as reaching the utmost limit of something, its goal and its extreme point [1]. These and other meanings differ completely from the original lexical meaning of the word *Texte* in Western Latin traditions, since that word derives from the lexical unit *Texère–Textus* [2], corresponding respectively to the concepts of “fabric” and the action of “weaving”.

The terminological meaning of the text in critical-theoretical literature derives from the Latin linguistic meaning of the word *Texte*, based on the assumption that the text is a verbal and linguistic phenomenon indicating the juxtaposition of a group of words within a single linguistic fabric. Its units are interconnected through lexical, linguistic, logical, or artistic relations, or through all these relations simultaneously. These relations establish the static structure of the realised text, which produces a communicative discourse.

In this respect, the lexical meaning of the text is connected to the general meaning of fabric, whose meanings, according to the author of *Lisan al-Arab*, include “joining, arranging, and refining” [3]. Accordingly, prominent figures of classical Arabic rhetorical and critical studies employed the term “weaving”, together with its associated concepts, when discussing the cohesion and coherence of poetic discourse, considering it “a craft, a form of weaving, and a genre of representation” [4].

Evidence of this can be found in the structure of the complex Arabic poem, which constitutes an integrated poetic image whose parts consist of elements organised within an interconnected relational linguistic fabric characterised by cohesion and textual composition.

1.2. The Terminological Meaning of the Text

The forms and contents of the text have been approached by various linguistic and critical schools. It has consequently received multiple and divergent definitions within their respective epistemological contexts, owing to the different perspectives adopted by these schools. These definitions can be classified according to the following frameworks:

a) Its linguistic forms, expressive styles, components, characteristics, and functions [5].

b) Its intersection with various terms, such as discourse, corpus, and literary work, among others.

c) Its capacity to be analysed into smaller units [6], considering it a group of interconnected sentences.

d) Its self-contained nature and the completeness of its meaning, whereby it is regarded as a closed structure within structuralist literature.

Accordingly, the text is the realised structure of the communicative function, governed by the principles of coherence, cohesion, and informativity. It adopts language as both its material and its instrument. Its forms are multiple and its functions diverse.

Consequently, intertextual studies approach it as an operational concept that can be observed and measured on the basis of its linear and dynamic dimensions. From this perspective, it is a linguistic entity comprising a sequence of words and sentences that together form a fabric at the levels of expression and content, characterised by relations of compatibility and difference.

The text is also constructed on the basis of the two activities of writing and reading, given that it is “a collection of quotations” [7] manifested in written form. For this reason, the concept of the text is replaced by that of writing, considering that, for Mohammed Meftah, the text is “a verbal (written) event with multiple functions, characterised simultaneously by closure and generativity” [8].

Accordingly, pure intertextual studies do not address “all manifestations of oral, gestural, and iconic communication” [9], since the text is a specific linguistic unit established through writing, which is essentially characterised by cohesion and coherence. These qualities are constructed by the reader on the basis of their cognitive and value-based knowledge.

In this respect, Meftah distinguishes the text from the concept of “textual resemblance”, a term initially applied to “different manifestations such as dreams, culture, and various icons” [10], among other human activities that do not correspond to the subject matter of intertextuality theory or serve its scientific objectives and propositions.

1.3. Degrees of the Text

Mohammed Meftah endowed the text with a pragmatic dimension—closure and generativity—which enabled him to classify it according to its degrees of clarity and ambiguity. In his conception [11], the text progresses through the following levels:

- The clear text.
- The explicit text.
- The apparent text.
- The probable text.
- The possible text.
- The obscure text.

These classifications of the degrees of the text in Mohammed Meftah's work may have been inspired by the jurisprudential and literary concepts of the text in ancient Arab culture.

2. The Formative Foundations of the Idea of Intertextuality

The new epistemological context of this idea benefited from a number of preceding conceptions, whose principal models can be identified through the following elements:

a) Roman Jakobson (R. Jakobson) and some of his fellow Formalists, including Shklovsky and Eikhenbaum, corrected the proposition that "the literary text is independent of what precedes and follows it" [12]. They argued that every linguistic system is synchronic and based on two structural elements: the past and the future, both of which are "inseparable from every written literary text".

This perspective paved the way for a study directed towards analysing the linguistic structure of the text by connecting its circumstances to the external frameworks of the text along the temporal axis. In this way, the literary work appears interconnected and coherent, since its explicit and implicit dimensions reveal interaction and integration with other literary texts that preceded it or were contemporary with it.

As a result, the concept of static synchrony was transformed into another concept: dynamic synchrony. Mohammed Meftah employed this concept in defining the text and approaching the Western idea of intertextuality simultaneously.

Intertextuality is a theoretical element whose concept has been able to replace numerous concepts developed by various ideologies, which maintained that the literary text is a linguistic universe closed in upon itself and establishes a single semantic axis manifested within the text in different ways.

In contrast, according to the idea of intertextuality, the literary text is a linguistic universe connected to reading and founded on a historical vision encompassing the three dimensions of time. It is a "written textual space" [13] in which a group of utterances drawn from other texts intersect and coexist simultaneously.

On this basis, Mohammed Meftah argues that Julia Kristeva was the scholar who brought the idea of interrelationship and interpenetration between texts within a single text to maturity. She introduced literary text theory into a new epistemological context from which "all intertextual studies benefited" [14], connecting the literary text to the reader and culture simultaneously.

b) Genetic structuralism responded to a number of structuralist philosophical propositions, such as "the closed system, non-relation, non-society, and non-history" [15]. It sought to refute the referential foundations and ideological backgrounds underlying the structuralist conception of the literary text.

It defended the idea that literature is a verbal phenomenon associated with the structure of the surrounding social phenomena. In other words, it is a linguistic and social entity in which the relations between linguistic units within the literary text correspond to the social relations existing between individuals [16] within the same linguistic and cultural community.

Its objective is to understand these elements through linguistic analysis associated with interpretation and oscillating between the internal and external dimensions. Intertextual studies consequently opened up the cultural and social dimension, enabling intertextual analysis to engage with diverse linguistic and non-linguistic data contributing to the construction of the literary text.

In this context, Mohammed Meftah employed the concepts of intentionality and sociality, stating: "We do not entirely deny intentionality, but neither do we make it the first and final cause of discourse production and interpretation. Rather, we consider it one component that acquires its meaning only

through its counterpart, namely sociality" [17].

This is because the language of the literary text possesses a dynamic dimension originating in the integration of the text with its general environment in its pragmatic dimensions.

c) Mikhail Bakhtin (M. Bakhtin) emphasised the dialogism of texts and their plurality of voices, criticising earlier conceptions. He argued that "every act of writing or inscription is an extension of what preceded it, engages in a debate with it, and anticipates active responses in the process of understanding" [18].

His aim was, on the one hand, to undermine structuralist thought and, on the other, to affirm the relationship between the primary text and other discourses. This relationship is natural and governed by verbal interaction, which is "an inevitable and unavoidable fate for every literary text" [19] at the level of agents and subjects.

Bakhtin's formulation paved the way for the development of a mature conception in numerous writings concerning the literary text and its related dimensions, considering it "a transformation of previous and contemporary utterances" [20] as a meaningful productive practice.

Whatever the case, the concept of the text, in light of intertextuality, freed itself from the reference to personal authorship by acknowledging the dynamic function of literary language, as established through the semantic analysis undertaken by Kristeva. Through this approach, she sought to establish "a science of the text constructed as a critique of meaning and its elements" [21], or of its microstructures and macrostructures.

On the basis of this consideration, intertextuality became, for Mohammed Meftah, "a systematic concept and a methodological mechanism that views the text as a linguistic universe founded on the principle of relations between signs, both inside and outside the text, regardless of their sources" [22].

He relied on the principle of connection, as opposed to separation, which forms part of the group of concepts accompanying the idea of intertextuality. He adopted the philosophy according to which everything is connected to everything else. This led him to reject the principle of separation and rupture, since the principle of connection is consistent with the reality of literary culture, which has not experienced historical ruptures.

In this regard, Mohammed Meftah avoided engaging in discussions of the author and the author's relationship with the work, turning directly instead to the analysis of the internal structures of the realised text, in accordance with the thesis of unity in culture.

In general, the literary text, particularly the poetic text, is composed of a group of possible texts. Its signs, in their various forms, do not refer to a particular referent but rather to other words existing in historical texts and available, in one way or another, in the texts of society and culture.

In Mohammed Meftah's view, the literary text is an incomplete construction reflecting a series of thoughts, beliefs, and references that interact in different ways with explicit or implicit elements existing in other discourses, whether preceding or contemporary with the primary text. Its analysis is therefore based on a semiotic foundation and a pragmatic framework whose central principle is the relationship between the text, the reader, and culture.

3. Intertextuality in Critical Practice

Researcher Mohammed Meftah became convinced that all critical propositions had addressed the idea of intertextuality without moving beyond the theoretical framework established by Julia Kristeva. Within this context, he "distinguished between two tendencies in intertextuality" [23]: one literary and the other philosophical, represented by Jacques Derrida and others.

Both tendencies shared the use of intertextuality to refute certain propositions, such as presence, coherence, and absolute correspondence, among other assumptions rejected by pure intertextual studies, which viewed the literary text as intertextual in nature.

3.1. The Term "Intertextuality" in Contemporary Arab Culture

Prominent figures in contemporary Arab culture agree that researcher Mohammed Meftah was the first to translate the Latin-form word *intertextuality* into the Arabic term *al-tanass*, considering it the precise equivalent of the idea of interpenetration and integration. This translation is distinguished by its accuracy in expressing the substance of the concept, unlike "numerous other translations that do not correspond to the term expressing the Western concept" [24], such as *nassnasa*, interpenetration, interaction, intertextuality, and dialogism, which do not adequately convey the Western idea of intertextuality.

The word *tanass* is derived from the verb *tanassasa*, whereby the first letter *sad* is assimilated into the second, resulting in the form *tanass*, through the assimilation of identical consonants. Its morphological pattern, *tafa'ul*,

also indicates participation in an action, through the interrelationship of one text or several texts with the actualised text in different ways, whereby the interacting texts are manifested within it through presence and absence.

In this context, Mohammed Meftah argues that “many studies have misused the concept in Arab and other studies because they have failed to understand it” [25]. From this perspective, intertextuality is not merely a matter of similarity between words, expressions, or comparable linguistic elements. Rather, it is a systematic concept and an analytical strategy that does not aim to investigate plagiarism within different texts or trace the origins of the ideas and stylistic forms of the primary text.

This is because its rhetorical nature and philosophical reality regard it as a linguistic process that is both spontaneous and intentional, performing multiple functions that “vary in importance and effect according to the intentions of the intertextual author” [26].

Myth is one of the forms through which the idea of intertextuality is expressed. Its presence can be observed in the poem “Oedipus at Delphi” by Fath Allaq [27], in which the poet assumes the character of Oedipus from the beginning to the end of the text, modifying the story and, in particular, its ending, which was “different from the original ending” [28].

He went to the priestess at Delphi to ask her about the reason for what had befallen the poet’s islands, corresponding to Sophocles’ Thebes. Modern Arab poets resorted to employing myth in the service of a particular vision, in addition to its positive semantic implications. This is because myth intersects with history and mythology, while its expressive structure reflects the poet’s philosophical and intellectual dreams and aspirations.

3.2. Textualisation (Nassnasa)

The frequent presence of intertextuality in Mohammed Meftah’s works led him to establish a comparison between it and the concept of textualisation, which he defines as follows: “It is a universe that develops from something consisting of open possibilities capable of growing along different paths, such as the development and evolution of something in visual paintings or poetic compositions” [29].

He illustrated this concept through Mohammed Bennis’s *Book of Love*, a work in which a painter participated. The book consists of a collection of illustrated texts and poetic texts constructed through interpenetration and integration, in a manner similar to the concept of intertextuality in this respect. Nevertheless, the structure of this phenomenon is what determines its function.

The difference between textualisation and intertextuality is therefore the same as the difference between the text and its resemblance, from one perspective. Pure intertextuality is not merely an intersection of texts or other conceptions judged from outside their internal environment. Nor does it overlook the consequences of this intersection and integration. This is precisely the central issue and weakness of studies that have misused the concept and moved away from its stylistic essence and philosophical reality as both writing and reading.

*3.3. Isotopy**

The concept of isotopy in Mohammed Meftah’s work is governed by a unifying principle: accumulation. He endowed it with a pragmatic semantic dimension, thereby linking it to intertextuality. It is defined as “the accumulation of an existing cognitive nucleus within discourse” [30].

This defining characteristic confirms its relationship with intertextuality, since both are subject to the same mechanism, based on the assumption that “any text, according to Mohammed Meftah’s perspective, is nothing more than an accumulation of a previously existing cognitive nucleus” [31], one that precedes every discourse.

From this perspective, its meaning almost becomes synonymous with the concept of intertextuality, understood as the interrelationship of one text or several texts with other texts in different ways [32]. On the other hand, its content appears broader than that of intertextuality, since isotopy constitutes a theoretical element and a descriptive tool that helps characterise the subject matter of intertextuality.

Accordingly, the unifying concept of isotopy enables it to govern all the phenomena described in discourse analysis, which relies on several concepts in its approach, including intentions, intertextuality, dynamism, interaction, and other concepts incorporated within isotopy.

For Mohammed Meftah, the concept of isotopy is associated with its pragmatic functions, unlike “Western studies, which restricted it to its central function, represented by the interconnection and cohesion of discourse components, on the assumption that the elements of the text appear contradictory on the surface but are semantically interconnected” [33].

In any case, studies that focus on the principle of relationship maintain that every concept is founded on another concept, and every text, insofar as it is intertextual, is constructed on another text or other texts within general intertextuality. This is governed by the concept of relationship, which is internal in the case of a single text and external in the case of the relationship between one text and other texts.

Furthermore, the identification of the components of internal and external intertextuality is based on the data provided by the surrounding environment and what is known as intentionality*. Therefore, interpretation appropriate to intertextuality within the field of intertextual studies should be connected to the interpretation of the author's intentions.

Intertextuality is a productive mechanism, not a form of disparagement, through which the degree of a discourse's coherence with the discourses that precede and follow it is determined, on the one hand, as well as the manner in which these components are adapted to their environment. This adaptation may take the following forms [34]:

- Veneration, respect, and reverence.
- Ridicule, mockery, and humour (incompatibility).

The actual analytical subject of intertextual reading, in both its branches, is therefore coherence or its absence.

From a critical perspective, the judgement of a discourse in this regard is determined by the degree to which it corresponds to the aesthetic and intellectual standards prevailing in the period during which the primary text is produced and received.

A poet says* in a poem entitled "The Blood of Snow":

Shake towards yourself the trunk of a god, and pray
Within my temple, then split the earth from my lips.

Then sow from my veins and arteries a sun,
As the desert is made from my garments.

Then weave from the threads of dawn white hearts,
Open and free from error.

Set fire to the wood of days within my eyes,
Then gather the ashes of life and kindle them.

Withdraw our shame and make the stone speak,
Shade the graceful love and depart.

These poetic lines reveal external intertextual isotopies at the level of reference, relating to absent texts originating from different contexts, which the poet has attempted to bring together within a single poetic context. From one level to another, this context is characterised by a series of horizontal isotopies, the most important of which is the repetition of certain morphological and grammatical units, particularly prepositions, conjunctions, and the second-person feminine singular suffix.

These elements occur frequently and contribute to the structure and content of the discourse. The poem also alludes to religious texts, as in the Almighty's words: "And shake towards you the trunk of the palm tree; it will drop upon you fresh, ripe dates" (Qur'an, Maryam, 19:25).

It also refers to the Almighty's words: "And they raced to the door, and she tore his shirt" (part of Qur'an, Yusuf, 12:25).

These references are expressed through the following poetic phrases by way of allusion: "Shake ... and pray ... then split the earth from my lips." Other mythological references are also present, such as those relating to Ishtar and Adonis, given that the cognitive structure being accumulated is pain, as will be explained later.

4. Intertextual Reading

Intertextual reading of literary texts in general is divided into two branches:

4.1. Linear Reading

This type of reading seeks to establish coherence between the components of internal intertextuality. It therefore focuses on identifying horizontal grammatical isotopies based on repetition, such as conjunctions, declarative particles, and imperative verbs in the previously mentioned poem "The Blood of Snow".

The poet has organised a series of isotopies through different methods and forms in order to reinforce the centrality of the title, which appears within the structure of a genitive metaphorical construction that semantically

symbolises the structure of pain, expressed through the word “Ah” in the poem.

Through this use, the poet establishes a new logic composed of both the possible and the impossible, realised through a series of poetic units, such as “the blood of snow”, “a god”, “split from my lips”, “the veins”, “the desert”, and “the wood of days”. These units contribute to alluding to the accumulated structure of pain.

4.2. Non-Linear Reading

This reading complements linear reading within a general concept “based on the principle of double coherence” [35], since the cognitive nucleus being accumulated requires, in every discourse, a process of identification involving “two procedures” [36]:

a) Analysing the discourse by identifying its central nucleus.

b) Revealing the discourses with which it engages in dialogue, in order to identify the coherence existing between the primary text and all possible texts. These two procedures also help establish interactive relationships between them.

In accordance with this approach, certain expressions in the preceding poem encompass meanings that vary between holiness, purity, and impurity. Some of them also fall within opposing binary structures. Taken together, they indicate that the second-person feminine singular suffix accompanying the words of the poem—“shake”, “towards you”, “pray”, “split”, “sow”, “weave”, “kindle”, and “carry”—has governed the poet’s being through the interweaving of the religious and the mythical.

This is because the self being addressed through commands in this discourse appears to be Ishtar, who brings together the sacred and the profane within a single entity (“withdraw our shame”). This suggests that the poet wishes her to weave the universe from his own being, in the same way as Adonis’s aspiration.

Furthermore, her blood represents the pain of both the poet and Adonis. The metaphorical images “the blood of snow”, “sow a sun”, and “weave hearts”, despite their different grammatical structures and the apparent irrationality of their constituent elements, reveal that their content belongs to the semantic field of heat. This refers to a revolution that melts within the poet’s being as he seeks to establish balance outside this framework, since he wishes to purify himself of an impurity that pursues him and aspires to attain a new spirit, expressed through the word “dawn”.

Thus, we have discussed a nucleus, elements, and relationships at both the formal and substantive levels, in light of the text’s references to a group of texts interconnected with it. Another group of possible texts expressing pain may also be embedded within some of these texts.

In this context, Mohammed Meftah adopted what is known as “local interpretation” [37], employing within it a series of mutually reinforcing concepts so as not to leave everything to the discretion of the recipient. Consequently, a methodological intervention becomes necessary to regulate the play of references, organise them, and prevent them from becoming dispersed.

This role is performed by double coherence, which observes the same principle in the primary text and in the texts with which it shares isotopic relations, in order to ensure identification and delimitation.

In his analysis of poetic discourse, he adopted a group of concepts parallel to the concept of intertextuality, with the aim of making the text a living entity whose components grow through interaction, because “every structure, however scattered it may appear, ultimately leads to an order constructed by the recipient” [38].

In general, intertextual reading, in both its branches, is subject to the existence of internal and external relationships. The former seeks to establish interrelationships within the text itself, while the latter seeks to establish its relationship with neighbouring texts and all possible texts that may engage in dialogue with it.

This interrelationship involves several concepts, namely “correspondence (interaction and interpenetration) and divergence (distancing and juxtaposition)” [39], which bring together the primary, or actualised, text and the various texts interconnected with it, all of which are constructed on the basis of intentions.

5. Forms of Intertextuality

Some intertextual studies have classified intertextuality, in terms of production, into three categories: “repetition, absorption, and dialogue”; and, in terms of its mode, into two types: internal intertextuality and external intertextuality [40].

In internal intertextuality, the poet begins with a particular cognitive nucleus and then seeks to develop and expand it. This process of growth is divided into two stages.

The first is the process of expansion, which is an affirming, explanatory, and clarifying process [41].

The second is “the process of condensation, which is a distancing and exclusionary process”.

There are also other partial types of intertextuality, whereby the poet invokes texts, words, structures, expressions, or meanings from the Holy Qur’an, the Prophetic Hadith, collective and cultural heritage, or all of these sources together.

In general, the forms of intertextuality can be represented through the following frameworks:

5.1. At the Level of Imitation

At this level, intertextuality is divided into two types:

a) Parodic imitation (parody): This involves changing the meaning until it becomes an example of ridicule [42]. Mohammed Meftah argues that “many studies have reduced intertextuality to this type” [43].

b) Emulative imitation (pastiche): This is considered the fundamental basis of intertextuality in many studies within the field of intertextuality.

5.2. At the Level of Production

It is divided into two types:

a) Internal intertextuality: The writer reproduces their own previous work.

b) External intertextuality: The writer produces the works of others in different ways, such as allusion, citation, quotation, and other techniques.

In light of this, Mohammed Meftah argues that “it is commonplace to say that the poet absorbs the texts of others, engages in dialogue with them, or transcends them according to the context and circumstances (...), or to say that the poet absorbs the traces of their previous works or reflects their contradictions when they change their opinion. Therefore, their text or texts must be situated spatially within the cultural path to which they belong, or temporally within a specific historical period” [44].

5.3. At the Level of Form and Content

From this perspective, researchers in intertextuality are divided into three groups. Some locate intertextuality in meaning, others in form, while the third group, represented by Mohammed Meftah [45], considers it to exist in both, on the assumption that separating form from content is neither logical nor acceptable.

5.4. At the Level of Intention

According to this axis, intertextuality is divided into the following types [46]:

a) Arbitrary intertextuality: This is the type that cannot be identified within the text except through reliance on the recipient’s memory.

b) Conscious and intentional intertextuality: This type directs the reader towards its sources, as in the previously mentioned poetic lines, in which the points of intertextual reference are identified for the reader.

In this way, Mohammed Meftah approached intertextuality theory, which revolves around a central idea concerning the concept of the text in terms of its static and dynamic dimensions. Within this framework, he attempted to establish an epistemological structure in which concepts and genres intersect with one another.

In doing so, he benefited from a range of forms of knowledge associated with what is known as cognitive criticism, including linguistics, semiotics, and other fields. In his analyses, he also sought to bring research sciences and the humanities closer together, aiming to understand texts and phenomena and interpret them in light of a major problem that governed his intellectual project: Is it possible to establish a science of texts that helps us read modern texts while preserving their cultural richness and civilisational values?

Accordingly, the fields of his intellectual project became numerous, and academic disciplines intersected throughout his critical experience. He focused on heritage texts—poetry, philosophy, narrative, Sufism, history, rhetoric, and others—approaching them in many of his books through the use of Western methodologies and a range of complex sciences. These approaches appeared mutually reinforcing throughout the different stages of his critical experience [47], both theoretically and practically, on the assumption that the text consists of forms and structures.

6. Functions of Intertextuality

Despite the multiplicity of epistemological fields that have addressed the study of intertextuality, Mohammed Meftah maintained a number of functions, which can be summarised as follows:

6.1. The Critical Function

Intertextuality is one of the fundamental critical concepts and a methodological mechanism whose function is to judge whether a discourse is coherent or incoherent. It does so by deconstructing the text and investigating its deepest semantic dimensions.

From this perspective, during the early stages of its use, it was employed in accordance with the view "that it served as a basis for criticising both the author and the literary work" [48].

This approach is perhaps the one followed by classical Arabic critical studies in their examination of plagiarism, based on the belief among their prominent figures that intertextuality, in its modern sense, consists of linguistic universes that are homogeneous in form, content, or both.

The opposite is true, however, since intertextuality consists of heterogeneous linguistic universes whose vitality increases through dialogue with other cultural discourses.

6.2. The Literary Function

From the perspective of intertextual studies, this function is manifested in the characteristic that colours and shapes the primary text through two frameworks.

a) The first framework:

This consists of the text's intersection with other texts or semantic systems originating from different cultural contexts, given that certain components of intertextuality may be "familiar to the reader because they are constructed according to their capacities" [49].

In other words, the elements realised within the actualised text contribute to activating the mechanisms of reference with which the reader has become familiar through contact with and reading of other texts that preceded the primary text.

b) The second framework:

This framework consists of the fact that certain components of intertextuality may violate the recipient's horizon of expectations, causing them to engage in two processes. One is conscious, in the sense that the recipient knows the point of departure, as in the previously mentioned poetic lines. The other is a process in which the recipient cannot establish the truth with certainty, as in the expression "Shake towards you the trunk...".

The recipient becomes immersed in this process and engages with it on the basis of "their cultural and cognitive knowledge" [50]. This is because the recipient plays a role in producing the meaning manifested in these interconnections between the author's intentions, the meaning of the primary text, and the meaning in which the recipient becomes involved.

This is because meaning is shared among these heritage-related elements.

6.3. The Aesthetic Function

This function is manifested in the aesthetic characteristic that transforms and changes the relationship between linguistic universes existing in expressive forms that adopt language as both an instrument and an end.

From this perspective, it represents "the interaction of interconnected texts with the primary text" [51], or their interrelationship with it through criticism or dialogue.

For intertextuality scholars, the function of an authentic literary work does not lie "solely in its representational function" [52], nor does it consist merely in imitating reality. Rather, it also lies in the aesthetic effect established or produced by intertextual writing through the reader's activation of the text and its constituent elements.

6.4. The Cultural Function

Intertextuality is an established principle and a fundamental factor in cultural exchange and openness towards the Other, given that intertextuality scholars believe in the unity of human literary experiences.

This belief is reflected in Mohammed Meftah's adoption of the proposition concerning "the similarity of human mental structures" [53].

Evidence of this lies in the role of intertextuality in connecting modern culture with ancient culture, thereby creating an awareness of the unity of human culture and its continuity across time and space.

Thus, historical circumstances in their ancient forms become connected with modern history, despite their diverse origins, through the interaction of texts at one or several levels or axes.

6.5. The Ideological Function

Mohammed Meftah informs us of an issue that falls within the scope of this function when he states that certain literary writings "highlighted a doctrinal character, as the poet may sometimes serve a particular position within the field of intertextuality. An example of this is the position adopted by the Abbasid poet Abu Nuwas, who satirised pre-Islamic poetry, as well as that of Ahmed Shawqi and others" [54].

In addition, the combination of genres in modern prose writing has highlighted another dimension. In this regard, some studies argue that this type of writing has transformed "intertextuality into a strategy of suspense whose function is to mock the stability of modern critical propositions" [55].

Furthermore, certain Andalusian poetic responses within the field of intertextuality have reinforced doctrinal and philosophical issues that are, in many respects, related to ideology in terms of both orientation and function.

Mohammed Meftah approached intertextuality by focusing on it in his discussion of the structures of poetry and the dynamic nature of its language, which transcends static conceptions. For this reason, alongside the concept of intertextuality, he invoked numerous other concepts as analytical tools through which poetry could be examined.

In general, his approach to the field of intertextuality was characterised by the following features:

- He did not eliminate the role of the writer or the writer's influence on the text in producing meaning. Nor did he overlook the writer's voice within the primary text, as demonstrated by his use of the concept of intentionality.
- He did not exaggerate the importance of the reader or subject meaning entirely to the reader's discretion, as purely interpretive reception theories tend to do.
- He theorised the text and intertextuality through the use of a series of concepts related to them, with the aim of resolving methodological problems that had generated contradictions among critical perspectives, doctrines, and schools concerning the relationship between the internal and external dimensions, as well as the intentional authority of the writer and other foundations and assumptions.
- On this basis, he adopted a methodology distributed across two axes in his analysis of phenomena and discourses:

1) A structuralist methodology: This involved treating each discourse separately by analysing its macrostructures and microstructures, while introducing analytical concepts throughout the process.

2) A systematic methodology: Through this approach, he sought to establish functional structural relationships between the different types of discourse, phenomena, and concepts he examined, because all of them are genres whose structures and functions overlap within the systematic methodology, while remaining independent within the non-systematic methodology.

In his analysis of poetic discourse, he relied on mutually compatible concepts, each of which explains its parallel concept, such as intertextuality and parallelism, among others, attempting to synthesise them [56] within an overall systematic methodology that he drew from modern Western research in order to construct a coherent framework.

Footnotes

Footnotes

[1] See: Ibn Manzur (d. 711 AH), *Lisan al-Arab*, Dar Sadir, Beirut, 3rd ed., 1994, entry "Nass."

[2] See: Majdi Wahba, *Dictionary of Literary Terms*, Librairie du Liban, Beirut, 1st ed., 1974, entry "Text," p. 566.

[3] See: Ibn Manzur, *op. cit.*, entry "Nasj."

[4] See: Al-Jahiz, *Al-Hayawan*, Vol. 3, edited and annotated by Abd al-Salam Muhammad Harun, Publications of the Arab Islamic Scientific Academy, Baghdad, 1st ed., n.d., p. 132.

[5] See: Muhammad Wahbi, *From Text to Intertextuality*, Alam al-Kutub al-Hadith for Publishing and Distribution, Irbid, Jordan, 1st ed., 2012, pp. 13, 15, 18, 23, and 25.

[6] See: Ibid.

[7] See: Ibid., p. 41.

[8] Muhammad Meftah, *Analysis of Poetic Discourse: The Strategy of Intertextuality*, Arab Cultural Center, Casablanca, 1st ed., 1985, p. 120.

[9] See: Ibid., same page.

[10] See: Muhammad Meftah, *Concepts and Landmarks: Toward a Realistic Interpretation*, Arab Cultural Center, Casablanca, 1st ed., 1999, p. 39.

[11] See: Ibid., p. 38.

[12] See: Roman Jakobson et al., *The Theory of the Formal Method: Texts by the Russian Formalists*, translated by Ibrahim al-Khatib, Moroccan United Publishers Company, Rabat, 1st ed., 1982, p. 102.

[13] See: Julia Kristeva, *Sémantique: Recherches pour une sémanalyse*, Tel Quel Collection, Éditions du Seuil, Paris, 1969, p. 62.

[14] See: Muhammad Meftah, *Concepts and Landmarks*, op. cit., pp. 38–39.

[15] See: Muhammad Wahbi, *op. cit.*, pp. 64–67.

[16] Muhammad Wahbi, *ibid.*, p. 66.

[17] Muhammad Meftah, "Semiotic Analysis: Its Dimensions and Tools," *Dirasat Journal*, Rabat, Issue 1, 1987, p. 116.

[18] See: Muhammad Wahbi, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

[19] See: Muhammad Wahbi, *op. cit.*, p. 64 et seq.

[20] See: Julia Kristeva, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

[21] See: Julia Kristeva, *The Science of Text*, translated by Farid al-Zahi, revised by Abd al-Jalil Nazim, Dar Toubkal Publishing, Casablanca, 1st ed., 1991, p. 116.

[22] See: Muhammad Meftah, *Similarity and Difference*, Arab Cultural Center, Casablanca, 2001, pp. 6, 9, 10, 23, 25, 26, 28, 33, 34, 61, 87, 157, and 163.

[23] See: Muhammad Meftah, *Analysis of Poetic Discourse*, op. cit., p. 121 et seq.

[24] Muhammad Meftah, "The Role of Background Knowledge in Creativity, Analysis, Interpretation and Exegesis," *Sal Journal of Studies*, Rabat, Issue 6, 1992, p. 86.

[25] See: Youssef Oughlissi, *The Problem of Terminology in the New Critical Discourse*, Ikhtilaf Publications, Algeria, 1st ed., 2008, pp. 391, 393, and 395.

[26] See: Muhammad Meftah, *Concepts and Landmarks*, op. cit., pp. 40–41.

[27] See: Muhammad Meftah, *Analysis of Poetic Discourse*, op. cit., p. 132.

[28] See: Fateh Allaq, *Diwan: Verses from the Book of Forgetfulness*, Ministry of Communication and Culture, National Fund for the Promotion of Arts and Literature, Algeria, 2001, pp. 123–272.

[29] See: A summary of the original story of Oedipus in Muhyi al-Din Subhi, *Modern Literary Criticism between Myth and Science*, Arab Book House, Beirut, 1988, p. 118 et seq.

[30] Muhammad Meftah, *Concepts and Landmarks*, op. cit., p. 179.

[31] This is a term borrowed from the fields of physics and chemistry. It was employed in discourse-analysis studies and given a semiotic significance, as in the studies of … and François Rastier. See: Youssef Oughlissi, *op. cit.*, p. 264.

[32] See: Muhammad Meftah, *Analysis of Poetic Discourse*, op. cit., p. 25.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid., p. 111.

[35] See: Muhammad Meftah, "My Proposed and Open Project," *Al-Adab* (Lebanese Journal), Issues 3–4, 1998, p. 37.

[36] A pragmatic concept employed by numerous scholars, including Searle, Grice, Van Dijk, Rastier, Hintikka, and Muhammad Meftah, among others. Some consider intention to be an expression of conscious will, while others regard intentionality as involving the integration of the conscious and the unconscious. Muhammad Meftah is among those who adopted and developed this concept in several studies and books.

[37] See: Muhammad Meftah, *The Dynamics of the Text: Theoretical Formulation and Practical Application*, Arab Cultural Center, Casablanca, 1st ed., 1987, pp. 84–85.

[38] The poet is Ahmed Qiran al-Zahrani, in *Selections from Twentieth-Century Arabic Poetry*, Vol. 2, Abdulaziz Saud Al-Babtain Foundation for Poetic Creativity, compiled by Majid al-Hakawati and Adnan Jaber, revised by Abdulaziz Jumaa, Kuwait, 2001, p. 353.

[39] See: Muhammad Meftah, *The Unknown of Eloquence*, Dar Toubkal Publishing, Casablanca, 1st ed., 1990, p. 118.

[40] See: The concept of double coherence in F. Rastier, *Sens et textualité*, Hachette, Paris, pp. 30–35.

[41] Ibid., p. 35.

[42] See: Muhammad Meftah, *Concepts and Landmarks*, pp. 129–130, 133, and 137; and his other book, *Similarity and Difference*, pp. 23–24, 30–31, 158, and 160.

[43] See: Muhammad Meftah, *The Unknown of Eloquence*, p. 7.

[44] Ibid., p. 118.

[45] See: Muhammad Bennis, *The Phenomenon of Contemporary Poetry in Morocco: A Genetic Approach*, Dar al-Tanwir for Printing, Publishing and Distribution, Beirut, 1996, pp. 253–254 and 287. See also: Laurent Jenny, "La stratégie de la forme," *Pratiques*, No. 27, Éditions du Seuil, Paris, 1976, pp. 158–261.

[46] [No footnote text was provided in the original.]

[47] Muhammad Meftah, *Analysis of Poetic Discourse*, p. 119.

[48] Ibid., p. 121.

[49] Muhammad Meftah, *ibid.*, p. 122.

[50] See: Muhammad Meftah, *ibid.*, p. 126.

[51] Ibid., pp. 122–134.

[52] The researcher Yahya Ben al-Walid divided the stages of Meftah's critical experience into the following phases: the social, functional, aesthetic, dynamic, and epistemological-systemic phases. See: Yahya Ben al-Walid, *Heritage and Reading: A Study of Contemporary Critical Discourse in Morocco*, Supreme Council of Culture, Cairo, 1st ed., pp. 255–257.

[53] Marc Angenot, "Intertextuality: A Study of the Emergence and Dissemination of a Conceptual Field," translated by Muhammad Khair al-Biqa'i, *Alamat Journal*, Vol. 18, March 1996, p. 96.

[54] Hans Robert Jauss, *Pour une esthétique de la réception*, translated from German by Claude Maillard, Éditions du Seuil, Paris, 1978, p. 44.

[55] Ibid., p. 45.

[56] See: Jamal Mubarki, *Intertextuality and Its Aesthetics*, Dar Houma, Algeria, n.p., 2003, p. 87.