

**The Methodology of Abd al-Salam al-Masadi in Theorizing Stylistics
and Style**
**La méthodologie d'Abd al-Salam al-Masadi dans la théorisation de la
stylistique et du style**

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Abstract: This study aims to critically examine the methodology of Abd al-Salam al-Masadi, particularly in his book *Stylistics and Style*, published in its fifth edition by Dar al-Kitab al-Jadid al-Muttahid in 2005. The goal is to identify the approach from which the researcher embarks on the complex field of stylistics. This work contains deep theoretical propositions concerning its intricate and interrelated issues regarding concepts and terminology. Al-Masadi's book is divided into two parts: the theoretical section, which explores the relationship of stylistics with rhetoric and linguistics, and the practical section, where the researcher collects various linguistic and stylistic terms from different origins, along with introducing scholars and their contributions.

Keywords: Stylistics, Style, Linguistics, Rhetoric, Theory, Method, Deviation, Reception, Scholars

Résumé Cette étude vise à examiner de manière critique la méthodologie d'Abd al-Salam al-Masadi, notamment dans son livre "**Stylistique et Style**," publié dans sa cinquième édition par Dar al-Kitab al-Jadid al-Muttahid en 2005. L'objectif est d'identifier l'approche à partir de laquelle le chercheur s'engage dans le domaine complexe de la stylistique. Cet ouvrage contient des propositions théoriques profondes concernant les questions complexes et interconnectées des concepts et de la terminologie. Le livre d'Al-Masadi est divisé en deux parties : la section théorique, qui explore la relation de la stylistique avec la rhétorique et la linguistique, et la section pratique, où le chercheur rassemble divers termes linguistiques et stylistiques de différentes origines, tout en présentant des chercheurs et leurs contributions.

Mots-clés: Stylistique, Style, Linguistique, Rhétorique, Théorie, Méthode, Déviation, Réception, Chercheurs.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Abd al-Salam al-Masadi established a methodological map to reinforce the concept of the science of style, based on the efforts of stylistic critic Charles Bally in founding the principles of stylistics. However, al-Masadi critically unveiled the realities of the French school, showing that the science of style, from his critical perspective, emerged from the fusion of disciplines in human knowledge (Al-masadi, 2005, p.18). The critic documented the theoretical practice of stylistics through the relationship between stylistics, linguistics, and literature.

Al-Masadi tackled the linguistic revolution and its impact on the humanities (Al-masadi, 2005, p.12) in the first section of his book *Stylistics and Style*. In the second section, he presented a wealth of linguistic and stylistic terms and introduced prominent figures in both fields, providing translations of functional terms for both disciplines. At the beginning of the book, al-Masadi rooted his discussion in doubts about the legitimacy of stylistics, stemming from a conviction that settled in his critical mind. He viewed style as a cultural given reinforced by obvious practices and prevalent usages. Style, according to al-Masadi, is an integral part of human personality, highlighting the duality of the human and the objective, the scientific and the subjective.

Al-Masadi's critical efforts in studying stylistics are evident in his exploration of its essence, field, and specific nature. He presented substantial contributions, expanding the stylistic theory as a Western method that appeared in modern and contemporary literary criticism. Thus, we aim to clarify the points of alignment by elucidating the justifications of al-Masadi's methodology in theorizing this science and the prospects it aims to achieve.

Al-Masadi, with his extensive knowledge and cultural background in stylistics and style in the fields of linguistics and stylistics, sought to

explain the essence of style first. Despite the title of his book being *Stylistics and Style*, logically, style precedes stylistics, considering the latter as a term derived from the former. Al-Masadi was aware of the essence of this formulation: *Stylistics and Style* because he aimed to clarify the boundaries, field, function, and functional relationships of stylistics between rhetoric and linguistics. He was among the pioneering modern Arab scholars in grasping the subject of stylistics. Hence, he dedicated a title called *The Science and Its Subject*(Al-masadi,2005,p.30) based on his belief in the vastness of the subject of style from terminological and semantic perspectives.

Abd al-Salam al-Masadi's Understanding of the Concept of Style and its subject:

Al-Masadi's uniqueness in his study of the term "style" varied compared to the studies of his contemporaries on the subject. He first explained the term "stylistics: la stylistique" in a foreign language, clarifying the role of the suffix "ique," which leads to the objective study of literary discourse styles derived from the phrase "science of style: science de style." This phrase closely connects to the term "stylistics," hence his determination of the function of stylistics in searching for the objective foundations to establish the science of style(Al-masadi,2005,p.32). This extraction reflects his Western cultural understanding of the term "stylistics" in Western studies, drawing from the thoughts of stylistic critic Michael Riffaterre(Michael,1971,p.31), who clarified the essence of stylistics as striving since its inception to establish scientific objective standards for the science of style, to liberate stylistics from the subjective, intuitive, and aesthetic criticisms.

Concept of Style from Abd al-Salam al-Masadi's Perspective:

Al-Masadi adopted the definition of the French academic critic Buffon Georges in solidifying the concept of style, stating, "le style est l'homme même. Le style ne peut donc ni s'enlever, ni se transporter, ni s'altérer(Buffon,1896,p.6)." Al-Masadi translated it as: "As for style, it is the man himself; thus, it cannot be removed, transferred, or altered(Al-

massadi,2005,p53-54)." We consider this translation the most accurate and appropriate for the concept of style compared to other Arabic translations because it conveys the individuality and uniqueness of style, as Buffon suggested. Salah Fadel translated the same concept as: "As for style, it is the man himself; thus, style cannot be removed, transferred, or altered(Fadel,1988,p.109)." Comparing the two translations, "removal" is more accurate than "disappearance" for it implies the sense of deprivation or expropriation, and "transfer" is broader than "move" as it implies the sense of change. Additionally, "peeling" is more accurate and comprehensive and more suitable for the sense of alteration, as it implies theft and seizure. The terms "removal," "transfer," and "peeling" translated by Abd al-Salam al-Masadi are similar in meaning to Buffon's terms "ni s'enlever, ni se transporter, ni s'altérer," all indicating the specificity and uniqueness of usage and creativity.

Al-Masadi's translation appears to be the most profound, as it refers to the concept of style concerning individuality and specificity, indicating that it is impossible to remove style from its owner forcibly, transform it from one form to another, or peel it off, suggesting implicit theft. Abd al-Salam al-Masadi accurately translated "ni s'altérer" as "peeling," a term that suggests theft, making it clear that style cannot be stolen or altered without revealing the thief, as it is an original creation rooted in spontaneous, psychological, and unique factors, which include subjective and objective elements contributing to its production and formulation.

The Essence of Stylistics from Abd al-Salam al-Masadi's Perspective: Al-Masadi dealt with the essence of stylistics by analyzing the term "stylistics" previously mentioned. He clarified that it is a compound term combining subjective and objective aspects, representing a condensed term for the science of style. The term "stylistics" focuses on searching for the objective foundations to establish the science of style scientifically. Al-Masadi's perspective is concise, needing detail and precision to distinguish between style as a science or theory and stylistics as a method or means. Discussing the science of style requires mentioning its content, which

includes both theoretical and practical aspects(Sandres,2003,p.20). Thus, many scholars do not differentiate between style and stylistics but consider them as one term with one function, which is accurate with a slight fundamental difference.

The Field of Stylistics:

Stylistics is one of the challenging issues in contemporary literary criticism. Al-Masadi defined the field of stylistics based on linguistic thinking represented by Saussure's dichotomy: "langue" and "parole," explaining their development in usage and terminology by researchers, such as Gustave Guillaume's "langue" and "discour(Al-massadi,2005,p.37)," considering that speech is the tangible manifestation of language. Charles Bally established the foundations of the stylistic field based on his investigation of the emotional density(Al-massadi,2005,p.45) carried by the discourse. According to Bally's function of stylistics, emotional, volitional, aesthetic, social, and psychological paradoxes in spontaneous language appear before emerging in artistic language. Al-Masadi's opinion stems from the idea that language is an individual phenomenon, and speech is a social phenomenon. Language manifests tangibly in speech, linking what is perceptible and imperceptible, emotional and unemotional. Thus, he adopted Bally's theory, which posits that discourse includes two types: one that is self-contained and devoid of emotion and one that carries emotions and all kinds of feelings(Al-massadi,2005,p.37).

Al-Masadi introduced the concept of "speaker's preemption(Al-massadi,2005,p.47)," referring to the author, aiming to clarify the relationship between stylistics and the communicative function by emphasizing the idea of influence and reader responses, represented by the element of surprise expressed by Jakobson as the unexpected emerging from the expected(Al-massadi,2005,p.47). The purpose of the concept "speaker's preemption" is to highlight the uniqueness of the author's style by focusing on their creative capacities that ensure individuality and distinctiveness in style. The theory of stylistics is based on identifying this trinity: the speaker, the recipient, and the discourse, which are interrelated

pillars(Al-massadi,2005,p.49) closely connected to the theory of communication.

Speaker's Preemption: The speaker, according to al-Masadi, constructs the mental image and embodies it in a tangible verbal form. He advances the triadic stage or the pillars of stylistic thinking from the origin and existence to receive the verbal series and deconstruct the components of the verbal mold, identifying the nature of the writer's or speaker's style, revealing their thoughts and verbal message as a unique representation of their way of thinking and perspective on things(Al-massadi,2005,p.53). Thus, al-Masadi's title "speaker's preemption" included discussing the author, their style, and thinking, stating:

"The critic knows the verbal art of the writer through their works, thus distinguishing the emotional and sensory state expressed through the artistic text" (al-Masadi, 2005, p. 201).

... so, dedicating al-Musadi to the title of "The Confiscation of the Addressee" includes his talk about the author and his style, his way of thinking, and that "style is a bridge to the purposes of its owner as it is a channel for conveying the components of his personality, not only artistic but existentially absolute" (Al-massadi,2005,p.54) , and his relationship with the reader whose role is to investigate stylistic facts, which is a function on which stylistics is based, that is, by focusing on the reader and his interpretative capabilities.

The Confiscation of the Addressee: The addressee is considered a second pillar in al-Musadi's stylistic thinking, relying on it to uncover the stylistic components of the author or creator because he is an essential party in the success of the communication process through his role of embodying the transmitted experience through discourse from al-Musadi's point of view.

He relied on this data, which we mean by the reader's work and his relationship with the speaker's message, on the opinion of Riffaterre, who believes that the stylistic analyst does not start from the text directly but

from the judgments that the reader presents towards the text (Riffaterre,1993,p.38), being a source for inferring the stylistic inventory. With this opinion, style becomes a surprise to the reader based on his reactions in response to latent stimuli in the corners of the discourse.

The Confiscation of the Discourse: Al-Musadi starts in this title related to the discourse from the idea that the hypothesis of the discourse exists in itself, extending the communication cord between its utterer or creator and its embracer without the essence of the discourse being tied to either of them. Al-Musadi addressed in the title: "The Confiscation of the Discourse" and the terminology of deviation, noting that the debate on terminology attracted the attention of scholars engaged in it. He enumerated a number of synonyms for the term deviation and addressed its problematic semantics, describing it as a terminological leap (Al-masadi,2006,p.124), as he illuminated researchers with twelve Western terms proposed by Western critics. Researchers often find themselves in the dilemma of this synonymous term and in choosing the most indicative and absolute term when receiving this momentum in stylistic research, finding it challenging to determine its semantics, which escape definition and regulation. He notes that the term deviation is a term of precision in meaning, and the credit goes to Abd al-Salam al-Musadi for addressing this term stylistically, providing evidence of its occurrence with examples that prove the speaker's deviation from the usual expression and deviation from the norm of the language system. The term deviation **l'écart** sparked a great debate among scholars' intellectual interpretations. Abd al-Salam al-Musadi saw it as difficult to translate because it is unstable in its conception, which is why many pioneers of linguistics and stylistics did not accept it and put forward alternative terms.

The phrase deviation is a literal translation of the word **écart**, but the concept itself could be termed as transgression or we could revive an Arabic term used by rhetoricians in a specific context, which is the phrase "deviation," and through semantic generation, we could term it as the foreign phrase concept(Riffaterre,1993,p.124). Abd al-Salam al-Musadi

utilizes the rhetorical term deviation, making it a semantic counterpart to the term deviation, and also favored the term transgression as a synonym and alternative to deviation. To simplify the meaning of the term deviation, al-Musadi used what is known as the meaning of the pragmatic linguistic event, which alludes to the familiar use of language, while the dedicated linguistic event clarifies the effectiveness of deviation and its degree and demonstrates the deviation of language use from its norm compared to simple use. Al-Musadi devoted a title in his book "Stylistics and Style: The Relationship and Procedure" in which he addressed the relationship between stylistics and criticism and the nature of stylistics in terms of theory, considering stylistics a theory and a scientific method in the ways of literary style.

The Essential Correlation Between Linguistics and Stylistics: Among the critical issues al-Musadi addressed is the relationship between linguistics and stylistics, providing a definition indicating the connection between them functionally, making stylistics a linguistic inclination. Al-Musadi clarified this connection: "If the act of reporting is the reason for the linguistic event, then the purpose of the literary event lies in transcending communication to excitement" (Riffaterre,1993,p.32). This proposition explains the functional difference between linguistics and stylistics, as the linguistic event does not go beyond reporting or informing, and informing may be the basis of the linguistic event. As for stylistics, its function extends beyond reporting to influencing, stirring emotions, and moving the recipient's dormant feelings, as style is known by its impact because "... it is an aspect of art, a way of putting language in a state of function teeming with vitality, vigor, and activity..." (Abelmalik Mortad,P.49). Style highlights the beauty of the language and ensures the display of its hidden elegance through the weaving process that controls stylistic effectiveness and impact.

The functional correlation between stylistics and linguistics has occupied the thinking of stylistics pioneers. The stylistic critic Michael Riffaterre defined the functional domain of stylistics within the linguistic

field, seeing stylistics as "... studying within the linguistic utterance those elements used to impose the encoder's way of thinking on the decoder, meaning that it studies the act of communication, not as a pure product of a verbal series, but as carrying the personal imprints of the speaker and compelling the recipient's attention" (Riffaterre,1993,p.68). The function of stylistics is determined within the framework of linguistic utterances employed by the author encoded, and it assigns the task of decoding to the reader. According to this opinion, stylistics is suitable for studying the communication process between correspondents, hiding and revealing meaning, in addition to monitoring the author's personal imprint, which tends to seduce the reader with expressive temptations. Al-Musadi made an unparalleled contribution to theorizing stylistics, being one of the early modern Arab theorists to determine its essence and function, deriving its definitions from the pioneers of linguistic science and literary criticism. He adopted Jakobson's statement when he understood stylistics as a search for what distinguishes artistic speech from other levels of discourse first and from all kinds of human arts second. Literary discourses are differentiated based on the types of styles crafted by creators, which vary in tension and impact from one creator to another, considering the differences in cultural and linguistic awareness levels and a set of psychological predispositions that strongly influence the crystallization of style, which becomes clear during the process of comparison.

The Relationship Between Rhetoric and Stylistics: The relationship between the two sciences appears in the duality of extension and redundancy, where Abd al-Salam al-Musadi focused on the standardization and didacticism of rhetoric.

The essential differences help researchers understand this relationship, as the researcher uses Abd al-Salam al-Musadi's book to understand this paradox, where he examined the relationship between grammar and stylistics, considering the first as a field of restrictions and the second as a field of freedoms, with grammar negating and stylistics affirming by saying "stylistics is a linguistic science concerned with

studying the field of manipulation within the structural rules of language regulation" (Riffaterre,1993,p.46). Abd al-Salam al-Musadi's thinking almost aligns with Heinrich Blythe's critical thinking in the field of studying the differences and correlations between the sciences of rhetoric and stylistics. Blythe defined the functional differences between them, saying: "...stylistics is an extension of rhetoric and its negation at the same time; it is both a communication cord and a line of separation..." (Al-Masadi,2005,p.44). Both sciences, rhetoric and stylistics, contribute to working within the framework of the literary phenomenon (Ahmed-sulaiman,2004,p.30). This strengthened their connection because they both participated in analyzing discourse, and discourse is the material of analysis for both, although there is a critical tendency that confines the functional difference between rhetoric and stylistics to the methodological aspect. Therefore, the stylistic evaluation of rhetorical phenomena is a methodological elevation of the critical vision that seeks to reveal the artistic structural value that reads the language aesthetically (Bohouch,p.50). The material of stylistics is structural by its nature, and the new rhetoric is conceived as a science of expression and criticism of individual styles (Fadel,p.199). Abd al-Salam al-Musadi took a direction in stylistic research in which he addressed a set of paradoxes between the sciences: stylistics and rhetoric.

The goal of presenting them is not only to stand on the elements of rupture but also to delve into the absence of communication elements and identify them later. Al-Musadi also defined the relationship between style and text as a set of suggestive elements in literary discourse. He addressed two sequential and functionally identical operations: selection based on utterance assumption and construction based on the functional performance axis of sentences.

Stylistics and Style Bibliography: Al-Musadi relied on more than forty Western references and created a special bibliography for structural stylistic studies distributed over translated Western references and modern Arabic references. It is noted that Abd al-Salam al-Musadi has thirteen references

in structural stylistics, including: "Linguistic Thinking in Arab Civilization," "Stylistics and Literary Criticism," and "Attempts in Structural Stylistics."

Abd al-Salam al-Musadi's Efforts in Translating Stylistic Terminology and Scholars: Abd al-Salam al-Musadi presented a revealing panel of stylistic and linguistic terminology, explaining and translating them in alphabetical order. He relied on the roots of words stripped of additional letters (Al-Masadi,2005,p.16-229) while expanding on explaining the terms according to their contexts. Abd al-Salam al-Musadi gained a leading position in the field of stylistic studies among his contemporaries, making a tremendous effort in defining stylistic terminology, translating, and explaining it, along with translating the scholars of stylistic studies. He arranged them according to the Arabic alphabet, writing their original names in Arabic, and placing next to it their name in the original language

Abd al-Salam al-Masadi achieved a leading position in the field of stylistic studies among his contemporaries. He exerted significant and unparalleled effort in standardizing stylistic terminology, through translation and explanation, along with translating key figures in stylistic studies. He organized them alphabetically according to the Arabic alphabet, providing their full names in their original language. In front of each scholar, he wrote their prominent works in both Arabic and foreign languages, including key figures in linguistics. However, we will focus on shedding light on the key figures and terminology of stylistics, in an attempt to standardize this specialization and assist the esteemed reader in understanding the field of stylistics, both theoretically and practically.

Key Stylistics pioneers:

Abd al-Salam al-Masadi documented (Al-maadi,2005,p.184-202) key figures and is credited with gathering numerous pioneers in stylistic and linguistic studies. He listed the scholars in their original language and specified their birth and death dates. He also mentioned their most notable works in Arabic and French. The title of the book in the foreign language

was documented at the bottom of the book's pages, along with the publisher and year of publication in the foreign language. We have presented them arranged and selected according to the specialization of stylistics, adding figures that Abd al-Salam al-Masadi either omitted or overlooked.

Abd al-Salam al-Masadi made significant contributions through his translation of key figures in stylistics and linguistics. We have compiled the key figures in stylistics to facilitate the esteemed reader's understanding of the pioneers in Western stylistic theory, attaching each pioneer to the book that made them famous in the field of stylistics.

- **Charles Bally:** Swiss linguist, born in Geneva in 1895/1947. Among his most famous works is the book *Traité de stylistique française*, 1951, Paris: Klincksieck.
- **Leo Spitzer:** Austrian-born, German-trained, and French-specialized. He lived between 1887/1960. His most famous work in stylistics is *Études de style*, 1970.
- **Benedetto Croce:** 1866/1952, Italian aesthetic theorist. Among his famous works is *L'esthétique comme science de l'expression*, 1902.
- **Pierre Guiraud:** French linguist. His most famous work is *La stylistique*, 1954, translated into Arabic by Munther Ayashi, 2002.
- **Michael Riffaterre:** Professor at Columbia University, born in France in 1924/2006. Among his most famous works is *Essais de stylistique structurale*, 1971. The book was translated into French by Daniel Delas, and Hamid Lhamidani translated two chapters into Arabic: Chapter One: Criteria for Stylistic Analysis, and Chapter Five: The Concept of Stylistic Function.

Omitted from the list of key figures in stylistics was its pioneer by Al-masadi:

- **Georges Molinié:** Born in France and died in 2014. He was a professor at the Sorbonne University. Among his most famous works is *La stylistique*, translated by Bassam Baraka, 1999.

Research Footnotes:

1. Abd al-Malik Murtad, *Writing from the Void, the nothing Dar el garb for Publih and distribution Oran-Algeria*.
2. Michael Riffaterre, *Criteria for Stylistic Analysis Tranlstaed by Hamid-el hamidani published by Saal studies Chapter one , Casablanca 1993*.
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6. Buffon, *Discours sur le style*, texte de l'édition de l'Abbé J. Pierre, Librairie Ch. Poussielgue, Paris 1896.
7. Salah Fadel, *The Science of Stylistics: Its Principles and Procedures*, 3rd edition, Literary and Cultural Club, 1988 Judda.
8. willy Sanders, *Towards a Linguistic Stylistic Theory*, translated by Khalid Mahmoud Jumaa.

