AN ANALYSIS OF KHALIL GIBRAN'S POEM *AL-UMM* USING ROMAN JAKOBSON'S FORMALIST THEORY

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ABSTRACT
This study aims to analyze Khalil Gibran's poem *Al-Umm* (الأُم) using Roman Jakobson's formalist theory, with particular emphasis on the poetic function and the linguistic representation of maternal love and a child's affection toward the mother. The research adopts a qualitative interpretive approach that relies on close textual analysis to explore meaning as constructed through internal linguistic and stylistic features rather than external historical or biographical contexts. The primary data source is the poem *Al-Umm*, while data collection was conducted through careful reading and systematic note-taking. In this analysis, data reduction refers to the process of selecting, classifying, and focusing on relevant linguistic elements—such as figurative language, repetition, and imagery—that are directly related to Jakobson's formalist framework. Data were then analyzed through interpretative procedures followed by conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that the poem highlights the role and character of a mother in shaping her children, as well as the emotional responses of children toward their mother, conveyed through expressive and symbolic language. To enhance its aesthetic structure and thematic depth, the poem employs six major language styles: poetic exaggeration (hyperbole), simile, repetition, anecdotal expression, representation or imagery, and associative language.
Keywords: Formalism theory, Khalil Gibran, Mother's poem, Roman Jakobson.

ABSTRAK
Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis puisi *Al-Umm* (الأُم) karya Khalil Gibran dengan menggunakan teori formalisme Roman Jakobson, dengan penekanan khusus pada fungsi puitik dan representasi kebahasaan tentang cinta seorang ibu serta kasih sayang anak terhadap ibunya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif interpretatif yang bertumpu pada analisis teks secara mendalam untuk mengungkap makna yang dibangun melalui unsur-unsur linguistik dan stilistika internal, tanpa melibatkan konteks historis atau biografis eksternal. Sumber data utama penelitian ini adalah puisi *Al-Umm*, sedangkan pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui pembacaan cermat dan teknik pencatatan sistematis. Dalam penelitian ini, reduksi data dipahami sebagai proses pemilihan, pengelompokan, dan pemfokusan unsur-unsur kebahasaan yang relevan—seperti bahasa figuratif, repetisi, dan citraan—yang selaras dengan kerangka formalisme Jakobson. Analisis data dilakukan melalui prosedur interpretatif yang diakhiri dengan penarikan simpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa puisi tersebut menyoroti peran dan karakter seorang ibu dalam membentuk anak-anaknya, serta respons emosional anak terhadap ibunya yang disampaikan melalui bahasa yang ekspresif dan simbolik. Untuk memperkuat struktur estetis dan kedalaman tematiknya, puisi ini menggunakan enam gaya bahasa utama, yaitu hiperbola puitik, simile, repetisi, ungkapan anekdot, representasi atau citraan, dan bahasa asosiatif.
Kata kunci: Formalisme, Khalil Gibran, Roman Jakobson, puisi al-Umm

INTRODUCTION

Literature is an object that writers use to express their emotions and feelings. (Anisa & Puspa, 2023) The emotions referred to can be sadness, frustration, joy, and so on. Literary works usually contain beautiful writing that represents the vibrations of the soul. Literary works are divided into two forms: oral literature and written literature.

Written literature is a form of literary work that expresses the author's ideas through written text or mass media. Meanwhile, oral literature is a form of literary work that provides a forum for the author to express his or her thoughts, which are then passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. The form of oral literature that will be analysed is poetry. (Yasa & Astika, 2014)

Poetry is a type or genre of literature. The terms "poetry" and "verse" are often used interchangeably. In fact, the terms are not the same. Poetry is a type of literature that includes poetry, while a poem is a single poem. In English, poetry is Poetry, and rhyme is a poem. (Ramdhani, 2023) Poetry is a means of expression for a poet in expressing ideas or thoughts. More deeply, poetry is the deepest expression of the poet's anxiety in response to the event. What events did he experience, or what happened around his life? In general, a work, in this case poetry, can reflect a record of events that occurred at a certain time. The reader's feelings will certainly deepen when they are able to understand the poem's content, especially the meaning of the style and the types of language variations used in the poem. By understanding these aspects, the reader can also effectively receive the message contained in the poem. To systematically understand the plot, style, language variations, and moral message contained in the poem, an analysis can be conducted using a formalist approach.

Formalism is an approach to literary works that emerged in Russia as a form of opposition to traditional approaches to literary works, which always prioritised the relationship between literary works and history, psychology, and sociology. Russian Formalism also emerged because of the shift in the humanities paradigm from a diachronic paradigm to a synchronic paradigm. (Botifar & Zulyani, 2023)

In this article, the analyst selects Khalil Gibran's poem "Alam" as the test subject, and Roman Jakobson's formalism hypothesis is used to analyse the poem. This is based on the poem's content, which describes the role of a mother and the profound love a child feels for her. Love and warmth are God's gifts to every individual, allowing them to meet each other endlessly. A mother's admiration and affection cannot be measured or seen with anything. Furthermore, the reason for choosing this test subject is the various oddities that occur today, especially among young people who forget the services of their parents. Furthermore, there are many cases of young people suing and reporting their parents to court. This contradicts Islamic teachings, which teach humans to always respect their parents. This in-depth study is expected to inspire readers and the public that parents, especially mothers, are perfect and resilient women. They will not stop adoring and appreciating their children under any circumstances.

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The poem entitled الأُم has many unique features in it, so that researchers are interested in analysing its Formalism, and in this poem, it not only discusses the case of a mother's love for her child, but also the opposite. Researchers identified several previous studies that discussed Formalism in literary works and classified them into several tendencies: (1) Research Analyzing the Semiotics of the Poem "My Heart is a Leaf" by Sapardi Djoko Damono by ramdhani dan nugraha (Ramdhani, 2023); (2) Research that analyzes formalism in the novel "AYAH" by Andrea Hirata by Botifar dan Zultani (Botifar & Zulyani, 2023); (3) Research Examines Formalism in Andrea Hirata's Novel Ordinary People and Its Implications for Literature Teaching by Miranda (Miranda, 2024); (4) Research that analyzes formalism in the poem "I" by Chairil Anwar karya Khoirunnisa, Putri dan Hartono (Khoirunnisa & Putri, n.d.); (5) Research that examines Storytelling Techniques in the Short Story Collection "Self-Esteem" by Syafruddin Pernyata Statement of Review of Russian Formalism by Tarigan dan Murtadlo (Tarigan et al., 2021).

This study aims to provide a unique contribution and fill the gap in the study of literary Formalism in Indonesia, which generally focuses on Indonesian-language works (Ramdhani, 2023; Khoirunnisa et al., n.d.) or uses Formalism in general to analyse novels and short stories (Botifar & Zulyani, 2023; Miranda, 2024; Tarigan et al., 2021). The novelty of this study lies in two aspects: the Object of Study and the Theoretical Focus. Object-wise, this study analyses the Arabic poem 'الأُمُّ' (Al-Umm) by Kahlil Gibran, which is rarely studied in the context of Formalism in Indonesia, thus opening space for intercultural studies. Theoretically, this study specifically applies Roman Jakobson's Theory of Linguistic Formalism (Poetic Function), which is a more in-depth approach based on structural linguistics, in contrast to previous studies that tend to use the earlier or more general concept of Russian Formalism. With this combination, this study offers a comprehensive analysis of how linguistic structures work in Gibran's poetry to produce meaning and aesthetics.

Based on the perspective of Formalism, especially Roman Jakobson's approach, this research hypothesis proposes that the literary value (literariness) in the poem الأُم does not only rest on the theme of affection, but is constructed through the dominance of poetic functions that project the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection to the axis of combination. It is suspected that Khalil Gibran utilises language deviation (defamiliarization) and intense syntactic and phonological parallels to activate the emotive function, so that the formal aspect of the poem becomes the main means that transforms the meaning of "Mother" from a mere biological reference to a great spiritual and universal entity.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research method, as it aims to analyze Khalil Gibran's poem *Al-Umm* (الأُم) through the lens of Roman Jakobson's formalist theory. Qualitative research is understood as a research tradition that relies on interpretive observation and analysis of texts within their linguistic structures

and meanings (Moloeng, 2012). This research is categorized as qualitative because it is based on library research, utilizing academic journals, books, and relevant scholarly sources as supporting data in analyzing the literary text. In literary studies, research data refer to textual materials contained within literary works that serve as the primary object of analysis (Semi, 2009).

The main analytical technique applied in this study is **close reading**, which involves a careful and systematic examination of the poem's linguistic elements, including diction, imagery, repetition, and figurative expressions. Within Jakobson's formalism framework, the analysis focuses on the **poetic function of language**, emphasizing how meaning is constructed through internal textual structures rather than external contexts. The six language styles identified in the poem—namely hyperbole, simile, repetition, anecdotal expression, representation (imagery), and associative language—were determined by examining recurring patterns of figurative language, semantic deviation, and structural emphasis in the text. Each stylistic device was then analyzed in terms of its function in reinforcing the poem's aesthetic form and thematic message.

This methodological approach is considered the most appropriate for this study because Jakobson's formalism prioritizes the analysis of linguistic structure and poetic function as the core of literary meaning. By employing a qualitative descriptive method combined with close reading and stylistic analysis, this research can systematically reveal how the poem's internal language mechanisms shape its representation of maternal love and emotional expression.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Result and Formalism Theory (Roman Jakobson)

Formalism is an approach to literature that emerged in Russia as a form of opposition to traditional approaches to literature, which always prioritised the relationship between literary works and history, psychology, and sociology (Botifar & Zulyani, 2023). This formalist school opposed the Russian tendency to examine literature as an expression of a worldview or the emotional climate of society. The main figures of this school were Shklovski, Tynjanov, and Jacobson (although Tynjanov later changed his mind). What is interesting about this school is that they were not a homogeneous and unified group. Their views differed from one another. They emphasised that a living science cannot be tied to a set of truths. They did not want to formulate a priori generally applicable theories, but rather based their analysis on a few temporarily valid principles (Tarigan et al., 2021).

The term literature originates from Jacobson, a formalist, who laid the foundation for the theory of poetic function. Poetic language is a simple language that has an aesthetic function. According to the formalist view, literary character arises from the arrangement and transformation of its neutral "material." In the case of poetry, that material is the narrative presented(Botifar & Zulyani, 2023). Jakobson outlines the stages of formalist research: "(i) analysis of the sonic aspects of a literary

work; (ii) issues of meaning within the framework of poetry; (iii) integration of sound and meaning into an inseparable whole".

The formalist study of poetry lies within the more general study of language, which Jakobson classifies according to its functions. The primary elements of this functional system are the speaker (emotive function) and the addressee (conative function); between them is a complex set of determinants that include context (referential function), message, contact (phatic function: "the physical channel and psychological connection between speaker and addressee"), and a code (metalingual function) understood by both speaker and addressee. Jakobson emphasised the poetic function of language, which "focuses on the message for its own sake." However, it is an oversimplification to reduce poetry to a poetic function. "The poetic function is not the sole function of verbal art; it is a defining function, whereas in other verbal activities, the poetic function acts as an additional constituent" (Manshur, 2019).

Analysis of Formalism in the Poetry al-Umm

In this study, the researcher chose Kahlil Gibran's poem "Allah" as the object of research. The data, or research object, to be analysed was taken from the translated version of the poem. The text and translation of the poem "Allah" are as follows.

	أمّ
	Ibu
١	إِنَّ أَعْذَبَ مَا تُحَدِّثُهُ الشِّفَاهُ الْبَشَرِيَّةُ هُوَ لَفْظَةُ "الْأُم".
	1) Mother is the coolest word uttered by human lips.
٢	وَأَجْمَلُ مُنَادَاةٍ هِيَ؛ يَاأُمِّي.
	2) The word "Mother" is the most beautiful term of address.
٣	كَلِمَةٌ صَغِيْرَةٌ مَمْلُوْءَةٌ بِالْأَمَلِ وَالْحُبِّ وَالْعَطْفِ،
	3) A word filled with hope, love and affection.
٤	وَكُلِّ مَا فِي الْقَلْبِ الْبَشَرِيِّ مِنَ الرِقَةِ وَالْحَلَاوَةِ وَالْعُذُوْبَةِ.
	4) As well as the gentleness and sweetness that radiate from the depths of the soul.
٥	الْأُمُ هِيَ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ فِي هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةِ،
	5) Mother is everything in life
٦	هِيَ الْتَعْزِيَةُ فِي الْحُزْنِ، وَالرَجَاءُ فِي الْيَأْسِ، وَالْقُوَّةُ فِي الضَّعْفِ،
	6) Mother is comfort in sorrow, hope in despair, and strength in weakness.
٧	هِيَ يُنْبوعُ الْحُنُوِّ وَالرَّأْفَةِ وَالشَّفَقَةِ وَالْغُفْرَانِ.
	7) Mother is a fountain of love, glory, happiness and forgiveness.
٨	فَالَّذِيْ يَفْقِدُ أُمَّهُ، يَفْقِدُ صَدْرًا يَسْنِدُ إِلَيْهِ رَأْسَهُ، وَيَدًا تُبَارِكُهُ، وَعَيْنًا تَحْرِسُهُ.
	8) Whoever loses his mother, he will lose the breast that is his lap, the hand that

blesses him, and the eye that protects him.	
كُلُّ شَيْءٍ فِي الطَّبِيْعَةِ يَرْمِزُ إِلَى الْأُمُوْمَةِ وَيَتَكَلَّمُ عَنْهَا،	٩
9) Everything in the universe always speaks in its mother tongue	
فَالشَّمْسُ هِيَ أُمُّ الْأَرْضِ: تُرْضِعُهَا حَرَارَتَهَا، وَتَحْتَضِنُهَا بِنُوْرِهَا،	١٠
10) The sun is the mother of the earth, feeding it with its heat and embracing it with its light.	
وَلَا تُغَادِرُهَا عِنْدَ الْمَسَاءِ إِلَّا بَعْدَ أَنْ تنوّمَهَا عَلَى نَفْحَةِ أَمْوَاجِ الْبَحْرِ، وَتَرْنِيْمَةِ الْعَصَافِيْرِوَالسَّوَاقِي،	١١
11) The sun will never leave the earth, until the night lays it down in the lantern of the waves, accompanied by songs of birds and others.	
وَهَذِهِ الْأَرْضُ هِيَ أُمُّ لِلْأَشْجَارِوَالْأَجْهَارِ	١٢
12) This earth is the mother of trees and flowers.	
تَلِدُهَا وَتَرْضِعُهَا ثُمَّ تَفْطِمُهَا.	١٣
13) The earth grows, maintains, and enlarges itself.	
وَالْأَشْجَارُوَالْأَزْهَارُتَصِيْرُبِدَوْرِهَا أَمْهَاتٍ حَنُوْنَاتٍ لِلْأَثْمَارِالشَّهِيَّةِ وَالْبُذُوْرِالْحَيَّةِ.	١٤
14) Trees and flowers, in turn, become loving mothers to nurture fruits and seeds.	
وَأُمُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فِيْ الْكِيَانِ هِيَ الرُّوْحُ الْكُلِّيَّةُ الْأَزْلِيَّةُ الْأَبَدِيَّةُ الْمَمْلُوْءَةُ بِالْجَمَالِ وَالْمَحَبَّةِ.	١٥
15) Mother is the eternal soul of all existence	
إِنَّ لَفْظَةَ الْأُمِّ تَخْتَبِئُ فِيْ قُلُوْبِنَا مِثْلَمَا تَخْتَبِئُ النَّوَاةُ فِيْ قَلْبِ الْأَرْضِ	١٦
16) The word "mother" is hidden in our hearts, just as the nucleus is hidden in the heart of the earth.	
وَتَنْبِثِقُ مِنْ بَيْنَ شِفَاهِنَا فِيْ سَاعَاتِ الْحُزْنِ وَالْفَرَحِ، كَمَا يَتَصَاعَدُ الْعِطْرُ مِنْ قَلْبِ الْوَرْدَةِ فِيْ الْفَضَاءِ الصَّافِيْ وَالْمُمْطِرِ(Muwaffa, 2021)	١٧
17) The word comes from our lips in moments of sadness and joy, like the fragrance that emerges from the heart of a flower in times of sunshine and rain.	

The poem "Mother" consists of four consecutive refrains, each with its own inherent components interconnected. These components will be described as follows.

a. **Feelings/Emotions**

The dominant emotional atmosphere in Khalil Gibran's poem *Al-Umm* is constructed through a linguistic structure that emphasizes semantic intensification and emotional repetition, making feeling an intrinsic part of the poem's formal design rather than merely its thematic content. This can be clearly observed in the following lines:

إِنَّ أَعْذَبَ مَا تُحَدِّثُهُ الشِّفَاهُ الْبَشَرِيَّةُ هُوَ لَفْظَةُ «الْأُمِّ»،

وَأَجْمَلُ مُنَادَاةٍ هِيَ: يَا أُمِّي.

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The poet employs the superlative forms **أعذب** (*the sweetest*) and **أجمل** (*the most beautiful*), which carry strong affective intensity in Arabic morphology. From a formalist perspective, these lexical choices function not merely as descriptive elements but as devices that amplify emotional emphasis. The repetition of superlative meaning (sweetness and beauty) generates semantic harmony, activating what Roman Jakobson defines as the poetic function, where the message draws attention to its own form and sound, thus evoking emotional resonance.

The sense of loss and emotional dependency of the child on the mother is further articulated in the following excerpt:

فَالَّذِي يَفْقِدُ أُمَّهُ يَفْقِدُ صَدْرًا يَسْنِدُ إِلَيْهِ رَأْسَهُ،

وَيَدًا تُبَارِكُهُ، وَعَيْنًا تَحْرُسُهُ.

This passage relies on structural parallelism in the sequence (صدرًا – يدًا – عينًا,) which produces a layered emotional rhythm. Each noun symbolizes a different dimension of maternal care: physical comfort, spiritual blessing, and existential protection. Rather than conveying a logical argument, this parallel structure constructs a cumulative emotional effect. In Jakobson's framework, the dominance of the poetic function is evident when linguistic form itself becomes the primary source of emotional meaning.

Emotional warmth and inner peace are further reinforced through the following lines:

الأم هي ينبوع الحب والرحمة والعطف والتسامح.

هي السلام الذي يسكن القلب في ساعة الألم.

The use of nominal sentence structures suggests permanence and stability, reflecting the enduring presence of the mother in the human psyche. The accumulation of affective lexemes (*love, mercy, tenderness, forgiveness*) intensifies emotional density, allowing the reader to experience feeling before intellectual interpretation. From a formalist viewpoint, this lexical accumulation serves a purely aesthetic function. A sense of sanctification and existential attachment is also expressed in:

الأم هي الروح الخالدة التي لا يطفئها موت،

ولا يغيّرها زمان.

Through emotional hyperbole, the poet elevates the mother to a timeless and immortal presence. This exaggeration is not intended as a factual claim but as a stylistic strategy that deepens emotional engagement. According to Jakobson, such foregrounding of language form reinforces the autonomy of the poetic message.

b. Idea/Theme/Concept

      Poetry is fundamentally shaped by the poet's ideas, themes, or conceptual worldview. A poem may contain multiple ideas; however, one dominant idea usually governs the poetic structure, while others function as supporting elements that reinforce the central meaning. These ideas are not presented explicitly but are embedded within linguistic codes, images, and stylistic choices that invite interpretation.

      In Khalil Gibran's poem "Al-Umm" (The Mother), the dominant idea revolves around the role and character of the mother as an irreplaceable source of love, life, and moral guidance. This central concept is conveyed through metaphorical language, symbolic comparison, and emotional intensification rather than direct explanation. This idea is clearly reflected in the following lines:

<div dir="rtl">

إِنَّ أَعْذَبَ مَا تُحَدِّثُهُ الشِّفَاهُ الْبَشَرِيَّةُ هُوَ لَفْظَةُ «الْأُمِّ»

وَأَجْمَلُ مُنَادَاةٍ هِيَ: يَا أُمِّي

</div>

      These lines establish the conceptual foundation of the poem by elevating the word *"mother"* itself as the most beautiful and sweetest expression in human language. From a formalist standpoint, the superlative forms أعذب and أجمل do not merely describe affection but function as linguistic markers that foreground the mother as the emotional and conceptual center of the poem. The idea of motherhood is thus constructed through lexical emphasis, making language itself the bearer of meaning.

      The poet further expands this idea by presenting the mother as a life-sustaining force, comparable to essential natural elements:

<div dir="rtl">

الأم هي كلُّ شيءٍ في هذه الحياة،

هي شمسُ الوجود التي لا تغيب.

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      Here, the metaphor of the **sun** symbolizes vitality, warmth, and continuity. Just as the sun is indispensable to human survival, the mother is portrayed as indispensable to emotional and existential life. This comparison strengthens the conceptual theme by translating an abstract idea (maternal importance) into a concrete, universally understood image. In Jakobson's terms, the poetic function operates through metaphorical equivalence, allowing meaning to emerge from formal resemblance rather than logical argument.

      Another important dimension of the poem's central idea is the moral and emotional character of the mother, particularly her patience and forgiveness:

<div dir="rtl">

الأم هي القلب الصامت الذي يغفر،

وإن أخطأ الأبناء مرارًا.

</div>

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This line highlights the mother as a silent yet powerful moral figure. The use of the adjective **الصامت** (silent) suggests that maternal sacrifice and forgiveness are often unspoken and unnoticed. Formally, the simplicity of the sentence structure reinforces the quiet strength it describes. Conceptually, this supports the main idea that a mother's value lies not only in affection but also in unconditional moral endurance.

c. Imagination

Imagination in Khalil Gibran's poem *Al-Umm* is constructed through symbolic imagery and analogical thinking, allowing abstract concepts of motherhood, love, and loss to be visualized through concrete and natural phenomena. Rather than relying on narrative storytelling, the poet activates the reader's imagination by transforming emotional and philosophical ideas into sensory and cosmic images. One of the strongest imaginative elements appears in the poet's elevation of the word *"mother"* itself:

إِنَّ أَعْذَبَ مَا تُحَدِّثُهُ الشِّفَاهُ الْبَشَرِيَّةُ هُوَ لَفْظَةُ "الْأُم"

وَأَجْمَلُ مُنَادَاةٍ هِيَ؛ يَا أُمِّي

Through superlative diction (*أعذب /* and *أجمل*,) the poet invites the reader to imagine language not merely as a communicative tool but as an emotional experience. The word *"mother"* is imagined as the most melodious and beautiful sound uttered by human lips, suggesting that imagination operates even at the phonetic and emotional level of language itself. The imaginative depth is further intensified in the description:

كَلِمَةٌ صَغِيرَةٌ مَمْلُوءَةٌ بِالْأَمَلِ وَالْحُبِّ وَالْعَطْفِ،

وَكُلِّ مَا فِي الْقَلْبِ الْبَشَرِيِّ مِنَ الرِّقَّةِ وَالْحَلَاوَةِ وَالْعُذُوبَةِ

Here, imagination functions by compressing vast emotional meanings into a single small word. The reader is encouraged to imagine how a short lexical unit can contain hope, love, affection, gentleness, and sweetness. This imaginative compression aligns with Jakobson's poetic function, where form intensifies meaning beyond literal reference. Imagination in the poem reaches a cosmic dimension through natural symbolism:

كُلُ شَيْءٍ فِي الطَّبِيعَةِ يَرْمِزُ إِلَى الْأُمُومَةِ وَيَتَكَلَّمُ عَنْهَا

فَالشَّمْسُ هِيَ أُمُّ الْأَرْضِ: تُرْضِعُهَا حَرَارَتَهَا، وَتَحْتَضِنُهَا بِنُورِهَا

The poet imaginatively redefines natural relationships using maternal metaphors. The sun is imagined as a mother who feeds and embraces the earth, transforming physical processes (heat and light) into emotional acts of care. This imaginative symbolism encourages the reader to perceive nature itself as a maternal system. The imaginative chain continues:

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<div dir="rtl">

وَهَذِهِ الْأَرْضُ هِيَ أُمٌّ لِلْأَشْجَارِوَالْأَجْهَارِ

وَالْأَشْجَارُوَالْأَزْهَارُتَصِيْرُ بِدَوْرِهَا أَمْهَاتٍ حَنُوْنَاتٍ لِلْأَثْمَارِ الشَّهِيَّةِ وَالْبُذُوْرِ الْحَيَّةِ

</div>

This sequence forms an imaginative hierarchy of motherhood, where nurturing is a universal principle. The reader is invited to imagine motherhood as a continuous cycle that sustains life across different forms of existence. Imagination is also employed to visualize emotional loss:

<div dir="rtl">

فَالَّذِيْ يَفْقِدُ أُمَّهُ، يَفْقِدُ صَدْرًا يَسْنِدُ إِلَيْهِ رَأْسَهُ، وَيَدًا تُبَارِكُهُ، وَعَيْنًا تَحْرِسُهُ

</div>

Loss is imagined not as an abstract grief but as the disappearance of concrete protective images: a breast, a hand, and an eye. Through this imagery, emotional absence becomes perceptible, enabling the reader to imagine loss in tangible terms. Finally, imagination reaches a metaphysical level in the following lines:

<div dir="rtl">

إِنَّ لَفْظَةَ الْأُمِّ تَخْتَبِئُ فِيْ قُلُوْبِنَا مِثْلَمَا تَخْتَبِئُ النَّوَاةُ فِيْ قَلْبِ الْأَرْضِ

وَتَنْبَثِقُ مِنْ بَيْنَ شِفَاهِنَا فِيْ سَاعَاتِ الْحُزْنِ وَالْفَرَحِ.

</div>

The poet invites the reader to imagine the word *"mother"* as a hidden seed within the heart, emerging naturally in moments of joy and sorrow. This metaphor transforms emotional reflex into a vivid natural image, reinforcing the imaginative unity of the poem.

In the poem "Alaam" by Kahlil Gibran, researchers found six types of figurative language in his writing, namely hyperbole, metaphor, repetition, allegory, personification, and association:

a) Hyperbole

According to Fitriyanti and Prabawa's theory, hyperbole is a style of language used to express a statement by deliberately exaggerating something. Furthermore, Sitompul states that hyperbole is a style of language that uses excessive emphasis in expressing a statement to create a positive impression. Therefore, it can be said that hyperbole is a style of language used to emphasise a particular event or scenario (Sumitro & Aprila, 2023). In the poem "Alaam", researchers found three sentences that use hyperbole.

1) Mother is the coolest word uttered by human lips.

   The coolest word in the line is a figure of speech, hyperbole. According to the KBBI, the word cool is an adjective used to describe a natural atmosphere or air that feels cold (KBBI, 2023).

2) Mother is the eternal soul of all existence

   The word "eternal" in this sentence implies something that will never disappear, even though there is no eternity separate from Almighty God. The use of the word "eternity" in this sentence signifies that a mother's love will never end, even if separated by death.

3) The word "mother" is hidden in our hearts, just as the nucleus is hidden in the heart of the earth.

According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), the nucleus is a part of the cell that is crucial for survival (KBBI, 2023). This sentence describes the mother as having similar characteristics to the nucleus, but this is a misinterpretation because the mother cannot fulfil the nucleus. This means that when someone loses their mother, they will still live, but when the earth loses its life elements, all life on earth will end.

b) Metaphorical figures of speech

According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary, a metaphor is the use of a word or group of words not with their literal meaning, but rather as a depiction based on similarities or comparisons. According to Keraf, metaphor itself is classified as a figurative language style. This style is primarily formed based on comparisons or similarities. This approach attempts to identify characteristics that indicate similarities between the two things (Djafar, 2020).

In the sentence: "Whoever loses his mother, he will lose the chest as his lap, the hand that blesses him, and the eye that protects him".

This sentence implies that when someone loses their mother, they may lose some of their spirit. Spirit in this sentence is characterised as fundamental to the individual and a source of joy.

c) Repetition figure of speech

Repetition is an emphasis by repeating words used in poetry or other compositions (Setiari, 2023). The repetition figure of speech is seen in the second stanza, where in the stanza the author repeats the word mother several times to emphasise the character of a mother.

In a sentence:

<div dir="rtl">

الْأَمُ هِيَ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ فِي هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةِ،

هِيَ التَّعْزِيَّةُ فِي الْحُزْنِ، وَالرَّجَاءُ فِي الْيَأْسِ، وَالْقُوَّةُ فِي الضَّعْفِ،

هِيَ يُنْبوعُ الْحُنُوِّ وَالرَّأْفَةِ وَالشَّفَقَةِ وَالْغُفْرَانِ.

فَالَّذِيْ يَفْقِدُ أُمَّهُ، يَفْقِدُ صَدْرًا يَسْنِدُ إِلَيْهِ رَأْسَهُ، وَيَدًا تُبَارِكُهُ، وَعَيْنًا تَحْرِسُهُ.

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Formally, the repetition of the pronoun هي at the beginning of each line creates a parallel syntactic structure. This parallelism produces rhythmic regularity and reinforces semantic accumulation: each repeated structure adds a new attribute to the concept of "mother" without shifting the thematic focus. In Jakobson's terms, this highlights the poetic function, where the organization of linguistic form becomes central to meaning making.

Semantically, repetition functions to intensify characterization. Rather than defining the mother through a single trait, the poet repeatedly assigns roles—*everything in life, comfort in sorrow, hope in despair*, and *strength in weakness*. The

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repetition transforms the mother into a totalizing figure, whose identity is constructed through continuous reinforcement rather than narrative explanation. The effect of repetition is further extended in the following line:

<div dir="rtl">

فَالَّذِيْ يَفْقِدُ أُمَّهُ، يَفْقِدُ صَدْرًا يَسْنِدُ إِلَيْهِ رَأْسَهُ، وَيَدًا تُبَارِكُهُ، وَعَيْنًا تَحْرُسُهُ.

</div>

Although the word *mother* is not repeated lexically in this line, repetition persists at the conceptual and structural level. The repeated pattern (صَدْرًا – يَدًا – عَيْنًا) forms a triadic structure that echoes the earlier repetitions. Each element represents a different protective function—emotional, spiritual, and physical—thereby reinforcing the maternal presence through cumulative imagery.

From a formalist perspective, repetition here operates as a meaning-generating device. The recurrence of structures and semantic units draws the reader's attention to the form itself, ensuring that the idea of motherhood remains dominant throughout the stanza. In line with Jakobson's theory, the repetition does not merely support the message but becomes the core mechanism through which emotional and aesthetic effects are produced. Thus, repetition in *al-Umm* functions to stabilize meaning, deepen emotional resonance, and construct motherhood as an absolute and irreplaceable presence, achieved through linguistic patterning rather than explicit explanation.

d) Allegorical figure of speech

According to Tarigan, allegory is defined as a figure of speech, usually containing a person's moral or spiritual attributes (Pangemanan et al., 2023).

1). Mother is comfort in sorrow, hope in despair, and strength in weakness.

The word "comfort" is characterised as a place that gives the impression of a calm environment. This sentence contains an allegory because it compares the mother to that place using the allegorical word "comfort".

2) Mother is a fountain of love, glory, happiness and forgiveness.

This sentence means that a mother is someone who has boundless love. Warmth is likened to a source of love that can become a source of life for other people. Thus, the mother is the source of life for her family and the best source of love in a person's life.

e) Personification figure of speech

Personification language style is a non-literal language style that describes inanimate or inanimate objects as if they had human characteristics (Harahap et al., 2020).

1) The word "mother" is hidden in our hearts, just as the nucleus is hidden in the heart of the earth.

The word "hiding" here is an action word. The word "nucleus" (hiding) contains personification because it compares the nucleus to a human. Action words only have a place in people or animals that live, while the nucleus is an object.

2) Everything in the universe always speaks in its mother tongue.

This sentence refers to everything in the universe, including humans, creatures, plants, and so on. Although the term "conversation" is more appropriate for humans, the universe is comprised of both living and nonliving components. Therefore, this sentence embodies the idea that inanimate objects in the universe are likened to humans.

3) The sun is the mother of the earth, feeding it with its heat and embracing it with its light.

The sun is likened to a mother. It is beyond the sun's ability to nurse and embrace the earth, for the sun is not human. 4) The sun will never leave the earth, until night lays it down in the lantern of the waves, accompanied by songs of birds and songs.

4) The sun cannot leave the Earth because it has no legs and is not human.

The sun is likened to a mother who does not leave her child. Regarding night, the earth cannot rest because it cannot rest like humans, and night is a time of air, different from humans.

5) This earth is the mother of trees and flowers.

The Earth cannot be a mother because it is not human and does not have human feelings. However, the implied meaning of this sentence is that the earth protects the trees growing on it by providing nutrients, oxygen, and other materials needed to sustain life. When trees can grow, they will flower.

6) The earth grows, maintains, and enlarges itself.

God does everything, including growing, nurturing, and growing the earth. The earth merely serves as a place for trees to grow and thrive because, in essence, all living things on earth need each other.

7) Trees and flowers, in turn, become loving mothers to nurture fruits and seeds.

Flowers and trees cannot be cared for, but if humans care for them, they will grow well and produce fruit or seeds. Flowers and trees cannot be cared for.

f) Association figures of speech

Association is a comparative style of language by mentioning another person's name with another situation according to the situation/description and nature (Mutiarasari et al., 2022).

1) The word "mother" is hidden in our hearts, just as the nucleus is hidden in the heart of the earth.

This sentence is expected to welcome the search for true meaning by introducing an articulation that invites the reader to imagine what the hidden core within the earth looks like.

2) The word comes from our lips in moments of sadness and joy, like the fragrance that emerges from the heart of a flower in times of sunshine and rain.

The word "mother" spoken from human lips resembles the scent of flowers. Both share something, for all intents and purposes, especially since they both smell good or are fragrant. The important thing is that their mother's words

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are appealing to the eye, while the fragrance of the flowers is pleasant to the nose.

Rhyme in the poem " الأم "

Rhyme is the progression of words traced throughout each line of a verse. Poetry often involves the excessive repetition of certain words and sounds to create a sense of unity and grandeur. Furthermore, rhyme is the way sounds are combined within a sentence. According to Wirjosudarmo, poetic rhyme can be divided into three categories: rhyme based on sound, rhyme based on location, and rhyme based on relationship (Wiryosudarmo, 1993).

Researchers found that the poem " الأم " by Kahlil Gibran uses open rhyme, where vowels are used in words or lines, such as the last word, in the original Arabic text. Vowels in Arabic can be either vowels or letters. When viewed from the perspective of the harakat, the sonnet utilises the last fathah and kasrah harakat. Based on the letter section, this sonnet uses two vowels, namely ya' (ي) and alif (ا). When viewed from the last letter of each line, this sonnet uses open rhyme and also uses closed rhyme, especially words or lines such as the last word, which is in the form of a consonant letter (Wiryosudarmo, 1993). This can be seen from the variety of endings of each line in the stanza. The consonant letters found in the sonnet include mim (م), fa' (ف), ta' marbuthah (ة), monastic (ن), ha' (ه), ra' (ر), and dha' (ض).

From an interpretive perspective, scholars have identified several types of rhyme based on the correspondence between sounds, their location, and their relationships. Two types of rhyme are found based on the correspondence between sounds: open rhyme and closed rhyme. Open rhyme in this sonnet is separated by the letters, such as a, u, and I. Closed rhyme is separated by the letters h, g, n, and d. Broadly speaking, the rhyme used is a type of initial rhyme, specifically the repetition of several words at the beginning of a line. This corresponds to the repetition of several words that appear at the beginning of the line, particularly "Mother." Given its interconnectedness, this sonnet uses a type of free rhyme, namely the repetition of unpredictable sounds or sound redundancy with the prescription abcd (Wiryosudarmo, 1993). This is indicated by the confusion in the last letters of each line in one stanza.

The novelty of this research lies in the analysis of Kahlil Gibran's Arabic Poem 'الأُمّ' using Roman Jakobson's specific model of Linguistic Formalism (Poetic Function), different from previous Formalism studies on Indonesian prose or poetry with general theories. Scientifically, this finding interprets that the beauty and depth of the maternal theme in the poem are produced by Arabic formal structures (such as parallelism and sound equivalence), proving the Formalism thesis that form is the determinant of aesthetics, and extending the validity of Jakobson's framework to the realm of cross-cultural literature.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that Khalil Gibran's poem al-Umm **(الأُم)** achieves its literary power not merely through its theme of maternal love, but through the dominance of linguistic form as articulated in Roman Jakobson's theory of poetic **function**. The analysis reveals that emotions, ideas, and imagination in the poem are systematically constructed through formal devices such as repetition, parallelism, metaphor, hyperbole, personification, and associative imagery. Superlative diction (أعذب، أجمل) syntactic parallelism (هي ... هي ... هي) and rhythmic equivalence function as aesthetic mechanisms that foreground language itself, allowing meaning to emerge from structure rather than from external biographical or sociocultural contexts. In this sense, the poem exemplifies Jakobson's principle that literariness is generated by the projection of equivalence from the axis of selection onto the axis of combination, where form becomes the primary carrier of emotional and conceptual meaning.

Furthermore, this research confirms that the representation of motherhood in *al-Umm* transcends biological or social definitions and is elevated into a universal and spiritual entity through formal linguistic strategies. By employing natural symbolism (sun, earth, trees, seeds), repetitive syntactic patterns, and sound-based rhyme structures, Gibran constructs motherhood as a cosmic principle that sustains existence, emotion, and morality. The findings reinforce the formalist claim that aesthetic value in literature is rooted in internal textual mechanisms, while also extending Jakobson's linguistic formalism into the study of Arabic poetry within an Indonesian academic context. Consequently, this study contributes to cross-cultural literary scholarship by proving that Jakobson's formalist framework remains analytically relevant and productive for interpreting non-Western poetic traditions, particularly in uncovering how language form shapes meaning, emotion, and imagination in Arabic literary texts.

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