

The Supreme Council of the Arabic Language's Efforts in the Emergence of Children's Literature in Algeria

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Abstract

This study, entitled "*The Supreme Council of the Arabic Language's Efforts in the Emergence of Children's Literature in Algeria*," aims to introduce the full scope of these relatively new efforts in the Algerian literary scene, focusing on Algerian theatre. It highlights the various obstacles that impeded its emergence, reveals its diverse issues and themes, and underscores its artistic characteristics, particularly those related to linguistic aspects, which constitute a fundamental pillar that must be examined and whose secrets and subtleties must be uncovered. Children's theatre, in general, is directed at an age group of extreme sensitivity and delicacy; therefore, the author must take into account the various psychological, social, and physiological aspects related to the child.

Keywords: Children's Literature—The Supreme Council of the Arabic Language—Algerian Theatre—Language

Introduction

Children's theatre is one of the literary forms and arts that has asserted its presence in

the literary arena in recent times, thanks to the substantial intellectual and methodological momentum that accompanied its emergence and development. It is closely tied to the child, hence its name from this perspective. Therefore, we must examine the most important features that distinguish this age group and discuss the genesis and emergence of children's theatre in the West and among the Arabs, while simultaneously highlighting the efforts of the Supreme Council of the Arabic Language in establishing the foundations of this theatrical art, taking the Council's 2009 publications as a model for our study.

1. Stages of Child Development

Discussing children's theatre leads us to discuss the child as the fundamental pillar upon which this theatrical form is built, in addition to identifying the various stages the child passes through during development and growth, and the transformations that occur during these milestones, whether related to the physical aspect or the moral aspect, which includes the various emotions and sensations that accompany physical development.

Various nations, ancient and modern, have paid attention to all matters related to the child. Many researchers and scholars have considered the child **"the fundamental and true wealth of the nation; consequently, developing creative and innovative capacity becomes the supreme goal of any education if we wish for society to advance and prosper, and if we aspire for a nation to flourish socially, culturally, and economically. The Arab nation needs to attend to its human potential and needs to invest these potentials wisely."**¹

Childhood is among the most important stages that a human being undergoes; therefore, this stage has received considerable attention from numerous scholars with various intellectual and philosophical orientations. They have addressed this subject from multiple angles. However, they faced the problem of dividing this age stage into partial phases, where each phase was distinguished by characteristics and features related to the child's physical structure, the emotions and sensations that accompany that development, or the type of text that harmonizes with each phase. Nevertheless, most studies indicate that there are four stages a child passes through during childhood.

1.1. Stage of Realism and Limited Imagination

Also called the early stage, this phase includes children whose ages range between six to eight years. During this stage, **"physical growth slows down somewhat, after having been characterized by evident speed in the first years of the child's life after birth, giving way to intellectual growth that accelerates and increases."**²

In this stage, the child's imagination is vivid, albeit limited to what is in his surrounding environment. This imaginative power leads him to imagine a chair as a train, a stick as an animal, and a pillow as a living being with whom he exchanges conversations. This type of illusory imagination is what makes the child in this stage passionately accept stories and skits featuring animals and birds, and in which inanimate objects are challenged, in addition to his fascination with fairy tales and fantasy stories.³

1.2. Stage of Free Imagination

This includes children whose ages range between six to eight years, also called middle childhood, where the child has acquired some experiences related to his limited environment and has begun to aspire to worlds that tend toward imagination and depart from the reality in which the child lives in his society. This

¹ Hasan Shihata, *Arab Children's Literature: Studies and Researches* (Cairo: al-Dar al-Misriyya al-Lubnaniyya, 2nd ed., 1994), 8.

² Ahmad Naguib, *Children's Literature: Science and Art* (Cairo: Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi, 1991), 38.

³ *Ibid.*, 39.

makes the child in this stage characterized by **"rapid growth in imagination, and by his intense aspiration toward distant horizons; hence, his fondness for fantasy stories that transcend his surroundings and world crystallizes. Indeed, we find the child drawn to listening to fairy tales as well, including stories of jinn, demons, and wonderlands."**⁴

1.3. Stage of Heroism

Also called **"late childhood,"** this includes children whose ages range between eight or nine years to twelve years. In this stage, the child transitions from the stage of realism and unrestrained imagination to a stage closer to reality, where **"he distances himself somewhat from imaginary matters, becomes interested in facts, and his inclination toward combat, dominance, and various games intensifies, especially games requiring skill and competition. He enjoys moving from one place to another, and may leave school or home to adventure with some of his peers in undertakings requiring courage or risk-taking. Therefore, we see him admiring heroes and adventurers; hence, this phase is called the 'phase of heroism and adventure.'"**⁵

As for the stories suitable for children in this stage, they are adventure, travel, courage, and risk-taking stories, detective stories, and

stories of heroes and explorers, provided that these stories have honorable motives and noble objectives, and that the child emerges from them with healthy, sound impressions that endear him to truth, goodness, and virtuous ideals, and repel him from recklessness, thievery, aggression, and foolish impulsiveness, to avoid what sometimes occurs during these periods of the child's life in terms of deviation toward vagrancy and gang life, influenced by what he has heard, read, or watched in cinema or on television.⁶

1.4. The Idealistic Stage

This includes children whose ages range between twelve to fifteen years, where at the beginning of this stage, **"the child begins to transcend childhood life; that is, he transitions from a stage characterized by relative emotional stability to a delicate stage of extreme sensitivity, where evident changes occur, accompanied by the emergence of sexual powers, the intensification of social inclination, and the crystallization of social thinking and philosophical theories about life."**⁷

The previous four stages are, in reality, not fixed stages but are variable and differ from one researcher to another. The previous divisions are merely efforts undertaken by scholars from various orientations, including

⁴ Hadi Nu'man al-Hayti, *Children's Literature: Its Philosophy, Arts, and Media* (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Misriyya al-'Amma li-l-Kitab, 1977), 35.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁶ Ahmad Naguib, *Children's Literature: Science and Art*, 42.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 42.

psychologists, sociologists, and educators. This stage remains one of the most difficult stages that a human being undergoes, given that the child has not yet reached intellectual maturity; therefore, scholars consider the child at this stage a blank slate upon which a person may write whatever he wishes, negatively or positively.

2. The Genesis and Development of Children's Theatre

Literature's interest in humankind is as old as humanity itself, for the human being was the primary subject that occupied writers and creators. However, their interest in children's literature was not on par with literature intended for adults, as its emergence was considerably delayed compared to literature directed at adults. Abd al-Fattah Abu Ma'al expresses this delay:

"Most books on the history of literature in the world indicate that literature in ancient times and in most parts of the world did not give children's literature [its due]; it did not begin to take clear shape until the past two centuries, that is, after the Renaissance in Europe. As for previous historical eras, there were various references to children's literature, narrated orally, and in the form of stories, tales, and myths, passed down by word of mouth from

generation to generation, until interest in written children's literature subsequently spread in European countries."⁸

Children's literature is, in fact, part of literature in general, and the definitions applicable to literature apply to it as well. However, it **"specializes in addressing a specific segment of society, namely children. Children's literature may differ from adult literature according to differences in minds and perceptions, and differences in experiences in kind and quantity. But what is indisputable is that the literary material of children's folktales and traditional stories that have been told to children of nations across generations for thousands of years captivates their emotions and imaginations."**⁹

As for the literary genres that fall under children's literature, they are the same as those found in adult literature, manifesting in poetry, the novel, the short story, and the play. It also constitutes a main pillar in the formation of children's personalities through its contribution to the crystallization and development of the child from the various angles that constitute his personality, whether related to the intellectual, psychological, social, or emotional aspects. Therefore, children's literature, in its entirety, is **"the**

⁸ Abd al-Fattah Abu Ma'al, *Children's Literature* (Amman: Dar al-Shuruq li-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzi', 2nd ed., 1988), 7.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 12.

artistic works that depict ideas, sensations, and imaginations that accord with children's comprehension and take the forms of: the story, poetry, the play, the essay, and the song."¹⁰

Children's theatre is one of the modern literary arts, despite the early emergence of the theatrical genre witnessed by humanity several centuries ago, and despite the distinctive presence of the child within theatrical texts. This presence was not intended to innovate a theatrical form directed at children with its own characteristics and features that make it a unique theatrical type. Most studies indicate that its first mature experience **"was with the Countess (de Genlis), who presented a theatrical performance for children in the garden of the Don Chartres estate on the outskirts of Paris, where she was saturated with Rousseau's ideas, particularly his book Emile, or On Education, and she aimed through her educational theatre to achieve the benefit that children obtain through their practice of acting."**¹¹

After the Countess (de Genlis) presented the aforementioned theatrical performance, which was intended for children, where they participated in performing its shows on stage, this helped accumulate theatrical experiences directed at children, especially after the

convening of the first international conference on children's theatre in the United States of America in 1941, which was the first global gathering of specialists and researchers in the field of theatre. Children's theatre in its contemporary form was also influenced by the Industrial Revolution (1760–1840), which was among the most important reasons for its emergence, where **"the demand for the right to leisure and free time was born, and interest in the child emerged with women going out to work and giving some importance to marginalized segments that deserved it. Among the reasons for interest in this art was also the availability of hours for rest, considering that the machine replaced manual labor, as well as the trade union demands that succeeded in reducing working hours. Rest hours became a need for the family, and the child was usually the beneficiary, where parental care was available for him and his need for entertainment was met. The development of the human sciences also had a great impact on the art of drama in particular, so the child came to receive attention through research, studies, means of presentation, and performance techniques."**¹²

Thanks to the aforementioned efforts, the foundations of children's theatre were

¹⁰ Hadi Nu'man al-Hayti, *Children's Literature*, 82.

¹¹ Zuhayr Tarada'it, *Children's Theatre: Secrets of Writing and Mysteries of Direction*, intro. Muhammad al-Juwayli (Tunis: Dar al-Manwal li-l-Nashr, n.d.), 12.

¹² *Ibid.*, 14.

consolidated, and it came to provide a great service to the child. Therefore, Hadi Nu'man al-Hayti considered it **"one of the effective media in developing children intellectually, emotionally, linguistically, and culturally. It is one of the tools for shaping the child's culture, for it conveys to children, in a beloved language—whether prose or poetry—and with skillful execution and pleasant delivery, ideas, concepts, and values within artistic frameworks replete with music, singing, and dance."**¹³

As for the researcher Tariq Jamal al-Din Atiya, he viewed it as **"another medium among the media for conveying culture and literature to children. Theatre, like most other media for children's literature, stirs the child's emotions, mind, and intellect, and enriches children artistically, literarily, and emotionally. Children, as an audience, constitute a fundamental dimension of the dramatic work that relies on the actor and the director; therefore, children's theatre constitutes a consistent relationship between the three dimensions: the director, the actor, and the children's audience."**¹⁴

2.1. Children's Theatre in Western Countries

As we mentioned previously, children's theatre was delayed in its emergence compared

to theatre intended for adults, because its true beginnings started with the modern Renaissance, when it spread in various countries of the world whose sole interest was focused on writing plays addressing topics that touch the human being in his totality, not in the partialities that constitute him. However, the developments of the Industrial Revolution and the economic, social, and cultural changes it produced hastened its emergence and spread in various countries of the world.

In France, the first appearance of children's theatre was in 1948, when a play for children was presented in the **"Duc de Chartres"** garden near Paris. After this play, the play *The Traveler* was presented, and the sons of the Duc de Chartres performed the roles in it. Then the play **"The Consequence of Curiosity"** was presented, which focused on delivering moral lessons. These three plays constitute the first nucleus of children's theatre in France.¹⁵

Then the former Soviet Union came to the forefront of countries that paid attention to children's theatre, for children's theatres in the Soviet Union were not the result of individual efforts but were a matter of the Soviet state itself, which concerned itself with the issue of childhood. The first children's theatre was opened in Moscow on the first anniversary of

¹³ Hadi Nu'man al-Hayti, *Children's Literature*, 304.

¹⁴ Tariq Jamal al-Din Atiya and Muhammad al-Sayyid Hilawa, *Introduction to Children's Theatre* (Tayyiba: Mawsasat Hurus al-Dawliyya, 2002), 12.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 14.

the October Revolution, at a time when the state was suffering from the effects of destruction and hunger due to war. The number of children's theatres in the Soviet Union exceeds 48 puppet theatres and more than 110 puppet theatres, in addition to theatres in state collective farms.¹⁶

The Soviet Union was among the pioneering countries in supporting children's theatre, and this was through defining its function and role in achieving awareness among children. This interest on the part of the state was manifested through the issuance of some official government statements, as appeared in the statement issued after the Soviet Revolution, which stated:

- That the curriculum can be an effective means for teaching curricula and school subjects to students, the most important of which are general culture, geography, history, and the local and national language.
- The establishment of a professional theatre for children and youth suitable for the comprehension, acceptance, and appreciation capacity of its young audience.
- It is imperative that students not act in the school theatre, but rather that they present complete theatrical

performances through which they cooperate in executing the show.¹⁷

As for the United States of America, children's theatre flourished greatly there, as the state was keen on developing this theatrical type specific to children. This interest was manifested through the World Conference of Children's Theatres, which it organized in 1944, from which the American Theatre Organization emerged, whose **"mission was to manage and plan for children's theatres, which began to grow and spread. After the dangers of World War II subsided, several conferences concerned with children's theatre were held, concerned in particular with graduating leaders in the field of children's drama, whether they were directors, authors, or supervisors, who believe in the paramount importance of children's theatre and in selecting plays of high standard, and in directing them with precision that makes them a wonderful artistic experience that remains vivid in the mind of every child, whether as a spectator or as an actor."**¹⁸

2.2. Children's Theatre in the Arab World

The Arabs' interest in children's literature in general and in theatre in particular was delayed, for the creator did not take a

¹⁶ Mahmud Hasan Ismail, Reference in Children's Literature (Cairo: Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi, 1st ed., 2004), 225.

¹⁷ Ibid., 226.

¹⁸ Ibid., 227.

serious stand toward the child's behavior until the last years of the modern era. This is attributed to the fact that in his earliest beginnings, the human being tried to discover the world surrounding him, in order to know its secrets and then interpret them for the purpose of knowing and identifying them. Then his interest shifted toward the human being himself, and here he truly began to study his behavior and personality, specifically the childhood stage, which is considered the most important stage that a human being passes through in his long life. Hadi Nu'man al-Hayti expresses this delay:

"If we attempted to trace the genesis of children's literature more precisely, we would discover that children remained orphans of literature until a short time ago, for the ancients sought to impose their ways of thinking and traditional work methods on their children without paying attention to children's worlds, inclinations, and impulses. Some of the children's impulses and inclinations appeared to them as evils that they worked to curb."¹⁹

Western civilization recognized children's theatre at a late period, which is dated to the beginning of the eighteenth century, and this is in comparison to its great interest in theatre intended for adults, which is

as old as humanity itself. As for Arab civilization, it did not know the art of theatre until the Renaissance era; correspondingly, only a few years passed before the Arabs began to pay attention to children's theatre, where it became known in various Arab countries, whether in the Mashriq or the Maghreb.

As for the genesis of children's theatre in the Arab world, it can be traced back to shadow puppetry tales, where critics unanimously agreed that they represent the first beginnings of that genesis. **"Shadow puppetry is a type of puppet or animated figures, and it witnessed its true birth at the hands of Ibn Daniyal al-Mawsili in the seventh Hijri century, where nobles and wealthy people at first would summon puppeteers—shadow players—to their parties and nights of revelry, just as they employed master storytellers, chanters, and singers. When the people took it from the amusements of their nobles to the domains of their joys, puppeteers multiplied and their games and arts developed, and they began to roam villages and city neighborhoods on the birthdays of saints and religious occasions, entertaining guests at wedding and circumcision celebrations."²⁰**

Egypt was among the first Arab countries to know children's theatre, where its

¹⁹ Hadi Nu'man al-Hayti, *Children's Literature*, 72.

²⁰ Fawzi Issa, *Children's Literature: Poetry, Children's Theatre, the Story* (Alexandria: Dar al-Wafa' li-Dunya al-Tiba'a wa-l-Nashr, 1st ed., 2008), 94.

first genesis was within the school, specifically at the hands of the pioneer of Arab theatre, Zaki Tulaymat, who submitted a request to the Ministry of Public Instruction in 1936 to establish acting troupes in secondary schools. The ministry approved his request and also equipped various schools with the various means required by the theatrical art. Ahmad Zalt states, clarifying Zaki Tulaymat's efforts in establishing the foundations of children's theatre in Egypt:

"Hope spread its sails when the pioneering theatre figure Zaki Tulaymat began dedicating his efforts, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education—at that time—to establishing a department for school theatre and supporting its activities and reinforcing its roles, aiming to enhance the role of balanced and integrated educational theatre. The experiment resulted in a temporary flourishing in all its elements at the expense of funding shortages and the absence of a creative text, and theatrical activities receded from one stage to another. Nothing remained of their fragrance except assignments from specialized theatre education administrations on occasions or pre-determined competitions, and the student's

role (as an actor) was confined to awaiting those assignments."²¹

The poet Muhammad al-Harawi (1885–1939) also contributed greatly to the genesis and development of children's theatre in Egypt, thanks to the plays he wrote for children during the period extending from (1922–1939), which are five plays: **"A Child's Dream on the Night of Eid (1929), The Emotions of Children (1929), Truth and Falsehood, Consolation (1932), The Wolf and the Sheep (1939)."**²²

As for Iraq, an active movement for children's theatre was launched, where the Iraqi state established the first national theatre in Baghdad in 1936, which closely resembles the theatre established by Zaki Tulaymat in Egypt. **"From the mantle of the Iraqi National Theatre, the school theatre emerged into existence, closely resembling the Egyptian school theatre, following its lines and steps. Egyptian academic artists had the great merit in establishing this theatre, and it was a foundation for building the burgeoning Iraqi movement."**²³

As for Algeria, the emergence of children's theatre was relatively delayed compared to other Arab countries, and this is attributed to the weakness of material and human capabilities allocated to theatre in

²¹ Ahmad Zalt, *Contemporary Children's Literature: Its Issues, Trends, and Criticism* (Cairo: Hibat al-Nil al-Arabiyya li-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzi', 1st ed., 2005), 87.

²² *Ibid.*, 87.

²³ Tariq Jamal al-Din Atiya and Muhammad al-Sayyid Hilawa, *Introduction to Children's Theatre*, 20.

general and children's theatre in particular. However, **"in the city of Oran, the regional theatre began to dedicate a section to children's theatre, which started recently, but it is now progressing rapidly, in a good, disciplined manner, accompanied by studies based on inquiries, examinations, and experiments, to determine the extent of the child's awareness of the social and political situation of his country, and in other countries, attempts to explore an audience for the future whose nucleus would be these children."**²⁴

As for Tunisia, the state paid attention to developing children's theatre, which was closely tied to school theatre, where the Secretary of State for National Education issued a statement on November 16, 1962, addressed to the directors of secondary institutes, calling upon them to **"form acting associations among secondary school students to plant the seeds of this art in their souls from their early years. The actual implementation of what was stated in that circular began after the end of the winter vacation, and thus theatre began in January 1963 to enter some secondary institutes as an activity receiving support from the highest level of authority."**²⁵

It was a free practice undertaken by students who chose it, and it took place within clubs supervised by theatre guides placed by the state at the disposal of those associations. Their first task was to create an activity considered the fundamental ground or incubators in which the talents relied upon to advance theatre in Tunisia would grow. Therefore, it is not strange that this activity was closely linked to what was happening outside the school and worked on rephrasing some famous works known in the theatrical field; indeed, it was sometimes critical of them, calling for transcending them.²⁶

3. The Role of the Supreme Council of the Arabic Language in Establishing the Foundations of Children's Theatre in Algeria

The Supreme Council of the Arabic Language is one of the prominent scientific institutions in the field of academic scientific studies, where it effectively contributed to publishing and accomplishing numerous researches in many fields covering literature, language, and theatre. It is an advisory body established by presidential decision, defined by Article Five, Law No. (96-30) dated December 21, 1996. As for its powers, organizational laws, and working methods, they were defined by Presidential Decree No.

²⁴ Ibid., 19.

²⁵ Mahmud al-Majri, Documents of Tunisian Theatre (1954–2007) (Tunis: Dar Sahar Tunis, 2009), 24.

²⁶ Ibid., 27.

(98-226) dated July 11, 1998. Numerous well-known literary figures succeeded one another in the Council, including: Abd al-Malik Murtad, Muhammad Wuld Khalifa, Azzedine Mihoubi, and Salah Belaid.

The Supreme Council of the Arabic Language enjoys numerous powers, most of which were derived from its legislative and organizational laws, including:

- It coordinates between the various bodies supervising the process of generalizing the use of the Arabic language and promoting and developing it.
- It carries out the work of the bodies entrusted with generalizing the use of the Arabic language and promoting and developing it.
- It examines the appropriateness of the deadlines related to certain positions in higher education stipulated in Article 07, amended and supplemented, paragraph two of Article 36 of Law No. (91-05) dated January 16, 1991.
- It contributes to preparing the proposal of scientific elements that constitute the basis for drafting national programs

within the general policy of programs for generalizing the Arabic language.

- It supports the implementation of national programs.
- It promotes the use of the Arabic language and protects it in administrations and public facilities and ensures its integrity.
- It studies and expresses its opinion on sectoral work plans and programs related to generalizing the use of the Arabic language.²⁷

These efforts exerted by the Supreme Council of the Arabic Language in the field of children's theatre were manifested through its organization of numerous national competitions specific to children's theatre. For example, in 2009, its members supervised the organization of a national competition for the best theatrical work, where the list included the participation of many theatrical works directed at children. These plays are subjected to a precise and rigorous judging process, thanks to the great diversity that characterizes the committee supervising it. The committee included the following names:

²⁷ Ali al-Qasimi, *The Favors of the Supreme Council of the Arabic Language on My Scientific and Literary Career* (2018), 83.

- Professor: Nour al-Din Amrun,
President
- Professor: Nawal Ibrahim,
Member
- Professor: Bukhalifa Habib,
Member
- Professor: Mahi Mahfuz,
Member
- Professor: Ra'fun Qadur,
Member
- Professor: La'rusi Mayssum,
Member

This diversity in evaluating the submitted theatrical works lends an aspect of credibility to the decisions taken by the Evaluation and Review Committee of the Supreme Council of the Arabic Language. Therefore, it is **"not merely an advisory council in every sense that the term carries, but rather a council with moral authority that entitles it to the power of follow-up, and grants it the power of evaluation, and the power of proposal and amendment."**²⁸

The play *Children of the Neighborhood* by the writer Hussein Soufatt obtained first place nationally, where it achieved consensus among all critics, as it addressed an ethical and human issue that has prevailed in human societies since ancient times, represented in the issue of solidarity and cohesion occurring

among members of one society, and this in light of the social distancing occurring among members of the same family. Therefore, this work came to establish this value and make it an effective tool in strengthening family bonds.

4. Linguistic Characteristics in the Play *Children of the Neighborhood*

Language is among the artistic and stylistic phenomena that we must examine in children's theatre, and this is due to its strong connection to the child's age group; consequently, the theatrical author in the field of children's theatre must be careful with the language and style of his play, in accordance with the child's intellectual and mental capacities.

The first thing that distinguishes the language of children's theatre is the necessity for the author to use easy words and structures, and to rely on simple sentences instead of complex sentences that would create great difficulty for the child in understanding and comprehending the text. Among the dialogic models that embodied this characteristic, we mention:

Mustafa: Where is Ahmad? He did not come to play with us today.

Yunus: That is how you always are, Mustafa.

²⁸ Muqaddam Fatima, "Contributions of the Supreme Council of the Arabic Language in Addressing the

Terminology Problem," *Jusur al-Ma'rifa* 7, no. 4 (2021): 12.

Mustafa: How so, Yunus?

Yunus: You only remember Ahmad.

Mustafa: I do not understand.

Ilyas: As if there is no one... other than Ahmad for you to ask about him alone.

Mustafa: He is our classmate at school.²⁹

Among the characteristics of language in children's theatre is also the use of words and sentences that refer to sensory meanings and the avoidance of abstract linguistic images that rely heavily on imagination and figurative images, such as:

Ilyas: No, I do not even want to talk about him.

Mustafa: Why, Ilyas?

Ilyas: Because he is a stranger to our neighborhood.

Yunus: And because we cannot stand him.

Mustafa: Would you not answer me honestly, Yunus?

Yunus: Answer you?

Mustafa: Why do you not stand him?

Yunus: Because he is arrogant and conceited.³⁰

Among the linguistic features that also distinguish the theatrical text directed at children is its inclusion of the characteristic of

clarity, which is an important characteristic that cannot be bypassed or ignored. This is in realization of the supreme goal that every theatrical author seeks, which is to highlight the various human and moral values that contribute to building and refining the child's personality. Among the models that embody this characteristic is the following dialogue:

Ahmad: Do not be angry, my friend, do not be angry.

Yunus: Did you not hear what he said?

Ahmad: Yes... he is ignorant of the matter.

Qasim: Excuse me, my brothers, I have wronged you.

Farid: Forgive us, Yunus, forgive us.

Yunus: I have forgiven you.³¹

It appears that most of the ideas and meanings included in this theatrical dialogue are clear and simple, as they are dominated by the characteristic of direct style in conveying them. This is achieved by employing a set of linguistic techniques such as repetition in his saying "**Forgive us... forgive us... I have forgiven you,**" as well as the use of performative styles such as vocative, interrogative, and exclamatory styles, which are rhetorical styles that the reader cannot deny or dispute. Therefore, they are styles that refer us directly to the intended goal. However, this

²⁹ Supreme Council of the Arabic Language, Theatrical Texts for Children: Winning Works in the National Competition (Publications of the Council, 2009), 14.

³⁰ Ibid., 15.

³¹ Ibid., 33.

does not lead us to consider it a trivial characteristic, for **"intellectual output cannot be literature unless it possesses the aesthetic condition that the child seeks in the literary text; otherwise, this text becomes dry and harsh, rejected by the child's taste, and he approaches it only under duress."**³²

Conclusion

In conclusion of this theoretical and applied approach to the efforts of the Supreme Council of the Arabic Language in establishing the foundations of children's theatre in Algeria, we have reached a set of results that can be summarized as follows:

- The emergence of children's theatre in Algeria was delayed compared to its emergence in other Arab countries, where writers' engagement with it was weak and marginal in quantity and quality, despite the existence of some exceptions that attempted to break into this new art.
- The Supreme Council of the Arabic Language contributed to attempting to establish the foundations of children's theatre in Algeria, through organizing various cultural and scientific events specific to children's theatre, as well as dedicating many national competitions in the field of children's literature, and

allocating valuable prizes awarded to winners, as a form of encouragement and motivation.

- Language is among the most important artistic characteristics that distinguished children's theatre in Algeria, where every writer in this field must be careful in formulating his creative texts, whether related to the clarity of words, meanings, and structures, and the avoidance of abstract meanings, and this is in accordance with the child's intellectual and mental capacities.
- Various scientific and cultural bodies in Algeria must activate this theatrical art directed at the child, by making it a subject taught in universities, and dedicating study days and scientific forums to it, for the purpose of introducing it, clarifying everything related to its themes and issues, and revealing its artistic characteristics.

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³² Nasser Yusuf Jaber Shabana, "Children's Literature: A Study in the Concept," *Umm al-Qura Journal of Languages and Literature*, no. 6 (2011): 25.

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