
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

A Stylistic Study of Postposing in Knowers Monologue of Al-Imam Al-Sajjad (Peace be upon him)

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| ABSTRACT

Literary language has long held a distinctive status, characterized by its style and distinct from ordinary linguistic conventions. Such style, manifested through various forms of linguistic variation, is a core feature of literary language. One notable syntactic device in literary language is postposing, which involves delaying an element to the end of a clause to achieve stylistic effects such as emphasis and textual effectiveness. This study examines postposing stylistically in The Knowers' Monologue of Al-Imam Al-Sajjad (peace be upon him), attempting to identify the purposes served by this construction. An eclectic analytical model is adopted, combining Huddleston and Pullum's (2002) syntactic framework with Oliva and Serrano's (2013) stylistic approach. Hence, the study aims at exploring the role of the postposing constructions in Knowers' Monologue, identifying the types of postposing constructions, and discovering the most common type of postposing employed in that Monologue. The study concludes that Knowers' Monologue employs two types of postposing construction, subject postposing and verb postposing and uses powerful and diverse rhyme.

| KEYWORDS

Stylistics, Linguistic Levels of Stylistics, Syntax, Information Packaging Constructions, Postposing

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

ACCEPTED: 01 January 2026

PUBLISHED: 07 February 2026

DOI: 10.32996/ijts.2026.6.1.3

1. Introduction

Human languages typically follow the "given before new" principle when structuring discourse, which means that in any given sentence, information that is supposed to be familiar or given is typically placed before information that is assumed to be new. The use of non-canonical constructions, or syntactic structures in which the canonical order of elements (in English, subject-verb-object), is changed, is one way to guarantee that this information flow is maintained (Aarts and McMahon, 2006, p. 291).

There are different styles of writing in literary texts at all levels of linguistics. On the syntactic level, changing the order of words and creating new non-canonical constructions plays an important and essential role in presenting and delaying old and new information and focusing on the important ones according to what the writer deems appropriate. Therefore, the present study attempts to shed light on the construction of postposing to reveal the role it plays in Knowers' Monologue of Al-Imam Al-Sajjad (peace be upon him). To achieve that the following questions need to be answered: A. What is the role that postposing construction plays in Knowers Monologue? B. What are the types of the postposing construction employed in Kowner Monologue? C. Which type of postposing construction is the most employed in Kowner Monologue? The current study is limited to analyze the lines of the Knowers Monologue that contain postposing constructions. The study also selects lexical categories and figures of speech as linguistic levels of stylistics.

2. Stylistics

Stylistics is sometimes called *literary linguistics*; it is the investigation and interpretation of texts, with a particular emphasis on literary texts, although this is not the only area of study. Its roots can be traced back to the rhetoric of the ancient classical world, particularly the poetics (Kienpointner, 2018). The third of the five canons in ancient rhetoric is primarily significant for stylistics. The ancient Greeks named the third canon as *lexis*, while the Romans call it as *elocution*, which is now recognized as *style* Wales (2009, p. 1048); Burke (2014, p. 1); Stockwell & Whiteley (2014, p. 1). Today's stylistics would not exist without classical rhetoric and poetics.

However, many other researchers attempt to define stylistics, but an agreed-upon definition remains difficult. For example, Simpson (2004, p. 2) believes that stylistics is a technique for textual interpretation that prioritizes language. Accordingly, Wales (2009, p. 1046) and McIntyre & Walker (2019, p. 16) define it as "the linguistic study of style". According to Wales, stylistics deals with explaining the formal aspects of texts and their significance in relation to the text's interpretation Wales (2009, p. 1046). Similarly, Leech (2008, p. 1) considers it as "the linguistic study of literary texts", and in its broadest sense, Lugea and Walker (2023, p. 3) refer to stylistics as "the study of style". Similarly, Widdowson (2014, p. 3) and Hogan (2021, p. 1) define stylistics as the investigation of literary discourse from a linguistic perspective.

3. Linguistic Levels of Stylistics

Leech and Short (2007, pp. 61-64) mention linguistic levels of stylistics under four general headings: lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, and cohesion and context. They are as follows:

A: Lexical Categories

1. Overall. Is the vocabulary easy or difficult? formal versus informal? Is it evaluative or descriptive? broad or narrow? To what extent does the author employ the affective and additional connotations of words beyond their literal meaning? Idiomatic phrases and noteworthy collocations—if any—are there in the text? If yes, what dialect or register are they connected to? Is any specialist or uncommon vocabulary used? Are there any specific morphological categories that stand out, such as compound words or words with specific suffixes? Which semantic domains are words in? (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 61).

2. Nouns. Are the nouns tangible or abstract? What categories of abstract nouns are there, such as those that describe processes, events, perceptions, moral characteristics, or social characteristics? What use do proper names serve? group nouns? (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 61).

3. Adjectives. Do the adjectives appear frequently? What kinds of qualities are described by adjectives? Mental or physical? Picture? Sound-based? Color? Relevant? Feelings? Assessive, etc. Adjectives: do they have restrictions or are they not? Is it gradable or not? Is it predicative or tributary?

4. Verbs. Do the verbs contribute significantly to the meaning? Are they dynamic—relating to acts, events, etc.—or stative, referring to states? Do they "refer" to gestures, verbal acts, physical acts, mental states, perceptions, etc.? Are they connecting (intensive), transitive, intransitive, etc.? Do they contain facts or are they not? (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 62).

5. Adverbs. Are adverbs frequent? What semantic functions do they perform (manner, place, direction, time, degree, etc.)? Is there any significant use of sentence adverbs (conjuncts such as *so*, *therefore*, *however*; disjuncts such as *certainly*, *obviously*, *frankly*)? (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 62)

B: Grammatical Categories

1. Sentence types. Does the author use only statements (declarative sentences), or do questions, commands, exclamations or minor sentence types (such as sentences with no verb) also occur in the text? If these other types appear, what is their function? (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 62).

2. Sentence intricacy. Is the overall structure of sentences simple or complex? What is the typical word count for a sentence? What proportion of independent to dependent clauses are there? Do sentences differ significantly in their complexity from one another? Which of the following three factors (coordination, subordination, or parataxis) is primarily responsible for complexity? Where in a sentence does complexity usually appear? Is there, for example, any significant instance of anticipatory structure, such as complicated subjects coming before verbs or dependent clauses coming before the subject of a main clause? (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 62).

3. Clause kinds. Which kinds of dependent clauses are preferred, such as adverbial, relative, and various kinds of nominal (that-, wh-, and so on) clauses? Are reduced or non-finite clauses frequently employed, and if so, what kind of clauses are they (verbless, infinitive, -ing, or -ed)?

4. Clause structure. Does the frequency of objects, complements, adverbials, and transitive or intransitive verb constructions among phrase elements matter in any way (viii)? Are there any odd word orders (fronting of the object or complement, first

adverbials, etc.)? Do particular types of clause construction—like those with a preparatory *it* or *there*—occur? (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 62).

5. Noun phrases. Are they relatively simple or complex? Where does the complexity lie (in premodification by adjectives, nouns, etc., or in postmodification by prepositional phrases, relative clauses, etc.)? Note occurrence of listings (e.g. sequences of adjectives), coordination or apposition.

6. Verb phrases. Does the simple past tense usage differ significantly in any ways? Take note of the present tense, its occurrences and functions, its progressive aspect (such as *was laying*), its perfective aspect (such as *has/had emerged*), and its modal auxiliaries (such as *can, must, would, etc.*). Keep an eye out for phrasal verbs and their usage (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 62).

7. Additional phrase forms. Regarding additional phrase types, such as adjective, adverb, and prepositional phrases, is there anything to say?

8. Word groups. After discussing major or lexical word classes previously, we may now discuss minor word classes, sometimes known as "function words," which include interjections, determiners, pronouns, conjunctions, and prepositions. Are certain terms from these categories—such as the definite or indefinite article, the first-person pronouns *I, we, etc.*—used for specific purposes? (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 63).

9. General. Note here whether any general types of grammatical construction are used to special effect; e.g. comparative or superlative constructions; coordinative or listing constructions; parenthetical constructions; appended or interpolated structures such as occur in casual speech. Do lists and coordinations (e.g. lists of nouns) tend to occur with two, three or more than three members? Do the coordinations, unlike the standard construction with one conjunction (*sun, moon and stars*), tend to omit conjunctions (*sun, moon, stars*) or have more than one conjunction (*sun and moon and stars*)? (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 63).

C: Figures of Speech

Here, we examine the prevalence of characteristics that stand out due to their departure from the language code's general communication norms. Examples of such features include the utilization of formal patterning regularities or linguistic code deviations. The classic figures of speech (schemes and tropes) are frequently helpful categories for recognizing such qualities.

1. Lexical and grammar-based. Are there any instances of mirror-image patterns (chiasmus) or formal and structural repetition (anaphora, parallelism, etc.)? Are these use antitheses, reinforcement, climax, anticlimax, or another rhetorical device? (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 63).

2. Systems of phonology. Is there any assonance, rhyming, alliteration, or other phonological patterns? Is there any noteworthy rhythmic patterns? Do consonant and vowel sounds cluster or pattern in specific ways?

3. Tropes. Is language code inconsistencies or deviations? Are there any neologisms such as American? Bizarre linguistic collocations, like infants who are portentous? Disturbances in meaning, syntax, phonology, or graphology? Even while these variations can happen in regular writing and speech, they frequently serve as a hint to unique interpretations of classic literary devices like paradox, irony, metonymy, synecdoche, and metaphor. What kind of particular interpretation is required if such tropes appear (for example, metaphors can be personified, animized, concretized, synaesthetic, etc.)? Similes can also be taken into consideration here due to their strong relationship with metaphor. Are there any similes or comparable constructions (such as "as if") in the text? Which disparate semantic domains are connected by simile? (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 63).

D: Context and Cohesion

Cohesion refers to the manner in which a text's elements are connected to one another, such as the connections between sentences. This is how the text is structured internally. As a discourse that assumes a social relationship between its players (author and reader; character and character, etc.), as well as the sharing of knowledge and presumptions by participants, context refers to the external relations of a text or a portion of a text (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 64).

1. Cohesion. Does the text contain logical or other links between sentences (e.g., coordinating conjunctions or linking adverbials)? Or does it tend to rely on implicit connections of meaning? What sort of use is made of cross-reference by pronouns (*she, it, they, etc.*)? by substitute forms (*do, so, etc.*), or ellipsis? Alternatively, is any use made of elegant variation – the avoidance of repetition by the substitution of a descriptive phrase (as, for example, 'the old lawyer' or 'her uncle' may substitute for the repetition of an earlier 'Mr Jones') Are meaning connections reinforced by repetition of words and phrases, or by repeatedly using words from the same semantic field?

2. Context. Does the author speak directly to the reader or does he or she use the words or ideas of a fictional character? What linguistic cues indicate the addresser-addressee relationship, such as the use of first-person pronouns like *I, me, my, and mine*? What kind of attitude does the writer seem to have toward the subject? If a character speaks or thinks, is it through direct speech or direct quotation, or through another technique (such as free indirect speech or indirect speech)(xiv)? Are there notable stylistic variations based on the person purportedly saying or thinking the words on the page? (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 64).

4. Syntax

Syntax is the branch of grammar dealing with the organization of words into a larger structure. Particularly into sentences: equivalently. The study of sentence structure (Trask, 2013, p. 273). Radford (2004, p. 1) defines syntax as the structure of a statement like "What's the president doing?" which is addressed by the study of syntax, which examines how phrases and sentences are put together from words. And what kind of grammatical processes are used to merge its constituent words into the overall sentence structure?

Syntax is a common term used to investigate the laws that determine how words are put together to make sentences in a language. In this context, the study of word structure, known as morphology, is contrasted with syntax. A different definition that does away with the word "word" is the study of how sentence structure components interact with one another and how sentences are organized in sequences (Crystal, 2008, p. 471).

5. Information Packaging Constructions

Huddleston and Pullum (2002, p. 1365) argue that Information-packaging constructions are those constructions that differ syntactically from the most basic, or canonical, constructions in the language. These information-packaging constructions characteristically have a syntactically more basic counterpart differing not in truth conditions or illocutionary meaning but in the way, the informational content is presented. Compare, for example:

- | canonical version | non-canonical version |
|--|--|
| a. <i>Kim wrote the letter.</i> | b. <i>The letter was written by Kim.</i> |
| a. <i>Two doctors were on the plane.</i> | b. <i>There were two doctors on the plane.</i> |
| a. <i>We rejected six of the applications.</i> | b. <i>Six of the applications we rejected.</i> |

6. Postposing

Postposing means an element appears to the right of its basic position, at the end of the clause:

Spain's financial problems were less acute than [had been those of Portugal].

He seemed at that time very much more sympathetic to the idea than he is now.

There was in her manner a certain aloofness that I found quite disconcerting.

Chris put on the table a large blue bucket full of ice-cubes.

The postposed elements here are respectively subject, predicative complement, displaced subject, and direct object. For the subject the basic position is before the predicator, and for the other three functions, it is immediately after the predicator (Huddleston and pullum, 2002, p. 1382).

Postposition is a construction used in grammar. It proves useful when there is a need to emphasize the adjacency of two categories to the noun, without having to choose whether the category precedes or follows (Crystal, 2008, p. 13).

A postposition is a lexical item that is the same as a preposition except that it comes after its object, which is NP. Although postpositions are uncommon in European languages, they are used exclusively in a number of other languages, including Japanese and Basque, in place of prepositions. As noted by Greenberg (1963), postpositions are consistently preferred over prepositions in SOV languages, though they do occur in other languages as well. Prepositions and postpositions are both included under the term "adposition" (Trask, 2013, pp. 212-113).

Preverbal subjects usually communicate lower informativeness and higher salience than postverbal subjects because postposition is associated with syntactic objects in a less pronounced configuration. Because of this, the SV pattern ought to co-occur with the intention of improving the subject's referent's image, whereas the VS pattern will typically suggest a lack of responsibility and autonomy (Oliva and Serrano, 2013, pp. 219-220).

For example:

You do not allow me to speak! Whenever try to speak.

6.1. Types of postposing

Huddleston and Pullum (2002, pp. 1383-1384) differentiate between four elements of postposing: noun phrase (NP), subject, object and verb postposing.

1. NP Postposing

In this case, the new information may be adequate to postpone NP, which is not heavy. For example:

Jenkins walked back into the office and glanced out of the window. Turning around, he saw on the desk a gun.

A desk is discourse-old and a gun is discourse-new. (by virtue of the prior mention of the office and the salient relation between desks and offices). This disparity in information status serves as the impetus for the postponement. This type of postposing is less common than postposing driven by weight. The version with a postposed object emphasizes the unexpectedness of the gun, in contrast to the default order version, which is neutral. *He saw a gun on the desk.*

2. Subject Postposing

Subject postposing is usually accompanied by preposing of another complement or an adjunct, giving the subject-dependent inversion construction seen in:

More important are the moral objections.

For the rest, postposing of the subject is found in two constructions. Here the postposing is motivated by weight. The other is with verbs of reporting:

The best solution, suggested Pat, would be to install a security alarm system.

Here subject postposing occurs predominantly in parentheticals, as in the above, but in journalistic style, it is also found with the verb in initial position, as in the following. This is a different kind of postposing from the others considered in this section, since it is apparently not motivated by weight.

Said Manager Kim Kessels: 'This is our best result in 20 years!' (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 1383).

3. Object Postposing

The object is postponed over a PP. Other possibilities are illustrated below:

I have read very carefully /several times all the articles she has written.

The object is postponed over an AdvP or NP in adjunct function.

I found rather more promising the proposals that his sister had made.

The object is moved over a predicative adj. (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 1384).

4. Verb Postposing

The verb postposing is one of the rarest constructions used in literature. The purpose of this construction is to focus on new information while at the same time moving the heavy element to the end of the clause. *The teacher, his best, explains.*

7. Methodology

The data used in this study is Al-Imam Al-Sajjad's (Peace be upon him) Knowers Monologue, and it is taken from the link below: (<https://alseraj.net/al-sahifa-al-sajjadi>). Since the original language of this Monologue is Arabic, the researcher translates the lines that contain postposing into English. Furthermore, the study seeks to analyze the lines of the Knowers Monologue that contain the postposing construction stylistically. The study analyzes the data by categorizing and describing postposing constructions qualitatively.

a. Model of Analysis

The study develops an eclectic model for analyzing the data. It consists of Leech and Short (2007) as an approach to analyze the data stylistically and Huddleston and Pullum (2002) as an approach to explain and classify types of postposing.

The eclectic model of analysis will be as follows:

1. Types of postposing

- a. Noun phrase postposing
- b. Subject Postposing
- c. Object postposing
- d. Verb Postposing

2. Linguistic Levels of Stylistics

- a. Lexical categories
- b. Figures of speech

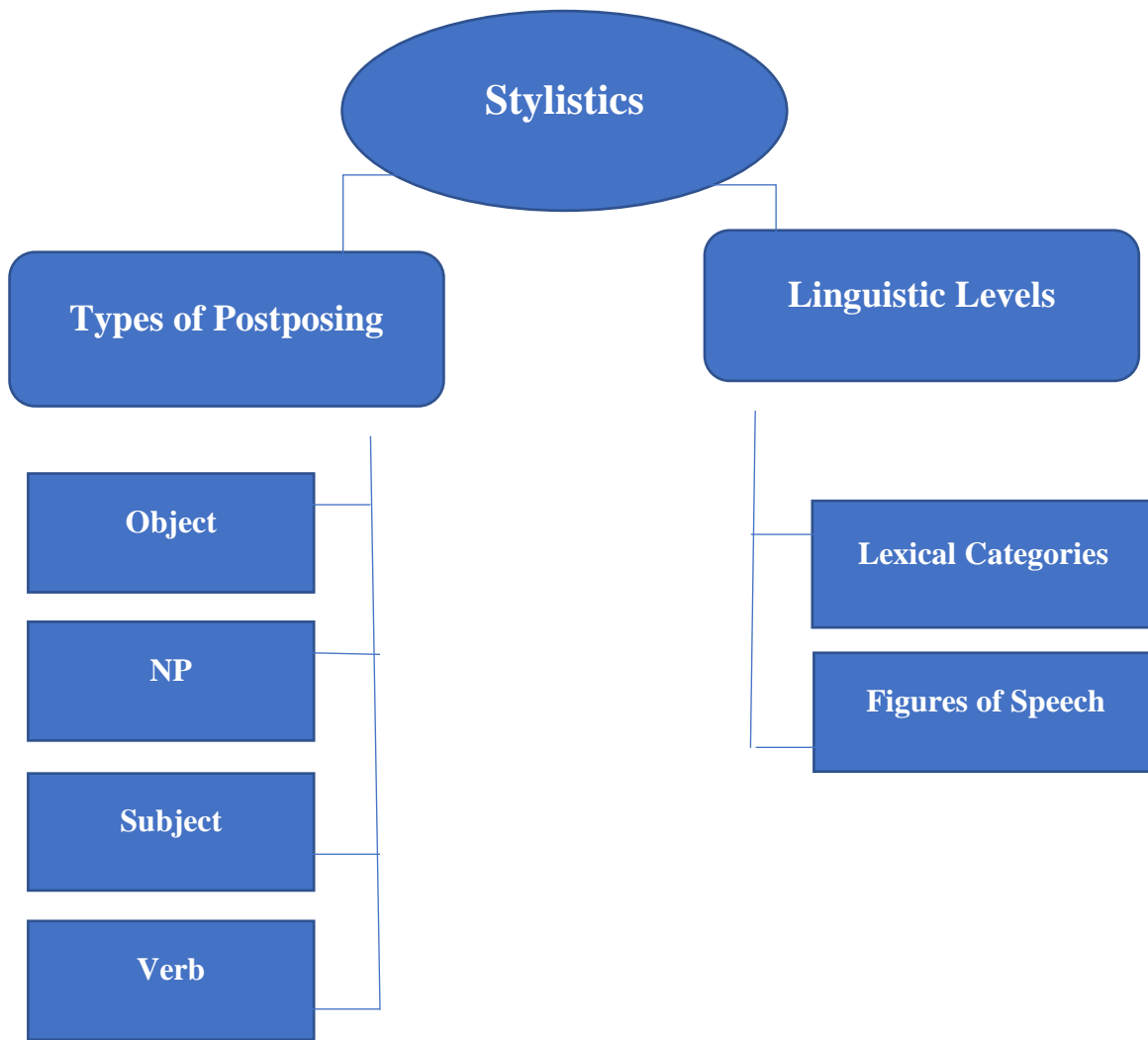


Figure 1. An Eclectic Model of Analysis

8. Data Analysis

1. Verb postposing

فَهُمْ إِلَى أَوْكَارِ الْأَفْكَارِ يَأْتُونَ،

They, to the dens of thoughts, refuge

وَفِي رِيَاضِ الْقُرْبِ وَالْمُكَاشَفَةِ يَرْتَعُونَ،

And in the gardens of closeness and openness, rest

وَمِنْ حِيَاضِ الْمَحَبَّةِ بِكَأْسِ الْمَلَاطِفَةِ يَكْرَعُونَ،

And from the docks of love with the cup of kindness, drink

وَشَرَائِعِ الْمَصَافَاتِ يَرْتَدُونَ،

And to the pure streams, come

In all these four lines, the verbs *refuge* يَأْوُونَ, *rest* يَرْتَعُونَ, *drink* يَشْرَبُونَ, *come* يَرُدُونَ are postponed. This postposing is accompanied with proposing the prepositional phrase. Such verbs are all relatively heavier than other constituents, and at the same time, they carry the new information. Verb postposing is less frequent than other postposing such as subject, NP, and object postposing, but here the author tries to duplicate the focus, once on the postponed verbs and another on the proposed prepositional phrase.

Stylistically, by the simultaneous reversing process of postposing the verbs and proposing the prepositional phrases, Al-Imam Al-Sajjad (peace be upon him) attempts to highlight the status of the believers as a result to their goods.

All verbs used in these four lines are action verbs that refer to what the believers do in their closeness to almighty Allah. All sentence types used in these are statement (declarative sentences). All four lines are rhymed phonologically with the plural pronoun (**oon**) وَون.

2. Subject Postposing

And rose to precede happiness by asceticism, their mettles

وَعَلَّتْ لِسَبْقِ السَّعَادَةِ فِي التَّرَهَادَةِ هَمُّهُمْ،

And purified in the spring of treatment, their drinking

وَعَدَّبَ فِي مَعِينِ الْمُعَامَلَةِ شَرِبُهُمْ،

And relaxed rest session, their secret

وَطَابَ فِي مَجْلِسِ الْأُنْسِ سِرُّهُمْ،

And secured in the home of fear, their flock

وَأَمِنَ فِي مَوْطِنِ الْمَخَافَةِ سِرْبُهُمْ،

And reassured by returning to the Lord of the Lords, themselves

وَأَطْمَأْنَنْتُ بِالرُّجُوعِ إِلَى رَبِّ الْأَزْيَابِ أَنْفُسُهُمْ،

And made sure the win and victory, their souls

وَتَبَيَّنَّتْ بِالْفُوزِ وَالْفَلَاحِ أَرْوَاحُهُمْ،

And convinced seeing beloved, their eyes

وَقَرَّتْ بِالنَّظَرِ إِلَى مَحْبُوبِهِمْ أَعْيُنُهُمْ،

And settled by realizing the request and achieving the hoped, their decision

وَأَسْتَقَرَّ بِإِدْرَاكِ السُّؤْلِ وَنَيْلِ الْمَأْمُولِ قَرَارُهُمْ،

And won hereafter by selling this world, their trade

وَرَبِحَتْ فِي بَيْعِ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ تِجَارَتُهُمْ

In all these nine lines above, the postposed construction is the subject. Accordingly, the process of postposing the subject leads to proposing the verb in all lines. The subjects are postponed and highlighted because they become new information after the postponement of the construction. Therefore, they are motivated to be at the end of the clauses. On the other hand, there is a focus on the stative verbs that express the states of faith of the believers.

All postponed subjects are used as new information and are to be highlighted. Their ends are rhymed with the phonological syllable (**their**) (هم). All postponed subjects are abstract nouns and are added to the anaphoric plural pronoun (**their**) (هم) which represents the rhyme.

9. Results

After conducting a qualitative descriptive analysis, the following results appear:

The role of postposing construction is to make the verbs in some lines and the subjects in others as new information, focusing on postposed and proposed items at the same time. It also conveys the heavy items to the end of the clause. Moreover, Knowers Monologue employs two types of postposing. One of them is subject postposing which is familiar and frequently used in literary text. Another type is verb postposing which is unfamiliar and less used in literary text.

Subject postposing is the type of postposing construction that is most employed in knower monologue, it occurs nine times while the verb postposing occurs four times. Additionally, the lexical verbs postposed in the monologue are all action and dynamic verbs and are rhymed with (oon) (ون). Finally, the lexical subjects postposed in the monologue are all abstract nouns and are rhymed with an anaphoric pronoun (their) (هم).

10. Discussions

According to what is shown in the results, it is important to discuss the following issues:

In both types of postposing in the analysis, Knowers Monologue highlights the verbs, which indicate the good believers' actions as new information. With the verb postposing, the Monologue highlights the verbs postposed, because they carry the most important meaning of the line and new information. With subject postposing, the Monologue highlights the proposed verbs because they also carry the important meaning. The distinction between the two is that, in verb postposing, the verbs are dynamic, but in subject postposing, the verbs are stative.

In addition, the two types of verbs and subject postposing are only used in order to focus on the verbs that carry the most important meaning of the lines. Whereas, subject postposing is the most employed type, because it is the most powerful one that has double emphasis, on the subject once and on the verb another. Finally, both types of subject and verb postposing are added to the plural pronouns them ون and هم to be the rhyme of all lines, which makes them heavier; therefore, they occur at the right position of the clauses.

11. Conclusions

The study concludes that the postposing construction is one of the important and effective devices in fulfilling the purposes and goals of the author in communicating ideas with a deep dimension and influence that can attract the attention of the reader, affecting the meaningful synthetic structure, giving a unique flavor and powerful rhythm, harmony and influence.

Knowers Monologues employs an unfamiliar style for the postposing construction in that the study did not find any other identical styles during the research and investigation during the research and writing process. The unique style in the process of focusing on both the postposing linguistic element and preposing linguistic element at the same time gave the text an aesthetic and unique influence on the reader's thought. In addition, the Knowers Monologue uses verb postposing, which is the most infrequent in use.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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