
Verifying the Terminology of Arabic Rhetorical Tradition: The Case of 'Iltifāt

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Abstract: The terminology of Arabic *Balāgha* suffers various problems, such as having multiple terms that refer to one concept and multiple concepts that have one term. These problems cause vagueness and misunderstandings in many modern and contemporary studies. This article aims to decrease the possibility of both ambiguity and misunderstanding by suggesting a comprehensive methodology to verify Arabic rhetorical terminology. This methodology consists of two procedures: (1) identifying and analyzing the various concepts that a one-term refers to, and (2) identifying and analyzing the different terms that refer to one concept. These procedures are applied to the term 'iltifāt and the concept of 'shifting among first, second, and third pronouns'. The Arab classical rhetoricians used 'iltifāt to refer to thirteen different figures, styles, and features. Similarly, they used seven different terms for one concept. The reasons behind this terminology disorder are investigated and the necessity of a contextual dictionary of Arabic *Balāgha* is argued for.

Keywords: 'ILTIFĀT, BALĀGHA, GRAMMATICAL SHIFT, ARABIC TRADITION, TERMINOLOGY, RHETORIC

Opsomming: Die verifikasie van die terminologie van die Arabiese retoriese tradisie: Die geval van 'Iltifāt. Die terminologie van die Arabiese *Balāgha* openbaar verskeie probleme, soos om veelvoudige terme te bevat wat na een konsep verwys en om veelvoudige konsepte te bevat wat net een term het. Hierdie probleme veroorsaak vaagheid en wanopvattinge in baie moderne en kontemporêre studies. In hierdie artikel word gepoog om moontlike dubbelsinnigheid asook wanopvattinge te verminder deur middel van 'n omvattende metodologie om die Arabiese retoriese terminologie te verifieer. Hierdie metodologie bestaan uit twee stappe: (1) die identifisering en analisering van die verskillende konsepte waarna 'n enkelterm verwys, en (2) die identifisering en analisering van die verskillende terme wat na een konsep verwys. Hierdie stappe word op die term 'iltifāt en op die konsep van 'wisseling tussen eerste, tweede, en derde voornaamwoorde' toegepas. Die Arabiese klassieke retorici het 'iltifāt gebruik om na dertien verskillende figure, style, en kenmerke te verwys. Op 'n soortgelyke wyse, het hulle sewe verskillende terme vir een konsep gebruik. Die redes vir hierdie terminologiese wanorde word ondersoek en die noodsaaklikheid van 'n kontekstuele woordeboek vir die Arabiese *Balāgha* word bepleit.

Sleutelwoorde: 'ILTIFĀT, BALĀGHA, GRAMMATIKALE VERSKUIWING, ARABIESE TRADISIE, TERMINOLOGIE, RETORIEK

1. Introduction

'iltifāt is an Arabic rhetorical term that commonly refers to moving from 1st, 2nd, and 3rd personal pronouns to another while referring to the same person. Within one decade, from 1988 to 1998, three researchers counted the number of times *'iltifāt* appears in the Qur'ān. al-Haysharī (1988) estimates the number of *'iltifāt* in the Qur'ān at 157, while Abdel-Haleem (1992) states that the number is 400. Hassan Tabl's (1998) raises that number to 790. This discrepancy in the number of *'iltifāt* in the Qur'ān results from the different concepts the three researchers have about that term. al-Haysharī (1988) confines the meaning of *'iltifāt* to the shifts between second and third-person pronouns. On the other hand, Tabl (1998) expands that definition to include the shifts among addressees, numbers, genders, and verb forms (past, present, and imperative). Abdel-Haleem (1991) adopts a middle ground where he defines *'iltifāt* as shifts between pronouns, numbers, genders and tenses.

The discrepancy in definitions of Arabic rhetorical terminology is not confined to *'iltifāt* alone; in fact, contemporary researchers in *balāgha*/Rhetoric¹ face many problems with most of its terms, such as *I'sti'āra*. This article explores the roots of terminological problems in Arabic rhetorical heritage and suggests a methodology to standardize terms to minimize the side effects of terminological inconsistency on contemporary research. A sample analysis will focus on the term *'iltifāt* and one of its concepts and attempt an explanation of the vast discrepancy among the concepts referred to by this term. There are religious, cultural, and social reasons for this discrepancy. To identify them, the Arabic writings from the second to the tenth centuries AH are surveyed. Every mention of *'iltifāt* in various disciplines is analysed, encompassing *balāgha*, literary studies, philology and linguistics, Qur'ānic studies, the science of jurisprudence, and theology. Five aspects which contribute to the problems of Arabic Rhetorical terms could be identified through the mentioned surveys and analyses, namely (1) the effect of religion; (2) replacing the term with another lexical equivalent; (3) diversity of disciplines using the term; (4) misreadings of classical writings; and (5) the reverse direction of establishing a terminology. These five aspects are discussed below.

1.1.1 The effect of religion

The relationship between Arabic *Balāgha* and Islam is very close and complex. Qur'ān studies provided influential motivations, concepts, and terminologies for Arabic *Balāgha*, but the influence of the Islamic religion has not always been positive, particularly on the terminology of *balāgha*. There are some examples where well-established rhetorical terms have been rejected for religious reasons. There are other examples where religion triggered rhetoricians to prefer one term to another or to drop some terms altogether.

For instance, Jamāl al-Dīn al-ʿAndalusī (1987: 166) called for the abandonment of the term *ʿiltifāt* for religious reasons. He (ibid.) says, "This point is illustrated in the Qurʿānic verse where God says: '... whom the Prophet wishes to wed- this is only for you [Prophet] and not the rest of the believers ...' [The Qurʿān 33:50.] This example should not be called *ʿiltifāt* because it [the term *ʿiltifāt*] cannot be used to talk about God" (al-ʿAndalusī 1987: 166). He builds this opinion on the assumption that the general and academic meanings of the word *ʿiltifāt* are identical in shaking the head to the right and left. Because God does not shake his head, he believes we must not use the term *ʿiltifāt* to describe God's Words. According to al-ʿAndalusī (1987), because God does not do this movement (*ʿiltifāt*), we must not attribute this description to His word.

The overlap between the general and academic meaning of words has resulted in the absence of a term denoting pronoun shifts in the Holy Qurʿān. Although this figure of speech is there and is recurrent in two Qurʿānic research areas: the first is Qurʿānic lections (different modes of reading or recitation) as in the works of Abū ʿAlī al-Fārisī, Ibn Khālawayh, al-ʿAzharī, al-ʿAkbarī, and others. The second is Qurʿānic exegesis, which is apparent in the commentaries of al-Ṭabarī, al-Ṭūsī, al-Fakhr al-Rāzī, Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Khāzin, etc. Confusing the academic and general meanings of the word *ʿiltifāt* reflects the lack of awareness that the academic and technical meaning diverges from the word's general meaning.

1.1.2 Replacing the term with another lexical equivalent

The terms that refer to pronoun shifts in Arabic include *ʿiltifāt*, *ʿinṣirāf*, and *ṣarf*. These three terms denote a 'change of direction'. Ibn Manẓūr (n.d.: 379-380), in his *Lisān al-ʿArab*, cites the usage of these verbs: "*lafata/ṣarafa his face from people (he turned it away); talaffata/ʿiltafata to something (he turned his face to it); laft and ṣarf are synonyms ... lafattu someone from his opinion (I dissuaded him/her; made him/her change his/her opinion)*". *Sarf* and *ʿinṣirāf* are two nouns derived from the same root (Ṣ-R-F). These three terms refer to the same concept based on their linguistic proximity. This interchangeability of terms hinders terminological unification achieved by having one specific referent for a particular concept.

1.1.3 The diversity of disciplines employing *ʿiltifāt*

Arabic *Balāgha* is a meeting point for different disciplines with their fields of study, methodologies, and goals, including linguistics, Quranic studies, Islamic theology, logic, literary studies, grammar, etc. Each discipline has left its impact on Arabic *Balāgha*, including its terminology; *ʿiltifāt* is not an exception.

For example, the concept of *ʿiltifāt* in literary studies differs from that in Qurʿānic exegesis. Under the influence of Ibn al-Muʿtazz, literary critics dealt with *ʿiltifāt* as a two sided figure that includes shifts in topic and pronouns. On

the other hand, scholars in Islamic studies confined the concept to the syntactic shifts between pronouns in most of their works.

1.1.4 Misreadings of classical writings

Around the middle of the fifth century AH, ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (1984: 457) argued that some rhetoricians had misunderstood rhetorical writings that had been produced before their time. Although he did not cite examples to support his claim, we can find clear evidence that classical Arabic works on *ʿiltifāt* have been misunderstood. This misunderstanding has resulted in basic terminological dilemmas and can be proved by studying the effect of confusing the contents of three consecutive chapters in Ibn al-Muʿtazz's book *al-Badīʿ* (Figures of Speech, 1967).

At the turn of the fifth century AH, Ibn Rashīq (1972b: 45-46) wrote: "This section will talk about *ʿiltifāt* which is known as *ʿi tirāḍ* (appositive) by some writers, while others call it *ʿistidrāk* (disjunctive) ...". Ibn Rashīq (ibid.) regards three completely different terms with distinctive concepts as synonyms, namely *ʿiltifāt*, *ʿi tirāḍ* and *ʿistidrāk*. He unites them in one definition that is true of only one of them, i.e., *ʿi tirāḍ*, which refers to embedding one statement in another. He cites examples from the chapter on *ʿi tirāḍ* from *al-Badīʿ*. Ibn Rashīq (ibid.) defends this confusion of the terms (*ʿi tirāḍ* and *ʿiltifāt*) by claiming, "All people consider them the same." Not only that, he illustrates *ʿiltifāt* with examples that describe a different figure, i.e., *tatmīm* (completion), saying, "These examples are closer to *ʿiltifāt* (than to *tatmīm*)." He goes on and illustrates *ʿiltifāt* with examples that belong to a fourth figure, *ʿistidrāk*.

This chaotic confusion of terms occurred even before Ibn Rashīq: al-Ḥātimī (1979: 45-46) equalizes *ʿiltifāt* and *ʿi tirāḍ*. al-Bāqillānī (1978: 32) does not explain any concept or provide any definition for *ʿiltifāt*. Instead, he cites some examples from different extracts that illustrate four other figures of speech. Perhaps his confusion results from the overlapping comments on each concept. Most of the examples al-Ḥātimī, and al-Bāqillānī provide are taken from *al-Badīʿ*. They had probably read that book and confused the three confusing chapters. al-Sijlimāsī (1980: 442) realized this confusion of terms made by Ibn Rashīq, and he did not hesitate to call it a mistake. We can picture what happened with those three rhetoricians who fell into that error: they, and others, saw three consecutive chapters in *al-Badīʿ* on *ʿiltifāt*, *ʿi tirāḍ*, and *ʿistidrāk* with their examples. Then, the terms and their illustrations were confused, and the limits between their concepts vanished.

1.1.5 The reverse direction of establishing a terminology

There is a terminological rule indicating that formulating an idea precedes the creation of a term that refers to it (al-Trabelsī 1991). This rule assumes the

existence of a one-way process where a concept is discovered, followed by finding a name for it. It does not recognize the presence of a reverse movement that starts with creating a name for something unknown and then trying to create or discover that thing. This rule is based on another rule that reads: "The principal function of the terminology system is that it refers to the concepts system. For a terminology to be useful, it must reflect the emergence of the concepts" (Ibn Ṭālib 1989: 97). However, Arabic *Balāgha* contradicts this rule in some cases where a name (term) is coined before researchers define the concept.

This reversed process causes terminology inconsistency, which is what happened with the term *'iltifāt*. Classical *Balāgha* books repeatedly cite an anecdote involving al-'Aṣma'ī as the first occurrence of the term, which caused many terminological problems. al-Ḥātimī narrates this story (1979: 388):

"Iṣḥāq ibn 'Ibrāhīm al-Mawsilī once said that al-'Aṣma'ī asked him: 'Do you know the *'iltifāt* of Jarīr?' I said: 'What are they?' He chanted:

Did you forget when Sulaima bade us farewell?

With a branch of Arabian balsam in her hand!

Oh, blessed is Arabian balsam!

Don't you see him talking to his companion before turning (*'iltafata*) to Arabian balsam and praying for it?!"

Ibn Rashīq (1972a) also cites this story in *al-'Umda* with a few changes in the text but many differences in the chain of transmitters: In one, al-'Aṣma'ī was talking to 'Iṣḥāq al-Mawsilī; in the other, it was al-Ṣūlī.

Moreover, al-Ḥātimī (1979) says it was Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā al-Ṣūlī narrating on the authority of Yaḥyā ibn 'Alī who was, in turn, narrating from his father on the power of 'Iṣḥāq al-Mawsilī. al-Ḥātimī's version is the oldest, and al-Bāqillānī (1978) cites it in his *'Ijāz al-Qur'ān* (Inimitability of the Qur'ān). With all its three versions, the story includes the term *'iltifāt* but without a clear concept or definition. al-'Aṣma'ī's comment on the lines of verse leaves it open to many interpretations, and this is what exactly happened later to some rhetoricians. For example, al-'Askarī (1984: 431) defines *'iltifāt* as follows: "It is when the speaker talks about something, and when you think he wants to talk about something else, he goes back to it and talks about it, adding new information or other words." al-Ḥātimī understood the same comment about *'iltifāt* to mean *'i'tirāḍ* (the appositive). At the same time, Ibn Rashīq (1972a) mentions two definitions for *'iltifāt* from this story: One synonymous with *tatmīm* (completion) and the other *pronoun shift* as came to be the established concept later. However, he does not attach any of the two definitions to what is meant in this story. Interestingly, none of these two concepts is present in this anecdote, nor does it illustrate the use of *'i'tirāḍ*. All these opinions result from a confused reading of the cited examples. Perhaps Abū Hilāl (al-'Askarī) was more discerning when he attempted a concept that pertained to this story in particular

and said it was one of two concepts, the second of which he took from Qudamah ibn Ja'far. This illustrates that coining a term for an unspecified concept at an earlier stage in the history of scholarship has caused some terminological problems that continued into the present. These problems require some effort to standardize the terminology of Arabic *Balāgha*. Following is a suggested methodology to achieve that.

1.2 Suggested methodology to standardize the terminology of Arabic rhetoric

There is a preliminary stage before applying the proposed methodology, which includes the following steps:

Identifying the disciplines and research fields that use the term

The following disciplines use the term *'iltifāt*:

- Qur'ānic studies: Qur'ān meaning, inimitability and miraculousness, exegesis and lections (variant readings/recitations).
- Literary Studies.
- Arabic linguistics and philology.
- General *Balāgha*.
- Dictionaries of general and specialized terms.

Documentation

This involves the collection of written works on *'iltifāt* in Arabic rhetorical legacy, which is a challenging process due to the lengthy period over which these works have been compiled, the various disciplines that tackled it, and the unorganised fashion in which these books discuss this term (al-Qāsimī 1985).

Semantic identification of the terms used in terminological standardization

Establishing a term rests on three elements:

- A reality: which is the object that needs a name. It can be abstract or concrete, singular or plural.
- A concept: "an ideational representation of something (concrete or abstract) or a class of things that share some characteristics and it is referred to with a term or symbol" (al-Qāsimī 1985: 213).

- A term: is "any linguistic unit that refers to a meaning, and it can consist of one word (a simple term) or many words (a complex term), and it gives a name to one specific concept within a certain field or discipline" (al-Qāsimī 1985: 213).

The methodology that proposed and applied in this article to standardize the terminology of *Balāgha* consists of two procedures. The first is building a history of the term *'iltifāt* and the various concepts connected to it over time. The second is following the different terms used to refer to a particular rhetorical concept.

2.1 Terminological standardization of *'iltifāt*

2.1.1 Defining the concepts referred to by *'iltifāt*

Table 1 below shows the many concepts referred to as *'iltifāt*. The table consists of four columns: the first includes the name of the rhetorician who used the term, the year he died, and the book title and page number where the term is mentioned (where applicable). The second column has a number referring to the number of concepts attached to the term; these numbers are chronologically ordered. The third column defines the concept. Repetition of the number in column two means repeating the same concept even with different words. Some rhetoricians did not give definitions to their concepts, but I deduced them from their examples and comments on them.

Table 1: Concepts attached to the term *'iltifāt* in Arabic rhetoric

Author/date of his death/book/page	Number of the concept	Definition	Discipline
al-'Aṣma'ī (died in 831).	1	He mentioned the term and a line of verse without giving a definition. The best definition, given by Abū Hilāl al-'Askarī, 1984: 431, reads: "It [<i>'iltifāt</i>] is when the speaker talks about something, and when you think he wants to talk about something else, he goes back to it and talks about it, adding new information or other words."	Commentary on poetry

Ibn al-Muʿtazz (died in 908), <i>al-Badīʿ</i> , 1967: 59.	2	Shifting from using the 2nd person pronouns to the 3rd person pronouns and vice versa, and the like. Moving from one meaning/topic to another.	Criticism of poetry
	3		
Qudamah (died in 948).	4	Leaving one meaning and going back to emphasize or justify a previous one.	Criticism of poetry
al-Khuwārazmī (died in 998), <i>Mafātīḥ al-ʿUlūm (Key to Sciences)</i> , 1924: 60.	2		A dictionary of terms
al-Ḥātimī (died in 998) <i>Ḥilyat al-Muḥaḍarah</i> , 1979: 157.	5	Embedding a phrase inside another.	Rhetoric
Ibn Jinnī (died in 1002), <i>al-Faṣr</i> , 2004, vol. 1: 210-211.	1		Commentary on poetry
Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī (died in 1005), <i>al-Ṣināʿatayn (The Two Genres)</i> , 1984: 438.	4+1		Criticism of poetry and prose
al-Tannīsī (died in 1003), <i>al-Munīf</i> , 1994: 166.	2		Criticism of poetry
al-Bāqillānī (died in 1013), <i>ʿIjāz al-Qurʿān (Inimitability of the Qurʿān)</i> , 1978: 30.	1+5		Inimitability of the Qurʿān

al-Marzūqī (died in 1030), <i>Sharḥ al-Ḥamasah</i> , 1991: 349.	1		Commentary on poetry
al-Tha‘labī (died in 1038), <i>Fiqh al-Lughah (Philology)</i> , 1885: 434.	1		Linguistics
‘Alī ibn Khalaf (died in 1040), <i>Mawādd al-Bayān</i> , 1982, vol. 2: 132.	2		Rhetoric
Ibn Rashīq (died in 1064), <i>al-‘Umdah</i> , 1972a: 46.	5+1 +6	Correcting a previous statement (by using a disjunctive article).	Criticism of poetry and prose
al-Tibrīzī (died in 1109), <i>Sharḥ al-Mufaḍḍalīyyāt</i> , 1977: 947.	1+5		Commentary on poetry
Abū Ṭāhir al-Baghdādī (died in 1124), <i>Qānūn al-balāgha</i> (the Canon of Rhetoric), 1981: 110.	5		Rhetoric
al-Zamakhsharī (died in 1144), <i>al-Kashshāf</i> , 1998, vol. 1: 118.	2		Qur’ān Exegesis
al-Rāzī (died in 1210), <i>Nihāyat al-‘Ijāz</i> (Utmost Conciseness), 1899: 203.	1+2		Qur’ān Exegesis

al-Sakkākī (died in 1229), <i>Miftāḥ al-ʿUlūm (Key to Sciences)</i> , 1990: 112-113.	2+ 7	Not abiding by the default mode of address (3rd person, 2nd person) and talking to a different addressee.	Rhetoric
Ibn al-ʿAthīr (died in 1239), <i>al-Mathal al-Sāʿir</i> , n.d., vol. 2: 167-181.	6+2 +8	Shifting from the past to the future and vice versa, shifting from the past and future to the imperative and vice versa.	Criticism of poetry and prose.
Ibn Abī al-ʿIṣbaʿ al-Miṣrī (died in 654 AH), <i>Badīʿ al-Qurʿān</i> , n.d.: 42.	2+4 9	When a speaker presents two things/persons for discussion. Then he tackles the first and moves to the second. After that, he moves back to discuss the first again.	Rhetoric
al-Muʿayyad al-ʿAlawī (died in 656 AH), <i>al-Ṭirāz</i> , 1980: 132.	2+5		
Ḥāzīm al-Qartājannī (died in 1284), <i>al-Minhāj</i> , 1966: 316.	4+ 10	Shifting from one thesis/topic to another without any intermediary or purpose.	Rhetoric
al-Sijlimāsī (died in 704 AH), <i>al-Manzīʿ al-Badīʿ</i> , 1980: 442.	2+4		Rhetoric

Najm al-Dīn ibn al- 'Athīr (died in 1336), <i>Jawhar al- Kanz (Jewel of the Treasure)</i> , 1974: 119- 121.	5+8	Shifting from the dual to the plural and from the plural to the singular.	Rhetoric
	11		
al-Qazwīnī (died in 1338), <i>al-ʿĪdāh</i> , 1993: 72.			Rhetoric
al-ʿAlawī (died in 1348), <i>al-Ṭirāz</i> , 1980: 131-132.	8+11	Shifting from one style/technique to another.	
	12		
al-Subkī (died in 1372), <i>Shurūḥ al- Talkhīṣ</i> , 2003: 463.	2+7		Rhetoric
al-Bābirtī (1384), <i>Sharḥ al-Talkhīṣ</i> .	2+7		Rhetoric
al-Zarkashī (died in 1392), <i>al-Burhān Fī ʿUlūm al-Qurʿān</i> .	2+7	Shifting from the active voice to the passive.	Qurʿānic sciences
	13		

Table 1 demonstrates that *ʿiltifāt* has been used in Arabic rhetorical legacy to refer to 13 figures of speech. Analyzing the interrelationships among them, we can group them under one overarching general category divided into two sub-categories: each sub-category has a set of standard features that set it apart from the other.

The part that links all figures together is "shifting from one style of discourse to another" (al-ʿAlawī 1980: 132). al-Subkī (2003: 464) reported the same meaning from an anonymous: "shifting discourse from one mode to another". This generalized, unrestricted definition equalizes *ʿiltifāt* with *ʿudūl* (deviation). Perhaps the various concepts of the term and al-ʿAlawī's desire to set a comprehensive definition are the reasons for formulating so stretched a concept for *ʿiltifāt*.

Choosing this concept to encompass the other concepts attached to *ʿiltifāt* is justified by the lexical and semantic spaciousness of the word itself. al-ʿAlawī (1980) did not plan to gather all the forms of deviation under *ʿiltifāt*; otherwise,

he would have listed them, but he did not. He did not refer to any forms he had not mentioned in his book except for shifts among pronouns, verb tenses, and numbers. However, his writings imply that *'iltifāt* encompasses all forms of *'udūl* (deviation), which is divided into two categories of figures: the first includes shifts in the addressee pronouns, their tense and number. In contrast, the second category contains shifts from one meaning or topic to another. The first category has the following figures:

- Shifting from first, second, or third-person pronouns to another.
- Shifting from what is supposed to be in the second, third, or first person to another form.
- Shifting from the past to the future and vice versa, shifting from the past and future to the imperative.
- Shifting from the dual form to the plural and from the plural to the singular.
- Shifting from the active voice to the passive.

These five figures of speech have one thing in common: deviating from the grammatical rule to change the addressee pronoun, tense, or number. I believe that the reason for attaching the term *'iltifāt* to pronoun shift is the same reason for connecting it to the rest of the figures: it is a result of the similarity among them. al-'Akhfash al-'Awsat (1990: 275) grouped these figures under one type: "that whose beginning is changed". Moreover, these figures are also grouped by Ibn Qutaybah (1973: 275) under one heading: "The discrepancy between surface structure and meaning".

al-Subkī (2003: 464) realized one dimension of this relationship in his explanation of the view that shifting the number of addressees is one form of *'iltifāt*. He states:

Other scholars regard the shift from talking to one person to talking to two or more as one form, and this is the closest thing to the famous term *'iltifāt* due to its similarity to it in that it marks a shift between three types (singular, dual and plural) and its application to six cases.

Although al-Subkī does not go beyond this surface similarity, his notice of resemblance is worth appreciation. Concept no. 7 has been developed from no. 2: the latter marks a shift between actual pronouns inside the text, while the former marks a shift between the default pronouns used in a specific context and the actual one (which can violate this rule). Shifts among tenses always accompany pronoun shifts because they have never been considered one form of *'iltifāt* when they come alone; they come with pronoun shifts just to expand the concept. There is a close relationship between tense shift and pronoun shift in that they both form the addressee pronoun and tense. There are also unique relationships between some pronouns and some tenses. For instance, first and second-

person pronouns are linked to the present tense, while the third-person pronoun mode is usually related to the past. Therefore, shifts among pronouns may lead to shifts in the tense and vice versa.

Similarly, considering the shifts between the numbers of addressees (second person singular, dual, and plural), one form of *'iltifāt* can be explained in light of a similar link between this shift and pronoun shift. In addition to the surface similarity mentioned by al-Subkī, these two kinds of shifts come together in many texts, like in the Qur'ān, 35:9 (Abdel Haleem's translation, 2005), which reads: "It is God who [sent] forth the winds; they raise the clouds; We [drove] them to a dead land and with them [revived] the earth after its death ...". This verse has three shifts: (1) pronoun shift from third person to first person; (2) tense shift from past to present and then to the past again; (3) subject number shift from third-person singular to first-person plural. The three shifts collaborate to enrich the effect of the verse. However, the link between pronoun shifts and active-passive shifts is the strongest of these relationships because the latter is one form of the former. Formulating a sentence in the passive after addressing the subject in an active voice sentence entails a shift from the second person to the third person pronoun.

Viewing the development of the term over time makes it clear that including this figure under the umbrella of *'iltifāt* took place at a relatively later stage, starting with Ibn al-'Athīr. Perhaps the reason behind this is the desire to expand the concept of *'iltifāt* to include other techniques that did not have established names or terms and had some similarities with pronoun shifts. It is perhaps safe to say that these techniques or figures of speech were linked to *'iltifāt* because one of them was similar to *'iltifāt*, and they had something in common; therefore, the term was expanded to refer to them all due to this resemblance. Thus, it can be concluded that one of the procedures used by Arab rhetoricians to broaden the concept of a specific term was to apply it to concepts similar to the original one in one way or another.

The second subcategory of figures connected with *'iltifāt* revolves around shifting from one meaning/topic to another (concept no. 3). This concept was narrowed down by Qudamah ibn Ja'far (concept no. 4) by defining the reason for shifting and the relationship between the two meanings/topics. According to Qudamah, shifting between topics/theses happens when a doubt occurs in the mind of a poet concerning the first topic/thesis; or when he anticipates another person to present an antithesis to his thesis or asks him to justify it (Ibn Ja'far 1948: 147). The motivation for shifting, in Qudamah's opinion, can be intrinsic (e.g., when the poet thinks he did not give the best expression to the topic) or extrinsic (e.g., when the poet takes into consideration the context in which his poem will be received and tries to anticipate possible objections and respond to them before the recipients express them). Consequently, the new topic/thesis (to which the shift happens) does a service to the first one (from which the shift happens) in that "it emphasizes the other topic, justifies it, or dispels any doubts about it" (Ibn Ja'far, 1948: 147). In this way, Qudamah restricts

the concept of *'iltifāt* "shifting from one meaning /topic to another," because the shift fills a gap in the first meaning/topic or emphasizes or justifies it.

Similarly, concept no. 5, "embedding one statement/phrase in another", is one case of shifting from one topic/meaning to another. *'Istidrāk* using a disjunctive article (concept no. 6) puts a constraint on shifting in that it is stipulated that the two meanings/statements/topic are contradictory and that they are connected with a disjunctive article. In contrast, al-Qarṭājannī (1966) defines the absence of any intermediary (verbal or nonverbal) or purpose for shifting from one meaning/statement/topic to another. For him, *'iltifāt* is "shifting from one thesis/statement to another without any intermediary or purpose" (concept no. 10). The last concept in this subcategory further restricts the general definition of *'iltifāt*, "shifting from one meaning/statement/topic to another". Ibn Abī al-ʿIṣbaʿ al-Misrī stipulates for the figure to be called *'iltifāt* to have two shifts, not simply one: shifting from the first statement/meaning before its completion to the second and shifting from the second before its completion to the first.

This analysis shows that some concepts came to be attached to *'iltifāt* through two contradictory processes: the first expands the concept by including more figures, highlighting their similarities, and ignoring their peculiarities. The second process narrows down the concept by dividing it into smaller components, highlighting the differences at the expense of the similarities. In the first process, this attachment between the concept and the term occurs by merging similar figures, while the second process separates the similar figures.

The analysis also reveals that these two processes have been primarily employed in two different disciplines: the first has been used in the fields of general rhetoric and inimitability/miraculousness (*'i ʿjāz*) of the Qurʿān, and it has been applied to figures of speech that are similar in that they are used to disregard a typical grammatical rule. The second process is standard in literary studies and is related to figures of speech that mark semantic shifts. In short, it can be stated that attaching different concepts to the term *'iltifāt* in Arabic rhetorical heritage resulted from two processes: merging similar figures of speech or splitting them. Another finding from this analysis is related to Ibn al-Muʿtazz's concept of *'iltifāt*, which played a central role in crystalizing the terminological structure of this term. This concept was the point of departure for all other attempts that tried a conceptual identification of *'iltifāt*, highlighting the centrality of his book *al-Badīʿ* in Arabic rhetorical legacy.

2.2 Listing terms that refer to one concept

The purpose of this procedure is to define the concepts that pertain to a specific field/discipline and to study the words that refer to them in context and the inter-relationships among them (al-Qāsimī 1985: 223). The concept analyzed here is shifts among first, second, and third-person pronouns. The table below consists of three columns; the first shows the year the author who mentioned the con-

cept died; the second gives the term he used to refer to this concept, and the third quotes him verbatim.

Table 2: The connection between concept and term

Year of the author's death (AD)	Term	Quote
822.	<i>Majāz</i>	"One form of <i>Majāz</i> is when one is spoken to as if he were present (second person) then he is referred to as if he were absent (in the third person), or vice versa ...". <i>Majāz al-Qur'ān</i> by Abū 'Ubaydah (1954: 19).
822.	0 ²	"The Qur'ān sometimes addresses people to whom it was revealed (in the second person), and sometimes it talks about them as if they were absent (in the third person)." <i>Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān</i> (Meanings of the Qur'ān) by al-Farrā' (1980: 211).
830.	0	"It (the verse of Qur'ān) talks to them after talking about them ... so it uses the third person after the second person." <i>Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān</i> (Meanings of the Qur'ān) by al-'Akhfash (1990: 137-138).
889.	The discrepancy between the surface structure and meaning	"(There) is a section (of the book) on the discrepancy between the surface structure and meaning. An example is when you talk about something to the addressee and then talk to him as if he were a third person ...". <i>Ta'wīl Mushkil al-Qur'ān</i> by Ibn Qutaybah (1983: 289-290).
898.	0	"The Arabs sometimes use the third person pronoun in addressing present people and the second person pronoun to talk about absent people." <i>al-Kāmil</i> by al-Mubarrad (1956: 30).

908.	<i>'iltifāt</i>	"A section (of the book is) on <i>'iltifāt</i> : when the speaker shifts from the second person to the third person and from the third person to the second person and the like. Another example of <i>'iltifāt</i> is changing the topic ...". <i>al-Badī'</i> by Ibn al-Mu'tazz (1967: 58).
923.	0	"The Arabs use the second person, then shift to the third person, and then go back to use the second person again." <i>al-Ṭabari's Commentary on the Qur'ān</i> (n.d.: 153)
923.	0	The Qur'ānic verse, "... when you are in ships, and they sail with them by a good wind" (10:22). It started as addressing people in the second person and then shifted to use the third person pronoun. <i>'I'rāb al-Qur'ān</i> (attributed to the same author) (1982: 923).
940.	0	"The Arabs switch between the second and third-person pronouns in their discourse ...". <i>Sharḥ al-Qaṣā'id al-Sab'</i> (Commentary on the Seven Poems) by Ibn al-'Anbārī (1969: 300).
946.	<i>ṣarf</i>	" <i>ṣarf</i> , they <i>yaṣrefun</i> (change/shift) discourse from the direct addressee (second person) to talking about the absent (third person) and from the singular to the plural." <i>al-Burhān</i> by Ibn Waḥb al-Kātib (1969: 152).
338 AH.	0	"The Arabs switch between the third and second-person pronouns in their discourse." <i>Sharḥ al-Qaṣā'id al-Tis'</i> by al-Naḥḥās, part 2: 463.
980.	0	"The Arabs switch between the second and third-person pronouns in their discourse ...". <i>al-I'rāb fī al-Qirā'āt al-Sab'</i> , Ibn Khālawayh (1992: 121).
980.	0	"The Arabs use the second person pronoun then switch to the third person pronoun." <i>Ma'ānī al-Qirā'āt</i> by al-'Azharī (1993: 96).

987.	0	"It is possible in Arabic to use the second person pronoun after the third person to talk to the same person like in verse 'It is You we worship' after using the third person pronoun." Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī, <i>al-Hujjah</i> (2000: 383).
998.	'iltifāt	"'iltifāt means changing between the second to the third person pronouns." <i>Mafātīh al-'Ulūm</i> by al-Khuwārazmī (1924: 61).
1002.	<i>Shajā'at al-'Arabiyya</i> (Courage of the Arabic Language)	"We call 'leaving the second person for the third person pronoun' <i>Shajā'at al-'Arabiyya</i> (Courage of the Arabic Language)." Ibn Jinnī: <i>al-Muhtasab</i> (1999: 139, 145); <i>al-Fasr</i> (2004, vol. 1: 210) and <i>al-Khāṭiriyyāt</i> (1988: 69).
1002.	0	"He (the poet) shifted from the second person pronoun to the third person pronoun." <i>al-Wasā'ih</i> by al-Jurjānī (1992: 344).
1003.	'iltifāt	"'iltifāt is used in poetry, and it means a switch between the third person and the second person pronouns and the other way round." <i>al-Munisf</i> by Ibn Wakī' al-Tannīsī (1994: 166).
1005.	0	"The shift from the third person to the second person pronoun, and vice versa." <i>al-Ṣāhibī</i> by Ibn Fāris (1977: 356-357).
1030.	0	"Changing the mode of discourse from the third person to the second person pronoun", <i>Sharḥ al-Ḥamasah</i> by al-Marzūqī (1991: 349 & 280); and "he (the author) used the second person, then switched to the third person when talking about himself." al-Marzūqī (1991: 271).
1038.	0	"The switch between the third person and the second person pronouns and the other way round." <i>Fiqh al-Lughah</i> by al-Tha'ālibī (1885: 349).

1040.	<i>'iltifāt</i>	" <i>'iltifāt</i> occurs when the speaker switches from the third person to the second person pronoun, and vice versa." <i>Mawādd al-Bayān</i> by 'Alī ibn Khalaf (1982: 288).
1064.	<i>'iltifāt</i>	"Ibn al-Mu'tazz chose the right words when he said that <i>'iltifāt</i> is 'when the speaker shifts from the second person to the third person, and from the third person to the second person pronoun ...'". <i>al-'Umdah</i> by Ibn Rashīq (1972a: 46).
1064.	0	"He (the author) shifted from the direct second-person pronoun to the indirect third-person pronoun." <i>al-tibyān</i> by al-Ṭūsī (1957: 35).
1073.	0	"The change of adjectives and using pronouns outside their typical context." <i>Sirr al-Faṣāḥa</i> (the Secret of Eloquence) by Ibn Sinān al-Khafājī (1982: 109).
1109.	0	"He (the author) shifted from the second person to the third person pronoun." <i>Sharḥ al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt</i> by al-Tibrīzī (1977: 445-448) "shifting the discourse from speaking to the addressee to speaking about another person" (the same author, vol. 1: 41) and <i>Sharḥ al-Qaṣā'id al-'Ashr</i> (1934: 268).
1122.	0	"Moving between the second-person and third-person pronouns." <i>Ma'ālim al-Tanzīl</i> by al-Baghawī (1912: 149).
1144.	<i>'iltifāt</i>	" <i>'iltifāt</i> in the <i>balāgha</i> refers to the switch from third person to second-person pronouns and vice versa, and then to the first person ...". <i>al-Kashshāf</i> by al-Zamakhsharī (1998: 118).
1144.	<i>Khiṭāb al-Talawwun</i> (changing discourse)	" <i>Khiṭāb al-Talawwun</i> has three forms: to use the second person and then change to the third person pronoun, the other way round." <i>al-Durr al-Dā'ir</i> by al-Zamakhsharī (1968: 23).
1147.	0	"Using the second person, then the third person pronoun, and the other way round." <i>al-Muḥarrar al-Wajīz</i> by Ibn 'Atīyah (1974: 107).

1153.	0	"Moving from the third person pronoun to the second person pronoun." <i>Tafsīr at- Ṭabarūsī: Majma' al-Bayān</i> (1958: 40).
1188.	<i>'inṣirāf</i>	"A section (of the book is) on <i>'inṣirāf</i> which is shifting between the use of second and third person pronouns and vice versa." <i>al-Badrī</i> by Ibn Munqidh (1987: 287).
1201.	0	"Arabs use the second person pronoun then switch to the third person pronoun and vice versa." <i>Zād al-Masīr fī 'ilm al-Tafsīr</i> Ibn al-Jawzī (1964: 14).
1210.	<i>'iltifāt</i>	"It is said that <i>'iltifāt</i> is the shift between the second-person and the third-person pronoun." <i>Nihāyat al-'Ijāz fī Dirāyat al-'Ijāz</i> by al-Rāzī (1899: 203).
1219.	0	"It is conventional for Arabs to use the second person pronoun then switch to the third person pronoun and the other way round." <i>'Imlā' mā Manna Bihi al-Rahmān</i> by al-'Akbarī (1969: 6).
1228.	<i>'inṣirāf</i>	"This is a chapter (of the book) on <i>'inṣirāf</i> which is to start a discourse with the third person pronoun and then shift to the second person pronoun." <i>Ma'ālim al-Kitābah</i> by Ibn Shi'th al-Qurashī (1988: 106).
1229.	<i>'iltifāt</i>	"Moving among the first, second and third-person pronouns are called <i>'iltifāt</i> ." <i>al-Miftāḥ</i> by al-Sakkākī (1990: 112).
1239.	<i>'iltifāt</i> + <i>Shajā'at al-'Arabiyya</i> (Courage of the Arabic Language)	"(A chapter) on <i>'iltifāt</i> ... and it is also known as <i>Shajā'at al-'Arabiyya</i> (Courage of the Arabic Language), and it has three types: the first one is to shift between third to second-person pronouns and vice versa ... etc." <i>al-Mathal al-Sā'ir</i> by Ibn al-'Athīr (n.d.: 168).
1258.	0	"It is a shift between a third to second-person pronouns and vice versa" <i>Nuḍrat al-'Ighrīd fī Nuṣrat al-Qarīd</i> by al-Muzaffar ibn al-Faḍl al-'Alawī (1976: 105-7).

1257.	<i>'iltifāt</i>	"'Iltifāt is the switch between third, second, and first-person pronouns and vice versa." <i>Mi 'yār al-Nuzzār fī 'Ulūm al-'Ash'ār</i> by al-Zanjānī (1991: 103).
1262.	<i>'iltifāt</i> + <i>Talwīn al-Khiṭāb</i> (Changing/colouring discourse)	"Moving from the third person to the second person is known as <i>'iltifāt</i> " <i>al-Fawā'id fī Mushkil al-Qur'ān</i> by 'Ezz al-Dīn ibn 'Abd al-Salām (1967: 52). "It is also called <i>Talween</i> (changing/colouring)" (1967: 53). "Changing and using a variety of modes, namely, moving from the second person to the third, and vice versa" (ibid.: 101).
1284.	0	"They get bored of using only the second or third person pronouns, so they shift between them." <i>Minhaj Al-Bulaghāa'</i> by al-Qarṭājannī (1966: 348).
1287.	<i>'iltifāt</i>	"First, second and third-person pronouns can be used in place of each other, and this is called <i>'iltifāt</i> " <i>al-Miṣbāḥ fī al-Ma'ānī wa al-Bayān wa al-Badī'</i> by Ibn al-Nāẓim (1989: 30).
7th century AH.	<i>Tawassu'āt</i>	"Among the licenses the Arabic language allows is the freedom of movement between the third and second-person pronouns" <i>al-'Aqṣā al-Qarīb</i> by al-Tanūkhī (1909: 44).
1305 ³ .	<i>'iltifāt</i>	"'Iltifāt which is called by some people the varied discourse (<i>khiṭāb al-talawwun</i>), which means the movement between different modes of discourse." <i>al-Manzī' al-Badī'</i> by al-Sijlimāsī (1980: 442).
1321.	<i>'iltifāt</i> + <i>khiṭāb al-talawwun</i>	"(The) switch from the second to the third person pronouns, and vice versa is called <i>'iltifāt</i> or <i>khiṭāb al-talawwun</i> ." <i>al-Rawḍ al-Murī'</i> Ibn al-Bannā' al-'Adadī (1985: 98).
1336.	<i>'iltifāt</i>	"There are different types of <i>'iltifāt</i> , like moving from the third person to the second person pronoun and the opposite." <i>Jawhar al-Kanz</i> by Ibn al-'Athīr, (1974: 120).

1338.	<i>'iltifāt</i>	"The free movement of the first, second, and third-person pronouns, is called <i>'iltifāt</i> ." <i>al-'Iḍāḥ fī 'Ulūm al-balāgha</i> by al-Qazwīnī (1993: 72).
1348.	0	"In the Qur'ān, the verse 'It is You we worship; it is You we ask for help' marks a shift from the third person to the second person pronoun" <i>al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ</i> by Abū Ḥayyān al-'Andalusī (1987: 252).
1348.	<i>'iltifāt</i> + <i>Shajā 'at al-'Arabiyya</i> (Courage of the Arabic Language)	"Talking about <i>'iltifāt</i> ... it is also called <i>Shajā 'at al-'Arabiyya</i> (Courage of the Arabic Language) ... and the first type means the shift between the first, second and third-person pronouns" <i>al-Ṭirāz</i> by al-Mu'ayyad al-'Alawī (1980: 131).
1372.	<i>'iltifāt</i>	"Changing the mode of discourse from first, second and third-person pronouns are called <i>'iltifāt</i> " <i>Sharḥ al-Talkhīṣ</i> by al-Subkī (2003: 463).
1384.	<i>'iltifāt</i>	"Expressing a topic with a shift between first, second and third-person pronouns" <i>Sharḥ al-Talkhīṣ</i> by Akmal Ad-Din al-Bābirtī (1983: 257).

Table 2 reveals the increasing connection between the concept and the term over time: there is this development from (1) not using a term to (2) using one term to refer to a concept, and then (3) using more than one term to refer to the concept in one book. For example, in the fourth century AH, 13 scholars talked about shifts between first, second, and third-person pronouns. Four used names to refer to them, while the other nine did not use any words or terms to denote them. However, eight scholars discussed this figure of speech in the eighth century AH. All of them used terms to name it, and two used more than one term to dub it. In this way, we can track the terminological development of *'iltifāt* in the Arabic rhetorical heritage. This process starts with recognizing the figure and formulating a definition for it. This is followed by classifying it into major categories and similar figures referred to by the same term. Then, each figure is given one term that becomes well-established. Eventually, the figure is dubbed with more than one term to distinguish it from other similar figures.

The development of the concept within different disciplines indicates that two of the disciplines that contributed to rhetorical heritage on *'iltifāt* did not use any terms to refer to this concept in most cases. The first discipline is Qur'ānic lectures (modes of reading/recitation), where scholars like Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī,

Ibn Khālawayh, al-ʿAzharī, and al-ʿAkbarī did not give any term to the figure of pronoun shift (see section 1.1.). The second discipline is literary studies, as shown in commentaries on poetry by al-ʿAnbārī, al-Naḥḥās, al-Tibrīzī, and al-Marzūqī. It is also reported that three critics of poetry, i.e., al-Qādī al-Jurjānī, Ibn Sinān al-Khafājī, and Ḥāzīm al-Qarṭājannī, did not use any name to dub this figure.

Different disciplines produced the terms that refer to pronoun shifts: *ʿiltifāt* was used in poetry criticism; *Shajāʿat al-ʿArabiyya* (Courage of the Arabic Language) was used in Arabic linguistics; while *Talween al-Khetab*, *Talween*, and *khiṭāb talawwun* were produced in the discipline of Qurʿānic studies. It can be noticed that the last three terms are based on the freedom of building the genitive and the attributive noun (freedom of ordering the nouns) in *khiṭāb al-talawwun* and *Talwīn al-khiṭāb* or otherwise just dropping one and using only one noun *Talween* that reflects the freedom enjoyed by classical Arab rhetoricians in coining new terms.

3. Conclusion

This article discussed the challenges that encumber contemporary understanding of Arabic rhetorical terms. It has explored the roots of these challenges and suggested some procedures to alleviate them. Suppose these procedures are applied to the bulk of Arabic rhetorical heritage, with the participation of a group of researchers. In that case, they may help compile a historical, contextual dictionary that we need. These procedures are summarised by tracing the different concepts that revolve around one term and listing the additional terms that refer to one concept. Finally, to understand the process of producing rhetorical knowledge, the influence of historical and cultural factors on coining terms in Arabic *Balāgha* were examined.

The procedures suggested by this research to standardize Arabic rhetorical terminology seem necessary and urgent because they fill confusing gaps and flaws in the currently used dictionaries of Arabic *Balāgha*, e.g., the repetitions of some concepts with different terms to dub them and the absence of basic concepts due to the lack of terms denoting them.

Endnotes

1. The term *balāgha* has been used as a synonym to the word Rhetoric. However, the Arabic *Balagha* is not exactly the Western Rhetoric. For a recent work on the differences between al-Balagha and Rhetoric see Halldén 2022.
2. The (0) here means that the author did not use any term to refer to this phenomenon.
3. The year the book was written, not the year the author died.

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