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The Encyclopedia of Arabic Rhetoric

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Welcome to al-Balagha.com,
the Encyclopedia of Arabic Rhetoric.
DOI: 10.64393/arabic-rhetoric GitHub**Arabic Rhetoric** (known in Arabic as *al-balāgha*) is the branch of the [Arabic language](#) which is related to the art and science of conveying a message with greater beauty, impact and persuasiveness.**Arabic Rhetoric** is as ancient as the Arabic language itself, and is used extensively in both classical and modern Arabic poetry and prose.In practical terms, **Arabic Rhetoric** is the intelligent use of word order, figurative speech and linguistic embellishments to deliver your message with greater impact.[More about Arabic Rhetoric](#)**The Encyclopedia of Arabic Rhetoric** brings together everything about Arabic Rhetoric in one place.

Arabic Rhetorical Devices

Arabic Rhetoric contains a large number of [rhetorical devices](#) which are used to create a rhetorical effect. This site lists 95 of the most common ones. They are traditionally grouped into three categories:A) Rhetorical devices related to Sentence Construction & Syntactical Stylistics (*ilm al-ma'āni*)B) Rhetorical devices related to Figurative Speech (*ilm al-bayān*)C) Rhetorical devices related to Linguistic Embellishments (*ilm al-badr*).

Additionally, there is a category of literary features which reduce the rhetoric qualities of a text:

D) Rhetorical devices related to Negative Rhetorical Effects

A) Sentence Construction & Syntactical Stylistics (*ilm al-ma'āni*)

The crafting of sentences with purposeful departure from what is syntactically or contextually expected (*ikhraj al-kalām alā khilāf muqādā al-zāhir*) to achieve rhetorical effect, emphasis, or nuance.

	Name of rhetorical device	Icon
A-1	Reporting/Informing Sentence-Type Switch <i>zahar jumlat khabariyya fi makan muqādā ljjumlat 'insha'iyya wa 'aksih</i>	
A-2	Affirmation <i>al-ta'kid</i>	
A-3	The Imperative <i>al-'amr</i>	
A-4	Prohibition <i>al-nahi</i>	
A-5	The Interrogative <i>al-istifhām</i>	
A-6	Wish <i>al-tamannā</i>	
A-7	The Vocative <i>al-nida'</i>	
A-8	Definiteness and Indefiniteness <i>al-ta'arif wa al-tankir</i>	
A-9	Use of Pronoun in Place of Noun <i>al-'idmār muqām al-'izhār</i>	
A-10	Use of Noun in Place of Pronoun <i>al-'izhār muqām al-'idmār</i>	
A-11	Conjunction and Disjunction <i>al-waṣal wa al-faṣal</i>	
A-12	Foregrounding and Backgrounding <i>al-taqdim wa al-takhrīr</i>	
A-13	Brevity, Verbosity and Moderation <i>al-'ijāz wa al-'irnāb wa al-musawā'a</i>	
A-14	Ellipsis <i>al-dhikr wa al-hadhab</i>	

B) Figurative Speech (*ilm al-bayān*)

The use of imaginative and indirect language to enhance meaning and evoke vivid imagery.

	Name of rhetorical device	Icon
B-1	Simile <i>al-tashbih</i>	
B-2	Metaphor <i>al-isti'āra</i>	
B-3	Figurative Analogy <i>al-tamthīl</i>	
B-4	Allegory <i>al-majāz</i>	
B-5	Implicit Reference <i>al-kirāya</i>	
B-6	Hinting <i>al-ta'riq</i>	
B-7	Pun <i>al-tawriya</i>	

C) Linguistic Embellishments (*ilm al-badr*)

The strategic use of lexical, phonetic, and structural techniques to beautify expression, intensify meaning, and create aesthetic harmony within the text.

(A) Wordplay & Phonetic Styling

Aesthetic choices in wording and sound that enhance memorability, rhythm, or layered meaning.

	Name of rhetorical device	Icon
CA-1	Paronomasia <i>al-jinās / al-tajnīs</i>	
CA-2	Alliteration <i>al-mujānīsa al-istiħākiyya</i>	
CA-3	Onomatopoeia <i>al-muhākāa al-ṣawtiyya</i>	

(B) Contrasts & Inversions

Rhetorical devices that highlight meaning through opposites, reversals, and mirrored structures.

	Name of rhetorical device	Icon
CB-1	Antithesis <i>al-tibāq</i>	
CB-2	Colour Contrast <i>al-tadbiq</i>	
CB-3	Oxymoron <i>al-'irdaf al-khalīf / ijtima' lafzatayn mutanāqidatayn</i>	
CB-4	Palindrome <i>al-qalb / mā lā yastāħil bi al-'nākās</i>	
CB-5	Reversal of Word Order <i>al-in'ikās al-tarkibī</i>	

(C) Repetition & Reinforcement

The strategic reuse of words or phrases to emphasize, intensify, or create rhythm.

	Name of rhetorical device	Icon
CC-1	Repetition <i>al-takrīr</i>	
CC-2	Repetition With Varied Phrasing <i>al-takrīr bi'barrat mukhtalifa</i>	

(D) Indirectness & Ambiguity

Rhetorical strategies that obscure, soften, or shift meaning to invite interpretation or avoid directness.

	Name of rhetorical device	Icon
CD-1	Deliberate Ambiguity <i>al-ibhām</i>	
CD-2	Evasive Response <i>'uslub al-hākim</i>	
CD-3	Evasive Letterplay <i>al-mawārabā</i>	
CD-4	Euphemism <i>al-tahwīn</i>	
CD-5	Referential Shift <i>al-istiħāħim</i>	

(E) Grouping & Distinguishing

Logical and stylistic techniques that organize, compare, or contrast elements within a sentence or passage.

	Name of rhetorical device	Icon
CE-1	Unifying Expression <i>al-ibāra al-jāmi'a</i>	
CE-2	Syntactic Grouping <i>al-jam'</i>	
CE-3	Semantic Grouping <i>mara'āt al-nażir</i>	
CE-4	Dividing Items <i>al-taqsim</i>	
CE-5	Grouping Then Dividing <i>al-jam' ma' al-taqsim</i>	
CE-6	Grouping Then Differentiating <i>al-jam' ma' al-taħrif</i>	
CE-7	Differentiating Between Similar Items <i>al-taħrif</i>	
CE-8	Folding and Unfolding <i>al-tay' wa al-nashar / al-laff wa al-nashar</i>	

(F) Paragraph Structure & Flow

Devices that shape the structure, transitions, and aesthetic impact of a passage from beginning to end.

	Name of rhetorical device	Icon
CF-1	Pleasantness of the Opening <i>ħusn al-ibtida'</i>	
CF-2	Finesse of Initiation <i>barā'at al-istiħħal</i>	
CF-3	Similarities of the Start & Finish <i>tashħab al-ātrاف</i>	
CF-4	Parallelism <i>al-mawāzina / muqābala bi al-laħaż</i>	
CF-5	Digression <i>al-istiħħad</i>	
CF-6	Rhetorical Branching <i>al-taħrif</i>	
CF-7	Change of Topic <i>ħusn al-takhħalus</i>	
CF-8	Forewarning <i>al-irħad / al-tashħim</i>	
CF-9	Anticipatory Closure <i>al-irħad</i>	
CF-10	Pleasantness of the Ending <i>ħusn al-ittiba'</i>	
CF-11	Finesse of the Ending <i>barā'at al-maqta'</i>	

(G) Argumentation & Illustrative Persuasion

(G) Argumentation & Illustrative Persuasion

Techniques that strengthen reasoning through vivid imagery, layered references, and strategic shifts in style or genre.

	Name of rhetorical device	Icon

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