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## **The Impact of Incorporating Texts from Nahj al-Balagha of Imam Ali (Peace Be Upon Him) on the Academic Achievement of Fifth-Year Literary Students in the Subject of Arabic Rhetoric**

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[hmydalqysy0@gmail.com](mailto:hmydalqysy0@gmail.com)**Abstract:**

No researcher or observer of the current state of Arabic language instruction in our schools can overlook the weakness of our students in this subject. Our students struggle with reading correctly, writing accurately without errors, and expressing themselves with precise and eloquent language. Additionally, they have difficulty understanding the meanings of literary texts and uncovering the imagery within them.

This observation is supported by numerous scientific studies that have pointed to the weakness of students in the Arabic language, compounded by the continued use of traditional teaching methods, which have led to a lack of interest in learning the subject (Al-Rubaie, 1989). The study by (Al-Ubaidi) further confirmed a clear weakness among high school female students, especially in Arabic rhetoric.

The issue of weak Arabic language skills is not confined to high school students; it extends to students in education colleges as well. Al-Jubouri's study revealed that the overall state of the Arabic language, particularly grammar, is distressing, reflecting the inability of Arabic language department students to master linguistic skills, especially syntax. Given all this, it has become natural for the Arabic language to drift away from everyday speech, and its rhetorical applications have become difficult for learners to comprehend, making it challenging for students to grasp its beauty and eloquence.

Moreover, other reasons prompted the researchers to conduct this current study, including feedback from those who found the idea intriguing and believed it could motivate female students towards their lessons. Furthermore, there is a scarcity of studies that have explored teaching rhetoric by employing texts from Nahj al-Balagha by Imam Ali (peace be upon him).

The researchers agree with opinions that attribute the majority of the problem to the aforementioned reasons. Therefore, the researchers have employed texts from Nahj al-Balagha in teaching Arabic rhetoric, hoping that this will be a small contribution to the larger goal of making this subject easier to teach.

**Keywords:** Nahj al-Balagha, rhetoric, female students, secondary education.

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**Received:** 30/03/2024**Accepted:** 10/05/2024**Proofreading:** 08/07/2024**Available online:** 01/09/2024**The Importance of the Research**

Teaching is a sacred profession, the profession of prophets and messengers, which has been revered and respected throughout history. No civilization, regardless of its level, has been devoid of this profession, for it is the one that deals with the human mind, the most honourable part of a person. It nurtures in humans the greatest quality that God has bestowed upon them: the ability to learn. Humans are intellectual beings, and prophets were sent to teach people the book and wisdom and to purify them. God has made scholars the heirs of the prophets, an honourable legacy indeed. Teaching is a divine profession; God taught with the pen, taught humans what they did not know, and taught Adam all the names. Prophets were sent as teachers, and a teacher deals with the noblest aspect of a person: their mind, imparting to it the fruits of human thought. Teaching is the profession that humanity can never do without, and it can be defined as the effort made by a teacher to help students grow intellectually and emotionally.

As evident from the above lines, teaching is not merely about delivering or memorizing information; it is a fundamentally different endeavor aimed at developing students' abilities in various aspects. The researchers believe that the most crucial aspect is training students to think critically, enabling them to draw conclusions, analyze, critique, and innovate.

Education is both a teaching and learning process. Given that modern life demands continuous learning, education has become an indispensable necessity. In essence, education is a psychological and social process that stems from the human personality, encompassing the body, mind, emotions, will, and ethics. It reaches its peak when these aspects are integrated, drawing on human thought, the advancement of modern science, particularly behavioral sciences, and practical experience. It requires support from philosophical and

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scientific analysis—the former focusing on goals and objectives, and the latter on methods and educational tools (Tawfiq & Al-Hayla, 2011: 277).

Education has become a societal concern, aiming to preserve cultural heritage and pass it on to future generations, while also preparing citizens holistically in all aspects of their personalities. It is a crucial factor in economic, social, and cultural development (Firman & Hala, 2014: 42-43).

The researchers believe that education is about comprehensive, balanced development of individuals in all dimensions: intellectual, physical, psychological, and social. It aims to prepare individuals fully and coherently to benefit themselves and society, interact with their social, economic, and natural environments, and be capable of solving problems and making decisions.

To achieve its goals through its institutions, education requires successful teachers who, in turn, need the language to express their thoughts. Language is the tool of influence and persuasion in the interaction between teacher and learner (Lewis, 21: 2003).

The researchers argue that education can only achieve its societal goals through a means of communication, enabling the application of scientific educational systems. This means is language, the primary tool humans have used since ancient times to communicate, through which they have conveyed their thoughts and life experiences to build their lives and society. Therefore, language is essential in all aspects of life, ceasing only with the end of life itself.

Education, as the arm of implementing what education strives for, manifests its objectives and translates its principles through educational institutions that nourish the learner with sound thinking, enabling them to interact with their environment and enrich themselves with knowledge and science. It is the foundation of education in achieving its goals. The aim is not merely for the student to learn but to ensure that the learner becomes a person with different characteristics from before learning (Al-Jismani, 1984, p. 2). The growing interest in education and its improvement has made it a crucial condition for the advancement and development of nations. Education is an effective tool for increasing and improving production in all areas, providing a foundation for continuous development. Every advancement begins

with human effort and continues as humans create and manage new things, responsible for their development, their families, and their nations (Al-Najjhi, 1974, p. 238).

The researchers believe that the scientific leaps and the increasing amount of information necessitated organizing and coordinating this information. Education was entrusted with this task, making it increasingly vital, especially since its need is continuous at all stages of life. This growing interest in education has also led to a focus on curricula, which are fundamental to achieving education and teaching. Curriculum development is the first foundation of curricula that derive from the needs of society and serve its purposes in various life situations.

Thus, education contributes to developing knowledge, spiritual values, understanding, and awareness needed by individuals in all areas of life, in addition to knowledge and skills related to it. Education brings about cognitive, skill, and emotional changes in learners. It is a complex interaction between the teacher and students to achieve educational goals, a system composed of inputs, processes, and outputs, intended to help others learn and provide students with information or skills. It is broad and inclusive of all levels of individual development, from childhood to the three academic stages—primary, intermediate, and secondary—and other advanced stages supervised by the state, imposing its philosophy and system and applying it to society (Zayir & Samah, 2013: 101).

Arabic language comprises many branches that work together to empower individuals to keep pace with their times. Among these branches, the researchers chose rhetoric, one of the earliest sciences to be given significant attention by Arabs and Muslims for its importance in understanding the Quranic miracle and distinguishing between eloquent and poor speech. It is born from the language of the Holy Quran, the science of its miracle, and the essential Arabic language sciences leading to understanding Allah's Book and the language of the Arabs (Matlub, 1999, p. 3).

The Holy Quran challenged poets without being poetry and challenged orators without being an oration (Al-Qayrawani, 1934, p. 21). Al-Razi said that this book, meaning the Holy Quran, is miraculous in its words and meanings (Al-Razi, 1938, p. 192).

The importance of rhetoric lies in its ability to refine taste, guide literary talent in the soul of the writer or reader to reach perfection, and enhance the quality of style, making it critical, appreciative, and creative with fertile imagination, clarity of thought, and extensive knowledge, enabling one to judge sound literary texts through their rhetorical studies (Allam, 1993, p. 53).

Therefore, rhetoric can be considered the art that enables the speaker or writer to convey the intended meanings through correct, clear, and beautiful expressions aimed at stirring emotions and delighting the soul. This can only be achieved through good word choice and elegant composition based on the motives of speech, topics, and the audience's circumstances (Ta'ima, 2000, p. 22).

This is manifested in the words of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in the book *Nahj al-Balagha*, whose language is unique in its cohesiveness, rarely found in other texts except the Quran. This cohesion signifies the value and high language of *Nahj al-Balagha* above other human languages (Al-Saeedi, 2004, pp. 133-134). Moreover, when Al-Sharif Al-Radhi compiled "Nahj," his primary intention was to present the words of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) that embody the wonders of rhetoric, the marvels of eloquence, the treasures of Arabic, and the profound religious and worldly wisdom that is unmatched in any other work (Al-Khatib, 1966, p. 23). Therefore, serious attention should be given to Arabic rhetoric by encouraging students to explore rhetorical techniques and stimulating their interest. Catering to students' desires is essential by selecting the best methods that suit their preferences to achieve the desired objectives in teaching the subject (Abd al-Salam, 1989, p. 87).

The teaching method is a cornerstone of the educational process, alongside the curriculum, textbook, and teacher. The method impacts the reflection of the curriculum material in depth, cohesion, and relevance to life (Al-Shalabi, 1992, p. 22).

The researchers thus decided to incorporate texts from *Nahj al-Balagha* in teaching Arabic rhetoric, as engaging with heritage and working to discover and bring it to light is a commendable and worthy endeavor. We all recognize the significance of "Nahj" and the unparalleled importance it has held over the ages, not surprisingly, given that Imam Ali (peace be upon him) was the Imam of the eloquent and the master of rhetoricians. It has been

said about his speech, "It is below the speech of the Creator, but above the speech of the created." He was the first knight of rhetoric without a contender, except for his teacher, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), who taught him eloquence until his soul was filled with it.

The researchers believe that *Nahj al-Balagha* by Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him) is one of the most important and richest Arabic references in rhetoric, literature, and Islamic thought. It contains immense knowledge and cultural treasures that enrich and enhance the educational process.

Based on the above, the significance of this research is as follows:

#### 1. Enhancement of Arabic Language Skills:

a. The texts of *Nahj al-Balagha* contribute to enhancing students' Arabic language skills at various levels by exposing them to a unique style that combines eloquence, rhetoric, and clarity.

b. These texts enrich students' vocabulary and improve their ability to express and communicate effectively, as well as enhance their writing, reading, and listening skills.

#### 2. Instilling Islamic Values and Principles:

a. The texts of *Nahj al-Balagha* reinforce noble Islamic values and principles among students, such as justice, equality, brotherhood, honesty, and integrity.

b. These texts present shining examples of Islamic behavior, encouraging students to adhere to good morals and virtues.

#### 3. Development of Critical Thinking:

a. The texts of *Nahj al-Balagha* help develop students' critical thinking skills by encouraging them to analyze texts, understand their meanings, and extract lessons from them.

b. These texts encourage students to ask questions and discuss different ideas, helping them form their own opinions and make sound decisions.

#### 4. Strengthening Cultural Identity:

a. The texts of *Nahj al-Balagha* introduce students to their rich Arab and Islamic heritage, helping them understand their cultural identity.

b. These texts motivate students to take pride in their heritage and encourage them to contribute to its preservation and development.

### 5. Fostering Creativity:

- a. The texts of Nahj al-Balagha inspire students and encourage them to be creative in various fields, such as writing, poetry, painting, and music.
- b. These texts present inspiring examples of rhetorical and literary creativity, encouraging students to express themselves in creative and innovative ways.

### 6. Incorporating Nahj al-Balagha Texts in the Educational Process Contributes to:

- a. Developing students' research skills by encouraging them to search for and analyze information.
- b. Enhancing students' problem-solving skills by presenting realistic situations and ethical challenges in the texts.
- c. Expanding students' intellectual horizons by introducing new and innovative ideas in the texts.

#### Research Objective:

The objective of this research is to investigate the effect of incorporating texts from Nahj al-Balagha by Imam Ali (peace be upon him) on the academic achievement of fifth-year literary students in the subject of Arabic rhetoric. This will be achieved by testing the following null hypothesis:

#### Research Hypothesis:

There is no statistically significant difference at the significance level of 0.05 between the mean scores of fifth-year literary students who study Arabic rhetoric with the inclusion of texts from Nahj al-Balagha and the mean scores of students who study the same subject without such inclusion.

#### Definition of Terms:

##### 1. Rhetoric:

**Linguistic Definition:** Rhetoric (al-balāgha) refers to eloquence. The term "balāgh" or "balīgh" refers to someone who is eloquent in speech. A "balīgh" man is one who expresses himself well, conveying the depths of his heart through articulate speech. The plural form is "bulaghā'," and the verb "balagha" means to become eloquent. A "balīgh" statement is one that is precise and effective (Ibn Manzur, 1955, Vol. 8, p. 420).

- **Terminological Definition:**

**Ibn Rashiq:** "Rhetoric is a quality in speech that allows it to clearly express a subtle meaning, making it easily understood by the listener without requiring further explanation" (Ibn Rashiq, 1934, Vol. 1, p. 10).

**Al-Jurjani:** "Rhetoric is the apt expression of the appropriate meaning for the context, coupled with a polished structure" (Al-Jurjani, 1931, Vol. 1, p. 11).

**Operational Definition:** Rhetoric in this research is defined as a set of skills and abilities that enable an individual to use the Arabic language effectively and beautifully to convey meaning in the most concise and impactful way. The operational definition of rhetoric includes the following elements:

**Linguistic Skills:** Such as eloquence, rhetoric, grammar, morphology, and spelling.

**Cognitive Skills:** Such as the ability to analyze meaning, understand context, and employ critical thinking.

**Creative Skills:** Such as the ability to use simile, metaphor, metonymy, and verbal and conceptual embellishments.

##### 2. Academic Achievement:

**Linguistic Definition:** Achievement (taḥṣīl) refers to reaching, gathering, and storing something. It is said, "He achieved knowledge," meaning he gathered and preserved it. Similarly, "He achieved wealth" means he accumulated and saved it. The source is "taḥṣīl," and the noun is "taḥṣīl." The verb is "taḥaṣṣala" (Ibn Manzur, 1955, Vol. 8, p. 450).

##### Terminological Definition:

**Isa:** "Academic achievement is the accomplishment of a certain level of proficiency in a subject, whether in school or university, as determined by standardized tests or teacher reports, or both" (Isa, 2000, p. 53).

**Al-Hourani:** "Achievement refers to reaching a certain level of proficiency in studies" (Al-Hourani, 2008, p. 22).

**Operational Definition:** In this research, academic achievement is defined as the measurement of students' performance in Arabic rhetoric through specific tests or evaluations conducted on the research sample.



## Chapter Two:

### Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies

#### 1. Theoretical Framework:

**Nahj al-Balagha:** Nahj al-Balagha is a collection of sermons, letters, and sayings attributed to Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him), the cousin of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). It was compiled by Al-Sharif Al-Radhi, a Shiite scholar of the 4th century AH (10th century CE). Nahj al-Balagha is one of the most famous Arabic rhetorical texts and is considered a literary masterpiece by Shiites. The book contains a vast number of sermons, admonitions, covenants, letters, and wisdoms, distributed over 238 sermons, 79 letters, and 489 sayings. Nahj al-Balagha has received considerable attention from scholars and writers throughout history, has been translated into many languages, and has seen numerous editions published worldwide (Al-Sharif Al-Radhi, 1899, p. 22).

**Characteristics of Nahj al-Balagha:** Nahj al-Balagha is one of the most important critical methodologies for analyzing literary and rhetorical texts. It is distinguished by unique characteristics that set it apart from other methodologies, including:

1. **Comprehensiveness:** Nahj al-Balagha covers all aspects of literary and rhetorical texts, from the linguistic meaning to the deep and critical analysis of the text.
2. **Precision:** Nahj al-Balagha places great emphasis on precision in analysis, relying on scientific tools for studying the text, such as linguistic, rhetorical, and critical analysis.
3. **Objectivity:** Nahj al-Balagha strives to maintain objectivity in analysis, avoiding preconceived judgments and focusing on understanding the text from a neutral, scientific perspective.
4. **Creativity:** Nahj al-Balagha allows for a wide range of creativity in analysis, helping to discover new and profound meanings in the text.
5. **Impact:** Nahj al-Balagha contributes to a better understanding of literary and rhetorical texts, appreciating their beauty, and developing the reader's critical analysis skills (Al-Nabli, 1990, p. 34).

**Rhetoric in Nahj al-Balagha:** Nahj al-Balagha is one of the most important books concerned with Arabic rhetoric, containing eloquent examples derived from the sermons of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). These

examples clearly demonstrate how Imam Ali (peace be upon him) used various rhetorical arts to convey his ideas and purposes. A detailed discussion of rhetoric in Nahj al-Balagha includes:

1. **Concept of Rhetoric in Nahj al-Balagha:**

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) defines rhetoric in Nahj al-Balagha as "understanding and expression." This means that rhetoric is the human ability to grasp meanings precisely and then express these meanings clearly and convincingly. Imam Ali's goal with this definition is to emphasize that rhetoric is not merely the use of embellished words but the ability to convey meanings accurately and effectively.

2. **Characteristics of Rhetoric in Nahj al-Balagha:** The rhetoric in Nahj al-Balagha is characterized by several features, including:

**Clarity:** Imam Ali (peace be upon him) uses clear and simple language that everyone can understand, even the illiterate.

**Strength and Precision:** Imam Ali's statements are strong and precise, touching emotions and influencing the soul.

**Beauty and Magnificence:** Imam Ali's sermons are characterized by their beauty and magnificence, and they are among the most beautiful statements in the Arabic language.

**Precision:** Imam Ali (peace be upon him) places great importance on precision in language use, carefully selecting appropriate words.

**Variety:** Imam Ali (peace be upon him) uses various rhetorical arts, such as simile, metaphor, metonymy, and allegory, to make his sermons more beautiful and impactful.

3. **Examples of Rhetoric in Nahj al-Balagha:**

Numerous examples of rhetoric can be found in Nahj al-Balagha, including:

**Metaphor:** Imam Ali (peace be upon him) uses metaphor in many of his sermons, such as saying, "Life is a bridge that a person crosses; either he crosses it safely, or the flood sweeps him away."

**Simile:** Imam Ali (peace be upon him) uses simile to clarify his ideas, such as saying, "Knowledge is like light that illuminates the heart, and ignorance is like darkness that blinds it."

**Metonymy:** Imam Ali (peace be upon him) uses metonymy to express certain meanings indirectly, such

as saying, "Do not give to those who do not deserve, for they will humiliate you and demean the gift."

**Synecdoche:** Imam Ali (peace be upon him) uses synecdoche to express certain meanings indirectly, such as saying, "The most beloved people to me are those who love goodness for others."

**Antithesis:** Imam Ali (peace be upon him) uses antithesis to emphasize certain ideas, such as saying, "Life and death, joy and sorrow, all are decrees from Allah" (Isa, 2000, pp. 44–45).

#### 4. **Importance of Rhetoric in Nahj al-Balagha:**

The rhetoric in Nahj al-Balagha holds great importance for several reasons, including:

**Accurate and Effective Conveyance of Meanings:** The rhetoric in Nahj al-Balagha helps convey meanings accurately and effectively through the use of various rhetorical arts, making the meanings clearer and more attractive to the listener.

**Impact on Emotions and Feelings:** The rhetoric in Nahj al-Balagha helps influence emotions and feelings through the use of an impactful style and expressive words, stirring the listener's emotions and convincing them of the speaker's viewpoint.

**Enrichment of the Arabic Language:** The rhetoric in Nahj al-Balagha contributes to enriching the Arabic language through the use of innovative words, complex structures, and adding beauty and magnificence to the language.

**Preservation of Arab Heritage:** The rhetoric in Nahj al-Balagha is part of the Arab-Islamic heritage due to the eloquent examples found in the sermons of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), representing the pinnacle of Arabic rhetoric.

**Benefit in Various Fields:** The rhetoric in Nahj al-Balagha can be beneficial in various fields, such as public speaking, writing, teaching, literature, and more, providing tools and skills that help in effective and persuasive expression (Isa, 2000, p. 52).

**Education in Nahj al-Balagha:** Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him) places great importance on education in Nahj al-Balagha, considering it fundamental to building society and achieving progress due to its role in enlightening minds, developing skills, and instilling values and principles. Key ideas about education in Nahj al-Balagha include:

1. **The Importance of Knowledge:** Imam Ali (peace be upon him) emphasizes the importance of knowledge in Nahj al-Balagha, considering it a light that illuminates the heart and removes

darkness. He likens knowledge to an inexhaustible treasure and stresses that knowledge is the key to success in both this world and the hereafter.

2. **Pursuit of Knowledge:** Imam Ali (peace be upon him) encourages the pursuit of knowledge in Nahj al-Balagha, urging continuous learning at all times and places. He emphasizes that seeking knowledge is an obligation for every Muslim, male and female, and that neither poverty nor wealth nor age should prevent anyone from pursuing knowledge.
3. **Sources of Knowledge:** Imam Ali (peace be upon him) points to the sources of knowledge in Nahj al-Balagha, emphasizing that the first source of knowledge is the Holy Quran and the noble Sunnah. Knowledge can also be acquired through books, scholars, and experience.
4. **Methods of Education:** Imam Ali (peace be upon him) highlights the methods of education in Nahj al-Balagha, emphasizing the importance of learning through listening, observation, and practice. He stresses that education should be interactive and based on communication between teacher and student.
5. **Characteristics of the Teacher:** Imam Ali (peace be upon him) describes the characteristics of a teacher in Nahj al-Balagha, stating that a teacher should be patient, knowledgeable, and wise. The teacher should be a good role model for students and love knowledge and teaching others.
6. **Characteristics of the Learner:** Imam Ali (peace be upon him) describes the characteristics of a learner in Nahj al-Balagha, stating that a learner should be diligent, seek knowledge, be patient, and respectful of the teacher.
7. **Fruits of Education:** Imam Ali (peace be upon him) discusses the fruits of education in Nahj al-Balagha, emphasizing that education yields understanding, knowledge, and faith. It helps solve problems, make correct decisions, and contributes to building society and achieving progress (<https://shamela.ws/book/7702/31>).

The researchers believe that it is unfair to treat Nahj al-Balagha merely as a book for those who seek the highest standards in rhetoric and literature. A cursory reading of Al-Sharif Al-Radhi's introduction to "Nahj" reveals that

the primary motivations for its compilation were not purely literary. As stated in his introduction, it serves the needs of scholars and learners, as well as the eloquent and ascetics. It addresses topics such as monotheism, justice, and the transcendence of Allah above creation, serving as a balm for every thirst and a remedy for every doubt. Nahj al-Balagha has echoed across the world, its light shining across the globe, crowning the pinnacle of literature for centuries. It stands as a testimony to eloquence and rhetoric, needing no description or introduction. Its status is beneath the Creator's words but above the created. It deserves to be recited and studied by the eloquent, morning and evening, and memorized in pure hearts that make it their vessel. Nahj al-Balagha will continue to be a beacon, guiding the way for those who seek its light, and no matter how thick and vast the clouds may gather, they will never obscure the sun from the eyes.

#### **Previous Studies:**

##### **1. Al-Daria Study (1992):**

**Title:** "The Effect of Teaching Using Integrated Texts on the Achievement of First-Year Secondary School Students in the Subject of Rhetoric"

This study was conducted in Jordan, aiming to explore the effect of teaching using integrated texts on the achievement of first-year secondary school students in rhetoric. The study tested the null hypothesis: There is no statistically significant difference between the mean achievement of students taught using integrated texts and those taught using the example method.

The study sample consisted of first-year male science students from government secondary schools under the Directorate of Education for the Greater Amman Area. The sample was selectively chosen from Al-Hussein Secondary School, comprising 171 students distributed across four classes: two experimental groups taught using the integrated text method, and two control groups taught using the example method.

The researcher prepared the educational material for both methods and taught the rhetorical topics (command, prohibition, and interrogation) to the groups. The students were randomly assigned to the groups. To achieve the research objective, the researcher developed a multiple-choice test consisting of 25 items, which was validated and reliability tested. The test was applied to a pilot sample of 40 students randomly selected from the same school, then administered to the experimental groups. The reliability coefficient was calculated using

the Kuder-Richardson formula. The study concluded that there was no statistically significant difference between the mean achievement of students taught using integrated texts and those taught using the example method.

The researcher recommended incorporating the integrated text method alongside the example method and conducting similar studies to explore teachers' and students' attitudes toward the integrated text teaching method (Al-Daria, 1992, p. 1, 46).

##### **2. Al-Janabi Study (2003):**

**Title:** "The Effect of Hilda Taba's and Merrill & Tennyson's Models on the Acquisition and Retention of Rhetorical Concepts among Fifth-Year Literary Female Students"

This study was conducted at the University of Baghdad, College of Education (Ibn Rushd), with the aim of exploring the effect of Hilda Taba's and Merrill & Tennyson's models on the acquisition and retention of rhetorical concepts among fifth-year literary female students.

To achieve this, the researcher selected a quasi-experimental design with two experimental groups and one control group, with a post-test. The experiment was conducted at Al-Shaheed Adnan Khairallah Secondary School for Girls in Baghdad/Al-Karkh II, with three randomly selected classes representing the research sample: Class C for the first experimental group, which studied using the Hilda Taba model (27 students), Class A for the second experimental group, which studied using the Merrill & Tennyson model (27 students), and Class B for the control group, which studied rhetoric using the traditional method (26 students). The researcher controlled for variables such as age, previous year's Arabic language scores, prior knowledge in Arabic, parental education, and linguistic ability, ensuring no statistically significant differences between the groups.

The researcher determined the scientific material, which included rhetorical concepts from the prescribed rhetoric textbook for fifth-year literary students. Behavioral objectives were formulated (220 in total) and presented to experts. The researcher prepared teaching plans for the three groups, which were also reviewed by experts. A test was developed, with its items reviewed by experts, and its difficulty and discrimination indices calculated. The reliability of the test was established by retesting a representative sample from the pilot study, and analysis of variance was used as the statistical tool, along with the Kuder-Richardson formula. The study results showed

that both experimental groups outperformed the control group in acquiring rhetorical concepts, with no statistically significant difference between the two experimental groups in this regard.

**Comparison of Previous Studies with the Current Research:** Through a review of the various aspects of the previous studies mentioned, the researchers observed differences in objectives, procedures, tools, samples, study materials, academic levels, and results, summarized as follows:

1. **Sample Size:** The sample sizes varied in previous studies depending on the research objective and the population studied. The largest sample was in Al-Daria's study, which included 171 students, while Al-Janabi's study involved 80 students. The current study's sample size is 48 students.
2. **Duration of the Experiment:** The duration of experiments in previous studies varied based on the topics covered, ranging from 14 weeks to 6 months. The current study lasted two months, which the researchers believe is appropriate for the research requirements.
3. **Gender Variable:** Previous studies differed in the gender of the research population. Al-Daria's study involved male students, while Al-Janabi's study involved female students. The current study includes both genders.
4. **Instructor:** In previous studies, the researcher was often the instructor, whereas in the current study, the subject's regular teacher conducted the teaching.
5. **Academic Level:** The studies were conducted at different educational levels. Al-Daria's study was conducted on fourth-year secondary students, while Al-Janabi's study focused on fifth-year literary students. The current study is conducted at the university level.
6. **Location of the Study:** The studies were conducted in different locations. Al-Daria's study was conducted in Jordan, while Al-Janabi's study took place in Baghdad, Iraq. The current study is conducted in Diyala, Iraq.
7. **Study Objective:** The objectives varied in previous studies. Al-Daria's study focused on achievement, while Al-Janabi's study focused on the acquisition and retention of concepts. The current study aligns with Al-Daria's study, as the dependent variable is achievement.

8. **Research Tool:** The studies shared similarities in the research tool, with tests being the primary method to obtain results. The current study also uses tests as the main research tool.
9. **Statistical Methods:** Previous studies used the t-test as the statistical method to determine differences between groups. The current study also uses this method.
10. **Results of Previous Studies:** Previous studies concluded that teaching methods are effective in teaching rhetoric, which the current study aims to further investigate.

#### **Conclusions from Previous Studies:**

1. The previous studies on teaching methods in rhetoric emphasized their superiority over traditional methods, recommending that these teaching methods be adopted as effective approaches. The current research seeks to contribute additional knowledge in the field of rhetoric.
2. Both previous studies agreed that using teaching methods in rhetoric plays a crucial role in helping students enhance their comprehension and assimilation of information in a scientific manner.
3. The teaching methods for rhetoric can be applied across various subjects and educational levels.

### **Chapter Three:**

#### **Research Methodology and Procedures**

##### **First: Experimental Design**

Choosing the appropriate experimental design is the first step for a researcher when conducting a scientific experiment. The validity and accuracy of the design are crucial to achieving accurate and reliable results. The selection of the experimental design depends on the nature of the problem and the circumstances of the sample. Since this research has one independent variable (the inclusion of texts from Nahj al-Balagha) and one dependent variable (academic achievement), the researchers adopted an experimental design suitable for their current research. The chosen design and its procedures are illustrated as follows:



Group	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Experimental	Inclusion of texts from Nahj al-Balagha by Imam Ali (peace be upon him)	Academic Achievement
Control	—	Academic Achievement

(Zuba'i and Al-Ghanam: 1974, p. 116)

### Second: Research Population and Sample

The researchers selected Rehana al-Rasool Secondary School, located in Baqubah, Kanaan Subdistrict, under the Directorate of Education in Diyala, to apply their experiment for the following reasons:

1. The school administration expressed its willingness and readiness to cooperate with the researchers.
2. The number of fifth-year literary female students is 50, distributed across two classes (A and B) for the academic year 2023-2024.

The researchers randomly selected Class A to represent the experimental group, whose students would be exposed to the independent variable, while Class B represented the control group. The research sample consisted of 50 students, with 25 students in each class. After excluding two repeat students, the final sample size was 48 students, with 24 students in each group. The table below illustrates this.

**Table 1:** Number of Students in the Research Groups Before and After Exclusion

Group	Class	Number of Students Before Exclusion	Repeat Students	Number of Students After Exclusion
Experimental	A	25	1	24
Control	B	25	1	24
<b>Total</b>		<b>50</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>48</b>

### Third: Equivalence of the Research Groups

Before conducting the experiment, the researchers ensured the equivalence of the two groups in certain variables that might influence the experiment's results. The researchers focused on the following variables:

1. **Arabic Language Grades from the Previous Academic Year:**

The researchers equated the experimental and control groups in their Arabic language grades for the 2022-2023 academic year. The average grade for the experimental group was 73.555, while the control group's average was 73.044. The standard deviation for the experimental group was 9.985, and for the control group, it was 8.834. The variance for the experimental group was 99.700, and for the control group, it was 78.039. The researchers used the T-test for two independent samples to determine if

the difference between the groups' grades was statistically significant. The calculated T-value was 0.285, which is less than the tabulated T-value of 1.671 with a degree of freedom of 46, indicating that the difference was not statistically significant. This suggests that the experimental and control groups were equivalent in their Arabic language grades from the previous academic year. The table below details this information.

**Table 2:** Equivalence of the Experimental and Control Groups in Arabic Language Grades for the First Year

Group	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	T-Value (Calculated)	T-Value (Tabulated)	Degrees of Freedom	Significance Level (0.05)
Experimental	24	73.555	9.985	99.700	0.285	1.671	46	Not Significant
Control	24	73.044	8.834	78.039				

### 2. IQ Test Scores:

To ensure the equivalence of the research groups in terms of intelligence, the researchers used the Otis (Otis) full-level intelligence test for secondary students, designed to measure mental ability. This test consists of 72 questions, each with three to five possible answers, and is standardized according to the Iraqi environment (Al-Badrawi, 2006: 146). The researchers reduced the test to 60 questions to accommodate the test duration. The test was administered to both groups simultaneously under similar conditions, and the students were given the same amount of time to complete it. The researchers then scored the tests and analyzed the results statistically. The mean score for the experimental group was 42.733, while the control group's mean was 42.311. The T-test for two independent samples revealed no statistically significant difference between the groups' scores, with a calculated T-value of 0.817, which is less than the tabulated T-value of 1.671 at a significance level of 0.05 and with a degree of freedom of 46. This indicates that the experimental and control groups were equivalent in intelligence. The table below details this information.

**Table 3:** Equivalence of the Experimental and Control Groups in IQ Test Scores:

Group	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	T-Value (Calculated)	T-Value (Tabulated)	Degrees of Freedom	Significance Level (0.05)
Experimental	24	42.733	2.972	8.832	0.817	1.671	46	Not Statistically Significant
Control	24	42.311	2.343	5.489				

### 3. Fathers' Educational Attainment:

The statistical analysis of the fathers' educational attainment data, obtained from the students through distributed forms and school records, indicated that the research groups were statistically equivalent in this variable. The Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ) showed that the calculated Chi-square value was 0.48, which is less than the tabulated Chi-square value of 5.99 at a significance level of 0.05 with 2 degrees of freedom. The table below illustrates this.

**Table 4:** Fathers' Educational Attainment for Students in the Experimental and Control Groups

Group	Sample Size	Educational Level	Chi-Square Value	Degrees of Freedom	Significance Level (0.05)
		Illiterate	Can Read & Write	Primary	Intermediate
Experimental	24	3	4	5	4
Control	24	2	7	2	5

### 4. Mothers' Educational Attainment:

The table below shows that the research groups were statistically equivalent in this variable. The Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ) revealed that the calculated Chi-square value was 0.376, which is less than the tabulated Chi-square value of 5.99 at a significance level of 0.05 with 2 degrees of freedom.

**Table 5:** Mothers' Educational Attainment for Students in the Experimental and Control Groups

Group	Sample Size	Educational Level	Chi-Square Value	Degrees of Freedom	Significance Level (0.05)
		Illiterate	Can Read & Write	Primary	Intermediate
Experimental	24	5	6	6	2
Control	24	4	7	4	4

### Fourth: Controlling Extraneous Variables

In addition to the steps taken to ensure the equivalence of the research groups, the researchers took measures to control the influence of extraneous variables (non-experimental) that could affect the experiment's validity and reduce the accuracy of the results. Controlling these variables ensures more precise outcomes. Some of these factors include:

#### A. Incidental Events:

No significant events occurred during the experiment that could have disrupted its progress or influenced the dependent variable alongside the experimental variable. The research groups did not experience any dropouts, transfers, or interruptions during the experiment, except

for occasional absences, which were relatively equal between the groups.

#### B. Effect of Experimental Procedures:

The researchers attempted to control the effect of certain experimental procedures that could influence the experiment's progress, as follows:

##### 1. Selection of the Sample:

The researchers controlled the influence of this factor by randomly selecting the sample and statistically equating the research groups in terms of parental educational attainment.

##### 2. Instruction:

The researchers requested that the regular teacher of the subject teach both groups to avoid the influence of this factor. Assigning different teachers to each group might make it difficult to attribute differences in results to the independent variable, as part of the difference could be due to one teacher's greater expertise in the subject or personal attributes, especially since the subject teacher specializes in Arabic rhetoric.

##### 3. Distribution of Lectures:

The researchers controlled this factor by ensuring an equal distribution of lectures between the research groups. The subject (Arabic rhetoric) was allocated two hours per week, scheduled on Sundays and Mondays, as shown in the table below.

**Table 6:** Distribution of Lectures for the Arabic Rhetoric Subject

Department	Subject	Group	Day	Time
Arabic	Arabic Language	Experimental	Sunday	08:50 AM
		Control	Monday	08:50 AM

##### 4. Measurement Tool:

The measurement tool was standardized for both research groups to ensure consistent results. The researchers developed an achievement test specifically for this research, which was administered to both groups simultaneously.

##### 5. Determining the Study Material:

The study material was standardized between the two groups and followed the syllabus as prescribed in the curriculum.

##### 6. Confidentiality of the Research:

The researchers ensured the confidentiality of the research by agreeing with the subject teacher not to inform the students about the

nature and objectives of the research to prevent any change in their behavior or approach.

**7. Educational Aids:**

The educational aids used were identical for both groups, consisting of a blackboard and colored markers.

**8. Determining the Scientific Material:**

The scientific material was determined before the experiment, as the behavioral objectives and achievement test were prepared based on the prescribed material. The researchers, in agreement with the subject teacher, selected the topics to be taught to the research sample during the experiment. These topics aligned with the curriculum content.

**Fifth: Formulation of Behavioral Objectives:**

Behavioral objectives serve as a guide for researchers during the experiment and in constructing tests. They significantly help in assessing student progress and performance because they represent measurable and observable behaviors following a specific learning experience (Al-Khatib, 1985, p. 10). The researchers analyzed the content of the scientific material scheduled for the experiment and translated it into behavioral objectives according to the topics of the experiment. The initial number of objectives was 48, distributed across the six levels (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation). To ensure their validity and alignment with the content, these objectives were reviewed by a group of experts. Some objectives were modified, but none were deleted.

**Sixth: Selection of Texts from Nahj al-Balagha**

The researchers relied on certain scientific sources to select the texts. After collecting the texts, they were presented to a group of experts with specialized knowledge in rhetoric, literature, and teaching methods.

**Seventh: Preparation of Teaching Plans**

A teaching plan is defined as "the amount of information that a teacher conveys to their students in each subject during the academic year. It records the content of the instruction provided to the learner" (Ibrahim and Al-Kalzah, 1983, p. 8). This task was assigned to the subject teacher, who was responsible for preparing the teaching plans after being provided with selected texts from Nahj al-Balagha by the researchers.

**Eighth: Research Tool**

**1. Preparation of the Test Blueprint**

A test blueprint is the optimal tool for preparing objective achievement tests and is a fundamental step in test preparation. It combines the content area with the behavioral objectives, weighted according to their importance. This allows researchers to distribute test items across the content areas of the study material. According to D. Embo (1977, p. 240), a test blueprint enables systematic and balanced test construction.

Based on this approach, the researchers prepared a test blueprint for the six topics chosen for the current research, along with the behavioral objectives across the six cognitive levels of Bloom's taxonomy. The content areas were weighted equally based on their concepts, and the objectives were weighted according to the number of behavioral objectives in each level. The test was designed to include 30 objective items, distributed across the matrix cells. The following table illustrates this distribution.

**Table 7:** Distribution of Test Items According to the Test Blueprint

المجموع	عدد الفقرات الاختبارية						الاهتمام النسبي	الاهداف	الموضوعات
	تكوين %10	تركيب	تحليل	تطبيق 5,17	فهم	معرفة			
4	0	1	0	1	1	1	25:1 %1	9	السجع
4	0	1	0	1	1	1	75:1 %3	1	الجناس
6	1	1	1	1	1	1	25:2 %1	7	الطباق والمقابلة
4	0	1	0	1	1	1	25:1 %2	0	التورية
6	1	1	1	1	1	1	25:2 %0	6	التشبيه
6	1	1	1	1	1	1	25:2 %1	7	تسبيه الصور
30	3	6	3	6	6	6	100 %	80	المجموع

## 2. Formulation of Test Items

One of the key requirements of this research is to prepare an achievement test in the subject of rhetoric to measure the academic performance of students in both research groups during the experiment. Given the absence of standardized tests suitable for measuring the performance of secondary students in rhetoric, the researchers, in collaboration with the subject teacher, developed an objective achievement test specifically for this research.

The test consisted of 30 items in a multiple-choice format, which is known for its reliability, validity, and wide usage. This format is also effective in covering a broad area of the tested material in a short period, making it one of the best types of objective tests (Saadeh, 1984, p. 164). The researchers used a single correct answer format, where each item consisted of a stem followed by several answer choices, with only one correct option and the others being incorrect.

## 3. Validity of the Test

A test is considered valid when it accurately measures what it is intended to measure (Al-Imam et al., 1990, p. 123) or when it measures the construct it is designed to assess (Abd al-Da'im, 1981, p. 255). To ensure the validity of the test, the researchers presented it to a group of experts in teaching methods, educational sciences, and psychology. Based on the experts' feedback, necessary adjustments were made to some items, and others were rephrased. No items were deleted.

## 4. Test Instructions

The researchers provided the test with clear and concise instructions to help students answer accurately. The instructions included writing the student's name and class in the designated space on the question paper and ensuring that no item was left unanswered. The grading instructions specified that one point would be awarded for each correct answer, while incorrect or unanswered items would receive zero points. Items with multiple answers or incomplete responses were also treated as incorrect. (Appendix 5)

## 5. Statistical Analysis of Test Items

Statistical analysis of test items is crucial, as it reveals the degree to which the items correlate with the content being measured, surpassing even logical analysis (Al-Kubaisi, 1987, p. 86; Abd al-Rahman, 1983, p. 414). To determine the difficulty level and discrimination power of each item, the test was administered on April 11, 2024, to a pilot sample similar to the main research sample. The researchers selected 40 students from the research

population. The average time taken by students to complete the test was 50 minutes, calculated using the following formula:

Test Duration = Time of Fastest Student + Time of Slowest Student  
$$\text{Test Duration} = \frac{\text{Time of Fastest Student} + \text{Time of Slowest Student}}{2}$$

### A. Difficulty Level of Items:

The difficulty level of an item represents the percentage of examinees who answered it correctly (Samara, 1989, p. 105). After calculating the difficulty level for each test item, it was found to range between 0.35 and 0.70, indicating that all items were acceptable and suitable for application. Bloom suggests that test items are considered good if their difficulty levels range between 0.20 and 0.80 (Bloom, 1971, p. 60).

### B. Discrimination Power of Items:

The discrimination power of an item refers to its ability to distinguish between students with high and low levels of the trait being measured (Abu Saleh, 2000, p. 215). The researchers calculated the discrimination power for each test item, which ranged between 0.30 and 0.55 (Appendix 6). This indicates that the test items were effective in differentiating between students with higher and lower academic performance. Eble states that an item with a discrimination power of 0.30 or more is considered good and acceptable (Eble, 1972, p. 4.6).

### C. Effectiveness of Distractors in Multiple-Choice Questions:

The difficulty of multiple-choice items depends on the degree of similarity between the distractors, which can mislead students who are not proficient in the material. A distractor is effective if it attracts more students from the lower group than from the upper group (Al-Baghdadi, 1980, p. 125). Distractors are considered effective if their value is negative. After sorting the students' responses and dividing them into two groups (upper and lower), it was found that the distractors attracted more students from the lower group than from the upper group. Therefore, the researchers decided to retain the distractors as they were.

### 6. Reliability of the Test

Reliability is one of the most important qualities of a good test, as it ensures that the test yields consistent results when administered to the same individuals under the same conditions (Al-Ghareeb, 1985, p. 651). The researchers calculated the reliability of the test using the split-half method. They used the scores from the pilot



test, dividing the 30 test items into two groups: one group contained the odd-numbered items, and the other contained the even-numbered items. The Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated between the two groups, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.94. After correction using the Spearman-Brown formula, the reliability coefficient increased to 0.96, which is considered good. Non-standardized tests are considered good if their reliability coefficient is 0.68 or above (Abu Allam, 1999, p. 434).

### 7. Test Administration Procedures

The students in the research sample were informed about the test date a week in advance to ensure both groups were equally prepared. The test was administered to both groups on April 18, 2024, at 9:30 AM. The researchers, along with the subject teacher, oversaw the administration of the test, which proceeded smoothly without any incidents that could have affected the testing process.

### 8. Test Scoring Procedure

The subject teacher scored the test according to the scoring instructions provided by the researchers. One point was awarded for each correct answer, while incorrect answers received zero points. Unanswered items, items with multiple answers, and incomplete responses were treated as incorrect. Based on this scoring method, the highest possible score was 30, and the lowest was zero. The highest score achieved was 30, and the lowest was 15.

### 9. Statistical Methods

The researchers used statistical methods to conduct the analysis and interpretation of the research results, utilizing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

### Chapter Four: Presentation, Interpretation of Results, Conclusions, Recommendations, and Suggestions

This chapter presents the research findings, tests the null hypothesis, interprets the results, and offers conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions based on the findings. The content is organized as follows:

#### Presentation of the Results:

The null hypothesis states: "There is no statistically significant difference between the mean achievement scores of fifth-year literary students who study rhetoric using texts from Nahj al-Balagha by Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and those who study the same subject without using texts from Nahj al-Balagha."

The results revealed that the mean score of the experimental group students was 23.63, while the mean score of the control group students was 16.79. Using the T-test for two independent samples, a statistically significant difference was found at the 0.05 level between the mean achievement scores of the two groups (experimental and control).

The calculated T-value was 5.922, which is greater than the tabulated T-value of 2.00 at 46 degrees of freedom, favoring the experimental group that studied using texts from Nahj al-Balagha. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. The following table illustrates this.

**Table 8:** Mean, Variance, Standard Deviation, and Calculated and Tabulated T-Values for the Achievement Scores of the Two Research Groups in the Rhetoric Test.

الدلالة الاحصائية عند المستوى 0,05	القيمة التائية		درجة الحرية	الانحراف المعياري	التباين	الوسيط الحسابي	حجم العينة	المجموعة
	الجولية	المحسوبة						
لا يوجد فرق ذو دلالة احصائية	02,2	922,5	46	56,3	68,12	63,23	24	التجريبية
				413,4	46,19	79,16	24	الضابطة

### Interpretation of the Results

The results of this study indicate that the experimental group, which was taught using texts from Nahj al-Balagha, outperformed the control group, which was taught without these texts. The researchers believe that the following reasons contributed to this outcome:

- Effectiveness of Nahj al-Balagha Texts:** The use of Nahj al-Balagha texts in teaching rhetoric proved to be highly effective, as it helped prepare the students mentally and captured their attention.
- Increased Student Engagement:** The inclusion of Nahj al-Balagha texts in the lessons engaged the students and increased their focus, as they found it to be a novel and captivating approach, leading to improved rhetoric scores.

3. **Creative and Enjoyable Teaching Method:** Teaching with Nahj al-Balagha texts provided a creative and enjoyable experience for the students, enhancing their motivation and positive attitude towards learning rhetoric.
4. **Educational and Moral Impact:** The use of Nahj al-Balagha in teaching is both educational and moral, having a profound effect on students, making it an excellent medium for studying rhetoric.

### Conclusions

Based on the results of this study, the researchers have drawn the following conclusions:

1. **Successful Teaching Approach:** Using texts from Nahj al-Balagha is a successful teaching method that facilitates understanding of the material and ensures long-term retention, while also sparking students' interest.
2. **Effective Alternative for Enhancing Achievement:** Incorporating Nahj al-Balagha texts into lessons is an excellent alternative for improving academic achievement.
3. **Versatile Teaching Method:** The use of Nahj al-Balagha texts can be an effective teaching method across all branches of the Arabic language.
4. **Increased Interest and Understanding:** The use of Nahj al-Balagha texts increases students' interest and their ability to understand and appreciate rhetoric, which has a significant impact on their enthusiasm for learning the subject.

### Recommendations

In light of the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. **Wider Use of Nahj al-Balagha Texts:** Incorporate Nahj al-Balagha texts not only in the teaching of rhetoric but also across all branches of the Arabic language due to their profound impact on students.
2. **Emphasize the Importance of Nahj al-Balagha:** Highlight the importance of using Nahj al-Balagha texts in teaching rhetoric, as they have proven to be effective and successful in improving student achievement.
3. **Create a Resource for Teachers:** Develop a handbook for educators that includes selected texts from Nahj al-Balagha, along with

comprehensive guidance on how to use and present these texts in the classroom.

4. **Encourage Memorization and Appreciation:** Utilize literary texts in teaching to encourage students to memorize and appreciate the rhetorical elements of Nahj al-Balagha, thereby enriching their thinking and imagination.
5. **Advocate for the Use of Nahj al-Balagha:** Encourage educational professionals to advocate for the use of Nahj al-Balagha texts in rhetoric and other branches of the Arabic language during their meetings with teachers.

### Suggestions

To further explore the aspects of the current research, the researchers suggest the following:

1. **Conduct Similar Studies in Other Educational Stages:** Undertake a similar study to explore the use of Nahj al-Balagha texts in different educational stages.
2. **Extend the Duration of the Study:** Conduct a similar study over a longer period to observe the long-term effects of using Nahj al-Balagha texts in teaching.
3. **Study the Impact on Literary Taste:** Conduct a study to investigate the effect of Nahj al-Balagha texts on developing literary taste in the subject of Arabic rhetoric.
4. **Examine Gender Differences:** Conduct a study to measure the impact of Nahj al-Balagha texts on academic achievement based on gender.
5. **Apply the Study to Middle School Students:** Conduct a similar study at the middle school level to evaluate the effectiveness of Nahj al-Balagha texts in that stage.

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