

Towards a New Rhetorical Reading of Abdul Qahir al-Jurjāni's Theory of Metaphor: A Reassessment in Light of New Rhetoric

Pro; Belkacem Boudenna ^{1*} 

University Center of El Bayadh ;Algeria ; blkacem@hotmail.fr

ORCID iD Link : <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6325-6164>

Dr ;Tahri Belkacem ² 

University Center of El Bayadh ;Algeria ; b.tahri@cu-elbayadh.dz

ORCID iD Link <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-7868-5221>

Dr ; Boutraâ Tayeb ³ 

University Center of El Bayadh ;Algeria ; t.boutra@cu-elbayadh.dz

ORCID iD Link <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-5807-1604>

Received: 11/02/2026

Accepted: 12/04/2026

Published: 08/07/ 2026

Abstract

This paper reinterprets Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani's rhetorical writings through the lens of New Rhetoric, arguing that metaphor is not merely ornamental but a cognitive and perceptual process central to meaning and persuasion. It proposes that al-Jurjani anticipated modern theories of conceptual metaphor and argumentation by treating metaphor as an inferential tool in discourse. Using an analytical comparison with thinkers such as Paul Ricoeur and George Lakoff, the study reveals the epistemological and argumentative depth of al-Jurjani's ideas. It also challenges conventional readings of his work, presenting metaphor as a mechanism for generating meaning and shaping mental vision. More broadly, the paper seeks to position Arabic rhetoric within global scholarly debates and offers practical ways to renew rhetorical studies today. By linking classical Arabic thought with contemporary cognitive science, it calls for a new rhetoric capable of strengthening persuasion, critical awareness, and intellectual engagement in modern discourse for diverse Arab audiences today.

Keywords: Metaphor, 'Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani, New Rhetoric, Conceptual Metaphor, Nazm Theory (Theory of Construction/Order)

Introduction

In contemporary linguistic and philosophical studies, metaphor is no longer merely a deviation from linguistic norms or a rhetorical ornament intended to embellish and improve speech. In light of the "New Rhetoric" (La Nouvelle Rhétorique) and Cognitive Linguistics, it has transformed into a central tool for thinking, perception, and knowledge production. (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969; Ricoeur, 1977)

The works of scholars such as Chaim Perelman, Paul Ricoeur, and George Lakoff have brought about a radical revolution in our understanding of metaphor, shifting research from the question 'How does metaphor adorn the text?' to the question 'How does metaphor create meaning and truth?' This epistemological shift has redrawn the map of rhetorical

studies, moving it from the narrow confines of school-based classifications of rhetorical embellishments to the vast horizons of interpretation and philosophy of language.

Amidst this global cognitive transformation, the Arabic rhetorical heritage emerges as a fertile field for questioning and re-reading. Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani (d. 471 AH / 1078 CE) represents the pinnacle that this heritage reached in its contemplation of the phenomena of meaning and imagery. (*al-Jurjani, 1991*)

Returning to al-Jurjani today is not a matter of historical glorification or nostalgic heritage; rather, it is an urgent cognitive necessity dictated by the need to uncover what has been left unsaid in our rhetorical heritage, and to demonstrate how the seeds of the cognitive theory of metaphor were latent within the folds of his theory of ‘nazm’ (systematic arrangement) and the analyses of ‘Asrar al-Balagha,’ albeit expressed in different language and terminology imposed by the cultural and doctrinal contexts of that era.

The research problem is defined by the following central question: To what extent can Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani's theory of metaphor be considered an early and remarkable intersection with the propositions of the New Rhetoric and Cognitive Linguistics? This question branches into sub-questions: How did Arabic heritage define metaphor before al-Jurjani? What is the qualitative addition made by the author of ‘Al-Dalail’ and ‘Al-Asrar’? How does his theory of ‘tahyil’ (imaginative evocation) and ‘iddia al-ma’na’ (meaning-claiming) intersect with the theory of ‘conceptual metaphor’ in Lakoff and Johnson? What are the pragmatic and argumentative dimensions that can be extracted from al-Jurjani's analyses of Quranic and poetic texts? And can this intersectional reading establish a new Arabic rhetoric that transcends school-based repetition?

1. The Concept of Metaphor in Arabic Rhetorical Heritage: Context and Formation

The concept of metaphor was not born complete in Arab culture; rather, it underwent a long evolutionary process, moving from intuitive aesthetic observation to logical and linguistic codification. In this section, we trace the trajectory of this concept's formation before al-Jurjani's pivotal moment, to understand the foundation upon which he built his theory.

1.1 Early Definitions of Metaphor

Al-Jahiz defined metaphor as “naming a thing by something else when it stands in its place.” (*al-Jahiz, 1985, p. 153*)

This definition represents an early key to understanding the mechanism of metaphor in Arabic from the perspective of functional substitution rather than merely formal similarity. The phrase “when it stands in its place” does not indicate mere verbal transfer, but rather stipulates a contextual legitimacy that enables the substitute name to perform the function of the original name within the context of communication. The relationship between the borrowed name and the named thing is not arbitrary; rather, it is founded on a connection that is amenable to circulation and acceptance.

In his discussion of Arab eloquence, al-Jahiz points out that Arabs may borrow a word for a thing when it shares with another thing in some meaning. Al-Jahiz did not establish strict logical boundaries between literal and metaphorical meaning; rather, he viewed the matter from the angle of usage and the ability to communicate understanding.

Metaphor, for him, is a means of clarification and exposition, not merely decoration. (*al-Jahiz, 1985, p. 153*)

This phrase carries within it the seeds of an early awareness that metaphor may be more truthful in expressing meaning than rigid linguistic literalism, something that contemporary philosophers of language would later develop.

Ibn Qutaybah (d. 276 AH / 889 CE) defined metaphor, stating: “For the Arabs borrow the word and place it in the position of another word when the thing named by it is related to the other in some way, or adjacent to it, or similar to it.” (*Ibn Qutaybah, 1981, p. 135*)

Tha’lab (d. 291 AH / 904 CE) discussed metaphor, saying: “It is when a name is borrowed for a thing from something else, or a meaning from other than it.” (*Tha’lab, 1995, p. 53*)

Al-Amidi (d. 370 AH / 981 CE) defined metaphor as follows: “The Arabs borrow meaning for what does not have it when it approximates it, or draws near to it, or resembles it in some of its conditions, or is a cause among its causes; thus the borrowed expression becomes then appropriate for the thing for which it was borrowed and harmonious with its meaning.” (*al-Amidi, n.d., p. 234*)

Metaphor uses a word or expression in a meaning other than its original meaning, but this word is related or proximate in its attributes or causes to the intended meaning, making its metaphorical usage acceptable and having correct signification within the linguistic and rhetorical context. This relationship based on similarity or proximity is what distinguishes metaphor from the literal usage of the word.

Qudama ibn Ja’far (d. 337 AH / 948 CE) came with a completely different project, influenced by Aristotelian logic that had begun to permeate Arab culture. In his book ‘Naqd al-Shi’r’ (Criticism of Poetry), Qudama attempted to establish rhetoric and criticism on strict rational foundations, defining metaphor in the context of his discussion on the harmony of expression and meaning. (*Qudama ibn Ja’far, n.d., p. 64*)

Qudama's concern was to establish logical boundaries. He viewed metaphor from the angle of “truth and falsehood” and appropriateness. Although his attempt added a scientific character to rhetorical study, it contributed to stripping metaphor of its vital psychological and aesthetic character, transforming it into a mathematical matter related to the appropriateness of expression to the meaning borrowed for it. Qudama is credited with drawing attention to the importance of ‘appropriateness’ or similarity between the source and target of metaphor, which is an essential condition for the success and acceptance of metaphor.

As for metaphor in al-Rummani's ‘Al-Nukat fi I’jaz al-Qur’an,’ it is: “Attaching expression to other than what it was originally established for in language, on the basis of transfer for clarification,” meaning it is the use of the word in a meaning that goes beyond the limits of its true meaning for which it was established in the original linguistic heritage, through a mechanism that transfers signification from its primary level to a secondary metaphorical level, with the aim of achieving rhetorical clarification and effect, and embodying abstract meanings in a sensible, perceptible image. (*al-Rummani, 1976, p. 79*)

In a later stage, we find Abu Hilal al-Askari (d. 395 AH / 1005 CE) in his book ‘Al-Sina’atayn’ (The Two Arts) reproducing the definitions of his predecessors with some expansion and explanation. Al-Askari defines metaphor as the transfer of expression from its original establishment in language to other than its establishment for the purpose of clarification. (*al-Askari, 1952, p. 296*)

Al-Askari here focuses on the explanatory function (clarification), emphasizing that metaphor is more eloquent than literal expression because it brings out meaning in a perceptible image.

As for al-Qadi al-Jurjani (d. 392 AH / 1002 CE), “metaphor is when one is content with the borrowed name instead of the original, and the expression is transferred and placed in the position of another, and its criterion is the approximation of similarity, and the appropriateness of the target to the source, and the blending of expression with meaning so that there is no repugnance between them and no apparent aversion of one from the other.” (*al-Qadi al-Jurjani, n.d., p. 41*)

Metaphor is the use of a word or expression (the borrowed name) in place of another word (the original), such that the expression is transferred to indicate a meaning other than its true meaning, and this is based on the existence of similarity or proximity between the borrowed word and the word from which it is borrowed. The essential condition for the borrowed name is that it be appropriate and suitable to the source, such that the expression blends with the meaning in a way that makes the relationship between them clear and cohesive, so that no repugnance or separation occurs between them, and neither appears detached or incompatible with the other. This blending makes the metaphorical meaning acceptable and natural in context.

1.2 Characteristics of Pre-Jurjani Rhetorical Study

From the foregoing, we conclude that the various definitions of metaphor by ancient Arab rhetoricians agreed on one meaning: that metaphor is when you mention one side of a simile intending the other side, claiming that the likened enters into the genus of what it is likened to, indicating that by attributing to the likened what belongs to what it is likened to.

The characteristics of the rhetorical study of metaphor before al-Jurjani can be summarized in specific points: First, the focus on the ‘single word’ and considering metaphor as a property that attaches to the single word, not the construction. Second, viewing it as an ‘ornament’ or decoration that can be dispensed with without the original meaning being disrupted (with the exception of glimpses from al-Jahiz). Third, treating it as a process of ‘substitution’ where one word replaces another due to a relationship of similarity, which is a reductive understanding that deprives metaphor of its generative capacity for new meanings.

These three objections to the traditional reading are not a criticism of the efforts of the early rhetoricians, for they were in the stage of establishment and laying down foundations, a stage that requires codification and classification before delving into analysis. However, the problem lies in the fact that this initial foundational stage became frozen in molds that did not change over centuries, so that Arabic rhetorical study continued to revolve in empty circles of definition, division, and branching without posing essential cognitive questions about the nature of metaphor and its cognitive function.

The causes of this stagnation can be diagnosed in multiple factors, including: the dominance of translated Aristotelian logic which sharply distinguished between literal and metaphorical meaning as two conflicting levels; the prevalence of the normative linguistic concern (the correctness and incorrectness of Arab speech) at the expense of the philosophical concern with the nature of meaning and how it is produced. Additionally, the employment of rhetoric as a tool to serve the sciences of Sharia and exegesis formed a ceiling that limited its contemplative scope.

2. Abdul Qahir Al-Jurjani and the Re-founding of Rhetoric

Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani represents a watershed moment and an exceptional juncture in the history of Arabic and human linguistic thought. His project was not merely adding marginal notes to the previous body of rhetoric; rather, it was a radical re-founding of concepts and tools. Al-Jurjani lived in the fifth century AH (eleventh century CE), a century of maturity and flourishing for the Islamic sciences, but it was also a century of major theological and doctrinal debates, especially around the issue of ‘i’jaz al-Qur’an’ (the inimitability of the Qur’an).

This polemical context is the hidden and declared driver of al-Jurjani's project. The challenge was: How do we prove that the inimitability of the Qur’an lies in its ‘nazm’ (systematic arrangement) and its eloquence, not merely in its words or abstract meanings? From here, al-Jurjani set out to investigate the secret of ‘excellence’ and ‘virtue’ in speech, which led him to establish a comprehensive linguistic theory.

2.1 Theory of “nazm” as a Theory of Meaning

Before entering into the details of metaphor, one must understand the overall framework in which al-Jurjani placed it: the ‘theory of nazm.’ In ‘Dalail al-I’jaz’ (Indications of Inimitability), al-Jurjani rejects the idea that individual words carry virtue in themselves. He states clearly: “Know that nazm is nothing but placing your speech in the position that the science of grammar requires, and acting according to its rules and principles.” (*al-Jurjani, n.d., p. 81*)

Nazm is not merely stringing words together; rather, it is ‘observing the meanings of grammar.’ Meaning is not formed in the individual word, but in the grammatical and semantic relationships that connect words. This foundation is essential for understanding metaphor, for metaphor at al-Jurjani is not a cosmetic process for an isolated word, but a semantic event that arises within the construction and through the interaction of the elements of nazm. Thus, al-Jurjani moved rhetoric from ‘the rhetoric of the word’ to ‘the rhetoric of the text’ or ‘the rhetoric of discourse.’

Before we delve into al-Jurjani's definition of metaphor, it must be noted that ‘Asrar al-Balagha’ and ‘Dalail al-I’jaz’ together form a coherent theoretical system, despite their apparent difference in subject matter. ‘Asrar al-Balagha’ deals with ‘imagination’ and the science of bayan (expression) (simile, metaphor, and metonymy), while ‘Dalail al-I’jaz’ deals with ‘nazm’ and the science of meanings. But al-Jurjani connects them in one project: proving that eloquence and rhetoric do not lie in abstract words, but in the dynamic relationship between words, meanings, and constructions.

In his book ‘Asrar al-Balagha,’ al-Jurjani dedicates extensive space to analyzing metaphor, presenting a precise definition that transcends simple transfer definitions. He says: “Metaphor is when one is content with the borrowed name instead of the original, and the expression is transferred and placed in the position of another, and its criterion is simile.” (*al-Jurjani, 1991, p. 28*)

The contemplator finds that this definition contains three main axes: the axis of ‘contentment’ which is concealment and hiding; the axis of ‘transfer’ which is the semantic shift from one context to another; and the axis of ‘criterion’ which is the simile-based connection that regulates the mechanism of metaphor and grants it its rhetorical legitimacy.

But al-Jurjani's genius does not lie in the apparent definition, but in his analysis of the ‘psychological process’ accompanying metaphor: “One of the most important topics of metaphor is establishing for the speaker a meaning that the hearer does not know from the word, but he knows it from the meaning of the word.” (*al-Jurjani, n.d., p. 431*)

This is what gives metaphor its power and psychological effect, and this representational pattern achieves remarkable aesthetic effectiveness manifested in arousing wonder in the recipient, and consequently giving expression a doubled artistic value, based on psychological enjoyment and aesthetic impact, in addition to what it bestows upon speech of artistic brilliance and stylistic elegance that enriches its expressive structure and increases its beauty.

This precise analysis reveals al-Jurjani's awareness of the ‘cognitive’ nature of metaphor, for it is not an abbreviated simile as the grammarians and previous rhetoricians said, but rather a different cognitive structure that requires mental effort to merge two images into one image. Al-Jurjani sees that metaphor is more eloquent than simile because it transfers the hearer from the apparent to the hidden, and stimulates the mind to search for the hidden relationship. What is obtained through effort and thought becomes more settled in the soul and more firmly established.

This means that what the apparent meaning suggests is suggestion and symbolism, “so that the apparent meanings of words are not intended as they were established for in language, but their meanings point to other meanings.” Metonymy came in this context oscillating between the apparent and the hidden, such that its signification is not revealed to the soul in a direct, easy manner, which compels the mind to engage in contemplation and summon imagination to reach its meaning and reveal the truth of what is intended from it. (*al-Jurjani, 1991, p. 256*)

2.2 Metaphor in Al-Jurjani: Interpretation and Signification

Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani divided metaphor according to its signification and rhetorical function into two main categories: the non-beneficial metaphor and the beneficial metaphor.

A. The Non-Beneficial Metaphor

Al-Jurjani defines it as: “That whose transfer has no benefit,” and he sees that this type of metaphor is limited in usage; for it is “short in reach, limited in scope.” This type is represented by transferring the word from its original meaning to another meaning, for the purpose of expanding the positions of language and observing the subtle distinctions in the meanings indicated. (*al-Jurjani, 1991, p. 31*)

Al-Jurjani gives an example of this type with the poet's words: "So we spent the night sitting by our horse, plucking the yellow from its lips." The poet borrows the expression "lip" which was originally established for humans – in describing the horse. Al-Jurjani sees that this metaphor does not add anything new to the meaning; "for there is no difference from the perspective of meaning between his saying: from its lips, and his saying: from its jahfalatayn (lips), if he had said it; it only gives you with both names the known organ." He even goes so far as to say that this type of metaphor may detract from part of the benefit that the poet seeks.

For this reason, al-Jurjani excludes the non-beneficial metaphor from the circle of true metaphor, limiting himself to the second type: the beneficial metaphor.

B. The Beneficial Metaphor

He defines it by saying: "Know that metaphor in this type is unlike the first, and it has a wider scope, more captivating, more flowing, more wonderful in beauty and excellence, more expansive in breadth, and deeper in profundity." These indications clarify the elements of the beneficial metaphor, namely: the breadth of the scope of meaning, comprehensive signification, employing poetic thought to bring out its beautiful aspects, its richness in meanings, and its extension in significations. (*al-Jurjani, 1991, p. 31*)

He describes it as: "That which has benefit," for its transfer from its original position to another position produces a semantic addition that would not have occurred without this transfer. Al-Jurjani limits this benefit to simile, saying: "As for the beneficial, it has become clear to you through its borrowing that there is a benefit and a meaning from the meanings and a purpose from the purposes, that without the place of that metaphor you would not have obtained, and the sum of that benefit and that purpose is: simile." (*al-Jurjani, 1991, p. 32*)

He gives two examples of this type: First, 'I saw a lion' – in which the name of the lion is borrowed for a man, to convey a new meaning that would not have been obtained without this metaphor, which is exaggeration in describing the intended person with courage. However, this exaggeration is not completed outside the effect on the recipient in whose soul falls the image of the lion in its ferocity, daring, despair, and severity. Second, 'I shook hands with a sea': in which the word 'sea' is borrowed for a man, to convey the meanings of generosity and munificence.

What also distinguishes al-Jurjani in his treatment of metaphor is his presentation of a 'stratified' analysis of the phenomenon of meaning, inaugurating the concept of 'meaning of meaning': the first meaning is what the word indicates in its direct lexical position, while the 'meaning of meaning' is what signification requires through the mechanisms of construction, image, and metaphor.

This distinction places al-Jurjani in the ranks of modern semanticists who distinguish between 'denotative meaning' (Denotation) and 'connotative meaning' (Connotation). Metaphor at al-Jurjani is necessarily a meaning of the second or third level, and for that reason it is more refined, more eloquent, and has greater effect than direct, rigid literalism.

In his second book 'Dalail al-I'jaz,' al-Jurjani returns to metaphor but from the perspective of 'nazm' and the effect of context. He emphasizes here that the beauty of metaphor does not stem from the borrowed word (such as 'inflamed' in His saying: 'And the

head was inflamed with gray hair’), but from its position in the nazm and its relationship with what precedes and what follows it. (*al-Jurjani, n.d., pp. 45–50*)

If we were to replace the word ‘inflamed’ with another word, the aesthetic and semantic structure would collapse, not because the other word is ugly, but because it does not achieve the required ‘interaction’ in that specific position. Thus, al-Jurjani establishes a contextual theory of meaning, where metaphor is a daughter of its context, and cannot be understood or appreciated in isolation from the total construction of the text.

3. The New Rhetoric: Origins and Stages

To appreciate the depth of what al-Jurjani proposed, we must place the mirror of ‘New Rhetoric’ before him. The New Rhetoric is not a single school; rather, it is a broad current of studies that appeared in the West in the twentieth century. The New Rhetoric, or what is technically known as “rhetorical stylistics,” underwent a gradual renewal trajectory that crystallized through successive historical and cognitive stages.

Each of these stages sought to overcome the methodological shortcomings of its predecessor, in order to establish a more comprehensive and scientific approach to analyzing discourse and literary text. This journey of renewal can be summarized in three basic stages. (*al-Harbi, 2003, p. 31*)

3.1 The First Stage: Linguistic Foundation and the Problem of Deviation

The emergence of this stage was linked to the efforts of a group of structural and generative linguists, such as Roman Jakobson, Samuel Levin, Paul Ricoeur, Perelman, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, and others. The initial concern of these pioneers focused on studying the problem of “deviation” from the standard grammatical norm. However, this exclusive and excessive focus on linguistic deviation, in isolation from other factors, led this approach to multiple methodological pitfalls that prevented it from providing a comprehensive explanation of the literary phenomenon.

3.2 The Second Stage: Structural-Based Stylistic Models

This stage was embodied in the prominent cognitive contributions of Geoffrey Leech, Tzvetan Todorov, the Liege group, in addition to Blyth. The efforts of these researchers focused on formulating models for deviation stylistics that are fundamentally based on structural foundations. Despite the dominant linguistic character of these models, they drew inspiration from classical figures of speech patterns, aspiring thereby to innovate a sophisticated and precise scientific tool for approaching and analyzing literary text.

Later, Blyth directed explicit criticisms at the pioneers of this New Rhetoric, especially the structuralists among them, taking them to task for their clear neglect of the pragmatic dimension and their overlooking of the context of the communicative situation, which called for proposing alternative models aimed at correcting this methodological path and remedying its consequences.

3.3 The Third Stage: The Persuasive and Pragmatic Dimension of Stylistics

This stage was characterized by the explicit call to transcend the monolithic view of rhetorical stylistics as merely a formal deviation phenomenon, and the emphasis on its possessing an active persuasive and functional component. Based on that, a methodological

necessity emerged requiring the attachment of the “rhetorical competence” model to other models concerned with “rhetorical performance.”

The nature of these models varied to include: hermeneutic (interpretive) approaches as in the case of Charles Dubois, communicative approaches at Howell and Blyth, in addition to semiotic approaches adopted by Umberto Eco.

Based on the foregoing brief review of the data of the New Rhetoric and the limits of its theoretical and applied work, it becomes possible to approach the set of ideas and concepts that Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani reached, which show substantial cognitive intersections with contemporary critical achievements in the study of metaphor.

This intersection is particularly evident in three main axes: first, conceptual metaphor and the latent semantic potentials it contains that are revealed through interpretation; second, the argumentative and persuasive energy that al-Jurjani employs in his theorization of metaphor as an effective rhetorical tool in influence and persuasion; third, the pragmatic and communicative role that metaphor plays in constructing discourse and producing signification within the communicative context, which gives al-Jurjani's propositions exceptional scientific importance that transcends their temporal limits to interrogate contemporary rhetorical studies.

4. The Scope of Metaphor in Abdul Qahir Al-Jurjani in Light of the New Rhetoric

4.1 Conceptual Metaphor and Its Mechanisms

Conceptual metaphor is based on mapping (Mapping) the structure of a source domain – usually concrete and tangible – onto a target domain – usually abstract. For example: ‘Love is a journey.’ We map the elements of the journey (travelers, road, obstacles, destination, fuel) onto the elements of love (lovers, relationship, problems, shared goals, emotional energy). This mapping is what allows us to think and talk about love. (*Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 3*)

Lakoff and Johnson rejected the idea that metaphor is a purely linguistic matter, and proved that it is a mental mechanism (Cognitive Mechanism). We understand abstract domains (the target) through tangible, perceptible domains (the source). For example, we understand ‘argument’ by means of ‘war’ (I attacked his opinion, he defended his position, strategy, winning and losing). These are not poetic expressions, but the only way we think about argument. Metaphor here is a tool for understanding, not for decoration.

When we return to al-Jurjani, we find him insisting strongly on the role of ‘representation’ (tamsil) in bringing abstract concepts close to minds by embodying them in perceptible images. He says in Asrar al-Balagha: “Know that among the things by which simile increases in precision and enchantment... is that it comes in forms that occur in the soul.” (*al-Jurjani, 1991, p. 112*)

He explains extensively how purely mental meanings do not settle in the soul unless they are ‘clothed’ in a sensory garment. This understanding functionally coincides with the principle of ‘embodiment’ (Embodiment) in Lakoff and Johnson. Al-Jurjani, with his deep rhetorical intuition, realized that the human mind tends to deal with perceptible things, and that the path to understanding the abstract necessarily passes through the perceptible.

When al-Jurjani analyzes a metaphor such as ‘And time has joys and sorrows,’ he explains how we imagine time as a person who has will and action. This ‘personification’ (Personification) is a type of ontological metaphor in Lakoff, where we attribute human qualities to non-humans so that we can deal with them.

It is a prior cognitive structure, for “the processes of human thought are largely metaphorical.” Lakoff and Johnson conclude in their approach that the essence of metaphor lies in the possibility of understanding something and experiencing or suffering it based on something else. (*Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 23*)

From this starting point, the dual field structure upon which conceptual metaphor is based crystallizes: the source domain (Source Domain) and the target domain (Target Domain). The target domain often manifests in abstract concepts such as fear, anger, and love, or in cognitive entities such as inflation, which are to be understood and interpreted. This is done through the source domain, which undertakes the task of conceptual mapping by employing its representational elements and invoking its cognitive systems existing in the mind, and matching its elements with the elements of the target domain and determining the purposes of those matches, then connecting them to build an adjacent reality that reveals meaning and conveys understanding.

Al-Jurjani begins his definition of metaphor by saying: “Know that metaphor in general is that the word is originally established in the linguistic position known, which the evidence indicates that it was exclusively designated for it when it was established, then the poet or non-poet uses it in other than that original and transfers it to it in a non-necessary transfer, so it is then like a borrowed garment.” (*al-Jurjani, 1991, p. 20*)

From this definition, it is understood that metaphor for him is based on transferring the word from its original lexical meaning to another meaning in a metaphorical manner, such that this transition is not necessary, but rather occurs on the basis of borrowing. In truth, al-Jurjani, to this extent, does not depart much from the conceptions that preceded him in defining metaphor. However, in his speech there is what reveals an aspect that intersects with the modern conception of it, manifested in the fact that he did not limit the field of metaphor to literary discourse alone, but indicated that it is used by “the poet or non-poet,” indicating its presence in everyday linguistic usage.

This meaning meets what Lakoff and Johnson went to when they decided that metaphors “apply not only to new poetic expressions, but to much of everyday, conventional language.” Consequently, it can be said that al-Jurjani was aware, within the limits of his rhetorical conception, of metaphor's exit from the scope of stylistic decoration and rhetorical embellishment to a broader scope related to the normal structure of linguistic usage.

As for the mental and psychological dimension upon which the theory of conceptual metaphor is based, it appears present in al-Jurjani's conception of metaphorical meaning, in his saying: “A type of simile and a pattern of representation, and simile is analogy, and analogy operates in what hearts perceive and minds comprehend, and in which understandings and minds are consulted, not ears and hearing.” (*al-Jurjani, 1991, p. 20*)

This text reveals that al-Jurjani does not view metaphor as merely a verbal phenomenon or superficial linguistic structure, but considers it a mental and cognitive act

based on mental representation and mental analogy. Consequently, metaphor, in this horizon, becomes connected to the way in which man perceives the world and reorganizes his experience through mental and psychological processes, which brings it close to the modern cognitive perspective that makes metaphor a mechanism of thought before it is merely a tool for expression.

Another aspect of intersection with the principles of conceptual metaphor can also be detected in al-Jurjani's discussion of mental images, as is clear in his saying: "A third type, and it is the pure essence of metaphor alone, is that the similarity is taken from mental images, and that is like borrowing light for clarification and the argument that reveals the truth, removes doubt, and dispels uncertainty... For the similarity obtained from light in clarification and argument and the like is only that when the argument reaches the heart, it becomes in a state similar to the state of sight when it encounters light, and its rays are directed towards it and it roams in its paths and spreads... And this, as you know, is a similarity from which you do not obtain a genus or a nature and instinct, nor a form and image that enters into creation, but rather it is a mental image." (*al-Jurjani, 1991, p. 65*)

This text clarifies that the relationship between 'light' and 'clarification' or 'argument' is not based on direct sensory similarity, but rather stands on mental representation that makes the sensory field a means for understanding the abstract domain. In the language of cognitive linguistics, 'light' can be viewed as a source domain with what it carries of significations such as illumination, revelation, and clarity, while 'argument' or 'clarification' represents a target domain of an abstract nature. Through this metaphorical transition, a new conceptual structure is built, through which the rational is understood in light of the perceptible, which constitutes one of the central pillars in the theory of conceptual metaphor.

According to Ortony, "the constructivist theory is now prevalent for many reasons, including pure scientific developments and changes that have affected the methods of the humanities and literary sciences, which make metaphor a means of understanding, perceiving, creating reality, and not merely describing it. Because metaphor 'establishes our conceptual systems, governs our life experience,' and this means that metaphor in its essence has a conceptual nature, contrary to the belief of many people who see metaphor as a linguistic property that focuses on words and not on thought or activities." (*Miftah, 1990, pp. 48–49*)

A reading of al-Jurjani's conception of metaphor in light of modern cognitive approaches reveals elements of great importance that can be considered early indications of understanding metaphor as a mental structure and a cognitive mechanism, not merely a rhetorical embellishment or a means of verbal decoration.

Thus, the Arabic rhetorical heritage, represented by al-Jurjani, remains a fertile space for re-reading and interpretation in light of contemporary linguistic and cognitive methodologies. It does not seem fair to read Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani's conception of metaphor as merely a traditional extension of inherited rhetorical definitions, for in the structure of his theoretical discourse there is what transcends the decorative function of language to a deeper questioning related to how meaning is formed in human consciousness itself.

When al-Jurjani decides that metaphor is not merely a verbal transfer from an original lexical position to a temporary usage, but rather an act that operates in the orbit of perception, understanding, and representation, he implicitly shakes the classical conception that confined rhetoric to the limits of stylistic improvement.

4.2 Argumentative Metaphor and Cognitive Effect

‘Argumentative metaphor’ in contemporary rhetorical study transcends its classical conception as a “verbal ornament” or a “rhetorical deviation” from true meaning, to settle in the center of inferential action as a strategic cognitive mechanism. In the pragmatic and cognitive perspective, metaphor is no longer merely a decorative tool for discourse, but has come to be read as a “hidden inferential structure”; for it works on structuring thought and directing the recipient's perception through the “metaphorical analogy” that connects two disparate semantic fields.

This type of metaphor is not content with describing the world, but reconstructs it in the mind of the recipient, making it a “persuasive tool” that possesses an extraordinary ability to impose argumentative claims that direct declarative discourse does not have the same mental effectiveness to pass. It transforms complex abstraction into something tangible and perceptible that is comprehended by sense and mind together.

In the context of the New Rhetoric, argumentative metaphor is viewed as a “strategy for cognitive effect” that aims to change the recipient's value system or restructure his convictions regarding controversial issues; The argumentative power here lies in the “conceptual background” of the metaphor, where the semantic values of the source domain (Source Domain) are invested and projected onto the target domain (Target Domain) to create a state of “begging the question” through the mental images that exempt the speaker from the trouble of lengthy demonstration; cognitive instruments that create new conceptual frameworks, echoing the views of cognitive linguists such as Lakoff and Johnson. By challenging the conventional view that dismisses metaphors as mere stylistic devices, his interdisciplinary approach integrates philosophy, cognitive science, and literary studies, highlighting the critical role of metaphors in meaning-making (*Boudenna, n.d., pp. 429–439*).

Thus, metaphor is transformed from “expression of rhetorical embellishment” to “expression of the mind,” becoming the cornerstone in building “argumentative systems” that do not depend only on the strictness of logical analogy, but on “metaphorical intuitiveness” that subjects the mind of the recipient to the semantic paths drawn by the speaker, making it a tool of cognitive hegemony par excellence in contemporary political, advertising, and philosophical discourses.

The argumentative philosophy of metaphor in Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani is manifested in that he brought it out from the circle of verbal ornament to the horizon of “rhetorical rationality”; for he sees that metaphor is not merely a deviation from direct meaning, but is an inferential epistemological tool. The rhetorical image at al-Jurjani possesses ‘cognitive authority’ that compels the hearer to believe. This fully coincides with the function of metaphor in Perelman as a tool for persuasion and influence on the audience.

Al-Jurjani realizes that ‘evocation’ (takhyil) is the shortest path to ‘belief’ (tasdiq), and that the image stands in place of demonstrative proof in literary and religious discourse.

The radical transformation of the concept of metaphor appears in Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani's saying: "It is a type of simile, and a pattern of representation, and simile is analogy."

His linking metaphor to 'analogy' means establishing it as a logical mechanism based on symmetry between two semantic fields to produce new knowledge. Thus, metaphor becomes for him a "hidden analogy," not content with describing the world, but demonstrating the hidden relationships between things. Here, al-Jurjani does not view metaphor as a rhetorical luxury, but as a "cognitive necessity" used for representation and inference, making it capable of moving the recipient from mere sensory perception to the level of intellectual comprehension of truths. (*al-Jurjani, 1991, p. 20*)

On the reception side, al-Jurjani creates a cognitive break with superficial auditory conceptions of rhetoric, emphasizing that metaphor "is effective in what hearts perceive and minds comprehend, and in which understandings and minds are consulted, not ears and hearing." (*al-Jurjani, 1991, p. 20*)

This phrase contains argumentative and philosophical depth that transcends the "ear" (the passive recipient) to address the "mind" (the active recipient). Argumentative metaphor at al-Jurjani imposes on the mind of the recipient a process of reconstructing meaning, where understandings are consulted to reach the truth through "representation." It places the recipient in confrontation with a series of mental operations that are only resolved through intellectual conviction; which makes metaphor not only a means of emotional effect, but a demonstrative tool subject to criticism and evaluation, requiring full activation of cognitive powers, thus transforming it from a mere style of speech into a method of thinking and proof.

Taha Abd al-Rahman concludes in his reading of the rhetorical project at Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani that the latter invested the techniques of argumentation and the conceptual system of the art of debate, employing the concept of "claim" as an essential procedural pillar and an analytical starting point for dismantling the structure of symmetry and exploring the mechanisms of inferential operation in discourse. (*Abd al-Rahman, 2006, p. 309*)

This proposition confirms that al-Jurjani was not merely a rhetorician describing linguistic phenomena, but was a theorist who invested the tools of 'debate' to transform 'claim' from a mere theoretical concept into a precise procedural tool that enabled him to explain how proof is built within contexts of communication and debate.

The researcher Khalifa Bujadi reviewed in his study entitled 'The Pragmatics of Metaphor through Asrar al-Balagha by Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani' a number of metaphorical examples that Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani presented in his book 'Asrar al-Balagha,' which clearly highlight how metaphor emerges from being merely a "verbal decoration" to become an argumentative tool aimed at convincing the hearer and building the claims presented by the speaker. (*Bujadi, 2013, p. 175*)

From these examples: The metaphor of 'the overflowing of dawn' (by al-Buhturi): In al-Buhturi's saying "like the dawn that overflowed upon the stars of the dark night," the poet used the verb 'overflowed' – originally established for the movement of water – to describe the spreading of dawn. Al-Jurjani explains here how metaphor is used to bring a sensory mental image (the overflowing of water) close to an abstract concept (the spreading of dawn), which places the hearer before a vivid image that makes him adopt the "captivating claim" of

the dawn that overwhelms everything, so the recipient submits to beauty and signification without objection.

The metaphor of ‘scattering the soldiers’ (by al-Mutanabbi): Al-Mutanabbi used the verb ‘scatter’ – which is specific to small bodies such as dirhams and grains – to describe the defeat of the Roman soldiers. Al-Jurjani analyzes this usage as an argumentative tool aimed at “contempt for the opponent and belittling his status”; for likening soldiers to small grains that are easy to pick up serves not only the artistic construction, but serves the “political and military claim” of the speaker.

According to al-Jurjani, this type of metaphor ensures the permanence of the image in the mind of the hearer, stifles any possible objection, and pushes the recipient to submit to the speaker's vision and position. These examples confirm that metaphor at al-Jurjani is not merely a “word substitution,” but is a pragmatic tool aimed at influencing the hearer and directing his convictions. It starts from ‘claim’ and uses ‘representation’ as a bridge to convince the mind, which transforms the hearer from a passive recipient into one who submits to the argumentative structure drawn by the speaker with linguistic and mental skill.

Conclusion

This research, entitled “A Detailed Analysis of Metaphor Theory in Abdul Qahir Al-Jurjani's Thought and Contemporary Rhetorical Theories,” addresses the problem of metaphor as the essence of rhetorical discourse, highlighting al-Jurjani's cognitive pioneering in transcending classical conceptions that confined metaphor to the scope of verbal ornament.

The research begins its scientific journey by dissecting the concept of “beneficial metaphor” at al-Jurjani, where he links it to the breadth of the scope of meaning and semantic addition, citing examples (such as ‘I saw a lion’ and ‘I shook hands with a sea’) that clarify how metaphor transforms significations from their direct lexical position to deep connotative levels, which is known as ‘meaning of meaning,’ considering it a cognitive tool more refined and more effective than rigid literalism.

The research then moves to linking al-Jurjani's perspective in ‘Dalail al-I’jaz’ with the concepts of the New Rhetoric (or rhetorical stylistics), clarifying that the value of metaphor does not lie in the single word, but in its position within the ‘nazm’ and the context of the situation. The research reviews the historical trajectory of the development of Western rhetoric in the twentieth century, from the stage of linguistic foundation and the focus on ‘deviation,’ to the stage of the persuasive and pragmatic dimension that restored consideration to the communicative function of the text, which is considered a substantial intersection with al-Jurjani's propositions regarding the effect of context in producing signification.

In a precise analytical axis, the research dismantles the structure of ‘conceptual metaphor’ at al-Jurjani in light of cognitive approaches (Lakoff and Johnson), explaining how al-Jurjani employed ‘representation’ as a mechanism for projecting tangible structures onto abstract meanings. The researcher sees that al-Jurjani realized early on that the human mind tends to deal with ‘embodiment’ (Embodiment) to bring abstract concepts close, where metaphor is transformed from a linguistic tool to a cognitive structure that organizes our experience of the world, which is manifested in his analysis of the mental image in the

metaphor of ‘light for clarification,’ where light becomes a source domain for revealing argument.

The research also dedicates important space to discussing ‘argumentative metaphor,’ where it sees that al-Jurjani made metaphor a “hidden analogy” that addresses understandings and minds, not ears and hearing. Through reviewing Taha Abd al-Rahman's additions regarding the “concept of claim,” the research concludes that al-Jurjani invested the mechanisms of debate to transform metaphor from a mere decorative tool into a powerful inferential mechanism. Based on Khalifa Bujadi's study, the research clarifies how examples such as al-Mutanabbi's ‘scattering the soldiers’ are not aimed only at praise or blame, but employ pragmatic strategies aimed at influencing convictions and imposing the speaker's point of view as an accepted truth.

At the conclusion of this scientific survey, the research confirms that reading al-Jurjani from the perspective of the New Rhetoric reveals the authenticity of the Arab heritage achievement and its ability to interrogate contemporary studies. Metaphor, according to this conception, is not merely a rhetorical embellishment, but is a “mental structure” and a “cognitive mechanism” that controls our life experience and frames our conceptual systems. Thus, al-Jurjani's rhetorical heritage remains a fertile epistemological space for re-reading, proving that metaphor is the cornerstone in every human discourse that aspires to persuasion, influence, and the construction of meaning.

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