

# Arabic Argumentation: Presentation or Proof

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**Abstract:** Arabic argumentation is often described as relying on repetition and coordination in contrast to Western argumentation, which emphasizes syllogism, proof, and dialectic. However, previous studies on this topic were based on a limited and unrepresentative corpus. This study seeks to verify these claims using a contemporary corpus of 110 Arabic competitive debates, comprising approximately 515,793 words. A hybrid argumentation annotation model, combining Aristotle's rhetorical appeals (logos, ethos, pathos) and Toulmin's model of argument structure, was developed for analysis. The findings reveal a high prevalence of logos compared to ethos and pathos, with relatively minimal reliance on repetition. Arabic argumentation emerges as diverse rather than monolithic, incorporating both inferential reasoning and rhetorical repetition. This study also highlights the influence of genre on rhetorical strategy use, calling for further research on genre-specific Arabic argumentation.

**Résumé:** L'argumentation arabe est souvent décrite comme reposant sur la répétition et la coordination, contrairement à l'argumentation occidentale, qui privilégie le syllogisme, la preuve et la dialectique. Cependant, les études antérieures sur ce sujet reposaient sur un corpus limité et non représentatif. Cette étude vise à vérifier ces affirmations à l'aide d'un corpus contemporain de 110 débats compétitifs arabes, comprenant environ 515 793 mots. Un modèle hybride d'annotation argumentative, combinant les arguments rhétoriques d'Aristote (logos, ethos, pathos) et le modèle de structure argumentative de Toulmin, a été développé pour analyse. Les résultats révèlent une forte prévalence du logos par rapport à l'ethos et au pathos, avec un recours relativement faible à la répétition. L'argumentation arabe apparaît diversifiée plutôt que monolithique, intégrant à la fois le raisonnement inférentiel et la répétition rhétorique. Cette étude souligne également l'influence du genre sur l'utilisation des stratégies rhétoriques, ce qui appelle à des recherches plus approfondies sur l'argumentation arabe spécifique à chaque genre.

**Keywords:** Arabic, argumentation, Aristotle, debate, repetition, rhetoric, Toulmin

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## **Introduction**

Arabic argumentation, according to Barbara Johnstone (1991), is heavily dependent on repetition and coordination, and is characterized by using presentation as proof as opposed to Western argumentation, which depends on syllogism, proof, and dialectic. Johnstone argues that in Arabic argumentation, “[A]n idea is made believable by being stated, restated and paraphrased” (1987, p. 85). Johnston’s claims are based on an Arabic corpus that is “unrepresentative” (Holes, 1992, p. 556) and limited in size, scope, and time. In terms of size, the main corpus is a text of about 6750 words of Arabic political writing. In terms of scope, the corpus represents mainly the political writings of an Arab nationalism leader, Saṭīf Al-Ḥuṣari. In terms of time, Johnstone’s corpus goes back to the 1950s. There is a need to validate these hypotheses using a more extensive, varied, and recent corpus. This paper aims to verify these claims using, for the first time, a more contemporary corpus of 110 Arabic competitive debates hosted by the QatarDebate Center and its affiliates (a diverse corpus of Arabic spoken argumentative/debate discourse of about 515,793 words). A hybrid argumentation annotation model was developed to analyze the debate corpus. The model is a combination of Aristotle’s (Kennedy 2007) three main appeals: logos, ethos, and pathos and Toulmin’s model of argument structure (2003). The rhetorical strategies used in this corpus show high percentages for logos compared to the other two rhetorical appeals of ethos and pathos. More interestingly, the distribution of textual material used for repetition is significantly lower than the distribution of logos across the variables of speaker, topic, and gender. The findings show that Arabic rhetorical culture is indeed diverse in its argumentation structure and rhetorical patterns. The corpus shows that debaters in Arabic use inferential arguments in their debates but more interestingly they also use various types of repetition as rhetorical and persuasive strategies. The findings of this study confirm our hypothesis that Arabic argumentation is just like any other argumentative tradition consisting of discourses that contain a variety of rhetorical patterns and is therefore far from being monolithic. This study also raises a number of questions about the role of genre in the concentration or otherwise of certain rhetorical

strategies. These questions call for further research on genre-specific Arabic argumentation.

### 1.1 Research problem

A number of arguments about Arabic rhetoric and argumentation have been proposed by contrastive rhetoric scholars. For example, Barbara Johnstone describes Arabic argumentation as repetitive, paraphrastic, highly coordinated, and parallelistic (1991). Persuasion in Arabic rhetoric, according to her, is more the result of “the sheer number of times an idea is stated and the balanced, elaborate ways in which it is stated than a result of syllogistic or enthymematic “logical” organization” (p. 108). She portrays repetition as having a central role in Arabic argumentation and contends that it “does not ornament an already-constructed argument, for without repetition, there would be no argument” (p. 75). This is a strong claim that has far-reaching implications for cross-cultural rhetoric, argumentation, English/Arabic translation studies, and intercultural communication. These claims have influenced directly and indirectly a number of researchers in Arabic rhetoric or Arabic/English contrastive rhetoric (Dickins et al. 2017; Baker 2018; Holes 1992; Fakhri 1998, 2009; Hatim 1990, 1991, 1998, 2007; Hatim and Mason, 1990, 1997; Jawad 2007a, 2007b, 2009, 2010; Al-Mahmoud 1989; Al-Jabouri 1984). There is probably an overgeneralization in these claims, a “dangerous nonsense” (Holes 1992, p. 556) because of the unwarranted jump from micro-level linguistic analysis to macro-level cultural and anthropological conclusions. Additionally, the claims are not adequately supported in light of the limited corpus used in Johnstone’s study.

Such claims, therefore, need to be further validated using Arabic argumentation data that is more recent than that used in the Johnstone study, which seems to attempt to reduce Arabic argumentation, with its rich history spanning over a millennium (Rahman and Young 2022), to a set of fixed and frozen patterns derived from a limited dataset. This paper uses a more contemporary corpus to argue, with Scollon et al. (2012, p. 144), that “If studies in contrastive rhetoric have shown anything, they have shown that no language or cultural group can be reduced to a set number of

diagrammatic rhetorical patterns that can be applied across the board.”

### *1.2 Research questions*

This study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What is the distribution of Aristotle’s logos (as substantiated by Toulmin’s labels), ethos, and pathos in the Arabic debate corpus across the variables of speaker, topic, and gender?
2. What is the distribution of the three types of repetition (self-repetition, team repetition, reciting) in the Arabic debate corpus across the variables of speaker, topic, and gender?
3. What do the patterns of argumentation in Arabic, as evidenced in this contemporary debate corpus, tell us about Arabic argumentation?

### *1.3 Significance*

Discourse is usually a carrier of ideological meaning, and this, according to Hatim and Mason (1997, p. 127), makes it “particularly vulnerable to changing socio-cultural norms.” It will be interesting to see whether Arabic argumentative discourse actually defies this vulnerability norm. If, however, the analysis in this study shows that Arabic argumentation is diverse and dynamic, then this will have a number of significant implications for Arabic rhetoric and argumentation research, which has hitherto been largely influenced by Johnstone’s claims.

## **2. Theoretical framework**

This section describes the three main components of the theoretical framework of the study. The first is the theoretical basis of the claim about Arabic argumentative discourse. The second is Aristotle’s three rhetorical appeals of logos, ethos, and pathos, which form the foundation of the adopted hybrid argument annotation model. The third is Toulmin’s argument structure model, which forms the backbone of the adopted hybrid argument annotation model, as explained in detail in the methodology section of this paper. This section also introduces the key concepts of repetition,

paraphrase, and rephrase, which will be used later in the analysis section of the paper.

### 2.1 Arabic argumentation

This study uses a discourse framework. It attempts to contextualize the investigation of persuasive strategies used in Arabic debating against a general discourse approach, which argues that Arabic rhetoric and persuasion are typically characterized by “repeating, rephrasing, clothing and reclothing one’s request or claim in changing cadences of words” Koch<sup>6</sup> (1983, p. 48). Koch calls this rhetorical tendency “presentation as proof” (ibid), meaning that Arabic argumentation uses presentation as a persuasion strategy. After examining a number of examples of micro-level textual repetition from her data, Koch concludes that “paraphrase, or repetition of content, occurs at all levels through the text” (p. 51). She maintains, “[t]he repetition is cohesive, rhythmic, and rhetorical” (ibid). Based on these observations, Koch (1983) argues that “Arabic argumentative style has its roots in the oratory of an oral culture, and that it is, therefore, somehow oral” (p. 53) given that these patterns of repetition are typical features of an oral culture. She concludes that “Arabic argumentation is structured by the notion that it is the presentation of an idea - the linguistic forms and the very words that are used to describe it - that is persuasive, not the logical structure of proof which Westerners see behind the word” (p. 55). Koch links between Arabic argumentation and the role of Arabic ‘lughah,’ that is ‘language,’ which she describes as “not a tool for communicating non-linguistic or pre-linguistic ‘ideas.’ ... The ideas are the language, and persuasion is presentation, the bringing into present of the oratorical and poetic history of the lughah” (p. 56).

Based on her conceptualization of Arabic argumentation as fundamentally paradigmatic, that is, mainly repetitive, parallelistic and metaphorical, Johnstone (1991) argues that “there is a difference between the argumentative discourse of the Arabic sort and Western argumentation, not only a formal difference but also a

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<sup>6</sup> Barbara Koch (1983) now writes under the name Barbara Johnstone—these sources are the same author.

rhetorical one” (p. 115). She maintains that “[p]resentation is the dominant mode of argumentation in hierarchical societies, where truths are not matters for individual decision” (p. 117) and concludes that argumentation by presentation is typical of Arabic language and discourse, and this mode of argumentation is deeply rooted in the historical and cultural background of Arab society. The ultimate truth in the Arab culture is already there, and it does not need deliberation or argumentation to be proven. All that is needed is to present it to an audience and make it linguistically and textually present through paraphrastic and paratactic strategies, which celebrate the language as an end in itself. The unity between code and message in Arabic argumentative discourse reflects an orientation to glorify the word in its form and content, which essentially gives language a poetic function. The universal truth is believed by the Arab society to exist in the Qur’an, and the typical nature of the Arab society is a hierarchical and collective society (Johnstone 1991).

In a study that examines argumentation as a text type and investigates cross-cultural differences in the application of argumentation and persuasion strategies, Hatim (1991) discusses two types of argumentation strategies. One is through-argumentation, and the other is counter-argumentation. The former consists of three levels: thesis to be supported, substantiation, and conclusion. This type of argumentation is characterized by a statement and subsequent substantiation of a thesis. The latter, however, consists of four levels: thesis to be opposed, opposition, substantiation of counter-claim, and conclusion. Hatim (1991) points out that within counter-argumentation, two further sub-types can be distinguished: balanced argumentation, where the arguer can signal the shift between the claim and the counter-claim either explicitly or implicitly. The other sub-type of counter-argumentation is the lopsided argument, where the counter-argument is introduced by an “explicit concessive (e.g., while, although, despite etc.)” (Hatim 1991, p. 193). He argues that the counter-argumentative text has four components: the citation of a claim, a counter-claim, evidence, and a conclusion (1997, p. 132). Hatim (1991) concludes that Arabic “favors through-argumentation (thesis – substantiation – conclusion)” (p. 194). Table (1) below shows Hatim’s (1991, p.

194) proposed hierarchy of argument preference between English and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA):

**Table 1**

*Argumentation hierarchy of English and Arabic*

<b>English</b>	<b>Arabic</b>
The balance counter-argument	Through-argumentation
Through-argumentation	The lop-sided argument
The lop-sided argument	The balance argument

Hatim and Mason (1997, p. 128) argue that “when a text producer opts for this or that form, we suggest that the choice is not haphazard” and further claims that “choice of argumentative strategy is closely bound up with intercultural pragmatic factors such as politeness and power” (ibid). Hatim (1991) asserts that classical Arabic rhetoric “is truly pioneering in recognizing and analyzing counter-argumentative texts of the balance type” (p. 198). He contends that “[w]hat is in evidence in the rhetorical practice of present-day Arabic as a ‘text type deficit’ is therefore only a by-product of social and political (i.e., pragmatic and discursal) conditions that have contributed to a temporary stifling of a text type” (ibid). Hatim and Mason (1997, p. 134) points out that the preference and ranking of argumentation strategies between English and Arabic as outlined in table (1) above are “not merely statistical norms, but are important indicators of psycho-cognitive predilections that underpin language use.”

### *2.2 Aristotle’s three rhetorical appeals*

Aristotle, the Greek philosopher to whom the early codification of rhetoric is attributed, proposed three types of rhetorical strategies, which were later called rhetorical appeals (Aristotle and Kennedy 2007, x). Aristotle adapted Plato’s idealistic principles of rhetoric and attempted to develop a more realistic rhetorical and argumentative science (Aristotle and Kennedy 2007). The outcome of this adaptation yields a rhetoric of three main appeals. Each of these appeals has a general focus on one major element of argumentation. Modern rhetoricians give the arguments related to the mes-

sage or content of the communication the rhetorical term ‘logos,’ the arguments related to the addresser or sender of the communication the term ‘ethos,’ and the arguments related to the audience of the communication the term ‘pathos.’ Because logos is message-centered, some scholars have linked it with logic, rationality, clarity, and consistency (Higgins and Walker 2012; Hill 2020). Since ethos is addresser-centered, scholars have associated it with issues of credibility, trust, and believability (Higgins and Walker 2012; Hill 2020). Pathos is addressee-oriented, and thus, it is usually associated with notions of empowerment, empathy, and emotions (Higgins and Walker 2012; Hill 2020).

According to Aristotle and Kennedy (2007), in Greek, logos means “what is said, speech, a speech, a word, but often the reason or argument inherent in speech” (p. 38, ff. 38). Logos is the appeal to reason and logic is achieved through the use of claims, explanations, justifications, backings, rebuttals, facts, statistics, and research findings (Ihlen 2009; Xu et al. 2020). It strives to maintain argument clarity and integrity (Brennan and Merkl-Davies 2014; Higgins and Walker 2012).

Ethos is the adaptation of the character of the speaker to that of the audience (Aristotle and Kennedy 2007) for the sake of securing the audience’s trust and confidence. It is the appeal to competence and values to establish the speaker’s credibility and trustworthiness. It is achieved through the use of the speaker’s credentials, social and cultural values, goodwill, and empathy with the audience (McCroskey and Teven 1999). In addition, it can be achieved by appealing to the credentials of established political, cultural, social, or scientific authority (Offerdal et al. 2021; Brennan and Merkl-Davies 2014; Ihlen 2009). In some cases, ethos can be achieved through self-criticism and the questioning of the opponent’s credibility (Xu et al. 2020).

Pathos focuses on awakening emotions in the audience. Aristotle and Kennedy argue that persuasion occurs “through the hearers when they are led to feel emotion [pathos] by the speech; for we do not give the same judgment when grieved and rejoicing or when being friendly and hostile” (2007, p. 39). Pathos is the appeal to the audience’s feelings to influence their attitudes, and it is achieved by evoking positive feelings in the audience such as

happiness, hope, optimism, sympathy, etc. (Erisen and Villalobos 2014). In some cases, pathos can be achieved by evoking negative feelings of anger, fear, pity, sadness, uncertainty, etc. (Reynolds and Seeger 2005). It can also be achieved through the use of figurative language such as metaphor, simile, and hyperbole (Charteris-Black 2005).

Despite the limitations of Aristotle's model of rhetoric, for example those expressed in Kennedy's critique (Aristotle and Kennedy 2007), which focused mainly on the model being restricted to the time and place in which Aristotle lived, Aristotle's rhetoric has been used to describe various types of communication in diverse cultures (Aristotle and Kennedy 2007), including contemporary studies of contrastive rhetoric (Connor 1996), and it currently inspires many cross-cultural argumentation research projects and composition and public speaking textbooks.

### *2.3 Stephen Toulmin's argument structure model*

Toulmin (2003) questioned Aristotle's triadic categorization of arguments into 'major premises,' 'minor premises,' and 'conclusions,' asking whether this categorization system was sufficiently detailed or if there was a need for a more complex system to account for the nature of argument structure. He proposed that an argument contains the following six main elements. The claim (C) is "the conclusion whose merits we are seeking to establish" (p. 90). This is the statement the arguer makes and for which the arguer needs some kind of support. The support comes in the form of data (D), which are "the facts we appeal to as a foundation for the claim" (ibid). These data might be challenged in the course of an argument, so they need to be supported by a warrant (W), which is a proposition showing that "taking these data as a starting point, the step to the original claim or conclusion is an appropriate and a legitimate one" (p. 91). A qualifier (Q) "indicat[es] the strength conferred by the warrant . . ." (p. 94). A rebuttal (R) "indicat[es] the circumstances in which the general authority of the warrant would have to be set aside" (ibid). Finally, the backing (B) is "the set of assurances, without which the warrants themselves would possess neither authority nor currency" (p. 96). With these 6 elements, Toulmin conceptualized a complete model of argu-

ment structure that has proven quite practical and has been used with some modification in several studies investigating argumentation in discourse, including Fu et al. (2023) in argument recognition and classification, Hinton (2022) in normative evaluation of arguments, Wan et al. (2022) in argument classification in student essays, Papadopoulou et al. (2022) in analysis of macrostructure of strategic spoken communication, Wambsganss et al. (2022) in analyzing student argumentation, Lawrence and Reed (2019) in argument mining, Nussbaum and Kardash (2005) in improving writing, Qin and Karabacak (2010) in EFL writing, Hitchcock and Verheij (2006) in argument analysis, Osborne (2005) in analyzing the role of argument in science education, and Karbach (1987) in argumentative writing pedagogy, among others.

#### *2.4 Repetition, paraphrase, and rephrase*

Repetition is referred to as ‘recurrence’ and is defined as “the direct repetition of elements” where “the original occurrence merely happens again” (de Beaugrande and Dressler 1981, p. 54). It is the “appearance of the same formal element (deictic shift aside), from a phoneme/item/turn to an entire text” (Bazzanella 2011, p. 246). Paraphrase is defined by Bhagat and Hovy as “sentences or phrases that convey the same meaning using different wording” (2013, p. 463). Rephrase is a “much more complex process than paraphrase” (Budzynska et al. 2024). It looks similar to paraphrase, but the two terms can still be distinguished on a very important ground; rephrase is not a semantic phenomenon. It is pragmatic, and it has a persuasive role. An instance of rephrase, can, while attempting to preserve the content of a former statement, provide new information, unlike paraphrase (Budzynska et al., 2024). Rephrases are not semantically very similar text chunks and this lack of similarity is what distinguishes rephrase from paraphrase. Konat et al. define rephrase as a “relation which holds between two text spans which have the same argumentative function but different linguistic surface” (2016, p. 33).

### 3. Methodology

This section describes how the debate corpus was built and how it was annotated. The focus is on the description of the annotation scheme and the process of annotating the corpus and how the inter-annotator agreement was ensured and calculated.

#### 3.1 Corpus building

This study was conducted on 110 Arabic competitive debate transcripts from Munazarat 1.0 corpus (Khader et al. 2024). The corpus has a 515,793 word count. The corpus maintains a balanced male-to-female ratio of 331 males and 329 females with a ratio of 1.006. The corpus represents debaters from 73 universities and 37 schools and contains a variety of topics including politics, culture, human rights, ethics, sports, technology, and environment. The contemporary Arabic debate corpus used in this study is characteristically argumentative, hence the similarity of purpose and textual function between the corpus of this study and the corpus used in Johnstone's study, albeit with a more active and explicit antagonist.

In building the Arabic debate corpus for this study, ethical considerations were taken into account. Rigorous procedures were followed to protect user privacy. The debates included in the corpus are publicly available as YouTube videos released with debaters' consent. The recordings, the transcriptions, and the associated metadata were anonymized prior to annotation to remove identifying information. The textual transcripts contain no direct user IDs or anything that reveals the debater's specific identity. Furthermore, the educational institutions that originally published the footage were contacted regarding the use of this content for this research. Only recordings that received consent were included in the corpus. The rigorous anonymization and consent procedures ensure that, while maximizing the data's research utility, we maintain participant privacy and ethics in compiling and releasing this corpus.

### *3.2 Corpus annotation*

For corpus annotation purposes, every discourse segment in the debate is identified as corresponding to three types of argumentation categories collectively called ‘the hybrid model’ in this paper. These three types are Aristotle’s three appeals: logos, ethos, and pathos and Toulmin’s six elements of argument, in addition to some elements that were added to the hybrid model in response to patterns emerging from the dataset. All these three types are considered labels of argumentation in Arabic. Some studies classify their corpora into argumentative vs non-argumentative discourse (Suhartono et al. 2020). However, from a critical discourse analysis perspective (Fairclough 2023; Blommaert and Bulcaen 2000), we believe this separating approach is limited and is probably motivated by a reductionist representational view of language. In this paper, we believe that discourse, in general, is socially constituted and motivated (Blommaert and Bulcaen 2000). Hence, all types of language use are inherently argumentative. The corpus of 110 annotated debates represents the following three variables: speaker, topic, and gender.

### *3.3 The annotation scheme*

Table 2 below shows the various elements in our hybrid model (Aristotle and Toulmin + our added elements) and provides a brief description of these elements. The model is specifically designed to annotate this argumentative debate corpus. It will obviously need further customization and adaptation if it were to be used for other argumentative corpora. The model illustrates the three main types of argumentation, that is, the inferential, the expressive, and the appellative, along with the labels used in each type of argumentation. It provides a definition for the types and labels used in the annotation process.

**Table 2**

*The hybrid annotation scheme based on Aristotle, Toulmin, and researchers' added categories*

No	Argumentation Type	Definition
1	<b>Inferential Argumentation (Logos)</b>	Argumentation based on the logical structure of an argument. This is Aristotle's logos and is substantiated by the categories proposed by Toulmin with some more labels added in response to the debate corpus of this study.
	(1) Position	Team's position in the debate, i.e., either proposition or opposition
	(2) Super claim	An assertive statement made by a debate team that outlines the team's overall goal
	(3) Claim	An assertive statement or a conclusion that the proposition team seeks to justify and support and that the opposition team seeks to refute and rebut
	(4) Ground	Usually agreed upon information and facts that support the claim, including definitions
	(5) Warrant	The logical link that connects ground to the claim—often implicit.
	(6) Rational backing	Logical and inferential reasoning, including justifications, conclusions, and mini supported assertions
	(7) Evidential backing	Specific examples or research findings provided to support a claim
	(8) Qualifier	A statement representing a concession on the part of the speaker as to the scope or certainty of the claim, whether in response to a rebuttal, or not
	(9) Rebuttal	The refutation of a claim by an opposing team or individual
	(10) Self repetition	Partial or total repetition of statements made by the same speaker

	(11) Team repetition	Partial or total repetition of statements made by the team of the speaker
	(12) Reciting	Partial or total repetition of statements made by the opposing team
2	<b>Expressive Argumentation (Ethos)</b>	Argumentation based on the expressive function of discourse whereby a speaker uses statements that help to establish their own credibility, morality, trustworthiness, organization and order. This type of argumentation includes authority, honesty, trustworthiness, reputation, fairness, transparency, openness, accessibility etc.
3	<b>Appellative Argumentation (Pathos)</b>	Argumentation based on the appellative function of discourse whereby a speaker uses statements that appeal to audience emotions and feelings and are intended to engage the receivers in one way or another in the discourse. This type of argumentation includes empathy, fear, anger, love, compassion, hope, patriotism, uncertainty etc.

### 3.4 Annotation process and inter-annotator agreement (IAA)

The annotation process was conducted using a paid digital tool called “UBIAI,” which is a website that allows a team of annotators to make separate and blind text labels on the same text file in a user-friendly environment. Each debate was annotated by analyzing its text using the labels identified in the hybrid model proposed in this study with its three major types of argumentation, the first one, ‘inferential,’ having 12 sub-labels (See table 2 above). The annotation team was carefully selected to ensure a high level of accuracy and diversity amongst its members. It consisted of seven native speakers of Arabic who are experienced debaters, debate judges, and debate trainers (5 males and 2 females). The annotators came from different academic backgrounds (engineering, biology, diplomacy, foreign affairs, and English literature) to ensure in-depth knowledge in the subject areas covered in the debates. In addition to the annotators’ expertise in Arabic competi-

tive debate, they were also provided with intensive training to enhance their annotation and argument analyzing skills.

The annotator training process required a structured annotation framework. This framework is based on the hybrid model specifically developed for this study to respond to the distinctive nature of debate argumentation. Subsequent to development, this hybrid model was thoroughly presented to and discussed with the team of annotators. Leveraging the annotators' experienced insights as active debaters, the annotation framework underwent meticulous iterative enhancements, ensuring its effective role in guiding the annotation process. This iterative and collaborative refinement process culminated in the ultimate crystallization of a definitive annotation scheme (Table 2), which served as the key to the annotators' meticulous work.

For the first twenty debates, we used a double annotation process where each debate transcript was separately annotated by two different annotators. Then, a reviewer, an academic who was part of developing the hybrid annotation model, would look at the inter-annotator agreement (IAA) rate, read both annotation files, compare the differences, and edit the final annotated file. This process was repeated for every debate in the first set of 20 debates. Detailed feedback was given to annotators through a series of 3-hour weekly meetings with the reviewers for four weeks. For the rest of the corpus, annotations were only revised by reviewers and the disagreements continued to decrease as the annotation process progressed and the annotators became increasingly experienced. This arduous process was necessary to ensure that all annotators had a clear view of the annotation process and that debates were being annotated consistently. The annotation process was designed to achieve the most precise and descriptive annotation possible. We did not address the quality, effectiveness, or integrity of the arguments because we did not intend to introduce any further distraction to our descriptive analysis of the corpus by involving evaluative judgments on the quality of the arguments.

The inter-annotator agreement (IAA) was calculated for the first 20 debates. We noticed that for the first half of the debates that were annotated in the early stages, the IAA ranged mostly between 20% and 50%. However, after the three weekly meetings

between annotators and reviewers (researchers) for four weeks to fine-tune and closely refine the annotation scheme, the IAA increased to be in the range of 50% to 75%, corresponding to 0.50–0.75 in Cohen Kappa’s test, indicating substantial agreement that is comparable to other studies (Lawrence and Reed 2019 and Higgins and Walker, 2012).

### *3.5 Micro-level analysis*

In addition to the macro-level analysis approach using Table 2 above—which aimed to identify the argument structure by identifying logos, ethos, pathos as well other argument structure elements such as claim, ground, backing, rebuttal, and the three types of repetition: self-repetition, team repetition and reciting—a micro-level analysis approach was used. This was intended to identify more specific patterns of repetition, namely paraphrase and rephrase at the lexical level as will be shown in section 4.6 below. The aim of this micro-level analysis was to distinguish paraphrase and rephrase from repetition and how they impact argument building. The aim was also to show whether debaters use these lexical-level patterns of repetition merely to ornament or to advance an argument and whether their use of repetition is diverse, serving more than one rhetorical function.

## **4. Results and discussion**

This section attempts to answer the research questions raised above by showing and discussing the results of this study. We first address the key issue raised in question 1 of this paper, which asks about the distribution of logos, ethos, and pathos in the corpus.

### *4.1 Distribution of argument labels in the dataset*

Table 3 below shows that the label ‘rebuttal,’ which essentially means ‘counter argumentation,’ has the highest mean among all the labels of logos in our corpus at 24.24%. Claim, rational backing and evidential backing together have an even higher percentage than rebuttal at 25.77%. These statistics clearly reflect an inferential orientation in contemporary Arabic competitive debate. The statistics on the use of rebuttal also confirm that Arabic com-

petitive debate shows a preference for the counter-argumentation pattern. Repetition, with its three sub-types, also occupies the highest position as shown in table 3 below. This combined percentage might seem to, *prima facie*, support a presentation-type argumentation style in which the speaker emphasizes their position by repeating. However, a closer look at this percentage will show that reciting (9.12%) is actually the first step of counter argumentation when the speaker cites the opponent's argument for a subsequent rebuttal. Both self-repetition (5.62%) and team-repetition (11.53%) were found to serve as discourse signage and provide the audience with some metadiscourse on signposting. In other words, both types were not only used to ornament but to create rhetorical presence (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969) through signposting and discourse sequence marking, which both contribute to the argument structure of the debate from its ethotic dimension. The conclusion we draw from the statistics shown in table 3 below is that contemporary Arabic argumentation is not restricted to repetition, parallelism, and presentation. It also uses an inferential pattern, and the notable percentage of repetition reflects a preference for repeating in order to emphasize, restate, paraphrase, rephrase, and argue and not an interest in the language 'lughā' as an end in itself.

**Table 3**

*Statistical distribution of argument labels in the dataset*

<b>Label</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Mdn</b>	<b>SD</b>
Ethos	13.72%	13.66%	0.0321
Pathos	4.91%	4.82%	0.0200
Position	1.08%	0.83%	0.0063
Ground	2.34%	1.93%	0.0140
Qualifier	0.31%	0.20%	0.0069
Claim	5.40%	4.88%	0.0255
Rational backing	15.58%	14.95%	0.0490
Evidential backing	4.79%	4.17%	0.0346
Super claim	1.08%	0.71%	0.0426
Rebuttal	24.24%	22.91%	0.0853
Warrant	0.30%	0.00%	0.0087

Self-repetition	5.62%	5.57%	0.0272
Team repetition	11.53%	11.58%	0.0326
Reciting	9.12%	9.22%	0.0236

#### 4.2 Logos, ethos, and pathos by speaker

The distribution of logos, ethos, and pathos by speaker as shown in table 4 below reflects a high concentration of textual material on logos especially by the first and second speakers from both proposition and opposition. These four speakers are the ones who advance the main claims, grounds, warrants, and backing of their respective teams, hence the high percentage of logos. As the debate progresses to the third speaker from both teams, the percentage of logos tends to drop, as can be clearly seen in table 4, because the two speakers move to rebutting, summarizing the team case, and reinforcing crux issues rather than advancing new claims or creating new arguments.

**Table 4**

*Distribution of logos, ethos and pathos by speaker*

Speaker	Logos	Ethos	Pathos
1 <sup>st</sup> Proposition	48.70%	27.38%	13.07%
1 <sup>st</sup> Opposition	45.67%	25.41%	12.55%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Proposition	40.72%	24.41%	12.98%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Opposition	43.13%	22.95%	9.74%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Proposition	29.79%	25.15%	12.26%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Opposition	29.50%	24.87%	11.14%

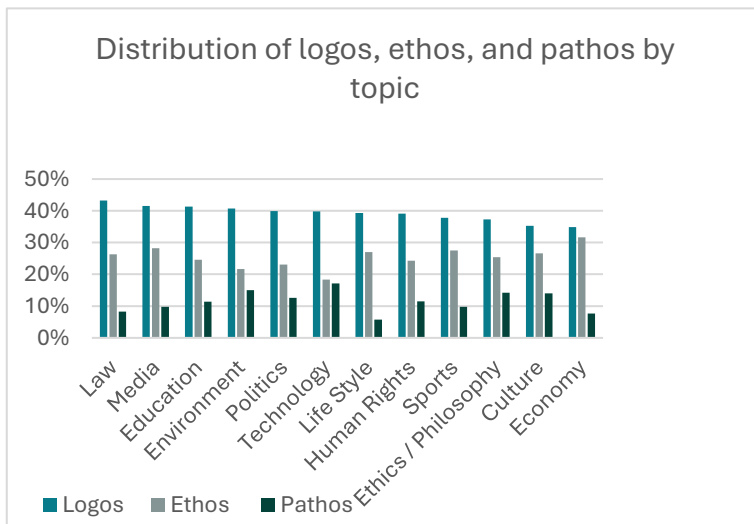
This pattern is also what is expected in an English context as the ‘burden of proof’ is usually the responsibility of the first four speakers from both teams, and this pattern is what table 4 above shows. The conclusion that we can derive from this table is that Arabic rhetoric and argumentation in this particular debate corpus seems far from being predominantly repetitive rhetoric. It even shows a pattern of argumentation far from through-argumentation. The label ‘logos’ in our corpus includes rebuttal, which is citing a thesis to be opposed or refuted. For this reason, we included ‘repetition’ under logos. According to the dataset, the first two speakers

from each team either repeat themselves to emphasize an argument, repeat arguments from their team for emphasis in the case of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> speakers, or recite an argument from the opposing team to refute it, also in the case of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> speakers. In other words, there is ample evidence, both from the rebuttal label and from the reciting label (total of 33.36% for both), in our corpus that Arabic argumentation seems to display a variety of argumentative strategies and is not entirely presentation-oriented; it is clearly argumentation by disputation and refutation. The analysis also shows that Arabic argumentation is diverse, even more so than suggested in Hatim's (1991) argument that it has a predominant preference for through-argumentation. The analysis in this section shows that there is ample evidence of counter-argumentation.

#### 4.3 *Logos, ethos, and pathos by topic*

Figure (1) below shows an interesting pattern of rhetorical and argumentation strategies used by debaters in Arabic by topic; there is a higher preference for logos in law debates than in any other debate topic, and the lowest preference for logos appears in economy debates. However, the variation is not that significant as the mean is 39.195 and the standard deviation is 2.39, which reflects a comparatively high preference for logos in the corpus across topics compared to the other two rhetorical appeals, ethos and pathos, revealing a trend in Arabic debate argumentation of focusing on logos. With regard to ethos, the highest concentration of this rhetorical strategy is in economic debates with 31.61%, and the lowest is in technology debates with 18.37%. This is an interesting finding and merits further research on argumentation strategies used in specific topics/genres. Another interesting pattern is found in the distribution of pathos across topics. The topic of environment shows the highest concentration of pathos with 15.03% and law shows the lowest occurrence of pathos strategies. Interesting as it is, this pattern calls for further research to determine why debaters use certain strategies more or less depending on the topic.

**Figure (1)**



#### 4.4 Logos, ethos and pathos by gender

The distribution of logos, ethos, and pathos across gender in the corpus as shown in table 5 below does not indicate a significant difference between genders as the figures are considerably close across the three rhetorical appeals while still maintaining a higher concentration of logos for both genders as compared to ethos and pathos. This pattern supports the claim of this paper that more recent rhetorical practices, Arabic competitive debate in this case, exhibit more focus on logos than the other two rhetorical appeals. This reveals a different picture of Arabic argumentation than that depicted by both Johnstone (1991) and Hatim (1991) and shows that Arabic rhetorical culture seems to indeed be diverse.

**Table 5**

*Distribution of logos, ethos and pathos by gender*

Gender	Logos	Ethos	Pathos
Male	38.72%	25.58%	11.76%
Female	40.01%	24.37%	12.13%

#### 4.5 Repetition in Arabic argumentation

Repetition plays a significant role in discourse cohesion (Halliday and Hassan 1976), and it is “pervasive in social life, oiling the waters of social interaction” (Brown 1999, p. 223). In this section, we identify the patterns of distribution of repetition across the variables of speaker, topic, and gender. In order to answer the second research question of this paper regarding the distribution of repetition in the Arabic debate corpus, we extracted statistics on repetition from the first type of argumentation ‘inferential argumentation,’ that is, *logos*, as shown in table 2 above. The assumption is that repetition in all the three types does contribute to persuasion (Younis et al. 2023). Repetition is also “fundamental to the definition of all cultural objects: of the phoneme, of particular kinds of act, of chunks of ritual, art, music and performance” (Brown 1999, p. 223).

##### 4.5.1 Repetition by speaker

Table 6 below shows the distribution of repetition by speaker. It is clear from the table that repetition is not highly favored as an argumentation strategy by Arabic debaters, whether it is self-repetition, team repetition, or reciting. The pattern is consistent across speakers with the highest score of 17.40% for reciting occurring in the speech of 3rd opposition because this is the rebuttal speech in which the debater needs to recite the opponent’s claims in order to refute them. The second highest percentage is that of the 3rd proposition, reflecting a similar concern with reciting the opponent’s claims in order to rebut them. The low preference for repetition in general, and self-repetition, team repetition, and reciting as specific sub-categories thereof, in the speeches of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> speakers from both teams shows that debaters in Arabic seem to refrain from repetition when it is not argumentatively motivated. They focus on repetition only when it serves a discourse-marking purpose to guide the audience to specific components of the debate, as is the case with the 3<sup>rd</sup> speakers from both teams. This finding casts doubt on the claim that Arabic argumentation is inherently and predominantly dependent on repetition.

**Table 6**  
*Distribution of repetition by speaker*

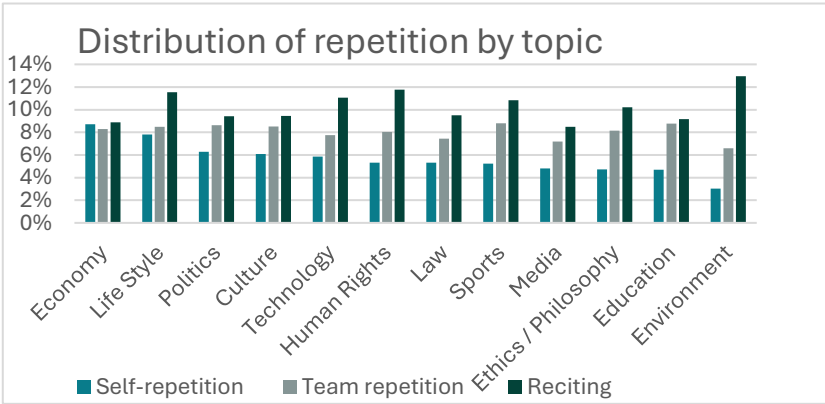
Speaker	Self-repetition	Team repetition	Reciting
1 <sup>st</sup> Proposition	10.68%	0.00%	0.13%
1 <sup>st</sup> Opposition	7.48%	0.25%	8.64%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Proposition	5.45%	8.98%	7.47%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Opposition	5.22%	7.82%	11.14%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Proposition	2.27%	16.29%	14.24%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Opposition	2.49%	14.59%	17.40%

#### 4.5.2 Repetition by topic

If we look at the distribution of repetition by topic in figure (3) below, we can see an emerging pattern which clearly demonstrates that debaters in Arabic have low preference for repetition across topics, with the mean being only 5.614 in self-repetition across the topics, 8.122 in team repetition across topics, and 10.324 in reciting also across topics. The mean for reciting is the highest across the three types of repetition. These statistics reveal two key findings. The first is that there is a general tendency for low preference for repetition among debaters in Arabic across topics. The second is that the highest mean among the three types of repetition is for reciting, which is actually the type of repetition that is closely related to rebuttal when a debater recites the opponent’s claim for refutation, that is, counter-argumentation (Hatim 1991). These two patterns provide further support for our claim that contemporary Arabic argumentation, as substantiated in our debate corpus, is making use of various forms of repetition to not only establish presence or glorify the ‘lughah’ language as an end but to create cohesion in the debate and ensure that the debate is a coherent discourse, thereby having an ethotic impact on the audience. Holes asserts that the use of repetition and parallelism in Arabic rhetoric is more “subject- and generation-specific phenomenon” (1992, p. 556) than that global strategy that has been used to stigmatize an entire culture. Figure (3) below speaks to this truth. In spoken competitive debates, one would expect higher levels of repetition

than rational argumentation. However, the picture that the figure below shows is rather different.

**Figure (3)**



*4.5.3 Repetition by gender*

The distribution of repetition by gender as can be seen in table 7 below does not reveal any significant variation between males and females in terms of preferences for rhetorical strategies in argumentative debate. For self-repetition, the difference is minimal, with 1.04 between male and female’s use. The figure is even less for team repetition at 0.43 and less still for reciting at 0.16. The notable conformity between males and females with regard to their rhetorical strategy of repetition is striking and can be explained only by a general tendency among debaters in Arabic to use a more diverse selection of rhetorical strategies, and this reflects a diverse rhetorical culture, certainly not a monolithic rhetorical one.

**Table 7**  
*Distribution of repetition by gender*

Gender	Self-repetition	Team repetition	Reciting
Male	6.00%	7.97%	9.97%
Female	4.96%	8.40%	10.13%

#### 4.6 Repetition, paraphrase and rephrase: a micro-analysis

In this section, the notion of repetition and its associate concepts of paraphrase and rephrase will be distinguished to situate this study within the broader semantic and pragmatic contexts of argumentation. This section provides a micro-level analysis of selected examples of repetition from the corpus to illustrate types, role, and function of repetition in contemporary Arabic debate argumentation.

##### 4.6.1 Repetition

The discussion above identifies the patterns of distribution of these three types of repetition in the Munazara 1.0 corpus. Here, however, we provide a more granulated, micro-level analysis of further types, and we focus on the roles and functions of these types as substantiated in the corpus. Here is an example taken from the corpus 001-IUDC-2022-FFMFM-AA, which is a debate on prioritizing human employment over technological development. The example is from 1<sup>st</sup> proposition speaker (repeated items highlighted in both Arabic and English):

(1) نحن هنا في فريق الموالاتة لسنا ضد التقدم، نحن مع التقدم  
التكنولوجي ومع تقدم المجتمع، ولكننا نريد إبطاء هذا التقدم حتى  
نعطي المجتمع فرصة لأن يفهم قوة هذه الآلات ويفهم كيفية التعامل  
معها.

- (1) We, in the proposition, are not against development. We are with technological development, and we are with society development, but we want to slow this development until we give society a chance to understand the power of these tools and to understand how to deal with them.

In this example, there is a clear pattern of lexical repetition of the word ‘development’, which is used 4 times and the word ‘society,’ which is used 2 times. The debater is repeating himself/herself to reinforce the fact that the debate is about ‘development’ and ‘society,’ so the patterns of lexical repetition here are not merely for the

sake of repeating redundant elements but for establishing textual cohesion (Halliday and Hasan 1976 and Brown 1999). Self-repetition “facilitates language production, enabling rapid fluent talk ..., it may be used to make a bid to retain the floor or tie a referent to the prior discourse” (Brown 1999, p. 224). In this sense, repetition has a crucial communicative and discourse function. Another example of self-repetition from the same debate is presented in (2) by the 1<sup>st</sup> opposition speaker:

(2) والتقدم التكنولوجي يا سادة أو أي شكل من أشكال التقدم التكنولوجي  
إذا عندما أدخل على محل اتبضع وأرى [self-cashier] إذا هذا تقدم  
تكنولوجي، لم تشترط القضية أن يكون التقدم التكنولوجي نكاء  
اصطناعي أو واقع مدمج.

- (2) Technological development, ladies and gentlemen, or any form of technological development, is when I enter a shop to buy something, and I find a self-cashier; this is technological development. The motion did not specify technological development to be artificial intelligence or augmented reality.

The 1<sup>st</sup> opposition speaker seems to repeat the word ‘development’ 4 times, not only for textual adornment but to establish textual coherence and precisely refine the topic of the argument. Again, this exact lexical repetition is not used as an end in itself but for sound communicative reasons and for argumentative ends. Repetition seems to be ubiquitous and “whether adult or child, layman or linguist, poet, orator or priest, no speaker can do without repetition” (Brown 1999, p. 225). Repetition in speech seems to be universal but its tolerance is probably culture-specific. Arabic rhetoric and argumentation appears to exhibit a high degree of tolerance for functional repetition, not redundant repetition. This degree of tolerance, which varies between cultures, is what makes an English reader find repetition in Arabic argumentation striking and marked.

Example (3) below is from a different debate, 010IUDC-2017-MFFFFFF-AA, in which the 2<sup>nd</sup> opposition speaker is citing an argument by the opponent in order to refute it. The speaker repeats the whole argument but only to rebut it and argue against it.

(3) الحروب ليست لعبة.

(أ3) قالوا "الحروب ليست لعبة".

(3) War is not a game.

(3a) They said “war is not a game.”

In this example, the 2<sup>nd</sup> opposition speaker repeats an argument offered by the 2<sup>nd</sup> proposition speaker. This is the reciting pattern referred to in tables 6 and 7 and in figure (3) above. Here we look at it as an example of total repetition used by the debater to serve an argumentative function, which is to cite an opponent’s argument in order to attack it. This is the counter-argument pattern that Hatim (1991) reserves for English, deeming it the third preference for Arabic. It is clear that even identical repetition is not an indication of an oral culture and not an indication of a society that is hierarchical and collective. There are numerous studies on the use of repetition in the English culture by speakers such as Churchill (Brown 1999), Martin Luther King, Obama (Bazzanella, 2011), and J. F. Kennedy (Koszowy et al. 2022) who use repetition as an argumentation strategy to state, restate, and emphasize. This kind of functional repetition is not restricted to English but, as the examples above show, is shared by Arabic rhetoric and argumentation.

#### 4.6.2 Paraphrase

Another type of repetition revealed by this micro-analysis is paraphrase, which is semantic repetition—that is the repetition of the same propositional content but without using the same words. Konat et al. argue following Hirst (2003) that “paraphrases are not fully synonymous: they exhibit pragmatic differences of evaluation, connotation, and viewpoint” (2016, p. 33). This means that

the use of paraphrase in argumentation serves a pragmatic function and reflects a shift in perspective, which involves introducing a variety of rhetorical strategies to show diverse points of view and to reflect an inferential relation between propositions (Blakemore 1997). Therefore, this type of repetition is not used for the sake of repeating or filling up space in discourse but for a legitimate rhetorical purpose. This is to emphasize, restate, and draw renewed attention to the argument. Here is an example of paraphrase from the dataset, from the same debate as in (3) above 010IUDC-2017-MFFFFFF-AA:

(4) نحن اليوم أمام حرب عسكرية واقتصادية وإعلامية. (المتحدث الثاني  
موالاة)

(أ4) لكن زميلي عندما ذكر أنواع الحروب ذكر أنها أنواع عديدة. (المتحدث  
الثالث موالاة)

- (4) In our world today, there are military, economic and media wars. (2<sup>nd</sup> proposition speaker)  
(4a) When my teammate mentioned types of war, he said that there are many types of war. (3<sup>rd</sup> proposition speaker)

In example (4) above, a paraphrase is used in the form of team-repetition where the same propositional meaning is maintained with different wording. This paraphrase strategy serves a text cohesion function in which two arguments from two members of the same team are semantically connected thereby establishing a cohesive relationship between the two arguments. It also serves an argumentative function by bringing the same argument to attention, hence intensifying the team's argumentative position and contributes to the advancement of a further argument based on this argumentative bond. The difference between the two paraphrases above, however, is clear. The first one is specific, and the other one is general. This difference does not affect their argumentative value because the cohesion and coherence link between the specif-

ic and the general reinforces the unity of the argument and at the same time avoids identical repetition.

#### 4.6.3 Rephrase

Rephrase is used in speeches for a variety of reasons, mainly to serve an argumentative function by rephrasing a claim or a ground or a rational backing to make the argument sound strong and to help refresh audience members' memories of an earlier argument. Konat et al. argue that "rephrases are discourse structures, playing a specific role in argumentation" (2016, p. 37). They propose 7 types of rephrase according to the function they serve in argumentation and communication. These are: (1) reformulation with close terms, (2) reformulation using semantically related terms and structure variation, (3) confirmation, (4) summarization, (5) clarification of complex issues, (6) instantiation of a general statement, and (7) more complex types of rephrases. All these types or functions of rephrase contribute to the development of an argument in discourse, that is, these types do not have only language-oriented functions. Speakers can rephrase their own words (self-rephrase) or those of others (other-rephrase) (Koszowy et al. 2022). Koszowy et al. identify two types of rephrase: generalization and specification. These types are "frequently employed by speakers ..., they are rhetorically effective." If paraphrase is an argumentative strategy to restate and emphasize, rephrase is an argumentative strategy to reframe and repackage an argument in a different light. It can be a strategy to withdraw a statement by replacing a more general term that does not commit the speaker to a specific position. Here is one example of rephrase from our corpus showing that debaters resort to this strategy to reformulate an argument and repackage it to make it stronger. The example is from a debate on the importance of suspending the law of workers' rights during economic crises from the 014-IUDC-2019-FMFMFM-AA dataset:

(5) إن تعليق قوانين حقوق العمال أثناء الأزمات الاقتصادية هو تعزيز  
لحس الانتماء إلى المجموعة الوطنية. (المتحدث الأول موالاة)

(15) أكدت زميلتي على أن هذا القرار سيعزز انتماء الفرد للدولة.  
(المتحدث الثاني موالاة)

- (5) Suspending laws of workers' rights during economic crises enhances the sense of belonging to the national community. (1<sup>st</sup> proposition speaker)
- (5a) My teammate emphasized that this decision will enhance the individual's sense of belonging to the state. (2<sup>nd</sup> proposition speaker)

In example (5), a rephrase is being used in the form of a team repetition where the 2<sup>nd</sup> proposition speaker repeats the same statement made by the 1<sup>st</sup> proposition speaker. However, this is clearly not an exact repetition because there is a difference in form between the two statements. It is not even a paraphrase because although slightly different forms are used in both statements, the argumentative function is not the same. In paraphrases, the argumentative function remains the same. However, in rephrases, the argumentative function is slightly shifted due to a process of particularization through the use of a hyponym (Younis et al. 2023) and through the use of explication. These two rhetorical strategies create a stronger argument by making the contribution more specific, thereby making it more persuasive. The use of 'individual' explicates what was left implicit in the former statement. The use of 'state' particularizes what was left general in the initial statement 'national community.' In this example, a rephrase that seems on the surface to be instance of repetition or paraphrase actually functions as argumentation by particularization and argumentation by explication. Both of these rhetorical strategies contribute effectively to the development of the team's argument. Rephrase is not a "marginal phenomenon" and "tested experimentally, it is a powerful rhetorical device" (Budzynska et al. 2024). The lexical variety between rephrases introduces different levels of argumentation particularly in the use of synonyms of varying degrees of intensity, such as "awful, terrible, bad, drab, average, acceptable, good, excellent" (Budzynska et al. 2024, p. 8).

## **5 Conclusion**

This study has shown that while Johnstone's findings with regard to micro-level linguistic analysis are solid, her macro-level cultural and anthropological conclusions are clearly unwarranted overgeneralizations. She goes from the micro-level linguistic analysis of a limited corpus to cultural and anthropological conclusions that depict Arabic rhetoric and argumentation as a whole as repetitive, paraphrastic, and parallelistic, and she relates these linguistic patterns to the cultural and anthropological orientation of Arab society. This study has provided evidence from the macro-level argument structure that shows that Arabic competitive debate discourse follows a different pattern in terms of preference for certain rhetorical and argument strategies, mainly a variety of logos-oriented strategies of claim, ground, backing, and rebuttal. This study has shown that even in the repetition dimension of the argumentation structure, the Arabic debate corpus displays a variety of patterns of repetition that are not used only for language ornamentation or decoration where language is used as an end in itself, but for emphasis, connotation, and shift of perspective. These patterns include self-repetition used for signposting, team-repetition for discourse organization and for emphasizing ethotic considerations, and reciting for refutation and rebuttal.

At the micro-level, the repetition patterns are interestingly diverse, ranging from identical repetition to paraphrases and rephrases; all serving argumentative means of emphasizing and bringing an argument to the attention of the audience, reframing, repackaging or showing contradictions, inconsistencies, and fallacious arguments in the antagonist's positions. Of course, further research is needed to explore the significance of the diversity of argumentation strategies displayed in the different topics of the debates as shown in sections 4.3 and 4.5.2. Equally intriguing is a more customized and focused research that focuses on specific argumentation structures in Arabic argumentation, such as claims, warrants, grounds, backing, rebuttal, or repetition to track their distribution across topics and across speakers within the debate. In addition, research is needed to explore the perlocutionary effect of certain argumentation strategies on the audience to determine their impact on the overall formal rating of debate teams by adjudica-

tion panels and the informal rating by the audience at large. This latter research could show the correlation, if any, between the use of specific Arabic argumentation patterns and the cultural and anthropological make-up of the Arab society in general.

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