



The Genre *Laḥn al-ʿamma* (Solecism) in the Light of the *Doha Historical Dictionary of the Arabic Language*

Rachid Belahbib | ORCID: 0009-0003-5688-5311

Professor of Arabic, Mohammad First University, Oujda, Morocco & Head of the Scientific Committee of the *DHDAL*, Doha, Qatar.

rachid.belahbib@dohainstitute.org

Ramzi Baalbaki | 0009-0006-2708-578X

Jewett Professor of Arabic, American University of Beirut, Beirut, Lebanon & Head of the Academic Council of the *DHDAL*, Doha, Qatar.

rbaalbak@aub.edu.lb

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Abstract

The purist approach of most Arab linguists is most clearly demonstrated in the genre of *laḥn al-ʿamma* (solecism). Authors typically cite usage which they attribute to the generality of people (*ʿamma*), and less often to the elite or educated people (*khāṣṣa*) or to both groups, and dismiss it as *laḥn*, mostly on morphological and semantic grounds. A few authors, however, were more tolerant of *laḥn* and tried to justify it by various means.

Following a brief introduction which traces the origin of the notion of *laḥn* in the linguistic tradition, and shows how the terms *ʿamma* and *khāṣṣa* were not clearly defined in the literature, this study examines a representative sample of thirty words derived from Abū Muḥammad al-Qāsim b. ʿAlī al-Ḥarīrī's (d. 516/1122) *Durrat al-ghawwāṣ* in the light of the corpus of the *Doha Historical Dictionary of the Arabic Language*. In each case, the usage described as *laḥn* is shown to be attested in the period known as *uṣūr al-ih̥tijāj* or epochs of reliable usage. The earliest attested *shāhid* for each usage is cited along with the number of occurrences of the “incorrect” and “correct” forms in the corpus of the *DHDAL*. In dismissing usage that goes back to *uṣūr al-ih̥tijāj*, Ḥarīrī and other authors may, at times, not have been cognizant of the attested material.



In most cases, however, they dismiss usage because they largely ignore not only the changes that words and constructions undergo, but also the role of analogy in linguistic change.

Keywords

Solecism – Epochs of reliable usage – Ḥarīrī – *Durrat al-ghawwās* – DHDAL

لحن العامّة في ضوء معجم الدوحة التاريخي للغة العربيّة

رشيد بلحبيب | ORCID: 0009-0003-5688-5311
أستاذ اللغة العربيّة، جامعة محمد الأوّل، وجدة، المغرب، ورئيس اللجنة العلميّة في
معجم الدوحة التاريخي للغة العربيّة
rachid.belahbib@dohainstitute.org

رمزي بعلبكي | ORCID: 0009-0006-2708-578X
أستاذ كرسي "جُويت" للدراسات العربيّة، الجامعة الأميركيّة في بيروت، بيروت،
لبنان، ورئيس المجلس العلميّ لمعجم الدوحة التاريخي للغة العربيّة.
rbaalbak@aub.edu.lb

المستخلص

تتجلّى نزعة اللغويين العرب الصفائيّة – أكثر ما تتجلّى – في صنف التأليف المعروف بلحن العامّة. فقد كان من دأبهم أن ينسبوا إلى العامّة، وأحياناً إلى الخاصّة أو لكلا الفريقين، استعمالات كثيرة فيلحنوها استناداً إلى اعتبارات صرفيّة ودلاليّة في الغالب. ومع هذا فقد انبرى عدد من المصنّفين إلى تبيان وجه الصواب في بعض هذه الاستعمالات.

تبدأ الدراسة بمقدمة موجزة تبيّن أصل مفهوم اللحن في التراث اللغوي وتظهر الغموض الذي يكتنف مصطلحي "الخاصّة" و"العامّة" في كتب اللحن. ثمّ تتركز الدراسة على نموذج تمثيليّ قوامه ثلاثون كلمة مستقاة من كتاب درّة الغواص لأبي محمد القاسم بن عليّ الحريري (ت 516/1122)، فتعارضها بمدوّنة معجم الدوحة التاريخي للغة العربيّة. ويبيّن البحث في كلّ مثال أنّ الوجه المملحن عليه شواهد في مدوّنة المعجم تعود إلى عصور الاحتجاج، كما ينصّ على أقدم شاهد منها ويذكر عدد المرّات التي ورد فيها الوجه المملحن والوجه المصوّب في



المدوّنة. ويخلص البحث إلى أنّ تخطيطة الحريريّ وسواه من المصنّفين استعمالاتٍ ترجع إلى عصور الاحتجاج قد يكون مرّكّها، في مواضع بأعيانها، إلى عدم الإحاطة بها. غير أنّ أسباب التخطيطة تعود، في الأعمّ الأغلب، إلى عدم الإقرار بالتغيّرات التي تطرأ على الكلمات - ولا سيّما من الناحية الصرفيّة - وبدور القياس في عمليّة التغيّر اللغويّ.

الكلمات المفتاحية

لحن العامّة- عصور الاحتجاج - الحريريّ- درّة الغوّاص - معجم الدوحة التاريخيّ للغة العربيّة

I Introduction

The term *laḥn* and its derivatives are encountered in the earliest stages of Arabic linguistic thinking, i.e. towards the middle of the second/eighth century. Later biographical works establish a strong link between the emergence of grammar as a discipline and the increase in what they perceive to be language corruption. Numerous anecdotes are reported in which early linguists became convinced of the need to determine what constitutes proper grammatical usage,¹ having heard speakers commit speech errors. The authenticity of these anecdotes is highly doubtful, but they do indicate an early awareness of a dichotomy between what is “standard” or “correct” usage and what deviates from it and is thus classified as *laḥn*, in the sense of “irregular” or “deviation from the norm”, or simply “wrong”.

The first authentic work in which the term *laḥn* in the sense of “solecism” appears is Sibawayhi’s (d. 180/796) *Kitāb*, albeit only on two occasions. On the first occasion, Sibawayhi argues that, should someone say *yā akhūnā* (O our brother), instead of *yā akhānā*, it would be *laḥn*.² The second occurrence of the term refers to an actual usage, namely, the Qur’anic *hā’ulā’i banātī hunna aṭhara lakum* (Here are my daughters they are purer for you; Q 11: 78), instead of *aṭharu*.³ Synonymous with *laḥn* in the *Kitāb* are the terms *ghalaṭ* and *khaṭa’*, but whereas *ghalaṭ* is used to describe attested usage,⁴ *khaṭa’* is reserved for unattested forms which some grammarians propose.⁵ Late synonyms of *laḥn* include *wahm/awhām* and *saqṭa/saqṭāt*.⁶

Another early authentic source for material on *laḥn* is *al-Bayān wa-l-tabyīn* by Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/869). More credible than the anecdotes attributed in biographical works to Companions of the Prophet (*ṣaḥāba*), such as ‘Umar b. al Khaṭṭāb (d. 23/644), and to scholars early as Abū l-Aswad al-Du‘alī (d. 69/688),⁷ are

1 Cf. Ibn Sallām, *Ṭabaqāt* I, 12; Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt* 21-22; Ibn al-Anbārī, *Nuzha* 20-21; Suyūṭī, *Akhbār* 162-164. For the various topics that are claimed to have captured the attention of the early linguists due to their connection with *laḥn*, see Baalbaki (1995: 124-125).

2 Sibawayhi, *Kitāb* II, 184.

3 Ibid., II, 396-397.

4 For example, the form *nuwayb* (diminutive of *nāb*, canine tooth), which some Arabs use instead of *nuyayb* is described as *ghalaṭ*; ibid., III, 462.

5 For example, ‘Isā b. ‘Umar’s treatment of *uḥayy* (diminutive of *aḥwā*, black) as triptote is described as *khaṭa’*; ibid., III, 472.

6 For a detailed discussion of *tawahhum*, see Baalbaki (1982: 239-240). The term *saqṭa/saqṭāt* occurs less frequently in the literature than other terms. One example is Ibn Jinnī’s chapter titled *Bāb fī saqṭāt al-‘ulamā’* (*Khaṣā’iṣ* III, 282-309).

7 The most famous anecdote of this type is that in which Abū l-Aswad’s daughter addresses him by saying *mā aṣhaddu l-ḥarri* (what hotness is most severe?) when she wanted to exclaim and thus should have said *mā aṣhadda l-ḥarra* (how hot it is!). See Abū l-Ṭayyib, *Marātib* 26; Sīrāfi, *Akhbār* 17-19; Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt* 21-22; Ibn al-Anbārī, *Nuzha* 19-21; Qifṭī, *Inbāh* I, 50-51.

reports quoted by Jāḥiẓ in one of his chapters, since they not only seem to be more “natural” and not intended to justify the beginning of early grammatical activity, but also since some of them have proper *isnād* (chain of authority).⁸ For his part, Mubarrad (d. 285/898) reports that Khālīd al-Qasrī (d. 126/743) was ridiculed by poets and rebuked by Caliph Hishām b. ‘Abdalmalik (d. 125/743) for having said on stage *aṭ‘imūnī mā‘an* (lit. feed me water!). The fact that Mubarrad quotes two poets who ridiculed Khālīd for this grave error gives credence to his report, but the anecdote derives full authenticity from the fact that the lengthy letter in which Hishām rebuked Khālīd has been preserved, and it contains reference to his erroneous construction.⁹

The link between *lahn* and the linguistic usage of the ‘amma/‘awāmm (common people; generality of people) is first attested in the title of Kisā’ī’s (d. 189/805) extant monograph *Mā talḥan fihi l-‘amma*. Many other early monographs which were lost to us had similar titles as reported in the sources. These include Farrā’s (d. 207/822) *al-Bahī/al-Bahā’ fī mā talḥan fihi l-‘amma*, Abū ‘Ubayda’s (d. 209/824) *Mā talḥan fihi l-‘amma*, and Abū ‘Ubayd’s (d. 224/838) *Mā khālafat fihi l-‘amma lughāt al-‘Arab*.¹⁰ Later extant works which mention the ‘amma/‘awāmm in their titles span several centuries and include Zubaydī’s (d. 379/989) *Laḥn al-‘awāmm*, Jawālīqī’s (d. 540/1145) *Takmilat Iṣlāḥ mā taghlat fihi l-‘amma*, Ibn al-Ḥanbalī’s (d. 971/1563) *Baḥr al-‘awwām fī mā aṣāba fihi l-‘awāmm*, and Ibn Bālī al-Qusṭantīnī’s (d. 922/1584) *Khayr al-kalām fī l-taqāṣṣi ‘an aghlāt al-‘awāmm*.

In contrast, the titles of some sources include the term *khāṣṣa/khawāṣṣ* (the elite; the educated). Two such works from a relatively early period, both of which did not reach us, are *Mā laḥana fihi l-khawāṣṣ min al-‘ulamā’* by Abū Aḥmad al-‘Askarī (d. 382/993)¹¹ and *Laḥn al-khāṣṣa* by Abū Hilāl al-‘Askarī (d. after 395/1005).¹² The term also appears in the titles of extant sources, most notably Ḥarīrī’s (d. 516/1122) *Durrat al-ghawwāṣ fī awhām al-khawāṣṣ* and Ibn al-Ḥanbalī’s *Iqd al-khalāṣ fī naqd kalām al-khawāṣṣ*.

8 Jāḥiẓ, *Bayān* II, 210 ff.

9 See the text of Hishām’s letter in Mubarrad, *Kāmil* IV, 121-125; see also I, 31. Note also that Ibn Fāris (*Maqāyīs*, *ṬM*) accepts the use of *iṭ‘ām* (feeding) with *mā’*. Section II discusses the sanctioning of *lahn* by some authors.

10 For Farrā’s book, see Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* I, 200; Yāqūt, *Muḥjam* II, 539; VI, 2815. For Abū ‘Ubayda’s book, see Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* I, 152; Yāqūt, *Muḥjam* VI, 2708. Abū ‘Ubayd’s book is quoted twice by Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān* (QZZ, QZZ). See also Ibn Durayd, *Jamhara*, index 13 (III, 1733-1734) for usage attributed to the ‘amma, some of which is derived from monographs on *lahn*. For a full list of works on *lahn* from this and later periods, see ‘Abdaltawwāb (2000: 72-94); and for the relationship between *lahn* and linguistic change, see Maṭar (1966).

11 Qifṭī, *Inbāḥ* I, 346.

12 Ibn al-Jawzī, *Taqwīm* 75; Suyūṭī, *Bughya* I, 506.

It is often not clear what is meant exactly by *ʿamma* and *khāṣṣa* in works devoted to *laḥn*. In a rare attempt at explaining the difference between the two groups, Jāḥiẓ says that when he uses the term *ʿawāmm*, he refers neither to the peasants (*fallāḥūn*) or the lowest of mankind (*ḥushwa*) or the handicraftsmen (*ṣunnāʾ*), nor to the tradesmen (*bāʿa*), the Kurds of the mountains, and the dwellers of the islands in the seas; rather, he means the *ʿawāmm* who possess intelligence and morals superior to those of barbarians such as the Ṭaylasān, Jīlān and Zanj, but who still do not attain the level of the *khāṣṣa*.¹³ Jāḥiẓ's text, however, better explains what the *ʿamma* are not than specify what characterizes them as a group or distinguishes them from the *khāṣṣa*.

The boundaries between the *ʿamma* and *khāṣṣa* are also blurred in many sources. To mention but two examples, Zubaydī states in the introduction of *Laḥn al-ʿawāmm* that his book lists those errors of the *ʿamma* which have infiltrated the speech of most of the elite so much that they occur in poems, in writings of eminent scribes, and in letters of high-ranking functionaries.¹⁴ But in spite of asserting that his book includes the errors of the *khāṣṣa* to the exclusion of the *dahmāʾ* (masses, multitudes) and *suqqāt* (lowest of people), he not only defends the inclusion in his book of vulgar speech (*al-kalām al-sūqī*) and commonly used speech (*al-lafẓ al-mustaʿmal al-ʿammī*), but also specifies the *ʿawāmm* in the title of his book and in the titles of its three major divisions.¹⁵ In the case of Ḥarīrī, the *khawāṣṣ* are described as men of letters and eminent scribes who have rivaled (*dāhaw*) the *ʿamma* in committing error in their speech and writing.¹⁶ But nowhere in his book does he distinguish the usage of the *ʿamma* from that of the *khāṣṣa*. Furthermore, many of his examples, which—given the title of his book—are supposed to be specific to the *khāṣṣa*, are frequently encountered in other works that refer to the *ʿamma* in their titles.

Yet there were authors who attributed *laḥn* to a particular group of the *khāṣṣa*, rather than vaguely referring to educated people in general or to eminent writers and scholars. Two extant works of this type are *Iṣlāḥ ghalat al-muḥaddithīn* by Khaṭṭābī (d. 388/998) and *Ghalat al-ḍuʿafāʾ min al-fuqahāʾ* by Ibn Barī (d. 582/1187). Also, Ibn Makkī (d. 501/1107) devoted five out of the fifty chapters which constitute his *Tathqīf al-lisān wa-talqīḥ al-janān* to the *laḥn* encountered in the speech and writing of specific elitist groups, namely, Qurʾānic readers, scholars of *Ḥadīth*, jurists (*aḥl al-fiqh*), writers of official documents (*aḥl al-wathāʾiq*), and physicians (*aḥl al-ṭibb*).¹⁷

13 Jāḥiẓ, *Bayān* I, 137.

14 Zubaydī, *Laḥn* 7-8.

15 Ibid., II, 206, 240 (the latter is a pronominal reference; *yūqīʿūnahū*, i.e. the *ʿamma*).

16 Ḥarīrī, *Durra* 3, 283.

17 Ibn Makkī, *Tathqīf*, chapters 35-39, pp. 302-336. A sixth group discussed in a separate chapter is *aḥl al-samāʾ* (singers; 337-346).

Given the above irregularities—and at times confusion—in the use of the terms *ʿamma* and *khāṣṣa*, titles of works on *lahn*, as well as their introductions, are not always helpful in determining to which of the two groups *lahn* is ascribed. Only when there is an unmistakable reference to one of the two groups, or when a particular group of scholars—such as Qurʾānic readers or transmitters of Prophetic tradition—are specified can a clear judgment be made in this respect. Thus, instances of *lahn* that will be quoted from Ḥarīrī's *Durrat al-ghawwāṣṣ fi awhām al-khawāṣṣ* in the rest of this paper should not be attributed specifically to either the *ʿamma* or *khāṣṣa*; rather, most of them were likely to be encountered in the usage of both groups.

II The sanctioning of *lahn* in the sources

The vast literature on *lahn*, both in works that belong to the genre and in the general sources on language and literature, amply demonstrates that Arab scholars adopted a largely “purist” approach to language. In both the grammatical and lexicographical traditions, Arab philologists were convinced that correct usage and *faṣāḥa* (eloquence) are exclusive to a variety of *ʿArabiyya* whose norms are derived from pre-Islamic poetry, the Qurʾān and the speech of the *aʿrāb* (Bedouins).¹⁸ Deviation from the standardized norms of this variety was readily considered to be corruption or decay of speech, rather than the result of a natural and inescapable linguistic evolution.

The predominance of this purist approach, however, should not eclipse the fact that a few scholars were critical of the tendency of many authors to dub as *lahn* a host of instances which may not in fact represent erroneous usage. Perhaps the position of Jāḥiẓ vis-à-vis *lahn* is the precursor to the attempt by some later authors to defend the correctness of numerous forms which occur in the speech of the *ʿawāmm* and which were viewed as *lahn* by other authors.

Although Jāḥiẓ quotes several examples of what he calls *lahn* in a chapter of *al-Bayān wa-l-tabyīn*—as mentioned in the previous section—his readiness to handle *lahn* as an intricate sociolinguistic question, coupled with his view that *lahn* is admissible, or even desirable in certain cases, is diametrically opposed to the intolerant approach of most scholars.¹⁹ He suggests that *lahn* may well be a natural disposition in a speech community (*ʿalā sajiyyat sukkān al-balad*), as in the case of the *ʿawāmm* of Medina, who had no training in grammar

18 For the speech of the Bedouins and the collection of the corpus, see Baalbaki (2014: 7-36).

19 For a detailed discussion of the position of Jāḥiẓ towards *lahn*, see Baalbaki (2009: 91-110). Jāḥiẓ's views on *lahn* firmly placed him outside the sphere of traditional grammar, and are probably the main reason for his exclusion from most biographical works on *naḥwīyyūn* and *luḡawīyyūn*.

(*naḥw*). He then goes as far as saying that *laḥn* is more easily acceptable if it is encountered in the speech of charming slave girls or pretty young women (*al-jawārī al-ẓirāf... al-shawābb al-milāḥ*), and cites Mālik b. Asmā's line:

منطقٌ صائبٌ وتَلَحَّنُ أحياناً وخَيْرُ الحديثِ ما كانَ لحناً

“(She has) correct speech, but she sometimes commits *laḥn*;
and the sweetest utterance is the one with *laḥn*”.²⁰

al-Madkhal ilā taqwīm al-lisān wa-taʿlīm al-bayān represents the first serious attempt at defending the *ʿamma* against allegations of *laḥn* by earlier authors. In the book's first two chapters, Ibn Hishām al-Lakhmī (d. 577/1181) relies on the views of renowned scholars—such as Khalīl b. Aḥmad (d. 175/790), Sibawayhi, Ibn al-Aʿrābī (d. 231/845), Farrāʾ, Thaʿlab (d. 291/904), Ibn Durayd (d. 321/933), Ibn Jinnī (d. 392/1002), and Ibn Fāris (d. 395/1004)—to demonstrate the permissibility of the usage of the *ʿamma*. The first chapter lists sixty-five items taken from Zubaydī's *Laḥn al-ʿawāmm*, whereas the second chapter lists sixty-two from Ibn Makkī's *Tathqīf al-lisān*. Ibn Hishām's main argument in refuting Zubaydī and Ibn Makkī is that the *ʿamma* should not be accused of *laḥn* as long as their usage agrees with an attested dialect (*lughā masmūʿa*), even if that dialect is not *faṣīḥa* (eloquent). For example, he accepts, contrary to Zubaydī, the use of *muknan* instead of *makniyy* or *mukannan* (surnamed) although it is not a *faṣīḥ* usage.²¹ In defending this form and other linguistic material that does not conform to the norm or does not represent the choicest forms, he relies on two statements attributed to Khalīl and al-Akhfash al-Akbar (d. 177/793) in which they show tolerance towards unorthodox usage. Khalīl is said to have opined that Arabic is too wide to allow for accusing a speaker of committing *laḥn* (*lughatu l-ʿArabi akbaru min an yulaḥḥana [fihā] mutakallimun*), and al-Akhfash al-Akbar is reported to have asserted that the most proficient grammarian is the one who never describes anyone's speech as *laḥn* (*anḥā al-nāsi man lam yulaḥḥin aḥadā*).²² This notwithstanding, in the other chapters of his book, Ibn Hishām spots hundreds of errors in the language of the *ʿamma* in Spain in his own time.

A few centuries later, Ibn al-Ḥanbalī (d. 971/1563) authored a book titled *Baḥr al-ʿawwām fī mā aṣāba fihī l-ʿawāmm*. This work is considerably more extensive than Ibn Hishām's since it consists of 223 entries, in each of which Ibn al-Ḥanbalī defends usage by the *ʿamma* that is generally considered to

20 See the controversy which surrounded what the term *laḥn* signifies in this line, in Baalbaki (2009: 101-102).

21 Ibn Hishām, *Madkhal* 27-28.

22 Ibid., 28. Note that the editor wrongly has *akthar* (for *akbar*) and *yulḥan* (for *yulaḥḥan*).

be erroneous. Moreover, Ibn al-Ḥanbalī adopts a much more lenient attitude towards unorthodox usage than Ibn Hishām or any of his own predecessors. His unprecedented tolerance of *lahn* is best exemplified by his defense of usage that deviates from some of the most basic rules of grammar. Such deviations include the omission of the final *nūn* in the indicative forms of what is known as *al-afʿāl al-khamsa* (the five verbs), as in *yafʿalū*, *yaqūmū*, *tafʿalī* and *taqūmī*; the use of the jussive in contexts that require the indicative, as in *fulānun yaʿkul*, instead of *yaʿkulu*; and the omission in pause of the *-ā* which indicates the accusative, as in *sharibtu sharāb*, instead of *sharāban*.²³ One wonders, however, whether either Khalīl or al-Akhfash al-Akbar would have gone as far as accepting such aberrant usage in spite of the above-quoted statements ascribed to them.

Although the modern period is beyond the scope of the present study, it is noteworthy that the purist approach still persists in a large number of works which prescribe “correct usage” and find fault with words or constructions that occur in formal speech, newspapers, books authored by certain scholars, etc. Some of the most well-known individuals who have authored such works include Rashīd al-Shartūnī, Anstās al-Karmilī, Muḥammad Salīm al-Jundī, Muḥammad Bahjat al-Atharī, Muṣṭafā Jawād and Muḥammad al-ʿAdnānī.²⁴ But as was the case in the pre-modern era, a few other authors went against the general trend and tried to demonstrate the correctness of numerous words and constructions which were dismissed by others as solecism. Notable works which represent this trend include *Muʿjam faṣīḥ al-ʿamma* by Aḥmad Abū Saʿd and *Muʿjam fiṣāḥ al-ʿammīyya* by Hishām al-Naḥḥās. Furthermore, Aḥmad Mukhtār ʿUmar in his voluminous dictionary *Muʿjam al-ʿArabiyya al-muʿāṣira* adopted a generally lenient and accommodative approach toward usage documented in his corpus, even if the purists readily dismiss it as wrong.²⁵

III Evidence from the *DHDAL*

During their involvement for more than a decade in the project of the *Doha Historical Dictionary of the Arabic Language* (hereafter *DHDAL*; dohadictionary.org), the two current authors have encountered, in the huge corpus amassed for this dictionary, numerous and frequently attested examples which contradict claims by many authors of books of *lahn* concerning their inadmissibility. This

23 Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Baḥr*, 133-134, 138-140, 155-156.

24 See a survey of works of this type in the modern era, in Ḥammādī (1980: 36-39).

25 For example, he lists words and expressions such as *raʿīsīyy*, *laʿība dawran*, and *nāhika ʿan*, which are generally considered to be unacceptable alternatives for *raʿīs*, *addā dawran/qāma bi-dawrin*, and *nāhika bi-*. See ʿUmar (2008: 837, 2014, 2297).

paper is a pilot study which explores the large discrepancy between a sizable part of the material dismissed as *laḥn* in the books of this genre and actually attested usage which is documented in the Corpus of *DHDAL* (hereafter: the Corpus) and goes which back to the pre-Islamic and early Islamic eras.

As part of their collective effort to create a linguistic corpus, early Arab scholars had to deal with significant dialectal variations. The consensus was that the speech of the Bedouins is the variety which represents the “purest” form of Arabic and should accordingly be the criterion which determines the degree of *faṣāḥa*, and even acceptability, of other varieties. They also had to set temporal limits for closing the corpus, hence the notion of *‘uṣūr al-iḥtijāj* or epochs of reliable usage.²⁶ In very broad terms, the temporal limit for admissible usage in prose was considered to be the end of the second/eighth century for urban areas (*amṣār*) and the end of the fourth/tenth century for material derived from the *A‘rāb*. As far as poetry is concerned, more strict rules were observed, since a group of poets dubbed by Aṣma‘²⁷ as *sāqat al-shu‘arā’* (lit. the poets of the rear) were said to be the last linguistically reliable poets. These include Ru‘ba (d. 145/762), Ibn Mayyāda (d. 149/766), al-Ḥakam al-Khuḍrī (d. 150/767), Makīn al-‘Udhri (d. c. 160/777) and Ibn Harma (d. 176/792).

The rest of this paper will demonstrate that a sizable amount of the material included in works on *laḥn* represents usage that is attested during the period of *‘uṣūr al-iḥtijāj*. Accordingly, to consider this material to be speech corruption contradicts the unanimity concerning the acceptability of usage during these *‘uṣūr*. The thirty items listed below are derived from Ḥarīrī’s *Durrat al-ghawwāṣ*, and many of them do occur in other works of the same genre (see note 46). The criterion for choosing these items (and many others that are not included in this representative sample)²⁸ is the possibility of proving that the usage which Ḥarīrī describes as *laḥn* is actually attested in the Corpus and goes back to *‘uṣūr al-iḥtijāj*.²⁹

The chosen items may be divided into five categories: nominal patterns from the same root; verbal conjugations from the same root; type of transitivity; substitution of a word by another from a different root; and various

26 For a detailed discussion of the notion of *‘uṣūr al-iḥtijāj*, see Baalbaki (2014: 29-36).

27 Ibn Qutayba, *Shi‘r* 639; cf. Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī* IV, 375; V, 238.

28 Some of these items, among others, are discussed in Belahbib (2024). It should also be pointed out that in choosing the items that constitute our representative sample, we have deliberately avoided examples whose vocalization may be due to a choice taken by the editor of the published text (e.g. *rakaḍa* vs. *rukiḍa* and *mashwara* vs. *mashūra*; see Ḥarīrī, *Durra* 27 and 174).

29 The corpus of the *DHDAL* is available on dohadictionary.org, and for each word are listed all available quotations as well as the sources they are derived from, including publication details and page numbers.

morphological phenomena. In each category, words are listed according to their order in Ḥarīrī's list, which includes 222 items. We will use "incorrect" and "correct" (no inverted commas hereafter) to refer respectively to what Ḥarīrī dismisses as *lahn* and what he determines to be the proper alternative. The dates—which are often approximative—are cited as they appear in the *DHDAL* and are either the death dates of the users or, less often, the dates in which the words, constructions, etc. were uttered. For each usage, the number of occurrences in the Corpus will be cited. Unless otherwise specified, these occurrences represent the quotations recorded in the Corpus from the pre-Islamic era until 2023. It should be noted, however, that the material which the Corpus consists of is largely comprehensive until 500 AH. For subsequent dates, the material that makes up the Corpus is selective, but chosen according to criteria that ensure fair representation of the various fields of knowledge and geographical distribution.

III.1 *Nominal patterns from the same root*

Most of the material in *Durrat al-ghawwāṣ* is of this type and of the next one. Our sample contains eleven instances of nominal patterns that Ḥarīrī claims to be *lahn*. In each case, the correct counterpart which he cites is a word from the same root.

1. Incorrect: *aryāḥ* (winds), pl. of *rīḥ*; correct: *arwāḥ* (p. 51).
According to the Corpus, *aryāḥ* first occurs in a line of poetry attributed to al-Jarrāḥ b. 'Amr al-Hamdānī (c. 86/ 538): *khayfānatun yuṭṭamu l-jānī li-laṭmatihā/ka'annahā ṣillu burdīn bayna aryāḥi*.
The number of occurrences of *aryāḥ* in the Corpus is 398. On the other hand, *arwāḥ* is the sense of "winds", occurs no more than twenty-three times.³⁰
2. Incorrect: *arāḍī* (lands); correct: *araḍūn* (p. 65).
The incorrect form is first encountered in a line of poetry by Abī Judāba (?) al-Shaybānī (c. 12 BH/610): *lā saqā l-Lāhu arāḍīhim ḥayan/wa-walīdī ghālahū sū'u l-qadar*. It is also used by al-Nu'mān b. Muqarrin al-Muzanī (19/640): *a'ṭāhum al-amāna 'alā anfusihim wa-amwālihim wa-arāḍīhim*.
The number of occurrences of *arāḍī* in the Corpus is 33,996, which exceeds by far the 8209 occurrences of *araḍūn*.
3. Incorrect: *hawā'ij* (needs); correct: *hājāt* (p. 70).
The incorrect form is first attested in a line of poetry by al-A'shā al-Akbar (c. 7/628): *al-nāsu ḥawla qibābihi/ahlu l-ḥawā'iji wa-l-masā'il*.
Ḥawā'ij occurs in the Corpus 10,604 times—considerably more than *hājāt*, which occurs 5976 times.

³⁰ *Arwāḥ*, in the sense of "spirits", is attested 5646 times.

4. Incorrect: *muthmin* (valuable); correct: *thamīn* (p. 72).
 The first occurrence of *muthmin* is in a line of poetry by al-Kumayt b. Zayd al-Asadī (c. 126/744): *fa-ṣādafa usratan min āli Murrin/bi-a'lāqi l-makārimi muthminīna*. *Muthmin* in this context gives the sense of “to give the price of something” (*al-muthminu l-shay'a: al-mu'ṭi thamanahu*). In the sense of “valuable, expensive”, *muthmin* is attested shortly after the *uṣūr al-ihtijāj* in poetry, namely, in al-Buḥturī's (d. 268/881) hemistich: *lam taghlu wa-hya ghadāta l-ba'yi muthminatun/inna l-rakhiṣa lladhī yulghā huwa l-ghālī*.
 The incorrect form is attested in the Corpus 2267 times³¹ versus 879 occurrences of the correct form.
5. Incorrect: *arḥiya* (pl. of *raḥā*, millstone) and *aqfiya* (pl. of *qafā*, back); correct: *arḥā'* and *aqfā'* (p. 74).
Arḥiya is attested for the first time in the expression *anquru l-arḥiyata*, used by Abū Lu'lu'a al-Majūsī (d. 23/644), whereas *aqfiya* occurs for the first time in the poetry of 'Amr b. Kulthūm (c. 39 BH/584): *qatalnā minhumu sab'īna jaḥshan/wa-wallawnā bi-aqfiyati l-imā'i*.
Arḥiya and *aqfiya* occur in the Corpus 353 and 146 times respectively, whereas *arḥā'* and *aqfā'* occur 960 and 220 times respectively.
6. Incorrect: *mat'ūs* (someone upon whom evil has been invoked); correct: *tā'īs* (p. 109).
 The incorrect form is first encountered in a hemistich dated c. 76/695 and attributed to a man from the tribe of 'Ijl: *wa-yakhla'ū l-khalīfata l-mat'ūsā*. The number of occurrences of the two forms in the Corpus is 117, and is almost equally split among them: fifty-six for *mat'ūs* and sixty-one for *tā'īs*.
7. Incorrect: *rikhla* (ewe-lamb); correct: *rakhil* (p. 130).
 The earliest attestation of *rikhla* is in a text by Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/ 869): *akala rikhlatan wa-shariba mish'alan thumma tajashsha'a wāhidatan*. The correctness of *rikhla* is also confirmed by the famous philologist Ibn Qutayba (d. 276/889): *wa-l-unthā min al-ḥimlāni: rikhla, jam'uhu rikhālun*. *Rikhla* is attested in the Corpus in twenty-eight contexts, whereas *rakhil* is attested in 120 contexts.
8. Incorrect: *muṭarmidh* (one who boasts for that which he does not possess); correct: *ṭirmādh* (p. 185).
 The incorrect form is first attested in a line of poetry attributed to Abān b. 'Abdalḥamīd al-Lāḥiqī (c. 200/815): *ghaybatun lam taṭul 'alayya wa-mādhā/khayru qurbi l-muṭarmidhi l-mallādhī*.

³¹ These occurrences include, other than *muthmin*, homographs such as *muthman*, *muthamman* and *muthammin*. See the following footnote.

The number of occurrences of *muṭarmidh* in the Corpus is thirteen, and that of *ṭirmādh* is twenty-seven.

9. Incorrect: *ma'lūl* (ill); correct: *mu'all* (p. 223).

The first occurrence of *ma'lūl* in the sense of “ill” is in Zuhayr b. Abī Sulmā's (8/629) famous line: *bānat Su'ādu fa-qalbī l-yawma matbūlu/ mutayyamun 'indahā lam yufda ma'lūlu*. In the sense of “invalid”, *ma'lūl* first occurs in the words of Ṭāhir b. al-Ḥusayn al-Khuzā'ī (198/813): *wa-baqīya makhdhūlan ma'lūlā*.

Till the end of the year 500 AH, *ma'lūl* and *mu'all* are attested in the Corpus eighteen times and three times respectively.³² In the Corpus as a whole, *ma'lūl* itself occurs 17,943 times.

10. Incorrect: *marāyā* (mirrors); correct: *marā'in* (p. 225).

The incorrect form is cited by Khalīl b. Aḥmad (175/791) in *K. al-Ayn* as a variant of *marā'in*, in which the *hamza* has been softened: *al-mir'ātu: allatī yunzaru fihā, wa-l-jamī'u: al-marā'ī, wa-man layyana l-hamzata qāla: al-marāyā*.³³

Up to 500 AH (see note 32), the Corpus contains 691 contexts in which *marāyā* is attested. On the other hand, *marā'in* occurs no more than nine times during this period, mostly in dictionaries and linguistic works rather than in actual usage.³⁴

11. Incorrect: *hāwun*³⁵ (mortar); correct: *hāwūn* (p. 240).

The form with a final short vowel is first encountered in Abū Nuwās's (198/813) line: *hāṣira kummayka 'alā hāwunin/li-daqqi thūmin aw li summāqī*.

It is striking that the number of occurrences of the incorrect form in the Corpus is 730, nearly ten times more than that of the correct form (seventy-seven).

III.2 Verbal conjugations from the same root

There are numerous instances in which Ḥarīrī rejects the use of a certain verbal conjugation and admits a different conjugation from the same root. The following examples demonstrate this frequently occurring phenomenon in the *Durra*:

32 For data after 500 AH, the morphological analyzer (*al-muḥallil al-ṣarfī*) is unable to distinguish between words that share a series of consonants. For example, statistics for the occurrence of مُعَلَّ cannot be obtained separately from those of مُعَلَّن, مُعَلَّم, مُعَلِّم, مُعَلِّ etc. Accordingly, in this item, statistics are given up to the year 500 AH for both the incorrect and correct usages, but only for *ma'lūl* in the whole corpus.

33 Khalīl, *Ayn* VIII, 308.

34 After 500 AH, مُرَاء and مُرَائ (hypocrite) are indistinguishable by the morphological analyzer, but the latter constitutes the vast majority of the 1022 occurrences of the two homographs.

35 The word is wrongly vocalized as *hāwan* in Ḥarīrī, *Durra* 240.

12. Incorrect: *inḏāfa* (to be added); correct: *uḏīfa* (p. 48).
Inḏāfa is attested for the first time in Ibn Hishām's (c. 151/768) *Sīra: wa-kāna mimman inḏāfa ilā Yahūda*.
Inḏāfa occurs in the Corpus 2161 times, and its verbal noun *inḏiyāf* occurs eighty-eight times. The passive form *uḏīfa* is attested a total of 8553 times.
13. Incorrect: *tayāmana* (to go to the right); correct: *yāmana* (p. 60).
The first occurrence of *tayāmana* is in a line of poetry attributed to Muḥayy b. al-Ḥakam al-Hudhalī (c. 50/670): *fa-rāqabtuhu ḥattā tayāmana wa-ḥtawat/maṭāfīla minhu ḥurrayātun fa-aghrubu*. As for the verbal noun, *tayāmun*, it occurs in the words of ‘Ā’isha bint Abī Bakr al-Ḥiddīq (c. 59/678): *kāna rasūlu Allāhi yuḥibbu al-tayāmuna fī ṭuhūrihi wa-na’lihi wa-fī tarajjulihi*.
Tayāmana is attested 476 times in the Corpus, in addition to 270 occurrences of its verbal noun *tayāmun*. *Yāmana*, on the other hand, is attested only 112 times.
14. Incorrect: *u’lifat al-dābbatu* (the riding animal was fed); correct: *‘ulifat* (p. 90).
The incorrect form is first encountered in the words of Abū Yūsuf Ya’qūb b. Ibrāhīm al-Anṣārī (150/767): *fa-akala min dhālika l-ṭa’āmi wa-a’lafa dābbatahu min dhālika l-‘alafī*.
The fourth form of the verb occurs sixty-nine times in the Corpus, much less frequently than the first form, which occurs 1226 times.
15. Incorrect: *ālaytu*, from *ālā* (to neglect, to fall behind), as in *mā ālaytu jahdan* (I spared no effort); correct: *alawtu* (p. 94).
The incorrect form is attested in the Corpus for the first time in a line attributed to al-Rabī’ b. Ḍabū al-Fazārī (c. 7 BH/615): *wa-inna kanā’inī lanisā’u ṣidqin/wa-mā ālā baniyya wa-lā asā’ū*.
*Ālaytu*³⁶ and *alawtu* are attested in the Corpus 1111 times and 530 times respectively.
16. Incorrect: *insāgha* (to be palatable); correct: *sāgha* (p. 127).
The earliest *shāhid* for *insāgha* is a line of poetry by the early poet Muḥalhil b. Rabī’a al-Taghlibī (c. 100 BH/525), to whom is attributed the invention of the *qaṣīda* form (*awwalu man qaṣṣada l-qaṣīda*).³⁷ The line in question is: *muḏṭalī’an bi-l-amri yasmū lahu/fī yawmi lā yansāghu ḥalqun bi-rīq*.
Other than *insāgha*, which is attested fifty-six times in the Corpus, its passive participle *munsāgh* and verbal noun *insīyāgh* are attested forty-

36 Note that occurrences of this form in the Corpus can mean either to “to neglect” or “to swear”.

37 Ibn Qutayba, *Shīr* 215.

one times and twenty-two times respectively. The use of *sāgha*, however, is dominant since it is attested a total of 2177 times, and its derivatives *sā'igh*, *masūgh* and *sawgh* are attested 3918, seven and 140 times respectively.

17. Incorrect: *shāla* (to lift, to carry); correct: *ashāla* (p. 188).

Ḥarīrī rejects *shāla* on the grounds that transitivity should be expressed by the pattern *af'ala*. Yet, according to the Corpus, the feminine active participle of *shāla*, i.e. *shā'ilatun*, is attested in a very early line by al-Mufaḍḍal b. Ma'shar al-Nukrī (c. 108 BH/517): *tashuqqu l-arḍa shā'ilata l-dhunābā/wa-hādīhā ka'an jidh'un saḥūqu*. The verb itself is encountered in the words of 'Abdalrahmān b. Jābir (195/811): *ḥattā shālathu bi-rimāḥihā 'an sarjihī wa-alqathu ilā l-arḍi*.

The number of occurrences of *shāla* in the Corpus exceeds by far that of *ashāla*: 505 versus forty-two times.

18. Incorrect: *ardafa*, as in *dābbatun lā turdifu* (a riding animal that does not allow its rider to place someone else behind him); correct: *rādafa* (hence: *dābbatun lā turādifu*) (p. 211).

The *af'ala* form of the verb is first attested in Ḥātim al-Ṭā'ī's (c. 46 BH/577) line: *anikhhā fa-ardifhu fa-in ḥamaltkumā/fa-dhāka wa-in kāna l-'iqābu fa-'āqibi*. Furthermore, Khalīl b. Aḥmad (175/791) in *K. al-'Ayn* cites both conjugations as synonymous: *wa-yuqālu: birdhawnun lā yurdifu wa-lā yurādifu, ay [lā] yada'u radīfan yarkabuhu*.³⁸

Arḍafa is attested in the Corpus 4455 times. Rādafa, on the other hand, occurs in 11,975 contexts, but in most of these, the word in question is irrelevant since the sequence رادف is part of a longer word, such as مُتَرَادَف, مُرَادَف and تَرَادَف.

19. Incorrect: *ṭarada* (expel); correct: *aṭrada* (p. 239).

As in item 16 above, the incorrect word is first attested in a line attributed to Muḥalhil (c. 100 BH/525): *'alā an laysa 'adlan min Kulaybin/idhā ṭurida l-yatīmu 'an-i l-jazūri*. The verbal noun *ṭard* is also attested in a line attributed to 'Antara b. Shaddād (c. 22 BH/600): *a-taḥsabu Qaysun annanī ba'da ṭarḍihim/akhāfu l-a'ādī aw adhillu min al-ṭardi*. Furthermore, the active and passive participles of *ṭarada* both occur in al-Muraqqash al-Aṣghar's (c. 50 BH/573) line: *wa-yasbiqū maṭrūdan wa-yalḥaqu ṭāridan/wa-yakhruju min ghammi l-maḍīqi wa-yajrahu*.

Ṭarada is encountered in the Corpus much more frequently than *aṭrada*: 5779 times versus 289 times.

38 Khalīl, *Ayn* VIII, 23.

III.3 *Type of transitivity*

Other than the previous type in which permissibility is linked to which conjugation of the verb is used, there are a few cases in which Ḥarīrī accepts or rejects usage of transitive verbs based on whether they are self-transitive or pass on to an object through a preposition. The terms used by the grammarians for these two types are *mutaʿaddin bi-naḥsihi* and *mutaʿaddin bi-l-wāsiṭa* respectively. Following are two examples of this type of so-called *laḥn*.

20. Incorrect: *azmaʿa ʿalā*, as in *azmaʿtu ʿalā l-masīri* (I was determined to walk); correct: *azmaʿa l-amra* (hence: *azmaʿtu l-masīra*) (p. 88).

The Corpus proves that *azmaʿa*, followed by *ʿalā* or *bi-*,³⁹ is attested during the epochs of reliable usage. *Azmaʿa bi-* appears in a line attributed to al-Muraqqash al-Aṣghar (c. 50 BH/573): *azmaʿat bi-l-firāqi lammā raʿatnī/ utlifu l-māla lā yadhummu dakhīlī*. As for *azmaʿa ʿalā*, it is attested in the words of the Caliph al-Amīn (198/813): *fa-kāna aḥaduhumā azmaʿa ʿalā l-ghadri*. In *K. al-ʿAyn*, Khalīl (175/791) cites three variants: *azmaʿu ʿalā kadhā... wa-azmaʿu bi-l-ibtikāri wa-azmaʿu ibtikāran*.⁴⁰

The verb is followed by a preposition in sixty-three quotations in the Corpus, whereas it is self-transitive in 243.

21. Incorrect: *ʿayyara bi-*, as in *ʿayyartuhu bi-l-kadhibi* (I upbraided him with lying); correct: *ʿayyarahu* + second direct object (hence: *ʿayyartuhu l-kadhibi*) (p. 168).

The earliest occurrence of the verb followed by the preposition *bi-* is in ʿAntara's (c. 22/600) line: *tuʿayyirunī l-ʿidā bi-sawādi jildī/wa-bīḍu khaṣāʿilī tamḥū al-sawādā*. Furthermore, the expression *a-ʿayyartahu bi-ummihī* is reported in a prophetic tradition (*Ḥadīth*), hence dated 11/632 or earlier. *ʿAyyara* is followed by the preposition *bi-* in 6350 contexts in the Corpus, whereas it is self-transitive in about 200.

III.4 *Substitution of a word by another from a different root*

Unlike the three previous types, the correct word, according to Ḥarīrī, is replaced by a word derived from a different root and that does not properly express the intended meaning.

22. Incorrect: *istaʿhala* (to deserve); correct: *istaḥaqqā* (p. 13).

Ḥarīrī rejects *istaʿhala* and its derivatives on the grounds that they were not heard (*lam tusmaʿ*) in the speech of the Arabs. Yet the first occurrence of the verb in the Corpus goes back to the epochs of reliable usage.

39 Abū Miṣḥal al-Aʿrābī (d. 231/845), famous for his eloquence, confirms the use of both prepositions with *azmaʿa*. In his *Nawādir* 336, he says: *wa-yuqālu ajmaʿtu ʿalā l-shayʿi wa-ajmaʿtu bihi wa-kadhālika azmaʿtu ʿalayhi wa-azmaʿtu bihi*.

40 Khalīl, *ʿAyn* I, 368.

ʿAbdalraḥmān b. al-Qāsim al-ʿAtaqī (c. 191/807) is quoted as saying: *idhā kāna yastaʿhilu an yakūna mimman yujʿalu dhālika ilayhi*.

Other than *istaʿhala*, which is attested 131 times, the infinitive *istiʿhāl* and the active/passive participles *mustaʿhil*/*mustaʿhal* are attested 140 and 204 times respectively. This is only a fraction of the number of occurrences of *istaḥaqqā*/*istuhīqqā*, which amount to 8408, let alone the many other derivatives from the same root.

23. Incorrect: *shawwasha* (to confuse, perplex); correct: *hawwasha* (p. 47). Ḥarīrī considers the use of *shawwasha* and its derivatives (e.g. the passive participle *mushawwash*) to be impermissible. The verb and its passive participle are attested for the first time in the words of Yaḥyā b. Muʿādh al-Khatlī (c. 224/839): *fa-shawwashahu wa-jaʿala kulla watarin minhu fī l-shiddati wa-l-līni ʿalā miqdāri l-ʿūdi l-mushawwashi l-awwali*.

Statistically, *shawwasha* is attested in the Corpus 2003 times; *mushawwi/ash* 1571 times; *tashwīsh* 2297 times; and *tashawwasha* 559 times. On the other hand, *hawwasha*, *muhawwi/ash* and *tahwīsh* occur 226, thirty-one and 153 times respectively.

24. Incorrect: *harrafa* (of a tree, to be early with its fruit); correct: *bakkara* (p. 40).

The famous scholar Abū Ḥātim al-Sijistānī (255/869) says in *K. al-Nakhla: yuqālu: harrafat al-nakhlatu tahrīfan idhā ʿajjalat*.⁴¹ Also, Abū Naṣr al-Jawharī (c. 393/1003) in his lexicon *al-Ṣiḥāḥ* says: *wa-ahrafat al-nakhlatu ay ʿajjalat itāʾahā*.⁴² In actual usage, the verb is attested in a text by Maʿarrī (398/1007): *tuḥarrifu l-qawla li-taḥtarifa wa-li-yahrifa nābituka tahrifu*.

The correct usage exceeds by far the incorrect one, based on the following statistics: *harrafa* (8 times), *tahrīf* (13), *muharrif* (1); *bakkara* (950), *tabkīr* (605), *mubakkir* (8164).

25. Incorrect: *ladagha* (when it refers to a scorpion's sting); correct: *lasaʿa* (p. 219).

Ladagha in connection to a scorpion is first attested in the prophetic tradition (hence dated 11/632 or earlier): *mā ḍarrahū ladghu ʿaqrabin ḥattā yuṣbiḥa*.

The expression *ladaghathu l-ʿaqrabu* is attested in the Corpus fifty-six times, whereas *ladghathu l-ʿaqrabu* and *ladaghātu al-ʿaqāribi* are attested 106 times and seven times respectively. On the other hand, the expressions *lasaʿathu l-ʿaqrabu*, *lasʿatu l-ʿaqrabu*, and *lasʿu l-ʿaqrabu* are attested thirty-one, 407 and 188 times respectively.

⁴¹ Abū Ḥātim, *Nakhla* 95.

⁴² Jawharī, *Ṣiḥāḥ* (HRF).

III.5 Various morphological phenomena

Some of the examples in this category are also consistent with the categories discussed above. For example, in item 27 below, *asharr* and *sharr* are two nominal patterns of the same root and thus qualify for inclusion under the first category. Yet the purpose of identifying examples that embody certain morphological phenomena is to demonstrate that Ḥarīrī, among other authors of books on *laḥn*, do not take into account, in considering the correctness or otherwise of a certain usage, the different phonological and morphological processes that words can undergo. In doing so, they dismiss usage which goes back, according to the Corpus, to the epochs of reliable usage as defined by the generality of grammarians and philologists.

26. Metathesis

Incorrect: *taghashrama* (to take something violently or rudely); correct: *taghashmara* (p. 11).

The incorrect form is attested, but shortly after the epochs of reliable usage. It first occurs in a line by Ibn Ḥayyūs al-Dimashqī (467/1074): *min al-qawmi lā yughḏūna yawman ‘alā qadhan/wa-lā ya’khudhūna l-‘izza illā taghashrumā*.

Derivatives of the root *GhShRM* are attested thirty-eight times in the Corpus—much less than derivatives of *GhShMR*, which occur 250 times.

27. Syllable elision

Incorrect: *asharr min* (worse than); correct: *sharr min* (p. 50).

Asharr is encountered for the first time in the following *ḥadīth*, which is dated 11/632 or earlier: *hādhā asharru, hādhā ḥilyatu ahli l-nāri*.

The number of quotations with *asharr* and *sharr* in the Corpus up to 500 AH is 884 and 10,145 respectively.⁴³

28. Consonant substitution

Incorrect: *kharmasha*, as in *kharmasha l-kitāba* (to corrupt the book); correct: *kharbasha* (p. 101).

Both Khalīl b. Aḥmad (175/791) and Ibn Durayd (321/933) have an entry for *kharmasha* in their lexica.⁴⁴ The passive participle *mukharmash* is also used by al-Qāḍī ‘Abdaljabbār (415/1024): *li-anna aqṣā mā yuqālu fī hādhā l-fi’li: al-mukharmashu*.

Kharmasha is attested in the Corpus twenty-three times, and *kharbasha* thirty-six times.

29. Diaeresis

Incorrect: *ḥājaja* (to argue, to debate); correct: *ḥājja* (p. 133).

43 Following 500 AH, the morphological analyzer does not allow for distinguishing أَشَرَّ or شَرَّ from other words which have the same sequence of consonants in each of them. Cf. n. 32.

44 Khalīl, *Āyn* IV, 325; Ibn Durayd, *Jamhara* II, 1145.

Ḥājaja is encountered for the first time in the words of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (40/661): *lā tukhāṣimhum bi-l-Qur’āni... bal ḥājijhum bi-l-sunnati*.

The number of occurrences of *ḥājaja* and *ḥājja* in the Corpus is sixty-three and 944 respectively.

30. Lightening

Incorrect: *dawātī* (bearer of an inkhorn); correct: *dawawī* (p. 25).

Ḥarīrī rejects *dawātī* in the *nisba* form (gentilic adjective) of *dawāt* on the ground that the feminine marker should be dropped in *nisba*. In the same paragraph, he accepts certain forms (e.g. *qafawān*, dual of *qafā*, back) because they are *khafīf* (light), and contrasts them to other forms that are not used because of their *thiqal* (heaviness). Yet Ḥarīrī nowhere mentions the *thiqal* of *dawawī* as the reason for replacing it by *dawātī*, which is obviously less “heavy”. In fact, Sībawayhi (180/796) establishes the principle that the occurrence of two consecutive *wāws* that are separated by a vowel, which is not considered to be a true barrier (*ḥājiz ḥaṣīn*) (e.g. *shawāwin*, pl. of *shawīyya*, roasted meat), results in forms that are considered heavy (*istithqāl*) and are thus replaced by other forms.⁴⁵

The first occurrence of *dawātī* in the Corpus is in the following quotation from al-Muḥsin b. ‘Alī al-Tanūkhī (380/990): *fa-jā’ahu l-dawātī bi-kitābin fa-qara’ahu wa-ṭawāhu*.

In the light of Sībawayhi’s words, it is hardly surprising that *dawawī* is nowhere to be encountered in the Corpus, whereas *dawātī* occurs sixty-three times.

IV Conclusion

The approach which Ḥarīrī adopts in dismissing usage in the thirty examples discussed in III above is a general feature which applies to the rest of the material in the *Durra*. It should also be noted that Ḥarīrī derives numerous items from works on *laḥn* authored by his predecessors,⁴⁶ and that his own material forms an integral part of later works devoted to *laḥn*.⁴⁷ Accordingly, the conclusions that can be drawn from his approach to the issue of *laḥn* do

45 Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* IV, 357.

46 Among earlier works which include examples that are also found in the *Durra* are Kīsā’ī’s (d. 189/805) *Mā talḥan fīhi l-’amma* (cf. p. 116, *ghasla*; *Durra* 210); Zubaydī’s (d. 379/989) *Laḥn al-’awāmm* (cf. p. 252, *mā abyada*; *Durra* 38; also p. 303, *tayāmana*; *Durra* 60); Ibn Makki’s (d. 501/1107) *Tathqīf* (cf. p. 225, *marāyā*; *Durra* 225).

47 Cf. Ibn Barrī (d. 582/1187) *Ghalaṭ* 26 (*khalāṣ*; *Durra* 113); also 27 (*muṣān*; *Durra* 77). See also Ibn Bālī (d. 992/1584), *Khayr* (index, 68) for several items that the author attributes to Ḥarīrī in the *Durra*.

apply to numerous other authors of the genre throughout the tradition. The authors of this article are preparing a comprehensive study in which they examine *laḥn* material in the whole tradition in the light of the corpus of the *DHDAL*.

The most obvious conclusion that can be drawn so far from our representative sample is that, given the unanimity among Arab scholars concerning the epochs of reliable usage, or *‘uṣūr al-iḥtijāj*, there is a basic discrepancy between Ḥarīrī’s stance on permissibility of usage on the one hand, and the data provided by the corpus of the *DHDAL* on the other. Each of the thirty examples cited above and rejected by Ḥarīrī as *laḥn* is supported by actual usage, i.e. *shawāhid*, that goes back to *‘uṣūr al-iḥtijāj* (or, only in item 29, shortly thereafter). Although we have cited only one or two *shawāhid* in each case, numerous others are documented in the Corpus.

The discrepancy referred to above may be due in part to Ḥarīrī’s limited knowledge of usage. Surely, the corpus amassed by Arab scholars (see III, above) was too large for any single individual to be cognizant of all its material. This is particularly true in cases where the form which Ḥarīrī rejects occurs much less than its correct counterpart. In item 14, for example, it can be argued that Ḥarīrī was not aware of the fact that *u’lifat al-dābbatu* is attested during *‘uṣūr al-iḥtijāj*. This may be due to its relative scarcity (sixty-nine times, versus 1226 times for *‘ulifat*). Similarly, since *harrafa* (item 24) is attested no more than eight times in the whole Corpus, versus 950 occurrences of *bakkara*, it may have escaped Ḥarīrī’s attention. The conclusion regarding Ḥarīrī’s rejection of certain usages due to limited knowledge of the vast data derived from the speech of the Arabs is corroborated by his own justification of the impermissibility of *ista’hala* (item 22). He cites this verb in the imperfect (*yasta’hil*) and the active participle (*musta’hil*), and asserts that these two forms were neither heard in the speech of the Arabs nor considered to be correct by any eminent man of letters (*wa-lam tusma’ hātāni l-laḥẓatāni fī kalāmi l-‘Arabi wa-lā ṣawwabahumā aḥadun min a’immati l-adabi*).⁴⁸ Obviously, Ḥarīrī was not cognizant of the existence of early *shawāhid* for *yasta’hil* and *musta’hil*. The latter occurs in the words of the Caliph al-Ma’mūn (d. 218/833; 195/811): *fa-in ghayyartu aw baddaltu kuntu li-l-‘ibari musta’hilan*.

Yet in most cases, Ḥarīrī’s position is difficult to justify on the basis of lack of knowledge. This is particularly so when a certain usage is supported by a host of *shawāhid* from *‘uṣūr al-iḥtijāj*. We can take item 27 as an example since we have cited the number of occurrences of the incorrect and correct usages (*asharr/sharr*) up to 500 AH, and not in the whole Corpus. In other words, the majority of these occurrences belong to *‘uṣūr al-iḥtijāj*. Given that the number of *shawāhid* of

48 Ḥarīrī, *Durra* 13.

the incorrect form, *asharr*, is 884 times (the earliest of which occurs in a *ḥadīth*), it is extremely unlikely that Ḥarīrī did not know that it had gained relative currency. The case of *marāʾin* (item 10) is also pertinent in this respect. It was noted that the Corpus, up to 500 AH, contains no more than nine occurrences of *marāʾin*, whereas *marāyā*, which is said to be *laḥn*, occurs 691 times during that period. Obviously, Ḥarīrī could not have missed Khalīl's mention of *marāyā* in *al-ʿAyn*, or its overwhelmingly frequent occurrence in speech.

Furthermore, many of the *shawāhid* which document the usage of words said by Ḥarīrī to be *laḥn* are attributed to major pre-Islamic poets, the Prophet and his *Ṣaḥāba* (Companions), famous authors, etc. Ḥarīrī (and indeed his predecessors as well as subsequent authors of works in the genre) were most likely to have been familiar with some of these *shawāhid*. Examples include *shawāhid* attributed to al-Aʿshā al-Akbar (item 3; *ḥawāʾij*); ʿAmr b. Kulthūm (item 5; *aqfiya*); Zuhayr b. Abī Sulmā (item 9; *maʿlūl*); Ibn Hishām (item 12; *inḍāfa*); ʿĀisha (item 13; *tayāmun*); Muḥalhil (item 16; *yansāghu*, and item 19; *ṭurida*); Ḥātim al-Tāʾī (item 18; *ardifhu*); ʿAntara (item 19; *ṭard*, and item 21; *tuʿayyirunī bi-*); Prophet Muḥammad (item 21; *ʿayyartahu*, item 25; *ladghu ʿaqraḥin*, and item 27; *asharru*); and ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib (item 29; *ḥājijhum*).

In a few cases, however it may be argued that Ḥarīrī justifiably rejected usage because its *shawāhid* are first encountered after *ʿuṣūr al-iḥtijāj*. For example, his rejection of *qāṣaṣa* (to punish; p. 113) may well be due to the lack of any supportive *shāhid* before the end of the fourth/tenth century. According to the Corpus, *qāṣaṣa* is attested for the first time in Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Hāshimī's (c. 428/1037) words: *qāṣaṣahā minhu bi-qīmati l-ʿabdi*. In other cases, the reason for his rejection of a certain word may be linked to its users. *Infasada* (to become corrupt), which Ḥarīrī mentions with *inḍāfa* (item 12), is a good example in this respect. The Corpus shows that it is first attested in the words of Ḥunayn b. Ishāq (c. 260/874): *yanfasidu wa-yanquṣu baʿḍuhā maʿa baʿḍin*. Moreover, the verbal noun, *infisād*, occurs for the first time in the words of Ibn Waḥshiyya al-Nabaṭī (c. 291/904): *wa-huwa l-infisādu bi-l-taʿfīni*. It is likely that *infasada* and its derivatives were considered by Ḥarīrī to be *muwallad*, or neologisms introduced by non-native or unreliable speakers of Arabic.

Another major conclusion to be drawn from Ḥarīrī's position vis-à-vis *laḥn* is that in his purist approach to usage, he does not try to justify forms on the grounds of the morphological changes that are operational across linguistic usage. Items 26 to 30 above clearly demonstrate this tendency. To take lightening (item 30) as an example, Ḥarīrī insists that *dawātī* is *laḥn* and does not consider justifying its replacement of the correct, but heavy form, *dawawī*. He also adopts the same approach in rejecting *dunyāʾī*, which has replaced what he considers to be the correct form, *dunīyī* (i.e. *dunīyy*, worldly; p. 93). In doing so, he disregards the speakers' tendency to avoid the occurrence of

three consecutive *yā*'s in one word. Similarly, he rejects *shuwayy* and *ʿuwayna* (p. 253), which have largely been used as substitutes for what he considers to be the correct forms, *shuyayy* and *ʿuyayna*. In these two examples as well, Ḥarīrī does not take into consideration the general morphological rule of *manʿ tawālī al-amthāl*, or avoidance of recurring consonants in a word—a rule which is particularly applicable in the case of *wāw* or *yā*'. Furthermore, in the case of hamza, Ḥarīrī does not consider the possibility that the form *mashūm* (ill-omened), instead of *mash'ūm* (p. 61) is an instance of the widespread phenomenon of hamza elision.

Ḥarīrī also often ignores *qiyās* (analogy) as a major cause of morphological change. Many of the usages which he classifies as *laḥn* could be readily ascribed to *qiyās*. In our own sample, both *inḍāfa* (item 12; also *infasada* mentioned in the same section) and *insāgha* (item 16) belong to a group of words in which the *infa'ala* pattern substitutes the passive *uf'ila* (i.e., *uḍifa*, *uḥsida* and *usīgha*). In fact, Ḥarīrī himself cites, alongside *inḍāfa* and *infasada*, several words whose origins (*uṣūl*) are of the pattern *fu'ila* but which were replaced by the pattern *infa'ala* in the reflexive (*muṭāwa'a*). The examples he gives are *inza'aja*, *inṭalaqa*, *inqaḥama* and *inḥajara*, which have replaced *uz'ija*, *uṭliqa*, *uqḥima* and *uḥrija* respectively. Yet he considers such examples to be anomalous (*shawādh*) and hence not to be expanded by analogy (*wa-lā yuqās 'alayhā*). Another example is that of *'ayyara bi-* (item 21), in which the verb is followed by a preposition, and not by a direct object. This usage, which Ḥarīrī rejects, would have been easily justifiable based on analogy to other verbs that are similar in meaning and are followed by the preposition *bi-*, such as *ittahama bi-*, *waṣama bi-* and *ramā bi-*. Similarly, Ḥarīrī does not take into consideration the fact that the *imāla* (fronting and raising of a long or short *fatha*) of *ḥattā* (p. 231) may be due to analogy, since several other words (e.g. *matā* and *balā*) are subject to *imāla*, as in many traditions of Qur'ānic readings.

Ḥarīrī's disregard for usage in certain cases, as well as his refusal to explain certain forms on the basis of analogy, were criticized by some later authors. One example is his rejection of the use of *sā'ir* if the speaker means "all" and not "rest of; remainder of". In response, Ibn al-Ḥanbalī (d. 971/1563) cites many *shawāhid* by famous poets, such as Ibn Aḥmar (d. c. 65/685) and Dhū l-Rumma (d. 117/735), in which *sā'ir* means "all".⁴⁹ For his part, Khafājī (d. 1069/1659) refutes Ḥarīrī's claim that *marāyā* is *laḥn*. He argues that, according to *qiyās* (i.e., prevalent usage), a hamza which forms part of the root (*aṣliyya*) may be changed into *yā*', in analogy to a transient (*'ārida*) hamza. Hence *marā'in* may be changed to *marāyā*.⁵⁰

49 Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Baḥr* 180-182; cf. Ḥarīrī, *Durra* 4.

50 Khafājī, *Sharḥ* 595-596; cf. Ḥarīrī, *Durra* 225.

This paper has hopefully demonstrated the need to reassess the purist approach which many authors of the genre of *laḥn* have adopted. Although there was general consensus among scholars concerning the temporal limits which define acceptable or eloquent (*faṣīḥ*) usage, they have often rejected material which goes back to pre-Islamic and early Islamic times, as documented by the *DHDAL*. Whether this is due to the authors' limited knowledge of the corpus amassed during the second/eighth and third/ninth centuries, or to their refusal to acknowledge phonological, morphological, syntactical and semantic changes which affect usage, their purist approach widened the schism between what they consider to be correct usage and that of the *ʿamma* and *khāṣṣa* alike. By specifying a variety which represents the "purest" form of Arabic in their view and using it as a yardstick for acceptability and for the degree of eloquence, the purists were largely insensitive to the various levels of usage that naturally exist in a linguistic community.

On a lighter note, were one to be convinced that some of the words or usages which Ḥarīrī and other authors describe as *laḥn* are indeed so, then one has to admit that they have fallen into their own trap since they, at times, used in their own writings the same words that they had classified as incorrect!⁵¹

Abbreviations

DHDAL = *Doha Historical Dictionary of the Arabic Language*. www.dohadictionary.org.

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Abū Ḥātim, *Nakhla* = Abū Ḥātim Sahl b. Muḥammad al-Sijistānī, *al-Nakhla*, in *Nuṣūṣ muḥaqqqaqā fi l-lughā wa-l-naḥw*. Ed. Ḥātim Ṣāliḥ al-Ḍāmin. Baghdad: Dār al-Ḥikma, 1991, 99-179.

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⁵¹ For example, Ḥarīrī (*Durra* 56) insists that *kāffatan* should come after the noun it corroborates (*ta ʿtī mutaʿaqqibatān*), as in *ḥaḍara l-nāsu kāffatan*. But he himself, in a different paragraph (*Durra* 239), contradicts this rule when he says: *wa-tashhadu l-āyatu bi-ttīfāqi kāffati ahli l-milali ʿalā l-īmāni bi-nubuwwatihi*. Similarly, Ṣafādī (d. 764/1363) describes *arāḍī*, instead of *araḍūna*, as wrong (*Taṣḥīḥ* 59), but uses it in his own writings: *al-arāḍī al-muḥtakaratu sabʿatu ālāfi dirhamin* (*Aʿyān* II, 131), and *dafana fi baʿḍi dafāʾinihi fi tilka l-arāḍi qidran fihā thamānūna alfa dīnārīn* (*Aʿyān* IV, 45).

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