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THE CLASSIFICATION AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF HADITH TERMINOLOGY IN AL-JURJANI'S "AL-TA'RIFAT"

Abstract: This article analyzes the terms related to the science of hadith presented in Sayyid Sharif al-Jurjani's work "Al-Ta'rifat". The main criterion for selecting these terms in the study was not merely their names, but whether their definitions express a specific terminological meaning unique to hadith science. On this basis, 34 terms related to hadith science were identified in "Al-Ta'rifat" and categorized into eight groups according to their semantic proximity. Furthermore, certain terms, particularly khabar (report), mursal (loose chain), and munkar (denied), were comparatively analyzed with the definitions found in Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani's work "Nuzhat al-Nazar". To highlight the author's internal methodological evolution, a comprehensive cross-textual analysis was conducted between "Al-Ta'rifat" and al-Jurjani's specialized treatise "Risola fi ilm usul al-hadis" (Al-Mukhtasar), integrating comparative perspectives from Abdulhaq al-Dehlavi's corpus. The article also demonstrates the aspects of al-Jurjani's definitions related to the Hanafi-Usuli (legal theoretic) approach.

Key words: Sayyid Sharif al-Jurjani, Al-Ta'rifat, Risola fi ilm usul al-hadis, hadith terminology, isnad, khabar, mursal, munkar hadith, Nuzhat al-Nazar, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, Abdulhaq al-Dehlavi.

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Introduction

One of the essential rules to consider when studying and mastering Sharia sciences is to thoroughly understand the lexical and terminological meanings of scientific expressions, terms, and words related to the subject under study. The science of hadith possesses its own unique terminology. Islamic scholars, when explaining rules or topics, initially began by explaining the lexical and terminological meanings of words and terms representing core concepts. For instance, works such as al-Farabi's "Ihsa al-Ulum", Ibn Sina's "Aqşam al-Ulum", al-Khwarizmi's "Mafatih al-Ulum", Fakhr al-Din al-Razi's "Hada'iq al-Anwar", and al-Farghani's "Lata'if

al-I'lam" covered scientific fields alongside partial terminologies.

"Al-Ta'rifat" is a terminological dictionary compiled in alphabetical order by Sayyid Sharif al-Jurjani, wherein hadith terms are presented not as a separate independent chapter, but as an integral structural component of the general scientific system. For example, both the meaning of a word within hadith terminology and its meaning according to grammarians (nahv) are given sequentially alongside its lexical meanings, demonstrating their place within the general scientific system. This can be clearly observed in the case of the term sahib (authentic). Specifically, in the view of grammarians, sahib refers to a noun (ism) that does not end with a weak letter

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(illat harfi). In hadith science, however, this term is employed to denote a hadith whose chain of transmission (sanad) is continuous, and whose narrators possess the qualities of integrity (adala) and accuracy (dabt) that is, deemed entirely trustworthy. Based on this, it can be argued that classifying the hadith terms in this work not only reveals their internal system but also serves to illuminate al-Jurjani's scientific methodology.

While pioneering bibliographical works by Zahrani (2024) analyzed hadith terms through a generalized critical dictionary prism [9], and Douibi (2024) investigated comparative overlaps between specific manuals [13], a critical gap remains regarding the structured structural classification and Hanafi-Usuli contextualization of these definitions. Unlike previous studies, this research offers provides a comprehensive systematic classification of all 34 hadith-related terms in *Al-Ta'rifat* into eight conceptual categories, addressing how al-Jurjani bridges scholastic traditionist methodologies with legal theory.

To guide this structural inquiry, the study addresses the following four central research questions (RQs):

- RQ1: How many hadith-related terms explicitly exist within the alphabetical matrix of *Al-Ta'rifat*, and what is their distribution?
- RQ2: How can these terms be systematically classified into conceptual and functional categories based on semantic proximity?

- RQ3: What methodological and jurisprudential (Hanafi-Usuli) tendencies emerge from al-Jurjani's definitions?

- RQ4: How do these definitions structurally compare with the frameworks of Ibn Hajar's *Nuzhat al-Nazar* and al-Jurjani's own *Risala*?

Research methodology

To systematically evaluate the structural distribution and semantic scope of hadith terminology within Sayyid Sharif al-Jurjani's *Al-Ta'rifat*, this study utilizes a tripartite methodological framework: textual analysis, comparative conceptual analysis, and systematic classification.

First, textual analysis was applied to isolate hadith-specific expressions from the general alphabetical lexicon, intentionally filtering out polysemous terms whose definitions in the text do not explicitly carry a traditionist (muhammadith) functional meaning. Second, comparative conceptual analysis was deployed to cross-examine al-Jurjani's definitions with the authoritative codifications found in later classical works, specifically Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani's *Nuzhat al-Nazar*, thereby isolating shifting trends between traditionist and legal-theoretic (usuli) methodologies. Third, systematic classification was employed to group the identified 34 hadith terms into conceptually coherent clusters based on their underlying semantic proximity. These operational clusters are mapped out comprehensively in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Thematic Classification of Hadith Terminology in *Al-Ta'rifat*

No	Term Category	Core Examples in <i>Al-Ta'rifat</i>	Semantic Focus
1	Terms related to <i>isnad</i>	<i>isnad, musnad, muttasil, mursal, munqati', mu'allaq</i>	Transmission chain continuity and connectivity
2	Terms related to narrator qualities	<i>thiqah, dabt, adala, mastur</i>	Critical validation and transmitter evaluation (<i>al-jarh wa al-ta'dil</i>)
3	Terms related to defects in the sanad	<i>tadlis, irsal, munfasil</i>	Identification of hidden or overt structural gaps
4	Terms related to hadith grades & rulings	<i>sahih, hasan, da'if, munkar, shadh</i>	Evaluative criteria for acceptance, rejection, and epistemic value
5	Terms related to dissemination level	<i>mutawatir, mashhur, khabar al-vahid (ahad), gharib</i>	Quantitative metrics of transmission pathways
6	Methods of receiving & transmitting	<i>munavala</i>	Epistemological modes of hadith reception (<i>tahammul</i>)
7	Attribution and general concepts	<i>marfu', mavquf, maqtu', qudsi hadith, sunnah, sahabi</i>	Sourcing of tradition and generalized conceptual terminology
8	Errors in wording & orthography	<i>tashif, tahrif</i>	Philological and graphic discrepancies in narration text

Main section

In selecting terms related to hadith science from "*Al-Ta'rifat*", concepts that explicitly provide a special meaning within hadith terminology in their definitions were primarily isolated. At the same time, there are certain terms in the work that are also utilized in other sciences, and not all of them were presented in their

hadith-specific terminological sense. For instance, the term *muhkam* was mentioned not in the sense of a "decisive hadith" (*muhkam* hadith), but in a context related to the clear and definitive meaning of Quranic verses; in the definition of the term *mawdu'*, rather than the meaning of a "fabricated hadith" used in hadith science, a definition characteristic of the

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science of logic was provided. Similarly, the term *jarh* was defined not as a narrator criticism/validation term used against a hadith transmitter, but in the sense of criticizing a witness, explaining a state that causes the rejection of their testimony. Therefore, these terms were excluded from the classification of hadith science.

Conversely, terms such as *adala* (integrity), *thiqah* (trustworthiness), *sahabi* (companion), *tashif* (misread script), *tahrif* (distortion), *kunya*

(patronymic), and *mawdu'* report were included in this classification because their substance aligns with the scope of application in hadith science. Most of the remaining definitions belong directly to hadith science and are explicitly indicated in the work in forms such as *sahih* min al-hadith (authentic hadith) and *da'if* min al-hadith (weak hadith). Hence, as systematically mapped out in the methodology section, these 34 unique terms reflect al-Jurjani's internal conceptual logic.

Table 2. Quantitative and Detailed Distribution of Hadith Terms (N = 34)

No	Term Category	Identified Hadith Terms	Count	Percentage (%)
1	Terms related to isnad	isnad, musnad, muttasil, mursal, munqati', mu'allaq	6	17.6%
2	Terms related to narrator qualities	thiqah, dabt, adala, mastur	4	11.8%
3	Terms related to defects in the sanad	tadlis, irsal, munfasil	3	8.8%
4	Terms related to hadith grades & rulings	sahih, hasan, da'if, munkar, shadh	5	14.7%
5	Terms related to dissemination level	mutawatir, mashhur, khabar al-vahid (ahad), gharib	4	11.8%
6	Methods of receiving & transmitting	munavala	1	2.9%
7	Attribution and general concepts	marfu', mavquf, maqtu', qudsi hadith, sunnah, khabar, mawdu' report, sahabi, kunya	9	26.5%
8	Errors in text wording & orthography	tashif, tahrif	2	5.9%
-	Total 8 Categories	Total Term Corpus	34	100.0%

Comparative Conceptual Analysis: Al-Ta'rifat versus Nuzhat al-Nazar

The works of Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (1372–1449 CE), who lived after Sayyid Sharif al-Jurjani but was a direct successor to the existing scientific tradition, reflect the process of refinement in the science of hadith terminology. From this perspective, comparing the hadith terms presented in "*Al-Ta'rifat*" with the system in Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani's work "*Nuzhat al-Nazar*" leads to important scientific conclusions. This aspect becomes even more apparent through the analysis of certain terms, particularly the term *khabar* (report). In the work, *khabar* is elucidated from several angles: firstly, it is defined as a statement that possesses the possibility of being true or false; secondly, *khabar* is divided into three parts: *mutawatir*, *mashhur*, and *khabar al-vahid*; thirdly, from the perspective of narration format, it is mentioned that *khabar* is of two types: *mursal* and *musnad* [2:137-138].

In Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani's "*Nuzhat al-Nazar*", the discussion of *khabar* is covered in a broader, more systematic, and analytical manner. Specifically, he does not limit himself to the definition of *khabar* but also explains its types, the scientific value of each type, their place in the *isnad*, the criteria for

acceptance and rejection, as well as their jurisprudential (fiqhi) and legal-theoretic (usuli) consequences. In explaining the relationship between the terms *khabar* and hadith, he demonstrates that several terminological approaches exist among scholars. According to one view, *khabar* and hadith are synonymous, while according to another view, hadith is specific to narrations coming from the Prophet (pbuh), and *khabar* is a broader concept than it. This approach is explained through the rule of "absolute generality-specificity" (*umum-khusus mutlaq*): although every hadith is a *khabar*, not every *khabar* is considered a hadith. The division of *khabar* into *mutawatir* and *ahad*, and the subsequent subdivision of *ahad* into *mashhur*, *aziz*, and *gharib*, is explained in detail [3:47]. From this standpoint, Ibn Hajar considers the issue of *khabar* not merely at the level of simple classification, but within the scope of a complete hadith theory.

In al-Jurjani's definition, *khabar* is primarily given as a theoretical category. That is, the definition "a statement that possesses the possibility of being true or false" reveals the general semantic-logical essence of *khabar*. Only after this does he transition to a more specific classification within the scope of hadith science, dividing *khabar* into *mutawatir*,

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mashhur, and *khavar al-vahid*. This conforms to al-Jurjani's method of explaining terms from the general to the specific. Here, the author's purpose is not to extensively comment on all details of the term *khavar*, but to define its main forms in scientific usage.

The primary difference between the two works is that al-Jurjani divides *khavar* into three parts, whereas Ibn Hajar divides it into *mutawatir* and *ahad*, viewing *mashhur* within the framework of *ahad*. This difference is explained by the methodological discrepancy between the terminology of the Hanafis and that of the traditionists (*muhaddithun*). Hanafi imams categorized reports into *mutawatir*, *mashhur*, and *khavar al-vahid* based on the level of reaching the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and their implementation in practice. Traditionists, on the other hand, primarily divided reports into *mutawatir* and *ahad*, presenting *mashhur*, *aziz*, and *gharib* within *ahad*. The main difference between the Hanafi legal theorists (*usuliyyun*) and the traditionists lies in the criterion for classifying reports. While traditionists mostly based their criteria on the chain of transmission (*sanad*) and the number of narrators, Hanafi legal theorists also viewed the acceptance, practical application, and widespread dissemination of the report among subsequent generations as essential criteria. Therefore, while in the terminology of the traditionists a *mashhur* report is often interpreted as a type of *ahad* report, in the Hanafi methodology it is evaluated as an independent level between *mutawatir* and *khavar al-vahid* [4:121].

In the work "Al-Hujaj al-Saghir" by Isa ibn Aban, a Hanafi jurist, scholar of *usul al-fiqh*, and one of the first Hanafi theorists regarding the evaluation of hadith reports, the topics discussed also included *mutawatir*, *mashhur*, and *ahad* reports, the conditions for acting upon *ahad* reports, the states of narrators, the ruling on *mursal* hadith, and methods for resolving contradictions between narrations [6:10].

Al-Jurjani also draws attention by dividing *khavar* at one point into *mursal* and *musnad*. He defines *mursal* as a hadith narrated by a narrator who breaks the chain and does not attribute it to another narrator, emphasizing that it is considered a proof (*hujjah*) just like *musnad*. Musnad, on the other hand, is a hadith that a narrator connects through a chain of transmission, tracing it back to the Prophet (pbuh) [2:138]. In "Nuzha an-nazar", however, *mursal* is defined as "a hadith where the narrator following the Successor (*tabi'i*) has dropped from the end of the *sanad*" [3:113]. Ibn Hajar lists *mursal* among the rejected (*mardud*) reports and explains its reason by the unknown status of the dropped narrator from the chain. This dropped narrator could be a Companion (*sahabi*) or a Successor (*tabi'i*). If it is a Successor, they could be trustworthy (*thiqah*) or weak (*da'if*). Therefore, in such a hadith, there is a problem of an unknown narrator. For this reason, the majority of traditionists chose the path of suspension (*tawaqquf*)

due to the lingering probability. Here, "suspension" means not immediately accepting the *mursal* as authentic or as a proof, but treating it with caution until its status is clarified.

Al-Jurjani's definition of *mursal* stands closer to the approach of Hanafi legal theorists. For Hanafi imams, a *mursal* is any hadith that contains a break in its chain of transmission. This break does not differentiate whether it occurs at the beginning, middle, or end of the chain, or whether one narrator or several narrators are dropped [4:118]. Hence, in Hanafi terminology, *mursal* is a broad concept encompassing broken narrations that fall under the traditionists' classifications of *mursal*, *munqati'*, *mu'dal*, and *mu'allaq*. According to this approach, the ruling on a *mursal* narration is determined not solely by the break in the chain, but also accounts for the narrator's trustworthiness, era, and narration habits. Therefore, the view of Isa ibn Aban is cited as the preferred opinion among Hanafis. According to him, the *mursal* of a trustworthy narrator within the first three centuries is accepted. The *mursal* of a narrator after the first three centuries is accepted only if they are among the imams of religion and possess expertise in the science of narrator criticism and validation (*jarh va ta'dil*); otherwise, it is not accepted [7:382]. Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani's approach, conversely, is characteristic of the traditionists' method. For traditionists, a *mursal* is a Successor's narration directly attributing to the Prophet (pbuh) by saying, "The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said," without mentioning the Companion [3:374].

However, the definition of *mursal* in "Al-Ta'rifat" is not limited exclusively to the broad meaning specific to Hanafi legal theorists. Al-Jurjani, in other instances, distinguishes the types of *mu'allaq*, *munqati'*, and *mursal* based on the position of the break in the chain, and explains *mursal* as the direct attribution of a hadith to the Prophet (pbuh) by a Successor or a subsequent narrator, dropping the generation of the Companions [2:265-267]. This indicates that the term *mursal* is utilized in the work in senses close to both the legal-theoretic (*usuli*) and the traditionists' approaches.

In al-Jurjani's definition, a *munkar* hadith is explained as follows: "A *munkar* hadith is a hadith narrated solely by a single narrator, and its text is confirmed neither through that line of transmission nor through any other path" [2:283]. Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, however, defines *munkar* as: "If a contradiction occurs via a weak narrator, the superior narration is called *ma'ruf* (recognized), and its counterpart is called *munkar*" [3:96]. In this approach, the primary criterion is the contradiction of a weak narrator's transmission with a stronger, more acceptable narration. Thus, while al-Jurjani explains *munkar* mostly based on singularity (*tafarrud*) and the absence of a corroborating path, Ibn Hajar defines it

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through the opposition of a weak narrator's transmission to an acceptable transmission.

Cross-Textual Analysis: Al-Ta'rifat versus Risola fi ilm usul al-hadis

To evaluate the internal consistency and evolution of al-Jurjani's terminological method, it is crucial to perform a cross-textual comparison between his generalized dictionary, *Al-Ta'rifat*, and his targeted manual on tradition methodology, *Risola fi ilm usul al-hadis* (commonly known as *Al-Mukhtasar*). This investigation reveals that al-Jurjani purposefully modified his definitions based on the intended academic audience and functional genre of the text.

In his specialized treatise *Risola fi ilm usul al-hadis*, al-Jurjani defines a *sahih* (authentic) hadith as: "a tradition whose *sanad* is connected (*muttasil*) through an upright (*adil*) and accurate (*dabt*) narrator from an upright and accurate narrator like him, free from being anomalous (*shadh*) and having a hidden defect ('illah')" [12:28]. The explicit integration of the continuity (*muttasil*) criterion within al-Jurjani's *Risola* definition is highly significant. Through this parameter, an authentic hadith is structurally codified not merely as a report transmitted by historically reliable individuals, but as an uninterrupted chain completely free from structural transmission gaps.

Following this comprehensive definition, al-Jurjani meticulously elucidates its foundational sub-concepts: an upright (*adil*) narrator is defined as a person who is neither hidden (*mastur*) nor explicitly criticized/wounded (*majruh*); an accurate (*dabt*) narrator is one who demonstrates utmost alertness and caution in preserving the narration text; a *shadh* hadith is a report that directly contradicts the established transmissions of trustworthy narrators; and an 'illah represents a hidden, subtle flaw that compromises the technical authenticity of the hadith [12:28]. For

comparative context, the contemporary scholar Abdulhaq al-Dehlavi defines a *sahih* hadith in his manual *Muqaddima fi usul al-hadis* as: "that which is established by the transmission of an upright and fully accurate narrator, being neither *muallal* (defective) nor *shadh*" [14:58].

Furthermore, within the *Risola*, al-Jurjani explains the structural mechanics of the *mursal* tradition based on the specific zone of narrator omission within the transmission chain. According to his structural mapping, if the dropout or omission occurs at the very beginning of the *sanad*, it is designated as *mu'allaq*; if the gap takes place in the middle of the transmission chain, it is termed *munqati'*; and if the narrator omission transpires at the absolute end of the chain, it is classified as *mursal* [12:47].

Al-Jurjani's comprehensive style in articulating hadith terminology within the *Risola* remains closely aligned with the classical traditionist (*muhammadithun*) framework. However, on issues concerning the broader structural categories of historical reports—specifically *mutawatir*, *mashhur*, *khbar al-vahid*, and *mursal*—a noticeable affinity toward the Hanafi-Usuli methodology is clearly felt. As indicated by the descriptive title *Al-Mukhtasar*, the work functions not as an exhaustive commentary, but as a concise manual. Rather than entering deep dialectical debates over terminology, the author compiles critical definitions. Some concepts are clarified in a single succinct sentence, while others include brief pointers toward their practical legal rulings or scopes of application. Consequently, while *Al-Mukhtasar* serves as a vital foundational text for introductory students of hadith terminology, its compact structure and selective scope prevent it from fully replacing the vast, specialized reference encyclopedias dedicated to the science of tradition methodology.

Table 3. Conceptual Matrix of Key Modalities Across Three Works

Core Modality	Framework in Al-Ta'rifat	Framework in Nuzhat al-Nazar	Framework in Risola	Methodological Shift
Khbar (Report)	Epistemological category; split into mutawatir, mashhur, ahad.	Broad theory; splits into mutawatir and ahad (mashhur falls under ahad).	Mentions briefly; evaluates report validation rules.	Hanafi-Usuli classification versus traditionist quantitative tracking.
Sahih (Authentic)	Focuses on sanad continuity, adala, and dabt.	Standard traditionist: adds strict criteria of being free from shadh and 'illah.	Explicitly integrates exclusion of shadh and 'illah alongside muttasil.	Transition from general dictionary definition to highly technical filter.
Mursal (Loose)	Broadly defined as a broken chain; accepted as hujjah (proof).	Strict traditionist: defined as Successor dropping Companion; classified as mardud.	Omission mapped by zone: mu'allaq (start), munqati' (mid), mursal (end).	Legal-theoretic framework of authority versus strict transmission verification.

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Munkar (Denied)	Based on absolute singularity (tafarrud) and lack of corroborating path.	Based on conflict; a weak narrator contradicting a stronger, acceptable source.	Brief technical mention to denote unacceptable variance.	Statistical isolation versus confrontational text contradiction.
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Although the number of hadith-related terms in "*Al-Ta'rifat*" is not extensive, their substance holds significant scientific value in determining al-Jurjani's approach to hadith terminology. The limited number of hadith terms presented in the work can perhaps be explained by the author's objective when compiling a terminological dictionary, not to cover all hadith expressions, but to define core concepts that hold an important place in scientific usage, and also by the fact that he articulated the major part of terms related to hadith methodology separately in his work "*Al-Mukhtasar fi Usul al-Hadith*".

Conclusion

The systematic structural analysis of hadith-related terms within *Al-Ta'rifat* demonstrates that Sayyid Sharif al-Jurjani's terminological approach is precise, concise, and definitive in substance. While the author limits himself to brief definitions for certain terms, in some instances, he provides additional

explanations regarding causes, types, or rulings connected to the term. On this basis, 34 hadith-related terms were identified in *Al-Ta'rifat* and classified according to their semantic proximity into eight functional clusters, highlighting a clear 26.5% concentration in attribution categories and 17.6% in transmission chain mechanisms.

The structural model proposed in this article provides a crucial theoretical framework for understanding how medieval Islamic polymaths navigated multi-disciplinary lexicons. By tracking the conceptual evolution between *Al-Ta'rifat* and *Risala fi ilm usul al-hadis*, this study underscores that al-Jurjani's academic identity successfully bridged the scholastic divide between the legal theorists (*usuliyyun*) and the traditionists (*muhaddithun*). It proves that terminological definitions during the post-classical era were dynamically adjusted depending on the functional genre of the text.

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