The Origins of Arabic Grammar and Its Influence by Philosophical Thought :An Analytical Study on the Interrelation Between the Linguistic Method and Rational Logic

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Abstract- This study examines the foundations of Arabic grammar through philosophical influences that permeated linguistic thought since the Abbasid translation movement. It explores the relationship between grammar, as a linguistic science rooted in textual evidence, and philosophy, as a rational discipline seeking the causes and essences of things. The research employs a historical-analytical method, linking early grammatical texts to contemporary philosophical movements. It concludes that Arabic grammar, though deeply rooted in native linguistic tradition, employed philosophical and logical tools in its later theoretical development without losing its authenticity or linguistic foundation.

 Keywords: Arabic grammar, philosophical thought, logic, linguistic methodology.

Introduction:

   Arabic grammar is considered one of the most prominent sciences that arose from the need to preserve the Arabic language from errors and distortions.

   However, it soon acquired a profound philosophical character in some of its schools, particularly in Basra and Baghdad.

   Researchers have found in the foundations of grammar terms and concepts related to logic, such as "definition," "analogy," "cause," and "universal and particular."

   These are terms that grammarians borrowed from the environment of philosophical and logical thought that flourished in the third and fourth centuries AH.

   Therefore, the importance of this research lies in analyzing the nature of the relationship between grammar and philosophy, clarifying the limits of influence and being influenced, and revealing the extent of the originality of Arabic grammatical thought through these influences.

First: The Research Problem and Questions:

   The research problem lies in determining the nature of philosophical influence on Arabic grammatical thought and the extent of grammar's independence from logic and philosophy.

The following questions stem from this:
1. What are the manifestations of philosophical influence in the foundations of Arabic grammar?
2. What factors paved the way for the infiltration of logical thought into grammatical studies?
3. What was the grammarians' stance on this influence? Did they maintain the distinctiveness of their methodology?
4. How can we distinguish between originality and borrowing in the grammatical tradition?

Second: Research Methodology:

   This research employs a comparative historical-analytical approach, examining grammatical texts through philosophical and logical data, analyzing the opinions of grammarians and philosophers, and highlighting the points of overlap between them.

Third: Research Objectives:
1. To highlight the features of philosophical influence on grammatical thought.
2. To determine the extent to which logical thought was utilized without compromising the originality of grammar.
3. To clarify the position of Najat on philosophy in the field of language.
4. Distinguishing Between Originality and Borrowing in the Grammatical Heritage .

First Axis:
The Origins and Sources of Arabic Grammar :
1. The Beginnings of Grammar:
   The origins of Arabic grammar are linked to the Holy Quran, as the primary motivation for establishing grammatical rules was to preserve the Book of God from errors and distortions. Most accounts attribute the first attempt at codifying Arabic grammar

to Abu al-Aswad al-Du'ali (d. 69 AH). Grammarians then continued to refine the branches of grammar until it became a fully developed science at the hands of Sibawayh (d. 180 AH/796 CE) in his book, *Al-Kitab*, which is considered the first almost comprehensive systematic work on Arabic grammar (1).

2. The Early Schools of Grammar Two main schools emerged in Arabic grammar:

The Basra School and the Kufa School. The former was characterized by rational analysis and reliance on analogy, while the latter was distinguished by its reliance on oral transmission and narration. This difference in approach is the seed of the intellectual orientation that opened the door to the philosophical tendency in grammatical thinking. Among these was Al-Sirafi (d. 280 AH), about whom Shawqi Daif said, "He was concerned with grammar and students would turn to him to interpret its complexities and solve its problems and obscure points. (2).

He adhered to Mu'tazilism, which made him closely connected to logic and philosophical discussions, a connection that armed him with the strength of argument and the soundness of proof, which ignited the fire of debate in him, and made him always triumph over his opponents.

His debate in which he silenced Matta ibn Yunus is famous, and its subject was grammar and logic, which is more accurate in knowing the correct speech from the incorrect and the sound from the flawed."(3).

3- Sources of Grammatical Thought The sources of Arabic grammar are numerous and include:
• The Holy Quran with its various readings, which is the primary reference. • The Prophetic Hadith, with its diverse styles.

• The speech of eloquent Arabs, both poetry and prose.

• Rational deduction, which later developed into what is called "the principles of grammar or grammatical analogy."(4).

3. From Observation and Induction to Foundational Methodology:

Grammarians initially adopted a meticulous approach to examining Arabic texts, employing careful observation and analysis.

They then moved towards foundational methodology and systematization, leading to the emergence of methodological terms such as "analogy," "causality," and "definition." These terms, inherently logical in nature, indicate the beginning of the influence of philosophical thought on grammatical thought. Ibn Jinni (d. 392 AH/1002 CE) noted in his work, *Al-Khasa'is*, that grammar is based on "analogy to the speech of the Arabs."(5).

This analogy is a form of logical reasoning within a linguistic framework.

Second Axis: Philosophical Thought and Aristotle's Logic in Arab Culture .

1. The Transmission of Philosophical Thought to the Arab Environment Arab influence from philosophy began after the great translation movement of the Abbasid era, when the caliphs ordered the translation of books on logic, natural philosophy, and ethics by Aristotle, Plato, and others. The House of Wisdom in Baghdad played a key role in transmitting this knowledge into Arabic.(6).

Among the first translators were Hunayn ibn Ishaq (d. 260 AH - 873 AD), Thabit ibn Qurra (d. 288 AH - 901 AD) and Ishaq ibn Hunayn (d. 298 AH - 910 AD), who translated the books of Aristotelian logic into Arabic, so terms such as limit, syllogism, proposition, premises, and proof entered Islamic scientific culture (7).

2. Philosophy and Logic in Islamic Thought Muslim scholars interacted with logic in two ways:

• Accepting and utilizing it as a tool for systematic thinking, as did al-Kindi (d. 252 AH / 866 CE), al-Farabi (d. 339 AH / 950 CE), Ibn Sina (d. 428 AH / 1037 CE), and Ibn Rushd (d. 595 AH / 1198 CE). • • Reservations and denials, as seen in the works of Ibn Taymiyyah (728 AH / 1328 CE), Ibn al-Salah (643 AH / 1245 CE), and al-Suyuti (911 AH / 1505 CE). Philosophers viewed logic as the "instrument of knowledge," as al-Farabi (339 AH / 950 CE) stated: "Logic is the servant of all sciences.(8).

Al-Farabi also pointed to the relationship between grammar, logic, and language, saying: "This discipline—meaning the science of logic—is compatible with the discipline of grammar. The relationship of logic to reason and intelligible concepts is like the relationship of grammar to language and words. Whatever rules grammar provides for words, logic provides us with their counterparts in intelligible concepts.(9). It was therefore natural that its influence would extend to the linguistic and grammatical sciences.

3. Logic and Grammar:

Intersecting Goals and Methods Both disciplines explore the relationships between words and meanings, though they differ in their focus. Logic examines intellectual meaning, while grammar examines linguistic meaning. Ibn Rushd (d. 595 AH/1198 CE) observed that "grammar is linguistic logic, and logic is intellectual grammar.(10).

This structural similarity between the two disciplines led grammarians to employ logical reasoning tools to explain linguistic phenomena.

They began discussing causes, analogy, division, and definition in a precise, philosophical manner.

4. The Influence of Logic on Grammatical Terminology:

Philosophical terms entered the language of grammar, such as:
1. Definition: meaning a comprehensive and exclusive definition. (11)
2. Cause: the reason for a linguistic ruling.
(12).
3. Analogy: relating a branch to its root due to their shared cause.(13).
These terms were prevalent in the writings of logicians, indicating the intermingling of intellectual fields during the Abbasid era.

5. Grammar Between Text and Reason :

Despite the noticeable philosophical influence on grammatical thought, Arabic grammar did not transform into a purely philosophical science. Rather, it remained based on language and spoken texts. Al-Suyuti (d. 911 AH/1505 CE) indicated that

grammar "is derived from the Arabic language, not from Aristotle and Plato.(14).

Grammar drew its material from the speech of the Arabs and only benefited from the mechanisms of logical reasoning in formulation and analysis.

Third Axis: Manifestations of Philosophical Influence in the Foundations of Grammar:

The manifestations of philosophical influence in the foundations of grammar are among the most complex issues in the history of Arabic linguistic thought.

The presence of logical terminology in many grammatical works since the third century AH cannot be ignored. In this axis, we attempt to identify the most prominent of these manifestations through four points:
The cause, the definition, logical analogy, and universals and particulars.

First: The Concept of Grammatical Reason and its Philosophical Origins :

The concept of reason is one of the most prominent issues influenced by philosophy.

Grammarians did not merely state what was right and wrong; rather, they sought the "cause" that makes a construction correct or incorrect, which is similar to the philosophical inquiry into the "causes of existence."

Ibn Jinni (392 AH / 1002 AD) defined the cause as "that for which a thing is as it is" (15), a definition of a philosophical nature close to Aristotle's definition of the cause as "that by which a thing is explained and its existence is understood" (16).

The idea of the cause in grammar developed from the auditory cause to the standard cause, then to the final cause among the later scholars, so that some grammar books became similar to logic treatises in the precision of analysis and deduction (17).

Secondly: The influence of logical boundaries and philosophical divisions on grammatical thought:

One clear manifestation of the influence of philosophy on grammar is the use of logical definitions in defining grammatical terms. For example, grammarians define the subject as "the noun abstracted from verbal factors to which what follows it is attributed" (18), a definition that carries a logical character in its inclusion and exclusion. Grammarians also used the binary division method (either this or that), similar to logicians, such as saying: "A word is a noun, a verb, or a particle," a division similar to Aristotle's division of the ten categories (19).

Third: Analogy and the Rational Method in Grammatical Thought Analogy represents;

One of the most important bridges between grammar and logic. Grammarians defined it as "the application of a ruling to a branch based on a shared underlying reason" (20).

This is similar to the logicians' definition of analogy as "a statement composed of propositions which, if accepted, necessitate another statement" (21).
Grammarians benefited from this logical definition in constructing linguistic analogy, applying it to unused terms based on their usage if they shared the underlying reason.

This is considered an application of philosophical analogy in the field of language. Consequently, the Basra school was more inclined towards this rational method, while the Kufa school was more reserved, preferring to rely on oral tradition rather than logical deduction (22).

Fourth: Universals and Particulars in Grammatical Thought Grammarians :

Also employed philosophical concepts such as universal and particular. They stated, "A noun is universal, and an indefinite noun is particular, depending on the context." They distinguished between the general and the specific, and the absolute and the qualified, in a manner similar to the logic of philosophers (23).

This interaction led to a semantic and methodological development in the analysis of linguistic structure, enabling Arabic grammar to transcend mere description and construct a comprehensive, rational linguistic theory.

Thus, philosophical thought entered Arabic grammar through methodology, not content. Grammarians did not simply transfer philosophical concepts into the language; rather, they employed analytical and logical tools to refine the discipline and define its boundaries, while maintaining grammar as an authentic linguistic science deeply rooted in Arabic texts.

Fourth Axis: Linguists' and Grammarians Stances on Philosophy in Grammar:

The stance of linguists and grammarians on philosophy in grammar was not uniform, but rather varied between acceptance and rejection, and between reconciliation and denial.

These stances can be classified into three main trends:

The supportive trend, the opposing trend, and the conciliatory trend.

First: The Supportive Trend – Grammar as a Rational Approach Proponents of this trend believe that grammar is inherently a rational science, and that the use of philosophical and logical thought tools is permissible in understanding and codifying the language. Among the most prominent representatives of this trend are Sibawayh, al-Zajjaji, and Ibn Jinni, who made analogy and rationality the foundations for establishing rules. Ibn Jinni said in al-Khasa'is: "Analogy is a principle to which the branches of Arabic are traced back.(24).

This statement reflects a rational perspective that stems from logical reasoning, not merely from oral tradition. Al-Zajjaji adopted the idea of "rational rationality" when he said(25).

The rationale in grammar is of two kinds: auditory and analogical. The analogical is deeper in its analysis and closer to the truth.(26).

Ibn Jinni also believed that language "is based on inherent qualities and causes, and that it is inseparable from analogy, thus aligning him with philosophers in his method of reasoning.

Secondly: The Opposing Trend – Rejection of Philosophy and Logic in Grammar :

In contrast, a trend emerged that denied the intrusion of philosophical thought into grammar, considering it an innovation alien to the authentic Arab heritage.

This trend is represented by Ibn Mada' al-Qurtubi and Ibn Taymiyyah. Ibn Mada' stated in his book, "Refutation of the Grammarians," that "the grammarians have corrupted their knowledge with pointless justifications.(27).

He called for the dismantling of the theory of grammatical cause because, in his view, it was foreign to the spirit of Arabic, influenced by Aristotelian logic. As for Ibn Taymiyyah, in his refutation of the logicians, he argued that adopting Aristotelian logic "corrupts the nature of the Arab mind.(28).

He said: "The definitions and syllogisms in logic only yield conjecture, and true knowledge is attained by examining existing things, not by abstract definitions.(29).

This approach sought to preserve the authenticity of Arabic grammar as a purely linguistic science, not a philosophical one.

Third: The Reconciliatory Approach – Combining Recitation and Reason:

Some linguists attempted to reconcile the two approaches, acknowledging the value of the rational method without making it a substitute for recitation. Among these was al-Jurjani in his "Dala'il al-I'jaz" (Proofs of Inimitability), who believed that "the relationship between word and meaning is rational on one hand, and intuitive on the other." Similarly, al-Suyuti, in his book "al-Iqtirah fi Usul al-Nahw(30). (Suggestion on the Principles of Grammar), stated: "Grammar is a science based on recitation, but rational inquiry helps in deducing its causes and purposes. .(31). Thus, in later centuries, a balanced trend emerged that viewed philosophy as a means of understanding, not an end in itself.

Fifth Axis: The Interplay Between Philosophy and Language in the Arab Heritage:

1. The Influence of Muslim Philosophers on Linguistic Thought Muslim philosophers had a prominent influence on shaping the linguistic and intellectual sensibility within grammatical thought. Al-Kindi (d. 252 AH) was the first to link language and thought in his treatise on the definitions and descriptions of things, indicating that (32),the linguistic definition is the image of the logical definition in speech."

Al-Farabi considered grammar "the logic of the nation," stating, "The relationship between logic and grammar is like the relationship between theoretical and practical faculties.(33).

Ibn Sina argued that language "translates the concepts of the mind just as logic translates judgments,(34). an expression highlighting the parallel between the mental and linguistic structures.

2. Between Linguistic and Intellectual Logic Grammarians and philosophers sought to define the nature of the relationship between grammar and logic: was it one of identity or similarity?

Ibn Rushd observed that logic and grammar share a common goal, even though they differ in their subject matter, because "logic investigates universal meanings, while grammar deals with particular words.(35),

Through this understanding, it can be said that Arabic grammar, thanks to this interaction, acquired a methodological rigor that made it more abstract and systematic. 3. The Rational Approach in Later Grammatical Studies With the flourishing of the Baghdad school, interest in linking language and thought increased, leading to the emergence of books exploring the "foundations of grammar" in a manner similar to books on "the foundations of jurisprudence," such as Ibn Jinni's *Al-Khasa'is*, Ibn al-Abbari's *Al-Ighrab fi Jadal al-I'rab*, *Lama' al-Adillah*, and al-Suyuti's *Al-Iqtirah*. These scholars followed the approach of theologians and philosophers in analyzing concepts and defining boundaries and categories, thus giving grammar a clear philosophical dimension.

Thus, what can be called the "Arabic grammatical mind" was formed—an analytical and reflective mind based on differentiation, reasoning, and analogy.

4. The Limits of Interplay Between Philosophy and Language:
Despite the numerous influences, Arabic grammar retained its linguistic and Quranic foundations.

Philosophical thought did not negate the auditory nature of grammar; rather, it contributed to the development of its analytical methodology and internal organization.

This is what Abd al-Rahman Badawi refers to when he says: "Arabic grammar had the merit of pioneering the direction of Arab philosophical thought, just as philosophy had the merit of logically organizing grammar.(36).

Conclusion and Key Findings:

After analyzing grammatical and philosophical texts through research into the origins of Arabic grammar and an attempt to uncover its influence by philosophical thought using a methodology that analyzes the intersection of linguistic methodology and rational logic, the following key findings can be drawn:

1. The originality of Arabic grammar is based on oral texts, but it benefited from philosophical thought during the stages of organization and codification.

2. The rational approach in grammar is not entirely foreign; rather, it is a natural extension of the nature of linguistic thinking among the Arabs, who have been familiar with analogy and reasoning since ancient times.

3. The grammatical rationale is the most prominent manifestation of philosophical influence, as its concept shifted from linguistic explanation to the investigation of final causes, as seen among philosophers.

4. Aristotelian logic contributed to the precision of grammatical terminology and the definition of boundaries and concepts.

5. Grammatical schools differed in their stance towards philosophy: the Basrans leaned towards reason, while the Kufans leaned towards oral tradition.

6. Muslim philosophers such as al-Kindi, al-Farabi, and Ibn Sina presented a profound understanding of the relationship between thought and language, paving the way for the convergence of the two disciplines.

7. Arabic grammar remained an authentic linguistic science, even though it employed logic to strengthen arguments and organize thought.

Therefore, the research concluded that Arabic grammar arose in a purely linguistic environment, but it did not isolate itself from the general intellectual movement that encompassed philosophy and logic in Islamic civilization.

As grammar evolved from description to foundational analysis, it required new methodological tools, finding them in logic, which provided it with the means of definition, analogy, and inference.

However, this influence was methodological, not fundamental; grammar maintained its linguistic and textual character and did not transform into a philosophy of language.

Thus, Arabic grammar remains a testament to the integration of two schools of thought: the authentic Arabic grammarian and the acquired philosophical and intellectual framework within the construction of Islamic Arabic knowledge.

Footnotes:

(1) Ibn al-Anbari in Nuzhat al-Alba' 7
(2) Sibawayh, Al-Kitab, vol. 1, p. 13
(3) Shawqi Dayf, Al-Madaris al-Nahwiyya, p. 145.
(4) Al-Suyuti, Al-Iqtirah, p. 7 .
(5) Ibn Jinni, Al-Khasa'is, vol. 1, p. 12.
(6) Al-Farabi, Ihsa' al-'Ulum, p. 60 .
(7) Ibn al-Nadim, Al-Fihrist, p. 250.
(8) Al-Farabi, Al-Burhan, p. 17.
(9) Al-Farabi, Ihsa' al-'Ulum, p. 53.
(10) Ibn Rushd, Talkhis al-Burhan, p. 22 .
(11) Al-Jurjani, Al-Ta'rifat, p. 23 .
(12) Al-Suyuti, Al-Iqtirah, p. 35.
(13) Ibn Jinni, Al-Khasa'is, vol. 1, p. 42.
(14) Al-Suyuti, Al-Iqtirah, p. 10.
(15) Jinni, Al-Khasa'is, vol. 2, p. 45 .
(16) Aristotle, Metaphysics, vol. 1, p. 12 .
(17) Al-Zujaji, Al-Idah fi Ilal al-Nahw, p. 28 .
(18) Sibawayh, Al-Kitab, vol. 1, p. 23 .
(19) Al-Farabi, Ihsa' al-'Ulum, p. 20 .
(20) Al-Suyuti, Al-Iqtirah, p. 45 .
(21) Ibn Sina, Al-Shifa', vol. 2, p. 36 .
(22) Shawqi Dayf, Al-Madaris al-Nahwiyyah, p. 53 .
(23) Abd al-Rahman Badawi, Al-Mantiq 'ind al-'Arab, p. 112.
(24) Ibn Jinni, Al-Khasa'is, vol. 1, p. 45 .
(25) Al-Zujaji, Al-Idah, p. 33 .
(26) Ibn Jinni, Al-Khasa'is, vol. 2, p. 70 .
(27) Ibn Mada', Al-Radd 'ala al-Nuhat, p. 15 .
(28) Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-Radd 'ala al-Mantiqiyyin, p. 12 .
(29) Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-Radd 'ala al-Mantiqiyyin, p. 18 .
(30) Al-Jurjani, Dala'il al-I'jaz, p. 19 .
(31) Al-Suyuti, Al-Iqtirah, p. 7 .
(32) Al-Kindi Al-Kindi's Philosophical Letters, p. 85 .
(33) Al-Farabi, Enumeration of the Sciences, p. 25 .
(34) Ibn Sina, The Book of Healing, vol. 1, p. 14 .
(35) Ibn Rushd, Summary of the Proof, p. 27 .
(36) Badawi, Logic Among the Arabs, p. 118.

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