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THE ROLE OF THE WORK “SHARH MULLA” IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARABIC LANGUAGE IN MAWARANNAHR

Abstract. *This article examines the place of Abd al-Rahman Jami’s al-Fawa’id az-Ziyaiyya – the commentary on Ibn al-Hajib’s al-Kafiya widely known in the madrasas of Central Asia as “Sharh Mulla” (or simply “Mulla Jami”) – in the development of the Arabic grammatical tradition in Mawarannahr. It outlines the work’s structure and pedagogical method, compares Jami’s approach with those of Sibawayh and Ibn Malik, and considers his position on adducing Qur’anic verses and hadith as grammatical evidence (istishhad). The article surveys the rich tradition of marginal glosses (hawashi) written on the work and sets out the principal findings concerning its significance for the systematization, teaching, and ongoing study of Arabic grammar, including its relevance to modern and computational linguistics.*

Keywords: *Arabic grammar, nahw, Abd al-Rahman Jami, al-Fawa’id az-Ziyaiyya, Sharh Mulla, al-Kafiya, Ibn al-Hajib, istishhad, hawashi, Mawarannahr, madrasa education.*

INTRODUCTION

The need to correctly understand the meanings of the Arabic language has long since transcended purely linguistic boundaries and acquired global importance. In our time, the study of Arabic by representatives of various nations is steadily increasing. “From this standpoint, deeply studying, profoundly comprehending, and widely popularizing the works of the thinkers of the Islamic world – our great ancestors – and their invaluable contribution to the development of world civilization is of particular importance. This matter is essential for strengthening among the youth the aspiration

toward science and learning, for the correct understanding and acceptance of Islamic values and culture in all societies, and for conveying the true essence of the religion of Islam to all the peoples of the world” (Mirziyoyev, 2022).

Arabic linguistics, moreover, was shaped over the centuries through rich scholarly schools and renowned scholars. In particular, the schools of Basra and Kufa and scholars such as Sibawayh, Ibn Malik, and al-Jurjani played an important role in establishing the syntactic and morphological structure of Arabic. One of the scholars who continued this scholarly tradition was Abd al-Rahman Jami, who made a major contribution to Arabic grammar through his work *al-Fawa'id az-Ziyaiyya*.

Among the fields and branches of knowledge devoted to disclosing the essence of the religion of Islam and the meanings of its written sources, particular importance is attached to Arabic grammar in the interpretation of the meanings of the Holy Qur'an. Here the need increasingly grows to consult the principal sources of Arabic grammar dealing with morphology (*sarf*), syntax (*nahw*), sentence structure, word formation, particles, inflection (*i'rab*), and governing elements – such as Sibawayh's *al-Kitab*, al-Zamakhshari's *al-Mufasssal*, Ibn Malik's *al-Alfiyya*, Ibn Hisham's *Qawa'id al-i'rab*, Ayman Abd al-Ghani's *an-Nahw al-kafi*, and Abbas Hasan's *an-Nahw al-wafi*. In particular, studying Abd al-Rahman Jami's *al-Fawa'id az-Ziyaiyya* – one of the most famous commentaries on Ibn al-Hajib's *al-Kafiya*, which has long been taught as a textbook in the religious educational institutions of the entire Muslim world and is still taught today – gives a fresh orientation to research in this direction.

MAIN PART

The work “Sharh Mulla” and its place in madrasa education

The work “Mulla Jami” is one of the important scholarly works on Arabic grammar. It is, in fact, a commentary written on *al-Kafiya*, composed by the great grammarian Ibn al-Hajib. The full title of the work is *al-Fawa'id az-Ziyaiyya*, and in the madrasas it became widely known under the name “Sharh Mulla Jami” or simply “Mulla Jami.”

The work was written in the fifteenth century and is devoted to expounding the syntactic (*nahw*) rules of Arabic. Because *al-Kafiya* was written in a very concise and complex style, it was difficult for students to understand. For this reason Abd al-Rahman Jami wrote notes and a commentary on the book, explaining its grammatical rules in detail. In the work, the structure of the Arabic sentence, the grammatical inflection of

words, the rules of i'rab, the types of verbs and nouns, and other important syntactic questions are set out on a scholarly basis. In the course of explaining the rules, the author cites and glosses famous examples from Arabic.

The work "Mulla Jami" occupied a very important place in the system of learning Arabic in the madrasas. In the madrasas of Central Asia, Iran, Turkey, and India, students learning Arabic first read simple grammatical books, then *al-Kafiya*, and after that the "Mulla Jami." For this reason the book was, for many centuries, considered one of the principal textbooks of Arabic grammar. Numerous manuscript copies of the work are preserved in the libraries of various countries, and later scholars added supplementary notes to some copies.

The work "Mulla Jami" is of great importance in the development of the science of Arabic and is regarded as one of the most famous commentaries that systematically explain the rules of syntax. For this reason the work was taught for centuries in many scholarly centers of the Muslim world and was recognized as one of the important sources for a thorough mastery of Arabic.

Abd al-Rahman Jami and his method

Abd al-Rahman Jami is known as a thinker-poet, linguist, and scholar who held a special place in Eastern literature and linguistics. His *al-Fawa'id az-Ziyaiyya* is one of the important sources on Arabic grammar and has made an incomparable contribution to the development of Eastern philology and linguistics over the years. The present study is devoted to the grammatical analysis of the verses (bayts) cited in this work; its examination from a linguistic standpoint has both theoretical and practical significance. The need to study Arabic grammar in depth and to analyze it scientifically in the educational process further enhances the relevance of this topic.

In his commentary, Jami substantiates the rules not only through grammatical structure but also through examples and poetic witnesses (shawahid). In Sibawayh's *al-Kitab*, the rules rely largely on accepted normative formulas, whereas Ibn Malik, in the *Alfiyya*, emphasizes setting out his theories in verse form. Jami combined these two approaches, harmonizing the practical and the theoretical.

Jami's approach serves as an important transitional stage, especially in the move toward modern linguistics. In *al-Fawa'id az-Ziyaiyya* he also introduced methodological elements that bring grammatical units closer to modern analysis, and in this respect he serves as a bridge between classical and modern linguistics.

Al-Fawa'id az-Ziyaiyya is a commentary written on Ibn al-Hajib's *al-Kafiya*, and it analyzes grammatical rules contextually. In this regard he largely approaches the glosses of al-Zamakhshari and al-Suyuti, but he formed a distinct methodology in stylistic tone and logical coherence. Jami's commentaries illuminate not merely grammatical explanation but also the logical foundations of linguistic structure and its layers of meaning.

Didactically, Jami chose an analytical method convenient for learners. His commentaries not only explain the text but also, through it, develop the learner's capacity for independent thought. In this respect he differs from Sibawayh's purely normative exposition and from Ibn Malik's concise versified coding.

The ideas expounded in Jami's work are pedagogically well structured: each grammatical rule is illuminated with a characteristic consistency, in many cases by means of alternative examples. This feature makes it possible to value the work as a universal manual not only for theory but also for the practical teaching of languages.

The linguistic structure in *al-Fawa'id az-Ziyaiyya* also harmonizes with modern grammatical theories. In particular, its methods of analysis have points of convergence with present-day syntactic analysis, construction grammar, and semantic rules. The work provides examples showing how morphological units (noun, verb, particle) take on different semantic loads in various positions.

This is of great importance, especially for students and researchers who wish to study the logical system of Arabic in depth. Not merely the statement of a rule, but also such aspects as its realization in speech and the connections among linguistic elements, are analyzed in depth.

The author's use of the Qur'an and hadith as grammatical evidence (istishhad)

Undoubtedly, the Holy Qur'an stands at the very summit in terms of Arabic modes of expression and at the highest degree of eloquence (*balagha*) and purity of style (*fasaha*). It is the miraculous word of Allah Most High, revealed to our Prophet (peace be upon him) through the trustworthy angel Gabriel. This sacred word was revealed in a setting into which no flaw could mix and into which no falsehood could enter, either from before it or from behind it. The Qur'an is regarded as the most reliable text in the history of humanity.

The author's position on adducing Qur'anic verses as evidence (*istishhad*) is like that of the Arabic linguists and scholars of syntax who preceded him: he gave the utmost

attention to the Qur'an. In his estimation, Qur'anic verses stand in second place after poetic witnesses (shawahid). The author cited Qur'anic verses as examples and proofs in matters of morphology, syntax, recitation (qira'a), and other questions.

The grammarians held differing views on the question of adducing hadith as evidence, and there are three positions on whether hadith may serve as proof in establishing syntactic rules:

The position of absolute rejection. This position belongs to Abu al-Hasan Ibn al-Da'i (d. 680 AH), who criticized Abu al-Hasan Ibn Khuruf (d. 609 AH) for excessive use of hadith as evidence and said:

"Ibn Khuruf adduces the noble hadith very frequently as evidence. If this is done merely in hope of supplication or blessing, that is good. But if he does so in order to supply what earlier scholars left unaddressed, then this is not correct."

His student Abu Hayyan al-Andalusi (d. 745 AH) also supported this view and criticized Ibn Malik as follows:

"This author (Ibn Malik) adduces expressions from hadith very frequently as evidence in establishing the rules of Arabic. As for me, I have not seen any other person among the scholars before or after him who took this path."

Imam al-Suyuti (d. 911 AH) likewise supports this view in his work *al-Iqtirah*.

The position of absolute permission. This position belongs to Ibn Malik (d. 672 AH) and al-Radi (d. 686 AH), and after them scholars such as al-Dammamini (d. 827 AH) and Ibn al-Tayyib al-Fasi (d. 1170 AH) continued to hold it.

The intermediate, that is, restricted-permission position. This is the position of Abu Ishaq al-Shatibi (d. 790 AH). He holds that if the text of a hadith was conveyed precisely in wording and with care, it is permissible to adduce it as evidence – for example, hadiths aimed at demonstrating eloquence, or wise sayings resembling the proverbs of the Prophet (peace be upon him). But if the transmitters of the hadith emphasized only the meaning, he says it is not permissible to adduce such a hadith as evidence. In this view al-Shatibi supports the opinion of Abu Hayyan.

The marginal glosses (hawashi) written on the work

More than sixty (60) marginal glosses (hawashi) were written on this work, and it is fitting to mention some of them:

1. "Al-Qawl as-Sami 'ala kalam Mulla Abd al-Rahman al-Jami" by Abdullah al-Azhari (d. 905 AH); Haji Khalifa mentioned it in his work.

2. The gloss of Abd al-Ghafur ibn Salah al-Lari (d. 912 AH); this is considered one of the most famous glosses.
3. The gloss of Isam al-Din Ibrahim ibn Muhammad al-Isfara'ini, famous under the name "al-Isam" (d. 944 AH).
4. The gloss of Shams al-Din al-Kuhistani (d. after 952 AH).
5. The gloss of Isa ibn Muhammad al-Safawi al-Iji (d. 955 AH); al-Babani mentioned it.
6. The gloss of Ghars al-Din Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-Halabi (d. 971 AH); written up to the end of the section on "al-Marfu'at," mentioned by Rida Kahhala.
7. The gloss of Jamal al-Din Nasr al-Din al-Dihlawi (d. 983 AH).
8. The gloss of Fadil Amir, famous as "the Lesser Amir" (d. 987 AH).
9. The gloss of Wajih al-Din al-Alawi al-Gujarati (d. 998 AH).
10. The gloss of Muhammad Sadiq (d. after 999 AH).
11. "Al-Hashiya as-Sultaniyya" by Sayyid Muhammad al-Bukhari, famous as "Baba Pasha."
12. The gloss of Ni'matullah ibn Abdullah al-Musawi al-Jaza'iri, famous as "al-Shushtari" (d. 1112 AH).
13. The gloss of Khalid ibn Muhammad al-Arzi al-Halabi (d. ca. 1115 AH); mentioned by Rida Kahhala, who noted that the work was left unfinished.
14. "Talmiz ash-shahd li-ahl al-'ahd wa-l-'aqd fi sharh abyat al-Jami" (a commentary on the verses in Jami's work) by Muhammad ibn Ibrahim, famous as Ibn al-Hanbali al-Halabi (d. 971 AH); al-Babani mentioned it.
15. "As-Sami 'ala abyat al-Jami" by Ibrahim ibn Mustafa, famous as Bohdi al-Rumi (d. 1126 AH); al-Babani also mentioned it.
16. "Sharh shawahid al-Kafiya wa-l-Jami" by Hafiz Mustafa al-Mikhaliji (d. 1300 AH).
17. "Sharh shawahid al-Jami" by Abd al-Baqi ibn Abd al-Rahim al-'Ishqi, famous as Ibn al-Samman (d. 1090 AH); al-Babani mentioned it.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The findings of the research are based on multifaceted and in-depth analyses and may be divided into several conceptual blocks. In each block below, the influence of *al-Fawa'id az-Ziyaiyya* on Arabic linguistics is illuminated from every side:

1. Its place in grammatical systematization

Al-Fawa'id az-Ziyaiyya is a thoroughly systematized commentary on the morphological and syntactic structure of Arabic, in which grammatical units are set out in a clear order. In the work each grammatical category (noun, verb, particle) is illuminated separately, and the relationships among them are explained.

2. The firm grounding of syntactic rules

In the work, many grammatical rules are presented relying on poetic witnesses and reliable transmissions. This strengthens grammatical constructions not only theoretically but also practically. The syntactic foundations are in many cases in agreement with the theories of Sibawayh and Ibn Malik.

3. The disclosure of stylistic possibilities

Jami did not confine himself to analyzing grammatical units but also disclosed their stylistic and aesthetic possibilities. This feature brings Arabic literary studies closer to linguistics and creates a foundation for modern stylistic analysis.

4. Its place as an educational methodology

The work serves as a core source in teaching Arabic in secondary and higher religious educational institutions. Its rule-orientedness, logical consistency, and didactic approaches are adapted to madrasa learning processes. To this day, al-Fawa'id az-Ziyaiyya retains its practical value.

5. Disclosing the semantic depth of Arabic

In the work the lexical and technical meanings of terms are clearly distinguished, and the role of each grammatical unit in its semantic context is explained. This plays an important role in penetrating the logical foundations of Arabic.

6. As a model for computational linguistics and artificial intelligence

In the field of modern informatics and language technologies, classical syntactic works – in particular al-Fawa'id az-Ziyaiyya – are regarded as one of the principal sources in developing formal models of Arabic. Its analytical method offers convenient material for adapting Arabic to artificial-intelligence processing systems.

7. Its standing as a cultural and scholarly heritage

Al-Fawa'id az-Ziyaiyya is an important scholarly-cultural document that illuminates the linguistic, aesthetic, and stylistic views of its age. Through it, a rich conception can be formed of the scholarly thought, the composition of curricula, and the grammatical culture of the fifteenth-century Muslim world.

8. Its application in comparative linguistics

The grammatical models presented in the work afford the possibility of comparison with structures in other Muslim languages. Especially when studied from the standpoint of comparative linguistics with Uzbek, Persian, and Turkish, commonalities and differences come clearly into view.

9. Scholarly continuity and the persistence of heritage

Al-Fawa'id az-Ziyaiyya is regarded in the history of Arabic linguistics as the product of an organic scholarly process. Together with Sibawayh's *al-Kitab*, Ibn Malik's *Alfiyya*, and other famous grammatical works, it expresses the continuity of scholarly heritage in linguistics.

10. Openness to research

The work is rich in aspects not yet fully studied and offers the possibility of re-examination on the basis of modern linguistic approaches (cognitive linguistics, pragmalinguistics, discourse analysis). It also opens the way to new research in such special fields as the language of gender, the language of register (*maqam*), and the syntax of religious texts.

These findings prove the relevance of *al-Fawa'id az-Ziyaiyya* in present-day Arabic linguistics not only historically but also methodologically, didactically, theoretically, and technologically.

CONCLUSION

Al-Fawa'id az-Ziyaiyya continues to preserve its relevance as an important source in the history of Arabic linguistics. The work serves as a principal source for modern approaches in the study of Arabic grammar. Its grammatical and stylistic analyses retain their scholarly value to this day.

The work's effectiveness in teaching method, in explaining the grammatical system, and in the study of Arabic makes it possible to apply it in modern educational processes. It is also esteemed as a vivid example of the continual scholarly continuity and tradition within Arabic linguistics.

In the future, it is advisable to carry out research aimed at the comparative analysis of *al-Fawa'id az-Ziyaiyya*, its comparison with other grammatical commentaries, and its application to modern linguistic models.

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