

The role of grammatical evidence in facilitating the teaching of Arabic grammar

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Abstract:

The Grammatical evidence has a role in understanding grammatical rules and acquiring the linguistic skills of learners. Grammarians - ancient and modern - have paid attention to it in order to facilitate the knowledge of grammar, after it has reached the stage of complexity. Many books have been written about this, and they are mostly shortened and reduced to grammatical evidence that is difficult for learners in the stages. The first is to understand it.

The aim of this research is to shed light on the role of grammatical evidence in facilitating grammar education, and the extent of its impact on achieving understanding among learners. As for the results reached, they include: Grammatical evidence is considered a scientific and educational gain in Arabic grammar lessons. There are three types of grammatical evidence: the Holy Qur'an, the Prophet's Hadith, and eloquent Arabic poetry.

Keywords:

The Grammatical evidence; facilitating the science of grammar; education; educational grammar; the efforts of ancient and modern grammarians.

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1.Introduction:

The Grammatical examples are considered a scientific and educational asset in Arabic grammar lessons, as they are fundamental to acquiring linguistic competence and grammatical rules among learners. Those interested in educational curricula should invest in grammatical examples and employ them while considering the learners' age stage, by presenting easy and accessible examples and postponing difficult ones to a period of educational and cognitive maturity; so that the difficulty of the examples does not distract them from understanding the grammatical rule and its applications.

The difficulty of grammatical rules has driven many learners away from the study of grammar, which has led many grammarians to seek the easiest ways to simplify grammar and make it appealing to those who wish to learn it. Grammatical evidence has become one of the fundamental aspects of education that has contributed to clarifying understanding in the minds of recipients. Here, we can pose the following question: Do grammatical evidences play a role in facilitating the teaching of Arabic grammar? Under this question, several sub-questions arise: What is grammatical evidence? What are its types? Did ancient grammarians pay attention to grammatical evidence? What are the characteristics of educational grammar? And how have grammatical evidences contributed to facilitating the teaching of Arabic grammar?

The aim of this research is to shed light on the role of grammatical evidence in facilitating the teaching of grammar and its impact on achieving understanding among learners. As for the research methodology, I have chosen the descriptive-analytical approach because I aimed to describe the terms and concepts employed in the research.

2. Definition of the grammatical evidence, its types, and its educational aspect :

1.2 . Definition of the grammatical evidence :

The grammatical evidence is an Arabic saying by a speaker trusted for their eloquence, cited for argumentation and proof of a statement or opinion. A grammatical "shahid" can be a verse from the Quran, a line of poetry, or a well-known saying. The term "shahid" is most often applied to poetic verses, to the extent that some scholars have compiled, explained, and annotated them in special works or appendices. There are "Shawahid" of Sibawayh, "Shawahid" of Al-Mughni, and Al-Ayni's explanation of Al-Ashmuni's "Shawahid".¹

The evidence is what is presented from eloquent Arabic speech; to attest to the correctness of attributing a word, form, phrase, or meaning to Arabic. The need for evidence in the Arabic

language is urgent, so that nothing is attributed to the language that does not belong to it. The Arabic speech that is relied upon is the Holy Quran, the Noble Hadith, and what has been transmitted from the speech of the Arabs, both poetry and prose, from the pre-Islamic era until the era of reliance.²

2.2. The Types of grammatical evidence :

A – The Holy Quran:

The Holy Quran is the most eloquent Arabic speech throughout all ages, and it is the primary reference in grammatical examples. Grammarians have differed in citing its verses and readings. The Kufans cite the verses of the Quran and prioritize them over the speech of the Arabs, both in poetry and prose, whether pre-Islamic or Islamic. As for the Basrans, they cite the Holy Quran with caution, especially the readings that contradict their established rules.

B – The Noble Hadith:

Linguists and grammarians have disagreed about the evidence from the prophetic hadith, with supporters, opponents, and those who are cautious. As for the supporters, they permit citing the prophetic hadith, whether it was narrated verbatim or in meaning. As for the opponents, they argue that some prophetic hadiths were narrated in meaning, and most of the narrators of the hadith are non-Arabs. As for the cautious ones, they permit citing the prophetic hadiths that were narrated verbatim only, not in meaning.

C – The poetic evidence:

Poetry is the anthology of the Arabs, and it contains the largest number of poetic examples from its predecessors, as well as the poems they cite. It includes the pre-Islamic and Islamic periods, with the former being accepted and preferred by all grammarians and linguists. As for the Islamic period, they differed in its temporal and spatial limits, which is due to the division of poets into classes: pre-Islamic, transitional, Islamic, and modern. And the reliance was limited to the first three classes, so that its era ends with the death of the last poet of the third class³. However, on the other hand, there are linguists who cite the class of the "Mawwalid" poets (the period of the Abbasid era), such as the linguist Abu Bishr al-Bandaniqi, who referenced the early Abbasids in his book "Al-Taqqiyah fi al-Lughah," such

as Ishaq al-Mawsili ⁴ , and Ibn Qutaybah, who cited the poetry of the Abbasids, such as Bashar ibn Burd (the "Mukhadrim") ⁵ , and Al-Jahiz, who cited the poetry of Abu Tammam and Ishaq al-Mawsili . ⁶

3.2. Definition of education :

There are several definitions of education; we will suffice with mentioning two:

- Didactics (or pedagogy) is a type of thinking or knowledge that focuses on the art or rules of teaching a school subject, with the aim of achieving effective learning through good control of methods and curricula, while considering the nature of the learners' personalities. ⁷
- Didactics (or pedagogy) is the scientific study of organizing learning situations experienced by the learner, to achieve a cognitive, emotional, sensory, or motor goal. This scientific study requires precise conditions, primarily: adherence to the scientific method in posing the problem, formulating hypotheses, and scrutinizing them to verify their validity through testing and experimentation. ⁸

3. The role of grammatical evidence in facilitating the teaching of Arabic grammar :

1.3 The efforts of grammarians in simplifying the science of grammar :

The ancient grammarians were concerned with simplifying the science of grammar after it had reached a stage of complexity, and the corruption in the language's expressions had increased, along with the complaints about the constraints of grammatical rules. This prompted a group of ancient grammarians to simplify and ease the study of grammar, leading them to compile summaries to grasp its characteristics and secrets. Among these grammarians, we find: Abu Umar Saleh bin Ishaq al-Jurmi (d : 225 AH) in his book "Mukhtasar Nahw al-Muta'allimeen," Al-Jahiz (d : 255 AH) who directed his comments to the scholars of Arabic not to burden children with the study of grammar except what leads to avoiding gross errors in pronunciation, and Abu al-Abbas al-Mubarrad (d : 285 AH) in his book "Al-Madkhal fi al-Nahw" and Muhammad ibn Kaysan (d : 299 AH) in his book "Mukhtasar fi al-Nahw." And Abu Ja'far al-Nahhas (d : 338 AH) in his book "Al-Tuffaha fi al-Nahw." And Abu Bakr al-Zubaidi (d : 379 AH) in his book "Al-Wadih fi Ilm al-Arabiyya." And Ibn Manda al-Qurtubi al-Andalusi (d : 592 AH) in his book "Al-Radd 'ala al-Nuhat," in which he directed many criticisms on some issues of grammar, such as the theory of the agent and grammatical analogies, and he called for their modification and treatment in the educational grammar section, so that it could be presented to the youth in an easy and accessible manner. ⁹

As for the twentieth century, we find Shawqi Deif (d : 2005) among the first Arab scholars who called for rethinking and reconsidering Arabic grammar issues and teaching methods by simplifying the presentation of grammatical rules to learners.¹⁰

2.3 Characteristics of educational grammar :

The educational or pedagogical grammar (grammaire pédagogique): It targets a specific group (beginner or intermediate), with the aim of using the language correctly in various contexts, in terms of writing and pronunciation. This perspective in dealing with grammar issues is characterized by a normative approach.¹¹

In contrast to educational grammar, we find scientific grammar, which is a descriptive grammar that involves deducing and interpreting grammatical rules. As for educational grammar, it is a prescriptive grammar that presents the rules and mandates their adherence in writing and speech.¹²

As for the characteristics of educational grammar, we find:

- The diversity of educational grammar topics, some of which dealt with grammatical, morphological, and linguistic sections, such as the book "Teaching the Learner" by Ibn Qutaybah (d : 276 AH), the book "Al-Mufaqqiq" by Ibn Kaysan (d : 299 AH), and the book "The Foundations of Grammar" by Ibn al-Sarakhsi (d : 316 AH).¹³

- The diversity of levels in educational grammatical works, where the first level is for beginners, and grammatical rules are presented with minimal detail, avoiding differing opinions and excessive citations. The second level is aimed at those who have some knowledge of grammar and its issues. The third level is directed at advanced students of grammar, presenting grammarians' opinions on all grammatical issues with citations and explanations supported by grammatical evidence.

- The curricula of educational books vary, some of which follow the question-and-answer method, which is suitable for the early stages of grammatical education. In this method, we find the book "Al-Ibanah wa Al-Tafheem" by Al-Zajjaji (d : 340 AH), in which he included 80 questions.¹⁴

- The alphabetical arrangement of grammatical material: which some Arabic scholars followed, either throughout the entire book or in just one grammatical section. Among the grammarians who authored books using the alphabetical arrangement method, we find: Ibn Jinni (d : 392 AH) in his book "Al-Mudhakkar wa Al-Mu'annath," Al-Zajjaj (d : 311 AH) in

his book "Fa'alta wa Afa'alta," and Ibn Waddah (d : 332 AH) in his book "Al-Maqsur wa Al-Mamduud".¹⁵

- Presenting and modifying texts: This involves one grammarian presenting texts from another grammarian who preceded him, while modifying the original text as he sees fit for the educational process. An example of this is Ibn Qutaybah (d : 276 AH) in his book "Ta'lim al-Muta'allim," where he modified some texts taken from Sibawayh's book. Similarly, Al-Zajjaj (d : 311 AH) modified Al-Mubarrad's (d : 285 AH).¹⁶

- Abbreviating the rules: It is unreasonable for a learner to study all the chapters of grammar; rather, some grammatical rules remain known only to specialists. Ibn Kisan (d : 298 AH) followed this approach in his book "Al-Mawafiq," where, when discussing proper nouns, he mentioned five: "proper names, those preceded by 'al' (the definite article), pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, and those added to any of these four," and he did not mention "relative pronouns." As for Ibn Qutaybah, he classified proper nouns into four: "proper names, those with 'al,' pronouns, and nouns in the genitive case".¹⁷

- Avoiding disputes over attributing the poetic verse to its speaker: Educational books did not concern themselves with the disputes over the speaker of the poetic verse, nor did they care about attributing the verse, even if its speaker was known. Among the books that avoided attributing disputed verses, we find "Taleem al-Muta'allim" by Ibn Qutaybah and "Al-Ibanah wa al-Tafheem" by Al-Zajjaj.¹⁸

3.3 Grammatical evidence and its impact on facilitating the teaching of Arabic grammar :

The grammatical evidence holds a significant place in solidifying grammatical rules in the minds of learners. However, some grammarians have insisted on burdening grammar with evidence linked to grammatical rules, which has come to dominate grammatical codification. Every grammarian needs evidence to support their rule, endorse their viewpoint, and back their stance on a particular issue, especially if there is a difference of opinion or if it falls outside the norm. It seems that scholars were expected to provide evidence—literarily—for every rule they established or every opinion they expressed, especially if it was unfamiliar or not widely known.¹⁹

The old educational methods focused on the grammatical rule itself, forcing the learner to memorize and present it strictly. This negatively affected academic achievement, resulting in a significant aversion to learning Arabic grammar. The demand for learners to apply

grammatical rules and demonstrate their inflection movements became a tedious and painful process, comparable to the impact of whips on bare backs.²⁰

As for modern educational methods in teaching grammar, they emphasize the utmost care in selecting appropriate examples and authentic models, which allow learners to emulate good texts that provide a model to be followed and imitated.²¹

The benefit of grammatical examples (the Holy Quran, the Noble Hadith, and Arabic poetry) is that they provide learners with literary knowledge that complements grammatical knowledge and encourages them to develop an artistic taste in deriving the meanings these examples carry. This can only be achieved through practicing high-quality texts and memorizing them extensively, as well as applying them. The more one memorizes and the broader one's exposure, the more capable learners become of appreciating and distinguishing between styles²². The Arabic scholars still focus on teaching grammar to acquire linguistic competence that enables learners to use the Arabic language correctly, because teaching grammar is not an end in itself, but rather a means to equip learners with linguistic skills that make them capable of communication and developing their linguistic repertoire.²³

The expansion in citing the Holy Quran, the Prophetic Hadith, and Arabic poetry increases learners' ability to acquire linguistic competence and grammatical knowledge, making them embrace and emulate it; thus becoming an active element in acquiring and understanding knowledge within the social framework.²⁴

4 Conclusion:

The grammatical evidence holds great importance in the educational process, as it provides us with the fundamentals upon which we build our grammatical and morphological rules, and through which we develop our language using the various principles that characterize the Arabic language.

Despite the great importance of the grammatical evidence, it has been a subject of disagreement among different grammatical schools in terms of source, narration, and usage, which led to a variety of methods of inference. This has affected the educational process and resulted in difficulties in reception and transmission, leading to a decline in the level of achievement.

As for the results obtained, they are:

- The grammatical examples are considered a scientific and educational asset in Arabic grammar lessons.

- The types of grammatical evidence are three: the Holy Quran, the Noble Hadith, and eloquent Arabic poetry.

- The difficulty of grammatical rules has driven many grammarians to search for easier methods to simplify the science of grammar.

Among the early grammarians who made efforts to simplify the science of grammar, we find: Abu Umar Saleh bin Ishaq al-Jurmi (d : 225 AH), Al-Jahiz (d : 255 AH), Abu al-Abbas al-Mubarrad (d : 285 AH), Muhammad bin Kaysan (d : 299 AH), Abu Ja'far al-Nahhas (d : 338 AH), Abu Bakr al-Zubaydi (d. 379 AH), and Ibn Manda al-Qurtubi al-Andalusi (d : 592 AH).

- Didactics (or pedagogy) is the scientific study of organizing the learning situations experienced by the learner, to achieve a cognitive, emotional, sensory, or motor goal.

- Among the characteristics of educational grammar, we find: the diversity of topics and levels of educational grammatical works and scientific book curricula, the lexicographical arrangement of grammatical material, the presentation and manipulation of texts, brevity in rulings, and avoiding disputes over attributing examples to their sources.

- The old educational methods focused on the grammatical rule itself, forcing the learner to memorize it and present it strictly.

- Modern educational methods in teaching grammar emphasize the utmost care in selecting appropriate examples and authentic models, which allow learners to emulate good texts that provide a model to be followed and imitated.

- The benefit of grammatical examples (the Holy Quran, the Noble Hadith, and Arabic poetry) is that they provide learners with literary knowledge that complements grammatical knowledge and encourages them to develop an artistic taste in deriving the meanings these examples carry.

As for the suggestions, they are as follows:

- Employing grammatical examples while considering the learners' age stage, by presenting easy and accessible examples and delaying difficult examples until the period of educational and cognitive maturity; so that the difficulty of the examples does not distract them from understanding the grammatical rule and its applications.

- The progression in the process of citation according to the order established by ancient grammarians, starting with the Holy Quran, then the noble prophetic hadith (which was narrated in words but not in meaning), and ending with the poetry and speech of the Arabs.

- Explaining the grammatical evidence and the stories and wisdom associated with it, to enable learners to understand it, its source, and its permanence in their minds.

- Reducing the use of rare grammatical examples whose authenticity and attribution are disputed.
- Expanding the grammatical citation for the class of innovators and for anyone whose eloquence has been established.
- Avoiding disagreements among grammarians on grammatical issues.
- Relying on abbreviated grammar programs.
- Focusing on acquiring linguistic competence and developing linguistic skills.
- Prioritizing the practical aspect over the theoretical aspect, and carefully selecting high-quality and good texts for applications.

5 Margins:

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- ¹ : Al-Labadi, 1985, pp : 119-120.
 - ² : Hassan Jabal, 1986, p : 51.
 - ³ : Same reference, p : 51.
 - ⁴ : Al-Banduniji, 1976, p : 279.
 - ⁵ : Ibn Qutaybah, 1984, pp : 433 - 434.
 - ⁶ : al-Jawhari, 1979, entries "Hadr" and "Hala".
 - ⁷ : Kouajlia, 2015 - 2016, p: 08.
 - ⁸ : Al-Dreij, 2011, p: 10.
 - ⁹ : Defa, 2006, p : 65 / Medni, 2009, p : 20.
 - ¹⁰ : Medni, 2009, p : 22.
 - ¹¹ : Ghalfan, 2013, p : 150.
 - ¹² : Same reference, p : 150 – 151.
 - ¹³ : Al-Miaan, 2007, p : 214.
 - ¹⁴ : Same reference, p : 218.
 - ¹⁵ : Same reference, p : 219.
 - ¹⁶ : Same reference, p : 221 - 222.
 - ¹⁷ : Same reference, p : 223.
 - ¹⁸ : Same reference, p : 224 – 226.
 - ¹⁹ : Alwan, 1975 - 1976, pp : 21 – 22.
 - ²⁰ : Medni, 2009, p : 11 – 12.
 - ²¹ : Boumaza, 2008, p: 127.
 - ²² : Rafeeda, , 1990, p : 50.
 - ²³ : Defa, 2006, p : 73.
 - ²⁴ : Laboukh, and Belkacem, 2012, p: 78.

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