

The Metahodology of Umar Al-Jandi's Work "Al-Iqlid"

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Abstract:

The science of Arabic grammar has historically developed through the interpretation and commentary of foundational texts, with scholars seeking to clarify, expand, and contextualize linguistic rules through methodological rigor. Among the most influential texts in Arabic grammar is Mahmud Zamakhshari's *Al-Mufasssal*, which has been the subject of numerous scholarly commentaries. One of the most notable yet underexplored is *Al-Iqlid* by Ahmad ibn Mahmud ibn Umar al-Jandi, a 13th-century scholar whose work offers a nuanced analytical lens on *Al-Mufasssal*. Despite *Al-Iqlid*'s depth and historical value, modern scholarship has insufficiently addressed its methodological significance, particularly its use of Qur'anic, Hadith, poetic, and proverbial evidence in grammatical exposition. This article aims to investigate the scientific-methodological approach adopted by al-Jandi in *Al-Iqlid*, examining how he interprets linguistic rules and applies them to diverse textual sources. The findings reveal that al-Jandi employed a multifaceted methodology rooted in dialogue, logical reasoning, and contextual interpretation. His extensive use of Qur'anic verses, Hadiths, classical poetry, and proverbs as grammatical evidence demonstrates his comprehensive grasp of language and his intent to render complex rules accessible. Notably, he challenges traditional limitations by incorporating poems from less authoritative periods. Al-Jandi's commentary is distinguished by its structural clarity, integration of religious and literary texts, and his pioneering inclusion of overlooked poetic sources, which collectively enrich the interpretive landscape of Arabic grammar. This study encourages a reevaluation of *Al-Iqlid* as a critical pedagogical and analytical resource for both classical Arabic linguistics and contemporary Islamic scholarship.

Keywords: Arabized, education, evidence, comment, grammar, Mufasssal, the rules, styles, lions

Introduction

The field of Arabic grammar has been shaped by a long tradition of scholarly engagement, where classical texts serve as foundational sources for understanding linguistic rules and stylistic features. One of the most influential works in this tradition is Mahmud Zamakhshari's *Al-Mufasssal*, a grammatical masterpiece that has inspired numerous commentaries over the centuries[1]. Among these, *Al-Iqlid* by Ahmad ibn Mahmud ibn Umar al-Jandi stands out as a detailed and methodologically rigorous interpretation of Zamakhshari's treatise. Although biographical information about al-Jandi remains scarce, his work reflects a high level of linguistic insight and scholarly diligence. Composed in Bukhara around the year 1300 CE, *Al-Iqlid* not only clarifies complex grammatical points from *Al-Mufasssal* but also integrates various sources—Qur'anic verses, Hadiths, Arabic poetry, and proverbs—to illustrate and justify grammatical rules [2]. Notably, al-Jandi deviates from early grammatical conventions by incorporating poetic examples from all four recognized historical periods, including poets traditionally excluded for linguistic irregularities. His approach is marked by a structured, dialogic exposition that combines analytical depth with pedagogical clarity. The present article seeks to explore al-Jandi's methodological contributions and the broader implications of his commentary for classical Arabic linguistics. In doing so, it highlights the intellectual legacy of *Al-Iqlid* as both a scholarly work and a pedagogical tool that continues to offer valuable insights into the interpretive and practical dimensions of Arabic grammar[3].

Methods

This study employs a qualitative, descriptive-analytical method grounded in the textual examination of Ahmad ibn Mahmud ibn Umar al-Jandi's work *Al-Iqlid*. The methodology is based on analyzing the commentary's structure, content, and use of grammatical evidence, particularly in reference to Mahmud Zamakhshari's seminal work *Al-Mufasssal*. Primary data is drawn from *Al-Iqlid* itself, with attention to how al-Jandi presents grammatical rules and supports them using various sources, including more than 400 Qur'anic verses, 19 Hadith citations, approximately 80 proverbs, and a wide range of classical and post-classical Arabic poetry[4]. The study closely examines the author's method of combining theoretical explanations with illustrative examples, utilizing a dialogic style that facilitates logical progression and pedagogical clarity. In addition, comparative linguistic analysis is applied to evaluate the grammatical interpretations provided by al-Jandi in contrast with those in earlier commentaries[5]. Special emphasis is placed on al-Jandi's justification for using poetic examples from all four traditional eras of Arabic poetry—including poets traditionally excluded by earlier grammarians due to language contamination. The investigation also involves evaluating grammatical structures through examples provided by the commentator, such as his multifaceted analysis of Qur'anic syntax and semantic interpretation. This methodological approach enables a deeper understanding of al-Jandi's contribution to Arabic grammatical scholarship and his role in bridging traditional grammatical theory with practical textual interpretation[6].

Results and Discussion

Mahmud Zamakhshari is the author of the famous work on Arabic grammar titled "*Al-Mufasssal*". This work has attracted great interest among scholars in the field, and many commentaries have been written on it. One of the scholars who studied this work was Ahmad ibn Mahmud ibn Umar al-Jandi al-Hanafī. There is limited information about this scholar in historical sources. Al-Jandi was born in a place called Jand, located near the Sayhun River, close to the border of present-day Turkey. However, historical books do not provide an exact date of his birth. It is known that he died in the year 700 AH / 1300 CE[7].

There is no biographical information in the sources regarding the teachers from whom Al-Jandi received his education, nor about the students who studied under him.

The work "*Al-Iqlid: Mufasssal fi Sun'at al-'Irab*" is considered one of the important sources dedicated to commenting on Zamakhshari's famous work "*Al-Mufasssal*". Khayriddin Zirikli, in his encyclopedic work "*Al-A'lam*" (The Encyclopedia of the most famous Arab, Arabized and oriental Eastern Scholars), states that Al-Jandi composed "*Al-Iqlid*" in Bukhara. Another piece of evidence

confirming that this work was written in Bukhara can be found in the final chapter of "Al-Iqlid", where the following words are mentioned: "I wrote this in Bukhara — as time passes — as the work of one who labored for his beloved homeland. May Allah protect it from all kinds of calamities "[8]. The author of this commentary, al-Jandiy, not only explains the content of the work "al-Mufasssal", but also analyzes its complex and ambiguous sections from a scholarly perspective, enriching them with simpler and more understandable explanations. In addition to conducting an in-depth analysis of grammatical rules, the scholar reveals the reasons for their application and the underlying linguistic mechanisms, which represents an academically valuable approach. The book includes evidence from Qur'anic verses, hadiths, well-known proverbs, and poetic works, all of which serve to substantiate the grammatical rules both theoretically and practically. The author makes extensive use of the scientific method of dialogue, engaging the reader in a question-and-answer form. This approach plays a significant role in the systematic assimilation of information and in drawing logical conclusions[9].

Due to its scientific significance, this commentary has been used as a primary source by a number of linguists. For instance, Baghdadi referred to it in his work "Khazanat al-Adab", Hajji Bobo al-Tusi used it in *Mia Kāmila fi Sharḥ Mia amilah*, and Tahomi used it in his book "Maqolid".

In his work, the scholar presents evidence based on a distinctive scientific-methodological approach, drawing from Qur'anic verses, the noble hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), widely used Arabic proverbs, and poetic references[10].

The "Al-Iqlid" work stands out among other grammatical texts by its frequent use of Qur'anic verses. The book cites more than four hundred Qur'anic verses and provides a comprehensive analysis of their stylistic and rhetorical meanings.

In his work "al-Mufasssal", Mahmud Zamakhshari states that the word "la'alla" (لعل), meaning perhaps or hopefully, is used either to express hope regarding a possible event or as a warning about something certain to occur. He illustrates this with the following Quranic verses: Surah Ash-Shura, verse 17: "La'alla as-sa'atu qarīb" (لعل الساعة قريب) – (Perhaps the Day of Judgment) is near. Surah Al-Imran, verse 130: (لعلكم تفلحون) – (So that you may succeed). Additionally, Umar Jandiy notes that the word "la'alla" can sometimes carry the meaning of "layta" (ليت), which denotes despair or longing for something unattainable. He supports this with the following verse: "قال فرعن يهمن ابن لي صرحا لعلی أبلغ" (Pharaoh said: (Hey Haman, build me a tower, so that I may reach the ways (of the heavens).) In this verse, the word "لعل" is interpreted in the sense of "ليت", as "ليت" is used for desires regarding things that are impossible to attain. Although Pharaoh expresses his desire with "لعل", as if he had hope to reach the pathways of the heavens, in reality this was impossible. Therefore, in this context, la'alla may be understood to mean layta. Instead of saying "لعل الشباب يعود" ("perhaps youth will return"), it is said "ليت الشباب يعود" ("if only youth would return")[11].

Likewise, the author Umar Jandiy has thoroughly analyzed the syntactic and semantic aspects of the Qur'anic verses presented as evidence. For example, Mahmud Zamakhshari, while explaining the "circumstantial accusative" (ḥāl) and its agent (the one it influences), refers to its semantic factor and cites the following statement of Allah the Almighty as evidence: "وَهَذَا بَعْلِي شَيْخًا" ("while this is my husband, an old man"). After presenting the views of the author of al-Mufaṣṣal, he notes that the word "shaykh" (old man) in the noble verse can, in five different ways, possibly appear in the nominative case[12].

- 1- Because the word "شيخ" (shaykh) functions as an explanatory word (modifier);
- 2- Or because the word "بعلي" (ba'li) is a non-adjectival modifier of "هذا" (this), and the word "شيخ" (shaykh) functions as the predicate;
- 3- Because both words "شيخ" (shaykh) and "بعلي" (ba'li) function as the predicate of "هذا" (this);
- 4- Because "شيخ" (shaykh) is the predicate, and "بعلي" (ba'li) is a non-adjectival explanatory word (عطف بيان, i.e., appositive) clarifying "هذا" (this);
- 5- Because it is the predicate of an omitted subject.

After the scholar cited Qur'anic verses as evidence, the views of grammarians (nahw scholars) and recitation modes were analyzed, and responses were provided with scholarly justifications to opinions

that deviated from the grammatical structure of the verse. For example, in Surah Ash-Shu'ara, verse 197: "أَوَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُمْ آيَةٌ أَنْ يَعْلَمَهُ عُلَمَاءُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ" ("Has it not been a sign for them that it is known by the scholars of the Children of Israel?!"), the word "آيَةٌ" was recited in the accusative case (nashb) by all qira'at imams except Ibn 'Amir. In Ibn 'Amir's recitation, however, the word "آيَةٌ" serves as the predicate (khabar) of the verb "lam yakun" and is read in the nominative case (raf'), while the phrase "an ya'lamahu 'ulama'u Bani Isra'il" functions as its subject (ism). According to this recitation, the word "آيَةٌ" is read in the nominative case[13]. Based on this reading, the grammarian Abu Ishaq (923–855/311–241 AH) held the opinion that "آيَةٌ" is the subject of "lam yakun", and the clause "an ya'lamahu 'ulama'u Bani Isra'il" is its predicate. Al-Jundi (Jandiy), however, criticized this analysis and explained that although this view was presented by the grammarian Abu Ishaq, it is clearly incorrect. The correct, broader meaning of the verse is: "Awa lam takun al-qissatu an ya'lamahu 'ulama'u Bani Isra'il ayatan" — meaning: "Wasn't the story itself that the scholars of the Children of Israel knew it a sign?" In this case, the subject of "lam yakun" is the implicit pronoun "hiya", referring to "the story". If one were to claim that "آيَةٌ" is the subject, then the Arabic construction of the clause "an ya'lamahu 'ulama'u Bani Isra'il" would be equivalent to "'ilm 'ulama'i Bani Isra'il" (the knowledge of the scholars of the Children of Israel), which is in a definite (ma'rifa) form, while "آيَةٌ" is in an indefinite form (nakira). Thus, it would result in a definite subject being explained by an indefinite predicate — a grammatical structure unanimously considered erroneous by grammarians[14].

According to the grammarians, when it comes to justifying the rules of grammar, hadiths narrated from Rasulullah (peace be upon him) are not used as evidence. The grammarians claim that the narrations from Rasulullah (peace be upon him) are not based on the exact wording but rather on the meanings of his words. In contrast to this, Jandi, in his works, has used hadiths as evidence in 19 instances and cited books in 13 instances. For example, in the chapter on "Ibdal" (the substitution of one word for another) in his work, he presents the hadith from Sahih Bukhari, "ليس من امير امصيام في "امسفر" (Fasting during travel is not a good practice). In this hadith, he explains that the letters "م" and the article "أل" are used in the sense of a definite article, and also that the word "بيد" is used in the sense of "غير" (except) in the hadith: "أنا أفصح العرب بيد أني من قريش و استرضعت في بني سعد بن بكر" (I am the most eloquent of the Arabs, except that I am from the Quraysh tribe and was nursed by the Banu Sa'd bin Bakr tribe). Thus, he argues that the word "بيد" in this hadith is used in the sense of "غير"[15]. In addition, it can be observed that the author has used nearly 80 proverbs and popular sayings spread among the people as evidence in his work, in addition to the above-mentioned arguments. Among them, he brings the proverb "عسى الغوير أبو سا" as evidence for the verb of the mubtada (subject) in the singular form. This proverb, ربما جاء الشر من معدن الخير, which means "perhaps evil comes from the source of good," is used in contexts of slander.

The early grammar scholars divided poets into the following four categories:

1. "الشعراء الجاهليون" (This term refers to the poets who lived and created before Islam, in the pre-Islamic period, such as Imru'ul Qays, A'sha, and others).
2. "الشعراء المخضرمون" (This term refers to poets who lived and created during the transition from the pre-Islamic era to the beginning of the Islamic period, such as Labid, Hassan bin Thabit, etc.).
3. "الشعراء الإسلاميون" (This term refers to poets who created during the early period of Islam, such as Jarir, Farazdaq, and others).
4. "الشعراء المولدون" (This term refers to poets who lived and created after the poets mentioned above).

The first three categories of poets' poems were used as evidence by the early grammar scholars. However, they did not use the poems of the poets from the fourth category as evidence. The reason for this is as follows:

- Poets of this period mixed with the Ajam (non-Arab) people;
- They were present there;-

- Due to the mixing of their language with the Ajam language, mistakes in their own language increased.

Due to these reasons, the grammarians lost confidence in the poetry of these poets. However, Jandi, in contrast to the early grammarians, used the poems of poets from the fourth period, such as Hamadani, Mutanabbi, Ibn Rumi, and Abu Nuwas, as evidence in many cases, without any exceptions.

The poems presented in the “Al-Iqlid” work can be divided into two categories. The first category includes the poems presented by Mahmoud Zamakhshari in his “Al-Mufasssal” text. The second category includes the poems presented by Jandi while explaining the text.

When the scholar used these poems as evidence, he paid special attention to aspects such as explaining the word units of the poem, clarifying unclear points, explaining the reason for presenting the poem as evidence, mentioning the story behind the verses, and conducting grammatical analysis.

In the process of summarizing, the commentator did not present the complete verses from the “Al-Mufasssal” text but rather limited himself to phrases such as, “As for the first verse, if we focus on the evidence in this verse, or if we look at the poet's words, or as for the words of Hassan...” Sometimes, he would also provide one or two words from a verse by Imru’ al-Qays, such as “your likeness” in the style of quoting a single or two words.

Another notable style of the commentator is that when the author of “Al-Mufasssal” cites the first line of a verse as evidence, Jandi would quote the second part, and vice versa, which is a praiseworthy act in completing the verse. For example, in the case of the poem belonging to Hassan, where the second line of the previous verse “يكون مزاجها عسل و ماء” was quoted by the author of Al-Mufasssal, Jandi, in completing the verse, also quoted both the first line and the second line from the previous verse.

كان سلافة من بيت رأس
يكون مزاجها عسل و ماء
على أنيابها أو طعم غص
من التفاح هصره الجناء

(From the grapes of the vine, mixed with water and honey, or the taste of freshly picked juicy apples, as if the nectar of such a drink was genuine.)

After explaining the word units, grammatical aspects, and meanings of these verses, Jandi also mentioned four possible interpretations related to the grammar of these lines. These possibilities are as follows:

1. The first possibility: The word “عسل” (honey) is the subject of the verb “يكون” and “مزاجها” is in the accusative case, serving as the predicate. He explained that although “عسل” and “ماء” are indefinite nouns, they approach specificity because of their type (gender), and thus they are potential candidates to function as a subject.
2. The second possibility, attributed to Abu Ali Jurmi, suggests that “مزاجها” is in the accusative case, and the verb “يكون” is implied, functioning as the predicate.
3. The third possibility: “مزاجها” is in the nominative case and acts as the subject of the verb “يكون”, while “عسل” is in the accusative case, serving as the predicate, and “ماء” is nominative, implying the verb “يخالطه” (mixed with water).
4. The fourth possibility: “مزاجها” is nominative, while “عسل” and “ماء” are the subject and predicate, respectively, forming a nominal sentence. The verb “يكون” is implied.

The second category of poems presented in “Al-Iqlid” consists of those Jandi included while explaining his thoughts in a detailed commentary. Although the commentator sometimes does not mention the poet’s name, he refers to the source and explains the meanings of the poems. For example, on the subject of relative pronouns: The word “اللتيا” is a form of the pronoun “التي”, and the purpose of changing it to this form is to glorify. Because sometimes a noun is changed to this form and the purpose is to refer to the greatness of something. The evidence for this is: كل أناس سوف تدخل

دويهيّة تصفر منها الأنامل بينهم

(Heavy times will come that will make people's fingers turn yellow.) In this poem, the word “دويهيّة” is the affectionate form of “داهية”, which means a great calamity or disaster. The poet’s use of this term refers to something even greater than death itself.

Conclusion

The author in his work utilizes various sources, including verses from the Qur'an, Hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), commonly used proverbs in Arabic, as well as poems from poets of various periods such as الشعراء الجاهليون (pre-Islamic poets), الشعراء المخضرمون (transitional poets), الشعراء الإسلاميون (Islamic poets), and even الشعراء المولودون (post-Islamic poets) like Hamadani, Mutanabbi, and Ibn Rumi. Jandi's approach was grounded in scientific-methodological principles when utilizing these poems for evidence.

Currently, it is of significant importance to study the historical roots of various scientific schools formed in our country and to research their written works. The study of Umar al-Jandi's "Al-Iqlid" along with its modern editions and translations, should be an important task for scholars in the sphere.

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