Grammatical Terminology in Abu Muhammad al-Abhari (600 AH): A Grammatical Study

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ABSTRACT

Grammatical studies require delving into the fundamental books that encompass grammatical topics. This study aims to explore the grammatical subjects addressed by al-Abhari, his influences, and the unique aspects he presented. It seeks to clarify what was agreed upon, what was disputed, and what distinguished al-Abhari from others, particularly regarding his treatment of grammatical terminology and the topic of nominatives. Among the grammatical terms are the concepts of the definite noun and the five special nouns, as well as the distinction between inflected and non-inflected nouns. The distinction between inflected and non-inflected nouns is a topic of morphological studies that various morphology books have examined. It focuses on nouns that are inflected and those that are not. The norm is for nouns to be inflected, while non-inflected nouns are exceptions with specific cases. Scholars have paid close attention to studying these distinctions, including Sheikh al-Abhari, who dedicated a section in his book to "Inflected and Non-Inflected Nouns." Al-Abhari also elaborated on grammatical terminology and the content of nominatives in his book, presenting it briefly but comprehensively. His grammatical knowledge was shaped by a tradition similar to that of his predecessors, such as al-Zajjaj, Abu al-Hasan al-Ramani, and Abu al-Fath ibn Jinni, with varying degrees of difference. This tradition, cultivated by his teachers, flourished among them and their contemporaries.

Keywords: Grammatical Terminology, Nominatives, al-Abhari, Inflected and Non-Inflected Nouns, The Five Special Verbs.

Al-Abhari and the Concept of Grammatical Terminology
First: His Name and Birthplace
1. His Name
He is Abu Muhammad Ubaydullah ibn Muhammad ibn Shahmardan al-Abhari, as mentioned on the cover of the second edition of his book, and "al-Abhari" is pronounced with an open "alif," a sukun on the "bā'" (with a single dot), an open "hā'," and ends with the letter "rā'" (without a dot). This nisbah (affiliation) refers to two places: one is Abhar, a town near Zanjan, and the other is a village in the vicinity of Isfahan also named Abhar.

2. His Birthplace
It is said that al-Abhari lived until the late 6th century AH, and there is no exact record of his birth date. His era and the century in which he lived can be inferred. For instance, Brockelmann, who exercised caution, only noted that his book "Hada'iq al-Adab" was written in 588 AH (1192 CE) without mentioning the exact dates of his birth or death. Some references suggest that his death occurred around 600 AH.

3. His Personality and Status
The attentive reader of "Hada'iq al-Adab" finds themselves before an esteemed literary and linguistic figure, a scholar deeply versed in both the study and transmission of language. Al-Abhari mastered various branches of Arabic sciences, with a predominant focus on linguistic studies. The chapters in his book "Hada'iq al-Adab" serve as clear evidence of this expertise. It is often noted that he was a literary linguist and a grammarian-linguist, both characterizations affirming his prominence and mastery in the Arabic language.

4. Scholars Who Quoted Him
Abu Muhammad al-Abhari filled his book with substantial knowledge, and by divine providence, it reached the hands of a select group of scholars who benefited from it and explicitly cited him. The research identified three scholars, in addition to those previously mentioned in biographical references like Yaqut al-Hamawi, who directly referenced "Hada'iq al-Adab" and acknowledged their reliance on al-Abhari's work. These scholars are:

- **Imam al-Baghawi:** The meticulous scholar and expert researcher, al-Saghani al-Hasan ibn Muhammad, Abu al-Fada'il Rady al-Din (d. 650 AH).
  This diligent imam clearly stated in the introduction to his book, "Al-'Abab al-Zakhirwa al-Lubab al-Akhar," that he depended on "Hada'iq al-Adab" and cited it.
- **The Literary Grammarian and Traveler Zayn al-Din al-Athari: Abu Sa'id Sha'ban ibn Muhammad ibn Dawud al-Mawsili al-Qurashi** (d. 828 AH).
  This research identified his explicit citation of al-Abhari and the naming of his book. For instance, when discussing the classifications of knowledge, he says: "Among the examples of annexed phrases are: Himar Qabban, Shamat al-Ard, and Sam Abraṣ. Al-Abhari categorized these three in his book 'Al-Hada'iq fi al-Lugha' saying: As for Himar Qabban, it is said to be a small creature…".
- **Al-Tayyib al-Dimashqi Ibn al-Suwaidi: Ibrahim ibn Muhammad al-Ansari** (d. 690 AH), a student of Ibn al-Bitar.
  He explicitly mentioned in his book "Al-Simat fi Asma' al-Nabat" that he relied on al-Abhari's "Hada'iq al-Adab," as confirmed by some researchers in their study titled "The Position of Ibn al-Suwaidi among the Masters of Damascene Medicine." As evident from the above, "Hada'iq al-Adab" enjoyed credibility among these scholars, who relied on it in their works despite living in different eras and regions, and with varying academic orientations. Each found what they sought in al-Abhari's book.

Second: The Grammatical Term

The concept of the grammatical term refers to the agreement of a specific group on a particular notion that has been mutually established and is recognized as the precise linguistic symbol for a singular concept.

It becomes clear that grammar, in its essence, has two aspects: one is the inductive aspect, which reflects the natural linguistic phenomena that the Arabic tongue has produced, such as the nominative case for the subject, the accusative case for the object, and the genitive case for the possessive construction. The other aspect pertains to the practical side of grammar, developed over long periods through intellectual competition among scholars, schools of thought, and methodologies. This rivalry eventually resulted in a rich intellectual legacy that enriched the grammatical tradition in a way unparalleled in the history of languages.

An examination of the origins of grammatical terminology reveals that it is not a product of the moment, nor solely the creation of scholars. Rather, it is the product of different schools and methodologies shaped by their proponents and adherents. The period from the era of Abu al-Aswad to the emergence of al-Khalil ibn Ahmad al-Farahidi was a preparatory phase for the development of grammatical terminology. The phase beginning with Abu Ishaq and ending with Abu Amr ibn al-Ala' marked the emergence and recognition of these terms.

From this, it is evident that the term has two meanings as indicated by al-Qawzi.

- **The Linguistic Meaning**: Derived from the root "ṣ-l-ḥ" (صلح), as al-Azhari states: "ṣulḥ" refers to reconciliation among people, "ṣalāḥ" is the opposite of corruption, and "iṣlāḥ" is the opposite of destruction. The expressions "taṣālḥū" and "aṣlaḥū" are synonymous.
- **The Technical or Terminological Meaning**: It signifies the agreement of a group on a particular matter. When this agreement is among scholars of Hadith, it gives rise to a specialized term in that field. For instance, the terms "qā'idah" (principle) and "ḍābiṭ" (rule) were frequently used by early jurists. However, there was no clear distinction between these terms initially. The difference between them became more defined only in later periods, leading to the specialized use of the term "ḍābiṭ" among jurists and Islamic legal scholars, who now distinguish between these terms in legal contexts.

Grammatical Terminology According to Al-Abhari

Grammatical terminology holds a significant position in Al-Abhari's grammatical thought, as it does in any grammatical work or for any grammarian. For Al-Abhari, grammatical terminology reflects his scholarly, referential, and linguistic-cultural orientation. It is essential to highlight some of the terms he employed in his writings, among which are:

1.   The Fully Inflected Noun (Al-Ism Al-Mutamakkin Al-Mutasarrif)

This corresponds to the concept of the declinable noun, as Al-Abhari mentioned: "All speech is categorized into three forms in terms of declension. The first is full declension, which applies to the fully inflected noun, such as Zayd." The second form is partial declension, where certain inflections are omitted, such as in non-fully inflected nouns like 'Ibrahim.' The third form is indeclinable nouns, which

are either fixed on a single vowel that does not change or on a fixed sukun, as seen in words like 'ayn' (where) and 'hal' (is). The term 'al-ism al-mutamakkin' is also used by Sibawayh. Ibn Abi al-Rabi' also indicated this by stating: "The fully inflected noun is a word that can be used across all Arabic grammatical structures."

2.   The Five Nouns (Al-Asma' Al-Khamsa)

Al-Abhari identifies the five nouns as 'ab' (father), 'akh' (brother), 'dhu' (possessor), 'ḥamu' (father-in-law), and 'fu' (mouth) when they are in the genitive construct. The term **five nouns** is attributed to scholars such as Al-Farra' and Al-Zajjaji, as well as Ibn Ajurrum. According to Basran grammarians and the majority, these nouns are considered six with the addition of 'hanu' (a euphemistic term), as mentioned by Sibawayh, albeit in a less common dialect.

3.   The ImplicitPronoun and the Referenced Pronoun (Mudhmar&Makna)

Al-Abhari primarily used the term 'mudhmar' (implicit pronoun) in most of his discussions, while using the term 'makna' (referenced pronoun) much less frequently, as seen in his statement: "to conjoin upon the implicit pronoun in the predicate of 'inna'," and he used 'makna' in another context when he said: "if you add it to the referenced pronoun." An example of this is found in the Qur'an in Surah Tauba:{That God and His Apostle dissolve (treaty) obligations with the Pagans. If, then, ye repent, it were best for you; but if ye turn away, know ye that cannot frustrate God and proclaim a grievous penalty to those who reject Faith}. (Tauba: 3).

The terms 'ḍamīr' (pronoun) and 'mudhmar' are Basran terms, while their counterparts among the Kufans are 'kināyah' (allusion) and 'makna' (referenced). Scholars have noted that 'ḍamīr' and 'mudhmar' are typically used by Basran grammarians, whereas Kufan grammarians prefer the terms 'kināyah' and 'makna'. This difference is likely due to the frequent usage of each term by the respective groups. Basrans tend to use 'mudhmar' more frequently but may also use 'kināyah' and 'makna'. Conversely, Kufans predominantly use 'kināyah' and 'makna' while occasionally using 'ḍamīr' and 'mudhmar'. Although both terms were discussed by early scholars, 'mudhmar' became more prevalent than 'makna' among the Basrans. For instance, Sibawayh consistently refers to it as 'mudhmar' and 'iḍmār'(concealment), as well as ''alamat al-mudhmar' (the sign of the implicit pronoun) and ''alamat al-iḍmār' (the sign of concealment). At times, he overlaps between these terms. He refers to 'mudhmar' when discussing the rule of conjoining the overt noun with the implicit pronoun, either in the accusative or nominative cases: "The chapter on what is permissible for the overt noun to be conjoined with the implicit pronoun in terms of action, and what is impermissible for the overt noun to be conjoined with the implicit pronoun in terms of action. As for what is permissible for the overt noun to conjoin with is the accusative implicit pronoun, as in: 'I saw you and Zayd', and 'You and Zayd are departing.' However, what is impermissible for the overt noun to conjoin with is the implicit pronoun in the nominative case in the verb, as in:'I did and Abdullah,'or'I will do and Abdullah'.

Sibawayh pointed this out by saying: "This impermissibility stems from the fact that this implicit pronoun governs the verb, and it is considered undesirable for the overt noun to be conjoined with an implicit pronoun that alters the state of the verb when it is distanced from it."

4.   Dual-Syllable Plural

Among the terms that Al-Abhari introduced to showcase his unique style is his reference to the sound masculine plural as the "**dual-syllable plural**." Al-Abhari mentions: "Pluralization in Arabic follows five patterns. The first is the dual-syllable plural, which is exclusive to men, such as 'al-zaydūn' (the Zayds), 'al-muslimūn' (the Muslims), 'al-ṣāliḥūn' (the righteous), 'al-muslimīn'(the Muslims), and 'al-ṣāliḥīn' (the righteous) in accusative and genitive cases."

Sibawayh referred to this plural by two names: first as 'al-jam' ʿalāḥadd al-tathniya' (pluralization in the same manner as the dual form), and second as'al-jam' bi'l-wāwwa'l-nūn' (the pluralization with wāw and nūn). Al-Mubarrad also called it 'al-jam'ʿalāḥadd al-tathniya' and regarded it as the pluralization of the sound noun.

Meanwhile, Al-Zajjaji described it as 'al-jam' al-musallam' (the intact plural), and Al-Farsi named it 'jam' al-salāma'(the plural of soundness), also calling it'al-jam' al-sālim' (sound plural) and 'jam' al-taṣḥīḥ' (the corrective plural).

From this, it is clear that Al-Abhari used this term with a level of precision that is neither common nor widespread, and it was previously mentioned by Al-Hariri and Ibn Yaish. It represents a new term and concept corresponding to the sound masculine plural.

5.   The Supplemental Hamzah

Al-Abhari uniquely introduced the term "supplemental hamzah (ء)" when discussing the extended alif used for supplementation. He states: "The hamzah not associated with feminine gender can either be in the final position of a word, as in samāʾ (sky), kisāʾ (garment), and duʿāʾ (prayer), or it can be an additional letter called the 'supplemental hamzah.' The supplemental hamzah appears in words like ʿulbāʾ (a type of container) and ḥarbāʾ (chameleon). The non-supplemental added hamzah appears in words like ʿulamāʾ (scholars) and anṣibāʾ (lineages) and similar words." Other grammarians did not refer to this concept with this specific term.

6.   The Extra Connective (Al-Ṣilah Al-Zāʾidah)

In this term, Al-Abhari refers to the grammatical function of an additional letter in parsing. This compound term appears in his discussion of 'mā' as an extra connective, as in the verse: /FabmaRahmahmun Allah/ {It is part of the Mercy of God that thou dost deal gently with them} (ĀlʿImrān: 159), and in another verse: /momakhtaiahom/ {Because of their sins they were drowned (in the flood)} (Nūḥ: 25), meaning: "By mercy" and "because of their sins."

Through this, Al-Abhari combines two well-known terms in expressing the concept of addition, following the approach of Al-Farrāʾ, who also combined the terms. The term 'ṣilah' is more commonly used among the Kufans, although they also use the term 'zāʾid', which is preferred by the Basrans. Both schools share the use of the terms 'laghw' and 'ḥashw'.

The understanding of the term 'zāʾid' (extra) has sparked considerable debate among scholars, including grammarians, rhetoricians, and interpreters, particularly regarding claims that it appears in the Qur'an, which is preserved by the protection of Allah. While all linguists agree that no letter in the Qur'an can be considered superfluous or omitted, and while they all agree—correctly—that there is nothing in the Book of Allah without purpose, they nevertheless describe some letters in Qur'anic verses as extra according to the Basrans, or as ṣilah or 'ḥashw' according to the Kufans.

Al-Rāzī commented: "No one can claim that the kāf (ك) in the verse: /leyeskamathelahshiewahoalsmeeialbaseer/{There is nothing whatever like unto Him, and He is the One, that hears and sees (all things)} (Shūrā: 11) is an extra letter with no benefit, because attributing purposelessness and nonsense to the speech of Allah is far-fetched."

Ibn Al-Ḥājib similarly noted regarding the verse: /Faqalilmāyouamenon/ {Little is it they believe}(Baqara: 88): mā could be considered extra, meaning they believe only a little.

Abū Jaʿfar said that exegetes differed in interpreting this verse. Some said it means that only a few among them believe, implying that only a small number have faith.

In the verse:{It is part of the Mercy of God that thou dost deal gently with them. Wert thou severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about thee: so pass over (their faults), and ask for (God's) forgiveness for them; and consult them in affairs (of moment). Then, when thou hast taken a decision, put thy trust in God. For God loves those wo put their trust (in Him)} (ĀlʿImrān: 159),mā is extra with no inherent meaning; the intended interpretation is "by mercy."

Similarly, in the verse {Little is it they believe} (Baqara:88), the word mā is also considered extra by some scholars, asserting that it does not add any meaning. They argue that the verse simply conveys that "{It is part of the Mercy of God that thou dost deal gently with them}." However, other scholars have rejected this view, considering it unlikely that mā in such contexts serves no purpose.

7. The Present and Future Tenses

Al-Abhari refers to this concept in his terminology for the present tense, with the editor noting: "The author here uses the Kufan term 'mustaqbal' (future), instead of the Basran termmuḍāriʿ (present), although the Kufans apply it to both the present and the imperative tenses."

According to Sībawayh, the matter is different, as he names the present tense by describing its similarity to active participles that begin with one of the four prefixes: alif, tā, yā, and nūn, as in "afʿalu" (I do), "tafʿalu" (you do or she does), and "yafʿalu" (they do).

This difference between Al-Abhari and Sībawayh is significant, as Sībawayh was the first to use the term muḍāriʿ in a dedicated chapter he named "The Chapter on the Parsing of Verbs Resembling Nouns." On the other hand, Az-Zajjājī uses the terms mustaqbal (future) and dāʾim (continuous) instead of muḍāriʿ in his book Al-Jumal: "Verbs are of three types: past, future, and a verb indicating the present time, which is called dāʾim (continuous). The past is what makes sense with 'yesterday' and is always in the indicative mood, as in qāma (he stood), qaʿada (he sat), inṭalaqa (he set off), and the like. The future is what makes sense with 'tomorrow' and begins with one of the four prefixes: yā, tā, alif, and nūn, as in aqūmu (I stand), naqūmu (we stand), taqūmu (you stand), yaqūmu (he stands), and the like.The future tense, which is

better than tomorrow, initially had one of the four additional letters, namely yā', tā', and alif, as seen in examples like: "I stand", "we stand", "you (plural) stand", and "he stands" among others.

Az-Zajjājī continues to call the present tense the future tense in his book Al-Iḍāḥ, saying: "According to grammarians, the verb indicates an event and a time: past and future, as in qāmayaqūmu (he stood, he stands) and qaʿadayaqʿudu (he sat, he sits), and the like. The event is the verbal noun, so anything that indicates what we have mentioned is a verb. If it indicates an event, it is a verbal noun, like ḍarb (striking), ḥamd (praising), and qatl (killing). If it indicates only time, it is a temporal noun."

Abū ʿAlī Al-Fārisī clarifies the terms muḍāriʿ and mustaqbal, using the term ḥāḍir (present) and then mentioning mustaqbal to explain the present tense. He says: "Know that the verb is divided by time into past and future. The past is always in the indicative mood, as in ḍahaba(he went), samiʿa(he heard), ḥaḍara (he attended), ḍaraba (he struck), dahraja(he rolled), istakhraja (he extracted), and the like. The present, like yaqūmu (he stands), yaḍhabu (he goes), yaṣrifu (he spends), yaktubu (he writes), and yuṣallī (he prays), refers to something ongoing that has not ceased. Thus, it indicates a verb that is neither past nor purely future according to the Arabs."

Al-Kisāʾī uses Mustaqbalinstead of muḍāriʿ, dividing verbs into past and future, Ibn Ya'ish, in his commentary on 'Al-Mufassal,' described the present tense, stating: 'To imitate, resemble, or match something is to become like it. The term 'mudari' (present tense) originates from the concept of milking, where two lambs suckle from the udder of a sheep. They are said to 'mudarra' (suckle) if each takes a teat. This term was extended to mean 'similar' or 'resembling,' hence the derivation of the term from 'udder' rather than 'suckling.' The intent is that it resembles nouns through the four prefixes: alif, nun, ta, and ya, such as in 'aqoom' (I stand), 'naqoof' (we stand), 'taqoom' (you stand), and 'yaqoof' (he stands)."

Al-Sīrāfī also notes that the muḍāriʿ indicates both meaning and time, suitable for the present and future. It must begin with alif, nūn, tā, or yā, known as the ḥurūf al-muḍāriʿa (the prefixes of the present tense). These are typically in the indicative mood unless the verb is quadrilateral, in which case it is conjugated with a ḍamma, as is the case in passive voice. As for the verb ʾikhāl, the more correct form has the hamza pronounced with a kasra rather than a fatḥa.

8.   Indeclinable and Declinable Nouns

Al-Abhari addresses the concept of indeclinable and declinable nouns in his terminology, stating: "The other is to decline some inflections and prevent others, as in the case of what is indeclinable, like 'Ibrāhīm." He dedicates a chapter titled "Indeclinable and Declinable Nouns" and notably adds the definite article "al-" to "baʿḍ" (some), a practice that is a matter of dispute, with some linguists permitting it, while the majority allow its usage with both "baʿḍ" and its counterpart "kull" (all).

The term inṣirāf (declinability) is a Basran term, whereas the Kufans refer to it as ijrāʾ (inflection), although Al-Mubarrad also dedicates a chapter titled "What Is Inflected and What Is Not Inflected."

Az-Zajjāj discusses the indeclinability of certain numerical adjectives, saying: "The words mithnā, thulātha, and rubāʿ (two by two, three by three, four by four) and their equivalents are not inflected when indefinite. Their inflection is prevented because they are shifted from thalātha and arbaʿa (three and four), combining both adjectival modification and this shift in meaning, which only allows them to be used as adjectives."

Al-Abhari addresses the inflection of definite and indefinite nouns, stating: "Among nouns, some are indeclinable whether definite or indefinite, while others are indeclinable when definite but declinable when indefinite. As for those that are indeclinable whether definite or indefinite, they fall into five categories:

- The afʿal pattern with a feminine form on the pattern of faʿlāʾ, such as aḥmaru (red, masc.) and ḥamrāʾ (red, fem.), aṣfaru(yellow, masc.) and ṣafrāʾ (yellow, fem.), aswadu (black, masc.) and sawdāʾ (black, fem.), and abyaḍu (white, masc.) and bayḍāʾ (white, fem.).
- The faʿlān pattern with a feminine form on the pattern of faʿlā, such as ʿaṭshān (thirsty, masc.) and ʿaṭshā (thirsty, fem.), ghaḍbān (angry, masc.) and ghaḍbā (angry, fem.), and sakrān (drunk, masc.) and sakrā (drunk, fem.).
- Every plural with three letters followed by an alif and two or three more letters or a heavy consonant, without ending in a hāʾ, such as masājid (mosques), fawāris (knights), akābir (nobles), qanādīl (lamps), tamāthīl (statues), duwābb (beasts), and shawābb (young people).
- Any word ending with an extended femininealif or a shortened femininealif, whether definite or indefinite, such as ḥublā (pregnant), suʿdā (blessed), and sakrā (drunk, fem.).
- Any noun that has undergone a shift from its original form when indefinite, such as mithnā(two by two), thulātha (three by three), rubāʿ (four by four), and aḥād (one by one), as the original forms are ithnayn (two), thalātha (three), arbaʿa (four), and wāḥid (one). Since these words have been altered from their original forms, they are not declinable.

As for nouns that do not fall into these five categories but are still indeclinable, they are declinable when indefinite and indeclinable when definite. Examples include foreign names that consist of more than three letters and do not resemble Arabic names."

The Nominatives

Many grammarians have differed in their explanations of the nominative cases, with the dispute primarily between the Basran and Kufan schools of grammar. Each group provided its interpretation and rulings regarding the nominatives, including the subject, predicate, and other nominatives. Following these discussions, Al-Abhari clarified the significance and rulings related to the nominative cases, drawing on the works of earlier scholars like Sibawayh, Ibn Ya'ish, and others, as will be elaborated below.

Al-Abhari states regarding the nominatives, insisting that they are governed by six core cases in which the noun is always in the nominative case. He emphasizes this by saying: "The nominative case in nouns across all Arabic speech occurs only in six instances, excluding four other cases that follow what precedes them. We will mention them separately, God willing. The six cases are: the subject (al-mubtadā) and predicate (al-khabar), the subject of a verb (al-fāʿil), the subject of the passive verb (mā lam yusamma fāʿiluhu), the subject of kāna and its sisters, and the predicate of inna and its sisters."

Al-Abhari explains that the subject is marked by specific signs. Ibn Ya'ish remarks that the basic principle in declension is to use vowel marks (ḥarakāt), while declension through letters is a secondary method. He states: "The agent that causes the subject to be in the nominative case is the verb, and the reason for its nominative case is that the verb is ascribed to it."

Similarly, Ibn Hisham mentions the signs of declension: "These four signs have indicators, which are of two types: primary signs and secondary signs. The primary signs are four: the ḍamma for the nominative, the fatḥa for the accusative, the kasra for the genitive, and the omission of the vowel for the jussive."

Grammarians, including Al-Suyuti, echo this sentiment when he says: "The nominative case has four signs: the ḍamma, the wāw, the alif, and the nūn. The ḍamma is the sign of the nominative in four instances: the singular noun, the broken plural, the sound feminine plural, and the present-tense verb that has nothing attached to its end. The wāw is the sign of the nominative in two instances: the soundmasculine plural and the five nouns (abūka, akhūka, ḥamūka, fūka, and dhūmāl). The alif is the sign of the nominative in the dual nouns, while the nūn is the sign of the nominative in the present-tense verb."

The nominative cases, according to linguistic scholars, are the essentials of the sentence, as Ibn Ya'ish (643 AH) explains: "The nominatives are the essential parts of the sentence and its pillars, without which it cannot exist, while everything else is supplementary, and the sentence can stand without them." Al-Suyuti refers to them as "the pillars" and says: "They are the nominatives and the objects of the verbal predicates, with the 'pillars' referring to what cannot be omitted from the sentence without a clue to replace it, and their inflection is the nominative case."

I: The Subject (Al-Mubtada')

Al-Abhari defines the subject (al-mubtada') as "a noun that is initiated without an action being ascribed to it." This concept is similarly found in Sibawayh's work with some variation: "The subject is any noun that is initiated to form the basis upon which the sentence is built, and the foundation is marked by the nominative case. Initiation cannot occur without a foundation, so the subject is always something built upon, while what follows it serves as the predicate."

Ibn Al-Anbari, Abu Al-Barakat (d. 577 AH), considers the subject to be a noun free from overt syntactic operators, either explicitly or implicitly. Ibn Ya'ish (643 AH) further explains this notion of being free from syntactic operators, stating: "It is any noun that is initiated and stripped of verbal operators for the purpose of conveying information. Verbal operators include verbs and particles specific to the subject and predicate, such as kāna and its sisters or inna and its sisters, as well as māal-ḥijāziyya/"

Thus, it is termed a "subject" because it initiates the sentence. The subject is the entity being described, while the predicate is the description awaiting the subject. Since the predicate serves as a descriptor of the subject, it deserves to follow it, similar to how an adjective follows a noun. However, the predicate can be advanced if doing so does not cause confusion.

II: The Predicate (Al-Khabar)

Al-Abhari states: "If the predicate is not the primary one, it follows the same inflection it would have had before becoming a predicate, as in: Zaydunfī al-dār (Zayd is in the house) or ʿAbdAllāhrakiba al-dābba (Abdullah rode the animal). If a noun follows a preposition or an adverb, it is raised as a subject, as in: lillāh al-ḥamdu (To Allah belongs praise), ʿindakamālun (You have wealth), or fī al-dārqawm (In the house are people). When you find an indefinite noun in the subject position, it is a delayed or implied predicate,

as in: Sūratunanzalnāhā{A Sura which We have sent down}, meaning 'this is a surah,' or mashnūʾun man shanaʾaka (hated is the one who hates you), where man (who) is the subject."

Al-Abhari outlines that the predicate of the subject comes in six forms: "an adverbial expression, a prepositional phrase, a subject and predicate together, a noun, a verb, or a circumstantial phrase (ḥāl), as in: al-ṣawmu al-yawm (Fasting is today), al-māl li-Zayd (The money belongs to Zayd), Zayd māluhukathīr (Zayd's wealth is plentiful) where māluhu is the subject and kathīr is the predicate, both of which together are the predicate of the first subject. The noun example is: Zayd qāʾim (Zayd is standing), the verb example is: Zayd dhahaba (Zayd went), and the circumstantial phrase is: saranī al-sawīqmalṭūtan (The porridge pleased me when mixed), with the best example being: Zayd qāʾiman (Zayd is standing)."

III: Advancing the Predicate in MāDāma

Al-Abharī permits fronting the predicate before "mā dām" (as long as), while others, including Ibn Kisan, argue against it, claiming: "It is not permissible to front the predicate before 'mādām'. Consensus on this view has also been reported among later grammarians.

Al-Abharī clarifies the allowance for fronting the predicate, stating: "It is permissible to front the predicate except with 'laysa' (is not), where it is not allowed: 'qāʾimun laysa Zayd' (not Zayd is standing), but it is permissible as 'laysaqāʾimun Zayd' (Zayd is not standing)."

The predicate is that which, along with the subject, forms a complete and meaningful statement that is satisfactory to pause upon. It constitutes a judgment about the subject. Ibn Ya'ish explains: "Know that the predicate of the subject is the part from which the listener gains new information and which, together with the subject, constitutes a complete statement, and which is subject to affirmation or denial." He adds: "It is the part that provides, or its related part provides, complete information with a subject other than the mentioned description, as in 'Zayd' in the phrase 'qāma Zayd' (Zayd stood). Although it provides the necessary information, it is not with the subject but with the verb. Similarly, with the 'subject' (the actor of the verb) as in 'al-zaydān' (the two Zayds) in 'qāʾimān al-zaydān' (the two Zayds are standing), although it provides the needed information, it is not with the subject but with the described subject."

The predicate may sometimes precede the subject in certain contexts, and both are mutually dependent; if one precedes, the other follows. This fronting may be permissible or obligatory. It is permitted due to its similarity to the verb in being an ascription and to the subject in being ascribed to. This view is seen in the debate between the Basrians and the Kufi grammarians. The Basrians permit it, whether the predicate is singular or a clause, whereas the Kufi grammarians prohibit it, arguing that it leads to placing the pronoun of the name before its visible form. They argue that in examples like "qāʾimun Zayd" (standing Zayd), the pronoun from "qāʾimun" refers back to "Zayd," evident in dual and plural forms such as "qāʾimān al-zaydān" (the two Zayds are standing) and "qāʾimūn al-zaydūn" (the Zayds are standing). If the pronoun were absent, it would remain singular in all cases. Similarly, in "abūhū qāʾim Zayd" (his father is standing Zayd), the "hū" refers to Zayd. The Basrians, however, permit the fronting of the predicate, whether singular or a clause, due to its frequent usage in Arabic, as in expressions like "mashnūʾ man yashnūʾuka" (hated is he who hates you), "Tamīmī anā" (I am Tamimi), and "rajul ʿAbdullāh" (a man, 'Abdullāh).

Regarding the permissibility of fronting the predicate with "mā zāl" (still), the statement supports the general allowance for fronting its predicate, aligning with the Kufi grammarians or their majority, who permit it, and contradicting the majority view of the Basrians, including Al-Farrā', who oppose it.

IV: Verbs

Al-Abharī highlights the verbs that govern the nominative case for the subject, such as verbs of praise and blame, which occur in both nominal and verbal sentences. He explains that there are certain verbs that inherently raise the subject, such as in his statement: "Among the verbs that raise the subject are niʿma (how excellent), biʾsa (how vile), and ḥabbadhā (how wonderful)."

In this regard, he aligns with the Basrians and Al-Kisāʾī in advocating for the verbal aspect, differing from the majority of Kufan grammarians who argue for the nominal aspect. According to the grammarians of Basra and Al-Kisāʾī, the subject of niʿma and biʾsa falls into three categories:

1. When it is definite with the definite article "al-" (as in alif and lām), as in the verse: "Niʿma-l-mawlāwaniʿma-n-naṣīr" {The Best to protect and the Best to help}.

The difference here lies in interpreting the definite article. Some argue that it is for the general category (gender) in reality, thus praising the entire category because of Zayd in: niʿma-r-rajul Zayd (Zayd is an excellent man), then specifying Zayd by mentioning him, thereby praising him twice. In this case, the subject takes the nominative case in parsing. Others claim it is for the general category metaphorically, as if Zayd represents the entire category for emphasis. Yet others arguethat it is for specification (ʿahd), as in the verse: "Niʿma-l-ʿabd" {How excellent in Our service!}.

2.   When it is in an annexed (mudaaf) relationship with something containing "al-," as in the verse: "waniʿmadāru-l-muttaqīn" {And excellent is the Home of the righteous}.

There are differences of opinion among grammarians regarding niʿma and biʾsa. One group allows the combination of the apparent subject with a distinguishing noun (tamīz) in niʿma and biʾsa, while others argue that this is entirely impermissible, as reported from Sībawayh and Al-Sīrāfī, whether the distinction adds meaning to the subject or not. Their argument is that the distinguishing noun clarifies ambiguity, and there is no ambiguity when the subject is clear, so one should not say: niʿma-r-rajulrajulan Zayd (Zayd is an excellent man).

Regarding ḥabbadhā, Al-Abharī states: "As for ḥabbadhā, it is derived from ḥabb (to love) with its origin being ḥubbiba (it was made beloved), similar to ẓurifa (it was made charming), and dhā (this) was attached to it. The frequent usage of the two made them almost a single word that can apply to any definite noun, making it definite, and to an indefinite noun, making it accusative. You say: ḥabbadhā anta rajulan (How wonderful you are as a man), ḥabbadhā Zayd akhanwaṣadīqan (How wonderful Zayd is as a brother and friend), and when only an indefinite noun follows, it is nominative." As in the poet's line:

How wonderful are the fragrant breezes from Yemen, sometimes brought to you from the direction of Rayyān

Al-Abharī notes: "In dual and plural forms, you say: niʿma-r-rajulān (How excellent are the two men), ḥabbadhā-l-fursān (How wonderful are the horsemen), and biʾsa-r-rijāl as-sawās (How vile are the unruly men). In the feminine: niʿma-d-dārhādhihi (How excellent is this house), niʿma-l-jāriyah (How excellent is the girl), and if you wish, you say: niʿma-l-marʾahwaḥabbadhā-l-jāriyah (How excellent is the woman and how wonderful the girl)."

In Al-Abharī's discussion of verbs, he emphasizes that the triliteral verbs biʾsa, niʿma, and ḥabbadhā raise the subject, supporting the verbal aspect in this matter.

Al-Abharī may sometimes diverge from the Basrians in cases involving the nominative parsing of verbs, while at other times aligning with the Kufans. For instance, in cases where the nominative marking is by both the ḍamma (nominative ending) and the wāw (a nominative marker for plurals), he agrees with the Kufans in contrast to the Basrians who argue that parsing should only be through vowel markings. In other words, the Basrians maintain that the nominative case is marked by ḍamma alone, while Al-Abharī sides with the Kufans who hold that the nominative case can be marked by either the ḍamma or the wāw, i.e., by both a vowel and a letter.

Regarding the reason for the nominative case of the present tense verb, Al-Abharī states that "the nominative marking of the verb is for a single reason: when the verb is in the present tense and free of any subjunctive or jussive particles

Al-Abharī's statement indicates his agreement with most Kufans who believe the cause of the present tense verb's nominative case is its lack of subjunctive or jussive factors, differing from the Basrians who attribute its nominative case to its resemblance to a noun.

Among the verbs that govern the nominative case for nouns are kāna and its sisters, as the grammarians have established that kāna raises nouns and assigns accusative case to predicates. This is also affirmed by Al-Abharī, who states that verbs like kāna, layssa, mādām, māzāl, amsā, aṣbaḥa, māfatā, ẓalla, bāta, ṭafiqa, and their derivatives, whether in the future tense or as active participles, raise the subject and assign accusative case to the predicate. Examples include: /kānaAllāhughafūranraḥīman/{For God is oft-forgiving, Most Merciful},yakūnu-l-mālualfayn (The wealth will be two thousand), yuṣbiḥu-n-nāsuṣāʾimīn (People become fasting), ẓallalnānahāranārukbānanjāʾīnwadhāhibīn (We spent our day riding back and forth), and likewise, Al-Abharī says: bitnālaytanāsāhirīn (We spent our night sleepless), and: lam yazal Zayd muntaziranlaka(Zayd has remained waiting for you).

Al-Abharī also mentions verbs like kāna in the context of the five nouns, stating: "When two definite nouns are combined, either can be made the subject or the predicate: kāna Zayd akhāka (Zayd was your brother), or kānaZaydanakhūka (Your brother was Zayd), but the predicate in kāna and its sisters should not be indefinite unless in negation, as in: mākānaaḥadunmithlak (No one was like you), whereas you cannot say: kānarajulunmithlak (A man was like you), or: kānaqāʾimun Zayd (Standing was Zayd), but rather: qāʾiman Zayd (Standing was Zayd) and qāʾimankāna Zayd (Standing, Zayd was)."

Additionally, regarding verbs like ḥabbadhā, it is stated: "The correct view is that ḥabb is a verb indicating love and praise, with dhā functioning as its subject to imply presence in the heart."

Abū ʿAlī Al-Fārisī, Ibn Burhān, and others indicate that ḥabb is a past verb and dhā is its subject, while the particularized noun (al-makhsūs) in examples like ḥabbadhāZayd is the subject, and the preceding sentence "ḥabbadhā" is its predicate. Some grammarians such as Al-Mubarrad (d. 285 AH), Ibn Al-Sarrāj (d. 316 AH), and Ibn Hishām (d. 213 AH) hold that ḥabbadhā is a noun, serving either as the subject with the particularized noun as its predicate, or as a fronted predicate with the particularized noun as a delayed subject, forming a composite noun.

The verbs that follow the pattern of niʿma and biʾsa for expressing praise and condemnation are, by analogy, any complete trilateral verbs that are indicative, fully inflected, affirmative, and capable of degrees (comparative). They are also built for an active subject where their adjective form does not follow the afʿalufaʿlā pattern. These verbs should be eligible for exclamation and are originally derived from verbs like ẓarafa (to be honorable), sharafa (to be noble), or luʾma (to be vile). They may also be transformed from verbs that originally have an open middle vowel, such as ḍaraba (to hit) or qatala (to kill), or from verbs with a broken middle vowel like ʿalima (to know) or faʿima(to be full). The transformation brings them closer to being inherent qualities and makes them intransitive like niʿma and biʾsa, so they are treated similarly in all their grammatical rules. For instance, one would say: niʿmaal-fāhimuZaydun (Zayd is an excellent understander) or biʾsa al-khabīthu ʿAmrun (Amr is a vile wretch).

V: The Passive Voice (ma lam yusammafāʿiluhu)
Al-Abharī states that "every direct object is accusative unless its agent is not mentioned. If the agent is not mentioned, the direct object takes its place. For example, you say: ḍarabaZaydun ʿAmran (Zayd hit ʿAmr). If the agent is not mentioned, you say: ḍuriba ʿAmrun (ʿAmr was hit)."
Here, Al-Abharī uniquely uses the term "ma lam yusamma fāʿiluhu" (the agent is not mentioned), which is what grammarians refer to as the "deputy of the subject" (nāʾib al-fāʿil). Al-Abharī uses this term to refer to what replaces the omitted agent. The author of the Ajurrumiyya (Ibn Ajurrum) explains this concept: "It is the nominative noun that does not mention its agent. If the verb is in the past tense, its first letter is damma and the penultimate letter is kasra. If it is in the present tense, its first letter is damma and the penultimate letter is fatḥa."
From this explanation, it is clear that the verb is altered so that its form becomes fuʿila, with the first letter taking a damma in all cases, the penultimate letter taking a kasra in the past tense, and a fatḥa in the present tense. Ibn Mālik supports this view, stating: "The predicate must be a verb that conforms to the requirements of either the active voice or the passive voice in terms of meaning and form."
Furthermore, grammarians agree that the deputy of the subject is treated as the subject, adopting its grammatical rules. If the subject is mentioned alongside it, the deputy becomes an accusative direct object. The default candidate for replacing the subject is the direct object. It is not permissible to promote any other element to the position of subject if the direct object is present. Ibn Hishām states: "It is not permissible to promote anything other than the direct object if the direct object is present, which is the position of the Basrians except for Al-Akhfash."
He also discusses the permissibility of substitution in the deputy of the subject. The Yemeni scholar (d. 599 AH) clarifies: "The options include the direct object, the verbal noun if treated as feminine or specified by definition or description, temporal adverbs if numerically specified or defined, spatial adverbs if they are delimited or defined as well, and prepositional phrases. However, none of the last four categories are promoted unless the direct object is absent."
Al-Abharī further discusses scenarios where two or more nouns follow the verb in the passive voice. He notes: "If two or more nouns follow a verb with an unmentioned agent, and one of them is governed by a preposition, you elevate the noun not governed by a preposition to the subject's position. For instance, you say: ishturī bi-dīnārīnthawbān (Two garments were bought with two dinars), utliqa li-r-rajulialfān (Two thousand were given to the man), and wuḍiʿamin al-ḥisāb bi-ḥaqqaṣ-ṣarfmiʾatān (Two hundred were deducted from the account for the currency exchange)."

VI: The Chapter on Conditional Sentences (Babal-Mojazaa)
Al-Abharī discusses the chapter on conditional sentences: "It includes nouns, adverbs, and particles that trigger the jussive case. The nouns are man, ayyu, mā, and mahma, while the adverbs are ayna, aynama, ḥaythu, matā, and matāmā. The particles are in andillā (meaning 'in lā'). Each of these, when applied to a future action, causes the verb to be in the jussive case, and they necessarily require an answer, typically introduced by fa or another verb. If the response is a future verb, it also takes the jussive case, but if introduced by fa, what follows it is in the indicative case. For example: man yukrimnīakrimhu (Whoever honors me, I will honor him), and ayyuhumyazurnīazurhu (Whichever of them visits me, I will visit him), as seen in the verse: /wa-māhmātaʾtinābihī min āyah/{Whatever be the Signs thou bringest, to work} (Al-Aʾraf:132), with its response: /fa-mānaḥnulaka bi-muʾminīn/{We shall never believe in thee}.
Al-Abharī continues, "If you introduce fa into all these, the verb following it is in the indicative case. For instance: in tukrimnī fa-ukrimuka (If you honor me, I will honor you), or say: ayyuhātashāʾ fa-laka (Whichever you wish is yours). In this case, tashāʾ is in the jussive if intended as a conditional sentence, and fais the answer. On the other hand, ayyuhātashāʾ laka (Whichever you wish is yours) in a non-conditional context is in the indicative case because ayyu here functions as the subject, and tashāʾ does not govern it, as ayyu in this context is like alladhī, and the relative clause does not govern the relative

pronoun. This is similar to man and mā in interrogative and non-interrogative contexts because they function similarly to ayyu. Additionally, one would say in response to a question: hal 'indakshay'unazuruka?(Do you have something for me to visit you?), or as an invitation: alātanzilu 'indamānukrimuka (Wouldn't you come down so we can honor you?)."

Al-Abharī also mentions the fa of consequence: "When you introduce fa into the response of such clauses, the verb is in the subjunctive mood. As Allah, the Exalted, says: /man dhāalladhīyuqriḍuAllāhaqarḍanḥasanan fa-yuḍā'ifahulahu/{Who is he that will loan to God a beautiful loan, which God will double unto gis credit} (Al-Baqara: 245), and wa-lawlāakhartanīilāajalinqarīb fa-aṣṣaddaq{O my Lord! Why didst thou not give me respite for a lttle while? I should then have given (largely)in charity} (Al-Munafiqun: 10). Here, the response to lawlā is fa-aṣṣaddaq, and the verb akun is coordinated with the position of 'fa-aṣṣaddaq' as if the fa were not present."

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is essential to highlight the key findings of this study, which can be summarized as follows:

1. We find that Al-Abhari introduced terminologies, some of which are unique and some that align with those before him, including Sibawayh, Al-Zajjaji, and Al-Mubarrad. He often reaches conclusions using unconventional terms that convey a common meaning shared by all scholars, particularly regarding the future tense (al-muḍāri' al-mustaqbal), declinable and indeclinable nouns, the five nouns, and others.
2. Al-Abhari discussed nominatives, mentioning what was presented by his predecessors like Sibawayh, Ibn Ya'ish, and others.
3. Al-Abhari introduced unique expressions related to concepts like mā lam yusammafā'iluhu (what is known in modern grammar as the passive voice), māyunṣarifwamālāyunṣarif (declinable and indeclinable nouns), and other nominatives.
4. Al-Abhari's views on nominatives show multiple perspectives, highlighting the intricacies of nominative cases, which, as Sibawayh described, are the most complex in parsing (i'rāb).
5. It became evident that there are verbs that raise (nominative) nouns in the five nouns category after two definites meet, making one the subject and the other the predicate, on the condition that the indefinite noun cannot be the subject of kāna and its sisters except in negation.

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