From Description to Prescription
The exceptive in Arabic grammatical theory*

Hana Zabarah
Georgetown University in Qatar

1. Introductory observations
The most famous scholarly work on Arabic grammatical theory is Sībawayhi’s *al-Kitāb* (d. 161–94 AH/777-810 A.D.), which has been an object of examination by scholars from the time it was written, long before it became an authoritative source, to the present. *Al-Kitāb* is of a descriptive nature and is an examination of the Arabic language as it was used in the 2nd/8th century. Sībawayhi’s deductions were exploratory in nature, often ambiguous and vague. However, the prescriptive nature of an instructional manual does not require more than pedagogical explanations; therefore, teaching brief and concise material becomes more effective. Comparing instructional manuals such as al-Zağgāği’s *Ǧumal* (d.337–340/948–951) and Ibn Bābašāq’s *Muqaddima* (d.469/1077) to Sībawayhi’s *Kitāb*, consequently, does not do justice to either type. How did these instructional manuals evolve? In what way do they differ, and where are they similar to *al-Kitāb*? What makes one more accessible to learners? These are some of the questions this study aims to answer through a careful examination of selected chapters from each type.

Scholarly investigation precedes writing instructional manuals, since investigative research leads to discovery which then evolves into educational materials. The science of linguistics is no exception. The linguist’s task is to analyse speech meticulously in order to describe the language examined and bring out the meaning behind its linguistic structure (Lehmann 1989: 140). In many cases this descriptive analysis includes prescriptive elements, especially if the language under study is undergoing a process of standardization. Once these elements are

---

*I would like to thank the editor of the journal and the anonymous reviewers for their comments and suggestions on an earlier version of this paper. I would also like to acknowledge a dissertation on the topic that was brought to my attention by a reviewer: La taxinomie des traités de grammaire arabe médiévaux (IVe/Xe/VIIIe/XIV siècle), entre représentation de l’articulation conceptuelle de la théorie et visée pratique by Marie Viain (2014). Unfortunately, I could not access this thesis before the publication of this paper.*
thoroughly investigated, the basic theory of that particular language is formed (Dik 1989: 33). For many languages the investigative journey ends at this point. However, for the majority of languages that are investigated, the teaching of these languages is the next logical step, and different materials need to be developed, i.e., pedagogical or instructional manuals. Nevertheless, it is well known that descriptive grammars sometimes have been used for pedagogy. In this case teachers and learners must be made aware of the anomalies these descriptive grammars contain due to speculative approaches and theorizing of linguistic structures (Greenberg 1968: 28). A specifically pedagogical grammar can only be possible after the descriptive research and the need for instruction are established. Descriptive analysis then becomes the basis for “pedagogical prescription” (Widdowson 1991: 12). The prescribed language in pedagogical grammars is based on the form of language chosen to be described. If standardization of a language is the aim of research, or more accurately, the result of such investigative research, then such a description ultimately becomes prescriptive, although not necessarily with this intention in mind when investigation starts.

Linguistic description and linguistic prescription are ultimately linked, and “the role of the linguist is still in large part prescription of a particular description” (Newmeyer 1978: 585). Effectively, pedagogical grammars must first rely on accurate descriptive grammars. Observations attained from interpretation and examination of analysed data in a particular language must be reflected in pedagogy with simple direct rules that are ready to be understood by the learner of the language (Dirven 1989: 58). The speculative nature of grammatical analysis does not belong in pedagogy, and pedagogy in languages cannot exist without linguistic description as “pedagogical grammars are ultimately translations of linguistic descriptions” (Tomlin 1994: 143). The need for such instructional materials is ultimately the driving force behind creating them, but, without descriptive grammars, they cannot exist.

In the case of Arabic, biographers report that the beginning of grammar was to preserve the language of the Quran from linguistic impurities that had infiltrated it through language contact as Islam and the Islamic empire expanded in the 1st/7th century (Baalbaki 2008: 2–4). Arabs settled primarily in military camps within the newly conquered territories. As they mixed with the indigenous peoples of the conquered lands and non-Arabs began to embrace Islam, the Arabic language served as the language of the new empire: it became the means of official and unofficial communication. It was the language of government, culture, and the sciences. Arabic thus no longer belonged only to the people of Arabia. It became the lingua franca of the Islamic empire. Since Arabs born in the new territories, as well as indigenous people, used Arabic for communication, the language they used started to shift away from the Arabic of the peninsula due to language
contact and language evolution. Scholars realized the challenge this posed to the understanding and correct recitation of the language of the Quran. Thus, the examination of the Arabic language began within the Quranic sciences in order to instruct people on the proper ways of reading Arabic. Accordingly, the study of grammar began to serve a pedagogical purpose.

The earliest stages of the development of Arabic grammatical theory remain obscure. Scholars have attempted to reconstruct this period, but with the scarce extant material, they cannot reach definitive conclusions. Consequently, the discussion begins with the famous scholarly work on Arabic grammar, *al-Kitāb*, composed by the Persian-born Sībawayhi (d.161–194/777–810),¹ which provides a descriptive, highly speculative analysis of the rules of Arabic grammar and essentially severs the tie it had with Quranic exegeses. By starting the investigation of Arabic grammar with Sībawayhi’s *Kitāb*, early pedagogical purposes for grammatical analysis are no longer noticeable in the descriptive language of the *Kitāb* itself. The initial interest for a pedagogical tool is lost in Sībawayhi’s theoretical approach (Baalbaki 2005: 40). The shift from a need to instruct learners of Arabic, in order to correctly recite the Quran, to the development of a highly speculative grammar, unfortunately, cannot be traced with the extant sources available.

As time passed, the dwindling segment of society who lived outside urban settlements and spoke “good” Arabic naturally passed away and thus this spoken form of the language died out. Arabic grammar could not remain a descriptive grammar. It transformed, by necessity, into a highly prescriptive grammar of a language that should be spoken and written in a certain way. All this translates into the growing need for instructional manuals in the way people ought to speak and write.

It has long been thought that Sībawayhi’s *al-Kitāb* is difficult to read and understand, especially because early Arab grammarians attested to this belief. According to al-ʿAḥfaṣ al-Ṣaḡīr (d.315–316/928–929), *al-Kitāb* contained *muḥta-bah* “obscure points” for scholars to *istanbaṭ-a wa-naẓar-a* “deduce and examine” (Bagdādi Ḥizāna, p. 372). Other scholars, such as al-Zaḡgāḡ (d.310–16/922–928) and al-Sīrāfī (d.368/978), confirmed the complexity and difficulty in understanding *al-Kitāb* (Ḥārūn 1988:33). Sībawayhi’s *al-Kitāb* is an immense and even intimidating piece of work. He painstakingly described and analysed the language of the Arabs, interpreting data to make sense of the language, and in the process, descriptions of grammatical structures for Arabic emerged. Reaching these deductions, he needed to examine a multitude of examples, often contradictory, and

---

¹ Abū Bišr ʿAmr b. ʿUṯmān b. Qanbar, known as Sībawayhi (d. 161-94/777-810), was Persian born and educated in Basra. For further details see Qifṭī (*ʾInbāḥ* II, pp. 346–360) and Sezgin (1984: 51).
provide a plausible explanation and rule for each point. Without appreciating this aspect of his contribution, one may lose sight of the nature of his work.

Sībawayhi was not only engaged in the practice of language description, his aim was the explanation of the language’s structure. He was not writing a pedagogical manual. According to Carter, Sībawayhi’s Kitāb “is no pedagogical treatise: indeed, it is so inclusively descriptive, accommodating all the variations and irregularities found in natural language (but not in the language of pedagogues), that it is completely unusable for teaching” (Carter 2005: 329). Although scholars of Arabic grammar of the time studied al-Kitāb, it was by no means a manual for beginners. These scholars were interested in the speculative nature of early Arabic grammatical theory, and this fact is discernable throughout the history of Arabic grammar. However, in due course, Arab grammarians had no choice but to be prescriptivists, as they could no longer engage in descriptive grammar, because native speakers of Classical Arabic eventually died out and disappeared (Owens 1993: 210). This does not mean that later grammarians’ focus on prescription caused them to consider instructional manuals. They were interested in the process of prescribing the way Arabic should be, yet remained speculative and theoretical. Baalbaki (2005) discusses how early Arab grammarians were “so heavily engaged in” speculative grammar that they “were hardly concerned with the pedagogical attainability of their interpretations and justifications.” Their application and defense of the theory was “at the expense of simple or straightforward explanations which would have made better pedagogical sense” (39–40). Grammarians were more inclined to justifying usage than simplifying for learners by avoiding speculative methods. The concern “of the grammarians for theoretical coherency” was “at the expense of pedagogical attainability” (43, 45).

The process of moving from Sībawayhi’s grammar to a more pedagogical approach took time. His observations needed to be adjusted by later grammarians in order to be presented in a form more easily understood by learners of Arabic. This process started early but took centuries to reach its peak (Carter 2005: 329). Later grammarians, who were concerned with language instruction, wrote manuals primarily for beginners in order to fill the gap left by theoretical grammars. These grammar manuals that were written for instructional purposes did not and could not replace those books that were dedicated to theoretical grammars. Both sets of grammars existed throughout the Arabic grammatical tradition (Baalbaki 2005: 42); however, especially at earlier times, pedagogy was not able to escape theory. It took time for traces of theoretical grammar to slowly fade away from pedagogy, but this was necessary for the education and instruction of those who sought instruction in Arabic.

The process of shifting to a more pedagogical approach did not happen in an atmosphere clear of conflict. The translation movement and the development
of the rational sciences were well under way in the 3rd/9th century (Versteegh 1977: 117–118). Rational thinking and logic stimulated minds, resulting in fierce debates in all sciences, including grammar. Additionally, sources tell us that from the earliest stages of grammatical analysis, there were two schools of grammar: the Basran and the Kufan. Versteegh stresses the importance of acknowledging that there was underlying agreement between both schools, despite the exaggerated differences mentioned in the literature (ibid., 111–112). The rivalry between both schools reached its peak in Baghdad during the second half of the 3rd/9th century, where it became the center of grammatical thinking, and scholars were able to seek both traditions often studying with scholars from both camps.

Approximately fifteen to twenty years elapsed following the shift of the grammatical schools of Basra and Kufa to Baghdad and the rivalry between both schools had subsided, allowing scholars to study under scholars trained in both camps. This tolerant atmosphere along with the infusion of logic and philosophy in scholars’ reasoning reinforced the deductions and rationale behind grammatical rules. At this stage in the history of Arabic grammar, al-Zağgāǧ 2 emerges as one of the leading grammarians of the period, especially with his ʿIdāḥ 3 and Ğumal.

Zağgāǧ’s Ğumal is a concise general introduction to Arabic grammar. Cózggāǧ explains and simplifies grammatical terminology used by the grammarians of his era, asserting the need to taqrīb ʿalā al-mubtadiʿ “clarify for beginners” (Zağgāǧ Ğumal, p. 90). Unfortunately, there is no introduction for the book; consequently, the reason behind writing it is based on statements he made in his book. However, it is clear that by the time of Ibn Ḥarūf in 6th/13th century, al-Ǧumal was used as a textbook for learners of Arabic. He believes that Zagggâj had written his work for “beginners”, asserting that Zagggâj wadaʿ-a-hu li-l-mubtadiʿ-ina wa-ittakal-a fi bayān-i-hi ʿalā al-muʿallim-ina “wrote it down for beginners and relied on instructors to clearly explain it” (Šarḥ, p. 243). Later, in the 7th/14th century, Ibn ʿAbī al-Rabiʿ mentions that al-Ǧumal was taught from childhood, affirming that ʿaḥāḏ-a al-nasʿat-u al-sīğār-u bi-ḥifz-i [al-Ǧumal] wa-ta-fahhum-i-hi “the young [generation] undertook the memorization and understanding of al-Ǧumal” (Basīṭ, p. 157).

2. ʿAbū al-Qāsim ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿIshāq al-Zağgâjī (d. 337-40/948-951) was also Persian born. He was educated in Baghdad and taught in Damascus towards the end of his life (Qifṭī ʿInbāḥ II, pp. 160–161, Sezgin 1984: 88).

3. Al-ʿIdāḥ fi ʿilal al-nahw is a philosophical debate on the rational motivation of linguistic rules in Arabic grammar. It is not a textbook dealing with grammatical rules, but it deals with the reasons behind the rules. The book is divided into 23 chapters followed by several pages dealing with additional issues.
Zağğăği himself mentions throughout the book that al-Ǧumal is muhtaṣar “condensed”; however, other scholars of the period held this against al-Ǧumal, criticizing Zagğăği for his “exaggerated conciseness and condensation” (Baṭalyawṣi Ḥulal, p. 57). The shift to instructional simplicity was not readily appreciated by all. Yet others, while acknowledging that Zagğăği was brief and concise, note that he ‘ittakal-a ... f i bayān-i hāḍā al-faṣl-i ‘alā al-mu’āllim-i li’ann-a-hu iḥtaṣar-a ‘alā ‘ādat-i-hi “relied on instructors to explain and clarify this section, since, as usual, he condensed [the material]” (Ibn Ḥarūf Šarḥ, p. 408).

By the 5th/10th century, the grammatical shift towards instructional manuals reached a pivotal stage in history with Ibn Bābašāḏ’s Muqaddima. He divides it into ten sections that thoroughly deal with the parts of speech, all the forms of inflection, operators, modifiers and finally orthography. Ibn Bābašāḏ explains in his commentary that he wrote his Muqaddima for the purpose of tashīl wa-tawtī'ā “simplification and introduction” to Arabic grammar for beginners (Šarīf 1978:2:16). He describes how some of his contemporaries had renamed this book as al-Muqaddima al-Muḥsiba. ‘Abd al-Karīm explains that the meaning of al-Muḥsiba is al-Kāfiya, i.e., that which should suffice without the need to consult other grammatical books (1976–1977: 27). Nevertheless, his Muqaddima has been considered so short and concise that Ibn Bābašāḏ’s students asked him to give them a commentary on his work more than 30 years later. This commentary is widely known as Šarḥ al-Muqaddima al-Muhsiba. Other grammarians also thought his Muqaddima too concise, motivating them to write their own commentaries.

According to Carter (1985) in his examination of the term nahw, the Muqaddima’s significance stems from the fact that its composition provided the definitive form of nahw, because of the existence of three main elements. The first element is the highly developed indigenous tradition of grammatical analysis, which was documented in Sībawayhi’s Kitāb as the manner in which the people spoke and was studied and examined for centuries. The second element is what Carter calls “imported scientific methodology,” which came about with the translation movement and introduced the importance of presenting clear and precise definitions. The third is the new Islamic educational system represented by the establishment of the madrasa or ‘academy’. Institutionalized learning emerged at the beginning of the 11th century, and thus a systematic methodology for instruction

4. ‘Abū Ḥasan Ṭāhir b. ‘Aḥmad b. Bābašāḏ b. Dāwūd b. Sulaymān b. ʾĪbrāhīm (d. 469/1077) was born in either Iraq or Egypt. Both editors of his commentary are in disagreement as to his birthplace, but they agree that he had received his education in both Baghdad and Egypt (Šarīf 1978:27; ‘Abd al-Karīm 1976–1977: 11). He settled in Egypt where he became a well-known government official and taught at Ibn al-ʾĀṣ mosque.
was needed. After examining *al-Muqaddima*, I came to believe that, in addition to the historical elements mentioned by Carter, its simplified and concise presentation with its division into ten sections, makes it an exceptional instructional manual in its time.

In order to appreciate fully the gradual development of instructional manuals this paper examines the chapters on *istiṯnā‘* “exception” using the particle ‘*illā* “except”, written by the aforementioned scholars in their respective books. Before I go into the details these grammarians offer, I present a simple illustration of grammatical rules of exception in Arabic. Exception involves three distinct elements: the exceptive particle, in this paper, we will only deal with the particle ‘*illā* “except”; the *mustaṯnā‘* “excepted noun” or the noun after ‘*illā*; and the *mustaṯnā‘ min-*hu* “noun excepted from” or the noun before ‘*illā*. The following example maps these three elements:

\[
\text{ما رأيت أحدا إلا زيدا}
\]

\[
mā ra‘ay-tu ʾaḥad-an ʾilla Zayd-an
\]

not saw-I anyone-acc except Zayd-acc

“I did not see anyone except Zayd.”

Here we can see the three exceptive elements: the exceptive particle ‘*illā*; the *mustaṯnā‘* “excepted noun” or the noun after ‘*illā*, which is the proper noun Zayd; and the *mustaṯnā‘ min-*hu* “noun excepted from” or the noun before ‘*illā*, which is ‘*aḥad* “anyone”, where Zayd is clearly not part of and is excluded from “anyone”.

2. *The role of Sibawayhi’s Kitāb*

Baalbaki (2008) argues that Sibawayhi presents basic grammatical rules throughout his book to account for the majority of grammatical usage, and, at the same time, finding appropriate explanations for anomalies (134–135). Sibawayhi supports his examples to prove these rules and thus establishes what Baalbaki calls “Basic Rules”, which Sibawayhi applies throughout his book while at the same time he is able to explain any variation from these rules (ibid.; 2005: 43). This flexibility allows Sibawayhi to document anomalies without jeopardizing the rules deduced from the data. Baalbaki argues that Sibawayhi is “keen to uphold what we called ‘basic rules’ by maximizing the applicability of the norm and minimizing deviations which undermine it” (2008:155). Baalbaki further elaborates on the early grammarians’ obsession with maintaining the concept of ‘basic rules’, with the

5. See Ḥasan 1968: 292–337 for a detailed account for the rules of *istiṯnā‘*.
use of taqdir “suppletive insertion”, which “denotes the restoration of missing elements by the grammarians to explain various aspects of the construction” (Baalbaki 2005:45) and modification of grammatical function, which allows for a shift in grammatical function without jeopardizing the “basic rule” (p. 55).

Sībawayhi’s presentation of the istīnā’ follows this ‘basic rule principle’ by introducing general guidelines that govern the majority of cases, followed by explanations for those cases that do not follow these general rules. Sībawayhi covers istīnā’ in several chapters, beginning with the basic rules. He states that the mustaṭnā, the noun after ʾillā, takes one of two options: (1) the case ending that the noun would normally receive without ʾillā, i.e., before introducing the particle, or (2) the accusative case in the tanwīn-naṣb construction.

Sībawayhi utilizes the phrase ʿišr-ūna dirham-an to explain the tanwīn-naṣb construction. He explains kamā ta’mal-u ʾišr-ūna fi-mā baʿd-a-hā ʾidā qulta ʾišr-ūna dirham-an “as the twenty operates on the dirham when you say twenty dirhams” (Kitāb II, p. 310).6 This convoluted explanation is Sībawahi’s way describing the tanwīn-naṣb construction.7 Sībawayhi’s grammatical theory involves elements acting upon each other in different ways. One type of operation involves the tanwīn-naṣb “accusative” structure, where it represents non-agreement between its elements, occurs outside already complete sentences, and cannot form true annexation units. He uses the phrase ʿišr-una dirham-an “twenty dirhams” to represent this operation in his Kitāb (Carter 2004:91–92). Carter explains that the “tanwīn-naṣb structure was as much an identifiable type of syntactical unit as the more familiar ‘true’ annexation and subject-predicate constructions” (Carter 1972:495). In Sībawayhi’s theory this includes all verbal complements (cf. Carter 2004:91). Unfortunately, later grammarians did not preserve this category, and, consequently, it has been lost to the theory.

To illustrate the first option, Sībawayhi explains that ʾillā and the mustaṭnā “noun that follows” are introduced into an utterance to establish the existence or affirm the situation that has been excluded or negated in the utterance before ʾillā. His statement tudḥīl-u al-ism-a fi šay’in tanfī ʾan-hu mā siwā-hu ʾizr-ūna dirham-an “You introduce the [excepted] noun to where everything else has been excluded” (Kitāb II, p. 310), also indicates that Sībawayhi means that the sentences he is considering are negated, proven by the examples he gives (ibid.):

6. For a detailed discussion on the effect of ʿišr-ūna on dirham see Carter (1972).
7. Later grammarians used the term tamyīz for specific elements of this structure.
ما أتاني إلا زيدٌ

mā ʾatā-nī ʾillā Zayd-un

not came-me except Zayd-NOM

“None came to me except Zayd,”

ما لقيت إلا زيدا

mā laqī-tu ʾillā Zayd-an

not met-I except Zayd-ACC

“None did I meet except Zayd,” and

ما مررت إلا بزيدٍ

mā marar-tu ʾillā bi-Zayd-in

not passed-I except by-Zayd-GEN

“None did I pass by except Zayd.”

The sentence structure before ʾillā in the above examples reflects negated sentences, and the function of the particle ʾillā is to exclude what follows from these negated structures. Thus, Zayd did come, did meet with, and did pass by the speaker. The nouns after the particle ʾillā all receive the appropriate grammatical inflections they would have received if the particle was never introduced into each sentence: Zayd in the first sentence is in the nominative case as the subject; Zayd is in the accusative case as the direct object in the second sentence; and Zayd is in the genitive case in the third sentence as the object of a preposition.

Sibawayhi clarifies tuğrī al-ism-a mağrūh-u … wa-lâkinn-a-ka ʾadḥalta ʾillā li-tūğib-a al-ʾafāl-a li-hādihi al-asmāʾ-ī wa-li-tanfiy-a mā siwā-hā “You give the noun its rightful place [in the sentence structure] … however you introduce ʾillā to affirm the verbs for these [excepted] nouns and exclude others” (Kitāb II, p. 310). The only reason ʾillā is used is to deactivate the negation in the sentence structure just before it is used, and thus, affirming that Zayd did come, did meet with, and did pass by the speaker. The reason that this is allowed is that the main verbs in these clauses do not have all their arguments: the verb ʾatā-nī “came to me” is missing the subject Zayd. The verb laqītu “I met” is missing the object Zayd, and the verb marartu bi “I passed by” is missing the object of the preposition Zayd. These missing arguments are needed for these sentences to be complete, and they are not complete sentences, because they do not have the mustaṭnā min-hu “the noun before ʾillā”. Sibawayhi explains lam tašgāl ʾan-hā qabl-aʾan talḥaq-aʾillā al-fiʿl-a bi-ḡayr-i-hā “you do not [allow] the verb to be occupied by anything before the insertion of ʾillā” (Kitāb II, p. 311). By depriving a verb of one of its arguments, ʾillā is treated as if it does not exist, and the noun that follows takes the appropriate case ending as dictated by the sentence structure as the final argument of the verb. Therefore, the particle ʾillā does not govern what follows and is treated as if it does not syntactically exist.
However if the mustaṭṭnā min-hu, the noun before ʾillā, is present, the sentence is complete before reaching the particle ʾillā. In this case, the mustaṭṭnā or the noun after ʾillā may be considered badal8 “apposition” standing for the first noun, the mustaṭṭnā min-hu: the second noun substituting for the first (Kitāb II, p. 311):

(4) 

ما أتاني أحدّ إلا زيدٌ
māʾ atā-nī ʾaḥad-un ʾillā Zayd-un
not came-me anyone-nom except Zayd-nom
“None other came to me except Zayd,”

(5) 

ما مررت بأحدٍ إلا زيدٍ
mā marar-tu bi-ʾaḥad-in ʾillā Zayd-in
not passed-I by-anyone-gen except Zayd-gen
“None other did I pass by except Zayd,” and

(6) 

ما رأيت أحدا إلا زيدا
mā raʾay-tu ʾaḥad-an ʾillā Zayd-an
not saw-I anyone-acc except Zayd-acc
“None other did I see except Zayd.”

It is noteworthy to mention that if ʾaḥad “anyone” is removed from these sentences, the verbs will be missing one argument as mentioned above, and what is left would be sentences (1)–(3) above, where the particle ʾillā does not govern and does not syntactically exist. However, since the mustaṭṭnā min-hu, the noun before ʾillā, is present, and therefore all the arguments of the verb are present, the appropriate structure, Sībawayhi affirms, is badal. Sībawayhi explains that hāḍā waḡh-u al-kalām-iʾan taḡʾal-a al-mustaṭṭnā badal-an min al-laḏā qabl-i-hi liʾann-a-ka tudḥil-u-hu fi-māʾ ahraḡta min-hu alʾawwal-a “this is the proper utterance. You make the excepted [noun] substitute for [the noun] that precedes [ʾillā.], because you introduce [the excepted noun] to where the first [noun] has been excluded” (Kitāb II, p. 311). He considers this construction the most appropriate and preferred option, because both nouns are equal in status and one can replace the other. He supplies the reader with further examples all illustrating the same badal constructions.

Within badal structures, both the nominative and accusative are acceptable under certain conditions when using sentential verbs, because, in Arabic, they need two accusatives.9 His examples include (Kitāb II, p. 313):

8. Badal refers to constructions where a noun substitutes for a previous noun and follows it in case. It is generally translated as apposition or substitution.

9. Sentential verbs are verbs that need sentences as their complements. In Arabic, a specific class of verbs called ʾafāl al-qulūb “verbs of the heart” are introduced to complete equational
The accusative case is chosen as a substitution for ‘*āḥad* “anyone”, and the nominative is chosen as a substitution for the subject pronoun in the verb *yaqūl-* “he says”, since both are objects of the verb ‘*ażumn-* “I think.” Consequently, the noun after ‘*illā* may substitute ‘*āḥad* “anyone” and therefore is accusative, or it may substitute the subject pronoun in the verb *yaqūl-* “he says” and therefore is nominative. Nevertheless, these sentential verbs do not convey actions. They convey what is in the speaker’s mind. Sībawayhi maintains that these verbs are not in the same category as “verbs of action”, *wa-*’*innamā* *yadull-* ‘*ālā* *mā* *fī* ‘*ilm-i-ka* “but they represent what is in your knowledge” i.e., what is in the mind (Kitāb II, p. 314); and therefore can also be called “verbs of the mind”. As for verbs conveying action such as (p. 313):

not hit-I anyone-ACC he-says-IND that except Zayd-ACC

“I did not hit anyone saying that except Zayd.”

only the accusative is permissible, because only one object is needed, and the noun after ‘*illā* can only be in apposition to ‘*āḥad* “anyone.”

Sībawayhi (Kitāb II, p. 314) also introduces *badal* in different syntactic positions. The substitution for the position of *mubtada*’ “subject” is illustrated in examples including:

not think-I anyone-ACC he-says-IND that except Zayd-NOM/ACC

“I do not think anyone says that except Zayd.”

where Zayd does not substitute for *raḡul-* “man” but for *qalla rajul-* “hardly a man”, functioning as the *mubtada’,* therefore Zayd receives the nominative case. Substitution for the position of *mubtada’* is also seen (p. 318) in:

not think-I anyone-ACC he-says-IND that except Zayd-NOM/ACC

“I do not think anyone says that except Zayd.”

sentences with a *mubtada’* and a ḥabar, subject and predicate noun, and govern both in the accusative case. A simple example will suffice. Both parts of the following equational sentence turn into two accusatives when the verb *ẓanna* is inserted: *al-walad-* ṭālib-*un* “The boy is a student.” The boy is the *mubtada’* and student is the ḥabar. Once the verb *ẓanna* is inserted, such as *ẓanan-tu al-walad-* ṭālib-*an* “I thought that the boy is a student” both *mubtada’* and ḥabar become accusative as objects of the verb *ẓanna* “to think.”
لا أحد فيها إلا زيدّ (10)

\[ lā 'aḥad-a fī-hā 'illā Zayd-un \]

not anyone-ACC in-it except Zayd-NOM

“No one is there except Zayd.”

where Zayd also substitutes for the *mubtada’* lā ‘aḥada “no one” and receives the nominative case.

Sībawayhi (p. 317) also presents substitution with other syntactic positions, such as the noun after ‘*inna*:

ما علمت أن فيها إلا زيدا (11)

\[ māʿ alim-tu 'anna fī-hā 'illā Zayd-an \]

not knew-I that in-it except Zayd-ACC

“I did not know anyone was there except Zayd.”

where Zayd substitutes for the accusative noun after ‘*anna*, which, in this case, has been dropped from the sentence, and therefore Zayd is accusative.

Other similar *badal* constructions occur in sentences (*Kitāb* II, p. 315) such as:

ماأتاني من أحد إلا زيد (12)

\[ mā 'atā-nī min 'aḥad-in 'illā Zayd-un \]

not came-me of anyone-GEN except Zayd-NOM

“None of them came to me except Zayd” and

ما رأيت من أحد إلا زيدا (13)

\[ mā raʿay-tu min 'aḥad-in 'illā Zayd-an \]

not saw-I of anyone-GEN except Zayd-ACC

“I did not see any of them except Zayd,”

where in both cases *min ‘aḥad-in “of anyone”* is equivalent to ‘*aḥad-un “anyone”* in the nominative, functioning as the subject of ‘*atā “to come”, or ‘*aḥad-an “anyone”* in the accusative, functioning as the object of raʿ ‘*a “to see”* in (12) and (13), respectively. Both cases are *badal* constructions.10

As for the alternate choice Sibawayhi gives at the beginning of the chapter, when he mentions that the noun after ‘*illā receives* the accusative case, he states that the accusative is also acceptable since *baʿd-u al-ʿarab-i al-mawṭūq-i bi-ʿara-biy yat-i-hi “some Arabs whose Arabic is trustworthy* use the accusative (*Kitāb* II, p. 319). Sibawayhi cites the same examples used with *badal* constructions in sentences (4)–(6) above, but instead of alternating between cases depending on the case of the substituted noun, all employ the accusative case (ibid.).

10. The preposition *min “of”* in both sentences *daḥalat hunā tawkid-an “is inserted here for emphasis”, as explained by Sibawayhi (*Kitāb* II, p. 316).
ما أتاني أحدًا إلا زيدًا
mā ʾatā-nī ʾaḥad-un ʾillā Zayd-an
not came-me anyone-nom except Zayd-acc
“None other came to me except Zayd,”

ما مررت بأحدٍ إلا زيدًا
mā marar-tu bi-ʾaḥad-in ʾillā Zayd-an
not passed-I by-anyone-gen except Zayd-acc
“I did not pass by anyone except Zayd,” and

ما رأيت أحدا إلا زيدًا
mā raʿay-tu ʾaḥad-an ʾillā Zayd-an
not saw-I anyone-acc except Zayd-acc
“I did not see anyone except Zayd.”

If the nouns after ʾillā are accusative, then they are not badal, but they are considered munqati “detached”, and the verbs governing the first nouns, i.e., the nouns before ʾillā, the mustaṭnā min-hu ʾaḥad “anyone” do not have an effect on what comes after ʾillā, the mustaṭnā Zayd. It is interesting that Sībawayhi uses the term munqati “detached” in these cases, because the meaning is clearly different from what later grammarians used. Later grammarians used istiṭnā munqati “detached exception” for when the excepted noun is heterogeneous with the munstaṭnā min-hu (Carter 1975:69), i.e., both nouns do not belong to the same category.

Once again, the verbs in examples (14)–(16) have all their arguments, just as they did in badal sentences (4)–(6) above. However, Sibawayhi explains that in structures similar to sentences (14)–(16), where the tanwīn-naṣb structure is used, they are not badal structures. Verbs in these sentences do not govern nouns after ʾillā, unlike what has been stated earlier with sentences (4)–(6) in the badal structures. This is clarified by Sibawayhi’s statement wa-dālīka ʾanna-ka lam taqāl al-ʾāḥir-a badal-an min al-ʾawwal-i wa-lākin-na-ka ǧaʿalta-hu munqati-an mim-mā ʾamil-a fi al-ʾawwal-i “you do not substitute the second [noun] for the first [noun] but you detach it from what governs the first [noun]” (Kitāb II, p. 319). Sibawayhi explains this discrepancy by explaining why these structures are not badal. The meaning of ʾillā, in these specific sentences, occurs as lākin “but” or lāʾaʾnī “I do not mean”, in effect meaning, “No one came but Zayd”, or “No one came; I do not mean Zayd.” As Baalbaki (2008:56–68) explains, similarity in meaning can be an ʾilla “cause” according to Sibawayhi, which he sometimes employs to justify usage. This resemblance in meaning could have triggered Sibawayhi’s explanation of the accusative in his illustration. In both cases Zayd is accusative, in the first as the subject-noun following lākin, and in the second as the object of ʾaʾnī. Sibawayhi asserts that both constructions are acceptable: badal and ʾinqiṭā “apposition and detachment”, although he prefers badal, as stated earlier.
However, badal constructions are not acceptable if the substitution does not make sense, in which case, the noun after ‘ʾillā must occur detached. Such structures occur when the noun after ‘ʾillā cannot be an element of or cannot relate to the first noun.11 Examples such as (Kitāb II, p. 319):

\[\text{ما فيها أحد إلا حمارا} \]
\[mā fī-hā ʾahad-un ʾillā ḥimār-an\]
\[“No one is there except for a donkey”\]

perfectly illustrate this concept, since a donkey cannot be an appropriate substitute for humans.

Sibawayhi presents more examples upholding the accusative choice. He explains that nouns after ‘ʾillā must be accusative in sentences such as (p. 331):

\[\text{أتاني القوم إلا أباك} \]
\[ʾatā-nī al-qawm-u ʾillā ʾab-ā-ka\]
\[“People came to me except for your father.”\]

His justification is that the mustaṭnā is not included in the mustaṭnā min-hu. ‘Ab-ā-ka “your father” is not part of al-qawm “the people” who actually came, and, therefore, the verb ʾatā “to come” does not govern ʾab-ā-ka “your father” and is detached. Sibawayhi explains that the reason is liʾanna-hu muḥriğ-un mim-mā ’adḥalta fi-hi ġayr-a-hu fa-ʾamila fi-hi mā qabl-a-hu kamā ʾamila al-ʾišr-ūna fī al-dīham-i “because [the noun that follows ʾillā] is excluded from what has been included [before]. Therefore ʾillā operates on it just like ʾišr-ūna operates on dirham” in a tanwin-naṣb construction (Kitāb II, p. 330). He continues intaṣaba al-ʾab-u ʾid lam yakun dāḥil-an fi-mā dāḥala fi-hi mā qabl-a-hu wa-lam yakun ṣifa wa-kāna al-ʾāmil-u fī-hi mā qabl-a-hu min al-kalām-i “‘ab ‘father’ is accusative because it is not included in what has been included before [ʾillā]; it is not an attribute, and what precedes operates on it” as in a tanwin-naṣb construction (ibid., p. 331). He further elaborates by explaining the difference between two types of sentences (ibid.):

\[\text{ما أتاني القوم إلا أبوك} \]
\[mā ʾatā-nī al-qawm-u ʾillā ʾab-ū-ka\]
\[“None of the people came to me except for your father”\]

11. In other words, heterogeneous with the munstaṭnā min-hu.
and sentence (18) above. Sentence (19) is acceptable with the mustaṭnā ʾab-ū-ka “your father” in the nominative case, because had the mustaṭnā min-hu, al-qawm “the people”, been missing, the resulting sentence (ibid.):

ما أتاني إلا ابوك (20)

māʾ atā-nīʾ illāʾ ab-ū-ka
not came-me except father-NOM-your
“None came to me except for your father”

is acceptable since it conveys the same meaning. In this case, the badal structure is appropriate, and thus, the nominative case.

However, if the mustaṭnā min-hu, al-qawm “the people”, is missing from (18), the resulting sentence would be (ibid.):

أتاني إلا اباك (21)

ʾatā-nīʾ illāʾ ab-ā-ka
*came-me except father-ACC-your
“[No subject] came except for your father.”

This is an absurd or an inconceivable utterance, or in Sibawayhi’s words muḥāl. Sentences (18) and (21) do not mean the same thing, and therefore, the structure cannot be badal. The only possible choice is munqatī “detached” structure in which the function of the verb ʾatā “he came” does not govern the mustaṭnā ʾab-ā-ka “your father.” The only explanation that potentially clarifies this ambiguity is Sibawayhi’s unique way of describing negated and affirmed sentences. For negated sentences, his preferred structure for the noun after ʾillā, the mustaṭnā, is badal, since the presence of the mustaṭnā min-hu is optional, because, as stated above, the particle ʾillā deactivates the negation of the verb, and thus the verb governs the mustaṭnā as its subject when the mustaṭnā min-hu is not present. Sibawayhi uses vague sentences to explain his argument. He says that the mustaṭnā in negated sentences tudḥil-u-hu fi-māʾ aḥrāqta min-hu al-awwal-a “is included in what the [mustaṭnā min-hu] has been excluded” (Kitāb II, p. 311), so the verb is allowed to govern it. However, the mustaṭnā in affirmed sentences is not part of the mustaṭnā min-hu, as observed in sentence (18) above. This exclusion makes it impossible for the verb to govern the noun after ʾillā, the mustaṭnā, which must be “detached” from the verb. In affirmed sentences, the mustaṭnā muḥriq-un mim-māʾ adḥalta fi-hi ġayr-a-hu “is excluded from what the [mustaṭnā min-hu] has been included” (ibid., p. 330), so the verb is not allowed to govern it. Essentially, it can only be accusative. With this in mind, it is clear that there is a choice with negated sentences: either badal or detachment, but, for affirmed utterances, the only option is accusative.
An additional mandatory accusative structure is when ‘illā and its noun, the mustaṭnā, are fronted, i.e., occurring before the noun that would otherwise be substituted, the mustaṭnā min-hu. If the mustaṭnā occurs at the beginning of the sentence, it cannot be badal structure, because the noun that is supposed to be replaced does not appear before the mustaṭnā. According to Sibawayhi, and this only applies to negated sentences, when the badal is an option, al-istiṭnāʾ ḥadd-u-hu ‘an tadārak-a-hu ba’d-a-mā tanfī fa-tubdil-u-hu “the definition of exception is that you reach it after negation then you substitute it with [the previous noun]” (Kitāb II, p. 335). Essentially the noun after ‘illā can only occur as the noun that substitutes for a previous noun; otherwise, there is no badal construction. Sibawayhi uses the sentence (ibid.):

ما لي إلا أباك صديقٌ (22)

mā l-ī ‘illā ‘ab-ā-ka ṣadīq-un

not to-me except father-ACC-your friend-NOM

“No one is there for me except your father as a friend”

with an accusative mustaṭnā, noun after ‘illā, to illustrate this structure, with ṣadīq “friend” occurring after the exceptive phrase, and therefore forcing the accusative case on ‘ab “father”, because a badal structure is not allowed. However, Sibawayhi also introduces what seems to be the opposite structure in (p. 336):

من لي إلا أبوك صديقًا (23)

man l-ī ‘illā ‘ab-ū-ka ṣadīq-an

who to-me except father-NOM-your friend-ACC

“No who is [there] for me except your father as a friend”

with a nominative ‘ab “father” after ‘illā. His explanation here is that ‘ab “father” is a substitute for man “who” in a badal structure and ṣadīq “friend” is in a ḥāl “circumstantial state” in the accusative.

Sibawayhi introduces a non-exceptive ‘illā, where it occurs as an attribute meaning ġayr “other than.” Ibn Mālik explains that ġayr “other than” primarily occurs as an attribute, and ‘illā “except” primarily occurs in istiṭnāʾ, but then both assume the [role] of the other in where each primarily occurs (Tashīl, pp. 297–298). In this case the noun after ‘illā cannot be in a badal structure, and the whole phrase can only be an attribute (Sibawayhi Kitāb II, p. 331):

لَو كان معنا رجل إلا زيد لغلبتنا (25)

law kāna maʿa-na raḡul-un ‘illā Zayd-un la-ḡulib-nā

if was with-us man-NOM except Zayd-NOM would-defeated-we

“Had we had with us a man, other than Zayd, we would have been defeated.”
Sibawayhi explains that if what is meant were an exceptive phrase, it would be an impossible utterance (p. 331):

(26) *law kāna ma’a-nā ʾillā Zayd-un la-halak-nā
*if was with-us except Zayd-NOM would-perished-we

“Had we had with us, except Zayd, we would have perished.”

He further explains that if you say sentence (26) wa-ʾanta turīd-u al-istiṭnā’ la-kaun-ta qad ʾaḥalta “and you want the exception, you would have said an absurd [utterance]” (p. 331). Sibawayhi does not explain the impossibility of this utterance, but Ibn Mālik relates Sirāfī’s explanation that a badal structure in ēstiṭnā’ necessitates an affirmed, or non-negated mustaṭnā, noun after ʾillā (Tashīl, p. 299), in which case it would give a different meaning indicating that if Zayd were present, they would have been defeated, and this is not what is meant by sentence (25). Effectively, Sirāfī gives the sentence law kāna ma’a-nā Zayd-un la-halak-nā “Had Zayd been with us, we would have perished” (Ibn Mālik Tashīl, p. 299). Additionally, he tells us that al-badal-u ba’d-aʾillā fi al-istiṭnā’-i mūjab-un “badal after ʾillā is affirmative in exception” (ibid.), since a badal can only occur in a negated sentence in exception. So, if sentence (25) has a badal structure, Zayd would not be excluded, and this proves the impossibility of the utterance. On the contrary, it indicates that without Zayd, they would have been defeated.

Sibawayhi cites one Quranic verse (21:22) that uses this non-exceptive ʾillā (Kitāb II, p. 332):

(27) {law kāna fī-him-ā ʾālihat-un ʾillā l-lāh-u la-fasadat-ā
\[law kāna fi-him-ā ʾālihat-un ʾillā l-lāh-u la-fasadat-ā\]

If Allah12 “God” were a badal, Allah “God” would substitute for ʾālihat “gods” and ultimately put “God” in place of “gods”; and, therefore, would translate according to Sirāfī as related by Ibn Mālik (Tashīl, p. 299) as:

(28) *law kāna fī-himā l-lāh-u la-fasadat-ā
*if was in-them-DU Allah-NOM would-ruined-DU

“This is an unthinkable expression in the Quran. However, this sentence means (Ibn al-ʾAnbārī ʾInṣāf, p. 235):

12. I use the conventionally written Allah in the text as opposed to the transliteration I use in the example: al-lāh.
If there were gods other than God, in [Heaven and Earth, both would be in ruin].

Treating ʾillā as the attribute ǧayr would change the meaning of the sentence to a perfectly acceptable expression.

Sibawayhi never explains the nominative “God” after ʾillā, except by treating it as an attribute not a badal. He also never explains the function of the conditional law “if”. Later grammarians explain further by reiterating that badal only occurs in negated sentences. Ibn al-ʾAnbārī states that al-badal-u ʾīṭbāt-i ǧayr-u ǧāʾ iz-in “substitution in affirmed sentences is not permissible” (ʾInṣāf, p. 235). Astarābāḏi states that al-badal-u là yaḡūz-u ʾillā fī ǧayr-i al-mūḡab-i “substitution is only allowed in non-affirmed sentences” (Šarḥ al-Raḍī, p. 185). Zamahšāri states that al-badal-u là yaḡūz-u ʾillā fī al-kalām-i ǧayr-i al-mūḡab-i “substitution is not allowed except in non-affirmed sentences” (Kaššāf, p. 86). Others add that conditionals indicate affirmed sentences. Ibn Yaʿīṣ states that al-šarṭ-u ʾī ḥukm-i al-mūḡab-i “conditionals are virtually affirmed [sentences]” (Mufaṣṣal, p. 89), and Ibn Mālik indicates that speech is affirmative with conditionals (Tashīl, p. 298). Astarābāḏi states that laysa al-šarṭ-u…min ǧayr-i al-mūḡab-i “conditionals are not beyond affirmed [sentences]” (Šarḥ al-Raḍī, p. 185). Finally, Zamahšāri indicates that speech with law “if” is affirmative (Kaššāf, p. 86). Furthermore, Ibn Yaʿīṣ asserts that the function of ʾillā in this verse is to indicate the antithesis (Mufaṣṣal, p. 89). He further elaborates that [ʾillā] wa-mā baʿd-a-hā tāḥliyat-un li-l-maḏkūr-i bi-l muḡāyatat-i “[ʾillā] and [the noun] that follows describe the attributes of what was mentioned [before] as contradictory” (Mufaṣṣal, p. 89). He continues explaining that the case of the noun after ʾillā follows the case of the noun before ʾillā, which explains the nominative case in “God.” In explaining the nominative, Ibn Yaʿīṣ states that mā baʿd-a ʾillā fī al-waṣf-i yakūn-u ʾi-rāb-u-hu tāḥiʾ-an li-ʾi-rāb-i mā qabl-a-hā “[the noun] after ʾillā [occurring] as an attribute follows the previous noun in case” (Mufaṣṣal, pp. 89–90). It is not a badal for “gods”, but an attribute in antithesis, thus receiving the same case ending as “gods.”

This is what Baalbaki (1995: 7) calls “Reclassification according to grammatical function”, where grammarians allowed a shift from the ʾaṣl to explain certain constructions, which otherwise would have been unacceptable. In this case, ʾillā as a particle has been modified to function as the noun ǧayr, as an attribute, in order to explain the nominative after the particle ʾillā, which otherwise would have been
badal, indicating an unacceptable utterance in the Quran. The noun after ’illā in affirmed sentences is accusative, though, in order to maintain this “basic rule,” this construction in this verse is considered something other than istiṭnā’. The shift in grammatical category is necessary to explain this anomaly. Sibawayhi “opts to confirm an exception to the boundaries between the parts of speech rather than an exception to the specific case under discussion,” namely the istiṭnā’ (Baalbaki 2008:164, 166).

In brief, Sibawayhi starts his chapters on ’illā with the ’illā of no effect in negated sentences. He then presents the badal as his primary choice if the sentence is complete before ’illā, revealing other badal possibilities, especially those that involve different syntactic positions. What is remarkable is his non-technical use of the word “detached” to explain the tanwīn-naṣb construction if the sentence is complete before ’illā. Since the verb cannot operate on the word after ’illā, it is considered detached, and the tanwīn-naṣb structure is allowed. He also uses the word “detached” when referring to different categories, as will be used by later grammarians as a technical term in the development of the grammatical theory.

3. Zaḡḡāği’s Ğumal
The topic of istiṭnā’ in Zaḡḡāği’s Ğumal is presented with clear rules without considerable analysis, and examples serve as proof as well as good illustrative models for the rules. Unlike Sibawayhi, Zaḡḡāği starts with affirmative sentences (Ğumal, p. 235):

(28) qāma al-qawm-u ’illā Zayd-an
stood the-people-nom except Zayd-acc
“The people stood except for Zayd.”

In which case, the mustaṭnā must be in the accusative case in the tanwīn-naṣb structure. However, if the sentence is negated, you have a choice (ibid.):

(29) mā qāma al-qawm-u ’illā ‘Amr-un wa-’illā ‘Amr-an
not stood the-people-nom except ‘Amr-nom and-except ‘Amr-acc
“The people did not stand except for ‘Amr.”

The mustaṭnā is nominative under badal rules or accusative if there is a complete sentence before the particle ’illā.

These are simple rules. If the sentence is affirmed, then the noun after ’illā is accusative, but if it is negated, then the noun may be badal or accusative in a
tanwin-naṣb structure, but only if there is a complete sentence before the particle ʾillā. Zaḡḡāḡī states that ʾidā kāna mā qabl-a [ʾillā] min al-kalām-i mūḡab-an kāna mā baʾd-a-hā manṣūb-an … “if what comes before ʾillā is affirmed in utterance, then what comes after it is accusative” (Ḡumal, p. 235). He continues waʾidā kāna ma qabl-a ʾillā ʾayr-a mūḡab-in kāna mā baʾd-a-hā tābīʾ- an li-mā qabl-a-hā ʿalā al-badal-i wa-ḡāza ʾi-mī al-naṣb-u ʾidā tamma al-kalām-u dūn-a-hu “and if what comes before ʾillā is not affirmative then what comes after it modifies what comes before in substitution, and the accusative is permissible if the utterance is complete before [the ʾillā phrase]” (ibid.).

However, if the mustaṭnā min-hu is not present, the verb governs what follows. He elaborates ʾidā farrāɡa mā qabl-a ʾillā li-mā baʾd-a-hā ʾamila ʾi-mī wālam taʾmal ʾillā šayʾ- an “if you free [the verb] before ʾillā for what follows, then [the verb] governs [what follows] and ʾillā does not govern anything” (Zaḡḡāḡī Ḇumal, p. 236). This is the istiṭnā′ muqadd “exhaustive exception” as used by later grammarians. The use of the verb farrāga “to free”, I believe, does not yet convey the technical term, but it indicates the opposite of šaḡala “to operate”, because Zaḡḡāḡī already uses the technical terms istiṭnā′ munqat “fronted exception” (ibid., p. 238) and istiṭnā′ munqaṭ “detached exception” (p. 239). If istiṭnā′ mu-farrāɡ “exhaustive exception” was already considered a technical term at this time, he would have used it in the same way he used the other technical terms. Zaḡḡāḡī gives the following examples if you remove the mustaṭnā min-hu (Ḡumal, p. 236):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ما قام إلا زيدَ} & \quad \text{mā qāma ʾillā Zayd-un} \\
\text{ما رأيت إلا زيدًا} & \quad \text{mā raʾay-tu ʾillā Zayd-an} \\
\text{ما مررت إلا بزيد} & \quad \text{mā marar-tu ʾillā bi-Zayd-in}
\end{align*}
\]

“No one stood except Zayd,” “None did I see except Zayd,” and “I did not pass by [anyone] except Zayd.”

Zayd in sentence (30) is nominative because it is the subject of the verb, Zayd in sentence (31) is accusative because it is the object of the verb, and Zayd in sentence (32) is genitive because it is the object of a preposition. This applies to sentences where the verb does not have all its arguments before the exception particle ʾillā and thus has no effect on what follows.
Zağghāği continues with other examples where the accusative case is the only choice: if the mustaṭnā is fronted, or if the mustaṭnā and the mustaṭnā min-hu do not belong to the same category, where both mustaṭnā and mustaṭnā min-hu cannot replace one another. Zağghāği explains that ʾiḏā kāna al-mustaṭnā min ġayr-i ġins-i al-ʾawwal-i kāna munqāṭī-ʾan min-hu manṣūb-ʾan “if the noun after ʾillā is not of the same category as the first [noun], then it is detached and is accusative” (Ğumal, p. 239). Zağghāği gives the following examples if the noun after ʾillā is fronted (p. 238):

(33)  
\[mā l-ī ʾillā al-ʿasal-a šarāb-un\]  
not to-me except the-honey-ACC drink-NOM  
“I have nothing except honey as a drink” and

(34)  
\[mā l-ī ʾillā ʾab-ā-ka šadiq-un\]  
not to-me except father-ACC-your friend-NOM  
“I have no one except your father as a friend.”

Similarly, if we have two different categories (p. 239):

(35)  
\[mā fī al-dār-i ʾahad-un ʾillā himār-an\]  
not in the-house-GEN anyone-NOM except donkey-ACC  
“No one is in the house except for a donkey.”

The mustaṭnā must be accusative, because himār “donkey” is not in the same category as ʾahad “anyone”. We here have two species, and thus, one cannot substitute for the other.

Zağghāği contrasts affirmed and negated sentences at the beginning of his chapter, where tanwīn-naṣb structure is the only choice or is preferred to badal in negated sentences, but only if the sentence is complete before ʾillā; otherwise, ʾillā has no effect. Zağghāği’s primary concern is the difference between affirmed and negated sentences, and based on this distinction rests his grammatical choice.

4. Ibn Bābašāḏ’s Muqaddima  
As for the Muqaddima of Ibn Bābašāḏ, istiṭnā’ is presented with direct, straightforward explanations providing only one example for each rule. According to Ibn Bābašāḏ, exception indicates ʾiḥrāq-u baʾd-in min kull-in bi-ʾillā “extracting some from [the] whole with [the use] of ʾillā.” (Ibn Bābašāḏ Nahwīyya (Šarīf) II, p. 263). Exception is used to extract something from all else. He explains that the noun
after *ʾillā* is accusative if it is in an affirmed sentence or *fī taʾwil-i al-mūğab-i* “what is similar to an affirmed sentence” (ibid., p. 264):

1. قام القوم إلا زيدًا  
   *qama al-qawm-u ʾillā Zayd-an*  
   stood the-people-nom except Zayd-acc  
   “The people stood except for Zayd” and

2. ما أكل أحد إلا الخبز إلا زيدا  
   *māʾ akalaʾ aḥad-un ʾillā al-ḥubz-a ʾillā Zayd-an*  
   not ate anyone-nom except the-bread-acc except Zayd-acc  
   “No one ate [anything] except bread except Zayd,”

which is similar to an affirmed sentence meaning that everyone but Zayd ate bread.

The *mustaṭnā* is also accusative if it precedes the *mustaṭnā min-hu* or is *mun-qatiʿ* “detached”, as respectively expressed by the following sentences (ibid.):

1. ما لي إلا اللهُ راحمُ  
   *mā l-ī ʾillā l-lāh-a rāḥim-un*  
   not to-me except Allah-acc merciful-nom  
   “I have [no one] except God[to be] merciful” and

2. ما بالدار أحد إلا حمارا  
   *mā bi-l-dār-i aḥad-un ʾillā ḥimār-an*  
   not in-the-house-gen anyone-nom except donkey-acc  
   “No one is in the house except for a donkey.”

The latter must be detached because it deals with two different species.

The accusative for the *mustaṭnā* is also a possibility *baʿd-a tamâm-i al-kalâm-i* “after a complete sentence” (ibid.):

1. ما فعلوه إلا قليلا منهم {  
   *mā faʿal-ū-hu ʾillā qalīl-an min-hum*  
   not did-they.NOM-it except few-ACC of-them  
   “They did not do it except for a few of them.”  
   (Quran 4:66)

Ibn Bābašāḏ also explains in his commentary that the *mustaṭnā* in sentence (40) can also be considered *badal*, and would thus receive the nominative case, only because the *mustaṭnā* occurs after a complete sentence (ibid., p. 269):

1. ما فعلوه إلا قليلا منهم {  
   *mā faʿal-ū-hu ʾillā qalīl-un min-hum*  
   not did-they.NOM-it except few-NOM of-them  
   “They did not do it except for a few of them.”
where the noun after ʾillā qalīl “few” would substitute for the subject pronoun in the verb faʾal-ū-hu “they did it.” Ibn Bābašāḏ does not give the alternative example where qalīl “few” is nominative in his Muqaddima, but he elucidates in his commentary in both editions (ibid., p. 269; Ibn Bābašāḏ Muḥsiba (ʿAbd al-Karīm) II, p. 324).

Ibn Bābašāḏ further states that if the sentence starts with an interrogative, it is negated, or prohibitive, the mustaṭnā, ġālib-an “usually”, follows the mustaṭnā min-hu in case (Ibn Bābašāḏ Nahwiyya (Šarīf) II, p. 264), i.e., a badal structure:

(42) هل قام أحد إلا زيد؟
hal qāma ʾaḥad-un ʾillā Zayd-un
“Did anyone stand except Zayd?” and

(43) لم يقم أحد إلا زيد
lam ya-qum ʾaḥad-un ʾillā Zayd-un
“No one stood except Zayd.”

While this example is given as part of the original Muqaddima as an example for nafy “negation”, in his commentary, edited by both Šarīf and ʿAbd al-Karīm, a slightly different version is presented (ibid. p. 270; Ibn Bābašāḏ Muḥsiba (ʿAbd al-Karīm) II, p. 325):

(44) ما قام أحد إلا زيد
mā qāma ʾaḥad-un ʾillā Zayd-un
“No one stood except Zayd,”

While the translation is not affected, however, the difference between the negation particles lam and mā is noteworthy, which leads me to think that Ibn Bābašāḏ did in fact chose a different example in his commentary. This is possible since the Muqaddima and its commentary were written almost thirty years apart.

For the nahy “prohibitive” (Ibn Bābašāḏ Muqaddima, manuscript, leaf 22; Ibn Bābašāḏ Muḥsiba (ʿAbd al-Karīm) II, p. 321), he gives:

(45) لا يقم أحد إلا زيد
lā ya-qum ʾaḥad-un ʾillā Zayd-un
“Let no one stand up except for Zayd.”

This example occurs in the manuscript as well as in ʿAbd al-Karīm’s edition. In the Šarīf edition, however, Ibn Bābašāḏ only provides this example for nahy “prohibitive” in the commentary (Nahwiyya (Šarīf) II, p. 270). Given that the manuscript
in my hand, ‘Abd al-Karīm’s edition, and the commentary edited by Šarīf have the same example, I speculate that that the manuscripts Šarīf used are to blame or that it is an editorial slip on the part of Šarīf.

His use of ḡālīb-an “usually” reflects the fact that the accusative is also allowed if the utterance is complete before ’illā, i.e., if the mustaṭnā min-hu is present and thus serves its function in the sentence and completes all the arguments of the verb, as in sentence (40) above.

Ibn Bābašāḏ presents all tanwin-naṣb “accusative” possibilities, whether affirmed sentences, fronted, detached, or after a complete sentence if negated, at the beginning of his chapter. He then mentions the badal only as a possibility with negated sentences. Ibn Bābašāḏ’s primary concern is to emphasize the tanwin-naṣb structure as primary and the badal only as a possibility.

5. **Concluding observations**

Comparing these istiṭnāʾ “exception” excerpts, the fundamental rules are the same; however, presentation varies widely, particularly when comparing Sībawayhi with the latter grammarians. Rules become simpler as one progresses in time, and lengthy explanations come to an end. In addition to the lack of extensive justification in the latter two selections, different badal “apposition” structures, elaborated by Sībawayhi are missing from Zaḡḡāḡi and Ibn Bābašāḏ. Whereas Sībawayhi’s treatment of badal “apposition” in istiṭnāʾ “exception” is primary, since he deals with negated structures first, it is only mentioned as a possibility in Zaḡḡāḡi and Ibn Bābašāḏ, as their primary istiṭnāʾ “exception” structure is the tanwin-naṣb structure: accusative. Furthermore, Zaḡḡāḡi and Ibn Bābašāḏ already use the term “detached” as a technical term referring to nouns that belong to two different categories. The word, as used by Sībawayhi, has dropped from usage as the other two grammarians found no reason to justify the tanwin-naṣb “accusative” structure as Sībawayhi did. Likewise, the controversial attributive ’illā is missing from both Zaḡḡāḡi’s Ġumal and Ibn Bābašāḏ’s Muqaddima. This is possibly because it is not considered an exceptive, a structure clearly not required to be mastered by beginners. This similarity between Zaḡḡāḡi and Ibn Bābašāḏ may also originate in the fact that the latter composed a commentary on Zaḡḡāḡi’s Ġumal. Ibn Bābašāḏ further neglects mentioning istiṭnāʾ “exception” when the mustaṭnā min-hu “noun before ’illā” is missing, as ’illā in this case is neutralized.

Although neither Zaḡḡāḡi nor Ibn Bābašāḏ, justify usage in presenting their rules, the main difference between their presentations is the number of examples used. Zaḡḡāḡi has seventeen examples in addition to three poetic references and four Quranic verses, while Ibn Bābašāḏ only uses seven examples (eight in the manuscript and the ‘Abd al-Karīm edition) in addition to two Quranic verses.
This is in complete contrast to Sībawayhi who uses more than 120 examples in addition to nineteen poetic references and seven Quranic verses. Although Zağgâği’s Ğumal and Ibn Bâbašâd’s Muqaddima are brief and concise and evidently should be used for beginners, other grammarians found the need to write extensive commentaries expanding and clarifying missing justifications. That grammar needed to be speculative was clearly expected by scholars of the period. These commentaries, however, serve as necessary substitutes for instructors, who were essential in the teaching of these manuals and often offered their own commentaries along with their teaching.

It is clear that Sibawayhi describes the language in order to generate rules of usage by examining multitudes of examples taken from the language in use. His explanations justify the rules he deduces from the data. He is therefore obligated to present these lengthy clarifications to rationalize his rules. Rules of istiţna’ emerge from within his explanations, yet he further explains any structures where the rules do not exactly correspond. By the time of Zağgâği these explanations were stripped from all but the most necessary rules for the exception. He gives clear explanations but still finds the need occasionally to supply multiple examples to support these rules, albeit not close in number to Sibawayhi’s. However, Ibn Bâbašâd finds that he needs only one example to convey each rule. Although the last two books do include minimal speculation and justification, they are definitely more accessible to learners for their clarity and simple presentation. Lengthy justifications are not needed for learners of the language. They have their acceptable, and well appreciated, role in speculative and theoretical grammars.

REFERENCES

A. Primary literature


SUMMARY

Once the need to learn a language arises, grammatical instructional manuals evolve from descriptive grammars of that language. Language description involves the uncovering of the rules of the language from collected data, and teaching those rules is the reason grammatical manuals exist. The most comprehensive descriptive grammar of Arabic is Sībawayhi’s Kitāb (d. ca.161–94 AH/777–810 A.D.). He includes the rules of Arabic as he deduced them from the language of the Arabs. As time passed and the need to learn Arabic increased, many grammarians started to write grammatical manuals for beginners. Sībawayhi’s monumental work was too speculative and highly theoretical for this task and was never suitable for instruction. The descriptiveness of Sībawayhi’s Kitāb needed to morph into a more approachable grammar. Zağğāğī’s Ğumal (d. ca.337–340/948–951) and
Ibn Bābašād’s *Muqaddima* (d.469/1077) are two instructional manuals that are concise and more suitable for beginners. This study examines how pedagogy in Zağğāği’s *Ğumal* and Ibn Bābašād’s *Muqaddima* evolved from the descriptive rules of Sībawayhi’s *Kitāb* through a careful analysis of *istiṭnā* “exception” rules presented by each grammarian in this study. Although the rules are essentially the same in all three books, presentation and description or lack thereof are sufficiently different illustrating their distinct objectives.

**RÉSUMÉ**

Quand surgit le besoin d’apprendre une langue, les manuels d’enseignement de la grammaire se développent à partir des grammaires descriptives de cette langue. La description linguistique implique la découverte des règles de la langue à partir des données collectées et l’enseignement de ces règles est la raison pour laquelle les manuels grammaticaux existent. La grammaire descriptive la plus complète de l’arabe est le *Kitāb* de Sībawayhi (m. entre 161 et 194 AH/777–810 ap. J. C.). Il inclut les règles de l’arabe, telles qu’il les déduit de la langue des Arabes. À mesure que le temps passait et que la nécessité d’apprendre l’arabe augmentait, de nombreux grammairiens commencèrent à écrire des manuels grammaticaux pour les débutants. Le travail monumental de Sībawayhi était trop spéculatif et hautement théorique pour cette tâche et n’a jamais été adapté à l’enseignement. Le caractère descriptif du *Kitāb* de Sībawayhi avait besoin de se transformer en une grammaire plus accessible. Le *Ğumal* de Zağğāği (m. vers 337–340/948–951) et la *Muqaddima* d’Ibn Bābašād (m. 469/1077) sont deux manuels pédagogiques concis et plus adaptés aux débutants. Cette étude examine comment la pédagogie dans le *Ğumal* de Zağğāği et la *Muqaddima* d’Ibn Bābašād a évolué à partir des règles descriptives du *Kitāb* de Sībawayhi par une analyse minutieuse des règles de “l’exception” (*istiṭnā*) présentées par chaque grammairien dans cette étude. Bien que les règles soient essentiellement les mêmes dans les trois ouvrages, la présentation et la description de celles-ci (ou leur absence) sont suffisamment différentes pour illustrer leurs objectifs distincts.

**ZUSAMMENFASSUNG**

daher in eine zugängliche Grammatik umgewandelt werden. Zağğāğīs Ğumal (gestorben um 337–340/948–951) und Ibn Bābaşāds Muqaddima (gest. um 469/1077) sind zwei Lehrbücher, die aufgrund ihrer knappen Darstellungen für Anfänger geeignet sind. In diesem Artikel wird untersucht, wie sich Zağğāğīs Ğumal und Ibn Bābaşāds Muqaddima aufgrund der beschreibenden Regeln in Sībawayhis Kitāb als didaktische Lehrbücher gestalten. Das Hauptaugenmerk der Analyse richtet sich auf die Weise, wie die beiden Grammatiker Ausnahmen (istiṭnā') darstellen. Obwohl die Regeln in allen drei Büchern im Wesentlichen identisch sind, stellt sich heraus, dass die Darstellungen und Beschreibungen unterschiedlich ausfallen, was darauf hinweist, dass die Verfasser jeweils andere Ziele verfolgten.

**Author’s address**

Hana Zabarah
Georgetown University in Qatar
Education City
P.O. Box 23689
Doha, State of Qatar
zabarahh@georgetown.edu