

Manifestations of the descriptive approach in Sibawaih's book

Yahi Hicham ¹

Specialization: Language Didactics, University of Médéa ,Algeria

Email: yahi3131@gmail.com ; ORCID: 0009-0004-9306-8510

Kadri Djamel ²

Specialization: Linguistic Studies, University of Algiers2 ,Algeria

Email : djamelkadri1984@gmail.com ; 4ORCID: 0009-0008-2375-793

Madji Moustafa ³

Specialization: Arabic Linguistics, University of Médéa ,Algeria

Email: mustapha.madji@gmail.com ; ORCID: 0000-0003-1085-4539

Received: 07/01/2025 Accepted: 15/03/2026 Published: 10/08/2026

Abstract

The Almighty's saying: {In retaliation is life} [Al-Baqarah: 179] was characterized by faces of eloquence and kinds of miracles, in terms of structure and significance. He knew that when he was killed, he was killed, he stopped killing and was reprimanded, so he raised the killing that is retribution, killing people unjustly, and that was life for them. , requires investigation and verification, just as retribution is killing and the loss of life, and one of the sources of rhetoric is to make a place and a circumstance for it.

Keywords : Significance , Life , Miraculousness , Retribution.

Introduction

In modern linguistic studies, the phrase “the descriptive approach is the master of all approaches” has become widely recognized, as it has demonstrated remarkable effectiveness in analyzing linguistic phenomena and uncovering their underlying structures. Indeed, hardly any linguistic study whether historical, comparative, or otherwise is entirely devoid of descriptive analysis. Many scholars trace the emergence of the descriptive approach in its modern scientific form to Ferdinand de Saussure, who drew a clear distinction between the historical study of language and its descriptive study. Consequently, this approach gained widespread acceptance among linguists and has received considerable scholarly attention.

Given the significance of the descriptive approach in linguistic research, an important question arises: Did Arab linguists contribute to the emergence of this approach, considering that they were among the earliest nations to engage in systematic linguistic inquiry? Furthermore, can the foundations of this approach be identified in Al-Kitab of Sibawaih, which is regarded as the cornerstone of classical Arabic linguistic scholarship?

Accordingly, the present paper seeks to identify some of the principal foundations advocated by proponents of the descriptive approach in its contemporary form and to demonstrate how these principles are reflected in Al-Kitāb of Sibawayh. This study relies extensively on Hasan

Ahmad Nuzad's work *The Descriptive Approach in Sibawaih's Al-Kitab*. Indeed, the present paper is, to a considerable extent, a critical reading of that work, from which the author has greatly benefited, as it offers a highly mature and comprehensive treatment of the subject.

The Foundations of the Descriptive Approach to Language Study and Their Manifestations in Al-Kitab

Research in this field has identified numerous principles that every scholar adopting a descriptive perspective should observe. However, the present study confines itself to the most essential of these principles.

1. Studying a Particular Language within a Specific Time and Placeⁱ

A. Temporal Unity

Ferdinand de Saussure emphasized the necessity of examining language within a clearly defined time frame while avoiding a historical perspective, so as to identify “the general rules and principles governing it, or to uncover its structural organization.”ⁱⁱⁱ Consequently, the descriptive approach has been characterized as “a static science, in which language is described as it exists at a particular point in time, not necessarily the present.”ⁱⁱⁱ

The earliest generation of Arab linguists also paid considerable attention to defining the temporal boundaries of linguistic authenticity when collecting linguistic material, including the author of *Al-Kitab*. It became generally accepted that “the period of linguistic purity ended in the middle of the second Islamic century in urban centers and at the end of the fourth century in the Bedouin regions.”^{iv}

Nevertheless, it is evident that the period of linguistic authenticity recognized by the early Arab linguists extended over a relatively long span. This has led many scholars to characterize early Arabic linguistic studies as essentially historical in nature. For example, Abo Ali al-Kurdi describes Arabic linguistic scholarship as follows:

“It encompassed more than one historical era and stage, collecting linguistic texts from the pre-Islamic, Islamic, and Umayyad periods. This, in itself, represents several developmental stages across different linguistic levels.”^v

By contrast, descriptive linguistics insists on restricting the temporal scope of linguistic investigation. As one scholar observes, “the period under investigation should preferably be short, since a prolonged time span does not serve descriptive analysis due to the various linguistic changes that occur over extended periods.”^{vi} Likewise, “once multiple time periods are included, the study shifts toward the historical approach, which is not confined to a single period because linguistic phenomena and their characteristics may change from one era to another.”^{vii}

Hasan Ahmad Nuzad addresses this apparent contradiction by arguing:

“This perceived inconsistency stems primarily from the influence of the Western descriptive approach and the neglect of the unique characteristics of the Arabic language. Arabic has preserved many of its linguistic features and characteristics that enabled the formulation of linguistic principles. Despite the chronological distance separating the early linguists from the poets of the pre-Islamic era, they were still capable of appreciating and understanding their language. Indeed, to this day, Arabic speakers continue to comprehend and appreciate classical

Arabic to a remarkable degree, unlike English, where a clear divide exists between its ancient and modern forms.”^{viii}

Moreover, historical linguistic research “requires the establishment of a chronological sequence of linguistic developments, that is, a relative chronology of linguistic changes.”^{ix} Early Arabic linguistic scholarship, however, did not adopt such a historical developmental perspective. Al-Kitab of Sibawaih provides sufficient evidence of this, as it is devoid of this type of historical investigation, reflecting instead a fundamentally descriptive methodology.^x

It should also be noted that the overlap and complementarity among linguistic approaches is both inevitable and widely acknowledged. The descriptive approach frequently serves as a methodological tool within other approaches, including the historical, comparative, and contrastive methods. In this regard, Mario Pei observes:

“While the primary function of descriptive linguistics is to describe language, and that of historical linguistics is to account for linguistic change, it is extremely difficult to separate the two in practical application.”^{xi}

B. Unity of Place

Modern descriptive linguistics considers the unity of place to be a fundamental requirement in the study of linguistic characteristics, and it does not recognize the use of linguistic texts collected from multiple geographical locations within the same descriptive analysis.^{xii}

This principle corresponds to what the early Arab linguists referred to as defining the geographical boundaries of eloquent Arabic. It is well known that Sībawayh explicitly identified the names of the Arabic dialects upon which he relied in collecting linguistic data. Moreover, his descriptive methodology was not confined merely to observing and describing the dialects branching from a single language; rather, it extended to tracing the effects of phonological variation occurring within the same dialect itself.^{xiii}

Accordingly, Sībawayh’s method of describing the Arabic language in its various dialectal forms was comprehensive. Throughout Al-Kitab, he presents linguistic issues and attributes their differences to dialectal variation through numerous examples, including the following:

In the chapter entitled “K Used as the Marker of the Pronoun”, he states:

“Know that in the feminine it is pronounced with kasrah, while in the masculine it is pronounced with fathāh. Thus you say: ‘I saw you’ to a woman and ‘I saw you’ to a man.

Many members of Tamim and some of Asad replace the feminine "K" with the consonant "Ch". They intended to make the distinction clearer in pause, since the consonant becomes silent when pausing. Therefore, they sought to differentiate between the masculine and the feminine, emphasizing and confirming this distinction. They considered distinguishing by means of a consonant stronger than distinguishing by means of a vowel. Hence, they employed this consonant just as they differentiated between the masculine and feminine by the suffix "N" in forms such as ‘they masculine went’ and ‘they feminine went’, and ‘you masculine plural’ and ‘you feminine plural’. They selected the nearest consonant resembling "K", namely "Ch", because both are voiceless consonants, and they did not choose a voiceless guttural consonant since "K" is not articulated from the throat. Thus they say: innish dhāhibah and mālish dhāhibah, meaning indeed you and what is yours.”^{xiv}

He further says:

“Know that some Arabs attach the consonant "S" to the K in order to make the feminine kasrah more evident. They attached "S" because it also occurs as an augmentative consonant in forms such as *istaf'ala*. Thus they say: : I give you s and I treated you generously s. However, when connected in continuous speech, they omit the "S", since the kasrah itself sufficiently indicates the feminine form.

Another group attaches "Ch" to indicate the kasrah when pausing, just as they substituted it for "K" for the sake of clarification. Thus they say: I give you and I treated you generously, but when speaking continuously, When they arrived, they abandoned it.”^{xv}

He also states:“Some Arabs say photo, he said, and Describe, replacing the final consonant with "Me", as though they agreed with those who pronounce verb. These are people from Qays and the inhabitants of the Hijaz. We know of no pattern in Arabic corresponding to verb, verb, or verb.”^{xvi}

Likewise, he remarks:

“Some members of Bakr ibn Wael say from your draems and with your, treating it analogously to the pronoun "H", since it is a pronominal marker occurring after kasrah. They therefore followed the preceding kasrah with another kasrah because it functions as a pronominal element, and this was easier for them than pronouncing a *ḍammah* after a kasrah. This usage is considered highly irregular. We heard speakers of this dialect recite the verse of life ...”

“Whenever their master said, concerning any event of time: ‘Restore the excellence of your wisdom,’ they would indeed restore it.”^{xvii}

Despite this comprehensiveness and the simultaneous study of multiple dialects although linguistic research was still in its early stages and the period was relatively advanced this approach has been criticized by several scholars. Among them is Tammam Hassan, who argues that early Arab linguists, in their treatment of dialects, did not confine themselves to the study of a single dialect. Rather, they examined numerous dialects that differed in many respects, with the result that “the unity of the subject under investigation was ultimately lost.”^{xviii}

Responding to this alleged criticism, Rashid Al Obaidi contends that “differences in phonological and semantic issues do not necessarily justify establishing independent linguistic rules for each dialect, because the grammatical system, syntactic structures, and linguistic framework remained fundamentally unified.”^{xix}

2. Making Spoken Language the Primary Object of Linguistic Inquiry

Modern descriptive linguistics places spoken language at the center of linguistic investigation because linguistic change is more clearly reflected in speech than in writing, while written language generally tends toward stability.^{xx}

Accordingly, the modern descriptive approach assigns considerable importance to spoken language, considering it the principal object of linguistic research, since linguistic developments and changes are manifested more accurately in spoken discourse.^{xxi}

Advocates of this approach therefore focus primarily on the study of spoken language, as it provides a more faithful basis for describing linguistic phenomena and identifying their characteristics, particularly their phonetic features. Nevertheless, they do not disregard written language, although their attention is more extensively directed toward spoken forms.^{xxii}

The descriptive method is clearly evident in the work of Sibawaih, particularly through his emphasis on the phonetic and articulatory aspects of language. For example, in describing the points of articulation, he states:

“The points of articulation of the letters are sixteen. Three belong to the throat: the furthest produces the A, "H", and "A"; the middle produces "A" and "H"; and the nearest to the mouth produces gh and kh'...”^{xxiii}

He also classifies the phonetic characteristics as follows:

“These letters fall into eleven categories: voiced, voiceless, plosive, fricative, lateral, those accompanied by audible release, trill, soft, gliding, emphatic, and non-emphatic.”^{xxiv}

In book, Sibawaih provides a remarkably precise description of the articulation point and phonetic quality of every letter. He further explains the phonetic changes that occur when sounds combine in connected speech with extraordinary accuracy, making all subsequent studies in this field largely dependent upon his pioneering work.

Moreover, Sibawaih explicitly advocated direct oral transmission as a means of accurately observing and understanding certain linguistic phenomena. For instance, in book, under the chapter entitled “Lengthening in the Genitive and Nominative, and the Absence of Lengthening while Maintaining the Original Vowel,” he states:

“As for those who lengthen the vowels, they prolong them, and their indication is represented by the letters "And" and "M". This, however, can only be properly understood through direct oral transmission.”^{xxv}

The scholar recognized that listening is not confined merely to hearing; rather, it also involves observing the speaker attentively and noting their facial expressions. It is evident that visual perception plays a vital role in enabling the listener to grasp speech accurately and comprehensively.^{xxvi} This, in itself, represents an original and distinctive approach to the study of spoken language.

From the foregoing discussion, it becomes evident that Tammam Hassan's claim that Arab linguists confined "the codification and regulation of language to its written form, whereas language is fundamentally spoken" is inconsistent with the actual practices of classical Arabic linguistic scholarship.

3. Adopting Scientific Induction as a Method for Deriving General Linguistic Principles^{xxvii}

Tammam Hassan argues that: "Induction and grammatical codification are among the principal methods of description in linguistic studies... A researcher who does not rely on these two foundations remains lost amidst the chaos of scattered linguistic units... These units may consist of sounds in phonetic studies, letters, syllables, or positional phenomena in phonological analysis, morphological patterns in morphology, grammatical categories in syntax, or other linguistic elements.”^{xxviii}

Historical evidence, however, demonstrates that the Arabic scholarly tradition pioneered the use of induction. Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to assert that "no one understood the true nature and function of induction as thoroughly as our early Muslim scholars, nor applied it as effectively.”^{xxix}

Ibn al-Sirraj even defines grammar as: "A science extracted by the early scholars through the inductive examination of the speech of the Arabs until they identified the purpose intended by the original speakers of the language. Through inductive analysis of Arabic speech (...) they established that the subject takes the nominative case, the object the accusative case, and that verbs whose middle radical is "M" or "And" undergo vowel alternation, as illustrated in forms such as He got up and sold."^{xxx}

Sibawaih's *Al-Kitab* is fundamentally constructed upon the principle of induction.^{xxxi} "His treatment of inflected and indeclinable forms clearly reflects an inductive methodology. He systematically presented all inflectional case endings in every grammatical context governed by syntactic rules. The inflected form changes according to the governing element, whereas the indeclinable form remains fixed and unaltered."^{xxxii}

Examples of inductive reasoning in the Arabic grammatical tradition are numerous. It is sufficient here to cite Sibawaih's inductive treatment of the augmentative letters, particularly since the researcher 'Adnan Moḥammed Salman maintains that no predecessor had anticipated Sibawaih in this regard, and that the many scholars who came after him were unable to improve upon or correct his findings.^{xxxiii}

The following passage from book is reproduced in full so that the reader may appreciate the mechanism of meticulous induction in one of its clearest manifestations:

Sibawaih states: "Chapter on the Knowledge of the Augmentative Letters: They are ten letters:" character "A" is considered an additional letter when it occurs at the beginning of a noun as the fourth letter or beyond, and likewise at the beginning of a verb, as in So every and I go. It is also added as the connecting hamza in forms such as The Link and ibn and hits.

As for the "A", it is added as the second letter in patterns such as verb and similar forms, as the third letter in words such as 'Imād, as the fourth letter in 'Aṭshā and Ma'zā, and as the fifth letter in words such as Ḥalbilāb, Jaḥjabī, and Ḥabanṭā. This will be explained in greater detail in the section devoted to verbs, God willing.

The "H" is added to indicate vowel movement, as has already been explained. It is also added after the long "A" in expressions of lamentation and vocative

forms, such as Wa young man and O young man. Its function has likewise been clarified.

The "M" is considered an additional letter when it occurs initially as the fourth letter or beyond, just like the hamza in nouns and verbs, as He throws and He raises, He hits. It may also be added as the second or third letter in the same positions occupied by the "A", as will be explained later, God willing. Furthermore, it appears as the fourth letter in forms such as Cautionary and a lamp, and as the fifth letter in words such as Turtle-like. It is also attached in a doubled form to every noun when annexed, just as it is attached to nouns when they are pluralized with the feminine suffix -T, where the "A" precedes the "T", and likewise in the dual form before the "N". Should any instance of these additional letters have been omitted, it will be clarified in the discussion of verbs, God willing.

The "N" is added as the fifth letter in patterns such as tow verbs and similar forms, and as the sixth letter in words such as saffron. It also appears as the fourth letter in words such as jerk, and ostentation, and in other inflected nouns. It is further employed in verbs that take the light and heavy emphatic N, in the form tow verbs, in feminine plural verb forms such as You do

and They (two) do, as well as in the dual and plural forms of nouns. It also occurs initially in We do, as the second letter in Descendants, and as the third letter in capuche. The "T" serves as the marker of the feminine plural, as in Guiding Principles, and also marks the feminine singular, as in this Ṭalḥah, Raḥmah, daughter, and sister. It is added as the fourth letter in forms such as Sanbatah, as the fifth in goblin, and as the sixth in spider.

. It also occurs initially from the fourth position onward in the verb forms second person and third person feminine, and in nouns such as Like drying up, receding, and settling.

The "S" is added in the morphological pattern he do it.

The "M" is added initially in patterns such as predicate, mifāl, mafal, mifal, and related forms.

The "And" is added as the second letter in words such as Ḥawqal and a hermitage, as the third letter in Gatherings, Old woman, and Fault.

, just as the "Y" appears in the pattern, as in happy and Atheer. It also occurs as the fourth letter in Dull-witted and And a horn-like structure, and as the fifth in A skullcap, A fruit-bearing limb, and similar forms such as 'Aḍrafarūt, just as the "Y" appears in Smiling.

"A" is prefixed whenever the first radical of a word is quiescent, as in son, And a man, and And strike. This is what is known as the connecting hamza.

Finally, the "L" is added in forms such as 'Abdal and Dhalika, and similar expressions.^{xxxiv}

From examining this inductive text, it becomes evident that Sibawaih adopts a systematic process of classification after collecting linguistic data at its various levels. There is no doubt that "the process of classification constitutes an integral component of the descriptive method in linguistic research."^{xxxv}

With regard to the classification of linguistic material which follows the stage of induction and represents one of the fundamental principles of the modern descriptive approach this classification is clearly manifested throughout numerous chapters of book. One notable example is his division of speech into its principal categories:

"This is the chapter on the categories of speech in Arabic. Speech consists of a noun, a verb, and a particle that conveys a meaning which is neither a noun nor a verb."

The noun includes such examples as man, horse, and wall.

As for the verb, its forms are derived from the lexical expressions denoting the events associated with nouns. These forms are structured to express what has already occurred (the past), what is expected to occur but has not yet taken place (the future), and what is currently taking place and has not yet ceased (the present continuous).

The form denoting the past includes examples such as he went, he heard, he remained, and he was praised. The form denoting what has not yet occurred appears in the imperative, as in go, kill, and strike, and in the indicative, as in he kills, he goes, he strikes, he is killed, and he is struck. The same applies to the form expressing an action that is ongoing and has not yet come to an end when one reports it. Events are represented by verbal nouns such as striking, praise, and killing.

As for words that convey meaning without being either nouns or verbs, examples include then, shall/will, the "And" of oath, the "L" of annexation or possession, and other similar particles."^{xxxvi}

4. Linking Linguistic Study to Actual Language Use through Reliance on Spoken Evidence

Linguistic analysis should be connected to authentic language use by relying on spoken evidence in order to identify the pronunciation habits of native speakers of the language.^{xxxvii}

The descriptive approach in linguistic research is fundamentally based on listening, since all subsequent stages of research can only proceed after the collection of linguistic data, which are then observed, analyzed, and systematically studied.^{xxxviii}

Early Arab linguists attached great importance to direct linguistic evidence and regarded it as the highest authority in linguistic investigation. No analogy was accepted when it contradicted authentic linguistic evidence. They treated attested usage as authoritative, leaving no room for independent reasoning in the presence of explicit textual evidence, following the methodological approach of jurists in the field of Islamic legal theory. Sibawaih did not depart from the views of his teachers in this regard. Indeed:

"Sibawaih's sources of linguistic evidence varied between direct transmission from native Arab speakers, indirect transmission through his teachers, and consultation with members of particular Arab tribes whose settlements were geographically dispersed. At times he relied on two informants, and at other times on a single Arab informant. This reflects his determination to collect the greatest possible amount of linguistic data from the dialects spoken throughout the Arabian Peninsula."^{xxxix}

Among the expressions employed by Sibawaih in *Al-Kitab* to indicate that a form was based on direct linguistic evidence are:

"We heard the eloquent Arabs."^{xl}

"We heard the eloquent speakers among the Arabs."^{xli}

"We heard the trustworthy Arabs."⁷

"We heard it from those among the Arabs whom we trust."^{xlii}

"We heard it from one whose Arabic is considered reliable."^{xliii}

It can be inferred from these statements that Sibawaih concentrated on two fundamental principles: eloquence and reliability, the latter encompassing two aspects: the trustworthiness of the narrator as an individual and confidence in the authenticity of his Arabic linguistic competence and innate linguistic intuition.

Furthermore, Sibawaih relied extensively on indirect transmission through his teachers, whose authority rested both on their eloquence and on the accuracy and integrity of their transmission. Among the expressions found in *Al-Kitab* are the following:

"I asked Al-Khalīl about their expression *al-Ash'arūn*. He replied: 'They merely added the suffix *-ūn*, just as they formed the broken plurals by saying *al-Ashā'ir*, *al-Ashā'ith*, and *al-Masāmi'ah*. Whenever they used the broken plural of *Misma'* and *al-Ash'ath* to refer to the descendants of *Misma'* and *al-Ash'ath*, they added *-ūn*. The same applies to *al-A'jamūn*. Some Arabs also said *al-Numayrūn*. However, not every noun of this pattern takes the suffix *-ūn*, just as not every noun of this type forms a broken plural. One should therefore restrict oneself to the forms actually transmitted from the Arabs; this is the principle governing this category."^{xliv}

He also states:

"Abo Amer used to say: Do not come to us lest we insult you."^{xlv}

Likewise, he reports:

"I heard Yonis say... and I asked him about the verse: 'Do you not see that Allah sends down water from the sky, whereupon the earth becomes green?'^{xlvi} He replied: 'This construction is obligatory and serves as a form of rhetorical attention-drawing, as though you were saying: Do you perceive that Allah has sent down water from the sky, and consequently such-and-such occurred.'^{xlvi}

These examples clearly demonstrate Sibawaih's strong commitment to objectivity, a defining characteristic of the descriptive method. He consistently sought to formulate linguistic judgments on the basis of authentic linguistic evidence while avoiding preconceived opinions unrelated to the nature of language itself.^{xlvi}

From the foregoing discussion, it may be concluded that Sibawaih attached the utmost importance to attested linguistic usage, treating it with exceptional caution and striving to transmit the language exactly as it was spoken by eloquent native Arab speakers. This constitutes one of the principal foundations of the descriptive methodology employed throughout *Al-Kitab*.

5. Rejection of Analogy Based on Aristotelian Philosophy and Logic, and the Emphasis on Studying Language through Natural Linguistic Analogy^{xlix}

For a considerable period, Western linguistic studies relied heavily on Aristotelian logic as the primary basis for linguistic inquiry. This approach often produced judgments that were detached from the true nature and internal logic of language. With the emergence of the descriptive approach, however, a distinction was established between the logic inherent in language and Aristotelian logic. The former came to be recognized as legitimate and indispensable in linguistic analysis, whereas the latter was regarded as an external framework inappropriately imposed upon language.^l

It is well known that early Arab grammarians attached great importance to analogy as a methodological device through which unattested forms could be inferred from attested linguistic usage. In doing so, they relied on their sound linguistic intuition, intellectual discernment, and refined appreciation of authentic Arabic speech. *Al-Kitab* contains numerous discussions illustrating this principle, among them the following statement:

"Concerning what functions like in certain contexts according to the dialect of the people of the Hijaz, yet ultimately reverts to its original function this particle is "M". Thus one says: *Abdo Allahi akhaka*, and *Zaydon muntalīqan*."

As for Banu Tamim, they treated it in the same way "M" and H, that is, they did not regard it as governing any grammatical element, which conforms to the analogical principle, since it is neither a verb nor comparable, and therefore does not permit an implicit subject.

The people of the Hijaz, however, likened it to because its meaning corresponds to that of *mklaysa*, just as they likened *lait* to it in certain contexts.

Sibawaih consistently adhered to the authentic speech of the Arabs and regarded it as the fundamental basis of grammatical analogy, which could not be overridden. He states: "Had the Arabs whose linguistic authenticity is trusted not spoken according to this analogy, it would not have been taken into consideration."^{li} Consequently, Sibawaih sought to describe linguistic facts as they actually existed, while establishing linguistic principles that speakers were expected to observe because they were derived directly from the speech of the Arabs.

It is also worth noting that Sibawaih's descriptive methodology differs from that of later formal structural linguists. His descriptions are frequently accompanied by explanation and causal interpretation. In this respect, he followed the approach established by his teacher, seeking the underlying causes of linguistic phenomena whenever possible. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that Sibawaih rarely discusses a linguistic phenomenon without providing interpretation, analysis, and justification, whether based on the teachings transmitted from his teachers or on his own scholarly reasoning. The term *tafsir* (explanation) appears explicitly in *Al-Kitab*, as in his statement: "If you wish, you may say: 'Indeed, Zayd is standing' or 'standing'. The explanation for the accusative and nominative forms of *qaim* here is the same as its explanation in the construction of the initial subject."ⁱⁱⁱ As for the procedural application of explanation without explicitly using the term, examples of this are abundant throughout *Al-Kitab*.

Conclusion

The following are some brief conclusions drawn from this discussion:

It becomes evident to every careful scholar that the Arabs were pioneers in developing what is today known as the descriptive approach. This methodology emerged from a cumulative intellectual tradition in which Arab scholars played a significant role through their rich linguistic heritage.

It is essential to emphasize the importance of returning to the authentic linguistic heritage in order to avoid mistakes similar to those made by some modern Arab descriptivists who rejected grammatical analogy, legal retribution and causal explanation. Ironically, modern descriptive linguistics has ultimately acknowledged many of the principles advocated by Sibawaih and his contemporaries centuries ago.

The descriptive approach is clearly present in *Al-Kitab*. Indeed, it may be argued that many of the fundamental principles later established by modern linguistics can already be found, in embryonic form, in Sibawaih's work.

Sibawaih's descriptive methodology is fundamentally both descriptive and explanatory. It does not merely record linguistic phenomena; rather, it provides interpretations rooted in the intrinsic nature and internal logic of the Arabic language.

ⁱ Nayef Kharma, *Insights into Contemporary Linguistic Studies*, Alam Al-Ma'rifah Series, 1978, p. 106.

ⁱⁱ Mario Pei, *Foundations of Linguistics*, translated by Ahmad Mukhtar Umar, 8th ed., Alam Al-Kutub, 1998, p. 137.

ⁱⁱⁱ Abd al-Razzaq ibn Farraj al-Sa'idi, *The Foundations of Arabic Linguistics in Medina*, Vol. 1, p. 348.

^{iv} Muhammad Salah al-Din Mustafa, *Descriptive Grammar through the Holy Qur'an*, Al-Matba'ah al-Fanniyyah, Cairo, 1986, Vol. 1, p. 17.

^v Ibrahim Muhammad Ibrahim Muhammad Uthman, *Methods and Schools of Linguistic Research*, p. 5.

^{vi} Issam Farouq, "The Descriptive Method: Its Foundations and Presence in the Arab Heritage," Alukah Network: <http://www.alukah.net/>.

^{vii} Hassan Ahmad Nuzad, *The Descriptive Method in Sibawayh's Al-Kitāb*, p. 50.

^{viii} Hassan Ahmad Nuzad, *The Descriptive Method in Sibawayh's Al-Kitāb*, p. 50, cited in: *The Status of Classical Linguistic Research in Modern Linguistics*, p. 75.

^{ix} Hassan Ahmad Nuzad, *The Descriptive Method in Sibawayh's Al-Kitāb*, p. 51.

-
- ^x Mario Pei, *Foundations of Linguistics*, translated by Ahmad Mukhtar Umar, 8th ed., Alam Al-Kutub, 1998, p. 137..
- ^{xi} Muhammad Salah al-Din Mustafa, *Descriptive Grammar through the Holy Qur'an*, p. 22.
- ^{xii} Hassan Ahmad Nuzad, *The Descriptive Method in Sibawayh's Al-Kitāb*, 1st ed., Dar Dijlah, Amman, Jordan, 2007, p. 53.
- ^{xiii} Sibawayh (Amr ibn Uthman ibn Qanbar al-Harithi Abu Bishr), *Al-Kitāb*, ed. Abd al-Salam Muhammad Harun, 3rd ed., Vol. 4, Al-Khanji Library, Cairo, 1408 AH/1988 CE, p. 199.
- ^{xiv} Sibawayh, *Al-Kitāb*, Vol. 4, p. 199.
- ^{xv} Sibawayh, *Al-Kitāb*, Vol. 4, p. 256.
- ^{xvi} *Ibid.*, p. 297.
- ^{xvii} Hassan Tammam, *Language between Prescriptivism and Descriptivism*, Alam Al-Kutub, Cairo, 2000, p. 159.
- ^{xviii} Rashid al-Ubaidi, "Linguistic Research and Its Relationship to Structuralism in Linguistics," *Mustansiriyah Journal of Arts*, Baghdad, 1985, p. 60.
- ^{xix} Hassan Ahmad Nuzad, *The Descriptive Method in Sibawayh's Al-Kitāb*, p. 29.
- ^{xx} Hassan Ahmad Nuzad, *The Descriptive Method in Sibawayh's Al-Kitāb*, p. 44, citing Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, p. 43.
- ^{xxi} Ibrahim Muhammad Ibrahim Uthman, *Methods and Schools of Linguistic Research*, p. 5.
- ^{xxii} Sibawayh, *Al-Kitāb*, Vol. 3, p. 401.
- ^{xxiii} *Ibid*
- ^{xxiv} Sibawayh, *Al-Kitāb*, Vol. 4, p. 202.
- ^{xxv} See: Hassan Ahmad Nuzad, *The Descriptive Method in Sibawayh's Al-Kitāb*, p. 46.
- ^{xxvi} Hassan Ahmad Nuzad, *The Descriptive Method in Sibawayh's Al-Kitāb*, p. 29.
- ^{xxvii} Hassan Tammam, *Language between Prescriptivism and Descriptivism*, p. 149.
- ^{xxviii} Adnan Muhammad Salman, "Induction in Language," Vol. 3, *Journal of the Iraqi Scientific Academy*, Baghdad, 1983, p. 203.
- ^{xxix} Ibn al-Sarraj (Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-Sari ibn Sahl al-Nahwi), *The Principles of Grammar*, ed. Abd al-Husayn al-Fatli, Vol. 1, Al-Risalah Foundation, Beirut, Lebanon, p. 35.
- ^{xxx} Hassan Ahmad Nuzad, *The Descriptive Method in Sibawayh's Al-Kitāb*, p. 56.
- ^{xxxi} Hassan Ahmad Nuzad, *The Descriptive Method in Sibawayh's Al-Kitāb*, p. 56, cited in: *The Phenomenon of Irregularity in Arabic Grammar*, p. 120.
- ^{xxxii} Adnan Muhammad Salman, "Induction in Language," p. 203..
- ^{xxxiii} Sibawayh, *Al-Kitāb*, Vol. 4, p. 235.
- ^{xxxiv} Hassan Ahmad Nuzad, *The Descriptive Method in Sibawayh's Al-Kitāb*, p. 60.
- ^{xxxv} Sibawayh, *Al-Kitāb*, Vol. 1, p. 12.
- ^{xxxvi} Hassan Ahmad Nuzad, *The Descriptive Method in Sibawayh's Al-Kitāb*, p. 29.
- ^{xxxvii} Hassan Tammam, *Language between Prescriptivism and Descriptivism*, p. 166.
- ^{xxxviii} Hassan Ahmad Nuzad, *The Descriptive Method in Sibawayh's Al-Kitāb*, p. 38.
- ^{xxxix} Sibawayh, *Al-Kitāb*, Vol. 1, p. 199.
- ^{xl} Sibawayh, *Al-Kitāb*, Vol. 3, p. 503..
- ^{xli} Sibawayh, *Al-Kitāb*, Vol. 1, p. 423.
- ^{xlii} Hassan Ahmad Nuzad, *The Descriptive Method in Sibawayh's Al-Kitāb*, p. 71, cited in: *The Sibawayh, Al-Kitāb*, Vol. 4, p. 139.
- ^{xliiii} Sibawayh, *Al-Kitāb*, Vol. 4, p. 465.
- ^{xliv} Sibawayh, *Al-Kitāb*, Vol. 3, p. 410.
- ^{xliv} Sibawayh, *Al-Kitāb*, Vol. 3, p. 40.
- ^{xlvi} The Holy Qur'an, Surah Al-Hajj (22), Verse 63.
- ^{xlvii} Sibawayh, *Al-Kitāb*, Vol. 3, p. 40.
- ^{xlviii} Hassan Ahmad Nuzad, *The Descriptive Method in Sibawayh's Al-Kitāb*, p. 29.
- ^{xlix} Hassan Ahmad Nuzad, *The Descriptive Method in Sibawayh's Al-Kitāb*, p. 29.

ⁱ Hassan Ahmad Nuzad, The Descriptive Method in Sibawayh's Al-Kitāb, p. 71, cited in: The Foundations of Arabic Grammar, p. 67.

ⁱⁱ Sibawayh, Al-Kitāb, Vol. 2, p. 20.

ⁱⁱⁱ Sibawayh, Al-Kitāb, Vol. 2, p. 132.