



THE INTERPRETATION OF THE GRAMMATICAL GOVERNOR IN IBN HISHAM'S MUGHNI AL-LABIB

Dilnoza Kholmirezayeva

Arabic Language Teacher at the "Xadicha Kubro"

Women's Secondary Specialized Islamic Educational Institution

Abstract. *This thesis analyzes the interpretation of the theory of the grammatical governor in Jamal al-Din Ibn Hisham al-Ansari's work Mughni al-Labib 'an Kutub al-A'arib. It discusses the structure of the work, the classification of verbal and semantic governors, the theory of the implied governor and syntactic attachment (ta'alluq), as well as the methodological significance of ta'liq, ilgha', tanazu', and ishtighal. The study demonstrates Ibn Hisham's attitude toward the views of the Basran and Kufan schools of grammar, his evidence-based criterion of preference, and his recognition of meaning as a primary factor in the process of grammatical parsing (i'rab). The thesis evaluates Mughni al-Labib as an important source in the history of Arabic grammar that transformed theoretical heritage into a practical analytical apparatus.*

Keywords: *Ibn Hisham, Mughni al-Labib, Arabic grammar, nahw, grammatical governor, i'rab, ta'alluq, Basran school, Kufan school.*

INTRODUCTION

Jamal al-Din Abu Muhammad 'Abd Allah ibn Yusuf ibn Ahmad ibn Hisham al-Ansari (708/1309–761/1360) was a major representative of the Egyptian school of nahw during the Mamluk period. His work Mughni al-Labib 'an Kutub al-A'arib represents the final, synthesized stage of the classical Arabic grammatical tradition (al-Suyuti, 1965: 68–69). Ibn Khaldun highly praised this scholar and specifically noted that a grammarian had appeared in Egypt who possessed an even deeper knowledge of nahw than Sibawayh (Ibn Khaldun, 2004:386).

The purpose of this thesis is to determine how the theory of the grammatical governor is interpreted in Mughni al-Labib, to identify the author's methodological position on this issue, and to examine his attitude toward the Basran-Kufan disputes. The study was carried out through textual-analytical and comparative methods based on the edition of the work prepared by Mazin al-Mubarak and Muhammad 'Ali Hamdallah.



MAIN BODY

The Structure of the Work and the Place of the Governor Issue within It.

The very title of the work - “that which makes one independent of books on i‘rab” - reveals the author’s purpose: he aimed to create a single analytical source that could replace separate manuals on grammatical parsing. The book consists of eight chapters, and their structure is subordinated to the logic of the theory of the grammatical governor: the first chapter explains individual particles in alphabetical order together with the conditions under which they govern or do not govern; the second chapter deals with the types and rulings of sentences; the third chapter discusses the attachment of adverbials and prepositional phrases; the fourth chapter examines precautionary issues; the fifth chapter treats frequently occurring aspects of i‘rab; the sixth chapter explains the method of parsing and its conditions; the seventh chapter presents general rules necessary for the parser; and the eighth chapter discusses the mistakes made by those who perform i‘rab and the reasons for those mistakes (Ibn Hisham al-Ansari, 1985, vol. 1: 5–7).

It is therefore clear that the issue of the grammatical governor is not separated in the work as an independent theoretical section; rather, it is transformed into the guiding principle of the entire structure of the book. This is a distinctive feature of Ibn Hisham’s approach, allowing the work to be characterized not as a purely theoretical debate but as a text aimed at forming a practical analytical apparatus.

Classification of Governors and the Conditions of Their Operation.

Ibn Hisham traditionally divides governors into verbal and semantic types. Verbal governors include the verb, the active participle, the passive participle, the verbal noun, the assimilated adjective, the elative noun, and governing particles; semantic governors are limited to *ibtida’*, which raises the subject, and *tajarrud*, which raises the imperfect verb. The author pays particular attention to defining the conditions under which particles govern: in the first chapter, he systematically explains, for each particle, the conditions on which its operation or cancellation depends - for example, the different status of the particle *ma* in the Hijazi and Tamimi dialects, the operation of *inna* and its sisters, and the use of *la* for absolute negation of genus (Ibn Hisham al-Ansari, 1985:40–43).

The Implied Governor and the Theory of Attachment.

The third chapter of the work demonstrates the most consistent application of the doctrine of the grammatical governor. According to Ibn Hisham, every adverbial



and prepositional phrase must necessarily be attached (ta'alluq) to some governor; if no explicit governor is present in the text, then a verb such as kana or istaqarra is assumed. The author emphasizes here that ellipsis is not arbitrary and is permissible only when there is semantic or verbal evidence; he also warns against multiplying implied governors without justification (Ibn Hisham al-Ansari, 1985, vol. 2: 415–417). This aspect represents an important point of restraint in Ibn Hisham's theory and, to a certain extent, softens the later criticism that the theory of the grammatical governor artificially complicates grammatical analysis.

Suspension of Operation: Ta'liq and Ilgha'.

Ibn Hisham distinguishes two cases in which the operation of verbs of the heart, such as zanna and 'alima, is suspended: ta'liq, in which the operation is cancelled in wording but preserved in syntactic position, and ilgha', in which the operation is completely cancelled. As causes of ta'liq, he identifies the intervention of particles of negation, the lam of inception, and interrogative particles between the verb and its complement (Ibn Hisham al-Ansari, 1985, vol. 2: 508). This analysis makes it possible to distinguish between the formal operation of the governor and its semantic status, showing that the author did not treat the governor as a purely morphological phenomenon.

Issues of Tanazu' and Ishtighal.

On the question of two governors competing for one governed element (tanazu' fi al-'amal), Ibn Hisham presents the views of the Basran and Kufan schools comparatively: the Basrans preferred the second governor, while the Kufans preferred the first (Ibn Hisham al-Ansari, 1985, vol. 2: 630–634). Although the author presents this dispute in a manner close to al-Anbari's account in al-Insaf (al-Anbari, 1961, vol. 1: 83–88), in many cases he expresses his own preference (ikhtiyar), supporting either the Basran or the Kufan position according to the strength of the evidence. In the chapter on ishtighal, he also analyzes in detail how the fronting of the governed element changes the possible forms of i'rab in relation to the governor.

Methodology of I'rab and the Procedure for Identifying the Governor.

From the perspective of practical methodology, the sixth chapter is the most valuable part of the work. Ibn Hisham describes the process of i'rab step by step: first the general meaning of the text is understood, then its structural units are separated, after that the governor of each unit is identified, and finally the sign of i'rab is assigned. The



author regards parsing without considering meaning as a serious methodological error and, in the eighth chapter, demonstrates through examples the incorrect analyses that result from such an approach (Ibn Hisham al-Ansari, 1985:693–700, 787–792). This view is ideologically consistent with Ibn Jinni's idea that the governor is connected with the intention of the speaker (Ibn Jinni, 1952:109).

The Influence of the Work on the Later Tradition.

From the time it was written, Mughni al-Labib gave rise to a broad commentary tradition: the commentaries of al-Damamini and al-Shumunni (al-Damamini, 1983, vol. 1: 27; al-Shumunni, 1305 AH, vol. 1: 4), al-Suyuti's Sharh Shawahid al-Mughni, and al-Baghdadi's monumental work Khizanat al-Adab all emerged from the need to explain the poetic citations contained in this book (al-Baghdadi, 1979, vol. 1: 5–9). In the madrasas of Transoxiana, the work was also studied as one of the advanced textbooks of nahw, and today the tradition of its classifications and terminology continues in textbooks on Arabic grammar used in Uzbekistan (Ibrohimov & Yusupov, 1997:20–22).

CONCLUSION

Mughni al-Labib does not propose a new theoretical system for the theory of the grammatical governor; however, it occupies a special place because it critically selected the centuries-old tradition that preceded it and transformed it into a unified practical apparatus of analysis.

Although Ibn Hisham works within the doctrine of the grammatical governor associated with the Basran school, he is free from school-based partisanship, accepts the strength of evidence as the primary criterion, and, where necessary, gives preference to Kufan or Baghdadi views.

Although the author recognizes the implied governor, he makes its use conditional upon clear evidence; this principle may be evaluated as an internal methodological control aimed at limiting excessive theorization within the theory of the grammatical governor.

In the work, the governor is analyzed without being separated from meaning: the principle of subordinating i'rab to semantic interpretation constitutes the core of the analytical methodology of Mughni al-Labib.

The complete translation of Mughni al-Labib into Uzbek and the comparative study of its terminology related to the grammatical governor in relation to modern linguistic terminology remain among the urgent tasks of Uzbek Oriental studies.



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