



ISSN: 2663-8118 (Online) | ISSN: 2074-9554 (Print)

Journal Of Al-Frahedis Arts

Available Online: <http://www.jaa.tu.edu.iq>

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### Keywords:

- Almakam
- Originator
- Rhetoric
- Factor Syntax
- Parsing
- Eloquence

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received : 15/03/2019  
Accepted : 05/06/2019  
Available Online : 23/07/2019

## The Importance of Syntax in Pragmatics

### ABSTRACT

The Arab rhetoricians suggested that syntax can have an important role in pragmatics whereas syntax and semantics are generally interdependent. Therefore, there must be a strong relationship between pragmatics and syntax and consequently this approach is regarded as a new method in linguistic analysis of a linguistic structure (Annajar (2010:87) .

It is hypothesized that Arabic syntax only specializes in diacritical remarks and that is the aim of syntax but this Concept is realized differently. This fact seems to be much more significant in Arabic than to be in English. Moreover, this idea is quite different from that of English .

Some sayings in Nahjulbalagha (نهج البلاغة) are chosen at random with their interpretation to test the validity of the mentioned hypotheses .

The basic findings arrived at are as follows :(1) it is not significant to understand syntax just on the basis of diacritical remarks but syntax may include other aspects than this task, (2) six sayings are taken randomly from (نهج البلاغة) to be our data, and (3) The importance of syntax in pragmatics seems to be clear in several ideas while English Grammar can be exchanged for syntax very often. Moreover, Arabic syntax can be understood easily unlike the English ones which cannot be realized easily and undergo many difficulties to be conceived well .

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## Introduction

Since Arabic syntax is not an easy subject to deal with, the study will be limited to a few areas which can show only the significance of syntax in pragmatics and focus on different views in both Arabic and English. The study also tackles little difference in syntax between Arabic and English. The study is going to show a short excerpt of sayings taken from (نهج البلاغة) with their interpretation and translation and this will be a good way to clarify syntax role in pragmatics and to become clear and easier to understand. Take the following phrase : (الدهر يومان) which is mentioned in (نهج البلاغة) and see how syntax enables us to reach the true meaning as well as other syntactic aspects in linguistic analysis. It is possible to determine which type of syntax can deal with the phrase (الدهر يومان) which mentioned before and consequently the study deals with different views which were done by different writers. (Muter (1966:42).

## 1. Syntax and Pragmatics In Arabic

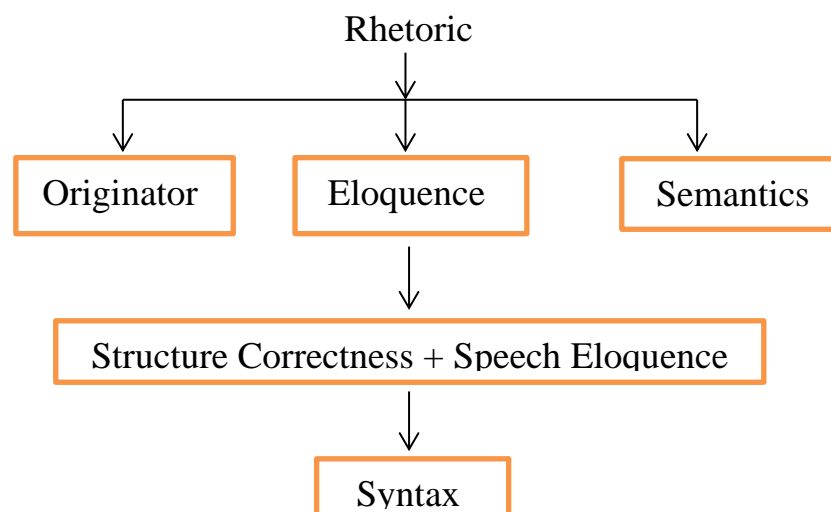
The study only deals with four points which give syntax great importance to pragmatics and they are summarized as follow: The relation between syntax and pragmatics, syntax and philosophy, Meaning, and function. It is significant to make them become clear and easier to understand based on a very succinct way .

### 1.1 Syntax and Pragmatics

Khafaje (1961:15) says that it is, without doubt, syntax is regarded to be one of the most basic element of pragmatics because nothing can achieve 'linguistic Correctness' i.e. what is said must be done based on precise and sensible way provided that it must have full meaning. The influential speech has to be related to other important issues, semantics is the first one whereas it can focus on the Communicational aspect. Eloquent science has come to be the second issue that concentrates on an uncovering idea in rhetoric. As for originator science, that's a branch of rhetoric whose job is to make a speech as attractive and have a lot of decoration. The need of linguistic authenticity must come before the need of variety in methods of performance and other decorative devices in speech. This Can constitute a high proportion of pragmatics since it covers scopes of meaning in terms of linguistic Correctness or authenticity (ibid:16).

Wafee (1962:519) states that Correctness of a linguistic structure and speech eloquence are Considered to be terms of rhetoric. At the same time syntax is responsible for making these two terms be Correct and appropriate. Syntax must not be set aside and consequently there is no pragmatics without syntax. Pragmatics can include everything to be interconnected with rhetoric. Syntax is also a basic element of rhetoric. So syntax and pragmatics at large are interdependent as in the following figure:

Figure (1): The Relationship between pragmatics and syntax as suggested by khafaje (1961:15) .



## 1.2 Syntax And Philosophy

Matlub (1964:14) Confirms that there are two ways to define and explain philosophy as a term but the two ways depend on a certain situation. Philosophy at large is the study of beliefs and views about the meaning of life. But it is different when to refer to the relation between syntax and philosophy. With regard in this aspect, philosophy means to know things in their essence; philosophy of a certain thing is concerned with extensive knowledge of it as well as its origin. Moreover, the meaning of philosophy is to reach the truth of things.

The truth of everything is certainly concerned with its meaning. Syntax does belong to references, meaning and rhetoric. So is pragmatics. This is not controversial because the relation between syntax and philosophy is clear throughout investigation. The relation among syntax, philosophy and pragmatics has become clear too. But the general meaning of syntax is to make things clear or giving reasons for them. This is really the result that Theory of factor has come to exist as well as factor syntax, i.e. (نحو العامل) (ibid:16) .

## 1.3 Syntax And Semantics

Al-khuli (1960:199) points out that the old Arab grammarians suggested that syntax was very important just because it enables speakers and listeners to use it as a certain standard for the speech authenticity or correctness. But nowadays it is different philosophy where syntax has come to be one of the most important elements in which eloquence of speech depends upon it completely. This vital point brought so many grammarians to go deeply and into details concerning secrets of rhetoric like a miracle of Quran as well as other rhetorical meanings. In past, the Arabs were in need of knowing diacritical remarks and they considered 'syntax' that it means everything in Arabic. Therefore, this view was in their mind for a long time and they called parsing syntax or 'syntax of parsing'. The Arabs took great attention to the issue of parsing so that they

kept Arabic from losing besides they confirmed that it is a big wrong for the Arab man to be wrong about parsing.

With appearing new views and new linguists, they agreed to give syntax of meanings as a new name according to different opinions .

#### **1.4 Syntax And Function**

Asheikh (1968:11) says that the Arab modern linguists realized currently the significance of functional use of language and consequently functional syntax has appeared. Functional syntax is of great importance to a language user that it makes him to employ language on the real and ideal use. Moreover, functional syntax also enables a language user to point out the mistakes or faults of the real use of language. Functional syntax also Can make a listeners feel admiration, i.e. it Can impress something on a listener and draw his attention to other aspects then it Can have the power to affect .

#### **1.5 Syntax and Almakam (المقام)**

Hindawe (2000:125) points out that there is a strong relation between syntax and Almakam is that Almakam Can be expressed for an occasion of talk. An occasion of talk is regarded to be one of the important fundamentals in pragmatics since there is no impact of language on a listener without occasion of speech. Syntax is a basic Component of rhetoric and Arabic rhetoric is equivalent to the English “pragmatics”.

Almakam (occasion of talk) is always related to a Culture of each era. Therefore, there is a strong connection between syntax and Culture Makam (المقام الحضاري) in a certain era. Thus, each era Can have a different syntax; scientist and educated people Can follow a certain syntax in a specific era are since time or era always different from each other. This is because syntax represents different methods to produce correct and eloquent linguistic structure. Since the notion of Culture includes so many aspects either in language or other affairs of life, linguists and educated people try to Compose, produce and innovate what Coincide with their era about Cultural aspect (ibid:127) .

#### **1.6 Parsing Syntax (نحو الاعراب)**

Ahmed (1985:116) Says that linguists tried to show a great interest in parsing, especially diacritical remarks and they gave a good reason for it is that parsing is regarded as one means of presenting syntax besides diacritical remarks which are Considered to be one of the most important methods of syntax which benefit language users to Correct a speech and interpret its meaning. In a specific stage of history and not all time, the Arab linguists gave a special attention to syntax for two reasons: they wanted to keep Arabic from being lost and there was a big fault with an Arabic speaker when he was wrong about paring .

### **2. Differences Between Syntax and Grammar In Arabic**

It is important to differentiate between syntax and grammar in Arabic in a very brief way.

Alimbark (1959:93) asserts that the word “parsing” or ‘alearab’ (الاعراب) has come before any level of language which means explanation and clarity. Alearab can refer directly to grammar and linguistic rules. Thus, alearab Came into sight before syntax and this was enough evidence to prove that based on what was said by the prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) when he said (اعربوا القرآن واتمسوا غرائب). Alearab is connected strongly to diacritical remarks which means a whole grammar. Another idea says that the meaning of (اعربوا) is to understand and Consider carefully all the details of verses. This means that syntax came before grammar (ibid: 94).

Mukaram (1977:7) remarks that there are different views on its existence. Syntax was founded by Abu-alaswad Adduali where a dialogue happened between him and his daughter when she said ‘what a beautiful sky’! Intending surprise and pleasure for the sky. Her father repeated the same sentence with different diacritical remarks. This led to change in meaning and that was the first moment for syntax to be appeared. He (ibid:8) added that Al-Imam Ali Bin Abe Talib was the first one to found syntax where nobody else Came before him to do the same when he said his Catch phrase “إنحو هذا المنحى”.

Though there was no agreement about the date in which syntax to appear, the year of 148 A.H. was the birth of syntax, at the most. It is significant to extract these facts depending on the following table:

Table (1): Differences between syntax and grammar In Arabic as adopted by Alimbark (1959:93) and Mukaram (1977:7).

Syntax	Explanation	It is understood In a particular way	Birth of syntax In 148 A.H.	It was founded by Ali bin Abe Talib	No immediate connection with Meaning
Grammar	Description	Fixed Rules with little Exception and no further Discussion	It Comes to be later than syntax	Founded by Nasur bin Asim	Immediate Connection with Meaning

### 3. Diverse Points In Syntax and Grammar In English

Chomsky (1960:72) affirms that grammar Can make a leaner know what he needs so as to have native-competence in language i.e. he will be Capable of speaking language like a fluent native speaker. Hence, it is certain that grammar is involved with competence rather than performance.

Competence means the fluent native speaker’s tacit knowledge of his language while performance is concerned with the actual use of language in Concrete situations. Competence also refers to the speaker’s-hearer’s knowledge of his own language.

CHOMKY(1986:19-48) argues that Cognitive approach is Concerned with the study of a grammar focusing on how speakers know about their native language and to be able to speak and understand the language fluently. Grammar is related strongly to a language in addition to a cognitive system, acquisition and competence. The latter is involved with



grammar. A cognitive approach is useful for one who is interested in developing a grammar of language.

Ross (1967:7) states that grammar and syntax are not treated alike. Grammar does not aim at including only the rules of language for forming words or joining words together in sentences, but it is used to include every field of language giving fixed ways to describe everything which is concerned with language.

Each rule can describe every situation of language. Everything is likely to be subject to certain rules and these rules can be expressed by language.

Radford (1997:28) confirms that it is significant to put an important question to a native speaker of English and non-native speaker in order to find out some information. The question: Can you make grammar different from syntax? The answer to this question is going to be the same among learners is that grammar is concerned with the rules of language, while syntax refers to the study of the way in which phrases and sentences are constructed out of words. But the opposite is true since there are essential differences between them according to different views.

Nasu (2002:93) says that grammar appeared first in seventeenth Century and it is still used even today. During the sixteenth and seventeenth Centuries, grammar of English began to appear since these early grammars were studied exclusively as an aid to learning Latin, yet the structure of English is quite different from that of Latin.

Barss (2001:96) ascertains that syntax is created newly and it has started in the late of 1933 and early of 1957.

A new approach to the study of syntax was inaugurated by Charles L. Baker in his publication entitled 'principles of syntax'. The word 'syntax' has first come from Greek and it has not originated in English. It is literally meant "a setting out together" or "arrangement".

Guasti (2002:37) states that there is a very specific period age for children either to acquire or learn and understand something about grammar and syntax. So grammar can come with language acquisition, while syntax is involved with learning process. Thus, this aspect can enable us to realize the difference between syntax and grammar.

Radford (2004:3) says that syntax can be described throughout taxonomy which means classificatory list of the range of different types of syntactic structures found in language. The job of taxonomic approach is to classify constituents into different types.

Cognitive approach is concerned with the study of human knowledge about language.

Pollock (1989:365) remarks that grammar does not use only to form sentence, expression and phrase depending on a specific way. Grammar has come to describe everything or nearly everything that is concerned with a particular subject in language. Thus, grammar always sticks to language and they are not separated.

Radford (2004:340) states that the study of morphology and syntax can be expressed for grammar. It also refers to the study of phonology and semantics: i.e. the phonetic form and semantic representation of expressions. Finally, grammar and syntax Can have Contravicted views; yet both are considered to be levels and belong to language. Look at the following table:

Table No. (2): Differences between grammar and syntax as illustrated by Chomsky (1986:48) and Radford (1997:17).

Grammar	Too Old and English origin	Language	Acquisition	Cognitive approach (Cognition)	Competence
Syntax	Newly Created and of Greek Origin	Sentence	Learning	Taxonomic approach (Taxonomy)	Performance

#### 4. Different Views on Pragmatics In English

Khulusi (1982:56) points out that English is always characterized by bluntness in all situations but the English people tend to use prolixity in pragmatics issues since they depend on grammar much more than syntax and grammar is connected strongly with a detailed description so as to reach the facts of pragmatics. Thus, prolixity Cannot be used in English except in explanatory problems of pragmatics.

Mey (1993:242) suggests that both syntax and grammar are important elements in pragmatics but grammar is strongly involved in Context and the latter is regarded to be a starting point from which pragmatics develops or is made.

Black (1947:78) Confirms that English grammar can be divided into different types like structural, functional traditional and universal grammar. Each type can have its own features. Since psychology of language is conceived as the best way to analyse and explain every unintelligible thing, it can have a strong Connection with grammar which depends completely on description i.e. to go deeply into every difficult thing in order to reach its truth and its essence. Grammar is also involved strongly in structure and function; yet a large number of English grammarians had divided into two teams: The first one says that it does not matter whether a sentence is constructed depending on the nine patterns of sentence or neglecting a function, the second suggested that a sentence must be correct about both correctness of structure and authenticity of function as in the following sentences: The dog bites a baby, A baby bites the dog.

Martin (1959:132) says that English linguists had taken grammar to look at or think about pragmatics issues since grammar and description are strongly related to each other. The immediate role of grammar to play is to focus on correctness of speech and the latter refers to the real use of language and this is from the English's point of view.

It is significant to refer to the importance of syntax in Arabic referring to the opposite points in English based on the following table:

Table No. (3): Different Views on Syntax and Pragmatics In Arabic With Reference to English as Explained By Annajar (2010:87), and Martin (1959:132).

Arabic	Almakam and Syntax	Analytical and Brief Ways	Different Types of Syntax	Philosophy and Syntax	High style	Rhetoric and clues to miracle in language
English	Context and Grammar	Prolivity	Different kinds of Grammar	Psychology of language and Grammar	Function and structure	Correctness of speech

## 5. Text Analysis

The relationship between syntax and pragmatics can be shown In terms of sayings and catchphrases of old Arab grammarians and this is regarded as a new method in linguistic analysis of a structure in language. Thus, sayings in Nahjulbalagha have come to be much better than others do.

**Text (1):** من استوى يومه فهو مغبون

A rawdeal views what will happens from one day to the next is equal.

Khulusi (1980:140).

Explanation:

Since the text is full of vigorous meaning and it is having a type of philosophy, syntax of factor (نحو العامل) is dealing with this text. Syntax of factor is of great significance to pragmatics because pragmatics is closely associated with a unique meaning which needs to think too much of it.

**Text (2):** الناس صنفان إما أخ لك في الدين أو نظير لك في الخلق

Mankind at large are of two classes: either to be your brother in religious faith or your opposite number in creation.

khulusi (1980:144).

Explanation:

New Arab grammarians suggested the significance of functional use of language. So functional syntax has come into sight and it can enable language user to employ language in a very correct form. Therefore, this text is built on the basis of functional syntax.

**Tex (3):** لقد هلك فيّ إثنان مبغض قال وعدو مغال

I tired two people: one has a lot of hatred for me, another praises me extremely and he is my enemy khulusi (1980:146).

Explanation:

Almakam means an occasion of talk i.e. the time is right or suitable for talking. The occasion of speech is related closely with a culture of each era. Talk or speech had to be done according to era and cultural aspect. Consequently, syntax of almakam has began to show the strong relation between syntax and cultural makam which was prominent in a Certain era. This text refers to the impotence of syntax to pragmatics and it is syntax of Almakam.



**Text (4):** إنني أعيشُ حيث يعيش الشباب  
I behave and think like a young person, even if I am not young.  
khulusi (1980:152).

Explanation:

At a Certain stage of history, the Arab linguists had to take care of parsing since tone phenomenon has pervaded and this may make Arabic be lost. So they had to adhere to the process of parsing. Hence, syntax of parsing has appeared so that it can help to avoid errors and follow correct methods to show correct use of diacritical remarks. This catchphrase has come to associate with syntax of parsing.

**Text (5):** لقد حملتُ (نقلتُ) من الحديد والصخر فلم أجد أثقل من الدين  
It is easy for me to lift or move a heavy Iron and rocks than to be in debt.  
(khulusi:158)

Explanation:

The saying above can include both Arabic styles and rhetorical meanings and it does thus belong to syntax of meanings. Therefore, meanings syntax has come to give most of its attention to extraordinary issues and secrets of rhetoric in Arabic as well as the Quran miracles.

**Text (6):** الدهرُ يومان يوم لك ويوم عليك فان كان لك فلا تبطران وان كان عليك فاصبر فكلاهما سينحسر.

Don't be wasteful if days are going well as you want and be patient if days go adversely. Both good and tough time will be receded.

Khulusi (1980:160)

This catchphrase focuses on some ideas and beliefs which concerned with life on one hand. It is also closely related to some of philosophy. Thus, it Can have a strong connection with syntax of factor (نحو العامل).

## 6. A Few Remarks In English

English Grammar is completely different of that Arabic since it is divided into two different parts: morphology and syntax. Pragmatics is related to know, understand, study, and how someone knows and understands pragmatics well without studying language precisely. The main task of syntax is to enable native speakers to know how to join words together in order to make a correct sentence. As for grammar, it leads to so many essential points which are concerned immediately with pragmatics. Grammar also focuses on how to form and interpret words, phrases and sentences in the language and this is regarded as the essence of pragmatics. Grammar is characterized to be a tool which gives a highly descriptive way of the meaning. Hence, it is of two properties: description and interpretation. The vigorous and hidden meaning that a speaker forms is strongly bound up with understanding the language. The latter is very closely related with pragmatics. Finally, though syntax and grammar overlap, i.e. part of one can cover part the other, grammar can stand in for syntax in a lot issues of pragmatics in English .

## 7. Conclusion and suggestions

In past, Arabic syntax was only seen as a tool for correcting a speech depending on diacritical marks without taking care of rhetoric. Syntax at large must have impression and influence on the linguistic structure which used in a pragmatic way. Since means of communication have advanced remarkably, Arabic syntax must take different tendencies instead of syntax of factor (نحو العامل) which involved in philosophy, syntax of Meanings which Concerned with secrets of Arabic rhetoric, especially Quranic rhetoric and Miracle issues in the Quran, Functional syntax is another type of syntax whose responsibility is to enable language user to follow precise and correct way to form the influential meaning. Syntax of Almakam which deals with cultural makam (Cultural occasion) which was prominent at a certain period of time. People could form hidden meanings according to what suit time or era concerning the cultural aspect, i.e. occasion of talk must correspond with a culture of each era and this is one of pragmatic meaning. What is said above is strongly involved in pragmatics. As each type of syntax can play a very important role in aspects of pragmatics, syntax at large is of great importance to pragmatics.

As for English, syntax cannot be divided into different types. It contrasts sharply with grammar which divided into: traditional, structural, functional and universal grammar as well as new modern types. Grammar's role in pragmatics is bigger than the advantage of syntax without denying the significance of the last one. Grammar's essence is directly related to the following points which Considered to be fundamentals of grammar: Innate knowledge, Comprehensive account, structure and sound of word, Semantic representation of expressions and grammar are basically born with people. These fundamentals can make grammar have a big role in pragmatics. While syntax has only represented a particular Case in that it deals with the distribution of word-forms out of the well-formed sentences of language.

As for the study's suggestion, each kind of syntax can deserve consideration to be researched contrastively .

In both Arabic and English putting emphasis on the relationship between syntax and pragmatics.

The study also can keep scholars interested in doing researches into meaning, translation, rhetoric, and semantics in both Arabic and English based on different way.

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