

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين



Overview of Lesson 1

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Overview of Lesson 1

The Importance of Understanding Arabic

The importance of understanding Arabic, particularly syntax, is key to accessing the sacred sciences like the Qur'an and Sunnah. This journey into Arabic is framed as essential for fully grasping the meanings of the religious texts.

The Nature of Language

In (جامع الدروس العربية) the author mentions:

"اللغة أَلْفَاظٌ يُعَبَّرُ بِهَا كُلُّ قَوْمٍ عَنْ مَقَاصِدِهِمْ"

"Language is composed of words through which each group of people expresses its intentions." This indicates that language is simply words which are symbolic for concepts and ideas that are in the mind.

Moreover, he mentions that there are many different types of languages, and although these languages are different in terms of the words that are used, they still convey the same meaning. Despite differences in vocabulary, the underlying ideas conveyed are universal. For instance, consider a concept which is expressed in two languages; such as in Arabic and English. Consider the word "Wall" in English, the concept of a wall is the same, though in Arabic it is called "جدار", yet they convey the same meaning.

The Evolution Of Language

Likewise, in the origins of how languages started, it is implied that illustrations were used to convey ideas since they were used to conceptualize thoughts which were in the mind. Over time, this evolved into expressing meaning through sounds. Just as a picture symbolizes a concept, a sound can also represent an idea.

In this way, people began to develop specific sounds to convey meanings, creating patterns in the process, further resulting in a language. This evolution of sounds and meanings is how languages have developed over time.

For the Arabs, the Arabic language is defined as

"اللغة العربية هِيَ الْكَلِمَاتُ الَّتِي يُعَبَّرُ بِهَا الْعَرَبُ عَنْ أَغْرَاضِهِمْ."

"The Arabic language consists of the words by which the Arabs express their purposes." Thus, this group of individuals, known as the Arabs, uses these words to convey the thoughts and concepts they envision.

Preservation of The Arabic Language

Regarding the preservation of this language, the author mentions:

"وَقَدْ وَصَلَتْ إِلَيْنَا مِنْ طَرِيقِ النَّقْلِ"

"It [the Arabic language] has reached us through transmission."

"وَحَفِظَهَا لَنَا الْقُرْآنُ الْكَرِيمُ وَالْأَحَادِيثُ الشَّرِيفَةُ وَمَا رَوَاهُ النَّقَاتُ مِنْ مَنُثَوْرِ الْعَرَبِيِّ وَمَنْظُومِهِمْ",

"Preserved for us by the noble Quran and the honorable Hadith, as well as what has been narrated by trustworthy sources from the prose and poetry of the Arabs."

The Arabic language has been transmitted across generations, continually spoken and utilized until it reached us in its current form. As mentioned earlier, the primary objective of language is to facilitate communication—effectively conveying the thoughts in one's mind to the individual being addressed.

The Codification of Arabic Sciences

As the Muslims spread during the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, a challenge arose: many non-Arab individuals, unfamiliar with the Arabic language, entered

the Muslim lands. As a result of the influx of new Muslims who were not proficient in Arabic, and as the language began to blend with others, the preservation of Arabic became imperative. While communication between individuals is usually manageable, the critical issue was that the Quran is in Arabic. In everyday conversations mistakes might be tolerated; however, errors in reciting the Quran are unacceptable, as they could completely alter meanings. The scholars further recognized this and documented vocabulary in dictionaries and established rules to protect the language from being corrupted.

These principles are known as the Arabic sciences.

(تُسَمَّى هَذِهِ الْأُصُولُ الْعُلُومَ الْعَرَبِيَّةَ)

Moreover, he says:

“فَالْعُلُومُ الْعَرَبِيَّةُ هِيَ الْعُلُومُ الَّتِي يَتَوَصَّلُ بِهَا إِلَى عَصْمَةِ اللِّسَانِ وَالْقَلَمِ عَنِ الْخَطَا”

"The Arabic sciences are the disciplines through which one can safeguard the tongue and the pen from error."

The Arabic disciplines can be categorized in multiple ways due to different perspectives on the language itself. For instance, one aspect may involve proper pronunciation of letters, which is essential for spoken Arabic. Additionally, the written form of the language can be divided into categories such as poetry (شعر) and prose (نثر). Each category has its own set of rules; poetry follows specific rhythmic patterns, while prose adheres to different conventions and so on.

The Thirteen Disciplines of the Arabic Language

1. Sarf (Morphology): First among these is Sarf (morphology), which examines word formation and the application of diacritics (harakat). For instance, the correct pronunciation of "صَرَفَ" requires a fatha on the ص and a sukoon on the ر. Furthermore, morphology addresses the specific vowels and structures of words, determining their composition.
2. I'rab (syntax): which focuses on how words combine to form sentences. Both Sarf and I'rab are collectively referred to as Nahw.
3. Rasm (Calligraphy): which pertains to the writing of the Arabic language. This includes understanding the placement of dots in letters, which has

evolved over time to clarify the distinctions between similar characters, such as ي (Yaa) and ن (Noon).

4. Ma'ani (Semantics)
5. Bayan (Rhetoric)
6. Badi (Figures of speech)

Additionally, we have Ma'ani (semantics), which explores the nuances of meaning and rhetoric. This field, along with Bayan (Rhetoric) and Badi (Literary Criticism), encompasses rhetorical devices that amplify the expressive emphasis of a language. Collectively referred to as Balaghah, these disciplines focus on the art of rhetoric and figurative language, enabling speakers and writers to convey their messages with greater depth and impact.

7. 'Arūd - عروض (Prosody)
8. Qawāfī - قوافي (Rhyme)
9. Qaraḍ al-Shi'r - قرض الشعر (Poetry Composition)
10. Inshā' - إنشاء (Writing)
11. Khiṭābah - خطابة (Oratory)
12. Tārīkh al-Adab - تاريخ الأدب (Literary history)
13. Maṭn al-Lughah - متن اللغة (Lexicology)

'Arūd (Prosody) and Qawāfī (rhyme) are essential components of poetry, focusing on its structures and rhythmic patterns. Qaraḍ al-Shi'r refers to poetry composition, emphasizing the techniques and artistry involved in crafting poetic works. Inshā' encompasses writing skills, guiding writers on how to effectively express their thoughts in literary form. Meanwhile, Khiṭābah emphasizes oratory skills, highlighting the art of effective speaking and public presentation. Consequently, Tārīkh al-Adab delves into the intricacies of Arabic literature, examining its historical development and compilation. Maṭn al-Lughah refers to understanding the vocabulary of individual words in the language.

Collectively, there are 13 distinct disciplines that stem from the Arabic language. Some scholars have summarized these disciplines in couplets to aid in memorization:



علوم آدابِ ثمانية لغةً ... صرفٌ ونحوٌ والمعاني المُفضَّلَا
وَكَذَا بَيَانٌ وَالْبَدِيعُ وَقَافِيَةٌ ... وَكَذَا عُرُوضٌ فَطُلُبْنَهَا مُجَمَّلَا
وَفَرُوعُهَا إِنِشَاءٌ نَثْرٌ وَالنَّظْمُ ... وَمُحَاضَرَاتٌ وَالْخُطُوبُ فَأَجْمَلَا

“The sciences of literature, eight in all,
Morphology, syntax, and semantics stand tall.
Rhetoric and critique, with rhyme to refine,
Prosody, seek these, and knowledge you'll find.
In their branches include both prose and verse,
Lectures and scripts, for the learner's converse.”

And some have said:

صرفٌ بيانُ معاني النحوِ قافيةً ... شعرٌ عروضٌ اشتقاقُ الخطُ إنشاءً
محاضراتٌ وثاني عشرها لغةً ... تلك العلوم لها الآدابُ أسماءُ

“Morphology and rhetoric, meanings, and syntax,
Rhyme and prosody, derivation, and composition in tracks.
Lectures and the twelfth, language's embrace,
These sciences bear names in the realm of grace.”

Focus on Nahw

In this book, *Al Tuḥfat Al Saniyyah*, we will focus on the discipline of Nahw, which encompasses syntax and the study of Al-I'rab. This discipline is crucial for mastering the Arabic language, as it teaches how to construct and articulate sentences effectively. Understanding Nahw is fundamental, as it determines whether a sentence is grammatically correct or incorrect; it is, in essence, the spirit that gives life to language. *Al Tuḥfat Al Saniyyah* is a highly regarded and well-known text in the study of Nahw. It is typically taught after *Al-Ajrūmiya*, and serves as a bridge between beginner and intermediate levels.