Pedagogical Considerations and Terminological Conventions in Arabic Grammatical Tradition: The Term *jumla* Revisited *

Almog Kasher  
Bar Ilan University  
Israel  
almog.kasher@biu.ac.il

Abstract

It has been claimed in modern scholarship that the term *jumla* ("sentence"/"clause") as used by early grammarians differed from its use by later ones, in that it excluded verbal clauses, or at least a subtype thereof. The present article argues that conclusions regarding grammatical theories should not be drawn from isolated texts; rather, other factors, such as pedagogical considerations, the history of terms and manners of speech which were conventional in grammatical writings, should also be taken into account. More specifically, it will be shown that although some texts display terminological inconsistencies regarding the use of *jumla*, they do not reflect an early theory.

Keywords: *jumla*, clause, sentence, Arabic grammatical tradition, pedagogical grammars

*The research for this paper was supported by the Israel Science Foundation (grant no. 812/17). I would like to thank Ms Dina Baum, head of the library of the Department of Arabic and formerly my research assistant, for supplying me with many of the sources. I would also like to thank both anonymous referees for insights and helpful suggestions.*

© International Journal of Arabic Linguistics 9 (2023) (pp. 34-58) 34
1 Introduction

One of the peculiar traits of traditional Arabic grammars that strikes probably every beginner in this field is its division between sentence types. The difficulty does not lie in the division itself, but rather in the fact that whereas sentences such as *qāma Zaydūn* “Zayd stood”\(^1\) are subsumed, as expected, under *jumla fiʿliyya* “verbal sentence/clause”\(^2\), sentences such as *Zaydūn qāma*\(^3\) are classified under *jumla ismiyya* “nominal sentence/clause”. In other words, these two sentences do not represent, in Arabic grammatical tradition, two word-orders, but rather two distinct sentence types. Much research has been devoted to this theory, which will be referred to below as the “canonical theory” in Arabic grammatical tradition; here it will only be outlined in broad terms\(^4\):

The bipartite division of sentence types furnishes a principled explanation for the so-called “agreement asymmetry” in number in standard Arabic, which manifests itself, for instance, in the contrast between *qāma l-Zaydāni* and *qāma l-Zaydūna* “the (two) Zayds stood”, on the one hand, and *al-Zaydāni qāmā* and *al-Zaydūna qāmū*\(^5\), on the other. According to the traditional explanation, in the former, the verb (*fiʿl*) is said to be followed by an overt subject, termed *fāʿil* (lit. “doer), to which it assigns the nominative case, and together they constitute *jumla fiʿ liyya*. In the latter, on the other hand, *al-Zaydāni* and *al-Zaydūna* are parsed as *mubtadaʾ* (the subjects of nominal sentences, whose case is not assigned by the following verb) – just like in *Zaydūn ʾaxūka* “Zayd is your brother” and *Zaydūn ḍarabtuhu* “Zayd, I hit him” – and *qāmā* and *qāmū* are regarded as complexes of verbs + pronominal *fāʿils* (whose virtual nominative case is assigned by the verbs); that is, these two are *jumla fiʿ liyya* functioning as the *xabar* (predicate)\(^6\). This distinction also applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to the pair *qāma Zaydūn* (analysed as a “bare” verb preceding its overt *fāʿ il* and assigning it the nominative case) and *Zaydūn qāma* (analysed as *mubtadaʾ* followed by a clause functioning

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\(^1\) See fn. 14 below.

\(^2\) It is traditionally said that sentences are structured out of words, phrases and clauses, each of which belongs to a specific grammatical category and serves a specific grammatical function within the sentence containing it.” “A clause is an expression which contains a subject and a predicate, and which may also contain other types of elements…” (Radford et al., 2009, p. 274). See fn. 10 below.

\(^3\) A literal translation of this sentence would be approx. “Zayd, he stood”. Whereas the propositional meaning of these sentences is identical (cf. Levin, 1985, pp. 118–119), they differ with respect to information structure. See Peled (2009), with ample references to previous research. See also Larcher, 2017, pp. 25–27; Sartori, 2022.

\(^4\) On Arabic sentence types see esp. Levin (1985); Peled (2009), with ample references to previous research. The following succinct survey will not address the myriad issues pertaining to this theory, which are irrelevant to the present study (such as the operator assigning the nominative case to the predicative constituents in nominal sentences).

\(^5\) See fn. 3 above.

\(^6\) It is immaterial for the present discussion whether the final *ā* and *ū* are analysed as personal pronouns or as mere markers for pronouns that inhere in the verbs (see Goldenberg, 1988, pp. 64–67). Henceforth I shall use the term “subject” for both *mubtadaʾ* and *fāʿ il*, and the term “predicate” for both *xabar* and *fiʿ l* (in line with Goldenberg, 1988; Levin, 1981; Peled, 2009). For reasons which would take us too far afield to elaborate, I shall refrain from using the terms “topic-comment”, “theme-rheme” and “agent (cf. Carter, 1981, p. 159, Carter, 2017, pp. 527–528, Guillaume, 2020)
as xabar, that consists of a verb incorporating an implicit pronominal fā’il and assigning it the nominative case).

This canonical theory in Arabic grammatical thought can be illustrated with the following text, taken from ʿAbū ʿAlī al-Fārisī’s (d. 377/987) pedagogical grammar al-ʾĪḍāḥ, regarding the types of jumla that can function as xabar al-mubtadaʾ. Of the four types listed by al-Fārisī (quoted in al-Jurjānī, al-Muqtaṣid, I, pp. 273–274), the first two are a jumla that consists of fiʿl and fāʿil and a jumla that consists of ibtidāʾ (= mubtadaʾ) and xabar (the third and the fourth types of jumla are conditional sentences and zarfs, i.e. locative/temporal adverbials, which will not be dealt with here). The former is exemplified with qāma in Zaydun qāma, where a (pronominal) fāʿil coreferential with Zaydun is incorporated in qāma, as well as with qāma ʾabūhu in Zaydun qāma ʾabūhu “Zayd, his father stood”, with an overt fāʾil.

Although this theoretical differentiation between two sentence types goes back to Sībawayhi (d. ca. 180/796), the Master of Arabic grammatical tradition never uses jumla as a technical term (see, e.g., Talmon, 1988, p. 80, Kouloughli, 2001, p. 577, Iványi, 2007, p. 536, Larcher, 2019, pp. 47–48. Yet, already the grammarian and Qurʾānic commentator al-Farrāʾ (d. 207/822) utilises terms derived from the root JML with reference to clauses7, and jumla is used technically and consistently in al-Mubarrad’s (d. 285/898) al-Muqtaḍab8. There, this grammarian explicitly states that a jumla can consist of either ibtidāʾ (= mubtadaʾ) + xabar or fiʿl + fāʾil (al-Mubarrad, al-Muqtaḍab, I, 146; II, p. 53; III, pp. 127, 177, 263; IV, p. 347 ff.).9 The terms jumla ismiyya and jumla fiʿliyya probably make their first appearance much later (see Larcher, 2019, p. 59, ff).

In his seminal article “Subject and Predicate in Arab Grammatical Tradition”, Goldenberg (1988, p. 55) argues for “a difference in the use of ‘ǧumlah’ between earlier and later writers”. Goldenberg (1988, pp. 55–56) maintains, regarding Ibn al-Sarrāj’s view of yaqūmu in Zaydun yaqūmu, that “such a verb form which makes the xabar, though complex by nature, is not a ǧumlah”. Moreover, Goldenberg (1988, p. 56) deems “strange” al-Zajjājī’s (d. 337/949? – see the discussion in Binaghi, 2015, pp. 89-92) classification of e.g. Zaydun xaraja ʾabūhu

7In the Appendix I revisit al-Farrāʾ’s use of these terms and Talmon’s and Kinberg’s interpretations thereof.
8On al-Mubarrad’s importance in the early history of Arabic grammatical tradition, see esp. Bernards (1997). Goldenberg (1988, p. 54) says that the term jumla “appears to have been used by al-Māzinī” (d. 248/862), based on al-Mubarrad’s and Ibn al-Sarrāj’s (d. 316/928) texts. However, it is doubtful whether these are verbatim quotations of this earlier grammarian
9See also Bernards (1997), e.g. p. 115 (Arabic edition). On jumla in al-Muqtaḍab, see also Talmon (1988, pp. 95–96) (it is unclear to me, however, why Talmon regards the fact that al-Mubarrad “considered the nexus construction of fiʿl + fāʾil as jumla, equivalent in all respects to mubtadaʾ + ḥabar” as one of two points in which “he clearly widened its [sc. jumla’s] denotation” vis-à-vis its usage by al-Farrāʾ. See also Larcher (2019) and Versteegh (1995). Iványi (2007, pp. 536–537) asserts that “[t]he first occurrence of the word jumla as a real linguistic term may have been in al-Mubarrad’s (d. 285/898) Muqtaḍab” and that al-Mubarrad was “probably the first grammarian to use jumla consistently in a linguistic sense”. However, Iványi also claims that “jumla does not seem to mean for al-Mubarrad more than its original everyday sense: ‘a sum; a group of words’”. I believe that the fact that al-Mubarrad restricts the term to clauses, and never applies it to other combinations, such as annexations, weakens this claim. See also Larcher, 2019, p. 48, fn. 5.
“Zayd, his father went out” as “verb with agent and object attached to it”, in contradistinction to jumla. Following in his footsteps, Talmon (1988, p. 76) regards Goldenberg’s assertion that (in Talmon’s words) “for (some?) early grammarians, not every clause was termed ǧumla” as “an evidence in favour of such a historical process” (namely, a historical process the terms jumla and kalām underwent, “at the end of which they finally came to partially overlap”).

The main argument in the present article is that conclusions regarding grammatical theories should not be drawn from isolated texts; rather, other factors should be taken into account, such as pedagogical considerations, the history of terms and manners of speech which were conventional in grammatical writings. More specifically, it will be shown that although the texts adduced by Goldenberg and Talmon display terminological inconsistencies, they by no means reflect an “early” theory that jumla excludes verbal clauses, or even just verbs incorporating nominative personal pronouns.

First, I shall present the relevant texts in Ibn al-Sarrāj’s al-ʾUṣūl (Section 2) and al-Zajjājī’s al-Jumal, as well as other early pedagogical treatises (Section 3). As a partial explanation for the problematic passages, I shall discuss in Section 4 the widespread practice amongst grammarians to use the term fiʿl with reference to the entire verbal clause, in attempt to account for this usage as a special case of a broader terminological convention. The second, and main, part of the suggested solution will be dealt with in Section 5, in which I shall show that the formulation found in Ibn al-Sarrāj’s and al-Zajjājī’s writings were far from exceptional in their time; rather, they reflect a pedagogical practice that was widespread in their epoch, from which one cannot draw conclusions about theories upheld by any of the grammarians. In the Appendix I shall revisit the term jumla, and other terms derived from the root JML, in al-Farrāʾ’s Qurʾānic commentary Maʿānī al-Qurʾān. The relevant passages were already studied by Kinberg and Talmon, however, I shall offer different interpretations to some of them. The importance of this commentary for the present study lies in its being the earliest text in which these terms apply to clauses (even though they are not fully fledged technical terms yet). Furthermore, in addition to the fact that several points are found in al-Farrāʾ’s discussions that are of relevance to the present study, in Section 5 I shall raise the possibility that al-Farrāʾ’s formulations may be regarded as reflecting the conventions of his time, and not necessarily an alleged Kūfān theory, distinct from the canonical one.

10 Here I shall not discuss the relation between jumla and kalām, nor the intricate question of the extent to which, and by whom, jumla was used in the sense of sentence, in contrast with clause (on these issues, see esp. Goldenberg (1988), Iványi (2007), Kinberg (1991), Kouloughli (2001), and Talmon (1988), Qabāwa (2014, pp. 15–18), Sheyhatovitch (2015, pp. 197–198), Guillaume (2017) and Larcher (2019), since our focus will be on cases in which jumla is applied to clauses functioning as predicates.

11 Confusingly, the word Jumal in the title of this work does not mean “clauses/sentences”, but rather “summaries”. See Versteegh (1995, p. 3), Binaghi (2015, pp. 144–149).
2  *Jumla* in Ibn al-Sarrāj’s *al-ʾUṣūl*

According to Goldenberg (1988, pp. 55–56), *yaqūmu* in *Zaydun yaqūmu* is not a *jumla* per Ibn al-Sarrāj (*al-ʾUṣūl*, I, p. 62 ff.), “though complex by nature”, based on this grammarian’s division of *xabar* into types and sub-types. Here, the verb that contains a personal pronoun referring to the *mubtadaʾ*, e.g. in *Zaydun yaqūmu* and *al-Zaydāni yaqūmāni*, is contrasted with *jumla*, that is, *fiʾl* + *fāʾil* or *mubtadaʾ* + *xabar*, e.g. in *Bakrun qāma ʾabīhu* “Bakr, his father stood” and *Zaydun ʾabīhu munṭaliqun* “Zayd, his father is going away”, respectively. Ibn al-Sarrāj (*al-ʾUṣūl*, I, 65) summarises his discussion by enlisting four possible types of *xabar*: al-*ism*, al-*fiʿl*, al-*ẓarf* and al-*jumla*. Moreover, in the title of the chapter on annexation of nouns indicating time to clauses (see Section 4 below), Ibn al-Sarrāj (*al-ʾUṣūl*, II, p. 11 ff.) distinguishes between verbs and *jumal*: bābu ʾiḍāfati l-*ʾasmāʾi ʾilā l-*afʿāli* and l-*jumali*. A closer look at these texts shows, however, that their contents do not tally with each other, since Ibn al-Sarrāj’s (*al-ʾUṣūl*, II, p. 11) first illustration of “annexation to *fiʿl*” is *ʾataytuka yawma qāma Zaydun* “I came to you the day Zayd stood”, where the verb is followed by an overt *fāʾil*, thus constituting a complex classified as *jumla* in the former chapter. This fact begs the question whether it is indeed possible to argue that these texts reflect a coherent theory upheld by Ibn al-Sarrāj regarding the extension of the term *jumla*.

Moreover, the term *jumla* in *al-ʾUṣūl* occasionally applies explicitly to the complex of verb and pronominal *fāʾil*. One such case is found in Ibn al-Sarrāj’s (*al-ʾUṣūl*, II, p. 80-82; see also ibid., II, 104) discussion of the so-called “diptotes” (on “diptosis” in Arabic grammatical tradition, see Druel and Kasher, 2019), more specifically, of proper names taking verbal patterns. The proper name *ʾAḥmad*, for instance, is a “diptote”, since it takes the pattern of the imperfect verb, e.g. ʾaḏhab(u) “I(shall) go”. On the other hand, if the perfect verb *ḍaraba*, for example, is used as a proper name, namely *Darab*, it is a “triptote”, since it has the same pattern as nouns such as *ḥajar* “a stone”, that is, this pattern is not specific to (or characteristic only of) verbs. In this discussion, Ibn al-Sarrāj addresses the use of *qāma* *Zaydun* as a proper name. In such cases, the sequence of words is “quoted” (*ḥakayta*; see Sheyhatovitch, 2021, p. 94, fn. 89 and the references therein), that is, left as is, with its original vowels, e.g. *ḥāḏā Qāma ʿAmrun* “This is Qāma ʿAmrun”. This rule applies, according to Ibn al-Sarrāj, to all cases of *jumla* used as a proper name, such as *Tāʿabbaṭa ʾArran* (a nickname of a well-known pre-Islamic poet; the sentence *taʿabbaṭa ʾArran* means “he carried an evil under his arm”), *Qāmā* and *Qāmū*. Moreover, he says, if *qāma* that incorporates a nominative personal pronoun is used as a proper name, it is also left as is, that is *Qāma*, in contrast with *qāma* with no such personal pronoun, in which case the proper name would be “triptote” (just like *daraba* mentioned above). Another illustration is the proper name *Zaydun ʾAxūka*, which is also reproduced as is. *Tāʿabbaṭa, qāmā, qāmū* and *qāma* all consist of verbs + nominative personal pronoun (see fn. 20 below).
pronouns and are all subsumed here under jumla.

Elsewhere in al-ʾUṣūl, in his discussion of nouns such as ḥayṭu “where” annexed only to a jumla (… wa-ʿuḍīfa ʿilā jumlatin; see Section 4 below) but never to single nouns, Ibn al-Sarrāj’s (al-ʾUṣūl, II, p. 143-144) first example reads: ‘aqūmu ḥayṭu yaqūmu Zaydun wa-ʾuṣallī ḥayṭu yusallī “I (shall) stand where Zayd (will) stand(s), and I (shall) pray where he (will) pray(s)”, in which the verbal clause yusallī, whose fāʾil is a personal pronoun, is an illustration of a jumla.

It should be further noted that the claim that for Ibn al-Sarrāj verbal clauses incorporating a nominative personal pronoun are not subsumed under jumla, leads to a highly undesirable conclusion, namely that wherever Ibn al-Sarrāj uses the term jumla (as in the last passage under discussion), such clauses are excluded.

Another fact that should also be taken into consideration is that verbs with pronominal fāʾils are regarded as jumla already by Ibn al-Sarrāj’s teacher, al-Mubarrad, in his al-Muqtadab. Thus, in addition to the construction kāna + nominative noun + nominal clause, as an illustration of a rule pertaining to jumal, al-Mubarrad (al-Muqtadab, III, p. 263) also adduces kāna Zaydun yaqūmu yā fatā “Zayd was standing, oh young man”, since fiʾl + fāʾil is equivalent to al-ibtidāʾ (= al-mubtadaʾ) + al-xabar. Elsewhere, al-Mubarrad (al-Muqtadab, IV, pp. 120-123) explores different possibilities to analyse the sequence ‘inna ’afḍalahumu l-ḍāribV ʾaxāhu kāna ZaydVn (the translation depends on the chosen analysis and the concomitant vocalisation). For instance, it is permissible for al-ḍārib to take the accusative, as ṣifa (attribute) of ‘afḍalahum, in which case kāna + what it operates on function together as the xabar, thus ‘inna ’afḍalahumu l-ḍāriba ʾaxāhu kāna ZaydVn “The most excellent among them, which is the one who hits [or: will hit] his brother, was Zayd”. However, it is impermissible for al-ḍārib to take the nominative (as the xabar), in which case kāna would be (i.e. would be the first constituent of) a ṣifa (an asyndetic relative clause) of ʾaxāhu (the meaning of the sentence in that case would be: “The most excellent among them is the one who hits [or: will hit] his brother, who was Zayd”), since the latter is definite, while verbs with their fāʾils are jumal, and these can only function as ṣifa of indefinite nouns, or as ḥāl of definite nouns. Here kāna and its fāʾil are classified as jumla. Al-Mubarrad’s (al-Muqtadab, IV, pp. 347-348; see also ibid., III, p. 176) citation of the Qurʾanic verse hāḍā yawmu lâ yanṭiqūna

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14Two remarks are in order here with respect to this illustration. First, it is plausible that the verb qāma here conveys the sense of prayer, on which see Levin, 2019, fn. 34. This is not to say that this is the meaning of the verb qāma in all its occurrences in the grammarians’ illustrations, where it frequently appears next to qaʿada as well as verbs of movement, which suggests that it conveys its basic meaning. Second, it is unclear whether the sequence of words presented here by Ibn al-Sarrāj is intended as one illustration, consisting of a conjunction of two sentences, or as two illustrations (wa- thus belonging to the meta-language). These two issues have no bearing on the present discussion, since the analysis of the clause yusallī is identical according to all these possibilities.

15The vocative is added for the sake of preventing the previous word (here yaqūmu) from taking the pausal form (waqf).

16Just like Sibawayhi, ism kāna and xabar kāna are termed fāʾil and mafʿūl by al-Mubarrad (e.g. al-Muqtadab, IV, p. 86). See Levin, 1979, p. 205.
(Q. 77/35) “This is the day they shall not speak” (Jones, 2007, p. 552) as an illustration of ḥāḏā bābu ‘idāfātī l-ʾazminati ʾiťā l-jumal “this is a chapter on the annexation of (nouns denoting) time to clauses” (see Section 4 below) is another case in point. Thus, the term jumla had been applied to all types of clauses under discussion already by Ibn al-Sarrāj’s teacher, al-Mubarrad.

To recapitulate, under the term jumla, Ibn al-Sarrāj in his al-ʾUṣūl classifies nominal as well as verbal sentences/clauses including their subclasses, namely, both where the fāʾīl is an overt noun and where it is a personal pronoun. Yet, he occasionally differentiates between jumla and what he terms fiʾl or fiʾl + fāʾīl.

3 Jumla in al-Zajjājī’s al-Jumal and Other Early Primers

As mentioned above, Goldenberg (1988, p. 56) deems “strange” al-Zajjājī’s (al-Jumal [Ben Cheneb], pp. 48-49 / al-Jumal [al-Ḥamad], pp. 36-37) categorisation of predicates into the following classes: ism huwa huwa (i.e. “identical”17 to the subject), e.g. Zaydun qāʾīmun “Zayd is standing”; a verb together with its fāʾīl and mafʿūl 18, e.g. Zaydun xaraja ʾabīhu “Zayd, his father went out” and ʾAbdu llāhiʾ akramaʾ azāka “Abdallāh, he honoured your brother”; ẓarf (locative/temporal adverbial), e.g. Zaydun ʿindaka “Zayd is with you”; and jumla, e.g. Zaydun ʾabīhu qāʾīmun “Zayd, his father is standing”. Similar classifications also appear in the following loci elsewhere in al-Jumal:

First, al-Zajjājī (al-Jumal [Ben Cheneb], p. 54 / al-Jumal [al-Ḥamad], p. 42) mentions the latter three types in his discussion of xabar kāna, noting that all types of xabar of the mubtada’ can also function as xabar here.

Second, in the chapter on doubly transitive cognitive verbs (e.g. ẓanantu “I thought [that A was B]”), al-Zajjājī (al-Jumal [Ben Cheneb], p. 42 / al-Jumal [al-Ḥamad], pp. 29-30) states that the position of the second object can be filled (beside by a noun) by the following: perfect and imperfect verbs, prepositions (i.e., prepositional phrases – see Section 4 below), al-jumal and al-ẓurūf. Here jumal is most probably illustrated only with a nominal clause.

Third, in the parallel passage on the types of predicate in sentences introduced by ʾinna or one of its “sisters” – although the list is preceded by a statement to the effect that every element that can be used as the predicate of the mubtada’ can also be used as the predicate here, and another statement compares the present list to the one concerning kāna – al-Zajjājī’s (al-Jumal [Ben Cheneb], pp. 66-67 / al-Jumal [al-Ḥamad], p. 53) list runs as follows: verb together with the constituents linked to it (i.e. fāʾīl and mafʿūl), mubtada’ and ẓarf. Only in

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17 This concept of “identity”, and its relation to the notion of reference, needs a special study. At any rate, the predicate at stake can be a noun or an adjective.

18 This term may apply, specifically, to the object (al-mafʿūl ʾīl bihi) or, generally, to any of the so-called mafʿūl ʾīlāt / mafʿūl ʾīl, namely, the technical terms whose first element is the word mafʿūl, such as al-mafʿūl ʾīl fīhi (locative/temporal adverbial). See Levin (1991) and Taha (n.d.).
one manuscript (which is the one chosen by al-Ḥamad as the ‘aṣl of his edition: al-Zajjājī, *al-Jumal* [al-Ḥamad], p. 53, fn. 3) does the list also include *jumla*. This item is also missing from the text of *al-Jumal* as quoted in the (editions of) its commentaries by Ibn Bābašāḏ (d. 469/1077) (*Šarḥ*, p. 146), al-Ḍațalyawsī (d. 521/1127) (*al-Ḥulal*, p. 180) and Ibn ‘Abī al-Rabī’ (d. 688/1289) (*al-Bātīf*, II, pp. 777-778) (none of the other commentators I examined quotes this sentence). Worthy of note here is al-Zajjājī’s use of the term *mubtadaʾ* for the entire nominal clause, which will be discussed in Section 4 below.

Finally, in the chapter on *ṣila* (a sequence of words, usually a clause, which completes the relative pronoun), four types are also mentioned by al-Zajjājī (*al-Jumal* [Ben Cheneb], pp. 338-339 / *al-Jumal* [al-Ḥamad], p. 361), the first three being (the fourth is conditional sentences): the verb with the constituents linked to it, *al-zurūf* and *al-mubtadaʾ wa-l-xabar*.

In another treatise by al-Zajjājī, *Kitāb al-Lāmāt*, (perfect and imperfect) verbs and *jumal* are also mentioned separately as types of *xabar* in sentences introduced by ‘*inna* (al-Zajjājī, *al-Lāmāt*, p. 75).

Thus, verbal and nominal clauses are variously referred to in these classifications as: verb + subject and object(s) vs. *jumla*; (imperfect/perfect) verb vs. *jumla*; verb + subject and object(s) vs. *mubtadaʾ*; and verb + subject and object(s) etc. vs. *mubtadaʾ* + *xabar*.

As already noted by Goldenberg (1988, p. 56), fn. 53, al-Zajjājī’s classification (in the chapter on the *xabar* of the *mubtadaʾ*) “was sharply condemned” by al-Ḍațalyawsī. Other commentators also levelled similar criticisms at al-Zajjājī’s classifications in this chapter as well as the others mentioned above. Already Ibn Bābašāḏ (*Šarḥ*, pp. 103-104) censures al-Zajjājī on similar grounds; after suggesting a classification of the *xabar* into nine types, subsumed under three groups: three types of *mufrad* (i.e. single nouns or phrases), three types of *jumla* (mubtadaʾ and xabar; verb and *fāʿil*; conditional sentence) and three types of *ẓarf*, Ibn Bābašāḏ asserts that al-Zajjājī’s division into four types is confusing, since he regards the verb together with what is linked to it as a class by itself, while its appropriate classification is under *jumal*. For the very same reason, al-Ḍațalyawsī judges al-Zajjājī’s classification of the types of the *mubtadaʾ*’s *xabar* as *xaṭaʾ* “a mistake” (*al-Ḥulal*, pp. 150-151), and that of *xabar kāna*’s types as *xalal* “a defect” (*al-Ḥulal*, p. 165). Ibn Xarūf (d. 609/1212) (*Šarḥ*, I, p. 419) considers the fact that al-Zajjājī does not name the verb together with what is linked to it *jumla* as *tasāmuḥ* “using a careless mode of expression, relying upon the understanding of the reader or hearer” (Lane, 1872, p. 1423), noting that he does name it *jumla* elsewhere more than once. Finally Ibn al-Ḍāʾī (d. 680/1281) (*Šarḥ*, I, p. 148) holds that by *jumla* al-Zajjājī here means *jumla min mubtadaʾ wa-xabar*, which is why he says: … *aw bi-jumla naḥw* …, that is, with a restrictive expression.

Indeed, as pointed out by Goldenberg (1988, p. 56), al-Zajjājī classifies verbal clauses in his

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19 The term *jumla* is used later in this chapter, in reference to clauses introduced by ‘*inna* and its “sisters”, *kāna* and its “sisters” and cognitive verbs (al-Zajjājī, *al-Jumal* [Ben Cheneb], p. 342 / *al-Jumal* [al-Ḥamad], p. 365).
al-ʾĪḍāh as jumla. In fact, even in al-Jumal itself, jumal are divided into al-mubtadaʾ wa-l-xabar and al-fiʾl wa-l-fāʾil (al-Zajjājī, al-Jumal [Ben Cheneb], p. 323 / al-Jumal [al-Ḥamad], p. 339; see also al-Zajjājī, al-Jumal [Ben Cheneb], p. 325 / al-Jumal [al-Ḥamad], p. 341). It is also asserted in this chapter that when ḏaraba, yaḍribu etc. with pronominal fāʾil s are used as proper names (see Section 2 above), they are left as is (ḥakaytahu), namely ḏaraba, yaḍribu etc., since these are jumal, in contrast with their usage as mere verbs, without fāʾil s, in which case they take different case markers, as well as the dual and plural suffixes (al-Zajjājī, al-Jumal [Ben Cheneb], p. 328 / al-Jumal [al-Ḥamad], p. 344.)

To obtain a fuller picture, we should also examine other treatises belonging to the same genre as al-Jumal, that is, early primers. The canonical theory was illustrated in the introduction with ‘AbūʾAḥī al-Fārisī’s pedagogical grammar, al-ʾĪḍāh, to which we can add al-Lumaʿ by his celebrated student, Ibn Jinnī (d. 392/1002) (al-Lumaʿ, pp. 10-11, 17, 18 and 23). However, alongside these two, we find early authors whose terminology in their primers do not square with the canonical theory, just like al-Zajjājī. In some of these books the term jumla is not used at all. An example for this is a treatise by a grammarian known by his nickname Luḡda. After illustrating the xabar of the mubtadaʾ as a noun, Luḡda (al-Nahw, pp. 223-224) moves on to xabar al-ibtidāʾ as a fiʾl, exemplifying it with sentences of the type Zaydun yaḏhabu. Only later in the chapter does Luḡda mention, in a list of illustrations that do not belong to any specific category, sentences such as Bišrun ʾaxawāhu ṣāliḥānu “Bišr, his two brothers are good” and Zaydun ḏahaba ʾaxūhu “Zayd, his brother went away”, that is, nominal sentences whose predicate is a nominal clause or a verbal clause whose fāʾil is disjoint in reference from the mubtadaʾ.

In Ibn Kaysān’s (d. 299/912 or 320/932) al-Muwaffaqī (al-Fatlī and Šallāš), p. 109 / al-Walīd, pp. 108-110) we meet the following quadripartite division of the predicate (ḥadīṯ al-ism): ism, zarf, fiʾl and jumla. In the third type are incorporated sentences of the type Zaydun qāma, alongside those of the type qāma Zaydun, that is to say, this class is not restricted to predicates in nominal sentences. The fourth type (only when the main sentence is nominal) is explained as a complex of ism and its xabar (also: ḥadīṯ), both constituting the xabar (also: ḥadīṯ) of the first ism, and illustrated with Zaydun māluhu kaṯīrun “Zayd, his wealth (or: livestock) is abundant” and Zaydun qāma ʾabūhu. Elsewhere, in such classifications – after kāna and its “sisters” (Ibn Kaysān, al-Muwaffaqī al-Fatlī and Šallāš), p. 114 / al-

20 Al-Zajjājī explicitly states that it is up to the name giver whether the verbs include a personal pronoun (see fn. 13 above).
21 His year of death is not documented (he was of the same ṭabaqa as ‘Abū Ḥanīfa al-Dīnawarī [d. ca. 282/895]). His nickname has several variations.
22 This sentence is followed by ‘Abdu llāhi ḏaraba ʾaxāka, identical in its structure with one of the illustrations for fiʾl, Bišrun yukrimu ʾaxāka.
23 This grammarian is said to have mixed between the two schools, the Baṣran and the Kūfan. One can raise the possibility of Kūfan influence on the grammatical description he presents, but see below.
Muwaffaqī [al-Walīd], p. 133) and asyndetic and syndetic relative clauses (naʿt and ṣila) (Ibn Kaysān, al-Muwaffaqī [al Fatlī and Shallāsh], pp. 118-119 / al-Muwaffaqī [al-Walīd], pp. 153-154) – no illustration is found in which the fāʿil in the clause is an overt noun, but rather only examples of the type Zaydun qāma, probably illustrating the category fiʿl, whereas jumla is illustrated with nominal clauses.

In his primer, al-Mūjaz, Ibn al-Sarrāj does not make use of the term jumla. The term fiʿl applies to both types of verbal clause, namely, with fāʿil as an overt noun and as a personal pronoun incorporated in the verb. Here, the two clause types, verbal and nominal, functioning as asyndetic relative clauses (ṣifa), are referred to as fiʿl and al-ibtidāʾ (= al-mubtadaʾ) wa-l-xabar, respectively. The illustrations for the former include not only yaqīmu and qāma, but also qaʿada ʾabūhu, with an overt fāʿil (Ibn al-Sarrāj, al-Mūjaz, p. 63).

The term jumla is not used in al-Zubaydī’s (d. 379/989) al-Wāḍiḥ either; moreover, he does not mention nominal clauses or verbal clauses whose fāʿil is an overt noun as types of xabar. Fiʿl as a type of xabar is only illustrated with verbal clauses whose fāʿil is a pronoun coreferential with the mubtadaʾ (also: ibtidāʾ), e.g., Zaydun qāma and ʾaxawāka nṭalaqā “your two brothers departed” (al-Zubaydī, al-Wāḍiḥ, pp. 70-71). 26

Finally, a primer by the grammarian ʿAbū al-ḤasanʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḍarīr (“the blind”) al-Quhunduzī (d. 5th/11th century) 27 (Ḍarīrī [1262], pp. 7-8 / Ḍarīrī [1291], pp. 7-8) also displays a quadripartite classification of xabar al-mubtadaʾ, into ism, fiʿl, ẓarf and jumla. The illustrations of fiʿl only include sentences of the type Zaydun qāma, while jumla is only illustrated with nominal clauses. Sentences in which the fāʿil of the verb is an overt noun are simply ignored. In a similar vein, two of the three ṣila’s types are said to be fiʿl and jumla28, and the list of illustrations include, inter alia, both qāma / yaqīmu and ʾabūhu qāʾimun. The last illustration in the chapter is the Qurʾānic ʿṣirāṭa llaḏīna ʾanʿamta ʿalayhim (Q. 1/7) “The pass of those You have blessed” (Jones, 2007, p. 23), but it is probably not adduced as an illustration of any specific type of ṣila (al-Quhunduzī, Ḍarīrī [1262], p. 29 / Ḍarīrī [1291], p. 30).

In conclusion, in several early pedagogical grammars the term fiʿl refers to verbal clauses. In some of them it explicitly applies to verbs incorporating a pronominal fāʿil, occasionally contrasted with jumla, while xabar clauses whose fāʿil is an overt noun are either ignored, illustrated with no clear classification or even classified under jumla alongside nominal clauses.

26 See also al-Zubaydī, al-Wāḍiḥ, pp. 74, 76 (where one of the illustrations is ka ʿanma ʾaxāka qādimun [sic], which, according to al-Zubaydī’s own classification, does not belong here, and may be the result of corruption in the text) and pp. 78-79.

27 Further discussion of this grammarian, and the confusion that surrounds his identity and his year of death in modern scholarship, will be offered elsewhere.

28 In the two printed editions consulted for this study, the text reads: jumla ismiyya, while two manuscripts of this work that I examined (Leiden Or. 5694(1), 2r-2v and the John Rylands Library, Arabic MS 725 [215] B, 19r-19v) lack the word ismiyya. It seems to me that this word is a later addition, designed to “canonise” the text. Otherwise, this would be the earliest known appearance of the term jumla ismiyya in Arabic grammatical tradition.
Alternatively, fiʿl may be used for any type of verbal clause.

Thus, al-Zajjājī is not exceptional in comparison with other grammarians of his era. In his al-Jumal, jumla is occasionally contrasted with verbal clauses, which are referred to with phrases such as “the verb with the fāʿil and mafʿūl linked to it” or, simply, fiʿl. Elsewhere in this primer, as well as in al-Zajjājī’s other writings, jumla also applies to verbal clauses, including those whose fāʿil is a personal pronoun. The attention paid to al-Zajjājī’s terminological inconsistency, both on the part of his commentators and modern scholars, is, therefore, due to the popularity of his al-Jumal.

So far, the facts have been merely portrayed. In the following two sections an attempt will be made to explain them.

4 fiʿl = “Verbal Clause” as a Terminological Convention

A partial explanation for the terminological inconsistency, which does not seem to reflect a theoretical point of view, consists of two interconnected factors. The first is the fact that the birth of the term jumla, as we have seen in Section 1 above, took place only after the relevant syntactical constructions had already been described in different terms, by Sībawayhi as well as other early grammarians. The second factor is the common practice in the grammatical literature to indicate only the first element of a clause or phrase when the other word(s) is (are) implied, such as the grammarians’ use of the term ḥarf jarr (preposition, lit. “particle of genitive”) with reference to an entire prepositional phrase29.

These two factors will be exemplified here with grammarians’ formulations regarding the annexation of nouns denoting time to verbal clauses30. The title of the chapter discussing this topic in Sībawayhi’s al-Kitāb (I, pp. 409-410) reads: ḥāḍā bābu mā yuḍāfu ʾilā l-ʾafʿāl min-a l-ʾasmāʾi “this is the chapter on nouns annexed to verbs”. Towards the end of the chapter, Sībawayhi also contrasts al-fiʿl with al-ibtidāʾ (= al-mubtadaʾ) + al-xabar31. In al-Mubarrad’s (al-Muqtaḍab, IV, pp. 347-348) aforementioned chapter entitled ḥāḍā bābu ʾidāfati l-ʾazminati ʾilā l-jumali (see Section 2 above), nouns are said to be annexed not only to al-fiʿl + al-fāʿil, but also to al-fiʿl (or: al-ʾafʿāl). An interesting theoretical text pertaining to “annexation to verbs” is al-Zajjājī’s (al-ʾĪḍāḥ, pp. 107-120; for translation and notes see Versteegh, 1995, pp. 190–215) chapter in his highly theoretical work al-ʾĪḍāḥ fiʾlāl al-naḥw.
on the reason why verbs do not take the genitive (xfḍ\(^{32}\)). Succinctly put, the reason he offers is that the genitive is the constituent to which something is annexed\(^{33}\), while verbs are not annexed to (al-Zajjājī, al-ʾĪḍāḥ, p. 108 ff; see Versteegh, 1995, p. 191 ff). One of al-Zajjājī’s (al-ʾĪḍāḥ, pp. 110-111; see Versteegh (1995, pp. 193–194)) explanations (on the authority of al-ʾAxfaš [d. 215/830]) for the impossibility of verbs to be annexed to is based on the fact that a verb must have a fāʿīl, which entails that annexation to a verb implies that al-fiʿl + its fāʿīl would together be in lieu of the tanwīn (since the constituent annexed to is in lieu of the tanwīn), in which case the noun would take two “additions” (ziyādatayni), this being impermissible (for instance, a noun cannot take both the definite article and the tanwīn). Here al-Zajjājī (al-ʾĪḍāḥ, pp. 112-113; see Versteegh (1995, pp. 195–196) and 208) discusses the counterexample of nouns denoting time, which can be annexed to verbs\(^{34}\). According to al-Zajjājī’s (al-ʾĪḍāḥ, p. 113; see Versteegh (1995, p. 196)) first solution to this difficulty, the permissibility of annexing nouns denoting time to verbs stems from the fact that verbs together with their fāʿīls constitute jumal, and nouns denoting time may be annexed to jumal, exemplified with annexation to nominal clauses. These nouns, he says, are annexed to verbs + their fāʿīls, just as they are annexed to other sorts of jumal. In the sequel, al-Zajjājī (al-ʾĪḍāḥ, pp. 119-120; see Versteegh (1995, pp. 202–203)) addresses the theory that verbs are indefinite, as proven by the fact that they necessitate fāʿīls, al-fiʿl + al-fāʿīl constituting a jumla, which is, in turn, considered indefinite. Furthermore, in one of his answers to the question why it is impossible for verbs to become definite, al-Zajjājī (al-ʾĪḍāḥ, p. 120; see Versteegh (1995, p. 203)) asserts that they are, as mentioned before, jumla, and the article cannot be attached to jumal. The terminological inconsistency is conspicuous in this chapter: although the annexation is, according to al-Zajjājī, to the entire verbal clause, al-Zajjājī’s discussion revolves around “annexation to the verb” (see also al-Sīrāfī [d. 368/979], Šarḥ, I, pp. 42-46). In fact, the formulation “annexation to the verb” never ceased to be used in Arabic grammatical tradition. For instance, al-Zamaxšarī (d. 538/1144) (quoted in Ibn Yaʿīš [d. 643/1245], Šarḥ, III, p. 15) indicates that nouns denoting time (and occasionally also nouns denoting place) are annexed to fiʿl, as well as to jumla ibtidāʾiyya (i.e. nominal clause). After his renowned commentator, Ibn Yaʿīš (Šarḥ, III, pp. 16-17), mentions this phenomenon of annexation to fiʿl (a formulation which also features afterwards in the text), he discusses a dispute among grammarians over the essence of this annexation: while some hold that it is the verb itself which is annexed to (formally), others are of the opinion that it is the jumla, be it fiʿl + fāʿīl or mubtadaʿ + xabar, and not merely the verb. Al-Zamaxšarī’s statement that it is the fiʿl which is annexed to is interpreted as intended to refer to the fiʿl and fāʿīl together (that is, Ibn Yaʿīš ascribes the second opinion to al-Zamaxšarī), evidenced from al-Zamaxšarī’s mention of the nominal sentence. The reason why al-Zamaxšarī did not

\(^{32}\)It is often claimed that term xafḍ is the Kūfan counterpart of the Baṣran term jarr. Indeed, only the latter is used in Sibawayhi’s al-Kitāb, whereas the former is the only one used by al-Farrāʾ and Ţaʿlab (d. 291/904). However, both are utilised, as synonyms, by mainstream grammarians. For discussion see Vidro and Kasher (2014, pp. 218–219). See also Versteegh (2019, p. 185).

\(^{33}\)muḍāf ʾilayhi, a term which also applies when the genitive noun follows a preposition, as pointed out by al-Zajjājī in this discussion.

\(^{34}\)Other much more marginal counterexamples are ḍū and ʾāya, which will not be dealt with here.
mention the *fāʿil*, per Ibn Yaʿīš, is the fact that every verb entails a *fāʿil*.

In Section 3 above we came across al-Zajjājī’s use of the term *mubtadaʿ* with reference to the entire nominal clause, which tallies with the terminological convention dealt with here. As far as my knowledge goes, it is an extremely rare usage in Arabic grammatical writings; in the Appendix we mention a similar case, where al-Farrāʾ utilises the term *al-ism al-muxbar ʿanhu* (i.e. the subject) for nominal clauses.

The convention addressed in this section can explain the use of the term *fiʿl* with reference to the entire verbal clause, yet it cannot resolve the problem stemming from the contrast in grammarians’ formulations between *jumla* and verbal clauses (or a subtype thereof), to which the next section will be dedicated.

### 5 The Pedagogical Consideration

In Ibn Kaysān’s text, discussed in Section 3 above, a pedagogical consideration manifests itself for applying the term *fiʿl* to the predicate in sentences of the type *Zaydun qāma*, in contrast with clauses whose *fāʿil* is an overt noun: this usage of the term *fiʿl* enables him to present the aforementioned phenomenon of “agreement asymmetry” in a rather simple manner. As noted above, Ibn Kaysān applies the term *fiʿl* to the predicates of sentences of both the type *qāma Zaydun* and *Zaydun qāma*. Accordingly, he states (Ibn Kaysān, *al-Muwaffaqī* [al-Fatlī and Šallāš], p. 109 / *al-Muwaffaqī* [al-Walīd], p. 109; see also Ibn Kaysān, *al-Muwaffaqī* [al-Fatlī and Šallāš], p. 108 / *al-Muwaffaqī* [al-Walīd], p. 106) that if the verbal predicate precedes the *ism* (the subject, lit. “noun”, but see below) it takes the singular form, while it agrees with it in number if it follows it, e.g. *qāma Zaydun, qāma l-Zaydāni* and *qāma l-Zaydūna* vs. *Zaydun qāma, al-Zaydāni qāmā* and *al-Zaydūna qāmū*.

This “asymmetry” is explained here based on the canonical theory, namely, the existence of a personal pronoun in the verb (in the latter cases) or the lack thereof (in the former). The same also holds for the primers of Luḡda (*al-Nahw*, p. 225), al-Zajjājī (*al-Jumal* [Ben Cheneb], p. 23 / *al-Jumal* [al-Ḥamad], p. 10), al-Naḥḥās (d. 337/949 or 338/950) (*al-Tuffāḥa*, p. 17) and al-Zubaydī (*al-Wādiḥ*, pp. 196-198).

An even more “extreme” formulation appears in al-Quhunduzī’s (*Ḍarīrī* [1262], p. 11 / *Ḍarīrī* [1291], p. 11) primer, where the preposed verb is said to take only the singular, while the postposed verb can also take the dual and the plural, with no mention of a personal pronoun in the latter case; the two options are put in terms of merely different word-orders, rather than different constructions. A similar formulation is found in another short pedagogical primer.

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35See also Ibn Yaʿīš, *Ṣarḥ*, VIII, p. 46. One may explain the rarity of the formulation “annexation to *mubtadaʿ*” on the ground that it is blatantly self-contradictory, as the *muḍāf ʾilayhi* should take the genitive due to the annexation, whereas the *mubtadaʿ*, by definition, takes the nominative and its case is not assigned by any formal operator (according to the vast majority’s view).

36wa-ʾiḏā kāna l-hadīṯu ʿan-i l-ʾismi fi ʾlan wuhhida (in the printed editions: *WJD* muqaddaman wa-jāʾ aʿalā ʾadadi l-ʾasmāʾi mutaʾaxxiran).
ical grammar, by Ibn Saʿdān (Naḥw, p. 43), probably the Kūfan grammarian ʿAbū Jaʿfar Muḥammad Ibn Saʿdān (d. 231/846). Under bābu taqdimī l-fiʿli wa-taʾxīrīhi “a chapter on preposing and postposing the verb” the verb is said to take the singular form (muwaḥḥad) if it precedes the ism, while it may take the dual and plural forms if it follows it. No mention is made to a personal pronoun inhering in the verb.37 But even here, no full symmetry obtains between the two constructions, since only the constituent following the verb is termed fāʿil in this treatise (Ibn Saʿdān, Naḥw, passim and Vidro and Kasher (2014, passim)). It is possible that this text reflects a Kūfan inclination (see below), although it can also be regarded as reflecting traits pertaining to other early primers.38

This kind of formulation, according to which verbs take the singular form when they precede the ism, while they take either the singular, the dual or the plural form when they follow it, seems to be characteristic of early pedagogical grammars, in contrast with the well-known emphasis grammarians generally put on their contention that it is not the verb that takes the dual or the plural in e.g. yaqūmānī and yaqūmūna, but rather its pronominal fāʿil (see e.g. Ibn al-Sarrāj, al-ʾUṣūl, I, p. 48; also ibid., I, p. 172)40.

This depiction of grammatical rules brings to mind portrayals of this topic common in Western grammars of Arabic. Guillaume (2020, pp. 97–99)41 shows that Thomas Erpenius42 presents constructions such as al-nāsu qālū wa-yaqūlūna as regular, whereas he devises an ad hoc rule for e.g. qāla l-nāsu. Yet, as stated by Guillaume, the cost for regarding Zayd as the “subject” in Zaydun qāma just as it is in qāma Zaydun is disregarding sentences of the type Zaydun qāma ʾabūhu, which one may indeed consider as unnecessary at the early stage of learning.

The syntactic descriptions in the pedagogical grammars discussed here can be represented as points on a continuum between the “canonical” and the “pedagogical” poles. At the former, one finds al-ʾĪḍāḥ by ʾAbū ʿAlī al-Fārisī and al-Lumaʿ by Ibn Jinnī, both conforming with the canonical theory. At the other pole we find al-Quhunduzī’s al-Ḍarīrī: jumla applies exclusively to predicative nominal clauses; predicative verbal clauses whose fāʿil is a personal pronoun coreferential with the mubtadaʾ are termed fiʾl; predicative verbal clauses whose fāʿil is an overt noun are ignored; the “agreement asymmetry” phenomenon is put in terms of word-order alone. An intermediate position is taken, for instance, in Ibn Kaysān’s

37A longer version of this chapter is found in Vidro and Kasher (2014, pp. 180–181) (see also ibid., p. 208); a study of the relation between this text and Ibn Saʿdān’s grammar is currently in preparation.

38For further discussion see Vidro and Kasher (2014, pp. 220–224). See ibid., p. 223, fn. 169 for further references to other treatises in which the difference between the two sentence types is formulated in terms of different word-orders.


40See also Versteegh (1977, p. 70), fn. 1; Goldenberg (1994, pp. 7–8), fn. 4. For an exceptional counter-example, see Sheyhatovitch (2021, p. 87).

41This article consists of a critical discussion of the treatment of Arabic “nominal sentences” in Western grammars. Cf. also Uhlmann, 2017, pp. 89–102.

42“La Grammatica arabica d’Erpenius (1584-1624), dont la première édition date de 1613, marque une étape décisive dans le développement des études arabes en Europe, en proposant pour la première fois une grammaire pratique destinée à former des arabisants à partir du niveau le plus élémentaire” (Guillaume, 2020, p. 97).
al-Muwaffaqī, where jumla applies to both nominal clauses and verbal clauses whose fāʿ il is an overt noun, but not a personal pronoun; these are termed fiʿ il; and while the “agreement asymmetry” phenomenon is explained as stemming from word-order, Ibn Kaysān takes care to mention that when the subject precedes, a personal pronoun is incorporated in the verb.

Returning to the point of departure of the present article, the inconsistencies in Ibn al-Sarrāj’s and al-Zajjājī’s books can be explained now as originating in the fact that although these authors adhere to the canonical theory, as manifest in their explicit statements, they make use of “pedagogical” formulations, such as the quadripartite division of the types of xabar to ism, fiʿ il, zarf and jumla, which does not square with the canonical theory (as already pointed out by al-Zajjājī’s commentators), due to its implied exclusion of verbal clauses, or a subgroup thereof, from the category of jumla. The chapter in Ibn al-Sarrāj’s al-ʾUṣūl on the types of xabar is closer, in this regard, to the pedagogical pole, in comparison to al-Zajjājī, as only verbal clauses whose fāʿ il is a personal pronoun are subsumed under fiʿ il, while those with an overt noun are analysed as jumla. Al-Zajjājī, on the other hand, extends the former so as to incorporate all verbal clauses, using to this end more complex expressions, such as “the verb with the fāʿ il and mafʿūl linked to it”, yet, by doing so he restricts the extension of the category jumla in comparison to Ibn al-Sarrāj.

Of interest is the fact that a similar exposition is found in al-Farrāʾ’s (Maʿānī, I, p. 128) Qur’ānic commentary, in a passage discussed by Talmon (1990, p. 273), where al-Farrāʾ addresses the discrepancy between the masculine verb and the feminine subject in the verse zuyyina li-llaḏīna kafarū l-ḥayātu l-dunyā … (Q. 2/212) “The life of this world has been made to seem fair to those who disbelieve …” (Jones, 2007, p. 50). In contrast with such cases, where the masculine form of the verb is permitted when it precedes its feminine subject, al-Farrāʾ condemns (as qabīḥ) but permits (jāʾiz) the use of a masculine verb when it follows its feminine subject, since in the latter case the verb incorporates a pronoun coreferential with the subject. What is manifest here, as elsewhere in this commentary, is al-Farrāʾ’s use of the term ism for subjects, whether they precede or follow the verb, in line with what we have seen in pedagogical grammars above. According to Talmon (1990, p. 272) (see also Talmon (1991, pp. 60–61), Talmon (2003, p. 165)), al-Farrāʾ’s “unitary division of the main part of the sentence into ism/ fiʿ il (xabar) is unmistakably derived from Aristotle’s concept of ὄνομα and rhèma in their basic syntactic relations as ὑπόκειμενον ‘subject’ and κατεγοροῦμενον ‘predicate’ which he describes in De Interpretatione”. Also worthy of note is al-Farrāʾ’s treatment of the difference between these two constructions, which puts stress on word-order. However, Talmon (1990, p. 273)’s far-reaching conclusion regarding “[t]he absence of any distinction between VS/SV structure”, is untenable, since al-Farrāʾ explicitly indicates the

\[43\] A quadripartite division is also offered by ʿAbū ʿAlī al-Fārisī, but there fiʿ il is replaced by a conditional sentence (see the Introduction above).
\[44\] One should keep in mind that although al-ʾUṣūl certainly does not belong to the genre of primers but is designed for more advanced students, its orientation is still pedagogical, as its author explicitly declares in its introduction (Ibn al-Sarrāj, al-ʾUṣūl, 1, pp. 35-36).
\[45\] li-ʾanna l-fiʿ il ʾaḏā ʾatā baʿ da l-ismi kāna fīhi makniyyun min-a l-ismi.
\[46\] He says: “Whenever the different position of the verb in relation to its subject has syntactic implications
existence of a resumptive pronoun in the latter case, which is one of the basic principles underlying the distinction between the two sentence types in the canonical theory\(^{47}\). One should not dismiss out of hand the possibility that al-Farrāʾ in his Qurʾānic commentary utilises conventional formulations, which do not necessarily reflect his own theoretical views. As for the use of *ism* for “subject”, one should keep in mind that it is, in fact, widespread in mainstream Arabic grammatical tradition within the technical terms *ism kāna* and *ism ʾinna* (cf. Fischer, 1963, p. 154).

6 Conclusion

In this article we have seen that the terminological inconsistency in Ibn al-Sarrāj’s and al-Zajjājī’s treatises can be explained by a close examination of contemporary grammatical writings, specifically by inspection terminological conventions and pedagogical practices in the latter. A methodological implication of this, pertaining to the validity of reconstruction of grammarians’ theories based on pedagogical writings, is the following: such works, in particular the early ones, should be read from a different vantage point than theoretically oriented treatises. One should take into consideration the aim and the target audience of these texts, as these do not necessarily consist of simplified expositions of their authors’ theories (see Kasher, 2018, 2022). Grammatical descriptions that are at variance with grammatical theory due to pedagogical considerations are typical in early primers, yet we have seen that they are not absent from Ibn al-Sarrāj’s *al-ʾUṣūl*, which was obviously not designed for beginners. The possibility we raised, that formulations of this sort also appear in Qurʾānic commentaries, needs further study.

Appendix: *Jumla* in al-Farrāʾ’s *Maʿānī al-Qurʾān*

"Jumla"\(^{48}\) first appears in al-Farrāʾ’s (*Maʿānī*, II, p. 195) commentary on *ʿa-fa-lam yahdi lahum kam ʾahlaknā (qablhum min al-qurūni)* … (Q. 20/128) “Have they not been guided by how many generations We destroyed before them …” (Jones, 2007, p. 296). Al-Farrāʾ explains: *fa-jumlatu l-kalāmi fīhā maʿnā rafʿin*\(^{49}\), that is, the interrogative clause introduced by *kam* (which is, in itself, *fī mawḍiʿi naṣḥin*, i.e. it occupies the position of an accusative noun) has

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\(^{47}\)Talm (2003, pp. 165–166) also points out that “[b]eside Farrāʾ, Abūʿ Ubayda is the other early writer who applies a fairly consistent unitary system to the analysis of sentence main parts …”. The excerpts quoted from Abū Ubayda’s (d. ca. 210/825) *Majāz al-Qurʾān* address the issue of agreement, depending on the relative order of the verb and the subject (*ism*).

\(^{48}\)Kinberg (1996)’s translation reads: “a compound construction; a sentence, a clause (it may be substituted for a noun, hence it is liable to take a theoretical case marker; …)”. *Jumlat al-kalām* is translated as “a compound utterance, a clause” (p. 133).

\(^{49}\)This explanation directly follows another sentence to which al-Farrāʾ analogises the verse, yet, it most probably applies to both.
the “meaning” of the nominative. An analogy is drawn from the syntactic construction of wa-
‘in tad’ūhum ‘ištā – hūdā lā yattabi‘ūkum sawā‘un ‘alaykum ʿa-da‘awumūhum ‘am ‘antum ʿāda‘awān ʿalāmīnā (Q. 7/193) “If you call them to guidance, they will not follow you. It is the same for you whether you call them or are silent” (Jones, 2007, p. 167). The raf’ in the jumla, that is, the interrogative clause introduced by ’a-‘, becomes apparent in the corresponding construction sawā‘un ‘alaykum ʿantum wa-du‘ā ‘Ukum (conveying the same meaning)50.

This term is used, less technically, in another occurrence where the virtual case of a clause is discussed: wa-taraknā ʿalayhi fī l-ʾāxirīnā salāmun ʿalā Nūḥin fī l-ʾālamīnā (Q. 37/78-79) “And [We] left for him among posterity [the greeting]51, ‘Peace be on Noah among all beings’” (Jones, 2007, p. 410). These verses are compared with qaraʾtu fī l-Qurʾān: l-ḥamdu li-Llāhi rabbi l-ʿālamīn (e.g. Q. 1/2)”I read in the Qurʾān: ‘Praise belongs to God, the Lord of all Beings’” (Jones, 2007, p. 23), explained as fa-yakūnu fī l-jumlati fī maʾnā naṣbin, i.e., lit., as a whole, it has the “meaning” of the accusative52. For the same reason, salāmun ʿalā Nūḥin in our verse is fī taʾwīli naṣbin (with the same meaning) (al-Farrāʾ, Maʿānī, II, pp. 387-388)53.

Another occurrence54 is found in al-Farrāʾ’s (Maʿānī, III, pp. 179-180) interpretation of al-ḥāqqatu mā l-ḥāqqatu (Q. 69/1-2; for translation see below), a construction which is analogous per al-Farrāʾ to al-qāriʿatu mā l-qāriʿatu (Q. 101/1-2; for translation see below). In the latter, according to al-Farrāʾ, the nominative is assigned to mā by the second token of al-qāriʿa, and to the first token – bi-jumlatihā (which should possibly be read: bi-jumlatihimā), that is, by the entire clause, lit. by the totality of both55. These verses thus mean, according to this grammarian: “The reality/smiter – what is the reality/smiter!”58

Apart from jumla, al-Farrāʾ also uses the phrases kalima mujmala and kalām mujmal with reference to nominal clauses59. After he mentions the consensus regarding the reading yawmU

50 Elsewhere, al-Farrāʾ (Maʿānī, II, p. 333) uses the term jumla in his discussion of Q. 32/26, which is the same construction as Q. 20/128 (apart from fa- instead of wa-). See also Talmon (1988, pp. 90–91).
51 Jones’ addition.
52 The text continues: tarfaʿuhā bi-l-kalāmi, which should possibly be read instead: bi-l-lāmi, in which case it indicates that the nominative of al-ḥamdu is assigned by the preposition li- of li-Llāhi, in accordance with the Kūfan opinion (see e.g. Talmon, 2003, pp. 170–173). Talmon (1988, p. 91) translates: “in actual speech”.
53 The raf’ in salāmun is assigned by ʿalā, in accordance with the Kūfān view (see the previous footnote). See also Talmon (1988, p. 91).
54 This passage is not mentioned in Talmon (1988).
55 On the Kūfan explanation of the nominative case of the subject and the predicate in nominative sentences, see Vidro and Kasher (2014, pp. 221–222) and the references therein.
58 The exclamation mark is due to al-Farrāʾ’s use of the verb taʿajjabta.
59 Kinberg (1996, pp. 134–135)’s translation of kalām mujmal (and with an almost identical wording – of kalima mujmala [ibid.]) runs as follows: “a compounded utterance (i.e. a clause, which may be substituted for a single noun, e.g., as a second term of annexation)”. Talmon, 1988, p. 92, fn. 54 suggests the following explanation for the “rather disturbing fact that al-Farrāʾ uses the word kalima in reference to the nexal construction in clause position, side-by-side with the use of kalām in the same reference”: “kalām denotes the speech unit-
in *hāḏā yāwmu lā yanṭiqūna* (Q. 77/35) “This is the day they shall not speak” (Jones, 2007, p. 552) in the nominative, he states that it would have also been permitted (only from a linguistic point of view) to read it *yāwma*; one of the reasons he gives for this (for him hypothetical) reading is that when *yāwma* (as well as *layla*) is annexed to *faʿala* (i.e. perfect), *yāfʿalu* (i.e. imperfect) or ... *kalimatin mujmalatin lā xaḍā fīhā*, it takes the *naṣb* (i.e. -a) even when it occupies the position of the genitive or the nominative. In this case, *yāwma* would retain its function, as if it took the nominative. Clearly, the third expression refers to nominal clauses. The asyndetic relative clause *lā xafḍa fīhā* can be analysed as either unrestrictive (as inferred from Talmon, 1988, pp. 91–92) or restrictive, that is to say, as designed to exclude phrases carrying a case marker of the genitive. If the latter is the case, it follows that the phrase *kalima mujmal* by itself has a broader extension, not restricted to clauses.

Later in the text al-Farrāʾ again enlists these three, this time the third is dubbed *kalām mujmal* and exemplified with a nominal clause. This third member of the triad is later referred to as *al-ism al-muxbar ḍanhu*, namely, the nominal subject (al-Farrāʾ, *Maʿānī*, III, pp. 225-226).

Two terminological issues arising from this passage are of much importance for our main discussion. First, although, as we have seen, *jumla* may be applied to verbal clauses, here the terms *kalima mujmal* and *kalām mujmal* stand in contradistinction to *faʿala* and *yafʿalu*, namely, to verbal clauses. Second, not only does al-Farrāʾ designate verbal clauses by their first element, i.e. the verb, but he also applies the terminological convention discussed in Section 4 to nominal clauses as well, by referring to them by indicating only the subject.

In this passage, al-Farrāʾ (*Maʿānī*, III, pp. 225-226) uses the phrase *fiʿl mujmal* in his second interpretation of the (for him hypothetical) variant *yāwma*: “...that you use the word *hāḏā* with reference to a general act, namely God’s threat and recompense, as if you said: ‘this matter (will take place) in the day they shall not speak’”.

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60 But see ʿUmar and Makram, 1988, VIII, p. 40; Al-Xaṭīb, 2002, p. X, pp. 251-252, where the reading *yāwma* is also attested.

61 It is unclear whether *naṣb* here means accusative or the vowel *a*, since both are possible in the nomenclature utilised by al-Farrāʾ (see the references in Vidro and Kasher, 2014).

62 Elsewhere, in another discussion of such constructions, *kalām* is modified by a restrictive relative clause: *wa-mā ʿudīfa ʾilā kalāmin laysa fisī maxṣūdun* ... (al-Farrāʾ, *Maʿānī*, I, p. 327; see Kinberg (1991, pp. 244–245)).

63 On this passage see Talmon, 1988, pp. 91–92; Talmon, 2003, p. 166, fn. 2.

64 The editor notes that in another version of the text the words *lā yanṭiqūna* appear between *min* and *wa ʿid*. This version is the one chosen by the editor, who vocalises the word *wa ʿid* with -u. I cannot conceive of any reasonable interpretation for this version (but see below).
In this case, *yawma* would be a time adverbial functioning as the predicate. Talmon (1988, p. 92) interprets *fiʿl mujmal* here, incorrectly I believe, as meaning “verb (+ agent) in noun-position”, referring to (*lā* *yantiqūna* in the verse). A different interpretation is offered by Kinberg (1996, p. 134); see also Kinberg (1991, p. 245)’s translation of *fiʿl mujmal* “a verbal complex summed up in a single noun (which is a pro-sentence, e.g. ‘this’)’. Kinberg takes this phrase, correctly I believe, to pertain to the word *hādā* in the verse. However, no “verbal complex” is involved in this discussion. Moreover, this sense of generality or vagueness (rather than of summing up) for *mujmal* is used by al-Farrāʾ elsewhere, in his commentary on the following verse: *wa-iḏ qāla Mūsā li-qawmihi ḏkurū niʿmata Llāhi ʿalaykum ʾiḏʾanjākum min ʿāli Firʾawna yaṣūmūnakum sūʾa l-ʿaḏābi wa-yuḏabbiḥūna ʾabnāʾakum wa-yastahyūna nisāʾakum wa-fiḏālikum balāʿun min rabbikum ʿaẓīmun* (Q. 14/6) “[Recall] when Moses said to His people, ‘Remember God’s blessing to you when He saved you from the folk of Pharaoh who were afflicting you with evil torment and slaughtering your sons and sparing your women. In that there was a grievous trial from your Lord’” (Jones, 2007, pp. 239–240). Al-Farrāʾ notes that elsewhere a parallel text reads (*yasūmūnakum sūʾa l-ʿaḏābi*) *yuḏabbiḥūna* (*ʾabnāʾakum …*) (Q. 2/49), and in yet another verse – *yuqattilūna* (Q. 7/141) (in the same context), both without *wa-.* He explains that this *wa-* implies that they suffered torment that was not slaughtering in addition to slaughtering, whereas lack of *wa-* implies that “slaughtering” explains “torment”. In the latter case, the information (*xabar*) is said, first, to be *mujmal* (that is, torment generally), and later explained (as slaughtering). The notion of *mujmal* is also illustrated by al-Farrāʾ with the verses: *… wa-man yafʿal ḏālika yalqa ʾaṯāman yuḍāʿaf lahu l-ʿaḏābu yawma l-qiyāmati …* (Q. 25/68–69) “… whoever does that will meet the price of sin: The torment will be multiplied for him on the Day of Resurrection …” (Jones, 2007, p. 334). Al-Farrāʾ (Maʿānī, II, pp. 68-69) explains that *ʿaṯām* implies *ʿaḏāb,* whether on a small or a large scale, which is thereafter explained – without *wa-* with the words *yuḍāʿaf lahu l-ʿaḏābu yawma l-qiyāmati*. Kinberg (1996, p. 134)’s translation of *mujmal* as “[semantically] compounded (e.g. a verbal noun, since it suggests a predication)”, based on this passage, is therefore untenable. In a similar vein, Kinberg (1996, p. 134) also translates *mujmal fi kalima* as follows: “summed up (an idea, a message) in a single noun (namely verbal noun such as ‘torture, punishment’, ‘recompense’)”. This sequence of words appears in our text in the following sentence: *wa-iḏā kāna l-xabaru min-a l-ʿaḏābi ʾaw-i l-ʿawābi mujmalan fi kalimatin ṯumma fassartahu fa-jʾalhu bi-ʾgayri l-wāwi.* It is evident that the sequence *mujmal fi kalima* does not constitute a technical term at all; rather, it simply means that the information about the torment or recompense is expressed in a general fashion, only to be explained afterwards; neither the notion of summing up, nor of a single noun, are relevant to al-Farrāʾ’’s discussion.

Talmon (1988, p. 92) concludes that the “existence of synonymous expressions denoting ‘clause’, the use of *mujmal* in a non-grammatical sense … , the introduction of the phrase
and the phrase *fi l-ĝumla* ‘as an ensemble’... all leave the impression that it was at that time in the very first stages of its generation as a term.” The above interpretation of *fi l mujmal* as irrelevant to the concept of “clause”, as well as the possible analysis raised above regarding the term *kalima mujmala*, lead to the conclusion that in al-Farrāʾ’s *Maʾānī l-Qurʾān* the expressions in question are situated even closer to the literal pole in the literal-technical continuum (see also Iványi, 2007, p. 536).

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