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Examining Interface of Al-Azhari's Grammatical Reasoning: Quranic Readings as a Model

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines a well-known Arabic phonological phenomenon called grammatical reasoning. The study addresses four forms of reasoning in the Arabic Case system: alleviating, heaviness, meaning-carrying, and adjacency. The study categorizes the data linguistically and phonologically adopting a descriptive qualitative methodology by presenting a sample of Quranic verses carrying the target reasoning forms. The study findings reveal that Arabic via syntactic-phonological interface utilizes different strategies of phonological reductions that result in alternative phonological readings of some Quranic lexicon. The study contributes to understanding Arabic phonological reductive processes by reflecting on the multiplicity of phonological readings of the Quranic language. The study has shown that this phonological reduction includes phonological elision, vowel alterations, consonantal shortening, as well as assimilation processes. By assessing the distinction of the application of these process in Al-Azhari's grammatical categorization, the study distinguishes between four phenomena explicated in Arabic classical grammar, but underexplored in modern linguistics and phonology (alleviating, adjacency, heaviness, and semantic concord). Therefore, the study contributes on the one hand to casting novel modern linguistic analysis on classical interpretations of different phonological readings, while on the other hand the study sheds light on the interplay between phonological processes and Quranic readings, emphasizing the micro coordination between syntax and phonology while showing relevance to the macro interpretational levels of Quranic studies.

Keywords: Grammatical Reasoning; Alleviating; Heaviness; Adjacency; Qualitative; Quranic

1. Introduction

The method of *al-ʿillah* (grammatical reasoning) stands as one of the primary approaches adopted by linguists to elucidate phenomena that deviate from linguistic norms, encompassing various phonetic, syntactic, and morphological aspects. Upon investigating the available corpus, one cannot overlook the presence of a multitude of expressions indicating linguists' reliance on justification for the proclamations they make. This reliance is manifested through statements such as *semantic concord*, "conveying lightness," "expressing weightiness," and others. Such justifications impart a scientific and persuasive dimension to linguistic matters.

The book titled "*The Readings and the Grammarians' Reasons for Them*," known as "Maʿānī al-Qirāʾāt," authored by Abi Mansour Al-Azhari[1], stands as one of the earliest advanced works in the field of grammatical reasoning. In this book, Al-Azharī collected a variety of Qur'anic verses, Hadiths, proverbs, sayings, and poetic evidence, along with reasons for the different aspects of this evidence.

Al-Azhari's purpose in authoring "*The Readings and the Grammarians' Reasons for Them*," was to justify the eight readings through Arabic grammatical reasons, highlighting their linguistic validity. He relied on the opinions of grammarians to demonstrate the status of these readings in terms of eloquence and accuracy, quality and weakness, divergence, and prosody, using the standards and reasons of the grammarians[2, 3]. Al-Azharī's approach was characterized by prioritizing the judgments of grammarians without simultaneously subjugating himself to their dominance. Furthermore, Aldubai[4] delves into the different modes of reading as historically adopted in the Quran, resulting in a variety of phonological readings of a sample of lexicon within the Quranic verses. Additionally, Al-Nuaemy & Younis[5] have examined the influence of various phonological readings on the grammatical interpretation of Quranic verses. There are also occurrences where linguistic rules are violated including antiagreement[6] and Al-khawadah[7] has clarified the positions of the native speakers of their dialect in dealing with sound reading that resulted in certain linguistic irregularities. Many scholars in the field of Quranic reading have debated extensively about the multiplicity of linguistic operations occurring within alternative possible readings within various dialectal contexts[8]. The microlinguistic assumption of these forms of reasoning is that their phonological processes that determine the nature of their output are subjected to the Principle of Economy outlined by Chomsky[9] in which the PF form opts for the optimal option for the phonological changing context[10].

The reasons provided by Al-Azharī encompass phonological, morphological, and syntactic aspects of language. The study has identified these reasons, namely: The Reasoning of Alleviating, The Reasoning of Heaviness, The Reasoning of Semantic Concord, and The Reasoning of Bearing Adjacency "following." The study therefore addresses the following questions:

Q(1): What are the types of linguistic reasoning in Arabic Quranic grammar?

Q(2): How linguistic processes are incorporated in the production of Arabic grammatical production?

Q(3): What is the nature of the interface between syntax, morphology, and phonology in Arabic grammatical reasoning?

These questions address Al-Azhar's grammatical categorization in terms of the nature of phonological production, recognizing types of interfaces amongst language components, and assessing the interplay between phonological alterations and alternative and interpretational levels of Quranic language[11].

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Framework

The study adopts Al-Azhari's categorization of Arabic grammatical reasoning including the following:

1. Alleviating
2. Heaviness
3. Semantic Concord
4. Adjacency

Based on the foregoing discussion, it becomes evident that Quranic evidence serve as the cornerstone of reasoning according to Al-Azharī's methodology. Al-Azharī has categorized this evidence and arranged them according to their occurrences in the Noble Quran. Both the reasoning of alleviating and the reasoning of heaviness, as well as the reasoning of semantic concord to adjacency and semantic concord to proximity, have received ample attention within Al-Azharī's work. This comprehensive coverage in Al-Azharī's writings can be attributed to his meticulous focus on phonological

issues influenced by the Quranic recitations and the diversity of Arabic languages within those recitations.

Al-Azharī's grammatical guidance was primarily derived from the narratives of the Arabic grammatical authorities such as Al-Farāhīd [12], Al-Zajjāj [13], and Tha'lab – may Allah have mercy on them. He left this aspect for those who excelled in it and dedicated themselves to its intricacies and analogies.

However, Al-Azharī's role was far from that of a mere transmitter or imitator of those who preceded him. While he drew from others, such as Al-Zajjāj in understanding the meanings of the Quran and Al-Farāhīd in grammatical meanings, Al-Azharī was distinguished by an independent methodology. He agreed with some and disagreed with others, carefully selecting what he found reliable and reassuring.

The study adopts phonological descriptive analysis in which phonological processes of sound alterations are captured as follows:

1. Elision [14]
2. Vowel change
3. Consonantal alteration
4. Assimilation

2.2. Data Sample

The study collects and examines 40 Quranic verses that incorporate the target forms of Arabic grammatical reasoning, reflecting on their linguistic nuances and interfaces.

2.3. Data Analysis

By adopting a descriptive qualitative analysis, the study subjects the items within the Quranic verse sample to a qualitative categorization reflecting on linguistic nuances and interfaces between syntax, morphology, and phonology. This incorporates different linguistic processes that include the following:

1. Elision
2. Vowel Change
3. Reduction

3. Discussion and Results

3.1. The Reasoning of Alleviating

The reasoning of alleviating is employed to reduce heaviness and seek ease of pronunciation [15]. Alleviation can occur through omission, assimilation, or merging, among other methods. This reasoning is considered one of the most common reasonings cited by Al-Azhar. The study has identified nineteen instances in which Al-Azhar discusses the reasoning for alleviating. These instances are as follows:

1- "... فَتَخْطَفُهُ الطَّيْرُ..." (Surah Al-Hajj, Verse 31) - "... then the bird will snatch him ..." (Quran 22:31).

2- "... تَظَاهَرُونَ عَلَيْهِم..." (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 85) - "... you show aggression towards them ..." (Quran 2:85).

3- "... تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا ..." (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 185) - "... contributes good willingly ..." (Quran 2:185).

4- "....حتى يَطهُرْن..." (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 222) - "... until they are purified ..." (Quran 2:222).

5- "...أَن تَصَدَّقُواْ ..." (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 280) - "... that you give in charity ..." (Quran 2:280).

6- "...كَأَنَّمَا يَصَّعَّدُ فِي السَّمَاء ..." (Surah Al-An'am, Verse 125) – "... as if he is climbing into the sky ..." (Quran 6:125).

7- "... أَتُحَاجُّونِّي..." (Surah Al-An'am, Verse 80) - "... do you argue with me ..." (Quran 6:80).

8- "...وَاتَّقُواْ اللهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ..." (Surah An-Nisa, Verse 1) - "... and fear Allah, who you ask ..." (Quran 4:1).

9- "...لَوْ تُسَوَّى ..." (Surah An-Nisa, Verse 42) - "... if they were equal ..." (Quran 4:42).

10- "...وَظَنُّواْ أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ كُذِبُواْ..." (Surah Yusuf, Verse 110) - "... and they thought they had lied ..." (Quran 12:110).

11- "...وَخَرَقُواْ لَهُ بَنِينَ وَبَنَاتٍ..." (Surah Al-An'am, Verse 100) - "... and they bore for him sons and daughters ..." (Quran 6:100).

12- "...تَّزَاوَرُ عَن كَهْفِهِمْ..." (Surah Al-Kahf, Verse 17) - "... they distracted from his cave ..." (Quran 18:17).

13- "...فَمَا اسْطَاعُوا أَن يَظْهَرُوهُ..." (Surah Al-Kahf, Verse 97) - "... so they were not able to appear it ..." (Quran 18:97).

14- Utterance of 'Amr ibn Ma'di Yakrib:

قول عمرو بن معدي يكرب: تَرَاهُ كَالثَّغَامِ يُعَلُّ مِسْكًا   يَسُوءُ الْفَالِياتِ إِذَا فَلَيْنِي

You see it as the hyssop plant, exhaling a musk-like scent,

Yet it is worse than women delousing.

15- "... يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ ..." (Surah Al-An'am, Verse 95) "brings out the living from the dead..." (Quran 6:95).

16- "The saying of the Arabs: 'Easygoing and lenient.''

17- "... نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي ..." (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 40) "my favor which..." (Quran 2:40).

18- "... بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ ..." (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 125) "... My house is for the circumambulators..." (Quran 2:125).

19- "... وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا ..." (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 128) "and show us our ways of worship..." (Quran 2:128).

Each instance of the above includes reasoning of alleviating, its purpose is to rid of heaviness in pronunciation, in a context that demands seeking lightness. In the instances (1–6), the words (فَتَخَطَّفه : *it snatches him*, يطهرون: *you show*, تطوع: *voluntarily*, يطهرون: *they purify*, اتحاجوني: *do you argue with me*, يتصعدوا: *they climb*, يَصَّعَّد: *he climbs*) were recited with alleviation, and their original forms are (فتختطفة: *it snatches him*, تظهرون: *you show*, يطوع: *voluntarily*, يطهرون: *they purify*, واتحاجونني: *do you argue with me*, وتتصدقوا: *you give charity*, ويتصعد: *he climbs*). The letter تاء "Taa" was assimilated with the following letter, especially since they share the same place of articulation (طاء "Thaa") تاء "Taa" and والتاء والصاد ("Dhaa") and (ظاء "Taa" and والتاء والصاد and "Saad") as in **Table 1** as follows:

This alleviating reduction can be achieved through either/both the two following processes:

1. Consonantal Elision

2. Vowel change

By way of illustration, alleviating is executed in example (1) through a set of phonological operations:

- Elision: *fataxtaṭifuhu* ==> *fataxtaṭifuhu* ==> *fataxṭifuhu*

- Vowel Rounding: *fataxṭifuhu* ==> *fataxṭufuhu*

Similarly, the case applies to example (2) in which *tatatharu:n* is reduced to *tathaharu:n* in which the first prefixation is completely elided reducing the initial syllabic heaviness:

- Elision: *tatatharu:n* ==> *tatatharu:n* ==> *tathaharu:n*

In instances (7–14), the words were recited: (اتحاجوني: *do you argue with me*, وتساءلون: *you inquire*, وكذبوا: *they denied*, وخرقوا: *they broke*, وتزاور: *they visit*, واستطاعوا: *they were able*, فليني: *delousing*) with alleviation, and their original forms are: (اتحاجونني: *do you argue with me*, وتتساءلون: *you inquire*, وكذّبوا: *they denied*, وخَرَّقوا: *they broke*, وتتزاور: *they visit*, واستطاعوا: *they were able*, وفلينني: *delousing*). In these instances, a form of alleviation by omission has occurred, as in **Table 2** below.

In instances (15–19), the words were recited: (الميْت: *the deceased*, وهين: *easygoing*, ونعمتيْ: *my blessings*, بيتيْ: *my house*, أرْنا: *show us*) with alleviation, and their original forms are: (الميِّت: *the deceased*, وهيّن: *easygoing*, و نعمتيَ: *my blessings*, و بيتيَ: *my house*, وأرنا: *show us*). In these instances, a form of alleviation by consonant has occurred.

3.2. The Reasoning of Heaviness

This reasoning corresponds to its predecessor, as heaviness prompts alleviation, and alleviation results from heaviness. Perhaps the most prominent methods of alleviation are through substitution and omission. The majority of cases of heaviness occur in nouns with a missing part and verbs ending with 'ya' (ياء). The study has identified seven instances in which Azhari presented the cause of heaviness. These instances are as follows (Al-Warraq) [7]:

1- "... وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ..." (سورة البقرة، آية 91) "And when it is said to them..." (Quran 2:91).

2- "... فَبِمَ تُبَشِّرُونَ..." (سورة الحجر، آية 54) "Then of what do you give good news?" (Quran 15:54).

3- "... لَئِنْ أَخَّرْتَنِ..." (سورة الإسراء، آية 62) "If You delay us..." (Quran 17:62).

4- "... فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ..." (سورة الإسراء، آية 97) "So he is rightly guided..." (Quran 17:97).

5- "... لَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ..." (سورة النور، آية 21) "Do not follow the footsteps of Satan..." (Quran 24:21).

6- "... بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ..." (سورة البقرة، آية 87) "By the Holy Spirit..." (Quran 2:87).

7- "... قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ..." (سورة البقرة، آية 88) "Our hearts are sealed..." (Quran 2:88).

Table 1. Prefixed Reduction via Alleviating.

Original Form	IPA	Alleviated Form	IPA	Meaning
فَتَخَتَطِّفه	fa-**taxta**ṭifuhu:	فَتَخَطّفه	fa-**tax**ṭifuhu	So, it snatches him
تتظاهرون	**tata**dha:ru:n	تظهرون	**ta**dhharu:n	You ascend or expose
يتطوع	**yata**ṭawwaʕ	تطوع	taṭawwaʕ	He volunteers or willingly offers
يتطهرون	**yata**ṭahharu:n	يطهرون	**ya**ṭharu:n	They purify themselves
يتصعدوا	**yata**ṣaʕʕadu:	يَصّعدوا	**ya**ṣṣaʕʕadu	They ascend with difficulty

Table 2. Infixed Reduction via Alleviating.

Original Form	IPA	Alleviated Form	IPA	Meaning
اتحاجونني	atuħadʒdʒu-nani:	اتحاجوني	atuħadʒdʒu-ni:	Do you argue with me
وتتساءلون	wa-tata-sa:ʔalu:n	وتساءلون	wa-ta-sa:ʕalu:n	And you ask one another
وكذبوا	wa-kaththabu:	وكذبوا	wa-kathabu:	And they denied
وخَرَّقوا	wa-xarraGu:	وخرقوا	wa-xaraGu:	And they fabricated
وتتزاور	wa-tata-za:war	وتزاور	wa-ta-za:war	And it inclined
واستتطاعوا	wa-stata-ṭa:ʕu:	واستطاعوا	wa-sta-taṭa:ʕu:	And they were able
وفليننني	flay-nani	فليني	flay-ni	So let me

Each instance of the above examples exhibits the reasoning of heaviness, driven by the aversion to heaviness, in a context that necessitates seeking lightness. In instance (1), the singular form (قِيْل : *it was said*) was recited and its original form is (قُول : *it is said*), with the transformation of the silent (و: *waw*) into (ي: *ya*) due to the heaviness of pronunciation by the silent (و: *waw*) following the (ي: *ya*).

In instances (2–4), the words (تبشرون : *give good news*, والمهتد : *If You delay us*, والمهتد : *rightly guided*) were recited, and their original forms are (تبشروني : *give good news*, وأخرتني : *If You delay us*, والمهتدي : *rightly guided*), with the omission of the (ي: *ya*) for the purpose of alleviation.

In instances (5–7), the words (خُطُوات : *footsteps*, والقُدْس : *the Holy Spirit*, وغُلْف : *sealed*) were recited, and their original forms are (خُطُوات : *footsteps*, والقُدُس : *the Holy Spirit*, وغُلُف : *sealed*), with the consonant of the movement of the second letter due to the heaviness of the doubled *damma* (ضمتين) as in **Table 3** below:

Differently from alleviating that may involve both consonantal and vowel alterations, heaviness is distinguished for its phonological association with two main vowels: /i/

and /u/, and their long forms as /i:/ and /u:/. By applying either vowel shortening, vowel fronting, or vowel rounding, alternative phonological reading is applied easing the pronunciation of the target item:

1. Vowel shortening

[/i:/ ==> /i/]: tubaʃʃiruni: ==> tubaʃʃiruni

2. Vowel Fronting

[/u/ ==> /i:/]: **G**uwila ==> **G**i:la

3. Vowel Rounding

[/∅/ ==> /u/]: xuṭwa:t ==> xuṭuwa:t

These phonological processes have shown how heaviness is constructed phonologically via various types of vowel change[16].

3.3. The Reasoning of Adjacency

Adjacency occurs by replicating the movement of a similar letter or by mimicking the vowel of a similar letter in a context that necessitates carrying[17]. The study has identified eight instances in which Al-Azharī presented the reasoning of semantic concord, and they are as follows:

1- " ...وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ... " (سورة المائدة، آية 6) " ... and your feet..." (Quran 5:6).
2- " ...الْحَمْدُ لِلّهِ... " (سورة الانعام، آية 1) " ... Praise be to Allah..." (Quran 6:1).
3- " ...فَلأُمِّهِ السُّدُسُ... " (سورة النساء، آية 11) " ... and to his mother is a sixth..." (Quran 4:11).
4- " ...وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ لاَ يُبْصِرُون... " (سورة البقرة، آية 17) " ... and left them in darkness, they cannot see…" (Quran 2:17).
5- " ...لَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ... " (سورة النور، آية 21) " ... Do not follow the footsteps of Satan..." (Quran 24:21).
6- " ...قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ... " (سورة البقرة، آية 88) " ... Our hearts are sealed..." (Quran 2:88).

Table 3. Vowel Change via Heaviness.

Original Form	IPA	Shortened Form	IPA	Meaning
قُول	Guwila	قِيْل	Gi:la	It was said
تبشروني	tuba∫∫iruni:	تبشرون	tuba∫∫iruni	Give good news
وأخرتني	wa-axxartani:	وأخرتن	wa-axxartani	If You delay us
والمهتدي	wa-muhtadi:	والمهتدِ	wa-mutadi	Rightly guided
خُطُوات	xuṭwa:t	خُطُوات	xuṭuwa:t	Footsteps
والقُدْس	wa-Guds	والقُدُس	wa-Gudus	The Holy Spirit
وغُلْف	wa-ɣulf	وغُلُف	wa-ɣuluf	Sealed

7- "...وَمَا أَنسَانِيهُ إلا الشَّيْطَانُ..." (سورة الكهف، آية 63) "... and Satan made me forget it..." (Quran 18:63).

8- "... صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنعَمتَ عَلَيْهِمْ..." (سورة الفاتحة، آية 7) "... the path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor..." (Quran 1:7).

Each instance of the above examples involves the principle of imitation (Ittiba') within a context that demands imitation. In instances (1–2), the words (وأرجُلِكم: and your feet) were recited, and their original form is (أرجُلَكم: your feet), with the movement of the kasra (ِ) being imitated due to the adjacent kasra (ِ). In instances (3–6), the words (لإمّه: to her mother, ظُلُمات: darknesses, خُطُوات: steps, غُلُف: seal) were recited, and their original forms are (لأمّه: to her mother, ظُلْمات: darkness, خُطْوات: steps, غُلْف: seal), imitating the kasra for the sake of the adjacent kasra, and imitating the damma (ُ) for the sake of the adjacent damma (ُ).

In instances (7–8), the words (إنسانيه: my mankind, وعليهم: and upon them) were recited, and their original forms are (إنسانيه: my mankind, وعليهُم: and upon them). The movement of the haa (هاء) was imitated with a kasra (ِ) following the yaa (ياء), as the kasra is of the same category as the yaa (ياء).

This phonological reasoning as exemplified in **Table 4** primarily incorporates fronting whether rounding or central vowels as a dominant alteration.

Vowel Alteration to /i/

1. [/a/ ==> /i/]: arʤul**a**kum ==> arʤul**i**kum
2. [/u/ ==> /i/]: Ɂal-ḥam**du** ==> Ɂal-ḥam**di**

Differently from alleviating and heaviness, this adjacency is distinct for its dominant adoption of alternating different types of vowels to the short-fronted vowel /i/.

3.4. The Reasoning of Semantic Concord (Anti-Agreement)

The term "carrying" is used interchangeably with the term "analogy." The notion of semantic concord comes into play when there exists a resemblance between the analogized element and the subject of analogy. This has been shown in other languages including English and Indonesian as emphasized by Supardi & Jabal[18]. In such cases, the analogical element imparts its judgment to the subject of analogy due to its shared involvement in the underlying meaning. This conveys that the ruling attributed to the analogized aligns with the analogical due to their shared significance. The various manifestations of carrying meaning to adjacency have taken diverse forms among linguistic scholars, contingent upon the structure of the analogized element[19]. Ibn Jinni[20] succinctly categorized these manifestations, stating, "I understand that this exposition delves deep into the Arabic language, offering a comprehensive and expansive approach. It is evident in the Quran and eloquent discourse, whether in prose or systematically organized. Examples include feminizing the masculine and vice versa, conceptualizing the singular within the plural and vice versa, and conveying the meaning of the second term onto a word that could belong to the first, either inherently or tangentially, along with other instances you will encounter, God willing."

The study has identified eight instances in which Al-Azharī presented the reasoning of carrying meaning to adjacency, and they are as follows:

Table 4. Vowel Change via Semantic Concord.

Original Form	IPA	Adjacency Form	IPA	Meaning
أرجُلَكم	ardʒulakum	أرجِلكم	ardʒulikum	your feet
الحمدُ الله	ʔal-ḥamdu-lilah	الحمدِ الله	ʔal-ḥamdi-lilah	Praise be to Allah
فلأمِّه	fa-li-ʔammihi	فلإمِّه	fa-li-ʔimmihi	And his mother
وغُلْف	wa-ɣulf	وغُلُف	wa-ɣuluf	Sealed
أنسائيه	ʔansa:nujah	أنسانيه	ʔansa:nijah	Made me forget it

1- " ...شَيْئاً وَلاَ يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفَاعَةٌ... " (سورة البقرة، آية 48) "Nothing will be accepted from it as intercession..." (Quran 2:48).

2- " ...وَأَخَذَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ الصَّيْحَةُ... " (سورة هود، آية 67) "And the shriek seized those who had wronged..." (Quran 11:67).

3- " ...إِن يَكُن مَّيْتَةً... ۞" (سورة الأنعام، آية139) "If it should be [that] it was dead..." (Quran 6:139).

4- " ...وَمَا كَانَ صَلاَتُهُمْ عِندَ الْبَيْتِ... " (سورة الانفال، آية 35) "And their prayer at the House was not except whistling and handclapping..." (Quran 8:35).

5- " ...وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ... " (سورة التوبة، آية 30) "And the Jews said..." (Quran 9:30).

6- " ...فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلآئِكَةُ... " (سورة آل عمران، آية 39) "So the angels called him..." (Quran 3:39).

7- " ...تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا... " (سورة الانعام، آية 61) "Our messengers took him in death..." (Quran 6:61).

8- " ...كِلْتَا الْجَنَّتَيْنِ آتَتْ أُكُلَهَا... " (سورة الكهف، آية 33) "Both gardens produced its fruit..." (Quran 18:33).

Each instance of these examples includes carrying of meaning, in a context that necessitates semantic concord. In instances (1–5), the words (يُقْبَل: *be accepted*, أخذ: *seized*, يكون: *should be*, كان: *was*) were recited, and their original forms are (تقبل: *be accepted*, أخذت: *seized*, تكون: *should be*, كانت: *was*). The words were originally masculine but were used in a context that required them to be feminized to achieve gender agreement.

In instances (6–7), the words (قالت: *said*, نادته: *called him*, توفته: *took him in death*) were recited, and their original forms are (قال: *said*, ناده: *called him*, توفاه: *took him in death*). The words were originally masculine but were used in a context that requires them to be masculinized to achieve gender agreement among all feminine nouns.

In instance (8), the verb (أتت: *produced*) was recited in its singular form, and its original form is (أتتا: *produced*). The word (كلتا: *Both*) was used in a context that requires the verb (أتت: *produced*) to be in its dual form (أتتا) to achieve numerical agreement in the dual (كلتا: *Both* and أتتا *produced*).

This type of grammatical reasoning is prominent for its anti-agreement behavior whether in terms of number or gender agreement as exemplified in **Table 5**. The possible two readings of agreement vs. anti-agreement are both tenable due to the fact that on the one hand agreement is achieved by feature matching while anti-agreement is triggered due to binding intervention or stylistic reasons[21]. For instance, looking at the example (1), *yugbal* (*accept*) holds masculine features via the prefix *ya* disagreeing with its subject *ʃfa:ʔa* (*forgiveness*) which holds feminine features via the feminine suffix /a/[22].

- Gender Anti-agreement (where M refers to *masculine* and F to *feminine*)

(1) la yugbal minhu ʃfa:ʔa
not accept-M from-he forgiveness-F
"Nothing will be accepted from it"

This anti-agreement may be triggered due to the intervention of the prepositional phrase *minhu* as it intervenes between the verb and the noun causing a feature-checking mismatch[23, 24].

- Number Anti-agreement (where D refers to *duality* and S to *singular*)

(2) kilta ʔal-dʒannatayn ʔa:tat ʔukalaha
both the-heavens-D produced-S fruit-its
"Both gardens produced its fruit"

Similarly, here, the NP *ʔal-dʒannatayn* is dual in which its verb is expected to match in numbering as *ʔa:tat-a* (produced-D) instead of *ʔa:tat* (produced-S). It is unclear syntactically why anti-agreement, especially since there is no intervention and the subject has precedence over the verb[25]. However, it remains the fact that there is an anti-agreement reading realized in the Quranic discourse. This feature realization is constituted through adopting default masculine features triggering a mismatch with the subject, which is a standard feature behavior in the Arabic feature-checking system[26, 27].

Table 5. Anti-agreement via Adjacency.

Original Form	IPA	Anti-Agreement Form	IPA	Meaning
تقبل	tugbal	يُقْبَل	yugbal	be accepted
أخذت	ʔaxathat	أخذ	ʔaxath	seized
تكن	takun	يكن	yakun	should be
كانت	ka:nat	كان	ka:n	was
قال	Ga:l	قالت	Ga:lat	said
ناداه	na:dah	نادت	na:dat	called
توّفاه	tawafah	توفّته	tawaffathu	took him in death
أتتا	ʔa:tata	أتت	ʔa:tat	produced

4. Study Findings

The study has answered the research questions comprehensively. By answering Q(1), the study has shown that there are four distinct forms of grammatical reasoning (*alleviating*, *heaviness*, *adjacency*, and *antiagreement*) as categorized and exemplified in the discussion. Regarding Q(2), the study has revealed that each grammatical reasoning is distinguished for its linguistic processes. By way of illustration, alleviating is primarily associated with consonantal elision and change whereas heaviness is contingent upon two primary vowels: /i/ and /u/, and their long versions as /i:/ and /u:/ incorporating various of vowel changes such as fronting, rounding, and insertion. This phonological distinction also applies to adjacency as different types of vowels are dominantly fronted as /i/ while differently, semantic concord as named in Arabic perspective grammar is constituted through antiagreement whether in gender or numbering, resulting in superseding the semantic agreement rather than the syntactic agreement[28]. Furthermore, the interface aspect of this phenomenon as questioned in Q(3) has been addressed explicitly and implicitly in the discussion by outlining that each reasoning may involve some level of interface. For example, *semantic concord* via antiagreement incorporates a morpho-syntax interface in which feature checking is blocked triggering anti-agreement and therefore, the realization of an alternate affixation in the morphological make-up of the item. Similarly, in the case of adjacency, the vowel changes to the fronted vowel /i/ alternating the Case-marking of the lexical item, highlighting the phonological-syntax interface in Arabic grammar which an alternate reading is prioritized over the mandatory Case-marker in the expected syntactic position. In a nutshell, the study contributes to the following aspects:

1. Phonological processes: Elision, sound alterations (vowels-consonants), and assimilation

2. Interface of language components: phonology-syntax interface, phonology-morphology interface, as well as morphology-syntax interface

3. Interplay between phonological alternatives and Quranic readings

Categorization of Grammatical Quranic Reading adopting Al-Azhar's framework.

5. Recommendations

The study recommends various areas of the study focus:

1. The study encourages researchers and linguists to delve more into developing classical linguistic analyses that have been dominant in explaining various phonological phenomena and emphasize strengthening relevance to modern linguistic theories rather than relying on perspective traditional approaches

2. The study also encourages educators to benefit from the distinguishing highlights between Al-Azhari's grammatical categories in aiding the teaching of non-native speakers in phonological learning of Standard Arabic pedagogy.

3. The researchers of this study highlight that there remains a necessity to contribute to understanding these phonological alterations more extensively in modern linguistic programs including the Minimalist Program.

The study also builds this research on future potential case studies on these phonological alternations in Arab dialects and what vernacular variations might be found[29].

6. Conclusions

The study has examined alternative Quranic phonological readings so-called grammatical reasoning by Al-Azhari

categorized as alleviating, heaviness, adjacency, and semantic concord. The findings have shown that these different readings involve distinct linguistic processes that distinguish these reasonings from each other including consonantal elision, vowel change, vowel fronting, and feature antiagreement. By adopting a qualitative approach in analyzing Quranic verses containing the alternated items, the study delves into the interface between morphology, phonology, and syntax, contributing to understanding the linguistic nuances of different phonological readings of Quranic verses. By categorizing grammatical forms of reasoning while making a phonological distinction between the four forms via the qualitative analysis of phonological processes including elision, phonetic alterations, and assimilation. The study provides insights on Arabic phonological processes in Quranic Standard Arabic and encourages developing these linguistic insights on modern linguistic theories in affirming the Principle of Economy within the system of Arabic phonology. Furthermore, the study hints at expanding these distinctions to develop linguistic awareness of non-native speakers of Arabic about Arabic phonological alterations and enhance their readability skills of various readings of Standard Arabic.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, L.A.-J., T.M.F, M.I.A.-W. and D.H.A; methodology, L.A.-J., T.M.F, and D.H.A; validation, L.A.-J., T.M.F. and D.H.A; writing—original draft preparation, T.M.F.; writing—review and editing, L.A.-J. and M.I.A.-W.; supervision, L.A.-J.; funding acquisition, L.A.-J., T.M.F, M.I.A.-W. and D.H.A. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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All translator participants of the study were informed about the research purpose and reserve their right to withdraw at any time as their participation is voluntary. Verbal consent was granted as the contexts of translation evaluation was conducted through informal academic discussion and post-machine editing notes were taken from them manually.

Data Availability Statement

We agree to share research data.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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