

THE BEGINNING OF LANGUAGE: THE INCREMENTAL REVELATION THEORY

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One of the best-kept secrets of the Arabic language is the clarity and logic of its verb inflections. Unlike the verbs in the languages of Europe, the Arabic verb brooks hardly any true irregularities, that is, forms that cannot be predicted by rules.

Professor Raymond Scheindlin

Human brains are perhaps the most intricate and powerful computing devices on our planet and communication through languages the most complex behavior known to mankind. For centuries, people have speculated over the origins of human language. What is the world's oldest spoken language? Have all languages developed from a single source? How did words come to be, in the very beginning? These questions are fascinating, and have provoked experiments and discussion whose history dates back at least three millennia. The irony is that the quest has been fruitless so far. Each generation asks the same questions, and reaches the same impasse; the absence of any scientific evidence relating to the matter, given the vast, distant time scale involved. We have no direct knowledge of the origins and early development of language, nor is it easy to imagine how such knowledge might ever be obtained. But there is a fair body of indirect evidence that can be brought to bear on this subject.

How only one species among several million did come to have language and how do children so effortlessly learn their mother tongue, a feat that puts the smartest adults to shame? These are certainly two of the most awe inspiring questions facing linguists. Here we propose to address the former. Let us now examine the current theories of language origin.

THE CURRENT THEORIES OF LANGUAGE ORIGIN

According to David Crystal in the chapter 54 of his book *How Language Works*, "The Danish linguist Otto Jespersen (1860–1943) grouped commonly held

theories about the origins of language into four types, and added a fifth of his own. They are often referred to by nicknames.”¹ We will go ahead and describe those theories now:

THE BOW-WOW THEORY:

According to this theory, language began when our ancestors started imitating the natural sounds around them. According to Bow-Wow theory the first speech was onomatopoeic--marked by echoic words such as moo, meow, splash, cuckoo, and bang. According to Friedrich Max Müller, Professor of Philology at Oxford University:

“This theory was very popular among the philosophers of the eighteenth century, and, as it is still held by many distinguished scholars and philosophers, we must examine it more carefully. It is supposed, then, that man, being as yet mute, heard the voices of birds and dogs and cows, the thunder of the clouds, the roaring of the sea, the rustling of the forest, the murmurs of the brook, and the whisper of the breeze. He tried to imitate these sounds, and finding his mimicking cries useful as signs of the objects from which they proceeded, he followed up the idea and elaborated language.”²

What's wrong with this theory? Relatively few words are onomatopoeic, and these words vary from one language to another. A dog's bark, for instance, is heard as au au in Brazil, ham ham in Albania, and wang, wang in China. In addition, many onomatopoeic words are of recent origin, and not all are derived from natural sounds.

THE POOH-POOH THEORY

According to this theory speech arose through people making instinctive sounds, caused by pain, anger, or other emotions. This theory holds that speech began with interjections--spontaneous cries of pain ("Ouch!"), surprise ("Oh!"), and other emotions ("Yabba dabba do!"). The main evidence would be the universal use of sounds as interjections, such as ooh or tut-tut, but no language contains many of these, and in any case the clicks, intakes of breath, and other noises which are used in this way bear little relationship to the vowels and consonants found in phonology.

Wilbur Marshall Urban (1873–1952) was an American philosopher of language, influenced by Ernst Cassirer. He wrote in 1951 about interjectional theory that presupposes that natural sounds uttered in the state excited feelings were the beginning of speech, “All attempts at explaining the language in this way have been fruitless. There is no tangible evidence, historical or other, tending to show that the mass of speech elements or processes has evolved out of interjections.”³

THE DING-DONG THEORY

This theory was proposed by Friedrich Max Müller and later wisely abandoned by him. According to this theory speech arose because people reacted to the stimuli in the world around them, and spontaneously produced sounds (oral gestures) which in some way reflected or were in harmony with the environment. The main evidence would be the universal use of sounds for words of a certain meaning, but apart from a few cases of apparent sound symbolism (such as teeny-weeny), the theory has nothing to commend it. Several fanciful examples have nonetheless been cited, mama is supposed to reflect the movement of the lips as the mouth approaches the breast, and bye-bye or ta-ta show the lips and tongue respectively ‘waving’ good-bye.

This theory, favored by Plato and Pythagoras, maintains that speech arose in response to the essential qualities of objects in the environment. The original sounds people made were supposedly in harmony with the world around them.

What's wrong with this theory? Apart from some rare instances of sound symbolism, there's no persuasive evidence, in any language, of an innate connection between sound and meaning.

THE YO-HE-HO THEORY

According to this theory speech arose because, as people worked together, their physical efforts produced communal, rhythmical grunts, which in due course developed into chants, and thus language. The main evidence would be the universal use of poetic features, especially of rhythm; but the gap between this kind of expression and what we find in language as a whole is so immense that an explanation for the latter would still have to be found.

THE LA-LA THEORY

The Danish linguist Otto Jespersen felt that, if any single factor was going to initiate human language, it would arise from the romantic side of life—sounds associated with love, play, poetic feeling, perhaps even song. But again, the gap between the emotional and the rational aspects of speech expression would still have to be accounted for. So, all the current theories are seriously deficient and this fact is widely acknowledged.

The lengths to which some people have gone in order to throw light on the question of origin of language are truly remarkable; if the accounts are to be believed. One of the best-known reports concerns the Egyptian king Psamtik I, who reigned in the 7th century BC. According to the Greek historian Herodotus, Psamtik wished to find out which of all the peoples of the world was the most ancient. His way of determining this was to discover the oldest language which, he thought, would be evidence of the oldest race. He gave two new-born babies of ordinary men to a shepherd, to nurture among his flocks. He charged him that none should utter any speech before them, but they should live by themselves in a solitary habitation; and at the due hours the shepherd should bring goats to them, and give them their fill of milk, and perform the other things needful. Thus Psamtik did and commanded because he desired, when the babes should be past meaningless whimpering, to hear what tongue they would utter first.

And these things came to pass; for after the shepherd had wrought thus for a space of two years, when he opened the door and entered in, both the babes fell down before him, and cried 'becos,' and stretched out their hands. Now when the shepherd heard it for the first time, he held his peace; but when this word was often-times spoken as he came to care for them, then he told his lord, and brought the children into his presence when he commanded. And when Psamtik had also heard it, he enquired which nation called anything 'becos;' and enquiring, he found that the Phrygians call bread by this name. Thus the Egyptians, guided by this sign, confessed that the Phrygians were elder than they. Phrygian is now extinct, but at the time it was spoken in an area corresponding to the north-western part of modern Turkey. Psamtik's conclusion was wrong, for we know from philological studies that Phrygian is but one of several languages which had developed in that period of history. So why did the children say 'becos?' Doubtless they had begun to babble naturally and

repetitively to each other, in a similar way to twins, and this was one of the 'snatches' that the shepherd recognized. Some commentators have even suggested that they were imitating the sound of the goats! Whether the Psamtik experiment ever took place is open to question. Possibly the origins of the story lie in a fiction invented by someone to discredit the Egyptians. But whatever the reality, the initiative credited to Psamtik has apparently had its parallels in several later times and places.

All these above theories are mere speculation and conjecture, as may be inferred from Psamtik experiment. The authors feel that they have an advantage in inheriting the correct paradigm given to us by the Messiah of this age, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Before we propose our theory let us examine a metaphor from SETI research.

A METAPHOR FROM SETI

Despite an over-arching influence of Darwin's work, the origin of human conscience and ultimate explanation of the origin of languages has evaded the secular scientists and philosophers. To examine the theories of origin of language and their limitations, we need to review an analogy about search for extraterrestrial intelligence (SETI).

Johannes Kepler thought the craters on the moon were intelligently designed by moon dwellers. We now know that the craters were formed naturally. It's this fear of falsely attributing something to design only to have it overturned later that has prevented design from entering science proper. According to William Dembski, "With precise methods for discriminating intelligently from unintelligently caused objects, scientists are now able to avoid Kepler's mistake." Einstein taught us, "Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler." Precise and creative thinking has lead to development of criteria to distinguish intelligent causes from random natural causes. Entire industries, economic and scientific, depend crucially on such notions as intelligence, intentionality and information. Included here are forensic science, intellectual property law, insurance claims investigation, cryptography, random number generation, archaeology and the search for extraterrestrial intelligence (SETI). Did the human spoken language begin in completely random processes or can we see indirect evidence of revelation in the development of early language? We are far removed from the

time of infancy of the languages so we cannot have eye witness account of that but we can bring to bear host of indirect evidence to this question. The worry, of repeating Kepler's mistake though perhaps justified in the past, is no longer tenable. According to William Dembski, "There does in fact exist a rigorous criterion for distinguishing intelligently caused objects from unintelligently caused ones. Many special sciences already use this criterion, though in a pretheoretic form (e.g., forensic science, artificial intelligence, cryptography, archaeology and the search for extraterrestrial intelligence [SETI])."⁴ The analogy about SETI described here is borrowed from William Dembski's book *Intelligent Design: the Bridge between Science and Theology* but some of the wording has been changed.

Consider how the radio astronomers in the movie *Contact* detected an extraterrestrial intelligence. This movie, based on a novel by Carl Sagan, was an enjoyable piece of propaganda for the SETI research program; the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence. To make the movie interesting, the SETI researchers in *Contact* actually did find an extraterrestrial intelligence; the real-life SETI program has yet to be so lucky.

The SETI researchers in *Contact* did find a signal worthy of celebration-the signal in figure below. They received this signal as a sequence of 1126 beats and pauses, where 1s correspond to beats and 0s to pauses. This sequence represents the prime numbers from 2 to 101, where a given prime number is represented by the corresponding number of beats (i.e., 1s) and the individual prime numbers are separated by pauses (i.e., 0s). The SETI researchers in *Contact* took this signal as decisive confirmation of an extraterrestrial intelligence.

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that an extraterrestrial intelligence has been discovered. No headline is going to read, 'Aliens Master First Three Prime Numbers!'

The problem is that this sequence is much too short (and thus too simple) to establish that an extraterrestrial intelligence with knowledge of prime numbers produced it. A randomly beating radio source might by chance just happen to output this sequence. A sequence of 1,126 bits representing the prime numbers from 2 to 101, however, is a different story. Here the sequence is sufficiently long (and therefore sufficiently complex) that only an extraterrestrial intelligence could have produced it. The odds of this happening by sheer chance are almost zero if not zero! In the allopathic medical research what has only 5% probability of happening by sheer chance is attributed to the medicines or other interventions.

To see the connection between complexity and probability, consider a combination lock. The more possible combinations of the lock, the more complex the mechanism and correspondingly the more improbable that the mechanism can be opened by chance. Complexity and probability therefore vary inversely: the greater the complexity, the smaller the probability. Thus to determine whether something is sufficiently complex to warrant a design inference is to determine whether it has sufficiently small probability.

Even so, complexity (or improbability) isn't enough to eliminate chance and establish design. If I flip a coin 1,000 times, I'll participate in a highly complex (i.e., highly improbable) event. Indeed, the sequence I end up flipping will be one in a trillion trillion trillion. This sequence of coin tosses won't, however, trigger a design inference. Though complex, this sequence won't exhibit a suitable pattern. Contrast this with the previous sequence representing the prime numbers from 2 to 101. Not only is this sequence complex, but it also embodies a suitable pattern. The SETI researcher who in the movie Contact discovered this sequence put it this way: 'This isn't noise; this has structure.'

A SETI like paradigm could be considered in the study of Arabic and Hebrew root system.

ARABIC AND HEBREW ROOT SYSTEM

One striking example of organization and complexity, in languages is the verbal

system of the Semitic languages. No wonder, “One of the best-kept secrets of the Arabic language is the clarity and logic of its verb inflections;” so says Professor Raymond Scheindlin, “Unlike the verbs in the languages of Europe, the Arabic verb brooks hardly any true irregularities, that is, forms that cannot be predicted by rules.”⁵

Guy Deutscher describes the root system of the Semitic languages in the following words:

“You may recall that the root of a Semitic verb is not a pronounceable string of consonants and vowels, like English 'twist' or 'turn,' but an abstract entity which consists exclusively of consonants. Roots such as Arabic s-l-m 'be-at-peace' or Hebrew s-b-t 'rest' come to life only when they are inserted into a 'template': a sequence of sounds with empty slots for the three root-consonants. The Hebrew template OaOaO, for instance, expresses the past tense (in the third person 'he'), so when the root s-b-t is superimposed on this template, it yields sabat 'he rested' (hence 'Sabbath' - the day on which 'He rested'). When the same root is inserted into other templates, it generates various other nuances of the verb. ... there are many dozens of such templates, through which the Semitic languages can express every conceivable nuance of the verb.”⁶

Guy Deutscher goes on to express his amazement at the sophistication of the root system of the Semitic languages:

“The fact is that while erosion can create endings - reams and reams of them - the structure on display here is of an entirely different order. What makes the Semitic verbal architecture so special is not so much the sheer bulk of the templates, but rather the remarkable idea behind their design, the system of tri-consonantal roots and prefabricated vowel templates. There is just no way that erosion on its own could ever have come up with such an abstract algebraic scheme, a conceptual design of roots that cannot even be pronounced, but which are superimposed on vowel templates to produce every conceivable nuance of the verb. **In fact, if there is anything in language which still seems to cry out for a conscious invention, this is surely it. For if it was not invented, how could people ever have stumbled across such an unusual idea?**”⁷

Here Guy Deutscher appears ready to preempt our theory. But he does not take the leap of faith to say it in so many words for his lack of belief in a Living God. Promised Messiah^{as} explains the reasons why so many scholars have had limited success in the field of study of origin of languages:

“Many people have spent their lives in such research and have made great efforts to discover which language is the mother of tongues, but as their efforts were not rightly directed, nor were they bestowed the relevant capacity by God Almighty, they could not achieve success. An additional reason was that they were prejudiced against Arabic and did not pay due attention to it. Thus, they failed to discover the truth. Now we have been guided by the Holy Word of God Almighty, the Holy Qur’an, to the truth that the mother of tongues, to which the Parsees, the Hebrews and the Aryas have laid separate claims, is Arabic, and that all other claimants are in error.”

We find a computer and a space age technology in Semitic root system that came into being in a pre-stone age era. Professor Raymond Scheindlin is Professor of Medieval Hebrew Literature at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. He is the author of the book *501 Arabic verbs*. This is a part of the Barron’s best selling verb series in the world. He has made a table of Ten Forms that serve as a template for the root words. He writes that the ten Forms are in ordinary use in Arabic today, but no root occurs in all ten, and most roots can be used in only a few. Here is a table of the ten Forms, using the common root فعل (a root that contains the idea of ‘doing’), as has been the custom of Arab grammarians for many centuries. In the left-hand Arabic column, each of the Forms is represented by a verb in the perfect third-person masculine singular. This form is the one closest to the root and therefore the form under which verbs are listed in most dictionaries. In the second Arabic column, the same verb appears in the imperfect third-person masculine singular. In the following columns the active participle, the passive participle, and the verbal noun (except for Form I, in which the verbal noun has no single form) appear.⁸ All root words do not have all these possible derivatives but this table serves as the overall ‘summary’ template or formula if you will, as to how different words are derived from the root words.

Form I	فَعَّلَ	يَفْعُلُ	فَاعِلٌ	مَفْعُولٌ	---
Form II	فَعَّلَ	يُفَعِّلُ	مُفَعِّلٌ	مُفَعَّلٌ	تَفْعِيلٌ
Form III	فَاعَلَ	يُفَاعِلُ	مُفَاعِلٌ	مُفَاعَلٌ	فِعَالٌ، مُفَاعَلَةٌ
Form IV	أَفْعَلَ	يُفْعِلُ	مُفْعِلٌ	مُفْعِلٌ	إِفْعَالٌ
Form V	تَفَعَّلَ	يَتَفَعَّلُ	مُتَفَعِّلٌ	مُتَفَعَّلٌ	تَفَعُّلٌ
Form VI	تَفَاعَلَ	يَتَفَاعَلُ	مُتَفَاعِلٌ	مُتَفَاعَلٌ	تَفَاعُلٌ
Form VII	انْفَعَلَ	يَنْفَعِلُ	مُنْفَعِلٌ	مُنْفَعَلٌ	إِنْفِعَالٌ
Form VIII	اِفْتَعَلَ	يِفْتَعِلُ	مُفْتَعِلٌ	مُفْتَعَلٌ	إِفْتِعَالٌ
Form IX	اِفْعَلَّ	يِفْعَلُّ	مُفْعَلٌّ	---	اِفْعِلَالٌ
Form X	اِسْتَفْعَلَ	يَسْتَفْعِلُ	مُسْتَفْعِلٌ	مُسْتَفْعَلٌ	اِسْتِفْعَالٌ

Each set of root letters can lead to a vast number of words, all predictable in form and all related to the basic meaning of the three root letters. Here are a few examples from the first column of the table. The Form in which a verb is conjugated has an effect on its meaning; for example فعل (Form I) means 'to do,' but تفاعل (Form VI) means to 'to interact;' انفعال (Form VII) means 'to be done' or 'to be excited;' استفعل (Form X) means to fabricate' or 'to invent.' It is not always possible to predict how a given Form will affect the meaning of a given root; the only way to know for certain is to consult the dictionary.⁹

Arabic language has been given a complete root-system by all knowing God. According to Encyclopedia Britannica:

"Arabic shows the fullest development of typical Semitic word structure. An Arabic word is composed of two parts: (1) the root, which generally consists of three consonants and provides the basic lexical meaning of the word, and (2) the pattern, which consists of vowels and gives grammatical meaning to the word. Thus, the root /k-t-b/ combined with the pattern /-i-ā-/ gives kitāb 'book,' whereas the same root combined with the pattern /-ā-i-/ gives kātib 'one who writes' or 'clerk.' The language also makes use of prefixes and suffixes, which act as subject markers, pronouns, prepositions, and the definite article."¹⁰

The vast majority of Arabic verbs are built from a root consisting of three consonants. The root usually conveys a certain core meaning that is made more specific by having added to it the vowels and prefixes belonging to one of ten patterns, called Forms. ('Form' in the sense of conjugational patterns is capitalized to distinguish it from the common noun 'form.')

Only when the root is realized in a particular Form is it a verb. Although dictionaries are usually organized by roots, the verb is not the root itself but only its realization in a particular Form. Its meaning may range widely from the core meaning inherent in the root, depending on the Form and on usage as it has developed over the centuries.

A verb can be modified to indicate mood, voice, tense, person, gender, and number. The prefixes and suffixes for person, gender, and number are essentially identical in all ten Forms. There are two sets, depending on which of the two tenses, perfect or imperfect, is being used.

THE INCREMENTAL REVELATION THEORY

This is a theory proposed by the authors of this article and explains the current data and information about the languages far better than any of the preceding theories.

When we study the organization and the complexity of the 6000 extant languages of the world none of the above theories explain the gathered data. This creates room for a better and a more satisfying theory. According to this theory proposed by the author's of this article the systematic development of languages would not have been possible without precognition or revelation.

The root words of Arabic were revealed over time to mankind as their need arose. Therefore, Arabic has the most extensive root words. Other languages have fewer root words depending on when they were derived from the Arabic language. The languages that separated very early in the history like the Australian languages will have the greatest limitation and the languages closest to Arabic like the Semitic languages will have the least limitation in terms of numbers of root words. The Holy Quran was revealed in the dialect of the Quraish of Mecca. With the revelation and preservation of the Holy Quran the

idiom of the Quraish of the seventh century has become ever lasting and in a manner of speaking frozen in time.

الرَّحْمَنُ
عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ
خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ
عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ

Bounteous God, taught the Quran, created man (as a social being) and taught him the mode of expression. (Al Quran 55:2-4)

Languages are not evolving from simple to complex. According to the famous linguist Merritt Ruhlen, "All extant human languages are today considered of equal 'complexity' by virtually all linguists."¹¹ Guy Deutscher writes, "Small tribes with stone-age technology speak languages with structures that sometimes make Latin and Greek seem like child's play."¹²

One reason why human language is so deeply puzzling to biologists and linguists is that it seems to defy the rule of incremental improvement. It is a vibrant, fully developed faculty in people, but is not possessed, even in rudimentary form, by any other species. It seems to have popped up into the recent human line from nowhere. The root system is not an incremental invention it is a very complex paradigm gifted to pre-historic man through some form of revelation. The authors propose that it was a gradual phenomenon that new root words and derivations were revealed as human thought progressed. This theory alone explains the complexity and organization of the root system of the Semitic languages. The relationship of different Semitic languages with each other and with other African languages can be examined in an article in summer 2009 volume of Muslim Sunrise, titled *Arabic: The mother of all languages*.¹³

This is not a 'God of the gaps' theory. For example, Francis S Collins, nominee of President Obama to lead the NIH, says that Intelligent Design (ID) theorists

are proposing a 'God of the gaps' theory. They seem to be invoking God for what is not known to the present day scientists.¹⁴ In contrast to ID our theory is invoking dreaming or some other form of revelation. Dreaming has been scientifically investigated and many a new scientific discoveries are attributed to true dreams.¹⁵

One simple proof that will convince Ahmadi Muslims, regarding revelation being an incremental process will be the following. There are several thousand root words in Arabic language, more than any other language. Promised Messiah^{as} in one of his writings wrote that he was taught several thousand root words of Arabic in revelation in one night. Keeping human intellectual limitations in consideration, even the religion was perfected by Allah through incremental revelation over the millennia. So it would stand to reason that root words were revealed piece meal as need arose.

FURTHER DEMONSTRATION OF THE ROOT SYSTEM

The perfect tense is inflected by means of these suffixes:

he	-a
she	-at
you, masculine	-ta
you, feminine	-ti
I	-tu
they two, masculine	-ā
they two, feminine	-atā
you two, masculine and feminine	-tumā
they, masculine	-ū
they, feminine	-na
you, plural masculine	-tum
you, plural feminine	-tunna
we	-nā

The imperfect is inflected by suffixes as well as prefixes:

he	ya-
she	ta-
you, masculine	ta-
you, feminine	ta-ina
I	a-
they two, masculine	ya-āni
they two, feminine	ta-āni
you two, masculine and feminine	ta-āni
they, masculine	ya-ūna
they, feminine	ya-na
you, plural masculine	ta-ūna
you, plural feminine	ta-na
we	na-

The root k-t-b has the basic meaning of marking, inscribing or writing. The root may be conjugated in simple past tense (perfect) verb forms such as:

kataba	he wrote
katabû	they wrote
katabat	she wrote
katabnâ	we wrote

Similarly, there are simple and predictable rules for present (imperfect) and imperative forms of the basic root, such as:

yaktubu	he writes
yaktabunâ	they write
taktubu	you write
naktubu	we write
'uktub	write!

And then the vastness really begins to be seen as additional forms such as verbal nouns are created from the same simple root k-t-b to describe things such as:

katîb	Writer
Kitâba	the act of writing
kitab	some writing, book
kutub	Books
Kutubî	Book dealer
Kutayyib	Booklet
maktûb	Letter
maktab	school, office
maktaba	library, literature
maktabî	individual office
miktâb	Typewriter
mukâtaba	correspondence
iktitâb	Registration
istiktâb	Dictation

... and on and on. This is only a limited sample of the immense variety of words that can be formed by simple and predictable usage of the basic root which was only the three consonants k-t-b. Roots are a common feature of many languages. Since Arabic is a very well and the most-organized language, the lexical roots in the language are used quite extensively with an almost mathematical precision. Words derived from the same root share, generally, a similar meaning. Usually the root words in Arabic have three consonants but a few have four. This large use of trilateral roots is a common point in all the Semitic languages.

Mohammad Ahmad Mazhar has collected approximately 8000 Quranic root words culled from the following 30 languages, Japanese, Chinese, Indonesian, Tibetan, Nepali, Pali, Aryan roots, Sanskrit, Hindi, Mahratti, Tiegua, Gujrati, Punjabi, Persian, Swahili, Luganda, Italian, Latin, Greek, Sumerian, Akkadian, Egyptian, Spanish, French, German, Russian, Swedish, Dutch, English and Tarahumara.¹⁶

INSPIRATION OF THE THEORY

Inspiration of our theory of incremental revelation of the Arabic root words comes from the writings of Promised Messiah^{as}, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Here is a sample of his writings as he extols the beauties of the Arabic language in his book *Minan-ur-Rahman*, published in 1895:

“There are five special characteristics of Arabic, which prove conclusively that Arabic is a revealed language, which we shall expound in detail in their proper places.

These are:

First Characteristic: Arabic has a perfect pattern of roots, which is suited to human needs. Other languages lack this pattern.

Second Characteristic: The names of God, and of heavenly bodies, vegetables, animals, solids, and human limbs in Arabic comprise great wisdom. Other languages cannot compete with Arabic in this respect.

Third Characteristic: The Arabic system of elementary words is perfect, and comprises all nouns and verbs of the same roots, and illustrates their mutual relationship by arranging them in a wise pattern. This characteristic is not found in other languages in the same perfect degree.

Fourth Characteristic: In Arabic idiom a few words comprise extensive meanings. Arabic conveys extensive connotations through the use of the definite article and vowel points and sequence, for which purpose other languages have to employ several phrases and sentences.

Fifth Characteristic: Arabic possesses such roots and idioms as furnish a perfect means for the expression of the most subtle of human thoughts and reflections.”¹⁷

EPILOGUE

It can be said that with the development of language, a major part of the task of morphing an ape into a human had been accomplished, and of shaping humans into a truly social species. Since language is such a defining faculty of modern humans, providing perhaps the only clear distinction between people and other species.

If it can be shown that ‘revelation’ played an important role in the origin of the software of the brain, namely the languages then one could assume that the Creator also guided the evolution of the hardware that is the brain of the homo sapiens, providing for the lucky or Provident mutations that will lead to such hardware developments to make it befitting for the revealed software. According to Friedrich Max Müller, Professor of Philology at Oxford:

“If you consider that, whatever view we take of the origin and dispersion of language, nothing new has ever been added to the substance of language, that all its changes have been changes of form, that no new root or radical has ever been invented by later generations, as little as one single element has ever been added to the material world in which we live.”¹⁸

These are certainly very powerful claims but the history of devolution of languages is testament to these observations by Friedrich Max Müller. Some of the evidence of devolution of languages has been examined in an article in the April 2009 volume of Al-Islam eGazette, titled *A Revealed Mother Tongue: Evidence for Guided Evolution*.¹⁹ Max Müller goes on to write later in his book, the full text of which can be reviewed in the google.com book section:

“Since the beginning of the world no new additions has ever been made to the substantial elements of speech, any more than to the substantial elements of nature. There is a constant change in language; a coming and going of words; but no man can ever invent an entirely new word. We speak to all intents and purposes substantially the same language as the earliest ancestors of our race; and, guided by the hand of scientific etymology, we may pass on from century to century through the darkest periods of world’s history, till the stream of language on which we ourselves are moving carries us back to those distant regions where we seem to feel the presence of our earliest forefathers, and to hear the voices of the earth-born sons of Manu.”²⁰

Why no man can ever invent a new word, as claimed by Max Müller? It is because a word cannot exist in isolation it is a shared heritage, it is part of a culture. Mohammad Ahmad Mazhar argues that if the prehistoric, primitive man could invent a language why cannot the advanced man of the twentieth century invent a single word?²¹ The complexity and organization of the root system of the Semitic languages is a strong pointer towards revelation of the language and presumably incrementally.

¹ David Crystal. How Language Works. Avery: A member of Penguin group, 2005. Page 350.

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- ² Friedrich Max Müller. *Lectures on the Science of Language*. Lugmans, Green and Co., Fifth edition, 1866. Pages 396-397.
- ³ Wilbur Marshall Urban. *Language and reality: the philosophy of language and the principles of symbolism*. 1951. Page 73.
- ⁴ William Dembski. *Intelligent Design: the Bridge between Science and Theology*. InterVarsity Press, 1999. Page 127.
- ⁵ Professor Raymond Scheindlin. *501 Arabic verbs*. Barron's educational series, 2007. Page v.
- ⁶ Guy Deutscher. *The Unfolding of Language: An Evolutionary Tour of Mankind's Greatest Invention*. Published in 2005 by Henry Holt and Company. Page 171-172.
- ⁷ Guy Deutscher. *The Unfolding of Language: An Evolutionary Tour of Mankind's Greatest Invention*. Published in 2005 by Henry Holt and Company. Page 171.
- ⁸ Professor Raymond Scheindlin. *501 Arabic verbs*. Barron's educational series, 2007. Page vi.
- ⁹ Professor Raymond Scheindlin. *501 Arabic verbs*. Barron's educational series, 2007. Page vii.
- ¹⁰ "Arabic language." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. 2009. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. 07 Apr. 2009 <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/31677/Arabic-language>>.
- ¹¹ Merritt Ruhlen. *The origin of language*. John Wiley and Sons, 1994. Page 148.
- ¹² Guy Deutscher. *The Unfolding of Language: An Evolutionary Tour of Mankind's Greatest Invention*. Published in 2005 by Henry Holt and Company. Pages 14-15.
- ¹³ <http://www.muslimsunrise.com/>
- ¹⁴ Francis S Collins. *The language of God*. Free Press, New York, 2006. Page 193.
- ¹⁵ <http://www.alislam.org/allah/Al-Aleem-Bestower-of-True-Dreams.pdf>
- ¹⁶ Mohammad Ahmad Mazhar. *English traced to Arabic*. Sunrise Art Printers, 1967, page 15-19. <http://www.alislam.org/topics/arabic/>
- ¹⁷ Promised Messiah. *Minan-ur-Rahman, Ruhani Khaza'in*, vol. 9, pp. 128-129.
- ¹⁸ Friedrich Max Müller. *The Science of Language: Founded on Lectures Delivered at the Royal*

Institution 1861 and 1863. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891. Page 27.

¹⁹ <http://www.alislam.org/egazette/archives/>

²⁰ Friedrich Max Müller. The Science of Language: Founded on Lectures Delivered at the Royal Institution 1861 and 1863. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891. Page 324.

²¹ Mohammad Ahmad Mazhar. English traced to Arabic. Sunrise Art Printers, 1967, page 10.
<http://www.alislam.org/topics/arabic/>