

VERB IN ARABIC NAHWĪ AND THE VERB CLASS IN UZBEK: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Abduvahobov Shahzodbek Ravshanbek o'g'li

Student of the Programme "Philology and Languages
Teaching (Arabic)" Tashkent University of Humanities

Abstract

This article examines the concept of the verb, one of the main categories of Arabic grammar. In Arabic grammar, the verb is defined as one of the three types of words, and its definition, tense, mood, and conjugation system are analyzed based on Sibawayh's "Al-Kitab" and A. Abdujabborov's textbook "The Arabic Language." Additionally, the comparative relationship between the verb category in Arabic and the verb class in Uzbek is studied, and the similarities and differences are identified.

Keywords: Verb, syntax, Arabic grammar, past tense, present tense, imperative mood, Uzbek language, comparative linguistics, verb tenses, verb chapter.

Introduction

The Arabic language, as the language of the Qur'an and the foundation of Islamic civilization, has been and continues to be deeply studied by linguists for centuries. At the heart of Arabic grammar—the science of nahw—is the division of words into three categories: nouns, verbs, and letters. This classification was established by Sibawayh in the 8th century in his Al-Kitab as the foundation of Arabic linguistics.¹

As emphasized in A. Abdujabborov's textbook "The Arabic Language," the verb group in Arabic consists of "words that denote an event, i.e., an action or state, and have tense and person markers." In Uzbek, the verb category also occupies a special place as an independent and rich grammatical category. Therefore, the

¹Sibawayhi. Al-Kitab. - Cairo: Maktabatu al-Khanaji, 1988. - Vol. 1. - P. 2.

comparative study of the verb categories of the two languages has significant scientific importance.²

The purpose of the article is to provide a comprehensive treatment of the concept of the verb in Arabic grammar based on classical sources, to analyze its system of tense, mood, and aspect, and to conduct a comparative analysis with the verb class in the Uzbek language. The study employs descriptive, comparative-typological, and historical methods.

Definition of the Concept "Verb" in Arabic Grammar

The founder of Arabic linguistics, Sibawayhi, in his work "Al-Kitab," divides words into three types and defines the verb as follows: it is a part of speech that has a tense, is formed from a noun, and signifies an event or action. In it, the action's relationship to time—past, present, or future—is expressed in form³.

In A. Abdujabborov's textbook, this definition is given as follows: in Arabic, the verb is a class of words that "denotes an event, i.e., an action or state, and has indicators of tense and person." This definition encompasses both of the verb's essential properties—its semantic (meaning of action/state) and its grammatical (tense and person) aspects⁴.

An important feature is that in Arabic, verbs do not have indefinite (infinitive) forms like Uzbek's "o'qimoq" ("to read") or "bormoq" ("to go"). In dictionaries and textbooks, the indefinite form – the infinitive – is replaced by the verb's simplest form, namely the third-person singular past definite form. For example, "كَاتَبَ" originally means "he (male) wrote," but in dictionaries, it can be used to mean "to write."⁵

Formation of the Verb Root and its Chapter

In Arabic, the root of verbs is usually composed of three consonants (ف ع ل); four-consonant roots (ف ع ل ل) also exist. According to A. Abdujabborov, by changing the verb's root—that is, by adding other consonants and vowels to the

²Abdujabborov A. Arabic Language. Textbook for university students. - Tashkent: Tashkent Islamic University, 2005. - pp. 88–89.

³ Sibawayhi. Al-Kitab. - Vol. 1. - P. 2–3

⁴ Abdujabborov A. Arabic Language. - P. 89.

⁵ Abdujabborov A. Arabic Language. - P. 90.

root consonants—new root-forms are created that express reflexive, passive, causative, and other meanings. Such bases are called "verb moods."

Fifteen forms of three-consonant verbs are known; of these, the following ten forms are mainly widely used: I form (فَعَلَ / فَعِّلَ / فَعَّلَ) - basic action; II form (فَعَّلَ) - intensification or causative; III form (فَاعَلَ) – mutual action; IV form (أَفْعَلَ) – intensive; forms V–X express the reflexive, passive, desiderative, and other aspects. For example, from the root "qata'a" (to cut), the forms "aqta'a" (to make cut), "inqata'a" (to be cut) are formed.⁶

Verb tenses in Arabic. In Arabic, there are only two verb tense forms: the past tense (الماضي) and the future tense (المضارع). In addition, the amr (الامر) – the imperative mood – is also distinguished as a separate form of the verb⁷.

Ma'zoo - past tense (الماضي)

Verbs in the past tense indicate a completed action. In conjugation, only the final suffixes change; the root remains unchanged. For example: كَتَبَ (he wrote) - كَتَبْنَا (we wrote) - كَتَبُوا (they wrote). If the particle "qad" is placed before the past tense verb, it emphasizes that the action has just been completed: قَدْ كَتَبَ - "he/she/it has finished writing"⁸.

The absence of the past tense verb is expressed with the negating particle "ma": مَا كَتَبَ - "did not write." Similarly, in Arabic, the past tense verb is also used to express habitual actions, prayers, and wishes – this corresponds to some of the functions of the future tense verb in Uzbek⁹.

Muzari - present-future tense (المضارع)

Present and future tense verbs express an incomplete action. According to A. Abdujabborov, an incomplete action can be expressed as a state (e.g., "The Earth rotates around its axis"), as a continuous action (e.g., "I study at the university"), or as a present action (e.g., "I am preparing the lesson"). "I will go to Cairo" for the future and "I would study at that time" for the past.¹⁰

⁶Abdujabborov A. Arabic Language. - pp. 91–92.

⁷Sibawayh. Al-Kitab. - Vol. 1. - P. 12–15.

⁸ Abdujabborov A. The Arabic Language. - P. 74-75.

⁹ Abdujabborov A. Arabic Language. - P. 76.

¹⁰Abdujabborov A. Arabic Language. - P. 107

The muzāri[‘] verb is formed with prefixes (يَ، تَ، نَ، أَ) indicating person and gender. For example: يَكْتُبُ (he/she writes), تَكْتُبُ (you/you write/write), نَكْتُبُ (we write), أَكْتُبُ (I write) (I write). This tense form can, from a grammatical standpoint, take the raf, nasb, and jazm cases, which defines a distinctive feature of the Arabic verb system¹¹.

Amr - Imperative mood (الامر)

The imperative mood, or "amr," is a special form of verbs that conveys meanings such as command, request, advice, or permission. According to A. Abdujabborov, verbs of this type are primarily addressed to the second person and are formed by dropping the prefix of the verb in the jazm form. For example: اُكْتُبْ (Write!), اِذْهَبْوا (Go!), اِقْرَئِي (Read! - to a woman).¹²

A Comparative Analysis of Verbs in Arabic and Uzbek

In Uzbek, the verb is defined as "an independent part of speech that expresses the action or state of an object." The Uzbek verb has grammatical categories such as tense, person, number, voice, and mood. The definition of the verb in Arabic is also similar: Both Sibawayh and A. Abdujabborov define it as a part of speech that conveys action and state and has tense and person markers. Thus, in both languages, the verb functionally performs the same primary task—expressing an action, state, or process.¹³

The Tense Category: Similarities and Differences

In Arabic, the verb has two tenses: past (mazī) and future (muzāri[‘]). In Uzbek, however, it is divided into three tenses: past, present, and future. Here an important difference is noticeable: in Uzbek, the present and future tenses are morphologically distinct ("yozayapman" - present, "yozaman" - future), whereas in Arabic, the muzāri[‘] form covers both.

This feature is clearly emphasized in A. Abdujabborov's textbook: the muzāri[‘] form can express both "I will go to Cairo" (in the future) and "I am preparing for class" (in the present).

¹¹ Sibawayh. Al-Kitab. - Vol. 1. - P. 15.

¹² Abdujabborov A. The Arabic Language. - P. 110.

¹³ Tursunov U., Muxtorov J., Rahmatullayev Sh. Modern Uzbek Literary Language. - Tashkent: O'zbekiston, 1992. - pp. 145–160.

The second important difference is the multifunctionality of the past tense verb. In Arabic, the past tense is also used for habitual events, prayers, and wishes. In Uzbek, however, such usage is not typical—habitual events are expressed with the present-future tense, and prayers are conveyed through special forms or modal expressions.

Person-Number Category and Inflection System

In both languages, the verb is inflected for person (1st, 2nd, 3rd) and number (singular, plural). However, in Arabic there is an additional category of gender: in the 2nd and 3rd persons, masculine and feminine forms are distinguished. For example: كَتَبَ (he wrote) - كَتَبَتْ (she wrote). In Uzbek, the gender category is not morphologically expressed in the verb - this is one of the main differences between the two systems.

Moreover, in Arabic there is a dual form (musanna – plural of one, i.e. for two people). In Uzbek, the dual is not distinguished as a separate grammatical category, and in this respect Arabic appears much more complex than Uzbek.

Both languages have a verb aspect category. In Arabic, aspect is expressed through verb forms: I form – basic active aspect; II, III, IV forms – intensive aspects; V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X forms – reflexive, passive, and other aspects. In Uzbek, there are also active, passive, reflexive, intensive, and other aspects. The difference is that in Uzbek, aspect is expressed through suffixes (-il, -in, -ish -tir), whereas in Arabic they are expressed through the stem consonants and the temporary change of the root—the chapter system.

In Uzbek, the infinitive is formed with the suffix "-moq": "yozmoq," "o'qimoq." In Arabic, however, according to A. Abdujabborov, there are no such indefinite (infinitive) forms of verbs. In dictionaries, the past tense third-person singular masculine form is used in place of the infinitive. This is one of the noticeable differences between the two systems: while in Uzbek the infinitive is a separate grammatical form, in Arabic such a category does not exist.

Conclusion

This comparative analysis has shown that the verb category in Arabic and Uzbek has a number of important similarities and differences. The similarities include the following: in both languages, the verb expresses action and state; it agrees in person and number; and it has a voice category. The definition of the verb

established by Sibawayh in "Al-Kitab" and A. Abdujabborov's modern definition complement each other, separately emphasizing the functional essence of the verb—its property of denoting action and time.

The main differences are as follows: first, while Arabic has only two tenses—past (moziy) and future (muzoriy)—Uzbek has three tenses ; second, Arabic verbs have a gender category, whereas the verb class in Uzbek does not; thirdly, Arabic has a dual form, while Uzbek does not; fourthly, the Arabic language does not have an infinitive, whereas in Uzbek the indefinite form with the suffix "-moq" is distinguished as a separate category; fifthly, the aspect formed in Arabic through the verb class system is fundamentally different from the suffixal aspect system in Uzbek.

This comparative study serves to deepen the understanding of the grammatical systems of Arabic and Uzbek and can serve as an important theoretical basis for teaching and translation practice in both languages.

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