

THE ISSUE OF DERIVATION: VERB AND MASDAR, WHICH ONE DERIVES FROM THE OTHER?*Xusanboyev Olimjon**1st year aster's student at Oriental University.*

Abstract: This article analyzes the relationship between verbs and masdars (verbal nouns) in Arabic linguistics, one of the significant debates in the field. The views of the Kufa and Basra linguistic schools on this issue are examined, along with their main arguments. The Kufan linguists propose that the verb is the primary form from which the masdar is derived. In contrast, the Basran school considers the masdar as the original form, from which the verb is generated based on scientific principles. Additionally, the article discusses the concepts of verbs and masdars, their grammatical characteristics, and their distinctions. This topic is important not only for understanding the key aspects of Arabic morphology but also for comprehending word formation processes in general linguistics. By addressing this long-standing scholarly debate in Arabic linguistics, the article provides a broader perspective on word formation processes.

Keywords: erb, masdar, Arabic linguistics, Kufan school, Basran school, word formation, morphology, linguistic debates, grammatical analysis, word derivation.

Outline

1. Introduction: Concept of verbs and masdars
2. Kufan perspectives
3. Basran perspectives
4. Theoretical approaches to the Kufan and Basran debate
5. Conclusion: Summary of key differences between the Kufan and Basran schools' perspectives

Introduction. The Central Question in Arabic Linguistics

A key issue in Arabic grammatical analysis is whether the verb (fi'l) or the masdar (verbal noun) is the root form. Before delving into this debate, it is essential to define verbs and masdars.

A verb (fe'l) is a part of speech that expresses an action, state, or occurrence. In a sentence, verbs usually play a central role and change according to tense (past, present, or future) and subject.

Main Characteristics of Verbs:

1. Expressing an action: A verb conveys an action (e.g., to walk, to write) or a state (e.g., to calm down, to sleep).
2. Tense variations: Verbs can take past, present, or future tense forms.
 - Past tense: "He wrote."
 - Present tense: "He is writing."
 - Future tense: "He will write."
3. Subject relation: Verbs indicate who is performing the action (e.g., "I wrote," "You wrote").

Examples:

- "I read" (verb: "read," past tense).
- "He is running" (verb: "running," present tense).

A masdar (verbal noun) represents the pure action itself without specifying tense or subject. It behaves like a noun and can function as a subject, object, or other grammatical element in a sentence.

Main Characteristics of Masdars:

1. Naming an action: A masdar represents an action without linking it to time or subject.
 - Example: "Running is beneficial." (Here, "running" is a masdar representing the general act.)
2. Formation: In Uzbek, masdars typically end in "-moq" (e.g., "o'qimoq" - "to read," "yozmoq" - "to write").
3. Similarities to nouns: Masdars function like nouns in a sentence.
 - Example: "Writing is an art." (The masdar "writing" serves as the subject.)

Differences Between Verbs and Masdars:

1. A verb expresses an action with tense and subject agreement.
 - Example: "I ran." (Past tense, first-person subject.)
2. A masdar represents the action in a general sense, without specifying tense or subject.
 - Example: "Running is good for health." (The action itself is referenced, but the doer and time are unspecified.)

Verbs and Masdars in Arabic

In Arabic, a similar relationship exists between verbs and masdars. The masdar (مصدر) is considered the root form, from which verbs of various tenses and conjugations are derived. Arabic has numerous masdar patterns governed by specific grammatical rules. Masdars generally behave like nouns in Arabic.

Examples:

- Masdar: ضرب (zarb - "striking")
- Verb: ضربت (zarabtu - "I struck")

The Kufan Perspective: Verbs are the Root Form

Kufan linguists argue that the masdar derives from the verb. They claim that a verb ensures the validity of a masdar and provides its meaning. For instance:

- قَامَ قِيَامًا ("He stood up")
- ضَرَبَ ضَرْبًا ("He struck a blow")

According to the Kufans, this proves that masdars originate from verbs. Some Kufan scholars support this claim with the argument that masdars function as reinforcements for verbs. Since reinforcements are subordinate to what they reinforce, verbs must be the primary form.

Additionally, they note that certain verbs lack corresponding masdars, implying that verbs are fundamental while masdars are derived.

Examples:

- نَعَم ("good")
- بُئْسَ ("bad")

Since these verbs have no masdar, Kufan scholars argue that masdars are secondary.

The Basran Perspective: Masdars are the Root Form

Basran scholars counter this view, asserting that the masdar is the original form. Ibn Yaish states: "The masdar indicates an action in an absolute sense, while a verb ties the action to a specific time. The absolute always precedes the particular."

Basran scholars argue that because masdars are not tied to a specific tense, they must be the source from which verbs, which require tense, are derived. They note that verbs must indicate both the action and the time in which it occurs, while a masdar only denotes the action itself.

For example:

- ضرب (“to strike”) expresses only the action.
- ضرب (“he struck”) conveys both the action and the past tense.

Thus, just as a general concept (e.g., “striking”) precedes its specific application (“he struck”), the Basrans argue that masdars must precede verbs.

Some Basran scholars further note that for each masdar, there are multiple verb forms, but a single verb cannot account for multiple masdars. This asymmetry suggests that masdars are the root form.

Conclusion

The debate between Kufan and Basran linguists regarding the origins of verbs and masdars remains a central issue in Arabic grammar.

- Kufans believe verbs are the fundamental form and masdars are derived from them. Their arguments are based on the grammatical function of verbs and the lack of masdars for some verbs.
- Basrans consider masdars as the root form from which verbs are derived. Their reasoning is that masdars represent the pure action without temporal constraints, while verbs introduce time-specificity.

This debate has shaped Arabic morphology and syntax, influencing how Arabic grammar is studied and understood. The discussion continues to be a crucial linguistic issue, reflecting broader questions about word formation in language history.

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