

## THE SYNTACTIC FUNCTIONS AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PAST TENSE VERB IN ARABIC AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

Roxat Mamadshoyeva

Master Student of the Yangi Asr University

Teacher at Mir Arab Higher Madrasah Bukhara, Uzbekistan.

### Abstract

This article provides a comparative analysis of the morphological structure and syntactic functions of the past tense verb in Arabic and Uzbek languages. The study contrasts the Arabic form *al-fi'l al-māḍī*, characterized by its fusional system that combines person, number, and gender, with the agglutinative affixal model of Uzbek. The findings reveal that Arabic, as a verb-centered syntactic system, employs the past tense form extensively in the functions of predicate, adverbial modifier, and attribute. In contrast, the Uzbek past tense verb predominantly functions together with participial forms, where word order plays a decisive role. These results form a scientific basis for translation practice and language teaching methodology.

**Keywords:** Past tense verb, Arabic language, Uzbek language, syntax, morphology, comparative analysis, fusional, agglutinative.

### Introduction

#### ARAB VA O'ZBEK TILIDA O'TGAN ZAMON FE'LINING SINTAKTIK FUNKSIYALARI VA QIYOSIY TAHLILI

Roxat Mamadshoyeva

Yangi asr universiteti magistranti

Mir Arab oliy madrasasi o'qituvchisi

### Annotatsiya:

Ushbu maqolada arab va o'zbek tillarida o'tgan zamon fe'lining morfologik tuzilishi va sintaktik funksiyalari qiyosiy tahlil qilindi. Arab tilidagi *al-fi'l al-māḍī* shaklining shaxs, son va jinsni birlashtirgan flektiv tizimi o'zbek tilining agglutinativ affiksali modeli bilan solishtirildi. Tadqiqot natijalariga ko'ra, arab tili fe'l-markazli sintaktik tizimga ega bo'lib, o'tgan zamon shakli kesim, hol va aniqlovchi vazifalarida keng qo'llanadi. O'zbek tilida esa o'tgan zamon fe'li asosan sifatdosh shakllar bilan birga ishlatiladi va so'z tartibi hal qiluvchi rol o'ynaydi. Mazkur natijalar tarjima amaliyoti va til o'qitish metodikasi uchun ilmiy asos yaratadi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** o'tgan zamon fe'li, arab tili, o'zbek tili, sintaksis, morfologiya, qiyosiy tahlil, flektiv, agglutinativ.

### INTRODUCTION

In the linguistic system, the verb category represents one of the central syntactic and semantic units, serving not only to express actions and states but also to structure speech within the framework of time. Although Arabic, belonging to the ancient Semitic languages, and Uzbek, a



member of the Turkic language family, belong to genetically opposite systems, the category of the past tense occupies an important place in the grammatical structure of both. Therefore, a comparative analysis of the morphological and syntactic features of this verb form is relevant not only for general linguistics but also for translation theory, computational linguistics, and language teaching methodology.

In Arabic, the past tense verb (*al-fi'l al-māḍī*) constitutes the root form of the verb, encapsulating person and gender markers within its internal morphological structure. This feature gives it the characteristics of a complex inflectional system typical of fusional languages. In Uzbek, however, the past tense is expressed through external morphological markers such as the suffixes *-di*, *-gan*, *-ibdi*, and in most cases, the categories of person and number are indicated by independent pronouns. This is a distinctive feature of the agglutinative system.

From a syntactic point of view, in both languages the past tense verb primarily functions as the predicate. However, in Arabic, it can also function as an adjective within genitive constructions and, in some cases, serve as a circumstantial clause, forming complex syntactic structures. In Uzbek, these functions are typically realized through participial forms ending in *-gan*, with word order playing a decisive role. Moreover, in both languages, the participation of the past tense form in compound predicates plays a significant role in creating pragmatic meaning.

The relevance of this research lies in the fact that in existing linguistic literature, the syntactic systems of Arabic and Uzbek are often studied independently, and the comparative syntactic functions of the past tense verb have not yet been examined as an independent and comprehensive object of study. Therefore, this work aims to fill this gap.

## MAIN PART

Before comparing the morphological and syntactic structures of the past tense verb in Arabic and Uzbek, it is necessary to consider the grammatical typology of both languages. Arabic is a fusional (inflectional) language in which grammatical meanings are expressed as an integrated whole through internal phonetic alternations and external affixes. Uzbek, on the other hand, is based on an agglutinative structure, where grammatical categories are formed through the sequential addition of independent affixes. This typological difference is clearly reflected in the formation mechanism of the past tense verb.

The simplest paradigm of the Arabic past tense verb is built upon the *fa'ala* model: *kataba* (he wrote), *jalasa* (he sat), *qāla* (he said). Its essential feature is that it encodes person, number, and gender meanings within the verb form itself. For example, *katabtu* — “I wrote,” *katabta* — “you (masc.) wrote,” *katabti* — “you (fem.) wrote,” *katabū* — “they (masc.) wrote.” Thus, in Arabic, the subject of a sentence can be identified directly from the verb form, which ensures syntactic agreement. In Uzbek, however, forms such as *yozdim* / *yozding* / *yozdi* / *yozdik* are created through affixes, but the indication of person is not obligatory: *keldi* (“came”) may mean *u keldi* (“he/she came”) or, depending on the context, *men keldim* (“I came”). This increases the necessity of an explicit subject and ensures the stability of word order.

From the syntactic perspective, in both languages, the past tense verb mainly serves as the predicate. In Arabic simple sentences, the verb usually occupies the initial position, followed by the subject (*kataba al-waladu* — “the boy wrote”). In Uzbek, the typical word order follows the pattern “subject + object + predicate,” as in *bola maktub yozdi* (“the boy wrote a letter”). This



demonstrates that Arabic syntax is verb-centered, while Uzbek syntax is subject-centered. The use of the past tense verb in compound predicates is also noteworthy. In Arabic, this is often formed with the auxiliary verb *kāna* — *kāna kataba* (“he had written”). In Uzbek, equivalent meanings are expressed through auxiliaries such as *edi*, *ekan*, *boʻlgan* — *u yozgan edi / yozgan ekan* (“he had written” / “it is said he had written”). Interestingly, in Arabic, *kāna* often modifies the temporal aspect of the verb, while in Uzbek auxiliary verbs typically express nuances of narration, inference, or reported speech.

In Arabic, the past tense verb may function as an attributive modifier, even without a participial form, when understood contextually. For instance, *rajulun qala amsi* — “the man who spoke yesterday.” Here, *qala* (“spoke”) functions as a modifier but is not morphologically a participle. In Uzbek, however, the *-gan* form serves as a clear participial modifier: *kecha gapirgan odam* (“the man who spoke yesterday”). Thus, Uzbek exhibits greater morphological clarity and regularity in this respect.

When used as an adverbial modifier of manner, Arabic exhibits more complex constructions. For example, *dakhala wa huwa yadhak* — “He entered while laughing.” The main verb *dakhala* (“entered”) is accompanied by *yadhak* (“he laughs”), which expresses the state accompanying the action. In Uzbek, such meanings are typically expressed through affixal constructions: *kulib kirdi* or *kulgan holda kirdi* (“he entered laughing”). Therefore, although the semantic equivalence between the two languages is strong, their syntactic organization differs: Arabic often expresses the circumstantial meaning through secondary clauses, while Uzbek relies on affixal constructions.

Comparative analysis shows that the fusional nature of Arabic increases syntactic flexibility, whereas the agglutinative nature of Uzbek ensures syntactic precision. For example, in Arabic, the difference between *kataba Zaydun ʿAmran* and *kataba ʿAmrun Zaydan* is distinguished only by case endings (vowel inflection), since word order alone is insufficient. In Uzbek, however, word order determines the syntactic meaning: *Zayd Amrni yozdi* (“Zayd wrote Amr”) and *Amr Zaydni yozdi* (“Amr wrote Zayd”) differ solely through word arrangement.

In addition, the pragmatic functions of the Arabic past tense verb are also noteworthy. In Qurʻanic and religious discourse, forms like *laqad jaʿa* (“indeed, he came”) are used to convey emphasis or divine assertion. In Uzbek, such emphasis is typically achieved through additional lexical elements such as *haqiqatan*, *rostdan ham*, *chindan* (“indeed,” “truly,” “really”).

Overall, while the past tense verb in both Arabic and Uzbek fulfills similar semantic roles, the strategies of its morphological and syntactic realization differ fundamentally. Arabic relies on morphological integration and syntactic agreement, whereas Uzbek depends on affixal layering and stable word order. Therefore, a comparative study of past tense forms in these two languages is not only valuable for grammatical theory but also carries practical significance for translation studies, language teaching methodology, and the development of AI-based linguistic models.

## CONCLUSION

Although the past tense verb in Arabic and Uzbek shares a common semantic essence, the mechanisms of its morphological and syntactic realization differ fundamentally. In Arabic, the past tense verb serves as the core form within the verbal system, expressing person, number, and gender meanings through internal morphological means. It simultaneously fulfills both the



predicate and subject-identifying functions. In Uzbek, these grammatical meanings are conveyed through external affixes and independent pronouns, which simplifies the overall syntactic structure.

From a syntactic perspective, the past tense verb in Arabic dominates verb-centered constructions and is widely used in adverbial and attributive functions. In contrast, in Uzbek, such functions are primarily realized through participial forms or auxiliary elements. Thus, Arabic tends to preserve syntactic flexibility, while Uzbek maintains structural clarity and systematization.

A comparative study of the past tense category in two typologically distinct languages allows for a deeper understanding of the relationship between linguistic structure and thought. The results of this research hold practical significance for the improvement of translation theory, computational linguistics, and the methodology of teaching Arabic and Uzbek as foreign languages.

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