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THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFFIXAL UNITS IN THE ARABIC LANGUAGE

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Abstract. This thesis examines the formation and historical development of affixal units in the Arabic language, their role within the science of Arabic morphology (sarf), and their functional characteristics in the process of word formation. It analyzes the initial development of Arabic morphology in close connection with nahw (Arabic grammar) and its subsequent development as an independent scholarly field of sarf. The study also considers the manifestation of root-pattern relations, prefixation, suffixation, and internal morphological changes in Arabic. Drawing on the views of Sibawayh and subsequent scholars of sarf, the thesis reveals the main features of the historical development of affixal units in Arabic [1, pp. 48–52].

Keywords: Arabic language, affixal unit, affix, morphology, sarf, tasrif, ishtiqaq, root, pattern, word formation, Sibawayh.

In contemporary linguistics, the historical formation and development of morphological units constitute an important area of research. Arabic is distinctive in this respect. The formation of word forms in Arabic depends not only on the sequential addition of affixes but also on the interaction between root consonants and a particular morphological pattern. Therefore, the study of affixal units in Arabic requires the traditional principles of sarf to be considered alongside modern morphological approaches [5, pp. 405–424].

The early development of Arabic morphology was associated with the need to use the language correctly and preserve grammatical norms. Initially, issues of sarf were studied without being separated from nahw. Later, questions concerning word

structure, morphological change, and word formation gradually developed into an independent field of scholarly inquiry. Atavullayev relates the historical formation of sarf to the period before Sibawayh and the subsequent stages following Sibawayh [1, p. 51].

Sibawayh's Al-Kitab occupies a special place in the development of Arabic grammatical thought. The work systematically addresses issues related to word structure, root letters, additional letters, and morphological changes. In subsequent periods, independent works devoted to sarf emerged, leading to further development in the classification of morphological units and the explanation of their patterns of change [1, pp. 50–52].

A distinctive feature of affixal units in Arabic is that they cannot be adequately explained solely through prefixes and suffixes. The root-pattern model occupies a central position. For example, forms such as kataba, kātib, maktūb, and maktab derived from the k-t-b root demonstrate how a single root can be realized through different morphological patterns. Watson analyzes Arabic morphology from the perspective of derivational and inflectional processes and demonstrates its pattern-based morphological character [5, pp. 405–424].

The development of affixal units can also be associated with the phenomenon of ishtiqaq. Ishtiqaq is one of the important means of forming new lexical units in Arabic. Studies in Uzbek linguistics distinguish such forms as minor, major, and greatest ishtiqaq, as well as naht [8, p. 229; 8, pp. 234–235]. The formation of words with different meanings within a single root demonstrates the internal derivational potential of the language.

The development of affixal units in Arabic can conventionally be divided into several stages. Initially, morphological observations emerged from practical linguistic needs. At the next stage, the activities of the Basran and Kufan grammatical schools contributed to the systematization of Arabic grammatical and morphological principles

[2, pp. 725–736]. During the period of Sibawayh, these principles were theoretically consolidated. In the following period, the number of specialized works devoted to sarf and ishtiqaq increased [1, p. 52].

Modern linguistics also investigates Arabic morphology through new methodological approaches. In particular, computational linguistics pays considerable attention to the automatic identification of a word's root, morphological pattern, grammatical category, and derivational structure. Al-Sughaiyer and Al-Kharashi demonstrate the complexity of Arabic morphological analysis and the importance of the root-pattern system for automatic processing [6, pp. 189–213].

Interest in the sarf and morphological system of Arabic is also increasing in Uzbek-language scholarship. Nurmatova and Begmatova analyze word formation and ishtiqaq in Arabic [8, pp. 229–235]. Orifxonova discusses the principal features of Arabic grammar and morphology [9, pp. 141–147]. Usmonova and Yuldashev focus on sarf, morphological patterns (wazn), and changes in word forms [10, pp. 69–73].

In conclusion, the development of affixal units in Arabic is the result of a long historical process. This process began with early grammatical observations, was systematized through the activities of the Basran and Kufan schools and the scholarly legacy of Sibawayh, and was subsequently enriched by research in sarf. The distinctive character of Arabic affixal units is manifested in the active interaction of root-pattern relations, ishtiqaq, and internal morphological changes. Therefore, the study of the Arabic affixal system benefits from integrating the traditional science of sarf with modern morphological approaches.

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