

THE CATEGORY OF 'ASMĀ' AL-FĪ'L IN ARABIC GRAMMAR

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1. Introduction

In Arabic grammatical terminology the term '*asmā' al-fī'l*' refers to certain interjections denoting a sense of a verb, such as *nazāli* - "Go down!", *halumma* - "Come here!" and *'ilayka* - "Go away!" (see below 2).

Most of the interjections belonging to the category of '*asmā' al-fī'l*' denote an imperative. However, some of them denote the sense of a verb in the past tense (see below 2).

The term '*asmā' al-fī'l*' occurs for the first time in the *Kitāb*.¹ The singular form, *ism al-fī'l* or *ism fī'l*, occurs only in later sources.² The interjections known by this term are also called '*asmā' li-l-fī'l*' (sing. *ism li-l-fī'l*)⁴ and '*asmā' al-'aḥ'āl*' (sing. *ism al-fī'l*).⁶

The term '*asmā' al-fī'l*' calls for some elucidation, and in this paper I will therefore attempt to show what the grammarians held '*asmā' al-fī'l*' to mean (see below 3). I will also deal with the Arab grammarians' views on the classification of '*asmā' al-fī'l*' (see below 2), and on the grammatical task and characteristics of the words belonging to this category (see below 4).

For the Arab grammarians' discussions of '*asmā' al-fī'l*' see Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 102.6 - 107.10; Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* II, 34.7 - 38.15; al-Mubarrad, *Muqtaḍab* III, 202 - 211; Ibn as-Sarrāḡ, '*Uṣūl* I, 167.5 - 174.8; az-Zaḡḡāḡi, *Ġumal* 228.1-7; 244;⁷ aṣ-

¹ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 102.21. This term occurs also in al-Mubarrad, *Muqtaḍab* III, 206.7; az-Zamaḡḡari, *Mufaṣṣal* 65.20.

² For *ism al-fī'l* see Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 513.24 - 514.1 = Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 49.11; for *ism fī'l* see al-Ġurḡānī, *Muqtaṣid* I, 571.7; Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 513.15 = Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 49.2; Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 513.17 = Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 49.4.

³ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 102.8; 105.3; az-Zamaḡḡari, *Mufaṣṣal* 65.20; Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 504.19 = Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 39.17; Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 507.22-23 = Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 42.25; Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 508.3 = Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 43.1; Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 513.4-5 = Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 48.3; Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 514.11 = Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 50.2.

⁴ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* II, 34.9; 34.11; Ibn as-Sarrāḡ, '*Uṣūl* II, 91.2; al-Ġurḡānī, *Muqtaṣid* I, 573.19; 575.2; az-Zamaḡḡari 61.21.

⁵ See Ibn al-Ḥaššāb, *Murtāḡil* 248.2; Ibn 'Abī ar-Raḥīf, *Basīṭ* 167.15; Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 494.17 = Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 25.12; Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 503.12-13 = Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 38.10; Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 506.19 = Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 41.21; Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 510.22 = Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 45.8; Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 513.3 = Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 48.2; Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 534.1 = Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 75.8-9.

⁶ See Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 535.21 = Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 77.9.

⁷ The term '*asmā' al-fī'l*' does not occur in this text.

Şaymarī, *Tabṣira* 246 - 253; al-Ġurġānī, *Muqtaṣid* I, 569-577; al-Ġurġānī, *Talḥiṣ* 195.3 - 204; Ibn Ḥaššāb 248-259; Ibn al-'Anbārī, *Asrār* 67.1 - 68.18;⁷ Ibn al-'Anbārī, *'Inṣāf* 99.15 - 102.5;⁷ az-Zamaḥṣarī, *Mufaṣṣal* 61.7 - 67.2; Ibn Ya'īs, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 494.9 - 534.6 = Ibn Ya'īs, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 25.6 - 75.13; Ibn 'Abī r-Rabī', *Basīṭ* 163.2 - 164.14; Ibn 'Abī r-Rabī', *Ḍabī* 347 - 353; Ibn 'Aqīl, *Šarḥ* 302 - 307.

2. The classification of 'asmā' al-fīl

In the grammarians' classification, 'asmā' al-fīl are divided, according to their grammatical function, into two main groups:

- (1) 'asmā' al-fīl which occur as imperatives; and
- (2) 'asmā' al-fīl which take the place of an affirmative declarative sentence (= *ḥabar*).⁸

(1) 'asmā' al-fīl as imperatives are divided according to derivational criteria into three groups:

(a) 'asmā' al-fīl on the *fa'ālī* pattern, derived from trilateral roots. For example: *nazālī* - "Get down!"⁹ (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* II, 34.20); *ḥaḍārī* - "Beware; Be cautious!" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* II, 34.17); *nazārī* - "Look!" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* II, 34.19).¹⁰

The sense of a given *ism fīl* on the *fa'ālī* pattern is the same as that of an imperative of the 1st Verb Form derived from the same root. Thus, *nazālī* has the same connotation as *inzil*, and *ḥaḍārī* has that of *iḥḍar*.

Unlike imperatives of the 1st Form, 'asmā' al-fīl on the *fa'ālī* pattern are indeclinable. Thus, for example, *nazālī* stands for all the declined forms of *inzil* such as *inzilī*, *inzilū* etc. (see below 4).

(b) 'asmā' al-fīl which are formed by a combination of a preposition + a genitive pronoun of the 2nd person,¹¹ such as 'ilayka - "Go away!" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 105.23 - 106.1); 'alayka *zaydan*, *dūnaka zaydan* or 'indaka *zaydan* - "Seize Zayd!" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 105.17). The genitive pronoun included in combinations acting as 'asmā' al-fīl is declinable in number and gender (see below 4).

This category of 'asmā' al-fīl is called by some grammarians *al-iğrā'* - lit. "the incitement".¹² The sense of *al-iğrā'* as a grammatical term is "the words denoting an incitement to do a certain act."

(c) 'asmā' al-fīl which are isolated forms, such as *ḥayya* - "Come!" (az-Zamaḥṣarī, *Mufaṣṣal* 63.1); *ḥayyahala* - "Come quickly!" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 102.10);

⁸ For *ḥabar* in this sense see, for example, Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 49.6; 250.12-13; 252.15-17.

⁹ The term *nazālī* was used as a war cry in the sense of "Get down off your horse and start fighting!" (see 'Abū Tammām, *Ḥamḍa* I, 23.3. Cf. Ibn Ya'īs, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 514.23 - 515.2 = Ibn Ya'īs, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 50.13-16.

¹⁰ For 'asmā' al-fīl on the *fa'ālī* pattern see Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* II, 34.11 - 35.8; aṣ-Şaymarī, *Tabṣira* 246.1-4; 251.6 - 252.10; az-Zamaḥṣarī, *Mufaṣṣal* 63.6-10; Ibn Ya'īs, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 514.10 - 516.14 = Ibn Ya'īs, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 50.1 - 52.17.

¹¹ The prepositions included in such combinations consist either of a *ḥarf ḡarr*, like 'ilā, or of a *zarf* like 'alā and dūna. (For classification of prepositions see Levin 1987).

¹² See az-Zağğāgī, *Ġumal* 144; Ibn al-'Anbārī, *'Inṣāf* 99.15-16; Ibn al-'Anbārī, *'Asrār* 67.2-5.

halumma - "Bring close!" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* II, 102.10); *ṣah* - "Shut up!" (al-Mubarrad, *Muqtaḍab* III, 202.6); *'īhi* - "Tell more!" (az-Zamaḥṣārī, *Mufaṣṣal* 61.13). These isolated forms are called by some grammarians *'aṣwāt* (sing. *ṣawt*) - lit. "sounds".¹³

Some grammarians classify the word *hātī* - "Give!" as belonging to this category,¹⁴ although Sībawayhi and al-Mubarrad do not mention it among *'asmā' al-fīl*.¹⁵ It seems that both of them held the view mentioned by al-Ḥalīl that the form *hātī* is the imperative of the verb *hātā*, imperfect *yuhātī*. These forms were shifts of *'ātā*, imperfect *yu'ātī* - "he gave". However, by al-Ḥalīl's time the forms belonging to the conjugation of *hātā*, except the imperative *hātī* were no longer used by the 'arab.¹⁶ It is clear that *hātī* cannot be classified as an *ism fīl* by grammarians who hold that it is an imperative of a certain verb, even if this verb was no longer current (for the criteria of classifying a certain form as an *ism fīl* see below 3).

(2) *'asmā' al-fīl* which take the place of an affirmative declarative sentence.

According to the grammarians, only a few interjections belong to this category. For example: *hayhātu* - "Far from it!" (az-Zamaḥṣārī, *Mufaṣṣal* 61.18); *ṣattāna* - "How different is...!" (ibid.); *'uffīn* - "an interjection expressing anger" (az-Zamaḥṣārī, *Mufaṣṣal* 61.20); *'awwah* - "an interjection expressing pain" (ibid.).¹⁷

3. The meaning of the term *'asmā' al-fīl*

The sense of the term *'asmā' al-fīl*, according to the Arab grammarians, is: "the proper names of the verbs". The term derives from their notion that certain verbs have a proper name. Sometimes, instead of using a given verb, the speaker uses its proper name. The proper name of the verb is a sign denoting the verb, just as the proper name of a given person is a sign denoting that person: for example, the form *hayyahala* is the proper name of the verb *'āti* - "Come!", as the name *ḥassānu* is the proper name of a given person. Hence, *hayyahala*, when used by the speaker, denotes the verb *'āti*, just as *ḥassānu* denotes a person known by this name. This interpretation of *'asmā' al-fīl* can be illustrated by the following excerpts:

(1) Ibn 'Abī r-Rabī' (13th century) says: *wa-mīna n-naḥwiyyīna man ḍahaba 'ilā 'annahā 'asmā'un lā 'af'āhun fanazāli ismu inzīl wa-ṣattāna ismu ṣattata wa-hayhātu ismu ba'ūda kamā 'anna ḥassānu ismun li-ṣaḥṣin...* - "And among the

¹³ See, for example, al-Ġurġānī, *Talḥīḥ* 195.5-6; 197.13; Ibn Ya'īs, *Ṣarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 508.16 = Ibn Ya'īs, *Ṣarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 43.12; Ibn Ya'īs, *Ṣarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 510.22-23 = Ibn Ya'īs, *Ṣarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 45.8-9.

¹⁴ See, for example, az-Zamaḥṣārī, *Mufaṣṣal* 61.10; Ibn Ya'īs, *Ṣarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 497.16-18 = Ibn Ya'īs, *Ṣarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 30.5-7.

¹⁵ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, Chapters 47-49 (= I, 102.6 - 107.10); Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* II, Chapter 309 (= II, 34.7 - 38.15); al-Mubarrad, *Muqtaḍab* III, 202.1 - 207.3.

¹⁶ See al-Ḥalīl, *Ayn* IV, 80.14-18. Cf. Ibn Ya'īs, *Ṣarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 497.16-20 = Ibn Ya'īs, *Ṣarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 30.7-9. It should be noted that both Sībawayhi and al-Mubarrad render the *ism fīl* *halumma* by *hātī*, without saying that *hātī* itself is an *ism fīl* (see Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 102.9-10; al-Mubarrad, *Muqtaḍab* III, 202.10).

¹⁷ See Ibn al-Ḥaṣṣāb, *Muraṭṭil* 248.8-12; az-Zamaḥṣārī, *Mufaṣṣal* 61.18-20; Ibn Ya'īs, *Ṣarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 501.14 - 504.14 = Ibn Ya'īs, *Ṣarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 35.8 - 39.14.

grammarians there are [those] who hold that they [i.e. *'asmā' al-fī'l*] are nouns, and not verbs, so [according to their view] *nazāli* is a proper name [of the verb] *inzil* (= "Get down!"), and *šattāna*¹⁸ is a proper name [of the verb] *šattata* (= "he scattered, separated") and *hayhātu*¹⁹ is a proper name [of the verb] *ba'uda* (= "it was far away"), just as *ḥassānu* is a proper name of a person..." (Ibn 'Abī r-Rabīf, *Basīl* 163.17 - 164.1).

(2) Ibn Ya'qūb says: *wa-lammā kānat ḥādīhi l-'alfāzu 'asmā'an li-l-'afāli ka-l-'alāmi 'alayhā kāna fīhā ka'īrūn min 'aḥkāmī l-'alāmi...* - "... since these words are names of the verbs [and they are] like proper names which were given to them [i.e. to the verbs], they share with the proper names many of their essential grammatical properties..." (Ibn Ya'qūb, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 496.14-15 = Ibn Ya'qūb, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 29.6-7).²⁰

(3) Ibn Ya'qūb says: *īlam 'anna ma'nā qawli n-nahwīyīna 'asmā'u l-'afāli l-murādu bihi 'annahū wuḍī'at li-tadulla 'alā šiyāḡi l-'afāli kamā tadullu l-'asmā'u 'alā musammayātihā fa-qawlunā ba'uda dāllun 'alā mā taḥtahu mina l-ma'nā wa-huwa ḥilāfu l-qurbi wa-qawluka hayhātu (i)smun li-lafzi ba'uda dāllun 'alayhi wa-kaḏālika sā'inuhā* - "Know that that which is intended by the grammarians' term *'asmā' al-'afāli* is that [the forms known by this term] were coined in order to denote [various] forms of verbs, just as the names denote [the persons] named by them. [For example], the utterance *ba'uda* [= "it was far away"] denotes a certain sense, which is the opposite of *al-qurb* (= "being near"), and your utterance *hayhātu* is a name of the form *ba'uda*, and it denotes it [i.e. it denotes *ba'uda*]. And the same holds good with respect to all the rest of [*'asmā' al-fī'l*]"²¹ (Ibn Ya'qūb, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 494.17-19 = Ibn Ya'qūb, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 25.12-14).

(4) Ibn al-Ḥaššāb says: *wa-'alfāzu l-'afāli dawāllu 'alā l-ma'ānī llatī wuḍī'at lahā wa-ḥādīhi dawāllu 'alā tilka l-'alfāzi fa-hiya 'asmā'un li-'alfāzihā 'a-lā tarā 'anna lafza ba'uda dāllun 'alā l-ma'nā llatī taḥtahu wa-huwa ḥilāfun li-l-qurbi wa-qawluka hayhātu (i)smun li-lafzi ba'uda 'alayhi* - "And the words which are verbs denote the sense which they [i.e. these words] were coined for, and these [i.e. *'asmā' al-fī'l*] signify these words [denoting the verbs], and they [i.e. *'asmā' al-fī'l*] are names of the words [which denote the verbs]. Don't you see that the form *ba'uda* denotes the sense which is found in it, and this sense is opposed [to the sense of the verb denoting the act of] being near. And the utterance *hayhātu* is the name of the word *ba'uda*, i.e., it signifies this word" (Ibn al-Ḥaššāb, *Murtaḡil* 248.8-11).

(5) The title of the chapter dealing with *'asmā' al-fī'l* in al-Mubarrad's *Kitāb al-Muqtaḏab* is: *ḥāḏā būbu mā ḡarā maḡrā l-fī li wa-laysa bi-fī lin wa-lā mašdarin wa-lākinnahā 'asmā'un wuḍī'at li-l-fī li tadullu 'alayhi* - "This is the chapter dealing with

¹⁸ The sense of *šattāna* is "what a difference!", as in the phrase *šattāna mā baynahumā* - "What a difference between... and...!".

¹⁹ The sense of *hayhātu* is "Far from it!".

²⁰ For the "grammatical essential properties" common to *'asmā' al-fī'l* and the proper names, see Ibn Ya'qūb, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 496.14-16 = Ibn Ya'qūb, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 29.6-8. See also Ibn Ya'qūb, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 30.20 - 33.19 = Ibn Ya'qūb, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) I, 27.2 - 33.14.

²¹ I.e., the rest of *'asmā' al-fī'l* are proper names of given verbal forms, just as *hayhātu* is the proper name of the verb *ba'uda*.

[these words] which occupy the same place as the verb does, and which are neither a verb nor a *maṣḍar*, but [are] names which were coined for the verbs [and] which denote them" (al-Mubarrad, *Muqtaḍab* III, 202.1-4).

(6) For other excerpts interpreting the term 'asmā' al-fīl in the same way see Ibn Haššāb, *Murtağil* 248.1-4; Ibn 'Abī r-Rabī, *Dabṭ* 347.2-8; 348.21; 348.12 - 349.1.

The following is the title of Chapter 47 in the *Kitāb* which is the first chapter in Sībawayhi dealing with 'asmā' al-fīl: *hādā bābun mina l-fīli summiya l-fīlu fīhi bi-'asmā'in lam tu'haḍ min 'amṭilati l-fīli l-hādīti wa-mawḍi'uhā mina l-kalāmi l-'amru wa-n-nahyu*.²² The interpretation of the term 'asmā' al-fīl by the later grammarians enables us to render this title as follows: "This is a chapter dealing with verbs which were named by names which are not derived from the patterns [denoting] a verb which signifies an act. The place [occupied by these words] in speech is that of [a verb denoting] a command or a prohibition" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 102.6-7).

The interpretation of the term 'asmā' al-fīl by the later grammarians shows that Wright's editor is mistaken when saying that 'asmā' al-'af'āl are so called because they have "a certain verbal force".²³ Lane is also mistaken when calling various forms of 'asmā' al-fīl by the term "verbal noun"²⁴ or "imperative verbal noun".²⁵

The grammarians' notion that a given word is a proper name of another word is not restricted to words belonging to the category of 'asmā' al-fīl. According to Sībawayhi, there are two other such categories of words, which he calls *ism li-l-waṣf* — "a proper name of an adjective"²⁶ and *ism li-l-maṣḍar* — "a proper name of a *maṣḍar*".²⁷ The words belonging to these two categories, like some of 'asmā' al-fīl, occur on the *fa'āli* pattern,²⁸ and they are regarded as feminine nouns.²⁹

The following examples belong to the category of *ism li-l-waṣf*: *ḥabāṭi* is the proper name of the adjective *ḥabīṭa* - "a bad woman".³⁰ Hence *yā ḥabāṭi* means "O bad woman!";³⁰ *lakā'i* is the proper name of the adjective *lak'ā'* - "a vile woman".³⁰ Hence, *yā lakā'i* means "O vile woman!".³⁰

²² For the sense of *an-nahyu* here see as-Strāfi, as quoted by Jahn 1895-1900: 1/2 177, note 3.

²³ Wright's editor says: "Many interjections have, by origin or use, a certain verbal force and are called therefore 'asmā' al-'af'āl..." (Wright 1896-98: I, 296.8-9).

²⁴ See Lane 1863-93: V, 2146A.53 - 2146B.1 (referring to 'alayka).

²⁵ See Lane 1863-93: I, 86A.25-28 (referring to 'ilayka); I, 305B.57-58 (referring to *tardki*); II, 534C.5-7 (referring to *ḥaḍāri*).

²⁶ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* II, 34.7-10. Sībawayhi also calls this category of words *ism li-sifa* (see Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 34.11). Cf. Ibn as-Sarrāg, *Uṣūl* II, 90.15-17.

²⁷ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* II, 34.7-10. The term *ism li-l-maṣḍar* appears in Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 36.1. For this term see also Ibn as-Sarrāg, *Uṣūl* II, 90.18 - 91.2; az-Zağāgī, *Ġumal* 229.2-3.

²⁸ See the examples in Chapter 309 (= Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* II, 34.7 - 38.15).

²⁹ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* II, 34.7-10; 37.21-22.

³⁰ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* II, 35.8-9. For other examples of *ism li-l-waṣf* see Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* II, 35.9-16.

The following are examples of the *ism li-l-maşdar* category: *fağāri* is the proper name of the *maşdar fağra* which denotes the sense of "being immoral";³¹ *yasāri* is the proper name of the *maşdar al-maysara* in the sense of "being wealthy".³²

It should be noted that Ibn Yaʿīš mentions the view that the forms *al-kalām* and *as-salām* belong to the category of *ism li-l-maşdar*: *al-kalām* is the name of the *maşdar at-taklīm*, and *as-salām* is the name of the *maşdar at-taslīm*.³³ Similarly, al-ʿUkbarī mentions the view that *hiğğ* - "making the pilgrimage [to Mecca]" is an *ism li-l-maşdar*.³⁴ Note that Ibn Yaʿīš's and al-ʿUkbarī's examples do not occur on the *faʿālī* pattern.

Ibn Yaʿīš says that the form *darāmi* is a proper name (= *alam*) of the word *ḥarb* - "war".³⁵

Sībawayhi holds that all forms appearing on the *faʿālī* pattern, including '*asmāʾ al-fiʿl*' are "transformed from their primary form (= *maʿdūl ʿan aʿšilihi*).³⁶ He means that a form such as *ḥaḍāri* - "Beware" is a transformation of the form *iḥḍar*; *ḥabāʾi* of the adjective *ḥabīʾa*, and *yasāri* of the *maşdar maysara*. (See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb II*, 34.7 -36.17).

4. The grammatical characteristics of '*asmāʾ al-fiʿl*'

The Arab grammarians, then, hold that '*asmāʾ al-fiʿl*' are proper names of verbs (see above 3). Hence, they classify '*asmāʾ al-fiʿl*' as nouns.^{37, 38}

The words belonging to the category of '*asmāʾ al-fiʿl*' denote the sense of a verb,³⁹ and the place occupied by them in speech is that of a verb.⁴⁰ '*asmāʾ al-fiʿl*' do not occur on any of the verbal patterns.⁴¹ Some grammarians emphasize that '*asmāʾ al-fiʿl*' are not *maşādīr*.⁴²

³¹ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb II*, 36.1-4; Ibn as-Sarrāğ, *ʿUṣūl II*, 90.18 - 91.1. Cf. az-Zağğāğī, *Ġumal* 229.2.

³² See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb II*, 36.1-7; Cf. az-Zağğāğī, *Ġumal* 229.1-2. For other examples of *ism li-l-maşdar* see Sībawayhi, *Kitāb II*, 36.8-19.

³³ See Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 23.18 - 24.2 = Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) I, 21.3-12

³⁴ al-ʿUkbarī, *Tibyān* 281.7-8.

³⁵ For the interpretation of the literal sense of *darāmi* by Ibn Yaʿīš, see Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 520.6-7 = Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 59.11-12.

³⁶ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb II*, 35.17-18. Sībawayhi also says that these forms are *maʿdūlan ʿan ḥaddihi* (= transformed from their regular form) (*Kitāb II*, 34.7). Cf. az-Zağğāğī, *Ġumal* 228.9; as-Şaymarī, *Tabşira I*, 247.1-4; Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 514.10 = Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 50.1.

³⁷ For the exceptional view that '*asmāʾ al-fiʿl*' form a special part of speech called *al-ḥāliḥa* see the Appendix below.

³⁸ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb I*, 102.17-18; al-Mubarrad, *Muqtaḍab III*, 202.1-4.

³⁹ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb I*, 102.6-7, 102.23-24.

⁴⁰ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb I*, 102.6-7.

⁴¹ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb I*, 102.6; 102.17-19.

⁴² See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb I*, 102.23-24; al-Mubarrad, *Muqtaḍab III*, 202.1-3.

Every *ism fīl* denotes the sense of the verb named by it. E.g., *ḥayyahala*, which is the *ism* of the imperative 'īlī, means "Come!".⁴³

'*Asmā' al-fīl* of verbs which take an accusative as a direct object can also govern a direct object,⁴⁴ as in the following examples: *ḥayyahala t-tarīda* - "Come quickly to have soup!" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 102.10); *ḥalūmma zaydan* - "Bring Zayd!" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 102.9). Such '*asmā' al-fīl* can take an accusative pronoun suffix as a direct object, as in *tarākihā* - "Leave them!" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 102.13) and *manā'ihā* - "Defend them!" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 102.15).

An *ism fīl* of an intransitive verb cannot govern a direct object,⁴⁵ as illustrated by the examples *ṣah* - "Shut up!" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 102.17) and *mah* - "Stop!" (ibid.), which are the names of *uskut* and *ukfif* respectively.

Some of '*asmā' al-fīl* forming a combination of preposition + 2nd person genitive pronoun suffix (see above 2) can take a direct object, as in '*alayka zaydan, dūnaka zaydan, 'indaka zaydan* - "Seize Zayd!" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 105.17).⁴⁶

Some of these '*asmā' al-fīl* can govern a preposition + genitive, as in the examples '*laykum 'annī* - "Go away from me!" (Ṣāliḥānī 1938:20.15); '*alaykum bi-n-nāri* - "Come to the fire!" (Kister 1960:22.11-12) and '*alaykumā bi-n-nāqati llatī ṣifatuḥā kaḏā* - "Go, the two of you, to the she-camel whose description is such and such..." (Ṣāliḥānī 1938:22.14).

Most of '*asmā' al-fīl* are indeclinable forms, which can denote any number or gender of the second person. E.g. *ḥayyahala t-tarīda* - "Come (pl.) to have soup!" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 102.10); *ḥayya 'alā ṣ-ṣalāti* - "Come (pl.) to prayer!" (az-Zamaḥṣārī, *Mufaṣṣal* 63.1).

However, the 2nd person genitive pronoun suffix in '*asmā' al-fīl* which combine a preposition with a genitive pronoun suffix, is declinable as regards gender and number, as in the examples '*layka* - "Go away!" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 105.23) and '*laykum 'annī* - "Go away from me!" (see above).

The forms *ruwayda* and *balha* are classified either as an *ism fīl* or as another part of speech, depending on their syntactic structure.

(1) *ruwayda*:

The form *ruwayda* is classified as an *ism fīl* when taking a direct object, as in the example *ruwayda zaydan* "Treat Zayd gently!" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 102.9).⁴⁷ But the same form is classified as a *maṣdar* when occurring as the first part of the construction of '*idāfa*, as in the example *ruwayda zaydin* (az-Zamaḥṣārī, *Mufaṣṣal* 62.4), which means the same as *ruwayda zaydan*.⁴⁸

⁴³ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 102.9-11.

⁴⁴ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 102.7-16; Ibn as-Sarrāḡ, *Uṣūl* I, 167.6-8.

⁴⁵ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 102.7-9; 102.16-17; Ibn as-Sarrāḡ, *Uṣūl* I, 167.6-8.

⁴⁶ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 105.15-17; Ibn as-Sarrāḡ, *Uṣūl* I, 168.4-5; 168.10.

⁴⁷ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 102.9; al-Mubarrad, *Muqtaḍab* III, 208.5; az-Zamaḥṣārī, *Mufaṣṣal* 61.20 - 62.1; Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Ṣarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 504.19 - 505.4 = Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Ṣarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 39.17 - 40.4.

⁴⁸ See az-Zamaḥṣārī, *Mufaṣṣal* 62.3-5; Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Ṣarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 506.6-7 = Ibn Ya'īṣ, *Ṣarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 41.11-15. For *ruwayda* as a *maṣdar* see also Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 104.9-10. It is inferred that al-Mubarrad (*Muqtaḍab* III, 209.2-3) also holds that *ruwayda* in this construction is a *maṣdar*.

The form *ruwaydan* is classified as a *šifa* (= adjective) in the example *sāri sayran ruwaydan* - lit. "They walked a slow walk", i.e. "they walked slowly" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 103.6).⁴⁹ al-Mubarrad and Ibn Yaʿīš hold that *ruwaydan* in this construction is a *mašdar*, acting as a *šifa*.⁵⁰

According to the grammarians, the form *ruwaydan* functions as a *ḥāl* in the example *sāri ruwaydan* - "They walked slowly" (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 103.6-7).⁵¹

Ibn Yaʿīš says that *ruwaydan* in *ruwaydan zaydan* - "Treat Zayd gently!" is a *mašdar*.⁵² It is inferred that al-Mubarrad holds the same view.⁵³

(2) *balha* - "Leave alone!":

The form *balha* is classified as an *ism fiʿl* when it takes a direct object in the accusative as in the example *balha zaydan* - "Leave Zayd alone!"⁵⁴ The same form is classified as a *mašdar* when occurring as the first part in the construction of *'iḍāfa*, as in the example *balha zaydin* (az-Zamaḥṣarī, *Mufaṣṣal* 63.3), which also means "Leave zayd alone!"⁵⁵

Ibn Yaʿīš says that an *ism fiʿl*, just like a verb cannot occur as the first part of a construction of *'iḍāfa*.⁵⁶

APPENDIX

as-Suyūṭī quotes 'Abū Ḥayyān (13th century) who notes that 'Abū Ġaʿfar Ibn Šābir held that the words the grammarians call *'asmā' al-fiʿl* belong to a special category known to him as *al-ḥālifa*. This category of *al-ḥālifa*, says Ibn Šābir, is a fourth part of speech.⁵⁷ This view, as far as I know, is exceptional, and it deviates from the traditional division of the words of the Arabic language into three parts of speech: *al-ism*, *al-fiʿl* and *al-ḥarf*.⁵⁸

⁴⁹ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 103.6; az-Zamaḥṣarī, *Mufaṣṣal* 62.1-2; Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 505.23 - 506.1 = Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 41.4-6.

⁵⁰ al-Mubarrad, *Muqtaḍab* III, 209.1; Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 505.23-24 = Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 41.4-5.

⁵¹ See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 103.6-7; az-Zamaḥṣarī, *Mufaṣṣal* 62.3; Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 506.2-3 = Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 41.7-8.

⁵² Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 506.5-6 = Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 41.10-11.

⁵³ See al-Mubarrad, *Muqtaḍab* III, 209.2-3.

⁵⁴ Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 513.3-9 = Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 48.2-8. Cf. az-Zamaḥṣarī, *Mufaṣṣal* 63.2-3.

⁵⁵ See az-Zamaḥṣarī, *Mufaṣṣal* 63.2-4; Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 513.3-20 = Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 48.2 - 49.7.

⁵⁶ Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (ed. Jahn) I, 513.9-11 = Ibn Yaʿīš, *Šarḥ* (Cairo ed.) IV, 48.8-10. It should be noted *'asmā' al-fiʿl* such as *dūnaka* and *'alayka* are no exceptions to Ibn Yaʿīš's rule, since in these examples the complete constructions of *'iḍāfa* is regarded as an *ism fiʿl*, and not the words *dūna* and *'alā* alone (See above 3).

⁵⁷ See as-Suyūṭī, *Aṣbāḥ* III, 2.8-9.

⁵⁸ See, for example, Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* I, 1, chapter I (= I, 1.1-8).

The word *al-ḥālifa* is a feminine active participle of the verb *ḥalaḥa* - "he took the place of someone". Hence, literally, *al-ḥālifa* means "that which takes the place of ...". As a technical term, *al-ḥālifa* means "the words which take the place of verbs."

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