

Comparative Analysis of Arabic and English Verb: An Overview

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Received: 25.07.2022 | Accepted: 08.08.2022 | Published: 12.08.2022

Electronic reference (Cite this article):

Bashir, T. (2022). *Comparative Analysis of Arabic and English Verb: An Overview*. *Sprin Journal of Arabic-English Studies*, 1(03). <https://doi.org/10.55559/sjaes.v1i03.16>

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ABSTRACT

Arabic and English are the fifth and third most spoken languages in the world. There are 379 million native speakers and about 700 million foreign language speakers of the English language. Almost 319 million people use Arabic as their mother Language. Both languages have some similarities and differences as both originated from very different origins; the English language originated from the Indo-European family, while Arabic from Semitic languages. The article is expected to highlight the similarities and dissimilarities between both languages. A verb is the most significant and vital element of any language; there is no existence of any language without the verb component. The article will also provide detailed information about the morphological and syntactic structures of Arabic and English verb formation by applying an analytical research method. Furthermore, a preview of borrowed verbs from Arabic into English and vice versa will be followed by a brief conclusion.

Keywords: Language, Arabic, English, Verb, Morphology, Syntax, Borrowed words. Borrowed verbs

Introduction:

The verb component has been studied from different times from different points of view. The paper discusses the verb formation in Arabic [Modern Standard Arabic & Classical Arabic] and English Language. There are different views about the presence of tense in Arabic, some studies do not agree with the presence of tense in Arabic and other studies say that verb in Arabic indicates the relative tense rather than absolute tense. The primary concern is to explore how English and Arabic tenses and verb forms are used. There is no language that does not have its own rules and ways of usage. All languages don't have the same usage of tenses and forms of verbs, although some may have some common characteristics. [Jafer, 2013] The verb has been derived from the Latin word 'verbum', which means 'word'. A prevalent definition of a verb is a word or a *murakkab* [combination] of words that indicate the state of action. Almost every sentence requires a verb, either the main verb or an auxiliary verb or both. Lexicographically, the verb denotes the action, an event, or state of action [Oxford Advanced American Dictionary, 2011]. One prominent grammarian describes the verb that points to any

specific time, either past, present or future [Abdul Hameed, 1994]. Some grammarians do not point to the verb to time, as cited by Brookliman [Alhudithy, 2001]. In Arabic, the verb has three divisions past, present and imperative [Seebaway, 1988] and in English, the verb has three tenses past, present and future.

Methodology:

The method which is appropriate to the nature of the study is the contrastive-analytical method. The writer compares the verb formation within the two different languages from different and distant families with different examples of Arabic sentences and their equivalents in the English Language to show how verb and sentence structure is employed in both languages.

Differences between Arabic and English tenses and verbs.

Arabic	English
1. According to the two schools' grammarians, [Basari & Kufi] Arabic verb has two tenses, past and present tense.	2. Old English has three tenses past, present, and future. Some grammarians like Eckersley [1960] argued for future tense. According to them, there are only two tenses in English, past and present.
3. The verb has three forms: past [<i>Al-Madi</i>], present [<i>Al-Mudar'</i>], and imperative verb [<i>Al-Amr</i>]. [Ali Jazim and Mustafa Ameen, 1983]	4. According to Quirk [1972], the forms of verb are: base, -s, past, -ing and -ed.
5. The future tense is either taken from the present or by adding some prefixes to the present tense like <i>syn</i> [س] or <i>sawfa</i> [سوف]. Similarly, Wightwich, Jane and Gaafar (2008) and Ryding (2015) agreed that the future in Arabic is indicated by adding some prefix to the present tense.	6. The future tense is used by applying the auxiliary verb such as "will," "shall." [Eckersley, 1960]
7. Usually, there is a Vrb + Subject + Object or complement in verbal sentences.[Ali Jazim and Mustafa Ameen, 1983]	8. In English, the word order/sequence in both nominal and verbal sentences is the same, Subject + Verb + Object (V + O = Predicate). [Eckersley, 1960]
9. There is no progressive and perfective tense in Arabic.	10. Progressive and perfective tenses occurred in the language.[Quirk, 1972]
11. There are two types of verbs regular and irregular. The regular verb does not possess any syllable of ' <i>llat</i> [<i>Alf, waw, ya</i>]. It is subdivided into <i>Salim</i> ,	12. There are three conjugations of a verb in English: regular, irregular and defective verb [Chaedar Al Washilah, 1993]

<i>Mhmwz and Mda'f</i> . Irregular verb possesses a letter of illat it is subdivided into four kinds: <i>Mital. Agwf, Naqs and Lafyf</i> . [Ali Jazim and Mustafa Ameen, 1983]	Regular verbs are formed by adding the morpheme of d or ed at the end of the verb, and irregular verbs are not formed by adding these morphemes. Defective verbs do not have infinitive or participle forms such as can, could, shall, should, may, might, etc.
13. All Arabic words, including verbs, are derived from the basic three syllables [<i>Msdr</i>] <i>Fa, 'yn and Lam</i> [Abu Bakr Muhammad, 1995].	14. There is no such basic word from which all of the words are derived.
15. In Arabic, verbs are clearly and adequately used. There are specific forms of verbs for single, dual and multiple, masculine and feminine. [Ali Jazim and Mustafa Ameen, 1983]	8. There is no difference between the verbs applied for singular, dual and multiple, masculine and feminine. However, the subject can clarify whether it is used for singular or plural, masculine or feminine. [Quirk, 1972].
16. Arabic verb can possess the stress/emphasis in itself by adding some prefixes or suffixes or any symbol [قد كُتِبَ، لِيَكْتَبَنَّ، شَدَّ]. It is of two types; <i>Lafzi</i> and <i>Ma'nawi</i> . [Aasim Bytar, 2004]	17. In English, it is needed to add a very different word to stress on verb like surely, definitely, certainly, indeed, etc.
18. Arabic does not use modal auxiliaries to show modality but there are some forms of modality which are used in MSA such as <i>ممكن، يجب، يمكن</i> etc. [Farghal, 1984]	19. Commonly, in English, there are modal auxiliary verbs such as can, could, may, might, must, etc., to express modality. [Cambridge Dictionary].

Compatibilities of Arabic and English Verb

According to Linda Thomas [1993], English has two tenses, past and present as future tense doesn't exist as a tense, but it is denoted by auxiliaries; Arabic has the same two tenses but does not need any other verb forms to show aspectual variation.

The students will attend the class.	سيحضر الطلاب في الفصل.
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The office will open at 10.00 am	سيفتح المكتب في الساعة العاشرة صباحا.
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The above sentences express future tense but don't use a specific future verb form as there are no future verbs in English and Arabic [Quirk, 1972]

Modern Standard Arabic has perfective tense that parallels the English perfective by adding *قد*, as a prefix to the verb and *كان* for past and *يكون* for future to indicate the perfective tense.

The student [feminine] has written the article.	قد كتبت الطالبة المقالة.
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Present Perfective

The student [feminine] had written the article.	كانت الطالبة قد كتبت المقالة.
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Past Perfective

The student [feminine] will have written the article	تكون الطالبة قد كتبت المقالة.
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Future Perfective

Similarly, Arabic has another structure of progressive that parallels the English progressive structure. This form is also constructed by adding *كان* and *يكون* to the past and future respectively [proceeded by the particle *س* and *سوف* to the future progressive].

The teacher was delivering the lecture.	كان الأستاذ يلقي المحاضرة.
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Past Progressive

The teacher is delivering the lecture.	الأستاذ يلقي المحاضرة.
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Present Progressive

The teacher will be delivering the lecture.	سيكون الأستاذ يلقي المحاضرة.
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Future Progressive

In English, the sentence or clause may be classified into two categories: transitive [if the main verb requires an object] and intransitive [if the main verb doesn't require an object]. It resembles *Mt'dy* [the verb that needs an object to complete the sentence] and *Lazm* [the verb that doesn't need an object] in Arabic Morphology. In English, within the transitive category, there is a subcategory of active and passive voice equivalent to *M'rwf* (Active) and *Mghwl* (Passive) in Arabic Grammar. Inactive voice, the doer is the subject and in the passive voice, the object or receiver of the action is the subject, the same case applies in the Arabic language but the receiver of the action is specially named as Vice subject/ Naibul Fail [the object which replaces subject].

A scholar wrote a book

كتب باحث كتابا

Transitive Active

A scholar → Subject

Wrote → the Main verb *the verbal sentence with SVO word order has the main verb 'wrote.'*A book → Object *that needs an object, so it refers to transitive}*

كتب ← فعل

The Arabic verbal sentence with VSO order has a transitive verb.

باحث ← فاعل

كتابا ← مفعول

The book was written

كتب الكتاب

Intransitive Passive

ذهب الطالب إلى الصين، نام الطفل، خرج الأستاذ من الفصل، جلس الولد على المقعد.

Intransitive Majhool*Arabic intransitive verbs are a little different from English intransitive verbs. [Yasir Bdaiwi, 2015]*

The imperative verb [command] of both Arabic and English are lexical. English imperative carries the same semantic weight as Arabic. All the imperative forms of the verb are derived from the same verb with few variations [Addition/ deletion/order] in the Arabic language and sometimes infinite and emphatic words are included [McCarus, 2007]

Write, Study, Drink

اكتب، ادرس، اشرب

Imperative Verbs**Verb Borrowings from English to Arabic and Vice – Versa.**

There is no language in the world that doesn't possess borrowed words [Jespersen, 1922]. The world is undergoing many changes due to innovative technologies and globalization, and these tremendous changes affect the communication system as Graddol [2004] describes that "World's language system is undergoing rapid change because of demographic trends, new technology, and international communication. These changes will affect both written and spoken communication". So, borrowing of words is unavoidable in every language of the world; instead, it is the main and important source of new words in any language [Franklin: 2003] The English language has borrowed many words from the Arabic language directly or

indirectly and Arabic vocabulary also carries various words descended from the English language. According to Taylor (1993), there are about a thousand words in English borrowed from the Arabic Language. Serjeantson (1935) estimated that the number of Arabic loanwords in English is three thousand, and another scholar [Abu Ghoush, 1977] stated that there are about 10,000 loanwords in English loaned from Arabic. So, there are numerous borrowed words in English. The below series of words are originally from Arabic and adapted by English:

Alcohol [Al-Kuhul], Algorithm [Khawarizms], Alkali [Alqali], Algebra [Aljabr], Caliph [Al-Khalifa], Cotton [Al-Qutn], Sugar [Al-Sukar], Syrup [Sharab], Magazine [Al-Majallah], Valley [Wadi] [Strang: 1970] etc.

There are many more loanwords in English descended from Arabic other than the above-quoted words. All the mentioned words are used as nouns but there are various borrowed verbs in English as well as in Arabic; some of them are as below:

- Cover: Kawwara: {*borrowed by English from Arabic*}
- Control: Kunturu:l {*borrowed by Arabic from English*}
- Cut: Qata' {*borrowed by English from Arabic*}
- Pick-up: bi:kam {*borrowed by Modern Standard Arabic [MCA] from English*}
- Ready: Ridi {*borrowed by MCA from English*}
- Brushed: barash {*borrowed by MCA from English*}
- Cancel: kansal {*borrowed by MCA from English*}
- Punctured: banshar {*borrowed by MCA from English*}
- Doubled: dabbal {*borrowed by MCA from English*}
- Check as verb/ cheque as noun: shayak {*borrowed by MCA from English*}
- Shoot: Shawat {*borrowed by MCA from English*}
- Finished: Fannash {*borrowed by MCA from English*}
- Fall: Afala {*borrowed by English from Arabic*}
- Smell: Sham {*borrowed by English from Arabic*}
- Tell: Tala {*borrowed by English from Arabic*}

These are the mere handful borrowed verbs that the researcher has identified from a big bag of different borrowed words in both languages. If we survey Modern Standard Arabic and Modern English, we can collect more of them.

Conclusion:

In this paper, the researcher made an attempt to analyse and compare the tenses and verbs of Arabic and English language. It demonstrates that there are significant differences and similarities between both languages, especially in terms of morphology and syntax. After analyzing and comparing both the languages, the researcher has concluded the following points:

- There are many differences between both the languages as well as similarities.
- Arabic has contributed to the English vocabulary a lot and vice-versa.
- Arabic and English tenses and verbs have copious similarities and dissimilarities in structure and usage.

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