The Effect of Verb Meaning upon Determining
Its Syntactic Behaviour in
English and Arabic

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Abstract:

   This study is both interdisciplinary (combining syntax and semantics) and comparative. That is, it tries to combine the syntax and semantics of verbs, and manifests how the ties between them determine the behaviour of verbs in English and Arabic.

   The aim of the study is to show how meaning of the verbs affects their syntactic behaviour (the syntactic constructions) in both languages. It also aims at explaining whether this behaviour-affecting meaning works on English verbs in away different from that of Arabic ones or not. The procedures to be followed are: selecting a group of syntactic constructions in both languages, choosing verbs which have a shared meaning component to test their participation or non-participation in these constructions .Finally comparing (by tables and summaries) how meaning component determines the syntactic behaviour of these verbs (their participation or non-participation) in both languages.

   It is concluded that meaning of English verbs makes them occur in or share a number of different constructions. Contrastively, meaning component in Arabic verbs makes them restricted to participation in one specific construction.

هذه الدراسة تتشكّل في اتجاهين:الاتجاه الأوّل، هو أنّها تزاوج بين علمين هما النحو والدلالة، والاتجاه الثاني، في كونها دراسة موازنةوفي ما يخصّ الاتجاه الأوّل هو أنها تحاول أن تجمع بين نحو الفعل ودلالته، وفي الاتجاه الثاني تحاول أن تفسّر كيف أنّ العلاقة بين نحو الفعل ودلالته تحدد سلوك الأفعال في اللغتين الإنكليزية والعربية.

والهدف من هذه الدراسة هو إيضاح كيف أنّ معنى الأفعال يؤثر في سلوكها النحوي (التراكيب النحويّة) في كلتا اللغتين ، وتهدف أيضا إلى بيان في ما إذا كان هذا المعنى الذي يحدد سلوك الفعل هل إنّه يوجه الفعل نحويا في الإنكليزية بطريقة مختلفة عن تلك التي في العربية أم لا؟

وكان منهجي في البحث على وفق إتباع الخطوات الآتية :

اختيار مجموعة من التراكيب النحويّة في كلتا اللغتين ، ثمّ اختيار أفعال تشترك بمعنى معيّن لنختبر مشاركتها أو عدم مشاركتها في تلك التراكيب ، وأخيرا إجراء موازنة(بالجداول والملخصات) بين اللغتين في هذا الجانب

لملاحظة كيف أنّ هذا العنصر المعنوي بين الأفعال يحدد السلوك النحوي لتلك الأفعال ـ وأريد بالسلوك النحوي مشاركتها أو عدمها بتلك التراكيب النحويّة ـ في اللغتين قيد البحث .و استُنتج أنّ المعنى في الأفعال الإنجليزية يجعل هذه الأفعال تحدث أو تشترك في عدة تراكيب نحوية مختلفة.بالموازنة مع المعنى في الأفعال العربية فإنّه يجعل هذه الأفعال محددة المشاركة بتركيب نحوي واحد.

1- Introduction

In the grammar of English and Arabic, meaning considerably plays a leading role in determining the syntactic behavior of verbs or their syntactic constructions. In other words, the interdisciplinary [1] ties between the semantics of verbs and the syntactic constructions are established in both languages. The mechanism, both languages apply in approaching verbs, seems to be similar, though not matching. The researcher adopts Levin (1993) as a model to investigate the semantic-syntactic ties in English verbs. (Ibid.) 's mechanism can be generally summarized as:

- gathering different diathesis alternations or constructions [2] which English verbs show and choosing certain English verbs,

- testing the 'sensitivity' or participation of these verbs, or their occurrence in Quirk *et al.*'s terms (1985:53), to these alternations

- and finally grouping verbs which show alike alternations into a single semantic class. This semantic class is based on the shared meaning element (among those verbs) .This shared meaning is the reason behind their alike constructions.

That is, to establish the semantic determination to verb behaivuor, Levin (ibid.) introduces the notion of diathesis alternations .These alternations mean the possible options or ways in which verbs can express their arguments. Viewpoints of certain grammarians regarding the semantic influence on verb behaviour are presented. Lyons (1977) agrees with Levin's proposal of semantic determination, though implicitly. (Ibid.) introduces the notion of valency (the number of arguments a verb may have .Also, (ibid.) assumes that English has a number of grammatically valency-changing mechanism like the passive.The meaning of the passive is to give a description without showing the agent. Thus, the valency is changed due to that meaning. On the other hand, Haspelmath (2002) disagrees with Levin's semantic determination, assuming that meaning in roughly synonymous verbs is not enough to predict their syntactic behaviour.

2-Crystal (1985:70) thinks that a particular type of construction is defined as a sequence of units which has a functional identity such as Subject -Verb- Object as far as sentence is concerned. In this connection, Levin has used constructions in the sense of her proposed diatheses alternations.

Then, Levin's semantic determination is moved towards the larger context. That is, three diathesis alterations and four verbs are chosen. Each of these

verbs is tested with regard to its participation or n-participation in each of these alternations. Finally, specifying whether the meaning these verbs share has a certain influence upon their participation.

Certain modifications, relating first to the three diathesis alternations and second to the pattern of behaviour of the four verbs participating in them, are provided by the researcher.

Regarding Arabic and following Al-Ghalayni (1971) and Al-Jiwari (1974) as models, four syntactic constructions are chosen. In each construction, the meanings of the verbs participating in that construction are given a special focus. That is, groups of verbs, with meanings that allow them to participate in each construction, are provided.

2- Aims and Procedures

The present study is of two aims .The first is to explain how meaning of verbs may direct their syntactic behaviour (syntactic constructions) in English and Arabic. Second, it aims at comparing the two languages with respect to this behaviour-affecting meaning in verbs.

The procedures followed are:

- giving an account on Levin's (1993) work by introducing her concept of semantic determination in single verbs .Under semantic determination, other concepts are explained like diathesis alternations and arguments.

-choosing three diathesis alternations to test the sensitivity of four verbs in relation to these alternations. A table modified by the researcher will summarize how the four verbs will respond to these alternations due to their meanings.

Regarding Arabic, grammarians like Al-Ghalayni (ibid.) and Al- Jiwari (ibid.) are considered to show how meaning in Arabic verbs direct their syntactic behaviour .Accordingly, four Arabic syntactic constructions are chosen intransitive, monotransitive ,ditransitive and tritransitive .Then, under each construction groups of verbs are provided. These verbs have a certain meaning which allows them to participate in these constructions. A table, almost similar to the previous one is given to show how these Arabic verbs will participate in the four constructions.

Certain conclusions will be obtained in the light of how meaning may determine the behaviour of verbs in both languages.

3- Levin's Classes or Mechanism

Levin (ibid.:12-14) argues for a hypothesis of 'semantic determination' saying that "the syntactic behavior of a word is fully semantically determined". That is, some meaning components of words, including verbs, are thought to be responsible for the syntactic behavior of these words.

Other grammarians like Hale and Keyser (1987) (cited in ibid.: 4) explain that "what enables a speaker to determine the behavior of the verb is its

meaning". That is, they agree with the assumption of the semantic determination of the syntactic behavior of verbs.

Levin (ibid.:2) sets out to examine the ties between verb semantics and its syntax by introducing the notion of 'diathesis alternations', which a verb might participate or occur in. (Ibid.) defines them as "alternation in the expression of arguments".

First, what is meant by arguments should be explained .Semantically speaking and following Lyons (1977: 148-149), the proposition, or the simple sentence in terms of grammatical structure, can be of two terms: names or arguments and predicates. The name means individuals and the predicate is "a term which is used in combination with a name in order to give some information about the individual that the name refers to". Thus, and in terms of simple sentence, arguments are to be identified with proper names and common nouns, while the predicates mainly with verbs [3] .Syntactically speaking, a verb (a predicate) requires certain noun phrases or clauses (arguments). This requirement is to ensure the sentence well-formedness (Trask, 1993: 20).

In her proposal of diathesis alternations, Levin (ibid.) concentrates on the possible options (syntactic behaviours) verbs may show in expressing their arguments.

(1) a- Sharon sprayed water on the plants.
   b- Sharon sprayed the plants with water.   (Ibid.)

The verb (sprayed) has two options in expressing its arguments (water) and (the plants); this is called the locative alternation. The locative alternation involves change in order of the arguments. Not all verbs are open to or permit this alternation. For example, the verb (poured) cannot display these two ways of the locative alternation to express its arguments (lemonade) and (pitcher).

(2) a- Carla poured lemonade into the pitcher.
Carla poured the pitcher with lemonade.   (Ibid.)*   b-

(Ibid.) observes that the syntactic behavior of (sprayed) with regard to locative alternation is different from that of the verb (poured) with regard to the same alternation. The two verbs (sprayed) and (poured) differ in their participation in locative alternation due to the hypothesis of semantic determination.

3- Lyons (1977:148) assumes that not only verbs but also adjectives and common nouns are to be identified with predicates. Also, Trask (1993:213) defines a predicate as "that constituent of a sentence, most typically a verb phrase". For the time being, predicates are to be identified with verbs only.

That is, there is a meaning component that determines the syntactic behaviour of verbs like (sprayed) .This meaning makes these verbs accept participation in such alternation, displaying their arguments in the two ways.

In other words, the verb (sprayed) has the meaning "force imparted to a mass, causing ballistic motion along" [4]. It is the existence of such a meaning that makes verbs like (sprayed) sensitive to participation or non-participation in the diathesis alternation in question. In contrast, the meaning of verbs like

(poured), which means to "focus only on motion" away from the nature of the end result [5] is not sensitive to the locative alternation.

Levin (ibid.:5) claims that in a single semantic class, verbs are expected to show similar diathesis alternations in expressing their arguments. This similarity is because of the meaning component those verbs share in that semantic class. That explains why the verb (sprayed) shows diathesis alternation different from those shown by (poured) .That is because the former belongs to a semantic class different from that of the latter. The researcher's aim is not to elaborate on Levin's classes; rather the attempt is to shed light on how meaning affects verbs in English.

4- Levin and Lyons

Lyons (1977:486-488) agrees implicitly with Levin's semantic detrmination, saying " It is obvious that there is a considerable degree of interdependence between the meaning of the verb and its valency". A valency (sometimes spelt valence) is defined as the number of arguments or valents a verb may have. If a verb is of a one argument, it is a monovalent. If it is of two arguments, it is a bivalent and if it is of three arguments it is trivalent (ibid.).

Then, (ibid.) assumes that most languages, including English, have 'grammatically productive mechanism' that is changing the verb valency. Examine below:

(3) a- John opened the door.

b- The door was opened.

The verb (opened) is a bivalent taking two arguments (John) and (the door). It is used in its transitive sense and thus requiring an agent (to initiate the action) and a patient (to undergo that action). In (3-b-) the verb (opened) is a monovalent having one argument (the door), since it is

4-and 5- http://www.ilc.cnr.it/EAGLESq6/rep2/mode10

used in its intransitive sense in the passive .One of the principal functions of the passive is to provide a description of the activity without specifying the agent (Ibid. :487).The assumed grammatically valency-changing mechanism is when (opened) changes from expressing two arguments into one due to the meaning of passive. That is, its valency is being affected.

Lyons' identification of verb valency, as being changed by the meaning of the grammatically changing mechanism, is similar to Levin's proposal of verb meaning as a key to its behaviour. One can conclude that the grammatically valency-changing mechanism, proposed by Lyons, is equivalent to diathesis alternations.

5- Haspelmath vs. Levin

Haspelmath (2002:210-212) makes a different stand against Levin. In his discussion of the way in which morphology can affect valency, he distinguishes two kinds of valency: syntactic and semantic. The former has to

do with syntactic functions, i.e., subject, object, indirect object, oblique and adverbial etc. The latter, on the other hand, means semantic roles like agent, patient, theme, experiencer and source. (Ibid.:210) assumes that some 'roughly synonymous' verbs like (steal, rob, like, please and eat) can be examined with respect to semantic and syntactic valency. For example, the verbs (rob) and (steal) are represented as following:

4-steal: subj--- obj --- obl$_{from}$
       agent   theme source
       Baba stole the bike from me.

5- rob: subj --- obj --- obl $_{of}$
       agent   source theme
       Baba robbed me of the bike.   (Ibid.)

(Ibid.) thinks that "the verbs steal and rob are roughly synonymous, so there is no way to predicate their different behaviour from their meanings".

That is, because (steal) and (rob) are nearly synonyms (sharing some meaning), their syntactic behaviour is different (as it is represented above by the syntactic and semantic valency).This is the opposite to Levin's proposal where the shared meaning makes verbs show similar behaviuor. Accordingly, Hspelmath (ibid.) proposes that verb meaning insufficiently makes a speaker form assumptions about the behaviour of these verbs, when they are roughly synonymous. Thus, meaning must be enhanced by the syntactic functions associated with the semantic roles.

6- Towards the Larger Context

After discussing diathesis alternations in single verbs, Levin (1993:5) moves to verify her hypothesis of semantic determination to the larger context discussing groups of verbs. (Ibid.) extends her proposal by(a) investigating three diathesis alternations: middle, conative and body part possessor constructions (b) testing the sensitivity of four verbs (break),(cut),(hit) and (touch) to the chosen alternations. She makes use of the literature of these verbs found in other studies like Fillmore (1967), Hale and Keyser (1986) and Laughren (1988) (cited in ibid.).

Levin (ibid.) assumes that "verbs that fall into classes according to shared behaviuors (similar diathesis alternations) would be expected to have a shared meaning component".That is, verbs displaying a similar behavior, when expressing their arguments in diathesis alternations, are thought to have a meaning component in common. Following is a detailed examination of each separate alternation with respect to participation or non-participation of the above four verbs in each alternation. Meaning is crucial in that participation.

6-1 The middle Construction

It is one of the diatheses alternations proposed by (ibid. : 6) in establishing semantic determination of verb behaviour. The four verbs chosen are measured with respect to participation or non-participation in the middle construction:

6-(a) Margaret cut the bread.

  (b) The bread cuts easily.

7-(a) Janet broke the vase.

  (b) Crystal vases break easily.

8-(a)Jerry touched the cat.

  (b)*Cats touched easily.

9-(a)Carla hit the door.

  (b)*Door frames hit easily.   (Ibid.)

    (Ibid.) assumes that this alternation is characterized by the fact that the subject of the altered sentence (6-b-) (the sentence undertaking the alternation) is not the subject of the unaltered one (6-a-) (the sentence before the alternation) .That is, the subject (bread) bears a semantic relation to the verb (cut) different from that of the subject (Margaret) since the latter is the doer of the cutting action while the former is not.

   Crystal (1985:111-112) describes the construction exemplified in (6-b-) and (7-b-) as an ergative construction .Ergativity means "the subject of intransitive use of broke is the same as the object of its transitive use, and the Agent of the action is thus said to appear as the 'ergative subject' ".

    In accordance with Levin, Trask (1993:71) draws attention to the middle alternation saying that it is "denoting verbs whose subject is not an agent".

    Levin (ibid.:6) has described the middle construction as a transitivity alternation since the transitive verbs (cut) and (break) are changed into intransitive by virtue of that alternation. That is, the transitive verbs in the (a) variants of the above sentences are requiring two arguments, i.e., a subject and an object. Once they participate in the middle alternation, their behaviour will differ regarding it. As it is noticed ,(cut) and (break) undertake the middle construction , deleting their subjects (Margaret) and (Janet) and allowing their objects (the bread) and (the vase) to be the subjects of the resulted constructions in(6-b-) and (7-b-) respectively. It is obvious that (touch) and (hit) are not possible of expressing their two arguments by the middle construction.

  Drawing on Levin's proposal of semantic determination, it is believed that the verbs (cut) and (break) share some meaning element. This meaning determines their syntactic behaviour, allowing them to participate in the middle alternation. The assumed meaning element shard by (cut) and (break) is that both verbs causing change of state. It is concluded that the middle construction is sensitive to verbs expressing the meaning of causing a change of state. The other verbs (touch) and (hit) are not participating in the middle alternation since they lack the meaning component associated with this syntactic behaviour. That is, they are not causing a change of state (ibid. :10).

6-2 Conative Alternation

The conative alternation is a transitivity-changing one .In this alternation the subject of the altered sentence is the same as that of the unaltered one (Margaret).The only difference is in the expression of the other argument (the object of the altered sentence) which is expressed by virtue of the conative as a prepositional phrase headed by at (ibid.:6). The four verbs respond differently to this alternation.

10-(a) Margaret cut the bread.
  (b) Margaret cut at the bread.
11-(a) Janet broke the vase.
  (b)*Janet broke at the vase.
12-(a) Terry touched the cat.
  (b) *Terry touched at the cat.
13-(a) Clara hit the door.
   (b) Clara hit at the door.

Obviously, the verbs (cut) and (hit) accept the conative construction. In (10-a-) and (13-a-), these verbs are transitive expressing the two arguments as subject and direct object. The same verbs in (10-b-) and (13-b-) are intransitive since their direct objects (the bread) and (the door) are expressed as prepositional phrases introduced by the proposition (at).

That is, they express their arguments in the conative construction (ibid.).

The meaning component underlying the conative behaviour, in which these two verbs occur, is illustrated by Guessel, Hale Laughren, Levin and White Eagle (cited in ibid.:8), saying "verbs which enter into the conative alternation have meanings that involve both motion and contact components". (Ibid.: 10) claims, in this respect, only the meanings of (hit) and (cut) involve both motion and contact and this meaning license them to participate in this alternation.

The other verbs (touch) and (break) are not naturally expressing both meanings. That is, (touch) is a verb of contact only and (break) is "a pure change of state and a notion of contact is not inherent in its meaning" (ibid.:8).

6-3-Body Part Possessor Alternation

This is another Levin- proposed alternation. As with the two previous ones, the verbs under study differ in their participation or non-participation in this alternation. (Ibid.:6-7) summarizes this alternation as being:

characterized by a change in the expression of a possessed body part: either the possessed body-part may be expressed as the direct object of the verb ….or the possessor may be expressed as the object of the verb, with the possessed body-part expressed in a prepositional phrase.

 14-(a) Margaret cut Bill's arm.
    (b) Margaret cut Bill on the arm.
15-(a) Janet broke Bill's finger.
   (b)* Janet broke Bill on the finger.

16-(a) Terry touched Bill's shoulder.
   (b) Terry touched Bill on the shoulder.
17-(a) Carla hit Bill's back.
   (b) Carla hit bill on the back.   (Ibid.)
It seems that the verbs (cut), (touch) and (hit) are open to this alternation. In (14-a), (16-a) and (17-a-), the possessed body parts, which are (arm), (shoulder) and (back), are realized as direct objects. In (b) sentences, the possessor (Bill) is realized as the object of the verbs, while the possessed parts are realized as (on the arm), (on the shoulder) and (on the back), that is as prepositional phrases.

   The relevant meaning component associated with these verbs and allowing them to participate in this alternation is the involvement of contact. The verb (break) is not sensitive to body part possessor alternation since it is a pure change of state verb (Levin, ibid. :10).
   (Ibid.:7) assumes that the conclusion obtained from these four verbs cannot be simply ignored. Then, she examines other verbs corresponding in their behavior in the same diatheses to the behavior of Levin's representative sample (the four verbs). The result can be summarized as:
a- break verbs: break, crack, rip, shatter, snap….
b- cut verbs: cut, hack, saw, scratch, slash…..
c- touch verbs: touch, pat, stroke, tick, ….
d- hit verbs: hit, bash, kick, pour ,tap ,whack…..
In other words, break verbs show the same pattern of syntactic behavior of (break) in the previous alternations because of the meaning component they share with (break).Thus, break verbs represent a coherently semantic class, expressing the same meaning of change of state.It is worth mentioning that the four verbs and the three diatheses alternations chosen by Levin are only a representative sample of her work. Levin (1993), then, examines larger groups of verbs and defines alternations for English in order to examine the ties between the meanings of the verbs and their syntactic behavior in these alternations.
Again the researcher's aim is not to elaborate on Levin semantic classes. It is intended to show how meaning affect verbs behaviour in English.

7- Summaries and Modifications
   For ease of explanation, the researcher thinks it would be appropriate to provide some sentence patterns exemplifying the three alternations:
-Middle alternation patterns like:
Subj + V + Obj
Subject (obj of the unaltered sentence) + V + Adv

-Conative alternation:

Subj +   V + Obj
Subj$_{(subj\ of\ the\ unaltered\ sentence}$ + V + PP $_{(at\ +\ obj\ of\ unaltered\ sentence)}$

-Body Part Possessor alternation:
Subj   +   V+   Obj $_{(possessor\ +\ possessive\ (s)\ +\ the\ possessed\ body\ part)}$
 Subj+$_{(subj\ of\ the\ unaltered\ sentence\ )}$ + V + Obj $_{(possessor\ )}$ + PP $_{(prep\ +\ possessed\ body\ part)}$

    (Ibid. :7) proposes a 'pattern of behaivor' of the four previous verbs with respect to the three diatheses alternation under study.

	touch	hit	cut	break
middle	No	No	Yes	Yes
conative	No	Yes	Yes	No
body part possessor	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

(Ibid.)

(Ibid.:10) explains that middle alternation is sensitive or possible with verbs of pure change like (break) and verbs of change by motion and contact like (cut).The conative alternation is sensitive to verbs denoting motion and contact like (cut) and (hit).Body part possessor is permitted with verbs involving contact like (cut),(touch) and (hit).
    The researcher observes that such a pattern is lacking the meaning component of these verbs. Thus, a modification is suggested to this pattern by adding the concept of verb meaning determination to its behavior in the following table.

Semantic determination of English verb meaning to its behaviours in diathesis alternations   Table (7-1)

THE VERBS	THIER MEANINGS	DIATHESIS ALTERNATIONS AND VERB PARTICIPATION		
		MIDDLE	CONATIVE	BODY PART
cut	causing change by motion &contact	YES	YES	YES
break	a pure change of state	YES	NO	NO
touch	a pure verb of contact	NO	NO	YES
hit	verb of motion & contact	NO	YES	YES

The table shows that the meaning of (change), which is shared by (cut) and (break), determines these verbs to participate in the same middle alternation. Similarly, the meaning of (contact and contact), which is shared by (cut) and (hit), makes them participate in the conative alternation .Also, the meaning of (contact) shared by (cut), (touch) and (hit) enables them to show the body part alternation.

Besides, the table shows that the meaning, (of change by motion and contact), of the verb (cut) gives that verb the potentiality to participate in the three diathesis alternations above. Also, the meaning, (of motion and contact) of the verb (hit) makes it possible for that verb to participate in the conative and the body part alternations. One can conclude the effect of verb meaning upon its behavior is of extensive nature.

8- Meaning in Arabic Constructions

Modern Arab grammarians like Al-Jiwari (1974:69-72) make use of meaning when considering verb constructions. Also, Al-Ghalayni(1971:31) has based his discussion of transitive and intransitive verbs on meaning, assuming that a verb like (hamura) , which denotes colour, should display the syntactic behaviour of being intransitive.

1- hamura alwardu.
The flowers get red.

It should be noted that meaning is not the only factor that determines verb syntactic behaviour in Arabic. When discussing intransitive construction, Ibn Al-Nazim (245-246) thinks that some intransitive verbs, which are diagnosed by virtue of the form ('if'allala) would be only intransitive like (iksha'ara) and (itma'anna).

2- iksha'ara aljildu.
The hair stands on its end.

Yet, the present study, following semantic determination, focuses on meaning as a crucial determiner of what constructions Arabic

verbs have to express their arguments. Accordingly, four syntactic Arabic constructions are chosen: intransitive, transitive, ditransitive and tritransitive. Then, it is specified which verb meanings are associated with each construction.

8-1 Intransitive Construction

Al-Jiwari (ibid. :69) assumes that an intransitive construction is where the verb adheres or clings to its subject and passes the object by or neglects it. It is a two-element construction. (Ibid.) attributes clinging to the subject and disregarding the object in an intransitive construction to the nature of that verb. That is, (ibid.) explains that the real difference between intransitive and transitive (where the object is preserved) is the existence of the meaning of the action.

In intransitive construction, that meaning of the action is weak, thus the verb meaning is restricted to its subject expressing a kind of description of it. Al-Makhzumi (1966:100) agrees with the subject-description which intransitive verbs denote. (Ibid.) assumes that an intransitive verb expresses a meaning existing in the subject and does not extend its meaning to something else like the object.

To Al-Hashimi (177), an intransitive verb is the verb whose happening settles upon the subject. Similarly, Al-Muhaymid (2002:181) describes intransitive verbs as speech or talk about the subject alone, carrying or bearing no correlation to the object.

To conclude, Arab grammarians assume that intransitive construction is restricted to verbs describing the subject and their reference is confined to it. Thus, Al-Ghalayni(1971:44) classifies intransitive verbs into groups which share the meaning of describing the subject :

shaju'a),(jabuna) (i) verbs sharing natural disposition and traits like (hasuna),(qabuha) denoting courage ,cowardice, beauty and ugliness respectively. Dayf (1988:46) thinks that such verbs denote actions on which human beings have no exercised will or control (natural disposition). Aziz (1989:29) considers these verbs as denoting a'permanent quality or state' of the subject.

3- hasuna alwajhu.

The face gets beautiful.

ii) verbs denoting casualness , symptoms or accidental characteristics

like (marida) ,(nashuta),(fariha),(hazuna),(shabi'a),('tusha) .These verbs are always intransitive because they express respectively

accidental or casual characteristics in the subject like sickness, activity , happiness, sadness, fullness and thrust.
Such non-inherent traits are describing the subject and their meaning is confined to it .Thus, these verbs cling to their subject and never need an object to follow (Al-Ghalayni,ibid.). Consider:
4- marida alrajulu.
The man gets sick.
    Aziz(ibid.) describes the verbs above as expressing a ' temporary quality'.
iii) verbs sharing colour, cleanness, uncleanness, ornament, defect and appearance or exterior like :('ihmara), ('ikhdera), (adama),), (wasikha), (denisa), (qadhura), (kehula), ّ(nedufa), (tahura). ّ(najula), (tala), (qasura
5- nadhufa althwubu.
The dress gets clean.
6- tala alwaladu.
.The boy gets tall
    The verbs (nadhufa) and (tala) express cleanness and appearance respectively. Such qualities are relating to the subjects (althwubu) and (alwaladu) and describing them (Al-Ghalayni,ibid.).

iv) verbs denoting reflexiveness . Ibn Al-Nazim(245-246) explains that a verb is intransitive if it is reflexive .(Ibid.) defines a reflexive verb as an intransitive verb that falls under the influence of a transitive verb and thus denotes accepting the object (of the transitive verb) to the effect of the subject (of transitive verb). For example:
7- da'aftu alhisaba fa jda'afa .
I doubled the account and it doubled.
    The verb (tada'afa) is a reflexive verb since it falls under the influence of the transitive verb (da'afa).Beside it denotes that the object of the transitive (da'afa), which is (alhisaba), accepts the effect of the subject (tu) (ibid.).
     Al-Makhzumi (1966:101) defines submissive verbs in another way. (Ibid.) thinks that actions like extending a robe and breaking glass are caused by outside factors since in the examples below:
8- 'imteda alhablu.
The robe extends.
9- 'inkasara alzujaju.
The glass breaks.
The action of the verbs ('imtada) and ('inkasara) might be attributed to the influence of exterior factors like a human being.
10- mada 'insanun alhabla fa'imtada.

Somebody extends the rope and it extends.

11- kasara 'insanun alzujaja fa'inkasara.

  Somebody breaks the class and it breaks.

   Aziz (1989:31-33) explains that Arabic verbs like (taba'ada) (he kept himself away), (taqatala) (the two fought one another) and (tatabaa't alintisarat) (the victories followed one another) are reflexive. (Ibid.) assumes that these verbs express reflexiveness since they denote 'reciprocal relations' or, in Crystal's (1985: 257) terms, 'meaning of mutual relation ship'.

8-2 Monotransitive Construction

   Transitive construction is of three elements: a verb, a subject and an object. For Al-Makhzumi (ibid.:103), a transitive verb denotes an action which does not cling to the subject, rather it exceeds its subject to a following object.

12-katabtu alresalata.

I wrote the letter.

   Writing a letter is not an action whose effect is confined to the subject (tu) , but also related to the object (alresalata) . Al-Jiwari (1974:70) attributes subject-exceeding in transitive verb to the nature of the verb. (Ibid.) suggests that a transitive verb is the one in which the meaning of the action is strong to the extent that it passes the subject by to an outside affected entity (the object).

   (Ibid.) assumes that transitive verbs differ with respect to the strength of the action in them. That is, some of them might influence one object and this is the majority of transitive Arabic verbs. Such verbs are called monotransitive like (katala), (akrama), dhakara) and ((shariba),

(aghlaqa).

   Al-Muhaymid (2001:180-181) claims that transitive verbs express the relations of the subject in the outside world where these relations are positive or negative .These verbs are of a triple system, that is the relation exists among the verb , the subject and the object.

   Abu Al-Makarim (2007:46) explains that monotransitive verbs are the majority of verbs in Arabic and all verbs sharing the meaning of senses are monotransitive. See below:

13-lamastu alwarda.

I touched the flowers.

14- dhiqtu alta'am.

 I tasted the food.

   15- absartu alhilal .

I saw the crescent.

16- sami'tu aladhan.

I heard the prayer.

17- shamimtu altiba.

I smelt the scent.

The strength in meaning of the action might magnify or get bigger in other verbs forcing them to influence more than one object. These verbs are the focus of the coming subsection (Al-Jiwari,ibid.).

8-3 Ditransitive Construction

Some verbs exceed their subjects influencing two objects due to the magnified strength of action meaning existing in these verbs. Based on meaning, Arab grammarians restricts ditransitive constructions to verbs whose their first object is an implied subject (See Nur Al-Dyn: 2007:332).

18-manahtu'alyan jubatan.

I endowed Ali a gown.

19- a'taytu alrajula dinaran.

I gave the man one dinar.

The first objects above ('alyan), (alrajula) are the implied subjects of the verbs (manaha) and (a'ta) because ('alyan) is the receiver of the second object(jubatan), and (alrajulu) is the taker of the second object (dinaran). Verbs of this type include (mana'a), (kasa), (sa'ala), (albasa), ('alima).

On the other hand, Buckley (2004:510) calls the verbs above as "doubly transitive verbs" which express the meaning of giving. One of their objects is called 'direct' meaning "the person or thing directly affected by the action of the verb". The other is 'indirect' meaning "the person or thing that is the recipient of the action, to whom or for whom the action expressed by the verb is carried out".

Other verbs, which could be recognized as diatransitive, are most verbs of heart. According to Al-Makhzumi (1966:103) and Al-Jiwari (ibid.:43) the two objects affected by verbs of heart have some kind of affinity or relation that is pictured in the mind or heart of the speaker.

20- zanintu aljawa sahwan.

I thought the weather is good.

21- 'alimtu khalidan sha'iran.

I had known that Khalid is a poet.

In (20) the first object (aljawa) is related to the second object (sahwan) in the mind of the speaker. In (21) there is also an

exsiting relation between the first object (khalidan) and the second one (sha'iran).

Verbs of heart in their turn can be subdivided into other subtypes based on delicate difference in meaning. According to Al-khudhari (2005:333-336) thses are:

i) verbs of certainty

Certainty means the profound belief on the part of the speaker. Such verbs include (wajada), (ta'alama),(dara),('alima),(ra'a).

22- 'alimtu zaydan sadiqan

I knew that Zaid is a friend.

ii) verbs of preponderance or predominance whose meaning is closer to certainty than doubt. These are (khala), (zanna),(hasiba), (za'ama), ('adda), (haja), (ja'ala), and (hab).

23- hasibtu a'umaran akhaqa.

I thought that Omer is your brother.

iii) verbs of becoming and making in which the meaning of the action is increasing .It increases to the extent that any verb of those may affect something ,changing it into something else different from its previous state before using such verbs (Al-Jiwari),(takhadha),(,ibid.:71).These are (sayara), (radda) ,(taraka 'itakhadha),(ja'ala) .

24- sayartu al'aduwa sadiqan.

I have made the enemy a friend.

25- itakhadtu ahmad jalisan.

I have made Ahmed a sitter.

8-4 Tritransitive Construction

In this construction, the verb has four arguments: a subject and three objects.Dayf (1988:166) considers the verbs (a'lama) meaning (to let know) and (ara) meaning (to let see) as tritransitive.

26- a'lama zaydun umaran alra'ya mofasalan.

Zayd let Umar know the opinion in details.

Haydar (2005:21-22) assumes that some verbs, beside these two verbs, may take three objects by virtue of a process of semantics called connotation or extension in meaning (Also see Mubarak1995:58).

Al-Samara'i (167) explains that Al-Zamakhshari (1953) defines connotation as 'making the verb include the meaning of another verb and thus causing the former to follow the syntactic behavior of the latter. And the purpose of connotation is to give the sum of the two meanings and this is stronger than giving one meaning. To explain, the verb receiving the included meaning will syntactically

behave like the source verb (the verb giving that meaning).
Consider:

27- la 'aluka nushan.

I will prevent you no advice.

    To explain connotation in general, Khudayr (2008: 333) presumes that by the included meaning the verb might transfer from intransitive into ditransitive. For example, the verb ('ala) meaning (qasara) is an intransitive verb, but in the above example it is a ditransitive verb taking two objects (ka) and (nushan). This could be explained in the light of connotation. The intransitive verb ('ala) includes the meaning of the ditransitive (amna') meaning (to prevent).This included or added meaning gives potentiality to ('ala) to be ditransitive by increasing the meaning of the action.

    Concerning tritransitive construction, Haydar (ibid.) considers it as Arabic-specific and assumes that Chomsky does not mention it in English. (Ibid.) explains that verbs like (anba'a) ,(nabba'a),(akhbara) and (haddatha) are monotransitive, meaning(to inform).Once these verbs include the meaning of the tritransitive verb(a'lama) beside its informing meaning , they will be tritransitive .This is the end of transitivity in Arabic.

28- nabba'a zaydun umeran bilkhabari.

Zayd told Umar the news.

29- nabba'a alahu alnabiya alwahya yaqinan.

Allah told the prophet the revelation is sure.

    The verb (nabba'a) in (28) is monotransitive meaning (to inform) and taking one object (umeran). In (29), the speaker makes this verb include the meaning of (letting know) beside its informing meaning .Thus, it is a tritransitive taking the three objects (alnabiya), (alwahya), (yaqinan).See also:

30- nabba'tu khalilan alkhabara waqi'an.

I told Khalil the news is real.

    It should be noted that connotation is to make a verb include the meaning of another verb and thus the verb in question will have another added meaning beside its original one (Ibid.:7). This is different from Levin's proposal of the effect of the shared meaning component .This affect directs the verb syntactic behaviour since the shared element component is inherent or originally existing in the verbs and it is not added or included. For example, the meaning component of contact is naturally exciting in (hit) and (touch).

9- Summaries:

A similar behaviour pattern can be proposed by the researcher. That is, the previous Arabic constructions and the meanings restrictively associated with them will be summarized in the following table.

Restriction of Arabic verb meaning to its behaviour in syntactic
constructions Table (8-1)[6]

VERBS	THIER MEANING	SYNTACTIC CONSRRUCTIONS AND VERB PARTICIPATION			
		Intransitive	Monotransitive	Ditransitive	Tritransitive
tala- hasuna-jabuna-	Quality or trait	YES	NO	NO	NO
absara-sami'a	Senses	NO	YES	NO	NO
'alima-hasiba-ja'ala-sayar	meanings of heart (certainty, predominance and becoming)	NO	NO	YES	NO
a'lama-nabb'a-anba'a-khabara	connotation (included meaning of letting know)	NO	NO	NO	YES

The table shows that the meaning of (quality or trait) makes the verbs (tala) and (hasuna) participate in the intransitive construction only. Also, the meaning of (senses) restricts verbs like (absara) and (sami'a) to participate in the monotransitve construction. Similarly, verbs like ('alima) and (hasiba) are restricted to occur in ditransitive construction due to the meaning of heart. Finally, verbs like (a'lama) and (nabb'a) are restricted to show tritransitive construction because of connotation. Accordingly, meaning of Arabic verbs is of restrictive nature to their behaviour.
Still, just like English, when verbs like (tala), (hasuna) and (jabuna) share the meaning of trait or quality, they will participate in the same intransitive construction. Also, the meaning of heart which is shared by verbs like (a'lama) (nabb'a) and (anba'a) makes them share the ditransitive consrruction.

10- Conclusions
The following conclusions are obtained:
1- English and Arabic make use of meaning when considering the syntactic behaviour of verbs.

6- To avoid complicating the table, only some of the meanings are chosen since there are other verbs with meanings like colour, defect which are restrictive to

intransitive constructions .Also, there are verbs with their first object as an implied subject and are restrictive to ditransitive ones.

2- In both languages, meaning has a determining effect in directing the syntactic behaviour of verbs. In English, this effect is called semantic determination.

3-Lyons (1977) agrees, though implicitly, with Levin's semantic determination. The valency of the verb may be affected by certain grammatical mechanisms like the passive. The passive has the meaning of giving description without showing the agent and thus the verb valency is changed due to that meaning. In conclusion, valency-changing mechanism of Lyons is somehow similar to Levin's diathesis alternations.

4- Hspelmath (2002) assumes that meaning is not enough to make one predict the syntactic behaviour of synonymous verbs (sharing a certain meaning) like (steal) and (rob).This is contrary to Levin. Accordingly, meaning should be accompanied by syntactic valency and semantic one.

5-In directing verb behaviour, meaning works differently in both languages. In English, the meaning component gives certain verbs the potentiality to participate in a number of different constructions or diathesis alternations in Levin's terms. For example, the verbs (cut) and (hit) have the meaning of motion and contact .This meaning will permit both of them to participate in the conative and body part alternations.(See table 7-1)

6-With Arabic verbs, meaning would restrict them to participate in one construction. For example, verbs with the meaning of quality or trait would occur mainly in the intransitive construction (Al-Ghalayni (1971).(See table 8-1)

7- In Arabic, meaning is not the only factor affecting verbs behaviour since some verbs with a form like ('if'allala) are said to be intransitive due to that form.

8- Tritransitive construction, which is Arabic-specific, requires the verbs participating in it to have added meaning beside their original one by connotation. In English, verbs occur in certain constructions due to their original not added meaning.

10- In both languages, when verbs share a certain meaning, they would be expected to participate in the same construction due to that meaning. For example, (cut) and (hit) share the meaning of (contact) which allows them to participate in conative alternation. With Arabic, verbs like (a'lama) (nabb'a), (anba'a) and (khabara) would be accepted to show tritransitive construction due to the meaning of (letting know) which they have in common.

11- Recommendations

The present study recommends giving much attention in teaching to the interaction between the syntactic behaviour of the verb and its meaning .Often, the syntactic behaviour of English verbs in certain constructions is discussed with less of reference to their meanings. The mechanism by which the meaning of verbs affects their syntactic behaivuor(expressing their arguments) is worth explaining .For example, transitivity in verbs is explained, but there is no reference to which meaning is sensitive to this construction. That is, which verbs with certain meaning components, could participate in transitivity constructions due to that meaning. Arabic establishes the relationship between verb meaning and its syntax .The question is whether meaning affects Arabic verbs in the same way it does with English ones or not. Recognizing which meaning component may go with which constructions can help students using the right verbs with the right constructions.

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Appendixes

Appendix (1)

A List of Symbols and Abbreviations

*	Grammatically incorrect sentences
Adv	Adverbial
Obj	Object
Obl	Oblique (indirect object)
PP	Prepositional Phrase
Prep	Preposition
Subj	Subject

V   Verb

Appendix (2)
Tables
7-1   Semantic determination of English verb meaning to its behaviours in di hesis alternations at

8-1   Restriction of Arabic verb meaning to its behaviour in syntactic   constructions

Appendix (3)
A Glossary
لازم Intransitive خواص عرضيةaccidental characteristics
جَعْل   making   تصييرbecoming
meaning of the عَرَضcasualness
معنى الحدثaction
قوة المعنى   meaning strength يقينcertainty
متعدي لواحدmonotrasitive تضمين   Connotation
حلية   ornament   عيبdefect
reponderance or معلومية الفعلdiathesis
جَحْحانpredominance
مطاوعةمتعدي لمفعولينreflexiveness diatransitive
ميلtraitsطبائع   disposition
متعدي لثلاث   tritransitive وزنform
مفاعيل
أفعال القلوب   verbs of heartsإخباريinformative
Appendix (4)
   List of Arabic letter with the English formal transcription
(7)

Arabic Letter	English Equivalent	Arabic Letter	English Equivalent
ا	a	ط	t
ب	b	ظ	z
ت	t	ع	،
ث	th	غ	gh
ج	j	ف	f
ح	h	ق	q
خ	kh	ك	k
د	d	ل	l
ذ	dh	م	m
ز	z	ن	n
ر	r	هـ	h
س	s	و	u,w
ش	sh	ي	i,y
ص	s	ء	٬
ض	d	Fatha,damma kasra	a, u, i

7-This list is taken from Arabic chat alphabet- Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.