Similarities between Arabic and English Morphemes and Morphosyntactic Features

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Abstract:

This research aims to investigate the level at which both Modern Standard Arabic and English feature their morphological similarities. The study adopts contrastive analysis method, in which the similarity in the morphological features are marked and defined. Arabic being the native language of the investigator, the data has been furnished by him. The study is a departure from earlier studies, since it compares two genetically unrelated languages. Since the present work is dealing with the analysis of the morphology of both English and Modern Standard Arabic, help is also taken from various books and the alike, dealing with the modern Arabic and English language. The paper concludes that both languages use almost the same morphological processes of affixation, internal change, compounding etc. Various affixes like prefixes, infixes and suffixes are added to the root.

تشابه العناصر النحوية والصرفية للغتين العربية والانكليزية

الملخص:

يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة أوجه التشابه المورفولوجي في اللغة العربية واللغة الإنكليزية وذلك من خلال إستخدام طريقة التحليل التبايني لكلا اللغتين حيث سيتم تحديد

وتعرف الخصائص المورفولوجية المتشابة . وكون اللغة العربية هي اللغة الأم للباحث فسيساعده ذلك على جمع البيانات اللازمة للبحث والحكم على صحة هذه البيانات. يتميز هذا

البحث عما سبقها من أبحاث كونها ستتناول لغتين مختلفتين كلياً. كما سيتم الإستعانة بالعديد من الكتب والدراسات السابقة التي تطرقت إلى دراسة وتحليل البينة الصرفية لكل من

العربية والإنكليزية. تشير هذه الورقة البحثية في نتائجها إلى إن العربية والإنكليزية تتشابهان من خلال بعض العمليات المورفولوجية (الصرفية) كأضافة اللواحق لتشكيل كلمات جديدة

والتغير البنيوي الداخلي للكلمة ودمج الكلمات لإنشاء تركيب جديد .

1. Introduction

The present study aims at showing the similarities between English and Arabic morphology to determine the points of similarity between them. These similarities are the main cause of difficulty in comparing the system of two languages. This in turn determines what the scholar has to analyze and what to consider.

However, The lay out of the paper will be as following: first we will introduce the contrastive approach and how it can account for the features of the two languages. Then, the genetic relationship between Arabic and English is introduced. After that, the morphological manifestations of English and Arabic are demonstrated in detail. Given this, we will try to shed light on how the morphological features in English and Arabic are represented.

The concept of contrastive analysis was first introduced by Charles Fries in (1952), and fully described by Robert Lado in his book "Linguistics across Cultures" (1957). Contrastive analysis is a systematic branch of linguistics which deals with the linguistic description of the structure of two or more different languages. Such descriptive comparison serves to show how languages differ in their sound system, grammatical structure and vocabulary. This type of analysis can be used in language analysis among others, to point out the areas where the similarities exist. Theoretical contrastive studies give an exhaustive account of the similarities between two or more languages, provide an adequate model for their comparison, how and which elements are comparable. Arabic being the native language of the investigator, the data has been furnished by him. The data is analyzed and described through the contrastive method.

2. The genetic relation between Arabic and English:

Since English and Arabic are genetically different languages the researcher does not expect a great deal of similarities in their derivational and inflectional systems. However, some similarities are noted in the derivational system in both languages, which will be the core focus of this chapter.

English is part of the West Germanic language group. This means that it belongs to an early grouping of Indo-European languages which distinguishes itself from other languages of this family by having undergone a series of changes to consonants in initial position. Today, the Germanic languages are to be found throughout Scandinavia (North Germanic) and in central Europe in the area of Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

On the other hand, Arabic is a Semitic language which does not have any genetic or real relation with English. Nevertheless, it seems that both English and Arabic share some notable similarities at several linguistic levels, Phonological, syntactic and morphological. However, in this particular paper, the researcher limits himself to point out the morphological similarities. Although the differences between Arabic and English at morphological level are more notable than the similarities, both languages hold some slight similarities as well. What is common in them at these levels are the morphological processes. Both the languages use almost the same morphological processes of affixation, internal change, compounding etc. Various affixes like prefixes, infixes and suffixes are added to the root. According to Haywood and Nahmad (1965:30), English and Arabic share some similar characteristics in their derivational system. The following section will show how the derivational structure in both English and Arabic is similar.

3. Derivational Analysis of English and Arabic:

3.1 The Derivational System of English

English derivational morphemes are of two types: (i) Distributional morphemes which determine the distribution of the word, or the function it can perform within the sentence (Bernard, 1947: 21). A distributional morpheme is usually suffixed to a word, determining whether the word is to be a noun, verb, or adjective. It may also add a lexical meaning. Lexical morphemes give the word an additional meaning, usually prefixes such as dis- dislike ,disagree. In addition to the root + affix method, English words can be constructed through the combination of two or more roots, each of which may be a free morpheme, "ouch" a word is called a compound noun, A coat worn over everything else becomes an "over coat", as a coat to protect against rain is a rain coat.

A stem is any construction to which an affix can be added. Roots always contain a single morpheme, but a stem may contain a root plus an affix (Rochelle,1992, p. 56). In "impossible", 'possible' is the root to which /im -/ is prefixed. In 'black-birds', 'black' and 'bird' are roots and 'blackbird' is a stem to which the suffix/-s/ is attached. In English, there are two basic processes of stem formation, i.e., the addition of derivational affixes to roots or stems, and the combination of two or more stems, to stem compounds.

In English, derived stems (derivatives) are formed by the use of affixes of one

type or another. Derived stems are either primary or secondary.

In a primary derivative, none of the constituent element is a stem, but one is a derivational affix, and the other is a derivationally bound form called a base as in receive, deceive and conceive. Primary derivation involves forms which are bound at the derivational level. In a secondary derivative, one of the immediate constituents is a stem, and the other is a derivational affix of some derivational formations as in" reception and attractive". Secondary derivation involves forms which are themselves susceptible of use in inflection (introduce, introductory, introduction).

3.1.1 Prefixes

The vast majority of English prefixes are class-maintaining. Prefixes will be considered in terms of the form class of the base to which they are added. The majority of prefixes can be added to bases or stems of more than one form class. Productive prefixes normally have a slight stress on their first syllable, the main stress of the word coming on the base.

The two major distinctive groups of prefixes are : A-Class-changing prefixes are those that produce a derived form of the same class . The following prefixes change the word class: a- asleep, ablaze, ashore; be- bedazzled, becalm, befriend, bewitch; en- enslave, enlarge, enchant.

B- Class-maintaining prefixes are those that produce a derived form of the same class. The following prefixes do not change the word class: un- unjust, uncover; non- non-stop; in-incomplete; dis-discomfort, dislocate; a- anemia, amoral; de-decompose, degenerate.

3.1.2 Suffixation

In many cases, a derivational suffix changes the part of speech of the word to which it is added (James 1959, p. 207). Many English words change their vowels or final consonants when they are followed by certain derivational suffixes as in: decide, decision; flame, flammable; concede, concession. The location of word stress may depend on the suffix.

4. Arabic Derivation

Derivation process means extracting one form from another. Both of the two ejections agree on meaning and arrangement of the original root. Derivational system in Arabic includes: active participle, passive participle, intensive active participle, diminutive nouns, adverbial expressions of time and place, nouns of instrument, nouns of manner and superlative adjectives (Fehri, 2012). The following table illustrates.

Root	Active participle	Active participle	Intensive active participle	Noun of instrument
khabaza خبز	khabez خابز	Makhbuuz مخبوز	khabbaz خباز	makhbaz مخبز
ghafar غفر	ghafer غافر	maghfuur مغفور	ghaffar غفار	NA

Table 1: Derivational structure in Arabic

Derivation from existing Arabic roots has always been considered to be the most natural way to create new vocabulary. Arabic has three main types of derivation (Razin, 2014, p. 88):

1- Root modification: It involves a change in the position of the root consonants and the retention of the original meaning

2-Metathesis: It involves a change in the position of the root consonants and the retention of the original meaning

3-Simple Derivation: It plays the most prominent role in the process of creating new words. Many Arabic words are formed from a root consisting of three consonants and a set of vowels that alternate with the root consonants and that acting rather like an affix (Wiryono, 2004, p. 38), changed in any way, but are derived from and built upon. Different sets of patterns are used in that process. Derived verbs and derived nouns are produced by lengthening a vowel, doubling the second consonant, doubling the third consonant, adding a prefix or infix. Some of the derivational patterns are used in deriving the different kinds of nouns and verbs.

Derivation is a very important aspect of morphology. Some differences in the derivational processes of English and Arabic are either monosyllabic or disyllabic. In English and Arabic derivational suffixes determine the distribution of the word, or what function it can perform within the sentence (Tarazi, 1967, p. 102). Both languages share a number of features in their derivational structure. In both languages, derivational affixes are stem forming (in fictional affixes may be added to these

stems); derivation is a continuing process in both languages. English has various suffixes, added to nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs. Besides these, there are a number of prefixes also added to lexical morphemes which have specific meaning and give the word an additional meaning e.g. such as -ceive, -mit, -fer which have lost their independent meaning and their meaning depends on the entire word in which they occur as in the case with receive, conceive and permit, remit, omit. In Arabic, too, a great majority of nouns, adjectives, numerals and verbs are derived from the three consonantal roots e.g. the noun /katib/ " writer' is derived from the root /katab/ " write" . In English, for example, we add /-er/ and /-ing/ to the verb to express the infinitive or gerund.

In Arabic, the third person masculine singular of the perfect of the simple verb serves as the root. For example from /kataba/ 'he wrote', a number of derivatives are formed such as /Kita:bun/ 'a book', /.kita: batun/ 'writing', /,ka:tib/ 'writer', a clerk'. Derivation in Arabic is not simple. The foreign language learners face difficulty in mastering the various derivational processes in .Arabic.

5.Similarties between Arabic and English Morphological processes

The various morphological processes of stem formation are as follows:

1. Affixation 2. Derivation 3. Inflection

5.1 Affixation in Arabic and English:

The most frequent morphological process is affixation, which is of three types: prefixes, infixes and suffixes. Affixes are also of two types: inflectional and derivational, preceded or followed by parts of the root. For example, /yadrusu/ 'to study' /darasa/ 'he studied' , /darasat/ 'she studied', /darastu/ 'I studied ' etc. Similarly, English share the same process as in Arabic .Most English words are made up of the base word known as root which contains the heart of the meaning of the word (Leech, 2004, p. 2). To expand such words, appendages (affixes) are added at either the beginning or at the end of the word. It is the process of attaching these affixes that is referred to as affixation. The affix added at the beginning of the root is known as prefix while the affix added at the end of a word is known as suffix. The root is central to the building of new words. For instance, advantage, help, forgive, measure are the core words (roots).

5.2 Derivation in Arabic and English:
Derivation is the opposite of inflection. It consists of adding an affix or affixes to the root or stem of the word. When this is

done, new words are derived. Within derivation, the distinction is often made between class-maintaining and class-changing processes. Class-changing produces a new word in different word class.

In Arabic, the great majority of nouns and verbs are derived from the trilateral root of the third person masculine singular of the perfect of the simple verb. Thus from /qatala/ 'he killed' a host of derivatives exist such as /yaqtulu/ 'to kill', /qita:lun/ 'fighting', /qa:tala/ 'he fought', /qa:tilun/ 'murderer', and so on. The Arabs use the simplest pattern /fa3ala/ 'he did' and use its three radicals /f-3-l/ quite independently of any idea of describing the various patterns of words. Although derivational affixes do not necessarily alter the syntactic category, they do change the meaning of the base in English. In many cases, derivational affixes change both the syntactic category and the meaning: modern → modernize ("to make modern"). The change of meaning is sometimes predictable: Adjective + ness → the state of being (Adjective); (white→ whiteness).

5.2.1 Derivation of Nouns in Arabic:

Word formation in Arabic involves three concepts: (a) the concept of root, (b) the concept of pattern (c) and the concept of form (Zakaria, 2004, p. 17). The various

word patterns are expressed by using the root consisting of consonants only. The actual form of the word is created by inserting vowels within the consonantal pattern and sometimes by additional consonants which are not part of the root. The actual word formation can be described by using the consonantal pattern /fa3ala/, e.g., /jama3a/ 'he collected', /kataba/ 'he wrote', /la3iba/ 'he played', etc.

Thus, nouns in Arabic are of two classes:

1. Primitive: those nouns that don't refer to any verbal root, e.g., /farasun/ 'a horse', /qalbun/ 'heart', etc.

2. Derived: derived nouns are those nouns that are derived from various verb forms or patterns:

(a) From bi-consonantal root /yd/, the form /yad/ 'hand' is derived. From /bk/ the morpheme /buka:?/ 'weeping' is derived. From the three consonantal root e.g., /f-?-l/ we have /walad/ 'a boy' , /qamar/ 'a moon' , /watan/ 'a homeland', raqam/ 'a number', etc. In addition to the above mentioned derived nouns, broken plural patterns also fall under derived nouns. For instance, the noun /kursi/ "chair" is pluralized as /karasi/ " chairs".

(b) Diminutive: which is rarely used, is formed according to the pattern /fu?aylun/, e.g., /kutayyibun/ 'a small book', /bunayyatun/ 'a little girl', etc.

(c) Nouns derived from verbs: nouns derived from verbs of trilaterals, e.g.,

/qita:lun/ 'fighting' , from /qatala/ 'he killed'. /majlesun/ 'council' from /jalasa/ 'sat', etc.

(d) Nouns derived from nouns: some nouns are derived from other nouns, e.g., /insa:niyatun/ 'humanity' from /insa:nun/ 'human', /Isla:miyyun/ 'Islamic' from /Isla:mun/ 'Islam'.

Derivation differs from inflection in a number of ways, the chief one being the grammatical role of the suffixes involved whereas inflections are grammatical in character (Al-Qahtani, 2000 p.51), Most derive stand closer to the vocabulary and its root morphemes. The inflectional affixes of English are relatively few in number and regular in their use. English derivational affixes ,on the other hand, are greater in number and, with few exceptions, much more limited in their distribution. Prefixes: Derivational prefixes in English are either monosyllabic or disyllabic, with the sole exception of the |n-l of 'neither, never, nor, none-> Monosyllabic prefixes may be exemplified by: /riy-/ 'reoccupy',/priy-/ 'pre-' university, pre-arrange', -/an-/ 'unhappy'/n 3on-/ 'non-payment'.

6. The derivational process compound nouns in Arabic and English

Compounds are considered as a major point in which both Arabic and English are similar in a number of features involving the way compounds are derived and the order of the present morphemes in compounds (W.Sahabu ,2010). Compounds are groups of two or more elements treated as a unit. They consist of two or more bases joined together without the use of derivational affixes. Compounds are either primary or secondary. In a primary compound or base-compound, two bases (derivationally bound forms) are joined together. In a secondary compound or stem-compound, both or all of the constituents of the compound are stems (free forms).

6.1 Similar features in compounding in English and Arabic:

Arabic and English are morphologically asymmetrical. English is a mostly analytical language. The first element of compounding in English can be: a noun, a pronoun, an adjective and a verb. The second element of a compounding noun can be: a noun, a pronoun, a verb or verb stem and an adverb. There is a syntactic relation between the two elements. There is also a semantic relationship between the two elements of the compounding words (the first element is the main concept). The main types of nouns and adjective compounds are: endocentric, exocentric and appositional. Compounding forms are: the solid or closed form, the hyphenated and the open or spaced form. In English there is simple, complex and compound words or/and sentences. In Arabic, contrast to

English, compounding does not play such an important part in Arabic. This compounding falls into three categories: almurakkab l-idaafiyy, al-morakkabu l-mazjiyy and al-murakkabu lisnadiyy. In addition to these, Arab grammarians mention the compound numericals from 11 to 19. Arabic has other forms of compound such as: compound particles, that are used as adverbials or conjunctions, defective verb compound; they are usually constructed with /ma/ as their first element, there are one or two interrogative pronouns that are also compound: these are /man da/, /ma/da/. Some original Arabic proper nouns are compounds of the form N+Adj. like English, there are several compound nouns, adjectives and compound verbs. Only one more type of compound is called self-compound, it is referred to the relation between the two elements (i.e. the possessive relation) e.g. Myself, yourself, ourselves.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion the paper shed light on how the morphological system of Arabic is similar to English. The chapter can be summarized in the following points.

(1) Both English and Arabic share some features in their derivational structure.

(2) In Arabic, the root system represents the basic morphological characteristics in the structure of nouns and adverbs. Every word in Arabic may be referred to a significant root consisting of three consonants .By means of morphological processes of adding suffixes, internal vowel modification, infinite number of nouns and verbs can be derived.

(3) The derivational suffixes in both languages determine the distribution and function of words within the sentence.

(4) Both English and Arabic almost use the same morphological processes.

(5) Both English and Arabic have the same number of word classes.

In a nutshell both Arabic and English share some similarities in their morphological system. The similarity is gained through some shared features in the derivational system.

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