

Transitivity and Intransitivity in English and Arabic: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

English and Arabic are two major languages which have many differences and similarities in grammar. One of the issues which is of great importance in the two languages is transitivity and intransitivity. Therefore, this study compares and contrasts transitivity and intransitivity in English and Arabic. This study reports the results of the analysis of transitivity and intransitivity in the two respective languages. The current study is a qualitative one; in nature, a descriptive study. The findings showed that English and Arabic are similar in having

transitive and intransitive verbs, and in having verbs which can go transitive or intransitive according to context. By contrast Arabic is different from English in its ability to change intransitive verbs into transitive ones by applying inflections on the main verb. Additionally, Arabic is different from English in the fact that some Arabic transitive verbs can take up to three objects.

Keywords: Transitive, Intransitive, Verbs, English, Arabic

1. Introduction

1.1 Background Overview

English and Arabic are two distinctive languages which belong to two different language families. English is an Indo-European language, while Arabic is a Semitic languages (Nofal, 2011). However, both languages share some features, and this maybe what Chomsky referred to in his theory of universal grammar (UG). Chomsky sees that all human beings have the same set of principles which are instinctively stored in their minds (principles). However, they may have differences according to certain variables which he called parameters (Cook & Newson, 2000). Adopting the Chomskyan theory, it is agreed that languages have differences in their parameters, and similarities in their principles.

Languages share similarities and have differences as well. All languages, for instance, have nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and prepositions. However, the syntactic pattern of each language differs from its counterpart. For example, Arabic sentences tend to be overdominated by the verbal sentences, which mean that they usually start with the verb phrase (VP), though this does not mean that Arabic does not have the other types of sentences. On the other hand, English tends to be overdominated by the nominal sentences, or to be accurate by the NP+ VP structure, though this does not either imply the absence of the other types of sentences.

One of the main differences between English and Arabic is the types of tenses which are embedded in verbs. For example, there are thirteen (13) tenses¹ in English, while there are only three (3) tenses in Arabic. In contrast, the two languages, namely, English and Arabic permit the two main types of verbs, the transitive and intransitive verbs.

This study attempts to figure out the similarities and differences between the transitive and intransitive verbs in English and Arabic.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

English and Arabic are two major languages in the world. Arabic gains its status for its being the language of Islam with all its components, while English gains its importance from its being the language of academic settings, technology and even the language of diplomacy (Alduais, 2012). However, the syntactic pattern of each language has its peculiarity. Parts of speech, arrangement of these parts of speech, and the nature of these parts of speech differ from Arabic to English. They are similar in some respects while different in other respects.

So far, many studies were conducted to compare and contrast English and Arabic in terms of morphology and syntax. However, little is known about the differences and similarities between the two languages in terms of the types of verbs; the transitive and intransitive verbs. Therefore, this study compares and contrasts transitive and intransitive verbs in the English and Arabic languages with the ultimate purpose of gaining further insight into transitivity and intransitivity in the two languages in question.

¹ In grammar books, they use the term “tense” to refer to “aspects”.

1.3 Scope of the Study

This study presents a cross-linguistic comparison between transitive and intransitive verbs in English and Arabic. The comparison attempts at displaying the areas of similarities and differences in terms of verbs transitivity and intransitivity.

1.4 Delimitations of the Study

This study is delimited to the Modern Standard Arabic and Standard English as well. It is also delimited to transitive and intransitive verbs' similarities and differences in the two languages.

1.5 objectives of the Study

This study aims to fulfill the following three objectives:

1. Identifying the nature of transitive and intransitive verbs in the English and Arabic languages.
2. Identifying the similarities between English language Arabic languages in terms of transitive and intransitive verbs
3. Identifying the differences between English and Arabic languages in terms of transitive and intransitive verbs

2. Literature Review

2.1 Overview of the English and Arabic Languages

Arabic, as a language, is one of the most important languages in the world. It is spoken as a native language by not less than four hundred million people in diverse counties and places in the Arab world (according to summer institute linguistics, 2008). Furthermore, Arabic is spoken or learned as a second language in all over the world (Aldusi, 2012). It is also admitted as an official language by the United Nations (Chejne, 1969).

Generally speaking, Arabic is divided into three types; Classical Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic, and Colloquial Arabic. Classical Arabic was used in pre-Islamic period in the Arab peninsula, and surly, it is the most accurate and eloquent variety of Arabic. Currently, it is used only in the holy Quran, Prophetic hadiths, and tradition books. Modern Standard Arabic is the variety of Arabic used by the educated people in academic settings, TV news, and formal settings. It is a correct variety of Arabic in terms of grammar with some common errors, but not up to the classical Arabic in terms of eloquence. However, colloquial Arabic is the language used by people to communicate with each other. It is mostly an incorrect variety of Arabic; grammar is not observed while using colloquial Arabic (Owens, 2006). Moreover, there are many varieties of colloquial Arabic. There are the Saudi Arabian dialect, Yemeni dialect, Egyptian dialect, and many others.

On the other hand, English is not less important than Arabic. It is a language spoken widely in the world; more than three hundred million people speak English (according to Ethnologue website, 2008). English is the language of science and technology in most of world countries

at the present time. English, like Arabic, has so many varieties and dialects. For instance, Standard English is spoken only in academic settings, newspapers, TV news ...etc. However, many other dialects, accents, or Englishes are spoken all over the world.

2.2 Grammar of English and Arabic

Sentence, whatever the language is, is considered the largest part of a language in terms of grammar (Humboldt, 1988). They are marked with a certain beginning and a certain ending, and following certain punctuation marks (Leech, 2006). Sentences either in English or Arabic have main component parts of speech; namely, they have nouns, prepositions, adjectives, adverbs, and verbs. However, English and Arabic are not identical in terms of sentence structure.

Arabic has some features making its syntax complex in comparison to English and other European languages. Arabic has two main types of sentences; nominal sentence in which the subject is the “*mubta'da*” and then comes a predicate which can be presented by different types of phrases (El- Shishiny, 1990). The second type of sentences in Arabic is the verbal sentence, and which starts with a verb. Verbal sentences can be followed by either a subject phrase, or a subject phrase and a compliment (El- Shishiny, *ibid.*). Unlike Arabic, English has five main types of sentences; they are the intransitive type, the verb *be* requiring adverbs of time or space type, the linking verb with adjectival subject complement type, the linking verb type with a nominal subject complement type, and the transitive type (Klammer et al, 2000).

Verbs in English and Arabic can act differently. English, for instance, represents modals; those verbs which cannot be conjugated, whereas, Arabic does not have such a kind of verbs, though it can express modality using verbs that can be conjugated (Aziz, 2010). Likewise, the sentence pattern in English and Arabic is not similar. Simple sentences in English usually consist of the basic elements, which are subject, verb, object, and compliment, and each simple sentence should have at least two obligatory elements, namely, a subject and a predicate (Hussein, 2009). In Arabic, it is too complicated to tell the pattern of a sentence. Arabic has the characteristic of fronting and deferring. Put simply, in Arabic, we need not to keep a certain pattern; for example, an object can precede its subject, or a verb can come after or before the subject depending on what semantic stress the writer or the speaker wants to highlight. However, Aziz (1989) suggested eight patterns which all fall under the umbrella of nominal or verbal pattern.

Verbs are a main component of the parts of speech. The verb, according to grammarians, is a token which expresses a state or a fact happening in the past, present, or future. Moreover, verbs can be either complete or deficient. In Arabic, states of verbs can be classified as follows:

- "According to Mood: past, confirm (present or future), or imperative.
- According to Time: past, present, or future.
- According to Number of original letters: trilateral or quadrilateral.
- According to End-case analysis: declined or structured.

- According to Confirmation: Confirmed or unconfirmed.
According to Defective letters:
- Sound: intact, doubled or with the Arabic character Hamza [ء].
- Defective: modal, hollow or deficient.
- According to Affirmation: affirmative or negative.
- Mixed: separated or joint
- According to Radicals: denuded or augmented”.

(Al-Muhtaseb & Mellish, 1998)

On the other hand, English shares Arabic some of the above mentioned categorizations; however, differences look to be greater. English has two tenses (present and past), whereas, it has 13 aspects as classified by grammar analysis books.

2.3 Previous Contrastive Studies

The history of comparative studies between English and Arabic goes back to 1950s. This date remarks the initiation of the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (Mukattash, 2001). Many studies attempted to compare and contrast English and Arabic. For example, in 1988, Suleiman published a study comparing passive in the two languages. Khalil (1993) shed light on the problems of translating passive sentences from English to Arabic. Sultan (2000) conducted a comparative study to compare English and Arabic in terms of metadiscourse. Likewise, Salim (2013) conducted a comparative study between English and Arabic in terms of noun morphology. Gadalla (2000), as well, conducted a study on genitive constructions in English and Arabic. Literature, in fact, is abundant with comparative studies between English and Arabic.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study is a qualitative descriptive one. A qualitative research design is different from a quantitative one in that, the former does not depend on statistical data like the case with the quantitative studies (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Moreover, such kind of design is usually adopted to have more in-depth feedback about something the researcher already knows, or to gain information about something the researcher does not know (Strauss and Corbin, *bid.*).

3.2 Sampling

Examples from different English and Arabic grammar books constitute the sampling of this study. Examples were collected and analyzed.

4. Data Analysis

This section presents transitive verbs in English and Arabic.

4.1 *Intransitive and Transitive Verbs in English*

(Adapted from Oxford Guide to English Grammar: by Eastwood, and English Grammar in Use: by Murphy)

Before proceeding further with transitive and intransitive verbs in English, let's first shed light on the sentence and clause concepts in English. As stated by grammarians, sentence can consist of one or more clauses. By turn, clauses are made up of certain elements. These elements can include subject, verb, object, complement and adverbial. Hence, a verb is one of the essential and main components of a sentence or a clause. Verbs are broadly divided into transitive and intransitive verbs (this is one of the classification only). Intransitive verbs are those verbs which do not require an object, they can stand by themselves. Intransitive verbs include verbs such as think in a sentence like "I am thinking". On the other hand transitive verbs are those verbs which require an object to make the meaning complete. For example, I bought a car.

4.1.1 Intransitive verbs in English

As it has been mentioned earlier, intransitive verbs do not take an object, though they can be followed by a prepositional phrase. They usually express actions (ie. He is running along the road), or events (i.e. It is raining outside).The following are examples:

1. Ahmad was waiting in the garden.
2. Ali studies hard.

In the above examples, the verb "wait" is followed by a prepositional phrase, and not an object. Likewise, in the second example, the verb "study" is followed by an adjective. Hence, intransitive verbs can be described as having the following pattern: NP+ V+ (Prep P) (Adj). Brackets show optionality because a transitive verb is mainly NP+V.

As a matter of fact, intransitive verbs cannot be in the passive form because they do not have objects. However, those intransitive verbs can sometimes be transitive depending on the meaning of the sentence or clause. For example, the verbs in the above examples can also be transitive. Consider the following examples:

1. Ahmad is waiting his dad.
2. Ali studies applied linguistics.

In these last two examples, the verbs are followed by objects. In contrast, there are verbs which are always intransitive; they are mostly followed by prepositions. The following verbs are examples of verbs which are always intransitive: apply, apologize, rain, be, feel, seem, and snore.

4.1.2 Transitive Verbs in English

Transitive verbs are used to express actions (play), feelings (love), perception (saw) and possession (have). Although they are followed by objects, sometimes we can leave out the object when it would add little or nothing to the meaning. For example, Ahmad is reading (a

book). The object in this sentence can be left out because the meaning is embedded in the verb. Moreover, the object can be left out after the following verbs: ask/answer (a question), draw/paint (a picture), enter/leave (a room/building), pass/fail (a test/exam), play/win/lose (a game), practice (a skill), sing (a song), speak (a few words), study (a subject). Furthermore, the object can be left after the following verbs if the meaning is clear. begin, choose, decide, hear, help, know, notice, see, start.

Some verbs, in English, can be transitive in certain contexts and intransitive in other contexts. The following table gives examples.

Table 1. Examples of verbs which can go transitive and intransitive

Intransitive	Transitive
I stopped by the door.	I stopped a taxi.
The door opened	I opened the door
The cup broke	I broke my leg

The following verbs can be transitive or intransitive:

unite break end move soften burn finish open sound alter develop increase shine tear begin divide join shut turn bend drive melt slide weaken boil dry mix smash change fly pour spread close freeze ring stand cook hang roll hurt separate strengthen crash improve shake swing start combine harden sail stop continue

In this context, it is important to mention that some verbs take two objects. The first object is the indirect object, while the latter is the direct object. Indirect object can be moved to the end of the sentence and be preceded by a preposition. Consider the following example:

I bought Ahmad a gift

↓ ↓

Indirect object direct object

I bought a gift for Ahmad

↓ ↓

Direct object Indirect object

Transitive and intransitive verbs in Arabic

(Adapted from: An Essential Grammar by Farouq Shaqra (2007); قواعد الموجز في اللغة العربية by عماد على جمعة (2006) by قواعد اللغة العربية النحو و الصرف الميسر (1971) الأفغاني, سعيد

Firstly, it is fitting to shed light on some important rules related to verbs in Arabic. The basic verb form is called “المجرد” (abstract), which is close to the base form in English. Another important feature of the Arabic language is what is called by linguists as (verbal) root and radical. They are not synonyms; they refer to two distinctive features. The root is the absolute basis for forming all verb forms, as well as, most nouns, adjectives, adverbs and even prepositions. The root mostly consists of three consonants. These consonants are called radicals, because together they make up the root, e.g. كتب /katba/ ‘to write’, كِتَابٌ /kitābun/ ‘book’, قول /qawla/ ‘to say (basic verb form قَالَ /qalaa/ ‘he said, imperfect يَقُولُ /yaqulu/ he speaks). Although some grammarians call the radicals simply letters, but the term radical is more appropriate, because letters refer to units of writing, whereas radicals refer to more theoretical units, which may sometimes be dropped or transformed in the actual verb forms and derivations. Roots with three radicals are called trilateral. There are no roots with fewer than three radicals. Some roots have four radicals, and they are called quadrilateral.

On the other hand and differently from “المجرد” (the base form) is what is called by grammarians as “المزيد” / al-mazīdu/, and which is the derived verb forms. They are formed from the root by means of consonant doubling, prefixes or infixes, according to certain patterns. For example حطم is a root; however, to change it to “المزيد” / al-mazīdu/, we double the second letter, hence, it becomes حَطَّمَ. The meanings of the derived verb forms are generally derived from the basic verb form according to a system explained below (see table 2)

As a rule, grammarians prefer to call the derived verb forms as derived verb stems, because each derived verb form has a complete set of conjugated forms (tenses, verbal noun, participles, etc.). There are 14 derived verb forms (stems). However, there is no verb which is used in all ten forms; normally the verb is used in five or six of the derived forms and sometimes even the basic verb form itself is not used. As a matter of fact, there is no infinitive in Arabic in the same sense as in the Indo-European languages. The derived verb forms are listed in the dictionary under the root, which is mostly the same as the basic verb form (I) without vowels.

In relation to this study, which is about transitive and intransitive verbs; a transitive verb is called مُتَعَدِّئًا mutaaddin, and an intransitive verb is called لَازِمٌ lazimun. Transitive verbs can take a direct object in the accusative case, whereas intransitive cannot do so (some of them can, however, take an accusative predicative complement). The basic verb form may be transitive or intransitive, depending on its meaning and construction. Some derived verb forms are typically transitive, while others are generally intransitive, but there are no absolute rules for determining their type. In the following examples, the basic form is transitive and the corresponding form is intransitive.

Table 1. Transitive and intransitive verbs

Transitive	Intransitive
كَسَرَ الطَّالِبُ النِّظَارَاتِ kasara attalib Annazarat	أَنْكَسَرَتِ النِّظَارَاتُ Inkasarat annazarat

The student broke the glasses.	The glasses broke
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There are ten cases of verbs in the Arabic language, which are classified according to the meter. The following table illustrates these ten cases of the verbs. The meter is provided with examples.

Table 2. Cases of verbs in the Arabic language

Form Number	Meter	Example
I	فَعَلَ Fa'ala	قَتَلَ
II	فَعَّلَ Fa''ala	جَرَّمَ
III	فَاعَلَ Faa'ala	قَاتَلَ
IV	أَفَعَلَ Afa'la	أَكْتَرَى
V	تَفَعَّلَ Ta'fa'ala	تَفَنَّ
VI	تَفَاعَلَ Tafa'ala	تَقَاتَلَ
VII	إِنْفَعَلَ Infa'ala	انْبَهَرَ
VIII	إِفْتَعَلَ Ifta'ala	
IX	إِفْعَلَ If'alla	اسْتَهَلَ
X	إِسْتَفْعَلَ Istaf'ala	أَسْتَيْشَرَ

As it is seen from the table, there are ten meters of the verb cases in the Arabic language. These meters make us decide whether the verb is transitive or intransitive, though it is not a clear-cut issue; transitivity and intransitivity mostly depend on the meaning. In the next lines, details are provided. The forms mentioned in the table with their meters re explained.

Form I: The basic form (I) can be transitive or intransitive. The following table shows examples.

Table 3. Form I

transitive	Example	Intransitive	Example
كُتِبَ To write	كُتِبَ أَحْمَدُ الدَّرْسَ Ahmad wrote the lesson.	جَلَسَ To sit	جَلَسَ أَحْمَدُ Ahamad sat down.

In the above examples, both transitive and intransitive verbs can change to be the opposite if we made an inflection to the verb. For example, adding *hamza* “*ʾ*” in front of the intransitive verb changes it into transitive one. So we can say, *أجلس أحمد علياً*, and which means Ahmad made Ali sit down (this will be discussed later in details).

Form II: this form has three cases which will be explained in the following points in details.

1. **Causative** verbs (to cause someone to do something): these verbs are always transitive. For example; *علم أحمد علياً قيادة السيارة*, and which means Ahamad taught Ali how to drive a car. In this example, the verb has two objects which are *علياً* and *قيادة* (this part will be elaborated later).
2. **Intensifying** or iterative verbs: those verbs which imply intensifying or exaggeration are always transitive verbs. For example, *مزق أحمد الكراس*, and which means: Ahmad has torn the notebook into pieces.
3. **Declarative** verbs in the sense of considering someone or something to be something, and not the meaning referred to in English grammar. For example, *صدق أحمد علياً*, and which means: Ahamad believed Ali. In this example, if the root verb was used, it would be intransitive. For example: *صدق أحمد*, and which means Ahamd is telling the truth (but this applies to form I).
4. Denominative (forming verb from noun).this happens when we form verbs out of nouns. The resulting verbs become transitive verbs. For example, the noun *سلاح* when it is changed into a verb, it becomes *سلح*. for example, *سلح القائد جيشه*, which means: the commander armed his soldiers.

Form III: this form is on *فاعل* as a meter. It is mostly transitive. For example, *قاتل أحمد اللص*, and which means: Ahmad fought against the thief.

Form IV: is prefixed with *أ* /a/ which is elided in the imperfect tense. This type comprises three sub-types, which are:

1. The causative type: this type is transitive; for example, *أعلم أحمد علياً بالخبر*, and which means: Ahamd made Ali know such a piece of news.
2. Declarative of I: to declare that someone has a certain quality, and this type is transitive, as well.
3. Denominative (intransitives verb derived from a noun). This type is intransitive. For example; *أذنب علي*, and which means: Ali made a sin.

Form V: this type is generally reflexive of form II. It can be either transitive or intransitive. For example; *إنني أتكلم*, in this case, it is intransitive. However, *أني أتكلم العربية*, it is transitive.

Form VI: it is reflexive or reciprocal of form III (mostly transitive). In this form, both or all partners are involved in action, therefore the subject is in the dual or plural form. For example, *تكاتم الرجلان السر*, which means: The two men promised each other to keep it secret.

Form VII: this form is prefixed with *إِنْ* /_in/, and *إِ* /i/ is elided in the imperfect tense. It is reflexive-passive or anti causative of form I. it is intransitive. For example, *أُنبهر الرجل*, which means: The man was amazed.

Form VIII: It has an infix *ت* /t./ in the middle and is prefixed with *إِ* /i./, which is elided in the imperfect tense. This form has three sub-types, which are:

The verb is reflexive-intransitive of form I. For example, *أجتمع الرجلان*, and which means: The two men met together.

The verb has the passive meaning of form I; it is intransitive. For example, *أحترقت السيارة*, and which means: the car has been burned.

The verb sometimes has the same meaning as form I (transitive). *أشترى الرجل سيارة*, and which means: the man bought a car.

Form IX: it has its last consonant doubled and is prefixed with *إِ* /i/, which is elided in the imperfect tense. It refers to colors or defects and has the meaning ‘to become or turn. It is intransitive and can be formed from the first or second form or directly from adjectives. For example, *أحمر وجهه* (his face became red).

Form X: it is formed by adding the prefix *إِسْتَأْت* /_ista./ to form I, and *إِ* /i./ is elided in the imperfect tense. This form is represented in three subtypes, which are:

- The verb is reflexive of form IV (transitive). For example, *أستفهم أحمد الأمر* (Ahmad wanted to know about it).
- The verb is transitive of form I (often denoting attempt, request or desire to obtain something). For example, *أستخرج الرجل كنزا* (He dug out treasure)
- The verb is declarative of form I or IV (transitive or intransitive). For example, *استحسن* *الرجل الأمر* (he felt it is OK)

4.2.1 Intransitive Verbs

As it is mentioned earlier, there are some verbs which are transitive, while other verbs are intransitive. Transitive verbs are those which necessitate one object or more than one object. However, there are some verbs which can be transitive in certain stances, and intransitive in other stances. There are some verbs which are always intransitive such as: *طال*, *حُمِر*, *شُرِف*, *ظُرِف*, *كُرِم*, *نهم*, *راح*, *اغتدى*, *انصرف*, *حَسُن*, *تدحرج*, *تمزق*, *وسخ*, *دنس*, *أنكر*, *انفلج*, *احمر*, *اسود*, *ابيض*, *اصفر*, *اقشعر*, *اطمأن*, *احرنجم*, *اشمخر*

4.2.2 Transitive Verbs

Transitive verbs can be followed by one object, two or three objects. Those which take one object like most of the Arabic verbs (see above). However, the verbs which take two objects are such as:

1. *رأى علم - وجد - درى - تعلم - ألقى*: all these verbs express certainty.
2. *ظن - خال - حسب - زعم - عد - حجا - هب*: all these verbs refer to probability.

3. صير - جعل - وهب - اتخذ - اتخذ - ترك - رد : all these verbs express change

Examples:

رأيت الصدق خير وسيلة للنجاح في الحياة (Telling the truth is the best way of success in life)

N.B the aforementioned verbs are only examples; they do not include all verbs.

On the other hand, transitive verbs which take three objects include the following categories:

Fronting *hamza* (ء) to change the verb into a causative case. For example:

رأيت أحمدًا (I saw Ahmad). In this example the verb is followed by one object. However inserting *hamza* (ء) makes the verb take two or three object such as : أرى والدك زيدا خالدًا أخاك

The following verbs take three objects: حَدَّثَ ; أنبأ; نبئت ; أخبر; أنبا; أنبا; نبئت ; حَدَّثَ . All these verbs are synonyms with different expressive meaning. All of them mean “told”.

How to change an intransitive verb into a transitive one:

Following any of the following rules can result in changing the verb from intransitive case into transitive case:

1. Fronting *hamza* (ء)

For example: جلس أحمد \longrightarrow أجلس أحمد عليا
Ahmad sat down \longrightarrow Ahmad made Ali sit down

2. Doubling the middle letter in the verb (عين الفعل). The following is an example:

For example: عظم القائد \longrightarrow عظمت القائد

The commander is great \longrightarrow I highly respected the commander

3. Changing the meter of the verb (see table 2)

4.3 Similarities between English and Arabic with Respect to Transitive and Intransitive Verbs

Both English and Arabic have transitive verbs and intransitive verbs. English as well as Arabic have verbs which can take two objects. They are called in English as direct and indirect object. However, in Arabic both are called objects. Another similarity between the two languages is that intransitive verbs in both English and Arabic can be followed by a prepositional phrase. Additionally, in both two languages, there are verbs which can go transitive in some contexts, and intransitive in other contexts.

4.4 Differences between English and Arabic with Respect to Transitive and Intransitive Verbs

Arabic grammar is more complicated and intricate than English; this applies to all the grammatical patterns and issues in Arabic. In relation to transitive and intransitive verbs, English and Arabic have some differences. For example, in Arabic, all verbs which are intransitive can be changed to be transitive by inserting certain prefixes, or doubling middle letters, and other measures. However, in English you cannot change a verb which is always

intransitive to be transitive. Moreover, Arabic transitive verbs can take more than one object, up to three objects; this does not apply to English.

5. Conclusion

Verbs in English and Arabic express transitivity and intransitivity according to meaning and the context of speaking or writing. It is a core part of the language that some verbs can stand by themselves, without a need for an object; they can express complete meaning without a need for an object. Meanwhile, there are other verbs which need an object to express meaning. In relation to Arabic, some verbs in certain contexts may require up to three objects to give sensible and complete meaning.

This study, however, suggests further studies to be conducted to study other aspects of language differences and similarities, such as copular verbs in English and Arabic, tense and aspect in the two languages, and many other aspects.

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