Syntactic and Semantic Analysis
of English and Arabic Objects:
A Contrastive Study

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Abstract :
   English and Arabic belong to different language families since they have different grammar and structures .The main purpose of this paper is to show similarities and differences between English and Arabic objects in terms of syntactic and semantic classification. Moreover, the current paper aims at highlighting the divergences and convergences that exist between English and Arabic objects from syntactic and semantic point of view .The paper falls into three sections: section one sheds some light on basic terms that are of relevance to the core of the study. Section two deals with the syntactic and semantic analysis of English objects. Section three deals with the syntactic and semantic analysis of Arabic objects. The main findings that this paper has come up with can be summarized as follows : an object is an entity or participant that undergoes an action done by the performer of the action. Syntactically speaking, an English object can be direct , indirect or complement .Semantically speaking , objects can be affected , recipient, attribute and effected. Syntactically speaking , Arabic objects can be cognate , causative ,or concomitant .Semantically speaking , Arabic objects can come as a receiver , agentive or beneficiary.
Keywords: Arabic and English objects , causative , cognate , recipient.

Section One: Introduction
1.1 The Problem
The main problem of the current paper is that Iraqi EFL learners may face difficulties in identifying and understanding the main similarities and differences between English and Arabic objects in terms of syntactic and semantic classifications.

1.2 Aims of the Study
The study aims contrasting objects in English and Arabic in terms of syntactic and semantic classifications as well as this paper aims at highlighting the divergences and convergences that exist between English and Arabic objects from syntactic and semantic point of view.

1.3 Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that contrasting objects in English and Arabic may raise problems to EFL learners due to the differences in the types of objects and differences in language structure .

1.4 Limits of the Study

This study is limited to the English and Arabic objects.

1.5 Value of the Study

It is hoped that this study will be of value to those concerned with grammar , morphology and contrastive studies between English and Arabic .It is also considered useful for students and textbook writers of English and Arabic.

1.6 Procedures

In dealing with objects, the following procedures are adopted:

1. Identifying and classifying the types of objects in English and Arabic .
2. Presenting a contrastive analysis of the English and Arabic objects by presenting a survey of literature concerning the identification , classification and use of English and Arabic objects.
3. Carrying out syntactic and semantic analysis of objects in both languages.

Section Two: Theoretical Background

2.0 Introduction

The current section sheds light on some of the salient grammatical terms that are of relevance to the core of the study .These terms include syntax , types of objects ,semantics and semantic roles.

2.1 Syntax

Syntax is the field of linguistics that studies the rules of language which dictate how different parts of sentences go together. According to many language theorists " syntax is the branch of linguistics that deals with the formation of sentences" (Crystal ,2006: 144).

Syntax refers to the rules that govern the ways in which words combine to form phrases , clauses and sentences(Yule,1999:212) Similarly , Brown and Miller (1991:222) state that syntax can be seen as the governing principle of defining which combinations of linguistic symbols are deemed to be correctly structured by natural language speakers.

2.2 Types of Objects

To begin with ,an object is a noun or pronoun that is governed by a verb or a preposition .There are three types of objects : a direct object , an indirect object , object and object of a preposition (Finch, 2002: 232)

Ruby (2001: 421) states that objects are those entities which are acted upon by subjects ,and objects complete the meaning of verbs by

receiving action from them. Accordingly , objects can be classified into three types.

(a) A direct object is a noun , pronoun , or group of words acting as a noun that b receives the action of a transitive verb .For example ,

   We watched TV.

   I bought a car.

(b) An indirect object is a noun or pronoun that appears with a direct object and names the person or thing that something is given to or done for .For example:

I showed <u>Randy</u> the <u>book.</u>
               IO   DO

They gave <u>him</u> <u>a present</u>
               IO   DO

(c) Objectives complement which complete the meaning of the direct object in a sentence .It is a noun or pronoun that appears with a direct object and describes or renames it . For example:

The president named <u>him</u> <u>administrator of Nasa.</u>
                              DO   OC

 I consider <u>her</u> the best <u>candidate for the job</u>.
               DO   OC   (Ibid :422)

2.3 Semantics

   Semantics is the study of relationships between words and how we construct meanings , shed light on how we experience the world and how we understand others and ourselves (Saeed,1990: 130)

   According to Palmer (1976:1) states "semantics is the technical term used to refer to study of meaning"

   Similarly , Lyons (1995: 122) holds that "semantics is the study of meaning expressed by elements of any language , characterizable   as a symbolic system .It is the goal of semantics to describe the meaning of linguistic elements and to study the principles which allow the assignment of meaning to combinations of these elements.

2.4 Semantic Roles

    A semantic role is the underlying relationship that a participant has with the main verb in a clause.(Thakur,1990:23).For example , if someone named John purposely hits someone named Bill , then John is the agent and Bill is the Patient of hitting event. Therefore , the semantic role of Bill is the same (patient) in both of the following sentences:

         John hit Bill

         Bill was hit by John

In both of the above sentences John has the semantic role of agent.(Ibid :24)

Löbner (2002:111) states that semantic roles keep to account for meaning relations holding between participants and arguments .Semantic roles can be summarized by the following table:

Role	Description	Examples
Agent	Performs the action expressed by the verb	John wrote a love letter
Theme/patient	Undergoes the action /change/ event expressed by the verb	The cat eats the egg.
Experiencer	Experiences a perception Feeling or other state	I heard him
Instrument	An instrument, or a cause , by which	This key opens the door
Locative	A location	The keys are on the desk
Goal	Goal of a movement	Put the keys on the desk.
Path	Path of movement	She rode through the desert

Table (1) Semantic Roles cited from Löbner (2002:111)

Section Three: Syntactic and Semantic Analysis of English Objects
3.0 Introduction
The present section deals with the syntactic and semantic analysis of English objects.
3.1 Syntactic Analysis of English Objects
   Syntactically speaking, an object ,is a noun phrase or clause with nominal function normally follows the subject and the verb phrase. There are four types of objects in English:
 (a) A direct object is a noun ,pronoun , or group of words acting as a noun that receives the action of a transitive verb. For example :
              I watch **the show** until midnight.
To find a direct object in a sentence ,ask whom? Or what? After n action verb if you find no answer, the verb is intransitive and has no direct object.
 (b) An indirect object is a noun or pronoun that appears with a direct object and names the person or thing that something is given to or done for. For example: I gave **him** the book
     "him" is an indirect object that precedes the direct object.
     (Ruby,2001:420)
 (c) An object complement completes the meaning of the direct object in a sentence .It occurs ,therefore , only in sentences that already

contain a direct object. Object complement is a noun phrase ,an adjective phrase , or a clause with nominal function, having a co – referential relation with the subject. For example:

<div align="center">We have proved him wrong</div>

"wrong" is an object of the complement that completes the meaning of the direct object "him" (Quirk,1973:171)

(d) An object of a preposition is a noun or pronoun that comes after preposition. For example:

<div align="center">She lives near Brighton (Ibid,163)</div>

3.2 Semantic Analysis of English Objects

Semantically speaking , objects can be considered semantically as having underlying relationships that a participant has with the main verb in clause elements.

(a) The most typical function of the direct object is that of the affected participant ; i.e. a participant (animate or inanimate) .For example: Many MPs criticized **the prime minister**

" the prime minister " is the affected participant.

Also known as : patient , undergoer since it is affected by an event or undergoes a process.   (Thakur,1984:120)

(b) The most typical function of the indirect object is that of recipient ; i.e.an animate participant being passively implicated by the happening or state. For example: I have found **you** a place.

"you" is the recipient who receives or get a place.

(c) The role of the object complement is that of attribute of the object .For example: They elected him **president**

"president " and " blue" are attributes of the objects "him" and " the wall".

(d) Direct object has the role of locative object .For example:
 The horse jumped **the fence**.

(e) A direct object has the role of effected object .For example:
 Baird invented **television.** (Ibid,121)

3.3 Summary:

Despite the fact that the semantic roles of the elements are quite varied ,there are certain restrictions such as that the object cannot be " agentive " or "instrument" ; that a subject cannot be " effected"; that an indirect object can have only two functions- those of " affected" and " recipient". Syntactically speaking ,there are four of object , a direct object , an indirect object , object complement and object of object of preposition.

Section Four: Syntactic and Semantic Analysis of Arabic Objects

4.0 Introduction : The current section deals with the syntactic and semantic analysis of Arabic objects.

4.1 Syntactic analysis of Arabic objects

In Arabic there are seven types of objects on syntactic grounds :
they are as follows:

1. The cognate object is a type of object in that it is a way of intensifying an action by following the verb with its corresponding verbal noun (masdar). For example :

<div dir="rtl">

قاتلوا قتالاً **عنيفاً**   They fought **bitterly**

نام نوماً **مزعجاً**   He slept a troubled **sleep**

</div>

Sleep is cognate object of the verb slept.

<div dir="rtl">حلت الموضوع حلاً **جذرياً**   It solved the issue **fundamentally**</div>

2. The object of transitive verb is a noun that receives the action or nouns that are acted upon .For example:

<div dir="rtl">حضروا **الاجتماع**   They attended the meeting</div>

3.Averbial expressions of time , place ,and manner , indicating circumstances under which an action takes place. For example :

<div dir="rtl">

تستمر **يوما واحداً**   It lasts one day

جاءوا **فجراً**   They came at dawn

</div>

4.Causative object shows the purpose of an action , usually using an indefinite .For example :

<div dir="rtl">خلال حفلة استقبال اقاموها **تكريما له**   During a reception they gave in his honor</div>

5. The circumstantial accusative is a way to describe a condition , action going on at the same time as the main action .For example :

<div dir="rtl">

رفع يده **معترضا**   He raised his hand objecting

دخلت الصف **متأخرة**   She entered class late

</div>

6. The accusative of specification , often answers the question " in what way " includes the comparative , superlative . For example:

<div dir="rtl">نعلن ذلك **قولا وفعلا**   We announced that in speech and action</div>

<div dir="rtl">كانت اكبر عاصمة **جاها** و **فخامة**   It was the greatest capital in fame and splendor</div>

7. The object of association

<div dir="rtl">سرت **والنهر**   I walked along the river</div>

8. Concomitant object is a type of object that occurs in accusative case and is always preceded by the preposition " with" .For example:

<div dir="rtl">رجعت **والفجر** (أي رجعت مع الفجر)   I came back with dawn</div>

<div dir="rtl">سرت **وضوء القمر**   I stayed up with moonlight   (Aziz ,1989:93)</div>

4.2 Semantic Analysis of Arabic Objects

The current sub-section deals with the semantic analysis of Arabic objects .Semantically speaking objects can be regarded in terms of semantic connotation underlying the meaning that a participant has with the main verb in clause elements.

(a) The most typical semantic function of the direct object is that of the receiver of the action (i.e. similar to that of English patient of theme).For example :

The boy broke **the window** كسر الولد **النافذة**

" the window " is the receiver of the action.

(b) The most typical semantic function of indirect object is " agentive" similar to that of English of prepositional phrase. For example: The students go to **school** ذهب الاولاد الى **المدرسة**

" to school " is agentive case or prepositional phrase.

(c) Another semantic function of indirect object is that of beneficiary similarly to that of English recipient). For example :

My father bought **me** a car اشترى ابي **لي** سيارة

"me " is the recipient or the beneficiary who receives or gets a car.

(d) The other semantic role of a direct object is that of cognate object (masdar) as in the following example:

I rejoiced **widely** فرحت فرحاً **جذلاً**

" widely" is a cognate object (similar to that of adverb of manner in English) (Ibid: 94)

Conclusion:

The current research paper has come up with the following findings:

(1) English and Arabic are the two languages with different structures and grammar.

(2) The syntactic elements of English sentences can be S-V-O (subject , verb , object whereas the syntactic elements of Arabic sentences can be V-S-O (verb , subject , object)

(3) Syntactically speaking , an English object can be the following : direct object , indirect object , object complement, an object of preposition whereas semantically speaking , an English object can be affected participant , recipient , attribute locative or effected.

(4) Syntactically speaking , an Arabic object can be either of the following : cognate object , causative object , circumstantial accusative or concomitant object whereas semantically speaking , an Arabic object can be the receiver of the action , a genitive , or beneficiary.

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