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A Grammatical Analysis of Transitivity and Intransitivity in Al-Imran Sura in The Glorious Qura'an
with Reference to English

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Article Information	Abstract

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English and Arabic are distinctive languages with similarities and differences in syntax. The primary goal of this work is to provide more light in this area, for it is hypothesized that there are some similarities and differences between the two languages concerning transitivity and intransitivity. The work also provides a grammatical analysis of transitive and intransitive verbs in Al-Imran Sura to shed light on these verb categories in Arabic, and then, to achieve the purpose for which this work is done. Thus, it consists of two main parts: the first thoroughly examines the two languages' intransitivity and transitivity, and the second focuses mostly on the analysis mentioned above. Finally, the work ends up with the conclusions that the researchers reached out.

1. Introduction

Arabic and English are two different languages, however, both languages share some features according to Chomsky's Universal Grammar (UG). All languages have nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and prepositions. Despite these similarities, they differ in syntax. In Arabic language, for instance, the sentence usually starts with the verb. On the other hand, English starts the sentence with the NP (noun phrase). The study is supposed to reveal how similar intransitive and transitive verbs are in English and Arabic, as well as how verbs could change their meaning depending on the situation.

2. Objectives of the Study

1. The primary goal of this work is to highlight the similarities and differences between the two languages' verb types, namely intransitive and transitive verbs.

2. Examining Al-Imran Sura's syntactically transitive and intransitive verbs is another goal.

3. Transitive and Intransitive Verbs in English

A transitive verb is one that needs an object to be the recipient of the action; some examples of these are:

- The teacher <u>wrote</u> Various examples.

- Linda <u>borrowed</u> the book from her classmate.

- She <u>gave</u> the gift into her sister.

- The committee members will <u>raise</u> money for the new project.

Even if objects follow them, there are situations when we could omit the object if it doesn't significantly or at all add to the meaning. For instance:

- John <u>is writing</u> (an essay).

- Due to the fact that the meaning is embedded in the verb, the word "essay" could be omitted. When a transitive verb takes more than one object, it is said to have the direct object (D.O.) and the indirect object (I.O.). Prepositions could come before the direct objects and be shifted to the conclusion of the sentence. As an illustration:

I.O. D.O.

- He bought <u>Rachel</u> a <u>present</u>.

- He bought a <u>present</u> for <u>Rachel</u>.

 D.O. I.O.

Only transitive verbs can be used in the passive (Azar, 2002: 280), for example:

- Bob mailed the letter.

- The letter was mailed by Bab.

　　Many verbs could be classified as both intransitive and transitive depending on how a certain verb is used in the sentence, for example:

- After she cleaned up, she left.

　She left the bag on the table.

- The students spoke French.

　They spoke well.

- Tom studied grammar.

　He studied hard.

　We must determine whether or not the verb has an object in order to determine whether it is intransitive or transitive. Break, write, move, end, finish, burn, sound, open, develop, alter, shine, increase, begin, tear, join, divide, turn, shut, drive, bend, etc. are all examples of verbs which could be both intransitive and transitive (Cobuild, 1999:154).

On the other hand, some English verbs are always intransitive. An intransitive verb is an action verb without a direct object (Ibid). Intransitive verbs usually tell what someone or something does, or they are followed by words that tell when, where, or how an action occurs. For example:

- Dogs obey. (the action verb <u>obey</u> works alone)

- Bats see well in the dark. (the verb is followed by words that tell how and when)

- I slept well last night.

An intransitive verb is not used in the passive, for example:

- An accident happened. (active)

- (incorrect) An accident was happened.

Many intransitive verbs always or typically have adjuncts after them (Cobuild, 1999: 139). The adjunct must be prepositional phrases, for example:

- Everything you see here <u>belongs to me</u>.

- I'm <u>relying on</u> Bill.

4. Complex Transitive Verbs

A complex transitive verb needs both a direct object and an object complement. It is often referred to as a resultative verb or an attributive ditransitive verb. Two objects of a complicated transitive verb may exist, yet they serve distinct purposes (Sells and Kim 2008: 115). For instance:

- They called him <u>Robinson Crusoe</u>.

"Him" is the sentence's object, while "Robinson Crusoe" is its object complement.

The portions of the predicate that follow a direct object and describe it in order to complement it are called the object complements, sometimes referred to

as the object predicate or the object predicative. The complement of the object might be:

1. Pronouns

2. Noun (phrases)

3. Adjective (phrases)

4. Participles

5. Infinitive clauses

6. Adverb (phrases)

7. Relative clauses

8. Prepositional phrases

(Klammer et al, 2000: 112)

The above types can be shown in the following examples:

- John will make her <u>sad</u>.

- The director will make her <u>a movie star</u>.

- I will make her <u>mine</u>.

- They chose her <u>for captain</u>.

- I found her <u>singing in the room</u>.

- Childhood experiences make us <u>who we are</u>.

- They consider him <u>to be a gentleman</u>.

- Put the eggs <u>in the frig</u>.

In English, "make, call, turn into, find, believe, keep, consider, prove, and think" are the most often used complicated transitive verbs. It is crucial to remember that a large number of intricate transitive verbs could function as transitive verbs even in the absence of an object complement. In comparison with their complicated transitive form, many verbs may have a distinct meaning when employed transitively in this situation (Ibid). For instance:

- I found <u>the bag</u>.

- I found the bag fascinating.

Distinguishing between a complex transitive verb and a ditransitive verb is also crucial. We must focus on the noun phrases that follow the transitive verbs for accomplishing this. The verb is complex transitive if the noun phrase that comes after it relates to the same thing/person, as in:

- I consider <u>Tom</u> my best friend.

If the noun phrase following the verb does not refer to the same person/thing, the verb then is a ditransitive one, as in:

- I made <u>Tom</u> a sandwich.

5. Intransitive and Transitive Verbs in Arabic[1]

One classification of verbs in Arabic is that of intransitives and transitives. Intransitive verbs are those which settle for their subjects and do not require objects, as in:

- ذهب زيدٌ.   (Zeid went)

- مكث عمرٌ. (Omar stayed)

- Transitive verbs, on the other hand, are those which require objects to complete the meaning of the context. They are sub-classified into three types:

- 1. Verbs requiring one object (mono-tranisitve)

- 2. Verbs requiring two objects (di-transitive)

- 3. Verbs requiring three objects (tri-transitive)

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[1] Following Al-Andalusi: 1989, Abdulhameed: 1964, and Ibn Ya'eesh W.D.

1. Verbs requiring one object: the following kinds of verbs are included in this type:

a. muscular verbs; those related to muscular actions in which we use one or more muscles:

- ضرب الرجلُ ابنهُ.   (The man hit his son)
- أكلتُ تفاحةً.   (I ate an apple)

b. mental verbs; those related to mental activities:

- فهمتُ الحديثِ.   (I understand the speech)
- حفظَ الولدُ القصيدةَ.   (The boy memorized the poem)

c. sense verbs; those related to senses:

- أبصرتُ رجلاً.   (I saw a man)
- شممتُ عطراً.   (I smell some scent)

2. Verbs requiring two objects: as far as the relation between the two objects is considered, verbs in this type are divided into two sub-types:

a. Verbs that require objects with different references:

Arab grammarians call such verbs "effective verbs" whose effect transfers from their subject to two different objects, as in:

- أعطيتُ الفتاةَ وردةً.   (I gave the girl a flower)
- "فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا". (المؤمنون: ١٤)

"Then we dressed the bones (in) flesh" (Ghali, 2002: 342)

b. Verbs that require objects having the same reference:

Those verbs do not have such an effect as that of the verbs in the previous type, they only have two objects which are originally a subject and a predicate (مبتدأ وخبر). The meaning of such verbs has a relation to certainty and doubt, and they are

حسبَ (think)، ظنّ (think)، خالَ (reckon)، علِمَ (know)، رأى (consider)، وجَدَ (find out)، زعمَ (say).

- ظننتُ <u>زيداً أخاك</u>.   (I thought that Zeid is your brother)

3. Verbs requiring three objects: such verbs are divided into two types:

a. Verbs that are transitive for one or two objects transformed to transitive for three objects by adding "the transforming Hamza"[1], such as:

أعلمَ (inform)، أرى (show)، أخبرَ (tell)، أنبأ (announce)

- "كَذَلِكَ يُرِيهِمُ اللَّهُ <u>أَعْمَالَهُمْ حَسَرَاتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ</u>" (البقرة: ١٦٧)

"Thus Allah will show them their deeds (as) regrets for them" (Ghali; 2002: 25)

b. Other verbs that are typically transitive for three objects, such as:

حدَّث (talk)، خبرّ (tell)، نبّأ (announce)

- خبرّني عليٌّ <u>محمداً قادماً</u>.

- Ali told me (that) Mohammed is coming.

5.1 Changing intransitive verbs into transitive:

An intransitive verb can be changed to transitive by one of the following ways:

1. Adding the transforming 'hamza' (see the previous section), as the fallowing:

Intransitive	Transitive
(come down) نزلَ	(get something/ someone down) أنزلَ
(go out) خرجَ	(bring something/ someone out) أخرَجَ
(go away) ذهبَ	(let something/ someone go away) اذهَبَ
(grow up) نشأً	(make something/ someone grow up) أنشأً

- خرجَ الولدُ إلى الشارع. (intransitive)

- The boy went out to the street.

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[1] Transforming hamza, or transitivity hamza, which is added to intransitive verb changing it to transitive, or added to transitive verb changing it from one type to another, i.e. from mon-transitive to di-transitive or from di-transitive to tri-transitive.

- "كَمَا أَخْرَجَ أَبَوَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ" (الأعراف: ٢٧) (transitive)

- "… just as he brought your parents out of the Garden" (Ghali, 2002: 153)

2. doubling the second letter of the verb in the regular meters[2]:

Intransitive	Transitive
نزَلَ (come down)	نزّلَ (send down)
خرجَ (go out)	خرّجَ (bring out)
فرحَ (get happy)	فرّحَ (make happy)

- "نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ" (الشعراء، ١٩٣) (intransitive)

- "The trustworthy spirit has come down with it" (Ghali, 2002: 375)

- "وَنَزَّلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاء مَاءً مُبَارَكًا" (ق: ٩) (transitive)

- "And We have sending down from the heaven water blessed" (Ghali, 2002: 518)

5.2 Verbs that are both intransitive and transitive:

Some verbs can be either intransitive or transitive according to the context in which they are used, such as:

بانَ (get clear)، رجَعَ (return)، زادَ (increase)، نقصَ (decrease)

- "فَرَجَعُوا إِلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ" (الأنبياء: ٦٤) (intransitive)

- "So they returned one to another" (Ghali, 2002: 327)

- "فَرَجَعْنَاكَ إِلَى أُمِّكَ" (طه: ٤٠) (transitive)

- "So we returned you to your mother" (Ghali, 2002: 314)

6. Differences and Similarities between the Two Languages

Researchers have discovered a number of differences and similarities between English and Arabic after examining intransitive and transitive verbs in each language. These are the most significant of them:

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[2] Morphologically, Arabic verbs are built upon specific meters. The basic and regular meter normally consists of three letters.

1. Both Arabic and English have transitive and intransitive verbs.

2. The two languages have verbs that take two objects.

3. In both languages some verbs can be used as transitive and intransitive.

4. In Arabic, some verbs can be changed from being intransitive into being transitive by adding certain prefixes to the verb. In English, a verb that is always used as an intransitive verb cannot be changed to be transitive one.

7. Semantic Analysis of the Intransitive and Transitive Verbs in Al-Imran Sura

In this section, the researchers will perform a semantic analysis of some verbs mentioned in Al-Imran Sura. This analysis is associated directly with the morphological meters of the verb in Arabic.

1. Verbs formed on the meter (fa'ala فَعَلَ):

Meter (fa'la فَعَلَ) is considered the lightest among other meters and the most commonly used not only in the Holy Qur'an but in speech in general. In Al-Imran Sura, there are more than (100) verbs formed on this meter, some of them are intransitive and some are transitive. For example:

- "إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ" (آل عمران: ٤) (intransitive)

"Surely (the ones) who have disbelieved in the signs of Allah will have a strict torment" (Ghali, 2002: 50)

- "فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ" (آل عمران: ١١) (transitive)

"So Allah took them away for their guilty deeds" (Ghali, 2002: 51)

Semantically, verbs of this meter are generally employed to achieve narrative or declarative purposes, i.e. they are used either to narrate actions or to declare something; that is why, in our opinion, they are more commonly used in speech than other verbs. For example:

- "كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّى لَكِ هَذَا قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ" (آل عمران: ٣٧)

"Whenever Zakariyya entered the Chamber to her, he found (a) provision in her presence. He said, O Maryam, however does this come to you? She said It is from the Providence of Allah, surely Allah provides whomever He decides without reckoning" (Ghali, 2002: 54)

- "الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا" (آل عمران: ١٧٣)

"The ones to whom the multitude said, surely the multitude have already gathered against you, so be apprehensive of them. Yet it increased them in belie?" (Ghali, 2002: 72).

Both the above verses contain intransitive and transitive verbs that are all used in a narrative or declarative sense.

2. **Verbs formed on the meter (فَعَّلَ):**

   Such verbs are typically transitive and semantically employed for the following purposes.

   (a) Multiplying the action embedded in the verb. For example:

   - "نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ" (آل عمران: ٣)

   "He has been sending down upon you the Book with the Truth" (Ghali, 2002: 50)

   The verb (نَزَّلَ) (nazzala = He send down) denotes that the action of sending down the Holy Qur'an has been multiplied, it has not been sent as one whole but on multiple times; unlike the verb (انزَلَ) (anzala – to send down) which implies the meaning of sending down as one whole at once.

(b) Reinforcing the meaning of the verb:

Verbs of the meter (فعَّل) convey more forceful meanings, the verb (نزّل), for instance, is more effective and has a more emphatic sense than the verb (أنزَل).

3. **Verbs formed on the meter (af'ala افعَلَ):**

Such verbs are mostly formed on this meter to transform from being intransitive to transitive. For example, the verb (خرَجَ) (kharaja = to get out) is typically intransitive but it will transform to be transitive when adding (همزة التعدية) (hamza of transitivity) and becomes (أخرَجَ) (akhraja = to bring something/someone out).

- "كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ" (آل عمران: ١١٠)

"You have been the most charitable nation brought out to mankind" (Ghali, 2002: 64)

4. **Verbs formed on the meter (فاعَلَ):**

The basic meaning of this meter implies a sense of involvement of two (persons) in an action in such a way that they share the effect of that action on each other, and thus each can become the door of the action. In this sense, verbs of this meter are mainly transitive though there may be some intransitive verbs. The following verse is an illustration of such verbs:

- "يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ" (آل عمران:٢٠٠)

"O you who have believed, be patient, and vie in patience, and be garrisoned and be pious to Allah, that possibly you would prosper" (Ghali, 2002: 76)

Another meaning implied in the morphological structure of these verbs is that of increasing and exaggeration. This is clearly illustrated by the difference between the verbs (sabara صبَرَ) and (saabara صابَرَ) mentioned in the above verse; while the former means "to be patient", the latter indicates "to increase patience".

8. Conclusions

After analysing and reviewing the grammar of the two languages English and Arabic respectively, the present study has come out with the following general remarks:

1. The two languages have intransitive and transitive verbs.

2. Both languages have verbs which could be intransitive and transitive based on the context.

3. Arabic language differs from English in its possibility to change intransitive verbs into transitive by applying inflection on the main verb.

4. When analyzing Al-Imran Sura, it has been found that the number of verses that contain intransitive verbs are (56). Transitive verbs with one object are found in (91) verses. Ditransitive verbs with two objects are less in number for the verses in which they are found are only (20).

5. According to the semantic analysis performed by the researchers, it has been found that transitive and intransitive verbs formed by the meter (فعل) are mainly used to convey both narrative and declarative purposes. Verbs formed by the meter (فَعَّل) are mainly used to perform as transitive verbs to convey an embedded meaning within the sentence or to reinforce the actual meaning of the verb.

6. The research has also found that the meter (فاعَلَ) is only achieved by transitive verbs and the semantic implication of such verbs is mainly to show the involvement of more than one person in the action or to show exaggeration.

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