PhD Course in Contrastive Linguistics

English and Arabic Morphology

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1. Introduction

Morphology is the study of the internal structure of words and of the rules by which words are formed. It is divided into two main branches: Free morpheme that can stand alone with meaning and bound morpheme which can not be articulated with meaning. The bound morpheme can be dismantled into **inflectional and derivational morphology**. Inflection is a grammatical branch that does not change the part of the speech and the meaning of the stem. Derivation is concerned with the formation of new lexemes by affixation compounding with the formation of new lexemes from two (or more) potential stems. Derivation is sometimes subdivided into class-maintaining derivation and class-changing derivation. Morphology consists of two layers: an outer one involving **inflectionally** bound forms and an inner one the layer of **derivation**.

2. Part One : Inflectional Morphology

2.1. Inflectional Morphology of English

1 Number

English has two forms of number: **singular and plural**. **Nouns, pronouns, verbs, the indefinite article and demonstratives** are marked for number. **Adjectives and the definite article** are not marked for number.(Reima)

a. Nouns

In English, the class noun is associated with an inflectional category number. The plural suffix /-s/ may be added to the base form which is singular to convert it to plural. This plural suffix has a large number of allomorphs. The following is a

detailed description of the form, distribution, and meaning of the plural suffix.

(1) The regular plural suffix *-s* is added to singular nouns e.g.: *cats,*

(2) The suffix *-es* is added to singular nouns ending in e.g.: *buses.,*

(3) The suffix /-s/ occurs in some plural invariable nouns. e.g.: *scissors,*

(4) Some singular nouns ending in -f have a regular plural: *beliefs,*

(5) The suffix /-en/ is used with or without additional changes*; child, children.*

b. Verbs

In English, verbs are not fully inflected for number. Only the present third person singular is marked for number.

e.g.: He goes, she writes, it eats

c. Pronouns

Distinctions occur with the 1st person *(I, we);* and 3rd person *(he, she, it, they).* The 2nd person pronoun *(you)* is unmarked for number. English also makes number distinctions in definitive pronouns, e.g.: *one, ones; other, others.*

d. Determiners

English articles and demonstratives in some forms show number agreement with the noun they modify. The indefinite article occurs only before singular nouns *(a book, an orange).* Demonstratives have singular-plural forms:

This book \these books.

2 Gender

Gender is a set of class, governing the forms of **nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives and articles;** specifically, in English and Arabic, the masculine and the feminine gender. English makes gender distinctions. **Gender distinctions are not made in the article, verb, or adjective.** Some pronouns are gender sensitive *He* (masculine), *she* (feminine), *it* (neuter). The it can refer to certain creatures of either sex- *baby, cat-* and to sexless things- *car, beauty, book.*

The others (*I, we, you, they*) are unmarked. **(Stageberg:1967).**

The English noun makes gender distinctions king / queen

Other variations: the variant is sometimes by adding: e.g. *duke duchess/ hero heroine*

3. Comparison

Comparison is the modification of **adjectives and adverbs** to show its three degrees of quality: positive, comparative and superlative.

English Comparison

Comparison may be indicated by inflections. Many English adjectives inflect for the comparative and superlative as follows:

* -er and -est as in: e.g. long longer longest.

*some two-syllable adjectives and adverbs, especially those ending in -ly and -y can take the comparative and superlative suffixes -er, -est,

e.g. polite politer politest \ early earlier earliest

* A superlative form is used with a few adjectives, *e.g. good better best*

4. Tense and Aspect

English language has **two tenses ,past and present** , the present tense inflectional suffix is –s which used with 3rd person singular

present : He **leaves** to London tomorrow.) .

the past tense inflectional suffix is -**ed**

past : he played.

There is no obvious future tense corresponding to the time/tense relation for present and past. The future is denoted by means of modal auxiliaries -   I will go to school. (modal auxiliary).

In terms of aspect, **there are two basic grammatical aspects: progressive and perfective**. Progressive aspect is combined with two the tenses , the present and the past, aspect is shown by the use of suffixes **{-ing} and {-ed} and**/or auxiliary words be and have as in:

they are running   he has played

5 Case

Case is the relationship of a noun, pronoun, or adjective to other words in a grammatical construction, shown by word order or by prepositions in inflected languages and by change in word form in inflected languages. English nouns may have case contrast, i.e , the genitive (possessive) case. Possession in English can be signaled in two ways: the -'s genitive suffix added to singular and plural nouns and the of-genitive form.

- <u>**-'s genitive**</u>: **the boy's book**, **the boys' books**, **the men's names.**

- of-genitive: **the price of the book**, **the name of the game.**

6 Person

When the **suffix -s** is added to the base form of a verb in English, it indicates **third person singular number present** tense. **Helping verbs**, is, does and has refer to third person singular present tense as well. the idiosyncratic **verb (be)** is the only verb that has a form for the first person singular present tense .

 The auxiliary are designates first or third person plural and second person singular and plural. T**he past tense form was is a sign of first person or third person** singular number and were shows second person singular and plural and third person plural.

7 Mood

English has **three mood categories: indicative , imperative and subjunctive** .

- **Indicative:** English verbs are marked for the indicative mood in the present third person singular only by the suffix -s. The past tense form is not marked for the indicative, e.g.**: I go, he go<u>es</u>, she go<u>es</u>, we went, you went.**

- **Imperative**

4

English verbs are not inflectionally marked for the imperative. The imperative is the uninflected verb form used with the second person you, **e.g.: Come here. Lock the door**

- **Subjunctive**

It lacks the use of –s suffix that appear in the 3ʳᵈ person singular verb. The subjunctive is used in that-clauses after some verbs and adjectives such as insist, demand, require, move, ask, propose, suggest, essential, necessary , or expressing a strong wish or when an unreal meaning is expressed.

e.g. I suggested that he go on a bus tour –long live the queen – if I were rich , I would build a hospital.

8 Voice

English verbs have active form and passive form. The passive voice in English is a morphosyntactic operation in the sense that the head verb is morphologically changed into its past participle form and is followed by a form of be that indicates tense and aspect and sentence word order is also changed. as in:

He plays tennis : tennis is played.

2.2. Inflectional Morphology of Arabic

1 Number: Arabic has three forms of number**: singular, dual and plural**. Arabic subjects and verbs, demonstratives and nouns, adjectives and nouns, and relative pronouns and nouns show number agreement. Arabic plural is classified into regular and broken (irregular)   .

a.*Nouns:* Arabic nouns have three number contrasts: singular, dual, and plural. The dual and plural are marked by special inflectional   suffixes.   **The   dual inflectional** suffix has two forms: / ان /‏ (NOM) and /ين/ (ACC/GEN)

Dual: NOM :   معلمـان   two male teachers'

معلمتان   two male teachers'

5

ACC/GEN: **معلمين** two male teachers'

معلمتين 'two female teachers'

Arabic has two types of **plural**: sound plural (SP) and broken '(ablaut) plural (BPY SPs are formed by suffixation. Masculine nouns take /ون/ (NOM)' and /ين/ (ACC/GEN), whereas feminine ones take / ات/ (NOM) and (ACC/GEN)

Masculine: **معلمون** (NOM)' / **معلمين** (ACC/GEN) (teachers).

Feminine: **معلمات** (NOM) and (ACC/GEN) (teachers).

b. Adjectives

Arabic makes number distinctions in adjectives. An adjective may be singular, dual or plural. Dual adjectives are formed by adding the dual suffix /-aan, -aani/ to the singular form in the nominative case; and by adding the suffix /-ayn, -ayni/ to the singular form in the oblique (accusative or genitive case),

Singular	, **dual**	, **plural**
mas: /مجتهد/	مجتهدان, مجتهدين	/مجتهدون
fem /مجتهدة /	مجتهدتين مجتهدتان	مجتهدات

c. Verbs

In Arabic, perfect (past), imperfect (present) and imperative verbs are inflected for number:

- perfect:

singular: شربتُ , شربتَ , شربتِ , شربتْ

dual : شربا

plural : شربنَ- شربنا

- Imperfect:

singular: اشرب -تشرب ـ يشرب -تشربين

dual : تشربان- يشربان

plural : -تشربن-يشربون

- Imperative:, اشرب ـ اشربي – اشربا ـ اشربوا

d. Pronouns

Arabic pronoun system makes distinctions for number (هي, هو, انتَ, انتِ ,انا) are **singular**; (هما, انتما) are **dual**; (نحن ,انتم) are **plural** .

The **relative pronouns** (التي ، الذي) are **singular**; (اللتين ، اللتان ، اللذين ، اللذان) are **dual**; and (الذين ، اللائي , اللاتي, اللواتي) are **plural .**

e. Demonstratives

Arabic makes gender distinction in demonstrative pronouns.

Singular:

Mas	**Fem**
هذا ولد	هذه بنت
ذاك, ذلك معلم	تلك معلمة

Dual :

Mas	**Fem**
هذان رجلان	هاتين بنتين / هاتان بنتان
هذين رجلين	

plural:

Mas	**fem**
هؤلاء رجال	هؤلاء نساء
اولئك رجال	اولئك نساء

2 Gender

Arabic makes gender distinctions **in nouns, adjectives, verbs, pronouns, relative pronouns and demonstratives.** There are two genders: masculine and feminine. Persons, things and animals may be masculine or feminine. **The agreement of noun adjective, noun-verb, noun demonstrative, and noun-relative pronoun in gender**, masculine noun requires masculine adjective and masculine verb , same as for feminine noun.

الطالبة الذكية ـــــــــ الطالب الذكي ,   جاء الطالب ـــــــجاءت الطالبة

3 Comparison

In Arabic, **the comparative and the superlative** are expressed by the relative. The relative is derived from verbs. The relative is formed as follows:

-The pattern ?af9al أفعل is used to derive the comparative and superlative forms from a verbal adjective consisting of three radicals:

كبير (محمد اكبر من علي)

- The superlative is formed by adding the definite article al- ال to the comparative form or by deleting the preposition min **(محمد هو الاكبر)**.

4 Tense and Aspect

Arabic language has two tenses , **past (الماضي) and present (المضارع),** , the past tense is marked by suffixes ,whereas present is marked by suffixes and prefixes as well as internal vowel change. There is no future tense corresponding to the time/tense relation for present and past. The future time is rendered by means of the future particles(سوف ,سـ) .

past: (كتبَ) - He wrote / she wrote (كتبت)

present (يكتبُ) - He writes , / she writes (تكتب)

future - (سيكتبُ) (سوف يكتبون) (سوف تكتب)

5 Case

Arabic nouns have different case markers depending on their number and definiteness. They have three cases: رفع **'nominative'**, نصب **'accusative'** and جر **'genitive'**. Case endings are marked by /-u/, /-a/ and /-i/, respectively. If a noun is indefinite, an -n is added.

(1)   Nominative case:

جاءت البنتُ (**the girl** came)

(2)   Accusative case:

كتبت البنت **الدرسَ** (the girl wrote **the lesson**).

(3)   Genitive case

The genitive, on the other hand, is used after all prepositions.

القلم على **الطاولة** (the pen is on **the table**)

 The genitive is also used for the second member of الاضافة construction 'construct case/state'.

• اسم **البنتِ** جميل   (The girl's name is beautiful).'

6 Person

Arabic verbs and personal pronouns inflect for three persons: first person (I, we),second person (you), and third person (she, he, they). First person (**انا ـ نحن**) there is no gender distinction. For the second person, there are five forms of "you": masculine singular **انتَ** , feminine singular **انتِ** , dual **انتما**, masculine plural **انتم**   and feminine plural **انتن** . For the third person, there are six verbal distinctions and five pronoun distinctions: he (**هو**), she (**هي**), they-two masculine (**هما**), they-two feminine (**هما**), they masculine (**هم**) and they feminine (**هن**).Thus, the total number of person categories in Arabic is thirteen, as opposed to the seven of English (I, you, he, she, it, we, they).

7 Mood

Arabic has three mood categories: **indicative** (**الرفع**) **subjunctive** (**النصب**)   and **jussive** (**الجزم**) and they are marked by suffixation as follow:

Indicative: used with imperfect and perfect forms. In the imperfect it has (**الضمة**) at its end while in the perfect it is expressed by (**الفتحة**). e.g. – كتبَ الطالب الدرس
يكتبُ الطالب الدرس

Subjunctive: Imperfect verbs are marked for the subjunctive mood by (**الفتحة**) or elision of n (**حذف النون**). e.g. اريدُ ان ادرس – لن يدرسوا

Jussive : Imperfect verbs are marked for jussive by (**السكون**) after use of jussive particles(لم ـ لما) or elision of n (**حذف النون**) or elision of final long vowels

(حذف حروف العلة)

Jussive: **يلعبْ** لم ـ يلعب : السكون

Elision of n: لم يأكلوا ـــ ياكلون : **حذف النون**

Elision of final long vowels: ارم – ارمي ـ لم يعط – يعطي : **حذف حروف العلة**

8 Voice

Arabic verbs are conjugated to indicate the passive voice. The passive voice in Arabic is mainly a morphological operation. The past and present forms of the Arabic verb are changed into passive by simply changing the vowel pattern

شرب احمد الماء : شُرِبَ الماء

يشرب احمد الماء : يُشْرِبَ الماء

3. **Part Two : Derivational Morphology**

3.1 Derivational Morphology of English

 Derived stems (derivatives) are divided into three types:

-        **Prefixes** (bound morpheme attached at the beginning of the word). such as **distrust , unhappy**

-        **Suffixes** (bound morpheme attached at the end of the word). It can be noun suffixes as in [**mile-age , manage-ment , kind- ness** ,Chomsky-an], or it can be adjective as in **[worri-ed , danger-ous ,quick-ly, active-ate].**

-        **Infixes**: ablaut (bound morpheme attached within the word) ,they are replacement rather than addition and appear in few plural nouns as in[**foot-feet , mouse-mice**]. It is similar to Arabic root-pattern system.

3.2. Derivational Morphology of Arabic

1. Arabic affixation: Arabic morphology is highly systematic but differs from the English one basically in that it consists primarily of a system of consonant roots which interlock with patterns of vowels (containing consonants sometimes) to construct words or word stems.

He wrote	كتبَ	writer	كاتب
It was written	كُتب	he corresponds	كاتب
Book	كتاب	write	اكتب
Books	كُتبْ		

The shifting of patterns around the consonantal root accomplishes a great deal in terms of word creation (derivation) as in (كاتب) writer – (كتاب) book –books and to some extent, word inflection (e.g., pluralization) as in كَتَبَ -he wrote or كُتب- books.

In Arabic ,New words are derived through analogy al istiqaaqu bi-l- qiyaas (الاشتقاق بالقياس) , derivation involves arranging the root (carrier of primary lexical meaning) in different patterns known as اوزان , صيغ , قوالب , each has a specific signification. For example ,derived verbs (الافعال المشتقة) fall into possible 15 patterns (only 10 are used).

Arabic also has derived nouns which are derived through affixation ,Arabic nouns either primitive (جامدة) or derived (مشتقة) ,for example the lexical item مشمس sunny- is derived from primitive item شمس sun- and from the from the verb اشمس to become sunny.

4. The similarities and differences of English and Arabic

A. Similarities

1. Both English and Arabic share conjugation and declination in inflectional morphology.

2. Both English and Arabic use the affixes consistently as the main facility in the word formation.

3. Both English and Arabic share modification as one of morphological process (besides affixation) in the word formation.

4. Both English and Arabic inflectional morphology is related to the change of tenses, personal and number.

5. Differences between English and Arabic Inflectional

1. Number

First, Arabic nouns have dual number, whereas English ones don't. Second, Arabic plural contrasts are realized according to regular plural patterns, whereas English plural contrasts are realized by both regular -s plural sufix and irregular plurals. Third, duality in English is marked lexically rather than morphologically. Finally, unlike English nouns, a few Arabic nouns have two broken plurals that are different in meaning. First, the classification of Arabic verbs into either basic or derived is based on morphological changes, whereas the classification of English verbs into either auxiliary or main is based on syntactic principles. Second, Arabic verbs are inflected for gender, whereas English verbs are not. Third, Arabic verbs are inflected for dual number, whereas English verbs are not.

2. Gender

First, English nouns have natural gender, whereas Arabic nouns have grammatical gender. Second, Arabic has gender agreement between the noun, pronoun, adjective and verb, whereas English doesn't.

3.Comparison

English has two suffixes (-er, -est) that mark comparative and superlative degrees of the majority of adjectives, whereas Arabic has one verb pattern fa'ala فـد from which both comparative and superlative degrees are derived

4. Case

First, English nouns only exhibit genitive case contrasts, whereas Arabid nouns exhibit nominative, accusative and genitive case contrasts. Second, the Arabic genitive case has different forms depending on the number and definiteness of the noun, whereas the English one doesn't.

5.Tense

First, both English tenses are marked by suffixes, whereas Arabic imperfect tense is marked by prefixes and suffixes. Second, the English present tense suffix is added only to third person singular verbs, whereas the Arabic imperfect prefixes and suffixes are added to all forms of verbs in their person and number distinctions.

6. Mood

First, English has two marked moods (subjunctive and imperative), whereas Arabic has three marked moods (indicative, subjunctive and jussive). Second, English mood markers are lexicalized, whereas Arabic ones are inflectional.

7. Voice

In Arabic the active form of the verb is made passive by internal vocalic change, whereas in English the active form of the verb is made passive by changing it into the -ed participle and by introducing the appropriate form of "be".

Derivational
English and Arabic derivational affixation:

-      English derivation involves affixation , compounding and ablaut ,whereas Arabic derivation involves affixation , ablaut and root-pattern formation.
-      Derivational affixation is very productive in English but less in Arabic as Arabic has very few suffixations and prefixes.
-      Large number of English stems are of Latin and Greek origin , whereas Arabic derivational process work on purely native roots.
-      The root in English is fixed in a way does not allow of infixation , whereas it is possible in Arabic. كتب -----كاتب ----كتاب

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