



Transforming Finite Subordinate Sentences into Non- Finite and Verbless Sentences with Reference to Translation : A Contrastive Study

Lecturer. Mustafa Nu'man Ahmed

College of Political Science \ University of Mustansiriyah

Linguistics and Translation

Mustafatranslator2@gmail.com

07807307906

Abstract:

This study is a contrastive syntactic analysis for the purpose of showing the possibility of transforming finite subordinate sentences into non-finite and verbless sentences. Some English and Arabic adverbial finite sentences could be changed into non-finite or verbless sentences. This change may occur by ellipsis of some parts of the subordinate sentences or by converting the finite verb into a non-finite verb. The present study deals with the problem of transforming finite subordinate sentences into non-finite and verbless sentences as they appear within the context of the complex sentence. These sentences have different sorts of syntactic structures which could pose problems to translators. This study aims at demonstrating (1) Whether all types of English subordinate adverbial sentences, which have a finite verb, can be transformed into non-finite or verbless sentences and (2) Whether Arabic has surface structures which correspond to the English non-finite or verbless sentences. This study limits itself to the subordinate adverbial sentences as they appear within the context of the complex sentence. Other types of subordinate sentences, nominal or adjectival, are beyond the scope of this study. It is hoped that this study is of some theoretical and practical value to those concerned with syntactic structures and translation.

The methodology adopted in dealing with the subject under investigation is Transformational- Generative Grammar.

Key words: finite sentence, non-finite sentence, syntax, translation, verbless sentence, subordinate sentence .

Introduction



A complex sentence, which contains one or more adverbial sentences, is a type of syntactic structure where the syntactic and semantic relations between the superordinate sentence and the subordinate sentence are assumed to be determined, in many cases, in the deep structure, especially if the adverbial sentence is transferred into a verbless sentence or into a sentence with a non-finite verb. In this connection, Chomsky (1970: 139) says:

“Grammatical relations are defined in a general way in terms of configuration within phrase-markers [tree Diagram] and that semantic interpretation involves only these grammatical relations specified in deep structure although it may also involve certain properties of surface structure “ *

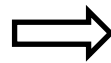
*For further information, see (Radford, 2004: 94 , Liles, 2012: 66, Koutsoudas, 2011: 78)

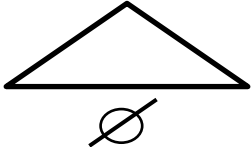
It is to be mentioned that the term “subordinate sentence” will be used throughout this study to replace the traditional term “subordinate clause”. Transformational-Generative Grammar (henceforth T.T.G), the model which will be adopted in this study, rightly considers the clause to be a sentence embedded in the superordinate sentence to form a complex sentence.

Some English subordinate adverbial sentences, which have a finite verb, can be transformed into non-finite and verbless sentences. Such a transformation is marked either by converting the finite verb into non-finite or by ellipting the finite verb and the subject without affecting the well-formedness and acceptability of

these sentences. The omitted verb can generally be assumed to be a form of the verb BE, and the subject ... can be treated as recoverable from context, (Quirk, 1972:752). These transformed sentences can cause structural problems to translators as long as there are no one-to-one transformational rules between English and Arabic for deriving adverbial sentences:

(1.1) a. [Although he was tired] , the worker kept on working



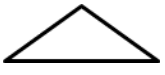
b. [Although  tired] , the worker kept on working.

* For more details on non-finite and verbless sentences, see (Ibid, 1972: 722–727, 756–764, Roberts, 1986,178–183, 211–240, Bebbington, 2017, 46, Jagger,2010: 57, Tippling,2000, Langacker, 2008, 112, Onions, 2012, 105, Scott, et al, 1968: 163–180).


Both (1.1a–b) are well-formed sentences. (1.1b) is transformed from its deep counterpart (1.1a) by a transformational rule which deletes the subject “he” and the verb “was” rendering thereby the sentence into non-finite (i.e. with no tense indication). Arabic, however, does not provide a corresponding transformational rule which always deletes the subject of the subordinate sentence and which may derive an Arabic structure equivalent to that in (1.1b).

Therefore, (1.1b) should be transformed back into its deep structure (1.1a) before translating it into Arabic. Two Arabic renditions are given in (1.2). Translation (1.2a), which corresponds to the deep structure (1.1a), is well- formed but translation (1.2b), which corresponds to the surface structure (1.1b), is ill- formed.

(1.2)a. [برغم انه كان متعبا] استمر العامل يعمل ←

b. [متعب]  برغم [استمر العامل يعمل]

One way for translating (1.1b) will be by converting the subject “tired” into a noun and a coreferential pronoun should be suffixed to that noun. Thus an Arabic translation for (1.1b) will be:

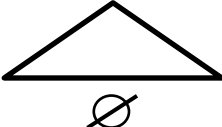
استمر [العام] ل [يعمل] [برغم تعب]

 [[ه]

b (1.2).

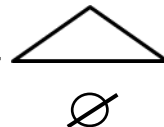
(The superordinate and the subordinate sentences are reordered to avoid cataphoric reference).

The same can be said about verbless sentences. The following example illustrates:

(1.3) a. [When he was at Oxford] , he was a prominent member of the dramatic society. \Rightarrow

b. [When  at Oxford] , he was a prominent member of the dramatic society.

(1.4) a. \Leftarrow [حين كان في أكسفورد] كان عضواً بارزاً في الجمعية المسرحية

b. [في أكسفورد  حين] كان عضواً بارزاً في الجمعية المسرحية

Again the English sentence (1.3b) can be translated with the subordinate sentence rendered into a verbless sentence but a subject pronoun should be present. The subordinator “when” should be matched by the coordinator (و) :

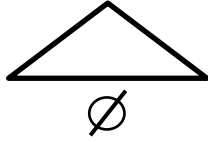
(1.5) [وهو في أكسفورد] كان عضواً بارزاً في الجمعية المسرحية .

It should be noted that the elliptical subject of a non-finite or verbless sentence is assumed to be identical in reference to the subject of the superordinate sentence.

(1.6)a. [~~He~~] wrote his greatest novel [while [~~he~~] was working on a freighter] \Rightarrow

b. He wrote his greatest novel [while \emptyset working on a freighter].

The serious problem arises when “the noun phrase with which the understood subject of the non–finite clause should be identical does not appear as subject of the main clause, and perhaps does not occur in the main clause at all,”(Quirk,1972: 757) :

(1.7) Many radical changes have been made, [since  appointed supreme commander].

In such cases, the intended subject can be recoverable from the context. Therefore, we would assume that the superordinate sentence in (1.8) means “Many changes have been made by him” , and that the subject of the subordinate sentence is the third person pronoun “he”.

(1.8) Many radical changes have been made by [him] , [since [he] was appointed supreme commander] .

The following investigation aims at finding out:


- 1– Whether all types of the English subordinate adverbial sentences, which have a finite verb, can be changed into non–finite or verbless sentences.
- 2– Whether Arabic has corresponding surface structures.

A Cross Linguistic Analysis of Transforming Finite Adverbial Subordinate Sentences into Non–Finite and Verbless Sentences with Reference to Translation

1– The Subordinate Sentence of Time

Each of the following examples will be given with two structures (a) Deep and (b) Surface together with their Arabic translation

English:

(1.9)a. D.S [When it was published] , the book caused a remarkable stir among critics. 

b. S.S [When  published] , the book caused a remarkable stir among critics.

Arabic:

(1.10)a. D.S  [حين نُشِرَ الكتاب] سبب ضجةً كبيرةً بين النقاد

b. S.S [حين منشور الكتاب] سبب ضجةً كبيرةً بين النقاد.

The translator has to determine the syntactic frame in which the past participle “published” appears in (1.9b). The past participle in English could be used in different syntactic contexts: (a) with the perfect tense, (b) with the passive voice and (c) as an adjective (e.g. the published books). Therefore, the English subordinate sentence of time in (1.9b) above should be transformed back



into its deep structure (1.9a) above before rendering it into Arabic in order to determine the intended context in which the past participle has been used. Word-for-word translation will lead to producing the ill-formed sentence (1.10b) above.

However, sentence (1.10b) can be made well-formed by using the subordinator (لدى) followed by a gerund.

(1.10)b. سبب الكتاب ضجة كبيرة بين [لدى نشره]

النقاد

(In relation to the verbless sentence of time, see sentence (1.3) above and the Arabic translations (1. 4,5))

2- The Subordinate Sentence of Place

English:

(1.11)a. D.S. Such facts must have been reported [wherever they were known] →

b. S.S. Such facts must have been known [wherever known]


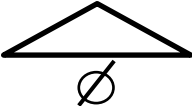
Arabic:

(1.12)a. D.S. ← كان لا بد من الاخبار عن هذه الحقائق [حيثما عُرِفَتْ]

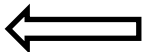
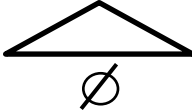
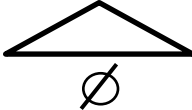
b. S.S. كان لا بد من الاخبار عن هذه الحقائق [حيثما معروفة]

The English subordinate sentence of place (1.11b) above should be rendered into Arabic by translating its deep structure (1.11a) above.

English:

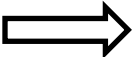
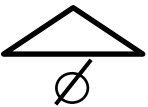
- (1.13)a. D.S. All moving parts should be tested [where that is possible] 
- b. S.S. All moving parts should be tested [where  possible]

Arabic:

- (1.14)a. D.S  يجب فحص كل الأجزاء المتحركة [حيث امكن ذلك]
- b. S.S [ ممكن] حيث  المتحركة *

3- The Subordinate Sentence of Purpose

The English subordinators of purpose, “so that, in order that”, could not introduce non-finite or verbless sentences.

- (1.15)a. D.S. We carved their names on the stone [so that they will be known to future generations] 
- b. S.S. We carved their names on the stone *[so that  known to future generations]

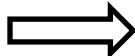


but see: We carved their names on the stone [in order for them to be known to future generations] Non-finite

The Arabic rendition of (1.15) above will be:

(1.16)a. D.S. نقشنا أسماءهم [كي يكونوا معروفين لدى أجيال المستقبل]
b. S.S. نقشنا أسماءهم على الحجر [كي معروفين لدى أجيال المستقبل]

The subordinate sentences of purpose could be transformed into non-finite sentences by replacing “ so that, in order that” with “to, in order to, and so as to” provided that the subject of the subordinate sentence is identical to that of the superordinate sentence.

(1.17)a. D.S. The police made many elaborate plans [so that they might catch the culprits]. 

b. S.S. The police made many elaborate plans [so as to catch the culprits].

Both (1.17a–b) will have one Arabic translation (1.18) below:

(1.18)a. . [لكي تقبض على المجرمين] وضعت الشرطة العديد من الخطط المتقنة

We also change this verb into gerund:

b. . [للقبض على المجرمين] وضعت الشرطة العديد من الخطط المتقنة



English and Arabic do not have subordinate verbless sentences introduced by a subordinator of purpose, where there is no verb at all in the subordinate surface sentence of purpose.

4- The Subordinate Sentence of Result

Not all subordinate sentences of result can be converted to non-finite sentences. The following finite subordinate sentence can not be transformed into a non-finite sentence. Its Arabic translation can not also be converted into a non-finite sentence.

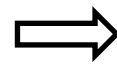
(1.19) He spoke for such a long time [that people began to think he would never end] .

The Arabic translation for (1.19) will be:

(1.20) لقد اطال الحديث [بحيث بدا الظن يساور الناس انه لن ينتهي ابدا] .

However, sentences introduced by the subordinator “ So ... that “ can be converted into non-finite sentences :

(1.21)a. D.S. The story was so interesting [that I enjoyed it].



b. S.S. The story was interesting enough [to enjoy it].

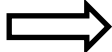
The Arabic translation for (1.21a) above is:

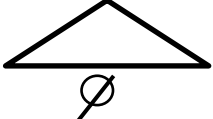
(1.22)a. D.S. كانت القصة جد مثيرة [بحيث استمتعت بها]

But a word– for–word translation for the English surface sentence (1.21b) will be the following ill– formed Arabic sentence:

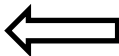
b. S.S. كانت القصة جد مثيرة * [بما يكفي ر ان اتمتع { التمتع به _____]

5– The Subordinate Sentence of Condition and Concession

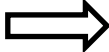
(1.23)a. D.S. [If it is hit by the endemic] , the town will be evacuated at once. 

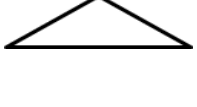
b. S.S. [If  hit by the epidemic] , the town will be evacuated at once.

(1.23b) above must be rendered into Arabic by translating its deep counterpart (1.23a). Otherwise, the translation of (1.23b) will produce the ill–formed sentence (1.24b) below:

(1.24)a. D.S.  [ان تتعرض المدينة للأصابة بالوباء] فستخلى على الفور

b. S.S. [ان المدينة معرضة للأصابة بالوباء] فستخلى على الفور

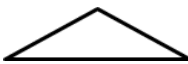
(1.25)a. D.S. [Unless he is expressly forbidden] , he will not stop his childish behaviors 

b. S.S. [Unless  expressly forbidden] , he will not stop his childish behaviors.

(1.26)a. D.S. [مالم يُمنع بوضوح] فلن يوقف تصرفانه السخيفة ←

b. S.S. [مالم ممنوع بوضوح] فلن يوقف تصرفانه السخيفة

(1.27)a. D.S. [Though he is over eighty] , he can walk a mile faster than I can. →

b. S.S. [Though  over eighty] , he can walk a mile faster than I can. ∅

(1.28)a. D.S. ← برغم ان عمره [فهو يستطيع ان يمشي ميلا اسرع مني] يتجاوز الثمانين

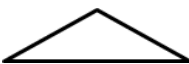
b. S.S. [برغم { تجاوز الثمانين } فهو يستطيع ان يمشي ميلا اسرع مني]

6- The Subordinate Sentence of Manner and Comparison.

The adverbial sentence of manner, introduced by “as” , can be transformed into a non-finite sentence as (1.29) below illustrates:

Manner

(1.29)a. D.S. He fixed it perfectly [as he has been directed] →

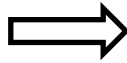
b. S.S. He fixed it perfectly [as  directed] ∅

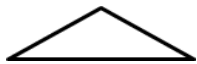
(1.30)a. D.S. ← ثبته بأحكام [كما وُجِه]

b. S.S. [كما موجه]* بثته بأحكام

("AS", as a subordinator of manner, can not introduce a verbless sentence)

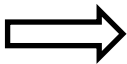
Non-finite and verbless comparative sentences, preceded by (than) and (as), are in use.

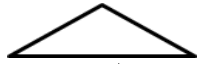
(1.31)a. D.S. It is often more expensive for the young mother to work and pay for a nursery [than she does it herself] 

b. S.S. It is often more expensive for the young mother to work and pay for a nursery [than  to do it herself]

(1.32)a. D.S. انصراف الام الشابة للعمل ودفع نفقات دار الحضانة غالبا ما يكون اكثر تكلفة. [مما لو فعلت ذلك بنفسها] 

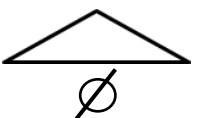
b. S.S. انصراف الام الشابة للعمل ودفع نفقات دار الحضانة غالبا ما يكون اكثر تكلفة. [مما لو فعلت ذلك بنفسها] .

(1.33)a. D.S. French sentiment, he assures us, has never been as pronounced against Germany [as it is Today] 

b. S.S. French sentiment ,he assures us, has never been as pronounced against Germany [as  today].

(1.34)a. D.S. انه يؤكد لنا ان المشاعر الفرنسية لم يجاهر بها من قبل
ضد المانيا [كما يحصل اليوم]

But translating (1.33b) above will yield the following dubious sentence.

b. S.S. انه يؤكد لنا ان المشاعر الفرنسية لم يجاهر بها من قبل
ضد المانيا ؟ [اليوم  كما] .

7- The Subordinate Sentence of Proportion

The proportional sentence can not be transformed into a non-finite or verbless sentence:

(1.35) [The farther one penetrates into the house] , the more evident the ravages of time are.

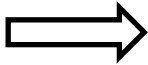
(1.36) [كلما ازداد المرء توغلاً داخل المنزل] ، ازدادت غوائل الزمن جلاءً

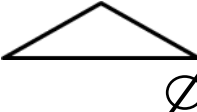
(1.36) [As the strength of the defenders failed] , (so) their courage grew.


(1.37) [كلما وهنت قوة المدافعين] ، اشتدت شجاعتهم

8- The Subordinate Sentence of Preference

The subordinate sentence of preference is more often gerundive than finite. Such infinitival sentences, like most adverbial infinitival sentences, have no subject in their surface structure. Both the D.S. and S.S. can be rendered into well-formed Arabic translations:

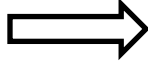
(1.38)a. D.S. [Rather than I borrow from you] , I would borrow money from the bank 

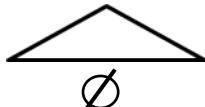
b. S.S. [Rather than  borrowing from you] , I would borrow money from the bank.

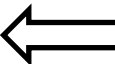
(1.39)a. D.S.  [بدلاً من ان اقترض منك] سأقترض النقود من المصرف

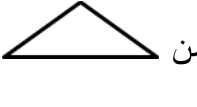
b. S.S. [بدلاً من الاقتراض منك] سأقترض النقود من المصرف .

The finite sentence of preference, introduced by “rather ... than”, can also be changed into a verbless sentence. Both the D.S. and S.S. sentences will have well-formed Arabic translation:

(1.40)a. D.S. [Rather than he bought a new car] , he bought a color television. 

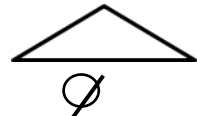
b. S.S. [Rather than  a new car] , he bought a color television.

(1.41)a. D.S.  [بدلاً من ان يشتري سيارة جديدة] اشترى تلفازاً ملوناً

b. S.S. [بدلاً من  سيارة جديدة] اشترى تلفازاً ملوناً

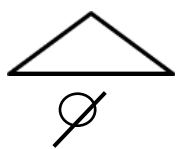
9– The Subordinate Sentence of Reason or Cause

Non-finite and verbless sentences of reason and cause can be used, but without subordinator.


(1.42)a. D.S. [Because he was a man of ingenuity], he had soon repaired the machine. b. S.S.  Being a man of ingenuity], he had soon repaired the machine.

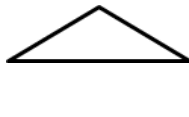
(1.42a-b) both can be rendered into well-formed Arabic translation.

(1.43)a. D.S. لأنه كان رجلاً بارعاً [فقد أصلح الماكنة على الفور

b. S.S. رجلاً بارعاً  لكونه [فقد أصلح الماكنة على الفور

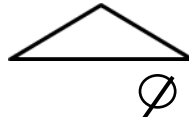
The adverbial sentence of reason, introduced by (because), can be changed into a verbless sentence with (because of):

(1.44) a. D.S. She hesitated, [because she was cautious], to open the door 

b. S.S. She hesitated, [because of her  caution], to open the door.

Both (1.44a-b) can be translated into Arabic:

(1.45)a. D.S.  لأنها كانت حذرة [ترددت في فتح الباب

b. S.S. حذرهما  بسبب [ترددت في فتح الباب



The parenthetic subordinate sentences in (1.45a–b) are better moved to the beginning of the whole sentence, otherwise a translation into Arabic with the same English sentence order will yield the following sentences which might be unacceptable to some native speakers of Arabic.

(1.46)a. D.S. . [لأنها كانت حذرة] ، في فتح الباب . ؟ ترددت ،

b. S.S. . [بسبب حذره _____] ، في فتح الباب . ؟ ترددت ،

Conclusions

This study has shown that English uses translated non-finite or verbless subordinate sentences more extensively than Arabic does. In some cases, especially in the subordinate sentences of time, purpose, proportion and cause, Arabic can use non-finite or verbless subordinate sentences. This state of affairs means that in many cases, the translator has to back-transform these English non-finite or verbless sentences into their deep structure before translating them, since it has been demonstrated through our extensive examples that a surface word-for-word translation of many of such sentences will yield ill-formed Arabic translation.

It is also noticed that not all English finite subordinate sentences accept transforming them into non-finite or verbless sentences. The English subordinate sentence of result introduced by the subordinator “such that” can not be converted into non-finite or verbless sentences, which will mean that translating such sentences is easier than translating transformed non-finite and verbless sentences since the surface structure of the former is identical with the deep structure.



References

- 1- Bebbington, W. G. (2017). *An English Handbook*, Hudders-Field: Schofield and Sims Ltd.
- 2- Chomsky, Noam (1970). “ *Deep Structure, Surface Structure, and Semantic Interpretation*”, in Jakobson, R, and S. Kawamoto, eds. *Studies in General and oriental Linguistics*. Tokyo: TEC Corporation.
- 3- Jagger, J. H (2010), (1964). *A Handbook of English Grammar*. London: University of London Press.
- 4-Langacker, R.W. (2008). *Language and its Structure: Some Fundamental Concepts*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Word, Inc.
- 5- Liles, B.L. (2012). *An Introductory Transformational Grammar*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliffs.
- 6- Onions, C.T. (2012). *Modern English Syntax*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- 7- Koutsoudas, A. (2011) . *Writing Transformational Grammar: An Introduction*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.
- 8- Quirk, R. (1972). *A Grammar of Contemporary English*. London: Longman.
- 9- Radford, A. (2004). *Minimalist Syntax: exploring the structure of English*, Cambridge University Press.
- 10- Roberts, N. B. (1986). *Analyzing English Sentences: An Introduction to English Syntax*. London: Longman.
- 11- Tippling, L. (2000). *Matriculation English Grammar of Modern English Usage*. London: Macmillan.



تحويل الجمل الثانوية المحدودة إلى جمل غير محدودة وغير فعلية مع

الإشارة إلى الترجمة: دراسة مقارنة

الباحث مصطفى نعمان أحمد

كلية العلوم السياسية/الجامعة المستنصرية / اللغويات والترجمة

Mustafatranslator2@gmail.com

07807307906

مستخلص البحث:

يمكن تحويل بعض الجمل الظرفية المعلقة الانكليزية والعربية المحددة الزمن الى جمل غير محددة الزمن أو الى جمل لا فعلية. وقد يتم هذا التحويل بحذف بعض أجزاء الجمل المعلقة أو بتحويل الفعل المحدد الزمن الى فعل غير محدد الزمن. وقد لا يكون بالامكان ترجمة بعض الجمل الانكليزية السطحية المعلقة ، وخصوصا تلك التي خضعت لحذف أو تلك التي يختلف بناؤها السطحي عن بنيتها العميقة نتيجة لتحويلات معينة، الى العربية مباشرة بسبب عدم وجود البنية السطحية المكافئة ، لذا يجب تحويل هذه الجمل الى بناها العميقة قبل ترجمتها الى العربية .