

English and Arabic Subordinate Adverbial Clauses and Subordinators: A Contrastive Study

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Abstract

This study explores the English subordinate adverbial clauses and adverbial subordinators and compares them with their Arabic counterparts. The problems of This study tries to investigate, Accordingly, it hypothesizes that (1) Whether the English subordinate adverbial clauses have corresponding Arabic counterparts and (2) Whether the English adverbial subordinators have corresponding Arabic equivalents. The present study tackles the problem of the absence of corresponding Arabic equivalents to the English subordinate adverbial clauses and subordinators. This could pose a problem to translators. This study limits itself to the subordinate adverbial clauses as they appear within the context of complex sentences. Other types of subordinate clauses, nominal or adjectival, are beyond the scope of this study. This study is hoped to be 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 the contrastive approach.

Keywords: Adverbial clauses; comparative clauses; conditional clauses; semantics; syntax.

Introduction

This study presents a contrastive analysis of the English and Arabic subordinate adverbial clauses. The investigation is organized according to the semantic roles of adverbial clauses and subordinators. Each section deals with the English type of adverbial clause and the subordinators followed by the corresponding Arabic type.

In classifying the English adverbial clauses, the following references have been consulted: (1) Quirk et al., (1972) (2) Zandvoort, R.W. (2016) (3) Eckersley, C.E. and Eckersley, J.M. (1960) (4) Bebbington, M.G. (2017) (5) Onions, C.T. (2012) (6) Langacker, R.W. (2008). As for Arabic, the adverbial clauses and adverbial subordinators have not been paid due

attention by Arab grammarians. The researcher, therefore, has classified the Arabic subordinate clauses and subordinators by using the same classification that is already used in English.

1- The English Subordinate Clause of Reason or Cause

The English Subordinators of Reason or Cause: “ because, Since, as, seeing that, now that”

These subordinators introduce the subordinate clause of reason or cause that (why) action in the main clause has (or has not) occurred:

(1.1) Tom sold his car {because it was too small}

(1.2) We cannot buy it {since we have no money}

The subordinate clause in (1.1) states why Tom sold his car and the subordinate clause in (1.2) denotes the reason why we cannot buy it.

However, there is a semantic overlap between conditional clauses and those of reason. The overlap is already noted with clauses introduced by “seeing that” and “ now that”. Such clauses express a relation between “a premise (in the subordinate clause) and the conclusion drawn from it (in the main clause),” (Quirk et al., 1972: 753). In this respect, Zandvoort (2016: 220) says that “the meanings of adverbial clauses often shade off into one another”.

(1.3) {Seeing that} you live near the sea, you enjoy a healthy climate

In its deep structure, sentence (1.3) may have two semantic interpretations. It is either a reason:

(1.4) Since you live near the sea, you enjoy a healthy climate.

Or a condition:

(1.5) If you live near the sea, you enjoy a healthy climate.

Arabic Subordinate Clause of Reason or Cause

The Arabic Subordinators of Reason or Cause:

" لأن ، بما أن ، مادام ، اذ ، طالما"

Such subordinator introduces the subordinate clause of reason or cause

"العبرة السببية المعلقة"

(1.6) لم يذهب علي الى المدرسة لأنه كان مريضاً .

(Ali did not go to school because he was sick)

The subordinate clause of reason in (1.6) states why Ali did not go to school. More examples are given below:

(1.7) سينجح الطالب في الامتحان مادام أنه ذكي.
(The student will pass the exam since he is clever)

(1.8) كانوا سعداء طالما وافق المدير على مقترحهم.
(They were happy as the boss approved their proposal)

2- The English Subordinate Clause of Time

The English Subordinators of Time:

“When(ever), while, before, after, since, until, as soon as, as long as, now(that), once, as, no sooner... than”

These subordinators introduce the adverbial clauses of time. Semantically such clauses state (when) an action in the main clause has (or has not) taken place.

(2.1) The workers left home { after they had finished their work }.

The adverbial clause “after they had finished their work” indicates when “the workers left home”.

Here are more examples”:

(2.2) He was happy { when he saw me }.

(2.3) I have been ill { since I last saw you }.

(2.4) I’ll tell him the news { once I saw him }.

The subordinator “now that” expresses an overlap in meaning between time and reason. The following example illustrates:

(2.5) Now that you mention it, I do remember.

Such a sentence could be semantically interpreted in relation to those two sentences:

(2.6) When you mention it, I do remember. (time)

(2.7) Because you mention it, I do remember. (reason)

The Arabic Subordinate Clause of Time

The Arabic subordinators of Time

"حين ، لما ، عندما ، حينما ، كلما ، بينما ، فيما ، قبلما ، قبل أن ، بعدما ، بعد أن ، منذ (أن) ، حتى ، حالما ، ما ان ، ما ان ... حتى"

These subordinators introduce the subordinate clause of time

" العبارة الزمنية المعلقة "

(2.8) وهو الذي ينزل الغيث من بعدما قنطوا

(He is the one that sends down rain after (men) have given up all the hope.)

(Ali, 1946:1313,42:28)

(2.9) لا يؤمنون به حتى يروا العذاب الأليم

(They will not believe in it until they see the grievous penalty)

(Ali, 971,26: 201)

(2.10) أغمي عليه بينما كان يهرول

(He fainted while he was jogging)

3- The English Subordinate Clause of Place

The English Subordinators of Place:

“Where, wherever”

These two subordinators introduce the subordinate clause of place.

(3.1) Farming is possible where there is rain.

(3.2) They went wherever they could find work.

The adverbial clause of place states (where) an action in the main clause has occurred. Thus the two subordinate clauses in (3,1- 3.2) denote where “farming” is possible and where they went.

The Arabic Subordinate Clause of Place

he Arabic Subordinators of Place:

" حيث، حيثما، أينما "

Such subordinators introduce the subordinate clause of place

" العبارة المكانية المعقدة "

(3.3) الله أعلم حيث يجعل رسالته

(God knowth best where to carry out His solution)

(Ali, 1946: 326,6:124)

(3.4) أينما تكونوا يدرككم الموت.

(wherever you are, death will find you out)

4- The English Subordinate Clause of Purpose

The English Subordinators of Purpose:

“so ...that, in order that, to, in order to, so as to, lest”

The adverbial clauses of purpose are introduced by the above mentioned subordinators. The purposive clauses indicate the purpose for which an action in the main clause has (or has not) taken place:

(4.1) He went to Liverpool {so that he might attend the annual meeting}.

The adverbial clause in (4.1) states the purpose for which he went to Liverpool.

An overlap exists between the subordinate clauses of purpose and those of result. This overlap arises with the subordinator “so that”:

(4.2) He works hard {so that he may life in luxury}. (Adverbial clause of purpose)

(4.3) He spend very little {so that he has plenty of money}. (Adverbial clause of result)

Nevertheless, some areas of difference between these two kinds of subordinate clauses can be noted. Semantically, the purposive clause is “putative” whereas the resultive clause is factual rather than putative. In addition, the modal auxiliaries (should and may, the past time might) are used with the clause of purpose. The sentence of result, in contrast, may contain a main verb form but without a modal auxiliary.

(4.4) Keep quiet {so that you may understand what I say}.

In this clause of purpose, the action is putative; it is not yet fulfilled while the resultive clause in (4.5) below shows that the action is factual; it has been achieved.

(4.5) It was such a busy day { that he did not visit Alice }.

Furthermore, clauses of purpose are functionally adjuncts whereas clauses of result are disjuncts. (With regard to the differences between these two types of subordinate clauses, see Bebbington,2017:42, Quirk et al., 1972: 753-754, Zandvoort, 2016, 1972: 21, Eckersley and Eckersley, 1960: 343, Onion,2012: 72)

The Arabic Subordinate Clause of Purpose

The Arabic Subordinators of Purpose:

“لام التعليل (ل)، كي، لكي، حتى، كي لا، لئلا”

Such subordinators introduce the subordinate clause of purpose

“ العبارة الغرضية المعلقة ”

جاء زيد كي يساعدني (4.6)

(Zaid came in order to help me)

The adverbial clause in (4.6) indicates the purpose for which Zaid came.

More examples are given below:

“ فرددناه الى أمه كي تفر عينها ولتعلم أن وعد الله حق ” (4.7)

(Thus we did restore him to his mother, that her eye might be comforted, that she might know the promise of God is true)

(Ali, 1946: 1004, 28:13)

(4.8) نقرأ حتى نزيد معرفتنا

(We read in order to increase our knowledge)

5- The English Subordinate Clause of Result

The English Subordinators of Result:

“ So that , so/such ... that”

These two subordinators introduce the subordinate clause of result. When (so) and (that) come together, they formed a compound subordinator “so that”. But when (so) occurs in the main clause and (that) in the subordinate clause, they form a correlative subordinator “so ... that ...”.

(5.1) He was so tired that he could hardly stand.

The subordinate clause “ that he could hardly stand” is a consequence of the fact mentioned in the main clause “his tiredness”

The Arabic s Subordinate Clause of Result

The Arabic Subordinator of Result: بحيث

The subordinator " بحيث " introduces the subordinate clause of result. It is a compound of the preposition (ب) and the adverb " حيث ". The clause introduced by " بحيث " indicates a result of an action that has occurred in the main clause.

(5.2) كان القتال ضاريا بحيث هجر السكان المدينة.

(The fighting was so fierce that the population abandoned the city.)

6- The English Subordinate Clause of Condition

The English Subordinators of Condition:

“ if, unless, but for, provided\ providing (that) , on condition that, so(as) long as , supposing that”

Such subordinators introduce the adverbial clauses of condition. Semantically, conditional clauses state “the dependence of one circumstance or set of circumstances on another” (Quirk et al., 1972:745 , See also Langacker,2008: 97).

(6.1) He will go to the party if you invite him.

Sentence (6.1) implies that the fulfillment of the action in the main clause ”his going to the party” will depend on that in the subordinate clause “your invitation to him”.

The adverbial clauses of condition, introduced by “if”, may express:

(1) Open or real condition:

(6.2) If you ask him , he will help you.

(2) Hypothetical or Unreal Condition:

(6.3) If I had known you were here, I would not have come.

The semantic difference between these two types of conditional clauses is that “the open condition leaves unresolved the question of the fulfillment or non- fulfillment of the condition; hence the truth of the proposition expressed by the main clause. A hypothetical condition, on the other hand, conveys the

expectation that the condition may not be fulfilled” (Quirk et al., 1972: 747, Radford,2004: 102)

“Unless”, as a subordinator, is equivalent in meaning to “if not”. But there is a slight difference between an unless- clause and a negative if-clause in that “ unless has the exclusive meaning of “Only if ...not” or “ except on condition that ...” In this, it is more precisely the opposite of the compound conjunction “provided (that) “ or “providing(that)” which means “if and only if...” (Quirk et al., 1972: 746)

(6.4) You will fail unless you work harder.

Thus sentence (6.4) may imply the meaning of the following two sentences:

(6.5) You will fail except on condition that you work harder.

(6.6) You will fail only if you do not work harder.

Other examples , introduced by different conditional subordinators, are given below:

(6.7) The workers will leave provided that their wages are paid.

(6.8) He will be allowed to live in the house rent- free on condition that he keeps

It in repair.

The Arabic Subordinate Clause of Condition

The Arabic Subordinators of Condition:

“ان، اذا، لو، لولا (أن)، مالم، على أن، شرط/ شريطة أن، مادام، هب أن”

The above- mentioned subordinators introduce the subordinate clause of condition:

(6.9) ان تدرس تتجح

(If you study, you will succeed)

The conditional clause, introduced by “ان” or “اذا”, usually expresses an open condition whereas “لو” or “لولا” clause expresses a hypothetical unfulfilled condition. In this respect, Aziz (1989:224) points out that “there are two kinds of conditional sentences: open and rejected. They are expressed by the particles introducing them: “ان” , “اذا” usually introduce open condition; “لو” , “لولا” introduce rejected condition,”

(6. 10) قالت اني أعود بالرحمن منك ان كنت تقيا

(She said: I seek refuge from thee to (God) most gracious if thou dost fear God)

(Ali, 1946:771,19:18)

ليس على الضعفاء حرج ولا على المرضى ولا على الذين لا يجدون ما ينفقون حرج إذا نصحوا
(6.11) بالله

(There is no blame on those who are infirm, or Ill, or who find no resources to spend (on the cause), if they are sincere (unduly) to God)
(Ibid :467-468,9:91)

(6.12) ستعاقبه الشركة ما لم يسدد ديونه

(The company will punish him unless he pays off his debts)

7- The English Subordinate Clause of Concession

The English Subordinators of Concession:

“though, although, even though, while, whereas”

These subordinators introduce the subordinate clause of concession, which implies “a contrast between two circumstances; that in the light of the circumstance in the dependent clause [equivalent to the subordinate clause]; that in the main clause is surprising,” (Quirk et al.,1972:754)

(7.1) He visited me { although he was sick }.

The action in the main clause “his visit” is surprising in the light of the circumstance in the subordinate clause ‘his sickness’.

(7.2) The democrats accept the new law, whereas the Republicans refuse it.

Sentence (7.2) expresses a contrast between two circumstances; a contrast between the democrats’ acceptance of the new law and the republicans’ refusal of it.

The Arabic Subordinate Clause of Concession

The Arabic Subordinators of Concession:

” حتى وأن، وان، ولو، يرغم (أن)، بينما “

Such subordinators introduce the subordinate clause of concession that implies a contrast between two circumstances:

(7.3) سافر الرجل برغم أنه كان متعبا.

(The man travelled even though he was tired)

(7.4) ويؤثرون على أنفسهم ولو كان بهم خصاصة.

(They give them preference over themselves , even though poverty was their {own lot}.)

(Ali, 1946:1533,501:9)

8- The English Conditional – Concessive Clause

The English Conditional – Concessive Subordinators:

“ even if, whether... or..., whatever, however, no matter what, no matter how,

It does not matter what, it does not matter how, whoever”

The overlap between conditional clauses and those of concession is already noted with these subordinators. The subordinate clause, introduced by “even if”, expresses both “the contingent dependence of one circumstance on another and the surprising nature of this dependence,” (Quirk et al.,1972: 746)

(8.1) You would enjoy this concert { even if you dislike music }.

The “even if” clause in (8.1) expresses condition as well as concession.

On the other hand, the correlative subordinator “whether... or...” introduces the alternative conditional concessive clause. In these sentences, a choice between two conditions is given. Furthermore, two subordinate clauses are coordinated by this correlative subordinator.

(8.2) He will resign { whether he wins the election (or not) }.

The adverbial clause in (8.2) conveys the conditional meaning and that of concession. Thus it could be paraphrased in two ways”:

(8.3) If he wins the election or not, ...

(8.4) Even if he wins the election ...

Other subordinators introduce the universal conditional – concessive clauses that indicate “a free choice from among any number of conditions,” (Ibid, 1972: 751). The following examples illustrate:

(8.5) He dislikes me { whatever I do }.

(8.6) We shall never stop working { however tired we may be }.

(8.7) { Whoever does that } will be punished.

The Arabic Conditional – Concessive Clause

The Arabic Conditional – Concessive Subordinators:

" حتى لو، سواء ... أم ...، أم ...، مهما "

" حتى لو " , as a compound subordinator, introduces the conditional concessive clause

(8.8) لن أساعده حتى لو طلب مني ذلك.

(I won't help him even if he asks me to do so.)

The subordinate clause in (8.8) conveys both the conditional meaning “if he asks me ...” and that of concession “though he asks me ...”

The correlative sequence " سواء ... أم ...، أ ... أم ... " , on the other hand, introduces the alternative conditional concessive clause:

(8.9) قال نكروا لها عرشها ننظر أ تهتدي أم تكون من الذين لا يهتدون.

(They say “Transform her throne out of recognition by her: Let us see Whether she is guided (to the truth) or is one of those who receive no guidance.)

(Ali, 1946:987-988,27:41)

(8.10) لن يبيع داره سواء رحل عن المدينة أم لم يرحل.

(He won't sell his house whether he leaves the city or not.)

(8.11) وقالوا مهما تأتينا به من أية لتسحرنا بها فما نحن لك بمؤمنين.

{ (They say (to Moses): “whatever be the sign thou brightest, to work therewith thy sorcery on us, we shall never believe in thee. }

(Ali, 1946,378,7:132)

9- The English Subordinate Clause of “Manner” and “ Comparison”

The English Subordinators of “Manner” and “ Comparison”:

“asas , more- less- adjective +er ...than, as if, as though”

The subordinator “as” introduces the subordinate clause of manner. The as- clause indicates how an action in the main clause is done.

(9.1) He plays piano exactly {as I do}.

The correlative subordinators” more – less – adjective +er ...” , on the other hand, introduce the comparative clause which expresses a different comparison.

(9.2) It requires {more} money {than I have}.

Whereas the comparative clause, introduced by the “so – as – such ... as” construction, indicates an equal comparison.

(9.3) She was {as} beautiful {as I expected}.

The subordinate clause, introduced by “as if” and “as though” indicates hypothetical or unreal circumstances:

(9.4) She looked {as if she had been a ghost}.

(9.5) He spends money {as though he were a millionaire}.

In these types, the verb of the subordinate clause is in the past time or past perfect aspect.

The Arabic Subordinate Clause of “Manner” and “ Comparison”

The Arabic Subordinators of “Manner” and “ Comparison”:

" كما، مثلما، (أفعل) ... مما ، كما لو ، كأنما"

The Arabic subordinators, كما and مثلما, introduce both the subordinate clauses of manner and those of equal comparison:

(9.6) اكتب كما يكتب أخوك.

(Write as your brother{ writes}.)

The subordinate sentence, in (9.6), indicates the way in which the action of writing in the main clause should be done.

(9.7) يبدو المهرجان رائعاً هذا العام مثلما كان في العام الماضي.
(The festival this year seems as wonderful as it was last year.)

The “أفعل ... مما” construction introduces the subordinate clause of different comparison.

(9.8) يتكلم زيد أكثر مما يعمل.
(Zaid speaks {more than he works}.)

The comparative particles must be derived from the form which is called “أفعل التفضيل”. This form should be formed from a trilateral verb, in the active voice and fully inflected.

When “اسم التفضيل” (comparative degree noun) could not be derived directly as a result of the absence of one of the above-mentioned conditions, comparatives like “أشد، أكثر، اعظم، اكبر ... must precede (المصدر الصريح) “أكثر” of the verb from which “اسم التفضيل” could not be derived, e.g, “تعاوننا”. The comparative “أكثر” precedes “تعاوننا” which is “المصدر الصريح” (gerund) of the verb “تعاون”.

The subordinator “مما” is an assimilation of the preposition “من” with the particle “ما”. Because of the assimilation, the “ن” in “من” is deleted.

The subordinators “كما لو” and “كأنما” may express a hypothetical meaning or something contrary to fact (see Cantarino, 2010: 240):

(9.9) تكلم معي كما لو كان يعرفني.
(He talked to me as if he had known me)

With the subordinators “كما لو” and “كأنما”, the verb of the subordinate clause will be formed in the past progressive aspect, hence “كان يعرفني” in (9.9) above.

Conclusion

This contrastive investigation of the subordinate adverbial clauses in both English and Arabic demonstrates that:

- 1- The English subordinate adverbial clauses have corresponding Arabic counterparts.
- 2- Most English adverbial subordinators have corresponding Arabic counterparts. Few of the English subordinators, like “now that”, have no one-to-one existing corresponding Arabic subordinators. These should be matched by Arabic near- synonymous subordinators.
- 3- Some English and Arabic subordinators are polysemous, i.e., they can introduce different kinds of subordinate clauses.

4- A semantic overlap between subordinate clauses may occur. This overlap can be noted in clauses beginning with the English subordinators seeing that , now that , even if , so that ...etc.

5- Some Arabic subordinators such as حتى وان ، ولو أن، بما أن، قلما ، والان وقد ، etc, are innovations used in Modern Arabic. An independent study is necessary for tracing back these modern subordinators to their origin. Many of these could have emerged in Arabic as loan translations of foreign subordinators through translating from foreign languages.

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□ العبارات الانكليزية والعربية الظرفية التابعة وأدواتها: دراسة مقارنة

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مستخلص البحث

تقدم هذه الدراسة تحليلاً مقارناً للعبارات الانكليزية والعربية الظرفية المعلقة وأدوات التعليق الظرفية مع نظائرها العربية. وقد جرى تصنيف كل نوع من أنواع هذه العبارات والأدوات في مبحث مستقل وفقاً لأصنافها الدلالية ويتناول كل قسم نوعاً من العبارات الظرفية الانكليزية وأدواتها ويتبعه التصنيف العربي التقابلي لذلك القسم من العبارات .

الكلمات المفتاحية

العبارات الظرفية ؛ العبارات الدالة على المقارنة ؛ العبارات الشرطية ؛ علم الدلالة ؛ علم النحو .