Translating Arabic Perfect Verbs into English: A Text-Based Approach

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Abstract:

This paper proposes a model for translating Standard Arabic perfect verbs into English based on their contextual references. It starts with a brief introduction to tense and aspect in English and Arabic. Then, it shows the study aim and technique. After that, it provides an analysis of the study results by discussing the various translations of Arabic perfect verbs in the translations of two novels by Naguib Mahfouz, namely Autumn Quail and Wedding Song. The study compares the translations with the original texts to highlight the different English renderings of the Arabic perfect verbs. A corpus of 250 sentences was randomly chosen from the two novels, 125 sentences from each novel. The structures in which Arabic perfect verbs occur are classified into four groups: the bare perfect form, /qad/ + perfect, /kaana/ + /qad/ + perfect, and /-(sa-)yakuun/ + /qad/ + perfect. For each class, the various English translations are provided with a count of the examples representing them in the corpus and their percentages. Then, the contextual reference of each translation is explained.

Keywords:

Translation, Arabic, English, Perfect Verbs, Text Linguistics, Syntax, Semantics

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