

Adverbial Infinitive in English and its Counterpart in Arabic with Reference to Translation

Inaad Mutlib Sayer

ORCID: 0000-0002-4766-1653

E-mail: inaad.sayer@uhd.edu.iq; imsart20@hotmail.com

CV: Dr. Inaad M Sayer is currently a lecturer at the Department of English - University of Human Development – Kurdistan Region – Iraq. He studied English Language and Literature at the English Department / College of Education / Anbar University and graduated with a B.A. degree in 1992. He obtained the M.A. degree and the Ph.D degree in English Language and Linguistics from Baghdad University; the M.A. degree was in 1998 and the Ph.D degree was in 2008. Dr. Sayer has been teaching English as a foreign language to undergraduate university students since 1996. Besides teaching, he had worked as a Dean Assistant for two years and as a Head of English Department for two years, too.

Abstract

This paper tackles adverbial infinitive in English and its counterpart in Arabic with reference to translation. The aim of the paper is to highlight the points of similarity and difference between English and Arabic as far as adverbial infinitive is concerned. The paper also aims at giving suggestions for translating English adverbial infinitive into Arabic and vice versa. The procedure followed in the present paper is to directly compare between the uses of the English infinitive as adverbial and their Arabic equivalent uses to find out in what aspects they are similar and in what aspects they are different. Syntactically, the results show that infinitive in both English and Arabic can be used as adjunct; however, only in English the infinitive can be disjunct or conjunct. Semantically, the infinitive in both languages can express purpose, result, time, reason, condition, exception, and preference. However, there are differences in the details of the uses of the infinitive in each language. Yet, only English has infinitive as comparison, and only Arabic has infinitive as similarity. The study has provided suggestions for translating English adverbial infinitive into Arabic and for translating the Arabic counterpart of English adverbial infinitive into English.

Keywords—*adverbial infinitive; infinitive in English & Arabic; contrastive linguistics; translation;*

I. INTRODUCTION

Infinitive is a term in grammar which refers to the form that "expresses the notion of the verb in its general sense, not as it applies to any particular subject" [7, p. 230]. The infinitive, in its simple form, does not indicate a particular time in itself; its time reference is determined by the predicate governing it, or by the context. Thus, it may refer to the present, future, or past [12].

The infinitive is in origin a neuter abstract noun. It has been commonly classified as a *mood* in accordance with the usage of Latin grammarians who called it *modus infinitivus* (= the indefinite mood); but its function is not to express the *manner* of an action or to denote the aspect under which it is considered, but to express the action itself in the most indefinite manner [8].

The particle of the infinitive *to* was originally a preposition of direction as in *I moved to ask a question*. However, in the course of time the prepositional status of this *to* has been lost and it is now treated as a particle of the infinitive [9], [16]. The infinitive, like other non-finite verb forms, used to be classified as "verbal"; for it combines the characteristics of a verb with those of a noun, an adjective, or an adverb [8].

In modern English, the infinitive possesses two forms: the bare infinitive which is without *to* and the *to*-infinitive which is the base form of the verb preceded by *to*, e.g.

1. a. I will go soon.
- b. I want to go.

The Arabic *maṣḍar mu'awal* is the structure which counterparts the English infinitive (hence, the term infinitive will be used in lieu of *maṣḍar mu'awal* throughout this paper). So, Arabic infinitive is used here to roughly refer to the Arabic structure which consists of the imperfect verb preceded by the particle 'an, such as 'an *yal'aba* ((for him) to play), 'an *yadrusa* ((for him) to study), etc. [11]. Arabic has two types of infinitive which are *maṣḍar masbūk bi'adāti sabk* (marked infinitive) and *maṣḍar masbūk min ḡayri 'adāti sabk* (unmarked infinitive) [2, p. 414]. The marked infinitive has five particles which are: 'an, 'anna, law, kay, mā, [2, p. 407]. The particle 'anna cannot be followed by a verb; therefore, it will be excluded from this study. The particle 'an can be associated with a past, present, future, or imperative verb forms. Consider the following examples respectively: [11, p. 373]

[1] بَلْ عَجِبُوا أَنْ جَاءَهُمْ مُنْذِرٌ مِنْهُمْ... (ق: ٢)

2. Bal 'ajibū 'an jā'ahum mundhirun minhum... (Qāf: 2)

[1] قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يُكَذِّبُونِ (الشعراء: ١٢)

3. Qāla rabbi 'innī 'aḡāfu 'an yukadhibūn. ('al-ṣu'arā': 12)

[1] عَلِمَ أَنْ سَيَكُونُ مِنْكُمْ مَرْضًى (الزلزل: ٢٠)

4. 'alima 'an sayakūnu minkum marḍā. ('al-Muzzammil: 20)

[1] إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ أَنْ أَنْذِرْ قَوْمَكَ... (نوح: ١)

5. 'innā 'arsalnā Nūhan 'ilā qawmihi 'an 'andhir qawmaka... (Nūh: 1) [11]

The unmarked Arabic infinitive occurs in the following example:

[4] تَسْمَعُ بِالْمَعِيدِي خَيْرٍ مِنْ أَنْ تَرَاهُ

6. Tasma 'u bilmu'eydī ḡayrun min 'an tarāh

((to) *hear of the gypsy* is better than to see him)

The infinitive in English has nominal, adjectival and adverbial functions. However, the present study will compare only the adverbial infinitive in English with its counterpart in Arabic.

The aim of the study is to highlight the similarities and differences between English and Arabic as far as adverbial infinitive is concerned, and to find out the structural problems in translating adverbial infinitive from English to Arabic and vice versa.

II. METHODOLOGY

Contrastive studies are done in two different methods. The first method is to present the structure under study in each language separately, then a comparison is conducted between the structures to show the similarities and differences between the languages in question. The second method is to put the structures of the languages under study in comparison from the very beginning. The present paper will follow the second method as it saves space. That is, the

structures of the infinitive in English and Arabic will be put in contrast from the very beginning of the paper to highlight the similarities and differences between the adverbial uses of the English infinitive and their counterparts in Arabic.

The majority of the Arabic Examples will be taken from the Holy Qur'ān since it is considered an authentic resource of Arabic language. Besides, the Arabic examples will be written both in Arabic orthography so as to keep the original form of the Arabic words and in transliteration so as to make it easier for non-Arab scholars to read the examples.

After the comparison section, there will be two sections; the first will be devoted for translating English adverbial infinitive into Arabic and the second will be allocated to translating the Arabic adverbial-equivalent infinitive into English.

III. COMPARISON BETWEEN ENGLISH ADVERBIAL INFINITIVE AND ITS ARABIC COUNTERPART

Adverbial infinitives are classified syntactically into adjuncts, disjuncts and conjuncts. As an adjunct, the English infinitive is used to modify verbs, as in:

7. a. I called *to see you*.

b. I went *to visit my mother*.

c. We eat *to live*, not live *to eat*.

[17]

As a disjunct, the English infinitive modifies the whole sentence and comments on the style of saying the sentence in which it is used. Infinitival constructions such as *to be honest, to be fair, to be frank, to be precise, to be truthful, to speak candidly* are examples of disjuncts, e.g.

8. I'm not sure what to do, *to be honest*.

In the following expressions, the infinitive has a conjunct force: *to begin with, to conclude, to continue, to recapitulate, to start (with), to summarize, to sum up*, etc.

[17]

9. *To sum up*, we all agreed to elect him.

Also in Arabic, the infinitive can be used as an adjunct to modify verbs, but it is not used as a disjunct or a conjunct.

[1] ... وَذَكَرَ بِهِ أَنْ تُبْسَلَ نَفْسٌ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ... (الانعام: ٧٠)

10. wadhakkir bihi 'an tubsala nafsun bimā kasabat.

('al-'an'ām:

70)

... وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَبَيِّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ... (البقرة:

١٨٧

[1]

11. wakulū waṣrabū ḡattā yatabayana lakum alḡayṭu al'abyaḡu mina alḡayṭi al'aswadi mina alfajr...

('al-Baqara: 187)

The infinitive in English and Arabic has different semantic relations to the sentence to which it is subordinated. But this does not mean that the infinitive in both languages expresses the same semantic relations.

In fact, a semantic role is sometimes found in one of the two languages only. Furthermore, when the same semantic role exists in both English and Arabic, it is usage that determines whether in a certain case we can have an infinitive or not. Consequently, we do not necessarily have an English infinitive translated by an Arabic infinitive and vice versa in all cases where it is stated that the infinitive in both languages is used in expressing the same semantic role.

A. Purpose

The English infinitive of purpose can always be preceded or paraphrased by the subordinators *in order to* or *so as*, and it mainly occurs after verbs of motion, as in:

12. a. I came *to see you*. (= in order to see you).
- b. He left early *to catch the train*. (= in order to, so as to catch...).
- c. You should eat *to live*, not live *to eat*.
- d. I came *to bury Caesar*, *not to praise him*.

[9], [16], [17]

Negative purpose is expressed in the infinitive clauses by *so as not to* and *in order not to*:

13. a. Turn the volume down *so as not to wake the baby*.
- b. I ignored the remark *in order not to prolong the dispute*. [17]

The Arabic infinitive of purpose is introduced by one of four subordinators, namely: *kay*, *likay*, *hattā*, and *li'ajl*. Consider the following examples:

14. a. Faradadnāhu 'ilā 'umihī *kay taqara 'aynuhā* wa lā taḥzan... ('al-Qaṣaṣ: 13)

[1] فَرَدَدْنَاهُ إِلَىٰ أُمِّهِ كَيْ تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا وَلَا تَحْزَنَ... (القصص: ١٣)

- b. *Likay lā ta'saw 'alā mā fātakum* wa lā tafrahū bimā

'ātākum... ('al-Hadīd: 23)

[1] وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةً وَيَتُوبَ الَّذِينَ لِلَّهِ... (البقرة: ١٩٣)

- c. Waqātilūhum *hattā lā takūna fitnatun* wa yakūna addīnu lillāh... ('al-Baqara: 193)

أعطيت الحمال ديناراً لأجل أن يحمل امتعي.

- d. 'a'taytu 'alḥammāla dīnāran *li'ajli 'an yaḥmila 'amti 'ati*.

The Arabic infinitive may give the meaning of purpose without any subordinator to introduce it. As such, the infinitive is explained differently by Baṣrah grammarians and Kūfa grammarians. According to Baṣrah grammarians, the infinitive is maf'ūl li'ajlih (object of purpose) because it is preceded by the ellipted gerund *karāhata* or *ḥaṣyata* (lest). By contrast, Kūfa grammarians believe that there is

an implied *lā* (not) between the infinitive verb and its particle; therefore, they take the infinitive in such a case to mean *li'allā...* (*so as not to...*). [5], [10]

Consider the following examples:

[1] ...يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَضِلُّوا... (النساء: ١٧٦)

15. a. Yubayinu Allāhu lakum *'an taḍillū*...

('al-Nisā': 176)

[1] وَجَعَلْنَا فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيًا أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِهِمْ (الانباء: ٣١)

- b. Waja'alnā fi al'arḍi rawāsiya *'an tamīda bihim*...

('al-'anbīyā':

31)

In both these examples, the infinitive has two interpretations depending on whether Baṣrah school of grammar is followed or Kūfa school.

B. Result

"To-infinitive clauses without a subordinator or a subject may have temporal function, expressing the outcome of the situation" [17, p. 1079]

16. a. A bird sang, to split its throat.
- b. They parted, never to see each other again.
- c. He left, never to return.
- d. She turned around, to find the car gone.

In this context, the infinitive occurs in final position only, and it conveys a meaning similar to that of finite result clauses. [17]

In Arabic, there is no adverbial of result, but we can find examples which resemble the English infinitive of result in meaning, like:

...مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَاءُ وَزُلُّوا حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَىٰ نَصُرَ اللَّهُ...

[1] (البقرة: ٢١٤)

17. massat-hum alba'sā'u waḍḍarā'u wa zulzilū *hattā yaqūla arrasūlu walladhīna 'āmanū ma'ahu matā nasuru Allāh*... ('al-Baqara: 214)

C. Time

The English infinitive may combine duration of time with outcome when it follows durative verbs.

18. a. He lived *to see the two world wars*.
- b. We have to wait for the boy *to become a man*.
- c. He lived *to be one hundred*.
- d. He lingered on *to see his daughter's wedding*.

[17, p.1079]

The Arabic infinitive can be used after the prepositional phrases *min qabl* and *min ba'd* or after the nouns *qabl* and *ba'd* to express a temporal relation to the main verb, as in:

[1] قَالُوا أُوذِينَا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَأْتِيَنَا وَمِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جِئْتَنَا... (الاعراف: ١٦٩)

19. a. qālū 'udhīnā *min qabli 'an ta'tīyanā* wa *min ba'di mā ji'tanā*...

[1] ... أَنَا آتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ... (النمل: ٤٠)

b. 'anā 'ātīka bihi qabla 'an yartadda 'ilayka tarfuk... (ʿan-Namil: 40)

[1] فَمَنْ بَدَّلَهُ بَعْدَمَا سَمِعَهُ فَإِنَّمَا إِثْمُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يُبَدِّلُونَهُ... (البقرة: ١٨١)

c. faman badalahu ba'da mā sami'ahu fa'inamā 'ithmuhu 'alā alladhīna yubadilunah... (ʿal-Baqara: 181)

D. Reason

Infinitive clauses may convey a meaning similar to that of reason *in that*:

20. He is foolish *to make such a fuss*. (... in that he makes such a fuss.) [17]

In Arabic, we can talk about reason by an infinitive without any subordinator or by an infinitive introduced by 'illā:

[1] ...أَتَقْتُلُونَ رَجُلًا أَنْ يَقُولَ رَبِّيَ اللَّهُ... (غافر: ٢٨)

21. a. ...'ataqtulūna rajulan 'an yaqūla rabiya Allāh... (Gāfir: 28)

[1] وَمَا نَقَمُوا مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ (البروج: ٨)

b. wamā naqamū minhum 'illā 'an yu'minū billāh al'azīz alhamīd. (ʿal-Burūj: 8)

E. Condition

English infinitive clauses with *without* as subordinator may express a conditional relationship:

22. *Without me to supplement your income*, you wouldn't be

able to manage. [17, p. 1090]

The Arabic infinitive of condition has more various structures than the English one. In this usage, the Arabic infinitive can be introduced by *min ġayr*, 'alā, law, lawlā and ḥattā, as the following examples show:

لَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ أَنْ تَعِيشَ مِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ أَمْدَكَ بِالْمَالِ.

23. a. Lan tastaṭī'a 'an ta'tīsa min ġayri 'an 'amudaka bilmāl.

قَالَ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُنْكِحَكَ إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيْ هَاتَيْنِ عَلَيَّ أَنْ تَأْجُرَنِي ثَمَانِي حَجَجٍ..

[1] (القصص: ٢٧)

b. Qāla 'innī 'urīdu 'an 'unkihaka 'ihdā abnatayya hātayni 'alā 'an tajuranī thamāniya ḥujaj.

(ʿal-Qaṣaṣ:

13)

وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ وَإِلَى أُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَبْطِنُونَ مِنْهُمْ

[1] (النساء: ٨٣)

c. Walaw radduhu 'ilā alrasūli wa'ulī al'amri minhum la'alimahu alladhīna yastanbiṭunahu minhum. (ʿal-Nisā': 83)

[1] لَوْلَا أَنْ تَدَارَكُ بَعْمَةَ مَنْ رَبَّهِ لَنَبَذَ بِالْعَرَاءِ وَهُوَ مَذْمُومٌ. (القلم: ٤٩)

d. Lawlā 'an tadārahahu ni'matun min rabihi lanubidha bil'arā'i wahuwa madhmūm. (ʿal-Qalam: 49)

[1] وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكَاتِ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنَ. (البقرة: ٢٢١)

e. Walā tankihū almušrikāti ḥattā yu'minna...

(ʿal-Baqara: 221)

F. Comparison

As a comparison clause, the English infinitive may be introduced by *as if* or *as though*:

24. a. He raised his hand *as though to command silence*.

b. She winked at me *as if to say that I shouldn't say anything*. [17, p. 1110]

The infinitive has no such a use in Arabic.

G. Similarity

The English infinitive cannot express similarity because it never comes after the similarity subordinators *as* and *like*. However, the Arabic infinitive can be used to show similarity between two actions. In this usage, it is introduced by *kāf* or *mithl*:

[1] أَمْ تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَسْأَلُوا رَسُولَكُمْ كَمَا سَأَلُوا مُوسَى مِنْ قَبْلُ... (البقرة: ١٠٨)

25. a. 'am turīduna 'an tas'alū rasūlakum kamā su'ila Mūsā min qabl... (ʿal-Baqara: 108)

[1] ...أَنْ يُؤْتِيَ أَحَدٌ بِثَلٍّ مَا أُوتِيتُمْ... (آل عمران: ٧٣)

b. 'an yu'tā 'ahadun mithla mā utītum...

(ʿal-'Umrān: 73)

H. Exception

English infinitive clauses of exception are introduced by the subordinators *but* and *except*:

26. a. Nothing would satisfy the child *but for me to place her on my lap*. [17, p. 1103]

b. There is nothing to do *but/except (to) go home*.

Exception in Arabic is done by eight particles, namely "illā, ġayr, siwā, ḥalā, ḥāshā, 'adā, laysa, lāyākūn" [14, p. 127]. Only 'illā can be followed by an infinitive, as in:

قُلْ لَا أَجِدُ فِي مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ مُحَرَّمًا عَلَى طَاعِمٍ يَطْعَمُهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ مَيْتَةً أَوْ دَمًا مَسْفُوحًا أَوْ

لَحْمٌ خنزير... (الانعام: ١٤٥)

27. Qul lā 'ajidu fī mā uḥiya 'ilayya muḥaraman 'alā ṭā'imīn yaṭ'amuh 'illā 'an yakūna maytatan 'aw daman masfūḥan... (ʿal-'an'ām: 145)

I. Preference:

Clauses of preference are mainly introduced by the subordinators *rather than* and *sooner than*, with the bare infinitive as the verb of the clause:

28. a. *Rather than go there by air*, I'd take the slowest train.

b. They'll fight to the finish *sooner than surrender*.

c. *Rather than you say anything*, I would speak to the manager. [17, p. 1111]

The infinitive clause of exception may have its own explicit subject:

29. *Rather than you say anything*, I would speak to the manager myself. (I'd prefer to speak to the manager myself.) [17, p. 1112]

The Arabic infinitive follows the phrase *ḥayrun min* to express preference, as in:

[4, p. 44] تسمع بالمعيدي خير من أن تراه.

30. a. Tasma'u bilmu'aydi ḥayrun *min 'an tarāh*.

الموت خير من أن يقال عني جبان.

b. 'almawtu ḥayrun *min 'an yuqāla 'anni jabān*.

The infinitive in English sometimes blends more than one semantic relations, as in the following example in which the infinitive combines condition with purpose and reason.

31. You must be strong *to lift that weight*. =

[if you were able to lift that weight]. (condition)

[in order to lift that weight]. (purpose)

[because you were able to lift that weight]. (reason)

[17]

IV. TRANSLATING ENGLISH ADVERBIAL INFINITIVE INTO ARABIC

As we have seen in the comparison section, the Arabic infinitive is not used as a disjunct or a conjunct as the English infinitive is. Therefore, translators need to look for alternative Arabic structures when translating English infinitival disjuncts and conjuncts into Arabic. The Arabic *maṣdar sarīh* (gerund) and prepositional phrases are good candidates to be equivalent to the English infinitival disjuncts and conjuncts. For instance, the following English sentence which contains infinitive as a disjunct:

32. *To be honest*, I am not sure what to do.

can be translated into Arabic as:

صدقاً، لست متأكدًا ماذا أفعل.

33. *Ṣidqan*, lastu muta'akidan mādhā 'af'al.

where the English infinitive is rendered to Arabic gerund.

Similarly, the following English sentences which have infinitive structures as conjuncts:

34. a. *To sum up*, we all agreed to elect him.

b. *To begin with*, I'd like to thank you all.

can be translated into Arabic with gerund or a prepositional phrase, as follows:

(gerund) خلاصة القول، اتفقنا جميعاً على انتخابه.

35. a. *Ḥulāṣatu alqawli*, itafaqnā jamī'an 'alā intiḥābih.

(prepositional phrase) في البداية، أود أن أشكركم جميعاً.

b. *Fil bidāyati*, 'awadu 'an 'aškurakum jamī'an.

In other words, a replacement procedure is adopted in translating the previous English sentences into Arabic, i.e. the English infinitive is replaced by Arabic gerund or prepositional phrases.

As an adverbial of result, the English infinitive poses problems in translation as it does not always have infinitive equivalent in Arabic. When we translate an English sentence like:

36. A bird sang, *to split its throat*.

we can use infinitive structure in Arabic as well to translate this sentence, but we need to add *ḥattā* as a subordinator, as follows:

غنى الطيرُ حتى انفلقت حنجرتَه.

37. Ġannā alṭayru *ḥattā infalaqat ḥunjuratah*.

However, when we try to translate an English sentence like the following into Arabic:

38. They parted *never to see each other again*.

we cannot use infinitive structure sentence, as we did in the previous example. The sentence may be translated into Arabic as follows:

افترقوا فلا يرى بعضهم البعض مرة أخرى.

39. Iftaraqū *falā yarā ba 'dahumu alba 'aḍ maratan 'uḥrā*.

The English adverbial infinitive of time has no Arabic infinitive equivalent. But it can be translated into Arabic by using *ḥattā* as a preposition, as shown in the following examples:

40. a. He lived *to see the two world wars*.

عاش حتى رأى الحربين العالميتين.

b. 'āša *ḥattā ra 'ā 'alḥarbayni 'al 'ālamiyatayn*.

41. a. We have to wait *for the boy to become a man*.

علينا الانتظار حتى يصبح الولد رجلاً.

b. 'alaynā al'intizāru *ḥattā yuṣbiḥa alwaladu rajulan*

Two procedures are adopted in translating English time infinitive clauses into Arabic, namely addition and replacement (*ḥattā* is added and the infinitive is replaced by a verb in the past or present form)

The English infinitive as an adverbial of condition has only one structure, which is an infinitive with explicit subject introduced by *without*, as the following example shows:

42. *Without me to supplement your income*, you wouldn't be able to manage.

To translate this structure into Arabic, we should use an infinitive structure introduced by *lawlā* or the prepositional phrase *min ġayr*, as follows:

لولا أن أمدك بالمال لما استطعت أن تعيش.

43. a. *Lawlā 'an 'amudaka bilmāl* lama staṭa'ta 'an ta'īš.

لن تستطيع ان تعيش من غير أن امدك بالمال.

b. Lan tastaṭī'a 'an ta'īša *min ġayri 'an 'amudaka bilmāl*.

The English infinitive of comparison is always introduced by the subordinators *as though* and *as if*. These subordinators are rendered in Arabic into *ka'anna* which cannot be followed by infinitive. Therefore, we cannot translate the following English sentences into Arabic using infinitive; we have to use *ka'anna* followed by a verb to give the English meaning.

44. a. He raised his hand *as though to command silence*.

b. She winked at me *as if to say that I shouldn't say anything*.

رفع يده كأنه يأمر بالصمت.

45. a. Rafa'a yadahu *ka'annahu ya'muru bišamt*.

غمزت لي كأنها تقول لا تنطق بشيء.

b. Ġamazat lī *ka'annahā taqūlu lā taṭṭaq bišay'*.

The infinitive in English sometimes blends more than one semantic relation, as in the following example where the infinitive combines condition with purpose and reason.

46. You must be strong to lift that weight . =

[if you were able to lift that weight] (condition)

[in order to lift that weight] (purpose)

[because you were able to lift that weight] (reason)

[17]

In such a case, the infinitive is ambiguous and needs special attention in translation. The translator should know which of these semantic roles is intended before s/he could translate the sentence.

V. TRANSLATING ARABIC ADVERBIAL-EQUIVALENT INFINITIVE INTO ENGLISH

The first thing to be taken into consideration in translating Arabic infinitive into English is that it is finite, unlike the English infinitive, i.e. the Arabic infinitive changes according to number, gender and tense. That is why in many situations the Arabic infinitive is translated into that-clause in English in order to show this change which cannot be shown by English infinitive.

As a purpose equivalent, the Arabic infinitive is ambiguous when it is not introduced by a subordinator; so, it can be translated in two different ways: the expression *lest* followed by that-clause when the translator follows Baṣrah school's interpretation and *so as not to* followed by the infinitive form of the verb when the translator follows Kūfa school's interpretation.

...يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَضِلُّوا... (النساء: ١٧٦) [1]

47. Yubayinu Allāhu lakum 'an taḍillū... ('al-Nisā': 176)

Compare the two translations of the previous example.

48. a. Allah makes clear to you, *lest you go astray*...

b. Allah makes clear to you, *so as not to go astray*...

The Arabic equivalent of English adverbial of result is introduced by *hattā* which is a purpose particle, according to Šāfi [13, p. 440]

...مستهم البأساء والضراء وزلزلوا حتى يقول الرسول والذين آمنوا معه منى نصر الله.

(البقرة: ٢١٤) [1]

49. masathum alba'sā'u waḍḍarā'u wa zulzilū *hattā yaqūlu arrasūlu walladhīna 'āmanū ma'ahu matā nasuru Allāh*... ('al-Baqara: 214)

Such use of the Arabic infinitive can be translated into English by a finite clause introduced by *so that*, as in:

50. ...distress and affliction befell them and they were shaken violently, *so that the Messenger and those who believed with him said: When will the help of Allah come?* [15]

The Arabic infinitive of time can be preceded by one of the phrases *min qabl* and *min ba'd* or by one of the adverbs *qabl* and *ba'd*, as in:

قَالُوا أُوذِينَا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَأْتِيَنَا وَمِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جِئْتَنَا... (الاعراف: ١٢٩) [1]

51. a. Qālū 'udhīnā *min qabli 'an ta'tīyanā* wa *min ba'di mā ji'tanā*... ('al-'a'rāf: 129)

... أَنَا أْتَيْكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ... (النمل: ٤٠) [1]

b. 'anā 'ātīka bihi *qabla 'an yartadda 'ilayka ṭarfuk*... ('an-Namil: 40)

فَمَنْ بَدَأَهُ بَعْدَمَا سَمِعَهُ فَإِنَّمَا إِثْمُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يُبَدِّلُونَهُ... (البقرة: ١٨١) [1]

c. faman badalahu *ba'da mā sami'ahu* fa'inamā 'ithmuhu 'alā alladhīna yubadilunah...

('al-Baqara: 181)

When translating these Arabic examples into English, we have to use a finite clause introduced by the subordinator *before* or *after*. Following are the English translations of the previous examples respectively:

52. a. They said, 'We have been hurt *before thou camest to us*, and *after thou camest to us*.' [3]

b. ...'I will bring it to thee, *before ever thy glance returns to thee*.' [3]

c. Whoever then alters it after he has heard it, the sin of it then is only upon those who alter it; [15]

As a reason for what precedes it, the Arabic infinitive can occur without a subordinator or with 'illā as a subordinator. Consider the following examples:

[1] ...أَتَقْتُلُونَ رَجُلًا أَنْ يَقُولَ رَبِّيَ اللَّهُ... (غافر: ٢٨)

53. a. ...'ataqtulūna rajulan 'an yaqūla rabiya Allāh... (Ġāfir: 28)

[1] وَمَا نَقَمُوا مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ (البروج: ٨)

b. wa mā naqamū minhum 'illā 'an yu'minū billāh al'azīz alhamīd. ('al-Burūj: 8)

Here, there is not structural equivalence between Arabic and English. Thus, because-clause is used to render the above Arabic examples of reason into English.

54. a. Will ye slay a man because he says, 'My Lord is Allah'? [6]

b. They took revenge on them only because they believed in the All-mighty, the All-laudable, [3]

Unlike the English infinitive of condition, the Arabic infinitive can take different forms only one of them is structurally equivalent to the English infinitive in this function, namely the infinitive preceded by lawlā or min ḡayr. (see examples number 42 and 43)

When the Arabic infinitive is preceded by ḡattā, it will be rendered in English into unless followed by finite clause, as in:

[1] وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكَاتِ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنَ. (البقرة: ٢٢١)

55. Walā tankihū almušrikātī ḡattā yu'minna... ('al-Baqara: 221)

56. Don't get married to unbelieving women unless they become believers.

However, when the infinitive is introduced by 'allā to express condition, it will be translated into English by that-clause preceded by the phrase on condition, i.e. there is addition, e.g.

قَالَ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَنْكِحَكَ إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيَّ هَاتَيْنِ عَلَى أَنْ تَأْجُرَنِي ثَمَانِي حَجَجٍ..

[1] (القصص: ٢٧)

57. Qāla 'innī 'urīdu 'an 'unkihaka 'ihdā abnatayya hātayni 'alā 'an tajuranī thamāniya ḡujaj.

58. He said: "I intend to wed one of these my daughters to thee, on condition that thou serve me for eight years;

[6]

As we have seen earlier, the Arabic infinitive can be introduced by only one exception subordinator, viz. 'illā, as in:

قُلْ لَا أَجِدُ فِي مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ مُحَرَّمًا عَلَى طَاعِمٍ يَطْعَمُهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ مَيْتَةً أَوْ دَمًا مَسْفُوحًا أَوْ لَحْمَ خِنْزِيرٍ...

[1] (الانعام: ١٤٥)

59. Qul lā 'ajidu fī mā 'uḡiyya 'ilayya muḡaraman 'alā ṭā'imīn yaṭ'amuh 'illā 'an yakūna maytatan 'aw daman masfūḡan... ('al-'an'ām: 145)

The exception clause in this example can be translated into English by an infinitive clause introduced by *except*:

60. ...except to be dead flesh, blood poured forth, or swine flesh ...

The Arabic infinitive of similarity has no English infinitive equivalent; thus, it cannot be translated into English with infinitive. This is because the English subordinators *as* and *like* which introduce similarity clauses in English can never be followed by infinitive. Compare the following examples:

[1] أَمْ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَسْأَلُوا رَسُولَكُمْ كَمَا سُئِلَ مُوسَى مِنْ قَبْلُ... (البقرة: ١٠٨)

61. a. 'am turīduna 'an tas'alū rasūlakum kamā su'ila Mūsā min qabl... ('al-Baqara: 108)

[1] ...أَنْ يُؤْتِيَ أَحَدٌ مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيتُمْ... (آل عمران: ٧٣)

b. 'an yu'tā 'aḡadun mithla mā 'utītum...

('āl-'Umrān: 73)

62. a. Would ye question your Messenger as Moses was questioned of old? [6]

b. ...that anyone should be given the like of what you have been given,... [3]

CONCLUSION

As the results of the comparison have shown, the infinitive in both English and Arabic can express purpose, result, time, reason, condition, exception, and preference. However, only the English infinitive is able to convey comparison meaning and only the Arabic infinitive can express similarity meaning.

Although they share the majority of the adverbial semantic roles, the English infinitive and the Arabic infinitive differ in many aspects. They differ in the nature of the subordinators which introduce them. They differ in the type and nature of the verbs they modify, i.e. a verb which is modified by an infinitive clause in English is not necessarily modified by an infinitive clause in Arabic when translated. Arabic infinitives can be preceded by prepositions whereas English infinitives cannot.

Translating English adverbial infinitive into Arabic and vice versa yields many problems since there is not always structural equivalence between the two languages in this aspect. Addition, replacement and modification are the common procedures used in translating this structure between the two languages.

APPENDIX

REFERENCES

- [1] The Holy Quran
- [2] A. Hassan, *'al-Nahw al-Wāfī*, 3rd ed, vol. 1. Cairo: Dār 'al-Ma'ārif Press, 1966.
- [3] A. J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted*. New York: Touchstone, 1996.
- [4] 'Abu Bišr 'Amrū Sībawayh, *'al-Kitāb*, Beirut: 'Ālam 'al-Kutub Publisher, 1975.
- [5] 'Abu Ja'far 'an-Naḥḥās, *'I'rāb 'al-Qur'ān*, 1st ed., vol. 2. Beirut: Dār 'al-Kutub 'al-'Ilmiyyah, 1421 H.
- [6] A. Y. Ali, *The Holy Quran: Translation and Commentary*, 2nd ed. American Trust Publications, 1977.
- [7] C. E. Eckersley and J. M. Eckersley, *A Comprehensive English Grammar for Foreign Students*. London: Longman Group Ltd, 1960.
- [8] C. T. Onions, (ed.) *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966.
- [9] G. Curme, *English Grammar*. New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc, 1953.
- [10] I. 'al-'Aṣbahānī, *'I'rāb 'al-Qur'ān Lil'aṣbahānī*, 1st ed. 1995.
- [11] I. M. Sayer, "Nominal Infinitive in English and Arabic: A Contrastive Study", *International Journal of English and Education*, vol. 5, issue. 3, pp. 372-388, July 2016.
- [12] K. Schibsbye, *A modern English grammar*. London: Oxford University Press, 1967.
- [13] M. 'Abdul Rahīm Ṣāfi, *'al-Jadwal fī 'I'rāb 'al-Qur'ān*, 4th ed., vol. 1 Damascus: Dār 'al-Rašīd, 1418 H.
- [14] M. 'al-Ġalāyīnī, *Jāma' 'al-Durūs 'al-'Arabiyyah*, 30th ed., vol. 3. Beirut: 'al-Maktabah 'al-'Aṣriyyah Publications, 1994.
- [15] M. M. Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Arabic Text with English Translation and Commentary*, New ed. Ohio: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islām Lahore Inc., 2002.
- [16] O. Jespersen, *Essentials of English Grammar*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1977.
- [17] R. Quirk, S. Greenbaum, J. Leech and J. Svartvik, *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. London: Longman Group Ltd, 1985.

| IPA: Arabic Vowels | | | |
|------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| IPA | Letter(s) | Nearest English Equivalent | Transliteration |
| i: | ي | see | ī |
| i | ِ | sit | i |
| a: | ا | fan, hard | ā |
| a | َ | set | a |
| u: | و | soon | ū |
| u | ُ | look | u |
| ai | أي | light | āy |
| ei | أي | day | ay |
| ao | أو | now | āw |
| IPA: Arabic Consonants | | | |
| IPA | Letter(s) | Nearest English Equivalent | Transliteration |
| b | ب (Bā') | but | b |
| t | ت (Tā') | stay | t |
| t ^ʕ | ط (Ṭā') | No equivalent | ṭ |
| d | د (Dāl) | do | d |
| d ^ʕ | ض (Ḍād) | No equivalent | ḍ |
| dʒ | ج (Ġīm) | joy | j |
| k | ك (Kāf) | sky | k |
| f | ف (Fā') | feel | f |
| θ | ث (Thā') | thing | th |
| ð | ذ (Dhāl) | this | dh |
| ð ^ʕ | ظ (Ẓā') | No equivalent | ẓ |
| s | س (Sīn) | see | s |
| s ^ʕ | ص (Ṣād) | No equivalent | ṣ |
| z | ز (Zāy) | zoo | z |
| ʃ | ش (Shīn) | she | š |
| h | هـ (Hā') | him | h |
| m | م (Mīm) | me | m |
| n | ن (Nūn) | now | n |
| l | ل (Lām) | leaf | l |
| ɫ | * | hall | ll (in Allāh only) |
| r | ر (Rā') | trilled run | r |
| w | و (Wāw) | we | w |
| j | ي (Yā') | yes | y |
| x | خ (Ḥā') | loch | ḥ |
| ɣ | غ (Ġayn) | No equivalent | ġ |
| ħ | ح (Ḥā') | No equivalent | ḥ |
| ʕ | ع ('ayn) | No equivalent | ʕ |
| ʔ | أ (Hamza) | glotalised / t /: beʔə | ʔ |