THE EMPHASIS IN ARABIC AND ENGLISH: A STUDY IN CONTRAST

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ABSTRACT

"A piece of writing may be unified and coherent and still not be effective, if it does notobserve the principle of emphasis." (Brooks and Robert 1949: 44).

From this point of view, it is intended in this paper to give the reader a fair idea aboutavery important and interesting linguistic phenomenon 'emphasis in Arabic and the English.'(AE).

Learners of English have to know what is emphasis, to sort out ambiguity.

Different forms of emphasis are considered. Types of emphasis are demonstrated.

SECTION ONE

EMPHASIS IN ARABIC

DISCUSSION

As in English, emphasis in Arabic is used to help a hearer to avoid ambiguity. However, emphasesinArabic is divided into two types.

- Semantic Emphasis.
- Verbal Emphasis.

1. Semantical Emphasis (Using Different Forms).

In this type of emphasis, it is decided at what meaning must be in mind of the hearer, and a try is made to help him/her to avoid any undesired ambiguity. Emphasis here has seven original forms.Itissubdivided into the following:

The first usage applies *'self, both, and all'.*

a) Self and Sameness, e.g.:

Wasal alinsanu ila Al-qamari nafsuhu aw aynahu
Arrived man to the moon himself or same.
Man himself reached the moon.

b) (Both) *Kilta (feminine)*, *Kilaa (masculine)*.

c) (All) *Kul, jamii aamaatan.*
All, every, the whole.

These forms in Arabic give comprehensiveness to the meaning. However, it can add other two kinds related to the original comprehensive ones.

1. **ALL** for (Plural, and Maximum of Plurality).
    - Sometimes these forms are used for emphasis after the word all.
2. **NUMBERS**
    - If we add a number to the sentence utterance, this means it is an emphatic situation, e.g.:
        - Safàra'l asdiq au sab'atuhum
        - Travelled friends the seven of them
        - The seven friends travelled.
        - Seven is used here to show a kind of emphasis.

3. INDEFINITE EMPHASIS

Grammarians disagree about this kind of emphasis. Some prevent the use of this kind o f emphasis,others do use it. Each proposes an implication: (a), or (b).

a) The indefinite should be specified like:
    - year, month, week, day, night.

b) The indefinite should use forms of comprehensiveness for all.

4. VERBAL EMPHASIS

This is to repeat the same first form pattern which could be in the noun, verb, letters, sami-verbs,nominal sentence, and a pronoun.

Examples are:

1. Noun

(Sura: Al-Fajer 89 Aya: 21) (كَلَّا إِذَا دُكَّتِ الْأَرْضُ دَكًّا دَكًّا) (سورة الفجر – الآية 21)

2. Verb
    - Tala'a tala'a lfajru
    - The day break, the day break.
3. Letter (sami-verbs)
    - Na'am na'am ayyuhalqa'idu
    - Yes, Yes, president!
4. Nominal Sentences
    - Amen Amen
5. Verbal Sentence
    - Za'ara'l'asadu Za'ara''asadu
    - Roar the lion, roar the lion.
    - The lion roared

6. Pronoun

- Antum antum mahaththaboona
- You are, You are Polite!

PRONOUN EMPHASIS

We can emphasise the pronoun by using verbal emphasis (same forms) or by using different patterns as shown below:

1. Semantical Emphasis

This emphasises the same pronouns semantically by using different structure forms. It is divided into:

a) Separate Pronoun: this pronoun can be used to emphasise in a semantic way without isolating it, e.g.:

- anta nafsuka farisun, wahumjamee'humjashuddoon 'azrak
- you yourself a knight and they all support you.

b) Connected pronoun: this emphasises the connected pronoun semantically by using one of its forms without isolating it from other separated pronouns, e.g.:

- Khalidun akramaka nalsuka wa marra bika 'aynaka wazarakum kullukum wa sallama 'alaykum Janice 'ukum.
- Khalid was generous with you yourself and passed by you the same day and visited you all and saluted you all.

c) Hidden Pronoun: the hidden pronoun can be emphasised verbally by using separate pronouns, e.g.:

- aJee'u 'aria 'ayni 'ilalnaadi.
- I come I am, me to the club.
- I myself come to the club.

2. Verbal Emphasis: this includes:

a) Separated Pronouns: it can be emphasised verbally only by repetition, e.g.:

- anta anta muhibbun lii' kheiri.
- You, you like good

b) Connected Pronouns: it can be emphasised verbally by using separate pronouns that carry the same meaning, e.g.:

- qara 'tuma antuma wa a teituma, wa 'a teitu ana
- Read you both, you came, came I am.
- You both read, you came, I came.

c) Hidden Pronoun: it can be emphasised verbally by using clear separate pronoun, e.g.:

- Ajtahidu ana najtahidu nahhu
- Me study, I, we study, we are.

- I study, we study.

3. Letter(s) Emphasis

a) The repetition of the same letter alone when the answer of a sentence is (Yes) the emphasis will be (yes, yes), e.g.:

- a laysaija wwu shah wun baJa baJa
- Isn't it shining? Yes, Yes.

b) To repeat the letter with its connected form as in saying, e.g.:

- Fiss amaa Fissamma
- In the sky, in the sky.

SECTION TWO

EMPHASIS IN ENGLISH

EMPHASIS AREA OF APPLICATION

In both languages emphasis is applied by using special devices in the main cases of emphasis as a means for emphatic forms.

The emphatic form in English is mainly discussed within the verbs, and especially treated withelaboration within the special finites, as part of certain characteristics of the finites which distinguish them fromother verbs.

As part of the finite verbscharacteristics verbs are used to express emphasis. Eckersley, C. E. (187-188, 203).

There is sometimes a strong stress on the special finite in special construction for affirmative emphasis:

I do like seafood.

You can speak fluently.

My brother will be happy to come again.

I did take your book.

Within the general application of the pronoun (it) when it stands for the real subject, e.g.:

(It) was his brother, not him, who said that.

This construction can be used to give special emphasis to the real subject; when 'it is' or 'it was' …precede the real subject and a relative clause, e.g.:

It was the training that he had as a young man that made him such a good engineer.

Emphatic forms can be obtained as well by special structures, (ibid, p. 203), that is when 'ever' is added to 'what' or 'who' or to 'which' as far as a feeling of surprise, anger or indignation is intended e.g.:

Whoever can be calling at this time?

Who ever heard of such a silly idea?

Whatever were you thinking of to suggest such a plan?

Emphasis has a link with the voice, (ibid, p. 219, 221), as well where the passive voice is not merely a formal variant of the active voice, able to replace it with no change in meaning. It might in most cases show difference of emphasis; i.e., when the subject of the sentence is the main point of interest in the active, the passive supplies a grammatical device that offers the object an important role.

'When we went to place the emphasis on the active, or on the receivers of the action, we use the passive voice.'

Don't you dare to say I am not telling the truth?

Adverbs, (ibid, pp. 263, 265, 267), play a role as well, in the emphasis structure. A structure may be changed into the emphatic form when the adverb or the adverb phrase changed position to the front position of the sentence:

often have I heard it said that he is not to be trusted.

By this side sat his faithful dog.

Here is the book that you wanted.

Very soon we shall get the result of your examination.

Also related to adverb in applying emphasis is the attachment of emphasis when it is thrown on to the principal clauses, (ibid, p. 393, 340), in clauses beginning with 'as', 'seeing that'.

Emphasis from the principal clause; in the first example, to the adverb clause in the second example below:

As my secretary is away at present, I have a great extra letter to answer.

I have a great many extra letters to answer because my secretary is away at present.

Emphasis also operates with (-self) pronouns. (Ibid, pp. 116, 120, 121).

The emphasis is formed by adding-self (plural selves) to the possessive adjectives of the first and second person. They are generally used in addition to emphasis to point and contrast, regard:

You yourself (i.e.: you and not anyone else)

Yourself told me the story.

In the above examples the emphasising pronouns can go after the word for which they stand, but it is usually placed at the end of the sentence; regard:

I saw him do it myself.

Jane drove the car herself.

Never leaves to others what you ought to do yourself.

It is noted here that the emphasis (self) pronouns agree in form with reflexive pronouns, but agree in form with their function differ. It is observed that they are strongly stressed, and they are used for the sake of emphasis; generally, to point out a contrast like:

You yourself (i.e., you and you not anyone else).

Played the piano yesterday.

(A learner of the language should be reminded that the emphasising pronouns "not the reflexive ones" could be omitted without destroying the sense in the sentence.)

Sometimes emphasis can be intensified. This can be formed by using 'all' with the structure 'by-self', regard:

Don't you feel lonely living here all by yourself.

Degrees of emphasis in English

Degrees of emphasis are available in:

a). When clauses of reason are preceded by 'it is', 'it was' etc., and followed by 'that'. An additional emphasis is given to the adverb clause of reason here, e.g.:

It was (only) because the car was so small that he solid it.

b). When an adverb clause follows the principal clause the omission of the comma places more emphasis on the adverb clause, e.g.:

He came because I asked him to.

CONCLUSION:

If we examine the above discussion of the emphatic forms in English and Arabic, it is clear to see that there are interesting differences and similarities between the two languages. For example, onefindingis that both languages make use of special forms for achieving emphasis, whereas English, sometimes, applies special structures for the sake of emphasis.

1. English makes use of passivation in making emphasis, while Arabic does not apply suchtechnique.
2. English makes use of special grammatical structure, whereas Arabic makes use of different structure (see pronoun discussion above).
3. Arabic is famous in applying emphasis by repeating words; English makes no such usage.
4. Arabic makes little use at shifting special structure from one place in the structure to another whereas English applies this too often; especially with adverbs. (See above)

Hence, each language has its own technique in making emphasis though they sometimes agree oncertain implication and special facilities.

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