

Rasulova Mashxuraxon Dilmurod qizi

TSUOS Arabic philology

The second-year student

+998907801468, mashhurarasulova2@gmail.com

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF GRAMMATICAL CASES IN ENGLISH AND ARABIC: USAGE, SIMILARITIES, AND DIFFERENCES

Abstract: This article explores the use of grammatical cases in English and Arabic, examining their applications, similarities, and differences. While English relies primarily on word order and prepositions to convey grammatical relationships, Arabic employs a more complex system of inflectional cases. Understanding these distinctions aids in better comprehension and fluency for learners of both languages alike.

Keywords: Grammatical Cases, English, Arabic, Syntax, Morphology, Language Learning, Linguistics

Introduction: Grammatical cases are essential for understanding the syntactic and semantic roles of nouns and pronouns within sentences. In English, cases are largely limited to pronouns, whereas Arabic features a rich system of case markings for nouns, pronouns, and adjectives. This article explores the functions and applications of cases in both languages, highlighting key differences and similarities that impact language learning and translation.

Grammatical Cases in English

In English, the use of grammatical cases is primarily evident in pronouns, which change form to indicate their function in a sentence. The three main cases in English are:

- Nominative Case: Used for subjects. Examples include "I," "he," "she," "we," "they."
 - Example: "She runs every morning."
- Objective Case: Used for objects of verbs or prepositions. Examples include "me," "him," "her," "us," "them."
 - Example: "The teacher called him."
- Possessive Case: Used to indicate ownership. Examples include "my/mine," "his," "her/hers," "our/ours," "their/theirs."
 - Example: "That is her book."

English nouns, however, do not change form based on case. Instead, word order and prepositions play a crucial role in conveying grammatical relationships. For example:

- Subject-Verb-Object Order: "The dog (subject) chased (verb) the cat (object)."
- Use of Prepositions: "The book is on the table."

Grammatical Cases in Arabic

Arabic employs a more complex and systematic use of cases, marked by specific suffixes on nouns, pronouns, and adjectives. The primary cases in Arabic are:

- Nominative Case (مرفوع): Used for subjects and predicate nouns. Typically marked by a "◌ُ" (damma) or "◌" suffix.

- Example: " يدرس الطالب " (al-talib-u yadrus-u) – "The student studies."

- Accusative Case (منصوب): Used for direct objects and after certain prepositions. Typically marked by a " َ " (fatha) or "-i" suffix.

- Example: " أرى الطالب " (ara al-talib-a) – "I see the student."

- Genitive Case (مجرور): Used after prepositions and to indicate possession. Typically marked by a " ِ " (kasra) or "-i" suffix.

- Example: " الطالب كتاب " (kitab-u al-talib-i) – "The student's book."

Arabic cases provide clear grammatical roles and relationships within sentences, allowing for more flexible word order compared to English.

Differences and Similarities: A significant difference between English and Arabic is the extent and manner of case usage. English primarily uses word order and prepositions to establish grammatical relationships, with limited case inflection in pronouns. In contrast, Arabic uses a detailed system of inflectional suffixes that change based on the noun's role in the sentence.

However, both languages use cases to clarify the grammatical function of words, although English does so more through syntax and Arabic through morphology. Both languages aim to convey clear relationships between subjects, objects, and possessors within sentences.

Conclusion: Understanding grammatical cases in English and Arabic is essential for language learners, as it directly impacts sentence structure and meaning. While English relies on word order and prepositions, Arabic uses a detailed system of inflectional cases. Recognizing these differences and similarities can enhance learners' fluency and accuracy in both languages, facilitating better comprehension and translation skills.

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