

Bibliography

1. Beeston , A.F.L. **The Arabic Language Today**. Hutchinson University Library , London,1970.
2. Gantarino Vicente, **Syntax of Modern Arabic Prose**. Indiana University Press, 1974.
3. Fleischk Henri . **L' Arabe Classique, Esquisse D'Une Structre Linguistic**. Dar El-Machreq, Editeurs ,Beyrouth ,1968.
4. Howell, Mortimer Sloper . **Grammar of the Arabic Language**. Allaha-
bad ,1880.
5. Howson, Johne. **Article and Noun In English** .Mouton ,the Hague ,
Paris ,1972 .
6. Ibn Abdi Rabbih al-Aqada l- Farid Edited by Amin Ahmed ,al-Zain
Ahmed ,and al-Abyari , Ibrahim . Cairo ,1965 .
7. Jespersen ,Otto . **A Modern English Grammar On Historical Principles**
Reprinted by George Allen & Unwin Ltd ., 1965.
8. Leech ,G. **Meaning and The English verb** . Longman ,1971 .
9. ——— **Towards a Semantic Description of English** . Longman,
2nd impression, 1971 .
10. Lyons ,John . **Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics** .C U P, 1968.
11. Monteil, Vincent **L'Arabe Moderne Libraire C. Klincksich** ,Paris ,1960.
12. Palmer ,F.R. **The English Verb** . Longman ,1974.
13. Reckendorf , H. **Arabische Syntax** .Heidelberg ,1927.
14. Quirk,R.,Greenbaum, S. Leech,G.,and Svartvik, J A **Grammar of
Contemporary English** . Longman, 2nd Impression ,1972.
15. Twaddell, W.F. **The Englidsh Verb Auxiliaries** . Brown University
Press .,1963.
16. Wright, William . **A Grammar of the Arabic Language** . C U P , 3rd
Edition, 1971 .
17. Zandvoort ,R.W. **A Handbook of English Grammar** . Longmans ,3rd
Edition , 1965 .

The English tense is used to mark possibility, unreality or tentativeness in conditional sentences. In Arabic, these concepts are normally expressed by the particles **لو** and **إن** 'إذا'.

Finally the English past tense is used in reported speech to mark sequence of tenses or 'backshift', a purely Linguistic phenomenon which is not found in Arabic.

Future in the Past

This is a type of future seen from a viewpoint in the past . To express this English uses some of the future constructions used in the past tense.

I was going to see him later .

I knew he was leaving for France the next day .

We were to meet at the same place.

The plane was about to take off .

Arabic does not distinguish between the future proper and future in the past as far as the particles and the verb form are concerned; all that is required is an appropriate time-marker indicating the past .In the following examples the time-marker is underlined

كنت سأراه فيما بعد .
علماً أنه سيفادر في اليوم التالي .
قال اننا نلتقي في المكان نفسه .
فلما اوشكت الطائرة على الاقلاع قال ..

Conclusion

No exact equivalences are possible between two languages, especially between such different languages as English and Arabic ,because of the numerous variations caused by situational context. All that we hope for is approximation and not an exact reproduction .²⁶

The imperfect may be used to render into Arabic most of the meanings of the simple present tense and the progressive aspect ; it may also express future time .

The Arabic perfect may be used to express the majority of the meanings denoted by the past tense and the perfect aspect in English .

Since the two Arabic forms have no deictic properties ,they should be used with an appropriate time marker in order to indicate the exact time.

(26.) On the topic of exact equivalence see John Howson Article and Noun in English (Mouton ,the Hague ,Paris 1972),pp.35-6 and footnote 31; Gregory Rabassa ,If This Be Treason : Translation And Its Possibilities, The American Scholar , 1975, 44,1 , Win .

not. Semantically the English shall and will have a wider range of meanings. They may refer to the present, in addition to the future, to express certainty or prediction, e.g.

We shall always agree that Shakespeare is a great poet. لا شك اننا نتفق
That will be the milk انه بائع الحليب

and سوف denote futurity and are not used to refer to the present.

The particles لا + the imperfect are restricted to negative sentences. لن may be said to be the negative of سوف or سوف. Hence in Arabic these two types of particles do not co-occur. لا is weaker than لن and may indicate the future or the present, depending on the time-marker with which it is used: لا يذهب غداً ، لا يذهب الآن

In classical Arabic هل + the imperfect indicates future time, where as ا + the imperfect is often used for the present (25.) هل تسافر غداً
Will you travel tomorrow? أقرأ الروايات الانكليزية Do you read English novels ?

In modern Arabic these rules are not strictly observed. هل has probably become more common than ا , and is used for the present and the future. In the latter sense it is sometimes found with سوف or سوف.
هل . هل (سوف) ستحضر الحفلة ؟

All this is an attempt by the modern Arabic writers at a greater precision in marking time by means of verbs.

Immediate or near future is expressed in Arabic by a special group of verbs named verbs of appropinquation افعال المقاربة. The most common of these are:

كاد ، اوشك ، قارب

The water is about to boil

اوشك الماء ان يغلي

Finally the *nomen agentis* اسم الفاعل is sometimes used to denote future time. But since this form may also denote the present, an appropriate adverbial is required to indicate temporal relation, e.g.

اني مسافر الآن / غداً

I am travelling now/tomorrow

25. M.S. Ho well, Grammar of the Classical Arabic (Allahabad ., 1880)

Arabic, on the other hand, has three main ways of denoting future ;

- (1) The imperfect . يذهب غداً
- (2) The particles سوف , س the imperfect ; used in affirmative sentences and in question introduced by سيذهب سوف يذهب
- (3) other particles + the imperfect . These may be divided into
 - (a) Negative particles لا , لن
لا يذهب , لن يذهب
 - (b) Interrogative particle هل , هل يذهب

The imperfect may be considered the major means of expressing future time in Arabic. Like the present tense and the progressive aspect in English, the imperfect in Arabic normally requires a time-marker to express futurity. However, the Arabic imperfect lends itself more readily to futurity than the two English constructions. This is hardly surprising since the Arabic imperfect has no deictic characteristics ; it is not a marked form and with appropriate time-marker it may easily denote the future, or for that matter any of the three divisions of time. The two English constructions on the other hand, are restricted to certain verbs. Thus, It rains (is raining) tomorrow is unacceptable .

The particles -- or سوف is used with the imperfect to render futurity more definite. They may be said to express determination insistence' or volition . These particles are used mainly in affirmative sentences and in questions except those introduced by هل . In Modern Arabic , however , they are occasionally found in negative sentences and in questions with هل سوف يذهب: هل سوف لن يذهب . Such constructions are unacceptable to some grammarians .

سوف and س are sometimes 'equated' with the English shall (will). But there are basic syntactic differences between the Arabic particles and the English auxiliaries . The Arabic particles are more restricted in their use than the English auxiliaries. We have stated that the Arabic particles are confined to certain kinds of sentences , whereas the English auxiliaries are

Future Time :

Modern grammarians generally agree that English has no future tense since there is no special verb form which denotes futurity. There are, however, a number of possibilities of expressing future time. These are closely connected with tense, aspect and modality, and include :

(1) Shall or will + infinitive

I shall (will) go there.

He will do his best.

(2) Simple present tense

She leaves for Paris tomorrow.

(3) Progressive aspect

They are coming next Week

(4) Shall or will + Progressive aspect

We shall be leaving soon.

(5) Be going to + infinitive

It is going to rain .

(6) Be to + infinitive

We are to meet here .

(7) Be about to + infinitive

The plane is about to take off.

Futurity is normally coloured by other semantic implications. Thus shall and will may express determination, volition or insistence ; the simple present tense often implies certainty; the progressive aspect usually denotes future realizations of the present arrangements : the construction with shall or will + the progressive aspect implies a casual future ; Be going to + the infinitive may mean future of present cause, or with a personal subject it may denote intention, Be to + the infinitive may express arrangement, order or pre-destined future ; Be about to + the infinitive expresses near future .

The present tense and the progressive aspect when denoting time are usually used with adverbials , since futurity is not the basic function of these two constructions (see tense and progress aspect above).

adverbial, is sufficient to indicate 'past in the past' e.g. جلس حيث جلس

ابوه من قبل He sat where his father had sat before him.

Lexical elements are also used to express the semantic implications of the English past perfect e.g. سبق وان اخبر بذلك he had been told about it, where the lexical verb سبق makes this meaning clear.

Past perfect Progressive

The relation of the past perfect progressive to the past is similar to the relation of the present perfect progressive to the present. Thus the basic elements of past perfect progressive may be said to be (1) the deictic element referring to past time and (2) the aspectual element denoting incompleteness, repetition, recent action, duration or continuity (22)

I gave him the book which I had been reading (incompleteness).

He had been visiting us once a week (repetition)

Meanwhile the man whose affairs they had been discussing walked home. (23) (recent action). The bell had been ringing all the morning. 24

We have already discussed how the deictic element referring to the past may be expressed in Arabic (see tense). The aspectual element may be rendered into Arabic by the imperfect form of the verb, and the example above may be translated as :

اعطيته الكتاب الذي كنت اقرأ.
كان يزورنا مرة كل اسبوع
وفي هذه الأثناء غادر الرجل الذي كانوا يبحثون في امره إلى داره .
ظل (كان) المبرور يدق طوال الصباح

It is to be noticed that the perfect form of كان is used in the first three examples to express past time and the imperfect of the appropriate verb to convey aspectual and semantic implications. In the last example ظل and طوال denote duration or continuity, and the imperfect يدق incompleteness.

(22.) O. Jespersen, V, 197-8.

(23.) Ibid, p. 198.

(24.) Ibid, p. 197.

You have been working hard (you look tired).

I have been painting the house (that is why the place is in a mess).

Layla has been crying again (her eyes are red).

This type , too, has three basic features : (1) discontinuation of the verb action, (2) apparent results and (3), present relevance. The first of these features may be rendered into Arabic by the perfect , 'the 'other two are more difficult. Their Arabic equivalent may be an 'adverbial', the context, or even a new utterance , e.g.,
لقد ارهقت نفسك ، وها هو التعب قد بدا عليك

The fact that the action has stopped does not mean it is completed ; in fact it often indicates, incomplete action .Where incompletion is implied ,the imperfect is also possible as in the two examples above :

انك ترهق نفسك ، اني اصبح البيت

The following two sentences ,from Leech , are worth quoting as examples of incomplete and complete action :

Who's been eating my dinner ? (Some of it is left).

Who's eaten my dinner (It's all gone). 19

The difference between the two sentences may be rendered into Arabic by using there partitive preposition من with the perfect form for the first one and the perfect transitive for the second .
من اكل طعامي
من اكل من طعامي

Finally the present perfect progressive is often used with an emotional colouring e.g. what have you been doing 20. This is usually rendered into Arabic by the imperfect preceded by the perfect form of ماذا كنت تفعل ؟ كان

Past Perfect

The past perfect denotes a ' past in the past '. 21 Such verb actions may be expressed in Arabic by the perfect alone or the perfect preceded by كان or / and قد e.g. he had gone out .
كان قد خرج ، قد خرج
كان خرج ، خرج . Often the perfect alone , used with an appropriate

19. Meaning and the English verb (Longman, 1971), .p. 46.

20. O. Jespersen , V , 196-7 .

21. Quirk .p.92 ;Leech , Meaning and the English Verb, p. 42 .

Peter has injured his ankle (it is still bad).

Peter injured his ankle (but now it's better).

Leech adds: "The second permits us (and in fact encourages us) to conclude that the result of the injury has disappeared ." Thus the perfect is connected with present time, the past tense is not.

This distinction is not expressed by the Arabic verb.

جرح بيتر كعبه is ambiguous; it may denote the sense expressed by either of the two English sentences quoted above. If the distinction is required to be rendered this should be achieved by other means, an additional clause, for instance .

Present Perfect Progressive

Our classification of the perfect into continuative and non-continuative is also valid for the present perfect progressive.

- (a) Continuative present perfect, which denotes a verb action still going on at the time of utterance, differs from the present perfect in that it denotes temporariness.

The Jones have been living in that house since they came to Mosul.

The Jones have lived in that house since they came to Mosul.

Because of this element of temporariness the first sentence hints at the fact that the Jones have not lived in the house for very long.

The continuative present progressive may be said to have three basic features :

- (1) 'Continuity' or incompleteness, (2) temporariness and (3) 'present relevance'

The first feature may be rendered into Arabic by the imperfect. The other two features are problematic and have to be expressed by adverbials, lexical verbs, etc, or even an additional clause.

عائلة جونز تعيش في هذا البيت منذ أن قدمت الموصل، ولم يمتض على ذلك طويلا

- (b) Resultative present perfect progressive indicates that the verb action has recently stopped and its 'effects' or 'results' are still apparent .

For example :

18. Meaning and the English verb (Longman, 1971), p 36

The present perfect may refer to an indefinite past, the past tense to a definite or specified past.

Have you seen this man before ?

Did you see this man on the day of the accident?

The Arabic verb, on the other hand, is not marked for definite or indefinite past; it merely expresses a finished action.

هل رأيت هذا الرجل من قبل ؟ هل رأيت هذا الرجل يوم الحادثة؟

The present perfect may denote proximity in time, the past tense does not .

I have received two letters this morning.

I received two letters this morning .

The first sentence is said in the morning , the second at some other time. This opposition between the perfect and the simple aspects disappears in the Arabic sentence, where the perfect is used or both English aspects.

استلمت رسالتين هذا الصباح

Closely related to this sense is the use of the present perfect or immediate past, usually with adverbs like just, recently, already etc. .

We have just mentioned this .

This meaning may be rendered into Arabic by the perfect and an appropriate adverb or / and the particle قد 17.

قد ذكرنا قبل قليل

However, it should be noticed that قد is confined to assertive sentences only: it is not used in negative and interrogative sentences .

(b) Resultative Perfect

The following two examples quoted by Leech, who comments on the difference between the resultative present perfect and the past simple, illustrate a basic difference.

17. For this meaning of قد see W. Wright, Part First, p 286

1. Continuative Present Perfect

I have taught English since 1958 (implies that I still teach English).
I taught English for 6 years (implies that I no longer teach English). These examples may be rendered into Arabic by the imperfect and the perfect respectively. أنا ادرس الانكليزية منذ ١٩٥٨؛ درست الانكليزية مدة ست سنوات

2. Non-Continuative Present Perfect

This may (a) involve a time period extending to the present or
(b) express result, commonly called resultative perfect.

(a) – Have you visited the International Trade Fair?

– Did you visit the International Trade Fair?

The first sentence implies that the fair is still running, whereas the second confines the time of the fair to the past. This basic difference is lost in the Arabic translation :

هل زرت المعرض التجاري الدولي

An additional clause is required if this opposition between the perfective and the simple respects is to be rendered into Arabic .

In the examples (quoted by Quirk et al) 16: For generations Nepal has produced the world's greatest soldiers.

For generations, Sparta produced the world's greatest soldiers .

The perfect implies that the Nepal still exists, whereas the simple aspect denotes that Sparta no longer exists. Here again the contrast is lost in Arabic and the perfect is used for both English aspects:

انجبت النبال طيلة اجيال اعظم جنود العالم . انجبت اسبارطة طيلة اجيال اعظم .

However, our knowledge of the outside world, will help us to know that Nepal exists , Sparta does not .

speaking the perfect ذهب, for example, is equivalent to neither the past *I went* nor to the perfect *I have gone*, since it does not mark a definite past nor does it express a past action connected with the present. All that it denotes is a finished action, presumably in the past.

For the purpose of this study two types of the present perfect may be distinguished :

(a) The continuative present perfect and (b) the non-continuative present perfect.

The continuative present perfect refers to a verb action which actually extends to and includes the present.

My brother has lived in that village since 1957 (and he still lives there).
She has been teaching English for eight years (and she still does).

The non-continuative present perfect, on the other hand, refers to a verb action which has been completed at the time of utterance.

I have seen this man before, (action completed in the past).
They have been painting the door. (It does not necessarily imply that they are working now.)

The difference between these two types is basically that denoted by the opposition between the imperfect and the perfect forms in Arabic. Hence (a) may normally be rendered into Arabic by the imperfect and (b) by the perfect .

يعيش اخي في تلك القرية منذ سنة ١٩٥٧ .

رأيت هذا الرجل من قبل

Expressions like لا يزال , ما يزال are often used to render 'continuateness' more explicit in type (a).

However, these two types of the present perfect have one important feature in common; their "current relevance". The semantic implications of this common feature are problematic for the Arabic translator. Current relevance' is not a feature of the Arabic aspect, and hence it has to be expressed by other means, adverbials, lexical elements (verbs), particles and even the context. We shall now contrast some of these semantic implications with the simple aspect and point out the main problems of rendering these into Arabic .

No such contrast is conveyed by the two aspects in Arabic, and the imperfect is used to express the semantic implications denoted by the two English aspects.

صديقك يسأل دائماً اسئلة صعبة

The additional feeling of irritation is probably expressed in Arabic by a lexical element; an adverb of manner or a verb. In narrative style, one finds

قال ممتعضاً ، امتعض قائلاً :

PERFECTIVE

English combines tense with the perfective aspect to form the present perfect, *I have gone*, and the past perfect, *I had gone*. These may also be combined with the progressive aspect to form the present perfect progressive, *I have been going*, and the past perfect progressive, *I had been going*. Thus we may distinguish two groups.

A- The present perfect, under which we also include the progressive;
I have been going . . .

B- The past perfect including the progressive; I had been going.

Since all these are in one way or the other connected with past time, I shall therefore contrast them with the past time. I shall start with group A:

Present Perfect

It is a well-known fact that English differentiates between two types of action in the past: a past action related completely to the past and a past action connected with present time or with current relevance. The past tense is used for the former and the present perfect for the latter. Thus, *he went* and *he has gone* both indicate past time, the basic difference being that the present perfect has 'present or current relevance.'

The Arabic verb, on the other hand, does not make this distinction with regard to verbs denoting past time, i.e., between verbs with and without current relevance; the perfect aspect merely denotes a completed or finished action and often implies past time in a general way. Thus strictly

(e) **Vividness of Description.**

Zandvoort quotes the following example; *In another year I shall probably be growing tea in Ceylon*, and comments : " The dynamic character of the progressive makes it particularly suitable for use in descriptive and emotional context. Thus in the sentence about tea-planting in Ceylon the speaker is drawing a mental picture of himself as he will be a year hence."⁴

The simple aspect, on the other hand, is objective and neutral.

In another year I shall grow tea in Ceylon.

I know of no way in Arabic by which this contrast between vividness and objectivity may be expressed. The imperfect form is used for both and the contrast is probably lost. The first of the following two examples is more common although the second is nearer in its meaning to the English sentence.

بعد سنة سأزرع الشاي في سيلان
بعد سنة اكون ازرع الشاي في سيلان 15

(f) **Emotional Colouring.**

The progressive aspect may carry the additional feeling of irritation, and usually occurs with adverbs like : always, continuously, for ever, perpetually, etc.

He is always asking difficult questions. The simple aspect, on the other hand, expresses an objective, neutral statement.

Your friend always asks difficult questions.

14. A Handbook of English grammar (Longmans, 1965), pp. 38 and 39.

15. Formal and rare. For this and other uses of كان with the imperfect and perfect see H- Reckendorf, Arabische Syntax (Heidelberg 1921), PP-295-300.

(C) Dramatic Action:

In the present tense the progressive aspect is neutral and denotes a gradual action, whereas the simple aspect expresses a sudden dramatic action :

The train is stopping .

The house is falling .

The house falls !

The train stops !

Neutral, gradual actions are expressed in Arabic by the imperfect: e.g.

البيت يسقط ، القطار يقف .

whereas sudden, dramatic actions are expressed by the perfect

سقط البيت ! وقف القطار !

(d) Simultaneity .

In the following example the verb in the progressive aspect refers to an action simultaneous with the one expressed by the simple aspect and serves as a temporal frame for the latter.

The policeman looked at her ; she was shouting

Two simple aspects in the above example would normally be regarded as two successive actions.

The policeman looked at her ; she shouted .

In such examples the simple aspect basically emphasizes a short completed action , whereas the progressive aspect denotes durations , continuation and incompletion. The former aspect is expressed in Arabic by the perfect, the latter by the imperfect.

نظر اليها الشرطي وهي تصرخ

نظر اليها الشرطي ، فصرخت

Layla reads French novels. (usually ; a habit)

My friend lives in Basrah . (permanent residence) .

In Arabic ,the imperfect expresses all those meanings , if a distinction is required between temporary and permanent actions ,this is achieved by an appropriate adverb of time ,the context or other markers not by the verb aspect .
تقرأ ليلى رواية الآن ، تقرأ ليلى الروايات الفرنسية (عادة)

The *nomen agentis* (اسم الفاعل) may also be used to refer to temporary or instantaneous action ,e.g.

I am going home (now) انا ذاهب الى البيت

(b) Incompletion

The girl was drowning, but the man saved her. I was reading a novel from 9 to 11 O'clock. The progressive in these examples expresses an unfinished action and may be compared with the simple aspect, which denotes a finished or completed action

The girl drowned.

I read a novel from 9 to 11 o'clock .

Completion and incompletion are expressed in Arabic by the perfect and the imperfect aspects respectively.

كانت البنت تغرق ولكن الرجل انقذها
كنت اقرأ رواية بين الساعة التاسعة والحادية عشر
غرقت البنت
قرأت رواية بين التاسعة والحادية عشرة

The use of the progressive and the simple forms in the following examples is also worth noticing.

I saw him *crossing* the river

رأيتهم يعبر النهر

I saw him *cross* the river

رأيتهم عبر النهر

The first denotes an unfinished action and is expressed in Arabic by the imperfect; the second refers to a finished action and is 'equivalent' to the Arabic perfect.

This use of the past simple is not unknown in Arabic and is expressed by the perfect. هل اردت مقابلة المدير الآن ؟

Having discussed how the deictio element (tense) of the English verb may be rendered into Arabic. I now turn to the other category of the English verb, namely aspect.

Aspect

Aspect, which concerns the manner of the verb action, is a common property of English and Arabic verbs. But the similarity ends there. For, as has already been mentioned, English has two sets of aspectual contrast: non-progressive / progressive, *I go : I am going, I went : I was going*; and non-perfective / perfective; *I go ; I have gone, I went , I had gone*.

Arabic, on the other hand, has only one set of aspectual contrast: imperfect / perfect; يقول / قال. Moreover, the semantic implications of aspects in these two languages show marked differences. I shall start with progressive aspect in English and examine the possibilities of 'correspondences' between it and the Arabic aspect.

Progressive

The semantic opposition between the simple aspect and the progressive aspect in English is notoriously problematic 12. In addition to process and continuation, "write Quirk *et al*, there are a number of other concomitant meanings or overtones that go with the progressive aspect, such, as limited duration, incompleteness, simultaneity, vividness of descriptions, emotional colouring and emphasis. 13 I shall examine how these semantic implications may be expressed in Arabic

(a) Limited Duration

This includes actions taking place at the time of utterance and temporary actions.

Layla is reading a novel (now)

My friend is staying with his uncle (for a fortnight) (temporary action)

These examples may be contrasted with the simple aspect.

12. G. N. Leech, *Towards A Semantic Description of English* (Longman, 1969) ,p. 148.

The secondary functions of the simple past pose some problems. It should be remembered that the past tense here refers to present or future time, and is used (a) in tentative or unreal condition : *If you went there now you would see him. If cows had wings they would live on trees* and (b) in reported speech or thought in accordance with 'sequence of tenses' or 'back-shift' :

The president of the University said that they always welcomed students from the Arab gulf. 10

Tentativeness and unreality are expressed in Arabic by the particle and not by the verb. As has already been stated, the distinction between the perfect and the imperfect is neutralized in such sentences :

لو ذهبت (تذهب) إلى هناك لرأيتك (تراد)

However, this usage is not strictly observed in modern Arabic, which sometimes results in confusion.

Back - shift or sequence of tenses is a purely linguistic phenomenon which does not exist in Arabic. 11 Hence the past tense in such sentences is rendered into Arabic by the imperfect :

قال رئيس الجامعة انهم يرحبون دائماً بالطلبة من الخليج العربي

The imperfect يرحبون is ambiguous in the above example ; it may refer either to past time since the verb in the subordinate clause is in the perfect, or it may denote present time. However, the context will often show which of the two meanings is valid. The problem which a tyro may face here is to decide whether the past tense in the subordinate clause of reported speech refers to real past time or not ; If it does, the Arabic perfect would be the correct form; if it does not then the imperfect should be used.

Finally, mention would be made of the attitudinal past tense which refers to present time, and is used because it is more polite than the present tense, e.g. Did you want to see the manager now ?

10. *Back-shift in such sentences is optional; the present tense (that they welcome) may be used since the validity of the verb action extends to the present .*

11. *In fact, Arabic makes little distinction between direct speech and reported speech in so far as the form of the verb is concerned.*

A more detailed study for the future will be found in the last part of this study.

The simple present tense used in conditional and semi-conditional clauses to denote open (likely, possible) condition may be rendered into Arabic by using the perfect -or the imperfect form, since the distinction between these two forms is neutralized in conditional sentences. However, classical Arabic seems to favour the perfect .

If you work hard your manager will be pleased with you .

إذا (ان) اجتهدت (تجتهد) رضى (يرضى) عنك مديرك

The simple present denoting past time as in (a) historic present ,*she suddenly opens the door and starts shouting*, and (b) headlines in newspapers etc.

The president leaves for Algeria : president Al-Bakr left for Algeria this morning, are normally expressed in Arabic by the imperfect :

ثم تفتح الباب فجأة (فإذا بها تفتح الباب) وتأخذ بالصراخ
الرئيس القائد يغادر إلى الجزائر : غادر صباح اليوم إلى الجزائر.

A noticeable exception here is the simple present denoting past time in verbs of communication ; tell ,hear, learn etc: *I hear* that the manager has resigned. These verbs are rendered into Arabic by the perfect: سمعت ان المدير (قد)استقال

The Past Tense

The simple past tense in English when referring to past time may be rendered into Arabic by the perfect.

I saw them two weeks ago رأيتهم قبل أسبوعين

Shakespeare died in 1616 توفي شكسبير في عام ١٦١٦

But there are two exceptions : (a) habitual or repeated actions and (b) incomplete or progressive actions .These two types of action are normally expressed in Arabic by the imperfect with an appropriate time -marker.

(a) She went (used to go)to the doctor once every week كانت تذهب إلى الطبيب مرة كل اسبوع
The time -makers in the above example are : كانت and

(b) As he walked across the fields, he saw a strange sight.

بينما هو يسير في الحقول رأى منظرأ غريباً رأى وهو يسير في الحقول منظرأ غريباً

The time -maker in (b) is رأى

9. The English progressive aspect is also possible here:

As he was walking

performative actions ,etc.

E.g.

- Ali passes the ball to Jassim علي يعبر (يعطي) الكرة إلى جاسم
I take a cup of suger and mix it with 4 cups of flour
أأخذ كوباً من السكر وأخلطه مع أربعة أكواب من الطحين
I declare the session open أعلن افتتاح الجلسة

Three exceptions may be noted here. First, instantaneous present expressing exclamation (usually) with there), e.g. *There comes the train, You lie!* are normally rendered into Arabic by using the perfect, جاء القطار، كذبت. The first example may also be translated by using *nomen agentis* and the second by the imperfect, انك تكذب. Secondly, verbs of mental activities and will, e.g. *I know (understand) what you mean, I like (love) this girl,* are normally expressed in Arabic by the perfect although the imperfect is also possible (أحببت (أحب) هذه الفتاة، علمت (اعلم) where English normally use the simple present tense.

Thirdly, the Arabic perfect is also common in sentences of the type: wisemen say, Shakspeare says. قالت الحكماء، قال شكسبير where English normally uses the simple present tense: Here again the imperfect is also possible, but probably less common, especially in classical Arabic.

The passive voice of the simple present poses a problem. Two senses of this passive can be distinguished as illustrated by these two examples⁸

(a) All sorts of books are sold here.

(b) These books are sold.

(a) expresses an action and is rendered into Arabic by the imperfect:

تباع جميع الكتب هنا

(b) denotes a state (or finished action) and corresponds to the Arabic perfect:

قد بيعت هذه الكتب

The simple present referring to the future may also be translated by using the imperfect with an appropriate time-marker (سوف ، س) , adverbial etc) .e.g., *I leave for Paris tomorrow,* (سوف) اغادر إلى باريس غدا

8. see F.R. palmer, The English verb (longman, 1974) P. 88; who uses the term statal passive for this type of construction.

the verb by itself is not adequately provided to express a definite time, like the imperfect, it requires an appropriate time-marker to achieve this deictic function ,e.g. أنتهيت بالأمس ، أنتهيت الآن . (بعد اسبوع) سأكون قد أنهيت

In Arabic the concepts of open/ rejected condition for possibility/non-reality are not expressed by the verb, but by the particles *إذا* and *لو* the first is often considered to be 'equivalent' to *when*, the second expresses open or possible condition and the last rejected, unreal, or hypothetical condition, the distinction between the perfect and the imperfect is neutralized after these particles. *If you go now, tomorrow. . . .* إن ذهبت (تذهب) الآن ، غدا لو ذهبت (تذهب) اليوم ، غدا

However ,with past time the perfect seems to be the normal form

If he left yesterday (open) إن سافر بالأمس

If he had travelled yesterday (rejected) لو سافر بالأمس

Finally , the linguistic phenomenon known as sequence of tenses or backshift , which is found in reported speech in English does not exist in Arabic. This is understandable since Arabic has no tenses in the proper sense of the word. However , it should be noticed that an imperfect verb in the subordinate clause acquires the time denoted by the verb in the superordinate clause if the verb of the latter is in the perfect ,e.g.

رأيت أنه وهو يركض

where رأى expresses past time because it is dependent on the perfect-verb يركض.

After these general remarks, a more detailed discussion of the tenses and aspects and how they may be rendered into Arabic will be attempted.

The present Tense

Generally speaking , all the main use of the simple present tense may be rendered into Arabic by using the imperfect. These include :

A. Present without reference to a specific time as in facts , universal truths and repeated or habitual actions.

The sun sets in the west تغيب الشمس في الغرب

I don't read French novels لا أقرأ الروايات الفرنسية

B. Instantaneous present , as in commentaries (football) , demonstrations,

However, the Arabic verb by itself is not sufficient to denote temporal relations similar to those expressed by the English tense, since it lacks the deictic category (tense). To express these relations, Arabic makes use of other linguistic means .i.e., adverbials, particles and other time markers, or even extra- linguistic means such as our experience of the realities of the situation, e.g. *يصدر العراق النفط الى اوربا* where we know from experience that *يصدر* refers to the present .

Thus the imperfect may refer to the present, the future or the past if it is used with an appropriate time-marker, e.g. *يذهب الان . يذهب غدا* . Here is a further example from classical Arabic: *فلما نظر حوثره إلى أهل الكوفة ، قال : يا أعداء الله ، انتم بالامس تقاتلون معاوية لتهدوا سلطانة . واليوم تقاتلون معه لتشدوا سلطانة* 7 .

where the adverbs *بالامس* and *اليوم* show that the first *تقاتلون* refers to the past, the second to the present .

The perfect, as has already been stated, expresses a finished action and as such it is usually taken to refer to the past unless there are indications pointing to the other divisions of time, the present or the future. Here again

= present and past time respectively. *In classical Arabic, the distinction between the two forms is neutralized in conditional sentences . A further proof of the modern tendency is the use of the signs of futurity سوف (لا) يذهب in the following constructions: سوف لن يذهب . هل سوف يذهب ، هل سيذهب . In classical Arabic the signs of futurity are not found in such constructions since the imperfect by itself was sufficient to indicate the future . In modern Arabic, the imperfect is felt to be marked for the present ; hence the use of سوف ، سوف in these constructions to indicate the future .*

7. *Ibn Abdi Rabbih al-'Aqd al - Farid*, 1, 216-7. Such examples prove what *Henri Fleisch in L' Arabe Classique (Beyrouth, 1968)* , p 114, says about classical Arabia; *la langue arabe dissocie les deux 'ele'ment : temps aspect exprime le temps par differents moyen (time and aspect are separated in Arabic ; time is expressed by other means than the verb)* .

Besides expressing time relations, the tenses in English have two other important functions. The present and past tenses are used in conditional sentences, the former to indicate an open or 'possible' condition, the latter a rejected (or 'unreal') condition, tentativeness, or open condition.

If I go there (now or tomorrow) I shall tell him. (open condition)

If I went there (now or tomorrow) I would tell him. (rejected condition, tentativeness) .

If he went there (yesterday) he must have seen him..(open or possible condition) .

If he had gone there (yesterday) he would have seen him (rejected or unreal condition).

The second function concerns the past tense only. This tense is used in reported speech or thought in what is known as 'sequence of tenses' or 'back-shift'; a purely linguistic phenomenon with no semantic implication.⁴

Arabic verbs, on the other hand, do not possess deictic characteristics. The two forms, the imperfect *يذهب* and the perfect *ذهب* basically express the manner of the verb action, i.e. they refer to the aspect of the verb.

This, however, does not mean that these forms are completely divorced from time. In fact, aspect, like tense, is closely connected with time, but differs from tense in that it is not a deictic category,⁵ it only relates the verb form to time in a vague general way. The imperfect *يذهب*, for instance, is generally taken to refer to present time unless there is a time-marker which indicates otherwise. The perfect *ذهب* is even more marked for time; it usually denotes past time. This is probably due to the very nature of a finished action which it expresses.⁶

4. W. H. Twaddell, *The English Verb Auxiliaries* (Brown University Press, 1963), p: 7

5. J. Lyons. *Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics* (CUP, 1968), p: 315.

6. *There is a tendency in Modern Arabic, probably promoted by translation from European languages, to regard the two forms as deictic categories referring to the present and the past. This tendency is clear in conditional sentences where the imperfect and the perfect are frequently used for=*

By means of this complicated verb system English is able to express a wide spectrum of temporal and aspectual meanings:

Arabic, on the other hand, has a relatively simple verb system. The verb phrase has two forms: the imperfect (يذهب) المضارع and the perfect (ذهب) الماضي. These two forms are generally believed to refer to the manner of the verb action, the imperfect expressing an unfinished action and the perfect a finished action. They are therefore regarded as aspects.³

Syntactically, the Arabic verb phrase is essentially simple. The use of كان before the imperfect كان يذهب or the perfect كان ذهب is the nearest we get to the complex verb phrase. However, كان cannot be considered an auxiliary verb in the same way as DO, HAVE and BE are in English. In such constructions كان is a verb of full predication (lexical verb).

This article will examine how the wide spectrum of meanings expressed by the English tense and aspect may be rendered into Arabic. It will concentrate mainly on the practical implications of the subject, which will, I hope, be of benefit to the student of translation and contrastive grammar. The article will conclude by discussing the various ways of expressing the future in English and Arabic, since these are closely connected with tense and aspect.

Tense

The main function of tense is deictic; it relates the form of the verb to the time of utterance. Thus the present tense, *I go* and the past tense, *I went*, basically relate the verbs *go* and *went* to present and past time respectively. These may be considered the primary functions of the two tenses in English. However, the present and the past tenses may express other time relations. The present tense may refer to the future, usually with the help of an adverbial, *We leave for Baghdad tomorrow*, or to the past, *I hear that you are engaged*. The past tense may denote present or even future time: *You wanted to see me, we could go now*.

3. See W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language* (CUP, 1971). Part Second, P. 51; A.F.L. Beeston, *The Arabic Language Today* (Hutchinson University Library, London, 1970), P. 76.

INTRODUCTION

Two features of the English verb are tense and aspect.¹ Tense, eventually derived from the Latin translation of the Greek word for 'time', is a linguistic category which expresses the correspondence between the verb form and time.

Aspect has to do with the manner in which the verb action is regarded or experienced.²

English has two verb forms *go*, *went*, corresponding to present and past time; hence there are two tenses in English: the present and the past tenses. There is no verb form in English denoting future time. Thus, English has no future tense, but ways of expressing future time.

There are two sets of aspects in English: non - progressive / progressive, *I go*, *I am going*, and non-perfective/perfective, *I went*, *I have gone*. The first member of each set may be termed the simple aspect, for convenience sake.

Tense and aspect are not used separately, but are combined together and with other categories to form the English verb phrase. Thus, two types of the verb phrase can be distinguished: the simple verb phrase, formed by combining the simple aspect with any of the two tenses, and the complex verb phrase which comprises the other verb phrases. Concentrating on aspect and tense, we may have the following combinations:

Simple Present	I go	} simple verb phrase
Simple Past	I went	
Present Progressive	I am going	} Complex Verb Phrase
Past Progressive	I was going	
Present Perfect	I have gone	
Past Perfect	I had gone	
Present Perfect Progressive	I have been going	
Past Perfect Progressive	I had been going	

1. Other features are mood and voice.

2. See R. Quirk, S. Greenbaum, G. Leed and J. Svartvik, *A Grammar of Contemporary English* (Longman, 1972), p- 90; henceforth quoted as Quirk.

**SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR TRANSLATING THE ENGLISH
TENSES AND ASPECTS INTO
ARABIC**

YOWELL Y. AZIZ
COLLEGE OF ARTS - MOSUL UNIVERSITY

۹۴۴