A Construal-Based Approach to Arabic Tenses

Mustafa Khalid Saleh [1,2], Azad Hasan Fatah[3]

[1,3] Dept. of English, College of Languages, University of Sulaimani, Sulaimaniya, Iraq.
[2] Department of English, Cihan University Sulaimaniya, Sulaimaniya, Iraq.

Email: mustafa.saleh@univsul.edu.iq[1], mustafa.salih@sulicihan.edu.krd[2],
azad.fatah@univsul.edu.iq[3]

Abstract:

   The present study aims to provide a cognitive account of tenses in Arabic. To do so, it employs perspective, a dimension of construal as proposed by Langacker's construal theory (1987, 1991, 2008, 2013). What motivates the study is the presence of certain complex issues in Arabic tenses. One issue concerns the difference in between perfect and imperfect. The difficulty resides in that this operates on three levels, where one level may become more prominent, overshadowing or essentially eliminating the others. The perfect denotes past time, while the imperfect denotes present or future time. The imperfect denotes habitual or repeated action, or to one encapsulated as covering a space of time. The perfect denotes a fact, while the imperfect denotes a conceptual idea not necessarily realised. To study tense requires the study of aspect due to the fact the Arabic is an aspectual language. Therefore, it is hypothesized that both tense and aspect in Arabic are two sides of the same coin, i.e., they are inseparable.

Key Words: Construal of Perspective, Arabic tense/aspect, Grounding.

الملخص:

   يهدف البحث الحالي الى تقديم منظور ادراكي للازمنة في اللغة العربية. ولتحقيق هذا الامر، تستخدم الدراسة بعد المنظور وهو جزء من نظرية التكوين الدلالي للنحوي (لانگكر 1987, 1991, 2008, 2013). ان مغزى هذه الدراسة هو وجود بعض القضايا المعقدة الخاصة بالازمنة في اللغة العربية. من بين هذه القضايا التي تهتم بها هذه الدراسة هي الفرق بين التام وغيرالتام. وتكمن الصعوبة في هذا الامر ان الفرق بين الاثنين خاضع لثلاث مستويات حيث يمكن لاحدهما ان يبرز على الاخر بحيث تكون له الاولوية. يشير استخدام الغير تام الى حدث متكرر او عادة او الى حدث يتضمن وقت ما. اما التام فانه يشير الى حقيقة بينما يشير الغير تام الى فكرة ادراكية (مفهومية) والتي ليس من الظرورة ادراكها حسياً. ان دراسة الازمنة تتطلب دراسة مفهوم الزمن وذلك لان اللغة العربية هي لغة مفهومية وعلى هذا الاساس تفترض الدراسة الحالية ان الزمن والمفهوم في العربية هما وجهان لعملة واحدة، اي لايمكن الاستغناء عن اي منهما.

الكليمات المفتاحية: المعرفة الأساسية، الزمن باللغة العربية، تفسير المنظور.

پوخته:

   توێژینهوهی بهردهست ئامانجی پێدانی خوێندنهوهیهکی کۆگنهتڤییه به دهمهکانی رسته له زمانی عهرهبیدا، بۆ ئهنجامدانی ئهم مهبهسته، بۆ ئهم مهبهسته، تێروانینی بیردۆزی (لانگکر 1987, 1991, 2008, 2013) بهکاردههێنرێت. ههبوونی چهند بابهتێکی ئاڵۆز له دهمهکانی رسته له زمانی عهرهبیدا هاندهری سهرهکی ئهنجامدانی ئهم توێژینهوهیه. یهکێک له بابهتهکان گرنگی به جیاوازی نێوان دهمی تهواو و ناتهواو دهدات. کێشهو گرفت لهو کاتهدا سهر ههڵدهدات که کاتێک لهسهر سێ چین کاردهکرێت بهڵام یهکێک له چینهکان زۆر بههێزتره لهوانی دی بهشێوهیهک که ئهوانی دیکه بهتهواوی دهشارێتهوه و دووریان دهخاتهوه. دهمی تهواو کاتی رابردوو دهنوێنێت لهمکاتێکدا دهمی ناتهواو کاتی ئێستا و داهاتوو دهنوێنێت.

دەمی ناتەواو کرداری دووبارە و ئاسایی دەردەخات . دەمی تەواو رووداویک دەنوینیت لەکاتیکدا دەمی ناتەواو بیرۆکەیەک دەنوینیت
کە بەتەواوی درکی پینەکراوە. تویژینەوە لە دەمەکانی رستە پیویستی بە خویندنەوەی رووخساری زمان هەیە بەهۆی ئەو راستییەی
کە زمانی عەرەبی زمانیکی رووخسارییە. لەبەرئەوە وا دەبینریت کە دەم و رووخسار لە زمانی عەرەبیدا دوو رووی یەک دراون
و لیکجیا نەبووەن.

کلیلە وشە: لیکدانەوەی روانگە، کات لە زمانی عەرەبیدا، زانیاری سەرەتایی.

Introduction

Cognitive linguists point out that there are a number of ways in which a specific situation can be 'construed', and this number depends on different conceptualizations; therefore, if a situation is encoded in two different ways, it may be interpreted in different ways either. In contrast to Chomskyan generative grammar, which considers this case of encoding as a difference in the 'form' of the situation (sentence) and not the 'substance', cognitive linguists would argue that the change of encoding is of form as well as substance (meaning) (Lee, 2001). Although certain situations can be encoded in different ways, there are other situations that can only be encoded in specific way, and this is a sign that the change is not only in form, but also in meaning (ibid, 2001). A conceptualizer can observe a visual scene from various perspectives when they are experiencing it. In the realm of language, a speaker (conceptualizer), by analogy, might construe a situation differently and adjust their point of view accordingly. According to Langacker (1987), perspective refers to a specific way of looking at a situation that might change depending on one's intentions. Depending on the needs of the discourse, describing a situation frequently entails shifting attention or emphasis from one aspect to another. The way a scene is viewed, including the relative importance of its participants, is referred to as perspective. The perceptual relationship between the perceiver and the perceived entity correlates to the conceptual link between the speaker and their conceptualization object in the verbal world.

The action in a timeline from the past to the future that is connected to the speaker is what linguists refer to as the tense (Ryding, 2005). According to Leech (2014), the term "tense" refers to more than just the simple tenses like past and present; it also includes the present perfect tense, past progressive, and other tenses. Linguists did agree that there are just two fundamental tenses. There are two finite verb forms in Arabic: one that is prefixed and the other that is not prefixed (El-Sadek, 2014). In English, tense is shown or expressed with an assisting verb (Aljohani, 2019). In order to shed some light on the difficult challenge of representing Arabic tenses onto English, this research aims at investigating the complex issues regarding the construal of tenses in Arabic language and whether it is effective to apply the cognitive theory of construal of perspective to solve these issues. Moreover, since it is somehow difficult to draw a clear-cut line between tense and aspect in Arabic, this study will regard aspect as a part of grounding.

Literature Review

A conceived scene's perspective is determined by two factors: vantage point and viewing arrangement (Hamawand, 2016). The vantage point is the standpoint from which the same objective situation is perceived and described, resulting in varied interpretations and structures. The real location of the participants in the communication scenario, whether the speaker or the hearer, is referred to as the vantage point. Lee (2001) and Taylor (2002) showed the effect of locative

prepositions in construing meaning and the relationship between 'trajectory' and 'landmark'. Human cognition processes, through the logic of the world, make an individual construe meaning beyond the meaning of the actual situation. landmark is landmark because of its function as well as the trajectory; it is somehow similar to the relationship between background and foreground. In "elaborative hierarchies" (Langacker, 2008:56), it is the situation which considers the focus of the construal i.e. the situation would recall a background knowledge (depending on physical world experience) which is the base of understanding this situation, therefore the background knowledge and the foreground (situation) frame the construed background.

The component which has to do with whether the activity was fully completed, somewhat completed, ongoing, or had not yet occurred is known as aspect (Ryding, 2005). Aspect was described as a fundamental category of perfect and progressive by Leech (2014). He actually divided them into four categories: perfect, imperfect, progressive, and nonprogressive. The terms "perfect" and "imperfect" in English refer to past and present simple tenses, respectively, and present and past continuous forms, respectively. According to Odilavadze (2010), Arabic is categorised as having aspect rather than tense. According to Alasmari et al. (2018), the perfect and imperfect verb forms in Arabic can communicate many tenses and aspects depending on the content of the sentence. A translation research of tense and aspect was carried out by Zahiri (2014) to look at problematic translation issues and potential solutions. This study sought to illustrate the challenges that students confront in finding equivalent meaning and tense in Arabic for both perfective and imperfective aspect. The research supported the claim that present perfect and present perfect progressive are challenging. Dixon (2006) stated that a clause can be marked for tense and/or aspect depending on the structural varieties of that clause. For instance, in English, 'for / to' complement clauses tend to mark aspect rather than tense, whereas 'that' complement clauses mark tense rather than aspect. This would provide an understanding that both tense and aspect are needed in the interpretation of language. However, while dealing with more than one language, Comrie (1976) and Brisard (2011) argued that aspect should be utilized as a verbal tool in order to achieve grounding due to the fact that the conceptualizer needs a full mental image of the dynamicity of the verb to perceive events.

Javed and Ahmad (2013) carried out a research concerning error analysis of the present simple tense in the interlanguage of adult Arab English language learners. The findings demonstrated that first language interference made it difficult for the learners to master English language due to difficulties in understanding tenses. According to the results, students performed better on tests of the simple present, simple past, and simple future than they did on tests of the present perfect and past perfect.

Arabic language

Arabic is categorised as a templatic, derivational, and inflectional language. Syntactically speaking, Arabic seems to be a pronoun-dropping language that uses the referent of the verb to indicate tense, aspect, and modality markers as well as person, number, and/or gender agreement. The verb is only quantified in each individual inflection (Alasmari, 2016). Arabic is claimed to be a past-focused language due to the fact that a significant number of verbs in Arabic have past tense but refer to the present. 'Lastu' is Arabic for 'I am not. However, "Lastu" has the same past tense form as

"Darastu," which means "I studied," and "Safartu," which means "I travelled." The verb "Lastu" is conjugated in the past tense even though it indicates something about the present. This makes it quite evident that the Arabic language is past oriented. Other Arabic verbs can have the same purpose as "Lastu." For instance, the verb "Maaziltu" can be conjugated to signify "I was" or "I am." Many Arabic verbs are conjugated in the past even if they refer to the present, indicating that the language is past-oriented. However, there are other verbs that act normally i.e. they have present tense and refer to present or future time. In Arabic, the subject can also be omitted and inferred in the verb. In Arabic, the subject is frequently dropped from sentences together with all of the verb tenses and all of the subjects. For instance, the "Ana," which denotes "I," is deleted when people say "Adrusu" in Arabic, which means "I study." Given that the Arabic language allows for the erasure of subjects like "Ana," and the fact that Arabs are undoubtedly influenced by their mother tongue, Arabic, it follows that subjects like "Ana" are also erasable in daily life. As a result, the subject, such as the "I," might be reduced to another entity, such as a particular social group. This demonstrates how Arabic language and the erasable nature of its subjects contributed to the collectivistic nature of that language (Ajami, 2016).

There is also the weak claim that Arabic is a certainty-oriented language. According to Ajami (2016), the only grammatically right way to follow "A'arifu" "I know" and "U'sadiqu" "I believe" in Arabic is to write "ana-a," which is Arabic for "that." It is only grammatically permissible to use "ina-a," which similarly means "that," but denotes emphasis and suggests certainty, with the verb to state, such as "Aqulu" "I say." Therefore, according to this claim, anything said in Arabic is certain from the perspective of the Arabic language. However, these same verbs are not always followed by "ana-a" clauses as complement but still they tend to strike certainty in their meaning. Arabic is a heavy (contextually elevated) language in the sense that words in this language are linguistically derived from other words.   For instance, "Jaa-mi-" in Arabic signifies mosque and gatherer. This is due to the linguistic relationship between "Jaa-mi-a" and "Ja-ma'aa," which meaning "he gathered." Consequently, "Jaa-mi-" denotes both a mosque and a gatherer thanks to the Arabic language's extensive derivation system. This demonstrates that Arabic is a high-context language in the sense that it has a powerful derivative system that allows for the linguistic derivation of many Arabic words from one another. Nearly all Arabic words have an intriguing set of inherited information. For instance, "sadaka," which means "he said the truth and/or he was truthful," is linguistically related to the Arabic term "sadeek," which means friend. As a result, in Arabic, your friend is the one who is honest with you. The Arabic word "sadeek" has an unusual inherited meaning in this regard, namely that a friend is someone who speaks the truth (ibid). Another illustration of how the Arabic language is an innate collection of information is the word "ma'rifa," which in Arabic denotes wisdom but is linguistically descended from the word "orf," which means tradition. Since "ma'rifa," which refers to "knowledge," can linguistically be derived from "orf," which refers to "tradition," it follows that knowledge is said to belong to tradition in Arabic (ibid). Given that the word "ma'rifa" in Arabic is linguistically derived from the word "orf," the word "ma'rifa" in this context denotes the inherited knowledge that knowledge exists in tradition.

Due to the Arabic language's strong derivative process, as mentioned earlier, there are virtually unlimited examples that show that it is an inherited body of knowledge. Another example, the Arabic word "ta-wa-sala," which means "he connected" is derived from "wa-sa-la." Therefore, from the perspective of the Arabic language, communication is the means through which people are linked to one another. This suggests that the Arabic word "ta-wa-sol" has the acquired knowledge that connecting individuals through communication is the process. The following is another illustration: The Arabic word "insaan," which means "human being," comes from "na-sa," which means "he forgot." As a result, a human is defined in Arabic as someone who forgets. However, those who think are those who forget. Consequently, a human being is defined in Arabic as someone who thinks. Here, the Arabic word "in-saan" carries the inherited knowledge that people are thinkers and forgetters. All of this demonstrates that the Arabic language is a collection of information that has been perpetuated; as a result, practically every word in Arabic has some interesting information. In other words, Arabic is an inherited body of knowledge because it offers definitions and analyses of numerous topics (ibid).

Verbs in Arabic

The verb system employed in Arabic is distinctive and different from that of English. The verb, which expresses both action and time, is the most crucial element of a sentence in English. In Arabic, however, there are verbal sentences as well as nominal sentences i.e. sentences without any verb. In verbal sentences, the verb plays a significant role in the identification of meaning. The inflectional morphology rules can be used to represent the tense and aspect of Arabic verbs (Truck, 2010). According to Alasmari (2018), the perfect and imperfect are commonly referred to as the suffix conjugation and the prefix conjugation, respectively, in Arabic inflectional verbal morphology. The past tense is normally connoted by the suffix conjugation, whereas the present tense is connoted by the prefix conjugation. The grammatical categories of person (first, second, third), number (singular, dual, multiple), and gender (masculine, feminine) are pertinent for verbs. As seen in the examples in Tables 1 and 2, these categories are realised in the prefixes (and suffixes) of the prefix conjugation as well as in the suffixes of the suffix conjugation:

Table 1:
The suffixes of the Arabic suffix conjugation
kataba "To write"

'I wrote'	*katabtu*	'we wrote'	*katabna*
'you (m.) wrote'	*katabta*	'he wrote'	*kataba*
'you (m. pl.) wrote'	*katabtum*	'they (pl.) wrote'	*katabuu*
'you (f. pl.) wrote"	*katabtunna*	'they (f.pl.) wrote'	*katabna*

Table 2:

The prefixes and suffixes of the prefix conjugation for the Arabic verb 'to write'

kataba "To write"

'I write'	*aktubu*	'we write'	*nadrusu*
'you (f.) write'	*taktubiina*	'she writes'	*taktubu*
'you (m. pl.) write'	*taktubuuna*	'they (pl.)write'	*yaktubuuna*
'you (dual) write'	*' taktubaani*	'they (dual) write'	*yaktubaani*

(ibid, 2018, 1606)

The verb, in Arabic, has mainly two types in its most basic form: 'triliteral' and 'quadriliteral' verbs, according to the number of letters of these verbs, i.e. the triliteral verb contains three letters such as 'fa'ala' and the quadriliteral one contains four letters such as 'dahraja'. The latter group is relatively underrepresented. These two types are called the root forms, and both of them could be increased by the addition of one, two, or three letters producing the derived forms of the verb. The root letters can be called 'strong' or 'weak' i.e. there are two groups of the root letters and based on them, it is possible to have both strong and weak verbs (by the absence or presence of these root letters) (Sterling, 2018). The letters added to the root forms are called the letters of increase. Similar to the verbs of other languages, Arabic verbs can be both transitive and intransitive. Moreover, it is possible to make intransitive verbs transitive by: first, the use of a preposition, as in 'ja'aa' 'to come' intransitive and 'ja'aa bi' 'to bring' transitive, second, the addition of Hemzeh as a prefix as in 'qama' 'to rise' intransitive and 'a'qama' 'to raise' transitive. And the third way to make intransitive verbs transitive, is by tripling the 'medial radical' as in 'nama' 'to sleep' intransitive and 'nawama' 'to cause to sleep' transitive (ibid). There are other verbs which are both transitive and Intransitive as: 'a'hsana' 'to do good' and 'ta'alama' 'to learn' and so on. For both the Triliteral and the Quadriliteral, the typical prototype verbs are 'fa'ala' and 'fa'alala' respectively. 'Fa'ala' is the Preterite's (past) third person singular masculine pronoun. Because this verb is the most basic form of the verb, the root form is used as a benchmark or "measure" for all verbs and even derivative nouns (ibid).

One of the facets of the Arabic verb is its inflection. The verb is inflected to express Voice, Mood, Tense, Number, Person and Gender. As much as voice is concerned, The Active Voice and the Passive Voice are both present. Because the agent of the verb, "ضرب عمر الولد" 'dharaba Amron al walada' 'Amro beat the boy', is known, the Active is referred to as "the known.". Because the agent is unknown, the passive voice is referred to as "the unknown," as in "ضُرب الرجل" 'dhoriba al rajulu' 'The man was beaten'. The active verb is called "the known verb" and the passive is called "the unknown verb". As for the mood, there are three different verb moods: indicative, imperative, and subjunctive. The imperative is formed from the indicative's imperfect tense. Different meanings of the subjunctive, such as jussive, conditional, etc., are possible. In the concern of tense, both perfect and imperfect tenses are present in the indicative mood. There is only the imperfect tense in the subjunctive. The verb does not technically have tenses, but rather forms that express states (Sterling, 2018). One is a completed act, the Perfect; the other is an unfinished act, the Imperfect, whose completion may be in the near or far future. Action, not time, is signified in both cases. All past tenses

from Arabic or other languages are included in the perfect action, while all imperfect tenses are included in the Imperfect Action. The action of the imperfect verb is given a present meaning by adding the prefix 'lam', and the near or far future is indicated by adding the prefix 'se-n' or 'sawfa'.

Tenses of the Verb in Arabic

The verb system, or how Arabic verbal forms are denoted, has long been a source of contention among linguists and grammarians studying the language. Specifically, there is disagreement over whether Arabic employs a tense system or an aspect system. According to Wright (1967), a number of theoretical and historical elements contributed to the debate's emergence. According to Odilavadze (2010), some academic approaches to the terms "tense" and "aspect" have been affected by conventional orientalist notions that Arabic has "aspect" rather than "tense." In any of the tenses, Wright (1967) claims that he was unable to comprehend what was being said in terms of perfective, imperfective, or simple features. While some linguists, like Eisele (1990), proposed that the "past" and "present" distinguish between activities that are past and non-past, Ryding (2005) explained "past" and "present" via a chronology when using the term "tense," which can be less confusing for learners. Additionally, new definitions for the words "aspect" and "tense" have been added (Bubenik, 2011). Somehow the same can be true regarding tense and aspect in English. The present and past tenses are the only ones used in English. The verb tenses used to denote the time period are the past tense and the present tense. English verbs do not have any forms in the future tense. The unmarked verb is combined with the word "will" to create the future tense. The two fundamental grammatical features are perfective and imperfective. The word "imperfect" denotes the past progressive in English. Aspects that are imperfect and perfect can coexist, as in: I was talking (imperfect) when you entered (perfect). When you went, it was cold and rainy (inadequate) (perfect). The imperfect aspect is typically realised by a present/future tense, while the perfect aspect is typically realised by a past tense form. The imperfect denotes continual action, whereas the perfect denotes accomplished action.

According to Abü Shaqrä (2007) Arabic has two basic verb tenses. These tenses are the imperfect tense, which typically refers to the present or future tenses in English, and the perfect tense, which commonly corresponds to the past or perfect in English. Ryding (2005: 489) stated that Arabic verbs "show a range of tenses" and provided a full description of the language's tense and aspect systems. According to this remark, Arabic contains several different divisions of tenses, but the two most common are past and present, which are also known as perfect and imperfect or perfective and imperfective, respectively. The two latter ones are employed to convey aspect as opposed to tense. Tense and aspect are the two different ways that time can be viewed. Aspect is concerned with the completeness of an action (finished, partial, ongoing, or it has not yet occurred), as opposed to tense, which deals with sequential (syntagmatic) points in time beginning in the past and moving into the future (Sekhri, 2009). While aspect focuses on the activity itself, tense emphasises actions at the linear level of the action. Tense and aspect can therefore combine to indicate a specific activity. Aspect was emphasised in classical Arabic. Because it is less perplexing to learners, it is also possible to distinguish between the perfect and imperfect tenses in Arabic by utilising the past and present tenses, respectively (Ryding 2005).

The perfect tense, according to Abü Shaqrä (2007) indicates mostly a past state, finished event, or definite reality. The perfect can be used to express a wish or prayer in the second and third person. The perfect also allows for the expression of hypotheses in conditional phrases. The perfect is thus one of Arabic's two tenses. Its primary purpose is narrative; it describes activities or events. The perfect also describes events that will occur in the future and present. Other characteristic of the prefect is that it is 'neutral' in the sense that it emphasises the verb action rather than the subject (Eckhard & Gunther Wolfgang, 2000 cited in Abü Shaqrä, 2007). Arabic contains two basic verbs: perfect and imperfect, neither of which actually expresses tense because their purpose is to indicate whether an action has been performed or not. The imperfect indicates an unfinished action, whereas the perfect indicates a completed action. The second Arabic verb tense is the imperfect. It is employed to depict both current and forthcoming events. The imperfect changes depending on the subject.

Whether Arabic is aspect- or tense-specific is still a topic of discussion among modern linguists. El-Sadek (2014) believes that Arabic is a tense language with two finite forms, one that is prefixed and one that is not. However, the interpretation of meaning in Arabic needs the consideration of aspect as well. Both tense and aspect can be represented by the verb; the verb carries tense only in simple tense forms, while the primary predicate (such as the auxiliary kaan) marks tense, in compound tense forms, and aspect is signalled by the following lexical verb. Linguists like Fehri (2012) and Binnick (1991) have also considered Arabic as a tense-aspectual language. According to Brustad (1991), the participle, imperfective yaf'al, and the perfective form fa'al all define acts, occurrences, and states in their own unique ways. According to Comrie (1976) stated that Arabic verb forms refer to both tense and aspect and that these two categories go side by side. Verbs in Arabic, as mentioned earlier don't express the time of an action or event, but they express states. These states are either complete i.e. a finished act or incomplete, an unfinished act. These states are represented by two forms of the verb, the preterite (*the past),* and the aorist *(the present).*

In Arabic, the use of the notions preterite (past) and aorist (present) tenses is more accurate. The former is used to convey a known finished act, whereas the latter is used to convey an undefined unfinished act. In addition, personal pronouns attached to the various verb tenses are used to express number, person, and gender. The singular, dual, and plural persons are the three numbers. There are three persons: "the speaker" (the first person), "the one being addressed" (the second person), and "the absent" (the third person). As for gender, the masculine and the feminine are the two genders grounded in the Arabic verb.

Although there seem to be similarities in the treatment of tense/aspect in Arabic and English, the verb system in Arabic is distinct from that in English. Numerous studies have been conducted to compare and contrast the verb systems employed in Arabic and other languages (Eisele, 1990; Zollmann et al., 2006).

In order to create a verb in Arabic, three (fa'ala) to four (fa'lala) consonant roots are inserted into one of the several verb patterns. These templates are then modified by adding verb suffixes and prefixes to indicate where certain verbs are located in regard to number, person, and gender. For the dummy root, the perfective tense/aspect and the active/passive voice, are utilized (Truck, 2010). According to Abdul-Halim et al. (2015), affixes known as inflectional prefixes are added to words to denote grammatical function. They also point out that, unlike English, which only exhibits a small

number of these traits, Arabic is categorized as a templatic, derivational, and inflectional language, as mentioned earlier. Arabic and English are different in that Arabic does not utilise a predetermined formula to build the aspect of the verb in a similar manner that English does. According to Reishaan and Jafar (2008), Arab scholars signify the progressive and perfect elements of the Arabic verb in the absence of specific formal markers by utilising certain auxiliary words before the verb form, such as "sawfa," "se-n" and "qad" in terms of tense. English has sixteen different tense forms, whereas Arabic only has two (Gadalla, 2006). Derivational and inflectional morphological categories both play a significant primary role in the verb system in Arabic. The rules of inflectional morphology are used to produce the tense and aspect of Arabic verbs (Al-Saleemi, 1987).

The first form of the verb, the preterite, is expressed by a number of constructions besides the actual past tense i.e. an action's or event's precise timing can be deduced from its surroundings or some incidental information. It is commonly known that past tenses tend to be less problematic in the sense that tense and time are both representing an action initiated and completed before the moment of speaking as in:

- Oh, you destroyed everything
- لقد دمرت كل شئ
- "Laqad damarta kula sha'"

The particle "qad" essentially restricts the preterite to a time that has already passed while assuring the action of the verb. "Kaana", on the other hand, is used with the preterite to denote the past perfect (pluperfect) (ibid, 1987); as:

- Amr had sat
- كان عمرٌ قد جلس
- "Kanna Amron qad jalas"

There are two other constructions to express the preterite: First, the forms that are called in Arabic 'Al-Insha'a' ' to initiate' i.e. verbs that are used to create certain new contracts. These forms are represented by the present tense with verbs as 'ba'aa' to sell, 'ishtara' to buy, when used at the time of selling or buying (ibid, 1987); as in:

- I sell you the camel for two pounds
- بعتك الجمل بليرتين
- "Bi'tuka aljamal bilairatain"

The second form is the future when it is used to express:

1- A prayer or curse 'duaa' as in:

- May God have mercy upon you
- رحمك الله تعالى (The verb is in the past tense, but the time reference is the future)
- "Rahimaka Allahu ta'ala"

- May God bless your soul

- <u>بارك</u> الله فيك (The verb is in the past tense, but the time reference is the future)
- "Baraka Allahu fika"

2- After the negative 'la' following an oath; as in:

- By God I will not help you until you help me
- والله لا أساعدك حتى تساعدني
- " Wallahi la sa'adtuka hata tusa'iduni"

3- An answer to a condition or a condition; as in:

- If you seek you will find
- ان طلبت تجد
- "In talabta tajid"

   The second form of the verb, the aorist, is also expressed by a number of constructions. The following are four constructions that are used to express this form of the verb:

1- Present or Future Tense.

It is confined to the present tense when preceded by (a) 'lam ilibtida'a' (b) the negative 'la' or 'in' (c) the verb 'laisa'; as in:

- The hours are really passing
- انّ الساعات لتمر
- "Inna alsa'ata latamur"

It is confined to the future when preceded by
(a). The particles 'se-n' a near future or 'sawfa' a remote future; as

- Your Lord will give to you and you will be satisfied.
- سوف <u>يعطيك</u> ربك فترضى
- "Sawfa yua'tika rabuka fatardha"

(b). Particles of 'nasib' نصب as in:

- I long to see you
- أشتاق <u>لان</u> اراك
- "Ashtaqu li'an araaka"

(c). Particles of Expectation 'ادوات التوقع' as in:

- Perchance I may come
- لعلي اتي
- "La'ali a'ti"

(d) 'lau' or 'qad'

The answer to a condition can take the future as in:

- If you know
- لو تعلمون
- "Law ta'lamo-n"

(e). When it expresses a prayer or curse 'duaa' ; as in:

- May God help you
- أعانك الله
- "Yusa'iduka Allahu"

(f). When it expresses condition or an answer to a condition; as in:

- Whosoever studies will understand
- من يدرس يحفظ
- "Man yadrus yahfidh"

2- Past Tense when preceded by 'Lam' or 'Lamma' particles of 'jazim' جزم; *as in:*

- I did not understand
- لم افهم
- "Lam afham"

3- An idiomatic use of the aorist that can be understood in the following:

- Zaid drinks wine
- زيد يشرب الخمر
- "Zaidun yashrabu alkhamra" i.e. he is in the habit of.

4- And finally, at times no special tense is indicated by the aorist; as in:

- Zaid reads
- زيد يقرأ
- "Zaidun yaqra'"

Misinterpretations of the Arabic tenses

By using the linguistic category of tense, one can relate to the extra-linguistic facts of time relations. Thus, Quirk et al. (1972, 84) stated that "English has two tenses: present tense and past tense. The present tense often refers to the present time and the past tense to the past time, as their names suggest". Contrarily, aspect refers to the perspective or experience that the verb action is viewed or experienced from. The chosen aspect is a critique of or a specific interpretation of the activity. The aspectual contrasts in English are perfective/non-perfective and progressive/nonprogressive (Quirk et al. 1972, 90). In English, combining tense and aspect categories can result in up to sixteen separate structures. There are four different tenses: conditional (future in

the past), past, present, as well as future and four aspectual references are available for each tense: simple, progressive, perfect, and perfect progressive (Gadalla, 2017).

Aspect, not tense, determines the basic differences between verbs in Arabic. According to Wright (1967), the Arabic verb has two aspectual forms, only two temporal tenses of the Arabic verb exist: the perfect and the imperfect. The perfect expresses a completed act that is finished and complete in relation to other acts; the imperfect expresses an unfinished act that is only beginning or in progress. These two forms of the verb are combined with specific verbs, like /kaana/ 'to be,' and specific particles, such /qad/ 'already,' to convey specific meanings. Finding the Arabic verb form and the verbs or particles that can combine with it to communicate a specific English tense is thus one of the main challenges faced by those who study the differences between the languages as well as the translators of English into Arabic.

The English verb has sixteen tenses, but the Arabic verb has two aspectual forms. As a result, dealing with these languages is a challenge because each Arabic form must stand in for a number of English tenses. This leads to the conclusion that the Arabic text must provide hints that direct the interpretation in selecting the appropriate English tense (ibid, 2017).

Due to the fact that Arabic and English come from two distinct and remote language families, among other factors, there are certain issues with the syntax and organisation of the two languages. Linguists must pay close attention to any syntactic inconsistencies between Arabic and English. The incompatibilities at the sentence level that involve altered word order must be particularly well-known to the interpretation such as in the case of the verb 'do'. The major verb in English is the lexical verb "do," which is equivalent to the Arabic verb "yafa'al." For English negative (and occasionally affirmative) sentences, the auxiliary verbs "Do" (present tense) and "Did" (past tense) with "yafa'al" solely denote the tenses. The Arabic word for "do" and "did" in questions is "hal," as in:

- Do you like flowers?
- "hal tuhib azzuhur?"

The verb 'yamlik' 'to indicate ownership' has fewer issues when used as the primary verb, it cannot be used as an auxiliary verb in Arabic. In English, however, the verb "have" is used quite often as a primary and an auxiliary verb. In questions 'hal' can be used for yes-or-no questions in Arabic in both the present and past tenses. English typically only has sentence constructions (i.e. SVC). Compared to English, Arabic has more latitude in its syntax. There are three commonly used word orders in Arabic: VSC, SVC, and VCS. However, the normal sentence structure in Arabic is VSC: the verb is followed by the subject, which is then followed by the object or complement, whereas the typical sentence structure in English is SVC: the subject is followed by the verb, which is then followed by the object or complement. But with a slight change in meaning, the English word order might also shift (Akan, 2019). Arabic and English both have two main tenses (e.g. present and past). There are no progressive or perfective tenses in Arabic. The present tense and past perfect tenses in Arabic are translated as past simple. In Arabic, the present progressive is considered as the present simple whereas the past progressive is treated as the past simple to denote time ('al'an'). Arabic lacks the present and past perfect progressive tenses (ibid).

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Discussion

The Arabic verb has two aspectual varieties: perfect(ive) and imperfect(ive), as was previously mentioned. The perfect is used to describe an activity that has been completed or concluded (often in the past, i.e. before speaking). As opposed to this, the imperfect refers to an incompleted or unfinished action (often in the present or future). Time-words like "now" and "tomorrow" (/ala'an/ and "gadan") can be used to denote the imperfect's designated time.

Beeston (1968, 50) states that the tense disparity, with regard to meaning, between perfect and imperfect acts on three levels, and in different settings, any one of these levels of differentiation may gain the main emphasis, upstaging or essentially eliminating the others: i. The perfect denotes past time, the imperfect denotes present or future time; ii. The perfect denotes a single action, considered as instantaneous in its occurrence; the imperfect denotes habitual or repeated action, or to one encapsulated as covering a space of time; iii. The perfect denotes a fact, the imperfect denotes a conceptual idea not necessarily realised in fact, and will frequently have to be rendered in English by the use of modal verbs.

Linguists nowadays, refer to the two forms as perfect(ive) and imperfect(ive), respectively. According to Gadalla (2000, 76), the two forms can be distinguished morphologically: "The imperfect form is obtained via the addition of confixes, i.e. variations of prefixes and suffixes, whereas the perfect form is obtained by the attachment of suffixes solely." Radwan (1975, 30) claimed that aspect and tense "should be considered two separate categories. .... Both phrases are used to refer to two distinct speech pattern characteristics". While "tense" refers to temporal reference, the term "aspect" spans the semantic ranges of completion against non-completion and continuation versus non-continuation. Therefore, there is no one-to-one correlation between aspect and tense. Other linguists also agreed with this idea, including Eisele (1990), who suggests that the difference between these two forms correlates to a difference between past and non-past. Arabic language learners erroneously believe that Arabic verbs can only express a limited amount of past, present, and future information. As demonstrated by Fayyad (1997), this is incorrect. He presents the following fourteen Arabic tenses by utilising tense and aspect:

1. Simple Past, expressed by the perfect form of the verb,
2. Near Past, formed by /*qad, laqad*/ + perfect,
3. Distant Past, formed by /*kaana*/, /*kaana qad*/ or /*qad kaana*/ + perfect,
4. Progressive Past, formed by /*Zalla*/ or /*kaana*/ + imperfect,
5. Approaching Past, formed by /*kaada*/ or /*awshaka*/ + ('*an*) + imperfect,
6. Futuristic Past, formed by /*kaana*/ + /*sa-*/ + imperfect,
7. Simple Present, expressed by the imperfect form of the verb,
8. Progressive Present, formed by /*ya-zall-u*/ + imperfect,
9. Approaching Present, by /*ya-kaad-u*/ or /*yu-shik-u*/ + ('*an*) + imperfect,
10. Commencing Present, formed by /*akhtha*/, /*shara'aa*/, /*ja'alaa*/ or /*ansha'a*/ + imperfect,
11. Progressive Composite, formed by /*maa zaal-a*/ or /*laa ya-zaal-u*/ + imperfect,
12. Near Future, formed by /*sa-*/ + imperfect,
13. Distant Future, formed by /*sawfa*/ + imperfect, and

14. Progressive Future, formed by /sa-, *sawfa*/ + /*ya-Zall-u*/ + imperfect.

Application of the dimension of perspective to Arabic tense

Here are a number of Arabic examples which are analysed by the implementation of the cognitive construal of perspective in order to investigate the possibility to comprehend whether Arabic tense and aspect should be separated or they should be studied and investigated as one entity:

1. He is crazy
   'Inahu lamajnoon' انه لمجنون

2. He is being crazy
   'Yatasarafu alwaladu bijnoon (al'ana)' يتصرف الولد بجنون (الان)

3. He is going to be crazy
   'SaYujanu alwalada' سيجن الولد

4. He will be crazy
   'Sawfa Yujanu alwalada' سوف يجن الولد

Sentence (1) is a nominal sentence in Arabic [has no verb]; it can only be interpreted by the use of present simple tense in English. This sentence refers to a generalisation and implies that this is a behaviour or a habit. Sentence (2)'s verb is in the present continuous tense. It explains a specific assertion that suggests that this is a current action. To express the activity occurring at the time of speaking, the word "ala'ana" must exist. The future forms in (3, 4) tend to indicate habits or other upcoming behavioural traits; as a result, in (3), the prefix "se-n" denotes a planned or near future, whereas the prefix "sawfa" denotes a far future.

5. By 10:00 pm, I will be sleeping
   'Inda alsaa'a al'ashirati masa'an sa'akunu na'iman'
   عند الساعة العاشرة مساءا سأكون نائما

6. By the time I leave the house, the sun will have set
   'Inda khuroji mina al manzili Sawfa Takoonu alshamsu qad gharabat'
   عند خروجي من المنزل ستكون الشمس قد غربت

The verb phrase in (5) is in future continuous. It expresses an activity that will be in progress at a time in the future; therefore, in Arabic the prefix 'se-n' is used. However, there is no representation of the continuity of the future. The verb phrase in (6) is in future perfect. Notice that in Arabic if one wants to express that tense i.e. an activity that will be completed before another time or event in the future, it is possible to use 'se-n' and the present form of 'kaana' as well as 'qad'.

7. Shall I come to your house?
   'Hal a'ati ila manzilik?' هل آتي الى منزلك؟

8. Will you come to my house?
   'Hal ta'ati ila manzili?' هل تأتي الى منزلي؟

9. Zaid came in

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'A'ata Zaidun' أتى زيد

10. Zaid went
'Thahaba Zaidun' ذهب زيد

In (7, 9), the coming is seen from the hearer's vantage point. In (8, 10), it is seen from the speaker's vantage point.

11. The door (of the house) opened and the thieves sneaked in
'Infataha babu aldaari wa dakhala allusoosu' إنفتح باب الدار ودخل اللصوص

12. The thieves opened the door (of the house) and sneaked in
'Fataha allusoosu aldaara wa dakhaloh' فتح اللصوص الدار و دخلوه

The vantage point in (11) is inside the room. The trajectory, or passive entity whose position or state is described, is the door (of the house), which serves as the sentence's subject. the verb open, here, is an example of an intransitive verb, indicating that it doesn't need an object. Inside the room is where the vantage point. However, in (12), the vantage point is outside the room. The thieves are the sentence's trajectory, and considered as the agent that deliberately acts to open the door (of the house). "Open" is transitive in this instance (it requires an object: the door). The view is from a location outside the room. The subject of the sentence, which relates to what the experiencer sees first, gives hints on how to reconstruct the vantage point.

13. People enjoy spending the holiday with the family
'Yastamti'u alnasu biqadha'i al'tlati ma'a alahli' يستمتع الناس بقضاء العطلة مع الاهل

14. It is enjoyable spending the holiday with the family
'Mina al mumti'i qadha'u al'tlati ma'a alahli' من الممتع قضاء العطلة مع الاهل

The form of the personal complement clause in (13) denotes a subjective interpretation of the complement clause as seen from the perspective of the main clause subject. The involvement of the main clause subject in the incident detailed in the complement clause is conveyed via personal complement clause constructions. The major clause subject, who is the scene's speaker, only applies the scene they describe to themselves, giving the impression that they are more invested in seeing it through. Such a statement exemplifies EVA (Egocentric Viewing Arrangement) and provides a subjective interpretation of the imagined scene. The experience of spending the holiday with the family is ascribed to a particular subject (the main clause subject), and the sentence is interpreted subjectively.

The form of the impersonal complement clause in (14), which starts with 'It' in English and 'mina' in Arabic, indicates an objective interpretation of the complement phrase as perceived from the speaker's perspective. The speaker's distancing from the event is communicated by impersonal complement clause forms. As the scene's speaker, the speaker assumes an objective viewpoint on the action and moves away from the participant in it. As a result, the speaker seems less dedicated to realising it. An OVA (Optimal Viewing Arrangement) statement like that provides an unbiased viewpoint on the imagined scene. The sentence is also construed subjectively because the experience of spending the holiday with the family is ascribed to a non-specific (generic) object.

Conclusion

As seen from the literature that tense encompasses more than just the simple tenses like past and present; it also refers to other tenses like the present perfect tense and past progressive. There are just two basic tenses, as linguists agreed. Arabic has two finite forms, one of which is prefixed and the other is not. Rather than a tense language, Arabic is classified as an aspect language. Depending on the meaning of the sentence, Arabic perfect and imperfect verbs can convey a variety of tenses and aspects. A fundamental category of perfect and progressive was described as aspect. Perfect, imperfect, progressive, and nonprogressive are the four divisions. In English, the tenses past and present simple and the forms present and past continuous are referred to as "perfect" and "imperfect," respectively.

The construal of perspective provides a significant interpretation of the tenses of Arabic. However, due to the understanding that Arabic language is an aspectual language rather than a tense language, it seems that it is more appropriate to consider this language as aspect/tense language as explained by Fayyad (1997). Aspect, then, is considered as a grounding element in Arabic. This supports what is hypothesized and analyzed that both tense and aspect in Arabic are two sides of the same coin. Therefore, to provide a complete comprehension of the grounding of meaning in Arabic, the implementation of both the construal of perspective and the mode of scanning is needed in order to perceive the conceptualization through processing time. This would reflect a comprehensive cognitive realization of the conceptualization of the Arabic language.

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