

**A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH AND ARABIC
PRESENT TENSE SYSTEMS WITH TEACHING AND
LEARNING IMPLICATIONS**

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis titled “A Contrastive Analysis of English and Arabic Present Tense Systems with Teaching and learning Implications” has been written by me in the Department of Arts and Social Science Education. The information derived from literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and a list of references provided. The study was not previously presented for the award of a degree in other institution.

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CERTIFICATION

This thesis entitled ‘A Contrastive Analysis of Arabic and English Present Tense Systems with Teaching and Learning Implications’ has the regulations governing the award of a degree of master of education (M.Ed. TESL) of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and it is therefore approved for its contribution to knowledge.

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ABSTRACT

The study contrasted English and Arabic present tense systems with a view of identifying the areas of similarities and dissimilarities between the two languages as well as the problems the findings posed for both Learners of English and Arabic. The work sought to find out how English present tense system posed problem for learners of Arabic as a second language. Four research questions were raised to back up the study. The study involved eighty (80) sentences from both Arabic and English data. The eighty sentences were described through Transformational Generative Grammar and contrasted with the use of Di Pietro Contrastive Analysis Model. The results revealed high differences between Arabic and English present tense systems and, therefore, confirmed that Arabic learners of English have problems with the use of English present tense especially in the use of present perfect and present continuous tenses. The study also showed that Arabic students learning of English as well as English students of Arabic as a second languages may encounter different learning difficulties as a result of language differences. Based on this result the researcher suggested, amongst others, that the curriculum planners should bear in mind the linguistic differences that exist between Arabic and English present tense systems when designing curricula for schools. The teacher, in particular, should extensively drill the students using translation and present the language to the learners in meaningful and manageable units with adequate drills.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my beloved parents, Alhaji Shehu Usman Muhammad and Malama Aishatu Shehu Usman.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CA: Contrastive Analysis

CAH: Contrastive Analysis Hypotheses

CLA: Contrastive linguistic Analysis

HISCE : Higher Islamic Studies Certificate Examination

SAISCE: Senior Arabic and Islamic Studies Certificate Examination

JISCE: Junior Islamic Studies Certificate Examination

TGG: Transformational Generative Grammar

SFG: Systemic Functional Grammar

N.D.: no date

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language Learning

V: verb

VP: Verb Phrase

NP: Noun Phrase

Aux: auxiliary

DET.: determiner

Pr.: Pronoun

Adj. Adjective

Sing: Singular

PT: Progressive Transformation

AT: Affix Transformation

Perf: Perfect

PSA: Progressive Standard Arabic

SE: Standard English

MSA: Modern Standard Arabic

ESL: English as second Language

EFL: English as foreign Language

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Strings of words have little or no meaning unless they are grammatically correct and used in a way recognizable to the listener or reader. Grammar as an aspect of language is, perhaps, the most important target to be achieved in order to make the words meaningful and understandable (Alam khan 2011:108). Saad (2009:83) affirms that for most people who speak a language, the essence of that language lies in grammar. The aim of grammar is to teach people how to express their thoughts correctly, either in speech or writing. Each grammatical class has its own feature, linguistic complexities and difficulties. Among those complexities are the interpretation and familiarization with the English tenses and aspects.

The term 'tense' is a grammatical category that serves to locate an event or a situation in time. Mahinnaz (2013:124) defines tense as an aspect of the verb that shows the time an action happens. Shafayi (1984:74) opines that “the tense has been made when the man has paid attention to the verb, and then the grammatical tense was created”.

The general term 'tense' applies to a system where the basic or characteristic meaning of the term is to locate the situation or part of it at some point or period of time (Pullum 2002: 116). Although the natural division of time into 'past', 'present' and 'future' is widely accepted, it is difficult to find a linguistic system of tenses which completely corresponds to the extra-linguistic category of time (Novakov 2008:15).

The study of the verb tense has traditionally arisen the interest of linguists concerned with the semantics of natural language. Linguists have tried to describe the properties (at the morphological, syntactical or semantic level) of the tense in different languages. More recently, however, the issue of tense has attracted the attention of linguists interested in the system.

This study intends to undertake a contrastive analysis (henceforth C.A.) of English and Arabic tense systems. In Nigeria, the two languages have co-existed for long time in schools, business, and international relations as well as in many other different areas and disciplines. Despite this long co-existence, many researchers and language teachers have been complaining about different cases of errors committed by Arabic learner of English. For instance Kharma (1981), Aljumah (2007), Ghrib (2011), highlighted some areas of learning difficulties by Arabic learners of English especially in terms of its tenses and other crucial grammatical aspects. The interpretation and familiarization of the English tense and aspect is one of the most difficult grammatical areas by Arabic learners of English (Aljuma2007).

Wilkins (1972), Leech (1971), Shamaa (1978: 32-3), Vandao (2010), Larsen-Freeman et al (2002:4) mentioned that English tense system is problematic area for foreign students. One of the difficult grammatical areas for ESL/EFL students to master is the English verb tense-aspect system. In a study conducted by Vandao (2010) on Vietnamese problem in learning English, the author discovered that Many Vietnamese students beginning to study English have much trouble learning English grammar in general. One of the problems they usually encounter is handling English tense and aspect. Similarly, Shamaa (1978), conducted a research on Arabic and English imperfect tenses. The author concluded that English speakers learning Arabic encountered difficulty in translating Arabic tenses into English.

English and Arabic languages belong to different language families. The former is Germanic while the latter is Semitic. Germanic is one of the Indo-European language families and the family consists of: Germanic, Italic, Celtic, Balto-Slavic, Albanian, Greek and others (Baugh 1972; Robert 2007).

Arabic, on the other hand, is one of the major languages of the Semitic group in which one of their characteristic features is their basic consonantal root, mostly trilateral. Variations in shades of meaning are obtained first by varying the vowel of the simple root and, secondly, by addition of prefixes, suffixes and infixes (Haywood, & Nahmad, 1965:1).

Despite the fact that the two languages differ in their word order, verb is very essential in sentence formation as it is the most significant element that expresses actions. It is assumed that by contrasting the tense systems of Arabic and English, it is possible to delineate similarities and differences. This would ease teaching and learning of the two languages in a bilingual situation.

The languages enjoy international status with a large number of both first and second language speakers. Therefore, the need for the learners to be fluent in the use of tense and aspect in the two languages is very important.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

For the past five years, the researcher has been involved in marking of final year examinations, that is the Higher Islamic School Certificate (HIS) and Senior Arabic and Islamic Studies Certificate Examinations (SAISCE) as well as Junior Islamic Secondary Certificate Examinations (JISCE). Marking examination scripts reveals a wide range of practical problems learners encounter while using English. Thus, students' incompetence in writing English can be clearly observed in examination answer scripts. The following are such examples:

- * I am **live** in our house.
- * They always **shouting**.
- * Did you **saw** him last week?

Having taught English language for long time, the researcher observed that students of Arabic learning English as a foreign language often make serious mistakes in the use of English tense system. Therefore, it takes long time to achieve the level of grammatical competence on the part of language learners. Furthermore, the process of learning grammar and its acquisition are from the start, hindered by the cognitive hurdles presented by English tenses for the learners.

This research has therefore been considered in order to investigate these problems especially to highlight the causes of such problems and how they could be tackled pedagogically.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Tense is the aspect of language responsible for expressing event, state, process or action in time.

This research work intended to:

1. Compare the similarities between Arabic and English present tense systems;
2. Compare the differences between Arabic and English present tense systems;
3. Identify the learning and teaching difficulties pose by the similarities and differences between English and Arabic present tense systems.

1.4 Research Questions

To achieve the purposes of the study, the following research questions were used:

1. In what way is English present tense is similar to Arabic present tense?
2. To what extent is English present tense is different to Arabic present tense?

3. What are the teaching and learning difficulties pose by the similarities and differences between English and Arabic present tense systems?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study could help the Arabic learners of English and their teachers to understand the similarities and differences between the Arabic and English present tense systems. Course and syllabus designers also may find the research findings helpful when preparing teaching and learning materials. The study could give the syllabus designers clues on how to design curriculum that may solve the problem of negative transfer in translating or constructing sentences with present tense. Similarly, the work may provide deeper knowledge of the verb structures and its tense system, thus educating teachers and learners alike. The findings may be valuable to the textbook writers because it may act as the basis for decision-making about grouping and sequencing of items, the kinds of drills and practical work of which it should be presented to facilitate learning of tenses. The study may also arouse the interest of future researchers who may want to further the study in the area of Arabic and English contrastive study.

1.6 Basic Assumptions

It is assumed that difficulties in teaching and learning English present tense systems could result where there are differences between its system and that of Arabic. This may constitute a source of learning problems and misinterpretation of meaning. The similarities between the two present tense systems could make learning easy.

1.7 Scope and Delimitation

The study identified possible errors in learning English present tense system by Arabic students learning English. In order to explore the composing process of L2 writers meaningfully, there is need to understand how Arabic students compose in both Arabic English languages to understand more about their learning strategies, especially in monitoring errors, such as the role of translation and transfer of skills.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This research focused on a contrastive analysis of Arabic and English present tense systems. It established the similarities and differences between Arabic and English languages and how the differences could affect learning each language. This chapter reviewed some literature related to the topic and the variables identified.

2.2 Contrastive Analysis

Contrastive Analysis (CA) is defined as a realm of applied linguistics entailed in the comparison and contrast of two or more languages or subsystems of languages in order to determine their similarities and differences (Fisiak, 1985). According to McArthur (1992:216),

Contrastive analysis is a branch of linguistics that describes similarities and differences among two or more languages, at such levels as phonology, grammar, and semantics, especially in order to improve language teaching and translation.

McArthur (1992:216)

The history of Contrastive Linguistic Analysis was central to linguistic studies, notably in the 19th century and early 20th century. Contrastive analysis is a branch of historical linguistic studies. It deals with the comparison of the characteristics of different languages or different states of a language through history. It starts with the discovery of the similarities and differences as well between languages or within the same language. However, some linguists and pioneers in the field of language pedagogy were well aware of the pull of the mother tongue in learning a target language. It was Charles (1945) who firmly established contrastive linguistic analysis as an inter component of the methodology of target language teaching (Sridhar, 1987:209). For Carl

J. (1988:157) “modern CA starts with Lado (1957). So, Lado’s work has become a classic field manual for practical contrastive studies. Lado (1957) believes that CA is a means of identifying the areas of difficulty for language learners that could be managed with suitable exercise. Banathy (1969:3) is on the opinion that CA is a process by which two languages are compared in order to identify similarities and differences between their linguistic systems.

The background for CA, as applied to language teaching, is the assumption that the native language plays a role in learning a second language. Mother tongue influence is sometimes very obvious. Influence from the mother tongue is not just negative, however; learning a related language is much easier than learning one that is very different (Ringbom 1987). So, Arabic speakers learning English language may have tense learning problems because the two languages differ from each other in their tense system. Lado (1957:2) believes that the student who comes in contact with a new language may find those elements that are similar to his native language simpler for him and those elements that are different will be difficult. These sorts of observations have probably always been made in language learning and in the contact between native and foreign speakers.

The main purpose of contrastive analysis is to give a detailed description of the differences between the languages compared as well as to contribute to the task of foreign language teaching. It provides teaching materials and information that could help in the organization of the teaching syllabus. When people have written textbooks for learners of foreign languages, there has regularly been an element of comparison between the native language and the foreign language to be learned. CA is also directed specifically to those areas of language where errors are most frequent and it is likely to provide information on why the errors occur which at the same time suggest ways of organizing teaching materials which can anticipate and overcome the

problems. Catford (1965: 159-173) believes that the data supplied by CA can be of value to the teacher, and the textbook writer. CA is still relevant in assisting language teachers with their teaching methods and techniques (Bahram & Somayyeh 2014:612).

Previous studies conducted by Fisiak (1985) clarify that CA is concerned with solving the problems that language learners have in learning English as Foreign Language. Ellis (1989) and Sajavaara (1977) assert that CA was rooted in the practical needs to teach L2 in the most efficient possible way. As Lado (1957:) makes clear: "the teacher who has made a comparison of the foreign language will know better what the real problems are and can provide for teaching them. So the origins of CA were pedagogic".

Some of the researchers discussed grammatical errors made by Arabic learners of English as a second language using CA include: Emam, 1972; Meziani, (1973), El-hibir, (1976) Mukattash, (1978), Al-Buainain, (1988), Kharma and Hajjaj, (1989), El- hibir & Altaha,(1992) Ghrib, (2001) and Mahmoud, (2002). Looking at how these researchers and scholars use CA and arrived at valid conclusion, it can be said that CA helps to solve the problems likely to be encountered by the Arabic speaker learning English and vice-versa in the area of tense system.

Other contrastive linguistic analysis carried out by different scholars includes: Olaofe (1982) contrastive analysis of the Yoruba based verbal system. The researcher used CLA in predicting verbal errors of Yoruba students learning the English verbal system. The researcher implemented the findings in a classroom situation where he found that the CA is very useful in predicting some errors that the Yoruba learners of English might commit in the verb aspect.

In a study titled Corpus-based Contrastive Analysis of Igbo and English Adjectives, Umeodinka (2011), used a descriptive approach to investigate the patterns of authentic language use through

the analysis of the actual usage of adjective. His emphasis was on the differences in their usage as they relate to interference problems encountered by the Igbo learners of English as L2. The results of the analysis showed that corpus-based contrastive study is an indispensable innovation in language teaching, especially as it played a prominent role in foreseeing problem areas and making predictions to forestall their occurrence in language pedagogy. The researcher concluded that the corpus-based contrastive analysis of Igbo and English adjectives has revealed a number of advantages derivable there from. This shows that contrastive linguistic analysis using corpus data constitutes an empirical basis.

Boskany (2001) conducted a research on the topic “A Contrastive Analysis of Agreement in Standard English and Standard Kurdish”. He believes that Kurdish learners of English often face problems related to the expressions of time. The main purpose of the study is to highlight the similarities or otherwise of the agreement in Standard English and Standard Kurdish. The researcher was able to conclude that English and Kurdish languages share the same general rules i.e. singular subject requires singular verb while plural subjects require plural verbs. This was achieved through CA.

These researchers used CA approach and succeeded in carrying out the research. This suggests that the present study might succeed in conducting research using contrastive analysis theory. The findings arrived at would help language teachers to explain the most essential structural differences between English and Arabic languages to their students in more effective and systematic ways.

CLA can be operational (for generalized model like TG) or taxonomic (for autonomous model like structural grammar and generalized models). In order to make contrastive an operational, contrast will have to be expressed as a series of conversations performed on the source language

so as to produce the form of the target language. According to Di Pietro (1971:18-21) the operational model of CA requires a lot of conversations of the source rules in order to correlate them to the target language rules. The language analyst in this regard seeks those grammatical elements which are shared and unshared by the source and the target language and identifies them according to the hierarchy of importance.

2.3 Relevance of Contrastive Analysis to English and Arabic Languages

Each grammatical class has its own feature. So the quality of learner's mistakes differs from one category to another. Arabic learners of English are believed to commit errors in learning English tense system (Anbar 2011:3). If the tense systems of Arabic and English are distinctly different, then one could expect relatively high frequency errors to occur in learning English or Arabic languages (Ellis 1997).

Many studies revealed that differences between source and target languages make difficulties in learning the target language. Some researchers took quite radical positions, suggesting that the learner's L1 had relatively little influence on the inter language (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982). Others, such as James (1971), and Schachter (1974), continued to show that L1 influence needed to be taken into account, and studies of L1 influence regained their place in the mainstream of Second Language Acquisition research (Gass and Selinker, 1983; Odlin, 1989).

CA has a predictive power which was found very effective in contrasting two languages. In fact, no one can deny the potential impact of CA studies in certain fields. The researcher does not claim that CA predicates and solves all errors and problems encountered when learning L2, but the value and importance of CA lies in its ability to indicate potential areas of interference which is the chief source and the most important source of errors but not the only source (Fisiak, 1985;

Keshavarz, 2003). However, despite all the criticisms surrounding the field of CA, many language teachers from various corners of the world as well as a large number of applied linguists have found Contrastive studies functional in language teaching, language teaching materials development etc. Adeyanju (1979), for example, declared that CA in foreign language learning is perhaps the most systematic, relevant and economical way of selecting teaching materials.

The present study believed that the importance of CA as a discipline is still relevant and will continue to be like this as long as foreign language teaching exists. Contrastive analysis of tense in English and Arabic languages is of vital importance not only to the language teachers but also to the textbook writers and other educational stake holders. This is because CA helps to identify the similarities and differences between the two languages under study.

2.4 English Tense System

Verbs generally serve as the very heart of every sentence. They change into different inflectional forms to indicate tense and the time an action takes place. This change, according to Adedokun (2013:207) indicates time of an action whether the action took place in the past; is taking place at the present, or will take place in the future.

For related literature on the verb tense in English language, almost all grammar books in English tend to count tenses and compare them to one another for the sake of showing their use and usage and the different verb-forms that express tenses. Eckersley and Eckersley (1960) for instance, counted as many as 24 English tenses, 12 of them were active and the other 12 were passive. A few such books, like Quirk and Greenbaum (1973), Quirk et al (1985), Lewis (1986), and Leech and Svartvik (1994) tried to explicate the relationship between the time, tense, and the

verb-forms. Lewis (1986) referred tense as the entire phenomenon of the grammaticalization of time, a phenomenon generally articulated through the verb.

According to (Hornstein 1990:32) 'tense' can be defined as a secondary grammatical category which serves to locate an event or a situation in time. It accounts, for example, for the difference in the sentences: John leaves / John left. It encompasses two aspects: a morphological aspect, namely a system of tenses encoded in the verb's morphology, and a semantic aspect dealing with the temporal location of the event or events depicted in one or more sentences: the 'meaning' of the various tenses. Tense is the morphological change the verb undergoes in expressing time relation.

Bhat (1999) defines tense as “an inflectional marker of the verb used for denoting the temporal location of an event (or situation)”. Tense, as Declerck (2006:22) states, “denotes the form taken by the verb to locate the situation referred to in time. According to Thornybury (2006:226) tense refers to the way that verbs are inflected (ie, have different forms) to express a relation with time. For example, happen vs happened ; run vs ran ; can vs could.

The tenses are not the only means available of locating events in time. An additional possibility is the use of other linguistic elements, for example, temporal adverbs such as *yesterday* or *soon* or prepositional phrases such as *before* or *in two weeks* ((Reichenbach,1947). But these expressions do not have the same status as tense: they are lexical, not grammatical expressions of temporality.

Crystal (1991) examined morphological variation of tense verb form as a signal to meaning other than temporal ones. According to him, tense and time are not related terms. He subscribed to the traditional distinction of past, present and future tenses. He later argued that the tenses are seen

as forms of the verbs. He believed that construction like: *I will/ shall go* as best analysed as modal auxiliary verbs displaying a different grammatical functions such as expression of intention that may often involve futurity.

Morphologically, English tense according to Thornbury (2006 and Omoridion (2011:147) has two forms (present and past) and that tense is a grammatical category which is expressed morphologically, more precisely, by means of inflectional morphemes only. Consequently, any verb form which is not created by means of inflectional tense morphology (such as the analytic will -future) is a priori not considered true tense forms (Finch, 2000; Thornbury, 2006; Trask, 2000). There are, however, many linguists who do not subscribe to such definition of tense and who included, for example, the analytic will -future as a possible tense in English (Crystal, 2003; Declerck, 2006), bringing the total amount of tenses to at least three (present, past and future). Other scholars broaden the definition of tense to include the perfect verb forms (present perfect, past perfect, future perfect), often referred to as aspectual variants of non-perfect verb forms (Declerck, 1991, 2003).

Downing (2006:320) sees tense as a grammatical category that is realised in English morphologically on the verb. This is to say that, morphologically, English verbs have a distinctive past and present forms, (saw, see) and, semantically, the past tense basically refers to a situation that is prior to the present, as in this sentence: *Yesterday was fine.* and the present tense refers to the present moment as in: *Today is fine.*

Looking at the function of tense, Palmer (1975:125) pointed out that, the English tense has three functions. The first is to show time relationship of past and present, as well as future time. The second is to indicate tense sequence. The third is to mark unreality in conditional clauses and wishes. Generally speaking, the subordinate verb in English denotes time in relation to the main

verb. Therefore, the tense form of a subordinate verb is usually determined by the tense of the main verb.(Evans,1980 : 140). Eyisi (2004:22) opines that:

“Verb is a word or a group of words that is used to tell what someone or something does or experiences. It is a compulsory element of a sentence expressing an action done by the subject or what is becoming of the subject... it is regarded as an essential part of speech, since no sentence can be deemed acceptable without it. e.g. talk, be, see, shall, ought to, cook, have, come, will, used to, close, do, eat, may, and have to.

(Eyisi 2004:22)

Some verbs have five forms: (write, writes, wrote, writing and written). The forms comprise different grammatical meanings of tense, person etc. If we look at the five forms, we find that only the contrast between "write" and "wrote" express time. The contrast between "write" and "writes" denotes person, but no time. Both forms refer to the present. The form "wrote", on the other hand, refers to the past. The other two forms (-ing) and (-ed2), (the present and past participle)" writing " and" written" are non –finite . They do not normally refer to time but to aspect.

However, Palmer (1971:193) clarifies that: “English has two tenses only as exemplified by: he likes / he liked. These are most plausibly referred to as ‘present’ and ‘past’. Yet, other English tenses are achieved through the combination of auxiliaries or modals plus the English main verb (aspect). For the future time expression, Chalker (1984) agrees with other linguists that English has no verbal inflection to mark a future tense. The forms “shall” and “will” are not verbal inflection but modal auxiliaries which, when reduced, are attached to pronouns, not to the verb root (I’ll wait outside). Instead of a future tense, English makes use of a number of combinations such as *be going* and other adverbs of time to refer to future events. Since the tense systems in

English demonstrate different forms and meanings it, therefore, appears reasonable to introduce a brief description of their tense systems.

2.5 Types of English Tenses

According to Omoridion (2011:147) there are only two tenses: present and past. Others scholars like Hornby (1976: 80-81), Celce, (1999:11), Thomson and Martinet (1980: 90, Larsen-Freeman et al (2002:4) believe that there are therefore twelve tenses. However, there are some grammarians such as Quirk et al.,(1972:87) and Chalker (1984: 75) who are on the opinion that of dividing tenses into present and past and that each of which may show a variety of aspects. This clearly indicates that grammarians have described and classified tenses in English by depending on various criteria.

According to Celce (1999:11) there are “four tense aspects: i.e. simple (sometimes called zero aspect), perfect, progressive, and their combination perfect progressive.”

a. Simple aspect:

This refers to the events which are understood to be completed. The simple aspect is not like progressive aspect which is said to be incomplete or imperfective. This simple aspect embraces three main simple tenses which are: simple present tense, simple past tense, and simple future tense with will (or contracted ‘ll) (Celce, 1999:14).

b. Perfect aspect:

The perfect aspect is used to relate an event(s) with other events at a particular point in time. It comprises the present perfect, the past perfect, and the future perfect.

- c. Progressive aspect: This aspect is said to be imperfective because it shows an incomplete event or a limited one. This aspect consists of the present progressive or continuous, the past progressive, and the future progressive.
- d. Perfect Progressive Aspect: this aspect is a combination of perfective and progressive, (incomplete). It is composed of three tenses which are: present perfect progressive, past perfect progressive, and future perfect progressive.

The advocates of twelve tenses such as Thomson and Martinet (1980: 90, Larsen-Freeman et al (2002:4), Adedokun (2013:208) believe that the twelve English tenses are:

1. Present simple (as in He works)
2. Present continuous tense, (he is working)
3. Present perfect tense, (he has worked)
4. Present perfect continuous tense, (he has been working)
5. Simple past tense (he worked)) which comprises other aspects like:
6. Past continuous tense, (he was working)
7. Past perfect tense, (he had worked)
8. Past perfect continuous tense, (he had been working)
9. Simple future tense (he will/shall work) which comprises other aspects like:
10. future continuous tense, (he will be working)
11. future perfect tense, (he will have worked)
12. future perfect continuous tense, (he will have been working)

2.5.1 The Simple Present Tense

The sense of ‘present’, for instance, changes to be inclusive rather than exclusive. According to Quirk et al., (1985: 175). Something can be said to be present if it has existence at the present

moment with the possibility that its existence may also stretch into the past as well as to the future time. In the example below, the ‘present’ state of affairs of Paris does not only refer to the present moment but it has also obtained for numerous centuries in the past and may extend to an indefinite period in the future: Paris stands on the River Seine (Quirk et al., 1985: 175).

This level of analysis is what Quirk et al. (1985: 176) call the semantic level. The use of the special form of the verb ‘stands’ signals the tense of the sentence that is primarily used to indicate the time at which the event takes place.

The present tense has its point of reference the present moment of speaking. It is an absolute tense: but it refers to present time in general. Joos (1964: 121-145) uses the term actual tense to refer to the present tense, while Palmer (1974: 43-75) uses the term non-past to refer to the same tense. According to Downing (2006) present tense expresses repeated actions, habits, customs and even mere ability in the present. The Present tense is the unmarked tense. Cognitively, it expresses situations which have immediate reality, that is, what is currently observed. Morphologically, it is marked only on the 3rd person singular (with the exception of be, which has three forms (am, are and is)). Semantically, it covers a wider range of temporal references including reference to future time.

The simple present is used for the following:

1. The unrestrictive use of the simple present. It is called unrestrictive use because it places no limitation on the extension of the state into past and future time as in this sentence:
We live in Durham (Downing 2006).

The simple present can also express eternal truths and universal statements: The sun rises in the east.

2. The instantaneous use of the simple present. It occurs with verbs expressing events, not states; and it signifies an event simultaneous with the present moment. For example, in sports commentaries:

Bond passes the ball to Smith who heads it straight into the goal (Downing 2006).

The instantaneous use of the simple present refers to an act or event that takes place at the moment of speaking. 'We accept your offer' (Downing 2006).

3. the habitual use. The habitual use of the simple present refers to an event or activity that stretches back into the past and forward into the future: 'He walks to work.'
4. it can be used to refer to past events in certain limited ways. E.g In newspaper headlines and captions to photographs. Example:
 - a. Thousands flee persecution.
 - b. Demonstrators clash with armed police as violence increases.
5. it is used to denote future time: I start work tomorrow. The train leaves at 5 o'clock.
6. Events or actions in the present, such as in sporting events. "The goal counts!"
7. conversational historical present (in narration) "So he enters the room and crosses over to the other side without looking at anyone."
8. speech acts in the present. "I nominate Chris."

(Downing 2006:334-377)

Quirk et al (1985:175) indicated various uses of simple present tense, including its usage for State Present that is utilized with stative verb senses where the present is used without reference to any specific time, i.e., there is no inherent limitation on the extension of the state into the past

and future. State present includes general timeless statements, or so-called 'eternal truth'. For example, 'Honesty is the best policy'.

The simple present tense is also used for habitual actions expressing inherently unrestricted time span in which the verb refers to the whole sequence of events repeated over the period of time, e.g

She makes her own dress.

It should be mentioned that this type of present tense includes dynamic verb meanings and is the most common meaning of present tense.

Simple present tense represents instantaneous present where verb refers to a single action begun and completed approximately at the moment of speech. For example 'We go to Brussels every year' (Quirk et al 1985:176).

The authors distinguished between the first and the second use of present tense. State present always refers to something obtaining at the time of speaking; this is not necessary or even usually true of habitual present (ibid 179-80). He finally concludes that "English present tense, by no means always, signifies present time".

2.5.2 The Present Progressive/ Continuous Tense:

The chief function of the present progressive is that it denotes an activity which is in progress at the moment of speaking. Again, there are various terms that refer to the same verb form. Quirk and Greenbaum (1973: 26-58) and Palmer (1974; 43-75) called it the present-progressive form, while Christopherson and Sandven (1969: 42-52) referred to the same verb form as the expanded present form. The tense according to (Quirk et al, 1985: 197) denotes temporariness in contrast

with the simple present which indicates permanency. According to Quirk et al, (1985:197) present continuous tense is used to:

1. denote continuity and duration of action:

Example: He is smoking a cigar.

2. refer to a habitual action conveying an emotional connotation as irritation or annoyance:

Example: The children are always annoying her.

3. refer to the near future:

Example: I am moving to London next week.

4. refer to an action that is in a state of incompleteness,

Example: The bus is stopping.

The tense is formed by using simple present "to be" + present participle (ing form).

2.5.3 Present perfect tense

The present perfect tense is used to describe an action that has been completed but has present relevance in it (Omoridion 2011:153). The action has stopped but certain qualities could show that the said action was performed. Swan and Walter (2001:51-6) indicated that present perfect is used to express past actions which has connection to the present time, or to tell people about new things happened, or to give news. What is worth mentioning is that the action in present perfect is performed in the past but the result continues to the present. For example (the man has gone to school) means that 'he has gone there and he is there right now' (Swan and Walter 2001:51-6).

In line with the above, (Catford et al,1974: 98, Palmer (1987:174-177), Comrie (1976: 66-71) believed that Present tense seems to be one of the most difficult English tenses for non-native speakers of English. Sometimes there is confusion between the present perfect and the present tense, and at other times with the past. It is sometimes difficult to build exact rules about the situation(s) in which the present perfect is used and the purposes to which it is put.

In the formation of the tense, there should be simple present form (the base) + have/has + past participle. Example:

John has lived in London for ten years. (Omoridion 2011:153)

Quirk et al (1985:193) elaborated the uses of present perfect tense which include: Putting emphasis on the result, action that is still going on, action that stopped recently, finished actions that have influence on the present and action that has taken place once, never, or several times before the moment of speaking. According to the author, the tense is also used for:

1. Anterior time e.g: I have known him for years.
2. A very recently completed action, eg. He has just come back.
3. Resultant, e.g. My mother has recovered from illness.
4. Activity that is still underway, e.g. We've lived in London since last September.
5. Activity at unspecified time before now. Example: Have you ever been to London
6. Action in the future if it is used in subordinate clauses. Example: Wait till I have finished my meal.

Lexus and Ronberg (2002) emphasized that the present perfect is used to refer to past actions or events which have relation with the present.

Hewings (2002) claimed that the present perfect is used in various cases which are.

1. Talking about a given thing that happened in the past, without any specification of the exact point when the event happened.
2. Relating a past situation to the present one emphasizing on the current moment (present moment).
3. Referring to a given period of time (how long does it last) even if the period is not specified.
4. Repeating an action or event a number of times.

To clarify things, Thomson and Martinet (2001:166) explained that the present perfect simple can be said to hold between present and past tenses. So, it may be said to be a mixture of the two. It usually has the meaning of connection with the present and it is merely used in “convocations, letters, newspapers and televisions and radio reports”.

2.5.4 Present Perfect Continuous Tense

Present Perfect Continuous according to Wren & Martin (2000:82) and Kosur (2014) is used for an action which began at some time in the past and is still on progress; eg,

1. He has been sleeping for five hours (and is still sleeping).
2. They have been building the bridge for several months.
3. They have been playing since four o'clock.

Present Perfect Continuous is also used for an action already finished. In such cases the progress of the activity is emphasized as an explanation of something. 'Why are your clothes so wet?' - 'I have been watering the garden' (Wren & Martin 2000:82).

Present perfect tense is made up of two elements: the auxiliary verb (has/has been), and the present participle of the main verb (base+ing). However, when the sentence is interrogative, the subject, which comes before the perfective (has/have), is shifted from its initial position to the position between the perfective and present participle verb. Examples:

- a. Affirmative sentences: (subject, has/have been, base+ing e.g
Zainab has been cooking for two hours.
- b. Negative affirmative: (subject, hasn't/ haven't been, base+ing) e.g.
The man hasn't been attending the lecture.
- c. Interrogative sentence: (has/have, subject, been, base+ing e.g.
Has she been coming here?
- d. Negative Interrogative: (hasn't/ haven't, subject, been, base+ing e.g.
Haven't they been listening to the announcement since morning?

This shows the positions of subject in different type of sentences as well as where the negative form comes in the sentence.

2.6 Arabic Tense System

Arabic tenses according to Sībawāih (1983: 12); Az- Zamakhsharī: (nd :244); Ibn Al-Hājib, vol. 2: 223 (no date) ; Badrī, 1404: 42) are the grammatical category which refer to the time of the action or event. The tense is indicated by the form of the verb. There are two tense forms: past and present. Both are related to distinctions in time. For instance, the present tense generally

refers to a time that includes the time of speaking, while the past tense describes an action in the past.

According to Bahloul (2008), tense is an inflectional category which locates the action expressed by a verb at a time relative to the moment of speaking. This emphasizes that tense is inflected to indicate time occurrence of event which is carried by the verb. This definition does not solve the problem of completion and incompletion of action. In his opinion, Al-Jurf, (n.d.: 80) believed that the Arabic tenses are recognized in two forms: the perfect and the imperfect forms. Here Al-Jurf holds the view of other linguists who believe that Arabic tenses are seen from the angle of completion and incompletion of action. Going by this definition, it could be asserted that the two forms: perfect and imperfect which are used to express past, present and future actions are the only tense forms existing. Others that have the same opinion are: Wright (1947:51), Gadalla (2000: 76), Wightwick (2002:1), and Al- Hazimi (2010:227), to mention but few. According to Wightwick (2002:1) although, time is naturally divided into past, present and future and the three divisions are also reflected in Arabic tense system, but the tenses are represented by only two forms: perfect and imperfect forms.

This assertion has been receiving different criticisms from Arabic linguists. For instance, al-Makhzoumy (1964. 145-6), said that Wright thinks that the Arab grammarians were not successful in realizing the way their language expresses such aspects as simple, perfective, or imperfective in any of the past, present, or future tense.

The function of tense is to indicate time in the sentence. This indication however is not always straightforward. Sometimes a certain tense indicates a certain time and sometimes a certain tense may indicate more than one time: in fact, all time; and sometimes a certain tense indicates its opposite time (Jassem 1993:48) e.g.

الناس يأكلون الخبز

People eat bread. (general fact).

2.7 Types of Arabic Tense

Some Arabic scholars such as Ibn Al-Anbārī: 315; Ibn Jinnī 1988:28; Ibn Al-Hājib: 223) to mention but few, indicated that there are three tenses in Arabic, these are past, present and imperative (future) tenses. The forms are: the past, the present, and the imperative. For instance:

ضرب *dharaba* (he beat.) يضرب *yadhribu* (he is beating.) اضرب *idhirib* (beat!)

The past expresses an event which happened before the moment of speaking. The present expresses an event which happens at the moment of speaking or after it. The imperative is considered in Arabic as a tense unlike English which considers it as a mood. It expresses a request that will happen after the moment of speaking. The imperative is marked by requesting something and by adding “ي”, which expresses the singular feminine addressee, to the stem of the verb e.g.

اذهبي الي المدرسة يا فاطمة *izhabiy ilal madrsat ya fadhima* Fatima, go to school!

The imperative is used to express doing something. It also implies a state of being obligatory. (Elmoukatari, 2007: 118).

According to At-Tabatebaai' (1983:30), tense can be divided into two types: real and unreal. Real tenses include tenses referring to actions that exist, i. e. the present, and to actions that have existed but not anymore, i. e. the past. Unreal tense refers to future actions that have not existed yet. This suggests that non-existent tenses are both past and future.

Furthermore, at-Tabatebaai' (ibid.) identifies two types of non-existent actions: actions that came to exist but not anymore, like actions in the past tense, and actions that have never come to exist, like actions in the future tense. Real tenses are realised by existential verb-forms of real actions: past and present, whereas unreal tenses on the contrary, the future tense has no specific verb-form; it can only be identified by the virtue of its structure in some larger units of grammar.

Similarly Aziz (1989: 43) opines that tenses can be seen as:

- a. The present tense refers to an action that is being done at the moment of speaking (now),
- b. The future tense refers to an action that is before the time of speaking, and
- c. The past refers to an action that is after the time of speaking.

However, Ahmad (2013:2) posits that tense, as it is realised in verb forms, is that part of speech which indicates the time in which an action is done. According to Radwan (1975: 30), Jarim et al (n. d.) among others, Arabic tenses are: the past tense, the present and the imperative. This opinion is the popular and the most accepted definition of verb tense in Arabic. Going by this definition, past tense has its own independent form which is known as (فعل الماضي) *fiilul madhi*. This form which is the masculine third person singular is considered as the verb root upon which other verb tenses are formed. The verb form for any root is represented by the same form of the root فـ لـ ا فعل. Similarly, present tense which is known as (فعل المضارع) *fiilul mudhari* also has its own form different from past and the imperative form. The imperative form (فعل أمر) *fiilul amr* is categorized under tense in the sense that the action carries by the tense will take place in the future.

Arabic tenses are usually relative, they may take other moments in the sentences as their point of reference.(Al samiri 1991:8). According to Fariduddin (1997:6) tense in relation to time can be

divided into (المطلق) (*mudlaq* unconditional and (المقيد) *muqayyad* conditional. The (المطلق) *mudlaq* is further divided into three, namely:

1. Past unconditional tense (al madi mudlaq)
2. Present unconditional tense (alhaal mudlaq)
3. Future unconditional tense (almustaqbal mudlaq)

(Fariduddin 1997:6)

He further rejected the division of Arabic tense into past, present and imperative, as he also criticized the proponents of perfection and imperfection. According to Anamaria (2014:20) Arabic does not have infinitive form, and thus in order to be able to refer to a verb, most linguists rely on the masculine third person singular of the perfective, since it is the form less marked by affixed or internal flexion. Such as

ضرب (*daraba*) he beat for *to beat*, كتب (*kataba*) he wrote for *to write*

The present study is limited to only the present tense (*fiilul mudhari'un*) its formation process and usage. So, only details of present tense would be discussed here.

2.7.1 Present Tense

The present tense (فعل المضارع) basically refers to present time, if the point of reference is the moment of speaking. Jarim & Amin (n.d.:15) sees present tense as every verb that signifies the occurrence of an action in the present or future". According to Badawi (2007: 364), and (Wright, 1996: 51) the present tense generally indicates an incomplete action, continuous or habitual, that is just commencing or in progress and the time reference depends on the context.

In its formation processes, the imperfect form is formed from the perfect form stem of a verb to which both a prefix and suffix are added. The stem by itself is not an independent word; it needs the prefixes and suffixes to convey a complete meaning. There are certain grammatical endings that accompany the last letter of the present tense verb form.

The prefixes are subject makers of person which are used to denote imperfect aspect. In this case, there are four inflectional prefixes attached to it, these are *hamzah*, *nun*, *ya*, or *ta*, (ا, ن, ي, ت). The suffixes, on the other hand, indicate mood and number, where the inflectional morpheme “ا” (aa) denotes duality, the “و” /uu/ denotes plurality and “فتحة” /a/ or “ضممة” /u/ denotes a singular number. There are thirteen inflectional affixes for imperfect form according to Karin (2005:681), as indicated in table 2.2 below:

Table 2.2 showing the inflection for the imperfect form

The table below shows the different inflectional affixes attached to the imperfect forms. These affixes vary from singular, dual and plural as well as the first, second and third persons.

Imperfect/ Present tense stem “ كتب – ktub – (write)			
	Singular	Dual	Plural

First person	أكتب a-ktub-u	–	نكتب na-ktub-u
Second person			
Male	تكتب ta-ktub-u	تكتبان ta-ktub-aa-ni	تكتبون ta-ktub-uu-na
Female	تكتبين ta-ktub-iyna	تكتبان ta-ktub-aa-ni	تكتبن ta-ktub-na
Third person			
Male	يكتب ya-ktub-u	يكتبان ya-ktub-aa-ni	يكتبون ya-ktub-uu-na
Female	تكتب ta-ktub-u	تكتبان ta-ktub-aa-ni	يكتبن ya-ktub-na

(Karin 2005:681)

The imperfect is marked to express that an event happens. Moreover, it implies a state in present or future depending on the context (Al-saleemi 1992:44). According Jarim & Amin (n.d.:15) present tense signifies the occurrence of an action in the present or future”. e.g,

ابدا العمل غدا *abda 'ul al-amal gadan*. (I will start work tomorrow). Al-saleemi (1992:44)

2.8 Functions of Imperfect (present tense)

The present tense may not correspond to the present time. It may indicate other functions, which depend on the context in which it occurs. Badrī (1404: 199-202) and (Gellati, 1998: 46-56) summed them up as follows:

1. It indicates the past tense, such as: (ولو يؤخذ الله الناس بما كسبوا...) سورة فاطر 45. (If had Allah taken mankind to task by that which they deserve...), (Al-Quran, 35:45)
2. It expresses a state or an action in the present or the future time. For instance: يأكل
3. It expresses the present moment when it is preceded by (لام الابتداء) or (ليس) : ماالنافية :
e.g.
 - The teacher explains/is explaining the lesson الأستاذ ليشرح الدرس
 - I will not be satisfied of you لست أرضى عنك
 - I will not give you what you asked ما أعطيك ما طلبت
4. It indicates the present time, such as: (فأينما تولوا فوجهكم فثم وجه الله) سورة البقرة (Whithersoever Ye turn, there is Allah's countenance), (Al- Quran, 2:115).
5. If the imperfect is preceded by (سوف) or (س) it expresses the future such as: ساستغفر لك ربي
6. It expresses the past if:
 - a. preceded by (لم) and (لما) such as (زرتك ولم تكن في البيت (I visited you but you were absent at home) قطفت التمرة ولما تنضج (I plucked the fruit but it was not ripe.)
 - b. Preceded by a past tense such as: ” فجاءته إحداهما تمشي على استحياء (then one of the two women came unto him **walking** shyly).
 - c. Preceded by (كان) because it expresses the meaning of continuity of time for a given period in the past as in: (كان يتعبد في غار حراء (He used to pray in the Cave of Hira.)
 - d. Preceded by (لم) because it expresses that the event has not happened in the past and it is impossible to happen neither in the past nor in the future as in: لم يلد ولم يولد
7. The tense changes into the past generally after the conditional (لو) for instance

لو ينتبهوا الي الدرس لاستفادوا (if they have paid attention during the lecture they would have benefited.)

(Badrī 1404: 199-202) and (Gellati, 1998: 46-56)

2.9 Contrastive Studies of English and Arabic Tenses

While the field of CLA in relation to Arabic and English is very rich with regard to foreign language studies, research on Arabic and English tense systems especially on a contrastive basis in the two languages is rare. In other words, much of the works done by researchers, have not been taken as contrastive studies, hence they do not address the teaching implications. So the need to contrast the present tense systems in Arabic and English with teaching implication is highly needed. The present study therefore reviewed some works done by Al-salami (1987), Sa'ad (2009), Mansour (2011), Alduais (2012), Brien (2013) as regard CA involving Arabic and English.

Al-saleemi (1987) gave detailed contrastive study of the verb systems of English and Arabic according to tense, aspect and mood in order to determine the differences and similarities between the two verb systems. The researcher was able to describe the tense and aspect systems of the two languages through the structural model. He investigated how a universal category is realised in English and Arabic languages. The area of weakness observed in Al-saleemi's (1987) work is the fact that the author was successful in explaining the nature of Arabic and English verb systems but the author failed to address the issue of possibility of negative transfer in the area of tense translation. The work was purely linguistic rather than pedagogical.

Shamaa (1978: 32) observed that temporal contrasts in Arabic are less systematic, i.e., they are not clearly marked by verb-forms. Temporal reference in Arabic is expressed by means of verb forms in conjunction with time adverbials and other lexical items. It is, however, the context which finally places the action or event in its true temporal and aspectual perspective. But since context may not provide the same clear-cut and easy determinations afforded by English tense systems, it is therefore a source of occasional ambiguity.

Kamel (2004) conducted a linguistic study in search for a methodology for the translation of English nominal compounds into Arabic. The reason for investigating such phenomena was both linguistic and pedagogic. The purpose of his paper was to suggest a two-way strategy for translating these nominal constructions through intralingual disambiguation (using valence theory), and an interlingual search for translation equivalence. The author argued that Arabic has no such completely- packaged constructions and that its learners find it difficult to cope with these constructions in English due to their semantic compactness which might lead to mistranslation. This semantic ambiguity strongly influences students' translation. He also tried to offer a set of generalizations or guidelines with the aim of building a methodology for compounds translation based on observations in translation practice and comparative stylistics tutorials. One of the weaknesses of this study was that the author did not treat verb as an aspect of the sentence. Hence, Arabic sentences are either nominal or verbal; verbal sentences play some significant roles in translating the meaning of sentences.

Saad (2009) conducted a research on the topic contrastive analysis of tense and aspect in English and Arabic. The purpose of the study was to compare the tense and aspect of the two languages. The study failed to adequately address the problems that the Arabic speakers learning English might encounter in the tense system. The researcher compared the tense system without

following any of the contrastive models suggested in carrying out linguistic contrastive analysis. The work would have a great importance to the Arabic language teacher if it had approached the problem from Di pietro (1971) contrastive model.

A study conducted by Mansour (2011) on the topic difficulties in translation of the English present perfect simple and past perfect simple tenses into Arabic. The researcher carried out the research based on the reason that the number of tense structures in English was more than that found in Arabic. The reason, according to him, introduced a structural gap between the tense systems of both languages represented by the loss of one to one correspondence of some tense structures.

Alduais (2012) conducted a research with a title “A contrastive study of simple sentence structure of Standard Arabic and Standard English”. The purpose of the study was to contrast the simple present tense of the two languages. The researcher used Lado’s contrastive analysis hypothesis in carrying out the research with the population of five hundred (500) sentences from Arabic and five hundred (500) sentences from English corpus data. The researcher concluded that learners of both Arabic and English languages as second language have difficulties in using some tenses. For Arabic learners, they will have serious problems in subject tense agreement. The present study used the total population of four hundred sentences from Arabic and English corpus data.

A study conducted by Brien (2013) on the topic “a case of contrastive interpretation of the expression of time in English and Arabic”. The overall objective of the study was to contrast the expression of time in both English and Arabic from the grammatical and semantic perspective. The author used Svaberg’s (1995) model of tense analysis in carrying out the research. The author concluded that the availability of a number of English tense forms to encode Arabic

imperfective might confuse Arabic learner of English. The researcher succeeded in comparing the two languages semantically ignoring the roles of morphology in the tense formation. The work would have been more relevant if it had included the formation of verb tense as part of grammatical description of the tense.

Evidence of the verb tense difficulty has been identified among Yoruba students learning English as a second language. Banjo (1969), Tomori (1971) for instance, discovered that 25% and 60% of their data respectively are tense associated errors. Similarly, Perren (1968) pointed out that all the first, second and third person verbs are similar in French, whereas in English the third person verbs are realized by inflectional verb forms in the present tense. Based on this fact, the author drew a conclusion that any difficulty encountered by the French learners of English could be traced to their linguistic background. Levenston (1966) holds a strong view that the universality of the verb tense errors is due to the fact that language learners often make their choice of tenses in English the way it is made in their first language.

Khurma and Hajjaj (1989) concluded that the main problem encountered by Arabic learners of English in dealing with the English verb-system emanated from the fact that each verb-form in English (simple or expanded) expresses many different meanings, and the two systems in the two languages sometimes express the same meanings through the same forms, but at other times the area of overlap ends and each system goes its own way.

2.10 Contrastive Models

According to Di Pietro (1971:17), CA models may be either ‘autonomous’ or ‘generalized’. Of these two models, the former is taxonomic only and the latter is both ‘taxonomic’ and ‘operational’. Autonomous models have no conscious correlation with a higher level of

universality whereby overriding notion about language as the principal form of human communication are reinforced by each bit of specific information about particular languages. The generalized models, according to Di Pietro (1971:17) are constructed so that their applications to a particular language reinforce the investigator's intuition about its universal structure of language. Operationally, the study used the generalized model to show the universality of present tense system of English and Arabic. The Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG) was applied in analyzing the similarities and differences of present tense in the two languages.

The contrastive methodology subsumed two basic steps: description and comparison. These steps are very essential in contrasting two languages. The description of the two languages was in the form of putting the languages side by side before comparing their selected element. For this purpose, several models were advocated by some scholars. The multiplicity of such models suggested that a language constructivist is faced with the task of making a choice which in turn dictates by the need for suitability and adequacy of coverage. Operationally, several contrastive models have been developed by different scholars. These models include:

Di Pietro (1971) postulated the following steps:

1. Observe the differences between the surface structures of two languages: such difference may be from total absence to partial sharing of some surface features;
2. Postulates the underlying universals;
3. Formulate the deep-to-surface structure and in the process specify only those rules which are not shared between the two languages rather than formulating complete and separates sets of realization rules.

Banathy (1969:3) suggested the following:

1. The rationale or purpose for which CLA is undertaken;
2. The scope and depth of coverage;
3. The language theory upon which the comparison is based;
4. The framework within which the comparison is made;
5. The procedures used in making comparison; and
6. The format and style of formulation of the contrastive statement.

Whitman (1969:191-197) suggested the following:

- a. Description which was recommended within the framework of formal grammar and that the opposing systematic structures of the LI and L2 should be explicitly described by the linguist or the teacher who is highly competent in the two languages.
- b. Selection which entailed selecting particular linguistic items, rules and sub systems for contrast, since it is impossible to draw a comparison between the whole systems of the LI and L2.
- c. Contrast which, by describing one category of the LI and its linguistic distribution in the L2, relied on the validity of the reference points made by the linguist or language teacher.
- d. Prediction which, on the basis of the three procedures, concerned the anticipation of the L 2 learners would make or the difficulty they would have in L 2 –learning.

There were other researchers such as Stock well et al (1965) and Prator (1967), who formulated a set of paradigms known as a hierarchy of difficulty for arriving at possible predictions about potential language errors. These researchers constructed a hierarchy of difficulty for phonological systems, grammatical structures and functional/semantic dimensions by reference to the three types of language transfer: positive transfer, negative transfer, and neutral transfer.

Olaofe (1982) suggested the following steps:

- a. Establishing the rationale or purpose of the CLA;
- b. Outlining the scope and depth of coverage;
- c. Describing the two languages using the same analytical model. I.e sector analysis;
- d. Selecting element for the actual contrast;
- e. The contrast of the forms selected using the same comparative framework;
- f. Prediction of areas of interference based on the contrast;
- g. Establishing the prediction/ hierarchy of difficulty;
- h. Validating the predictions; and
- i. Outlining the pedagogical implications of the prediction and validations.

From the synthesis of various views and suggestions mentioned above, the present study arrived at the following steps regarding the analytical procedures followed in the study. The present study:

- i. Observed the differences between the surface structures of two languages: such differences were from total absence to partial sharing of some surface features;
- ii. Postulated the underlying universals. That is the only shared items between Arabic and English present tense.
- iii. Formulated the deep to surface structures and, in the process, only those rules which are not shared between the two languages rather than formulating complete and separate sets of realization rules were specified.
- iv. Predicted areas of possible learning difficulties.

To describe the prediction stage, Stockwell (1965:50) proposed a “hierarchy of difficulty” based on the notions of transfer (positive, negative or zero) and of optional and obligatory choices of certain phonemes in the two languages in contrast. Hence, when the structures of the given two languages are similar, positive transfer would occur while with those that are different, a negative transfer will take place. And, where there is no relation between those structures of the two languages, zero transfer will occur (Byung-gon 1992:35).

2.11 Descriptive Models

Many descriptive models were developed in CLA. For instance, Selinker (1992), James (1996) and Muhammad (2000) identified some models of CA. Selinker (1992) mentioned structural models: functional model, transformational model and eclectic generative model among others. James (1996) pointed out structural or taxonomic model, transformational generative grammar, contrastive generative grammar, case grammar among others. Muhammad (2000) identified some descriptive grammatical models such as traditional grammar, IC analysis, sector analysis, systemic functional grammar etc.

The present study reviewed some of the grammatical models, the theories and their treatment on tenses. After the review TGG was considered as the most appropriate and effective model for the present study. These are:

- a. Traditional Grammar
- b. Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG)
- c. Systemic Functional Grammar

2.11.1 Traditional Grammar and tense

The Traditional grammar approach to the study of grammar according to Crystal (1995) is an attempt to prescribe rules for language use. In this approach, language is described using features to refer to syntactic categories which have been identified in classical languages such as Greek and Latin. According to the proponents of this theory, for any research within a language to be carried out successfully, classification of the elements of that language is required. Based on this, terms such as noun, pronoun, verb, adverb, adjective, preposition, conjunction and interjection were established and given formal and notional definitions. This approach aids our understanding of English grammar despite the criticism labeled against it and it is still in use in language study.

In traditional grammar, tense is seen as grammatical category that is realized at the verbal group of a clause. In this view, verb tenses are paradigmatically of three forms: the present, the past and the future (Crystal 1995).

2.11.2 Transformational generative grammar and tense

The transformational generative grammar approach to the study of grammar represents an attempt to prescribe rules for language. This approach was developed by Chomsky (1957), in his attempt to prescribe syntactical rules through phrase structure. The theory also deals with sentences syntactically, semantically and phonologically. A sentence may be syntactically well formed but semantically wrong e.g. The food ate the man.

Similarly, a sentence can be syntactically ill-formed but accepted semantically. In the area of pronunciation, a sentence can be semantically and syntactically well formed but phonologically wrong. This can be found in cases where syllabus, words or sentences are not well stressed.

Transformational generative grammar comprises three elements: these are:

- i. Syntactical rules of sentence formation which specify how to form sentences;
- ii. Semantic rules of sentence interpretations which specify how to interpret the meaning of sentences.
- iii. Phonological rules of sentence pronunciations which specify how to pronounce words and sentences.

It is believed that learners learn foreign languages according to their surface structure before they can understand the underlying representation in the foreign language. So, the present study holds the view that we speak a language according to its surface structure. The most important features of TGG approach is that it recognises the levels of deep and surface structures. According to Jacob and Rosenbuaam (1968) syntactic tense is represented in the deep structure by (+ present) for the present and (- present) for the syntactic past. While the surface structure of a sentence is the written or spoken form which is represented at the phrase structure is the abstract syntactic structural presentation of the sentence.

The rationale behind the choosing of T-GG in CA is that it has been claimed that deep structures are universal and can be applied to all languages. Deep structure is the aspect of syntactic structure operated on by semantics for the purpose of semantic interpretation. Surface structure is the aspect of syntactic structure operated on by phonology for the purpose of phonetic interpretation. The surface structure is more immediately obvious and the deep structure takes

into consideration the transformation. TG accentuates that the structures relevant for semantic interpretation turn out to be different from those which are relevant for phonological interpretation. The rules do not only give the string but also exclude the possibility of generating the ungrammatical sentences.

2.11.3 Systemic functional grammar and tense

This approach relies on context of the situation to describe language. It conceives language as a social activity and that meaning can only be arrived at by taking into considerations the social condition within which it occurs. According to Saeed & Fatihi (2011) the SFG gives great consideration to the comparison of the semantic and functional elements of linguistic systems after comparing forms of the languages. The theory examines actual language production in various social contexts, while formal linguistics focuses more on abstract forms of language.

Systemic grammar sees tense as being recursive but has ‘stop rules’ which limits the total set of the tense that can occur in a sentence. This is because one has to take into consideration the social conditions within which the tense can be used.

According to Halliday (1985) the system of tense is realised by the logical structure of the verbal group. Tense according to systemic functional grammar is classified into two forms: the primary and secondary forms. The primary form is realised in three forms: the past, the present and the future. The past is realized by adding ‘ed’ to the regular verb and other forms of the irregular verbs as in work – worked, drink – drank etc. The present tense is realized by adding ‘s’ to the simple present tense as in eat - eats, come – comes etc. the future is realized by using *shall / will* preceding the verb as in will / shall work, will/shall come etc.

The secondary tense, on the other hand, is realised in the past by using *have + ed* to the verb as in *have worked, has taken* etc. Since this theory does not focus on individual elements of language, but rather it takes a holistic view, the theory will not be adequate in the analysis of present tense system of Arabic and English.

Having discussed some of the grammatical theories approach to CA, it will not be proper to conclude that anyone of the approaches is superior to the other for CA. however, it is fair to conclude that transformational grammar approach to the tense system is more explicit. This is because it has taken into consideration the three important components which specify how to form grammatical sentences. The theory also distinguishes between deep and surface structures. Under this theory, tense is not independent of the semantic categories such as time. So, it will be possible to account for the ungrammaticality of wrongly constructed sentences.

2.14 Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

The claim that the best language teaching materials are based on a contrast of the two competing linguistic systems has long been a popular one in language teaching (Wardhaugh 1970). The hypothesis exists in strong and weak versions.

2.14.1. The strong hypothesis

This claims that L2 learning problems can be predicted on the basis of linguistic differences between LI and L2. The strong hypothesis claims a high predictive power. It is based on Lado's (1957:2 assumptions that "the student who comes into contact with a foreign language will find some features of it quite easy and others extremely difficult. Those elements that are similar to his native language will be simple for him, and those that are different will be difficult.

According to Fries (1945:9)

The most efficient materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner.

The programme sketched by Fries was comprehensively realized a few years later by Lado (1957) in a comparison of English and Spanish. In the preface, Lado claimed that

“...we can predict and describe the patterns that will cause difficulty in learning, and those that will not cause difficulty, by comparing systematically the language and culture to be learned with the native language and culture of the student.

This assumption has come to be known as the contrastive hypothesis in its strong or predictive form. Banathy and others (1966:137) believed that strong hypothesis is useful and valuable in second language learning. They said:

“ The change that has to take place in the language behaviour of a foreign language student can be equated to the differences between the structure of the student's native language and culture and that of the target language and culture.

The strong version claims that a linguist can predict area of learning difficulty of a second language learner through contrastive analysis. The assumption is that the two languages can be compared a priori. The strong version claims the following:

1. The main obstacle to second language learning is from the interference of the learner's native language system;
2. The greater the differences between native language and target language, the greater the difficulty will be;
3. A systematic and scientific analysis of the two language systems can help predict the difficulties;

4. The result of contrastive analysis can be used as a reliable source in the preparation of teaching materials, the planning of course and the improvement of classroom techniques.

However the strong version has been criticized by other scholar. According to Wardhaugh (1970: 125) the strong version was “unrealistic and impracticable”. The version claimed that all the errors made in learning the L2 could be attributed to 'interference' by the L1. However, this claim could not be sustained by empirical evidence. It was soon pointed out that many errors predicted by contrastive analysis were inexplicably not observed in learner's language. He, therefore proposed a more tenable weak version of CA which does not claim or agree with the prediction.

2.14.2. The Weak Hypothesis

As a reaction to the criticism of the strong version of the CAH, Wardhaugh (1970) offered a weak version hypothesis. The weak, unlike the priori prediction of certain fine degree of difficulty, purports the use of CLA to explain the sources of the already observed errors. The weak version starts with the evidence provided by linguistic interference and uses such evidence to explain the similarities and differences between the two systems (Wardhaugh 1970:15). The version does not claim to be predictive but aims at identifying which errors are the results of L1 interference. The difference is reflected in the analytic procedure it employs.

The hypothesis also does not imply the a priori prediction of certain fine degrees of difficulty. It recognizes the significance of interference across languages, the fact that such interference does exist and can explain difficulties, but it also recognizes that linguistic difficulties can be more profitably explained a posteriori – after the fact (Brown 1980: 157). Therefore, the weak form of the hypothesis claims only to be diagnostic. The CA can be utilized to pinpoint which errors are the results of interference (Khansir, 2012).

2.15 The Contrastive Hypothesis for the Study

Since the aim of the present study is to find out areas of similarities and differences of English and Arabic present tense system; it is assumed that some features of present tense formation processes and its functions may be shared with those of English while others may be different. The similarity of the two language features facilitates learning either language. On the other hand, the differences found in the features of present tense may pose difficulty and it would result to negative transfer. In so doing, there is a need to adopt one of the contrastive models applicable to the nature of this study.

The present study adopted the strong hypothesis in carrying out the contrasting English and Arabic tense system. This is because the researcher believes that the predictive power of CLA is very effective not only to the teachers but also the stakeholders in language teaching and learning. The hypothesis was proved to be useful. According to Fries (1945:9):

“the most effective materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with parallel description of the native language of the learner.”

The present study does not deny the fact that some errors in language learning are not as a result of interference as claimed by the proponent of strong hypothesis. It is also in the believe of the writer that CLA and EA are complementary to each other for their end results are the basis of effective language teaching as well as the provision of learning materials. The researcher is of the opinion that by contrasting present tense system of Arabic and English, proper and effective teaching materials can be well provided.

2.16 Gains from the Review of Related Literature

From the syntactic literature reviewed, the study came out with the following:

1. The CA appears to be very useful and more economic way in providing language teachers and other stakeholders in language teaching effective majors in teaching foreign language. It is obvious that no matter what criticism is leveled against CA, practical evidence has shown and proved its validity and suitability in both classroom teaching and selecting relevant materials for language learners.
2. The knowledge acquired through CA forms the basis for measuring learners' performance in the use of tense system. Contrastive description of the learner's first language (L1) with language learning (L2) could enhance better planning on learning and teaching materials on tense system. The distinction drawn between Arabic and English tense system could guide the second language teacher and Arabic second language learner on the effective use of tense system.
3. From the CLA models reviewed, the present study adopted Chomskian TGG model for describing present tense system as the descriptive model for the study. As contrastive model, the study adopted Di Pietro (1971) in contrasting English and Arabic present tense.
4. Despite all the criticisms laid against strong hypothesis, the present study employed the Strong Hypothesis in conducting the study.

2.17 Theoretical framework

The study was theoretically based on the contrastive analysis theory of Whitman (1969) and Di Pietro (1971). According to the theory, two languages can be contrasted in order to show their similarities and differences by describing, selecting, contrasting, and predicting the language elements the pose learning difficulties. The contrastive theory sees language interference as the

major language learning problem, so a language contrastivist, through his good knowledge of two languages, can predict areas that may pose learning difficulty to the language learner. . It is hoped that this research will shed further light on the hypothesis.

Table 2.3 Summary of the Authors Reviewed

The table below presented a summary of the authors reviewed and the aspects reviewed as well as its relevant to the present study.

Authors reviewed	Summary of the aspects reviewed	Relevance to the present study
Bhat (1999) Declerck (2006) Thornbury (2006)	Tense denotes the form taken by the verb to locate the situation.	The study analysed and described the tense system of English and Arabic sentence.
Omoridion (2011) Meyer (2009)	Tense is a point in time marked by an inflection on the verb.	The study intended to answer the question: what are the tense markers of English and Arabic. So this will help the

Comrie (1976)	English recognises two verb forms for tense system: These are past and present.	researcher to answer the question.
Gaffar (1988)	Arabic has two verbs tense: perfect and imperfect.	The study intended to analyse the tense system of English and Arabic and to identify their differences or similarities.
Wright (1996)		It related to the study because the study investigated the tense system of Arabic language.
Bahloul (1991)		
Alkarni (2002)		
Fisiak (1985)	CA concerns itself with the comparison of two or more languages with the purpose of identifying their similarities and differences	This gave clue to the researcher to use CA in conducting the work.
James (1989)		
McArthur (1999)		
Lado (1959)		

Banathy (1969)	for language teaching.	
Breen (2013)	The author concludes that	The study intended to
Alduais (2012)	English present tense and	investigate the problems
Almansour (2011)	Arabic present tense differs	learners encounter in tense
	from each other. This can	construction.
	cause learning problem.	
Sa'ad (2009)		The study investigated the
	The author is on the view	problematic areas in learning
	that translating of English	tense systems.
	present perfect and past	
	perfect tenses into Arabic is	It is relevant to the study
	problematic area.	because the study
		investigates the present tense
	The analysis of tense and	system of English and
	aspect in English and Arabic	Arabic.
	There are some areas of	The study set to predict the
	learning difficulty in learning	learning difficulty that may

Kamel (2004)	or translating English nominal compound into Arabic.	come as a result of learning English present tense system.
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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

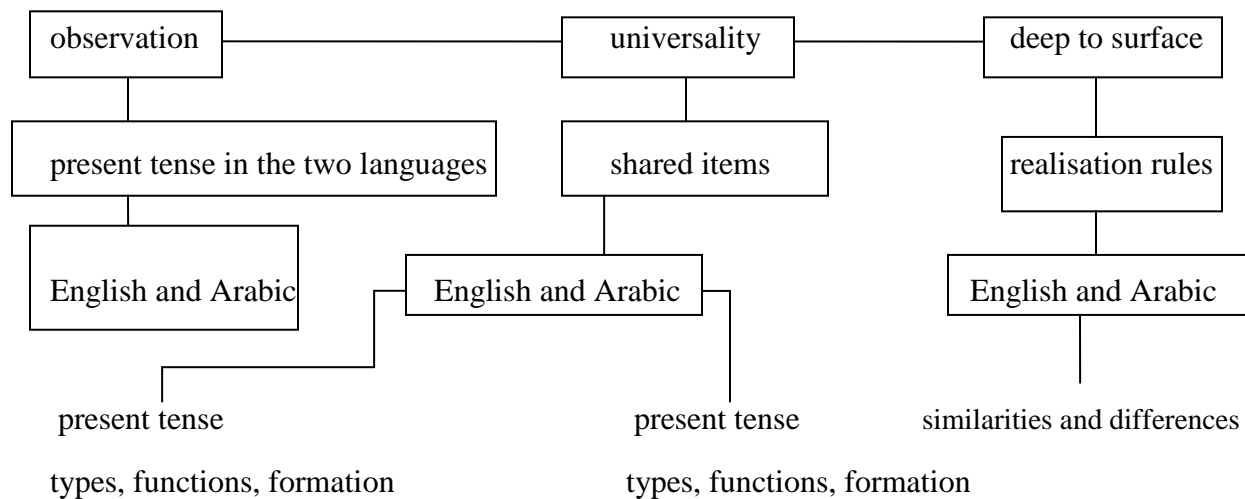
This chapter outlined the procedures employed in the research work. It described how the data were collected and the method used for its analysis as well as for establishing linguistic contrasts. Baker (2006: 183) believes that corpus linguistics has a complementary nature in the sense that it is not the only possible methodology to follow, but it is essential for the purpose of linguistic analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted descriptive contrastive analytical design. The design was considered appropriate because of the nature of the study. This is because a contrastive analysis of Arabic and English present tense systems requires a careful description of the elements of present tense system of both languages. It is based on Fries' (1945) assertion that the most efficient materials

are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner. The use of this design described the contrastive components of the present tense system of English and Arabic as shown in diagram 3.2.1.

Diagram 3.2.1



(Di Pietro 1971)

This design was able to predict the learning difficulties that Arabic students learning English language and English students learning Arabic may encounter. This was done through observing the surface structure of the two languages, postulating the underlying universal and finally formulating the deep to surface structures.

3.3 Population for the Study

The population for the study are all the sentences in present tense from the text **The Ugly Ones Refuse to Die** by (Yakoob 2004) and all the sentences in present tense of the text العميد المبجل *Al-amidul mubajjal* (2008) (The honourable Dean) as Arabic data. The two drama texts were chosen for this work as both contain a number of present tense used for different purposes. The total population for the Arabic data is two hundred (200) sentences and another two hundred (200) sentences as the population of English data.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

The sampling adopted in this work was purposive sampling. The sampling according to Fraenkel and Wallen (2008) and school of management (2014:30) enabled the present study to use his judgment to choose from population available that best met his objectives. The sampling was considered appropriate because of the nature of the population. Since the population comprised of many sentence among which are in present tense and some are in other tenses, this sampling enabled the researcher in making choice from the available data the ones that best met his choice. Hence, eighty (80) sentences out of four hundred (400) sentences were sampled out from the sample size of the study. Forty (40) sentences were selected from the text **The Ugly Ones Refuse to Die** for the English data and another forty sentences (40) sentences from the text العميد المبجل (The honourable Dean) were sampled out for the Arabic data. Thus, the sample was considered sufficient for the study, for it represented 20% of the population (Krejcie and Morgan 1970; Nworgu, 1991).

The table 3.1 below shows the sampling procedure as adopted from Krejcie and Morgan (1970).

3.1 Sample Size Data

	Population	Sample	Percentage	no of verb Tense
English sentences	200	40	20%	41
Arabic sentences	200	40	20%	44
Total	400	80	20%	85

According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a required sample size is important in establishing confidence in generalizing result to the entire population. So from the two hundred (200) sentences of the text “The ugly ones refuse to die” and another two hundred (200) sentences of the text “ العميد المبجل *Al-amidul mubajjal* which make four (400) total number of the population, forty (40) sentences were purposively selected as the sample from both texts to represent English and Arabic data. This resulted to 20% sample from both languages.

3.5 Research Instrument

The research instruments used in the study are two drama texts. The instruments are **The Ugly Ones Refuse to Die** and *Al-amidul mubajjal* (the Honourable Deen). The texts were used for English and Arabic data collection. The instruments helped in revealing the similarities and differences between present tense system of English and Arabic language. As documentary evidence, the instrument was able to identify the differences and similarities of present tense between the two languages and provided effective results which would be very useful in language teaching.

3.6 Procedure for Data Collection

The choice of the data was guided by the contrastive principle which says that contrasts are made along specific levels of two languages that are being compared. The data contained two hundred (200) English sentences and another two hundred (200) Arabic sentences. The two texts were examined and all present tense forms used for particular tense or aspect were detected and underlined. Relevant present tense was extracted under the following aspects: simple present tense, present continuous tense, present perfect tenses and present perfect continuous. The verb tenses were then analyzed from using deep and surface structures. Contrastive analysis model was used to work out the English and Arabic tenses using Di pietro (1971) contrastive model.

However, Chomsky's (1957) Transformational Generative Grammar was used as the descriptive model for the analysis of the data. The Arabic data were transliterated and translated into English.

3.7 Sources of Data Collection

The sources of data were derived from “**The Ugly Ones Refuse to Die**” and “*العميد المبجل Al-amidul mubajjal*” as the sources of English and Arabic data respectively. It is very interesting to use data in contrastive analysis because it captures relations of sense as well as form, which would be very hard to capture without such data (Mauranen, 2002: 161).

3.8 Data Analytical Procedure

The procedural steps to be followed in this study were fashioned out after those of Di Pietro (1971). These steps are:

1. The researcher observed the differences between the surface structures of two languages at the lexical level of present tense forms in English and Arabic. Such difference may be from total absence to partial sharing of some surface features. At this step, the researcher observed the different structure to see whether the features of present tense in English are similar or different from that of Arabic. For example:

It is raining, now. تهطل الأمطار الآن

Here the researcher observed the difference between the words *is raining* and the Arabic version تهطل is at the lexical level.

2. The researcher postulated the underlying universals for the present tense system in the two languages. Arabic and English languages have lexical forms in describing present events.
3. The researcher formulated the deep structure to the surface structure of the present tense and also specified the rules of present tense formation process and function in English that differ from the Arabic present tense formation and functions. In Arabic all verbs in present tense are inflected for person, number and gender provided the subject precedes the verbs. But in English there are auxiliary verbs that indicate only person and number. The main verbs are only inflected for aspect.

3.9 Methods for Data Analysis

The study extracted as many relevant present tense lexical verbs as possible from the data collected. The lexical verb items identified were subjected to description using Chomsky's (1957) traditional generative grammar. The descriptive model explained the morphological and semantics processes in verb tense of English and Arabic from the surface and deep structures.

Di Pietro's (1971) contrastive model was used to contrast the surface and deep structures of two languages to ascertain if the differences may be from total absence to partial sharing of some surface features. The researcher postulated the underlying universal and provided reference frame in discussing those situations where particular tense is used in one language not the other and what is the appropriate tense is used in expression a particular situation. Lastly, the researcher formulated the deep-to-surface structure rules concerning the time expression in Arabic and English by specifying those rules that are not shared between the two languages. The researcher established the pedagogical implications for teaching either of the languages.

3.11 Summary

This chapter presented an overview of the research methodology through which relevant data for the research were collected. The major sources of data collection were the English and Arabic present tense forms of the verbs which were collected from the two selected texts.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focused mainly on data presentation and analysis. The aim of this chapter was to compare Arabic and English present tense system, using adequate examples from the two languages. However, where Arabic language does not have equivalent feature, explanation is provided.

The execution of CA involves two stages which should always be taken in the same order: description and comparison. Di Pietro (1971:) argues that CA must proceed through three steps: observation of the differences between the surface structures of two languages, postulating the underlying universals and formulating the deep to surface structures. The data collected were contrasted using TGG as a descriptive model.

4.2 Presentation of the Data Collected

The total English and Arabic data collected for contrasting the present tense system which covered simple present, present continuous, present perfect and present perfect continuous tenses were eighty (80) sentences. Table 4.1 and 4.2 below presents the frequency occurrence of English and Arabic present tense respectively, as collected in the sample.

Table 4.1 Number of sentences collected for English data

Tense	No. occurred	Percentage
Simple present tense	10	25%
Present continuous tense	10	25%
Present perfect tense	10	25%
Present perfect continuous tense	10	25%
Total	40	100%

Table 4.1 shows the data collected for each of the four types of the present tense in English. The ten (10) sentences collected were based on the functions of each tense.

Table 4.2 below illustrates the number of sentences collected for Arabic data. The sentences were based on the functions of the tense expression in English:

Table 4.2 Number of sentences collected for Arabic data

Tense	Functions	No. occurred	Percentage
Present tense	Actual present (progressive)	12	30%
	Habitual action	09	22.5%
	For future expression	14	35%
	Past time	05	12.5%
Total		40	100%

4.3 Description of English and Arabic present tense systems

4.3.1 Description of English present tense system

Present tense in English has four types: simple present tense, present continuous tense, present perfect tense and present perfect continuous tense. Below is the description of each of them.

a. Simple Present Tense

This tense is used to express the following:

i. habitual action, fact or universal statement e.g.

1. That the country lacks any serious electoral discipline shows your chance of winning.
2. People do not win election in Nigeria on the basis of principles and honesty.
3. The beauty of democracy lies in this very opposition.

4. Does it occur to you that you are endangering your political ambition?

ii. actual present, i.e. an event that takes place at the moment. For instance:

5. Whatever we do here the whole world is watching us.

6. You talk as if one is in hurry.

7. Now you talk about opposition.

8. We need a personality who is nationally and internationally acceptable.

iii. future time, For instance:

9. The meeting with the party leader comes up next week.

10. After election, I give you another half.

The data is a presentation of the functions of simple present tense in the context. In its formation process, the simple present tense is formed by the use of base form of lexical verb. When the subject is a third person singular, the verb takes –s inflection. The inflection can be in form of -s, -es and –ies depending on the last letter of the verb as in sentences 3 and 9. To form interrogative sentence, only the verb “do” with the lexical verb are used. The verb “do” is used when the subject is first person, second person and third person plural. When the subject is third person singular the “does” form is used and no more –s inflection on the main verb as in sentence 4 above.

b. The present continuous tense

This tense is used to express the following:

i. an action or an activity that is on the progress e.g.

11. They are arresting everybody.

12. I am waiting for any one of you to lay his dirty hands on me.

13. I am contesting for the presidency of this country.

14. This time around, I am campaigning again.

15. You are talking about an outspoken woman.

ii. to refer to near or arranged future, for instance:

16. So, we are going to strengthen our campaign team.

17. But hopefully, things are changing for better in the country.

18. What about the women, are they not coming for the party?

19. He is offering you something if you would step down.

20. How am I going to address these delegates?

In respect of its function, the present continuous tense is made up of auxiliary and main verb.

The auxiliary verb agrees with the subject in person and number. There are three auxiliary verbs used for this matter. The “am” is used when the subject is first person singular as in examples 12, 13, 14 and 20. The auxiliary “is” is used when the subject is third person singular as in example 19. When the subject is first person plural, second person or third person plural, the auxiliary “are” is used. This was documented in examples 11, 15, 16, 17 18,19 and 20. To form an interrogative sentence, the subject separates the auxiliary and the main verb as in examples 18 and 20.

c. **The present perfect tense**

Present perfect tense is used for the following:

i. to indicate a very recent and completed event e.g.

21. You have equally told the truth.

22. Hasn't the election started yet?

23. He has rushed into the bedroom.

24. I have just spoken with Jude on mobile.

ii. The form is used to link up past activities with the present moment. It denotes an action connected through its effect with the present moment e.g

25. These women have already shared all the juicy positions to themselves.

26. We have not gathered here to launch campaign of calumny against one another...

27. Have you ever seen a grave before?

iii. Present perfect tense is used to express an action that occurred in the past i.e. indefinite happening in the past.

28. I have never forgiven him for taking off just like that.

29. I have served this great people for many years defended them in times of war.

30. But I have since withdrawn that...

This tense functions in different situations as we can see from the data 21-30. The tense is made up from auxiliary verb “have” and the participle form of the main verb. The auxiliary also agrees with the subject in number and person. When the subject is first person, second person and third person plural, the auxiliary takes the form of “have” as in examples 21, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30. But if the subject is third person singular the auxiliary will be in form of “has” as in examples 22 and 23. Similarly, the subject separates the auxiliary verb and main verb in interrogative sentence as in examples 22 and 27.

d. Present perfect continuous tense

The tense is used for the following:

- i. to denote an action beginning at sometime in the past and continuing up to the moment. i.e. duration and continuity e.g.

31. I have been looking forward after all to dealing with him.

32. I have been going round the premises searching for you.

33. We have been asking whether you will come at all...

34. It is you we have been waiting for.

35. You have not been reading the papers then.

36. We have been asking whether you will come at all.

37. What have you been doing in America up till this moment?

38. What I have been doing there all these years: visiting tourist centres; going to cinema; picnics ...

39. I have been in politics for a very long time now.

40. The phenomenon has long been used to exploit us.

The tense has three different transformations: the perfect, the progressive and the affix transformations. All combined together to form the tense which other considered as tense and aspect.

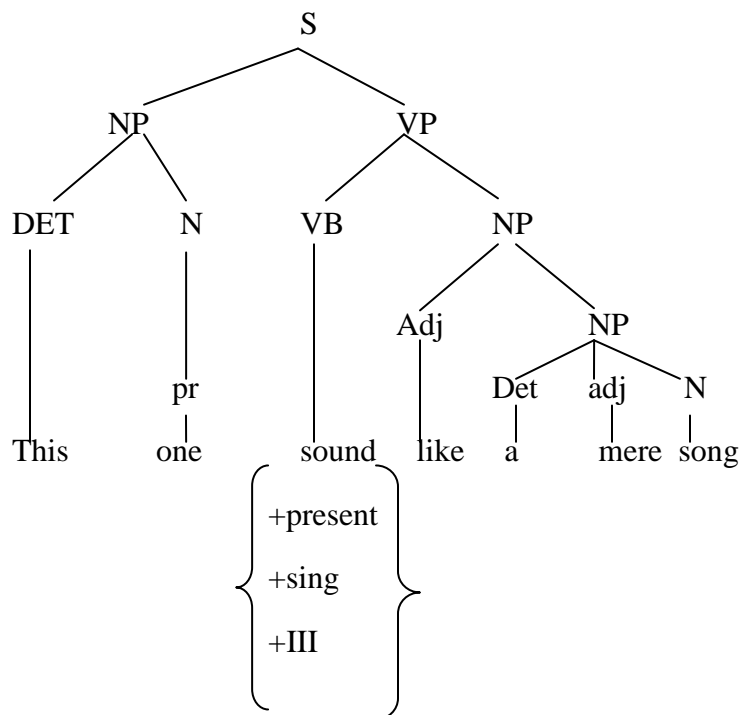
4.3.2 Analysis of English present tense sentences using TGG

For the purpose of the analysis, it would make the work bulky if all the forty (40) English data are to be analysed. Instead, one sentence for each of the four divisions was analysed from its deep to surface structure with semantic analysis of the verb/ tense in question. All the sentences came from the text “The Ugly Ones Refuse to Die”.

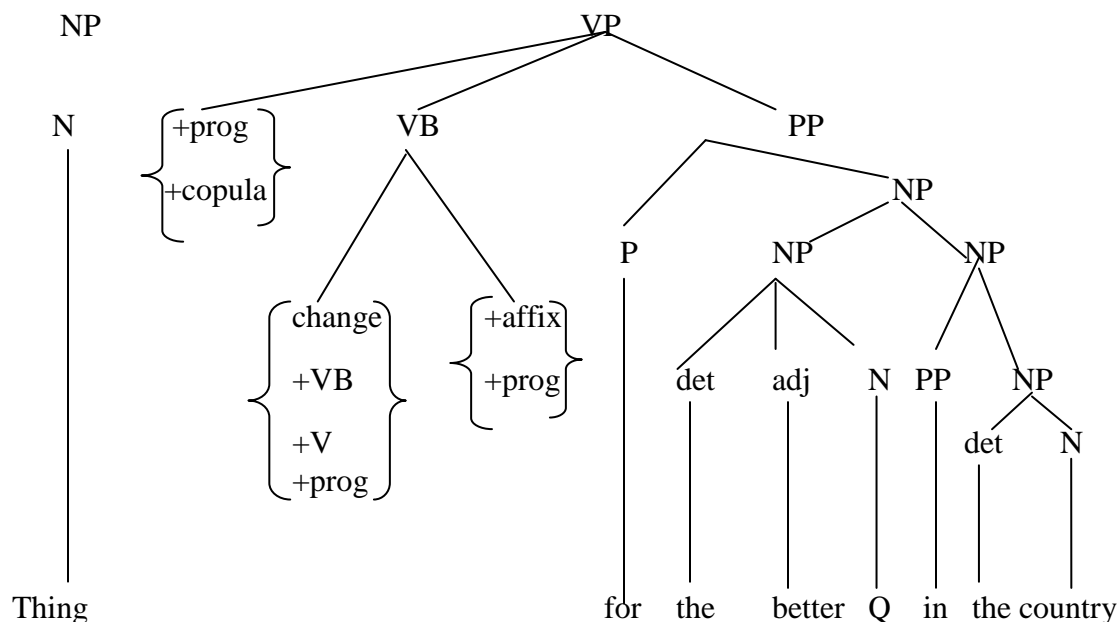
a. Simple present tense

Simple present tense is used to express habitual or repeated actions. Here the verb must agree with the subject in number. In its deep structure, the verb is leveled + sing or –sing and + III or –III. This information is represented by –s which is inflected on the verb as it can be seen in the analysis below:

Surface structure: 21. This one sounds like a mere song.



Surface structure: (interrogative sentence): Does she remember all these?

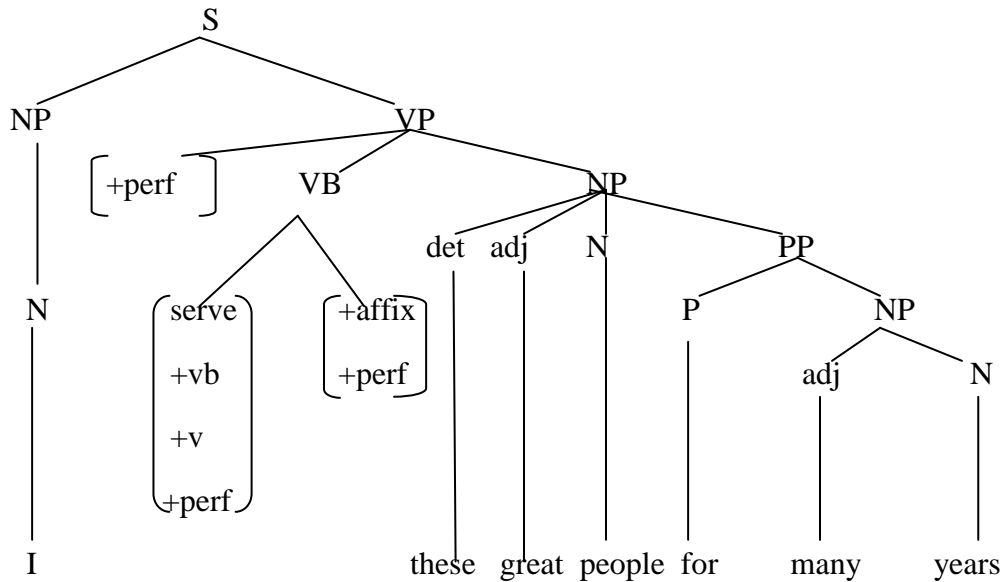


The sentence above is made up of tense and aspect or what is known as present continuous tense. In its deep structure, the progressive aspect appears as the feature + progressive on a verbal group. The progressive transformation (PT) introduces the copula segment. The PT also introduces, to the left of the verbal, the segment containing the feature +progressive and + copula. Then the affix transformation (AT) introduces “-ing” to the right of the verb. The AT introduces the segment with the features +affix and + progressive to the right of the segment following the progressive segment “change”. Then the progressive segment is replaced by the appropriate form of the copula “are”; the verbal segment, by “change”; and the affix segment, by “-ing”. Therefore the PT and the AT have correctly generated the verb phrase “are changing”.

c. Present Perfect Tense

Present tense is used to express a just completed action or action in the past. For detail information about the function and formation of the tense, see section 2.5.3. In the analysis below, we can see how different transformations are used in the tense formation:

24. I have served these great people for many years.

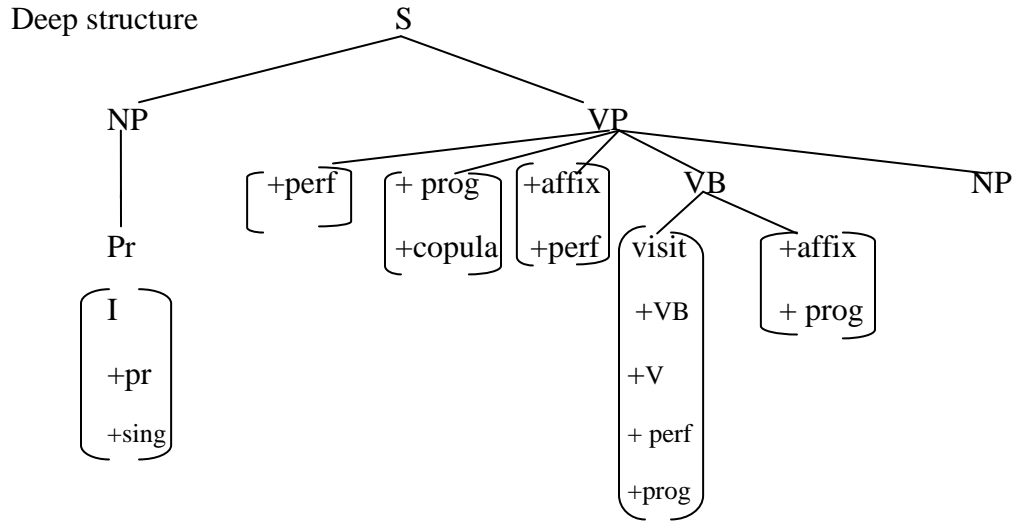


The sentence above comprises both tense and aspect that is known as present perfect tense. Like the progressive aspect which consists of the copula and the ending “-ing”, the perfect consists of two parts. The first is a form of “have” and the second is an ending which is usually either “-ed” “-en” or zero as in cut, broadcast etc. Generating the perfect aspect involves the perfect transformation and affix transformation. The perfect transformation is applied to the structure which introduces the perfect segment with the feature (+ perfect) to the left of the verbal “serve”. The affix transformation is then applied to the verb form which introduces the segment with the feature (+perfect) to the right of the verb (served). Consequently, the perfect transformation and the affix transformation have generated the verb phrase “have served”.

d. Present Perfect Continuous Tense

Present perfect continuous tense is used to express action which began at sometimes in the past and it is still on progress. For detail information about the function and formation of the tense, see section 2.5.4. In the analysis below, we can see how different transformations are used in the tense formation:

Surface structure: 25. I have been visiting tourist centre and cinema.



The sentence above consists of three transformations: the perfect, the progressive and the affix. The deep structure contains both the features + progressive and + perfect. The perfect segment is introduced via the perfect transformation i.e. + perfect. Then the progressive segment is introduced to the left of the verbal by the progressive transformation i.e + progressive. Finally, the affix transformation is applied to both the perfect and the progressive segments in the sentence i.e. “-en” and “-ing” respectively. Thus, this transformation introduces an affix segment with the feature + progressive to the right of the verbal segment and progressive segment with the feature + perfect to the right of the progressive segment.

In the surface structure, the perfect segment “have” is applied to agree with the subject of the verb “I”. The progressive segment is replaced by verb to be; the affix segment with the feature + perfect is replaced by “-en” ending. The verbal segment is replaced by “visit”; and the affix segment with the feature + progressive is replaced by “- ing” ending. The word “have” in such position becomes an auxiliary capable of being shifted around the subject NP if the presence of the Question constituent necessitates the application of the interrogative statement.

4.3.3 Description of Arabic present tense system

The Arabic present tense or the imperfect form is used to refer to different situations, (see section 2.7.1). When the term imperfect is used, it is usually referred to the indicative imperfect because the imperfect is always indicative unless it is preceded by certain particles which make it either subjunctive or jussive as in لم يذهب or لن يذهب (Bahloul 1991). The imperfect indicative (يذهب) is also known as the simple form. The Arabic imperfect form comprises both tense and aspect (Ahmad 2008:95). It is equally used to refer to both the present and the future tenses. For instance, the forms of the present and the present continuous tense are the same .For example;

(يقرأ الولد في الحديقة) could possibly mean either:

The boy reads in the garden. (present simple) or

The boy is reading in the garden. (present progressive)

The Arabic present tense system is characterized by number, person and gender. Although it has only one form to refer to the English present tense types but the form is used for different functions. Below is the description of such functions.

- i. The present tense form is used to indicate actual present, i.e. an event that is taking place at the moment of speaking e.g.

41. تتكلم كأنك سياسي . *tatakallamu ka annaka siyasiyun.*

You are speaking like a politician.

42. أشكركم جميعا علي ما أبديتم كالعادة . : *ashkurukum jamiy'an ala ma abdaitum ka al adat*

I thank you all for your usual cooperation.

43. هذا ما يليق بمكانتنا *haza ma yaliqu bi makanatina*. This is what deserves our position.

44. إن الله معنا و يعرف رقم بيت كل واحد... .

Inna Allaha ma 'ana wa ya 'rifa rakma baiti kulla wahidin minna wa minkum.

Surely, Allah is with us and he knows the house number of everybody...

45. إن جل المتدينين في مجتمعنا من المسلمين و المسيحين منافقون يقولون مالا يفعلون.. .

Inna julla al-mutadayyiniyna min al-muslimiyna wa al-masihiyina munafikuuna, yakuluuna ma la yaf'aluun...

Most of the religious people in our society from Muslims and Christians are hypocrites. They say what they do not practice.

46. نعرف أنك العين التي نرى بها ما يحدث في تلك الجامعة.

Na 'arifu annaka al-ayna al-lati nara biha ma yahduthu fi tilka al-jami 'ah.

We know that you are the eye in which we see what is happening in that university.

47. فإنه يكون كمن يعمل ولا يأخذ أجراً *Fa 'innahu yakuunu kaman ya 'amalu wala ya 'khuzu ajran.*

He will be like someone who works but he does not take the reward.

48. نتكلم عن المال الذي دفعه لك أولئك الذين لم يقبل أبناءهم في الجامعة.

Natakallamu an al-mali allazhi dafa'ahu laka ula;ika al-laziyna lam yuqbal abna'uhum fil jami'a.

Meaning: We are talking about the money which was given to you by the parents of those who were not given admission.

49. تعرفون قيمتي في هذه الجامعة. *Ta'arifuuna qimatiy fi hazihi al-jami'ah.*

You know my status in this university.

50. نحمد الله علي أنعمه. *Nahmudu Allaha ala an'umih.* We thank Allah for his blessings.

51. تحتاج الي الاستراحة. *Tahtaju ila al-listiraha.* You need to rest.

52. الذي يسكن قرب مدرسة أنصار الدين. *Allazhi yaskunu qurba madrasati ansari al-deen*
who stays close to Ansaru al deen school

53. نريد أن نعرف ماذا حدث... *Nuridu an na'arifa mazha hadatha*
We want to know what happened.

54. نشكر العميد شكرا جزيلًا. *Nashkuru al-amid shukran jazilan.*
We thank the deen very much.

55. أرحب بكم جميعا إلي هذا الاجتماع. *Urahhibu bikum jami'an ila hazha al-lijtima'a.*
I welcome you all to this gathering.

ii. The imperfect points to habitual or repeated actions:

56. نراهم كل يوم. *narahum kulla yaumin* We see them every day.

57. والله يعلم المفسد من المصلح. *Wa Allahu ya'alamu al-mufsida min al-muslih.*
Allah knows the bad ones among the good ones.

58. فإنهم قرويون لا يعرفون الفرق بين شمالهم و بين يمينهم. *Fa innahum karwiyyuuna la ya'arifuuna al-farqa bayna shimalihim wa bayna yaminihim.*

They are villagers. They don't know the difference between their left and right hands.

59. يغلو الصحافيون فيما ينشرونه في جرائدهم و مجلاتهم. *Yagluu al-sahafiyyuuna fima yanshurunahu fi jara'idihim wa mujallatihim.*

The journalists transgress in what they publish in their newspapers and magazines.

60. ولذلك يظن بنا ظنونا. *Wa lizalika yazunu bina zunuuna.* This is why they suspect us.

61. يفعل ما لا يليق بمكانته *Yaf'alu ma la yaliqu bi makanatihi.*

He does what does not deserve his position.

62. أريد أن أخدمكم *Uridu an akhdimakum.* I want to serve you.

63. هذا نفس الرجل الذي يسب رئيس الدولة...

Haza nafsu al-rajulu allazi yasubbu ra'iyasa al-daulah.

This is the exact person who abuses the president.

64. أنظر كيف يلبسون الملابس الفاخرة. *unzur kaifa yalbasuuna al-malabisa al-fahirah.*

See how they wear cloth of proud.

iii. The present tense can be used to refer to future time with or without the particle :sa''

e.g

65. سأفكر في الأمر وأعطيك الجواب غدا. *Sa ufakkir fi al-amri wa u'udiyka al-jawaba ghadan.*

I will think about the issue and give you the answer tomorrow.

66. و سأنصحك ألا تأخذ من أي واحدٍ مالا لأن ذلك يفسد اسمك

I will also counsel you not to collect money from anybody because this will spoil your name.

67. أرجع قبل الساعة العاشرة. *Arji'u qabla al-sa'ati al-ashirah.*

I will come back before ten o'clock.

68. نلتقي غدا في الساعة السابعة صباحا. *Naltaqi gadan fi al-sa'ati al-sabiah masa'an.*

We shall meet tomorrow by seven o'clock in the morning.

69. وكما تعرفون, تنتهي فترتي كعميد الكلية في ذلك اليوم.

Wa kama ta'arifuuna, tantahi fatratiy ka amidu al-kulliyati fi zalika al-yaum.

As you all know that my tenure as the faculty dean is expiring that day.

70. و سنتخبون من تشاؤون كعميد جديد لكم

Wa satantakhibuuna man tasha'uuna ka amiydin jadiyahin lakum.

You will elect whom you like as your new dean.

71. يحدث ذلك كله اليوم قبل غروب الشمس. *Yahdusu zalika kulluhu al-yaum qabla gurubi al-shams.*

These will all happen today before the sun set.

72. فإن الجزاء سيأتي اليوم لا في الغد. *Fa inna al-jaza'a saya'atial-yaum la fi al-ghadi.*

The reward is coming today not tomorrow.

73. سيجازيك الله غدا علي ما فعلته. *Sa yujaazyka Allahu ghadan ala ma fa'altahu.*

Allah will reward you tomorrow on what you did.

74. سنراك بعد اسبوعين. *Sa naraka ba'ada usbu'ayni.* I will see you after two weeks.

75. إن شاشا سيكون من الشاكرين اليوم والغد.

Inna Shasha sayakuunu min al-shakiriyna al-yaum wa al-ghad.

Shasha will become among the grateful today and tomorrow.

From the data presented here, it is obvious that the imperfect form (المضارع) is used to refer to future tense. As it is inclusive in all present tense form to be used as future tense (Jarim nd:13). So the examples: 67,68, 69, and 71 justify this fact. When you look at the sentences from semantic point of view, you will discover that the adverbs of time in the respective sentences suggest their futurity. On the other hand, examples 65, 66, 70, 72, 73, 74 and 75 are also imperfect used with *sa*. In this regard, any present tense form that *sa* is attached to it is automatically considered as future tense.

iv. The present tense form can be used to refer to past time, eg.

76. إننا كنا نناقش موضوع الدرس الماضي.

Inna kunna nunakishu mawdhu'a al-darsi al-madhi.

We were discussing about the previous lesson.

77. فإننا لانبالى ما دام الله لم ينسانا.

Fa innana la nubali ma dama Allahu lam yansaana.

We do not care as far as the Almighty Allah did not forget us.

78. كان كثير من أهل القرية يأتون الي من حين الي حين

Kaana kathirun min ahli al-karyati ya 'atuuna ilayya min hinin ila hinin.

Most of the villagers had been coming to me from time to time.

79. نسيت اسمه ولم أكتبه في القائمة التي قرأتها.

Nasiytu ismahu walam aktubhu fi al-qa 'imati allati qara 'ataha.

I forgot his name because I did not write it in the list which I read.

80. إننا لم نأت هنا للنصيحة.

Innana lam na 'ati huna linnasiyha.

We did not come here for counseling.

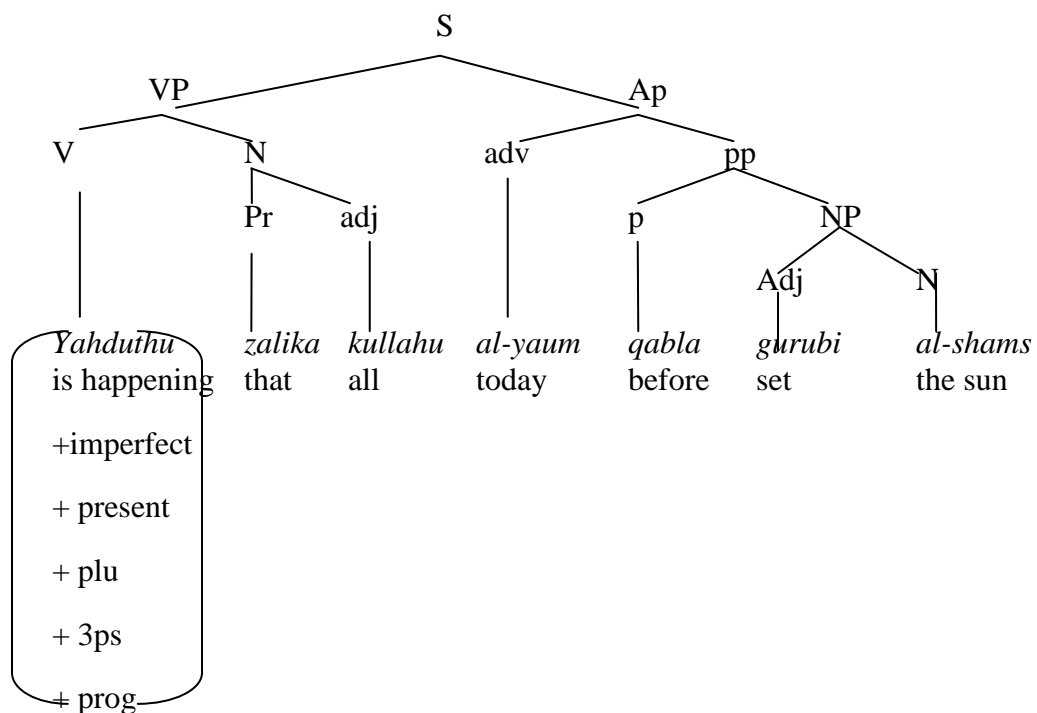
The Arabic present tense form is used to refer to past event when it is preceded by لم or perfect form. In sentence 77, 79 and 80, the negative لم (not) was used before the present tense, so they are interpreted as past. Likewise in sentence 76 and 78, a past tense form came before the present form, in such case the present tense form is also considered as past event.

4.3.4 Analysis of Arabic Present Tense

After describing the function and formation of Arabic present tense system in section 4.3.3, the researcher analyzed some of the sentences presented. Since Arabic present tense has only one form which could be interpreted as either simple present tense with its functions or present continuous tense, only two sentences were analysed. The English present perfect and perfect continuous are considered under past tense in Arabic. Below is the tree diagram of the sentences

which were extracted from the Arabic text العميد المجل *Al-Amidul Al-mubajjal*. The sentences were analysed from their deep and surface structures:

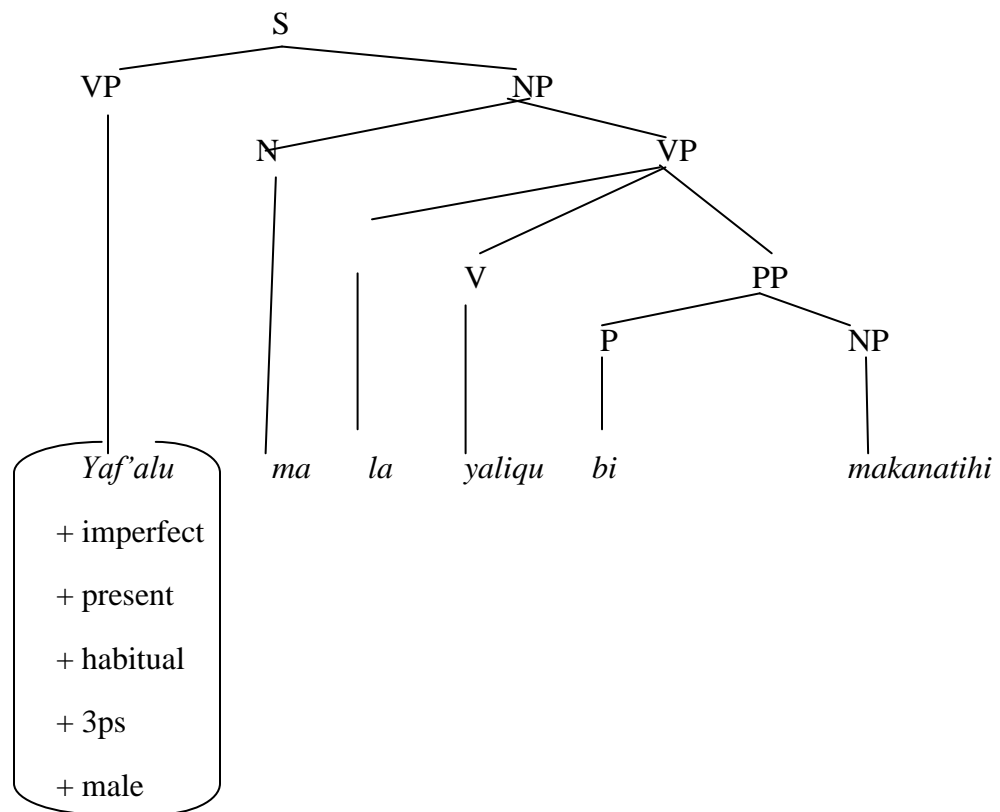
71. يحدث ذلك كله اليوم قبل غروب الشمس.



English: All these are happening today before sun set.

The next sentence was analyzed as habitual or repeated action. The agreement was applied as it can be seen in the deep structure:

42. يفعل ما لا يليق بمكانته. *Yaf'alu ma la yaliqu bi makanatihi*. He does what does not deserve his position.



Meaning: He does what does not deserve his position.

4.4 Contrastive Analysis of English and Arabic Present Tense Systems

The CA undertaken in this study is to find out the similarities and differences between the English and Arabic present tense system. This is executed by first looking at the meaning and formation of the English present tense systems and contrasting these constructions with the Arabic present tense system to see how the same meaning or function is rendered in Arabic. This is done through the different sections below:

4.4.1 Contrastive Analysis of English Simple Present Tense with its Arabic Equivalent

The English simple present tense is used to refer to repeated or habitual actions as in:

The beauty of democracy lies in this very opposition.

In order to express the same meaning in Modern Standard Arabic MSA, the imperfect form المضارع is used e.g.

يعتمد جمال الديمقراطية علي هذه المعارضة

Moreover, English employs the simple present tense form to indicate actual present, ie an event that takes place at the moment of speaking e.g.

You talk as if one is in hurry.

Arabic also employs the imperfect tense to indicate actual present e.g.

tatakallmu ka anna wahidan fil ujaalah

تتكلم كأن واحداً في العجالة

Future time can be expressed in English by the use of simple present form.

The meeting with the party leader comes up next week.

Arabic also employs the imperfect form of the verb to refer to future time e.g.

ينعقد المؤتمر مع رئيس الحزب في أسبوع المقبل

Yan 'aqidu al-mu'atamar ma'ara'iysi al-hizbi fi usbu'I al-muqbil.

From the data presented here, it is obvious that the expression of Simple Present Tense is done in the two languages. In English for instance, Simple Present Tense is expressed by the use of the base form of the verb. Number is considered in the formation of the verb. That is to say, verb must agree in number with the subject. When the subject is third person singular, the verb takes – s. e.g.:

She wishes to belong to a world not really hers.

In the above sentence, the subject is third person singular (she) this makes the verb to have –s inflection. Similarly, in the interrogative sentence formation, the “–s” appears only on the auxiliary verb which is “do” and not also on the main verb. The auxiliary verb agrees with the subject of the sentence while the main verb will be in the base form without any inflection as:

Does it occur to you that you are endangering your political ambition?

Arabic expresses English simple present tense by the use of imperfect form المضارع . Unlike English where verb agrees with the subject in number only, the Arabic present tense agrees with the subject in number, person and gender. Consider this example:

This is what deserves our position. *haza ma yaliku bi makanatina.* هذا ما يابق بمكانتنا

4.4.2 Contrasting English Present Continuous Tense with its Arabic equivalent form

- i. The English present continuous tense is used to refer to on-going activities or near future i.e. events that are to occur in the future. In Arabic, the same meaning can be expressed by the use of imperfect form. thus:

They are arresting everybody. (progressive)

yaa takiluuna al- jamii

يعتقلون الجميع

From the data contrasted here, it is obvious that English present continuous tense formation has to do with number agreement. This is to say, the subject must agree with the verb as either singular or plural. The tense is formed by the use of verb “to be” and present participle form of the main verb. The tense is used to express action that is taking place at the moment and action will take place in near future as in sentence.

To form an interrogative sentence, the auxiliary verb comes before the subject and the subject comes before the present participle. For instance:

What about the women, are they not coming for the dinner?

Like Standard English SE, the Arabic imperfect form is used after the question marker but the subject that separates the auxiliary (question maker) and the main verb does not appear in the Arabic construction. Similarly, the English question maker functions as a verb and it requires present participle form of the main verb. Arabic question maker on the other hand is not a verb but a particle which does not change the form of the verb.

Table 4.3 Conjugation pattern of present progressive of the verb “go”

The table below shows the different inflectional affixes attached to the imperfect forms in the formation of present continuous tense and present simple tense. The verb “go” was used as a sample to show how the verb is conjugated. The verb correspondent in Arabic (ذهب) was equally treated with their affixation. These affixes vary from singular, dual and plural as well as the first, second and third persons.

Person	Number	Gender	Arabic	English	
1 st	Sing	M	Azhabu (أذهب)	I am going / I go	
		F	Azhabu (أذهب)	I am going / I go	
	pl	M	nazhabu (نذهب)	We are going / We go	
		F	nazhabu (نذهب)	We are going / We go	
2 nd	Sing	M	Tazhabu (تذهب)	You are going / You go	
		F	Tazhabiyna (تذهبين)	You are going / You go	
	dual	M	Tazhabaani (تذهبان)	You are going / You go	
		F	Tazhabaani (تذهبان)	You are going / You go	
	pl	M	Tazhabuuna (تذهبون)	You are going / You go	
		F	Tazhabna (تذهبن)	You are going / You go	
	3 rd	sing	M	Yazhabu (يذهب)	He is going / He goes
		dual	F	Tazhabu (تذهب)	She is going / She goes
pl		M	yazhabaani (يذهبان)	They are going / They go	
		F	tazhabaani (تذهبان)	They are going / They go	
		M	yazhabuuna (يذهبون)	They are going / They go	
		F	yazhabna (يذهبن)	They are going / They go	

From the analyses of present continuous tense presented in section 4.4.2, it is observed that SE uses auxiliary verbs in the tense construction while MSA does not. The auxiliary agrees with the subject in term of number only. But in Arabic number, person and gender are considered in the

agreement. So the present tense and present continuous tense in English can be interpreted in different ways in Arabic.

4.4.3 Contrasting of English Present Perfect Tense and the Arabic Equivalent

Present perfect tense is used to express a just completed action or an action in the past that has a relation with the present. The tense is formed with ‘have/has + past participle’ in English. What is worth mentioning is that the action in present perfect is performed in the past but the result continues to the present. The result of the action is important. The above statement can be illustrated follows:

I have just talked to Jude on phone.

You have equally told the truth when you said time is very much our enemy.

This function of present perfect tense is rendered in Arabic by means of the perfect form (past tense) (الماضي) of the verb preceded by the particle *qad* or *laqad* لقد to refer to the meaning of English present perfect tense, which is to relate a past action to the present. The particles *qad* or *laqad* does not literary mean “have” or “has” but it achieves a similar purpose when it precedes a perfective verb.

It is noticeable that the compound structure of /*qad*/or/*laqad*/ + perfect can be of great benefit to add emphasis and certainty to the meaning of the verb. The illustration above can be illustrated as follows:

Qad takallamtu ma'a Jude alal haatif al'an

قد تكلمت مع جود علي الهاتف الآن

Meaning: I have just talked to Jude on phone.

لقد قلت الحق علي حد سواء لما قلت إن الوقت عدونا جدا

Laqad kulta al-haqqa ala haddi al sawa'a lamma kulta inna al- wakta aduwuna jiddan.

Meaning: You have equally told the truth when you said time is very much our enemy.

The differences in the use of English present perfect and its equivalent from Arabic is in the verb in. Arabic uses past form of the verb plus *qad* while English uses past participle form of the main verb.

Table 4.4 Conjugation pattern of present perfect tense of the verb “go”

The table below shows the different inflectional affixes attached to the imperfect forms in the formation of present perfect tense. The verb “go” was used as a sample to show how the verb is conjugated. The verb correspondent in Arabic (ذهب) was equally treated with their affixation.

Person	Number	Gender	Arabic	English
1 st	Sing	M	Zahabtu ذهبْتُ / لقد ذهبْتُ	I have gone
		F	zahabtu (ذهبْتُ) / لقد ذهبْتُ	I have gone
	pl	M	zahabna (ذهبنا) / لقد ذهبنا	We have gone
		F	zahabna (ذهبنا) / لقد ذهبنا	We have gone
2 nd	Sing	M	zahabta (ذهبْتَ) / لقد ذهبْتَ	You have gone
		F	zahabti (ذهبْتِ) / لقد ذهبْتِ	You have gone
	dual	M	zahabtuma (ذهبتما) / لقد ذهبتما	You have gone
		F	zahabtuma (ذهبتما) / لقد ذهبتما	You have gone
	pl	M	zahabtum (ذهبتم) / لقد ذهبتم	You have gone
		F	zahabunna (ذهبتن) / لقد ذهبتن	You have gone

3 rd	sing	M	zahaba (ذهب / لقد ذهب)	He has gone
		F	zahabat (ذهبت / لقد ذهبت)	She has gone
	dual	M	zahabaa (ذهبا / لقد ذهبا)	They have gone
		F	zahabaa (ذهبا / لقد ذهبا)	They have gone
	pl	M	zahabuu (ذهبوا / لقد ذهبوا)	They have gone
		F	zahabna (ذهبن / لقد ذهبن)	They have gone

4.4.4 Contrasting English present perfect continuous tense with its Arabic equivalent

This tense is used in English to express events started in the past and stopped recently e.g.

I have been going there all these years.

This meaning is expressed in Arabic by the use of perfect *kaana* كان and the imperfect form of the main verb, e.g.

kuntu azhabu hunaka tiwla hazihi al sanawaat كنت أذهب هناك طوال هذه السنوات

Such analysis provided an additional insight into the complex relationship between the Arabic and English present tenses. However, the choice of the appropriate Arabic version which would equally states the English present tense depends on the context and it is often limited to a few possible forms in practice.

4.5 Prediction of Similarities and Differences

From the description and analysis of Arabic and English present tense lexical data collected, it is assumed that second language learners of both languages may encounter different level of difficulties in expressing present tense. For instance, Arabic speaker learning English language

may have a problem in the use of auxiliary verb in expressing present continuous tense since such lexical item does not exist in Arabic language when expressing such tense. But one could see that an English speaker learning Arabic present tense in general may find it less difficult since the two types of English present tense: simple present and present continuous tenses are expressed in the same way in Arabic.

The question markers such as “do, is, are and have” affect the main verb precedes it. For instance, when “do” or “does” is used in asking a question, the verb that follows must be in the simple (base) form. Similarly, when “are or is” is used, the main verb takes “-ing” inflection. The participle form of a verb is used when “have” is used in asking a question. In Arabic the particle *hal* is used for all the four English question markers and it functions as a question marker only and it does not affect the form of the verb that follows it.

Consequently, Arabic learners of English may likely say or write the following sentences:

- a. *Do she go to school? Instead of: Does she go to school?
- b. *Are you go to school? Instead of: Are you going to school?
- c. *Have you go to school? Instead of: Have you gone to school?
- d. *Did you went to school? Instead of: Did you go to school?

To a great extent, the language interference is clear here especially in the case of verb (to be) deletions. The Arabic learner of English may also omit auxiliary verbs in the formation of present tense continuous tense and produce the following ungrammatical sentences:

- a. *I going to school. Instead of: I am going to school.
- b. *He going to school. Instead of: He is going to school.
- c. *We going to school. Instead of: We are going to school.

Another possible area of difficulty for Arabic learner of English language is the use of participle forms. For there are only two verb forms in Arabic: present and past forms, the learner may say or write the following sentences:

- a. *I have went to school. Instead of: I have gone to school.
- b. *We have wrote a letter. Instead of: We have written a letter.
- c. *You must have saw my keys. Instead of: You must have seen the keys.

English present perfect could constitute a problem for Arabic-speaking students because of the fact that it is marked for an action in the past that has connection with the present time and MSA has no notion of such tense. The tense also cannot be used with adverb of time. Consequently, Arabic student learning English may tend to use adverbs of time which denote past with it due to the possibility of doing this in Arabic and produce the sentence like:

- a. *I have eaten it yesterday.
- b. * She has seen it last year.
- c. They have finished the work last week.

Similarly, MSA does not make distinction between actions completed in the past that has connection with the present. This could lead to failure to use the right tense. The learner could therefore produce sentences like:

- a. The rain started; let us wait for a while. for (the rain has started let us wait for a while.)
- b. The phone rang. Instead of: the phone has rung.
- c. Did he come? Instead of: Has he come?

Compared to learners of English are learners of Arabic who can also produce ungrammatical, ill-formed and unacceptable sentences in MSA for the same reasons suggested by the CAH. These

problems may be similar to those in the case of Arabic learners, they include: producing all types of sentences with verbs ignoring or misunderstanding that in Arabic, a sentence can be meaningful without verbs. The learner may produce sentence like:

البيت يكون بعيد (البيت بعيد)

Al baitu takunu ba'iydatan

The house becomes far. For (The house is far).

أنا أكون طالبا (أنا طالب) instead of

Ana akuunu daliban instead of *ana dalibun*

I become a student. Instead of, I am a student.

Another area of differences that may cause learning difficulty is the issue of number. This area is considered to be one of the significant areas in both English and Arabic. Arabic has three notions of number system: singular, dual and plural and three terms for persons 1st, 2nd and 3rd. But English has two terms in number system: singular and plural. The number unless it is singular third person, otherwise, it does not determine the form of the verb to be used in verb tense.

This implies that the two languages do not share the same notion of number. The number variations may lead the English speaker learning Arabic to produce ungrammatical sentence like:

الولدان يذهبون الي المدرسة instead of الولدان يذهبان الي المدرسة

Alwaladaani yazhabuuna illa al- madrasah instead of *alwaladaani yazhabaani ilal madrasah.*

The boys are going to school.

أنتما تأكلون الطعام instead of (أنتما تأكلان الطعام)

Antuma ta'akuluuna al-da'am instead of *antuma ta'akulaani al-daam*

You are eating the food.

4.6 Summary of findings

In contrasting English and Arabic present tense systems conducted in this research work, it was found out that:

1. Present tense systems in both languages share the same rule of concord for a singular subject take singular verb and plural subject goes with plural verb.
2. The progressive aspect in English and the imperfect aspect in Arabic are used for durative and progressive actions.
 - a. The distributional characteristics of English and Arabic present tense are different in most cases.
3. The present tense forms of English and Arabic is referred to future time, usually with the help of future adverbial.
4. The use of compound structure to express present perfect tense in both languages is similar.
5. The notion of progressive and perfection may pose difficulty to Arabic students when translating them to English tense.
6. There are also structural and lexical differences between English and Arabic present tense. This also may pose problems to Arabic students.

4.7 Discussion of the findings

The present finding has shown that the use of present tense in English and Arabic has certain similarities and differences. The areas of differences are higher than the areas of similarities which this could pose learning difficulties. For instance, English present tense has wider range of distributions when compared to that of Arabic. Much of these distributions of English present tense are mostly of perfection and progressive (Al-duais 2012:510). The author concluded that the differences in tense formation between Arabic and English are better than their similarities.

The English and Arabic present tense systems share some certain functional similarities: the present tense, in both languages is used to express general present time, action in progress or in the future. The English simple present tense for instance, is formed from the base form of the verb. When the subject is third person singular the affix transformation affixes –s to the verb. (See table 4.3). The Arabic equivalent maintains the root of the verb with present tense marker. The marker comes before the root which must agree with the subject in its number, gender and person. The progressive form is used for a single temporary event that has a beginning and an end. It suggests that an event began in the past and is continue to the present. The present progressive tense can also be used for the future time; it normally accompanied by an adverb of time.

He is leaving for London tomorrow.

The man is travelling next week.

The English present perfect tense is used to express a just completed action using have/ has with the participle form of the verb. Accordingly, the Arabic compound structure is used to express or translate the same information of English (see table 4.4).

It is noticeable that the compound structure of /*qad/or/laqad*/ + perfect can be of great benefit to add emphasis to the meaning of the verb. This structure grants the meaning of near perfect (الماضي القريب) to the verb that follows (Ahmed, 2008: 84; Hassan, 1990: 126-30) . However, the particle /*qad*/ is not literary the same as “has/have”. Where the auxiliary “has/have” can be used in both affirmative and negative statement, The *Qad* is only applied to affirmative statements like: قد جاء (He has come). It cannot be used in negative and interrogative sentences. So, the following sentences are ungrammatical: * ما قد جاء (he has not come).

In English, the present perfect denotes actual-past-to-present time. An actual event starts in the past and continues up to the present. Several expressions of time mark the past-to-present event like since, for, so far, up to now, until now, up to the present, all his life, in his whole life, etc. e.g.: I **have seen** two lecturers so far. لقد رأيت محضرين الي الآن.

In Arabic, the past-to-present time is denoted by the perfect of the verb and the particle قد, لقد. However, when a negative present perfect verb is used, the particles قد and لقد are no longer used; the imperfect form and the negative particle لم are used instead, e.g.: I have not yet seen her. لم ارها حتي الآن.

The progressive form of the present perfect tense stresses the duration of a single past-to-present action that has a beginning and an end. It stresses the middle of an event rather than its beginning and end. It is more closely related to the present than non progressive forms. The Arabic equivalent is the imperfect of the verb. When the subject is a pronoun, the Arabic verb should be preceded by the particle ان + pronoun; if the subject is a noun, ان is not used, e.g.: The committee has been discussing the problem for more than two hours.

تناقشت اللجنة المشكلة منذ أكثر من ساعتين. *tanaqashat al-lajnatu al-mishkilata munzu akthar min sa'atayn.*

The study revealed that there are different inflectional affixes attached to the verbs in the tense formations. The inflectional affixes vary from English to Arabic. Where English affixes are only for person. Progressive or perfection, the Arabic inflectional affixes are for person gender and number. Arabic and English employ suffixes to refer to number, but they differ in the sense that Arabic employs suffix to refer to three numbers: singular, dual and plural, whereas English employs suffixes to refer to two cases of number: singular and plural (for details of Arabic verb inflectional affixes, see section 2.2).

Arabic language has five different lexical verbs in addressing second person simple present and present continuous tenses. In English language only one form is used to semantically denote all the five expressions (see table 4.3 on present continuous tense conjugation).

The Arabic verb tense is inflected. For instance, the suffix -aa is used for the second person feminine and masculine dual; -uu is used for the second person masculine plural and -na is used for the third person feminine plural and 0 suffix is used for the singular. (See Table 4.3)

In the imperfect tense, the imperfect prefix ?a- is singular, na- is plural; ta- and ya- are oblique (used for singular, dual and plural). The Imperfect pronominal suffix -aa is used for the dual; -uu is used for the masculine plural and -na is used for the feminine plural and 0 suffix is used for the first, second and third person singular.

In the English simple present, only the third person singular is marked for tense by the suffix -{S3}, e.g.: I play, we play, you play, they play, he plays, she plays, it plays. The morpheme {-S3} has the same allomorphs in the same distribution as the plural suffix {-S1} and possessive suffix {-S2} of the noun: /-s/, /-z/, /-iz/, as in sleeps, brushes, changes, raises.

The study also revealed that the tense formation processes of English and Arabic differ in several ways. The English present continuous tense for instant, is formed by the use of verb “to be” plus V-ing. The verb “to be” which is in form of “am, are, is” agrees with the subject in person and number (see table 4.3). This tense when translated to Arabic, although it maintains the same semantic interpretation but it does not share all the distributional characteristics with the English equivalent. The Arabic equivalent has no auxiliary verb; it is just formed from the root of the verb with addition of present tense marker and it is inflected for gender, number and person (see page 81).

Arabic does not make any structural differences between simple present tense and present continuous tense. This confirmed the finding of Khalil (2010) who concluded that Arabic language does not mark the verb for progressive aspect. It uses either the simple present or present active participle form of the verb.

The simple present and present continuous tenses can be interpreted or translated by the use of one form in Arabic only the context determines its semantic role (see table 4.3). This agrees with Briton (2000) assertion that there are chances of discovering semantic overlapping of two or more words in certain areas of meaning from one language to another.

The study found that as a result of differences of the present tense system at different levels, there are many possible difficulties that could pose teaching and learning difficulties for Arabic learners of English.

The English present tense system is categorized into four different divisions considering the time and nature of the action. These four divisions differ from each other in their formations and semantic interpretations.

Sometimes there would be confusion between the present perfect tense and the past tense. This confusion could affect the quality of teaching tense as well as in translations. When a particular tense in a particular sentence is not translated well, it affects the meaning of the entire sentence. The findings confirmed (El-Zeini, 1994)'s prediction that the incorrect use of tense in the translation can lead to a change in meaning.

It is sometimes difficult to build exact rules about the situation(s) in which the present perfect is used and the purposes to which it is put (Palmer,1987:174-177;Comrie,1976: 66-71). The tense would pose difficulty to Arabic learners of English language. The finding confirmed Catford et al(1974) assertion that one of the most difficult English tenses for non-native speakers of English is the present perfect.

Owing to these differences, the English speaker learning Arabic present tense system is bound to face immense difficulties. The present study predicted confirmed that the above differences could constitute major sources of errors in English. The study also agreed with Lado (1957) that the higher the degree of similarity between English and Arabic present tense systems, the easier it is for the speakers of Arabic to learn English.

Generally speaking, the aspects that are similar in the two languages will facilitate learning and teaching process of a foreign language and the aspects that are relatively or entirely different will pose some learning difficulties.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The chapter is the summary of the study conducted. The conclusions reached and their pedagogical implications. The chapter ended with recommendations based on the findings.

5.2 Summary

The study contrasted the English and Arabic present tense systems and determined the teaching and implications. The study answered the research questions designed for the study. The data were described using TGG model of language description. The analysis was carried out operationally using Di Petro's (1971) operational model. The sentences were selected and analysed based on their functions, structures and meanings.

In order to answer the research questions, a total number of 80 sentences were selected from existing data that extracted from both English and Arabic different drama texts. The actual contrast was done in chapter four and the facts highlighted the research questions as presented below.

The Arabic and English present tense systems share some certain similarities and differences. For instant, the present tense in English expresses present action or action in progress likewise In Arabic, where the present tense (فعل المضارع) denotes action in present or in progress. Similarly, affixation is used to express number while compound verb are used to express aspect.

Another area of differences between Arabic and English present tense is the function of the tense. English present tense has about ten (10) different functions (see table 4.1 and section 4.2.2). The Arabic present tense system has about four (4) different functions (see table 4.2.1 and section 4.2.2).

In line with the above, the English present tense formation process differs from that of Arabic. The findings have indicated that although both languages use inflections in verb tense formations, the Arabic inflections are very complex for it considers number, (singular, dual and plural) gender (male and female) and person(1st, 2nd and 3rd). The English present tense formation process, on the other side, considers number (singular and plural) and persons only.

The findings also revealed that there are a lot of learning difficulties that may arise in teaching and learning English to the Arabic learners of English. Based on the findings, all the areas of differences between the Arabic and English present tense systems could pose learning difficulty. For example, while the English present tense makes distinction between actions completed in the past that has connection to the present, the Arabic present tense has no such distinctions. This would pose learning English present tense difficult to Arabic learners. (see section 4.5).

Finally, the range of similarities observed is much higher than that of the differences (see section 4.5). Thus it is concluded that the Arabic student learning English could encounter certain difficulties in the use of copula (i.e. verb to be) while the English speaker leaning Arabic may

have difficulties in number and gender. This assumption was supported by many researchers. Olaofe (1982) concluded that the fact that Yoruba verbal system shares similarities in the notion of tense with the English language but differs in the forms and functions of the item used in the expression of tense, suggests that Yoruba speakers will find English tenses difficult to construct.

5.3 Conclusion

From the analysis, the Arabic and English present tense differ in many areas: formation processes, distributions and functions. The present simple tense is by far the most frequent translation equivalent, which reveals a considerably greater potential of the English present simple in narration than it is often assumed in theory.

Finally, I concede that research of this nature is on-going and therefore no definite conclusions can be made because teaching and learning are both complex processes. While the results of the present study have given an insight into the present tense systems of Arabic and English, the findings can only be considered as suggestive. As Ilomaki (2005:76) clarifies, the results of studies of this nature cannot really be generalized and regarded as representing an entire population, since the study such as this one focused on two language groups only.

Although much work remains to be done in the area of Arabic and English contrastive study, I hope this study contributes to the quest by Arabic teachers, learners and material developers to improve the standard of English language proficiency in Arabic based schools.

5.4 Recommendations

In the light of the findings of this study, it will be correct to say that any curriculum development aimed at the teaching of English should take cognizance of possible areas of first language interference. In order to enhance the teaching and learning of English present tense system, this research work recommended that an effective English language teaching material with appropriate expressions on present tense expressions should be prepared.

The study also recommends the followings:

- a. Description and contrasting the English and Arabic present tense systems covering areas of their functions and formations.
- b. Remedial drills are essential in teaching present tense systems. Language lesson is more successful when drills are frequently involved. The drills provide instant practice in sentence construction and help the learner retain the basic structural patterns. The substitution table that exposes learners to the appropriate use of English present tense will be quite useful in this regard.
- c. Translators and translation students need to be aware of the differences and similarities between English and Arabic present tense with their functions and formations processes. This supports the recommendation suggested by Saeed and Fareh (2006) that the accuracy of the translated texts should not be superficially evaluated by examining the target language text without matching it with the source language text.
- d. Teachers should know when to correct their students' tense errors immediately. They should be flexible in the sense that they need to tolerate some oral and

written errors in the class in order to help the students to communicate successfully.

- e. Learners should be encouraged and exposed to reading different types of literary texts. This widens their understanding and helps them to master the use of different tenses.

5.5 Pedagogical implications

Based on the findings of the study, the results and the preceding observations motivate the formulation of the following implications to language learners, language teachers and curriculum designers:

5.5.1 Implications for the learner

The second or foreign language learners should be aware of the differences between their native and foreign languages. They should not assume that English present tense and the rules governing its functions are similar to that of Arabic in all aspects. The rules should be learnt independently.

The copula (am are and is) are used for form progressive tense. The form is totally absent in Arabic. Arabic learners of English need to be taught on how these forms are used to express progressive actions in English. The forms are also used as copula where they stand as main verb in a sentence. The forms are used in translating Arabic nominal sentences into English. The Arabic nominal sentences do not contain a verb. The pedagogical implication here is that English

learners of Arabic needs to be taught that unlike English, numerous Arabic sentences can be formed without a verb. The learners should not insert verb in all Arabic nominal sentences.

5.5.2 Implication for the teacher

The English present tense system should be taught contextually for teaching in context enhances learning more effective than presenting and explaining such structures deductively. Teaching inductively helps students to get the concept of present tense and to be able to use it in different contexts. Teaching present tense contextually, would help learners understand the situational and cultural use of these constructions in discourse. Where the English text - books do not directly address the learner's problem in the area of present tense use and usage, the language teacher should design what will help learner to overcome their learning difficulties. This corresponds to Di Pietro's (1971:34) suggestion that the language teacher, to a certain extent, must be his own grammarian. 'He must arrive at some conceptualization of how language is organized in general if he is to prepare teaching materials which systematically cover all matters of importance to his students. The teacher would be able to go beyond the grammatical plan of the textbook towards more comprehensive coverage of his own making.

While person, gender and number are considered when forming present tense form in Arabic, only person is considered in English. The teaching implication is that, English learners of Arabic present tense need to be taught the gender and number inflectional affixes used in the present tense. Similarly, English present tense adds -s to the root of the verb to the third person singular. The Arabic present tense does not only add inflectional affixes to third person but also to the first and second persons. Therefore, the learners need to be taught prefixes and suffixes which are used to indicate gender, number and persons.

Employment of present tense to indicate durative action, incomplete events, progressive actions, habitual actions and repeated actions cuts across the two languages under contrast. However, their forms and number are different. For instance, the present continuous and simple present tenses of English are translated into Arabic by the use of one form. It is only the context which determines the differences between the two structures. Therefore, Arabic learners of English present tense must be guided to learn afresh the function of progressive system of the English language. Thus, in teaching progressive aspect, while Arabic learners of English present continuous tense are taught to insert verb to be, their English counterparts should be guided to express both simple present tense and present continuous tense in one form without the use of copula.

English present tense should be taught in such a way that the learner sees the tense making prediction to the present time, bearing in mind, the semantic implication of time reference of the present tense. Making learners to understand the number and types of English present tense is not actually as important as their mastery of the correct verb form to refer to the time in question.

Teachers have an enormous responsibility in the classroom. It is crucially important that instead of being exam- oriented and producing learners who would obtain only good results on their exams, they should be more flexible toward teaching present tense, and they should consider students' attitudes, interests, and abilities encouraging them to translate some passages from English to Arabic and vice versa. The teacher should provide an explanation with regard to the possible source or what may cause error to bring about an awareness of what could be the potential contributory factor. They should also encourage their learners to express themselves creatively. Students fully develop second language and literacy through using the second

language in many different settings, with a wide variety of respondents and audiences (including themselves), and for a wide variety of purposes.

To correct the anomaly of syntax errors, where they occur, the teacher of English must concentrate on teaching auxiliary verbs, forms of verbs as well as nominal and verbal group structures which constitute prime areas of weakness of the Arabic learner of the English language. This, indeed, owes to Lado's (1971:59) affirmation that 'the degree of control of these structures that are different is an index to how much of the language a person has learned'. In order to help the learner out of this problem, all the English tense forms should be thoroughly taught using different methods which include:

- a. Situational Contexts- the teacher brings situation and asks students to generate sentences. For example in teaching simple present tense, the teacher may ask his/her students to report their daily schedules in the class, their daily activities at home etc. The teacher can also ask the students to give directions to another person to get to a school, the mosque or a bank using a map.
- b. Present tense can be taught through texts. If learners are to achieve a functional command of a second language, they will need to be able to understand and produce not just isolated sentences, but whole texts in the language. Language is context-sensitive; which is to say that an utterance becomes fully understandable only when it is placed in its context. The implication of this context-sensitive view of language on teaching present tense is that the tense is best taught and practiced in context.

- c. situational instruction and effective drills - For instance, in teaching the present continuous tense, it will be ideal if the teacher helps the students to understand the different situations in which the tense form is used as well as how the tense is formed, followed by adequate and regular practice. Constant drills on auxiliary verbs, progressive and perfective forms of the verbs should be systematically applied in teaching tense system. The language teacher can also call the students to dramatise the use of the tense: each student can carry a placard written on it one aspect of the tense to make a complete sentence.

5.5.3 Implication for the curriculum designers

The study revealed that the English perfective and progressive aspects pose learning difficulties to the Arabic students learning English. Syllabus designers should take tense systems into consideration through proposing suitable materials and programmers for teaching tense in schools. Adequate tense based materials in the expression of the simple present, present continuous, present perfect, and present perfect continuous tenses should be provided for Arabic learners of English. Emphasis should be done on the formation of declarative and interrogative sentences. Learners should be encouraged to use language not only in the classroom situation but also in their daily activities. They should also be encouraged to engage in intensive and extensive readings in order to improve the use of tense expression.

Text books should be written to take cognizance of the peculiar needs of the learners. Supplementary materials which emphasize and give special drills in the major contrasts between

English and Arabic present tenses should be developed by the text book writers. Provision should be made for enough revision exercise to enable the students grasp the contents.

Curriculum designers should pay more attention to the tense and its formations process. There should be proper exposure of Arabic student to different present tense expressions at different stages of learning. Pattern drills and a lot of exercises should be regularly observed. This would help the learners to explore their own mental resources in expressing different situations. There should also be a widening gap between theory and practice. High frequency structures and words in English must be taken into consideration in the course for the teaching English tense to avoid possible errors. As Lightbown and Spada (2000:176-192) argue when errors occur frequently, it is useful for teachers to bring the problem to the student's attention. The significance of this study is, therefore, to inform teachers, educators and language study material developers about the kind of errors that their target learners may likely encounter. Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (2002:44) state that "research adds power to everyday observations ...". If teachers, educators and study material developers become conscious of likely problem areas that face specific ethnic groups, they will be in a better position to put appropriate intervention strategies into place.

Translation and Arabic grammar courses should be specially designed to meet the students' needs. The topics covered in Arabic grammar courses should focus on the function and formation of present tense. Stories to be translated should come from live programs or events.

5.6 Contribution to knowledge

The present study contributed to knowledge through its findings and predictions made in the previous chapter. The study revealed that the Arabic and English present tense systems share the

same rule of concord for a singular subject take singular verb and plural subject goes with plural verb. The progressive aspect in English and the imperfect aspect in Arabic are used for durative and progressive actions while the distributional characteristics of English and Arabic present tense are different in most cases.

5.7 Limitations

This study was limited to the contrastive analysis of Arabic and English present tense system. The findings arrived at are limited to the data on which they are based. So, the results of the study cannot therefore be generalized either to all English-Arabic parallel texts, or to Arabic comparable texts. These limitations can also be seen as further avenues for future research.

5.7 Areas for Further Research

The present study concentrated on the present tense system of Arabic and English, it is suggested, that similar studies be carried out on past and future tenses. Perhaps, some of the identified problems in this study might be nipped in the bud at the lower level of learning the target language.

Other areas which may be considered worthy of similar research include:

1. A contrastive study of the perfective and progressive tense systems in English and Arabic with teaching and learning implications.
2. A contrastive study of Arabic and English past tense systems with teaching implication.
3. A Contrastive analysis of conjugation of English and Arabic verbal system.

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