

## ترجمة الأزمنة واتجاهاتها من الإنجليزية إلى العربية

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## ملخص:

تركز هذه الورقة على ترجمة الأزمنة من الإنجليزية إلى العربية حيث تهدف إلى اختبار قدرة طلاب الترجمة في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية على ترجمة الأزمنة الإنجليزية إلى العربية لاكتشاف الصعوبات التي تواجههم. فهي دراسة حالة حيث تتبع طريقة الملاحظة فتقدم اثني عشر جملة إنجليزية. كل منها يعبر عن زمن محدد ويطلب من طلاب الترجمة ترجمتها إلى العربية. مجتمع البحث هنا هو طلاب الترجمة في السنة الثالثة والرابعة بكلية الآداب والعلوم مسلاتة، وهن جميعهن طالبات. يتم مقارنة ترجمة الطالبات قياسا على نموذج د. عزالدين محمد نجيب في ترجمة الأزمنة. أهم نتائج هذه الدراسة أن طالبات الترجمة في السنتين الثالثة والرابعة قد واجهنا صعوبات في ترجمة الأزمنة المستمرة والتامة المستمرة من اللغة الإنجليزية إلى اللغة العربية.

**ABSTRACT:**

This paper focuses on translating English tense and aspect into Arabic. The objective of this study is to investigate the ability of translation students to translate tense and aspect from English into Arabic to identify the difficulties they face in this regard.

It is a case study that follows an observation method by asking students of the translation branch to translate twelve sentences, each representing an aspect, into Arabic.

The population of the study includes the students of the translation branch at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Messalata. Students in their third and fourth years are selected as the sample for the study, and the entire sample consists of female students.

Translations are evaluated according to Najeeb's model of translating English tense and aspect into Arabic.

The most important result indicates that students of the translation branch (third and fourth year) encounter difficulties in translating the continuous and perfect progressive aspects of English into Arabic.

**Keywords:** Tense, Aspect, effective communication, intended meaning, translator.

**Introduction**

The tense and aspect of the English language, as a topic in English grammar, are frequently studied in schools and faculties. Most students, particularly those specializing, can use the correct tense and aspect in their speech or writing.

The significance of tense and aspect in language is evident when an event takes place (the intended time of an action) from the perspective of the writer or speaker for effective communication.

Since translation is concerned with conveying the intended meaning from one language to another to achieve effective communication, the translator bears the responsibility of reproducing the intended meaning in a proper and correct way. Any diversion of meaning leads to a distortion of communication with the receiver of the translated production.

Therefore, the role of the translator is to convey the intended meaning in an accurate rendering in order to be understood as it is intended. Moreover, the task of translation requires competence from the side of translator which enables him/her expressing accurate structures that represent the same of the intended meaning.

Regarding Tense and Aspect, Arabic expresses them in a different way from English. Whereas English depends on verbs and their forms, Arabic uses different tools in question. In that, some tenses include four verbs such as The Passive Future Perfect :( It will have been studied), in contrast with Arabic which uses two forms of a verb (present or past) which has some other devices such as (سوف) or (قد) to expresses the same tense as follows: (سوف تكون قد درست) (Ghazala, 1995).

## ***2-The Problem of the study***

Libyan students, as native Arabic speakers, have not studied any topics related to tense and aspect of Arabic. The topic has not been offered to them either in schools or at the undergraduate stage; this is because it is neglected at all stages of education.

This study aims to investigate the competency of students in the branch of translation in translating English Tense and Aspect into Arabic. Therefore, it will depend on their knowledge of Arabic and how well they understand the meaning expressed by English tense and aspect.

The study is going to test the students of the third and fourth years of the branch of translation in the Arts and Sciences Faculty in Messallata. The test consists of twelve sentences, each representing an aspect of the English tense. Students will be asked to translate them into Arabic, and then the translations will be evaluated according to Najeeb, M. E, suggestion for translating tense and aspect.

Finally, the study will conclude the results of the students, comparing them to Najeeb's suggestion.

## ***3.Aims and objectives:***

This paper aims to investigate students' translation of English tense and aspect into Arabic to evaluate their competency and understanding of the topic in question. Students of the branch of translation (third year and fourth year) will be asked to translate twelve sentences, each of which represents one aspect in English. These sentences should be translated into Arabic by them.

#### **4.Hypothesis:**

Since the sample (students) has not acquired any knowledge about tense and aspect in Arabic, their translation will be based solely on their understanding and abilities to express thoughts in Arabic. Therefore, their translation might be unacceptable or incoherent regarding some aspects.

#### **5.Research Question:**

1. To what extent can the (sample) reproduce tense and aspect in Arabic?
2. Do their translations express the exact tense?
3. What difficulties do they face in the question?

#### **6.Significance of the study:**

The study sheds light on the translation of tenses and aspects from English into Arabic. This topic has not been offered to Arab students except in some practical activities in translation. Therefore, it will provide teachers, students, and translators with remarkable points in question. It can be a good reference for translating English tenses into Arabic as well.

#### **7.Scope of the study:**

This study is limited to testing the students of the translation branch, third and fourth year, in the faculty of Arts and Sciences in Messalata. The test is concerned with translating English tense and aspect into Arabic.

#### **8. Definition of Terms:**

Translation: rendering of meaning.

Translator: person who renders meaning.

Tense: time of action.

Aspect: type of tense.

Effective communication: understanding the message.

Intended meaning: the message.

#### **Literature review**

Several papers have been presented by Arab scholars dealing with Tense and Aspect in Arabic compared with Tense and Aspect in English. In spite of some differences among these papers, scholars have exerted considerable efforts to make

sense along those comparisons. They have attempted to clarify how Arabic expresses Tense and Aspect differently from English. Whereas English uses forms of verbs to express aspects, Arabic uses other devices of language, but not forms of verbs. It sometimes uses adjectives instead of verbs as well.

For example, in the continuous tenses, e.g., "He was sitting" (كان جالسًا), the word "لقد" before the past verb may express the perfect aspect, e.g., "He has left" (لقد غادر), or "He will have arrived" (سيكون قد وصل). As for perfect continuous, Arabic uses "ما كان لينقطع عن" or "ما كان ينفك" - "We had been watching TV" (ما كنا لننقطع عن مشاهدة التلفاز/ ما برحنا مشاهدة) (فريد الدين ايدن، الأزمنة في اللغة العربية، استنبول 1997).

The study sheds light on the translation of tenses and aspects from English into Arabic. This topic has not been offered to Arab students except in some practical activities in translation. Therefore, it will provide teachers, students, and translators with remarkable points in question. It can be a good reference for translating English tenses into Arabic as well.

Arab linguistics and scholars have not paid any attention to Tense and Aspect in Arabic; they just focus on metaphors, the function of words emphasizing their forms. (أيدن، 1997). Gadallah (1999) discussed the topic in his book "Translating Tenses in Arabic-English and E.A. Context. (Johne Benjamine, vol. 52, No. 3, 2006) referred to the usage of "لقد و قد" to express perfect tenses.

Nidal Ajaj discussed "The differences between the two languages," which were explained in Arabic in his essay titled (Tense and Aspect in English, at <http://learningenglish100.com>).

Najeeb (2005) suggests how to translate English tenses into Arabic.

This is how he translated tenses:

### 8.1-Present Tenses

- Metals expand on heating تتمدد المعادن بالحرارة
- She is crying أحمد نائم وهي تبكي, Ahmed is sleeping
- He has just eaten his breakfast تناول افطاره توا
- She has been eating since noon

ظلت تأكل من الظهر أو ما زالت تأكل من الظهر

### 8.2-Past Tenses

- He went home late yesterday. عاد أمس إلى البيت متأخرا

- b. He was lucky كان محظوظا
- c. He was studying all morning كان يذاكر طيلة الصباح
- d. While he was bathing, the bell rang. بينما كان يستحم، دق الجرس.
- e. I ate the food that I had bought. اكلت الطعام الذي كنت قد اشتريته.
- f. He had been studying for 12 hours before the electric current cut off. ذاكر لمدة اثني عشره ساعة قبل أن ينقطع التيار الكهربائي

### 8.3-Future Tenses

- a. I'll bring it tomorrow. سأحضرها غدا أو سوف أحضرها غدا
- b. I'll be sleeping at six. أنا سأكون نائما عند الساعة السادسة.
- c. She will have gone before you come. ستكون قد رحلت قبل أن تأتي.
- d. I'll be tired because I'll have been driving all night. سوف أكون متعبا لأنني سأكون قد قددت السيارة طوال الليل

Najeeb's model of translating tense and aspect from English into Arabic is adopted as the framework of this study.

### ***Population and Sampling:***

The population of this research comprises the students of the Branch of Translation in the Department of English at the Arts and Sciences Faculty in Messallata, one of Almergeb University's faculties. The population includes second, third, and fourth-year students to form the sample of the research. They have been chosen to study translation rather than literature.

This study has selected students from the third and fourth years as the sample. They were chosen because they have been studying translation for a period of two and three years, thus, they should have the ability to render meaning either from English into Arabic or vice versa.

The sample consists of fourteen students: six in the third year and eight in the fourth year.

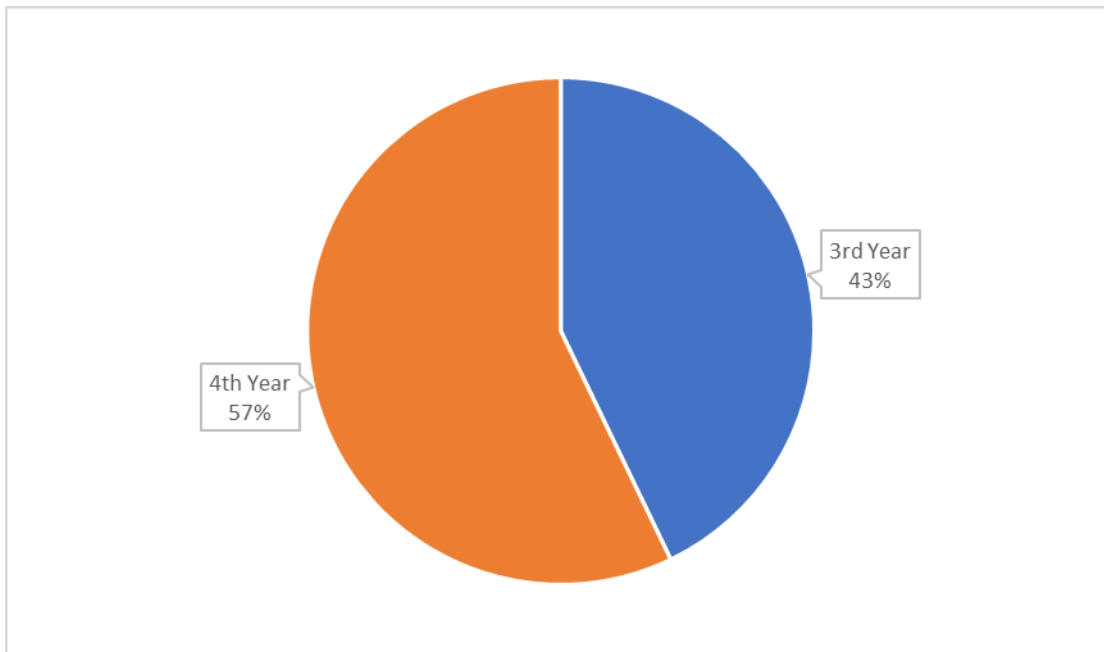


Figure 1 Students' Academic Year

All the students are female, comprising the entire community of the third and fourth years.

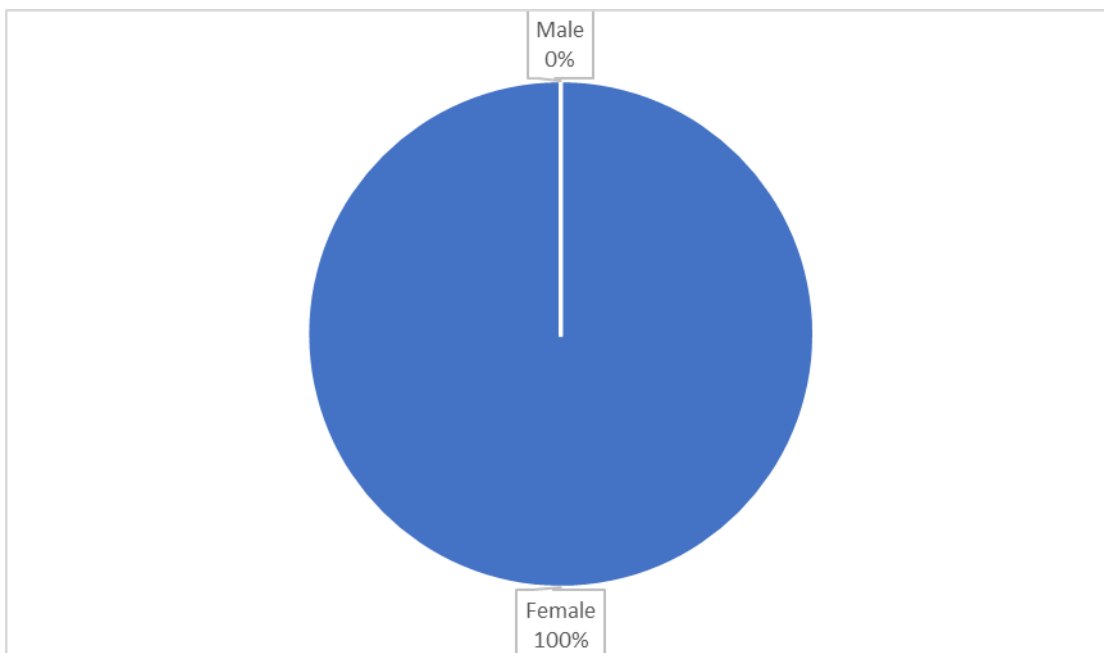


Figure 2 Sample Gender

### **Method of research:**

It is a case study that concerns itself with translating tense and aspect from English into Arabic. It is descriptive, testing the students (sample) by asking them to translate twelve simpler structured sentences. These sentences represent tenses and aspects in English, with each one representing one aspect.

The students' translations will be evaluated according to Najeeb's model of translating tense and aspect. The focus will be on the structure of verbs and any other means used in expressing tense and aspect.

The evaluation of translations will be as follows:

- A. Correct translation: A percentage of correct ones according to Najeeb's model.
- B. Closer translation: A percentage of the ones close to the correct ones.
- C. Over-translated ones: This will include any translation with additional terms. A percentage of them to the total number.
- D. The wrong or false in the percentage of the study.

With these categories in mind, the results of the evaluation will clearly show points of weakness in the sample's ability to express tense and aspect in Arabic. This weakness will be attributed to the lack of studying the topic in Arabic. The following are the twelve sentences that will be given to the sample to translate into Arabic:

1-It rains in winter.

.....

2-It is raining now.

.....

3-It has rained a lot.

.....

4-It has been raining for a week.

.....

5-It rained last night.

.....

6-It was raining when we arrived here this morning.

.....

7-It had rained before we got up this morning.

.....

8-It had been raining until we started playing football yesterday.

.....

9-It will rain tomorrow.

.....

10-It will be raining tomorrow morning.

.....

11-It will have rained tomorrow afternoon.

.....

12-It will have been raining for hours then.

.....

The evaluation will cover the terms used in expressing tense. All English sentences used in this test depend on the event (RAIN) in twelve aspects of English tenses. Therefore, all the products will include the event (تمطر) or (أمطرت), i.e., the present or past form of the Arabic verb. It sometimes combines with other terms such as (كان) and (لقد or قد). Moreover, there will be other terms that might be used by the sample of students.

### ***Data Analysis***

The participants translated the statements in question, which represent twelve tenses. The population of the study includes all the students in the third year of the translation branch. Their total number is fourteen. The analysis of the translation is as follows.

#### **A-Simple Tenses:**

All the translations are correct, despite some over-translated instances, such as when they contain the Arabic term "لقد" which expresses emphasis on meaning, whereas the original text does not include emphasis. For example, the translation of the past simple (the fifth one, "It rained last night") was translated by three students as "(لقد أمطرت البارحة)".



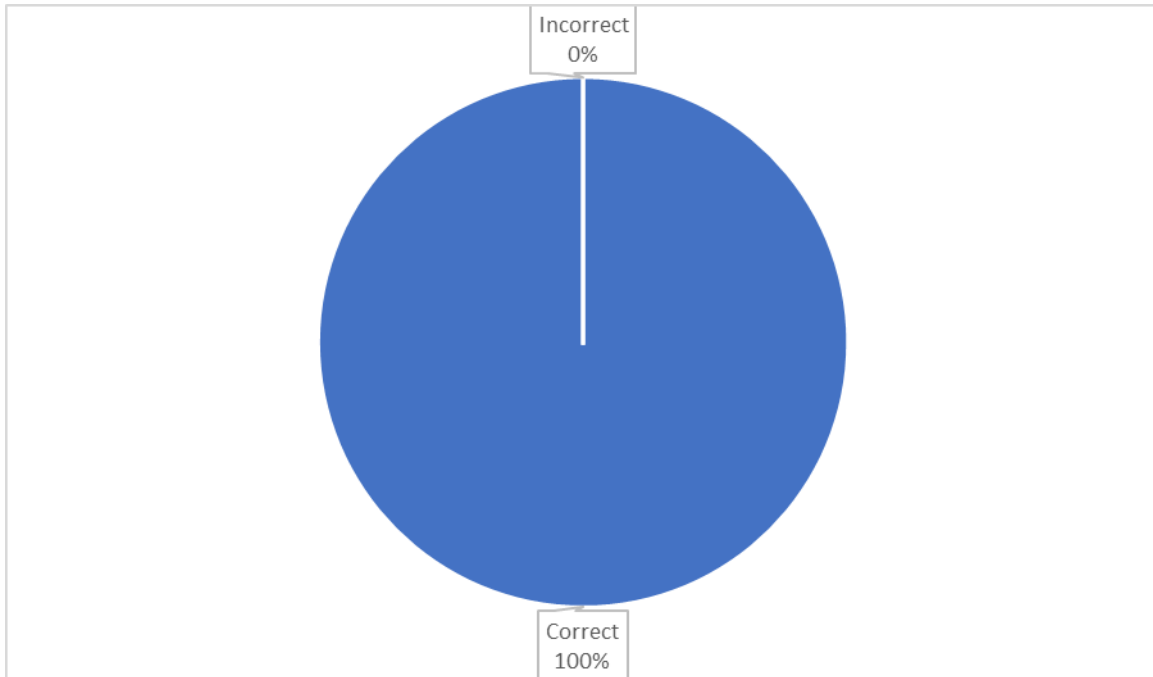


Figure 3 Simple Tenses Translation

B-Continuous(progressive) tenses are translated as follows: -

- A) The Present is almost correct; the students used the term "now" (الآن) to express the continuity of action.

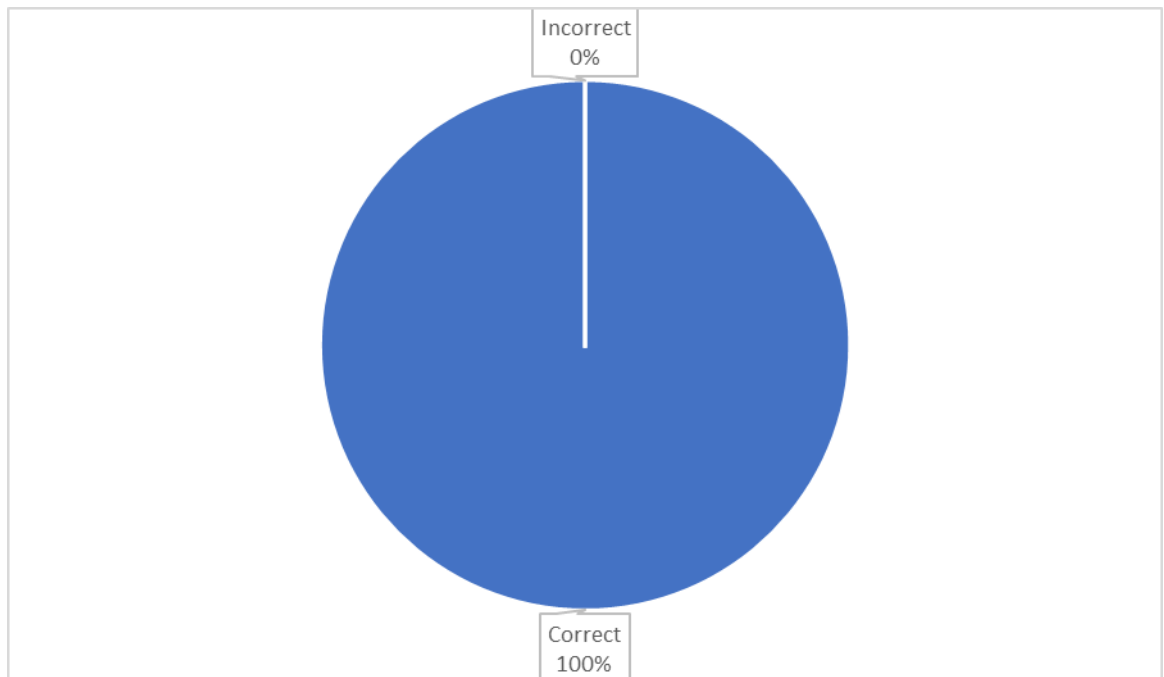


Figure 4 Progressive Tenses Translation

(It is raining now) as (إنها تمطر الآن).

B) Past is almost correct, regardless of the over-translation by three participants using the Arabic term "لقد," which has nothing to do with continuous action (It was raining ..... ) as (لقد كانت تمطر), while the expression (كانت تمطر) is enough to convey the meaning of past continuous.

C) In the assessment of future tense translations, a mere three out of fourteen students demonstrated proficiency in articulating the prolonged nature (progress) of the raining action. Their translations exemplify this capability, as follows:

- a. سيكون الجو ماطرا
- b. ستظل تمطر
- c. سوف يكون ماطرا

Conversely, the remaining participants failed to convey the sense of progression, presenting mere iterations of future simple constructions:

- a. سوف تمطر
- b. ستمطر
- c. سوف يسقط المطر

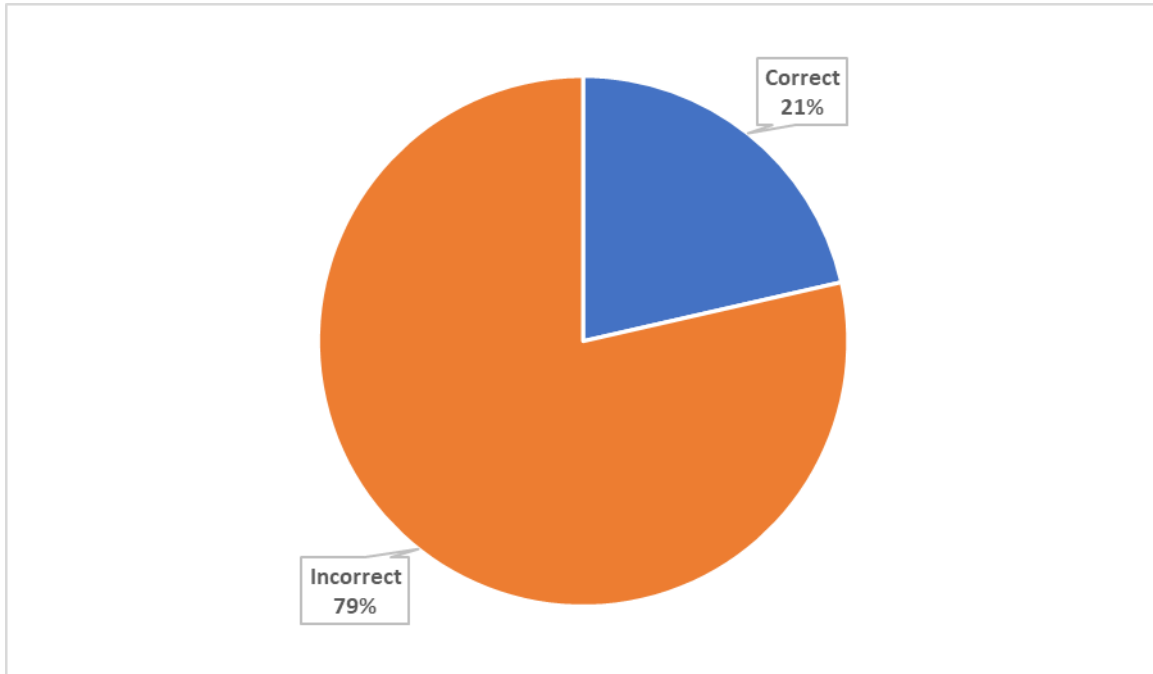


Figure 5 Future Tense Translation

This deficiency indicates the participants' incapacity to express the progressive nature of the action in future tense constructions.

C-Perfect Tenses:

1-Present perfect: - {It has rained a lot}

Three out of fourteen students could not express the sense of perfect in Arabic ,their translations were close to past simple as follows:-

a-أمطرت

b-انها أمطرت

c-أمطرت

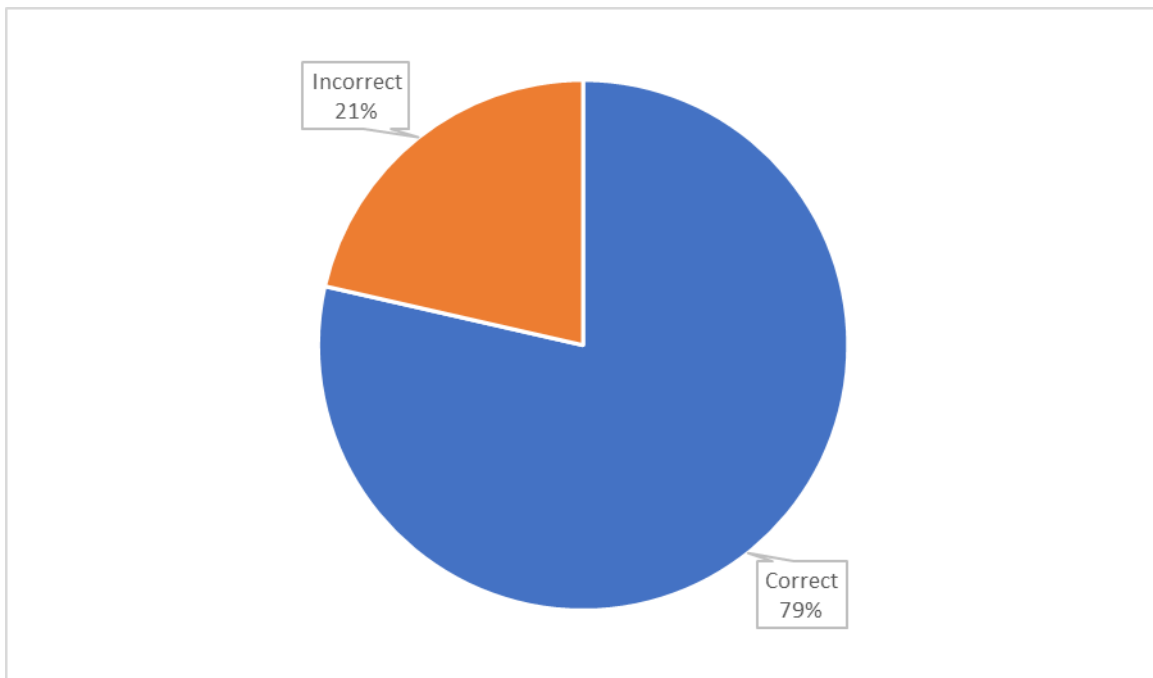


Figure 6 Present Perfect Translation

Whereas others have used the Arabic terms قد or لقد to express the sense of perfect tense such as أمطرت لقد and أمطرت قد

2-Past perfect: - {It had rained before.....}

All Participants have translated it as if it was past simple, although some of them have used the Arabic term (لقد) whereas they should use (كانت) instead (كانت قد (أمطرت

3-Future perfect- It will have rained.....

Just one student has translated it correctly as (ستكون قد أمطرت), whereas the rest of them have translated it as (سوف ستمطر) as if it is future simple. Therefore, one answer is correct which represents 7.14%, whereas thirteen answers are wrong which represents 92.86% of the sample.

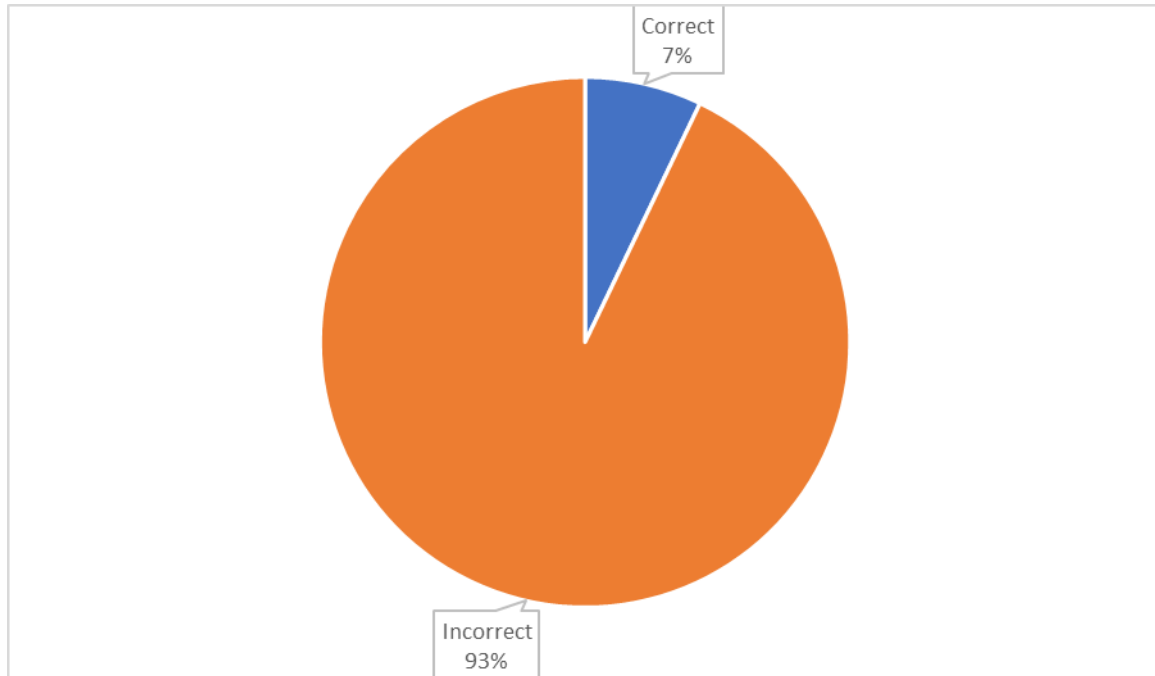


Figure 7 Future Perfect Translation

#### D-Perfect continuous:

a-The present ((It has been raining).

Seven responses, constituting 50% of the sample, are deemed accurate. Conversely, the remaining seven responses are categorized as incorrect, as they either deviate significantly from the correct aspect or are outright wrong. This also constitutes 50% of the sample.

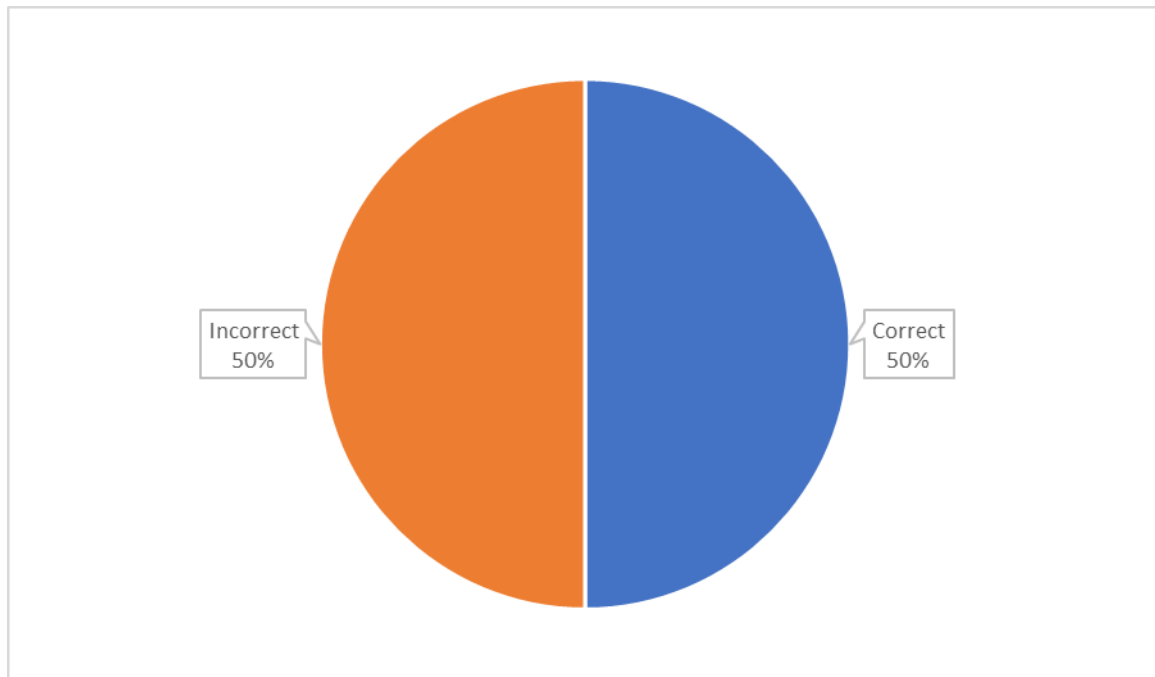


Figure 8 Present Perfect Continuous Translation

#### b-Past; (It had been raining.....)

Four responses are accurate, utilizing terms indicative of past progression, such as (بقيت، طلت، استمرت), comprising 28.57% of the sample. Conversely, the remaining responses are deemed incorrect, as they fail to convey the sense of past perfect continuous. Instead, they predominantly align with past simple or continuous tenses, with some instances of expressing present or present continuous. This inaccuracy is evident in 71.43% of the sample.

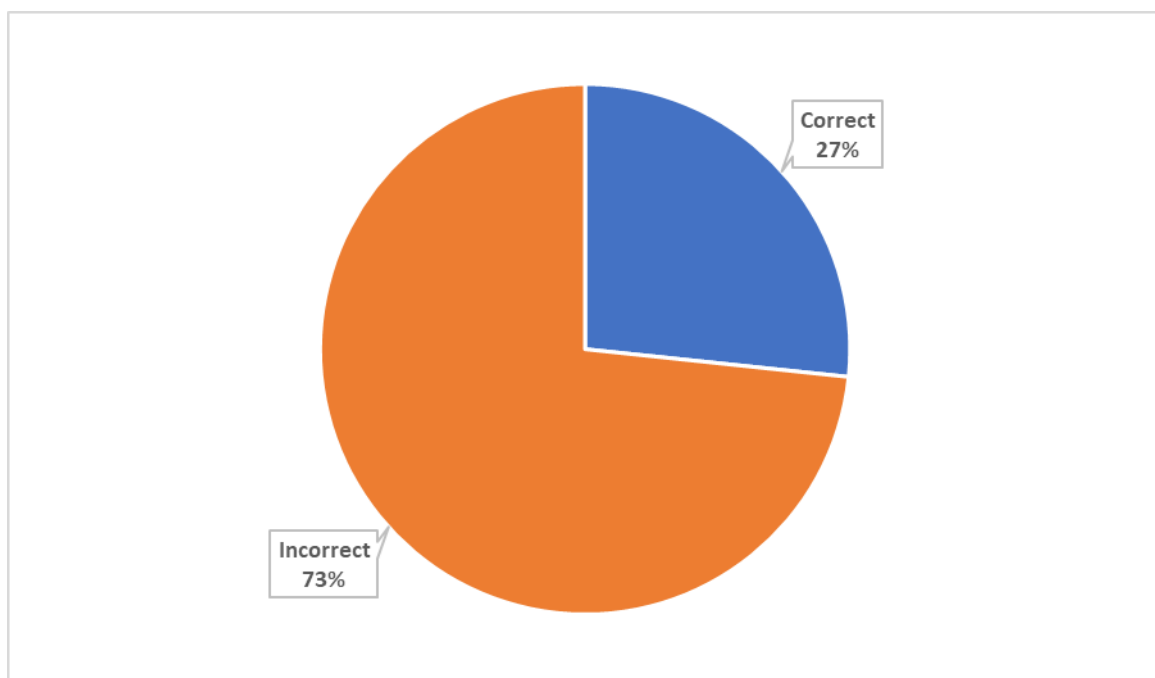


Figure 9 Past Perfect Continuous Translation

#### C-Future: ((It will have been raining.....))

No response exhibits complete accuracy; the majority merely conveys either future simple or future continuous tenses. Consequently, all responses are classified as incorrect, encompassing 100% of the sample. This indicates that none of the participants provided a correct answer, yielding a 0% accuracy rate within the sample.

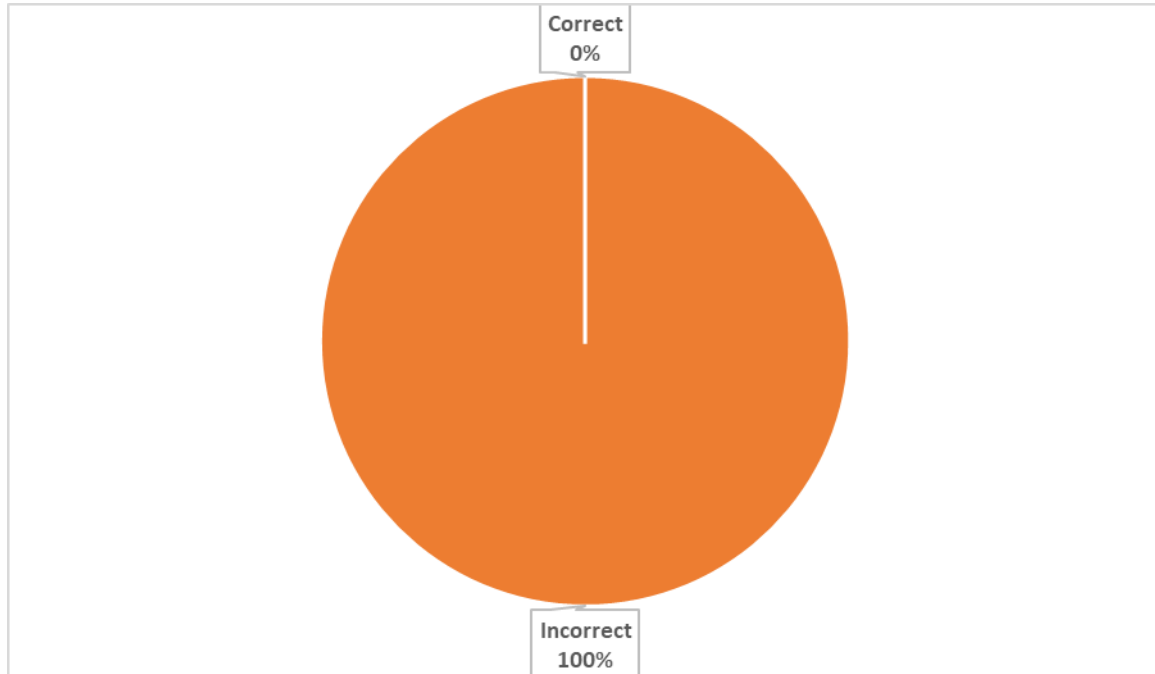


Figure 10 Future Perfect Continuous Translation

### **Discussion:**

Deficiency in articulating tense and aspect in Arabic. This inadequacy can be traced back to their limited exposure to the study of the Arabic language. It is incumbent upon translation educators to allocate more emphasis and concentration on this subject.

Translation students at the Faculty of Sciences and Arts encounter challenges when translating tense and aspect from English into Arabic, with specific hurdles emerging in the realms of perfect and perfect continuous aspects. Hence, instructors should prioritize addressing these aspects in their teaching methodologies.

### **Results:**

No challenges were encountered in translating simple aspects, notwithstanding instances of over translation. Concerning continuous tenses, some participants struggled to convey them accurately, especially in future contexts. It became apparent that students encountered difficulties when translating perfect tenses, particularly in cases involving perfect continuous expressions. This was particularly evident in the translation of Future Perfect Continuous, where none of the students could produce a suitable expression that captured the intended meaning. This observed weakness can be attributed to the neglect of studying tense and aspect in Arabic.

**Conclusion:**

This study aimed to examine the proficiency of third and fourth-year students in the translation branch in rendering English tense and aspect into Arabic. The research sample comprised all third and fourth-year students who were tasked with translating twelve sentences representing various aspects of English tenses into Arabic. The research employed an observational method through a written test, requiring the participants to translate the provided sentences into Arabic. The study findings revealed the following outcomes:

- a. Students demonstrated proficiency in translating simple tenses.
- b. Difficulties arose when students attempted to translate future continuous tenses.
- c. The translation of perfect tenses led to confusion among students, resulting in a high incidence of errors.
- d. Perfect continuous tenses posed the greatest challenge, with none of the participants providing a correct translation for the past aspect.

**Recommendations:**

Translation instructors should intensify their focus on aiding students in translating tense and aspect, both through assignments and dedicated workshops utilizing diverse educational materials. Additional resources on this subject should be explored collaboratively by teachers and students to draw insights from other research studies

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## Contents

Search title	Page number
probability collectives algorithm for solving knapsack problem Mohamed Alhamrouni Lutfia khalifa	6
ترجمة الأزمنة واتجاهاتها من الإنجليزية إلى العربية أ.محمد عياد حمزة	16
التحديات التي يواجهها طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة المرقب أثناء التحدث اسم الباحث: محمد فرج سعيد الدليم	31
(الأدب كوسيلة لتعزيز مهارات الاستماع والتحدث لطلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية على المستوى الجامعي بكلية الآداب والعلوم-مسلاتة) Literature as a Means of Enhancing Listening and Speaking Skills for EFL University- level Students at College of Arts and Sciences-Missalata أمنة مفتاح علي عمار	40
( استكشاف تحديات ودوافع الطالبات الجامعيات المتزوجات بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية مسلاتة) Exploring Challenges and Motivations of Female Married Undergraduate Students English Department, Msllata زمزم امحمد زرقون	54
Epidemiology of Hepatitis B and C Infection in Msallata city in reference to Age Groups and Genders. (وبائية الاصابة بالتهاب الكبد بي و سي في مدينة امسلاتة حسب الفئات العمرية و الجنس) Fathi Abdallah Shakurfow, Ali Salam Faraj Edalim	69
Some Biological Effects of Libyan Propolis extract on Male albino Rats Treated with Aluminum chloride Mahmoud Mohamed Howas, Ragab Farag Al-Kazaghly	76