

The difference between the two languages, Arabic and English, in expressing futurity is significant. Nevertheless, this cannot be taken as an argument against an Arabic future tense since nowadays we are talking about MSA and that the use of the present form to express futurity is a universal phenomenon (Comrie, 1985, pp. 44–45; Declerck, 1991, p. 10; for further discussion, see Al-Khawalda, 1998). For instance, it is contended that *will* indicates a general tendency, probability, willingness, etc., rather than future time, e.g., "Boys will be boys" (Pennington, 1988, p. 71). The data demonstrate that such usages typical of English (the nontemporal reference of the future morpheme) are not found either in CA or MSJA. Furthermore, /sayaf9alu/, ("he will do") has one and only one usage: locating the situation sometime after the moment of speech. It scores 91.7% in the speech of the Jordanian Prime Minister and 97.7% in the translation of Acapulco Bay, whereas /sawfa yaf9alu/ and /yaf9alu/ are used marginally in both. To sum up, according to our data and the above discussion, the future in Arabic is a true tense that is expressed primarily by the verb form /sayaf9alu/. The data indicate that futurity in MSJA is expressed basically by the future verb form /sayaf9alu/. In other words, the arguments that are used to show that English lacks a future tense are not applicable to Arabic. The dispute over whether the future is a tense in English, mentioned above, cannot be applied to Arabic. That is, it truly expresses future temporal reference. Another argument against treating the future as a tense and that *will* is the future morpheme is that there are many ways to express futurity in English. Table 4 shows the five general ways to express futurity in English, and none of them could be considered marginal. The situation in Arabic and in particular MSJA, which is the focus of this paper, is different. The data support this argument.