

MORPHOLOGICAL AND SYNTACTIC PERSPECTIVES ON VERB TENSES: IBN TAYMIYYAH'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO ARABIC GRAMMAR

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Abstract: The study of verb tenses in the Arabic language has long been a fundamental aspect of Arabic grammar, with traditional classifications focusing on morphological tense. However, the complexity of verb tense interpretation, particularly when considering the influence of context, requires a deeper exploration. Ibn Taymiyyah, a prominent figure in Arabic linguistic thought, offers a unique perspective on verb tenses by categorizing them not only morphologically but also syntactically. This research aimed to explore Ibn Taymiyyah's classification of verb tenses in the Arabic language, focusing on both morphological and syntactic structures. While traditional Arabic grammar generally categorizes verb tenses into past, present, and future based on the verb's inherent form, Ibn Taymiyyah introduces a more nuanced perspective by emphasizing the role of context in determining verb tense, a concept known as syntactic tense. This study utilized a descriptive-analytical approach to examine Ibn Taymiyyah's works, comparing his views on tense with those of earlier and contemporary Arabic grammarians. The findings reveal that Ibn Taymiyyah aligns with the traditional morphological categorization of tenses but introduces significant differences in how syntactic factors affect the interpretation of tense. Specifically, his understanding of syntactic tense, which is influenced by contextual elements, contrasts with the more rigid, form-based definitions of tense found in earlier grammatical traditions. The study also highlights the unique aspects of Ibn Taymiyyah's theories, such as his interpretation of لا يفعل (lā yaf'alu – he does not do/will do) as negating both present and future, which deviates from the conventional view of negating only the future. The research contributes to Arabic linguistic thought by emphasizing the importance of context in the study of verb tenses and offers new insights into the dynamic relationship between morphology and syntax in Arabic grammar. This work not only deepens our understanding of Ibn Taymiyyah's influence on Arabic linguistics but also provides a foundation for future research in both classical and contemporary linguistic studies.

Keywords: verb tenses; morphology; syntax; Ibn Taimiyyah

INTRODUCTION

Some scholars believe that Arabic is the most extensive and diverse language in expressing meanings (Ibn Katsir, 1419, p. 4/313) for its ability to convey a single meaning through hundreds of synonymous words (Ats-Tsa'alabi, 1422, p. 211), flexibility to precede the latter and to delay the former

(Al-Buwaidhoni, 1434, p. 197), and its use of feminization, pluralization, and other morphological derivations, which result in nuanced meanings. Moreover, Arabic's trilateral root system forms the backbone of its linguistic creativity, allowing the generation of numerous related words and concepts from a single root, which amplifies its expressive

power (Holes, 2018). Its intricate syntax, marked by a system of agreement in gender, number, and case, further enables Arabic to convey subtle variations in meaning with precision (Ryding, 2014). This linguistic sophistication contributes to its designation as the medium of divine revelation, as the Quran's intricate linguistic features challenge and inspire readers in both meaning and aesthetics. The Quranic text itself highlights the uniqueness of Arabic in expressing divine intent, emphasizing that its linguistic structure is inimitable (Al-Azami, 2011). Thus, the choice of Arabic for the Quran is often seen as a testament to the language's unparalleled capacity for rich and profound expression.

Arabic's linguistic richness and flexibility are evident in its verb system, traditionally classified into three tenses: past, present, and imperative. This categorization, widely agreed upon by scholars (Sibawaih, 1408, p. 1/12), forms the foundation of Arabic's morphological structure. The past tense denotes actions that have already occurred, the present tense encompasses both ongoing actions and those yet to occur, and the imperative expresses commands for actions that have not yet taken place. This classification is known as morphological tense—a tense derived directly from the verb form without considering its context (Hasan, 1994, pp. 240–241). For instance, the form *فَعَلَ* (fa'ala - he did) signifies that an action occurred in the past, *يَفْعَلُ* (ya'alu - he does/will do) indicates that it takes place in the present or future, and *إِفْعَلْ* (if'al - do) denotes a future occurrence. These distinctions focus on the verb's inherent temporal aspect, independent of external contextual factors.

When compared to English, which features sixteen distinct verb forms spread across three main tenses—past, present, and future—each further divided into simple, perfect, continuous, and perfect continuous aspects, Arabic's morphological classification might seem relatively straightforward. However, this apparent simplicity is counterbalanced by Arabic's reliance on syntactic and contextual nuances to convey intricate temporal and modal meanings (Ryding, 2014). While English explicitly encodes distinctions like continuity and completion within its verb forms, Arabic leverages particles, sentence structure, and contextual markers to achieve similar

expressiveness (Holes, 2018). This reliance on contextual flexibility highlights Arabic's efficiency and adaptability in expression, where a single verb form can carry multiple meanings depending on its environment.

Rather than viewing one system as inherently more advanced than the other, these contrasts illustrate different approaches to linguistic expression. English prioritizes explicit tense-aspect combinations, while Arabic places greater emphasis on adaptability and economy of expression. Both systems reflect distinct cultural and linguistic evolutions, each offering sophisticated strategies for encoding time and modality. Arabic's reliance on context and syntactic interplay further affirms its capacity for precision and depth, showcasing the language's linguistic ingenuity and historical significance (Holes, 2018; Owens, 2019).

While the morphological classification of Arabic verbs provides a foundational understanding of their temporal aspects, it is insufficient to capture the nuanced ways in which meaning is conveyed through context. This is where syntactic tense comes into play, offering a more dynamic perspective on how verb tenses operate within sentences. Ibn Taymiyyah (2019) introduced a theory called syntactic tense, which refers to the tense determined by contextual clues, also known as contextual or structural tense. Unlike morphological tense, which is tied to the verb's inherent form, syntactic tense becomes apparent only within the broader syntactic structure (Hindawi, 1429, p. 50). For example, in the Quranic verse:

﴿أَتَىٰ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوهُ﴾ (النحل: 1)

(Atā amrullāhi falā tasta'jilūh)

The command of Allah has come, so do not hasten it (Al-Nahl: 1)

The verb *أتى* (Atā - has come) morphologically belongs to the past tense, indicating an action that has occurred and concluded. However, its syntactic tense indicates the future, as the verbal clue following it, "So do not hasten it," suggests that the event will occur later (Al-Hatari, 2018, p. 437). This contextual shift in tense illustrates how Arabic leverages syntactic relationships to express complex temporal meanings, extending the interpretive possibilities of its verb system.

To provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject, the researcher reviewed several significant studies that are related to the current investigation. These studies, each examining various aspects of tense usage and derivation in the Arabic language, offer valuable insights into different approaches and methodologies. While each of these studies contributes uniquely to the field, they vary in scope, focus, and the primary sources they engage with. Below is a summary of the studies identified, along with their relevance to the present research on Ibn Taymiyyah's views on verb tenses.

The first study is one authored by the researcher, titled "Ihtijaj Ibn Taimiyyah bi al-Istytiqaq fi al-Masail al-'Aqdiyyah" (Ibn Taymiyyah's Argument with Derivation in Doctrinal Issues), published in *Jurnal Dirasat Islamiyah: Al-Majalis* in 2024. This study explored how Ibn Taymiyyah used derivation as an argument in doctrinal matters, categorizing it into three types—minor, intermediate, and major—to address six doctrinal issues. While this work shares the same methodology and primary sources, it does not delve into verb tenses in the Arabic language. The present research, by contrast, focuses on the classification and syntactic applications of verb tenses, an aspect not covered in the earlier study (Gumilar, 2024).

Dr. Ahmad Abu Al-Hajjaj's 2022 study, titled "Mukhallishat al-Fi'l al-Mudhari' li al-Istiqbal wa Atsaruha fi al-Ma'na wa al-'rab" (Indicators of the Future Tense in the Present Verb and Their Impact on Meaning and Syntax), published in the *Scientific Journal of the Faculty of Islamic and Arabic Studies, Al-Azhar University*, examines how the present verb can indicate the future tense, categorizing indicators into operative verbal, non-operative verbal, and non-verbal types. While this study focuses exclusively on the future tense, it does not address the broader classification of tenses or the role of context in determining them. The present research, however, examines both morphological and syntactic tenses across a range of verbs, offering a more comprehensive exploration of temporal structures in the Arabic language (Ahmad, 2022).

Saadi Ramadhani and Samieh Hosnalayan's 2021 study, "Abniyyah az-Zaman wa Dalalatuha fi al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah" (The Structures of Tense and Their Significance in

the Arabic Language), published in *Buhuts fi al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah*, discusses the distinction between morphological tense, which is context-independent, and syntactic tense, which depends on context. This categorization aligns with the present study's focus on both types of tenses, but Ramadhani and Hosnalayan's research does not provide detailed examples or specific applications, nor does it engage with Ibn Taymiyyah's works. In contrast, the current research highlights Ibn Taymiyyah's contributions to these concepts, offering a deeper examination of his approach to tense within Arabic grammar (Ramadhani, 2021).

Dr. Abdullah Ali Al-Hattari's 2018 study, "Atsar al-Mughayarah fi Azminah al-Fi'l fi al-Quran al-Karim" (The Impact of Shifts in Verb Tenses in the Quran), published in the *Scientific Journal of the Faculty of Arabic Language, Assiut University*, identifies shifts in verb tenses in the Quran, such as from past to present or imperative. While Al-Hattari explores syntactic tenses, his analysis is based on Quranic texts, whereas the present research centers on Ibn Taymiyyah's work. Although both studies examine the role of context in determining tense, the present research focuses specifically on Ibn Taymiyyah's interpretation of verb tenses across a wider array of texts (Al-Hattari, 2018).

These studies provide valuable contributions to understanding Arabic verb tenses, but the current research offers a distinctive focus on Ibn Taymiyyah's perspectives, exploring both the morphological and syntactic tenses in-depth, especially through the lens of his written works.

This research seeks to address several critical questions within the field of Arabic linguistics, particularly focusing on Ibn Taymiyyah's contributions to the understanding of verb tenses. The study examines the morphological and syntactic tenses of verbs as discussed by Ibn Taymiyyah in his works. While Arabic verb tenses have been widely explored by both classical and contemporary scholars, Ibn Taymiyyah's unique perspective, particularly in relation to how verb tenses are understood in a syntactic context, remains underexplored. This study intends to fill this gap by providing a thorough analysis of Ibn Taymiyyah's views on both morphological tenses (those inherently

indicated by the form of the verb) and syntactic tenses (those inferred from the surrounding context), as outlined in his writings.

The research also investigates whether Ibn Taymiyyah's ideas on verb tenses were discussed by his predecessors. Classical Arabic grammarians, such as Sibawaih, established foundational concepts of tense and aspect. Ibn Taymiyyah, however, introduced nuanced interpretations, particularly through his integration of syntactic factors that shape the understanding of verb tenses. By comparing Ibn Taymiyyah's theories with those of earlier grammarians, this study sheds light on his innovations and refinements in the field. It also explores whether these tenses have been revisited or expanded upon by contemporary researchers, providing a modern perspective on how Ibn Taymiyyah's work has influenced or been overlooked in recent linguistic studies.

This research is novel in its effort to bridge historical and contemporary perspectives on Arabic verb tenses, which offers new insights into how Ibn Taymiyyah's theories relate to the broader development of linguistic thought. Specifically, the study addresses a gap in the existing literature by focusing on the syntactic dimension of tense, which is often overshadowed by the more widely studied morphological aspects of Arabic grammar. By exploring how Ibn Taymiyyah's concept of syntactic tense aligns with or diverges from those of earlier grammarians and contemporary linguists, the research aims to make a significant contribution to the development of linguistic thought, particularly in the fields of morphology and syntax. This examination not only deepens our understanding of Arabic grammar but also underscores Ibn Taymiyyah's continued relevance in contemporary discussions about language and meaning.

METHOD

The current research employed the descriptive-analytical approach, frequently used to study a specific language and its related aspects within a defined time and place. It was carried out by describing and analyzing particular components of the language, including its phonetics, vocabularies, morphological structures, grammatical rules, and semantics (Saibokir & Najahi, 2019, p. 47).

The approach was implemented in four key steps: first, induction of the topics from the primary data, which are the morphological and syntactic tenses of verbs from their sources, the works of Ibn Taymiyyah, which are: *Majmu' Al-Fatawa*, *Jawab Al-I'tiradat Al-Misriyya*, *Sharh 'Umdat Al-Fiqh*, *Daqa'iq Al-Tafsir*, *Al-Safadiyya*, *Dar' Ta'arud Al-'Aql wa Al-Naql*, *Al-Jawab Al-Sahih liman Baddala Din Al-Masih*, *Kitab Al-Iman*, *Al-Tis'iniyya*, and *Tanbih Al-Rajul Al-'Aqil 'ala Tamwih Al-Jadal Al-Batil*.

The second is data collection. The data were collected through classifications according to their temporal types, starting from the morphological tense to the syntactic tense, and proceeding from the past tense to the future tense.

The third is data analysis. The data analysis techniques involved comparing Ibn Taymiyyah's views with those of the grammarians who came before him and who specialized in this field, including Sibawaih, Ibn Al-Khashshab, Ibn Babshadh, Al-Zamakhsyari, Al-Suhaili, Al-Anbari, and Ibn Hisyam. This was supplemented by comments based on the opinions of contemporary scholars, such as Dr. Tammam Hasan, Dr. Ibrahim Al-Samarrai, Dr. Muhammad Al-Rihani, Dr. Malik Al-Muttalibi, Fadhil Al-Saqi, and Dr. Abdul Hamid Hindawi.

The fourth is a conclusion drawing, which provides answers to the research problems and questions and a statement of the contribution, either to the benefit of readers or to development in this field.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As previously stated in the introduction, tense in the Arabic language is divided into two: tense understood from the verb itself and tense inferred from context. The first is referred to as morphological tense, and the second is called syntactic tense. The discussion begins with morphological tense, as it is the foundation of all verbs—each verb inherently indicates a tense. Then, it proceeds to syntactic tense, which is derived from external contextual clues.

Morphological Tense According to Ibn Taymiyyah in Comparison with Former and Contemporary Scholars

Ibn Taymiyyah cited grammarians as stating that verb is divided into three tenses: past, present, and imperative, which are

identifiable by their forms (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1416, p. 84; 1416, p. 7/134). It refers to what is known as morphological tense. It is widely recognized and agreed upon that, among all Arabic words, only verbs are directly associated with tense, as tense is one of the two meanings inherent in verbs, alongside the action, as Ibn Malik noted (Ibn Malik, 1442, p. 183).

المَصْدَرُ اسْمٌ مَّا سِوَى الزَّمَانِ مِنْ ...
مَدْلُولِي الْفِعْلِ كَرَأْمِنِ) مِنْ (أَمِن)

(al mashdaru ismu mā siwa azzamāni min ... madlulayil fi'li ka(amni) min (amin))

The masdar is a noun that denotes the action apart from time...

For example, amn (أمن) is derived from amina (أمن)

In other words, the masdar refers solely to the action without indicating tense, while the verb conveys both the action and the tense. Tense is an intrinsic part of the verb and can be identified from its form. No other word, even those that convey the verb's meaning such as the *masdar* and adjectives, shares this feature (Al-Saqi, 1397, p. 235).

Ibn Taymiyyah cited Sibawaih's opinion, which he supported, that the past tense verb (*fi'l madi*) is constructed for any action that occurred in the past (Ibn Taymiyyah, 2019, p. 167). It corresponds to what Sibawaih stated in his book, where he described the verb as a type of word derived from the masdar and associated with time. When it is linked to the past, it is called *fi'il madi* (Sibawaih, 1408, vol. 1, p. 12). For example, the verb ذهب (dzahaba – he went) indicates that the action "going" occurred and was completed in the past. The tense can be identified even when the verb appears without any surrounding context, which is called morphological tense.

The second type of verb is the one that indicates all tenses except the past. It is called the present tense (*fi'l mudhari'*), which indicates the present, future, and continuous tenses (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1416, p. 16/551; 2019, p. 127). On this basis, its exact time can be determined only with context. This view is consistent with what Sibawaih noted, that the present tense conveys an absolute time and is valid for any non-conclusive tense (Sibawaih, 1408, vol. 1, p. 12).

The third type of verb is the imperative verb (*fi'l al-amr*). Arabic has a specific form to request an action authoritatively, known as the imperative verb (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1420, vol. 3, p. 1034). Sometimes, the imperative meaning can also be understood from the present tense form when prefixed with the imperative particle 'lam' (e.g., ليفعل - liyaf'al – do) (Ibn Taymiyyah, 2019, vol. 1, p. 484). The imperative, in terms of tense, denotes a specific time: it refers to an action that has not yet occurred (Ibn Taymiyyah, 2019, p. 127). Similarly, Sibawaih stated that a verb indicating an unperformed action while conveying the meaning of a command is called an imperative verb, such as اذهب (idzhab – go) (Sibawaih, 1408, vol. 1, p. 12). Its meaning can be paraphrased as: "Know that I am asking you to go" (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1420, vol. 3, p. 830).

To explain the division of morphological tenses of verbs according to Ibn Taymiyyah, the summary is presented as follows:

Table 1: Morphological Tenses of Verbs According to Ibn Taymiyyah

Form	Tense
<i>Fa'ala</i>	Past
<i>Yaf'alu</i>	Present, Future, and Continuous
<i>If'al</i>	Future

These three tenses do not apply when the verb is placed within the context of a sentence, but they are made as a standard for determining the syntactic tense within that context. In other words, morphological tense has a role in defining syntactic tense (Al-Mathlabi, 1987, p. 30).

For example, the verb أتى (atā – has come) in the following Qur'anic verses has different syntactic tenses:

﴿أَتَى أَمْرُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوهُ﴾

(Atā amrullāhi falā tasta'jilūh)

"The command of Allah has come, so do not hasten it" (Al-Nahl: 1)

﴿فَتَوَلَّى فِرْعَوْنُ فَجَمَعَ كَيْدَهُ ثُمَّ أَتَى﴾

(fatawallā fir'aunu fajama'a kaidahu tsumma atā)

"Pharaoh then withdrew, orchestrated his scheme, then returned" (Ta-Ha: 60)

﴿وَلَا يُفْلِحُ السَّاحِرُ حَيْثُ أَتَى﴾

(wa lā yuflihus sāhiru haitsu atā)

And magicians can never succeed wherever they go.” (Ta-Ha: 69)

The word “*atā*” in the first verse indicates the future tense, inferred from what comes after it: *فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوهُ* (falā tasta’jilūhu - so do not hasten it), which implies a future occurrence. In the second verse, the word “*atā*” refers to the past tense, as it is conjoined with past verbs: *فَجَمَعَ كَيْدَهُ* (fajama’a kaidahū - orchestrated his scheme). In the third verse, the word “*atā*” denotes a continuous tense as it functions as a conditional clause for an ongoing action: *وَلَا يُفْلِحُ السَّاحِرُ* (wa lā yuflihuh sāhiru - and magicians will not succeed).

However, these syntactic tenses cannot be separated from the morphological tense, which is the past tense.

In the first verse, the past tense is used to mean the future to confirm the certainty of the matter, which is ‘His command will inevitably come as if it were already completed and finalized in the speaker’s perspective’. This meaning would not be completely conveyed using the present tense with the particle of futurity ‘*sa*’, such as *سَيَأْتِي أَمْرُ اللَّهِ* (saya’ti amrullahi - the command of Allah will come). Some interpreters said it is because the event is close to happening (Al-Zamakhsyari, 1987, p. 2/592). Some also said it is intended to emphasize the significance and inspire fear (Al-Alusi, 1415, p. 7/334).

In the second example, the syntactic tense derived from the context does not differ from its morphological tense. The context reinforces its origin, which is the past tense because it is conjoined with another past-tense verb.

In the third example, the conditional verb following “*hāitsu*” (wherever) appears in the past tense to indicate continuity. That is, whenever the magician performs his magic, he will never succeed. When an ongoing action is expressed using the past tense, it indicates fulfillment and completeness, as is its original function.

From these examples, we learn that the former grammarians made the three types of verbs—past, present, and imperative—a standard for determining their syntactic tense (Hindawi, 1429, p. 51).

The Syntactic Tense according to Ibn Taymiyyah and the Opinions of His Predecessors and Successors

Context has a significant role in determining grammatical tense (Muhammad, 2015, p. 40). This issue has existed since the era of Sibawaih, who provided examples: *أَتَيْتُكَ أَمْسًا وَسَأَتِيكَ غَدًا* (ataituka amsi wa sa ātika ghadan - I came to you yesterday and I will come to you tomorrow,” and this is an example of a good, straight sentence because the context is consistent with their grammatical tenses, which are the past and the future. However, saying: *سَوْفَ أَتِيكَ أَمْسًا* (Saufa ātika ams - I will come to you yesterday,” is absurd and false because the context conflicts with the morphological tense (Sibawaih, 1408, pp. 1/25-26).

Ibn Taymiyyah followed the approach of his predecessors among the grammarians and did not ignore the syntactic tense. He saw that the context might change the morphological tense and shift it to a new tense that fits the context. Below are some of the syntactic tenses with their contexts as mentioned by Ibn Taymiyyah in his books:

Negative Simple Past Tense

When the present tense is preceded by the negation particle lam (لم), it negates the past, as in: *لَمْ يَذْهَبْ* (lam yadzhab - he didn’t go) and *لَمْ يَأْتِ* (lam ya’ti - he didn’t come), because lam turns the present tense into the past tense (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1416, p. 16/506). This aligns with what Sibawaih stated, that the negation of *فَعَلَ* (fa’ala - he did) with the addition of “*lam*” to its present form results in *لَمْ يَفْعَلْ* (lam yaf’al - he didn’t do) (Sibawaih, 1408, p. 3/117).

Dr. Tamam Hasan mentioned the reason for negating the past tense in Arabic using the present tense consistently, as most negation particles are used with the present tense, such as: *لَيْسَ* (ليس), *لَمْ* (لم), *لَمَّا* (لما), *لَا* (لا), *لَنْ* (لن), and *مَا* (ما). However, those used with the past tense are only *لَا* (لا) and *مَا* (ما), and they are used to indicate prayer or supplication (Hasan, 1994, p. 237), as in the example: *لَا رَحْمَ الْكُفَّارِ* (Lā rahima al kuffāru - May the disbelievers not be given mercy). It is also used for affirmative supplications, such as: *أَعِزَّكَ اللَّهُ وَأَبْقَاكَ* (A’azzaka Allahu wa abqāka - May God honor and preserve you), and the like (Al-Suhaili, 1412, p. 111).

The Affirmative Repeated Past Tense

Ibn Taymiyyah mentioned that the phrase كان يفعل (Kāna yaf'alu – he used to do) is used to indicate the repetition of an action in the past, not just once or twice (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1440, p. 1/564). This is similar to the statement of the Prophet to Fatimah bint Abi Hubaysh: دَعِيَ الصَّلَاةَ قَدْرَ الْأَيَّامِ الَّتِي كُنْتَ تَجْبِضِينَ فِيهَا (da'i assholāta qadral ayyāmi allati kunti tahidhina fiḥā - Leave the prayer for as many days as you used to menstruate) (Bukhari, 1414, p. 1/124), meaning as long as you menstruated in the past.

What Ibn Taymiyyah said is not far from what Dr. Ibrahim As-Samirai suggested, as this formula consists of two verbs, the first: كان (kāna) which specifies the past tense, and the second: يفعل (yaf'alu) which indicates continuity, indicating that the event is ongoing in the past (As-Samirai, 1386, p. 33).

Negative Perpetual Tense

If the sentence comes in the form of "لم يكن يفعل" (Lam yakun yaf'al – he did not do) or "لم يكن فاعلاً" (Lam yakun fā'ilan – he was not doing), such as in the verse: "لَمْ يَكُنِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ مُتَفَكِّحِينَ" (lam yakunilladzīna kafarū min ahlil-kitābi wal-musyrikīna munfakkīna - The disbelievers from the People of the Book and the polytheists were not going to desist 'from disbelief') (Al-Bayyina: 1). It means, they were not separating, implying the negation of both the present and future. This is because the present tense verb and the active participle indicate a perpetual time. The form "ما كان" (mā kāna – not doing) does not indicate past time but it states that it is always ongoing, which contrasts with the form "لم يكن قد فعل" (lam yakun qad fa'ala - had not done) (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1416, p. 16/506, 509).

Dr. Tammam Hasan has a different view contrary to that of Ibn Taymiyyah. According to him, whenever the present tense verb is preceded by "لم", it denotes the negation of the past. Similarly, when used with "لم يكن" (lam yakun), it does not deviate from the meaning of the past, and it is the opposite of "كان" (kāna) in affirmation, and what comes after it, such as "يفعل" (yaf'alu – he does) or "فاعلاً" (fā'ilan - doer), indicates the meaning of renewal (Hasan, 1994, p. 247). This perspective is more accurate according to the researcher.

Negative recent Interrupted Past

Ibn Taymiyyah viewed that the construction "لم يكن قد فعل" (lam yakun qad fa'ala - had not done) or "ما كان قد فعل" (mā kāna qad fa'ala - not doing) distinct from the permanent form previously mentioned. He stated: "لم يكن" (lam yakun arrajulu ātiyan - the man was not coming) is different from saying: "لم يكن" (lam yakun arrajulu qad atâ - the man had not yet come) (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1416, p. 16/507). This construction negates the recent, discontinuous past, as described by Dr. Muhammad Al-Rihani (Al-Raihani, n.d., p. 381). This is because the word لم negates the past, while قد brings the past closer to the present (Ibn Hisyam, 1985, p. 229).

Affirmative Past Connected to the Present

If we want to express the past tense connected to the present, we use the formula ما زال فاعلاً (mā zāla fā'ilan – he has been doing) (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1416, p. 16/507). This opinion was supported by Dr. Kamal Rasyid, who said that all sisters of كان (kāna) are preceded by negation tools, such as ما زال (mā zāla), which convey the meaning of continuity and connection to the present tense (Rasyid, 1428, p. 170).

Affirmative Future Perfect

If a verb appears in the formula إنه فعل (innahu fa'ala – surely he di) while the action has not yet occurred, it indicates an affirmed future tense with a sense of certainty. This is because it is preceded by the particle of emphasis إِنَّ and followed by the past tense verb, which conveys a sense of verification. For instance, in the verse:

﴿إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ﴾

(innâ a'thainâkal-kautsar)

Indeed, We have granted you Al-Kawthar" (Al-Kawthar: 1).

Although al-Kawthar was not given to the Messenger, God promised him a fixed promise that cannot be denied, as if the Prophet had received al-Kawthar because it had been predestined in the first decree fifty thousand years before the creation of creation (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1416, p. 16/529). Ibn al-Atsir saw that reporting the future that has not yet occurred in the past tense is a more emphatic way to assert its certainty and actualization, because the past refers to what has passed and

occurred, and this is often done to describe great things (Ibn Al-Atsir, 1431, p. 2/149).

Negative Distant Future

If the intention is to negate the possibility of an action extending into the distant future, use this formula: ما كان ليفعل (mâ kâna liyaʿal – he will not do), as it negates not only the action but also the possibility of its occurrence, as God Almighty said:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ أَنْ يُفْتَرَىٰ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ﴾
 (wa mâ kâna hâdzal-qur'ânu ay yuftarâ min dûnillâhi)
And this Qur'an could not have been invented by other than God" (Yunus: 37).

The meaning, it is neither possible nor conceivable that this Quran could have been fabricated (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1999, p. 5/425).

Sibawaih viewed that this formula is a negation of the statement: كان سيفعل (kâna sayaf'al – he is doing), and considered it specific to the future (Sibawaih, 1408, 5/425). This is because the 'lam' in this formula is a particle of negation to emphasize the negation, and it came after كان which is past tense in the form. Therefore, it indicates the distant negated future (As-Samirai/1420, p. 1/225; Hasan, 1994, p. 248).

Below are some of the syntactic tenses of the verb according to Ibn Taymiyyah, presented in the following table:

Table 2: Syntactic Tenses of Verbs According to Ibn Taymiyyah

Forms	Tenses
لم يفعل	Negative Simple Past
كان يفعل	Affirmative Repeated Past
لم يكن يفعل/لم يكن فاعلاً	Negative Perpetual Tense
لم يكن قد فعل/ما كان قد فعل	Negative Recent Discontinuous Past
ما زال فاعلاً	Negative recent Interrupted Past
إنه فعل (with future indication)	Affirmative Future Perfect
ما كان ليفعل	Negative Distant Future

Indicators of the Present for Future Time

Ibn Taymiyyah believed that the primary meaning of the present tense verb indicates a continuous action that includes both the

present and the future (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1416, p. 16/552), unless preceded by certain particles that denotes the future, such as the particles of emphasis: "sa" (س) and "sawfa" (سوف). These particles do not change the meaning of the verb as they are considered part of it (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1416, p. 12/109). The difference between them is that "sawfa" refers to a more distant future than "sa," as exemplified in the verse:

كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ
 (3) Kallâ saufa ta'lamûn(a). (4)
 Summa kallâ saufa ta'lamûn(a)
You will surely know; then, no, you will surely know" (Al-Takatsur: 3-4).

It was narrated by Ali ibn Abi Talib that this refers to the punishment in the grave (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1416, p. 16/517). As al-Zamakhsyari stated, the use of "sawfa" adds an extra degree of delay or emphasis (al-Zamakhsyari, 1993, p. 435).

Among the means of expressing the future in the present tense are conditional particles such as the conditional "in" (إن), even if the verb after it is in the past tense (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1416, p. 13/46). The same applies when the verb is an answer to conditions, because an answer always comes after the condition (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1416, p. 6/225). For example: إن جاء زيد ذهبْتُ (in jâ'a zaidun dzahabtu - If Zayd comes, I will go." The arrival of Zayd and my going have not yet occurred. It corresponds to what Ibn al-Khasysyab said, that the conditional "in" (إن) makes one of the two tenses future because the condition must be future, so it is similar to particles of subjunctive mood (Ibn al-Khasysyab, 1392, p. 201).

Another means of expressing the future is through the particles of the subjunctive mood, including "an" (أن) used for infinitives (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1411, p. 4/107), as in the verse

﴿إِذَا أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ﴾
 (idzâ aradnâhu an naqûla lahû kun fa yakûn)
If We ever will something 'to exist', all We say is: "Be!" And it is! (An-Nahl: 40).

Al-Anbari noted that it only functions in the present future tense (Al-Anbari, 1424, p. 2/450).

Another means of expressing the future is through the use of the particle of "lam qasm" (لام القسم) and "nun tauqid" (نون التوكيد). Al-Zamakhsyari stated that they are used to emphasize only future actions (Al-Zamakhsyari, 1993, p. 457), since an oath is taken only regarding the future, as in the verse:

(لَتَدْخُلَنَّ الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ)

(latadkhalunna al masjid al harâma)
 You will surely enter the Sacred Mosque" (Al-Fath: 27).

This indicates that God has promised the Messenger will enter the Sacred Mosque in the future (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1416, p. 357; 1440, p. 2/589).

To negate the future, the negation particle "lan" (لَنْ) is used, as in the verse: (وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا) (wa lan taf'alû - And you will never do it" (Al-Baqarah: 24). In this, God informs that they will not be able to do it in the future. (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1999, p. 5/426). This particle is unanimously agreed upon by grammarians to negate and subjugate the future verb (Ibn Babsyadz, 1977, p. 1/226).

Common Tools between the Present and the Future

According to Ibn Taymiyyah, the negation particles that enter the present tense without specifically indicating the future are (لَا) (la) and (مَا) (ma) (the negators), such as in the verse: (لَا تُعْبُدُوا) (Al-Kafirun: 2), which negates worship in both the present and the future (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1416, p. 16/552). Sometimes, "ما يفعل" is used to negate the future when indicated by context, as in the verse: (وَمَا تَسْأَلُونَ) (wamâ tasâ'ûna - But you cannot will 'to do so') (Al-Insan: 30), which negates their will in the future, with the supporting context that follows: (إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ) (illâ an yasya Allah - except Allah will - which is the affirmation of God's will in the future (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1404, p. 3/27).

It agrees with what Sibawaih said, except that he details the difference between them, that ما يفعل (mâ yaf'alu - he does not do) negates the action in the present tense: هو يفعل (huwa yaf'alu - he does) and لا يفعل (lâ yaf'alu - he does not do) negates a time that has not occurred (Sibawaih, 1408, p. 3/117).

The following are tools that enter into the present tense verb according to Ibn

Taymiyyah and specify its time or leave it unspecified:

Table 3: Tools used in the present tense according to Ibn Taymiyyah

Particles	Time
The prefix "سـ" (sa), "سوف" (sawfa), "أنـ" and its sisters, "إنـ" and its sisters, the emphatic "لـ" (lam qasm), the emphatic "نـ" (nun tauqid), and "لنـ"	Future
The negation particles "ما" (ma) and "لا" (la)	Present and Future

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has demonstrated that Ibn Taymiyyah's contributions to the understanding of verb tenses in Arabic provide valuable insights that expand upon the foundational work of earlier grammarians. While he adheres to the traditional division of verb tenses into morphological categories—past, present, and future—he introduces a distinctive perspective with his concept of syntactic tense, which emphasizes the role of context in determining the temporal meaning of verbs. For example, (لم يكن قد فعل) (lam yakun qad fa'ala - had not done) indicates the negation of the interrupted recent past, and others. This dual approach of morphological and syntactic tenses, as outlined by Ibn Taymiyyah, offers a more dynamic understanding of how time and action are expressed in Arabic, moving beyond the rigid structural analysis to incorporate the influence of context and sentence structure.

Although many of Ibn Taymiyyah's ideas align with the theories of past and contemporary scholars, his interpretations in certain areas, such as the syntactic tense of لا يفعل (lâ yaf'alu - he does not do/will not do) - negating both present and future - stand out as unique. This divergence not only showcases his individual contributions to Arabic linguistic thought but also highlights areas where further examination could yield deeper understanding. His work demonstrates a synthesis of classical grammatical theories with innovative ideas that advance our understanding of how time and action are expressed in Arabic.

As for future research, further exploration of Ibn Taymiyyah's theories on

verb tenses is needed, especially in the context of modern linguistic approaches. Research could expand on the practical application of syntactic tenses in various types of Arabic texts, such as classical literature, Quranic exegesis, or contemporary Arabic writings. Additionally, comparative studies between Ibn Taymiyyah's theories and those of other classical Arabic grammarians, or even modern

linguists, could illuminate how his ideas continue to influence or differ from prevailing linguistic trends. Examining these areas would not only deepen our understanding of Ibn Taymiyyah's contributions but also offer new perspectives on the evolution of Arabic grammar in the broader context of global linguistic development.

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