| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Changes in the Syntactic Structure in English-Arabic Simultaneous Interpreting

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| ABSTRACT

Simultaneous interpreting represents a challenge for interpreters working between typologically distinct languages, like the English-Arabic language pair. The present study is conducted to explore transfers in passive voice verbs between English as the source language and Arabic as the target language in a corpus of an interpreted English speech and its corresponding Arabic counterpart. A mixed qualitative and quantitative approach is adopted in the present study to identify recurrences of passive voice verbs and to explore the ways of rendering them into Arabic. Translation shifts are identified according to Catford's (1965) approach. The findings of the present study reveal that nearly half of the passive voice verbs found in the source text are rendered using active voice verbs in the target text. The findings also reveal that there are four other ways of rendering passive voice verbs, including using a noun phrase, omitting a part of a sentence or a sentence as a whole, using a noun, or maintaining the passive voice form of the source verb in the target sentence. The present study contributes to promoting practices that enrich the field of English-Arabic simultaneous interpreting. It also contributes to enriching the research domain with its findings that hold special significance as the passive voice verbs constitute a divergence point between the two languages.

| KEYWORDS

Simultaneous Interpreting, Passive Voice Verbs, Source Text, Target Text.

1. Introduction

As a demanding cognitive task, simultaneous interpreting requires simultaneous interpreters to process and reformulate spoken language in real time. This processing and reformulation often takes place between typologically dissimilar languages. In this regard, English and Arabic present a significant challenge due to the fact that they are different in grammatical structures, word order, and sentence types (Al-Shawi, 2014). In the present study, the attempt is to highlight congruence or incongruence between SL English sentences and their TL Arabic counterpart sentences in order to identify the extent to which simultaneous interpreters maintain the source language syntax and the potential reasons behind their deviations, if any.

> In (1965), the term translation shifts were first introduced by Catford, who defined these shifts as 'departures from formal correspondence in the process of going from the source into the target language. Translation shifts were also classified into groups that are related to the field of linguistics in one way or another (Catford, 1965). He further stated that translators do not transfer meaning from one language to another, but they replace the meaning expressed in a source text with a meaning expressed in the target text. Catford named two major types of shifts, including level shift and category shift. The level shift is defined as any source language item at one linguistic level whose equivalent in the target language is at a different level. Level shifts can be motivated by differences in formality, register, or style between the source language and the target language. On the other hand, the Category shift refers to any change in the grammatical category of a word or phrase in the translation. This can involve changing the part of speech, syntactic structure, or grammatical category of a word in the target language compared to the source language.

In (1972), Goldman-Eisler conducted an experimental study that referred to syntactic-based segmentation. Syntactic transformations, frequency of repairs, and compression depending on language pairs are attributed to syntactic structures of the source and the target languages (Bartłomiejczyk, 2006; Chang and Schallert, 2007; Dailidėnaitė, 2009; Shamy and De Pedro, 2017). Similar debates on the challenges of interpreting between asymmetrical structure language pairs and strategies employed to overcome such challenges are provided by corpus analytical studies (Gile, 1992, 2011; Liontou, 2011; He et al., 2016).

The English and Arabic languages exhibit significant structural disparities, particularly in their word order preferences. English principally follows an (SVO) order, whereas Arabic follows a (VSO) order. This essential variance poses a critical challenge for interpreters, requiring them to reform the target language sentences while simultaneously grasping the continuing source language discourse. Having an awareness of the types of transformations employed can shed light on their cognitive processing strategies and the impact of language-specific characteristics on simultaneous interpreting performance. The corpus of the present study consists of authentic English source texts along with their Arabic counterparts that are carefully transcribed and aligned for comparison between passive structures in the source sentences and their counterpart target sentences. In doing so, the aim is to gain a comprehensive understanding of how interpreters bridge the syntactic gap between English and Arabic.
Problem Statement

In a profession that is full of demands and challenges, performers are required to be equipped with more than a skill in order to avoid exposing themselves to unavoidable traps caused by many areas of their daily routines. Speaking of simultaneous interpreting, the immediacy of receiving, processing, and conveying a piece of a source language message into the target language represents the forefront challenge they come across during almost all their interpreting tasks (Al-Bataineh and Al-Qayyim, 2018). Complex syntactic structures remarkably increase the complexity of this process. Part of these complexities are caused by passive voice verbs in the source sentences, which are not always similar in form and function, depending on the language pair. English and Arabic constitute the language combination of the present study. To start with, English, the source language, predominantly employs the passive voice patterns of verbs in an effort to achieve various communicative functions. However, Arabic, the target language in the present study, is more biased towards the use of active voice forms of verbs. Al-Khalifa and Al-Sagheer (2017) investigate the reasons behind the employment of semantic and pragmatic shifts. Thus, inaccurate or incomplete renditions are quite typical of the complexities encountered by simultaneous interpreters in this unique language pair. Henceforth, exploring the problems caused by passive voice verbs when conducting a simultaneous interpreting task.

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, a study that tackles this research gap in the English-Arabic language pair has not been conducted yet. Therefore, by addressing these research gaps, the present study aims to contribute significantly to the field of simultaneous interpreting, providing valuable insights for both researchers and practitioners.

1.1 Research Questions
1. How do syntactic differences between English and Arabic influence the strategies of rendering passive voice structures in English-Arabic simultaneous interpreting?
2. What are the factors influencing the choice of rendition strategies of passive voice structures in English-Arabic simultaneous interpreting?

1.2 Research Objectives
The present study aims to:

Identify how syntactic differences between English and Arabic influence the strategies of rendering passive voice structures in English-Arabic simultaneous interpreting.

Explore the factors influencing the choice of rendition strategies of passive voice structures in English-Arabic simultaneous interpreting.

1.3 Scope of the Study
The present study is limited to analyzing how passive voice verbs are interpreted from English into Arabic. The corpus of the present study consists of an English speech delivered by American President Joe Biden on March-11-2021 and its Arabic counterpart text delivered by the simultaneous interpreter of the Al-Arabia TV channel.
Significance of the Study

The present study is significant as it tackles one of the frequently encountered challenges in simultaneous interpreting: passive voice verbs. The study contributes to promoting practices that enrich the field of English-Arabic simultaneous interpreting. It also contributes to enriching the research domain with its findings that hold special significance as the passive voice verbs constitute a divergence point between the two languages.

2. Literature Review

In light of the importance of simultaneous interpreting due to the various fields of life in which simultaneous interpreters are required and the complexities of this profession, scholars devote considerable efforts to tackle this process from its multiple angles. The difficulties of simultaneous interpreting come from the fact that the interpreter is required to process and reconstruct spoken discourse in a nearly real-time manner. This complexity increases when coming across languages with different syntactic structures, as is the case with English-Arabic simultaneous interpreting. However, a large proportion of the focus in previous works is on translation studies. Many previous studies were conducted in the field of translation in order to shed light on the way translators make shifts in the level of grammar, structure, or word class when they translate a source into a target message. What confirms this idea is that it was found that there are two types of shifts that are related to style, including optional and obligatory shifts. It was affirmed that the occurrence of such shifts may give a hint about how the translator perceives the SL-TL linguistic and non-linguistic differences (Al-Qinai, 2009). Another type of shift was examined by (Hijjo, 2013), who carried out a study to tackle grammatical shift issues related to media settings. This study aligns with (Al-Qinai, 2009) in that it also detects the employment of optional and obligatory shifts at all levels in order to maintain the quality of the message. An important finding of this study is that when the translator employs structural shifts when translating a passive voice verb using an active voice verb, the meaning and quality of the message cannot be maintained. The present study is consistent with this finding, as rendering a passive voice verb into Arabic using an active form of the verb does not convey the intended meaning as it is in the source language.

Talking about such differences between the English-Arabic language pair in terms of their syntactic structures makes it necessary to talk about the affiliation of the two languages. In light of the distinct incongruity between English, which belongs to the Indo-European family and Arabic, which belongs to the Semitic family, their linguistic systems are significantly different. This great discrepancy paves the way for Catford's notion of translation shifts (Jabak et al., 2016). From their point of view, Translation Shifts noticeably rationalize translators' preference for free translation over literal translation when the source language and the target language belong to two completely different families.

Abualadas and Ahmad (2018) conducted a study which indicated that deictic shifts significantly affect the narrative point of view and mood in translations of fiction. They indicated that translators should be aware of this influence and make decisions based on the intended aims and implications of their choices.

AlShubaily (2018) conducted a study which concluded that the most prevalent type of semantic shift in the data is mistranslation. The conclusions reveal that the least frequent type is omission. The majority of semantic shifts result from translators' incompetence. In her study, Altwaijri (2019) states that resorting to employing translation shifts can be a personal decision taken by the translator to reflect these changes. A study was carried out by (Najjar et al., 2019) to compare the grammatical shifts made in two English translations of the Quranic rhetorical questions and determine whether or not these changes affect the questions' mode and rhetorical implications. The study concludes that there are several types and degrees of grammatical shifts, including structure, class, unit, intra-system, and level shifts. These shifts influence the rhetorical meanings and mode of the rhetorical questions in the source text, which in turn raises concerns with mode sustenance. Almutairi et al. (2020) conducted a study which found that all types of category shifts occurred in the translation of the data. The results of the study indicate that there is no formal equivalence in the process of translation due to the fact that English and Arabic belong to two different language families.

The formal modifications made to the target texts, the most common types of shifts, their causes, and their results were explored (Alshahrani, 2023). Structural discrepancies between English and Arabic were found to be the reason for a large ratio of the detected shifts.

From the above mentioned studies, one observation one can make is that they are all conducted in the field of translation. This observation gives the motive to carry out the present study to explore how such shifts are employed in the field of simultaneous interpreting. The findings of the present study are expected to fill a gap in the existing literature.

3. Methodology

Catford's model of shifts is employed to explore the types of shifts in the corpus of Biden's speech and its Arabic counterpart. Both the English source and Arabic target sentences are manually marked up according to Catford's (1965) framework. The descriptive qualitative approach is used in the analysis, description, and characterization of the data of the present study. The data collection technique utilized in the present study is comparative content analysis, which is a form of qualitative research in which documents are decrypted by the researcher to give meaning to the subject. The document content analysis is conducted to investigate the translation shifts in the simultaneous interpretation of Biden's speech about the steps taken by his administration to combat the coronavirus. The speech is broadcast live on the Al-Arabia TV channel and simultaneously interpreted from English into Arabic. In collecting the data, the original English version was retrieved from the official website of the US government. The researcher transcribed the Arabic rendition. The corpus was then aligned to have each Arabic sentence assigned to its source English

counterpart. As a following step, the researcher categorized the English source text into grammatical categories and language segments. After that, the equivalents of the grammatical categories and language segments created by the interpreter were identified. Next, the researcher identified the grammatical categories of the target text and finally compared them to the categories of the original text categories for the sake of identifying the translation shifts in the text under investigation. As a result, the researcher employed descriptive qualitative analysis to assess the data.

3.1 Data Description

A bilingual corpus comprising simultaneously interpreted speech is compiled. The corpus consists of an English speech delivered by Joe Biden **in addition to a** corresponding Arabic interpreting of the source speech, performed by a professional simultaneous interpreter. The speech length is 23:38 minutes. The speech was broadcast on Al-Arabia TV Channel on 11-3-2021 and interpreted into Arabic by a professional interpreter as TV channels only assign interpreting tasks to professional interpreters (Amado and Mak, 2011). The details of the database of the present study are as follows:

Link of the original speech website: https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2021-03-11/transcript-president-joe-biden-on-the-coronavirus-pandemic%3Fcontext%3Damp--

Link of the speech interpreted on the Al-Arabia TV channel website on YouTube:

https://youtu.be/BttHhFL9hmw?si=oHL3Vvj1NiAhaCXw

Duration: 23:38 minutes.

Number of the English Sentences: 225

Number of words of the original speech: 3206.

Delivery Rate wpm: 135

3.2 Data Analysis

To begin with, below are the extracted passive voice verbs found in the source sentences and how they were interpreted, along with the back translation provided by the researcher for a better understanding of what happened.

Table (1) Passive Voice Structures in the Source Text

No.	ST Passive Structure	TT	Back Translation
1	we were hit with a virus	ضربنا هذا الفيروس	This virus hit us
2	That was met	وكان الرد	The response was
3	they were taken in another era	الصور التي التقطت	Photos that were taken
4	children who may be set back up to a year	الأطفال الذين قد واجهوا تلك النكسة لمدة سنة ونيف	Children who faced that calamity for more than a year
5 6 7 8	Asian Americans, who have been attacked, harassed, blamed, and scapegoated	الامريكيين الافارقة الذين يتعرضون للمضايقة وباتوا كبش فداء	African Americans, who face harassment and they, became scapegoats
9	they are forced to live in fear	يرغمون على العيش بخوف	They are forced to live in fear
10	you're owed nothing less than the truth	انتم لا تستحقون الا الحقيقة	You only deserve the truth
11	to get the job done	من اجل اداء هذه المهمة	For performing this task
12	they should be applauded for it	-	-
13	the more people who are fully vaccinated	-	-

14	to make all adults — people 18 and over — eligible to be vaccinated no later than May 1	لجعل كافة البالغين البالغ عمرهم ثمانية عشر من العمر وما فوق ان يحصلوا على اللقاح في موعد اقصاه الحادي والثلاثين من مايو	to make all adults who are 18 and over to get the vaccine not later than May31st
15	before I was sworn in	-	-
16	encourage more people to get vaccinated	وتشجيع الاخرين على الحصول على لقاح	And encourage others to get a vaccine
17	I need you to get vaccinated	أود منكم أن تحصلوا على اللقاح	I need you to get the vaccine
18	to help your family and, friends and neighbors get vaccinated as well	تساعدوا أصدقاءكم وجيرانكم للحصول على اللقاح أيضا	To help your friends and neighbors get the vaccine as well
19	The first lady and the second gentleman also got vaccinated	السيدة الأولى وزوجها أيضا قد حصلوا على لقاح	The First Lady and her husband also got a vaccine
20	We need everyone to get vaccinated	فاننا بحاجة الى كل مواطن أمريكي أن يأخذ اللقاح	We need every American citizen to take the vaccine
21	this country will be vaccinated soon	من خلال تلقيح كافة أبناء الأمة	By vaccinating all the nation's people
22	We are bound together by the loss and the pain of the days that have gone by	التي باتت تربط عرى هذه الأمة سوية	Which binds this nation together
23	But we're also bound together by the hope and the possibilities of the days in front of us	لكن أيضا نجتمع من خلال الأمل والامكانيات والاحتمالات في الأيام القادمة	But we also come together through hope, abilities, and possibilities in the coming days

A review of the extracted data reveals that the passive structures in the source text are rendered in Arabic in many different ways. The analysis reveals that the interpreter employed five ways to render the passive voice structures in the source speech into Arabic. The interpreter either rendered them by using an active form of the main verb, resorting to nominalization, a verb phrase, or a noun phrase. In some few cases, the simultaneous interpreter maintained the passive form of the ST verb in the TT sentence.

In Ex1- Ex4- Ex5,6,7,8- Ex10- Ex19- Ex20- Ex22- and Ex23-, the interpreter rendered the passive form of the verb in the ST into active in the TT. In Ex1, he rendered "we were hit with this virus" into "this virus hit us". In this case, the interpreter not only changed the verb form from passive to active, but he also changed the word order of the sentence by topicalizing the noun phrase (this virus) instead of the pronoun (we). In Ex4, the interpreter replaced the passive form of the phrasal verb in the source sentence "children who may be set back up to a year" with an active structure in the target sentence "Children who faced that calamity for more than a year". The matter is not different when it comes to how the interpreter rendered Exs5,6,7, and 8. The only difference is that the interpreter rendered only two verbs out of the four found in the source sentence, which means that he not only changed the voice of the verb but also omitted two verbs. Moreover, the interpreter added the verb "became", which changed "scapegoated" from a verb in the passive voice In the source sentence to a noun "scapegoats" in the target sentence "African Americans, who face harassment and they became scapegoats".

The matter of using an active voice of the verb continues to occur once again in Ex10 when the interpreter interpreted the sentence "you're owed nothing less than the truth" as "you only deserve the truth". Similarly, in Ex20, "We need everyone to get vaccinated", Ex22, "We are bound together by the loss and the pain of the days that have gone by", and Ex23, "But we're also bound together

by the hope and the possibilities of the days in front of us", the interpreter keeps applying his most frequent strategy of rendering passive voice verbs from English into Arabic, which is changing the voice of the source verb from passive to active in the target sentence. This strategy was applied (11) times to render (11) out of the (23) passive voice verbs found in the source text, which means that the percentage of resorting to the interpreter is (47.8%). This high percentage refers to the fact that Arabic sentences tend toward active structures. This finding aligns with ().

In Ex2, the interpreter changed the passive structure "That was met" in the source sentence into a noun phrase "the response was" in the target sentence. The interpreter repeated applying this strategy with Ex14, when he changed the passive form of the verb in the source sentence "to make all adults — people 18 and over — eligible to be vaccinated no later than May 1" into a noun phrase in the target sentence "to make all adults who are 18 and over to get the vaccine not later than May 31st ". In Ex16, the strategy of interpreting the passive voice using a noun phrase was also applied by the interpreter as he rendered the source sentence "encourage more people to get vaccinated" as "And encourage others to get a vaccine". Similarly, Ex17, "I need you to get vaccinated", was interpreted as "I need you to get the vaccine". The noun phrase "the vaccine" in the target sentence replaced the verb "vaccinated" in the source sentence. In Ex18, the passive form of the verb in the source sentence "to help your family and friends and neighbors get vaccinated as well" was also rendered using a noun phrase in the target sentence "To help your friends and neighbors get the vaccine as well". This strategy was applied (5) times to render (5) out of the (23) passive voice verbs found in the source text, which means that the percentage of resorting to it by the interpreter is (21.7%). This percentage places this strategy as the second most frequent strategy among those applied by the simultaneous interpreter. This finding aligns with ().

In Ex3, the interpreter applied a strategy that aligns with the form of the verb of the source sentence, "they were taken in another era," as he rendered this sentence as "Photos that were taken". Contradicting expectations, the interpreter only reapplied this strategy in Ex9 when he rendered the source sentence "they are forced to live in fear" as "They are forced to live in fear". In this example, it is noticed that when there is identicality in the verb voice in both the source and target sentences, there is such high closeness in the meaning between the source and target sentences to the extent that they become identical in terms of their reference. This strategy was only applied twice to render (2) out of the (23) passive voice verbs found in the source text, which means that the percentage of resorting to it by the interpreter is (8.6%). This percentage places this strategy as the fourth strategy among those applied by the simultaneous interpreter. This finding aligns with ().

In Ex11, the interpreter resorted to using a noun in the target sentence "for performing this task" to render the passive structure found in the source sentence "to get the job done". In Ex21, the interpreter also changed the passive structure "this country will be vaccinated soon" in the source sentence into a noun in the target sentence "By vaccinating all the nation's people". This strategy was only applied twice to render (2) out of the (23) passive voice verbs found in the source text, which means that the percentage of resorting to it by the interpreter is (8.6%). This percentage places this strategy as the fourth strategy among those applied by the simultaneous interpreter. This result indicates that this strategy is parallel with the strategy of rendering a passive verb in the source sentence into an equivalent passive verb in the target sentence. This percentage places these two strategies as the last as they are the least applied strategies among those applied by the simultaneous interpreter. This finding aligns with ().

Ex12, "they should be applauded for it", Ex13, "the more people who are fully vaccinated", and Ex15, "before I was sworn in," were omitted by the interpreter. This strategy was applied thrice as the interpreter did not render (3) out of the (23) passive voice verbs found in the source text, which means that the percentage of resorting to it by the interpreter is (13.04%). This percentage places the strategy of omission as the third strategy among those applied by the simultaneous interpreter. Resorting to applying this strategy indicates that the interpreter faced difficulty for one reason or another, which made him forced to resort to omitting the source sentence either partially or completely. This finding aligns with (Altalqani et al., 2021; Altalqani et al., 2022; Abdulameer et al., 2023).

Except for the strategy of omission, it is noticed that the shifts in interpreting this speech from English into Arabic seem not to have a negative effect on the meaning conveyed in the target language, and thus it can be said that shifts might sometimes be useful when it comes to maneuvering the texts maintaining the idea of the source language text. This finding is in line with (Nuirat and Zayed, 2023).

4. Conclusion
The present study aimed to explore the changes in meaning that happen while conducting a simultaneous interpreting task from English into Arabic. As the scope of the present study is limited to investigating how passive voice verbs are interpreted in Arabic, the results of the present study reveal that they are interpreted either by using an active form of the verb, using a noun phrase, omitting a part of a sentence or a sentence as a whole, using a noun, or maintaining the passive voice form of the source verb in the target sentence. This indicates that simultaneous interpreters handle the complexities they encounter with passive voice by employing various types of shifts that facilitate managing the difficult situations they undergo as a result of the discrepancies in various levels of the languages they deal with.

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