
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Catering for the Audience Needs in English-Arabic Interpreting: The Case Study of Arabized Words in Conferences

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| ABSTRACT

This research sheds light on whether Arab interpreters take into consideration the audience preferences when interpreting Arabized words in conferences. The researchers selected four groups; three of them are students at Birzeit University majoring in the English language with a minor in translation or English language only, as well as students coming from different majors but not English language majors. Forty contextualized Arabized words were used in a simulated conference situation, and students were asked to select either the loan words or the loan translations they preferred to hear for the Arabized words. Five certified interpreters also participated in this study. The results showed that there were clear trends; the English language majors with a minor in translation, as well as the English language majors, opted for the loan translations, while the other students not majoring in English selected the loan words. Finally, the five interpreters supported the loan translation options. Thus, it became clear that those who major in language and or translation tend to prefer loan translation rather than loan words since they think these translations are more formal, more standard, and purer.

| KEYWORDS

Interpretation, audience, preferences, Arabized words

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1. Introduction

Conferences are held every now and then in the Arab world. To ensure maximum audience benefit, simultaneous interpretation is delivered to the audience of these conferences. Therefore, during the presentation, an interpreter in a sound-proof booth interprets the speech simultaneously to an audience as he/she listens to the presenter. Meanwhile, the listeners use headphones to listen to the interpretation while looking at the presenter.

Presentations are usually delivered in English, and they teem with new terms and expressions. The problem is that these terms and expressions do not yet have equivalents in Arabic. Therefore, some of these terms undergo the Arabization process where they are borrowed into Arabic either as they are with some pronunciation modifications or are loan translations.

The researchers believe that the English-Arabic interpreter in such conferences needs to cater to the need of the audience since the overall aim of interpreting in these conferences is to help the audience understand the papers presented in these forums. One of the problems, the researchers believe, is the new words/concepts in English that need to be Arabized. Therefore, the researchers believe that a good interpreter should see what is more appealing to the Arab audience and consequently employ it in the process of interpretation.

1.1 Arabization

Arabization is a concept that is resorted to whenever there is a new term that does not have an equivalent or an equivalent effect in Arabic. This is particularly true in the field of science and technology where Arabic is a recipient language, unlike other languages, say English which takes the lead in this respect. Therefore, these new terms are usually Arabized to allow the Arab audience to understand them because they are soon circulated.

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Furthermore, Arabicization is the adaptation of non-Arabic terms to Arabic by applying the rules of the phonological and sometimes morphological systems of the language to the English terms. (Sayadi, 1985, 38). Arabicization refers to lexical expansion, which involves the rendering or coinage of new words either from existing roots or through the translation of foreign terms, and the adoption of already existing words through borrowing from foreign languages or reviving and revitalization of older usage in the same language.

To elaborate more on the concept of Arabicization, different scholars and linguists tackled this concept extensively. According to Al-Asal and Smadi (2012, 22), Arabicization is used to refer to a process of transliteration, where a foreign term is merely transliterated in conformity with the Arabic phonological and morphological systems. Therefore, when a certain English technical term is 'Arabicized', it means that "it is linguistically borrowed from English and used in Arabic with some modification or without modifications.

In the same vein, Ahmed (2011, 469) believes that Arabicization is an adopted and already implemented strategy to introduce new concepts into Arabic. It is "the process of translating foreign terms using Arabic forms." For instance, the English words philosophy and asphalt are Arabicized into *falsafah* and *isfalt*, respectively. Arab scholars like Darwish (2009) often refer to such transference as phonetic borrowing. English-Arabic examples also include the English radar into رادار, which is phonetically transferred into Arabic through a process called 'transliteration' or 'transcription'. Here, the phonetic properties of the source language term are directly transferred with or without modification into the target language. Therefore, Arabicization, in its narrowest sense, entails mere transliteration of a foreign term according to Arabic sounds and characters (Khulusi, 1982).

Farghal and Shunnaq (1999, 35) define Arabicization as "a kind of naturalization that takes place at sound level or the concept level. At the sound level, the source language spelling and pronunciation are converted into Arabic ones. At the concept level, the source language concept is loan-translated into Arabic." This means that the word could be a loan word like garage = كراج or it could be a loan translation as مراب; a term the Arabic language academy coined to refer to "garage".

Therefore, the Arabic language academies resort to word-coinage, which is a process of word-formation that usually takes place when there is a linguistic gap in Arabic. New inventions that usually happen in non-Arabic environments usually do not have any words to refer to. Therefore, new words of technology like scientific and technical terms lack natural and standard equivalents in the host languages, such as the Arabic language. Pinchuck (1977, 53) argues that languages may suffer from gaps at the lexical level, and most likely, "one language will have no words for a concept expressed in the second language." At the same time, it is hard to create translation equivalence for technical words, as Catford (1967) pointed out.

Thus, creating absolute translation equivalence between technical and scientific terms as well as other general items in two different languages like English and Arabic is demanding. As a result, this gap between the two languages could be filled by a term borrowed from the source language or by the creation of a new term in the target language. The new term is domesticated and assimilated into Arabic through translation and Arabicization (Al-Asal & Smadi, 2012).

Newmark (1988) talks about neologisms; these are newly-coined lexical units or existing lexical units that acquire a new sense. The introduction of new Arabicized words (neologisms) can be done through the application of the morphological rules of the receiving language, such as Arabic. The Arabicization of English terms can also be carried out through the assimilation methods such as outright borrowing in terms of loans and loan translation in terms of calques. The criterion, which is applied in the process of Arabicization, is based on three important aspects of brevity, clarity, and naturalness (Mollanazar, 2004). According to Abu Absi (1986), there are hundreds or even thousands of words and phrases that have been either phonetically borrowed or calqued from English and actively used on a daily basis. Talebinejad et al. (2012, 183) believe that borrowing can have ramifications on the borrower's language because it can accelerate the "foreignization" of the language. Therefore, coining native Arabicized terms through productive word-formation processes using the internal resources of the Arabic language has to be added as another criterion to the process of Arabicization.

It can be said that Arabicization is also the assimilation of foreign terminology through borrowing or translation. Stetkevych (1970) states that the assimilation of the vocabulary of foreign origin was one of the most important factors which contributed to the rapid modernization of Arabic. Ali (1987) adds that among the methods of lexical expansion by Modern Standard Arabic is the one traditionally known by the name of *al-taCrīb*. For some Arab scholars, Arabicization is considered to be the most appropriate technique in creating and introducing foreign neologisms into Arabic, and it can fulfill the following objectives: (i) to preserve the purity of Arabic and considered as a means of developing Arabic in terms of vocabulary; (ii) to standardize the scientific and technical terminology and (iii) to revive the Arabic-Islamic cultural heritage (Ghazala, 2005).

Arabization methods include phonetic borrowing via transliteration, which is generally referred to as Arabization (*al-ta^crib*) by many scholars of Arabic, as well as word formation techniques such as derivation and composition. Therefore, the researchers believe that the concept of Arabization refers to the application of various word-formation processes in Arabic, including phonetic borrowing via transliteration. Accordingly, when a foreign term is Arabized, it is either coined in accordance with word-formation rules of Arabic and/or phonetically borrowed from the source language.

It seems from previous studies that Arabization could be a little bit different from one source to another. Therefore, this paper shall adopt the definition supplied by Farghal and Shunnaq (2011), i.e., Arabization could be a loan word where the English word is taken as is with possibly some phonological changes (fax = فاكس), or it could be a loan translation, that is the word created and supplied as an equivalent by the Arabic Language Academy (fax = ناسوخ).

1.2 Purpose of the Study

This study sets out to investigate one of the problems in English-Arabic interpreting of conferences, namely, audience preference for Arabized loan words versus Arabized loan translation. To this effect, the researchers used a sample of 40 terms, each with two possible interpretations: one Arabized loan word and the other is an Arabized loan translation. Then they asked groups of students (3 groups) to write down the interpretation they prefer to hear at a conference. The fourth group was five certified translators/interpreters who were interviewed individually. The researchers provided the subjects of the study with two interpretations. The participants have to write down the one they would prefer to hear in a conference situation.

1.3 Questions of the study

Specifically, this paper attempts to answer the following questions:

1. Which Arabized form (loan words or loan translations) do listeners (audiences) in conferences who listen to the interpreters prefer to hear?
2. What reasons do they have to prefer one form over the other?

1.4 Subjects of the Study

The subjects of the study are students at Birzeit University in the West Bank, Palestine. These students represent three groups as follows: Thirty students majoring in English language and its literature with a minor in translation; the second group comprises thirty students majoring in English language and its literature only; the third group consists of thirty students enrolled in various colleges of the university such as Arts, Science, Law, and Public Administration and Economics and Business. The first two groups are junior students, while the third group is sophomores who are taking English courses as their university requirements. The last group, which is the fourth one, includes five certified Arabic- English and vice-versa translators and interpreters who have intensively practiced interpretation in local Palestinian academic settings, mainly in conferences.

1.5 Time of Data Collection

The data was collected during the first semester of the academic year 2021/2022.

2. Methodology

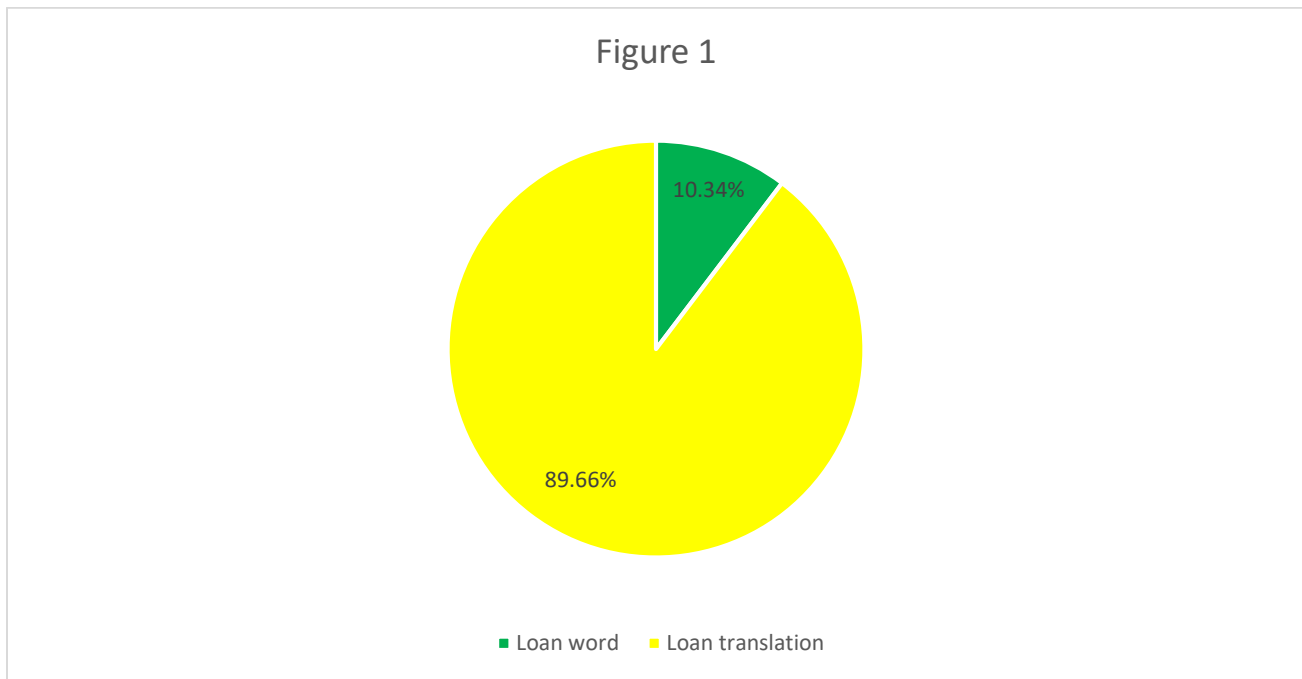
The co-researchers wrote short texts that incorporated forty words, which constitute the subject of the study. Students of the three groups were furnished with forty short texts. Then, the students had to write down either the loan word or the loan translation in the respective column after hearing both interpretations of the bold word. One researcher read the text, and the other provided two interpretations for the bold word. For the sake of illustration, let’s give an example. The first researcher would read the text, “ Yesterday, my son broke the **keyboard**. The other researcher would provide a simultaneous interpretation of the previous text with two interpretations for the bold word **keyboard** as كي يورد and as لوحة مفاتيح

text	a. Loan word	b. Loan translation
Yesterday, my son broke the keyboard	كسر ابني الكيبورد	كسر ابني لوحة المفاتيح

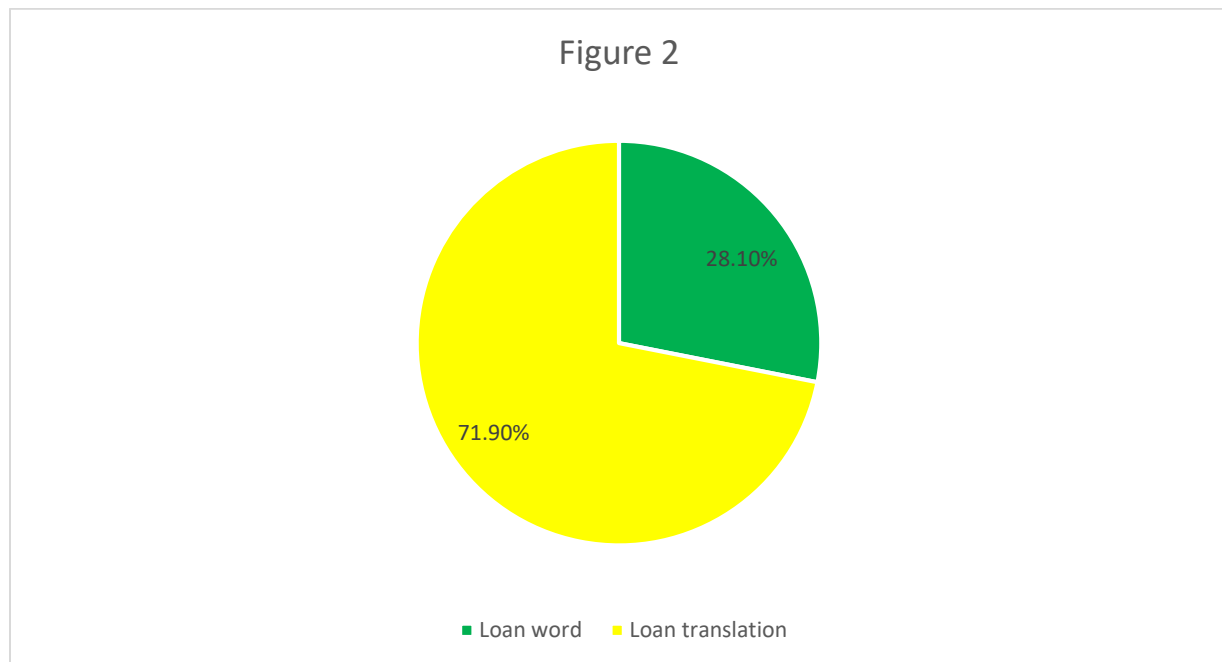
The respondents were given ten seconds to write down the word they would like to hear. The same process continued for the forty texts with two interpretations for the bold word in the text. At the end of the interpretation process, students were given five minutes to explain their choices. Regarding the fourth group, the five interpreters, the same process was adopted, but these interpreters were interviewed directly after the interpretation process to explain and justify their selections. Finally, the occurrences were counted in each column, and the percentages were calculated for each column out of one hundred.

3. Results

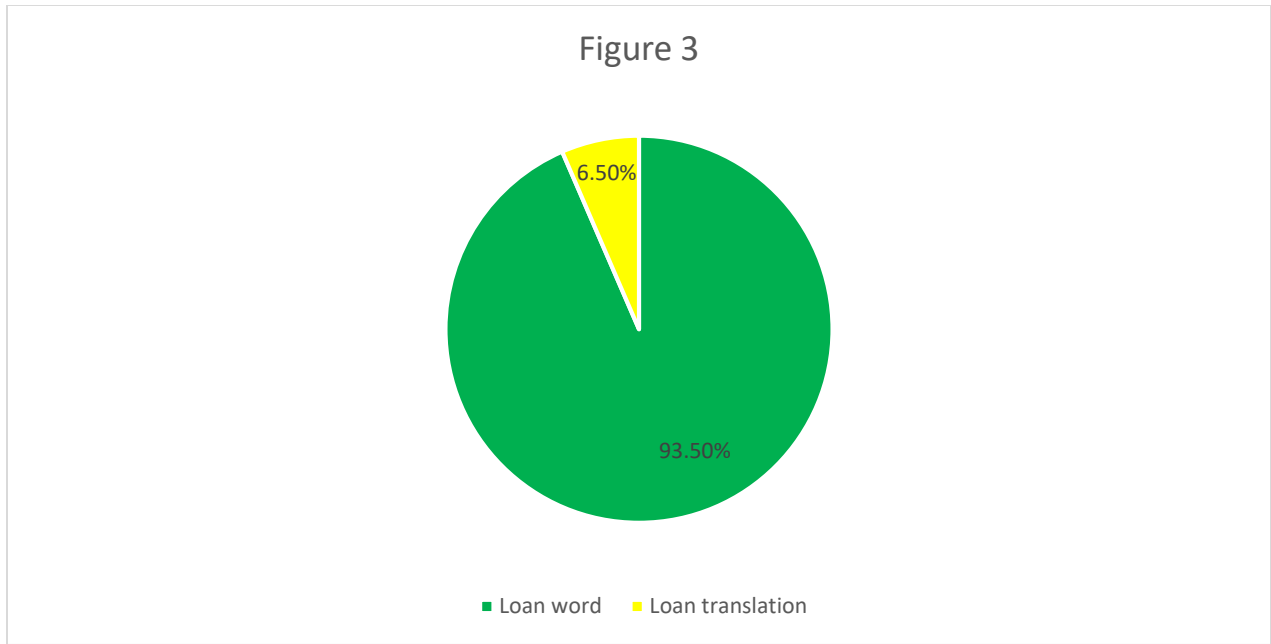
The first group – thirty junior students majoring in English as their major and Translation as a minor- opted mainly for the loan translation. The percentage of the loan translation was 89.66%, and for the loan word, the percentage was 10.34, as shown in the following pie chart. Figure 1



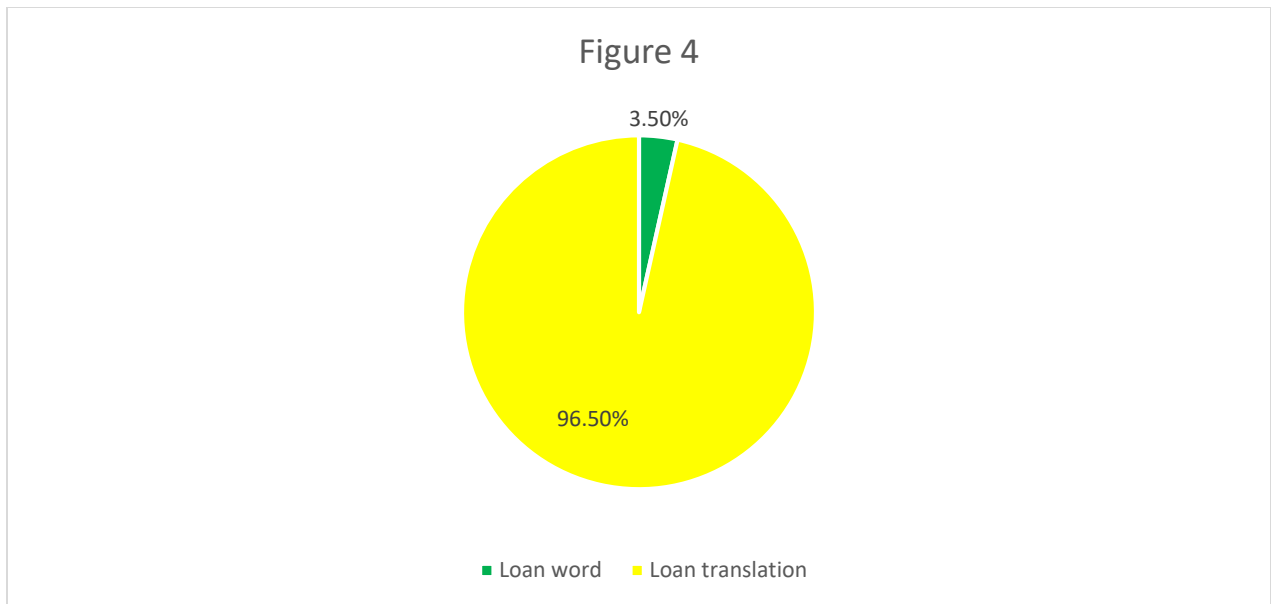
The second group – thirty junior students majoring in English language and its literature – preferred loan translation by 71.9% and loan words by 28.1%, as shown in the following figure. Figure 2



The third group- thirty sophomore students coming from various university colleges- selected mainly loan words; the percentage reached 93.5% and 6.5% for the loan translation, as shown in the following figure. Figure 3



The fourth group- five translators and interpreters- mainly opted for the word translation choice. The percentage of the loan translation was 96.5%, while for the loan word, the percentage was only 3.5%, as shown by the following figure. Figure 4



4. Discussion

From the previous figures, one can clearly notice that the English major students with a minor translation preferred the loan translation with a high percentage, almost 90%. It seems that these students are occupied by the notion of "correctness" at the expense of what are "commonly used" translations. Students studying translation are expected to produce perfect translations during their course of study at the university. Thus, from their perspective, choosing the standard Arabic equivalents is looked upon as the best way to convey the meaning of the English words, rather than saying these words as they are or modifying them phonologically or morphologically or both to suit the Arabic morpho-phonological rules. Then, it might be logical to suppose that for those who are indulged in the translation study or activity, the preference would be clearly geared towards a more correct standard ideal and pure language. This conclusion could be further supported by the students who are majoring in the English language and its literature and are not taking a minor in translation. Still, for this group, the notion of "correctness" is present. The majority of this group, 71.9%, also selected the loan translations because they think they are the correct ones. Again, it seems that

these students are obsessed with the notion of "correctness" more than the daily use of certain loan vocabulary. Language students tend to pay more attention to "formal language" rather than "language use". What solidifies this conclusion is the answers they provided for their selection at the end of the interpretation process. The majority of the comments of the first two groups centered around the notion that "I selected these forms because, for me, these are the best, the correct, the formal translations; these translations look more of a formal and standard Arabic."

Giving the notion of "correctness" a priority over daily usage is conspicuously evident in the interpreters' choices. They gave the loan translation a very high percentage- 96.6%. They believe that Arab interpreters should pay attention to producing formal standard Arabic equivalents for English vocabulary regardless of whether these words are commonly used. From their perspective, an Arab interpreter should select the standard Arabic equivalents even if there are other words that are common. Thus, for them, we, as Arab natives, must use حاسوب and not the loan word كمبيوتر. It is a matter of language identity rather than a matter of daily usage. They even think that the native speakers of Arabic should accustom their ears to the Arabic vocabulary and not keep using the loan words in their everyday interactions. It is clear that the issue of language purity has precedence over the daily use when interpreting from Arabic into English from the perspective of these interpreters.

However, the results of the third group- sophomores who are not studying language or translation, show a reverse trend compared with the rest of the three other groups in this study. This group believes that Arab interpreters should provide, in the process of interpretation, loan words instead of loan translations since these words are used in their daily language interactions. From their perspective, the Arab interpreters should provide interpretations that accommodate the audience rather than focusing on using pure formal equivalents that are mainly employed by Arabic specialists and Arab grammarians. Why, as an audience, should bother about using شطيرة if I can use the common loan word سندويشة, one of the students commented. As such, it seems that for this sector of the audience, the common usage takes priority over the formal standard use of language. This explains why this group selected the loan words over the loan translation.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

This study was conducted to see whether interpreters in conferences take into account audience preferences regarding Arabicized words. Specifically, this paper set out to answer the following questions:

1. Which Arabicized form (loan words or loan translations) do listeners (audiences) in conferences who listen to the interpreters prefer to hear?
2. What reasons do they have to prefer one form over the other?

Upon analysis of the results of the study, it became clear that there is a strong correlation between the field of study and/or profession of the audience. The translation and language majors preferred loan translations over loan words; however, those who come from different majors such as commerce and law opted for loan words. In other words, when the target group is one that studies language and or practices translation, the preference goes for loan translation. For these groups, the notion of "correctness" occupies their priority in interpreting the Arabicized words as loan translations rather than as loan words. On the other hand, for the target group which does not study or work in the interpretation, the most important thing is the daily usage and the commonality of the word rather than its formality or purity. Thus, it is highly significant for Arab interpreters to take the audience into consideration when carrying out an interpretation that includes Arabicized words. Since the ultimate goal of interpretation is conveying the meaning from one language into another in the best possible manner, it would be practical to think of the audience in the process of interpretation. Finally, the interpreter is not doing the job for himself or herself; on the contrary, the audience should play a role in the interpreter's choice in interpreting the Arabicized words as loan words or as loan translations. It is time to think of the people we are interpreting for instead of merely thinking of what is correct in the process of conference interpretation.

6. Limitations of the study and suggestions for future research

This study was limited to university students and 5 interpreters. The sample of Arabicized words was confined to 40 items as well. Therefore, the findings of this study may not be generalized to all kinds of audiences. We recommend changing the population of the study to include groups of subject specialists like nurses, pharmacists, and engineers, among others, to investigate their preferences for loan translations or loan words when dealing with Arabicized words in conferences. This would help us generalize the findings and consequently sensitize conference interpreters to the needs of the audience, the most important parameter in this business.

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Appendix

English word	Loan word	Loan translation
internet	الانترنت	الشبكة العنكبوتية
2. motherboard	مذيرود	لوحة المفاتيح
3. computer	كمبيوتر	حاسوب
4. sandwich	ساندويشة	شطيرة
5. fax	فاكس	ناسوخ
6. television	تليفزيون	الرائي
7. gear	جير	ناقل الحركة
8. motor	ماتور	محرك
9. radio	راديو	مذياع
11. acid	اسيد	حامض
12. agenda	اجندا	جدول اعمال
13. clinical	أكلينيكي	سريري
14. like	لايك	أعجيني
15. steering	ستيرنج	مقود
16. bank	بنك	مصرف
17. babeque	باربكيو	شواء
18. telephone	تلفون	هاتف
19. bus	باص	حافلة
20. puncture	بنشر	اطار مثقوب
21. course	كورس	مساوق
22. democracy	ديمقراطية	حكم الشعب
23. autocracy	اتوقراطية	استبداد
24. goal-keeper	جولنجي	حارس مرمى
25. technology	تكنولوجيا	تقنية
26. tennis	تنس	كرة المضرب
27. mechanic	ميكانيكي	فني سيارات
28. football	فطبول	كرة قدم
29. truck	ترك	شاحنة
30. scooter	سكوتر	دراجة
31. calculator	كالكوليتير	آلة حاسبة
32. mobile phone	موبايل	هاتف نقال
33. honor list	انر ليست	لوحة شرف
34. Biology	بيولوجيا	علم الاحياء
35. agenda	اجنذة	جدول اعمال
36. catalogue	كاتالوج	قائمة سلع
37. android	اندرويد	نظام تشغيل
38. mouse	ماوس	فأرة
39. metro	مترو	قطار الانفاق
40. steak	ستيك	شرايح لحم