



**STRATEGIES OF RENDERING DIFFICULT SYNTACTIC  
STRUCTURES IN ENGLISH-ARABIC SIMULTANEOUS  
INTERPRETING**

**By**

**ABDULAMEER MUHANNAD HADI ABDULAMEER**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra  
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Philosophy**

**July 2022**

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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**July 2022**

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When conducted between linguistically different language pairs, simultaneous interpreting encapsulates difficulties when choosing the strategies to be used with certain syntactic structures. The present study is a corpus-based study which examines how simultaneous interpreters employ certain interpreting strategies rather than others when rendering noun phrases and numbers in English-Arabic simultaneous interpreting. In light of the emerging conditions posed by the corona virus pandemic hitting the world and the urgent need to carry out interpreting tasks remotely, the present study aims to identify the categories of noun phrases and numbers that cause difficulties when rendered from English into Arabic through applying Quirk et al., (1985) and the strategies employed to render them through applying Kohn and Kalina (1996).

To address the issues focused on in this study, a parallel unidirectional corpus of English source speeches on briefings about the Corona virus around the world with their Arabic renditions was compiled to constitute the data of the study.

The findings of the study indicate that simultaneous interpreters employed nine interpreting strategies when rendering noun phrases. The employed strategies are parallelization, omission, deviation, condensation, substitution, paraphrasing, expansion, repair, and elaboration. Whereas, numbers were interpreted employing three interpreting strategies; parallelization, deviation, and omission. The findings also show that a new interpreting strategy has emerged. The strategy was termed as deviation, in which the interpreter omits a particular syntactic structure and adds irrelevant information in order to avoid being silent. Additionally, the data analysis reveals that the strategies of parallelization, condensation, substitution,

paraphrasing, expansion, repair, and elaboration are appropriate for rendering noun phrases, whereas, numbers are only appropriately rendered by employing the strategy of parallelization. These findings were validated by inter-raters proving that the identification of difficult categories as well as the strategies employed to render each of them along with the appropriate strategies of rendition are appropriately conducted. Based on the findings of the present study, the researcher proposed many recommendations and suggestions in order to help simultaneous interpreters overcome such difficulties.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia  
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

## **STRATEGI TERJEMAHAN STRUKTUR SINTAKSIS YANG SUKAR DALAM BAHASA INGGERIS - BAHASA ARAB**

Oleh

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Penterjemahan serentak, apabila dilakukan antara pasangan bahasa yang berbeza dengan ilmu linguistik, merangkumi kesukaran apabila memilih strategi yang akan digunakan dengan struktur sintaksis tertentu. Kajian ini adalah berasaskan korpus yang mengkaji kaedah jurubahasa serentak menggunakan strategi penterjemahan tertentu berbanding yang lain dalam terjemahan frasa nama dan nombor dalam tafsiran serentak menggunakan bahasa Inggeris – bahasa Arab. Memandangkan fenomena baru yang wujud oleh pandemik virus korona yang melanda dunia dan keperluan mendesak untuk menjalankan tugas menterjemah dari jarak jauh, kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti kategori frasa nama dan nombor yang menyebabkan kesukaran apabila diterjemahkan daripada bahasa Inggeris kepada bahasa Arab melalui pengaplikasian Quirk et al. (1985) dan strategi yang digunakan untuk mewajarkannya dengan pengaplikasian Kohn dan Kalina (1996).

Bagi menangani isu yang difokuskan dalam kajian ini, korpus selari bersumberkan ucapan berbentuk pemberitahuan tentang virus korona di seluruh dunia dalam bahasa Inggeris yang diterjemah dalam bahasa Arab secara tersusun disediakan untuk menjadi data kajian.

Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa jurubahasa serentak menggunakan sembilan strategi penterjemahan semasa membuat terjemahan frasa nama. Strategi yang digunakan ialah selari, peninggalan, sisihan, peringkasan, penggantian, parafrasa, pengembangan, pembaikan dan penghuraian. Manakala, nombor ditafsir menggunakan tiga strategi tafsiran; keselarian, penyimpangan dan peninggalan. Dapatan kajian turut menunjukkan bahawa strategi terjemahan baharu telah muncul. Strategi itu diistilahkan sebagai sisihan yang mana penterjemah menyetepikan struktur sintaksis tertentu dan menambah maklumat yang tidak

relevan untuk mengelak daripada menyembunyikannya. Selain itu, analisis data mendedahkan bahawa strategi penyejajaran, peringkasan, penggantian, penguraian kata, pengembangan, pembaikan dan penghuraian adalah sesuai untuk menghasilkan frasa nama, manakala, nombor hanya sesuai dengan menggunakan strategi penyejajaran. Penemuan ini telah diperakukan oleh penilai yang membuktikan bahawa pengenalpastian kategori sukar dan strategi yang digunakan untuk menjadikan setiap daripada kategori adalah sejajar dengan strategi penyampaian yang sesuai dijalankan. Berdasarkan dapatan kajian ini, pengkaji mencadangkan banyak cadangan dan saranan untuk membantu jurubahasa serentak mengatasi kesukaran tersebut.



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With infinite thanks and love, my work is dedicated to my father and mother, whose prayers have granted me the blessings to put strong efforts and determination throughout my study and all my life. Besides, my work is dedicated with sincere love and thanks to my partener in this journey as well as every single detail of my life, my wife, who has been considerate, supportive, and cooperative throughout the duration of my study. With love, I dedicate my achievement to the light of my eyes, my two angels; Rahaf and Malak.

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBTS	Corpus Based Translation Studies
CBIS	Corpus Based Interpreting Studies
CL	Corpus Linguistics
EPIC	European Parliament Interpreting Corpus
EP	The European Parliament
EVS	Ear-Voice Span
WM	Working Memory
LTM	Long Term Memory



# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Preamble

This chapter presents an introduction to the study. It is divided into seven sections. Section one is devoted to presenting a background to the study by reviewing previous studies which dealt with topics that are close to the topic of the present study in some aspects and showing differences between the present study and previous studies. It is built to move from the general to the particular. It starts by presenting an overview of the concepts dealt with in the present study. First, it tackles the concept of simultaneous interpreting in brief. Then, it briefly compares the syntactic structures of the English-Arabic language pair indicating previous studies that separately dealt with each language syntactic structures as this language pair has not been chosen together to investigate problems facing simultaneous interpreters in terms of the influence of the syntactic structures on the use of certain strategies rather than others. An overview is presented about the difficult syntactic structures of the source language of the present study which is the English language. Next, this section presents strategies of simultaneous interpreting as stated in some previous studies. Finally, the section presents a snapshot about remote simultaneous interpreting justifying why it has been chosen to be the mode tackled in the present study.

In section two, the problem statement is established by indicating the gap that has not been tackled by previous studies, which is how certain English difficult syntactic structures make simultaneous interpreters' resort to using certain strategies to render them into Arabic.

Section three presents the objectives of the study followed by the research questions in section four. Section five details the scope of the present study followed by section six which explains the significance of the present study. Section seven is devoted to presenting a snapshot about the conceptual framework of the present study. Finally, this chapter is concluded with definitions of the main terms.

### 1.2 Background to the Study

This section surveys the various aspects of the topic of the present study. This is why it is subdivided into sub-headings to present a clear foundation of the background of the present study.

### 1.2.1 Categories of Interpreting

Simultaneous interpreting (SI) is without any doubt one of the most complex and demanding tasks for the human brain (Baekeland and Defrancq, 2020). The simultaneity requirements of SI mean that interpreters work under significant time pressure, causing a heavy cognitive load. But even under such severe constraints, the interpreter orients towards the primary purpose of his/her activity: interlingual communication. This means that audience design remains an important part of the interpreter's task (Dayter, 2020).

In the field of interpreting, there are three main subcategories, namely consecutive interpreting with note-taking, simultaneous interpreting of speeches as delivered at international events, and dialogue interpreting in community settings. The two first subtypes differ in various ways. First, consecutive interpreting does not require the interpreter to immediately reproduce the message as in simultaneous interpreting, where there is no time for structuring the discourse. Another distinction can be made in the understanding phase. In consecutive interpreting, it can take the form of notes whereas for the simultaneous interpreting, the processing of information must be very immediate, making the task more cognitively challenging. In both cases, the interpreter needs a good short and long-term memory (Qianxi and Junying, 2018).

The significance of skills that are related to interpreters' memory was thoroughly investigated in line with the cognitive turn in Interpreting Studies (Moser-Mercer et al., 2000). Whether professional interpreters have a better working memory ability than trainees or bilinguals who are not fluent in both languages is one of the key issues raised in this regard. However, the findings of the studies are still up in the air. In line with this direction in interpreting studies, linguistic and cognitive abilities have also been treated as key determinants of an interpreter's future performance and critical elements of their aptitude, defined as a capacity to attain talent (Salkind, 2008). The major live TV programs are generally interpreted by experienced professional interpreters and often feature highly skilled performances (Amato and Mak, 2011). However, Interpreting Studies have witnessed the advent of a modern movement in recent years. More focus has been dedicated to the influence of psycho-affective factors, including resistance for stress or motivation in the practice of interpreting (Timarová and Ungoed-Thomas 2008; Rosiers et al., 2011; Bontempo and Napier, 2011).

Due to changes happening every now and then, conferences have become more challenging and complicated (Kalina, 2014). Specific difficulties identified in the literature as the main factors contributing to the complexity of the interpreters' task include high information density, especially if combined with a high speed of talk and/or not well structured utterances, proper names, figures, culture-bound references, humorous, ironical, or highly emotional passages, unfamiliar accents and pre-prepared speeches read out with no chance for the interpreter to have access to them (Amato and Mak, 2011).

### **1.2.2 Media Interpreting**

One of the areas where interpreting has been growing rapidly is the media and in particular television. Although TV interpreting only accounts for a limited share of the interpreting private market, it has a remarkable influence on the perception of interpreters and their work among large numbers of people. Thus, interpreters should be equipped with skills that can be transferred, including: public speaking, psychological preparation (confidence and readiness), flexibility at linguistic and strategic level, fast discourse analysis, multi-tasking, and brain-voice coordination (Li, 2015).

### **1.2.3 Particularity of Noun Phrases and Numbers**

Simultaneous interpreting is a difficult process since it necessitates a strong level of competence in both the source and target languages. Professional interpreters recognize that interpreting is a difficult task which necessitates a variety of linguistic and non-linguistic skills, including mastery of the active language, a strong background of general knowledge, and certain personal qualities such as the faculty of analysis and synthesis, the ability to intuit meaning, and the ability to adapt quickly to changing circumstances. A strong short and long term memory, the capacity to focus, physical stamina, and a talent for public speaking, and good nerves are among the other attributes needed (Al-Khanji, and Al-Salman, 2002).

The rendition of noun phrases was tackled in two dissimilar language pairs, including English-Hebrew and Polish-Italian. Shlesinger (2003) tackled the overload of memory in rendering noun sequences in simultaneously interpreting English texts conveyed into Hebrew at different speeds. Shlesinger (2003) conducted an experimentation by means of utilizing (16) professional simultaneous interpreters who interpreted (6) transcripts. The other study was conducted by Capella (2014). The objective of the study was to identify the interpreting strategies implemented by simultaneous interpreters at the European Parliament in order to render lengthy sequences of nouns from Polish into Italian. Capella (2014) noticed that interpreters lean towards omitting some parts that the context can give a clue about (Ghiselli, 2018).

On the other hand, interpreting numbers is found to be more cognitively demanding than interpreting the context in which they occur (Korpala and Stachowiak, 2018). The occurrence of such a problem in interpreting a certain syntactic structure can contribute to significant cognitive effort in simultaneous interpreting. It is stated that numbers cannot be subject to paraphrasing (Jones, 2002). Numbers can thus be a challenge for interpreters (Korpala and Stachowiak, 2018). They indicate that processing numbers is more cognitively demanding in the event of syntactic asymmetry between the source language and the target language. In light of these complex features, processing and rendering noun phrases and numbers can be treated as a special task in simultaneous interpreting.

### **1.2.4 Syntactic Asymmetry Between English and Arabic**

In English-Arabic simultaneous interpreting, there are several language-specific elements and strategies relating to syntactic asymmetry (Al Zahran, 2021). When complicated by lengthy and/or complex initial subjects in the source language, there is a difference between subject-verb-object (S-initial) and verb-subject-object (V-initial) (SL) structures. The verb that is usually used to begin sentences in Arabic is greatly delayed by these forms of complicated initial structures in the subject position (Al Zahran, 2021).

In terms of inflectional characteristics, syntactic distribution of determiners, and the word order of the determiner phrase itself, large parametric variations have been discovered between determiner phrases of English and Arabic (Al-Najjar, 2019). The determiner phrase usually comes before the head noun or its pre-modifying adjectival phrase in English, with a few variations where determiners come after the head noun. Parts of the determiner phrase occur before the head noun and parts appear after the head noun or its post-modifying adjectival phrase in Arabic, resulting in a discontinuous determiner phrase (Al-Najjar, 2019).

However, (Al Zahran, 2021) hypothesizes that professional simultaneous interpreters resort to following the SL syntactic structures to deal with difficult initial subjects and prevent failure, loss of information, or overload of memory (Al Zahran, 2021). Simultaneous interpreters use the not waiting for the verb strategy, utilizing the flexibility of the Arabic word order, which provides nominal clause structures that are close to the English S-initial structure, which is proposed to deal with the asymmetry between the two languages. Chunks dealt with under SI conditions and a combination of syntactic asymmetry and complexity can impose a cognitive overload on the interpreter's working memory (Al-Zahran, 2021). This necessitates investigating the influence of these features of this language pair on simultaneous interpreters' use of strategies to cope with such conditions.

### **1.2.5 Interpreting Mode Specific Strategies**

The importance of interpreting strategies in interpreting research cannot be underestimated. Strategies that are particular to each mode of interpreting, such as anticipation in simultaneous interpreting offer interpreters advantages in reducing workload induced by mode-specific constraints (Kalina, 1994; Agrifoglio, 2003). Moreover, strategies allow interpreters to use the least amount of processing effort possible to reduce the detrimental effects of cognitive restrictions, such as high time demands, extreme speech conditions, and unsatisfactory working conditions (Riccardi, 1998; Gile, 2009). Restructuring (Riccardi, 1995), anticipation (Chernov, 2004), and segmentation (Lee, 2007) are strategies that minimize the risk of overburdening processing ability due to language-specific restrictions. Therefore, they are critical for interpreters working between syntactically different

languages. Consequently, strategies are important for high-quality interpreting and can be considered an indispensable part of interpreting competency (Kalina, 2000).

In their daily work tasks, conference interpreters regularly get involved in multitasking conducted in a bilingual or multilingual context. The burdens of the mission force the simultaneous interpreter to always produce the target language output at the same time during which the source language message is being produced. Syntactic structures and lexical items of the source language should be kept monitored in order not to overlap with the regular sounding of the production of the target language (Lamberger-Felber and Schneider, 2009; Dailidénaitė and Volynec, 2013). Otherwise, (Shlesinger, 2008) states that the interpreter produces *interpretese*, a target language expression that is tainted with SL forms that result from cross-linguistic interference. Inputs vary from one task to another. They might be visual, such as the case in sight translation, consecutive interpreting with notes, and simultaneous interpreting with text. They might also be auditory, such as the case in simultaneous and consecutive interpreting. Therefore, interpreters should also handle resource demand interference, i.e. interference from one task while performing another because of competing for restricted cognitive resources due to the multitasking and multimodality involved in the practice of interpreting tasks (Wickens, 2002; Seeber, 2011). Conducting simultaneous interpreting for live media events even involves more difficulties resulting from the peculiar characteristics, structure, and time restrictions of the broadcast event (Amato and Mak, 2011).

### **1.2.6 Traditional VS Remote Simultaneous Interpreting**

Conference interpreters may resort to conducting their interpreting tasks remotely. A faster performance failure may result when the interpreting task is conducted remotely than when it is conducted live (Braun, 2007-2013; Napier and Leneham, 2011). In both modes of remote and video interpreting, isolation results from the environment in which the interpreting task is carried out (Braun and Taylor, 2012). This may increase the overload on simultaneous interpreters (Kurz, 2002; Moser-Mercer, 2005; Roziner and Shlesinger, 2010). Consequently, concern for appropriate working standards may not be available when simultaneous interpreting is performed remotely (Petersen, 2011). Research on the objective influence of remote simultaneous interpreting on performance efficiency is still inconclusive (Roziner and Shlesinger, 2010). It is evident that adjusting to these circumstances and the lack of co-presence with meeting participants costs interpreters considerable stress and additional effort, even with the presence of the best equipment (Moser-Mercer, 2003; Mouzourakis 2003-2006; Braun and Taylor, 2012).

In light of the need to adapt to changes and developments, remote simultaneous interpreting is increasingly used to optimize interpreters' availability (Braun, 2016). In her series of papers about remote simultaneous interpreting in legal contexts, Braun compares remote interpreting to traditional interpreting at courts



(Braun, 2016). Remote simultaneous interpreting is one of the attempts to decrease the dangers of exposing interpreters and participants to being infected by the Corona virus.

There are two points making it necessary to conduct the present study. The first point is that the remote simultaneous interpreting mode is crucial due to the pandemic conditions. Hence, aspects of this mode, its strengths and weaknesses, and problems facing simultaneous interpreters need to be investigated. The second point is the specificity of the English-Arabic language pair and lack of research tackling the influence of the English difficult syntactic structures on strategy use by simultaneous interpreters when rendering the difficult syntactic structures from English into Arabic. This field of research study is comparatively underrepresented by the English-Arabic simultaneous interpreting scholars. It was witnessed that simultaneous interpreters, while facing the communication difficulties in the target language, accidentally move on making decisions in direct solutions for the problems satisfying the requirements for communication goal in the target language. The strategies exploited in the communication of target language comprise a broad sector containing reduction strategies (RS) where simultaneous interpreters attempt to reduce the communication goal by avoiding or ignoring the contents in the target language. The utilization of the proposed strategies might not be successful as the needed contents would be ignored and there is a possibility for causing a communication breakdown (Al-Khanji et al., 2000). Another approach, termed the achievement strategies (ASs), appears to be divergent in its strategy, where simultaneous interpreters employ the possible strategies in solving all communication problems and attain their communication goal in the target language. These strategies involve the inclusion of paragraphs or phrases for the intended contents in the target language. Therefore, it is evident that implementing these strategies would benefit simultaneous interpreters in overcoming their communication difficulties and problems in the target language, which would help the communication channels stay open (Al-Khanji et al., 2000). Successful anticipation of syntax without considerable delays and pauses is possible if interpreting is performed between languages with a similar syntactic structure (Maksimov, 2019).

Recently, many projects have examined various language pairs, especially European languages in terms of strategy use in RSI, such as AVIDICUS (Braun, 2016). In addition, new trends in interpreting demands, such as interpreting on broadcast, via satellite, or on the Internet must be taken into account (Gile, 2005) as different skills in simultaneous interpreting should be mastered (Christoffels and De Groot, 2005). The increased use of mediated communication through interpreting and audiovisual methods increases the possible range of the addressees that a speaker is likely to address in a statement (Condor et al., 2013). Moreover, due to the new conditions imposed by the corona virus pandemic, such as physical distancing and other measures, there is a need to investigate the aspects of (RSI) as it is the dominant mode of interpreting that requires in depth research in order to identify how possible it is to overcome problems and difficulties and improve interpreters' handling of their tasks. Based upon, the most up-to-date studies in

simultaneous interpreting research have highlighted the need to expand horizons of the way simultaneous interpreting is studied and evaluated by taking into consideration newer troublesome factors than those previously considered.

It is clear that using certain strategies by simultaneous interpreters when facing particular difficulties resulting from certain English syntactic structures has not been tackled before. Moreover, despite the fact that there are very few studies tackling different aspects of simultaneous interpreting in various language pairs, mostly European, the English-Arabic language pair still requires in depth research due to the discrepancy between the syntactic structures of the two languages. Studies conducted in the English-Arabic language pair tackled issues like the influence of text type on strategy use by simultaneous interpreters (Al-Khanji and Al-Salman, 2000; Al-Salman and Al-Khanji, 2002). Remote simultaneous interpreting still requires more in-depth investigation to identify how remote simultaneous interpreters can handle problems facing them when conducting their tasks.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

In light of the Corona virus pandemic, speeches related to informing the public of the updates about the pandemic situation, recommendations of how to cope, vaccine developments, and numbers of infections and deaths around the world are of crucial importance as they affect peoples' daily lives. In light of these global conditions, people of all origins need to understand the reality of health situations from a reliable source, such as the director general of the World Health Organization (WHO), Dr. Tedros. As a large part of the global community, the Arab community constitutes an essential part of whom the speeches of Dr. Tedros address. The fact that not all Arabs speak English initiates the urgent need for mediators that render the English speeches into the Arabic language in order for Non-English speakers of Arabs to understand the content of the speeches and act accordingly in a way that ensures the safety of the largest numbers possible of the people in the Arab community. This clearly refers to the importance and danger of the role simultaneous interpreter's play in delivering the information related to the global health situation as the WHO intends them as accurately as possible. Consequently, if it is found that the speeches are not interpreted in a way that conveys the information contained therein, this may lead to a misunderstanding that may lead to unwanted results, such as an increase in the death cases, infections as well as deterioration in health situations.

There are many factors that may cause comprehension and production difficulties. Such factors include complex syntactic structures like figures, names, and so on (Riccardi, 1998; Setton, 1999; Al-Qinai, 2002; Chernov, 2004; Gile, 2009; Pöchhacker, 2009). Many other factors can contribute to interpreting performance, including syntactic differences between languages. The task of interpreting cannot be smooth due to the structural differences of the SL and TL, so interpreters should be prepared to encounter the constraints as they interpret utterances from the SL

into the TL (Khachula, et al., 2021). Some source text features are deemed particularly problematic in simultaneous interpreting. They include, but are not limited to: names, numbers, enumerations, noun strings, in addition to fast pace of speech, poor sound quality, lack of source speech logic, and foreign accent (Gile, 2009; Korpala and Stachowiak, 2018; Ghiselli, 2018). Hence, the occurrence of such difficulties can significantly contribute to influencing the strategy use by simultaneous interpreters.

As an attempt to identify the strategies employed by the simultaneous interpreters who interpreted the speeches live, the present study investigates the strategies used when rendering noun phrases and numbers. Noun phrases are selected due to the frequency of their occurrence in almost every single sentence of the speeches, as they commonly occur in English, in which attributive adjectives precede the nouns that are modified by them (Quirk et al., 1985). In English, noun phrases are composed of a head, usually a noun, and of elements that determine and optionally modify the head or complement another element in the phrase, for example, all those fine warm days in the country last year (Quirk et al., 1985). Hence, handling noun phrases in simultaneous interpreting from English into Arabic is a challenge as modifiers normally follow the noun head in Arabic, thus taxing working memory. Moreover, the high information density of the strings of modifiers brings about specific processing constraints due to memory overload (Ghiselli, 2018). On the other hand, due to the critical nature of numbers, through which infections, deaths, aids, and so many other facts are indicated, the present study also investigates the strategies employed when rendering them. In simultaneous interpreting, numbers are a common source of errors. They are often characterized by low predictability from the context and high information density, which requires the interpreter to change strategies with respect to listening, memory, and production (Desmet et al., 2018). However, so far, only a few studies have empirically examined how syntactic structure affects strategy use (Jones, 2002). Source language syntactic structures are important aspects of interpreting, since they determine interpreters' use of certain strategies. Some studies indicate that syntactic structures were found to cause more or less syntactic transformations, compression, and frequency of repairs depending on language pairs (Bartłomiejczyk, 2006; Chang and Schallert, 2007; Dailidénaitė, 2009; Shamy and De Pedro, 2017). Other analytical studies provided similar discussions of difficulties of interpreting between language pairs with asymmetrical structures as well as the tactics used to cope with such difficulties (Gile, 2011; Liantou, 2011; He, Boyd-Graber, and Daumé III, 2016). The study of source-target correspondence is one of the big issues in research on translation and interpreting in general (Pöchhacker, 2004). Some scholars suggest that variables like morphosyntactic asymmetry between source and target languages have an effect on simultaneous interpreting since they raise cognitive workload, whereas others argue that such factors are negligible if both the source and target languages speakers have adequate linguistic proficiency (Seeber and Kerzel, 2012).

Previous studies have demonstrated that strategy use is influenced by the language pair specific restrictions. For example, when conducting a simultaneous



interpreting from English into Italian, the interpreter sticks to the surface structures of English and focuses on transcoding rather than comprehensive syntactic restructuring (Donato, 2003). When simultaneously interpreting between morphosyntactically different languages, the cognitive capacity of simultaneous interpreters is more likely to be overloaded. Before disambiguating syntactic structures, the simultaneous interpreter is required to process larger pieces, remember the processed information, and fully restructure the message to adhere to the principles of the target language (Riccardi, 1998; Liontou, 2011). When simultaneously interpreting between SVO (English, French, Italian, etc.) and SOV (German, Japanese, Korean, etc.) languages, as well as languages with different order of information, such as between Chinese and English, the simultaneous interpreter is required to use the Anticipation strategy (Donato, 2003; Kurz and Färber, 2003; Gile, 2009; Lim, 2011; Liontou, 2012). Syntactic structures are inextricably linked to the lexical items that make them up (Maksimov, 2019). However, variations in the syntactic structures of the source language and the target language can trigger problems in simultaneous interpreting (Maksimov, 2019).

In light of the importance of each component of the source text in having a clear target text, many previous studies have tackled this issue in other language pairs, such as English into Hebrew by Shlesinger (2003), Polish into Italian by Capella (2014), and English into Italian by Ghiselli (2018). These studies revealed that there is a major deficiency in the target text arising from interpreting materials without employing appropriate interpreting strategies for each syntactic structure of the source text. This typically applies to English-Arabic simultaneous interpreting. Yet, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, the review of published studies revealed that no study has dealt with the influence of SL noun phrases and numbers on the use of strategies by simultaneous interpreters in the English-Arabic language pair interpreting. Thus, the present study aims to address this research gap by focusing on the aforementioned aspects.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

This study has the following specific objectives:

1. To identify categories of noun phrases and numbers in Tedros speeches on Covid-19 in which simultaneous interpreters faced difficulties rendering from English into Arabic.
2. To identify the interpreting strategies employed by simultaneous interpreters when rendering noun phrases and numbers in Tedros' speeches on Covid-19 from English into Arabic.
3. To distinguish between interpreting strategies that are specifically used with noun phrases and those used with numbers.
4. To determine the appropriate interpreting strategies used in rendering noun phrases and numbers in Tedros' speeches from English into Arabic.

## 1.5 Research Questions

To obtain the objectives of the present study, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What are the categories of noun phrases and numbers in Tedros speeches on Covid-19 in which simultaneous interpreters faced difficulties rendering from English into Arabic?
2. What are the interpreting strategies employed by simultaneous interpreters when rendering noun phrases and numbers in Tedros' speeches on Covid-19 from English into Arabic?
3. Which interpreting strategies are specifically used with noun phrases and which are used with numbers?
4. To what extent have certain strategies been appropriately used in rendering the English noun phrases and numbers into Arabic?

## 1.6 The scope of the Study

The present study investigates the strategies employed in simultaneous interpreting of Dr. Tedros', Director General of the World Health Organization, speeches about the Covid-19 pandemic from English into Arabic in the period from January 2020 to February 2021. Examining strategies of interpreting these speeches is worthwhile for the following reasons:

1. The speeches are delivered by the person in charge of the top organization responsible for global health affairs, which gives them importance and authenticity.
2. The considerable percentage of Arab communities not speaking English among the global population makes it necessary to assure conveying the World Health Organization's instructions to them as accurately as possible to help avoid consequences of unawareness of dangers of the pandemic.

There is a particular focus in the present study on the linguistic aspects of two syntactic structures in the English source speeches that cause difficulties for interpreters, namely, noun phrases and numbers. The analysis of the employed strategies takes into account the various categories of noun phrases and numbers found in the English source texts in light of Quirk et al's (1985) taxonomy. The interpreting strategies are identified in light of Kohn and Kalina's (1996) modal of categorizing interpreting strategies. However, when an interpreting strategy is identified as pertaining to a certain part of an utterance, this exactly means that the specific syntactic structure was interpreted using the specific strategy. Meanwhile, the strategy can apply to other parts of an utterance, but investigating the strategies employed with other syntactic structures is out of the scope of the present study. Interpreters develop a deep repertoire of interpreting strategies, but they utilize certain strategies across different speeches. They also employ strategy clusters, a

sequential combination of strategies, to cope with complex source-text segments (Shlesinger, 2000).

In addition, the remote simultaneous interpreting mode is chosen to be the focus of the present study due to many reasons:

1. The pandemic conditions that made it hard for interpreters to be at the same places where the speaker is.
2. Resorting to conducting online meetings to prevent infections.
3. The need to identify weaknesses and strengths of the remote simultaneous interpreting mode to improve its good aspects and overcome its deficiencies.

The data of the present study have been obtained from live broadcasts of six Arab TV channels, namely Alarabiya TV channel, Express News Arabic TV channel, France 24 TV channel, Nile News Arabic TV channel, RT News Arabic TV channel, and Sky News Arabic TV channel as they are the only Arab TV channels that broadcasted the press conferences of Dr. Tedros live, which makes them the only source for obtaining the target texts.

The need for the present study is informed by the fact that simultaneous interpreters come across various syntactic structures, which requires them to assign certain strategies for each syntactic structure.

## **1.7 Significance of the Study**

Since the topic of the influence of syntactic structures of the source language on interpreters' employment of interpreting strategies has not been examined by scholars in the field of interpreting Studies, the present study offers an ideal opportunity to consider renditions of English texts within a non-European cultural context. The significance of the present study is in the assumption that, despite the fact that there has been no analysis of the use of strategy in simultaneous interpreting in the English-Arabic language pair (...), no research has been done to look at the influence of English difficult syntactic structures on the use of strategy by Arab simultaneous interpreters. Furthermore, only a few research on Arabs have been performed with regard to the use of strategies in translation (e.g., Atari, 2005; Rababah, 2008), and only a few studies have been conducted with regard to the use of strategies in interpreting (e.g. Al-Khanji et al., 2000; Al-Salman and Al-Khanji, 2002). The results of their analysis showed that interpreters interpreting into English used more ASs strategies than RSs, implying that interpreting from English to Arabic is difficult and necessitates in-depth studies from a variety of angles. They were curious, however, about the influence of text typology on interpreters' choice of strategy.

The reviewed literature reveals that no previous studies have tackled the influence of the English difficult syntactic structures on interpreters' use of strategies. Moreover, similar studies tackling the influence of English difficult syntactic structures on strategy use in remote simultaneous interpreting were not identified in the reviewed literature not only in the Arab region, but also in the entire world. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to fill the gap detected in the literature by carrying out this research to outline the strategies used by simultaneous interpreters. Thus, this may help researchers realize how Arab professional simultaneous interpreters strategize their interpreting difficulties.

In light of the results of the present study, its contribution is that it explores how simultaneous interpreters employ certain strategies as they try to overcome the difficulties resulting from the discrepancy of the syntactic structure of English as an SL and Arabic as a TL. It provides simultaneous interpreters with a clearer understanding of the interpreting strategies during their tasks in the area of simultaneous interpreting. The present study adds to the literature of interpreting studies by contributing to proposing solutions for problems facing simultaneous interpreters due to the discrepancy of the SL and TL syntactic structures.

## **1.8 Conceptual Framework**

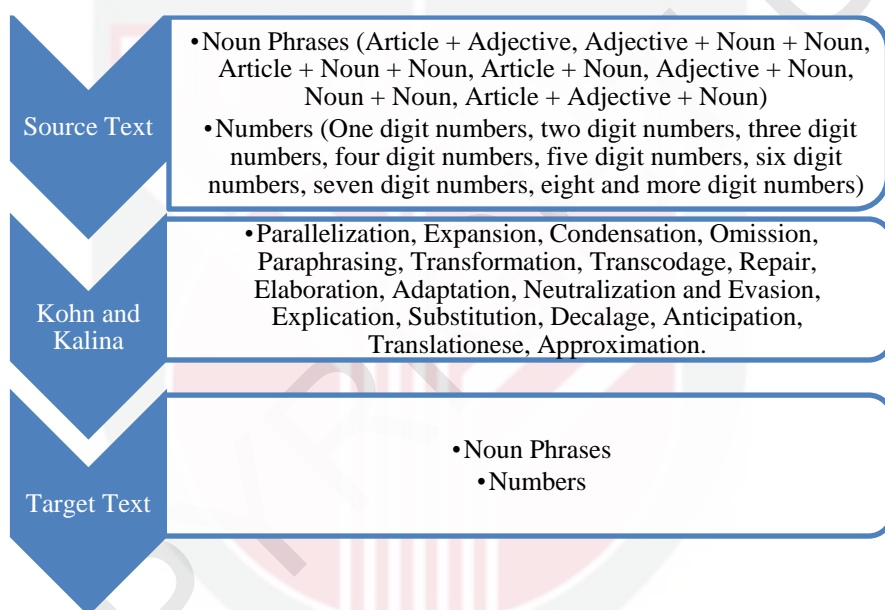
This section aims to illustrate the way through which the framework of data analysis is conceptualized making use of the models presented by Quirk et al., (1985) and Kohn and Kalina (1996). To identify strategy use, one of the methods that are usually used in the literature is called paralleled text analysis, namely, segment-by-segment analysis of the source text (ST) and the target text (TT). The aim of such analytical approach is to examine products of interpreting (Brownlie, 2003). The underlying rationale is that strategy use in SI leaves traces in interpreted texts, and can thus be detected (Ivanova 2000; Riccardi 2005). This method has been widely used to identify individual strategies of particular interest (Vandepitte 2001; Petite 2005) or to explore all possible strategies used (Donato 2003).

A paralleled text analysis of source speeches and interpreting transcripts indicates that the interpreters utilize certain strategies across different speeches. They also employ strategy clusters, a sequential combination of strategies, to cope with complex source-text segments, which gives the strategy that is regularly used by competent professionals a normative force (Shlesinger, 2000). As a descriptive term, strategy functions on a continuum between the two extremes of idiosyncrasies and absolute rules (Munday, 2009).

Based on the abovementioned, the present study employs a parallel text analysis of source texts in English and target texts in Arabic adopting Kohn and Kalina (1996) to identify the strategies employed by simultaneous interpreters to render noun phrases and numbers in Dr. Tedros' speeches in his press conferences of the

updates about the corona virus pandemic broadcast on six Arab TV channels, including Al-Arabiya, Extra News Arabic, France 24, Nile News Arabic, RT Arabic, and Sky News Arabic TV channels and are all available on YouTube. This descriptive study of strategies based on a corpus of simultaneous interpreting can serve as a tentative exploration of the methodology in descriptive interpreting studies.

The relationships between the elements of the theoretical framework of the present study can be illustrated as in the following figure, which shows how the use of interpreting strategies shapes the target text.



**Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework**

## 1.9 Definition of Key Terms

**Interpreting strategies:** An interpreting strategy is a method that is used deliberately to prevent or solve potential problems in interpreting or to enhance interpreting performance (Bartłomiejczyk, 2006).

**Remote Simultaneous Interpreting (RSI);** an interpreting task that is simultaneously conducted, with the simultaneous interpreter placed in a different location from the location of the speaker.

Source language (SL): In the present study, wherever the term source language or (SL) is used, it refers to the English language as the press conferences of Dr. Tedros were broadcasted in English.

Target Language (TL): It is the Arabic language, to which the interpreters rendered the source speeches.

Dr. Tedros: The Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO).

### **1.10 Summary of The Chapter**

In short, this chapter presented the introduction of the thesis, including ten subsections. As such, the chapter starts with an introduction that constitutes the background of the study, followed by the problem statement, which forms the cornerstone of the thesis as it tackled the problems and research gaps related to the topic of the thesis. Then, objectives and research questions, scope and significance, as well as conceptual framework and definitions of the key concepts were presented. The chapter is concluded with a summary that recaps the whole chapter.



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