

# GLOBAL JETS



## Global JETS

The Global Journal of English & Translation Studies (Global JETS) is a high quality open access peer reviewed research journal published by the Faculty of Languages- Aden University-. It is a brainchild of a group of academicians and research scholars in the field of English language and translation studies. It aims to provide a platform for the researchers, academicians, professionals, practitioners and students to impart and share knowledge in the form of high quality empirical and theoretical research papers, case studies, literature reviews and books reviews to make them available to scholars of English language studies. It is a biannual publication (January & June). The journal publishes in both print and online versions.



<https://www.facebook.com/globaljets001>  
[globaljets001@gmail.com](mailto:globaljets001@gmail.com)

<http://g-jets.blogspot.com>



*Global Journal of English  
& Translation Studies*



# G-JETS



An international peer reviewed Journal issued semi-annually in both print and online version by the Faculty of Languages, Aden University.

Volume No. 1

Issue No. 1

January 2015



Global JETS

Volume No. 1

Issue No. 1

# Global Journal of English and Translation Studies G-JETS

**An international peer reviewed journal issued semi-annually in both print  
and online versions by the Faculty of Languages, Aden University**

*©Faculty of Languages, Aden University*

*January 2015, Volume No.1 Issue No.1*

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

إصدارات جامعة عدن

WWW. Adenuniversity.edu.ye .

E-mail: Adenuniversity@y.net.ye

رقم الايداع في المكتبة الوطنية – عدن 1092 لعام 2015م.

حقوق الطبع والنشر محفوظة.

دار جامعة عدن للطباعة والنشر. الطبعة الأولى 2015م.

يمنع ترجمة أو طباعة أو تصوير هذه المطبوعة أو أجزاء منها، وكذا حفظها أو نسخها على الوسائط الإلكترونية من غير موافقة مسبقة من الناشر.

National Library Aden, No. 1092/2015.

Copyright.

Aden University Printing and Publishing House, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 2015.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be translated, reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher.



الجمهورية اليمنية . عدن . مدينة الشعب . ص . ب . 11016 360087 – 360135

فاكس: 360701 (2 967 +) E-mail: unipress@y.net.ye

R. O. YEMEN. ADEN. MADINAT AL – SHAAB P. O. BOX 11016 % 360087-360135

**Chief Editor**

*Dr. Gamal, M. A. Abdullah*

**Editorial Secretary**

*Dr. Abdulnasser Moh'd Ali*

**Editorial Board**

*Dr. Jaklin Mansoor Moh'd*

*Dr. Adel Abdulkhaliq Abdulkareem*

***Editorial Correspondence***

Journal email, editor and Executive

Editorial Board emails.

**Website:** <http://g-jets.blogspot.com/>

**Email:** globaljets001@gmail.com

**Tel:** +967 02-236476

**Mobile:** +967 777231779



***First Issue Special Word***

In the events of Aden University celebrations on the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its establishment, it is my great pleasure and honour to write this lead-off editorial in the *G-JETS* (Global Journal of English and Translation Studies) first issue. This scientific international refereed journal is the first in the field of English and translation studies in Aden University. Our university has always strived to provide scholars and researchers the optimal conditions for presenting and publishing their research works. This materializes the great concern of the university in building strong relations between research and community. Today we open a new window for academicians and students to share their research papers that will contribute to the excellence in teaching English and translation because excellent teaching is based on high-quality scientific researches that provide new knowledge and new experiments. With the appearance of the first issue of *G-JETS*, a new academic achievement will be added to the record of the achievements of this university. Finally, I would like to present my thanks and appreciation to those who were behind this accomplishment in particular Dr. Gamal Mohammed Ahmed, the Dean of the Faculty of Languages, who always shows hard work and excellence academically and administratively.

Further, I extend my thanks to all authors who are going to recognise our journal as a proper medium for spreading and presenting their research papers.

**Rector of Aden University**

*Prof. Dr. Abdulaziz Saleh Ben Habtoor*

### ***Editorial***

We are very pleased to announce the launch of the first issue of the Global Journal of English and Translation studies (G-JETS). The G-JETS is an international peer reviewed, open-access journal published by the Faculty of Languages, University of Aden.

The G-JETS focuses on various perspectives related to English language and translation studies. Our intended global readership includes linguists, teachers, students of translations and applied linguistics and, others with professional interest in English teaching and second language acquisition.

The G-JETS can act as an academic platform for professionals and researchers to contribute work in such fields of study. The editorial board encourages authors to submit complete, original, unpublished, and full-length articles that reflect recent researches and developments in both theoretical and empirical aspects of linguistics and translation studies.

The team of the editors combines brains of international, eminent academicians from different countries; this may help to share and develop various views, recent insights, and trends in the fields of English language teaching or translation.

In this issue, we present you the first collection of high quality papers covering some important aspects in the fields of theoretical and applied linguistics, and translation. We hope you find these articles beneficial and enjoyable.

We would like to express our deep gratitude to all the contributors who have worked hard to make the dream of publishing the first issue of the journal come true.

Finally, we hope that G-JETS will meet your expectations for a high quality journal in which you would consider publishing your important researches. We will continue to work hard to provide an exceptional service to both authors and readers while maintaining the standards that we set out to achieve. The G-JETS will be published biannually in both print and online versions.

**Chief Editor**

*Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gamal, M. A. Abdullah*



### ***Notes for Contributors***

#### ***Editing Requirements***

1. Paper should be in Times New Romans font with 12 font size on 4A paper printed at single side.
2. Margins should be 2.5 cm on four sides.
3. The soft copy of the paper should be in MSW 2007 OR any latest MSW version.
4. A PDF format copy should also be included.
5. Contributors should follow APA referencing system.
6. The paper should not exceed 5000 words.
7. The paper should be acknowledged with a declaration that it is an original work and has not been published anywhere else.
8. Abstract should not be more than 200 words.
9. A short bio-note of the author should include name, institutional affiliation and brief career history.

#### ***Selection Procedures***

All submitted papers will be screened by peer reviewing committee. Final selection will be made if the paper is selected by reviewers for publications. The editors reserve the right to make necessary editing of the selected papers for the sake of conceptual clarity and formatting.

***Plagiarism Alert***

It is warned to the contributor(s) that he /she must adhere to academic ethics with respect to acknowledgment of original ideas of the others. It will be the contributors' sole responsibility of any plagiarism.

***Disclaimer:***

Articles and views published in this journal DO NOT necessarily reflect the views or policies of the editorial board or the journal. The authors will be solely responsible for the legal complications arising out of the contents of their articles or research papers.

Subscription Rates		
Period	Individuals	Institutions
One Year	\$20	\$50
Three Years	\$50	\$120
Five Years	\$80	\$200

©***Copyrights: Faculty of Languages, Aden University***

## **Contents**

<b>The Use of Cohesive Devices by EFL Learners of English at Saber Faculty of Education .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>Abdulmalik Moh'd Alawdi</i>	
<b>Using ESL Conversation Questions in Teaching Spoken English at the Tertiary Level.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<i>Dr. Abdalnasser Mohammed Ali</i>	
<b>Students' Achievement and Characteristics of an Effective English Language Teacher as Perceived by Yemeni English Teachers and Students of English.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<i>Dr. Adel Abdulkhaliq Abdulkareem Dulul</i>	
<b>The Syntax and Semantics of <i>wala</i> 'and not' in Yemeni Arabic.....</b>	<b>85</b>
<i>Dr. Jaklin Mansoor</i>	
<b>Proposed Schemata of an English Course for the Learners of Pharmacy.....</b>	<b>105</b>
<i>Dr. Gamal M .A .Abdullah</i>	
<b>Meaning Loss in Translating News Headlines from Arabic into English with reference to Al hayat International Journal.....</b>	<b>126</b>
<i>Dr. Arwa Mohammed Mansour</i>	

**The Use of Cohesive Devices by EFL Learners of English at Saber**

**Faculty of Education**

*Abdulmalik Moh'd Alawdi*

*Aden University*

**Abstract**

*The present study investigated the use of cohesive devices in the writings of EFL learners of English at Saber Faculty of Education in Yemen. It focused on the learners' ability to select and use appropriate grammatical and lexical cohesive devices in their writing. Ten paragraphs by third-level students were analyzed to assess the students' ability in the use of cohesive devices in their writings and discover sources of incoherence. The subjects were randomly selected from among the third-level students at Saber Faculty of Education, who have been studying English as a foreign language in a four-year program. The students' writings were examined for appropriate use of cohesive devices and for overall cohesive harmony. The analysis indicated statistically significant differences between students in sentence construction and the use of cohesive devices in both sentence and paragraph levels.*

**Keywords:** *cohesive devices, cohesion, writing*

## **1. Introduction**

Since people write in order to achieve communicative goals in a social context, writing is considered as one way of communication. The ability to write has become a significant criterion in judging one's success or failure in becoming literate. The present study attempts to examine the use of cohesive devices by EFL students at Saber Faculty of Education to signal and link the various parts of their written works.

### **1.1 Aim of the study**

The aim of this study is to discover the ability of EFL learners in using cohesive devices in their writings, and the types of grammatical and lexical cohesive devices they frequently use.

### **1.2 Research questions**

1. How often do Yemeni students of English use cohesive devices in their writing?
2. To what extent are Yemeni students of English able to write a cohesive paragraph?

### **1.2 Significance of the study**

The significance of the present study lies in its importance for both teachers and learners of English in Yemeni Universities. This study could inform teachers of how to help their learners improve their writing performance. As a result, teachers can moderate or adopt

new ways of teaching to overcome the problems faced by their learners in using cohesive devices. Learners can also benefit from this study in getting a clear idea about cohesive devices and their importance in connecting various parts of a sentence and various sentences in a text to make meaning flows smoothly from one sentence to another in their writing.

## **2 Literature review**

The purpose of this literature review is to define EFL writing, highlight the importance of writing to EFL students, and shed light on some aspects related to EFL students' writing problems with special focus on the use of cohesive devices to achieve cohesion and coherence. In early studies of cohesion, researchers examined writers' use of various cohesive devices, or types of cohesive ties such as pronominal reference (the use of a pronoun in place of a previously mentioned noun). In their book *Cohesion in English*, Halliday and Hasan (1976) made a detailed study of cohesion in English in which they classified cohesive devices into five categories: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. This led to a great interest on studying cohesion from different perspectives and approaches. Again, in their taxonomy of cohesive devices, Halliday and Hasan (1976) include a variety of other cohesive devices such as ellipsis and the lexical links such as the use of repetition, synonyms, and subordinates. Hence, in a cohesive text, the author's thoughts are



related to each other through using a series of cohesive ties or devices between words and sentences in the text, which give a unity for the written text.

## **2. 1 Definition of writing**

Writing is defined as “a reflective activity that requires enough time to think about the specific topic and to analyze and classify any background knowledge” (Chakraverty, 2000). Byrne (1979:1) defines writing as the act of forming symbols, or the production of sentences arranged in a particular order and linked together in certain ways to form a coherent whole, which is often called a text. Thus, writing can be defined as a continuous process which depends on the ability to communicate one’s thoughts and feelings meaningfully to others by means of written words.

## **2. 2 Importance of EFL/ESL writing**

EFL/ESL Writing has always been considered as an important skill in teaching and learning processes. For EFL learners, writing is useful as it motivates students’ thinking, organizing ideas, developing their ability to make sense of a written word. It also strengthens students’ learning, thinking and reflecting on the English language. Students’ writing in an EFL classroom context should show their awareness of their own communicative goals, of the reader, and of the writing context. The following section focuses on issues related to

cohesion, coherence, the relation between cohesion and sentence structure, text and texture, and types of cohesive devices.

### **2. 3 Cohesion**

Cohesion is one of the main features of writing, which can be studied in independent as well as integrated writing tasks, is related to the broad concept of coherence and to other related concepts as text, texture, and tie. It can be defined as the property that distinguishes a sequence of sentences that form a discourse from a random sequence of sentences. Cohesion is a series of lexical, grammatical and other relations which provide links between the various parts of a text. Since cohesion concerns with relating the internal organization of language to the functions of language and to its social situation, it is viewed as residing in the semantic and grammatical properties of the language. Again, cohesion cannot be achieved without using cohesive devices. It is expressed through both grammar and vocabulary, which means that the grammatical built-up of a sentence is important for expressing meaning in a text.

#### **2.3.1 Cohesion and EFL essay writing**

In relation to EFL essay writing cohesion, many researchers agree that cohesion is related to linking ideas or concerned with connecting sentences and phrases to each other within a paragraph or an essay. Halliday and Hasan (1976) identified two types of cohesion grammatical and lexical. The various types of grammatical cohesion

are reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction. Lexical cohesion is realized through repetition of lexical items, synonyms, superordinates and general words. (Halliday and Hasan 1976/ 1985)

### **2.3.2 Cohesion and sentence structure**

Cohesion is defined as the property that distinguishes a sequence of sentences that form a discourse from a random sequence of sentences by the listener or the reader. It is a series of lexical, grammatical and other relations which provide links between the various parts of a text. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976: 28), the highest structural unit in the grammar is the sentence. For them, cohesion occurs in texts where the interpretation of some elements in the discourse is dependent on that of another.

### **2.4 Coherence**

In written texts coherence refers to the way a text makes sense to the readers through the organization of its content, the relevance and clarity of its concepts and ideas. A coherent paragraph has a topic sentence and supporting sentences or details, which relate to it in a meaningful and logical way. In a coherent paragraph, the relationship between ideas is clear, and one idea connects logically to the next, which means that all the ideas fit together in logical flow.

## **2.5 Text and texture**

The concepts of text and texture are interrelated because the concept of texture displays the feature of being a text. For Halliday (1985: 10), a text is any instance of living language that is playing some part in a context of situation. It may be spoken or written or indeed in any other medium of expression that one likes to think of. Again, texture is created by cohesive relationships within and between the sentences in a piece of writing, which means that a group of sentences do not constitute a text without using cohesive devices. Halliday and Hasan (1976)

## **2.6 Types of cohesive devices**

Halliday and Hasan (1976) identified five types of cohesive devices: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunctive, and lexical cohesion. The first four types fall under the category of grammatical cohesion. Lexical cohesion, on the other hand, refers to relations between any lexical item and some previously occurring lexical item in the text, quite independently of the grammatical category of the items in question. Cohesive relations established by various ties across sentences of a text help readers to perceive the meaning of individual sentences presented as a single entity or textual meaning.

Grammatical cohesion includes such cohesive devices as reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction. Reference cohesion is traditionally used in semantics to define the relationship between a

word and what it points to in the real world. It is classified into three types: nominal, demonstrative, and comparative reference. Substitution cohesion consists of sense identity relation instead of a reference identity relation and Ellipsis cohesion (nominal, verbal and clausal) refers to the case of absence of a word, a phrase or a clause whose meaning is understood. While referencing functions to link semantic meanings within text, substitution and ellipsis differ in that they operate as a linguistic link at the lexico-grammatical level. Conjunctive Cohesion refers to words joining phrases, clauses, or sections of the text in ways that express their logical-semantic relationship. It can be classified into four categories: additive, adversative, causative, and temporal.

Lexical cohesion, on the other hand, refers to the semantic relationships created by specific lexical items. It includes such cohesive devices as reiteration and collocation and occurs when two words in a text are related in terms of their meaning. Some of the relations which signal for lexical cohesion through their vocabulary involve such signals by repetition of a phrase or word, synonymy, antonym, hyponymy, and collocation.

### **3. Methodology**

A descriptive method was used in this study for collecting data from sample texts by EFL learners in Saber Faculty of Education. To discover the difficulties facing third-year students in using cohesive devices when writing, ten subjects were asked to write a paragraph on a given topic then the written works were collected and analyzed according to Halliday and Hasan's (1976) theory of cohesion. The texts were analyzed quantitatively to identify the number of occurrences of different cohesive devices in the students' writing and to discover whether some types of errors appeared systematically in the students' writings.

#### **3.1 Participants**

The subjects in this study were ten students of English in Saber Faculty of Education- Aden University. They were a representative sample of the third-level in the department of English. The subjects were randomly chosen to participate in this study and the selection was made on the basis that they have finished the prescribed writing courses in the college.

#### **3.2 Instruments**

The main instrument used for data collection in this study was a writing task. Quantitative methods were used for analyzing the students writings in terms of sentence structure and cohesive devices used.



### **3.3 Data collection procedures**

Data collection was conducted by means of a written sample analysis. The participants were given a writing task on comparison and contrast, on the belief that they will do better, especially if we knew that the topic was presented previously in their prescribed writing course. They were allowed 30 minutes to write a paragraph and the samples were thus collected and analyzed.

### **5. Data analysis**

Based on the taxonomy of cohesive devices proposed by Halliday and Hasan's theory (1976), the collected data showed that the subjects in this study used two types of grammatical cohesive devices (namely; reference and conjunction), and only one type of lexical devices (namely; repetition), to build up coherence in their English writings. Reference was reflected in several instances of personal, demonstrative, and comparative ties. Conjunction was reflected in several instances in the students' writings through the use of additive, adversative, causal, and temporal conjunctive ties. In the use of reference, personal reference was dominantly used and in substitution, neither nominal nor verbal substitution was found. In ellipsis, neither type of nominal or verbal ellipsis was used, while, in lexical cohesion, repetition is used in some of the samples. To determine the frequency of occurrences of cohesive devices in the students' writing, the number of content words in each paragraph was

counted followed by a count of the occurrences of different cohesive types.

## **5. Results and discussion**

Findings of the current study revealed that the EFL students encounter many problems related to cohesion and coherence in their writings. At the sentence level, for example, students faced a number of challenges including inability to construct main ideas, write grammatically correct sentences, or select and use cohesive devices properly within a sentence. In the paragraph level, on the other hand, the students lack the ability to connect sentences to each other and to make meaning flows smoothly from one preceding sentence to the following one, or to maintain meaning flows smoothly from one sentence to another. Again, the analysis of the written samples indicated that the students limited their use of cohesive devices in their writings to reference, conjunction and repetition. The most frequently used cohesive ties in the ten samples were the personal pronouns, the additive *and*, the adversative *but*, and the causal *because*. Furthermore, the collected data revealed that there is a tendency for using lexical cohesive ties to achieve coherence throughout the written work. The most frequently used lexical type was repetition, which counted about (40) instances and represented (33.9%) of all cohesive ties used. In lexical cohesion, it was obvious

that students relied heavily on exact repetition to create and link texts. However, they frequently failed in using such device properly.

For the purpose of data analysis, the occurrences of various cohesive devices were counted in all samples and put into tables to be analyzed. Table (1) below shows the number and percentage of all cohesive devices used, and their correct and incorrect use.

### **10.1. Grammatical cohesion**

The following table presents the number and percentage of all cohesive devices that were found in the study.

*Table (1): Number and Percentage of All Cohesive Devices*

<b>Types</b>	All Ties	Percentage %	Correct	Percentage %	Incorrect	Percentage %
<b>Grammatical Types</b>						
Reference	30	38.5%	16	53.3%	14	46.7%
Conjunction	48	61.5%	30	62.5%	18	37.5%
Substitution	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Ellipsis	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Lexical Types</b>						
Repetition	40	33.9%	30	75%	10	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>64.4%</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>35.6%</b>

The data in table (1) above presents the number and percentage of all cohesive devices that were found in the study. It also shows the number and percentage of correct and incorrect use of all cohesive

ties. The data indicated that the subjects in the study concentrated only on using reference, conjunctions, and repetition in their writings and neglected the other types of cohesive devices.

Among the ten samples that were analyzed, there were a total of (30) instances of reference, which constituted about (38.5%) of the total grammatical types occurred in the study. Of those instances, there were (16) that were correctly used, which accounted for (53.3%) of the total number of occurrences of reference, and (34.8%) of total correct grammatical types found (see table 1 above). Again, the data gathered showed that there were (14) instances of incorrect use for reference in students' writings, which constituted (46.7%) of the total number of occurrences of reference in the study and (43.8%) of total incorrect grammatical types found. It is clear that the majority of the students never used substitution and ellipsis at all and they tended to avoid using them as cohesive devices because this category is difficult for them.

*Table (2): Number and percentage of reference ties in the study*

<b>Cohesive Device</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Correct</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Incorrect</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Pronouns</b>						
Personal pronouns	22	73.3%	12	54.5%	10	45.5%
Relative pronouns	8	26.7%	4	50%	4	50%
Total	30	100%	16	53.3%	14	46.7%

The data in table (2) above indicated that the students concentrated on using personal pronouns in their writings more than relative pronouns. Among the (30) instances of reference that were found in the study, there were a total of (22) instances of personal reference which constituted about (73.3%) of all reference ties. Of those instances, there were (12) that were correctly used, which accounted for (40%) of the total number of occurrences of reference, and (75%) of the total number of correct reference ties found in the study. According to the data in table (2) above, there were a total of (10) instances of incorrect personal reference, which constituted about (33.3%) of the total number of occurrences of reference and (71.4%) of the total number of incorrect reference ties found in the study.

Again, the data showed that the students rarely used relative pronouns as a cohesive tie in their writings. Among the (30) instances of reference that were found in the study, there were only (8) instances

of relative pronouns that were used, which constituted about (26%) of all reference ties in the study. Of those instances, there were only (4) that were correctly used which accounted for (13.3%) of the total number of occurrences of reference, and (25%) of the total number of correct reference ties found in the study. The data also showed that there were (4) instances of incorrect use relative pronouns which constituted about (13.3%) of the total number of occurrences of reference and (28.6) of the total number of incorrect reference ties in the study.

The percentage of error in using personal pronouns and relative pronouns were (33.3%) and (25%) respectively. Thus, it can be concluded that the students relied heavily on using personal pronouns (73.3%), whereas relative pronouns were rarely used (13.3%) for connecting information in their writings. Again, the previously mentioned results reflected the fact that encounters problems in using reference as a cohesive device.



*Table (3): Number and percentage of conjunctive ties*

<b>Conjunctions</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Correct</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Incorrect</b>	<b>%</b>
And (additive)	23	47.9%	12	52.2%	11	47.8%
But (adversative )	7	14.6%	5	71.4%	2	28.6%
Because (causal )	8	16.7%	5	62.5%	3	37.5%
Also (additive)	4	8.3%	2	50%	2	50%
Or (additive/ choice)	1	2.1%	1	100%	-	-
So/ that (causal)	2	4.2%	2	100%	-	-
When (Seq.)	1	2.1%	1	100%	-	-
Finally (Seq.)	2	4.2%	2	100%	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>62.5%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>37.5%</b>

The other type of grammatical cohesive devices used in the students' writings was conjunction. Among the ten samples that were analyzed, there were a total of (48) instances of conjunction, which constituted about (61.5%) of the total grammatical types occurred in the study (see table 1 above). Of those instances, there were (30) that were correctly used, which accounted for (62.5%) of the total number of occurrences of conjunction, and (65.2%) of the total number of correct grammatical types found in the study. The data also showed that there were (18) instances of incorrect use of conjunction in the study, which accounted for (37.5%) of the total number of occurrences

of conjunction in the study, and (56.3%) of the total number of incorrect grammatical types in the study.

The most frequently used conjunctive ties in all samples were the additive *and*, the adversative *but*, and the causal *because* (see table 3 above). The collected data indicated that the number and percentage of conjunctive ties were higher than the other two types of cohesive devices that were found in the study (40.7%), see table (5) below. However, in using conjunctives as a cohesive device, the students overused the additive “*and*” which accounted for (47.9%) of all conjunctive reference occurrences in the study. This led to a higher percentage of error of using conjunctives in the study (47.8%), especially if we knew that this type of conjunction is the easiest one to be used. This was followed by the causal “*because*” (16.7%) and the adversative “*but*” (14.6%). Other conjunctives as “*also*”, “*or*”, “*so/that*”, “*when*”, and “*finally*” were rarely used in the study though the topic of writing requires using such cohesive ties. (See table 3 above). The percentage of the correct use of conjunctives was (62.5%) whereas the percentage of error was (37.5%).

Thus, the students used many conjunctives to connect different parts in their writings, but the overuse of some ties affected their writings negatively which led to a higher percentage of error. It can be concluded that students in Saber Faculty of Education encounter many

problems in utilizing conjunctives as a cohesive device, which supports the hypothesis of this study.

## **5.2. Lexical cohesion**

The only lexical cohesion device that was found in the students' writings is repetition. Table (4) below presented the number and percentage of lexical cohesive devices that were found in the ten samples.

*Table (4): Number and Percentage of Lexical Cohesive Devices*

<b>Lexical Types</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Correct</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Incorrect</b>	<b>%</b>
Repetition	40	33.9%	30	75%	10	25%

Among the ten samples that were analyzed, there were a total of (40) instances of exact repetition, which constituted about (33.9%) of all cohesive ties occurred in the study. Of those instances, there were (30) that were correctly used, which accounted for (75%) of the total number of occurrences of repetition, and (39.5%) of total correct cohesive ties found. Again, the data gathered showed that there were (10) instances of incorrect use for repetition in students' writings, which constituted (25%) of the total number of occurrences of repetition in the study and (23.8%) of total incorrect cohesive ties found (see Table 5 below).

*Table (5): Number and percentage of all cohesive ties*

<b>Types</b>	<b>All ties</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Correct</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Incorrect</b>	<b>%</b>
Reference	30	25.4%	16	21%	14	33.3%
Conjunction	48	40.7%	30	39.5%	18	42.9%
<b>Tot. (G)</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>66.1%</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>60.5%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>76.2%</b>
Repetition	40	33.9%	30	39.5%	10	23.8%
<b>Total (All)</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100%</b>

According to the given data in table (5) above, the total number of cohesive ties (Grammatical & Lexical) that were found in all samples was (118) instances. Of those instances, there were (78) instances of grammatical ties, which accounted for (66.1%) of the total number of occurrences of all cohesive ties in the study. There were also (40) instances of lexical ties, which accounted for (33.9%) of the total number of occurrences of all cohesive ties in the study. Reference constituted about (25.4%), conjunction constituted about (40.7%) and repetition (33.3%) of all cohesive ties used in the study.

The percentage of the correct use of reference was (21%) of all correct ties used, whereas the percentage of the incorrect use was (33.3%). The percentage of the correct use of conjunctive and repetition ties was the same (39.5%), whereas the incorrect use of

conjunction was (42.9%) and of repetition was (23.8%). The data also showed that the percentage of correct grammatical and lexical ties were (60.5%) and (39.5%) respectively. This percentage indicated that the occurrences of the correct grammatical ties were higher than that of the lexical ones. The same percentage was for incorrect occurrences of both types of cohesive devices. The data also indicated that the percentage of incorrect grammatical ties was (76.2%) whereas the percentage of incorrect lexical ties was (23.8%) of all incorrect occurrences of cohesive ties in the study.

The percentage of error in the use of grammatical ties was (41%) whereas the percentage of error in the use of lexical ties was (25%), which indicated that the students found it easier to use lexical cohesive ties rather than grammatical ones to achieve coherence in their writings. The results also indicated that the EFL learners encounter problems in using and utilizing cohesive devices in their writings even though they were familiar with the topic of writing, which supports the hypothesis of the study.

## **6. Suggestions and recommendations**

1. Teachers can make use of the skills that the students already know in improving their writing performance.

2. In dealing with the topics in the prescribed writing courses, teachers must search for more information to enrich the topic and facilitate the problematic areas for students.
3. EFL teachers should be acquainted with new teaching methods and trained to use different classroom interaction techniques to help their students learn effectively.
4. Further research is required on the effect of different teaching techniques on the students' writing performance in Yemeni Universities.

## **7. Conclusion**

The results of the study indicated that the students encounter different problems in using cohesive devices in their writings. The samples presented the most frequently committed errors by Yemeni students in English. The numbers and percentages in table (5) showed that the subjects concentrated on using certain cohesive devices and neglected the rest of such cohesive devices. For example, in grammatical cohesion, the subjects concentrated only on using two types of cohesive devices, namely reference and conjunction. The other types of grammatical cohesive devices as substitution and ellipsis were not used at all. The most frequently used cohesive ties in the study were the personal pronouns (*I, they, them, us* and *we*), the additive *and*, the adversative *but*, and the causal *because*. For lexical cohesion, on the other hand, the subjects concentrated only on



repetition and neglected the other types of lexical ties, such as synonymy, superordinates, general word, and collocation (see Table 4). The analysis of the data indicated that the subjects tended to use exact repetitions in their writings more often than paraphrases. However, some of such repetitions were not used properly in the written texts, which led to a misuse of repetition as a cohesive device. From the frequency and the percentage of each category, it is concluded that most of the students in the study do not know how to utilize cohesive devices in their writing though they were in different frequency and percentage. It also showed that the dominant types of cohesive devices used by the students were conjunction (40.7%), repetition (33.9%), and reference (25.4%). Ellipsis, substitution, synonymy, general word, and collocation were not used at all in the students' writings. These results indicated that the students encounter different problems in using cohesive devices in their writings, which reflects their level of proficiency in English and answers the questions set out at the beginning of this study.

### References

- Byrne, D. (1979). *Teaching writing skills*. Longman Group Ltd.
- Chakraverty, A., & Gautum, K. (2000). Dynamics of writing. *Forum English Teaching*. July 2000. Vol.38. No. 3 (pp.22-25). 38(3).
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Hassan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. New York: Longman.
- Halliday, M.A.K. (1985). *An Introduction to functional grammar*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Halliday, M.A.K., & Hasan, Ruqaiya. (1985). *Language, context, and text: Aspect of Language in A Social – Semiotic Perspective*. Victoria: Deakin University.

**Using ESL Conversation Questions in Teaching Spoken English at  
the Tertiary Level**

*Asst.Prof. Dr.Abdulnaser Mohammed Ali*

*Aden University*

*Email: [abdulnaseralnaqeeb@gmail.com](mailto:abdulnaseralnaqeeb@gmail.com)*

**Abstract**

*This research paper tried to focus on the practical experience of using ESL Conversation Questions in Teaching Spoken English at the tertiary level at Aden University and examine its effectiveness in teaching spoken English as perceived by students. The researcher chose the questionnaire as the main instrument to collect data. Thirty students out of eighty students were selected randomly after matching from the Faculty of Education-Aden, Aden University to represent the urban areas sample of the study and fifteen students out of twenty five were selected to represent the rural areas students. The sample consisted of urban areas colleges (Faculty of Education-Aden) and rural areas colleges (Faculty of Education-Yafea). The researcher himself taught these two samples for a whole semester applying the technique of ESL conversation questions in teaching Spoken English Course. At the end of the semester, the researcher gave the questionnaire to the selected sample to fill it in. Based on the results of collected data of the study, the researcher found that students' responses showed very high preference and satisfaction of the use of*

*ESL Conversation Questions in teaching Spoken English Course. Accordingly, the researcher recommended the use of ESL Conversation Questions in teaching Spoken English Course at the university level because it showed practical and effective role in the classroom for both rural and urban colleges.*

**Key words:** *ESL Conversation Questions, Spoken English Course*

### **1. Introduction**

The meaning of teaching in FL literature has been changed from transmitting information to engaging students in learning. In other words, teaching is involving learners in the learning process. This means that foreign language students should be active participants in using the target language rather than as recipients of information or knowledge especially conversation classes. Richards (1990) pointed out how a conversation class should be taught by saying that it is "something of an enigma" because surely conversation is something that is acquired 'simply by doing it' (p.67). Thus teaching foreign language skills requires a classroom in which the target language is used and practiced by students. Teachers of foreign language skills should work to create a classroom atmosphere full of communicative activities in which students use the language actively and meaningfully. Teaching spoken English skill is the core element in foreign language teaching. Learning English means learning to speak

English. This requires teachers to search for techniques and ways by which their students practice and use the target language actively and meaningfully in the classroom that help learners to be fluent and get the ability to communicate meaningfully. In tertiary levels, teachers of spoken English often find it quite difficult to engage students in spoken for two-hour class time during a whole semester because most games and activities found in the literature of teaching spoken are short time (5, 10 or 30 minutes time-games) or because of discipline problems. Furthermore, teachers find it difficult to get effective techniques and activities that help in engaging students in spoken in the class. ESL conversation questions present a very good solution to such difficulty and they are characterized by covering a larger period of time in practicing and using the language in the classroom. Moreover, they cover many different daily real life-like aspects that are very relevant to learners' daily life which make them interesting to learners. This research paper will try to present the value of using ESL conversation questions in teaching spoken English skill at the tertiary level as perceived by learners.

### **1.1 Statement and aims of the study**

Since teaching spoken course at the university level lacks good organized course books and supportive instructional materials, teaching spoken may pose difficulty to teachers. This research paper aims at evaluating the use of ESL conversation questions in teaching spoken English at the tertiary level through learners' opinions hopefully to find a good technique that might help in this respect. The evaluation is based on the researchers' application of ESL conversation questions in teaching spoken English course for the second level B.Ed students at two different faculties (Faculty of Education Aden and Faculty of Education Yafea) Aden University. The two faculties are chosen to represent urban and rural faculties for the sake of comparison.

### **1.2 Research question**

1. To what extent do EFL students prefer ESL conversation questions as a technique in teaching spoken English?

### **1.3 Significance of the study**

The significance of this research paper consolidates in the following points:

- a. A major difficulty that teachers face in teaching spoken English especially at the tertiary level is finding effective tasks and activities that maintain active spoken class. This study will

present a model or technique of teaching spoken English course at the tertiary level that might, hopefully, help teachers in teaching spoken English course and maintain the time assigned for spoken English class in an active and communicative learning. It will also determine the value and effectiveness of using this technique in teaching spoken English skill at the tertiary level.

- b. The study will explain in detail the different procedures of using ESL conversation questions in teaching spoken English. This will help teachers to easily adopt such technique in teaching at the tertiary level.
- c. The study is based on two faculties at the university, Faculty of Education- Aden and Faculty of Education -Yafea. It will show the possibility of application in rural and urban situations.
- d. The study will explain the different ways of using such technique and the sources from which such questions can be accessed. This will help university teachers who teach spoken English to easily get and use them in their classes.

## **5. Methodology**

In what follows, an explanation of the methodology used in the study is given.

### **5.1 Questionnaire**

A questionnaire consists of ten items following Likert Scale format is used to collect students' perceptions of the use of ESL conversation questions in teaching Spoken English Course.

### **5.2 Sampling**

For the urban colleges, thirty students from the second level in the department of English at the Faculty of Education- Aden were selected randomly to fill in the questionnaire. Fifteen students in the second level from the Faculty of Education-Yafea were also selected randomly to represent the rural areas colleges. The two samples were taught the spoken course for the whole semester (semester one for the academic year 2013-2014) by the researcher. For the urban colleges, the researcher selected fifteen students from the two groups. The number of students in each group is 60. In rural areas colleges; the total number of students is 24 students in one group. The researcher selected fifteen students. The selection of the samples is based on random sampling technique after matching students to ensure good and equal representativeness of gender and students level of English.

## **6. Literature review**

In what follows, a review of the relevant literature is presented.



### **6.1 What are ESL conversation questions?**

ESL conversation questions can be defined as a two-part discussion questions concerning or revolving around a certain topic or concept that generates a conversation between two or more. They are usually divided into 10 A's questions and 10 B's questions. These questions are designed by experts in the field of foreign language learning and teaching (see appendix A). A main feature of these questions is that they present a series of controversial items that lead to hot and continuous discussion regarding expressing one's own opinion about the topic or concept under discussion. Expressing one's own opinion is easier to foreign language learners to speak about than talking about other topics because learners possess both linguistic level and knowledge. Linguistic level and knowledge are two main elements for continuity of any conversation. Harper and Lively (1986) referred that teaching foreign spoken course as "not a study of grammar and structure" but rather, "the expression of ideas and opinions" (p.2). Nisbett (2003) referred that "debate is an important educational tool for learning analytic thinking skills and for forcing self-conscious reflection on the validity of one's ideas" (p.210). Also Fukuda (2003), in a debate study conducted with Japanese students, found that "before the debates only 30.8% of the students were not afraid of expressing their opinions when they were not the same as others" (p.34). After the debate this figure rose to 56.7%."He further

concluded that discussion practice familiarize students in stating their views. A main problem that usually faces foreign language learners in maintaining a long discussion or conversation (conversation breakdown) is continuity and thread of ideas that are connected and relevant to one topic. Since ESL conversation questions are structured and put in a way that each question leads to the second in a structured way helps students to overcome the problem of conversation breakdown. Holmes and Brown (1976) pointed that "asking questions is an important skill of sustaining a conversation"(p. 427) Also Pica (as cited in Browne, 1993, p. 40) stated that "classroom activities must be structured to provide a context whereby learners not only talk to their interlocutors, but negotiate meaning with them as well".

University students possess their own views towards real life concepts and phenomena. What is more, they like to express their opinions openly and share them with their friends and classmates. ESL conversation questions provide a nice and suitable situation in which students discuss and share their opinions with classmates. In what follows, an explanation and clarification of the main features of ESL conversation questions will be given.

### **6.1.1 Suitability for long group and pair work discussion**

ESL conversation questions are characterized by their very suitability to group and pair work activities in the classroom. They are mainly designed to be used in pair and group work activities. Research in second language learning stresses the value of pair and group work in teaching foreign or second language. When students engage in pair or group work they use the language and interact with each other in a meaningful way, Webb (1982) referred that group work fosters interaction in all levels. Badache (2003:7) presented three main advantages of group work: (1) it helps weak students to continue in the discussion and speak because they stuck when they speak individually.(2) it helps students to look at a matter from different points of views (collectively).(3) all students try to participate to share their opinions to the group. LeGall (1992) pointed out that group work activities encourage students to share their opinions (p.24). He further refers that encouragement is very important to keep students participate and speak especially weaker ones. Peterson and Swing (1985) contented that “[s]tudents of low achievement benefited from participation in groups, heterogeneously composed on achievement in comparison to participation in homogeneously low-achieving group. Students of average achievement benefit from their interaction with others of higher or lower achievement” (p.302).

### **6.1.2 Covering different real life topics**

Thousands of real life topics are covered by ESL conversation questions. Money, fashion, shopping, family, food are examples of such real world topics. The availability of this large numbers of topics makes it easy for the teacher to choose the topics suitable to his/her students needs and likes.

### **6.1.3 Fostering negotiation of meaning**

ESL conversation questions help learners to initiate conversations through which negotiation of meaning is fostered. Students ask questions about certain concepts or ask about the meaning of some words for clarification which leads to negotiation of meaning. Also because students talk and give their opinions about controversial topics, they try to make themselves understood. Long (1996) suggests that "negotiation for meaning, and especially negotiation work that triggers interactional adjustments by the NS [native speakers] or more competent interlocutor, facilitates acquisition because it connects input, internal learner capacities and output"(p.451).

### **6.1.4 Flexibility of application**

Though ESL conversation questions are designed to be used mainly in pair work, they are adaptable to be used in different ways inside the classroom. They can be used as group work activity, whole

class discussion and individual work presentation. Such feature makes it a beneficial and effective technique in teaching spoken English.

#### **6.1.5 Availability**

ESL conversation questions are easily accessed and retrieved free from [www.eslDiscussions.com](http://www.eslDiscussions.com). They are available at pdf format text and word document text.

#### **6.1.6 Easiness of use**

ESL conversation questions are very easy to use in the class. All a teacher does is printing out copies and distribute them in the class. For the steps of using ESL conversation questions in the classroom see (1.5.2)

#### **6.1.7 Controversy**

Controversy is a very observable feature of ESL conversation questions. Questions are designed mainly to be controversial to generate heated discussions. Controversy is considered powerful in promoting learning.

#### **6.1.8 Interesting**

An important feature of ESL conversation questions is that they cover many interesting topics that are very close to students' real life. For example, there are topics about mobiles, fashion, computer, friendship, football, movies, movie stars and the internet.

## **6.2 How to use ESL conversation questions**

1. Tell students about the topic of the next class. This will help students to prepare the vocabularies and read topics relevant to the topic of the class.
2. Prepare the photocopies according to the number of students or groups.
3. Start with eliciting words and expressions relevant to the topic from the class and add your own.
4. Explain the meaning of some expressions or words that you expect to be difficult or new for students to understand.
5. Explain the instructions or procedures of how the activity will be executed. Tell students that they should not show their copies to their partners in case of pair work. Tell students to ask their partners to clarify meanings or ideas.
6. Assign the pairs or groups.
7. Tell students to start asking and discussing items one by one from both A's and B's questions.
8. Ask them to add their own questions if they like and always ask "why" after questions.

9. Tell students that they will present a five or ten minute talk before the class about the same topic.
10. Tell them that there will be a reward mark for individual talk to the whole class.
11. Distribute the copies or questions halves and ask students to start working on the topic.
12. Go around the class to provide help, control the class and check that the work is in progress.
13. Tell those who finish earlier to continue the discussion by asking their own questions about the same topic and do individual presentation to each other to prepare for the presentation to the whole class.
14. After finishing the group or pair work, ask individual students to stand and talk about the topic to the class.
15. Thank them for their good work and tell them or ask them to choose the topic of the next class.

### **6.3 Typical stages of a class room using ESL conversation questions**

The class time is usually divided into four stages. These stages are as follows:

### **6.3.1 Brainstorming stage**

At this stage, the teacher assigns ten-fifteen minutes to collect and explain expressions and words relevant to the topic. Firstly, the teacher writes some expressions and words and elicits explanations' from students. Then he tries to collect others from the class. At this stage, the teacher also explains the meaning of some words or expressions in the questions.

### **6.3.2 Pair or group work practice stage**

This stage takes fifty-sixty minutes or more. At this stage, the teacher distributes the copies to students to start the conversations and goes round the class monitoring and providing help.

### **6.3.3 Individual presentation stage**

This stage takes fifteen-twenty minutes and sometimes more if there is a big class. At this stage, the teacher selects individual students to talk to the whole class about the topic. After each presentation, the presenter asks the whole class if they have any questions regarding the topic and he/she answers them.

### **6.3.4 Whole class discussion stage**

The time of this stage varies between twenty to forty minutes according to the size of the class. At this stage, the teacher says his/her opinion about some issues and opens discussions about these controversial issues in the topic as a whole class.



## 7. Results and discussions

In what follows an interpretation and discussion of the results will be given.

*Table No.1: Faculty of Education-Aden students' responses*

No.	Item	Strongly agree	agree	Do not know	disagree	Strongly disagree
1	ESL conversation questions are very interesting to practice spoken English.	76.6%	23.4%			
2	ESL conversation questions helped to practice the language.	90%	10%			
3	ESL conversation questions help me to talk much.	93.3%	6.7%			
4	ESL conversation questions make the class very active in learning spoken English.	90%	10%			
5	I feel that I got much in spoken English because of ESL conversation questions.	73.3%	26.7%			
6	ESL conversation questions give me the thread to start a conversation.	93.3%	6.7%			
7	ESL conversation questions provide us with everyday life vocabularies.	60%	40%			
8	ESL conversation questions encourage shy students to practice spoken English.	70%	30%			
9	ESL conversation questions	56.6%	23.4%	10%	10%	

	increase my desire to speak English.					
10	ESL conversation questions organize our spoken by giving us threads to move from one point to another smoothly.	91.6.%	8..4%			

*Table No.2: Faculty of Education-Yafea students' responses*

No.	Item	Strongly agree	agree	Do not know	disagree	Strongly disagree
1	ESL conversation questions are very interesting to practice spoken English.	40%	60%			
2	ESL conversation questions helped to practice the language.	73.3	23.7%			
3	ESL conversation questions help me to talk much.	80%	20%			
4	ESL conversation questions make the class very active in learning spoken English.	66.6%	33.4%			
5	I feel that I got much in spoken English because of ESL conversation questions.	73.3	23.7%			
6	ESL conversation questions give me the thread to start a conversation.	86.6%	13.4%			
7	ESL conversation questions provide us with everyday life vocabularies.	73.3	23.7%			
8	ESL conversation questions encourage shy students to practice spoken English.	66.6%	33.4%			
9	ESL conversation questions	66.6%	33.4%			

	increase my desire to speak English.					
10	ESL conversation questions organize our spoken by giving us threads to move from one point to another smoothly.	92%	8%			

As is shown in the tables above, the high majority of students expressed their satisfaction and agreement to the items regarding the effectiveness of ESL conversation questions in teaching spoken English. Students of both faculties almost offered equal responses regarding expressing their perceptions about the effectiveness of ESL conversation questions. Most students expressed their preference to the technique. The highest noticeable percentage of responses is that ESL conversation questions give students the threads to start a conversation. Also, getting threads to move from one point to another that sustains continuity of conversation is very observable high response at both colleges. Though students expressed high agreement rates at both colleges, the highest observable response is getting the start point of conversation and the threads to continue from one point to another. This could be attributed to the fact that university foreign language learners possess a certain amount of linguistic competence but lack the ability of how activate this competence and think in the target language, but when they get the starting point of a discussion, they get some kind of continuity in their speech. Foreign language learners suffer from stuckness and discontinuity of conversation because of experience and little practice. University foreign language

learners possess a certain amount of linguistic competence but they need to be trained of how to think in the target language (English) and stir up this competence to make it active. Also, it is very noticeable that students' attitudes towards most items are very positive. They expressed that they get help to practice the language through ESL conversation questions. This could be attributed to the suitability of such technique in teaching spoken English. ESL conversation questions are interesting and cover topics that are at the interest of students' daily life. This is clear from students' answers to item No.1 in the questionnaire in which students expressed high response regarding ESL conversation questions as very interesting technique.

#### **8. The main findings**

Based on the results of the study, it is very observable that the responses of the students in the two colleges showed that using ESL Conversation Questions in teaching Spoken English at the tertiary level is very preferred by students. Very high percentage of agreement and preference of using ESL Conversation Questions in teaching Spoken English classes was recorded in both colleges. The results show that ESL conversation questions is a good technique in teaching spoken English as perceived by learners of two colleges from Aden University. Attitudes of preference are positive at both colleges.

## **9. Recommendations**

Based on the results of this study that showed the effectiveness of ESL Conversation Questions in teaching spoken at the tertiary level at both rural and urban colleges, the researcher recommends using this technique in teaching spoken English in the university and training teachers of spoken on the methods of using.

### References

- Browne, C. (1993). Teaching communicative strategies to develop communicative competence. *The Language Teacher*, 17(6), 39-41.
- Fukuda, & Shinji (2003). *Attitudes toward argumentation in college EFL classes in Japan*. Proceedings of the First Asia TEFL International Conference. Pusan, Korea. pp. 417-418.
- Harper, J., & Lively, M. (1986). *Techniques and materials for conversation in the foreign language classroom*. Retrieved from ERIC Database, Ed.276459.
- Holmes, J., & Brown, D. F. (1976). Developing sociolinguistic competence in a second language. *TESOL Quarterly*, 10,423-431.
- Long, M.H. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition in W.C. Ritchie, and T.K. Bhatia (Eds): *Handbook of research on Language Acquisition: Second language acquisition*.Vol.2.NewYork: Academic Press.413–68.
- Badache, L. (2003). *The effect of group work on students 'Oral Performance: The case of first year students at Batna University*.MA dissertation, Batna University.
- LeGall. N.S., (1992). *Children's instrumental help-seeking. Its role in the social acquisition and construction of knowledge, in*

*Lazarowitz, Ed. Interaction in Cooperative groups: Theoretical Anatomy of Group Learning, p.120-141, NY: Cambridge University Press.*

Richards, J., (1990). *The Language teaching matrix*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*Peterson, P., & Swing, S., (1985). Students' cognitions as mediators of the effectiveness of small group learning. Journal of Educational Psychology, 77(3)*

Webb, N., M. (1982). Group composition, group interaction and achievement in small groups, *Journal of Educational Psychology, 74(4) 475-484.*

## **Appendix A: Sample of ESL conversation questions**

### **FRIENDS DISCUSSION**

#### **STUDENT A's QUESTIONS** (Do not show these to student B)

- 1) What do friends mean to you? **Why?**
- 2) What makes a friend a best friend? **Why?**
- 3) What makes you a good friend? **Why?**
- 4) Is it easy for you to make friends? **Why?**
- 5) Do you have any particularly close friends? **Why?**
- 6) Do you stay in touch with all of the friends you've made? **Why?**
- 7) Which long-lost friend would you like to see again? **Why?**
- 8) Is there a difference in friendship between your male friends and female friends? **Why?**
- 9) What would life be like without friends? **Why?**
- 10) Do you ever worry about losing your friends? **Why?**

.....

#### **STUDENT B's QUESTIONS** (Do not show these to student A)

- 1) Are friends sometimes more important than family? **Why?**
- 2) Do you agree with the expression "a friend in need is a friend in deed"? **Why?**
- 3) How similar are you to your friends? **Why?**
- 4) Do you think you have a special understanding with your friends? **Why?**
- 5) At which stages of life is it easier to make friends? **Why?**
- 6) Are your childhood friends those you have strongest bonds with? **Why?**
- 7) What's the nicest thing you've ever done for your friends? **Why?**
- 8) How often do you fall out with your friends? **Why?**
- 9) If you could choose any friend in the world, who would it be? **Why?**
- 10) What is the most valuable thing you have to offer as a friend? **Why?**



### **Appendix B: The questionnaire**

No.	Item	Strongly agree	agree	Do not know	disagree	Strongly disagree
1	ESL conversation questions are very interesting to practice spoken English.					
2	ESL conversation questions helped to practice the language.					
3	ESL conversation questions help me to talk much.					
4	ESL conversation questions make the class very active in learning spoken English.					
5	I feel that I got much in spoken English because of ESL conversation questions.					
6	ESL conversation questions give me the thread to start a conversation.					
7	ESL conversation questions provide us with everyday life vocabularies.					
8	ESL conversation questions encourage shy students to practice spoken English.					
9	ESL conversation questions increase my desire to speak English.					
10	ESL conversation questions organize our spoken by giving us threads to move from one point to another smoothly.					

**Students' Achievement and Characteristics of an Effective English Language Teacher as Perceived by Yemeni English Teachers and Students of English**

*Asst.Prof.Dr. Adel Abdulkhaliq Abdulkareem Dulul*

*adel.dulul@gmail.com*

**Abstract**

*The purpose of this research paper is to check the relationship between teacher characteristics and students' achievement as perceived by Yemeni English teachers and students of English. It focuses on the teachers' characteristics such as their qualifications, their teaching experience and the students' achievement in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education /Aden, and the Department of English at the Faculty of Education/ Saber, and the Faculty of Languages/ Aden. To collect the relevant data of the topic, a questionnaire was administrated to 10 teachers of English and 60 students in the Departments of English at the Faculty of Education/ Aden, and the Faculty of Languages at Aden University. Moreover, the records of the second semester examinations results of the students at the third level in the academic year 2013-2014 in three subjects (i.e. Linguistics, ELT Methodology, and Translation) were used as an indication and evidence of the direct impact of the teachers' characteristics on students' performance. Data were analyzed using*

*the SPSS programme. The findings in this study, which are in line with findings from many other studies, do support a significant relationship between the students' achievement and characteristics of an effective English language teacher. This research paper contributes to the understanding of how students perceived the characteristics of English teachers. In addition, it is expected that the findings will contribute to the field of teaching English at the university level by reflecting the importance of some characteristics that affect the students' achievement.*

**Keywords:** Teaching, teachers' characteristics, teachers' qualifications

## **1. Introduction**

Teachers have a fundamental role in their students' achievement and their characteristics can highly influence students' outcomes. English language teachers are not by no means an exception and their key role in effective language teaching cannot be ignored. Special attention must be paid to this link between teachers and students in countries like Yemen where language learning happens mainly in formal classroom settings. It is well-known that the main source of language input to students affects their learning directly. This study focuses on the relationship between the teachers' characteristics such as their qualifications, their teaching experience, etc. as perceived by the Yemeni English teacher and students of English, and the students'

achievement in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education /Aden, and the Department of English at the Faculty of Education/ Saber, and the Faculty of Languages/ Aden.

The first part of this research paper will start by presenting the rationale, the aims, the significance, and the questions related to the topic. The second part will introduce a review of literature concerned with some characteristics of an effective English teacher.

The third part of the research paper involves a clear display of the methodology and instruments utilised in the current study. This will be followed by a detailed section of the results with a statistical analysis of the responses of the students and teachers of the questionnaire, and the examinations results of the students. A discussion of the results, in the next section, will demonstrate the relationship between the teachers' characteristics and the findings of the examinations results of the students, followed by a conclusion, which includes a concise review of the findings, and recommendations.

### **1.1 Rationale of the study**

The author of this research paper has been teaching English since 1996 and has taught at different university levels. He has observed the variable levels of the students from one faculty to another and it is generally agreed that the standard of competency of the students in the

Departments of English is not satisfactory in comparison to the time they expend in learning the language. The rationale of the study is to find out the most effective features of the teachers of English from the point of view of the students and the teachers. It is also aimed to check whether there is a relationship between the teachers' characteristics such as their qualifications, their teaching experience and the students' performance in English subjects in the (B. Ed.) English programme.

### **1.2 Aims of the study**

The study aims to:

1. Recognize the most effective features of the teachers of English as perceived by the teachers and the students of English.
2. Identify the relationship between the teachers' characteristics and students' performance.
3. Identify the essential needs for EFL teachers in these departments to improve the students' performance.

### **1.3 Significance of the study**

1. Teachers of English who teach English subjects in the Departments of English at the Faculties of Education vary in qualifications, years of teaching experience, knowledge of the subject matter, and other characteristics such as their ability to present information, and friendliness. The significance of this research paper is to find out the effects of the teachers' characteristics, that is, teachers' qualification,

and teachers' experience regarding teaching English as a Foreign Language on the students' performance.

2. The research properties to offer some contributions that may help to overcome such issues that may prevent students from acquiring language competency. It has been chosen to provide contributions towards the characteristics improvements of English teachers in the Departments of English at the Faculties of Education.

3. Further, the results of this research paper can be used for a variety of purposes. Principally, it will help teacher-trainers, policy makers, researchers and teachers in the English Departments to identify the characteristics likely to increase students' English performance. Here, this research paper will try to point out some teachers' characteristics where steps should be taken to promote them in order to positively affect English teaching and learning conditions in the Yemeni context.

#### **1.4 Research questions**

1. What are the most effective features of the teachers of English as perceived by the teachers and the students?
2. To what extent does the number of years of teaching experience affect students' achievement?
3. To what extent does the teacher degree level affect students' achievement?

## **2. Literature review**

A substantial amount of research has been conducted on the relationship between teachers' characteristics and students' achievement. It has been argued in the relevant literature to the topic under this study that the better the teacher teaches, the better the student learns. Teaching effectiveness can be understood by studying the models of instruction that capture and define what it is that effective teachers know and do, that is, a set of behaviors that effective teachers incorporate into their daily professional practice. These involve a deep understanding of subject matter, learning theory and students' differences, planning, classroom instructional strategies, knowing individual students, and assessment of students understanding and proficiency with learning outcomes. They also include a teacher's ability to reflect, collaborate with colleagues and continue ongoing professional development.

The literature has identified several aspects that affect students' achievement: teachers' experience, teachers' incentives, and their knowledge background.

Many variables affect students' achievement. They include family life, society, involvement in extracurricular activities, and the school environment. Teachers, however, have a direct responsibility that affects the students' performance, and are the most important factor in their education. This is why it is important to investigate which

teachers' characteristics may be related to students' achievement. The focus of this research paper is to look at the joint relationship between teacher characteristics such as experience and qualifications, etc. to determine whether teacher characteristics have a consistently positive effect on students' achievement.

Teachers' characteristics and teaching practices are crucial factors that affect students' motivation and learning, and performance as well. Benson et al. (2001) believe that an effective teacher is the one who has the ability to present information in a clear understanding and motivating manner. Effectiveness in teaching was reported to be directly related to mastery of subject matter in the selected teaching field. In addition, a long experience of teaching in one's academic field was thought to be a necessary pre-requisite for effectiveness. Some clues can be collected from previous research about the characteristics of a good and effective language teacher. Pettis (1997) identifies three main characteristics for a professionally competent teacher. According to her, an effective teacher must firstly be principled and knowledgeable in addition to being skillful. Secondly, professional needs and interests of an effective language teacher must change over time and develop during his/her teaching. Thirdly, a teacher must be personally committed to his/her professional development. In an investigation of the characteristics of good language teachers, Brosh (1996) finds out that the desirable



characteristics of an effective language teachers are to be: having knowledge and command of the target language; being able to organize, explain, clarify, arouse and sustain interest and motivation among students; being fair to students by showing neither favoritism nor prejudice; and being available to students.

Both language teachers and students counted command of the target language and teaching comprehensibility as the most important characteristics to be possessed by an effective foreign language teacher. Moreover, the teachers gave more weight to items related to developing motivation and research orientation, whereas the students counted items relating to treating students fairly and making lessons interesting more important as compared with the teachers' ideas on these very issues. A comprehensive list on effective teaching is provided by Blum (1984)(as cited in Richards, 2001) who lists 12 characteristics such as, giving clear and focused instructions, monitoring students' progress, using class time properly, having positive interpersonal skills with students and using rewards to encourage students.

The effects of the teacher characteristics are mediated by years of experience. Recent studies generally report that teacher experience has a positive effect on student test scores (Clotfelter,Ladd, & Vigdor,2006; Goldhaber & Anthony,2007; Goldhaber &

Brewer,1997;Jepsen, 2005; Krueger, 1999; Noell,2001, 2005; Rivkin et al, 2005; Rockoff, 2004;Sanders, Ashton & Wright, 2005).Other studies on the effect of teacher experience on student learning have found a positive relationship between teachers' effectiveness and their years of experience, but the relationship observed is not always a significant or an entirely linear one (Klitgaard & Hall, 1974; Murnane & Phillips, 1981). The evidence currently available suggests that while inexperienced teachers are less effective than more senior teachers, the benefits of experienced teachers level off after a few years (Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005).

Despite this fairly consistent results, not all studies find an association between experience and students' achievement (Cooper & Cohn, 1997). All of these studies make the implicit assumption that experience operates similarly for all teachers.

Most prior research on this topic has focused on teachers' educational background, years of teaching experience and salaries. The results of this work are mixed. While it is clear that certain teachers are more effective than others at increasing students' performance, there is considerably less consensus on whether specific, observable teachers' characteristics such as education or experience produce higher performance.

Teachers' qualifications comprise teachers' scores on tests and examinations, what qualifications they hold in their area of expertise, and their ongoing professional development. In many countries, teacher qualifications that are considered to be related to students learning have become targets of education reform. However, the nature of this reform is under debate. Some comprehend the main problem to be the low academic and cognitive level of those who go into the teaching profession and call for policies aimed at attracting more capable candidates through shorter, less regulated alternative. Others view the problem mainly as the result of inadequate teachers preparation and call for the professionalization of teacher education by making it longer, upgrading it to graduate programs.

What makes a teacher effective has been a subject of prime importance to many scholars concerned with education. In 1957, secondary-school principals in New York were asked to nominate effective teachers of academic subjects. The most frequently mentioned qualities were: subject-matter mastery, motivation, dedication, co-operation, and sense of humor, creativity, efficiency, control, discipline, standards, promptness with reports, methods and generosity with personal time for students (Calabria, 1960). Effectiveness in teaching was reported to be directly related to mastery of subject matter in the selected teaching field.

Feldman (1976) examines seventy two studies on characteristics reported by college students as associated with ideal teachers and as important for effective teaching. Across this large body of research, he finds the following characteristics to be consistently associated with superior college teachers or teaching: stimulating interest of the learners; being clear and understandable; being knowledgeable in subject matter; being prepared and organized for the course and being enthusiastic about the subject matter and teaching. Friendliness, helpfulness, and openness to others' opinions were characteristics that students said they preferred in teachers especially when they freely described their ideal or best teacher. In a later study, Feldman (1988) reviews thirty one other studies in each of which students and faculty had specified the instructional characteristics they considered particularly important to good teaching and effective instruction. Students placed more importance than faculty on teachers being interesting, having good elocutionary skills, and being available and helpful. They also emphasized the outcomes of instruction more than faculty did. Faculty placed more importance than did students on teachers being intellectually challenging, motivating students and setting high standards for them, and encouraging self-initiated learning.

In spite of the fact that many studies conducted on the characteristics of EFL teachers, very little research has been

conducted on how the Yemeni university teachers of English and English students perceived the effective characteristics of English teachers. Knowing about the perceptions of the Yemeni university teachers and students regarding this issue will greatly help to offer some insights that might improve English teaching in the departments of English in Yemeni context.

### **3. Methodology**

To collect the related data of the current study, I utilized the following methodology.

#### **3.1 Methods of data collection**

I have collected the relevant data of the topic under the study by two ways. Firstly, the questionnaire comprises 30 closed-ended items and one open ended question. Secondly, the records of the second semester examinations results of the students in the Departments of English at the Faculty of Education/ Aden, and at the Faculty of Education/ Saber at the third level in the academic year 2013-2014 in three subjects (i.e. Linguistics, ELT Methodology, and Translation). The students' results are used as an indication and evidence of the direct impact of the teachers' characteristics on students' performance.

### **3.2 Participants**

The participants who responded to the questionnaire are English language teachers and English language students at Aden University, they are 10 teachers of English (i.e. five of them have a Ph.D. degree, one is an M.Ed., and four have a B.Ed. degree) teaching at different faculties; and the students are 60 students from the Department of English at the Faculty of Languages, and the Department of English at the Faculty of Education/ Aden.

I used the records of the second semester examinations results of the students at the third level in the two mentioned departments of English. The students' achievement in the exams of three subjects (i.e. Linguistics, ELT Methodology, and Translation) are used as an indication and evidence of the direct impact of the teachers' characteristics on students' performance. I also distributed a questionnaire to the students and the teachers of English, it comprises two sections, section one consists of thirty items based on a five point Likert Scale; and the second section is one open-ended question. The questionnaire was developed by me after a thorough review of the literature about effective characteristics of English language teacher, and based on previous studies dealing with such qualities of teachers.

### **3.3 Data analysis**

I started to analyse the collected data by the first section of the questionnaire quantitatively, it includes thirty statements about the characteristics of an effective English language teacher. The participants were asked to express their agreement or disagreement based on a five-point (strongly disagree, disagree, no idea, agree, strongly agree) Likert Scale. They were asked to select the option which best represented their reaction to the statement. The second section consists of one open-ended question to be answered by the participants. It was analyzed qualitatively. The questionnaire was administered at the end of the second semester of the academic year 2014-2015.

The students' results of the subjects (i.e. Linguistics, ELT Methodology, and Translation) at the third level in the academic 2013-2014 in the two departments of English (in Aden and Saber) are used to check their achievement in these subjects. I also collected relevant details regarding the qualifications and the teaching experience of the teachers who taught the mentioned subjects. The collected data have been analysed by using the SPSS programme. The data is processed statistically, analyzed by using frequencies and percentages, means and standard deviations so that the results could be judged.

#### 4. Results

In the following section, I present the results of the questionnaire as well as the examinations results of the students at the third level of the Department of English at the Faculty of Education/ Aden, and the Department of English at the Faculty of Education/ Saber in the academic year 2013-2014.

##### 4.1 The questionnaire

To begin the analysis, the following values were assigned to responses provided for Likert Scale items: Strongly Agree = 5, Agree= 4, No Idea = 3, Disagree= 2, Strongly Disagree= 1. The frequencies and the percentages of each choice of the students' responses have been calculated. Then the mean values and standard deviations for each item were calculated using the SPSS programme. The students' responses to the open-ended question were analyzed mainly qualitatively. The same procedure was followed regarding the analysis of the teachers' responses to the questionnaire. The results of the students' responses as well as the percentages of the five point Liker scale are displayed in the following table:

*Table No. 1The students' responses to the questionnaire*

No.	Statements		Responses					Mean	Std Deviation
			Strongly agree	Agree	No Idea	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
1	Have a long	Fre	28	23	9	-----	-----	4.1667	1.02786



***G-JETS, Issue No.1 Students' Achievement and Characteristics of an Effective English Language Teacher: Dr. Adel Abdulkhaliq Abdulkareem Dulul***

	teaching experience	Per%	46.7	38.3	15				
2	Have an advanced degree	Fre	13	23	3	21	-----	3.4667	1.18560
		Per%	21.7	38.3	5	35	-----		
3	Have the ability to present information in a clear understanding and motivating manner.	Fre	22	21	6	9	2	4.0167	1.28210
		Per%	36.7	35	10	15	3.3		
4	Have a high level of proficiency with English vocabulary.	Fre	32	12	3	11	2	3.7500	1.28386
		Per%	53.3	20	5	18.3	3.3		
5	Mastery of subject matter in the selected teaching subject.	Fre	22	19	4	12	3	3.7500	1.28386
		Per%	36.7	31.7	6.7	20	5		
6	Speak English well.	Fre	39	8	4	9	---	4.2833	1.12131
		Per%	65.0	13.3	6.7	15	-----		
7	Teach English in English.	Fre	25	16	6	10	3	3.8333	1.27780
		Per%	41.7	26.7	10	16.7	5		
8	Use Arabic and English in teaching English.	Fre	12	27	2	13	6	3.4333	1.30665
		Per%	20	45	3.3	21.7	10		
9	Be personally committed to his/her professional development.	Fre	23	15	12	10	---	3.8500	1.11728
		Per%	38.3	25	20	16.7	----		
10	Be up-to-date (e.g. use internet and	Fre	18	25	4	11	2	3.7667	1.16977

*G-JETS, Issue No.1 Students' Achievement and Characteristics of an Effective English Language Teacher: Dr. Adel Abdulkhaliq Abdulkareem Dulul*

	recent technologies in teaching).	Per%	30	41.7	6.7	18.3	3.3		
11	Teach how to learn English outside the classroom(teach language learning strategies).	Fre	18	28	4	10	----	3.9000	1.02
		Per%	30	46.7	6.7	16.7	---		
12	Assess what students have learned reasonably.	Fre	18	24	8	10	---	3.8333	1.04
		Per%	30	40	13.3	16.7	---		
13	Give feedback.	Fre	19	26	4	10	1	3.78	1.09
		Per%	31.7	43.3	6.7	16.7	1.7		
14	Being fair to students by showing neither favoritism nor prejudice.	Fre	15	28	7	9	1	3.8667	1.04
		Per%	25	46.7	11.7	15	1.7		
15	Assess his/her work regularly.	Fre	16	26	8	9	---	3.83	0.99
		Per%	26.7	43.3	13.3	15	---		
16	Be helpful to students in and outside the classroom.	Fre	27	16	4	12	1	3.93	1.21
		Per%	45	26.7	6.7	20	1.7		
17	Be able to organize, explain, and clarify, as well as to arouse and sustain interest and motivation among students.	Fre	24	14	8	11	3	3.75	1.24
		Per%	40	23.3	13.3	18.3	5		
18	Show interest in	Fre	22	22	4	11	1	3.88	1.15

*G-JETS, Issue No.1 Students' Achievement and Characteristics of an Effective English Language Teacher: Dr. Adel Abdulkhaliq Abdulkareem Dulul*

	students (by remembering students' names) and their learning.								
		Per%	36.7	36.7	6.7	18.3	1.7		
19	Be interested in his/her career.	Fre	20	24	2	11	3	3.78	1.23
		Per%	33.3	40	3.3	18.3	5		
20	Provide opportunities to use English through meaningful tasks and activities.	Fre	19	12	20	9	---	3.68	1.08
		Per%	31.7	20	33.3	15	---		
21	Utilize class time properly.	Fre	20	24	5	11	---	3.88	1.07
		Per%	33.3	40	8.3	18.3	---		
22	Have positive interpersonal skills with students and using rewards to encourage students.	Fre	18	20	13	9	---	3.87	1.04
		Per%	30	33.3	21.7	15	---		
23	Help students to develop self-confidence in order to learn English well.	Fre	22	22	6	10	---	3.93	1.07
		Per%	36.7	36.7	10	16.7	---		
24	Be neat and tidy in appearance.	Fre	28	18	4	9	1	4.05	1.14
		Per%	46.7	30	6.7	15	1.7		
25	Monitor students' progress.	Fre	29	13	7	11	---	4	1.16
		Per%	48.3	21.7	11.7	18.3	---		
26	Be punctual.	Fre	21	22	8	9	---	3.91	1.04
		Per%	35	36.7	13.3	15	---		
27	Not lose temper and get angry	Fre	27	8	8	16	1	3.73	1.32
		Per%	45	13.3	13.3	26.7	1.7		

28	Be open to criticism.	Fre	15	24	9	12	---	3.70	1.06
		Per%	25	40	15	20	---		
29	Be flexible	Fre	23	23	5	9	---	4	1.04
		Per%	38.3	38.3	8.3	15.0	---		
30	Give clear and focused instructions.	Fre	39	11	---	10	---	4.31	1.11
		Per%	65	18.3	---	16.7	---		

*Note.* 'Fre' means frequency, 'Per' % 'indicates percentage and 'Std' indicates standard deviation

Table 1 above shows that the students' responses to the questionnaire emphasizing the importance of most of the given characteristics. The results highly indicated that teachers of English should have a long teaching experience, have an advanced qualification, and should give clear focused instructions, and be helpful to students in and outside the classroom in order to be more effective. The results of the teachers' responses as well as the percentages of the five point Liker scale are displayed in the following table:

*Table No.2 The teachers' responses to the questionnaire*

No.	Statements	Responses						Mean	Std Deviation
			Strongly agree	Agree	No Idea	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
1	Have a long teaching experience	Fre	3	6	0	1	0	4.1000	.87560
		Per%	30	60	---	10	---		
2	Have an advanced degree.	Fre	4	4	---	2	---	4.0000	1.15470
		Per%	40	40	---	20	---		
3	Have the ability to present information in a clear understanding and motivating manner.	Fre	5	4	1	---	---	4.4000	.69921
		Per%	50	40	10	---	---		
4	Have a high level of proficiency with English vocabulary.	Fre	3	5	2	---	---	4.1000	.73786
		Per%	30	50	20	---	---		
5	Mastery of subject matter in the selected teaching subject.	Fre	6	4	---	---	---	4.6000	.51640
		Per%	60	40	---	---	---		
6	Speak English well.	Fre	3	5	1	1	---	4.0000	.94281
		Per%	30	50	10	10	---		
7	Teach English in English.	Fre	3	7	---	---	---	4.3000	.48305
		Per%	30	70	---	---	---		
8	Use Arabic and English in teaching English.	Fre	1	4	---	2	3	3.3000	1.05935
		Per%	10	40	---	20	30		
9	Be personally committed to his/her professional development.	Fre	5	---	3	2	---	4.3000	.82327
		Per%	50	---	30	20	---		
10	Be up-to-date (e.g. use internet and recent technologies in teaching).	Fre	5	4	---	1	---	4.3000	.94868
		Per%	50	40	---	10	---		
11	Teach how to learn English	Fre	4	6	---	---	---	4.4000	.51640

*G-JETS, Issue No.1 Students' Achievement and Characteristics of an Effective English Language Teacher: Dr. Adel Abdulkhaliq Abdulkareem Dulul*

	outside the classroom (teach language learning strategies).	Per%	40	60	...	...	...		
12	Assess what students have learned reasonably.	Fre	5	5	---	--	...	4.5000	.52705
		Per%	50	50					
13	Give feedback.	Fre	6	4	---	---	...	4.6000	.51640
		Per%	60	40	...	...	...		
14	Being fair to students by showing neither favoritism nor prejudice.	Fre	3	5	2	---		4.1000	.73786
		Per%	30	50	20	...	...		
15	Assess his/her work regularly.	Fre	4	5	---	---	1	4.1000	1.19722
		Per%	40	50		...	10		
16	Be helpful to students in and outside the classroom.	Fre	5	4	1	---	---	4.4000	.69921
		Per%	50	40	10				
17	Be able to organize, explain, and clarify, as well as to arouse and sustain interest and motivation among students.	Fre	6	4	---	---	...	4.6000	.51640
		Per%	60	40	...	...	...		
18	Show interest in students (by remembering students' names) and their learning.	Fre	6	3	1	---	...	4.5000	.70711
		Per%	60	30	10	...	...		
19	Be interested in his/her career.	Fre	5	5	---	---	...	4.5000	.52705
		Per%	50	50	...	...			
20	Provide opportunities to use English through meaningful tasks and activities.	Fre	6	4	---	---	...	4.6000	.51640
		Per%	60	40	...	...	...		
21	Utilize class time properly.	Fre	2	7	---	1	---	4.0000	.81650
		Per%	20	70		10	...		
22	Have positive interpersonal skills with students and using rewards to encourage students.	Fre	4	6	---	---		4.4000	.51640
			40	60	...	...	...		
23	Help students to develop self-confidence in order to learn English well.	Fre	4	6	---	---	...	4.4000	.51640
		Per%	40	60	...	...	...		
24	Be neat and tidy in	Fre	5	5	---	---	...	4.5000	.52705

	appearance.							
		Per%	50	50				
25	Monitor students' progress.	Fre	5	5	---	---	---	4.5000 .52705
		Per%	50	50	...	...	...	
26	Be punctual.	Fre	7	3	---	---	---	4.7000 .48305
		Per%	70	30	...	...	...	
27	Not lose temper and get angry	Fre	6	3	1	---	---	4.5000 .70711
		Per%	60	30	10	...	...	
28	Be open to criticism.	Fre	8	1	---	1	---	4.6000 .96609
		Per%	80	10	...	10	---	
29	Be flexible	Fre	7	3	---	---	---	4.7000 .48305
		Per%	70	30	...	...	---	
30	Give clear and focused instructions.	Fre	7	2	1	---	v	4.6000 .69921
		Per%	70	20	10	...	---	

Table 2 shows that the highest teachers' responses (i.e. 8/80%, and 7/70 %) were given to the teachers' characteristics of being open to criticism, giving clear and focused instructions, and being punctual. The results also show that (6 / 60%) of the participants have indicated that having a long teaching experience is an effective feature of English language teachers.

#### 4.2 The examinations results of the students

The records of the examinations results of the students in the academic year 2013-2014 were analyzed by using the SPSS programme to find the mean score and standard deviation of each subject in the two departments of English. The qualifications as well as the teaching experience of the teachers of these subjects (i.e. Linguistics, ELT Methodology, and Translation) have been tabulated

to find to what extent such characteristics affect on the results of the students.

*Table No. 3The subjects, the teachers' experience, and teachers' qualifications in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education/Aden*

Name of the Faculty and the Department	Subjects	Teacher's experience	Teacher's qualification
The Faculty of Education/ Aden, the Department of English	Linguistics	18 year	Ph.D.
	ELT Methodology	5 years	M.A.
	Translation	8 years	M.A.

*Table No. 4The third year examinations results of the students of the Department of English, at the Faculty of Education/Aden*

Subjects	Number of students	Mean	Std. deviation
Linguistics	95	3.230	.55427
ELT Methodology	95	3.214	.64331
Translation	95	3.034	.61339



*Table No. 5 The subjects, the teachers' experience, and teachers' qualifications in the Department of English, at the Faculty of Education/Saber*

Name of the Faculty, and the Department	Subjects	Teacher's experience	Teacher's qualification
The Faculty of Education/Saber, the Department of English	Linguistics	14 yrs	B.Ed.
	ELT	11 yrs	B.Ed.
	Translation	8 yrs	M.A.

*Table No.6 The third year examinations results of the students of the Department of English, at the Faculty of Education/ Saber*

Subjects	Number of students	Mean	Std. deviation
Linguistics	124	3.449	0.48966
ELT Methodology	124	3.231	0.59956
Translation	124	3.577	0.81371

## **5. Discussion of the results**

The results of the study will be presented below.

### **5.1 The questionnaire results**

The present research paper checks the teachers and the students' views regarding the effective characteristics of English language teachers such as teachers' experience, teachers' educational skills and awareness, teachers' communicative skills and methods, and teachers' social and emotional skills. The results show a common belief in the importance of some characteristics of teachers which affect the students' achievement.

As the above results in Table 1 and Table 2 demonstrated that teachers and students of English hold the same views towards some characteristics of an effective English language teacher. The students' responses to the questionnaire in Table 1 have revealed that (28/ 46.7%) students, with a mean score (4.1667) and a standard deviation (1.02786), considered that teaching experience of the English language teacher is as an effective characteristic. The teachers' responses to the questionnaire in Table 2 indicated that (6/ 60%) teachers emphasized that teaching experience is of a high importance. The mean score is (4.1000) and standard deviation is (87560). This reflects homogeneous results

The students' responses (13/3.8.8%) with a mean score (3.4667) and a standard deviation(1.18560) as well as the teachers' responses (4/40%)and a standard deviation (1.15) displayed that having an advanced degree is considered as an effective English language teacher. The standard deviations of the results are lower than their mean scores. This confirms the homogeneous results.

Furthermore, subject matter knowledge is another characteristic that one might think could be related to teacher effectiveness. While there is some support for this assumption, the results show that teachers' responses (6/60%) strongly agree that it is as an effective feature, and students responses (22/36.7%) strongly agree, (19/31.7%) agree that it is as an effective feature; while (12/20%) disagree that subject matter is as an effective feature of English language teacher. The results are not as strong and consistent as one might expect.

Both the teachers and students regarded that: be flexible; give clear and focused instructions; have the ability to present information in a clear understanding and motivating manner; mastery of the subject matter in the selected teaching subject; speak English well; teach English in English as desirable characteristics of an effective English language teacher. Moreover, being patient and flexible, utilizing class time properly, having positive attitudes towards the

students and giving feedback are considered as important features of English language teachers.

Regarding the second section of the questionnaire, that is, the open-ended question, some of the teachers pointed to some characteristics that might help to improve teachers' effectiveness like better payments, and more educational facilities. Some students' responses to this item specified that some English teachers have no English proficiency, and they are not aware of using technology to present the topics of the subjects they teach.

## **5.2 Discussion of the students examinations results in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education/ Aden**

To discuss the examinations results achieved by 95 students at the third level in academic year 2013-2014 of the Department of English at the Faculty of Education/Aden in three subjects, firstly, Table 3 shows that the instructor of linguistics has 18 years teaching experience and has a Ph.D. Degree in English. The instructor of ELT Methodology has five years teaching experience and has an M.A. degree in applied linguistics, and the instructor of Translation has eight years teaching experience and has an M.A. degree in Translation. Secondly, Table 4 displays the mean scores of the three subjects i.e. linguistics, ELT Methodology, Translation are (3.230, 3.214, and 3.034) respectively; with standard deviations (0.55427,

.64331, and 0.61339) respectively. The standard deviations of the results are lower than their mean scores. This assures the homogeneous results.

One can infer from the results shown in Table 3 and Table 4 that the students' achievement in the three subjects, to what extent, are close. The results also reflected that the three teachers are experienced in teaching as their teaching experience is ranged between 5 to 18 years. The three instructors seemed to be qualified in the field of English teaching; all of them have a high degree in English. Research supports this notion that a good teacher and actions to be taken on his part in the classroom play a vital role in provoking effective and efficient learning on the part of the students (Markley, 2004).

### **5.3 Discussion of the students' examinations results in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education/ Saber**

To discuss the examinations results of 124 students at the third level in the academic year 2013-2014 of the Department of English at the Faculty of Education/Aden, Table 5 shows that the instructor of linguistics has 14 years teaching experience and has a B.Ed.degree in English. The instructor of ELT Methodology has 11 years teaching experience and has a B.Ed. degree in English, and the instructor of Translation has 8 years teaching experience and has an MA degree in Translation. Table 5 displays the mean scores of the three subjects i.e. Linguistics, ELT Methodology, Translation are (3.449, 3.231, and

3.577) respectively; with standard deviations (.48966, .59956, and .81371) respectively. The standard deviations of the results are lower than their mean scores. This assures the consistent results.

One can infer from the results shown in Table 3 and Table 4 that the students' achievement in the three subjects, to what extent, are close. The results also reflected that the three teachers are experienced teachers in teaching English as their experience is ranged between 8 to 14 years. The two instructors have no high qualifications in the field of English teaching, however, the standard deviations of the results are lower than their means. This assures the consistent results.

## **6. Conclusion**

The discussion in the preceding sections leads us to the conclusion that teachers and students of English in the Yemeni context have similar views regarding the desirable characteristics of an effective English language teacher. They have emphasized the importance of teaching experience, qualifications, and subject matter knowledge. Moreover, both the teachers and students of English have indicated that being flexible; giving clear and focused instructions; having the ability to present information in a clear understanding and motivating manner; speaking English well; teaching English in English are desirable characteristics of an effective English language teacher.

The findings have also shown that being patient and flexible, utilizing class time properly, having positive attitudes towards the students and giving feedback are considered as important features of English language teachers.

This research paper demonstrates that there is a strong relationship between the students' achievement and the teaching experience as an effective characteristic of an English language teacher which is in line with findings from many other studies which do support such a result. The results have also displayed that there is no a strong relationship between the students' achievement and the teachers' qualifications.

## **7. Recommendations**

In order to achieve the aims of this study, the researcher would like to draw the attention of the teachers of English at our faculties to incorporate the characteristics of an effective teachers and be aware of such characteristics in their professional lives. In essence, this study recommends that every teacher of English in our faculties to be an effective teacher that might help to improve the students' achievement. The current movement in thinking and research that is taking us from the concept of a highly qualified teacher in every classroom, to the need for a highly effective teacher in every classroom, is a logical and needed evolution in our thinking about improvements in the way teaching and learning of English takes place in the departments of English.

### References

- Benson, L., Schroeder, P., Lantz, C., & Bird, M. (2001). *Student perceptions of effective teachers*. Retrieved October 16, 2013, from <http://www.usfca.edu/ess/sym2001/PDFbooks/naspe/naspep53-56.pdf>
- Brosh, H. (1996). Perceived characteristics of the effective language teacher. *Foreign Language Annals*, 29, 125-138. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.1996.tb02322.x>
- Blum, R. (1984). *Effective schooling practices: A research synthesis*. Portland, Ore: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Calabria, F. M. (1960). Characteristics of effective teachers. *Educational Research Bulletin*, 39 (4), 92-100.
- Clotfelter, C. T., Ladd, H. F., & Vigdor, J. L. (2006). Teacher–student matching and the assessment of teacher effectiveness. *The Journal of Human Resources*, 41(4), 778–820.
- Cooper, S. T., & Cohn, E. (1997). Estimation of a frontier production function for the South Carolina educational process. *Economics of Education Review*, 16(3), 313–327
- Feldman, K. A. (1976). The superior college teacher from the students' view. *Research in Higher Education*, 5(3), 243-288.



- Feldman, K. A. (1988). Effective college teaching from the students' and faculty's view: Matched or mismatched priorities? *Research in Higher Education*, 28(4), 291-344.
- Goldhaber, D. D., & Brewer, D. J. (1997). Why don't schools and teachers seem to matter? Assessing the impact of unobservable on educational productivity. *The Journal of Human Resources*, 32(3), 505–523.
- Goldhaber, D. D., & Anthony, E. A. (2007). Can teacher quality be effectively assessed? *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, 89(1), 134–150.
- Jepsen, C. (2005). Teacher characteristics and student achievement: Evidence from teacher surveys. *Journal of Urban Economics*, 57(2), 302–319.
- Klitgaard, R.H., & Hall, G.R. (1974). Are there unusually effective schools? *Journal of Human Resources*, 10 (3), 40-106.
- Krueger, A. B. (1999). Experimental estimates of education production functions. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 114(2), 497–532.
- Markley, T. (2004). Defining the effective teacher: Current arguments in education. *Essays in Education*, 11(3), 1-14.
- Murnane, R.J., & Phillips, B. (1981). Learning by doing. Vintage and selection: Three pieces of the puzzle relation

- teaching experience and teaching performance. *Economics of Education Review*. 28 (2009) 49–57.
- Noell, G. H. (2001). *Assessing teacher preparation program effectiveness: A pilot examination of value added approaches*. Unpublished manuscript. S. Kukla-Acevedo / *Economics of Education Review* 28 (2009) 49–57.
- Noell, G. H. (2005). *Assessing teacher preparation program effectiveness: A pilot examination of value added approaches*. Unpublished manuscripts. Kukla-Acevedo / *Economics of Education Review* 28 (2009) 49–57.
- Pettis, J. (1997). Developing our professional competences: some reflections. *TESL Canada Journal*, 16(2), 67-71.
- Richards, J. (2001). *Curriculum development in language education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rivkin, S. G., Hanushek, E. A., & Kain, J. F. (2005). Teachers, schools and academic achievement. *Econometrica*, 73(2), 417–458.
- Rockoff, J. E. (2004). The impact of individual teachers on student achievement: Evidence from panel data. *American Economic Review*, 94(2), 247–252.
- Sanders, W. L., Ashton, J., & Wright, S. P. (2005). *Comparison of the effects of NBPTS certified teachers with other teachers on the rate of student academic progress*. Unpublished manuscript.S.

*G-JETS, Issue No.1 Students' Achievement and Characteristics of an Effective English Language Teacher: Dr. Adel Abdulkhaliq Abdulkareem Dulul*

---

*Kukla-Acevedo / Economics of Education Review 28 (2009)*

49–5

## **Appendix**

### **A Questionnaire on Characteristics of an Effective English Language Teacher**

This questionnaire is going to be used to investigate the characteristics of an effective English language teacher from the perspective of Yemeni English language teachers and students. Findings of this study are hoped to be beneficial to Yemeni English language teachers and learners. English language teachers will be able to check the suitability of their own and their colleagues' beliefs regarding foreign language teaching and learning, trying to enhance their teaching practice regarding the needs and purposes of their learners as far as possible. Learners will similarly be able to understand their teachers' beliefs and change their own wrong beliefs about foreign language teaching and learning, trying to develop more positive attitudes towards English language learning.

It is worth mentioning that your participation in this research is voluntary and the data collected by means of this questionnaire will be kept confidential. Should you wish to contact the researchers during the process of research, please feel free to contact him through the following e-mail address: adel.dulul@gmail.com Thank you for your participation.

**Dr. Adel Abdulkhaliq Abdulkareem Dulul**

Status: Teacher of English at University, Student of English at University,

University Degree:      BA...                      MA...                      PhD...

- I. Please read the following list carefully. For each statement, select the response that best represents your Agreement or Disagreement. SA, A, NI, D and SD stand for Strongly Agree, Agree, No Idea, Disagree and Strongly Disagree respectively. If you have any additional comments to add about any of the following statements, please do so in the blank space provided at the end of this table.

From your point of view, the characteristics of an effective English language teacher are as follows:						
		SA	A	NI	D	SD
1	Have a long teaching experience.					
2	Have an advanced degree.					
3	Have the ability to present information in a clear understanding and motivating manner.					
4	Have a high level of proficiency with English vocabulary.					
5	Mastery of subject matter in the selected teaching subject.					
6	Speak English well.					
7	Teach English in English.					

8	Use Arabic and English in teaching English.					
9	Be personally committed to his/her professional development.					
10	Be up-to-date (e.g. use internet and recent technologies in teaching).					
11	Teach how to learn English outside the classroom (teach language learning strategies).					
12	Assess what students have learned reasonably.					
13	Give feedback.					
14	Being fair to students by showing neither favoritism nor prejudice.					
15	Assess his/her work regularly.					
16	Be helpful to students in and outside the classroom.					
17	Be able to organize, explain, and clarify, as well as to arouse and sustain interest and motivation among students.					
18	Show interest in students (by remembering students' names) and their learning.					
19	Be interested in his/her career.					
20	Provide opportunities to use English through meaningful tasks and activities.					

21	Utilize class time properly.					
22	Have positive interpersonal skills with students and using rewards to encourage students.					
23	Help students to develop self-confidence in order to learn English well.					
24	Be neat and tidy in appearance.					
25	Monitor students' progress.					
26	Be punctual.					
27	Not lose temper and get angry.					
28	Be open to criticism.					
29	Be flexible.					
30	Give clear and focused instructions.					

II. Please specify if there are any particular characteristics that you believe an English Language Teacher must possess besides the characteristics that you agreed with above?

**The Syntax and Semantics of wala ‘and not’ in  
Yemeni Arabic**

Asst. Prof. Dr. Jaklin Mansoor

Faculty of Education, Aden University

Email: jaklin.mansoor@yahoo.com

**Abstract**

*This paper examines the negative quantifier wala ‘and not’ in Yemeni Arabic. It focuses on two main aspects: the negative and emphatic behavior of wala. Wala can express both sentential and constituent negation based on its position in the sentence and it is always associated with a focus feature. Examining those aspects syntactically, it is shown that in Yemeni Arabic wala behaves differently from wala in the other varieties of Arabic to some extent, i.e. wala can be followed by a verb phrase, a noun phrase as well as a prepositional phrase. Therefore, I argue that wala does not have strict lexical selectional properties. Further, it is found out that any element follows wala must be associated with a focus feature and those elements are moved from their original position to a position that occurs below wala phrase. I assume that wala selects a focus phrase that appears immediately below it where various phrasal and lexical categories can occur. The paper also highlights several syntactic and semantic aspects of wala and discusses some of the previous accounts. Finally, I provide a unified analysis to all these aspects within the generative*



*grammar framework especially Chomsky (2001); and Pesetsky and Torrego (2007).*

**Keywords:** Yemeni Arabic, emphatic negation, negative quantifiers, Agree

### **1. Introduction**

This paper discusses a significant aspect of the syntax of negation in Yemeni Arabic<sup>1</sup> (YA), i.e. emphatic negation. The expression of emphatic negation in other languages is done either by some non-negative words that add emphasis to the existing negative construction as in French, or by attaching a negative marker to non-verbal constituents of the clause; subject, direct object, indirect object, nominal predicate or adverb as in English (Givon, 2001). Consider these examples:

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| 1. je ne march pas                             | French  |
| I neg march step                               |         |
| ‘I don’t march.’                               |         |
| 2. a. <b>No</b> woman gave the book to the boy | English |
| b. The woman gave <b>no</b> book to the boy    |         |

---

<sup>1</sup>YA is a cluster of Arabic varieties spoken in Yemen. There are many varieties of YA, which we can call dialects. These dialects exhibit distinctive morphological and phonological differences but minor syntactic differences. These variations are not motivating to classify them as languages because irrespective of the variation, speakers of different dialects are able to understand and communicate with each other.

- c. The woman gave the book to **no** boy
- d. She is **no** dummy.

What captures attention in YA is the presence of a single element (*wala*) that can express both negation and emphasis. In other words, *wala* is more economical because it has two semantic functions in the structure.

*wala* 'and not' can occur in both the preverbal position and in the post-verbal position. It can be followed by a verb phrase (VP), a noun phrase (NP) or a prepositional phrase (PP). *wala* in the post-verbal position has to be c-commanded by the negative marker *ma* 'not'. Consider these examples:

- 3. **wala** sawwait    hagah qalat  
and not do.past.1s    thing wrong  
'I did not do anything wrong.'

- 4. ma-baqula-k    **wala**    kalimah  
neg-fut.tell.1s-you and not word  
'I will not tell you even a word.'

*wala* exhibits an analogous behavior to the negative marker *sh* in that it is also incompatible with the inherently emphatic elements *wallah* 'by God' and *ʔumer* 'ever/ in one's life'. Consider these examples:

- 5. \***wallah wala**    sawwait    hagah qalat  
by God and not do.past.1s    thing wrong

‘By God, I did not do even anything wrong.

6. \*ʔumri wala ʔakaltu gambri

ever and not eat.past.1s prawn

‘I have not eaten even prawn ever.’

The incompatibility of *wala* and these elements indicates that *wala* has a strong emphatic feature that cannot co-occur with another element that has the same feature. This behavior falls in line with Rizzi (1997).<sup>2</sup>

As demonstrated, *wala* ‘and not’ can express sentential negation but it is distinguished from the unmarked negative markers *mish*, and *ma...sh* (the unmarked negative markers will be presented in the next section) in so many ways. First, *wala* is positioned higher than TP. Second, it can negate verbal and nominal predicates. Third, it is associated with a focal stress. Consider these examples:

7. a. wala wahid aga

and not one come.past.3ms

‘Not even one came.’

b. \*wahid wala aga

one and not come.past.3ms

8. wala ʔamal haghah

---

<sup>2</sup> Rizzi (1997) argues that that two focus phrases cannot co-occur in the same context.

and not do.past.3ms thing

'He did not do anything

Obviously, *wala* can be followed by an NP or a VP. It has also to be placed higher than the subject, as illustrated in (7). This place enables it to take wide scope of negation. However, the occurrence of *wala* in the post-verbal position does not enable it to take wide scope of negation, so it has to be c-commanded by the NegP. In (9), it is the negative marker *ma* 'not' that expresses sentential negation, not *wala*. Consider this example:

9. ma-baqula-k        **wala**     kalimah

neg-fut.tell.1s-you and not word

'I will not tell you even a word.

Notice that the negative scope of *wala* is determined by its surface position in the structure. The discussion also shows the behavior of *wala* in the context of inherently emphatic elements and highlights the aspects of distinction. The results reinforces the claim that *wala* is an emphatic negative quantifier that can express sentential negation.

This paper has great significance in that it brings to light some of the important aspects of the syntax of negation in YA in particular and dialectal Arabic in general. It can be considered as a valuable contribution to the field of descriptive linguistics since it provides some interesting data about the syntax and semantics of negation in

YA that has not been discussed yet by any Yemeni linguist. It also provides analyses and explanations to the various occurrences of *wala* in the structure within the guidelines of generative grammar framework, particularly the minimalist program (Chomsky, 1995, 2000, 2001).

Note that the data are partly discussed in Mansoor (2012) and the other examples in section one and two are provided by the author who is a speaker of one of the varieties of Yemeni Arabic, i.e. Abyani dialect.

The paper is organized as follows. After the introduction, I outline in the second section some of the assumptions and analyses that have discussed *wala* previously. In the third section, I examine those aspects technically and offer a syntactic analysis based on the recent trends in the syntactic theory. The fourth section concludes the paper.

## **2. Literature review**

This section reviews some of the relevant works that have tackled this aspect in other varieties of Arabic mainly Palestinian Arabic. I also throw some light on Mansoor (2012) where the syntax of negation<sup>3</sup> in YA is discussed and many analyses were provided to a wide range of syntactic and semantic aspects of negation in this

---

<sup>3</sup>For more information about the syntax of negation, see Benmamoun (2000), Aoun et al. (2010), and Haegeman (1995).

language. Provided that the data have been presented there and I used here only the native speaker judgment to judge the grammaticality and acceptability of *wala* in other environments.

In YA, three chief negative markers express sentential negation: *ma*<sup>4</sup>, *mish* and *ma...sh*, which indicates that there are two main systems of negation employed by YA: the one-part negative marker, which always occupies the preverbal position and the two-part/discontinuous negative marker. Consider these examples from Hadhrami dialect, Abyani dialect and Adeni dialect respectively:

10. *ma nimt samh al-barih*  
neg sleep.past.1s early last night  
'I did not sleep early last night.'

11. *mish indina-hum assiyarah haqqana*  
neg give.past.1p-them the car ours  
'We did not give them our car.'

12. *ma-ʔatiena-hum-sh haqqana assiyarah*  
neg-give.past.1p-them-neg our the car  
'We did not give them our car.'

---

<sup>4</sup>*Ma* is used in Hadhrami dialect, *mish* is used in Abyani dialect, and *ma....sh* is employed in several dialects mainly Adeni and Taizi dialects. For further discussion, see Mansoor (2012).

Mansoor (2012) argues that the negative marker *sh* has a focus feature that disappears in the presence of inherently negative elements such as the oath invoking God *wallah* ‘by God’, the emphatic NPI *ʔumer* ‘ever/in one’s life’, and the emphatic negative quantifier *wala* ‘and not’. Consider these examples:

13. *wallah*      *ma-aquum-(\*sh)*    *men*    *mahl-i*  
by God    neg-fut.stand.1s    from place-my  
‘By God, I will not leave my place.’

14. *ʔumri*    *ma-ʔakaltu(\*sh)*    *gambri*  
ever    neg-eat.past.1s    prawn  
‘I have not eaten prawn ever.’

15. *ma (\*sh)*    *baaʔtiik*                    ***wala***    *fels*  
neg    fut.give.1s-you    and not penny  
‘I will not give you even a penny.’

*wala* in (15) is incompatible with *sh* because both elements have a strong focus feature that cannot co-occur within the same clause. Put in mind, *wala* does not have a wide scope of negation given that its post-verbal position does not enable it to take wide scope over the entire clause.

The occurrence of *wala* in the post-verbal position is discussed in Hoyt (2005) and Lucas (2009). Hoyt (2005) sheds light on the behavior of *wala* in Palestinian Arabic. He claims that when *wala*

occurs in the post-verbal position, it behaves as a negative concord item<sup>5</sup>. Conversely, Lucas (2009) argues that *wala* is a negative conjunctive derived etymologically from the conjunction *wa* 'and' and *la* 'not'. Therefore, when it occurs in the post-verbal position, it is considered as a part of another clause. Its negative feature is not absorbed by the negative marker *ma* in the matrix clause but it scopes over the element following it.

In these terms, *wala* is also a negative conjunctive that joins two negative clauses. Consider this example:

16. a. *ma samiʔet wala kilma*

neg hear.past.1s and not word

'I did not hear even a single word.'

Accordingly, this sentence can have the following interpretation where *wala* is part of another clause that is elided:

b. I did not hear anything, not even a word.

c.  $\neg\exists x (\text{hear}(\text{Me}, x)) \wedge \neg\exists y (\text{word}(y) \wedge \text{hear}(\text{Me}, y))$ .

The emphatic feature of *wala* was not given much attention neither by Hoyt (2005) nor by Lucas (2009). However, it is a crucial feature that has a semantic and syntactic significance to the interpretation of the sentence.

---

<sup>5</sup>Negative concord is lavishly discussed in Zeijlstra (2004), Haegeman and Lohnda (2010), and Hoyt (2006).



Lucas’s (2009) proposal seems more plausible than Hoyt’s one because *wala* has not only a negative feature but also it has a focus feature. I argue that those features are not lost even if *wala* is generated in an elliptical clause and their scope is restricted to their c-commanding domain. Further, the XP<sup>6</sup> following *wala* is negated and focused. Then, it is moved from a lower position to a higher position. After that, the rest of the clause is elided. The elliptical part corresponds to the structure in the higher clause with a slight difference. Consider this example:

17. ...wala samiʕet kilma

and not hear.past.1s word

‘And I did not hear even a single word.’

Ellipsis takes place after moving *kilma* to a focus phrase (FocP) selected by *wala*. Consider this configuration:

18. [XP wala [FocP kilma [Foc<sup>0</sup> [<sub>TP</sub> ~~kilma~~ [<sub>T<sup>0</sup></sub> [<sub>VP</sub> pro [<sub>NP</sub> ~~samiʕet~~ [<sub>NP</sub> ~~kilma~~]]]]]]]]]

This configuration explains how the XP in a lower position appears higher and c-commanded by *wala*. It seems that when *wala* occurs in the embedded clause c-commanded by *ma*, the two negative features are generated in two different clauses so they do not cancel out each other but every feature scopes over its domain. The occurrence of

---

<sup>6</sup>XP refers to any phrasal category whether it is an NP, a vP or PP.

*wala* in this context is principally to emphasize and restrict the domain of negation to the XP following it.

The question that currently seeks an answer is concerned with determining the position of *wala* or the structure of *wala* clauses. As shown, *wala* occupies a position higher than TP and it can also be followed by a noun phrase, a prepositional phrase or by a subject or an object, which indicates that the position which follows *wala* is not subject to strict lexical selection. This position can host any element if that element is marked for a focus feature. Consider these examples:

19. a. *wala hurmah hadharat*  
and not woman attend.past.3fs  
‘No woman attended...’  
b. *wala fels inda-na*  
and not penny give.past.3ms-us  
‘He did not give us a penny.’  
c. *wala fi-ha hagah*  
and not in-it thing  
‘There is nothing in it.’

In (19a) *hurmah* ‘woman’ is a subject, in (19b) *fils* is a direct object, while in (19c) *fiha* is a prepositional phrase. This observation reinforces the claim that *wala* selects a focus phrase as a complement.

I argue that *wala* phrases will always be followed by a FocP that hosts any lexical category, as shown below:

$$20. [\text{walaP} [\text{wala}^0 \quad [\text{FocP} [\text{Foc}^0 \quad \text{XP} ]]]]$$

I also argue that any XP that has a focus feature moves to the specifier of a focus phrase immediately below *wala*. The mechanism of checking these features will be discussed below.

### **3. The theoretical bases of the proposal**

In this section, I will discuss some of the brilliant accounts like Chomsky (2001); and Pesetsky and Torrego (2007). I also provide an account to explain how *walaP* and its FocP enter into an Agree relation with other proper goals in order to eliminate the unvalued features.

#### **3.1 Chomsky (2001)**

Chomsky (2001) argues that uninterpretable features enter the derivation without values while interpretable features are valued. The crucial idea of Agree is to establish a relation between uninterpretable and unvalued features and interpretable and valued features called probe-goal relation. For instance,  $T_{\text{comp}}$  will function as a probe since it has a set of uninterpretable *phi*-features and an EPP feature while nouns function as proper goals since they have a set of interpretable *phi*-features. Notice that the goal must be active at least by having an uninterpretable feature; otherwise, the probe cannot locate it and it

will not participate in a probe-goal relation. Agree determines the relation of these uninterpretable features and determines their elimination from the narrow syntax.

The main purpose of the probe-goal relation is to eliminate the uninterpretable unvalued features from the narrow syntax through assigning values to them. Chomsky (2001,) states:

The natural principle is that uninterpretable features, and only these, enter the derivation without values, and are distinguished from interpretable features by virtue of this property. Their values are determined by Agree, at which point the feature must be deleted from narrow syntax (or they will be indistinguishable from interpretable features at LF) but left available for the phonology (since they may have phonetic effects).(p.5)

There are two types of features in Chomsky's (2001) framework:

- i) uninterpretable/unvalued
- ii) interpretable/valued.

The valuation of the uninterpretable features is a syntactic process determined by Agree mechanism.

### **3.2 Pesetsky and Torrego (2007)**

Pesetsky and Torrego (2007) (P&T henceforth) argue against the association of valuation with interpretability, according to them, it is vacuous and redundant. They have offered a proposal that is concerned with the inclusion of two more features to the derivation.

They claimed that the lexical entry of  $v$  is unvalued for number and person but valued for tense (+PAST, +PRESENT). Valuation of a feature is a process that must take place at syntax while semantics is only concerned with interpretability. The novelty of the account lies in the suggestion that agreement is sharing of features that produces one instance of a feature shared by two locations.

21. Agree (feature sharing version) (from P&T 2007:5)

- (i) An unvalued feature  $F$  (a probe) on a head  $H$  at syntactic location  $\alpha$  ( $F_\alpha$ ) scans its c-command domain for another instance of  $F$  (a goal) at location  $\beta$  ( $F_\beta$ ) with which to agree.
- (ii) Replace  $F_\alpha$  with  $F_\beta$ , so that the same feature is present in both locations.

The difference between feature sharing and feature assignment is that the former gives rise to more possibilities. For instance, Agree between two unvalued features becomes possible in the former.

22. Notation for feature sharing (from P&T 2007:6)

$F [73] \dots F [73] \dots F_{val} [73] \dots F [73]^7$

The proposal of P&T allows for four types of features:

---

<sup>7</sup> Unvalued features are indicated by an empty pair of brackets [ ], and 73 is an arbitrary number indicating that features share the same feature irrespective of being assigned valuations.

i) Uninterpretable, valued u[val]

ii) Uninterpretable, unvalued u[ ]

iii) Interpretable, valued i[val]

iv) Interpretable, unvalued i[ ].

Among these types, only unvalued features can act as probe. Further, P&T (2007) argue that the deletion of uninterpretable features does not apply to an occurrence of a feature but only to instances of that occurrence because semantics can be satisfied with only one interpretable instance of F. This claim is built on the TRI<sup>8</sup> condition, which requires instances of features to be interpretable at the semantic interface and does not stipulate that every instance of the feature must be interpretable.

### **3.3 The proposal**

In the light of P&T (2007), I argue that *wala*P, whether it occurs in a preverbal position or a post-verbal position, selects a FocP that is endowed with i[ ] focus feature. This feature enters into Agree relation with any element that has an u[val] focus feature. The unvalued feature (the probe) seeks a value within its c-commanding domain.

---

<sup>8</sup>TRI indicates the Thesis of Radical Interpretability condition, which stipulates that each feature must receive *exactly* one semantic interpretation in some syntactic location.

The moment it locates a proper goal, it enters into an Agree relation with it in order to assign its unvalued focus feature a value. The process does not stop there but it proceeds further since the FocP has to be filled overtly by a phonological element at the Spell-out. The goal moves to the specifier of FocP as illustrated by the configuration below:

$$23. [\text{walaP } [\text{wala}^0 [\text{FocP } \text{XP } i[\text{val}] [\text{Foc}^0 i[\text{val}] [\text{TP} [\text{T}^0 [\text{vP } \dots \text{XP } u[\text{val}]]]]]]]]]$$

The bold letters show how feature sharing takes place and how both features are valued and eliminated. Consider this example:


24. a. *wala hurmah hadharat*  
 and not woman attend.past.3fs  
 ‘No woman attended...’

The derivation of this example proceeds as follows:

$$b. [\text{walaP } [\text{wala } [\text{FocP } \text{hurmah } [\text{Foc}^0 [\text{TP } \text{hurmah } [\text{T}^0 \text{hadhrat } [\text{vP } \text{hurmah } [\text{v}^0 \text{hadhrat} \dots]]]]]]]]]$$

*hurmah* is generated in the specifier of *vP*, then it moves to the specifier of tense phrase (*TP*) and resides finally in the specifier of *FocP*. The overt movement of *hurmah* to the *FocP* is motivated by *i[ ]* of the *FocP* that requires also to be filled by an overt phonological element.

In the case of the post-verbal *wala*, the same procedure takes place with a slight difference. That is, when the goal moves to the FocP; the remnant clause is elided. Consider this example where the struck TP refers to the elided clause.

25. [walaP [wala<sup>o</sup> [ FocP XP<sub>u[val]</sub> [Foc<sup>o</sup>i[unval] [~~TP~~[T<sup>o</sup> [vP ..... XP<sub>u[val]</sub> ]]]]]]]]
- 

#### 4. Conclusion

The goal of this paper is to bring about a significant aspect of the syntax of negation in YA, i.e. emphatic negation, which is expressed by the negative quantifier *wala*. It highlights some of the significant properties of *wala* like its ability to express sentential negation with emphasis, its ability to have a wide and narrow scope of negation based on its surface occurrence in the structure and its association with a FocP. It also offers some novel analyses to those aspects within the guidelines of P&T (2007).



### References

- Aoun, J., Benmamoun, E. & Choueiri, L. (2010). *The syntax of Arabic*. Cambridge University Press.
- Benmamoun, E. (2000). *The feature structure of functional categories: A comparative study of Arabic Dialects*. Oxford University Press.
- Benmamoun, E. (1999). The syntax of quantifiers and quantifier float. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 30(4), 621-642.
- Chomsky, N. (1995). *The minimalist program*. MIT Press.
- Chomsky, N. (2000). Minimalist inquiries: The framework. In R. Martin, D. Michaels, & J. Uriagereka (eds.), *step by step: Essays on minimalist syntax in honor of Howard Lasnik*, 89-155. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- Chomsky, N. (2001). Derivation by phase. In M. Kenstowicz (ed.), *Ken Hale: A life in language*, 1-52. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- Givón, E. (2001). *Syntax: An introduction* (Vol. 1). Amsterdam: John Benjamin.
- Haegeman, L. (1995). *The syntax of negation*. CUP: Cambridge.
- Haegeman, L. & Lohnda, T. (2010). Negative concord and (multiple) Agree: A case study of West Flemish. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 41(2), 181-211.

- Hoyt, F. (2005a). Negative concord and restructuring in Palestinian Arabic. University of Texas at Austin. Retrieved from [http://comp.ling.utexas.edu/fmhoyt/Hoyt\(06\)\\_ConcordWorkshop.pdf](http://comp.ling.utexas.edu/fmhoyt/Hoyt(06)_ConcordWorkshop.pdf).
- Hoyt, F. (2006). Negative polarity in Arabic. University of Texas. Retrieved from <http://comp.ling.utexas.edu>
- Lucas, C. (2009). *The development of negation in Arabic and Afro-Asiatic* (Doctoral dissertation, The University of Cambridge). Retrieved from: [http://mercury.soas.ac.uk/users/cl39/Lucas\\_2009\\_PhD\\_thesis.pdf](http://mercury.soas.ac.uk/users/cl39/Lucas_2009_PhD_thesis.pdf)
- Mansoor, J. (2012). *The syntax of negation in Yemeni Arabic* (unpublished doctoral dissertation). EFL University, Hyderabad.
- Pesetsky, D & Torrego, E. (2007). The syntax of valuation and interpretability of features. In Karimi, S., Samiian, V. & Wilkniz, W.K. (eds), *Phrasal and Clausal Architecture: Syntactic Derivation and Interpretation*, 262-294. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Rizzi, L. (1997). The fine structure of the left periphery. In L. Haegeman (Ed.), *Elements of grammar: Handbook of generative syntax*, 281–337. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Zeijlstra, H. (2004). *Sentential negation and negative concord*  
(Doctoral dissertation). University of Amsterdam. Utrecht: LOT  
Publications.

## **Proposed Schemata of an English Course for the Learners of Pharmacy**

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gamal M. A. Abdullah

Faculty of Languages, University of Aden

*E-mail: [gamal133@yahoo.com](mailto:gamal133@yahoo.com)*

### **Abstract**

*The present paper is an attempt to study the materials of English Course in use at the Faculty of Pharmacy -Aden University and reveal whether they match the learners' needs either academically or professionally (i.e. in-study or post-study). Further, it attempts to elicit the harmonic elements between objectives of the prescribed curriculum and contents of the teaching materials. The results of this study have shown that the current materials only cover a segment of the students' needs, while the other pre-requisites are neglected to a great extent. Along these lines, a proposed schemata for a practical English Course is provided to approach the adequate requirements of such students. It comprises three visions: Part one contains sixteen units of medical and semi-medical topics, in more ways, it is an introductory part. Generally, it is designed to help the learners gain a good background about medicine and healthy sciences in order to establish a foundation in regards to interdisciplinary field. Part two (English Course for Pharmacy) involves twelve units shed light on*

*registered English i.e. pure pharmaceutical English. This kind is presented to match the academic requirements. Part three (A Course of Grammar in Medical Context) consists of ten sections focusing on the grammatical structures which are used more commonly in medical setting.*

**Key words:** ESP, Schemata, Pharmaceutical English.

### **1. Introduction**

Unquestionably, the importance of English is increased day by day as it is accepted internationally as the language of automation, technology and innovations in different branches of sciences. Indisputably, English has become a medium that can be used in the unlimited ways in the new revolutionary world of globalization (Abdullah, 2009:1 and 2013:225). There is no doubt that English like any other language serves the native speakers with a wide range of implementations in different disciplines, it strikes to note that it serves the non-natives of English with an equally wide range of use as it is international and can be used in various fields of commerce, trade and communication between the different states of the world (Talgeri, 2004:117). Therefore, English imposes itself as an instruction tool, because of its great importance on different branches of science, the discipline of pharmacy is not an exceptional condition. The five-year Bachelor of Science (B Sc.) provided by the Faculty of Pharmacy, in Aden University, uses English as the language of instruction in the

teaching/ learning process of all the subjects, seminars, assignments, control tests, reports of experiments, end-semester examinations and final year research projects.

The subjects of the present research are the first year students of the Pharmacy Faculty in Aden University. They are studying English course in the first year only alongside ten subjects (semester one: Botany I, Zoology I, General Chemistry I, Physics and English I. Semester two: Botany II, Zoology II, General Chemistry II, Physics II, Pharmaceutical Calculation and English II). The credit hours for each subject ranged between 3/2 theoretically and 2 practically per week with the total of 14 hours and 12 hours respectively.

English is taught for two semesters 4 hours weekly, the faculty curriculum fixes nine objectives to be achieved by English Course at the end of the first year. It claims that the course aims to develop in the undergraduate, students specializing in pharmacy, the suitable language skills and sub-skills that students need in their field of specialty. By the end of this course, the students will be able to:

- ✓ Read his/ her subject materials purposefully;
- ✓ read and understand medical and pharmaceutical texts and take-note;
- ✓ have knowledge of note-taking techniques;
- ✓ have knowledge of medical terminology and abbreviations;
- ✓ listen to and understand lectures, discussions and take-note;

- ✓ communicate intelligibly in English;
- ✓ write various types of medical and pharmaceutical essays, reports, articles, etc.;
- ✓ participate in conferences, seminars and meetings effectively and
- ✓ understand and use basic grammatical structures related to his/ her field of specialty.

The above-mentioned objectives are excellent on papers, but in reality, most of them cannot be found. It is worth to mention that English Course presents purely pharmaceutical topics such as: A plant-based Drug Industry, A Pill for Every Ill, Injections, Drug Abuse, Pharmacology and Therapeutic, Future of Medicine etc. But there is a research question arises here: Does this kind of English meet the complete needs of the first year learners at the Pharmacy College? If negative, what do such learners entirely need in order to function effectively in different settings?

### **1.2 Hypothesis of the research**

The current research hypothesizes the following:

Pure pharmaceutical English is important, but it does not satisfy the adequate needs of the learners in the discipline of pharmacy in its own right, thence medical, semi-medical English and some topics of grammar in medical contexts are seriously required.

### **1.3 Limitation of the study**

This study is limited to investigate the English language needs of the first year students at the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Aden.

### **1.4 Significance of the study**

This study can be regarded as useful for the learners of medical sciences in general and pharmacy discipline in particular. It aims to expose the learners of pharmacy to use English effectively in different settings (academic, professional and even social).Further. It attempts to bridge the gap between the theoretical aspect i.e. what the students need in-study and practical aspect i.e. what the students need post-study.

## **2. Literature review**

English for medical studies includes human medicine, pharmacy, dentistry etc., is a branch of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) which is a major breakthrough of English Language Teaching (ELT) that occurred in the beginning of 1960s. McDonough (1984) states that "ESP has become fashionable inevitable in the language teaching globe because of its great importance scientifically or economically. From time to time, new varieties of ESP are increasing in number over the entire competitive world" (p.1).

Richards et al. (1992) defines ESP as the role of English in a language course of instruction in which the content and aims of the



course are fixed by the specific needs of a particular group of learners"(p.125). Abdullah (2005) provides another practical definition of ESP." It is the language of speakers of English either as a foreign/ second language designed for definite purposes of a particular group of learners that meet their accurate needs. For instance, English for medical studies, English for technicians, English for airlines employees etc" (p.47).

Traditionally, English for medical studies is used to teach the learners of different disciplines of medical and health sciences such as human medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, nursing, public health, laboratories etc, but during the different developmental paces of ESP, each type of English is developed to meet the needs of a particular group of learners. The major focus of ESP was thrown on the profitable sectors as business, commerce, tourism, technology etc. Unfortunately, ESP in the field of medicine does not have a sufficient investigation. Despite, a little research work carried out in the area of English for medicine, though some exemplification will be covered in the next discussion.

Tawfiq (1984) conducted a study on the English language needs of the Iraqi undergraduate medical students during their preliminary year in Kufa Faculty of Medicine at Al-Mustansaria University of Iraq. The aim of this study was to bring out a needs profile that would help in designing a reading skill course. This work

concluded that reading skill was the most important one, because it helps the students to be motivated to orient medical materials.

Khan (1986) administered a work on ESP and the teaching of medical vocabulary at Aligarh Muslim University in India. The study attempted to present the special vocabulary of medicine and provided a list of huge medical terms which could be applied to various contexts of medical discipline.

Adams-Smith (1979) draws up a needs profile paramedical students in Kuwait University. She used just one data collected questionnaire. The research revealed that the paramedical students' needs different from medical students, the goals of the former being occupational than academically oriented.

Abdullah (2005) conducted a work on needs of the first year students at the Medical College, University of Aden; the results of the study have already shown that the medical English materials in use at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Aden do not match the entire needs of the learners. Further, Medical English alone does not satisfy the needs of such learners. Semi-medical English and general English are also needed to express basic functions in the practical work, occupation and even the daily communication with colleagues as well as lecturers and the medical staff in the hospital. The study offered an outline of a plan for a medical English course in the form of a dosage

"Eighteen units of a course book" and a capsule form "Six units of supplementary grammar in the medical context".

The previous discussion provides a fast survey on the research work in the field of medicine. Unfortunately, some vital scientific disciplines are ignored to a great extent in ESP research, the foremost being medicine, despite its critical importance to human life and health. The case of pharmacy is worse; the studies literature review can be counted on the fingers of two hands (Abdullah and Othman 2010:5). In the University of Aden, two research studies are administered to investigate the ESP in the discipline of pharmacy; it will be worthy to mention them below.

One study is conducted by Ziadah (2013) focusing on the difficulties encounter learners of pharmacy in translating medical terms, the subjects of the study are first year students of the Pharmacy Faculty, University of Aden, Yemen. The findings and conclusions of this work have shown that there are difficulties faced by students in translating medical terms pertaining to the course objectives, content, students' level, nature of the medical terminology which came from Latin and Greek and teaching methods.

Abdullah and Othman (2010) carried out another study concerning with English needs of students and the course materials in use at the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Aden, Yemen. This study aims at exploring what they require in English to function

effectively in different situational settings: the current academic study and sociolinguistic needs and probable prerequisites of profession or further education. A data collection instrument (questionnaire schedule) was designed based on the perceptions of learners. The results of the study show that specialized English (Pure Pharmaceutical English) in itself does not satisfy the overall needs of the learners. Other types of English such as disciplinary (Medical English) and ordinary (English for general purposes) need to supplement the main course.

### **2.1 Current materials vs. students' needs**

As it has been pointed out previously, the English materials in use at the Faculty of Pharmacy emphasizes registered English i.e. pure pharmaceutical English. No doubt, specialized English is basic, but it does not match the entire needs of the learners, though it represents a part of the learners' needs. Thence, other types of English as disciplinary English (medical and semi-medical English) have an equal importance, because medical sciences are interdisciplinary field i.e. interrelated to each other. Further, the contents of each unit focuses more on reading skill that means reading has the lion's share, the other skills (listening, speaking and writing) have been ignored to a great extent. It is a truism that reading is regarded as the most important skill in the academic setting. McDonough (1984) suggests:

“... it will come as no surprise to most people to discover that in ESP terms by far the most significant skill is that of reading”(p.70).

It is strongly recommended that the macro-skills of listening, speaking and writing should be given a logical consideration a long with reading, instead of the undue emphasis on one skill. Hutchinson and Waters (2006: 75) grant the importance of reading for ESP learners; they add, however, that a balanced practice of listening, speaking, reading and writing would strengthen and enrich learners' English.

Furthermore, the subjects of the present work are learners of English as a foreign language, they were taught English for six years in basic and secondary education along with 8-10 subjects in the learners' mother-tongue (Arabic). It seems clear that English is used only in limited circles which negatively affects the learners' proficiency in general and writing skill in particular. Hence, such learners need to be exposed to some topics of grammar in medical domain in order to cope with the prerequisites of the university studies.

Accordingly and based on the previous research work in the field of medicine and pharmacy and the experience of the present researcher in teaching English Course for learners of pharmacy for more than thirteen years, the present study aims to provide proposed schemata of an English Course for the learners of pharmacy. Such

practical course is devoted to help the students function effectively in the settings of in-study i.e. academic needs and post-study i.e. professional pre-requisites.

### **3. Proposed schemata**

The proposed course is entitled *A Triple Course of English for Pharmacy*. As it can be seen clearly, the title started by the word ``Triple`` which means having or consisting of three parts. Therefore, this course consists of three parts as follows:

- ✓ Introductory Topics for Medical Sciences.
- ✓ English Course for Pharmacy.
- ✓ A Course of Grammar in Medical Context.

Some contents of the first two parts are compiled and collected legally from authorized sources and others are designed by the author of this research, while the last part is completely the own work of the present researcher. Generally, they are designed for the learners of English as a foreign / second language, particularly, the learners of pharmacy. Each part is designed to meet a particular and specific needs of the concerned learners, for instance, the first part "Introductory Topics for Medical Sciences" will help the students to build a good foundation about medical sciences in general via the language skills (Reading – writing – Listening), because medical and health sciences as human medicine, dentistry and pharmacy are interdisciplinary fields i.e. interrelated to each other. It is subdivided

into five divisions (Reading, Writing, Medical Terminology, Listening Comprehension and Supplementary Materials). The type of English which is included in this part is known as medical and semi-medical English.

The second part (*English for Pharmacy*) contains pure topics for pharmacy i.e. it is designed specifically to match the academic and professional requirements of the pharmaceutical discipline. Such kind of English is known as registered\ specialized or disciplinary English.

The third part (*A Course of Grammar in Medical Context*) is a combination of intermediate and above intermediate levels of grammar; it introduces grammatical topics within medical settings. Many new trends claim that grammar is very important for the learners of different medical disciplines as pharmacy, dentistry, human medicine, laboratories, nursing, public health etc, ( Hutchinson and Waters, 2006:92, Kennedy and Bolitho, 1991:50 and Abdullah,2005:183). Therefore, this course is prepared to meet the needs of such learners in an academic way, further it promotes the development of all the language skills in general and writing device in particular.

It is worth to mention that *A Triple Course of English for pharmacy* is an annual subject, it should be taught for two semesters in the first year of B. Sc. of pharmacy. In the first semester, the students have to study not less than ten units of the first part

(*Introductory Topics for Medical Sciences*) plus sections one, two, three, four and five of the third part ( *A Course of Grammar in Medical Context*). Then, the students end this semester by a control test (I). In the second semester, the students have to study not less than ten units of the second part (*English Course for Pharmacy*) in addition to sections six, seven, eight, nine and ten of the grammar book. Eventually, the students have a control test (II) and conclude this course by a final examination at the end of their first year of the tertiary study.

### **3.1 Objectives of the proposed course**

The proposed materials aim to achieve the following objectives:

- ✓ To encourage and promote oral interaction and communication in English between the learners of the same discipline, particularly, in formal and informal contacts.
- ✓ To grasp the general theme of lectures presented in English either in the specialized subjects or faculty and university subjects.
- ✓ To develop the device of listening comprehension so that the students can follow the lectures, participate in scientific discussion and projects carried out in English.
- ✓ To encourage the students to speak effectively in seminars and summarize scientific notions orally.
- ✓ To encourage the students to describe orally the results of the practical work projects, experiments, etc.



- ✓ To interact with peers, workshops instructors, tutors, lecturers and administrative staff in the area of study.
- ✓ To gain knowledge of note-taking techniques and summaries.
- ✓ To write in a good academic style reports of practical work and experiments, answers of the control tests and end semester examinations etc.
- ✓ To understand and use basic grammatical structures related to his/her subject specialization.
- ✓ To have primary ideas about principles of a small-scale research project.
- ✓ To raise the overall performance level of the students so as to enable them to function successfully in their future careers.
- ✓ To expose the students to as many relevant learning opportunities as possible so that students get used to the language need on the job. (Abdullah, 2005:179-180).

Below is a list of the contents of each part matched with credit hours:

- **Part I: Introductory topics for medical sciences.**
- **Reading:**

Unit No.	Subject	Credit Hours
Unit One	Reading strategies in the Academic Setting	4 hrs
Unit Two	Preventive Medicine	2 hrs
Unit Three	Infectious Diseases	2 hrs
Unit Four	How the Body Fights Infection	2 hrs
Unit Five	Nutrition / Malnutrition	2 hrs

Unit Six	Immunity	2 hrs
----------	----------	-------

• **Writing:**

Unit One	Definitions	2 hrs
Unit Two	Exemplifications	2 hrs
Unit Three	Classifications	2 hrs
Unit Four	Process of Descriptions	2 hrs

- **Terminology:** Learning how to break down and understand the medical terms (4 hrs).

• **Listening comprehension.**

Unit One	Anemia	2 hrs
Unit Two	Losing Weight	2 hrs
Unit Three	Safe Food and Water	2 hrs
Unit Four	Harmful Effects of Sun on Skin	2 hrs

**Supplementary materials:**

This section is concerned with the innovations in the field of pharmacy, such materials are adopted from internet and other recent recommended references (6 hrs).

**Part II: English course for pharmacy:**

Unit One	Drugs and Medicines	2 hrs
Unit Two	Drug Administration and Absorption	2 hrs
Unit Three	Plant – Based Drug Industry	2 hrs
Unit Four	Injections	2 hrs
Unit Five	Warnings about Drug Use	2 hrs
Unit Six	Drug Testing and the Placebo Effect	2 hrs

Unit Seven	HIV Infection and Drug Research	2 hrs
Unit Eight	The History of Drug Abuse	2 hrs
Unit Nine	The Blood – brain Barrier	2 hrs
Unit Ten	Alkaloids: Powerful Substances From Plants	2 hrs
Unit Eleven	Eastern Medicine	2 hrs
Unit Twelve	Medicine and Genetic Research	2 hrs

**Part III: A Course of grammar in medical context:**

Section One	Present Simple and Progressive	4 hrs
Section Two	Past Simple and Present Perfect	4 hrs
Section Three	Past Progressive and Perfect	4 hrs
Section Four	Ways of Expressing Futurity	4 hrs
Section Five	English Verbs	4 hrs
Section Six	Impersonal Passive	4 hrs
Section Seven	Articles and Nouns	4 hrs
Section Eight	Adjectives and Adverbs	4 hrs
Section Nine	Adjuncts	2 hrs
Section Ten	Sentences: Simple, Compound and Complex	4 hrs

**4. Conclusion**

As presented so far the results of this work have revealed that the current English course materials provided for the first year

students at the Faculty of Pharmacy, Aden University do not achieve the objectives that claimed by the curriculum of the faculty. Further, it emphasizes only registered English (i.e. specialized or pure pharmaceutical topics). Definitely, this type of English is important for such learners, but it is not all what they totally need, it represents a small segment of their needs. Such result addresses a part of the research question that is: Does pure pharmaceutical English meet the complete needs of the first year learners at the Pharmacy College? In addition, the first part of the research hypothesis that is: Pure pharmaceutical English is important, but it does not satisfy the adequate needs of the learners in the discipline of pharmacy.

The present work suggests proposed schemata for a practical English course consisting of three parts viz. a) introductory topics for medical sciences; it is a type of medical and semi-medical English designed to help the students build a good foundation about medical sciences in general, because they are interdisciplinary streams i.e. interrelated to each other. b) English for pharmacy: This part belongs to registered or specialized English, it is provided specifically to meet the academic and professional prerequisites of the pharmaceutical discipline. c) A course of grammar in medical context offers grammatical topics cycle around medical settings. Finally, the proposed schemata addresses the last part of the research question i.e. what do such learners need in order to function effectively in different

settings? And the last part of the research hypothesis i.e. in addition to pure pharmaceutical English, medical, semi-medical English and some topics of grammar in medical contexts are seriously required.

#### **Prescribed books for the proposed course**

Abdullah, G. M. A. (2013). *A Course of grammar in medical context*.

Yemen: Aden University Printing and Publishing House.

Cooper, C. (1993). *English course for pharmacy* (Collection of different medical topics). *Introductory topics for medical sciences*. (Medical and semi-medical topics designed and compiled by the present researcher).

#### **Recommended references for the proposed course**

Aslrasouli, M. (1983). *An English and study skills course for the students of medical sciences*. Tehran: System Quark Xpress.

Freeman, S. (1983). *Progressions: English grammar in context*. Evans Brothers Ltd.

Glendinning, E., & Holmstrom, B. (1998). *English in medicine: A course in communicative skills*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

James, D. V. (1989). *Medicine: English for Academic Purposes*. Cassel.

O'Brien, T. (1979). *Medicine: Nucleus English for sciences and technology*. Longman.

Parish, P. (1987). *Medicine: A guide for everybody*. Penguins.

Rutten, M. K. (1986). *Comprehending academic lectures*. Macmillan Publishing Company.

### References

- Abdullah, G. M. A. (2005). *Needs of ESP learners for practical English communication: A case study of first year students at the Medical College, University of Aden*. Ph.D. Thesis. Pune: University of Pune, India.
- Abdullah, G. M. A. (2013). Strategies and approaches for teaching and learning of medical terminology. *International Journal of English and Education Vole .02*, Issue; 02 April 2013. [www.ijee.org](http://www.ijee.org)
- Abdullah G. M. A. (2009). English for specific purposes: A review of development and current implementation. *Indian Linguistics Journal, Vol.70* No. 1-4 2009.
- Abdullah G.M. A, & Othman .S.A (2010).English Needs of Students and Course Materials in Use at the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Aden. *Al-Twusal a Refereed Research Journal, Vol.24-2010* Aden University Printing and Publishing House. Yemen.
- Adams-Smith, D. (1979). Reviewed of English for medical science. *ESP Newsletter*, December pp. 46-51.
- Hutchinson, T. & Waters, A. (2006). *English for specific purposes: A learning-centered approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kennedy, K., & Bolitho, P. (1991). *English for specific purposes*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd.
- Khan F. U. (1986). *ESP and the teaching of medical English vocabulary*. PhD. Thesis, Aligarh Muslim University, India.

- McDonough, J. (1984). *ESP in perspective: A practical guide*. London: Collins ELT.
- Richards, J. C., Platt, J., & Platt, H. (1992). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics*. London: Longman.
- Tawfiq, A, S. (1984). Designing a communicative EST reading skills course for students of Faculty of Medicine in Iraq: A case study in Swales, J. and Mustafa, H. (eds.) *English for Specific Purposes in the Arab World*. Language Studies Unit, University of Aston, Birmingham.
- Ziadah, A. A. S. (2013). *The difficulties encounter learners of pharmacy in translating medical terms: A case study of first year students at the Faculty of Pharmacy, Aden University*. MA Dissertation, Center for English and Translation Studies. University of Aden, Yemen.



**Meaning Loss in Translating News Headlines from Arabic into  
English with reference to Al hayat International Journal**

Dr. Arwa Mohammed Mansour

Department of Translation, Taiz University

**Abstract**

*This paper is aimed at analyzing the translation of newspaper headlines from Arabic into English. The paper highlights the semantic, cultural and linguistic problems that a translator may encounter while translating news headlines. The corpus of the study consists of a set of headlines of news articles collected from the online Arabic and English edition of Al hayat newspaper. From the analysis, the researcher found out that there is some kind of meaning loss when translating Arabic news headlines into English. This meaning loss was found to be due to the semantic, cultural and linguistic differences between Arabic and English. The paper is a modest contribution in the sense that it tackles these differences and it ends up with some recommendations to improve the quality of translation in the field of media in general and in the field of news translation in particular.*

**Keywords:** translation, headlines, newspapers.

## **1. Introduction**

The new developments in the twenty first century called for the translation of all news to various audiences. News translation gained special priority between the two languages, Arabic and English due to the recent calls for bridging the gap between the two cultures. It has been observed that press news have received the largest share of analysis and scrutiny. (See Wodak and Busch 2004)

It has long been argued that translating concepts and ideas from one language to another is not an easy and straightforward task. Linguists and translators have concluded that no two languages are identical. Languages clearly differ in their perspective, classification and delimitation of the reality of the world. However, the existence of translation and translators through history has led researchers to wonder about the means, techniques and procedures to which translators have recourse in order to overcome the difficulties of linguistic diversity (Newmark 1988, Vinay and Darbelnet (1995 [1977])).

News is a specific form of media that has attracted the interest of researchers. This may be attributed to the fact that news is important in our day-to-day lives. Most of our social and political knowledge and beliefs about the world are acquired from the massive bulk of news reports we read or see in multimedia.

News, as a form of media text, is a representation of reality. As no representation reflects the whole reality, news producers have to select certain aspects of the reality they are reporting about to represent and present. Representation in the news requires decisions from the news writers as to the criteria to be followed in selecting news headlines. Citing Warren (1934), Wodak (1996: 100) states that news should consist of, and contain, ten elements: actuality, nearness, consequentiality, public importance, drama, curiosity, conflict, sex, emotion and progress.

In this vein, one of the areas that attracted early academic attention to the news was the question of the criteria for newsworthiness. Researchers explored what makes a certain story more newsworthy than another. That is to say, the selection of news to be broadcasted is not random; it is rather based on a number of criteria. This interest has resulted in what has come to be known as 'news values. Conboy (2007:30) maintains that the news values of a particular newspaper or broadcast channel are one of the ways in which the social targeting of news could be identified. As mentioned above, a few events in the world are unanimously considered news items that are worthy of publication for every news organization. Moreover, different degrees of priority are accorded, within different news institutions, to those stories, which are considered global or of

interest to larger segments of audience, such as natural disasters, conflicts involving different nations as well as underdog issues.

Regarding 'news value', we can refer to some factors that give certain news a specific value:

*Newness*: This value is considered a core value of news stories. Newness in this context is that what goes into news is supposed to be something *new* that the audience did not know before, or an update supplementing *new* information to what has already been known.

*Recency*: Recency is an element closely related to novelty and that may overlap with it. However, novelty is considered from the perspective of the receiver, while recency is looked at from the side of the story itself. For Golding and Elliot, recency means that the news should be up-to-date and should refer to contexts as near the time of transmission as possible (Golding & Elliot 1996: 409). Bell estimates the news cycle to be 24 hours for the press and television, and hourly for radio news (Bell 1991: 156)

*Relevance*. What is reported in the news is supposed to be of considerable significance for large numbers of the audience. Golding and Elliot (1996: 407) refer to this value as importance. As for news reporters and editors, "achieving relevance for a story causes much head-scratching and labour in the newsrooms", according to Bell (1991: 156). However, relevance is a relative value that is not easy to

define in concrete terms. Deciding what is relevant on behalf of the audience is a matter that could raise many question marks. Do news writers or producers really care about providing their audience with the type of news they really need to know? Or do they decide, based on reasons far from the audience interests, what is relevant, and endeavor to arouse the audience's interest through different persuasive means?

*Consonance.* News stories are expected to be compatible with socially-shared norms, values and attitudes (Van Dijk 1988: 121). According to Bell (1991: 157), consonance reflects compatibility of preconceptions regarding the social groups to which news actors belong. News editors follow certain stereotypes concerning how particular groups or people behave (e.g. political rallies, demonstrations, etc.) (Bell (1991: 157).

As an example of consonance, news reports about the Middle East tend to focus on conflict and fighting; accordingly certain news might be excluded simply because it is not conflict-related.

*Deviance and Negativity.* It is not surprising to see that most news bulletins contain a considerable percentage of bad news. Golding and Elliot (1996: 409) claim that *bad* news is *good* news. They attribute the interest of news writers in the factor of negativity to the origin of the news industry. Bell confirms that negative events are

the basic components of 'spot' news, as they contain "a number of concepts such as damage, injury or death, which make disasters and accidents newsworthy" (Bell 1991: 156).

In fact, news values are not a central point of my research. But I referred to them to discuss their impact on the stories posted on the News journals in question.

## **2. News headlines**

News headlines constitute the brief summary of the concerned story. They are the theme of the news story. It can be said that news headlines are the subject matter of the news story. They are the brief account of the content of the story. Sherpa (2012) labeled news headlines as "news capsules". Andrew (2007) called them "media generated shortcuts" in which we use minimal words to convey maximum message and Barkho (2008) labels it the Nucleus. A headline is a distinguished genre which compacts a whole story in a concise form. It must "encapsulate the story in a minimum number of words and attract the reader to the story" (Reah, 2002, p. 13). According to Schneider (2000:48) "headlines provide more or less detailed information about the content of an article, mostly by providing a short summary....it informs quickly and accurately and arouses the reader's curiosity". For Ludwig and Gilmore (2005) they explained that the best headlines are those which are able to give a

brief account and to attract the reader to read the news story. "The best headlines both tell and sell, that is, they tell the reader quickly what the news is and persuade the reader that the story is worth reading" (P.107).

News headlines are very important part of any piece of news. If you are watching news on the TV, the news headlines inform you the type of the coming news and their importance and arrangements. Therefore the headlines guide the audience to select desired news. When reading the newspapers, the first thing we look at are the headlines which direct us to choose the piece of news we are interested in. Sometimes if we do not have enough time to read a newspaper or a magazine, we normally go through the headlines to check what is interesting and then we read it in details. We also read the bolded headlines on the posters in the streets or the headlines in our websites. Intentionally or unintentionally, media headlines have become an integral phenomenon of our daily lives.

A headline tries to inform the reader of what has just happened, of what is happening at the present moment, or of what will happen in the near future. And it tries to do so briefly, simply and attractively. A headline is the theme of the news story; thus it should be chosen carefully to attract the reader. Headlines constitute the summary of any news story. If you want to know the content of any news story,

simply you read the headline. They attract attention and give an initial indicator in their content and style of the news values of the newspaper. They are also an important part of the way in which the newspaper appeals to its audience. Besides, some headlines can be used separately from their full stories such as those which appear on websites, SMS news messages, and on-screen breaking news items.

Since headlines have a very important role to play in affecting the audience, they should be written in a skilful language and in an attractive style. When formulated, they need to be both brief as well as informative. Brevity and the selection of interesting terms are among the common features of writing news headlines. However, every newspaper has its way of using expressions that work for its readers. Most local newspapers tend to use colloquial expressions that attract the domestic reader. For example *Yemen Times* newspaper in one of its bolded headlines started the second page with (the marginalized threatened the Government), the word marginalized refers to a class of the Yemeni society who are believed to be neglected. The word is the direct translation of the Arabic term (muhamasheen). Therefore for the Yemeni reader who has become acquainted with the term, the headline is clear but for non-Yemenis, it is so odd. Sometimes writers prefer to use misleading headlines if they want the reader to read their news story. Some of them use sarcastic language and funny



expressions to attract the readers' attentions. Some newspapers start articles with vague headlines that have no association with what the news story is about. Headlines in many newspapers have a high tendency to mislead the reader since the structured message may not match the content of the news story.

The function of the news headlines is crucial to any news story. It is said headlines are "the Nucleus" of the news story (see Barkho 2008). However, their importance has increased in the era of digital media. This is enhanced by the fact that headlines are used separately from their full news stories on websites, SMS news messages, and on TV. screen indicating news items. When they are formed, they should be brief and informative by containing the maximum amount of information possible.

In addition to its mentioned importance, headlines can be given three functions (Conboy 2007:13):

- ✓ they attract attention
- ✓ they provide a brief summary of the main news
- ✓ they provide an initial indicator in their content and style of the news values of the newspaper.

It should be observed that headlines reach a wide range of audience, many more than those who read the full news story in the press or otherwise follow the whole broadcast news report. For

example, some people might only browse newspapers by looking at the headlines. In other news media, such as television and radio, headlines are usually read at the beginning of a news bulletin and repeated many times through the day. Some people might listen to the headlines to decide whether to listen to the rest of the news bulletin or to change channels. Others might be interested only on the headlines as a source to satisfy their limited interest in news.

Headlines on news websites are directing readers to follow the whole story. They are repeated everywhere on homepages to attract the reader. In a mobile phone messages, news are sent in the form of headlines that provide a summary of the main news.

From the headline, we predicate the news and its value because it serves as the theme of the news story.

Concerning the language of headlines, strategic language techniques are used to create curiosity and confusion. For example, on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2013 I was shocked by a news headline broadcasted on "Yemen Voice" website that said (the first marriage between two gays in Taiz, Yemen). Of course, such a news headline is a cultural shock in a conservative society that considers such relationship both religiously forbidden and socially unacceptable. But when I went through the article the whole story has turned out to be a joke fabricated and circulated among bus drivers. Headlines often provide

us with striking examples, because their aim is basically to attract the reader's attention. Journalists tend to manipulate the headlines and to play with words in order to attract readers and to raise curiosity and astonishment. To make ends meet, they use all language's techniques. Journalists sometimes use peculiar terms and structures deliberately in news headlines; that the reader needs to read the whole news story in order to understand what is meant in the headline. For example, they sometimes resort to syntactic ambiguity in which the headline can be interpreted in more than one way or more than one thing. This kind of ambiguity does not arise from the range of meanings of single words but from the relationship between the words and clauses of a sentence. In other words, it is structural ambiguity. They may also use semantic ambiguity, in which a word may be open to more than one interpretation that changes the whole meaning of the headline. In addition, ambiguity which results from the use of punctuations is very common in news headlines because the writer does not pay much efforts to the play on words, all what he has to do is to change the places of the punctuation marks or to leave the headline without any punctuations. Another ambiguity which sometimes occurs to misguide the reader is referential ambiguity. This kind of ambiguity takes place when a speaker uses a referring expression to denote a referent and the addressee is thinking of another referent. For example, while I was roaming through Sahafa.net, a Yemeni website for all Yemeni

newspapers, I came across the following headline (Hadi to resign his post). Of course the first referent that came to my mind is president Hadi, the president of Yemen, to my surprise it was Hadi the general manager of one of the institutions. The most interesting headline I have ever read is a headline that says in Arabic "انقلاب عسكري في تعز", the word (انقلاب) in Arabic has two meanings: the first meaning is (coup d'état) which is relevant to the accompanied word in this headline (military/عسكري). The second meaning is (to fall off) a car, a horse or a wagon, etc.. Of course the first meaning that came into my mind is the military coup but when I read the whole story, I found out that a soldier fell off a donkey. This is the way headlines are formulated in different mass media.

Another conventional feature of headlines is associated with grammar. In newspaper headlines the rules of grammar are violated for priority is given to persuasion rather than grammatical accuracy. For example, headlines tend to be in the form of incomplete sentences, no articles are used, 'verbs to be' are avoided, and the present tense is used to refer to actions which happened in the past. Kenneth Beare, in *Understanding Newspaper Headlines* indicated that the most common exceptions found in newspaper headlines were:

1. Noun Phrases: Headlines often contain a noun phrase with no verb. A noun phrase describes a noun. The following are some examples of noun phrase headlines:

- ✓ Unexpected visit
- ✓ A huge rejection from MPs
- ✓ Under pressure from Iran

2. Noun Strings: Another common headline form is a string of three, four or more nouns together. Some examples of this type are

- ✓ Higher education law restrictions
- ✓ Customs complaint smuggle goods.

3. Various Verb Changes: There are a number of verb changes made to headlines. The most common are:

Simple tenses used instead of continuous or perfect forms. For example: *Forgotten Brother Appears* = A forgotten brother has appeared (after a long period of time). *Professors Protest Pay Cuts* = Professors are protesting pay cuts (at the university).

The infinitive form refers to the future. For example, *Mayor to Open Shopping Mall* = the mayor is going to open a new shopping mall. *James Wood to Visit Portland* = (Famous actor) James Wood is going to visit Portland soon.

In this respect, Nemeekova (2011) wrote:

In English headlines, it is permitted to violate deliberately grammatical rules which contribute not only to headline's brevity but also to its attractiveness. There is, for example, frequent omission of definite/indefinite articles and auxiliary verbs, non-observance of word order, incorrect verb tenses etc.(p.18)

On the same topic Mardh (1980) indicates some linguistic features that are very common with English headlines:

- ✓ Nominalizations
- ✓ The omission of articles
- ✓ The omission of verbs and auxiliaries
- ✓ The omission of both verb and subject
- ✓ The frequent use of complex noun phrases in subject position
- ✓ The use of short word
- ✓ The importance of word order, with the most important items placed first
- ✓ The widespread use of puns, word play and alliteration

Graphically news headlines are written in a specific way, they are written in bold, or italics form and sometimes with different colors. Since headlines have their distinctive way, they grab the readers' attention and attract them to read the news story.

## **2.1 Types of headlines**

There are different types of newspaper headlines. I noticed that most Arab newspaper use banner headlines for their best news, which are large headlines posted across the top of the front page. Whereas American newspapers very often use pyramid, inverted pyramid, flush left, or flush right. Some of the most popular headlines are the following:

### **2.1.1 Straight headlines**

They simply relate the main topic of the story. They are the most common types of headlines and are the easiest to understand.

### **2.1.2 Feature headlines**

These headlines are for some unusual or amusing stories which do not give a complete meaning. It is often necessary to read the story to understand the headline.

### **2.1.3 Headlines that contain a quotation**

A quoted speech is used in this headline. It is another way to begin a story with an unproven statement.

### **2.1.4 Headlines that ask a question**

Most question headlines are not really typical questions at all. They are statements followed by a question mark. These questions are used when there is some doubt about the truth or accuracy of the story.

### **2.1.5 Double headlines**

They are two-part headlines of the same story. They are often used for major events. A headline may consist of one or more parts; each part may deal with different facts from the same story. The larger part is the important while the smaller become the subordinate headline.

The present paper attempts to investigate the loss of meaning that is likely to occur while translating newspaper headlines from Arabic into English. Both linguistic and translational considerations will be taken into account.

### **3. Problem of the study**

The translation of headlines from Arabic into English and vice versa encountered some kind of meaning loss. The case being as such, some Arabic newspapers publish their English editions that include the translation of some articles of the original newspaper. Translating news headlines from Arabic into English and vice versa poses some problems that result in meaning loss. Therefore, the present study seeks to identify these problems and suggest possible solutions.

### **4. Significance of the study**

Undoubtedly, bridging the gap between Arabs and non-Arabs has become an urgent need in this era of globalization and digitalization. Thus, the translation of important news stories in all kinds of mass



media is inevitable. However, this need to circulate news and localize them in different languages of the world, including Arabic necessitates the assessment of the quality of news translation with a view to finding out the difficulties that are likely to encounter a translator in the process of rendition news from English into Arabic and vice versa.

Headlines which play a decisive role in attracting the readers to read the news story are likely to be lost in translation; therefore translating them properly and accurately is a crucial need.

## **5. Review of related literature**

In her attempt to answer the question, 'does news paper headlines carry the essence of the message or lead up creating confusion in the readers mind? Sherpa (2012) argued that news headlines have confusing words and phrases that do not hold any meaning if read in isolation. The different language styles in newspaper headlines are deliberate with a view to misleading the readers. Uncommon abbreviations, unrelated figurative words or phrases, unfamiliar names, haphazard use of punctuations and the use of fancy words are common devices of headlines in modern media outlets.

Zvirblyte (2012) compared and analyzed 100 Lithuanian headlines selected from six most common Lithuanian websites to their English equivalents. The analysis was done to overview and characterizes the main and unique features of translation of media

language in general and headlines in particular. The study has also attempted to identify equivalence degree in the translated headlines (from English to Lithuanian) and the problems of translation equivalence.

The conclusion was that, although equivalence is one of the key aspects in translation studies, the results of the analysis indicate that absolute equivalence is quite hard to be achieved in the translation of headlines of online news articles. Online news articles are characterized by publicist style and the main features of it are accuracy and clarity. Headlines are the most important part of online news articles, they have to capture readers' attention, intrigue and at the same time provide the reader with a considerable amount of information. The results of the analysis demonstrate that in translation from English to Lithuanian, there is a tendency to simplify headlines: some information are omitted, complicated words are not translated and structure and style of the headlines have undergone some modifications.

Thus, the analysis has revealed that in order to make a more comprehensive study on the translation of media language (headlines in particular), there is a need to analyze not only the headlines, but the articles as well, although such a study may be performed with respect to some other perspectives and nuances of translation studies.

Adams (1999) considered the genre conventions of professional writing such as the use of short sentences. All researchers, academicians and professional writers suggested five basic rules for writing:

1. Use short sentences.
2. Use short words.
3. Eliminate wordiness.
4. Avoid jargon or technical language.
5. Good writing comes to point quickly.

He mentions a study at American Press Institute which showed that the readers' understanding drops beyond 20 words and only one out of 20 readers was able to recall a sentence of 50 words.

According to Mrigesh (1999), it is clear from the analysis that Hindi newspapers use English, Urdu, Arabic and Sanskrit words quite liberally. Newspapers have coined their own creative words and attractive headlines which may be sarcastic, negative, questioning having idioms, & phrases etc.

Stepp (1993) says that people respond to small words as they are first degree words, or words that are easily understood e.g. mother, home etc. Second degree words are abstract rather than concrete e.g. nutrition. Little words are more heartwarming and more easily understood. They also save space, time and readers' energy.

Umesh (2007), he conducted a study on the usage of idioms and phrases in the news headlines in India. The researcher selected Five newspapers, three national (The Hindu, The Times of India, Hindustan Times), one regional (The Tribune) and one financial (The Economic Times) in view of their high circulation & readership and rainbow characteristics of regional and content diversity. In order to check the extent of idioms and phrases in Indian English newspapers' headlines and the various types of news that have idioms and phrases and the different sources of idioms and phrases. He used a quantitative content analysis with few qualitative aspects to achieve the mentioned objectives. He concluded that:

Common and varied patterns among newspapers were reflected in the study. The share of idioms and phrases in headlines was negligible (.077%). The Tribune and The Hindu used idioms and phrases to a maximum degree. Political and Business news categories carried maximum headlines interspersed with idioms and phrases whereas education and agricultural headlines carried the least. This doesn't convey their dominance in appearance of overall news types but it certainly reflects the high probability of idioms and phrases being used in their headlines. Like creativity in news headlines, the idioms and phrases were placed on the most important and premium places of the newspapers. First page and editorial pages of the newspapers had

considerably high numbers of idioms and phrases. This shows that if idioms and phrases are recognized as elements of "creativity" in language then it can be deduced that this creativity was accorded the best possible place. This finding is in consonance with Kumar (2007) who reported that 8 creative styles identified from five English newspapers understudy accorded a decent, easily recognizable and high OTS (opportunity to see) status to such headlines on most important pages.

Headlines written by journalists and correspondents had the highest share. Majority of idioms and phrases in headlines use 2-3 words whereas long worded idioms and phrases were used very less. This highlights the importance of brevity and prevalence of small idioms and phrases instead of bigger ones and conciseness proves to be indispensable. The place of idioms and phrases in a headline is either in the beginning or last not in the middle. Most of the idioms and phrases were used in their pure forms rather than any modifications. Experiments have been done with some of them and such idioms and phrases are very interesting to read. Modifying a word, changing its spelling, transliterating etc are main forms of modifications in idioms and phrases.

The rich source of idioms and phrases is the running news matter underlying headlines. The researcher observed that almost every

decent sized news carried at least one idiom and phrase. A study of such idioms and phrases can result in a collection of "core idioms and phrases" which can be a useful resource for training the media students and reach out to more readers and result in increased circulation by decorating the language.

Kumar Umesh conducted a study to measure the creative performance by newspapers in headlines during (action packed months) and (action less months) situations. He studied the different categories of news and their frequency of occurrence in newspapers, the contribution of different newspapers in publishing creative headlines, and whether creative headlines carry photo or not. He also studied the placement of creative headlines in newspapers' pages (front, last, etc.) In which maximum creative headlines appear and the source of news stories. He also referred to the type and style of creativity shown in headlines. He used the quantitative content analysis technique to get the findings. The findings threw a concurrent as well as divergent view of English print media's quest for creativity. All the selected newspapers behaved similarly and differently on variables selected for the study. There was significant difference in the number of observations during "action packed months" and "action less months" situations, the former contributing less than the later. However, in absence of sufficient reference period of 15 days, this

finding cannot be generalized. It can be safely concluded that creativity is exercised throughout the year irrespective of the situations. A qualitative analysis perhaps may throw more light on this aspect where the prospective researchers can conduct longitudinal study of creativity during "special" events in society. These meticulously filtered 9 creative styles traversed throughout the study and no style other than these was found. "Word import style" and "SMS" emerged as top most favorite styles of headlines and rhymic style proved to be least popular. It was observed in the running text of news stories that all styles except SMS and rhymic style were frequently used. Hence these styles hold good even for the body of the news. TOI (highest readership) emerged as most creative headliner followed by HT (2nd highest readership) and The Hindu (3rd highest readership) consistently. A clear relationship between the creativity and readership is visible. It can be inferred that creative headlines are read more thus leading to more readership. Another inversely proportional relationship was found between the word length and the creativity in both the situations. This is in concurrence with Stepp (1993). The "politics" and "sports" categories scored maximum entries and considerable creativity was shown in case of "business" news. "Agriculture" sector was absent from the creativity radar of print media. Though the creative headlines occupied important positions in both the years but a huge variation was seen in distribution across

different pages whose explanation is beyond the scope of the present study. The position of creative headlines inside pages tallied exactly with each other in "action packed months" and "action less months" situations. Similar was the case with news sources where both the situations were in sync with each other. A remarkable similarity was revealed in the mean scores of words used in creativity portion of headlines, which explains a uniform pattern in creative behavior of headline writers at any given point of time. More longitudinal studies are required in order to standardize these styles and to investigate the ever changing and continuously evolving new creative linguistic styles.

Bazza (2012) conducted a comparative study of English and Arabic newspaper headlines aiming at investigating the major linguistic changes that take place in the translation process from English into Arabic. The comparison analyzed the linguistic variations occurring in the translation process from English into Arabic. The collected data consists of eight headlines, five headlines are taken from BBC website and three are taken from CNN website.

This study investigated the functions and features of English headlines, the linguistic changes that occur in the translation process, the linguistic choices and techniques that translators use in translating newspaper headlines and to what extent is the translation of English



headlines into Arabic faithful. To perform the study, he selected English and Arabic news headlines from online news websites, namely CNN and BBC.

The results have shown that different techniques and methods are used by translators in the process of translating headlines. It can be deduced that these techniques, such as addition or explicitness, omission or translation with change in meaning, vary according to the translator's intention, linguistic choices and even priority is either given to the clarity of information or to the target readers' expectation.

## **6. Methodology of research**

The researcher selected a set of 20 editions of Al hayat Newspaper along with their English versions which were thought to be laden with translational problems. These newspapers have been selected because they have both the English and the Arabic versions and they are widely accessed by a large number of people around the world. The researcher will compare the translation of the headlines of the translated articles to detect any meaning loss in the process of translation.

### **6.1 The collected data**

As mentioned above the collected data consists of twenty headlines taken from Al hayat newspaper along with their English

versions. The following chart summarizes the Arabic headlines alongside their English versions.

No	Arabic headline	English headline
1-	كشف المستور الأربعاء ١٢ فبراير ٢٠١٢	Lifting the Cover
2 -	الفشل الاستراتيجي للنظام السوري الأربعاء 18 يوليو 2012	The Syrian Regime's Strategic Failure
3-	الخلية البديلة لإدارة الأزمة الجمعة 20 يوليو 2012	The Alternate Cell to Manage the Crisis
4-	خطاب نصر الله: خطران الجمعة 20 يوليو 2012	Nassrallah's speech: Two threats
5-	هل تغير موسكو سياستها بعد تفجير دمشق؟ الجمعة 20 يوليو 2012	Will Moscow Change its Policy after the Damascus Bombing ?
6-	النفط والأزمة السورية بين كردستان والمالكي الأربعاء 1 أغسطس 2012	Oil and the Syrian Crisis Come Between Kurdistan and Maliki
7-	شعوب الخيم الخميس 2 أغسطس 2012	The Tent People
8-	سوريا دخلت مرحلة التفتت؟ الأحد 5 أغسطس 2012	Syria has Entered The Phase of Fragmentation?

9-	مرسي والعسكر... وذكرى غزوة بدر الاثنين 6 اغسطس 2012	Morsi and the Military..and commemorating the Invasion of Badr
10-	من مرسي وأردوغان الى صلاح الدين الايوبي الخميس 6 سبتمبر 2012	From Morsi and Erdogan to Salahuddin al-Ayoubi
11-	ايران على النار السورية الاثنين 6 اغسطس 2012	Iran and the Syrian Fire
12-	من المريخ الى الانفاق الخميس 9 اغسطس 2012	From Mars to the Tunnels
13-	الانجرار الى حرب اقليمية مدمرة ليس امراً مستبعداً الجمعة 10 اغسطس 2012	A devastating regional war is not farfetched
14-	شبيحة في دول الخليج! الاثنين 20 اغسطس 2012	Thugs in the Gulf States !
15-	حكام وأوهام وركام الاثنين 20 اغسطس 2012	Rulers, Illusions, and Rubble
16-	ايران اللامنحازة! الثلاثاء 21 اغسطس 2012	The Non-Aligned Iran!
17-	عيون وأذان (ياأخوان إتركوا أمثال هؤلاء)	Ayoon Wa Azan (O Brothers ,Let Them Say Whatever They Want)

	الأربعاء 22 أغسطس 2012	
18-	زيارة طهران أوقعت بان بين المطرقة والسندان الجمعة 24 أغسطس 2012	Tehran Visit Places Ban between the Hammer and the Anvil
19-	عيون وأذان ("أخونة" مصر خطأ) الأحد 26 أغسطس 2012	Ayoon Wa Azan (Forcing Egypt Into the Ideology of the Brotherhood Is a Mistake)
20-	"التنظيف" و "التطهير" و "الهلال الشيعي" الخميس 30 أغسطس 2012	The "Cleaning", the "Cleansing" and the "Shiite Crescent"
21-	بخمسة ملايين تدمر "الربيع" الخميس 13 سبتمبر 2012	You Can Destroy the Spring with Five Million
22-	كل هذا العار الثلاثاء 18 سبتمبر 2012	Ayoon Wa Azan (All that shame)
23-	عيون وأذان (عصابة إيران في البحرين) الخميس 6 سبتمبر 2012	Ayoon Wa Azan (Iran's Gang in Bahrain)
24-	دور مصر بيد "جماعتها" ام بيد تركيا وإيران؟ الاثنين 1 أكتوبر 2012	Egypt's Role In The Hands Of The Muslim Brotherhood or in The Hands Of Turkey And Iran ?
25-	كهرباء "ماكو" الاثنين 8 أكتوبر 2012	No Electricity

26-	ايران في "أم المعارك" الخميس 11 أكتوبر 2012	Iran in the 'Mother of all Battles '
27-	عيون وأذان ("من فمك أدبتك ياإسرائيل") الأحد 1 يوليو 2012	"From your mouth, we brought you Israel"
28-	إن تكن انساناً الجمعة 5 2012	On being human

## **7. Data analysis**

The data was analyzed from three different perspectives: semantic variation, cultural variation and linguistic variation.

### **7.1 Semantic variation**

The translation of headlines from Arabic into English can show some kind of loss at the lexico-semntic level. Consider, for instance, the headline:

"كشف المستور" which was translated as "Lifting Cover". The word "lifting" is not an appropriate equivalent of the Arabic word "كشف"; the Arabic word is much more informative and it is collocated with the accompanied Arabic word "المستور" in the Arabic context. It means 'the disclosure of a serious hidden secret'. Hence, this meaning is farfetched with the English word "Lifting"; which gives the impression of just removing the cover of anything normally.

Similarly, the headline "الخلية البديلة لإدارة الأزمة", was translated as "The Alternate Cell to Manage the Crisis". The Arabic word "الخلية" is laden with different associations than the English word "Cell". It carries the meaning of conspiracy, gangsterism, and ideology. It is closely associated with those who are dominated by certain ideological thoughts. For example, Al Qaeda group, this Arabic word is normally used with Al Qaeda. However the English equivalent "Cell" is the literal translation of the word and it is not aptly used in this context. A third example is given in "خطاب نصر الله: خطران", which has been rendered into English as "Nassrallah's Speech: Two Threats". The word "threats" is not the appropriate translation of the Arabic word "خطران" which can be better translated as "two risks". In addition, the Arabic word "خطاب" implies the meaning of delivering a speech before an audience. However, the English equivalent "Speech" does not convey the same implication. The Arabic headline is a complete sentence that consists of a predicate and a complement, whereas the English headline is a fragment sentence. That is to say that Arabic structure is different from the English one. Thus, the Arabic headline seems to be more informative.

Another example of semantic variation in the translation of headline is obvious in the rendition of the Arabic headline "هل تغير موسكو سياستها بعد تفجير دمشق؟" as "Will Moscow Change its Policy after

the Damascus Bombing?" While the former carries the present and the future tenses and thus this gives it a wide and an inclusive implication, the latter overtly expresses futurity through the use of modality i.e., "will".

In the same vein, in the Arabic headline "سوريا دخلت مرحلة التفتت", the word "التفتت" is much more expressive and informative than its seemingly English counterpart "Fragmentation", which is inappropriate in this context. The English equivalents "breaking up" and "distortion" are more accurate in this context.

The Arabic headline "إيران على النار السورية" is different in meaning from the English headline "Iran and the Syrian Fire". The Arabic structure based on the preposition "على" means that Iranian current policies are planned according to the situation in Syria. But the English translation does not reflect the spirit of the original headline. The English structure gives the implication of equality between Iran and Syria.

In the Arabic headline "من المريخ الى الانفاق", the word "المريخ" is used metaphorically in Arabic to indicate superiority and highness. Thus, the English translation "From Mars to the Tunnels" distorted the meaning completely by omitting the antonym relationship between the two words "Mars and Tunnels" which is strongly clear in the Arabic headline.

The omission of the Arabic word "الإنجرار" in the Arabic headline "الإنجرار الى حرب اقليمية مدمرة ليس امراً مستبعداً" from the English headline "A devastating regional war is not farfetched"; distorted the intended meaning. The word "الإنجرار" implies the deliberate ally of some countries in the region. Therefore omitting that word from the English translation causes a loss of meaning or what we call misunderstanding.

In the Arabic headline "حكام وأوهام وركام", all the words rhyme with each other. There is some kind of music that is formed because they end in the same sound. However the English translation "Rubble" seems to be a sequence of fragmented words without connection and the deliberate rhyme of the original is completely lost in the translation.

In the Arabic headline "ياأخوان اتركوا امثال هؤلاء", the Arabic word "إخوان" is highly expressive and laden with the ideology of brotherhood. It also refers to the Muslim brotherhood in the Arab world. It is used ironically to refer to both brotherhood organization and to address any companion as a brother. However, in the English translation "O Brothers ,Let Them Say Whatever They Want", the word does not carry the ironical meaning which is achieved in the Arabic headline. In addition to that, the translator added extra information in the English translation which distorted the meaning of



the source Arabic headline. Consequently there is a loss of meaning in the target English headline.

In the Arabic headline "كل هذا العار!" the Arabic word "العار" connotes much more than the English equivalent "shame". The Arabic word carries the meaning of shamefulness, inferiority, dishonor, and humiliation. Thus, the English word "shame" does not carry all the subtle nuances of the Arabic word.

In the Arabic headline "دور مصر بيد "جماعتها" ام بيد تركيا وايران؟" the Arabic word "جماعتها" is used ironically to refer to "Muslim brotherhood" in Egypt represented by its current authority. However, the English word "Muslim brotherhood" refers only to the Muslim groups regardless of authority. Again here metaphoric expressions lose their hidden implications in the target translation and as a result the meaning suffers a degree of loss.

In the Arabic headline, "كهرباء "ماكو" the word "ماكو" is a colloquial Iraqi term. It is used sarcastically in this headline to indicate the frequent non-sporadic problem of electricity switch off in Iraq and most "Arab Spring" countries. The English translation "No Electricity" does not make any sense in this regard. Thus, the pragmatic meaning was completely lost in the English headline.....

.....

## **7.2 Cultural variation**

Another frequent variation in the translation of headlines is that of cultural variation. The following headline النفط والأزمة السورية بين "كردستان والمالكي", for instance, is deeply-rooted in the Iraqi culture and Iraq's political history. The Iraqi prime minister supports the Shiite sect and he is in favor of the Syrian regime. Kurdistan is against Shiite and the Syrian regime. Al Maliki wanted the Kurdistan's oil fields to be under the authority of the Shiite. According to his policy, Iranian companies rather than American ones should be contracted to drill for oil. Therefore, to the Arabic audience, the pragmatic meaning of this headline is clear and apparent. The English translation of the Syrian Crisis Come Between Kurdistan and Maliki" does not make the intended meaning, however.

Another example of cultural variation is given in the Arabic headline "شعوب الخيم", which is associated with the uprisings in the so called "Arab Spring". In addition to its traditional sense, the collocation شعوب الخيم has recently gained a new meaning. That is to say, it no longer refers to the Bedouin Arabs in the desert alone, but also to those protesters who went out against their rulers. The English headline does not reflect the culture of the Arab Spring.

The Arabic headline "مرسي والعسكر... وذكري غزوة بدر" indicates a cultural reference which is Badr battle in the history of Islam. Badr

was the largest battle in Islam; Muslims were accompanied with Prophet Mohammed in this battle. The word "غزوة" is a culture-specific allusion. The reference is to the battle led by Prophet Mohammed. However, the English translation of the headline does not convey the intended meaning behind the headline. Here the writer wanted to make fun of the Egyptian president Murcy, by comparing his leadership to that of the prophet's. Thus, the implied meaning was lost in the translation.

Likewise, the headline "من مرسي وأردوغان الى صلاح الدين الايوبي", includes a historical reference to "صلاح الدين" a great Muslim leader better known in the West as Saladin and the founder of the Ayyubid dynasty. The writer here is deriding the Egyptian president and the Turkish Prime Minister Ardughan. The headline is crammed with irony in the sense that the writer is trying to show the great gap between the failed policies of Murcy and Ardughan and the successful policy of Saladin. The English translation, however, the target headline has failed to retain the cultural reference of the original and the irony intended.

In the Arabic headline "شبيحة في دول الخليج", the word "شبيحة" is a non-standard term and one of the *neologisms* of the Arab Spring. The funniness of the term is attributed to the fact that the Arab Spring has produced a proliferation of terms to refer to the supporters of the ex-

regimes. For example, in Egypt and Yemen they call them "بلاطجة", in Syria they call them "الشبيحة", and in Turkey "الزعران". The Arab audience has become acquainted with such terms and consequently they are reflected in the Arab media.

The word "شبيحة" in the above headline, indicates that there are protesters in the Gulf countries. However, in the English headline, the word was translated as "thugs" who does not convey the intended meaning. "Thugs" is a generic term that refers to any brutal or violent person.

In the Arabic headline, "زيارة طهران أوقعت بان بين المطرقة والسندان", the proverbial statement "بين المطرقة والسندان" is used. This fixed expression is used in the context when a person finds himself in a critical situation and is left with no choice. The idiom here refers to the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki Mon who put himself in a critical situation by visiting Iran which is against USA's policy. The literal translation of the idiom into English makes no sense, the whole meaning is lost.

In the Arabic headline "التنظيف والتطهير والهلال الشيعي", the two Arabic words "التنظيف والتطهير" refer to getting rid of non-Shiites in the region. The term "الهلال الشيعي" refers to the Shiites geographical regions, Syria, Iran, and some parts of Iraq. The geographical regions of these countries take the shape of a crescent. The geographical

reference which is part of Arab culture is absolutely absent in the English translation of the headline.

In the Arabic headline "بخمسة ملايين تدمر الربيع" the word "الربيع" refers to the period of the Arab Protesting Movement. The word is a part of the new term "الربيع العربي" which has become well known to all Arabs all over the world. The English translation of the word as "Spring" in "You Can Destroy the Spring with Five Million" does not convey the appropriate meaning. The word spring in the English headline appears to be used literally rather than metaphorically.

In the Arabic headline "عصابة ايران في البحرين", there is a reference to the Shiites of Bahrain. The Arab audience knows that Iran is a Shiite country and that it supports Shiite everywhere in the world including Bahrain. Since they are a minority in Bahrain, they are referred to as a "A gang" in "Iran's Gang in Bahrain". The English translation of the headline does not convey the same cultural associations of the original.

In the Arabic headline "أم المعارك", the term "أم المعارك" refers to the battle that Iran suffers in Syria. Such encounter is the mother of all battles in the eyes of the Iranians because in this battle Iran is defending its borders, its strategic roles, and its long lasting investments. The epithet أم المعارك is repeatedly used by Arabs to name their great battles. For example, when Saddam Hussein invaded

Kuwait, he called that battle "the mother of all battles". It is an indication for the importance of the battle and its goals. Therefore, the term does not make any sense in the English translation of the headline.

The Arabic headline "من فمك ادينك ياإسرائيل", includes a colloquial proverb which means to force someone or something to surrender. The writer of the article wanted to say that Israel should give up because it has been condemned by many.

The Arabic proverb has a cultural meaning which is known to all Arab audience. However, the English translation does not convey the same cultural meaning. Thus, the English headline "From your mouth, we brought you Israel" is misleading.

### **7.3 The Linguistic variation**

The third type of variation in the translation of headlines from Arabic into English is linguistic variation. It is a generally accepted fact that Arabic and English belong to different families of languages and thus linguistic differences between the two are inevitable. The corpus of the study shows several instances of linguistic variation. For example, in the Arabic headline "أخونة مصر خطأ", the Arabic word "أخونة" does not have a plausible equivalent term in English and thus it cannot be translated as a single word, but it needs to be paraphrased. أخونة means the gradual process of empowering the

Muslim brotherhood to dominate Egypt. Thus, some Arabic terms need to be explicated in translation. It is said that Arabic language is an implicit language; which means that a word may need a sentence when translated. Therefore, the English translation decoded the Arabic word in a whole sentence. As a result, the English translation of the headline appears to be a fully-fledged sentence rather than a news headline.

The following Arabic headline "إن تكن انساناً", this Arabic structure carries the meaning of "إن تكن انساناً أو لا تكن". The omission of "أو لا تكون" is strategic in Arabic because it gives a wide range of possibilities. But in English it was translated literally as "On being a Human" which does not make much sense.

In the following Arabic headline "الفشل الاستراتيجي للنظام السوري", the emphasis is on "الفشل الاستراتيجي". But when translated into English as "The Syrian Regime's Strategic Failure", "النظام السوري", has been foregrounded. Thus, the attention will be shifted to the "Syrian regime" rather than "the Strategic Failure".

Similarly, the Arabic headline "إيران اللامنحازة", in which "إيران" has been emphasized through fronting has been translated into English as, "The Non-Aligned Iran!", in which Iran has been backgrounded. Arabic language is known to be a rhetoric language and the placement of words in the theme or in the rheme position is always strategic.

## **8. The findings**

Based on the analysis of the data, it was found that a translator encounters several problems while translating headlines from Arabic into English due to semantic, cultural and linguistic differences between the two languages. The loss of meaning is sometimes inevitable.

Regarding the semantic aspect, the translator used some English equivalents that do not convey the intended meaning. Some headlines include very standard collocations in Arabic, but when they are rendered into English, they are translated literally and thus the resultant collocations are not standard. Some Arabic terms are laden with several associations that were completely ignored when rendered to English. Some Arabic terms were mistranslated into English equivalents. In addition, some Arabic verbs indicate the present and the future, but when translated into English, only the future tense was considered. This rendering limits the wide scope of meaning. In some Arabic headlines, the proposition was rendered literally which gives a different meaning.

Some Arabic words are used metaphorically, however, they were conveyed literally and consequently the meaning was altered. Similarly, the omission of some Arabic words while translating, distorted the intended meaning completely.



Some Arabic headlines are full of rhetorical devices such as rhyme, assonance and consonance with a view to and attracting the reader. However, such devices pose a great difficulty to the translator and they are sometimes lost in the translation. As a result, the headlines lose their attractiveness.

In addition to semantic variation, there is cultural differences that affect meaning in translation. In some headlines, there is an indication to the sectarian affiliation which affects the political tendency, such as Shiites. In some cases such hints are clear and apparent for the Arabic reader because they are quite familiar with the cultural references used in the headlines. However, to an English reader they hardly make any sense due to the cultural gaps between Arabic and the English cultures.

In addition, some headlines are crammed with irony, humour and satire with an aim to make fun of or deride some politicians. Our data has shown some cultural or religious allusions have been ironically used to strike a balance between the current situation of the Arab World and the situation at the time of those historical figures. These referents when translated literally, they make no sense to the target audience.

Another aspect of cultural difficulties in the translation of headlines is found in the rendition of some new terms associated with

the so- called Arab Spring such as "tent people, thugs, and spring". These terms occurred in most news headlines. However, when they have been translated into English, the cultural intended meaning is lost.

The use of proverbial statement is also prevalent in Arabic news headlines. Of course these proverbs have posed a problem to translators especially when translated literally.

Similarly, the reference to some Arab regions or countries that are commonly known to Arab audience, impose a difficulty to the target audience.

Concerning the linguistic variation between Arabic and English, it was found that meaning was distorted due to these differences. Some Arabic terms are used implicitly and thus they need to be expanded in the target language to the extent that a particular term is likely to be rendered as a whole sentence. The result is therefore a vague and confusing headline.

Another aspect of linguistic variation is the translation of elliptical elements used intentionally for rhetorical purposes. The deletion of such elements in the translated version can affect the informativity of the text and is likely to result in meaning loss.

## **9. Conclusion**

Arabic and English languages refer to two different families, namely English refers to Indo-European languages, and Arabic refers to Semitic Languages. Therefore it is expected to find some semantic, cultural and linguistic differences.

Translation in the field of media, in most cases is problematic due to the implied intentions of source text writer. It is clear that news headlines form a specific genre by itself. News headlines tend to be attractive, informative and short. They are used to grasp attention of the audience and to arouse their curiosity. To achieve this aspect, the writer of the article sometimes chooses a misleading headline.

All these specificities in addition to the mentioned difficulties between Arabic and English languages cause misunderstanding and miscommunication during translation process. Thus, the translation of news headlines in most cases poses some difficulties.

## **10. Recommendations**

For the purpose of achieving accurate translation, the translator has to understand the intention of the source article writer.

- ✓ The translator has to be helpful to the target audience by making the meaning as clear as possible.

- ✓ The translator in the field in media should have a wide knowledge in the culture of the source and the target languages.
- ✓ The translator has to read the source news headline along with the story to get the intended meaning.
- ✓ When translating proverbs, the translator should try to find if there is an equivalent in the target culture. If he does not find, he should try to convey the meaning accurately instead of translating proverbs literally.
- ✓ Linguistic gaps between languages can be compensated by explanation.
- ✓ The translator should pay much attention to structure in Arabic because it affects meaning.
- ✓ Metaphorical and rhetorical expressions should be decoded in the target language during translation; because they are culture-specific.
- ✓ New terms and jargons should be considered when conveyed to the target language; because transliterating them is useless.
- ✓ Adding any information to compensate for the loss of meaning in the target language, should not distort the source language message.

- ✓ The target language headline should not violate the features of news headlines. It should be informative, interesting and attractive to grasp the attention of the target reader.
- ✓ A translator should have adequate linguistic competences because some headlines can be ambiguous and misleading.
- ✓ Colloquial expressions should be considered because they are dialect-specific. The translator should try to find colloquial equivalents.

### References

- Andrew, & Blake C. (2007). Media-generated shortcuts: Do newspaper headlines present another roadblock for low information rationality?, *Harvard International Journal Of Press/politics* 12 (2).
- Arya, U. K. (2012). Mass Communicator: International: Comparative creativity construction in newspaper headlines in "on" and "off" situations: A content analysis of three English newspapers. *Journal of Communication Studies* Volume: 6, Issue: 3) Print ISSN: 0973-9688. Online ISSN: 0973-967X.
- Barkho, L. (2008). *The discursive and social power of news discourse: the case of Aljazeera in comparison and parallel with the BBC and CNN. Studies in Language &Capitalism*, 3(4), 2008, 111-159. Retrieved from <http://www.languageandcapitalism.info/wp-content/uploads/2008/11/slc3-4-barkho.pdf>
- Beare, Kenneth. (n.d). *Understanding newspaper headlines*. About.com.23thNov<<http://esl.about.com/od/readinglessonplans/a/newslesson.htm>>
- Bell, A. (1991). *The language of news media*. London: Blackwell.
- Conboy, M. (2007). *The Language of the news*. London: Rutledge.

- Golding, P., & Elliott, P. (1996). News values and news production.  
In P. Marris and S. Thornham (eds), *Media studies: a reader*  
(pp. 405-415). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Indre Zvirblyte (2012). *Headlines of Online News Articles: Degree of  
Equivalence in Translation, Kaunas University of Technology.*  
Lithuania.
- Ludwig, M. D. & Gilmore, G. (2005). *Modern news editing* (5th  
edition). Iowa, USA: Malmö: Gotab.
- Mårdh, I. (1980). Headlines: On the grammar of English front page  
headlines. Lund: Gleerup. *Linguistics Journal Volume 2 Issue*  
1 126
- Mrigesh Manik (1999). *"Samachar patron ki bhasha"* (Vani  
publications, 1999)
- Němečková, K. (2011). *Contrastive analysis of Czech and English journalistic  
style Master's Diploma Thesis.* Masaryk University.
- Newmark, P. (1988). *A textbook of translation.* London: Prentice  
Hall.
- Sherpa.P., (2012). *A study on strategic use of language in newspaper  
headlines,* Christ University, Bangalore.
- Reah, D. (2002). *The language of newspapers.* London and New  
York: Rutledge.
- Reah, D. (2002). *The language of newspapers* (2nd edition). London:  
Rutledge

- Schneider, K. (2000). The emergence and development of headlines in English Newspapers. In. F. Ungerer (Ed.), *English Media Texts, Past and Present: Language and Textual Structure*, Philadelphia,: John Benjamin.
- Stepp, C. S. (1993). How to Save America's Editors. *American Journalism Review*.
- Baza, T., (2012). *Headline Translation from English into Arabic: A comparative Study*, Tangier.
- Umesh Kumar Arya (2007). Linguistic Creativity Construction in Newspapers" Headlines: A Content Analysis of Five English Dailies, 81-95. In *Indian Media Studies Journal* 2 (1-2).
- Van Dijk, T. A. (1988). *News as discourse*. New York: Erlbaum.
- Vinay, J.-P., & Darbelnet, J. (1995). *Comparative stylistics of French and English: a methodology for translation*. Amsterdam: Johns Benjamins.
- Warren, C. N. (1934). *Modern news reporting*. New York: Harper.
- Wodak & M. Meyer (Eds), (1996) *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. (2nd. Ed.) (pp. 62-86). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Wodak, R., & Busch, B. (2004). Approaches to media texts. In J. D. H. Downing et al. (Eds), *The SAGE handbook of media studies* (pp. 105-122). Thousand Oaks: Sage.



Yopp Johnson Jan, Adams C. &, Katherine, (1999). *"Reaching Audience, a Guide to Media Writing"* (Allyn & Bacon, 1999), 119-125.