DIRECTIONALITY IN ENGLISH/ARABIC INTERPRETING

A THESIS IN TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETING

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UNIVERSITY OF SHARJAH THESIS:

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ABSTRACT

Directionality in interpreting refers to whether interpreting is performed into or out of one's native language, which is known as (A) language, Arabic in this study. It was long-established that working into one's non-native (B) language, English in this study, is seen as inferior to working into the A language as both speech comprehension and production can vary to a significant extent.However, other approaches represented by the former Soviet Union maintain that interpreters can indeed work both directions with their production being almost intact.

With a focus on the practice of interpreting in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the aim of this thesis is to primarily assess the concept of directionality in English/Arabic interpreting, particularly with regard to the preferences of practicing interpreters, including those working at the United Nations (UN). To this end, a questionnaire was produced and distributed directly to a number of interpreters over the Internet, and some personal and phone interviews were conducted with professional interpreters in different work places in the UAE, with the prime focus on their experiences with different directions in their interlingual work.

Introduction

The debate on directionality in interpreting has attracted some controversial views that remain unresolved. Many international organizations insist that their interpreters work solely into their native languages, while in other organizations, interpreters can work both directions. In this thesis, the case of directionality in English/Arabic is examined:

- What are the interpreters' preferences?

- To what extent can directionality in interpreting impact their performance, i.e., production?

- What are the dis/advantages, if any, when working into or out of one's native language?

- What can be done to improve the strategies of interpreters to ultimately reach satisfactory interpreting practice?

This thesis attempts to relate these questions with the reality of interpreters who work at both the UN and in the UAE where they are asked to render from and into their native languages.

This thesis presents research into directionality in interpreting practice with a focus on practice in the UAE. It begins with an examination of some traditional views on the issue of directionality and then presents some critical arguments against them. Finally, the stages of research are described, with particular attention paid to the methodology used for data collection. For the data collection, a questionnaire was designed and used with interpreters; in addition, real experiences of Arabic/English interpreters at the United Nations and other interpreters in the United Arab Emirates were also employed.

This thesis consists of three chapters, an introduction and a conclusion. Chapter One presents a general introduction of the subject at hand, as well as the aims and scope of the thesis.

Chapter Two outlines some of the main approaches involved in translation studies vs. interpreting studies, modes of interpreting, and settings of interpreting. Chapter Three focuses on the theory of directionality in interpreting, major approaches of certain authors, and traditional views, presenting several critical arguments brought by different scholars. Chapter Four looks specifically at the profession of interpreting in the UAE, methodology, and data analysis. Chapter Five presents some findings from personal interviews carried out with interpreters in the UAE, as well as from a questionnaire survey conducted among interpreters in the UAE and other areas in the world in 2007.

Chapter One: Translation v. Interpreting Studies

1.1 Introduction

Like any field of knowledge, interpreting and translation have gone through significant changes over the last three decades or so. As recently as only a decade ago, it became possible to talk about translation and interpreting. Newmark (1994) states that interpreting and translation "are two distinct disciplines" that see ample differences. He says, " Interpreting is often a matter of temperament, of ability to react quickly, of summarizing and explaining, and extemporizing, and diplomacy," while translation, that is " written to written", requires more time to complete. By holding these beliefs, Newmark starkly disagrees with Seleskovitch in her approach to identifying interpreting with translating, i.e., her theory about deverbalization which was introduced in 1968. Yet, Newmark also adds that professionally one can both translate and interpret (1994). In this chapter, various approaches in translation and interpreting studies are examined. The goal here is to identify these approaches and study how they relate to one other.

1.2 Translation Studies

All through history, translating as a practice was recognized, "but the discipline of translation studies is new" (Munday, 2006, p. 17). Translation studies gained its name through the work of Holmes in 1972 when he explained that it addressed "the complex of problems clustered round the phenomenon of translating and translations" (Holmes 1988/2000, p. 173). This "exciting new discipline," as Baker identified it (1998, p. 2), has gained a remarkable academic momentum across the world. Nevertheless, the practice of translation was seen as "derivative and secondary"and "denied parity with other academic research" (Munday, 2001, p. 14).

Dynamic Equivalence

Through the concept of dynamic equivalence, Nida and Taber shed light on the importance of culture in translation. They define dynamic equivalence in the theory and practice of translation as "the degree to which the receptor language responds to it in substantially the same manner as the receptors in the source language." In their view, the translator attempts to achieve "complete naturalness" and "tries to relate the receptor to modes of behavior relevant within the context of his own culture" (1984, p. 24).

Pragmatic Equivalence

During the translation process, Levinson (n.d.) defines implicature as "the study of the ability of language users to pair sentences with the context, in which they would be appropriate." Baker presents this as as a main element in approaching the pragmatic equivalence. According to this writer, the translator should take his/her way up for "pedagogical reasons." Baker states that "translators must not underestimate the cumulative effect of thematic choices on the way we interpret text" (1992, p. 129). The author adds that the translator's role should re-establish the real meaning of the source language in the receptor's culture.

Culture in Translation

Culture, as a term, refers generally to the way of life, that is, a group of behavioral functions and practices. Culture ranges from symbols, arts, and languages to religion, customs, traditions, etc. Goodenough explains:

As I see it, a society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves. Culture, being what people have to learn as distinct from their biological heritage, must consist of the end product of learning: knowledge, in

a most general, if relative, sense of the term. By definition, we should note that culture is not material phenomenon; it does not consist of things, people, behavior, or emotions. It is rather an organization of these things. It is the forms of things that people have in mind, their models of perceiving and dealing with their circumstances. To one who knows their culture, these things and events are also signs signifying the cultural forms or models of which they are material representation (as cited in Hariyanto, 2008).

Newmark defines culture as "the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression" (as cited in Méjri, 2003, p. 110). Nonetheless, not many scholars refer to culture as an essential factor that should be accounted for in their writing about translation; Newmark himself (1991, p. 95) does "not regard language as a component or feature of culture" as evidenced in the following statement. "Translation is a craft consisting in the attempt to replace a written message and/or statement in one language by the same message and/or statement in another language" (as cited in Armellino, 2008). He makes no mention of culture.

The following definition of translation also does not refer to culture.

"Translation involves the rendering of a source language (SL) text into the target language (TL) so as to ensure that (1) the surface meaning of the two will be approximately similar and (2) the structure of the SL will be preserved as closely as possible, but not so closely that the TL structure will be seriously distorted." (McGuire, 1980, p. 2)

Wills extends McGuire's definition by saying that "translation is a transfer process which aims at the transformation of a written SL text into an optimally equivalent TL text, and which requires

the syntactic, the semantic and the pragmatic understanding and analytical processing of the SL" (as cited in Hariyanto, n.d.).

In contrast, the concept of culture was considered an essential element that must be accounted for in the translation activitiy. Hatim and Mason (1997, p. 1) consider translation as "an act of communication which attempts to relay, across cultural and linguistic boundaries, another act of communication." Vermeer (2000, p. 222) states the matter more simply: "language is part of a culture."

Ideology in Translation

Ideology as a notion can be defined in many ways. But broadly speaking, it is a set of thoughts shared by a group of people in a certain society and reflects their selective belief of their own reality. Bassnett and Lefevere (1992, preface) state, "Translation is, of course, a rewriting of an original text. All rewritings, whatever their intention, reflect a certain ideology and a poetics and as such manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way." Fawcett observes that beliefs, ideologies of people, and institutions are consistently applied in order to reach a particular result in translation (cited in Baker, 1998).

An important step forward embodied in the advances in *Critical Discourse Analysis* is founded on the idea that translation and other language concepts represent ideological encounters (Dellinger, 1995). In the same way, Schäffner maintains that all translation practices are ideological since "the choice of a source text and the use to which the subsequent target text is put are determined by the interests, aims, and objectives of social agents" and translation (as cited in *Ideology*, n.d.).

1.3 Interpreting Studies

In its general aspect, interpreting simply means to denotate and connotate accurately and faithfully any type of communication occurring (orally or in sign) between two or more people of different languages, culture, and beyond. Apart from the academic register, which fundamentally differentiates between interpreting and translating as two separate practices no matter how closely alike they may appear to be, many of the laypersons who were asked to simply tell of any differences between the two types, stated firmly that none exist. Indeed, interpreting practice only recently gained its wide recognition as a profession in the course of the twentieth century (Pöchhaker & Shlesinger, 2002, p. 2). But that does not necessarily imply that interpreting was not practiced before. In their book, The Interpretation Studies Reader (2002), Pöchhacker and Shlesinger write that "interpreting must have been practiced when ancient peoples were driven into exile, when explorers had to transact business, and when slaves were being put to work for the colonizer" (p. 2). Interpreting has been in practice in various non-Arab Muslim lands since the beginning of Islam. This is common during *Khutbas*(religious sermon) during *Jumaat* (Friday prayer) and Eid prayers and so on.They also explain that although interpreting and interpreting both refer to one activity and profession, interpreting is the term to be used as it refers to the "activity in all its ramifications."

In contrast, until the 1990s, interpreting was viewed as simply one of many aspects of translation studies. Holmes said that interpreting was an example of a "medium-restricted" type of human oral translation, which does not call for designation. Yet, Salevsky was first to use the term "Interpreting Studies" after addressing the 8th Conference On Translation and Interpreting at Charles University, in Prague 1992 (as cited in Pöchhacker & Shlesinger, 2002, p. 3). Many other scholars followed the same path of coming up with other similar terms; for example, Gile

(1994, p. 241) named the discipline "Interpreting Studies." He also used "Interpreting Research and Theory (IRT)," which was changed to "Interpreting Research (IR)," then to "Conference Interpreting Research (CIR)," (as cited in Beeby, Ensinger, & Presas, 1998). Yet, Venuti (2000, p. 2) maintained that interpreting is an area of translation research whose "volume and degree of specialization demand separate coverage."

Modes of Interpreting

The practice of interpreting can be performed in three modes: simultaneous interpreting (SI), consecutive interpreting (CI), and liaison interpreting. In the first mode, the interpreter's part starts immediately while listening to the source language speaker; it is like two-in-one communication. The audience can hear the interpreting of one speech directly after it is delivered by the interpreters in sound- proof booths equipped with earphones and microphones. The same, on the other hand, cannot apply to the second mode of interpreting, as the part of the interpreter can only begin after the source language speaker stops or pauses. The audience in this mode have the chance to hear the original text being interpreted.

Hatim and Mason (1997) analyzed the interpreting process from three dimensions of "textuality," that is, context, texture and structure. They say that the interpreter would rely predominantly on one of those dimesions when working with one or another of those modes. For example, if the interpreter is practicing consecutive interpreting, then the work would rely on structure; in contrast the interpreter would rely on texture for simultaneous interpreting and on context for liaison.

Before leaving this section, it is worth noting what Salevsky proposed to distinguish between types of translation and interpreting that are based on the way they relate to the following set of parameters:

1. Repeatability/non-repeatability of the activity;

2. the object of the activity, in terms of whether the translator has at his or her disposal the whole text or portions of it;

3. the unfolding of one of the constituent activities with respect to another: whether reception, for example, is performed relatively independently of the other two activities or whether it runs parallel to realization;

4. temporal conditions: whether the speed of the process and the time allotted for its completion are subject to any restrictions;

5. spatial conditions, in terms of the physical location of the communicants in space;

6. mode of reception of the original text: via the visual or auditory channel, and with or without the use of technical equipment;

7. mode of realization: whether the translated text is written or spoken, and whether it is relayed with or without the help of technical equipment (as cited in Marschark & Peterson, 2005, p. 30).

Settings of Interpreting

Interpreting as a practice serves one straightforward goal, that is, to facilitate oral communication between conversing parties. The settings where interpreting takes place determine the type of interpreting practices. The current changes the world experiences at an unprecedented pace impose many other types or cases of interpreting that keep increasing everyday.

In addition to classic types of interpreting, including interpreting for conferences, medical needs, court procedures, the military, etc., there are other new cases of interpreting that involve

among others, telephone interpreting, sign language interpreting, sports interpreting, face-to-face interpreting, among others.

This study draws attention to cases of interpreting utilized/practiced most in the UAE, that is, interpreting for courts and police, medical interpreting, and conference interpreting. In addittion to that, the experience of the UN interpreters/Arabic Section, shall be discussed, for telephone interviews have been made with some interpreting practitioners working there.

Interpreting for courts and police.

Despite the title, this setting of interpreting is widely practiced at all other related legal settings. It is just another type of interpreting that is often ignored as a field of study, save some efforts made by a few researchers. The role of the court interpreter, problems they face, and the complexity of the practice itself are also often overlooked. Wadensjo describes the pressure put on the interpreter when things go wrong in a court room. "Before suspecting the other party of talking nonesense, or oneself of being unclear, man would rather suspect the interpreter of getting things wrong" (as cited in Hale, 2004, p. 1).

Different views of how accurate the interpreting process should be and the complex role of the interpreter have left an impact on the profession. Many scholars call for accuracy of message intention and effect. As Hatim and Mason maintain, "equivalence is to be achieved not only of propositional content but also of illocutionary force" (as cited in Hale, 2004, p. 3).

Medical interpreting.

Medical interpreting has experienced a great deal of development in recent years. In the United States, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 called for seeking professional medical interpreters to cope with the large numbers of patients with "limited English proficiency" (Angelelli, 2004a, p. 1). This was accompanied by a growing change in the field of medicine, including knowledge

as well as technology, which raised more questions about the actual role of medical interpreters in bridging the gap between health systems and people flowing from all quarters.

Angelelli (2004a, p. 28) presents several studies that examine the role of the medical interpreter in medical interaction (Bolden, 2000; Cambridge, 1999; Davidson, 1998, 2000, 2001). Nevertheless, many scholars call for further research in medical interpreting that expands the role of the interpreter as an "active participant" in medical discourse (Angelelli, 2004b, p. 18).

Conference interpreting.

This type of interpreting setting, once limited to international conferences held at the highest meeting levels and practiced today at most of business and media events all over the world, is considered to be the most prominent type of interpreting. According to Shlesinger, it requires more than the ability to utter and comprehend particular languages (as cited in Diriker, 2004).

Diriker claims that research on conference interpreting has been devoted to "cognitive aspects" varying from the role played by the interpreter's memory, to the "verbal-manual interference task," and the "psycho and neuro-linguistic paradigms," that, he adds, have distracted the attention of concerned scholars from analyzing the situation of conference interpreters who are practicing in "socio-cultural contexts, and the interdependency between socio-cultural contexts" (2004, p. 1). Thiery emphasizes the importance of situationality, when he states that "situation analysis inevitably encompasses not only the power structure but also the action, emphasizing the role of interpreter, and urging him/her not to act as it is 'none of his business'" (as cited in Diriker, 2004).

1.4 Orality, Heteronomy and the Cultural Turn in Interpreting Studies

In the general field of translation, only a minority of practitioners evidence interest in interpreting studies. Having a widespread presence geographically and historically, interpreting is an activity largely used in courts, police stations, social welfare offices, conferences, tours and the like. Cronin expounds on the oral nature of interpreting and its neglect by scholars from literacy/orality studies. He goes on to discuss the signal bias that plagues interpreting studies toward prestigious forms of interpreting practice in developed countries. He states that this partiality is geopolitical in nature and must be faced by a new cultural turn in interpreting studies. Further, he maintains that a politically self-aware and more materialist approach to interpreting studies would unravel the massive research prospective of this area of translation inquiry and underline the importance of interpreting and interpreters in any evaluation of the influence of translation on humanity, from long ago through the present (2002, pp. 393-395).

Cronin finds the neglect of orality in interpreting studies highly disturbing. He observes that speech is momentary, short-lived and temporary leaving little choice but to seek evidence for interpreting not directly through written sources. While this reflection is manifestly true, it tends to miss an essential and deep-seated point about translation and orality. Any examination of the role interpreting plays in the history of translation cannot examine a verbal procedure by using explicative apparatus of the hand-written and typewritten translations (2002, pp. 393-395).

Prime orality as described by Cronin is that the gist of the exchange will prominently be "different from a similar exchange in the context of literacy." Failure to recognize the psychodynamics of orality will result in repetition of assumptions underlying representations of primitive and dissembling natives. Cronin adds that external commentators may arrive at the biased conclusion that uneducated persons are naïve and confused based on the fact that oral

cultures may not deal in things like geometrical figures, abstract characterization, reasoning processes of formal logic, comprehensive descriptions and explicitly articulated self-analysis. The educated person, on the other hand, has not in general succeeded in identifying the precision and superiority of oral thinking, and scholars of translation history have to date failed to value the significance of orality studies for their subject area. The power of literacy on analytical thinking could result in exaggeration of the significance of textual translation and overlook the widespread political and historical effects of interpreting exchanges (2002, pp. 393-395).

Interpreters, too, adds Cronin, face problems similar to those faced by ethnographic translation historians. The main question here is what must be done to properly understand linguistic acts in interlingual exchange. Justice cannot be fully done to an interpreter's role if mediation is not included between the different approaches of orality and literacy. Cronin observes that if interpreting studies in its perspective as an oral practice handles orality with more seriousness, then that would indeed contribute significantly to growing areas of translation studies. He continues by stating that secondary orality, viz., orality of the telephone, audio and visual media, as different from the primary orality of non-literate cultures, has expanded remarkably in the current times. Interpreting that theoretically deals with human speech in language transfer must be able to make a clear contribution to the understanding of the interaction between translation and secondary orality, but Cronin says this regrettably has not started to come about (2002, pp. 393-395).

Cronin deplores the negligence of other types of interpreting, including community and other dialogue interpreting, which focus only on conference interpreting. He agrees with what was observed by Baker who stated, "Although some work has recently been done on consecutive interpreting and on liaison interpreting, research on interpreting is still heavily influenced by the

priority which has traditionally been given to simultaneous conference interpreting" (as cited in Simms, 2001). Cronin believes that research in interpreting has been affected by geopolitics, and explains that "the theoretic paradigm of interpreting is restricted to reflect the market and institutional realities of wealthier nations" (2002, p. 390). This has had the following ramification.

> The breadth of the activity being ignored by concentrating on a minority sector in interpreting, thus weaken[s] the impact of interpreting theory on translation studies, as a discipline. Interpreting practice in developing countries that is not covered by the conference interpreting paradigm is largely ignored. Minority groups in developing countries tend to merit conference status when it is not they who speak but others who speak for them (Cronin, 2002, p. 390).

Furthermore, Cronin says that very little attention has been put on the conditions that surround the production and reproduction of the theory of interpreting. He adds that critical attention has been paid to the conditions of production and reproduction of the theory of interpreting (2002, p. 390).

In Cronin's view, the main problem that besets translation in general and interpreting in particular, is "control." He adds that "proximity" is both desired and dreaded. The first stems from the desire to manipulate, and the second stems out of concern over being misled either by the native interpreter or by the semi-native one, adding that difficulty arises in dealing with the potential duplicity of interpreters (2002, pp. 390-395).

Interpreting problems, as Cronin sees them, are attributed to intimate exchanges between people with strong personalities and are manifested in several forms. Cronin emphazises the role played by ideology in creating such interpreting problems. He describes them as being "strongly

political in nature" (2002, p.393). Brown says interpreting problems are caused by interpreters changing sides "with breaches of etiquette or even ethics" (as cited in Tymoczko & Gentzler, 2002, p. 58). Wilden describes "symmetrization" as "the ideological and unreal 'flattening out' of a hierarchical relationship as it exists" (as cited in Pöchhacker & Shlesinger, 2002, p. 394).

Cronin calls for exploring other significant areas in the theory of interpreting. One observable area is the relation between interpreting and gender, which has led to some important consequences from the colonial era to the present. He concludes by pointing out that the constant importance of orality in daily life and the vital importance of interpreting exchanges where issues of power and control are always in the forefront, call for an imperative need to bring forward a new practical approach to bear on interpreting studies to examine translation of the past, the present, and the future (2002, pp. 390-395).

1.5 Conclusion

Theories in translation studies have increasingly developed from the notion of similarities between different languages to place a significant impact on the subject itself, as developed by the Skopos theory which was introduced by Hans J. Vermeer preferring adequacy over equivalence. The word skopos according to The Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies by Mona Baker is derived from Greek "and is used as the technical term for the purpose of a translation" (p. 235). Skopos theory describes translation studies today as an interdisciplinary field of study; and Gentzler says that the Holmes paper, "The name and nature of translation studies," is "generally accepted as the founding statement for the field" (as cited in Munday, 2001, p. 10).

Reiss states that other approaches in translation studies have added to the evolving and promising field of study, by shedding more light on the text type and text purpose (1971/2000).

An example of this is Halliday's theory of discourse analysis and functional grammar which states, "A language is interpreted as a system of meanings, accompanied by forms through which the meanings can be expressed" (as cited in de Beaugrande, 1994). On the other hand, interpreting studies, "a small academic community" (Gile, 2006) have not been as prominent as translation studies in the interest of academic research. Pöchhacker and Shlesinger (2002, p. 8) describe interpreting studies as a "discipline in the making within a discipline in the making," referring to translation studies in the latter. Gile strongly disagreed with this assessment when he stated that translation as a "hypernym covering all forms of translation including the various forms of interpreting" has unfortunately not gained its complete recognition as "an autonomous discipline" (2006*).*

Chapter Two: Directionality in Interpreting

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed eclectically most pertinent theories of translation and interpreting studies. This chapter focuses on the issue of directionality in interpreting.

Most interpreting theorists agree that research in interpreting has been hampered by many factors, including the issue of directionality, and that these factors have impacted outcomes. The conventional views argue that interpreters assume more perfect command when they render into their native language, that is, the A language (Arabic in this thesis). Cook claims that interpreters should work into the language that adapts more to constraints, that is their native language (as cited in Schweda-Nicholson, 1992, p. 90). He stresses two reasons that encourage interpreters to work only into their A language; they are the syntactic structure and prosodic features of the B language. Another lively argument calls for interpreting from A language to B language. Denissenko claims that interpreters find it easy to understand the source language, which is the most essential part of a successful interpreting process; he says "the losses at input cannot be repaired" (as cited in Gile, 2005a).

2.2 Definition of Directionaliy in Interpreting

Directionality in interpreting is defined as whether interpreters are supposed to interpret into their native languages or into their second language. Through the present, many theorists see the theme of directionality in interpreting as a challenge that still needs to be addressed, and which has gained its recurring debate as a result of the remarkable strides achieved in the interpreting studies.

2.3 Major Approaches to Directionality in Interpreting.

Two of the major figures in the field of directionality in interpreting are Daniel Gile and Danica Seleskovitch. Both researchers have a great deal of experience in the field and are writers of great depth. However, their work has led them to opposing views on the topic of directionality.

Daniel Gile

Very little empirical evidence has been conducted to resolve the question of directionality in interpreting. Daniel Gile's "Effort Model" proposed in 1985 is seen as the most frequently cited empirical evidence with regard to processing models of interpreting, ie., simultaneous interpreting. This shed some light on the importance of the interpreting direction adopted by a practitioner. According to him, the Effort Model is a set of four parallel efforts that occur during the simultaneous interpreting and the consecutive interpreting practices. These efforts are Listening (L), Production (P), Memory (M) and Coordination (C). He explains that the interpreter's performance is primarily affected by the smooth flow of those efforts, and any unsteadiness in the process of any one of them, results in cognitive load, which in turn would lead to errors, omissions, or inaccuracy of speech segments. He concludes that the direction of any language has a significant impact on the Effort Model.

Gile analyzes directionality in terms of "comprehension load and production load" and their effect on the entire processing capacity (as cited in Godijns & Hindedael, 2005, p. 3). In his view, the production element in interpreting requires more attention, due to conscious efforts to avoid any linguistic interference that may occur from the source language, both in lexical and in syntactic terms. Elaborating more on prospective differences in processing requirements of production or comprehension, Gile says that certain factors interfered with particular source

languages and other specific target languages (as cited in Pöchhacker & Shlesinger, 2002, pp. 162-174). This influences the processing capacity while working between the two languages. For example, when interpreting between two languages that syntactically and linguistically differ to a large extent, the interpreter may require more processing capacity in both the comprehension and production process. Gile concludes by calling for a more balanced view on directionality in interpreting. He asserts that all of the above is in fact theoretical and to determine which direction in interpreting is better than the other, further empirical research in the field should be conducted.

Danica Seleskovitch

Danica Seleskovitch, founder of the Paris School, calls for interpreting into one's A language; and in remarks made while attending various conferences she presents evidence from her personal experience. Seleskovitch asserts that the production of working into one's B language is poorer while the interpreter is struggling to find corresponding equivalents of the A source language; she believes this results in more syntactic and lexical problems (1999, p. 57).

In addition, Seleskovitch criticizes those who call for interpreting into one's B language by observing that the assumption behind interpreting into one's B language is to substitute expression of the B language for its equivalent in the A language, but she adds that such interpreters do not in fact possess the required knowledge of their B language. This affects their performance when rendering into that language. Seleskovitch concludes that there is a need to introduce training courses in interpreting into the B language. This is particularly true in a world that is expanding with more languages being recognized, as is seen in the European Union, which aims to include more countries in Central and Eastern Europe (1999, p. 57).

Finally, Seleskovitch feels that the interference between the A language and the B language is the main factor affecting improved interpreting into the B language. As a result, she calls for considering deverbalization of the source language as a strategy for delivering a more natural idiomatic production. She thinks that more qualities, including language mastery, knowledge and experience, should be possessed by the interpreter to enable them to work in the B Language (1999, p. 57).

2.4 Definition of Directionality in the Eastern v. Western Perspectives

The issue of directionality in both translation and interpreting has long been discussed and debated but is not yet eliminated. The debate over directionality is probably best reflected in the argument presented by Gile, a professional conference interpreter, who claims that "interpreting directionality preferences are contradictory and based on traditions rather than research" (2005, p.1).

Traditional views on directionality may be explained by the Western camp versus the Eastern camp. It is often traced back to the different ideological positions taken by some prominent interpreting researchers and practitioners in the Paris School against others in the Soviet School. Minns states that "translating into your language of habitual use […] is the only way you can translate naturally, accurately and with maximum effectiveness" (n.d.). The International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) says that "although some interpreters are obliged in the course of their professional life to work into their 'B' language, most interpreters, and especially teachers of interpreting, insist on the fact that true interpreting can occur only into one's native language, i.e., 'A' language" (2007).

The argument of the supporters of interpreting into one's native language or A language asserts that practitioners may face cognitive difficulty while working from their native language

into the non-native one due to the added effort to find equivalent expressions in the former (Pedersen, 2000). Gile considers this "an absurd requirement and a hopeless task" (2005b) and offers two prime reasons for the standard performance of interpreting into the A language solely. The first reason revolves around paying more attention to "syntactic structure" when practicing the non-native or B language, and the second one requires the interpreters to give attention to the "prosodic features" of their output in the B language (2005). Thus far, three reasons have been identified for why it is preferred that interpreters work into their A language: cognitive burden, syntactic structure and prosodic features of the B language.

Other researchers declare this problem to be a challenge of comprehension and production. Newmark argues,

> When [the interpreters] worked both ways, it is easy to note not only that the 'B'
> language is poorer but that it is subservient to the 'A' language and that the efforts made
> to find corresponding expressions in 'B' distract the mind from constructing sense (1988,
> p. 23).

Thus, there are potential syntactic interference and lexical gap problems when interpreting into the B language. A study conducted in 2000 by Moser-Mercer, Frauenfelder, Casado and Kunzli revealed that professional interpreters as well as novices perform worse when "shadowing" their B language (as cited in Fleischmann, Kutz, & Schmitt, 1997, p. 359). Beeby (1998, p. 64) describes Newmark's opinion as "so widely held in Europe that the unmarked direction of translation is into the mother tongue" (as cited in Hatim, 2001, p. 166). McAlister (1992), commenting on translating out of one's native language (inverse translation), says that most texts (trade magazines, brochures, etc.) do not take culture in mind, yet it serves more the growing demands of international consumption (as cited in Hatim, 2001, p. 166).

Numerous researchers provide additional proof. They say that interpreting into one's B language is of particular difficulty for interpreting students. Seleskovitch and Lederer support their strong position against working into other than one's native language.

> Simultaneous interpreting imposes stressful working conditions and is already arduous enough. All unnecessary difficulties should be eliminated. Having the students work into their own language enables them to concentrate on what is important. Second, working into the native tongue, that is, one which comes intuitively, yields natural-sounding languages which native speakers can follow easily; and third, working into the native language relieves the interpreter from consciously having to search for idiomatic expressions in the foreign language and getting behind. It automatically assures that the interpreting will be complete and the whole content conveyed (pp.113-114).

It is worth noting that international organizations such as AIIC, which was established in Paris in 1953, insist on its interpreters working into their A language, sustaining what was made explicit in the "Recommendations on the legal protection of translators and translations and the practical means to improve the status of translators" (as cited in Baker & Malmkjær, 2001). Baker & Malmkjær state that a "translator should, as far as possible, translate into his, or her, mother tongue" (2001). Other professional institutes and associations encourage their members to work entirely into their native language.

On the other hand, the Eastern European camp is represented by the former Soviet Union, along with numerous researchers, practitioners, and theorists. It simply maintains that interpreters can work both ways, A – B and B – A, with their production being almost intact. This camp even claims that "source speech is best understood in one's native language, and the interpreter is in a better position to reformulate what s/he has fully understood," (Gile, 2005b, p.

1). Among authors with a strongly held similar view is Campbell (1998, p. 4), who argues that non-native language translation is "an activity as normal and possibly as widespread as translation into the first language." Similarly, the Slovene scholar Pokorn, who argues for the traditional view that translators should always work into their native language, maintains that it "stems from an aprioristic conviction unsupported by any scientific proof that translation into a mother tongue is by the fact it self superior to translation into a non-mother tongue." Pointing out other aspects of the importance of bilingual translation in minor countries, Pokorn says that translation into the B language is "especially common in languages with restricted distribution," but it is also common "in larger linguistic communities which are pushed into a peripheral position because of the global distribution of power and in major-language societies when communicating with ethnic minorities" (2005, p. 37). Pokorn further criticizes "traditional translation theory" that ,according to her, has ignored the practices of L2/B language translation and has emphasized that translators should work only into L1/A language.

> This conviction of the linguistic and cultural inferiority of inverse translations in an opaque way ethnocentrically defends the superiority of post-Romantic West-European concepts concerning translation and translational practice, and consequently the a priori superiority of the translators and translational practice of major-language communities (Pokorn 2005:37).

That is not all, Pokorn went on to say that "the assumption that translators can master only their mother tongue and must therefore translate only in that direction" was enhanced further by those she decribes as a "generation of Romantic authors" (2005, p. 25).

Comprehension and production can oddly be the common factors between the pro B to A interpreting camp and pro A to B interpreting camp. Nevertheless, research done by Gile , the

former mathematician and scientific and technical translator concludes, "generally it is the production that requires more attention, if only because it often involves a deliberate effort to avoid linguistic interference from the source language, both in retrieving lexical items and in constructing syntactically acceptable target-language sentences." Comprehensiuon should receive more attentiuon than production. (2005b, p. 4).

2.5 A First Language v. B Second Language

Pinker, a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in the introduction of *Language Acquisition* , defines language as

the main vehicle by which we know about other people's thoughts, and the two must be intimately related. Every time we speak we are revealing something about language, so the facts of language structure are easy to come by; these data hint at a system of extraordinary (n.d.).

The glossary of the AIIC Conference Interpreting presents a straight forward definition of B second language as a language other than the interpreter's native language, of which she or he has a perfect command and into which she or he works from one or more of her or his other languages. Some interpreters into a B language work only one of the two modes of interpreting (2006).

The same can not be said about A language. Most search engines came across define A language differently. In *The Texan* online website, Barinas Translation Consultants see A language as the interpreter's " dominant language, into which he or she is competent to interpret professionally," but emphasize that it is not always the interpreter's native language (n.d.).

2.6 Conclusion

One can conclude by noting that the demands of this fast-moving world have indeed set out the conditions in which interpreting can be performed. Interpreters are required to work from and into their native language, which is especially true in the case of the media such as television and radio interpreting. Most prestigious work places in the Arab world insist on their interpreters working both ways.

Chapter Three: Data Analyis

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discusses directionality in interpreting through the review of the major approaches to this important but often neglected issue in interpreting studies as well as main stream translation studies. Through data analysis, the aim of the present chapter is to glean what interpreters actually do in terms of directionality. Prior to data analysis proper, matters of definition and some information on interpreters at the UN and in the UAE are given.

The terms "mother tongue," "language of habitual use," "native language," "foreign language," and "second language" can all be used when speaking about the concept of directionality. Yet many authors prefer to use the nomenclature applied by the AIIC, the A language and B language. The AIIC (2006) uses the following language classifications:

A: The interpreter's native language (or another language strictly equivalent to a native language), into which the interpreter works from all her or his other languages in both modes of interpreting, simultaneous and consecutive.

B: A language other than the interpreter's native language, of which she or he has a perfect command and into which she or he works from one or more of her or his other languages. Some interpreters work into a B language in only one of the two modes of interpreting.

C: Languages, of which the interpreter has a complete understanding and from which she or he works.

This thesis utilizes the nomenclature of the AIIC, that is, the A language and B language in order to avoid what is known as terminological circularity. Also, in UAE's foreign-language degree courses, A language and B language labels are used in most institutions along with "L1"

and "L2." It is worth noting that the term "L2," according to Ellis, is defined as "to refer to any language other than the first language"; however, he prefers to apply the term "additional language," as second language (L2) "may be perceived as opprobrious to some learning settings, such as those in South Africa, involving black learners of English" (1994, p. 11);

The adoption of some specific terms in different countries as well as their translation into English or Arabic is dependent upon the cultural/political context and notions of education of each country. It is worth pointing out, however, that some English terms are controversial, for example, first language (L1), home language, mother tongue, language A, or arterial language can all refer to one another with the exact meaning being affected by the speaker's or listener's bias.

In a recent population census, Canada defined mother tongue as "the first language learned at home in childhood and still understood by the individual at the time of the census" (Statistics Canada, 2008). The Brazilian linguist Altenhofen (n.d.) views "mother tongue" in general to be vague and open to different interpretings which can be biased in linguistic intolerance, particulary to bilingual children from ethnic minority groups." Through the years, many scholars have defined "mother tongue" on the basis of frequent usage, including the speaker's emotions towards the language.

3.2 Interpreting as a Profession in the UAE

As a rapidly growing oil-rich country, with booming economic and construction sectors, the UAE has attracted and developed a pool of highly skilled interpreting personnel in recent years. It can be fair to say that this study would not have been possible 15 years ago, as the country which was formerly called the Trucial States is only 37 years old. Like all other businesses in the UAE, the translation and interpreting market has witnessed an explosion of

demand, including the demand for both directions (English to Arabic as well as Arabic to English). The last three years have seen some research initiatives, but they were focused in the translation field. Drawing on that, the growing need for translators and /or interpreters, has, unfortunately, not been matched by a corresponding effort to establish translation and interpreting as a professional business in its true meaning. This thesis found out that very few companies/businesses in the UAE have listed translation or interpreting as a separate profession. This situation contradicts the well-known British linguist Newmark's position that translation be recognized as a profession. He says that "in spite of the various circumstances under which it is practiced, translation must now be recognized as a distinct and autonomous profession" (1991, p. 45). At this time, however, most jobs and employment opportunities encountered during the study period have listed translation and sometimes interpreting as additional skills required to hiring primarily an executive secretary. The situation is gradually changing; that is with Dubai and Abu Dhabi in particular, growing at an intense pace, there are more than 25 online translation and/or interpreting agencies in the UAE at present. However, with very few training institutions and almost no regulation of the practice as a profession or business, the field trips to various public and private entities have shown that tranalstion and/or interpreting services, regardless of directionality of the language in use, are provided to a large extent by native speakers.

3.3 *Interpreters at the United Nations*

The Interpreting Service at the United Nations consists of six language sections, Arabic Section,Chinese Section, English Section ,French Section, Russian Section and Spanish Section. The Interpreting Service at the UN has a staff of 80 interpreters. Arabic Interpreters are required to interpret into Arabic from English or French and into English or French from Arabic. Working

as an interpreter at the UN will require more than a university degree; that is, one must acquire one or more of the official United Nations languages (Arabic, English, Russian, French, Spanish and Chinese) and gain fluency, foreign language knowledge, advanced language skills, and plenty of training. Conference interpreting at the UN applies three methods of interpreting: simultaneous, consecutive, and whispering. UN interpreters encounter challenges in their daily conferences and meetings. When Andreassier-Pearl, head of the UN's interpreting department, spoke in an interview with the Associated Press about her work as an interpreter, she said that the interpreter must always revise his lesson, take benefit of "glossaries and good databases for terminology" (2005). She also emphasized how difficult the delegate's voices can be for them, despite the long years of practice in the booth. "We know that some delegates are horrible and when they ask for the floor we just shudder" (2005).

3.4 Methodology and Data Collection

This study is based on a questionnaire that was sent to prospective interpreters through e-mail as an online link. The writer's address book and online contacts, as well as interpreting agencies, were used to reach out to interpreters.Hence interpreters in countries like Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine were also involved. It should be mentioned that this questionnaire did not intend to reach only interpreters at the United Nations and the UAE; that is due to the difficulty encountered while doing so in the preliminary data collection phase. Personal and/or phone interviews were another approach adopted to reach interpreters to permit further analysis of how this profession is practiced. Thus, overall data for the present study pertain to information collected from those virtual respondents, as well as other related sources that could be reached.

3.5 Data Analysis

The main objective of this thesis is to examine the concept of directionality while rendering between the Arabic and English languages. The total number of respondents was approximately 50 within an eight-week period. As mentioned in other parts of this thesis, the interpreter line of work is not well defined in UAE, and a significant number of the respondents admitted that they do not hold a degree in interpreting. They practice interpreting, solely to earn their living. Having said that, the total number of expert interpreters in the UAE and some other places reached is quite difficult to estimate.

There are 35 translation and interpreting agencies in Dubai alone, according to an online translation directory, thirteen of which have a website. These agencies state that they have not more than three or four in-house translators and/or interpreters, and that they rely mostly on freelance translators who work via e-mail from other parts of the UAE and/or other countries, including Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, etc.

The situation with regard to the Emirate of Abu Dhabi does not change much, as many translation services in the capital shared the same views. But, this is likely to change gradually, as many large private and international companies advertise daily seeking professional interpreters. Interviews were conducted with interpreters working at the major government entities in Abu Dhabi including hospitals, medical centers, immigration and passport units, the traffic section, media companies, and research centers. They came back with similar answers: the business is still not widely identified and that it is being practiced by too many unprofessional persons, both male and female.

Questionnaire

At this point, it should be noted that it was difficult to clearly differentiate between professional and unprofessional respondents to the questionnaire. The results collected by returned answers show the following figures:

The total number of returned questionnaires was 10 from interpreters.

1. The total of 10 respondents work either as in-house, part-time, or freelance interpreters. Of the 10 respondents, 5 work both directions, in and out of the Arabic and English languages, while 2 respondents say that they can work into the B language, i.e., English direction only, although they were fluent in the Arabic language.

2. Almost all respondents consider themselves bilingual; some claim to be fluent in both languages, Arabic and English, while others claim they speak and write both languages up to a very good level.

Results of the questionnaire show that interpreters interviewed prefer to work into their native language, Arabic, but they usually receive better rates when they work into their second language, English.

Questions Asked

1. How often do you have your second (B) language renderings (interpreting) revised by a native speaker of B?

Table 1

Always	1 (in recorded items only)
Never	8
Sometimes	1

Comment: The answers and the figures presented in the above table raise further questions about the competency or proficiency of such translations. Indeed, many of the translators and interpreters interviewed during the field trips or over the phone, emphasized that any target text should be proofread by a native speaker of that target language regardless of the direction in which the translator or interpreter is working. Randomly speaking, many of them agreed that when a target text is reviewed by a native speaker, the translation is more efficiently proofread on the whole, is more coherent and is surely more natural. The reasons for having a small number of translations being revised by a native speaker, according to the respondents, revolve around two main concerns. First, there is a lack of competent native speaker proofreaders in the UAE and other countries approached. Second, many if not to say all translation and/or interpreting agencies and companies are still unwilling to allocate a budget for what they consider to be additional unnecessary financial expenses.

Unsurprisingly, respondents who put down some additional comments in the questionnaire mentioned that their rates are considerably higher when they render into the B language, English in this study, and that can be added as another reason for having such a large number of translators who work both directions.

2. How difficult/easy do you find working into your A or B language?

Table 2

Easier into (A) language	4
Easier into (B) language	2
Both (No difference)	4

Comment: The responses to this question were something of a surprise. Based on Seleskovitch's work (1999, p. 57), it was expected that more interpreters would fine it easier to translate into

their A language. The surprise came in the third choice, in which 4 of the 10 respondents said they were equally comfortable in either translation/interpreting direction.

3. Which direction do you prefer to work into?

Table 3

A to B direction	2
B to A direction	3
Both directions	5

Comment: According to this table, half of the respondents work both directions. The Arabic-English - Arabic interpreting and have no preference of directionality. The other half prefer working in one direction and are split fairly evenly between the two directions. In their comments, some reported that they prefer to interpret from the English language as a source text to the Arabic language as a target language, as it is easier fpr them to manage structurally and grammatically. Other respondents take the opposite position: they favor interpreting from Arabic - English. They use the word challenge to explain some of the reasons behind this preference. This group admitted facing some significant challenges while working into their B language, including comprehending incoming speech and speach, as is the case with simultaneous interpreting. This overlap leads to difficulty in comprehending the speech in hand and puts more load on their memory. Liu observed that interpreters' working memory in particular is not larger than that of others, but they have developed a strategy to utilize their memory more effectively (2001, p. 22).

4. Do you agree with the hypothesis that A and B interpreting display differences?

Table 4

YES	7
NO	0
To some extent	3

Comment: This question met with majority consent. The Arabic and English languages exhibit complete differences in terms of phonological, morphological, and syntactic aspects. Being one of the "high context" languages, as described by Hall (2006, p. 632), the interpreter working from an Arabic source text to an English target text has to pay close attention to all he/she hears in order to miss no chance of comprehending the speaker's words, thus producing a fruitful and accurate rendering in the target language.

5. In which direction have you mostly interpreted?

Table 5

A language	5
B language	2
Both directions	3

Comment: As Table 5 shows, five interpreters worked into their A language, Arabic. The figures above do not indicate that working into A language is most preferable by the respondents. There are many factors involved in the direction chosen by the interpreter, including market demands, interpreter's not being very competent in the B language, attractive interpreting rates, etc.

In terms of the level of B language competence, it was classified by Gile (2005a) as the most pertinent factor in the interpreting or translation practice. In translation studies, competence, according to Chomsky, is the knowledge speakers/listerners have of their language, (as cited in Patterson, 1998, p. 628). According to one comment on the above question,

ZERO

6 In

7 resp

knowledge of grammar, lexicals and other aesthetic aspects of the A language would definitely save time and ease the load on the interpreter's memory.

6. Does your organization/employer specify the direction for you?

Table 6

YES	7
NO	3
Other	0

Comment: Seven of the 10 respondents reported that their employers specify the direction in which they will work. With the pressing need for interpreters in the UAE's growing economy, it may seem that the respondents would be in the position to choose their direction of interpreting. However, it may be that the market need that causes employers to require the directionality that best suits their needs.

7. In which direction do you find it easier dealing with terminology?

Table 7

A language	6
B language	4
Both directions	0

Comment: The results of Question 7 show that six of the respondents found it easier to work into their native language when dealing with terminology.

8. Into which direction do you find dealing with structure and grammar easier to manage for a 'better' output?.

Table 8

A language	6

B language	4
Both directions	0

Comment: In terms of difficulty , six respondents consider rendering into their mother tongue, Arabic, easier as they claim its structure and syntactic feaures are closer to their reach than that of the second language, English. Gile (as cited in Shlesinger, 2003) notes that in these situations

> more information must be processed per unit of time. […] High speech density is probably the most frequent source of interpreting problems. High speech density is associated with […] information elements put next to each other without grammatical or other low-density word groups in-between.

In addition to Gile's concerns, there is the "ear-voice-span"(EVS) feature which characterizes some interpreting practice. This was described by Hatim and Mason (1997, p. 62) as the "time lag between reception of source text and production of target text" and is seen as clear evidence for adding to the interpreter's dilemma of comprehension.

9. Which language lends itself to you for a better retention of information?

Table 9

A language	6
B language	3
Both	1

Comment: By a two to one margin, the interpreters in this study prefer to translate into their A language, which supports the position of Denissovitch. The practitioners' familiarity with and comfort level in their A language reduces memory load problems, thereby allowing a better product (1999, p. 57).

10. What type of interpreting do you carry out most?

Table 10

Consecutive	5
Simultaneous	2
Both	3

Comment: Three respondents report they perform consecutive and simultaneous interpreting with equal frequency. The other seven answers are somewhat intriguing in that by a two to one margin the interpreters typically perform consecutive translating. Since the interpreters perform in the manner required by their employers, these assignments appear to underline Gile's note (2001) that consecutive translations permit the interpreters to form a better understanding of the material being presented.

Simultaneous Interpreting (SI) and Consecutive Interpreting (CI) may share the "listening phase," but they differ in the production. The consecutive interpreter puts most of his production on notes, while the simultaneous interpreter has to produce it as a target speech. In responding to this question, two respondents answered that they engage in simultaneous translation, five report consecutive interpreting, and three work as both simultaneous and consecutive interpreters. The five consecutive interpreters share their experiences while taking notes. One said that she encounters difficulties, including interpreters for fast speakers, a situation that often cause lags and puts more load on her memory. Aside from that, a good number of respondents say that although they had to carry out simultaneous interpreting tasks, they prefer to work in consecutive interpreting and particularly into their native language, Arabic. Some interpreters insist that no matter how professional and experienced the interpreter into the B language is, working into the A language is far more natural and is much easier. They say that working in the consecutive

mode is more accurate and authentic than working in the simultaneous interpreting, proving what Gile said:

> In the consecutive mode, interpreters have the possibility of listening to and assimilating the linguistically completed expression of ideas or sequences of ideas before starting to produce their own speech, whereas in simultaneous, they cannot afford to lag behind the speaker and therefore must often start their rendition into the target language on the basis of a shorter, not fully digested source-speech segment (2001).

It is interesting to note before leaving this section that most of the interviewees claim to have reached strategic approaches sufficient to cover all different demands of Arabic/English interpreting. That said, some interpreters, who claimed to be skillfull in this domain, spoke about learning such strategies in interpreting training programs they have taken.

11. When the speaker uses some dialect the interpreter is not familiar with, how do you handle it?

Table 11

Ignore	9
Give it a try	1
Never happened.	0

Comment: While trying hard to comprehend what the speaker means, 9 out of the 10 interpreters straightforwardly replied that they would ignore any dome dialect they do not comprehend. This problem can occur when an interpreter is performing from his/her A language or into it, bringing to light what is described by Gile as "comprehension load" (2005b, p. 10). If working from Arabic to English, do you render "wa" ("and")?

Table 12

Always	7
Rarely	1
According to context.	2

Comment: The answer to this question was, in fact not surprising, as most interpreters (7 out of the 10) state that they do render "wa" by its equivalent "and" in English. They emphasized that rending "wa" presents the actual meaning of the speaker finishing it with a better cohesive meaning.The relationship between "wa" and "and" may be direct or one to one. "Wa" in interpreting can sometimes be redundant, and deleting it will not affect the interpreting production. The table below (from Poznań Studies in Contemporary Linguistics) shows the functions of "wa" and "and" as well as the differences:

Function	AND	WA
Consequences	+	-
Sequence	+	+
Contrast	+	+
Simultaneity	+	+
Consession	+	+
Condition	+	+
Addition	+	+
Explanation	+	-
Comment	+	+
Resumption	+	+
Manner	-	+
Oath	-	+
Adverbial (by, Along)	-	+
Option	-	+
Redundance	-	+
Praise/ Admiration	-	+
Threat/underestimation	-	+

Interviews

In order to learn more about the notion of directionality in interpreting and how it can have an effect on the overall performance of interpreters, a series of interviews was conducted

with interpreters working in the UAE, precisely in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, in medical centers, the immigration department, police stations and courts. With concerns about personal privacy and work confidentiality in mind, a limited number of interpreting sessions was attended by the author of this thesis, in which the performace of the interpreter, including accuracy and strategies used, were the prime focus.

The setting of court interpreting is one of the most common types of interpreting used in the UAE. In-depth interviews were carried out with four interpreters at a police station, an immigration unit, and a court where two sessions were observed. The visits were meant to witness how interpreters perfom at various events, and to observe their strategies uses and duties. The questions presented relate more or less to the ones presented in the questionnaire, particularly their personal preferences of which direction they prefer to work, as well as their rates. The study found out that there are still significant barriers within the works of this type of interpreting approach:

1. Lack of clear rules regarding the interpreter's roles.

2. Lack of effective training programs, materials, and appropriate references.

3. Lack of social awareness or competence regarding the significant role played by interpreters at all kinds of interpreting settings.

Indeed, the above drawbacks can also be noted in what can be described as a life-changing encounter, that is, medical interpreting, in the nature of the work of healthcare interpreters in the UAE. This type of interpreting, which in normal settings goes on among three persons, the caregiver, the patient and in between is the professional medical interpreter. In the online American medical journal, *The Oncologist*, one Spanish medical interpreter shares his experience, in particular, the emotional effects involved while doing his job. He speaks of "the

painful process," saying that "in a couple of seconds" the interpreter should "process all the information before it is transmitted to the patient and in our minds" (Schapira, 2008). Another interpreter describes his experience in a hospital as being on "an emotional seesaw" (Schapira, 2008). Another important issue to examine is the ramification of medical interpreting errors. Random answers by some medical interpreters at health centers and hospitals in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi suggested unproved statistics that more than 90 percent of such errors were due to what they called the tendancy to omit information on the interpreter's part, a practice that can have serious consequences on the life of patients.

Interviewees were approached with the questions mentioned in the questionnaire and sometimes with others. Almost all of the interviewees agreed that preparation for the subject in hand, including having a script or a recording tape of the source text, enables them to produce satisfying results, in terms of accuracy, smoothness. They also spoke of the speaker's speed and its affect on their performance when they are dealing with Arabic and/or English.

Chapter Four: Conclusions and recommendations

This thesis grew out of the desire to understand the ongoing debate on the issue of directionality in interpreting and translating, examining primarily the Arabic and English languages. The results discussed in the previous chapter show that the majority of interpreters, whether working on a full-time , part-time or freelance basis, seem to prefer the direction of rendering into their native language, Arabic. This is interesting enough to call for more research, to identify the reasons and try to address the matter. A recent article by the widely- read British daily, *The Guardian*, highlights the most crucial dilemma facing interpreting as a profession, that is, the shortage of professional interpreters as well as people who want to become interpreters. This is a change of situation, as according to Carsten of the University of Leeds (n.d.), "A decent flow of applicants emerged to take up these jobs from the earliest university interpreting courses set up in the 1960s." This brings into attention the impact of such situations on the attitudes of practictioners who might have to work between both directions in order to meet growing demands on interpreting. The arcticle goes on to say that the biggest demand is for interpreters whose native language is the English language which in fact is utilized in 99.9 percent of the European Commission's meetings. This study shows that a relative majority of the questionnaire respondents work between the two directions, Arabic/English and English/Arabic; but this may not in fact reflect the overall situation of interpreting and translation.

This study has found out that there is almost no empirical research into the issue of directionality of Arabic and English interpreting and translation and thus presents answers to some of the directionality issues, including strategy use, preferences, and performance of the profession's practitioners in interpreting and translation. This thesis suggests that the performace of professional interpreters, i.e., at the UN, is in fact far better than that of interpreters at

different interpreting settings, including medical, court, media, etc. Nevertheless, the results

reached by this thesis need to be looked at with caution, as more studies are needed to shed more

light on the notion of directionality, including more research with regard to capacity

requirements, processes of interpreting, the interpreters's performance, and how to improve

strategies already in place. Finally, specific courses to address directionality should be added to

training programs for interpreters.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire

I am currently working on my MA thesis as my final requirement, and chose to work on the topic of directionality in Arabic/English interpreting. To get some input from practicing interpreting, I have prepared this questionnaire.

I would be very grateful if you could answer the questions as fully as possible; your comments will be very valuable in sketching a picture of directionality in Arabic/English interpreting.

All information will be treated in the strictest confidentiality. The identities of the respondents will not be disclosed at any stage of the process. The information you provide will be computed to arrive at frequencies and percentages only.

I would, however, be happy to acknowledge your support if you wish me to do so, and your name will be mentioned in the acknowledgements section.

Please note that

A= mother tongue (Arabic in our case)

B= second language (English in our case).

I would be very grateful if you would complete the questionnaire and return it to me by return e-mail. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you very much indeed for your time and assistance.

1. How often do you have your second (B) language renderings (interpreting) revised by a native speaker of B?

Always	
Never	
Sometimes	

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

2. How difficult/easy do you find working into your A or B language?

☐ Easier into (A) language	
☐ Easier into (B) language	
☐ Both (No difference)	

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

3. Which direction do you prefer to work into?

☐ A to B direction

☐ B to A direction

☐ Both directions

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

4. Do you agree with the hypothesis that A and B interpreting display differences?

☐ YES

☐ NO

☐ To some extent

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

5. In which direction have you mostly translated/interpreted?

☐ Alanguage

☐ Blanguage

☐ Both directions

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

6. Does your organization/employer specify the direction for you?

☐ YES

☐ NO

☐ Other

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

7. In which direction do you find it easier dealing with terminology?

☐ Alanguage

☐ Blanguage

☐ Both directions

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

8. Into which direction do you find dealing with structure and grammar easier to manage for a

better output?

☐ Alanguage

☐ Blanguage

☐ Both directions

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

9. Which language lends itself to you for a better retention of information?

☐ Alanguage

☐ Blanguage

☐ Both directions

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

10. What type of interpreting do you carry out most?

☐ Consecutive

☐ Simultaneous

☐ Both

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

11. When the speaker uses dome dialect the interpreter is not familiar with, how do you handle it?

☐ Ignore
☐ Give it a try
☐ Never happened

12. If working from Arabic to English, do you render "wa" ("and")?

☐ Always
☐ Rarely
☐ According to context

Overall Comments: Based on your experience and international standards, please comment here on any aspect related to Arabic/English interpreting.

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

About you:

1) Name (optional): _____

2) Nationality (optional): _____

3) Academic degrees: B.A. (in _____),

   M.A. (in _____),

   Ph.D. (in _____),

   other (in _____.

4) Details of training in translation/interpreting:

   _____

   _____

5) Years of experience as translator (_____) as interpreter (_____).

6) Current organization/employer.