

GRAMMATICAL INTERFERENCE OF ARABIC ON ENGLISH IN THE PASSIVE VOICE

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English and Arabic are globally prominent languages with similarities and distinctions. The Arabic language exhibits a distinct syntactical structure compared to English. This study builds upon previous comparative research on Arabic and English, highlighting grammatical issues in passive sentence construction. Different sources from the literature demonstrate that Arabic and English have divergences in sentence structure that could cause grammatical interference.

Keywords: contrastive analysis hypothesis; grammatical interference; language interference; passive voice; the Arabic language; the English language.

ГРАММАТИЧЕСКАЯ ИНТЕРФЕРЕНЦИЯ АРАБСКОГО ЯЗЫКА НА АНГЛИЙСКИЙ ЯЗЫК НА ПРИМЕРЕ ПАССИВНОГО ЗАЛОГА

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Английский и арабский языки являются всемирно известными языками, имеющими определенные сходства и различия. Синтаксические структуры арабского языка отличаются от английского. Данное исследование, основанное на предыдущих сравнительных исследованиях арабского и английского языков, посвящено грамматическим проблемам, возникающим при построении пассивных структур. Различные источники показывают, что арабский и английский языки имеют различия в структуре предложений, которые могут являться причиной грамматической интерференции.

Ключевые слова: гипотеза контрастивного анализа; грамматическая интерференция; языковая интерференция; пассивный залог; арабский язык; английский язык.

To understand the connection between "language interference" and the notion of "transfer," it is essential to explore the concept of transfer. The term "language interference" refers to how one's mother tongue affects spoken language and can have either a detrimental or beneficial influence. Negative transfer occurs when difficulties arise from using the target language alongside one's native language, whereas positive transfer arises when similarities between languages assist in the learning process. Essentially, "language interference" involves the transfer of linguistic characteristics from one language to another, and this phenomenon is closely linked with the concept of "transfer."

C. S. Lobban and M. Schefter believe that using passive voice in scientific writing can contribute to an objective perspective by removing personal involvement from the narration and improving clarity in procedures and descriptions [1]. The impact of grammar interference extends beyond vocabulary substitution, affecting different aspects such as phonetic collection, morphology and sentence structure in language contact scenarios. Achieving permanent changes requires a sustained coexistence of different cultures while demonstrating consistent patterns across all linguistic levels. Passive voice refers to instances where the noun serves as the subject and undergoes the action of a verb, enabling avoidance of assigning responsibility to the doer. This study will examine the cross-linguistic influence resulting from bilingualism, with a specific focus on how Arabic interferes with passive sentence structures.

When the subject undergoes the action initiated by the verb, we categorize the verb as passive. In other words, a passive sentence is created when a sentence's subject experiences a movement that shifts the focus to the theme. The construction of a passive sentence in English diverges from its counterpart in Arabic. Given the dissimilarities in tense structures between Arabic and English, learners may encounter challenges when attempting to form sentences in the English passive voice.

M. A. Squier and O. A. Shqeer highlight that the correlation between the subject and verb poses a more intricate challenge in Arabic than in English, potentially leading to interference for Arabic language learners [2]. In Arabic, verbs do not exhibit agreement with the subject when they come before it, whereas they do so when following the issue, as observed in the word arrangement of the sentence "SVO" (subject-verb-object). In Arabic, verbs also align with their subject regarding quantity, and case. A. S. Alasfour [3, p. 1] states that the occurrence of L1 transfer errors related to relative clauses was somewhat higher than other error types. However, their frequency was on par with other errors regarding passive voice errors influenced by L1.

The passive voice is used in both English and Arabic to modify active sentences. In English, the subject and object positions are switched, the verb becomes a participle, and the agent is introduced with the word "by". On the other hand, in Arabic, modifications are made to the verb's vowels and the case-ending of the object while omitting mention of the agent [4].

Arabic demonstrates a unique syntax when contrasted with English. Although both languages share similarities in conveying time, their methods for constructing passive sentences vary. A "subject" is necessary to represent the actor in English, while Arabic employs an alternative syntax. Occasionally, sentences may conform to syntactical rules but lack pragmatic

accuracy within a given context. Passive voice can influence how meaning is understood by Arabic and English speakers during communication [5].

The passive voice is employed to diminish the significance of the doer, and it is created using the auxiliary verb 'be' along with the past participle of the main verb. The presence or absence of a doer in a passive voice sentence can influence its length, as it may include a "by" phrase to indicate the doer of the action. The linguistic disparities between Arabic and English can present difficulties for individuals seeking to become proficient in English.

The passive voice poses a substantial challenge in terms of linguistic interference between Arabic and English because of disparities in word order. In Arabic, passive voice construction commonly involves using the auxiliary verb "يُتَمَّ" (yutamm) followed by the past participle of the verb without necessitating the inclusion of a copula. In contrast, the passive sentence structure in English is formed using the auxiliary verb "be" and the past participle, with the copula as a necessary construction element. In Arabic, passive voice sentences are frequently formed without a copula and typically follow SVO word order. When Arabic speakers attempt to construct passive sentences in English, they might apply this structure, even though English mandates the use of the auxiliary verb "be" and follows a different word order (Object-Verb-Subject, or OVS). Additionally, Arabic tends to use pronouns less frequently than English. Consequently, Arabic speakers unintentionally omit essential pronouns in passive English sentences, resulting in sentence structures that must be corrected.

The distinction between the verbal/adjectival passive and the resulting differences in aspectual meaning, particularly concerning the dynamism or stasis of verbs, is worth noting [6]. The main difference between English and Arabic lies in the use of auxiliary verbs in English and their absence in Arabic. While Arabic sentences typically consist of a subject and a complement, English sentences involve a subject, a copula, and an addition. For example, "*The student is intelligent*" is expressed as such in English, while its equivalent in Arabic does not include any changes to the verb. In Arabic, passivization is achieved by modifying the vowels within the verb stem and tense prefix or by incorporating a specific prefix. This point is reiterated later on. In Arabic, passivization involves altering the verb's vowel while maintaining word order and omitting any mention of the agent. The object in an active sentence becomes the subject in a passive sentence. Passive voice constructions are less common in Arabic compared to English due to Arabic's limited ability to express the agent explicitly in passive sentences. The subject of a passive voice construction is derived from the object of an active verb and marked with nominative case inflection in classical/standard Arabic. The transformation into passive voice within

Arabic can be accomplished through vowel changes within the main verb and tense prefix or through the addition of a prefix repeating previously provided information [7].

In Arabic and English, the passive voice is generated by transforming an equivalent active sentence, involving the shift of the object to the subject position. However, there are distinct rules governing the formation of passive voice in each language. In English, tolerant control involves exchanging the subject and object, transforming the verb into its participle form, and introducing “by” before the agent. Conversely, in Arabic’s passive rule, the transformation primarily entails changes in the vowels of the verb and the object’s case-ending, accompanied by the obligatory removal of the agent in the target language’s structure [7].

Arabic has greater flexibility in the arrangement and placement of its linguistic components. While its fundamental word order is Verb-Subject-Object (VSO), M. A. Attia [8] emphasizes the relatively open nature of Arabic’s word order. He explains that Arabic accommodates various word orders, including VOS and OVS, and the basic VSO structure. Furthermore, he points out that Arabic employs a nominal sentence structure comprising a subject phrase and a predicate phrase, lacking a specific verb or copula. This stands in contrast to English, which adheres to SVO word order, where altering the sequence of words can significantly affect sentence meaning. For example, an active English sentence like “*The girl ate an apple*” remains fixed in its structure.

In contrast, Arabic offers flexibility in expressing the same functional meaning through various word order permutations, such as “*Akalat (ate) albedo (the girl) tufahatan (an apple)*” [9, p. 106]. In Arabic, the passive voice serves as a written style under specific conditions: 1) when the subject remains anonymous, 2) when the subject’s importance is diminished, or 3) when the object’s significance surpasses the subject.

An experiment was conducted using one of the well-established Arabic morphological analyzers to underscore the limitations of analyzing Arabic passive verbs. The findings emphasize the necessity of addressing the issues related to the morphological analysis of passive verbs to enhance the accuracy of Arabic word recognition.

Thus the research focuses on the linguistic aspects of language interference observed in Arabic and English, with specific attention given to the formation of passive-voice sentences. The interference is greatly impacted by variations in linguistic structure, including differences in word order and the use of copulas. In passive voice Arabic often adheres to an SVO word order, but English prefers an OVS word order accompanied by the copula “be”. Moreover, it is observed that Arabic employs a lower number of

pronouns compared to English, resulting in the removal of essential pronouns in passive English phrases. This omission might impact the intelligibility and structure of the sentences. The issues arising from language interference between Arabic and English in passive sentences are underscored by these structural discrepancies.

Sentence structure inaccuracies and the development of passive voice are outcomes of grammatical interference that arise from the structural disparities between Arabic and English. Existing research shows that Arabic speakers use subject-verb-object (SVO) word order and lack a copula. In contrast, English speakers primarily use object-verb-subject (OVS) word order with the auxiliary verb “be”. In passive voice phrases Arabic speakers often omit essential elements like copulas and pronouns, leading to grammatical errors. These errors highlight the challenges of linguistic interference in navigating the grammatical differences between Arabic and English. The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) compares languages to uncover distinctions or resemblances between L1 and L2. By applying CAH to passive voice construction, linguists can identify specific structural differences responsible for interference in word order, copula usage, and pronoun usage between Arabic and English. This method helps pinpoint areas where Arabic speakers may struggle to conform to English passive voice conventions, revealing the complex linguistic dynamics underlying interference phenomena. The theory of Interlanguage explains the impact of Arabic grammatical interference on the construction of passive voice in English. This theory sheds light on the reasons why Arabic passive voice structures continue to be present in English communication, owing to the divergence between the two languages. Additionally, it elucidates the transient adoption of passive voice patterns from Arabic in their English expressions.

The investigation of grammatical interference from Arabic in the construction of passive voice in English brings attention to the challenges arising from linguistic disparities. Variances in word order, copula usage and pronoun deployment can result in mistakes when forming passive sentences. The two languages' main contributors to grammatical errors are the structural distinctions. The Comparative Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) offers a systematic approach to examining linguistic forms and regulations in Arabic and English. A comparison between Arabic and English allows for identifying areas where structural differences exist, leading to interference. Interlanguage theory aids in comprehending errors made by Arabic speakers when using English passive voice structures. Through interlanguage researchers gain insights into the reasons behind these grammatical errors, offering practical guidance to non-native English speakers. Non-English speakers should be mindful of these issues as they strive to enhance

communication between individuals who speak Arabic and those who speak English.

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