Translation Assessment of Temporal Succession of Events in Narrative Discourse from Arabic into English

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Abstract

The present paper aims at investigating the lexical and grammatical means by which events in written texts are temporally sequenced in standard Arabic and Standard English. Temporal succession refers to the chronological order of events which is signalled typically by conjunctions, tense, aspect, synonyms, antonyms, time adverbials and prepositions. The researcher built his study on two hypotheses: firstly, both languages tend to use the same lexico-grammatical devices to achieve the succession concerned. Secondly, translating Arabic temporal connectives, found in narrative texts, into English seems to pose rendition difficulties which can be attributed to grammatical and discoursal differences between the two languages. The results of the contrastive analysis conducted by the researcher have proved that the two languages partially employ the same lexico-grammatical connectives to maintain the temporal sequence of actions and events. However, unlike English, Arabic employs some coordinators as time connectives. As for the translation assessment, it has been found out that in Arabic literary texts, time connectives have not been accurately translated. This has been particularly in evidence as far as Arabic coordinators (as time connectives) are concerned.

Keywords

Arabic, assessment, connectivity, devices, English, rendition, succession, temporal

1. Introduction

Prose translation has received less attention by translation theorists in comparison with poetry translation. This is attributed to the widely spread erroneous notion that a novel or a short story is somehow of a simpler structure than a poem and consequently easier to translate (Bassnett, 2002, p. 114). On equal-footing with poetic texts, prose texts (when translated across languages) involve rendition difficulties which should be carefully treated. It is normally claimed by some scholars and translators that the simplicity of the translation of novels, short stories or anecdotes is owing to the lack of such a literary genre to rhyme, meter, imagery, assonance, etc. Nevertheless, prose translation is not devoid of thorny areas at different levels of language analysis (e.g. lexical, syntactic, semantic, or discoursal) that such areas pose challenges to translators to handle. Differences at these levels would definitely add to the difficulty of translating a given text from one language to another especially when

the absence of equivalence comes to the fore. It is very frequent that the fine senses of some lexis (e.g. coordinators, prepositions, etc.) in the source language lead to the rise of inaccuracies in the target language due to the inherent difficulty (which is present in the source language itself) of such lexis. Besides, one cannot deny that there is "chronological as well as logical priority in translation: the source text precedes the translation in time and serves as the basis for the latter's creation" (Toury, 1985, p. 20). This explicitly shows that the translator is constrained by the source text linguistic and cultural norms and he has to transplant it in a newly different linguistic and cultural world.

Accordingly, the translation of any text-type involves some linguistic challenges (lexical and structural) that entail special attention on the part of translators. These challenges can be overcome by meticulous scrutiny of the key lexical units that are pregnant with meanings and they are used intentionally by the original's writer. The same applies to structural difficulties.

In addition, it has been settled that cultural differences between the source text and the target text are the most challenging translation difficulties that translators encounter (Nida, 1964). However, translation difficulties stemming from cultural differences are beyond the coverage of the present paper.

2. Literature Review

The translations of different sub-types (e.g. poetic, dramatic, etc.) of literary texts have been continually produced where various mistranslations are diagnosed by translation critics. Such mistranslations emanate from linguistic and cultural discrepancies between the languages involved in the translation process. For instance, the English translation versions of an Italian novel *Fontamara* show several types of negative shift where the sentences appear to have been translated at face value, rather than as component units in a complex overall structure. Such types of negative shift involve: (1) mistranslation of information, (2) sub-interpretation of the original text and (3) superficial interpretation of connections between intentional correlatives (Bassnett, 2002, p. 118).

Moe (2010) studied the translation of popular fictions from English to Slovene where he pinpointed various types of shifts involved in the translation of such a literary text-type. He (2010, pp. 132-134) categorized the shifts such as increased formality in that a higher level of it is achieved by lexical choices: more formal synonyms, sometimes unusual words or phrases, or archaisms. Translators sometimes choose to leave out or embellish very informal or vulgar expressions. Besides, shifts of meaning ranked second (after increased formality) in translating popular fictions as they are attributed to various reasons such as interference between English and Slovene, cases of word-for-word translation. As for stylistic shifts, Moe (2010, p. 135) cited examples of compression; translators frequently decide to say the same thing with less words than the original author. One typical example where one of the characters talks about "the man who is married to my sister" so as to distance himself of a very unpleasant character, who, in Slovene translation, becomes "my brother-in-law". Another very common change is omission of repeated words, according to the Slovene norm, which is quite different from the English norm.

Mizaal (2011) assessed three Arabic translations of (the British novelist) William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. This novel is considered by critics as the author's masterpiece as he got Nobel Prize for literature for writing such a novel. After he finished the translation assessment, he (pp. 170-174) concluded that the three translations involved various flaws such as resorting to the use of the foreign words instead of the target ones where the latter are present. For instance, the use of phonetic translation " البلاج, السويتر, الاجون " (whose meanings respectively run as: *seashore*, *sweater*, *lagoon*) appeared in the translations where the translators could have respectively used the Arabic equivalents: سترة من الصوف, ساحلية ساحل البحر. بحيرة

3. Temporal Cohesion in Language

The concept of cohesion "is a semantic unit; it refers to relations of meaning that exist within the text, and that define it as a text" (Halliday & Hassan, 1976, p. 4). No doubt that cohesion in language is maintained by various means: grammatical and lexical. The former can be fulfilled by reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction whereas the latter is maintained by repetition, collocation, reiteration, reference and conjunction. Lexical conjunction could be additive, causal, and temporal. Accordingly, temporal cohesion is maintained in part by lexis, and by the grammatical category of tense and of aspect (see section 3.3 below).

3.1 Temporal Connectivity in English

English has its links to signal the sequencing of events when they occur in written or spoken discourse. These links, broadly speaking, fall within the area of lexis, grammar and discourse analysis. Discoursal links are generally implicit (e.g. the greeting ritual in conversational opening is followed by the topics of common concern to participants). Occurring in English and some other languages, typically temporal connectivity (Note 1) is traditionally treated "in terms of sequence of tense in that a tense of a finite verb in a matrix clause places constraints on the tense of a complement clause" (Trask, 1993, p. 251). That is, it is accurate to say: *David opened the door of the reading room and started to type his research* but it is not correct to say *David opened the door of the reading room and starts to type his paper*. However, temporal succession is not confined to the dependencies between tense forms in successive clauses .It can be signalled by lexis whose realizations are time deixis that "makes reference to the ways particular cultures conceptualize and measure time" (Marmaridou, 2000, p. 82). Generally speaking in most languages time is measured in cycles that refer to a 24-hour day and the ways it is divided into sub-section of sociocultural significance e.g. the month and its 7-day week cycles, the three-month season cycle corresponding to cycles of natural order , and the year which constitutes the highest unit of temporal cycle.

The most prominent expressions in encoding time deixis in English are the adverbs: *now*, *then*, *soon*, *recently* and verb tense. When time deixis interacts with calendrical units of time words like *today*, *tomorrow* and *yesterday*, they are used to locate an utterance relative to time. Nevertheless, the use of these is flexible in that it can indicate the entire time span specified or just a relevant part of it (ibid.).

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Cruse (2011, p. 321) confirms that temporal deictics function to locate points or intervals on the time axis using "(ultimately) the moment of speaking as a preference point." Thus, there are three major divisions of the time axis (i) before the moment of utterance, (ii) at the time of utterance (iii) after the time of utterance. One should not forget that temporal deictics depend heavily on calendric notions subsuming both clock and calendar.

The temporal relationship between the events and states that are described in successive sentences in a narrative discourse is often signalled explicitly by means of definite time adverbials (e.g. Brown arrived to Baghdad at 8 PM. He left again at PM 10.). Scholars (e.g. Jespersen), nevertheless, have noticed the absence of temporal relationship markers and yet the temporal succession is maintained. This is true when a sentence contains a verb conveying the sense of an accomplishment or of an activity, but no definite time adverb, that sentence is understood to describe an event occurring later than the time of the previous sentence's event, i.e. narrative time moves forward in the second sentence. It is often suggested that achievements differ from accomplishments in that achievements are punctual in some sense whereas accomplishments have duration; dying, an achievement, it happens at once while building a house is an accomplishment that takes time (Dowty, 1986, p. 42).

(1) John entered the conference hall. The organizing committee members walked over to him. (Walking over takes some time; therefore, it is an accomplishment)

(2) John entered the conference hall. The organizing committee members woke up. (Waking up happens at once; it is an achievement)

Griffiths (2006, pp. 67-68) supports the above view in saying that the progressive aspect and the verb *stop* can be used as criteria distinguishing between achievements and accomplishments. The progressive aspect can also be used to differentiate between sentences expressing states and activities.

(3) He stopped having a cosmetic surgery. (Accomplishment)

(4) He stopped joining the band. (Achievement)

(5) He was having a cosmetic surgery. (Activity)

(6) He was having one leg. (State)

3.2 Anaphoric and Cataphoric Temporal Markers

Halliday and Hassan (1976, p. 261) state that the relation between the theses of two successive sentences may be simply one of sequence in time; the one is subsequent to the other. So, it is logically accepted to say: *Mr. Brown died yesterday. Then, he was buried the following morning*, where the order of these two sentences cannot be reversed. In a similar vein, Levinson (1983, p. 74) maintains that the temporal markers can be in a sharp contradiction with each other in case they exhibit the threefold time distinction, i.e. past, present and future. For instance, *now* contrasts with *then* and indeed *then* can be described as "not now" to allow for its use in both past and future. *Then* is sometimes claimed to be necessarily anaphoric in nature and it can be used for indicating future actions.

(7) Farmers sow the fields with wheat. Then, they start to harvest it. (Schiffrin, 1994, p. 299f)

Quirk et al. (1985, pp. 533-539) hold the view that there are key items realizing forward span which are

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until and *till* used for introducing clauses or prepositional phrases. The key term realizing backward span is *since.*

(8) Tony's performance was postponed {until *all dignitaries arrived.*

{*until midnight.*

(9) Sara has not visited the Egyptian Museum *since her father left Cairo as ambassador to France there*.

(10) Steven has been trying to finish his thesis *since last June*.

On his part, Orvokki (1978, p. 74) states that time connectives can indicate sequence of events anaphorically and cataphorically; the typical of time connectives are *after* and *before, earlier and later*. They, i.e. *after and before*, are normally considered as converses. Consider the following examples:

(11) a. John finished his studies before he travelled all over the world.

b. John travelled all over the world after he finished his studies.

(12) a. John was a military police officer before Jack was.

b. Jack was a military police officer after John was.

In sentence (11. a) and (11. b), the two conjunctions are not converses because the order of events involved was reversed but no difference in meaning arises because the pair of the sentences entails each other.

To conclude, in such sentences the two conjunctions are used to signal the sequence of events anaphorically and cataphorically on equal footing. However, this does not hold true for sentence (12. a) and (12. b) because (a) entails (b) but not the other way round. This is owing to the fact that (a) is true only if John became a military police officer before Jack became one, but (b) can be true no matter in which order their careers began, if for instance Jack continues to be a military police officer even after John has stopped.

Accordingly, *before-after,* as a pair of conjunctions, exhibits a preceding-following relation between events whose order is reversible unless the *before-clause* has a durative predicate (state or activity) where *A*. before *B*. entails *B*. after *A*. but not the other way round.

To sum up, temporal markers belong to different parts of speech which can be, broadly speaking, categorized into those showing sequentiality, simultaneity, immediateness, repetition, specificity, etc. (Halliday & Hassan, 1967, p. 266)

3.3 Tense and Aspect

Many definitions of the category of tense have been introduced by linguists and grammarians (e.g. Jespersen, Quirk, Leech etc.). Moreover, tense has remained an area over which much controversy is held among specialists even in languages (e.g. English) in which this category is almost theoretically well-established (e.g. the sentence I *wish* I *knew* is not necessarily referring to the past time, historical present is a case in point etc.). For space necessity, it is not suitable to get involved in such a controversy. As defined by Lyons (1968, p. 304), "the category of tense has to do with time relations in so far as these are expressed by systematic grammatical contrasts". He (p. 305) adds that the essential

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characteristics of the category of tense is that it relates the time of the action, event, or state of affairs referred to in the sentence to the time of utterance (the time of utterance being "now"). Accordingly, it is a deictic category, i.e. partly or wholly dependent upon deixis. Crystal (2008, p. 479) maintains that tense is "a category used in the grammatical description of verbs … referring primarily to the way grammar marks the time at which the action denoted by the verb took place".

One should keep in mind that there is no one-to-one correspondence between tense forms and time. In addition, there are overlaps between tense forms and other verbal functions such aspect and mood. And since it is typically a deictic category, it is an essential means of signalling temporal relations in a language. Lyons (1977, p. 678) supports this view by saying that "tense … is part of the deictic frame of temporal reference: it grammaticalizes the relationship which holds between the time of the situation that is being described and the temporal zero point of the deictic context". English is no exception in this regard.

Modern English grammarians (e.g. Quirk et al., 1985, p. 78) underline that English has two tenses; past and non-past (inaccurately called present due to the absence of one to one match between tense verb form and time reference as referred to above). Morphologically, English has no future form of the verb, but there are certain grammatical constructions capable of expressing future time actions and events (e.g. will + bare infinitives, be + going to, present progressive aspect be + v-ing etc.) (Huang, 2007, p. 148). For instance, the progression of events in the following text exhibits temporal cohesion which is marked by tense and aspect.

Mr. Brown is an English citizen who is fond of learning foreign languages since his childhood. He joined The Higher Institute of Languages for three years. Consequently, he has learnt Spanish, German and Danish. Searching for vacancies, he is going to work in the National Oil Company next month as a translator because he needs a good financial resource so as to get married.

The events of (1) joining the institute, (2) learning the three languages and (3) to join the new job are sequentially marked by simple past tense, present perfect aspect and *be + going to*, respectively.

Accordingly, the category of tense and of aspect are significant inseparable devices involved in maintaining temporal succession of events in languages (e.g. English) where tense normally functions as a time deictic category.

3.4 Temporal Connectives and Order-Preserving of Occurrences of Events

The correspondence between language and the outside world is evidenced by the structural devices (e.g. cohesive links, verb tense, adverbs, adjectives, etc.) that language employs to refer to the changes involved in the real world. Cohesive links such as subordinators (e.g. because, after, before), prepositions (e.g. owing to, because of), adjectives (e.g. previous, former, latter), verb tense (e.g. play vs. played) and adverbs (previously, formerly, latterly) play a significant role in indicating the correspondence concerned and keep the temporal order of occurrences of events (Dijk, 1977, pp. 103-105). This can be noticed in the following two texts:

(A) David was a rich man whose apartment was next to ours. All of sudden, he had disappeared where

his family informed the police in the square. It was rumoured that he was kidnapped. After a search of several days, the body of the victim was found hidden under some bushes in the nearby foothills. Because of this event, the police officer started to question the victim's family if he had been previously threatened. The family's answer was that they were not aware of such a threatening before. Medical reports later proved that he was poisoned by relatives to inherit his wealth. Due to the discovery of the fingerprints of the people involved, they were arrested and set on trial.

(B) David was a rich man whose apartment was next to ours. After his sudden disappearance, David's family informed the police in the square. It was rumoured that he was kidnapped. Before finding the body of the victim hidden under some bushes in the nearby foothills, policemen and detectives had spent several days of search to attain their goal. The police officer started to question the victim's family if he had been previously threatened. Owing to the absence of such a threatening, the policemen latterly received the medical reports that proved the involvement of some people in poisoning David to inherit his wealth. The discovery of some people's fingerprints had led to arresting them and setting them on trial.

When one looks at the above two texts, he can easily recognize that the chronological order of events (e.g. David's disappearance followed by informing the police, the search preceded the discovery of the victim's body, the start of the family's questioning , the reception of medical reports, etc.) is preserved by the temporal connectives. In other words, the temporal connectives found in the two texts have kept the temporal succession of events as happened in the real world regardless of changes in language structures. (Orvokki, 1978, ch. 3)

3.5 Time Adverbials

It is proved by linguists that not all languages (e.g. Chinese, Malay) have the category of tense, but it is true to say that all languages have deictic adverbs and particles of time (see section1 above) equivalent to the English time adverbs such as *now*, *then*, *soon*, *recently*, *today*, *yesterday*, *tomorrow*, etc. They are also used (in collocation with tense) in English for "drawing deictic temporal distinctions" (Lyons, 1977, p. 679) to signal the sequence of events or actions within the preceding-following time relation. The temporal relations holding within the parts of a text are seen with reference to a temporal linear scale whose fixed point is the time of the occurrence of an action. This can be referred to (in addition to tense) by time adverbials whose temporal reference can be forward or backward (see section 1 above) (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 481) For example,

(13) The Iraqi football team stayed at Doha airport for ten hours yesterday until the Qatari authorities intervened and granted them visas.

(14) Douglas has been working on his PhD in linguistics since his joining London University last summer.

The above two examples exhibit temporal connectivity in those two actions in each sentence are temporally sequenced by tense and time adverbial clauses.

In addition, time adverbials are capable of showing the deictic function of the tense more explicitly in

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case the shape of the verb is not changed (e.g. *yesterday they cut the grass* vs. *tomorrow they cut the grass*) (Saeed, 1997, p. 115)

One should not forget that understanding time adverbial reference basically depends on a variety of "contextual parameters including sociocultural knowledge" (Marmaridou, 2000, p. 83). This is owing to the fact that such adverbials e.g. *now* may either relate to the actual time of utterance (i.e. coding time (CT)) or to a whole span of time specified in relation to CT. For example,

(15) Take the right road now.

(16) She is in the office now.

(17) Jane is a Deputy Director now.

The reference points of *now* in each of the above sentences can be explained by the fact that *now* in (15) is interpreted as referring to CT because it is part of an order that involves immediate action. In (16) and (17) the adverbial is interpreted against our cultural knowledge that if one in office he is likely to be there for some time, whereas being a Deputy Director spans over a period of time and is not a momentary property of an individual (ibid.). Accordingly, as Cummings (2005, pp. 24-25) states, even these terms encode different units of time as they can do so in a way that refers to larger and smaller parts of those units. For example, in the utterances

(18) Yesterday was a glorious day.

(19) The accident occurred yesterday.

The term "yesterday" constitutes a 24-hour unit of time. However, the "yesterday" of the first utterance refers to most, and probably all, of this 24-hour unit, while the "yesterday" of the second utterance refers only to seconds within this unit.

Another interesting point is that the use of *today/tomorrow/yesterday* pre-empts, that is, it has priority over, the use of the calendrical terms for the relevant days. Thus, speakers of English would normally avoid saying sentence (20) if either today or tomorrow is Saturday. This is because on a Saturday they would use *today*, and on a Friday they would use *tomorrow* (Huang, 2007, p. 145).

(20) I'll depart to London on Saturday.

To conclude, this does not mean that the time deictic role of such adverbs becomes absent, but the involvement of one's cultural knowledge is of some importance in enabling readers to understand the parts such adverbials play in maintaining temporal cohesion in a text.

4. Connectives of Temporal Succession in Arabic

Arabic has a variety of markers of temporal connectivity where Arab traditional and modern scholars (grammarians, rhetoricians and theologians) devoted detailed descriptions of these markers. The involvement of theologians in language description is attributed to the fact that the Arabic language and the Holy Qurân are closely tied to each other since the Islamic teachings (according to the religion's principles) should be introduced in a highly accurate language. Therefore, it has become a commitment for religious men to study and master the grammar of Arabic to better understand and interpret religious

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teachings derived from the Holy Qurân.

Traditional and modern Arab grammarians have kept citing examples in their writings basically from two sources; the Holy Qurân and the Arabic classical poetry. This applies to temporal markers where the examples that will be given below are from the two sources in question.

4.1 Tense

Tense refers to "the verb form indicating an action that is tied to a particular time" (Saybawaih (Note 2), 1988, p. 34, Vol. I). Arab grammarians introduced too much detailed descriptions to the non-correspondence between the form of the verb and its time reference. Moreover, some particles when used before verbs change the time reference (e.g., لم يحضر محمد للاجتماع (*lam yaħđr mohammed llijtimâ'*) *Mohammed did not attend the meeting*). The tense of the verb is imperfect, but once it is preceded by the jussive particle لم, its time reference has changed into perfect (Al-Sâmarâiy, 2007, p. 8, Vol. IV). For the moment, we are not concerned with going into such minute details. Our primary concern is to see how tense is used as a cohesive temporal device to signal the sequencing of events in texts.

Arab modern grammarians draw a distinction between morphological tense and grammatical tense. The former refers to tense in isolation from context whereas the latter refers to a contextualized tense (Ħassâân, 1973, p. 241). The grammatical tense along with some particles like(e.g., لما ,س.. ,سوف, قد,لقد) defective verbs (كان,مازال,مافتىء,) verbs of beginning (شرع, طفق,قام) express a variety of aspectual senses since aspect is formally absent in Arabic. Used to bridge this linguistic gap between English and Arabic, the aspectual senses help to indicate the sequence of events. This true of sentence (1) where the first action followed the second one. For instance,

(1) سافر علي الى البصرة للعمل في مؤسسة الموانيء العراقية. كان أخوه قد سبقه للعمل هناك

sâfara Ali illa albaṣrah lli'amal fi muasasat almawâni al'iraqia. kâna akhuhu qad sabaqahu lli 'amal hunâk.

Ali travelled to Basra to work in Iraq Ports Company. His brother had preceded him to work there. (Rasheed, 2008, pp. 25-29)

4.2 Coordinators

In addition to grammatical tense mentioned in section 4.1 above, some coordinators in Arabic can exhibit a variety of senses among which is the succession of events. The three below coordinators are used for marking the sequentiality of events, but with different meanings.

4.2.1 Waw

The coordinator *waw* basically conveys two senses: involvement and succession. As for the former, it means that one cannot determine which one of the two coordinated noun phrases (whether they are subjects, objects, or complements of prepositions) or verbs comes before which. This is due to the fact that the two are involved in the same grammatical function (Saybawaih, 1988, p. 218, Vol. I).

(2) زرت زيداً ومحمداً zirtu Zaidan waMohammadan. I visited Zaid and Mohammed.

(3) أكلت وشربت كثيرا akaltu washaribtu kathiiran. I ate and drank very much.

One cannot tell with certainty whom the speaker visited first in sentence (2). It is possible that he visited them one by one, i.e. Zaid first then Mohammed, or the reverse, or both at the same time. As for the coordination of verbs in sentence (3), the speaker may have eaten then drunk, or the reverse or eating and drinking are involved in taking place at the same time (Al-'Alawy, 2009, p. 42, Vol. II) (Ibin, 1965, p. 445).

Al-Sâmarâey(2007, p. 188, Vol. III), among other linguists, states that the present coordinator can be used as a marker for temporal succession. This is true of many Qurânic ayas. To cite just an example:

(4) ‘‘وماأنزل الى إبراهيم وإ   سماعيل وإسحاق ويعقوب والأسباط وماأوتي موسى وعيسى’’(سورة البقرة, p. 136)

wamâunzila ila Ibrahiima wa Ismâ'iil waIshâq waYa'qub wal? ṣṣbâṭwamâutia Musâ wa 'iisâ

What has been sent down to Ibrâhîm (Abraham), Ismâîl (Ishmael), Ishâq (Isaac), Y'qûb (Jacob) and to *Al-Asbât* (the offspring of the twelve sons of Y'qûb (Jacob)), and that which has been given to Mûsâ (Moses) and 'Isâ (Jesus). (Baqara, aya: 136, p. 27) (Note 3)

Therefore, in the above aya, the prophets' names are mentioned in chronological order which is signalled by the presence of *waw*. Nevertheless, the same coordinator can serve other rhetorical purposes (e.g. fronting, coordination of generic to specific or the reverse etc.) which we are not concerned with for the moment (ibid.).

4.2.2 Fa

Ibin Jinny (2007, p. 262, Vol. I) maintains that when Fa is indeclinable, it functions as follows: a coordinator signalling sequentiality of occurrence of events and a particle whose presence and absence is redundant. Basically, this coordinator serves the function of cohesiveness and succession.

(5) قام أخي فصديقي Qâma akhii faṣadiiqy. My brother stood up then my friend immediately.

The occurrence of the event of "standing up" done by the speaker's bother has followed his friend's immediately without a considerable interval (see section 2 above). Al-Shâṭiby (2007, p. 80f), on his part, confirms that the coordinator in question shows the succession of what goes before and after it. The interval between the occurrences of the two coordinated actions is too short to consider in that the second action cannot be started unless the first has come full circle. He (p. 86) compares it to *thumma* (see section 2 above) in saying that the interval between both actions is longer in time to consider.

Al-Makzumy (1966, p. 191), among other grammarians (e.g. Saybawaih), adds that this coordinator expresses "involvement in the accomplishment of the action and the temporal order of doing it."

(6) جاء عبدالله فمحمد Jâ? 'abdullah faMuhammed. Abdullah came then Mohammed.

Looking at sentence (6), one can recognize that both subjects were involved in the act of coming, but Mohammed's coming consecutively followed Abdullah's.

This coordinator can express some other rhetorical purposes (e.g. causality) or it can be used as a coordinator showing no consecutiveness (Ibn, 2001, p. 170).

(7) أعطيت الفقير هدية فشكر ?'ṭaitu alfaqyr hadiatan fashakar. I gave the poor man a prize, then he thanked. (Prize-giving causes thanks).

4.2.3 Thumma

Al-'Alawy (2009, p. 43) explains that Thumma is a coordination device used to signal a succession of the coordinated events whose occurrences take place with some intervals. That is, the occurrence of the coordinated action follows the first action, but with an interval, it may take months or even years. This is true of the following Qurânic texts.

(8) waâlazy yumytiny thumma yuħyyn "والذي يميتني ثم يحيين" (الشورى, p. 81)

"And Who will cause me to die, and then will bring me to life (again)" (Al-Shura, p. 81, p. 494)

Accordingly, one can notice that "bringing to life" is coordinated to "death" by Thumma because the time span between both may take years.

(9) "ولقد خلقنا الأنسان من سلالة من طين * ثم جعلنه نطفة في قرارٍ مكين*ثم خلقنا النطفة علقة" (المؤمنون, pp. 12-14).

Walaqad khalqnâ alinsân min sulalatin min ṭiin thumma ja'lnâhu nuṭfatan fy qarârin makiin thumma khalqna alnuṭfata 'alaqatan

And indeed we created man (Adam) out of an exact of clay (water and earth). Thereafter, we made him (offspring of Adam) as a Nutfah (mixed drops of the male and female sexual discharge and lodged it) in a safe lodging (womb of the mother). Then, we made the Nutfah into a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood). (Al-Muauminun, aya: 12-14, p. 455)

The above aya depicts the stages of Man's creation as the coordination of the transference of Man in his mother's womb is referred to by *Thumma* because these stages take some span of time until one is given birth. Therefore, *Thumma* is the best coordinator to signal the succession of these events since it rhetorically involves coordination implying longer time interval than what *Fa* refers to (see section 4.2.2 above) (Al-'Alawy, 2009, p. 44; Ali, 1998, p. 154).

However, some say that this coordinator is not necessarily referring always to distance in time between two coordinated actions or nouns. It can also refer to emphaticness when the same noun is repeated and coordinated by *Thumma*. e.g.

(10) "والله أنه لكاذب ثم كاذب ثم كاذب" Wallah Innahu lakâżib thuma lakâżib *thumm*a lakâżib.

I swear that he is a liar, a liar and then a liar. (Al-Sâmarâiy, 2007, p. 211, Vol. III)

4.2.4 Other Coordinators

Reference has been made to three coordinators above as far as their temporal cohesive functions are concerned. Nevertheless, this does not mean that there are no other coordinators in Arabic; rather there are more but they do not function as temporal links. For, instance, ħatâ (even), is a coordinator whose function is to signal doing an action or thing to its maximum limits. This could be materialistic or symbolic.

(11) مات الناس حتى الأنبياء mâta alnâs ħatâ alenbia. All People die, even prophets

Accordingly, such coordinators (aw, to express choice; bel, to express retractation; lâkin, to covey the sense of rectification, etc.) (Note 4) are not of immediate concern to the present paper (Ibn, 1965, pp. 446-447; Ibn, 2001, pp. 171-172).

4.3 Time Adverbials and Prepositional Phrases

Time adverbials and adverbial objects in Arabic are capable of signalling how events in discourse are

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sequenced. These time adverbials are of three types: some collocate with the past, some with the present and some with the future time. Traditional Arab grammarians call time adverbials as nouns of times that are normally in the accusative case; they are of three types: specific, limited and undefined. Accordingly, specific nouns of time are called so because they exhibit a specific period of time that can be an answer to when-questions (e.g. الخميس, Thursday). Limited nouns of time are called so due to the fact that they can show the length of period of time involved in doing an action (e.g. شهر, أسبوع, سنة a month, a week, a year etc). Finally, undefined nouns of time exhibit no specific time within which the action is carried out (e.g.الوقت عند ذلك الحين, now, at that time) (Ibn, 2001, pp. 129-130).

Adverbial objects can be realized by nouns of time. These realizations serve as temporal relationship markers. e.g.

(12) صمت يوم الخميس.و سافرت يوم الجمعة Şimtu yawma alkhamiis wasâfartu yawma alJum'ah. I fasted on Thursday and travelled on Friday.

The nouns of times can be categorized into three classes as far as their colligation (Note 5) is concerned. Moreover, such nouns reflect the threefold division of time: past, present and future:

a. Nouns of times collocating with the past time are: أمس, yesterday, last night البارحة الليلة الماضية, previous night,الليلة السابقة last month الشهر المنصرم, lastly. آنفآ

b. Nouns of times collocating with the present time runs as follows: الأن now, الحين for the moment, هذا الوقت at this time.

c. Nouns of times collocating with the future time include: غدا tomorrow, لاحقا later, etc. (Zaqlâm, 1986, pp. 162-165)

Besides, there are some prepositional phrases in Arabic that can mark temporal relationship such as: بينا meanwhile,فيما بعد later,بعد هنيئة, after a moment , precedingly في السابق for (two past hours, days etc.),ل(يومين,ساعتين ..الخ) خلت,

To conclude, these nouns of time, adverbial objects and prepositional phrases can be employed to create temporal cohesion within written or spoken Arabic texts.

5. Findings of Contrastive Analysis

After the theoretical survey for temporal connectives in both languages has come full circle, English and Arabic have yielded the following similarities and differences.

5.1 Similarities between Both Languages

The similarities between both languages concerning the area under investigation run as follows:

(1) Time adverbials are employed in both languages to signal how the occurrences of events are temporally sequenced.

(2) Tense and aspect are two common denominators to show succession of events in both languages.

(3) Absence of correspondence between the verb tense and its time reference is true of Arabic and English.

(4) Prepositional phrases functioning as time adverbials are present in the two languages to realize

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temporal cohesion.

(5) English and Arabic have temporal markers in common to show forward and backward time reference.

5.2 Differences between Both Languages

The divergences of the two languages as far as the topic in question is concerned are the following:

(1) Arabic employs nouns of time and adverbial objects for marking temporal succession of events while both are not found in English.

(2) Some coordinators in Arabic are used for exhibiting how actions in texts are temporally sequenced. English, however, does not utilize coordinators to mark temporal cohesion.

(3) Aspect is formally absent in the Arabic verb system whereas it is found in its English counterpart. Therefore, this linguistic gap is bridged by Arabic defective verbs and verbs of beginning to refer to the progression of events in discourse.

6. Translation of Arabic Temporal Connectives into English: An Assessment

In light of the theoretical surveys of temporal cohesion in both languages, translation criticism would be carried out to English renditions of an Arabic literary text (see section below).

6.1 Translation Assessment

An Arabic literary text has been handed to ten translators (M.A. and PhD holders) to render it to English. All of them are native speakers of Arabic. The text choice is based on the fact it involves the Arabic temporal connectives discussed above (see section 3.). Moreover, it is written in modern standard Arabic which is easy to understand by Modern Arabic translators. The text (written by an Iraqi modern short story writer (Note 6)) is one page size and it involves different structures where the sequence of events is either implicitly or explicitly indicated. Its general theme talks about an Iraqi young farmer who went to Basra in 1940s to work in the Iraqi Ports Company due to his family poverty. As a translation assessment procedure, each structure will be introduced with the samples of renditions produced by translators. The potential-optimal equivalence distinction (Reiss, 2000) will be referred to in passing judgement over the translation quality of the renditions below. Besides, the repeated translations which are produced by more than one translator will not be discussed individually.

14 كان أبو ناجح يدخر جزءاً من المبلغ الذي يرسله ولده كل أسبوعين. تزوج الأخ الأول فالثاني ثم الثالث في مدة سنة

Kaana abuNâjħ yadakhiru juzan min alMuablagh alażii yursilahu waladahu kulla esbu'ayn. Tazawaja alekh aleawal falthânii thumma althâlith fii muddati sana.

Abu Nâjiħ used to save some of the money that his son kept sending fortnightly. The first brother got married, the second then the third in a year's time (The researcher's translation).

The above bold-typed Arabic sentence involves the acts of marriage (of three brothers) which are temporally marked by the three coordinators discussed above. The renditions given have exhibited that translators followed the avoidance strategy in producing the translations in that they use numerals, quantifiers and adverbials to show the succession of events. In fact, they have given potential

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translation for the text portion. This inadequacy in translation can be attributed to the absence of English coordinators showing the sequence of events as those found in Arabic. Accordingly, they have given translations such as

"*Within a year his first brother got married, followed by the second and the third. His first brother got married, then the second and finally the third one. His brothers got married respectively within one year. His three brothers got married one by one. They all got married within one year*".

It is thought that the optimal translation (reflecting how the events are temporally sequenced by Arabic coordinators) for the present extract is "The first brother got married, then the second and after some period of time the third one".

(15) قرر ناجح زيارة أهله فِسافر مع جمع من العمال المتوجهين لبغداد

Qarara Nâjiħ ziârat ehlih, fasâfara maʿa jamʿin min al ʿumâl almutajihiin liBaghdâd

Nâjiħ decided to pay a visit to his family as he travelled with a group of workers to Baghdad (the researcher's translation).

The two bold-typed verbs in sentence (15) indicate decision-making first and then travelling respectively. The presence of the coordinator *Fa* in the second sentence of the above text indicates that decision-making concerning travelling preceded the act of departure. As for the renditions produced, eight out of ten translators signalled how the two events succeeded one another by the conjuncts "*therefore*" and "*so*". For instance, the translations are: *Najih decided to visit his family, so he took the boat along with some workers who were heading to Baghdad/Najih decided to visit his family. Therefore, he accompanied a group of workers leaving for Baghdad*. One translator has used an infinitival clause and another used past perfect for the first act while simple past for the second act. *Najih decided to travel on a ship to visit his family. Najih had decided to visit his family; therefore he travelled on the Baghdad Ship accompanied by a group of workers moving to the capital*.

The last rendition is expected to be the optimal one because of the use of past perfect for the first act which came full circle first then the second action which is referred to by simple past.

(16) وبعد وصوله البصرة بسنة تقدم للزواج من أخت صديقه قاسم وتم الزواج ورزق بعلي ومحمد فزيد ثم حسن

Wabaʿda wiṣṣwlihii albaṣra bisanatin taqadama lilzawâj min ukhti ṣadiiqihi Qâsim watama alzawâj waruziqa biʿalii waMuħamad faZayd thumma Ħassan.

A year after his arrival to Basra, he asked his brother's sister's hand. He married her and was bestowed with Ali, Mohammed then Zaid and after a while Hassan (the researcher's translation).

The above extract indicates succession of actions done by Najih: his re-arrival to Basra signalled by the Arabic adverbial time *Wabaʿda*: *after*, asking his friend's sister's hand, getting married signalled by *tama* which is supposed to be translated (according to Arabic Academies) in form of perfective aspect in English, and his wife's delivery of four children signalled by three Arabic coordinators whose semantic reference shows the temporal sequence of the children's births.

As far as the renderings given, the translators have rendered the succession of events referred to above by the use of prepositional phrases, subordinate clauses starting with the conjunction *after*, or the use of

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the coordinator *and*. The latter use can be attributed to the Arabic text where the coordinator in question is syntactically associated with every item or action counted, unlike English, the coordinator *and* is used only with the last item or action mentioned. All translators have failed to render the act of marriage accurately which is signalled in the original by the word *tama* which indicates the equivalence of the perfective aspect in English. Similarly, as in sentence (14), they have proved unsuccessful in translating the part of the text involving coordinators which show the delivery of the four children in a sequential temporal order. As translation examples, the following have been produced:

One year after his arrival to Basrah, Najih asked his friend's sister for marriage. They got married and he had four sons they are as follows: Ali, Mohamed, Zaid and Hassan. After a year of his arrival to Basrah, he engaged to his friend's sister, and then got married, and had four children Ali, Mohamed, Zaid and Hassan. etc.

Accordingly, the inaccuracies in the renditions given above are attributable to the linguistic and rhetorical differences found between both languages. The alternative translation of the text portion can be: A year after his re-arrival to Basra, he asked his friend's sisters' hand and the marriage had taken place. He was blessed with four children: Ali, Mohammed, then Zaid and later Hassan.

7. Conclusions

Having finished the assessment of the translations of the literary extract, the researcher has reached the following conclusions. Firstly, translating temporal connectives from Arabic literary texts into English has proved difficult to carry out. This is due to linguistic and discoursal differences between both languages as far as the topic is concerned. Secondly, the two languages exhibit more similarities than differences in maintaining temporal order of events by employing roughly the same lexico-grammatical devices. Accordingly, both of the hypotheses of the present paper have been verified. Thirdly, the absence of form contrasts in the Arabic verb system concerning aspect has made its translation from the original into the TT more complicated. Due to the lack of English coordinators as temporal connectives, translators have resorted to using conjuncts such *so*, *therefore*, *hence*, etc. Finally, deletion and compensation strategy have been in evidence on the part of translators to keep themselves away from involvement in rendering the text's portions that seem to lack one-to-one equivalence between ST and TT.

It is worth mentioning here that the temporal succession of events in a different text type (e.g. political) is worth investigating with reference to translation in a bidirectional way.

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Notes

Note 1. Temporal succession and temporal connectivity are two terms alternatively used in the present paper.

Note 2. It is a tradition in Arabic linguistics that the death dates of ancient Arab traditional grammarians are mentioned next to their names because such death dates enable readers (1) to know the school of grammar the scholar belongs to and (2) to familiarize them with the general trends of the school on the scholar's day. So, the death dates (according to Hijjri Calendar) of scholars who are quoted throughout the present paper will be mentioned within the list of references.

Note 3. All the translations of the Qurâic ayas will be taken from al-Hilâli and Khân's (1996) *Translation of the meanings of thenobel Qur'ân into the English language*. Madinah: King Fahd Complex. To save space, in the body of the paper reference will be made only to page number after the translations of the ayas cited.

Note 4. All the Arabic grammatical terms are taken from Chachia's (1973) *The monitor: A dictionary of the Arabic grammatical terms*. London: Longman. Besides, the researcher's experience is involved in this regard.

Note 5. Colligation. "A term in Firthian Linguistics for the process or result of grouping a set of words on the basis of their similarity in entering into Syntagmatic Grammatical Relations" (Crystal, 2008, p. 86).

Note 6. Qâsid, Hussein (2011) *Majmu 'a min qasas alfuloklor al 'irâqi* (*A collection of Iraqi folkloric stories*). Baghdad, Union of Iraqi Writers.