

# A Contrastive Analysis of Thematic and Information Patterning in English and Arabic Contexts

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## Abstract

Language acquisition is a remarkable and crucial aspect of human evolution because it is a means of communication. One of the main problems in which language is implicated is when speakers of different languages communicate. A possible solution for speakers of different languages is to learn the other's language or to employ a translator. Contrastive analysis is the study and comparison of two different languages, such as English with Arabic. It compares the structural similarities and differences between the two languages. In this regard, it is utilized to compare the Thematic and Information Structures in English and Arabic, which is the most common focus of this study. This article aimed to examine the theme and Information structures of English and Arabic from contrastive analysis perspectives. Multiple sentences from daily language are included in the analysis, which is based on Halliday's practical theme-rheme paradigm applied to conversational English and Arabic clauses. The researcher, an ESL instructor, used a descriptive-analytical technique to critically assess the similarities and differences in the structural aspects of themes and rheme in English and Arabic to help ESL students be well prepared for the translation job after graduation and now while learning at the college. While Arabic and English clauses are distinct, they can express the same concepts in dramatically more diverse ways, according to the findings of this study. This study also revealed the alignment of themes could alter across various ESL learners' understanding. Personal experience or ability, among other factors, can impact topical subjects, regardless of whether they are written or spoken. Because the two systems are so dissimilar, it is critical to understand the linguistic differences between English and Arabic to help recognize the difference in meaning between them.

**Keywords:** ESL learners, information structure, rheme, thematic structure, theme

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, research on thematic and information structures has emphasized meaning over structure, and language studies have shifted dramatically away from syntactic and semantic levels toward stylistic ones (Van Leuven-Zwart, 1990). Thematization of texts across languages has shown inconsistencies in textual meaning, and the ramifications of this research have a substantial impact on translation (Cerban, 2009). While English sentences are being changed, difficulties are expected due to the structural differences between the two languages (Swan, 2017). For instance, verbs are often placed in English sentences after the subject (topic). The clause consists of verbs or uses a noun/entity (Ghezaiel Hammouda & Haddar, 2018). Once the noun/entity is placed in the first part, this clause is nominal; however, if the initial part of the clause includes a verb, this one is known as the verbal clause. Consequently, clausal components equivalents are hard for the ESL students to translate from English to Arabic, mainly if the subject is placed at the graduation of a clause in a single language and found in every other.

This study, predicated on Halliday's theory and Prague school conceptions, used the theme device to examine and contrast the English textual content additives (clauses) and their Arabic correspondences to highlight the homogeneous attributes and differences. The study will also display how theme patterning is preserved or altered among the source (Arabic) and goal (English) language. Therefore, this research pinpoints instances of unjustified departure that result in translational alterations and transmutations within the intended textual meaning. According to the study, theme patterns are unsystematic yet suggested textually, then translated into the target language. They reveal the author's aim, the text-magnification method, and the ESL student's perspective. As a result, the differences in theme patterning between English and Arabic are attributed to the interlocutor's loss of knowledge of the texts underpinning such patterns and a lack of Arabic sources to recreate such senses equally. It also supplies a neutral metalinguistic instrument for translating a theme and suggests addressing the topic and rheme as a substitute.

## 2. Background

Many researchers consider the differences in syntactic and semantic components between English and Arabic. The disparities can be linked to textual materials expected to be published via each language's precise thematic and statistical frameworks, based on variances in topic and rheme patterns in English and Arabic. Modifications in theme and information structures have supplied the researchers' worries.

Furthermore, theme and rheme structures, a form of discourse structures, has made extraordinary involution in language and is the notion

of language acquisition to a degree without ordinary comprehension. However, one sharp difference between the two languages is expected to impede the rendering of thematic and information styles (theme and rheme). This study's primary purport is to evaluate English and Arabic's thematic structure and information structure.

Moreover, the study finds numerous thematic and information structure factors within the source (English) and target languages (Arabic). A few corpus examples have been adjusted to prove homogeneous attributes and variations to attain the study's purposes. In a nutshell, the study aims to accomplish the following goals: to investigate the concept of thematic structure and information structure in English versus Arabic, to provide a theoretical review of the theme and rheme system based on Hallidayan and Prague school theories in the field, and to reveal the homogeneous attributes and differences of theme and rheme with clauses and sentences in English and Arabic.

### 3. Objectives of the Study

The particularly important aim of this article is to compare and contrast the theme and rheme in English and Arabic to help ESL students understand and remove textual hurdles. In this paper, the researcher looks to clarify the parallels and contrasts between theme and rheme in Hallidayan and Prague schools. Furthermore, the researcher hopes to give instances of translation for theme and information structures so that the nature of the thematic progression and information pattern may be better understood by his ESL learners who may become translators in the future.

### 4. Research Questions

By addressing the following research questions, the study contributes to the literature on theme organization and information structure:

**RQ1.** What are the parallels and distinctions between theme and information structures?

**RQ2.** To what extent can ESL learners overcome these differences when translating themes and rheme from English to Arabic?

**RQ3.** What are the different types of themes and rhemes, and how are they contrastively addressed?

### 5. Literature Review

The topic and rheme are the two most essential elements of a nominal phrase, and they move places to serve various purposes, which results in fronting. Fronting is a technique for emphasizing a theme by inserting a word or phrase at the beginning of a sentence. Inverted subject-verb order can also result from fronting. Moving the subject from its original location changes the emphasis and adds a new dimension to this focus device (Pearce, 2012).

The theme-rheme system is a textual content evaluation method that focuses on info meaning and waft. It also considers how interpersonal and ideational meanings combine to create a logical and consistent message. It is also concerned with the comparative study of textual meanings and equivalence at the textual level, which is indisputably the topic of language companies (English and Arabic). It proves how interpersonal and intellectual meanings combine to create a well-organized and cohesive message and the manner and sample of topic matter development in the text. The theme-rheme system divides a sentence into two parts: theme and rheme. The distinction between topic and rheme may also help explain employer tactics and generate different types of textual material (Baker, 2018).

Linguists in Hallidayan School and Prague School supplied a similar definition for the concept of theme and rheme besides other concepts such as Communicative Dynamism (CD) and functional sentence perspective (information structure). According to Firbas (1964), the theme is the well-known object in a scenario from which the speaker progresses. The beginning point for the theme, according to Halliday, is the clause's circumstance. It is a common element; every language has a technique for figuring out the subject of a phrase. According to Halliday, it is a feature in which one portion of the phrase is given distinctive significance. The subject employs what is placed within the clause's beginning feature, and this beginning function provides the theme a "unique popularity" within the clause.

Emilia (2014) considers the theme to be the utterance or clause's starting point. Then again, in a clause, rheme, the theme is evolved or the whole lot, now not the theme. The clause's theme is what the theme is set, and the theme is what the speaker says it. The theme is used as a factor of orientation that connects and locates a clause within its broader co-text and a starting point for figuring out and foregrounding a clause challenge. As a substitute, rheme capabilities because the message or new information at the theme or records to be transmitted (Halliday et al., 2014). In English, the subject matter is defined by way of Halliday as the starting point; it is the challenge of the clause. It is a standard detail; each language has a way of determining what the clause is ready. Halliday deems it as a characteristic wherein unique fame is assigned to one part of the clause. The theme is realized by way of what is positioned within the clause's starting position, and this beginning function provides the theme a "special status" in the clause.

### TYPES OF THEMES AND RHEMES

Referring to Hamday (1994), there are three metafunctions at the lexico-grammatical level. Albeit ideational metafunction constructs a model of experience and interpersonal metafunction enacts social interactions, textual metafunction engenders pertinence to the context. The textual metafunction includes themes and rhemes. However, textual meanings are conveyed via lexico-grammatical patterns that are not visually perceived in English. Regarding theme structures, the distinctions between Arabic and English are most visible in how the two languages designate and identify Theme constituents (s).

The theme functions as the commencement point for the utterance or clause, but the rheme is not a theme component. After determining the theme, the ESL learners analyze thematic progression and endeavors to uncover thematic progression related to the theme and rheme. (Emilia, 2014).

Thematic progression, as defined by Butt et al. (2003), is the evolution of original themes. It includes textual elaboration explaining how interpersonal and experiential topics are injunctively allowed linear and unified. The way themes and rheme concatenate within a text is related to the text's hierarchical structure and to rhetorical purposes. According to Emilia (2014), there are three forms of theme progression in which writings evolve the concepts they represent. A zig-zag pattern, a re-iteration motif, and many patterns make up the thematic development. By building on freshly presented information, the zig-zag pattern generates text cohesiveness. The term "re-iteration" refers to the repetition of a topic to provide information follow-up. The pattern for this sort of theme is the same as the theme. The zig-zag Pattern and Re-iteration Pattern are employed in the numerous Rheme to build on the information in the text.

According to Gerot and Wignell (1994), functional grammars see language as a resource for producing meanings. These grammars are concerned with describing language in use and focus on texts and their contexts. In terms of the function that is usually used in every phrase, systemic functional grammar, also known as a label or clause element, is concerned with the structures and how those structures are used.

Halliday et al. (2014) explain systemic functional grammar ideas to allow the reader to comprehend and use them in a variety of situations. Functional grammar has been a course offered at the English department and translation at Qassim University for quite some time, according to Emilia (2014), at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Halliday et al. (2014) explain the ideas of systemic functional grammar, allowing the reader to comprehend and apply them in any situation. Many secondary schools in Saudi Arabia have had the core notion of systemic functional linguistics and systemic functional grammar in their English curriculum since 2004. Understanding language structure is undoubtedly essential in this respect, and as Bärjars and Burridge (2019) point out, this knowledge is crucial.

According to Knapp and Watkins (2005), one of the cornerstones of this approach to genre, text, and grammar is the link between genre and grammar. While systemic-functional grammar creates a connection between context and language, this connection is usually problematic as we have visually experienced. The gap between context and grammar is frequently too significant, resulting in indeterminism.

In terms of thematic progression, a text's themes might grow in various ways: constant, derived, subordinate, and linear patterns intersection (Bloor & Bloor, 2013). That is, to create writing that is coherent and has well-developed concepts and a natural flow, Themes may reflect the text's general theme or a categorical theme (constant pattern), a text's superordinate item or idea derived from the general theme (derived pattern), or the anterior clause's Rheme (derived pattern) (linear pattern). These developmental processes are necessary elements of cohesion and coherence. The theme of a sentence might be nominal, adverbial, prepositional, or nominalization. Butt et al. (2003) classify topical (experiential), textual, and interpersonal themes.

The theme is relegated into three primary groups according to its overall meaning: topical themes (include participant, process, or circumstance), interpersonal theme (include aspects of interrogative mood), and textual theme (include cohesive contrivances. Textual themes utilize cohesive textual devices that betoken an incipient move in the text by utilizing coordinates and conjunctive. According to Nikmah (2010), the theme can be categorized into three types: a topical theme which includes a marked and unmarked theme. The second type is the impersonal theme, and the third type is the textual theme which consists of structural conjunctions, relative, conjunctive adjunct, and continuative.

The topical theme is the first element of the experiential meaning, and it could be the participant, process, or situation. In line with Emilia's views, the topical theme is linked to the experiential metafunction, and it is the first part of the clause that expresses some representational meaning (Emilia, 2014). It is realized in transitivity structure player, circumstance, and the method, and it may be relegated as a marked or unmarked theme.

#### **MARKED THEMES VS. UNMARKED THEMES IN ARABIC AND ENGLISH**

Additionally, the English and Arabic versions of the theme are categorized as marked and unmarked. An unmarked theme is the prevalent, expected, and conventional form, whereas a significant theme is unconventional in some way, less desired, or occurs less frequently. Distinguishing between marked and unmarked themes, the unmarked theme is a declarative sentence that includes the subject; however, the non-subject is referred to as the marked theme, which typically represents circumstance and process (Emilia, 2014).

The Topical Theme is also the Subject in the unmarked case. A Marked Topical Theme is a Topical Theme that is not the Subject. The phrase marked is used because it is unusual or uncommon and is typically employed in certain literary contexts such as poetry, novels, or ads. Following Halliday et al. (2014) classification of marked Themes in English, marked Themes in Arabic may be classified into three categories: fronted, predicated, and identifying Theme. Subjects, Adjuncts, and Complements are all instances of the first category. A Complement, sometimes referred to as an Adjunct, appears immediately after a lexical verb and before a Subject and is also regarded to be a component of a specified Theme.

As in English, Arabic has cleft and pseudo-cleft structures, according to their mobility, fronted Subjects and fronted Adjuncts are the least marked in Arabic, followed by cleft and then pseudo-cleft structures. Fronted Subjects are frequently used in Arabic clauses, whereas cleft and pseudo-cleft structures are infrequently used unless they are a component of quoted speech in the report.

#### **INFORMATION SYSTEM IN ARABIC AND ENGLISH**

As is the case with English, predictability, recoverability, location, saliency, tense, and aspect may all be utilized to distinguish between old and new. According to Khalil (2000), Arabic syntactic particles such as the incomplete verb Kana and its sisters' can be utilized to

ascertain if a constituent has been addressed earlier. Additionally, the unrestricted mobility of elements in the Arabic sentence aids in detecting the age of a piece of information. In other words, Arabic makes it straightforward to determine which element is a given and which is novel. A unit of information, according to Halliday et al. (2014) taxonomy, consists of two components: Following supplied is new. In its unmarked condition, we consider an information unit in Arabic to be equivalent to a sentence in written Arabic speech that follows the sequence Predicator-Subject-Complement-Adjunct information. Given the current context, any change in this sequence very certainly signifies the addition of a new unit of knowledge.

### **UNMARKED INFORMATION STRUCTURE IN ARABIC AND ENGLISH**

Texts in Arabic are marked using the Theme-Rheme structure rather than the information structure. The previously presented data is exhibited first, followed by the newly introduced data. The new data is built around the rhematic elements of satisfaction, compliments, and positivity, and these elements were not predicted or mentioned previously. The arrangement and selection of clausal and information aspects in Arabic texts can aid readers in understanding. Analyzing the unmarked information structure and selecting specific linguistic terms as given or latest information suggests that texts are positively represented. In other words, it is via the interplay of the theme and information systems that ideological representation in Arabic writings is identified.

### **THEMATIC STRUCTURE VS. INFORMATION STRUCTURE**

Thematic progression refers to how text develops the author's ideas; then, the author takes a concept from previous research. Thematic development exemplifies Rahmawati and Kurniawan (2015) approach to idea improvement. Thematic progression may be used to explain how students develop their perspectives and make the material simpler to comprehend and analyze. Students are critical in generating an amazing narrative that progresses thematically, apart from consistency and coherence. Rakhman (2013) thematic progression helps to the consistency and cohesiveness of the literary content development. Thematic progression ensures the consistency of the text's content and is concerned with the speaker's selection and arrangement of diverse subjects in a way that they are connected. Thematic development is the process through which the several topics of decisive texts (paragraphs and chapters) interact to create meaningful writings. According to Jingxia and Li (2013), six different forms of thematic progression enhance text development: linear progression, consistent progression, focused progression, derived-theme progression, split-theme progression, and summary progression for pre- and post-test analysis. Back Themes, new Themes, and contextual Themes are all examples of themes that do not encourage text growth when viewed through the lens of their analytical model.

The Hallidayan approach for understanding clauses as messages views themes and rhemes structures as distinct, if usually connected, aspects of discourse organization. Both structures are diametrically opposite. On the other hand, Prague School linguists typically seek to equate the two forms and classify them together. Frequently, the two approaches conflict, resulting in radically different readings of the same sentence. On the other hand, ESL students with a variety of language backgrounds should benefit from a brief exposure to both views.

Hierarchical representations of thematic analysis are possible. Since sentences usually contain numerous clauses, they will have a multi-level thematic structure. Each phrase will have its own theme-rheme structure, which may or may not be subservient to a more gigantic theme-rheme structure. The diagram above illustrates the hierarchical nature of theme-rheme structures without delving into complicated technical specifics.

We have incorporated several components in parenthesis to indicate that they do indeed correspond proximally in the analysis. The logic is carefully stated; certain aspects do not form part of the text's essential thematic framework. As a result, they are not considered to be a part of the propositional that denotes the message. These entail specific connecting devices comparable to, but not identical to, conjunctions. They incorporate aspects of the verbalizer's position that are tangible, such as infelicitously, in my view, veraciously, and limpidly (these are called disjuncts). Each conjunction and disjunction are customarily reintroduced at the beginning of English sentences. It is normal for the verbalizer to include a component in the starting position that connects what they are about to verbalize to what has been orally stated before (conjunction) or an element that communicates their opinion about what is being verbally articulated (disjunct). Conjunctions and disjuncts, in this sense, are intrinsically thematic (Halliday, 2014). However, because conjunctions and disjuncts are not a component of the message's propositional content, they are not considered thematic in the same way that subject, predicator, object, complement, and adjunct are. There are techniques for adding conjunctions and disjunctions into theme analysis; however, this level of rigor is not required for our current aims.

Apart from conjunctions and disjunctions, the Hallidayan model has a high correlation with theme/rheme and subject/predicate. We will see visually shortly that the link does not hold true for defined themes. The contrast between theme and rheme, on the other hand, is frequently analogous to the classical grammatical distinction between subject and predicate.

Thematic selection includes assigning a theme to a clause element. The primary clause components are the subject, predicator object, complement, and adjunct. Thematic choice is indicated in the Hallidayan model by inserting one of these items in the clause's starting place. Thematic selection is always significant since it shows the speaker's/starting writer's point. However, some alternatives are more significant than others due to their prominence.

Due to the strong relationship between meaning and selection, the more required an element is, the less obvious it is and the weaker its meaning. Since adjectives must precede nouns in English, their occurrence in this position is of little or no relevance due to the chosen

outcome. When a language user places a place or time, such as on the table or shelf, at the beginning of a phrase, it gains additional significance since it is the consequence of a choice: alternative placements are possible. This is one facet of the relationship between meaning, distinctiveness, and choice. A second factor to evaluate is the degree of predictability or surprise inherent in the selection. The less expected a decision is, the more noticeable and significant it is the more expected a choice is, the less noticeable and significant it is.

It may be beneficial to demonstrate the designated theme’s function by examining how it operates in one language, English. Hallidayan linguists distinguish three distinct marked themes in English: the fronted, predicated, and identifying theme. These are discussed below, along with relevant samples from translated works. (Baker, 2011) categorizes the subject into three subcategories:

(A) Fronted Theme: Fronting is defined as “the accomplishment of the designated theme through the introduction of an object that is otherwise unique in that location.”

(B) Predicated Theme: This form of theme is created by commencing or near the beginning of the phrase with a (it-structure) termed a cleft structure.

(C) Identifying Theme: These themes are typical of theoretical themes. However, they use cleft structure instead of other types of theme positions.

**6. Method**

**QASSIM UNIVERSITY SYLLABUS**

B.A. program in English Language and Translation at Qassim University comprises 131 total credit hours. Students learn through study time, in-class participation, assignments, projects, presentations, and library work in three credit hours each course and 15 to 18 hours per semester. The research study’s target population was undergraduates in their third year of a B.A. degree enrolled in level five. By equipping undergraduates with skills and knowledge in the English language and translation, the B.A. degree prepares them for employment as translators, teaching assistants, researchers, information producers, and trainers who work with technology, creative thinking, and problem-solving.

**PARTICIPANTS**

The research study’s one hundred and fifteen participants were all at level five. In their third year of study, these participants were a homogenous class of undergraduate students, ESL learners from various socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds from the Al Asyah and Ar-Rass provinces in the Qassim region, Saudi Arabia. The researcher chose the participants in the study to be from two colleges at Qassim University, where English and translation are taught as requirements for B.A. program. This level’s learners were all females ranging in age from 18 to 22.

The researcher taught the participants courses related to semantics and pragmatics, contrastive analysis, and translation theories. Therefore, the participants were familiar with textual analysis, so the researcher randomly chose them to participate in this study. The researcher is faculty member in the English language and translation department at Qassim University.

**PROCEDURE**

The objective of the study was to elicit ideas on the contrast between theme and rheme in English and Arabic and to illustrate the associated characteristics and differences in order to prevent problems that ESL students as future translators may encounter. The researcher used descriptive and analytical approaches to achieve the study’s objectives. The researcher collected data on Thematic and Information Structures in Arabic and English from an administered test and previous academic texts used in this study during the academic year 2021-2022. The test was designed and included texts used in the prescribed textbooks of language and linguistics and translation sources. The selected statements from the text represent all types of themes and rhemes (see appendix A). The test statements allowed the participants to choose the correct options based on Thematic and Information Structure in English and their correspondents in Arabic.

**7. Results**

**DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS**

Table 1. Example of Theme and Rheme in English and Arabic

Theme	Rheme	Arabic Transliteration
They	caught him red-handed.	<i>qabaduu ealayh mtlbsaan</i>
However, excuses	were not accepted.	<i>ghayr 'ana al'aedhar lam taqbal</i>
I believe the earth	is around.	<i>'aetaqid 'ana al'ard mustadira</i>

The above table includes three clauses; each clause involves a theme and rheme. In the first example “they caught him red-handed” there is a theme in English, but it is not a theme in Arabic by itself. It is a theme together the verb “caught” “*qabaduu*” . This is because the “subject” has been followed by the verb, which is usually rendered as inseparable couples (theme) in Arabic, and the rest of the clause represents the rheme. In the second example “However, excuses were not accepted.” The theme and the rheme have been translated into theme and rheme in Arabic language following the same order in the source language clause. The theme “However, excuses” has been rendered into the (*ghayr 'ana al'aedhar*) in Arabic and the rest has been rendered into rheme in both English and Arabic. The third example “I believe the earth is round, the first part of the clause I believe the earth represents the theme in English

and “‘aetaqid ‘ana al’ard” is the equivalent theme in Arabic.

Table 2. Topical Theme in English and Arabic

Category	Type of topical theme	The theme	Equivalence in Arabic
Participant	Unmarked (common)	The translators <i>almutarajun</i>	They are experts in the field. <i>khubara' fi majal altarjama</i>
Circumstance	Marked (uncommon)	Yesterday <i>'ams</i>	I went to college with my classmate <i>dhahabt' iilaa aljamieat mae zamili</i>
Process	Marked (uncommon)	Buckle <i>arbit</i>	The seatbelt before driving. <i>alhizam qabl qiadat alsayaara</i>

From the table above, the first category of the theme is the participant theme (translators) that is the unmarked theme (challenge can be a theme). (Are professionals within the field) is the rheme of the theme (translators). (*almutarajun*) is Mubtada (theme) and *khubara' fi majal altarjama* is Khabar (rheme). The second category is the circumstance theme, marked as in (yesterday) I went to college with my classmate (rheme). It has been translated into Arabic as (*dhahabt' iilaa aljamieat mae zamili*), which has Marked in Arabic and no longer preferable in the Arabic language in terms of style. The 0.33 category is the technique as the marked theme (Buckle) and the rheme (The seatbelt before driving *airbit alhizam qabl qiadat alsayaara*), which is acceptable in the Arabic language. The theme has been translated into Arabic in a verbal sentence as an equivalent marked theme.

According to (Gerot & Wignell, 1994), textual themes connect the clause to its context. It includes discourse markers and conjunctions and attaches the meaning of a specific clause to the rest of the text. It does not convey impersonal or experiential meaning. It contributes to coherence by connecting one clause to its context (Eggs, 2004). They can be continuatives, Adjunctive Adjuncts, or Conjunctive Adjuncts and Conjunctions. The distinction between Conjunctions and Conjunctive Adjuncts is frequently blurred. However, one difference is that Conjunctive Adjuncts are freer to move within a clause, whereas Conjunctions are always at the beginning. The textual theme, i.e., the text-creating meanings an author creates.

In textual themes, the linking function is typically used and or, but additionally, textual themes are used by writers to establish connections and pursue a line of argument, such as using the first, second, third, and finally conjunctions. These conjunctions are beneficial for providing information about how the text unfolds. Additionally, the reader could access the knowledge and construct the latest information that the writer wants to communicate.

Table 3. Textual Theme in English and Arabic

Discourse Devices	Textual theme highlighted	Equivalence in Arabic
Coordination	Jack works very hard, but his co-worker wastes a lot of time.	<i>yaeml jak bjd , lakina zamilah fi aleamal. yadie kthyraan min alwaqti.</i>
Subordination	The student was absent because he was sick	<i>kan altaalib ghaybaan li'anah kan mrydaan.</i>
Relative	This is the book, which was published in China.	<i>hadha alkitab aladhi nushir fi alsyn.</i>
Conjunctive	Besides a father, he has a brother to support.	<i>bijanib walidih ladayh 'akh yaeuluh.</i>
Cont.	Right, what we need to do today is to schedule our trip to London.	<i>hsnan , ma yataeyan ealayna alqiam bih alyawm hu tahdid maweid rihlatina 'iilaa landan.</i>
Cont.'+ Conjunctive	Well, on the other hand, if we were in charge.	<i>hsnan , min nahiat 'ukhrra 'iidha kunaa maswuwlina...</i>

The above table represents the textual theme by clauses that include discourse devices. These devices include discourse markers and conjunctions and connect the meaning of a specific clause to the rest of the text. For instance, the clause that contains “but” as a coordination device has been directly translated into an equivalent one in the Arabic language in the same position. The clause that includes subordination “because” has been translated with a slight change to the order of topical subject. However, the relative item has been translated using the same order. The other devices were translated directly into the Arabic language. The textual theme could include topical theme, interpersonal theme and could include rheme as well.

The interpersonal theme is often used to designate the writer’s or speaker’s attitude or judgment on meaning. It usually occurs before the topical theme (Emilia, 2014).

Table 4. Interpersonal Theme in English and Arabic

Category	Interpersonal theme	Topical Theme	Rheme	Transliteration
Unused finite as the theme	Can Have	We	Have PCR test after vaccine?	<i>hal yumkin 'iijra' akhtibar alkuruna baed allaqahi?</i>
Mood adjunct	I believe	Ghosts	Exist in the real world.	<i>'aetaqid 'ana al'ashbah mawjudat fi alhayaati.</i>
	I think	She	Will pass her driving test.	<i>'aetaqid 'anaha satajtaz aikhtibar alqiadat alkhasi biha.</i>
Comment adjunct	Obviously Frankly	A family doctor	Is important to family members.	<i>bisarahatin, tabib al'usrat muhimun li'afraad al'usrati.</i>
Polarity adjunct	Yes /No	I	Have PCR test after vaccine?	<i>naeam sa' atasil biki.</i>

From this table, it is observed that interpersonal is represented in English and Arabic by the following categories. The interpersonal is expressed by attitude (adjuncts) such as think, belief, and frankly. These words are in addition to different words that sound polarity adjunct and other items. A topical theme accompanies the interpersonal theme, and the translation in Arabic showed interpersonal and topical themes as well.

#### **ANALYSIS OF THEMATIC AND INFORMATION STRUCTURE IN ARABIC AND ENGLISH**

The idea of starting point is possible in English; however, it is not possible in the Arabic language because Arabic is expected to follow verbal structure (V-S-O) more than nominal structure, whereas the English language follows nominal structures (S-V-O) more than verbal structures. The verbal sentence in English includes a verb, whereas the verbal sentence commences with a verb in Arabic. Arabic is known as the language of inflections, and these inflections impact the theme and rheme, which is not the norm in English. As a result, a comparative analysis should focus on one of the discourse's central components. In contrast to English, Arabic allows for free word order (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, 2020).

As a result, the Hallidayan approach is sufficient for identifying the theme in Arabic clauses or sentences. There are particles in Arabic, which are conventionally placed at the commencement of the clause or sentence, and these particles are not considered themes but serve to draw attention to the theme, which is not found in English. According to Almanna (2016), the object is a component of the rheme, and the theme and subject are components of the theme in MSA. Arabic commences with given information and progresses to new information, i.e., from theme to rheme, and this is because people are concerned about communication being understood by the audience (Abdul-Raof, 2013).

Because English and Arabic both begin with the most thematic element and conclude with the most rhematic, if the word order of the original Arabic can be approximated in English, the original theme-rheme structure is frequently reproduced. As a result, Dickens' word order is fixed in this regard for theme - rheme analysis (Dickins et al., 2016).

Arabic grammar theory gives paramountcy to the commencement positions in the sentence. This Position is quite Diverse in the nominal sentence. According to several principles, it can accommodate both focal and common elements. Here are some reasons to prove that. First, a definite noun must be used initially, assumed in the verbalizer/consciousness. In Arabic, there appears to be a gradient of definiteness for the hearer. A proper noun or pronoun is a definite entity. A participle became optionally definite when the definite article was used or when it was combined with a possessive pronoun or noun. When the item is indefinite, this gradient interacts with given-new to generate information Structures; otherwise, it is new by default. However, the equative form has two definite elements: the present subject and predicate; the provided is frequently optionally definite, when the degree of definiteness of the components is equal. Second, negative, and interrogative sentences in English are drawn to the tonic element (the focus of information). In Arabic, the beginning particle carries a negative and interrogative connotation. As a result, Arabic has an open word order. The unmarked order in a declarative verbal sentence is VSO.

In Arabic, an equative phrase is a word in the first position firmly focused on what is equal or on the predicted theme. In contrast to thematic equatives, different noun kinds are offered in that place in English. Thirdly, it would be interesting to examine the information structure of English and Arabic in light of what Firbas (1964) refers to as communicative dynamism in conjunction with the Prague school's notion of functional sentences.

Halliday's approach was pioneered by perspective. According to Firbas, the degree of communicative dynamism possessed by an element is quantified by the message in pushing communication. As is the case with Halliday's theory, the sequence of theme and rheme is not established. The theme is a floating element that interacts with the concept of markedness.

In comparison, linguists believe that unmarked English exhibits a progression from the lowest to the highest CD. Arabic in indicated provided -given a new sequence, Arabic seems to shift prominently from the highest to the lowest CD. As a result, English favours what might be described as a rising pattern of communicative dynamism. Simultaneously, Arabic has a descending trend. These findings are provisional at the moment (Mughazy, 2007).

8. Discussion

STUDENTS' TEST ON THEMATIC AND INFORMATION STRUCTURES IN ENGLISH AND ARABIC

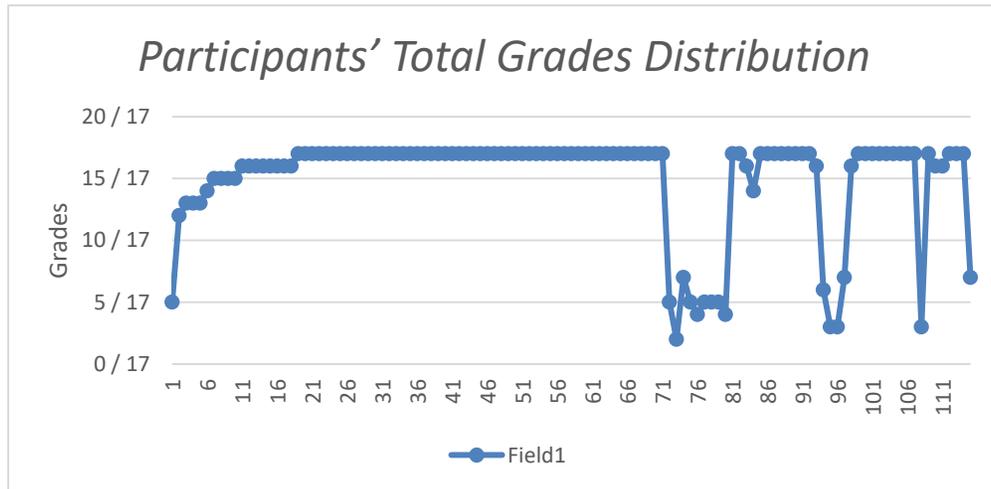


Figure 1. Participants' Total Points Distribution

Field1 = Students, Average = 14.91/17 Points, Median = 17/17 Points, Range = 2-17 Points

Figure 1 illustrates participants' total points distribution from students' test on Thematic and Information Structures in English and Arabic. The participants were given seventeen statements taken from their course textbook, and the researchers here focused on the familiarity of texts to the participants. It was noticed that the participants translated the statements in a reasonable time. Participants' scores show an exceedingly high indicator. Figure 1 illustrates that the average is 14.91, which was astonishing to the researchers. They did not expect to see such a high average.

In contrast to the researcher's opinion, most participants scored high marks on the test according to the median of 17/17 points. The range of the scores was 2-17, and this shows that participants have excellent knowledge about thematic and information structures in English and Arabic. From the above discussion and statistics, most participants were able to translate the statements, and they were aware of themes and rhemes in English and Arabic.

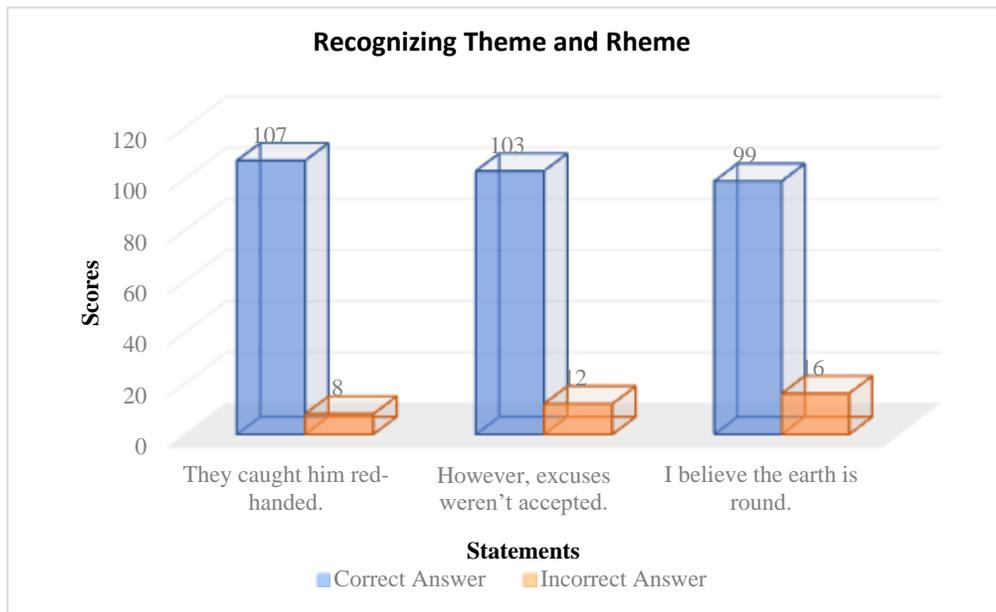


Figure 2. Recognizing Theme and Rheme in English and Arabic

Figure 2 shows the total number of participants who scored the correct or incorrect answers to the first category in the test, Recognizing Theme and Rheme in English and Arabic. Most of the participants achieved the correct response with a high number. The first statement, 'they caught him red-handed,' was translated "homa qabza laya metelbessa" correctly by 107 participants, while eight participants scored the incorrect answer. The second statement, 'however, excuses were not accepted,' was also translated "ghair hann alazar lam taqbal" correctly by 103 participants, while only twelve participants chose the wrong translation. The third statement, 'I believe the earth is round,'

was again translated “*ataqud hann alarz mastadeera*” correctly by 99 participants, while 16 participants selected incorrect translations.

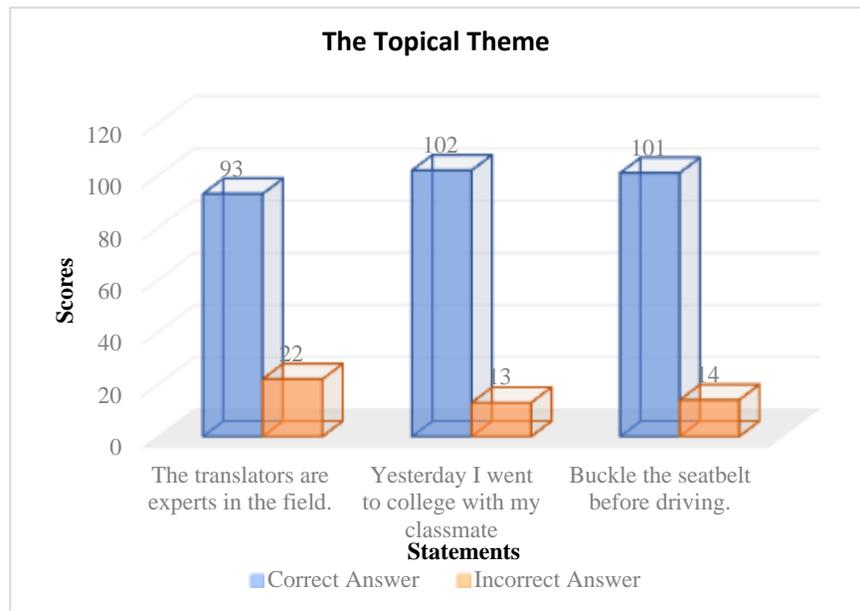


Figure 3. The Topical Theme in English and Arabic

Figure 3 illustrates the total number of participants who scored the correct or incorrect answers to the second category in the test, The Topical Theme in English and in Arabic. It was noticed that most of the participants selected the correct translation with high number. The first statement, ‘The translators are experts in the field,’ was translated “*almutarjooon khabrah fee majal altarjumah*” correctly by ninety-three participants, while twenty-two participants scored the incorrect answers. The second statement, ‘Yesterday I went to college with my classmate,’ was also translated “*hamas dhabat delly aljamaa maa zomely*” correctly by 102 participants, while only thirteen participants decided the wrong translation. The third statement, ‘Buckle the seatbelt before driving,’ was again translated “*arbat alhazam qabal qayada alsiyarah*” correctly by 101 participants, while fourteen participants chose incorrect translations.

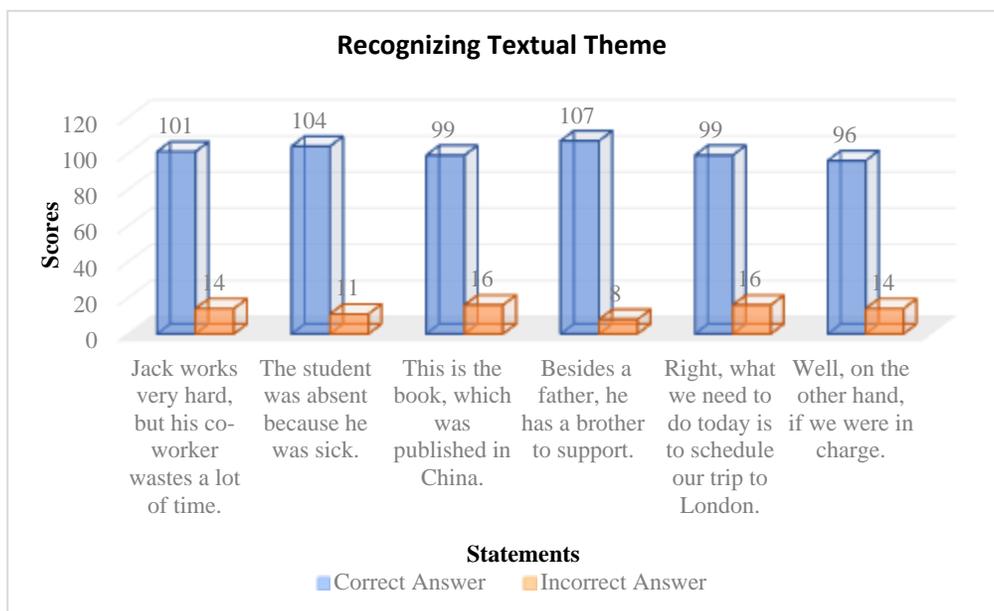


Figure 4. Recognizing Textual Theme in English and Arabic

Figure 4 demonstrates the total number of participants who scored the correct or incorrect answers to the third category in the test, Recognizing Textual Theme in English and Arabic. The researcher noticed that ninety-five participants scored correct answers in each statement. On the contrary, a minimal number of participants selected the incorrect translation. For example, the statement, ‘Besides a father, he has a brother to support,’ was translated “*bijanib walidih ladayh ‘akh yaeluluhu.*” correctly by 107 participants, while eight participants scored the incorrect answers. The statement, ‘The student was absent because he was sick,’ was also translated “*kan altalib ghaeba laneh*

kan mariza” correctly by 104 participants, while only eleven participants chose the wrong translation.

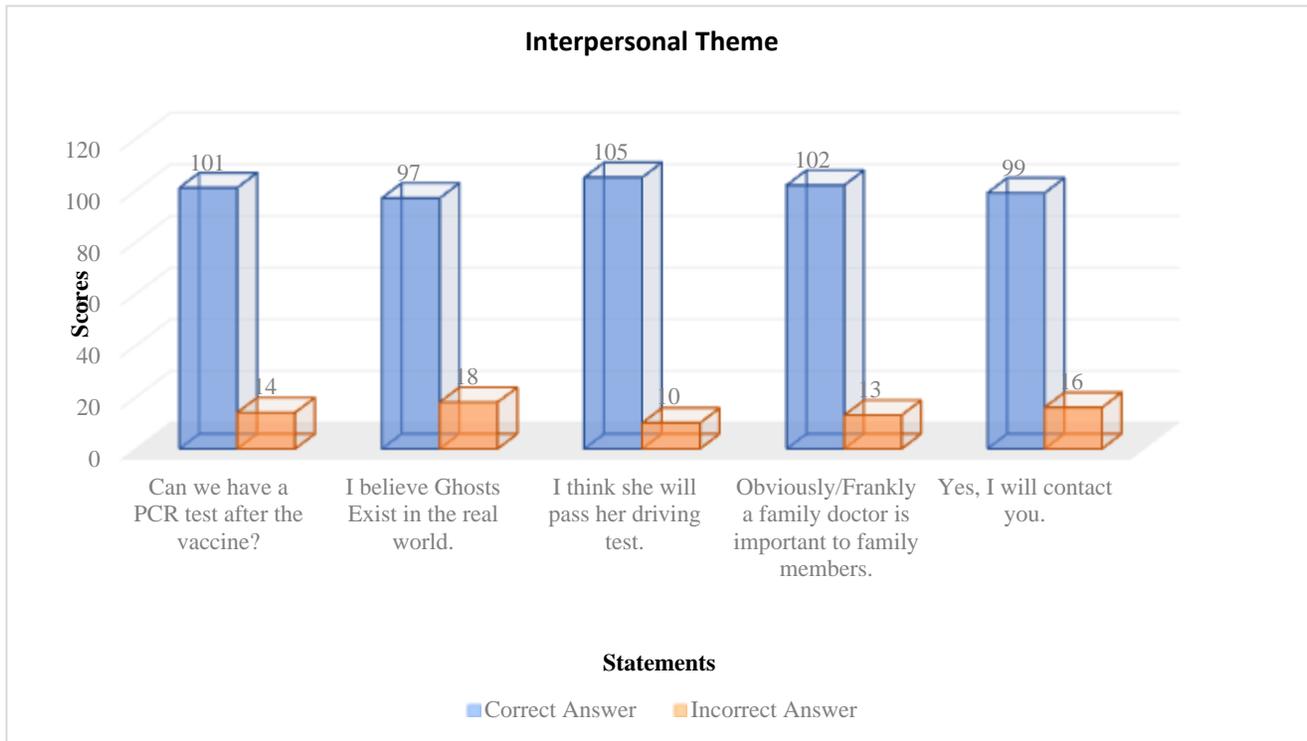


Figure 5. Interpersonal Theme in English and Arabic

Figure 5 displays the total number of participants who scored the correct or incorrect answers to the fourth category in the test, Interpersonal Theme in English, and Arabic. Most of the participants selected the correct translation version with high number. The statement, ‘I think she will pass her driving test,’ was translated “*ataqud nha satujtaz ikhtebar alqiada alkhaas baha*” correctly by 105 participants, while 10 participants scored the incorrect answer. The statement, ‘I believe Ghosts Exist in the real world’ was also translated “*ataqud hann alshabah mojoedah fee alhayaat*” correctly by ninety-seven participants, while only eighteen participants chose the wrong translation.

**9. Findings**

This research reveals that thematic information structures are employed in English and Arabic based on contrastive analysis. In English and Arabic, every form of theme and rheme can be found. Both English and Arabic have a higher frequency of the topical theme. The theme is sometimes deleted or substituted by rheme. In both English and Arabic, the interpersonal theme is rarely used. A theme in English can be translated into an Arabic rheme. The topical theme predominates in English and Arabic clauses and is expressed in the target language. When the subject of the clause is accompanied by a verb in Arabic, the verb and the subject form the theme of the clause. Interpersonal themes can be found in both English and Arabic and are represented through words or phrases such as honestly, well, right, etc.

When ESL students translate these words or phrases into Arabic, the rendition will be direct, with no shifts or modifications in the placements of the equivalent themes. However, these thematic phrases are found in conjunction with topical and textual themes. The textual theme has been scrutinized and is frequently conveyed by discourse markers and coherent devices. These entities are employed to provide coherence and cohesiveness. When translating a literary theme, the students are obliged to supply identical elements in the appropriate context. In Arabic and English, marked and unmarked themes are commonly employed. The objective of adopting a marked theme is to bring the reader’s and recipient’s attention to the message. In Arabic, for example, the theme (subject) is placed first and before the rheme (predicate), but in some circumstances, the rheme (predicate) comes first to serve a specific role. The unmarked topic is the most common and usually appears first in the clauses. The theme is sometimes repeated to serve diverse functions, and this is referred to as theme reiteration. As the words suggest, the zigzag theme emphasizes the text’s cohesiveness by focusing on the newly introduced and usually attempts to elaborate on this information. All forms of themes serve different purposes in translation, though shifts from theme to rheme are often unavoidable. The thematic structure and information structure are linked in both languages by topic and rheme.

**10. Conclusion**

The study focused on interpreting thematic structures (theme) and information structures (rheme) from English into Arabic. The finding showed that the rules bind the theme and Thematic progression in English and Arabic. All types of themes are significant in translation and need to be handled carefully in translation process by ESL learners. The Topical Theme, which is dominant, should be

the focus in any text to be rendered. The interpersonal theme is commonly used in conversation and everyday language and aims to help the speakers to express their attitudes, feelings, and judgment. Thus, it should be translated to serve the same function. The Textual Theme function is an element that establishes the relationship between clauses to build text coherence and cohesion. The thematic structures patterns in both languages are built by theme reiteration and zig zag pattern. The latter helps build the new and given information and the multiple theme help produce the whole text together with the other types of text. The ESL learners who will become translators should be aware that thematic structures and information structures could pave the way so that the theme and rheme are the building blocks of the text and understanding them and the differences used in a different language could raise the level of fluency and accuracy of the translation between English and Arabic.

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## APPENDIX (A)

### A test on Thematic and Information Structures in English and Arabic

#### (ESL Students)

#### Dear students,

This test is intended to collect data about Thematic and Information Structures in English and Arabic in higher education in Saudi Arabia context. Your contributions to answering these questions will help the researcher explore instructors' perceptions and beliefs regarding this matter. Kindly note that all answers will be collected anonymously and only used for this research.

#### Choose the correct option in each statement:

#### A) Recognizing theme and rheme in English and Arabic:

##### 1. They caught him red-handed.

- a) *homa qabza laya metelbessa.*
- b) *qabzua laya metelbessa.*
- c) *tom alqabz ali ilmutalbasin.*

##### 2. However, excuses were not accepted.

- a) *ghair hann alazar qablat.*
- b) *qablat alazar.*
- c) *ghair hann alazar lam taqbal.*

##### 3. I believe the earth is round.

- a) *ataqud hann alarz mastadeera.*
- b) *alarz mastadeera.*
- c) *alarz daireyah.*

#### B) The topical theme in English and translation Arabic:

##### 4. The translators are experts in the field.

- a) *fee majal altarjumah almutarjamoona ham alkhabraa.*
- b) *almutarjamoona ham alkhabraa.*
- c) *almutarjoona khabraa fee majal altarjumah.*

##### 5. Yesterday I went to college with my classmate

- a) *maa zomely dhabat delly alkalya hamas.*

- b) *hamas dhabat delly aljamaa maa zomely.*
- c) *dhahab delly alkalya.*

**6. Buckle the seatbelt before driving.**

- a) *arbat alhazam qabal qayada alsiyarah.*
- b) *alhazam qabal alqiada.*
- c) *arbat alhazam man fazlak.*

**C) Recognizing textual theme in English and translating Arabic:**

**7. Jack works very hard, but his co-worker wastes a lot of time.**

- a) *lakhan zomely jock yazia kaseera man alwaqt ye alamal.*
- b) *zamel jock yazia kaseera man alwaqt.*
- c) *yamal jock bajd lakhan zamileh fee alamal yazia kaseera man alwaqt.*

**8. The student was absent because he was sick.**

- a) *kan altalib ghaeba laneh kan mariza.*
- b) *kan altalib ghaeba.*
- c) *kan altalib haazra.*

**9. This is the book, which was published in China.**

- a) *nashre haza alkatab fee alsin.*
- b) *haza alkatab alzai nashre fee alsin.*
- c) *tom nashre alkatab.*

**10. Besides a father, he has a brother to support.**

- a) *ladiyeh kh yaoolah.*
- b) *ladiyeh wald yaoolah.*
- c) *bijanib walidih ladayh 'akh yaeuluhu.*

**11. Right, what we need to do today is to schedule our trip to London.**

- a) *hasana ma yataeen aleena alqayam bay llium hoo tahdeed moad rahlatna delly london.*
- b) *ma yataeen aleena alqayam bay llium hoo tahdeed moad alrahlah.*
- c) *yajab tahdeed moad alrahlah.*

**12. Well, on the other hand, if we were in charge.**

- a) *zaza kenna masuleen man nahiya khari.*
- b) *hasana man nahiya khari zaza kenna masuleen.*
- c) *zaza kenna masuleen.*

**D) Interpersonal theme in English and translation Arabic:**

**13. Can we Have a PCR test after the vaccine?**

- a) *hell, yemkink jujraa akhtabari*

- b) *hell, yemkink jujraa ikhtebar alkaroonaa baad allaqahin*
- c) *hell, ajreet alakhtabari*

**14. I believe Ghosts Exist in the real world.**

- a) *ataqud hann alshabah mojudah fee alhayaat.*
- b) *alshabah mojudah fee alhayaat.*
- c) *la tawajd ashbah fee alhayaat.*

**15. I think she will pass her driving test.**

- a) *ikhtebar alqiada alkhaas baha sahal.*
- b) *ikhtebar alqiada alkhaas baha leese sahal.*
- c) *ataqud nha satujtaz ikhtebar alqiada alkhaas baha.*

**16. Obviously/Frankly a family doctor is important to family members.**

- a) *basrahata tabib alsarah maham lafrad alsarah.*
- b) *tabib alasrah maham lalasara.*
- c) *tabib alasrah ghair maham lalasara.*

**17. Yes, I will contact you.**

- a) *namee satsal beck.*
- b) *namee satsal beck lahaqa.*
- c) *namee len atasal beck lahaqa*

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