

Trumpslation Analysed: Constraints and Interpreter Strategies in the Simultaneous Interpretation of Donald Trump's Unscripted Speeches into Arabic

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Abstract

The field of translation has recently been affected by an increasing tendency to use unconventional language in the realm of politics. This study explores the influence of such a tendency on simultaneous interpreting and focuses on the Arabic translations of two simultaneous interpreters who rendered two of Donald Trump's unscripted speeches into Arabic. The study aims at detecting the constraints involved in the simultaneous interpreting of Trump's unscripted speeches, exploring the interpreters' strategies, and revealing how the speaker's deviation from the norms of language use in politics may have an impact on the performance of the interpreters. The study contributes to the field of translation studies by exploring the territory of political interpreting into Arabic which needs further studying. It addresses the phenomenon of using unconventional language in the realm of politics and broadens our knowledge of the constraints it imposes on simultaneous interpreting and of the ways in which simultaneous interpreters intervene to make the communicated message intelligible. The study also suggests that explanation can be another category of the ways of intervention that interpreters use and can thus be added to the categorisation suggested by Kadrić et al. (2022).

Key terms: Trumpslation, political interpreting, simultaneous interpretation, categorisation of interpreters' ways of intervention, cognitive and non-cognitive constraints.

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Introduction

Since his arrival on the political field, Donald Trump has created a linguistic phenomenon due to his deviation from the norm of using elated and politically correct language. Trump's popularity resides in his unconventional use of language which brought him closer to many voters. However, Trump's exceptional style has posed an "unprecedented" challenge to interpreters who branded the problematic task of translating him as "Trumpslation" (Ersöz, 2017, paras. 2,4).

Political interpreting is a constantly changing landscape. Recently, the change in diplomatic and political life has been accelerated by several factors such as "globalisation, new technologies, and digitisation" (Kadrić et al., 2022, p.179). Schöffner (2007) observes that "the universality of political discourse has consequences for intercultural communication, and thus for translation" and that political "communication relies on translation" (p.135). Political communication may demand translation or interpretation. The difference between them has to do with "the modes of input and out" which are "the visual and written mode in the case of translating and the auditory and verbal mode in the case of interpreting" (Christoffels, 2004, p.7). This study focuses on the work of simultaneous interpreters as they deal with the phenomenon of Trumpslation.

In recent years, the rise of nationalism and the problems of immigration in Europe and the United States tempted some politicians to abandon political correctness and the traditional political speech style in order to get closer to the audience. Because of the constant change in politics, Kadrić et al. (2022) suggest that interpreters “need to keep up to date with political and current affairs via both traditional and new media and familiarize themselves with new topics and discourses” (p. 178). However, getting updated on new topics cannot always guarantee that the assignment can be done adequately if the speaker being interpreted—like Trump—cannot be expected.

The work of a political interpreter is surrounded by high expectations about fluency and precision. Deviation between what the speaker says and the message the interpreter delivers is regarded as “a threat to neutrality” and “a failure” (Helmer, 2019, p. 5). However, deviations can sometimes be inevitable in simultaneous interpreting, especially when politicians deliver unscripted speeches (Helmer, 2019, p.5).

The aim of this study is to explore the constraints involved in interpreting the unscripted speeches of Trump into Arabic and to investigate how the style and language use of the politician may affect the interpreter’s strategies and performance. It focuses on two of the speeches Trump delivered at two of his rallies during his 2020 presidential campaign. One of the speeches was broadcast on

air by AlArabiya TV news channel, and the second was broadcast on air by CBC eXtra news channel.¹ The two were simultaneously interpreted into Arabic by different interpreters.

The study develops a method of analysis that is based on merging the descriptive method that Baker (1997) uses to analyse the non-cognitive constraints and performance of political interpreters during a time of crisis with the categories of the ways of intervention that interpreters use to manage information which are suggested by Kadric et al (2022) and it adds another way of intervention to the categorisation. The developed method of analysis is employed in detecting constraints and assessing the strategies of the two interpreters and in exploring the impact of Trump's unconventional style on the performance of the interpreters.

The study explores the subfield of political interpreting which needs to be more closely studied as Baker (1997) suggests (p.124). It attempts to broaden our knowledge of the tendency of deviating from routine and expectations which seems “to be increasing... in political discourse” (Kadrić et al., 2022, p.115). Nowadays, far right nationalist politicians like Marine le Pen in France and Nigel Farage in the United Kingdom use shocking language like Trump. Increasing our understanding of the

¹ The names of the news channels are spelled in the same way they appear on their official webpages and YouTube channels.

simultaneous interpretation of this unconventional and unprecedented use of language in the realm of politics can help scholars and interpreters to identify and understand the increasing constraints on the work of simultaneous interpreters of political discourse today.

Before discussing Trumpslation, the next section investigates the norms of using language in the realm of politics from which Trump deviated and thereby formed a dilemma for interpreters.

Political Discourse and Ideal Expectations about the Work of Political Interpreters

Politicians—usually consciously—attempt to control “the production of the self” (Carver & Hyvärinen, 1997, p.5). The production of a political self and a sophisticated image involves having the ability to communicate in the realm of politics. As most politicians enter the field of politics and diplomacy, they learn to use political language because language is a particular form of action whose aim is “to influence thinking and action in certain social relationships” (Kadrić et al., 2022, p. 29).

Political language has its own characteristics. Newmark (1991) observes that the language of politics is characterised by abstraction (147), “metaphors” (p. 158), “neologisms” (p. 158), “acronyms”(p. 159), “euphony” (p.159), and “collocations” (p. 159). Kadrić et al. (2022) state that an important characteristic of political language is that “not everything is said directly” and that

politicians and diplomats communicate their messages tactfully (p. 31). Political interpreters should be equipped with the adequate knowledge of these characteristics and with the skills that help them to convey the embedded meaning effectively.

There are mainly two modes of interpreting: consecutive and simultaneous. Russell (2005) states that consecutive interpreting is generally defined as “the process of interpreting after the speaker or signer has completed one or more ideas in the source language and pauses while the interpreter transmits that information” and that simultaneous interpreting is defined as “the process of interpreting into the target language at the same time as the source language is being delivered” (p.136).

Some of the standards as well as the expectations about the work of interpreters in general may be too ideal. There is an emphasis on “accuracy and completeness” (Kardić et al., 2022, p.61). Gile (1999) sees “omissions and errors” as one category (p. 159), and Gile’s viewpoint implies that all omissions “are indicators of lesser quality” (Pym, 2008, para. 14). However, empirical studies about interpretation which have been carried out since the 1990s suggest that such high expectations about accuracy and completeness are not realistic (Kadrić et al, 2022, p. 61).

One of the reasons why absolute precision and completion are not always possible is because the interpreter acts as a cultural mediator to make the content of the message understood; therefore,

he or she may sometimes have to tailor the message in accordance with the expected knowledge and socio-cultural background of the target audience (Kadrić et al., 2022, p. 61). Another reason is the fact that “purely semantic accuracy” may fail to convey the pragmatic meaning of the speaker’s message (Kadrić et al, 2022, p. 61). In the case of simultaneous interpreting, different efforts work simultaneously as the interpreter attempts to listen to segments of the text, store them in memory, analyse them, and reproduce them (Gile, 1995, p.170). The multi-effort work of the simultaneous interpreter is surrounded by cognitive and non-cognitive constraints such as “different cultural contexts and meanings”, “time pressure” (Helmer, 2019, p. 5), the interpreter’s “attention span”, “heavily accented speech”, “environmental noise” (Baker, 1997, p.83), and “imported load” which “is cognitive load transferred from one sentence to the next”(Plevoets & Befrancq, 2020,p.18) . These constraints may affect the performance of the interpreter and the precision with which he or she may deliver the message. In fact, interpreting is a form of “damage control” (Helmer, 2019, p. 5).

Trumpslation: The Dilemma, the Phenomenon

Viser (2015) analysed the language use of the 19 presidential candidates who ran for office during the 2016 elections and focused on their opening speeches in which they announced their campaigns (para. 4). Based on this analysis, Trump’s announcement speech was ranked at the lowest level (Viser, 2015, para. 9). However,

Viser (2015) revealed that candidates with lower grade levels had a bigger impact on the voters than candidates with higher levels (para. 5). Simpler speeches are easier to understand; consequently, the candidates who had lower grade level reached more people.

Viser (2015) suggests that it has been the norm for politicians to use elated or sophisticated language and that political consultants face “a battle to get candidates to speak like everyday Americans — and not like politicians” (para. 23). Trump understood that the American voters were fed up with the policies of the elite politicians in Washington DC; so, he repeatedly emphasised that he was a “businessman and not a politician”, detaching himself from the political elites and promising change (Lessard, 2015, para. 1). The detachment was reflected in the way he used language, especially in the unscripted speeches he gave during presidential campaign rallies. Unlike other candidates, he did not try to use elevated rhetoric. He normalised political incorrectness, hurled slurs at his opponents, chose derogatory nicknames for his rivals whether they be senators or presidential candidates (Edelman, 2019) or foreign leaders (Lavelle, 2018, para. 9). He repeatedly attacked other countries like China and Mexico (Cerrato et al., 2016, para. 1), and he used sexist language against women (Yan, 2015, paras. 1,2) and racist language against immigrants and African countries (Lee, 2020, paras.18, 20, 23). Trump’s shockingly unprecedented use of language in the field of

politics helped him to convince voters that he was an anti-establishment candidate.

However, Trump's deviation from the linguistic norm in political discourse created chaos among translators and interpreters. They considered the act of translating and interpreting Trump as a dilemma and an independent phenomenon in translation and they gave it the name "Trumpslation" (Ersöz, 2017, paras. 5, 7).

When discussing Trumpslation and describing their plight, translators and interpreters from different nationalities cite many problems. In an interview with Zaretsky (2017) Bérengère Viennot—who is a French interpreter—states that the difficulty of translating Trump stems from the fact that “when he speaks he seems not to know quite where he's going (para. 8). She also observes that his “vocabulary is limited, his syntax is broken”, and “he repeats the same phrases over and over”; therefore, he makes it difficult for the interpreter to convey the message eloquently because his poor skills as an orator inevitably impact the translation (Zaretsky, 2017, para. 8).

Anticipation can be a helpful tool for simultaneous interpreters; it generally happens “when the target language counterpart of a source language segment is produced before the source language segment is uttered” (Bartłomiejczyk, 2008, p.117). Anticipation may be based on the interpreter's linguistic knowledge (Wilss,1978, p.364) or situational knowledge (Lederer,1978, 330).

Therefore, students who learn about simultaneous interpreting are advised to anticipate what the speaker will say (Doshi and McCurry, 2017, para.16). However, it is not always useful when simultaneously interpreting Trump's speeches. In an interview with Fokken (2017), Norbert Heikamp—who interpreted Trump into German—clarifies that Trump strains the interpreters' thinking habits, making it hard for them to predict what is coming (para. 13). In her interview with Doshi and McCurry, Chikako Tsuruta—a Japanese interpreter and professor of translation studies—clarifies that this trick of anticipation cannot work when interpreting Trump because his stream of consciousness usually lacks logic (para. 16). Tsuruta notes that Trump complicates the task of the interpreters because he uses lewd language and culture-specific expressions or makes cultural references which are not usually used in political speeches (Doshi & McCurry, 2017, paras. 9, 12).

Constraints on interpretation become more obvious in Trump's unscripted speeches, particularly in campaign rallies. In their analysis of the demographics of the constituency of a Trump rally, Reicher and Haslam (2016) observe that Trump followers do not trust politics (paras. 25, 26). Trump succeeds by addressing their "feelings of decline and marginalisation" (Reicher & Haslam, 2016, para. 27). His normalisation of politically incorrect language, his mocking of the Washington elites, his simple language, and maybe his lack of oratory skills distance him from the distrusted politicians. However, the way he uses language during his rallies

impose constraints on the interpretation of his unscripted speeches, and the impact of the constraints can be seen in the selected translations that this study focuses on.

Methodology of Analysis

The present study merges the method that Baker (1997) follows to analyse the impact of non-cognitive constraints on the work of interpreters during an international crisis (p.111) with the categorisation that Kadrić et al. (2022) provide for the ways in which interpreters intervene in the communicative situation to manage information (p.77) –and adds a new category of intervention—to develop a descriptive method of analysis. The developed method of analysis aims at analysing how Trump’s style and use of language impose constraints on the work of simultaneous interpreters of his unscripted speeches, and how interpreters deal with these constraints.

Baker (1997) focuses on the psychological and cultural constraints in the interpretation of a political interview that took place during the Gulf War (p.112). The interview was broadcast by the British TV channel ITN in November 1990 after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait (Baker, 1997, p.112). The host was Trever McDonald, the guest was Saddam Hussein, and there were two interpreters (Baker, 1997, p. 112). Baker (1997) emphasises that the interpreters were under stress because their performance was monitored by Saddam who understood English and by the audience

who watched the televised interview, because their work at such time of tension involved a “moral and historical responsibility”, and because the role of the interpreters seemed to be unspecified (Baker, 1997, pp.114-115).

Baker (1997) adopts a descriptive approach to her analysis: she generally outlines the non-cognitive constraints in the interview (pp.112-115), describes the three main strategies of the interpreters, selects segments from her transcript of the interview, pinpoints the constraints in each segment, and discusses how these influenced the strategies and consequently the performance of the interpreters (pp. 115-124).

This study follows the descriptive methodology of Baker (1997) because it starts by describing the features that characterise Trump’s language use that creates constraints for interpreters, and by describing the types of the ways of intervention that interpreters generally resort to as they attempt to manage information. The description of the interpreters’ ways of intervention is based on the categorisation that Kadrić et al. (2022) provide. I discuss the features of Trump’s use of language and the categorisation of the interpreters’ ways of intervention in general in this section. Then, I focus in the analysis section on the constraints and strategies in the selected segments from my transcripts of the translations of the specified simultaneous interpreters.

Trump's language and style are characterised by several features which create cognitive and non-cognitive constraints for simultaneous interpreters. The first feature is repetition which Trump seems to use either for emphasis or for the sake of creating a form of connection between his incoherent utterances. Repetitions may have a positive impact on the crowds in Trump rallies, but they overload the message with details and may create a cognitive constraint for interpreters.

The second characterising feature of Trump's speeches is incoherence as he usually expresses himself in inconsistent and unclear way. He often uses irrelevant simple sentences or even incomplete sentences which sometimes make him sound unintelligible. Incoherence creates a cognitive constraint.

The third feature is the use of culture-specific elements, such as the excessive use of names of TV shows or names of people and cultural institutions that are supposed to be familiar to the Americans but are not expected to be known to the Arab target audience. Culture-specific elements impose a non-cognitive constraint on simultaneous interpretation.

The fourth feature is abusive language. Trump often uses insults that are not normally used in the American and the Arabic politics. His inappropriate language creates a non-cognitive constraint since lewd language normally has no place in the elevated language often used by Arab politicians.

The fifth feature, which is often related to incoherence, is unexpectedness. Trump often jumps from one topic to another suddenly. His unexpectedness creates a cognitive load which complicates the task of the simultaneous interpreter.

To deal with problems and constraints, interpreters intervene in the communicative situation to manage information. Kadrić et al. (2022) divide the interpreters' ways of intervention in the communicative situation into four main categories: explicitation, modification, reduction, and interposition (p.77).

According to Kadrić et al. (2022), explicitation involves verbalising “elements in the interpreter’s translation that are not verbalised or not explicitly found in the original utterance” (p.77). Explicitation is used to make the meaning clear without adding something new to the content of the source message (Kadrić et al., 2022, p. 78). It can take different forms which include “adding modifiers”, “opting for verbal constructions instead of nominalisations”, explaining metaphors, and “inserting explanatory remarks” (Gumul, 2017, p. 316)

The second category of intervention that Kadrić et al. (2022) refer to is modification (p.82). The interpreter may substitute words or phrases of the source text with other segments from the target text, and the changes that the interpreter makes may include adding or omitting elements (Kadrić et al. 2002, 82). The interpreter may need to modify segments from the source text in order to “correct

obvious mistakes”, to communicate a message in an appropriate or more polite way, or to remove unsuccessful attempts or mistakes made when one starts to speak (Kadrić et al. 2002,p. 82).

The third category of intervention is reduction which is the term that Kadrić et al. (2022) employ to refer to a situation where the interpreter recapitulates and partially interprets entire unites of meaning or omit them completely (p.91). Ideally, reduction should not result in “any loss of information or misinterpretations”; however, some interpreters produce a censored translation of the source text if the speaker uses a language that is regarded offending or inappropriate (Kadrić et al., 2022, p. 92).

The fourth category of intervention is interposition which aims at making communication better (Kadrić et al., 2022, p. 94). Here, the interpreter can pause translating the message of the participant(s) into the target language in order to ask questions he or she may find crucial to convey the meaning successfully (Kadrić et al., 2022, p.94). This category is not available for translators who simultaneously interpret speeches that are broadcast live on TV.

To make the categorisation of Kadrić et al. (2022) more comprehensive, explanation can be added as a fifth category. Kadrić et al. (2022) state that some objects or concepts may require using a brief explanation when translating them into a TL and that these include culture-specific elements (p. 78). Thus, Kadrić et al (2022) basically use the term explanation to refer to a translation

strategy that helps the translator to intervene in the text to make some segments explicit; they view explicitation in a broader sense. However, the analysis of the Arab interpreters' translations reveals that the interpreters may attempt to make sense of incoherent messages by adding new content that may make the message intelligible. Therefore, I use the term "explanation" in this study to refer to a fifth way of intervention where the interpreter adds elements which are new to the content of the source message.

Based on the method of Baker (1997) and the categorisation of Kadrić et al. (2022), this study develops a model of analysis that consists of three steps. The first step is to highlight the constraints in the selected parts from my transcripts of Trump's two unscripted speeches and discuss the challenges they pose to the interpreter. The second step is to detect the strategies the interpreters resort to in the selected parts from my transcripts of the two Arab interpreters' translations and to describe these strategies in accordance with the categorisation suggested by Kadrić et al. (2022). The third step is to explore the possible impact of the constraints on the interpreters' translations of the selected segments and to assess the success of the interpreters' strategies in their attempts to convey the message.

Analysis

The study analyses segments from Trump's unscripted speech at a political rally in Tulsa, Oklahoma which he delivered on

20 June 2020 and its simultaneous interpretation into Arabic which was broadcast live on AlArabiya TV news channel. It also analyses segments from an unscripted speech that Trump delivered at a rally in Oakland County, Michigan, on 30 October 2020 and its simultaneous interpretation into Arabic which was broadcast live on the CBC eXtra news TV channel². In this analysis, the segments from Trump's speeches are followed by their translations that were provided by the simultaneous interpreters. Then, the translations are back translated into English to show the difference between the source and target texts.

In his speech in Tulsa, Trump refers to his achievements in relation to appointing conservative Supreme Court judges:

Trump:	Think of that: over 300, around 300 by the end of the term, and when we have another four years, we're gonna have a big big percentage of the total number. Very important: November 3 rd ! And two great Supreme Court judges. (Factbase Videos, 2020, 3:12).
	فكروا. أكثر من ما يقرب من ثلاثمائة قاض في نهاية فترة الولاية الأولى، وبعد ذلك سوف يكون لدينا نسبة كبيرة منهم يعا...سوف ن...تح... تلامسون هذه الأرقام في الثالث من نوفمبر. لذا، لدينا اثنان من رؤساء المحاكم العليا. (AlArabiya, 2020, 3:03)
	Think. There are more than 300 judges by the end of the first term. Then, we will have more of them. You will...witness these numbers on November 3 rd . So, we have two of the heads of the Supreme Court.

² I contacted AlArabiya and CBC eXtra via email and Facebook messenger to get information about the interpreters and to try to contact them, but I received no response.

One characteristic of Trump's speech is incoherence. In this selected quotation, he talks about the number of Supreme Court justices; then, he suddenly says "Very important: November 3rd." Then, he continues to talk about these two justices. Here, the interpreter intervenes to find a kind of relevance for these words. The disfluencies of incomplete words may reflect his attempts to find a relation between Trump's irrelevant words and the topic. Eventually, the interpreter renders these words into Arabic as "سوف... تلامسون هذه الأرقام في الثالث من نوفمبر". His translation implies that the number of the judges will be more on or by the 3rd of November which is the election day. The explanation is thus inaccurate because the American president takes new decisions by the end of January which is the first month in the presidential term and the number of judges cannot increase by or on the day of election. A more accurate rendition would thus be "ان التصويت في " الثالث من نوفمبر في غاية الأهمية", especially that the words are uttered after Trump links the promise to winning "another four years". However, it should be emphasised that Trump's incoherence increases the pressure on the interpreter who tries to understand the relevance of the incoherent words. The cognitive constraint of adding a load of incoherent words can thus affect the performance of an interpreter.

A few seconds later, Trump refers to another promise he kept during his first term as president of the United States:

Trump:	We passed VA choice, thank you very much Jim. Where's my senator? Jim Inhofe, you'd better vote for him, he's running, he's great, but we'll get to him and James Lankford in a second. Two great senators. You have two great senators. So, we passed VA choice (Factbase Videos, 2020, 4:25).
AlArabiya interpreter:	لقد... جيم وهوف، أين أنتم؟ سوف نصل اليه بعد دقيقتين، وهو... وهو سيناتور رائع. اذن... الخيار لهؤلاء المحاربين القدامي... (AlArabiya, 2020, 4:19)
Back Translation:	We've... Jim and Hoff, where are you? We will get to him in two minutes. He is a great senator. So, it's the choice of the veterans...

The simultaneous interpreter faces two problems: incoherence and the use of culture-specific elements. There does not seem to be a clear connection between passing the VA choice and referring to the senators. It may be inferred that Jim Inhofe helped Trump to pass the VA choice and that is why Trump thanks him; however, the reference to the senator is sudden, and the names might be unfamiliar to the interpreter himself as his translation suggests.

The interpreter resorts to reduction when the VA choice is first mentioned. Reduction here may be the result of not having enough time to establish the connection between what Trump has just said and then the sudden shift to Inhofe in a split second. When Trump suddenly thanks Jim Inhofe, the interpreter reproduces the name of this one senator as “جيم وهوف”; then, he renders “where is my senator” into Arabic as “?أين انتم؟”, and the translation suggests that the interpreter does not know the senator because it suggests that Trump is

talking about two senators. Then, Trump loads the message with the name of another senator—Lankford— that the interpreter omits, and the interpreter seems to realise that he has made a mistake but decides to focus on one senator only after omitting the name of Lankford, probably to make the sentences more consistent in Arabic. He modifies the sentences to make them all refer to one senator in what seems to be an attempt to make the translation sound consistent, and he omits the name of the other senator and the final short sentence in which Trump praises the two senators. The non-cognitive constraint of loading the message with culture-specific elements and the cognitive constraint of the lack of coherence in Trump’s unscripted speech result in the simultaneous use of reduction and modification that ultimately make the interpreter’s translation of this quotation imprecise.

Trump then refers to one of his opponents when he talks about the impact of the coronavirus on the energy sector

Trump:	And we were gonna lose 10 million energy jobs, 10 million jobs, so Texas and Oklahoma and North Dakota, many other states would have been hurt. Now you think you’re gonna be hurt here? You try putting AOC in charge of your energy. That will make the pandemic look like child’s play to the people in energy. (Factbase Videos, 2022, 9:52).
AlArabiya interpreter:	أحدهم كان يخشى بأننا سوف نفقد أكثر من ١٠ ملايين وظيفة لكن هذا الأمر غير صحيح، فاستطعنا إعادة الوظائف الى أوكلاهوما وغيرها من الولايات. وقد يجعل هذا الأمر من الجائحة أشبه بالعبوة (AlArabiya. 2022, 9:47).
Back translation	Someone was afraid that we would lose more than 10 million jobs, but this is not true. We could bring back jobs to Oklahoma and other states, and this may make the pandemic seem like child’s play.

The problem that the interpreter faces here is Trump's unexpected reference to "AOC" or Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez who is a democratic representative that opposes his policies. The interpreter resorts to reduction and omits the sentences which refer to her. However, the omission causes a change in meaning. The omission of any reference to her in "فاستطعنا اعادة الوظائف الى أو كلاهوما" "وغيرها من الولايات. وقد يجعل هذا الأمر من الجائحة أشبه بالعبوة vehicle in the simile "look like child's play" describe bringing jobs back instead of describing the pandemic's impact on the energy sector when compared to that of Ocasio-Cortez. The translation has a contradictory message, and it fails to convey Trump's meaning. Thus, Trump's sudden use of culture-specific elements that the interpreter or the audience may not be familiar with at all results in making errors.

As Trump talks about the bias of the left-wing media against him, he suddenly mentions a cultural institution:

Trump:	So, last week they called me, and they say, "Sir, West Point, West Point. We're ready." I said "Oh, that's right. I have to make a commencement speech at West Point" (Factbase, 2022, 22:51).
AlArabiya interpreter:	في الاسبوع الماضي... ات... ات... اتصل أحد... أحدهم بي وقال لي بأن منطقة ويست بوينت كانت جاهزة لهذه الحملة الانتخابية (AlArabia, 2022, 22:47).
Back translation:	Last week, somebody called me and told me that West Point region was ready for this campaign rally.

The challenge here is that Trump suddenly mentions West Point Academy. He repeats its name and follows the repeated name with a simple sentence that does not immediately clarify what West Point is or what Trump's team is ready for. The disfluencies in the interpreter's translation when Trump suddenly mentions West Point probably reflect how he attempts to make sense of the words and simple sentence that Trump suddenly says, especially that the interpreter seems to be unfamiliar with what West Point is. Cultural institutions are culture-specific and might not be immediately understood.

In order to make sense of Trump's vague message at first, the interpreter resorts to an explanation that is based on guessing. Trump's simple grammar does not help the interpreter to understand the connection between the words and the simple sentence; so, he creates a context for them and interprets them into Arabic as "منطقة ويست بوينت كانت جاهزة لهذه الحملة الانتخابية"; thus, the interpreter turns West Point into a region, and makes the team ready for a rally. However, the commencement speech which is mentioned later does not suit the context that the interpreter guesses. The interpreter omits it as he does not have enough time to reformulate and correct his translation. Thus, Trump's unexpectedness and his simple language— which does not immediately clarify the context of the surprising information— influence the interpreter's decision and result in imprecision.

In the next selected segment, Trump criticises Biden for criticising Trump's speeches:

Trump:	He has absolutely no control. You know, a lot of times, I make like a speech, and I'll have this beautiful paragraph come out criticising every little aspect of the speech, beautiful, brilliant, but Joe didn't, and it'll say a comment from Joe Biden, but he didn't say it. Professional people, great students in English lit, people that are very smart say it. "Joe Biden said", and they go into this highly complex paragraph beautifully worded, and I say "Joe didn't say that" (Factbase Videos, 2022, 40:33).
AlArabiya interpreter:	فقد سيطرته على كل الأمور، ولم ينتقد أي من تلك الأحداث العنيفة التي ضربت البلاد، وكان قد عبر عن هذا الأمر بطريقة مختلفة، وكتب فقرة بكلمات جميلة بأن هؤلاء هم طلاب ويعبرون عن حرية الرأي والتعبير، لكنني قلت لهم بأن بايدن لم يكتب هذا الكلام (AlArabiya, 2022, 40:48).
Back translation:	He lost control over everything. He did not criticise any of the violent incidents that hit the country. He expressed it differently and wrote a beautifully worded paragraph and claimed that these were students who expressed freedom of speech. However, I told them that Biden did not write that.

Trump attempts to cast doubt over the idea that Biden himself speaks or writes eloquently. However, he talks in a confusing way. First, the sentence "a lot of times, I make like a speech, and I'll have this beautiful paragraph come out criticising every little aspect of the speech" does not explain at first who criticises Trump's speech. Second, there is a problem with reference in "Joe didn't" because the previous sentence does not

include any word (such as a pronoun) that would suggest that Biden was involved in the criticism or in speaking eloquently or writing beautifully. So, “Joe didn’t” seems to be irrelevant; it triggers the question “what is it exactly that Joe didn’t do?”. Third, there is a problem with reference in “it’ll say a comment from Joe Biden, but he didn’t say it”; it is not obvious what the first “it” here refers to. Fourth, there is no connection between the unfinished sentence which is supposed to be a quotation “Joe Biden said”, and the clause “and they go into this highly complex paragraph beautifully worded”.

The meaning of these sentences— that Biden’s eloquent comment which criticises Trump’s speech is not actually written by Biden—can be understood after hearing the quoted segment in its entirety. However, the simultaneous interpreter cannot wait until the end because he must translate the message while Trump speaks.

The interpreter provides an explanation, and he chooses parts from the unconnected sentences like “beautiful”, “comment”, and “students” in order to create a message that makes sense. However, his explanation does not convey the meaning accurately. Instead of suggesting that Biden’s comment is not originally produced by him, the translation suggests that Biden defended the rioters and claimed that they were students who were using their right to freedom of expression. Trump’s incoherence influences the translation because the meaning in the original message is confusing.

Trump says that he saw the coverage of riots on the presidential airplane Air Force One and starts talking about his negotiations with Boeing to brag about his skills at bargaining:

Trump:	I said... “Don’t you understand you dumb son of a bitch? Don’t you understand?” (Factbase Videos, 2020, 49:22)
AlArabiya interpreter:	وقلت لهم بأنكم يبدو أنكم لا تفهمون أصول التفاوض (AlArabiya, 2022, 49:22)
Back translation:	I said: “It seems that you do not understand the basics of negotiating.”

The challenge that the interpreter faces here is that Trump uses a very offending insult. Therefore, the interpreter resorts to reduction and omits the insult completely because coarse insults cannot be accepted on news channels and are expected to be shocking to the Arab audience.

The CBC eXtra news interpreter who renders Trump’s unscripted speech in Oakland County into Arabic faces the same problems. He faces several challenges in the next selected segment:

Trump:	Biden's running mate, America's most liberal senator. She makes... she makes Bernie look like a conservative. Crazy Bernie is like a conservative compared to her. She even... KAMELAH... you have to pronounce it exactly right. Otherwise, she gets very upset even though she can't pronounce it right. You saw that the other day. I think that was actually...that was on the great Laura Ingraham Show. Actually, I watched that...and I do believe Laura Ingraham is here some place. Where is Laura? Where is she? Ha! Where is Laura? I can't recognise you. Is that a mask? No way! Are you wearing a mask? I've never seen her in a mask. Look at you! Oh, she's being very politically correct. Wooh! Wooh! (WOOD TV8,2020, 12:11).
eXtra news interpreter:	بايدن يريد من الولايات الأمريكية أن تكون أكثر ميلا الى المحافظين عن الميل الى الليبراليين. عليكم أن تقوموا بنطق هذه الكلمة بنفس الطريقة التي ينطقها. حتى لا يستطيع هو أن ينطقها بشكل صحيح. اعتقد أن هذا العرض لورا انجرام كان الأفضل، وأنا أؤمن بأن لورا انجرام... أين لورا؟ أين لورا؟ أنا لا أستطيع أن أقدر ماتم من عمل حتى الآن. هل... هل ترتدين كمامة؟ لم أرك من قبل. هي سياسية، تتصرف بشكل صحيح. (eXtra News, 2020, 2:42).
Back translation	Biden wants the American States to lean more toward the conservatives than they do toward the liberals. You should pronounce this word the same way he pronounces it. He does not even pronounce it correctly. I believe that this was Laura Ingraham Show. It was the best, and I believe that Laura Ingraham... where's Laura? Where's Laura? I cannot evaluate what has happened so far. Are you... are you wearing a mask? I've not seen you before. She is a politician; she acts appropriately.

After talking about Biden's policy regarding the energy sector, Trump suddenly shifts to mentioning Biden's running mate Kamala Harris. He knows his audience's dislike of liberal policies

and thus attempts to intensify how liberal she is by comparing her to the progressive former presidential candidate Bernie Sanders. Trump also knows that his audience includes nationalists; so, he implicitly refers to her foreign origins by imitating the unusual way in which she pronounces her name. The sudden change in topic which has cultural implications is sometimes expressed using an unfinished sentence such as “She even... KAMELAH”.

The interpreter here resorts to explanation and reduction. He omits reference to Bernie and Kamala but tries to explain the main idea that Biden wants the Americans to lean toward a particular party. However, it seems that the cognitive load makes the interpreter make the mistake of suggesting the Biden favours conservatives. Furthermore, omitting the name of Kamala and making the message about Biden pronouncing a certain word in a particular way makes the meaning confusing and the message inconsistent, because the interpreter does not specify what this word is. Thus, the interpreter fails to convey the message.

When Trump sees Fox News show host Laura Ingraham wearing a mask, he exclaimingly repeats the word “mask” and the shout “wooh” to express surprise. The surprise which Trump shows is understood in light of his attempts to downplay the importance of the coronavirus precautions (Victor et al. 2020, para. 3). The interpreter makes Trump sound more eloquent by removing the repetition of “mask” and by completely omitting “wooh”.

Trump then refers to his debate with Biden:

Trump:	...but if Biden wins, our recovery will end and a long economic nightmare...just like he said on the debate, “It’ll have a dark winter.” That was really depressing. It was even depressing... even though he did so bad in the debate, I was depressed because I said, “It’s such a depressing thing he said.” I like the last statement though best, right? Was not that the best? We said, “that means you know war on oil. Yes, we are going to get off oil.” I said... this is like... I felt like Perry Mason, you know, it’s always that last question. It’s always the last question that the guy “Yes, I’m guilty. I’m guilty”, and then they end the show and they go to a commercial (Wood TV8, 2020, 15:15).
eXtra news interpreter:	ولكن بايدن يريد أن ينهي هذا التعافي ويريد أن يوقف كل هذه الانجازات، ويريد منا أن نعيش شتاءا مظلما طويلا حتى أنه أدى بشكل سيء خلال المناظرة وكنت محبط بهذا الأداء السيء من قبله في المناظرة. ألم تكن هذه المناظرة الأفضل؟ عندما تحدثنا عن النفط وأنا قلت بأنني أشعر... كان ذلك هو السؤال الأخير (eXtra news, 2020, 5:46).
Back translation:	But Biden wants to end this recovery and all our achievements. He wants us to have a long dark winter. His performance was even bad during the debate, and I was depressed by his performance during the debate. Was not this debate the best? When we talked about oil and I said that I felt... that was the last question.

When Trump repeats two adjective forms of the verb “depress”, he maximises the negative feelings about Biden’s plans in the sectors of economy and energy. Trump expresses his message in a confusing way. Trump uses constructed dialogue or direct reported speech in his monologic unscripted speeches to create imaginary conversations and put words into the mouths of others

(Sclafani, 2018, p. 48). He uses the unfinished sentence “a long economic nightmare” then he shifts from constructed dialogue in his monologic speech to his comment on this constructed dialogue and vice versa fast. Coupled with repetition, Trump’s confusing use of language results in creating a cognitive load.

The interpreter resorts to reduction and explanation. He uses the word “محبط” only once and he reformulates the sentences to explain what he understands from Trump’s constructed dialogue. However, the interpreter makes an error when the explanation he provides makes Biden’s performance—not Biden’s depressing vision about the American economy and energy sectors— a reason that makes Trump depressed. Thus, it seems that the cognitive load in Trump’s speech influences the precision of the interpreter’s translation.

Trump praises his own response to the final question in the debate then claims that it is the most significant one by comparing it to questions used in the script of the American legal drama *Perry Mason*. The reference here is culture-specific, and Trump expresses his message by using unfinished sentences. The interpreter totally omits the sentences, complete or unfinished, about *Perry Mason*. The reduction does not seem to harm the content of his translation which focuses on the political message.

Trump then expresses his opinion about the debate moderator:

Trump:	I said, “this is the biggest thing that happened tonight,” and even Kristen Welker who I thought did a fair job, ok? I really did. I thought she did. A lot of people thought she was much tougher on me but that we expect, ok? But I mean...and she looked at him, and she goes...because she’s on his side, not his side, she’s on the democrat radical left side, but she did a relatively fair job. She said, “Why did you say that?” Just like “Why?” Like “Why the hell did you say that? I’m protecting you all night and now you end the debate” (WOOD TV8, 2020, 15:54).
eXtra news interpreter:	بالحديث عن النفط، هذا أفضل شيء حدث ب...أ...أ...أ... كريستن والكر أدى بشكل جيد أيضا. الكثير من الناس أيضا قد يكونوا أكثر صرامة مني وحدة ، ولكن عندما نظر اليه... ايه... لقد... أ...أ... أ... أيضا في المناظرة الثانية من قامت بادارة المناظرة أيضا كانت تت... لماذا أن... قمت بذلك؟ لماذا قمت بذلك؟ أنا كنت أحافظ على حياتكم (eXtra news, 2020, 6:24).
Back translation:	Speaking of oil, this is the best thing that happened... Kristen Welker did a good job. Many people can also be tougher and more severe than I am, but when he looked at him...In the second debate also, the woman who moderated the debate was also... why did you do that? Why did you do that? I was protecting your lives.

One of Trump’s strategies of casting doubt on the media’s credibility is to accuse debate moderators—even if indirectly—of taking the side of his opponent. Here, the accusations pose several challenges to the interpreter. The first challenge is cultural because the interpreter himself here does not seem to know the debate moderator. The second is confusion which results from Trump’s use of the vague subject “A lot of people” in order to sound more objective. The third is incoherence which is reflected in Trump’s use of unfinished sentences which echo incoherent thoughts; these

include “even Kristen Welker who I thought did a fair job” and “But I mean...and she looked at him, and she goes...because she’s on his side”.

The interpreter’s unfamiliarity with the moderator is reflected in the disfluency of the repeated “أ” and in referring to her as a man at first. The interpreter resorts to explanation to make sense of what Trump says. However, the added content in “الكثير من الناس أيضا قد يكونوا أكثر صرامة مني وحدة” does not convey Trump’s message at all. The interpreter apparently realises that the moderator is a woman and tries to reformulate the message. However, the explanation he starts to provide also has errors because it suggests that Trump is referring to another female moderator and another debate. The interpreter realises the mistake he makes and leaves his sentence unfinished and he omits the rest of constructed dialogue between Trump and the moderator. Thus, Trump’s incoherence and his confusing use of language influences the interpreter’s performance and results in imprecision.

Trump later claims that tech companies are biased against him and his supporters:

Trump:	...but Mark is talking about how incredible the border security, and they took down his tweets, and they wanted to close him up. All he's doing is saying like, "We're doing a good job", and he's not a politician, and he's saying, "He's doing a good job." They took down his tweet and they got the hell knocked out of him, and they put it back, I understand, but this is really bad, and they don't do that to liberals. (WOOD TV8, 2020, 24:17).
eXtra news interpreter:	عندما يتحدث عن الحدود وتحسن الأوضاع في الحدود دائما يقومون بتجاهل مثل هذه التصريحات. هو ليس سياسيا، ومع ذلك كان يتحدث بالطريقة المناسبة لتغطية مثل هذه التطورات، ولكن هذا أمر سيء للغاية (eXtra news, 2020, 14:52).
Back translation:	When he talks about the borders and the improving situation at the borders, they ignore his statement. He is not a politician; however, he was talking properly and he was covering these developments, but this is very bad.

Trump refers to Twitter in a confusing way because he does not clearly mention the name of the platform and uses the pronoun "They" instead. Trump repeats "They took down his tweet" and repeats the idea that all that his supporter said was that Trump "was doing a good job", and it seems that the repetition is used to emphasise the idea that the supporter broke no community role and that he was unfairly censored. Furthermore, Trump uses "hell" as a swear word; but the word which is often translated into Arabic as "بحق الجحيم" is normally not expected to be used by an Arab politician.

The pronoun Trump uses to refer to Twitter does not seem to help the interpreter to make sense of who censors the tweets. The

interpreter thus omits all repetitions that refer to tweets or responses to them and completely omits the sentence that includes the swear word. He tries to make sense of the confusing and overloaded sentences by using the short explanations دائما يقومون بتجاهل مثل هذه instead of referring to Twitter censorship and “التصريحات” يتحدث “ instead of repeating content. However, the new content does not convey the original meaning. The confusion and cognitive load make the interpreter unable to make sense of the meaning in split seconds.

Conclusion

The study explores Donald Trump’s unconventional use of language and the challenges it poses to Arab simultaneous interpreters. It sheds light on the constraints that Trump’s use of language creates for interpreters who render his unscripted speeches into Arabic and investigates their strategies. The study shows that deviation from the norm in terms of how language is used in the field of politics does affect the performance of simultaneous interpreters. Trump’s deviation from the norm of using elated and politically correct language creates cognitive and non-cognitive constraints which affect the simultaneous interpreters’ decisions and often result in making errors or lead to imprecision.

The study contributes to the field of translation studies by exploring the territory of simultaneous interpretation into Arabic in the field of politics; this territory needs further studying. On the

basis of the analysis of the translations of the two Arab interpreters of Trump's unscripted speeches during his political rallies, the study suggests that explanation can be a fifth category of the ways of intervention that interpreters use to manage information and that it can be added to the categorisation suggested by Kadrić et al. (2022). Adding explanation as a category of intervention can make the categorisation more comprehensive and can help in understanding the interpreters' attempts to solve problems that simultaneous interpretation involves. The study contributes to broadening our knowledge of the challenges involved in interpreting unconventional language which is becoming increasingly used by nationalist and far right politicians nowadays, especially in the West. For future studies, the study recommends further exploration of the performance of simultaneous interpreters who render unscripted political speeches into Arabic.

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ملخص

تأثر مجال الترجمة مؤخرا بالاتجاه المتزايد نحو استخدام لغة غير معتادة في مجال السياسة، وتقوم هذه الدراسة باكتشاف أثر هذا الاتجاه على الترجمة الفورية حيث تركز على الترحمتين العربيتين اللتين قدمهما اثنان من المترجمين الفوريين اللذين قاما بترجمة خطابين من خطابات دونالد ترامب المرجلة الى العربية. تهدف الدراسة إلى استبيان القيود التي تتضمنها الترجمة الفورية لخطابات ترامب المرجلة، واكتشاف استراتيجيات المترجمين لحل المشاكل التي يواجهونها، و إظهار إمكانية تأثير انحراف المتحدث عن معايير استخدام اللغة في السياسة على أداء المترجمين عامة. تسهم هذه الدراسة في مجال دراسات الترجمة باكتشاف مجال الترجمة الشفوية السياسية إلى العربية الذي يحتاج لمزيد من الدراسة ، وتتناول ظاهرة استخدام لغة غير معتادة في مجال السياسة وتوسع من معرفتنا بالقيود التي تفرضها تلك الظاهرة على الترجمة الفورية وبأنواع الطرق التي يتدخل بها المترجمون الفوريون لتقديم رسالة مفهومة ، كما تقترح الدراسة اعتبار الشرح نوعا من أنواع التدخل الذي يستخدمه المترجمون الشفهيون والذي يمكن إضافته للتصنيف الذي اقترحه كادريك وآخرون (٢٠٢٢).

كلمات مفتاحية: ترجمة ترامب، الترجمة الشفهية السياسية، الترجمة الفورية، تصنيف طرق تدخل المترجمين الشفهيين ، قيود إدراكية وقيود غير إدراكية.