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# The lawyer's discourse in the courtroom: A contrastive analysis in English and Arabic – A forensic linguistics perspective

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**Abstract**
This study addresses a research gap in comparative forensic linguistics by systematically examining only the distinctive features of spoken courtroom discourse used by English-speaking and Arabic-speaking lawyers during trial proceedings. The analysis deliberately excludes non-verbal and written communication and focuses exclusively on oral exchanges between lawyers in courtroom settings. Eight trials were randomly selected; four in English and four in Arabic, encompassing a total of sixteen lawyers. Using a constructed analytical model and SPSS, the study identifies key linguistic characteristics unique to each language, as well as major similarities and differences between them. By focusing on spoken interactions between lawyers during live trials, the research offers targeted insights for comparative legal discourse analysis.

**Keywords:** Lawyer's discourse, courtroom trial, contrastive analysis, English, Arabic

## Introduction

Forensic linguistics is a branch of applied linguistics covering the language of trials, law, and legal professionals (Shuy, 2006, p. 104). Crystal (2008, p. 194) defines it as using linguistic techniques to investigate crimes involving language evidence, such as grammar or vocabulary, to authenticate police statements.

Legal language uses precise terms to address specific legal matters and meet the profession's needs (Bhatia, 2010 [22]; Holt & Johnson, 2006; Trosborg, 1997). Lawyers influence outcomes by explaining the law and presenting arguments (Teirsma, 1999).

Discourse competence is central to language instruction. Producing coherent discourse is an essential skill (Richards, Plat, and Plat, 1992). Legal practitioners must write clearly and logically. Research indicates that investigators require more than grammatical proficiency to author cohesive legal documents in English.

In courtrooms, advocates and witnesses use language to clarify arguments and support judgments (Goddard, 1996). This study focuses on the spoken language of lawyers in South Sudanese courtroom trials, providing a targeted investigation of their oral discourse.

## The Literature Review

### 1. The Lawyer's Communication Method

The legal profession exhibits a distinct culture shaped by established norms. Even when lawyers and clients share similarities, miscommunication can occur due to differences in legal culture. Lawyers must develop their knowledge and skills to navigate cross-cultural challenges and communicate precisely (Brayant & Peters, 2005 [9], p. 47). Rhetorical skill functions as a cultural model for persuasive legal speech (Hobbs, 2003 [23], p. 273). Al-Aubaidy (2012, pp. 46-47) identifies key traits for lawyers:

#### a. Truthfulness and Honesty

Honesty constitutes a fundamental principle of legal practice and humanistic values, requiring lawyers to foster professional relationships with both clients and colleagues.

#### b. Endurance and Cooperation

Patience builds professional credibility, and collaboration supports effective legal outcomes.

#### c. Bravery in Saying the Truth

Self-confidence is central to a lawyer's identity. Legal practitioners should communicate transparently, ensure clients understand, and show professional courage with judges and opponents, regardless of hierarchy.

Clients often do not fully understand a lawyer's work, such as drafting documents, conducting research, or preparing arguments (Al-Mashhadany, 2014, p. 8). The increasing number of legal practitioners may affect professional standards, prompting bar associations to set strict admission criteria to protect lawyers' rights (Zain, 2004, p. 13).

### 2. The Lawyers

Hill & Hill (2009 [17], p. 34) define a lawyer as an authorised agent who practices law after meeting state and bar requirements. Lawyers follow bar rules, advise clients, and provide legal consultation. Lawyering protects human rights, and legal systems require education to enter the profession. Lawyering is essential in the judiciary (Swady, 2010 [22], pp. 12–14). Lawyers advocate for clients, provide legal information, and help them make decisions, underscoring the importance of communication skills (Boyle *et al*., 2003) [7].

Ahmed (2016, p. 19) [1] states that lawyers must pledge to respect, maintain independence, maintain confidentiality, and adhere to legal and ethical standards. Lawyers sometimes take on cases they do not believe in, a practice called "self-deception," or may drop cases if they are uncomfortable. They work on behalf of clients. Teitelbaum (1968, p. 1) notes that helping a client believed to be guilty seems inconsistent with community norms and may appear harmful. Helping offenders escape penalties is illegal. Social values guide lawyers' actions and explain differences from others (Ibid., pp. 5, 6).

The lawyer-client relationship is typically characterised by an asymmetrical dynamic, with the lawyer assuming a paternalistic role. Professional expertise provides the authority needed to offer guidance and instructions (Chapman, 2000 [10], p. 1).

## 3. Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis studies the patterns of utterances people use in different domains of life. It includes various cross-disciplinary approaches for exploring social domains in diverse studies (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002 [24], p. 1).

Brown & Yule (1983 [8], p. viii) state that discourse analysis has many meanings and applies to several fields. Sociolinguists study structures of social interaction and emphasise features relevant to sociological classification.

Discourse analysis is not limited to language forms. It examines language in real-world contexts, covering argumentation, persuasion, and identity construction. Discourse analysts study how phrases and utterances create cohesive texts and interactions, and how these relate to a broader social environment (John, 2010, p. 2). This approach relies on four main assumptions;

- First, language is ambiguous, and meaning is not always clear.
- Second, language varies by time, place, and purpose.
- Third, language use reflects users' identities and social ties.
- Fourth, language often includes other modes of communication, such as tone, gestures, facial expressions, and typographic features (Ibid., p. 2).

Both written and spoken language allow communicative participants to share and construct meaning (Sinclair, 1993 [20], p. 6). Written texts (e.g., novels) can be read aloud, and spoken conversations can be transcribed. Crystal & Davy (1969, p. 170) call this a "complex medium," explaining that language usually occurs in either spoken or written form but can transition between them, as in dictation or broadcasting. Speaking and writing represent points on a continuum, not true opposites. A zone exists where spoken and written language overlap, making boundaries difficult to define (Cornbleet & Carter, 2001, p. 92).

Legal discourse refers to oral or written communication in legal contexts. It is defined by how language conveys meaning and is recognised as a genre with its own textual construction and institutional power. Legal discourse involves evidence, planning, and procedures related to rights and abilities (Goodrich, 1987 [14], pp. 117, 154, 157).

Legal discourse is not always filled with obscure words. It often includes many everyday terms. Shinichiro (2014 [30], p. 88) lists general words used in UK courts, such as "Act (4313), action (745), address (282), adopt (512), allow (758), answer (462), apply (1858), arise (691), attempt (264)." However, these words are often used in ways that differ from their usual meanings. For example, "action" generally means "the act of doing something" (Garner, 1999, p. 89), but in legal terms, it can refer to a process, conduct, act, or a judicial proceeding (Ibid., 1999, pp. 88-89).

Communication is central in court trials. While language is a primary means of communication, other forms such as images, gestures, and facial expressions also serve this purpose. Everyone has the right to remain silent, reflecting the principle of innocence until proven guilty. Warnings follow a formula: "You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to speak to an attorney and to have an attorney present during any questioning …." (Woods, 2006 [34], pp. 102- 103).

## 4. Model of the Study

### 4.1. The Formal Characteristics

The English trials contain a sequence of formal instructions that are almost fixed across trials. They can be explained as follows:

#### 4.1.1 The Jury Selection

The first step of each trial is jury selection. In the courtroom, all motions and sentiments are put aside. Then, an investigation process, voir dire, begins to determine whether the jurors are appropriate to judge the case. Witnesses should be present in court to lay out the facts of the case (Cohen, 2008 [11], p. 53). At this point, the jurors are empanelled and sworn, and the trial proceeds (Nolfi, 2009, p. 276).

#### 4.1.2 The Opening Statement

According to Tanford (1993, pp. 147-148), the opening statement is a significant procedure in the trial. Through the opening statement, the parties can get to know each other. It is usually short and to the point, focusing on the key facts of the case. Moreover, it usually follows a chronological order, making it read like a story. It also gives the judges a clear idea of the nature of the antagonism and the evidence produced by the different parties (Ibid., pp. 147, 148).

#### 4.1.3 Presentation of Evidence

In introducing evidence, participants introduce it to the jury. There are four main types of evidence:

1. The testimony that the witnesses present.
2. The written document, such as letters, reports, mail and records.
3. The physical evidence from the case, for example, the actual murder weapon.
4. The visual aids used to support the testimony, such as diagrams, maps, and photographs (Brieant, 2011, p. 33).

#### 4.1.4 Witnesses

A witness is a person with personal knowledge of the case. A witness should be "credible" and "believable" and should observe the facts directly or be involved in the issue. A witness who suddenly comes is not allowed to testify in court (Brieant, 2011, p. 45).

#### 4.1.5 A Final Argument

The final statement usually comes at the end of the trial. It works as the final chance to address the jury. Simply put, "closing arguments are not for the purpose of recruiting new troops, but for arming those already on your side" (Tanford, 1993, p. 373).

### 4.2. The Sentence Duration

Sentence length can usually be determined by counting the number of words in a given sentence. In writing, one needs not only succinct sentences but also varying sentence lengths. That is, one may have 35-word sentences, some 40-word sentences, and many in between. In general, one has to monitor one's average writing. Readability formulas mainly

depend on sentence length. Thus, sentence length is a significant factor in determining a text's quality and readability (Garner, 2001, p. 25).

### 4.3. The Sentence Complexity

Any sentence can be simple or complex. In English, a simple sentence contains one independent clause, whereas a complex sentence contains one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses, depending on its immediate constituents. A compound sentence could be compound or complex. A compound sentence contains two or more coordinated clauses, which are connected by coordinators and are considered main clauses. In contrast, a complex sentence includes one or more subordinate clauses that form the element(s) of the main clause, such as a direct object or an adverbial (Quirk *et al*., 1985 [25], p. 719).

### 4.4. Cohesion

Halliday & Hasan (1976 [15], pp. 1-2) explain that the word "text" can be used linguistically to denote any passage (spoken or written) that forms a complete unit, regardless of length. Every text has certain distinctive features. A text could be spoken or written, prose or verse, dialogue or monologue. It can be a simple saying or complicated play, a single word or a long day's conversation. Cohesion and congruity are two of the seven standards that enhance textuality; the others are intentionality, acceptability, informativity, situationality, and intertextuality.

## The Research Methodology

This study adopts an analytical approach, utilising purposive sampling to select spoken data from English courtroom trials. The study selected eight trials for their representativeness of typical legal proceedings, with an equal distribution of trial types where possible. The sample includes the discourse of sixteen lawyers, eight representing the plaintiff and eight representing the defendant, to ensure balanced perspectives and facilitate systematic comparison across roles.

The researcher then develops a model from the available literature. The model draws on Quirk *et al*. (1985) [25] for syntax, Halliday & Hasan (1976) [15] for discourse, Sacks *et al*. (1974) [27] for pragmatics, and AlCaraz & Hughes (2002) for lexicon. The analysis then begins with statistical tables. This study uses the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to analyse the collected data. SPSS is a comprehensive data analysis system. It can extract data from any file type and generate tabular reports, charts, and complex statistical analyses.

Moreover, it can run on different computer systems. One merit is that it can be used by both beginner and professional researchers (Gailly & Alder, 2003; Field, 2009, p. 61; Pallan, 2011, p. 14). The chosen lawyers work in English courtrooms. All the other lawyers are excluded. English Lawyers are those with a BA in law who work in courts as professional lawyers.

The methods used to collect data include recordings of lawyers in courtrooms made by the researcher, documents available in court archives, and documents from English courtroom trials.

The lawyers engaged in the data work without the observer's paradox, since the researcher was not seen as a researcher but as an audience member. The researcher then obtained permission to use the data in the study, subject to privacy measures. Comparing the English data relies on statistical analysis to support or reject the study's hypotheses, depending on whether the difference between the English informants is statistically significant.

According to the SPSS output for two independent samples, this study uses two tests: Levene's test for equality of variances and the t-test for equality of means. Levene's test determines the t-test distribution. Levene's test determines which mean to use for the p-value. If Levene's test is less than 0.05, the variances are different. It should be applied to the second row named "Sig. (2-tailed)", which indicates that the assumption of equal variances is not satisfied. Conversely, if Levene's test is greater than 0.05, the assumption of equal variances is satisfied. It should be applied to the first row of Sig. (2-tailed). The following identifies similarities and differences in the English language regarding the lawyer's linguistic style in the courtroom.

## 1. The Research Results:

The analysis of the data takes the form of the suggested model as follows:

### 1.1. The Formal Characteristics

Both English and Arabic trials exhibit distinct procedural steps, some of which are overtly articulated while others are subsumed within broader stages of the trial process. Although the initial hypothesis posited no substantive differences in the systems' formal characteristics, a closer comparative analysis of the collected data reveals important divergences. Notably, certain procedural elements are present exclusively in English courtroom trials and are absent from Arabic courtroom procedures. These findings have significant implications: the presence or absence of particular procedures in each legal system reflects not only variations in courtroom protocol but also broader differences in legal philosophy and the distribution of authority within each tradition. For instance, the formalisation and independence of roles in English trials suggest greater procedural autonomy for legal practitioners. In contrast, the integrated, less segmented approach in Arabic trials highlights a stronger judicial centrality. Thus, these contrasts show how legal systems embed cultural, institutional, and pragmatic priorities into courtroom processes, ultimately shaping both legal outcomes and participants' experiences.

- First, jury selection, which is absolutely absent in Arabic Courtroom trials.
- Second, the opening statement, which is not similar to that followed in English Courtroom trials. In Arabic trials, the judge opens the trial by calling on the defendant to identify himself.
- Third, the final statement, which is absent in Arabic trials, is also delivered by the judge to decide the appropriate verdict.

Some procedures are similar in the English and Arabic trials, such as the introduction of the plaintiff's case and the verdict. Moreover, some procedures are implicitly included in both trial types. Rather, they do not appear as distinct procedures; they occur within other procedures. For example, English trials follow certain procedures that do not appear in Arabic but are included in other procedures, such as the conferral with the trial judge. Similarly, Arabic trials include procedures that do not appear in English trials but

appear in other procedures, such as calling the defendant and the witnesses, and the statements of the defendant's and the plaintiff's lawyers. Therefore, one can notice that such procedures also have certain percentages (Table 1):

**Table 1:** Formal Characteristics of English and Arabic Courtroom Trials

| Formal Characteristics of English Trials | English F | Arabic F |
|---|---|---|
| Confrontation With the Judge of the Trial | 1 | 1 |
| Selection of the Jury | 1 | 0 |
| The Opening Statement | 1 | 0 |
| Introducing the Plaintiff's Case | 1 | 1 |
| Closing Argument | 1 | 0 |
| The Verdict | 1 | 1 |
| Calling on the Defendant | 1 | 1 |
| The Witnesses | 1 | 1 |
| The Defendant's Statement | 1 | 1 |
| The Plaintiff's Lawyer Statement | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 10 | 7 |

## 2. The Sentence Duration

Arabic lawyers use shorter sentences than English lawyers; English lawyers, in turn, use longer sentences than Arabic lawyers. For example, Arabic lawyers often structure their statements succinctly, as seen in expressions such as "Objection, Your Honour. The evidence is inadmissible," or "The witness will confirm the timeline." In contrast, English lawyers, constrained by longer allotted speaking periods, tend to deliver lengthy, uninterrupted statements, as in the following illustrative example: "Your Honour, I request that the court consider not only the written documentation but also the testimonies which the defence has compiled, as these are integral to establishing the sequence of events and clarifying the defendant's position." This structural difference arises because Arabic-speaking lawyers have less time to speak in court than their English-speaking counterparts, making it difficult to pause and conclude each statement concisely (Tables 2, 3 and 4).

**Table 2:** Frequencies of sentence duration by English and Arabic lawyers

| No. of Words | English | | Arabic | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | PLF | DLF | PLF | DLF |
| From 1 to 10 | 311 | 67 | 2 | 6 |
| From 11 to 20 | 101 | 76 | 2 | 2 |
| From 21 to 30 | 14 | 61 | 2 | 4 |
| From 31 to 40 | 5 | 15 | 1 | 6 |
| From 41 to 50 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 3 |
| From 51 to 60 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| From 61 to 70 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| From 71 to 80 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 5 |
| From 81 to 106 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Total | 433 | 225 | 15 | 37 |

**Table 3:** Frequencies of sentence complexity by English and Arabic lawyers

| English | | Arabic | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type PLF DLF PLF PLF | | | | |
| Simple | 275 | 116 | 6 | 14 |
| Compound | 20 | 6 | 5 | 18 |
| Complex | 138 | 103 | 4 | 10 |

Total 433 225 15 42

**Table 4:** The use of cohesive ties by English and Arabic lawyers

| Grammatical Cohesion | 1185 | 779 | 119 | 373 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lexical Cohesion | 117 | 194 | 72 | 107 |
| Total | 1302 | 973 | 191 | 480 |

Lawyer English Arabic
Cohesive Ties PLF DLF PLF DLF

### 4.2.1 The Grammatical Cohesion

The number of instances of grammatical cohesion in the English data is 1964, while in the Arabic data it is 492 (Tables 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9).

**Table 5:** The use of grammatical cohesion by English and Arabic lawyers

| Lawyer | English | Arabic | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type PLF DLF PLF DLF | | | | |
| Reference | 912 | 596 | 54 | 243 |
| Substitution | 8 | 29 | 12 | 12 |
| Ellipsis | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Conjunctions | 213 | 107 | 53 | 116 |

Total 1133 732 119 373

**Table 6:** The use of references by English and Arabic lawyers

| Personal | 548 | 340 | 49 | 193 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Demonstrative | 364 | 256 | 5 | 46 |
| Comparative | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |

Total 912 596 54 243
Lawyer English Arabic
Reference Types PLF DLF PLF DLF

**Table 7:** The use of substitution by English and Arabic lawyers

| Lawyer | English | Arabic | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type PL F DLF PL F DLF | | | | |
| Nominal | 1 | 11 | 16 | 12 |
| Verbal | 7 | 15 | 11 | 0 |
| Clausal | 0 | 3 | 18 | 0 |
| Total | 8 | 29 | 45 | 12 |

**Table 8:** The use of ellipses by English and Arabic lawyers

| Nominal | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Verbal | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Clausal | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| Total | 0 | 0 | 5 | 8 |

Lawyer English Arabic
Type PL F DLF PL F DLF

**Table 9:** The use of conjunctions by English and Arabic lawyers

| Additive | 93 | 36 | 42 | 92 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Adversative | 0 | 0 | 3 | 5 |
| Causal | 3 | 20 | 5 | 9 |
| Temporal | 65 | 20 | 3 | 10 |
| Other types | 52 | 31 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 213 | 107 | 53 | 116 |

Type English Arabic
PLF DLF PLF DLF

### 4.2.2 The Lexical Cohesion

The plaintiff and defendant lawyers, in English and Arabic, use lexical cohesion, but with varying frequencies depending on the type of trial and the lawyer's eloquence in the courtroom (Table 10).

**Table 10:** The use of lexical cohesion by English and Arabic lawyers

| Type | Sub-type | PL/ English | | PL/ Arabic | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | PLF | DLF | PLF | DLF |
| | Repetition | 109 | 191 | 35 | 32 |
| Reiteration | Synonymy | 0 | 0 | 18 | 53 |
| | Antonymy | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| | Hyponymy | 6 | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| Collocation | | 0 | 0 | 11 | 14 |
| Total | | 117 | 194 | 72 | 107 |

**Reiteration**

In both languages, most types of reiteration occur at different frequencies, but only one type is not used at all (synonymy).

**a. Repetition**

The English data show 300 cases of repetition, while the Arabic data show 67. The English lawyer uses repetition more than the Arabic counterpart, and this is subjective and depends on the lawyer's personality or speaking style. (Betti & Hashim, 2018, pp. 276-290)

**b. Synonymy**

English has 0 instances of synonymy, compared to 71 in Arabic. Accordingly, Arabic lawyers use synonymy more than English lawyers do, for colloquial reasons (Betti & Hashim, 2018, pp. 276-290). Moreover, synonymy is a main characteristic of Arabic, as legal language is known for its varied vocabulary. In contrast, English lawyers tend to be more economical and direct, as directness is a main characteristic of English legal language.

**c. Antonymy**

Antonymy exists in both English and Arabic data, but at different frequencies: 5 cases in English versus 8 in Arabic (Betti & Hashim, 2018, pp. 276-289).

**d. Hyponymy**

Hyponymy appears in both languages, but the number varies by trial type and the lawyer's linguistic style (6 cases in the English data and 8 in the Arabic data) (Betti & Hashim, 2018, pp. 276-290).

**e. Collocation**

Only the Arabic data show collocation at different frequencies, whereas English lawyers do not use collocation at all (Betti & Hashim, 2018, pp. 276-290).

**3. The Turn-Taking**

Some conversational principles are used equally by English and Arabic lawyers. These principles are "change of speakers", "moving from one speaker's turn to the next", "turn ordering varies", "length of conversation is not fixed", "the number of participants is not fixed" and "turn constructional units". The principle of "more than one speaker talks together" is not used by all English and Arabic lawyers. The principle of "one person speaks at a time" is used equally by the English and Arabic defendants' lawyers, while the principle of "what speakers say is not already specified" is used equally by the English and Arabic plaintiffs' lawyers.

The principle of "turn size is also varied" is used equally by the English and Arabic defendants' lawyers; meanwhile, the English plaintiffs' lawyers use this principle less than the Arabic ones. The principle of "a conversation can be continuous" is not used by English and Arabic plaintiff lawyers, while English defendant lawyers use it less than Arabic ones. English plaintiff and defendant lawyers use the principle of "turn allocation" more than Arabic ones.

The English lawyer's role in the courtroom is completely different from the Arabic one, since English lawyers can question witnesses directly and may interfere and interrupt. Their legal authority also differs from that of the Arabic lawyer in the courtroom. However, in most Arabic trials, lawyers have no opportunity to participate or guide the conversation. Their task is merely to present written lawsuits to the judge, who then knows the main ideas of those lawsuits. Each lawyer has a specific time to present their part of the story, and they do not have the right to interfere at will (Table 11).

**Table 11:** The use of turn-taking in English and Arabic trials

| Conversational Principles | English | | Arabic | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | PLF | DLF | PLF | DLF |
| Change of speakers | 59 | 59 | 1 | 1 |
| One person speaks at a time | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| More than one speaker talks together | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Moving from one speaker's turn to the next | 59 | 59 | 1 | 1 |
| Turn ordering varies | 59 | 59 | 1 | 1 |
| Turn size is also varied | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| The length of the conversation is not fixed | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| What speakers say is not yet specified | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The number of participants is not fixed | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| A conversation can be continuous or not | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Turn allocation | 38 | 23 | 1 | 3 |
| Turn constructional units | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 234 | 220 | 10 | 13 |

**4. The Vocabulary**

The investigated data for both languages (English and Arabic) show that three types of vocabulary (Technical, Semi-technical, and Common) are used. Common words are the most frequent, which clearly indicates that law mainly concerns issues in people's daily lives (Table 12).

**Table 12:** The use of vocabulary by English and Arabic lawyers

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Technical | 74 | 97 | 64 | 180 |
| Semi-technical | 95 | 126 | 41 | 192 |
| Common | 747 | 481 | 96 | 248 |

Total 916 704 201 620
Type English Arabic
PLF DLF PLF DLF

**The Discussion and Analysis**

From the statistical analysis of sentence size used by the plaintiff's lawyer, the t-test p-value is 0.048, which is less than 0.05. Moreover, the p-value of the t-test applied to the defendant's lawyers ' use of text length is 0.049. Therefore, the difference is highly significant (Betti & Hashim, 2018, pp. 276-285). Accordingly, the study refutes hypothesis (B) and accepts the alternative hypothesis that sentence duration differs significantly between English and Arabic plaintiff and defendant lawyers. This is language-specific, as languages differ in the number of words available for forming sentences.

Regarding the English and Arabic plaintiff lawyers' perceptions of sentence complexity, the statistical results indicate that the current investigation supports the null

hypothesis (C), as the t-test p-value is 0.132. This result shows no statistically significant difference in sentence complexity between English- and Arabic-speaking plaintiff lawyers, suggesting that both groups use sentences of comparable structural complexity in their courtroom discourse. Similarly, this hypothesis cannot be refuted based on defendant lawyers' sentence complexity, as the p-value also exceeds 0.05. These findings suggest that, in both plaintiff and defendant roles, the syntactic complexity of legal arguments is consistent across the two languages, reflecting parallel linguistic strategies despite differences in other aspects of courtroom practice. (Comparison of Formal Characteristics in English and Arabic Lawyers' Language in Courtrooms, 2018, pp. 283-293)

Regarding the number of cohesive devices used by English and Arabic lawyers, the statistical results lead the researcher to accept the null hypothesis (D). The p-value of the t-test for the data of the English and Arabic plaintiff's lawyers is 0.487; meanwhile, the p-value for the data of the English and Arabic defendant's lawyers is 0.551. Therefore, there is no significant difference between English and Arabic lawyers in the cohesive ties used in each type of trial. (Betti & Khalil, 2018, pp. 1-15)

The difference in using references by the English and Arabic plaintiff and defendant lawyers is not significant, as the statistical results show that the p-value of the t-test (applied to the English and Arabic plaintiff lawyers) is 0.152, while the p-value of the t-test (applied to the English and Arabic defendant lawyers) is 0.372. (Betti & Hashim, 2018, pp. 284-292)

Regarding turn-taking principles, the difference between English and Arabic defendant lawyers is also significant, as the t-test p-value is 0.037. Thus, hypothesis (E) is refuted, and the accepted hypothesis is that English and Arabic plaintiff and defendant lawyers differ significantly in their use of turn-taking principles. (Comparison of Turn-Taking in English and Arabic Trials, 2018, pp. 234-291) This relates to the nature of pragmatic strategies used in each language, including turn-taking, as well as those used in each procedural law.

Regarding vocabulary, the differences between the English and Arabic plaintiff and defendant lawyers are not significant because the t-test p-values are 0.393 for the plaintiff's lawyers and 0.843 for the defendant's lawyers. (Comparison of vocabularies in English and Arabic trials, 2018, pp. 284-293) Both types of lawyers' discourse use similar terms, but situate them within each language's lexicon.

**The Conclusion**

The findings of this study provide a synthesised account of both the convergences and divergences observed in English and Arabic courtroom discourse. Specifically, the analysis identifies key similarities between the English and Arabic data as follows:

1. The two languages use particular cohesive devices to establish cohesive ties, with different frequencies in each language.
2. Concerning vocabulary, the discussed data show that the two languages use vocabularies in their technical senses (e.g., pleading, prosecution, and defendant), common or everyday vocabularies, and semi-technical vocabularies that fall in between (e.g., issue, case, and problem).
3. The number of judges in the courtroom depends on the type of trial: a personal status court, which implies one judge, or a court of misdemeanours and offences, which contains three judges. Such types of courts, whether there is just one judge or multiple judges, and whether they restrict the role of lawyers, affect lawyers' language participation in courtrooms. (Legal System of Sudan, n.d.)
4. The use of different types of vocabulary and sentences is related to the trial system and the time available to the lawyer to present his statement.
5. Both the plaintiff's and defendant's lawyers are sometimes similar in not using some subtypes of cohesive ties, like the comparative reference.
6. One of the conclusions of the study is that the two languages try to understand and recognise the language of the written law.
7. Also, the study stresses the importance of language use in the judicial process in both English and Arabic.
8. It is important to show the role language plays in forming the law because there is no law without language. Thus, what concerns law also concerns language.

Insofar as the differences between the English and Arabic data are concerned, the following differences have been identified:

1. The formal characteristics of the English and Arabic courtrooms differ. English and Arabic trials include formal courtroom procedures but differ in certain respects; for example, Arabic trials have no jury members.
2. According to the comparison, English lawyers tend to use short, simple sentences, whereas Arabic lawyers tend to use compound, intricate sentences.
3. Regarding conversational level, the English lawyer tends to have more confidence in the courtroom and has the right to call the witness, ask questions, object, and interrupt as he/she thinks appropriate. In contrast, the Arabic lawyer's power is very limited; he/she can introduce his/her statement at a certain point and does not have the right to ask questions directly, but he/she can do so through the judge.
4. The turn-taking principles are appropriately used to assess the quality and even the quantity of participants in the conversation. According to these principles, English lawyers tend to use them more than their Arabic counterparts.
5. Arabic lawyers use ellipsis as a technique to lead the judge to a particular point or to mislead him.

According to the investigated data in English and Arabic, the following pedagogical recommendations may be useful and significant to upcoming studies in the same field:

1. It is recommended that forensic linguistics be taught, as a field of study, to undergraduate students in the departments of English (as an application of linguistic studies to other disciplines, particularly law), to obtain the fundamental principles of this field.
2. The instructors at the College of Law need to shed light on the trials in South Sudan's courtrooms and the main procedures followed in those trials, so that researchers in law and linguistics can investigate the role that lawyers' linguistic styles play in the courtroom.

3. It is highly recommended that lawyers in Arabic courtrooms have more space and greater freedom to express themselves in the appropriate language, since their role is very limited and the judge does most of the work.
4. It is also recommended that Arabic lawyers attend international conferences to observe how English lawyers use their linguistic style to handle lawsuits and pleadings, gain more experience, and learn more about the law in other cultures.
5. The new law students (who are supposed to become lawyers) ought to attend intensive sessions on law and lawyering to gain a full understanding of their roles and how to conduct themselves in court.
6. Law students ought to have practical lessons on law and how to handle certain issues in the courtroom.
7. It is also recommended that lawyers be aware of technical, semi-technical, and common words, and how and where to use them.
8. Another recommendation is that it is significant to have students with dual knowledge of law and linguistics to produce fruitful studies in these fields.

There should be greater focus on the emerging field of forensic linguistics and corpus linguistics.

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