

Motion Events Conceptualisation in Arabic and English: A Study on Monolingual and Bilingual Speakers

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Abstract:

My research investigates how individuals encode motion events, focusing on both monolingual Arabic speakers and bilingual speakers of Arabic and English. This study addresses two key questions: (1) What are the preferred motion event structures in Arabic? This analysis explores the dominant structures used by Arabic speakers to describe motion events, positioning Arabic within Talmy's (1985) typological framework as either S-framed or V-framed. (2) How does cross-linguistic influence manifest in bilingual speakers? This aspect examines how bilinguals encode motion events in their first language (L1) and second language (L2), with a particular focus on whether acquiring distinct motion event structures in L2 leads to cross-linguistic influence in L1 or L2.

The study employs two experimental tasks to collect data on motion event descriptions: (1) Picture book narration: 150 participants—including Arabic and English native speakers as well as Arabic learners of English at varying proficiency levels—narrated the story from the picture book *Frog, Where Are You?* (Mayer, 1969). (2) Dynamic video descriptions: The same participants provided descriptions of motion events depicted in six-second videos specifically designed for this study.

As a PhD student, I will share my progress thus far, discussing key challenges encountered during data collection. Additionally, I will outline future research plans and propose potential directions for further exploration within this field.