
THE ABILITY OF TRANSLATION STUDENTS IN ANSLATING ENGLISH TECHNICAL TEXT INTO ARABIC AT JADARA UNIVERSITY IN JORDAN

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ABSTRACT: *The aim of this study is to examine the ability of translation students in translating technical text from `English into Arabic at Jadara University in Jordan. To allow data collection, the researcher provided a technical text containing various technical expressions to be translated from English into Arabic as a test to investigate their levels in the field of technical translation. The translation text was reviewed by a panel of experts, their remarks and comments were taken into considerations. The English text included (35) technical expressions. The text was given to a random sample of (23) BA translation students. The students were asked to translate the English text into Arabic. The findings of the study were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitatively, identifying translation students' ability in translating a technical oriented text from English into Arabic, followed by discussing and analyzing their answers according to the previous studies presented. The results showed that the ability of students in translating technical and military text displayed fairly low level. Also, it showed no statistical differences between males and females in translating such text. Based on the results of this study, the researcher provided several recommendations. The most important is the need to increase the number of translation courses, including various translation courses in the English department syllabi at Jadara University.*

KEYWORDS: translation level, technical translation, technical expressions, Jadara University, Jordan

INTRODUCTION

Historically, and as Gholami, et al (2016, p. 56) stressed, translation has played a significant role in human life. This role is crucial that without translation communication among people were not to be achieved. In some areas, this role becomes more significant and translation of the holy texts is one of them, because of the specific role they play. They mostly address the whole human being, not one special group.

Al- Shehab (2014, p. 15) explained that translation is of a great significance for communicating knowledge and information among nations since the beginning of life. For example, Muslims benefited greatly from translation to obtain the knowledge of previous civilizations, mold it in new forms, expand and elaborate previous nations' advances and theoretical knowledge, and provided the world with new fields of study that were not known before.

Technical translation is one of these types of this science that has developed significantly as a result of the various developments in the different fields of studies,

the enormous expansion of knowledge in these fields, and the emergence of new forms of sciences. Technical translation is a domain-specific and any word giving a specific meaning in one field may have another one in a different scientific field.

Stressing the increasing importance of technical translation in the different fields, Lin (2016, p. 803) emphasizes the fact that estimations indicate that technical translation accounts for more than 90% of all the translation outputs found worldwide. These figures are not surprising considering that technical translation covers various disciplines, and considering the growing advancements in them. The increasing interest in technical translation may be attributed to the mounting collaboration between nations in scientific, technological and industrial domains. As seen, the researcher argues that these figures document the increasing significance of technical translation as an important type of translation.

In the same vein, Hatam (2015, p. 70) argues that the emergence of various technological developments and the dominating trend among modern nations to communicate their scientific inventions and technologies in their mother language has dictated the need for more attention to technical translation, which deals with specific terminologies used in a certain field of study. Regarding this, the researcher sees that the emergence of this type of translation is a result of modern development in the various scientific fields.

While giving a brief description of technical translation, Hosseinimanesh and Dastjerdi, (2013, p. 162) stressed that it covers a wide range of specialized texts within a given field of study, and more specifically in science and technology texts. In addition to other scientific disciplines such as economics and medicine. Managing technical texts requires high discipline knowledge to convey the intended meaning accurately from SL text to TL text, and to master the relevant terminologies specific to this discipline. The researcher states that technical translation is strongly related with specific fields of study, and these are mostly scientific.

Stressing the specific nature of technical translation; its unique nature compared to other forms of translation, Hosseinimanesh and Dastjerdi (2013, p. 157) indicate, understanding the SL text is the first step in achieving high quality of technical translation, which cannot be reached without an excellent mastery level of SL text. Mastery in the subject domain itself is vast and needs checking the cultural context which itself includes the relevant discourse field. This study argues that technical translation is a technique that requires specific steps, and this dictates the need for competent translators to assume the task of technical translation.

Explaining the reasons leading to the development of technical translation, Dejica and Stoian (2016, p. 134) explain that technical translation has gained more importance in the field of translation due to the increasing the use of various scientific, military, legal and commercial terms in business, trade and human rights. Despite the negligence of technical translation in theories of translation, nowadays, no one can ignore that it is of a great significance due to the increasing use of new terms in science and technology, and the ever increasing in commercial and military transactions between persons and nations. The researcher emphasizes that the increasing importance of technical translation is the result of the enormous advancements in various fields of study.

Describing the nature of technical translation, Stolze (2009, p. 129) emphasizes the fact that in technical translation, there is a need to select the most suitable equivalent in the target text to convey the message as accurately as possible, and to achieve a highly effective communication process, which is the essence of technical translation. He further adds that technical translators must master the terms used in text belong to a specific discipline and this requires excellent background knowledge in both languages. This study emphasizes that accuracy in technical translation is a must; as the selection of an inaccurate equivalence may change the meaning of the text.

To further illustration, the difficulty in translating technical terms such as military terms, Al-Ma'ani (2015, p.11) identifies that the handling of unfamiliar words/terms is one of the crucial differences between students of translation and professional translators. It is generally accepted that students normally rely on dictionaries, particularly bilingual dictionaries, whereas professional translators use dictionaries, monolingual or bilingual to assist in the process of refining meaning and selecting an appropriate rendering. The two authors called for further future study, and this is consistent with the main objectives of this study, and is consistent with what this study calls for, as the need for more study is of urgent importance in this field of research. .

Moghadam and Far (2015) investigate the most prevalent translation strategies used by translators when managing law technical terms. The sample of the study includes four law translated books obtained from special translation centers. To achieve the objectives of the study, content analysis of the books was performed. The results of the study have indicated that translators employed effective translation strategies when managing law technical terms. It was also found that focusing on word meaning was the focus of technical translation employed by good translators.

Dejica and Stoian (2016) seek in their study to identify the qualities of good technical translation, the sample of the study includes six computer engineering texts given to a group of individuals specialized and non-specialized in computer engineering. The results of the study indicate that good technical translation includes acceptability, faithfulness, connectedness, clarity, and naturalness.

Bell (2006) indicates that military expressions as technical ones are limited to a specific group of people working in the military field, and thus, it is of great difficulty for other groups to know exactly the accurate equivalent for a specific expression.

In their research, both Al- Ma'ani (2015, p.13) and Al- Shehab (2014, p. 13): highlight issues surrounding the challenges of successfully translating military language and text; each concludes that further studies require identifying the scale of the problem and if possible to find solutions which, if adopted, would reduce the size of the problem. In his initial investigation, the researcher finds that there is a very little research material regarding a students' ability to translate military terms and texts from Arabic into English and vice versa. The lack of research into the topic has prompted this research study. As identified by Al- Shehab (2014, p.12), who has pioneered this field of study in Jordan, the lack of ability in translating military expressions and texts from English into Arabic and vice versa by translation students at Yarmouk University in Jordan is clear.

In fact, several studies have examined the level of military translation among the various populations, and this has made it difficult for the researcher to review related studies. In this sense, it is a serious limitation for the current study to cite related studies. Anyhow, this section is an attempt to review the related studies and will be presented in a chronological order.

In a more recent study, Al- Shehab (2014) has examined Yarmouk University students' ability in translating military expressions from English into Arabic. The sample of the study composed of (20) translation students selected randomly from the translation department at Yarmouk University in the academic year 2011/2012. To achieve the objectives of the study, a military translation test containing twenty five English military expressions to be translated into Arabic was used. The results of the study have indicated a low standard of Yarmouk University students' ability in translating military expressions from English into Arabic.

Al-Ma'ani (2015) investigates the most prevalent problems among translation department students in Al Sultan Qaboos University, Oman. The sample of the study consisted of an unspecified number of translation students at Al Sultan Qaboos University. To achieve the objectives of the study, a translation test containing several military expressions was administered to the students. The results of the study found that the translation department students in Al Sultan Qaboos University struggled to understand technical information, technical expressions and collocations

Hatam (2015) assesses the effectiveness of one ESP university course on enhancing technical translation proficiency among translation students. The sample of the study includes fifty male and female students. To achieve the objectives of the study, a pre-posttest design was employed. The results of the study have indicated that the ESP university course was relatively effective in promoting technical translation proficiency among translation department students. Dejica and Stoian (2016) aimed to identify the qualities of a good technical translator and this is different from the scope of this study. As for the sample used, it was (6) computer engineering texts.

By reviewing related studies, the aim of this study is consistent with the one stated in Al- Shehab study (2014), which aimed to identify the translatability of military expressions by MA students at Yarmouk University. The study employed a descriptive design and concluded that the level of translatability of military expressions was low, but is different with respect to the sample used, as Al- Shehab study (2014) employed a sample of Yarmouk University translation students, while this study used a sample of Jadara University translation students. As for the methods used in previous studies, most of them (e.g. Dejica & Stoian, (2016); Hatam, (2015), Al- Shehab, (2009) used English texts, similarly, this study employs English military text.

In Jordan, Al- Shehab (2014) concluded that translation students recorded low levels of translatability of military expressions and texts from English into Arabic in BA and MA program; he recommended the need for further research to be conducted into the challenges of military translation. This study is based on the recommendations suggested by Al- Shehab (2014) calling for further studies in this area to investigate the translatability level of students in universities, which is the main objective of this study.

This study benefited greatly from previous studies in enriching its literature review, reviewing related studies, developing the suitable methodology, selecting statistic analysis, discussing the results obtained in this study, developing the implications of this study and providing suitable recommendations concerning the purpose of this study.

Statement of the Problem

The researchers believe that military translation is one of the most types of technical translation, it needs a considerable attention. Thus, they used a military text to examine students' level in translating technical expressions. Nowadays, it is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore it because there are many technological advances in the military field, meaning that, weapons are more sophisticated to be functioned and operated properly, and this states that the users of weapons must have the necessary knowledge about how to operate them. There is no doubt that military translation has become an important issue in the technical translation field. Asserting this importance, the researchers, who were employed in the military field, have used a military text to examine students, as they saw lower level translatability skills committed by civilian translators working with him and found that there are many problems encountered them. Consequently, they sensed the urgent need for a study to identify the extent of the levels, and for that study to provide potential solutions which, if adopted, would assist to resolve the issue.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims at examining the ability of translation students in translating military (here in this study military means technical) expressions from English into Arabic at Jadara University in Jordan. In addition to see if there are statistical differences between males and females at the same university.

Questions of the Study

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the translation students' level in translating technical text from English into Arabic at Jadara University in Jordan?
2. Are there any statistical differences between the means of males and females in translating technical expressions?

Significance of the Study

With the rapid advancement in the field of technical and military translation, the absence of a suitable academic research material for this topic highlights the importance of this study research. It is anticipated that the findings of this research will assist both academic staff and students to overcome the challenges faced in the translation of unfamiliar technical language, which if translated incorrectly, may have serious consequences. It is also concluded that, this study will help Jordanian university administrators in designing and developing courses dealing solely with the translation of military as technical terms and expressions in the same way that specialist courses exist for translators engaged in the translation of Legal, Commercial and Political expressions. The level of students in military expressions translation is low, so, it is hoped that the results of this study will shed more light on this problem so as educators and interested researchers will dedicate their efforts to remedy this issue.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to the sample of the study is confined to (23) translation students at Jadara University in the summer term of the academic year (2016/2017). Moreover, the tests used in this study are limited to one technical text containing military terms and expressions. The English text included (35) military expressions. As such, the results to be obtained in this study are not accurate indicator of students' level in translating military text.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher will clarify the methodology employed in this study to investigate the levels of translation students' ability in military translation. The methodology gives a description of population and the sample of the study. Then, the researcher will present data collection procedures, validity, reliability and finally, data analysis.

Population and the Sample of the Study

The population of the study included all translation students in the English department at Jadadra University in Jordan for the academic year 2016/2017. The number of students has been obtained from the official records at the Admission & Registration Department at the university. It is estimated that there are (200) translation students who are currently enrolled at Jadara University.

The sample of the study included (23) Bachelor translation students in English department at Jadadra University. The sample was randomly selected from the population of the study. The respondents were informed of the study objective and were ensured that all data obtained from them will be only used for academic research purposes.

The majority of the students achieved a high academic performance, (13) students were of "A" grade. All students in the sample population were aged between (20-23) years; meaning that most students were third or fourth year translation students. Most GPA's (Grade Point Average) recorded (A+B) scores.

Data Collection

Instrument of the Study

One type of technical text containing military expressions and terms was employed. The text was utilized as a test to examine students' ability in translating English military expressions into Arabic. The test was an English text containing different military expressions. Students were given this text and were asked to translate it. The test contains (35) military expressions such as infantry battalion, command, fire support, brigades and battle forces. These expressions need military experience so as the translator can find the suitable Arabic equivalent (see appendix A).

To score students' translation, Al-Shehab, (2014) scoring category was employed. The following is the scoring category adopted in this study.

Table (1): English into Arabic Translation Text Scoring Criteria

Professional translation		Student translation				
Excellent	%	Good	%	Fair	%	Low
2.3 - 2.86	80-100	2.0 - 2.29	70- under 80	1.43- 1.97	50- under 70	Under 1.43 Under 50%

From the table above, it can be clearly observed that when the student's translation is approximately equivalent to the professional's (denotative), the expression scores (2.86). If the student scores between (2.57-2.86) for all military expressions included in the test, his/her level will be "excellent". When polysemies are used by the student (connotative), this level is evaluated as "good" and the expression scores between (2.0-2.29). If the rendering of the expression is only partly right, it will be graded between (1.43-1.97) and its level is "fair". Finally, the expression reflects a fair level if it obtains a score under (1.43)- means under 50%, while a poor level is scored if its rendering is completely wrong. For example, if the student scores full marks with (2.86) for (23) items, good marks with (2.29) for (10) items, fair marks with (1.97) for (1) item, and zero mark for (1) item, ($23 \times 2.86 + 10 \times 2.29 + 1 \times 1.97 + 1 \times 0 = 90.65$), he/she will consider to be at the "excellent" level.

The test was reviewed by experts in military translation. These experts were selected by virtue of their experience in this form of technical translation so as to ensure that the results obtained in this study reflect the actual students' ability in military translation.

The test was also reviewed by experts in the military translation department in the Jordanian Armed Forces. These experts were selected by virtue of their experience in this form of technical translation so as to ensure that the results obtained in this study reflect the actual students' ability in military translation.

The validity of the text was achieved by asking a "panel of experts". They are four professors majoring in translation studies and four military experts in translating military expressions. They were asked to review the test, and their remarks and comments were taken into consideration. The agreement percentage between the experts was (80%). The difficulty of the total test was found to be (83.9%) which was an acceptable percentage to achieve the objectives of the study. Appendix (A) shows the names, years of experience, work location and e-mail address of the experts' team scoring the completed translation test by students.

To establish the reliability of the achievement tests, a test- retest method was employed for English test. The test was administrated to ten students of the original sample of the study. The same students were called after two weeks, and they were examined the same test. Cronbach alpha values between the two administrations of the test were calculated and found to be ($r = 0.86.2$), which is an adequate value to establish test-retest reliability for the translation test.

Data Analysis

Percentages and ranks scores were used to answer the question of the study. Moreover, discussions for results presented were adopted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In order to achieve the study objectives, the following sections present the results regarding the study-questions. Quantitative methods were used dealing with a number of statistic techniques and followed by discussions as follows:

For answering Q1: *"What is the translation students' level in translating technical text from English into Arabic at Jadara University in Jordan?"* .

Table (2) shows the percentages of students' scores. The total means scores of the students' translation for (35) military (technical) expressions were (61%), which indicates a fair level in translating military terms.

As shown in table (2), one student obtained an excellent level with the percentages of (86.7%), while four students obtained a good level as their percentage ranged between (70.0%) to (76.7 %). Also, (17) students achieved a fair level with the percentage ranged between (50.0 %) to (66.7%). Finally, one student achieved a poor level and failed in translating military expressions scoring (46.7%).

Table (2): Students' level in translating military texts from English into Arabic at Jadara University in Jordan.

No.	%	Rank
1	66.7	6
2	46.7	23
3	50.0	18
4	66.7	6
5	60.0	12
6	76.7	2
7	60.0	12
8	63.3	9
9	63.3	9
10	50.0	18
11	66.7	6
12	63.3	9
13	70.0	4
14	50.0	18
15	53.3	15
16	50.0	18
17	56.7	14
18	53.3	15
19	86.7	1
20	50.0	18
21	70.0	4
22	53.3	15
23	76.7	2
Mean	61.0	

The highest level (85%) is for the sentence "*execute early-entry operations*" that means in Arabic "تنفيذ عمليات التدخل المبكر". It has not a correct translation by all students, it is translated by some students as "نشر عمليات سريعة في وقت مبكر" "Nashir a'meleyyat Sarea' Fi Waqet Mubaker", which is far from the correct translation in military texts while the correct translation is: "تنفيذ عمليات التدخل السريع" "Tanfeed a'meleyyat Al Tadakul Al Saareea".

The second level is for the term; *falling snow* using literal translation "هبوط الثلج" "Hobout-Al Thalaj", while the correct translation is "الثلج المتساقط" "Al Thalaj -Al mutsaket" affirming the fact that translation students show a fair translation level in such expression as it is considered a literary translation which is more easy the technical ones.

The second level also is for the expression majority of students translated the Arabic military expression: "فرقة عسكرية" "firgah 3skarieh" into "فرقة موسيقية" "firgah musiqia" **and the right polysemy is; military division**. This mirrors that students are using common language, not specialized one in the military field, which needs training and expertise, thus, this fact shows the low translation level students reported in this study. It can be argued, then, based on these results, that translation courses at Jordanian universities lack the ability to qualify students to be proficient translators, especially in the areas concerned.

The lowest level is for the English sentence; *field artillery mortar machine guns, chemical warfare weapons, tactic aviation section, and psychological operations* "مدفعية الميدان ورشاشات الموتر الميداني وأسلحة الحرب الكيماوية وجناح الطيران التعبوي والعمليات النفسية". Some students translated it as; "الميدانية الهاون رشاشات وأسلحة الحرب الكيماوية، وقسم الطيران التكتيك والعمليات النفسية". Such translation contains various types of mistakes such as ignoring the technical expression *artillery* that means in Arabic مدفعية. Some students translated this utterance by: "*include field artillery, guns, chemical warfare weapons, wing of tactical aviation and psychological operations*"; they omitted the expression "*field machine*". Some deleted the words "*and, operations*", and "*aviation*", which makes some portions of translation odd and unacceptable, such as: "وجناح الطيران التعبوي النفسي".

The low level of translation ability found in this study may be attributed to the fact that translation students at Jadara University have acquired a theoretical knowledge in the field of translation, but this knowledge is general. Military translation requires both good knowledge of military terms and expressions in the military field, whilst students participating in this study lack the needed skills and knowledge.

These results are consistent with the ones reported in previous related studies as both Al- Shehab (2009, 2014) and Al- Imian (2015). They have indicated that the performance of university students on military translation test is fair in most cases. Since students lack the necessary field experience and the appropriate military training in the armed forces, they do not have a clear image about the nature and skills needed to efficiently translate military texts.

Furthermore, Sohrabi *et al.*, (2015, p. 129) point out that the syllabi of translation departments in universities do not adequately qualify students to work on technical translation including military texts. This may be due to several reasons, including lack

of adequate financial and human resources, which in turn negatively affects students' translation ability, especially when working on texts that require special skills. The authors called for more attention to developing syllabi with the ability to meet the needs of both students and market demands. This study recommends that English departments in Jordanian universities in general, and Jadara University, in particular, need to improve their syllabi.

Also, there is an urgent need for qualifying faculty members in English departments by providing training programs able to improve their technical translation competence, which will defiantly have positive effects on students' translation level. Affirming this, Catford, (1965, p. 94) points out that professional translation from the beginning of history relies on training in the related field of translation (in this study military translation) and the need for experience before starting the translation process. He further adds that translation is both a science and art, and this requires that the translator be well- informed and knowledgeable in the field of study he/ she is going to work.

In their study, Sohrabi., *et al* (2015, p. 129) showed that syllabi at English departments at the Iranian universities still need more improvement as students in these departments show low translation ability levels, which means that unless something is done, the outcomes of higher education in these department will not be able to meet the requirements of translation profession.

The results reported in this study are consistent with the results obtained by Al- Shehab (2014), which showed that students' military translation level was low, and there is a need for improving the quality of courses in English departments at Jordanian universities.

For answering Q2: *Are there any statistical differences between the means of males and females in translating technical expressions?*

Table 3 shows no statistical difference between the means of males and females in translating military expressions at $\alpha = 0.05$ level.

Table3: T-test between males and females in translating military (technical) expressions

Sex	n	%	St.d	df	t	Sig
Male	13	61.87	3.42	21	0.23	0.065
Female	10	60.0	3.56			
All	23	61.0	3.45			

The equal result in translation signifies to the similarity in their levels in English translation, reflecting the same standards in their studying. Commenting on the result, students without a military background and updated military information could not fully comprehend the translated text, and therefore could not convey its meaning with accurately.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on study's results, it is recommended for practicing military translation at all academic levels. In addition to collaborating between the Jordanian universities and the Jordanian Armed Forces in such subject. Moreover, a textbook ought to be issued at Jadara's university level to be studied at English Department. To end with, conducting more researches in this rare field may resolve the problems committed when translating technical and military texts.

CONCLUSION

We have not here been considering the qualitative analysis, but merely quantitative method in stating students' ability in translating technical and military English texts into Arabic. In conclusion, the method used in this study is nearly suitable for achieving its goals; the validated technical text was exposed to students to be translated into Arabic. Data analysis was placed, and percentages were computed. The study revealed a fair level for students in translating technical and military expressions. It revealed also no significant differences between males and females in translating such texts. Their fair translation ability force us, we think, to raise searching courses about translating technical, especially, military texts, hence, some academic advices were recommended, and further ideas were suggested. As a final point, we hope, this study will present some benefits to the field of technical and military translation.

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Appendix (A)

English Text Containing Military (technical) Expressions

The infantry battalion is the first level of command that includes an assigned staff supporting the commander. The battalion can deploy rapidly, execute early-entry operations, and execute missions throughout the full spectrum of operations. It can conduct effective combat or other operations immediately upon arrival to assist in prevention, containment, stabilization, or resolution of a conflict. Infantry battalions are best when used in a combined arms formation, especially when armor, artillery, engineers, aviation, another joint assets are integrated into the operation. Task organizing combined arms with access to joint capabilities tailors the organization to the mission. This flexibility allows the commander to apply combat power at a designated time and place. An Infantry battalion can be completely wheel mobile using trucks from the forward support company (FSC) and more trucks from the brigade support battalion (BSB). However, the infantry brigade combat team (IBCT) can only provide this mobility to one infantry battalion at a time.

By definition, it is the overall employment of fires relevant to armed aircraft, infantry and naval forces using indirect fire systems and electronic warfare systems against ground targets to support ground operations, at both operational and tactic levels. At brigade level, these systems include field artillery, field mortar machine guns, chemical warfare weapons, tactic aviation section, and psychological operations. If applicable, fire support includes naval gunfire support and special operations forces support. Fire support for brigades has been organized and integrated to suit maneuvers. Additionally, fire support plan for brigade should match the aims of the brigade commandant. It allows the brigade commandant to make use of the available battle forces immediately at a designated time and place. Eventually, fire support helps sustain and strengthen the front and back lines of forces and to destroy, trouble, and delay the enemy's forces.

Appendix (A)

Arabic translation of English Text Containing Military Expressions

