

EFL Learners' Syntactic Problems in Translation at AL-Baha University from Arabic into English

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Abstract

This research aims to address the syntactic problems that Saudi students confront when translating. The significance of the study is to detect syntactic issues among Saudi Arabian undergraduate students. The question is addressed in the study: what are the syntactic problems that Saudi students confront when translating? The researcher used a descriptive analytical method. The sample of twenty undergraduate students, selected from the boys' section, were males and in the second level, enrolled in the second semester of 2018, at the College of Arts and Sciences, majoring in English in Beljurshi, Al Baha University, and this study used a validated test of written Arabic text as a tool to collect information about the research problem. The data was examined, and the students' syntactic problems were detected and categorized as omission and addition in the study. The study finding reveals that omission received a score of 103 out of a total of 50.7, while additions received a score of 99 out of a total of 49 percent. There are 202 syntactic problems in total. Discussion indicates that grammar norms are not being followed by the students, a lack of familiarity with the two languages' rules, interference between the two languages is the most common cause of errors, and students failed to notice there are some distinctions between English and Arabic. The study recommends pursuing research in additional areas connected to syntactic issues.

Keywords: Differences, interference, language, omission, problems, syntactic, translation

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Introduction

According to Sohaila (2018), translation, serves as a bridge of communication between nations. Humans have been doing it in various forms since ancient times, using language and writing to exchange knowledge and migrate cultures from one geographical area to another. Translation has taken on global relevance and has contributed significantly to the enrichment of the world's cultural heritage. Sohaila (2018) went on to say that translation is crucial to humanity's cultural evolution. People in a country learn about life through translation, and human communication establishes other countries' civilizations, cultures, and achievements in numerous fields.

According to Baker (1998), translation is one of the most fundamental acts people perform with language, and as such, it must be practiced alongside language, speech, listening, reading, and writing abilities.

Bahr (1998) claimed that the biggest issue with translation is that the translation process involves finding a word in one language that matches another word in the other language. This assumes, from the outset, that the two languages match in classification, cultural and social background, and metaphors. Semantic differences between the two languages are one source of translation problems. Working as a translator in many locations as a practitioner in this field, the researcher discovered that translation is a very complex activity and a tough process for most expert translators. During translation lessons, it is found that Saudi undergraduate students have syntactic problems in translation, which could be due to variances in the Arabic and English languages.

This study is significant since it is the first of its kind and one of the few investigations of syntactic issues among Saudi Arabian undergraduate students. As a result, students, teachers, translators, and curriculum planners may find it valuable.

The present study must fulfill the following research objectives: Identify the kinds of syntactic problems in translation encountered by Saudi students. They were second-year boys majoring in English and enrolled in the second semester of 2018. The College of Science and Arts in Baljurashi, Al Baha, offers the program and looks into the syntactic problems that Saudi students have when translating.

The following research questions are addressed in the study:

- 1-What are the syntactic problems that Saudi students confront when translating?
- 2-What are the sources of translation's syntactic problems?

This research is limited to identifying the syntactic challenges in translation that undergraduate students face, as defined in the research problem; it is also limited to the students who constitute a sample and the Arabic text that these students translate; they were second-year boys majoring in English and enrolled in the second semester of 2018. The College of Science and Arts in Baljurashi, Al Baha, offers the program. The time frame for this research is 2019-2022.

Literature Review

Concept of Translation

It involves replacing text written in one language, which he refers to as the source language, with an equivalent text written in another language, which he refers to as the language to which it is transferred, as Catford (1965) pointed out. The translation process, according to this definition, is an activity performed by researchers and authors to transmit knowledge and literature into the target language. Similarly, Newmark (1996) defines translation from the viewpoint of Taylor (1990) as is to divert a written discourse with a speech or sentence in another language that is identical. According to Newmark, translation also includes the transfer of source language, which could be a word or a book for new readers.

A good translation, according to Forster (1958), achieves the same aim in the chosen language as it did in the source language with the same goal. A good translation should capture the text's literal purpose and all that surrounds it, and an exact translation should express the true intent rather than simply translating words. As a result, Harry (2020) quotes "Translation is realizable precisely because those deep-seated universals, genetic, historical, social from which all grammars derive can be located and recognized as operative in every human idiom, however singular or bizarre its superficial forms" (p. 235). Thus, the importance of translation is evident in many areas, and is not separated from language in any way.

According to Newmark (1988), translation is a talent that involves attempting to transfer a message or an idea written in a single language to a message or idea written in the target language. The translator concentrates on the meaning rather than the lexical item because if the translation fails to achieve its communicative goal, i.e., if it has no meaning for the receiver, it will have failed to justify its existence. Because the literal meaning weakens the translation, whereas the spirit of the meaning gives it life, the translation must not only convey the message, but also the manner of the other language.

According to Delisle (1999), the complex matters in the translation are to convey information for one speech into the text to establish an equivalence relationship between the two texts, taking into account all the communication meanings associated with the text and the constraints imposed on the translator.

According to Ezzedine (2005), translation is the transfer of utterances from one language to the next. The translation will be more difficult if the translator does not grasp what is written in one language, and if he tries to transfer it without sufficient knowledge, he will write a meaningless speech. Following an examination of translation concepts, the researcher believes that translation is both a science and an art because the translator must adhere to the author's text and clarify what is hidden, and select one word to accurately represent the writer's mood and style to the reader.

Translator

According to Houbert (1998), the translator who truly practices his or her vocation has the responsibility for the translation. Of course, a good translator training program through academic institutions is required.

According to Shuttleworth (1997), the translator plays a vital part in human life interactions involving two or more languages. The translator, in this concept, acts as a go-between for two people who are unable to communicate.

As a result, Köksal (2020) quotes: "A translator is also an expert in intercultural communication, whose task is to create a bridge and aid others to cross-cultural and linguistic boundaries". (p.329)

According to Greiss (2000), a translator must possess some attributes to become a proficient translator. These skills can be attained through the science courses taught in the language and translation departments. These characteristics allow the translator to write effectively. Greiss (2000) went on to say that if you cannot write, you won't be a competent translator. Among the qualities that the translator must possess are the following:

- 1-Familiarity with his native tongue
- 2-Knowledge of the transmitted language
- 3-Knowledge of the translated text
- 4-Relying on his own experience

According to Greiss (2000) the translator should translate from a foreign language into his mother tongue. It is rare for a translator to have original knowledge of a language, and the translator need to be familiar with all aspects of that language represented in the text and be able to find what works best in terms of vocabulary, word order, and punctuation marks.

According to Anani (2000), the translator is a writer whose task is to formulate concepts into words that are directed at the reader. He differs from the original author in that the ideas he formulates are not his own, but rather those of others.

The researcher views the translator as the one who is fully proficient in the language from which he is translating and the target language has extensive cultural knowledge of both languages, and is constantly aware of the culture, literature, arts, laws and lives of the people of both languages. Finally, he is acquainted with the text he is translating.

Types of Translation

According to Shaheen (1998), distinct forms of translation can be recognized based on the translation procedures used. The translation may be instantaneous, and it is distinguished by its speed and variety of types. The translation could be done with mechanical tools. The method of brief translation is used in both of these two types of translation, or the complete text is honored by depending on the full translation, whether oral or written.

There are several types of translation according to Talal (2015)
1-written translation is as follows: There are two types of translation: idea translation and literal translation.

2-Oral translation: It has three methods: successive translation, dual translation, and simultaneous translation. It is primarily used for two purposes: text-to-text conversion and text-to-speech conversion.

Translation Methods

Finney and Darblane (1958) distinguished between direct and indirect translation procedures. According to Al-Khatib (2008), translation is separated into two types: direct translation (literal translation) and indirect translation (figurative translation). Indirect methods are opposed to direct methods, necessitating a significant amount of effort and cultural knowledge from the translator, and are classified into four types: literal, semantic, and contextual translation.

Al-Khatib, (2008) went on to say that while this translation was acceptable in the natural sciences, medicine, and mathematics, where the value of the translated work was unaffected, the transfer of Greek heritage to the Arabic language was not a direct transfer from.

Didaoui (1992) said that translation methods are the technical methods used to express the meaning of speech in one language. The translation has two well-known methods. The first method, is to look at a single word from the source language and its meaning, so the transmitter (the translator) comes up with a single word from the word of the transmitted language and its synonym to denote that meaning. This method is called literal translation.

According to Didaoui (1992), translation methods are "technical approaches for expressing the meaning of speech in a single language" (p.31). There are two well-known methods for translation. The first technique examines a single word from the source language and its meaning, after which the transmitter (translator) selects a single word from the transmitted language and its synonym to denote that meaning.

The second way, according to Didaoui (1992), follows a sentence and absorbs its meaning in his mind before expressing it in the other language with a sentence that fits it, whether the words are equal or different. This strategy is known as "interpretive translation" or "free translation". Every word in the literal translation is paired with a term in another language that has the same meaning. Because of its negative effects on meaning, this strategy is worthless.

Previous Related Studies

Some scholars have looked into translation problems, and a number and some past studies on student translation problems have been undertaken. Ehaj (2017) is geared toward locating the obstacles, language issues, and text-related difficulties those students of the Islamic University of Gaza's Diploma in Translation encounter. The study used several assessment methods to analyze the translated texts and discovered that the students had several translation challenges. The professor advised students to understand the origins of these difficulties and find appropriate solutions to avoid them in the future.

Ishaq (2017) investigated the challenges and problems faced by qualified translators when translating scientific words. The challenges, according to the report, are due to the wide range of scientific vocabulary and a lack of Arabic terms. The study looked into the challenges of scientific texts and how they relate to the text's properties. There are also other elements behind these

challenges and problems, such as a lack of technical things, a lack of translation understanding, and appropriate equivalency. A total of 44 students with a specialization in translation made up the sample. The study employed a qualitative approach. Interviews and documents were used to collect the necessary information. According to the findings, translators have various challenges due to a lack of equivalence.

Mostafa (2018), for example, looked into the common translation difficulties that students confront. The goal of the research was to look at the tough terminologies that students had to deal with during the translation process. A test was created to meet the study's goal, which consists of 20 items. According to the study lack of translation practice and translation courses, both of which are thought to be major contributors to translation difficulties, there is a lack of translation practice and translation courses, both of which are thought to be major contributors to translation problems.

Jabak (2018) discussed the problems Saudi undergraduates had translating texts from Arabic to English. He looked at the challenges that Saudi undergraduates experience and how to deal with them; the study aimed to clarify these challenges. The study used a qualitative approach. It collected data using two instruments: evaluation instruments and interviews. According to the research, numerous reasons that contribute to these problems, as well as numerous solutions for overcoming them.

Fahmi (2019) investigated the Challenges that Translators Experience when Translating Texts and Technical Terms. The goal of the research was to learn about the difficulties that translators face when translating texts and technical terms. This research used a test with five technical texts of varying difficulties and a sample of twenty participants, including ten master's students in the language specialization. According to the research, these challenges in language selection were due to grammatical structures, semantics, and vocabulary.

Abdellatif (2019) evaluated the difficulties and problems that arise when translating phone terminology. The goal of this study was to investigate the difficulties and problems that come with translating phone jargon. Using a questionnaire, the researcher attempted to learn about the tactics employed by students who translated specific terms. According to the study, their translations were inaccurate and lacked translation methodologies, and the students struggled to translate several technical terms.

Hikmah (2020) investigated the Analysis of Students' English Texts for Omission and Addition Errors. The study was conducted to identify aspects of addition and deletion errors in English writings created by students. The study was descriptive. The information was gathered by examining the work of students. There were 20 incidental texts written by 11th students. The text is divided into four sections. After gathering data and analyzing it using, students' errors were identified and verified in depth. The information gathered by entering it into the table was then categorized using linguistic classification and surface strategy classification. This study discovered several features of omission or addition errors and concluded that.

Some academics in Saudi Arabia have undertaken studies on syntactic problems in general, but there has been little research on syntactic problems with Saudi students, so this study was conducted to fill in the gaps.

Methods

To analyze syntactic problems in translation, the researchers used a descriptive method. It collaborated on syntactic problems. The information was gathered using written materials in Arabic.

Participants

The study sample comprises a group of English students engaged in a language education program. A text translation test was administered to measure the students' abilities to translate and detect syntactic problems. There were a total of 20 undergraduates in the group. They were second-year boys majoring in English and enrolled in the second semester of 2018. The College of Science and Arts in Baljurashi, Al Baha, offers the program. The participants had completed some of translation courses from English to Arabic and likewise. As a result, they all have the same educational background.

Research Instruments

This study's tools included an Arabic test. After scanning a series of texts and submitting their criticism, this text was graded by a panel of professionals. As a consequence, this text was decided. The researcher instructed the students to translate an Arabic text into English on a sheet of paper provided by the researcher. A translation test was performed on the study's sample. 20 Subjects were asked to translate a paragraph into Arabic, and syntactic issues were detected and assessed.

Research Procedures

The data for the study was collected via a test; the Arabic text was acquired from Dr. Ezzedine Muhammad Naguib's book, Foundations of the Translation. This content was evaluated by a group of experts who expressed their opinion, made changes and clarification some aspects that were taken into account. As a result, they selected this text.

Data Analysis

The term "analysis" refers to the process of describing and determining the causes of difficulties encountered by research participants. The participants created a variety of problems, but the examination was limited to syntactic issues. SPSS was used to provide a comprehensive study of the incidence of syntactic problems and to answer the research questions. After gathering the data needed to complete the study, syntactic problems in translation have been recognized, categorized, and mentioned below.

Findings

Syntactic Problems

The following table reveals that omissions received a score of 103 out of a total of 50.7, while additions received a score of 99 out of a total of 49 percent. There are 202 syntactic problems

in total. The datasets were analyzed using statistical analysis and software in this study. To summarize continuous data, standard deviations were used to summarize continuous data. These findings are similar to the findings of Shehab (2013). Syntactic problems were caused by interaction between the two languages, where the consequence of omission was greater than the result of the addition. Hikmah's (2020) analysis of Students' English Texts for Omission and Addition Errors concluded that students are not adhering to grammar norms. The following sentences describe omission and addition, respectively

Omission

According to the table, the percentage of omission was higher than the rate of addition, which was 50.7 percent.

In the English translation of the sentence

لللمدرسة دور هام في تعليم الجيل وتربيته

The school has an important role in educating the generation; this phrase can be translated as "school important for education generation" which means in Arabic.

مدرسة مهتمت بتعليم الجيل

The English translation is incorrect because the students omitted the article "the," the verb "has," the article "an," the noun "role," and the word "raising" from the English structure; the reader will be unable to comprehend this translated sentence due to the lack of a noun that clarifies and completes the sentence's significance. The target language does not match this sentence.

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

المدرسة تهمس اعدال سرفيتيبي اطفال

The school helps the family raise children; this phrase can be translated as "it helps family raise children" which means in Arabic.

هيتس اعدال سريرة لحييتيبي اطفال

Because the student omitted the words "school" and "the" from the English framework, the translation is incorrect. While translating the statement, the student removed the noun and replaced it with a pronoun, rendering the translation unclear; the reader is unable to comprehend the translation of "it."

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

فالمدرسة تهمس اعدال اطفال اخل قال حيدة

In school children are taught good morals; this phrase can be translated as "school learn the kids behavior and good" which means in Arabic.

تعليم الممرس لسوك الأطفال

The English translation is incorrect because the students left out the words "in" and "morals." The students omitted the preposition "in" as well as the noun "morals," which caused the translation to be incomplete and unintelligible.

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

"مثل الصدق وعدم الكذب والتعاون مع الآخرين"

Such as honesty, not lying, cooperation with others, order, cleanliness; this phrase can be translated as "like lying, cooperation, order and cleanness important for education" which means in Arabic.

مثل الكذب والتعاون والنظام والظافة

Students omitted the words "honesty" and "not" from the word "lying," causing the structure to change and the meaning to become incorrect; additionally, students omitted the word "with others," resulting in the word cooperation that does not correspond to the target language.

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

(احترام الكبير والعطف على الصغير، حب النجاح والفتوة وغير ذلك من الصفات الحميدة)

Respect for the great, kindness to the young, love of success, excellence and good behavior; this phrase can be translated as "respect great, kindness, success, excellence and more various" which means in Arabic.

"احترام الكبير والعطف على النجاح والفتوة وكثرت وع"

The students left out the article "the" and the preposition "for" from the word "great," leaving the meaning in the English grammatical structure incomplete. Furthermore, students omitted the word "young," rendering the meaning illegible; the word "love" was omitted from the word "success," as was the preposition "of," resulting in an English language misunderstanding of the meaning. The two words "excellent behavior" were removed by the students, resulting in the removal of a portion of the sentence in the English structure, which distorts the meaning.

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

بالإضافة إلى أن الممرس قدم للطلبة العديد من المواد الدراسية في مختلف المجالات

In addition to, the school provides students with many learning subjects in various fields; this phrase can be translated as "it also gave student by much ways" which means in Arabic.

كما أعطت للطلبة بطرق عديدة

Because the word "in addition to" and the noun "school" were omitted and replaced with a pronoun, the reader was unable to understand the translation of "it." The students also left out the words "fields" and "learning subjects," which resulted in misunderstanding and a lack of understanding of the concept.

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

و مذهب موافق له ألنظيرون شخصاً ناجحاً

These subjects qualify him to be a successful person in his work; This phrase can be translated as "these subjects qualify him to be successful in his work" which means in Arabic.

"و مذهب موافق له ألنظيرون ناجح في عمله"

The students left off the word "person" from the English construction; the reader will be unable to comprehend this translated statement because it lacks a noun that clarifies and completes the significance of the sentence. Also, this sentence does not correspond to the target language.

Addition

The addition differs from the omission in that it occurs when a word is added to a sentence that does not exist; it is usually inserted in the target language, as in the sentences below:

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

لل مدرسة دور هام في تعليم الجيل وتربيته

The school has an important role in educating the generation; this phrase can be translated by many students as "the school has an important part of educating the and upraising generation" which means in Arabic.

"المدرسة لها جزء مهم من تعليم وتربيته"

Many students added unnecessary words to the statement that were not part of the original structure of the target language, such as "part and of," altering the meaning and rendering the translation literal.

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

تساعد المدرسة ألسر في تربية أطفال

The school helps the family raise children; this phrase can be translated as "the school is helping the family to raise the children in school" which means in Arabic.

"تساعد المدرسة ألسر في تربية أطفال في المدرسة"

Students added an unnecessary verb to be "is" and "ing" to the sentence; the word "school" was also repeated, which is considered a clear error in English language structure.

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

ففيال مدرسيةتتمعليهمأطفالألخالقالحيدة

In school children are taught good morals; this phrase can be translated as "in the school it learns a children ethics good" which means in Arabic.

ففيال مدرسة هييتعلمالظلمحجةأخالقيات

Students added the pronoun "it" to the sentence, which is a repeat because the noun already exists and the pronoun is unnecessary. The word "children" has been given an extra "a"; this is incorrect because the word "children" is plural, not single. The term "ethics" has been replaced with the adjective "good".

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

نمثلالصدق وعدمالكذب وللععاون معألخوين

Such as honesty, not lying, cooperation with others; this phrase can be translated as "like honesty not lying, have connections to people cooperation", which means in Arabic.

The students modified the meaning of the sentence by inserting the word "have," which does not appear in the text. The term "people" was added in the target language, which did not appear in the Arabic text, changing the form and meaning of the statement.

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

بالإضافةإلى أنالمدرستمدالطلابألعديد منالموادالدراسيةفي معظمالامجالات

In addition to, the school provides students with many learning subjects in various fields; this phrase can be translated as "in addition to, the school provides students with all of the other learning subjects in various major" which means in Arabic.

بالإضافةإلى أنالمدرستمدالطلابلكل منالموادالدراسيةفي تخصصاتمختلفة

Students inserted the preposition of," into the sentence, which does not appear in the in Arabic sentence and can be written correctly without it; this error could be due to language interference.

Discussion

What are the syntactic problems that Saudi students confront when translating?

What are the sources of translation's syntactic problems?

Syntactic problems

- 1-The students made 202 errors, 50 omission errors, and 49 additional errors.
 - 2-The majority of the problems stemmed from omissions.
 - 3- A lack of familiarity with the rules of both languages.
 - 4-Interference between the two languages is the most common cause of errors.
 - 5-Students fail to notice differences between the English and Arabic languages.
- Grammar norms are not being followed by the students.

Conclusion

This study looked into the syntactic problems that English students at Al Baha University have when translating. Syntactic problems can be divided into two categories: omission and addition. The majority of the problems stemmed from omissions. According to the findings, the students made 202 errors, 50 omission errors, and 49 additional errors. The findings also revealed that grammar norms are not being followed by the students, a lack of familiarity with the rules of both languages: interference between the two languages is the most common cause of errors, and students fail to notice differences between the English and Arabic languages. These findings are similar to the findings of Shehab (2013). Syntactic problems were caused by interaction between the two languages, where the consequence of omission was greater than the result of the addition. Hikmah's (2020) analysis of Students' English Texts for Omission and Addition Errors concluded that students are not adhering to grammar norms.

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Appendices

Arabic Translation

لل مدرسة دور هافى على يفي اليجل وتربية ال مدرس يساع ال سر ريفيتية أطفافى في ال مدرسة يتعلم ال أطفال ال خلق ال حيدة. نمل الصدق وعدم الكذب والتعاون مع ال خرين والنظام والظافة واحترام الكبر والعطف لى الصغير وحبلن جاح والشوق غير ذلك ملس لولظل حسن بلبى افة لى أن ال مدرس قد مبال طلبيل عدي د من ال مواد ال اسري في م على ال م جالت. وهذه ال مواه اول ه أل نيكوش خصا ن ا ج افي عمل ه.

English Translation

The school has an important role in the education and upbringing of the generation. The school helps the family raise the children. In the school, the children are taught good morals. Such as honesty, not lying, cooperation with others, order, cleanliness, respect for the elder, kindness to the young, love of success and excellence, and other good behavior. In addition, the school provides the student with many subjects in various fields. These subjects qualify him to be a successful person in his work.

Syntactic problems

Syntactic problems			
Students No	1-Omissions	2-Addition	
Student 1	8	7	
Student 2	7	3	
Student 3	9	4	
Student 4	5	1	
Student 5	7	4	
Student 6	6	2	
Student 7	2	7	
Student 8	2	6	
Student 9	2	2	
Student 10	6	3	
Student 11	2	6	
Student 12	3	7	
Student 13	6	3	
Student 14	4	7	
Student 15	5	3	
Student 16	10	5	
Student 17	7	4	
Student 18	8	7	
Student 19	9	5	
Student 20	5	2	
Total	103	99	202
%	50.7	49	100