The Phenomenon of Arabic-English Translation of Foreign Language Classes During The Pandemic

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Abstract

The outbreak of the Covid-19 compelled the education sector to teach remotely. This study attempts to investigate the translation strategies used by Arabic-speaking students in EFL Saudi during online learning. The study used a questionnaire to gather the data. The participants of the study were the 120 EFL learners who majored in English at the PSU. The participant's language is Arabic to find the Phenomenon of Arabic-English Translation of Foreign Language. SPSS was used to analyze the data. The findings are encouraging. And supportive for Arabic-English translation of Foreign Language classes in online teaching. Participants used numerous translation strategies during online learning. They expressed a wide range of opinions about translation to help them in the online learning environment. The outcome demonstrates that they feel one must be immersed in an English-speaking environment for some time before thinking fluently in English. The translation was the most often utilized tool by Saudi EFL students to learn English words and phrases, write, and read English during online learning. The translation had no negative impact on participants' EFL learning. Arabic-English Translation helped in the comprehension of the subject as it is lareners' mother tongue. Also, it is supported tremendously in EFL learning.   .

Keywords: Arabic-English; Online learning; Translation Strategies; Covid-19

INTRODUCTION

The worldwide economy and education process has been significantly damaged by the deadly and infectious disease of Covid-19. Due to this catastrophe, the educational system has been rattled. This dread is likely to be felt in every school sector worldwide (Dhawan, 2020). Many schools and institutions were obliged to remain closed when the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak occurred. As a result, the many semesters and possibly more in the future are at risk. Many educational institutions have abandoned the use of face-to-face teaching. According to the study's findings, it is unlikely to return to typical education in the foreseeable future (Mukhtar et al., 2020). This will hinder learning chances in the early stages

of social separation. Educational entities are having difficulty coming up with workable solutions in the face of this formidable challenge. People need to be united while they deal with this problem. Every student, teacher member, academic staff member, community member, society member, and the nation has a profound, urgent need to be protected and saved.

Several claims have been made in favor of online learning. Online teaching topics include accessibility, affordability, flexibility, learning pedagogy, and life-long learning (Anderson, 2004). Online learning is commonly regarded as accessible, particularly for rural and distant places. Institution-based learning is considered a much affordable option for tuition, lodging, and transportation (Singh & Thurman, 2019). Flexibility is an essential component of online learning. A learner can choose to set aside time to complete online courses, especially if there are multiple on-demand offerings to choose from. Blended learning and flipped classrooms result from combining face-to-face lectures with technology; throughout this way, learning possibilities are improved for the students. Learners can understand whenever and wherever, therefore enhancing their learning abilities, which translates into continuing education. The use of E-Learning and M-learning is common in Saudi EFL context (Khan, Radzuan, Shahbaz, & Ibrahim, 2018; Khan, Radzuan, Shahbaz, Ibrahim, et al., 2018; Khan et al., 2021). While we understand the increasing success of digital learning in today's competitive environment, the government also acknowledges it.

Translating information from a language (L1) into another language (L2), and likewise, is a technique that seeks to make effective communication easier by understanding information obtained L1 into L2 (Calis & Dikilitas, 2012). Fundamentally, translation is concerned with transmitting the correct linguistic, semantic, and pragmatic content of the message or sentence in a given language (Chesterman, 2016). When this complicated procedure is implemented at a high degree of professionalism, it is reasonable to conclude that translation has achieved its ultimate objective.

Translation studies are predicated on the notion of meaning. Various perspectives to the topic refer to multiple kinds of interpretation: for example, while some research supports lexical regularities in scriptural references and their translations (Bassnett, 2013), other researchers mark attention on how messages or expressions structure inside the scenarios in which they have been utilized (Narayanan, 2018). While some studies look at the text translation as complete and its impact on its reader or community (Venuti, 2012), others look at translation through the lens of philosophy of mind (Alves & Albir, 2010) to better understand content in translation.

To make the learning process and acquisition simpler for non - native speakers, they commonly turn to translations for assistance. Despite the reality that interpretation has performed a lot of functions in numerous strategies of language instruction. These are formed to facilitate students with diverse backgrounds; the majority of the teachers believe that interpretation is a practical step toward

improving students in far more convincingly grasp words and illustrations of the words and presenting thoughts in the chosen language (Hvelplund, 2016). Although some instructors utilize translation to the local language in the classroom because they believe it is a severe hindrance to appropriate instructional learning, others believe it is necessary.

Translation, as a type of textual experiment, can be viewed as a way of communication in some constraints (Andriessen et al., 1999). This indicates that perhaps the interpreter may need to rewrite the exact wording, for illustration, the text in one's native language and target language, which is different from the actual language in which the content was written. Translation, in this framework, is something of a mechanical copy of the words; it is indeed a creative act wherein the message is "re-localized," so to say, inside these limitations and unique needs of the intended cultural environment.

Language learning strategies that employ translation can help enhance learners' communication skills and instruct the characteristics and kinds of interpretation that underpin semantic meaning, conversational vocabulary words, sentence structure, and contextual beliefs to students (Liao, 2006). In this way, translation is, on the one hand, a thinking process that helps learners in the acquisition of new words and expressions in the chosen language. Moreover, the application to various modes of communication to others, and on the other hand, a helpful activity that helps in problem-solving, allowing students to improve their abilities in information storage and interpretation of the language. O'MALLEY et al. (1985) identified 11 learning processes to learn to acquire English in this approach, finding that translation accounted for 11.3 percent of all strategies used by pre-intermediate ESL learners, trailing only known methods including repetition (19.5 %), imagery (14%), and note-taking (18.6%). Furthermore, Eser and Dikilitas (2017) assessed the learners' perceptions of translation. They reported that about70 percent of students who study German and 74 percent of learners studying Spanish viewed learning a second language mainly as a function of learning to convert from English in most cases. According to Albir and Alves (2009), who drew on the role of cognitive translation in the reading skills of L2, translation is seen as an undesired reinforcing foundation for learning the language amongst language instructors and learners.

Translation leads to the development of a global identification and the development of shared perceptions among individuals all over the globe. Translation of essential sources of current knowledge from English into another language, such as Arabic, and vice versa, is considered a demanding task that must be taken seriously in all fields of inquiry (Polyakova et al., 2019).

A few Arab bilingual researchers (e.g., Alawi (2010) claim that the spread of English in higher education institutions throughout the Arab world poses a severe threat to Arabic due to this knowledge. Therefore, they recommend that a consortium of translation organizations in Arab nations be constructed and publicly accessible on the web, as well as the development of university students' "capacity

to interpret Arabic technical phrases" (Al-Jarf, 2008). In contrast, translating from English into Arabic is a time-consuming endeavor due to the Arabic language's "right-to-left alignment, variety of templates, frequent deletion of vowels, and complicated morphology," not to consider "the multitude of distinct characters being used, which would be near to 100." (Kayyal, 2011).

Despite the benefits of translation as a form of communication in a second language (Cook, 2012), it is considered an unsuitable learning technique regarding the communicative language teaching (CLT) framework. The right approach for the student to achieve competence in the chosen language is to assume, especially in that dialect, a process that can significantly raise expertise in the target language (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). There has been a slew of research that have shown that the degree to which learners are proficient in the chosen language (L2) and are capable of preventing the predicted impact of mother tongue from is hugely affected by their usage translation techniques to acquire the targeted, second language ((Laufer & Girsai, 2008). Based on an examination of the literature on the intentional utilization translation in English learning (Al-Musawi, 2014; Aly, 2004; Asgarian & Musayeva Vefalı, 2015; Habtoor & Al-Swaidan, 2019; Hassan, 2020; Smadi & Alrishan, 2015), it has been possible to find the following strategies:

1. Boosting English abilities, especially writing, understanding reading texts, expression, and speaking proficiency: Ismail et al. (2017)concluded that translation improves writing abilities, boosts comprehension, and helps students describe and comprehend concepts in a different language. Vocabulary, idioms, idiomatic expressions, and grammatical rules tend to be learned most by students. To help students memorize the meaning of the English phrase or word, Karimian and Talebinejad (2013) found that utilizing the keywords memorization assists with that process of developing and retention of a new word more profoundly and quickly.

2. Efforts to describe the distinctions between the achievement of students who believe that using a translated version as a teaching process was harmful were realized (Du & Way, 2017). They found that contradictory to the perceptions of low-achieving students, using L1 is regarded by gifted children as negatively impacting their English learning. Based on these findings, the researchers concluded that students should not be encouraged to use translation from their first language (L1) in English classes, which fully concurred with Garcia (2013) finding that relatively high scoring students were the least successful in gaining in-class benefits from the use of L1.

3. Regarding incorporating modern technology and media, students' use of a dictionary, note-taking, translation machines, and other gadgets must make a substantial positive and constructive contribution to their overall knowledge of the target language. Integrating communications technology into l2 learning is not only inevitable because it supports the transition in the educational framework from a cognitive to a social constructivism learning process, but it also "demonstrates the shift in educational paradigms from a behavioral to a

constructivist learning process." So the most effective way of learning a language would be in an informational, appropriate context (Sun & Chang, 2012). The Internet provides an arena for students to engage with the actual world through thinking, questioning, and observing.

4. Working with other students in collaborative activities provides a common platform for pupils to learn a foreign language. In this way, the employment of translation is called a social technique, where learners communicate directly with the language activities they perform in class, using interaction as a significant way to understand the language skills (Hall, 2010). While translations can structure the learners' thought process and affect the way learning take place and the quality of teaching and learning, and few attempts have mainly investigated the students' use of translation as a strategic approach in learning English as a foreign language (Karimian & Talebinejad, 2013; Khan et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2020; Liao, 2006).

Liao (2006) carried out the study to gather information on 351 young adults' beliefs describing the importance of translation in Learning English and students' ways of learning English. Questionnaires and qualitative interviews were employed to help attain these objectives. The author discovered that students typically utilize translation to familiarize themselves with English vocabulary, idioms, phrasal expressions, and sentence structure to read, write, and speak the language and test their knowledge. The research results show that learners employed various translation strategies, including learning and memory, cognition, remuneration, cultural, and interpersonal ones. Advanced learners reported a preference for negativity concerning translation and a reduction in the use of translation. In contrast, less-proficient learners favored excitement about translation and more translation use.

Moreover, Bagheri and Fazel (2011) researched how Iranian university students employ translation to write. The study also used two questionnaires and one interview guide, designed by Liao (2006), tailored to the Iranian environment. Results from the survey suggested that Iranian university students considered that learning Farsi was necessary for developing their writing skills, and they used the learning approach of translation at medium to high levels. The data are consistent with Liao (2006) 's findings. However, the authors also highlighted several negatives associated with writing in English with translation. For example, "This could cause misunderstandings because of the many meanings of certain terms," and "This may result in students writing in Persian-style English, which may make advancement more difficult" (p. 207).

The findings of the empirical study (Karimian and Talebinejad, 2013) demonstrated that language learners in Iran, who wanted to discover how they made use of their native language, utilized translation to acquire English. The Liao (2006) ITLS questionnaire was first used alongside qualitative interviews with students. The study findings showed that Iranians favor translation when learning English for memorization and retrieval, linguistic understanding, self-assessment,

and making friends, and socializing. Additionally, it is accomplished to "minimize learners' concerns and stress and instill in them a sense of greater conscience and ease." Research reveals that language dictionaries aid students in comprehending the teacher and allow them to ask questions in EFL sessions, further increasing their sense of comfort (Tarp, 2013). Also, using direct writing to learn English as a foreign language seems to be more effective than writing in one's native language, then translating it (Ajmal & Kumar, 2020; Shahbaz & Khan, 2017). To date, literate lacks the studies that explored the use of translation strategies during online learning. As a result, the present study seeks to determine how students apply translation strategies to learn English during online learning. The present study describes translation strategies that Saudi learners use during online learning and Saudi learners' beliefs about translation strategies.

METHOD

Because the research is essentially quantitative, the study employed questionnaires designed by Liao (2006); it consists of a pair of questionnaires that each deal with two significant areas of strategies and beliefs application. The questionnaire items were modified to the context of the study and then sent to three EFL instructors for face validity. They suggested some improvements in the questionnaire. Suggestions were followed in the final version of the questionnaire. The goal of this study is to uncover the strategies held by Saudi FFL learners regarding the use of translation as a learning tool and investigate what kind of translation strategies students apply during online learning.

This study's participants were 120 participants recruited from the Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University (PSAU) orientation program (OP) enrolled in the second semester. All the participants were taking classes online because of the covid-19. The age of the participants ranges between 17 to 21. Google forms were used to collect the data. A questionnaire was sent to the participants through Blackboard after creating a link. Learners were advised to complete the questionnaire within a week. After decoding students' responses in excel, sheet data was imported to SPSS so statistical analysis. Before the statistical analysis reliability test was measured, the questionnaire's reliability was (0.894) on Cronbach's alpha value, which is considered a highly reliable value.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Data Analysis and Results

To address the research, descriptive statistics were used. Table 1 displays the data analysis of the use of translation strategies used during online learning.

Table 1. Translation strategies used in EFL learning during online classes

NO	Items	M	SD	r
1	In reading skills, I translate words in my mind into Arabic to understand them during online class.	3.21	1.39	.68
2	I translate new words using online dictionary	4	1.42	.67

3	I ask for the meaning of the words to my classmates during online learning	2.71	1.25	.57
4	After reading text I use the translation available to understand meaning	3.33	1.41	.66
5	In writing I first try to understand in Arabic during online learning	3.01	1.27	.60
6	Before writing I think in Arabic during online classes	3.11	1.37	.68
7	I develop Arabic outline during writing paragraph in online classes	2.36	1.43	.55
8	During listening I translate word to understand the meaning	2.91	1.35	.61
9	I stop and translate word of the video lesson during online classes	3	1.33	0.57
. 10	I read subtitles of the videos when I watch TV or other videos	3.01	1.46	0.59
. 11	Before speaking, first I construct an idea in Arabic then I speak in English during online learning	354	1.24	0.68
. 12	I ask for meaning in Arabic during online discussions in online classes	2.99	1.17	0.48
. 13	I remember the English words by recalling the Arabic translation of the word	3.84	1.34	0.52
. 14	I use English to Arabic rule conversion in learning grammar	4.01	1.47	0.69
. 15	I translate the grammar terminologies into Arabic	3.85	1.39	0.55
. 16	I translate idioms and phrases into Arabic to understand them	4.05	148	0.57
. 17	I use Google translation during online classes	2.99	1.42	0.48
. 18	I use online dictionary in online learning	4.11	1.53	0.69
. 19	I use my smartphone for translation purposes during online classes	4.32	1.37	0.70
. 20	I take handouts in Arabic during online classes	4.01	1.38	0.68

Students utilize translation to acquire English word meanings, idioms, phrases, grammar rules, and all language skills. They also employ translation to help them recognize the difference and similarities between English and their native dialect. In addition, learners in an EFL context frequently use mental translations to retain the content of English words, comprehend English texts, and confirm that they have correctly understood text and educational material in English. Most of the students use the cognitive strategy (M= 3.21), which shows that they think in Arabic before speaking and writing.

It is also vital from the data (M= 4.11,4.32) using electronic equipment, English-Arabic and Arabic-English dictionaries, and other resources. Saudi EFL

learners can assist themselves in learning English as a foreign language and understanding the meaning of English terms. To avoid thinking first in Arabic, Saudi EFL students attempt not to think first in English, their second language. Similarly, when students read English, they do not immediately think of Arabic alternatives for Words in English. Participants indicated that they sometimes relate to their native language when learning English to master reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills. They also tend to associate the phrases to their Arabic versions. The data analysis exhibited that Saudi EFL students rely on google translation mainly (M=2.99).

Finally, Saudi EFL students tend to use Arabic in classwork discussions in a collaborative environment to learn English as a second language. Together, they ask questions of one another and try to figure out the meaning of idiomatic expressions and phrases in a coordinated approach.

Table 2 displays the participants' beliefs on the translation strategies.

No	Items	M	SD	r
1	Translation helps me in developing my reading comprehension	354	1.24	0.68
2	Translation helps me developing my interaction with my classmates	2.99	1.17	0.48
3	Translation is useful for vocabulary retention	3.84	1.34	0.52
4	Translation is beneficial for writing my paragraphs during	4.01	1.47	0.69
5	Translation helps me to use appropriate words during my speaking	3.85	1.39	0.55
6	I rely on translation in solving my homework and assignments	4.05	148	0.57
7	Translation helps me in competing task quickly and easily	2.99	1.42	0.48
8	I speak better when I think in Arabic	3.33	1.41	.66
9	I think using Arabic dictionary helps me in online learning	3.01	1.27	.60
. 10	I keep an online translation dictionary in my smartphone	3.11	1.37	.68
. 11	My teacher should translate key words in English	2.36	1.43	.55
. 12	My teacher should use English language only	2.91	1.35	.61
. 13	Translation may cause hindrance in my language learning	3.01	1.33	0.57
. 14	Translation reduces the amount of English words in-class discussion	2.99	1.42	0.48
. 15	I keep using translation during online learning	3.33	1.41	.66

The participants in the present survey expressed a wide range of opinions about the use of translation to help them in the online learning environment. The findings of the data statistic of the questionnaire reveal which beliefs were held by

the participants. The outcome demonstrates that they feel one must be immersed in an English-speaking environment for some time before thinking fluently in English. Inbar-Lourie (2010) pointed out that learners must engage with and communicate in their foreign language to the greatest extent possible. The researcher ultimately believes with this perspective since, to become accustomed to an English-speaking society, a student should be introduced to it as often as practical throughout their academic career.

On the other hand, Respondents have stated that they felt under strain when forced to think explicitly in English (M=3.01). Learners who have limited competency in the foreign language are more likely to halt when they are asked questions in the target language, which confirms the previous statement. According to him, this pause represents "mental translation," which he referred to as "wait time," for the respondent to digest and comprehend the question in their original language. Whereas some learners regard translating their English instructor should use translation which helps them understand them (M=2.36), others believe that their English teachers should always use English to teach them (M=2.91). A considerable number of the learners (M=3.33) responded that they keep using translation, indicating that Saudi EFL learners tend to use translation in EFL learning. On the other hand, some learners (M=2.99) regarded translation as a hindrance to EFL learning.

DISCUSSION

The translation was the most often utilized tool by Saudi EFL students to learn English words and phrases, write, and read English during online learning. Furthermore, they had been using various resources, including dictionaries, electronic and Internet gadgets, to assess translation in language skills. They exercised cognitive translation for their thinking and asked other learners to quickly identify English words or phrases in their native language in a variety of scenarios. They hoped that they would be able to identify any similarities or differences between English and Arabic by translating. In addition, during reading and speaking, they strived to comprehend what they learned first before considering the Arabic counterpart of the words. These outcomes somewhat corroborated the findings of the Liao (2006), Bagheri and Fazel (2011), and Karimian and Talebinejad (2013) research, which all looked at translation as a beneficial technique for improving reading ability in the English language learning. Not employing translation to acquire Idiomatic expressions and words and not learning grammar through Arabic interpretations of English grammar rules were the approaches that Arab Saudi EFL students utilized the least during online learning. Similar findings contrast with those of Liao(2006), who discovered that Taiwanese college students often employed these translation approaches in learning English.

The use of translation in EFL lessons at PSAU depends on online learning because of the factor of the teacher's absence. Participants regarded translation as no damage to their learning in the EFL context. Students in the early

stages of learning the language would inevitably be exposed to some explication in their native language, particularly when discussing complex grammar principles that the learners cannot comprehend in English (Polyakova et al., 2019). As a result, bilingual or traditional teaching methods English have always been appreciated only when the need arises in the classroom. On the other hand, students in higher levels are required to comprehend arguments presented in English only. This type of behavior should not be supported because it will soon become a practice, and individuals will lose the desire to learn the language in its natural environment. When it comes to the university level, the entire method becomes much more sophisticated (AlKhunzain & Khan, 2021). Suppose an instructor has a relatively weak class with a relatively lower level of English language proficiency. In that case, they may opt to switch to the translation strategy when the situation calls for it. Language is the sole language that English graduates and individuals who are pursuing all of their courses in English are introduced to during the course of their studies. They are not compelled to communicate Arabic by their instructors because it would contradict with university's goals of learning English in Arabic.

CONCLUSION

To learn English vocabulary words, read, and write, Saudi EFL students frequently use translation methods. They also employed online tools to assess reading and listening comprehension. They used mind translation to key fundamental English terms in their native language. The participants in the present survey expressed a wide range of opinions about the use of translation to help them in the online learning environment. The outcome demonstrates that they feel one must be immersed in an English-speaking environment for a period of time before thinking fluently in English.

The study's findings attributed to the absence of the teacher in EFL classes at PSU during online learning. Learners asserted that Translation had no negative impact on participants' EFL learning. For example, when addressing complex grammar principles that students cannot comprehend in English, it is unavoidable that learners will be presented with some elaboration in their native language. This has led to a lack of appreciation for bilingual and traditional educational approaches. Higher-level students must understand arguments provided entirely in English. Because it becomes a routine, individuals lack experience in studying the language by translation. This approach becomes considerably more advanced at the university level. It is feasible for a teacher to use the translation approach when dealing with a weak class with little English ability.

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