

Word-Choice in Second Language Translation in Saudi Arabia

Student name: Monster

Academic number:

Supervisor name:

I confirm that this research proposal is my own work and that it is not copied/translated from any other person's work, and that it has not been previously submitted for assessment either at King Faisal University or any other educational institution.

(Signature)

Table of contents:

Page number:

1-Abstract.....	3
2-Introduction	3
3-Literature Review.....	3
4-Significance of Research.....	4
5-Research Questions.....	4
6-Research Methodology.....	4
7-Ethical Consideration.....	4
8-Limitations of the Study.....	5
9-Expected Results.....	5
10-References.....	6
11-Appendix.....	7

Abstract

This study aims at investigating one of the most common difficulties faced in second language (L2) translation, which is word-choice. The investigation is intended to highlight some causes of this problem as well as some strategies used to improve word usages in an L2 by conducting interviews and distributing a questionnaire.

Introduction

The importance of translation from one language into another lies in the fact that a text being translated is like deciphering a code. Indeed, language translation is one of the skills that L2 speakers struggle with. Word-choice is one of the most common challenges L2 translators encounter. They spend hard time until they have a good command of the word-choice skill. Looking at many texts translated by non-native speakers, poor usages of L2 words are evident. Using words inappropriately could hide the meaning. Therefore, it can be inferred that there has been a need to dig deeply into root causes of this difficulty and strategies to cope with.

Literature Review

By and large, language translation has gained a lot of attention in the field. However, L2 translation area needs more focus, as more interest has been given to L1 translation for a long time (Campbell, 1998). So, further L2 translation studies ought to be carried out. Furthermore, using lexicons is one of the main difficulties that should be brought up in L2 translation research. According to Campbell (1998), there are two types of L2 translators who deal with word choice differently. One attempts to translate every single word in the text while other would rather avoid translating all words in the context due to the difficulty resulting from lack of word choice skill. Despite the difficulty of L2 translation, there are different techniques that translators can exploit to boost their translation skills (Wilss, 1996).

Significance of Research

What remarkably distinguishes this study is that it tackles one of the biggest challenges that L2 translators encounter. Shedding some light on the word-choice problem, causes underlying it, and factors leading to improving it is essential for translators and translation students to raise their awareness of this issue, thereby developing their word choice skill. Moreover, raising such translation concerns would lead to more research in this area in the future.

Research Questions

This paper seeks for answers to some questions that more likely guide the reader to understanding the main causes of word choice difficulty. By surveying and meeting L2 speakers, struggling with the word choice skill has been carefully scrutinized, and these questions after all have unveiled effective strategies to overcome this difficulty.

Research Methodology

Two methods were conducted to accomplish this research. A face-to-face interview was conducted with ten Taif University professors who speak English as an L2 on campus. There was also a paper questionnaire distributed to 5 translators (see Appendices A& B).

Ethical Considerations

The study subjects were fully informed that their participation is voluntary and any information they provide will be confidential and their names will not be used in the paper. They were also told that their willingness to be interviewed and surveyed will indicate that they give permission for me to use information from the interview and questionnaire in this paper.

Limitations of the Study

There were a couple issues constraining the information collection process. First, since there was not a translation program at Taif University, the professors I made interview with were not specialized in translation, so their responses might have not been based on scientific research pertaining to the causes of the word choice problem. Second, it was not easy to find translators where I live (Taif), and consequently, I could not gather information from a big number at this profession. The more people participate, the deeper understanding of the problem we gain.

Expected Results

Interview

When asked about the difficulties they face with English as an L2, 70% of the responses referred to word choice as one of the main problems. The other 30% mainly focused on lack of communication with native speakers. In their responses to a question about the reasons behind their improper usages of words in English, 65% indicated that this is attributed to the fact that they are not exposed to native language input, while 55% stated that the effective use of dictionaries is vital to learn how words are correctly used. Finally, all participants believe that practicing English significantly helps develop the word choice skill.

Questionnaire

The five translators were asked about the causes of the word choice problem from their viewpoint. 85% indicated that lack of communication with native speakers is a main reason of their inability to use English words correctly. The need to have cultural knowledge is another reason suggested by 60 % of the participants. 77% of the translators involved in this study considered that the way how many translators use the dictionary is one of the weaknesses that lead to incorrect use of words.

References

- Campbell, A.(1998).Translation into the second language. Retrieved from <http://www.tesl-ej.org/wordpress/issues/volume3/ej12/ej12r12/?wsc=>
- Wilss, W. (1996). *Knowledge and skills in translator behavior*.Amsterdam, the Netherland: John Benjamins Publishing Co.

Appendix A: Interview

1. What the difficulties you face when using English?
2. To which you would attribute improper word usages by non-native speakers of English?
3. What some of the strategies that may improve your skills to use words more accurately?

Appendix B: Questionnaire

- What does cause the word-choice problem when you translate into English?