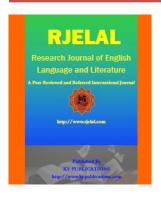**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

TRANSLATION SKILLS TEST FOR EFL SENIORS

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ABSTRACT

Translation is taught to senior EFL learners in Faculties of Education and Arts. Since it is a branch with a vast number of skills, the present study seeks to Introduce a standardized English/Arabic translation test. To get the test reliability and validityforty graduate-level majors at Uqlat Asoqour Faculty of Arts, Qassim University were chosen randomly to sit for the test. A translation skills rubric was used to assess fivetranslating skills over five points scale. Cronbach's alpha showed that the test is reliable and the initial eigenvalues proved that it's a unidimensional test i.e it's a valid one.

Key words: translation, skills, test, EFL, rubric

Literature Review
Evaluating Translation
Evaluation generally may have different objectives (Davies, 2004):

1. To detect the relation established between teaching objectives and learning results.
2. To offer the students the information needed for academic and professional guidance.
3. To compare each student's performance with other students in the group and encourage remedial work.
4. To compare the student's progress with his own performance throughout the academic year.
5. To identify those problems to help the students improve their self-monitoring skills.
6. To modify the syllabus and teaching methods according to the observed results.

For evaluating translation, one should answer the following questions:

1. Why to evaluate translation?
2. What should be evaluated?
3. How to evaluate translation?

Why to evaluate translation?

Abdellah (2007) identified the following reasons for evaluating the target text:

1. To assess e suitability of the text for the reader.
2. To evaluate language competence.
3. To determine levels of intercultural awareness, and
4. To identify levels and types of translation competence.

Agreeing with this, Chirss (2008) assures the need or a clarification of levels of competency for translators for better translation. Bassnett and Lefevere (1995) illustrate that evaluating translation offers a way of understanding how the processes of translation take place. They also add that there is a need to understand the constraints upon a translator and recognize the measures that the translator can take in order to escape those constraints. Abdellah (2007) also assured that knowing the reason for evaluation and the criteria by which a text will be evaluated could help to improve the accuracy of this process, by giving a definition of the specific task in a given translation situation.

What should be evaluated in translation?

Gerding-Salas (2000) proposes the followings to be evaluated in translation:

1. The comprehension of the sense and ideas of the original text.
2. The lexical-semantic level.
3. The morph-syntactic level.
4. The writing style and register.
5. The creative solutions to translation problems.
6. The transfer and rewording or the use of translation procedures.
7. Cohesion and coherence.
8. The format of the text.

Ford Davies (2004), the following aspects should be evaluated during translation:

1. The source text comprehension and transfer skills.
2. The linguistic and professional skills.

3. The ability to spot and solve potential translation problems.
4. The ability to meet the translation assignment.

Abdellah (2007) assures that evaluating translation should include the following four skills of translation:

1. Reading comprehension skill.
2. Researching skill.
3. Analytical thinking skill.
4. Composition skill.

For Duff (1991) evaluating translation should include the following aspects:

a) Meaning: to measure if the translation reflects accurately the meaning of the original text regarding using the most suitable words.
b) Form: to watch the order of words and ideas in the translation regarding the differences between the source language and the target language.
c) Register: to evaluate the translator's ability to distinguish between formal or fixed expressions and personal expressions as languages differ in their levels of formality in a given context.
d) Source language influence: to watch if the translator managed to achieve natural translation without being influenced by the original text.
e) Style and clarity: as the translator should not change the style of the original text, but s/he should correct the defects of repetitions for the reader's sake.
f) Idiom: the translator should try to translate an idiom with the right expressions or use a close equivalent.

How to evaluate translation?

Any assessment of translation can only be made by taking into account both the process of creating it and its function in a given context (Bassnett, 2002). She also adds hat evaluating translation may be done according to one of two limited standpoints:

1. From the narrow view of the closeness of the translation of the source language text.

2. From the treatment of the target language text a work in their own language.

Moreover, she distinguished between evaluation based on purely academic criteria and evaluation based on other elements (cultural aspects).

Translation should be evaluated according to a framework considering the readability of the text, time pressure, purpose of the translation, audience of the translation and language level required (Abdellah, 2007). Munday (2002) identified some criteria by which the adequacy of a translated text may be assessed which are:

1- Intra-linguistic criteria which include semantic, lexical, grammatical and stylistic features.
2- Extralinguistic criteria which include situation, subject field, time, place, receiver, sender and effective implications (humor, irony, emotion… etc).

However, Chriss (2008) argues that instead of debating the accuracy of the translation based on linguistic criteria, translation evaluation should consider the relative function of the text in each of its two contexts. Davies (2004) demonstrates that translation assessment should not always be error-based, but also success based. She illustrates that any translation may be identified as one of the following:

1. AT: acceptable translation.
2. ATI: acceptable translation, but needs to be improved.
3. UT: unacceptable translation.

Abdellah (2002) inserts the following criteria to assess or evaluate a good translation:

1. to be easily understood,
2. to be fluent and smooth,
3. to be idiomatic,
4. to convey the literary subtleties of the original,
5. to reconstruct the cultural/historical context of the original, and
6. to convey the meaning of the original text.

For Lui (2013), a good translation is one which performs the same or similar function in the target culture. Hence, as Lui adds, translation process depends on whether the translated target text can serve its expected purpose instead of whether it is maximally faithful and equivalent to the ST.

2. METHOD
2.1. Subjects
The selected subjects were 40 fourth level English major students, studying translation at College of Science and arts, Qassim University, Saudi Arabia. All the subjects had already studied and passed different translation courses.

2.2. Testing translation skills
A translation skills test and a grading rubric were conducted by the researchers (see the appendix). The translation skills test included two extracts one is English, the other is Arabic. Testees had to read each extract, activate schema related to the topic, check comprehension, then start translating it into Arabic and English languages. Researchers made and used the English/Arabic Translation Skills Grading Rubric to assess the subjects' translation skills. Five translation skills were assessed by the test; that are: (a) overall, (b) Comprehension of special idioms in the language, (c) overall comprehension, (d) target mechanics, and (e) register/style. Each of the previous skills was assessed over five points scale as follows: 1- Missing skills, 2- Skills not refined, 3- Acceptable Performance, 4- Outstanding Performance and 5- Superior Performance.

2.3 Test reliability & validity
Cronbach's alpha was computed for checking test reliability. Cronbach's alpha was 0.76 suggesting that the items had relatively high internal consistency. In order to investigate the dimensionality of the test, factor analysis was used; table 1 includes the resulting output.

Table 1 : Factor Analysis ofTranslation Skills Test Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.283	45.670	45.670	2.283	45.670	45.670
2	1.211	24.221	69.891	1.211	24.221	69.891
3	.626	12.521	82.412			
4	.484	9.690	92.102			
5	.395	7.898	100.000			

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Looking at the previous table, we see that the eigenvalue for the first factor is quite larger than the eigenvalue for the next factor (2.283versus 1.211). Additionally, the first factor accounts for 45.67% of the total variance. This suggests that the test items are unidimensional and that the test has construct validity.

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APPENDIX

Translation Skills Test

Part I: Translate the following passage into Arabic. (25 pts.)

GPS (Global positioning system)

GPS (Global Positioning System) Starting time with a GPS receiver, you need never be lost again. Whether you are driving in a new city or climbing a mountain path, you can use GPS (Global Positioning System) to find out exactly where you are. How is this possible? A system of twenty-four satellites sends continuous signals from 12,000 miles above the Earth. Based on the location of the satellites, GPS receivers on the earth can use these signals to find their own location.

GPS had its beginnings in the 1940s when the United States military developed a navigation system using radio signals from different ground locations. However, because the signals were easily interrupted or lost, the system did not always work. American scientists realized they might be able to use satellites to send signals after 1957, when the Soviet Union launched Sputnik I, the first man-made satellite. Since the scientists could follow the satellite's path and track its radio beams, it occurred to them that they could calculate the exact position of the satellite, using their exact location on the Earth. Using the same logic, they also realized that if they knew the exact location of the satellite, they could calculate their own position on the Earth.

A system using signals sent from satellites was clearly the solution for global navigation. The first such system was developed by the U.S. Navy in the

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1960s. It sent signals from five satellites and was used mainly by military ships and airplanes. However, with only five satellites, it was not always possible to get a signal everywhere on the globe. This meant ships or planes could not depend on the system in emergency situations—in war or in bad weather. More satellites and better signals were needed. After years of research, the first GPS satellite was launched in 1978, ten more had been launched by 1989, and a complete set of twenty-four satellites were in orbit by 1994.

Though it was originally created for military uses, GPS has by now become an essential global navigating tool. Around the world, ships depend on GPS, as do airports and airplanes. In recent years, the development of very small and inexpensive receivers has made possible all kinds of other uses. Many cars now come equipped with GPS receivers and computerized maps to show where you are. Farmers put GPS receivers on tractors to help them find their way at night over dark fields. Emergency telephone operators use GPS to locate people who have called in for help. And parents or pet owners put receivers on their children or their dogs so they cannot be lost.

Source: Mikulecky, B and Jeffries, L. (2007). *Advanced reading power*. New York, Pearson Education.

Part II: Translate the following passage into English. (25 pts.)

لماذا تتساقط أوراق الأشجار؟

قليلة هي عجائب الطبيعة التي تضاهي ورق الأشجار ورعة وجمالا وتعقيدا . لكنها أروع من أن تكون مجرد قطعة جميلة . إنها تحفة من تحف الهندسة الطبيعية التي تطورت عبر ملايين السنين ، تصنع الطعام للنبات الذي يحملها وتؤمن الغذاء لجميع حيوانات الأرض وللبشر أيضا.

والأوراق هي الأجزاء المتفرعة من الجذع أو الساق ، تتكون من نفس الألياف والأنسجة التي يتطور منها البرعم، وتتكون ورقة النبتة من سطح أخضر عريض متباين الأشكال ، يرتبط بالساق بعرق صغير . يتفرع داخل سطح الورقة مجموعة من العروق المتفرعة نحو الخارج

، التي تنقل المواد الغذائية إلى أنسجة الورقة ، وتدعمها كما تدعم الضلوع جسم الإنسان، وتعرف هذه العملية باسم " عملية البناء الضوئي " التي تعتبر المفتاح الرئيسي لقدرة النبتة على إنتاج الطعام . وتتكون جميع النباتات من [اليخضور] الكلوروفيل ، وهي صبغة خضراء تمتص أشعة الشمس ، وتمكن النبات من بناء الكربوهيدرات من ثاني أوكسيد الكربون الجوي ومن الماء، وتذهب كل هذه المواد الكيميائية إلى البناء الداخلي للورقة ، التي تحميها طبقة من الجلد النباتي ، وهو مرتبط بجلد الساق ، مما يمنع دخول أي عنصر مؤذي من الخارجي .

ويحتوي الجزء الداخلي من الورقة خلايا طرية الجدران . يتكون خمسها من مادة الكلوروبلاست الذي يحتوي على مادة الكلوروفيل التي تمتص ضوء الشمس . وتفرز هذه الخلايا الإنزيمات— وهي البروتينات التي تفرزها الخلايا الحية والتي تمثل المادة المحفزة في التفاعل الكيميائي الذي تعتمد عليه حياة النبتة، وعند بدء عملية البناء الضوئي ، تقوم هذه الأنزيمات بالتعاون مع طاقة أشعة الشمس بكسر الماء إلى عنصرين هامين وهما الهيدروجين والأوكسجين . وينطلق الأوكسجين الناتج عن عملية البناء الضوئي ثغرات خاصة موجودة على سطح ورقة النبات ، ليحل مكانه الأوكسجين الذي امتصته النبتة أثناء عملية التنفس . وفي نفس الوقت ، فإن الانزيمات تتحد مع الهيدروجين المنطلق من الماء ومع ثاني أوكسيد الكربون لتكون الكربوهيدرات التي تعتبر أساس حياة النباتات والحيوانات وبالتالي الإنسان . لذا ، يمكننا أن نقول أن التفاعل الكيميائي الذي يحدث داخل الورقة ، وهو عنصر حيوي جدا للحياة على الأرض . وهنا نعود إلى سؤالنا الأصلي حول سبب تساقط أوراق الأشجار في فصل الخريف . وتحدث هذه الظاهرة مرة في السنة في الأشجار الموسمية وكل سنتين أو ثلاثة في الأشجار الدائمة الاخضرار .

وستجد الإجابة عن السؤال ، في أولويات في حياة الورقة، فرغم أنها تشارك بدور فعال في العالم المحيط بها، إلا أن واجبها الرئيسي هو في دعم أمها الشجرة ، وعلى الأخص في مرحلة معينة من النمو، حين لا تكون الشجرة قادرة على امتصاص الغذاء الكافي لها من التربة، ورغم أن عملية إنتاج السكر تستمر باستمرار حياة النبتة، إلا أنها لا تكون ضرورية جدا في طور النمو، إن تساقط الأوراق في مختلف أنواع الأشجار ، يحدث بسبب ضعف المنطقة التي تربط الأوراق بساق النبتة أو البرعم . وتأخذ الطبيعة مجراها فيتم سقوط الأوراق عندما يصبح النهار قصيرا فتبطئ عملية البناء الضوئي وتقل كمية الضوء الواصلة إلى الأوراق .وعندما يحدث ذلك ، تتكون خلايا طرية عبر قاعدة العنق الواصل بين الورقة والساق ، فتسقط الورقة . ويلتئم الجرح بسرعة لأن الخلايا الطرية تغلق الساق الجريح وتحول دون فقدان المزيد من المواد الغذائية ، وهو أمر خطير في أشهر الشتاء الباردة والتي يقل فيها الضوء والغذاء .

المصدر: http://www.khayma.com/madina/m2-files/tree.htm

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English/Arabic Translation Skills Grading Rubric

Student's Name:……………………………………………pts.   /25

Skill / Performance	5- Superior Performance	4- Outstanding Performance	3- Acceptable Performance	2- Skills not refined	1- Missing skills
Overall	The target text would require little if any editing in order to be used for the purpose specified in the Translation Instructions.	The target text could be published or used for professional purposes after minimal work by a bilingual editor and a target language copy editor.	The target text could be used for the purpose given in the Translation Instructions after some work by a bilingual editor and/or a target language copy editor	The target text would require extensive bilingual editing and/or target language copy editing before it could be used for the purpose given in the Translation Instructions	This translation cannot be used for the purpose given in the Translation Instructions.
Comprehension of special idioms in the language	The translation demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the use of special idioms	The translation demonstrates a generally correct understanding of the use of special idioms	The translation demonstrates some understanding of the use of special idioms	The translation demonstrates little understanding of the use of special idioms	The translation does not demonstrate an understanding of the use of special idioms
Overall comprehension	The translation reflected the passage with clear understanding of structure and meaning	The translation reflected the passage with a generally successful understanding of structure and meaning	The translation reflected the ideas of the passage, but some details were confusing or incorrect	The translation reflected a few of the ideas in the passage correctly, many details were confusing and incorrect	The translation had little relation with the actual material presented
Target Mechanics	Translated text fully follows the rules and conventions of target language mechanics (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.).	Translated text contains few or no errors in target language mechanics.	Translated text contains occasional errors in target language mechanics.	Translated text contains frequent and/or obvious errors in target language mechanics.	Translated text contains excessive and/or disruptive errors in target language mechanics.
Register/Style	Terminology is appropriate in context. Style and register are appropriate for the topic in the target language and for the specified audience.	Translated text contains few or no inappropriate term or style/register choices. Any errors have a minor effect on meaning.	Translated text contains occasional and/or minor inappropriate term or style/register choices. Such errors may slightly obscure meaning.	Translated text contains frequent inappropriate and/or incorrect terms or style / register choices. Such errors may obscure or change meaning.	Translated text contains excessive inappropriate and/or incorrect terms or style/register choices. Such errors obscure or change meaning.