

The Difficulties that Tertiary English Students Confront when Translating Relative Pronouns

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Abstract

The study aims to alleviate the relative pronoun difficulties that Saudi students encounter whenever translating. The study's significance is that it uncovers relative pronouns among Saudi Arabian college freshmen. The study seeks to address the question: what difficulties do Saudi students confront when translating relative pronouns? The researcher employed a descriptive analytical approach. The sampling unit of twenty-five undergraduate students, preferred from the boys' section, were males in the first stage, attending university in the second semester of 2020 at the College of Arts and Sciences, getting a degree in English in Beljurshi, Al Baha University, and this study used a validated assessment of written Arabic sentences as a technique to gather a description of the research problem. The analysis was undertaken, and the issues that Saudi students had with relative pronouns were located and labeled as whose, who, whom, where, and where in the study. According to the study's findings, "whom" obtained a high score and "which" received a low score. According to the discussion, the difficulties that students have are caused by a lack of the student's failure to distinguish between subject and object pronouns, inaccuracy could be attributed to a lack of differentiation between relative pronouns, and the student's inability to discern between relative value pronouns. The study suggests further research into other areas related to relative pronouns.

Keywords: Confront, differences, difficulties, relative pronouns, students, translation

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Introduction

According to a thorough review of the literature on the subject, very few research studies have been conducted on the difficulty encountered by Arab students in translating relative pronouns from Arabic into English. More specific, the researcher discovered only four studies that have some methodological bearing on the current study.

For most skilled translators, translation is a very complex activity and a difficult procedure. There is still a lack of attention paid to the blunders made by university students when translating relative clauses. According to the researchers, Saudi undergraduate students are reported to have difficulties with relative pronouns in translation during translation lessons, which could be expressed differently.

This research is notable because it is way ahead of its time, being one of the few that has looked into relative clauses within Saudi Arabian college freshmen. As a result, this may be useful to students, professors, translators, and course designers.

The current study seeks to fill a gap in the literature by investigating related pronouns for a group of Saudi participants and providing the causes and solutions to this problem. As a result, the present research transposed relative pronouns. The current study must meet the following research objectives: Identification of the kind of relative clause that Saudi students experience whenever translating. They were English majors in their second year, registered in the fall term of 2021. The program, which is offered by the College of Science and Arts in Baljurashi, Al Baha, focuses on the related pronoun difficulties that Saudi students face when translating.

The study sought to answer study questions.

- 1-What are the difficulties with relative pronouns that Saudi students face when translating?
- 2-What are the causes of the relative pronouns difficulties in the translation?

This scope is confined to describing the relative pronoun challenges that undergrads experience in translation, as outlined in the research problem; it is therefore, narrow to the students who make up a batch and the Arabic sentences that some of these understudies translate; they seemed to be the first English majors enlisted in the fall term of 2021. The course is administered by Al-Baha University. This study will be conducted between 2021 and 2022.

Literature Review

Translation and Language

According to Maalouf (1996), translation entails "explanation and clarification." It is claimed to translate speech with its meaning and clarity, as well as translate speech, which is to interpret or cross it in another language. It is the art of transferring speech or writing from the original language to the desired language. It requires linguistic taste and a method that the translator employs in their work. Translation has always played a part in spreading peoples' civilizations and cultures as well as understandings between nations and individuals, and it is credited with propelling nations up the rungs of civilized peace. In recent years, translation has grown in importance, as has the pressing need for it in our modern age, and it remains one of the necessities of contemporary intellectual life because it is difficult for a nation to live in isolation from other nations, particularly in this age and age.

As a result, Ibrahim (2019) quotes, "Translation is an important science in our current era. We can communicate with the rest of the world and those around us through translating. (p.7). The importance of translation is increasing by the day, especially in the world of technology. According to Didaoui (1992), idioms and expressions necessitate the translator's ability to accurately deliver the message intended by the writer or author to the reader. The translator acts as a linguistic intermediary, converting what is stated or written. A person cannot become a translator unless he meets certain qualifications, which include knowledge, regulations, and techniques of use, as well as considerable training and experience.

Methods of general Arabic-to-English translation

According to Didaoui (1992), the technical procedures used to communicate the meaning of speech are known as "translation methods". The translation was done using two well-known approaches that the ancient Arabs used in their translations of Greek and other books: the first method is to look at a single word as both the literal meaning and what it means. The indication of that meaning is fixed and passed to another till he reaches the sentence he wishes to translate. This is known as a literal translation. In the second method, the translator creates the statement, so he remembers its meaning and expresses it in the other language with a sentence that fits it, whether the words are equal or not. This technique is known as free translation.

According to Mansour (2002), the text is a collection of sentences, and the sentences are a collection of words. And the Arabic words we find in some of them have a variety of meanings when placed in the context of various phrases or sentences. A single word can have multiple plural forms, or even a plural form. Because the expression has different connotations in each language, it is not acceptable for him to provide a literal translation in this circumstance; instead, he must come up with something that is appropriate or equivalent to it in the Arabic expressions. It is tricky to render the sentences and proverbs into literal translations, so he must try the matching elements or approach him from the sentence, unless this is not possible, in which case he may resort to interpretive or moral translation.

Problems and their types

According to Mustafa (1989), linguistic problems exist due to the paucity of data, but they happen in the first or mother language, and these problems are supposed to be the result of confusion in the elements of both languages. That these issues arise as an effect of rules from two languages that do not exist is clear.

As a result, Kamal (2000) quotes, "Working with words, phrases, and sentences is a problem. The problems arising from the difference in grammar between international languages put the translator at risk if he is unable to properly transmit the structures." (p.47). Because every language must belong to a specific culture, the translator may be capable of translating the term into another language, but he cannot be around to transmit the culture of the word.

Sini (1982) claims that difficulties with language and ineffective rule application. Such as improper generalization of the rule and a lack of understanding of the laws' settings, are to blame. There are issues when a learner tries to make language assumptions based on his or her limited experience in the classroom or from a textbook. There are structural issues that impede

communication and affect the general organization of the phrase when the incorrect word order is added, such as conjunctions of deleted sentences and incorrect or misplaced sentences. Additional issues affect one of the sentence's constituents, frequently inhibiting proper communication, such as issues with the incorrect conjugation of the noun and verb.

According to Ahmed (1989), there are issues linked to overlapping of the rules of the first language with the rules of the second language, such that the student cannot express his thoughts accurately verbally, or in writing. The difficulties occur since childhood when using the target language, making them difficult to overcome because the student may become accustomed to these difficulties over time. There are issues with learning the target language that begins in childhood.

Abdullah (2014) Languages differ in terms of the system in which sentences are arranged, the order of their words, and the relationship of each word to the other; the verb has a special place in the sentence for the subject, and thus the object has a special location. The transition from finding a term in one language identical to another term in the other language is the fundamental issue of the translation process between the two languages. These problems may arise within the language's foundation and indicate the learner's attempt to make language assumptions based on their limited experience.

Relative nouns

According to Al-Azhari (2006), a relative noun is one that lacks a relative conjunction with a phrase, whether nominative or actual, or a semi-sentence "adverb or accusative" or return, and whose connotation is incomplete, and after that, there's a statement. It is a knowledge noun that implies a specific use in linking speech, and in a clearer meaning, it is used to link nouns and verbs with a sentence that is mentioned after it, in which the relative noun is indicated by a pronoun. There's also a word for "feminine singular," as well as words for the dual and plural forms of their two types.

According to Ghalayini (2005), language is concerned with a large number of linguistic concepts and the large number of rules used in producing words and sentence structures. The link sentence is a knowledge noun whose meaning is only completed by the next sentence. Relative nouns are nouns that are used to connect discourse and denote a specific object in a phrase. Who, regularly, uses this for a normal person, masculine and feminine, multiple, dual, and single? A relative noun must always explain what it means to one of two things following it: a sentence or its resemblance, both of which are referred to as the relative pronoun. The related term denotes something specific or comparable, and it's mentioned just after it, so it's called the relative pronoun.

According to Al-Khaws (1987), a related pronoun is a noun that is attached to a specific by sentence termed the sentence of the link. Is it about a person, like Ali, or other animals and inanimate objects? The term "which" is an ambiguous name with a confusing meaning, and we have no idea what it refers to. If a sentence followed after them, the ambiguity vanished and the meaning became plain; this sentence is known as the sentence of connection, and that is why this name is not clear unless the sentence of connection is there.

According to Al-Noqrat (2003), the nominative relative consists of two elements: a unique relative noun and a common relative noun. Each relative word belongs to a different sort, whether singular, dual, plural, masculine, or feminine. Every relative noun has all of the singular, dual, plural, masculine, and feminine forms, but the intended purpose can be achieved by using a repeated pronoun that matches the sound and meaning of the term. Common relative words include who, what, that, whom, and which. A relative noun is a noun that appears in the middle of a statement and helps to clarify its meaning. The relative clause refers to the sentence that comes after it. If you take out the relative word from the sentence, you'll notice a considerable loss of meaning, which could lead to a serious misunderstanding.

According to Samarrai (2003, p. 189), relative nouns have their own functions in the language, making it easier for speakers to deal with them without difficulty. It is the most significant tool in the classical language since it aids in the adjustment of the right sentences and their communication with one another, and the connected noun must constantly define its meaning and understand what it means. It is followed by one of two things: a semi-sentence or a statement, both of which are referred to as the relative pronoun. This relationship, by definition, helps the noun stay connected, and it is called a verbal presupposition because the relative term fails to describe what this connection entails. Relative nouns are defined as a type of tool that connects sentences and, in another way, connects the noun with the completed verb, and these nouns come in a variety of forms, ranging from the masculine and feminine singulars, such as one and that, to the masculine and feminine dual, and so on. The relative noun sentence refers to the sentences that follow the relative noun.

Previous Related Studies

Some academics have looked into translation issues and a variety of current and previous research on student translation issues. Abdullah (1999) investigated the Errors Made by English as a foreign language (EFL) Learners when Using English Relative Pronouns. Learning is a challenging task made more difficult by a number of factors, the most prominent of which are the rules for converting other languages into a young person's native tongue and the contrasts between it and their mother tongue. For Syrians, learning can produce a lot of weariness, leading to many mistakes. The study employed a descriptive technique to analyze when they use related pronouns, utilizing a questionnaire and diagnostic exam as data collection methods, and a squad of twenty students was chosen (students and 100 students). Students were seated at the city's two secondary schools for boys. The survey found numerous things, the most notable of which is that a substantial percentage of high school pupils (almost 70%) comprehend the functions and uses of related pronouns and so fall into this category. According to the viewpoint of most teachers who completed their questionnaire (75 percent of the errors are related to a paucity of understanding), there are various errors made while using these pronouns. The study recommends that an English teacher draw students' attention to use relative pronouns correctly, and the authors of the curricula recommend that the curricula be provided with adequate training.

Al-Najjar (2012) The intent of this research was to scrutinize relative clause errors in English-Arabic directional translations completed by Al-Azhar University of Gaza second and third-year English department students. The researcher employed a descriptive academic approach to answer the study's questions. A diagnostic test that includes English and Arabic relative clauses consists

of 56 sentences divided into five groups. The test was administered at random to 110 students, or 35.94 percent of the total population, drawn at random from the study's sample.

Abood (2015) looked into the Usage of Related Pronouns. The survey found numerous things, the most notable of which is that the vast majority of high school pupils (almost 70%) comprehend the functions and uses of related pronouns and so fall into this category. However, most teachers who completed their questionnaire, which is the same as the grammar of the second language, made various errors while using these pronouns. This work undertakes a corpus-based examination. This research also attempts to evaluate and analyze a number of theories relating to the grammar, linguistics, and pragmatic behavior of relative pronouns that have previously been discussed in the English and Arabic languages. Second, it addresses relative clause grammar and the relationship between relative pronouns and their antecedents. It encoded relative pronoun linguistics and advocated unitary procedural linguistics. It also claims that relative pronouns encode procedural instructions for the listener.

Mohsen (2016) investigated The Acquisition of the English Relative Pronoun. The researcher sees how Arab students use the relative pronoun "who" in English by translating words from their native language (Arabic) into English (English). The individuals were given the responsibility of translating Arabic to English relative statements. According to the findings, students struggled with a variety of issues when using the relative pronoun "who".

Thyab (2022) Learning English relative clauses, like learning any other language, is difficult for a variety of reasons. Furthermore, many English-language academics find it challenging to acquire relative clauses. Learners of English relative clauses who are native Arabic speakers will notice similarities and differences in rule construction. These parallels and variances could be a significant source of positive and negative transmission. In contrast, investigations and error analysis, which are also known as "such restricted findings," are supported and highlighted in this work. Negative transfer causes challenges for Arabic-mother tongue English learners when using relative clauses. The related clause creation rules in Arabic are identical to those in English. Investigations and error analysis, which are also known as "such restricted findings," are supported and highlighted in this work. Negative transfer causes challenges for Arabic mother tongue English learners when using relative clauses. The related clause creation rules in Arabic are identical to those in English.

Some Saudi academics have studied relative pronouns in general, but there has been little research on relative pronouns among Saudi students, hence this study was undertaken to fill in the gaps.

Methods

Twenty-five Arab EFL students from Al-Baha University were involved in this study. All of the participants were male students. Students at this level attended a translation course in their first year of university. To analyze relative pronoun difficulties in translation, the researchers used a descriptive method. It collaborated on syntactic problems. The information was gathered using written materials in Arabic.

Participants

A sample is English-speaking students currently in a language education program. The participants were administered a sentence translation test to see how well they could translate and recognize relative pronouns. The group consisted of a total of 25 academics. They were English students in their first year, recruited in the academic session of 2020. Several of the individuals had completed translation courses and the other way around, so they were all educated and got a similar education.

Research Instruments

An Arabic sentence was one of the study's tools. A group of professionals rated these sentences after examining a set of texts and offering their critique. As a result, these sentences were chosen. The students were told to translate Arabic sentences into English. The study's sample was subjected to a translation test. Relative pronoun difficulties were found and rated when 20 subjects translated a passage into Arabic.

Research Procedures

The study's data was gathered using a test, and the Arabic sentences were obtained from various sources. This information was examined by a group of professionals who offered their opinions, made revisions, and clarified some issues. As a result, these sentences were chosen.

Data Analysis

The act of documenting and determining the challenges experienced by research participants is The participants come up with difficulties. However, the investigation was limited to relative pronoun concerns. SPSS was used to probe the prevalence of relative pronouns and to respond to the study objectives. After acquiring the necessary data for the study, syntactic issues in translation were identified, classified, and listed below.

Findings

Relative Pronouns: Difficulties

The analysis indicated that the greatest problems were in the “whom” translation domain, where the number of errors was 36, or 13%, and then the difficulties arose in the “whose” domain, where the number of errors was 29 and 25%, and the errors in the “who” domain was around 21 and 18%. The number of errors was the same in which and where domains, where the percentages of errors were 15 and 13%, respectively. The overall number of errors was 116, which was distributed across all elements.

The following sentences describe relative pronouns.

Whose

It connects words, defines a name, or provides information about it, and is well-known for to signify ownership. It alludes to the individual or people involved in the discourse. When discussing possession, we employ the relative word “whose”.

We noted that some students did not produce the relative pronoun appropriately and substituted another relative pronoun in its place, while others removed the related pronoun and did not replace

it with another related pronoun, resulting in flaws in the phrase and a lack of grasp of the intended meaning.

اخبرت الرجل الذي توقفت سيارته
I told the man whose car had stopped

Some students have used which rather than whose. *I told the man which car had stopped.* This is an incorrect translation because “whose” is regarded as a relative clause if it connects two sentences and does not appear before the phrase like an interrogative but instead appears after the thing possessed with the meaning, which is a method for connecting two sentences with the same subject as the word they refer to, and that relates to things or animals rather than possession. Another blunder occurred in the translation. The participants used “who” instead of “whose”. *I told the man who car had stopped.* In addition, the students used the phrase “that” instead of “whose.” *I told the man that car had stopped.* This sentence contains

هذا هو النجار الذي كسرت يده
This is the carpenter whose hand broke.

Some students left off the word "whose" in the phrase. *This is the carpenter broke his hand.* The students may have overlooked this word due to insufficient usage of “whose.” As a result, they resorted to eliminating this word, believing that the statement would be complete if they did so. The pupils also substituted the word “who” for the term “whose”. *This is the carpenter broke his hand.* This error could be triggered by a similarity between the two words.

Who

We use who to express people instead of the subject name or subject pronoun, such as: I, we, you, he, or we can remove these pronouns from the sentence after using the relative pronoun instead.

جاء التلميذ الذي كان برفقتي
The student who was with me came

When translating, we see that the students omitted the term “who,” *The student was with me came* and did not supply a replacement, which ruined the statement's sense. The students made no attempt to translate this sentence, instead merely removing the relative word "who." from the Arabic text. This error could be the result of a misunderstanding of the language's rules, as well as the distinction between each relative pronoun and how to use it.

ذلك هو الطفل الذي سقط على الارض
That's the child who fell to the ground.

Some pupils mistranslated this statement, adding the terms “that” and “whom.” As an example, as evidenced by the students, rendering of this statement. *That's the child that fell to the ground.* It is well known that “who” is a related pronoun that expresses the subject's case and acts on behalf of the subject. As a result, they cannot be employed in this situation. Despite the presence of the subject and the absence of the object, *that's the child whom fell to the ground.* Students utilize

“whom” instead of “who”. The cause of these errors could be a misinterpretation of the correct structure of the English language.

Where

It is a tool for connecting sentences and identifying a word or its meaning and indicating a location. The issues in the application of "where" were few compared to the previous errors, as the students' translation in this sentence was

ذهبت الى حيث يعيش صديقي
I went to where my friend lives.

The participants did not find this component difficult. However, when translating into another language, some students deleted the word "where." *I went to my friend lives.*

هذا هو السوق حيث اشترى اغراضي
This is the market where I buy my things.

Furthermore, there were few errors in this sentence; just a few students added the word "which" to the sentence when translating it to the other language. *This is the market which I buy my things.* The students demonstrated a considerable standard of competence in in translating this domain, indicating that they can discriminate it from other domains and understand when to use it.

Whom

Whom is accustomed to describe people and is used instead of the object noun or object pronoun.

Errors in relative pronouns like “whom” were the most common when compared to other related pronouns.

ذلك الطفل الذي أنقذته
That is the kid whom I saved.

There are numerous errors in this statement, including the application of the relative pronoun “who” instead of “whom”. *That is the kid who I saved.* The relative pronoun "who" is a term that can only be used when the subject is mentioned. That is, it serves as a subject. While the relative pronoun "whom" is an object rather than a subject, the students were unable to discriminate between the two words. Some students deleted the word “whom.” *That is the kid I saved.* In addition, the students used the phrase “that” instead of “whom.” *That is the kid that I saved.*

هذا هو الشاب الذي رأيته بالأمس
This is a guy whom I saw yesterday.

The students substituted “that” for the relative pronoun “whom.” *This is a guy that I saw yesterday.* Some students left off the word "whom" in the phrase. *This is a man I saw yesterday.* Some pupils mistranslated this statement, adding the terms “which” *This is a guy which I saw yesterday.* One of the factors that contribute to students' incorrect rendering into generalization and ignorance of the rules is a lack of presentation of English grammar and grammatical activities.

The difficulties that students have are caused by a lack of the student's failure to distinguish between subjects and object pronouns.

Which

We use “which” instead of the participle that refers to a location or the pronoun it to refer to things or animals. When utilizing the relative pronoun, we can also use that instead of the subject or pronoun.

هذا هو الارنب الذي اشتريته

This is a rabbit which I bought.

Some students added the word “that” instead of “which”. *This is rabbit I got.* This could be owing to the similarities between the use of "which" and “that,” as well as students' lack of understanding of the distinction between them and how to utilize them.

الكلب الذي قتلناه كان في غاية الخطورة

The dog which we killed was very dangerous.

The pupils had little trouble interpreting this phrase, and most of their versions were correct.

Where

هذا هو السوق الذي أشتري منه أغراضي

This is the market where I buy my things.

Similarly, the errors in this sentence were the same as in the previous sentence: *this is the market that I buy my things.* That was to be used instead of "where."

ذهبت إلى حيث يعيش صديقي

I went to where my friend lives.

The pupils had little trouble interpreting this phrase, and all of their versions were correct.

Following this thorough debate, we conclude that the difficulties that students have are caused by a lack of the student's failure to distinguish between subject and object pronouns and the student's failure to distinguish between relative pronouns.

Discussions

1-What are the difficulties with relative pronouns that Saudi students face when translating?

2-What are the causes of the relative pronouns difficulties in the translation?

Relative pronouns Difficulties

1-The students made 116 errors in all domains.

2-The greatest problems were in the “whom” translation domain, where the number of errors was 36, or 13%.

3-The difficulties that students have are caused by a lack of the student's failure to distinguish between subjects and object pronouns.

4-Inaccuracy linked to a scarcity of differentiation between relative pronouns.

5-There is inability to differentiate between relative and absolute pronouns.

Conclusion

The study sought to examine the difficulties in related pronouns and relative pronouns, which were categorized as follows: who, whose, whom, where, and which. According to the analysis, the “whom” domain had the most problems, while the “which” domain and the “where” domain had the fewest translation errors. The results suggested that students' difficulties are caused by a lack of difference between subjects and object pronouns, with inaccuracy owing to a deficit in differentiation between relative pronouns. Students have difficulty distinguishing between relative pronouns and one of the issues students have is a lack of understanding of the consequences of relative clauses.

About the Author:

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Appendices Arabic Translation

أخبرت الرجل الذي توقفت سيارته
هذا هو النجار الذي كسرت يده
هذا هو الطفل الذي سقط على الأرض
ذلك الطفل الذي أنقذته
جاء التلميذ الذي كان برفقتي
هذا هو الشاب الذي التقيته بالأمس
هذا الأرنب الذي اشتريته
الكلب الذي قتلناه كان في غاية الخطورة
ذهبت إلى حيث يعيش صديقي
هذا هو السوق حيث اشتري أغراضي

English Translation

I told the man whose car had stopped.
This is the carpenter whose hand broke.
That's the child who fell to the ground.
The student who was with me came.
This is the child whom I met yesterday.
This is the guy whom I met yesterday.
This is a rabbit which I bought.
The dog which we killed was very dangerous.
I went to where my friend lives.
This is the market where I buy my things.

Relative Pronouns: Difficulties

Students No	Relative Pronouns Difficulties					
	who	whom	Whose	where	which	
Student 1	2	1	2	1	1	
Student 2	1	2	2	1	0	
Student 3	1	2	2	0	0	
Student 4	1	2	1	1	1	
Student 5	1	1	0	0	0	
Student 6	1	2	1	0	0	
Student 7	2	2	1	1	1	
Student 8	0	0	0	0	0	
Student 9	2	2	1	1	1	
Student 10	2	2	2	1	1	
Student 11	0	1	1	0	0	
Student 12	1	2	2	1	1	
Student 13	1	2	1	2	2	
Student 14	0	1	1	0	0	

Student 15	1	2	1	1	1	
Student 16	1	1	1	0	0	
Student 17	0	0	0	0	0	
Student 18	1	2	1	1	1	
Student 19	0	2	1	1	1	
Student 20	1	1	1	0	0	
Student 21	0	1	1	0	0	
Student 22	1	2	1	1	1	
Student 23	0	1	2	1	1	
Student 24	1	1	2	0	1	
Student 25	0	1	1	1	1	
Total	21	36	29	15	15	116
%	18	31	25	13	13	