

Investigating Morpho-Syntactic Translation Errors Made by Yemeni EFL Students

Muayad Shamsan

University of Bisha, Asir, Saudi Arabia

&

Omdurman Islamic University, Omdurman, Sudan

Abdul-Majeed Attayib

English Language Centre

Umm AlQura University, Mecca, Saudi Arabia

Abstract

This study investigates the most common morpho-syntactic Arabic-English and English-Arabic translation errors made by fourth year students of the English Department (Translation Program) at the University of Science and Technology (UST) in Yemen. It identifies how frequently these errors occur and sheds light on issues for EFL students and translation teachers in Yemen in general and the UST in particular, regarding the importance of having a good command of both Arabic and English. This may help learners identify and reduce such errors. In this empirical study, a test of 20 English and 20 Arabic sentences was given to the subjects of the study to be translated into Arabic and English respectively. Findings from the study show that the students make significantly more errors in tense, noun, verb, preposition, pronoun, relative clauses, article, and voice when they translate sentences from Arabic into English. There are also no significant differences in the students' translation in terms of agreement, word order, mood, and condition. The study concludes with some important recommendations such as adding a course on contrastive analysis and other Arabic language courses to the curriculum of the Translation Program in the English Department. Teachers and students are advised to take into account the different morpho-syntactic rules when teaching or translating respectively.

Keywords: errors, morpho-syntactic, text type, translation