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Investigation of the Use of Computer-aided Translation (CAT) Tools in Freelancing Practice in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract:
To cope with large information content in today's multilingual Saudi Arabia, translation services are essential. Like any other industry, translation practice was heavily affected by technological advances. Professionals in the translation field use technology like Computer-Aided Translation (CAT) tools to complete their translation tasks. Freelance translators are not exempt from this. This study examines the utilization of CAT tools in the freelance industry in Saudi Arabia. Fulford and Granell-Zafra (2005) have proposed a model that incorporates both information and Communication Technology (ICTs)and CAT tools, facilitating a diverse array of activities such as document creation, information search and retrieval, communication, business management, marketing, procurement, and translation. While CAT tools support document creation, business management, and translation, ICT tools are responsible for the remaining activates . This research aims to thoroughly analyze the characteristics of Saudi freelance translators who use CAT tools, evaluate their usage of CAT tools, and acquire valuable insights into their overall attitudes towards CAT tool. The data was gathered using the survey method and distributed among 98 Saudi freelance translators. The data was analyzed using SPSS descriptive analysis and frequency tables showing percentages of each respondent. The results show that Saudi freelance translators employed general-purpose software like MS Word and MS PowerPoint, whereas less interest was given to special-purpose software which represent CAT tools . The vast majority of the participants agreed on the positive effect of CAT tools. Finally,it may be beneficial to conduct further research to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

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Investigation of the Use of Computer-aided Translation (CAT) Tools in Freelancing Practice in Saudi Arabia.

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Abstract

To cope with large information content in today's multilingual Saudi Arabia, translation services are essential. Like any other industry, translation practice was heavily affected by technological advances. Professionals in the translation field use technology like Computer-Aided Translation (CAT) tools to complete their translation tasks. Freelance translators are not exempt from this. This study examines the utilization of CAT tools in the freelance industry in Saudi Arabia. Fulford and Granell-Zafra (2005) have proposed a model that incorporates both information and Communication Technology (ICTs)and CAT tools, facilitating a diverse array of activities such as document creation, information search and retrieval, communication, business management, marketing, procurement, and translation. While CAT tools support document creation, business management, and translation, ICT tools are responsible for the remaining activates . This research aims to thoroughly analyze the characteristics of Saudi freelance translators who use CAT tools, evaluate their usage of CAT tools, and acquire valuable insights into their overall attitudes towards CAT tool. The data was gathered using the survey method and distributed among 98 Saudi freelance translators. The data was analyzed using SPSS descriptive analysis and frequency tables showing percentages of each respondent. The results show that Saudi freelance translators employed general-purpose software like MS Word and MS PowerPoint, whereas less interest was given to special-purpose software which represent CAT tools . The vast majority of the participants agreed on the positive effect of CAT tools. Finally,it may be beneficial to conduct further research to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Keywords: Computer-Aided Translation Tools, Saudi Freelance Translators, Information and Communication Technology.

مستخلص البحث

نظرا لما تشهده المملكة العربية السعودية من تطور سريع وقفزة نوعية في جميع جوانب الحياة كبلد يدعم تعدد اللغات، هناك تزايد ملحوظ على خدمات الترجمة. كغيرها من المجالات، تأثرت الترجمة بالنقلة التقنية، حيث يستخدم العاملون في هذا المجال تقنيات الترجمة في أداء مهماتهم، ومن بينهم المترجم الحر السعودي. تبحث هذه الدراسة الكمية استخدام أدوات الترجمة بمساعدة الحاسوب (CAT) من قبل المترجم الحر السعوي. وقام الباحث باستخدام نموذج Fulfordو Granell-Zafra (2005)في تصميم الاستبانة التي تهدف لقياس مدى استخدام المترجم الحر السعودي لهذه الأدوات. حيث يشمل النموذج المعني كلاً من تكنولوجيا المعلومات والاتصالات (ICT) وأدوات الترجمة بمساعدة الحاسوب(CAT) . و يدعم هذا النموذج مجموعة واسعة من الأنشطة، من إنشاء المستندات إلى البحث عن المعلومات واسترجاعها، الاتصالات، إدارة الأعمال، التسويق، المشتريات، واخيرا الترجمة. وترتبط أدوات الترجمة بمساعدة الحاسوب (CAT)بالأنشطة المتعلقة بإنشاء المستندات، وإدارة الأعمال وإنشاء الترجمة؛ وتشمل بقية الأنشطة أدوات تكنولوجيا المعلومات والاتصالات(ICT) . تبحث هذه الدراسة في خصائص المترجم الحر السعودي الذي يستخدم أدوات الترجمة بمساعدة الحاسوب(CAT) ، وتقّيم الدراسة استخدامه لهذه الأدوات. أيضا، تحاول الدراسة فهم وجهات نظر المترجم السعودي الحر فيما يتعلق بأدوات الترجمة بمساعدة الحاسوب(CAT) . جمع الباحث البيانات عن طريق توزيع استبانة على 98 مترجماً سعودياً مستقلاً، وتم تحليل البيانات باستخدام التحليل الوصفي لبرنامج SPSS والجداول التكرارية التي تظهر فيها النسبة المئوية لكل إجابة. أظهرت النتائج أن المترجم الحر السعودي يميل لاستخدام برامج ذات أغراض عامة مثل MS word وMS Power Point، حيث إنه يبدي اهتمام أقل في استخدام أدوات الترجمة بمساعدة الحاسوب (CAT). أخيرًا، أقر غالبية المشاركين على التأثير الإيجابي لأدوات الترجمة بمساعدة الحاسوب(CAT) . ختاماً، توصي الدراسة الباحثين باستكمال البحث عن استخدام المترجم الحر السعودي لأدوات الترجمة بمساعدة الحاسوب (CAT).

الكلمات المفتاحية: أدوات الترجمة بمساعدة الحاسوب، المترجمون السعوديون المستقلون، تكنولوجيا المعلومات والاتصالات.

Dedication

In the name of Allah , the Beneficial , the Merciful .

This work is the fruit of passion, dedication, and sacrifice, which I proudly dedicate to my uncle Mamdooh Aljuaid, my aunt Fatima Althbaity and their kids, Wasan, Zayed, and Noura. Your exceptional kindness is unforgettable.

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CAT Tools in Freelancing Practice

Translators in this century use technology to assist them in accomplishing translation tasks. In fact, many translator competencies (TC) models have appeared (European Commission, 2022; Göpferich, 2009; PACTE, 2003) with each model identifying a set of essential translation competencies. Despite this, all TC models agree that it is vital to be able to understand and use technological tools in the translation process. Above all, the ability to use technology effectively is essential for translators , and freelance translators are no exception.

Furthermore, it is common to describe freelancers as individuals who "sell their professional knowledge and skills, but nothing else" (Kazi et al., 2014, p.1). Freelance translators, or so-called 'independent' translators, are self-employed, meaning they are not legally bound to their clients or work provider. Generally, freelancers work either directly with a client or for an agency that gets contracts and subcontracts the work (Gouadec, 2007, p.99). Apart from this, in current translation practice, Dunne & Dunne (2011) say that agencies tend to outsource translation work because they lack the necessary skill (p.4). The translation activity of agencies is outsourced to various language service providers (LSPs), including in-house translators, project managers, terminologists, and freelance translators. Unquestionably, all those LSPs use translation technology, especially to increase their productivity and efficiency when it comes to handling the tasks outsourced by their agencies or clients . Given the wide range of LSPs to whom work is typically outsourced, this study focuses on freelance translators.

As the global market grows, Bowker (2002) asserts that the adoption of Computer Aided Translation (CAT) tools will be more needs-driven than research-driven (p.12).

Translation practice can only be managed with the help of CAT tools, so integrating CAT tools is unavoidable for translators when it comes to managing their work.

In Bowker's (2002) words, CAT tools for translators are "a variety of computerized tools that help them accomplish their tasks and increase their productivity" (p.4). Consequently, CAT tools can be very beneficial for translators. The use of these tools enables translators to use consistent terminology in translation, thereby saving time (Munday, 2016, p. 289). Accordingly, Cronin (2013) suggests that instant access to digital media could imply an accelerated flow of translations, resulting in the broader dissemination of translated work (p.8). As a result, CAT tools facilitate translators' productivity and save their time, while also enabling them to ensure the quality of their translations.

Arguably, in Saudi Arabia, the need for freelancers to keep up with global market growth is relevant to the Saudi Vision 2030 objectives. As part of Vision 2030, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development in Saudi Arabia launched an online platform entitled The Freelance Program. In line with Saudi Vision 2030, this initiative aims to help grow the economy. One of the specialized services offered by this initiative is freelance translation. This indicates that the Saudi government views freelance translators as key contributors to achieving the Vision's goals, demonstrating the importance of these individuals.

When it comes to translation technologies used by freelancers, Fulford and Granell-Zafra (2005) identified two types of technology applications that are used by freelancers. The authors refer to information and communication technology (ICT) as it refers to general-purpose applications such as Microsoft Office, while CAT tools are referred to as specific-purpose applications such as SDL Trados.

The present study seeks to contribute to the literature on freelance translators' use of CAT tools in Saudi Arabia, given that few researchers have investigated this topic. Consequently, the research aims to fill the existing gap by conducting a quantitative analysis of the technological applications used by freelance translators in Saudi Arabia.

The purpose of this study is to explore the use of CAT tools on the part of Saudi freelance translators. Based on Fulford and Granell-Zafra's (2005) model which encompasses six activities to detect the usage of CAT tools and ICT by freelancers: document production, information search and retrieval, translation creation, communication, marketing and procurement, and business management (Fulford and Granell-Zafra, 2005, p.5). A questionnaire was adapted from previous research to investigate three activities conducted by freelancers that related to the translation technology applications of CAT tools. This model is chosen because it is unique when it comes to determining the usage of translation technology applications on the part of freelance translators. Using this model will allow to limit the scope on the translation technology applications used by freelance translators and improve the data collection and analysis leading to accurate results. The objective of this study is :(i) to determine the characteristics of Saudi freelance translators who use CAT tools in their tasks, and (ii), to evaluate the usage of CAT tools by Saudi freelancers and finally (iii) to understand Saudi freelancers' perspectives with regard to CAT tools.

Using a quantitative approach, the study will address the following research questions:

RQ1: Which characteristics are associated with Saudi freelance translators who use CAT tools?

RQ2: Do Saudi freelance translators employ CAT tools in their work?

RQ3: How do Saudi freelance translators view CAT tools?

In regard to this quantitative study limitations , Time was the main constrain in conducting this research. This study is a requirement for a master's degree, so the researcher must complete it in a short timeframe, which might post a challenge in achieving the results of this study. Another limitation is that the sample size is small. According to Saldanha & O'Brien (2014) statistical analysis is more effective when dealing with large volumes of data (p.121). The results of this study should be interpreted cautiously due to its limitations.

Review of the Literature

This section presents studies which deals with CAT tools in general and with their employment by freelancers in particular. Two significant studies have tackled the issue of CAT tool employment among freelancers in the world, which the researcher will mention at the end of this review.

To begin with, in the Arab region, a number of studies have traced the perspectives of translators with regard to CAT tools in the Arab translation community. Studies such as those of (Alotaibi,2014; Mahfouz ,2018; Omar et al.,2020) have reported the positive impact and attitude of students and translation instructors with regard to translation technologies and CAT tools. These studies report that both students and instructors view them as an important aspect of translation training, learning, and teaching. These studies suggest that a considerable amount of literature has been published on CAT tools technology in Saudi Arabia and throughout the Arab region.

In Saudi Arabia, Alkhatani (2021) completed a study exploring the adoption of tech tools in the translation industry in Saudi Arabia. The researcher investigated the perception

and adoption on the part of professional Saudi translators where 39% of the study participants were practicing freelance translators in the post-Covid era (p.77). Alkhatani's (2021) data indicates that 53% of the translators who took part have access to general purpose technologies such as Microsoft (MS) Office and online dictionaries (p.85). One question that needs to be asked, however, is what the perspectives of Saudi freelancers towards the use of CAT tools are, and why did 39% of the participants prefer using general purpose applications.

By contrast, Alotaibi (2020) carried out a study in which she distributed a 50-item questionnaire to 49 participants. The aim of this was to assess the usability of CAT tools among Arab translators. She claims that the usability of these specific purpose technology applications usage is upon average among Arab translators (p.10). This framework, however, solely pertains to describing Arab translators' usage of CAT tools and not that of Saudi freelance translators.

On the international level, many studies have been conducted to determine the usage of CAT tools among freelance translators. Verplaetse & Lambrechts (2019) undertook a study to survey the use of CAT tools, terminology, management systems and corpora among professional translators. The researchers claim that both in-house translators and freelancers use CAT tools in their practice with regard to Belgian and Dutch language pairs. The researchers arrived at this result by comparing three translation aids in the form of CAT tools, terminology management systems, and corpora. They revealed that in-house translators use CAT tools relatively more frequently than do freelancers, with a 13.5% higher rate (p.18). This study shows that freelance translators' usage of specific-purpose applications is less compared to other professional in the field. Correspondingly, Abdi (2021) conducted a study

with regard to Iranian M.A. translation students' familiarity with various translation technologies. The researcher asserted that M.A. students are more familiar with general purpose applications, hence, ICT applications (p.24) .More specifically , Abdi (2019) states in his research" The status of ICT employment among Iranian freelance translators that a surprising number of participants (65%) self-taught their IT skills, where only 36% of freelance translators were IT qualified(p.343)

O'Brien et al. (2017) examined freelancers' motivation and its relation to the decrease in the use of CAT tools. The researcher used a survey to determine the negative aspects of the tools that translators find irritating. In the study, 1,850 translators from 50 countries were surveyed (p.194). The participants described the interface of CAT tools as being difficult to use, while another difficulty was formatting. O'Brien et al. (2017) says that freelancers find it difficult to deal with the technical issues related to CAT tools, in contrast to commercial and institutional translators. Therefore, this aspect impacts freelancers' motivation when it comes to employing those tools (p.156).

Finally, two significant studies investigated the employment of specific purpose technologies among freelancers. Fulford and Granell-Zafra (2005) developed a model to detect six activities by freelancers in the UK to determine if they were using general purpose applications or specific purpose applications to aid them in their work. The six activities were: document production, information research and retrieval, translation creation, communication, marketing and work procurement, and business management. The study shows that freelancers in the UK use general-purpose applications due to their lack of awareness of specific purpose applications such as CAT tools (p.104).

Similarly, after surveying 256 Iranian freelancers, Abdi (2020) states that MS word is the tool most commonly used by freelancers (p.816). In this study, the researcher investigates three activities - document creation activities, business management activities, and translation creation activities – and found that freelancers prefer using general purpose applications compared with specific purpose applications in their work (p.817).

To conclude, the review of the literature indicates the importance of CAT tools in the translation industry and has tackled CAT tools employment and usage on the part of translators. The aforementioned studies viewed students', instructors', and professional translator perspectives and usability. However, there is no clear evidence with regard to the usage of CAT tools among Saudi freelance translators. In this study, the researcher wants to explore the employment of CAT tool technologies on the part of Saudi freelance translators.

Methodology

Study Design

This study follows a quantitative approach , where the researcher is aiming to use survey to collect data . A questionnaire will be distributed to gather the data .

Population and Sampling

The population consists of Saudi freelance translators, specifically, Saudi nationals. A simple random sampling method will be used. Specifically, Creswell (2014,) says that random sampling means all individuals in the population have an equal probability of being selected (p.215). Since the number of freelance Saudi translators is not known , the researcher collected data from 98 which represent a population of 100 freelance Saudi translators . The researcher came to this sample number after following Fowler (2009) formula where he

suggest determining the error margin, confidence level , and estimating a percentage of responds(as cited in Creswell , 2014,p.204) .The researcher calculated confidence level as 95%, error margin 5%, and population responds percentage is 50%. The researcher distributed the questionnaire online, via Twitter and Telegram groups that contain freelancers who work in Saudi.

Instrument

In this study, the researcher used a questionnaire to collect data. According to Saldanha & O'Brien (2014), the questionnaire allows for the gathering of structured data on a large scale, as well as, the structured data makes analysis easier (p.152). Furthermore, the researcher believes this instrument will save her time and money. The questionnaire is adapted from the research of Hamidreza Abdi (2020) and was altered to suit the participants. The researcher received permission to use the questionnaire and modified it to suit the participants (see Appendix A and B). The researcher divided the questionnaire down into three sections. In each section, one research question will be addressed. In the first and second parts, the researcher used closed-ended questions. Where the first part is regarding personal information, and second part addressed the three activities: Document production, Business management, and translation creation; proposed by Fulford and Granell-Zafra (2005) model. As part of the third section, participants were asked to rate their perspectives of the CAT tools using Likert scales.

Data Analysis

Each section was analyzed separately using tables, and descriptive analysis of the outcomes. Using SPSS, the researcher analyzed the data with the assistance of a statistician.

As Creswell (2014) describes inferential analysis as being applied most often with large numbers of participants (p.209). Because of the small number of participants, the researcher chose descriptive analysis.

Ethical Consideration

Multiple ethical considerations are necessary because of the nature of this research. Since data collection is via questionnaires, confidentiality, and anonymity were ensured for all participants. Additionally, the researcher provided an informed consent form at the beginning of the questionnaire. Finally, a debrief on the study was provided after they agree to the informed consent.

Results and Discussion

In this section, we present the survey's main findings concerning the research questions. The survey was distributed online**.** The survey aimed to identify the characteristics of Saudi freelancers who use CAT tools in their work; evaluate freelancers' usage of CAT tools, and finally; understand Saudi freelancers' perspectives when it comes to the use of CAT tools. The questionnaire was answered by 98 participants and the responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Results

Part One : Participant Characteristics

Table 1

Participant age distribution

Age Range	Number	Percentage

20-29	80	81.6
30-39	16	16.3
40-49	0	0
50-59	2	2.1
60 and above	0	0
Total	98	100

The age distribution was 20-29 (81.6%), 30-39(16.3%), 50-59(2.1 %), with no participants in the 40-49 age range or above 60.

Table 2

Participant gender

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	12	12.2
Female	86	87.8
Total	98	100

Table 2 indicate that 87.8% of the participants were, while 12.2%were males.

Table 3

Participant qualifications

Degree	Number	Percentage
Associate degree	9	9.2
Bachelor degree	63	64.3

Master degree	24	24.5
Doctorate degree	2	2
Total	98	100

Table 3 indicates that 9% of the participants held an associate degree, 64.3% held a bachelor's degree, 24.5% have a master's degree, and 2% have a doctorate.

Table 4

Participant education

Relationship	Number	Percentage
No	19	19.4
Yes	79	80.6
Total	98	100

Table 4 reports that 80.6% of the participant's education is related to translation, while 19.4 % of the participant's education is not related to translation.

Table 5

Participant education relationship with translation

Academic Degree	Number	Percentage
AD in Translation	8	10.5
BA in Translation	46	60.5
MA in Translation	20	26.4
PhD in Translation	2	2.6

Total	76	100

Table 5 shows that 10.5% of the participants hold an AD in translation, while 60.5% hold a BA in translation. Furthermore, 26.4% of the participants hold an MA in translation, and 2.6% hold a PhD in translation.

Table 6

Participants years of experience

Years Range	Number	Percentage
1-4	74	75.5
5-9	17	17.3
10-14	4	4.1
15-20	2	2.1
Up to 20	1	1
Total	98	100

The data in table 6 length of the participants experience in translation practice . The data shows that 75.5% of the participants have one to 4 years of experience. 17.3% of the participants have 5 to 9 years of experience, 4.1% of the participants have 10 to 14 years of experience and 2.1% of the participants have 15 years or more of experience , and 20% of the participants have more than 20 years of experience

Table 7

Average weekly hours engaged translation

Hours Range	Number	Percentage

Less than 11	67	68.4
11-20	21	21.4
21-30	9	9.2
31 to 40	1	1
Total	98	100

Table 7 shows that freelance translators spend the following amount of time on translation tasks. 68.4% of the participants worked less than 11 hours per week. Among the participants, 21.4% worked 11 to 20 hours per week, 9.2% worked from 21 to 30 hours per week , and the final one percent worked between 31 and 40 hours per week.

Table 8

Participant other translation services

Age Range	Number	Percentage
Translation project management	53	39
Language training courses/tutorials	37	27.3
Subtitling/ Dubbing	35	25.8
Proofreading	2	1.6
Editing	1	0.7
To be honest I do nothing I’m still studying	1	0.7
Quality management	1	0.7
proofreading, graphic design	1	0.7
Proofreading and/or editing	1	0.7
Proofreading and editing	1	0.7

Nonspecific	1	0.7
Localization	1	0.7
Quran translations	1	0.7
Total	136	100

Table 8 shows if the participants provide other freelance services other than translation. The data shows that 39 % of freelancers provide translation project management services , 27.3% of provided language training courses and tutorials, 25.8% offered subtitling services, and 1.6% offered services related to proofreading services .Finally , 1% of the participants provide services such as editing quality management.

Table 9

Translated language pairs

Translation language	Number	Percentage
Arabic to English and English to Arabic	96	94.1
Arabic to French and French to Arabic	3	2.9
Korean to Arabic and Korean to Arabic	2	2
Arabic to German and German to Arabic	1	1
Total	102	100

Table 9 shows that 94.1 % of the participants translate from Arabic to English and from English to Arabic. 2.9% of the participants translate from Arabic to French and French

to Arabic , and 2% of the participants translate from Korean to Arabic and Arabic to Korean . Finally , one person translates from Arabic to German and German to Arabic.

Table 10

Translation domains

Translation domain	Number	Percentage
Social & Political Sciences	47	21.6
Technical & technology	37	17
Marketing & Advertising	35	16.1
Business & Economics	29	13.3
Legal	28	12.8
Medical	25	11.5
Military	3	1.4
Literary	2	0.9
General translation	2	0.9
General Texts - literary Texts	1	0.45
Military subject	1	0.45
Government	1	0.45
Media and military translation	1	0.45
Media	1	0.45
Sports & Media	1	0.45
Education	1	0.45
Gaming news	1	0.45
Normal and regular everyday interaction, entertainment	1	0.45

Academic research, media content, TV shows and drama.	1	0.45
Total	218	100

As indicated by data provided, the most commonly translated subjects by the participants were Social & Political Sciences (21.6%), Technical & Technology (17%), and Marketing & Advertising (16.1%). Other subjects that were translated included Business & Economics (13.3%), Legal (12.8%), Medical (11.5%), %), Military (1.4%), Literary (0.9%), General translation (0.9%), General Texts - literary Texts (0.45%), Military subject (0.45%), Government (0.45%), Media and military translation (0.45%), Media (0.45%), Sports & Media (0.45%), Education (0.45%), Translation of gaming news (0.45%), Normal and regular every day interaction, entertainment (0.45%), and Academic research, media content, TV shows and drama (0.45%).

Table 11

Participants acquisition of Information Technology (IT) skills

Skills	Number	Percentage
Self-taught	85	50.6
University/College courses	44	26.2
Professional training courses	21	12.5
Attending workshops and seminars run by professional institutes	15	8.9
Practice	1	0.6
Youtube	1	0.6
On the job practice	1	0.6

Total	168	100

Table 11 covers areas related to how participants acquired their Information Technology (IT) skills . 50.6% of the participants stated that they were self-taught. 26% said they had attended university courses. 12% said that they had professional training courses. 8.9 % of the participants gained IT skills by attending workshops and seminars run by professional Institutes. 0.6% of the participants learned IT skills by practice . 0.6% of the participants had acquired the necessary skills from YouTube. Finally , 0.6% claimed that they learned IT skills while working in a translation group .

Table 12

Participants scientific computer qualification

Scientific	Number	Percentage
No formal IT qualification	46	46.9
School/College qualification	24	24.5
Professional certificate	6	6.1
University degree	18	18.4
Other	4	4.1
Total	98	100

Table12 indicates that 46.9% of the participants that held no IT qualification. 24.5% of the participants had a school or college qualification in IT . 6.1% of the participants stated that they had a professional certificate in IT . 18.4% of the participants had university degrees in IT . Finally, 4.1% of the participant stated that they had other IT qualifications.

Table 13

Freelance certificate from the Saudi Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development (HRSD)

Have a Freelance certificate	Number	Percentage
No	65	66.3
Yes	33	33.7
Total	98	100

Table 13 shows that 66.3% of the participants did not have a freelance certificate, while 33.7 claimed to have such certificate.

Part Two : CAT Tools Employment

Document Production Software

The percentage breakdown of document production software used by Saudi Freelance translators is as follows:

The total employment of word processing software is 87.76%, involving Microsoft (MS) Word (56.98%), Google Documents (27.91%), and Microsoft Notepad (9.30%). The total employment of presentation software employment is 70.41%, with PowerPoint MS used by 92.75% of the participants. This followed by web publishing software with a total employment of 17.35%, whereas Google Web Designer was used by 47.06%, and Adobe Dreamweaver by 23.53%. Finally, desktop publishing software was used by 17.35% of the participants, with Microsoft Publisher at 47.21%, Adobe InDesign at 23.53% , and FlipHTML5 at 11.76%. See Table 14below.

Table 14

Document Production Software

Type		Number	Total	%
Word processing software		86	98	87.76
	MS Word	49	86	56.98
	Corel WordPerfect	1	86	1.16
	Google Docs	24	86	27.91
	Grammarly	2	86	2.33
	Microsoft Notepad	8	86	9.30
	Text Maker	1	86	1.16
	Microsoft Office	1	86	1.16
Presentation software		69	98	70.41
	MS PowerPoint	64	69	92.75
	SlideDog	2	69	2.90
	Prezi	1	69	1.45
	Canva	2	69	2.90
Web publishing software		17	98	17.35
	Bluefish	1	17	5.88
	Atom Text Editor	1	17	5.88
	Adobe Dreamweaver	4	17	23.53
	Google Web Designer	8	17	47.06
	MS FrontPage	1	17	5.88
	Canva	1	17	5.88
	Wordpress	1	17	5.88

Desktop publishing software		17	98	17.35
	Adobe InDesign	4	17	23.53
	FlipHTML5	3	17	17.65
	LibreOffice Draw	2	17	11.76
	Microsoft Publisher	8	17	47.06
Total activity employment		189	392	48.21

Business Management Activity

In terms of business management activity software, the study participants responded with total employment of 35.03%, 69.39% used spreadsheet software , 51.47% used MS Excel, 26.47% used Google Sheets, 14.71% used Office 365. Database software was used by 24.49%, with MS Access accounting for 37.5%, and Database Cloud Service 29.17%. Finally , in terms of accounting packages, 11.22% of the total respondents used them, with QuickBooks and Sage both being used by 27.27%.

Table 15

Business Management Activity

Type		Number	Total	%
Database Software		24	98	24.49
	Database Cloud Service	7	24	29.17
	MS Access	9	24	37.50
	TablePlus	2	24	8.33
	FileMaker	2	24	8.33

	IDK	1	24	4.17
	Knack	1	24	4.17
	Google drive	2	24	8.33
Spreadsheet Software		68	98	69.39
	Office 365	10	68	14.71
	MS Excel	35	68	51.47
	Google Sheets	18	68	26.47
	Numbers	2	68	2.94
	WPS Office	1	68	1.47
	Lotus	2	68	2.94
Accounting packages		11	98	11.22
	Sage	3	11	27.27
	QuickBooks	3	11	27.27
	Zoho Books	2	11	18.18
	FreshBooks	2	11	18.18
	IDK	1	11	9.09
Total activity employment		103	294	35.03

Translation Creation Activity

A total of 71.94% of the respondent were engaged in translation creation. The participants responses show that machine translation was used by 84.69%, with Google Translate being used by 68.67% and Microsoft Translator by 15.66% . Translation memory

was used by 59.18%, Trados by 43.10% , and Phrase Memsource by 18.9%. See table 16 for more details.

Table 16

Translation Creation Activity

Type		Number	Total	%
Machine translation		83	98	84.69
	Apertium	1	83	1.20
	chatgpt	1	83	1.20
	Dict plus	2	83	2.41
	Google Translate	57	83	68.67
	Microsoft Translator	13	83	15.66
	MateCat	4	83	4.82
	Reverso context	3	83	3.61
	SmartCat	1	83	1.20
	some apps	1	83	1.20
Translation memory		58	98	59.18
	Phrase Memsource	11	58	18.9
	Deja Vu	5	58	8.62
	Babylon Translator	4	58	6.90
	Trados	25	58	43.10
	SmartCat	2	58	3.45
	MemoQ	4	58	6.90
	IDK	1	58	1.72

	Wordfast	1	58	1.72
	Bureae works	1	58	1.72
	SDLX	1	58	1.72
	context reverso	1	58	1.72
	Smartcat. memesource	1	58	1.72
	Self	1	58	1.72
Total activity employment		141	196	71.94

Part Three : Freelancers Perspective on CAT Tools.

The last part of the survey shows the participants agreement with statements related to the use of CAT tools . In this part they expressed their agreements with regard to various statements by selecting one of the options (Strongly Disagree , Disagree, Don't Know , Agree , Strongly Agree). The results indicates that the statements regarding the benefits of using CAT tools in translation were agreed upon by the majority of the participants .80.6 % of the participants agreed with the following statement " Using CAT can help translators to become more competitive in today's market "making it the statement with the highest level of agreement . On the other hand , the statement " Using CAT will not give translators any benefits," is the statement with the lowest level of agreement with only 5.2% agreeing or strongly agreeing with it . Regarding the statements that are related to the effectiveness of using CAT tools in translation , the percentage responses ranged from 17.2% to 45.9% of in terms of the participants being unsure or neutral about the responses. The data shows an overall positive perspective toward the use of CAT tools in translation.

Discussion

Starting with the data obtained with regard to the first research question "Which personal characteristics are associated with Saudi freelance translators who use CAT tools?", several significant findings were obtained. Firstly, most of the participants have degrees, meaning that they are educated individuals. Around 80% of the participants' education is related to translation, which means that the participants are acquainted with both the theoretical and practical aspects of translation. Additionally, 75.5% of the participants have one to 4 years experience, which is justifiable given that most individuals' ages range from 20 to 29 years.

With regard to the language pairs used by the freelancers, the data show that 94% of the participants translate from Arabic to English and vice versa. The researcher thinks the lack of other language pairs is concerning in the freelancing market. The Saudi freelance translation market still needs translators who are skilled in the use of various language pairs other than Arabic to English and English to Arabic language pair that ranks the highest in term of use according to the participants of this study . The need for more language pairs would be beneficial since the Saudi economic market is expanding globally. With regard to the Saudi economic market, the results shows that 33.7% of the participants have a freelance certificate from the Saudi Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development. Again, this result indicates the lack of awareness on the part of the participants with regard to their importance to the Saudi economic market. Finally, 50.6% of the participants are self-taught when it comes to how they acquired their IT skills. Interestingly, this finding supports Abdi's (2019) research that most Iranian freelancers are self-taught when it comes to IT (65%). This

characteristic indicates that the participants are individuals who are able to learn and practice their technological skills independently.

Moving forward, to answer the second research question "Do Saudi freelance translators employ CAT tools in their work?", in the second part of the survey, the most commonly used general-purpose software is MS, as was found by Fulford and Granell-Zafra (2005) and Abdi (2020) who indicated that freelance translators in the UK and Iran preferred using general purpose software. In addition, PowerPoint MS was widely employed by the Saudi freelance translators as was also found in Abdi's (2020) study. Regarding the engagement in business activities ,using Spreadsheet Software and MS Excel ranked the lowest in terms of employment by the Saudi freelance translators . According to Abdi (2020), those two types of software were favored by freelancers because they are easy to use and cost effective (p.816). In addition, this finding is in line with Alkhatani's (2021) study in which translators were reported to have access to general purpose applications such as Microsoft (MS) Office including PowerPoint MS, MS Word, and MS Excel.

As the results show regarding the usage of machine translation, a CAT tool which freelance translators largely favored, Google Translate was very popular and a significant number of the participants use Trados Translation Memory. However, the percentage is still lower than that of other general-purpose applications. The researcher thinks this can be related to the findings of O'Brien et al. (2017), who indicated that freelancers find CAT tools' interface difficult to use and had problems dealing with the technical issues related to CAT tools. The overall results show the employment of general-purpose applications among Saudi freelance translators.

The final question is “How do Saudi freelance translators view CAT tools?”. The Saudi freelance translators in our study showed a positive perspective with regard to CAT tool benefits and effectiveness. This result was expected, as it is in line with previous results found in studies from Saudi Arabia (Alotaibi, 2014; Omar et al., 2020) that suggests a positive attitude toward CAT tools on the part of translation professionals. The result of our study show that Saudi freelance translators have a positive perception of CAT tools. However, the data also indicate that Saudi freelancers were natural and unsure when making statements regarding the effectiveness of CAT tools, suggesting a lack of awareness among Saudi freelancers of its advantages.

Conclusion

This study attempts to investigate the usage of CAT tool technology on the part of freelance Saudi translators. In this study, the researcher conducted a survey on 98 participants to gain insight into their personal characteristics, their CAT tool employment, and their perspective with regard to CAT tools technology. The results indicate that freelance Saudi translators tend to employ general-purpose technology applications such as MS word and MS PowerPoint. Significantly, the study suggests a positive perception when it comes to the use of CAT tools on the part of these translators.

However, there are some limitations to this study. Firstly, time limitation. The data collection and analysis were conducted over a two-week period, given that this study is part of the requirements associated with obtaining a master’s degree. Consequently, there were time limitations as the researcher was bounded by the time available in the course . As a result, the sample size is considered small for a survey-based study.

Finally , the researcher recommends conducting a study that covers a larger number of participants to get a more accurate result. In addition, the researcher recommends conducting a study that covers the remaining activities suggested by Fulford and Granell-Zafra (2005)in order to obtain a more in-depth review of the topic. The researcher finally recommends an investigating that focus the freelance certificate issued by the Saudi Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development (HRSD), and its relation to the employment of CAT tools by the Saudi freelance translators .

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Appendix A: Questionnaire Permission



Gmail Shuaa Althbaity <shuaah.althbaity@gmail.com>

Questionnaire Permission

Shuaa Althbaity <shuaah.althbaity@gmail.com> Fri, 3 Feb at 11:13 PM
To: <hooman_78h@yahoo.com>

Questionnaire Permission Letter

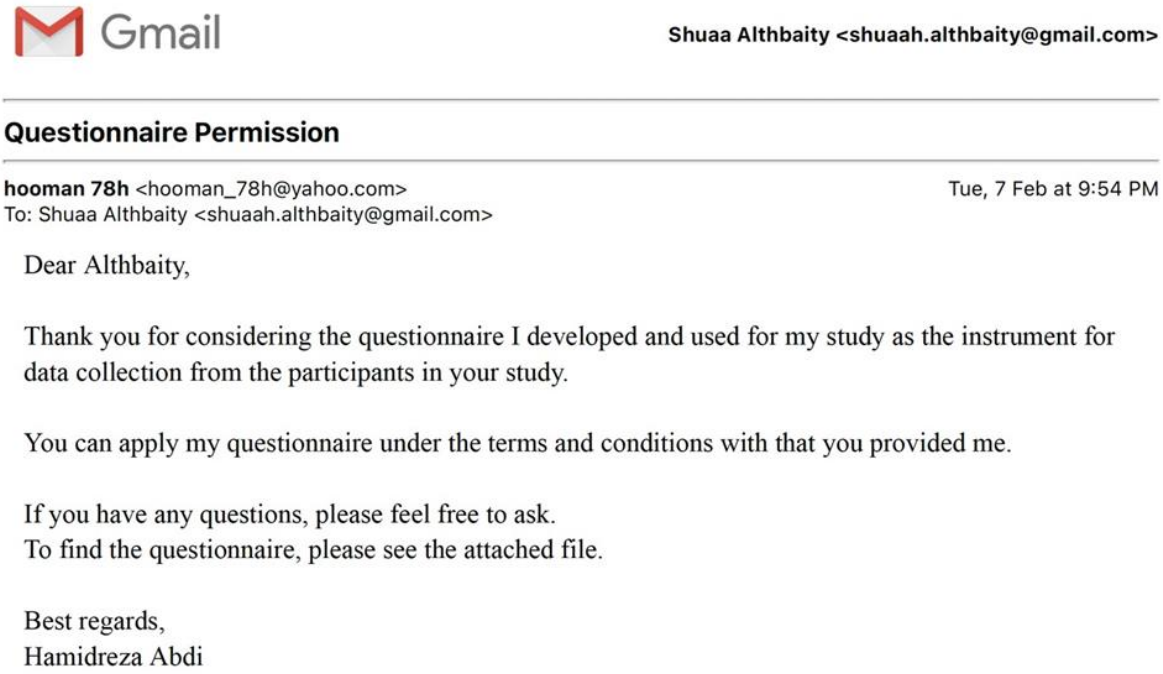
I am a master's student at the Saudi Electronic University completing a research project in Translation Technologies . I am writing to ask for a written permission to use the questionnaire you used in your study " Translation and Technology: Investigating the Employment of Computer-aided Translation (CAT) Tools among Iranian Freelance Translators "in my research study. I would like from you to share the questionnaire with me so I can use it in collecting data for my study .In addition to using the instrument, I also ask your permission to alter some of the questions to fit my participants and reproduce it in my research project appendix. I would like to use [and reproduce] your questionnaire under the following conditions:

- I will use the questionnaire only for my research study and will not sell or use it for any other purposes
- I will include a statement of attribution and copyright on all copies of the instrument. If you have a specific statement of attribution that you would like for me to include, please provide it in your response.
- At your request, I will send a copy of my completed research study to you upon completion of the study and/or provide a hyperlink to the final manuscript

If these are acceptable terms and conditions, please indicate so by replying to me through e-mail at shuaah.althbaity@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Shua'a Althbaity .



Gmail Shuaa Althbaity <shuaah.althbaity@gmail.com>

Questionnaire Permission

hooman 78h <hooman_78h@yahoo.com> Tue, 7 Feb at 9:54 PM
To: Shuaa Althbaity <shuaah.althbaity@gmail.com>

Dear Althbaity,

Thank you for considering the questionnaire I developed and used for my study as the instrument for data collection from the participants in your study.

You can apply my questionnaire under the terms and conditions with that you provided me.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.
To find the questionnaire, please see the attached file.

Best regards,
Hamidreza Abdi

Appendix B. Questionnaire for Saudi Freelance Translators

استبانة للمترجم الحر السعودي.

الفئة المستهدفة: المترجم الحر السعودي.

نطلب مساعدتكم في اكمال الاستبانة كجزء أساسي من مشروع بحثي يهدف لاستكشاف استخدام المترجم الحر السعودي الأدوات المساعدة الترجمة تُقّدر المشاركة في تعبئة الاستبانة 10 دقائق من وقتكم لإكمالها.

وصف الدراسة:

تهدف هذه الدراسة الكمية إلى استكشاف استخدام الأدوات المساعدة على الترجمة في مجال الترجمة الحرة في السعودية. حيث إن اجابة المترجم الحر السعودي على الاستبانة تساهم في الإجابة عن أسئلة البحث الرئيسة التي تسعى لمعرفة سمات المستخدمين، إلى أي مدى يستخدمها المترجم الحر وأراء المترجم الحر حول هذه التقنية

المخاطر المحتملة على المشاركين:

لا توجد أخطار متضمنة.

التكلفة والمدفوعات للمشاركين:

لا توجد تكلفة للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة. المشاركة طوعية تمأًما.

السرية:

المعلومات التي يتم الحصول عليها في هذه الدراسة سرية للغاية وسيتم الحفاظ على سرية هوية المشاركين.

وافقت هذه الاستبانة معايير اللجنة الدائمة لأخلاقيات البحث العلمي بالجامعة السعودية الإلكترونية، وفي حال وجود أي ملاحظات حول أخلاقيات هذه الاستبانة فنرجو لتواصل مع اللجنة الدائمة لأخلاقيات البحث العلمي عبر الإيميل التالي:

IRB@seu.edu.sa

لديك الحق في رفض المشاركة في هذه الاستبانة، والحق في الانسحاب والحق في إتلاف بياناتك في أي وقت أثناء الدراسة دون عقوبة ، وسيتم الاحتفاظ بالبيانات بمأمن لمدة سنتين.

☐ **أوافق على المشاركة**	☐ **لا أوافق على المشاركة**

مع تحياتي

الباحثة: شعاع حمد الثبيتي .

البريد الإلكتروني : Email:g210011871@seu.edu.sa/ Shuaah.althbaity @gmail.com

Questionnaire for Saudi Freelance Translators

Targeted population: Saudi Freelance Translators.

We are asking for your help with a survey as an essential part of a research project aiming to investigate the use of CAT tools technology among Saudi freelance translators . Participating in filling the survey may not exceed 10 minutes of your time to complete.

Description of the study:

The goal of this quantitative study is to learn about the usage of CAT tools in the Saudi freelance translation practice .Saudi Freelance translator will answer the survey to give insight on their usage of CAT tool technology. The main questions it aims to answer are: 1)What characteristics are associated with Saudi freelancers who use CAT tools in their work? 2)To what extent Saudi freelance translators employ CAT tools in their work ?3)How do Saudi freelancers view CAT tools?

Possible risks to participants:

There are NO risks involved.

Cost and payments to participants:

There is no cost for participation in this study. Participation is completely voluntary.

Confidentiality:

Information obtained in this study is strictly confidential and anonymity will be maintained. This survey met the standing criteria of the Saudi Electronic University Ethics Committee. If you have any concern regarding the ethics of this survey, please contact the Saudi Electronic University Ethics Committee at IRB@seu.edu.sa.

You have the right to refuse participation in this survey, the right to withdraw and the right to have your data destroyed during the study, without penalty. The data will be kept secured for two years.

☐ I give my consent to participate	☐ I don't give my consent to participate

With Regards,

Researcher: Shua'a Hamad ALTHBAITY Email:g210011871@seu.edu.sa/ Shuaah.althbaity @gmail.com

Please read the following questions; then answer them carefully. (Only one answer should bechosen per question unless it is required otherwise).

Part I: PERSONAL DETAILS

This part includes questions about demographic information, educational background, and ITknowledge and skills.

1. Which range age do you belong to?

   ☐ 20-29 ☐30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50-59 ☐ 60+

2. What is your gender?

   ☐ Male ☐ Female

3. Are you a Saudi citizen ?

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. What educational degree do you hold?

   ☐ Associate degree ☐ Bachelor degree

   ☐ Master degree ☐ Doctorate degree

5. Is your educational degree related to translation? ☐Yes ☐ NoIf Yes, which of the following do you hold?

   ☐ AD in Translation

   ☐ BA in Translation

☐ MA in Translation

☐ PhD in Translation

6. How long have you been translating?

☐ 1-4 ☐ 5-9 ☐ 10- 14 ☐ 15-20 ☐ 20+

7. How many hours do you dedicate to translation-related tasks each week?

☐ less than 11 hours ☐ 11-20 hours ☐ 21-30 hours ☐ 31-40 hours ☐ 40+

8. Which additional translation services are you responsible for across your translation task? (You may choose more than one option)

☐ Translation project management

☐ Language training courses/tutorials

☐ Subtitling/ Dubbing

9. Which language pairs do you translate?

you may choose more than one option

☐ Arabic to English and English to Arabic

☐ Arabic to France and France to Arabic

☐ Arabic to German and German to Arabic

☐ Other (please specify): ……..

10. Which main translation subject areas are you expert in? (You may choose more than one option)

☐ Marketing & Advertising ☐ Business & Economics

☐ Legal ☐ Social & Political Sciences

☐ Technical & technology ☐ Medical

☐ Other (please specify): ……

11. How did you acquire your computer skills? (You may choose more than one option)

☐ Self-taught

☐ Professional training courses

☐ Attending workshops and seminars run by professional institutes

☐ University/College courses

☐ Other (please specify): ……

12. What computer qualification do you hold?

☐ I hold no IT qualification

☐ School/College qualification

☐ Professional certificate

☐ University degree

☐ Other (please specify): …….

13. Do you have Freelance certificate form the Saudi Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development(HRSD)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

PART II: CAT Employment

This part contains questions related to CAT employed to support the first group of translationactivities, including document production, business management, and translation creation, aswell as your opinions about CAT tools.

14. Do you currently use word processing software? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, which of the following word-processing software do you use most often?

☐ Corel WordPerfect ☐ Google Docs

☐ MS word ☐ Kingsoft Writer

☐ Microsoft Notepad ☐ Text Maker

☐ Other (please specify): ……..

15. Do you currently use presentation software?

☐ Yes ☐ NoIf Yes,

which of the following presentation

☐ MS PowerPoint ☐ Haiku Deck

☐ CustomShow ☐ Prezi

☐ ClearSlide ☐ SlideDog

☐ Other (please specify): ……..

16. Do you currently use web publishing software?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, which of the following web publishing software do you use most often?

☐ Adobe Dreamweaver ☐ MS FrontPage

☐ Bluefish ☐ Google Web Designer

☐ Atom Text Editor ☐ Webflow

☐ Other (please specify): ……..

17. Do you currently use desktop publishing software? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, which of the following desktop publishing software do you use most often?

☐ FlipHTML5 ☐ Microsoft Publisher

☐ Adobe InDesign ☐ LibreOffice Draw

☐ Other (please specify): ……..

18. Do you currently use database software? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, which of the following database software do you use most often?

☐ MS Access ☐ Team Desk

☐ FileMaker ☐ Knack

☐ TablePlus ☐ Database Cloud Service

☐ Other (please specify): ……..

19. Do you currently use spreadsheet software? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, which of the following spreadsheet software services do you use most often?

☐ MS Excel ☐ Lotus 1-2-3

☐ Google Sheets ☐ Office 365

☐ Numbers ☐ WPS Office

☐ Other (please specify): ……..

20. Do you currently use accounting packages? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, which of the following accounting packages do you use most often?

☐ Sage ☐ FreshBooks

☐ QuickBooks ☐ Zoho Books

☐ NetSuite ERP ☐ Gusto

☐ Other (please specify): ……..

21. Do you currently use translation memory? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, which of the following translation memory do you use most often?

☐ Trados ☐ SDLX

☐ Deja Vu ☐ Babylon Translator

☐ Other (please specify): ……..

22. Do you currently use machine translations? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, which of the following machine translations do you use most often?

☐ Microsoft Translator ☐ Apertium

☐ Google Translate ☐ MateCat

☐ Other (please specify): …….

PART III: Freelancer Perspective of the CAT tools

1.	Which of the following statements about CAT tools do you agree with? (Please tick all the boxes that you apply and circle only one number per line)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Strongly Agree
2.	Using CAT is easier than traditional methods for information search and retrievalas well as communication	1	2	3	4	5
3.	CAT plays the main role in increasing translators' productivity and efficiency	1	2	3	4	5

4.	Using CAT facilitates the process of translation for translators to translate with more speed, equips companies to make saferand easier communications, and eliminates delays in receiving and transmitting texts	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Using CAT enables translators to produce higher quality translations at a cheaper price ina shorter time	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Using CAT can help translators to become more competitive in today's market	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Using CAT is not a need for translation activities	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Using CAT will not give translators any benefits	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Using CAT will not always be an effective method for information search and retrieval aswell as communication	1	2	3	4	5
10.	You will face many problems through CAT	1	2	3	4	5