

The Role of Target Readership Feedback in Improving Students' Self-Revised Translations: An Empirical Study

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Abstract—In translation training, translation revision to produce a high quality translation is an integral part of the translation process. Improvement on the translations produced by students during training are typically carried out by students themselves in the form of self-revision. The present empirical study aims to assess the improvement of student translations' quality in light of target readership assessment and feedback. It further sets out to measure student's attitudes towards target readership feedback in terms of effectiveness in assisting them to improve their translations. The findings reveal that target readership feedback had a considerable effect on improving the quality of student translations which made them more vigilant to analyzing target text context. Moreover, student translators perceived target readership feedback as valuable in improving their self-revised translations to enhance the quality of their translations. The study recommends employing target readership feedback as part of student translation training.

Index Terms—target readership feedback, student translators, acceptability, readability

I. INTRODUCTION

In translation practice, producing a high quality translation requires producing a faithful reflection of the original message of source language text (ST) while ensuring that the target language text (TLT) should read well and cause no comprehension problems for the target readers. Given the difference between distant languages such as English and Arabic, problems arise in lack of correspondence in words, phrases, sentences and whole texts as these two different languages function in different cultures (Baker, 1992; Ronowicz & Imanishi, 2003; Farghal & Almann, 2022). Therefore, achieving high quality translation poses a difficult task to beginner translators given their different levels of linguistic and translation skills as well as cultural knowledge in both languages.

Translation as a process, particularly in translation training, involves students following a sequence of phases: full comprehension of (ST), drafting of the (TT), and revising the final draft of that translation. Comprehension entails identifying potential problems of comprehension and production before undertaking the task of translation. The translator researches those problems using dictionaries or any available resources to solve them and reach full comprehension of the ST as a whole (Bell, 1991; Jakobson, 2002; Ronowicz et al., 2005). Of course, any unsolved problem of comprehension will result in translation errors in the TT. Full comprehension of the source text is crucial before embarking on the task of translation. For example, Nevue (2019) in her study on reading comprehension in translation training believes that developing skills of comprehension contributes to producing better translations. Therefore, analyses of both ST and TT are equally important to determine that translation choices are contextually based. During the drafting phase, the student translator makes choices of lexical items, grammar, and style that must be accurate, appropriate, and readable in the TT while faithfully maintaining the meaning of the ST. Even though, some errors are naturally corrected while drafting, it is in the revision phase that TT is checked for omissions, wrong lexical use, mistakes in grammar, punctuation and spelling in order to improve TT quality (Ronowicz et al., 2005).

Despite the fact that revision carried out by students on their TTs improves the end product, students as translation beginners struggle in choosing suitable lexical choices as in collocations, synonyms, and proper nouns in the TT. Numerous studies focused on the analysis of lexical choices in translations produced by both student and professional English-Arabic translators. For example, Alhihi (2015) analyzed errors in translated health documents, and Obeidat and Abu-Melhim (2017) analyzed errors in translated academic papers in an attempt to identify lexical problems in areas of synonymy, polysemy, collocations etc. In general, lexical choices are seen as the prominent contributor to incomprehensible translations (Shormani, 2014; Permatasari & Yuliasri, 2020; Saeed, 2023). Studies have shown that

even though student translators are translating into their native language, they commit grammatical errors in applying the grammatical rules of Arabic word order, agreement and pronouns (Al-Zahrani & Al Qahtani, 2021; Alanazi, 2023). Furthermore, students have been found to tend to transfer ST punctuation in their Arabic translations disregarding the different punctuation system used in Arabic (Al-Khalil, 2022).

Student translators, in the process of training, are developing their translation skills and therefore are required to practice analyzing the effect their translation mistakes have on the quality of translation with the eye of a target reader. Most research investigating translation revising procedures involve the translators themselves conducting revision through “self-revision” (Kasperavičienė & Horbačauskienė, 2020) or resorting to back translation (Behr, 2017), which all have been found to include shortcomings in improving quality. Students in particular get attached to the ST in fear of violating faithfulness to the original message and fail to pick up on the errors present in the TTs in what Baker (1992, p. 54) describes as the engrossed effect of the ST, i.e. tension between naturalness and accuracy in translation. Studies further proposed target readership assessment in the form of “other revision” (Kasperavičienė & Horbačauskienė, 2020) carried out by other translators, or “fresh look procedure” (Brunette, 2000) carried out by researchers themselves to assist in the assessment of translation quality.

The present study aimed at analyzing students’ translations to detect improvement in translation quality in light of target readership assessment and feedback, therefore the focus in reviewing studies below was on target readership assessment and feedback rather than translation quality assessment per se.

Previous research studies

Target readership assessment as a measure of translation quality was first introduced by Brunette (2000). However, the importance of the target reader, in general, as a target language receptor and his/her acceptability of the translation was raised previously by Nida and Taber (1969, p. 162). In particular, Brunette (2000, p. 173) introduces the term “fresh look procedure” in studies of translation quality assessment. However, the procedure suggested by Brunette (2000, p. 173) is different from that used in this study. The difference lies in who carries out the target readership assessment. According to Brunette’s (2000) proposal, it is the researcher who plays the role of the first reader in which he/she reads “the target text as an independent text to ensure it complies with current writing standards and the explicit or implicit requirements of the initiator. The person reviewing a text according to this procedure plays the role of “the first reader” and assesses the translated text from “the target audience’s point of view” (p. 172).

Target readership assessment has been tackled by studies empirically as a form of either self-revision or other revision in the translation process (Mossop, 2007, p. 12). Ipsen and Dam (2016) studied the link between revision procedure and quality in terms of detecting errors which involved subjects that revised translations with access to source texts, in other words, they performed “other revision”. The results of their study revealed that the comparative revision of source text and target text alone is not a good option.

Tabrizi (2022) investigated the dominant methods for translation evaluation of undergraduate students in final translation tests at Iranian universities. Tabrizi (2022) stated that the evaluation of a translated text as a finished product has often been accused of being a subjective process and argued that measuring the quality of translation is a subjective process that relies highly on human judgments. In other words, the main difficulty associated with translation evaluation is that it is often a very subjective exercise, even though there is little room for subjectivity in the translation classroom.

Both Kasperavičienė and Horbačauskienė (2020) and Ipsen and Dam (2016) illustrate that the term other-revision is sometimes interchangeably used with the term revision (which refers to the process when a person other than the translator corrects typographical, factual, logical, accuracy or other errors, if any, in order to improve the quality of the translated text. The study conducted by Kasperavičienė and Horbačauskienė investigated the perceptions of translation students on revision and other revision and tested their revision competence. Furthermore, Kasperavičienė and Horbačauskienė (2020, pp. 130-131) found that translation students identified revision competence as being very beneficial. However, their findings revealed that in self-revision students’ attention was focused on “language related issues” whereas in other-revision students emphasized the significance of interpersonal skills related to critical thinking, research and information mining”. Kasperavičienė and Horbačauskienė (2020, p. 118) conclude that “research-based know how in the training of the revision competence is still under-developed”. They further add that other revision could be carried out by a second translator or a non-translator (i.e., involves monolingual revision of the translated text only) (p. 118). Their study concluded that “The translation competence and the revision competence are undoubtedly highly interconnected” (2020, p. 130).

In terms of studies on English–Arabic translation quality Assessment, Al-Qinai (2000, p. 499) proposed an “eclectic practical model” which is a textually based assessment model of TTs. In his study, he adopts the parameters proposed by House (1981), Newmark (1988) and Hatim and Mason (1990) and highlights additional parameters. The parameters Al-Qinai (2000, p. 499) proposes in his model of TT quality assessment, tested on the analysis of TTs in advertising, include: textual typology (i.e., “the linguistic and narrative structure of ST and TT, textual function”), formal correspondence, coherence, cohesion, text pragmatics, lexical properties, and grammatical and syntactical equivalence. Al-Qinai (2000, p. 499) emphasizes that “the assessment of a translated text seeks to measure the degree of efficiency of the text with regard to the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic function of ST within the cultural frame” of both the source language and target language. Apart from his proposed model, he clearly emphasizes the shortcomings of his and

other models of assessment in lacking input from target readers. In fact Al-Qinai (2000) considers target readers as “the yardstick against which the success or failure of translation is measured” (p. 517).

Agriani et al. (2018) investigated errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar with a target readership assessment approach that consists of three aspects: readability, accuracy, and acceptability. They considered the aspect of readability to “refer to the understanding of the target reader to the translation work”. As for acceptability, it was seen by Agriani et al. (2018) to be “the appropriateness of translation to norms, rules and cultures that exist in the target language”. However, they considered the aspect of accuracy to be “related to the correspondence of content or messages between Source language and Target language” (pp. 225-226).

Not many studies have tackled thoroughly how revision can be utilized in improving students’ translations quality. In this study, our interest is neither to evaluate nor assess errors according to the different models or measures proposed in previous research (Nida & Taber, 1969; House, 1981; Newmark, 1988; Hatim & Mason, 1990; Al-Qinai, 2000) though these measures are to date adopted in many studies because they objectively analyze translation quality of both student and professional translators. This study is rather interested in whether target readership feedback can be utilized to assist student translators in improving the quality of their translation practice and revision competence. However, even though studies emphasized that the target readers who are the “ultimate end-users” are only interested in the quality of the product (Al-Qinai, 2000), no study has investigated whether target reader assessment could be carried out by fluent and linguistically competent target readers. Therefore, in this study, it is neither the researcher nor other translators, as proposed by previous studies, who carry out the quality assessment of the target text from a target reader’s perspective, i.e. revision. Along with the researchers’ ST and TT comparative analysis, this study includes the Arabic target readers’ perspective “which represents the end user” who carries out the assessment in an attempt to assist student translators in analyzing the TT. Furthermore, this study adopts those measures applicable in both researchers’ and target readership assessment mentioned in Al-Qinai (2000) and Agriani et al. (2018). The third aspect of accuracy proposed by Agriani et al. (2018) is understandably effective in researchers’ or second translator assessment when the target reader is comparing the ST with TT. However, it was excluded in this study, for the target readers as non-translators carrying out the target readership assessment and feedback obviously have no access to the ST to measure accuracy.

Therefore, the study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How does the target language readership assessment and feedback assist students in improving their self-revised translations?
2. What are the attitudes of subjects towards target readership assessment and its impact on the quality of their translations?

II. METHODS

A. Participants

The subjects in this study were 45 students enrolled in translation course (2) and nine fourth-year students (the target readers) enrolled in the Arabic department at Al-Hussein Bin Talal University (AHU). All participants are native speakers of Arabic. The translation student subjects were given several tasks of English–Arabic translation, prior to the study, to complete as part of the translation practice set out in the course. The target language readers selected have the linguistic and cultural competence to help identify errors in Arabic in areas such as lexical choices, grammar, and style.

B. Instruments

This study adopts two data collection instruments in order to detect the improvement in translation quality produced by the subject students in light of the target readership assessment. The first instrument was a translation task. The subjects were assigned the task of producing a high quality Arabic target text (TT) of the source text (ST). The selected ST assigned to subjects was an English general text, of 178 words, that described a sequence of series of events (see Appendix). Bell (1991), Gile (1995), Jakobsen (2002) and Ronowicz (2008) all emphasize that in order to produce a high quality translation, student translations should follow the three consecutive phases of translation: comprehension i.e. orientation, drafting, and end revision phase when producing their translation. In this study, the researchers incorporate these three phases in translation training in general and specifically in the course of training of this study’s subjects. However, the focus of this study is on the end revision phase, which entails that students check their translation draft for omissions, additions, appropriated lexical choices, grammatical, punctuation, and spelling mistakes.

The second data collection instrument was in the form of a questionnaire handed out to students upon resubmission of the final revised TTs. The researchers intended to elicit responses from the subjects on how target readership assessment impacted improving the quality of the TTs. The questionnaire consisted of six questions. The first question elicited responses from subjects on whether they followed the three phases of translation (i.e., orientation, drafting, and end revision) in order to achieve high quality translation before submitting the first version of the TT. Furthermore, the second question intended to elicit responses on whether students carefully checked the first version of the TT, prior to submission, for additions, omissions, lexical choices, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. As for the third question, the subjects were asked to specify the translation categories in which they received feedback from target readers which led to improving the first version of the TT. Finally, the fourth, fifth and sixth questions were intended to reveal whether the subjects felt target readership assessment assisted in improving the quality of the TTs and considered it a useful revision

translation tool, as well as whether they would consider having target readers check the TTs they produce when practicing translation in the future.

C. Data Collection Procedures

The first data collection procedure adapted to measure improvement in the translation quality of TTs involved a two phase comparative textual analysis of the STs and TTs. The initial phase involved the analysis of TTs submitted by subjects (the students of English) prior to the target readership assessment (the students of Arabic) and were only revised by students themselves (self-revision). The TTs were saved, assessed, and analyzed by the researchers following Baker's (1992) classification at the three levels of text (i.e., word level, above word level, grammar, and textual level) for omissions, additions, inappropriate lexical choices, grammatical mistakes, and stylistic mistakes (Baker, 1992).

In the second phase, the TTs resubmitted for post target readership assessment to identify the degree of improvement on the quality of the TTs in terms of comparing the numbers of errors found in the TTs prior to target readership assessment with those found in TTs post the target readership assessment. Prior to conducting this phase, the target readers were briefed about the research and were asked to read the Arabic translations. They were instructed to assess the translations as independent Arabic written texts to ensure that translated texts are regarded exclusively from the target audience's point of view to determine "how they will be received by the target culture" (Brunette, 2000, p. 172). They were also asked to identify problems of readability and comprehension, to detect violations of Arabic writing conventions in grammar, punctuation, and spelling, and to underline what may be considered erroneous, i.e. perceptible errors, in terms of naturalness and appropriateness (Farghal & Al-Hamly, 2004). The target readership assessment (i.e., other revision) was carried out according to the two aspects that define "high quality translation: acceptability, and readability" (Agriani et al., 2018, p. 225). Accordingly, taking into consideration the type of errors found in the self-revised TTs submitted by subjects, the checklist below was developed and given to the target readers:

- a. Inappropriate lexical choices in relation to context (e.g., synonyms, collocation, proper nouns)
- b. Non comprehensible parts
- c. Grammatical mistakes (e.g., word order, pronouns, agreement, etc.)
- d. Mistakes in punctuation, connectives, and spelling.

The checklist along with five translations was given to each of the nine target readers. The researchers explained the checklist to the target readers. Therefore, the target readership assessment was carried out according to the standards of Arabic editing and writing taking into account any mistakes that might hinder the comprehension or the smooth reading of the target text.

The final phase of data collection was group discussions. One to one discussions between the groups of subjects and the target language readers of the TT were carried out to give feedback and discuss the errors found. The discussions were held with no interference from the researchers. Then, the students were asked to resubmit the translations after taking into consideration the feedback they received from the target language readers. The final versions of the translations were analyzed again to track changes that subjects made on their translations. Finally, the subjects were also asked to answer a short questionnaire to assess their attitudes towards target readership assessment and its impact on improving the quality of the TTs.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Target Readership Feedback and Translation

In order to answer the first research question in this study on how target language readership assessment assists students in improving their translations and how these translations improve after the target language readership feedback, a comparative textual analysis between the ST and the 45 TTs submitted and self-revised by subjects was carried out. The purpose of the first analysis was to identify the most frequent translation errors in the subjects' TTs. The most frequent types of translation errors were found in lexical choices, grammar, and style. Three types of lexical choice errors were identified which were in the use of collocations, synonyms, and proper nouns. In terms of grammar, the errors found were those of word order, number agreement, and pronouns. As for stylistic errors, the most frequent errors were in punctuation and spelling. After the subjects received target readership feedback on their TTs and resubmitted their revised translations, another analysis was carried out to compare and track the improvement in correcting the identified translation errors in the first self-revised version of the TTs.

The results found in terms of comparing the total number of translation errors committed in each category mentioned above, as a result of the two phase analysis of both TTs, are presented in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TRANSLATION ERRORS FOUND IN THE SUBJECTS TTs (SELF-REVISION) AND THE ERRORS FOUND AFTER THE TARGET READERSHIP ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

Type of translation error		Number of translation errors in TTs (self-revision)	Number of translation errors after target readership assessment
Lexical choices	Collocations	143	10
	Synonyms	109	Nil
	Proper nouns	40	Nil
Grammar	Word order	93	Nil
	Gender agreement	75	Nil
	Pronouns	50	Nil
Style	Punctuation	300	Nil
	Spelling	60	Nil

(a). *Improvement in Lexical Choices*

1. *Collocations*

The results show that the most prominent translation errors found in the subjects' TTs prior to the target readership assessment were namely in the translation of the five collocations 'black Friday', 'keyhole', 'downstairs', 'lecture plan', and 'bad ones'. For example, the culture specific collocation 'black Friday' in the ST 'it was Friday 13th – Black Friday' was mistranslated by the majority of subjects, with 43 errors, through literal translation as '*Al-Jumaa Alsawdaa*: Black Friday', and '*Jummat Al-Shu'm*: Cursed Friday'. Other mistranslations appeared in the form of distortion as '*Al-Jumma Al-Bydaa*: White Friday' which was due to confusion with 'Black Friday' at the end of November which marks shopping season. The ST context of 'Friday the 13th' clearly shows the negative connotation it holds. However, in Arabic culture, 'Friday' is a religious sacred day and associating negativity to this day is not acceptable in the target culture. Since it does not collocate with 'cursed' nor 'Black', the mistranslations reflect a gap in the subjects' cultural competence (Asiri & Metwally, 2020) which, in turn, led to what Ababneh (2019) describes as "confusing cultural terms"(p. 128). The findings clearly illustrate the effect target readers had in clarifying the ramifications of using the incorrect collocation through highlighting the cultural unacceptability of such collocations, therefore led to the improvement of the revised translations in which the negativity was indirectly shifted from 'Friday' and resulted in an acceptable translation as 'Friday 13th – a Bad day'. It is clear that target readers input assisted subjects in rethinking their translations whether in terms of target culture acceptability or the realization of miscomprehension as in "White Friday". Evidently, the number of errors in translating this collocation decreased to two errors.

As for the second most problematic collocation, the improvement in subjects TTs was evident. In fact, the number of errors found in translating 'keyhole' which amounted to 39 errors dropped to three errors. Target readership assessment had a significant impact on subjects' improvement in this culturally bound collocation. Interestingly, the results revealed that mistranslations of 'keyhole' in the analyzed TTs were unanimously the result of literal translation as in '*Thoqab Al-Muftaah*: the key's hole'. It appears that the target reader feedback assisted subjects in realizing that in Arabic the correct collocation would be '*Thoqab Al-baab*: the door's hole' to capture the intended meaning of the ST 'he noticed that the keyhole was covered by a thick spider web'.

It is clear from the findings that student subjects struggled with translating the other three other collocations (i.e., downstairs, lecture plan, and bad ones). Apparently, comprehending collocations in the ST and producing correct collocations in the TT requires "cultural knowledge, more so than linguistics and semantic knowledge" (Mahdi & Yasin, 2015, p. 64). The mistranslations that occurred in the TTs were 20 errors in literally translating 'downstairs' as '*asfalalदारaj*: down the stairs'; 17 errors in literally translating 'lecture plan' as '*khatatalmuhathara*: lecture syllabus'; 14 errors in literally translating 'bad ones' which refers to "Friday the 13th" in the ST as '*alsayahokhra*: bad others'. The three produced collocations which appeared as unnatural collocates to the target readers were all corrected in the revised translations in which subjects were successful in both capturing the intended meaning of the original collocations and in providing natural collocates in the TTs.

The target readership assessment helped subjects understand that collocations "reveal the naturalness and cohesiveness of the text" which is a requirement for producing a high quality translation (Mahdi & Yasin, 2015, p. 64).

2. *Improvement in Translating Synonyms*

The results revealed that the total number of errors found in translating the four words, consecutively as they appeared in the ST, 'had', 'study', 'dust', and 'petrol' was a total of 109 errors of incorrect choice of synonyms. However, the target readership assessment proved relatively effective in which the number of errors was apparently reduced to 20 errors. For example, wrongful choices of synonyms in translating the word 'had' in the ST 'after Eddie had a cup of coffee' were evident in employing the inappropriate synonym '*tanawal*: ate' in 25 TTs. It appears that the subjects based their choices on wrongful contextual assumptions of the ST that is assuming the synonyms can be used "interchangeably in any context" (Bell, 1991, p. 91). Unlike English, Arabic distinguishes between having food and having drinks through the synonym '*Ihtasa*: drank'. Target readers' revision resulted in the correct choice of synonym in all 25 revised TTs. Similarly, the word 'study' in the ST 'he went up to the study to get a book' was translated using

unacceptable synonyms (30 errors) as *'lilderasah: to study'* and *'ghurfat al-derasah: room for studying'*. The inappropriate synonyms were identified by the target readers as they seemed culturally odd choices, for in Arabic the 'study' in a house is referred to as *'ghurfat al-maktab: office room'*. The improved versions recorded no errors in employing the correct synonym of the two words; in fact, the TTs clearly showed that the correct choice of synonym was contextually appropriate to the TT culture.

Moreover, choosing the appropriate synonym for translating the word 'dust' in the ST 'he decided to dust the study after getting back from work' seemed to be the most problematic for the subjects. The results revealed that 40 TTs mistakenly employed what Baker (1992) refers to as the "general word" instead of choosing the appropriate "specific word" (pp. 26-27). The subjects seemed to have resorted to selecting the readily general meaning of *'younathef: clean'* rather than selecting the appropriate specific meaning of *'yanfud: dust'* when the cleaning involves dust in Arabic. The target readership assessment assisted the subjects in improving the revised TTs in that the choice of the correct synonym was 100% in the 40 TTs. Another evident improvement in selecting appropriate synonyms, as a result of target readers' feedback, was in the translation of the words 'petrol' and 'had'. The word 'petrol' was transliterated in 14 TTs as *'betrol: petrol'*, whereas in the revised 14 TTs it was translated as *'Wuhood: fuel'* which is the appropriate synonym specific to cars according to the context of the ST.

The findings coincide with Aqel's (2019) conclusion that "translating synonyms" is "determined by the context" and that differences between the two languages "stem from the cultural variations" (p. 41). The improvement in the quality of selecting appropriate synonyms in the revised TTs is a clear indication that target readers assisted in endorsing the importance of considering TT's contextual appropriateness in the selection of synonyms.

3. Improvement in Translating Proper Nouns

In the data analyzed for the translation of proper nouns, the only two proper names evident in the ST were 'Allen' and 'Eddie'. The translation errors found concerning these two names in the TTs were in the form of incorrect transliteration. In specific, the findings show that 25 TTs provided incorrect phonetic transcription of 'Eddie' as *'Aydee'* which matches the same phonetic transcription of the Arabic word *'Aydee: hands'*. Similarly, the proper name 'Allen' was incorrectly transliterated in 19 TTs as *'Al-an: now'*. The subjects were trained in class on how to translate proper names through correct phonetic transcription using proper Arabic diacritics to avoid hindering the smooth reading of the translations for TT readers. The errors in translating proper nouns could be attributed to negligence and lack of research skills on behalf of the student translators (Dweik & Al-Sayyed, 2016) which, in turn, led to compromising the smooth reading of the TT which is an integral part of producing high quality translations. It is evidently clear that the target readership assessment picked up on those errors as the TT did not make sense with the incorrect renditions. However, the improved renditions showed that the subjects double checked their phonetic transcription, based on target readers' feedback, and managed to produce correct transliteration employing the correct diacritics for both proper names as well as employing brackets to make it clear that it is a foreign name to avoid confusion with similar Arabic words sharing the similar phonetic transcription.

Interestingly, the feedback of the target readers in the case of proper nouns seemed to have shown the subjects how serious the ramifications of incorrect transliteration may have on the target reader. Typically, students revise their translations as part of their end revision phase in the translation process and do not pick up on such errors because they have access to the ST and overlook the fact that the TT should read well for the target reader causing no ambiguity that may hinder comprehension.

(b). Improvement in Grammar Use

The findings in this study regarding grammatical errors committed in the TTs fall in line with the findings of Jannah et al. (2022) in that students tended to follow the word order of the ST and therefore "produce sentences that are not in accordance with the target language" (p. 9). Saraireh (2014, p. 203) rightly pointed out, through analyzing grammatical errors in students' translations, that "competence in the SL and TL grammatical systems is "extremely vital for the process of translation" in order to produce correct TTs. In class, subjects are taught the grammatical differences between English and Arabic, and they are specifically trained on how to change the word order when translating into Arabic (i.e., verb-subject-object). The findings indicated that the subjects' errors were namely in word order (90 errors), gender agreement (75 errors), and use of pronouns (50 errors).

Failure among translation students to follow the word order of the target language according to Al-Jarf (2007) is attributed to their "inability to recognize the difference between English and Arabic word orders" as well as their "inability to examine the syntactic context" of the ST and not neglect the "syntactic shift" required in the TT (p. 307). Evidently, the incorrect word order hindered target readership comprehension in what appeared to be a foreign structure in the TTs. Taking into account that the target readers major in Arabic language, the feedback given on word order was constructive and had an evident impact on the revised translation in which grammatical errors in word order were all corrected by the subjects.

Gender agreement and pronouns in terms of errors were to some degree interrelated in cases where subjects mistakenly miscomprehended the proper noun 'Allen' in the ST as a female. Therefore, the TTs reflected inconsistent gender references, through inflected and independent pronouns, to the same proper noun. For example, 'his' and 'him' in the ST 'so he had Allen, his neighbor, push-start it. He thanked him for the great help' were mistranslated as

'*Jaratoha*: her neighbor' in some cases and as '*shakraha*: thanked her' in other cases. The inconsistency was evident when subjects got the first pronoun correct and failed in the other and vice versa. This, in turn, caused confusion for the target reader trying to make sense of which is the correct reference as the pronouns resulted in gender agreement errors in the inflected words showing reference. It should be noted that other types of agreement, such as number agreement, were excluded from the analysis as no errors appeared in TTs concerning the use of these types of agreement.

Full comprehension of the ST in which pronoun references are correctly identified should have avoided subjects committing such and similar mistakes. Lack of linguistic competence and revision could be the main factors contributing to making such errors. However, the role of target readers in highlighting the inconsistencies and incorrect gender agreement forms proved effective, for the revised TTs were clear of errors in pronouns and gender agreement. The subjects were apparently reminded by the target readers that there are rules that govern the use of pronouns and agreement and have an impact on the cohesion and coherence of the TTs. This clearly falls in line with Al-Jarf's (2000, p. 13) findings in that the "mastery of the agreement system in standard Arabic can be improved by improving the teaching-learning situation".

It should be noted that some errors of unjustified omissions and additions were present in subjects' TTs which were mainly due to omitting/ adding prepositions or due to lack of comprehension resulting in unnecessary additions or omissions. Apparently, target readers uncovered that something was missing in some TTs in what seemed to be incomprehensible to them. So, alarming the subjects of parts being missing or unclear led them to go back and compare the ST with the TT to compensate for the omission or rethink the translation choices in case of additions.

(c). *Improvement in Punctuation Marks and Spelling*

The ST, as mentioned before, is a paragraph that reports a sequence of events. Subjects have received translation training on similar text type in terms of style prior to the task assigned for the purpose of this study. Interestingly, subjects were to a high degree successful in employing appropriate connectives in the TTs since Arabic style in listing events requires connectives. The 300 errors found in the subjects' self-revised translations were mainly in wrongful use of full stops which violates Arabic style in narrating a sequence of events that requires using a comma followed by 'and' as a connective. So, due to the differences "between punctuation systems and their functions in both English and Arabic, students commit errors" which resulted in hindering comprehension for the target readers (Al-Khalil, 2022, p. 87). The target readers easily picked up on all punctuation errors which were a clear reflection of the ST punctuation marks as they seemed odd for Arabic writing style. Consequently, all errors reported in punctuation were corrected in the final translations submitted after the target readership feedback.

Spelling is a key functional aspect of writing and poor spelling in TTs can hinder and interrupt smooth readability for the target reader (Agriani, 2018, p. 227). The analysis revealed only 60 instances of spelling mistakes in the TTs and all were corrected as a result of target readership feedback. The mistakes were mainly in the use of the diacritic '*hamza*' which represents a glottal stop over the letter 'A' in Arabic. Other spelling mistakes included using '*taamaftuHah*' instead of '*taamarbuTah*' and '*Haa*' instead of '*taamarbuTah*' with '*sukoon*' at the end of words. These letters sound the same and therefore constitute a difficulty even for native speakers of Arabic in writing. However, these errors could have been avoided by the subjects through paying attention to the presence or absence of final diacritical marks as '*taskeen*'. The feedback given to subjects on these errors resulted in correcting them all in the final translation versions.

B. *Attitudes Toward Target Readership Feedback*

To answer the second research question, a statistical analysis was performed to determine the responses regarding the attitudes of participants towards target readership assessment and its impact on the quality of their translations. In general, the results revealed that the sample had a positive attitude towards target readership assessment feedback and its impact on improving the quality of their TTs. Receiving direct feedback from the readers is an effective revision tool for any translation task since it enhances the quality of TTs. Furthermore, it increases the translators' awareness of target language conventions and codes as well as their tendency to make common mistakes. The results presented in Table 2 below shows the percentages of positive responses for each item. The responses to items 1 and 2 indicate that the majority of the English sample followed the three phases of translation and rechecked their TTs for any possible errors, to produce high quality TTs.

TABLE 2
TARGET READERSHIP ASSESSMENT ITEMS (POSITIVE RESPONSES IN PERCENTAGES)

Items	Frequency (%)
1. You followed the three phases of translation (i.e., orientation, drafting, and revision) to produce a high quality translation of your translation task.	92
2. The translation you submitted to the target readers was carefully checked for omissions, additions, lexical choices, grammar, spelling, and punctuation before submission.	84
3. The target readership feedback on your translation improved your final draft of the translation.	77
4. You would consider having target readers of Arabic read your English-Arabic translation to check your translations on the future.	80
5. Target readership assessment can be considered a useful revision tool to produce high quality translations.	73

The study sample had the opportunity to have their TTs revised by Arabic language experts. The target readers' feedback addressed different types of errors using the checklist provided to them, which covered all possible types. Table 3 below shows the types of errors and the percentages of commonly committed mistakes. This study sample examined the types of errors and highlighted the Arabic target readers' feedback in their TTs. Most errors were grammatical (81%), spelling related and punctuation errors (75%) considering the differences between Arabic and English grammar and writing styles. Other errors were found in synonymy (67%), omissions and additions (65%), and proper nouns (53%). Moreover, feedback highlighted collocational errors (75%), emphasizing a lack of awareness of cultural differences. Previous findings regarding the target readership feedback provide clear evidence of its effective role as an assistive tool in enhancing the quality of TTs.

TABLE 3
STUDENT SUBJECTS' RESPONSES TO TARGET READERS' FEEDBACK

The target readership feedback revealed translation mistakes in:	Frequencies (%)
1. Grammar	81
2. Collocations	75
3. Synonyms	67
4. Proper nouns	53
5. Spelling and punctuation	75
6. others (additions and omissions)	65

There is no doubt that self-revision is required as a phase of producing quality TTs, however, Borg (2018, p. 31) examined the effect of self-revision on TTs and found that "translator's self-revisions tend to bring the target text closer to the source text, in other words they literalize the translation". Therefore, employing a fresh look procedure in the form of target readership feedback, as shown in this study, can enhance the quality of the TTs in terms of accuracy, acceptability and readability.

IV. CONCLUSION

The aim of this empirical study was to identify the effect target readership assessment and feedback had on improving the quality of subjects' self-revised translations. The findings evidently illustrated the improvement through the number of corrections undertaken by subjects as a result of implementing the target readership feedback. This was further confirmed through the subjects' positive responses to target readership feedback. Improvement in TTs was evident in lexical choices, grammar, punctuation and spelling. The analysis of the improved TTs revealed high accuracy, acceptability, and readability due to target readership feedback resulting in what could be considered as high quality translations (Agriani et al., 2018).

Utilizing target readership feedback as part of translation training not only assists in improving translation quality but also gives students the chance to have access to the target reader who lies at the other end of the translation process and represents the target language and culture. The importance of implementing such revision procedures in translation training has also been stressed by Kasperavičienė and Horbačauskienė (2020, pp. 125-126) as they have found that students highly value the effect "other revision", i.e., target readership assessment, has on improving word choices, grammar, punctuation and spelling in the TTs. Therefore, further analysis on how target readership assessment and feedback improve students' translation performance in other translation areas not covered by this study would be beneficial. Furthermore, a longitudinal study with the same subjects undergoing translation training that implements target readership feedback could give useful implications on how it could be structured as part of translation training. From a pedagogical perspective, the researchers of this study recommend that further studies should be conducted to examine the effect of constructive target readership feedback on the quality of translating other specialized STs such as legal, literary, etc.

APPENDIX

Source Text

It was Friday 13th – "Black Friday". After Eddie had a cup of coffee downstairs, he went up to the study to get a book. He noticed that the keyhole was covered by a thick spider web. He decided to dust the study after getting back from work. And, sure enough, when he got in the car and started the engine it would not work, so he had his neighbour Allen to push-start it. Then (as he started driving) he noticed that he was also very low on petrol. However, he decided to continue the journey: he didn't want to be late for class. In addition, when he finally got to the university, he could not find a parking space and, consequently, he was late for class. It was then that he realised he had forgotten his watch. This was not such a big problem, since he could ask the students what the time was. But next he discovered that his lecture plan was missing from the folder -surely, this was going to be one of the bad ones.

(Modified extract adopted from Ronowicz, 2007, Introduction to translation theory and practice -course notes, Macquarie University, Sydney).

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