



Problems Faced by the Students of Abu-Isa Faculty of Education in Translating Non-Finite Verbs (-Ing and -Ed Participles)

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Abstract:

This study is mainly confined to the investigation of the difficulties encountered by the fourth-year students of University of Zawia — Abu-Isa Faculty of Education in rendering participial phrases from English into Arabic. This study is based on the hypothesis that those difficulties encountered are attributed to the lack of the student's linguistic competence, ranging from parts of speech to complex syntactic structures, and as a result, not producing the appropriate source language message—their translation incompetence.

Keywords: Participial Phrases, Non-Finite Verbs, English-Arabic Translation, Translation Difficulties, Translation Competence

المخلص :

يقتصر هذا البحث على استقصاء الصعوبات التي يواجهها طلبة السنة الرابعة بفرع أبو عيسى، جامعة الزاوية، عند ترجمة العبارات القائمة على اسم الفاعل واسم المفعول (Participial Phrases) من اللغة الإنجليزية إلى اللغة العربية. وتنطلق الدراسة من فرضية مفادها أن هذه الصعوبات تعود إلى ضعف الكفاءة اللغوية لدى الطلبة، بدءًا من الإلمام بأقسام الكلام ووصولًا إلى فهم التراكيب النحوية المعقدة، الأمر الذي ينعكس سلبيًا على قدرتهم على نقل المعنى المقصود في النص الأصلي إلى اللغة العربية بصورة سليمة، ويكشف عن قصور في كفاءتهم الترجمة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: العبارات القائمة على اسم الفاعل واسم المفعول، الأفعال غير المحددة، الترجمة من الإنجليزية إلى العربية، صعوبات الترجمة، الكفاءة الترجمة

1. 1 Introduction

Equivalence, the most important aspect of translation, is to produce an equivalent translation. That is, the translator comes up with an acceptable equivalent in Arabic lexically, grammatically, and textually. Lack of equivalence gives rise to problems and can pose many difficulties for the translator where there is no direct equivalent in the target language; he cannot snap his fingers to get the translation work done. However, relying not only on his competence in mastering both English and Arabic, but also with a good dictionary, the translator can deal with these difficulties right after identifying them.

1.2 Statement of the Research Issue

Many students face difficulties translating participial structures from English into Arabic language. These difficulties, among others, are chiefly ascribed to students' translation incompetence: being incapable of producing a proper translation. Besides, their linguistic incompetence where students fall short of comprehending syntactic structures, participial phrases included.

1.3 Methodology

In order to assess the students' ability in rendering participial phrases from English into Arabic, the researcher will conduct a translation test that entails the translation of one set of sentences representing the actual source of data. After the students have taken the test, the researcher will have analysed the students' translation of the sentences in question.

2. Literature Review

In reviewing the literature that discussed the topic of rendering the participial phrases, to my knowledge, two previous studies have been carried out:

Newmark (2001, 85), discussing transposition (shift) as a translation procedure, mentioned the participial constructions: "...German has active or passive participial constructions which are normally translated by adjective clause or non-finite participial clauses."

Hassan Ghazala (1995, 61) pointed out that students face a problem in translating the present participle. Example:

'Eating and drinking all day, he had a stomachache'.

(الأكل والشرب طوال اليوم، صار عنده ألم في المعدة)

This is not acceptable either grammatically or in meaning and resembles two separate, incomplete expressions:

(صار عنده ألم في المعدة) and (الأكل والشرب طوال اليوم)

However, the use of the equivalent present participle in Arabic is possible:

'Eating and drinking all day, he had a stomachache'.

(أكلًا وشاربًا طوال اليوم، صار عنده ألم في المعدة)

'Eating and drinking all day, he had a stomachache'.

(بسبب الأكل والشرب طوال اليوم، صار عنده ألم في المعدة)

The first word is the prepositional phrase which is added at the beginning to solve the grammatical problem here.

2.1 Verbal Phrases

Commencing with an overview of verbal phrases, a phrase, according to Frank (1985), can be defined as 'a group of words performing a single function'. A phrase that begins with a preposition is called a prepositional phrase; a phrase that begins with a form of a verb (either a participle or an infinitive) is called a verbal phrase.

It can be said that a verbal phrase can act as a single part of speech. Further, a writer, for instance, has choices: he might use a simple adjective in a sentence, or he might use a prepositional phrase instead, or use a participial phrase instead of either of the others.

Participles, gerunds and infinitives are the three kinds of verbals. Participles are adjectives (made of verbs), gerunds are nouns (made of verbs) and infinitives are nouns or modifiers (made of verbs). A verbal can be used as a single word, or it can join other words to become a phrase.

2.2 Definitions of Participial Phrases

As previously pointed out, a phrase is a group of words without a subject and a verb, used as a single word in a sentence.

Participial phrase: The boy kicking the ball is my brother. 'kicking the ball' is used as an adjective modifying the word/noun 'boy'.

Gerund phrase: Going to school is fun. 'Going to school' is used as a subject of 'is'.

Infinitive phrase: She wanted to know that. 'To know that' is used as a direct object of 'wanted'.

2.2.3 The Participle as a Modifier

The participle is a modifier. Both the present and past participle forms are used as modifiers of nouns and pronouns. Examples:

We read an interesting book. It is interesting.

['Interesting' modifies the noun 'book' and the pronoun 'it'].

The pleased customer returned the following day.

['Pleased' modifies the noun 'customer'].

A participle is a modifier and can be a phrase.

Present Participle Phrase:

Drinking coffee, she listened to her brother's story.

'Drinking coffee' modifies the pronoun 'she'.

Past Participle Phrase:

'Cooked in wine', snails are a great luxury in many parts of the world. So is the case here, the whole phrase 'cooked in wine' modifies the plural noun 'snails'.

A participial is a verb form used as an adjective:

Active participles: The howling dog [a dog that is howling].

The screaming child [a child that is screaming].

Passive participles: Broken toys [Toys that have been broken].

Rotted timbers [timbers that have been rotted].

Though they do the work of modifiers, not of verbs, participles are like verbs in that they can have objects, complements, and modifiers of their own. Together with these words, they form participial phrases that are used to modify nouns and pronouns:

'Grabbing a sandwich from the tray', Tom hurried to the door.

[The whole participial phrase modifies 'Tom'. Inside the phrase 'sandwich' is the object of 'grabbing'; 'from the tray' is an adverb modifying 'grabbing'].

'Having been warned about his temper', Laura wasn't surprised at his outburst. [The whole phrase modifies 'Laura'. 'About his temper' is an adverb phrase modifying 'have been warned'. Notice that a participle, like a verb, may be more than one word—having been warned].

A participle may modify a word, right in the phrase itself:

'His voice trembling with anger', he ordered us to leave. [The participle 'trembling' modifies 'voice'].

Dan was slouched in a corner of the seat, 'his head covered with a newspaper'. [The participle 'covered' modifies 'head'].

A phrase of this kind, containing a participle and the word it modifies, is called an absolute phrase. Absolute here means 'independent'; the phrase, in other words, has no grammatical connection with the rest of the sentence. But it is related in meaning, since it adds descriptive details to the statement, according to F.C. Scott (1955, 147).

Modifying phrases are made up of its objects, complements, and modifiers. With these words, they form participial phrases that are used to modify nouns and pronouns. Consider the sentences below where the notion is magnified through examples:

'Feeling cold and lonely', I went downstairs and sat in front of the television. Here, the participial phrase 'feeling cold and lonely' modifies the pronoun 'I'. 'Cold and lonely' is the complement of 'feeling'.

Finding out that he couldn't remember a word of the letter either, the goaler replied: 'The light is indeed dim, Sir'.

The whole participial phrase 'finding out that ... either', modifies the noun 'goaler'. 'That clause' is the object of 'finding'.

Further, according to Thomson and Martinet (1980, 243), a present participle can replace a relative clause. Examples:

People who wish to visit the caves ... People wishing to visit the caves.

Children who need medical attention ... Children needing medical attention.

A map which marks the political boundaries ... A map marking the political boundaries.

2.3 Meaning and Usage of Participial Phrases

It is worth mentioning that the writer would like to go into details emphasizing the notion of meaning of the participial phrases on the grounds that this is exactly the area where students have difficulty comprehending these constructions and where students' errors in translation are ascribed to (Klella, 2026). Meaning has different levels and dimensions as far as participial constructions are concerned and students need to take that into consideration.

2.3.1 Cause

A participle may indicate the meaning of cause, i.e., to explain something or why someone did something. In such a case, the participle usually comes first.

Examples:

Feeling tired, I went to bed early. (because I was tired).

Having already seen the film twice, I didn't want to go to the cinema. (because I already had seen it twice).

The present participle can replace as/since + subject + verb, i.e., it can help to explain the action which follows:

Knowing that he would be able to buy food on his journey, he took large supplies with him = as he knew etc. according to Thomson and Martinet (1980, 242).

2.3.2 Result

Thomson and Martinet (1980, 242) also point out that a present participle can be used to express result. When the second action forms part of the first or is a result of it, we can express the second action by a present participle:

She went out, slamming the door. He fired, wounding one of the bandits.

2.3.3 Means or Manner

Participial phrases, as Frank (1985, 89) states, used in final position may express means or manner with respect to the subject. Examples:

He sat there staring at the wall. He earns a living driving a truck.

2.3.4 Time or Cause

Participial phrases may indicate time or cause. Such phrases are more likely to occur in initial position than in final position. Examples:

Having finished her house work, she sat down to watch television. (after)

Walking along the street, I met a friend. (while or when)

When one action is immediately followed by another by the same subject, the first action can often be expressed by a present participle.

He opened the drawer and took out a revolver: opening the drawer he took out a revolver.

Thomson and Martinet (1980, 241). Having said that, when one action happens before another action, having + past participle can be used for the first action. Example:

Having found a hotel, they looked for somewhere to have dinner.

It is worth mentioning that students do not find it easy and straightforward to distinguish between the general form of the present participle and the perfect form in usage.

3. Data Collection and Analysis

The researcher provides and analyses the data of the test given aiming to investigate the difficulties that the fourth-year students at Abu-Isa Faculty of Education face in translating participial constructions from English into Arabic.

To identify the problems encountered by the students in rendering the phrases into Arabic, students' written translations were the source of the data to be analysed. The overall number of students—20—participating in the test were asked to translate the same fifteen sentences from English into Arabic in forty-eight hours to carry out the test, with all students allowed to use dictionaries. Bilingual dictionary English-Arabic used by almost all participants. The fifteen sentences are taken from different sources with varying levels of difficulty.

It is worth mentioning that many other students and teachers of English and even some inspectors were given the test but not included in the study.

3.2 The Test Sentences

The following set of sentences in English represents the test given to the students in order to translate them into Arabic, coupled with the resources where they are taken from:

1. A military Jeep plowed into the barricades, killing three civilians. (Newsweek Magazine)
2. China has become the world's largest consumer, eclipsing the United States in many key industries. (Newsweek Magazine)
3. Having been caught in that situation, I knew exactly what to do. (Grammar book)

4. I flew to America with them, translating and trying to explain all the travel procedures. (Newsweek Magazine)
5. 'Think it over and get some rest', one man argued, patting a soldier on the shoulder. (Newsweek Magazine)
6. Watching my brother joke and chat with friends, I was nagged with a suspicion that he had lost twice. (Newsweek Magazine)
7. He insisted, saying he just wanted to be there. (Newsweek Magazine)
8. Having read this book before, I didn't like to read it again. (Grammar book)
9. The German company for manufacturing tyres in Mexico closed its factories, laying off thousands of workers. (DW TV Channel)
10. Bush, discussing his experience as a trouble shooter during his father's presidency, said he learned another lesson. (BBC TV Channel)
11. Being unemployed, he hasn't got a job. (Grammar book)
12. Today, living in Beijing's perpetual haze, I see the truth in what she said. (Newsweek Magazine)
13. Passing through Chengdu, the capital of Deng's home province, I barely recognized the place. (Newsweek Magazine)
14. The government gave in to all the demands put forward by the rebels, promising to change the constitution. (Nile TV Channel)
15. Tom, taking a key out of his pocket, opened the door. Taking a key out of his pocket, Tom opened the door. (Grammar book)

3.3 Data Analysis

According to the definitions and explanations previously mentioned concentrating on the significance of the comprehension of the meaning of participial phrases, a great deal of the analysis of the data will be done in line with the students dealing with such constructions in regard to their meaning. "We translate neither grammar, word, style, nor sound. What do we translate then? We always translate one thing only: Meaning" (Ghazala, 1995, 2).

3.3.1 Analysis of Student Translations

First, and most strangely, it must be pointed out that five out of nearly all the students' translations were near satisfactory, not quite satisfactory, with a mere one sentence as the most acceptable. Consider the following.

Example 1:

"A military Jeep plowed into the barricades, killing three civilians."

(اصطدمت سيارة الجيب العسكرية بالحواجز قتل ثلاث مدنيين)

Although the translation of the main clause was correct (اصطدمت سيارة الجيب العسكرية بالحواجز) the student missed out to translate well the participial phrase 'killing three civilians', using (قتل) the past form of the verb 'kill' with an incorrect gender reference—masculine, instead of (قتلت) تسبب في. The participial phrase could have better been rendered as (ومما أدى إلى مقتل / مقتل صلة الموصول).

Example 2:

The same student translated the sentence: "The government gave in to all the demands put forward by the rebels, promising to change the constitution" into:

(استلمت الحكومة لمطالب المتمردين بعد تغيير الدستور)

The translation of the main clause 'the government gave in ... rebels', into (استلمت الحكومة لمطالب المتمردين) is an acceptable one, whereas the key word 'promising' in the phrase 'promising to change the constitution', which was supposed to be rendered as 'وعدت' had been translated by the student into 'بعد' which is not in parallel with the verb of the main clause 'استلمت', as well as the lack of cohesion between the main clause and the participial phrase which could have been achieved using the conjunction 'و' in Arabic 'وعدت'. Better version: (استلمت الحكومة لمطالب المتمردين ووعدت بتغيير الدستور).

Example 3:

Another student translated the sentence "I flew to America with them, translating and trying to explain all the travel procedures" into:

(سافرت إلى أمريكا معهم وكنت أترجم وأشرح لهم عروض الرحلة)

The translated version: (سافرت إلى أمريكا معهم وكنت أترجم لهم وأشرح إجراءات السفر) seems to be more acceptable. The key words 'translating' and 'trying' in the phrase 'translating and trying to explain all the travel procedures' are translated into verbs: 'يترجم' and 'يشرح'.

Example 4:

Of all the twenty participants subject to the study, one student came up with the correct, acceptable translation of the English sentence: "A military Jeep plowed into the barricades, killing three civilians" as:

(اصطدمت سيارة الجيب العسكرية بالحواجز وتسبب في مقتل ثلاثة مدنيين)

Killing, the main word in the phrase, was translated into 'تسبب في', with the meaning of result implied, i.e., the car action resulted in the people's killing.

3.3.2 Types of Errors

Moreover, it can be said that students in error made virtually all kinds of errors, serious and silly, one can think of: lexical, grammatical and stylistic. To begin with, it is the problem of miscomprehension that resulted in failure on the students' part in producing satisfactory and sensible translations.

On the grounds that understanding of meaning takes its toll on the kind of translation they produce, which needs to be borne in mind when translating, students' main problem is their being unable to find the proper Arabic equivalent of the participial phrase.

3.3.3 Miscomprehension of Meaning

Examples of miscomprehension of the participial phrases and not translating them well are countless. The following further illustrate the point:

Example 1:

Tom, taking a key out of his pocket, opened the door.

Consider the students' translations:

'أخرج المفتاح من جيبه', 'أخرج المفتاح من خارج جيب الثوب', 'أخذ المفتاح من جيبه'

These translations are incorrect. This sentence: 'توم أخذ مفتاح ليس بجيبه لفتح الباب' is worse. Miscomprehending the meaning of the phrase in the sentence, the student translated the phrase with a negative notion, which is misleading. While some students left the sentence untranslated, others commented that the sentence was not a simple one, though it was the simplest of the fifteen sentences given in the test. The sentence will be translated as:

'أخرج توم المفتاح من جيبه وفتح الباب'. It is as simple as that. When one action happens before or after the other, there is a difference in meaning. 'The simple-ing form' can be used when the second action takes place right after the first one, opposed to 'having + past participle form' when one action happens before the other.

Example 2:

Being unemployed, he hasn't got a job" was translated into Arabic as:

'هو لا يملك عمل شخص عاطل / عاطل شخص'

Not able to understand the meaning of the word 'being', most students translated it as 'شخصي' or 'شخص', which is not correct and precise. Here, the participial word 'being', is meant to be used to indicate reason/explanation, i.e., because he is unemployed. Some students translated the main clause 'he hasn't got a job' as 'هو لا يملك عمل', leaving the participial phrase understated. Other students translated 'being' into 'كان'—'was', which is unacceptable.

'بسبب كونه عاطلاً عن العمل، لم يمكنه الحصول على وظيفة' is the correct and sensible translation.

Example 3:

"Having read this book before, I didn't like to read it again."

This sentence was rendered as: 'هل قرأت هذا الكتاب من قبل، أنا لا أريد أن أقرأه مرة أخرى'

It can clearly be noticed that the student went too far, turning the affirmative participial phrase 'Having read this book before' into a question, which is misleading. If the student were aware of the notion of reason behind the meaning of the phrase, he would come up with a much better translation. (See chapter two)

Another incorrect version proves students' inability to spot the right meaning of the phrase:

'يملك قراءة هذا الكتاب', 'قبل أن أقرأ هذا الكتاب'

So is the case with the following sentence:

"Having been caught in that situation before, I knew exactly what to do."

With lack of better understanding of the meaning of the phrase, students' translations of the phrase 'Having been caught in that situation' are:

'اختناق الموقع', 'هل أمسك في هذا الموقف', 'يملك ظرف حرج', 'أمسك في تلك الحالة'

These translations are meaningless. They are unacceptable as they do not convey the original meaning that the phrase implies. It is an obvious indication that students do not understand the intended meaning.

3.3.5 Time Notions in Participial Phrases

Time is one of the notions that participial phrases express—after, when or while an action happens. Participial phrases, like adverbial clauses, may indicate time (Frank, 1985, 91). The following are the English sentences with their Arabic counterparts, model translations, as opposed to the students' translations commented on later:

Model Translations:

Bush, discussing his experience as a trouble shooter during his father's presidency, said he learned another lesson."

قال الرئيس بوش لدى مناقشته لتجربته في حل النزاعات السياسية أثناء فترة رئاسة أبيه بأنه تعلم درساً آخر.

"Watching my brother joke and chat with friends, I was nagged with a suspicion that he had lost twice."

ولدي مشاهدة شقيقي يمزح ويتبادل الحديث مع أصدقائه، راودتني شكوك بأنه كان قد خسر مرتين.

"Passing through Chengdu, the capital of Deng's home province, I barely recognized the place."

لدى مروري بشنقدو، عاصمة المقاطعة التي ينحدر منها دنغ، بالكاد عرفت المكان.

"Today, living in Beijing's perpetual haze, I see the truth in what she said."

والآن بينما أعيش في ضباب بكين المستمر، أدرك أنها كانت محقة فيما قالت.

The key words in the participial phrases: discussing, watching, passing, living are translated into: 'وبينما' 'لدى' is 'طرف' 'أعيش' 'ولدى مروري' 'ولدى مشاهدة' 'ولدى مناقشته'.

Students' Translations:

"Watching my brother joke and chat with friends, I was nagged with a suspicion that he had lost twice."

'مراقبة النكتة ودرشة أخي مع أصدقائه، أنا انزعجت مع الشك الذي خسر مرتين'

'أنا رأيت أخي ينكت مع صديقه أنا شككت أنه خرج عن وعيه'

'مشاهدة أخي يمزح مع أصدقائه جعلني منزعج'

'انزعجت بمراقبتي له وهو يمزح مع أصدقائه'

"Today, living in Beijing's perpetual haze, I see the truth in what she said."

'اليوم العيش في بكين أرى حقيقة ما قالت'

'اليوم عشت في بكين دائمة الرطوبة والغبار أنا رأيت في حقيقة ماذا هي قالت'

'أنا أرى الحقيقة في ماذا هي قالت العيش في رطوبة جوية بكين مستمر دائم اليوم'

"Bush, discussing his experience as a trouble shooter during his father's presidency, said he learned another lesson."

'مناقشة تجارية كمدمر مشكلة خلال رئاسة الأب قال هو تعلم درس آخر'

'أكتسب بوش خبرته من خلال حكم أبيه وقال بأنه تعلم درس آخر'

'ناقش تجربته ومشكلة إطلاق النار خلال رئاسة أبيه قال هو تعلم درس آخر'

Obviously, in these examples, students completely failed to find the Arabic equivalents for the English participial phrases, based on the very simple definition of translation—to find the equivalent word or expression in the target language. The students' translations are haphazard combinations of words with no sense or rather very bizarre sense. Undoubtedly, the meanings of time, while/when, embedded in the participial are unfamiliar to students and therefore, pose a problem for them in comprehension and translation.

Likewise, participial phrases, used in final position may express means or manner with respect to the subject, according to Frank (1985, 89). Notably, apart from meaning, it is obvious that there is no problem grasping the exact meaning of the key word in the phrases. Nevertheless, stylistically, students failed to produce a smooth translation.

Examples of the students' translations prove the argument:

"Think it over and get some rest", one man argued, patting a soldier on the shoulder.

'ربت الجندي على الكتف، رجل واحد جادل، فكر في الموضوع وارتح بعض الشيء'

'جندي طعنه رجل تشاجر فكر كثيراً وخذ راحة'

'جندي طعنه رجل يتشاجر'

'فكر في الموضوع وارتاح رجل يجادل وآخر يضرب على الكتف'

'أعتقد أنه أنت وخذ بعض الراحة رجل ما يناقش يضرب الجندي على كتفه'

Better version: قال رجل وهو يربت على كتف الجندي، فكر ملياً في الأمر واسترح قليلاً

The participial phrase 'patting a soldier on the shoulder' is translated into Arabic as 'وهو يربت على كتف' and 'الجندي', which is 'مبتدأ وخبر'.

· "He insisted, saying he just wanted to be there."

'وقال هو فقط يريدني هناك هو قرر'

'يقول فقط هو أراد أن يكون هناك أصر'

'ويقول هو فقط يريد ليكون هناك هو بصر'

'هو شديد الانتباه يحكم هو فقط يرغب أن يكون هناك'

'أصر قائلاً أنه سيكون هناك فحسب' is the correct and better version where the key word 'saying' in the phrase is translated into 'قائلاً', which is 'حال'.

One of the embedded meanings that the participial phrases incorporate is the notion of results, as Thomas and Martinet (1980, 242) state, when the second action is considered as a result of the first. Regarding students' translations, although the meaning of result that the phrase incorporates was not unclear, students were unable to phrase or make the phrase clear and correct in Arabic.

Examples:

"The German company for manufacturing tyres in Mexico closed its factories, laying off thousands of workers."

'ضياح الآلاف من العمال' ويتوقف على الآلاف في العمال'

'الشركة الألمانية لتصنيع الإطارات غلقت مصانعها. تسريح آلاف العمال' 'الآلاف تسريح عمل العمال'

Better version:

'أغلقت الشركة الألمانية لتصنيع الإطارات مصانعها في المكسيك مما أدى إلى تسريح الآلاف من العمال'

The participial phrase is translated into: 'مما أدى إلى تسريح الآلاف من العمال' which is (صلة موصول) in Arabic and where laying off of workers is a direct result of the closure of the factories.

It must be stressed that the preceding analysis of the students' translations asserts beyond doubt that comprehension of the meaning of the participial is considerably indispensable in producing satisfactory equivalents in the target language—Arabic. The translation of the participial phrases is usually difficult when there are different levels and dimensions of meaning. Mona Baker (1992, 10) argues that as translators, we are primarily concerned with communicating the overall meaning of a stretch of a language. Students are required to take this into account so they can produce acceptable Arabic translations of participials rather than a random collection of words.

Furthermore, not only did students fail in comprehending meaning, but also their translations were grammatically faulted, translating participial phrases into gerunds. Much to the expectations of the researcher, many students fell in the trap of translating participial phrases as gerunds. This is attributed to the fact that students have problems in rendering participial structures since there is a difficulty in distinguishing between participial phrases and gerunds. That is to say, the difficulty may lie in the similarity of both constructions in having the form -ing.

Having said that, distinguishing between the two constructions can easily be done once the main verb of the gerund is spotted. As for the participial phrases, the main verb is in the main clause not in the participial phrase.

The two following examples shed some more light:

Eclipsing the United States in many key industries is considered a national pride for the Chinese.

China has become the world's largest consumer, eclipsing the United States in many key industries.

The former is gerund phrase: 'Eclipsing the United States in many key industries' with eclipsing as the key word, translated into Arabic as 'التفوق'. The whole phrase functions as a subject of the verb 'is'.

The latter: 'Eclipsing the United States in many key industries' is a participial phrase modifying the noun 'China'. Inside, the phrase 'the United States' is the object of 'eclipsing'; 'in many key industries' is an adjective phrase modifies 'the United States'.

The suggested translation of both structures:

'يعد التفوق على الولايات المتحدة في عديدات الصناعات الرئيسية مدعاة لفخر الصينيين'

'أصبحت الصين المستهلك الأكبر في العالم، متفوقة على الولايات المتحدة في عديد من الصناعات الرئيسية'.

The word 'التفوق' is a gerund, whereas 'متفوقة على الولايات المتحدة في عديد من الصناعات الرئيسية' is the participial phrase. Further, 'Eating and drinking all day, he had a stomachache', (صار عنده ألم) (في المعدة

The translation is not accepted either grammatically or in meaning. The use of the equivalent present participial in Arabic is possible: (الأكل والشرب طوال اليوم، صار عنده ألم في المعدة) according to Ghazala (1995, 61).

In the light of the above explanation, here is a sample of the students' translation errors rendering participial phrases as gerunds:

• I flew to America with them, translating and trying to explain all the travel procedures.

ترجمة ومحاولة / Translating and trying

• 'Think it over and get some rest', one man argued, patting a soldier on the shoulder.

ربت / Patting

• Watching my brother joke and chat with friends, I was nagged with a suspicion that he had lost twice.

مشاهدة / Watching

• Having been caught in that situation, I knew exactly what to do.

قراءة / Having read

• The German company for manufacturing tyres in Mexico closed its factories, laying off thousands of workers.

Laying / تسريح

- Bush, discussing his experience as a trouble shooter during his father's presidency, said he learned another lesson.

Discussing / مناقشة

- Today, living in Beijing's perpetual haze, I see the truth in what she said.

Living / معيشة

- Passing through Chengdu, the capital of Deng's home province, I barely recognized the place.

Passing / عبور

- The government gave in to all the demands put forward by the rebels, promising to change the constitution.

Promising / وعد

China has become the world's largest consumer, eclipsing the United States in many key industries.

Eclipsing / كسوف

Word-for-Word Translation

Mentioning students' failure in comprehending the meaning of participial phrases, which led to mistranslation, on the other end of the spectrum, students were unable to produce a proper translation in Arabic, using unsuitable approach—word-for-word translation. An approach is 'the way in which a translator renders the meaning of a source language word, phrase or sentence' (Gaber, 2005, 59).

Students wrongly commit themselves to literal word-for-word translation in an unusual way, in some cases bewildering. In their translations, students use words in isolation, which is very serious. According to Newmark (1988), literal translation, however, still has its defenders. Newmark who is careful to distinguish literal translation from word-to-word translation maintains that literal translation is correct and must not be avoided if it secures referential and pragmatic equivalent meaning to the original. Also, students are not capable of understanding words in their special context where understanding words according to context is undoubtedly most important.

'Literal translation is, therefore acceptable, but only when possible and on one condition: when it is a literal translation of the meaning of words in context and in Arabic order' (Ghazala, 1995, 86). Word-for-word translation is to translate each word in an English sentence into its equivalents in Arabic in the same word order, Ghazala states.

Consider the following examples of students' translations that illustrate the point further:

One student translated the sentence "He insisted, saying he just wanted to be there" as 'هو يصر، يقول هو فقط يريد يكون هناك'. Clearly, this version of translation, word for word, is not acceptable in Arabic. The use of, say, 'هو' in the main clause and the participial phrase is unnecessary. Also, the student mistranslated 'insisted' as 'يصر' indicating present. Besides, the translation of the participial phrase is not the desired one. We can say: 'أصر قائلاً أنه يريد أن يكون موجود هناك فحسب'.

• "Being unemployed, he hasn't got a job" was rendered as 'عاطل شخص عاطل'. 'هو يملك عمل شخص عاطل', mistranslated, is not a part of Arabic grammar, the adjective 'عاطل' should come after the noun 'شخص'. Better version: 'بسبب كونه عاطل عن العمل، لم يمكنه الحصول على وظيفة'. Another student's translation: 'بدأ عاطل'.

"China has become the world's largest consumer, eclipsing the United States in many key industries."

'...الصين أصبحت العالم أضخم الاستهلاك'

'الصين أصبحت العالم أكبر الاستهلاك ومشاركة الولايات المتحدة في عديد مفاتيح الصناعات'

'كسوف الشمس الولايات المتحدة في عديد مفاتيح الصناعات'

· 'يملك قراءة هذا الكتاب': "Having read this book"

· "The government gave in to all the demands put forward ..."

'... الحكومة أعطى كل المطلب تضع نحو'

· "... said he learned another lesson."

'قال هو تعلم درس آخر ...'

· "Bush, discussing his experience as a trouble shooter during his father's presidency, said he learned another lesson."

'تعلم هو قال رئاسة أبائه أثناء خلال مشاكل كما تجربته يناقش بوش درس آخر'

· "Today, living in Beijing's perpetual haze, I see the truth in what she said."

'اليوم العيش في بكين أنا أرى حقيقة ما قالتها'

It can be concluded that such translations are strange, wrong and meaningless where students perceive translation as the rendering of individual words only.

Dividing Sentences into Separate Units

Additionally, it is logical to suggest that one of the serious errors, most notable, which students made when translating participial phrases was dividing the sentence into two separate units: the main clause and the participial phrase. In other words, strangely, the participial phrase could considerably be seen as a combination of words that do not relate to the main clause, which is another example of a complete miscomprehension.

Examples illustrate more:

"The government gave in to all the demands put forward by the rebels, promising to change the constitution."

(استلمت الحكومة لكل مطالب من قبل الثوار، يعد تغيير الدستور)

"A military Jeep plowed into the barricades, killing three civilians."

(سيارة عسكرية داخل أسوار، قُتل ثلاث مدنيين)

· "I flew to America with them, translating and trying to explain all the travel procedures."

'أنا سافرت إلى أمريكا معهم، ترجمة(*) ومحاولة لتوضيح كل إجراءات السفر'

Today, living in Beijing's perpetual haze, I see the truth in what she said."

'العيش في سديم بكين الدائم، أنا أرى الحقيقة في الذي قالت'

· "Having read this book before, I didn't like to read it again."

'وقبل قراءة هذا الكتاب، أنا لا أحب قراءته مرة ثانية'

· "Having been caught in that situation, I knew exactly what to do."

'يملك ظرف حرج، أنا أعرف ماذا يفعل بالضبط'

Dictionary Use Errors

It remains to say that among the errors committed by students were those that are related to dictionary use. As in the case of the translations of many of the students, it is certainly true that students used dictionary improperly, failing to rely on context for figuring out the accurate meaning of the word. That is to say, students were unable to make the correct choice when looking up words in their dictionaries and as a result that led to producing incorrect translations.

The following are some examples of the students' translations, looking up words and then translating them incorrectly:

Word Incorrect Translation

China خزفية

consumer استهلاك

key مفتاح / يقفل

industries زراعة

shoulder رقبته

plowed داخل

tyres صمغ

manufacture تصدير

argued تشاجر

eclipsing كسوف الشمس / مشاركة / تفتح

patting طعنه / دعم

trouble shooter مشكلة إطلاق النار / حلال مشاكل

being شخص

caught مسك / مقبوض عليه / ظرف خرج

This is a mere drop in the ocean given the scale of the problem where many students could not determine the relevant sense of the word using a dictionary.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has taken a modest step, among others, in investigating the difficulties encountered by students in rendering the participial phrases from English into Arabic.

The findings of the study of the students' translations, based on the data analysis reveals that the fourth-year students of Abu-Isa Faculty of Education taking part in the study more or less have largely failed to come up with the appropriate equivalents in Arabic. The TL Arabic is less explicit and precise due to the miscomprehension of the participial structures and the student's inability to produce satisfactory translations, not to mention many other points of linguistic failure.

In other words, the students' failure comes down to the fact that they do have little or no knowledge of many grammatical structures, participial phrases are included, though the sentences used in the test are well formed and neither complex nor complicated.

5.1 Reasons for Difficulties

In the light of this, concerning the difficulties the students face, whether there are possible solutions and given the fact that there are problems in translation, generally speaking, and there should be solutions, the researcher tend to propose some suggestions as solutions tackling these difficulties.

To begin with, it must be mentioned that there are some reasons behind the difficulty of comprehending and translating the participial structures:

First, it is the fact that these structures have no alternatives in Arabic. Second, such structures have not been, for years and years, included in the courses of study. Third, students themselves take part of blame in the sense that they do not take the trouble to study and understand them.

5.2 Suggested Solutions

With respect to the solutions suggested, in the first place, and referring to the reasons mentioned, solutions should start right from there. These syntactic structures need to be a part and parcel and indispensable to the curriculum that students study. Besides that, students have to roll up their sleeves to study and get familiarized with these phrases so to put them into good use and have them translated in a straightforward way. It is a fact that the more students identify them, the more they understand them better and translate them effectively.

Likewise, one of the facets of dealing with the problem is that students can adopt applying the solution of, according to meaning embedded, translating the participial structures into verbs (أفعال) and prepositional phrase (جار ومجرور), and adverb (حال) for instance, since these structures have no alternatives in Arabic language. Furthermore, another suggestion or way of taming the difficulties students face translating participial phrases into Arabic lies in the fact that students need to be mindful of translating participial phrases into gerunds, which most students do resulting in many baseless translations. It is because of the difficulty in distinguishing between gerunds and participial phrases since both structures have the same form—base/verb + ing. Therefore, students need not to mistake one for the another because each has its distinctive function which is different from the other.

It may be added, as a part of the solution regarding context, that students need to take into account grasping meaning in light with the preceding and following words in the one sentence, which is a prime factor in figuring out the accurate meaning and translating well accordingly.

5.4 Recommendations

The researcher proposes the following recommendations:

- Participial structures are commonly used in English. They are influential and important especially in written language. Therefore, a translator needs to be fully aware of comprehending such constructions and rendering them very effectively.
- Moreover, comprehending the meaning of such phrases is only half of the picture. Students have to produce the appropriate translation using the very suitable technique.
- Students are supposed to work very hard for mastering the structures of the participial phrases, which continue to trouble them, as well as the other syntactic structures of English which are deemed to be essential to the reporting of any experience.
- Further reading is recommended, some of the reference books used in this study in particular, which are compelling and very useful.
- Further studies are highly recommended where researchers can dig deeper, leaving no stone unturned so that conclusions can be generalized.

- As for the researcher, carrying out this study, which is a venture into a new territory, has proved to be incredibly beneficial.

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