
The Role of Background Knowledge in Translation Quality

Maryam Radfar*

M.A., Department of Translation Studies, Imam Reza International University, Mashhad, Iran

Received: September 15, 2022

Accepted: January 28, 2023

Abstract

It is well established that knowledge has strong effects on text comprehension and memory. There are a few studies about the role of background knowledge on translation quality. The major aim of the present study is to investigate the role of background knowledge in the translation quality of drama. For this aim, the literary translations of the two groups were compared. There was one experimental group and one control group in the present study. Participants in both groups were 60 undergraduate students enrolled in English literature at Ferdowsi University. The participants in both groups were given a pretest. The pretest examined the quality of translation. Based on Farahzad's model of translation quality assessment (Farahzad, 1992), the qualities of the translations were studied. Then, the students in the experimental group received special treatment (Farahzad, 1992). They acquired good background knowledge of the play of *An Enemy of the People* based on Strangman and Hall's model of activation of background knowledge (Strangman et al., 2009). They studied the play and analyzed its different aspects. The students in the control group did not improve their background knowledge about the source text. They did not receive any treatment. After the treatment, the two groups were given a posttest and were asked to translate the text that was extracted from the play. The results of the present study show that having access to background information and subject matter knowledge affects translation quality.

Keywords: background knowledge, drama, drama translation, linguistic knowledge, subject-matter knowledge

INTRODUCTION

A translator draws on all kinds of knowledge while translating, and such knowledge falls broadly under two types: linguistic and extra linguistic. In addition, s/he must be equipped with translation methodology, i.e., knowledge and skills involving problem identification, problem-solving, decision-making, subject research skills, etc. (Kim, 2006)

According to Kim (2006) the translation process demands knowledge and skills that range from adequately researching the social and cultural context of the source text, to making the best possible use of dictionaries, general reference books and the Internet (Kim, 2006).

A translator should obtain a detailed understanding of the content of each sentence. Field-specific knowledge is essential for successfully recognizing and understanding the ideas and the linguistic tools that translators employ to convey information, to introduce a particular concept, or to argue a certain position. One may build upon an accurate analysis of a sentence to establish the main points of the sentence with sufficient background knowledge. References such as dictionaries, glossaries, encyclopedias, and websites prove their worth during this process. In specific, the translator must double-check the source text, refer to additional references, or (preferably) both when the apparent meaning (based on textual analysis) of the source text conflicts

*Corresponding Author's Email:
mmradfar65@gmail.com

either with the translator's field-specific knowledge or with information gathered from reliable references.

Kim (2006) suggested that a translator needs to have a broad base of specialized knowledge as well as world knowledge. Also, s/he should keep in mind that the more effort or involvement in the translation, the better the result. Most translation work involves more or less specialized texts, it is likely that extra linguistic knowledge, rather than linguistic competence itself, plays an important role in the success of translation (Kim, 2006).

He (2006) states that one necessary prerequisite for successful comprehension is knowledge. For textual understanding the type of knowledge available and how it is presented is more essential than what language the subject speaks. He also emphasizes that a translator cannot translate successfully without understanding a source text. And s/he is very likely to face comprehension problems (of different sorts and in varying degrees) at one point or another. Inferencing and using reference materials appear to be the two main methods utilized to address comprehension issues. In other words, a translator does not know an ST item (lack of linguistic competence). A translator can infer meaning or refer to a dictionary (use of translation methodology). Here, one cannot say for sure whether inferencing as a comprehension strategy is better than using a dictionary. However, research shows that excessive and unguided use of dictionaries, especially bilingual dictionaries, is not advisable. Which strategy to use, or which to use first, depends largely on whether or not the relevant knowledge is available (Kim, 2006).

James Davis (Davis, 2002) as cited in (Kim, 2006) suggested, when carrying out translation tasks, students must have the necessary resources to deal with the material such as dictionaries, glossaries, and any other resources such as websites devoted to translation or terminology, online discussion groups concerning translation, and magazines and journals.

According to Dancette (Dancette, 1997) as cited in (Kim, 2006) there are three levels at which comprehension operates in translation: linguistic level, textual level, and notional level

in his study shows that a translator who can conceptualize 'contextual' meaning at the national level based on linguistic and extra linguistic knowledge can translate more successfully and creatively. On the other hand, a translator who remains at the linguistic and textual levels and fails to fully access the notional level tends at best to find the 'literal' meaning and ends up with less successful translation. This study indicates that extra linguistic knowledge is important in the construction of comprehension because it enables a translator to comprehend a text at deeper, notional levels (Kim, 2006).

The difficulty of the translation seemed to be related to the lack of access to the specialized knowledge or background knowledge about the subject matter. This supports the observation made earlier that knowledge about the subject matter is a major element in determining the quality of the product (Kim, 2006).

It is well established that knowledge has strong effects on text comprehension and memory (Moravcsik & Kintsch, 1993). Activation of background knowledge is a necessary condition to reach good text comprehension (McNamara & Kintsch, 1996). Kintsch (1998) showed the necessity of prior knowledge for constructing a comprehensive representation of the text (Kintsch, 1988)

Readers without that prior knowledge could not make correct elaborative inferences, resulting in poorer comprehension (Macizo & Bajo, 2009). Thus background knowledge, just as language plays a role in the comprehension of texts.

Background knowledge is one of the requirements that a translator/ an interpreter has to meet in order to work successfully in his/her job. Background knowledge is the knowledge of the world which the reader and listeners makes use of in interpreting a piece of spoken or written language. It is essential for a translator/ an interpreter to have knowledge of every field, both the knowledge of current issues, important issues and knowledge of daily life. To be successful in his/her work, a translator/ an interpreter needs to acquire as much knowledge as possible (Tran, no date, p. 11).

Background knowledge has been described as the key ingredient to reading comprehension. Background knowledge or prior knowledge is simply what someone already knows about a subject that will help him discover new information. For example, if someone reads a book about World War I, his/her prior knowledge about the War will help him/her understand what he /she is reading. Even if the book introduces new concepts, it will be easier for him/her to understand those concepts than if he/she has previous knowledge about World War I (Strangman et al., 2009).

Hirsch (1988) stated that without the background information needed for a given text, readers are effectively illiterate with regard to that text. He argued that quantitatively, too, background knowledge plays a major role in comprehension. He also emphasized that adequate background knowledge is an essential condition for successful communication (Hirsch Jr., 1988).

Subject-matter knowledge is one of the different kinds of background knowledge. It is the prior knowledge that someone already knows about a subject, that will help him/her gain new information (Strangman et al., 2009). Students need to be proficient in activating prior knowledge, integrating it with new information, and building new understandings. Students who lack sufficient background knowledge or subject matter knowledge are unable to activate it may struggle to access, participate, and progress throughout the general curriculum (Strangman et al., 2009).

Strangman and Hall (2009) mentioned that prior knowledge and background knowledge consist of more specific knowledge dimensions such as conceptual knowledge and metacognitive knowledge. Subject matter knowledge, strategy knowledge, personal knowledge, and self-knowledge are all specialized forms of prior knowledge/background knowledge (Strangman et al., 2009).

Strangman and Hall (2009) believe that students must become adept at activating prior knowledge, integrating it with new information, and constructing new understandings. Students who lack sufficient background knowledge or subject matter knowledge are

unable to activate it may struggle to access, participate, and progress throughout the general curriculum. Students and translators who lack sufficient subject matter knowledge are unable to comprehend the source text and analyze its topic. Based on Strangman, and Hall definitions of difficult vocabulary, translations of foreign phrases and explanations of difficult concepts would help the students to build their prior knowledge and subject matter knowledge about the source text and its topic (Strangman et al., 2009).

The lack of background knowledge cause major comprehension problems for translators. There are translation problems due to lack of background knowledge about the source text and its different aspects. Every translator is faced with the problem of comprehending the source texts although she/he knows the meaning of all words; in other words one of the difficulties in comprehending the source text and translating is caused by poor background knowledge. If the student's background knowledge is low, this can be a major obstacle to translation/interpretation. With poor background knowledge, sometimes a student fails to understand the written/ oral text even if she/he knows the meaning of the words. Inability to find equivalent cultural words, equivalent words and also to find equivalent terminology are also common difficulties that student face with due to their poor background knowledge (Tran, no date).

It is known by all translators, interpreters and students taking translation/ interpreting classes that background knowledge is a necessary factor in translation and interpreting process. Yet, to the most of them, the question of how much important background knowledge is in translation and why it plays such an important role in translation and interpreting success is not easy to answer. He claims that background knowledge has decisive effect on understanding a text (Tran, no date, p. 14).

Although it is true that the extent to which students will learn new content is dependent on factors such as skill of the teacher, the interest of the student, and the complexity of the content, the research literature supports one compelling fact: what students already

know about the content is one of the strong indicators of how well they will learn new information relative to the content. Commonly, researchers and theorists refer to what a person already knows about a topic as background knowledge (Marzano, 2004).

Readers without that prior knowledge could not make correct elaborative inferences, resulting in poorer comprehension (Macizo & Bajo, 2009). Thus, background knowledge, just as language plays a role in the comprehension of texts. They (2009) claimed that when translator's background knowledge is activated, he/she will comprehend the source text better.

Considering drama translation, Zuber-Skerritt (1988) stated that "drama translation is defined as the translation of the dramatic text from one language and culture into another and the transposition of the original, translated or adopted text onto the stage" (Zuber-Skerritt, 1988, p. 485). According to the American heritage dictionary of the English language (2011), Drama is also defined as a prose or verse composition, especially one telling a serious story, that is intended for representation by actors impersonating the characters and performing the dialogue and action ("Drama," 2011).

Several studies have been carried out about the important role of background knowledge by researchers and they examine the effect of background knowledge on second language comprehension. However, no study investigates the impact of the specialized form of background knowledge, subject matter knowledge on translation quality of drama. The present study is significant as it helps the readers to understand more about background knowledge and its impact on translation quality. Since having good subject matter knowledge helps the students to comprehend and understand the source text better, so it is important in translation and has an effective role in translation quality. Some translation problems are due to difficulties in comprehending the source text, thus background knowledge and subject matter knowledge help the students to solve some translation problems.

The present study investigates the role of background knowledge on translation quality

of drama. It specifically focuses on one of the specialized forms of prior knowledge/ background knowledge; the importance of subject matter knowledge. The researcher concentrates on the effect of having access to subject matter knowledge on translation quality of drama.

The study examined the impact of background knowledge, especially subject matter knowledge, on translation quality, addressing the following research question:

***RQ.** Does subject matter knowledge have any significant impact on translation quality?*

METHOD

Participants

The subjects participating in the study were selected from among both male and female undergraduate students of English literature (N=60) at Ferdowsi University of Mashhad.

Design of the Study

The study was quasi-experimental research and its aim was to carry out an analysis and description of background knowledge and its impact on translation quality. The present study was not true experimental research since the subjects were not selected randomly.

In order to measure the effect of the treatment, one pretest was administered before the treatment and one posttest was given to the participants after the treatment. The pretest and the posttest were designed to measure the students' level of translation proficiency. So the design of the present study was pretest/posttest design.

The study was quantitative research; it measured the translation quality of these two groups. The results of the first group were compared with the results of the second group. According to Farahzad's (1992) model of translation quality assessments (Farahzad, 1992), the translations of both groups were compared statistically.

Instrumentation and Materials

IELTS Academic Reading

Several instruments were used in this study. At first, the researcher examined the students'

level of reading comprehension proficiency through an IELTS test. In order to homogenize the students, the IELTS academic reading test was administered. The researcher used IELTS test because it is modular. It was an academic reading comprehension test chosen from Barron's IELTS. The IELTS test consisted of ten questions.

Pretest

A pretest was administered to measure the quality of translation of the students. The pretest consisted of one page of the play of *An Enemy of the People*. The researcher asked the students to translate the text. The source text consisted of 200 words.

Posttest

The posttest measured the quality of translation of the students. The free-response test was used. The posttest consisted of one page of the play of *An Enemy of the People*. The text consisted of 200 words.

Teaching Material

The play of *An Enemy of the People* was taught to the students in the experimental group. *An Enemy of the People* is a play which was written by Norwegian playwright *Henrik Ibsen*.

Background Knowledge Model

In the study, the researcher adopted Strangman's model of background knowledge (Strangman et al., 2009) for the basis of the research.

Strangman and Hall (2009) provide a definition for background knowledge. They describe background knowledge and prior knowledge as parent terms for many more specific knowledge dimensions such as conceptual knowledge and metacognitive knowledge. Subject matter knowledge, strategy knowledge, personal knowledge, and self-knowledge are all specialized forms of prior knowledge/background knowledge (Strangman et al., 2009).

Strangman and Hall (2009) suggest different strategies for building student's background knowledge (Strangman et al., 2009). One of the strategies is direct instruction. For example,

in one study, students who received direct instruction on relevant background information before reading an explanations or story texts showed significantly better reading comprehension than their classmates who received direct instruction on an irrelevant topics (Stevens, 1980) as cited in (Strangman et al., 2009).

They (2009) also believe direct instruction on background knowledge can be embedded into an approach such as previewing, where students are presented with introductory material before they read specific texts (Strangman et al., 2009). Such introductory material may contain important background information such as definitions of difficult new words, translations of foreign phrases, and explanations of difficult concepts. In a research by Graves et al. (Graves et al., 1983) as cited in (Strangman et al., 2009), students were given previews of narrative texts that included a plot synopsis, descriptive list of characters, and definitions of difficult words in the story. Thus, students received both a framework for understanding the stories and important background information. Not only did the students enjoy the preview, but they also greatly improved both their understanding and recall of the story.

Translation Quality Assessment Model

For the present study, a model of translation quality assessment was adopted as well. The researcher considered Farahzad's model of translation quality assessment for assessing the qualities of translations (Farahzad, 1992).

Data Collection Procedures

The aim of the present study was to carry out an analysis and description of background knowledge and to investigate its impact on translation quality. Therefore, for this aim the Persian translations of two different groups were compared.

At first, the researcher examined the students' level of reading comprehension. 100 undergraduate students of English literature of Ferdowsi University took IELTS test. In order to homogenize the students, the academic reading IELTS test was administered. The

researcher used IELTS test because it is modular. It was an academic reading comprehension test chosen from Barron's IELTS. The IELTS test consisted of ten questions. The researcher selected 60 students who acquired nearly the same scores. The scores were between 3 and 4. Descriptive statistics in Table 1 show that the means of the IELTS scores in 2 groups were nearly the same. There is no significant difference in the students' scores of IELTS reading test. So it can be statistically expressed that the students were homogenized in the level of reading comprehension proficiency.

When the subjects were homogenized in terms of the reading comprehension level, they were divided into two groups. The number of participants in each group was 30 students.

In the second phase, a pretest was administered to measure the quality of translation of the students. The pretest consisted of one page of the play of *An Enemy of the People*. The students were asked to translate the text. The source text consisted of 200 words. This type of item motivated examinees to treat the source text as a coherent whole rather than as a string of disconnected sentences. Then the researcher studied the quality of translation according to Farahzad's model of translation quality assessment and scored the translations (Farahzad, 1992).

There were one experimental group and one control group in the present study. Participants in both groups were 60 undergraduate students enrolled in English literature at Ferdowsi University. The experimental group received special treatment and acquired good background knowledge of the literary genre of drama according to Strangman and Hall's model of activation of background knowledge. One of the English literature professors instructed the students (Strangman et al., 2009). Dr. Askarzadeh was the instructor who taught the students the play of *An Enemy of the People*. He introduced the students to the characters of the play, and emphasized on the main idea of drama.

Based on Strangman and Hall's (2009) model of activation of background knowledge, the subjects in the experimental group were presented with introductory material before they read the play (Strangman et al., 2009).

Such introductory material included important background information such as definitions of difficult vocabulary, translations of foreign phrases, and explanations of difficult concepts. Therefore, the students became familiar with the topic of the story; they acquired good knowledge of the plot of the story, and its different themes, motifs, and symbols. The students in the experimental group studied the play of *An Enemy of the People* and different aspects of it. The students analyzed its major characters.

The time of instruction was about 8 hours in four sessions. So the subjects had sufficient time to improve their subject matter knowledge of the play.

The control group consisted of the students that received no treatment. The students were not taught the literary genre of drama. So the students in this group had no background knowledge about the source text. The control group was assigned a translation task without any background information and subject matter knowledge about the source text.

The students of both groups were given a posttest; the posttest measured the effects of the treatment. The posttest was designed according to Farahzad's (1992) model of translation quality assessment; the free-response test was used. This kind of test was an integrated test examining several components of translation at a time, such as comprehension of the source text, accuracy in terms of content, appropriateness of grammatical forms, choice of words, etc. (Farahzad, 1992). A piece of the play of *An Enemy of the People*, about one page of it, was given to both groups. The test assessed the quality of translation of the students.

Finally, the researcher collected and graded the tests. Based on Farahzad's model of translation quality assessment (Farahzad, 1992), the translations of each group were compared with each other and with the original text. Finally, the quality of translation of both groups was measured and compared statistically. The pretest scores of two groups were compared together and were compared with the posttest scores of both groups, also the scores of the posttest of both groups were compared together statistically.

Data Analysis

The pretest and posttest were administered to both groups. The tests examined the quality of translation of the subjects in both groups. The literary translations of 2 groups were compared together and with the original text. One group had good subject matter knowledge of the source text (the play of An Enemy of People), and the other group did not have any background knowledge of the source text. The researcher collected and graded the tests. As it was mentioned, the quality of translation of the students in both groups was assessed according to Farahzad's model of TQA (Farahzad, 1992).

RESULTS

The tests were collected and graded by the researcher. After the grading was completed, the results were transferred to the SPSS database for statistical analysis. The researcher statistically analyzed the data. The researcher used the current version of SPSS software in order to analyze the raw data sensibly.

As mentioned, in the first phase, the researcher examined the students' level of reading comprehension proficiency through an IELTS test. In order to homogenize the students, the academic reading IELTS test was administered. The means of the scores of both groups are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Group Statistics

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
IELTS	Control Group	30	3.617	.3869
	Experimental Group	30	3.583	.3957

Note. Descriptive statistics in Table 1 show that the means of the IELTS scores in 2 groups were nearly the same. So, it can be statistically expressed that the students in 2 groups were homogenized in the level of reading comprehension proficiency.

Table 2
Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for Equality of Means
	F	Sig.	t
Equal Variances Assumed	.000	.983	.330
Equal Variances Not Assumed			.330

Note. Levene's Test in Table 2 indicates that the group variances are equal and therefore, the assumption of homogeneity of variance comes true

Table 3
Group Statistics

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	Control Group	30	23.233	2.9028
	Experimental Group	30	23.633	2.9998

Note. Descriptive statistics in Table 3 show that there is not any significant difference in the means of pretest scores between the two groups

Table 4
Independent Samples Test

	T-test for Equality of Means	
	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest	Equal Variances Assumed	.602
	Equal Variances not Assumed	.602

Note. Levene's Test in Table 4 indicates that the group variances are equal ($p > .05$).

Table 5
Independent Samples Test

		T-test for Equality of Means	
		Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest	Equal Variances Assumed	58	.602
	Equal Variances not Assumed	57.937	.602

Note. The above table shows that there is not any significance difference in the pretest scores between the two groups ($P > .05$).

Table 6
Group Statistics

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
posttest	Control Group	30	24.333	2.9371	.5362
	Experimental Group	30	32.800	2.0661	.3772

Note. Table 6 indicates that the means of the posttest scores between the two groups are significantly different.

Table 7
Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means
		F	Sig.	t
posttest	Equal Variances Assumed	2.354	.130	-12.914
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			-12.914

Note. Levene's Test in Table 7 shows that the group variances are not equal.

Table 8
Independent Samples Test

		t-test for Equality of Means	
		df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Posttest	Equal Variances Assumed	58	.000
	Equal Variances Not Assumed	52.056	.000

Note. T-Test in Table 8 indicates that there is a significant difference between the posttest scores of two groups ($p < .05$). It is concluded that translation quality of the students in the experimental group were much better than those in the control group.

DISCUSSION

The pretest scores of both groups indicate that the subjects in 2 groups had difficulty in understanding the source text. The translations of both groups sounded unnatural and mostly inaccurate. The students failed to convey the message of the original text. The translators were unable to understand the main idea of the source text. The assessment of translation quality of the experimental group shows that subject matter knowledge is a statistically significant factor in translation quality.

The 30 subjects in the experimental group have been trained and became familiar with the main idea of the play, they analyzed and studied drama. They had sufficient time to improve their background and subject matter knowledge about the play of An Enemy of the

People. So they could successfully translate the source text. The students in the experimental group were able to understand the source text and convey the message of the original text. They applied their background knowledge into translations. They had no difficulty in finding equivalence. The style of the literary genre of drama was reproduced provided the paragraphs, sentences and words in the original or source text are faithfully, flexibly and satisfactorily transferred to the target or receptor language. As it was shown in the above tables, the quality of translation of the subjects in the experimental group was improved after the treatment.

The pretest and the posttest scores showed that the participants in the experimental group scored significantly higher than the partici-

pants in the control group. They applied their subject-matter knowledge into translations. In contrast with the subjects in the experimental group, those in the control group were unable to translate the source text accurately and naturally. The subjects in the control group failed to express the idea of the source language sentence although they knew the meanings of all words. They had difficulty in finding a suitable equivalent word. The subjects had problem with understanding the source text. The pretest and the posttest scores of the control group showed that the subjects' translation quality was not improved. Kim (2006) carried out an empirical research and investigated the effect of having access to background information of the translation. He examined the importance of background information and the impact of information quality and quantity on translation performance. Results indicate that having access to background information does have an effect on translation quality (Kim, 2006).

Tran (no date) carried out an experimental research and investigated the importance of background knowledge on translation and interpretation. He claims that background knowledge has decisive effect on understanding a text (Tran, no date).

The findings of the present study are in line with the previous study that mentioned above. The researcher concludes that background and subject matter knowledge is a statistically significant factor in translation quality. The subject, who has enough background information about the topic, would be able to understand the source text. And he/she can apply his/her knowledge into translation.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the present study show that background knowledge specifically subject matter knowledge has a significant impact on translation quality. The findings of the research emphasize not only the importance of subject matter knowledge, but also its significant role on translation quality of drama.

Results indicate that having access to subject-matter knowledge helps the translator to understand the source text better and translate the text successfully. The findings of the

research showed that subject matter knowledge influenced on the quality of translation.

So, the researcher concludes that subject-matter knowledge plays a critical role in successfully recognizing and understanding the concepts. Having access to background information and subject matter knowledge helps the translator to understand the source text better and to translate it successfully. The researcher claims that background knowledge has decisive effect on translation quality of drama. The lack of background knowledge causes major comprehension problems for translators. There are translation problems due to lack of background knowledge about the source text and its different aspects. Every translator is faced with the problem of comprehending the source texts although she/he knows the meaning of all words; in other words, one of the difficulties in comprehending the source text and translating is caused by poor background knowledge.

The role of background knowledge in drama translation is significant. Without having background knowledge about the drama text, the translator fails to preserve the style and the register of the source text. He/she would not be able to reproduce the style of the play.

The translator should be familiar with terminology and the style of the literary genre of drama. He/she should activate his/her background knowledge about the play. Theatrical translators must have enough background knowledge about the style of the literary genre of drama. The translator should be aware of all aspects of the source text. A translator, who does not have enough background knowledge about the play, may fail to render the allusion appropriately. A dramatic translation should be performable. The translator should write for the directors and the actors. The translator should produce performable translation. He/she should maintain the desired rhythm for performance. So, if the translator does not have background knowledge about the play, he/she fails to produce a performable translation.

The researcher carried out empirical research to investigate the role of subject-matter knowledge on translation quality of drama. The findings of the research show that background knowledge has an effective role on

translation quality. The significance of this study provides implications for teachers of translation. Firstly, translation teachers should be aware of the importance of background knowledge in translation quality. Therefore, this is necessary for teachers to find ways to increase the students' background knowledge. For example, the teacher can provide introductory material which includes important background information such as definitions of difficult vocabulary, translations of foreign phrases, and explanations of difficult concepts. Secondly, the teachers should also spend time in class doing activities that develop the students' background knowledge.

There are translation problems due to lack of background knowledge about the source text and its different aspects. Every translator is faced with the problem of comprehending the source texts although she/he knows the meaning of all words; in other words, one of the difficulties in comprehending the source text and translating is caused by poor background knowledge. The present study helps the students to solve some of their translation problems.

So, a translator must access to different kinds of knowledge in order to translate a text successfully. The present study helps the students to understand more about background knowledge and its impact on translation quality. Since having good subject matter knowledge helps the students to comprehend and understand the source text better, so it is important in translation and has an effective role in translation quality. The results of the research suggest the translators to improve their background and subject-matter knowledge of the source text before reading a text and translating it.

References

- Benhaddou, M. (1991). *Translation quality assessment: a situational/textual model for the evaluation of Arabic/English translations*. [PhD Thesis, University of Salford].
<http://usir.salford.ac.uk/id/eprint/2082>
- Dancette, J. (1997). Mapping meaning and comprehension processes in translation. *Cognitive processes in Translation and interpreting*.
- Davis, J. (2002). Teaching Japanese-to-English Translation. *Japan Association of Translators*.
<https://jat.org/news/articles>
- Drama. In. (2011). *American heritage dictionary of the English language*.
- Farahzad, F. (1992). Testing achievement in translation classes. In C. Dollerup & A. Loddegaard (Eds.), *Teaching Translation and Interpreting: Training Talent and Experience. Papers from the First Language International Conference, Elsinore, Denmark, 1991* (pp. 344). John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Graves, M. F., Cooke, C. L., & Laberge, M. J. (1983). Effects of previewing difficult short stories on low ability junior high school students' comprehension, recall, and attitudes. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 262-276.
- Hirsch Jr., E. D. (1988). *Cultural Literacy: what every American needs to know*. Random House USA Inc.
- Kim, H. (2006). The Influence of Background Information in Translation: Quantity vs. Quality or Both? *Meta :Journal des traducteurs*, 51, 328.
<https://doi.org/10.7202/013260ar>
- Kintsch, W. (1988). The Role of Knowledge in Discourse Comprehension: A Construction-Integration Model. *Psychol Rev*, 95(2), 163-182.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.95.2.163>
- Macizo ,P., & Bajo, M. T. (2009). Schema activation in translation and reading: A paradoxical effect. *Psicológica (Valencia)*, 30(1), 59-89.
- Marzano, R. J. (2004). *Building background knowledge for academic achievement : research on what works in schools*. Alexandria, VA : Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, [2004] ©2004.

- <https://search.library.wisc.edu/catalog/999967906202121>
- McNamara, D. S., & Kintsch, W. (1996). Learning from texts: Effects of prior knowledge and text coherence. *Discourse processes*, 22(3), 247-288. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01638539609544975>
- Moravcsik, J. E., & Kintsch, W. (1993). Writing Quality, Reading Skills, and Domain Knowledge as Factors in Text Comprehension. *Can J Exp Psychol*, 47(2), 360-374. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0078823>
- Stevens, K. C. (1980). The effect of background knowledge on the reading comprehension of ninth graders. *Journal of reading behavior*, 12(2), 151-154
- Strangman, N., Hall, T., & Meyer, A. (2009). *Background knowledge instruction and the implications for UDL implementation* .
- Tran, H. T. *The importance of background knowledge to students learning translation and interpreting*. University of Hufs, Vietnam.
- Zuber-Skerritt, O. (1988). Towards a Typology of Literary Translation: Drama Translation Science. *Meta*, 33(4), 485-490. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.7202/004168ar>

Biodata

Maryam Radfar has a master's degree in translation studies. She has been teaching translation courses at university. She is a university lecturer at Islamic Azad University of Mashhad and Imam Reza International University. She has authored a book on general English.

Email: mmradfar65@gmail.com

