

# **The Effectiveness of a CMC Course in Developing Some English Translation Skills in Light of beyond Constructivism for English Majors and Their Attitudes towards Translation**

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## **Abstract**

The present study aimed at developing English translation skills of the English majors through using a computer mediated communication (CMC) course. The main question of the study: “What is the effect of a CMC course in developing some English language translation skills in light of beyond constructivism for English majors and their attitudes towards it?”. The pre-post one experimental group design was used in the current study. The study sample consisted of 31 students in first year, English language department at the Faculty of Alsun, Minia University. The participants of the study received English translation skills instruction through the proposed CMC course activities of the website which was developed by the researcher for the purpose of the current study. The instruments and material of the study include: a pre-post translation online test, a questionnaire of learners’ perceptions about translation, a CMC translation course and a reflection log. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference at the level of 0.01 between the mean scores of the pre and the post translation test for the study participants. The qualitative results revealed that the attitudes of participants towards translation have been

changed positively after the CMC translation course, which means that CMC translation course of the current study is effective in developing some English translation skills of the English majors. Pedagogical implications suggest applying the techniques of computer mediated communications in teaching university courses.

**Key words:** computer-mediated communication, translation, beyond constructivism

## مستخلص البحث باللغة العربية

**العنوان:** فاعلية برنامج قائم على الإتصال الكمبيوترى فى تنمية بعض مهارات الترجمة الإنجليزية فى ضوء ما بعد البنائية لدى طلاب قسم اللغة الإنجليزية و اتجاهاتهم نحو الترجمة تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى تطوير مهارات الترجمة من و إلى اللغة الإنجليزية لدى طلاب قسم اللغة الإنجليزية و ذلك من خلال برنامج إتصال كمبيوترى لتطوير بعض مهارات الترجمة الإنجليزية فى ضوء ما بعد البنائية لدى طلاب قسم اللغة الإنجليزية. طبقت الدراسة المنهج شبه التجريبي المعتمد على الإختبار القبلى و البعدى لمجموعة واحدة، حيث اشتملت عينة الدراسة على (31) طالب و طالبة من طلاب الفرقة الأولى بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية، كلية الألسن - جامعة المنيا. حيث تلقى المشاركون بالدراسة شرحا و تطبيقا لمهارات الترجمة من و إلى الإنجليزية من خلال برنامج الدراسة المقترح القائم على الإتصال الكمبيوترى و الذى قام الباحث بتصميمه لغرض الدراسة الحالية. اشتملت أدوات الدراسة على إختبار إلكترونى قبلى/ بعدى لمهارات الترجمة، مقياس اتجاهات الطلاب نحو مادة الترجمة، برنامج الترجمة القائم على الإتصال الكمبيوترى و سجلات التأمل. وأوضحت نتائج الدراسة أن هناك فرق ذو دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى القيمة 0,01 بين متوسط درجات عينة الدراسة فى الإختبارين القبلى و البعدى للترجمة، و كذلك أوضحت النتائج أن اتجاهات المشاركين بالدراسة نحو الترجمة قد تغيرت بعد تطبيق برنامج الترجمة القائم على الإتصال الكمبيوترى، مما يدل على فاعلية برنامج الترجمة القائم على الإتصال الكمبيوترى الذى طبقته الدراسة فى تطوير مهارات الترجمة من و إلى اللغة الإنجليزية لدى طلاب قسم اللغة الإنجليزية. و اشتملت التوصيات التربوية للدراسة على أهمية الاستعانة بتقنيات الإتصال الكمبيوترى عند تدريس المقررات الجامعية و خاصة مقررات اللغات.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** إتصال كمبيوترى - ترجمة - ما بعد البنائية

## Introduction

Translation is the gateway for understanding others and their civilizations. It is obvious that translation plays an important role in human communication from the ancient time up until now.

Dagiliené (2012:124) states that translation is still ignored as a useful language learning tool to date due to the fact that the anti-translation side continues to believe that it is not a communicative activity.

Translation today is even more important than it was to the ancients as Wiersema (2004:14) maintained that translation is becoming an essential tool in enhancing intercultural understanding. Globalization imposes a heavy reliance on our communication with each other. Adewuni (2006) indicated that the continuous formulation of translation theories implies that human beings have still not yet satisfied their desire of perfection in translation, thus leaving room for further research. The translator shouldn't forget the age characteristics in selecting translation utterances which should be selected to equal the original text in the originality and common use. A good translator should be familiar with the culture, customs, and social settings of the source and target language speakers. He should also be familiar with different styles of speaking, and social norms of both languages.

Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) in its name is a rather foreign concept, but in reality, we have

subconsciously been using CMC all our lives. CMC refers to any manner of conversation or communication that is done through an electronic medium. It can be generally divided into two forms, synchronous communication and asynchronous communication. CMC is widely discussed in language learning because it provides opportunities for language learners to practice their language. For example, Warschauer (2005: 470) conducted several case studies on using email or discussion boards in different language classes. Warschauer claimed that information and communications technology “bridge the historic divide between speech and writing”. Thus, considerable concern has arisen over the reading and writing research in L2 due to the booming of the Internet.

Web-based media are changing the way individuals communicate and form relationships, but the use of such media for structured learning is new. Today almost every faculty member in a higher education institution has the ability to build a course website that enables interaction between students and faculty (Dornish & Land, 2012).

Chui's study (2005:65) pointed out that communication, when pedagogically employed, can lead to better classroom interaction and creative learning .this can also improve and build up students confidence and facilitate their writing skills in literacy classroom. CMC can help increase students' motivation to learn the foreign language, lower

their anxiety, increase their fluency in the target language, lead to improved intercultural competence and democratize classroom communication.

Brown (2007:13) refers to that beyond constructivism is the method where the educational organization stops presenting the content traditionally, but it considers training learners to find, treat, evaluate information and knowledge, to integrate with their practical and daily life to solve problems and transfer that knowledge to others, so learners should communicate through networks in this digital age.

### **Context of the Problem:**

Having interviewed some English majors from the Faculty of Alsun, Faculty of Education and Faculty of Arts, Minia University, and examining the scores of the first year English majors in the faculty of Alsun, it was found out that they suffer from some difficulties in translation from Arabic into English and vice versa such as the cultural aspects, using idioms, translating acronyms, and some other aspects.

The researcher decided to verify the existence of the problem in an accurate way, so he used two tools for this purpose. First, the researcher interviewed some English majors (10 students) and asked them the questions of the interview form. Some of them stated that they suffer from some difficulties in translation from English into Arabic and

vice versa. By analyzing their responses to the interview questions, the researcher found out the following:

- 70% stated that, they suffer from difficulties in some cultural aspects.
- 70% stated that, they suffer from difficulties in some composition skills.
- 90% stated that they suffer from difficulties using and understanding English expressions.
- 70% stated that, they are better in English translation into Arabic than from Arabic into English.
- 80% stated that they suffer from some difficulties in using idioms and abbreviations.

The second procedure that the researcher did to verify the problem is to interview some English majors to identify their trends towards translation and computer mediated communication (CMC) according to the simple interview form.

- 30% reported that, they did not use computer mediated communication.
- 90% reported that they like chatting and computer interaction.
- 60% reported that computer mediated communication is attractive.
- 50% reported that they don't like translation course.
- 90% reported that they want to know other cultures.

Therefore, English majors suffer from difficulties in translation from Arabic into English and vice versa.

### **Statement of the Problem:**

English majors suffer from some difficulties in using English expressions and translating English idioms in varied fields of translation, they also face difficulties in the composition skill when they translate from Arabic into English in addition to their problems in the cultural aspects of translation as they may misunderstand the context of the text because of the cultural aspect, so the present study attempts to investigate the following main question:

What is the effect of a CMC course in developing some English language translation skills in light of beyond constructivism for English majors and their attitudes towards it?

### **Hypotheses of the Study:**

- 1- There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores obtained by the study group on the pre and post-test of the skill of translating and using English idioms
- 2- There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores obtained by the study group on the pre and post-test of the skill of translating acronyms and abbreviations and understanding what they stand for.

- 3- There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores obtained by the study group on the pre and post-test of the skill of translating cultural aspects from Arabic into English
- 4- There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores obtained by the study group on the pre and post-test of the skill of translating cultural aspects from English into Arabic.
- 5- There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores obtained by the experimental group on the pre and post-test of the skill of composition.
- 6- There is a statistically significant difference between mean scores obtained by the study group on the pre and post translation test

### **Aims of the Study:**

The current study attempted to:

- 1- Develop some skills of translation from Arabic into English for English majors.
- 2- Develop some skills of translation from English into Arabic for English majors.
- 3- Identify the attitude of English majors towards translation.

### **Significance of the Study:**

The significance of the current study stem from the following considerations:

- 1- Developing some skills of translation from Arabic into English for English majors.
- 2- Developing some skills of translation from English into Arabic for English majors.
- 3- Enriching English majors' vocabulary in different translation subjects.
- 4- Motivating the English majors to identify other cultures and to accept the other.
- 5- Encouraging English majors for cultural exchange and looking for meaning.
- 6- Encouraging English majors for self-learning and interaction with each other.

#### **Participants of the Study:**

The study was conducted in the Faculty of Alsun, Minia University in the first term of 2017-2018. The study sample consists of 31 students in the first year (English department). The age of those students ranged from 18-19 years.

#### **Study Variables:**

The present study includes the following variables:

- 1- The independent variable: using computer mediated communication (CMC)
- 2- The dependent variables: Developing some English translation skills of the English majors.
- 3- the control variable:
  - Performance level.

#### **Design of the Study**

To investigate the effectiveness of this program, the study employed the one-group pre-post test design. It is a quasi-experimental research design in which the same dependent variable is measured in one group participants before and after administrating a treatment. Also, the mixed approach was employed in the current study to deal with both qualitative and quantitative data and to present answers to research questions through both numerical and narrative forms.

#### **Instruments and Materials of the Study:**

- 1- A performance test.
  - 2- Students questionnaire
  - 3- English translation CMC course
  - 4- Reflection Log
- **Material:**

For (36 hours) along a full semester, the researcher used a computer mediated communication (CMC) course through an interactive BlogSpot as its material was developed by the researcher and was designed by a web developer.

The weblog is [www.Ahmednassrat.blogspot.com](http://www.Ahmednassrat.blogspot.com) consists of two unit, where unit one includes seven lessons about different cultures. Each lesson is ended with online discussion; second unit includes six lessons about idioms, acronyms and some translation samples.

#### **Results Related to the Study Hypotheses:**

##### **Verifying the First Hypothesis:**

Table 1: T-test results comparing the mean scores of participants on the pre-post test in the skill of translating and using English idioms

Test Administration	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t-value	Sig.
Pre-test	31	4.32	1.33	19.53	0.000
Post-test		8.83	1.04		

From the above table, it is pointed out that the calculated t- value reached (19.53) was higher than the table value of (t) at the level of (0.01). This means that there are statistically significant differences between the scores of the pre and post administrating of the test in favor of the post administration of the study group, so the experiment had an effect on acquisition of the research participants for the skill of translating and using English idioms.

#### Verifying the Second Hypothesis:

Table (2): T-test results comparing the mean scores of participants on the pre-post test in the skill of translating acronyms and abbreviations

Test Administration	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t-value	Sig.
Pre-test	31	4.58	1.50	17.36	0.000
Post-test		8.84	.93		

From the above table, it is pointed out that the calculated T- value reached (17,36) which was higher than the table value of (T) at the level of (0.01). This means that there were statistically differences between the scores of the pre and post administration of the test in favor of the post administration, so the experiment had an effect on acquisition of the research subjects for the skill translating acronyms and abbreviations and understanding what they stand for.

#### Verifying the Third Hypothesis:

Table (3): T-test results comparing the mean scores of participants on the pre-post test in the skill of translating cultural aspects from Arabic into English:

Test Administration	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t-value	Sig.
Pre-test	31	4.29	1.35	17.67	0.000
Post-test		8.68	0.91		

From the above table, it is pointed out that the calculated t- value reached (17,67) was higher than the table value of (t) at the level of (0.01). This means that there were statistically significant differences between the scores of the pre and post administration of the test in favor of the post administration, so the experiment had an effect on acquisition of the research subjects for the skill of translating cultural aspects from Arabic into English.

#### Verifying the Fourth Hypothesis:

Table (4) T-test results comparing the mean scores of participants on the pre-post test in the skill of translating cultural aspects from English into Arabic

Test Administration	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t-value	Sig.
Pre-test	31	4.61	1.41	20.33	0.000
Post-test		8.61	0.84		

From the above table, it is pointed out that the calculated T- value reached (20, 33) was higher than the table value of (T) at the level of (0.01). This means that there were statistically differences between the marks of the pre and post administration of the test in favor of the post administration, so the experiment had an effect on acquisition of the research participants for the skill of translating cultural aspects from English into Arabic.

#### Verifying the Fifth Hypothesis:

Table (5): T-test results comparing the mean scores of participants on the pre-post test in the skill of composition

Test Administration	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t-value	Sig.
Pre-test	31	4.23	1.38	16.40	0.000
Post- test		8.65	0.84		

From the above table, it is pointed out that the calculated t- value reached (16, 40) was higher than the table value of (t) at the level of (0.01). This means that there were statistically significant differences between the scores of the pre and post administration of the test in favor of the post administration, so the experiment had an effect on acquisition of the research participants for the skill of composition.

#### Verifying the Sixth Hypothesis:

Table (6) T-value of the comparison between mean scores obtained by the participants on the pre and post translation test

Test Administration	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t-value	Sig.
Pre-test	31	22.42	5.82	23.37	0.000
Post-test		43.61	2.73		

From the above table, it is pointed out that the calculated T- value reached (23, 37) was higher than the table value of (T) at the level of (0.01). This means that there were statistically differences between pre and post administration of the translation test in favor of the post administration of, so the experiment had an effect on acquisition of the research participants for the English translation skills.

**Results of the Questionnaire for Learners' Attitude towards  
Translation**

**Table (7) shows students views about translation**

No.	Item		frequency			Chi-Square Test	Sig.
			Yes	partiall y	No		
1	Translation is an interesting subject.	Pre	5	4	22	29.33	.000
		Pos t	26	2	3		
2	I like translation from Arabic into English than translation from English to Arabic.	Pre	6	8	17	5.76	.056
		Pos t	14	3	14		
3	Learning English idioms and vocabulary is a difficult thing because they are confusing.	Pre	26	-	5	31.47	.000
		Pos t	4	2	25		
4	I have some knowledge about the cultural contexts of translation.	Pre	2	2	27	50.64	.000
		Pos t	30	-	1		
5	I often take much time to translate a text.	Pre	24	4	3	35.24	.000
		Pos t	3	2	26		
6	When there is a translation assignment from my	Pre	28	-	3	43.66	

No.	Item		frequency			Chi-Square Test	Sig.
			Yes	partially	No		
	teacher, I often have it translated by a professional translator.	Post	2	-	29		.000
7	Computer Mediated Communication is good for acquiring the skills of translation.	Pre	3	2	26	41.31	.000
		Post	23	7	1		
8	Online communication with my colleagues and my teacher helps in developing my translation skills.	Pre	3	5	23	38.13	.000
		Post	27	2	2		
9	I fell free when I ask my teacher any question about translation at online chatting.	Pre	4	-	27	34.27	.000
		Post	25	2	4		
10	I can translate a text in varied translation fields (political, economic, scientific, etc.).	Pre	6	3	22	29.17	.000
		Post	26	3	2		

The abovementioned table shows learners' responses to the questionnaire for participants' attitudes towards translation. According to the figures, it can be said that the attitudes of most learners have been changed positively after the CMC translation course, so it reflects the effectiveness of the CMC course.

### Discussion of Results:

All the study hypotheses were verified and the results of the present study confirmed that there is development in student level of translation performance after the treatment. Means of the scores in the posttest and the obtained t-value in the pre-post test of the study group were in favor of the posttest results, and the t-value was significant. That supports the research hypotheses. Also, that means the study participants developed their translation skills. This development of English translation skills might be attributed to a number of factors, which include the use of CMC (computer mediated communication) course , peer and group work, varied evaluations, communication between the researcher (the teacher) and the learners through the internet, the interactivity, receiving feedback, and using time effectively during the English class at the multimedia lab or at home as translation course is available on the website twenty four hours, so learners can visit it at any time from any place.

Results of Chui's study (2005) agree with the present study as it pointed out that communication, when pedagogically employed, can lead to better classroom interaction and creative learning .this can also improve and build up students confidence and facilitate their writing skills in literacy classroom.

Results of the meta-analysis of Means (2009) for research studies from1996 through July 2008 on online learning research studies agree with the present study that “on average, student in online

learning conditions performed better than those receiving face-to-face instruction”.

The study of Gavrilenko (2017) agrees with the present study as it points out that understanding the network enables to find a new way in modeling translation process in the context of modern communications flow, professional groups, databases, interaction technologies for translation companies and clients, project managers and translators. The online model for teaching and learning translation is not limited to communication networks. Also the present study stressed the importance of the online environment for translation learning and learning translation through computer mediated communication in the CMC translation course

The study of Sang (2010) concluded that student teachers should be prepared to integrate information and communication technology (ICT) into their future teaching and learning practices. Results of that study show that prospective ICT integration significantly correlates with language teaching and learning competence.

Jo Davies, Martin Graff, (2005:75) stated that, the beneficial effects of learners interacting in online programs have been widely reported. Indeed, online discussion is argued to promote student-centered learning.

Kim (2007, p. 1346) noted that currently “students take advantage of blogs to enhance their study, as they share their learning experiences and express their thoughts to the instructor

and peers through course blogs.” Learners of English who read blog postings but rarely write are also able to benefit from considering their peer students’ entries and comments as important feedback.

### **Suggestions for Further Studies:**

- 1- Further studies and research are needed in the field of developing other English language skills such as reading and speaking skills by using CMC.
- 2- Further studies and research are needed in the field of developing English translation skills by CMC but in other university grades and other English departments, such as Faculty of Education and Faculty of Arts.
- 3- Further studies and research are needed in the field of developing translation skills by CMC in other languages.
- 4- Further studies and research are needed about online testing and providing online feedback to learners by their teachers.

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