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Technological Factors that Affect Female Learners in English Translation Studies in Jazan University^(*)

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Abstract:

There are serious factors, which affect the female learners in translation studies in Jazan University, University College of Addayer. This paper explores those factors as well as how students use the technological applications in translation. The importance of this study arises from the fast developments in translation technological devices in addition to the sensitive issue it highlights. The study suggests that there are technological and personal factors affect the female learners of translation in Jazan University. What are those factors? Are they in need for training in using technological devices for translation? This study uses a descriptive and analytical approach with data collected from different resources. A questionnaire is used as the study instrument and SPSS tool is used for statistical analysis. The study sample is 50 female students from University College of Addayer, Jazan University. The study concludes that the negative dimensions affecting them are classified personally, technologically, and the lack of training. Recommendations are organized and they have a great deal of significance.

Key words: professional; industry; translation studies; factors; technological applications

العوامل التكنولوجية التي تؤثر على طالبات اللغة الإنجليزية – ترجمة في جامعة جازان

د/ عبد المجيد عبد القادر سعيد الحنش
تخصص الأدب الأمريكي بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية
الكلية الجامعية بالداير جامعة جازان- السعودية

الملخص

هناك عوامل تؤثر على طالبات قسم الترجمة بجامعة جازان بالكلية الجامعية بالداير. تستكشف هذه الورقة تلك العوامل وكذلك كيفية استخدام الطالبات للتطبيقات التكنولوجية في الترجمة. تكمن أهمية هذه الدراسة في التطورات السريعة في أجهزة تكنولوجيا الترجمة بالإضافة الى انها تسلط الضوء على قضية أكاديمية مهمة. تفترض الدراسة أن هناك عوامل تكنولوجية وشخصية تؤثر على طالبات الترجمة في جامعة جازان. ما هي تلك العوامل؟ هل هن بحاجة للتدريب على استخدام الأجهزة التكنولوجية للترجمة؟ تستخدم هذه الدراسة المنهج الوصفي والتحليلي للبيانات التي تم جمعها من مصادر مختلفة. يستخدم الاستبيان كأداة للدراسة وأداة SPSS للتحليل الإحصائي. بلغت عينة الدراسة 50 طالبة من الكلية الجامعية بالداير جامعة جازان. خلصت الدراسة إلى أن الأبعاد السلبية التي تؤثر عليهم مصنفة على المستوى الشخصي والتكنولوجي وقلّة التدريب. التوصيات الواردة في نهاية هذه الدراسة ذات أهمية كبيرة. **الكلمات المفتاحية:** محترف؛ صناعة؛ دراسات الترجمة؛ عوامل؛ التطبيقات التكنولوجية.



Introduction:

The growing need for translation in the context of globalization, and the growing importance of communication led to a growing demand for translation technology. Systems of translation technology have become very easily accessible to and by a wide range of users and translators. The importance of studies of translation technology arises from the said growing demand for translation in the contemporary scenario of the modern world. The factor of modern technology and training is one of the most important and effective elements of successful translation studies. Training courses and programs, undoubtedly, will create well qualified translators. They will improve their various experiences and skills through training. It will lead to more job satisfaction and help them to tackle the more challenging translation tasks in their future carrier.

Unfortunately, the study suggests that female students of translation studies in Jazan University are negatively affected by misuse of technological advancements and many other factors. What are those factors rather than technology? Are students in need for training in using technological applications in translation as part of the problem solution ? This paper investigate the factors affecting the female learners in translation studies in Jazan University. The study also explores the vagueness about the future of female students. The problems facing female students will be clarified as well so that the solutions and recommendations that will be given at the end of this paper will be of great importance and may be applicable to a wide range of translation students' problems in translation studies over the entire Kingdom.

It is clear that the translation industry in Saudi Arabia cannot be separated from the globalized translation industry. It is important scientifically, socially, culturally, economically, religiously and so on. The translation is expanding rapidly due to universal factors. There are many previous studies in the field that investigate the wide confines of translation technology.

Review of Literature:

The translation in Saudi Arabia is immensely expanding. That is because the universal factors regarding the information revolution and economy have deeply affected the translation and the need for professional translators worldwide in general and in Saudi Kingdom in particular. The Saudi Universities support the Arabic translation industry in different ways. Most of the Saudi universities have Translation Centers that care for publishing the Arabic translated books in different sciences. (Alkhaib, 2005).



The translation industry has a significant scientific, economic, cultural, social, and religious importance. Scientifically, the Arab World stands outside the knowledge stream isolated from what happens in the world. Facing the critical shortage in the knowledge requires local and national efforts in Arabic translation to help in the transformation of knowledge and different sciences to Arabic Language. This process will fill in the knowledge gap between Arab societies and the developed countries.

The economic importance of translation industry in Saudi Arabia is also clearly shown due to many reasons. The entrance of the Kingdom into the world trade organization, globalizing of Saudi business, the spread of the economic cities overall the Kingdom, in addition to the international network revolution have created a new trend in translation services that can be described as a rapidly growing area in the Kingdom. Some leading Saudi organizations, namely Aramco, the Saudi Electricity Company, the Shoura Council, and the Islamic Development Bank are obliged to use translation technology because of increase in information and speed of delivery. They have achieved success which will surely lead to the introduction of translation technology in other Saudi businesses and to the greater use of the technology in the local marketplace. (Fatani, 2010, p.5.).

Saudi Arabia has a great deal of religious importance in the Arabian and Muslim world that is because of the two holly mosques which affect the culture and the public environment clearly. To accomplish the pilgrimage and umrah, millions of Muslims every year visit the Kingdom. Hence forth, Muslims who cannot speak Arabic fluently are in a strong need to understand more about the religion so that translation industry in Saudi Arabia gains a clear-cut religious importance. There are many commissions and organizations that lead astounding efforts in translating Islamic books and brochures for non-Arabic speakers Muslims.

In the beginning of the 21st century, there have been an industrial revolution in the development of technologies that have been introduced and made life more convenient and simpler. Hutchins signifies the role of translation technology, as he says,

primary elements of translation technology like that of computer-based translation systems are not rivals to human translators but tools for increasing productivity in technical translation. (Hutchins 2001:5).

The growing need for translation in the field of commerce and industry in a globalized environment and the growing importance of communication between nations led to a growing demand for machine translation. House as well, sums up that:



“in the process of translation, therefore, not only the two languages but also the two cultures come into contact. In this sense, translating is a form of intercultural communication.” (House, 2009).

Here is a brief survey of advantages and disadvantages of machine translation. There are many advantages of using technology in translation like saving the time while translating large texts, low costs, and confidentiality is another matter which makes machine translation favorable. Machine translation system as well can translate any text about any area in contrast to the professional translator who becomes specialized in a particular field. This gives it universality.

There are some disadvantages of using translation technological devices. It cannot concentrate on a context and solve ambiguity and neither makes use of experience or mental outlook like a human translator can. Machine translation is simply cannot fully create perfectly accurate translations on a regular basis. You can get the first draft of a translation then you can work on it and correct for accuracy.

Fear of future and lack of motivation are also other factors hindering female students of achieving high efficiency in their carrier. A previous study by Reima Al-Jarf entitled *“Unemployed Female Translators in Saudi Arabia: Causes and Solutions”*, indicates that 90% of female Saudi translators who graduated between 1990 and 1996 are not working as translators because many of them say that the available jobs are not suitable for them. The reasons for unemployment indicated are the working conditions, staff policies, salaries and benefits, lack of motivation, and familial, social, and cultural factors. (Al-Jarf, 1999). The importance of motivation is also highlighted by McDonough; he says: *“motivation of the students is one of the most important factors influencing their success and failure in learning a second language.”* (McDonough, 1983: 42).

Parental and social attitudes as well are strongly influencing the over-all output of the learning process. In second language learning, however, it is the external motives which account for low of proficiency on the part of second language learners. Carroll in his study on foreign language majors, has suggested the importance of the attitude of parents as one of the external incentives that relate to learners' level of attainment. He indicates *“One reason why some students reach high level of attainment in foreign language is that they have home environments that are favorable to this”*. (Carroll, 1967).

A study by Afnan Hussein Fatani, entitled *“Globalization and the Translation Industry in Saudi Arabia: Factors Inhibiting the Use and Integration of Translation Technology into Mainstream Coursework”*,



comes to an end that universities must play a serious role in evaluating and assessing implementation of modern technologies into the translation curriculum. That is to ensure that the Saudi Universities graduates are competitive in the professional carriers. An appropriate instruction in the use of these technologies is necessary as well. Graduates will be highly qualified to function in the new globalized environment.

Another previous study entitled *“Factors Negatively Affect Skills at Saudi Colleges for Girls in the South”* by Mona M. Hamad (2013) states that those factors are summed up as the students’ background of English is weak as well as they fear to speak English in public. She mentions that instructors let the students use Arabic and that may hinder their English proficiency. In addition, curriculum of listening and speaking does not contain enough exercises for speaking skills. She goes to declare that instructors do not use neither teaching strategies nor labs to develop different skills.. The same point is also highlighted by Harry Ayers who states that anxiety affects the students because they avoid using English outside the classroom even with their classmates because of the fear of being laughed at by others:

“anxiety and depression are just two effective factors that contribute to learning difficulties or are the result of learning difficulties. The impact of persistent failure can adversely affect a pupil’s self-esteem, confidence, perceived self-efficacy, attitude and motivation.” (Ayers, 2006:41).

It is clear that this affects their learning of English and then affects their achieving proficiency in their carrier as translators.

All the above stated studies go for discussing and portraying the translation industry in Saudi Arabia and technological advancement in the field as well as the need for training, motivation, parental and social attitudes. They support the current study focus and help clarifying the hypothesis this study goes for.

Methodology

This study has been prepared using a descriptive and analytical approach. It contains a description of the literature review with data collected from different resources like books, journals, research papers, and previous studies. Analytical approach is based on a questionnaire as the study instrument, which was designed according to the objectives of the study, then administrated and assessed by some colleagues. The questionnaire was anonymous so that students could answer freely without feeling pressured and that lends more reliability to the data. The questionnaire consists of 17 items classified according to personal attitudes, modern technology and



training. SPSS tool is used for statistical analysis. The study sample is 50 female students from University College of Addayer, Jazan University, English Department - Translation.

Data Statistical Analysis

The data collected from the questionnaire is analyzed and discussed in this chapter. The questionnaire was distributed to study sample of 50 female learners of translation in University College of Addayer, Jazan University. The questionnaire statements are divided into four categories. Each category involves one factor which could be seen effective such as personal, cultural, educational technology, and training.

The study aims to explore what are the main factors that affects female learners of English translation studies. It suggests that technological advancements in addition to some personal, cultural, and training factors affect their translation skills negatively. Descriptive and analytical statistics methods are used in the study. Data is analyzed by the use of SPSS tool (the Statistical Package for the Social Studies). Test statistics, frequency, mean, standard deviation, reliability (Cronbach's Alpha), and ANOVA test, all of these measures and statistics are calculated. The Quintet Likert Scale is used to measure study sample responding to questionnaire items. Each item is given one degree out of the following five degrees (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree) respectively representing (5,4,3,2,1).

Reliability statistics of all items of the questionnaire is calculated using Cronbach's Alpha to measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. The result shows in the table below a rate of .713 and this means that the items have internal consistency and indicate the stability of the study instrument.

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.713	.710	17

The dimensions of the study model must be subjected to normal and natural distribution so that the validity of the study hypotheses can be tested. According to Won, 2004, the coefficient of skewness (Pearson) is ranged between 3 and -3 to measure the normal distribution of the study dimensions.

**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
personal	50	.457	.337
training	50	-1.597-	.337
culture	50	.223	.337
technology	50	-1.481-	.337
Valid N (list wise)	50		

The table above shows the skewness coefficient that is limited between (-1.481 and .223) and this is within the field (-3,3). It means that the sample is subject to normal distribution. Hence, the validity of the study hypotheses can be tested.

The table below shows the descriptive analysis of the questionnaire items grouped into four categories (personal, training, culture, and technology).

Descriptive Statistics of the questionnaire (four categories)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
personal	50	3.6347	.49934	.249
training	50	4.2333	.59190	.350
culture	50	2.6867	1.13171	1.281
technology	50	3.8800	.46948	.220
Valid N (listwise)	50			

To test the validity of the hypotheses, students' responses are highlighted. The culture category, as shown in the table above, scores the mean of (2.686) and this scale is close to the middle of the used "Likert pentacle" in this study. It means that the cultural factor is neither strong nor weak in affecting female learners of translation studies in Jazan University. While training factor is the strongest (4.233) followed by technology (3.880) and then the personal factor (3.634) and these scores are high according to "Likert pentacle" scale. This shows that the factor of culture negative affect hypothesis is somehow weak while the other three hypotheses are strong and correct. These three factors therefore are approved to have negative effects on students' proficiency.

The table below shows the significance of (.000) for all the categories indicates that the overall effect of these factors on female students of translation studies in Jazan University is statistically significant.

**One-Sample Test**

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
personal	51.470	49	.000	3.63467	3.4928	3.7766
training	50.573	49	.000	4.23333	4.0651	4.4015
culture	16.787	49	.000	2.68667	2.3650	3.0083
technology	58.439	49	.000	3.88000	3.7466	4.0134

Findings:

The first category reveals students' attitude towards translation studies. Students have the interest and high motivation in English translation studies shown through high rate of 62%. This is a good indicator and helping factor while a rate of 2% of them have no interest; that may refer to different factors. 46% of them strongly agree that they get support and encouragement from their families. That is really optimistic encouragement that will enhance their achievement and reinforce their motivation. However, they have difficulties in language acquisition that affect their translation skills and proficiency by high rate and they agree to some extent that it is not easy to find a job as a female translator and that is a disappointing indicator. Unfortunately, their use of the target language is very weak as they don't chat with native English speakers and they use mother tongue in their daily chat with their friends as well. That may refer to some reasons like fear of being wrong, lack of motivation and collaborative environment as well as the absence of creating real-like situations for practicing translation. So the personal factor is shown to affect them negatively as two items are positive and the other four items of the category are highly negative.

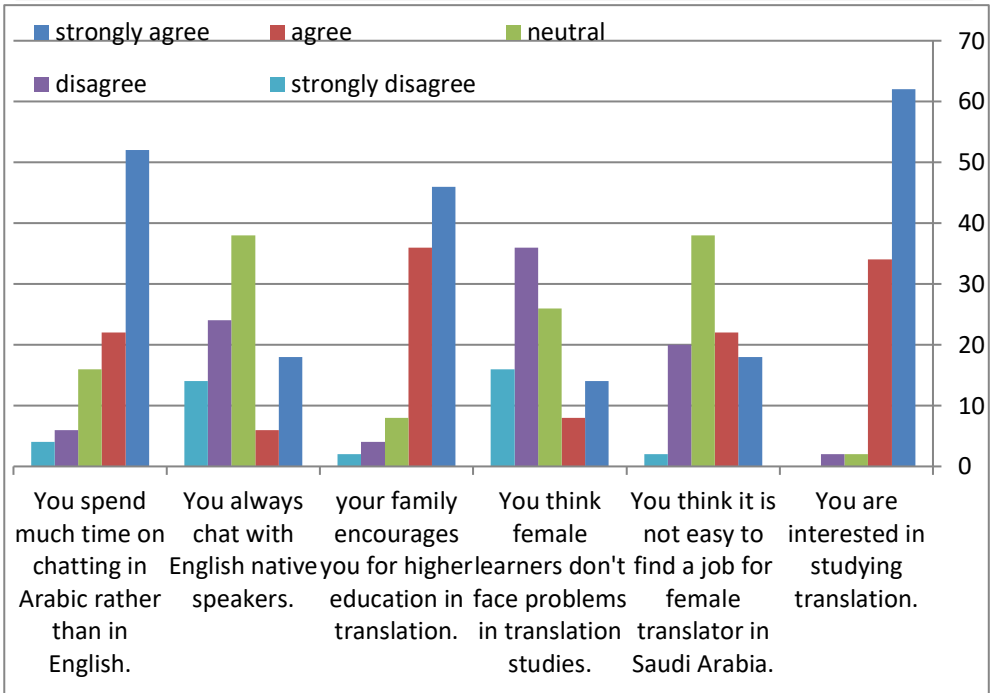


Chart (1): represent Students' attitude (personal factors)

The second category is about training courses and programs, that undoubtedly, will create well qualified translators. Students agree that they are in need for training to improve their various experiences and skills very strongly in a rate of 90% and 96% respectively. Even though, they declare that their teachers should also have training programs specially in using translation applications. Such astounding scores reveals that the lack of training programs affects their translation efficiency frightfully.

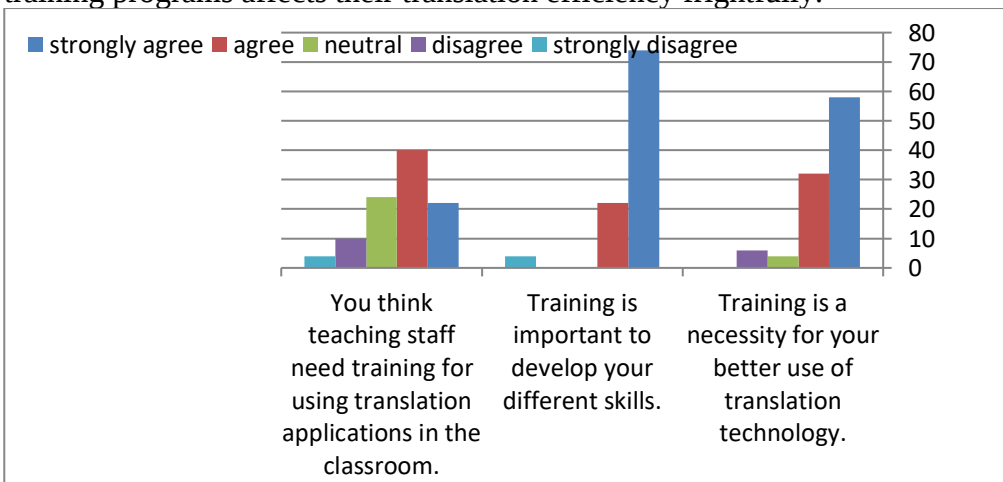


Chart (2): represent training factor

The cultural factor is also discussed in statements 10, 11, and 12. It comes to an end that English culture acquired through the language is not affecting the indigenous culture with a rate of 36% and an opposing rate of 14%. As students of translation, they have an overall positive attitude towards other cultures, and that surely will help them mastering the translation profession.

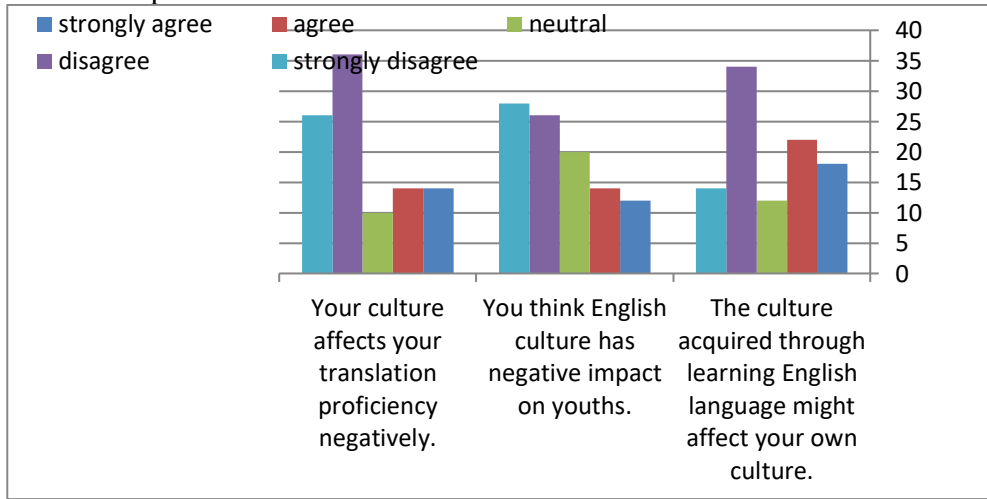


Chart (3): represent culture factor

The factor of modern technology is one of the most important and effective elements of successful translation studies. A huge proportion of the teaching courses emphasis that technology motivates them. But unfortunately, only 9% strongly agree that the needed translation applications are available in their college. This is the main reason behind the general weakness emphasized by previous studies regarding translation. 44% and 30% strongly agree and agree respectively that technology must be integrated into translation educational courses showing their high awareness of educational technology. A high rate of students use technology and see it a necessity for translation. Modern technology becomes inevitable in all fields and translation is one of them. Students find technology to be motivating but there is a frightening lack of technological equipment in their college as well as not integrated in their study courses.

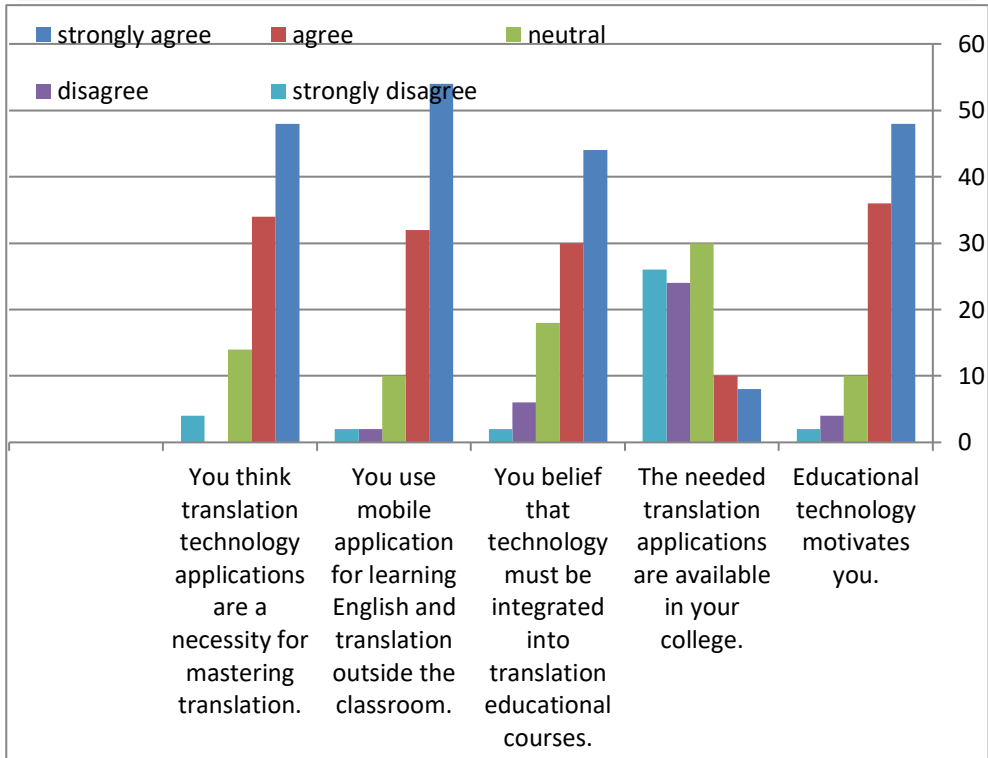


Chart (4): Represent Technology factor

To summarize the results, the study comes to an end that:

- There are personal and training factors in addition to technology that affect the female learners of translation in Jazan University and this approves the study hypothesis.
- The factor of culture doesn't seem to affect the students negatively. The students show that they have positive attitude towards other cultures.
- Students confirm that they are in strong need for training programs to use technology in translation.
- They are in need for collaborative learning environment and encouragement to develop their skills to cope and stand up to the dramatic mutation and technological revolution in the globalized world of today.

Recommendations

Based on the results mentioned above, some recommendations are set up to help solving the problems that hindering the female learners in Jazan University to achieve proficiency in translation studies.



- Students should be encouraged to use the target language in a friendly context as to use English with a wide range of English speakers including their teachers and friends.
- Support students with the needed mobile and computer applications to maintain their self-study and improve their translation skills.
- A continuous revision of the syllabus of translation programme is necessary and should be based on evaluation by learners, instructors, and concerned authorities.
- A collaborative learning environment is strongly needed and must have real-like practical courses for the students to practice the language and translation.
- A great deal of technological advancement in the profession should be implemented into the course mainstream.
- Up-to-date courses in machine translation using different systems are of great importance and the essence of translation studies.
- Modern language labs must be established in English language departments in colleges affiliated to Jazan University.
- Periodical training programs either local, national, or even international are of great importance in acquiring and exchanging knowledge, experience, and developing students' skills.

Conclusion

In data analysis, it is found that there are positive as well as negative dimensions affecting female learners of translation studies in Jazan University. The positive ones are the students' attitude towards language, and culture and a good familial support. The negative dimensions affecting them are classified personally, technologically, and the lack of training as well. The dreadful finding is that the technology and training seem to be completely absent. That is in the way proving the hypothesis of this study mentioned earlier. A bunch of recommendations microscopically and respectively organized and they have a great deal of significance. They will help solving the problems facing the female learners of English translation studies in Jazan University and hopeful to be nationally applicable throughout the Kingdom. The study, hence, is of great academic and social relevance.

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