

# The Impact of Attending and Participating in Translation Conferences on Translation Education: A Quantitative Study

Fayyad Odeh (Corresponding author)

English Language Skills Department, Preparatory Year College, Hail University

Hail, Saudi Arabia

E-mail: fayyadzubidy@yahoo.com

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## Abstract

This piece of research was specifically carried out in the field of translation pedagogy. It aims to measure the impact of attending and participating in translation conferences on translation education as perceived by a random sample of thirty-three translation instructors working at several universities in different countries. To this end, quantitative research method was employed in the study to yield answers to a couple of research questions. On this, the instructors were reached online to participate in responding to a researcher-made questionnaire of 18 - closed items. An SPSS analysis (version 24) was used to interpret the data elicited from the aforementioned research instrument. Having the data processed, the findings revealed that attending and participating in translation conferences is to be considered a major source for university translation programs to develop the implementation of translation didactics and pedagogies. Moreover, positive attitudes were developed in the study towards the practicality of integrating what could be seen innovative of translation conferences proceedings into translation education at the tertiary level. In the light of the study's findings, the researcher presents a number of pedagogical implications that would be taken into consideration to overhaul the existing university translation programs. Finally, a glance at some practical ideas is made for future research to explore new horizons in translation education in various teaching contexts.

**Keywords:** didactics, translation conferences, translation pedagogy

## 1. Introduction

In general, academic conferences are indispensable communication conduits for scholars to stay current in their disciplines and publish their work (Rowe,2018). For the same study, attending conferences and presenting the pertinent papers is also a matter of fun and enjoyment. It was also indicated that conferences have become key industry for several countries like the USA, the UK, Canada, among others to invest billions of dollars in support of their national income. In spite of the benefit of attending conferences was mainly economy-wise, he showed that conferences outcomes in terms of knowledge are widely stagnant in discipline –specific literature. With reference to this, he opened the article with a very sensible sentence that is necessarily to be quoted here:

*" academic gatherings may be fun, but they do little to advance knowledge".*

Hence, knowledge seems not to have been that major concern for attending or participating in conferences. It was then concluded in the same study that people should change their ways of thinking towards holding conferences with special regard to the following issues: conferences purposes, people needs for conferences, fruitfulness of conferences on the ground, and innovation of conferences. From that conclusion, the current researcher was in fact prompted a lot to seek into the potential role of translation conferences on serving translation education society. No quantitative research, as far as I know, has been conducted to investigate to what extent attending or participating in conferences would serve translation pedagogy and didactics implemented at the tertiary level. With this aim in mind, the current study surveyed a bulk of attitudes of translation university teachers on the impact of being attendees or participants in translation conferences on translation teaching at university. To address its objectives, the study is guided by two research questions that will be shown later in sub-section (1.3). Thereupon, it employed a quantitative research method to provide the stakeholders of translation university programs with statistical data about the impact of holding such events on translation pedagogy and didactics.

### *1.1 Statement of the Problem*

A huge number of conferences on Translation Studies (including interpreting studies) are being held by various academic institutions all over the world. Needless to say, innovative trends of translation and interpreting have been proposed by the academia of translation there. On this, there has been a consensus that the conferences came to be seen crucial aid to develop Translation Studies in general; translation teaching is among the discipline aspects. Studies like Shunnaq (2012) in Alhamad (2014), Hua(2013), and Zou(2014) glanced at the importance of translation conferences on developing Translation Studies and translation education in particular. However, no statistical research attempts have been made to appraise to what extent translation conferences affect specifically translation teaching practices at the tertiary level and even the literature related to this area is far between. To that end, the researcher conducted a preliminary study whose significance for Dalen (1979) lies in probing more deeply into the problem. Prior to the formal data collection of the main study, the preliminary fieldwork study was necessary to provide the researcher with initial data about the role of attending and participating in translation conferences on teaching translation university courses. It was

performed with structured interviews and the interview questions were emailed to three instructors working at universities from different countries. The interview participants were allowed a couple of weeks to respond. Using thematic analysis, their responses were classified into the following four areas and then addressed accordingly:

1. The experience of attending and participating in translation conferences.
2. Benefits of translation conferences with reference to teaching methods of translation at the tertiary levels.
3. Instructor's autonomy to adopt creative ideas of translation conferences proceedings to develop the curriculum (materials, methods of teaching, assessment, etc)
4. Practicality of translation conferences proceedings.

On the analysis of the instructors' indicative answers elicited from the interviews, the researcher was informed that there has been a little attention paid towards the compatibility between what is being proposed in translation conferences on the one hand, and the university translation teaching practices on the other. In view of the fact that translation scholars (including university teachers) are interested in proposing their contemporary views in conferences and symposia, their translation teaching practices at universities should have been implemented accordingly. It has been also noticed that translation teaching practices are to some extent still traditional and relatively stagnant albeit the discipline is considerably undergoing swift developments and drastic changes. On top of that, it could be understood from the analysis that translation conferences outcomes were unintentionally ignored on the subject of translation teaching practices. Surprisingly, attending or participating in conferences was found not that matter of interest for M.A holders; it was just for academic rank for Ph.D holders. Because all of that, the researcher was convinced that the impact of translation conferences on teaching translation at the tertiary level seem to be prone for appraising. On this, the current study is quantitatively measuring to what extent translation conferences outcomes affect translation education at universities. It is expected that this work may lead in turn to a better degree of quality and efficiency the existing translation programs strive to maintain.

### *1.2 Objectives of the Study*

The objectives of the study are twofold. The first concerns an investigation into general views of translation university instructors towards the impact of attending and participating in translation conferences on translation pedagogies and didactics implemented at university programs. Based on the findings of the overall data analysis, the second objective manifests itself in identifying the practicality of pedagogical integration of the most relevant translation conferences proceedings into translation education. Hence, translation specialists (including instructors) may utilize the study's results to consider the importance of translation conferences on boosting translation university programs.

### *1.3 Research Questions*

The following two questions arose in the study and need to be addressed for better understanding to the above said objectives:

1. What are the instructors' attitudes towards the impact of attending and participating in translation conferences on translation teaching at the tertiary level?
2. To what extent do translation instructors perceive the integration of translation conferences outcomes into translation education could become of great addition to the discipline programs ?

#### *1.4 Literature Review*

Translation Studies is a discipline that is still in dire need for more creative sources to thrive. Narrowing down the argument, translation pedagogy is for Piotrowska and Tyupa (2014) a new sub-discipline of Translation Studies. Relevant to this, studies like Ouided(2016) and Tan(2008) argued that translation pedagogy is still in its infancy and therefore it needs substantial theorization, especially in integrating the whys, whats, hows and whens into translation teaching for successful university programs. On this, conferences, symposia, seminars and workshops are being regularly held in translation and interpreting studies in different places by different bodies for different purposes. Holding these events undoubtedly creates opportunities of collaborating between the institutions and individuals to find out more solutions for the majority of problems and challenges of translation sciences. In other words, such academic events are to be held with the aim that they generate what should be expected to be novel, innovative, and up-to-date in the ever-changing world of Translation Studies.

Taking the importance of holding translation conferences to translation movement in China as a reference point, Zou (2014) shed light on the importance of conferences in exchanging ideas with colleagues from different universities about the contentious situation of translation problems in China. To show how significant it was for the same context to hold translation conferences, Lei(1999) described the status of research into translation teaching during the nineties in Peking University. The availability of reference books on translation studies was a serious obstacle for conducting research there. Because of fund restrictions implemented at the said university, the library there had about 30 books on Translation Studies. Consequently, the chance to buy reference books was unaffordable for researcher teachers there. Hence, they could neither conduct studies to exchange their related teaching experiences, nor to solve serious problems about translation teaching (including teaching programs, methods, testing, curricula and textbooks). Creatively, teachers of College English organized a conference to get to know how other related academic bodies(universities or departments included) dealt with the aforesaid problems. That in turn considerably helped those teachers not only to modernize their teaching practices but also to conduct real research in Translation Studies. It was further indicated in the same study that holding conferences and symposia has been fruitful to the same context where over hundred of Chinese translation specialists gathered to discuss various teaching issues on the situation of translation from Chinese into English and vice versa. Since 1996 when that first conference was organized, its pertinent recommendations have been considerably paving the way for the boom of the current university translation programs in China. On the ground, interpreting was first introduced to the fourth year syllabus as a separate course. In addition, translation teaching was guided by theory rather than imparting skills. Translation of culture, translation criticism and translation history were all integrated into the undergraduate curriculum to hone students' potentials for better translations.

Speaking of the challenges confronting translation pedagogy, Hau(2013) demonstrated in China that teaching methods are in some ways behind the time and so many teachers sparsely choose their translation materials. By the same token, Şahin (2013) in Çetiner(2018:154) indicated that there is a lack of consistency among the Turkish universities in integrating technology into their translation curricula. In this regard, Zou(2014) argued that translation teaching patterns should be consistent and systematically framed in order to better teach students. To meet such above challenges and others, Zakia(2016) recommended that universities work hard to respond to the drastic changes taking place in the higher education with reference to translation pedagogy and translation technology.

In a pioneering study, Mahasneh (2013), who was the first to develop Translation Curriculum Evaluation Model stemmed from the CIPP model of Stafflebeam, showed that translation studies on translator training at the Master's level at three universities in Jordan has been a matter of improvement. Her work suggests relevant adaptations to improve the curriculum and translator training there. She concluded that translator training is productive to some extent, but there are some drawbacks that need to be investigated through designing a proper curriculum for teaching translation. It was thereof proposed in her model that translation conferences recommendations be highly considered by stakeholders to re-engineer teaching translation curricula accordingly.

In relevance to this, the current study is to most likely bolster the argument of Mahasneh(2013), Zou(2014), and Zakia(2016) in that the challenges meeting translation studies could be tackled if universities(departments included) collaborate to hold specialized conferences with the goal of making 'how best to teach what to be taught ' consistent in their translation pedagogical contexts.

Finally, it could be posited that the literature reviews that relate directly to the research topic are few and far between. Yet, it is understood that there is an increasing interest among stakeholders of translation to signify the role of conferences on developing the discipline in general. As cited in Alhamad (2014:202), Shunnaq (2012) proposed that:

*" the Department of Translation at Yarmouk University in Jordan puts holding conferences on the top of priorities to attempt to breathe life into the translation movement in Jordan".* Thereupon, the present study is interested to explore in figures to what extent translation conferences could become a key factor in maintaining the continuous development of the translation education at various contexts, theoretically and practically. In this sense, the study seems to be quite different from the previous works since it by far intends quantitatively to appraise with a self- developed questionnaire the attitudes of translation instructors towards the impact of conferences outcomes on advancing the didactics and pedagogy of university translation programs.

### *1.5 Significance of the Study*

According to Piotrowska and Tyupa(2014), the top priority for research is to seek into an undeveloped field of knowledge. As the research literature review has shown, this study seems to be significant because it is by far the first attempt, as far as I am aware, at investigating into

the impact of translation conferences on translation and interpreting pedagogy at university programs. To underpin their teaching methods, it will provide translation instructors working currently at universities with precise information on the impact of translation conferences on translation teaching. The significance of the study lies also in its quantitative contribution to the research made so far in translation pedagogy. Finally, the researcher hopes the results will be of great benefit for translation stakeholders to use its pedagogical adaptations in reforming the existing patterns implemented at translation university programs.

## **2. Research Methodology**

### *2.1 Research Approach and Design*

The study employed quantitative research approach to deal with attitudes of translation instructors towards the impact of attending and participating in translation conferences on university translation programs. That it is being quantitative, an SPSS version 24 is employed in the study to process the data elicited from the research questionnaire.

### *2.2 Study Population*

University instructors of Translation Studies (including Interpreting) and Applied Linguistics from the Middle East, America, Africa, Asia, and Europe formed the population of the current study.

### *2.3 Study Sample*

Two groups of instructors participated in this study. The first group was selected to inform the preliminary study data while the other was included to inform data used in the main study.

Three translation instructors holding M.A and PhD degrees comprised the first group. They were purposefully selected and then contacted by mail for structured interviews to serve the preliminary study purposes.

In the main study where the second group was randomly selected, the online survey's sample consists of 33 faculty members of Translation and Applied Linguistics working at several universities from the following countries: Jordan, Oman, Saudi Arabia, The UK, The USA, Hong Kong, Morocco, Turkey, Palestine, China, South Africa, Kuwait, and Tunisia.

### *2.4 Profile of Respondents*

Table (1) displays the frequencies and percentages of the demographic information for 33 instructors participated in the main study. Academic qualification, minor specialization, academic rank, teaching experience, and translation conferences background are all included in the study to permit descriptive analysis.

Table 1. Statistics of Participants' Demographics

Block One Aspects		Frequency	Percentage
<i>1. Academic Qualification</i>			
M.A		15	45.5%
Ph.D		18	54.5%
<i>2. Minor Specialization</i>			
Translation Studies		24	72.7%
Interpreting		1	3.1%
Applied Linguistics		8	24.2%
<i>3. Academic Rank</i>			
Lecturer		17	51.5%
Assistant professor		12	34.4%
Associate Professor		3	9.1%
Professor		1	5%
<i>4. Teaching Experience</i>			
a-Length of service	Less than 5	14	42.4%
	5-10	9	27.3%
	More than 10	10	30.3%
b-Level of teaching	Undergraduate	19	57.5%
	Graduate	5	15.2%
	Both	9	27.3%
<i>5. Translation Conferences Background</i>			
a-Attending\Participating conferences domestically or internationally	in Yes	27	81.8%
	No	6	18.2%

	N/A	0	0%
	Once	12	36.3%
b-Number of times attended/participated in translation conferences per year	Twice	9	27.3%
	Thrice	2	6.1%
	More than 4	3	9.1%
	N/A	7	21.2%
c-Integrating of translation conferences outcomes into the courses taught	Yes	12	36.4%
	No	10	30.3%
	N/A	11	33.3%
d-Introducing the idea of attending/participating in conferences to students	Yes	16	48.5%
	No	11	33.3%
	N/A	6	18.2%

As shown in the table, the survey included 33 respondents. Respectively, 15&18 of the participants hold either an M.A or a Ph.D degree in one of the following specializations: Translation Studies, Interpreting, or Applied Linguistics. With teaching experience from 5 or less to over 10 years, being a lecturer, an assistant professor, an associate professor, or a professor has been teaching various translation and interpreting courses to undergrads, grads, or both.

The table provides essential information to describe the respondents in respect to their translation conferences' experiences. 81.8% of the sample have attended or participated in conferences domestically or internationally. The respondents were also requested to show how often they attend or participate regularly in translation conferences. One third of the sample attended or participated in translation conferences ONCE per the academic year. The same percentage is allowed to those respondents who have integrated translation conferences outcomes into the courses taught. Almost half of the respondents introduced the idea of attending \participated in conferences to their university students.

### 2.5 Instrumentation

To collect data about the impact of attending and participating in translation conferences on translation education, the study utilized only a self-constructed questionnaire of 18 closed items. On Likert scale, the questionnaire statements were three -optioned to examine the subjects' positionality on each item by checking one of the answers: agree, neutral, or disagree. The questionnaire's contents were distributed over three blocks. Block I requested

demographic information to permit descriptive analysis. Block II concerned seven general statements towards the impact of attending and participating in translation conferences on translation teaching. The final block III included eleven statements to probe attitudes of instructors on the integration of translation conferences outcomes into translation education at universities. The participants were allowed the opportunity at the end of the survey to annotate on the existing items or contribute to adding further items not listed therein. The significance of the instrument to the current study lies itself in that it is for Dalen (1979:152) the only practical way to obtain data through presenting respondents with carefully selected and ordered questions.

### 2.6 Validity of the Instrument

Dalen (1979: 135) said that "an appraisal instrument that measures what it claims to measure is valid". Relevant to this, the researcher checked the validity of the instrument through two types, namely the referee validity (Radwan,2012) and the Linguistic validity (Howard,2008).

1. The Referee validity: For review, revision, and modification, the questionnaire was administered to three faculty members majoring in Applied Linguistics and Translation Studies. Based on the their recommendations, the survey items were adequately modified in relevance to the content development. A few items were completely taken out because they were inappropriate to the scope of the study.

2. The Linguistic validity: Howard (2008) indicated that the Linguistic validity is the degree to which the wording of a questionnaire is understood in the same way by everyone who completes it. Thereof, the questionnaire survey was administered to a random sample of three instructors of English Language to review the items with regard to the clarity of the language. Items 8 &11 were modified for more language clarification. Their suggestions were considerable and integrated to the survey content.

### 2.7 Reliability of the Instrument

On this, the reliability of instrument used in the study was estimated by two methods, namely; test-retest reliability and the internal consistency.

1. Test-Retest Reliability: Dalen (1979: 138) pointed that "an instrument is reliable if it consistently produces the same results when administered twice for the same purpose under the same conditions". To this end, the researcher administered the same form of the questionnaire twice to three respondents with the interval of two weeks between the first and the second administration. The scores on the two administrations of the test were paired and calculated through computing the Spearman-Brown prophecy formula to estimate the correlation coefficient of the whole test's reliability.

2. The Internal Consistency: Based on what Streiner(2003), Kimberlin and Winterstein (2008) argued, the Cronbach's alpha was employed in the study to measure the internal consistency correlation coefficient of sets of items from the same test.

By the way of illustration, table (2 ) below shows the results of conducting the two analyses, respectively.

Table 2. Spearman-Brown coefficient and Cronbach's Alpha

Blocks	Items	Coefficient correlation of Spearman -Brown	Coefficient Cronbach's Alpha	correlation of
Block II	7	0.667	0.558	
Block III	11	0.581	0.581	
Overall	18	0.812	0.695	

According to table (2), the Spearman- Brown coefficient correlation is (0.812). Taking into account the length of the test is short and Cronbach's alpha is, to use Striener's words (2003:101), "*affected by the length of the scale*", the coefficient value is estimated to be (0.695). Overall, it could be concluded that both are good coefficients and therefore the questionnaire is reliable and can be used as an instrument of the study.

### 2.8 Data Collection Procedure

Between March, 31st 2018 and May, 15th 2018, about 100 respondents were reached to fill out a questionnaire online. The questionnaire's link along with a cover letter powered by Google Forms was mailed to the study's population. By considering what Dalen(1979) suggested in this respect, this method was effective enough for the current study to collect its relevant data because the respondents were scattered in very widely areas. Over a 45-day span, the researcher received and then treated 33 of questionnaires out of the whole population of the study. What explains the low number of respondents to the online survey is that no guarantee that all the target population, if contacted properly, would have liked to participate in reflecting to it. However, the researcher ended up with a sample bigger than 30% of the whole population; which is considered in Bailey(1994.p 97) and Dalen(1979.p130) adequate in psychological and social statistical descriptive studies.

### 2.9 Analysis Procedure

In order to achieve its objectives, the study gathered quantitative data by surveying the attitudes of university translation instructors towards the impact of translation conferences on translation education. The questionnaire data was divided into three blocks. Block one had demographic information while blocks two and three included the data that was processed according to the research questions. To do so, an SPSS software was employed on the descriptive level where frequencies, percentages, and means of responses were calculated to determine the study's results. The overall data analysis provided the researcher with a clear image to interpret the results based on the respondents' attitudes towards the aforementioned blocks.

### 3. Limitations of the Study

The current study is limited in appraising the impact of attending and participating in translation conferences on translation education at university in particular; translation training programs offered by training schools are not included. Furthermore, it was shown in sub-section(1.4) that the literature made in identifying the research topic under investigation is not that opulent. In addition, it limits itself in sampling online a number of M.A and PhD holders of Translation Studies and Applied Linguistics working at universities from several countries. Over a span of 45 days, the survey was accessible for a population of 100 participants to submit their reflections. On this, only 33% of the whole study's population submitted theirs. Overall, such limitations were found throughout the study's conduct and need to be reconsidered in doing future research.

### 4. Findings of the Study

The findings of the study are reported in the light of the research questions, the data collection instrument, and the data analyses. From a scale of 'agree, neutral, and disagree', the respondents were asked to select one to mirror their attitudes towards the impact of attending and participating in translation conferences on translation education at the tertiary level. Technically speaking, the frequencies of the participants' responses were calculated on the base of how many responses each option 'agree, neutral, or disagree' received out of the total responses 33. As for the means of the participants' responses to each statement, they were estimated on the base of (0) is negative, (1) is neutral, and (2) is positive. Thereon, the greater mean, the positive attitude indicated to the statement. That a comprehensive interpretation to the tables' contents is provided to determine the degree of agreement to each statement, ranking (descending order) seems not to be that much of concern in the interpretation. Thus, the results' report is presented according to the researcher's scale that starts from the most positive attitudes the statements received to the least ones. Finally, tables (3) & (4) below display the results as they were statistically computed in terms of frequencies and means of the participants' responses to the related statements of the questionnaire.

#### *4.1 Findings Emerged from the SPSS Descriptive Analysis of the Questionnaire Data Regarding the First Question Research*

The first question arose in the study was: What are the instructors' attitudes towards the impact of attending and participating in translation conferences on translation teaching at the tertiary level?

Based on their experience, the respondents were asked to determine to what extent they perceive attending and participating in translation conferences is influential to translation teaching at university.

The information derived from table (3) indicates that "Instructors of translation should be requested to attend / participate in translation conferences annually," and " Attending /participating in translation conferences is of great benefit for instructors to keep in view the fast growth and swift development of translation didactics and pedagogy" had an identical mean score of 1.85. So, the results identified these statements with the highest positive value.

With a mean of 1.52 " Ph.D holders are more interested in participating in translation conferences than those with a Master's" was found to be agreed by 22 responses out of 33.

When asked to rate " Conferences are not reliable sources for teachers or students to consider their recommendations in translation sciences", and " Areas (whatever they are)being discussed at the conferences are not issues of interest to me as a university teacher of translation courses ", quite few responses agreed with frequencies of 2 and 4 responses, respectively. 17 responses claimed the opposite and recorded 'disagree' to both statements, which logically entails that the results show positive attitudes to those two aforementioned statements.

"Most of translation conferences recommendations are seminal to translation pedagogy but turn to archives right after the event closing sessions" was more likely to be labeled neutral by 14 responses, while 13 hit 'agree'.

For "The conferences I have attended or participated in have made no real progress to my expertise in teaching translation courses", the results in the table reflect that the statement was identified with a low mean of agreement 0.88. Logically speaking, the statement however received a neutral value.

Table 3. Instructors' attitudes on attending and participating in translation conferences

#	Block Two Statements	Frequencies			Mean	Standard deviation
		Disagree	Neutral	Agree		
1	Ph.D holders are more interested in participating in translation conferences than those with a Master's.	5	6	22	1.52	0.76
2	Instructors of translation should be requested to attend / participate in translation conferences annually	0	5	28	1.85	0.36
3	Areas (whatever they are)being discussed at the conferences are not issues of interest to me as a university teacher of translation courses	17	12	4	0.61	0.70
4	Attending /participating in translation conferences is of great benefit for instructors to keep in view the fast growth and swift development of translation didactics and pedagogy	0	5	28	1.85	0.36
5	Most of translation conferences recommendations are seminal to translation pedagogy but turn to archives right after the event closing	6	14	13	1.21	0.74

	sessions					
6	The conferences I have attended or participated in have made no real progress to my expertise in teaching translation courses	12	13	8	0.88	0.78
7	Conferences are not reliable sources for teachers or students to consider their recommendations in translation sciences	17	14	2	0.55	0.62
Total		57	69	105	1.21	0.33

Overall, the results in the above table illustrate that the respondents' views on statements (1,2,3,4,7) were positive, and their views on statements (5,6) were neutral. In short, the total responses to the first research question revealed that that the participants developed positive attitudes with a cumulative mean score of 1.21.

#### *4.2 Findings Emerged from the SPSS Descriptive Analysis of the Questionnaire Data Regarding the Second Question Research*

The second question arose in the study was: To what extent do translation instructors perceive the integration of translation conferences outcomes into translation education could become of great addition to translation programs ?

The respondents were asked to determine to what extent they perceive a number of practices in which translation conferences proceedings could be effectively integrated into translation education. Their responses were coded in figures and shown in table (4).

With noticeable means of 1.91, 1.88, 30 participants agreed with the idea that "In light of translation conferences recommendations, instructors should vary their methods of teaching in a way that fosters the supportive environment of instruction", and "Translation conferences outcomes are of great help to graduate students in selecting topics for their endeavors in conducting theses", respectively. That is to say, the aforesaid statements were identified with positive attitudes.

"University instructors should autonomously explore the most seminal translation conferences outcomes." From the table, the same value was reached on " Departments that are pursuing to cope with the fast growth and swift developments in the discipline should hold conferences on translation studies annually". In figures, both statements were equally agreed with a mean of 1.76. As a result, the responses revealed positive attitudes to those aforementioned statements.

With a similar mean score of 1.64, about three-fourths of the responses chose 'agree' to characterize" Prior to call for proposals, the departments intending to organize conferences should survey their students' attitudes towards the themes in relevance to their translation learning needs", and " There should be elective courses to train undergraduate students in engaging in translation conferences: organizing, attending, or participating". The results identified the concerned statements positively.

Talking about " Translation conferences could be considered adequate sources for stakeholders to design the curricula that students need in response to the market's demands", the responses recorded 'agree' with a mean of score 1.51 to the said statement.

Over half of the responses put around means of 1.48, 1.42 for 'agree' concerning "Translation conferences outcomes have considerably affected my teaching practices", and "In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the graduate degree, students must participate at least once in translation conferences", respectively.

With 15 out of 33 responses," In the context where I have been teaching translation course, a lot of translation conferences recommendations are undoable because of technical restrictions" was scored 1.27 out of 2.

Quite a few mentioned agree to "It is the department's responsibility, not the instructor's, to explore and adopt the most seminal translation conferences outcomes". The participants showed their attitudes to the statement with a low mean of 0.73.

Table 4. Perceptions of instructors on the integration of translation conferences outcomes into teaching translation at universities

#	Block Three Statements	Frequencies			Mean	Standard deviation
		Disagree	Neutral	Agree		
8	University instructors should autonomously explore the most seminal translation conferences outcomes.	1	6	26	1.76	0.50
9	In light of translation conferences recommendations, instructors should vary their methods of teaching in a way that fosters the supportive environment of instruction.	0	3	30	1.91	0.29
10	It is the department's responsibility, not the instructor's, to explore and adopt the most seminal translation conferences outcomes.	17	8	8	0.73	0.84
11	Departments that are pursuing to cope with the fast growth and swift developments in the discipline should hold conferences on translation studies annually.	1	6	26	1.76	0.50
12	Prior to call for proposals, the departments intending to organize conferences should survey their students' attitudes towards the themes in relevance to their translation	2	8	23	1.64	0.60

	learning needs.					
13	Translation conferences could be considered adequate sources for stakeholders to design the curricula that students need in response to the market's demands.	5	6	22	1.51	0.76
14	There should be elective courses to train undergraduate students in engaging in translation conferences: organizing, attending, or participating.	3	6	24	1.64	0.65
15	In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the graduate degree, students must participate at least once in translation conferences.	4	11	18	1.42	0.71
16	Translation conferences outcomes are of great help to graduate students in selecting topics for their endeavors in conducting theses.	1	2	30	1.88	0.42
17	Translation conferences outcomes have considerably affected my teaching practices.	2	13	18	1.48	0.62
18	In the context where I have been teaching translation course, a lot of translation conferences recommendations are undoable because of technical restrictions.	6	12	15	1.27	0.76
Total		42	81	240	1.55	0.29

Overall, positive responses are indicated by a greater mean to each statement in the survey. From the table above, the most noticeable statements with a greater mean of 1.91 and 1.88 were (9) and (16) respectively, while statement (10) was found to be the least noticeable one with a mean of 0.73. However, the participants showed positive attitudes towards the second research question components with a cumulative mean score of 1.55.

## 5. Discussion

The present study was conducted to explore the impact of attending and participating in translation conferences on translation education at the tertiary level. Results of the study confirmed that the participants showed positive attitudes towards the two research questions framing the survey statements. Question one statements incorporated the importance of attending/ participating in translation conferences on teaching translation practices. Question two statements concerned the integration of translation conferences outcomes into translation education programs. On this, the findings of the data analysis are comprehensively discussed

in this section according to their aforementioned research questions.

### *5.1 Findings to be Discussed in Response to the First Research Question*

In responding to the first research question, the findings are discussed here under three subsections with respect to their relevance to block two statements from the questionnaire.

#### 5.1.1 Translation Conferences in Scaffolding the Quality of Translation Teaching

Lei (1999) argued that instructors of translation work hard to ameliorate the quality of translation teaching in their contexts. Relevance to this, translation conferences were found in the study to be considered rich and reliable sources for instructors to keep acquainted with new trends in translation teaching technologies, translation course-content assessments, etc, so instructors may be able to adopt the most effective methodologies of teaching translation.

More to the point, it could be noticed from the results that the participants' responses considered the regular attending and participating in translation conferences pivotal for translation instructors to keep in view the development of translation pedagogy and didactics. In other words, translation conferences are periodic regular platforms where scholars, practitioners, and intellectuals present new offerings and exchange of seminal ideas on the contemporary themes being sought in the field of translation and interpreting education. Thus, the results showed that there was a consensus among the respondents that conferences they have attended added new horizons to their teaching expertise.

Overall, it could be concluded that conferences pivots whatever they are were seen issues of interest for university instructors to improve the quality of translation teaching and research.

#### 5.1.2 Attending and Participating in Conferences for Academic Promotion

It was noticeable that PhD holders were judged to be more interested in participating in translation conferences than those with a Master's. Regrettably, the respondents' tendency could be justified in that participating in conferences for PhD holders is an essential matter for academic promotion, but not the same for Master's. What is risky here is that attending and participating in translation conferences for knowledge of translation pedagogies and didactics would be found marginal concern and hence the purpose of holding conferences seems to have been questionable (Rowe,2018).

#### 5.1.3 The Accessibility of Translation Conferences Proceedings

As for the accessibility of translation conferences outcomes, the results showed that the respondents had mixed feelings when they were asked to identify their attitudes towards the accessibility and availability of translation conferences proceedings for public. It could be argued that most of translation conferences outcomes are seminal to translation pedagogy but linger on in the back of their people's minds, or they in most cases turn to archives right after the event closing sessions. It was noticed from the findings that translation conferences recommendations were either inaccessible because of publication restrictions of conferences organizing bodies or being fossilized in their creators' minds. In this context, Rowe(2018) mentioned that the United Nations Educational, Scientific Cultural Organization in 1963

identified high levels of inaccessibility of conferences papers and proceedings, poor distribution, lost research, and language restrictions. Regrettably, the UNESCO reported that conferences were held for many people to legitimize attendance rather than serving any educational and intellectual needs. Therefore, the statement in concern was suggested in the survey by the researcher to bolster Rowe's claim in raising awareness to rethink of UNESCO's original question of how well academia share research through conferences. From this, the second research question is consequently brought into the surface to attempt practical answers for the above said UNESCO's question.

## 5.2 Findings to be Discussed in Response to the Second Research Question

With reference to the second research question, the findings are discussed in this subsection according to four levels of integration, namely, instructor, student, department, and stakeholder.

### 5.2.1 The Integration of Translation Conferences Outcomes Into Translation Teaching – Instructor's Level

At instructor's level, the participants' views towards the integration of translation conferences outcomes into translation teaching practices were mirrored in a couple of aspects.

The first concerns the supportive environment of instruction in which instructors should be open to adopt and adapt the most effective methods of translation teaching. Among of five personal traits of instructors, Patrick (2011) in Huang and Napir (2015) proposed *Openness to Experience* to identify the instructors' interest to engage in new experiences and ideas for the excellence of teaching in higher education. Kumaravadivelu (1994), as cited in Khodabakhshzadeh, Arabi and Samadi (2018.p426) indicated that " *no method is best for every situation*". Therefore, the results pertinent to this were found to be in harmony with Huang and Napir (2015) who argued that translation instructors should have the potentials to vary from time to time their methods of teaching to foster a remarkable situation of translation teaching. In this context, the participants who have a broad experience of teaching translation acknowledged that their teaching practices have been considerably varying as a result of attending and participating in translation conferences.

Secondly, it was found in a very recent study conducted by Khodabakhshzadeh *et al.* (2018) that teacher's autonomy is a key factor to make a teaching context more effective and productive. Being autonomous, teachers can motivate themselves to modernize their pedagogical patterns that will in turn affect positively the student's achievements. In the current study, university instructors were seen by many responses to be fully autonomous to figure out the most innovative trends of translation conferences on translation didactics and pedagogies.

On the other hand, saying that translation instructors would have been interested to be autonomous in developing their teaching practices in the light of translation conferences outcomes, Jackson (2018), Lei (1999), Çetiner (2018), and Zakia (2016) argued that teacher's autonomy to develop can be limited by institutional, technical, and funding challenges. On this, it was noticeable that the participants agreed with the study's assumption in that a broad spectrum of innovative translation conferences outcomes could be undoable because of many

technical, financial or bureaucratic constraints in the various contexts of teaching. Further research is called here to shed lights into those constraints along with practical solutions in greater detail.

### 5.2.2 The Integration of Translation Conferences Outcomes into Translation Learning-Student's Level

Positive attitudes were reported by the participants towards the integration of translation conferences outcomes into translation programs with special reference to the development of students' competencies.

Prior to call for proposals, it was suggested in the study that departments intending to hold or sponsor conferences should survey students' attitudes towards the themes that would be posed in relevance to the students' translation learning needs. Towards this claim, the results derived from the analysis showed that the participants were more likely very keen to bolster it.

Academically, translation conferences outcomes were found to be main sources for graduate students to dig in up-to date research topics for their endeavors in conducting innovatively term papers and original theses. More to the point, there was a consensus among the participants that graduate students have to participate at least once in a translation conference to meet the fulfillment requirements for graduate degree.

One of the survey's participants (2018) thankfully annotated on our claim that was about the importance of translation conferences to undergraduate students; he\she said:

*Most undergraduate students don't attend conferences even though we encourage them to do so. When I ask them why, they say they don't understand. Some say that the talks are too dense because a speaker has to finish within 30 minutes.*

The excerpt above is seen completely consistent with Rowe (2018) who emphasized that people change their ways of thinking towards the effectiveness of holding conferences. Because of this and to pave the way for pursuing future studies, the study's claim that there should be elective courses for undergraduate students to have training on how to engage in translation conferences: organizing, attending, or participating was corroborated by the majority of the participants of the study.

Yet, another anonymous participant of the survey (2018) tended to nullify the influence of translation conferences outcomes on teaching translation courses when he\she said:

*In most cases participants are not realistic, too theoretical. Our students need topics to guide them with practical material in this field. This one reason why most conferences are useless when it comes to teaching.*

The excerpt came to be partially consistent with Tan (2008) who claimed that undergraduate students are practice-oriented and they are willing to be exposed to practical translation problems solutions. This point of view is very sensible and leads us to rethink of the purposes behind holding, attending, and participating in conferences. This is also one of the current study's concerns in that there should be conformity between translation teaching conferences

pivots and the needs of translation education on the ground. If the integration of the relevant translation conferences outcomes was effectively done, then translation conferences would become useful in teaching. Hence, the study attempts to think how the integration could be successfully performed to make translation conferences fruitful in teaching.

### 5.2.3 The Integration of Translation Conferences Outcomes into Translation Programs-Department's Level

Based on the findings relevant to how translation departments could integrate translation conferences outcomes into their programs, quite a few participants were convinced that the department per se is to be responsible for exploring and integrating the most seminal translation conferences outcomes into translation curriculum. In addition, their responses showed that the participants were not enthusiastic to support the idea that departments pursuing to cope with the fast growth and development in the discipline should annually hold and sponsor specialized conferences. Noticeably, the relevant results derived from the table (4) reported the opposite to what Lei (1999), and Shunnag (2012) cited in Alhamad(2014) argued on the importance of holding translation conferences for departments to empower translation movement in China and Jordan, respectively.

On the other hand, one of the participants (2018) anonymously expressed his attitude in reference to the issue in concern in the following quotation:

*In some cases, the department has to collaborate with professors in the application of new components in the teaching curriculum.*

On this, instructor-department collaboration to inculcate new ideas of translation instruction at university programs is sensible, but needs further serious efforts to do so.

### 5.2.4 The Integration of Translation Conferences Outcomes into Translation Education-Stakeholder's Level

In a macro-level where stakeholders plan for others, the results clearly bolster Mahasneh (2013) who demonstrated that translation conferences outcomes could adequately provide stakeholders with the relevant data that enable them re/engineer translation curricula in response to the increasing-market's demands. In other words, translation stakeholders should scrutinize the pertinent translation conferences outcomes when they decide to overhaul university translation programs in their contexts.

In conclusion, the purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between attending and participating in translation conferences in the one hand, and translation education at universities on the other. The exploration was performed with a researcher-developed questionnaire probing attitudes towards the research topic in question. The findings were corroborated by reasoning themselves to the relevant literature, the researcher's viewpoints, and the constructive annotations of the study's participants. Yet, the current study had a few limitations that need to be considered in reading its findings. First of all, the sample size was to some extent small because there was no guarantee that everyone reached would participate in reflecting to that online research survey. Secondly, literature has shown that the studies that

were conducted in the importance of attending and participating in translation conferences are limited. Hence, generalization of the findings would be affected. Future research thus should be qualitatively performed with utilizing more research instruments like interviews to provide more detailed information and in-depth insights into the effective role of attending and participating in translation conferences on teaching translation at universities.

## **6. Conclusions, Implications, and Suggestions for Further Studies**

### *6.1 Conclusions*

Like many other professional areas, translation teaching for Tan(2008), Calzad and Perez (2005), Zakia (2016) has been undergoing considerable changes and thorough overhauls on theoretical learning and practical training since decades. It is understood from the literature that there has been an increasing interest to develop the pedagogy of translation as a science and as a profession for satisfying the needs of students and the markets. In this context, various forms of development have been attempted to suggest useful practices to ameliorate translation education at universities. For instance, a plethora of translation conferences are being held and consequently a huge number of academic works are being disseminated by scholars and specialists all over the world. Yet, it is noticed from the preliminary study's results that translation teaching conferences did not receive much attention in integrating their outcomes into translation teaching practices at the tertiary level. Relevance to this, the current study was conducted with the ultimate aim of finding out to what extent translation conferences could be considered a form of translation education development. With a self-developed questionnaire, attitudes of a sample of thirty-three university translation instructors were surveyed online to yield quantitative data to a couple of research questions arose throughout the study.

In the discussion section, the study revealed that attending and participating in translation conferences is considered to be a kernel factor in developing the didactics and pedagogies implemented in university translation programs. The findings' discussion further showed that attending and participating in translation conferences could do a lot to bridge the gap between the existing curricula and syllabi implemented by translation instructors at university programs on the one hand, and the ongoing global development of didactics and pedagogies of the discipline on the other.

It was also shown in the study that translation conferences witness a real dissemination of the most creative and innovative trends of translation education, hence the most relevant translation conferences outcomes could be pedagogically carried out through integrating four levels of such outcomes into university translation programs.

On the whole, the findings demonstrated that the study's participants developed positive tendency towards the impact of attending and participating in translation conferences on translation education at the tertiary level.

### *6.2 Pedagogical Implications*

From the results interpreted and discussed earlier, a number of implications are listed below

to suggest that the study signifies the development of the following:

1. For the reason that no official bodies are interested in incorporating any proceedings into practical methods of translation teaching, department-instructor collaboration on making translation conferences proceedings fruitful should be underpinned. That is to say, departments should form ad hoc committees whose responsibility is to study the most valuable and relevant conferences proceedings; teachers abide by the committees' recommendations.
2. Translation departments should conduct holistic overhauls in light of the most up-to-date worldwide translation conferences outcomes. In other words, they should annually re-design their courses syllabi considering the domestic or international translation conferences recommendations.
3. Undergraduate students should be led to attend and participate in translation conferences. Translation syllabi for undergraduate programs should include a specialized practical short course, say extra-curricular activity, to familiarize students to be engaging in future translation conferences: organizing, attending, or participating.
4. In partial fulfillment for the degree requirements, translation syllabi for graduate programs should have an advanced course on conference-based Translation Studies (including interpreting studies), say Contemporary Issues with Special Reference to Translation Conferences. Students meet the requirements of the course theoretically and practically.
5. Translation conferences pivots should be dealing with the latest issues of translation education, and ignoring the proposals that address the outdated practices of translation teaching.
6. Translation conferences pivots should be suggested in response to the ever-changing marketplace of translation.
7. Translation stakeholders should not ignore translation conferences outcomes when they decide to overhaul university translation programs in their contexts (Mahasneh, 2013).

This sub-section was further composed to attempt answers to the research problem statement that was about how translation conferences outcomes could be of great benefit to translation education if they have been incorporated effectively.

### *6.2 Suggestions for Further Research*

Based on what has been argued in the previous sections, the study's findings can be a foundation for future studies to add new horizons and innovative trends of translation and interpreting didactics and pedagogy to the bulk of research made in this field. On this, the current study calls for conducting further research on the following points:

1. The results of this study called for a further look into the constraints that vitiate the integration of the most relevant conferences outcomes into translation programs.

2. Due to the limitations that identified the interpretation of the study's findings, further research could seek to include a larger number of participants that permits more detailed information about the role of translation conferences on translation teaching. In addition, in-depth interviews are to be carried out by future studies to gather further information about the topic under investigation.

3. The current study is restricted to explore the potential impact of attending and participating in translation conferences on teaching translation at university; further research is needed to explore the potential impact of attending and participating in translation conferences on translation training programs.

4. Further research is to conduct with the aim of surveying the perceptions of translation offices owners on the role of translation conferences outcomes to meet the ever-changing market needs for skilled translators.

Last but not the least, this study hopes that translation conferences outcomes turn to be public and available for everyone. That will inevitably enhance the ultimate product of university translation educating and training programs in response to both research and market needs.

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