What lies behind good and poor translation from the perspective of translator trainees?

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Success and failure are like the two sides of the same coin, and as humans, we tend to find reasons for our successes and failures in life. Doing translations undoubtedly presents a professional environment in which it is quite natural to experience both success and failure. However, how we perceive success and failure, and how we approach them makes this process more meaningful. Therefore, this study dwells upon the students' perceptions regarding the causes of success and failure in performing translation. Preparatory class and first year students in translator training program in Turkey constituted the participants in this study. Data were collected through two types of attribution questionnaire. The first type was open-ended and qualitative in nature. The second type, developed from the students' own responses in the first type of the questionnaire, measured the degree of importance of their attributions quantitatively. Thus, the study used a mixed methods design. The qualitative data were subjected to content analysis, and the quantitative data were analysed via *Statistical Package for Social Sciences*. The study revealed university students' perceived reasons for both favourable and unfavourable translation, providing insights for all stakeholders in translation, to help make the work more constructive, conscious and fruitful.

Being a translator

The study of translation and translator training undoubtedly constitutes an integrative part of increasing intercultural relations and transferring of scientific and technological knowledge (Robinson, 2003); therefore, translation as a discipline has multi-dimensional facets. These various aspects assign a number of responsibilities to translators since they can be employed in a wide range of sectors as well as being required to be at least bilingual, given the global reach of businesses in 21st century (McKay, 2006). The act of translation is multi-faceted in nature and Calvo (2011) referred to the complication and variability of translation. This multi-dimensionality and dynamism offers translators a lot to consider while doing translation. Translators are not dealing only with the linguistic elements; translators also try to communicate the meaning of the message and attain accuracy, clarity and naturalness (Danbaba, 2017). It is important for a translator to give the meaning of source text in a clear and comprehensible manner while transferring the message of original text (Kamil, 2014).

Throughout history, theorists have put forward different criteria and opinions about the good translation. To illustrate, Munday (2010) referred to Tytler's (1797) *Essay on the principles of translation*, proposing three rules for in achieving good translation:

1. The translation should give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work;
2. The style and manner of writing should be of the same character as that of the original;
3. The translation should have all the ease of original composition.

Additionally, Nida (1964) suggested fundamental requirements for a good translation as making sense, conveying the spirit and manner of the original, having a natural and easy form of expression, and producing a similar response, and also adding that meaning should have priority over form.

Globalisation has grown the demand for translation to build mutual understanding; therefore, translation and its evaluation become a key economic element in a number of industries (Nerudova, 2012). Similarly, translation occupies a significant role in globalisation of cultures, and given that language and culture complement each other, translators should reflect both meaning and different cultural perspectives (Abbasi, Zadeh, Janfaza, Assemi & Dehghan, 2012). Having a communicator role among nations, translation is a mixture of both art and science, and translators should be equipped with relevant skills, linguistic knowledge of source and target language, and familiarity with theories and adoption of a translation strategy, before starting the act of translating (Alwazna, 2013). PACTE Group (2011) added that being competent in a profession requires effective performance of the tasks required of the profession and the ability to cope with the problems faced in the course of one's professional activity. Samuelsson-Brown (2010) provided a list of requirements for becoming a translator such as a university degree in language studies, knowledge of the subjects that will be translated, internship, familiarity with information technologies and motivation to be a lifelong learner. Translators who can instil lifelong learning into their work can become more autonomous, and can further their professional actions. Moreover, "a competent translator is able to adapt to the requirements of the task at hand, spreading cognitive resources along a continuum ranging from the components of texts to authors, clients and readers as the event and situation demand" (Ehrensberger-Dow & Massey, 2013, p.119). Therefore, considering the multi-dimensional face of translation and various factors in the process can help translators produce successfully translated texts.

Causal attributions

An attribution indicates the perceived cause of any result; it is an individual's explanation of why a certain event turned out as it did (e.g. pass or fail a test, win or lose a game). Attributions ground on the idea of ascribing the causes of events in a person's life to different factors, which can yield different outcomes. Attribution theory is about the way individuals make explanations, and it deals with the questions of self and social perception (Kelley, 1973). Attribution relates to what inferences individuals make, how they reach causal inferences, and the behavioural and attitudinal consequences of those inferences (Hewett, Shantz, Mundy & Alfes, 2018). In accordance with this it can be said that an individual's attributional style, which can be thought as a general disposition of a person to produce similar explanations for the events, is determined to be effectual in clarifying the reason why some individuals subjected to failure events including repeated failures form an unfavourable psychological indication and others do not (Yee, Pierce, Ptacek & Modzelesky, 2003).

Attributional theory advances three causal dimensions: locus, controllability and stability (Weiner, 1985). With respect to locus, cause can be external or internal, in other words,

factors can be inside or outside of the person; controllability relates to the factors that are or are not under the individual's control; whilst stability is pertinent to the temporary or permanent nature of the cause (Boruchovitch, 2004). Having a psycho-social perspective, attributions affect the subsequent behaviour (Zohri, 2011). Therefore, it seems that students' beliefs, or more specifically their causal attributions for success and failure, can shape their decisions and actions. Accordingly, the attributions could also have an influence on students' problem solving skills because how they view the reasons for success and failure can allow them to decide how they will cope with the problem. Mclean, Strongman and Neha (2007) also noted that three dimensions of attributional theory classify a number of probable causes which could impact the coping outcomes. McDowell (2009) signified that understanding the influence of attributions upon behaviour will contribute to increasing awareness for all people.

Attribution has received great attention within psychological research since its introduction and has been applied to many different areas (Murray & Thomson, 2009); therefore, the present study deals with attribution only within the context of translation activities. As well as being a means of communication and textual operation, translation is the consequence of cognitive processing performed by the translators (Albir & Alves, 2009). Since causal explanations for good and poor translation can affect translators' subsequent decisions and actions in performing translation, the way prospective translators view the reasons behind the successful and poor translation is the focus of this study. It aims to reveal the student translators' perceived reasons for success and failure in doing translations and to identify the degree of importance that they attach to these attributions. Identifying student constructs regarding good and poor translation feeds the additional purpose of this study, which is to identify potential points to improve in translator training program.

Context

The Department of Translation and Interpreting Studies at Adana Science and Technology University provides training of professional translators at an undergraduate level. The objective of the department is to train professional translators. Although graduates of ESL/EFL teaching departments are able to work as translators, their education is based mainly on teaching a language. In translator training programs, more field-specific courses are provided and students are also trained to be interpreters for consecutive and simultaneous translation. The Department of Translation and Interpreting Studies conducts one-year preparatory class training, and four-year undergraduate training. In preparatory ('prep') class, English language grammar and skills courses (reading, writing, listening and speaking in English) are provided to the students. In prep class, they are expected to improve language proficiency to follow the courses and to be able to do translation during the training. In the first year of university education, they start to take field-specific courses such as *Introduction to Translation Studies, Syntax, Etymology* and *German* as a second foreign language. The courses in the first year are less based upon practice than later year courses. *Introduction to Translation Studies*, one of the basic courses in the department, presents translation theories. Translation as an academic discipline, history of translation, different approaches such as linguistic, functional,

descriptive and system theories of translation, cultural turn, translation techniques, short introduction to audio-visual and machine translation (but not in practice) and code of ethics in translation are discussed in the theory-based translation studies course. Students get to know their field and become familiar with specific terminology in this course. In the third year, they start to take more practice-based courses such as *Screen Translation* and *Computer-Assisted Tools* as well as translation in specific fields such as art, social sciences, medicine, law, political science and media, to name a few, as electives. After the 4th semester or 6th semester, depending on the students' choice, they are required to complete an internship in summer vacation time at public or private organisations.

Method

The study, descriptive in nature, holds both quantitative and qualitative features. Therefore, a mixed methods research design was used in the study. The participants were 16 prep class and 26 first year university students in the Department of Translation and Interpreting Studies. Students were selected from different stages to investigate differing perspectives, and the effect of the first year students' theory-based translation studies course. The data were collected in 2017-2018 academic year, spring semester. The study used two different types of attribution questionnaire as data collection instruments, described below.

Attribution questionnaire (Type 1)

The attribution questionnaire (Type-1) was administered to each participant to identify the reasons they perceived for doing good or poor translations. Therefore, in the first type of the attribution questionnaire, two questions were posed to the students, each of which examined the fundamental causes of performing successful and unsuccessful translation respectively. The questions were adapted from Yılmaz (2012) with the aim of determining the perceived reasons of success and failure in translation:

- Write down the reasons for producing good translations (factors leading to good translation)
- Write down the reasons for producing poor translations (factors leading to poor translation)

The language of the questionnaire was both Turkish and English. Students were asked to answer in either language where they felt more relaxed and confident. Through analysing students' attributional styles, another attribution questionnaire was developed from their responses.

Attribution questionnaire (Type 2)

The second attribution questionnaire was constructed from the students' own responses to the questions in the first attribution questionnaire. It comprised two parts, one measuring good translation attributions, and the other dealing with poor translation attributions. Themes in this questionnaire emerged from the data students provided in the

first attribution questionnaire. This kind of analysis has been characterised as a grounded approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) by Yılmaz (2012) and Williams, Burden, Poulet and Maun (2004) in their studies. This method constitutes a way to determine hypotheses as they become evident from the data rather than to look for data to support the initial hypothesis (Glaser & Strauss, 1999 cited in Whisenthunt, Chang, Flowers, Brack, O'Hara & Raines, 2014). In the first attribution questionnaire, first year students stated 38 reasons for undertaking good translation and 38 reasons for undertaking poor translation, whilst prep class students proposed 30 reasons for producing good translation and 24 reasons for producing poor translations. The themes were developed into Attribution questionnaire (Type 2), where respondents were asked to identify the degree of importance of the reasons from their perspectives, as *very important*, *important*, *slightly important* or *unimportant*. The language of this questionnaire was Turkish, and students were expected to base their responses upon their own opinion, experience and knowledge. While the Attribution questionnaire (Type 1) was qualitative in nature, the Attribution questionnaire (Type 2) was designed quantitatively.

Findings from good translation attributions

The first part of Attribution questionnaire (Type-2) consisted of the students' own attributions regarding good translation. Different items emerged from students' responses in Attribution questionnaire (Type 1), and both groups' attributions regarding good translation were analysed together under the same title to picture the changes in their perspectives. First year students have 38 attributions, and prep class students have 30 attributions for producing good translations.

First year students stated reasons for good translation from different angles, and it was easy to see the effect of theory course on their choice of words in expressing their opinions. To begin with, all of the first year students believed that *good command of both source and target language* has a great importance in conducting good translation. However, only half of the students viewed *the proximity of the target language to the modern-day language* as important. Nearly 27% of them deemed it as slightly important. In addition, *having knowledge on topic to be translated* has similarly high importance for all the first year students. Accordingly, *analysis and comprehension of the source text* was important for all of them.

When it comes to culture, 80% of the first year students thought that *knowing the target and source culture* is very important. Related with culture, *audience* is another item that the first years put forth, and more than half of them gave importance to considering the audience while doing translation. Having *knowledge about the author* was believed to be important by half of the students though nearly 35% of them attached only slight importance to it. Furthermore, 61.5% of the students give importance to *initiative trust* as stated in Steiner's(2012) hermeneutic approach. Considering *the purpose of the translation*, as in Vermeer's (2012) skopos theory, appears to hold importance for almost all of them. *Translator's motivation* was also very important for more than 70% of the students. As for the equivalence issue, *faithfulness to the source text* and *finding the closest equivalence* were regarded as very important for more than half of the students. However, while doing this, *not overloading footnotes* into the translation was important for 65% of the students.

Table 1: Attributions of first year students regarding good translation

Factors that cause GOOD translation	Very important		Important		Slightly important		Un-important	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Good command of source language	24	92.3	2	7.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
Good command of target language	24	92.3	2	7.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
Having knowledge on topic to be translated	14	53.8	12	46.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Initiative trust	6	23.1	16	61.5	4	15.4	0	0.0
Not overloading footnotes	6	23.1	17	65.4	3	11.5	0	0.0
Proximity of the target language to the modern-day language	4	15.4	13	50.0	7	26.9	2	7.7
Faithfulness to the source text	14	53.8	9	34.6	3	11.5	0	0.0
Finding the closest equivalence	16	61.5	10	38.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Adding explanation	2	7.7	13	50.0	10	38.5	1	3.8
Knowing the source culture	21	80.8	5	19.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Knowing the target culture	21	80.8	4	15.4	1	3.8	0	0.0
Translator's motivation	19	73.1	6	23.1	1	3.8	0	0.0
Comprehension of the source text	24	92.3	2	7.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
Giving importance to audience	9	34.6	16	61.5	1	3.8	0	0.0
Improving himself/herself continually	16	61.5	9	34.6	1	3.8	0	0.0
Concern for making good translation, not for money	9	34.6	15	57.7	1	3.8	1	3.8
Reflecting the sense of text	15	57.7	9	34.6	2	7.7	0	0.0
Using tools such as dictionary	13	50.0	12	46.2	1	3.8	0	0.0
Naturalness of the translated text	14	53.8	10	38.5	2	7.7	0	0.0
Considering the purpose of the translation	17	65.4	8	30.8	1	3.8	0	0.0
Ability to do original translation	15	57.7	8	30.8	3	11.5	0	0.0
Reading a lot	11	42.3	14	53.8	1	3.8	0	0.0
Being responsible	14	53.8	12	46.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not being under pressure	17	65.4	8	30.8	1	3.8	0	0.0
Exchanging ideas with other translators	4	15.4	17	65.4	5	19.2	0	0.0
Translator training at university	12	46.2	9	34.6	3	11.5	2	7.7
Knowledge of translation theory	5	19.2	12	46.2	7	26.9	2	7.7
Knowledge about the author	2	7.7	13	50.0	9	34.6	2	7.7
Analysis of the source text	14	53.8	12	46.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Being impartial	20	76.9	5	19.2	1	3.8	0	0.0
Loving his/her job	20	76.9	6	23.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not underestimating his/her own role	13	50.0	10	38.5	3	11.5	0	0.0
Knowing and applying translation methods	10	38.5	10	38.5	5	19.2	1	3.8
Having world knowledge	15	57.7	10	38.5	1	3.8	0	0.0
Mastery in literature	9	34.6	9	34.6	8	30.8	0	0.0
Use of translator norms	5	19.2	13	50.0	5	19.2	3	11.5
Editor check of the translated text	4	15.4	14	53.8	8	30.8	0	0.0
Ability to think well	15	57.7	11	42.3	0	0.0	0	0.0

Adding explanation (gloss translation) seems important for half of them, and roughly 40% of the students considered it slightly important. On the other hand, *reflecting the sense of text* appeared to be important for almost all of them. Likewise, *naturalness of the translated text* was regarded as important by all of them. Moreover, *knowing and applying translation methods*

occupied an important place for 80% of the students while only one student views it as unimportant. *Using tools such as dictionary* was an important factor in performing good translation. When it comes to *use of translator norms*, this percentage decreased to 70, and nearly 20% of them saw it as slightly important.

From an idealistic perspective, a majority of the students believed the importance of *concern for doing good translation, not for money*. In addition, *having world knowledge* and *reading a lot* were also counted as important factors for good translation by the first year students. As to the personal traits, translator's being *responsible* (53.8%), *impartial* (76.9%), *loving his/her job* (76.9%) and *improving himself/herself continually* (61.5%) were deemed to very important in translation well. Furthermore, knowledge of *translation theory* was accepted to be important by 46.2% of the students while getting *translator training at university* was seen to be very important with the same percentage. Other highly important factors were translator's *not being under pressure* (65.4%) and *not underestimating his/her own role* (50.0%). Students also put forward the *mastery in literature* as a factor; however, only 34.6% of them assigned great importance to it, and 30.8% of the students regarded it as slightly important. *Exchanging ideas with other translators* (65.4%) and *editor check of the translated text* (53.8%) were viewed as important but not very important.

Prep class students also noted different factors regarding the good translation. As in first year students, they mentioned the language as well, and *good command of language and mother tongue* is seen as highly important for most of the students. However, in contrast to first years, they did not use terms such as source language or target language. *Good command of the topic* to be translated was rated important by 56.3% of them. Roughly 82% of the prep students believed *that understanding the text well*, *giving the message of the original text* and *correct transference of the sentences* were very important in producing good translations. *Considering the text type* was among the highly important factors for 56.3% of the students. *Mastery in translation rules* and *choice of appropriate translation techniques* were believed to affect good translation significantly. Half of the students attached high importance to *world knowledge*, and *awareness in cultural differences* was considered important by half of the students, though one fourth saw it as only slightly important. Accordingly, *selection of culturally appropriate words* was accepted to be very important by only 43.8% of them.

High importance was assigned to doing *meaningful* (75.1%), *cohesive* (68.8%) and *non-ambiguous* (75%) translation. *Consistency among the sentences* seemed important for 65.5% of them. *Avoiding word-for-word translation* was believed to be important by 68.8% of the students although a quarter of them gave little importance to it. In addition, more than half of the students gave importance to *producing natural texts*. *Interpretation while doing translation* had a significant place for prep students, as well. When it comes to personal traits, all of the students believed the importance of *making effort*, being *careful* and *meticulous*. Similarly, all except for 3 students appeared to be aware of the importance of *having different viewpoints* as translators. Almost all of the students believed the significant role of *reading a lot* and *making searches*; 62.5% of the students view *specialising in a certain field* as important. *Experience in translation* was seen as very important by 48.8% of the students even though nearly 20% of them believed its slight influence on performing good translation.

Table 2: Attributions of prep class students regarding good translation

Factors that cause GOOD translation	Very important		Important		Slightly important		Un-important	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Experience in translation	7	43.8	6	37.5	3	18.8	0	0.0
World knowledge	8	50.0	6	37.5	2	12.5	0	0.0
Selection of culturally appropriate words	7	43.8	6	37.5	2	12.5	1	6.3
Making meaningful and cohesive translation	12	75.1	4	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Consistency among the sentences	11	68.8	5	31.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Avoiding word-for-word translation	1	6.3	11	68.8	4	25.0	0	0.0
Good command of the topic	5	31.3	9	56.3	2	12.5	0	0.0
Good command of language	11	68.8	5	31.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Good command of mother tongue	13	81.3	2	12.5	1	6.3	0	0.0
Specialising in a certain field	1	6.3	10	62.5	5	31.3	0	0.0
Making searches	8	50.0	8	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Awareness in cultural differences	4	25.0	8	50.0	4	25.0	0	0.0
Making effort	11	68.8	5	31.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Correct transference of the sentences	11	68.8	5	31.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Understanding the text well	13	81.3	3	18.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
Being careful	9	56.3	7	43.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
Mastery in translation rules	9	56.3	7	43.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
Reading a lot	6	37.5	9	56.3	1	6.3	0	0.0
Having different viewpoints	5	31.3	8	50.0	3	18.8	0	0.0
Interpretation while doing translation	8	50.0	7	43.8	0	0.0	1	6.3
Producing natural texts	4	25.0	9	56.3	2	12.5	1	6.3
Making appropriate emphases	7	43.8	9	56.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Being meticulous	7	43.8	9	56.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Giving the message of the original text	13	81.3	3	18.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
Doing non-ambiguous translation	12	75.1	4	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Choice of appropriate translation techniques	7	43.8	9	56.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Considering the text type	9	56.3	5	31.3	1	6.3	1	6.3
Mastery in translation rules	10	62.5	6	37.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Having a balance between easy and difficult sentences	2	12.5	10	62.5	3	18.8	1	6.3
Providing audience a cultural basis	3	18.8	6	37.5	7	43.8	0	0.0

Findings from poor translation attributions

The second part of the Attribution questionnaire (Type-2) examined what causes unsuccessful translation from the students' perspectives. From the analysis of Attribution questionnaire (Type-1), 38 attributions from first years and 24 from prep class were specified for poor translation.

First year students gave various responses, but they were in line with the ones stated in good translation attribution. All of the students saw *not being good enough in both source and target languages* as a significant factor leading to poor translation. *Lack of knowledge in the topic* was similarly seen as one of the top factors. *Not knowing the source and target culture* was also among the elements whose importance students agreed on. Important reasons for poor

translation included *addressing to just certain audience* (54.2%) and *not knowing the audience* (62.5%). *Reading the source text superficially* (79.2%) and *not understanding the source text* (91.7%) were regarded as very important elements. In addition, all of the students believed that *lack of faithfulness to the source text* leads to unsuccessful translation. Roughly 60% of them viewed *lack of interpretation* as affecting translation on an important level.

Table 3: Attributions of first year students regarding poor translation

Factors that cause POOR translation	Very important		Important		Slightly important		Un-important	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Not being good enough in source language	23	95.8	1	4.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not being good enough in target language	22	91.7	2	8.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Lack of knowledge in the topic	22	91.7	2	8.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Reading the source text superficially	19	79.2	4	16.7	1	4.2	0	0.0
Overloading footnotes	12	50.0	11	45.8	1	4.2	0	0.0
Addressing to just certain audience	7	29.2	13	54.3	4	16.7	0	0.0
Underestimating his/her job	17	70.8	7	29.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Pressure on the translator	13	54.3	11	45.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not knowing the target culture	20	83.3	4	16.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not knowing the source culture	21	87.5	3	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not understanding the source text	22	91.7	1	4.2	0	0.0	1	4.2
Lack of interpretation	4	16.7	14	58.3	5	20.8	1	4.2
Doing translation only for money	6	25.0	8	33.3	9	37.5	1	4.2
Lack of initiative trust	11	45.8	11	45.8	1	4.2	1	4.2
Being reluctant to search and learn	16	66.7	6	25.0	1	4.2	1	4.2
Being partial	15	62.5	8	33.3	0	0.0	1	4.2
Frequent use of machine translation	14	58.3	7	29.2	2	8.3	1	4.2
Excessive use of word-for-word translation	10	41.7	11	45.8	2	8.3	1	4.2
Rushing the translation	19	79.2	5	20.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
Overuse of omission	17	70.8	6	25.0	1	4.2	0	0.0
Not knowing the audience	15	62.5	7	29.2	2	8.3	0	0.0
Insufficient reading	17	70.8	6	25.0	1	4.2	0	0.0
Not being meticulous	18	75.0	5	20.8	1	4.2	0	0.0
Lack of faithfulness to the source text	17	70.8	7	29.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not getting translator training at university	9	37.5	10	41.7	4	16.7	1	4.2
Lack of translation skill	15	62.5	9	37.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Using wrong style/wording	18	75.0	5	20.8	1	4.2	0	0.0
Overuse of domestication	13	54.3	9	37.5	2	8.3	0	0.0
Translating in incorrect meaning	21	87.5	3	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Lack of self-confidence	17	70.8	6	25.0	1	4.2	0	0.0
Disliking the job	18	75.0	5	20.8	1	4.2	0	0.0
Not considering the purpose of the translation	15	62.5	9	37.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not using standard language	13	54.3	10	41.7	1	4.2	0	0.0
Lack of discipline	17	70.8	7	29.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Lack of motivation	20	83.3	4	16.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
Lack of experience	14	58.3	7	29.2	2	8.3	1	4.2
Thinking too much on a sentence	6	25.0	7	29.2	9	37.5	2	8.3
Thinking too little on a sentence	12	29.2	12	50.0	3	12.5	2	8.3

Personal traits such as *being reluctant to search and learn* (66.7%), *being partial* (62.5%), *lack of self-confidence* (70.8%), *disliking the job* (75%), *lack of discipline* (70.8%) and *motivation* (83.3%) were considered to be important factors resulting in poor translation. Most of their poor translation attributions seemed to be simple opposites of the good translation attributions; however, different from those good ones, *frequent use of machine translation* (58.3%) was seen to be a very important factor in poor translation. Moreover, 41.7% of the first year students viewed *excessive use of word-for-word translation* as very important; on the other hand, more than half of the students seemed to be against *overuse of domestication* (54.2%) since it was also among the very important elements causing poor translation. *Not using standard language* (54.2%) presented itself among the quite significant factors, as well. A majority of the students believed *lack of experience* affects translation negatively.

Table 4: Attributions of prep class students regarding poor translation

Factors that cause POOR translation	Very important		Important		Slightly important		Un-important	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Not having knowledge on topic to be translated	4	26.7	10	66.7	1	6.7	0	0.0
Word-for-word translation	2	13.3	8	53.3	4	26.7	1	6.7
Lack of mastery in language	10	66.7	4	26.7	1	6.7	0	0.0
Lack of mastery in mother tongue	8	53.3	7	46.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
Lack of time (limited time)	1	6.7	8	53.3	4	26.7	2	13.3
Being not meticulous	7	46.7	7	46.7	1	6.7	0	0.0
Lack of interpretation	2	13.3	9	60.0	3	20.0	1	6.7
Lack of knowledge in cultural differences	4	26.7	7	46.7	3	20.0	1	6.7
Not giving the sentences the same meaning	10	66.7	5	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Making insufficient research	7	46.7	6	40.0	2	13.3	0	0.0
Using wrong word	10	66.7	5	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not understanding the text	9	60.0	6	40.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Being careless	7	46.7	6	40.0	2	13.3	0	0.0
Lack of world knowledge	3	20.0	10	66.7	2	13.3	0	0.0
Not reading a lot	7	46.7	4	26.7	4	26.7	0	0.0
Not having different viewpoints	5	33.3	4	26.7	5	33.3	1	6.7
Being inexperienced	5	33.3	4	26.7	5	33.3	1	6.7
Uninteresting topic	1	6.7	1	6.7	7	46.7	6	40.0
Failure in content integrity	9	60.0	6	40.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Making inappropriate emphasis	5	33.3	7	46.7	2	13.3	1	6.7
Not making effort	6	40.0	8	53.3	1	6.7	0	0.0
Making adaptation instead of translation	3	20.0	9	60.0	2	13.3	1	6.7
Translating words in a simple or exaggerated way	6	40.0	9	60.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not providing audience a cultural basis	4	26.7	5	33.3	5	33.3	1	6.7

Responses of prep class students for poor translation were in line with the ones for good translation. To illustrate, all of the students believed that *not understanding the text* leads to poor translation. More than half of the students gave importance to *mastery in both languages*. In addition, *word-for-word translation* (53.3%) and *lack of interpretation* (60%) were

viewed as important factors resulting in poor translation. Accordingly, *lack of knowledge in cultural differences* (46.7%) and *lack of world knowledge* (66,7%) were also counted among the important reasons. However, *not having different perspectives* as a translator (33.3%) and *lack of experience* (33.3%) were equally seen to occupy a slight role in poor translation. Different from the attributions for good translation, *lack of time* or *limited time* for translation was uttered by the prep class students, and more than half of them saw it as an important element. Additionally, 46.7% of them deemed *uninteresting topic* as slightly important, and according to 40% of them, it is an unimportant factor in conducting poor translation. 60% of the prep students did not have positive feelings about *making adaptation instead of translation* since they thought that adaptation can lead to poor translation on an important level.

Discussion

The present study focused on translators trainees' perceived causes underlying good and poor translation. Moreover, it specified the degree of importance that they attach to their own attributions. The participants were prep class and first year students at the Department of Translation and Interpreting Studies, with different groups being chosen to investigate the probable influence of theory-based translation studies course provided in the first year at the department. Their attributes for good and poor translation were approached separately for both groups.

With respect to attributions for good translations, both first year and prep class students gave importance to good command of both source and target language. Greater command of languages facilitates producing better translations (Gonzales Davies, 2004). Perfect knowledge of both source and target languages is also one of the principles set out by Dolet (1997, cited in Munday, 2010). However, prep class students did not use the terms "source" and target", which may stem from the fact that they were not yet familiar with these specific terms. Translator trainees should be encouraged to improve their linguistic skills quite well before they graduate and to focus not only target language but also their own mother tongue. Awareness about cultural differences is another point that both groups stated as necessary to achieve good translation. Translation constitutes intercultural transfer of both verbal and non-verbal signs; therefore it is necessary for translators to have good knowledge of culture (Kocbek, 2005), and translators have the role of culture mediators (Shirinzadeh & Mahadi, 2015). The other point that both groups agreed for successful translation is knowledge about the topic, although first year students seem to give higher importance to it. In the model of translation competence by PACTE Group (2003), subject knowledge in special areas is seen as one of the components of extra-linguistic competence. Both groups also believed that comprehension of the source text contributes to good translation.

Ability to use translation techniques is among the both groups' attributions for good translation, and they view it as significant. Đorđević (2017) noted that translation techniques are quite important since they can enable the translators to find specific solutions to specific problems that they encounter in translating, such as cultural items and terminology. Reading a lot constitutes another common point that both groups think

can assist successful translation. Since reading different texts about both translation and different topics broadens translators' world knowledge, they can become well-educated and more qualified. Both groups also believe that keeping the target text as natural as possible is an important basis for good translation. Nida (1964) also believed that translators should prioritise correspondence in meaning over correspondence in form to achieve equivalent effect. Likewise, in a study conducted with undergraduate English-major students by Köse (2011), the participants in an experimental group that was instructed through meaning-focused translation enhanced their language skills more than the participants in a control group that was given form-focused translation instruction.

Different from prep class students, initiative trust as stated in Steiner's (2012) hermeneutical motion was also mentioned by first year students as an important reason for good translation. According to this approach, a translator should find something worth translating as a first step. Likewise, they seemed to give value to the purpose of the translation as in Vermeer's (2012) skopos theory. The reason why only first year students noted these attributions is most probably their familiarity with translation theories and approaches. First year students believed the effect of theoretical knowledge on producing good translations. As Shuttleworth (2001) claimed, students should be trained to develop personal, internalised methods of theorising about what they are doing, which may present them with a set of techniques to produce high quality translations. Translator training at university and professional development are among the reasons that first year students identify as leading to good translations. Additionally, first year students seemed to give importance to considering the audience while undertaking translation. Procedures for judging the success of a translation should involve the reaction of the audience, and a translation could be described as less successful if audiences do not want to read it (McAuley, 2015); therefore, what to translate can sometimes be more important that how to translate (Araghi & Ramezanpoor, 2012).

First year students also considered use of translation aids such as dictionaries as a factor leading to success in translation. Using a dictionary is an indispensable part of doing translation, even when searching common words, as words gain meaning in context; thus, students should adopt the habit of using dictionaries that provide both examples and contextual meanings of words. Furthermore, objectivity and accountability are two elements that they thought can allow good translation. These are also included in the *Code of Professional Practice* issued by FIT Europe (2009). As a principle, translator trainees should be instructed to produce ethical work and translation ethics should be emphasised in their training before they start acting as translators. When it comes to differences between responses of prep class and first year students, experience is a factor. Prep class students believed that experience is conducive to good translation. In a study (Varzande & Jadidi, 2015) conducted among translators with and without academic experience, results showed that academic experience significantly influenced the quality of translation, contributing to better translations. In addition, prep class students viewed text type as a significant factor on the quality of the translation. Puchala (2011) also believed its importance and stated that correct recognition of text type has a role in performing a successful translation, as it enables the translators to specify the text's function, author's intention, reader's expectation, and to select an appropriate translation strategy.

As to the attribution for poor translation, some responses of both groups were similar. To illustrate, lack of linguistic knowledge leads to poor translation. Likewise, lack of mastery in the topic to be translated constitutes a significant factor leading to poor translation. Both groups also believed that having inadequate knowledge about the cultures influences the quality of the translation adversely. Both groups deemed lack of experience as a negative factor in translation competence. Incomprehension of the source text is also seen to be a negative cause. Both groups considered use of word-for-word translation as a negative factor. As opposed to prep class students, first year students thought that overuse of domestication technique has a negative influence on translation. Although there are different beliefs and attitudes towards the use of domestication and foreignisation in translation, Venuti (1995) also supported foreignisation by giving prominence to the visibility of translator. Lack of faithfulness to the source text also leads to poor translation, according to first year students. Kukkola (2002) also used faithful translation as the equivalence of good translation, and believed that faithfulness is possibly the most common criterion in assessing a translation.

Excessive use of machine translation and overuse of omission and addition techniques are also believed to be barriers to good translation. However, most probably students viewed excessive use of machine translation as depending on such aids too much without giving sense and meaning, or using inappropriate ones because some computer programs are not suitable for Turkish-English or English-Turkish translations due to the syntactical differences. Another point is that they had not taken a course in computer-assisted translating and were not familiar with effective uses of technology in translation. Adding unnecessary explanations into the translated text was not viewed favourably by the first year students. Berman (2004) also viewed expansion as a deforming tendency in translation. As personal traits, lack of discipline, self-confidence and objectivity lead to poor translations. In addition to these traits, prep class students posed some different attributions for unsuccessful translation. For instance, they believed that uninteresting topics impact translation quality negatively. Hence, students should be provided a variety of topics to translate in their training programs, to become used to translating unpopular as well as popular texts.

Inability to give the same sense in the translated text appears to form an obstacle against good translation. According to Xiang (2011), equivalence is necessary in translation; however, this equivalence does not mean absolute identity; a text translated with a certain degree of equivalence in certain aspects can be considered as a successful translation of the source text. Since translation is not just a matter of transferring words and sentences into the target language, students should be trained to be alert about the sense and to be able read between lines. Equivalence in both form and meaning can result in a good translation. Prep class students also seemed to consider translators having different perspectives, as they thought that a lack of different viewpoints can lower the quality of translation. Developing different viewpoints is related to critical thinking skills; thus, translator trainees should be provided with a course on critical thinking skills to help them gain questioning habits and thinking from different perspectives, as well as to raising awareness of the importance of being accurate, clear and impartial. As Kashirina (2015) suggested, critical thinking must be a necessary part of translator training since it

contributes to problem solving in translation. Lack of time is also regarded as an important factor that causes poor translation.

Causal attributions of prep class and first year students for good and poor translation have both similar and different points. Even though some responses of both groups reflected the same ideas, the terminology that first year students preferred seemed to be influenced by their theory-based translation studies course. As translation trainees, they have started to construct their own attributions about producing good and poor translations, and their viewpoints or beliefs will affect their approaches to doing translations, and their propensity to use relevant strategies and coping skills in cases of difficulties.

Limitations and further research

The present study, descriptive in nature, focuses on the translator trainees' causal attributions for good and poor translation. Different groups participated in this study; however, the number of samples can be increased in further studies to elaborate on the findings. Likewise, similar studies can be repeated in their 2nd, 3rd and 4th years of university education to identify changes in their opinions. What is more, same questions could be given to practising translators to compare their beliefs with those of trainees.

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