

IDENTIFYING GRAMMATICAL ISSUES IN TRANSLATION: METHODS AND PROSPECTS FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

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Abstract. This article explores methods for identifying grammatical issues in translations by students of technical education, with a focus on the challenges presented by specialized vocabulary and grammar structures in technical texts. It reviews various tools and methodologies, such as software tools and peer reviews, designed to enhance students' translation skills. The study discusses common errors like tense confusion and subject-verb agreement, while offering solutions for improving grammatical accuracy in technical translations. The importance of grammar in maintaining meaning, precision, and clarity is emphasized, particularly in technical and specialized fields. Furthermore, the article highlights the role of context-specific training in technical language acquisition, noting that general grammar rules may not always apply seamlessly to specialized terminology.

1 Introduction

Translation is a complex cognitive process that requires a deep understanding of two languages and their respective grammars. For students in technical education, the challenge is heightened due to the specialized vocabulary and structures common in technical texts. This article explores methods for identifying grammatical issues in translation, particularly aimed at students in technical fields. We will examine various tools and methodologies designed to help these students improve their translation skills and their understanding of grammar.

1.1 Literature review

Several studies have emphasized the importance of grammar in translation. Baker (2011) and Newmark (1988) highlight how grammar functions as the structural backbone of language.

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Misunderstandings arising from poor grammar comprehension can have significant consequences, particularly in technical translations where precision is crucial. Tools such as Grammarly and SDL Trados have emerged to help students identify these errors during translation tasks. In *Other Words* by Baker [1] also discusses how evolving translation methodologies are being adapted for students in various specialized fields.

For a comprehensive understanding of the role of grammar in translation, it is essential to consider additional perspectives that contribute to the literature. For instance, Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) introduced the concept of modulation and transposition in translation, which emphasizes the importance of grammatical shifts when translating between languages with different syntactic structures [2]. These shifts highlight the translator's role in adjusting grammatical elements to maintain meaning and clarity across languages.

Schäffner (1998) adds to this by analyzing the political and ideological implications of grammatical choices in translation [3]. In technical fields, where precision is paramount, any ideological misrepresentation can lead to miscommunication. Hence, grammar is not only a linguistic tool but also a medium through which cultural and contextual understandings are conveyed.

Finally, Nord (1997) in her *Functionalist Approaches to Translation* emphasizes the purpose of the translation (Skopos theory), highlighting that grammatical choices should always be adapted according to the target audience and the specific function the translation will serve [4]. These studies collectively underline that grammar is not merely a set of rules but a dynamic component that significantly influences the accuracy and appropriateness of a translation.

1.2 Methodology

This study employs several approaches to identify common grammatical issues encountered by technical education students in their translations. We focused on:

1. **Software Tools:** Tools like Grammarly and SDL Trados were used to detect grammatical inconsistencies in student translations. These tools automatically flag issues such as subject-verb agreement errors, tense confusion, and improper sentence structures.
2. **Peer Review:** Students were encouraged to engage in peer review sessions where they reviewed each other's translations. This collaborative approach allowed them to identify errors together, increasing their understanding of grammatical rules.
3. **Practical Exercises:** Students translated technical manuals, then analyzed their translations with a focus on grammatical structures. This hands-on approach promoted active learning and helped identify areas where they struggled.

2. Discussion

Translation, by its very nature, requires a deep understanding of grammar, which serves as the backbone of any language. Whether it is literary translation, technical translation, or machine translation, grammar remains the key to maintaining the meaning and nuance of the source text in the target language. Baker (2011) and Newmark (1988) emphasize that understanding the grammatical rules of both languages is crucial to ensuring that the intended meaning is preserved. Misunderstanding or misapplying these rules can lead to errors that compromise the translation's accuracy [5]. Grammatical rules in translation do not simply

involve knowing how to form proper sentences but also how to convey the same structural meaning from one language to another. In technical translations, where precision and clarity are critical, this role becomes even more significant. For example, in legal documents, a misplaced comma or incorrect verb tense can lead to ambiguity or misinterpretation. Understanding the role of grammar in translation allows for a more coherent and accurate reflection of the source material, ensuring that the target audience receives the same message. This chart represents the different aspects of grammar that are crucial in translation:

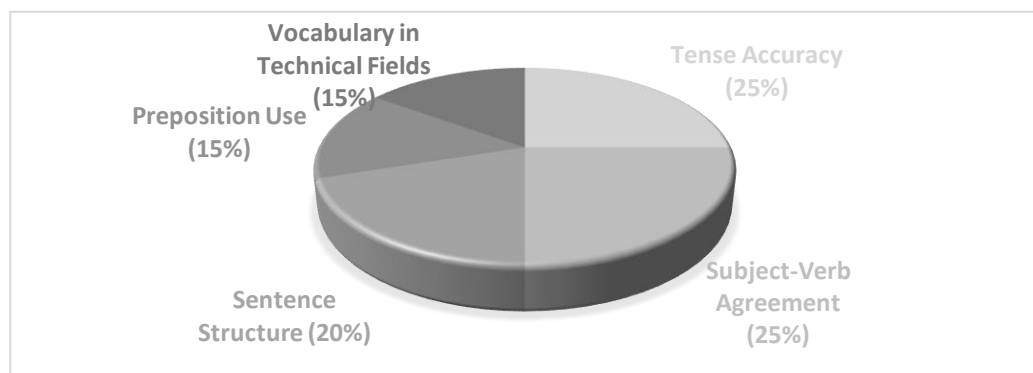


Fig. 1. Role of Grammar in Translation

Despite the importance of grammar in translation, it presents various challenges for translators, particularly when languages have vastly different grammatical structures. For example, the distinction between subject-verb-object (SVO) order in English versus subject-object-verb (SOV) in Japanese demands an adjustment in the way sentences are constructed and understood. Grammatical differences such as these, along with variations in tense, aspect, mood, and word order, can complicate the translation process.

Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) theory of modulation and transposition sheds light on how grammatical shifts are necessary when moving between languages. Modulation involves changing the viewpoint or perspective in translation to fit the target language, while transposition entails changing the grammatical structure without altering the meaning. These methods are essential for producing natural and grammatically sound translations, but they also require a deep understanding of both linguistic systems.

2.1. Common Grammatical Errors in Translation

Grammatical errors in translation can result from various factors, including lack of familiarity with the grammatical structures of the target language or a poor understanding of the source text [7]. Some common errors include:

- ✓ Tense errors: Misinterpreting or mistranslating the tense can change the timeframe of an action, leading to confusion. For example, mixing up past perfect and simple past can alter the sequence of events in narrative texts.
- ✓ Preposition misuse: Prepositions vary widely across languages and are often used differently. Translators frequently struggle with finding the correct preposition in the target language.

- ✓ Subject-verb agreement: Mistakes in ensuring that subjects and verbs agree in number and person can lead to awkward or ungrammatical sentences.
- ✓ Sentence structure issues: Translators often struggle with reproducing complex sentence structures, especially when translating from languages with different syntactical patterns.

These errors can significantly impact the readability and meaning of the translated text, particularly in fields such as technical or legal translation, where precision is crucial.

2.2. Grammatical Tools in Translation

With advancements in technology, various tools have emerged to assist translators in identifying and correcting grammatical errors. SDL Trados, for example, is a widely-used computer-assisted translation (CAT) tool that offers grammar-checking features to ensure consistency and grammatical accuracy throughout the translation [8]. Similarly, Grammarly provides real-time feedback on grammatical errors and offers suggestions to improve the text.

Machine translation tools like Google Translate and DeepL have also integrated grammatical algorithms to provide more accurate translations, although they still struggle with complex grammatical structures and nuanced meanings. While these tools can be helpful, human translators are still essential for ensuring the subtleties of grammar are properly addressed, especially in technical or specialized fields.

2.3. Translation Methodologies and Grammar

Modern translation methodologies emphasize the role of grammar in preserving the functional equivalence between source and target texts. In her book *In Other Words*, Baker (2011) discusses how new translation methodologies are evolving to adapt to the specialized needs of students and professionals in various fields, such as legal, medical, and technical translation. These methodologies underscore the importance of maintaining grammatical precision while adapting the translation to the context of the target language.

Skopos theory, introduced by Nord (1997), further highlights the importance of the purpose of translation. According to this theory, the grammatical choices made by the translator should always reflect the function the translation will serve in the target culture. Therefore, grammatical accuracy is not merely about following rules but about making the translation functional and meaningful to the intended audience.

2.4. The Peer Review Process in Translation

The peer review process plays a critical role in ensuring the grammatical quality of translations. In academic and professional settings, translations are often reviewed by peers who are proficient in both the source and target languages [6]. This process allows for the identification and correction of grammatical errors that the original translator may have overlooked.

The peer review process typically involves:

- **Submission of the translation:** The translator submits the translated text for review.
- **Feedback:** Reviewers provide detailed feedback on grammatical accuracy, clarity, and coherence.
- **Revisions:** Based on the feedback, the translator revises the text to correct any errors or improve grammatical structures.
- **Approval:** Once the translation meets the required standards, it is approved for final use.

Peer review ensures that the translation maintains high standards of grammatical accuracy and contextual appropriateness.

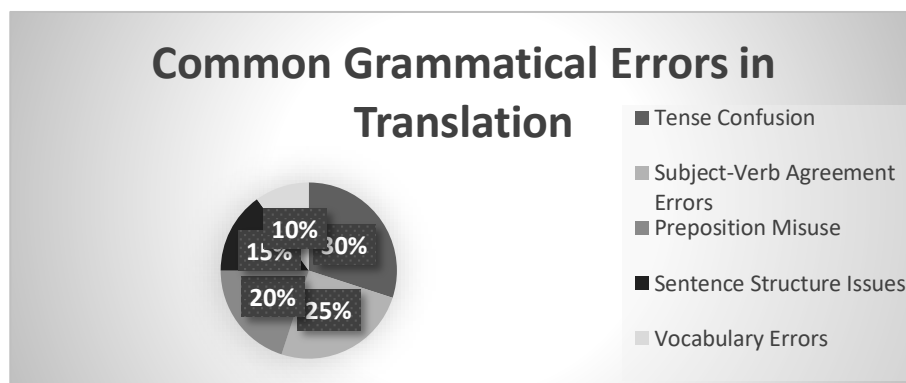


Fig. 2. Common Grammatical Errors in Translation

In conclusion, identifying and addressing grammatical issues in translation is an essential skill, particularly for students in technical fields, where precision and clarity are paramount. Mastering grammar ensures not only the accurate transfer of meaning but also enhances the readability and professionalism of the translated content. By leveraging software tools like SDL Trados, Grammarly, and other CAT tools, students can identify common grammatical errors and learn from automated suggestions. However, these tools alone are not sufficient; peer reviews and collaborative exercises play a critical role in refining translation quality. Peer feedback allows students to engage with different perspectives, spot subtle errors, and improve both their grammatical and contextual awareness.

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