

## THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF TRANSLATION IN LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

**Alijonova Farangiz Azizbek qizi**

alijonovafarangiz7@gmail.com

Uzbekistan state world languages university 3<sup>rd</sup> student

Supervisor teacher: **Baydullayeva Feruza Akilbekovna**

**Abstract:** This article analyzes the role, cognitive and pedagogical significance, and functions of translation in the process of learning English as a foreign language. The study examines the impact of translation on lexical acquisition, reading comprehension, and language learning strategies. In addition, the role and key aspects of modern digital technologies and machine translation in the educational process are also considered.

Overall, the study concludes that translation serves as an important cognitive and pedagogical tool in English language learning, contributing to more effective and meaningful language acquisition when integrated with modern teaching approaches.

**Key words:** translation, EFL, cognitive development, pedagogy, machine translation, language learning strategies.

**Аннотация:** Данная статья анализирует роль, когнитивную и педагогическую значимость, а также функции перевода в процессе изучения английского языка как иностранного. В исследовании рассматривается влияние перевода на усвоение лексики, понимание прочитанного и стратегии изучения языка. Кроме того, также рассматриваются роль и основные аспекты современных цифровых технологий и машинного перевода в образовательном процессе.

В целом, исследование приходит к выводу, что перевод является важным когнитивным и педагогическим инструментом в изучении английского языка, способствующим более эффективному и осмысленному овладению языком при интеграции с современными методами обучения.

**Ключевые слова:** перевод, английский как иностранный язык (EFL), когнитивное развитие, педагогика, машинный перевод, стратегии изучения языка

### Introduction

In modern linguistics, foreign language acquisition is considered one of the most significant academic issues. Since language is an inseparable part of human activity, every approach to language learning is of great importance. In particular, the role of translation in learning English is also highly significant.

For a long time, translation in English language learning was viewed as a controversial method. In traditional approaches, it was considered an obstacle to the “direct method” of language teaching. However, recent studies have re-evaluated its cognitive importance in the process of language acquisition.

Translation helps learners understand a new language, especially in mastering complex grammatical structures and lexical units. This process supports learners’ thinking through their native language and facilitates deeper comprehension.

As Liao (2006) states: “translation is widely used in learners’ foreign language learning process. It appears that learners often use translation as a learning strategy to comprehend, remember, and produce a foreign language.”

This idea shows that translation is not merely a mechanical process, but one of the essential strategies in language learning.

## Methods

This study is based on a qualitative research approach, in which reliable and widely recognized academic sources were analyzed to examine the role and importance of translation in English language learning. The research included articles indexed in databases such as Scopus and Google Scholar, as well as open-access scholarly resources.

The relationship between translation and English language learning was examined from both theoretical and practical perspectives. In particular, within the framework of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) methodology, the functions, advantages, and limitations of translation in the learning process were analyzed.

In addition, a corpus linguistics approach was applied to investigate linguistic patterns in translation and real language use. This approach helped to identify the linguistic strategies that learners employ during translation activities.

According to Baker (corpus-based approach):

“Corpus-based studies allow researchers to observe real patterns of translated language usage rather than relying on intuition.” ( Baker.M, 2018)

This perspective highlights translation not only as a theoretical concept but also as an empirically grounded field of linguistic research based on authentic language data.

## Results

The analysis of the data revealed several key functions of translation in the process of English language learning. These functions contribute significantly to facilitating language acquisition and enhancing learners' linguistic competence.

### 3.1 Vocabulary acquisition

Translation enables learners to acquire new vocabulary more quickly and effectively. When new lexical items are explained through contextual translation, their meanings are better understood and retained in long-term memory. Moreover, learners develop the ability to use these words in real communicative situations.

### 3.2 Reading comprehension

Translating complex texts into the learners' native language helps them gain a deeper understanding of grammatical structures. This process facilitates text comprehension and improves reading skills. In particular, translation serves as an important tool for understanding academic texts.

### 3.3 Cognitive support

Translation supports learners' cognitive processes by activating thinking, analysis, and comparison skills. It also reduces psychological barriers in language learning and increases learners' confidence in using the target language.

According to Liao: “learners often use translation as a learning strategy to comprehend, remember, and produce a foreign language.” (Liao,2006)

This statement confirms that translation is not only a supportive tool but also an essential part of language learning strategies.

## Analysis

During the study, the collected academic sources were analyzed using a qualitative approach. Throughout the analysis process, the functions of translation in English language learning were examined not only from a theoretical perspective but also in terms of practical language acquisition. Each source demonstrated the role and significance of translation within the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context.

The results of the analysis indicate that translation has a strong impact on three main areas of language acquisition: lexical development, grammatical comprehension, and cognitive support.

For example, the lexical analysis showed that translation is an effective tool for improving vocabulary acquisition. Learners are able to understand new words more quickly through their native language and learn to use them in appropriate contexts.

### **Discussion**

In modern pedagogical approaches, translation is no longer considered an outdated “forbidden method,” but rather an integrative learning tool and one of the contemporary instructional strategies. The communicative language teaching methodology supports the use of translation alongside other language skills.

“Translation should be reconsidered as an integrated pedagogical tool rather than a forbidden practice in language classrooms.” (Yuan Ping, 2024)

This perspective indicates that translation is being re-evaluated within modern EFL methodology and is gaining recognition as a meaningful instructional resource.

In addition, alongside artificial intelligence, machine translation tools such as Google Translate are also having a significant impact on the language learning process. These tools are increasingly being integrated into foreign language learning environments and are influencing how learners access and process information.

As noted by Yuan Ping:

“Machine translation tools such as Google Translate have become increasingly integrated into foreign language learning environments.” (Yuan Ping, 2024)

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the findings of this study demonstrate that translation is an important pedagogical tool in the process of learning English. The analysis confirms that although translation has long been regarded as a traditional or even prohibited method, it is currently being re-evaluated within modern EFL approaches as an effective strategy that supports language learning.

The study identified that translation has a positive impact in three main areas: lexical development, grammatical comprehension, and cognitive supports. Furthermore, the development of modern technologies such as machine translation and artificial intelligence has further expanded the role of translation in the educational process. These tools provide learners with quick access to information and additional support in language comprehension; however, they cannot fully replace human thinking and linguistic analysis.

Overall, translation should be considered a supportive yet strategically significant tool in English language learning, and the most effective results can be achieved through the integration of communicative teaching approaches and translation-based strategies.

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