CHAPTER - SEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
The aim of the present study was mainly to find out the potentialities of the use of translation in ELT/ELL as a foreign language with special reference to Yemen in order to clarify the misconceptions held for or against translation due to either the absence of enough empirical support or the subjective impression of the individuals concerned, i.e. learners, teachers, course designers and decision-makers.

It was hypothesised that:

(i) Foreign language teaching/learning in a non-supportive environment involves translation activity, in one form or another, both the teacher and the learner, i.e. it is not only necessary but also an inevitable fact.

(ii) Translation is an effective and facilitative means in English language teaching/learning as a foreign language in Yemen.

(iii) Translation has its own problems, e.g. the absence of linguistic and culture elements, untranslatability and the difference of world view. In addition, inadequate use of translation, e.g. mass use of literal translation in classroom practice, could be an obstacle and hinderance to effective English education.

(iv) The exploitation of translation in English Language Teaching (ELT) and English language learning (ELL) can be affected by the teacher's experience, the level of the students and the discipline in which the students are studying, (1.8).
THE METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES FOLLOWED IN CONDUCTING THIS STUDY
(1.11)

(a) A general survey of definition of translation from different points of view and review of various relevant sources for the development of concepts and issues involved in translation in general (Chapter : 2) and translation in ELT/ELL (Chapter : 3).

(b) Identification of some problematic areas in both Arabic and English through contrastive study and text translation. Certain areas of language were compared, contrasted and exemplified through stretch of connected sentences taken from texts in existing translations or text translation exercises administered to teachers and students for their possible attributes and implications for the learning and teaching of English (Chapter : 4).

(c) Instruments in the form of teachers' and students' questionnaires for collecting data about felt needs for translation, its effectiveness and the problems related to its application in ELT/ELL (Chapter - 5 & 6).

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and results of the study. Based on that, it also provides some pedagogical implications for teaching and learning English in Yemen, and some suggestions for further studies.

The summary, conclusions and results presented below are based on :

(1) the foregoing review of the literature related to :

(a) Fundamental Issues of Translation (Chapter Two).

(b) The Use of Translation in ELT/ELL (Chapter Three).
7.1. (a) FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES OF TRANSLATION

The review of literature related to the issues of translation discussed in Chapter Two showed that translation in all its aspects cannot be isolated from foreign language teaching and learning (Hypothesis i, 1.8). Translation, despite the many different definitions provided by different scholars, has always been a work conducted on language engaging two or more languages concerned with transferring a given text, a given message and or a work of art from one language into another (2.1).

Scholars distinguish between different types of translation based on the codes involved in transferring the message (intralingual, interlingual, and intersemiotic), the types of text (technical, cultural, literary), the method of translation (communicative or semantic translation) and/or based on bilingual competence (translating and interpreting, word-for-word and free, professional or pedagogical, human or machine, etc.) (2.2).

Translation through centuries played an important part as a means of breaking the language barriers, promoting better communication and contributing to linguistic creativity. Its conclusive and decisive impact on the evolution of human civilization is undeniable. In the present time, this role of translation has not changed or minimized, but become an essential part of our life (2.3).
The process of translating (2.4) engages the translator in intensive reading, in going beyond the language, in order to understand and interpret messages and intentions of the original. It requires a close investigation of the text—stylistic and semantic, etc. to enable him reproduce successfully a faithful and natural replacement of the original.

Translation is in a sense the comparative making of meaning. It generates potentially new meaning and establishes new parameters for readers' responses. It thus increases the translator's willingness as well as the learner of a foreign language, to work with informants, to listen, to analyse errors—apparent or real — as an opportunity for comparative understanding of two language communities. It enables him/her to move between languages while valuing and evaluating each of them. Accordingly, it helps in improving writing and reading skills (Hypothesis, ii, 1.8).

Undoubtedly, when carrying out their task, translators may face many critical problems due to the differences between the languages and cultures involved, the absence of linguistic elements, the problem of meanings of words appearing in different contexts and the connotation and denotation adherent to each linguistic item in every language and the differences in the world view and so on (2.5). They may not even, sometimes, get satisfying help from dictionaries or translation theories for solving those difficulties (Hypothesis iii, 1.8).
As for the issue of translation equivalence, it was found that the search for an exact equivalence at the level of word, phrase, sentence and the text as a whole, or, say the intentional deviation and shift from the original in order to reach that exact equivalence cannot be always possible. Although distinction between different equivalences was made by some scholars, translation equivalence apparently can only be an approximate correspondence to an original. Therefore, different translations of the same original can be taken as different understandings or interpretations (2.6).

Regarding the issue of the adequacy of translation theory, it was found that many authorities are not satisfied with what has been achieved in this area. A number of reasons were introduced (2.7). Translation theory, however, provides the translator with principles, guidelines and insights by which she/he can be better equipped for manipulating translation problems.

The development of translation theory (2.8) traced a number of attempts made by different scholars to historically classify translation theories and practices. The survey showed how those attempts are controversial as the "periodization" of translation theory may not help to understand it. In addition, different concepts and theoretical approaches kept prevailing in different times, (duty of translator, problems of translation, hermeneutic, linguistic, cultural and aesthetic approaches). Each translation theory, however, is unified by a conceptual framework which
assumes original presence and representation of it in the target language.

7.1(b). THE USE OF TRANSLATION IN ELT/ELL

The role of the mother tongue in monolingual classes is a topic which is often ignored in discussions of methodology and in teacher training. Although the total prohibition of the students' native language is now, to some extent, unfashionable, its use in the classroom clearly needs further exploration.

Translation as a means of teaching a foreign language has a long history and was justified as being a mental training activity when language learning was viewed as an intellectual activity involving rule learning, and the first language was maintained as the reference system in the acquisition of the target language.

Grammar-translation was criticized for being a tedious method which required from the learner a rigorous effort for the sake of merely memorizing endless lists of vocabulary and grammar rules. The learner had always to strive in order to translate sample or un-natural sentences which were unlikely to promote genuine language competence (Hypothesis No. iii, 1.8).

Furthermore, inefficiency of instruction, limitations of practice techniques and the dependency of the learner on the mother tongue resulted in limited proficiency of communication. All these, besides the influence of the development of new methodologies, led to translation being a method with bad reputation, (3.1, 3.4).
Recently, however, a number of publications call for re-assessing the potential contribution of translation to foreign language teaching and learning after it was unreservedly neglected. Its importance lies in the fact that it is seen as a purposive pedagogical device, an inevitable part of the L2 learning process, a learner's tool of contrastive analysis used intuitively and spontaneously, an inescapable fact since the first language sets the stage for the formal learning of any other (Hypothesis No. i, 1.8).

Translation lends itself to a variety of classroom activities, (Sec. 3.2). It helps in: practising and improving the learner's ability to communicate back into the mother tongue, increasing the student's power and range of expression, and playing an important role in fluency development. It enables the teachers to select material to illustrate particular aspects of language. It also helps in imparting an understanding of new concepts, practising vocabulary and giving insight into semantic distinction (Hypothesis No. ii, 1.8).

Furthermore, translation is in itself an important and necessary skill to be imparted to the learner specially when foreign language is learnt for teaching or for translating (3.3). There is no doubt that an ineffective use of translation, (e.g. over-use of it, not integrating it with other types of activities), may endanger the process of teaching and learning, (Sec. 3.4). Therefore, different suggestions and various applications of translation are provided by practitioners in
order to ensure fruitful results from employing translation in ELT/ELL (Sec. 3.5). Selection of texts which illustrate certain aspects of language or specific problems is emphasized. Also, assertion is made on devising and constructing tasks and activities which ensure the learners' involvement and motivate them for participating in discussion, help them in developing the ability of communication and in improving their language skills (3.6).

7.2. ARABIC VS. ENGLISH CONTRASTIVE STUDIES AND TEXT TRANSLATIONS

Arabic is a semitic language, this by itself causes more difficulties for Arab learners of English due not only to the differences between alphabets and the writing systems of Arabic and English, but also the differences between sound systems of both languages which result in a great deal of spelling and pronunciation problems (4.2) (Hypothesis No. iii, 1.8).

In the process of learning a foreign language, L1 functions in "a special relation" with L2. The important characteristic of this function is the interferential role in L2 learning where the L1 can be the source of interlingual errors in the acquisition of L2. Thus, translation can be an essential factor in error analysis because the learners tend to translate, to replace as accurately as they can, each word, phrase or clause of the source language by its equivalent in English. This is a real problem which the majority of Arab learners of English have because they learn a considerable proportion of English by means
of an inadequate use of translation. That is to say, some relations between Arabic and English are revealed by translation.

This fact was investigated through contrastive analysis where, based on the researcher’s teaching experience of English teaching to Arab learners, six predicted areas of difficulties were selected. The most apparent similarities and differences related to those areas in Arabic and English were discussed and exemplified by means of texts translations. Those areas were: Parts of speech, English articles/ prefix al in Arabic, sentence structure, tense system, auxiliaries and organization of text writing (4.1.3, i-vi).

7.3. THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE RESULTS OF THE CONTRASTIVES STUDIES AND TEXT TRANSLATIONS

(i) Arabic grammar divides the parts of speech into: noun, verb and preposition, whereas English grammar divides them into: noun, verb, adjective, adverb, pronoun, preposition, conjunction, article, demonstrative and interjection. This, however, does not mean that English has more parts of speech than Arabic. The fact is that Arabic integrates noun, adjective, adverb, demonstrative and pronoun under one title, namely the noun. Preposition, conjunction and interjection are put under the heading harf, literally (letter) meaning preposition (4.1.3,i).

But in the characteristics of both the noun and verb in Arabic exists a major difference. The Arabic noun is inflected for case, determination, gender and number. toffahatun (an apple)
can be toffahatun, toffahatan, toffahatin (nominative, accusative and genitive respectively) according to its position in the sentence, i.e. subject, object, or noun and preposition phrase. The word as it is right now indicates indefiniteness, singularity and feminity.

As with the verb, person, mood and aspect are marked by prefixes and suffixes. In addition, most of the Arabic verbs have case ending marking nominative (u), accusative (a) and jussive (o). Thus, the verb (akala : ate), for example, indicates the second person (male), past tense, and accusative (a) at the end. This means that gender, aspect and number are obligatory grammatical categories in Arabic.

Those characteristics of the Arabic noun and verb allow us to construct a sentence in a way which is not possible in English. Below are some examples.

- Ara. ahmadu akala toffahatan.
  Eng. Ahmed ate an apple.

- Ara. akala ahmadu toffahatan.
  Eng. ate Ahmed an apple. (Not possible)

- Ara. toffahatan akala ahmadu.
  Eng. An apple ate Ahmed. (Not possible)

It was found that some of the errors related to word order, subject-verb concord and verbal sentence committed by the learners were the obvious result of the negative transfer, (4.2.4, i-ii).
(ii) English has two types of articles, the definite article *the* (the book) and the indefinite article *a* before consonants (a book) and *an* before vowels (an egg). Sometimes, nouns require no articles. This is called the (zero article). The Arabic equivalence to these two articles are the prefix *al* (the) expressing definiteness (*al kitab* : the book) and the absence of the prefix *al* expressing indefiniteness (*kitab* : a book and *mohandis* : an engineer).

The similarities and differences of the use of articles in both languages are discussed and exemplified in more detail in chapter four (4.1.3, ii).

Errors in the use of the English articles made by the participant learners and teachers continue to exist, sometimes due to the use of literal translation, and sometimes due to the fact that the learners, seemingly, failed to understand how the English articles function. They omit, add or use them indiscriminately. (4.2.4, i-ii).

(iii) Sentence structure in English (Statement) follows the basic word order SVO. But Arabic has two structures for statements (4.1.3, iii):

* nominal SVO (subject + predicate, sometimes without copula, (e.g. algamar moshegun : The noon (is) bright), and
* verbal VSO (Verb + Subject + object...)

  e.g. Kasar Ahmadu al finjana.
  broke Ahmed the cup.
What was found related to this were:

(a) Arab learners of English tend to omit the copula in their written English.

(b) Although the learners or the teachers might have successfully switched from the Arabic VSO sentence to the English SVO, they sometimes kept the word order of the original Arabic in their translations (4.2.4, i-ii).

(iv) Arabic is generally considered to have only two tenses madhi (past/perfect) expressing completed actions, and modharea (present/imperfect) expressing incompleted action. But Arabic has its own way of expressing all these correspondent tenses in English (4.1.3, iv). Nonetheless, it was obvious that, due to the different tense systems in both the languages, a variety of errors of the English verb were found in the translations of the performant students and teachers (4.2.4, i-ii).

(v) Arabic does not have what is known in English as auxiliaries. Arab learners of English, especially in early stages, tend to drop those auxiliaries when writing English questions or negated sentences. This area, however, needs further study (4.1.3, v).

(vi) Unlike English, one would observe that text organization, the use of the devices that help to hold the text together and punctuation in Arabic writing are apparently not given proper emphasis. Therefore, Arab learners of English always face a big problem concerning this area. There is evidence that
the informant students, in spite of the fact that they translated original texts, did not succeed in producing well organized and coherent English versions with correct use of punctuation (4.1.3, vi) and (4.2.3-4).

7.4. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FIELD STUDY

The field study (Chapter - 5+6) in the form of teachers' and students' questionnaires was a natural extension of the work at the theoretical level because only very little is known about this unlighted region of the field of ELT/ELL in Yemen. Therefore, data collection was essentially an important part of this study so that hypotheses (1.8,i-iv) or generalizations tentatively held may be identified as valid, verified as correct, or rejected as unattainable.

The two questionnaires, then, were basically designed to collect explicit information about:

* the teachers' and students' perception of employing translation in ELT and ELL as a foreign language in Yemen.

* their awareness and understanding of the need for translation in the teaching and learning process of English.

* their awareness of translation - effectiveness as a means of facilitating and improving English language education.

* their understanding of the problematic areas of translation.

* the teachers' actual use of translation in their job and the learners' actual use of it during their learning of English.
the teachers' and students' ability to assess the suitability of the use of translation in ELT/ELL.

* the relation between different faculties or different levels of the students (1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th year) and the use of translation.

The items of both questionnaires were constructed on the basis of the theoretical development covered in the previous chapters. They were revised and tested on the basis of consultation with ELT professionals in order to determine the content validity of the questionnaires by means of judgements about the relevance of the items to the purpose for which they were defined (5.2) (Appendix 2, Students' and teachers' questionnaires, A+B).

The statistical analysis and evaluation of the responses of the teachers' and students' questionnaires provided a number of the findings (6.2, 1-2).

(i) The employment of translation in ELT/ELL is still worthwhile as the need for it and its effectiveness were confirmed by a large majority of the respondent students and a small majority of the informant teachers. (Hypotheses i-iii, 1.8).

(ii) Translation is seen by the informant teachers as surrounded by some problems in particular:

(a) 22 teachers out of 27 hold that it is of a little benefit in building foreign language competence;

(b) 22 teachers believed that it needs to be studied and mastered before it can be employed;

(c) 22 teachers out of 27 thought that it slows down the learning process.
(iii) A majority of about 60% teachers did not exploit translation in their teaching.

(iv) It was found that there was insufficient materials on using translation in ELT/ELL as ten teachers confirmed it while 12 were not certain.

(v) The students were not certain about some issues like whether the translation process is a discouraging task that hinders their learning of L2, and how and when to use it.

(vi) Most of the students confirmed the importance of acquiring translation skills.

(vii) It was found that there is a relationship between different faculties and different levels of the students and the use of translation in that;

(a) the students of the faculties of education tended to think negatively of the use of translation with comparison to the students of arts;

(b) the higher the level of the students was, the lower they rated the use of translation (6.2^d-i), (Hypothesis No. iv, 1.8).

7.5. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ENGLISH IN YEMEN

(i) Translation may not be a suitable basis for methodology when used mechanically and exclusively to teach grammar rules, vocabulary and foreign language expressions and the reading of text by means of excessive translation. But it has a variety of roles to play. Therefore, it should, through proper use, be included in the discipline of English language teaching/learning not only as an aid to improving the four language skills, but also to develop the ability to translate.
(ii) Teachers need not hesitate to think positively of the use of translation. Rather, they have to be more practical and identify and give enough attention to the proper use of translation in their job, and keep familiarizing and equipping themselves with up-to-date materials concerned with the development of employing translation in the teaching of English as this study shows that there is a lack of materials on the use of translation in ELT in the institutions where the S-Q and T-Q were administered.

(iii) Translation should not be used only as a means of learning and internalizing English words mechanically, but also as a means of improving skills of textual analysis particularly of words and structures.

(iv) Based on the results of the contrastive study and text translations, errors and inaccuracies by students and/or teachers of English should not be neglected or overlooked. Instead, they should be taken seriously. Translation, in this case, in addition to being a necessary part of the L2 learning process, becomes a tool to contrastive and error analysis. It can help in identifying the reason(s) for those inaccuracies and enabling the learner, as well as the teacher to learn more efficiently by exploiting the knowledge of his mother tongue.

(v) Students should be involved in genuine translation for genuine communication, by encouraging them to select and translate, from and into English, texts of their own taste and interest for the purpose of publishing. Articles, short stories, reports or even longer texts are suggested. The students can translate individually, in pairs or in groups. Reading those translations in class and discussing the quality of translation or at least commenting on them can be very useful.
(vi) Selections of translated texts which illustrate particular aspects of the language, specially in those areas of difficulty, should be made and included in the course. Translation exercises which aim to help the learner find ways and means to put their points across in acceptable English should be an essential parts of teaching/learning process.

(vii) Teaching English through English is stressed when we can afford it and when it ensures effective communication with most of our learners. At the same time, there is nothing wrong in using the mother tongue or involving the learners in translation activity when it can make the study of English clearer and easier to them.

(viii) The relationship between the native English speaker teacher and the non-native English speaker, should be quite close. Both should work together as often as possible as this would help greatly to improve the quality of teaching English. The Yemeni English teacher has to always consider himself as being in a situation of continuous learning not only to improve his teaching ability but also his English language skills.

7.6. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In the light of the present study, a few suggestions may be made as to further research needed.

(i) More supplementary information on the actual use and need of translation in the classroom is required. This could be done by the means of observation and/or interview with sample teachers and students. Also, modified versions of the teachers' and students' questionnaires for administration on teachers of Arabic to native English speaking learners can also give further support and more implications on the nature, value and function of translation in foreign language learning.
(ii) Although contrast and comparison through translation concerning the tense systems in Arabic and English can greatly familiarize the Arab learners with the correct forms of tense in English, there is a need for practical and experimental exploration of effective ways to help the learners trying to master this area.

(iii) Sufficient information regarding the area of the English auxiliaries and how the Arab learners deal with them was not obtained in this study. A further research on this topic will be very useful.

(iv) Arabic influence is an important factor in the acquisition of English phonetics and phonology. The importance of transfer in this area needs closer investigation specially on the different and nonexistent sounds which cause specific pronunciation and spelling problems.

(v) Similarities and differences in text organization and writing systems in both English and Arabic result in positive or negative transfer. Exploration of the impact of translation on the development in this area and research on remedial work of negative transfer is called for. Textual work which involves scrutinising stretches of translated texts in Arabic and English is required. The aim should be directed to: (a) assisting the learner to improve his English text organization (Arabic as well), and (b) determining and producing pedagogical material for improving the learning process of English.