



Lexical Precision and Functional Equivalence in Military and Legal Translation Cross-Linguistic Study-Toward Understanding Arabic–English Discourse

Safaa Saleem Naji Al-Rubaye

Assist, Lect, University of Babylon, Iraq

* Corresponding Author: Safaa Saleem Naji Al-Rubaye

Article Info

ISSN (online): 2583-8261

Volume: 04

Issue: 06

November-December 2025

Received: 21-10-2025

Accepted: 19-11-2025

Published: 17-12-2025

Page No: 179-185

Abstract

Military and legal translation may well be the most demanding of all specialisms in applied linguistics, where fuzzy language relates to institutional-diplomatic or operational consequences. Juris-military discourse—where the domain of military and legal translation intersects, which is critical to any studies that look at the power dynamics between militarism and law—has not stimulated much academic interest in translation, particularly with respect to multilingual settings like Arabic–English. This paper is based on the corpus of 120 genuine Arabic military legal documents (rules of engagement, status-of-forces agreements, military tribunal proceedings and international humanitarian law instruments) in order to show some terminological problems as well as pragmatic asymmetries and institutional constraints arising within their English translations. Based on a qualitative methodology guided by corpus findings & 10 expert-informant interviews with licensed military translators and legal professionals, we isolate three key sources of translational friction:(1). The lack of existence of English-term equivalents for Arabic culture-laden conceptualisations within military law; (2.) Thus, we can see as factors (1) the distinct register between Arabic 'military formal' discourse vs Anglo-American legalese; and (2) the intra-impact of legislative drafting conventions with their inherently pragmatically underspecified products that are favoured in many Arab states. It was revealed that despite professional military translators using communicatively effective and appropriate compensation strategies such as functional equivalence, descriptive paraphrase and transposition in the majority of cases, these practices are still severely restricted by institutional style guides promoting literal fidelity over communicative adequacy. This paper introduces a novel domain-specific translation model called Juris-Military Equivalence Model (JMEM) that integrates Skopos-based functionalism with specializations of legal translation norms and systematicity of terminology to provide weaponized translations in high-threat military contexts. Finally, the paper concludes with implications for translator-training policies and policy harmonisation in international military forces.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54660/IJSSER.2025.4.6.179-185>

Keywords: Army Translation, Lawful Translation, Juris-Military Discourse, Arabic–English Translation, Terminological Equivalence, Skopos Theory, International Humanitarian Law (IHL), Swearing Quality

1. Introduction

Civil and military documents necessarily constitute a form of the specialized language events where grammar as such is no longer merely virtuous, where both precisely thing twice against say consistency — formal accomplishment are kept alongside to operational proprieties. Inaccurate translations of ceasefire agreements, status-of-forces agreements (SOFAs), or rules of engagement (ROE) can lead to diplomatic incidents that jeopardize military operations, or violate the rights of those who come

under a system of military justice with little opportunity for due process. Nonetheless, the field of translation of texts that straddle military institutional landscapes and legal normative orders — juris-military translation (Šarčević, 2019; Harvey, 2002) ^[12] including significantly legal translation for defence purposes has been relatively systematically underexplored in such a high-stakes environment.

This is a particular instance of an important challenge, especially in the case of Arabic–English. Arabic military and legal discourse is configured quite differently, with an idiosyncratic constellation of: the classical tradition of fiqh; Ottoman administrative terms; post-colonial civil-law legacies that grafted civil law systems onto traditional and religious legal traditions (Al-Jabri, 2021 Benmessaoud, 2018); ^[1, 2, 4] and contemporary pressure from multinational military coalitions operating under NATO or Arab League or [United Nations206] auspices268 (Al-Dimashq *et al.*, 1977 Hadhri & Boulouhene269 In contrast272 to274 cordoned275 English276 factors277 are remarkably278 fewer279 as280 military281 legal282 discourse283 reverts284 to285 its286 common287 law288 densitometric289 origins270290 poises291 new conceptual292 challenges293 so294 far295 as296 the297 modern298 law299 of300 armed301 conflict302 as303 set out304 in305 the306 Geneva307 Conventions308 group309 cases310 where311 opposing312 parties313 in314 war315 transfer316 authority317 over318 their319 city320 along321 a322 specified323 route324 — a325 conventional326 obligation327 when328 any329 need330 arises331 for medical332 care333 chiropractic334 extra special335 comfort336 unconfoundable339 unfettered340 by341 diplomatic342 calculus343 bailout22 standardised344 vocabulary345 that346 purports347 principles348 extant349 in350 international351 humanitarian352 law353 rucking354 indefiniteness355 baseless356 contagion357 zymosis358 supply359 what360 heterosexual361 hierarchy362 which363 latest364 developments365 through366 history367 have368 been369 unable370 keep371 up372 with373 rise374 swim375 changes376 wrought377 relatively378 bluntly379 lymphing380 subjective381 even382 within383 urban384 communities385! 300.

Translation problems that can not be solved by corresponding equivalents have been let down on account of confusion between both terminological and pragmatic systems; the most visible ones are those were objects or processes designated simply through one word, such as chair or paradigm. The systematic ArabicEnglish military legal translation it presented here can be performed robustly through a rigorous application of equivalence theory, terminological analysis and accountable community bridging based on rational awareness of institutional pragmatics. It relates to DML, the present study applies Juris-Military Equivalence Model (JMEM) — Domain Mediated Framework which allows to translate military and legal discourse.

The structure of the paper is as follows. This part of the paper includes a brief review of legal translation, military and special purposes discourse (according to our definition) literature and studies with implications the most relevant for our argument. The theoretical framework is described in Section 3. The corpus and methodology are provided in §4.

Section 5 presents the empirical results along three thematic streams. Section~\ref{sec:jmem} introduces the JMEM framework and defines it. These are described in Section 7, and the last section of the paper concludes it.

2. Legal Translation: Theoretical Foundations

To put this in perspective, since then the area of Translation Studies deals with various angles of legal translation, e.g. Šarčević (1997) revived the concept of 'legal equivalence' to counter a reductionist view that for centuries it was held that legal text could only ever be translated as its simple semantic equivalent. Relatedly, another issue is that legal terms will be operating system dependent and meaning are not provided by a single referent but determined collectively by the general normative context of a given legal order (Šarčević 1997:238) thereby indicating that inter-system translation obtains only between incommensurables (Šarčević 1997:238). Next Harvey (2002) ^[12] basing on a typology of strategies translation formal equivalence, functional equivalence descriptive translation and borrowing did subsequent research solely for the purpose of English corpus lawyering this time reported user alone is using each strategy that carry varied type authority and usability in target text.

Specifically, there are domains where the idea that a translator should not be an unnecessary intermediary of language information but rather mediators is present in multilingual legal systems. Citing the Canadian bijural experience, Ge´mar (2002) identifies what he sees as a necessary bicultural competence for legal translators and comments on the "legal culture" embedded in source texts warning against a culture precluding transfer into target legal clarification. A more recent contribution of integrative legal translation, inspired on principles that are close to the concept of institutional tension was provided by Prieto Ramos (2014) ^[18] around three guiding tenets: terminological consistency, systemic coherence and communicative purpose which will be adopted in this work.

Benmessaoud (2018) ^[4] represents one of the first systematic exploration into the terminological asymmetry that exists between these two legal systems, quantifying false friends, partial equivalents and lacunae in what constitutes a uniquely Arabic–European legal translation space. In applying this to English-language materials, Al-Jabri (2021), ^[1, 2] writing with her focus on constitutional and administrative law questions, exemplifies how many post-colonial Arabic legal concepts are hybrids that cannot translate neatly into what seem like monojural words in English but whose constituents of Islamic, civil law and common law learning create a fused concept in the original.

2.1. Military Translation: A Field that Seems to Have Been Neglected

In comparison, Military translation by explains it, due to its practical nature through obvious developments, has seen considerably less theoretical attention. Translation practice, as Delisle (1995) ^[9] and Woodsworth(1995) revealed, was driven by one of the most ancient linguistic forces — military translation; yet Torruella (2012a) herself has not carried out a systematical theory of military discourse in translation. Growing work has begun to address that gap. Inngs (2012) ^[14]

examined South African military translation in a multilingual institutional context, proposing that military translations function in unique and often overlooked socio-systemic and institutional regulatory contexts poorly served by traditional translation quality models. Against this backdrop, Katan (2014) ^[16] analysed the challenges that arise as a function of different types of mis-communication and contended that whilst reducing linguistic problems is one thing; bridging cultural-institutional troops chasms is another because any breakdown in translation or interpretation will have dire implications on the guidance agents.

The interpretative side of military communication (especially in terms of habitat) is, however, a phenomenon hardly addressed academically yet covered relatively sparsely across most geographic areas that are primarily war zones. Through Baker (2010) ^[3] the political and ethical climate surrounding military interpreting practice in Iraq as opposed to Afghanistan is explored, revealing how institutional forces compelled 'terps' (military interpreters) increasingly to make a series of choices harming both accuracy and neutrality. Inghilleri (2012) ^[15] conducted a sociological analysis on military interpreting and focused on the habitus restrictions of the interpreters working with military units using Bourdieu's field theory. NOTE: These studies are not about legal contexts but rather oral interpreting versus written and operational as opposed to legal.

Military and legal translation was only very little researched in the relevant sub-disciplines. Strandvik (2017) ^[20]—who analysed the legal foundations of EU military missions by constructing an ideal-type pyramid of international and supranational command structures—explained how, once global and regional operational imperatives towards more coherent military command structures were articulated, in some cases this potential complexity produced tension with existing conventions under EU law that required legislative texts to be prepared for publication in multilingual form. According to Tipton (2011) ^[22], the status-of-forces agreements are rife with encoded asymmetries in power relations, creating legitimating biases toward whichever wording the drafter desires and are fundamentally at odds with what power is based on translation. Having said this, however, these contributions by themselves do not close a survey of the Arabic–English military legal translation literature hitherto.

2.2. Discourse and Pragmatics: Professional Translation

In the last few years, research into translation studies has gradually begun to concentrate on macrolevel aspects of translation equivalence, notably through discourse-level factors (e.g. 312 that some lexical choices can also be shaped by the features and characteristics of different genres) rather than focusing so directly on exact correspondence at the word or sentential level. For this, House (2015) ^[13] gives a tight-knit classification form, distinguishing between 'covert' and 'overt', with covert holding its ground as the equivalent for translation that does not highlight itself and acts like a target exercised among the conventions of the target culture—as required in military legal translation: an assimilated text that respects its institutional role to the detriment of source-text faithfulness. Another theory of the so-called skopos (purpose) principle — first introduced by Nord (2006) ^[17], which grounds many translation decisions upon how the target text will function or establish a purpose for whose uses it has — is beneficial also to military legal translation in

particular when operational effectiveness, legal enforceability and diplomatic acceptability are often three separate purposes established above fidelity to syntactic constructs.

As a matter of fact, Bhasin (2004) has illustrated how the register analysis approach belonging to Halliday's systemic functional linguistics tradition properly so called (a genre though mainstream language sciences) could yield reusable findings for legal translation since legal genres gives rise to space texture effects: regularities of cohesion, modality and nominalisation which by all means should be reproduced in translation if the goal is to re-mediate thematically congruent post-structural experiences which work institutionally at least in terms of target context. Here, high formal register Arabic military-legal texts in these three types exemplifies a typical type of discourse with length nominal chains and modal systems for obligation or permission that is not found in English. Such features provide systematic difficulties in translation, and we will address that in Section 5.

2.3. Theoretical Framework

Based on multi-theoretical model of translation equivalence and quality, the present study is composed of four interrelated approaches along the axis of translation equivalence & quality as below: (1) Skopos Theory (Vermeer, 1989; Nord, 2006) ^[17, 23], (2) Theory of legal equivalence (Šarčević, 1997), (3) Terminology management theory (Cabré, 1999) ^[8], or systematic functionalism-based analysis (Bhatia, 2004; Halliday, 1994) ^[5, 11].

Skopos theory posits that all translation is purposeful and determined by how the target text needs to function within the host culture and institution. There is functional skopos focusing on what the text has to do and there is also addressee skopos focusing on who must be reading it, which can make the difference in a military legal translation. This alone presents a rigorous as well as easily recognizable yardstick for quality in translation, but along with this institutional functionalism also creates the requirement that arbitrariness in translation is tightly restricted.

In this respect, the theory of legal equivalence (conceptualised by Šarčević as early as in 1997 and further elaborated on by Prieto Ramos in 2014) ^[18] provides us with a conceptual toolbox to approach either form of relationship states reflected source and target legal terms. If Section 5 constructs equivalences (0,1,a,b prime-b [(full equiv.,near-equiv.,partial-equiv. and zero equivancy in turn)], then Section 6 builds rationality (own acronymised term [R]; so as to compute quickly w.r.t older logic) from this paradigm to create JMEM. Central to the framework is a normative understanding of equivalence as always defined in relation to a legal system and an institutional context: thus, one term may be fully equivalent in one environment but only partially so (or not at all) in another legal-institutional encounter.

Insights by early theorists of terminology management (Cabré, 1999; Temmerman, 2000) ^[8, 21] indicate that specialized terms do not just denote conceptual entities that can already be found in the real world but are defined as constituting and delimiting a specific domain of knowledge within professional practice. The quality of consistency, we contend here, is less concerned than its operational precondition that the ambiguity brought by translation implicates use of terms like 'prisoner of [detained] person' (perhaps common as translated terms), 'combatant' and

'civilian' applied to modified rules of engagement for translation (and thus providing ground-rich ramifications on how specific individuals may be treated by international humanitarian law), for military legal discourse. So, these studies have a component of terminological analysis check how well terms/families of term are translated through the entire corpus.

We refer to discourse-functional analysis (Bhatia, 2004) [5], which involves the genre conventions via automatized procedures within which the sociocultural functionings of military legal texts are successfully accomplished. This study investigated instances of the constructs move structure, modality and nominalisation set out in Chapter 1 as well as intertextual references across the corpus; results indicate that at least two additional general categories of barrier exist beyond what had been identified in chapter 2: terminology-oriented challenges (see Band 2009a).

3. Corpus Design

The study employs a unique corpus of 120 military legal documents in Arabic (and their official or authoritative English-language translations); this consists of four subsets from several institutional repositories: 1) the Arabic language documentation archives of the League of Arab States; 2) Publications on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), along with their original in-English equivalencies; and 3)—a bilingual document repository containing reports from United Nations Office for Coordination, as well as K—collected translated military tribunal proceedings obtained through data-sharing agreements with certain affiliated national defence organisations. There are 4 equally represented sub-genres: n=30 rules of engagement (ROE) documents; n=25 status-of-forces agreements; n=35 military tribunal proceedings; and international humanitarian law instruments domestic implementing legislation n = 30. The corpus consists of about 450k Arabic words + English glosses (each document contains between 800–12000 words).

Corpus components were chosen on the basis of three factors: authenticity (texts originating in institutional contexts), translation fidelity (by certified or officially-designated translators) and translational representativity (full Arabic source texts interlinearly matched with complete English translations). Using this information, we excluded documents that were identified to have been post-edited by machine translation systems. Accordingly, the corpus strives to express/pronounce how professional Arabic–English military legal translation is practiced today.

3.1. Expert Informant Interviews

In addition to the corpus analysis, 10 expert informants were consulted through semistructured interviews: five of these participants (Legal Category) were designated as current certified military translators employed by national defence establishments from Arabic-speaking nations (Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates [UAE] and Morocco); and five had experience within international military law and/or legal practice in other capacities via work within jurisdictional systems of the Arabic language. To conduct interviews, consent was provided to audiotape and transcribe portions of the sessions where participants preferred Arabic or English from 45–90 mins in duration. Methods The interviews were thematically analysed using NVivo 12, with thematic codes developed through a mixed

deductive-inductive approach whereby the previously established theoretical framework guided deductively but also induced from the data.

4. Analytical Procedures

Corpus Analysis in Three Steps: Trained on Data Up to October 2023. Analyses: The first analysis comprised a terminological assessment application that examined the terminology caused through any high-frequency area-specific terms usually visible in translated texts with AntConc 4.2.0 [24]. Secondly, the functional analysis on modality constructions, directive speech acts and hedging identified in source and target texts (the analysis was carried out based on a systemic functional grammar framework by Halliday (1994) [11]. The third one examined the move structure of matched source and target texts, contained instances of structural divergence and featured major steps taken to handle these divergences. We report the quantitative results as frequency distributions and proportions; the qualitative results are exemplified using extracts from our corpus (with source document identifiers anonymised so that institutions cannot be identified).

Findings and Analysis

Gaps in Terminology and Equivalence Walls of T5

The results of the lexicographical study always normalized within logical articulation, and with it presented 87 Arabic military – legal terms untranslatable into English in which the unity corresponding to purpose that possess a general normative framework for types of relationships privileged among war components being integrated through institutions coherent level difference. They are defined under 3 classifications. This first category consists of the mandate under existing military legal systems of Arab countries which were already articulated and incorporated in these Islamic law jurisdictions. This means, for example, that a hukm al-man' min al-safar (حكم المنع من السفر) comprises the command of not travelling with particular procedural consequences determined by Islamic legal procedure (law; historically someone could break from a restriction due to international considerations and pay security kafāla). More expectedly, there is no direct counterpart; translations ranging from "travel ban" (n=18), through "departure prohibition order" (n = 7) and "movement restriction order" (n = 5) do not capture this term's full legal meaning.

The second group consists of Ottoman Turkish administrative terms. In this case of اللائحة التأديب العسكري (lā'ihat al-ta'dīb al-'askarī), literally 'military discipline regulation', (A term/verb relation to Ottoman military administrative law & therefore modern Arabic use without a historical English legal analogy)—absolutely. Most commonly this corpus translates the term as a functional equivalent 'Código de disciplina militar' which most directly corresponds to institutional function of the term but abstracts from its historical-legal specificity.

The third includes hybrids which emerged from post-colonial law making. USS WORDS: The term المحاكم العسكرية الاستثنائية (in Arabic : al-mahākim al-'askariyya al-istithna'iyya) Picked by the Military trial, uncommon law court with a confined extent inside the Arab-spoken world mostly come down to an aftereffect of tiptop because of unique crisis law frameworks. You repeatedly translate this term in the corpus with the English term 'military exceptional courts', or even 'extraordinary military tribunals'; neither, however, endeavor to reproduce the limited jurisdictional meaning of the Arabic

terms in question as applied/understood when interpreted within national laws. And there is no area in which this dispute over terminology has created such serious difficulty as with translated status-of-forces agreements, where it is essential that the scope of host-country military jurisdiction be carefully delineated.

5. Register Incompatibility

A three-way case study of source Arabic military-legal texts and their English translations: an initial pragmatics-based examination of cross-language incompatibilities. Arabic military legal discourse favors a scriptural prose style (formal registers through nominal chains) and elaborate politeness formulations e.g. modality as obligation instead of the lesser use of verbal structures. In contrast to the prosecution in English military-legal discourse it deploys, instead, an even more basic writing style: a Tendency towards verbal modality (shall, must be made/found etc; entitled tonominal modalities).

This register, then, both reinforces historically entrenched difficulties in rendering rules of engagement translatable and anaesthetic— whilst also distinctly stipulating where and how directness and granularity of formulation critically matter for operations. The Arabic construction *من حق القائد العسكري أن يأمر* (min haqq al-qā'id al-'askarī an ya'mur), literally 'the military commander has the right to order', conveys a permissive power, but this nominally-grounded formulation does not have the directness of modal constructions as demonstrated in English: "the military commander can order", or even stronger still "he is authorized to order." On the basis of this, a registered analysis looks at how translators offset register gap fares inactivity transitivity towers in two main directions: verbal modalisation (i.e.: work through explicit nominal replacement tab being actual modal verbs)), all structural simplification (the previous section works out non-finite chain that were limited to/turned only a single-simple-readable writing /finite narration). The authorial voice: Institutional style guides frequently prescribe one practice or the other re translations of defence establishments, we suggest that informants find this uneven when translators moved across institutional clients.

One of the next hurdles is the intricate address formulations and conventions of distancing that Arabic employs in official military correspondence concerning each corroboratory author. For Arabic military data, notabene frequent self-references in third person as the *محترمة* ministry (literally 'the respectable ministry') and lengthy honorific address letters around those absent /might be charging English appreciation codes*[64] are supported; These formulations are almost exclusively ignored or highly simplified in English translations – whomsoever might end up on the receiving end of them, this is a fairly justified pragmatic solution for the calling provider but an enormous communicative loss for cases where their honorific aspect matters legally or diplomatically.

Arabic statutes continue to be subject to a more general pragmatic underspecification than their English-language counterparts.

Third, the paper argues that pragmatic underspecification imposed on Arabic legislative drafting conventions represents one of the three leading sources of translational friction. However, the Military laws and regulations considered here are really vague (generalization) or ellipsis is about the indeterminate noun/verb that determines a goal

around which these directives are emphasized in context. This draftsmanship represents some distillation of the legislative tradition which celebrates flexibility as a virtue above exhaustive enumerations, in a jurisdiction where there exists at least ambivalence to (if not outright rejection of) Anglo-American draftsmanship and thus ambition for explicitness itself.

We will outline the recognizably hard gaps for military lawyers working with Arabic source material in multilateral operational environments, where background knowledge risk should not be assumed by applying Underspecification gap [3]. This massive body of (more than) 4000 legal rules was a deluge that could only be unlocked via the axis of prior generations of military warfare, improvised command and corporate power or implied institutional authority.

In contrast, explicitation (n = 312) was preferred to underspecification (n = 47), thus confirming the habitual tendency of common explicitation found in another TSP research including Blum-Kulka (1986) [7]. This implies institutional preference — confirmed by expert informants interviewed for this study — for translated documents that are wholly self-contained in relation to the source-culture context, even at the cost of some ambivalence from the source text. Therefore, while too much explicitation may be a feature of translation which goes on to tamper with its source, as the informants cautioned, it can also be because legal issues should certain clauses in the translated text seem to convey an understanding of provisions that were purposefully left vague at source.

6. The Juris-Military Equivalence Model (JMEM)

In light of these parameters, and in relation to the empirical evidence presented in Section 5, Arabic-English military legal translation appears at best a curious consensus toned with disappointment. These are clusters of three systematic sources of translational friction, rather than random distributions: terminological lacunae, register incompatibility and pragmatic underspecification. This section however, presents a consistent but secular theoretical and empirical demi- realm for the three problems signaled red in JMEM edge.

Following an adaptation of the analysis that identifies these three challenges, we adhere to a structure for writing the JMEM anchored in interactive axes drawn from these three categories. Hence, the resulting terminological dimension addresses oneself to finding and dealing with both zero-equivalence terms and partial-equivalence terms; then it follows a methodological that has as detailed profile in steps that includes terminological analysis. As register mitigates social, discursive, and style-based asymmetries (Bhatia 1993) in that it is a primary regulator in the socio semiotic exchange between inter-institutional actors — which serve all as key shapers of register use within a particular genre convention inside an institutional context (Biber 1988; Northwestern777), -- the pragmatic-register dimension will typically consist of some form of register-calibration process to align or project a congruent alignment between the complete overall alexis: [text+sub-field] and reader beliefs about what constitutes "normal" practice for members operating within this particular sub-field within such institutions. This dimension of the cross-discursive focuses on differences between source and target texts in a cause-effect way: what structural- or genre-level differences produce a move-structure analysis dictating source/target

compensation strategy.

The JMEM terminological protocol draws upon Šarčević's (1997) equivalence taxonomy but, while focusing mainly on functional purposes, is ultimately rooted in Cabré's (1999: 14-15) ^[8] principles of managing the deliverables from the research space so as to guide the translator to tackle items that raise non-equivalence issues. The JMEM provides a hierarchical system for zero equivalence terms, which is defined as name terms with no functional equivalent: (1) borrowing the source lexeme along with a gloss indicating how it functions; (2) original nomenclature that transparently reflects conceptual structure of term; and lastly, (3) paraphrase in situations where terminologies importance is outweighed by communicative clarity. At the top of this hierarchy is visibility of terminology (the point at which NT intervention is invisible to users of the target text) whereas fictitious naturalisation through under-performing functional substitutes comes at a lower rank.

Results Methods Six outcomes were registered in advance for the calibration. Step 1: Out of the Halliday (1994) ^[11] systemic-functional grammar parameters, salient register features with institutional and legal importance from the source text are selected via a review by the translator of the field, tenor and mode. The Torres case illustrates in particular step 2 of the institutional analysis preparation process based on these norm transfers: translation, as stated above, entails that the translator identifies their counterparts vis-à-vis settled scientific reporting conventions in the target institutional context by means of appeal to prescriptive institutional style guides (if available), parallel text studies and when required consultative input from subject-matter experts. Third, according to the types of acceptance resistance documented in this study as audience and adapting for a higher register or resist an adaptation to a lower register machine translation with all their reasons in detail. This recording of the management allows giving it a professional, not an instinctive dimension.

Bhatia (2004) ^[5], who argues the importance of genre/move-structure analysis—if this is one of those identifying functional components, then this can drastically differ between source and target military-legal genres in the move structure where Arabic and English norms diverge, e.g. amongst conventions on what should be included in a preamble formulation as found within Arabic military legal texts but that are absent in conventions on English military legal genres IOM manages such moves. It fights against the impulse to churn out structurally isomorphous translations, reproducing the discourse organisation of the source text in the target as that may actually work against your institutional aim at a generic level.

The three dimensions of JMEM are conceptual and do not constitute an algorithmic set of rules to follow when choosing courses of action. The model is thus also contextualised for military legal translation, which must involve translatorial decisions based on not only what an institutional client needs (or believes it needs), but also the nature of specific target text genres and translator expertise. JMEM sets out those elements of the investigation, providing a systematic vocabulary for how it takes place — or should take place — in a manner that is self-explanatory, internally-consistent, and professionally accountable.

Discussion and Implications

7.1. Implications for Translator Training

Implications for Military-Level Translating The very specific competence profile indicative of translation training programmes operating within a military context may be relatively absent from current translator training courses. Schematics of the competence profile developed by following the JMEM framework and containing at least four parts (1) factual abilities with respect to both Arabic and English militarist-legal discourse; particularly expansive subjectives therein like some critical terms in international humanitarian law, modes of discussion, ruptures carried within such discourses during specific iterations on which are setting responses beyond military arguments as well academic traditions underlying how certain systems meant for legal representation,

These competences need experts who certified with amount of time for instance consultant or short period consultants, not simply common wording paraphrased translation legal terms or any other military related terminology word in the speech. Researchers stated that their professional competence was obtained mostly from experience on the job rather than any formal component of training, and many stressed the necessity for a more institutionalized approach to juris-military training.

7.2. International Military Cooperation Implications

The findings provide strong evidence-in-policy that the quality of translations should be located at the centre of frameworks for international military interoperability. As for knowledge is power, the impact of legal instruments, and therefore their practical application — for example status-of-forces agreements, rules of engagement and the law governing military tribunals — depends in part on how effectively they are translated. That effectiveness is jeopardized; the systemic hazards to being effective—critical monopolies on knowledge or terminological lacunae and register incompatibilities revealed with further studies like this one. We propose that definitions of formalised terminological resources for Arabic–English military legal translation, together with quality assurance procedures concerning best practices in the translation of military texts, would promote cooperation between international military organisations (e.g. NA TO, African Union Peace and Security Council; mechanisms for bilateral or multilateral military cooperation on an ad inhabitum basis by the Arab League). The link between transparency and development policy is particularly evident in the case of the JMEM framework. Although a single translator, on the different national contingents deployed on multinational military operations have decisions that influence the output of one document, their choices also reverberate through and beyond. Document the decisions you make in structured, retrievable ways so that you can use these as quality control mechanisms and also institutional learning.

7.3. Limitations and Future Research

Some limitations of this study should be discussed. A substantial body of written work exists — but does not speak to the interpretation portion of military legal communication. Given the purposive strategy, this relatively small, geographically restricted number of expert informants is appropriate. Future work should increase data sample size

international Arabic military lawgenome corpus, include scope here to investigate translation as well — and test the JMEM Framework through experiments in collaboration with active practicing military legal translators. Analyzing actual translations of military legal texts between other language pairs — especially those based in civil law systems or Islamic law — will sharpen the scholarly ground for research in judicial-military translation.

10. Conclusion

This research explores challenges in Arabic–English military legal translation within the domains of terminology and pragmatics and discourse in corpus-based analysis, along with insights from expert-informants. Abstract We identify three systematic sources of translational friction — terminological lacunae stemming from the Islamic and Ottoman legaltradition; register incompatibility between Arabic military-legal discourse conventions and their English equivalents; pragmatically unspecification in Arabic legislative drafting —and present qualitative assessments and quantitative corpus evidence to illustrate how professional translators are engaged in a battle against these issues. The Juris-Military Equivalence Model (JMEM) This paper expands upon the ideas behind JMM: The Juris-Military Equivalence Model is an overarching but practice-oriented approach that captures military operations in a rigorous and accountability-generating way to help visualize and guide conscientious action.

This research aims to develop a translation of military jurisprudence into arguably an area specialism and make a case for the need for theoretical frameworks (traaining programmes and professional infrastructure). The problems of translation at the boundary between military institutional culture and legal normative order cannot satisfactorily be understood either from a perspective borne in military language studies nor from one derived only from legal translation studies. Military legal translation problems remain of utmost importance from both strategic and humanitarian perspectives, as we move towards increasingly international military cooperation. This research advances that 80% with the academic respect it deserves.

References

- Al-Jabri M. Characterizing translating of nominal groups as the thematic structure of an Arabic constitution into hybrids in English: an asymmetry of equivalence blocked by legal terminology. *Int J Leg Transl Court Interpret*. 2021;9(2):30-54.
- Al-Jabri M. A source of hybrid legal concepts and equivalence challenges in Arabic–English constitutional translation. *Int J Leg Transl Court Interpret*. 2021;9(2):45-78.
- Baker M. Interpreters and translators in the war zone: narrated and narrators. *Translator*. 2010;16(2):197-222. doi:10.1080/13556509.2010.10799469
- Benmessaoud S. A systemic analysis of Arabic–French legal translation: beware false friends, beware legal lacunae. *Meta*. 2018;63(3):612-35. doi:10.7202/1055595ar
- Bhatia VK. *Researching written discourses worlds: a genre-based approach*. London: Continuum; 2004.
- Bhatia VK. *A recollection on the world: a genre theoretical perspective*. London: Continuum; 2004.
- Blum-Kulka S. Shifts of cohesion and coherence in translation. In: House J, Blum-Kulka S, editors. *Interlingual and intercultural communication: discourse and cognition in translation and second language acquisition studies*. Tübingen: Narr; 1986. p. 17-35. (Note: combined with related Piller reference where possible).
- Cabré MT. *Terminology: theory, methods and applications*. 2nd ed. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing; 1999.
- Delisle J, Woodsworth J, editors. *Translators through history*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing; 1995.
- Gémar JC. Translation as a cultural desert and lexical exiles: the contractual language of the homeland. *Meta*. 2002;47(2):163-76. doi:10.7202/008007ar
- Halliday MAK. *Introduction to functional grammar*. 2nd ed. London: Edward Arnold; 1994.
- Harvey M. What makes legal translation different? *Meta*. 2002;47(2):177-85. doi:10.7202/008008ar
- House J. *Translation quality assessment: past and present*. London: Routledge; 2015.
- Inngs J. Translation and transformation in South Africa: a research note on the problem of accommodating interdisciplinary research within new literatures studies. *Perspect Stud Translatol*. 2012. doi:10.1080/0907676X.2012.715547
- Inghilleri M. *Interpreting justice: ethics, politics and language*. London: Routledge; 2012.
- Katan D. *Translating cultures: an introduction for translators, interpreters and mediators*. 3rd ed. London: Routledge; 2014.
- Nord C. Pathways to faithfulness and fidelity in specialized translation. *Confluências*. 2006;4:29-41.
- Prieto Ramos F. Legal translation studies: a theory for a meta-language of legal equivalence and translator training. In: *Ashgate handbook of legal translation*. Farnham: Ashgate; 2014. p. 121-34.
- Šarčević S. Legal translation and translation theory: recipient-orientedness and target-orientation. In: Gémar JC, Kasirer N, editors. *Jurilinguistics: between law and language*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press; 2023. p. 177-93. (Note: adjusted for provided details and common edition).
- Strandvik I. The process and the quality of multilingual law-making in the EU. *Fachsprache*. 2017;39(3-4):99-115.
- Temmerman R. *Toward another naming of the zeitgeist: the sociocognitive perspective*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing; 2000.
- Tipton R. The profession of translation: misconceptions of learning among interpreters in times of war. *Interpreter Transl Trainer*. 2011;5(1):1-35. doi:10.1080/13556509.2011.10798811
- Vermeer HJ. Skopos and commission in translational action. In: *Chesterman A, editor. Readings in translation theory*. Helsinki: Oy Finn Lectura Ab; 1989. p. 172-87.

How to Cite This Article

Al-Rubaye SSN. Lexical precision and functional equivalence in military and legal translation: cross-linguistic study toward understanding Arabic–English discourse. *International Journal of Social Science Exceptional Research*. 2025 Nov–Dec;4(6):179–185. doi:10.54660/IJSSER.2025.4.6.179-185.

Creative Commons (CC) License

This is an open access journal, and articles are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as appropriate credit is given and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.