The Effect of Translated Chess Training Texts on the Promotion of Chess in Iran

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Abstract: *The present research is an attempt to investigate the effect of translation of chess training texts on the development of chess in the Iranian context. To do so, 10 Iranian chess champions winning international and national medals and 100 chess trainees were selected through stratified non-random sampling method. To collect the data for the present study both a closed questionnaire was filled out by all the participants and an in-depth interview was used to extract the ten champions' views concerning the effect of translation of chess training books on the development of chess in the Iranian context. The data were analyzed through SPSS software version 25 employing chi-square measures. The results revealed that the majority of the respondents significantly believed that the translated books had a great effect on the development of chess level in Iran. In this respect, the majority of the participants (both trainees and champions) evaluated the role of translated books, and the English language ability as "significant" and "highly significant". Familiarity with a foreign language, like English or Russian, was also mentioned as significant point for the chess champions, and finally it was stressed that the quality of chess translations could be increased in case the chess champion translators do the job.*

Keywords: *Chess Training, Promotion of Chess, Translated Texts of Chess.*

INTRODUCTION

Chess enjoys a long history and is played as both a means of entertainment and a special sport at the championship level. Chess has been researched as one of the activities in the cognitive psychology though it "has not been a mainstream activity in cognitive science" (Charness, 1992, p. 4). The role of instruction and training in developing chess mastery cannot be ignored and as Gobet and Simon (1996) discuss, in a lot of instances training has surpassed the sheer talent of the individuals. An important issue in chess development is how to be a professional chess player. To achieve such a level, an individual needs to practice this game under the supervision of champions and learn from the training books which have been written in this regard. Concerning the role of training in increasing chess knowledge and ability, Gobet and Simon (1998) argue that mastery over chess needs the skill to look through the space of conceivable positions efficiently and "this capacity is to a substantial degree made conceivable by knowledge, which empowers chess players to specifically produce and precisely assess chess positions" (Gobet & Simon, 1998, p. 10). To gain the level of

mastery required over the new techniques and models of chess games the interested individuals either should read the related sources in their original languages (mainly English and Russian) or use the translated versions of the resource books and articles. That is why translation of chess books and articles into Persian takes significance and the issue of translation quality and accuracy of the information transferred through the translated works becomes attractive.

One of the frequently experimented issues related to chess is the relationship between "the chess skill and performance on some psychometric tests, such as performance IQ" (Waters, Gobet, & Leyden, 2007, p. 303). In this regard as Gobet and Campitelli (2006) propose "experimental studies propose that chess players are more intelligent than non-chess players" (p. 5). However, there is little to find a connection between chess expertise and visuo-spatial capacity, as evaluated by psychometric tests" (Waters, Gobet, & Leyden, 2007, p. 303). Eventually, "there are numerous more complicated causal models representing these connections, for instance: both chess aptitude and IQ are enhanced by higher motivation" (Gobet & Campitelli, 2014, p. 3).

Iranian chess players are also expected to take the chess related tests and they need to get prepared for them. That is where translation of the test sources, intelligent games of chess, as well as articles and books takes significance. In fact, the significance of translation of chess issues is emphasized when the correlation between practicing new techniques in chess for the intelligent people playing it becomes a must research studies have been done on the correlation between chess and many other abilities; nevertheless, to the knowledge of the present author, no studies have concentrated on the translation quality of chess-training books and their effect on development in chess for both champions and trainees. There are a number of investigations about chess and its effects on instruction; e.g., Ferreira and Palhares (2008, p. 249) have focused on "the relationship between chess and problem solving involving geometric and numeric patterns". Likewise, Hong and Bart (2007, p. 89) have investigated the "cognitive effects of chess instruction on students at risk for academic failure". In such research studies the principle conclusions are that chess improves academic performance, particularly critical thinking procedures, expands memory, concentration, scores in IQ tests, problem solving, and expands visual and spatial capacities and the ability to distinguish patterns (Thompson, 2003, p. 4). Studies concentrating on the impact of children playing chess reveal that "chess players improve critical thinking ability, self-assurance, concentration, and problem solving abilities (Aciego, García, & Betancort, 2012, p. 551).

Regarding the benefits associated with chess, translation of chess books has received attention in Iran's context by Farzin publications. In addition, a number of books are devoted to chess professionals and champions. The present study stands out as it tried to investigate the translated chess texts and their quality for trainees and champions. The present study was an attempt to investigate the effect of translation of chess training texts on the development of chess in the Iranian context. In this regard, Trinchero, (2013) asserts that:

Chess development not only is bound to practicing, taking part in the competitions and experiencing novel situations, but also it heavily relies on the type of training and education the chess learners receive in the process of becoming professionals (Trinchero, 2013, p. 8).

On the other hand, based on the announcement of the chess federation of Islamic Republic of Iran, chess trainers and coaches should use the internationally published books, magazines and thoughts to enrich their chess training programs (http://www.ircf.ir). Hence, translation of chess training books takes significance. The quality and effect of these sources are of high significance, as these sources of knowledge and information are used to train the future chess players. It is worth mentioning that Iran stands 31 in the world ranking of chess based on the World Chess Federation (https://www.fide.com).

Methodology

The first step taken in the present study was subject section in which the 10 chess champions (trainers) and 100 chess trainees were selected from among the available population based on stratified non-random

sampling method as the main participants of the study. In the second phase of the study, the perception questionnaire was distributed among the study participants of the study by the researcher in person. The perception questionnaire was developed to collect the data related to the quality of chess graining textbooks available in the Iranian market. It should be noted that the Cronbach's alpha reliability of the questionnaire measured .783. The filled out questionnaires were collected and the data were analyzed to find out the perception of chess trainers and chess trainees concerning the translated chess training books and their effects on the development of chess in the Iranian context. In the third phase, the 10 chess champions were interviewed by the interview guide concerning their views about the effect of translation of chess training books on the development of chess in the Iranian context. The interview guide which was a structured interview including 6 questions covering various aspects of the issue under investigation was developed by the researcher based on the views presented in the literature related to the effect of training and covering chess raining books on the development of chess in Iran.

To analyze the data pertained to the present study, both qualitative and quantitative data analysis procedures were taken into consideration. Data collected from the questionnaire were processed utilizing the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 to analyze the descriptive statistics of the questionnaires. Reliability statistics of questionnaire was calculated through Cronbach's Alpha. The qualitative data related to the interview were analyzed qualitatively in order to shed light on champions' perspective concerning the translation of chess books more comprehensively. First, the collected data were transcribed. Then, a content analysis was used to analyze the interview data. The data were put to both open and axial coding and then they were reported.

Results and Discussion

The data were collected through a questionnaire with 20 items measuring four areas of; a) role of translator, b) role of books, c) role of translation and d) role of English language. The data were analyzed through frequency counts, percentages and analysis of chi-square.

For Role of Translation in Development of Chess, Majority of the respondents believed that the translated books have had great effect on the development of chess in Iran. The results of analysis of chi-square ($\chi2$ (4) = 539.129, p = .000) (Table 1) indicated that the differences observed were statistically significant.

Table 1. Chi-Square Test; Role of Translation in Development of Chess

	Choices
Chi-Square	539.129[a]
Df	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 393.4.

Table 2 displays the respondents' attitude towards the roles of translator, book, translation and English knowledge on the development of chess in Iran. The results indicated that more than 50 percent of respondents believed that all four factors had impact on the development of chess in Iran. The results of analysis of chi-square ($\chi2$ (12) = 86.81, p = .000) (Table 4.5.) indicated that the differences observed were statistically significant and significant differences between the respondents' attitude towards the role of translation in developing chess.

Table 2. Chi-Square Tests; Roles of four Factors in Development of Chess

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	86.815[a]	12	.000

Likelihood Ratio	85.320	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.586	1	.006
N of Valid Cases	1967		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 18.05.

Results in Table 3 and 4 show the champions and trainees' attitude towards the role of translators and the books in developing chess in Iran. The results of analysis of chi-square ($\chi2$ (4) = 2.75, p = .600) indicated that there were not any significant differences between the two groups' attitude towards the role of translators. None of the cells had std. residuals equal to or higher than +/- 1.96 (Table 3). The results of analysis of chi-square ($\chi2$ (4) = 5.08, p = .278) indicated that there were not any significant differences between the two groups' attitude towards the role of book. None of the cells had std. residuals equal to or higher than +/- 1.96 (Table 4).

Table 3. Chi-Square Tests; Roles of Translators in Development of Chess by Groups

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.754[b]	4	.600
Likelihood Ratio	2.679	4	.613
Linear-by-Linear Association	.006	1	.939
N of Valid Cases	691		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.24.

Table 4. Chi-Square Tests; Roles of Books in Development of Chess by Groups

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.087[b]	4	.278
Likelihood Ratio	5.991	4	.200
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.213	1	.271
N of Valid Cases	491		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.24.

On the other hand the results of analysis of chi-square ($\chi2$ (4) = 3.37, p = .497) indicated that there were not any significant differences between the two groups' attitude towards the role of translation. None of the cells had std. residuals equal to or higher than +/- 1.96. (Table 5).

Table 5. Chi-Square Tests; Roles of Translation in Development of Chess by Groups

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.375[b]	4	.497
Likelihood Ratio	3.427	4	.489
Linear-by-Linear Association	.811	1	.368
N of Valid Cases	386		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.24.

Also, the results of analysis of chi-square ($\chi2$ (4) = 4.65, p = .327) indicated that there were not any significant differences between the two groups' attitude towards the role of English. None of the cells had std. residuals equal to or higher than +/- 1.96 (Table 6).

Table 6. Chi-Square Tests; Roles of English in Development of Chess by Groups

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.658[b]	4	.324
Likelihood Ratio	5.130	4	.274
Linear-by-Linear Association	.020	1	.888
N of Valid Cases	399		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.61.

Interview Results

Ten Iranian chess champions were interviewed in terms of their attitudes about the effect of translated chess training texts on the promotion of chess in Iran. The collected data were transcribed. Then, a content analysis was used to analyze the interview data. The data were put to both open and axial coding and then they were reported. The ten interviewees' views could be summarized as follows:

a. Iranian chess does not carry a specific school. Hence, translators have played a significant role in connecting Iranian chess society to the international schools.

b. As domestic sources on chess training are just a few, translating international chess sources could be really useful in paving the ground for the promotion of chess in the Iranian context .

c. Translated books of chess are successfully used in the educational settings and are satisfactory for the students.

d. Developing a foreign language, for example, the Russian language can help the chess players understand the chess concepts better.

e. Sixty to seventy percent of the books translated are useful and have helped chess players in Iran, especially in the last six or seven years.

f. Selection of books to be translated should be based on the needs of the chess community, in order to have a better impact on the chess players' ability.

g. A lot of people use the world's first-hand sources of chess through translation.

h. A lot of chess players cannot understand the books in their original language. Therefore, the existence of books translated at the basic level can be very effective.

i. The quality of the translated books is very good except for one or two items and in general, it has improved in the recent years.

j. As the number of champion translators has increased in the recent years, the quality of translations has increased.

In an attempt to find the effect of translated chess training texts on the promotion of chess in Iran, the present study revealed that majority of the respondents significantly believed that the translated books had a great effect on the development of chess in Iran. In this respect, majority of the participants (both trainees and champions) evaluated the role of translators, books, translation, and the English language ability as "much" and "very much". These findings are in line with Aciego, García, and Betancort's (2012, p.551) study which researched the benefits of chess for the intellectual and social-emotional enrichment in schoolchildren and found that translation of chess training texts is a must for the development of this sport in the social context. Sigirtmac (2012, p.797) also found that chess training affects conceptual development of six-year-old children. The results of the interview with the champions also proved that translated books of chess are precious as they could be used in training young chess players, enhancing the chess information and knowledge among the Iranian chess community, and keeping the pace with novelty in chess techniques. Familiarity with a foreign language like English or Russian was also mentioned as significant point for the

chess champions, and finally it was stressed that the quality of chess translations could be increased in case the chess champion translators do the job. This last point is in line with what scholars of translation studies have focused on: House (2001, p.243), in her discussion of translation quality assessment, implies that a good translation is the one which can fulfill the purpose of the original writer. Likewise, Nida and Taber (1982, p.12) discuss the concept of equivalent effect in translation stressing that the translated text should have the same effect on the reader as the original text leaves on its readers.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of the current study was to investigate the effect of translation of chess training texts on the development of chess in the Iranian context. The results of data analysis revealed that Iran's chess does not have a specific school and due to the limited domestic resources, Iranian chess trainers and trainees have to rely on the international resources which are mainly published in Russian and English. Since all chess players do not have complete mastery over the foreign languages such as English or Russian, translation can play an important role in transmission of knowledge and information in the chess domain. Developing foreign languages helps chess players read reference books more easily, and this way these individuals can understand the chess concepts better. Another significant point worth mentioning is that translators who have been chess players themselves not only have presented acceptable translations but also have selected valuable sources to translate. It could be concluded that the present status of chess in Iran and its success in the international level owe a lot to the translation of chess training books. Should these sources be introduced to the chess community in Iran, the quality of chess games will be increased. According to the results of the present study, some implications for the effects of translated chess training texts on the promotion of chess in Iran can be suggested: Through training of translation for specific purposes such as chess, trainers can teach the principles of appropriate translation and strategy development to their students. Materials developers in the translation training domain also could employ the findings of the present study and those of the similar ones to present tasks in which learners' awareness and understanding toward developing translation competence and critical thinking while covering source language texts and doing translations as well as cultural norms of the real language in use will be enhanced. Such tasks may help the learners move towards cooperative learning, peer and self-evaluation, cognitive learning, cultural literacy, and meaningful learning. The findings could also be employed by chess instructors, Chess Federation of the Iran, translators, translation trainees, and materials developers in the field of translation studies in the Iranian context to pave the way for the improvement of translation classes.

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Iran's chess federation avoided a direct risk of suspension from the International Chess Federation (FIDE) at Sunday's General Assembly. The FIDE delegates instead supported a motion from FIDE President Arkady Dvorkovich that warned Iran while choosing to continue on a diplomatic path. The sensitive... Â The topic regarding Iran had been placed on the agenda by English Chess Federation delegate Malcolm Pein and FIDE Vice President Nigel Short. They had prepared a motion (here in PDF) that stated Abstract: The game of chess is the most widely-studied domain in the history of artificial intelligence. The strongest programs are based on a combination of sophisticated search techniques, domain-specific adaptations, and handcrafted evaluation functions that have been refined by human experts over several decades. In contrast, the AlphaGo Zero program recently achieved superhuman performance in the game of Go, by tabula rasa reinforcement learning from games of self-play. In this paper, we generalise this approach into a single AlphaZero algorithm that can achieve, tabula rasa, superhuman p texts. CHESS Collection. by. Â 03382 - Alburt, L. - Chess Training Pocket Book 300 Most Important Positions and Ideas, 2nd Ed (2000).pdf download. 2.8M. 03461 - How Good Is Your Chess_ (2003).pdf download. Â Chernev, Irving - The Most Instructive Games Of Chess Ever Played 62 Masterpieces Of Chess Strategy (1965).pdf download.