

## The Situation of Legal Translation Post COVID-19

### وضعية الترجمة القانونية بعد كوفيد 19

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ISSN: 2716-9359

EISSN: 2773-3505

**Received 29/11/2022 Accepted 17/12/2022 Published 01/01/2023**

#### Abstract

This research focused on the situation of legal translation post COVID-19. A quantitative research design is used with a questionnaire and 50 participants of the Jordanian and Algerian legal translators. The results of the research revealed that legal translation was affected strongly during COVID-19 and that according to the comprehensive ban and there was delay in the issues and legal transactions. But, at post COVID-19, there is a strong demand for legal translation, especially at the first period of stopping the comprehensive ban. Also, most of the legal documents were about immigration transactions to European countries according to the financial situation during and after COVID-19. Also, most of the customers were afraid of COVID-19, and stopped most of their legal operations and transactions until the end of COVID-19, and this directly affected the legal translation. Furthermore, the results revealed that the situation of legal translation became better and more active post COVID-19. As well, the researcher concluded that COVID-19 affected negatively on the legal translation and its effects stated to stop post COVID-19. Also, the comprehensive ban caused reduction of the work in the field of translation in general and in the field of legal translation specifically. As well, the active of legal translation backs to the normal situation post COVID-19.

**Keywords:** The Situation, Legal Translation, Post COVID-19.

#### الملخص

ركز هذا البحث على وضع الترجمة القانونية بعد كوفيد. حيث تم استخدام تصميم البحث الكمي مع الاستبانة كأداة للدراسة، وشارك في الدراسة 50 مشاركاً من المترجمين القانونيين الأردنيين والجزائريين. وكشفت نتائج البحث أن الترجمة القانونية تأثرت بشدة خلال كوفيد بسبب الحظر الشامل، وكان هناك تأخير وتأجيل في القضايا والمعاملات القانونية. ولكن، في مرحلة ما بعد كوفيد، أصبح الطلب قوي على الترجمة القانونية وخاصة في الفترة الأولى لإيقاف الحظر الشامل وبداية عودة الحياة الاجتماعية والعملية إلى وضعهما الطبيعي. كما كانت معظم الوثائق القانونية حول معاملات الهجرة إلى الدول الأوروبية وذلك وفقاً للوضع المالي السيء أثناء وبعد كوفيد. وكان معظم العملاء

خائفين من تأثيرات كوفيد فقاموا بإيقاف او تأجيل معظم قضاياهم ومعاملاتهم القانونية إلى فترة إنتهاء الوباء، وقد كان لهذا تأثير كبير ومباشر على الترجمة القانونية. علاوة على ذلك ، كشفت النتائج أن وضع الترجمة القانونية قد تحسن بشكل كبير وأصبح أفضل وأنشط بعد كوفيد. كما خلصت الباحثة إلى أن كوفيد أثر سلباً على الترجمة القانونية. وقد توقف تأثيره بمجرد البدء بوقف الإجراءات الاحترازية وبعد إنتهاء كوفيد بشكل كامل. بالإضافة لذلك، فإنّ الحظر الشامل قد أدّى إلى تقليص العمل في مجال الترجمة بشكل عام وفي مجال الترجمة القانونية بشكل خاص. وبعد انتهاء الوباء، فإنّ وضع الترجمة القانونية بدء يعود لوضعه الطبيعي، بل ومع المزيد من ضغط العمل بسبب تراكم بعض المعاملات التي كانت مغلقة أو عالقة في مختلف المعاملات وعلى مختلف الأصعدة خلال كوفيد.

الكلمات الدالة: الوضع ، الترجمة القانونية ، ما بعد كوفيد -19.

## **Introduction**

The impact of COVID-19 covers the entire world ,from the east to the west, as no one can neglect the dangerous effects of the virus and how quickly it spreads between people and contents. The crisis started in China at the end of 2019 and many victims were dead or affected by the virus. The cities, countries and many activities are locking down, and the economic activities limiting down to the minimum. The costs of COVID-19 are unfolding as it affects humans, businesses, societies, and the entire life of people. But, economic sector is affected strongly because of the locking down of shops and trades between most countries and even inside one country. The crisis, in general, affects badly on most different sides and sectors of life (Monin&Schlz, 2009).

The situation of the different fields was under crisis as the world was suffering from a comprehensive ban and there were terrible, and negative effects hitting the people and their lives during COVID-19. The economic situation, trade, traveling, tourism, visiting and even the social relationships are affected and are limited under COVID-19. Interestingly, the legal and economic sector is still affected by COVID-19, and many business investments are stopped because of the virus. Viruses cause many dangerous

side effects on legal, economic, and social life (George Et al., 2016; Brunkard et al., 2008; Pickett & Wilkinson, 2015).

COVID-19 had an impact on almost all aspects of translation, especially legal translation, which is considered one of the essential fields that were affected during COVID-19. The difficulty of working in the field was because of total shut down, work had dried up, most of the conferences and conventions have been canceled too. Even remotely had many challenges if it had the chance to be available, and these challenges were because of the internet connections and microphones cutting out. Thus, there was a 24% fall in income and an 8% fall in translators during COVID-19 (Chaillou and Der Kakken, 2022).

### ***Operational Definitions***

*Legal translation*, in this study, means the legal translation in Jordan and Algeria in specific, and the participants of the research give their answers according to their knowledge about the legal translation in their countries.

*The situation*: in this study, the situation means how the situation and the process of legal translation is post COVID-19 in Algeria and Jordan.

*Post COVID-19*: in this study, means the period or time after the outbreak of COVID-19 and at the end of the Coronavirus in Algeria and Jordan.

### **Significance of the study**

This study is significant in focusing on the legal translation situation post COVID-19 in Algeria and Jordan. That there are few studies have been conducted to reveal the impact of the new virus that destroyed many sources of economic activity and stopped a lot of the working fields and activities all

around the world, and put many people in need because they lost their jobs or because of the comprehensive ban in many cities and countries around as Jordan and Algeria.

### **Question of the Study**

This study asked one question which is:

- What is the situation of legal translation postCOVID-19?

### **Literature Review**

In medieval times, legal translation focused on Latin: texts were translated from various languages into Latin and from Latin into other languages too. The first legal text translated from one language to another, and which has survived until today is the peace treaty. The legal texts are archaic and ritualistic texts with complex semiotic constraints, and legal writing is being subject to very strict stylistic conventions in terms of register and diction as well as highly codified genre structures. But, at all levels of the legal texts, there are heavy constraints. In this kind of translation, the language of the law has a special pragmatic status, and it is typically formulaic, obscure and archaic, and the legal discourse is culturally mediated (Mattila, 2006).

The use of legal translation is necessary for different fields of life. Many issues in education, law, trade, business, marriage and divorce, and contracts and agreements are needed to be translated into other languages. This process continued for a long time in history, and it changed, developed, and improved over time. But, all the changes were positive and helped in improving the legal translation process, and were connected to the development of the idioms, glossaries, and the operations and issues that related to different formal and official fields. However, the most known event

that is considered as a challenge for many areas of work and translation is COVID -19 (Alwazna, 2021).

Covis-19 is known as Coronavirus, a hazardous disease that was spread in the world at the end of 2019, and many people died because of it. Many everyday things have become forbidden under coronavirus, such handshaking, going out without masks, eating in restaurants, or going to grocery stores, workplaces, transport, and other fields of life. As well, the infections of the Coronavirus are unpredictable and unlimited and differ from one person to another (World Health Organization, 2020). But, the effects of COVID-19 on businesses and societies are the clearest sides under COVID-19. So, the deathrate has become higher in many countries because of Coronavirus (Worldometers, 2020).

Interestingly, many economic sectors are affected by Coronavirus, such as airlines, hotels, hospitality industries, tourism, and health sector organizations, and many workplaces, decreasing the number of employees to 50% or less. Furthermore, the future of economic life and human life is not stable or granted to be safe from viruses, and the world still afraid of viruses and different kinds of diseases that may start and spread around the world (Williams et al., 2019;Choi et al., 2020, de Bakker et al., 2020).

The nature of COVID-19 at the intersection of business and society, the differential effects of crises on individuals, businesses and societies, and their varied understandings of any responses contain in them a range of theoretical puzzles and research questions ( Worldometers, 2020).

Ammon news from Jordan (2020) mentioned that foreign investments would be decreased by about 40% to 60% .While, the fall in tourism income will be about 2.3 – 2.6 billion JD, and the Jordanian exports will decrease to 6.6% - 15.25% if the work stops between one and half month and two and

half month. Thus, there is a negative impact of Coronavirus on the Jordanian economy.

Phenix for economic and informatics studies (2020) confirmed that the risks of law and economics of Coronavirus are not less than the health risks. As well as, the rate of unemployment increased to 19% for the first months of the spread of the Coronavirus, and that rate is growing daily. Thus, there are many issues, and documents are stopped or postponed during COVID-19.

## **Methods**

The researcher used the following method for discussing the problem of this research.

## **Research Design**

The researcher used a quantitative research design and one instrument, which is a questionnaire that consisted of 12 statements about the situation of legal translation post COVID-19 in Jordan and Algeria.

## **Participants of the Study**

The participants of this study were 50 Jordanian and Algerian legal translators from different cities and governorates in the two countries. As well as, the participants answered the questions of the online questionnaire and gave their answers to the statements that the researcher wrote about the situation of legal translation post COVID-19.

## **Discussion and Findings of the Study**

To answer the question of this research, the researcher analyzed the data of this study, and by analyzing the answers of the participants, who are Jordanian and Algerian legal translators. The responses of the participants

showed the negative impacts of COVID-19 in different ways. The researcher used a questionnaire to focus on the problem of this study as follows:

No.	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	COVID-19 had terrible effects on the field of translation in general.				
2	The comprehensive ban was the main reason behind the negative impact of COVID-19 on the legal translation.				
3	The situation of legal translation was negative during COVID-19.				
4	The situation of legal translation is better post COVID-19.				
5	Many legal documents have been postponed during COVID-19.				
6	Post COVID-19 is a good period for translating legal documents.				
7	Post COVID-19, most documents that need legal translation are for immigration.				

8	Post COVID-19, most documents that need legal translation are for studying abroad.				
9	There were online documents that were translated during COVID-19.				
10	Using the translator's stamp was one of the main problems of legal translation during COVID-19.				
11	Your legal translation skills become better post COVID-19.				
12	You need to revise your legal information and experience post COVID-19.				

The results of the descriptive statistics indicated that the participants gave answers that reflected the negative and bad or harmful effects of COVID-19 on the Jordanian and Algerian legal translation. Furthermore, the mean scores range from 3.200 to 3.780 on a four-point scale for giving the level of agreement with the questionnaire statements. With this in mind, the results reported ‘high’ to ‘very high’ levels of negative attitudes toward COVID-19 on legal translation in Jordan and Algeria. As well, the legal translators have a positive attitude post COVID-19, about their attitude became negative gradually after the crisis.



**Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations for Each Statement**

No.	Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of Agreement
1	COVID-19 had terrible effects on the field of translation in general.	3.660	.450	Very high
2	The comprehensive ban was the main reason behind the negative impact of COVID-19 on legal translation.	3.560	.437	Very high
3	The situation of legal translation was negative during COVID-19.	3.360	.536	Very high
4	The situation of legal translation is better post COVID-19.	3.480	.535	Very high
5	Many legal documents have been postponed during COVID-19.	3.680	.576	Very high
6	Using the translator's stamp was one of the main problems of legal translation during COVID-19.	3.200	.600	High
7	Post COVID-19, most documents that need legal translation are for immigration	3.400	.430	Very high
8	Post COVID-19, most documents that need legal translation are for studying abroad.	3.440	.566	Very high
9	The situation of legal translation has a lot of pressure post COVID-19, because there are a lot of documents that need to be translated.	3.920	.380	Very high

10	Post COVID-19 is a good period for translating legal documents, and the translators' attitude becomes better gradually.	3.600	.549	Very high
11	Your legal translation skills become better post COVID-19.	3.780	.389	Very high
12	You need to revise your legal information and experience post COVID-19.	3.645	.500	Very high

The results shown in the table below had levels of agreement with the attributions on the survey were determined by using the following rubric: the interval of 1-1.75 showed a deficient level, the 1.76- 2.51 interval showed a low level, the 2.52-3.25 interval showed high level, the 3.26- 4.00 interval showed a very high level of agreement with the statements on the survey.

As shown above, the data of this study revealed a very high level of agreement with the statements that mentioned the negative impact of COVID-19 on the Jordanian and Algerian legal translation. The negative impacts are revealed and described by different reasons that are hidden behind as: the comprehensive ban that the government forced on cities and other sectors in Jordan and Algeria. Using the translator's stamp was one of the main problems of legal translation during COVID-19, and there were many legal documents that were postponed during COVID-19. While, post COVID-19 is a good period for translating legal documents, and most of the documents that need legal translation are for immigration and studying abroad, and legal translators need to revise their legal information and experience post COVID-19. Moreover, Post COVID-19 is a good period for translating legal documents, and the translators' attitudes become better gradually.

Thus, this study answered the question of this study as the situation of legal translation became better post COVID-19, and it went back to the normal situation before the crisis. But, there is a lot of pressure because there are a lot of documents that need to be translated. According to the results of the study, the researcher recommended future recommendations, to find solutions that can help in keeping the legal translation active during any other possible crisis as the crisis of COVID-19, and to find ways to save the work and continuity of the other fields of translation as the legal translation.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The author declares that she has no conflict of interest

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### **How to cite this article according to the APA Style:**

Hana Al-Badou (2023), The Situation of Legal Translation Post COVID-19, *Journal of Languages & Translation*, vol 03, issue 01, Laboratory of information and communication technologies in the teaching of foreign languages and translation, Hassiba Ben Bouali University of Chlef, Algeria. 27- 39