

Readiness of Translation Graduates for the Job in the Jordanian Market: The Employers' Perspective

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This is an empirical study that surveys the employers at the translation industry in Jordan on the competences and skills required the most in the market versus what they lack in the inexperienced translation graduates. Forty two employers from different translation service providers in the capital city, Amman are surveyed on their perceptions of translation competence. The PACTE competence model (2000, 2003, 2005, 2009, 2011) is used as a guiding model for the study. The data collection tool employed is a closed-ended Likert type questionnaire on a four-point scale. The purpose of the study is to reveal the demands of the market in relation to the status quo of the translator training programs at the Jordanian universities. Understanding what the programs offer, their pedagogical methodology and strategy and the extent to which they are market-oriented unveils any existing weaknesses and paves the way for implementing corrective actions. The results reveal that there is a gap between what is required by the employers at the translation service providers and the competence of the inexperienced graduates -from the perspective of the employers. The significance of the study lies in its reliance on empirical evidence in probing the requirements of the employers versus the actual competence of the graduates; a research area which has been left unexplored in Jordan.

Keywords: bilingual competence, extra-linguistic competence,
instrumental competence, strategic competence, transfer competence

1. Introduction

It goes almost without saying that the translator will also be expected to have some

experience of technical, legal, economic and commercial translation and even to be reasonably proficient at interpreting (at least liaison and consecutive interpreting). Even the beginner, straight out of university, is now often expected to be immediately operational in all these areas simply because requirements have changed and the conditions for employability have changed accordingly. (Gouadec 2007: 349)

Bridging the gaps between the academic and the professional worlds in translator training has been and is still gaining momentum. Calls for designing the curriculum in response to the market needs were reflected in the works of Pym (2003), Way (2000), Beeby (2004), Claramonte (1994), Gabr (2007), Li (2000) among others. Beeby (2004) and Gabr (2007) called for focusing on two factors when designing the curriculum; the students' expectations as well as the market demands. The works conducted by Claramonte (1994), Pym (2002) and Gabr (2007) revealed that market needs vary from one country to another.

Market needs in the translation industry can either be related to the skills and competences demanded by the employers or to the type of texts and modes of translation demanded by the clients. The large scale OPTIMALE market survey conducted in 2011 included a combination of these elements. It consulted employers at the European market on the qualifications and experience required the most as well as the significance of different skills and competences for them. Directionality was also tackled in the survey as employers were asked on the significance of the ability to translate into the second language. These changes in the demand of inverse translation were also highlighted and discussed by Beeby (2004), Pavlovic (2013), Li (2000) among others.

Due to the growing demands of the translation market, Gouadec (2007) stressed the significance of providing the market with competent translators and stated that universities should award translation qualifications only to those who fit the competent translator criteria to avoid jeopardizing the chances of competent graduates especially when the market is narrow.

Within the Jordanian context, some theoretical studies have attempted to link between translator training and the needs of the market but empirical research in this area still needs to be taken further in a competence-oriented investigation. The present study uses a similar mode of investigation to that used by OPTIMALE (2011) and takes competence as a point of departure to bridge the gap that still exists (Shunnaq 2009). None of the previous studies investigated translation competence of trainees from a holistic perspective for training implications. They were all found to fall within three main categories: product assessment for linguistic proficiency (e.g. Al-Najjar 2011)

curriculum evaluation (e.g. Yousef 2004) or theoretical studies (e.g. Shunnaq 2009). Interestingly enough, most of the studies stressed the significance of amending the curriculum to be market-oriented; however, none of them surveyed the employers on the competences and skills needed the most in graduates. None of them started with competence evaluation as a point of departure on which the curriculum could be evaluated and amended. The present study directly investigates whether the assumption made by Schaeffner and Adab that ‘translation competence is most effectively developed within a translator training programme’ (2000: x) is true for the Jordanian context.

2. The Significance of the Study

This research project contributes to the discipline of Translation Studies in various ways. Firstly, it sheds light on a geographical spot; i.e. Jordan where translation competence is still under-researched and empirical studies are needed (Shunnaq 2009).

Secondly, by pointing to the missing skills and competences in graduates as well as the areas that need further attention in the curriculum, the study provides a solid basis for the academic institutions to evaluate and re-consider the current curriculum design and the teaching practices. In other words, the study tends to bridge the gap between the academic and the professional worlds that was identified in previous studies such as those conducted by Yousef (2004), Shunnaq (2009) and Al-Hamad (2014). The recommendations those studies came up with were basically related to re-considering the curriculum design of the translator training programs by involving the actual stakeholders and understanding the market needs. Re-considering and improving the curriculum design is definitely a step in the right direction; however, it cannot be taken randomly. The curriculum amendments need to be based on what competences the students are developing versus those they seem to be lacking. The present study probes into this area to provide one of the missing links.

Thirdly, by unveiling the perspective of the employers, the study provides the translation graduates themselves with a realistic account of how they are perceived by their prospective employers and how their competence is likely to be evaluated and their translations are likely to be assessed when applying for a job. As a result, they head for the market with full understanding as to what to expect.

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3. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Williams and Chesterman (2002) point out that research on translation competence and development can involve areas such as investigating translation curriculum design at the translator training institutions where competence is supposedly developed the best (Schaeffner and Adab, 2000). Investigating competence through studying the effectiveness of the curriculum design or the soundness of the pedagogical methodology can be carried out either by observing the translation process or by assessing the product of the trainees or the students (Williams and Chesterman 2002). Moreover, competence evaluation can be investigated by surveying stakeholders on their perceptions of the competence of given trainees or graduates; the scope within which the present study lies.

Such survey-based studies provide general perceptions of the competence of trainees or even professionals without referring to their translation product or observing the translation process. Studies which have taken this approach are relatively few in the literature. The narrowed survey-based study conducted by Kaminskienė and Kavaliauskienė (2012) at the Vilnius University is one example. The study, which was based on the EMT translator competence profile, investigated the perceptions of students, lecturers and employers on the competences acquired by translation students at the University. It revealed that all groups of respondents reflected positive perceptions with regard to competence acquisition with more positive reflections from the employers. The PACTE-based study conducted by Eser (2015) on final year translation students at the state universities in Turkey used a similar approach. It surveyed the students themselves on their perception of translation competence acquisition. It showed that students agreed that they had developed translation competence during the translator training program with less satisfaction with the knowledge acquired about translation theories. While the latter study by Eser (*ibid*) overlooked the perception of the employers in the market, the former one by Kaminskienė and Kavaliauskienė (*ibid*) investigated the employers' evaluation of the graduates without understanding what the market actually needs.

Beeby (2004) and Gabr (2007) pointed out that the market demands constitute one of the most important factors to be taken into consideration when designing the translator training curriculum. The employers' reflections on the significance of the different competences for them are needed to bridge the assumed gap between what graduates lack versus what is needed in the industry. Within the Jordanian context, this gap still exists as claimed by Al Hamad (2014) and Shunnaq (2009).

The present study probes into the employers' perceptions as key stakeholders by comparing the translation competences they look for versus how they perceive the

inexperienced graduates for direct implications on translator training.

Since this research is a competence-related empirical study, it was essential to be guided by one of those translation competence models for a more reliable and systematic investigation. The selection of the suitable competence model had to be made based on the aims and objectives of the study. The PACTE model (2000, 2003, 2011) was found to fulfill the purpose of the research for reasons discussed below in this section.

PACTE stands for *Process in the Acquisition of Translation Competence and Evaluation*. The model was developed by a group of researchers in 1997 to investigate issues in translation competence and the process of its acquisition. In the model of 2000 translation competences were labelled as 1) communicative competence in the two languages defined as the knowledge and skills necessary for linguistic communication, 2) extra-linguistic competence which referred to the world and specialist knowledge, 3) instrumental/ professional competence, defined as knowledge related to the tools of the profession, 4) psycho-physiological competence, defined as the ability to use all kinds of psychomotor, cognitive and attitudinal resources 5) transfer competence which was a central competence integrating all the other competences, defined as the ability to complete the transfer process from the source text (ST) to the target text (TT) taking into account the translation function and the characteristics of the receptor and 6) strategic competence which includes all the conscious and unconscious, verbal and nonverbal procedures used to solve the problems found during the translation process. In the model of 2003, communicative competence was denominated as bilingual sub-competence. The extra-linguistic competence was almost kept the same but slightly extended to include the bi-cultural knowledge, encyclopaedic and subject knowledge. The instrumental and professional competence was split into two sub-competences: 1) instrumental competence, defined as use of documentation sources and information technologies and 2) knowledge about translation which refers to knowledge about translation processes, methods and procedures as well as the aspects of the profession. Transfer competence has remained as central competence but was integrated within the strategic competence. The psycho-physiological competence was adjusted into supporting components rather than a competence (see figures 3.1 and 3.2). According to PACTE (2000, 2003), all the competences are inter-related within one knowledge system which they referred to as 'the expert knowledge'.

Each of these competences entail certain sub-competences or components. For instance, transfer competence in direct and inverse translation along with the ability to solve translational problems is entailed within the strategic competence. The extra-linguistic competence involves the bi-cultural knowledge including socio-cultural specific elements and constraints as well as domain or world knowledge. Knowledge about translation

entails knowledge about the profession, ability to work within a team and meet the deadlines as well as fulfill the clients' requirements among other elements. The instrumental competence is the effective use of all types of documentation sources and information technologies. The psycho-physiological components are those related to motivation, creativity, and memory, among other cognitive and attitudinal aspects.

As for the bilingual competence, the need to be proficient in the foreign language prior to joining translator training was particularly stressed by Anderman (1998), Gouadec (2007) and Malmkjaer (2004). Apart from the views of the translation scholars, the actual practices of several universities around the world seem to show that the bilingual competence is well examined prior to accepting candidates to translator training programs. For example, the results of a questionnaire sent out to over 60 academic institutions in Europe and North America (Ulrych 2005) revealed that 57% of the universities stated that they require proficiency in the first foreign language before a student is admitted to the translator training program. It also showed that 32% of those universities require applicants to pass an entrance exam in order to be accepted to the program. In the Jordanian context, English proficiency for translator training in particular and for professional life in general was discussed by the British Council (2012), Education First (2013), Abu Risha (2005) and (Abuqudairi 2012).

In addition to being proficient in the two languages, Wilss (1982) called for 'super-competence' which is the ability to transfer messages between the two languages; i.e. transfer competence. It has been widely argued that the bilingual competence is a pre-requisite for translation competence (Andermann 1998; Gouadec 2007); however, it has also been pointed out that being a bilingual does not necessarily mean having the ability to transfer messages between the two languages (e.g. Toury 1984). This distinction between being a bilingual and being able to translate was a significant shift in the development of the notion of translation competence between the 1970s and the 1980s. Transfer sub-competence was stressed as a different component from bilingual competence and therefore appeared as a separate sub-competence in several models (e.g. Nord 1992; Beeby 1996; Hurtado Albir 1996; Hatim and Mason, 1997; PACTE 2000; Schaeffner 2000; Neubert 2000). Hatim and Mason (1997) viewed transfer competence as 'a strategic renegotiation by adjusting effectiveness, efficiency and relevance to an audience design task (brief, initiator, etc.) in fulfilment of a rhetorical purpose' (1997: 205). Schaeffner described it as 'the ability to produce target texts that satisfy the demands of the translation task' (2000: 146). According to PACTE (2000), transfer competence is the central competence that integrates all the others. It is the ability to complete the transfer process from the ST to the TT taking into account the translation function and the characteristics of the receptor (2000: 102). Until the very recent models

of translation competence, the bilingual and the transfer competence still lie at the core of the models. They form the solid ground on which the translator can develop her/his competence further.

The choice of the PACTE model as an underlying model for the present study was made due to several reasons. First of all, the model includes the basic sub-competences that have been highlighted in most previous and subsequent models. Therefore, it was found to be a model that serves competence investigation at the basic level. Secondly, the definitions of the PACTE competences were found simple and clear as noticed in the piloting of the study. This was considered a significant characteristic as it facilitates formulating clear and unambiguous questionnaire items. Thirdly, the model came as a result of a longitudinal empirical research project which has been in progress for more than seventeen years. It was tested on different language pairs and in different directionalities which gives assurance to researchers to be used as a template. The first model of 2000 has been slightly amended in 2003 in which transfer competence was integrated into the strategic competence. Since then, it was validated through constant empirical process and product oriented studies in 2005, 2009 and 2011. Figures 3.1 and 3.2 below illustrate the two PACTE models.

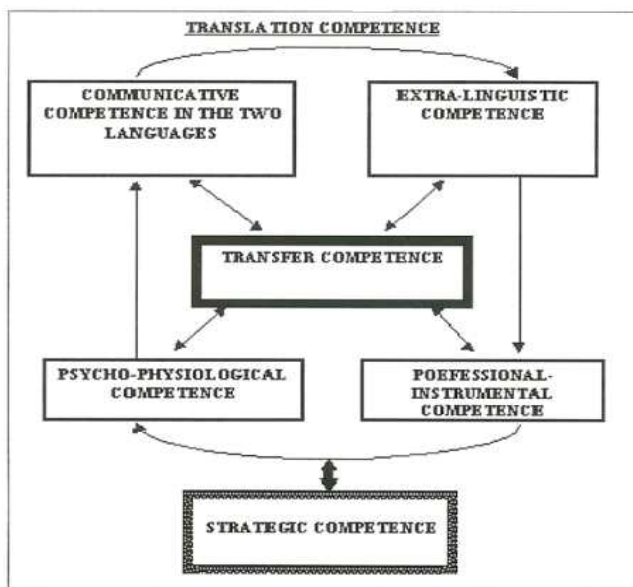


Figure 3.1: The PACTE translation competence model (2000)

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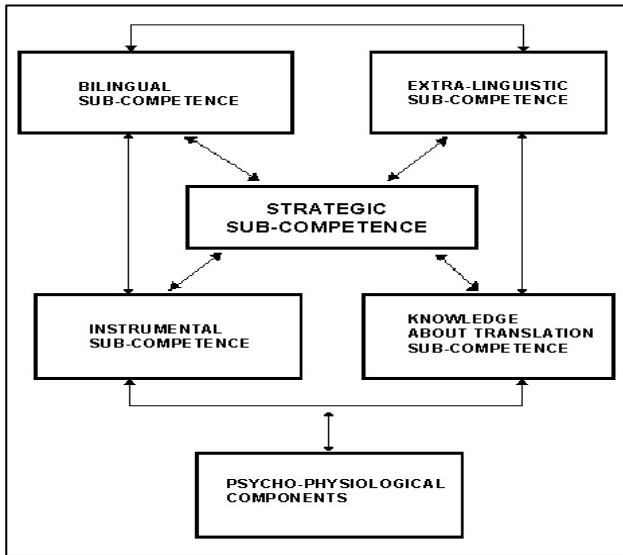


Figure 3.2: The PACTE translation competence model (2003, 2005, 2009, 2011)

4. Data Collection Methods and Tools

Since the purpose of the study was to approach the biggest sample possible of the employers, closed-ended questionnaires were used. Questionnaires are generally defined as means of gathering information about a particular population by sampling some of its members. The questionnaires -which were handed in person- basically included closed-ended items on four-point scales; i.e. Likert type with one open-ended item for further elaboration (Appendix 1). The scales were either on the degree of agreement (strongly agree → strongly disagree) or the degree of importance (essential → not important). It is worth mentioning here that the mode of inquiry in evaluating the graduates focused on the lacking competences rather than the developed ones. This mode was found to yield more accurate data as several theorists believe that the evaluators are generally error-oriented. Lowe (1987) for instance, claimed that ‘those assessing translation skills often focus on errors’ (1987: 54).

The employers were selected from over forty service providers in the capital city, Amman as dominant and specialized representatives of the industry in Jordan (Al-Hamad, 2014). The sampling of employers was guided by the official documents released by Amman Chamber of Commerce (see www.ammanchamber.org.jo). The translation service

providers selected for the study were those which offer general services in written translation from and into English. To get a homogenous sample, service providers which deal with any type of interpreting or audio-visual material were all excluded as those are considered providers of specific translation services.

The targeted sample versus the response rate is summarized in Table 4.1 below:

Table 4.1: The employers' sampling

Employers at the service providers in the capital city, Amman	Sample size: total number of translation service providers registered at the Amman Chamber of Commerce	Number of responses	Response Rate
	74	42	57%

The main sub-competences highlighted in the model were used in formulating the questionnaire items. However, some competences were broken down into smaller components. The definitions of the competences -as provided by PACTE- were used in the formulation of the items to yield more accurate data. By way of illustration, the transfer competence was defined by PACTE in the model of 2000 as ‘re-expressing the source text message in the target language’ (PACTE 2000: 102). Since it involves two directions at least and its competence varies according to directionality (PACTE 2003), this competence had to be split into direct and inverse translation. The strategic competence was simplified and summarized as the ability to carry out the translation process efficiently and solve the translational problems. Knowledge about translation involves several components including knowledge of translation as a profession such as meeting briefs, clients’ and work requirements, knowledge of the market, ability to negotiate prices, etc. In addition, it includes aspects such as knowledge of functions, methods and theories of translation. The aspects related to meeting the clients’ and work requirements were asked about whereas the knowledge of functions and theories were left out as they are integrated within the strategic competence by default. The extra-linguistic competence is also a multifaceted competence that involves the world and domain knowledge in addition to the knowledge of the two cultures associated with the two languages. There were three items related to this competence in the questionnaire; domain knowledge, the bi-cultural knowledge and knowledge of socio-cultural constraints. The latter was included since censorship is still practiced on translation activities in Jordan due to certain socio-cultural constraints (Al-Hamad 2013). The psycho-physiological components involve several cognitive and attitudinal aspects such as memory, creativity,

critical thinking, and motivation among others. Motivation was the only aspect selected to be included in the competence inquiry for being highly stressed as a success factor in the learning process in translator training (Mackenzie 2004; Gonzalez Davies 2004; Beeby 2004). It was also seen as a relatively explicit attitudinal aspect to be evaluated by others. The bilingual competence and the instrumental competence were not split but simplified in concise items (see Appendix 1).

For the analysis of the questionnaires, the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 16.0) as well as Microsoft Excel (2010) were used. The score mean for each item and for each group of related items along with its respective standard deviation were analyzed. Results were further illustrated in bar graphs.

5. Results and Discussion

The descriptive statistics on a four-point scale from 4 (essential) to 1 (not required) which describe how the employers reflected on the importance of the different competences for them are summarized in the following figure (Figure 5.1) below:

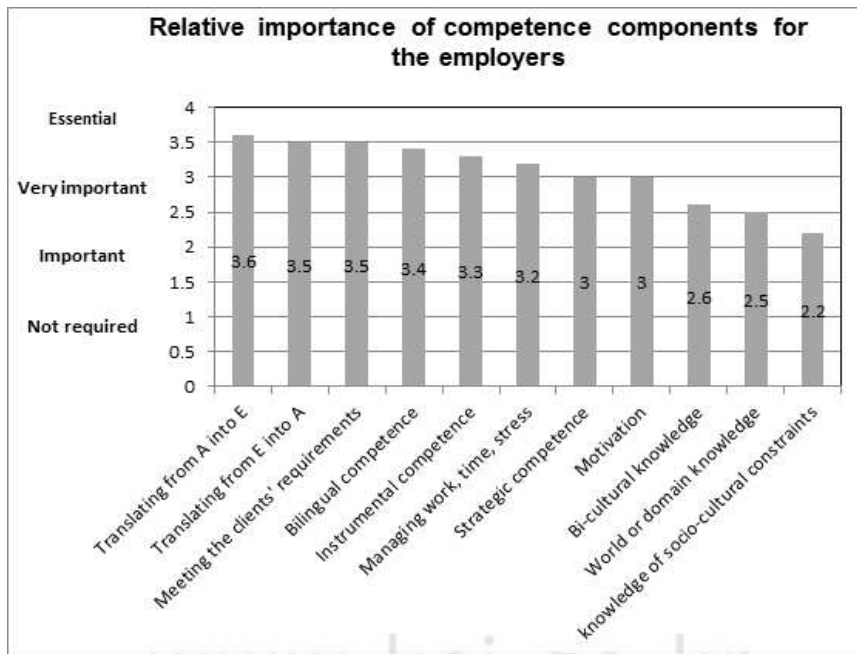


Figure 5.1: The importance of the competences for the employers

The results reveal that the employers in the Jordanian translation market attach the highest level of importance to three components: translating from Arabic into English (inverse translation) followed by translating from English into Arabic (direct translation) along with identifying and meeting the clients' requirements.

The emphasis on inverse translation complies with Campbell's argument (1998) that '[t]he experience of countries where the use of a commercially or politically dominant second language is necessary makes the insistence on translation into the first language unrealistic' (Campbell 1998: 28). According to a research conducted by the British Council in 2012, English was found to be a commercially and politically dominant language in Jordan. The seriousness and significance of this finding lies in the fact that some translation academics in Jordan seem to think otherwise. For example, Shunnaq (2009) called for more focus on direct translation and considered training students on inverse translation as a 'waste of time' (2009: 8). Studies conducted in different parts of the world also prove otherwise. The study carried out by Pavlović (2013) revealed that the practice of inverse translation started to prevail remarkably since the mid-1990s and the demand on inverse translation is increasing in different countries. Similarly, the market survey conducted by Li (2000) revealed that the translation market in Hong Kong is moving towards a higher demand for inverse translation. On a larger scale, the results of the OPTIMALE market survey (2011) revealed that 44% of employers in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland and Poland and 42% of employers in Romania, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey consider the ability to work into the second language as an essential or important skill. The results shown in the figure above show an increase in the demand of inverse translation in the Jordanian market as well, which was not probably the case some years ago. .

From a different angle, employers in the results above seemed to prioritize the transfer competence into and from L2 over the other sub-competences. Obviously, they seem to think that transfer competence is not possible without bilingual competence; therefore, the latter is still perceived among the most required competences. From a business-oriented perspective, the graduates' awareness of some professional aspects (knowledge about translation) and their ability to use sources (instrumental competence) were seen almost as important as the bilingual competence. In fact, the instrumental competence (search and research skills) was perceived as more important than the pre-acquired knowledge of the culture and the domain of the text (the extra-linguistic competence). It is worth quoting here one of the comments that was mentioned by one employer. He stated "*In an age of technology, all what the translator needs is mastering the two languages in addition to some search and research skills; understanding the culture or getting familiar with the domain can always be googled.*" This implies

important indications about the importance attached to the role of technology in translation from the perspective of the employers.

Generally speaking, almost all the components were rated as very important while the extra-linguistic competence was attached less importance. There was no competence that was considered as 'not required' except for knowledge of socio-cultural constraints as a component of the extra-linguistic competence. This could be interpreted in light of the findings by Yousef (2004) whose study revealed that the types of texts required the most in the Jordanian market were of a technical nature and in particular; scientific and legal texts. This finding actually explains the employers' little interest in the knowledge of the socio-cultural constraints since such types of texts do not require knowledge of culture-specific elements as much as they require world or domain knowledge

If this study is to be compared with similar studies like the one conducted by OPTIMALE (2011), certain similarities can be noticed in the demands of the employers. For instance, identifying and meeting the clients' requirements was considered -in this study- as essential as it was in the study by OPTIMALE (ibid). Similarly, the ability to produce a 100% quality which is at the core of transfer competence was considered the most essential for the employers in the European market as well as in the Jordanian market. Therefore, employers seem to reflect a similar mode of thinking in different contexts. Most importantly, inverse translation proved to be highly demanded by several employers in different European countries as is the case in Jordan which refutes the common misconception that translators should be asked to translate into their mother tongue.

To complete the cycle of the investigation, the employers were asked whether they perceive the above mentioned sub-competences as lacking in inexperienced graduates. The following bar graph (Figure 5.2) below shows the results of the descriptive statistics of the employers' feedback.

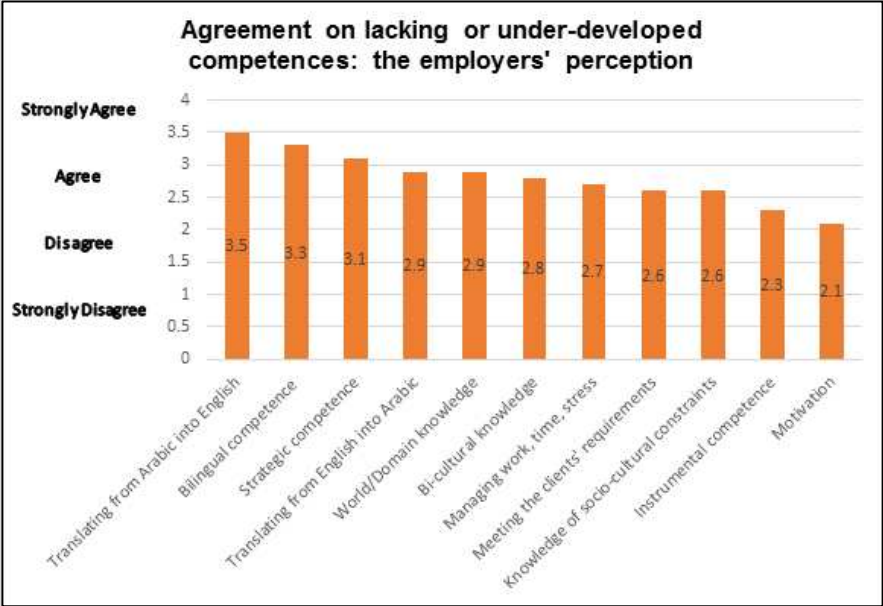


Figure 5,2: Agreement of employers on the lacking competences

The figures above reveal that the three competences which are perceived as lacking the most are: the bilingual competence, the transfer competence and the strategic competence.

The evaluation indicates a serious dissatisfaction with the competence of the graduates from the employers' perspectives with an overall mean scores of 2.8 of agreement on lacking the required translation competence. The seriousness of this evaluation lies in the fact that the competences judged the worst are the bilingual competence and the transfer competence; the two competences which have been considered core and essential since the earliest models of translation competence (see section 3).

The employers in the present study perceive the above two competences as lacking with strong agreement on lacking transfer competence into L2 (inverse translation). Since transfer competence involves understanding the source text message and re-expressing it in the target language (PACTE 2000: 102), it can be assumed that the negative evaluation of the graduates' inverse translation skills is directly related to a serious deficiency in the graduates' production abilities of the foreign language. This cannot be detached from their L2 proficiency and thus their overall bilingual competence. The findings above yielded quite interesting image when a comparison is made between what the two modes of inquiry. The irony of the comparison lies in the fact that the

transfer competence into the two directions and the bilingual competence were required the most by the employers and yet were seen as the most lacking in graduates. Inverse translation, in particular, is demanded the most and yet is lacking the most in graduates –from the employers’ perspective.

Similarly, meeting the clients’ requirements as a component of knowledge about the profession was ranked the third most important component for the employers (see Figure 5.1) and was perceived as lacking in graduates (Figure 5.2).

It is worth noting that the extra-linguistic competence appeared as the least important for employers among the rest of the competences as it appears in Figure II. This is due to the little importance attached to knowledge of socio-cultural constraints -as an extra-linguistic component- which lowered the mean score of the whole competence. The other two components; i.e. the bi-cultural knowledge and domain knowledge reflected mean scores of 2.6 and 2.5 respectively (mid-point between important and very important). Nevertheless, even with the exclusion of the element of the socio-cultural constraints, the extra-linguistic competence remained at the bottom of the importance scale. This raises interesting questions regarding the comment quoted above by one of the employers. The perception that searching and researching skills are more important than pre-acquired knowledge of cultures might be implied in the rest of the perceptions. Attention has to be drawn here that the employers might not be interested in a culture-knowledgeable person as much as they are in a technophile!

What has to be mentioned here is that the percentage of ‘No Answer’ (N/A) to the items of the extra-linguistic competence was the highest in evaluating the graduates. This shows that components of the extra-linguistic competence (knowledge of cultures and text domains) do not seem to be thoroughly investigated in job applicants to the extent that would enable employers to fully judge it. To prioritize the instrumental competence indicates that employers expect job applicants to rely on their abilities in searching for information and using the documentation sources to compensate for the lacking cultural knowledge.

To sum up, the results show a remarkable gap between the competences demanded the most by the employers and those that graduates seem to have developed. Obviously, this indicates serious drawbacks and deficiencies in translation pedagogy at the academic institutions. This means that the academic institutions in Jordan do not seem to be the place where translation competence is most effectively developed as claimed by Schaeffner and Adab (2000). Therefore, there are areas that need to be improved in translation pedagogy at the Jordanian universities which are highlighted in Section 6 below.

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6. Recommendations

In conclusion, the results of the present study reveal that the translator training programs are not market-oriented -at least from the perspective of the employers. In search for remedies, it would be beneficial to revise what has been recommended by translation scholars for better development of competence.

Several learning components and procedures were stressed by scholars in translation pedagogy for reinforcing the different translation competences. These include, but are not limited to, specialized translation for reinforcing the extra-linguistic competence (Jimenez Crespo 2013; Gouadec 2007; Li 2000), authentic training and/ or internship for improving the trainees' knowledge about the translation profession (Dollerup 1994; Li 2000) and CAT courses for boosting the instrumental competence (Wilss 2004; Mackenzie 2004; Gouadec (2007) as well as ensuring language proficiency of candidates (Nord 1988, Anderman 1998; Malmkjaer 2004). Accordingly, implications and recommendations for the Jordanian context can be summarized in the following points in light of the results of this study.

The results showed that graduates show underdeveloped bilingual competence that is seemingly affecting their ability in direct and inverse translation which needs proficiency in the comprehension of the source language and the production of the target language. Despite the fact that English was found to be a politically and commercially dominant language (British Council 2012) another report conducted by Education First (2013) ranked Jordan as a country of Low proficiency in English. This issue of English low proficiency especially in relation to methods of English (EFL) teaching at schools has also been raised by several scholars in Jordan including but not limited to Abu Risha (2005) and (Abuqudairi 2012). Therefore, imposing language proficiency entry restrictions or introducing a language remedial plan for candidates joining the program becomes a necessity. When language proficiency is ensured -to a certain extent- before joining the program, a faster and a steadier development of translation competence can be secured. The bilingual competence has been considered the first pre-requisite for any translation act as discussed in section 3. What also needs to be ensured in relation to the bilingual competence -if a remedial plan is implemented- is the appropriate sequencing of courses in the study plans; i.e. language courses to precede translation courses. First of all the study plans should reflect the recommended year for completing a specific course by identifying the pre-requisite(s) for each course. For instance, if the aim of including L2 skills courses is to enhance the L2 proficiency for better development of translation

competence, these courses need to be imposed as pre-requisites for translation practical courses. Students can be provided with proper academic advisory on the order by which they need to take their courses. In addition, there is a need to implement English for specific purposes for focused and specialized enhancement of the language especially for highly technical texts.

In relation to English for specific purposes, the text types or domains required the most in the market have to be well-studied by the academic institutions so that specialized translation courses would be market-oriented. It can be rightfully assumed that the dissatisfactory evaluation by the employers may be related to the text types they use in the proficiency tests. By way of illustration, the students could be fairly competent in translations of everyday language texts but weak in certain highly technical texts such as legal or medical translation. That is to say, if job applicants are examined in highly technical texts in the proficiency tests then the perception of the employers would be based on the results of those tests. Therefore, the academic institutions who prepare their graduates for a job in translation need to be fully aware of the nature of the proficiency tests given to their inexperienced graduates as job applicants.

From a different angle, the academic institutions in Jordan need to stress field and authentic training in their study plans while ensuring its effective application. This can boost the students' knowledge about translation profession as suggested by Jimenez Crespo (2013).

The results also reveal that inverse translation is highly demanded by the employers in the Jordanian market. The issue of directionality is a key issue here as translation competence varies according to directionality (PACTE 2003). This implies that if direct translation is given the highest share in the study plans and inverse translation is given less attention, then inexperienced graduates will not be able to meet the high demand of inverse translation competently. Therefore, courses of inverse translation need to be stressed especially within specialized translation.

In addition to implementing or stressing certain courses and modules, teaching methods are not to be overlooked here. The teaching and learning process is more than a reflection of certain courses in the study plans, but it is also about how those courses are taught. Therefore, the institutions need to monitor and ensure that the appropriate teaching methods are applied for boosting translation competence (Király 1995, 2000). For this purpose, the academic institutions can impose 'training the trainer' workshops for their academic staff as not all teachers may be aware of the competence-oriented teaching methods.

Last but not least, if the socio-economic context does not practically allow a better development of the competence at the undergraduate level, expectations may have to be

lowered. In other words, the learning objectives at the undergraduate level can be confined to achieving the apprentice level leaving competence as a learning objective for postgraduate programs. This can be a practical remedy, at least for the moment until radical changes take place in translation pedagogy in Jordan.

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Appendix 1

The Employers' Questionnaire

To be filled by the Department Head or the HR manager who interviews or tests the applicants.

Dear Participant,

Having been informed of the type and the aims of my research project, I would appreciate if you could take a few minutes to respond to this survey.

Please note:

- The main focus of this research project is investigating the competence of Translation Inexperienced graduates from the universities which offer Translation at the Undergraduate level. Therefore, whenever BA holder is used in this questionnaire, it should be understood as referring to graduates from these universities unless expressed otherwise.
- All questions are related to English-Arabic-English translation services.
- The survey will approximately take between 5 and 7 minutes

M1. The relative importance of different translation qualities and competences from the employers' point of view

1) Which of the following qualities and competences do you look for when recruiting translators?

	Essential	Very Important	Important	Not required
Fluency in Arabic and English				
Competence in translating from English into Arabic				
Competence in translating from Arabic into English				
World or Domain knowledge				
Knowledge of the cultures associated with the two languages				
Ability to use different types of sources, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other profession-related tools and software.				

Strategic competence (e.g. how to identify and solve translational problems effectively selecting the most appropriate method).				
Ability to identify and meet the clients' requirements (e.g. deadlines, purpose of the translation).				
Ability to plan and manage work, time, stress, as well as working within a team in accordance with the service provision standards				
Knowledge of socio-cultural constraints in Jordan that would directly affect the translation methods and strategies to be employed (e.g. censorship)				
Being well motivated to practice the profession				
Other, please specify_____				
M2. How translation graduates are perceived by prospective employers				

2) Which of the following reflects your opinion with regard to the translation competences of inexperienced *BA holders*?

Inexperienced Bachelor Degree holders seem to lack the	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N/A
bilingual competence (fluency in Arabic and English)					
competence in translating from English into Arabic.					
competence in translating from Arabic into English.					
competence in their world or domain knowledge.					
competence in their knowledge of the two cultures associated with the two languages.					
competence in using different types of sources, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other profession-related tools and software.					
competence in employing strategies for identifying and solving translational problems selecting the appropriate method.					
competence in identifying and meeting the clients' requirements (e.g. deadlines, purpose of the translation).					
competence in managing work, time, stress and working within a team in accordance with the service provision standards.					

competence in dealing with translational socio-cultural constraints in Jordan which directly affect the translation strategy (e.g. censorship)					
motivation for practicing translation.					

Thank you for your time

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● ***Published Paper***

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