

EFL Competence, Translation Competence, or Translator Competence: An Unfortunate Compromise

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English and Persian translator training in Iranian universities dates back to over four decades ago, and in the past years, many students have been supposedly prepared to work as independent, professional translators and intercultural mediators. However, the undergraduate English translation program appears to be less than successful in fully providing the candidates with all the skills and competences which they could use after graduation when seeking lucrative jobs. In this paper, initially the literature on translation competence and translator competence as umbrella terms for the set of components and sub-competences (e.g., bilingual competence, electronic competence, and etc.) essential for an efficient translator is reviewed. Subsequently, the components and competences addressed in the English translation undergraduate program in Iranian universities are reviewed with focus on the portion of the curriculum on English as a foreign language. Later on, to demonstrate the inefficiency of the Iranian undergraduate English translator training program, the results of a self-assessment of a purposive sample of students on their English knowledge are presented and discussed. In conclusion, a number of issues in terms of translation curriculum design including environment analysis and needs analysis are discussed as potential solutions to improve the current training program.

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