

# Post-graduate Translation Curriculum and Employability: The Case of Two Palestinian Universities

Antrosios studijų pakopos (magistro) vertimo programa ir vertėjų įsidarbinimo galimybės: dviejų Palestinos universitetų atvejis

TRANSLATION /VERTIMAS

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 <http://dx.doi.org/10.5755/j01.sal.0.30.17419>

Translator training has made a significant contribution to translation in the job market world-wide. The issue of curriculum development has always been part of such training which can pave the way for employability. This issue should then be given due attention in view of recent developments in the field of translation and technology, and the considerably larger and more robust job market. This article aims to explore the status of professionally-oriented translation, curriculum-wise in Palestine as illustrated in two Palestinian universities offering MA in translation in the hope of giving some advice to developers of academic postgraduate translation programmes. First, the article closely examines the course description of the courses (core or elective) in the two universities. The article then shows that although most of the courses offered help graduates manage to get jobs or moonlight, the curricula seem to fail to match the employability in the growing market place, as some courses at these universities, with a varying degree, are unrelated to the local job market. The article concludes that (1) the issue of curriculum permanent planning and design in the light of the job market becomes vital in translation, or training and education; (2) developing a curriculum should be responsive to local, regional and international translation industry demands, and thus it might contribute to sustainable development in the Palestine translation industry; and (3) information technology-based courses should be given more attention and developed so as to keep abreast of today's rapidly technological developments, since these courses might qualify graduates to cross various geographical borders to compete globally with peer translators.

**KEYWORDS:** curriculum, employability, training, translator, Palestinian universities, postgraduate programmes.

SAL 30/2017

Post-graduate  
Translation  
Curriculum and  
Employability:  
The Case of  
Two Palestinian  
Universities

Received 01/2017

Accepted 05/2017

## Abstract



Research Journal  
Studies about Languages  
No. 30/2017  
ISSN 1648-2824 (print)  
ISSN 2029-7203 (online)  
pp. 29-41  
DOI 10.5755/j01.sal.0.30.17419  
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## Introduction

Translation training is quite adequately offered at many translation schools and institutes all over the world. The ultimate goal of such training has always been to equip the labour market with professional translators so as to enter the increasingly lucrative job market. A lemming-like stampede of non-fully fledged translators pouring into the job market in Palestine has been evident for many years. Held by the Palestine Ministry of Justice, the Translator Accreditation Examination's (TAE) figures for 2011, 2012 and 2013 show that only 12.42 % of the examinees passed the exam, 91.67 % of whom had received academic training (Thawabteh, Najjar, 2014, p.44). TAE is held in accordance with Translation Law<sup>1</sup>, Article 15/1995 to monitor the standards of translation and interpreting in Palestine. This percentage *per se* piques our interests because academic training seems to be the most effective manner in such training. Passing TAE makes individuals more likely to gain employment and to be more creative in their occupations.

The translation curricula of academic programmes reveal that they are unsatisfactory. It is strongly believed that curriculum development seems to be the essence and the ultimate aim of any translation training. Gabr (2001) claims that "the first stumbling block that threatens the success of a translation program[me] is an erroneous approach to curriculum development, that is, course design and development". Gabr aptly remarks that,

*Curriculum development is a dichotomy of flair (or creativity) and systematic thinking. Creativity in curriculum development without a systematic approach may produce interesting class activities, but it will not engender effective training; the broad goals of the program[me] will not be achieved. On the other hand, elaborate systematic approaches, without the spark of creativity, will result in routine, uninteresting class material and activities. They will fail to motivate participants and engage them actively in the learning experience (ibid.).*

Newmark (1991, pp.46–7) believes that one of the main components of a curriculum for training translators for the industry is practice: "course curriculum should consist of 60 % translation practice".

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## Methodology

### Procedure

We analysed the curricula for a master's degree in Applied Linguistics and Translation (ALT) offered by An-Najah National University and that of the only sister master's programme in Translation and Interpreting (TI) offered by Al-Quds University. The current curricula adopted by the above mentioned programmes and how to cater for curriculum development for the sake of employability have been examined. For this purpose, we contacted twenty MA translation graduates from the two universities by e-mail and received their feedback about the curriculum of the two master's programmes (some of their comments are shown in Appendix I below). The limitation of the data should then be indicated here, which includes only a sample of 10 students from each university, the sample we could safely reach via e-mail. Thus, a convenient sampling procedure has been used in which sampling involves the sample being readily available and convenient.

### Significance of the study

It is perhaps true that a large body of the literature addresses translator training world-wide, but, to our best knowledge, scant attention has been paid to curriculum development (Kearns, 2006; Kelly, 2010; Mahasneh, 2015). Similarly, inadequate attention has been paid to translator and interpreter training in Palestine as shown in Atawneh and Alaqra (2007), Thawabteh

(2009), Amer (2010) and Abdel-Fattah (2011). Hopefully, this article will make some pedagogical implications that will be of help to translator trainers to aptly design translation curriculum.

To set our claim clearer, it would be advantageous to give a brief synopsis of the two master's degrees in ALT and TI offered by An-Najah National University and Al-Quds University, respectively.

## The ALT Programme

In the programme description<sup>2</sup> available at An-Najah National University's website, it is mentioned that:

*There is no doubt that the modern age is witnessing a stunning acceleration in scientific and technical progress which makes it a great burden to translate science. This cannot be obtained without scientific training, supervision and practicing translation on a conscious basis. Thus, the [M]aster's program[me] in [ALT] in the Department of English at An-Najah National University was initiated to contribute to the development of translation in our country. The program[me] aims at preparing specialists who will contribute to transferring science and information and provide scientific and practical expertise in this area[,] equipping learners with research skills which they need to pursue their post-graduate studies [and] rehabilitating students and English teachers and providing them with solid knowledge in various fields of applied linguistics which is needed to improve their skills [and] performance.*

The programme was established in 1998 to be the first programme of its kind in Palestine at the time, with a view to responding to the market needs. The status of professional translation in Palestine at that time was low with much translation work performed by BA graduates of English departments or by bilinguals. The ALT programme was meant to correspond to different professional orientations in Palestine. In spite of this, the programme was not confined to translation only but it also had to include Applied Linguistics in its name so as to obtain accreditation from the Palestine Ministry of Higher Education. This was due to the fact that there were more professors of linguistics than professors of translation in 1998. The programme was linguistics- and translation-oriented, and that made it beneficial to students. The programme's curriculum strikes a balance between linguistics and translation courses and that was meant to better serve its students who were not only translators but also school teachers. The programme offers training in both written translation and interpreting equipping its students with the necessary know-how they need for dealing with market needs; it also familiarises them with academic and scientific advances in theory of translation – “a specific attempt to explain in a systematic way some or all of the phenomena related to translation” (Shuttleworth and Cowie, 1997, p.185) and translation studies as a discipline “that must embrace a spectrum including all kinds of translation, from literary to technical and should also extend to the neglected field of interpreting” (Snell-Hornby, 1991, p.19). The programme, comprising two years of study, confers a master's degree. It offers practical training (written and oral), background courses in applied linguistics, and in current issues in translation theory. Students are exposed to a variety of texts in written translation workshops, ranging from economics and medicine to politics and the arts. The linguistics courses focus on deepening the students' awareness of the functional varieties of language in their social contexts. Finally, the programme adopts different methods of evaluation including written exams, research, assignments, practical exams and oral presentations. More precisely, Table 1 below shows the list of courses along with the associated competencies.

Table 1

Precise list of courses in master's programme in ALT, along with the associated competencies

Course name	Credits	Competencies
Advanced Readings in Language & Culture	3	Knowing how to master language barriers and to be <i>au fait</i> with cultural components.
Research Seminar	3	Knowing how to do a research in translation studies.
General Linguistics	3	Knowing how to develop linguistic competencies.
Contrastive Text-Linguistics	3	Knowing how to improve rigorous contrastive text linguistics competency between English and Arabic.
Sociolinguistics	3	Knowing how to improve sociolinguistic competencies, e.g., register, dialect, etc.
Translation from Arabic	3	Knowing how to hone translation skills from Arabic into English
Translation from English	3	Knowing how to hone translation skills from English into Arabic.
Translation Theory	3	Knowing how to develop various translation theories.

It should also be noted that Table 1 above shows that the courses aim at knowledge instead of skills, e.g. Advanced Readings in Language and Culture. Yet a combination of knowledge and skills are crystal clear in other courses, e.g. Translation from Arabic course aims at gaining knowledge of how to carefully develop translation skills from Arabic into English.

## The TI Programme

The master's programme in TI is offered by Al-Quds University. The rationale for such a programme is not solely economic, but political as well since perhaps the level of international relations and cultural cooperation has increased sharply for the past few decades; many embassies, consulates and representative offices were opened in the 1990s in Palestine, with a concomitant increase for professional translators. The programme is a national investment intended to allow qualified graduates to do a local affordable master's degree in Translation in response to the increased demand for translators and interpreters in the labour market. The objectives of the programme are stated on the website<sup>3</sup> of Al-Quds University as follows:

- 1 To familiarise students with translation techniques and methods, computer-assisted translation and terminology management.
- 2 To widen appreciation of languages and to sharpen awareness of syntactic, semantic and stylistic differences among disciplines.
- 3 To promote individual potential and self-directed improvement by building on previous language writing and translating experience.
- 4 To develop high specialisation in language processing and translating in specific languages and subject domains.
- 5 To prepare some students to be potential PhD candidates in translation studies and research.
- 6 To fill market needs locally and internationally for highly qualified interpreters and translators.
- 7 To establish in Palestine a central point for resources and training in the translation field.

## The Curriculum

The master's programme in TI at Al-Quds University offers a combination of core and elective courses totalling 39 credit hours, with two options: a thesis option and a comprehensive examination option. Eight courses (totalling 24 credits) are core whereas five courses (totalling 15 credits) are elective (see Table 2 below).

Course name	Credits	Competencies
Translation History and Theory	3	Knowing how to be au fait with the history and theories of translation from ancient times to the present.
Editing, Documentation and Publishing Methods	3	Knowing how to get familiarised with techniques and procedures used in the preparation and presentation of material for publication in electronic or print.
Advanced Linguistics for Translators	3	Knowing how to be acquainted with essential aspects of linguistic theory in relation to translation.
Introduction to Interpreting	3	Knowing how to improve basic principles in various types of interpreting situations and conditions.
Translation Practice I	3	Knowing how to improve translation skills.
Translation Practice II	3	Knowing how to improve further intensive translation skills in a variety of registers in English/ Arabic/ English translation.
Audiovisual Translation I	3	Knowing how to overview theoretical and practical issues in the domain of film translation and be sensitised to the various technical constraints, linguistic and cultural problems on the practices of subtitling, dubbing and voice over.
Translation Technology and Term Management	3	Knowing how to get acquainted with CAT tools and translation memories, e.g., <i>Trados</i> , <i>Wordfast</i> , etc.

**Table 2**

Precise list of courses in master's programme in TI, along with the competencies associated with each

However, as Table 3 shows, the ALT programme offers two tracks to its students: comprehensive examination or thesis defence. Students who follow the comprehensive examination track are granted a degree upon the successful completion of pre-requisite courses determined by the Department of English and of at least a total of 36 credit hours (12 courses: 9 core and 3 elective) with grade point average not less than 2.5 (75 %). Students who follow the thesis defence track should complete 10 courses (9 core and an elective), write an MA thesis and successfully defend it. The courses combine

TI Courses	ATL Courses
Introduction to Interpreting**	Advanced Readings in Language and Culture**
Editing, Documentation and Publishing Methods*	Research Seminar*
Advanced Linguistics for Translators**	General linguistics**
Audiovisual Translation I***	Contrastive Textlinguistics**
Translation Technology and Term Management***	Sociolinguistics**
Translation Practice I*	Translation from English*
Translation Practice II*	Translation from Arabic*
Translation History and Theory*	Translation Theory*

**Table 3**

Core courses offered by TI and ALT

both translation theory and practice and applied linguistics. There are courses in pragmatics, general and contrastive text linguistics, sociolinguistics, translation from Arabic into English and vice versa, consecutive and simultaneous interpreting and specialised translation courses in the fields of literature, science, and business.

Having closely examined the courses offered by TI and ALT (and their descriptions)<sup>4</sup>, we note the convergence and divergence of the two programmes. In Table 3 above, an asterisk is given to the courses which are more or less common between TI and ALT. For example, in the two programmes, Translation Theory (in ALT) and Translation History and Theory (in TI) are taught in order to equip the students with the theoretical framework that is necessary for different translation practices in other courses, e.g., Translation from English, Translation Practice I, etc. By the same token, the course description of Editing, Documentation and Publishing Methods, and Research Seminar are more or less the same, with a view to providing students with research tools to carry out research in Translation Studies. Two asterisks are given to courses which are different in the two programmes. For instance, TI offers Introduction to Interpreting as a requirement for obtaining a master's degree in TI whereas ALT does not, but it offers Advanced Readings in Language and Culture instead. And three asterisks are assigned to technology-based courses only housed in TI programme at Al-Quds University, namely Audiovisual Translation, Translation Technology and Term Management. Current students and graduates request more interpreting and technology courses as can be seen in Appendix I below.

At this juncture, it is perhaps useful to compare both IT and ALT in question with other programmes like for example the European master's in Translation (EMT), which has meticulously worked a lot on the question of what optimal translation curricula should cover in conjunction with the translation market. On behalf of the EMT<sup>5</sup> expert group, Yves Gambier (2009, pp.4–9) lists the following competencies defined for their programme: (1) translation service provision competence (e.g., “knowing how to follow market requirements and job profiles”); (2) language competence (e.g., “knowing how to understand grammatical, lexical and idiomatic structures as well as the graphic and typographic conventions of language A and one's other working languages (B, C)”); (3) intercultural competence, either sociolinguistic (e.g., “knowing how to recognise function and meaning in language variations (social, geographical, historical, stylistic)” or textual (e.g., “knowing how to understand and analyse the macrostructure of a document and its overall coherence”); (4) information mining competence (e.g., “knowing how to identify one's information and documentation requirements”) (5) thematic competence (e.g., “knowing how to search for appropriate information to gain a better grasp of the thematic aspects of a document”); and (6) technological competence (e.g., “knowing how to use effectively and rapidly and to integrate a range of software to assist in correction, translation, terminology, layout, documentary research”).

A glimpse at the competencies illustrated in Table 1 and 2 above shows similarities and differences between IT and ALT on the one hand and EMT on the other. Like EMT, IT and ALT highlight sociolinguistic competence dimension. The importance of translation service provision competence is more clearly marked by EMT than by IT and ALT.

## Programmes' Strengths

The programmes offer students solid training in English and Arabic translation (and in applied linguistics) and there is a close relationship between the programmes and the local community as they aim at forming competent translators to work in both the private and public sectors, filling vacancies in courts, ministries, cultural attachés in embassies, translation centres, public and private schools and institutes teaching English language. Other graduates work as freelance sworn translators and others with big international firms and travel agencies. There are many and varied teaching methods used in the programmes, all of which impinge on modern methods in education. For example, the methods described below are adopted in ALT.

*The student is the centre of the education process and an active participant in debate and critical and creative thinking. There are also many practical courses which demand great efforts from students in theory and practice. Through e-Learning and the use of the user-friendly Moodle- a university software program[me] available for the students- the instructor can keep in touch with all students in online debate. The program[me] supports scientific research in teaching where students prepare scientific researches and present them in most courses<sup>6</sup>*

## Students' and Graduates' Opinions

In order to obtain feedback about the programmes (i.e., IT and ALT), the authors exchanged e-mail discussions with both current students and graduates. These were meant to evaluate and assess the programme in light of the students' responses. The students were sent a message which contained these questions:

- 1 Could you please describe your programme from your personal experience in terms of the courses offered (pluses and minuses, or strengths and weaknesses)?
- 2 What improvements do you suggest?
- 3 Do you think your programme would open new opportunities for you after graduation?
- 4 Are you now involved in any translation/interpreting work?

The students' comments were generally positive with regard to their training in translation theory and practice as can be shown in the students' responses in message body 2 and 6 respectively: "the theoretical courses helped me take my job more seriously" and "the program offers you a wide and thorough view of the theoretical framework of translation as a field of study"; these two responses actually go in harmony with what Pym (1992, p.189) argues, that "translation theory should be understood as having an intimate relationship with the actual practice of translation". Pym (2005, pp.4-5) further adds

*A lot of theori[s]ing is just there to protect academic fiefdoms. It helps gain institutional power. Every professional guru soon develops specific terms and catchphrases. That kind of power is not a bad thing. With it, changes in the profession can eventually lead to changes in institutional training programmes. Without it, we would be back to medieval apprenticeships.*

However, the authors are inclined to thoroughly address some students' negative accounts in the hope of improving the current programmes. In this endeavour, they suggest appropriate amendments that can be beneficial to programme designers and translationists (i.e., professors of translation who are translation specialists proper) who teach at postgraduate translation programmes worldwide. To begin with, the students' reservations can be forked into the following: (1) the name of the programme; (2) coordination between programme developers and the market; and (3) absence of translation technology.

## The Name of the Programme

As can be implied from Message 4 below, a current student indicated that the programme's name "Applied Linguistics and Translation" is not favoured by employers, especially in the business world whereby translation proper is highly needed. Although the student is well trained in translation and can produce excellent translations in his/ her working languages (namely Arabic and English), he/ she thinks that being a graduate of a translation programme

## Discussion and Analysis

*per se* would serve him/ her better after graduation. The employers, the student argues, feel that he/ she is neither a good translator nor linguist. Employers, the student adds, usually do not examine the courses studied when they decide to hire someone but they value the name of the programme. It should be noted that this is true in an Arab work environment where pronged programmes (i.e., programmes, which combine two fields of study) may not serve their graduates well in the business world after graduation. The student has also indicated that he/ she may lose some opportunities in government and public institutions where holders of postgraduate translation degrees are sought. Obviously, programmes which combine two fields of study ,albeit related, should be discouraged. For the benefit of their students, programme designers may need to avoid establishing translation programmes, which twin other fields of studies such as cultural studies, communication, linguistics, etc. Pym (2005, p.1) states that training has to be in universities:

*Across the world, the polytechnics became universities, so translation has become a thing to be taught in universities. That is why we have an excess of conferences, theories and publications, all in the name of a new academic discipline. In Spain we have not just degrees in Translation and Interpreting, but whole faculties, lots of them.*

Therefore, only so related programmes (e.g., translation and interpreting) are encouraged and would be more fruitful than, say, hybrid names (e.g., Translation and Intercultural Communication, Applied Linguistics and Translation) for the huge job market for translators (Pym, 2005). Translation and interpreting are two sides of the same coin. Training in both pours into developing translation skills insofar as translation students are concerned.

### Coordination between Programme Developers and the Market

In academic departments in the Arab world, programme designers and developers, more often than not, do not design their programmes according to the local market needs. The job of launching a translation programme in these departments is usually assigned to one or two persons who usually imitate prestigious programmes in the world without taking into consideration their country's needs (Gabr, 2001). A close look at the translation syllabi in the departments of English at Arab universities reveals how ad hoc the materials, testing, and grading systems of these syllabi are. Existing syllabi are inappropriate mainly due to the lack of qualified translation teachers, the absence of systematic teaching methods and the lack of appropriate textbooks. This status quo has detrimental effects on programme graduates and output. When students graduate and enter the business world, they feel a huge gap between, what they had learnt and the market demands. Some of those students do not do well in competitive exams designed by their employers not because they are not qualified graduates but because they are simply not familiar with the type of texts they encounter in such competency exams. What happens in these academic departments is that programme developers do not keep abreast of the continuously changing market needs. It is imperative indeed, that academic departments of translation or English, which offer postgraduate training in translation, should permanently coordinate with prospective employers in their country with regard to the type of training those employers aspire to find in graduates of translation. They may need from time to time to adapt their course offerings in the light of market changes and demands so that their students would not stumble after graduation. Students can be given the opportunity of spending internships at private and public institutions in their local community and market during the last semester of their study and before their graduation as is the case with TI whereby "100 of the 150 practicum hours must be satisfied by the middle of the second semester in the second year of study"<sup>7</sup>. This will acquaint students with

type of work they expect to encounter after graduation and promote their self-confidence. A more telling example is a draft memorandum between Palestine Broadcasting Corporation PBC and TI in which MA translation students enrolling on Audiovisual Translation course do their final subtitling projects on TV documentaries (originally in Arabic) on Palestine-related topics, produced by PBC. These documentaries will then be shown in English subtitles.

## Absence of Translation Technology

As indicated in Message body 5 below, the graduate was dissatisfied with the fact that translation technology missing from the programme's curriculum at ALT. Computer-aided translation (CAT) tools, e.g., translation memories like SDL Studio, MemoQ, MemSource, among many others are crucial in translator training. There is no doubt that the translation industry with the use of technology has not yet started on a large scale in Palestine. But planning for a better future requires translation programmes to exert more strenuous efforts to develop translation curriculum to go in harmony with advancements in translation industry. Certainly, translation technology does not only mean the use of CAT software; it may also include machine translation, the use of corpora, searching engines, etc. Mackenzie and Vienne (2000, p.127) point out that the "ability to acquire, manage and utilise resources is part of the translator's competence and should be taught and practised systematically during training". Munday (2001, p.183) further argues,

*Specialised translation courses should have an element of instruction in the disciplines in which the trainees are planning to translate – such as law, politics, medicine and finance – as well as some input from information technology to cover issues in machine-assisted translation.*

Most of the translators and freelancers at the market employ traditional methods in their work and have limited experience with translation technology. This is partly because we do not have specialised institutions in Palestine, which offer such training and if freelancers are to seek such training, they have to go abroad.

It goes without saying that in this age of technology, the use of technology in translation has become inevitable. For this reason, at An-Najah University, there have been endeavours lately to incorporate courses in translation and technology into the programme's curriculum. The authors believe that Palestinian postgraduate translation programmes should train their students in the use of technology tools in translation to help them function efficiently at the market after graduation. A graduate is constantly complaining that his/ her chances at the market would have been higher had s/he been able to employ technology at work. The graduate in Message 4 below, however, argues that a Post-Graduate Certificate of Translation opens the door to good job opportunities. A translator and trainer like Brian Mossop still believes that "if you can't translate with a pen and paper, then you can't translate" (Pym, 2005, p.4), "pen and paper translators" may not survive at the market in this world of technology. All these reasons combined should make it mandatory for decision-makers at universities to provide professional training in the use of translation technology and various translation software to teachers/ trainers of translation and, if possible, to hire specialists in this field because this training is indispensable to today's translators and has become extremely popular among translation companies and freelancers. TI students at Al-Quds University, however, seem to be satisfied with their technology-based curriculum as it has been part and parcel of the programme which, in the words of Pym (2005, p.4), "are successful because they help trainees move into the high-tech sector, and that is a good thing". The no-feedback answer may imply a sort of satisfaction on the part of the TI students.

Introducing courses on translation memories, terminology management and content management can be helpful, but with a caveat in mind that “[t]he recent translation technologies are mostly based on assumptions that translation is phrase-replacement process. They distance the translator from senders and receivers; they privilege consistency rather than communication; they turn the world into databases” (Pym, 2005, p.4). These courses can be introduced in line with (and with a greater awareness of) the competencies sought in the courses offered by both programmes (see Table 1 and Table 2 above).

Finally and our last word, with such training on translation technology, it would also be possible to provide the global market with new graduates armed with solid training in the use of technology in translation, which, hopefully, would reflect itself on and improve the status of translation industry internationally. What is more is that our graduates would not confine themselves to freelancing at local markets in their respective country, but they can also cross the borders and seek rewarding international opportunities.

This study examines the status quo of the postgraduate translation curricula and employability at two Palestinian universities. Although the translation curricula are conducive to good translator training, there should be much to be done to develop these curricula to mesh with job market. Having examined the responses elicited from current MA translation students and graduates, curriculum development should be made to create more job opportunities for them, simply because technology is changing rapidly, and MA translation curriculum should be developed thereof. The following conclusions can be made (1) the fact that ALT include most of its curriculum linguistics-oriented courses does help students obtain jobs but our eyebrows go up on whether or not such training trend can survive at the era of technology; (2) a lack of sensitivity to language pairs is a source of difficulty in the translations; to master this problem, we find technology-based courses offered by TI programme be taken cautiously because students learn *Trados*, for instance, and they never use it in the labour market as no Palestinian translation company or organisation has ever used this translation memory, to the best of our knowledge; (3) job market analysis should be conducted if an intention by curriculum designers to develop translation curriculum is made. For example, as Appendix I below shows, legal translation is highly needed by many international organisations in Palestine. Thawabteh and Najjar (2014, pp.48–49) believe that there

*has been a breathless diatribe against the translation curriculum and tutors of translation. Since university-level training is the point of departure for equipping the market with fully fledged translators, a revision of current translation courses should be made. There should also be a shift from ‘middle-of-the-road’ translation tutors to ones with great sagacity and immense experience.*

And (4) reviewing research lines carried out by Palestinian translation scholars MA theses defended in both An-Najah National University and Al-Quds University would underline potential point of departure for a salient translation curriculum (on a similar experience, Alikina et al., 2016).

It is then of paramount importance to deepen our understanding of the job market and suggest solutions to bring about translator training of high quality.

We owe a big debt of gratitude to current and graduate MA students from An-Najah National University and Al-Quds University for the time allocated to answer the questions we raised.

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## Conclusion

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## Acknowledgment

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## Appendix

(students' feedback on the curriculum of IT and ALT by e-mail)

### 1. Message body

For me there are many courses that helped me in my work as a teacher and a translator. But as an interpreter I suggest to concentrate more on legal courses and to have practical courses that include real conferences or connect the students with such events in a continuous way in order to give them the best and the strongest possible start in this field.

### 2. Message body

I've been introduced to several common mistakes and errata. The editing course helped me focus on substantial components of the text while editing it, as I proofread and edit the work done by the outsourced translators and in-house ones. Furthermore, the theoretical courses helped me take my job more seriously.

### 3. Message body

Actually, I really enjoyed the translation programme that we enrolled in. The only thing that I think should have been done was to put the course of documentation and how to write papers as a starting course and combine the theoretical courses. I think they were 2 or 3 to just one thus giving us more courses for the practical side. Otherwise, I did gain many useful tips in translation that I would have never understood if it wasn't for the programme.

### 4. Message body

I have finished two courses. I think the programme has certain strengths and weaknesses. To start with, I believe that one of the strengths of this programme is that it contains and combines both linguistics and translation. Linguistic knowledge of English is a very necessary prerequisite to become a professional translator. Secondly, this programme is very helpful when it comes to employability, i.e. working as a translator. As far as I know, most English Department MA graduates find a job easily and the certificate awarded to them receives full recognition in Palestine. However, there are many weaknesses in this programme. First of all, though it combines both linguistics and translation, the programme's courses are mostly linguistic-oriented rather than translation-oriented. If we have a look at the compulsory courses (totalling nine courses), there are only three courses about translation. Besides, as an MA student of this programme, I do not think that courses like bilateral and consecutive translation, technical and literary translation and many others should be elective, but rather, compulsory. This is what I think of the programme so far. I hope it improves to meet expectations.

### 5. Message body

From my personal experience of being an MA student at the current programme of general linguistics and translation studies, I can say that the programme offers you a wide and thorough view of the theoretical framework of translation as a field of study; as well as intro-

ducing you to the different linguistic theories that aid and pour in the stream of translation. However, the programme has a deficiency when it comes to practicing translation and coping with the new technology that has been brought into the industry. It is true that the program offers a good theoretical background in translation and general linguistics; however, it lacks a well-organized translation practicing courses.

**Mohamad Ahmad Thawabteh, Ekrema Shebab. Antrosios studijų pakopos (magistro) vertimo programa ir vertėjų įsidarbinimo galimybės: dviejų Palestinos universitetų atvejis**

Vertėjų rengimas reikšmingai prisideda prie vertimo taikymo darbo rinkoje visame pasaulyje. Vertimo programos sudarymo problema visada buvo ir tebėra tokio rengimo dalis, sudaranti galimybę susirasti darbą, todėl tam turi būti skiriama didelis dėmesys dar ir dėl to, kad vertimo ir jo technologijų srityje bei vis didėjančioje dinamiškoje darbo rinkoje pastaruoju metu vyksta dideli pokyčiai. Šio straipsnio tikslas yra ištyrinėti į konkrečią profesiją orientuoto vertimo situaciją ir jo programos kūrimą dviejuose Palestinos universitetuose, kuriuose dėstoma vertimo magistro programa. Jo tikslas yra suteikti tam tikrų rekomendacijų tokių programų rengėjams. Pirma, straipsnyje smulkiai tiriama tų universitetų vertimo kurso (pagrindinio ir pasirenkamojo) aprašymas. Po to straipsnyje pailiustruota, kad nors dauguma dėstomų vertimo programų padeda absolventams įsidarbinti visu etatu ar gauti papildomo darbo, vis dėlto programos neužtikrina įsidarbinimo galimybės augančioje rinkoje, nes dėstomieji kursai dažnu atveju neatitinka vietinės darbo rinkos poreikių. Straipsnyje daroma išvada, kad 1) programos kūrimo ir jos struktūros tobulinimo problema darbo rinkos kontekste tampa gyvybiškai svarbūs pačiam vertimui, vertėjų rengimui ir edukacijai; 2) sudaryta programa turi atitikti vietos, regiono ir tarptautinio vertimo industrijos poreikius. Tokiu būdu ji gali įnešti svaresnį indėlį į tvarią Palestinos vertimo industrijos plėtrą; 3) technologijomis paremtoms vertimo programoms reikia skirti didesnę dėmesį, kad jų dėstymas atitiktų šiuolaikines sparčiai tobulėjančias technologijas. Tokios programos turėtų padėti universitetų absolventams įgyti atitinkamas kvalifikacijas, įgalinančias juos konkuruoti globalioje darbo rinkoje.

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## Santrauka

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