Characteristics of Competent Translator Trainers From the Viewpoint of Expert Iranian Translator Trainers: A Qualitative Study[1]

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Abstract

In this study, the directed (deductive) content analysis approach was adopted to explore the components of translator trainers' competencies through in-depth individual semistructured interviews conducted with 10 expert Iranian translator trainers at different universities around Iran. Theoretical model was the translator trainer profile proposed by The European Master's in Translation (EMT) Group, including fundamental requirements, instructional competence, assessment competence, field competence, organizational competence, and interpersonal competence. Initial codes were extracted from the interview data and subsumed under the existing subcategories of the framework or formed new categories. Subcategories were, then, analyzed and subsumed under the existing main categories or caused new subcategories to emerge. As a result, for the theme fundamental requirements, the main categories 'research skills' and 'linguistic-cultural-general knowledge,' for the theme assessment competence, the main category 'using different assessment methods in the class in addition to the summative assessment,' for the theme instructional competence, the main category 'the ability to improve students' competencies and metacompetencies,' for the theme field competence, the main category 'the ability to provide students with congruent tasks and being able to do the tasks,' and 'knowledge and practice of translation technology,' for the theme interpersonal competence, the main category 'complying with the personal/educational ethos,' and for the theme organizational competence, the main category 'the ability to manage change' emerged. So, all the themes were retained with the exception that the theme 'interpersonal competence' was changed into 'personal and interpersonal competence.'

Keywords: Qualitative Study; Translation Trainer; Competencies; Content Analysis

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1. Introduction

1.1. Status of Translator Trainer Training

Since the advent of translation studies as an academic discipline, there have always been great concerns over training translators competent enough to meet the needs of the market.

What translation studies suffer is the lack of fortified, well-established, and well-defined theoretical and disciplinary pillars. One of the reasons is, apart from being new to the academic world, its interdisciplinary nature due to the influx of varying disciplines turning it into a mosaic. This has some implications for translation pedagogy. On the one hand, there is a need for a translation curriculum to address a resulting broad spectrum of issues ranging from comparing and contrasting a translated text with its original to text functions, philosophical, sociological, psychological, and cultural considerations, as well as translation technologies depending on the offered degree and, on the other, regarded as the agents of translating the curriculum into instruction, there are translator trainers who, to be regarded as competent, need to receive training on, at least, some of these areas. The first step to meet this need is to carry out studies that can serve as a basis to develop a translator trainer competency framework. This is a prerequisite to pedagogical success in translator training that serves as the mainstay of the present study.

Most translation studies research is focused on translated texts or translators. Baer and Koby (2003) argue that what is really lost amid the controversies over the necessity of theory vs. practice in translation, as a curriculum-related concern, is the question of how translation can be taught. Kiraly (1995) identifies what translator trainers suffer from as a pedagogical gap caused by the absence of discrete objectives, curricular materials, and congruent teaching methodologies. One of the researchers of the current study tried to draw attention to the necessity of translator trainer training and help develop Holmes' map by adding translation teacher training as a subdivision to its applied branch.

Because of the scarcity of resources on translator trainer education, translator trainers have to start their career from scratch (Kearns, 2012). However, it is fortunate that the issue is turning to the center of attention of scholars in translation studies (Kelly, 2008). Few studies have been carried out on training translator trainers (Huang & Napier, 2015; Kelly, 2008, Li & Zhang, 2011). Pym (2003) states that, along with the growing demand for training translator trainers, especially after the emergence of translation studies as an academic discipline, to keep up with the technological changes in the profession, and to adjust the traditional teaching concepts to these changes, institutions have no choice other than using teachers who are mainly active in the field of language teaching and who need to be trained to

become expert translator trainers. Farghal (2000) states that the universities in the Arab world suffer the lack of competent translator trainers and have to use those with specialization in linguistics or literature who do not have the required theoretical knowledge of translation studies and do not have the motivation to get themselves acquainted with such concepts.

Cravo (2007) agrees that trainer's experience as a translator is not sufficient, there is more to being a competent translator trainer, and that we need to take the issue of translator trainer training seriously. Similarly, Li and Zhang (2011) acknowledge that subject matter knowledge is not the only prerequisite of becoming a quality translator trainer. Kelly (2014) and Wu, Wei, and Mo (2018) reiterate the necessity of training for translator trainers to act efficiently. Also, Dybiec (2014) puts emphasis on the necessity of training professional translator trainers and developing a trainer's competency profile, encompassing not only professional skills as a translator but also the pedagogical skills and competencies of a teacher. The Training Committee of the International Association of Conference Interpreters considers the interpreter trainers' receiving some kind of trainer training as an item of its guideline for the best practice in training interpreters (Diriker, 2013).

Commenting on the nature of the existing body of research on training translator trainers, Kelly (2008) states that this field is in need of studies done in different geographical areas and cultures. She, further, assumes that training received by the trainers is most favorable when closest to their local context. Some works have been published, aiming at shedding some light on the issue of training competent translator trainers through proposing ways to actualize the idea; a landmark attempt is the recent work by Venuti (2017) that brings together notions of translation programs, courses, and pedagogies, and gives invaluable data on them, claiming that translator trainers have turned away from a positivist epistemology to a constructivist one that is, from a teacher-centered to a learner-centered approach, focusing on the process, rather than the product. In the same line, Baer and Koby (2003) assert that to train flexible translators who have the required teamwork and problem-solving skills as well as creativity and independent thinking abilities, translator trainers need to be trained so that they move from the traditional chalk-and-talk method to more student-oriented ones. Viewing translation education from a cognitive perspective, Zhu (2018) argues that to design an effective teaching agenda, teachers need to know the cognitive routes of the learner's journey from being a novice to becoming an expert in the intended translation related area.

However, there are not enough studies carried out on training translator trainers. There have been studies in recent years, focusing on the pedagogical aspects of translation such as training translators, teaching methods in the translation class, translator competencies, and so on. In the present work, attempts were made to find

out published works on the translator trainer's competencies. To do this, a number of scientific databases like *ScienceDirect*, *Google Scholar*, *Springer*, *Scopus*, *Web of Science*, and *Magiran* were searched. The results showed that The European Master's in Translation (EMT) Group's translator trainer profile is the most comprehensive framework of reference for translator trainers' competencies available. Also, it was revealed that quite a few studies have been carried out on the competency of translator trainers, with none using the EMT profile as its point of departure.

1.2. The EMT Translator Trainer Profile

EMT is a label used for M.A. university programs in translation. Many institutions and universities are working under the label, trying to standardize the training they provide to the students of translation at the M.A. level (Group, 2017).

The present study was based on the criteria suggested EMT (Group, 2013) for the competency of translator trainers. Admitting that trainers' needs are subject to change based on the institutional and local needs as well as the target audience, the EMT Group has proposed a general reference framework for competencies of translator trainers consisting of six dimensions: fundamental requirements, field competence, interpersonal competence, assessment competence, instructional competence, and organizational competence. Each of the dimensions is subdivided into a number of main categories and some have a number of subcategories, as well.

It is worth noting here that, to the knowledge of the authors, EMT was the only available translator trainer profile. Still, to get a good grasp of the issue and conduct in-depth interviews and a more profound analysis of the results, we had an eye on the teacher competency profiles including, but not limited to, the European qualification framework for lifelong learning (Europea, 2008), the UK Higher Education Academy's Professional Standards (Burnapp, 2008), and the European Master's in Translation Competence Framework for Translators (Group, 2017).

2. Method

2.1. Setting

As it is favored in qualitative studies (Given, 2008), the research settings for all the interviews were natural and cozy ones, chosen by the participants themselves that were, unexceptionally, their own offices located in different universities in Iran.

2.2. Participants

Nonprobability purposive sampling was carried out trying to have maximum variation across the samples. With this sampling method, the selection of the samples is done based on knowledge and awareness of a certain phenomenon. The reason for

adopting purposive sampling was choosing data-rich samples for an in-depth study that can help move forward with the aims of the study (Streubert & Carpenter, 2011). According to Palinkas et al. (2015), purposive sampling helps researchers who conduct qualitative research to identify and select information-rich informants. On the other hand, considering the nature of the study which dealt with a sensitive matter, it was likely that the intended population would be hard to reach and hidden. Thus, the snowball sampling method was adopted because it is the best way to cope with such a sampling problem (Waters, 2015).

In qualitative studies, factors determining decisions made by the researcher are research questions, theoretical issues, and the data obtained from the interviews. So, the participants need to have enough knowledge of the different aspects of the phenomena under study (Sargeant, 2012).

The participants were professors at Iranian state-run or Islamic Azad universities. Seventy per cent of the participants were males and 30% were females, with a mean age of 56.9 years (range: 40-69). Six participants were associate professors and 4 were assistant professors. Two had a Ph.D. in translation studies, one had a Ph.D. in English literature, and 7 held a Ph.D. in TEFL. The mean of their teaching experience was 24.8 (range: 13-33) years, and the mean of their experience in training translators was 15.9 (range: 11-25) years. So, all the participants were regarded as experts. By definition, experts are those who are able to perform typical tasks in a domain superiorly and have, at least, 10 years of deliberate and well-structured practice in specific activities in a particular domain (Ericsson, Hoffman, Kozbelt, & Williams, 2018).

2.3. Data Collection

The data collection instruments included an interview guide and a voice recorder. Fifteen university professors were contacted in person or via phone; 10 gave consent to participate in the study. The time and place of the interviews were discussed and arranged at their convenience. Prior to every interview, the main researcher introduced the study aims and reminded the participant of the voluntary nature of their participation in interviews; also, they were ensured of maintaining the confidentiality of the interviews and their personal data. They were told that they could leave the study at their will and their consent was sought to record the interviews.

The data collection method was personal semistructured, in-depth interviews with expert Iranian translator trainers. After asking for the participants' demographic data, one of the researchers began by asking general questions and, then, continued with more specific ones, focusing on the research aims. The questions were made based on three pilot interviews with 3 participants meeting the inclusion criteria

and were used after being reviewed and approved by the research team. The following is a sample of the interview guide questions:

- How do you define competency when you talk about competent translator trainers?
- Do you know any competent translator trainers?
- What are their characteristics?
- Could you give me an example of a competent translator trainer?
- Could you spare a minute or two to categorize the main areas of their competencies?
- What do you think are the basic requirements of a competent translator trainer?

The sequence of the questions was not the same for all the participants and depended on the interview process and the participants' responses. During the interviews, the main focus was on providing a description of the participants' experiences of the qualities of a competent translator trainer. Doing the interviews and analysis simultaneously and forming the categories guided the subsequent interviews in that the interview questions were revised based on the data from the previous interviews. Probing questions were asked based on participants' answers about their experiences with translator trainers' competency, for example, "Would you explain more on that?" or "What do you mean by that?"

The average time per interview was about 80 min and the time range was between 40-120 min. The interviews began in September 2017 and ended in January 2018. The data collection continued until data saturation was reached. Data saturation, according to (Speziale, Streubert, & Carpenter, 2011), is the repetition and confirmation of the previously gathered data.

2.4. Data Analysis

In this study, qualitative content analysis with a directed approach was used to analyze the data from the interviews. With directed content analysis, the foundations for analysis are based on the existing theories or the results of previous studies that are used as initial coding categories or guidelines. As the researcher proceeds with analysis, new codes emerge and the original coding schemes are reviewed and refined; this helps with supporting or extending the existing theories (Morgan, 1993).

The data analysis was carried out in three phases: preparation, organizing, and reporting (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). And, data management (i.e., processing, ordering, and comparing the codes) was done using the MAXQDA software (version 10). To analyze the data, the following steps were taken:

2.4.1. Preparation phase

This phase consisted of two stages: selecting the unit of analysis and finding the relationship between the obtained data and the whole research topic or, as Elo and Kyngäs (2008), call it "making sense of the data and whole" (p. 110).

In this study, the whole interview was selected as the unit of analysis. Graneheim and Lundman (2004) consider the whole interview as the best unit of analysis because, as they put it, it is "large enough to be considered as a whole and small enough to be kept in mind as a context for the meaning unit, during the analysis process" (p. 106). Then, the interviews were transcribed verbatim and, in order to make sense of the data and whole, one of the researchers tried to get immersed into the data by reading the transcripts and listening to the interviews several times to thoroughly understand them (Burnard, 1991). After getting to know and being immersed in the data through long engagement hours (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985), we began the analysis.

2.4.2. Organizing phase

At this stage, a structured matrix of analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008) was developed based on the EMT framework of reference for the competency of translator trainers (Group, 2013). This matrix was used to code the data fitting the categories extracted from the framework and to choose those that did not and needed to be subsumed under new concepts and categories (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). This actually helped us improve and refine the framework from a localized perspective. Then, the data gathering by content was carried out. The data from the transcribed interviews were examined to find those adapting to the existing categories in the theoretical framework (Polite & Beck, as cited in Elo et al., 2014). Also, the data that did not fit into the existing categories were recorded separately for further analysis and categorization (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The meaning units were, then, condensed (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004) and, subsequently, all the extracted data were coded. After that, the coded data were subsumed under the relevant groups. The groups were, then, categorized based on their similarities and differences. Through abstraction (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008), the categorized groups were subsumed under the subcategories, the subcategories were placed under the main categories, and the main categories were nested into the themes. New subcategories and main categories were identified. It is worth noting that no new themes emerged in this study.

2.4.3. Reporting phase

In this stage, the sampling method, inclusion criteria, data collection instruments, data analysis method, a detailed description of all the main categories, as well as the emerged subcategories and main categories are explained.

2.5. Trustworthiness of the Data

The trustworthiness of the data was ensured using the criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985), including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

To examine credibility, the following steps proposed by Shenton (2004) were taken: Appropriate research methods were employed; honesty in the participants was ensured using some strategies, for example, the questions were made and asked in a way not to make them feel they were being judged; instead, the informants were given the impression that they were describing a competent translator trainer from the viewpoint of an expert. In addition, they were told that they were free to quit the interview at will and that their ideas would be used anonymously. Also, we tried to establish rapport with the participants and selected those who were really inclined to participate in the study. Moreover, where contradictory remarks were made by the informants, we used probing questions to solve the ambiguity. One of the researchers discussed the data with the other members of the research team to make sure the interviews were conducted in the appropriate direction. We peer-checked all the courses of action with two colleagues experienced in conducting qualitative research, too. In order to do member checks, the transcriptions and the extracted data were passed to two colleagues and the research team members, respectively.

To ensure transferability, following Lincoln and Guba (1985), attempts were made to explain the issue under study to the readers, so that they knew exactly what the major focus of the study and its scope were.

Dependability was tested by providing sufficient information about the research procedures to the readers, including the study design, data collection, and the effectiveness of the research process.

Confirmability was ensured taking the following steps during the data collection and the data analysis: One of the researchers kept an audit trail of his adopted research procedures and reflections on different events in the form of footnotes and commentaries, which helped him be cautious of his own biases and presuppositions and avoid irregularity and reworking. Also, all the research procedures were thoroughly explained to the readers to let them know how the original data were condensed and the final results obtained (Johnson & Rasulova, 2016).

3. Results

In this section, the results of the study are presented aimed at an elaboration of the competency components of the Iranian translator trainers based on the EMT framework (Group, 2013).

3.1. Results of Directed Content Analysis

In this qualitative study, the competency components of the translator trainers were explored from the viewpoint of expert Iranian translator trainers based on the EMT framework of reference for the competency of translator trainers (Group, 2013). A deductive approach and a structured matrix proposed by Elo and Kyngäs (2008) were employed. The initial content analysis using the MAXQDA software (version 10) yielded 1,167 codes. The codes were, then, grouped and categorized. The next stage was an abstraction and, then, modification of the existing main categories through which 34 main categories and 67 subcategories were established, modified, or emerged. All the emerged main categories were nested into the six themes of the themes matrix: fundamental requirements, field competence, instructional competence, organizational competence, personal and interpersonal competence, and assessment competence (adopted from the EMT framework of reference) and no new themes emerged. The only exception was changing the 'interpersonal competence' into 'personal and interpersonal competence.'

Table 1 shows the resulting main categories for the six themes (the full version with the main codes will be provided by the researchers upon request through e-mail). In the theme 'fundamental requirements,' the main categories 'research skills' and 'linguistic, cultural, and general knowledge' were developed. In the theme 'instructional competence,' the main category 'ability to improve students' competencies and metacompetencies' emerged. As for the theme 'assessment competence,' the new main category 'using different assessment methods in the class in addition to the summative assessment' was developed. In the theme 'field competence,' the main categories 'ability to provide students with congruent tasks and being able to do the tasks' and 'knowledge and practice of translation technology' emerged. In the theme 'personal and interpersonal competence,' the main category 'complying with the personal/educational ethos' emerged. It is worth noting that this theme was titled 'interpersonal competence' in the original framework. The reason for adding the word *personal* to it was that many of the subcategories were of a personal nature. This was in line with the EMT competency framework for translators (Group, 2017), as well. Finally, for the theme 'organizational competence,' the new main category 'the ability to manage change' was developed:

Table 1. *Themes and Main Categories Obtained From Directed Content Analysis*

Themes	Main Categories
Fundamental Requirements	- Academic qualifications - Relevant professional practice - Appropriate teacher training - **Research skills** - Knowledge of translation studies scholarship and research relevant for any courses taught

	- Linguistic, cultural, and general knowledge
Instructional Competence	- Ability to specify the tasks to be performed in relation to each course or module component - Ability to draw up a lesson plan by integrating TS scholarship and research relevant to teaching - Knowledge of the findings of translation didactics and the ability to integrate them into training - Ability to incorporate the process and outcomes of relevant TS research and scholarship - Ability to use existing professional and specialist tools and integrate them into training - Ability to motivate students **- Ability to improve students' competencies and metacompetencies** - Reflective thinking abilities
Assessment Competence	**- Using different assessment methods in the class in addition to the summative assessment** - Ability to assess student's entry/attainment level **-** Ability to evaluate a curriculum, syllabus, and lesson, and adapt to the results of this evaluation
Field Competence	**- Ability to provide students with congruent tasks and being able to do the tasks** - Knowledge of the professional field - Translation service provision competence **- Knowledge and practice of translation technology**
Personal and Interpersonal Competence	- Ability to integrate into a teaching team and work as part of a team **-** Knowledge of translation ethics - Ability to establish suitable learning environments for students - Ability to manage time and resources and teach it to the students - Ability to manage stress - Decision-making abilities **-** Knowledge of translation constraints **- Complying with the personal/educational ethos**
Organizational Competence	- Ability to analyze students' needs and expectations in relation to the overall program **-** Knowledge of curriculum design and analysis - Ability to track student's progression in relation to the course objectives - Ability to design a course syllabus or understanding of the structure of an existing course syllabus **- Ability to manage change**

[*]The emerged main categories are in **boldface**.

3.1.1. Fundamental requirements

According to the expert Iranian translator trainers' perspectives, the fundamental requirements for translator trainers included 'academic qualifications,' that is, having received translation-related quality education, 'relevant professional practice,' that is, having relevant experience both as a translator and as a teacher. Also, there was 'having received appropriate teacher training through attending related teacher training courses,' 'having research skills (experience and knowledge of research),' 'having knowledge of translation studies scholarship and research relevant for any courses taught through specialized academic knowledge of translation,' 'and knowing how to put it into action.' Finally, there was the issue of 'knowledge,' that is, linguistic, cultural, and general knowledge that included having linguistic knowledge of both L1 and L2 besides knowing them and familiarity with the culture of the two languages, as well as having a good encyclopaedic knowledge.

One of the participants said, "it is not a secret that most of the translator trainers have no choice other than accepting to teach translation courses, they may not be interested in translation at all, the majority of them do not have a postgraduate degree in translation studies, and some of them even don't have a B. A. in translation . . . . Many of them don't have professional experience as a translator. That's why they seem to be aimless an out of the picture in the classroom!"

Another participant said, "you don't expect let's say, a physics teacher to know about the culture of a language and its history, or other areas of knowledge other than physics regardless of the level they are teaching at, you see . . . a translation teacher, however, is expected to know, at least, a little bit of many things or even if they don't know it already, they have to study to get prepared for different classes in different times and situations, depending on the subject matter. The general and encyclopedic knowledge of the teacher really matters in the translation class."

3.1.2. Instructional competence

According to the participants of the study, this theme was composed of the following items: ability to specify the tasks to be performed in relation to each course or module component that entailed having the ability to explain learning objectives of the subject taught, having the ability to break down the educational components into tasks and subtasks drawing on relevant theoretical knowledge, and having the ability to encourage students to become aware of the challenges and issues involved in the task and subtask in the relevant field(s). Also, this theme included the ability to draw up a lesson plan by integrating TS scholarship and research relevant into teaching that itself necessitated being able to develop and update the lesson plan; create a list of all the tasks relevant for a given lesson and organize them in term of priorities sequences, time available, and overall syllabus; create the course or module

materials; and create content and choose the appropriate teaching method. In addition, this theme included having knowledge of congruent resources for course materials and content creation strategies. Another issue of concern about this theme was having knowledge of the findings of translation didactics and ability to integrate them into training which, according to the participants, could be realized through adopting different teaching methods and incorporating translation studies research and theories in teaching. Moreover, they believed that it was important for the translator trainers to be able to incorporate the process and outcomes of relevant TS research and scholarship which they thought would be possible if they had enough knowledge of the relevant TS research. Still, another main concern of the participants regarding this theme was the ability to use the existing professional and specialist tools and integrate them into training; this could primarily be achieved through having a good knowledge of the available tools facilitating translation and introducing them to the students. They believed that trainers needed to be able to motivate students via engaging their participation and interest, too. They asserted that translator trainers should improve students' competencies and metacompetencies through enhancing their linguistic skills, study skills, precision, and quality of the translation. Another component of instructional competence, according to these experts, was that of reflective thinking abilities attainable through gaining the required knowledge of self-reflexivity strategies and trying to stimulate it in the classroom.

One of the participants said, "I usually try to find out what my students lack and how I can improve it. Of course, this depends on the nature of the course. For example, in the interpretation course you can help them with their note-taking or note-making skills, or their active listening skills . . . in the advanced translation course you have the opportunity to enhance the students' knowledge of what makes us call a translation standard and of high quality."

Another participant said, "as a teacher, I have the ability to induce disillusionment in the students by telling them there is no hope for their success in the profession, and that they'd better give up and try their chances somewhere else or on the contrary, I can motivate someone with broken legs and arms to run in 24 hr! As teachers, it is our duty to give hope to the students by drawing a bright and of course not unreal picture of their future carrier."

3.1.3. Assessment competence

This area of competency for the translator trainers turned out to cover the following items: using different assessment methods in the class in addition to the summative assessment, which entailed having the ability to define assessment methods and criteria to evaluate each task relevant to the course and paying attention to the assessment structure; ability to assess students' entry/attainment levels, ability

to evaluate a curriculum, syllabus, and lesson and adapt to the results of this evaluation as a self-reflective practitioner; and ability to reassess practices, knowledge, and competencies at regular intervals.

One of the participants commented, "in my viewpoint, assessment should be done in every session and formatively. I mean formative assessment has priority over summative assessment in the translation class . . . ." Another participant said, "you need to have a portfolio for each student so that you can have an overall picture of their performance . . . having a final assessment in a controlled time and with controlled conditions is necessary. However, I use different methods to assess my students during the course; sometimes, I have students correct their peers' papers; sometimes, I ask them to assess their own papers and bring it back to the class for the next session and, of course, I provide them with some sort of a rubrics so that they know what they need to have in mind while doing it."

3.1.4. Field competence

According to the participants' experiences, in order to have field competence, the trainers need to have the ability to provide the students with congruent tasks and the ability to do the tasks assigned to the students according to the quality standards required in professional practice, the ability of translation service provision which entailed knowing about the existing standards and specifications, being able to critically analyze these standards and specifications, and being able to perform the tasks and subtasks involved in the translation service provision. For this area of competency, they also thought it was necessary to have knowledge of the professional field which included having knowledge of translation related professions and their related domains of specialization, knowledge of constraints of translation projects, knowledge of market requirements, knowledge of operating procedures and tools used in professional translation, knowledge of TS scholarship and research relevant for the course, and knowledge of foreseeable development of the professions. And finally, there was the knowledge and practice of translation technology that, according to the participants, included having technological knowledge and skills.

One participant said, "technology helps with speed and precision in translation. Nowadays, it is a must for someone teaching translation to be familiar with translation technology. It helps them find better ways and be a more competent translator." Another participant continued, "now that I mentioned the software, let's talk about language databases and online linguistic corpora. We must know them to introduce suitable ones to the students and teach them how to use them online or in the offline mode. We must be familiar with computer-assisted translation and the related skills and teach it to the students, as well. We need to know about different

file formats, how to convert them to each other, Microsoft Office skills, and so on. These are part of teachers' software and educational technology qualifications."

3.1.5. Personal and interpersonal competence

This theme consisted of the following items: the ability to integrate into a teaching team and work as part of a team through complying with ethics of teamwork and taking practical measures of teamwork; knowledge of translation ethics used to identify, adopt, apply and critically assess a code of professional ethics in translation and teach students how to do it; the ability to establish suitable learning environments for students which entails having the abilities to: create a positive classroom culture, create a positive physical classroom environment, and to set up proper classroom routines and rituals; the ability to manage time and resources and teach it to the students; the ability to manage stress, either one's own stress or the students' stress inside or outside the classroom and teach students how to do it; then, there were decision-making abilities, that is, the ability to make decisions and justify them and the ability to train students in decision-making and how to prioritize; another issue was knowledge of translation constraints which entailed having the ability to take into account all relevant constraints depending on the situation and explain them clearly as well as the ability to introduce students to the relevant constraints depending on the situation; finally, there was complying with personal/educational ethos which required having the professional/personal characteristics of a trainer.

One of the respondents said, "I am serious about the class discipline but, at the same time, I try to respect the students. It is a teacher's art to create a climate full of respect. For example, if someone is late and it is not their first time, I may tell them they cannot join the class because of that, but without insulting them or something. I, of course, know that the first one to be punctual is I myself or else I won't be able to expect students to be on time. If I don't like them to use their mobile phone in the classroom, I should put mine on silent mode first!"

Another respondent said, "after teaching translation for quite a long time, my personal experiences tell me that an important factor in being a good translator is to be able to find different possible equivalents for a word or expression in the source language and, then, choose one justifiably. Hesitation and doubt slow down the translation and make it boring. I always try to show my students how to deal with fears and doubts and choose the proper equivalent. This becomes innate and a part of them after some time."

3.1.6. Organizational competence

The main issues regarding this area of competency form the viewpoint of the expert Iranian translator trainers were as follows: the ability to analyze students'

needs and expectations in relation to the overall program which required to identify the areas of students' needs; knowledge of curriculum design and analysis which equaled having the ability to design a translator-training curriculum or having an understanding of the rationale for an existing translation-training curriculum; the ability to track student's progression in relation to the course objectives, the precondition of which was to be able to articulate the learning progression assumed by the program; and the ability to design a course syllabus or having an understanding of the structure of an existing course syllabus that entailed having the ability to set the tone for the course using syllabus; finally, there was the ability to manage change which meant being able to update the program or a course in anticipation of and in response to changes to the profession.

One participant argued that "what is widely ignored in our academic context is the syllabus. It is a document, a commitment you give to your students. It helps them keep in touch with you, even when they are alone. First of all, they know what they are going to learn each session and, secondly, if they are absent for any reason, they know what they are going to miss and, probably, how to compensate for that. It shows them the point of departure and destination of the course. It provides them with information on assessment issues. I always ask students to have the syllabus with them."

Another participant said, ". . . I have seen colleagues who are active, especially at the beginning of their carriers, but suddenly, sort of, freeze as if they don't like to move any further. I'm not going to discuss why it happens. But I know that the field of translation studies and the translation market are changing very fast. Just look at the way technology has affected translation and its market. How could you be an effective teacher if you cannot adapt to the changes in the market demands, technological advancements and, consequently, the students' needs?"

4. Discussion

The EMT document (Group, 2013) was used in this study as the starting point to categorize the translator trainers' competencies. The findings of this qualitative study help explain the viewpoint of the expert Iranian translator trainers towards the competency of the translator trainers within the Iranian academic context. The original framework itself asserts that there should be further studies carried out in local contexts to adjust it to the needs of the intended context by giving a detailed account of its components and developing new ones through in-depth studies to come up with guiding principles and concepts which are, in turn, used to refine and develop a final framework of reference for that context (Weinholtz & Friedman, 1985). The directed (deductive) content analysis is used to test theories and the inductive approach is used to generate themes (Creswell, 2013).

The results of the directed content analysis showed that the expert Iranian translator trainers regarded quite a wide variety of issues as contributing to the competency of translator trainers. All of these issues fall under the six themes of (1) fundamental requirements, (2) field competence, (3) instructional competence, (4) assessment competence, (5) organizational competence, and (6) personal and interpersonal competence.

To our best knowledge, this study was the first one of its kind to be carried out on the translator trainers' competencies because the EMT document was released in 2013, despite their call for local studies to examine its compatibility to contexts other than Europe. Consequently, there are almost no other studies to be used for the purpose of comparing the results; however, the areas of importance for the expert Iranian translator trainers are discussed here. For the theme 'fundamental requirements,' the participants paid more attention to 'the knowledge of translation studies scholarship,' 'research relevant for any courses taught,' and 'linguistic, cultural, and general knowledge,' respectively. In the theme 'instructional competence,' the main categories 'ability to specify the tasks to be performed in relation to each course or module component,' 'the ability to draw up a lesson plan by integrating TS scholarship and research relevant into teaching,' and 'knowledge of the findings of translation didactics and ability to integrate them into training' received more attention, respectively. For the theme 'assessment competence,' the participants put more focus on the main categories 'using different assessment methods in the class in addition to the summative assessment' and 'ability to assess student's entry/attainment level.' The issues mentioned most for the theme 'field competence' included 'knowledge of the professional field' and 'the ability of translation service provision.' As for the theme 'personal and interpersonal competence,' the main categories 'ability to establish suitable learning environments for students,' 'complying with personal/educational ethos,' and 'ability to manage stress' were among the most popular points. Finally, for the theme 'organizational competence,' the issues more frequently referred to by the interviewees included 'having the ability to design a course syllabus or understanding of the structure of an existing course syllabuses' and 'the ability to manage change.'

The original EMT framework (Group, 2013) is not designed to be used as a systematic framework for research purposes, that is, many of the main categories lack subcategories or some are too detailed to be considered as the main categories at all. In the present work, attempts were made to reorganize and refine the original framework. Doing this, the 'interpersonal competence' was changed into 'personal and interpersonal competence.' Furthermore, in addition to the emerged main and subcategories, some of the main categories of the original framework were used as subcategories or were modified. Twenty of the subcategories remained and 47 were

either developed or modified. As for the main categories, 22 were retained and 8 new main categories emerged.

The present study was carried out on Iranian translator trainers. Although attempts were made to choose participants of the interviews from among the trainers according to the definition of an expert, it is still possible that interviewing a greater number of experts would yield more comprehensive results. This shortcoming was mostly due to the budget and time constraints, as well as the willingness of the expert trainers to participate in the study. Another limitation of the study was that the trainers' perception of being effective is influenced by their experience of their own trainers, and their way of thinking is predetermined by the previously existing education system. This may have affected the results of the study, as traces of some of the pitfalls of the existing educational system may still be present in the ideas put forward by the interviewees.

The sampling was done purposively to include the experts of the field and have the most valid data possible. However, with the justification that people at a Ph.D. level have a better understanding of translation pedagogy and its needs, one of the inclusion criteria was being an expert and holding a Ph.D. in linguistics, literature, or TEFL with experience in training translators. Consequently, those having an M.A. in any of these fields or holding an M.A. or Ph.D. in any other possible academic fields related to teaching translation (e.g., Persian literature, philosophy, sociology, etc.) were excluded from the study.

5. Conclusion

The expert Iranian translator trainers mentioned a wide variety of issues as the constituting factors of translator trainers' competence that formed subcategories and main categories and were subsumed the six themes of (1) fundamental requirements, (2) field competence, (3) instructional competence, (4) assessment competence, (5) organizational competence, and (6) personal and interpersonal competence (see Table 1).

Also, a number of new main categories emerged that are as follows: In the theme 'fundamental requirements,' 'having research skills' and 'having linguistic, general, and cultural knowledge' were developed. In the area of 'instructional competence,' 'having the ability to improve students' competencies and metacompetencies' emerged. For the theme 'assessment competence,' the main category 'using different assessment methods in the class in addition to the summative assessment' was developed. In the theme 'field competence,' the main categories 'the ability to provide students with congruent tasks and being able to do the tasks' and 'knowledge and practice of translation technology' emerged. For the

theme 'personal and interpersonal competence,' the main category 'complying with the personal/educational ethos' was developed. And, for the theme 'organizational competence,' the main category 'having the ability to manage change' emerged. These main categories are indicative of the areas worth paying attention from the viewpoint of the expert Iranian translator trainers that were not included in the EMT reference framework.

This study has implications for curriculum designers, translation departments/institutes, and translator trainers themselves. Having clarified the areas of competency of translator trainers, it can lay the ground for developing a translator trainer training program at the M.A. level. Also, it could be used as a touchstone to be used by translation departments and institutes to assess their trainers either for recruitment and employment purposes or for offering them in-service training courses or continuing education programs to enhance their competencies. It could be used to develop a standardized scale to assess the competency of translator trainers at the level of the six themes, as well. Last but not least, the translator trainers can use this framework or a scale devised based on it to self-assess their competencies and find out what they are expected to know and be able of doing both inside and outside the classroom. They can create a competency profile for themselves and find out their current level of competency. They can use this to better plan for the courses and ensure the educational development of their students.

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