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INTRODUCTION

The translator's responsibility is multidimensional. Indeed, it decides on professional, pragmatic and cultural issues, to mention but a few. It is thus quite natural that Translator Training be no less crucial a responsibility. At the moment a student translator ends his four-year course, he is considered to be ready to practice professional translating, that is to start taking over the profession's charges. This suggests that at the end of the course he would be deemed to possess the required knowledge and competence for a beginner professional translator. This could be attained only through efficient knowledge and competence acquisition. Furthermore, the extent to which a beginner professional might develop and progress towards becoming a good translator is significantly determined by the knowledge and competence he possesses as a beginner.

Acquiring the required knowledge and competence is, nevertheless, not as simple as it may be assumed. The great amount of knowledge to be learnt and the specific type of skills to be developed in a relatively short period of time explain this belief (Pym, 2002). The learning process of a would-be translator is, thus, quite intense and complex.

However, some may judge this statement too demanding. Indeed, it is generally believed that learning translation involves no more than the acquisition of one or two foreign languages. This belief might be felt, it should be noted, even among some well-educated people. Although this is not necessarily the way Translation students at Batna University themselves think, it is hard to assert that they are fully ready to meet all the requirements.

We have noticed that students enter the Translation course with very little linguistic and cultural knowledge, especially as far as foreign languages are concerned. Logically, this low level calls for more adapted programs. Language programs, in particular, are reduced to elementary lessons aiming to provide students with the basic linguistic knowledge they lack (Nord, 2000; Gouadec, 2000; Gambier, 2000). As this aim is likely to take a long time to achieve, considerable amount of time and effort would inevitably shift to language learning objectives on the detriment of the initial objectives of the course. We assume that these objectives are Translation Competence acquisition and linguistic and cultural knowledge perfection.

Research Questions

Many questions rise, justifying the need to conduct the present study. These questions are the following:

- Do prior linguistic competence and cultural knowledge make any difference in what a student acquires, in terms of translation competence, in a given period of time? Or,
  - does this knowledge determine the quality and the pace of the translation student's subsequent learning process?

- Are prior linguistic competence and cultural knowledge prerequisites to learning translation? Or,
  - Is it possible to learn languages, their cultures and translation from and into these languages simultaneously?

- Regarding these questions, what is the present state of translator training in the Translation Department of Batna University? In other words:

- How is the performance of the Translation Department of Batna University under the established students' selection system? Particularly:

- How is the traditionally selected students' knowledge at the beginning of the course? And what do they learn within two or three years of study? More specifically,
  - What is the current level of newly selected students' prior linguistic knowledge and general culture in the Translation Department of Batna University?

o What is the current level of third year students' translation competence in the Translation Department of Batna University?

Hypotheses

This work aims at testing the following main hypotheses:

- Sound prior linguistic and cultural knowledge prepare the student for the translation course. Hence, they bring him learn translation better and faster.

- Without this prior knowledge there is no effective translation learning.

- Hence, this prior knowledge is a prerequisite for translation learning process to attain the course objectives.

- Criteria currently used in Batna Translation Department for selecting translation students are not sufficient.

Objectives

To test our hypotheses, a study comprising a quantitative and a qualitative part has been conducted in the Translation Department at Batna University. Subjects are first and third year students of translation. The quantitative study attempts to check whether prior linguistic and cultural knowledge make any difference in subsequent translation learning success. It compares the prior knowledge of two different groups

of third year students, selected on the basis of "translation competence" criterion. In other words, one group is believed to have more translation competence than the other.

The qualitative study's aim is to test the hypotheses through the description of the present state of affairs. Indeed, it attempts to examine the established system's effectiveness, as far as students' selection is concerned. This system gives the priority to students from literary streams, and is based on Baccalaureate general mean and foreign languages grades (see Appendix A).

It addresses two issues. Firstly, it looks at the value of the Baccalaureate degree in terms of linguistic competence and general culture. This evaluation does not concern the Baccalaureate degree as such, but as a unique selection criterion. Hence, it evaluates the overall knowledge standard of first year translation students before they start the course. This evaluation involves linguistic competence in Arabic and English, and general culture. Testing general culture aims to improve our understanding of the general knowledge traits of present-day freshmen.

Secondly, the qualitative study attempts an evaluation of third year students' translation competence. This is to see what students with no more than Baccalaureate level could learn within three years.

Scope of the Study

First, this study limits itself to written translation. The oral one entails different factors to be investigated, like listening and speaking skills. These are not similar to those written translation requires.

Secondly, we would like to point out that the qualitative part of this paper does not aim at providing an accurate evaluation of individual competence or knowledge. Its goal is rather to look for signs indicating the general knowledge standard.

Thirdly, it should be mentioned that linguistic competence and cultural knowledge are only two aptitudes among many others worth investigating in the same framework. This study does not imply that they are the only prerequisites. Nor does it intend to consider all the abilities a candidate to a translation course needs or needs not possess. Cognitive abilities and affective dispositions are some examples. It is true that some literature (Alves ; Vila Real & Rothe-Neves, 2001) as well as foreign translation schools advocate their necessity as a prerequisite. However, they lie beyond the scope of this research. If, in our literature review, some hints are present, it is for the sake of emphasising the value and the complexity of translator training.

Finally, this paper is not expected to provide a precise description of the type and amount of knowledge it is deemed necessary to possess.

This issue might be proposed as further research to be conducted in the field.

Limitations of the Study

We remain aware of the multitude of extraneous variables likely to alter the effect of previous knowledge on the learning process. Experimental manipulation and randomisation are lacking in the design we have chosen. Consequently, students' motivation, social situation, economic status, physical condition, sex, and interaction may influence their learning. They might influence also their performance at the exams or the tests constituting this study's source of data.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that if these variables might affect the results of the study, they would similarly affect the student's performance in real life conditions. This does not bring foreign translation schools to stop selecting their students on the basis of previous knowledge criteria.

Furthermore, the present study is not an experiment in which variables must be isolated, controlled and manipulated. It is a descriptive study, which implies dealing with real and authentic rather than laboratory settings. Hopefully, the fact of the absence of artificiality in our research proceedings might add to the findings' credibility.

Besides, some factors like motivation might be in their turn positively influenced by prior knowledge. Hence, it would be an integral part of the relationship we propose to investigate. It follows that controlling such a variable would be both hard and pointless.

Anyway, efforts that have been made to account for some extraneous variables will be explained within the procedures' sections.

Significance of the Study

Obviously, the study's findings will lead to recommendations as to what is needed for positive change to occur. It is hoped that our recommendations would serve to improve the academic level of the Translation Department of Batna University and help in training qualified translators.

The study's findings are also expected to provide insight into central issues to translation and Translation Studies. More specifically, we hope to increase awareness concerning some common misconceptions like the confusion between learning translation and learning languages.

The need to conduct this research is strongly justified, also, by the lack of research conducted in the field in Algeria (Aïssani, 2000). Aïssani (2000) states that Algerian graduates in translation turn to neighbouring disciplines, like linguistics, to carry out a research work. Besides, when

research is performed in the field, it is generally under the form of books'
translations. Very little work addressed Translator Training issues.

Ideally, this study could also be considered as a contribution to the
literature submitting one of Translator Training aspects to empirical
study. Moreover, it is hoped that implementing translation evaluation
instruments, as a research tool, will constitute a first step towards further
exploration of this specific issue in Batna University, at least.

As small size samples, namely no more than 10 subjects, represent
one of the weaknesses of available field research (Orozco and Hurtado
Albir, 2001), it is assumed that the relatively large samples under
investigation will add more scientific value to the present research.

We would like our work to remain within the expectations of a
scientific rationale and the principle of originality: two main reasons to
account for the choice of our subject and our methodology.

Basic Assumptions

We assume that culture, in its anthropological definition (see p.
28), is not systematically taught and tested in Algerian pre-university
language class. This is clear when we examine Algerian Baccalaureate
Exams of the English language. We would find no testing of any cultural
knowledge, which implies that teaching it was not a fundamental
component of the curriculum.

As will be exposed in the literature review, Chastain (1976) advances that, in order to test it, culture should be taught and tested systematically (p. 509). Therefore, it was not possible for this study to test this kind of knowledge. Any testing of a randomly acquired knowledge would be subjective. And as this testing was meant for statistical analysis, we settled for considering the kind of culture that is actually and systematically taught. It is *culture* that includes history, geography and philosophy. The aim was, as mentioned earlier, to see whether or not it had an effect on learning translation.

We maintain, however, that knowledge of the language's culture is a very important component in a good linguistic competence. Throughout the literature review, this claim is being supported.

Definition of Terms

Culture: throughout this study, this controversial concept has been attributed more than one definition. Each time the relevant definition will be determined. Here is a broad description of each context's definition:

- As far as the literature review is concerned, it is used to mean "lifeway of a population" (Oswalt, 1970).

- As to the statistical study, *culture* refers to academic achievement in history, geography and philosophy.

- Regarding the qualitative study, it refers to general knowledge: world news, cinema, geographical and historical information, etc.

Linguistic knowledge and ***linguistic competence*** are used interchangeably to mean the extent and quality of comprehension, writing, grammatical and vocabulary abilities in a given language. Speaking and listening are not considered because we are concerned with written translation.

Learning translation and ***translation competence acquisition*** are also used to mean the same thing: "learning how to translate".

Realia: is used in page 56 to refer to objects specific to one culture.

Note: Many terms related to translation studies are cited in the study. We have tried to make sure each first use is followed by the relevant definition.

Chapter One

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The major hypothesis underlying the present study states that the more a student possesses linguistic and cultural knowledge at the beginning of a translation course, the better he progresses in the process of translation learning and the more qualified prospective translator he is. Considerable amount of available literature is related, either directly or indirectly, to this issue (Mounin, 1976; Pym, 2002; Gouadec, 2000; Gambier, 2000; Hardane, 2000).

The literature review, in its three first parts, directs attention to the actual objectives of translation course in the light of some central issues to translation. These central issues are the linguistic and the cultural knowledge the profession requires, the nature of translation competence

as opposed to linguistic competence and some aspects of translation's problems and responsibilities.

The fourth part of the literature review proposes a brief account of the policies some European and Canadian translation schools adopt in student admission process. Moreover, it exposes the views of some translation teachers and scholars concerning the selection question. This description aims to support what our study advances and recommends.

The fifth part of the review deals with measuring translation learning progress. As stated earlier, this study intends to evaluate translation competence of third year translation students. Hence, an evaluation of their level is needed. This is why a critical description of some of the available evaluation methods of student translations and Translation Competence measuring instruments is presented.

1.1. Linguistic and Cultural Knowledge

1.1.1. Translation and Language

Translation can be considered as an attempt to fulfil an act of communication between two linguistic and cultural communities. The difference between languages is basically the *raison d'être* of translation. This section looks at this difference in order to gain some insight into the

linguistic task of the translator, and hence, the type and amount of linguistic knowledge he needs to possess.

1.1.1.1. Differences between languages

Instead of discussing the obvious superficial differences that exist between languages and that no one fails to notice, it seems preferable to begin by looking at the very depth of things. In contrast to what things appear to suggest, a word, within *the same* linguistic community, does not represent perfectly the same thing for all people. As early as the 19th century, Humboldt (1880) goes further to say that a word is nothing but what each individual thinks it is. Georges Mounin (1957), explains that each word is the sum of each individual's personal and subjective experience concerning the object this word represents. Therefore, exchanging words cannot assure a perfect communication of an idea between the members of the same linguistic community. This is what Humboldt (1880) explains in the following words:

> "[…] chez celui qui assimile comme chez celui qui parle, cette idée doit sortir de sa propre force intérieure : tout ce que le premier reçoit consiste uniquement dans l'excitation harmonique qui le met dans tel ou tel état d'esprit"

(p.25)

(see translation 1, Appendix B)

Obviously, different individuals perceive the same words in different ways. This is why the same author suggests:

> "Les paroles, même les plus concrètes et les plus claires, sont loin d'éveiller les idées, les émotions, les souvenirs que présume celui qui les prononce"

(p.25)

(see translation 2, Appendix C)

It is true that an extremist form of this view may raise a controversy as to the extent of probable limitations to the communicative capacity of language. However, recent psycholinguistic research findings basically agree. They provide considerable evidence that, within the same linguistic community, individual experience and perception associate different mental images, from a person to another, with the same linguistic sign (Eco, 1997).

It might be concluded, as formulated by Mounin (1957), that each language is nothing but the sum of its speakers' individual experiences, and hence:

> "[…] deux langues […] n'emmagasinent jamais le même stock d'expériences, d'images, de modes de vie et de pensée, de

mythes, de conceptions du monde."

<div align="right">(p. 27)</div>

<div align="right">(see translation 3, Appendix B)</div>

Again, some earlier thinkers like Humboldt (1909) and Schleiermacher (1813) attained this same conclusion as early as the 19th century. The latter put it as follows:

> " […] chaque langue contient […] *un* système de concepts qui, précisément parce qu'ils se touchent, s'unissent et se complètent dans la même langue, forment *un* tout dont les différentes parties ne correspondent à aucune de celles du système des autres langues. […] Car même l'absolument universel, bien qu'il se trouve hors du domaine de la particularité, est éclairé et coloré par la langue."

<div align="right">(p.85)</div>

<div align="right">(see translation 4, Appendix B)</div>

What Schleiermacher (1813) calls *un système de concepts* is a human being's or a group of individuals' system of *relative* concepts that seek to reach *absolute* concepts. In other words, it is a tentative knowledge about

the world that constantly attempts to reach perfect accordance with reality. What he means is that the interaction between the concepts of the same language community results in a *unique* organized mixture or system of concepts. Humboldt (1909) highlights a comparable concept when he discusses the difference between languages:

> "Des langues différentes sont donc comme des synonymes: chacune exprime le même concept d'une manière un peu autre, avec telle ou telle autre détermination concomitante, un peu plus haut ou un peu plus bas sur l'échelle des sensations"
>
> (p. 143)
>
> (see translation 5, Appendix B)

It should be noted that, for Schleiermacher (1813), the real object of translation is *thought*, and its real challenge is this difference between systems of concepts. To clarify this position he further adds that when translating:

> "[…] j'établis ainsi des correspondances -qui ne sont pas coïncidences- entre les représentations véhiculées par différents langages, entre l'organisation des concepts dans des langues

différentes."

(pp. 17-8)

(see translation 6, Appendix B)

Likewise, there is no doubt that this profound difference between the 'spirits' of languages is associated with differences in lexis, syntax, phonology and style. This difference is at the very core of the translation task, and it is what determines the type and amount of the translator's required linguistic knowledge.

1.1.2. The Translator's Linguistic Knowledge

The linguistic knowledge of two or more languages is what is generally thought to be equivalent to the concept of *ability to translate*. In the next sections, however, evidence will be provided about the incorrectness of this received belief. Yet, it may be useful to say that this belief would never exist if linguistic knowledge were of minor importance to translation. Still, what is generally ignored is the extent to which a translator's linguistic knowledge must be deep.

The translator's task includes, among other things, deep comprehension of a source text (ST) and the production of a target text

(TT). What has been so far advanced suggests that profound differences exist between languages. This gives a clear idea of the complex operations the translator has to carry out. These involve problem solving, decision making and responsibility taking. Given this, one can easily imagine how wide and how subtle the translator's linguistic knowledge should be.

Consequently, a good translator should be more than a good linguist (Mounin, 1962). All what concerns the languages on which the translator works should be of interest to him. Language is a changing system, as a multitude of factors constantly contribute to its shaping and reshaping. It is, to borrow Schleiermacher's expression (1999), *"a historical being"*. This implies that the translator's linguistic knowledge should extend to include every contributory factor in its mode of functioning. This is in order for him to be able to deeply understand the source language and effectively produce in the target language.

Moreover, it should be mentioned that what precedes concerns both knowledge of the foreign language and that of the translator's native language. As unexpected as it may seem, the translator's competence in his native language should never be taken for granted.

1.1.2.1. Knowledge of the native language

It seems obvious that the translator already masters his mother tongue, so all what is left is to work on its perfection through some final improvements. This is not necessarily the case. Darbelnet (1966) asserts that this is an illusion emerging from the fluency with which people speak their native languages. However, once one tries to draw up one's ideas, difficulties and hesitations arise, which is intolerable to a translator.

The case of Algerian students of translation is even more concerned by this illusion. Although Arabic is considered, in the context of the Translation university course, as the students' native language, reality is significantly different. Classical Arabic, which the students must learn to translate from and into, is not the language they use in everyday life. This is why the students' knowledge of Arabic should not be taken at face value (Hardane, 2000).

In fact, in order to master one's mother tongue, one has to observe and reflect on linguistic events. Darbelnet (1966) goes further to say that the translator should know his native language better than does a writer. Indeed, this latter chooses what to write, whereas what the translator should write is imposed on him. The following quotation illustrates this perception:

"Le traducteur ne choisit pas le sujet à traiter. Quelqu'un l'a déjà choisit pour lui, et il ne sait jamais à quelles ressources de la langue d'arrivée il devra faire appel pour rendre une pensée qu'il n'a pas conduite à sa guise mais qu'il reçoit toute faite."

(p. 5)

(see translation 7, Appendix B)

Similarly, Mounin (1957) quotes two famous French writers highlighting this underestimated requirement. The first is Marcel Brion (1927) who wrote in his *Cahiers du Sud*:

"C'est dans sa propre langue que le traducteur trouve le plus de difficultés."

(p.19)

(see translation 8, Appendix B)

The second is André Gide (1931) in his "Lettre à André Thérive":

"Un bon traducteur doit bien savoir la langue de l'auteur qu'il traduit, *mais mieux encore la sienne propre*, et j'entends par là : non point être capable de l'écrire correctement mais *en*

connaître les subtilités, les souplesses, les ressources cachées."

(p. 19)

(see translation 9, Appendix B)

1.1.2.2. Knowledge of the foreign language

The simple mastery of the language's lexis and syntax, however excellent it may be, is not sufficient to be able to translate (Schleiermacher, 1999, p. 15). The translator is not always expected to translate *from* the foreign language. He might well be asked to translate *into* it. This entails that he should be as competent as possible in this language in order to be able to effectively and appropriately write in it. This belief is also shared by Darbelnet (1966).

Understanding appears as a quite complex task because of the differences between languages in terms of concepts and, of course, forms. Hatim and Mason (1990) further explain the difficulty of the understanding process in the following words:

"[…] it is erroneous to assume that the meaning of a sentence or

a text is composed of the sum of the meanings of the individual

lexical items, so that any attempt to translate at this level is

bound to miss important elements of meaning."

<div align="right">(pp. 5-6)</div>

Many subtle language-specific elements determine the meaning and render understanding even more complex. Word order, sentence length, ways of presenting information, stylistic features and meaning carried by specific sound combinations, are but a few examples.

The already mentioned Mounin's belief (1962) that a translator should be more than a good linguist makes sense when we know that the translator has to analyse the text to be translated in a way comparable to that of a linguist. Literary translation, in particular, offers a wide range of illustrations. Hence, it strongly shows how a translator's linguistic knowledge should act. This is due to the fact that the very specificity of literature, and especially poetry, is, as is well known, language-based. The value of a text may lie in the ambiguity of its discourse, in the individuality of its style, in the rhythm underlying the choice of its structures, in the music of the words, in its cohesion and coherence, and the list remains open.

1.1.2.3. Textual knowledge

In order to be able not to overlook these text features, Christiane Nord (1999) talks about "*translational text competence* i.e. *what*

translators should know about texts". She explains that this competence includes:

(a) a profound knowledge of how textual communication works;

(b) a good text-production proficiency in the target *linguaculture* (linguistic and cultural system);

(c) a good text-analytical proficiency in the source linguaculture; and

(d) the ability to compare the norms and conventions of textuality of the source and the target linguacultures (contrastive text competence).

Nord (1999) explains at this level that:

- competence (a) includes aspects of *textual communication.* These include skills like text production for specific purposes and specific addressees, text analysis, and strategies and techniques of information retrieval.

- and competence (b) is linked to the ability of expression. It includes the ability to use rhetorical devices. These are used to achieve specific communicative purposes, like re-writing, re-phrasing, summarizing , and producing texts for other purposes. Converting figures, tables, schematic representations into text, producing written texts on the basis of oral information, and revising deficient texts are other activities contained in competence (b).

1.1.2.4. Communicative competence

Given that translation is all about communication, it would be unacceptable to talk about linguistic competence without pointing at the vital necessity of communicative competence. Georges Mounin (1973) insists that:

> "La traduction n'est difficile que lorsqu'on a appris une langue autrement qu'en la pratiquant directement en situation de communication."
>
> (p. 61)
>
> (see translation 10, Appendix C)

The translator's communicative competence then is fundamental to assure the appropriateness of translation acts, and hence the achievement of the ultimate aim of translation. Hatim and Mason (1990) assume that:

> "[…] the translator's communicative competence is attuned to what is communicatively appropriate in both SL and TL communities and individual acts of translation may be evaluated in terms of their appropriateness to the context of their use."
>
> (p. 33)

1.1.2.5. Controlled linguistic knowledge

Another vital feature of the translator's required linguistic competence is a *separate* knowledge of the two different linguistic worlds. In other words, this knowledge should be free of any sort of interference. That is to say a perfectly controlled knowledge that should be the result of a complete cognitive and affective involvement. Titone's (1995) explanation is clear:

> "The linguistic-communicative competence in two languages/cultures becomes an invaluable asset only if the whole human personality is complete in its performative, cognitive and in-depth conscious dimensions, and is therefore involved in controlling the two communication systems."
>
> (p. 177)

Inevitably, an uncontrolled knowledge of two languages leads to interference, which might be disastrous to the translation as well as to both languages. A constant cognitive effort is thus needed to prevent any interference to take place. This faculty is an aspect of what Titone (1995) calls *linguistic awareness,* which "*is nothing else but total self-perception and total self-control*" (p. 28).

On the whole, it should be retained, from all the assumptions advanced so far, that the difference between languages is far from being superficial. Mastering a language, even one's mother tongue, is hard. Mastering more than one language is even harder. But mastering two languages in order to be able to translate is far more complex. Indeed, it should be systematic, precise, deep, subtle and controlled. The translator needs to transcend the mere syntactic and lexical competence to establish communication between two distinct linguistic worlds.

Many other aspects should be characteristic of his linguistic knowledge. Precise knowledge of the limits of appropriateness in each language (communicative competence), mastery of textual features and effective writing devices, awareness of where differences and where similarities lie, are but some of these aspects. Again, it should be clearly underlined that consciousness of both linguistic systems as two *separate* entities is extremely important to translate safely, without distorting the specificity of any language.

1.1.3. Translation and Culture

Undoubtedly, language is not a purely linguistic entity. It has a particularly close relationship with all what has to do with the people who use it, be it concrete or abstract. That is to say with *culture*.

As early as 1813, Schleiermacher states that translating is at the same time understanding, thinking and communicating. He emphasizes, however, the act of *understanding* because of its great proximity to the act of translation. He thinks that the only difference between translating and understanding is one of degree. According to this author, translating is a profound act of understanding, since the primary goal of translation is making the target reader understand the source text. Accordingly, the translator needs first to make sure he understands it, which is not as simple a task as it may seem.

The source text, like all kinds of texts, is an entity of a very complex nature. Form, content, aim, function, aesthetic value and all its traits are the product of a wide range of overlapping factors. These factors are those involved in determining the choices that the author, consciously or unconsciously, makes. Many of these factors are, in a way or in another, a result of *culture*.

Culture is defined in the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2000) as "*the customs and beliefs, art, way of life and social organization of a particular country or group*" (pp.322-323). Oswalt (1970) provides a similar definition stating that it is the "*lifeway of a population*" (p.15). This is referred to as the anthropological definition of culture (Chastain, 1976, p. 388). Although this definition does not make it explicit, a group who shares all these very elements cannot but share an

intelligible linguistic code. Newmark (1988), on the other hand, maintains this point when defining *culture*. He states that it is:

> "The way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression."

(p.94)

This definition clearly links between language and culture, as it implies the assumption that one linguistic community shares necessarily one culture. Although this statement may be questionable, it is undoubtedly justifiable to maintain the close relationship it stresses between language and culture.

Whereas Newmark's (1988) definition of culture perceives language as its "means of expression", some linguists believe that the relationship between language and culture is far more intimate. This view is referred to as the "Sapir-Whorf hypothesis" after the two linguists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf (Trudgill, 1979). It holds that it is, rather, language that organizes knowledge, categorizes experience and shapes the peoples' worldview (Trudgill, 1979). As a direct consequence, it shapes culture. Edward Sapir (1956) claims that the community's language habits largely determine experience. And in his words:

"No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached."

(p.69)

Nevertheless, the strongest form of this view is now widely unacceptable, as it implies " the impossibility of effective communication between the members of different linguistic communities" (De Pedro, 1999, p.458). It also means that people cannot see the world but from their native language perspective. This proves wrong when considering that many people achieve a high degree of competence and fluency in foreign languages. Moreover, many translators do render meaning appropriately from one language to another. This might imply that "*they are able to conceptualise meaning independently of a particular language system*" (Hatim and Mason, 1990, p. 30).

Juri Lotman (1978), a Russian semiotician, holds an analogous, but a more moderate, view as to the relation between language and culture. He declares that:

"No language can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture; and no culture can exist which does not have at its center, the structure of natural language."

(pp. 211-2)

This opposes the belief that the relationship between language and culture is that of the part to the whole (Torop, 2000). The semiotician Peeter Torop (2000) sees language as one of the several semiotic systems found in a given culture. The "semiotic system" he refers to is any sign system, such as music, dance, painting and the like.

Despite the differences in views as to whether language shapes culture or not, we can maintain Linguistics' point of view expressed by Mounin (1973):

"La linguistique formule cette observation en disant que les langues ne sont pas des calques universels d'une réalité universelle, mais que chaque langue correspond à une organisation particulière des données de l'expérience humaine - que chaque langue découpe l'expérience non linguistique à sa manière."

(p. 61)

(see translation 11, Appendix B)

Bassnett (1991) holds the same view when she says that: "*Language* […] *is the heart within the body of culture*"(p. 14). This close relationship between language and culture is, in fact, what gives the translator's cultural knowledge its crucial value.

1.1.4. The Translator's Cultural Knowledge

Culture is thus what explains and clarifies almost every mystery in a foreign language text, including its language and its author. In other words, both the language learner and the translator need cultural knowledge to *understand*. Schank and Abelson (1977) support this, saying that: "*understanding is knowledge based*". Chastain (1976) states that:

> "The ability to interact with speakers of another language depends not only on language skills but also on comprehension of cultural habits and expectations. Understanding a second language does not insure understanding the speaker's actions."

(p. 383)

Mounin (1962) claims that:

> "Le traducteur ne doit pas se contenter d'être un bon linguiste, il doit être un excellent ethnographe: ce qui revient à demander non seulement qu'il sache tout de la langue qu'il traduit, mais aussi du peuple qui se sert de cette langue."
>
> (p. 50)
>
> (see translation 12, Appendix B)

Therefore, cultural knowledge refers to the knowledge of the way of life of a linguistic community. This includes every aspect of life: habits, worldviews, social system, religion, humor, good manners, clothing, etc. (Chastain, 1976, 389-92).

Given the particular relationship between culture and language, cultural knowledge is the way for the translator to deeply know the language. Indeed, culture reveals the language's mode of functioning. Schleiermacher (1813) thinks that it is not acceptable to work on and with language in an arbitrary way. The authentic meaning of language should be gradually discovered through history, science and art. This assumption adds another dimension to the required cultural knowledge of the translator. It is the intellectual production written in the language in question, and which contributes, in his view, to the formation of the language (ibid.).

Cultural knowledge does not only help understand a text's content. It also, as a logical consequence, shows the way in which a particular foreign reader is best addressed. It provides, hence, access to the first and the last translation operations, which Schleiermacher (1813) advocated: understanding and communicating.

So far, we have emphasised the necessity of cultural knowledge for understanding and communicating. Another facet of this necessity concerns translating, that is Schleiermacher's *thinking*. It is the cultural component of the already presented concept of controlled or separate knowledge. Incompatibility between cultures should be studied as well. De Pedro (1999) affirms that: " *Translators have to be aware of these gaps, in order to produce a satisfactory target text*" (p.548). In her paper about textual competence mentioned earlier, Nord (1999) insists on what she calls the translator's *contrastive text competence.* In this competence she highlights the ability to compare and be aware of cultural specificities. She states that it:

> "[…] consists of the ability to analyse the culture-specificities of textual and other communicative conventions in both linguacultures, [and] identify culture-bound function markers in texts of various text types."

(§ 8)

Another point cannot be disregarded. It is known that English, French and even Arabic, like many other languages, may be used by people of other cultures to produce all types of texts, especially in literature. African literature written in English and the North African one written in French are two illustrating examples. Here, the translator is faced with a specific language embedded in a different culture, which entails a specific task of analysis based on relevant knowledge. As a result, cultures directly related to the languages in question are not the only cultures the translator should be familiar with (Osimo, 2001).

1.1.5. Learning Culture

The translator's required cultural knowledge takes, then, huge proportions. A study of culture that depends on random exposure to relevant documents sounds insufficient. For this reason, there stands the need to systematically and deeply study the culture in question (Mounin, 1962, Chastain, 1976).

Therefore, if we consider the ways of acquiring cultural knowledge, we can find, among other things, the following:

▪ a relatively long stay in the country of the language (Mounin, 1962); or

- a long and systematic exposure (Mounin, 1962) to all types of authentic material like films in the original version, novels reflecting as authentically as possible everyday life and discourse, and nonfiction documents sharing the same characteristics.

Chastain (1976) advances that in an academic context, for example a language class, teaching the culture of the language must be a *fundamental* and *systematic* component of the curriculum. The objectives should be made clear to learners, and material acquisition should be tested rigorously, just as the linguistic material is (pp. 388, 509). Because the language and its culture are interdependent, the culture of the language should be given a similar importance to that of the language itself, and be taught in relation to the corresponding linguistic items (p. 388). It follows that:

> "*Ideally, at the end of their studies, the students will have a functional knowledge of the second culture system as they have of the second language system*"

(Chastain, 1976, p. 388)

All the literature summed up thus far leads to believe that, in translator training, two conclusions can be drawn. First, learning to mediate between two languages and cultures whose boundaries are not yet clear in one's mind seems to be of a questionable value.

Second, such a deep and subtle knowledge appears to be hard to achieve in such a relatively short time as a four-year translation course. This suggests that unnecessary loss of time should, as far as possible, be avoided. This makes sense when we know that the course should include a number of other subjects to study and other competences to acquire. This is the subject matter of the following sections.

1.2. Translation Competence

Translation Competence is a key issue in this study. It is a concept whose nature is generally misunderstood by common people, but also controversial to translation theorists. This is clearly felt when one examines relevant literature.

1.2.1. The Term *Translation Competence*

It should be noted that the definition of the concept is not the only fundamental issue that has not yet been established, the term indicating the concept as well. Pym (2002), Campbell (1991), Waddington (2001), F. Alves; J.L. Vila Real; R. Rothe-Neves (2001) and Orozco and Hurtado Albir (2002) use *Translation Competence*. Others have chosen different appellations. Orozco and Hurtado Albir (2002) mention some of them: *translation transfer* (Nord, 1991, p.161), *translational competence*

(Toury, 1995, pp.250-51; Hansen, 1997, p.205; Chesterman, 1997, p.147), *translator competence* (Kiraly, 1995, p.108), *translation performance* (Wilss, 1989, p.129), *translation ability* (Lowe, 1987, p.57), and *translation skill* (Lowe, 1987, p.57). All these denominations are, nevertheless, rarely accompanied with the researcher's definition of the concept (Orozco and Hurtado Albir, 2002, p.375).

In this study "Translation *Competence*" is being used. On the one hand, we accept the concept "*competence*" as comprising all the other terms, namely *ability*, *skill* and *knowledge*. The definition the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2000) suggests of the word *competence* is "*the ability to do something well*" (p. 260), which may entail a wide range of skills, abilities and types of knowledge. McClelland (1973), on the other hand, defines it as "*appropriate use of specific abilities according to surrounding demands*" (Alves; Vila Real; and Rothe-Neves, 2001). This definition fits the point of view this study adopts because we believe that the concept of *appropriateness* is central to *Translation Competence*.

On the other hand, the use of the term *"translator* competence" might include things that go beyond the concept. Indeed, it may imply all what a translator should know and be able to do including what may belong to other fields than translation, such as knowledge about specific subject matters. However, what we refer to by the term *Translation*

Competence is only what is specific to translation and distinct from the other disciplines.

1.2.2. Translation Competence Versus Linguistic Competence

Early attempts to define translation competence do not distinguish it from competence in more than one language. Anthony Pym (2002) attempts to classify the different approaches to the concept since the 1970s. The first approach he refers to perceives translation competence as a summation of linguistic competencies. It consists in possessing a "source-language text-analytical competence" and "a corresponding target-language text-reproductive competence" (Wilss, 1982, p. 118). Similarly, in Werner Koller's (1979) words, it is "*the ability to put together the linguistic competencies gained in two languages*" (p.40).

This approach raises the following relevant question: "Does translation competence mean linguistic competence in more than one language?" Accepting that it does would, in fact, imply the assumption that any person possessing a sound knowledge in more than one language can necessarily be a good translator. This, again, suggests that bilingual persons are automatically skilful translators (Harris, 1977). As a result, deduces Pym (2002), "*the linguistics of bilingualism might thus* […]

become the linguistics of translation, and no separate academic discipline need develop" (p.3). Furthermore, Translation Studies would be reduced to a subject within Applied Linguistics, and Translator Training would be the task of Language departments (*ibid.*). More relevant to this study's concern is that this approach implies that Translation course is all about language learning. This would make the duration of the course sufficient for students to learn 'translation' perceived in this way. Prior linguistic and cultural knowledge would then appear unnecessary.

1.2.3. Nature of Translation Competence

The existence of this concept has become undeniable even through empirical studies, such as that of Waddington (2001). Nonetheless, its nature raises controversy. Two main approaches to the question are presented.

The first approach is a set of different attempts to identify what is included in translation competence. These attempts seem to be more interested in what the translator's knowledge, abilities and skills should comprise rather than isolating the concept of translation competence itself. Pym (2002) mentions some of these views. He states that they all perceive translation competence as "multicomponential", with a growing

tendency to include in the list of components all what each theorist thinks necessary for a translator to know and do. This is, probably, the result of the dramatic change occurring in all aspects of life due to the development of science, communication and technology. The profession of translation seems to get more and more complex because of the large number of the required "market qualifications" of a translator.

Some of the definitions of translation competence belonging to this category are briefly listed. Roger Bell (1991) perceives translation competence as the sum of the following: target-language knowledge, text-type knowledge, source-language knowledge, subject area knowledge, contrastive knowledge, and communicative competence covering grammar, sociolinguistics and discourse. Beeby (1996) lists six sub competencies within translation competence. Each of them includes up to four or five sub-skills. Hewson (1995) added to the traditional ones a set of other 'competencies', where some of which are "access to and use of proper dictionaries and data banks" (p. 108).

Another example of the "multicomponential" models of translation competence is that of Jean Vienne (1998). He suggests that the first required competence is the translator's ability to ask the client about the target text's readership and purpose. Proper use of the appropriate resources to reach the client's aim and meet the public's needs constitutes the second competence. Third, the translator should be able to account

and argue for the decisions he has made in the translation process. The client needs to agree on whatever modifications brought to form or content. Finally, the translator should also be able to collaborate with specialised people in the source text's subject, particularly when they do not speak his language. He is also required to ask them to explain the subject for him rather than just teaching him the terminology. Translation implies, above all, understanding, affirms Vienne (1998).

All the models developed within this trend seem to be influenced by the complexity of the tasks the modern professional translator is required to carry out, and the multitude of disciplines he is expected to be familiar with. This is well explained in the following Pym's (2002) quotation:

> "The evolution of the translation profession itself has radically fragmented the range of activities involved. In the 1970s, translators basically translated. In our own age, translators are called upon to do much more: documentation, terminology, rewriting, and the gamut of activities associated with the localization industry."

(p.6)

This approach may also be explained by the fact that Translation Studies as a newly established discipline draws on a wide range of other disciplines. Pym (2002) continues:

"Perhaps, also, the explosion of components has followed the evolution of Translation Studies as an "interdiscipline", no longer constrained by any form of hard-core linguistics. Since any number of neighbouring disciplines can be drawn on, any number of things can be included under the label of "translation competence."

(p.6)

The development of the profession or that of the discipline, however, doesn't necessarily imply to stop distinguishing the required competence itself from the use of new tools or knowledge in specific disciplines. These are there to assist the translator in his task, rather than to add complexity to matters.

An additional critique lies in the question posed by Pym (2002): Is it possible to include all these skills in the objectives of translator training programs, given that the Translation course doesn't last more than four or five years?

The second approach distinguishes between Translation Competence and the other competencies, but seems to fail to draw clear boundaries between linguistic competence and translation competence. Vienne (1998) reports Jean Delisle's (1992) attempt to define the concept, where a set of five competencies is listed:

- Linguistic competence: ability to understand the source language and produce in the target language.

- *Translational competence:* ability to comprehend the organisation of meaning in the source text and to render it in the target language without distortion, in addition to the ability to avoid interference.

- Methodological competence: ability to look for and use documentation about a given subject and learn its terminology.

- Disciplinary competence: ability to translate texts in some specific disciplines, like law and economy.

- Technical competence: ability to use translation technology aids.

Jean Vienne (1998) expresses his disappointment of the fact that Delisle (1992), just like a number of other translation theorists, reduces translation competence to the "double operation of deverbalization and reformulation of deverbalized ideas" (p.1). This definition, he thinks, doesn't deal with the competencies that are actually specific to translators (Vienne, 1998).

In fact, the definition Vienne (1998) rejects has tried to distinguish between linguistic competence, Translation Competence and other competencies. The difference between linguistic and Translation Competences is, nevertheless, believed to be a matter of degree, accuracy and interference. In other words, according to this definition, a translator should understand a source text more profoundly and write more effectively than common linguistically competent people. Moreover, he has to avoid interference and be faithful and accurate.

Actually, what is thought to be the difference between linguistic competence and Translation Competence, namely good understanding and writing, appear to belong to linguistic competence. Avoiding interference, faithfulness and accuracy, on the other hand, may well be considered to belong to translation competence. But, are these three elements what translation competence is all about?

Another attempt to define translation competence is made by Stansfield et al. (1992). They claim that translation competence should be divided into two different skills. The first is *accuracy*, "*which is the degree of accuracy with which the translator transfers the content from the source to the target text*" (Waddington, 2001, p. 312). And the second is *expression*, "*which refers to the quality of the translator's expression of this content in the target language*" (Waddington, 2001, p. 312). This assumption is the conclusion of an empirical study conducted on

translation tests assigned to translators working for the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). However, Waddington (2001) criticises the study on the grounds that the majority of the tests consist of "multiple-choice tests and the translation of isolated words, expressions or sentences" rather than texts (p. 313).

A third group of scholars seem to have attained a clearer conception of Translation Competence nature. They put forward that Translation Competence is something distinct from both linguistic competence and other competencies. It lies in the ability to solve translation problems and make decisions with regards to a multitude of relevant factors, such as the source text author's purpose and the target readership's needs. This competence is what highlights translation specificity vis-à-vis other concepts like bilingualism. Hurtado Albir (1996) defines it as " the ability of knowing how to translate " (p.48). This implies a certain ability specific to the process of translating. Gideon Toury (1986) suggests that it is a specific "transfer competence" which is not the simple overlap between competences in two languages (Pym, 2002). Werner Koller (1992), in a more recent restatement of his view, asserts that Translation Competence resides in "*the creativity involved in finding and selecting between equivalents*" and in text production as well (p.20). Similarly, Pym opted for what he calls "a minimalist" definition of Translation Competence, as opposed to the multicomponentialist

definition. His definition is based on the generation and the elimination of alternatives as far as the problem solving process is concerned (Pym, 2002, p. 10).

As to the formulation of a definition, Hurtado Albir and Orozco (2002) choose that of Process of the Acquisition of Translation Competence and Evaluation (PACTE) research group, from the *Universitat Autònoma* of Barcelona in Spain. This definition suggests that Translation Competence is "*the underlying system of knowledge and skills needed to be able to translate*" (Orozco and Hurtado Albir, 2002, p. 376).

The "linguistic" approach to Translation Competence, which reduces it to mere competence in two languages, was subsequently rejected even by its own followers like Koller (1992). Apart from this approach, all the other trends argue for the existence of a competence specific to translation and more or less distinct from language competence. The approach underlying the present study draws on this assumption along with the conception the third approach establishes of Translation Competence. We assume that this latter appears to be the overlap between three types of qualities and practice. The first quality is a wide and diversified knowledge. The second is related to cognitive abilities such as inference and memory. And the third concerns some affective dispositions such as risk-taking and flexibility. This overlap

should result in appropriate performance in problem solving and decision-making: tasks constantly involved in translation.

It can also be retained that translation competence concerns the ability to deal with *translation problems.* Analysing and understanding the problem constitute the first step. Then the translator has to produce several alternative solutions and decide on the selection of the most *appropriate.* In this process, *every relevant element* should be taken into consideration. Cultural implications, style, the author's purpose, target readership needs, are some decisive elements.

To train the student translator to deal with translation problems, practice from the very beginning of the course appears as an indisputable necessity. What should be realised here is that alternative generation implies that the student's linguistic knowledge be of a certain level of variety, particularly in terms of syntax and lexis. Otherwise, the production of different solutions and formulations would be unattainable. A certain amount of cultural knowledge allowing for a sound communicative competence is also required. It is mostly needed for the task of selecting the most suitable alternative. Undoubtedly, what has been put forward so far reinforces the belief that previous linguistic and cultural knowledge are necessary for the translation learning process.

To sum up, all the views agree on the complexity and the difficulty of the process that entails translation competence. Consequently, as we

have seen, some of the approaches led to the supposition that a four or five years translation course is not sufficient (Pym, 2002). Acquiring translation competence requires the devotion of as much time and effort as possible. Spending time in basic linguistic and cultural knowledge acquisition seems to hinder the course objectives' attainment. These are then: translation competence acquisition and the *enrichment* of linguistic and cultural knowledge.

1.2.4. Translation Competence Acquisition and Language Learning

This section looks at the process of acquiring translation competence, and examines the interaction, if any, between it and elementary language learning. Understanding this is expected to help us know more about the possibility of simultaneous learning of the two. As a matter of fact no literature has been found to address the issue directly. Therefore, an analysis of the available findings is needed to uncover the question.

Toury (1986) suggests that translation competence consists in a *natural*, *innate* and mainly *linguistic* ability very much developed among bilingual people. He adds that this ability is not sufficient. The translator should also develop the *transfer ability* in order to achieve translation

competence. In this sense, linguistic knowledge is considered to be a basis upon which translation competence is, subsequently, developed.

Shreve (1997) states that it is a specific competence included in communicative competence, and that develops from natural translation to constructed translation. He means by "natural translation" the initial, natural and potential ability to translate. "Constructed translation" is the developed competence of translation. In this model, it may be discerned that "constructed" translation ability develops only after communicative competence is acquired.

Orozco and Hurtado Albir (2002) adopt the PACTE research group's model of translation competence acquisition (2000). It suggests that translation competence "is a dynamic process of building new knowledge on the basis of the old". This process "*requires development from novice knowledge (pre-translation competence) to expert knowledge (translation competence)*" (p.377). This finally "*produces a restructuring and integrated development of declarative and operative knowledge*" (Orozco and Hurtado Albir, 2002, p. 377). They mean that the learning process builds on previous knowledge, needed for translation, towards more developed competence. This involves an interaction between knowledge (declarative knowledge) and practice (operative knowledge). Expanding on this, it can be deduced that pre-translation competence (novice knowledge), which most likely refers in part to previous

linguistic and cultural knowledge, is important as a basis of translation competence development.

From what precedes, it seems obvious that translation competence is mainly concerned with the transfer task (Toury, 1986). Evidently, transfer is much more practice than declarative knowledge internalisation. Therefore, learning how to transfer involves practice. This entails *using* the declarative knowledge. It might thus be justified to assume that at least basic knowledge of the source and the target languages and cultures is needed in the process of transfer learning.

More explicit is Darbelnet's statement (1966) that learning about translation mechanisms is the objective of translation course. Working on the perfection of linguistic knowledge is also included. However, this does by no means imply giving separate lectures of grammar or lexis. He goes on explaining that this would consume a large part of the time we possess. Nord (2000) is also explicit in this regard:

> "An entrance test should ensure that the students have a good passive and active proficiency in the A-language [the native language]. With regard to B languages [foreign languages], the entrance qualifications defined by the institutions have to be tested in order to prevent translator training from turning

into some kind of foreign language teaching in disguise."

(§. 9)

This assumption is also clearly stated by Osimo (2001) in the following words:

> "Only after having studied one or more foreign languages can one begin to study translation.
>
> It is in fact necessary to have higher education qualifications or a university degree in order to be admitted to any translation course at university level. In both cases, when one sets out to learn the art of translation, one has already studied languages for some years.
>
> It is therefore necessary for the aspiring translator to have a clear idea of certain fundamental differences between learning a foreign language and learning translation."

("Learning a foreign language versus learning translation" § 1,2,3)

The statements of Darbelnet (1966), Nord (2000), and Osimo (2001) agree on one idea. There is no time to spend on teaching basic linguistic material during a translation course. This would suggest that the selection of the most knowledgeable candidates to be translation learners

is a necessity. Only then, emphasis would be put on the real objectives of Translator Training: translation competence acquisition and the *perfection* of linguistic and cultural knowledge.

1.3. Some Aspects of the Activity of Translation

1.3.1 Translation Problems

This section is a general account of translation problems, the main area in which translation competence is at work. It aims to demonstrate the complexity of translation task, as a permanent problem solving and decision making process. On the light of these aspects, it addresses the unlikelihood of acquiring translation competence, along with the required knowledge in a four-year time course, when the would-be translator does not possess basic linguistic and cultural knowledge at the beginning of the course.

1.3.1.1. Translatability

The huge conceptual gap between languages and cultures engendered pessimistic views (Humboldt, 1909; Sapir, 1921). The term *translatability* implies a doubt as to whether or not a text, a structure, an idea or a reality could be translated. This led to the emergence of the

counter-concept of "*untranslatability*". It points to "*the* […] *impossibility of elaborating concepts in a language different from that in which they were conceived*" (De Pedro, 1999, p. 546). This approach is referred to as *the monadist* approach to translatability (*ibid.*). There is a belief, for example, that poetry is untranslatable as its value is based upon its phonological features, which presents insurmountable difficulties in translation (Firth, 1935).

This concept, though controversial and too pessimistic, reflects the inevitable loss that translation causes to the original text. This is quite comprehensible when one considers translation difficulties and problems.

According to Catford (1965), the difficulties, and sometimes the quasi-impossibility, of translation belong to two main categories: linguistic and cultural. The translator is faced, in the former, with the task of rendering structures usually specific to a language into a different structural system of another. In the latter, the mission is to convey non-linguistic realities from a culture to another. He, nevertheless, did not assume absolute untranslatability in this regard.

Catford (1965) explains linguistic untranslatability as follows: "*failure to find a TL equivalent is due entirely to differences between the source **language** and the target **language***" (p. 98). De Pedro (1999) mentions ambiguity and plays on words as examples of this type of untranslatability (p. 551).

As to cultural untranslatability, Catford (1965) describes it saying that it arises " *when a situational feature, functionally relevant for the SL text, is completely absent from the culture of which the TL is a part*" (p. 99). De Pedro (1999) gives for this category the examples of the names of clothes, food and abstract concepts (p. 552).

Mounin (1968 and 1971), on the other hand, talks about lexical, syntactic and stylistic difficulties, all of which emerge from cultural and worldview differences. He believes that untranslatability is relative, and that it is the translator's task to reduce it in a text. This may be achieved through a scientific analysis of the constituents that make the effect of what seems untranslatable (Mounin, 1967).

Talking about translation problems was part of almost every published work in translation studies. Here, follows an account of a scheme suggested by the semiotician Peeter Torop, and which he named "Scheme of Culture Translatability" (2000). It appears to be a relatively comprehensive and brief summary of translatability issues existing in the literature. Torop's (2000) classification will be presented, accompanied with relevant explanation, commentary and illustration from different sources.

1.3.1.2. Peeter Torop's Scheme of Culture Translatability

Peeter Torop (2000) has suggested a classification of translation problems and listed each category's possible solution. He states that *translatability parameters*, i.e. categories of translation problems, are: language, time, space, text, work and socio-political manipulation. All these are, in a way or in another, related to culture.

The language parameter includes grammatical categories, realia, conversational etiquette, associations, world image and discourse.

Translatability problems that are linked to *grammatical categories* occur, for instance, when a category is absent in a language and present in another. When the translator wants, for example, to render a noun from a language that doesn't contain articles into a language that does, he has to look for the missing information in the context. If this does not provide the needed information, which occurs rarely, the translator has to decide on the appropriate choice to be made.

Mounin (1968) presents an example about word order, which is said to reflect the way linguistic communities perceive the world (mainly Sapir/ Whorf Hypothesis). Mounin (1968) presents the example of the English sentence " *He gazed out of the open door into the garden*". He supposes the Anglo-Saxon preference for the concrete can be perceived in the fact that the sentence follows the order of images the gaze passes across. Whereas the French translation " *Il a regardé dans le jardin par la*

porte ouverte." reflects the French preference for the abstract, talking first about the target and then mentioning the means. Mounin (1968) comments that, considering the fact that the French translation cannot render the English mentality underlying English syntax and vice versa, one may wonder whether translation is possible. The meaning conveyed by grammar constitutes then a source of difficulty to the translator.

Realia refers to words representing objects that exist in a culture but not in the other**.** One example is how to translate into French or English a name of a typically Algerian women dress namely "*Medjboud*" or a men dress like "*Keshabia*". How to translate the names indicating typically French, British or American types of food, dress and so on, is another illustration. The translator can choose between *borrowing*, i.e. rendering the word as it is with an explicative definition or a footnote (Mounin, 1971; Aziz & Lataiwish, 2000), or translating it into an approximate word in the target culture, which is referred to as *neologism* (Osimo, 2001; Aziz & Lataiwish, 2000).

The conversational etiquette is a particular form of realia. It refers to a conventional feature of address between members of the same community. One widely cited problem of this category occurs when the source language distinguishes between the pronouns used to address familiar and unfamiliar persons, like in French, while the TL does not. This problem may cause an important information loss. This happens, for

instance, when translating dialogues where there is a "significant shift" from the *vous* form to the *tu* form (Hatim and Mason, 1990). Reducing this loss to the maximum depends on the translator's competence. For the solution cannot be change in the target language. The missing information may be added to the dialogue in another way.

Associations refer to words with particular connotations. They pose a problem of understanding as well as translating. Some examples are trademarks conveying a connotation of luxury or poverty, mourning colors, humor and the like (Osimo, 2001; Redouane, 1985).

Torop (2000) points by *World image* to the degree of explicitness of a language. Osimo (2001) explains that translating from an explicit language results in a text that may seem redundant in a figurative culture. Similarly, translating from a figurative language results in a text that may be incomprehensible in an explicit culture.

Discourse is related to scientific and technical terminology. Translating this type of words poses many problems. One example is that the translator should always accurately assess the target readership's needs and knowledge (Redouane, 1985, p.68). This should determine the «degree of technicality» and the «volume of terms» the translator is called to work with (Resche, 2000, p. 631). Another example occurs when the terminology pertaining to a specific field is instable, which is usually the case. Medical terminology, for instance, changes according to

the evolution of medical knowledge. This, in its turn, is influenced by cultural, geographical and temporal variations (Balliu, 2001).

There exist different approaches as to the strategies used to solve the previously stated problems. These approaches vary according to the translator's priorities. The first is termed *nationalisation* or *integration* approach. It reduces the cultural difference in favour of a process of shift towards the target culture (Osimo, 2001; Aziz & Lataiwish, 2000). This implies, for example, neologism rather than borrowing. Or entails the use of local connotations rather than preserving and explaining the original and hence making explicit what is originally figurative. It may involve also omitting what is impossible to nationalise. A second approach is the opposing strategy: *source translation*. It consists in preserving the source culture (Aziz & Lataiwish, 2000, p.106). Another strategy may result in a shift away from both cultures. It is referred to as *alienation* (ibid.).

The second translatability parameter is that of ***time***. It concerns the period related to the source text culture, the author's life and the narrated events. Osimo (2001) states that the translator must choose between the decision of preserving time distance or ignoring it.

The ***space*** translatability parameter may be *social*, *psychological* or, *geographic*. Social space parameter concerns whether to keep or omit what refers to differences between social classes dialects (sociolects),

such as slang. These are very difficult to render, which makes loss almost inevitable.

Psychological space parameter, states Osimo (2001), refers to how well the translator conveys to the reader the source text unity, using both lexical coherence and imagery. Preserving the imaginary world of the source text is often important.

Geographical distance problems may be illustrated in this example. Consider when Shakespeare, in his sonnet No. 18, says, "*Shall I compare thee to a summer's day... Thou art more lovely and more temperate*". How a translator into Arabic is supposed to render "*summer*" and "*temperate*"? To an Arab reader, it is spring that would make him understand the poem's meaning (Aziz & Lataiwish, 2000, p.112). One of the strategies that might be used to solve problems of geographic distance is the adaptation to the familiar environment of the target reader. Another is the preservation of an exotic culture's specific characteristics (Osimo, 2001).

The **text** parameter includes poetic and literary technique. Translatability problems emerge from the translator's duty to render the original features of the ST. The individuality of characters, the author's specific literary character (preferred words, images, particular world views, etc.), the rhythm of the text, metaphors and connotations are some examples (Redouane, 1985; Bassnett, 1991).

The *work* parameter deals with all what accompanies the translated text in its final image i.e. as a book. This implies the preface, commentaries, notes, explanations and the like. These may seem to impose a particular view on the reader. Indeed, all these elements have critical influence on the idea the reader already has or is to form about the work. Still, Osimo (2001) insists that these elements may assist the reader with understanding the work. They help him recognize the translator's interventions, and know the motives of the translator's decisions. Besides, they can make him aware that the translation is a form of interpretation among many possible interpretations.

The last parameter is what Torop (2000) names *the socio-political determinacy parameter*. It refers to the ideological influence the editors may practice on the work, such as some forms of censure. It also denotes the influence practiced by the translator on the work.

In summary, the act of translating appears as a permanent problem-solving process. Learning translation is thus to learn about these problems and ways to solve them. Brian Mossop (2000) asserts that:

"At translation school, future translators need to find out what the problems of translation are, and reflect on these problems. The purpose of practice in translation (and of non-translational

exercises such as summarizing, paraphrasing or dictionary look-up exercises), is to make students aware of these problems and make them think about the issues. […] Producing satisfactory translations of specialized texts in good time takes about five years of full-time practice."

(§ 8)

From this arises the need, for the student translator as well as the professional translator, to the study of approaches concerning translation problems and their solutions. Theory is the sum of professional translators experience (Shuttleworth, 2001). Hence, there is no way to underestimate its importance on the ground of the theory versus practice attitude (Bassnett, 1991; Shuttleworth, 2001). The next subsection deals with this issue. It highlights the fact that theory offers to the translator a wide range of alternatives to solve translation problems. The translator then is expected to consider the text's situation along with all the contextual factors. Then he is required to make a decision as to which alternative to adopt or to create.

1.3.2. Translation as Decision Making

As already explained, a large number of translation problems result from the incompatibility between the source and the target communities. The translator is thus bound to constantly take decisions on how to deal with each problem, and what to choose from the multitude of approaches and alternatives.

A first decision to be made might be to choose the method of translation. This issue has always been a debate among translators and translation theorists (Hatim and Mason, 1991). As early as 1813, Schleiermacher has discussed this issue, and came out with what he calls two "authentic" methods of translating:

> "Ou bien le traducteur laisse l'écrivain le plus tranquille possible et fait que le lecteur aille à sa rencontre, ou bien il laisse le lecteur le plus tranquille possible et fait que l'écrivain aille à sa rencontre."

> (p. 49)

> (see translation 13, Appendix B)

In the second choice, he explains, the translator does as if the writer originally produced the text in the target language. This method neglects the close relationship between the writer's original culture and original

language. Whereas in the first choice, which he considers the only "correct", the translator does as if the target reader reads the source language. By so doing, the source culture is conserved and the "foreign" character of the text is preserved. To Schleiermacher (1813), a text's foreign character is very important to preserve. It makes up the value of the text and guarantees a better communication and understanding between cultures. Furthermore, it develops the peoples' open-mindedness and transmits knowledge and authentic thought (Schleiermacher, 1813). This is also defended by Mounin (1962) in his article "Le traducteur entre les mots et les choses" in the following words:

> "Tout le travail du Traducteur à son point le plus élevé de difficulté, c'est justement d'essayer de donner à ses lecteurs une idée des choses inaccessibles dont parle un texte en langue étrangère, qui se réfère à une culture souvent étrangère, soit en partie, soit en totalité."

(p.50)

(see translation 14, Appendix B)

Although Schleiermacher (1813) does not set practical principles to his theory's application, it seems as an earlier framework of a more recent theory. It is the distinction made by Nida (1964) between *formal*

equivalence and *dynamic equivalence*. The former's purpose is to be as faithful as possible to the source text's both form and content. It thus provides the target reader with some degree of insight into the lexical and structural form of the source text. And most importantly, it lets the target reader, as Nida (1964) puts it, "*understand as much as he can of the customs, manner of thought, and means of expression*" of the source culture (p. 129). Dynamic equivalence, on the other hand, seeks an equivalent effect on the target reader. It follows that features of the source culture be of secondary importance in favour of the fulfilment of the ST's function, and the production of an equivalent effect.

A similar problem emerges when translating old texts. Indeed, it entails one choice out of two. The first is keeping old concepts as they are with explanatory footnotes, for instance. The second is rendering them in a modern way accessible to the modern reader. The first orientation is *text-centered,* the second, *reader-centered* (Hatim and Mason, 1991, p. 16). To these orientations may be added the *author-centered* one, which takes into consideration the author's biography and personality in text interpretation (*ibid*.).

Another question is "*Do I have to bother the target reader with all these strange things that he may not understand nor be interested in?*" (James, 2002, §2) As Kate James (2002) formulates it, when discussing the cultural issue:

"The translator […] has to decide on the importance given to certain cultural aspects to what extent it is necessary or desirable to translate them into the TL."

(§ 2)

It is difficult to say who has the right to decide on this question? This issue, as well, is related to the controversy opposing text-centered to reader-centered orientations, or formal to dynamic approaches.

Although a decision within a translation act belongs always to the translator, it should, in fact, be the result of a thorough study of all the relevant factors. As expressed by Hatim and Mason (1991):

"In fact, the beginning of a solution to the problem will depend, to borrow a well-known sociolinguistic formula, on: who is translating what, for whom, when, where, why and in what circumstances?"

(p.6)

The problem lies in the possible conflict between these factors. However, the purpose of the translation will determine to a large extent the

translator's orientation. Hatim and Mason (1991) suggest an interesting conclusion.

> "Given that, in any case, translating involves a conflict of interests, it is all a question of where one's priorities lie."
>
> (p. 17)

The answers to the mentioned wh-questions are precious keys to establish the priorities of each individual translation, and hence to guide the translator's choice. An accurate assessment of the situation is, therefore, a must as well as a source of solutions to translation problems.

1.3.3. Some Aspects of the Translator's Responsibility

The purpose of including the translator's responsibility issue in this review is to further justify the significance of this study's concern. As a matter of fact, consciousness of the actual responsibility of translators is generally limited. This is why improving awareness of this issue appears to be necessary.

As already explained, there exist limits within the universal act of understanding (Schleiermacher, 1999; Mounin, 1976). Every act of understanding depends upon personal perception (Osimo, 2001). As an

attempt to understand, translation is no exception. From this perspective, there is no way to ignore the fact that the translator is likely to project some personal dimensions onto the target text, especially when it concerns the translation of polysemous or controversial texts. In this respect, Hatim and Mason (1990) state that:

"The translator's reading of the source text is but one among infinitely many possible readings, yet it is the one which tends to be imposed upon the readership of the TL version."

(p.11)

As difficult as it may be, the translator ought to avoid imposing his perspective on the target reader. Hatim and Mason (1990) give the example of poetry:

"[…] since an important feature of poetic discourse is to allow a multiplicity of responses among SL readers, it follows that the translator's task should be to preserve, as far as possible, the range of possible responses; in other words, not to reduce the dynamic role of the reader."

(p.11)

Another important issue of the translator's responsibility is related to source and target cultures. Through the act of translation, the translator has an important contribution in shaping and reshaping his own culture's identity. This is also true of the foreign culture (Delisle and Woodsworth, 1995). Indeed, the translator's personality, culture and attitude towards the foreign culture are inevitably reflected, in a way or in another, in the process of translation. This occurs through decision-making and problem solving operations (Cordonnier, 2002). In this sense, it seems justifiable to say that peoples perceive each other, to a large extent, through the translators' perspective. If the translator, for instance, decides to eliminate the cultural difference, intercultural communication may not be promoted. The target readership would be less exposed to the actual difference of the source culture, which may, through time, generate an ethnocentric attitude(Cordonnier, 2002). The translator's task is thus not to choose between a source text-centered and a reader-centered approaches to translation. This would be a too simplistic attitude. It is in fact a matter of communication and understanding, and priorities should be directed this way (ibid.).

Darbelnet (1966), on the other hand, draws the translator's attention to the linguistic responsibility. He states that the quality of the language in which we talk and write depends on that of translations. He attempts to establish that the protection of the target language from

distortion is the translator's responsibility. In other words, preserving what is called the *genie of the language* should be one of the translator's main concerns. In fact, translations that adopt an imitating or a too literalistic method may alter the way the receiving community uses its own language, in favour of foreign ways of expression. Darbelnet (1966) calls *genie of the language* the way a language prefers to combine its elements to express thought while other ways are still possible. He also calls this set of language-specific devices the sum of a language's *idiomatic constructions*. He points out that a translation may well be grammatically correct but not idiomatic. One of the examples he gives is the common use of the expression *air climatisé* in French to render the English one *air-conditioned*. He explains that, in French, there is no need to add the word *air* since we already know that *climatisé* concerns the air and not something else. This is not the case of *conditioned* in English, which needs a particular precision. He comments that one of the results of such translations is the spread of the Anglicism phenomenon among the French language community. The overuse of literal translation, he explains, is partly due to the belief people have that it is the most accurate. And it is partly due to the fact that it doesn't take too much time, which helps translators finish their work on time. Darbelnet (1966) insists that translators should learn to deal cautiously with this kind of

practice, and that this issue should be at the centre of any translation course objectives.

Another important issue concerns the ideological implications of translation. Here appears another instance of decision-making responsibility. The ideological issue may imply, at least, three points as far as the translator is concerned.

The first is linked to whether or not the translator discerns the existence of any ideological implication (Bassnett, 1991). The translator needs thus to make sure he does not convey an ideology without being conscious of that. This entails a lot of knowledge and analytical competence.

The second concerns the translator's autonomy of thinking. Schleiermacher (1813) insists on the fact that any person whose intellectual work is susceptible to be made public is imperatively required to be intellectually independent (Schleiermacher, 1813, p. 15).

The third issue is related to objectivity. The decision to be made is on whether or not to accept to translate a given text. This being done, the ideological content of the text to be translated is, by no means, to be altered. Hatim and Mason (1990) highlight, however, that risks of subjectivity are hard to be radically eliminated, although they "*are reduced to the maximum in most scientific and technical, legal and administrative translating*" (p. 11). They draw attention to the fact that

"*cultural predispositions can creep in where least expected*" (ibid.). This is why the translator should be extremely cautious.

Given the implications the act of translating can have, the translator's responsibility appears to be seriously critical. This responsibility constitutes the challenge of translator training. It seems thus only natural that student translators upon whom this huge responsibility is to depend need, at least, to be carefully selected.

1.4. An Account for Admission Requirements in Some Foreign Translation Schools

This section looks at the conditions some foreign translation schools require from candidates to be accepted as translation students. The first point to be mentioned here is that, in our investigation of the issue, no translation school has been found to accept candidates without testing their knowledge. Second, the following examples will provide an idea of the type of qualifications the candidates should possess to be accepted in the translation course.

1.4.1. "*Institut de Traduction*" at Montréal University in 1967

This is an example of the admission policy a Canadian translation school was adopting forty years ago. In December 1966, an article about *"L'enseignement de la traduction à Montréal"* was published in the translation journal *Meta*. It was an account for a reformation program that was to be implemented the next year, i.e. 1967, in the *Institut de Traduction* at Montreal University. The author, Paul A. Aurguelin, explained that changes are to be brought to both "norms" and "programmes". As is required by the purpose of this study, only norms reformation is going to be reported here.

The purpose of the reformations, states the author, is to raise the course standard. It concerns the admission exam, which so far consisted in *"un thème"* and *"une version"*. A *thème* is an exercise in which the candidate is asked to translate a text into the foreign language, and a *version*, into the mother tongue. This traditional exam is replaced by a test whose objective is to evaluate the candidates' French language, English language, translation and general culture. According to the test results, the accepted candidates are to be oriented to one of the three following options: either to a reinforcement course in English and French languages, to a preparatory year, or to first year.

The preparatory class is designed for students who possess a sound knowledge in English and French, but lack awareness of lexical translation problems, such as the *faux amis*, anglicisms, *calques*, and the like. The course program has two objectives. The first is giving up "bad linguistic habits", and the second, learning the use of dictionaries and vocabulary enrichment. By the end of the year, most of the students would be ready to translate and start the normal three-year translation course.

This policy, explains Mr. Aurguelin, has two main advantages. It not only avoids filling up classes with students whose knowledge is insufficient for them to benefit from the translation course, but also avoids rejecting candidates who are able to improve.

1.4.2. *"L'Université du Québec en Outaouais"* in 2004

Two grades are available concerning translation: *Certificat d'initiation à la traduction professionnelle* and *Certificat en traduction professionnelle*. Each lasts six trimesters.

As its name indicates, the *Certificat d'initiation à la traduction professionnelle* provides an introductory teaching in translation methodology and practice for persons wishing to become professional

translators. As for admission requirements, the university requests from the candidates the following conditions:

- possessing a *diplôme d'études collégiales (DEC)* or an equivalent qualification, which is equivalent to the Algerian Baccalaureate;

- either being no younger than twenty one (21), possessing a "sound general knowledge", and having worked for six (6) months in a field that permits the practice of translation, revision of translations, or text writing;

- or possessing a university grade;

- "sufficiently mastering" the French language (native language). This must be certified by one of a set of official exams, one of which is that leading to possess the *diplôme d'études collégiales*;

- in addition to two entrance exams which test the candidates' knowledge in English and French. These exams: " visent à s'assurer que tout candidat a atteint un degré de connaissance du français et de l'anglais adéquat à la poursuite d'études en traduction."

(the University's Web Site)

(see translation 15, Appendix B)

The *Certificat en traduction professionnelle* on the other hand, provides an advanced professional training in the field of translation. At the end of the course, students should have acquired not only theoretical

knowledge concerning linguistic production but also expert competence in the field of interlinguistic communication. Admission requirements are the following:

- either possessing the *certificat en traduction pratique* from *l'Université du Québec en Outaouais* or an equivalent certificate ;

- or being no younger than twenty-one (21), possessing a "sound knowledge" and having worked during twelve (12) months in a field that permits acquiring translation and writing methods necessary for an efficient communication. In this case the candidates will receive an entry exam that tests their aptitude to enter a training programme of professional translation from English to French; and

- possessing a "sufficient mastery" of the English language. This linguistic knowledge must be certified by one of a set of official exams, one of which is that leading to possess the *diplôme d'études collégiales.*

1.4.3. *"Ecole Supérieure d'Interprètes et de Traducteurs"* at *"l'Université Paris III"* in 2004

For the grade of *Maîtrise de Langues Etrangères Appliquées, mention Traduction Spécialisée*, the school is open for candidates who:

- in addition to a high proficiency in the native language, possess a "perfect mastery" of one or two foreign languages;

- possess a sound general culture; and

- show particular abilities: the capacity of analysis and comprehension, the ability to synthesise and mastery of expression.

The candidates should possess a DEUG grade, which consists in two years of general university studies. They have, then, to receive tow tests. The first determines whether they are susceptible to be admitted (aptitude test). The second includes tests of text synthesis and comprehension, writing and translation (admission tests).

In addition to language and culture exams, some universities submit the candidates to intelligence tests. The *Universidad Pontificia Comillas* of Madrid in Spain is one example (Waddington, 2001).

As is clearly seen in these examples, the requirements include, not only linguistic knowledge, but also many other prerequisites. A relatively mature age, practical experience, sound general culture, some cognitive abilities and sometimes a university grade in any subject were required. Although this revealing report does not need to be commented on, we can just remark that these procedures reflect a deep consciousness of the value of the translator's responsibility.

1.4.4. Views of Some Translation Scholars and Teachers

Some translation scholars, who are also translation teachers, have given voice to their own universities' concern. This was through an on-line symposium held by the Spanish Intercultural Studies Group between the 17th and the 25th of January, 2000. We deemed some declarations worth citing in this context, as they are attempts to answer the proposed question, "Who should be trained?"

Daniel Gouadec (2000), from the University of Rennes 2 in France, presents a paper of which the following statement is part:

> "We all know, of course, that we would like to train the best students, preferably mature, with degrees in other disciplines and in languages. That would mean training them to become translators and not 'wasting time' on language courses, reviews of grammar, spelling rules, and so on."
>
> (§ 6)

Roberto Mayoral (2000), from the University of Granada in Spain, states:

> "I believe that the students we accept into our courses should be those with the most ability, regardless of their capacity to pay fees. A certain personal maturity is also required if a student is

to become a professional translator […]. This maturity does not come automatically with age."

(§ 9)

Finally, as a response to the previously stated views, Yves Gambier (2000), from the University of Turku in Finland, presents a commentary that reflects the teachers' serious concern:

"Who should be trained? There seems to be a certain uneasiness on this question. We have no problem with the idea of people selecting the students who are to become our future medical doctors, engineers, architects or pilots, but apparently everyone can become a translator; the profession would be open to all, or at least to anyone with the necessary language competencies […]. Gouadec and Mayoral both refer to 'maturity', which might be a polite way of saying that young students are sometimes out of their depth.

If translation is a demanding profession, if it requires multipurpose high-level qualifications, why this timidity on the question of selecting our students?

Should our training begin straight after the students' final secondary-school exam? Should we not envisage prerequisites such as a long stay abroad, or a degree or diploma in another discipline? Why do we have aptitude tests which students must pass for conference interpreting but not for written translation?"

(§ 9, 10, 11)

Visibly, the question of "who should be trained" stands among the main issues preoccupying translation scholars and teachers. This reveals the importance of student selection in the path towards better translator training process and outcome.

In conclusion, the aim of the previous sections was to improve awareness of the actual challenges facing the translator and hence translator training. The reviewed literature is expected to provide a conceptual basis for the hypothesised relationship between prior knowledge and translation learning. Furthermore, the examples provided on European and Canadian Translation schools and the scholars' views were expected to support the study's hypotheses in a more concrete way.

1.5. Measuring Translation Learning Progress

To verify this study's hypothesis, the progress of the subjects' learning process needs to be measured. This objective has been, also, the concern of all translation schools as well as professional milieus throughout the world (Larose, 1998). Although the aim of evaluation in the context of research is slightly different from that of a pedagogical context, both, in fact, are interested in measuring learning progress. Given this, available research on evaluation, as far as translation teaching is concerned, is also of interest to the present study.

Assessment in translation teaching evaluates the student's translation competence as well as program acquisition. This is carried out through individual performance observation (Martinez Melis and Hurtado Albir, 2001). Evaluation is performed in many ways, and different approaches are adopted. Students are assigned different types of translation tests. Teachers, as well, correct tests, assignments and examinations in different ways (Waddington, 2001).

Available literature on the subject treats two central issues: *what to assess* and *how*. *What to assess* refers to the question of establishing objective, reliable and observable criteria that reflect the object of assessment. This task constitutes a major difficulty in the field. This is explained by the fact that the object of assessment is not only the

student's product, but also his competence and followed processes (Martinez Melis and Hurtado Albir, 2001). This does not pose problem as far as declarative knowledge is concerned. It does however when it comes to translation competence evaluation. This is why the evaluator should first determine the decisive factors of translation competence and the indicators of its acquisition according to the learning objectives (ibid.). Although scholars consider assessment criteria according to the way they perceive the nature of translation competence, they seem to agree on some criteria: translation errors, and performance regarding translation problems (Orozco and Hurtado Albir, 2001; Campbell, 1991; Waddington, 2001).

How to assess, on the other hand, is related to the *methods* and *instruments* of evaluation. The method may be, for example, *holistic* or *analytical* (Larose, 1998; Waddington, 2001). The holistic is more concerned with overall quality and purpose achievement. The analytical examines translation errors and good solutions (Waddington, 2001).

Instruments are evaluation models that can apply to a large number of situations. These models draw on a set of criteria and one or more specific evaluation methods. They may be under the form of texts to translate; translations to analyse, revise, or compare; multiple-choice tests; comparison exercises; isolated problems to solve; interviews or the like (Melis Martinez and Hurtado Albir, 2001). However, very few

instruments can be considered to be comprehensive. Only a reasoned combination of a good number of instruments may be said to provide sufficient data for the evaluator to measure the subject's translation competence.

Lack of measuring translation competence acquisition instruments constitutes one of the main weaknesses of Translation Studies research. Campbell (1991) attributes this to "the wealth of research on educational measurement in general and language assessment in particular" (p. 329).

Moreover, what goes on in the translator's mind is of great importance in the field of translation. This is why a debate between process-oriented and product-oriented approaches is characteristic of field research. A large part of research uses *Think-Aloud- Protocols*, or what is also called *verbal reporting*. It is a process-oriented instrument that consists in asking the subjects to verbalise their mental processes when carrying out a translation task, and in recording these information on what is called 'protocols' (Rydning, 2002). However, this instrument is criticised on the grounds that it is not specially designed for the field of translation studies, since it originally belongs to psychology. Moreover, the instrument is not able to account for unconscious mental processes (Orozco and Hurtado Albir, 2002). Hence, the description of the mental decisions taken by subjects will still be based on an interpretation of the data (Rydning, 2002).

As to measuring instruments specially designed for translation studies, the *translation task* and some computer programs, such as *Translog*, are the best known. Translog is a computer program designed by Arnt Lykke Jakobsen & Lasse Schou in 1998 (Rydning, 2002) to log all keyboard activity while a translator is carrying out a translation task. This includes pauses, corrections and electronic dictionary lookups (ibid.). The recorded data are expected to help understand the translator's mental processes and strategies.

The translation task, which is commonly believed as a product-oriented instrument, consists in giving the subjects a text to be translated according to a *brief*, i.e. a set of information and instructions concerning the text to be translated. This is usually followed by a specific questionnaire (Orozco and Hurtado Albir, 2002). The text includes the translation problems, attitude towards which the researcher intends to examine. The questionnaire is intended to elucidate the information the subjects' translations do not reveal, such as explanation of some choices, strategies used or opinions concerning the test's areas of difficulty.

This measuring instrument is in its turn rejected by some theorists. They hold that it is centred round the product with a focus on comparative structural analysis of the original text and the translation (Rydning, 2002). The main aim of measuring instruments is, however, to

gain insight into mental processes underlying the translation task, through observing the translation process itself (Campbell, 1991, p. 330).

Campbell (1991) on the other hand presents a model where he intends to demonstrate that a translation product is largely able to account for translation processes. This view is accepted in this study, and the evaluation of translated texts will be our main source of information as far as measuring students' progress is concerned.

1.5.1. Campbell's Developmental Scheme

Campbell's study (1991) is one of the few contributions that submitted translation evaluation to empirical study (Waddington, 2001). He investigates the extent to which translation tests, in this case a public examination, measure translation competence and account for processes involved in translations' production. He conducted a case study on a sample of renditions of a text from Arabic into English by non-native speakers of English. Campbell (1991) found that specific translation strategies and linguistic devices characterise every performance level. On this basis, he worked out a scheme of translation competence development composed of three stages. Each stage is identified through a number of criteria i.e. indicators of the subject's evolution. In the following description, each notion in italics is followed by its definition:

Stage 1:

o Substantial decrease in *omissions* i.e. "the lack, for a reason or another, of any target language item corresponding in a source language item" (p. 332)

Stage 2:

o Increase in word length

o Agreement with peers on *lexical transfers* i.e. rendering a source text lexical item by the standard corresponding one in the target language.

o Decrease in *direct translations* i.e. translations that stick to the source text's form.

o Increase in *shifts* i.e. " a target language item that is semantically accurate but grammatically different from the source language item" (p.332).

o Increase in *content words*, as opposed to *function words*.

o More *nominal style* as opposed to *verbal style*.

Stage 3:

o Decrease in text length, i.e. increase in text density.

o Increase in variety of vocabulary.

o Accurate spelling.

Campbell declares that this way of measuring evolution may help, among other situations, in entrance tests to translation courses. It helps

determine the candidate's level according to the outlined stages. This will help determine whether or not, starting the learning process from this point, the candidate is likely to attain translation competence given available time and instruction (Campbell, 1991, p. 340).

The study seems, however, to be based on linguistic features of the translations on the detriment of features revealing transfer and problem solving strategies. Overall translation quality, functional considerations, coherence and other features of higher textual levels are also not considered (Waddington, 2001).

1.5.2. Orozco and Hurtado Albir's Model

Construction of measuring translation competence acquisition instruments has been the central concern of Mariana Orozco's doctoral thesis (2000). The thesis was directed by M. C. Viladrich and A. Hurtado Albir from the University of Barcelona in Spain. Orozco and Hurtado Albir describe the suggested model in their article published in the translation journal *Meta* in 2001.

This set of measuring instruments aims to account for translation competence acquisition through three main aspects of performance. The model then includes three different tests. Each is expected to measure one element that the two theorists consider as *an observable indicator of*

translation competence acquisition. It is hence considered as a dependent variable. The first element is the way the subject deals with translation problems. The second concerns translation errors. And the third is related to general notions about translation. The two theorists state that all three are observable, has to do with all the stages of the translation process and involve the student's use of strategies to solve translation problems. This is why each element can be reliable as an indicator of translation competence acquisition.

As mentioned above then, one measuring instrument is designed to test the subject's behaviour when faced with translation problems (Translation Problems Instrument). A second measures performance with regard to translation errors (Translation Errors Instrument). And a third measures translation notions (Translation Notions Instrument). All three are to be conducted once at the moment students enter translation course and once at the end of the first year i.e. after eight months. Individual and group evolution is then measured.

Translation Notions Instrument is a questionnaire whose aim is to gain some insight into the knowledge students have about general notions related to translation. The nature of translation, translation unit, and translation strategies are some examples. This makes sense as the translator's decision making is determined by the idea he has about the nature of translation, its objective, its priorities and the like.

Consequently, the test provides an explanatory background to the process of translation production of each subject.

Translation Problems Instrument investigates whether or not the student detects the problem, and how he deals with it if he does. The test contains two parts. The first consists in a task of translating a text including many types of translation problems that are previously identified by the evaluator. Each problem involves a skill or knowledge the evaluator seeks measuring. The text is accompanied by a translation brief that contains useful information about the text, its purpose, and the evaluator's instructions. A second part of the test is a questionnaire used to provide the information that the translation task fails to provide.

The researchers adopt Nord's (1996) perception of translation errors, which states that it arises from an unsolved or an inappropriately solved translation problem. Translation Errors Instrument provides the students with a text to translate. Translations are then corrected and errors classified. Successful solutions, i.e. instances where the student appropriately solves a translation problem, are also considered. The researchers point out that the investigators are free to set error categories as fits their purpose.

This model, state the researchers, is designed to evaluate the students' written translations into the mother tongue. They should therefore be modified to evaluate translations into the foreign language.

Furthermore, whatever modifications are brought, the instruments may apply to all situations where a teacher or a researcher needs to measure translation students' progress.

1.5.3. Waddington's Experiment

Christopher Waddington (2001) investigates the validity of four methods of evaluating student translations, currently used in European and Canadian translation faculties. The first and the second methods are exclusively based on error analysis. In the first, errors are categorized. Each error is attributed either one or two-point penalisation. Successful solutions are awarded with either a one or two plus points. The second method distinguishes between errors according to their impact on the transfer of meaning. An error that has no impact on transfer is a language error, as opposed to a translation error. As a result, it costs only one point. Translation errors may be penalised with 2 to 12 depending on the seriousness of the negative effect it has on meaning.

The third method adopts a holistic approach. It treats the translation as a whole. It examines three different aspects: accuracy of transfer of source text content, quality of expression in target language, and degree of task completion. Task completion refers to how adequate the final product is to the sought objectives of the translation. And the fourth one

is a combination of both approaches. These methods are applied "*to the correction of translations of part of an authentic text done by students under exam conditions*" (Waddington, 2001, p. 313).

Waddington studies the four methods' validity in relation to 17 external criteria. That is to say, the results obtained from the application of the methods to 64 student translations are compared to the results obtained by the students in seventeen different external evaluations. Waddington (2001) explains:

"These criteria can be grouped under six headings:

(i) knowledge of languages; (ii) results in intelligence tests; (iii) students' self-assessment; (iv) teachers' assessment of the students; (v) students' average mark in their translation course (Spanish-English); and (vi) marks in other translation exams."

(p. 317)

The translations are corrected using the four methods separately. Results are compared with each other, and with those of the external variables. The validity study reveals that all four methods proved to be equally valid, in spite of the considerable differences that exist between them. Waddington states that these results are explained by the care with which each method is prepared and applied.

Conclusion

This chapter provided theoretical basis for the paper's concepts as well as underlying assumptions. The first part addressed the translator's linguistic and cultural knowledge as reflected in the literature. The second presented a review of the main approaches to the term and the nature of translation competence. The third part explored some aspects of translation as an activity, like translation problems and responsibility. Then it attempted to understand the interaction, if any, between the processes of language learning and translation competence acquisition. The aim of these three parts has been to analyse the needs of a translation course in order to gain awareness of its real objectives.

The fourth part supplied an overview of some examples of foreign translation faculties. The overview described their students' selection systems. Then, views of some foreign translation teachers and scholars about the selection issue were presented. The aim has been to look at the way foreign faculties and teachers perceive the prerequisites of learning translation.

Finally, three models of measuring translation acquisition were described. This has been an attempt to give an idea of a certain kind of research tools, one of which has been used in this paper.

The next chapter exposes the methodology design and research procedures of this study.

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Chapter Two

METHODOLOGY DESIGN

</div>

Introduction

This chapter exposes the methods and the procedures used in this study. It is divided into two sections. The first describes the quantitative part of the study, namely the *ex post facto* experiment; and the second, the qualitative one.

2.1. The *Ex Post Facto* Study

This section describes the quantitative part of the study. First, a reminder of the research questions and hypotheses is presented. Second, operational definitions of variables are provided. Third, choice of methods is justified. Fourth, sampling and data collection procedures are explained. Finally, data analysis is described.

2.1.1. Research Questions

This part of the study investigates the following questions:

- Are linguistic and cultural knowledge prerequisites to learning translation? More specifically:

o Could the quality of translation competence acquisition be explained by prior linguistic and cultural knowledge?

o Is there a positive relationship between prior linguistic and cultural knowledge, and better translation learning?

o What is the strength of this relationship? In other words: Is it systematic?

2.1.2. Operational Definitions of Variables

2.1.2.1. Dependent variable

As the study's title suggests, the dependent variable is *learning translation*. It is also referred to as **Translation Competence Acquisition** (Orozco and Hurtado Albir, 2002). In this study, this variable is measured through the subjects' grades on translation examinations. Therefore, the measurement scale of this variable is the interval scale.

2.1.2.2. Independent variables

The first independent variable is *prior linguistic competence*. It is measured through the subjects' means of scores in English and Arabic Baccalaureate examinations. It is, hence, measured at the interval scale as well.

The second independent variable is *prior cultural knowledge*. It is measured through the students' means of : History, Geography and

Philosophy scores in the Baccalaureate examinations, in addition to the general mean. This measure is represented at the interval scale, too.

2.1.3. Choice of Method

This study investigates the relationship between prior linguistic and cultural knowledge, on the one hand, and subsequent translation competence acquisition on the other. Two characteristics of this issue determined the choice of the appropriate method. First, observing this relationship implies a relatively long period of time. Learning should be given sufficient time before considering that it could be clearly observable. Second, the independent variables are not susceptible to be manipulated; they have already occurred.

The experimental method was, therefore, ruled out in this case. On the other hand, data gathered through a survey seemed to be less useful if we could think of a way to observe *facts* rather than *opinions*. A differential experiment, hence, appeared to fit the study before time constraints were realised. In a differential experiment, two groups that differ on the basis of a pre-existing variable are chosen and observed. The variable differentiating them is the independent variable. In the case of this study, it is linguistic and cultural knowledge. The groups are then compared according to the research question and its dependent variable.

In the case of this study, two different groups could well be chosen. One would possess significantly more prior knowledge than the other. Then the groups would be observed and compared according to the quality of their translation learning. The constraint is that this experiment would entail a long observation time before any observable translation competence acquisition could occur. Thus, lack of time led us to eliminate the choice of this design.

The method we found most appropriate is the *ex post facto* study. The meaning of this phrase in the context of social and educational research is "after the fact" or "retrospectively" (Cohen & Manion, 1980, p. 143). This method is used to investigate the issues in which the independent variable has already occurred and, hence, could not be manipulated. The researcher then:

> " studies the independent variable or variables in retrospect for their possible relationship to, or effects on, the dependent variable or variables. The researcher is thus examining retrospectively the effects of a naturally occurring event on a subsequent outcome with view to establishing a causal link between them."

(Cohen & Manion, 1980, p. 143-4).

Adopting this method, then, solved the problems of time and lack of manipulation, and suited the type of variables investigated.

2.1.4. The *Ex Post Facto* Design

The *ex post facto* method may be implemented through two different designs. The one that fits this study is referred to as the *criterion group study*. The design of this type of research (see figure 1) consists in choosing two groups of subjects (G1 and G2). The dependent variable(s) should be present in one group and absent from the other. Of course, in the case of this investigation, we should talk about the *degree* of presence rather than absolute presence or absence of the dependent variable. Then the groups are compared in terms of the hypothesised independent variable(s) (X), which had already occurred.

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                              G1

     X

                              G2

     Past    ◄──────    Present
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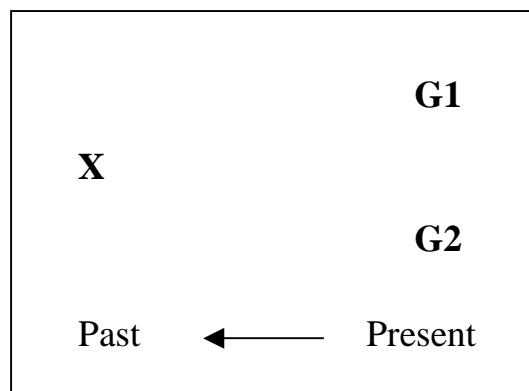
Figure1: The *ex post fact* design adapted from" (Cohen & Manion, 1980).

This type of design is said to bridge *"the gap between descriptive research methods on the one hand and true experimental research on the other"* (Cohen & Manion, 1980, p. 144). Lack of manipulation of variables makes it belong to the range of descriptive methods, while the fact of choosing, observing and comparing two groups of subjects makes it seem like an experiment.

2.1.5. Sampling

The participants of this experiment were third year Translation students of Batna University. We have chosen third year and not second or first because we assumed that they should have attained a relatively advanced stage in the learning process. This advanced stage represents the dependent variable of the study. In addition, we have chosen third and not fourth year students because there exists no fourth year students in Batna Translation Department. The third year students represent the first class in this newly founded department.

Our sampling technique was based, as already explained, on the assumed "presence" and "absence" of the dependent variable. In other words, two groups have been chosen. Students who obtained the highest grades on the 1st semester exam of Arabic-English-Arabic translation

constituted the 1st group. Those who obtained the lowest grades constituted the 2nd group.

The number of third year students is 141. The sample was formed with 44 students, which represents 31% of the population. Each group contained 22 students. As our sampling was based upon a specific criterion, control over other types of criteria, like sex and age was limited. Nevertheless, sex proportions were respected as much as possible. This is explained in the following table.

Table 1: Gender proportions in the *ex post facto* sample

Group Category	Population N.	%	Group1 N.	%	Group 2 N.	%
Male	45	31%	8	36%	5	23%
Female	96	69%	14	64%	17	77%
Total	141	100%	22	100%	22	100%

For the specific purpose of this study, most importance was given to prior knowledge regardless of its sources. Therefore, the students' academic background and age are not variables this study needs to control. Indeed these variables might contribute to their subjects' knowledge.

2.1.6. Data Collection Procedures

This experiment investigates the following questions:

- Are linguistic and cultural knowledge prerequisites to learning translation? More specifically,

  o Could translation scores be explained by prior scores in language and cultural disciplines?

  o Is there a positive relationship between prior scores in language and cultural disciplines and subsequent translation scores?

  o What is the strength of this relationship? In other words: Is it systematic?

To answer these research questions, three sets of data were collected. The first represented the dependent variable: translation competence. The 30 highest and the 30 lowest grades in the 1st Arabic-English-Arabic translation exam were recorded. These scores represent students' performance in only one test: that of the third year. For the sake of validity, the mean of each student's third and second years' scores was calculated. Then only the 22 highest and the 22 lowest means were kept for analysis. (See appendix C for all sets of scores concerning both groups).

The second set of data concerns the first independent variable, namely students' linguistic competence as measured on the Baccalaureate exams. It is represented by the mean of each student's score in Arabic and in English exams. The scores were not used separately because this study is not concerned with the effect of each language competence apart. It is rather interested in overall linguistic competence. This is why individual means were obtained from each pair of English and Arabic scores.

The third set of data represents the second independent variable, namely students' cultural knowledge. As stated earlier, it is the mean obtained from three scores: History and Geography, Philosophy, and the general Baccalaureate mean. It is assumed that the obtained scores would measure the students' achievement in the academic disciplines studied during the third year of secondary school, with a specific importance given to the mentioned disciplines. (See Appendix C)

2.1.7. Statistical Analysis

Data collected within the *ex post facto* experiment were quantitative data. This, obviously, called for quantitative analysis. Two different types of analysis were used to answer each of the research questions. Statistically speaking, these questions read as follows:

a. Is there a significant difference between group A's and group B's language means?

b. Is there a significant difference between group A's and group B's culture means?

c. Is there any correlation between scores in translation and prior scores in language and culture?

d. What is the strength of this relationship? In other words: Is it systematic?

Indeed, a *T-test* is used to investigate questions (a) and (b), and *Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient*, questions (c) and (d).

2.1.7.1. Means Comparison: Research Questions (a) and (b)

To answer these research questions, the following hypotheses were set:

H_{1a}: Group A's language mean is significantly higher than that of group B.

H_{1b}: Group A's Culture mean is significantly higher than that of group B.

A T-test was used to compare each independent variable pair of data. Therefore, the null hypotheses (H_{0a}) and (H_{0b}) were stated as follows:

H_{0a}: Group A's language mean is not significantly higher than that of group B.

H_{0b}: Group A's Culture mean is not significantly higher than that of group B.

The next step in the analysis procedure was the choice of a probability of error level (alpha level). The decision was set at a conservative level i.e. $\alpha < 0.01$. This decision implies that the present study tolerated no more than a probability of 1% that the differences between means be chance occurrence. The type of significance level this study adopts was *directional* (as opposed to non-directional). This means that the study expected one specific mean to be higher than the other. Thus the study predicted the direction of the difference.

2.1.7.1.1. Language Means Comparison

Means comparison concerning each independent variable was then made. To start with, this is a description of the comparison made between the **first independent variable means** i.e. language means. The T- test formula entails a series of calculations before the T-value is calculated. These are each group's scores' mean, the difference between both means, the standard deviation (SD) of each group's scores and the square value of each (SD).

- A group's mean formula is as follows: $\overline{X} = \dfrac{\Sigma X}{N}$

Where $\overline{X}$ = mean, X= scores, N= number of scores and Σ = sum.

- Group A's mean $(\overline{X}_A)$ = $\dfrac{305.75}{22}$ = 13.90

$\overline{X}_A = 13.90$

- Group B's mean $(\overline{X}_B)$ = $\dfrac{230.02}{22}$ = 10.46

$\overline{X}_B = 10.46$

- Difference between means = $\overline{X}_A - \overline{X}_B = 13.90 - 10.46 = 3.44$

$\overline{X}_A - \overline{X}_B = 3.44$

- Standard deviation is calculated as follows: SD = $\sqrt{\dfrac{\Sigma(X - \overline{X})^2}{N}}$

Standard deviation, then, requires that the mean $(\overline{X})$ be subtracted from each score $(X - \overline{X})$. Each of the resulting values is squared $(X - \overline{X})^2$, then added up (Σ). After this, the sum (Σ) should be divided by the number of scores (N=22). The result's square root gives us the standard deviation.

$SD_A = \sqrt{\dfrac{63.97}{22}} = \sqrt{2.91} = 1.71$

$SD_B = \sqrt{\dfrac{74.23}{22}} = \sqrt{3.37} = 1.84$

- The square value of $SD_A = 1.71^2 = 2.92$

- The square value of SD $_B$ = 1.84² = 3.38

The T-ratio formula is as follows: $\dfrac{\overline{X}_A - \overline{X}_B}{\sqrt{\dfrac{SD_A{}^2}{N_A} + \dfrac{SD_B{}^2}{N_B}}}$

$t = \dfrac{3.44}{\sqrt{\dfrac{2.92}{22} + \dfrac{3.38}{22}}} = 6.49$

$$\boxed{t = 6.49}$$

Consulting a table of critical values of *t,* provided us with the value our

T-ratio should exceed to be statistically significant. Our sample size was

44, which made a degree of freedom (*df* = *n*-2) of 42. This means that,

with this sample size, any T value below the critical value would have

occurred by chance alone. The alpha level we set for this study was:

α < 0.01 directional. Therefore, the *t* critical value was 2.423. It is

obvious that the observed *t*-value largely exceeds the critical *t*-value.

$t_{obs} > t_{crit}$ (6.49 > 2.423)

Thus, the means difference was statistically significant. This

permitted the rejection of the null hypothesis suggesting that G$_A$ mean of

language Baccalaureate exams scores is not significantly higher than that

of G$_B$. In addition, at p < 0.01, we could say that 99% of mean differences are due to factors other than chance.

2.1.7.1.2. Culture Means Comparison

Secondly, the same steps were followed to calculate the t-test concerning **the second independent variable** (*) i.e. Culture means. Following is the list of the values leading to the calculation of the T-value.

- $\overline{X}_{A}* = 11.03$

- $\overline{X}_{B}* = 10.98$

- $\overline{X}_{A}* - \overline{X}_{B}* = 0.05$

- SD $_A* = \sqrt{\dfrac{89.83}{22}} = \sqrt{4.08} = 2.02$

  SD $_A* = 2.02$

- SD $_B* = \sqrt{\dfrac{50.34}{22}} = \sqrt{2.29} = 1.51$

  SD $_B* = 1.51$

$$\text{\textbf{T-ratio*}} = \frac{0.05}{\sqrt{\dfrac{(2.02)^2}{22} + \dfrac{(1.51)^2}{22}}} = 0.17$$

$$t = 0.17$$

It is clear that the T observed value (0.17) does not exceed the critical T value (2.423).

$t_{obs} < t_{crit}$ (0.17 < 2.423)

In this case, the null hypothesis, saying that G_A cultural mean is not significantly higher than that of G_B, was accepted.

Following is a table summarising all the previous statistical analyses.

Table 2: Means, Standard Deviations and T-values

Independent Variables	Group A		Group B		T values	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t obs	t crit
Culture	11.03	2.02	11.98	1.51	0.17*	2.423
Language	13.90	1.71	10.46	1.84	6.49*	2.423

*$p < 0.01$; $df = 42$

2.1.7.2. Correlation: Research Questions (c) & (d)

- To which extent can we say that the relationship between subsequent scores in translation and prior scores in language is systematic?

In the previous analysis procedure, the second independent variable i.e. cultural knowledge was found to have no significant relation to the students' translation scores. As a result, only one independent variable, i.e. language scores, remained to be investigated in the second research question.

This question is concerned with the magnitude of the relationship existing between one dependent variable and one independent variable. These variables were both measured at an interval scale. Therefore, the appropriate statistics procedure was *Pearson product-moment*. It is one of the best known techniques used to measure *correlation* or *association* between two variables (Cohen & Manion, 1980). In other words, it measures the two variables' "*tendency to vary consistently*" (Cohen & Manion, 1980, p.126). Consequently, this type of analysis fits the mentioned research question.

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (*r*) is a statistical value that indicates the strength and the direction of the relationship between variables. It can be as high as (+1) when the relationship is positive. This implies that if one variable increases, so does the other and

vice versa. When the relationship is negative *r* can have a value as high as (-1). This means that when one variable increases, the other decreases and vice versa. When there is a weak or no relationship between the variables, the coefficient can be as low as (0). To sum up, the nearer is *r* to (1) or to (-1) the stronger is the relationship and vice versa. If it is preceded by (-), the relationship is negative. Otherwise, it is positive. (Brown, 1988; Cohen & Manion, 1980).

The research hypotheses this analysis intended to test were the following:

H $_1$: There is a systematic positive relationship between language scores and subsequent translation scores. In other words,

H $_1$: the higher the prior language scores the higher the subsequent translation scores.

The null hypothesis was also stated so that it could be tested as well.

H$_0$: There is no systematic positive relationship between prior language scores and subsequent translation scores.

Statistically speaking:

H$_1$: $r > 0$

H$_0$: $r = 0$

Alpha Decision Level

$\alpha < 0.01$ directional.

This decision implied that there was only 1% probability (p) that rejecting the null hypothesis be an error. In other words, it meant that 99% of the correlation represented by *r* was due to factors other than chance. "Directional" meant that this study assumed that any relationship proved to exist between the two variables would be positive.

Calculating the Pearson Coefficient

The formula is as follows:

$$r = \frac{n(\Sigma XY) - (\Sigma X)(\Sigma Y)}{\sqrt{\left[n\Sigma X^2 - (\Sigma X)^2\right]\left[n\Sigma Y^2 - (\Sigma Y)^2\right]}}$$

$$r = \frac{274307,99 - 264094,43}{\sqrt{\left[298864,57 - 287049,49\right]\left[257294,4825 - 242975,06\right]}}$$

$$r = \frac{10213,56}{13007.12}$$

$$\boxed{r = \mathbf{0.79}}$$

In order to know if this observed value of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was statistically significant, we consulted a table of *r* critical values. With a sample size of 44, which made a degree of freedom of 42 ($df = n\text{-}2$), $r_{crit} = 0.3578$. It was obvious that: $r_{obs} > r_{crit}$

(0.79 > 0.3578). At p < 0.01 directional, there was only 1% probability that this observed correlation coefficient was due to chance. This result permitted the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0: $r = 0$). And as the relationship was expected to be positive, only one alternative hypothesis was there (H_1 : $r > 0$). This is, hence, automatically accepted with only 1% probability that the observed correlation ($r_{obs} = 0.79$) was due to chance alone.

Once the significance of the observed Pearson correlation coefficient had been established remained to investigate its *meaningfulness*. One way to do so is to examine its magnitude. It is clear that it reflects a strong relationship since it is much closer to (1), which indicates perfect correlation, than it is to zero, which indicates no correlation. Another way to check the outcome's meaningfulness is to calculate the *coefficient of determination* (r^2). This coefficient provides us with the percentage of variation of each variable that is due to the variation of the other i.e. the *covariance*. It is calculated simply by squaring the value of the observed *r*.

$r = 0.79$

$r^2 = 0.62$

This coefficient implied that 62% of the two variables correlated with each other, which is quite meaningful. Only 38%, the remaining of the relationship, could then be explained by other variables.

The following table summarises the process of hypothesis testing.

Table 3: Summary of the Correlational Analysis

H_1: $r > 0$
H_0: $r = 0$
$n = 44$
$\alpha < 0.01$. Directional
$df = 42$
r obs $= 0.79$
r crit $= 0.3578$
r obs $> r$ crit   ($0.79 > 0.3578$)

At $p < 0.01$ H_0 is rejected and H_1 accepted.

$r^2 = 0.62$
62% of covariance are accounted for.

The following scatter diagram represents correlation between each student's translation score and his Baccalaureate language mean.

Figure 2 : Correlation Between Language Scores and Translation Scores
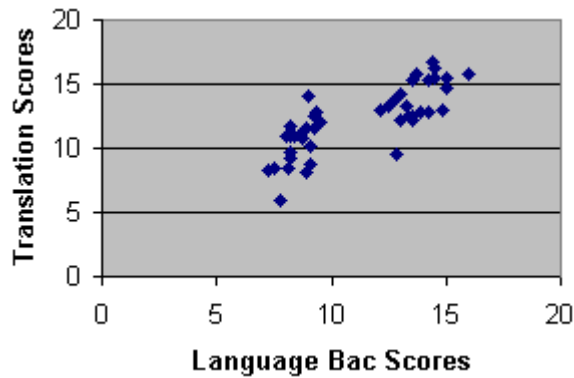
This pattern indicates a strong correlation. The gap in the middle of the two groups of points represents the absent marks of average students, who were not included in the sample. It is clear that the points of the whole population would form a linear shape that goes up toward the right. This is a typical shape for a strong positive correlation. This is supported by the assumption that correlations ranging from 0.65 to over 0.85 "*make possible group predictions*" (Cohen & Manion, 1980, pp. 138-9). This means that, with this strong correlation, it is possible to predict a student's translation score from his language score, which suggests that the relationship is systematic.

Figure 5: Overall Students' Performance on the English General Culture Test
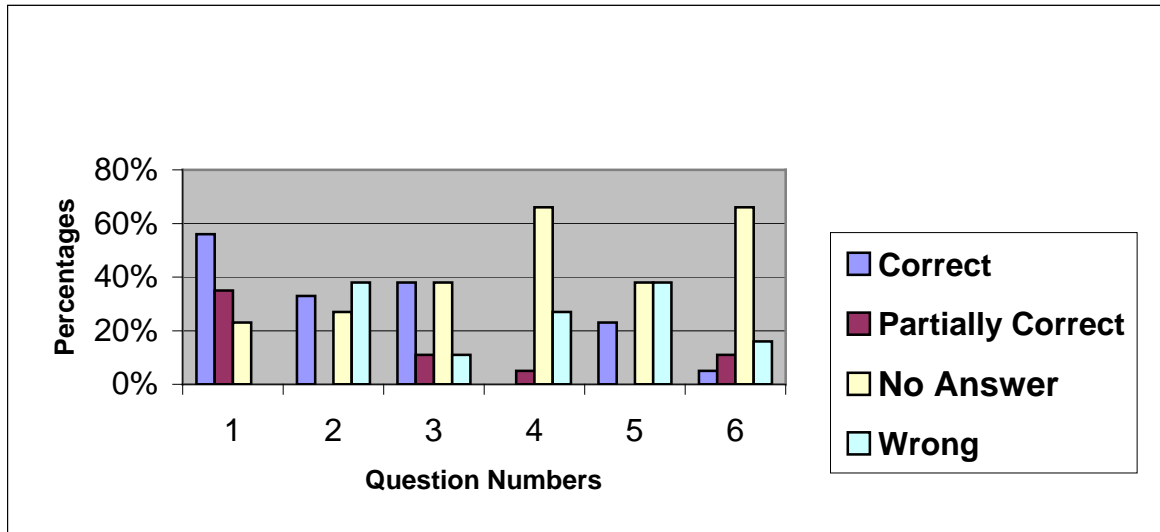
Qualitative description

Question one is correctly answered by 56% of the students. What is worth mentioning is that most of them don't write the correct spelling of film titles. They simply transcribe the words as they heard them. The least we can deduce from this is the lack of interest in accurate information about the movie. Partially correct answers reflected, for example, confusion between titles or between British and American actors or movies.

Second World War is one of the main subjects of the History program of third year of secondary school. Winston Churchill is, therefore, frequently mentioned in the course. This is not reflected in the high percentage of wrong answers: 38% and "no answer": 27%. To

illustrate this better, here are some answer examples: Churchill is "*a German soldier*", "*an ancient president of the USA*", "*the commandant of the Americans during the Cold War*".

The correct answers of the third question (38%) were all a literal translation of the Arabic equivalent of "World Trade Centre", which is quite comprehensible. The partially correct answers (11%) included the "Pentagon". The wrong answers (11%) and the "no answer" cases (38%) seemed to reflect a considerable disinterest in what's happening in the world.

As to question four, only two students (6%) wrote "*Times*". We considered it as a partially correct answer because we assumed that it was just a failure to write "Thames" correctly. The rest either did not answer (66%), or answered wrongly (26%). "*The Amazon*", "*the Danube*" and the "*Rayne*" are examples of wrong answers.

Question five concerned the British currency. Not more than 23% answered correctly –some in Arabic. The rest either did not answer at all (38%), or answered incorrectly (38%). These are some wrong answers: "*Lira*", "*Oro*", "*Dollar*", and "*American Dollar*".

The last question was about American political parties. "No answer" cases represented 66% of the sample, partially correct answers, 11% and correct, 6%. This was unexpected because, as stated earlier, the presidential campaign was the first headline in every news edition of the

day. The two most important American Political Parties were mentioned each time. In addition, what characterised an important number of wrong answers, which represented 16% of the sample, is that students did not understand the question at all. Some answers were: "*war and race toward weapons*", "*Dollar and petrol*", "*Washington and New York*".

2.2.2.5.3.2. Arabic Culture Test

Quantitative Description

Following is a quantitative description of the test's results.

Table 7: Classification and Quantification of Arabic Culture Answers

Answer number	Correct	Partially Correct	No Answer	Wrong
1	15%		46%	38%
2	16%	77%	0%	5%
3	53%	38%	7%	0%
4	11%		77%	11%
5	22%		50%	27%
6	50%		16%	33%

n = 31

Figure 6: Overall Students' Performance on the Arabic General Culture Test
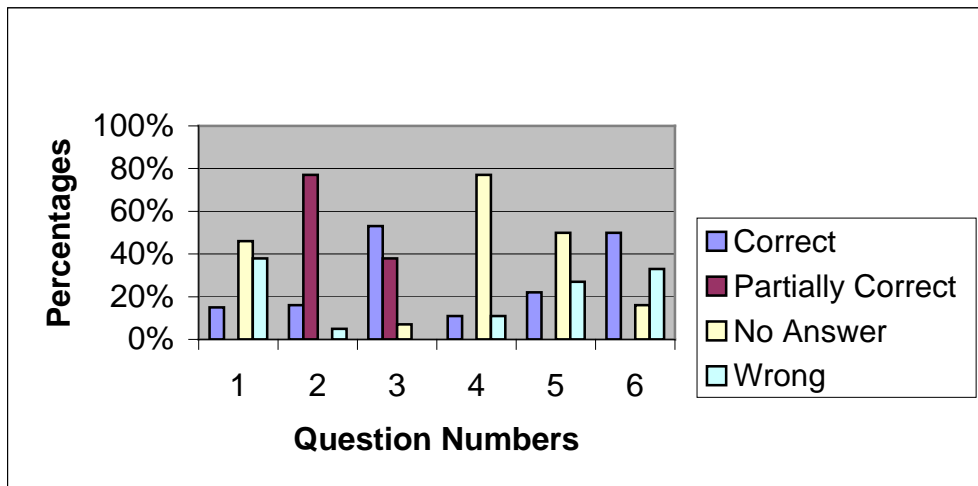
Qualitative Description

The results of the general cultural test were revealing. The highest correct answers percentage wasn't more than 53%. The lowest wasn't more than 11%.

The largest proportion of correct answers concerned the question about the Sunnite Traditions. Still, many wrong and partially correct answers showed fundamental gaps in the students' knowledge. Many included the Shiite Tradition within the Sunnite ones. Many others did not give more than two of the four traditions. The "no answer" cases were considered as "don't know" responses. Only 7% of the sample did not know anything about the answer.

The next largest proportion of right answers concerned the question about Israel. It might be supposed that 50% is a relatively high percentage. However, this information is part of the History course of

third year of secondary school. In other words, the students, being freshmen, should have been exposed to this information only some months ago. In addition, it should be noted that this very information is constantly mentioned on TV programs because of the Palestinian Issue.

The third largest correct answers percentage is related to the question about the Frankfurt's Annual Book Fair. It is, nevertheless, clearly low (22%). The fact that this famous book fair devoted the year 2004 to the Arabic Culture was an important current event. It was mentioned daily on TV. One might be tempted to deduce that 22% represents the students who are interested in the Arab World and International news.

Much more revealing is the results concerning the question of countries situated on the frontier with Algeria. Only 16% gave a fully correct answer. The 77% partially correct answers indicated a considerable knowledge gap. Some examples might be those that dropped important countries like Libya from the list; others, those that included Egypt, Sudan or Senegal in the list.

The fact that only 15% knew the capital of Bahrain is not very surprising. What could reveal much more about the students' knowledge lies in the following examples. Some students did not confuse "Almanama" with other capitals, but with other Golf countries like Qatar and the Emirates. They seemed to know a lot of names that they heard in

a way or in another, but not which of them is a country and which is a city.

The lowest amount of right answers corresponded to the historical personality Abd al-Rahman al-Dakhil who founded the Umayyad State in *al-Andalus* in 756. No more than 11% knew the answer. This seemed to imply that the majority of the subjects do not watch TV serials of historical character.

2.2.3. Third Year Translations' Evaluation

2.2.3.1. Objectives

This part of the qualitative study attempts to evaluate a sample of third year students' translations. Its aim is to determine the general level of third year students' translation competence.

2.2.3.2. Research Questions

Through this evaluation, we intend to answer the following question:

- What is the level of translation competence acquired in three years of study by students selected in the established way?

The process of evaluation was guided by the following questions:

- How is the quality of their translations?

- o Is the original meaning conserved?

- o Are the source text key characteristics preserved?

- o What is the quality of expression in the target language?

- o Are translation problems, if any, solved?

2.2.3.3. Sampling

The sample included 30 translations. They were produced for the third year first semester exam in Arabic-English-Arabic translation. The translations were randomly selected. The sample size constitutes 22 % of the whole population.

2.2.3.4. Tests Materials and Administration

To start with, a general description of the involved source texts should be presented. The provided English source text (ST) is a translation, itself, of a Japanese literary text. This information is not supplied; however, it could be deduced from the text's source (see Appendix D). The text was about 100 words long, and the students were given one hour and a half to translate it. As it was a translation from Japanese, it included almost no problems of translating English culture. The text contained few literary linguistic devices: mainly some metaphors in the first sentence.

On the other hand, the provided Arabic ST was originally written in Arabic. Similarly, it was about 100 words long, and one hour and a half is the time students were given to translate it. It had an academic character. The language was modern and formal, and the sentences, rather long. Content was empty of purely Arabic cultural elements.

Both texts' styles, however, reflected the character of their respective languages. This can be perceived, among other things, in their use of tenses, sentence length, typical expressions and specific structures.

2.2.3.5. Translations' Evaluation

The evaluation was mainly qualitative. Levels were, however, determined and translations belonging to each level, quantified. The objective was to provide information about the proportions of the existing levels in relation to the sample, and hence to the population.

The evaluation method we adopted is an adaptation of Waddington's (2001) *holistic method* described in this study's literature review. In fact, Waddington's method was meant only for translation into English as a foreign language. As a result, we had also to adapt the method to the requirements of translation from English as a foreign language into Arabic as a first language.

2.2.3.4.1. Arabic-English translations' evaluation

Qualitative Description

Arabic-English translations' evaluation was made according to three aspects of the students' performance: quality of expression in the target language (TL), dealing with translation problems, and accuracy of transfer of ST content. As designed by Waddington (2001), a scale of five levels has been set up. Each level was described in a qualitative way, so that a clear idea be made about the relevant students' performance. Following is a table describing the method.

Table 8: Description of Arabic-English Translation Levels

Level	Accuracy of transfer of ST content	Expression in the target language (TL)	Dealing with translation problems
5	Complete transfer of source text information; only minor revision needed to reach professional standard.	Almost all the translation reads like a piece originally written in English; there may be minor grammatical, lexical or spelling errors.	Successful
4	Almost complete transfer; there may be one or two insignificant inaccuracies; requires certain amount of revision to reach professional standard.	Large sections read like a piece originally written in English; there are a number of grammatical, lexical or spelling errors.	Almost completely successful
3	Transfer of the general idea(s) but with a number of lapses in accuracy; needs considerable revision	Certain parts read like a piece originally written in English, but others read like a	Adequate

	to reach professional standard	translation; there are a considerable number of grammatical, lexical and spelling errors.	
2	Transfer undermined by serious inaccuracies; thorough revision required to reach professional standard.	Almost the entire text reads like a translation; there are continual grammatical, lexical or spelling errors.	Inadequate
1	Totally inadequate transfer of ST content; the translation is not worth revising.	The candidate reveals a total lack of ability to express himself adequately in English.	Totally inadequate

Source: Adapted from Waddington (2001)

Level One

The translations found to fit into the first level were characterized by a total incapacity of expression in English. There are many omissions, and no correct sentences could be found. A total dependence on Arabic, Algerian and French linguistic backgrounds is obvious. Language is awkward and content, incoherent. Sentences without any logical meaning are frequent. Some examples are presented in the following tables.

Table 9: Examples of Level One Translations of Some Arabic Source Text Items.

ST item	Translation	Comment
First sentence of the ST	*"So if we want to go back in our humanity, and lating (with Travelling) we Travel with the machine and knowing what we do*	Awkwardness and incoherence. Probable incomprehension of the ST idea. The use of "*lating*" to translate "نظل" seems

	with it."	to mean "lasting", which is in its turn inappropriate. The whole sentence fails to transfer the meaning of the first ST sentence, and of whatever other meaning. <u>N.B.</u> The item "go back" is provided in the exam's glossary.
-------------	*"they were may go back of human, and they used the motor have to make of good culture…"*	<u>N.B.</u> The first word of the whole translation "they" is not capitalized.
--------------	*"If we went back us of Humanity…"*	----------------
الإرادة	• *Abilité* • *volonté* • *désir* • *volentine*	• Use of French words. • Attempt to adapt a French word.
علينا أن نضع نصب أعيننا حقيقة من الأهمية بمكان عظيم	• *"they went to take of eys the right is important"* • *"we will put our intention in an important reality in a good place"* • *"we must to look very well the reality of important…"*	Total inability of expression in English.
لا ثقافة بدون منهج، كما أن لا إرادة بدون منهج	*"No way if no volonty and no way if no culture"*	---------------
تثقف	*"agriculte"*	Totally inadequate
استنهضت	*"exitate"*	--------------
و رسمت لك بالعزم و الإرادة منهجا معينا للمطالعة على أن يكون ذلك في أناة و صبر و تأمل فاحص دقيق	• *"I draw for you a volonté a methode to revising, all this going to suffer and endure and a hope very precise"*	Total inability of expression in English.

(Note: ----------- means: "the same thing as in the previous case")

Level Two

Second level translations were characterised by continuous vocabulary, grammatical and spelling errors. The frequency and the seriousness of these errors indicated incapacity of accurate transfer of whatever idea. It could be noticed that the student was willing to express a precise idea, which implied a more or less sound comprehension of the Arabic text. The student seemed to struggle not to omit items, trying to find an equivalent. However, using items from the Arabic, Algerian and French linguistic backgrounds was quite perceptible. The following table presents some examples of translation phenomena characterising this level.

Table 10: Examples of Level Two Translations of Some Arabic Source Text Items

ST item	Translation examples	Comment
الإرادة	• *Volenty* • *Wantness*	• Anglicising a French word • Lack of vocabulary accuracy
لن...إلا إذا...	You can never…*just if,* …*but if,*	Lack of knowledge of the appropriate equivalent (unless) leading to inappropriate literal translation, hence to meaning inaccuracy.
منهج	• *Road,* • *way,* • *direction,* • *mithodry* • *doctrine*	Lack of vocabulary knowledge
الأدب	• *Lettre,*	Clear use of French

	• *letterary*	background
الآلة	*appareil*	---------------
فعلينا أن نضع نصب أعينناحقيقة من الأهمية بمكان عظيم	• *"We should put besides/ between/in our eyes…"* • *" we must see a reality of the importance in a high place"*	Inappropriate literal translations
نظل	• "to still" • "a lot of time"	• The majority of translations use "*still*" as a verb. • Inadequate translation
تثقف عقلك	• *Illitirate* your mind • *rich* your mind	Inadequate translation

Some examples of the errors found in this level's translations are

displayed in the following table:

Table 11: Examples of Linguistic Errors Found in Level Two Arabic-English
Translations

Correct form	Grammatical errors	Spelling errors	Lexical errors
If we want to	"If we want*ed* to" -Transfer of the Arabic use of past tense (إذا أردنا)		
…to keep on using…	"…to *kept* on using" Infinitive vs. past participle use.		
which		wish	
machine		mechine	
try		tray	
quantity		quentity	
chose		shose	
still		steel	
enough		inaf	
more		mor	
likewise			Like the wise
You can't get	"you can't getting"		
Culture and	The culture and the will		

will			
critics			commentors
moral			concret

Level Three

In addition to the characteristics presented earlier, translations belonging to the third level involved two contradictory levels of competence. On the one hand, a sound mastery of the English sentence structure was perceived. Besides, there were only a small number of inappropriate literal translation occurrences. This implied a certain amount of independence from first and second languages' logic.

On the other hand, there were relatively serious vocabulary errors leading to transfer inaccuracies. Signs of superficial comprehension of the ST were also noticed in some translations. Indeed, important details of principle ideas were often omitted. In addition, some grammatical errors related to certain grammatical categories such as irregular verbs, were frequent. Examples follow.

Table 12: Examples of Level Three Translations of Some Arabic Source Text Items

ST item	Translation	Comment
الجانب المعنوي النبيل فينا	• "our *abstract* side" • " *kind* aspect in ourselves"	• The ST intends "*moral*" • Better but inaccurate
و أن نظل ونحن نستخدم الآلة مسيطرين عليها	" *and remain using the machine as we like*"	The idea of "dominating the machine" is omitted.
مهما حاولت	"*even* you try"	Inadequate
منهج	• *basic*	• Inadequate

	• *plan*	• Inaccurate
تثقف عقلك	Culture your mind	Inappropriate
العزم	*Incontournable* decision	Interference with an irrelevant French word.
الإرادة	*"Good will"* *"willing"*	Inappropriate

Kinds of language errors made in this level's translations are

illustrated in the following table.

Table 13 : Examples of Linguistic Errors Found in Level Three Arabic-English
Translations

Correct forms	Lexical errors	Spelling errors	Grammatical errors
You have chosen			"you have choosed"
should		chould	
control		controle	
draw		drow	
which			who
careful		carreful	
analysis	analyse		
critics	criticians		
Want to	Wanna (stylistic)		

A number of adequate translations were found in level three texts.

Here are some examples.

Table 14: Examples of Level Three Adequate Translations to Some ST Items

ST item	Adequate translation
فعلينا أن نضع نصب أعيننا	• *"we must bear in mind an important reality"* • *"we should take into consideration the very important fact that…"*
و أن نظل و نحن نستخدم الآلة مسيطرين عليها	• *"and remain mastering the machine while using it"* • *"…having good command of it"*
استنهضت	*stimulated*
مهما حاولت	*"no matter how hard you try"*

No translations were found to fit in either of the remaining levels, namely four and five.

Quantitative Description

Frequency distribution of translations in relation to the five levels is displayed in the following table.

Table 15: Distribution of Arabic-English Translations Levels

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Students' number	8	14	8	0	0
Percentage	27%	46%	27%	0%	0%

n = 30

Figure 7: Distribution of Arabic-English Translation Competence Levels'
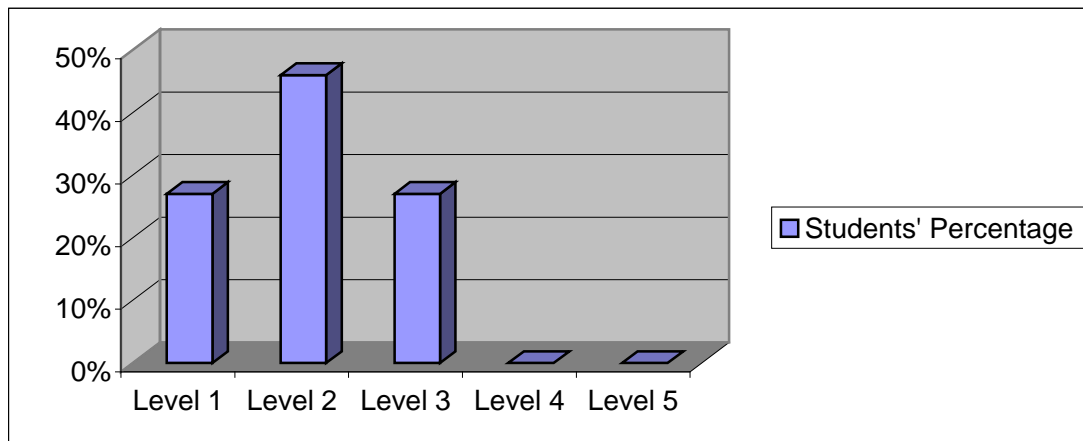
2.2.3.4.1. English-Arabic Translations' Evaluation Qualitative Description

The same procedure has been followed for English-Arabic translations' evaluation. There were only some slight differences regarding levels' characteristics. Levels description is summarised in table N. 16 presented in the following page.

Level	Comprehension of the ST	Accuracy of transfer of ST content	Quality of expression in Arabic	Dealing with translation prbms
5	Complete and deep understanding of the source text's content and characteristics	Complete transfer of source text information; almost no revision is needed to reach professional standard	All the translation reads like a piece originally written in Arabic; no errors of whatever kind are there	Successful
4	Almost complete understanding of the source text's content and characteristics; only some subtle details are overlooked.	Almost complete transfer; there may be one or two insignificant inaccuracies; requires minor revision to reach professional standard.	Large sections read like a piece originally written in Arabic. There are minor stylistic errors.	Almost completely successful
3	Many comprehension gaps are perceivable	Transfer of the general idea(s) but with a number of lapses in accuracy; needs considerable revision to reach professional standard	Certain parts read like a piece originally written in Arabic, but others read like a translation. There are a considerable number of stylistic errors, and few errors of other categories.	Adequate
2	Considerable comprehension gaps	Transfer undermined by serious inaccuracies; thorough revision required to reach professional standard.	Almost the entire text reads like a translation; there are many grammatical, lexical or spelling errors.	Inadequate
1	Failure in comprehension of the source text	Totally inadequate transfer of ST content; the translation is not worth revising.	Too many grammatical, lexical, stylistic or spelling errors.	Totally inadequate

Table 16 : Levels for Translations Evaluation. Source: Adapted from Waddington (2001)

Level One

Level one translations altered dramatically the content of the ST. We assume that this was the result of students' incapacity to properly understand English. Here is an example of a translation of the first ST sentence:

"في قرون ماضية كان يسكن بجانب الجبال، لكن جاسمين فالي الروماني كان في كوخ..."

Although students were writing in their first language, a considerable amount of serious errors were found. The following table presents some examples:

Table 17: Examples of Linguistic Errors Found in Level One English-Arabic Translations

Error	Category	Correct form
الخمود إلى النوم	Lexical	الخلود إلى النوم
بعظهم	Spelling	بعضهم
السماء العالي	grammatical	السماء العالية
معظم القرويون	grammatical	معظم القرويين

Level two

Level two translations altered the meaning as well but on a smaller scale. Lack of understanding led to inadequate translations that influenced smaller sections of the text. The following table presents some translation errors that influenced parts of the original meaning.

Table 18: Examples of Meaning Transfer Inaccuracies in Level Two English-Arabic Translations

ST item	Translation
"the paling of the stars"	"بريق النجوم"
"their grass-roofed houses"	"منازلهم المبنية من السعف"
"while the others sat on the tree roots"	"في حين يجلس البعض الآخر فوق الأغصان"
"but Jasmine Valley still remained wrapped in a blanket of the steaming summer heat"	"لكن وادي الياسمين مازال يصب في بحيرة"
	"لكن هضبة الياسمين مازالت تتذكر الماضي"
"they gathered under the greying sky"	"يتجمعون على الجليد الذائب"
"Some of them were leaning against tall trees"	"بعضهم يصارع الأشجار الطويلة "

Grammatical, spelling and lexical errors contained in some of this level's translations were similar to those of level one.

Level Three

Level three translations conserved the ST's general ideas. However, parts of the ST seemed to be barely understood. The majority, for instance, failed to understand the phrase " *waving their straw fans*". Translations such as: "يتبادلون نوادرهم/حكاياتهم الطريفة" were frequent.

As to grammatical, spelling and lexical errors, they were not too frequent in this level. Still, a considerable number of inaccuracies seemed to result from lack of sound linguistic competence in both English and Arabic. The following table will make the idea clearer.

Table 19: Examples of Level Three Inappropriate Translations of Some English Source Text Items

ST item	Translation	Comment
"The steaming summer heat"	"أشعة الصيف الدافئة" "دفء الصيف الحالم"	Confusion: *hot* vs. *warm*
"Valley"	"هضبة" "تله"	Lack of knowledge of the appropriate equivalent "وادي", probably because of the meaning of this word in the Algerian language
"Tree roots"	"جذوع الأشجار"	Confusion: "جذور" vs. "جذوع"
"Grass-roofed"	"الأسقف المكسوة بالحشيش"	Algerian background: الحشيش=العشب
"Relaxing"	"يأخذون راحتهم"	Algerian background
"Day began…and ended..."	"بدأ النهار...و بلغ نهايته..."	Inappropriate transfer of past tense use. In Arabic, general facts are expressed in present tense.

Another problem was of a stylistic order. Many students belonging to this level translated this literary text in a journalistic or academic style. This revealed a lack of awareness of style importance, which might be sign of unawareness of other important text characteristics. Indeed, elements like register, degree of formality and the like are integral parts of the meaning of a text (Hatim & Mason 1990). Following is an example of this kind of errors:

"يجتمع السكان تحت سماء رمادية ملبدة بالغيوم و ذلك بغرض الحصول على بعض من

الراحة و الاسترخاء قبل التوجه إلى النوم (...) كما يقومون بالدردشة و التحاور..."

Level Four

Only two translations of the whole sample could be considered to fall into the fourth level. As mentioned in the level's description, there are minor inaccuracies that do not alter the ST main content.

Finally, no translation was found to fit into the fifth level.

It is worth mentioning that a problem was present in most of the translations of all levels. It concerned whether or not to translate "Jasmine Valley" and "Pearl River". Some did not notice that the words were capitalised. As a result they did not notice the presence of a problem at all; they automatically translated the words according to their knowledge of their meaning, e.g. "النهر المتلألئ". Others noticed that the words were capitalised, and applied "the rule of thumb" saying that proper nouns are not translatable. Therefore, they transcribed the words in Arabic letters. The third category, which constituted a small percentage, analysed the situation. The text was a translation itself. These proper nouns were in English, hence translated. The logical deduction is that there should be a reason behind translating these proper nouns. The very meaning of these proper nouns must have a role in the story.

Consequently, "Pearl River" and "Jasmine Valley" should be translated into Arabic as well: "وادي الياسمين"and "نهر اللؤلؤ" .

Quantitative Description

Frequency distribution of translations in relation to the five levels is presented in the following table.

Table 20: Distribution of English-Arabic Translations Levels

Levels	1	2	3	4	5
Students number	6	11	11	2	0
Percentage	21%	36%	36%	7%	0%

n = 30

Figure 8: Distribution of English-Arabic Translations Levels
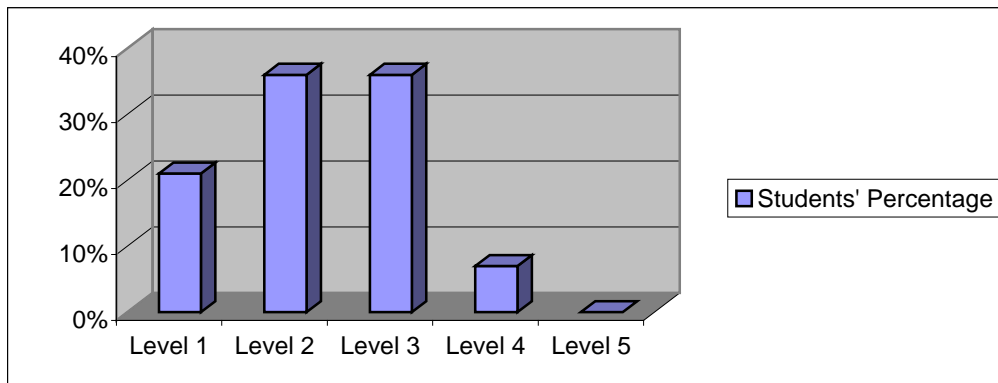
2.2.4. Results' Summary

2.2.4.1. First Year Students' Knowledge

2.2.4.1.1. Linguistic Competence

The qualitative analysis of data provided us with the existing competence levels among first year students. The quantitative description helped us uncover the levels' distribution. Both provided the following results.

English

Nineteen percent (19%) of the students could understand written English to an acceptable degree. Thirty percent (30%) could remember the use of a grammatical rule studied some months ago. Not all of them, however, consciously master the rule.

Eighty-one percent (81%) (levels 1 & 2) could not understand written English. Level 1 students (51%) and many of level 3 students could not remember the mentioned grammatical rule. All the students (100%) could not express one simple idea in one correct sentence in English. All the students (100%) made serious errors.

In short, first year translation students come to the course with very little linguistic knowledge. Even the few students who could understand English need a great deal of time and effort to acquire basic linguistic competence in English.

Arabic

Only 13% of the students could accurately understand an Arabic written text, and write with acceptable coherence in their first language. More than half of them had extremely poor linguistic competence in Arabic: no satisfactory comprehension, no grammatical or vocabulary knowledge and poor writing. Eighty-seven percent (87%) could not write coherently. One hundred percent (100%) could not accurately parse an Arabic sentence. No one paid attention to style or to punctuation.

Simply said, first year translation students come to the course with poor competence in what is considered to be their first language.

2.2.4.1.2. General Culture

Both qualitative and quantitative analyses of data supplied the following general knowledge traits of first year translation students:

- Most of the students do not keep accurate information about the TV programs they watch. This would be sign of 'pleasure-directed' use of media.

- A small minority appeared to watch the news, from time to time. Even this minority seemed to watch the news without active interest. This is

deduced from the uncertainty and the inaccuracy of the correct answers.

- The choice of TV programs to watch also seemed to be 'pleasure-directed'.

- Most of the students could not make use of information learned in cultural academic disciplines to answer general culture questions: poor transfer of knowledge.

- Most of them had no or very little knowledge of important geographical, political, economical or historical facts.

In brief, most of these students appeared to have no consciousness of the importance of general culture.

2.2.4.2. Third Year Students' Translation Competence

2.2.4.2.1. Arabic-English

Waddington's scale (2001) was designed for second year translation students. The quality of all the translations we evaluated did not exceed the third level. In order not to repeat already mentioned information, we can say that third year translations were barely at the third level of foreign second year translation students.

It is worth mentioning that, through this investigation, we came to know that students who held, at least, BA degrees in English before they

start the translation course, produced the three best translations of the whole exam.

2.2.4.2.2. English Arabic

The scale we adapted for the English-Arabic translations did not differ a lot from the original. Therefore a similar evaluative conclusion could be drawn from the analysed data. Considering the seriousness of errors, the quality of expression, and the poor level of comprehension of ST content, we could qualify the general level as being poor. This is further justified by the fact that the target language is the students' first language.

Conclusion

This chapter described the research procedures used in this investigation. First, it presented the steps of the *ex post facto* study and the obtained results. Second, it exposed the proceedings involved in the qualitative part of the paper along with the observed findings. Then it presented a summary of these results.

The next chapter discusses the implications of the study's findings. Then it proposes recommendations on the light of the presented results' interpretation. Finally, it presents general conclusions to the paper.

Chapter Three

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. Results' Discussion and Interpretation

The *ex post facto* study provided statistical evidence for what follows:

- There is a significant difference between prior language means of the two groups differing on the basis of their translation means.

- There is no significant difference between prior means in academic cultural disciplines of the two different groups.

- There is a strong positive relationship between prior language scores and subsequent translation scores.

- Prior language scores account for 62% of subsequent translation scores.

These findings were revealing. Statistics showed not only a statistically significant relationship between prior language scores and subsequent translation scores, but also a meaningful one. It is meaningful in the sense of its magnitude and strength. We believe that this result reflects the relationship between prior linguistic competence and

subsequent quality of translation competence acquisition. Now, could this confirm the hypothesis establishing linguistic competence as a *prerequisite* to learning translation? In other words, could it prove that having good prior linguistic knowledge causes good learning, and having poor prior linguistic knowledge causes poor learning?

What we can claim, as a result of this statistical study, is the existence of a strong correlation. In spite of this, we should admit that correlation does not establish causality (Brown, 1988, p.146; Cohen & & Manion, 1980, p. 131). In fact, what may suggest causality are the nature and the direction of the relationship. These should constitute the theoretical basis upon which hypotheses are set. Indeed a sound theoretical basis is what determines the quality of correlational research (Cohen & Manion, 1980).

In the case of the present paper, theory had already established the nature and the direction of the relationship. The link existing between translation and language (Schleiermacher, 1999; Humboldt, 1880; Catford, 1965; Mounin, 1963), and hence between translation competence and linguistic competence (Mounin, 1962, 1973; Darbelnet, 1966; Hatim & Mason, 1990; Nord, 1999; Titone, 1995) were the basis of our hypotheses. The literature suggests that language differences are the reason for translation existence. This answers for the direction of the relationship; language was there before translation. Furthermore,

language is the tool of translation, which determines the nature of the relationship. Therefore, language competence, the tool, should be there for translation, the activity, to be performed.

Correlation, then, established the fact that prior linguistic competence had a strong association with subsequent learning of translation. The nature and the direction of this relationship being determined, we believe that correlation is all what was required to confirm the hypothesis stating that prior linguistic competence is a prerequisite to learning translation.

The statistical study proved also that no significant difference existed between the two different groups' culture means. Various justifications might explain this. First, the information these disciplines include may not be of use in the process of learning translation. History, Geography and Philosophy curricula might not have much to do with the cultures of the countries speaking the involved languages. In other words, the specific contents of these disciplines might not help much in the acquisition of communicative competence or in any phase of the translation learning process. Or specifically, they might not have much to do with the translation course content. As a result the learners did not need to use any of that information, so their achievement in these disciplines did not contribute to their translation scores.

Secondly, it might also be explained by the fact that students did not learn well the content of these branches of learning. Our qualitative study, exploring the knowledge of freshmen, confirmed this. Most of the students proved unable to remember or use already seen information to answer general culture questions. Thus, it might be a question of poor learning or inability to use learned information outside its restricted context.

It is important, at this level, to tackle the issue of culture of the language i.e. culture in its anthropological sense (see p. 26). It is true that this type of knowledge was not part of our field exploration, because testing it was problematic. Nevertheless, theory establishes the importance of culture in language competence. The relationship between language and culture (Newmark, 1988; Lotman, 1978; Bassnett, 1991) and hence between linguistic competence and cultural knowledge (Chastain, 1976) account for this. It is clear, as well, that cultural knowledge is what develops linguistic competence into communicative competence (Hatim & Mason, 1990).

It is this strong relationship that leads us to express an additional implication of this study's results. If prior linguistic competence leads to better learning of translation, this would be also true of cultural knowledge. The more prior cultural knowledge, the more communicative competence, the better translation learning.

We come now to the discussion of the qualitative study's results. The qualitative analysis provided qualitative and quantitative evidence for what follows:

- The linguistic level of first year translation students' is, in general, very low.

- First year translation students, in general, possess very poor general culture.

- Third year students' translation competence is of a relatively low level.

On the light of the *ex post facto* study results, we believe the qualitative data could be interpreted as follows. First, we could come out with a general image of the current knowledge level of freshmen. Of course, this evaluation does not concern the value of the Baccalaureate degree as such. Actually, it concerns the level of the recent holders of the degree in this specific part of the country i.e. the *current* level of the Baccalaureate degree as reflected in its holders. It is clear that the level is quite low, whether it concerns languages or general culture.

Secondly, we gained insight into the main characteristics of third year students' translation competence. Concerning translation into English, the level of the best translations produced by these students does not exceed the third level, out of five, of the scale designed by Waddington (2001). More revealing is the fact that this scale was

designed for *second* year Spanish students. As to translation from English into Arabic, it does not exceed the fourth level of the adapted scale. We should remind the reader that very few translations fitted into the highest levels. This means that the majority were of levels one, two and three. It follows that the level of our third year translation students does not reach that of Spanish second year translation students.

The meaning we are tempted to attribute to all these data is the following. The low level of third year translation students appears to be explained by their low linguistic level as new university students. We strongly believe that it must have been comparable to that of current first year students. This interpretation is further supported by the correlation established by the *ex post facto* study.

Some of the reviewed literature asserted that the amount of knowledge included in a translation course is hard to cover within four or five years (Pym, 2002, Mossop, 2000). With the observed students' level, this amount of knowledge is increased by basic language material. Indeed, teachers feel obliged to adapt their course contents to the students' level (Nord, 2000; Gouadec, 2000; Gambier, 2000). Therefore, the pace of the learning process is significantly slowed down. At the end of the course, we assume that the general level would be barely intermediate (i.e. a little more than basic knowledge).

The analysed translations showed also a great deal of interference in the students' basic knowledge of the involved languages. This seems to suggest that three years were not sufficient for students even to, effectively and properly, acquire basic linguistic knowledge. It could be deduced that learning to translate from and into languages whose basic principles are not yet mastered might hinder language learning itself. Thus, the qualitative study provided evidence that simultaneous learning of basic linguistic knowledge along with translation from and into these languages is not effective, and hence inappropriate.

This conclusion supports the theory cited in the literature review about *controlled* linguistic knowledge (Titone, 1995). This author asserted that acquiring two languages without interference requires hard cognitive and affective efforts. Thus, acquiring more than two languages (Arabic, French and English) along with translation would certainly be of a questionable worth.

Another issue cannot be overlooked. The study indicated a low level in Arabic language competence, in spite of the fact that the students received their entire academic learning in this language. This might be a sign of either the students' poor overall linguistic knowledge, or poor knowledge of all kinds. Anyway, this leads us to draw two conclusions. First, the fact that the selection system (see Appendix A) does not take into consideration grades obtained in Arabic is based upon erroneous

beliefs as to the students' knowledge of their first language. Second, we claim that this study's conclusions about linguistic knowledge should be generalised to French as well.

In conclusion, all what precedes suggests that students selected on the basis of scores in Baccalaureate exams cannot attain acceptable degree of translation competence within three, or even four, years of study. What seems quite fair to say is that these students will not be able to practice the profession after their four-year course. In addition, the fact that the three students who held university degrees in English produced the best translations further confirms our main hypothesis.

To conclude, we claim that the established students' selection system is not appropriate to train translators within four years. Therefore, it should be adapted to the situation.

3.2. Recommendations

The present paper attempted to accomplish two major goals: establish a rule, and evaluate a reality. The rule claimed linguistic competence as a prerequisite to learning translation. The evaluation indicated an inadequate performance of an established students' selection system. Therefore, the recommendations we would like to present concern applying the rule to reality.

We maintain that translator training is a crucial responsibility. Thus, all what is required to obtain positive outcomes in this regard should be fulfilled. Translators-to-be should be carefully selected. Those who have more linguistic competence and cultural knowledge should be favoured. For this aim, we believe the following alternative policies would bring about positive change.

First, establishing a translation branch in secondary school would constitute a radical solution to the problem. This branch would be a preparatory phase for subsequent university course. It would thoroughly stress language learning, and systematic exposure to cultural knowledge. Introduction to translation theory and practice might also be included. Obviously, only pupils who aspire to a translator career would be oriented

towards this branch. Naturally, this suggestion could be further developed according to the course objectives and needs.

Secondly, in addition to learners especially prepared for this course, candidates holding language degrees should also be given priority. Holders of some other relevant degrees, like ethnography and anthropology, or people having professional experience in linguistic fields, such as journalism, might also be adequate candidates.

Thirdly, all candidates should receive an entrance examination. Among the competencies to be tested, there, evidently, should appear the linguistic and the cultural ones. A translation test would also be included to test the candidates' capacity to make use of their knowledge. The standard of the examination's questions should be set as high as the course needs. The translation department would then select the best, according to the number of students it is able to receive.

Finally, there might be some admitted candidates who show some slight gaps in their knowledge. This may occur when the general standard of the candidates is *relatively* low. In this case, these admitted candidates should receive a remedial preparatory course lasting for a semester or two, according to each candidate's needs.

As a final point, we would like to draw attention to the fact that these recommendations are only general ideas of what would become through careful study a more sophisticated selection system.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This paper helped us gain insight into the relationship between learning translation and prior linguistic knowledge. It established the assumption that translation is a complex activity. And as learning a complex activity calls for practice, there is a need for tools. Linguistic and cultural knowledge being the tools, they are prerequisites to learn the activity of translation. The paper demonstrated, as well, that meeting translation course objectives is dependent on the quality of those prerequisites.

What remains to be known in this respect, however, is more than what has been uncovered through this research paper. Various questions are left to be investigated, some of which are listed here: What, precisely, is the minimum level of linguistic competence a candidate translator should possess? What precisely is the lowest amount of cultural knowledge a candidate translator should possess? How can cultural knowledge be tested? As far as translation objectives are concerned, at which stage in language learning the culture of the language becomes a necessity? Does general culture help acquire 'anthropological' culture?

This last question leads us to one of the shortcomings of the present paper. We are conscious that the unexpected results of the statistical study concerning culture remained open to various interpretations. This amplified our questions regarding this issue. Indeed, which of the possible interpretations is the right one remains another obscure question.

Some theoretical conclusions can also be drawn from this investigation. We hope they constitute a contribution to the reader's awareness of some conceptual misapprehensions. First, the uncovered complex nature of translation clears it of the received idea of being no more than competence in tow languages. This, we believe, gives language learning on the one hand and translation learning on the other independent theoretical constructs. Stemming from their respective objectives, this independence would certainly promote the goals of each.

Second, awareness of the profession's responsibility would be, it is hoped, another contribution of this paper. The very choice of this paper's subject along with the choice of some aspects addressed in the literature review were expected to serve this goal. The recommendations put forward were further motivated by the researcher's awareness of this issue.

Indeed, if the proposed recommendations seem somewhat radical, it is because of the key role the translator plays in almost every aspect of

modern life. The translator's understanding, expression and transfer decisions decide on the nature and the quality of interlinguistic communication. Personal affairs, social relationships, destinies, careers, lives, cultural identities, national values and even the course of history might be at stake. It is, thus, high time to reconsider the importance of this profession. It would not be just for the sake of acknowledgment for the translator's merit. It would be, much more, for the sake of our own destinies. We should start being over-exacting as to those who will become our translators. And, as a final point, we should be conscious that this is not only legitimate; it is much more than that: it is a duty.

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APPENDIX C

RAW DATA OF THE *EX POST FACTO* STUDY

1. Translation means

2. Language means

3. Culture means

Table 1: Individual Means of 2nd and 3rd Years Scores in Arabic-English-Arabic Translation Exams.

Group A		Group B	
Student	Mean	Student	Mean
1	16	23	7,25
2	15	24	7,5
3	15	25	7,75
4	14,88	26	8
5	14,5	27	8,12
6	14,5	28	8,25
7	14,38	29	8,25
8	14,25	30	8,25
9	14,25	31	8,25
10	13,88	32	8,38
11	13,7	33	8,75
12	13,5	34	8,75
13	13,5	35	8,88
14	13,5	36	8,88
15	13,38	37	9
16	13,25	38	9,12
17	13	39	9,12
18	13	40	9,25
19	12,88	41	9,25
20	12,73	42	9,38
21	12,5	43	9,38
22	12,10	44	9,5

Table2: Individual Means of Scores in English and Arabic Baccalaureate Exams.

Group A		Group B	
Student	Mean	Student	Mean
1	15,75	23	8,25
2	15,5	24	8,5
3	14,75	25	6
4	13	26	11
5	16,25	27	8,5
6	15,5	28	11,75
7	16,75	29	11
8	15,25	30	9,25
9	12,75	31	9,75
10	12,75	32	11
11	15,75	33	11,25
12	15,25	34	10,75
13	12,5	35	8,14
14	12,25	36	11,5
15	12,5	37	14
16	13,25	38	8,75
17	14,25	39	10,13
18	12,25	40	12,5
19	9,5	41	11,5
20	13,75	42	12,75
21	13,25	43	11,75
22	13	44	12

Table 3: Individual Culture Means

Group A		Group B	
Student	Mean	Student	Mean
1	11,39	23	11,40
2	16,67	24	11,82
3	10,52	25	13,07
4	11,66	26	11,37
5	9,01	27	8,25
6	9,39	28	8,98
7	9,27	29	8,105
8	9,67	30	11,06
9	12,77	31	11,70
10	8,63	32	12,20
11	8,68	33	11,69
12	10,93	34	11,86
13	12,73	35	8,7
14	12,05	36	12,79
15	13,39	37	8,21
16	11,90	38	10,98
17	8,23	39	10,23
18	13,31	40	10,87
19	10,19	41	11,86
20	11,44	42	12,33
21	8,64	43	11,65
22	12,21	44	12,43

APPENDIX D

TESTS

1. Arabic test

2. English test

3. Translation exam

أ- اللغة العربية

اقرأ النص التالي جيدا ثم أنجز المطلوب بعده.

كان اختلاف السلف في الفُتيا* <u>يرجع إلى اختلاف أفهام الأفراد</u>. و كلُّ يرجع إلى أصل واحد <u>لا يختلفون فيه</u>، و هو كتاب الله و ما صح من السنة. فلا مذهب و لا شيعة، <u>و لا عصبية تقاوم عصبية</u>. و لو عرف بعضهم صحة ما يقول الآخر لأسرع إلى موافقته (...). ثم جاء أنصار الجمود فقالوا: "يولد مولود في بيت رجل من مذهب إمام، فلا يجوز له أن ينتقل من مذهب أبيه إلى مذهب إمام آخر"(...). ثم كانت حروب جدال بين أئمة كل مذهب، لو صرفت آلاتها و قواها في تبيين أصول الدين و نشر آدابه و عقائده الصحيحة بين العامة، لكنا اليوم في شأن غير ما نحن فيه. يجد المطلع على كتب المختلفين من مطاعن بعضهم في بعض ما لا يسمح به أصل من أصول الدين الذي ينتسبون إليه. يضلل بعضهم بعضا، و يرمي بعضهم بعضا بالبعد عن الدين. و ما المطعون فيه بأبعد عن الدين من الطاعن. و لكنه الجمود، قد يؤدي إلى الجحود.

محمد عبده "الإسلام و النصرانية بين العلم و المدنية"

* الفُتيا = الفتوى.

المطلوب

1. اشرح في جملتين أو ثلاث فكرة النص العامة.
2. ما معنى الجملة التالية: " و ما المطعون فيه بأبعد عن الدين من الطاعن."؟
3. اضبط بالشكل عبارة " بأبعد".
4. أعرب ما تحته خط.
5. أذكر مصادر الأفعال التالية: يجوز، جاء، كنا، يؤدي.

ب- الثقافة

أجب على الأسئلة التالية.

1. ما هي عاصمة البحرين؟

2. ما هي البلدان المجاورة للجزائر؟

3. أذكر المذاهب الإسلامية السنية الأربعة.

4. من هو عبد الرحمن الداخل؟

5. أية ثقافة يستضيف معرض فرانكفرت السنوي للكتاب هذا العام 2004؟

6. في أي عام قامت دولة اسرائيل؟

I- ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Text

For hundreds of millions of years the North American continent was there; but no species of man had ever trod it before the ancestors of the Indians arrived tens of thousands of years ago. (…) Surprisingly, a good deal is known about them from archeological investigations. They brought only meager cultural baggage with them when they migrated to North America: a social organization at the level of the small band, crude stone tools, no pottery, no agriculture, no domesticated animals except possibly the dog. Most of what the Indian would become he would invent for himself in the New World, for once he arrived in North America he was in most part isolated from the Old World. He could evolve unfettered his social and political institutions, his religion and laws and arts.

Peter FARB, *Man's Rise to Civilisation.*

Questions

1. Did the Indians bring civilization with them to North America?
2. Did the Indians receive help from the Old World in building their cultures? Why?
3. Find in the text words that are close in meaning to: research, develop, create, probably.
4. "Most of what the Indian would become he would invent for himself in the New World, <u>for</u> once he arrived in North America he was in most part isolated from the Old World."
   - Replace the underlined "for" by another word without changing the meaning of the sentence.
5. The author said, "They brought only meager cultural baggage with them when they migrated to North America".
   - Report this sentence into the indirect speech.
   - What are the tenses used in both sentences?

II- CULTURE

1. Give the names of two American actors, or the titles of three American Films.
2. Who is Winston Churchill?
3. On September the 11th 2001, two buildings collapse. What is their name?
4. What is the name of the biggest river in England?
5. What is the name of the British currency (money)?
6. Name two political parties in the USA.

First Term Exam

Translate the first text into Arabic and the second one into English.

TEXT 1:

The blazing sun had disappeared behind the high mountains, but Jasmine Valley still remained wrapped in a blanket of the steaming summer heat. For the people living alongside the Pearl River, day began at the paling of the stars and ended at the appearance of the moon. Most of the villagers had already eaten their last meal of the day, and in front of their grass-roofed houses they gathered under the graying sky, relaxing before going to sleep. Some of them were leaning against tall trees, while the others sat on the tree roots, waving their straw fans, chatting and breathing in the perfume of the night-blooming jasmine that grew throughout the valley.

BEZINE ching yun, Children of the Pearl,
Signet Book, New York, 1991

الثقافة و الإرادة

... فإذا شئنا أن نرتد إلى إنسانيتنا، و أن نظل و نحن نستخدم الآلة مسيطرين عليها و مجتهدين بالثقافة إلى ما يسمو بالجانب المعنوي النبيل فينا، فعلينا أن نضع نصب أعيننا حقيقة من الأهمية بمكان عظيم و هي أن لا ثقافة بدون منهج. و أنت مهما حاولت فلن تثقف أبدا عقلك و لن تظفر أبدا بقسط من العلم و الأدب و الفن، إلا إذا كنت قد اخترت من مختلف المؤلفات العالمية ما اجمع كبار النقاد على كماله، ثم استنهضت ما استطعت إرادتك، و رسمت لك بالعزم و الإرادة منهجا معينا للمطالعة، على أن يكون ذلك في أناة و صبر و تأمل فاحص دقيق...

إبراهيم المصري -خبز الأقوياء-
-سلسلة اقرأ- دار المعارف مصر

<u>شرح المفردات:</u>

يرتد: **Go back**
يسمو: **To elevate**
المؤلفات العالمية: **Universal masterpieces**
أجمع: **Acclaimed**

APPENDIX B

TRANSLATIONS

1. "(…) to the one who assimilates as to the one who speaks, this idea must come out from his own inner strength: all what the former receives consists solely in the harmonic excitement that makes him be in such or such a state of mind."

2. " Words, even the most concrete and the clearest ones, are far from arousing the ideas, the emotions and the memories presumed by the one who utters them."

3. "(…) two languages (…) never store up the same stock of experiences, images, ways of life and thought, myths and world views."

4. "(…) every language includes (…) *one* system of concepts that, precisely because they overlap, unite and complement each other within the same language, form *one* whole whose different parts do not correspond to any of those of other languages' systems. (…) For even what is absolutely universal, though beyond the domain of particularity, is enlightened and coloured by language."

5. "Two different languages are, then, like synonyms: each expresses the same concept a little differently, with more or less concomitant determination, a little higher or a little lower on the scale of sensations."

6. "I establish correspondences – that are not coincidences-between the representations conveyed by different languages, between the organisation of concepts in different languages."

7. "The translator does not choose the subject to deal with. Someone has already done it for him, and he never knows to which of the target language's resources he should have recourse to in order to render a thought he has not freely conceived, but received already done with."

8. "It is in his own language that the translator has the most of difficulty."

9. "A good translator should know the language of the author he translates well, but he should know his own even better, I mean: not only being able to write correctly in it, but also knowing its subtleties, its flexibilities, its hidden resources."

10. "Translation is not difficult except when one has learned a language otherwise than through direct practice in situation of communication."

11. "Linguistics formulates this observation saying that languages are not universal tracings of a universal reality, but every language corresponds to a particular organisation of human experience data – every language cuts out non-linguistic experience in its own way."

12. "The translator must not only be a good linguist, but also an excellent ethnographer, which implies that he know all, not only of the language he translate from, but also of the people using it."

13. "The translator should either leave the writer alone and make the reader go to meet him, or leave the reader alone and make the writer go to meet him."

14. "All the difficulty of the translator's task consists precisely of struggling to provide the reader with an idea of the inaccessible things a text in a foreign language talks about, and that refer to a culture that is usually stranger, either entirely or partially."

15. "(…) aim to make sure that every candidate has achieved a level of knowledge in French and English that is adequate for them to enter a translation course."

APPENDIX A

THE ESTABLISHED TRANSLATION STUDENTS'

SELECTION SYSTEM