

Assessing Translation Competence in Jordanian Universities

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Received on: 17-5-2025

Accepted on: 30-8-2025

Abstract

Translation assessment plays a vital role in enhancing students' translation skills, including their abilities in source text analysis, target text creation, and revision strategies. However, in translation studies, particularly in pedagogy-focused research, assessment methods are still underexplored. This study examines how translation instructors at Jordanian universities evaluate student translations, focusing on the types of grading systems and assessment rubrics used at both undergraduate and graduate levels. Two questionnaires were used to identify the most important aspects of translation performance from the professors' perspectives and to highlight the areas most frequently assessed. The findings stress the need for adopting comprehensive and consistent translation-specific assessment tools to improve the reliability and validity of translation quality evaluations in academic settings. The study also proposes a holistic rubric designed to assess translation performance, aiming to promote more reflective and standardized practices in translation education and evaluation.

Keywords: Translation Assessment, Rubrics, Translation Competence, Grading Practices, Translation Pedagogy.

Overview

Translation programs are crucial for preparing students for careers by providing them with the essential knowledge, skills, and competencies required in today's global and tech-driven market. The success of effective translation programs depends on several interconnected components: curriculum design, faculty expertise and training, practical experience, technological integration, industry collaboration, and strong assessment methods (Shermatova 2024 & 2025).

Moreover, designing a curriculum remains essential, requiring a careful balance between theoretical knowledge and practical skills. It must cover different translation areas, include cultural and ethical considerations, and match market demands. As Shermatova stresses, "the inclusion of both theoretical content knowledge and practical competencies was proven to close the gap between academic preparation and vocational skills utilized in businesses and organizations" (2025, 47).

Furthermore, selecting faculty and providing ongoing professional development are equally important. Translation educators must possess not only subject-matter expertise but also pedagogical

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* Doi: <https://doi.org/10.47012/jjml.18.1.11>

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flexibility and industry experience. Mbotake states that “translator trainers should spend considerable time familiarizing themselves with occupational standards and curriculum guides,” emphasizing that effective teaching depends on understanding students’ diverse backgrounds and learning needs (2017, 123).

Practical experience—through internships, simulations, and project-based learning—enhances students’ preparedness for real-world challenges. Shermatova (2025) found that “competency-based training improved translators’ self-performance, enabling them to evaluate themselves against new industry demands” (2025, 59). Such experiential learning fosters adaptability in specialized fields like legal, medical, and technical translation.

Technological integration has become essential. Training in CAT tools, terminology management systems, and AI-assisted translation platforms is vital for modern translators. As Mbotake notes, “knowledge of translation is not just a matter of *savoir* and *savoir faire* but also requires *savoir être*—values, attitudes, motivation, and resources” (2017, 115).

Therefore, it is necessary to further explore and improve current practices in translator training, especially assessment methods, as Salamah states: “translator training remains a relatively under-investigated area of research compared to the other sub-branches of applied translation studies. Translator training is concerned with teaching methods, methods of assessment, and curriculum design. These pedagogical elements combined are the foundations of the training and preparation of translators” (2021, 277).

Additionally, translation testing has become an essential part of translation studies due to the rapid development of the field. In conclusion, progress in scholarly research on translation assessment has led to a more nuanced understanding of the skills and competencies needed for effective translation (Zhang 2024, 855). Moreover, it is crucial to understand the significance of Translation Competence in the field of translation assessment, as it serves as a benchmark for evaluating the proficiency and effectiveness of translators in providing accurate and appropriate translations (ABADOU 2024, 199).

Finally, developing suitable assessment methods for measuring students’ translation skills and competencies is crucial. Assessment in educational settings refers to ‘the systematic collection and analysis of information to improve student learning’ (Stassen et al. 2001, 5). It allows instructors to evaluate their teaching effectiveness by connecting student performance to course learning objectives. As a result, instructors can adjust their teaching strategies and adopt more effective methods in their teaching to enhance students’ performance in translation. For any translation program to be successful, it must be designed to evaluate students’ acquired skills and competencies.

Translation assessment involves two main concepts: translation rubrics and translation competencies. A rubric, etymologically, refers to decorative text or instructions in medieval documents written in red ink, and later in academia, where notes a teacher wrote in red ink while grading a paper have come to refer to a scoring tool in modern academic language (Khanmohammad and Osanloo 2009, 132). Moreover, rubrics are defined as “a scoring tool for qualitative rating of authentic or complex student work. It includes criteria for rating important dimensions of performance, as well as standards of

attainment for those criteria (Jonsson and Svingby 2007, 131). Rubrics articulate student performance expectations and provide a framework for qualitative and holistic evaluation and assessment of student work. Rubrics consist of two primary components that align with their intended purpose: criteria and quality descriptors (Hegrenæs & Simonnæs 2020).

Whereas ISO 17024 (2019) defines competence as the ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve results, focusing on measurable performance. It distinguishes this from competency, which encompasses the broader mix of knowledge, skills, and personal attributes (KSAs) that enable success. Furthermore, translation competence refers to ‘the underlying system of knowledge and skills needed to be able to translate’ (PACTE 2003, 100). Additionally, to improve translator education, a comprehensive translation competency framework should include more than just subject matter knowledge. It should also incorporate proficiency in IT mediation and analytical skills (ABADOU 2024, 200).

Rubrics and clear evaluation criteria should be used to provide feedback and ensure consistency in assessments. Because rubrics are used “to communicate performance criteria and expectations. In addition, rubrics constitute a tool for teachers to provide feedback on students’ performances, and to receive a general overview of student learning and learning progress. In other words, rubrics provide teachers with information on whether students are (on their way) to meet expected learning outcomes” (Hegrenæs & Simonnæs 2020).

This study explores various aspects related to assessment and rubrics in translation programs. According to Gaber (2005, 17) selecting and designing student and course evaluation tools are part of the development stage in the cycle of translation program design and development, which occurs in the final stage of translator training. Similarly, Kelly (2005) places them near the end of the translation program design cycle and emphasizes that the fundamental principle for assessment is aligned with learning process outcomes. Likewise, in her TCEM model, Mahasneh (2015) considers determining assessment methods and grading systems as a step in the program development phase, usually followed by a post-development stage of translation program evaluation and modification. Therefore, assessment is directly linked to the program and course outcomes, and it is crucial for these two aspects to be aligned.

Although some studies and works have addressed translation quality assessment (TQA), the field still needs further research, a fact that many scholars, including Shermatova, have highlighted. He stated that "there is a pressing need for comprehensive reforms in translation education to align training programs with industry requirements and integrate interdisciplinary learning models." By addressing these gaps, this study aims to contribute to the growing body of literature on modernizing translator training through a competency-based framework (2025, 58-59). Similarly, EL-Karnichi mentioned that the current state of translation training “necessitates a reassessment of teaching techniques and curriculum design in translation programs, both in terms of pedagogy and content. This approach emphasizes the development of both the content components of the curriculum and the human element” (2024, 98).

Therefore, this paper aims to examine current translation assessment methods and rubrics used to evaluate students’ translation and performance in translation courses at Jordanian universities. The data for this study were gathered from a review of literature in translation studies and two surveys conducted to explore the criteria used by translation instructors in both public and private universities in Jordan. This

research advances the field by creating an integrated rubric for assessing students' translation quality, thereby supporting critical and reflective teaching.

Literature Review

Abdel Latif (2018) describes pedagogy-oriented translation and interpreting research as studies that aim to understand how students, practitioners, and trainees perform translation, as well as the requirements, experiences, and challenges they face during the process. Abdel Latif (2018) views this term as broader and more comprehensive than translation teaching, training, and educational research, since those do not fully capture the focus on pedagogy-driven translation acts and practices. Translation pedagogy emphasizes the importance of considering students' actions and decisions during translation to improve their translation skills (Massey and Ehrensberger-Dow 2013). However, translation pedagogy has not received enough academic attention, mainly due to the 'lack of systematic training' for translators (Sabaté Carrové 2000).

Abdel Latif (2018, 322-323) argues that developing a typology of pedagogy-oriented translation and interpretation research can provide a clear and centralized scope of topics within the research and help improve pedagogy-focused translational acts and practices. Therefore, he proposes a typology of pedagogy-oriented translation and interpreting research by discussing six main aspects in this field, which are outlined below.

1. Proposed training: This category involves suggesting a specific pedagogical training syllabus or technique and examining its impact on the performance of translation practitioners or trainees to improve translation teaching methods.
2. Training Program Evaluation: This category involves assessing existing pedagogical training programs or curricula, as well as teachers' and students' experiences. Some of these studies identify the strengths and weaknesses of courses and training programs and suggest solutions to these issues. Others explore micro approaches in in-class translation practices.
3. Process Research: Research in this category aims to identify and define cognitive processes and strategies involved in analyzing the original text, translating it into the target language, and making revisions that include problem-solving and decision-making during the translation process.
4. Professional Experience and Perception Research: This study highlights aspects of job tasks and the role of the translator's workplace, identifying factors that enable efficient performance or cause hindrances and distractions for trainees.
5. Assessment Research: This type of research focuses on evaluating the performance of translator trainees, gauging their aptitude during the training course, and improving the quality of translated texts.
6. Product Research: This type of research focuses on analyzing the features or errors in discourse-related and linguistic aspects of translation, and profiling them to help translation trainees and students avoid such errors and make better decisions when the optimal features of the rendered text are identified (Abdel Latif 2018, 327-330).

Of the six categories, *assessment research* and *product research* are most pertinent to this study. Assessment research evaluates translation trainee performance, while product research analyzes error types and patterns in translated texts. Both approaches seek to improve translation quality and instructional effectiveness. Translation assessment is a central element of translation education, as it measures the achievement of instructional objectives. It systematically evaluates whether training provides students with the competencies necessary for high-quality translation. This study applies both assessment and product research to identify ways to refine pedagogical strategies for translator development.

In general, translation methodology systematically employs processes, methods, and procedures when translating from one language to another across three main stages (Nida 1964, Nord 2005, Gaber 2005, Giaber 2018): Source Text Analysis and Comprehension: at the start of the translation process, features of the source text, such as grammatical, lexical, cultural, and discourse-related aspects, are analyzed and interpreted for accurate and proper understanding, which guides translation decisions, especially during the rendering of the target text, which ‘serves as a permanent frame of reference for the translator’ (Nord 2005, 1); Target Text Production and Rendering: after fully understanding and interpreting the source text, the process of rendering it into the target language involves subprocesses starting with individual units of the source text, which are subjected to appropriate translation procedures and techniques to produce an accurate translation; and Revision of the Target Text: the final critical step that confirms the translation’s completion and quality. Each broad methodological stage includes various sub-procedures and strategies. Understanding these individual stages helps students ‘to internalize theoretical knowledge and develop their own theories for translating’ (Giaber 2018, 260).

The translation process involves not only converting a text from one language to another but also ensuring that the translated text maintains the original meaning and faithfully expresses it in the target language’s form. This requires the translator to have several critical skills to successfully achieve accurate translation. Scholars have proposed various models to categorize these skills, with the most notable being the PACTE group (2003; 2005). The PACTE (2003) model presents a holistic and dynamic view of translation competence, comprising five sub-competencies: bilingual, extralinguistic, translation knowledge, instrumental and strategic skills. It also highlights the activation of psycho-physiological components such as perception, creativity, logical reasoning, intellectual curiosity, memory, and perseverance (Hurtado Albir 2017, 39) 2020).

To determine whether these competencies were acquired, students’ translations need to be evaluated. Judging the quality of translation is a challenging task, as such quality assessment relates to the ‘conception of the nature and goals of translation; in other words, it presupposes a theory of translation’. Therefore, different theoretical perspectives offer various views and methods for assessing translation quality (House 2014, 241). Translation assessment serves different purposes and functions. Although scholars vary in their understanding of these functions, assessments can generally be divided into two main categories: formative and summative assessments. Martínez Melis and Hurtado Albir identify three types of assessment roles: formative function, summative function, and diagnostic function—evaluating the abilities and weaknesses of translation students (2001).

Albir and Pavani (2018) argue that summative assessments serve two purposes: pedagogical, which concerns the final grading of students at the end of each module based on their performance, and professional, which aligns students' knowledge and skills with professional standards. Translation courses have mainly relied on summative assessments. However, new assessment methods have improved the process of evaluating translator trainees, such as initial assessment (at the start of learning), continuous assessment (throughout the learning process), self-assessment (where students evaluate themselves), peer assessment (where students evaluate each other), and hetero assessment (conducted by an assessor, lecturer, or trainer) (Hurtado Albir and Pavani 2018; Galán-Mañas and Hurtado Albir 2015).

Additionally, various types of translation assessment models have been developed in recent years, among which those proposed by Chao Han (2020, 3) are significant. They include seven types: intuitive assessment, error analysis, corpus-based evaluation, rubrics-based evaluation, scale-based scoring, mixed methods scoring, item-based assessment (such as calibration of dichotomous items and evaluation of preselected items), and comparative judgment.

All proposed models include shared areas or features that should be evaluated, such as accuracy, appropriateness, naturalness, cohesion, and style of discourse or word choice (Farahzad 1992); understanding of the source text, expression in the target language, transmission of either the main or secondary functions of the source text, the quality of translation or the rendering of meaning, transfer accuracy, quality of expression in the target text, and the degree of completeness (Waddington, 2001); accuracy, finding equivalents, register and TL culture, grammar and ST style, including shifts, omissions, additions, and inventing equivalents (Khanmohammad and Osanloo 2009); adequacy and impact of performance, content quality, textual adequacy, and quality of specialized content (Colina, 2008; 2009); transfer or functional and textual adequacy, target language quality, and terminology or research (Williamsaber 2013); completeness, overall quality of student translations, quality requirements (e.g., accuracy, appropriate register and tone, proper language use, and naturalness), quality of reflections, seriousness and ethics, and organization and presentation (Giaber 2018, 267); specialized content and terminology, content and meaning, target language, structure, and list of references (Hegrenaes 2020); meaning transfer skills, attention to translation brief, application of textual norms and conventions, proficiency, revision skills, and application of standard translation knowledge (NAATI 2020); target language mechanics, meaning transfer, and writing ability (Geoffrey ATA, 2021); lexical aspects, syntactical aspects, sub-sentential elements (phrase level & collocational level), non-rich point elements, and (communicativeness), coherence (Yildiz 2021). In this study, these assessment areas were investigated in detail, as discussed in the following section.

Methodology

Data collection

The researcher conducted a literature review of all current models and rubrics used for translation assessment, then developed two instruments. The translation assessment checklist, which covers the most important evaluation areas, was created based on a study by Samir and Tabatabaee-Yazdi (2020). Their list included 28 areas, which were improved upon after reviewing existing assessment models and rubrics

in the field. Six additional areas were added (syntax, illegibility, accents and diacritical marks, too literal/word-for-word, too freely translated, and word form), resulting in a total of 34 items. These items make up a questionnaire with ‘yes’ or ‘no’ questions (see Appendix 1).

The second instrument was a translation quality assessment rubric in the form of a questionnaire, also adopted from Samir and Tabatabaee-Yazdi (2020). The six new areas added to the checklist above were included in the rubric as well. This questionnaire had three sections: the first included demographic questions about the participants’ gender (male, female), education level (PhD, MA), years of experience (10+, 5--10, 5-- years), and field of study (translation, linguistics, translation & linguistics, and literature). The second section consisted of eight general questions. The third section featured a table of 34 assessment areas combined into 23 to explore their importance as perceived by translation instructors, rated on a 4-point Likert scale (see Appendix 2). The two surveys were conducted online via Google Forms, which included a brief introduction to the study. The links to the forms were sent to participants during the second semester of the 2022/2023 academic year, either through email or WhatsApp.

Data analysis

The data collected through the two surveys were saved, and statistical analysis was performed using SPSS version 22. A Pearson’s chi-square test (a test used to check for a statistically significant relationship between variables) was conducted for the third section of the second survey, which involved a 4-point Likert scale (a scale used to measure attitudes and opinions on specific topics) for the 23 assessment areas examined.

Demographic and background information of the participants:

The study targeted all translation instructors at public and private universities in Jordan to gather their views on key areas of effective translation assessment. A total of 65 instructors responded to the first survey (checklist survey), and 66 responded to the second survey (rubric survey). The surveys were emailed and shared via WhatsApp during the second semester of the 2022/2023 academic year, either sent to the chairpersons of translation studies and English departments with translation programs or directly to the instructors. Participants gave verbal consent to take part in the study. Table 1 provides additional details about the participants.

Table 1: Profile of the Participants

Gender	<i>Female</i>	24	36.4%	Total
	<i>Male</i>	42	63.6%	
Experience	10+	36	54.5%	
	5-10	17	25%	
	5-	13	19.7%	
University	<i>Public</i>	8 (unis)	39.4	
	<i>Private</i>	26 (Participants) 11(unis) 40 (Participants)	60.6	
Education	PhD	58	87.9%	
	MA	8	12.1%	
Field of Study	<i>Translation</i>	26	39.4%	
	<i>Linguistics</i>	21	31.8%	
	<i>Translation & Linguistics</i>	17	25.8 5%	
	<i>Literature</i>	2	3.0%	66

Results

Findings Related to the Translation Assessment Checklist

As mentioned earlier in the methodology section, a checklist of 34 assessment areas was used in the first survey, and the responses regarding whether the instructors evaluated these areas are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Checklist Responses

Number	Assessment Criteria	Yes (%)	No (%)
1	Do you assess the quality of target language grammar?	98.4	1.6
2	Do you assess the idiomatic usage of the target language?	93.7	6.3
3	Do you assess the quality of omission of something from the Target Text (TT) which is unessential to the meaning?	76.2	23.8
4	Do you assess the accuracy of transferring the content and meaning from the ST into TL?	95.2	4.8
5	Do you assess the quality of the naturalness of language form in translation?	90.5	9.5
6	Do you assess the ambiguous words and expressions that leads to vagueness in TT?	93.7	6.3
7	Do you assess the quality of the addition of something in the TT which is not clearly expressed in the Source Text ST?	88.9	11.1
8	Do you assess the quality of the translation of specific terms/word choice embedded in technical text?	96.8	3.2
9	Do you assess the usage of the TL punctuation convention in the TT?	82.5	17.5
10	Do you assess the quality of TT fluency?	81.0	19.0
11	Do you assess whether the mistranslation of meaning in TT occur?	98.4	1.6
12	Do you assess the quality of faithfulness of translation?	84.1	15.9
13	Do you assess whether the translator's indecision about meaning or grammar in the TT?	82.5	17.5
14	Do you assess the appropriate use/preserve of register in the translation?	82.5	17.5
15	Do you assess whether all sections within the ST transfer completely to TT?	84.1	15.9
16	Do you assess the quality of cohesion in the TT?	93.7	6.3
17	Do you assess the quality of coherence in the TT?	95.2	4.8
18	Do you assess the italicization and capitalization of words and expressions in TT?	73.0	27.0
19	Do you assess the appropriate use/preserve of source language text style in the TT?	85.7	14.3
20	Do you assess the quality of retention of the genre in the TT?	84.1	15.9
21	Do you assess the appropriate use/preserve of source language text type in the TT?	87.3	12.7
22	Do you assess the quality of lexical consistency in translation?	93.7	6.3
23	Do you assess the quality of creativity used in the TT?	74.6	25.4
24	Do you assess the spelling of each word in the TT?	85.7	14.3
25	Do you assess the quality of false friends' equivalent in TT?	82.5	17.5
26	Do you assess the illegibility of the TT?	79.4	20.6
27	Do you assess whether the TT was too freely translated?	79.4	20.6
28	Do you assess whether the TT was too literal/word for word?	93.7	6.3
29	Do you assess the Syntax of the TT?	93.7	6.3
30	Do you assess accents and other diacritical marks in the TT?	57.1	42.9
31	Do you check word form in TT?	81.0	19.0
32	Do you assess the translator's problem-solving skills?	76.2	23.8
33	Do you assess the quality of the revision/self-assessment technique used in the TT?	73.0	27.0
34	Do you assess the time management skills of the translator?	60.3	39.7

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As shown in Table 1, all respondents agreed on the importance of TL grammar and mistranslation, specific terms/word choice, accuracy and coherence, idiomatic usage and cohesion, lexical consistency and overly literal or word-for-word syntax, as well as naturalness and avoiding ambiguous or vague words. Other areas, such as illegibility or overly free translation, omission and problem-solving skills, creativity and revision, self-assessment, italicization and capitalization, time management skills, accents, and other diacritical marks, were seen as less important. The order of importance for each of the 34 assessment areas is listed above. The table also indicates that every area of assessment holds significance to some extent when evaluating students' translations.

Findings Related to the Translation Quality Assessment Rubric

General Questions on Students' Translation Assessment

The study included eight general questions about other aspects of the evaluation process, as mentioned in the methodology section. The participants' responses are shown in Table 3 in descending order based on whether they answered yes or no.

Table 3: Responses to General Questions

NO.	Question	Yes (%)	No (%)
1.	I think essay-type exam is a proper test type to assess students' translation.	87.9	12.1
2.	Do you usually give your students a rubric for translation in BA courses?	83.3	16.7
3.	Do you give it and explain it before or after the exam?	83.3	16.7
4.	Do you give your students a rubric for translation in MA courses?	72.7	27.3
5.	The number of students in translation per se courses at the BA level is noticeably large, above 50.	60.6	39.4
6.	Do you use the American Translation Association (ATA) rubric? If another, please specify?	54.5	45.5
7.	The number of students in translation per se courses at the MA level is excessively big, over 50.	40.9	59.1
8.	I think multiple choices or T/F are a proper test type to assess students' performance?	10.6	89.4

Table 3 shows that 87.9% of the respondents (58) agreed that the essay-type exam is a suitable test for assessing students' translation skills, whereas only 10.6% (about 7) believed that multiple-choice or T/F tests are appropriate. Another promising finding is that 83.3% of the participants, or 55 instructors, said they usually provide their students with rubrics for translation before exams in BA courses and explain them. Nearly half of the respondents (54.5%) used the ATA rubric. The situation is different for MA courses, where only 72.7% (40) of instructors do so. The final finding relates to the number of students in translation classes, which is higher at the BA level: more than 50 students per class in 60.6% of cases (40 instructors), and fewer than 50 students per class in 39.4% (39) cases.

Areas of assessment importance on a 4-point Likert scale

A table of the 23 combined assessment areas was included in the second survey to evaluate their importance from the respondents' perspectives on a 4-point Likert scale. The responses are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Areas of assessment importance

	Items	Number of respondents who consider it important	Percentage
1.	Register/Tone, Punctuation/Accents and other diacritical marks, Capitalization/Italicization rules	64	96.9
2.	Completeness, Usage, Terminology/False friend terminology, Genre (Text style, Text type)	63	95.4
3.	Fluency (Naturalness, Readability (illegibility), No ambiguity, (No mistranslation), Cohesion/Coherence, Consistency, Quality of terminological database, Faithfulness/literalness (word for word)/too freely, (No) Omission, (No) Ambiguity, (No) Mistranslation), Spelling, Creativity/Problem Solving (No) indecision), Pace of work, Revision file, self-assessment	62	93.9
4.	Grammar (Word Form/Part of Speech, Word Order, Syntax) Accuracy, Organization/Time management, (No) Addition	61	92.4
5.	Initiative	60	90.9
6.	CAT skills, Relevance of bibliography	58	87.8

As shown in Table 4, all the areas listed are considered important by the respondents when assessing students' translations, with only slight differences in opinion. Furthermore, the participants identify the most critical areas as Register/Tone, Punctuation/Accents and other diacritical marks, and Capitalization/Italicization rules, with 96.9%. The least important areas are CAT skills and the relevance of bibliography, at 87.8%.

Regarding the relationships among the five demographic dimensions used in the study, I excluded the first two (gender and type of university) because they are not relevant to the importance of the assessment areas. Therefore, we examined the correlation between the remaining dimensions (field of study, years of experience, and level of education) and the participants' answers to the 23 areas in the second survey using Pearson's chi-square test. A statistically significant result ($P \leq 0.05$) indicates a correlation between a dimension and the assessment areas. The analysis of the correlation between the 23 assessment areas and level of education showed only one relationship: between the level of education (PhD/MA) and three assessment areas (1) grammar (Word Form/Part of Speech, Word Order, Syntax); (2) usage; and (3) (No) addition. The PhD holders consider these three areas especially important when assessing students' translations, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Correlation between Level of Education and Areas of Assessment

Areas of assessment		Area (1)	Area (2)	Area (3)
Qualification	PhD	87.9%	77.6%	87.9%
	MA	50%	37.5%	50%
P value		0.007	0.017	0.007

Regarding how the participants' field of study influences their perception of the 23 assessment areas, the chi-square test results showed a correlation between the field of study and three areas: (no) omission, completeness, and CAT skills. Instructors with backgrounds in translation, linguistics & translation, and literature consider (no) omission, translation completeness during exams, and CAT skills to be important, whereas instructors with linguistics backgrounds are less concerned with these areas. The effects of participants' backgrounds on their perceptions of the three assessment areas are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Correlation between Field of Study and Areas of Assessment

Area of assessment		Area 4 (No) Omission	Area 5 Completeness	Area 22 (CAT skills)
Field of study	Translation	63%	18.5%	74.1%
	Linguistics	25%	0%	100%
	Literature	100%	50%	100%
	Linguistics and translation	70.6%	5.9%	94.1%
P value		0.01	0.05	0.007

Furthermore, when analyzing the correlation between assessment areas and participants' years of experience, the results revealed that the strongest influence on perception is found in three areas: usage, (no) addition, and accuracy. This suggests that more experienced instructors tend to focus more on these three areas (Table 7).

Table 7: Correlation between years of experience and areas of assessment

Area of assessment		Areas 2(Usage)	Area 3 (no addition) important	Area 14 (accuracy) important
Years of experience	<5	38.5%	100%	100%
	5-10	82.4%	94.1%	88.2%
	>10	80.6%	88.9%	91.7
P value		0.008	0.006	0.036

Discussion

The study examined how instructors perceive 34 different aspects of translation assessment and their preferred evaluation methods. Overall, respondents identified several linguistic criteria as essential for judging student translations. These included grammar, mistranslation, terminology and word choice, accuracy, coherence, idiomatic usage, cohesion, lexical consistency, and avoiding literal or word-for-word syntax. Respondents also emphasized the importance of translations sounding natural and clear, with a particular focus on avoiding ambiguous or vague language. Conversely, elements like illegibility, overly free translation, omission, creativity, revision, self-assessment, formatting details such as italicization and capitalization, time management, and the use of accents or diacritical marks were viewed as less important. Nonetheless, all 34 assessment areas were recognized as playing some role in

evaluating translation quality. A similar result was also reported by Samir and Tabatabaee-Yazdi; they stated that “the study’s overall findings confirm that the 23-item of the ‘Translation Quality Assessment Rubric’ is an effective unidimensional representation for assessing the quality of translation performance” (2020, 117).

When it comes to testing formats, most instructors—87.9% (58 respondents)—prefer essay-type exams as the best way to assess students’ translation skills. Only 10.6% (7 respondents) consider multiple-choice or true/false tests suitable alternatives. Additionally, 83.3% (55 instructors) say they provide and explain rubrics to their students before exams in BA-level courses, with 54.5% relying on the ATA rubric. In MA-level courses, this practice decreases slightly, with only 72.7% (40 instructors) doing so.

Class size emerged as a key factor. At the BA level, 60.6% of instructors (40 respondents) reported teaching large classrooms with over 50 students, while 39.4% (26 respondents) handled smaller groups. These crowded BA translation courses may influence not only how instructors evaluate students but also the strategies they use to engage and guide their classes.

The results showed a strong consensus: nearly every assessment area was seen as important, with only slight variations in opinion. Register and tone, punctuation and accents, and capitalization and italicization rules stood out as clear favorites, earning the enthusiastic approval of 96.9% of respondents. Even at the lower end, CAT skills and bibliography relevance were far from dismissed, still appreciated by 87.8% of participants.

Demographic analysis using Pearson’s chi-square test revealed several correlations. The level of education had a statistically significant relationship with three assessment areas: grammar (including word form, part of speech, word order, and syntax), usage, and (no) addition. PhD holders focused more on these areas compared to MA holders. The field of study also influenced perceptions. Instructors with backgrounds in translation, literature, and linguistics & translation found omission, completeness, and CAT skills more important than those with a linguistics-only background. Lastly, years of experience affected assessment priorities. More experienced instructors tended to emphasize usage, (no) addition, and accuracy, indicating that practical classroom exposure increases sensitivity to these key aspects of translation.

Perceptions of 34 different aspects of translation assessment importance vary depending on factors such as instructors’ specialization, years of experience, and education level. Instructors with translation backgrounds are more aware of the importance of using a rubric to grade students’ translations. A key insight is that these instructors provide rubrics to their students and discuss them before exams, which helps improve students’ performance and skills at both the BA and MA levels.

Furthermore, since years of experience, field of study, and level of education are strongly related to the assessed areas, these factors should be considered when assigning instructors for translation per se. Courses each semester should prioritize instructors who specialize in translation, have more teaching experience, and hold PhDs. An encouraging finding was the concern and interest among translation instructors regarding recent technologies and translation skills, including using CAT tools, because as

Abadou stated that "the translation industry is rapidly evolving due to increased" mobility in academic and professional contexts, resulting in a growing demand for curricula that address societal needs and foster international communication" (2025,116). Moreover, to improve translator education, "a comprehensive translation competency framework should include more than just specialized subject knowledge. It should also cover proficiency in IT mediation and analytical skills" (Abadou 2024, 200). Additionally, most instructors believe that essay-type exams are far more suitable than true or false exams for translation courses.

This study highlights certain risk factors that may negatively impact the learning process, such as the large number of students in translation courses and instructors who are not specialized in translation studies. Instructors play an essential role in shaping the talents and skills of translators, as suggested by scholars like Kelly (2005, 2008) and Kearns (2006, 2008, 2012), who advocate for integrating insights from Translation Studies into curriculum design and emphasizing situational and pragmatic aspects. This comprehensive approach, supported by El-Karnichi (2017), underscores the importance of human factors—particularly the roles of instructors and learners—in developing effective translation education. Therefore, program stakeholders and directors must take necessary measures to address these issues through "a reassessment of teaching techniques and curriculum design in translation programs, both in terms of pedagogy and content. This technique places emphasis on the cultivation of both the content component of the curriculum and the human element" (EL-Karnichi 2024, 98).

Other areas requiring more focus from translation instructors include the importance of clear assessment methods with well-defined rubrics for BA and MA students during translation courses, as they are a vital part of the translation process, as stated by Nakhli: "the assessment of learning should be done based on a set of indicators visible in students' performance or behavior" (2021,122).

In conclusion, I propose the following rubric to assess students' translation, which can be used for translation between English and Arabic or any other language pair. The grades for each area may vary based on course objectives, as shown in table 7.

Table 7: Translation Rubric (Mahasneh 2024)

Assessment Area	Error Items	Percentage
Style & Formality	Register/Tone, Capitalization/Italicization rules, Punctuation/Accents and diacritical marks	15%
Terminology & Consistency	Completeness, Usage, Terminology/False friend terminology, Genre (Text Style, Text Type)	15%
Fluency & Readability	Naturalness, Readability (illegibility), No Ambiguity, No Mistranslation, Cohesion/Coherence, Consistency, Quality of terminological database, Faithfulness/Literalness (word-for-word/too freely), (No) Omission, Spelling, Creativity/Problem Solving (No Indecision), Pace of work, Revision file, Self-assessment	30%
Grammar & Structure	Word Formation/Part of Speech, Word Order, Syntax, Accuracy, Organization/Time management, (No) Addition	20%
Professional Skills	Initiative	5%
Technical & Research Skills	CAT skills, Relevance of bibliography	15%

Conclusion

Teaching translation is vital in today's globalized world. Recent research on translation education in the Arab world reveals a landscape that is rapidly expanding yet remains scattered in its theoretical and empirical foundations. Around the globe, translation programs have flourished, and Europe has seen a remarkable surge. In the MENA region, the identification of 61 active programs highlights a strong regional commitment (Al-Batineh and Bilali 2017). Yet, this impressive growth is shadowed by a noticeable lack of empirical studies that closely examine these programs within their institutions.

Furthermore, educators and institutions play crucial roles in preparing future translators for their careers. The needs of the translation market can shift based on student demands and the changing requirements of the industry. Therefore, "there is a pressing need for comprehensive reforms in translation education to align training programs with industry needs and incorporate interdisciplinary learning models (Shermatova 2025, 58-59). Stakeholders should stay responsive to shifts in market demand and adapt to emerging trends. The translation industry is continuously changing with technological advancements, new methods, and shifting market needs. Therefore, translation programs must be flexible and incorporate the latest tools and techniques. Aligning the curriculum with emerging market requirements ensures students are ready to meet current and future industry demands. By addressing these market needs in teaching translation, educational institutions can equip aspiring translators with the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to succeed in the dynamic, competitive translation landscape as stated by Nakhli "Clearly, effective translation teaching has to provide the student with operational knowledge and skills that can be transferred to real-life contexts"(2021, 119).

Furthermore, assessing and evaluating students' translation skills is essential for determining their proficiency and ability to accurately convey meaning from the source language to the target language. This study was limited to the Jordanian context, did not address the long-term effects of the proposed rubric, and relied on self-reported data from instructors. These limitations highlight the need for future research to expand on this initial framework and provide a comprehensive evaluation of the rubric's impact. However, it offers a largely comprehensive analysis of the various methods and tools used to assess students' translation competencies. By examining the strengths and weaknesses of these assessment techniques, this study may help improve the development of effective and objective evaluation practices in translation training.

This assessment offers valuable feedback to meet the demands of the professional translation market. By simulating real-world translation situations, these assessments expose students to the challenges of meeting deadlines, following client requirements, and delivering quality translations. This prepares students for the professional scenarios they are likely to face in their careers. An effective translation assessment rubric highlights student strengths and weaknesses, allowing instructors to give targeted feedback and guidance for improvement. Through this process, instructors can identify translation errors, linguistic issues, or cultural difficulties that hinder accurate meaning conveyance. This feedback helps students recognize areas for growth and supports their learning, leading to ongoing improvement in translation skills. This study, among its standout achievements, is the creation of a robust rubric model

that captures every stage of the translation process. This adaptable model holds promise not only for Jordan but for translation programs around the globe. The study also highlights the pivotal influence of seasoned professors, showing how their expertise elevates both teaching quality and student success. Finally, it advocates for the integration of technology-driven translation quality assessment (TQA) courses, blending translation software with evaluation rubrics to mirror the demands of the modern translation industry.

Furthermore, with the rapid advancement of technologies and the internet, the use of translation tools and technology has become essential in the translation industry. Students' translation can be evaluated using these technologies, and the results of this study could be implemented in a technology-based TQA course to integrate translation software with translation evaluation rubrics.

This study shows that current assessment methods or rubrics for evaluating students' translation share common focus areas: fluency, faithfulness, grammar, register and style, completeness, and CAT skills. Each of these areas has subcategories. What may differ between these rubrics and/or evaluation methods is how instructors assess these areas and the value and importance they assign to each. The rubric model developed in this study can be used by instructors in Jordan and around the world, as it addresses all key aspects of the translation process. Additionally, an important insight from this study highlights the need for specialized and experienced professors in translation studies to teach translation courses, given their positive impact on teaching quality and results.

The integration of diverse teaching methods, assessment techniques, and evaluation strategies enables translation educators to establish comprehensive learning environments that facilitate the development of knowledge, skills, and translation competencies. Moreover, implementing a competence-based teaching approach (CBA) is essential in translator education, as competencies serve as foundational elements in effective translator training. This combined approach supports student progress and prepares them for the challenges and demands of the translation profession.

Future research should explore how well the proposed rubric applies and works across different educational and cultural settings. Cross-cultural and international studies are crucial to determine if the rubric can be used globally or if it needs adjustments for specific contexts. Long-term studies are also recommended to evaluate how rubric-based assessment impacts student performance and career readiness over time. Moreover, research should investigate how artificial intelligence and machine translation tools can be integrated into assessment practices, considering the growing role of technology in the translation industry. Including student perspectives on rubric-based evaluation will help gain a full understanding of its effectiveness and ensure teaching strategies align with learner needs and expectations.

Acknowledgments

I want to thank all the instructors at both private and public universities who participated in and responded to the two surveys for their valuable time and contribution to this study.

تقييم كفاءة الترجمة في الجامعات الأردنية

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الملخص

يؤدي تقييم الترجمة دوراً حيوياً في تطوير كفاءة الطلاب في الترجمة، بما في ذلك مهارات تحليل النص المصدر، وإنتاج النص الهدف، واستراتيجيات المراجعة. ومع ذلك، لا تزال طرق التقييم، خصوصاً في سياق دراسات الترجمة الموجهة نحو التعليم، غير مدروسة بشكل كافٍ. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف كيفية تقييم مدرسي الترجمة في الجامعات الأردنية لأداء الطلاب في الترجمة، مع التركيز على أنواع الأنظمة التقييمية ومصفوفاتها المستخدمة على المستويين البكالوريوس والماجستير. ومن خلال استبيانين، تحدد الدراسة الجوانب الأكثر أهمية في تقييم الترجمة من وجهة نظر المدرسين، وتسهم في إبراز المجالات التي يتم التركيز عليها في التقييم. وتُظهر النتائج ضرورة اعتماد أدوات تقييم شاملة ومتسقة خاصة بالترجمة، من أجل تعزيز موثوقية ودقة أحكام جودة الترجمة في السياقات الأكاديمية. كما تقترح الدراسة مصفوفة تقييم موحدة لتقييم الترجمة، بهدف دعم ممارسات تعليمية أكثر تأملاً واتساقاً في مجال تقييم الترجمة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تقييم الترجمة، مصفوفات التقييم، الكفاءة الترجمة، ممارسات التقييم، تعليم الترجمة.

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Appendix A

Translation Quality Assessment Checklist

Dear respondent,

This checklist investigates which translation assessment criteria instructors consider important. Your responses will help researchers develop a rubric to assess students' translation quality. Completing the checklist carefully ensures more accurate findings. All information is confidential and used only for research.

Assessment Criteria	Determined by the Translation Instructors	
	Yes	No
1. Do you assess the quality of target language grammar ?		
2. Do you assess the idiomatic usage of the target language?		
3. Do you assess the quality of omission of something from the TT which is unessential to the meaning?		
4. Do you assess the accuracy of transferring the content and meaning from the ST into TL?		
5. Do you assess the quality of the naturalness of language form in translation?		
6. Do you assess the ambiguous words and expressions that leads to vagueness in TT?		
7. Do you assess the quality of the addition of something in the TT which is not clearly expressed in the ST?		
8. Do you assess the quality of the translation of specific terms/word choice embedded in technical text?		
9. Do you assess the usage of the TL punctuation convention in the TT?		
10. Do you assess the quality of TT fluency ?		
11. Do you assess whether the mistranslation of meaning in TT occur?		
12. Do you assess the quality of faithfulness of translation?		
13. Do you assess whether the translator's indecision about meaning or grammar in the TT?		
14. Do you assess the appropriate use/preserve of register in the translation?		
15. Do you assess whether all sections within the ST transfer completely to TT?		
16. Do you assess the quality of cohesion in the TT?		
17. Do you assess the quality of coherence in the TT?		
18. Do you assess the italicization and capitalization of words and expressions in TT?		

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Assessment Criteria	Determined by the Translation Instructors	
	Yes	No
19. Do you assess the appropriate use/preserve of source language text style in the TT?		
20. Do you assess the quality of retention of the genre in the TT?		
21. Do you assess the appropriate use/preserve of source language text type in the TT?		
22. Do you assess the quality of lexical consistency in translation?		
23. Do you assess the quality of creativity used in the TT?		
24. Do you assess the spelling of each word in the TT?		
25. Do you assess the quality of false friends' equivalent in TT?		
26. Do you assess the illegibility of the TT?		
27. Do you assess whether the TT was too freely translated?		
28. Do you assess whether the TT was too literal/word for word?		
29. Do you assess the Syntax of the TT?		
30. Do you assess accents and other diacritical marks in the TT?		
31. Do you check word form in TT?		
32. Do you assess the translator's problem-solving skills?		
33. Do you assess the quality of the revision/self-assessment technique used in the TT?		
34. Do you assess the time management skills of the translator?		
Total Score		

Appendix B

Translation Quality Assessment Rubric

Dear respondent,

This rubric was created to evaluate the overall quality of students' translations in Jordanian universities. Your rating will help researchers assess the quality of the students' work. By carefully completing the rubric, you contribute to collecting accurate data, which is essential for producing more precise findings. The information you provide will be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes.

A. Please mark the part that best matches your status.

Gender: Male Female University

Your level of qualification: PhD M.A.

Years of translation experience: Below 5 years 5--10 years more than 10 years

Field of study: Translation Linguistics and Translation Linguistics Literature

B. General questions:

- Do you usually give your students a rubric for translation in BA courses? Yes/No
- Do you give your students a rubric for translation in MA courses? Yes/No
- If yes, do you give it and explain it before or after the exam?
- Do you use the ATA rubric? If another, please specify?
- I think multiple choices or T/F are proper test types to assess students' performance Yes/NO

- I think the essay type exam is a proper test type to assess students' performance Yes/No.
- The number of students in translation per se courses at the BA level is very large, above 50 Yes/No
- The number of students in translation per se courses at the MA level is very large above 50 Yes/No

C Respond to each statement below according to the following 4-point Likert scale:

Very important = score 4, important= score 3, fairly important = score 2, and unimportant = score 1

Items	Rate By raters			
	1	2	3	4
1. Grammar (Word Form/Part of Speech, Word Order, Syntax ...)				
2. Usage				
3. (No) Addition				
4. (No) Omission				
5. Completeness				
6. Punctuation/accents and other diacritical marks				
7. Terminology/False friend Terminology				
8. Spelling				
9. Capitalization/Italicization Rules				
10. Faithfulness/literalness (word for word)/too freely				
11. Register/Tone				
12. Genre (Text Style, Text Type)				
13. Cohesion/Coherence, Consistency				
14. Accuracy				
15. Fluency (Naturalness, Readability (illegibility), No Ambiguity, No Mistranslation)				
16. Creativity/Problem Solving (No Indecision)				
17. Organization/time management				
18. Initiative				
19. Pace of work				
20. Revision file, self-assessment				
21. Quality of the terminological database				
22. CAT skills				
23. Relevance of bibliography				
Total				

These two questionnaires were adapted from Samir and Tabatabaee-Yazdi 2020 and then modified by the researcher.