Aligning English Department Outputs with Job Market Demands: Preparing Students for Careers in Translation

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Article Information	Abstract
	This study examines the alignment between skills taught in the translation courses at the English department, Faculty of Arts- Misrata University and the competencies sought by prospective employers. It aims to investigate whether students are adequately prepared for market demands and aims to bridge the gap between academic outputs and industry needs. Utilizing a quantitative research approach, the study involves prospective employers from various sectors, English department teachers and graduates of the department. Structured questionnaires assess required skills, educational gaps, potential areas of collaboration and potential curriculum improvements. Preliminary findings reveal a significant skills gap, especially in practical training and technology use in translation. Prosepctive mployers emphasize the need for graduates to possess practical skills that complement their academic training. On the other hand, teachers express a desire to integrate these competencies and showw willingness to work for better alignment. The study highlights the importance of collaboration between academia and industry to enhance curriculum relevance, better prepare students for careers, and develop strategies to address the education-employment gap, ultimately fostering a more skilled workforce.

1. Introduction

In an increasingly competitive job market, equipping students with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in their chosen careers has become a paramount concern for educational institutions, particularly within English departments. The traditional focus on literary analysis and critical thinking, while essential, often overlooks the practical competencies that employers seek. As industries evolve and the demand for specialized skills rises, it is crucial for academic programs to align their curricula with the current job market requirements.

This research aims to analyze the specific skills and qualifications that employers value in candidates from English departments. Furthermore, this study explores how English departments can integrate these competencies into their programs, thereby enhancing the employability of their graduates.

Ultimately, this research seeks to bridge the gap between academia and the professional world, ensuring that students are not only well-versed in literary theory and analysis but also prepared to navigate the complexities of the modern job market. By understanding the evolving landscape of employment opportunities, English departments can

better equip their students for successful careers in various fields, including education, publishing, marketing, and beyond.

1.1 Hypthoesis:

The skills and competencies currently taught in English department translation courses at Misrata University do not adequately align with the demands of the job market, particularly in practical and technological aspects of translation. A focused revision of the curriculum, integrating industry-specific tools and practices, bridges this gap and enhance graduates' employability.

1.2 Statement of the problem:

The traditional academic framework of English departments, with a focus on theoretical studies, often fails to equip students with the practical and technical skills demanded by employers, especially in translation-related careers. This misalignment results in a significant skills gap, leaving graduates underprepared for the job market and contributing to employer dissatisfaction. The lack of collaboration between academia and industry further exacerbates the problem, with minimal incorporation of modern translation technologies and real-world applications into the curriculum. Addressing this issue is critical to improving the employability of English department graduates and ensuring that educational outcomes meet the evolving needs of the translation industry.

Research questions:

1- How well do the skills and competencies taught in the English department at Misrata University align with the demands of the job market, particularly in translation-related careers, and what are the key gaps in practical and technological training؟

2- What strategies and collaborative efforts between academia and industry stakeholders can enhance curriculum relevance, practical skill acquisition, and employability of English department graduates in translation and related fields?

2. Literature Review:

2.1 Introduction

The rapid globalization of economies and cultures has significantly increased the demand for skilled translators. English departments in academic institutions play a critical role in equipping students with language proficiency and cultural knowledge. However, a persistent gap exists between the skills taught in these departments and the competencies required by the translation job market. This literature review examines key research themes on this topic, focusing on curriculum alignment, industry expectations, skill development, and pedagogical innovations.

The employability of university graduates, especially those from English departments, has received increasing focus in recent years. As the global job market changes, it is essential to close the gap between academic programs and the skills that employers seek. This section reviews the current literature on job market trends, the skills needed by English graduates, and strategies for aligning curricula. The connection between education and job market demands has become a significant topic of interest, particularly as employment landscapes continue to transform. This literature review investigates how educational institutions, especially English departments, can enhance student readiness for the workforce by aligning their curricula with the skills and competencies desired by employers.

2.2 Curriculum Alignment with Market Demands

Several studies highlight the need for curriculum reform to bridge the disconnect between academic training and professional translation requirements. Kiraly (2000) emphasizes the importance of a "constructivist approach" in translation education, advocating for a learner-centered model that integrates real-world tasks. Meanwhile, Pym (2013) underscores the necessity of teaching market-relevant skills such as localization, subtitling, and project management alongside linguistic proficiency.

2.3 Collaborative and Experiential Learning

Innovative pedagogical strategies have been proposed to address the alignment issue. Kiraly (2014) advocates for "project-based learning" where students work on authentic translation projects. Such approaches not only enhance technical skills but also foster teamwork and problem-solving abilities.

The research highlights collaborative and experiential learning as crucial strategies for addressing the skills gap between academic preparation and job market demands in translation-related careers. These approaches focus on practical, hands-on training and active partnerships with industry stakeholders, enabling students to develop competencies that align with professional standards. The importance of collaborative and experiential learning could be summorised as follows:

2.3.1 Importance of Collaborative and Experiential Learning

- **Bridging the Theory-Practice Gap**: Traditional English department curricula often emphasize theoretical knowledge over practical skills. Collaborative and experiential learning methods provide students with real-world experience, helping them transition from academic environments to professional workplaces.
- **Enhancing Employability**: Employers in the study highlighted that graduates often lack practical experience and familiarity with industry tools. Experiential learning equips students with the skills demanded in translation and related fields, such as proficiency in CAT tools and cultural adaptation.

2.3.2 Collaborative Learning: Academia-Industry Partnerships

- **Joint Projects with Industry Stakeholders**: Employers and teachers in the study emphasized the value of collaborative projects. For example, partnerships with translation agencies and multilingual organizations can offer students opportunities to work on live translation assignments, simulating professional scenarios.
- **Internship Programs**: The study revealed strong support from employers (83.3%) for offering internships to students. Internships provide hands-on experience with translation tasks, CAT tools, and client interactions, bridging the gap between academic training and workplace demands.
- **Advisory Boards and Feedback Mechanisms**: Regular interaction between academia and industry through advisory boards can ensure that curricula remain relevant. Feedback from industry professionals helps institutions identify and address skill gaps.
- **Guest Lectures and Workshops**: Bringing industry professionals into the classroom for workshops or seminars helps students gain insights into current trends and best practices in translation.

2.4 Technology Integration

Another key area of innovation is the integration of technology in translation education. Bowker and Marshman (2010) discuss the benefits of training students in CAT tools and terminology management systems. Recent advancements in artificial intelligence

and neural machine translation have further underscored the need for tech-savvy graduates (Lütz & Massey, 2020).

The integration of technology in translation education is a key area of focus in the study, as it addresses the significant gap between academic preparation and the technological demands of the job market. The research highlights the growing importance of technology-driven tools and practices in modern translation careers and examines how these elements can be effectively incorporated into the curriculum. Here's a detailed discussion based on the findings:

2.4.1 Importance of Technology in Translation Education
- **Role of CAT Tools**: Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) tools are industry-standard technologies that improve efficiency and accuracy in translation tasks. Employers emphasize their importance, with 66.7% identifying technical skills, including proficiency in CAT tools, as crucial for translators.
- **Emerging Technologies**: Neural Machine Translation (NMT) and post-editing of machine translations are rapidly gaining traction in the industry. The study underscores the need for graduates to be trained in these areas to remain competitive.
- **Terminology Management Systems**: These systems are critical for maintaining consistency in translation projects, particularly in specialized fields such as legal or medical translation

2.5 Role of Academic Institutions

To align outputs with market demands, institutions must actively collaborate with industry stakeholders. Biel and Sosoni (2017) recommend establishing advisory boards comprising academics and practitioners to regularly update curricula. Financial and logistical support for internships and study-abroad programs can also enhance students' readiness for global careers.

The research paper emphasizes the pivotal role of academic institutions, particularly English departments, in preparing students for the competitive demands of the job market. By bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills, academic institutions can better equip graduates for careers in translation and related fields. Below is an in-depth exploration of their role as highlighted in the study:

2.5.1 Designing Industry-Relevant Curricula
- **Aligning with Market Needs**: Academic institutions must actively revise and update curricula to reflect the changing demands of the translation industry. The study identifies that 66.7% of employers and 80% of teachers feel the current curriculum poorly aligns with job market requirements.
- **Frequent Updates**: Regular curriculum reviews (recommended every two years) are necessary to incorporate technological advancements, market trends, and employer feedback.
- **Specialized Translation Training**: Institutions should establish dedicated translation programs or divisions within English departments. These programs would focus on translation technologies, cultural adaptation, editing, and project management.

2.6 Skills Required by Employers

Studies consistently identify core competencies for translators, including advanced bilingual proficiency, cultural sensitivity, technical expertise, and technological fluency. O'Hagan and Ashworth (2002) highlight the growing importance of computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools and machine translation post-editing (MTPE) in the industry.

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Employers also value "soft skills" such as adaptability, time management, and effective communication (Katan, 2009).

2.6.1 Core Skills Identified by Employers

The study identifies several key competencies that employers consider essential for successful translators:

- **Language Proficiency**:
  - Bilingual Mastery: Employers emphasize advanced proficiency in both source and target languages as the most critical skill. Clear and accurate communication is fundamental for translation work.
  - Cultural Sensitivity: Understanding cultural nuances and idiomatic expressions is crucial for producing translations that resonate with target audiences.
- **Technical Skills**:
  - Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) Tools: Proficiency in tools such as SDL Trados, memoQ, and OmegaT is highly valued. These tools streamline the translation process and improve accuracy.
  - Terminology Management: Familiarity with terminology databases and glossaries is important for maintaining consistency in translations, particularly in specialized fields like legal or medical translation.
  - Neural Machine Translation (NMT) Post-Editing: As machine translation technologies advance, employers seek graduates skilled in editing and refining machine-generated translations.
- **Practical Translation Skills**:
  - Editing and Proofreading: Employers prioritize the ability to refine translations for accuracy, coherence, and stylistic appropriateness.
  - Localization: Adapting content for specific regions, cultures, or industries is increasingly important, particularly in marketing and technology sectors.

2.7 Challenges Faced by English Department Graduates

Despite their versatile skill set, many English graduates struggle with career placement due to several factors:

- **Lack of Career Guidance**: Insufficient exposure to diverse career options leads to underutilization of skills (Tomlinson, 2008).
- **Skill-Job Mismatch**: Academic programs often fail to align with the specific technical skills required in modern job markets (Jackson, 2016).
- **Stigma of Humanities Degrees**: English graduates often face stereotypes about the "impracticality" of their education (Arum & Roksa, 2014)

2.8 Strategies to Equip Students for the Job Market

Considering the identified skills gap, many educational institutions are starting to update their curricula to better meet job market needs. For example, a study by Green and Smith (2020) highlights the significance of incorporating practical skills training into academic programs. This approach includes experiential learning opportunities like internships, workshops, and collaborative projects, enabling students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world situations. These initiatives not only improve students' employability but also deepen their understanding of their field.

- **Curriculum Enhancement**: Incorporating practical courses such as business writing, digital storytelling, and project management can make graduates more marketable (Hart Research Associates, 2015).
- **Internships and Experiential Learning**: Partnerships with industries provide students with real-world exposure and relevant experience (Ferns & Zegwaard, 2014).
- **Career Services and Mentorship Programs**: Establishing strong career counseling services within departments can help students navigate their career paths more effectively (Robinson, 2018).

3. Methodology
3.1 Research design

This research adopts a purposive sampling approach to engage key stakeholders directly involved in the subject matter, namely prospective employers, English department teachers, and graduates of the English department. The study employs a quantitative research design to examine the alignment between the outputs of English departments and the demands of the job market, with the goal of enhancing students' transition into the workforce.

To collect data, the study utilizes structured questionnaires tailored to the three distinct groups. The first questionnaire targets prospective employers from diverse sectors, including heads of translation agencies, maritime shipping companies, INGOs, the Misrata Free Zone, and banks. The second questionnaire is designed for English department teachers with experience teaching translation courses. The third questionnaire is aimed at graduates of the English department to gather insights on their post-graduation experiences.

3.2 Participants and Setting

The research involved three key participant groups: prospective employers, teachers from English departments at the faculty of Arts and the department graduates. This has provided comprehensive insights into the skills and qualifications needed in the job market, as well as how these align with current academic curricula. 18 employers, 20 teachers and 39 graduates were involved in the study.

Prospective employers: A diverse range of employers from various industries that typically hire graduates with English degrees are targeted. This includes sectors such as heads of translation agencies, maritime shipping companies, INGOs, Misrata Free Zone and banks.

Educators (Teachers): Participants were faculty members from English departments who taught translation courses and were aware of the curriculum.

Department Graduates: graduates of the department are involved in the study, as their input provides valuable insights into the challenges they faced while seeking employment. Their feedback will be analyzed alongside the perspectives of prospective employers and department teachers to identify gaps and opportunities for aligning educational outcomes with job market demands.

3.3 Research Instruments

This study employed a quantitative approach, using questionnaires as the primary data collection method. Three distinct questionnaires were designed: one for prospective employers, another for teachers familiar with the curriculum of translation courses in the department, and a third for department graduates. The study involved 20 teachers, 18 prospective employers, and 39 graduates.

Although the sample size was relatively small, the researchers considered a quantitative MCQ-based questionnaire appropriate for this study. This method ensures response consistency, facilitating clearer comparisons and trend identification. Additionally, the

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structured format minimizes variability in interpretation, enhancing the reliability of the analysis and aligning with the study's specific research objectives.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

The research adhered to ethical guidelines, ensuring confidentiality of participant responses and using the data solely for academic purposes. Approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review board before commencing the study.

By employing this methodology, the research aims to gather valuable insights that can inform curriculum development in English departments, ultimately enhancing the employability of graduates and their readiness for the evolving job market.

4. Data Analysis and Study Findings

The data was collected and analysed using Google Forms. Three sets of questionaires were sent to prospective employers, teachers of the department and group of recenet graduates.

4.1. Employers´ questionnaires.

The first questionnaire (see appendix A) was distributed to eight employers in some of the most sought-after fields for English graduates. The selected employers included heads of translation agencies, maritime shipping companies, INGOs, Misrata Free Zone and banks. This questionnaire comprised 12 multiple-choice questions that addressed the main research inquiries and was administered via Google Forms.

Figure 1: Recruitment of English Department Students, Faculty of Arts, Misrata University.

Figure 1

Figure (1) illustrates the responses of 18 participants regarding whether they have ever recruited students from the English Department. The majority, representing 83.3%, indicated that they have indeed recruited students from this department. Conversely, a smaller proportion, accounting for 16.7%, responded negatively, suggesting that they have not recruited students from the English Department.

Figure 2: Perceptions of Recent English Graduates' Workplace Preparedness.

Figure 2

Figure (2) depicts the perceptions of 18 respondents on how well recent English

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department graduates are prepared for workplace demands. Half of the respondents (50%) believe that graduates are poorly prepared, indicating significant concerns about their readiness for professional environments. A notable 38.9% of participants think graduates are somewhat prepared, while a small fraction (11.1%) remains neutral. None of the respondents believe the graduates are very well prepared. These results highlight a predominantly negative outlook regarding the preparedness of recent graduates for workplace challenges.

Figure 3: Challenges Faced When Hiring English Department Graduates.
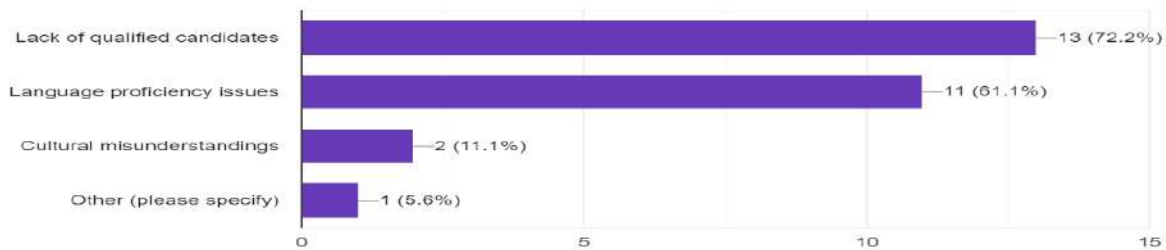
Figure 3

Figure (3) outlines challenges employers face when hiring English department graduates, based on 18 responses. The top issue, cited by 72.2%, is a lack of qualified candidates, followed by language proficiency problems (61.1%). Cultural misunderstandings were noted by 11.1%, and 5.6% mentioned other unspecified challenges. These findings highlight significant concerns about the skills and qualifications of English graduates.

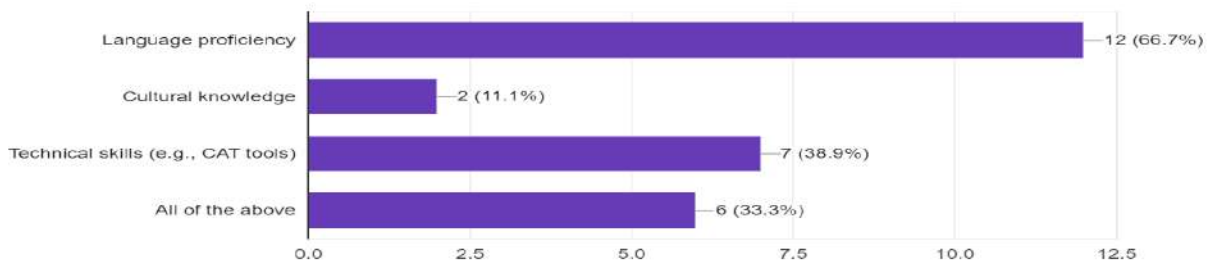**Figure 4: Most Appropriate Skills for a Translator.**

Figure 4

Figure (4) shows the skills deemed most important for translators by 18 respondents. Most (66.7%) prioritized language proficiency, while 38.9% highlighted technical skills like CAT tools. A third (33.3%) chose "All of the above," reflecting a holistic view, and 11.1% emphasized cultural knowledge alone. The findings underscore the critical role of language proficiency, supported by technical and cultural skills.

Figure 5: Alignment of English Department Skills with Employer Needs.

Figure 5

Figure (5) illustrates perceptions of the alignment between English department curricula and employer needs, based on 18 responses. A majority (66.7%) rate the alignment as poor, reflecting dissatisfaction with the relevance of academic training to industry demands. Meanwhile, 16.7% find the skills somewhat aligned, 11.1% are neutral, and none consider the alignment very well-aligned. These findings underscore a significant gap between education and workplace expectations, emphasizing the need for curriculum reforms.

Figure 6: Collaboration for Curriculum Alignment.

Figure 6

Figure (6) highlights respondents' perspectives on collaboration between English departments and industries. Among 18 respondents, 83.3% perceive insufficient collaboration, 11.1% are unsure, and only 5.6% see it as adequate. This suggests a notable disconnect between academia and industry. Strengthening partnerships is essential to align curricula with job market needs.

Figure 7: Interest in Collaborating on Translation Training Programs.
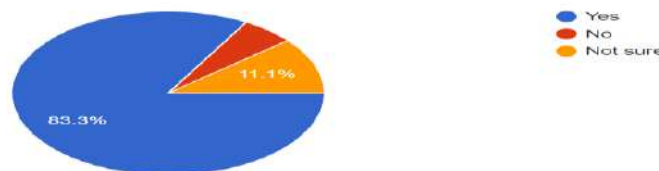

Figure 7

Figure (7) shows respondents' willingness to collaborate with educational institutions to improve translation training. Of 18 participants, 83.3% expressed interest, 11.1% were unsure, and 5.6% showed no interest. These findings highlight strong support for partnerships to enhance translation education and address industry needs.

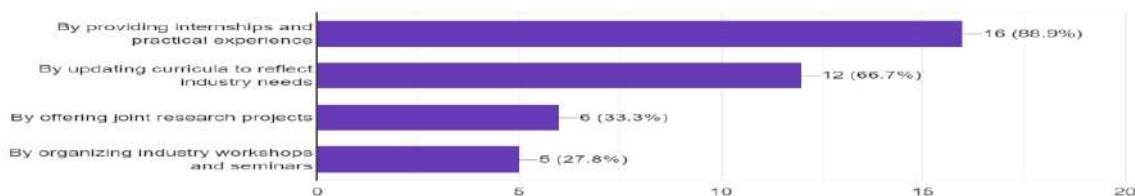**Figure 8: Enhancing Translation Education Through Collaboration.**

Figure 8

Figure (8) outlines strategies to improve translation education through collaboration between educational institutions and industry stakeholders. Most respondents (88.9%) highlighted internships and practical experience as the most effective approach. Updating curricula to meet industry needs was endorsed by 66.7%, while 33.3% suggested joint research projects, and 27.8% recommended industry workshops and seminars. These findings emphasize the need for hands-on training and curriculum alignment, along with the benefits of collaborative research and professional development activities.

Figure 9: Willingness to Offer Internships or Mentorships to English Students.

Figure 9

Figure (9) reflects respondents' willingness to offer internships or mentorships to students in the English department. Among the 18 respondents, 50% indicated they would "definitely" be willing to offer such opportunities, while 38.9% responded with "possibly," suggesting openness to the idea under the right circumstances. A smaller proportion (11.1%) stated they are "not currently" willing, and no respondents explicitly expressed disinterest. These findings suggest a strong potential for partnerships between employers and English departments to provide practical training and mentorship for students.

Figure 10: Biggest Gap in Translation courses at the department.

Figure 10

Figure (10) highlights the biggest gaps in translation courses, based on 18 responses. All respondents (100%) identified practical experience as the most significant gap, underscoring the urgent need for hands-on training. Additionally, 66.7% pointed to insufficient knowledge of translation technology, while smaller proportions cited cultural competency (11.1%) and language skills (5.6%). These findings emphasize the importance of incorporating practical experience and technology training to address key stakeholder concerns.

Figure 11: Methods for Integrating Real-World Applications into Translation Education.

Figure 11

Figure (11) presents employer-recommended methods for integrating real-world applications into translation education, based on 18 responses. The most favored approach, endorsed by 83.3%, is collaborative projects with businesses. Additionally, 50% recommend job shadowing, 44.4% suggest guest lectures from industry professionals, and 11.1% advocate for case studies and simulations. These findings highlight the value of direct industry engagement and experiential learning in bridging the gap between academic training and professional practice.

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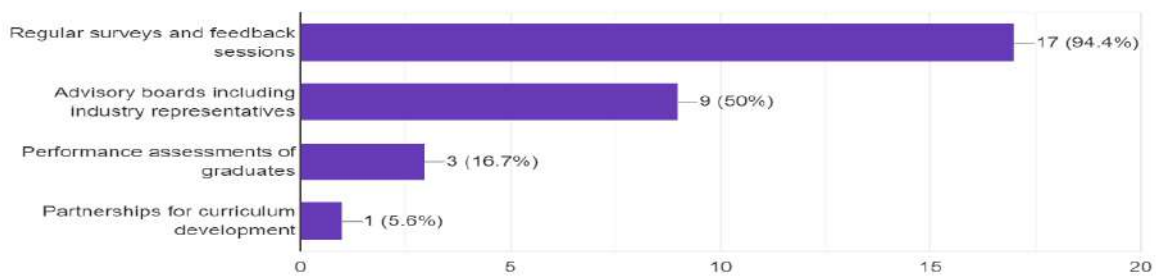**Figure 12: Feedback mechanisms for improving English department curricula.**

Figure 12

Figure (12) highlights employer-recommended feedback mechanisms for improving English department curricula, based on 18 responses. Most respondents (94.4%) prioritize regular surveys and feedback sessions as the most effective approach. Half (50%) suggest forming advisory boards with industry representatives, while 16.7% recommend performance assessments of graduates, and 5.6% advocate for partnerships in curriculum development. These findings underscore the importance of continuous feedback and collaboration to align curricula with industry demands.

4.2 Teachers´ questionnaire.

The second questionnaire (See appendix B) was distributed to eight teachers from the English department who has previously taught translation courses. This questionnaire comprised 14 multiple-choice questions that addressed the main research inquiries and was administered via Google Forms.

Figure 13: Satisfaction with the Outputs of the English Department.

Figure 13

Figure (13) illustrates the satisfaction levels of 20 respondents regarding the outputs of the English Department. The majority, accounting for 80%, expressed dissatisfaction, while 20% indicated they were satisfied. Notably, no respondents reported being extremely satisfied or extremely unsatisfied. These results indicate a predominant sense of dissatisfaction with the outcomes of the English Department, suggesting room for significant improvement in meeting expectations and addressing stakeholder needs.

Figure 14: Alignment of Skills Taught in English Departments with Employers' Needs.

Figure 14

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Figure (14) presents the views of 20 respondents on the alignment of English department skills with employers' needs. A majority (55%) believe the alignment is poor, 30% think it is somewhat aligned, and 15% are neutral. No one rated the alignment as very good. These results highlight a disconnect between academic instruction and industry expectations, calling for curriculum improvements.

Figure 15: Primary Barrier to Aligning English Department Skills with Industry Needs.
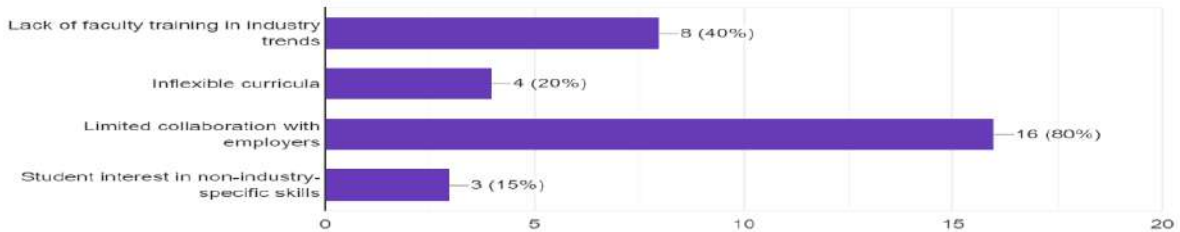
Figure 15

Figure (15) identifies barriers to aligning English department skills with industry needs. Among 20 respondents, 80% cited limited employer collaboration, 40% noted insufficient faculty training, 20% pointed to inflexible curricula, and 15% mentioned students' focus on non-industry-specific skills. These findings underscore the need for enhanced academia-industry partnerships, faculty development, and curriculum updates.

Figure 16: Most Effective Method for Aligning Translation Courses with Market Needs.
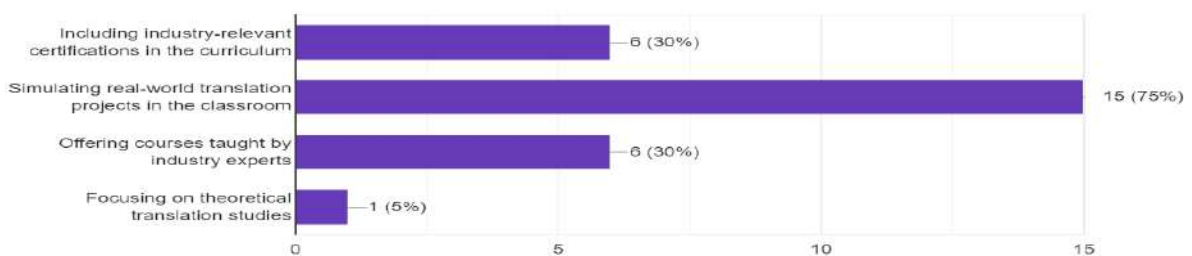
Figure 16

Figure (16) highlights methods for aligning translation courses with market needs, based on 20 responses. Most respondents (75%) favor simulating real-world translation projects, while 30% advocate for industry certifications and expert-taught courses. Only 5% prioritize theoretical studies. These findings stress the need for practical, industry-aligned training to prepare students effectively.

Figure 17: Most Notable Gap in The Curriculum of Translation Courses.
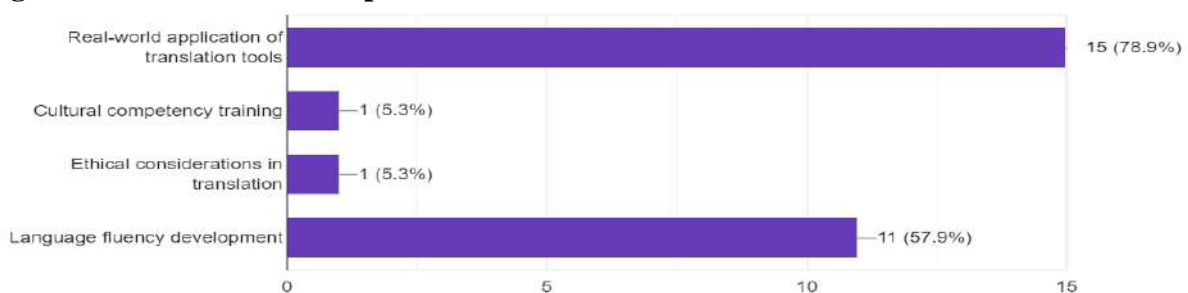
Figure 17

Figure (17) identifies the most notable gaps in the curriculum of translation courses, based on 19 responses. The most significant gap, cited by 78.9% of respondents, is the real-

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world application of translation tools, indicating a strong need for practical training in industry-standard software. Additionally, 57.9% highlighted language fluency development as a major shortfall. Cultural competency training and ethical considerations in translation were each noted by 5.3% of respondents. These results underscore the importance of integrating practical, tool-based training and advanced language fluency development into translation curricula to better meet industry demands.

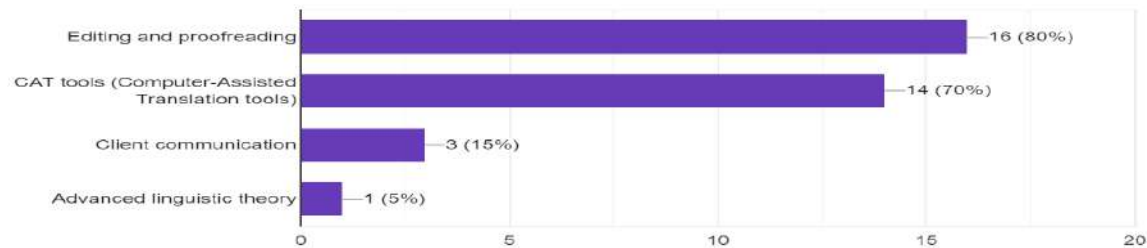**Figure 18: Skill Most Commonly Overlooked in Translation Education.**

Figure 18

Figure (18) highlights overlooked skills in translation education, based on 20 responses. Most respondents (80%) cited editing and proofreading, while 70% pointed to a lack of focus on CAT tools. Client communication was noted by 15%, and advanced linguistic theory by 5%. These findings emphasize the need to prioritize practical and technical skills in translation education to meet industry demands.

Figure 19: Willingness to Collaborate with Employers for Student Job Market Preparation.
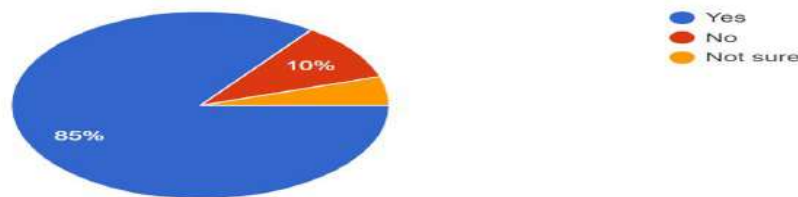

Figure 19

Figure (19) shows respondents' willingness to collaborate between departments and employers to prepare students for the job market. A majority (85%) expressed willingness, 10% were unsure, and 5% were unwilling. These results highlight strong stakeholder interest in partnerships to bridge the gap between education and industry needs.

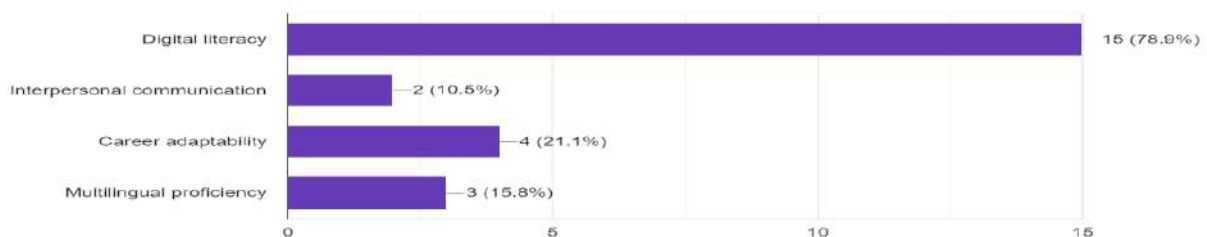**Figure 20: Most Challenging Practical Skill Area to Incorporate into the Curriculum.**

Figure 20

Figure (20) outlines practical skills that are hardest to incorporate into the curriculum, based on 19 responses. Most respondents (78.9%) cited digital literacy as the biggest challenge, followed by career adaptability (21.1%), multilingual proficiency (15.8%), and

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interpersonal communication (10.5%). These findings highlight the need for targeted efforts to integrate digital literacy into academic programs effectively.

Figure 21: Frequency of Curriculum Updates to Reflect Industry Changes.

Figure 21

Figure (21) shows that 65% of respondents report infrequent curriculum updates, highlighting a gap in alignment with industry changes. While 20% were unsure, 10% noted updates every 5+ years, and only 5% reported updates every 2–3 years. No respondents indicated annual updates, emphasizing the need for more regular revisions to meet evolving industry demands.

Figure 22: Main Reason for the Gap Between Translation Curricula and Job Market Needs.

Figure 22

Figure (22) highlights the main reasons for the gap between translation curricula and job market needs, based on 19 responses. Limited industry collaboration tops the list (36.8%), followed by outdated course materials (26.3%), lack of practical experience (21.1%), and limited interest from institutions and stakeholders (15.8%). These findings stress the need for stronger partnerships, updated materials, and experiential learning to better align curricula with market demands.

Figure 23: Effectiveness of Translation Courses in Preparing Students for Challenges.
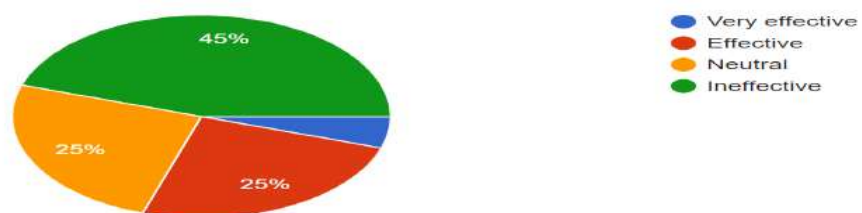

Figure 23

Figure (23) shows that 45% of respondents view translation courses as ineffective in preparing students for real-world challenges. While 25% were neutral and another 25% found the courses effective, only 5% rated them as very effective. These results underscore

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significant concerns about the ability of translation education to equip students with practical skills.

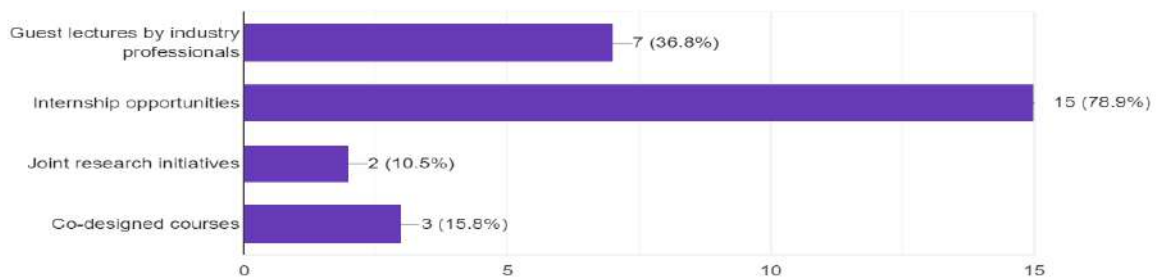**Figure 24: Most Beneficial Collaboration Methods for Enhancing Translation Education.**

Figure 24

Figure (24) highlights effective collaboration methods for improving translation education, based on 19 responses. Most participants (78.9%) identified internships as the most impactful approach. Guest lectures by industry professionals followed at 36.8%, while 15.8% suggested co-designed courses, and 10.5% preferred joint research initiatives. These findings stress the value of practical experiences and industry expertise in better preparing students for professional demands.

Figure 25: Key Area of Professional Development for Translation Students.

Figure 25

Figure (25) highlights key professional development priorities for translation students, based on 19 responses. Most respondents (57.9%) emphasized the use of translation software, reflecting its growing industry importance. Cultural adaptation and sensitivity were noted by 21.1%, while 15.8% prioritized project and client management. Only 5.3% stressed advanced language skills. These findings underscore the need for technological, cultural, and managerial competencies to prepare students for professional translation roles.

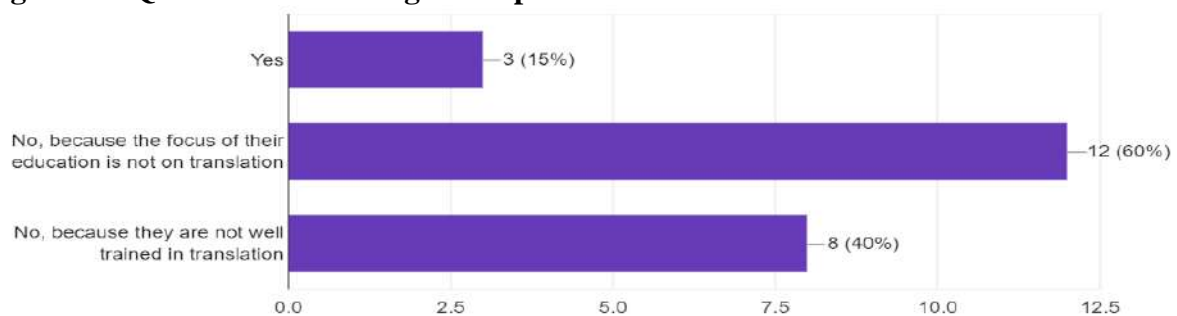**Figure 26: Qualifications of English Department Students as Translators.**

Figure 26

Figure (26) shows opinions on the qualifications of English department students as translators, based on 20 responses. Only 15% consider them qualified, while 60% attribute this to a lack of translation-focused curricula, and 40% cite insufficient training. These findings underscore the need for curriculum reforms with specialized training to better prepare students for translation careers.

4.3 Graduates' questionnaire

The thrid questionnaire (See appendix C) was distributed to 39 gradutes via Google Forms. This questionnaire comprised nine multiple-choice questions that addressed the main research inquiries. Due to the lack of an established alumni network at the department, which limits access to former students, it was hard for the researcher to reach more graduates. Additionally, tracking and reaching graduates for research purposes is challenging due to the absence of systematic records or contact databases. This limitation is further compounded by graduates often moving away or transitioning to diverse career paths, making it difficult to ensure a representative and comprehensive sample for the study.

Figure 27: Gender of the participants

Figure 27

Figure (27) illustrates the gender distribution of the participants in the study. According to the data, males represent a majority, accounting for 57.9% of the total participants, while females constitute the remaining 42.1%.

Figure 28: Current employment status

Figure 28

Figure (28) shows the current employment status of participants. Full-time employees form the largest group at 25.6%, followed by part-time at 23.1%, and those in non-translation roles at 20.5%. Freelancers make up 17.9%, while the unemployed account for 12.8%. This indicates a diverse range of employment types, with full-time being the most common.

Figure 29: Working in Translation related jobs.

Figure 29

Figure (29) illustrates whether participants are working in translation-related jobs. A majority, 64.1%, answered "Yes," indicating they are engaged in such roles, while 35.9% responded "No." This shows that over half of the participants are actively involved in translation-related work, highlighting its relevance within the group.

Figure 30: Satsfaction with the translation courses

Figure 30

Figure (30) illustrates participants' satisfaction with translation courses. A significant majority, 78.9%, reported being somewhat dissatisfied. Those who are somewhat satisfied account for 13.2%, while a small percentage fall into categories such as very satisfied, neutral, or very dissatisfied. This suggests that most participants are not content with the translation courses, highlighting potential areas for improvement.

Figure 31: Translation courses preparation of students for the workplace.

Figure 31

Figure (31) illustrates participants' opinions on how well translation courses prepare students for the workplace. A striking majority, 78.9%, believe students are somewhat unprepared. Only 13.2% hold a neutral stance, while a minimal percentage feel students are either well-prepared or very well-prepared. This indicates widespread dissatisfaction with the practical workplace readiness provided by these courses.

Figure32: Aspects of translation courses that prepared students for a career in translation

Figure 32

Figure (32) highlights aspects of translation courses that contributed to preparing students for a career in translation. The majority, 94.6%, identified practical exercises in translation as

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the most beneficial element. Cultural and contextual translation training was acknowledged by 13.5% of participants, while theoretical knowledge of translation was not recognized by any respondents as a contributing factor. This emphasizes the importance of hands-on, practical training over theoretical content in career preparation.

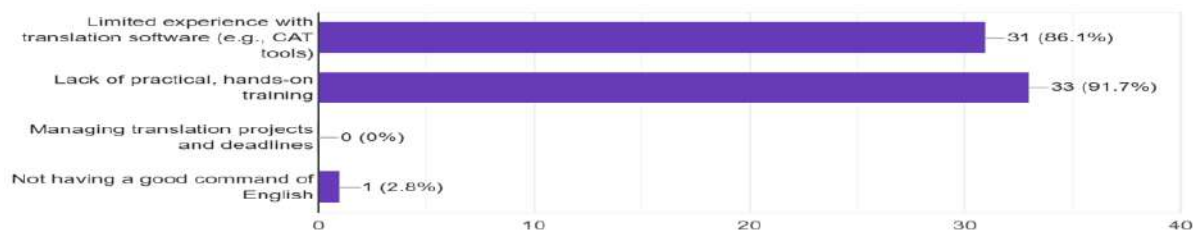**Figure 33: Challenges faced students while seeking jobs**

Figure 33

Figure 33 highlights the challenges students faced when applying knowledge from translation courses to their jobs. The most significant issue, cited by 91.7%, was a lack of practical, hands-on training. Additionally, 86.1% reported limited experience with translation software (e.g., CAT tools). Managing translation projects and deadlines was not identified as a challenge, and only 2.8% mentioned not having a good command of English. This underscores the need for more practical training and exposure to translation tools in academic programs.

Figure 34: Additional training should have been included in the translation courses?
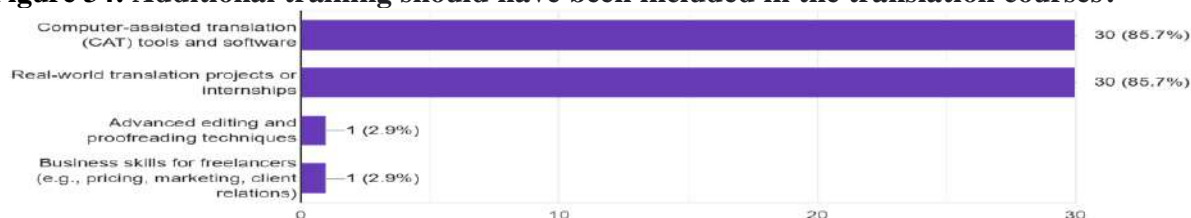

Figure 34

Figure 34 shows the additional training participants felt should have been included in translation courses. Both computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools and real-world translation projects or internships were highlighted by 85.7% of respondents. Advanced editing techniques and business skills for freelancers were each suggested by only 2.9%. This emphasizes the need for practical and technology-oriented training in translation programs.

Figure 35: Willingness in participating in a mandatory internship as part of the translation courses
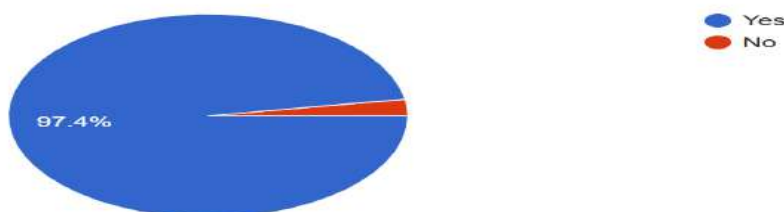

Figure 35

Figure 35 illustrates participants' willingness to participate in a mandatory internship as part of translation courses. A vast majority, 97.4%, responded "Yes," showing strong support for incorporating internships into the curriculum. Only 2.6% expressed unwillingness, emphasizing the perceived value of practical, hands-on experience in preparing for translation careers.

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Discussion of Results

The findings from both the employers' and teachers' questionnaires underscore a critical disconnect between the academic preparation provided by the English department and the expectations of the job market. While both groups acknowledged the potential of English graduates, they also highlighted significant shortcomings in their readiness for professional translation roles.

Employers' Insight

Employers expressed strong interest in recruiting English department graduates, with 83.3% reporting that they have done so. However, their perception of the graduates' workplace readiness revealed stark deficiencies. Half of the respondents indicated that graduates are poorly prepared for professional demands, and none rated them as "very well prepared." This underscores widespread dissatisfaction with the level of preparation these students receive, particularly in relation to the practical and technical skills required in translation.

The challenges employers face when hiring English department graduates provide further clarity. A lack of qualified candidates and language proficiency issues were the most cited concerns, affecting 72.2% and 61.1% of respondents, respectively. Additionally, 66.7% believed that the curriculum poorly aligns with the needs of employers, reflecting a systemic issue in the way translation education is structured. A key area of consensus among employers was the critical importance of language proficiency, followed by technical skills, such as familiarity with computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools. Employers also identified practical experience as the most significant gap in the current education system.

Despite these challenges, employers expressed willingness to collaborate with educational institutions. Approximately 83.3% showed enthusiasm for partnerships to improve training programs, emphasizing the need for internships, curriculum updates, and joint projects. Their openness to offering internships and mentorships further highlights their commitment to fostering practical skills among students. Employers also suggested regular feedback mechanisms, such as surveys and advisory boards, as effective strategies to ensure continuous improvement in curricula.

Teachers' Perspectives

Teachers provided a complementary yet equally critical view of the translation courses' shortcomings. A significant majority (80%) expressed dissatisfaction with the department's outputs particulary the translation courses, mirroring employers' concerns about the alignment between academic instruction and industry requirements. Teachers emphasized that limited collaboration with employers (80%) and outdated curricula (65%) were major barriers to effective translation education. They also identified gaps in practical training, particularly in the use of CAT tools and the application of real-world translation projects.

Teachers highlighted specific methods to bridge the gap between education and industry needs. Simulating real-world translation projects in the classroom was seen as the most impactful solution, supported by 75% of respondents. They also advocated for more frequent curriculum updates and the inclusion of industry-relevant certifications and courses taught by professionals. Teachers echoed employers' concerns regarding digital literacy, identifying it as the hardest skill to incorporate into the curriculum. Nevertheless, 85% of teachers expressed willingness to collaborate with employers, reinforcing the shared desire for partnerships to enhance student preparation.

Graduates' Insights

Based on the findings from the graduates' questionnaire, the following key perspectives emerge regarding the alignment of translation courses within the English Department and market demands:

1. Employment Relevance and Satisfaction

- **Employment in Translation-related Jobs:** Over half of the participants (64.1%) work in translation-related roles, suggesting a moderate relevance of translation training to their current employment. However, the remaining 35.9% working in non-translation fields indicates a disconnect for some graduates.
- **Job Satisfaction with Translation Courses:** A significant majority (78.9%) expressed dissatisfaction with the translation courses. This dissatisfaction highlights a gap between the course content and practical job requirements.

2. Preparation for the Workplace

- **Practical Readiness:** A striking 78.9% of graduates believe that translation courses leave students somewhat unprepared for the workplace. Only a small fraction reported feeling adequately prepared.
- **Key Beneficial Aspects:** Practical exercises in translation were overwhelmingly recognized (94.6%) as the most beneficial part of their education. This underscores the value of hands-on learning over theoretical approaches.

3. Challenges and Gaps in Training

- **Practical Training Deficiency:** A lack of practical, hands-on training (91.7%) and limited exposure to translation software (86.1%) were the most significant challenges faced by graduates in applying their academic knowledge to real-world scenarios.
- **Limited Integration of Technology:** Many graduates reported that training in computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools was insufficient, reflecting a gap in technological preparation.

Conclusion

The findings reveal a significant alignment among the perspectives of employers, teachers, and department graduates, underscoring shared concerns and priorities for advancing translation education. Both employers and teachers agree on the urgent need to address critical gaps in practical training. They identified the lack of hands-on experience—particularly in areas such as CAT tools, editing, and proofreading—as a major shortcoming. To address this, they stressed the importance of incorporating internships, real-world projects, and practical opportunities into the curriculum to better equip students for professional challenges. Department graduates echoed these concerns, highlighting the need for reforms in translation courses based on the challenges and difficulties they encountered during their job search.

Another area of consensus is the need to strengthen collaboration between the English department and the translation industry. Employers expressed a strong interest in offering internships and mentorship opportunities, while teachers demonstrated enthusiasm for participating in joint initiatives to align educational outcomes with market demands. Graduates, in turn, expressed a willingness to take on internship opportunities, noting that they would have welcomed such experiences during their studies. These partnerships are widely regarded as essential for bridging the gap between academic learning and industry expectations.

The three groups emphasized the importance of curriculum relevance, highlighting that the current program often fails to meet industry needs. Updating the curriculum to include technical, cultural, and professional skills emerged as a shared priority. Employers stressed the need to align course content with industry requirements, while teachers advocated for more frequent curriculum reviews to effectively address evolving market demands. Graduates acknowledged facing significant challenges due to gaps in essential skills and foundational translation training, underscoring the need for comprehensive curriculum reform.

Structural adjustments within the English department were another point of discussion. Teachers highlighted the need to establish a dedicated translation division, a suggestion that aligns with employers' focus on targeted training. Specialized programs would help students acquire the technical and practical skills required by the job market, creating a more focused and effective pathway for aspiring translators.

While there is strong agreement on the major issues, differences emerge in their approaches to implementation. Employers place a greater emphasis on collaborative efforts, such as internships and joint research initiatives, while teachers advocate for systemic changes, including curriculum updates and departmental restructuring. Addressing these concerns will require a multi-faceted approach that integrates practical training, regular input from industry professionals, and structural changes within the academic framework.

Ultimately, fostering a stronger partnership between academia and industry is essential to bridging the gap between education and employment. By aligning curricula with industry demands and providing students with hands-on experience, English departments can better equip graduates with the skills and qualifications needed to succeed in professional translation roles. Both employers and teachers recognize the potential for improvement and are committed to working together to achieve these goals. This shared commitment lays a promising foundation for the development of a robust and industry-relevant translation education program.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and analysis of the employers', teachers' and graduates' questionnaires, the following recommendations are proposed to address the gaps between academic preparation and job market demands:

1. Strengthen Industry-Academia Collaboration
- Establish formal partnerships with employers to facilitate internships, mentorships, and job-shadowing opportunities for students.
- Create advisory boards that include industry representatives to provide regular feedback on curriculum relevance and emerging trends.
- Organize industry-led workshops and seminars to expose students to real-world challenges and professional expectations.

2. Revise and Update the Curriculum
- Conduct frequent curriculum reviews (at least every two years) to ensure alignment with industry needs and technological advancements.
- Integrate practical training components, such as real-world translation projects, into course offerings.
- Include industry certifications and training in computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools as part of the curriculum to enhance technical proficiency.

3. Introduce a Specialized Translation Division
- Establish a dedicated translation division within the English department to provide focused training for students interested in translation careers.
- Offer specialized courses in translation technology, cultural adaptation, editing, and project management.
- Develop pathways for students to pursue a bachelor's degree in Translation, distinct from general English studies.

4. Enhance Practical and Technical Training
- Collaborate with employers to offer hands-on training in CAT tools and other translation technologies that are standard in the industry.
- Emphasize editing, proofreading, and client communication as essential components of translation education.
- Provide opportunities for students to work on live translation projects through partnerships with translation agencies or multilingual organizations.

5. Foster Faculty Development
- Train faculty members in industry-relevant tools and practices, such as translation technology and project management.
- Encourage faculty to participate in industry conferences and professional development programs to stay updated on market trends.
- Recruit practitioners from the field as adjunct faculty to bridge the gap between academia and professional practice.

6. Promote Digital Literacy and Career Readiness
- Integrate digital literacy training into the curriculum to prepare students for technology-driven work environments.
- Include courses or workshops on career adaptability, project management, and client relationship management to build transferable skills.
- Provide access to career services and job placement programs tailored to the translation industry.

7. Establish Feedback Mechanisms
- Conduct regular surveys with employers and alumni to assess the effectiveness of the curriculum and identify areas for improvement.
- Use feedback from internships and job placements to evaluate and refine program outcomes.
- Create a platform for ongoing dialogue between students, faculty, and industry stakeholders.

8. Expand Practical Opportunities
- Work with employers to increase the availability of internship opportunities and encourage student participation.
- Develop simulation-based training programs that replicate workplace scenarios to provide students with practical experience.
- Incorporate case studies and problem-solving exercises into coursework to enhance critical thinking and real-world application.

9. Monitor and Evaluate Progress
- Set measurable goals for student performance and employability, and track progress through graduate outcomes assessments.

- Benchmark the program against successful translation education models internationally to identify best practices.
- Regularly update stakeholders on improvements and outcomes to maintain transparency and encourage continued collaboration.

Graduates consistently emphasize the need for more practical, hands-on experiences, particularly through internships, real-world projects, and training in CAT tools. While translation courses provide some foundational skills, the prevailing sentiment is that they fall short in preparing students for market demands. Aligning translation courses with industry requirements through enhanced practical training and technology integration is critical to improving satisfaction and workplace readiness. This feedback reflects an urgent call to re-evaluate the curriculum to bridge the gap between academic training and professional needs.

By implementing these recommendations, the English department can bridge the gap between academic preparation and the professional demands of the potential employers, equipping students with the skills, knowledge, and experience needed for successful careers. These steps also align with the shared priorities of employers and teachers, ensuring a cohesive and effective approach to enhancing translation education.

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Appendix A
Employers' questionnaire

Q1- Have you ever recruited students from English Department?
Q2- To what extent do you think recent English department graduates are prepared for workplace demands?
Q3- What challenges do you face when hiring English department graduates?
Q4- Which skills do you consider most important for a translator?
Q5- How well do you think the skills taught in English departments align with employers' needs?
Q6- Do you believe there is sufficient collaboration between English departments and industries to align curriculum with job market needs?
Q7- Would you be interested in collaborating with educational institutions to improve translation training programs?
Q8- How can collaboration between educational institutions and industry stakeholders enhance translation education?
Q9- Would you be willing to offer internships or mentorships to students in English department?
Q10= What is biggest Gap in Translation courses at the department?
Q11- Which methods do employers suggest for better integrating real-world applications into translation education?
Q12- What feedback mechanisms can employers provide to ensure continuous improvement in English department curricula?

Appendix B
Teachers' questionnaire

Q1- Are you satisfied with the outputs of the English Department?
Q2- How well do you think the skills taught in English departments align with employers' needs?
Q3- What is the primary barrier to aligning English department skills with industry needs?
Q4- What is the most effective method for aligning translation courses with market needs?
Q5- What is the most notable gap in the curriculum of translation courses?
Q6- Which skill is most commonly overlooked in translation education?
Q7- Would you be willing to be involved in any cooperation between the department and employers to better prepared students to the job market?
Q8- Which area of practical skills is the hardest to incorporate into the curriculum?
Q9- How often are curricula updated to reflect industry changes?
Q10- What is the main reason for the gap between translation curricula and job market needs?
Q11- How effective are translation courses in preparing students for real-world challenges?
Q12- Which collaboration methods would be most beneficial for enhancing translation education?
Q13- Which area of professional development do you believe requires the most emphasis for translation students?
Q14- Do you believe that English department students are qualified to be translators?

Appendix C
Graduates' questionnaire

Q1- What is your gender?
Q2- What is your current employment status?
Q3- Have you worked in a translation-related field since graduation?
Q4- How satisfied are you with the translation courses you took in the English department?
Q5- How well did the translation courses prepare you for your work in translation?
Q6- Which aspects of the translation courses were most helpful in preparing you for a career in translation?
Q7- Which aspects of the translation courses were insufficient?
Q8- What challenges did you face when applying the knowledge gained from translation courses to your job?
Q9- Would you have been interested in participating in a mandatory internship program as part of the translation courses?

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مواءمة مخرجات قسم اللغة الإنجليزية مع متطلبات سوق العمل:
إعداد الطلاب لمهن الترجمة

الكلمات المفتاحية:	الملخص
مواءمة التعليم وسوق العمل، متطلبات السوق، تحسين المناهج الدراسية	تتناول هذه الدراسة مدى توافق المهارات التي تُدرّس في مقررات الترجمة بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية الآداب- جامعة مصراتة مع الكفاءات المطلوبة من قبل أصحاب العمل المستقبليين. وتهدف إلى بحث ما إذا كان الطلاب مستعدين بشكل كافٍ لتلبية متطلبات السوق، وتسعى لسد الفجوة بين مخرجات قسم اللغة الانجليزية بكلية الاداب، جامعة مصراتة واحتياجات سوق العمل. باستخدام نهج البحث الكمي، تشمل الدراسة أصحاب العمل المحتملين من مختلف القطاعات وأساتذة قسم اللغة الإنجليزية. يتم تقييم المهارات المطلوبة والفجوات التعليمية ومجالات التعاون المحتملة وتحسينات المناهج من خلال استبيانات مُنظمة. تشير النتائج الأولية إلى وجود فجوة كبيرة في المهارات، خاصة في التدريب العملي واستخدام التكنولوجيا في الترجمة. يشدد أصحاب العمل المحتملون على الحاجة إلى أن يمتلك الخريجون مهارات عملية تكمل تعليمهم الأكاديمي. من جهة أخرى، يعرب الأساتذة عن رغبتهم في دمج هذه الكفاءات وإبداء استعدادهم للعمل من أجل تحقيق توافق أفضل. تسلط الدراسة الضوء على أهمية التعاون بين الأوساط الأكاديمية والصناعة لتعزيز ملاءمة المناهج الدراسية، وإعداد الطلاب بشكل أفضل للمهن، ووضع استراتيجيات لمعالجة الفجوة بين التعليم وسوق العمل، مما يسهم في نهاية المطاف في تعزيز قوة عاملة أكثر مهارة.