Exploring the Utilization of Translation Competence across General Language Proficiency Levels and Gender: A Study of Iranian EFL Learners

Narjes Ghafournia [1] *

[1] Assistant Professor, Department of English, Neyshabur Branch, Islamic Azad University, Neyshabur, Iran

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Abstract

The study scrutinized the probable differences between general language proficiency levels and Translation Competence (TC). Furthermore, the probable significant gender differences in TC were explored. The significant relationship between general language proficiency and TC was explored. Finally, the significant predicting role of TC for general language proficiency was investigated. The participants were 196 ELT students at the Islamic Azad University of Neyshabur-Iran, who filled out a Translation Competence questionnaire and took a TOEFL test. The study followed a quantitative descriptive design, in which the differences between language learners' general proficiency levels in TC across genders were explored. It also followed a correlational design, in which the correlation coefficient between general language proficiency levels and TC was investigated. After confirming the normality of data distribution, parametric statistical analysis was employed to probe the research questions. The findings demonstrated significant differences among three general proficiency levels in TC as well as a significant relationship between the general proficiency levels and translation competence. The significant predicting role of Translation Competence (TC) for general language proficiency was also confirmed. No significant gender difference was reported concerning translation competence. The findings offer some insightful suggestions for improving second language teaching methodology and syllabus designing.

توانش ترجمه، سطح مهارت عمومی زبان و جنسیت: بررسی زبان آموزان ایرانی زبان انگلیسی

این مطالعه تفاوت های احتمالی قابل توجه بین سطوح مهارت عمومی زبان و توانش ترجمه(TC) را مورد بررسی قرار داد. علاوه بر این، تفاوت های احتمالی قابل توجه جنسیتی در TC مورد بررسی قرار گرفت. رابطه معنادار بین مهارت زبان عمومی و TC مورد بررسی قرار گرفت. در نهایت، نقش پیش‌بینی‌کننده مهم TC برای مهارت عمومی زبان مورد بررسی قرار گرفت. شرکت کنندگان ۱۹۶ نفر از دانشجویان آموزش زبان انگلیسی دانشگاه آزاد اسلامی واحد نیشابور بودند که پرسشنامه TC را تکمیل و در آزمون تافل شرکت کردند. این مطالعه یک طرح توصیفی کمی را دنبال کرد که در آن تفاوت‌های معنادار بین سطوح مهارت عمومی زبان‌آموزان در TC در بین جنسیت‌ها بررسی شد. همچنین از یک طرح همبستگی پیروی کرد که در آن ضریب همبستگی بین سطوح مهارت عمومی زبان و TC مورد بررسی قرار گرفت. پس از تایید نرمال بودن توزیع داده ها، از تحلیلهای آماری پارامتریک برای بررسی سوالات تحقیق استفاده شد. یافته‌ها تفاوت معنی‌داری را بین سه سطح مهارت زبانی در استفاده از TC و همچنین رابطه معنادار بین سطوح مهارت عمومی و توانش ترجمه نشان داد. نقش پیش‌بینی‌کننده TC برای مهارت زبان عمومی نیز تأیید شد. تفاوت جنسیتی قابل توجهی در مورد توانش ترجمه گزارش نشد. یافته های تحقیق پیشنهادهای مفیدی برای بهبود روش تدریس زبان دوم و طراحی مطالب درسی زبان انگلیسی ارائه می دهد.

واژه‌های کلیدی:سطح مهارت عمومی زبان; توانش زبانی؛ توانش ترجمه

[1] Corresponding Author's Email:
Na.Ghafournia@ iau.ac.ir

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Introduction

TC has been considered as an essentially interesting topic since the last decades concerning some fundamentally underlying causes. Some reasons as Pym (2003, p. 481) identified are "1) mode of bilingualism; 2) a question of market demands; 3) a multi-component competence, involving a set of skills that are linguistic, cultural, technological, and professional; and 4) a super-competence that would somehow stand above the rest." There exists a variety of defining and categorizing approaches for TC, most of which concur with the view that TC comprises different sub-competencies. However, there exists a disagreement on the number as well as the type of sub-competencies (e.g., Kelly, 2002; 2005; Király, 1995; Nuebert, 2000; Pym, 1992; Sykes, 1989).

Sykes (1989) gave a definition of TC as "an excellent command of the source language, an equally excellent command of the target language plus a "… very good understanding of the subject matter" (p. 35). TC is one of the essential competencies; every translator is required to improve. TC can be defined with regard to pedagogical paradigms, affecting training translators and activities (Pym, 1992). Alves and Goncalves (2001) asserted that TC is comprised of the resources as well as the supposed consequence. McClelland (1973, p. 47) asserted "Competence is defined as the appropriate use of specific abilities according to surrounding demands, i.e., a goal-oriented behavior". Thus, TC is considered a repertoire as well as a role-specific competence, which McClelland (1973) regarded as the proper utilization of particular skills concerning the probable contextual needs. In other words, "it is a goal-oriented behavior, which includes and specifies the notion of competence as the ability" (Alves & Gonçalves, 2001, p. 47).

Kelly (2002, 2005) reviewed different definitions of TC and offered a unique definition, focusing specifically on syllabus design and teaching. Kelly considered TC as the macro competence, comprising a variety of capacities, knowledge, skills, and attitudes, that skillful translators should apply in translating. TC can be divided into sub-competencies, the interaction of which leads to successful translation (Kelly, 2002, 14-15).

In spite of many studies conducted in translation fields, few broadly confirmed models of what really constitutes TC exist. Most proposals congruently describe TC as a set of components such as linguistic, cultural, and subject knowledge, documentation, and transfer ability. Few TC models include strategic components as the main component of TC (e.g, Bachman, 1990), and do not mention psycho-physiological mechanisms in relating the components. Most models are simple lists of the characteristics defining translators and do not show how the components interact or if

there are any hierarchy among them. Besides, a few empirical studies have been done to explore translation competence. Two famous empirical studies, conducted to examine TC are Lowe (1987), and Stansfield, Scott and Kenyon (1992). Orozco (2000, 113) pointed out that Lowe's work can be considered as a theoretical proposal introducing the elements of translation competence, instead of an empirical study. Orozco believed that the study of Stansfield, et al (1992) can be considered as a real empirical study of TC. Stansfield, et al created a valid and reliable instrument, referred to as the *Spanish into English Verbatim Translation Exam* (SEVTE). Nonetheless, the result of their study cannot be broadly accepted due to the limitations of the sample. In terms of the acquisition of TC, very few empirical studies have been carried out. A few longitudinal studies have been done yet to assess the acquisition of TC as a whole.

From 1990s, the PACTE Group, directed by Hurtado Albir, has been doing research on the related constituents of translation competence. The group showed great interest in utilizing the model in the detailed scientific study of TC acquisition (PACTE, 2000, 2003, 2005). Using the relevant information and insights from cognitive approaches, some components of TC were identified by the group. In the advanced framework version, TChas been identified as "the underlying knowledge system needed to translate" (PACTE 2005, 610). The recently revised model consists of five closely related sub-competences as well as psycho-physiological constituents. The TC bilingual sub competence consists of pragmatic, sociolinguistic, textual, and lexical-grammatical knowledge in each language. The extra linguistic sub competence consists of encyclopedic, thematic, and bicultural knowledge. Translation knowledge sub-competence is considered as the knowledge of the principles, guiding translation, and the profession. Instrumental sub-competence comprises the particular knowledge, concerned with the utilization of documentation sources along with information technologies, employed in the process of translation. The strategic sub-competence is considered as the most essential constituent, used for providing the proper solutions for dealing with the probable existing problems. It is used to resolve the probable deficiencies as well as providing compensating aids in translation through strategic planning and evaluating. The last components are psychophysiological components, which are concerned with cognitive, behavioral, and psychomotor mechanisms.

Apart from the insertion of psycho-physiological components, the most fundamental use of the highly developed PACTE model is to emphasize the role of strategic competence, as the main

component of TC. Strategic competence operates as the procedural knowledge, necessary for activating the relevant competencies to solve the relevant problems with regard to the limitations caused by transfer competence (PACTE, 2005). The most essential effect of transfer competence was initially examined by Neubert (2000), regarding it as the particularly differentiating aspect of translators, which "dominates over all the other competencies" (p. 6). PACTE Group referred to the related competencies as translation-specific ones. "Given that any bilingual has knowledge of two languages and may have extra-linguistic knowledge, we consider that the sub-competencies specific to TC are the strategic, instrumental and knowledge about translation" (PACTE, 2005, 611).

The term translational competence was initially introduced by Toury (1980, 1995), which was to Chomsky's (1965) noted differentiation between linguistic competence and linguistic performance to investigate particular paradigms of translation ability. Nord (1991, 2010) applied transfer competence instead, and Chesterman (1997) named it translational competence later again. The identifying definition of TC is highly related to the pedagogical model of competence. This view has been taken from researchers such as Kiraly (1995), who considered common aspects between translation and other professions such as the need to have specific and cultural knowledge to improve translation quality (see Pym, 1992). Therefore, this view exerts a strong influence on various aspects of training translators.

There exist different related aspects, limited to the domain of translation, constituting the essential elements of the definition of TC. Neubert (2000, 3) asserted that the practice and teaching translation needs a single competence, integrating a series of competencies such as source and target language competencies. As claimed by Ezpeleta (2012, 139) "Reflection on TCis a relatively recent development, resulting from empirical studies. It is still scarce". Some researchers have investigated translation acquisition skills (e.g., Hatim & Mason, 1997; Lowe, 1987; Pym, 1992) while others investigated translation performance (e.g., Wilss, 1989). However, to answer the question of the components of translation competence, a set of contextual factors, underlying the necessary knowledge for translators including complexity, heterogeneity, and approximate estimate of the expert knowledge, owned by translators, should be taken into account.

Review of Literature

Linguistic Competence and TC

Linguistic TC models progressed within four periods. Harris (1997) considered translation as an internal bilingual skill. Delise (1980) believed that TC comprises linguistic, encyclopedic, comprehension, and expression competencies. Campbell (1998) differentiated between disposition and proficiency as two components of TC. Yang, et al (2001) considered linguistic competence as the explicit central part of TC, along with encyclopedic and particular translation knowledge and comprehension competence. Wang (2019) considered linguistic-textual-pragmatic competence as the central sub-competence. Linguistic competence is an essential prerequisite to TC. Bilingual competence was considered as the most essential part of TC, and took an essential role in translation quality before the progress of information technology. Translators drew related information from their brains without the great contribution of proper instruments. After the improvement of related academic disciplines such as psychology, sociology, linguistics, and information technology in the 1970s, TC was integrated in linguistics. It offered insightful suggestions for further studies. After the drastic progress of information technology, strategic, instrumental and knowledge about translation sub-competencies acted as the decisive factors to improve translation quality to fulfill the communicative needs of translation, focusing on the prerequisite linguistic and cultural competencies.

The present study explored the relationship between general language proficiency and TC, which has been scarcely investigated in the Iranian context. In addition, the significant differences between general proficiency levels and TC across genders were explored. Exploring the predicting role of TC for general language proficiency was the next concern of the research. As English is taught as a target foreign language in Iran, many learners suffer from limited exposure to authentic use of English. Hence, using first language transferring strategies as well as translation strategies can greatly accelerate the language learning process, where appropriate. As it was mentioned earlier, TC is part of linguistic competence and closely related to textual, cultural, and sociolinguistic competencies. Thus, improving translation acquisition competence can enhance linguistic competence efficiently. Therefore, one main concern of the study is seeking the significant TC differences across language proficiency levels, as well as the significant relationship between them. The findings can give useful hints to language teachers to utilize translation

strategies to teach different language components, where necessary. The results can also reveal the close interdependent relationship between linguistic and translation competencies, which can remove some major blocks to learning.

Method

Participants

The target sample for the present study comprised 196 Iranian undergraduate BA English Language Teaching students, who passed advanced translation courses, at the Islamic Azad University of Neyshabur. The students' ages ranged from 20 to 35. With regard to the results of the administered Barron's (2015) TOEFL test, the participants were divided into three groups of language proficiency. Therefore, the target participants comprised three proficiency levels of high, intermediate, and low.

Instruments

TOEFL Test

Two instruments were employed to investigate the research questions. Initially, a standard paper-based TOEFL test to assess the participants' general language proficiency level was used. It had been derived from the paper-based Longman TOEFL test 5th version, comprising of listening, reading, and grammatical and written expressions. Due to the major difficulties in administering and evaluating the listening, speaking, and writing abilities of a large number of the participating students, the listening, speaking, and writing sections were deleted. Therefore, only the reading and grammatical and written expression sections of the test were administered. The dedicated time to answer the test items was 90 minutes.

TC Acquisition Questionnaire (TCAQ)

The second instrument was the TC Acquisition Questionnaire (TCAQ) by Alavi and Ghaemi (2013), developed for the Iranian context. It has 30 five Likert scale items, asking the participants to select among the five choices, which ranged from *strongly disagree* = 1 to *strongly agree* = 5. The reliability index, using Cronbach's formula is (α = 0.962), which is a high index of reliability.

Procedures

Initially, a general language proficiency test was given to the learners, which they had to answer in about 90 minutes. Then, TC questionnaire was given to the participants to fill out in about 15 minutes and submit it to the researcher. Before responding to the test and questionnaire, the participants were fully briefed on the way they had to take the test and answer the questionnaire.

Design

The study is a quantitative descriptive design. The variables are translation competence, gender, and general language proficiency. No treatment was used in the study. The correlation coefficients between the variables were explored in the study. Hence, it followed a correlational design.

Data Analysis

Having analyzed the data obtained from the test and questionnaire, the learners were first divided into three general language proficiency groups of high, intermediate and low regarding the standard deviations of their reading scores from the mean. The normality of data was checked through Kolmorow-smirnow test. To analyze the significant differences between the proficiency groups concerning translation competence, one-way ANOVA was utilized. To locate the significant differences, Scheffe and Tukey tests were used. To probe the significant gender differences in terms of translation competence, an independent sample T-test was utilized. Finally, to probe the significant predicting role of general language proficiency for the participants' translation competence, a linear regression analysis was employed.

Research Questions

RQ1. Is there any significant difference between the learners' TC in terms of gender?

RQ2. Is there any significant difference between the learners' TC and the three levels of general language proficiency?

RQ3. Does learners' TC act as a significant predictor of general language proficiency?

Results

To analyze the normality of data, One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was done concerning confidence level (α = 0.95). The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		General Language	Translation Competence
N		196	196
Normal Parameters[a]	Mean	70.2398	94.3776
	Std. Deviation	15.85442	26.47244
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.115	.102
	Positive	.106	.047
	Negative	-.115	-.102
Test Statistic		.115	.102
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.120	.072

Concerning the findings shown in Table 1, since p value is more than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$) for all the variables in the study, the distribution of data is normal. Thus, parametric statistical analysis can be utilized to explore the relation between the variables in the study.

To explore the significant differences between genders in terms of translation competence, descriptive statistics analysis and independent sample T-test were utilized. Tables 2 and 3 reveal the results.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for TC of Male and Female Students

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Translation Competence	Female	105	3.1489	.82371	.08039
	Male	91	3.1425	.95027	.09962

The findings indicate higher mean score for females (*M*= 3.1489; *Sd*=.82371) than males (*M*= 3.1425; *Sd* = .95027). To check the significant difference between the genders in TC, an independent sample T-test was used. The results are indicated in Table 3.

Table 3

Independent Sample T-test for Gender Differences in Translation Competence

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for Equality of Means					
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Translation Competence	Equal Variances Assumed	3.523	.062	.050	194	.960	.00640	.12671	-.24350	.25630
	Equal Variances not Assumed			.050	179.506	.960	.00640	.12800	-.24619	.25899

As the findings indicate, since $p > 0.5$ ($P = .062$), no significant gender difference was seen in translation competence.

To examine the second research question concerning the significant difference between three levels of general language proficiency and TC, a one-way analysis of variance was used. Table 4 indicates the results.

Table 4

One-way ANOVA for General Language Proficiency Level and TC

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	81.642	2	40.821	112.235	.000
Within Groups	70.196	193	.364		
Total	151.838	195			

As the findings indicate, since *F* (112.235, 193) is significant at *p* = .000, significant differences were proved to exist between the learners' proficiency levels and TC. To locate the differences, Scheffe and Tukey tests were utilized. Tables 5 and 6 reveal the results.

Table 5

Multiple Comparisons between the TC Means of Three General Language Proficiency Levels

					95% Confidence Interval	
	(I) General Language Proficiency Level	(J) General Language Proficiency Level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Scheffe	High	Intermediate	.64613*	.10326.000	.3914	.9009
		Low	1.86130*	.12566.000	1.5513	2.1713
	Intermediate	High	-.64613*	.10326.000	-.9009	-.3914
		Low	1.21517*	.11041.000	.9428	1.4875
	Low	High	-1.86130*	.12566.000	-2.1713	-1.5513
		Intermediate	-1.21517*	.11041.000	-1.4875	-.9428

The findings in table 5 reflected the significant difference between the means of high and intermediate (*I-J* = .64613*) as well as high and low proficiency levels (*I-J* = 1.86130*). The significant differences were proved between the mean scores of intermediate and high (*I-J* = -.64613*) as well as intermediate and low levels of proficiency levels (*I-J* = 1.21517*). The significant difference was also seen between low and high (*I-J* = -1.86130*) as well as low and intermediate proficiency groups (*I-J* = -1.21517*) at *p* = .000.

Table 6 demonstrates the homogeneity of subsets of the means of TC for three proficiency levels.

Table 6

The Subsets of Mean Scores of TC for Three Proficiency Levels

General Language Proficiency Level		N	Subset for Alpha = 0.05		
Tukey B[a,b]	Low	42	2.0230		
	Intermediate	103		3.2382	
	High	51			3.8843
Scheffe[a,b]	Low	42	2.0230		
	Intermediate	103		3.2382	
	High	51			3.8843

Sig.	1.000	1.000	1.000

The findings in Table 6 demonstrate the heterogeneous subsets of TC means for three proficiency groups.

To probe the third research question concerning the significant relation between the participants' general language proficiency level and translation competence, first, the descriptive statistics for these two variables were calculated. Table 7 indicates the results.

Table 7

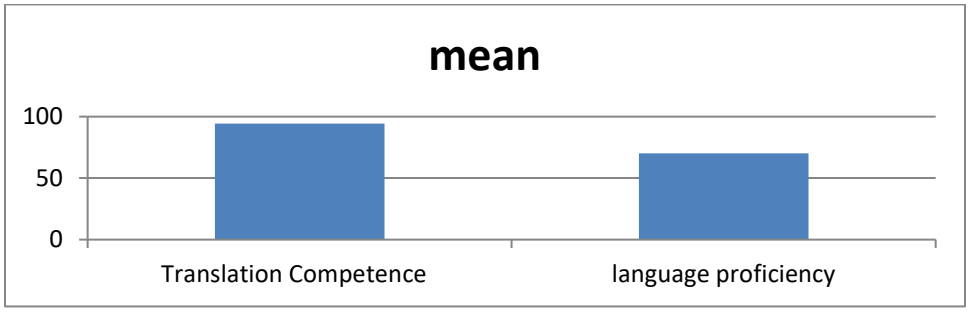
Descriptive Statistics for General Language Proficiency and Translation Competence

	N	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Std. Deviation	Skewness
Translation Competence	196	94.37	34	148	26.47	-0.242
Language Proficiency	196	70.23	40	90	15.85	-0.444

Concerning the findings indicated in Table 7, the Skewness value for TC is (S = -0.242), and the value is (S = -0.444) for language proficiency. Since the values are near zero, the distribution of data for the participants' language proficiency and TC is normal. In addition, the distribution of the data was between -2 to +2 standard deviations of the scores. Therefore, parametric statistical analysis can be used. The mean of the participants' TC is (M = 94.37), and the standard deviation is (SD = 26.47). The mean score of language proficiency is (M = 70.23), and the standard deviation is (SD = 15.85). Figure 1 shows the means of the participants' language proficiency and TC.

Figure 1

The Mean scores of TC and Language Proficiency



To analyze the significant relationship between the language proficiency and translation competence, Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated. The results of which are shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Pearson's Correlation Matrix between TC and Language Proficiency

		Language Proficiency
Translation Competence	Pearson Correlation	.835**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	196

The results in Table 8 reflect that there is a positive correlation between the two variables *(r = .83)* at *(p < .05)*, reflecting a significant relation between TC and Language Proficiency. Regression analysis was employed to offer a model for TC and general language proficiency. The results revealed TC as a positive predictor of Language Proficiency (LP), as the dependent variable. The results are reported in Table 9.

Table 9

Regression Model for TC as the Predictor of Language Proficiency

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.835[a]	.697	.696	8.74642

Predictors: (Constant), Translation Competence

As shown in Table 9, (*R* = .835), indicating a strong relationship between TC and language proficiency. The results indicated that TC, as the independent variable, is a positive strong predictor of the dependent variable or Language Proficiency concerning R Square *(R Square* = .697), indicating that 69% of the variation in one variable may be accounted by the other variable. Or, .069 proportion of variation in language proficiency can be accounted by TC . As R- squared is very close to 0.70, the predicting power of the model for the relation between dependent and

independent variables is strong. Table 10 shows the ANOVA for TC and Language Proficiency, indicating the degree of relation between the variables.

Table 10

ANOVA for TC as the Predictor of Language Proficiency

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	34174.741	1	34174.741	446.729	.000[b]
	Residual	14840.989	194	76.500		
	Total	49015.730	195			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Translation Competence,

ab Dependent Variable: Language Proficiency

Based on the findings in Table 10, since *F* (446.729, 194) is significant at (*p* =.000), significant relationship existed between language proficiency and TC of the participants. TC can act as a good significant predictor of language proficiency, based on a statistical formula. Table 11 shows the standard and unstandardized correlation coefficient between language proficiency and TC as well as the constant value for offering a mathematical predicting model.

Table 11

Coefficients between TC and Language Proficiency

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	23.043	2.319		9.938	.000
	Translation Competence	.500	.024	.835	21.136	.000

The findings in Table 11 reflect that there is a significant relation between TC and general language proficiency of the participants since standardized coefficient between the two variables is (r = .835) at p ≤ 0.05 (p = .000). The t value (t = 21.136) is significant at $p \leq 0.05$ (p = .000). Hence, there is a significant relation between TC and language proficiency. The statistical

predicting formula or the predicting model between the dependent variable of language proficiency and the independent variable of TC is as follows,

General Language Proficiency = 23.043+ .500 (Translation Competence)

Discussion

The results reflected a positive significant relation between the Iranian EFL learners' language ability, investigated by a standard paper-based TOEFL test and TC, assessed through using a reliable and valid questionnaire. The findings are in accord with the previous theoretical models, suggesting a relation between linguistic competence and TC (e.g., Martínez Melis & Hurtado Albir, 2001; Saldanha & O'Brien, 2014). However, this relation has been scarcely investigated empirically up to now. Therefore, the findings of the study are of significance.

Significant differences were proved between the proficiency levels in translation competence, in which the participants with higher proficiency levels were significantly more competent in translation. The findings are in accord with Yang (2002) and Wang (2019), who identified linguistic competence as the core of TC. Thus, lower proficiency learners showed a lower level of TC in this study.

The significant role of translation should be reevaluated in the language teaching curriculums. For example, in the Humanistic paradigms of Community Language Learning (CLL) and Suggestopedia, where teachers utilize translation, learners' anxieties can be decreased to a great extent. Translation activities can be appropriately used by language teachers by choosing authentic and relevant texts, enhancing the process of language learning. The usefulness and efficiency of good translation skills in the language teaching process should not be taken for granted. TC also encompasses linguistic competence. Consequently, language teachers should focus on the students' foundation competencies (Popescu, 2013).

In Bachman's (1990) model, communicative competence is one of the key factors, affecting language performance. Communicative competence consists of different sets of competencies such as linguistic, discourse, strategic, and sociolinguistic ones. Among different competencies, TC or the ability to translate a second language into the first language can be also regarded as one of the most essential competencies or paradigms, affecting second/foreign language learning, which has been totally ignored in some approaches in language learning such as audiolingual, natural approach, direct method and so forth.

The findings also confirmed the significant predicting role of TC for general language ability. In other words, TC is a significant part of linguistic competence. Although TC is not an explicit component of communicative language ability in Bachman's (1990) model, it is closely integrated with textual, discourse, and sociolinguistic competencies. It consists of some sub-competencies such as bilingual, extra-linguistic, strategic, instrumental, psycho-physiological, and knowledge about translation based on PACET Model (2003). The high correlation coefficient, found between general language ability and translation competence, confirms the close interrelationship between linguistic competence and translation competence, which encourages language teachers to integrate translation exercises into the second language teaching process, boosting language learners' confidence and accelerating their rate of learning. Through coding and decoding activities and transferring strategies between the first and second languages, the linguistic competence of language learners can be improved. Therefore, employing the first language in teaching the second or target language through using translation activities should not be banned in language-teaching classes to enhance the effective transfer competence of language learners, leading to success in language learning.

Conclusion

The present research was an investigation into the probable significant relation between Iranian language learners' TC and language proficiency concerning gender differences. The significant differences between the three general language proficiency levels in using TC were also explored. Moreover, the significant predicting role of TC for general language proficiency was examined. The findings presented significant differences between general proficiency levels in terms of translation competence. No significant gender differences were confirmed in terms of translation competence. The positive significant predicting role of TC for general proficiency level was finally confirmed. The close positive relation between TC and general language proficiency level proved in this study, confirms the significance of subtle use of translation activities in improving general language proficiency. Based on Krashen's affective filter hypothesis, many language learners suffer from great anxiety, which is similar to an imaginary rising wall, which impedes their learning progress. In order to lower the blocking wall, self-confidence and motivation should be greatly enhanced in language learners. One possible solution to lower the filter and decrease the fear and embarrassment of language learners, particularly novice ones, is the meticulous

employment of translation exercises and activities while teaching different components of the target language. Through using simultaneous use of positive transferring and translating strategies, many stressing barriers of learners can be eliminated. Thus, language teachers should be well informed of the significance of proper utilization of translation in teaching different components of language, where necessary. The findings can also offer some helpful hints for improving English teaching syllabuses, providing ample translation exercises for language learners, which facilitate language learning.

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Biodata

Dr. Narjes Ghafournia is an assistant professor in TEFL at Islamic Azad University-Neyshabur Branch, Iran. She has conducted many studies in different areas of second language teaching and applied linguistics. She has published many research papers in national and international journals and conferences. Her major areas of interest are ESP and Psycholinguistics.

Email: *Na.Ghafournia@iau .ac .ir*

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