This study is designed to evaluate the two academic translation training master's programs at two local public universities in Palestine in view of burgeoning market demands. The study reveals the weaknesses and strengths in both training programs, a step which is believed to be necessary to evaluate trainers' current practices and provide formative data about these programs and programs operating in similar contexts. To achieve this objective, the modules of the courses, the teaching and assessment methods and the challenges facing implementing and developing the curricula are all studied, bearing in mind the job market. Two questionnaires were also administered to students and translation professionals. The questionnaires address the current market demands for translator training, the performance level of novice translators, the nature of the courses and the challenges that are likely to face developing and implementing the curricula, and the methods of teaching and assessment. The study findings reveal that there are significant shortcomings in the curricula, namely the theoretical training is overemphasized and stakeholders' involvement in the review and design of the translation program curricula remains significantly undervalued. Finally, the study identifies the emerging translation text genres that occupy a significant niche in the local translation market.

KEY WORDS: translation curricula, translator training, market needs, translation teaching and assessment.

Translator training in Palestine in view of market demand

EKREMA SHEHAB
An-Najah National University
ORCID: 0000-0002-5624-0455

HANA MUTAWE
An-Najah National University

ABDELKARIM DARAGMEH
An-Najah National University
ORCID: 0000-0002-0137-9361

MOHAMMAD AHMAD THAWABTEH
Al-Quds University
ORCID: 0000-0003-0434-6730

Formación de profesionales de la traducción con arreglo a las demandas del mercado

El presente estudio se ha diseñado con el objetivo de evaluar los dos programas de maestría de capacitación académica en traducción en dos universidades públicas de Palestina con arreglo a las crecientes demandas del mercado. El estudio revela las debilidades y fortalezas en ambos programas de capacitación, paso que juzgamos necesario para evaluar las prácticas actuales de los capacitadores y proporcionar datos formativos sobre dichos programas y otros que operan en contextos similares. Para lograr este objetivo, se estudian los módulos de los cursos, los métodos de enseñanza y evaluación, así como los desafíos que es preciso superar de cara a la implementación y desarrollo de los planes de estudio, teniendo siempre en cuenta el mercado laboral. También se pasaron sendos cuestionarios a estudiantes y profesionales de la traducción, en los cuales se abordan las demandas actuales del mercado para la formación de profesionales de la traducción; el nivel de rendimiento de los traductores novatos; la naturaleza de los cursos; los retos que suscitará el desarrollo e implementación de los planes de estudio, y los métodos de enseñanza y evaluación. Los resultados del estudio muestran que existen deficiencias significativas en los planes de estudio; a saber, la formación teórica se enfatiza demasiado y la participación de las partes interesadas en la revisión y el diseño de los planes de estudio del programa de traducción sigue siendo significativamente infravalorada. Finalmente, el estudio identifica los géneros emergentes de textos para traducir que ocupan un nicho significativo en el mercado local de la traducción.

PALABRAS CLAVE: programas de traducción, formación de profesionales de la traducción, necesidades del mercado, enseñanza y evaluación de la traducción.

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the last few decades, translation has shifted from being a necessity for limited groups of people to becoming a huge industry that serves billions of people in important manufacture, trade, education, and media sectors, to name only a few. The rapid technological developments, and especially the developments in telecommunications, have transformed the world into a smaller place where people of different cultures need to interact more intensively than ever. As a result, the need and demand for translation have given the job market a new lease of life and a significant jump-boost. Several studies show that the translation market is growing inexorably worldwide and is expected to continue to grow in the near future. It follows, therefore, that translation service is becoming a growing market that is worthy of investment. Gillespie (2012) aptly noted that the translation industry had an estimated worth of $33.5 billion in 2012. Ibis World (2015) also noted that the market size of the translation services reached up to $37 billion in 2018 and its revenue is likely to continue to rise. For Krassny (2014) and Nilssen (2014), the translation industry remains one of the most (economically) interesting industries for self-employment and work from home jobs. In a nutshell, the growing demand for translation and the huge size of its market make it vital to give more attention to training competent translators.

To keep abreast of the job market, academic translator training programs have been established with a view to training competent translators who can produce quality translations. Several studies have been conducted with the valuable aim of providing formative data on translator training programs. These studies aim to improve academic translator training practices, to identify the challenges that face transla-

tor training, and to propose realistic, applicable solutions. For example, Dam and Zethsen (2010) address the opportunities and challenges facing the translation profession in Denmark. They included both freelancers and agency and company translators in their study. The results of their study show that even though translation is a promising profession in Denmark, there is a quite common lack of awareness of the level of expertise that is needed to provide professional translation services. Kang and Shunmugam (2014) considered the practices of non-professional translators as a challenge which reduces the opportunities available for professional translators. Doubtless to say, amateur translators do not do their job as well as professional, well-trained translators and they may accept lower fees for their work as clients seem to look for cheaper services (see Bahloul, 2021). The challenges mentioned above show that achieving the objective of training competent translators who can operate in the market is not as easy of a task as it may seem to some of us.

In the Arab World, the challenges facing translator preparation programs are even more complex. Some translation theorists and practitioners have studied the shortcomings of translation training programs in several universities in the Arab world only to conclude that these programs fall short from achieving the objectives that they promise to achieve (Attari, 2012; Farghal, 2000; Gabr 2001, 2001b; Thawabteh, 2009; Thawabteh and Najjar, 2014; Thawabteh and Shehab, 2017; Shehab and Thawabteh, 2020). For instance, Shehab and Thawabteh (2020, p. 1) maintain that

> translation programmes in the region have been termed, quite pejoratively, the 'white elephant' by numerous academics, perhaps because those offered are too limited in scope, addressing predominantly linguistic and cultural matters, yet failing

to adopt the sort of progress and development seen in counterpart programmes internationally, for instance: the advancement in, inter alia, technological dimensions of translation, translation memory tools, machine translation, use of corpora in translation studies, digital age and translation, globalization and translation, localization and translation, audiovisual translation (e.g. subtitling, voiceover, dubbing etc).

The success of any academic translator training program depends greatly on the curriculum that is employed, the trainers who implement it and the training methodologies they use to apply the curriculum. As far as the curriculum is concerned, Hatim (2013, p. 8) differentiates between two kinds of knowledge that are needed to prepare competent translators when he asserts that "practitioners need to reconsider the role of traditionally highly valued technical knowledge and to reinstate the undervalued artistry knowledge." Artistry knowledge is important as it reflects the creativity of the translator. Without a doubt, the nature of any academic translation training program affects how efficient, professional and competent translators are. One of the shortcomings of some training programs is overemphasis on theoretical knowledge at the expense of translation practice. According to Newmark (1991), 60 % of a translation training curriculum should be practical. Another common shortcoming in translation training programs in the Arab world is the lack of specialized translation professors. Most of the tutors are holders of postgraduate degrees in English literature or linguistics from local or foreign universities and they are not qualified to teach specialized translation modules (Shehab and Thawabteh, 2020).

Lack of responsiveness of the translation curriculum to the market demands has also been identified as a major challenge for translators.

These demands are changing at a faster pace while the translation curricula are static without significant changes over quite long periods of time. As the market needs keep changing, the translation curriculum developers need to continuously develop the content and training practices to cope with these market changes. Unfortunately, this does not seem to be the case according to several studies. Commenting on the translation curricula development in Jordan, Mahasneh (2015, p. 23) aptly remarks that little efforts have been made to develop translation curriculum; she adds that there is "little interest in the development of curriculum design and assessment tools that would allow scholars of Translation Studies to constantly oversee the pertinence of the training they are offering to the future translators." Al-Batineh and Bilal (2017, p. 1) argue that

> translator training programmes have been increasingly challenged to explicitly identify the link between their curricula and the market that their graduates will, potentially, be serving. The Arab world nowadays hosts a number of translator training programmes in several countries. Nevertheless, the priorities of these academic programmes and their course offerings are not always aligned with the realities of the profession both at the local and global levels.

Likewise, scant attention has been given to training translators in Palestine. Thawabteh and Najjar (2014, pp. 48-49) state that "since university-level training is the point of departure for equipping the market with fully fledged translators, a revision of current translation courses should be made." The main issues that need more attention according to them are the issue of culture, the number of translation courses, the overcrowded classes, and selection of the learning materials.

300   This study carefully examines the extent to which the translation programs' curricula, the translator training methodologies and the assessment methods used in the master's programs at An-Najah National University and Al-Quds University (the only two universities in Palestine which offer such postgraduate training) are responsive to the rapidly changing translation market. The aim of this study is to give practical, applicable recommendations on how to improve translator training practices in the light of market demands in Palestine. It also aims to provide the program administrators and the translation teachers with the most recent data about the most recent trends, requirements and demands of the local translation market. In addition, the study provides the newly graduate/employed novice translators with sufficient information about the areas for translation work as well as the qualifications and skills required by translation service providers and clients in Palestine.

1.1. Skills, competencies, and the translator training curricula

To train competent translators, it is necessary to prepare them for certain requirements. Understanding the subject matter is a necessary requirement for translation as well as the knowledge about different translation theories and strategies. Newmark (1991, p. 44) states that "[t]he translator should also demonstrate an awareness of current methods of translation; have a previous apprenticeship with an established translator"; a sound command of the translator's working languages, that is, "a satisfactory knowledge of the source language" and "thorough mastery of the target language."

The translation curricula normally cover both theoretical and practical dimensions, and, with great enthusiasm, translation teachers often argue that acquiring both of them is necessary for a competent translator. However, training professional translators requires attention to the immersion of translator trainees in the translation industry. Pym (2005, pp. 3-6) asserts that "translation theories are abstruse and useless; only professionals know the realities of translation. Trainees thus need professional skills, not the immersion in academic theories." Pym emphasizes the significance of the practical dimension of translation since it ensures familiarity with different text types that are commonly in demand for translation. Other scholars still emphasize the role of theory in translator training.

The practice-oriented translator training pedagogy proclaims that translators should be equipped with a range of skills which allow them to produce quality translation work. Several scholars have defined the most essential skills a professional translator must have. Although the term "competence" is so much popular and is used in many contexts, it is still hard to define it in relation to translation for the profession is still evolving and with it the needed competencies for professional translators will continue to evolve (Hurtado Albir, 2007). Norris (1991) also points out that, defining competence is complex because the practical aspect of competence has been overshadowed by the theoretical confusion. According to Lasnier (2000, cited in Esfanndiari et al., 2014, p.10), "[a] competence is a complex knowhow to act resulting from integration, mobilization and organization of a combination of capabilities and skills (which can be cognitive, affective, psycho-motor or social) and knowledge (declarative knowledge) used efficiently in situations with common characteristics." Hurtado Albir (2007) further explains the two elements of the definition by stressing three points. First, a competence is not primarily just knowhow, and it is not res-

tricted to operative knowledge. Secondly, it can be achieved during practice. Thirdly, it is important to apply knowhow efficiently to cater for the requirements of specific contexts. In brief, competence means producing a translation that is natural, contextual, and accurate.

To boost trainees' ability to translate with high competence, and to cope with the rapidly changing market demands nowadays, it is essential for translation curriculum developers to implement continuous revision, renewal and development of the curricula, teaching methodologies and training practices that are used to train translators. Many translation training programs around the world tend to include both on campus practical training as well as on site work placements in their curriculum. Sheal (1989, p. 62) believes that "the market for translation is completely interfaced by available technology," and therefore, the professional translator "should physically possess basic computer technology," not only to be able to work with geographically distant clients, but also to have wider access to various databases. Hence, translators cannot survive as professional translators without the effective utilization of such tools. In addition to addressing the use of basic electronic tools, translator training programs should integrate more vocational practice and less academic training. An adequate translation program should cover certain aspects of the actual profession itself to give the students a clear idea of post-graduation expectations with exposure to hands on duties. Finally, the diversity of translation commissions has forced many programs to diversify their curricula offerings by introducing courses which specialize in legal translation, commercial and business translation, financial translation, subtitling, multimedia, localization, translation technologies as well as advanced utilization of voice recognition systems. The job market will

also be looking for specialized translators, as such. The students must be trained to become translators, terminologists, technical text writers, language engineers, project managers, and much more.

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In light of the available data from previous studies about translator training, the emerging trends in the translation market, and the need to be responsive to changes in market demands, the authors have put forth these main questions:

1. What are the kinds of translation tasks that are in demand in the local market?
2. What are the text types that are highly challenging to novice translators?
3. Are the learning materials employed on the MAs at An- Najah National University and Al-Quds University responsive to market demands?
4. Are the teaching and assessment methodologies adequate for the market demands?

3. METHODOLOGY

This section presents the research design, study population and sample, data collection procedures, and the statistical analysis method.

3.1. Study design

The current study uses the descriptive and inferential approach because its primary goal is to provide as comprehensive a description as possible, and to infer the judgments or opinions of the study population on the domains included in the questionnaire which collects data on the nature of translation teaching materials and their relation to local market demands, the training practices and to what extent they prepare

graduate translators with market relevant skills. Similarly, the study analyzes the curriculum utilized in training translators at An-Najah National University and Al-Quds University to identify the extent to which these programs respond to current market needs.

3.2. Population and sample of the study

This study involves two actors, namely the agencies for certified translation in the West Bank and the MA students enrolled in the two MA programs at the target universities. As far as the certified translation offices in the West Bank are concerned, the population of this study is composed of 40 translation offices. A random sample of 27 local translation professionals has been chosen for the study. The sample may be considered representative as it involves roughly 67 % of the community of this study. Another sample of 56 MA students (37 female, 19 male whose ages are between 24-35) in both universities has also been used. The students have a BA in English Language and Literature and study towards their MA degree in translation. They have already studied advanced courses in linguistics, translation and literature and produced decent translation work between Arabic and English.

3.3. Sampling procedure

A stratified random sample representing the study population has been chosen. The sample consisted of 27 local professionals and 56 MA students in the academic year 2020-2021. The sample was selected by the simple random sampling method (Table 1 below).

Table. 1. The distribution of responses of the sample

NO.	CATEGORY	QUESTIONNAIRES DISTRIBUTED	SUB VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	%
1	Professionals	Experience	less than 5 years	3	11.1
			5-10 years	18	66.7
			more than 10 years	6	22.2
		Specialty	Financial Translation	1	3.7
			Legal Translation	18	66.7
			Technical and legal translation	8	29.6
3	Students	University name	Al-Quds University	27	48.2
			An-Najah National University	29	51.8
		Gender	Male	19	33.9
			Female	37	66.1
		TOTAL		**93**	**100%**

3.4. Data collection and instrumentation

The authors administered two structured questionnaires (one for each target group, i.e., MA students and local translation professionals), developed in English, as the main tools for data collection. Each questionnaire was divided into sections according to the subject matter each section addresses.

The first questionnaire aims to identify current market demands and the challenges that newly employed translators face and was designed to be answered from the perspectives of the translation professionals with experience in the Palestinian translation market. It is composed of twenty-six statements that are distributed in two domains. The first domain is meant to identify the text types that are most in demand in the market (e.g., literary, scientific, religious, stock market data, etc). The frequency is measured in this domain through estimating the times a certain type of text is requested per week.

The second domain aims to verify the efficacy of translator training practices from the perspective of professionals by soliciting sample population opinion on the degree of challenge posed by certain text-types for newly employed translators. In this domain the level of challenge is graded as very weak, weak, medium, strong and very strong.

The second questionnaire was completed by translation students at the MA programs at An-Najah National University and Al-Quds University. This survey was designed to collect students' opinions about the types of teaching materials, teaching and training practices, and assessment methods that are commonly used by university professors. This questionnaire has 19 statements covering two domains. The first domain requests the students' perspectives on professors' methods and teaching practices on the MAs and the second domain investigates students' perspectives of the courses, the nature of the learning materials and assignments on the MAs.

4. DISCUSSION

To collect comprehensive data from all stakeholders, two separate surveys with two sections were used. The first section explored the viewpoints of professionals who work in certified local translation offices in the West Bank concerning the kinds of text types and commissions that are most frequently required in the local translation market and their viewpoints regarding the kinds of texts that are challenging for newly employed translators who graduated from local universities. The second section explores students' perspectives regarding the learning materials included in their courses, the teaching methods and assessment techniques used by the university professors. SPSS was used to analyze the data from the surveys using one-way ANOVA tests and independent sample t-tests. The authors relied on post hoc tests to shed light on significant differences resulting from a particular independent variable. To answer the questions of this study, the means and the standard deviations of the success factors were calculated. The authors used the following scale to estimate the level of evaluation:

Table 2. Estimation level=(highest value-lowest value)/(5)=5-1/5=0.8

4.2-5: Very High	3.41-4.20: High	2.61-3.40: Moderate
1.81-2.60: Low	less than 1.81: Very Low	

4.1. Texts in demand in the local translation market

Providing the students with the skills, competencies and experience that will enable them to compete in the translation market is one of the basic objectives of any translator training program. To achieve this, curricula designers need to be aware of the current demands of the translation market. This subsection aims to supply the university curricula designers with the essential data needed to develop the curricula to make them more competitive, and more responsive to the current needs and demands of the local translation market.

This section deals with the first question of the study concerning the kinds of translation tasks that are in demand in the local market. It aims to collect data about text types that are commonly in demand in the local Palestinian translation market. The kinds of texts that are in demand in the market and their frequency are presented in this section from the viewpoint of professionals in certified translation offices as the profession they practice qualifies them to give reliable responses to the questionnaire items that are included in this domain. This subsection involves 15 different text types that are commonly in demand in the translation market to verify which of them are in high, low, or medium demand. The frequency of demand for certain text types is estimated on a weekly basis. The demand for translation of certain texts is estimated according to the number of times a translation of that text type is demanded. The level demand is considered very weak if a text type is commissioned 1-2 times per week; it is considered as weak if the frequency of demand is 3-5 times per week; the level of demand is considered as medium if the frequency of demand is 5-7 times per week. The strong demand level starts from 7-10 times per week and the very strong demand level starts when the frequency of demand is more than 10 times per week. To measure the professionals' perceptions about the market demand in Palestine, means and standard deviations and estimation levels are calculated as shown in table 3.

Table 3. Text types in demand in local translation market

TEXT-TYPE	1-2/ PER WEEK	3-5/PER WEEK	5-7/ PER WEEK	7-10/ PER WEEK	MORE THAN 10/PER WEEK
Medical reports	88.90 %	7.4 %	3.7 %	0	0
Commercial advertisements	11.10 %	18.50 %	29.60 %	37.00 %	3.70 %
Old literature texts	92.60 %	7.40 %	0	0	0
Modern literature texts	88.90 %	11.10 %	0	0	0
Religious texts	55.60 %	40.70 %	0	0	3.70 %
Scientific books	11.10 %	18.50 %	37.00 %	33.30 %	0
News broadcasts	3.70 %	11.10 %	25.90 %	51,9 %	7.40 %

Stock market data	11.10 %	0	37.00 %	48.10 %	3.70 %
Tourism brochures	11.10 %	7.40 %	70.40 %	7.40 %	3.70 %
Commercial contracts	11.10 %	0	7.40 %	66.70 %	14.80 %
Governmental announcements	11.10 %	0	3.70 %	40.70 %	44.40 %
Job application forms and university enrollment materials	11.10 %	11.10 %	7.40 %	59.30 %	11.10 %
Videos and films	7.40 %	11.10 %	22.20 %	59.30 %	0
Audio materials	14.80 %	11.10 %	37.00 %	14.80 %	22.20 %
Legal documents and court sentences	7.40 %	0	7.40 %	22.20 %	63.00 %
Travel documents	7.40 %	0	40.70 %	25.90 %	0
Advertisements and commercials	11,1 %	14,8 %	22,2 %	25,9 %	25,9 %

To facilitate understanding of the results in Table 3, the authors have divided the text-types into three categories according to their level of frequency demand. The texts are considered as texts of weak demand if the level of frequency is either weak or very weak by more than 50 % of the professionals who participated in the study. The texts are labeled as strong demand texts if the level of frequency is selected as either strong or very strong by more than 50 % of the professionals and the texts are regarded as medium demand texts if the level of demand frequency is medium for more than 50 % of the professionals.

The results of the study (as can be observed in Table 4) show that the text types in high demand include legal documents and court sentences, governmental announcements, stock market data, videos and films, commercial contracts, job application forms, advertisements and commercials and university enrollment materials, respectively. Legal documents have the highest frequency demand which is either strong or very strong for 85 % of the professionals. The

second text types by frequency of demand are governmental announcements and court sentences, with either a strong or very strong levels of frequency for 85 % of the professionals. Commercial contracts are third with either strong or very strong levels of demand frequency for 82 % of the professionals. Job application forms and university enrollment materials are fourth with a strong level of frequency demand for 70 % of the professionals. Videos and films and news broadcasts rank fifth with either a strong or very strong level of frequency demand for 59 % of the professionals for both. The last position in this domain is occupied by stock market data and commercial advertisements with a level of frequency demand of either strong or very strong for 52 % of the professionals.

4.2. The most challenging text types for novice translators

This subsection deals with the second question of the study concerning the kinds of texts that

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are highly challenging for novice translators with less than 3 years practical experience. Studying the kinds of texts that are challenging to novice translators who graduated from the two local universities is important for many reasons. Firstly, it can help predict the areas where there is lack of training in the local universities' translation programs. Secondly, it helps translation training program designers and developers to design programs that are effective based on the actual needs of the translation market and consequently produce graduates who are competitive enough to guarantee excellent performance as translators.

This subsection explores the levels of challenges that certain text types pose for novice translators from the perspective of professionals who supervise their work in local translation offices as the translators are hesitant to provide accurate responses to the items involved in the domain. The data provided in this subsection provides the local universities with feedback about the effectiveness of their translator training programs and with useful data to be taken into consideration in the processes of designing, reviewing, and developing their programs. Table 4 (below) shows the responses

Table 4. Professionals perspectives of degree of difficulty of text-types for novice translators

No.	Item	Very Strong	Strong	Medium	Weak	Very Weak	Standard Deviations	Means
1	Translating medical reports	0 %	11.1 %	66.7 %	11.1	11.1	.80	2.78
2	Translating legal texts and court sentences	0 %	0 %	3.7 %	29.6	66.7	.53	1.74
3	Translating scientific books	11.1	59.3	25.9	3.7	11.1	.70	3.78
4	Translating videos from English to Arabic	3.7	3.7	11.1	63	18.5	.89	2.11
5	Translating religious texts	0 %	74.1	22.2	0	3.7	.68	3.67
6	Translating literary texts	22.2	66.7	7.4	3.7	0	.68	4.07
7	Translating commercial advertisements	3.7	11.1	77.8	7.4	0	.58	3.11
8	Translating political texts and news broadcasts	3.7	3.7	11.1	55.6	25.9	.94	2.04
9	Stock market data and economic reports	0	3.7	11.1	66.7	18.5	.68	2.00

of local professionals about the level of performance of novice translators for nine text types.

The text types according to the level of difficulty are presented in Table 4 based on how local professionals in agencies for certified translation evaluate novice translators' performance with them. These text types are labeled as either challenging or not challenging. In other words, the kinds of texts in which professionals evaluate novice translators' performance as weak or very weak are considered training deficiencies whereas the ones where professionals consider novice translators' performance as strong or very strong are classified as not challenging. In discussing the results that are presented in Table 4, priority is given to the kinds of texts that indicate incompetency and lack of experience due to lack of exposure to these text types in their training.

Table 4 shows that 96 % of the professionals consider the performance of newly employed translators on legal texts and court sentences as either weak or very weak which means that these kinds of texts are the most challenging for newly employed translators in the local market. Taking into consideration that these kinds of texts are first position in local market demand, this means that students have not had enough exposure or training on translating these kinds of texts. The stock market data and economic reports are in the second position in terms of the level of challenge they pose for novice translators as 85 % of the professionals consider their performance with these kinds of texts as either weak or very weak. Once again, these kinds of texts are among the top eight text types in terms of demand. The third position for the level of challenge is shared by translating videos from English to Arabic and translating political texts and news broadcasts with 81.5 % of the professionals consider the performance of newly employed translators as either weak or very weak.

It is important to notice that all the kinds of texts that are labeled as challenging are included in the list of the top eight most highly in demand texts, except for translating political texts and news broadcasts.

The list of the least challenging text types includes translation of literary texts as 89 % of the professionals consider the performance of newly employed translators for this kind of texts as either strong or very strong. The second position on the list of the least challenging texts is occupied by translation of religious texts according to 74 % of the professionals followed by translation of the scientific books which is the third position with a percentage of 70 %, as the professionals who took part in the survey consider the performance of newly employed translators as either strong or very strong. However, it is included in the list of the top eight most highly in demand texts. This clearly supports and emphasizes the observation that there is a large gap between the content of the curriculum and current local translation market demand.

Apart from the kinds of texts on which the performance of newly employed translators receives strong or weak evaluations, their performance is viewed as moderate for translation of commercial advertisements by 78 % of the professionals although these kinds of texts is not included in the list of the top eight most highly in demand texts. The other kinds of texts on which the performance of newly employed translators is viewed as moderate from the viewpoints of professionals are the medical reports, according to 67 % of them. However, it is important to notice that these text types are not included in the list of the top eight most highly in demand texts. This means that students have had some exposure and training in the two programs, though insufficient, for these kinds of texts. Figure 1 be-

308   low shows deficient areas for newly employed translators in relation to the demands of the local translation market.
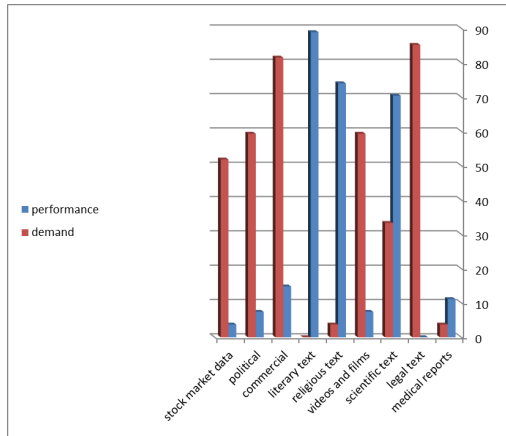

FIG 1. *The gap between newly employed translators' performance and market demands*

4.3. The curricula and translation commissions for MAs at An-Najah National University and Al-Quds University

The learning material in terms of its amount, text types and nature of tasks and activities affects students' translation competency. When the courses involve sufficient learning material of different kinds and allow for enough practice especially on the text types that are in high demand in the translation market, students are more likely to compete well in the market and show their good reputation as translators and for the universities from which they graduated.

This section deals with the third study question: (Do the learning materials employed on the MAs at Al-Quds University and An-Najah National University reflect the market demands). It aims to examine the suitability and efficiency of the translation training programs at An-Najah National University and Al-Quds University from the students' perspectives.

4.4. Students perspectives of the curricula and the assigned learning material at the master's level

This section explores the students' viewpoints regarding the courses, the learning material, and the assignments. The data provided could be taken into consideration when developing the translation curricula. Table 5 (on the next page) presents the responses of the students participated in the survey to the items involved in this domain.

The results in Table 5 reveal that students are satisfied with the learning material and its ability to provide them with the competencies they need to be proficient future translators. This appears in their agreement on the items that reflect the positive qualities of the learning material included in the courses. For instance, 68 % of the students agree that the number and the content of the courses are adequate to produce competent translators. Besides, one of the important qualities to be observed when designing course content is providing students with diverse text types to give students the chance to practice translation of different kinds of translation tasks. The results show that 60 % of the students are convinced that the learning materials cover various kinds of texts that a student may encounter in the job market. In addition, the theory which provides the solid ground and the guiding principles for the translation approaches is achieved in the courses. Eighty six percent of the students agree that the courses provide the learners with sufficient knowledge about different types of translation such as semantic, communicative and functional translation. The courses also provide the students with the necessary competencies (language, textual,

Table 5. Students' perceptions of the learning material included in the courses

No.	Item	Means	Standard Deviations	Percentage %	Estimation level
1	The courses are appropriate to turn out competent translators	3.39	1.04	67.86	Moderate
2	The learning materials cover various kinds of texts that a student may face in his/ her future job	3.02	.94	60.36	Moderate
3	The courses provide the learners with sufficient knowledge about different theories of translation	4.30	.83	86.07	High
4	The courses stress theory more than practice	4.14	1.00	82.86	High
5	The courses include sufficient practice sessions for the students to develop their competencies	2.88	1.03	57.50	Low
6	The courses equip the students with the necessary competencies (language, textual, cultural, transfer) needed to practice translation	3.73	1.07	74.64	High
7	The courses involve sufficient practice of audio-visual translation	2.38	1.21	47.50	Low

cultural, transfer) needed to practice translation according to 74 % of the students. However, students drew attention to some of the shortcomings of the courses such as overemphasis of the theory of translation at the expense of practice. Eighty two percent of the sample agreed that the courses stressed the theory more than practice when asked to express their level of satisfaction with the learning materials. Students also drew attention to the lack of performance in certain kinds of translation fields, as only 47 % of them agreed that the courses guaranteed sufficient practice on audio-visual translation.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES

This section deals with the fourth question of the study which addresses whether the teaching and assessment methodologies are responsive to market demands and aims to explore whether the practices and methods used in training and assessing students are effective or not. Consequently, this section is composed of two subsections. The first one deals with the methods and practices used in training students, whereas the second one focuses on the methods that are used to assess students.

5.1. Effectiveness of training methodologies

This subsection discusses students' perspectives about the teaching, training methodologies used in the training translation programs at the MAs at An-Najah National University and Al-Quds University in detail. The discussion of the results in this subsection is important as it provides university professors with feedback about how their

teaching and training practices are viewed by their students. Table 6 below presents students' responses to the items involved in this domain.

The detailed discussion of the students' responses is essential as it shows the different kinds of methodologies that are used by professors and sheds light on their positive practices and draws attention to the practices that need modification. Table 7 below represents the responses of the students who took part in the survey about the teaching methodologies used by professors.

The aim of this section is to reveal the training strategies and practices that are frequently used

Table 6. Overall students' perspectives on the translator training practices

No.	Factor	Means	Standard Deviations	Percentage %	Estimation level
1	Students' perspective of professors' methods and teaching practices at the MA level	3.03	.61	60.54	Moderate
2	Students' perspective of the courses, nature of the learning material and assignments at the MA level	3.40	.36	67.93	Moderate

Table 7. Students' perspectives regarding training methodologies

No.	Item	Means	Standard Deviations	%	Estimation Level
1	Professors stress theoretical knowledge more than practical training	4.09	1.10	81.79	High
2	Professors give students enough contexts for the translation tasks to develop their skills	3.48	1.06	69.64	Moderate
3	Professors send students to translation offices to gain experience	1.30	.57	26.07	Very low
4	Professors stress accuracy in the translation product	3.93	.85	78.57	High
5	Professors give students timely feedback on their performance	3.70	1.03	73.93	High
6	Professors guide students to suitable supplementary material	3.39	1.14	67.86	Moderate
7	Professors guide and encourage students to access digital translation sites	2.20	1.41	43.93	Very low
8	Professors provide students with samples of work by offices for certified translation	2.13	1.31	42.50	Very low

by professors on the MAs at An-Najah National University and Al-Quds University according to the students to verify whether they are effective or not to take them into consideration when planning to develop the translation training programs at the target universities.

The satisfaction levels with the strategies and training practices are divided into three categories. These categories are strategies that are essential and positive and widely used by professors; strategies and practices that are negative and widely used and the strategies that are positive and essential though rarely used.

The positive training practices that are commonly used by professors include providing students with enough translation tasks through different contexts which facilitate developing students' skills, giving students immediate and sufficient feedback on their tasks, stressing accuracy and guiding students to useful supplementary material. According to Table 7 above, almost 70 % of the students are convinced that they are given enough contexts for the translation tasks to develop their skills. Moreover, accuracy is important in translation as there is no point in producing a target text that is incorrect. The table above shows that professors do focus on accuracy in the translation product according to 87 % of the students. Furthermore, 74 % of the students are convinced that professors provide them with sufficient and timely feedback on their performance. In addition, 69 % of the students agree that professors guide them to supplementary material.

As far as negative practices are concerned, students underline the excessive stress on the theory. In fact, the theory is an essential part in any training translation program as students need theoretical guidance when practicing translation, but there should be a balance between practical training and theory. The results show that students are not satisfied as 81 % of

them agree on the item that professors stress theory more than practical training. This result is in part because professors' methods of teaching and training in general are guided by the nature of the courses they teach.

The last category of the training strategies and practices involved in this domain includes those practices related to field placements (internships). These include sending students to offices for certified translation to gain practical experience and become familiar with the tasks they will be asked to perform in their future jobs as translators. According to the table above, only 26 % of the students agree that professors send them to certified translation offices for training purposes. Similarly, a low percentage (42 %) agree that professors provide them with samples of work by certified translation offices and only 43 % of the students agree that professors guide and encourage students to access digital translation sites. The results of this category point to a clear need for more market-connected translation training practices in collaboration with certified translation offices to provide students with practical experience and familiarity with the tasks they will perform ahead in their future jobs as translators. Thus, on campus training as well as on site training are deemed to be key components of the curriculum according to Gouadec et al. (2000, p. 6) who state: "Translators should be trained at university, not simply taught at university, and then trained on the job."

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Research data revealed that text types that are in relatively high demand in the local translation market include legal documents and court sentences, governmental announcements, stock market data, videos and films, news broadcasts, commercial contracts, job application

forms and university enrollment materials in addition to advertisements and commercials. The results also show that the only kind of texts that has a medium level of demand frequency according to professionals is the tourism brochures (70 % of the professionals), whereas other text types are either in low or very low demand. However, audio materials and scientific texts can be considered as moderate demand texts according to 37 % of the professionals.

The results for the low demand text types in the translation market include medical reports, literary texts, and religious texts. As for medical reports, it is believed that since the predominant medium of communication in medical field is English, the demand on translation is expectedly low. Literary and religious texts are the most challenging and require well trained translators. In addition, these texts are commissioned by well-established publication houses. In these domains, the Palestinian translation market can be described as consumer market.

With regards to the most challenging text types for recent graduates whom we classified as novice translators, the study concludes that from the list of nine kinds of texts involved in this domain, the performance of those translators is rated by employers as either strong or very strong only for three text types. These include translation of literary texts, translation of religious texts, and translation of scientific books; however, none of these texts appears in the list of the top eight high demand texts. The performance of novice translators is rated as either weak or very weak in these four types of texts: legal texts and court sentences, stock market data and economic reports, translation of videos and films from English to Arabic, and translation of news broadcasts. These domains are voted among the top eight high demand text types. In addition, the performance of novice translators is rated as

moderate when it comes to translating medical reports and commercial advertisements. The results clearly show that there is a gap between the translator preparation programs and the current needs of the local translation market. This implies that there is a need to revise and develop the content and the methodologies that are used in the translation programs to reflect the new trends in the translation market.

Regarding students' perceptions of the translation course learning materials, the results show that although students have positive viewpoints which reflect high levels of confidence in the curriculum, they point to some shortcomings that need be addressed. The positive points and the confidence that students showed reflect their experiences with the tasks they do at their university since all translation programs lack any components related to market placements or internship. Moreover, students alert us to high theoretical load and the lack of practice in certain translation domains such as audio-visual translation.

Finally, on training methodologies, the study reveals that students reported positive attitudes towards the following assessment practices: emphasizing accuracy in the translation product, providing timely feedback on translation tasks, providing enough contexts for their translation tasks and guiding students to suitable supplementary material. However, the results indicate that there are gaps concerning the high number and grade weights given to the theoretical questions when compared to the number and weight given to practical translation assignments. In addition, some positive and essential practices are either absent or rarely practiced, such as sending students to local translation offices to gain experience, encouraging students to access digital translation, and providing students with samples of work by certified translation offices.

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