



The Changing Face of Translation Competences and Qualifications in the AI Era: A Diachronic Analysis of Iranian Job Advertisements

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Abstract

Open-access generative AI has transformed language-related industries. Few studies have examined shifts in the skills translators are expected to have from the pre-AI to the post-AI era. Using a diachronic approach, this study compared job advertisements published in the pre-AI (121) and AI eras (30). The study conducted a deductive content analysis of both datasets based on Li (2022). While both eras required linguistic competence, oral skills dominated the AI era. Psycho-physiological, extralinguistic, interpersonal, and translation knowledge competences became more relevant in the AI era. Overall, subtle shifts indicate that pure translation is less in demand. Furthermore, the demand for candidates with a translation degree slightly increased in the AI era. These findings can help novice translators entering the market, experienced translators updating their skills, and translation educators aligning curricula with current demands. Future research could use interviews to explore how AI has changed translators' competences more directly.

Keywords: Translation competence, qualification, job advertisement, translation market, generative AI

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1. Introduction

Today, with all the studies conducted by translation studies researchers, it seems redundant to say the translation profession has a long history. From the West to the East, from the North to the South, researchers trace the translation activities back several centuries (see, for example, Atefmehr, 2022; Lefevere, 1990; Olsen, 2008; Rasmussen, 2004).

As with any other activity, the translation practice has not remained the same throughout its long history. However, this study does not aim to provide a comprehensive historical account of every minute shift. After the Second World War, in 1947, Warren Weaver spoke of using machines in translation. In the coming years, several attempts were made to automate translation; some failed, others succeeded (Chan, 2023). Since then, CAT tools have emerged to help translators, such as SDL Trados, memoQ, and MateCat. In recent years, AI chatbots such as ChatGPT, Claude, Grok, and Gemini have stormed the translation market in unprecedented ways.

The translation market is indeed dynamic and flexible. Heavily funded large language model (LLM) projects can affect translators' skills and competences (Ayvazyan et al., 2024). Professional and novice translators alike may possess competences aligned with current market needs; however, they should be able to adapt to new circumstances, acquire fresh competences, and move into emerging roles. This study may guide this adaptation process, although we cannot predict future market needs.

Translation job advertisements (hereafter, ads) reflect what the market, employers, and companies require from translators. Much literature examines translation job ads in relation to translation competences and qualifications, but a gap remains in incorporating a game-changing variable, generative AI, and in examining its impact on in-demand translation competences. However, one cannot know how much something has changed without having a clear understanding of its previous state. Such an understanding can be achieved through a diachronic analysis of the same phenomenon at two points in time: the pre-AI era and the AI era. While we acknowledge that Artificial intelligence (AI) has a long history, by pre-AI, we mean the time before the release of ChatGPT 3.5, the generative AI chatbot, on November 30, 2022 (OpenAI, 2022). The release of ChatGPT 3.5 marked a turning point in the development of chatbots (Wang, 2024). In this diachronic study, we address this gap by analyzing two datasets: one collected in the pre-AI era and the other in the AI era.

Finding convincing answers to a couple of questions is the aim of this study:

1. What different qualifications and translation competences can be observed in translation job ads before and after the widespread adoption of generative AI?
2. Which roles have newly emerged and which have become less prominent or disappeared from job ads?

2. Literature Review

Debate exists over who can be a translator. Some believe any bilingual can be a translator (see Harris & Sherwood, 1978). Some believe a translator, if nothing else, should at least be bilingual (see Presas, 2000). Still others, like ourselves, maintain that translators should have certain competences. Translation competence has deep roots in the literature, as many scholars have sought to answer how translators do what they do. They have tried defining, building, and assessing translation competence (see Adab & Schäffner, 2000), but a comprehensive discussion lies outside the scope of this study. Therefore, we only focus on some of the most-often cited models of translation competence.

In the quest to deconstruct translation competence, Neubert (2000) attributes seven non-primary features to it: "complexity" distinguishes translation from other disciplines, "heterogeneity" means

that translating requires skills that normally differ from each other, and the “approximate” nature of translation competence suggests that translators cannot be fully competent in every field; thus competence is considered “open-ended”. Moreover, translators must always have an equivalent at their hand, which is named “creativity”, achieved through a stimulus and requires awareness of the “situationality” of translation. Situationality further involves translators’ flexibility, namely “historicity”, to adapt to ever-changing situations (pp. 4-5).

Neubert (2000) identifies five primary attributes that shape a translator’s competence: language competence, textual competence, subject competence, and cultural competence, which are shared with other communicators, and transfer competence, which distinguishes a translator. Neubert (2000) argues that translators are judged by transfer competence. Another highly referenced translation competence model is proposed by PACTE (2017). The final version of the model includes five sub-competences (bilingual, extralinguistic, instrumental, knowledge of translation) along with psycho-physiological components.

Competence models are often proposed to better understand the traits of and train professional translators (see Chesterman, 2000; Fraser, 2000; Vienne, 2000). However, translators do not work in a static market. In recent years, the translation market has changed dramatically with the advent of generative AI. Once, there was a belief that machines could not replace human translators. For instance, Bowker (2004) rejected the idea, calling it a “false impression”. They believed translation is much more than “computer skills” (p. 971). Nevertheless, empirical research suggests that AI’s widespread accessibility has had some negative ramifications for the translation profession. For example, Egorova (2025) reports that online freelancers have faced reductions in employment and earnings in the Russian market. Translators also seem pessimistic about their profession’s future. As a case in point, Kirov and Malamin (2022), in their interesting study, showed that a pessimistic view exists among slightly threatened Bulgarian translators. Translators mostly thought AI would handle routine translations, with technical texts, documents, and legal texts most affected, and fiction texts and oral translation least.

It is unwise to ignore the seemingly inexorable march of generative AI into the translation market; however, it is too soon to say AI will completely replace human translators. For example, Constantin et al. (2024) points out to the role shift from human translation to post-editing and argues that human translators remain unrivalled when it comes to complex creative content, contextual awareness, and emotional nuance. The degradation of the human translator’s role to a post-editor is also visible in Łukasik’s (2024) inspection of the Polish translation market. Massion (2026) states that AI creates new roles for human translators, including prompt engineering and AI translating. Similarly, Asmar et al. (2025), researching the Indonesian context, conclude that AI still lacks the cultural awareness translators need for sensitive decision-making, while noting the added benefit of time efficiency in AI translations. Al Mudarra (2025) reached similar conclusions in Saudi Arabia. Wang (2023) scrutinizing the context of China, recommends human-AI collaboration to ensure accuracy, fluency, and fidelity to the source text. Finally, in contrast to dystopian views, AI can improve translators’ workflows. Noaman and Alkawri (2026) show that AI reduces the workload of translators, improving their efficiency. Besides human-assisted AI translations, that is, human translators’ post-editing of AI translations, Hajimohammadi and Mousavi Razavi (2026) found that human actors make use of AI in the process of editing literary translations, that is, AI-assisted human translation.

No matter how much AI shifts the translation market, and even if employers do not recognize translation competence as understood in Translation Studies, they still require translators to possess certain skills. There are multiple ways to discern what competence and qualifications employers demand from translators. One way is to analyze the content of translation job ads. One of the earliest studies of this kind is that of Bowker (2004) which focused on Canadian job ads in the early 21st century, looking for the set of required skills; it found that employers require translators to be

computer literate (basic tools), a team player, able to work under pressure, skilled in communication, domain knowledgeable, skilled interpersonally, detail-oriented, flexible/adaptable, and so forth. Li (2022), in the Chinese context, seeking translation curriculum renewal, identified linguistic competence, psycho-physiological competence, interpersonal competence, extralinguistic knowledge, and instrumental competence as the most required competences in job ads. Salamah (2022), examining the viability of the PACTE (2017) translation competence model in Saudi Arabia job ads, found strategic sub-competence most important, while employers also valued other sub-competences. These studies were conducted during what we called the pre-AI era in the previous section.

Job ad analysis studies are now examining in-demand translation competence in the presence of generative AI. Alshamrani's study (2026) highlights the importance of linguistic accuracy, time efficiency, technical competence, and multitasking in Saudi Arabian job ads. In the Finnish context, employers prefer a bachelor's degree over a master's degree, with two years of experience as necessary qualifications and "soft skills" such as "attention to detail", "ability to keep deadlines", "problem-solving," and twelve other attributes (Firsova, 2024, p. 51). Another recent study in Zimbabwe examines a specialized job market in legal interpretation and translation, finding that the most important qualification is bilingualism and that ads list no relevant degree program as a requirement (Ndlovu, 2026). One study that resembles ours to some extent is Ayvazyan et al. (2024), which used the United States Department of Labor's Occupational Information Network database. Their study compared the relative importance of knowledge, language skills, information-processing skills, social communication skills, and core tasks in the 2017 and 2023 datasets to determine which translators' skills and knowledge are immune to automation. They found that interactive skills, critical thinking, transcreation, and the skill to translate for specialized domains resist automation. However, their study may not apply to the Iranian context and was conducted only a year after history-making AI chatbots launched.

3. Methodology

Recruitment websites let recruiters post job ads, and applicants search for jobs online. Job ads posted on these websites often include detailed information about entry requirements, wages, working conditions, and more. Online translation job ads not only indicate the competences employers expect translators to have, but also are not limited to a single city.

To understand the competences expected of translators when generative AI was not available and used as pervasively as it is now, we compared job ads posted online before the release of ChatGPT 3.5, the pre-AI era defined in the introduction, with ads posted three years into its release, the AI era.

One of the authors collected the 2022 data from November 16 to 24 for an unpublished study. These data formed the first dataset for the current study. The data collection procedure was as follows:

Following a purposive sampling method, first, the phrase «آگهی شغلی» (job ads) was searched on Google. The top three results were chosen: [E-Estekhdam](#), [Jobinja](#), and [Jobvision](#). Subsequently, the word «مترجم» (translator) was searched in the search bar of the websites. The only job ads analyzed were those whose titles, as a rule of thumb, explicitly contained the word "translator", regardless of the required language, and whose descriptions specifically mentioned translation as the employee's main duty. This decision was made because several irrelevant results appeared when "translator" was searched in Jobvision. In addition, a small number of job ads with the word "translator" in their title were looking for English teachers. As a result, the number of ads decreased considerably. After removing duplicates and ads that did not meet the requirements, the remaining search results on the websites were analyzed.

Two accounts, one as an employer and the other as a job applicant, were created on each of the websites. This was done to ascertain whether employers could fill in the job requirements themselves or whether the websites provided pre-prepared, automatically filled-in requirements as soon as employers specified the type of job position they wanted to post. It also aimed to determine whether employers were restricted to a predefined list of options.

The second phase of data collection, conducted in November 2025, exactly three years after the first phase, followed the same procedure as the 2022 phase to ensure validity. In 2025, however, the top Google search results were slightly different: E-Estekhdam, Jobvision, and Jobinja.

The pre-AI dataset included 121 job ads: 11 from E-Estekhdam, 84 from Jobinja, and 26 from Jobvision. By contrast, the AI era dataset consisted of 30 job ads: 6 from E-Estekhdam, 15 from Jobinja, and 9 from Jobvision.

Building on previous multi-component competence models, Li (2022) proposed a market-driven competence model, which we used as the analytical framework of this study. Li (2022) borrowed different competences and sub-competences from PACTE (2003), Kelly (2005), and Göpferich (2009), among others, and added descriptors in the form of sub-competences for each category to create a framework. In addition, he distinguishes translation competences from qualifications, such as education level, major, certifications, and work experience. Accordingly, we took Li's (2022) qualifications, competences, and sub-competences as the coding template for our analysis. We, the authors, held sessions to code the data together and resolve any disagreements on the spot. We conducted a deductive content analysis of the job ads on MAXQDA 24 based on Dörnyei (2007) and Crabtree and Miller's (2023) template organizing style. It is imperative to mention that because each ad contained information about more than one competence and sub-competence, the codes outnumber the job ads.

4. Results and Discussion

To trace the changes in translation competences in the pre-AI and AI eras, we conducted a deductive content analysis of translation job ads published in 2022 and 2025. However, before delving into the analysis, the number of AI-era ads (30) compared with pre-AI-era ads (121) is quite striking. Although this study focuses on AI and its impact on qualifications and competences, it is unwise to treat AI as the only variable driving this decline in the number of job ads. Other confounding variables also shape the Iranian job market, especially for language-related jobs, such as war, sanctions, and the economy. Thus, we report and discuss the results while acknowledging that factors other than AI may have affected the translation market in Iran.

4.1. Competences

Table 1 presents an overview of required competences in the pre-AI and AI eras. In this table, count refers to how many times a code related to a specific competence was detected. Needless to say, percentages are calculated based on the total number of codes in each dataset.

Table 1. Distribution of Competences in the Pre-AI and AI Eras

Pre-AI Era			AI Era		
Competence	Count	Percentage	Competence	Count	Percentage
Linguistic Competence in Working Languages	221	38%	Linguistic Competence in Working Languages	53	32%
Psycho-Physiological Competence	149	26%	Psycho-Physiological Competence	52	31%

Pre-AI Era			AI Era		
Competence	Count	Percentage	Competence	Count	Percentage
Instrumental Competence	96	17%	Extra-Linguistic Knowledge	26	15%
Extra-Linguistic Knowledge	63	11%	Interpersonal Competence	16	10%
Interpersonal Competence	34	6%	Instrumental Competence	11	7%
Strategic Competence	7	1%	Translation Knowledge	6	4%
Translation Knowledge	5	1%	Strategic Competence	2	1%
Translation Routine Activation Competence	0	0	Translation Routine Activation Competence	0	0%
Total Count = 575			Total Count = 166		

Linguistic competence and psycho-physiological competence remain at the top in the AI era, as in the pre-AI era. This finding aligns with Li's (2022) study, in which linguistic and psycho-physiological competences were the most frequently required competences in the Chinese context. However, in the AI era, psycho-physiological competence is much closer in frequency to linguistic competence than in the pre-AI era. This could mean that linguistic competence has lost some importance after the emergence of AI, as supported by the slight decrease in its percentage relative to other competences in the AI era. Alternatively, this could show that psycho-physiological competence has grown in importance in recent years.

The findings reveal a marked drop in interest in translators' instrumental knowledge, from 17% in the pre-AI era to 7% in the AI era. One possible explanation is that basic computer literacy is taken for granted in the age of AI. The results show an increase in the demand for extra-linguistic knowledge in the AI era. One plausible interpretation is that AI tools' growing ability to handle simple translation tasks has led employers to place more weight on extra-linguistic knowledge when distinguishing job candidates. Moreover, the results indicated that demand for interpersonal competence and translation knowledge has grown slightly.

As shown in Table 1, this study's corpus of job ads showed no demand for translation routine activation competence in either the pre-AI or AI era. In Li's (2022) model, this competence involves the "ability to render language-specific elements" and the "ability to render culture-specific elements" (p. 187). To interpret this result, we use literary translation as an example because we are more experienced in this area. The study corpus included job ads seeking literary translators in both the pre-AI and AI eras. It is very likely that culture-specific elements and language-specific elements exist in literary books. Employers may simply not have known what goes into translation; that is, they may not have been aware of these elements in the source texts to be translated. Alternatively, they may have known about these elements and chosen not to mention them in the ads.

4.1.1. Linguistic Competence in Working Languages

Li (2022) describes linguistic competence as "the translator's communicative competence in his or her working languages (comprehension and production) and awareness of inter-linguistic and cross-rhetorical differences" (p. 183) and proposes the following sub-competences for linguistic competence:

Descriptions of translation duties in job ads: 1) Comprehension and production in both A and B (both B-A and A-B translation); 2) Comprehension in A and B language and production in A language (B-A

translation); 3) Comprehension in A and B language and production in A language (A-B translation); 4) Interpreting, oral presentations, business negotiations, or other oral communications; 5) Précis writing, document composition, or technical writing; 6) Post-editing; 7) Proofreading and revision; 8) Command of C language; 9) Ad hoc linguistic support /language consultancy; 10) Excellent typing and comprehension speed (Li, 2022, p. 187).

Although linguistic competence was the most frequent requirement in both datasets, the sub-competence requirements differed. As can be seen in Figure 1, translation from a foreign source language to the mother tongue is not the most important requirement in the AI era (26%). Instead, interpreting, oral negotiation, and other oral communication are the most in-demand linguistic competences (28%). Similarly, Ayzvazyan et al. (2024, p. 137) call spoken communication skills for translators “automation-resistant”. This finding, along with other findings, the increase in the demand for translators who can write technical documents (17% vs. 21%) and provide ad hoc linguistic support (0% to 2%), suggests that translators are increasingly taking on the role of language service providers (LSPs), as they are increasingly required to engage in duties beyond simply dissolving language barriers. EMT (2022) believes that service provision and personal-interpersonal competences are the least likely to be affected by automation. Although EMT’s (2022) service provision competence includes components not specifically covered in our linguistic competence, our results support their argument to the extent of overlap.

In our study, in contrast to those of Łukasik (2024) and Constantin et al. (2024), post-editing skills were not in greater demand in the AI era compared to the pre-AI era. The results did, however, show an increase in the demand for proofreading and revision (11% vs. 17%).

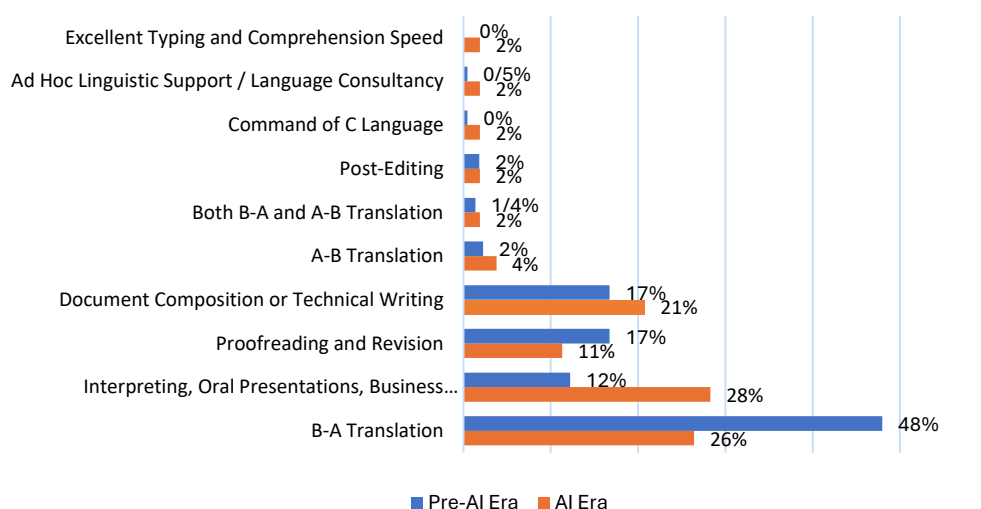


Figure 1. Sub-Competences of Linguistic Competence

4.1.2. Psycho-Physiological Competence

Li (2022) defines psycho-physiological competence as “translator’s attitudinal competence or soft skills that regulate his or her thinking and behaviour (mostly character traits)” (p. 183). As noted earlier, psycho-physiological competence was the second most frequent competence in pre-AI and AI-era ads. Tables 2 and 3 show that the top three sub-competences in this category were being disciplined, being responsible, and having time management skills in the AI era, while in the pre-AI era they were being

committed/dedicated, being responsible, and being disciplined. Time management skills seem to be an important sub-competence in other contexts: Alshamrani (2026) and Firsova (2024) point to similar requirements in the Saudi Arabian and Finnish contexts, respectively.

In addition, other character traits had only one instance in the AI era dataset, namely, being careful/cautious, enthusiastic/passionate, friendly, industrious, outgoing, precise, proactive/having initiative, reliable/dependable, stress tolerant, tolerant of criticism, and willing to travel/work abroad; and in the pre-AI era, namely, being concentrated, curious, humble, industrious, multi-tasking, and optimistic had only one instance.

Notably, in the AI era, the demand gap between psycho-physiological (31%) and linguistic (32%) competences narrowed considerably compared to the pre-AI era. This rise in the demand for psycho-physiological competence is consistent with PwC's (2026) report that emphasizes human-intensive capabilities in the AI era. Nevertheless, there are points where the results of this study do not match those of PwC (2026); for instance, creativity, a truly human trait (Runco, 2023), fell from 6% in the pre-AI era to zero in the AI era.

Table 2. Sub-Competences of Psycho-Physiological Competence in the AI Era

Sub-Competence	Count	Percentage
Disciplined	6	12%
Responsible	6	12%
Time Management	5	10%
Detail-Oriented/Meticulous	4	8%
Multi-Tasking	4	8%
Committed/Dedicated	3	6%
Motivated	3	6%
Willingness to Learn/Autonomous Learning	3	6%
Adaptable to Differences and Flexible to Working Conditions	2	4%
Patient	2	4%
Willing to Work Overtime and Any Shifts	2	4%
Others	11	21%
Total Count = 52		

Table 3. Sub-Competences of Psycho-Physiological Competence in the Pre-AI Era

Sub-Competences	Count	Percentage
Committed/dedicated	27	18%
Responsible	25	17%
Disciplined	21	14%
Willingness to Learn/Autonomous Learning	19	13%
Careful/Cautious	12	8%
Motivated	10	7%
Innovative/Creative	9	6%
Adaptable to Differences and Flexible to Working Conditions	8	5%
Time Management	7	5%
Patient	5	3%
Others	6	4%
Total Count = 149		

4.1.3. Extra-Linguistic Knowledge

Domain knowledge is a sub-competence in high demand in both the pre-AI (70%) and AI eras (81%). Neubert (2000, p. 3) calls translators “polyhistorians in an age of specialisation,” who are “supposed to have specialist knowledge about more and more,” and AI seems not to have affected this requirement. But the nature of the demanded domain knowledge has changed: in the pre-AI era, only 3% of domain-knowledge sub-competence revolved around digital marketing and market research; in the AI era, however, 44% revolved around digital marketing and market research. Employers also frequently demanded knowledge of content creation and SEO techniques: 24% in the pre-AI era and 37% in the AI era. Similarly, Li (2022) found domain knowledge to be the most demanded extra-linguistic sub-competence. However, in Li’s (2022) study, finance, law, and medicine and healthcare were among the most frequent domains. Familiarity with basic domain terminology and concepts rose from 14% in the pre-AI era to 19% in the AI era. This sub-competence was always lower than domain knowledge because employers sometimes mentioned it only when they mentioned domain knowledge elsewhere in the same ad. There were also, of course, cases where terminology knowledge sufficed and no deeper domain knowledge was needed. However, the simultaneous increase in domain knowledge and familiarity with basic terminologies and concepts in the AI era could indicate that employers expect translators to have more specialized knowledge than before.

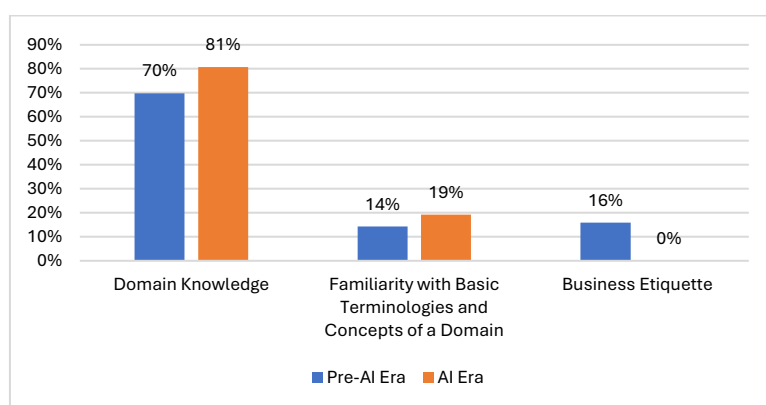


Figure 2. Sub-Competences of Extra-Linguistic Competence

4.1.4. Interpersonal Competence

Interpersonal competence is “the translator’s ability to deal with people (professionals and clients)” (Li, 2022, p. 183). While this sub-competence includes a variety of sub-competences in Li’s (2022) model, namely “1) collaboration/teamwork; 2) good at communication; 3) customer awareness; 4) leadership; 5) management potential/administrative or executive skills” (p. 187), we only detected some of them in the corpus, as shown in Table 4. The sub-competences of interpersonal competence are similar in the pre-AI and AI eras, with collaboration/teamwork most important in both and communication skills rising by 10% in the AI era. This suggests that human skills like communication are hard for AI to replace, as EMT (2022) also emphasizes.

Table 4. Sub-Competences of Interpersonal Competence in the Pre-AI and AI Eras

Pre-AI Era			AI Era		
Sub-Competence	Count	Percentage	Sub-Competence	Count	Percentage
Collaboration/Teamwork	20	59%	Collaboration/Teamwork	10	63%
Good at Communication	14	41%	Good at Communication	5	31%
Total Count = 34			Customer Awareness	1	6%
			Total Count = 16		

4.1.5. Instrumental Competence

Instrumental competence was understood as “the translator’s literacy in using technological tools, software and other resources” in Li’s (2022, p. 183) model. As Table 5 illustrates, the sub-competences found in our study were less varied in the AI era. The “other” category in the pre-AI era includes CAT tools, document archiving, and desktop publishing software, each appearing once, and information and communication technology, appearing twice, in the pre-AI era ads. Employers may have taken literacy in computer use/MS tools for granted, which may explain the lower percentage in the AI era. However, we should interpret these results cautiously, as the lower variety of sub-competences in the AI era may simply reflect the much smaller number of AI-era job ads than pre-AI ads.

Table 5. Sub-Competences of Instrumental Competence in the Pre-AI and AI Eras

Pre-AI Era			AI Era		
Sub-Competence	Count	Percentage	Sub-Competence	Count	Percentage
Literacy in Computer Use/MS Tools	68	71%	Literacy in Computer Use/MS Tools	4	36%
Use of Dictionaries, Corpora and Search Engines	17	18%	Use of Dictionaries, Corpora and Search Engines	4	36%
Use of Video Editing and Formatting Software (for Dubbing and Audiovisual Translation)	6	6%	Use of Information and Communication Technology	2	18%
Others	5	5%	Document Archiving	1	9%
Total Count = 96			Total Count = 11		

4.1.6. Translation Knowledge

Li (2022) describes translation knowledge as “the translator’s declarative knowledge of translation principles, strategies and theories” (p. 183). In the pre-AI era, this competence appeared 5 times, all related to knowledge of translation strategies. In the AI era, it appeared 6 times. In 67% of the cases, it required knowledge of quality standards. One could argue that knowledge of translation strategies is no longer in demand, while knowledge of quality standards remains important because AI can produce many different versions of a single translation, requiring the selection of the best version. In the AI era, knowledge of professional ethics and translation theories were the only other requirements, each at 17%. Li (2022) also identified knowledge of professional ethics as the most important translation knowledge.

4.1.7. Strategic Competence

In Li’s (2022) market-driven model, strategic competence refers to “the translator’s procedural knowledge to monitor and evaluate the translation process and coordinate other competence components” (p. 183). Strategic competence is found by Salamah (2022) to be the most important competence in Saudi Arabian job ads. In our study, the pre-AI era ads showed seven instances of strategic competence, all referring to the ability to detect and solve problems. Both instances of strategic competence in the AI-era ads also referred to the same ability. For Li (2022), the most frequent strategic competences were project planning and monitoring, quality control, and problem identification and problem solving. AI does not yet seem ready to mimic human strategic competence. PwC (2026) supports this claim, stating that AI will increase demand for more human-intensive skills.

4.2. Qualifications

Following Li (2022), four sub-categories of qualifications were identified in job ads. As shown in Figure 3, demand for a bachelor's degree rose by 20% in the AI era compared to the pre-AI era. Firsova (2024) found that Finnish employers prefer a bachelor's degree over a master's degree, which aligns with our study. This may reflect a trend toward hiring educated employees, as AI can more easily replace the uneducated.

It is rather shocking that demand for a translation major is quite low in both datasets. Looking through our employer accounts on the websites may help us understand this finding. In Jobvision 2022, employers had to fill in contract type, working conditions, gender, and work experience when posting an ad. While the subject of study could be left unmentioned, only certain subjects were available to choose from, and translation was not an option. In 2025, too, this was still the case. The field of study remained limited to language and literature. But they could write the major themselves in a box provided by the website for writing requirements. In Jobinja 2022, employers had to fill in all the boxes the website provided, including contract type, requirements, minimum academic degree, wage amount, years of experience, and so forth; similarly, in 2025, qualifications, responsibilities, and job benefits were required, as well as contract type, minimum academic degree required, amount of wage, and years of experience. And there were no boxes to add a major. In E-Estekhdam 2022, employers needed to specify only the job title, work experience, and contract type. In 2025, employers could enter qualifications and skills, job title, and other details in a box. AI also suggested some skills they could choose from, but they were not required.

Certification is identical in both datasets and remains unaffected by AI's impact. Years of experience show no significant change, with still a higher preference for less than three years of experience, as in Firsova's (2024) study, which preferred two years of experience as a necessary qualification.

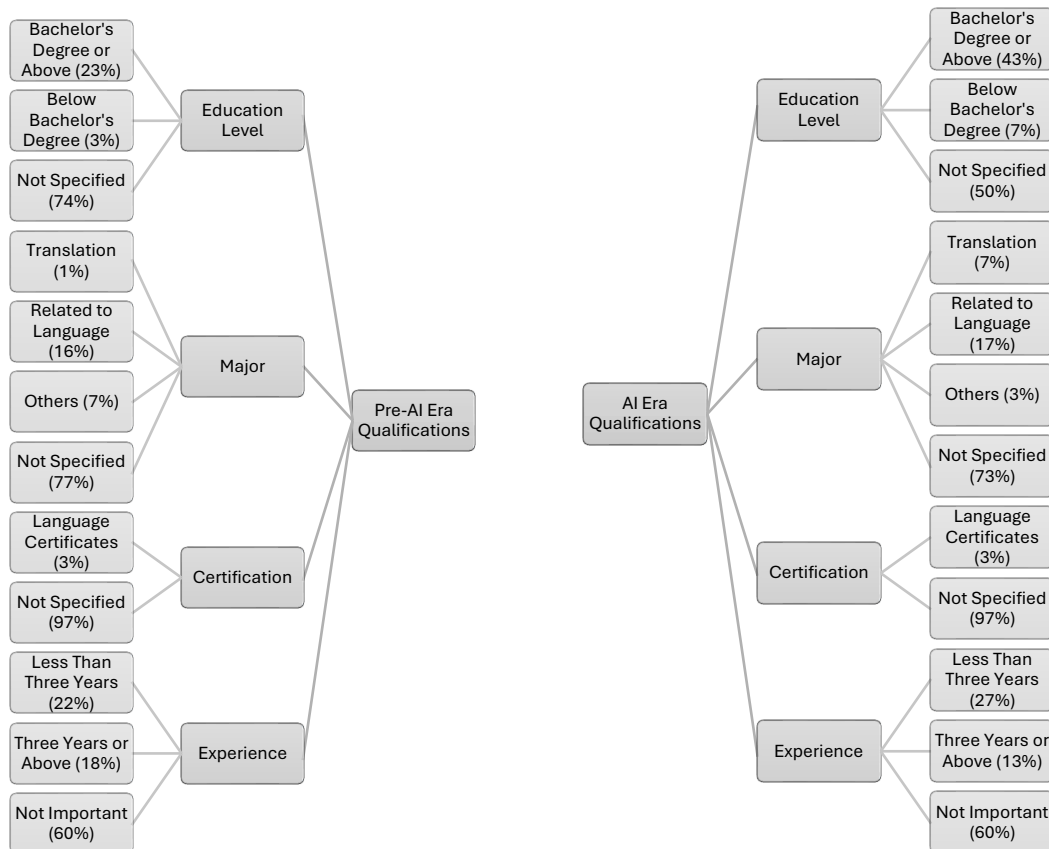


Figure 3. Qualifications in the Pre-AI and AI Eras

5. Conclusion

The study intended to compare translation qualifications and competences in the pre-AI and the AI eras. Analyzing a corpus of 121 pre-AI-era ads and 30 AI-era ads, we found that generative AI has not affected certification requirements, and that years of work experience have changed only slightly. More job ads required a translation major, and bachelor's degrees or higher have become more common, as far as qualifications are concerned. Regarding competences, we found that while linguistic competence remains the most required translation competence, its nature has changed. Interpreting, negotiating, and other oral communication skills have become the most in-demand linguistic competences in the AI era. Moreover, psycho-physiological competence is almost as important as linguistic competence in the AI era. Extralinguistic competence is also more in demand than in the pre-AI era; knowledge of specific domains, especially marketing, and familiarity with basic terminology and concepts show that translators are needed for more specialized duties. The results also indicated that employers highlight interpersonal competence more in the AI era than in the pre-AI era. Instrumental competence, however, was less prominent compared to the pre-AI era. Employers now slightly prefer translation knowledge more, and strategic competence showed no change. Finally, we found no translation routine activation competence in either the pre-AI or AI-era ads.

We also sought to identify new roles that have emerged for translators in the AI era and those that have become less prominent or disappeared. Although the results did not identify any roles that did not exist before AI, they showed that translators are more likely to take on the role of an LSP. Pure translation activities appeared to be in less demand.

While the study sheds some light on the changing face of qualifications and translation competence in the AI era, the results are not generalizable and should be interpreted cautiously. For one thing, the study's sample, particularly in the AI era, was not large enough. Another issue is that Iran's political and economic climate affects the translation market, which is closely tied to international relations. Future research could interview translators and employers to assess AI's impact on translators' qualifications and competences; this might help control for the effects of so-called confounding variables.

Nevertheless, this study has implications for graduate students in translation and translators, helping them adapt to new market needs in the AI era and acquire new roles and competences. It may also help curriculum designers and trainers bridge the gap between translation education and the realities of the translation market. Employers and translation agencies may also benefit by better understanding requirements and incorporating them into their organizational culture.

AI Declaration

The authors used Grammarly Premium, an AI-assisted writing tool, for proofreading and language editing, including checking grammar, spelling, punctuation, and clarity. The authors reviewed and approved all suggested corrections and remain responsible for the final content of the manuscript.

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