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Exploring Iranian Translation Students' Perception of Research: Education Level in Focus

Mohadese Karimi [1], Neda Fatehi Rad*[2]
[1] M.A. Translation Studies, Department of English Language, Kerman Branch, Islamic Azad University, Kerman, Iran
[2*] Assistant Professor, Department of English Language, Kerman Branch, Islamic Azad University, Kerman, Iran

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Abstract
This study aimed to explore whether translation students' research concepts are different at education levels. To this aim, a descriptive survey method was employed. The participants of this study included 60 M.A. and B.A. students of translation studies (30 males and 30 females) from different branches of Islamic Azad University in Iran. This selection was made based on convenience sampling. The data of this study were collected using Meyer, Shanahan and Laugksch's questionnaire. Analysis of data was done using qualitative content analysis. The results of data analysis showed that B.A.-level and M.A.-level translation students have good perceptions of research. Also, it was found that the participants' perceptions of research were different in terms of their education level. In a more specific sense, M.A.-level translation students' perceptions of research were more scientific and technical compared to undergraduate students.

Keywords: Perception, Research, Translation, Translator

INTRODUCTION

Since approximately 50 years ago, there has been a focus on education from teaching translation to learning translation. In other words, in recent years, the focus has increasingly been on the processes that result in a successful translation. One result of this change has been the increased importance of the related notion of research (Murtonen & Lehtinen, 2003). Another result of this shift of focus from teaching to learning has been developing a series of studies on research perception, including students' perceptions of research, supervisors' perception of research, teachers' perception of research, leaders' perception of research, etc. Such studies have been primarily conducted in the form of phenomenography (Murtonen & Lehtinen, 20 investigating manners in which individuals experience various phenomena (Marton & Booth, 1997). It has been most broadly used in higher education and professional development (Ashworth & Lucas, 2000). Phenomenography played a crucial role in research perception in education in regards to "perception" itself.

In phenomenography, the study object is the meaning or perceptions held by people on a specific phenomenon (Akerlind, 2005) w. The results consist of how one can experience that phenomenon (known as categories of description). The second dimension of phenomenography, the structural aspect, includes designing a structured collection of these "outcome spaces" or associations (Akerlind, 2005).

*****Corresponding Author's Email:
nedafatehi@yahoo.com

The phenomenographic approach is composed of three stages. The first stage involves uncovering, usually by interviews, individuals' perceptions that are pivotal in the topic under investigation. The second stage consists of converting these perceptions into categories. The third step describes how the various perceptions are different from one another (Akerlind, 2005).

The translation is one of the most critical jobs in modern society. As the whole globe is coming together based on information sharing and communicative advances, it is natural that there has been a constant demand to translate new words from one language to another. And as it is precise translation is one of the best ways for exchanging these new words in different countries and cultures, so, for vastly use of these words and making them known among all people all over the world, the translation should be done and for the best translation, doing research is one of the most critical factors (Murtonen & Lehtinen, 2003). However, despite the importance of research and research perception in the translation field, looking at the existing literature shows the empty place of a study on Translation Students' Perception of research.

Further, generally, it can be said that the perception of research has been neglected as a subject for study. Among the very few studies, those by Startup (1985), who researched academics' ideas about the impact of changes in higher education on how they viewed their research, and Bruce and Bahrick (1992), who looked at psychologists' perceptions of past research can be mentioned. More recently, Jenkins and colleagues (1998) have also examined students' perceptions of their teachers' research. Yet, as stated above, no work has explicitly addressed the ways in which research is experienced by translation studies students.

This study intended to explore Iranian B.A. and M.A. translation study students' perceptions of research. It further aimed at discovering the possible differences between the two groups. Therefore, the researchers raised the following research questions.

RQ1. *What perceptions of research do Iranian B.A.-level translation studies students hold?*

RQ2. *What perceptions of research do Iranian M.A.-level translation studies students hold?*

RQ3. *Are Translation Students' Perceptions of research different regarding their education level?*

LITERATURE REVIEW

The first efforts to measure research knowledge were made in the early 1960s, and some believe that this measurement is the main reason why research became a central issue in science policy (Godin, 2000). In the 1960s, the US National Science Foundation (NSF) was the most advanced institution in classifying different types of research, so the NSF definitions were an essential resource for the OECD's formulations of its definitions (Godin, 2000).

This classification of research became necessary for the retaining of the concept in the following decades. Because when it became something that could be measured, procedures could be identified for international comparisons (Godin, 2000).The 1950s and 1960s were periods of considerable growth in funding for scientific research. During this time, the belief was that investments in science would lead to innovation (Gummett, 1991). Towards the end of the 1960s, the belief in the potential of science was challenged with the appearance of some of the adverse outcomes of scientific and technological development of the environment and society. So, during the late 1960s and 1970s, many countries reduced government expenses on science (Elzinga, 1985). The 1980s experienced a considerable change in governmental attitudes towards research in many countries. With the ending of the Cold War, military motivations for funding research were no longer important. What became important instead was the promotion of technology and economic competitiveness. At the same time, academic studies of innovation challenged the simple linear model of the relationship between science and technology (Mowery & Rosenberg, 1989).

The changes that began in the 1980s are continuing today, although we are also observing the emergence of new issues. We now have a situation where "research has become intimately intertwined with the production of goods and technological development of relevance for all realms of society" (Elzinga, 1985, p. 420). Moreover, by the 1990s, most European countries had entered an era of 'steady state' science (Ziman, 1994). To summarize, the history of research funding from the 1950s to the 2000s has shown a move away from the idea that scientists should be supported as autonomous truth-seekers to orient their work rather more toward social and economic objectives. More simply, there has been a parallel decline in autonomy and an increase in accountability. Brew's (2001) study was intended to understand what was at the forefront of researchers' minds (what researchers thought about) when asked to discuss their research. She interviewed fifty-seven senior researchers with substantial track records in publication and in gaining research grants. She found they were differentiated according to four perceptions of research which were given symbolic names. Brew (2001) analyzed transcripts phenomenographically. This qualitative research methodology was designed to map the variation in the range of ways that a phenomenon (in this case, "research") is experienced and to demonstrate the structural similarities and differences in patterns of viewing the phenomenon, i.e. how the resultant categories are related (Marton & Booth, 1997).

She found that senior researchers' perceptions of research were differentiated according to four "perceptions", which were given metaphorical names (domino, trading, layer and journey). McCormack (2004) compared institutional assumptions and postgraduates' experiences regarding research perception. He found that in these two settings, research perceptions are significantly different. A pilot study (by the authors) addressed the perceptions of research held by graduate students in the U.S. (Kawulich, Garner, & Wagner, 2008), and the perceptions of research of doctoral students were investigated by Halliday and Meyer (2008). According to the results, the participants had more or less similar research perceptions. In an exploratory study, Byrne-Armstrong et al. (2004) described the research as a difficult and vague concept replete with significant moments that are sometimes disrupting. Kiley and Mullins (2005) sought to explore postgraduate supervisors' perceptions of "research", using the existing framework into a new area. It is hypothesized that developing a conceptual framework that identifies doctoral students' perceptions of "research", and how these articulate with the perceptions of research held by their research supervisors will enable support mechanisms to be developed and used to assist students. In addition, supervisory practice will benefit from being aware of and sensitive to these perceptions' variety and potential effect. While it is recognized that there are strong cultural influences on perceptions of research, this project has focused initially on the perceptions of research generally adopted by Western academic institutions.

However, the students involved in the study were not necessarily of Western educational background. This study discussed that supervisors' views on the purpose of research and what characterizes "good" research, and good researchers are different. Besides, they reported various strategies to assist their students to develop more comprehensive and sophisticated perceptions of research. Meyera, Shanahanb and Laugkschc (2005) explored the dimensionality of students' perceptions of research from two complementary research perspectives. To do so, the open-ended written responses of 5154 students to questions aimed at eliciting variations in perceptions of research were analyzed using a qualitative methodology to identify "categories of description".

Findings showed that, in terms of the main categories, research is perceived in terms of variation in the following categories: (A) information gathering, (B) discovering the truth, (C) insightful exploration and discovery, (D) rational and systematic enquiry, (E) incompleteness, (F) re-examining existing knowledge, (G) problem-based activity, and (H) a set of misperceptions. These findings

provide an initial conceptual basis for the students' perception of research. Brew, Boud, Namgung, Lucas and Crawford (2015) investigated whether people with different levels of research productivity and identification as a researcher think of research differently. The study participants were English and Australian academics working in research-intensive environments in three broad discipline areas: science, engineering and technology; social science and humanities; and medicine and health sciences.

Results showed that the participants have different perceptions of research regarding their levels of research productivity, their levels of research training, whether they considered themselves an active researcher and a member of a research team, and their disciplinary differences. As can be seen from the reviewed studies, although some studies have been conducted on perceptions of research, so far, no study has dealt with Iranian Translation Students' Perception of research. This issue was touched on the present study.

METHOD

A descriptive survey method was employed to achieve the study's objective of exploring Iranian B.A. and M.A. translation students' perception of research, and to see whether translation students' perceptions of research are different in terms of their education level. The study sample included 60 (30 M.A. and 30 B.A.) students of translation (30 males and 30 females) from different branches of Islamic Azad University. This selection was done based on convenience sampling. In other words, the researcher chose his participants among the available cases. The age range of the participants was 18-29 and they spoke Persian.The data of this study were collected using Meyer, Shanahan and Laugksch's (2007) questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: demographic information, and perceptions of research. The first part covered information about participants' name, age, gender, educational level and years of teaching experience. The second part included five open questions to elicit the participants' perceptions of research.

At the beginning, the participants were explained the aim of the study and its potential benefits. Then, they were kindly asked to participate in the study voluntarily. Because this was a survey research, data gathering mainly involved distributing the questionnaire among the participants and asking them to fill it. As stated, the questionnaire employed in this study was Meyer, Shanahan and Laugksch's (2007) questionnaire.

For the convenience of the participants, based on their choice, the questionnaire was distributed through e-mail or social networks. And the participants were kindly asked to return the questionnaire in at most one week. After receiving the questionnaires from the respondents, the researcher started qualitative content analysis of the questionnaire data. As is the case in any qualitative survey study, analysis of the resultant data was done using content analysis of the data without any preconceived ideas about the internal structure of the data on the researchers' part. In other words, the researcher conducted the content analysis without any already established perception about translation students' perceptions of research.

RESULTS

Results of the content analysis of B.A.-level translation studies students' answers

In this section, the results of content analysis of the B.A.-level translation studies students' answers to each question are provided:

Question one:

> *As an open question, how would you explain to a stranger what "research" is?*

In analyzing the answers of the B.A.-level translation studies students to this question, the following themes were identified:

Research means searching for information

A common theme identified in the B.A.-level translation studies students' answers was that research is equivalent to searching for information. To them, research is work that is mainly aimed at collecting data on something. However, they regarded it as a way to become aware of something. This view highlights the

conscious-raising nature of research, in their opinion.

Research means seeking things to solve a problem

Another typical pattern found in the B.A.-level translation studies students' answers was that research is something you do to find something which can help solve a problem. To them, many issues in various aspects of life can be solved by searching the available sources.

Research means increasing knowledge through searching

The other theme in the answers of the B.A.-level translation studies students was that research means searching for an increase in the knowledge. They believed that through research, one's knowledge in different areas can be increased.

Question two:

> *To be more specific, write down what you think "research" means in your discipline or subject.*

Content analysis of the answers of the BA-level translation studies students to the above question led to the following themes:

Research is searching about the great translators and translations

For B.A.-level translation studies students, research is searching for great translators and translations in the translation field. They believed that everybody studying in the translation field should search first and foremost for translators and the t translations.

Research means searching for the dominant figures and theorists

The B.A.-level translation studies students viewed research in their field as searching about the popular theorists and figures in translation. Translation students and translators must know about their field's dominant figures.

Research means searching for translation models, principles, and methods

The respondents regarded research the same as searching for translation models. They explained that translation models have been explained in various sources and searching these sources can lead to a better understanding they believed that those involved in the translation field should inevitably know about the principles and methods of translation through research in this area.

Question three:

> *What do you think the main reasons are for doing "research" in your discipline or subject?*

In answering the reasons for doing research, the following themes are found:

Research is conducted for the increase of technical knowledge

The respondents treated technical knowledge increase as a good reason for researching their field. They explained that through research, individuals' technical knowledge is increased. By technical knowledge, the knowledge related to the translation discipline was meant.

Research is conducted for problem-solving

The B.A.-level translators believed that often research is conducted to solve a problem. Therefore, according to them, the available resources can be helpful as a problem-solving instrument. Many useful solutions can be found in the previous works that have dealt with similar problems with the researcher.

Research is conducted to know more about areas of interests

From the viewpoint of BA-level translation studies students, one goal of doing research can be obtaining more information about one's areas of interest. More particularly, the respondents believed that you simultaneously obtain more information about your interests and find new interests when you do research.

Question four:

> *Could you now describe what you think successful researchers actually do in your discipline or subject?*

The researcher identified the following terms in the participants' answers to this question:

Successful researchers investigate the most recent issues

The BA-level translation studies students stated that a successful researcher should in-

vestigate new topics in the field. The topics that a successful researcher touches on up-to-date topics rather than old ones.

Successful researchers do apply research

From the perspective of B.A.-level translation studies students, successful researchers do research that leads to practical results with applications in the field. In other words, they regard the practical applicability of the findings as a criterion for the research conducted by successful researchers.

Successful researchers use diverse sources

To the B.A.-level respondents, a successful researcher is one who takes advantage of various resources including papers, books, websites, etc. More specifically, they regard resource diversity as another characteristic of a successful researcher.

Question five:

What do you think constitutes "good research" in your discipline or subject?

Good research is goal-oriented

The B.A.-level translation studies students considered goal as a main component of good research. They believed that for research to be treated as good, it should pursue a stated goal. They also mentioned that the stated goal of research should be an important one.

Good research should solve a problem

The respondents at the B.A.- level believed that good research can solve a problem in the field. This problem-solving function of the research is important for the BA-level translation studies students because they also referred to it in the previous questions.

Good research should add something to the previous knowledge

The B.A.-level participants believed that good research is research that adds something to the existing knowledge. They stated that research that just repeats the previous findings has no use in the field and is not creative.

Table 1 shows the B.A.-level 03). Phenomenography can be explained as Translation Students' Perceptions of research.

Table 1

B.A.-level Translation Students' Perceptions of research

number	questions	Perceptions
1	As an open question, how would you explain to a stranger what "research" is?	Research means searching information Research means seeking things to solve a problem Research means increasing the knowledge through searching
2	To be more specific, write down what you think "research" means in your discipline or subject?	Research is searching about the great translators and translations Research means searching about the dominant figures and theorists Research means searching about translation models, principles and methods
3	What do you think the main reasons are for doing "research" in your discipline or subject?	Research is conducted for the increase of technical knowledge Research is conducted for problem solving Research is conducted to know more about areas of interests
4	Could you now describe what you think successful researchers do in your discipline or subject?	Successful researchers investigate the most recent issues Successful researchers do applied research Successful researchers use diverse sources
5	What do you think constitutes "good research" in your discipline or subject?	Good research is goal-oriented Good research should solve a problem Good research should add something to the previous knowledge

Frequency and percentage of B.A.-level Translation Students' Perceptions of research are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Frequency and percentage of B.A.-level Translation Students' Perceptions of research

Perceptions	frequency	Percentage
Research means searching information	21	70%
Research means seeking things to solve a problem	16	53.33%
Research means increasing the knowledge through searching	12	40%
Research is searching about the great translators and translations	8	26.66%
Research means searching about the dominant figures and theorists	5	16.66%
Research means searching about translation models, principles and methods	10	33.33%
Research is conducted for the increase of technical knowledge	4	13.33%
Research is conducted for problem solving	17	56.66%
Research is conducted to know more about areas of interests	4	13.33%
Successful researchers investigate the most recent issues	23	76.66%
Successful researchers do applied research	18	60%
Successful researchers use diverse sources	10	33.33%
Good research is goal-oriented	22	73.33%
Good research should solve a problem	25	83.33%
Good research should add something to the previous knowledge	9	30%

Results of the content analysis of M.A.-level translators' answers

Question one:

As an open question, how would you explain to a stranger what "research" is?

Research is a systematic work with a specified aim

In explaining the research, the M.A.-level translation studies students defined it as routine work that seeks a specified goal. Systematicity of the research is an academic concept stated by the respondents. Yes, in several definitions of research in the literature, systematicity has been emphasized.

Research is a multi-stage task in a chain form

The respondents considered research as a chain consisting of multiple stages which are tied to each other. As is known, research is not a one-shot work, instead, it is composed of several steps, including stating a problem, specifying objectives, collecting data, analyzing data, etc.

Research is a scientific work that answers research questions

The participants regarded research as a scientific thing that attempts to find answers to research questions. Of course, the research question is an inevitable component of any research, and thus, defining research as an effort to find answers to research questions seems usual.

Question two:

To be more specific, write down what you think "research" means in your discipline or subject?

Translation Research covers different issues of the translation field from theoretical topics to empirical ones

The M.A.-level translation studies students stated that translation research could cover different issues from theoretical concepts to practical problems. Furthermore, they considered that every topic related to the translation field could be investigated from different angles in translation research. Mainly, the participants emphasized the goal-oriented nature of the study in their answers to this question.

Research in the translation addresses particular gaps in the translation field

From the viewpoints of the respondents, translation research is characterized by identifying a gap in the field. Also, they mentioned that the attempt should not be limited to gap identi-

fication; instead, it should be aimed at filling the identified gap in the translation field.

Research means solving the challenges of the translation field

Mostly, the respondents pointed out that translation research is research that overcomes the challenges of the field. Every area has its challenges, and the translation field is also full of challenges. Thus, translation research should try to overcome the difficulties identified. This idea was also mentioned in the literature on the definition of research.

Translation research is a kind of research that assess the existing translations

The M.A.-level translation students stated that translation research assesses the quality of the existing translations.

Research in translation is research that leads to the improvement of future translations

Another theme identified in the answers of the M.A.-level translation studies students was that translation research should increase the quality of future translations. Naturally, when the translations are assessed, the problems of the existing translations are identified. Accordingly, the quality of future translations will be improved.

Question three:

What do you think the main reasons are for doing "research" in your discipline or subject?

To bridge the main gaps in the field

To the respondents, one reason for doing translation research is to fill the identified gaps. This perception is also a reasonable justification for studying and has been emphasized in the research literature.

To solve the main challenges in the field

As pointed out by the respondents, solving the challenges of the translation field is another reason for researching the area. As argued before, any field of study, including translation has its challenges, and even partial solutions to the difficulties identified can lead to good improvements in the area.

To challenge the existing models

As another reason for researching translation, the M.A.-level translation studies students referred to challenging the existing models. As is known, translation is a field full of different models of translations by scholars in the area. And these models are widely used by researchers in the field. Therefore, challenging the existing models can implicitly lead to improved quality of research in the area.

To test hypotheses

To test hypotheses was another reason for doing translation research mentioned by the respondents. According to the respondents, hypothesis testing is an inseparable component of most research in any field, including translation. Thus, it can be a reason for doing translation research.

To answer research questions

The M.A.-level respondents stated that answering research questions is one reason for researching the field of translation. Similar to the hypotheses, research questions are also a central component of research and finding answers to these questions can be one reason for doing research.

Question four:

Could you now describe what you think successful researchers do in your discipline or subject?

Refuting the existing theories

To the respondents, successful researchers are those who refute the existing theories. Many theories have been proposed in this field, some of which have shortcomings. To the MA-level translation studies students, one work done by successful researchers is refuting these theories.

Proposing new theories

Also, the participants believed that other work done by successful researchers is proposing new theories. When the existing approaches are successfully refuted, consequently, the next stage would be presenting new ideas free from the identified shortcomings. Besides, with the improvement of science in any field,

new issues have been proposed, which require offering new approaches.

Challenging the existing translation models

As argued before, many translation models have been proposed previously by translation scholars. However, similar to the theories, these models also have shortcomings. According to the respondents, successful researchers should challenge the existing translation models and identify their problems.

Proposing new translation models

Another work mentioned by the participants as what successful researchers do is proposing new translation models. This work can expand the range of existing models and lead to improvement of the research in the field and the whole translation field.

Question five:

What do you think constitutes "good research" in your discipline or subject?

Good research fills a gap in the field

The respondents believed that for research to be categorized as good, it should fill an identified gap in the field. Gap filling was also mentioned in the answers to the previous questions and this shows the importance of this issue from the participants' viewpoint.

Good research deals with hot topics

Another characteristic of good research, according to the M.A.-level translation studies students, was touching the hot topics. But, according to them, addressing old issues does not add anything to the technical knowledge in the field and is just a waste of time and energy.

Good research is conducted with an appropriate method

According to the participants, for research to be good, it should be done based on a suitable way. The research method is an essential aspect of the study and even perhaps one can say that it is the most critical element of research. Naturally, an appropriate method can be one of the main features of a good study with such importance.

Good research has innovation

Another feature enumerated for good research by the respondents was research innovation. A piece of research should be innovative and add something new to the previous similar studies to be considered good research. They believed that repetition of previous similar studies does not improve the field.

Good research has a specified well-defined objective

The participants believed that good research has a specified purpose. In fact, to them, research with no objective is not research. This is the objective of the study that gives direction to the research and it is hard to imagine research with no direction.

Good research should have good implications for the stakeholders

Another characteristic of good research that the participants stated was the implications of the research for those who want to take advantage of the research findings or the stakeholders. Research without implication is a piece of work without meaning. Meaningless work has no benefit and use for stakeholders. The MA-level Translation Students' Perceptions of research can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3

M.A.-level Translation Students' Perceptions of research

number	questions	Perceptions
1	As an open question, how would you explain to a stranger what "research" is?	Research is a systematic work with a specified aim Research is a multi-stage task in a chain form Research is a scientific work which answers research questions
2	To now be more specific, write down what you think "research" means in your discipline or subject?	Translation Research covers different issues of translation field from theoretic topics to empirical ones Research in the translation addresses particular gaps in translation field Research means solving the challenges of translation field Translation research is a kind of research that assess the existing translations Research in translation is a research that leads to improvement of future translations
3	What do you think the main reasons are for doing "re-search" in your discipline or subject?	To bridge the main gaps in the field To solve the main challenges in the field To challenge the existing models To test hypotheses To answer research questions
4	Could you now describe what you think successful researchers actually do in your discipline or subject?	Refuting the existing theories Proposing new theories Challenging the existing translation models Proposing new translation models
5	What do you think consti-tutes "good research" in your discipline or subject?	Good research fills a gap in the field Good research deals with hot topics Good research is conducted with an appropriate method Good research has innovation Good research has a specified well-defined objective Good research should have good implications for the stakeholders

The frequency and percentage of M.A.-level translation study students' perceptions of research are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Frequency and percentage of M.A.-level Translation Students' Perceptions of research

Perceptions	frequency	Percentage
Research is a systematic work with a specified aim	19	63.33%
Research is a multi-stage task in a chain form	5	16.66%
Research is a scientific work which answers research questions	13	40%
Translation Research covers different issues of translation field from theoretic topics to empirical ones	16	43.33%
Research in the translation addresses particular gaps in translation field	10	33.33%
Research means solving the challenges of translation field	8	26.66%
Translation research is a kind of research that assess the existing translations	23	13.33%
Research in translation is a research that leads to improvement of future translations	11	76.66%
To bridge the main gaps in the field	10	33.33%
To solve the main challenges in the field	9	76.66%
To challenge the existing models	10	30%
To test hypotheses	20	66.66%
To answer research questions	14	46.66%
Refuting the existing theories	8	26.66%
Proposing new theories	9	30%
Challenging the existing translation models	7	23.33%
Proposing new translation models	10	33.33%
Good research fills a gap in the field	18	60%

Good research deals with hot topics	9	30%
Good research is conducted with an appropriate method	15	50%
Good research has innovation	10	33.33%
Good research has a specified well-defined objective	14	46.66%
Good research should have good implications for the stakeholders	8	26.66%

To investigate the significance of the difference between the frequency of M.A.-level and B.A.-level Translation Students' Perceptions of research, a chi-square test was run. The results of this test are provided in the next Table.

Table 5
Results of the Chi-square Test

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	180.000[a]	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	190.694	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	113.680	1	.000

As is shown in Table 5, there is a significant difference ($p<.05$) between the frequencies of the MA-level and BA-level Translation Students' Perceptions of research. In other words, the difference in frequencies of the MA-level and BA-level Translation Students' Perceptions of research is significant at $p=.05$ level.

DISCUSSION

Data analysis revealed the participants' perceptions of the research. Because the perceptions were provided in the previous sections, here they are not repeated and just they are discussed with a look at the earlier studies. The first finding was that to B.A.-level translation studies students; research is equivalent with searching information, seeking things to solve a problem, increasing the knowledge through searching, searching about the great translators and translations, searching about the dominant figures and theorists, translation models, principles and methods.

Also, they believed that research is done for some purposes, such as increasing technical knowledge, problem-solving, and knowing more about areas of interest. To them, successful researchers investigate the most recent issues, do applied research and use diverse sources. Finally, they stated that Good research is goal-oriented, should solve a problem and add something to the previous knowledge. While some of these perceptions may not be profoundly theory-based and scientific, they show that B.A.-level translators have their own perceptions of research. More interestingly, they show that B.A.-level translation studies students are familiar with the concept of research, know about its purposes and aims, have some perceptions of the success in the research, etc.

Given that in B.A.-level education, the research courses are limited, these findings seem relatively promising. The other result was that according to M.A.-level translation studies students, research is a systematic work with a specified aim, a multi-stage task in a chain form, and a scientific work which answers research questions. Further, they believed that:

-Translation research covers different issues of translation field from theoretical topics to empirical ones,

-Research in the translation addresses particular gaps in translation field,

-Research means solving the challenges of translation field,

-Translation research is a kind of research that assess the existing translations,

-Research in translation is a research that leads to improvement of future translations.

Moreover, they regarded research as bridging the main gaps in the field, solving the main challenges in the field, challenging the existing models, testing hypotheses, answering research questions, etc. To them, good research fills a gap in the field, deals with hot topics, is conducted with an appropriate method, has innovation and a specified well-defined objec-

tive. These perceptions of M.A.-level translation studies students are scientific and in line with the existing theories. This shows the effectiveness and usefulness of existing research courses in the MA-level education. Also, it was found that the participants' perceptions of research were different in terms of their education level.

In other words, the B.A. and M.A. translation students' perceptions of research were different. The results of chi-square test also confirmed this finding statistically. In a more specific sense, M.A.-level Translation Students' Perceptions of research were more scientific and technical.

One important implication of this finding is that research courses serve an enlightening role in translating students' perceptions of research. Thus, incorporating these courses in B.A.-level education will lead to valuable achievements in the field. Some perceptions of the participants of the present study are similar to the previous findings. For example, the participants of the survey by Kiley and Mullins (2005) also mentioned the rigorous application of systematic methods to well-defined problems within a particular disciplinary context. They also assumed that appropriate method will result in research outcomes.

Also, in Meyer, Shanahan and Laugksch's (2007) study, the respondents enumerated well-conceived, systematic, objective, independent as the characteristics. Like the present study, the study participants stated that good research should be creative and innovative. Also, they mentioned challenging the existing orthodoxies as a characteristic of good research. But it should be noted that the participants were just English students, not translators in the mentioned study.

The other common point found between this study and previous studies was that the research should be a systematic process with a purpose, as stated by the participants of Kiley and Mullins' (2005) study. Interestingly, 'Academic research asks critical questions toto illuminate understanding, advance knowledge and/or question prevailing knowledge' found in the study by Meyer, Shanahan and Laugksch's (2007) was also revealed in the present study.

Furthermore, the participants of the survey by Kiley and Mullins (2005) stated that the purpose of research is hypothesis testing: "directed by a formulated question that may reflect a practical problem that is generated by falsifiable theory and therefore leads to testable predictions". In the same vein with the present study, Kiley and Mullins (2005) also reported that the participants thought research should investigate a significant problem in the field. However, it should be noted that the participants of that study were supervisors, but respondents of the present study were translators at the B.A. and M.A. level. Another point worthy of note in the current research, while not included in the stated objectives of the present study, was that the Translation Students' Perceptions of research were different.

The difference observed in the participants' perception seems reasonable because there is approximately no formal research course for the students of translation field at the B in the Iranian education systeM.A. level. But, at the M.A. level, the translation students have research courses. Thus, it is reasonable that their perceptions of research be different. Further, it was observed in the perceptions that the M.A.-level Translation Students' Perceptions of research were more scientific and technical, compared with those of the B.A.-level translation studies students.

CONCLUSION

In sum, no one can deny that both the B.A. and M.A. translation students' perceptions of research give valuable insights about their perceptions which can be helpful for the stakeholders in the field. In conclusion, some perceptions identified in the present study had counterparts in the previous studies, which is a strong point for the study.

However, as far as the researcher found, this issue is new in translation research and more studies need to be done to add to the strength of the results. The study findings give new insights to stakeholders in the field of translation about the translators' conceptions of research which is somehow new in the research in the field of translation. Further, the findings make the curriculum planners aware of the

current conceptions of research held by the translators and cause them to take research courses more into account in planning translation courses. Finally, this study makes translators conscious of their colleagues' conceptions of research. This leads to increased importance of research in their minds.

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Biodata

Neda Fatehi Rad is an assistance professor of English Language Teaching at Islamic Azad University, Kerman Branch, Iran. She mainly teaches language testing, research methodology and teaching language methodology at graduate level and her main areas of interest include teachers' education, cooperative learning, language testing and research. She has published papers in international and national academic journals and presented in several national and international seminars. She has published three books in the field of translation, language learning and teaching.
Email*: Nedafatehi@yahoo.com*

Mohadese Karimi has got her master degree in English Translation Studies at Islamic Azad University, Kerman branch Iran. Her main areas of interest include teachers' education, translation, translation strategies and interdisciplinary studies in the field of teaching and translation. She has published a book and some papers in international and national academic journals.
Email: *Mohadesekarimi0627@gmail.com*