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Perceptions of Faculty Members on the Role of the Translation Curriculum in Developing Intercultural Communication Competence among EFL Students at King Khalid University

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Abstract. In the current world, intercultural communication competence brings out the capabilities that allow people to carry out effective communications in cross-cultural surroundings and recount diverse cultural attitudes. A closer look at the relationship between intercultural communication and translation indicates that translation and intercultural communication are explicitly interrelated and can be mutually realized. The current research paper mainly purports to extrapolate the perceptions of faculty members on the role of the translation curriculum in developing intercultural communication competence among EFL students at King Khalid University. The key significance of this study is how faculty members of translation perceived the role played by the translation curriculum in enhancing intercultural communication and cultural dialogue among EFL students. The main questions of this study are: (1) What are the general perspectives of faculty members concerning the role played by the translation curriculum in developing ICC among university students of translation? (2) To what extent does the translation curriculum affect translation students' ICC as an integral component of linguistic competence as perceived by faculty members of translation? Moreover, to accomplish the objectives of the study, the two researchers utilized a descriptive research method. Information gathering was collected by dint of using a questionnaire of fourteen items based on a five-point Likert scale. Some English-language staff members were randomly selected from King Khalid University. The study's results revealed that most staff members showed positive perceptions towards the role of the translation curriculum because it helped their translation students understand more about their culture than other cultures. The findings of the study also showed that most staff members perceived the translation curriculum can make their translation students have an aspiration to learn more crucial knowledge and capabilities to communicate effectively in intercultural meets. Premised on the findings, the study will offer some recommendations and implications on the role of translation curriculum in developing intercultural communication competence among EFL university students in general and at King Khalid University in particular.

Keywords. faculty members, female students, ICC, translation curriculum, King Khalid University

Introduction

In the current world, the place of translation in intercultural communication is crucial and pivotal. It is needed for global trade, international advertisements, and international relations all over the world and for sharing views and experiences, touring companies around the world, and domestic industries as well. Hence, intercultural communication is a necessity for every individual. (Baryshnikov, & Vartanov, 2017). The goal of translation is to convey thoughts and events over the years and beyond time to make something realized, and achieved. Translation plays a significant and core function in plurilingual news writing for international mass media networks, global media outlets, the Internet, information superhighway, media platform, weblogs, wikis, etc. (House, 2015; Orengo, 2005). Today, e-learning plays an influential role in increasing the importance of translation globally. The robotic industry, the digital universe centered around distance learning, and other types of education spreading across the network in many diverse languages demonstrate the close bond between translation and today's world economy. (Cronin, 2003; House, 2015; Liu & Wang, 2009).

Nowadays, many international and plurilingual *television stations* depend significantly on translations of information, and news, reporting in many multiple languages. The increasingly intertwined globe and translation carry out roles by eliminating language barriers and removing cultural obstacles, from the experienced and expert standpoint, translators play a role as intercultural communication professionals, mediators, and the bridge between divergent cultures and cosmopolitan views, for example, the quandary of intercultural communication between Eastern countries and Western countries is more challenging in that there are not only barriers to communication but also opposed cultural prototypes. (Tsien, 1954; Valdeón, 2020; Usunier, 2003).

In modern times people spend a considerable amount of time intercommunicating across cultures with other people, agencies, institutions, diplomacy, education, etc., on a global scale. Intercultural communication competence in the workforce of intercultural organizations has been increased to a high degree of importance. Nowadays, a significant portion of communication in intercultural agencies and institutions occurs between individuals with diverse cultural contexts and cultural circles backgrounds (Saphiere, 1996; Granlund, & Lukka, 1998). People with divergent cultural circles and racial backgrounds probably have challenges and problems in knowing each other easily because of the difference in understanding effective communication. (Gay, 2018; Thomas, 2008; Kim, 2000).

A plethora of studies heightened the possibility of incarnating ICC in the systems of instructors' teaching, compelling them to bear in mind the intercultural facets of language teaching. Nevertheless, studies into university teachers' perceptions of the role of ICC in teaching translation are still insufficient. (Estaji, & Rahimi, 2018; Xiaohui, & Li, 2011; Serco, 2005). Furthermore, a significant number of research papers that concerned instructors' perceptions have shown inconsistent results, with an urgent appeal for further investigations. Additionally, explorations of university teachers' perception of the role played by the translation curriculum in promoting ICC and how they impact their conception of ICC are sternly field surrogated. (Jones, 2021). This gave thrust for the two researchers of the recent study to explore faculty members' perspectives on the role of the translation curriculum in enhancing intercultural communication competence among university students of translation in general and King Khalid University students of translation in particular.

Purposes of the Study

The number-one purpose of this research article is to study the perspectives of university teachers on the role of the translation curriculum in enhancing intercultural communication competence among university students of translation. The number-two purpose is to identify the role of the designed translation curriculum in enhancing intercultural communication competence as an integral component of linguistic competence as perceived by university teachers of translation throughout their teaching the translation courses in several Saudi colleges of languages and translation in general and King Khalid University, College of languages and translation in particular.

Questions of the Study

Consistent with the two aforementioned purposes of the study, the main research questions driving this study were:

RQ1: What are the general perspectives of faculty members concerning the role played by the translation curriculum in developing ICC among university students of translation?

RQ2: To what extent does the translation curriculum affect translation students' ICC as an integral component of linguistic competence as perceived by faculty members of translation?

Review of literature

Concept of Intercultural communication Competence

During the last few years, the notion of intercultural communication competence (ICC) has been diffusing in the discipline of second or foreign language teaching and learning. The elements of this (ICC) competence may support second language or foreign language students to act as mediators and go-betweens amid the cultures of speakers in a manner that mirrors each other's own culture as a difficult, yet open structure or network of specific information, obtaining knowledge and acquire skilling (Aldosari, & Mekheimer, 2018; Kramersch, 2013). Byram (1997) through his model sees (ICC) as a group of knowledge, perspectives, abilities, and citizenship education that signals facets of knowledge, demeanor, and feeling (Mekheimer, & Amin, 2019; Fernández & Pozzo, 2017). Byram's idea regards intercultural communication competence as a feature of linguistic competence that is evolved through fostering cultural understanding, intercultural social enlightenment, communication skills, and cross-cultural and multifariousness awareness. Moreover, intercultural communication competence alludes to the capabilities that allow people to carry out effective communications in cross-cultural surroundings and to recount diverse cultural attitudes (Mekheimer, Amin, 2019; Bennett & Bennett, 2003). Intercultural communication competence is the ability for implementing untroubled interactions with persons from divergent cultures, and this skill assists people to seek their appropriate places in cross-cultural environments (Marrone, 2005; Müllejans, 2021; Marginson, 2009; Gourvès-Hayward, 2004).

Intercultural Communication and Translation

A closer look at the relationship between intercultural communication and translation indicates that translation and intercultural communication are explicitly interrelated and can be mutually realized. Based on the functionalist and communicative method, translation is viewed as a procedure of intercultural communication, whose final output is a text that works properly in particular situations and usage contexts (Schäffner 1996; Tomozeiu, et al., 2016; Piller, 2017). The translators play the role of cultural intervenors, adept at looking through the two different ways of the source language and target language text, and selecting how to render

difficult texts making their intercultural communication fundamental for effective intermediation during the cascading process between the cultures involved. (Piller, 2011).

The need to take advantage of a mediating competency is accentuated as the crucial difference between translators' intercultural communication and general intercultural communication. (Wilkinson, 2012; Leclerc, & Martin, 2004).). The core of competence – is the capability to envisage the effects of different rendering procedures and select the most suitable one, consequently emphasizing the translator's knowledge of his/her task in the IC techniques. (Yarosh, 2015; Whyatt, 2012; Tomozeiu, et al., 2016).

There is no doubt that translation is a pragmatic attempt and the significance of intercultural communication sub-competencies, that is, abilities, performance, and skills consequently practically significant, and the importance of the theoretical groundwork should not be undervalued. (Hussein, 2022; Mirzoyeva, & Syurmen, 2016; Tomozeiu, et al., 2016). Translation theory and intercultural communication theory can enhance each other in a lecture room context. Nevertheless, theoretic interbreeding has been quite limited, and even though rendering is within translation studies commonly realized as a practice akin to intercultural communication, processes candidly connecting translation studies theories with theories of intercultural communication have been uncommon and rare. Sketchley, 2021; Lumsden, & Patke, 1996; Tomozeiu, et al., 2016). The same was true of IC literature, which has not conventionally involved thoroughly with translation concerns. The progress of suitable teaching materials for this academic transition, equipping students of translation with a strong theoretical foundation for their career development, is, therefore, another influential research orientation and area of inquiry. (Gay, 2018; Tomozeiu, et al., 2016; Garzone, & Viezzi, (Eds.), 2002; AlKindi, et al., 2020).

Previous studies

There have been scarcely a few research papers examining the perceptions of faculty members on the role of the translation curriculum in developing intercultural communication competence among EFL students and still there is no independent research that delves into the role played by the translation curriculum in improving intercultural communication competence among students of translation. Thus, there are shortcomings in their studies because these researchers have been limited to teaching culture and intercultural communicational competence, literature teaching, and incorporating culture learning into second language instruction. For example, Robin, (2015) studied how teaching translation in a college education can take into account the methodical improvement of intercultural skills. The study aimed to help the university faculty of translation improve the advancement of translation students' intercultural skills — a 'translation curriculum, instructional materials, and evaluation materials, for each of which the theoretical/ academic foundation was clarified and examples provided. The study concluded with an elongated ruminative part probing some of the limits of the project, and areas in which it could be further advanced or apt to context, ending with evidence of fields in which further studies are required.

Askarzadeh & Yazdanmehr, (2016) examined how to improve intercultural knowledge among learners of English for specific purposes and translation curricula. The results of the study revealed how cultural competence can be embodied in the description of course aims, subject proviso, learning opportunities, assessment and redesigning of goals, and performance. It also indicates its effects on the translation syllabuses and curricula. Jata (2015) examined the perceptions of ten English instructors in an Albanian university towards teaching culture and intercultural communicational competence in an English language lecture hall. The findings of

the study displayed that seventy percent of the English instructors evaluated linguistic communicational competence as the primary concern of their teaching goals, whereas they assessed skills of intercultural competence as the lowest preference aim in their teaching. Although they view the significance of ICC, they seldom incorporated cultural knowledge into their lesson because of lack of time, the curriculum's main objective on linguistic competence, the learners' current low degree of language competence, and uncooperative resources. Moreover, if they had a chance to teach culture, most of them were inclined to teach discernible cultures such as literature, culture, geography, history, and everyday life, rather than other cultural factors and issues.

Mekheimer, & Aldosari, (2011) investigated the perceptions of staff members and EFL students at King Khalid University (KKU), and their perspective on literature teaching and divulgence of the culture of the English language in lecture halls. The results of the study have underscored the significance of integrating culture in English language teaching and learning, particularly within the literature syllabus, and the vigorous relationship between enculturation and English language teaching and learning in Saudi universities.

Demircioğlu, Ş., & Cakir, C. (2015) studies the intercultural competence of English language instructors in international bachelor's degree world schools in Turkey and out of the country. The study revealed that there is not enough formal schooling about intercultural language teaching in tertiary education. There is also little direction obtainable on intercultural competence teaching. The specific elements of intercultural competence should be investigated and how they may best be fostered through not native language teaching should be given more carefully in re-service and in-service instruction. Aldosari, H. S. (2013) explored incorporating culture learning into second language instruction. The findings of the study showed that the learner's background inheritance was an important consideration that impact their deed in cross-cultural competence and their perceptiveness of the bond between language as a tool of conveying culture and culture.

Xiao, & Petraki, (2007) carried out a study on problems of intercultural communication competence encountered by Chinese university students who were pursuing their undergraduate courses in Australian universities in their communications between them and other international students and the causes that lead to these intercultural communication problems. The findings of the study showed that Chinese students met many challenges and enough problems when communicating with international students from other foreign countries due to a scarcity of awareness of intercultural communication, clash of cultures, and discrepancies in oral communication. Xiao, J. (2010) studied Chinese students' perception of cultural contents of in-use listening textbooks 3. The study discovered a strong tendency of Chinese students to intend cultural content, especially in American and British cultures. Chinese students. The study also exposed that predilection for a big "C" culture learning concerning history, geography, arts, art, and so forth. A small percentage of little "c" cultural subject matters were noted.

Methodology

Study Design

For the present study, the two researchers implemented the qualitative research technique which purports to identify the perceptions of faculty members on the role of the translation curriculum in developing intercultural communication competence among EFL students. The descriptive research method with qualitative evidence from the participants' poll can afford helpful data about their perceptions of faculty members (Gall, et al., 1996; Mekheimer, & Aldosari, (2011).

Participants

About twenty female students of translation course (2) and course (3) of the Department of English language, Dhahran al-Janoub female students' campus, King Khalid University joined this study of their free will. They were asked to answer a questionnaire of 14 items.

Study Variables

The independent variable included in this study was the role of the translation curriculum in developing intercultural communication competence. The dependent variable included in this study consisted of the perception of faculty members on the role of the translation curriculum in developing intercultural communication competence among students of translation at King Khalid University.

Instrumentation

To examine the perceptions of the role of the translation curriculum in developing intercultural communication competence among EFL students, as perceived by the faculty members of translation at King Khalid University. A questionnaire of fourteen items was designed by the two researchers to elicit faculty members' views on the role of the translation curriculum in developing intercultural communication competence among EFL students at King Khalid University. The questionnaire requested the participants to show their agreement to each item in a five Likert-type questionnaire: (agree, strongly agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree.). To test the validity of the questionnaire, the questionnaire was reviewed first by five professional professors from King Khalid University who were asked to review the instrument for content and face validity. To enhance the instrument's validity, the instrument was pilot tested with a group of eight translation students at King Khalid University. The changes in the questionnaire were made by the two researchers based on the recommendations of five professors from the university. At the end of the semester 2021/2022, about 20 students of translation were given the questionnaire and were asked to give their accurate responses through a Google Form. Hundred percent of respondents responded to the questionnaire.

Table (1): Reliability Statistics of the questionnaire
Cronbach's Alpha for the Reliability of the questionnaire (Pilot Sample:
n=20)

<u>Variable</u>	<u>No. of Items</u>	<u>Alpha</u>
All items	14	0.94

As seen in table (1), the value of Cronbach's α for all items (1-14) was high (0.94). The overall alpha reliability coefficients for perceptions of faculty members on the role of the translation curriculum in developing intercultural communication competence among EFL students at King Khalid University.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5 N%	4 N%	3 N%	2 N%	1 N%

Table (2) Perceptions of Faculty Members on the Role of the Translation Curriculum in Developing Intercultural Communication Competence among EFL Students at King Khalid University

N	Statements	5	4	3	2	1	M	Ds	R
1	I perceive intercultural communicative competence is necessary for effective cross-cultural communication	8.45	40.8	1.5	0.75	0.0	2.75	0.20	13
2	I consider my students of translation interculturally competent because they read a lot of translated books	37.15	7.5	4.1	0.85	0.50	2.30	0.39	7
3	I consider, my students of translation interculturally competent because the translation curriculum contains cultural points and capsules.	18.25	17.45	7.35	3.4	3.6	1.93	0.59	14
4	I believe the translation curriculum can raise intracultural and intercultural awareness among my translation students	35.00	9.55	4.95	0.5	0.0	2.31	0.33	6
5	I believe my translation students have an open mind to different cultures that they might meet in international communications.	29.65	16.45	2.75	0.25	0.95	2.24	0.39	10
6	I always find ICC a significant parameter for cross-cultural communication	36.8	10.2	3.00	0.0	0.0	2.34	0.29	1
7	I found my students of translation mostly resort to translation in cases of problem-solving activities and decision-making about the translated text	35.1	11.9	3.00	0.0	0.0	2.32	0.29	4
8	I am aware that Translation-based learning should be an asset to contribute to developing the intercultural communicative competence	22.9	21.25	3.85	1.75	0.0	2.18	0.35	11
9	My students of translation are aware of enriching their knowledge of different cultures to develop their intercultural communicative competence	34.0	11.1	4.00	0.09	0.0	2.29	0.33	9

10	The translation curriculum helped my students understand more about their culture than other cultures.	37.2	9.8	3.0	0.0 0	0.0 0	2.3 4	0.29	1
11	The translation curriculum helped my students of translation to participate in intercultural communications and avoid the breakdown	37.1 5	7.5	4.1	0.8 5	0.4 5	2.3 0	0.39	7
12	The translation curriculum developed my translation students' knowledge about people and cultures in the world	35.5	11. 5	3.0	0.0 0	0.0 0	2.3 3	0.30	3
13	The translation curriculum made my students of translation have the desire to learn more essential knowledge and skills to communicate successfully in intercultural encounter	35.5	9.8	4.00	0.7	0.0 0	2.3 1	0.33	5
14	My students of translation want to enrich their knowledge of other Englishes outside the classroom to enhance their intercultural communicative competence	19.9 5	25. 2	3.6	0.3 5	0.4 5	2.1 4	0.37	1 2
Mean* for total		2.11	0.35						

The mean of 5 degree

Data Analysis

The survey requested the participants about their perceptions concerning the role of the translation curriculum in developing their intercultural communication competence. It also probed to what extent the translation curriculum affects translation students' ICC as an integral component of linguistic competence as perceived by faculty members of translation.

Results

The statement 'I believe intercultural communicative competence is necessary for effective cross-cultural communication', received various responses. The majority of the staff members believed intercultural communicative competence is indispensable for impactful cross-cultural communication as 8.45% strongly agreed and 40.8% agreed. 0.75% disagreed and 0.00% strongly disagreed and 1.5% were neutral. Responses to the statement, 'I consider my students of translation interculturally competent because they read a lot of translated books' were as follows-37.15 % strongly agree, 7.5 % agree, 0.85% disagree, 0.50% strongly disagree, and 4.1% neutral.

To the statement, 'I consider, my students of translation interculturally competent because the translation curriculum contains cultural points and capsules', most of the participants responded positively (35.70%). 'I believe the translation curriculum can raise intracultural and intercultural awareness among my translation students' statements created

distinct responses. most of the staff members consider the translation curriculum can increase intracultural and intercultural knowledge among their translation students 35 % strongly agree and 9.55% agree. 0.5% replied saying disagree and zero % strongly disagree whilst 4.95 % stayed neutral. When the respondents were asked to give a response to the statement, 'I believe my translation students have an open mind to different cultures that they might meet in international communications', 29.65% replied that they strongly agreed and 16.45% agreed. 0.25% replied saying they disagreed and 0.95% replied saying they strongly disagreed whilst 2.75 % stayed neutral.

It was also observed here that most of the participants (36.8% strongly agree and 10.2% agree) always find ICC a significant parameter for cross-cultural communication. However, 3.00 % of the respondents replied neutrally indicating that they do not endorse or prop any of the groups. This statement ranks 1. (See table 2).35.1% of the participants strongly agreed with the statement 'I found my students of translation mostly resort to translation in cases of problem-solving activities and decision-making about the translated text. 11.9% agreed to it, zero % disagreed, zero% strongly disagreed and 3% keep neutral. 22.9% of the respondents strongly agreed and 21.25% agreed that they are aware that translation-based learning should be an asset to contribute to developing intercultural communicative competence, whereas 1.75% disagreed, zero% strongly disagreed and 1.75% kept neutral.

It was also noticed here that most of the participants (22.9% strongly agree and 21.25% agree) are aware that translation-based learning should be an asset to contribute to developing intercultural communicative competence, However, 1.75% disagree and zero% strongly disagree, whilst 3.85 % avoid deciding, (keep neutral). To the statement, 'my students of translation are aware of enriching their knowledge of different cultures to develop their intercultural communicative competence', most of the participants responded positively (45.1%). (34% strongly agree and 11.1% agree). However, 0.09% disagree and zero% strongly disagree, whilst 4 % avoid deciding, (kept neutral).

On a very positive remark, 47% of the participants replied stating that the translation curriculum developed their translation students' knowledge about people and cultures in the world. (35.5% strongly agree and 11.5% agree). However, zero% disagree and zero% strongly disagree, whilst 3 % kept neutral). The statement ' the translation curriculum made my students of translation have the desire to learn more essential knowledge and skills to communicate successfully in intercultural encounters ', received various replies. The majority of the staff members believed the translation curriculum can make their students of translation have an aspiration to learn more crucial knowledge and capabilities to communicate effectively in intercultural meets as35.5.% strongly agreed and9.8% agreed. 0.7% disagreed zero % strongly disagreed and4 % stayed neutral.

On excellent feedback, 37.15% of the participants replied that the translation curriculum helped my translation students participate in intercultural communications and avoid the breakdown. 7.5% agree). However, 0.85% disagree and 0.45% strongly disagree, whilst 4.1% kept neutral).

The statement ' My students of translation want to enrich their knowledge of other Englishes outside the classroom to enhance their intercultural communicative competence ', received various replies. The majority of the staff members relied on stating that their students of translation want to refine their knowledge of other Englishes outside the lecture hall to improve their intercultural communicative competence as19.95. % Strongly agreed and25.2% agreed. 0.35% disagreed0.45 % strongly disagreed. 3.6 % were neutral.

Discussion

To answer research question 1: What are the general perspectives of faculty members concerning the role played by the translation curriculum in developing ICC among university students of translation? The qualitative evidence indicated that the majority of staff members showed positive perceptions towards the role of the translation curriculum because it helped their students of translation understand more about their culture compared to other cultures. Moreover, the translation curriculum developed their knowledge about people and cultures in the world. The findings of the study showed that the participants perceived the translation curriculum can make their students of translation have an aspiration to learn more crucial knowledge and capabilities to communicate effectively in intercultural meets. The results of this research paper verified and ratified the findings of previous studies which examined the problems of intercultural communication competence encountered by EFL students, and a strong tendency of EFL students to intend cultural content, especially in American and British cultures, and how cultural competence can be embodied in the description of course aims, subject proviso, learning opportunities, assessment and redesigning of goals, and performance (Xiao, & Petraki, 2007; Xiao, 2010; Askarzadeh & Yazdanmehr, 2016).

To answer research question 2: To what extent does the translation curriculum affect translation students' ICC as an integral component of linguistic competence as perceived by faculty members of translation? The survey findings demonstrated that the students of translation become aware that translation-based learning should be an asset to contribute to developing intercultural communicative competence. Also, the questionnaire findings showed that students of translation became also aware of enriching their knowledge of different cultures to develop their intercultural communicative competence. Moreover, it was found that students of translation mostly resort to translation in cases of problem-solving activities and decision-making about the translated text. The results revealed that students of translation always find ICC a significant parameter for cross-cultural communication. The translation curriculum affects translation students and made have an open mind to different cultures that they might meet in international communications. These results adhered to the previous studies that study how teaching translation in a college education can take into account the methodical improvement of intercultural skills of Robin, 2015. These findings adhered also to the results of the study by Demircioğlu, Ş., & Cakir, 2015 on the intercultural competence of English language instructors in international bachelor's degree world schools in Turkey and out of the country. To conclude the results of this research paper verified and ratified the findings of the previous study by Mekheimer, & Aldosari, (2011) which showed the significance of integrating culture in English language teaching and learning, particularly within the literature syllabus, and the vigorous relationship between enculturation and English language teaching and learning in Saudi universities.

Conclusion

The translation curriculum plays a prominent role in improving intracultural and intercultural awareness among students. The majority of the staff members consider their students of translation interculturally competent because the translation curriculum contains cultural points and modules. Most of the staff-member respondents believed that the translation curriculum helped their translation students understand more about their culture compared to other cultures. The translation curriculum affects translation students and made them have open minds to different cultures that they might meet in international communications. The findings of the study showed that the participants perceived the translation curriculum can make their

students of translation have an aspiration to learn more crucial knowledge and capabilities to communicate effectively in intercultural meets. Moreover, it was found that students of translation mostly resort to translation in cases of problem-solving activities and decision-making about the translated text. The results also revealed that students of translation always find ICC a significant parameter for cross-cultural communication. The respondent staff members also believe that they could always encourage their translation students to enrich their knowledge of other Englishes outside the classroom to enhance their intercultural communicative competence.

Implications of the Current Study

The study findings are very valuable and fecund to researchers because of the useful information they demonstrated about the role of the translation curriculum in developing intercultural communication competence. The data will be particularly beneficial and gainful for investigating the role of the designed translation curriculum in enhancing intercultural communication competence as an integral component of linguistic competence as perceived by university instructors of translation throughout their teaching translation courses. It also leads future researchers to modify the research aims and utilizes it in other Arab and Saudi universities to pinpoint the role of the translation curriculum in developing intercultural communication competence at each college of translation. To conclude appertaining results the study recommended that translation course designers should keep an eye on the translation syllabuses and curricula because they play a pivotal role in strengthening intercultural communication competence as an integral component of linguistic competence.

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