



## Translating Market Desires in the Finnish Context: English Job Ads as a Guide

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### Abstract

This paper examines a part of the Finnish translation market through 97 English-language translation job advertisements. The results agree with the previous Finnish research on the importance of the country's official languages, Finnish and Swedish, alongside English as a foreign language. The study presents a mixed emphasis on the significance of formal education – Finnish employers who value it prefer a bachelor's over a master's degree. Experience and soft skills are crucial for recruiters, and the analysis of translators' job responsibilities reveals translators' multifaceted roles and alignment with the EMT competence framework, highlighting the vital role of translation, service provision, and technology. The outcomes have practical implications for the development of translator training curricula and generate a modern image of the professional translator from the market perspective. They also enable translators to anticipate employers' needs and adequately prepare for their future careers.

**Keywords:** translator job advertisements, translation market, employment, soft skills

### 1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore work opportunities and requirements of the Finnish translation market through the analysis of English-language translator job advertisements (TJADs). The study contributes to the existing research on TJADs (Bowker 2004; Poonlarp & Leenakitti 2016; Hjort 2023) and studies on the translation profession and translators' employment in Finland (Dam & Koskinen 2016; Virtanen 2019; Ruokonen & Svahn 2022). While the present study partly has a similar design as previous research (e.g. education, languages, experience), it offers new insights by analysing only English-language TJADs and, unlike the previous Finnish research (Hjort 2023), expands beyond in-house positions to cover freelance, internship, and seasonal jobs. It also evaluates TJADs with minimal translation tasks or those where translation is not the main focus, examining responsibilities outlined by Finnish employers and their influence on the role of translators. Its results can be used to develop, for instance, educational programmes and/or to improve career guidance for translators.

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The study focuses on the following research questions (RQ):

- 1) What qualifications are expected of translators in Finland?
- 2) What are the main responsibilities put forward by employers in Finland?

To facilitate comparative analysis and confirm findings across different contexts, RQ #1 parallels the one in previous studies (Li 2022; Hjort 2023). The data are analysed thematically on the basis of 1) the European Master's in Translation framework (EMT Expert Group 2022) and 2) data-driven categories. Beyond the scope of the article are, for instance, descriptions of positions and titles, number and types of jobs, work locations, employers, and employment.

The article starts with an overview of research on TJADs in Translation Studies (TS) with regard to the RQs of the present study (Section 2). Section 3 describes the study methods and data, while section 4 presents findings for five themes: 1) languages; 2) education; 3) experience; 4) soft skills; 5) responsibilities. The conclusion discusses the results, addresses the limitations of the current study, and outlines directions for future research.

## **2 Literature review**

The analysis of job advertisements, a tool to reduce the market-training gap in various fields (Li 2022), is rare in TS. Yet, it can enhance research on employers' needs and understanding of the translator profession, often characterised by high demands and low compensation, and equip translators with practical job insights (Poonlarp & Leenakitti 2016).

Lynne Bowker's (2004) work on 301 Canadian TJADs (2000–2002) provides the basis for future studies. According to the results, 65% of the TJADs require a university degree with translation, and only 4% mention a degree with domain specialisation. As there are two official languages in Canada, it is unsurprising that "293 ads are for translation-related positions requiring at least the use of these two languages" (Bowker 2004:964). The analysis identifies three major groups of experience in years required by employers: 2 years (17%), 3 years (21%), and 5 years (19%). The most required skills are computer skills (61%), teamwork skills (37%), pressure resilience (37%), fluent written communication skills (36%), and domain knowledge (32%).

In his dissertation, Andy Lung Jan Chan (2009) analyses 66 TJADs for the Hong Kong translation market. Akin to Canada and Finland, Hong Kong has two official languages (English and Chinese), and most employers are looking for English-Chinese translators. Some TJADs (29%) require two-way translation (English-Chinese-English), while 14% focus on Japanese translation, which may reflect the influence of the Japanese culture in the region. Most TJADs require a university diploma (77%), while 18% do not require an academic qualification.

Tongtip Poonlarp and Nattharath Leenakitti (2016) review translation market needs in Thailand. They analyse 95 TJADs collected in 2012. English is the second unofficial language in the country, and it is even more in demand than Thai (72% vs 52%). Other

required languages are Japanese (41%) and Chinese (16%). Most employers search for candidates with a bachelor's degree (80%). While 68% of the TJADs require some experience, most list only one year as the minimum. The researchers assume that employers are ready to hire less experienced translators and train them, unlike the situation described by Bowker (2004). The multifaceted nature of the profession is reflected in such responsibilities as *translation proper* (24%); *translation and unrelated tasks* (16%); *translation and related tasks* (13%); *translation, interpreting, and unrelated tasks* (8%).

Mohammed Al-Batineh and Loubna Bilali (2017) examine the link between translator training curricula and translation market in the Middle East and North Africa, comparing 50 TJADs collected in 2016. The results of their research can be divided into two groups: translation competence (TC)-related and experience-related. The most required TCs are professional and instrumental (50%), with a special focus on experience in machine translation, CAT tools, and project management. Communicative and textual TC accounts for 18% of the TJADs, with an emphasis on creative writing, language, and communication. In addition, employers require experience in domain-oriented translation practice (25%) and quality control (10%).

Xiangdong Li (2022) analyses 429 TJADs collected in 2017 in terms of education, experience, and TCs. Most employers require a bachelor's degree (72%), while a master's degree is mentioned only in 5% of the TJADs, which is similar to the Thai situation described above. However, a translation major is not seen as essential, accounting only for 6% of the TJADs, whereas a language major (61%) and language certification (60%) are considered as a must. Based on this, the author assumes that employers "may not know of the existence of translation as a major in higher education due to a lack of communication between academics and employers" (Li 2022:188). Translation experience is highly appreciated by the Chinese employers (69%) just as in Canada and Thailand. The most mentioned TC is linguistic competence (96%), with 66% covering communication and interpreting, followed by translation (53%), writing (27%), and language support services (25%).

In her study, Dania Salamah (2022) analyses 28 TJADs to investigate any reflection of the PACTE's TC model (PACTE Group 2003) in the TJADs. The results reveal that almost 61% of the TJADs require a translation degree (similarly to Bowker 2004), often paired with other degrees, e.g. linguistics or English language, or supplemented by additional phrases such as "or its equivalent" or "or relevant field" (Salamah 2022:246). While 33% of the TJADs do not list any experience, 43% require from 1 to 10 years of experience. The most required TC is strategic TC (72%) with an emphasis on translation-related tasks. Bilingual, extra-linguistic sub-competences, and psycho-physiological components are each mentioned in 52% of the TJADs. Knowledge about translation and instrumental sub-competences are each highlighted in 45% of the TJADs, with a special focus on communication skills in the former and on basic computer skills in the latter.

The most recent study on TJADs in Finland is conducted by Minna Hjort (2023), who analyses 120 TJADs for in-house positions collected during 2020–2022. Given that Finland is a country with two official languages, it is not surprising that most TJADs require translation between Finnish and Swedish (54%), followed by other Nordic

languages, English, German, Russian, and Chinese. Many TJADs mention two-way translation direction (40%), but one-way direction prevails (47%), mostly with the need for Finnish-Swedish translation (63%). Though a formal degree is not necessary to work as a translator in Finland, 60% of the TJADs indicate a formal degree as a requirement, and 20% list it as a wish. Most employers (62%) are looking for “a degree suitable for the task”, whereas 39% provide a choice to choose from “translation or linguistics” or “languages or translation” (Hjort 2023:17, my translation<sup>1</sup>). Work experience is also important (essential in 56%, preferred in 29%) and can be categorised into experience in translation in general, in a specific field, or in specialised translation (Hjort 2023:18). Some TJADs require experience of one to five years. More than half of the TJADs (54%) emphasise the importance of Technology TC and technical skills. Based on the psychosocial skills data (employers mention more than 60 skills), the researcher concludes that today’s employers see translator as an “independent, accurate, and a customer-oriented team-player who is flexible and able to withstand pressure” (Hjort 2023:20–22).

### 3 Methods and Data

#### 3.1 Database compilation

The TJADs database comprises 209 advertisements collected between October 2021 and November 2022. All TJADs in the same language are combined into one group, resulting in five language-based groups. This article, however, concentrates only on the findings from 97 TJADs in the English language group (henceforth ‘EnLaGr’), since space constraints limit comprehensive coverage of all five groups simultaneously. Notably, this is the first study to specifically concentrate on English-language job ads targeting translators in Finland, contrasting with the previous Finnish research (Hjort, 2023) which employed Finnish, Swedish, and English search terms. Focusing on the EnLaGr allows for an in-depth analysis of this specific group, with plans to compare findings from the remaining groups for a fuller dataset overview.

The TJADs sources include online Finnish job websites, translators’ social media groups, and the website and email listing notifications of the author’s university, the University of Eastern Finland. For the EnLaGr TJADs, nine sources are identified, with the top three being LinkedIn (n=78), Duunitori (n=9), and RemoteHub (n=4). Each of the other six sources appears only once in the group: careerjet, TE-palvelut<sup>2</sup>, JoBly /Monster/, Yammer, joooble, and Lever. LinkedIn, as the world’s leading professional network, facilitates job postings, professional profile development, job searching, networking, and skills and career advancement (LinkedIn 2023). The predominance of TJADs on LinkedIn (78 out of 97) indicates its key role in recruiting translators via English language ads and a shift towards professional social media for recruitment over

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<sup>1</sup> All quotes from Hjort’s study are translated by the author of the article.

<sup>2</sup> A state entity responsible for the organisation and provision of services related to employment and economic development.

traditional job boards. This trend could imply that employers seek translators who are tech-savvy, professionally networked, or committed to continuous professional development, urging translators to boost their online professional presence and networking in career development. To collect EnLaGr TJADs, original search used such keywords as *translator*, *translator needed in Finland*, *language specialist*, *translator job Finland*, *translation job*, *translation job Finland*, *translation teacher*, while also incorporating search engine-recommended terms: *authorised translator*, *subtitle editor*, *secretary*, *communication expert*, *localization tester*, and *professor in Translation*.

### 3.2 Data selection criteria

A TJAD was included in the database if it mentioned at least one of the following: 1) translation tasks and responsibilities; 2) translation and/or translator experience; 3) translation and/or translator skills, competences, education. Interpreting and sign language positions were excluded, except when combined with any of the above criteria. If one and the same position was announced several times within a one-month period, only the first TJAD was included. However, if there was a longer gap between them, both were kept. When it was impossible to confirm a TJAD publishing date, the collection date (c.d.) was used instead.

TJADs were excluded from the analysis if they were *duplicates* (n=28) or *unrelated* (n=7). *Duplicates* are identical in content postings, published across sources during the same time period. *Unrelated TJADs* which can be considered false positives, are not related to translators' jobs as they lack relevant data eligibility criteria. Thus, after the removal of duplicates and unrelated TJADs, the EnLaGr analysis comprises 97 TJADs.

### 3.3 TJADs analysis methods

During the collection stage, each TJAD was stored in a separate Word document. In the categorisation stage, a detailed Excel table was created, with various categories being formulated using four distinct approaches: 1) a data-driven, involving a thorough re-reading of the TJADs to compile a list of categories; 2) drawing inspiration from existing literature on TJAD analysis (Bowker 2004; Poonlarp & Leenakitti 2016; Li 2022 ); 3) applying the EMT Framework in cases where TCs are described; 4) examining soft skills classifications across different subject areas (Cedefop 2015; SOSTRA 2019; Hosseini, Tajvidi & Kerremans 2020). This organised key information from each TJAD into designated categories within Excel.

Atlas.ti software was used for a deep qualitative analysis once all EnLaGr TJADs had been imported into it, allowing for a more detailed data organisation via coding. While some of the original Excel category names were retained for consistency, the transition to Atlas.ti facilitated refining and expanding the initial Excel categories through an intensive review of the TJADs vis-à-vis the EMT Framework, resulting in a more thorough analysis. It is noteworthy that certain information such as sources, employers, domains, languages, and soft skills was exclusively managed in Excel due to its

quantitative calculation capabilities, underscoring the complementary use of both tools for a comprehensive analysis. The categories analysed for the present article include languages, education, experience, soft skills, and job responsibilities.

In order to test the developed EnLaGr categories and codes, a pilot test was conducted using the first 13 TJADs. Though the results turned out to be satisfactory, these categories and codes were continuously revisited and refined throughout the entire analysis process, adopting a reiterative approach to ensure accuracy and relevance.

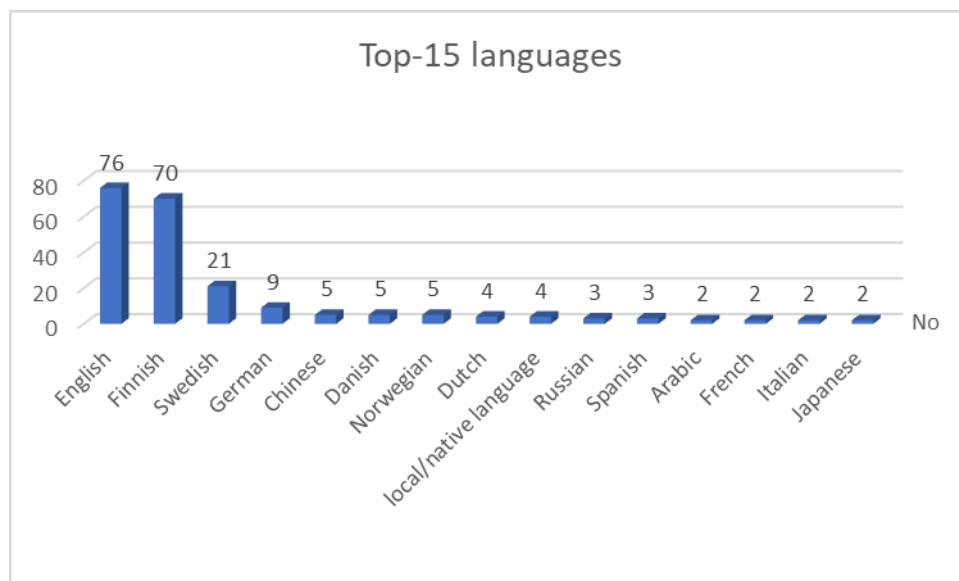
The methodological framework is based on a mixed-methods approach. The quantitative analysis utilises systematically developed Excel categories, while the qualitative data from Atlas.ti forms the basis for thematic and content analysis (Park, Lu & Marion 2009; Clarke & Braun 2017), evolving iteratively in response to emerging patterns and insights.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Languages

In the EnLaGr, 31 languages are identified, with the top 15 shown in Figure 1. The most commonly mentioned languages are English (n=76), Finnish (n=70), and Swedish (n=21). While 34 TJADs list languages without specifying any source (SL) or target language (TL), the remaining 63 TJADs name such SLs as English (n=53), Finnish (n=14), Swedish (n=2), and German (n=2). The most required TLs are Finnish (n=43), Swedish (n=15), English (n=9), and German (n=4).

**Figure 1.** Top 15 EnLaGr languages.



There is also a need for experts in German (n=9), Danish (n=5), Chinese (n=5), Norwegian (n=5), and Dutch (n=4). Four TJADs mention the ability to translate into the

local/native language(s) without specifying them (1). As the jobs are advertised for Finland, it is assumed that they imply Finnish and/or Swedish.

- (1) *We are looking for individuals with excellent language skills in both their native language and in English (ZOO Digital Group plc c.d. 25.04.22).*

Three TJADs offer a list of languages to choose from. Two of them advertise jobs for freelance linguists and translators and list 15 languages, some of which appear only once in the EnLaGr (2, 3). This pattern may suggest that these positions are likely designed for some specific projects or that some translation companies aim to maintain a database of translators across a broad range of languages, including indigenous and regional ones, for example, Northern Sami or Cusco Quechua.

- (2) *Translation experience and fluency in any of the following languages: English, German, Polish, Russian, Turkish, Arabic, Chinese, Czech, Danish, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Dutch, Spanish, Swedish (Fingerprint for Success [F4S] c.d. 10.10.22).*
- (3) *Strong written and spoken fluency in English and one of the following languages: Finnish, Bashkir, German, Dhivehi, Chuvash, Chinese, Cherokee, Cusco Quechua, Greenlandic, Northern Sami. Note: We are looking for translators whose native language is any of those languages (Appen c.d. 25.07.2022).*

The analysis identifies 4 groups of *proficiency levels*: *near-native/native* (n=50), *fluent* (n=36), *excellent* (n=18), and *good* (n=4). *Near-native/native* is the most frequently mentioned level, especially for Finnish (n=26), Swedish (n=11), and English (n=7). *Fluency* ranks second for English (n=17), Finnish (n=8), and Swedish (n=1). *Excellent proficiency* takes the third place (n=18), predominantly for English (n=12), and it is followed by *good proficiency*, stated only for English in the TJADs. These findings differ from the Hjort's research (2023) which mentions near-native/native level of language proficiency only 16 times across 120 TJADs. Alongside the proficiency levels, the analysis also categorises TJADs based on the required *modes of language proficiency*, namely *written* (n=1) and *verbal and written* (n=18). *Written skills* alone are mentioned only in one TJAD for the position of *content creators* where written skills in different languages are an advantage. It should be noted, however, that in some TJADs employers specify language proficiency by combining levels with modes of proficiency – namely, verbal and written: a *native level* (n=1), a *fluent level* (n=4), an *excellent level* (n=8), and a *good level* (n=1) of *written and oral language skills*.

The TJADs also provide insights into translation directions. *One-way translation direction* is identified in 54 TJADs (56%) for the following language pairs: English-Finnish (n=32), English-Swedish (n=8), and Finnish-Swedish (n=7). In contrast, in the previous study by Hjort (2023:15), 47% of the job ads had one language direction, demonstrating a difference of 9%, with the most required *one-way translation direction* being Finnish-Swedish. Notably, the present research has no reference to the Finnish-English language pair, possibly because it is included *into two-way translation direction* or because the English-language TJADs are likely to target mainly English-speaking candidates for duties from English to other languages. In addition, 1 TJAD requires

translation from English into the native language, 1 TJAD mentions 6 language pairs (4), and 1 TJAD lists 10 language pairs (see [3]) for the position of a linguist.

- (4) *linguists who are looking to gain experience as freelancers in EN/DE/FR/IT/NL/SV-FI language pairs (Idea Text Ltd 23.12.21).*

For the *two-way translation direction* (n=8), three groups of language pairs are identified that mention Finnish-English-Finnish (n=7), Finnish-Swedish-Finnish (n=1), and English-Swedish-English (n=1). This data differs from the previous Finnish research (Hjort 2023) where almost a half of the TJADs mention *two-way translation direction*.

## 4.2 Education

While 48 TJADs lack either education or specialisation, the remaining 49 TJADs include various education requirements. Despite slight value differences, a translation degree (n=27) is still required more often than a linguistics degree (n=24), echoing the findings of Bowker (2004) and Salamah (2022). Similarly, a bachelor's degree (n=15) is more common than a master's degree (n=7), a preference also noted in previous research (Poonlarp & Leenakitti 2016; Li 2022).

Sixteen TJADs list vague requirements such as “language-related studies” (n=10), “education in a relevant field” (n=1), and “other applicable studies (e.g. economics, law, or medicine)” (n=5), which is in line with previous studies (Salamah 2022; Hjort 2023). Several TJADs specify the need for “certification” (5, 6). One translation agency requires a certificate of competence in translation (n=3) for three different roles and language pairs: a German-Finnish freelance translator, an English-Finnish freelance subtitler, and an English-Finnish/Swedish freelance translator and proofreader. Another TJAD, posted by a Finnish software developing company searching for a freelance translator, requires a certificate of competence in linguistics. Two TJADs target students for the roles of a *Customer Service Representative-German Translator* and a *Finnish freelance translator* (7). This finding on “certification” is noteworthy as in Finland there is no general certification for translation or linguistics, and it seems that employers are not familiar with this.<sup>3</sup>

- (5) *a certificate of competence in translation awarded by an appropriate government body (TransPerfect 23.12.21).*
- (6) *Additional certification in Linguistics is a plus (Fingerprint for Success [F4S] c.d.10.10.22).*
- (7) *... who have completed or are about to complete their translation studies (BA or MA) and are looking to gain experience as freelancers (Idea Text Ltd 23.12.21).*

Seven TJADs offer a choice between education and experience (8).

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<sup>3</sup> The Finnish authorised translator's qualification only concerns translation of texts for legal or administrative purposes.



- (8) *Degree in Applied Linguistics, Translation and/or equivalent experience in the technology industry (Welocalize c.d. 25.04.22).*

Seven TJADs also require specialisation in a specific field: automotive (n=2), banking (n=1), IT (n=1), life sciences (n=3), marketing (n=1), media (n=1), medicine (n=2), technical (n=1). Specialisation and education sometimes appear together in TJADs (9).

- (9) *a degree in translation, linguistics, or language studies or and equivalent degree that includes significant translation training from a recognized institution of higher education, specialized in the following subject matters: Automotive. (TransPerfect 23.12.21).*

### 4.3 Experience

In this study, experience is divided into 6 groups: *no experience* (n=31), *work activities* (n=73), *domains* (n=68), *occupation* (n=14), *digital tools* (n=18), and *years* (n=24).

Experience is not mentioned in 27 TJADs, and another 4 TJADs require no experience for such jobs as work-from-home opportunities (n=2) or internships with induction training (n=2).

As it could be expected, the most required experience in work activities is translation (n=36) (10), which is also true for previous research (Li 2022).

- (10) *you must have precious translation experience to work on this project (Appen 26.03.22).*

Less required is experience in subtitling (n=7), proofreading (n=7), and editing (n=5). As regards proofreading, 6 out of 7 TJADs require “previous experience in translation or proofreading”, which can mean that it is enough to have experience in only one of these two skills for the job at hand. The same applies to editing; in all 5 TJADs (11), it is accompanied by translation experience.

- (11) *previous experience in translation/editing casino/gambling related texts (Language Bear 26.10.21).*

Experience in interpreting in general (n=4), in person (n=2), and over the phone (n=2) is needed only in some TJADs but always in relation to experience in translation (12).

- (12) *Experience translating; experience interpreting both into and from a specified language pair (TransPerfect 23.12.21).*

Each of the following work activities are cited just once as required experience: conducting research, content production, discussing translation and terminology issues, machine translation evaluation, software testing, translation project management, and writing.

Further findings reveal 30 domains in which translators are needed, with the top 5 being medicine (n=12) (13), linguistics (n=7), technology (n=5), localisation (n=4), and marketing (n=4).

- (13) *At least 2 years' experience in a medical field translation, experience in at least one of the following domains: Clinical Trials, Medical Devices and/or LS Regulatory (Lionbridge 25.04.22).*

Experience in localisation is divided into 3 types: general (n=4), audiovisual (n=3), and software (n=1) localisation (14).

- (14) *3+ years of experience in software localization, translation or linguistics (Reddit Inc. c.d. 25.06.22).*

Employers also set requirements as to experience in such *occupations* as *translator* (n=9), *linguist* (n=3), *interpreter* (n=1), and *reviewer* (n=1), with *translator* being the most listed one. One TJAD requires both a university degree in translation and 1–3 years of experience in the profession, while the other two offer a choice: “University degree in linguistics (or 6 years of experience as a professional translator)”. Another TJAD notes that “Extensive experience working as a translator is not a necessity but would be taken as an advantage”. Two TJADs require “proven work experience as a translator”.

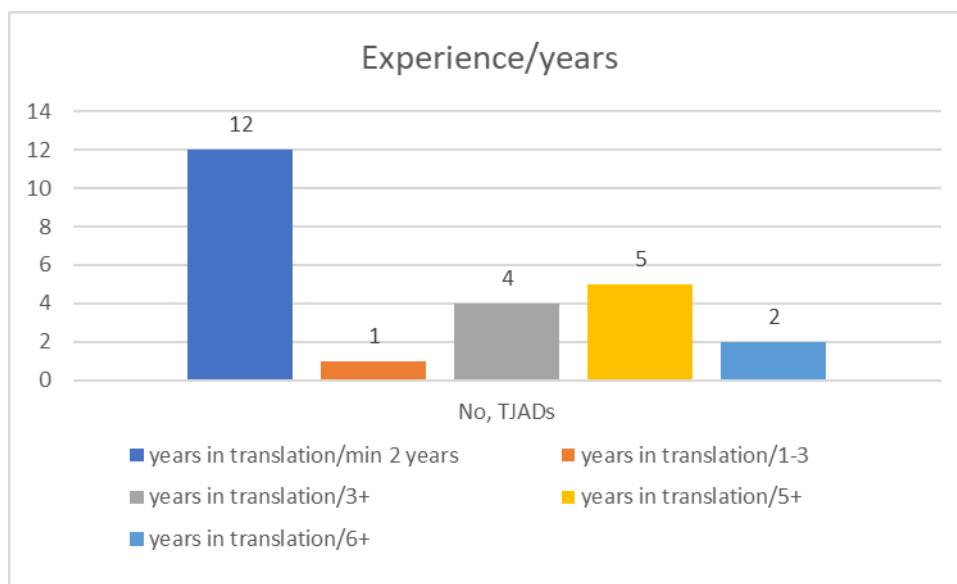
All three TJADs that require experience as a *linguist* use the word *translator* in their job title. For instance, one seeks a candidate with “at least a couple of years of experience as a professional linguist, for ex. as a freelancer translator”. This suggests that employers do not necessarily differentiate between the roles of translator and linguist. The two remaining roles, interpreter and reviewer, are each paired with that of translator, requiring candidates to have experience in one or a combination of these roles.

Only thirteen TJADs highlight the importance of experience with *digital tools*, a figure that might seem small in a broader context. The group features diverse software and language/translation tools, the most common being TM and CAT tools (n=8) such as SDL Trados Studio, translation management systems (n=4) (e.g. Smartling), and standard software (n=2), e.g. Microsoft Office. Finally, there are individual references to experience with other digital tools such as subtitle editing software or terminology guides, and productivity tools such as Google Workspace.

Separate attention is paid to the *years of experience* (n=24) (Fig. 2), ranging from 1 to 6+ years. This group is further divided into such sub-groups as 1–3 years, min 2 years, 3+ years, 5+ years, and 6+ years of experience in translation. The findings are similar to previous research; while Bowker (2004) mentions 2, 3, and 5 years as the most listed years of experience, Salamah (2022) reports on a wider range (1–10 years), and Hjort's data (2023), mentioning 1–5 years, is closer to the present research. The current research indicates a *minimum 2 years of experience* as the predominant requirement (n=12) (15).

- (15) *At least 2 years' experience in a medical field translation, experience in Clinical Labelling would be a plus (Lionbridge c.d. 30.05.22).*

Figure 2. Experience in years.



Five TJADs require 5+ years of experience in translation (16).

- (16) *5+ years of translation experience in medicine and life sciences fields; medical records translation experience desirable (Language Doctors 15.07.22).*

Four TJADs require 3+ years of experience for the positions of a language specialist, language manager, language excellence manager, and specialist; two TJADs require 6+ years of experience for freelance English-Finnish translator positions; one TJAD requires 1–3 years of experience in translation for a temporary job of a freelance Finnish translator.

#### 4.4 Soft skills

Known under different names, e.g. “key competences”, “21<sup>st</sup> century skills”, and even “life skills” (Cinque 2016:392–394), soft skills are believed to be crucial for both professional and personal development. Per se, “Soft Skills represent a dynamic combination of cognitive and meta-cognitive skills, interpersonal, intellectual and practical skills and ethical values” (Haselberger *et al.* 2012:73).

Comparing research findings on soft skills with previous studies presents challenges. Earlier studies either often combine soft skills with other skills or characteristics (Bowker 2004; Poonlarp & Leenakitti 2016; Hjort 2023) or describe them as part of a competence in a TC model (Li 2022; Al-Batineh & Bilali 2017; Salamah 2022), rather than treating them as a separate entity. It is important to note that one and the same skill can be labelled differently in the EnLaGr TJADs. For instance, *ability to work independently* has been phrased as “capable of working independently” (TJAD 099), “autonomy” (TJAD 194), “independent attitude” (TJAD 232), “independent” (TJAD 250), and “an independent self-starter” (TJAD 256).

The EnLaGr database mentions a total of 64 soft skills, the number being similar to that of Hjort’s research which defined “sixty different psychosocial characteristics or skills” (2023:19). The top 15 soft skills are shown in Table 1. The most cited soft skill is *attention to details* (n=21), mentioned as “detail-oriented” by Bowker (2004) and Li (2022), the latter using it to refer to psycho-physiological competence. Salamah (2022) uses it to refer to psychophysiological components. *Ability to keep to deadlines* (n=18) is also cited by Li (2022) within the psycho-physiological competence. Furthermore, *problem-solving* is important (n=12), sometimes preceded by adjectives such as “exceptional, advanced, good” or described as a “problem-solving attitude”.

**Table 1.** Top 15 soft skills.

Soft skills		n
1	attention to detail	21
2	ability to keep to deadlines	18
3	problem-solving	12
4	ability to learn/develop	11
5	flexibility	11
6	customer-oriented	11
7	organisation(al) skills	11
8	efficient	11
9	ability to work independently	11
10	proactive	10
11	communication/written	10
12	multitasking	9
13	communication/verbal	9
14	ability to work under pressure	9
15	ability to work in a fast-paced environment	8

The next six soft skills are mentioned 11 times each in the EnLaGr and also found in previous research: *ability to learn/develop* (Poonlarp & Leenakitti 2016), *flexibility* (Bowker 2004; Hjort 2023), *customer-oriented* (Bowker 2004; Hjort 2023), *organisation(al) skills* (Bowker 2004; Hjort 2023), *efficient*, and *ability to work independently* (Bowker 2004; Salamah 2022; Hjort 2023).

*Efficient* and *independent* are mentioned together in 3 TJADs, whereas 1 TJAD contains 4 out of 6 soft skills mentioned above (17).

- (17) *Strong organizational skills, an independent and efficient attitude and a drive for constant professional development* (Nedu Group Oy 31.08.2022).

Other important soft skills are, for instance, *proactive* (n=10); *communication/written* (n=10) and *communication/verbal* (n=9), both mentioned in Bowker (2004) and Poonlarp

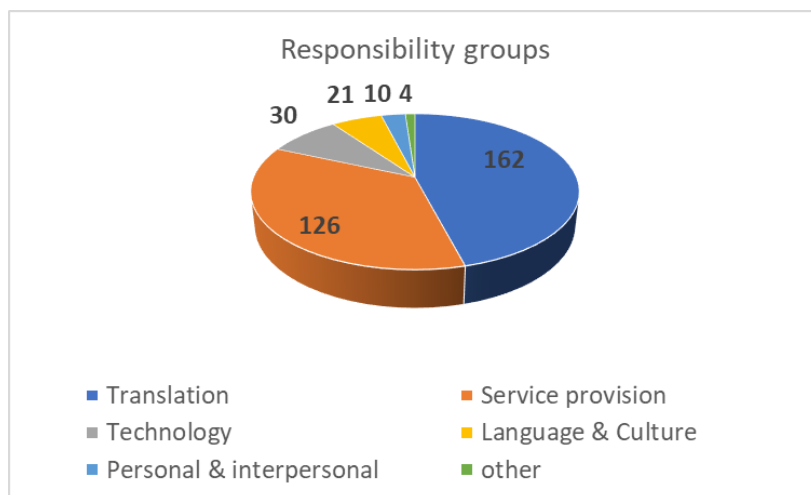
& Leenakitti (2016); *multitasking* (n=9); *ability to work under pressure* (n=9), found in Bowker (2004), Poonlarp & Leenakitti (2016), Li (2022), and Hjort (2023); and *ability to work in a fast-paced environment* (n=8).

Based on the above, it can be concluded that employers value soft skills for effective project management (e.g. attention to details, ability to keep to deadlines, problem-solving), client interaction, and adaptability to various work conditions (flexibility, multitasking, ability to work under pressure). To get a more in-depth image on the role of soft skills in TS, further studies are needed on the analysis of soft skills in TJADs in other languages, their effectiveness in the workplace, their impact on career development, and comparison with other professions.

#### 4.5 Responsibilities

The EnLaGr TJADs are a rich source of information on responsibilities awaiting a translator at a workplace. They not only describe the tasks a translator is expected to perform but also indirectly reflect competences and skills essential in the translation industry. The responsibilities in the TJADs are arranged into six groups, five of which draw from the EMT Framework competences (EMT Expert Group 2022) and have the same names: *language & culture*, *translation*, *technology*, *personal & interpersonal*, and *service provision* (Fig. 3).

**Figure 3.** Responsibility groups.



The groups include 20 sub-groups (Table 2), each linked to a specific EMT TC, with the exception of the sixth group, *Other* (n=4), which includes “any other tasks” or “additional related tasks”.

**Table 2.** A list of responsibility groups.

Group	n	sub-group & tasks (n)
Translation	162	translation-process-related (n=67), review-related (n=47), subtitles-related (n=17), localisation (n=12), interpreting-related (n=10), terminology-related (n=5), research-related (n=4)
Service provision	126	project-related (n=32), communication (n=30), quality-related (n=23), client-related (n=20), product-related (n=9), finances-related (n=6), company-related (n=6)
Technology	30	translation tools-related (n=26), machine translation-related (n=4)
Language & Culture	21	writing (n=11), linguistics-related (n=10)
Personal & interpersonal	10	team-related (n=10)
Other	4	

These (sub-)groups encompass a wide range of tasks (n=353), many of which often appear in combination with other tasks within a single TJAD. One such example (18) includes tasks from five responsibility groups presented in the EnLaGr in the TJAD advertising a job for freelance translators.

- (18) *Read through the original material and rewrite it in the target language, ensuring that the meaning of the source text is retained; Share the tools and resources used such as translation memory software, such as Wordfast, memoQ, Across, Trados Studio, and Transit NXT, to ensure consistency of translation within documents and help efficiency; use specialist dictionaries, thesauruses, and reference books to find the closest equivalents for terminology and words used; use appropriate software for presentation and delivery; research legal, technical and scientific phraseology to find the correct translation; liaise with clients to discuss any unclear points; proofread and edit final translated versions; provide quotations for translation services offered; consult with experts in specialist areas; retain and develop knowledge in specialist areas of translation; follow various translation-quality standards to ensure legal and ethical obligations to the customer; Excellent proofreading skills with the ability to identify grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors (Fingerprint for Success [F4S] c.d. 10.10.22).*

The translation responsibility group occupies a dominant position (n=162) and highlights translation as the key pillar of the profession, with tasks related to translation process, review, subtitles, localisation, interpreting, terminology, and research. Its focal points are the two most common sub-groups, translation process-related (n=67) and review-related (n=47). The major tasks for the former include translation (n=43) and transcription (n=7) (19), while the latter includes proofreading (n=23), editing (n=10), revision (n=8), and language review/check (n=4) (20).

- (19) *The transcriber will listen to audio files in Finnish and transcribe them also in Finnish following our guidelines (translation is needed) (Home Project.Tech c.d. 30.05.22).*
- (20) *You will be working on: translation assignments, language reviews, proof-reading projects, and quality assurance (Adaptive Business Group 23.12.21).*

The service provision group (n=126) includes tasks related to performing translation and language services, with the four most distinct sub-groups being project-related (n=32), communication (n=30), quality-related (n=23), and client-related (n=20). It indicates a shift towards recognizing translators as central figures in communication, project and product management, and client relationships (21).

- (21) *Understand TransPerfect's quality standards and make sure they are upheld to meet the client's expectations. Consult with Stakeholders (Account Managers, Project Managers, external Linguists) to discuss the client's expectations and be able to understand the instructions provided to meet the client's expectations. Take part in calls and meetings with the client to gather feedback in direct contact to enforce the relationship with the client. Provide meaningful feedback for project-specific non-conformances, resolutions and quality of the file reviewed to PMs, external Linguists and the rest of the Internal Linguists (TransPerfect 23.12.21).*

Being much smaller than the two previous responsibilities groups, technology group (n=30) focuses on (digital) tools connected with (machine) translation, its two groups being translation tools-related (n=26) and machine translation-related (n=4). It stresses the need to use technology in order to improve productivity and accuracy (22).

- (22) *Share the tools and resources used such as translation memory software, such as Wordfast, memoQ, Across, Trados Studio, and Transit NXT, to ensure consistency of translation within documents and help efficiency; Good knowledge of content editing tools. Familiarity with translation software (Fingerprint for Success [F4S] 10.10.22).*

The language & culture (n=21) and personal & interpersonal (n=10) groups highlight the importance of the human aspect in translation, focusing on writing, linguistics, teamwork, and interpersonal skills. They reinforce the role of translator as a cultural mediator and team player with strong cultural background knowledge and effective communication skills, enabling them to navigate complex linguistic and cultural landscapes (23).

- (23) *supporting social media and owned channel storytelling to ensure brand consistency across the touchpoints; producing and publishing content directly on different content platforms (Finnair c.d. 24.04.22).*

## 5 Conclusion

The article describes the main requirements of a segment of the current Finnish translation market via the analysis of 97 English-language TJADs. The study supports the findings from previous research as to the importance of the official languages and English gaining the role of lingua franca in Finland (Lehto 2023). It underlines the need for native/near-native language knowledge and the predominance of one-way translation direction in over half the TJADs, unlike the previous Finnish research.

The study reveals a mixed view of Finnish employers on the value of formal education. Half of the TJADs do not mention education, while the remainder typically seeks a bachelor's degree. A portion of the TJADs provide only broad criteria such as "language-related studies", "education in a relevant field", or "other applicable studies", with few mentioning certification or specialization. This suggests that employers have

different attitudes to education; some see it as essential while others prefer practical experience.

Experience and soft skills are highly valued, with most TJADs requiring experience in work activities and domains. The top 15 soft skills found in this study are also regarded as important by previous research (Bowker 2004; Poonlarp & Leenakitti 2016; Salamah 2022; Hjort 2023), with the most common ones being attention to details, ability to keep to deadlines, problem-solving, ability to learn/develop, and flexibility.

The variety of responsibilities outlined in TJADs reflects the multifaceted role of today's translators, who have to not only translate, but also review, assure quality, produce content, and interpret. The identified responsibilities align with the five competency areas of the EMT Framework: language & culture, translation, technology, personal & interpersonal, and service provision. This alignment suggests the relevance of the EMT and offers a structured approach to analysing the translation job market, providing insights for education and professional development and marking a significant step towards bridging the gap between academic preparation and professional practice.

The limitations of the present study include its focus on a single language group and the exclusion of certain results due to space limitations. The database does not cover all possible TJADs, with the major reasons being "hot" jobs (high demand jobs that disappear too soon from the Internet) and uncertainties around job status (whether positions have been filled, cancelled, or substituted). Furthermore, the database is limited to a certain time period, and the TJADs may not reflect all the requirements of the employers. Often, TJADs are compiled by individuals who are not necessarily skilled writers, and some requirements may only be discussed during the interview.

To gain more understanding on the requirements of the modern translation market, further research is needed on TJADs in other languages. Regular analysis update (e.g., every two years) can provide a dynamic image of the translation market requirements, while interviews with employers and translators, accompanied by online questionnaires, can further enrich our understanding of the market desires.

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