



Ethics in Translation: A Pathway to Integrity in Future Professionals

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Abstract

Translation is essential for bridging the linguistic gap between languages and cultures. Nevertheless, translators continue making errors and facing difficulties, especially with sensitive content and multifaceted cultures. This study attempts to understand key factors enhancing students' critical thinking skills when translating, which helps them develop a higher level of professional integrity. Therefore, to achieve the study's objective, a sample of 177 students studying translation at different universities was selected. Data were then collected through an online questionnaire and in-person visits to their universities. The study reported interesting findings. It revealed that both Ethical Awareness (EA) and Education and Training (EAT) positively and significantly contributed to enhancing Critical Thinking Skills (CTS) among the students. Furthermore, the study indicated that neither EA nor EAT directly influence Professional Integrity in Translation (PIT). Additionally, results confirmed that CTS positively and significantly mediates the relationship between EA, EAT, and PIT. The study concluded by offering practical and theoretical implications for policymakers, educational institutions, and other interested stakeholders regarding ethical translation and professional integrity.

Keywords: Translation, Ethics, Professional integrity, Critical Thinking, Ethical Awareness.

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أخلاقيات الترجمة: نحو بناء النزاهة المهنية لجيل المستقبل

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المخلص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى فهم العوامل الرئيسية التي تُسهم في تعزيز مهارات التفكير النقدي لدى الطلاب أثناء الترجمة، مما يساعدهم على تطوير مستوى أعلى من النزاهة المهنية. باعتبار الترجمة وسيلة أساسية لتجسير الفجوة اللغوية بين اللغات والثقافات. ومع ذلك، لا يزال المترجمون يرتكبون أخطاء ويواجهون تحديات، خصوصاً عند التعامل مع المحتوى الحساس والثقافات المتعددة الأوجه. ولتحقيق هدف الدراسة، تم اختيار عينة مكونة من 177 طالباً يدرسون الترجمة في جامعات مختلفة. وتم جمع البيانات من خلال استبيان إلكتروني وزيارات ميدانية إلى جامعاتهم. قدمت الدراسة نتائج مثيرة للاهتمام، حيث كشفت أن كلاً من الوعي الأخلاقي والتعليم والتدريب يُسهمان بشكل إيجابي ومؤثر في تعزيز مهارات التفكير النقدي لدى الطلاب. ومع ذلك، أشارت الدراسة إلى أن الوعي الأخلاقي والتعليم والتدريب لا تؤثر بشكل مباشر على النزاهة المهنية في الترجمة. كما أكدت الدراسة أن مهارات التفكير النقدي تؤدي دور الوسيط الإيجابي والمؤثر في العلاقة بين الوعي الأخلاقي، والتعليم والتدريب، والنزاهة المهنية في الترجمة. وخلصت الدراسة إلى تقديم توصيات عملية ونظرية لصناع السياسات، والمؤسسات التعليمية، وغيرهم من الأطراف ذوي العلاقة المهتمين بأخلاقيات الترجمة والنزاهة المهنية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: النزاهة المهنية، الترجمة، التفكير الناقد، الوعي الأخلاقي.

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© نُشر هذا البحث وفقاً لشروط الرخصة Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0)، التي تسمح بنسخ البحث وتوزيعه ونقله بأي شكل من الأشكال، كما تسمح بتكييف البحث أو تحويله أو إضافته إليه لأي غرض كان، بما في ذلك الأغراض التجارية، شريطة نسبة العمل إلى صاحبه مع بيان أي تعديلات أجريت عليه.



Introduction

While translation is believed to play a positive role in bridging the gap between languages and cultures, translation errors and blunders continue from time to time (Naimushin, 2021). In many cases, translation has negatively exacerbated political and medical issues and led to the loss of individuals' rights. The task of translation has always been considered sensitive due to its vast scope and different considerations. Translators should be careful when translating and consider different aspects, including cultural sensitivity, ethical principles, societal values, religion, and other factors. Translation may have positive or negative consequences depending on its accuracy and professionalism. An example of negative consequences that are always remembered is the inadequate translation of the Japanese word "Mokusatsu" during the Second World War in 1945. The story began when the United States and its Allies demanded that Japan surrender immediately; otherwise, it would face the consequences if refusing to surrender. The Prime Minister of Japan at that time responded officially to the Allied Powers with the word "mokusatsu", which means to "withhold comment" or "no comment for now," However, it seems that in Japan, the word *mokusatsu* also had another meaning, derived from two components: *moku*, meaning 'silence,' and *satsu*, meaning 'to ignore. When the USA and its Allies translated *mokusatsu*, they understood it as a rejection of the proposal of unconditional surrender, which resulted in the bombing of Hiroshima by an atomic bomb in August of 1945 (Naimushin, 2021). This emphasizes the need for translators to exercise great care, awareness, and critical thinking before translating texts or making translation decisions.

It is important to note that translation is not merely the accurate conversion of text or speech from one language to another. It requires consideration of ethical factors that may influence the quality and integrity of the translated work, such as critical thinking. Critical thinking is essential in translation, as it is rooted in cultural practices. Therefore, it helps individuals navigate ethical dilemmas and professional responsibilities within a specific context (Atkinson, 1997). Critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity have been characterized as essential 21st-century skills that need to be acquired (González-Pérez & Ramirez-Montoya, 2022). Specifically, developing critical thinking skills has been a key objective for many individuals in educational institutions (Camilli et al., 2022). Critical thinking is important because it provides individuals with adequate knowledge of specific problems and challenges, enables them to solve these issues critically, and helps them draw well-founded conclusions (Jahromi, 2016). There has been a strong emphasis on developing critical thinking in pedagogical courses (López et al., 2023; Zasluzhena, 2020) and a call to link it to translation (Oussama et al., 2023).

Despite being an unclear concept without a standard definition, critical thinking mainly aims to increase individuals' reasoning capacity (Solbrekke; et al., 2016). Educational institutions can contribute



positively to strengthening individuals' knowledge and skills in critical thinking (Brahim, 2024; Facione, 1990). They achieve this by instilling ethical principles, providing information and training related to decision-making, fostering motivation and emotions essential for ethical behavior, and improving individuals' cognitive skills (Ciulla, 1996; Meisel & Fearon, 2006) and also by offering them with course assignments and classroom activities (Murray, 2015). According to Birjandi and Bagherkazemi (2010), education should focus on two aspects: how we think and what we think, rather than concentrating on just one of them. It is further argued that current educational approaches emphasize facts, leaving little room for the development of critical thinking among teachers and students. Thinking critically is an important objective for various individuals, including students and teachers, especially in an environment saturated with vast amounts of information and diverse opinions (Birjandi & Bagherkazemi, 2010, Ashuja'a & Jibreel, 2024).

Having a high level of critical thinking leads to contributing positively to better outcomes in business, which in turn leads to the common good and acting ethically. Furthermore, critical thinking tends to develop better decision-making, professional integrity and competency and helps individuals prepare themselves for independent work (Heidari & Ebrahimi, 2016; Pavlenko et al., 2024). Nevertheless, there have been limited investigations on critical thinking abilities among students (Heidari & Ebrahimi, 2016; Manzari et al., 2015), particularly regarding its interaction with ethical awareness, education and training, and ethical integrity. This is especially relevant given the argument that critical thinking alone may not be sufficient to influence professional practices (Solbrekke; et al., 2016, Mohamad, 2024). Hence, there may be a need to enhance integrity and professionalism in the translation process by incorporating key influencing factors such as ethical awareness, education, and training. These elements play a crucial role in developing individual cognitive skills and fostering motivation to become an ethical translator prepared for professional integrity.

This study aims to examine how ethical awareness, education, and training positively and significantly enhance critical thinking skills among translation students, ultimately leading to better professional integrity in translation. This study provides policymakers and educational institutions with empirical evidence of the importance of critical thinking skills, ethical awareness, and education and training in translation studies. It also highlights the need for their development to ensure professional integrity in the field.

2. Foundations and Hypotheses: A Conceptual Exploration

2.1 Theoretical Background

This study is grounded in Bandura's (1986) Social Learning Theory, which emphasizes the role of observational learning and modeling. According to this theory, individuals acquire new behaviors by observing and imitating others. In the context of this study, students are expected to develop ethical translation principles through their education, training, and exposure to their surroundings, thereby enhancing



their ethical awareness. Furthermore, students' ethical behavior can be enhanced by observing role models and experts in translation, such as professionals and teachers who demonstrate high integrity and moral commitment in real-life scenarios. Students can also develop ethical awareness through various activities, including role-playing, analyzing complex problems, and participating in open discussions. Learning ethical principles from experts in educational institutions and engaging in ethical practice helps students better understand how to approach translation professionally. The learning process also encourages them to think critically, analyze deeply, and seek consultation before translating. Additionally, placing students in dialogue and exposing them to real-life situations will increase their critical thinking skills (Camilli et al., 2022). This, in turn, leads to better professional integrity. This confirms that social influences shape the attitudes and actions of people in professional and educational settings (Bandura, 1986).

2.2 Operational Definitions:

Ethical Awareness

Ethical awareness is understood as the acknowledgment and application of moral and ethical principles by translators when practicing translation work. This includes being honest, accurate, respectful, and maintaining confidentiality in sensitive content; avoiding personal opinions or bias; balancing the interests of all stakeholders; and understanding the ethical implications that may arise from their choices.

Education and Training

Education and training encompass various programs, initiatives, syllabi, and both practical and theoretical courses designed to enhance students' ethical principles, skills, knowledge, and competencies.

Critical thinking skills: Critical thinking skills refer to an individual's ability to logically understand, evaluate, analyze, and reason effectively. They enable translators to address challenges, draw conclusions, and make informed decisions during the translation process (Jahromi, 2016).

Professional integrity in Translation

Professional integrity in translation is defined as an individual level of adherence to ethical standards principles such as honesty, responsibility and accountability in translations tasks including (Baker & Maier, 2011).

2.3 Hypotheses Development

2.3.1 EA and CTS

For an individual to be considered ethically aware, they must have the capacity to recognize and understand that the dilemmas or issues they face involve ethical concerns (Türegün, 2018; Uyar & Ozer, 2015). Ethical awareness refers to a person's ability to identify ethical problems and adhere to principles that promote correct behavior and decision-making, positively impacting others' lives. In this research, ethical



awareness emphasizes ensuring that translation students develop and uphold ethical principles and values, such as honesty, responsibility, fairness, impartiality, accuracy, kindness, open-mindedness, truthfulness, compassion, consideration, and honor (Paul & Elder, 2009). Ethical awareness helps individuals make ethical and correct decisions, requiring a clear understanding of moral issues and enough training to find the ethical aspects of a decision and evaluate the factors that affect the action selection (Türegün, 2018). According to Paul & Elder, 2009, ethical thinking and reasoning are important for having an ethical life and establishing an ethical globe. This emphasises the need to develop ethical education, enhance ethical understanding, and instil critical thinking skills, abilities, and traits to develop fair-minded critical thinking among individuals, particularly students and translators. Ethical reasoning is also vital because it encourages students to understand the rights and needs of others rather than considering only personal interests.

Both ethical awareness and critical thinking are important for making the right ethical decision. Ethical awareness and critical thinking share common characteristics, contributing to responsible decision-making and good judgment. In other words, critical thinking concentrates on analysing challenging and changing information and ethical awareness; conversely, it looks for values and decision consequences (Santos, 2021). Empirically, (Çakıcı, 2018) conducted a study among 218 pre-service students and confirmed the presence of a positive relationship between Metacognitive awareness and critical thinking skills, emphasising the importance of being aware. In another study conducted by (Kim et al., 2014) among 508 students, it was found that there is a positive relationship between ethics awareness, critical thinking skills and moral sensitivity.

Additionally (Samancı, 2015) investigated the relationship between moral judgment competencies and critical thinking abilities, and it was found that a positive and significant relationship exists among them. In their research, Chang and Wang, 2011 found that group discussion, structured learning practices and self-reflection about ethical dilemmas among the students improved their critical thinking abilities and enhanced their ethical understanding. Moreover, certain factors cannot function in isolation, such as environmental awareness, democratic participation, the fight for equality, scientific and critical thinking, and ethical behavior (Santos, 2021).

In summary, when students or translators demonstrate high ethical awareness during the translation process, they are better equipped to develop and apply critical thinking skills. In other words, strong ethical awareness enables students to critically assess, evaluate, and analyze translation content while making ethical decisions. Ethically aware students are more likely to uphold ethical principles such as confidentiality, accuracy, and impartiality, guiding them toward ethical conduct and helping them avoid unethical practices.



This results in fewer errors, greater adherence to ethical norms, sound ethical decision-making, and enhanced professional integrity. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1 EA positively contributes to PIT.

H2 EA positively contributes to enhancing CTS.

H3 High level of CTS positively mediates the relationship between EA and PIT.

2.3.2 EAT and CTS

Education and training have always been considered a good source of students' knowledge and skills for their educational activities (Alshebami et al., 2024). Academic institutions are encouraged to move away from rote learning and spoon-feeding teaching methods, instead focusing on educational content that cultivates critical thinkers. Such individuals are well-informed, trustful of reason, naturally inquisitive, flexible, open-minded, fair in evaluation, and honest in managing personal biases (Facione, 1990). Critical thinking is essential for educational institutions as it empowers individuals to think independently, question assumptions, and make informed decisions. It also plays a crucial role in personal development and civic life (Brahim, 2024). Educational institutions and schools are often pressured and encouraged to develop curricula that foster critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and analytical skills. Developing critical thinking is a complex and long-term process, typically beginning in early childhood (Brahim, 2024; Gelder, 2005).

Critical thinking skills are essential for teachers, as they help prepare students to become critical thinkers—an ability recently recognized as one of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Batdi et al., 2024). Qualified teachers who provide essential training in critical thinking enable students to reason effectively, interpret information professionally, make informed decisions, and solve complex challenges (Brahim, 2024). Educators can use different strategies that improve students' critical thinking levels, including providing practical problems to analyse, developing innovative curricula, exploring new critical thinking ways, and acting with the students as role models to guide them in critical thinking activities (Buskist & Irons, 2008; Kuleli & Tuna, 2022). Empirically, it has been evidenced that the provision of interactive dynamic lessons, allowing active dialogues, exposing learners to real-life situations, and allowing active participation of the students in the classroom helps teachers teach students effectively and leads to better and improved thinking skills (Camilli et al., 2022; López et al., 2023). Specifically, curriculum revision, active learning strategies, offering training programs, collaborative learning and practical engagement can all lead to better critical thinking improvement (Batdi et al., 2024; Okolie et al., 2021; Zaslužhena, 2020).

Furthermore, while educational institutions continue to play an effective role, especially English language institutions, in developing critical thinking skills and building students' future careers and education (Sun, 2016), it is important that these educational institutions focus on developing both emotional as well as



cognitive aspects of the students and needs to integrate both emotions and feelings necessary for morality development which in turn will enhance critical thinking skills among them (Ciulla, 1996). Additionally, among the key factors believed to improve critical thinking skills was grit competency among the students of junior students in Korea, which was found to influence critical thinking, communication and competencies positively (Yim & Yoon, 2018), suggesting that grit competency can be enhanced through education and training programs, which in turn leads to better development of the essential skills for professional and personal growth.

Gelder (2005), on the other hand, contributed significantly to the field of critical thinking. He states that individuals cannot quickly develop critical thinking skills; they need to practice the principles of critical thinking to achieve that purpose. He continues arguing that there is a need to transfer available critical thinking skills to various contexts, and individuals wishing to learn critical thinking skills should learn theoretical and practical exercises. From the above discussion, we argue that educational institutions providing both theoretical and practical critical thinking knowledge and exercises will equip the students studying translation with essential competencies and skills necessary for analysing and evaluating available translation contents they have and accordingly making the right ethical decisions about it, which in turns will lead to professional integrity in their translation. Accordingly, we hypothesized the following:

H4 EAT positively contributes to enhancing CTS.

H5 EAT positively contributes to PIT.

H6 High level of CTS positively mediates the relationship between EAT and PIT.

2.3.3 CTS and PIT

Translation practice is not limited to texts, their accuracy, or proficiency. It is a function that requires a stronger commitment to ethical principles to ensure greater professional integrity. The sensitivity of the translation profession underscores the need to understand key factors that enhance professional integrity, such as critical thinking skills. Critical thinking skills equip translators with essential tools that enable them to analyze deeply sensitive content and comprehend the implications that may arise from their translated work. According to Pavlenko et al. (2024), critical thinking is a significant move that helps students increase their motivation to learn and prepare for independent work. Educational institutions are responsible for training and equipping students with critical thinking skills and moral imagination to ensure better development of socially responsible students. Critical thinking skills are not only a skill an individual possesses. It is cultural thinking, and it is rooted in cultural practices (Atkinson, 1997). Critical thinking skills can help individuals deal with ethical dilemmas and professional responsibility within their cultural context. In other words, those individuals brought up in a context that values critical thinking skills can be more qualified to develop integrity professionally (Atkinson, 1997).

Empirically, Birjandi and Bagherkazemi (2010) demonstrated that critical thinking ability, specifically drawing inferences, interpreting evidence, and evaluating arguments, positively correlates with the professional success of English Language teachers. In another empirical finding, a study by Heidari and Ebrahimi (2016) found a positive and significant relationship between critical thinking and decision-making ability, which ultimately led to better professional competency. Critical thinking serves as a foundation for advancing the common good, fostering ethical behavior, and encouraging translators to act with integrity rather than self-interest. In other words, enhancing the quality of thinking leads to improvements in actions, decision-making, and professional integrity, ultimately promoting more effective and ethical work (Conley, 1996).

Additionally, the study by Solbrekke; et al. (2016) argued that critical thinking alone cannot develop professional practices. It needs to go beyond being a cognitive skill wherein individuals think logically and analyse information. Critical thinking needs to be combined with individual actions and overall professional identity. It is essential in various fields and should not be treated as optional, as it is considered both a moral and professional duty (Stark & Fins, 2014).

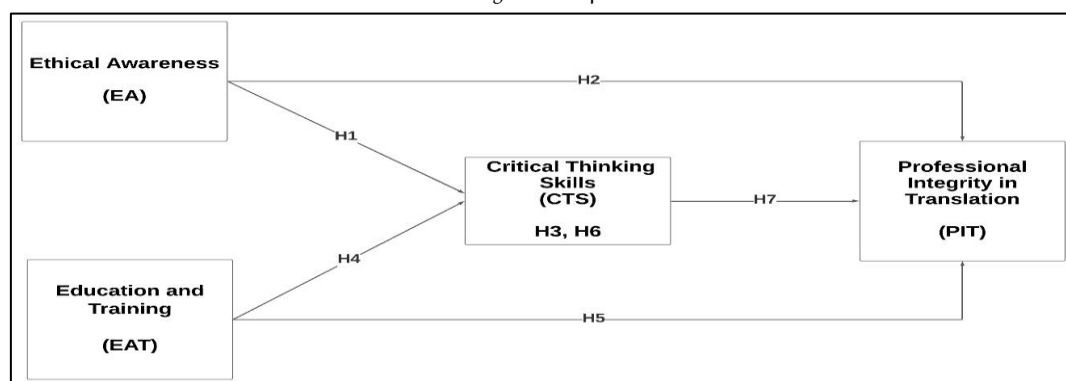
From the above discussion, it is evident that there has been a limited understanding of how critical thinking abilities interact with different aspects and contexts, particularly among students (Heidari & Ebrahimi, 2016; Manzari et al., 2015). Accordingly, we build on this assumption and argue that students who develop stronger critical thinking skills—encompassing analysis, comprehension, evaluation, and cultural sensitivity—are better equipped to make informed decisions and perform professionally in translation tasks. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H7 High level of CTS positively influence PIT.

2.4 Proposed Model of the study

Figure 1 gives a visual representation of the study model; it indicates that EA and EAT are independent variables and reports CTS as mediator variables, while it shows PIT as the dependent variable. This model was framed after careful review and analysis of the previous literature. Further details regarding the measures of the concepts and other related aspects are presented in Sections 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and 3.2.

Figure 1: Proposed Model



Source: Author development



3. Research Methodology

3.1 Collection of data and Sample

As this study aims to understand the influence of both EA and EAT on CTS and PIT among students, it applied the deductive approach and quantitative method followed by researchers such as (Alshebami, 2024c). The study sample included 177 students studying translation from some universities offering translation programs in Saudi Arabia and Yemen. The sample was specifically drawn from Northern Border University, Tabuk University, and Taibah University in Saudi Arabia, as well as Sana'a University, Azal University, Al-Hikma University, Queen Arwa University, New Generation University, and Al-Nasser University in Yemen, as these institutions offer translation programs for their students. The researchers visited universities to obtain permission from department authorities and request their assistance in distributing the questionnaire, with data subsequently collected through an electronic survey.

This sample was chosen because students constitute the group that has direct interaction with the subject of translation and other supporting courses. This makes their opinions and perspectives valuable contributions to understanding issues related to ethics, critical thinking, and professional integrity. Additionally, as potential translators, their insights can help educational institutions design appropriate curricula and training programs that prepare them to handle ethical dilemmas in translation and maintain integrity in the future. Moreover, students' perspectives can serve as a starting point for other researchers to further explore various factors influencing integrity and ethics in translation. Their views will also provide insight into the context of the Arab world in comparison to the international landscape.

The developed model was carefully revised after analyzing the available literature review, and accordingly, specific measures were designed and adopted to measure the concepts of the study. The developed questionnaire was in English and then translated into Arabic language with the help of a professional translator to ensure clarity in the content and questions. The researchers conducted a pilot study before distributing the questionnaire to respondents to ensure that all doubts were clear. After receiving the positive results of the pilot study, the questionnaire was sent to the students, and the collection process started. The collection process during October 2024. The researchers made sure all the participants in the questionnaire were participating voluntarily. The data analysis was done with the help of Partial Least square-structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM), which is deemed suitable for complex models and small samples (Hair et al., 2019). The sample of the study is considered adequate according to the 10-time rule method that indicates the sample of the study should be higher than 10 times the maximum number of inner or outer model links pointing at variables of the study (Alshebami, 2024a; Kock & Hadaya, 2016).



3.2 Measures of the Study

After carefully reviewing the available literature, the researchers developed measures to assess the respondents' responses based on the previous literature. Different measures were developed for measuring EA, EAT, CTS and PIT. The measures for the concept of EA were adopted from (Baker & Maier, 2011; Trevino & Nelso, 2011). A sample of the measures for the concept of EA included "I ensure that my translations maintain honesty and accuracy". For the concept of EAT, the measures were adopted from the study of (Kolb, 1984) and the sample included was "The courses I take improve my translation skills effectively.". Furthermore, the measures for the concept of CTS were adopted from (Peter, 1990), and a sample of these measures included "I analyze the context to ensure the translation is appropriate". Finally, the measures for PIT were adopted from the study by (Trevino & Nelso, 2011), and a sample of them included "I adhere to professional standards when working on translation tasks."

4. Analysis and Results

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The sample of this study was made up of 177 male and female students, with the majority female (84.2%) compared to males (15.8%). The higher percentage for women here may indicate that female students see translation as a better and more flexible career option, including freelance opportunities and remote work, which can motivate and help them balance home responsibilities and work. Regarding the marital status of the respondents, about 80.8% were single, followed by 13.6% were married, and about 5.6% were neither single nor married. Regarding age range, about 90.4% of the respondents were between 18 and 28 years, followed by 6.8 with ages between 29 and 39 years and 2.8% for those above 40 years old.

4.2 Data Analysis Approach

In this study, the analysis is conducted with the help of PLS-SEM, which requires conducting two steps: the measurement and structural model (Alshebami, 2024b; Sarstedt et al., 2017). The sections below provide more explanations of these two steps.

4.2.1 Measurement Model

The analysis section of the PLS-SEM starts by checking the validity and reliability of the study constructs. EA, EAT, CTS and PIT received composite reliability (CR) of 0.781, 0.795, 0.827 and 0.860, respectively. The CR is more accurate than Cronbach's alpha (Hair et al., 2019). Concerning the Average variance extracted (AVE), PIT received values above 0.50 while EA, EAT, CTS received 0.473, 0.493 and 0.490 respectively. The F square, R square and Q square results were also reported here; according to the results, ethical awareness, education, and training explained 38.1% of the variance in critical thinking skills (CTS), a moderate explanatory power. Furthermore, CTS, EA, and EAT explained about 44.8% of the variance in PIT,



regarded as a tremendous explanatory power (Cohen, 1988). Concerning the result of F square, EA revealed a good positive effect on CTS 0.188 and a weak effect on PIT 0.065. Education and training reported a strong influence on CTS 0.275 but a minor influence on PIT (0.021). Finally, CTS reported a moderate effect on PIT with a score of 0.237 confirming the considerable role CTS plays in developing the PIT. Concerning the Q square result, it is to be noted that the result of the Q square for both CTS and PIT reported values of 0.177 and 0.234, respectively, both showing greater than zero and confirming the presence of good predictive relevance.

Table 1 reports the outer loadings of the items used to measure the concepts of the study. The higher the indicator outer loadings, the better the reliability of the constructs, and it shows that the item better represents the constructs and has higher consistency and validity. It is advised to have a factor loading of 0.07, but in exploratory research, 0.06 can be accepted (Hair et al., 2011, 2019). According to the threshold for the item's reliability, obtained findings successfully meet the threshold.

Table 1: Items Loadings

	EA	EAT	CTS	PIT
EA1	0.674			
EA3	0.678			
EA4	0.624			
EA5	0.767			
EAT1		0.645		
EAT2		0.726		
EAT3		0.703		
EAT4		0.730		
CTS1			0.733	
CTS2			0.722	
CTS3			0.600	
CTS4			0.718	
CTS5			0.717	
PIT1				0.800
PIT2				0.722
PIT3				0.724
PIT4				0.780
PIT5				0.680



Source: Primary data

The discriminate validity test is then conducted using the Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT). This test ensures that the constructs of the study are statistically distinct and unique. When HTMT values are less than 0.85, this means this is an acceptable discriminate validity in the construct of the study. Table 2 reported that all the constructs HTMT values are less than 0.85, indicating good discriminate validity (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 2: Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)

	EA	EAT	CTS
EAT	0.382		
CTS	0.666	0.710	
PIT	0.648	0.564	0.821

Source: Primary data

The common method bias (CMB) test was also conducted using Harman's single-factor test to check the bias in the data. The finding revealed that the first factor extracted around 26.112% of the variance in the data of which is lower than the 50% considered threshold according to threshold of (Podsakoff et al., 2003) confirming the number of CMB in our model and data.

4.2.2 Structural Model

This section begins by testing the multicollinearity in the structural model of the study. We tested the variance inflation factor (VIF) for the inner and outer models. The VIF test indicates whether the independent variables are similar or not. The result obtained from the VIF test revealed that all values received were below 3, which shows no multicollinearity, as 5 is the threshold for the VIF (Hair et al., 2019). Once the measurement model analysis and the VIF test are completed, we then test the developed hypotheses using the bootstrapping method and report the results of t and p values for further clarification of the findings. The tested hypotheses' results are disclosed in Table 3; all the proposed hypotheses, including mediation hypotheses, were accepted except for H2 and H5. Further elaboration on the result is discussed in detail in the discussion section.

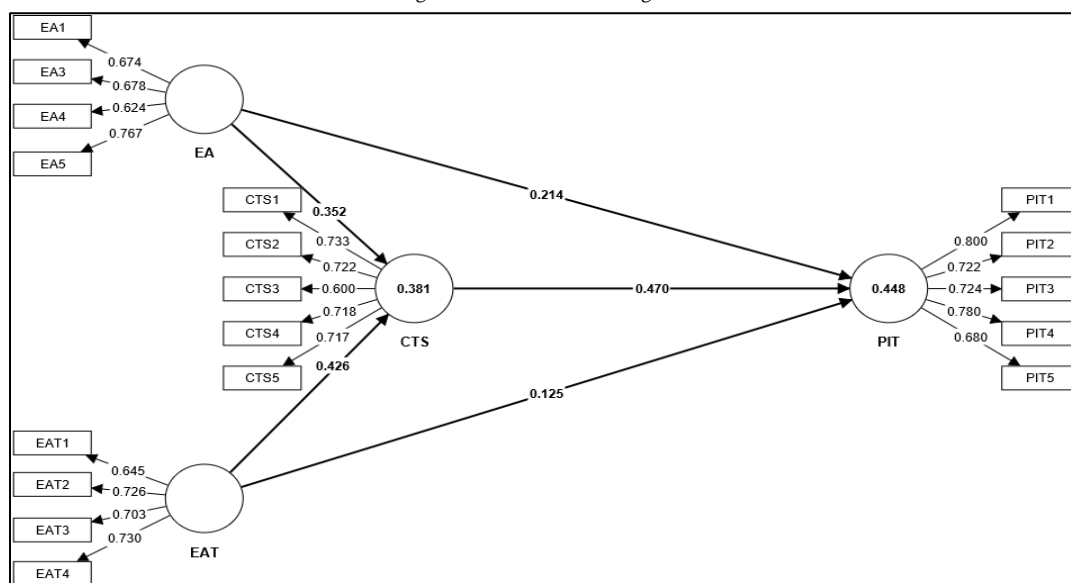
Table 3: Testing of Hypotheses Result

Hypothesis	Relationship	Type of Relationship	β	Mean	t-value	P-values	Decision
H1	EA -> CTS	Direct	0.352	0.357	5.398	0.000	Supported
H2	EA -> PIT	Direct	0.214	0.236	1.951	0.051	Rejected
H3	EA -> CTS -> PIT	Indirect	0.156	0.166	3.742	0.000	Full Mediation
H4	EAT -> CTS	Direct	0.426	0.431	6.081	0.000	

H5	EAT -> PIT	Direct	0.125	0.119	1.711	0.087	Rejected
H6	EAT -> CTS -> PIT	Indirect	0.200	0.198	4.628	0.000	Full Mediation
H7	CTS -> PIT	Direct	0.470	0.461	6.065	0.000	Supported

Source: Primary data

Figure 2: Path Model Diagram



Source: primary data

Figure 2 reveals the path model diagram for the constructs of the study.

5. Discussion and Implications

5.1 Interpretation of Findings

This study investigated how EA and EAT positively contribute to CTS and, in turn, lead to better PIT. Accordingly, seven hypotheses were developed to achieve the purpose of the study, and all of these hypotheses were approved except hypotheses 2 and 5.

The first hypothesis (**H1**) assumed a positive and significant relationship between EA and CTS. H1 was tested, and the result reported a positive and substantial connection between them ($\beta=0.352$, $P<0.05$). H1 assumption is anticipated as when students or translators learn ethical issues, they tend to practice ethical behavior and inculcate ethical principles; they equip themselves with essential ethical background guidelines that motivate them to work more ethically, analyze contents carefully, understand the texts deeply, be cautious about cultural sensitivity and ensure honesty in translation and increase their level of cognitive skills



such that help ultimately in making informed decision making. These findings are supported by (Çakıcı, 2018; Kim et al., 2014; Meisel & Fearon, 2006).

The second hypothesis (H2) aimed to investigate if EA can directly positively and significantly influence PIT, and the finding revealed that there is no significant relationship between EA and PIT ($\beta=0.214$, $P>0.05$). The inability to obtain a positive and significant relationship between EA and PIT may be attributed to that ethical awareness not being sufficient to translate ethical awareness into professional integrity in translation. Ethical awareness and principles may need other factors, such as CTS, to help the students analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information and make it easy to practice professional integrity in translation.

The third hypothesis (H3), anticipating the ability of CTS to mediate the relationship between EA and PIT, was approved ($\beta=0.156$, $P<0.05$). The H3 result confirms that EA cannot alone predict PIT, and it needs other factors, such as CTS, to support the translation of ethical awareness and principles to professional integrity in translation. In other words, once the students develop a higher level of ethical awareness, they cannot directly ensure achieving professional integrity in translation. They need CTS as a mediary or cognitive ability to help them analyze, deeply understand, and critically revise available information and make the required decisions, leading to better decision-making and more professionalism in the translated work. These statements are supported by the argument of (Chang & Wang, 2011; Paul & Elder, 2009; Santos, 2021).

The fourth hypothesis (H4) assumed EAT could positively and significantly influence CTS, and the results confirmed that ($\beta=0.426$, $P<0.05$). In this regard, the result of H4 confirms that those students receiving better ethical education and training through various approaches such as seminars, exposure to real-life scenarios, practising practical translation problems to solve, attending workshops, studying recent and modern educational curricula, and meeting with expert translators from the translation industry will better understand the importance of ethics and its principles in translation profession. Accordingly they will tend to work more honestly; analyse more deeply the information they have and think deeply before making any ethical decisions related to translations. These findings are supported by the arguments of (Buskist & Irons, 2008; Camilli et al., 2022; Kuleli & Tuna, 2022; López et al., 2023).

With regards to the fifth hypothesis (H5), it was found that there is no positive and significant relationship between EAT and PIT ($\beta=0.125$, $P>0.05$). The rejection of H5 can be attributed to the fact that EAT alone cannot predict and translate educational contents into PIT among the students; there might be a need for other factors, such as CTS, to help ease this process.

The sixth hypothesis (H6) confirmed that CTS can positively and significantly mediate the connection between EAT and PIT ($\beta=0.200$, $P<0.05$). This proves that PIT among the students can be achieved via a complex process, starting with obtaining essential education and training related to various translation



subjects and then using CTS to translate those educational and ethical principles into actual practices reflected in informed decision-making about professional integrity in translation. In other words, students initially learn about ethics from various sources such as educational institutions, training provided by organisations, observation, and understanding of available codes of conduct from multiple sources; once they build a strong ethical background and strong belief in themselves, they then start analysing carefully any information or texts they receive for translation purpose leading ultimately to a higher possibility of professional integrity in translation. This is aligned with previous literature such as (Brahim, 2024; Facione, 1990; Gelder, 2005).

Finally, the seventh hypothesis (H7), which assumes that CTS leads to better or higher PIT, was tested and found to be positive and significant ($\beta=0.461$, $P<0.05$). This finding indicates that those students capable of developing CTS can better deal with ethical translation challenges and dilemmas, such as confidentiality, cultural sensitivity, and fidelity, leading to better professional integrity. This finding also indicates a need for more training programs that focus on developing ethical critical thinking skills among students and translators as it helps the students increase their motivations for learning and prepares them for independent work (Pavlenko et al., 2024) and also for achieving good quality of work (Jahromi, 2016) and for successful personal and professional (Nurgul et al., 2022). Pavlenko et al., 2024; Jahromi, 2016; Nurgul et al., 2022).

5.2 Practical Implications

The positive and significant finding of ethical awareness, education, and training on critical thinking skills and professional integrity in translation emphasized discussing essential implications. The positive relationship between ethical awareness, education and training, and critical thinking skills confirms that having clarity in the ethical awareness among the students makes them better think critically and analyze ethically, logically and honestly the available content they have to be translated. In this regard, policymakers need to develop essential workshops, initiatives, and conferences that emphasize the importance of ethics and help equip the students with the skills required for building solid ethical grounds and values to be followed when practicing the translation profession. Furthermore, educational institutions, including universities, must design curricula to enrich the students with the ethical foundations and principles essential for inculcating critical thinking skills.

There is also a need for both educational institutions and policymakers to work on providing a vital translation environment that allows the students to meet complex and challenging translation tasks and perform them. Enhancing the critical thinking skills of the students will allow them to feel more capable, develop the higher ability to judge, analyse and think about the content they have, apply the ethical principles they have achieved and use available values for their work, which ultimately leads to better professional integrity in translation. Policymakers should encourage students to deeply understand the culture's available



norms and traditions and ensure that they do not affect the quality of translation. There is also a need for the arrangement of visits and meetings between the students studying translation and experienced professionals to ensure receiving proper guidelines about translation practices through peer learning. Acquiring evidence of ethical training and critical thinking from accreditation bodies before establishing a translation business can allow the students to prepare better.

5.3 Theoretical Implications

This research is one of the few attempts, if not the first, to investigate the influence of ethical awareness, education, and training on enhancing students' critical thinking skills and professional integrity in translation. Therefore, it is considered one of the few studies that contribute to the limited literature available on translation. The findings of this study confirm the applicability of the study model in its context, i.e., Saudi Arabia and Yemen, as well as in the educational field of translation. Furthermore, they validate the applicability of social learning theory in translation, which emphasizes that people can learn not only through personal experience but also by observing others and their surroundings. In this regard, it is confirmed that translation students can learn ethical behavior by observing role models, such as professional translators and educators, who demonstrate professional integrity in real-world situations. They can also enhance their critical thinking skills through discussions with educators and by following role models who reinforce ethical principles and motivate them to apply these principles in practice. Additionally, the study confirms that students who develop and refine their critical thinking skills are more likely to achieve higher professional integrity in translation. The study model further reinforces the idea that learning is context dependent. In other words, the environment in which learning occurs, including cultural and social factors, is key to building students' critical thinking skills.

6. Conclusion, Limitations and Future Directions

While the translation process is essential for connecting cultures and nations, concerns remain regarding the authenticity and reliability of translations worldwide. Several factors may influence the quality of translated work—both positively and negatively—when translating specific texts or speech. These factors include translators' education and training, as well as their level of ethical awareness regarding translation principles. Accordingly, this study seeks to identify key factors essential for enhancing future translators' critical thinking skills and strengthening their professional integrity in translation. This research considers ethical awareness, education, and training as vital antecedents for improving students' critical thinking skills when performing translation work. This, in turn, strengthens translators' beliefs and self-efficacy, ultimately leading to professional integrity in translation. The study collected data from a sample of 177 respondents from various universities in Saudi Arabia and Yemen. It targeted both male and female students studying



translation at these universities and invited them to voluntarily complete the distributed questionnaire. Various statistical tools were used to analyze the collected data, yielding insightful results. The findings revealed that ethical awareness, education, and training significantly and positively enhanced the critical thinking skills of the study sample. Additionally, the study found that improved critical thinking skills had a significant positive impact on students' professional integrity in translation.

Furthermore, critical thinking skills reported its ability to positively and significantly mediate the relationship between ethical awareness, education and training, and professional integrity in translation. The study noted the importance of moral understanding, education, and training as antecedents for developing higher levels of critical thinking skills and professional integrity in translation. Accordingly, it provided specific theoretical and practical implications for policymakers, educational institutions and future researchers. While the study acknowledges the applicability of the developed model in the context of the study and the confirmation of the assumed propositions, it recognizes the presence of certain limitations. For example, a limited study sample size might be considered a limitation as it is always better to have a more significant sample to represent the study context better. Finally, the study sample is mainly female respondents, which may raise an issue of proper representation of the study sample despite the cultural reasons explained above for having such a sample. Future studies may focus on increasing the sample size and incorporating a sample of different countries to investigate how perceptions of other countries influence critical thinking skills and professional integrity in translation. Furthermore, future authors should examine how moderators such as self-efficacy and cultural sensitivity influence professional integrity in translation. Future research may also collect samples from real translators already involved in the translation field and have more incredible experience.

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