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ISO 20771:2020 overview and legal translator competence requirements in the context of the European Qualifications Framework, ISO 17100:2015 and relevant research

Summary

The article provides an overview of legal translator competence set in the ISO 20771:2020 standard in the context of relevant research, European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and ISO 17100:2015 with the aim of determining the similarities and differences between the various approaches, the extent to which the referenced resources conform to or differ from the ISO 20771:2020 requirements, and the practical implications thereof. Some relevant translator competence research and models are referenced here in order to provide more context and information, and illustrate the potential gap or overlap between research and current industry best-practice reflected in ISO standards.

On the basis of analysis of the referenced resources and the background information on ISO standards development process, the author demonstrates that consensus-based ISO standards take a pragmatic approach and provide most accurate information about professional translator requirements. The author posits that ISO requirements standards are also, by definition, more operational and easier to validate through conformance assessment than any other models or resources and that is why the industry uptake and implementation of standards is so significant.

There have been a lot of discussions within the industry and the academia on translator competence and qualifications requirements. Given the fact that ISO standards are the most important source of information on actual market requirements for translators, prevalent industry terminology and industry best practice, they need to be taken on board by all stakeholders. This overview of the industry's pragmatic approach to legal translator competence and other translator requirements, as reflected in ISO 20771, also outlines some of the practical and professional implications of industry standardization in the hope that it might become the starting point for more discussions on this subject in the future.

Keywords: legal translation, translator competence, legal translator, translator qualifications, EQF, ISO 17100, ISO 20771, best practice, requirements, continuous professional development (CPD)

Introduction

This article provides an overview of legal translator competences set in the ISO 20771:2020 *Legal translation – Requirements* (ISO 20771) standard in the context of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), ISO 17100:2015 *Translation services – Requirements for translation services* (ISO 17100) and some relevant research with the aim of determining what are the main similarities and differences between the various approaches, to what extent do these reference resources overlap with or conform to the ISO 20771 legal translator requirements, and what are the practical implications thereof. Some relevant translator competence research and resources are analysed and referenced here to provide more context and information in this field of study.

On the basis of the analysis of translator competence and other relevant requirements set in the ISO 17100 and ISO 20771 standards, the author initially tries to determine if these ISO standards are in-line with the EQF. The same approach is then applied to some relevant research and resulting models. The author concludes that although there is a significant overlap between all the resources in terms of concepts and their definitions, there are also notable gaps in terms of clarity, granularity, terminology used, scope of validation and practical application.

Analysis of translator competence set in ISO standards against much of the translator competence research and models is not an easy task because the terminology used to signify similar concepts often differs from the standardized terminology. Nevertheless, based on this analysis and the background information provided on ISO standards development process, the author provides not only an overview of the pragmatic approach taken in ISO translation standards but also discusses the key differences between standard translation competence requirements and other referenced research and resources. Practical implications of the standard approach and its relative importance for the industry and the profession are also discussed here.

1. ISO and standards – some background information

ISO, founded on 23 February 1947, with a Central Secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland, is an independent, non-governmental international organization with

a membership of 165 national standards bodies. ISO develops voluntary, consensus-based, market relevant International Standards. The actual standards work is done by key industry stakeholders, referred to as experts, appointed by the national standards organisations, and assigned to technical committees that lead standards development on the basis of existing best practice in a given industry or area and with the aim of addressing actual market needs and filling important standardization gaps. In total, ISO collaborates with over 700 international, regional and national organizations, which contribute their expertise. The object, structure and rules of ISO and its standardization process are laid down in its Statutes (ISO 2018). It is noteworthy that, as stipulated in the WTO Code of Conduct, international standardization takes precedence over national standardization and all ISO members should align their own processes so that approved ISO standards can also be adopted as national standards in their countries. All ISO standards are reviewed at least every five years to ensure that they remain up-to-date and relevant (this is referred to as the Systematic Review process). Through this process, national standards bodies review a standard (in consultation with stakeholders) and decide whether it is still valid, should be updated, or withdrawn.

Under the Vienna Agreement between ISO and the European Committee for Standardization (CEN), where an ISO standard is simultaneously approved as a European Standard it automatically becomes a national standard for all CEN members and any pre-existent conflicting national standards have to be withdrawn. Moreover, CEN standards may also be used as a basis for the development of ISO standards. This is relevant for the discussion because there are currently no translation industry standards being developed within CEN. Some ISO standards have also been approved as EN standards on the basis of the Vienna Agreement but it is important to understand this distinction.

The establishment in 2011 of subcommittee 5 within ISO technical committee 37 (ISO TC 37/SC5), which deals specifically with translation, interpreting and related technology standards, was a major breakthrough for the industry and quickly led to the development of some key standards. ISO TC 37/SC5 is composed of 35 participating national members (i.e. standards bodies), 12 observing members and more than a dozen industry liaison organisations, and has already produced 17 published industry standards and 7 more are currently under development (as of April 2021). As a rule, ISO standards are always a function of industry best practice and they should be analysed in that context.

Over the past few decades much progress has been made in developing and implementing the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) in or-

der to facilitate restructuring of academic teaching programmes and setting the same level of comprehensive educational and professional requirements across Europe. This has changed some academic approaches to competence research. Academic research conducted with the aim of describing and conceptualizing translator competence became more popular. In recent years, this research has focused more on specialist translator competence. Some of this research was undertaken with the aim of adapting translation graduate and post-graduate training programmes (especially within the EMT framework) to the EQF. Since the approach taken in ISO standards is more pragmatic and market-oriented (rather than conceptual), it makes sense to view standard translator competence in the wider context of EQF and, to some extent, the more specific translator competence research and resulting models while at the same time focusing on their different function and purpose (which underlies the different, requirements-based, approach taken in ISO standards).

In case of ISO translation standards, the main purpose was to define translator competence and qualifications by setting measurable requirements subject to conformance assessment (which is an objective and recognized form of validation for the purpose of adoption and certification, for example). To this end, competence is defined in translation requirement standards with regard to individuals (actual translators and their skills rather than some theoretical concept of translation) and requirements are set with reference to specific, objective, and auditable criteria for the purpose of documenting and validating competence and qualifications in practice. Given the ISO consensus-based standard development process and representative involvement of international stakeholders, as described above, it is reasonable to assert that industry standards are a comprehensive and up-to-date reflection of relevant industry best practice and market requirements. This applies in particular to requirements with regard to translator competences and qualifications, translation processes, technologies and some other key professional requirements.

2. ISO translation standards and the EQF

The first approach to standardizing translator competence and qualifications in Europe was the European EN 15038:2006 *Translation services – Service requirements* standard. This standard was superseded by ISO 17100:20015 *Translation services – Requirements for translation services* standard, and the EN 15038 was withdrawn in 2015. The publication of ISO 17100:2015 *Translation services – Requirements for translation services* (ISO 17100), on 1 May 2015, was the first milestone in international standardization of translator competence and quali-

fication requirements. ISO 17100 is a product standard for translation service providers (TSPs) that sets comprehensive, generalist translator competence and qualification requirements and defines the translation process. Henceforth ISO 17100 also became a benchmark for other translation industry standards. Following a Systematic Review, it was approved as an up-to-date valid standard in 2020.

ISO 20771:2020 *Legal translation – Requirements* (ISO 20771) was published on 20 April 2020 and it is the first specialized international standard developed for individual translators. The standard sets competence and qualification requirements for legal translators, covers all professional aspects of the legal translation service, and establishes a framework for the relevant process and terminology. Since ISO 20771 requirements reflect market best practice and are designed to be objective, operational and used for conformance assessment legal translators can be certified on the basis of this standard. Therefore, analysis of other resources dealing with general or specialist translator competence needs to be primarily benchmarked against these two ISO standards and, in turn, the standards can be analysed within a wider context of other frameworks or programmes.

The EQF for lifelong learning was established pursuant to the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 (2008/C 111/01). The Preamble to the Recommendation recognized that increased transparency of qualifications is one of the main components necessary for adaptation of education and training systems in the European Community (EC) to the demands of today's knowledge society. Hence, the development and recognition of citizens' knowledge, skills and competence were deemed crucial for the development of individuals, competitiveness, employment and social cohesion in the EC. The Recommendation took into account Decision No 2241/2004/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2004 on a single Community framework for the transparency of qualifications and competences (Europass) and Recommendation 2006/962/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning.

The objective of the EQF was to create a common reference framework which would translate and disambiguate the different qualifications systems and their levels, whether for general and higher education or for vocational education and training, with the aim of improving transparency, comparability and transferability of qualifications issued in the different EU Member States. Each level of qualification should, in principle, be attainable by way of a variety of educational and career paths. The EQF should, moreover, enable international sectoral organisations to relate their qualifications systems to a common Euro-

pean reference benchmark and thus demonstrate the relationship between international sectoral qualifications and national qualifications systems. The purpose was to achieve wider objectives of promoting lifelong learning and increasing employability, mobility and social integration of employees and learners (taking into account transparent quality assurance principles and information exchange). Henceforth the EQF contributed to the positive redefining of many professional competence models, modernising education and training systems (taking into account the interrelationship of education, training and employment), building bridges between formal, non-formal and informal learning, and leading also to the validation of learning outcomes acquired through experience (rather than a formal qualification).

The EQF also made national qualifications more readable across Europe because the framework-based schemes in different countries' national qualifications systems were now related to a common European reference framework. Individuals, educators and employers use the EQF to better understand and compare the qualifications levels of different countries and different education and training systems. Since 2012, all new qualifications, including certificates, diplomas and 'Europass' documents issued by the competent EU authorities contain a clear reference, by way of national qualifications systems, to the appropriate EQF level. Therefore, as in the case of other sectors, the EQF (even though it is not a standard per se) had an impact on the academic and industry approach to translator competence and standards.

The core of the EQF, which has been slightly revised since 2008, specifies eight reference levels describing what a learner knows, understands and is able to do. These are referred to as 'learning outcomes.' Levels of national qualifications are placed at one of the central reference levels, ranging from basic (Level 1) to advanced (Level 8). All eight levels are described in terms of learning outcomes: knowledge, skills and competences (European Commission 2018: 18)

Qualifications frameworks play an increasingly important role at international, national and sector levels. Learning outcomes descriptors of qualifications frameworks are normally designed using a horizontal axis identifying learning domains (such as knowledge, skills and competence) and a vertical dimension indicating how the complexity of learning increases from one level to another (1-8).

Learning outcomes are defined by Cedefop (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) as:

- a) "statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence" (Cedefop 2014: 74);

- b) “sets of knowledge, skills and/or competences an individual has acquired and/or is able to demonstrate after completion of a learning process, either formal, non-formal or informal” (Cedefop 2014: 73).

This relationship can be expressed as a loop where the interaction between what is intended (intended learning outcomes) and what has actually been achieved (achieved learning outcomes) feeds into a continuous improvement process.

The focus on actually achieved learning outcomes introduces the concept of competence, defined by Cedefop as the “ability to apply learning outcomes adequately in a defined context (education, training, work or professional development)” (Cedefop 2014: 47). Competence is understood as actually achieved learning outcomes, validated through the ability of the learner to autonomously apply knowledge and skills in practice, in society and at work. Thus, learning outcomes are validated by their relationship to competences (Cedefop 2014: 28). While the term competence is widely used throughout Europe, and in some countries it is even used as a substitute for the term learning outcomes, there are several definitions provided and this might create some confusion. The definition provided by the Recommendation on the EQF is a compromise pointing towards a shared approach: “Competence means the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development” (European Parliament and Council of the EU 2008: 4).

Learning outcomes are specified in three categories: knowledge, skills and competence.

- **Knowledge** - outcome of assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices related to a field of study or work (European Parliament and Council of the European Union 2008: 4);
- **Skill** - cognitive or practical ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems (European Parliament and Council of the European Union 2008: 4);
- **Competence** – is the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development’ (European Parliament and Council of the European Union 2008: 4).

Another important term defined within the EQF is qualification. Qualification covers a wide range of learning outcomes and their different aspects which are subject to validation. A formal qualification represents a formal outcome (e.g. certificate, diploma or title) of an assessment and validation process

which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes according to a specific standard and/or possesses the necessary competence to do a job in a specific area of work. A qualification confers official recognition of the value of learning outcomes in the labour market, education and training. A qualification can also be a legal entitlement to practice a trade (Cedefop 2014: 94, cf. Cedefop 2008, Eurydice 2006; European Training Foundation 1997; OECD 2007; ILO 1998, European Parliament and Council of the European Union 2008). Competence-based qualification thus states that a person is qualified to work in a specific field or occupation.

Taking the above into consideration, the EQF and the European Parliament and Council definition of competence can be simplified as follows:

competence = knowledge + skills (and other abilities) + proven ability to use them in practice

The formal outcome of an assessment process of competence translates into a **qualification**.

3. Translator competence – relevant research and reference to ISO 17100

Extensive research has been undertaken in the past with the aim of conceptualizing translator competence. Scholars have frequently used different terms (such as translator competence, translation competence, transfer competence, translational competence, translation performance, translation ability, translation skill etc.) for what seems to be basically the same or similar concept. More recently, some scholars have claimed that their research is predominantly empirical and more comprehensive because it has been developed under academic and industry partnerships and used advanced methodology (see e.g. PACTE 2003, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2011a and 2011b; EMT Expert Group 2009; Göpferich and Jääskeläinen's TransComp 2009; Toudic and Krause's EMT Competence Framework 2017).

Most approaches and definitions of competence focus on the 'knowledge' and 'skills' (including 'other abilities') components at the expense of the 'proven ability to use them in practice' component. In recent years the academic focus has also gradually shifted to translator competence (rather than the more abstract translation or transfer competence) thus bringing it more in-line with the EQF, the EP and Council of the EU approach, and ISO standards.

Since the 1990s, the study of translator competence has in fact become a more pressing issue due to the practical necessity for restructuring a lot of programmes in the wake of the Bologna process in Europe, as proposed in the competence-based approach of the European Master's in Translation (EMT)

partnership project launched by the European Commission. It has been noted that the EMT project promotes the sort of translator education that would predominantly meet the requirements set by European Union institutions based on their internal needs but it also makes a case for more practical education and enhancing employability of graduates throughout Europe. So, the above developments are all inter-connected and give a bigger picture when engaging in discussions about translator competence.

It is impossible to reference all the translator competence research and models but a certain pattern emerges when analysing some representative approaches. Göpferich, for example, distinguishes the following translator sub-competences: communicative competence in at least two languages, domain competence, tools and research competence, translation routine activation competence, psychomotor competence, and strategic competence (Göpferich 2009: 21-23). Prieto Ramos summarizes the situation as follows: “In spite of the different perspectives, consensus has grown in the past two decades around some elements of the so-called ‘competence-based training’ (see e.g. Hurtado Albir 2007). Firstly, the need to orientate translator training programmes to the development of professional skills (see e.g. Hurtado Albir 1999 or Schäffner 2000). Secondly, the perception of translation competence as a complex (...) ‘super-competence’ (e.g. Wilss 1976: 120) (...). Thirdly, studies on translation competence have progressively expanded the list of core components of translation macro-competence. During the 1990s, authors like Nord (1991), Delisle (1992), Gile (1995), Kiraly (1995), and Neubert (2000), albeit using different labels and divisions, identified similar key competences. These can be summarized as follows by combining Nord’s (1991: 235) account of ‘essential competences required of a translator’ and Neubert’s (2000: 6) taxonomy of ‘parameters of translational competence’: (1) language competence; (2) textual competence (text reception and analysis, production and quality assessment); (3) subject or thematic competence; (4) cultural competence; (5) research competence; (6) transfer competence.” (Prieto Ramos 2011:8).

Pym argues that the latest multicomponent translator competence models followed the fragmentary development of the profession, were a response to interdisciplinarity and the break with linguistics, and supported a certain model of traditional translator training. He stated rather perceptively that “Since the 1970s the notion of ‘translation competence’ has been viewed as at least 1) a mode of bilingualism, open to linguistic analysis, 2) a question of market demands, given to extreme historical and social change, 3) a multicomponent competence, involving sets of skills that are linguistic, cultural, technological and professional, and 4) a ‘super-competence’ that would somehow stand above

the rest. (...). On the other hand, a simple minimalist concept of translation competence, based on the production then elimination of alternatives, can help orient translator training in times of rapid technological and professional change.” (Pym 2003:481). He also argues that the lists of components in multi-component models are vague and ever growing “Perhaps because the earlier scholars were thinking in terms of linguistics and students, and not in terms of how translators work in the world (such was the exclusion explicit in Wilss).” He also notes that [the multicomponent] model is not the only one, nor necessarily the best and that “Given the inherent failure of the multicomponent models to keep up with historical change, serious thought should now be invested in the minimalist ‘super-competence’ approach.” (Pym 2003:487) He believes this means accepting that there is no neat definition of all the things that translators need to know and will be called upon to do and a concept is needed to define the very act of translating. Therefore, he proposes the following minimalist definition of translation competence:

- “The ability to generate a series of more than one viable target text (TT₁, TT₂ ... TT_n) for a pertinent source text (ST);
- The ability to select only one viable TT from this series, quickly and with justified confidence.” (Pym 2003:489)

He concludes that “A minimalist concept of competence should help keep such aims clearly in sight. A multicomponent model, on the other hand, tends to accept complexity without critically distinguishing between means and ends.” This definition and approach are conceptually appealing, but also oversimplistic and difficult to expand on.

Despite the different perspectives, Prieto Ramos notes that most researchers seem to agree that translation competence is a complex, multi-componential, concept comprising several sub-competences which are particularly useful for designing academic curricula. (Prieto Ramos 2011:10). It seems, however, that some of the components (or subcomponents) typically listed are unpractical and difficult or impossible to assess (validate), and there is no agreement as to the final number of elements that need to be included on the core translator competences list. It is also difficult to see how a concept “particularly useful for designing academic curricula” would automatically also be useful for defining and assessing professional competences actually required by the market. Pym, for example, also expressed surprise that it took such a long time for definitions of competence to include reference to the client’s brief (Pym 2003:486). This is an interesting point because nowadays it is quite obvious that a translator should take into account a brief (aka project specification) or use specific tools or resources but it does not necessarily mean

that fulfilment of project requirements, specifications or agreements would be included on the list of translator competences as this is clearly part of any professional's ability to meet requirements, deadlines and other contractual obligations, rather than a translator competence as such. If the EQF approach is adopted, whereby competence is the proven "ability to apply learning outcomes" by an individual, then it is easy to see the distinction and correlation between competence, qualifications, and service, process or project requirements.

Given the fact that the industry has matured and professionalized very rapidly over the past few decades, the translation process and project requirements have been researched and standardized in quite a lot of detail and are no longer bundled into the generalist container of 'translation competence' which previously seemed to include a whole range of different things separate from actual translator competence (such as schedules, ethics and collaboration scenarios). Nowadays, the discussion of process or project requirements (see e.g. ISO 17100 or ISO 20771) would be treated as a separate area of concern where the individual translator's role is analysed as part of a project management work-flow, subject to various scenarios and agreements, depending on the process adopted, types of projects, technologies and resources used, specifications, deadlines, project management constraints, any number of different service or professional requirements, and other factors.

The PACTE (Process in the Acquisition of Translation Competence and Evaluation) Group led by Amparo Hurtado Albir was involved in developing a holistic model of translation competence and then a holistic model of the acquisition of translation competence in translation, both direct and inverse. This research focused on expert translators' 'dynamic' concept of translation and approach to the translation of specific texts, understood to be textual, communicative, and functional (hence the connection with the functionalist approach extended to acquisition) as opposed to a 'static' concept and approach which was defined as linguistic and literal. In the 2005 version of their model, translation competence is defined as "the underlying knowledge system needed to translate" (PACTE 2005: 610). Based on the previous (empirical) research in that area, in 2005-2007 PACTE defined a model of translation sub-competences, which included the following components:

1. **"Bilingual sub-competence:** procedural knowledge required to communicate in two languages, i.e. pragmatics, sociolinguistics, textuality, grammar and lexis in each language;
2. **Extra-linguistic sub-competence:** bi-cultural, encyclopaedic and subject matter (thematic) knowledge;

3. **Translation knowledge sub-competence:** knowledge of principles that guide translation (process, methods, procedures) aspects of the profession (types of translation briefs, users), the labour market, etc.
4. **Instrumental sub-competence:** procedural knowledge for the use of documentation resources & information technologies;
5. **Strategic sub-competence:** procedural knowledge that guarantees efficiency in the translation process by identifying and solving problems. It is a key competence that creates links between the other sub-competencies;
6. **Psycho-physiological components:** cognitive components, such as memory, perception, attention span, perseverance etc.; attitudes such as curiosity, rigor, etc., and abilities such as creativity, analysis, logical reasoning, etc.” (PACTE 2007: 331)

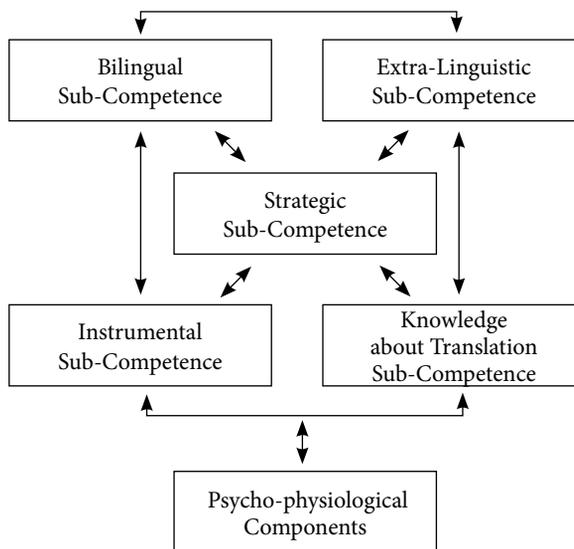


Figure 1. The PACTE Group's revised translation competence model (PACTE 2005: 610; 2007: 331)

The PACTE Group posits, on the basis of their research, that an expert translator possesses the ability to solve problems, and that this is also part of translation competence. They conclude that strategic competence is the most important of all the sub-competences that interact during the translation process (hence its central position) because it underlies the decision-making and problem-solving processes. Strategic sub-competence, instrumental sub-com-

petence and knowledge about translation are therefore considered to be specific to translation competence. However, this is not obvious from the model (see Figure 1).

Within this approach, bilingual sub-competence was not considered to be specific to translation competence but strategic sub-competence was. If decision-making and problem-solving processes are fundamental for translation competence then surely bilingualism is crucial. Furthermore, the PACTE translation knowledge sub-competence seems to focus on service provision rather than actual translation skills, so the terminology used here (not always consistently) might be somewhat misleading. The psycho-physiological components, on the other hand, are very difficult to define and measure. It is also debatable if some of the components included in the model (e.g. psycho-physiological components) can even be classified as part of competence according to the EQF definition.

The PACTE approach is, to a certain degree, reflected in the EMT reference framework which proposed “a minimum quality profile” (EMT Expert Group 2009: 1), subsequently replaced by the EMT Expert Group 2017 framework, in order to facilitate development of newly launched translation programmes. Within the 2009 framework, ‘competence’ was defined as “the combination of aptitudes, knowledge, behaviour and know-how necessary to carry out a given task under given conditions”. Six interdependent competences were thus identified (see Figure 2):

- Translation service provision competence (interpersonal and production dimensions);
- Language competence;
- Intercultural competence (sociolinguistic and textual dimensions);
- Information mining competence;
- Thematic competence;
- Technological competence. (EMT Expert Group 2009:4).

The most recent EMT Competence Framework developed in 2017 (see Figure 3) is still based on the EMT’s founding principles set out by the Expert Group in January 2009 but the focus is on employability of graduates. Furthermore, it is much more streamlined with the EQF and claims to also take into account the research outcomes on translation and translator competence reported by the translation studies research community and the changes that have affected the language services industry since then. Within this approach, competence is defined as “the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development” (EMT Expert Group 2017: 3). As the definition in-

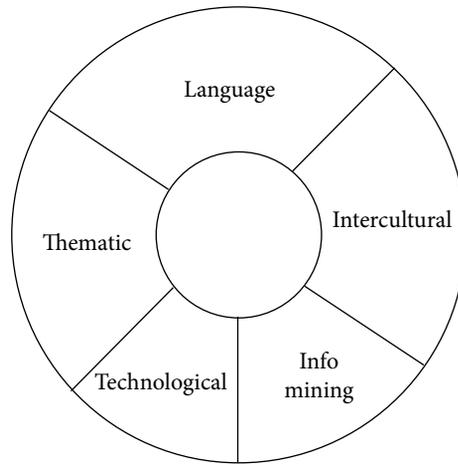


Figure 2. EMT Expert Group translation competence model (EMT Expert Group 2009: 4)

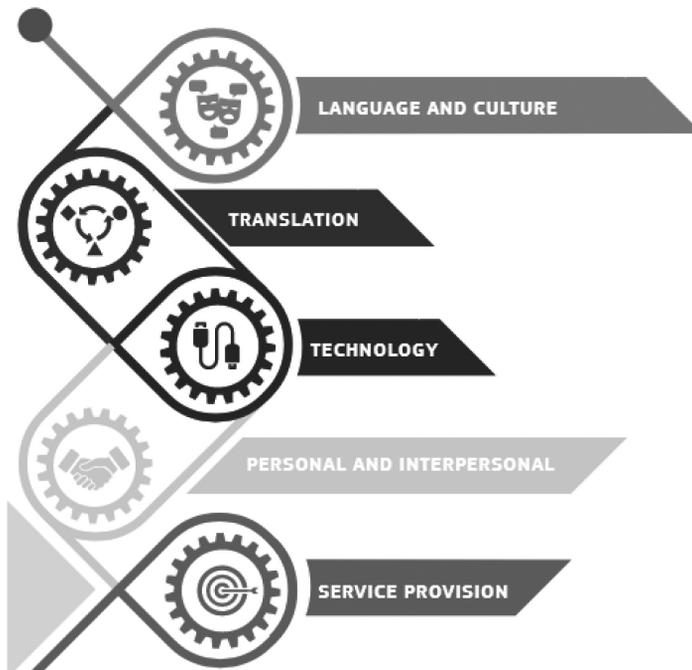


Figure 3. EMT Expert Group translation competence model (EMT Expert Group 2017: 4)

dicates, this approach is much more aligned with EQF than the previous one. The EMT 2017 model defines five main areas of competence:

1. Language and Culture (transcultural and sociolinguistic awareness and communicative skills),
2. Translation (strategic, methodological and thematic competence),
3. Technology (tools and applications),
4. Personal and Interpersonal (all the generic skills, often referred to as “soft skills”, that enhance graduate adaptability and employability),
5. Service Provision (skills relating to the implementation of translation and, more generally, to language services in a professional context).

(EMT Expert Group 2017: 6-11)

The model is simplified and does not claim to provide a comprehensive and exhaustive description of all the competences, skills and knowledge that translation graduates should acquire. Notably, it does not include theoretical knowledge or research skills (information mining), translation and service provision have been separated, and service provision is no longer the central element but seems to be treated as the final stage within a process, and thematic competence is now covered under translation (along with strategic and methodological competence). As in the original framework, the EMT 2017 model lays down a common set of learning outcomes for EMT Master’s degree programmes, described in terms of the general competences and specific skills that graduates are expected to possess, and it includes a note to the effect that the aim of Master’s degree programmes is to teach a combination of knowledge and skills so that students can achieve the competences considered essential for access to the translation industry and to the wider labour market. In general, in spite of the fact that the EMT 2017 model is more in line with the EQF, the EMT 2009 model was more structured and had a clearer distinction between competences which are frequently found in learning outcomes. As a result of the modifications, the EMT 2017 framework has amalgamated several competences to create a ‘super’ translation competence, which does not allow for more detailed analysis and granularity. The visual representation of the different competences in the 2017 model as ‘a series of mechanical cogs’, that are presumably supposed to set the whole competence mechanism in motion, looks quite dynamic at first glance but is actually rather confusing when analysed from the process perspective. The actual relationship between the various elements is not clearly defined and the suggested sequencing is inaccurate (e.g. the language and culture competence does not actually trigger the translation competence, and the translation competence does not trigger the technology competence etc.).

ISO 17100 sets the following translator competence requirements:

- a. **“Translation competence:** the ability to translate content in accordance with 5.3.1, including the ability to address the problems of language content comprehension and language content production, and the ability to render the target language content in accordance with the client-TSP agreement and other project specifications,
- b. **Linguistic and textual competence in the source language and the target language:** the ability to understand the source language, fluency in the target language, and general or specialized, knowledge of text-type conventions. This linguistic and textual competence includes the ability to apply this knowledge when producing translation or other target language content,
- c. **Competence in research, information acquisition and processing:** the ability to efficiently acquire the additional linguistic and specialized knowledge necessary to understand the source language content and to produce the target language content. Research competence also requires experience in the use of research tools and the ability to develop suitable strategies for the efficient use of the information sources available,
- d. **Cultural competence:** ability to make use of information on the behavioural standards, up-to-date terminology, value systems and locale that characterize both source and target language cultures,
- e. **Technical competence:** the knowledge, abilities and skills required to perform the technical tasks in the translation process by employing technical resources, including the tools and IT systems that support the whole translation process,
- f. **Domain competence:** the ability to understand content produced in the source language and to reproduce it in the target language, using the appropriate style and terminology.” (ISO 17100:2015: 3.1.3)

A comparison of the EMT 2017 competence model and ISO 17100 shows that the new EMT model seems to have benefitted not only from EQF and the PACTE Group approach but also, to a certain extent, from ISO 17100. The competences are more aligned between these frameworks (except for some classification, terminology and application issues). The main difference between the EMT 2017 model and ISO 17100 is still the approach by EMT to competences as ‘translation competences’ rather than ‘translator competences’ (attributed to an individual) and the degree of simplification. This is not just a terminological or technical issue because the EMT 2017 model is actually a set of competences which contain several bundles of sub-competences within an oversimplified model. For example, the fact that the EMT 2017 ‘translation competence’ is

made up of strategic, methodological and thematic sub-competences bundled together makes it less fine-grained and more difficult to analyse than the more straightforward ISO 17100 classification. In ISO 17100 the EMT 'thematic' sub-competence is classified separately as "domain competence", while the EMT 'strategic' and 'methodological' sub-competences are classified as "competence in research, information acquisition and processing". Furthermore, in ISO 17100 the bundled together EMT 'language and culture' sub-competences are classified as "linguistic and textual competence (...)" and "cultural competence" accordingly. In the EMT 2017 model most soft skills are bundled together within the service provision category which is too general. For example, it is difficult to determine what are the obscure "skills relating to the implementation of translation". Therefore, in spite of the fact that the EMT 2017 model is conceptually more in line with the EQF, simpler and visually more attractive than the PACTE and EMT 2009 models or the ISO 17100 competence requirements classification, it is in fact too simplistic and difficult to use in practice. It is also difficult to see how the EMT 2017 competences can be objectively validated. In ISO 17100 the service provision component is dealt with separately from translator competence requirements – as it is clearly part of translation process requirements and also falls within the competence of other functions (reviser, project manager etc.). This makes the ISO 17100 standard more comprehensive than any of the referenced models. Thanks to this approach, the standard is also easily implementable and fulfilment of the standard requirements can be properly documented and assessed for conformance.

4. Legal translator competence – relevant research

While many scholars have tried to define the profile of a competent legal translator (see e.g. Šarčević 1994, Hertog 2001, Prieto Ramos 2011, Pieczychna 2013), the scope and extent of legal knowledge required for the translator to achieve expert competence and ensure quality remains an open question. While Sofer stresses in his Handbook the importance of writing skills, specialisation in a legal field and knowledge of good legal reference resources (Sofer 2006: 106–107), Obenaus focuses on the need for good information brokering skills and functionality (Obenaus 1995: 250). On the other hand, Trosborg (1997: 156) clearly emphasises the importance of legal terminology, whilst Šarčević (1997: 271) recommends a guiding theory specific to legal translation and attempts to describe the ideal legal translator although she concludes that such *ideal translators* simply do not exist. Šarčević defines legal translation as "an act of communication in the mechanism of law" which could also be used to describe what a lawyer

does. She also stresses that a legal translator must be to some extent an expert not only in translation but also in law and that legal translation competence should include thorough knowledge of legal terminology, in-depth understanding of logical principles, logical reasoning, problem solving and text analysis abilities as well as knowledge of the source and target legal systems, (Šarčević 1997: 113-114). While it is easy to agree with Šarčević on the legal background requirement and practice-oriented approach, it seems obvious that such skills as the understanding of logical principles, logical reasoning, problem solving and text analysis abilities are common requirements for any type of translator (or in fact any type of professional) and it is the domain (subject matter) competence that is actually instrumental in defining legal translator competence.

Most researchers underline the need for legal translators to be qualified as lawyers or collaborate with lawyers and they also identify the need for translators to have a sound legal background (see e.g. Cao 2007: 5; Gouadec 2007: 31; Prieto Ramos 2011: 13; Šarčević 1994: 304 and 1997:113; Wilss 1996: 73), but the actual scope and extent of expertise in law required of legal translators is still a hotly debated topic. Gouadec states that in situations when a legal translator is not himself a lawyer or does not have a solid legal background, the translation “should always be a joint effort by a translator and a lawyer, the latter having the last say, of course.” Gouadec (2007: 33). Manganaras goes further and argues that “a qualified legal translator is a lawyer” and legal translation is better performed by a “law graduate who is acquainted with at least one or two foreign languages” than by a “translation graduate who has taken legal translation courses” (Manganaras 1996: 64ff).

Orlando and Scarpa (2014: 209-218) presented some research in the context of the EMT model for the conceptualisation of legal translation competence as developed within the QUALETRA project (JUST/2011/JPEN/AG/2975), whose main aims were the training and accreditation of highly-qualified legal translators specialising in criminal proceedings in line with Directive 2010/64/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2010 on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings. The top-down approach model, the conceptual grid of sub-competences for legal translators, integrates the general EMT reference framework for translation competences (EMT Expert Group 2009) with the specific knowledge and sub-competences that are strictly related to legal translation. The model was adopted as a basis for the training and testing objectives of the QUALETRA project and resulted in the competence grid (enumerating sub-competences specific for professional legal translators) and the ECQA ‘Skills card’ which focuses on the competences and skills of prospective translators in the specific legal subdomain of criminal proceedings, i.e. the trans-

lation of ‘essential documents’ and the European Arrest Warrant specifically mentioned in the Directive (Scarpa, Kockaert, Orlando 2014: 4-17).

The procedure adopted in the QUALETRA project, and the EMT 2009 ‘wheel of competences’ model (see Figure 2), served as a starting point for defining the general translation competences assumed to be already acquired by translators wishing to specialise in legal translation. To this end, the sub-competences specific to legal translators were extracted from the relevant literature and integrated into the EMT reference framework with additional core components more strictly related to legal translation (Scarpa, Kockaert, Orlando 2014: 4-17). This approach took a broader view that professional translators specialised in specific areas are translators first, which is also implicit in Cao’s definition of legal translation as “the rendering of legal texts from the SL into the TL,” (Cao 2007: 10) whereby legal translation can be distinguished from other forms of translation by merely adding the qualifier “legal”. The specialisation of translators in specific areas was however meant not necessarily as a sequential process but rather a model expressed in a hierarchical sense, where the knowledge of specific subject matter should be considered a subcomponent of translation competence and be complemented by further sub-competences, both innate and acquired.

Orlando (2016) researched the difference between a translator trained for legal translation vs. lawyer trained for legal translation. The conclusion was that “The analysis shed light on the different levels of translation competence displayed by the two groups, with direct implications for the identification of their specific training needs. In particular, the results indicate a more superficial approach for lawyers, who mainly focused on the micro-textual level, problematised little and produced poor quality translations. By contrast, the findings suggest that the translation-specific training of translators enabled them to reach acceptable quality levels, despite their lack of subject-field specialisation. The identification of a possible correlation between the different backgrounds of the participants and the quality of their translation thus appears to suggest that a translation background is in fact a fundamental component of legal translation competence, to be integrated with the necessary legal knowledge” (Orlando 2016: 7). The results led to the first, empirical attempt both at validating the integrative EMT-based model for legal translation competence developed as part of the QUALETRA project, which provided the theoretical foundation for the study, and grounding the notion that “a competent legal translator is first of all a competent translator” (Cao 2007: 39).

Building on previous holistic multicomponent paradigms of macro-competence (PACTE, in particular), Prieto Ramos (2011) proposes an integra-

tive process-oriented approach to legal translation competence focused on legal translation-specific know-how within the key methodological or strategic sub-competence that controls all other sub-competences. This approach is grounded in professional practice and includes all the relevant components but the combination of individual translator competence with process requirements might be confusing if one tries to use the resulting model for the purpose of actually validating professional practice and competence (especially in terms of operative knowledge) in real life scenarios.

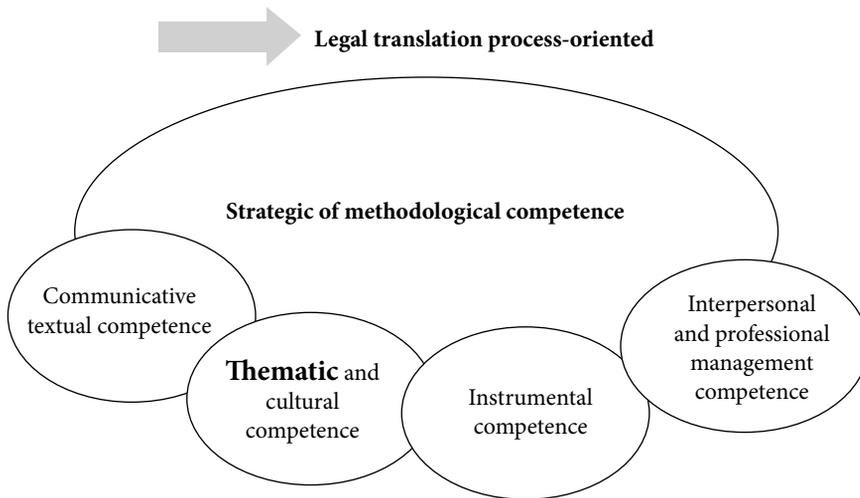


Figure 4. Legal Translator Competences Model based on Prieto Ramos 2011

Apart from the generic skills required for all translation work, in Prieto Ramos's approach the strategic or methodological competence includes self-assessment and quality control which is somewhat puzzling as there is no real explanation of how the latter is relevant for individual competence except for a general statement further on in the article to the effect that "*Quality control* in legal translation requires particular emphasis on accuracy and effectiveness of legal communication when assuring the macro-textual coherence of solutions to the semantic, procedural and reformulation problems encountered." (Prieto Ramos 2011:17). Moreover, when discussing revision as a critical final phase of the translation process, Prieto Ramos does not specify that revision is an activity performed by another equally competent translator/reviser. These remarks about quality control are confusing because it is difficult to imagine any professional translation process where a translator effectively and objectively performs self-assessment and auto-quality control.

Furthermore, in the model based on Prieto Ramos's approach (see Figure 4), communicative and textual competence includes specialized legal linguistic uses and legal genre conventions, and the interpersonal and professional management competence includes knowledge of legal framework for professional practice and fiscal obligations as well as deontological aspects. In this specialized context, 'thematic' (domain) competence constitutes a distinctive feature of legal translation competence (hence the emphasis in Figure 4) and includes: knowledge of legal systems, hierarchy of legal sources, branches of law and main legal concepts, awareness of asymmetry between legal notions and structures in different legal traditions. In Prieto Ramos's view, the core of that sub-competence would be very close to the practical principles of comparative law. He also distinguishes other elements of legal science and legal linguistic knowledge as part of legal translation competence, such as:

- Scope of specialization: classification of legal genres (textual competence);
- Comparative legal linguistics: features of legal discourse in the source and the target languages and jurisdictions (communicative and textual competence);
- Documentation: specialized legal sources (instrumental competence);
- Professional practice: market conditions, associations and deontology issues in legal translation (interpersonal and professional management competence).

(Prieto Ramos 2011:13)

It seems that Prieto Ramos was quite forward thinking when he proposed in 2011 a legal translation competence approach based on the previous holistic multicomponent paradigms of translation macro-competence but aimed at avoiding conceptual duplications and with a focus on professional practice (including incorporation of distinctive legal thematic elements) (Prieto Ramos 2011: 7). Unfortunately, he does not include objective assessment (e.g. revision) among the elements that are important for the legal translation quality process. Nevertheless, his argument that the integral development of legal translation competence requires specific interdisciplinary methodologies and needs to be process-oriented, focus on the legal translation-specific know-how, a combination of practical translation skills and legal knowledge and adhere to a rigorous translation process, reflects some of the thinking behind the legal translator competence requirements set in the ISO 20771 standard as well. However, the distinction between translator competence and process requirements is clearly made in the ISO 20771 standard and this more comprehensive approach allows not only for practical assessment of individual translator competence based on

measurable skills and qualifications but also independent process validation in real life situations. This distinction is also important from the point of view of methodology because assessment of individual competence and performance is always retrospective, while process requirement mapping is always a prospective activity that falls under quality assurance.

5. ISO 20771 Overview

Legal translation is a specialization which covers law related or legal specialist field translation in terms of content as well as context (e.g. legal settings). Given the potential legal consequences, formal and liability issues, this specialization requires specific competences and a professional approach from the individuals involved. The standard explicitly states that due to the formalized and sensitive nature of the subject matter in certain countries, settings and under certain circumstances legal translators may be subject to specific professional, confidentiality and ethical requirements, authorisation, certification, and/or security clearance procedures (ISO 20771: v).

ISO 20771 is intended for implementation by individual translators who specialize in the provision of legal translation services. The standard specifies requirements for the competences and qualifications of legal translators, revisers and reviewers. In particular, it specifies the core processes, resources, continuous professional development, training and other aspects of the legal translation service provided by individual translators. Fulfilment of the requirements set out in the standard enables the individual legal translator to demonstrate their capability to maintain a desired level of quality in legal translation services that will meet the Client's and other applicable specifications and therefore be considered a fit for purpose specialist translation product. ISO 20771 takes a similar approach to translator competences as ISO 17100 and adds domain knowledge and specialist legal field practical understanding and skills to the generic competences. The standard requirement is that legal translators "shall have the following competences:

- a) **Translation competence:** the ability to translate specialist legal content, including the ability to address the problems of specialist language content comprehension and production, and the ability to render the target language content in accordance with the project specifications, using the correct language register, specialist terminology and taking into account other aspects of legal translation specialization,
- b) **Linguistic and textual competence in the source language and the target language:** the ability to fully understand the source language,

fluency in the target language, and knowledge of specialist genre conventions, language registers, legal collocations and terminology in both the source and target language. The linguistic and textual competence includes the ability to apply this knowledge and specialist legal terminology when producing legal translation,

- c) **Specialist legal field competence:** the ability to understand specialist legal content produced in the source language and to reproduce it in the target language, using the appropriate up-to-date specialist legal language register, genre conventions, terminology and style. If required and authorised to do so, a legal translator should have the knowledge of proper procedure for certifying a translation,
- d) **Competence in research, information acquisition and processing:** the ability to efficiently acquire additional specialist legal knowledge or source documents and terminology necessary to understand and process specialist source language content, to produce the legal specialist target language content, and to critically assess the credibility and reliability of all the resources. Research competence also requires experience in the use of research tools and search engines, the ability to develop suitable specialist terminology bases and strategies for the efficient use of the information sources available, evaluation of their relevance and credibility in a given context, and source. If required, to be capable of providing information about the requirements for legalization or authorisation of translated legal documents,
- e) **Legal culture competence:** ability to make use of information on behavioural standards, value systems, understanding of legal procedures and systems, language registers and locale that characterize both source and target language legal cultures and are relevant to the specialisations and settings that the legal translator is dealing with as well as ability to understand the distinction and cultural and factual implications behind different legal systems and approaches (intersystemic, intrasystemic or acultural),
- f) **Technical competence:** abilities and skills required to perform the technical tasks in the specialist translation process by accessing and employing technical resources, and using tools, templates, electronic signature systems, data safety and security systems, document and terminology data bases and IT systems that support the legal translation process.” (ISO 20771:2020: 5.1).

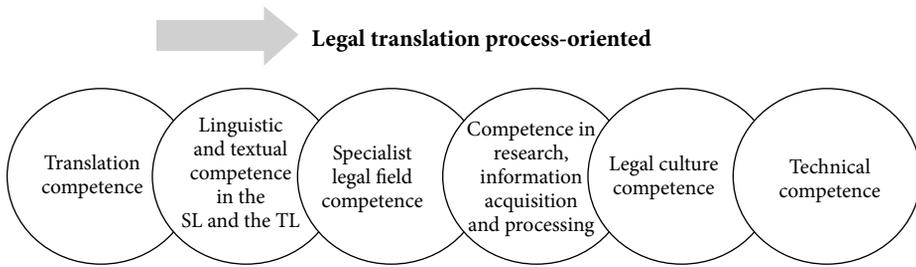


Figure 5. Legal Translator Competence Model based on ISO 20771

The competences referenced above are seen as complementary to the minimum legal translator qualifications requirements and that is why they are quite general. What is more, it is relatively easy to devise methods of assessing them in practice. For example, the competences described in points a) to f) can all be measured and validated by way of legal translation tests using the technical and other resources described in point f) (ISO 20771:2020: 5.1). Also, the referenced models do not generally include lists of specific skills such as the use of templates, electronic signature systems, security systems, terminology data bases etc. So, based on the above reasoning and the research done as part of the QUALETRA project and Prieto Ramos's work, one may conclude that the legal translator competences set in ISO 20771 include similar competence components as those discussed in the referenced research, but the referenced research does not take into account all the components set in the standard, and there are some notable conceptual and terminological differences which make the standard more operational. The differences in approach are even more pronounced when one takes into account some of the other ISO 20771 requirements.

6. Other ISO 20771 requirements relevant for the discussion on legal translator competence

The ISO 20771 qualification requirements complement the competence ones. ISO 20771 standard requires that a legal translator shall meet at least one of five criteria in relation to the relevant language pair and have documented evidence to support this. Thus, in order to demonstrate conformance, the legal translator “shall meet one of the following requirements:

- a) has obtained a recognized degree in translation, language studies or an equivalent degree that includes a significant translation training component from an institution of higher education and a post-graduate degree in law or another specialist legal field from an institution of higher

- education and has the equivalent of at least three years' full-time professional experience in translating within the legal field;
- b) has obtained a recognized degree in law or another specialist legal field from an institution of higher education and has the equivalent of at least three years' full-time professional experience in translating documents within the legal field;
 - c) has obtained a recognized degree in translation or any field from an institution of higher education and has the equivalent of at least five years' full-time professional experience in translating in the legal field;
 - d) has obtained a recognized degree in any field from an institution of higher education and a recognized professional qualification as a certified legal translator from an officially recognized professional organisation and has the equivalent of at least three years' full-time professional experience in translating in the legal field;
 - e) has obtained an officially recognized qualification as an authorised legal translator on the basis of relevant national requirements and regulations." (ISO 20771:2020:5.2).

Once again, the qualifications described above are quite specific and it is relatively easy to validate them by asking the translator for documented proof thereof. The full-time professional experience in translating within the legal field requirement can be validated through relevant references, copies of contracts and other documented evidence of such experience. It is noteworthy that the other approaches and models referenced do not include any specific translator qualification requirements or experience component which makes them less useful than standards from the practical point of view (e.g. when a translator needs to demonstrate the fulfilment of specific requirements for the purpose of certification, as part of procurement or recruitment process etc.).

Additionally, there are some other important requirements and recommendations set in ISO 20771 which are also relevant in the context of the discussion on competence and professional translation practice, such as:

- requirement to perform full revision (obligatory) and review (recommended) of all translations;
- responsibility of the legal translator towards the client for the whole process, which includes fulfilling all the specifications and ensuring that independent revision takes place;
- requirement to have some sort of service agreement and service specification in place for the translation service;
- requirement to follow a standard process for managing a translation project;

-
- recommendation for signing off on the translation (if possible) and record keeping in order to ensure full transparency and traceability;
 - requirement for dealing with feedback, complaints, and taking corrective action;
 - requirement for maintaining confidentiality and security
 - recommendation for carrying professional liability insurance and a related requirement which stipulates that the client shall be informed if the translator is uninsured.

It is noteworthy that the ISO 20771 is the first ISO standard which sets a clear recommendation that translators should engage in continuous professional development and maintain documented proof of such activities. The standard also outlines how this should be achieved.

A comparison of the approach proposed by Prieto Ramos (Prieto Ramos 2011) and the ISO 20771 standard shows that the most notable differences are:

- the clear distinction between competence, qualification and translation process in ISO 20771 is missing in Prieto Ramos's approach and makes his recommendations much less comprehensive and inoperable in practice;
- the structured model (integrating competence, qualification and translation process) proposed in ISO 20771 is based on measurable criteria, reflects actual market practice and allows for validation of all requirements and conformance assessment while Prieto Ramos's model is held together by the strategic/methodological meta-competence and focuses on thematic competence, and other aspects of professional practice, which are purely descriptive and hence difficult to implement and validate objectively;
- Prieto Ramos's strategic/methodological meta-competence-centred approach references self-assessment and quality control but sets no actual requirements while ISO 20771 proposes a clear requirements model for legal translator competences, qualifications and the relevant process which includes quality control measures and steps;
- the ISO 20771 requirement that all legal translation shall be revised by another equally competent translator/reviser is clearly missing in Prieto Ramos's approach and this is a serious weakness - suggestions of translator self-assessment and self-revision at the conclusion of the translation process are inconsistent with industry best practice and do not contribute anything relevant to the ongoing discussion on objective translation quality control.

The most notable similarities between ISO 20771 and Prieto Ramos's approach involve the focus on legal domain competence (albeit the terminology and model is different in ISO 20771 and there is a complementary relationship between minimum competence and qualification requirements), professional practice and the legal translation process orientation.

The above overview of ISO 20771 requirements and analysis of relevant approaches demonstrates that the referenced industry standards reflect actual best practice and are in-line with the EQF and its strategic goals. Furthermore, ISO 20771 and ISO 17100 are written using standardized industry terminology and use comprehensive models, measurable professional qualifications, experience and other minimum requirements as the benchmarks for conformance assessment. ISO 20771 is focused on the specialist and practical aspects of legal translation and it sets a wide range of professional requirements and offers recommendations relevant not only to legal translators but all translation professionals.

7. Conclusions

ISO industry standards are developed by key stakeholders on the basis of consensus, existing best practice and with the aim of addressing actual market needs and filling important standardization gaps. They are probably the most important and comprehensive professional resource available on the market. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that the relevant ISO industry standards should be taken on board and used widely within both the industry and the academia. The lack of relevant and informed publications on industry standards indicates that there are still research gaps in this area and more information campaigns are needed.

The EQF Recommendation launched many important initiatives aimed at standardizing academic teaching programmes and setting the same level of comprehensive educational and professional requirements but this has not necessarily translated into the general adoption of a uniform approach to translator competence outside the industry. ISO industry standards have taken a pragmatic approach to translator competence, validation and resulting qualifications. By associating competence with individuals and referring to specific, auditable criteria and requirements for the purpose of documenting and validating competence in practice and setting required minimum qualifications, ISO standards are operational, certifiable and therefore contribute to the creation of professional certification schemes that can be complementary to or alternative to formal academic qualifications.

ISO 17100 translator competence and qualification requirements are referenced here to show the difference between the ISO 20771 approach to specialist legal translator competence and qualification requirements and general translator requirements. Since ISO 20771 and ISO 17100 share the same approach and terminology, they are in many ways complementary and easy to analyse side-by-side. As stated above, analysis of the ISO industry requirements standards demonstrates that they are in-line with the EQF and have contributed to some of the more recent theoretical approaches of translator competence.

Analysis of academic approaches to translator competence poses a greater challenge. There is a conceptual overlap between ISO standards and the referenced theoretical approaches but there are also some significant differences in application and terminology. From the industry's point of view, ISO translation requirements standards are much more useful than theoretical frameworks or models developed for policy or academic reasons. This is a function of their purpose. Standards are industry-driven and if they do not reflect best practice and/or are difficult to implement by market players, then they fail to fulfil their main purpose and are considered invalid. Hence, one might posit that academic approaches are less pragmatic, and objective than standards and may use different terminology for more or less the same concepts because they are not validated in practice and the uptake of relevant ISO standards among the academia is significantly slower than in case of other stakeholders. It is worth mentioning here that translation and interpreting terminology has been standardized for some years now and ISO 17100 and ISO 20771 have contributed significantly to this effort. Relevant standardized terminology has also been published in ISO 20539:2019 *Translation, interpreting, and related technology – Vocabulary*.

An important requirement set in both ISO 17100 and ISO 20771 is that all translations have to be revised by a competent reviser after the translator has performed all the required checks. None of the referenced frameworks or models mention this requirement or specific reviser competence requirements in spite of the fact that it is considered by the industry to be a crucial element of translation quality assurance and assessment. In fact, revision competence is still in much higher demand on the top-end market than post-editing competence. Therefore, it is not surprising that some of the previous research on conceptualizing and describing translator competence may be less useful nowadays and ISO industry standards have filled this gap. Given the fact that ISO standards are developed in response to actual market demand and their usefulness has been positively verified in practice, their wider adoption is evidently a win-win option for all stakeholders.

Based on implementation and certification figures, it is clear that the industry uptake of ISO standards has been phenomenal. The European Union initiatives are also driving projects aimed at better adjustment of individual competence and qualifications to the requirements of knowledge society, and academic programmes are trying to adjust to market needs and benchmarks. Given the fact that one of the EQF aims is adaptation of education and training systems in the Community to the demands of today's knowledge society, promoting lifelong learning and increasing employability, it is reasonable to expect that graduates and post-graduates should have more practical experience and access to know-how about the profession and the industry. Most of this information is provided in ISO industry standards.

The ISO translation standards discussed in this article address the issue of competence validation and minimum professional competence-based qualifications of a translator and define the different options in a consistent, clear and objective way, which is seen as one of their main strengths. Despite the growing consensus on translation competence as a multi-faceted or multi-component model comprising several core components and their dynamic interrelation, more research is needed on practical application and instruments for objective validation of specialist translator competence. The approach to practical application is the main difference between theoretical models and standards. There are on-going discussions within the industry on what is required of translator education and training nowadays and there is a consensus that it needs to focus more on actual market requirements and the dynamic changes taking place within the industry. In time, as ISO industry standards are taken on board by all stakeholders, there will be more publications on this subjects and standards will definitely be used as an important resource for training of future translators and their continuous professional development.

To conclude, certain conceptual elements of academic competence models are reflected in standards (albeit the specific terminology and classification methods may differ) but standards have a different function (hence the pragmatic approach), they reflect the changes taking place in the industry more closely and they reference the experience and validation factor as an element of translator competence and qualifications as a matter of course. Furthermore, standards are much more comprehensive, operational and readable – which is of course also a function of their practical application. Last but not least, as opposed to the academic or hybrid models, standards generally set measurable minimum requirements because otherwise they could not be used for conformance assessment. If, for some reason, some elements of best practice are not cru-

cial, measurable or operational, and therefore difficult to implement or validate, they are treated in standards as recommendations (not requirements).

The background information and presented analysis indicate that while the translation industry is becoming more mature and the dynamic development of relevant industry standards is driving specialisation and professionalization, and the other way round, ISO standards still need to be promoted more actively and used as a key resource for translator education. Therefore, this overview of industry's pragmatic approach to legal translator competence and other requirements, as reflected primarily in ISO 20771, within a wider research and standardization context also outlines some of the practical implications of standardization in the hope that this might become the starting point for more analysis and discussions on the subject in the future.

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