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HOW TO RAISE QUALITY ASSURANCE IN LEGAL TRANSLATION: THE QUESTION OF OBJECTIVITY?

Abstract. The aim of the present study is to propose an approach to legal translation quality so as to address the idiosyncrasies in legal studies and to confront the challenges and flaws of previous paradigms and models of translation quality assessment. The present approach is associated with the micro-macro textual, contextual, and legal components/variables in the pursuit of an adequate strategy through elaborating the decision making process for translation. The elements of the decision making process remain constant between translation relevancy/brief, and the translation product in the source text analysis, reformulation and revision stages. Translation competence, translation product, and the translation decision making process are all the evaluative standards for both quality controllers and translators. Also, this study scrutinizes the impact of translation quality assessment involving professional and training contexts besides managerial quality. In the upshot, this approach has the potential to reduce subjectivity in the quality of legal translation based on particular methodologies. The proposed framework assists the need for the evaluation of the quality of legal translation to boost the quality benchmarks in the professional environment.

Keywords: legal translation quality, adequacy strategy, translation competence, translation decision making process, translation product.

1. Introduction

Translation quality, especially in multimodal contexts such as legal translation, has played a significant role in evolving legal translation studies. No one can deny the legitimacy of legal translation across nations, since the purpose of legal contexts is to provide equal rights, to further reciprocal understanding within society. However, the issue of quality in legal translation has sustained a specific question in this field. The process of translation, translation competence, and ultimately translation product have become the centre of attention in legal translation. In spite of the various research articles and the theoretical works in this field, the legal translators have

been more or less directed through their own impression in handling the problems of legal translation (Šarčević 1997). Generally, the consequences of inadequate legal translation can be considered serious for the public sectors, the private sectors, and for legal certainty (Byrne 2007). Since legal translation is a specific part of professional interpreting and translation, it requires relevant qualifications and technical expertise to guarantee the quality of legal translation (Borja Albi and Prieto-Ramos 2013). Accordingly, to corroborate the quality of legal translation, some questions may be asked: (1) what factors describe quality in legal translation; (2) which components have an influence on quality in legal translation; (3) who is going to evaluate the quality of legal translation; and (4) through which means may quality be enhanced.

The language of legal contexts is more ‘jargonized’ (Mattila 2006) and ‘complex’ equipped with specialised lexicons making this genre to be incomprehensible for laypersons (Hargitt 2013). According to Tiersma (2004):

The most salient feature of the structure legal texts is that they are highly formulaic or stereotypical. Some texts can be quite elaborate in terms of structure, of course, but routine legal documents tend to follow a predetermined structure that changes little over time. A statute, for instance, normally has some or all of the following elements; *Long titles*: an act to consolidate certain enactments relating to the constitution and proceedings of the Scottish Land Court; *Enactment Clause*: be it enacted by the Queen’s most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same; *Substantive Provisions*: (1) The Scottish Land Court shall continue in being; (2) one of the members of the Land Court shall be a person who can speak the Gaelic language; *Short title or citation*: this act may be cited as the Scottish Land Court Act 1993.

In the process of translation, factors such as source and target languages, translation process, translation product, translation competence, and the text conventions are of great significance; they form the ‘sphere of communication’ (González-Jover 2011). Sparer (2002: 275) argues that:

Un texte, juridique ou non, est avant tout un instrument de communication. Il n’est pas si clair que des juristes ou des médecins par exemple aient toujours les aptitudes à la communication qui garantiraient aux lecteurs et aux lectrices un texte d’arrivéé compréhensible.

(Gloss) A text, to be legal, is above all an apparatus of communication. It doesn’t particularly follow the lawyers or medical practitioners; for example, always having the communication skills that guarantee their readers a text which is clearly comprehensible in the target language (Author’s translation from French).

Williams (2004) defines quality certitude or assurance as the ‘systematic pre-delivery activity or activities designed to give assurance that a translation meets quality requirements’. In line with Williams, Saldanha and O’Brien (2013) consider the term quality assurance as the ‘systems and processes used to help create or maintain quality’. With this idea, to prove quality assurance in translation, two key components are required: (1) measurement and (2) judgment (Maier 2000). According to Mossop (2007), quality assurance involves the translator’s self-reformulation, the reviser’s evaluation and reading through quality controllers. Brunette (2000: 173) pointed out that translation quality assessment and quality control are considered as ‘management terms’ involving:

- (1) determination of the quality of a translated text or a check after the fact for a management purpose, i.e. measuring the productivity of translators and the quality/price ratio of translations;
- (2) verification to ensure that the product to be delivered or already delivered complies with the requirements, language norms, and the established criteria with the ultimate goal of saving time and resources.

Last but not least, the purpose of the current article is to propose an approach linking the micro-macro textual, contextual, and legal variables in favour of acceptability and adequacy in translation to enhance the quality of legal translation. Finally, the proposed approach pinpoints the inherent advantages of diminishing the subjectivity of legal translation in terms of particular methodologies and evaluative criteria.

2. Obstacles Occurring during the Process of Legal Translation

There are a number of bodies of research carried out separately by linguists, terminologists, comparative lawyers, and translation researchers devoted to legal translation through the perspectives of methodologies, approaches, and strategies (Biel and Engberg 2013: 2) in line with their interests in their disciplines. In this respect, lawyers show their interests to the theoretical facets of legal systems and their consequences (Pommer 2006); linguists’ interests lie in the areas of semantic, syntactic, pragmatic, stylistic, and discursive aspects of legal translation (Bhatia 2004). Lastly, translation researchers often launch an unbending enquiry into problems of equivalents, the ways to solve legal translation problems, and the ways to define legal translation (Cao 2007). Normally, every translator faces some problems during the process of translation. According

to Dagut (1981), a ‘semantic void’ makes critical problems during the process of translation. A void is regarded here as a ‘phenomenon’ and a ‘contrastive concept’ illustrating the ‘lexical relation’ between any two languages. Dagut (1981) categorizes voids into referential and linguistic. The former mostly attempts at ‘transcribing’ and ‘explaining’ the intended equivalence. Transcription demonstrates ‘the translator’s sense of the untranslatability of the void’ while explanation indicates that transcription does not transfer the critical components of the source language. Linguistic voids allude to the ‘replacement of a TL (*target language*) word by the whole SL (*source language*) phrase’, which is completely different from referential void.

Orozco and Sánchez-Gijón (2011: 27) classify the problems occurring during the process of legal translation into different levels. These levels include ‘macro-textual lexical level’, ‘micro-textual level’, and ‘textual level’. The first level intrinsically embraces four different possibilities: (1) ‘A legal equivalent’: this refers to a term in the target language having a similar ‘concept’ in the source language. (2) ‘A contextual equivalent’: this indicates a term in SL having diverse equivalents in TL depending on the context where it is used. (3) ‘Calque’ might be utilized when ‘no equivalent exists in the target legal system’. Finally, (4) ‘periphrastic translation’ alludes to ‘a source-text term’ into the target legal system. The second level (micro-textual level) may be used at the ‘sentence level’. Consequently, Matulewska and Gortych-Michalak (2014: 249) typify the common problems in which a translator may encounter in the course of legal translation as ‘(i) errors resulting from the lack of competence as far as law is concerned; (ii) spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors in native and foreign language; and (iii) translation errors resulting from insufficient knowledge of legal translation techniques, methods, and strategies.”

To cut a long story short, a translator is responsible for choosing ‘phraseological equivalents’ into the target language to meet the expectations of the reader with regard to ‘syntax’ and ‘style conventions’. Correspondingly, for the last level (the textual level), the translator is responsible for recreating the peculiar traits of the source language ‘macrostructure’ in the target language, while considering ‘the possibility of having to adopt it to the particular characteristics of the same genre in the target legal system’. In other words,

It is the legal translator’s responsibility to find adequate ways of explaining, transmitting, and clarifying the aspect [*concepts*] for readers with a different legal background to be able to grasp the meaning as accurately as possible from their viewpoint of the legal world (Pommer 2008: 362).

3. Legal Translation: Quality Standards

In order to analyse the quality of translation, two questions may be asked: (1) what are the criteria to evaluate the quality of translation? And (2) how can one measure the quality of translation? As House (1997), puts it ‘different views of translation lead to different concepts of translational quality, and hence different ways of assessing quality’. To prove the identity of purpose and readership in translation quality, Hague et al., (2011) introduce the term ‘substantial convergence’ which ‘reflects general agreement about the role of extra-textual factors such as audience and purpose, which have long been basic to functionalism’. As a matter of fact, in the academic sphere, adequacy (Colina 2008; Al-Qinai 2000), situatedness (Martín 2010), and appropriateness (ATA 2011) are considered key components in translation quality. The terms mentioned above are very common and their applications rely upon the judgment of an evaluator/translator. To measure the quality of translation, Angelelli (2009) views the ‘creative solutions to translation problems’ as a top level in translation assessment. However, the question is, “How is it possible to reach creative solutions and when is it adequate?” According to Bowker (2001), the ‘primary difficulty surrounding the issue of translation evaluation’ resides in the ‘very fuzzy and shifting boundaries’. This is so because the models of translation quality have been extended ‘with literary, advertising, and journalistic translation in mind and the principles underlying them do not necessarily apply to other types of instrumental translation’ (Williams 2004).

Legal translation due to its congruity to legal sources and discourses give little ground to subjectivity. It is associated with the rules of legal interpretation, comparative law, and legal conditions to attain maximum adequacy. According to Prieto-Ramos (2015), ‘in most existing approaches to quality, the role explicitly or implicitly assigned to intuition and the relativism associated with subjective judgments do not meet those priorities’. To prove this, Al-Qinai (2000) contends ‘quality is relative and absolute of accuracy; it ceases where the end-user (i.e. client) imposes his own subjective preferences of style in target text. Standardization of quality is thus a grey fuzzy area’. The gulf between legal translation pedagogy and translation quality evaluation is moreover underlined through a terminological decision evaluation approach. In this direction, legal terminologies are the key elements of legal translation practice and the evaluation quality. Legal terminologies consist of specialised competences such as comparative legal analysis. Also, the jargonized and specialised legal terminologies constrain the appropriateness of the traditional lexicographical assets of legal

translation (Prieto-Ramos 2014). Therefore, on the basis of translation quality assessment/evaluation, the components of a specialised terminology are taken from established solutions and the evaluation of types which contrast with the all-purpose binary ‘equivalents’ (ibid.). As noted by de Groot (2006: 424),

When the target language and the source language relate to different legal systems, absolute equivalence is impossible. For example, can the German word *Ehescheidung* be translated into French with *divorce* or into Italian with *divorzio*? We know that the grounds are different in Germany, France, and Italy and further, that there are essential differences regarding the nature of the marriage, which is dissolved, specifically in the field of marital property law.

By the same token, Gény (1922) has pointed out that there does not exist any ‘absolute equivalence’, rather than a ‘textual adjustment’. Farrar and Dugdale (1990: 78) then clarify that:

Concepts are more like chess pieces. They can be maneuvered to produce certain results but the players have a choice as to the move. Similarly, lawyers and judges often have a choice as to how they will move the concepts.

Despite the flaws of evaluating legal translation quality, the Skopos approach to translation quality has paved the way for providing textual and linguistic types to be examined in reformulation and translation evaluation (e.g. stylistic conventions, coherence, cohesion, etc.). In this direction, Al-Qinai (2000), Mossop (2007), Angelelli (2009), and Colina (2008) proposed the assessment criteria in various approaches to evaluate the quality of translation. Al-Qinai (2000) suggests the following criteria: (1) tenor and textual typology, (2) formal correspondence such as logos, punctuation, etc., (3) thematic structure coherence, (4) cohesion, (5) dynamic equivalence, (6) syntactic equivalence, and (7) register properties. In line with Al-Qinai (2000), Mossop (2007) proposes the following criteria to evaluate translation quality assessment (TQA): (1) transfer such as accuracy, (2) factual and logical contents, (3) language and style including punctuation, cohesion, house style, tailoring, etc., and (4) presentation (e.g. organization and typography). In doing so, to attain a better balance ‘between theoretical sophistication and applicability’, Colina (2008) diminishes the number of evaluative criteria compared to Al-Qinai (2000) and Mossop’s (2007) approaches. Colina (2008) recommends the following criteria: (1) target language such as grammar, lexicon, spelling, etc., (2) textual and functional adequacy, (3) non-specialized meaning, and (4) specialized terminology. As a result, Angelelli (2009) proposes: (1) the meaning of the source text,

(2) cohesion and stylistic convention, (3) translation skill, (4) grammar and mechanics, and (5) situational appropriateness as the assessment criteria for TQA. With this in mind, EN (15038: 2006) is the quality benchmark applied to date for translation service providers. This translation service depends on reformulation and revision to check the appropriateness and suitability of translation involving the juxtaposition of the source text to the target one in terms of terminology consistency and accuracy, style, and register. This system specifies the evaluators/revisers that render experiences in the considered discipline. Also, EN (15038: 2006) specifies that the task of a translator is to pay attention to terminologies, lexical cohesion, grammar, formatting, local conventions, the function of the translation, stylistic conventions, and the target group. Despite all these traits, this system does not express anything regarding the parameters for measuring the relevance of translation. According to Gouadec (2010: 271), this service system is

No more than a compendium of what the prime contractor or work provider, on the one hand, and the translator or translation company on the other hand, should do to contribute to quality assurance in translation, on the assumption that, if the conditions for quality assurance are met, the end-product will be of good quality.

In other words, while the benchmark (standard) may have positive effects on the sector, it will not underwrite the quality of translation (Biel, 2011). As Biel (2011: 62) argues, this standard concentrates on the entire translation service rather than on a translated product (text). The standard mandates translation service providers to ensure the quality of legal translation and motivates the improvement in service. On the other hand, it will not address the ways of evaluating the target text.

The two other translation benchmarks addressing the error categories in evaluating the product are LISA Q.A Model 3.1 and J2450 TQM. LISA QA model 3.1 was developed on the basis of the localization projects. This model is user-friendly and consists of a series of templates and forms combined together in a database (Stejskal, 2006). Also, LISA QA model is equipped with seven predefined error levels as (1) mistranslation, (2) accuracy, (3) terminology, (4) language, (5) style, (6) country, and (7) consistency (Parra, 2005). Each error of this typology might influence the quality of the target text. In this direction, this typology has three degrees of seriousness: (1) major, (2) minor, and finally critical errors. Depending on the significance of any errors, a minor error deducts 1 point, a major one deducts 5 points, and a critical one deducts 5 points on the basis of the

location of the error in the document. Despite the merits of this model, Jiménez-Crespo (2009) observes that the error typology of this model ‘lacks an empirical base and that some error categories overlap’. O’Brien (2012) argues that unlike other quality models which are based on counting the number of errors and tagged as process-oriented models, LISA QA model and J2450 are quantitatively based. According to Mateo (2014), they are all trying to ‘identify, classify, and allocate severity level and apply penalty points to errors’; besides, they meticulously stipulate the prevalent macro and micro error categories such as language, terminology, accuracy, and style. On the other hand, J2450 was developed for a standardized grade and it was ‘regarded as only one element in a total quality assurance process, albeit an important one’ (J2450, 2001). This system deals only with the linguistic errors and it never identifies the cause of errors. Its rudimentary task is to detect, tag, and count the linguistic errors on the basis of evaluation grids. Perhaps one of the major merits of this system is to even count the errors of the source text, which the translator faithfully transfers into the target text. The errors, in accordance with this system, can be grouped into seven ranks as follows: (1) a wrong term, (2) a syntactic error, (3) an omission, (4) an agreement error, (5) misspelling, (6) a punctuation error, and (7) a miscellaneous error.

Table 1

J2450 Error Typology (2001)

Main Category	(abb.)	Sub-Category	Weight (Serious-Minor)
Wrong Term	(WT)	Serious (S)	5/2
Syntactic Error	(SF)	Minor (m)	4/2
Omission	(OM)		4/2
Agreement Error	(SA)		4/2
Misspelling	(SP)		3/1
Punctuation Error	(PE)		2/1
Miscellaneous Error	(ME)		3/1

On balance, no assessment criteria can be fruitful unless they are followed by specialised expertise to identify the translation problems. Therefore, legal translation quality models require integrating the parameters of

decision-making and translation skill in order to assess the adequacy of the end-product micro-macro text with a special focus on ‘legal terminology as a quality marker’ (Prieto-Ramos 2015).

4. Legal Translation: A Quality Approach

The proposed approach is an attempt to highlight the features of legal translation, to address the characteristics of legal translation, and to confront the limitations posed by the standard quality approaches. The proposed approach consists of three core parts: (1) the parameters of the decision making process that predict the criteria for the legal translation quality assurance. In fact, the elements of translation adequacy strategy maintain a consensus for quality assessment, problem solving, and finally for competence demands. Such components do not rely upon subjective intuitions; rather, they depend upon the legal circumstances tarrying between translation relevance and translation product in pre-post-delivery stages and revision assessment stages. By the same token, Al-Qinai (2000: 479) clarifies that...

The tendency to ignore the process of decision making lies behind the lack of objectivity in translation assessment. Consequently, any attempt to evaluate translations by analytic comparison of the source text (ST) and target text (TT) is bound to divert away from accuracy without considering the procedures undertaken by the translator to resolve problems (Hatim and Mason 1990).

Therefore, translation quality assessment approaches are likely to be beneficial and practical if the parameters of the decision making process are combined into the evaluation process (Lauscher 2000). (2) The second part connects the decision making parameters such as legal, contextual, and macro-micro textual features to the translation process, and amalgamates them into product evaluation and competence, to build up ‘an operative model of analysis for translation evaluation which is capable of bringing together textual, contextual, and functionalist criteria’ (Martínez et al, 2001: 274). Consequently (3), the third part entails the observation of legal translation problems on the basis of the professional settings available since the late 1990s (Prieto-Ramos 1998; 2002 and 2013) after being successfully addressed and tested for training purposes at postgraduate level (Prieto-Ramos 2015: 17). According to Bush (1997: 66), ‘quality evaluation should be related to a much closer analysis of the work of professional translators’.

4.1. Quality Assurance: Translation Decision Making Process

The outline of the translation decision making process links the principles of the purpose oriented paradigm (functionalist) to the pragmatic aspects of legal translation. Translation adequacy is addressed throughout the stages, from the definition of overall strategy for translation adequacy to the source text analysis, reformulation, and then the revision stage.

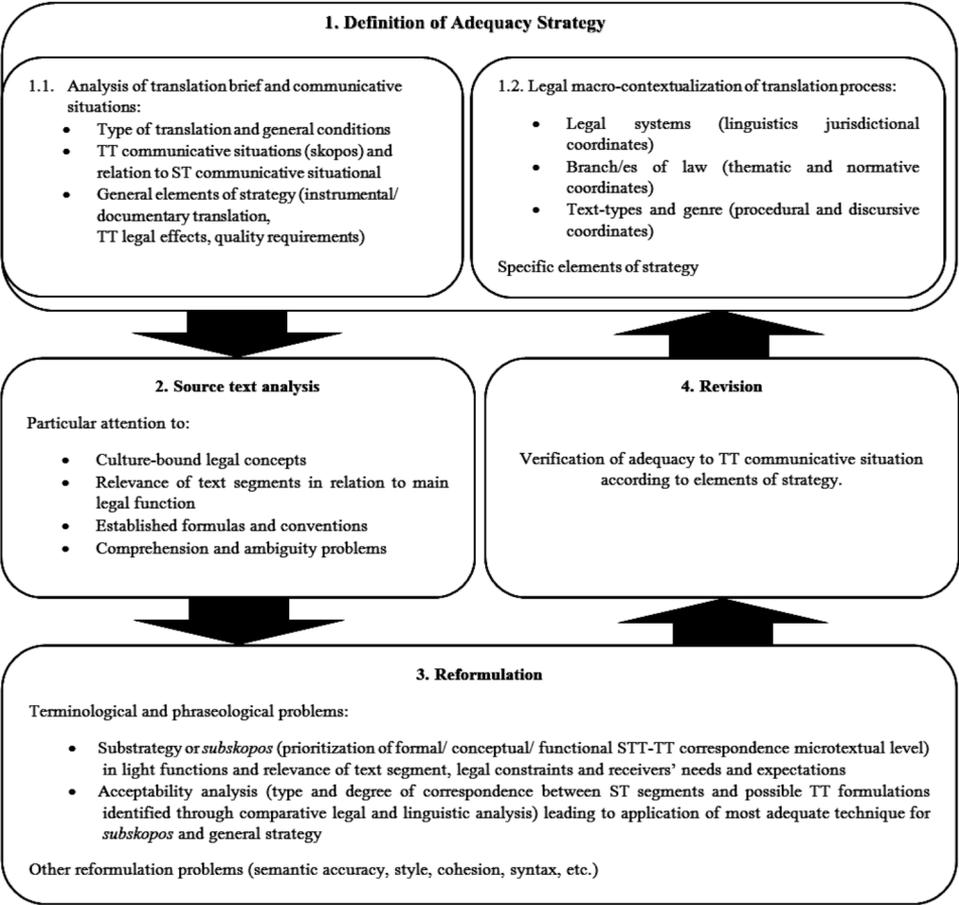


Figure 1. Translation Making Process Outline (Prieto-Ramos 2014)

The above figure responds to the needs of the micro-textual to macro-textual levels of translation oriented analysis in professional contexts. It addresses the whole process of the translation stages and regards the particular aspects for solving the legal translation problems which a translator may encounter in the process of translation. As a consequence, ‘the definition of

the overall translation strategy' is in accordance with (1) the communicative situation and translation relevance such as the general conditions of translation and ST-TT relation and (2) the three parameters: legal systems, legal genre and text typology, along with the branches of law. The intended parameters contribute to the legal, communicative, normative, thematic, and procedural conditions.

In the case of source text analysis, the renderer checks some criteria, such as coherence, culturally-bound concepts, stylistic conventions, cohesion, text segments, and comprehension issues at the micro-textual level. This stage is remarkably significant due to the fact that it determines the nature of the legal concepts (terminologies) and other stylistic conventions related to the legal texts and addresses ambiguity problems through applying similar legal sources. If the translator encounters any problem at this stage, s/he will find the answer in the next stage (reformulation). The most probable problems are the terminological, phraseological and semantic problems. They are followed by a dual analysis: (1) the definition of the *sub-skopos* of 'micro-textual adequacy' in terms of text segments, legal constraints and receivers' expectations and (2) the acceptability analysis of the formulations, such as the degree of correspondence between ST segments and TT formulations in terms of the adequate techniques of *sub-skopos* and general strategy.

Last but not least, the general implications of the reformulation stage are as follows: (1) 'contextualizing the translational action entails determining the role of legal translation itself in the relevant scenario' (ibid). (2) Legal translation in terms of adequacy is always possible under particular legal coordinates and (3) 'no translation technique is a priori, more adequate than other' (ibid.). The last stage (revision), the TT adequacy regarding pertinent legal communicative circumstances is validated on the basis of the elements of strategy, both macro- and micro-textually. The parameters in this phase are the same for self-revision applied by the translator and other quality controllers.

4.2. Quality Assurance: Translation Competence

In the field of translation techniques, no model or approach for translation quality assessment can be beneficial without a translation competence to be utilized to a particular situation. Thus, it is important to understand the exhaustive definition of the term competence: "a competence is a complex know how to act resulting from integration, mobilization, and organization of a combination of capabilities and skills (which can be cognitive, affective, psych-motor or social) and knowledge (declarative knowledge) used ef-

ficiently in situations with common characteristics” (Lasnier 2000). The key component in competence-based learning is integration. According to Hurtado Albir (2007), there exist three types of integration: (1) the integration building up each competence, (2) the integration of various competences construing a ‘given profile’, and consequently (3) learning, teaching, and evaluating integration. In this respect, competence is the primary touchstone in competence-based training utilized in designing curriculum. Hurtado Albir (2007) also pointed out that ‘learning objectives’ and ‘discipline-related contents’ are commissioned by competence while the term ‘competence’ per se functions as ‘a guide for sequencing teaching units’. Competence-based learning differentiates between transversal (general) and discipline-related (specific) competences (ibid.). The former alludes to any competence which can be utilized in all disciplines, while the latter refers to competences used in each discipline tagging ‘a given profile’.

4.2.1. Translation Competence as a Task-based Approach

A translation task is defined as “a unit of work in the classroom, representative of translation practice, formally directed towards learning how to translate and designed with a specific objective, structure and sequence” (Hurtado Albir 1999). Furthermore, the tasks of translation are concerned with establishing ‘teaching units’. Hurtado Albir (1999) proposes the structure and formation of teaching units whereby each unit consists of various tasks so as to reach the final task.

Table 2
The Structure of Teaching Unit (Adopted from Hurtado Albir 1999)

UNIT:
UNIT STRUCTURE
TASK 1:
TASK 2:
TASK 3:
TASK.....
FINAL TASK

To put it in a nutshell, the merits of a task-based translation approach are as follows: (1) the tasks prepare the ground for a translator to represent the professional world, (2) the tasks make the ‘active methodology’ (Hurtado Albir 1999) available to learning activities, (3) the tasks prepare a transla-

tor to understand the translation process by finding a suitable solution for the final task, (4) the tasks also allow a translator to become familiar with the principles and strategies (translation strategies and learning strategies) used to solve the pending problems, and finally (5) the tasks allow teachers and translators to evaluate their teaching tasks, and correspondingly to alter them, if possible and appropriate, to meet the translators' expectations. Regarding discipline-related competences of translator training, the present paper makes use of the combined model for evaluating legal translation. The multi-faceted model is adopted from Hurtado Albir (2007), European Master's in Translation (EMT) (2009), and Quality of Legal Translation (QUALETRA) project (aiming to produce training materials to meet the requirements of legal translation evaluation in Directive 2010/64/EU). According to Kockaert et al. (2014),

QUALETRA aims at anticipating some serious challenges EU Member States will have to deal with after the transposition of Directive 2010/64/EU by proposing deliverables that are expected to cater for training and assessment needs experienced by legal translators specializing in the translation of European Arrest Warrants and by legal practitioners working with translators.

Table 3

Translation Legal Competences

<p style="text-align: center;">Language Competence</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The importance of utilizing and understanding legal grammatical, lexical, idiomatic structures, and stylistic conventions of the source and target languages.2. The importance of using legal specific structures in both languages.
<p style="text-align: center;">Contrastive and Translation Competences</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Translation from language A to B and B to A<ul style="list-style-type: none">– The importance of a legal source text in mother language and vice versa.2. The role of the target language in legal translation<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Translation between the foreign language and the mother language to scrutinize the contrasting facets and to differentiate between the two language systems;– To survey the influences between the two languages when dealing with legal translation problems.
<p style="text-align: center;">Methodological and Strategic Competences</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Informative target of assessing legal translation<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Translation brief analysis;– Macro-contextualization planning;– Implementation of translation procedures;– Self-evaluation;– Quality control

<p>2. Process of legal translation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Prior to the act of translating, one must design the whole framework and then identify the legal translation problems;- Translating (translation process): translation of the source language into the target language taking legal lexicologies, terminologies, expressions, and the types of genres into consideration;- Restructuring: assessing the quality of the legal translation with regard to grammatical, stylistic conventions, and textual equivalents.
Legal Competence
<p>1. Knowledge of different legal Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The importance of different rules within foreign languages.
Extra-linguistic Competence
<p>1. Knowledge of extra-linguistic (macrostructure) factors in legal translation such as institutions, author, target reader, customer, publisher, market, etc.;</p> <p>2. The importance of encyclopaedias and thematic knowledge to solve legal translation problems;</p> <p>3. The importance of legal translation techniques based on the legal genre and receiver of the text such as glossaries, footnotes, and parenthesis to expatiate the terms absent from the target language.</p>
Information Mining and Instrumental Competences
<p>1. Documentation Resources (paper based or digital based)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Dictionaries (either general or specialized), encyclopaedias, glossaries, style conventions, grammatical structures, expressions, collocations, idioms, etc.;- Reference works (Bilingual): footnotes in both languages, glossaries, lexicologies, terminologies, legal dictionaries, etc.; <p>2. Parallel Texts (the recognition of the comparable texts sentences in both parallel source and target texts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Electronic, Audiovisual, and paper parallel texts <p>3. Efficient Search Strategies in Legal Databases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- legislative materials, judicial law, law journals, scholarships, treaties and reports; <p>4. The importance of utilizing and familiarizing with legal translation tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- IATE- EU-JRC Acquis Multilingual Corpus- DGT Translation Memory
Textual Competence
<p>1. Typical text features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The importance of text types: A contract, letter of complaint, a certificate of registration, etc. <p>2. Legal genres translation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Translation of informative texts- Translation of administrative texts- Translation of power of attorney- Translation of marriage certificate- Translation of contractual rent- Translation of will

<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Translation of specific legal genres<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Ethics problems– Signatures– Stamps– Handwritten corrections4. Linguistic and practical knowledge such as linguistic registers, legal genre conventions, and linguistic variants.
Professional Management Competence
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Interaction with client and professionals2. Knowledge of legal structures for deontological ethics and financial obligations
Educational and Evaluative Competences
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Course Preparation<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Each student prepares a course very thoroughly and gives feedback to fellow students who make the translation during the workshop

Based on the above table, the methodological competence shapes the process of legal translation; however, it covers its own operative and declarative knowledge of the decision making processes. In this respect, specialisation in the target legal system and linguistic analysis (e.g. inter-systemic and intra-linguistic analysis for the decision making process) is also a key element in legal translation.

4.3. Quality Assurance: Translation Product

According to this translation approach, translation product evaluation is conducted by the similar attributes and parameters of translation competence and translation decision making with regard to the elements of the overall adequacy translation strategy and micro-textual priorities. The overall adequate translation strategy can be traced backwards from the target text textual content with regard to translation brief and relevancy. In this direction, as illustrated in the figure above, stage (4), ‘revision’ involves both specialized elements (e.g. accurate and consistent terminologies) and non-specialized ones, such as spelling, punctuation, etc. of translation assessment. With this in mind, the power of each component can be ascertained through adequate translation strategy and the micro-textual priorities. As noted by Prieto-Ramos (2015: 22):

Legal systemic conditions of accuracy do not often leave much margin for stylistic enhancement from the perspective of lay readers, unless this is a priority in a text primarily addressed to them for informative purposes (e.g. a manual on the general features of a particular legal system.)

In the light of these explanations, any vagueness in the source language cannot be completely transformed into clarity by the renderer. Furthermore, the quality of legal translation can be conditioned by accuracy and various biases acquired from translation strategy. The expert in translation product evaluation will not be led through by a general intuition of difficulty and fluency, often found in contemporary translation studies, in regard to other branches of translation studies. Gouadec (2010: 272) maintained that

A given translation may be as translated, meaning, it is rather rough cut or has not been reviewed. It may be of ‘fair average quality’, meaning it is correct, readable, and maybe even pleasant to read. Or it may be of ‘top quality’: fluent, efficient, most readable, and ergonomic in that both contents and form are more than adequate on two counts, the first one being that the translator ‘improved on the original’ and the second one being that s/he adapted from the content to the particular public and destination within the particular conceptual-linguistic-cultural context of the reception and the use of the translation by that public and destination.

Therefore, the aforementioned criteria cannot be regarded as valid and reliable guide-lines to a professional legal translation. Clarity and fluency are associated with the quality of the source text. Moreover, the quality evaluation of legal translation is comprehensively recognized in terms of the adequacy parameters and legal translation methodology, rather than on the basis of the translation industry.

5. Quality Assurance: Implications

The formation of a process-based approach in terms of quality assurance and its performance through translation service providers must cover two particular trajectories: (1) competent translator and (2) qualified evaluators. The translation job should actually be delegated to a competent translator so as to maintain the end-product of the highest quality and to verify that the adequacy to the target text communicative situation both in the pre and post-delivery stages must be assessed by a qualified evaluator to improve the adequacy of translation.

5.1. Quality Metrics

A kind of quality standard is congruous with the present approach since these standards consider the variables of legal translation methodology. The quality standards of the variables rely on the features of each context, pur-

pose, and scope of the assessment. For instance, the evaluation criteria of a freelance translator sworn on the area of transnational law firms are completely different from those of a translator of particular legal texts working in the area of institutional structures. In this vein, quality variables are categorized as follows: (1) legal consistency and accuracy; (2) translation decisions adequacy in terms of legal traits, such as legal phraseology, terminology, and stylistic conventions regarding the overall adequate translation strategy and the micro-textual primacies and (3) common linguistic features, such as punctuation, cohesion, etc.

These quality metrics can be described through various taxonomies. Table (4) reveals that each category combines scores on the basis of different elements of assessment.

Table 4

Quality Metrics (Adapted from Prieto-Ramos 2015)

A General Description of Quality Levels in Legal Translation	
Excellent (A/5)	Maximum accuracy and consistency, adequate decisions according to the legal conditions and communicative situation, no linguistic error.
Acceptable (B/4)	Only some minor inaccuracy, inconsistency, inadequate decision or linguistic error not affecting main functions or micro-textual priorities.
Borderline (C/3)	Inadequate decisions hinder main functions or micro-textual priorities; significant linguistic errors or several minor ones (e.g. punctuation problems).
Poor (D/2)	Major problems of accuracy, consistency, adequacy or linguistic correctness even if the text is readable.
Unacceptable (E/1)	Inaccurate content, systematically inadequate decision-making and serious linguistic errors.

As shown in the above table, the type of errors, inaccuracies, and inadequate methodological decisions deserve closer attention. The table above is in line with Waddington's holistic assessment in terms of the accuracy of the transfer of source text content, quality of expressions in the target language, and the degree of task completion. Prieto-Ramos (2015: 24) noted:

The flexibility to choose and adapt marking systems does not entail a distortion of the real degrees of adequacy from an LST perspective. It rather means that these levels are managed in relation to different expectations and uses in assessment.

In this respect, the main evaluative criteria in terms of quality levels would be objective based on the shared process parameters in legal translation. The decision making process, competence, and product connect the various metrics of legal translation to the different adequacy elements in legal translation assessment.

5.2. Evaluator's Competence

– Who Certifies the Certifiers?

The quality of legal language can be interrelated to the expertise of a legal translator and to the evaluator's competence to attain adequacy in legal translation. The competences mentioned in section (4.2.1) actually apply to the quality controllers and the revisers whose responsibilities are generally anticipated to be as high as those of a legal translator to identify the relevant problems and to find some ways to improve the solutions. Accordingly, the particular competence of a quality controller or reviser and the extra-textual limitations are the key components in this regard (Martin 2007). The subject-matter specialists constitute another factor illustrating a situation where experts have no skills in legal translation. Their roles as specialists are of a high value to the translator (e.g. in legal discourses and concepts); however, they lack strategic, methodological, linguistic, contrastive, and translation competences. According to Mossop (2007), 'most clients know next to nothing about what translation involves, how much can be translated in a given time, why translators need documentation, and so on'. The third factor which might affect the acceptability, credibility, and readability of the target text would be the general reader's opinions. Essentially, all translators cannot be allowed to ignore the judgement of the readers (clients) in such circumstances where the readers have insufficient knowledge of the source language, the methodological and strategic competences, and the subject matter. The public reader is the significant factor who approves or disapproves of the translation product. Finally, trainers can be considered as active assessors/evaluators of professional expectations if they keep themselves up-to-date with the quality benchmarks.

5.3. Managerial Quality

The managers of any public or private sector agency together with the well-organized translation service play a key role in advancing the quality of translation, the assignments of tasks, training policies, and client-user interactions. Vlachopoulos (2009:17) contended that 'the improvement of translation quality is as much a managerial challenge as it is a linguistic and technical one'. With this in mind, to attain the highest quality through

the available human and material resources, quality assurance must respond positively to ‘supply and demand’. Sometimes, achieving the highest quality may not be available on demand at any given time. Therefore, in order to utilize quality assurance in translation, huge translation companies and organizations assign different texts to various translators. The end products are liable to be revised on the basis of their significance. Similarly, legislative and judicial texts are at the top of the institutional texts (top priority), whereas the genres related to legal monitoring are at the bottom of priority. Quality assurance in a multilingual context can be attained through addressing the accuracy, consistency, and inter-linguistic concordance between pairs of languages. By the same token, managerial quality has a strong leverage on the execution of holistic approaches to quality. Prieto-Ramos (2015: 27) stated:

In any event, a distinction must be made between fit-for-purpose managerial decisions (reasonable solutions depending on quality needs, time and resources) and adequate translation decisions required for a top quality product. It also becomes apparent that long-term quality enhancement policies require the evaluation of quality assessment and management practices themselves.

6. Concluding Remarks

Achieving the highest quality in legal translation has always been regarded as a cardinal concern. General methods and approaches to translation quality fall short of the demand for standards required by the communicative circumstances of legal translation. The proposed approach amalgamated the micro-macro textual and contextual variables of translation competence and the translation decision making process to attain the highest adequacy of legal translation. In this way, utilization of the decision making process for legal translation products can improve and support objective criteria, such as legal accuracy, consistency and accuracy of the semantic/legal discursive traits and the attainability of translation problem solving from the definition of adequacy strategy, to the revision stage. Reaching of the highest adequacy level of legal translation products is associated with the translation brief and relevancy, the parameters of the translation problem solving, and finally the objective criteria. In the proposed approach, the elements of quality metrics can be addressed to particular assessment functions (i.e. professional and training practices). Also, the proposed approach reinforces legal translation and its quality as an accomplished activity dis-

proving simplistic assumptions over the quality of the target language. This framework seeks to systematize the components of legal translation in order to attain the highest quality assurance in this field. However, the diversity of models and approaches proposed for the quality of legal translation and the lack of quality control in large environments, such as translation services, agencies, organizations, and companies make translation quality certification a crucial issue. With this in mind, the ultimate aim of legal translation studies is to promote and improve the quality metrics and benchmarks through designing and proposing applicable approaches and evaluating them in the contexts where translation quality assessment is highly regarded.

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