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# TRANSLATIONAL COMPETENCE

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A R T I C L E I N F O.	Abstract:
<b>Keywords:</b> translational competence, translation skills, linguistics, professional translation	Translational competence, the ability to effectively translate between languages while preserving meaning and style, is a critical skill for professional translators. This article examines the key components of translational competence and how they can be developed. Through a review of relevant literature and analysis, the essential knowledge, skills, and attributes that contribute to high translational competence are identified and discussed. Strategies for translators to enhance their competence are also explored. Developing strong translational competence allows translators to produce high-quality translations that successfully convey the source text into the target language. http://www.gospodarkainnowacje.pl/© 2024 LWAB.

#### Introduction

Translational competence refers to the ability to translate written text from a source language into a target language in a way that accurately conveys the original meaning, tone, and style. It is a key skill for professional translators that requires linguistic knowledge along with cultural understanding, subject matter expertise, research abilities, and strong writing skills in the target language [1]. Developing a high level of translational competence allows translators to effectively bridge languages and cultures through their work.

This article aims to provide an in-depth examination of translational competence - its components, development, and importance in the field of professional translation. Through a review and analysis of relevant literature, the essential elements of translational competence will be identified and discussed. Strategies for translators to assess and improve their own competence will also be explored.

#### METHODS AND LITERATURE REVIEW

To identify the key components of translational competence, a thorough review was conducted of

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academic literature related to translation skills and translator training. Searches were performed in translation studies journals, linguistics databases, and academic search engines. Key search terms included "translational competence," "translation skills," "translation expertise," "translation proficiency," and "translator training."

The literature review focused on identifying the knowledge, skills, and attributes that research has found to enable high quality translation work. Empirical studies that assessed translator performance and competence were given special attention, along with conceptual models of translation expertise. Literature aimed at students and practicing translators was also examined for perspectives on the development of translational competence.

#### RESULTS

The literature review revealed several essential components of translational competence that were consistently highlighted across both empirical research and theoretical perspectives. These core elements include:

*Bilingual linguistic proficiency:* Translational competence requires advanced proficiency in both the source and target languages. This includes knowledge of each language's grammar, vocabulary, semantics, and pragmatics [2][3].

*Cultural knowledge:* Understanding the cultures associated with both the source and target languages is crucial for producing translations that resonate with the intended audience. Familiarity with cultural norms, values, customs, and conventions informs a translator's choices [4][5].

*Subject matter expertise*: Having in-depth knowledge of the topic and genre of the source text allows translators to accurately convey specialized terminology and content. Competent translators either possess relevant subject matter expertise or have strong research skills to fill knowledge gaps [6][7].

*Research skills*: The ability to efficiently research unfamiliar terms, concepts, and contextual information is an important component of translational competence. Skilled translators know how and where to find reliable information to support their translation choices [8].

*Writing skills*: Excellent writing abilities in the target language are essential for crafting well-written translations that read naturally to a native speaker. This includes a command of the target language's style, register, tone, and idiomatic expressions [9][10].

*Translation strategies*: Competent translators possess a repertoire of strategies to handle translation challenges like linguistic and cultural gaps, untranslatable terms, and style mismatches. This strategic competence allows them to find effective solutions while preserving the meaning and spirit of the source text [11][12].

*Tools and technology proficiency*: Modern translators must be adept at using translation tools and technologies like translation memory software, terminology management systems, and machine translation engines. Knowing how to effectively leverage these tools is part of translational competence [13][14].

*Interpersonal skills*: Professional translators often collaborate with clients, subject matter experts, and other translators. Strong communication, negotiation, and teamwork skills contribute to a translator's overall competence and success.

# ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The identified components of translational competence paint a picture of the complex set of knowledge and skills required for professional translation work. Linguistic and cultural knowledge form the foundation, but subject matter expertise, research abilities, writing skills, and strategic competence are



all essential for producing high-quality translations.

One key insight is that translational competence is multi-faceted and goes beyond mere bilingualism. Speaking two languages fluently does not automatically qualify someone to be a skilled translator. Rather, translators must actively cultivate the additional knowledge and abilities that allow them to effectively convey meaning between languages and cultures.

The literature also emphasizes that translational competence is developed through a combination of training, practical experience, and deliberate effort. Translation courses and degree programs can provide aspiring translators with a solid foundation, but ongoing learning and skill development is necessary. Exposure to a wide range of translation tasks and genres helps translators expand their expertise.

Additionally, the literature highlights the affective and attitudinal components of translational competence. Qualities like curiosity, flexibility, reflectiveness, and a growth mindset serve translators well. Translators must be willing to continually learn and adapt, as languages and cultures are constantly evolving.

Another important consideration is that translational competence is not a one-size-fits-all construct. The specific skills and knowledge needed can vary depending on the translator's specialization, working languages, and target audiences. Legal translators, for example, require different subject matter expertise than medical translators. Thus, translational competence can be seen as a dynamic and context-dependent construct.

The growing role of language technology in translation practice is another key theme in the literature. While some worry that tools like machine translation may devalue or replace human translators, researchers argue that technology should be seen as a complement to human skills rather than a replacement. Translational competence in the modern era includes the ability to effectively use and evaluate these tools. Post-editing machine translation output, for instance, requires a keen eye for quality and strong decision-making skills.

Furthermore, the development of translational competence is not solely an individual endeavor. The translation industry as a whole plays a role in fostering the growth of skilled professionals. Translation agencies, professional associations, and academic institutions can contribute by providing training opportunities, setting professional standards, and promoting best practices. Collaboration and knowledge-sharing among translators can also support the collective development of translational competence within the field.

It is also worth noting that the construct of translational competence is not static. As the language industry evolves and new technologies emerge, the skills and knowledge required for translation work may shift. Translators must be prepared to adapt and expand their competencies over time. This underscores the importance of lifelong learning and professional development.

Ultimately, the development of translational competence is an ongoing journey for professional translators. It requires a commitment to lifelong learning, a willingness to embrace new challenges, and a deep appreciation for the nuances of language and culture. As the global translation industry continues to grow and evolve, nurturing translational competence will be key to producing high-quality translations that bridge divides and foster understanding.

# CONCLUSIONS

This examination of translational competence highlights the complex blend of knowledge, skills, and attributes that enable professional translators to produce high-quality work. Key components include bilingual proficiency, cultural knowledge, subject matter expertise, research skills, writing abilities,

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strategic competence, and technological savvy. Developing these competencies requires a combination of training, practical experience, and ongoing learning.

Aspiring and practicing translators can take steps to improve their own translational competence by pursuing relevant education, seeking out diverse translation experiences, staying current with industry technologies, and cultivating a growth mindset. Regularly assessing one's own skills and identifying areas for improvement can help translators stay on a path of continuous development.

As the demand for translation services continues to grow in our globalized world, translators with strong translational competence will be well-positioned to meet the needs of diverse clients and audiences. By serving as skilled linguistic and cultural mediators, they play a vital role in facilitating cross-border communication and fostering global understanding.

Further research could explore how translational competence is best taught and assessed in translator training programs, as well as how working translators maintain and expand their skills over the course of their careers. Studies that examine the specific competencies required in different translation specializations and language pairs would also be valuable. As machine translation and other language technologies continue to advance, ongoing research will be needed to understand how human translators can most effectively work alongside these tools while still bringing their unique skills and judgment to the translation process.

Ultimately, translational competence is a multifaceted construct that will continue to evolve along with the language industry and our globalized society. By shedding light on its key components and the pathways to developing them, this article aims to support the growth of skilled, adaptable translators who can meet the communication needs of a diverse and interconnected world.

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