RESEARCHING LEGAL TRANSLATION: A MULTI-PERSPECTIVE AND MIXED-METHOD FRAMEWORK FOR LEGAL TRANSLATION

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Abstract

The objective of the paper is to propose a multi-perspective and mixed-method research framework for legal translation by modelling key dimensions and factors applicable to legal translation. As a result of the ongoing expansion of Legal Translation Studies, the field is experiencing a methodological development, which extends our perspective on legal translation. The paper proposes four postulates for the multi-perspective framework for researching legal translation — namely, transdisciplinarity, multidimensionality, bidirectionality, and multimethodology. The multi-perspective research framework for legal translation embraces a continuum of four key dimensions of translation, i.e. the product itself, the context of production and reception, process and participants, modelled according to their dominant factors, components and related methods of research. The second part of the paper investigates, by way of illustration, how corpus methods interact with the above proposed multi-perspective framework. In the conclusions it is argued that research into legal translation may be expected to become increasingly larger in scale and more teamwork-based in order to accommodate multiple perspectives on the object of study.

Keywords: Legal translation, research framework, triangulation, mixed methods.

LA RECERCA EN TRADUCCIÓ JURÍDICA: UN MARC QUE COMBINA DIVERSES PERSPECTIVES I METODOLOGIES PER A LA TRADUCCIÓ JURÍDICA

Resum

Aquest article té com a objectiu proposar un marc de recerca que combina diverses perspectives i metodologies per a la traducció jurídica, mitjançant la configuració de dimensions i factors clau aplicables a la traducció jurídica. Com a conseqüència de l'expansió dels estudis de traducció jurídica vigents, aquest camp experimenta un desenvolupament metodològic que eixampla la nostra visió sobre el camp de la traducció jurídica. L'article proposa quatre postulats per al marc de recerca esmentat, que són la transdisciplinarietat, la multidimensionalitat, la bidireccionalitat i la multimetodologia. Aquest marc, a més, comprèn un contínuum de quatre dimensions que són primordials en traducció, com ara, el producte mateix, el context de producció textual i recepció, els procediments i els participants, que es configuren segons els factors, els components i les metodologies de recerca associades, que hi predominin. La segona part de l'article investiga, a tall d'exemple, com les metodologies basades en corpus interactuen amb el marc polifacètic proposat. En les conclusions, sostenim que és possible que la recerca en el camp de la traducció jurídica creixi cada vegada més i que es dugui a terme en equips per tal d'ajustar les diverses perspectives en l'objecte d'estudi.

Paraules clau: traducció jurídica; marc de recerca; triangulació; metodologies mixtes.

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Summary

1 Research into legal translation: recent developments

1.1 Expanding Legal Translation Studies: in need of data integration and synthesis

Since the publication of Susan Šarčević's seminal monograph *New Approach to Legal Translation* twenty years ago, Legal Translation Studies (LTS) has been expanding and diversifying itself both thematically and methodologically. As argued by Prieto Ramos, LTS has moved into a phase of robust growth where it undergoes consolidation and expansion with reorientation towards applied research (2014: 271-272). This expansion has been very well visible in the 2010s, with dedicated conferences[1], edited monographs[2] and special guest-edited issues of major journals[3]. While the expansion cannot be questioned, consolidation lags behind. LTS remains fragmented and dispersed along the interdisciplinary lines (Law, Translation Studies, Linguistics) and language-specific enclaves — mainly English, French, Spanish, German and Italian (cf. Biel and Engberg 2013: 2). What is required in near future, as a consequence of expansion, is increased theoretical and methodological reflection on legal translation, integrating and synthesising empirical data provided by various research projects across disciplines and languages, which will ultimately lead us to the multi-faceted modelling of legal translation. Following Saldanha and O'Brien (2013: 12), I understand a model as a representation of the reality — in this case, the reality of legal translation.

This paper intends to partially fill in this gap. Its objective is to propose a multi-perspective and multi-method research framework for legal translation by modelling key dimensions, components and factors applicable to LTS.

1.2 Specificity of legal translation

It is difficult to model legal translation due to diverse and not fully compatible types of translational situations. One of the main categories is intersystemic legal translation — it operates not only between two languages but also between at least two legal systems, e.g. a translation of a Spanish contract into Swedish. The major challenge in intersystemic translation is the incongruity of legal terminology due to its system-bound nature (Šarčević 1997: 232), resulting from its embedding in national legal systems. Legal systems have their own history, developments, principles, axiology; they shape their concept systems and term boundaries to respond to their own needs. As a result, terms tend to differ across legal systems and intersystemic translators are required to compensate for it by building "terminological bridges" (Weigand qtd. in Šarčević, 2012: 13). The next major type of legal translation — intrasystemic legal translation — may be found in bilingual or multilingual countries, such as Switzerland or Belgium, as well as in international organisations. Intrasystemic translations of law tend to have an authoritative (authentic) status (cf. Garzone 2000: 6). In this case legal concepts are linguistically represented as terms in two different languages but they are shaped by the same legal system. Yet this clear-cut distinction is an oversimplification in the case of hybrid[4] supranational legal systems with authoritative translations, such as the European Union (EU). The EU has a supranational legal system, which, however, has mutual interdependencies with national legal systems of currently 28 Member States: it is a "*tertium comparationis* (…) combining very different legal systems, cultures and styles" (Jopek-Bosiacka 2011: 26), where legislation is produced within the supranational system but is applied in all domestic legal systems (Kjær 2007: 79). The EU legal system is still evolving and is not independent yet; hence, EU translation is intersystemic to some extent (cf. Šarčević 2013: 10). Another type of hybridity is Canadian transsystemism (cf. Emerich and Plante, 2018, *forthcoming*), involving civil law and common law aspects. All in all, the degree of conceptual mediation between and within legal systems may vary in legal translation.

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1 E.g. the Transius conference on Law, Translation and Culture in Geneva in 2015; the From Legal Translation to Jurilinguistics Conference in Seville in 2016.

2 E.g. Borja Albi and Prieto Ramos (eds.) (2013), Cheng et al. (eds) (2014), Glanert (ed.) (2014).

3 E.g. *Linguistica Antverpiensia, New Series — Themes in Translation Studies* (2013, ed. by Łucja Biel and Jan Engberg), *The Translator* (2014, ed. by Simone Glanert), *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law* (2015, ed. by Anne Wagner and Jean-Claude Gémar), *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer* (2015, ed. by Esther Monzó Nebot), *The Journal of Specialised Translation* (2017, ed. by Hendrik Kockaert and Nadia Rahab).

4 Cf. Garzone (2000: 6) for hybrid international texts as a third category of legal translation.

In addition to the most visible terminological and systemic challenges, legal translators also face language-specific challenges which result from structural, semantic, and pragmatic differences between languages in general and between legal genres in particular, as well as challenges typical of the translation process — connected with complex bilingual processing and frequent language-code switching during the translation task (e.g. interference, explicitation, underrepresentation of unique items) (see Biel 2014 for further discussion).

1.3 Research methods in LTS: emerging methodological shifts

As with any type of translation or, more broadly, language studies, the methodology of legal translation research may be categorised according to the fundamental distinction into quantitative and qualitative research. **Quantitative** research methods are oriented towards objective systematic measurements with statistical methods and large samples of numerical data capable of reducing idiosyncratic variation (Dörnyei 207: 24, 27). Recent years have observed a general trend of the evolution of theoretical and applied linguistics towards quantitative methods (Gries and Wulff 2012: 34). Within Translation Studies, quantitative methods include corpus methodologies, questionnaires, eye tracking and other experimental methods. **Qualitative** research methods are interested in smaller-scale non-numerical 'open-ended' data which account for idiosyncrasies and individual/subjective meanings (Dörnyei 2007: 24, 27). Their advantages include a more flexible, emergent and exploratory nature, while their weaknesses are: small sample sizes of idiosyncratic nature and limited generalisability, over-reading of individual examples, examination of 'telling' cases, and risk of confirming researchers' biases (cf. Dörnyei 2007: 39-41). Qualitative research into translation includes ethnographic research, (critical) discourse analysis (CDA), sociology of translation, and narrative analysis. In reality, the divide is not so deep and the two approaches may be seen as complementary. A more recent trend in social sciences is the multi-method approach which uses more than one method, most notably the mixed-method approach (also known as multitrait-multimethod research, interrelating qualitative and quantitative data, cf. Dörnyei 2007: 42) which combines both types of methods through triangulation to address a research question from alternative perspectives.

Although the mixed-method approach is still rather rare in LTS, methodological shifts have started to emerge in this field. The recent intensification and build-up of research has inevitably led to the methodological development, diversification, and refinement of LTS, which — in my opinion — is a major factor behind the incremental progress achieved by LTS in the last decade. Research into legal translation has traditionally been predominantly qualitative, product-oriented and descriptive (cf. Biel and Engberg 2013: 2). It has become, quite naturally, more and more transdisciplinary, exploring not only the interface with Legal Studies, in particular comparative law, but also with various strands of linguistics. Quite recently researchers have started to experiment with more varied eclectic methods, involving empirical, quantitative and mixed approaches (Biel 2017, *forthcoming*). The methods relatively recently introduced to legal translation studies include corpus methodology (e.g. Biel 2014, Pontrandolfo 2016), sociology of translation (e.g. Vidal Claramonte 2005), ethnography and workplace studies, including surveys (e.g. Koskinen 2008), (critical) discourse analysis (e.g. Borja Albi 2013, Way 2012), as well as practitioner research (Scott 2016). These developments have been triggered by methodological advances in Translation Studies since the 1990s: the reorientation towards empiricism (cf. Snell-Hornby 2006: 114), the revival of linguistic methods, including corpus linguistics, genre analysis and (critical) discourse analysis, as well as the advent of the technological turn (Cronin 2010).

2 Multiple perspectives on researching legal translation

2.1 Assumptions for holistic research into legal translation

Below I present the main assumptions and postulates for the multi-perspective research framework for legal translation in order to ensure a holistic view of the field in question:

1. Legal translation is **transdisciplinary**. Being an interdiscipline, legal translation does not enjoy full autonomy as a discipline. Thus, it should capitalise on and integrate developments made within,

above all, Translation Studies, (Comparative) Law and Linguistics, to address translation-related, conceptual and linguistic challenges in translation.

2. Legal translation is **multidimensional**. It should embrace the main dimensions of translations, that is: the **products** (translations), the **process**, the **participants** and the **context** of text production and reception (cf. Saldanha and O'Brien[5] 2013: 5).

3. Legal translation is **bi-relational.** Research should account for two fundamental intertextual relations of translations: **equivalence** and **textual fit**. As all types of translation, legal translations are governed by two relations: the relation of equivalence, that is the relation of the target text to its source text and, in the case of multilingual translation, to other language target texts (accuracy of translations, multilingual mediation of legal knowledge), and the relation of textual fit, that is the relation of the target text to non-translated target-language texts of a comparable genre (naturalness and acceptability of translations) (cf. Chesterman 2004, 2010; Biel 2014).

4. Legal translation requires **multimethodological** research, mixing and matching methods, in particular through the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative approaches. While quantitative methods can offer a "macro-perspective of the overarching trends in the world", qualitative methods provide "a flexible and highly context-sensitive micro-perspective of the everyday realities of the world" (Dörnyei 2007: 29).

Multiple perspectives are thus achieved through transdisciplinarity, multidimensionality, bidirectionality, and multimethodology.

2.2 A multi-perspective research framework for legal translation

The chart below (Chart 1) proposes a multi-perspective research framework for legal translation. It shows four dimensions of translation — the product itself and the context of production and reception, process and participants — modelled according to key factors, components and related methods of research (the list is non-exhaustive). They are arranged in the sequence of context, participants, process and product to account for the where, who, how and what in legal translation.
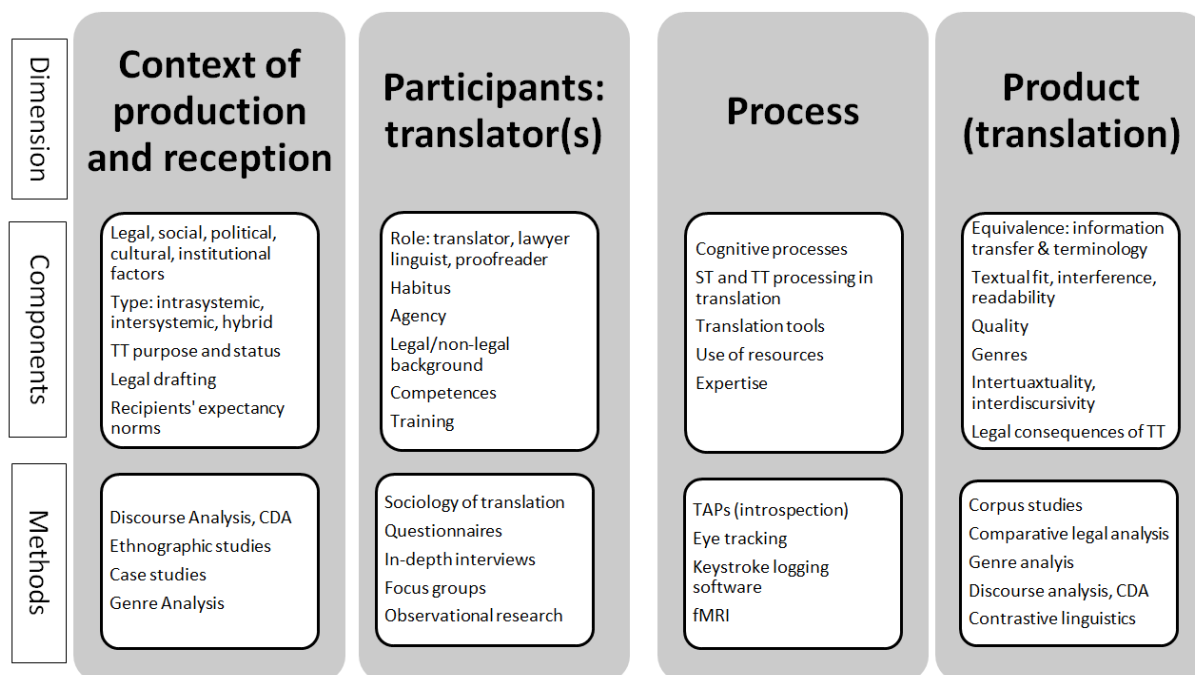
Dimension	Context of production and reception	Participants: translator(s)	Process	Product (translation)
Components	Legal, social, political, cultural, institutional factors Type: intrasystemic, intersystemic, hybrid TT purpose and status Legal drafting Recipients' expectancy norms	Role: translator, lawyer linguist, proofreader Habitus Agency Legal/non-legal background Competences Training	Cognitive processes ST and TT processing in translation Translation tools Use of resources Expertise	Equivalence: information transfer & terminology Textual fit, interference, readability Quality Genres Intertuaxtuality, interdiscursivity Legal consequences of TT
Methods	Discourse Analysis, CDA Ethnographic studies Case studies Genre Analysis	Sociology of translation Questionnaires In-depth interviews Focus groups Observational research	TAPs (introspection) Eye tracking Keystroke logging software fMRI	Corpus studies Comparative legal analysis Genre analyis Discourse analysis, CDA Contrastive linguistics

Chart 1. A multi-perspective framework for researching legal translation: dimensions, components and methods.

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5 Saldanha and O'Brien refer to them as 'orientations' or 'foci' (cf. 2013: 5).

The **context** of translation production and reception should account for external factors which influence translators (cf. Saldanha and O'Brien 2014: 205). In the case of legal translation, the wider context must cover legal factors, such as a type of the legal systems involved (intrasystemic, intersystemic, hybrid translation), the authoritative or non-authoritative (cf. Šarčević 1997: 21, Garzone 2000: 6) status of the target text, and the purpose of translation — normative, informative or general legal/juridical purposes (cf. Cao 2007: 10). In the context of quality assurance, this is referred to by Prieto Ramos as the 'legal macro-contextualization' of the translation process (2015: 18). The context also encompasses institutional, political, ideological, social and cultural factors. For example, institutional settings are of high importance in the analysis of legal translation in international organisations, such as the EU or the United Nations (UN), which have their own institutional cultures of translating and regulate and control translators' behaviour (cf. Koskinen 2008). The **contextual and situational analysis** is essential in qualitative approaches, such as ethnographic studies, genre analysis, discourse analysis, and critical discourse analysis (cf. Bhatia 1993: 22-36; 2004: 164-165; Baker 2010: 152); nevertheless, it should also precede quantitative studies to establish the background for the interpretation and evaluation of data. Bhatia's model of applied genre analysis (1993, revised version 2004), which has been tested extensively by him on legal discourse, includes an in-depth study of the discourse community as part of the situational/contextual analysis. In particular, as Bhatia recommends, it is necessary to identify the author, recipients, their relationship and goals, as well as to describe the historical, socio-cultural, philosophical, and occupational situation of the discourse community and to conduct an ethnographic study of its practices (2004: 164-165). These factors also apply to legal translation — what is especially important is the identification of target text recipients, including their legal expertise, familiarity with the source text legal system, legal knowledge gaps, degree of conceptual mediation required, and recipients' expectancy norms. Another layer of analysis may concern such external factors as the brief, time pressure, remuneration and quality assurance procedures. To sum up, the contextual and situational analysis is often qualitative — not only descriptive, but also involves a critical assessment of factors and circumstances.

The next dimension of legal translation covers various types of **participants** — translators, revisers and proofreaders, as well as translation commissioners. A recent reorientation of Translation Studies towards translators has been inspired by the sociology of translation (cf. Wolf and Fukari (eds) 2007). Research into participants is usually done with a mix of quantitative methods (surveys) and qualitative methods (in-depth interviews, ethnographic research, focus groups, observational research and practitioners' individual stories). Research on translators and other participants contributes to a clearer understanding of the translator's habitus and agency (cf. Simeoni 1998), that is how translators' decisions are influenced and constrained by other actors or conditions. The legal translator's habitus and agency have not been explored extensively yet, with some exceptions — see for example Vidal Claramonte (2005) and Martín Ruano (2014). Overall, this type of research is more popular among researchers studying legal interpreting. It is worth noting in passing that the common ground between legal translation and legal interpreting merits more attention from scholars working, quite separately, in these two fields.

Compared to other areas, research into the legal translation **process** is a *terra incognita*. So far experimental and observational methods, such as eyetracking, Think Aloud Protocols, keystroke logging or fMRI, were hardly used in the context of professional legal translation, although it should be appreciated that these methods are still considered to be in their infancy and in need of higher rigour and standardisation (cf. Saldanha and O'Brient 2014: 148-149). This area has to be developed in the future if we want to move beyond speculation about cognitive processes in legal translators' mind during the translation process and to understand how translators process legal texts and produce their translations. Process research may also provide insight into how translators use resources, e.g. paper versus electronic dictionaries, term bases, legislative databases, corpora, computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools or machine translation (MT) systems. This type of data has practical implications for translation practice as it may help to improve the functionality and efficiency of such resources. Finally, process research has proven effective in understanding translators' expertise and competence in other types of translation (cf. Saldanha and O'Brien 2014: 109) and it should be extended to explore experimentally how lawyers and non-lawyers translate and how novices' performance differs from that of professionals, providing empirical evidence for translator trainers. The interpretation of process research findings requires triangulation, in particular, with product-oriented research, to link performance during the translation process with the quality of the translation product.

Finally, the bulk of legal translation research focuses on the **products** — translations. As already noted, one of the key aspects of legal translation is equivalence which requires a high degree of accuracy of transfer and a skilful mediation of legal knowledge between and within legal systems (cf. Engberg 2013). Since legal terms are units of legal knowledge (cf. Biel 2014: 41), their rendering is often critical for establishing equivalence between a source and target text, as well as for accuracy, which — as argued by Šarčević — takes precedence over stylistic considerations (2000: 3). Research on legal terminology in translation is conducted, above all, with qualitative methods borrowed from comparative law (cf. Šarčević 1997, Glanert 2011, Engberg 2013). Take for example the conceptual analysis proposed by Šarčević, which involves the comparison of *essentialia*, i.e. vital characteristics of legal terms, differentiating them from *accidentalia*m i.e. additional characteristics, to establish a degree of incongruity between a SL and TL term (1997: 237). Some aspects of terms may be studied quantitatively with corpora, which will be discussed in the next section (cf. section 3). Translations may also be studied with contrastive methods through the prism of SL and TL conventions. Corpus methods (as well as a manual analysis of much smaller samples) are also used to study the textual fit of translations in the context of their naturalness and readability. Other studies may involve the discursive dimension of translations, focusing in particular on genres and related issues, such as a macrostructure and microstructure, intertextuality, interdiscursivity, etc. Recent studies evidence high variation across (legal) genres (cf. Goźdź-Roszkowski 2011, Delaere *et al*. 2012, de Sutter *et al*. 2012); genres[6] are also an important underlying factor in the translator's decision-making process, in particular the selection of translation strategies and techniques (cf. Alcaraz Varó and Hughes 2002: 103). Another aspect of translation products is their legal effects, including consequences of errors, which is studied usually within the field of Legal Studies. All in all, a broad spectrum of methods is necessary to account for legal, communicative, pragmatic, cognitive and social aspects of legal translation products.

To sum up, the division into dimensions should not be viewed as clear-cut — in reality it is rather a partially overlapping continuum or a sequence. Any research into translation products, processes and participants has to — to some extent — account for the wider context of translation. It should be stressed that some aspects of translations — most notably, quality— cut across all dimensions.

3 Applicability of the framework: a corpus research model

In general, methods tend to focus on one aspect while downplaying others. I will illustrate the applicability of the framework by positioning a corpus research model[7] in it to see how it interacts with the proposed dimensions and components, specifically to understand what is left out and should be supplemented with other methods. Corpus methods have not been tested extensively on legal translation so far but have started to enjoy increasing popularity recently (cf. Biel 2017, forthcoming, for an overview).

Compared to the standard use of corpora in Translation Studies, Chart 1 proposes an advanced corpus design which affords a broader perspective on the phenomena identified in the corpus and eliminates methodological shortcomings. The corpus architecture[8] comprises genre-based comparable, parallel and general reference corpora.

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6 See also Borja Albi 2013 for a genre-analysis approach to researching the translation of court documents. A genre may be defined as "a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes which are recognised by the expert members of the parent discourse community" (Swales 1990: 58) and a "way of acting and interacting linguistically" (Fairclough 2003: 17). Thus, genres are understood as dynamic constructs with a strong emphasis on a repeated use of relatively stable, recognisable patterns in a particular discourse community for a specific communicative purpose to realise a social goal.

7 Corpus studies tend to be, somewhat artificially, divided into corpus-based and corpus-driven approaches. The former apply corpora as a tool to test or validate pre-conceived hypotheses and theories (Tognini-Bonelli 2001: 65), taking for granted linguistic categories proposed by linguistic theory (Biber 2013[2009]). The latter are more radical and inductive, relying on corpus data without prior assumptions, "so that the linguistic constructs themselves emerge from analysis of a corpus" (Biber 2013[2009]: 5). This distinction is artificial to some extent — 'overstated' as observed by McEnery et al. (2006: 8) — since quite frequently researchers use a mix of corpus-based and corpus-driven approaches, and it is virtually impossible to approach data without 'any prior assumptions'. As I share these concerns, I will use a generic term 'corpus research model' to account for both approaches.

8 This architecture been tested on legal translation in Biel (2014, 2016).
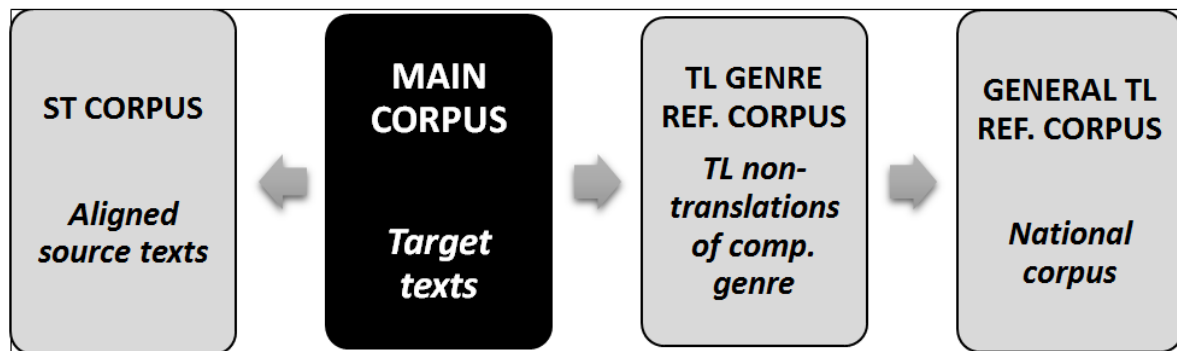
Chart 2. Comparable-parallel corpus architecture (ST – source text, TL – target text, ref. - reference).

The main corpus consists of the corpus of target texts (translations) which is researched against the reference corpus of target language non translated texts of a comparable genre (a comparable corpus) designed according to the same sampling frame (cf. McEnery and Hardie 2012: 19). The comparable corpus technique[9] is quite frequent in Translation Studies thanks to the sophistication of monolingual corpus software. It focuses on patterns which are overrepresented and underrepresented in translations or are atypical. The use of comparable corpora has, however, been criticised as methodologically flawed due to the exclusion of source texts (STs) from the study of translations (cf. Bernardini and Zanettin 2004: 59). It has been recommended by a number of scholars to utilise a mixed-design architecture with another component — a bilingual parallel corpus which comprises source texts aligned with their target texts. I refer to this type of corpus architecture as a comparable-parallel corpus[10] (cf. Biel 2016: 203). Thus, in our model, the main corpus is also studied in relation to the corpus of source texts aligned with their target texts (a parallel corpus). It should, however, be appreciated that parallel corpus methods still lack technical sophistication similar to that of comparable corpora and, after extraction, data often require manual analysis. The final component in the architecture, borrowed from discourse studies, is a big general reference corpus, e.g. The National Corpus of Polish, to avoid the "difference mindset" and be able to identify similarities (Baker 2010: 153). In this context, Baker warns against over-reporting differences and under-reporting similarities (2010: 152).

As a quantitative method, corpus methodology facilitates searching for regularities and generalisability beyond the particular context, through the systematic bottom-up identification of patterns in large, ideally representative and balanced, collections of data. The main strength of corpus studies is their ability to explore different types of patterns in translation as a special type of language use. Language use has been found by corpus linguists to be highly patterned and formulaic (cf. Sinclair's idiom principle[11] 1991: 101), with corpus linguistics shifting attention from a word to recurrent repetitive patterns (Stubbs 2004: 118). Owing to their repetitiveness, such patterns are cognitively salient and may be expected to play a **facilitating** role in text comprehension.

Corpus methods can help us study a number of **patterns**:

(1) **Legal rule as a pattern:** mental patterning of legal reasoning (cf. Kjær 2000:146);

(2) **Patterns in underlying source and target legal genres** (generic conventions): various types of lexico-grammatical patterns, including deontic and epistemic modality, framing (qualification) of legal rules, rhetorical and argumentative patterns, depersonalisation of the authority, sentence structure; logical relations between units of discourse; intra- and intertextuality/textual navigation, cohesion, including the consistency of term use (cf. Biel 2014: 143);

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9 This method was pioneered by M. Baker in early 1990s (1993).

10 Hansen-Schirra and Teich have proposed to refer to it as a *multilingually comparable corpus* (2009: 1162), a name which I find ambiguous.

11 Sinclair's idiom principle assumes that "a language user has available to him or her a large number of semi-preconstructed phrases that constitute single choices, even though they might appear to be analysable into segments" (1991: 110).

(3) Patterning (prefabrication) **primed in translation**: the intensity of SL interference and constraints of the translation process, that is to what extent translations may overcome source language interference and recreate natural TL patterns;

(4) Patterns in the use of terms: the collocational environment of terms (embedding of terms), a range of equivalents for a SL term, consistency in the use of equivalents for a SL term, terminological n-grams;

(5) Patterns in translators' behaviour evidenced as translation universals or features of translations, including simplification, explicitation, standardisation, exaggeration of typical target language features, and suppression of unique items (Baker 1993; Chesterman 2004);

(6) Patterns of patterns: generalisations about legal translation and transferability of findings to other contexts. Generalisability "aims to establish the relevance, significance, and external validity of findings for situations or people beyond the immediate research project" (Duff 2006: 67).

Thus, corpus methods are oriented at exploring predominantly the product (translations) quantitatively on large collections of texts, and except for some aspects of the process and translators (participants) (see pattern # 5), they are inadequate to extensively study the remaining dimensions, that is the context, the process and translators.

In respect of the product, the corpus model is well-suited to study the textual fit — the distance of translations to non-translated legal texts of a comparable genre, their naturalness, aesthetics, readability and clarity, all of which contribute to the communicative potential of legal translations. In particular, research into textual fit explores the intensity of SL interference and translation-induced distortions related to the constraints of the translation process and does it on a much larger and objective scale. Despite the complex corpus architecture proposed in the model, corpora have a limited potential to study equivalence (information transfer, accuracy), that is the construal of legal meaning in translations against the legal meaning of the source text, which requires the one-to-one close reading of the target text against the source text (ST). Parallel corpora may help extract some bilingual information, which still requires qualitative analysis. As observed by Baker (2010: 151), "A crucial stage of analysis in any corpus research involves qualitative analyses of quantitative patterns". Corpus methods are used to identify units for further qualitative and small-scale quantitative analysis to shift from the macro perspective and global trends to a micro perspective with richer data.

In order to ensure a good coverage of perspectives, corpus data should be triangulated with other methods, in particular qualitative approaches (cf. Zanettin 2012: 12), and in our case, above all, with comparative law methods. It is also advisable to supplement corpus research with the study of the context, process and participants.

4 Conclusions

This paper has proposed a framework for researching legal translation by modelling its key dimensions, components and factors, and linking them to relevant research methods. All in all, a broad spectrum of methods is necessary to account for legal, communicative, pragmatic, cognitive and social aspects of legal translation.

It may well be difficult to apply varied methods and approaches to legal translation, and, in fact, to any object of research, in a single study. For practical considerations, a single study would usually focus on one or selected lines of research within the framework. Each method has its strengths and weaknesses and while exploring extensively one aspect of language use, it may obscure other aspects. It is vital that a researcher be aware of what is being suppressed or left out (and of the ensuing consequences). Yet, in order to obtain a complete picture of legal translation, a researcher should aim at incorporating other components of the framework in their successive studies. On the other hand, this problem may be overcome, at least to some extent, if we conduct our work in transdisciplinary, multimethodological and multilingual teams. With the growing methodological awareness and rigour in the field, it may be expected that research into legal

translation will become increasingly larger in scale and more teamwork-based in order to integrate multiple perspectives on the object of study.

Acknowledgement

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