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THE ROLE OF GENRES AND TEXT SELECTION IN LEGAL TRANSLATOR TRAINING

Abstract. The development of genre-awareness is a key issue in legal translator training, as, according to research, semantic text comprehension depends largely on the recognition of genres/text types. Legal translators must be familiar with the rhetorical and textual conventions of legal genres both in the source- and the target language – the two code systems – to realise the communicative aim of the translation, and to be able to produce texts that are acceptable by the professional community.

Consequently, in legal translator training the development of intercultural competence has double implications: it refers not only to the ability to transfer between legal systems, but also between legal genres. The biggest challenge of translator training is to improve skills and competences effectively through a selection of texts that realistically meet the changing needs of the translation market, but, at the same time, can be successfully adjusted to the level of proficiency attained by students at different levels of the training.

Drawing on both practical experience and empirical research, the paper attempts to present a methodological scheme for the selection and grading of legal genres and text types in legal translator training, taking into account some of the functional typologies, and several other relevant aspects. With a practical approach, the selected genres are introduced in the context of exercises aimed at improving genre-transfer competence and some other skills vital for legal translators. Although the presented scheme/case study has been designed for an actual 3-semester legal translator training where students have legal degrees, it is supplemented with further methodological guidelines so that it can be adapted to other legal translator trainings of any level.

Keywords: legal translator training, genre, text-type, genre analysis, genre-transfer competence.

1. Introduction

Legal translator training is an increasingly challenging area that requires careful methodological planning, ideally based on a needs-analysis, with several factors (training and outcome requirements, requirements of

the translation market, language proficiency level, age and profession of the students etc.) taken into consideration. As translation (as a subcategory of mediation) is a written activity, the written text is supposed to be the core element of the subjects constituting the curricula of legal translator trainings, and thus the selection of the texts used in the training is equally crucial. Given the vast array of legal genres and text types, one of the challenges of legal translator training is to improve the skills and competences of translation students effectively by the selection of texts that realistically meet the changing needs of the translation market (i.e. reflect the proportions of genres that are commissioned for translation), and, at the same time, can be successfully adjusted to the level of proficiency attained by students at different levels of the training.

Drawing on both practical experience and empirical research, the paper presents a methodological scheme for the selection and grading of legal genres and text types in legal translator training, taking into account functional typologies (e.g. Šarčević 1997), and several other relevant aspects, such as, e.g. the level of difficulty of the texts, as defined by Nord (1991) and De Groot (2002). The selected genres are introduced in the context of exercises aimed at improving genre-transfer competence and written legal communication skills in the English-Hungarian language pair. Although the presented scheme has been designed for an actual postgraduate-level 3-semester legal translator training program in Hungary, where all the students have legal degrees, it is supplemented with further methodological guidelines so that it may be adapted to other legal translator trainings of any level.

2. Issues of terminology and definitions

Although the scope of this study does not allow for an exhaustive account, some clarification is necessary in terms of the terminology used in the paper.

Genre analysis is a subject that has been addressed by researchers from several fields (e.g. literary scholars, rhetoricians, sociologists, discourse analysts, cognitive scientists, machine translators, computational linguists, language teachers and ESP specialists); however, when reading through the articles related to the subject, it becomes clear that there is no consensus on the relevant terminology. While the concept of ‘discourse’ seems to be used in a fairly unified way (referring to language use in the general sense), the terms ‘register’, ‘genre’ and ‘text type’ are often used with different

interpretations. Although the main focus of this paper is genres and text types, a short discussion of the notion of register cannot be avoided, as register (the legal register respectively) is a functional attribute that is an inherent part of any genre: without the appropriate register the translated target text will not be regarded as authentic and consequently will not fulfil its function. Register is also listed in the EMT (European Masters in Translation) competence model as the socio-linguistic dimension of translators' intercultural competence (see table 1.).

Register is typically regarded as a functional language variation related to language use, mainly referred to occupational fields. It is a contextual category that correlates linguistic features with recurrent situational features (Gregory and Carroll 1978: 4). The concept refers primarily to textual knowledge (revealing similarities and differences mainly in lexis by way of typical terms, set phrases and collocations, and in grammar by way of typical syntactical structures), which does not take into account some factors that cause variations in the usage of the language in a text, such as the communicative purpose of the text, the communicators (their status: professionals or laypersons; and their role: addresser or addressee) and genre-conventions. Bhatia (2004) discusses the difference between register (seen as typical configurations of field, mode and tenor of discourse) and disciplinary discourses/disciplines (displaying characteristics of the subject matter they represent).

In Trosborg's opinion, 'analysis of registers on their own reveal little about the nature of genres', so she suggests that 'registers are divided into genres reflecting the way social purposes are accomplished in and through them in settings in which they are used' (Trosborg 1997: 6). Her view is supported by the fact that several researchers (e.g. Cao 2007, Haigh 2012, Mattila 2013, Tiersma 1999) have provided general descriptions of the textual features of the legal language (the legal register), which is useful if the aim is to differentiate it from the general language, or from other specialised languages, but the extent to which the properties listed in these general descriptions manifest themselves in a particular legal genre greatly depends on the factors listed above (the given genre, the communicative purpose of the text and the participants involved in the discourse).

Genres reflect differences in external format and situations of use, and are defined on the basis of systematic non-linguistic criteria. Genre is a macrolevel concept, a communicative act within a discursive network. In the context of linguistics, genre is considered to be a concept used in semiotics, relevant for the comprehension and the production of texts, and, within the category of semiotics it is closely related to pragmatics, which

comes down to how language is used to achieve a certain communicative goal, and how context aids the transmission of meaning in a discourse. Genre constraints operate at the level of discourse structure and can only be realised in completed texts, while registers can be applied to fragments of texts as well.

The broadest definition for genre was given by Swales, who sees it as a phenomenon determined by a complexity of linguistic, social and cognitive factors. Genre in his view is “a class of communicative events that share some set of communicative purposes” (Swales 1990: 58). In addition to purpose, genres can be distinguished by structure, style, content and intended audience and they also display differences and similarities in language use – this latter idea suggesting that the concepts of register and genre overlap.

Although genre and register were not much differentiated in linguistics until the 80s, due to the characteristics described above it makes sense to handle these concepts as separate (though intertwined), and not subordinated, but rather complementary to each other. There are genres typical of one single register (e.g. a contract is always drafted in the legal register) and there are genres cutting across disciplines, as suggested by Hyland (2000) and Bhatia (2004) (e.g. a research article). Both genres and registers impose constraints on translators, in terms of the discourse structure and language use respectively.

Within the discipline of rhetorics, text types are typically determined by the purpose of the communication (to inform, to persuade, etc.), which is in close connection to the rhetorical purpose and rhetorical strategies used in the text. While communicative purpose represents the ultimate aim of a text, rhetorical purpose is made up of the rhetorical strategies which constitute the mode of discourse realized through text types. Text types are identified by Hatim and Mason (1990: 140) as “a conceptual framework which enables us to classify texts in terms of communicative intentions serving an overall rhetorical purpose”. For Biber, however, the differentiation of text types implies groupings of texts which are similar in linguistic form, irrespective of genre. Linguistically distinct texts within a genre may represent different text types (e.g. newspaper articles can range from narrative and colloquial to informational and elaborated in linguistic form), while linguistically similar texts from different genres may represent a single text type (e.g. newspaper articles and popular magazine articles) (Biber 1989: 6).

Based partly on the views introduced above and focusing on the context of translation, in this paper genre will be regarded as text used in a particular situation for a particular purpose composed and structured ac-

cording to the norms accepted by a particular discourse community and thus displaying differences in external format (e.g. newspaper article, essay, contract, etc.), while text types are differentiated according to their specific rhetorical (and communicative) function (e.g. narrative, descriptive, prescriptive, argumentative, comparative, etc.) – in other words, the mode of the discourse. Register and text type have a more direct connection to language use, while genre is a system for pursuing social goals by verbal means, and it has more to do with the structure of the discourse.

3. The rationale for improving genre-awareness in legal translator training

Researchers dealing with the translational aspect of genres and text typology generally agree that for translators (as text producers) understanding the genres of written communication in a specific field is essential to professional success and that the “lack of relevant knowledge of genre, communicative functions, text types and culture may result in distorted translations”, as stated by Trosborg (1997: 17). Failure to use the appropriate generic framework might have a deeper impact on the quality of the text as a whole, than errors in language usage or inappropriate register. Errors in language usage might cause problems in the comprehension of text segments, but neglecting generic conventions might result in a total breakdown of communication in case the function of the text is not fulfilled.

Both Bhatia (1997) and Swales (1990) point out that each professional community has a set of discoursal expectations, which must be met for successful text production. As Bhatia puts it, legal translators must be familiar with the rhetorical and textual conventions of legal genres both in the source- and the target language – the two code systems – to realise the communicative aim of the translation, and to be able to produce texts that are acceptable by the professional community. Károly (2007) emphasizes that generic competence enables future legal translators to recognize and tackle the difficulties stemming from the differences between textual structures of the source- and the target language. According to Szikszainé Nagy (1999), semantic text comprehension depends largely on the recognition of genres and text types.

Research done by Colina (1997) has shown that beginner translators tend to transfer ST (source text) elements into the TT (target text) due

to a lack of genre-awareness. After conducting experiments with beginner translators, García Izquierdo (2000) pointed out that most of them were unable to identify genres even in their mother tongue, but following a theoretical briefing on genres, they had no difficulty identifying them. Hatim and Mason (1990: 149) found that the majority of twelve translator trainees produced translations which could be faulted on the grounds that they misinterpreted text-type focus. Another important observation about the working process of beginner translators was made by Klaudy (2005), who came to the conclusion that as opposed to experienced translators, most of them use a bottom-up approach instead of a top-down one, that is, they compose the text by putting the words together instead of starting from the macro-level (i.e. seeing the text as a whole) and adjusting the style, the register, the grammar and the vocabulary to the standards required by the text.

To acquire genre-competence, students need improvement or consolidation of abilities and skills related to the communicative, textual, cultural and intercultural sub-competencies as proposed by Kelly (2005) because it promotes the development of the capacity to understand, analyse, and produce texts that are compatible with the genres and subgenres present both in the source culture and in the culture where the target language is used. Nevertheless, it also has to be acknowledged that in some situations generic attributes can be applied with flexibility and that there are situations when generic equivalence is not required. The most common aim of legal translation is to preserve the function of the text so that an identical communicative goal is achieved. The strategies adopted by the translator are subordinated to this aim, so ST genres are matched to TT genres accordingly. But there might be other scenarios, when, for example, the normative text is to be translated for informative purposes. Genres in this case will be different in the ST and the TT. “A major change in the communicative purpose(s) is likely to result in a change of genre” (Bhatia 1993: 14).

Finally, in legal translation, it is especially important for the translator to be aware of the textual conventions of the genre, as the validity of legal documents may depend on the expression of specific formulae.

While only a few specialist legal translator programs ask for a legal degree as an entry requirement, there are a number of MA-level translator training programmes that train students with BA degrees in modern languages. This latter group of students is in an especially difficult situation as regards mastering the legal register (as broken down to specific genres) due to the lack of legal collocation dictionaries and legal thesauri (Biel 2010).

4. The intercultural nature of genre competence and some empirical data supporting the necessity of genre and intercultural competence

Taking off from the proposition that cultural factors influence and determine linguistic choices, as put forward by Firth (1951), we can also presume that legal cultures influence the language of legal texts produced within them, which makes legal translation an intercultural encounter. Translators are supposed to use the social and linguistic tools of a professional field in their native language and in the language of the target text, usually without being given the chance to adopt the target language culture, or immerse in it. The EMT (European Masters in Translation) model names intercultural competence as one of the five major competences translators need to become successful service providers in the translation industry. The general idea of intercultural competence is divided into two subcategories (dimensions), suggesting that intercultural competence implies knowledge of the appropriate register on the one hand, and knowledge of the generic conventions of the text on the other (see Table 1).

Table 1

The dimensions of intercultural competence as described by the EMT model

INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE	
SOCIO-LINGUISTIC DIMENSION	TEXTUAL DIMENSION
knowing how to produce register appropriate for a given situation for a particular document or speech	knowing how to compose a document in accordance with the conventions of the genre and rhetoric standards

The results of an empirical research (conducted at Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Faculty of Law and Political Sciences) in which students studying legal translation filled in questionnaires and gave their opinion on the necessity of improving genre competence, confirm the findings of translation researchers. 25 students responded to the questionnaire, all of whom had legal qualifications and attended postgraduate specialist training. All the students said yes to the question whether they thought the improvement of genre-awareness and studying about textual and rhetoric conventions was important. Students were also asked to rank the importance of improving intercultural competence (meaning genre- and register-competence in this

context) on a ten-point scale, 1 standing for not important at all, 10 standing for very important. The average of their answers came to 8.6. They were also asked to do the same with all the competences listed in the EMT model and intercultural competence was rated as the second most important competence to be improved in translator training, after language competence. This might be surprising for those not knowing that the students in question are legal professionals and not language professionals, like, e.g. students of modern languages, who might have answered in a different way, saying that the improvement of thematic competence is more useful.

When asked to give reasons for their choices, students formulated the following answers (among others): being aware of the genre of a legal document helps to understand the purpose of the writer; even when working in a special legal area, one encounters only certain types of legal texts and not all of them; thematic and language competence is not enough for a translator to produce good quality translations, translators have to ‘look behind’ the text.

5. Classifying legal text types and genres

Acknowledging genre-awareness as a necessary skill for legal translators, text typologies seem to be a good starting point for filtering the specific genres to be used for practice in the training of legal translators. Legal texts can be classified according to several criteria, like, for example, the branches of the law; however, with this method mostly lexical differences can be identified in the texts. For translation purposes, functional typologies are more suited, as the one created by Šarčević (1997), which differentiates legal texts according to their field of application. In her system, legal genres are presented under three main functions, which, with the approach applied in this paper, are identified with text types (primarily prescriptive; primarily prescriptive but also descriptive; and purely descriptive). Examples of genres and subgenres that typically perform the respective functions are listed accordingly (See Table 2).

It must be noted that Šarčević’s system focuses on communication between legal professionals and does not include situations where professionals communicate with laypersons (e.g. in legal correspondence), or, where laypersons communicate with each other about legal issues (e.g. posts and comments in internet fora and blogs). Considering that language usage is influenced by who the text is addressed to, it seems logical to supple-

Table 2

**Legal text types by function with examples of legal genres
(based on Šarčević's typology)**

PRIMARILY PRESCRIPTIVE	PRIMARILY DESCRIPTIVE BUT ALSO PRESCRIPTIVE	PURELY DESCRIPTIVE
<p>REGULATORY INSTRUMENTS (NORMATIVE TEXTS):</p> <p>examples: legal acts statutes regulations codes contracts treaties conventions, etc.</p>	<p>JUDICIAL DECISIONS AND INSTRUMENTS USED TO CARRY ON JUDICIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDINGS:</p> <p>examples: actions pleadings briefs appeals requests petitions, etc. (minutes, powers of attorney, certificates of clean record, etc.)</p>	<p>NOT USED IN THE MECHANISM OF LAW, BUT HAVE INDIRECT IMPACT ON THE LAW (WRITTEN BY LEGAL SCHOLARS):</p> <p>examples: legal opinions law textbooks academic papers, articles, etc.</p>

ment Šarčević's classification with Trosborg's division of the legal register (meaning the legal language) into three sub-registers. These sub-registers are consistent with Šarčević's three main functional groups, with the exception of the last one, which includes communication with laypersons as well:

1. the language of the law in legal normative documents (= primarily prescriptive);
2. the language of the courtroom (= primarily descriptive but also prescriptive); and
3. the language of legal textbooks (= purely descriptive), and various types of lawyers' communication with other lawyers and with laymen (Trosborg 1991: 4).

Another distinction based on the function of legal texts is Tiersma's typology, which differentiates operative (pleadings, petitions, orders, contracts, deeds and wills), expository (office memoranda, judicial opinions, client letters) and persuasive (briefs to a court and memoranda of points and authorities) documents.

6. Further aspects to be considered for text selection

The number of legal genres and subgenres is so huge that it is practically not possible to use all of them in a training, so in this section of the paper we will see what aspects may be considered for the weighting and selection of texts.

6.1. Training aims and level of the training (defined by students' professional and language knowledge)

Text selection largely depends on the type and the level of the training, and the training outcome. In MA translator training programs, legal translation is usually only a part of the curriculum among other fields of social sciences. Students attending these trainings are typically students of humanities with good language B proficiency, but little or no legal knowledge. Students attending postgraduate specialist trainings, on the other hand, arrive with sound legal knowledge but are less trained in languages. Consequently, the focus of the training must be shifted accordingly.

6.2. The language pair and the direction of the translation

These aspects are closely related to the previous ones, as they depend on the training aim and can be evaluated in the context of the particular training.

6.3. Typical communicative situations; the aim and the target audience of the translation

In the context of legal communication, the most typical communicative situations (who communicates with whom, about what and in what register) and events are the ones that involve professionals. However, as mentioned before, communication between professionals and laypersons (in the form of legal correspondence, legal assistance, lawyer-client interviews) is also important. Stylistic exercises, like drafting the same text for different purposes and audiences (target language summary or extract for informative purposes for laypersons, or translation preserving the exact contents of the source text for professionals, etc.), are excellent tools to make students aware of the necessary shifts in register due to the status of the communicators.

6.4. Requirements imposed by the translation market

Studies and statistics both confirm that normative (prescriptive) text types are the ones that are the most frequently commissioned for translation. Translation courses should attempt to match the training to market conditions if they wish to provide students with marketable skills and com-

petences. For that purpose, institutions must keep in touch and cooperate with professional organizations and translation agencies, and take part in mentoring programs offered by them.

6.5. Group-specific needs

Groups attended by students with legal qualification are better motivated if students are asked about the specific types of legal documents they meet during their daily work and whether they do any translation tasks related to them. In case any of the students deal with a genre or document type regularly, their experience can be invaluable if shared with the group.

6.6. The level of difficulty

It seems to be an accepted axiom in the methodology of translation training that the level of difficulty of texts should be gradually increased. But defining the level of difficulty is one of the biggest challenges trainers face when selecting texts.

From the extensive literature of translation methodology providing clues to help trainers define the difficulty of texts and grade them accordingly, we would like to highlight the complex method developed by Nord (1991) for the training of professional translators. Nord distinguishes between translation problems and translation difficulties. Translation difficulties are subjective and can be related to the translator's person, language competence, or individual working conditions, while translation problems are objective and they have to be solved by all translators irrespective of their acquired skills and competences. Problems stemming from generic differences belong to the latter category (Nord 1991: 150).

Another typology relevant for the grading of legal texts was made by De Groot (2002), who defines the difficulty of legal texts with a comparative approach, differentiating four levels:

- a. Easiest translation: legal systems and languages are closely related.
- b. Easy translation: the legal systems are closely related, but the languages have not much in common.
- c. Difficult translation: the languages are closely related, but the legal systems are very different.
- d. Most difficult translation: legal systems are very different and languages are hardly related.

For translation trainers both systems might be useful and inspirational when structuring the curriculum, grading the texts and deciding on the order in which the selected texts are used.

7. Suggested genres in the framework of a three-semester legal translator training

Taking into account the aspects listed above, in the following part of the paper a possible pattern for text selection is introduced as a case study, designed for an actual three-semester legal translator training program in Hungary, in the English-Hungarian language pair. The course is attended by students with legal qualifications, whose written English language skills need a little more improvement than that of students of modern languages. Therefore, following the introduction of the selected genres and the tasks rendered to them, supplementary exercises focusing on the development of legal writing skills in English will be presented in a separate table, under point 9. The presented scheme is also adaptable to legal translator training courses taking place within the framework of four-semester MA programs. As these courses are usually attended by students without a legal degree, the scheme must be preceded by a crash-course on legal studies and legal terminology, for which the first semester of the program is the ideal time-span. In view of these, in the final section of the paper some tasks and activities will be listed, which can introduce students to the basics of legal English from the aspect of translation.

In the **first semester**, the most important training aim is to improve students' translation competences. This involves making students familiar with the general characteristics of legal genres in the target language and the typical transfer operations in the given language pair, and making them aware of the differences between the concepts behind certain terms and the pitfalls or challenges these differences might carry.

To make students aware of the general characteristics of legal texts, the examination of statutes and legal acts is the best choice. Legal acts, together with contracts, are prototypical genres; they are so representative that they should be dealt with at each level of the training. However, in the first phase of translator training they serve a better purpose if used for text analysis instead of translation. Constitutions and codes are perfect choices because their English translations are usually available, so the macrostructure, as well as the syntactical and lexical solutions of the source and the target texts, can be studied parallelly.

Another method to study the structure and leading features of legal genres drafted in English is based on Šarčević's typology of legal texts (see Table 2). Selecting a few of the genres grouped under the three main text types and providing students with articles or paragraphs from each genre, they are asked to compare them in terms of grammar, lexis and style. It is

in this phase that generic differences in register and style can be discussed the most effectively, as the simultaneous examination of different genres will instantly shed light on the fact that the typical features we attribute to traditional legal style, so-called legalese, is not at all typical of each legal text type; it is mostly characteristic of prescriptive (normative) texts (codes, contracts, etc.), while descriptive legal texts show more similarity to general English. The discussion of the efforts and the rationale behind the plain English movement is also a rewarding idea at this stage. But it is also important to clarify the issue from the perspective of the translator: under what circumstances is it necessary to preserve the complicated sentence-structure and archaic vocabulary, and when can the translator discard or standardize them in the target text?

Getting to know the distinctive features of prototypical legal genres both in the source and the target language should precede actual translation tasks, which, in the first semester of the training ideally include the translation of documents containing set phrases and formulaic language (forms, declarations, applications, claims, wills, etc.) into both language directions, and the translation of private law contracts from English into Hungarian, preferably within similar legal systems (the difficulty level increases dramatically if the text is translated between different legal systems, as observed by De Groot – see point 7.6). In case of the Hungarian-English language pair, this latter precondition implies that instead of authentic contracts drafted by native English speakers, lingua franca texts are to be used, where English plays an intermediary role.

While in the first semester of the training the primary aim is to improve translation competences, from the **second semester** translator competences need to be improved as well. Project work is a very effective tool in this phase, since it integrates both translation and translator competences. One definite advantage of project work is that it allows for the use of longer and complete texts, which will give students a better insight into the characteristics of genres than text fragments used during normal translation practice. Another advantage of project work is that by using authentic texts the gap between the training and the translation market can be narrowed. Working in teams, students might translate a contract from lingua franca English (text drafted in English by non-native speakers) into Hungarian. (Lingua franca texts are hard to translate, because they contain more errors and their interpretation is harder, as sometimes the intention of the author of the source text is not clear.) A further practical advantage of project work stems from the fact that by working in teams, students will acquire competences necessary for cooperative learning.

In addition to contracts, genres suggested for the second semester are legal acts (translated from Hungarian into English this time), and texts used in the civil and criminal procedure, such as complaints, summons, pleadings, judgements, appeals, etc.

In the **third (and last) semester**, translator candidates have to be able to cope with all types of texts with high levels of difficulty, so the training aim is to immerse students in deep water by simulating as many different translation situations as possible (for example, students can be asked to translate according to the rules laid down by the style-guides of different international institutions, like the UN, the ECJ or any other EU institution). The more decisions and strategies the text requires from the translators, the better. Genres and the direction of the translation are suggested as follows: sophisticated private law agreements (HU-EN), international agreements (EN-HU), documents related to company law (the formation and registration of companies), IP law and tax law (in both directions). Table 3 below summarizes the genres suggested for use during the three semesters and the tasks related to them.

Table 3
Selected genres and related tasks by semester over a three-semester training

SEMESTER 1	SEMESTER 2	SEMESTER 3
<p>TRAINING AIM: to identify characteristics of legal texts; to improve translation competences</p> <p>FOCUS: translation problems</p>	<p>TRAINING AIM: to improve translator competences (using authentic texts)</p> <p>FOCUS: translation difficulties</p>	<p>TRAINING AIM: to test students' acquired knowledge by a complexity of challenges</p> <p>FOCUS: translation problems and difficulties</p>
<p>TEXT 1: LEGISLATION (Constitutions, EU treaties)</p> <p>TASK: examination of parallel texts, transfer operations, comparative analysis of genre characteristics</p> <p>TEXT 2: FORMS formulaic elements (statements, minutes, certificates, power of attorney)</p> <p>TASK: translation into both directions – with samples!</p> <p>TEXT 3: PRIVATE CONTRACTS (within the same legal system)</p> <p>TASK: translation EN-HU</p>	<p>TEXT 1: LEGISLATION</p> <p>TASK: summarizing Hungarian legislation in English</p> <p>TEXT 2: PRIVATE CONTRACTS, JUDGEMENTS</p> <p>TASK: project work: translation EN-HU in teams</p> <p>TEXT 3: TEXTS USED IN THE CIVIL AND CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (complaints, claims, summons, appeals, judgements, records)</p> <p>TASK: translation into both directions</p>	<p>TEXT 1: DIFFICULT PRIVATE CONTRACTS</p> <p>TASK: translation HU-EN</p> <p>TEXT 2: INTERNATIONAL TREATIES</p> <p>TASK: translation EN-HU</p> <p>TEXT 3: TEXTS USED IN COMPANY LAW, COMMERCIAL AND BUSINESS LAW, TAXATION (articles of association, liquidation, patents, etc.)</p> <p>TASK: translation into both directions</p>

8. Optional exercises aiming at the development of legal writing skills in English

In the following section, some optional tasks will be introduced. Their aim is to improve written communication skills and legal writing skills of the translation trainees in the target language, in English in our case. As the primary focus of this study is text selection, these exercises are presented merely in a concise, tabled format, without specific comments (Table 4).

Table 4

Optional tasks

Semester 1.	Semester 2.	Semester 3.
To improve legal writing skills and second language competence: Summarizing and structuring a text Shifting register Simplification of complicated text Identifying problem areas in the text	To improve legal writing skills and second language competence: Translating a text (EN-HU) for different audiences (laypersons/professionals) Proofreading and editing a text translated from English into Hungarian Keeping a translation journal: recording reasoned translation strategies, decisions and solutions	Simulation of various translation situations: Translating by the rules of styleguides issued by institutions (UN, EU institutions, national and international courts) Translating a text (HU-EN) for different audiences (laypersons/professionals) Proofreading and editing a text translated from Hungarian into English Keeping a translation journal and compiling terminology databases

9. Supplementary tasks for students without legal qualification

The exercises introduced so far are primarily intended for students with legal qualifications, but with minor alterations they can be adapted to any legal translator training. Most MA-level trainings cover four semesters, from which the first semester seems to be ideal for intensive subject-field competence improvement, providing students with the legal basics they need to

translate legal documents. The following tasks are suitable for the improvement of subject-field competence in the legal area:

- Introduction and comparative analysis of legal systems
- Terminology related to the specific branches of law
- Reading comprehension of texts with legal content
- Summarizing cases for professionals
- Summarizing cases for laypersons (by lexical and grammatical simplification of language)
- Short summaries of contract clauses in English
- Revising machine-translated texts
- Communication between laypersons and legal professionals (legal correspondence)
- Writing/summarizing press releases with legal content
- Identifying pitfalls in legal texts and translation (crucial).

From these, the last point is of special importance, as the preliminary results of an ongoing research project (which analyses the quality of legal translations prepared by qualified lawyers and students of humanities with the help of a special error-typology) conducted by the author of this study within the framework of an interinstitutional cooperation reinforce the presupposition that beginner translators who are not qualified in the law tend not to recognize the pitfalls of legal texts, or recognize them much less frequently than their counterparts with legal degrees, who are aware of the meaning behind legal concepts. It is therefore crucial for them to be made aware of the risks and possible consequences of mistranslation, to get sufficiently trained in the fundamentals of law, and to acquire competence in the use of legal genres and registers.

10. Conclusions and limitations

The set of aspects to be considered for the grading and the selection of texts in legal translator training represents only one of many possible methodological approaches. It aims to provide students with some help to acknowledge and acquire the different generic requirements of texts used in written professional legal discourse, and to make them aware of their importance in legal translation. However, further research is needed for the language-pair-specific comparative analysis of the individual legal genres, taking into consideration the variations caused by the differences of legal systems. It would also be necessary to examine and compare the thematic structure and the lexical and the grammatical cohesion of the texts

(in the context of different language pairs) selected for the training of legal translators in addition to the comparison of their generic and rhetorical features. Corpus analysis and corpora-based studies could enhance the research into the generic differences of legal texts in different language pairs, but this kind of research is largely impeded by the fact that while in some languages legal corpora are abundant, in minor languages it is hard to find the necessary amount of texts to be used for comparison. In the legal area, the availability of certain genres is further limited by the confidential nature of legal texts, as a direct consequence of which there is a dominance of legal acts and codes in available sources, while private legal documents are under-represented.

R E F E R E N C E S

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