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Intercultural Communication Training for Translators: A Comparative Analysis

ABSTRACT

The paper investigates what is the understanding of intercultural competence (IC) for translators across six European countries. This is done using data from a comprehensive survey carried out in 2012 as part of the Promoting Intercultural Competence in Translators (PICT)¹ project. The first part of the paper looks at the results obtained across the six different countries in two key-areas: the importance attached to IC competences by different groups and how these groups conceptualize IC for translators. The analysis here is mostly quantitative, employing Spitzberg's IC model. The paper produces both academic-student comparisons as well as comparisons across the six academic approaches. The second part of the papers focuses on the way in which IC is conceptually seen by teachers and students in two chosen countries: Poland and United Kingdom. The analysis turns much more qualitative at this stage in order to analyze the complex nuances identified in the respondents' answers. Cross-country and teacher-student analyses are provided in this context. The views of the respondents from the two countries on *what* IC for translators consist of provide a rich tapestry of overlapping yet distinct meanings and understandings of the theoretical and practical aspects. These understandings are grouped, for research purposes, into several conceptual categories. The analysis demonstrates that there are a number of common strands in the understanding of IC for translators. There are also (national) differences in the way IC for translators is conceptualized. Recent years have seen a proliferation of pedagogical models for the teaching of IC for translators; in the view of the author, these models need to take into account both the common strands as well as the distinct conceptual understandings when defining what IC for translators is.

KEY WORDS

Intercultural competence, translator training, competence model, conceptualization of IC

1. Introduction

¹ The Promoting Intercultural Competence in Translators (PICT) project was co-financed by the European Union and its outputs can be found on: www.pictllp.eu

Intercultural Communication (IC) has become an integral concern of translation studies from both a research and pedagogical perspective. This growing interest is reflected in the number of articles discussing different pedagogical approaches to the teaching of IC for translators and the importance of translation training in general. A recent bibliometric analysis (Zanettin, Saldanha & Harding 2015, 168), ranked intercultural studies and translator training as 3rd and 4th, respectively, in terms of popularity among the 27 different topics listed in the translation studies abstracts database (TSA). The only two areas that are currently proving more popular with researchers, in terms of number of articles published, are translation theory and literary translation. This high level of interest in IC for translators reflects the centrality of the topic in several academic debates ranging from professionalization of translation to translation quality assessment, and from the impact of functionalism on current practice to pedagogical teaching models.

The interest of the translation studies community in IC is reflected not only by the high number of academic articles written on this topic but also by the number of new pedagogical models developed in the last decade. Models that define IC training for translators, with their different conceptualizations and dimensions, can be divided into different categories, models that are very much IC centered, such as PICT 2013, Yarosh 2015; generic models that present IC as one of the several translation dimensions PACTE 2003, Göpferich 2009, and others that are focused on a type of translation, such as PETRA-E designed specifically for literary translations, to mention just a few. These models demonstrate that the research and theoretical interests of the researchers are doubled by practical needs of the translation training community. For an up-to-date overview of the research and pedagogical agenda in this area, see the position paper by Tomozeiu, Koskinen and D’Arcangelo (2016). All of these models propose innovative approaches that provide suggestions, and in some cases, concrete curriculum frameworks, teaching and assessment materials, as to *how* IC can be taught on translation programs.

This increased research and pedagogical interest seems to indicate that the need to teach IC for translators is becoming recognized by both theoreticians and practitioners. The current article comes to unpack this idea of IC for translators further asking *what* IC for translators should contain. While most authors agree that IC is needed in translation training, and the number of models offering diverse approaches to do this is increasing, there appears to be limited agreement as to *what* IC for translators should contain. The

current article comes to address this gap in the literature by looking at current practice in order to identify how IC is being conceptualized and taught in different educational environments. The article uses the qualitative and quantitative data collected in a survey ran across six European countries, part of the Promoting Intercultural Competence in Translators (PICT 2013) project. After an initial broad comparison across the six academic and national cultures, which provides an understanding of the importance attached to IC by translation teachers and students, the study zooms in on two countries, Poland and the United Kingdom, in order to analyze in detail the similarities and differences in IC conceptualization and its implication for translator training.

The data for the current article comes from the Promoting Intercultural Competence in Translators (PICT 2011-2013) project, which was co-funded by the European Union.²The project delivered a curriculum framework, ready-made teaching and assessment materials for developing IC competences in translators as well as policy recommendations for academic and political decision-makers. As part of the project, a needs analysis was carried out in 2012 and this analysis included an online survey which was advertised in the six countries that were taking part in the project. The primary data used in this article was collected in that period while the interpretation of the data and the analysis took place later, in 2016, being influenced also by more recent developments in the field of IC for translators, such as the publication of the Yarosh model in 2015.

2. Methodological consideration

In the area of translation training there appears to be very limited data collected on current practices. There is little information detailing what is currently being taught and through what methods. Without this valuable data, it is hard to understand the current state of affairs and how models and approaches can be designed in order to improve it. It was with this lack of data in mind that the PICT survey was designed by the partner institutions in 2012 (PICT 2012, 5). The aim of the survey was to collect valuable information from the translation teachers and students in six different European countries – Bulgaria, France, Finland, Germany, Italy, Poland and UK. The countries were carefully chosen to represent the diversity of European geography and cultural traditions.

² Full results of the project can be accessed at www.pictllp.eu

The initial aim of the survey was:

“(…) to gain greater insight into how far and in what ways intercultural elements are currently being introduced into postgraduate translation programmes in higher education institutions across the partner countries and beyond. The materials assess what aspects, if any, of intercultural communication are currently taught on postgraduate translation programmes and the methods used in teaching those aspects.” (PICT 2012, 4)

As the survey results started coming in, it became clear that restricting its circulation among postgraduate programs was neither feasible nor desirable, particularly in countries, such as Finland, where there are only a handful of universities providing degrees in translation. Therefore the survey was circulated in both postgraduate and undergraduate programs. The idea was that the survey would: “provide a ‘birds-eye’ view of the content and modes of delivery for intercultural communication” (PICT 2012, 4) on translation programs. Indeed the survey collected a wealth of both quantitative and qualitative data based on the responses provided by 63 academics teaching on translation programs and 399 students enrolled in these programs across the six target countries.

A dedicated website was set up containing the survey questions and the address of the website was circulated on various translation-related academic mailing lists. The questions were asked in respondents’ language in order to enhance their ability to provide comprehensive answers. The answers to the open questions were then translated by professional translators from the partner institutions. This approach was chosen in order to enhance the comparability of the collected data. The survey was in reality composed of two mirroring surveys, one for teachers and one for students; the teachers’ survey contained fourteen questions while the students’ version ten. Both surveys contained open, closed and ranking questions in order to engage with the multiple dimensions of the topic. In addition, each of the two surveys contained two parts, one that reflected on the current state of affairs and one which asked the respondents about the desired level and approach to IC teaching on translation programs (Tomozeiu 2015). As described above, the focus of the current paper will be on the first of these two parts.

While the quantitative findings cannot be said to be necessarily statistically representative as the authors of the survey did not attempt to receive replies from each of

the translation programs in the six participating European countries, every effort has been made to encourage students and teachers from across these countries to participate. In any case, the findings, both quantitative and qualitative, present a clear snapshot of current understanding and practice. In terms of translation academic programs in Poland and the United Kingdom, there seems to be a significant difference in numbers between them. For Poland the European Society for Translation Studies lists five different academic programs (EST 2016), while for the UK Undergraduate Courses at University and College (UCAS) database lists 20 undergraduate translation courses in the UK (UCAS 2016) and the American Translators Association recognizes 29 training programs in the UK (ATA 2016). The difference in the number of programs was reflected in the number of responses collected from teachers with 15 from the UK and only 8 from Poland. However when it came to the students, Polish students turned out to be much more interested in taking part in the survey with 124 Polish students participating, as opposed to only 45 British students. In fact, Poland had the highest student participation of all the six countries that took part in the survey (PICT 2012: 7). The interest shown by the students in the topic of IC for translators is reflected not only in the high number of participants but also in the rather elaborate answers they provided to the open questions of the survey.

In order to analyze the collected data, a number of different IC models and taxonomies were considered. As most of the data was made up of answers to open questions, one of the defining characteristics of the data is its variation in terms of format and focus. It was on purpose that the collected data was not all converted into one single format. Translation teachers at the partner universities summarized and translated the answers of the students and teachers. The summary tried to capture as much as possible to original expressions and foci of the original answers and therefore created a rich and diverse data set in English. While different taxonomies were considered, it became clear that, given this richness of the data and the different nuances it contains, using one of the more complex taxonomies such as Ruben's (1976) model, which was considered in detail in this context, would have made the analysis more complicated and less rigorous. Therefore, the comparatively straightforward model proposed by Spitzberg with its three dimensions (knowledge, motivation and skill) was considered the most appropriate one. Its use in this context is detailed in the analysis section. The choice of the model proved suitable as it highlighted a number of

highly relevant aspects in relation to the views provided by the translation students and teachers.

3. Theoretical considerations

As mentioned by Hatim and Mason (1990, p. 11) “we [the translators] feed our own beliefs, knowledge and attitudes, and so on into our processing of texts”. This quote, alongside the interest of the translation community is showing towards IC theory and practice, demonstrates the relevance of IC for translation, in general, and for translator training, in particular. The theoretical aspects of IC which are relevant to translation and which oftentimes dovetail with translation theory have become part of the training of translators as demonstrated by the theoretical dimension of the PICT project curriculum framework (PICT 2012a).

Not only is the number of academic papers addressing IC and translation increasing all the time, but also the practical models on the teaching of IC are increasing in number (Tomozeiu & Kumpulainen, 2016). These models, by their very nature have to engage with the theory of IC and how IC competences are defined by, for example, Lustig and Koester (2010) and to select those aspects of IC theory that apply to translator training and translator’s activities, in a more generic sense. The influence of functionalism on translation and translation theory in recent decades cannot be overstated. This influence has only highlighted the need for deeper understanding on intercultural aspects and therefore the requirement to develop IC competences in translators. As Schäffner (1996, p. 118) mentions, translation can be seen ‘as a process of intercultural communication, whose end product is a text which is capable of functioning appropriately in specific situations and contexts of use’. Her communicative and functionalist approach resonates with the more pedagogical approach proposed by Witte (2008), with its emphasis on the cognitive student experience, who identifies the fostering of IC skills in junior translators as an important and worthwhile challenge. In order to help foster these skills, several authors such as PACTE (2013) and Yarosh (2015) have developed IC training models, which implicitly or explicitly also help define IC competence for translators.

Several authors have defined what IC competence looks like for a translator. While no final definition yet been agreed upon, each attempt provides yet another relevant

dimension to this complex debate. Katan's (2009, p.284) definition of what IC competence is for translators emphasizes their ability to address difference "[i]n short, intercultural competence means being able to perceive and handle difference." At the same time, taking a more pedagogical approach to the issue, Tomozeiu, Koskinen and D'Arcangelo propose a definition of the interculturally competent translator as "[the] one who demonstrates a high level of intercultural knowledge, skills, attitude and flexibility throughout his or her professional engagements" (Tomozeiu et. al. 2016, p. 6).

Starting from this final definition that the IC competences needed by translators encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, the current article looked at how these different aspects are understood in the six different educational environments where the survey was circulated. The article then analyzed in more detail the conceptualization of these elements in Poland and the United Kingdom, as understood by students and teachers. The survey findings confirm not only the importance attached to IC by both translation students and teachers alike, but also the necessity to further theoretically define and pedagogically enhance translators' IC competences.

3. Analysing the Survey Data

The PICT survey had, as discussed above, several aims. Amongst its aims was improving the academic and professional understanding of how IC for translators is conceptualized among translation students and teachers. In order to do this, the open question "What areas of IC do you feel are important for translators?" was included in the survey and an indication was given that 3 to 5 areas were expected for this particular question. This was done in order to focus the mind on what is considered most important but at the same time to allow the respondent to engage with different areas of IC. This question was preceded by another question that asked the respondents to rank the importance attached to IC for translators with 10 being crucial and 1 not important at all. The majority of the responses, as presented below, tended to use the top three grades (10, 9 and 8) for IC. Even if they are all clustered in this manner, the actual numbers provide important insights into the national views on IC for translators as presented by the teachers and students. By summarizing several tables from the survey report (PICT 2012), the following synthetic table is created:

Table 1 The importance of IC for translators

Country	No of Teachers	Grade 10	Grade 9	Grade 8	No of Students	Grade 10	Grade 9	Grade 8
UK	15	20,00%	13,33%	40,00%	45	40,00%	24,44%	17,78%
Bulgaria	10	90,00%	10,00%	0,00%	51	49,02%	19,61%	15,69%
Finland	12	75,00%	16,67%	8,33%	92	47,83%	29,35%	19,57%
France	12	66,67%	8,33%	16,67%	45	31,11%	28,89%	24,44%
Italy	6	16,67%	33,33%	50,00%	42	54,76%	28,57%	14,29%
Poland	8	75,00%	12,50%	12,50%	124	64,52%	13,71%	12,90%
Average		57,22%	15,69%	25,50%		47,87%	24,10%	17,45%

For a full breakdown of the level of importance attached to IC by the respondents in the different countries please see the PICT survey report (PICT 2012). One of the aspects that is particularly interesting to notice is that the responses of the students were more spread across the grades than those of the teachers. While most teachers saw IC as crucial or very important, quite a number of students gave it a lower grade. Also interesting to note is that a smaller percentage of students than teachers saw IC as crucial (47.87% compared with 57.22%). This demonstrates the significant need to engage with IC in translation classes and to do so in an explicit manner. The recent increase in the IC models for translators, with a clear pedagogical dimension, comes to support the need identified here. Moreover, the need for explicit engagement, rather than more implicit approaches, for example by discussing cultural aspects when analyzing the source text, is highlighted at length by a number of publications, such as Tomozeiu et al. (2016). A more explicit approach to developing IC in translators would not only raise awareness of the importance of IC when translating, but would also help train better translation professionals. With the advent of online translation tools and software, IC becomes an even more important asset for the professional translator.

Overall, the clustering towards the higher end of the scale demonstrates the importance attached by both teachers and students to IC concepts and the realization that IC concepts are relevant to the professional translator. This consensus by teaching academics is reflected also in the academic literature on the topic. Piller (2011) mentions the general agreement that that IC needs to be taught to translators and discusses how this might be done. As demonstrated by the same survey (PICT 2012, p. 14), 87.5% of the teachers who

took part, indicated that they include IC training in their translation classes. While methodological considerations are extremely important in this context and have also been discussed at length by, for example, Tomozeiu and Kumpulainen (2016), the conceptualization of IC for translators and its various dimensions remains very much to be agreed upon. Table 2, below, taken from the PICT survey (2012) illustrates the variety of the different dimensions that are considered either by translation students or teachers when identifying IC for translators.

There are a large number of different approaches to understanding what culture is and what its components are. From Weaver's (1986) "iceberg model" of culture which has been used and re-used both in academia and popular culture, to Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1997) essentialist approach which has influenced approaches to cultural studies in the 1980s and early 1990s, to Guirdham (2005) culture in the workplace model and the shift to non-essentialist approaches, the elements of culture have been understood and represented in several ways. For the purposes of the current study a relatively straightforward IC model, which still acknowledges the complexity of IC, is employed. The taxonomy proposed by Spitzberg and Cupach (1984) and further developed by Spitzberg (2000) divides intercultural competences into three different dimensions (knowledge, motivation, skill) creates a categorization that can be applied directly to the collected data, therefore maintaining its richness. While acknowledging that this particular taxonomy is not without its faults, for example the equal weighting given to the three elements, as discussed below, it served to highlight diversity of understanding of IC. Spitzberg defines the three dimensions in 2009 (p. 76) as follows:

"Motivation refers to the many positive and negative valences that move a communicator toward, against, or away from a particular path of activity. Knowledge represents the possession and understanding of resources that inform the enactment of skills in a given context, including the ability to acquire informational resources, whether by questions, observation, cognitive modelling, or creative introspection. Skills are repeatable goal-directed behavioral sequences producing some level of goal achievement."

Each of the three dimensions (knowledge, motivation, skill) were assigned an abbreviation (K, M, S) and each survey entry was categorized under one of these three dimensions as demonstrated in the table below. While every effort was made to place all the survey

entries under one of the three categories, there were some entries that, due to their phrasing could not be categorized. For these, a new category (U), which stands for uncategorized or unclear, was created for the purposes of the current study. This fourth category was used only in cases where the entry really did not fit any of the original three categories. Where there was evidence that the entry could be placed under one of the original three categories, this option was preferred.

Table 2 Conceptualization of IC for translators across 6 EU countries

	Students		Teachers	
UK	general knowledge of one culture, e.g., religion, politics, culture, values and traditions	K	general knowledge of 'culture' (– e.g., institutions, politics, current affairs, religion, geography, the arts	K
	awareness and understanding of differences between SL culture and TL culture	K	general awareness of cultural differences between the source-language country and the target-language country that will affect the translation solution chosen	K
	understanding of ways to mediate between SL and TL culture	K	knowledge of specific working 'cultures' and their norms – e.g., health services, legal profession, business	K
	being able to understand cross-cultural verbal and non-verbal messages	S	knowledge of value systems – e.g., hierarchy, loyalty, ethics	K
	being able to respond to cross-cultural messages appropriately and effectively	S	knowledge of discourse features (textual norms and conventions) – e.g., style, register, sentence length, directness/ indirectness (politeness theory)	K
Bulgaria	ability to understand the way of thinking of people with a foreign culture	S	intercultural relations (savoir être)	M
	knowledge of the manners and customs of a given nation	K	knowledge of social groups and practices in both the target and home cultures (savoirs)	K
	knowledge about the different cultures, not only linguistic, but cultural, national and state	K	skills of interpreting and relating (savoir comprendre)	S
	ability to understand foreign culture: thinking, views, feelings, action	S	skills of discovery and interaction (savoir apprendre/faire)	S
	full awareness of terms in both source and target language	K	critical cultural awareness (savoir engager), which comprises abilities to evaluate perspectives, practices and products of both home and target culture	K
	awareness of the differences existing in history and traditions of different cultures	K	cultural traditions and cultural context (home and target cultures)	K
			knowledge of socio-political events and processes in the home and target cultures (historically viewed as well as current ones)	K
			attitudes in small groups and society as a whole	U
			the cultural "load" of the mother tongue and the target language	K
			communication patterns and behaviours in the	U

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			home and target cultures	
Finland	theoretical knowledge of one's own and the other culture and the differences between them	K	knowledge of source and target languages and cultures (history, customs, cultural products, world of values, collective memory, stereotypes, traditions taboos, behavior patterns and conventions, governmental systems)	K
	practical knowledge of one's own and the other culture and the differences between them	K	knowledge of the theory of cultural differences and their impact on the translation and communication	K
	understanding that there are differences between cultures	K	knowledge of organizations and institutions	K
	ability to take these differences into account in one's doings and to value respect them	S	solid general education	U
	knowledge of history, different behavior, habits, traditions and everyday culture, behavioral patterns and awareness of patterns of thinking	K	sensitivity to cultural discourses and ability to design the texts in different languages and cultures	S
	eagerness and unprejudiced curiosity to acquaint oneself with the differences of the culture	M		
	understanding the linguistic and textual conventions of the foreign language	K		
France	the ability to integrate into another culture with its different codes	S	country knowledge of the relevant language (history, geography, culture, literature, theatre, institutions, political organization, press)	K
	being able to accept the cultural differences of other people	S	being able to bring the two cultures together	U
	being able to adapt to cultural differences (codes) of other people in another country	S	identifying cultural, linguistic, social, historical conventions/habits/values of each country	K
	the ability to understand and integrate different cultures in order to produce the best translation in both style and content	S	adapting/localizing/explaining those conventions depending on the target audience/country	S
	knowledge of foreign language and culture	K	identifying the implicit values of each country: understanding that what is implicit for one country/culture is not for others: accepting the idea that our way of thinking/conceptualizing is different from others and being constantly acknowledged with the latest economic, social, political news to understand those implicit value	K
Italy	knowing the source and the target culture	K	knowledge of source and target culture	K
	being able to interact with other cultures	S	general knowledge (literature, geography, history, traditions, customs, legal, education, medical/health systems and institutions)	K
	knowledge and consciousness of the differences among cultures	K	knowledge of discourse features	K
	linguistic sensibility	U	ability to take the perspective of the other culture	S
	being able to adapt the target text to the target culture	S		
	being able to interpret the source text according to the source culture	S		
	flexibility, open-mindedness, tolerance	S		
	being aware that there are differences among cultures and that such differences do have	K		

	practical consequences in communication			
Poland	knowledge of foreign culture (social and political, history, literature and art, literature and the arts, traditions, customs, value systems, taboo areas, principles of communication, the rules of politeness, of everyday manifestations of culture, social and linguistic conventions)	K	general knowledge of 'culture' – e.g., history, literature, cinema, mass culture, everyday life affairs including political allusions, the units of measure and the idiomaticity of language	K
	understanding, tolerance and dialogue	S	knowledge of discourse features (textual norms and conventions) – e.g., style, register, sentence length, directness/indirectness (politeness theory) as well as the nonverbal communication	K
			knowledge of the mentality of target language users, cultural knowledge, understanding of cultural identity and ways of expression, awareness of relationships between language and cultural phenomena, including untranslatability as one of them	K
			tolerance and sensitivity towards other cultures	S

4. Conceptualizations of IC for translators

The data collected by the PICT survey demonstrate that in general terms there is an overlap in the understanding of IC for translators both among the teachers and among the students that took part in the survey. Certain dimensions, such as socio-historical or genre knowledge, appear, expressed in different forms by the teacher and students in all the six countries. The similarities do not stop here, there appears to be a common core understanding of what IC for translators includes. Besides the two aspects mentioned above, a number of entries talk about understanding the difference between the source culture's underlying values that influenced the source text and the values that will shape the expectations of the audience in the target culture.

However, a more detailed analysis highlights a number of interesting trends and aspects. The first aspect relates to the preponderance of knowledge aspects (K) in relation to Motivation (M) or skills (S). It can be argued that the longer answers, incorporating several aspects, that were recorded for some countries and the more fragmented ones that were presented for others make a quantitative analysis difficult. Indeed, the following numbers should not be taken as absolute. At the same time the "bundling" of several aspects in the same answer has been done by the translators and editors without regard to Spitzberg's

categorization and therefore its effect is spread across the different dimensions. Therefore, from a quantitative perspective the data for both teachers and students combined shows across the six countries thirty-nine entries that relate to knowledge (39K), twenty entries that relate to skills (20S) and only two entries that relate to motivation (2M). In addition to these there were five entries that were uncategorized (5U).

These numbers in themselves present a rather unbalanced picture of what IC for translators is understood to contain. The knowledge element (K) appears to be at the center of almost half of the entries collected by the survey. Despite the shift towards competences as opposed to specific knowledge, recorded by IC as a discipline Humphrey (2007), as it moves away from essentialist understandings of culture, both teachers and students identified (cultural) knowledge dimensions preponderantly when asked “What areas of IC do you feel are important for translators?” (PICT 2012).

When looking at the answers provided by the students and the teachers separately, a slightly different picture emerges. Both the students and the teachers had one entry each which focused on motivation (1M each) so this particular dimension of Spitzber’s model appears to be ignored (or acknowledged) by both groups to a similar extent. The more interesting results appear when looking at the entries on knowledge and skills. The students, across the six counties, have a very balanced approach to the two aspects with seventeen entries for knowledge (17K) and fourteen for skills (14S). However, the teachers appear to be focused primarily on knowledge, with 22 entries for this category (22K) and only 6 entries for skills (6K).

While these numbers cannot be taken as absolutes, as they are based on different numbers of survey respondents in each country and have been influenced by the translators and editor of the survey responses, a certain trend appears obvious. Overall, IC for translators is very much focused on knowledge aspects for the teachers that took part in the survey. The importance of motivation as part of the IC competences does not appear to be acknowledged much by either group. At the same time, the translation students appear to be focused on knowledge and skills in almost equal measure. They appear to conceptualize IC for translators as a combination of knowledge (K) and skills (S), while ignoring motivation (M). Another worthwhile observation is that all the teachers had more entries for knowledge (K) elements than skill (S) elements mentioned, while for the students in two countries identify more skill (S) than knowledge (K) elements.

It is also useful to observe that Spitzberg's model (1984) is direct and brings together a range of different aspects of knowledge, motivation and skill under these three umbrella terms. Other models that were developed subsequently such as Byram's (1997), which expands in his different "savoirs" mostly the notions Spitzberg (1984) had brought together under motivation or skills, therefore making the knowledge element just one of six different dimensions. In a similar fashion, for example, Rubens' (1976) "Seven dimensions of communication" which are aimed to allow the individual to develop "the ability to function in a manner that is perceived to be relatively consistent with the needs, capacities, goals, and expectations of the individuals in one's environment while satisfying one's own needs, capacities, goals, and expectations" (p. 336) again focus primarily on abilities and competences and not so much on specific cultural knowledge. It has to be acknowledged that these models were developed for IC in general and not for translators in particular. This disconnect between the focus of the teachers and that of the IC theories could be a reflection of the specific needs of professional translators, needs which in the view of the teachers appear to be very much knowledge-centered. The students however, rightly or wrongly, appear to assign a similar level of importance to both knowledge and skills. This discrepancy between the teachers' views and those of the students seems to be supported also by the students' claims that they "build-up intercultural awareness on their own" (PICT 2012: 15), outside the classroom. In total 90.03% of the student respondents across the six countries claimed to do this.

5. Poland and the United Kingdom: comparing views on IC for translators

The two countries were chosen in order to undertake a more in-depth analysis of the views of the students and teachers on IC for translators. While the analysis involving all the six countries applied a well-known taxonomy and a more quantitative analysis, this second part of the paper engages in a more qualitative analysis. As it has been mentioned above, the qualitative analysis is being affected by the translation of the answers provided by the Polish participants from Polish into English and by the role of the editor that has compiled the different answers into the table entry. Under PICT, the partner responsible for the data collection and the production of the survey report was the Jagellonian University Krakow. The data in the United Kingdom was collected in English while in Poland in Polish. The data collected in Polish was then translated and summed up into comprehensive entries by our

colleagues at Jagellonian University Krakow. They are professional translators and teachers of translation, and paid particular attention to maintaining the content and format of the responses both during the translation and when summing up the answers. While this method of translation and summing up does impact on the comparability of the collected data, this particular method was preferred to the alternatives (i.e., asking students and teachers to respond in a language that is not their mother-tongue). Having a small number of professionally trained translators manipulate and covert the data was considered the least disruptive approach on data comparability. The entries for the two countries appear rather different, as demonstrated by Table 3 below (PICT, 2012).

While the actual terms and phrases used by the respondents are not captured in the table above, as the results were summed up into comprehensive entries, the key words and nuances of the specific answers were retained. The table above highlights the areas that are identified by the respondents when considering IC for translators. Looking at the answers provided by the students first, it becomes apparent that cultural knowledge is very much foregrounded by both student groups. The dimensions that are identified under this heading of cultural knowledge differ slightly between the two sets of answers. There are a number of areas that are identified by both groups as being part of the cultural knowledge required by a translator. These areas are: politics, culture, values and traditions. While the answers from the United Kingdom identify these as distinct cultural knowledge areas, the Polish answers appear to go into more detail, mentioning literature and art, for example. At the same time the Polish answers identify a number of areas of everyday social interaction as being relevant, for example principles of communication and rules of politeness. The answers provided by UK students remain more generic on a meta-level, avoiding any specifics.

At the same time, with the answer “understanding of ways to mediate between SL and TL culture” they seem to be creating a link between knowledge and skill and highlighting the fact that they are aware that there is not only one way to mediate between cultures and they are ready to consider alternatives. At the same time, it is interesting to note that the UK answers are the only ones, among all the six sets, mentioning the verb “to mediate” in this context. The idea of translators as intercultural mediators has been presented by a number of English language sources and this perspective appears to be adopted by the translation students. In terms of skills, the answers of the British and Polish students overlap

to a large extent. However, it is interesting to note that Polish students use the word “tolerance” in this context, which appears also in the answers provided by the Polish teachers, but not very often in the other answers (only one more mentioning by Italian teachers). At the same time the British students mention both verbal and non-verbal cultural aspects.

Table 3 Conceptualization of IC for translators in Poland the UK

	Students	Teachers
UK	general knowledge of one culture, e.g., religion, politics, culture, values and traditions	general knowledge of ‘culture’ (– e.g., institutions, politics, current affairs, religion, geography, the arts)
	awareness and understanding of differences between SL culture and TL culture	general awareness of cultural differences between the source-language country and the target-language country that will affect the translation solution chosen
	understanding of ways to mediate between SL and TL culture	knowledge of specific working ‘cultures’ and their norms – e.g., health services, legal profession, business
	being able to understand cross-cultural verbal and non-verbal messages	knowledge of value systems – e.g., hierarchy, loyalty, ethics
	being able to respond to cross-cultural messages appropriately and effectively	knowledge of discourse features (textual norms and conventions) – e.g., style, register, sentence length, directness/ indirectness (politeness theory)
Poland	knowledge of foreign culture (social and political, history, literature and art, literature and the arts, traditions, customs, value systems, taboo areas, principles of communication, the rules of politeness, of everyday manifestations of culture, social and linguistic conventions)	general knowledge of ‘culture’ – e.g., history, literature, cinema, mass culture, everyday life affairs including political allusions, the units of measure and the idiomaticity of language
	understanding, tolerance and dialogue	knowledge of discourse features (textual norms and conventions) – e.g., style, register, sentence length, directness/indirectness (politeness theory) as well as the nonverbal communication
		knowledge of the mentality of target language users, cultural knowledge, understanding of cultural identity and ways of expression, awareness of relationships between language and cultural phenomena, including untranslatability as one of them
		tolerance and sensitivity towards other cultures

This becomes particularly relevant in the context of translation as it demonstrates that they are not considering only textual tasks, but also the interpersonal interaction of the translator, for example with their clients. These considerations beyond textual tasks guided the PICT consortium in designing its curriculum framework containing three different dimensions: theoretical, textual and interpersonal (PICT, 2012).

Looking at the answers provided by the translation teachers, they, to a large extent, mirror those of the students. The entry containing the reference to “tolerance” in the phrase “tolerance and sensitivity towards other cultures” which has already been discussed above, is the only entry that could be considered to allude to a skill, otherwise all the other entries clearly focus on knowledge. The areas of knowledge reflect very much those mentioned by the students in the respective countries. The entries provided by the British teachers tend to be more generic while the ones provided by the Polish ones again focused on day-to-day and social life with examples such as “cinema, mass culture, everyday life affairs including political allusions”. The British emphasis on institutional context which appears in two entries (once under the name of “working” cultures) also comes to identify a particular focus. Knowledge of value systems (called “mentality” by the Polish teachers) and knowledge of discourse features are two areas that are clearly identified by the teachers in both countries. This comes to demonstrate their awareness of the interaction between language and culture as well as their focus on the textual dimension. This particular focus was not identified, to the same extent, in the answers provided by the translation students that took part in the survey.

The above findings come to demonstrate three important aspects. First, they show that translation students take responsibility for their own studies and try to expand their IC knowledge also outside the classroom (as they also claimed in the survey). While they do not identify some very specific aspects of IC for translators as the teachers do (i.e., discourse features), their conceptualization of IC takes into account views of IC as an academic discipline at large, going beyond knowledge and incorporating also several skills. This cross-over from IC as a discipline to the specific needs of translators has been acknowledged also by several pedagogical models, such as PICT (2013). Second, despite the fact that they might be independent learners, students mirror some of the concepts that have been identified by their teachers. Therefore, the onus is on the teachers to always keep their understanding of IC for translators up to date in order to provide their students with access to the latest

academic and professional resources on the topic. Third, while there is a certain overlap of the identified elements that constitute IC for translators, there is also significant diversity between different countries and generations. It is this diversity in conceptualization that can inform the debate on *what* IC for translators is.

6. Conclusion

This diversity in the conceptualization of IC for translators needs to be acknowledged and placed at the core of any pedagogical model developed in order to teach IC for translators. As the importance of IC for translators has been acknowledged (Piller, 2011), and several research groups and individuals are now addressing aspects of operationalization and *how* to teach it, it is more pertinent than ever to try to understand *what* IC for translators is and how it is conceptualized in different (national) pedagogic contexts. Obviously, the answer to this question is complex, as national, historical and institutional aspects, to mention just a few influences, all play a role in defining IC for translators. Yet, this complexity has to be acknowledged and made part of the pedagogical models that are being developed. In a period when a high number of different pedagogical models for teaching IC for translators are being published the different operationalization approaches are becoming clearer. What remains to be identified is *what* dimensions IC for translators comprises of and which of these dimensions are given by the model (for example by the theoretical input of the specific approach) and which need to be developed or adapted based on the local context. As the PICT survey demonstrates the views on what IC for translators is, or how it is currently conceptualized, are not monolithic. In designing models and pedagogical approaches, it is this diversity of understanding that needs to be harvested and applied.

It is the view of the author that, at a time when the voice of happy or disgruntled citizens is heard more than ever in different contexts and through different media, the process defining IC, and IC for translators, and developing pedagogical models for teaching it, needs to take into account the conceptualization of the end users, teachers and students alike. The pedagogical models have to find creative ways of combining theoretical models and classroom understanding and experience. At the same time all models that want to be applicable across institutional and national borders need to acknowledge the different approaches, all equally valid, to conceptualizing and understanding IC. Additionally, it has to be acknowledged that views and the understanding of complex concepts such as IC are

never static and the models used in teaching it require regular updating. The current paper demonstrates the richness of these different views across a selected number of countries. The different conceptualizations of IC for translators enrich not only our understanding of the topic but also allow us to develop viable teaching and assessment materials. More in-depth research, across a larger number of countries and with the larger sample groups, is needed in order to provide a more comprehensive answer to the questions around the conceptualization of IC for translators.

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