

# PETRA-E

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## **The Framework and other models: comparison to PACTE and EMT**

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### **The PACTE-model**

The PACTE Group is a research group formed at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona with the purpose of doing empirical and experimental-based research on translation competence and its acquisition in written translation. They have developed a model to describe the translation competence.

The PACTE model mentions five sub-competences:

- The Bilingual subcompetence, which comprises the ability to communicate in two languages;
- The Extra-linguistic competence: general world knowledge, domain-specific knowledge, bicultural knowledge and encyclopaedic knowledge
- Knowledge about translation, consisting of both knowledge about how translation functions and knowledge about professional translation practice.
- The Instrumental sub-competence, which is related to the use of resources such as dictionaries, encyclopedias and search engines)
- The Strategic sub-competence, which controls the translation process.

Next to these five sub-competences, the PACTE-model also mentions **psycho-physiological components**, which PACTE describes as 'different types of cognitive and attitudinal components and psycho-motor mechanisms', for example cognitive components like memory or attention, and attitudinal aspects like intellectual curiosity, the ability to think critically, and abilities like creativity and logical reasoning, etc.

The bilingual subcompetence and the extra-linguistic subcompetence are not considered specific to translation, as they apply to all bilinguals.

The last sub-competence is, according to PACTE, the central competence when talking about translation competence. Their definition of this **strategic competence** is as follows:

'Procedural knowledge to guarantee the efficiency of the translation process and solve problems encountered. This sub-competence serves to control the translation process. Its function is to plan the process and carry out the translation project (selecting the most appropriate method); evaluate the process and the partial results obtained in relation to the final purpose; activate the different sub-competences and compensate for any shortcomings; identify translation problems and apply procedures to solve them.'

According to PACTE, this competence is the most important one because it 'serves to make decisions and solve problems'.

PACTE's aim was, in their own words: 'developing a holistic model of translation competence which may subsequently be validated in a hypothetic-deductive study of professional translators.' So, they wanted to use this model (->) to develop a second model. This model would also be a holistic model of the acquisition of translation competence. This second model was announced by PACTE but has not been released yet.

Important: the PACTE-model was not made especially for *literary* translation.

## EMT

Another model was developed by the EMT expert group, a group set up by the Directorate-General for Translation of the European Commission with the goal of improving the quality of translator training by implementing a European reference framework for a Master's programme in translation in the whole European Union.

EMT has also developed a model, a translator competence profile. According to this model, there are six competences:

- The translation service provision competence
- The language competence
- The intercultural competence
- The information mining competence
- The thematic competence
- The technological competence (mastery of tools)

The EMT-model takes the form of a wheel in which the central competence is the translation service provision competence.

A fundamental difference with the Framework is that the EMT-model only sums up all competences. It is a list of all the competences a translator needs, but it doesn't show the forms the competences take on at different levels: it does not describe the developments in a translator's career.

Zooming in, it becomes clear that most of the competences mentioned in the EMT-model, correspond to those mentioned in the Framework.

First, the central competence: the **translation service provision competence**. Some of the competences are broken down into dimensions. The translation service provision competence has two dimensions: an interpersonal and a production dimension.

The components that constitute the *interpersonal dimension* all have to do with the professional aspects of the work of a translator, as you can see (maybe not, small letters on slide), for example: 'Knowing how to follow market requirements and job profiles' and 'Knowing how to plan and manage one's time, stress, work, budget and ongoing training'. In the Framework, these skills form the Professional competence, although there is less detail in the descriptors mentioned there, for example the aspect of negotiation with clients, or the approaching of clients are not mentioned (but could be included in 'professional skills'). Maybe some of the components of this 'interpersonal dimension' could be included in the

Framework, or in the commentary explaining the Professional competence, as too much detail would make the model too complex.

The '*production dimension*' of the translation service provision competence is different: most of the skills mentioned there form part of the first competence in the Framework: the Translating competence. They have to do with translation strategies, the identification of translation problems, etc, and with proofreading and editing, similar to the editorial skills mentioned in the Textual Competence in the Framework.

Something not explicitly mentioned in the Framework is 'mastering the appropriate metalanguage', but this might be implicit in, for example, 'able to exercise translation criticism', 'can justify her/his translations as a whole' (1, LT4) and 'knows modes and traditions of translation criticism' (6, LT2).

The last component of this competence in the EMT-model, 'knowing how to establish and monitor quality standards', could be compared to the 7<sup>th</sup> competence in the Framework, the Evaluative competence, especially the monitoring of quality. In the Framework, a distinction is made between the estimation of quality of translations of others and self-assessment.

The second competence mentioned, the **Language Competence**, is similar to the Linguistic Competence in the framework. In the EMT-model, different aspects of language proficiency are mentioned, the focus is on the knowledge of (grammatical, lexical and idiomatic) *structures*, and the ability to use and understand them. The categories indicated in the Framework seem to be more specific for translation: first, the Framework uses categories established by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, so as not to need to describe linguistic knowledge in detail. That way, it is brief and more complete. Also, in the Framework there is a clear focus on writing skills, skills that are very important for translators.

The **intercultural competence**, the third one, roughly corresponds with the Literary-Cultural competence in the Framework. In the intercultural competence, two dimensions are distinguished: the sociolinguistic dimension and the textual dimension.

The descriptors listed under the *sociolinguistic dimension* are implicit in the Framework's 'intercultural skills'. The EMT-model describes in more detail what these intercultural skills are: knowing the rules for interaction in a specific culture and knowing how to produce the appropriate register.

The first descriptor mentioned has to do with language variations, and seems to me more linguistic than cultural: a translator with a profound knowledge of the language he or she translates (in), should also be able to recognize language variations, and the recognition of function and meaning of these variations could also be considered as a part of text analysis (the Textual competence): when analyzing the style of a text, aspects like this should be taken into account.

The descriptors mentioned as the *textual dimension* of the intercultural competence, all have to do with dealing with texts. In the Framework, skills like 'knowing how to recognise elements proper to the cultures represent' form part of the Literary-cultural competence, while skills that only have to do with the texts are grouped in the Textual competence. The descriptors mentioned in the Textual competence of the Framework are very similar to the ones mentioned here.

Some of the skills mentioned in the EMT-model seem to indicate different levels: analyzing the macrostructure and grasping, for example, the implicit, could be similar to the difference between a Beginner (LT2) and an Advanced translator (LT3) in his or her ability to analyze texts (LT2: can analyse literary source texts, LT3: can make detailed analyses of literary texts).

Some descriptors are mentioned in the EMT-model, but not in the framework:

- Knowing how to describe and evaluate one's problems with comprehension and define strategies for resolving those problems
- Knowing how to extract and summarise the essential information in a document (ability to summarise)

The **information mining competence**, the fourth one in the EMT-model, could be compared to the heuristic competence in the Framework. It also describes the practical skills needed to document a translation. Again, some of the components mentioned correspond to different levels in the framework; even though this model does not describe the ONTWIKKELING a translator experiences during his career, the different levels are still visible in the EMT-model (for example: 'developing strategies' and 'knowing how to use tools'). Some of the components that are described here might be missing in the Framework, for example 'knowing how to identify one's information and documentation requirements', means that the translator develops a certain awareness of the problems encountered before searching for solutions. And one could argue that the aspect of knowing how to evaluate the reliability of documentary sources, for example, is present in the Framework (4, LT3: can find specific reference material and can apply search strategies), but this could be mentioned more explicitly.

Fifth, the **thematic competence** is a mix of attitudes and abilities. 'Developing a spirit of curiosity' could be seen as an attitude, while 'knowing how to search for information' is an ability, and an ability which for me could just as well form part of the information mining competence, as the EMT-model also indicates. The component that mentions 'development of knowledge in specialist fields' could maybe be compared to the 'handling of genres' mentioned in the Textual competence of the Framework. For me, it is not clear why this is a separate competence.

The last competence is the **technological competence**. In the Framework, this competence is reflected in the Heuristic competence: there, it states that the translator can use digital tools. In the Framework, machine translation and the creation of databases is not reflected, one could argue that it is missing. On the other side, this competence might be less relevant for literary translation, as the use of translation software is less common among literary translators (and more for commercial translators).

In the beginning of my presentation, I mentioned a fundamental difference between the EMT-model and the Framework Literary Translation: the EMT-model lists all the competences a translator must have, and does not describe his or her development: the list is similar to the list of competences in the first column of the Framework. But the Framework discerns different levels, and descriptors vary according to those levels, thus describing the development in the career of a translator. This makes it easier to get a clear view of the EMT-model; the Framework is more complex. Still, some different levels are visible in the components of the competences described in the EMT-model.

When studying the EMT-model, it seemed to me that in some ways it is much more detailed, for example in the interpersonal dimension of the translation service provision competence, professional skills are discussed in very much detail, but at other points the detail is missing, for example when describing evaluative skills or reflexive skills. It seems that the EMT-model is most detailed when discussing professional aspects of the work of a translator, and the Framework contains more aspects of reflection on translation, translation criticism, and translation theory. Also, the EMT-model has no Research competence and the descriptors that form this competence in the Framework are not present in the model.

Also, in the Framework, the more practical skills, or skills that have to do with the 'outside world' (dealing with publishers, clients, etc) are all together in the Professional competence, and other descriptors mostly have to do with texts and translations. In the EMT-model, a couple of competences mix these two.

Another big difference is that the EMT-group has designed a separate model for trainers. In an earlier version of the Framework, this was included in a Didactic competence, but this competence has been adapted to an Evaluative competence that focuses on the translator's ability to assess and evaluate translations.

Overall, the EMT-model has chosen a different approach: less competences, and the model seems to focus a bit more on practical skills.