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**Pavlović, Nataša; Antunović, Goranka**

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## A desirable profile of translation teacher: perceptions and needs in the Croatian context

By Nataša Pavlović and Goranka Antunović (University of Zagreb, Croatia)

### Abstract & Keywords

#### English:

While recent research has produced a substantial body of knowledge regarding translator education in general and translator competences in particular, much less attention has been devoted to competencies of professional translation teachers. Inspired by several researchers who have dealt with the topic (for example, Kelly 2008; Gambier and Pokorn 2013), the authors examine it in the Croatian context, whose specific characteristics (a rather small translation market, no university programmes in translation until 2008, and other) might be expected to influence the views on the topic.

The study aims to investigate the perception of a desirable translation teacher profile among two groups of relevant informants: professional translators and translation teachers themselves. In a questionnaire distributed online, they are asked to assess the importance of sets of qualifications and competences selected and adapted from the literature. The teachers are additionally asked to specify the areas where their need for further professional development is most pronounced. Answers are compared based on the respondents' profession and, where relevant, the university programme they have completed.

The results may be used to inform future recruitment and facilitate the design of training courses for translation teachers, not only in Croatia but also in other similar settings.

**Keywords:** translator education, translator training, translator trainer, competences, qualifications

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### 1. Background

Over the past decade much research has focused on various aspects of translator education. As a result, there is already a substantial body of knowledge on the topic of translator education in general and translator competences in particular. Interestingly, much less attention has been devoted to the desirable, or even necessary, qualifications and competences of professional translation teachers.

A broad view of a desirable translation teacher profile has traditionally focused on translation experience, coupled with a suitable personality. For Newmark (1991: 131), 'personality' in case of a translation teacher includes 'personal qualities', 'professional qualities and experience' and 'general knowledge of culture'. Personal qualities are further elaborated as comprising of 'energy, curiosity, enthusiasm', as well as 'confidence [for] admitting mistakes' (1991: 130), 'openness and friendliness', 'the disposition to invite collaboration and participation' (1991: 131), and so on. Professional qualities can be seen as comprising of 'translator's skills' on the one hand, and teaching skills on the other, the latter being 'reflected in course design and choice of materials' (ibid.). Newmark admits that in the classroom it is difficult to say exactly 'where personality finishes and teaching technique begins' (ibid.), and suggests provocatively that 'the success of any translation course must depend 65% on the personality of the teacher, 20% on the course design and 15% on the course materials' (1991: 130).

About a decade later, González Davies (2004: 1) tackles what she considers to be the usual perception of translation teachers' necessary background. This includes 'a variety of areas, such as communication theory, linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics and cognitivism, or translation studies' (ibid.). She accepts all these as important, but suggests that pedagogy and psychology should be added to the list. She argues that the former discipline can help teachers reflect on the approach, design and activities to be adopted in teaching, while psychology can enable them to explore the mental processes 'that can improve the students' translation competence and performance' (2004: 2). Furthermore, she believes the knowledge of psychology could help translation teachers explore issues related to 'the students' personalities, backgrounds, and learning and translating styles' (ibid.). In her opinion, knowledge of both pedagogy and psychology can be profitably used to encourage students' motivation and participation, respecting the diversity of learning styles (ibid.).

Kelly (2005, 2008) also sees teaching skills as an important aspect of the translation teacher competence profile. In her 2008 contribution, she takes as her starting point the 2005 version of the Higher Education Academy's document "The UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education" (cf. HEA 2011), which formulates three sets of standards for the higher education teaching profession, i.e. 'areas of activity', 'core knowledge' and 'professional values'. Kelly applies these standards to translation teaching, producing a very detailed list of (sub)competences. The paper also presents the results of a survey of translation teachers conducted in Spain, which found that 70 per cent of the respondents had an undergraduate or postgraduate degree in translation, 80 per cent had had professional experience in translation or interpreting and 68 per cent had received teacher training. When asked to self-evaluate their competence, the respondents in that study placed their scores between 3 and 4 on a six-point scale, identifying as their weak points the 'knowledge of the educational, administrative and management contexts in which they work' (2008: 117).

Li and Zhang (2011) explore master's and doctoral programmes in translation studies in Hong Kong against a model of translation teachers' knowledge structure. Their model comprises three main elements, termed by them

as ‘knowledge of teaching’, ‘knowledge of research’ and ‘knowledge of the trade’. The latter encompasses translating abilities and the knowledge of the profession, including familiarity with the market and the technology (2011: 697).

Another empirical study on this topic was carried out more recently by Huang and Napier (2015). They set out to investigate students’ and teachers’ perceptions of effective translation teachers, aiming to identify their important qualities. Their survey included 94 students and 22 teachers from several Australian and New Zealand universities, who were asked to rate the importance of the following ‘aspects of translation teaching’: knowledge of translation theories, mastery of translation skills, teaching methods, personality traits, communicative skills, the ability to give constructive feedback, teaching qualification and ongoing professional development (2015: 18). They additionally asked the respondents to rate particular personality qualities (motivated, encouraging, caring, respectful, flexible, adaptable, humorous, intelligent, organised, and confident) that might be important for a translation teacher. Mastery of translation skills, the ability to give constructive feedback, and communicative skills were considered the most important by both groups of the respondents, with the teacher group additionally highlighting the mastery of teaching methods (2015: 7). None of the teachers, and only 12 per cent of the students, listed teaching qualification among the three most important items. Personality traits were mentioned among the top three important elements by slightly over 18 per cent of the teachers and almost 15 per cent of the students. Asked to list the top three personality qualities translation teachers should possess, the teachers opted for ‘motivated’, ‘confident’ and ‘encouraging’, while the students considered ‘encouraging’, ‘organized’ and ‘respectful’ to be the most important (2015: 9).

In addition to the contributions mentioned so far, scholars in the EMT and later OPTIMALE groups have attempted to build a model of translation teacher competences, recommending a list of prerequisites that translation teachers should fulfil (EMT Expert Group 2013; Gambier and Pokorn 2013). Among these are the ‘fundamental requirements’, which encompass academic qualification and appropriate teacher training (both depending on national regulations), relevant professional practice, and knowledge of relevant ‘translation studies scholarship and research’[1]. The EMT model (Fig. 1) further consists of five areas of competence: field competence, instructional competence, organizational competence, interpersonal competence and assessment competence (EMT Expert Group 2013; Gambier and Pokorn 2013).



**Figure 1. The EMT ‘wheel of competences’ recommended for translation teachers (EMT Expert Group 2013; Gambier and Pokorn 2013)**

Inspired by their work, we decided to test the model in an empirical study that would elicit the opinions of relevant stakeholders as to the importance of particular requirements and competences that university translation teachers should possess. Given the specific circumstances in Croatia – including a rather small translation market, the fact that the first translation study programmes were introduced only a decade ago, and a lack of translation teacher training – we suspected that the perception of a desirable translation teacher profile might prove to be rather different from that described in the literature. On the other hand, we hoped that our findings may resonate beyond this country and inform decision-making in other similar settings.

## 2. Aims and method

As stated above, the aim of this study was to investigate the relevant stakeholders’ perception of a desirable translation teacher profile in the Croatian context. More specifically, we wanted to compare the perceptions held by two groups of relevant informants: professional translators and translation teachers themselves. An additional aim was to assess the needs of currently active translation teachers for further training, which we hoped might facilitate any future design of training courses aimed at translation teachers.

To meet these aims, a questionnaire survey was created using LimeSurvey[2] and distributed online in June 2017 via professional organizations, social networks, mailing lists and personal contacts. Two slightly different forms were sent out – one for professional translators and the other for translation teachers. Both groups of respondents were asked to assess the importance of select qualifications and competences adapted from the EMT model. The

translation teachers were additionally asked to assess their need for further professional development and specify the areas in which such training was needed most.

The EMT model, which provided the starting point for our study, proved to be too complex for use in a questionnaire survey, since its descriptions of each competence area are very elaborate, with a large number of sub-items. For that reason we had to adapt it to our needs. This mostly involved reducing the number of categories, but also, in a few exceptional cases, fine-tuning some of the categories. Instead of the ‘formal requirements’, we speak of ‘qualifications’, some of which may also be formally required of translation teachers (depending on national laws, but also perhaps reflecting the needs of a particular institution). Similar to the EMT model, some of these qualifications have to do with formal training (a degree in translation, training in teaching, formal education in translation theories), while others are related to relevant experience. We decided to elaborate on the latter notion, so that a translation teacher may have experience in only one type of translation (such as specialized or technical translation, AVT, literary translation, and so on), in several types of translation, and/or in various translation-related tasks (such as revision, terminology work or project management).

With regard to competences, we divided them into two broad categories: translation-related and teaching-related. The former group includes the ability to perform, at professional level, the tasks assigned to students; knowledge about the translation profession (trends, workflows, tools and so on); the ability to use CAT tools; the ability to do research in TS; and knowledge of translation theories[3]. The pedagogical group consists of knowledge about translation competences and their acquisition; the ability to design courses in translation; knowledge about translation teaching methods; the ability to design translation teaching materials; the ability to motivate students; and the ability to assess students’ work and provide feedback.

The resulting, streamlined model (Table 1) was used to create the questionnaire.

<b>Qualifications:</b>	<b>Competences:</b>
Degree in translation	The ability to perform, at professional level, the tasks assigned to students
Training in teaching	Knowledge about the translation profession (trends, workflows, tools and so on)
Formal education in translation theories	The ability to use CAT tools
Experience in one type of translation	The ability to do research in TS
Experience in several types of translation	Knowledge of translation theories
Experience with different translation-related tasks (e.g. revision, terminology work)	Knowledge about translation competences and their acquisition
	The ability to design courses in translation
	Knowledge about translation teaching methods
	The ability to design translation teaching materials
	The ability to motivate students
	The ability to assess students’ work and provide feedback

**Table 1. Our list of translation teacher qualifications and competences**

The questionnaire was thus divided into three main sections, dealing with: a) translation teacher qualifications; b) translation teacher competences; and c) the respondents’ demographic details (education background and translation experience).

In most questions belonging to the first two sections, the respondents were asked to rate the importance of a particular qualification or competence using a five-point Likert scale (1 = ‘completely irrelevant’; 5 = ‘necessary’). With regard to qualifications, the respondents were additionally asked to identify those that should be included among the *formal requirements* for the job of university translation teacher. In connection with competences, the respondents were also asked to rank them in their perceived order of importance. A number of additional questions were open-ended, inviting the respondents to comment on any aspects of the topic not covered elsewhere in the questionnaire. The teachers were additionally asked to self-assess their need for further training, and identify the areas in which this need was most acutely felt.

For questions which elicited assessment on a five-point scale, we calculated the average ratings (scores). This was done for the whole sample, as well as separately for each of the two groups (professional translators vs. translation teachers). Where potentially interesting (see Figs. 5 and 7), ratings were also compared between two groups of respondents depending on the type of study programme they had completed (‘Bologna’ programme in translation vs. all others). This seemed relevant in view of the fact that the programmes in translation were introduced for the first time at Croatian universities as part of the so-called Bologna reform, and graduates from such programmes could be expected to be better aware of various aspects and current trends in both TS and translation profession.

With regard to the ranking question (see Fig. 9), in which the respondents were required to order the competences in their perceived priority, we calculated weighted averages of the responses in order to obtain a global view of the two groups and facilitate inter-group comparison. Weighted average is a mean calculated by awarding each position on the ranking scale a weight (in our case, from one to eleven, since eleven competences were offered for ranking). Weights are assigned in reverse; that is, the first position on the ranking scale is assigned the

largest weight (11), while the last position is awarded the weight of 1. The average weight is then calculated by using this formula:  $x^1w^1 + x^2w^2 + x^3w^3... x^nw^n$  (where 'x' is the response count for each position and 'w' is the weight of the position), divided by the total number of responses. (SurveyMonkey 1999-2017)

Responses to the open-ended questions were used to facilitate interpretation and discussion of the results.

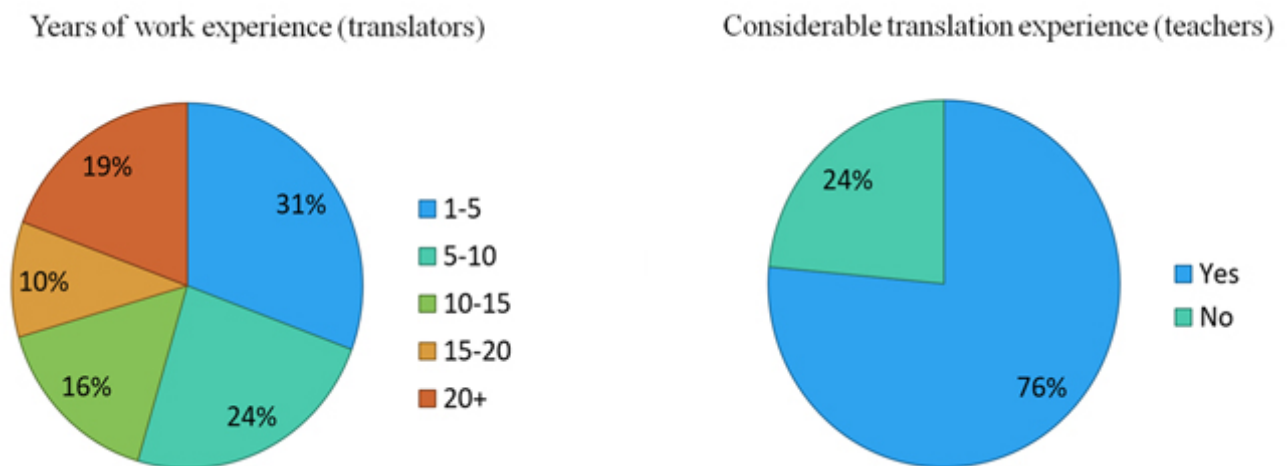
The last section of the questionnaire (demographic data) differed on two points depending on the group of respondents it targeted. With respect to education background the translation teacher group was additionally asked to indicate whether they had completed any university program in teaching. The other difference was in the orientation of the question establishing the extent of a respondent's translation experience. Translators, who possess such experience by definition, were asked to indicate the length of their work experience, in years. For translation teachers, on the other hand, it seemed interesting to establish whether they had experience in translation at all, or rather, whether they had sufficient experience to be able to assess it as 'considerable' (no attempt was made to influence the assessment).

A total of 105 complete responses were received: 88 from professional translators and 17 from translation teachers. Given the size of the translation market and, in particular, the total number of university translation teachers currently active in the country, the numbers can be considered satisfactory. In the next chapter, we look more closely at the respondents' translation experience and education profile, before presenting the results obtained from the questions dealing with translation teacher qualifications and competences.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Respondents' background

With regard to length of professional experience, the translator group proved to cover the whole range, starting with those who are relatively new to the profession (one to five years) to those with more than 20 years of experience (see Fig. 2). In the translation teacher group, 76 per cent of the respondents claimed to possess considerable translation experience.



**Figure 2. Experience in translation: the translator group (left, N=88) and the translation teacher group (right, N=17)**

The demographic data provided by the respondents also included information on their education background (Figs. 3 and 4). Both groups were very homogeneous in terms of having a background in philology (96 per cent of translators, 94 per cent of translation teachers). In contrast, only 42 per cent of translators and 30 per cent of teachers had completed a programme in translation. The teacher group was split with regard to teacher training as well: 65 per cent had received it, 35 per cent had not. The two groups differed considerably in the share of Bologna graduates: while they made up more than one third of the translator group (36 per cent, a vast majority of them – 31 per cent of the whole group – having completed a Bologna programme in translation), there were only 12 per cent of them among the translation teachers.

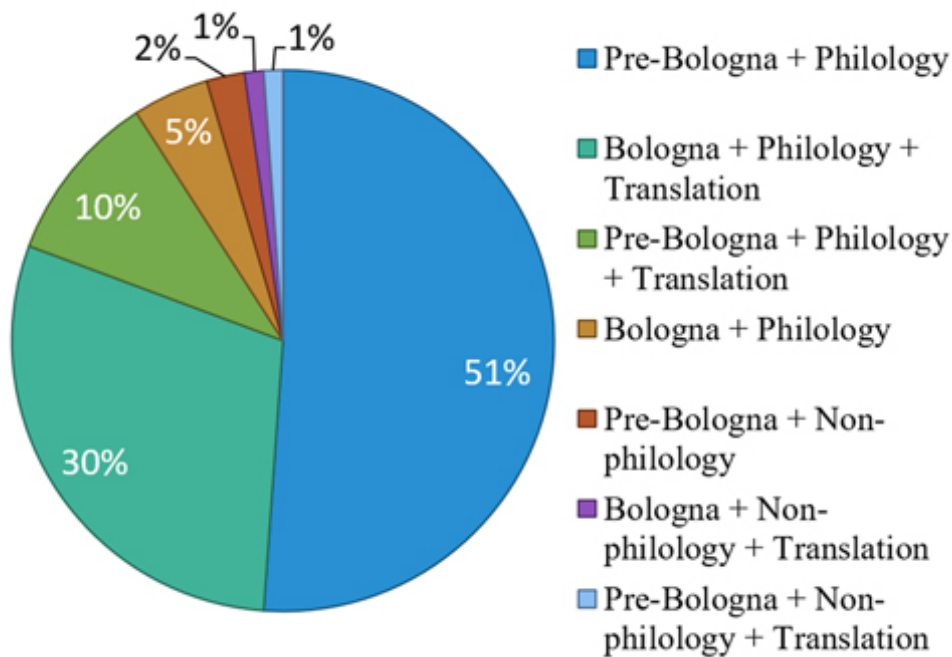


Figure 3. Respondents' education profile (professional translators)

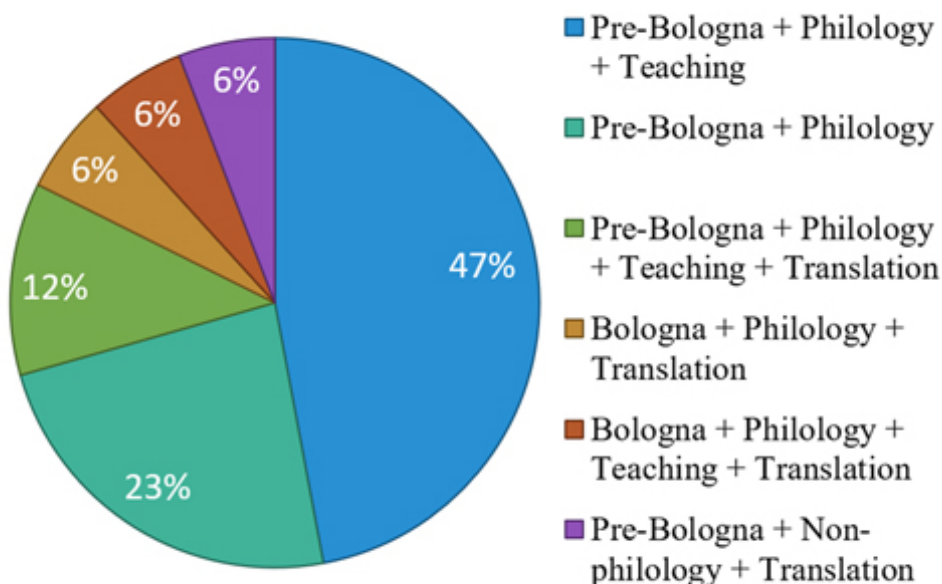


Figure 4. Respondents' education profile (translation teachers)

### 3.2. Qualifications

The first set of questions in the questionnaire focused on qualifications, i.e. formal achievements with respect to education or translation-related experience. As already pointed out in Chapter 2, the selection of qualifications was inspired by the EMT list of formal requirements (Gambier and Pokorn 2013) but the two sets do not correspond fully. The most pronounced difference has to do with experience in translation, phrased by the EMT group as 'relevant professional practice (e.g. work experience in translation)'. Thinking that such a description might prove insufficiently precise for this survey and receive different interpretations from our informants, we decided to break it up into two qualifications and refer to experience in one type vs. several types of translation, as well as to add a qualification explicitly involving translation-related tasks, different from translation proper but commonly performed by translators (revision, terminology-related work, and so on). As our footnote 3 explains, we refer to '*formal education* in translation theories' as a qualification, rather than '*knowledge of*', as this is phrased in the EMT list of fundamental requirements. In the EMT Expert Group's presentation (2013) those requirements also included the 'Ability to perform tasks assigned to students according to professional quality standards'. We decided to include a slightly rephrased description of that ability in our list of competences, rather than qualifications, just as was done by Gambier and Pokorn in their presentation (2013).

Our informants' responses indicate that they deem all the six qualifications on the list desirable (all ratings exceed 3.5 on a 1 to 5 scale). It is, however, obvious that the qualifications related to professional experience are

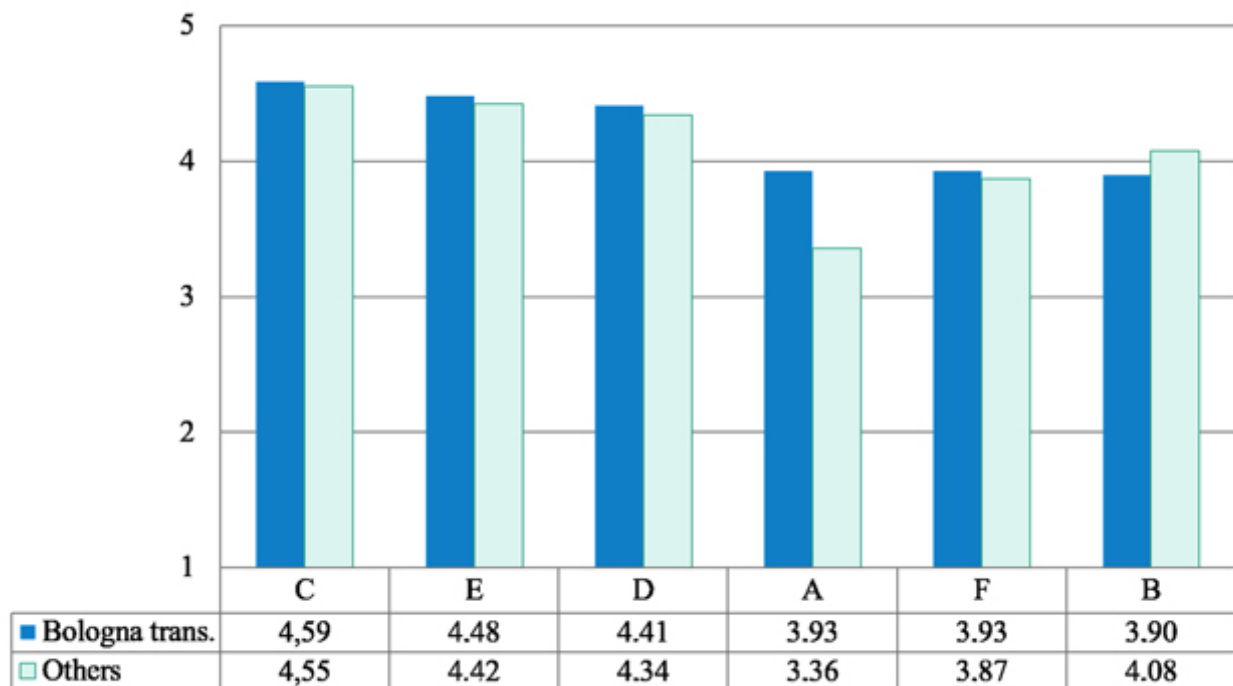
rated higher than the rest: these three top the list with scores above 4.35, while the desirability of the other three is rated between 3.51 and 4.03 (Table 2).

Avg. score	Qualification
4.56	Experience in one type of translation
4.44	Experience with different translation-related tasks
4.36	Experience in several types of translation
4.03	Training in teaching
3.89	Formal education in translation theories
3.51	Degree in translation

**Table 2. Assessment of desirability of a given qualification for translation teachers: average scores for all respondents. Scale 1 to 5: 1=completely irrelevant, 5=necessary**

A comparison between the two groups of respondents, translators and translation teachers, reveals very little difference in their perception of how desirable the six qualifications are. The difference in their ratings is slightly more pronounced with regard to the experience-related qualifications but still very small (between 0.11 and 0.18), with the translator group proving more demanding across the board.

A somewhat different picture emerges when the perceptions expressed by respondents with a Bologna degree in translation are compared to the perceptions of all the others (Fig. 5). The differences in ratings of five qualifications are very small here as well (four of them between 0.04 and 0.07; for the fifth, the only one where the group ‘others’ proved more demanding, namely training in teaching, the difference is 0.18). However, the qualification ‘degree in translation’ (labelled ‘A’ in the chart) received a considerably different score from the two groups: its desirability seems to be substantially higher for the Bologna graduates in translation than for the rest (even if the score is not very high for either group: 3.93 and 3.36 respectively).



**Legend:** A = degree in translation; B = training in teaching;  
 C = experience in one type of translation; D = experience in several types of translation;  
 E = experience with different translation-related tasks; F = formal education in translation theories.

**Figure 5. Desirability of a given qualification for translation teachers (scale 1 to 5); respondents with a Bologna translation degree compared to all others.**

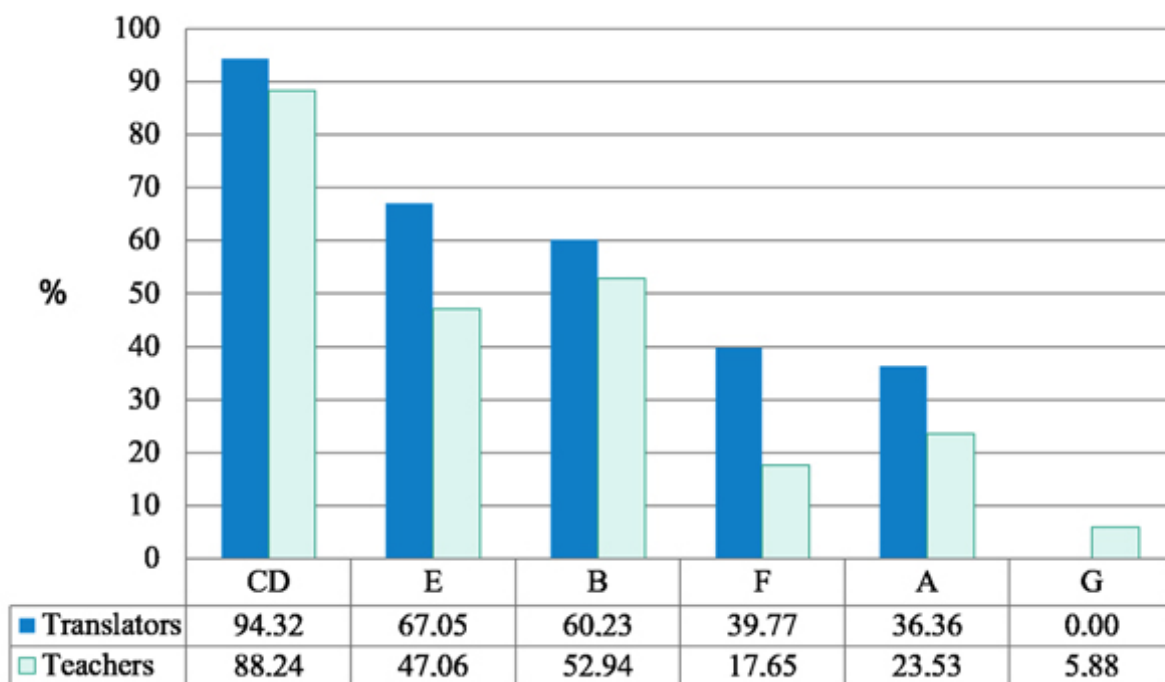
The next question in the questionnaire aimed to establish whether the respondents felt that a particular qualification was not only desirable but absolutely necessary for a translation teacher, in other words, that it should be a formal requirement for the position. As it turns out, only one qualification is seen as a sine qua non by a vast majority (94.29 per cent) of our informants, namely experience in translation. While this applies to experience in general, regardless of the type of translation or the number of different types a person has worked with, a smaller but still appreciable number of respondents (61.9 per cent) believe that the required experience should involve more than one type of translation. As can be seen in Table 3, only two more qualifications are deemed a necessary requirement by more than a half of the respondents. The third highest score for ‘training in teaching’, substantially higher than the following one (59.05 per cent vs. 36.19 per cent) is interesting in that it disagrees with the result in Huang and Napier’s study (2015: 7), where very few respondents, and none in the teacher group, included teaching qualification among the three most important ‘aspects of translation teaching’. The fact that ‘degree in translation’ ranks lowest among the potential formally required qualifications may be partly explained by specific circumstances in Croatia, as was indicated by several respondents’ comments. One of

them thus remarked that he or she might change the opinion in the future but ‘in view of the fact that translation programmes were introduced at Croatian universities only several years ago, and despite that, the teachers teaching translation courses demonstrate competence and high quality, I believe that this [i.e. a degree in translation] is not necessary.’

%	Qualification
94.29	Experience in translation
63.81	Experience with other translation-related tasks
59.05	Training in teaching
36.19	Formal education in translation theories
34.29	Degree in translation
0.95	None of the above

**Table 3. Percentage of respondents who think that a given qualification should be a formal requirement for the translation teacher position**

A comparison between the responses given by the translator and by the teacher group with regard to formally required qualifications (Fig. 6) reveals more pronounced differences than with their assessments of how desirable a given qualification is. Once again the translator group proves more demanding, as evident in higher percentages for all of the listed qualifications. The difference is most noticeable (20 per cent or more) with regard to ‘experience with other translation-related tasks’ (labelled ‘E’ in the chart) and ‘formal education in translation theories’ (‘F’). The former circumstance does not seem very surprising since practising translators can be expected to be more aware of the various tasks that they themselves or their translator colleagues perform in the workplace. The other finding is undoubtedly more astonishing. Following the logic of the previous explanation, one would hardly expect translation practitioners to be more inclined to see ‘formal education in translation theories’ as a necessary requirement than the group composed of academics (only university teachers have participated in the survey). For a possible explanation, see discussion of Fig. 9, the results for ‘knowledge of translation theories’.

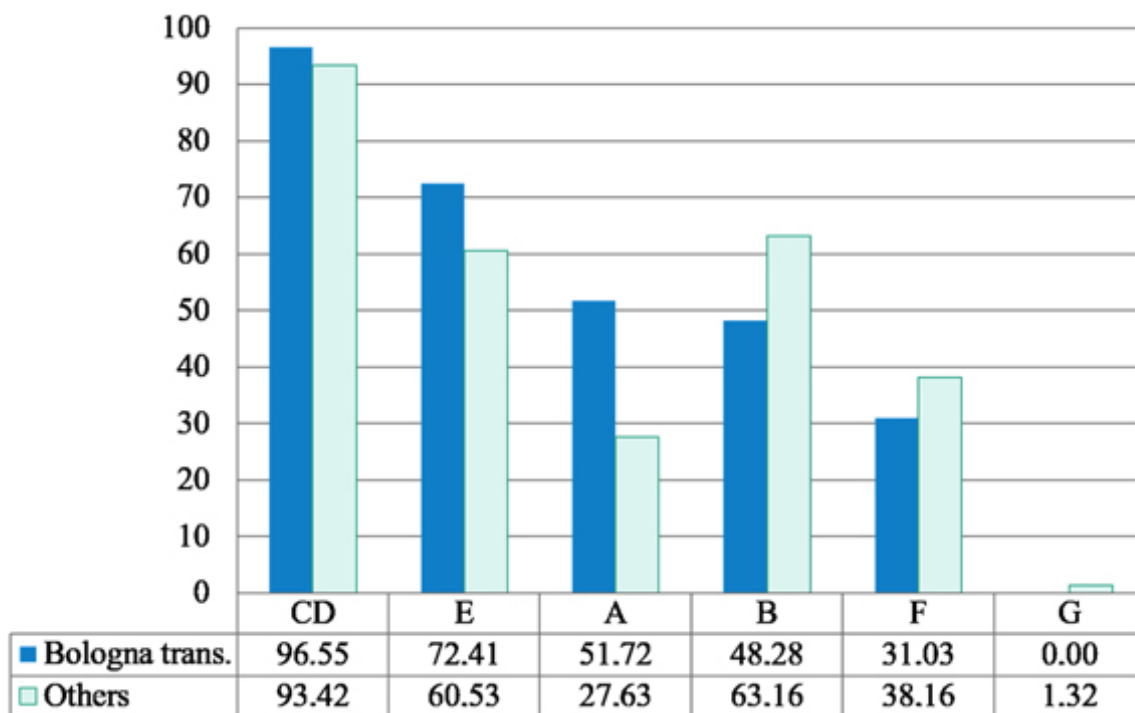


**Legend:** A = degree in translation; B = training in teaching;  
 CD = experience in (one or several types of) translation;  
 E = experience with different translation-related tasks;  
 F = formal education in translation theories; G = none of the above.

**Figure 6. Percentage of respondents who think that a given qualification should be a formal requirement; the translator and the teacher group compared.**

In an attempt to see whether the respondents’ education background had influenced their assessments we once again compared the answers of the respondents who had completed a university programme in translation in the post-Bologna reform period with the answers of all the rest (Fig. 7).





**Legend:** A = degree in translation; B = training in teaching;  
 CD = experience in (one or several types of) translation;  
 E = experience with different translation-related tasks;  
 F = formal education in translation theories; G = none of the above.

**Figure 7. Percentage of respondents who think that a given qualification should be a formal requirement; Bologna translation graduates compared to all others.**

This time the comparison yielded a diversified picture, with Bologna translation graduates being more prone to seeing three qualifications as necessary formal requirements ('translation experience', 'experience with different translation-related tasks' and 'degree in translation'), and less prone to do that with regard to the other two. The difference in percentages was largest with respect to 'degree in translation' (exceeding 24 per cent), and it was quite considerable with respect to 'training in teaching' (the share among the Bologna translation graduates almost 15 per cent lower than among the rest) and regarding 'experience with different translation tasks' (the share among the Bologna graduates trained in translation 11.88 per cent higher).

The final question in the section of the questionnaire focusing on qualifications invited respondents to name any additional qualification that a translation teacher should in their opinion possess. While many respondents offered a comment, only two new qualifications emerged from their answers, each of them mentioned only once. These were 'formal education in LSP' and 'experience in the business sector'.

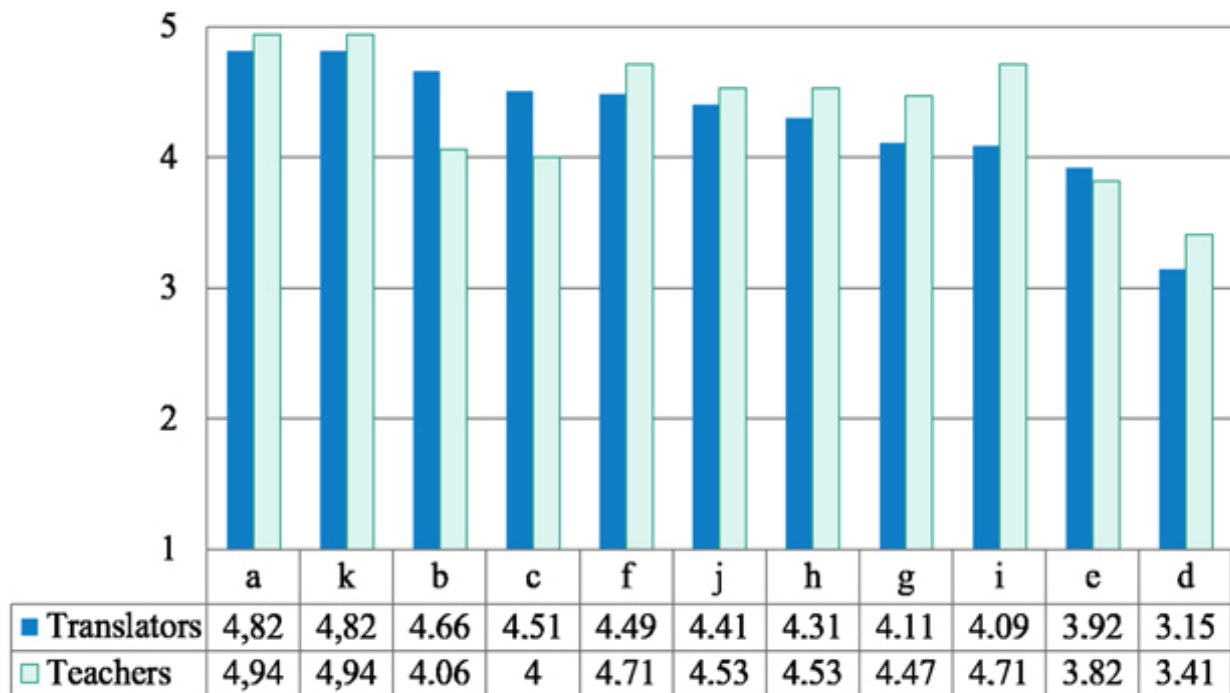
### 3.3. Competences

Regarding the perception of competences desirable for translation teachers, the first thing that we can notice (Table 4) is that all the competences offered to the respondents for assessment proved to be highly valued, with average ratings ranging from 4.84 (for 'the ability to perform, at professional level, the tasks assigned to students' and 'the ability to assess students' work and provide feedback') to 3.19 (for 'the ability to do research in TS'). Although 'familiarity with translation theories' and 'the ability to do research in TS' received relatively low scores (3.9 and 3.19 respectively), both ratings still fell above the middle point of the scale.

Avg. score	Competence
4.84	The ability to perform, at professional level, the tasks assigned to students
4.84	The ability to assess students' work and provide feedback
4.56	Knowledge about the translation profession (trends, workflows, tools and so on)
4.52	Knowledge about translation competences and their acquisition
4.43	The ability to use CAT tools
4.43	The ability to motivate students
4.34	Knowledge about translation teaching methods
4.19	The ability to design translation teaching materials
4.17	The ability to design courses in translation
3.90	Knowledge of translation theories
3.19	The ability to do research in TS

**Table 4. Assessment of desirability of a given competence for translation teachers (scale 1 to 5): average scores for all respondents**

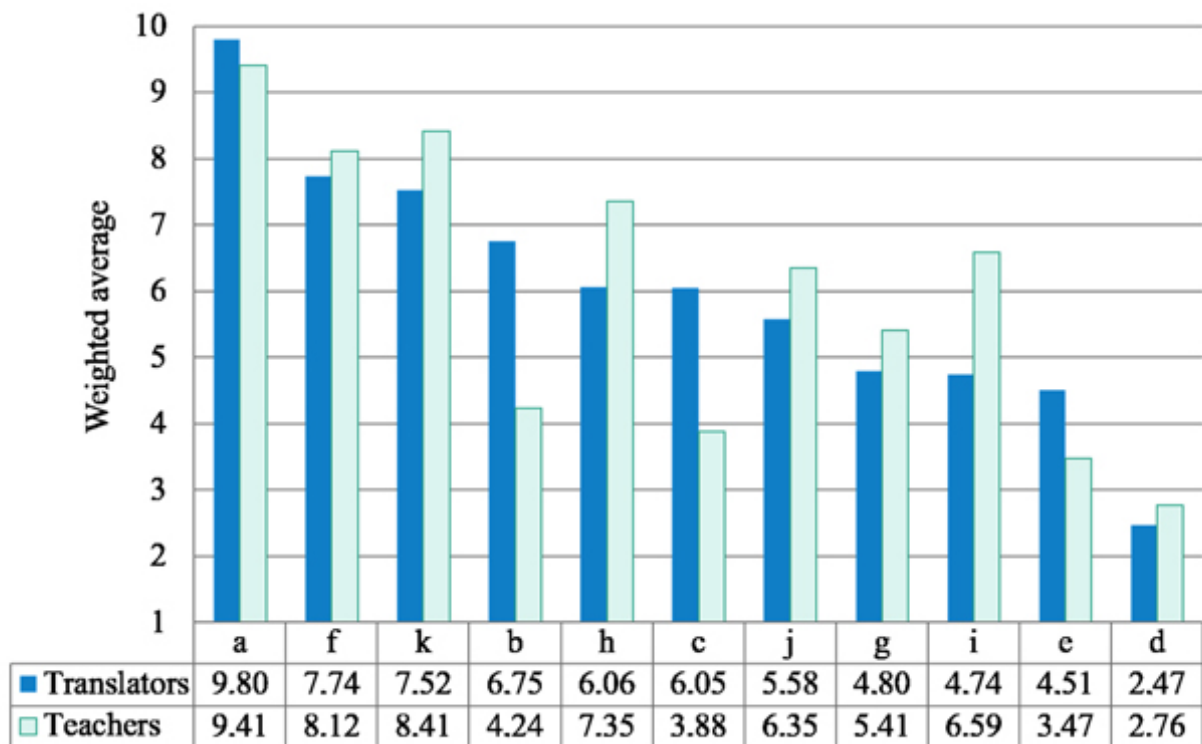
Comparing the two professional groups of respondents, we can see two most notable differences (Fig. 8). First, the translator group awarded considerably higher scores than the teacher group to the two profession-related competences: ‘knowledge about the translation profession’ (labelled ‘b’ in the chart) and ‘the ability to use CAT tools’ (‘c’). Conversely, the teacher group rated more highly than the translator group the two teaching-related competences: ‘the ability to design courses in translation’ (‘g’) and, in particular, ‘the ability to design translation teaching materials’ (‘i’).



**Legend:** a = the ability to perform, at professional level, the tasks assigned to students;  
 b = knowledge about the translation profession; c = the ability to use CAT tools;  
 d = the ability to do research in TS; e = knowledge of translation theories;  
 f = knowledge about translation competences and their acquisition; g = the ability to design courses in translation;  
 h = knowledge about translation teaching methods; i = the ability to design translation teaching materials;  
 j = the ability to motivate students; k = the ability to assess students’ work and provide feedback.

**Figure 8. Desirability of a given competence for translation teachers (scale 1 to 5): comparison between the translator and teacher group.**

These differences between the two groups became even more pronounced when respondents were asked to rank (rather than rate) the competences in order of priority. Figure 9 shows the competences as ranked by the respondents (ordered by the translator group).



**Legend:** a = the ability to perform, at professional level, the tasks assigned to students;  
 b = knowledge about the translation profession; c = the ability to use CAT tools;  
 d = the ability to do research in TS; e = knowledge of translation theories;  
 f = knowledge about translation competences and their acquisition; g = the ability to design courses in translation;  
 h = knowledge about translation teaching methods; i = the ability to design translation teaching materials;  
 j = the ability to motivate students; k = the ability to assess students' work and provide feedback.

**Figure 9. Competences ranked by the respondents: weighted averages for the translator and teacher groups**

Both groups of respondents ranked 'the ability to perform, at professional level, the tasks assigned to students' ('a') as the most important competence for translation teachers. 'Knowledge about translation competences and their acquisition' ('f') and 'the ability to assess students' work and provide feedback' ('k') were ranked second and third respectively by the translator group, and in the reverse order by the teacher group, with the two competences neck-to-neck in both groups (7.74 and 7.52 in the translator group; 8.12 and 8.41 in the teacher group).

The most pronounced differences are again evident with regard to competences labelled 'b' and 'c' in the chart ('knowledge about the translation profession' and 'the ability to use CAT tools'), which were ranked fourth and sixth respectively by the translator group, and found themselves only in the eighth and ninth place in the teacher group's ranking, followed only by the theory- and research-related competences.

On the other hand, the teachers' rankings, when compared to the translators', show a clear preference for the teaching-related competences, in particular 'the ability to design translation teaching materials' (6.59 vs. 4.74) and 'knowledge about translation teaching methods' (7.35 vs. 6.06).

As was the case with the five-point assessment question, here too both groups' responses placed 'knowledge of translation theories' ('e') and 'the ability to do research in TS' ('d') at the bottom of the list. Interestingly, the translator group's weighted averages obtained from the ranking question were considerably higher for 'knowledge of translation theories' than the teacher group's (4.51 vs. 3.47). This might be explained by the fact that the teacher group in our sample is rather small, and that some of them teach practical courses and perhaps do not consider knowledge of translation theories to be an essential part of the translation teacher's job. Some teacher respondents explicitly said in the open-ended questionnaire section inviting 'further comments' that knowledge of translation theory was a 'good-to-have' but not an essential part of the translation teacher profile, and that this knowledge would not necessarily have to be very deep. On the other hand, one respondent stressed that, although she had placed 'the ability to do research' in the last place when ordering the competences, she believed that a teacher who also did research in TS would be more innovative and less prone to get stuck in a rut when delivering translation classes.

As a general remark about this question, several respondents mentioned that they found it very difficult to rank the competences, since they considered them all to be equally important for translation teachers.

In an open-ended question at the end of this section of the questionnaire, our respondents had the opportunity to list additional competences not included in our list. A few of the respondents mentioned mother tongue competence, which we took for granted when creating the questionnaire, and which we considered implied in 'the ability to perform, at professional level, the tasks assigned to students'. In fact, the same applies to competence in a foreign language or languages and the knowledge of respective cultures. Highly developed language competence, quite clearly required of translators and translation teachers alike, encompasses the ability to use registers appropriate to the situation, which was another asset highlighted by the respondents.

On the other hand, some respondents also mentioned good communication skills, which would indeed be most desirable in translation teachers.

Two well-argued contributions had to do with competence in various professional fields. One of them stressed the need for students to become acquainted in the course of their studies with some fields that their future translations were likely to involve (law, engineering, medicine...). It seems probable, even if it was not clearly stated, that the comment implied that the translation teacher should possess the necessary knowledge toward that goal. The other comment put more emphasis on the translation teacher encouraging his or her students to keep developing their knowledge in the field(s) relevant for their translation practice.

Interestingly, one respondent mentioned that translation teachers should be able to recognize in their students the talent for one type of translation or another, in order to be able to steer them in that direction.

### **3.4. Teachers' need for further training**

One of the aims of this research involved self-assessment on the part of the teachers of their need for further training in competences necessary for translation teaching. They were asked to assess their need on a five-point scale (1 = 'no need at all'; 5 = 'very strong need'). The average rating turned out to be 3.59, with the '3' and '4' ratings equally distributed (eight respondents each), and only one respondent assessing their need as 'very strong' ('5').

Asked in an open-ended question to identify the areas of training that they felt mostly in need of, the respondents listed the following (presented here in order of frequency):

1. translation tools (mentioned by eight of the 17 respondents in this group)
2. trends in the translation profession or in the translation market (mentioned by four respondents)
3. teaching methods (four respondents)
4. design of teaching materials (two respondents)
5. translation assessment (two respondents).

Even though the translation teachers assessed and ranked 'the ability to use translation tools' and 'knowledge about the translation profession' as less important than did their professional translator counterparts (Figs. 8 and 9), these two areas were clearly identified as the ones in which the teachers felt most need for further training. This would suggest that at least some of them consider competences in these areas to be a very important aspect of their job.

More generally, two of the respondents mentioned they would like future training courses to provide them with the opportunity to 'share experience with colleagues'.

### **3.5 Teacher's personality**

Although we did not explicitly include questions on desired translation teacher personality traits in our questionnaire, quite a few of such qualities were nevertheless brought up in responses to open-ended questions. For this reason we feel compelled to mention them when presenting our results.

According to our respondents, a translation teacher should be: inspiring, dedicated, patient, fair, helpful, empathetic, eloquent, erudite, innovative, open to learning new things, open to alternative translation solutions, talented for teaching, willing to undergo further training and independent. Several respondents emphasized that, if a translation teacher did not have a gift for teaching, no amount of training in translation or teaching competences would help. Others stressed that good teachers could make or break a translation course or study programme, regardless of how well-designed the curriculum or its syllabi.

With that observation, we seem to have come full circle, returning to the emphasis on translation teacher personality that was highlighted by early authors who wrote on the topic.

## **4. Conclusions**

The responses received in this survey indicate that the qualifications and competences listed in the questionnaire are all deemed relevant and desirable by the two professional groups of relevant stakeholders. Together with a few additional competences mentioned by the respondents they can therefore be considered to provide an adequate reference framework for the recruitment of translation teachers, as well as for the development of translation teacher training courses. It is worth repeating in that context that almost all the respondents consider 'experience in translation' to be indispensable for translation teachers. That view is indirectly corroborated by their emphasis on the significance of 'the ability to perform, at professional level, the tasks assigned to students'.

The results discussed in the previous chapter enable a number of more general conclusions. They make it clear that not everything that is deemed desirable needs to be a formal requirement for the teaching position. While all the qualifications quoted in the questionnaire are deemed desirable (four of them rated above 4 and all six above 3.5 on a 1 to 5 scale), only two of them would be formally required by a majority in the teacher group and only three by a majority of translators. The responses also show that competences enable a more nuanced picture of a desirable translation teacher profile than qualifications do. It turns out that some competences implied by a particular qualification are recognized as important even if the qualification itself has received a lower score.

Comparisons of results carried out along two different lines (different profession and different education background) indicate that different backgrounds seem to influence the respondents' perceptions. The translator group thus rate translation-related competences (familiarity with trends, CAT tools, various translation-related tasks) more highly than the teacher group. Equally so, the latter rate competences related to their profession (in particular the ability to design teaching materials and courses, and familiarity with translation teaching methods) more highly than translators do. Responses by Bologna graduates trained in translation provide another example of the influence, most visibly in respect of 'a degree in translation': more than a half of them (51.72 per cent) would like to see that qualification as a formal requirement for the translation teacher position, while only 27.63 per cent of the other respondents share their opinion.

Responses to an open-ended question in the teachers' questionnaire provide a glimpse into the currently active translation teachers' needs for further training. The areas in which the needs seem to be most acute are CAT

tools, trends in the translation profession and translation teaching methods.

The survey has also yielded some interesting information regarding a topic that it did not initially set out to investigate. The demographic data provided by translation teachers enable a preliminary picture of that group of university teachers in Croatia. They tend to have very similar education backgrounds (94 per cent have a philology degree, 88 per cent completed a pre-Bologna programme, 70 per cent did not study translation, 65 per cent received teacher training during their studies), and 76 per cent of them have 'considerable translation experience'. These findings may feed into various future endeavours relating to translator and translation teacher training in Croatia.

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## Notes

[1] The descriptions of the list in the two presentations we refer to (EMT Expert Group 2013; Gambier and Pokorn 2013) are very similar but they differ in the number of elements included in the 'fundamental requirements' set. While Gambier and Pokorn's presentation lists the four requirements quoted here, the EMT Expert Group's presentation contains an additional requirement, namely the 'ability to perform tasks assigned to students according to professional quality standards' (see 3.2. for further comment).

[2] <https://www.limesurvey.org/>

[3] It should be noted that we consider 'formal education in translation theories' as a qualification, while 'knowledge of translation theories' is considered as a competence, on the understanding that one can acquire the latter in other ways than through formal education. The same principle can also be applied to other categories.

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