

HANKA BŁASZKOWSKA

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Faculty of Modern Languages and Literatures

blaszkow@amu.edu.pl

ORCID: 0000-0002-1096-9021

DIANA PRODANOWIĆ STANKIĆ

University of Novi Sad in Serbia, Faculty of Philosophy

diana.prodanovic.stankic@ff.uns.ac.rs

ORCID: 0000-0001-6221-9372

Transcreative vs. Translational Competence from the Practitioner's Perspective in View of Training Professional Transcreators

Abstract

As the demand for transcreation services grows in the global translation industry, it has become necessary to adapt translation education to more adequately prepare university graduates to meet the needs of new market. This paper will link the ideas of transcreation, a part of industry, to Translation Studies, an academic discipline, by analysing statements obtained from transcreators through a survey, in order to integrate their conceptualisation of transcreation into the context of teaching translation at the tertiary level. It proves crucial to identify the specific transcreation competencies and to develop models that can guide the forming of new courses for future translators, which gives additional value to current university curriculum. Based on the existing research and models and supplementing them with further developments, the authors conducted a survey to examine the concept of transcreation as represented by industry experts in Poland and Serbia. Comparing the data with the current competency model of academic translation education, namely the Competence Framework 2022 (European Master's in Translation [EMT]), the authors aimed to identify the specific transcreation competencies that could be integrated into extended curricula for translation specialisations in philological studies in both countries.

Keywords: language services industry, transcreation, translation/transcreation training, higher education, Poland, Serbia

1. Introduction

114

Since Katan (2016) announced the transcreation turn in translation studies and pointed out that specialising in transcreation can save translators from losing their jobs in the age of machine translation, translation education has been given an impetus to address the training of transcreation skills in the university education of future translators. This is even more significant considering the fact that transcreation consists of a translation practice that reinforces the value of human translation¹. Nowadays, more and more companies are offering transcreation services in the global market, which indicates an increased demand for this service, and consequently, a demand for specialised transcreators with the adequate competence profile.

As a field of research transcreation is slowly gaining ground, however, the large number of publications and the keen interest of young researchers in transcreation also indicate the potential for the development of this new discipline bordering on translation studies. Since transcreation originally emerged from professional practice, and is not a part of the theoretical translation paradigm such as creative translation, it is impossible to study it without adding the insight of expert practitioners. To date, translation scholars have devoted most publications to reflecting on transcreation and its relation to translation. There have also been attempts to describe the process of transcreation in field studies, which have confirmed the distinct nature of transcreation. Recently, however, researchers have been giving voice to practitioners, by analysing their perspective, since they can make a significant contribution not only to the development of a relevant theory, but also to the creation of a didactic basis for teaching transcreation in the training of translators with a specialization in transcreation.

The present study fits into this line of research. Following some similar studies conducted in Spain and Italy, in which an expert-validated competence model for transcreation teaching in higher education was developed, our aim was to explore the perspective provided by transcreation experts in two countries, Poland and Serbia. It was done by conducting an exploratory study in spring 2024, simultaneously, in which we wanted to gain a better insight into the transcreators perspective and find ways how to integrate developing transcreator competencies at the tertiary level in Poland and Serbia. Its purpose was to draw attention to the changes in services being offered in language services industry (LSI) and in the translators' professional profile, requiring expanded competencies, and the necessity of their inclusion in university translators' training programs, which is yet quite rare, or rather conspicuously absent. In doing so, the present context and the development prospects of transcreation in the translation industry in both countries will also be highlighted.

The paper starts by providing an overview of scholarly literature and research on transcreation, focusing on the latest studies about transcreation competencies that relates to translation teaching in higher education. It then moves to the discussion of transcreator competency models including both models presented by professional practitioners and transcreation researchers. After having outlined the

1 "So, at the cross-roads, individual professionals could continue taking the traditional turn to specialise as low-risk 'faithful' T/Is, but with the need to compete keenly with the onslaught from machines or from cheaper if not volunteer others. Or they could 'simply' step into the role of transcreator, which would allow them to take advantage of an already assigned professional recognition of their creative role, and which would authorize them to take account of the impact of cultural distance when translating. There really is no question about it, if T/Is are to survive then they must make the transcreational turn" (Katan 2016: 378).

specific transcreator competencies and skills emerging from these models this paper will present a survey conducted in spring 2024 simultaneously among professional translation agencies offering transcreation services in Poland and Serbia, contributing to the development of research in the field of transcreation conducted by researchers from other countries.

2. Theoretical Framework

Transcreation has developed in two different areas – literary and translation of specialised texts, mostly in the domain of marketing and advertising, with this article focusing on the latter area.² Benetello (2018: 28) states that “the term transcreation has been used in academia for almost sixty years and it has mainly been associated with literary texts”. Only recently, scholars have started to include transcreation in the scope of marketing translation. Pedersen (2014) offers an overview of the definitions of transcreation, which is mainly seen as adaptation of a message from one language by recreating it in another language in an advertising and marketing context where texts require large amounts of creativity. The author notes that translation proper is perceived as transferring words from one language to another, while transcreation implies something more – “Transcreation is transferring brands and messages from one culture to another” (Pedersen 2014, 62).³ Díaz-Millón and Olvera-Lobo (2021: 347) define transcreation “as a translation-related activity that combines processes of linguistic translation, cultural adaptation and (re-) creation or creative re-interpretation”.

Transcreation is a relatively new linguistic practice whose conception was initially explained by LSP providers – companies and practitioners⁴ (Sattler-Hovdar 2016, Benetello 2018) and then by scholars (Ray and Kelly 2010, Schäffner 2012, Gaballo 2012, Rike 2013, Munday and Gambier 2014, Katan 2014, 2015, Pedersen 2014, 2016, Mastela, Seweryn 2021, Błaszowska 2022, Petrović 2023). Both industry and researchers were originally concerned with the comparison between the conceptualisations of translation and transcreation, and both defined transcreation differently, starting from different concepts of translation and creativity. Previous research has highlighted confusion and the variety of definitions attributed to transcreation depending on different perspectives. First, there is some confusion surrounding the very term “transcreation”. Transcreation is sometimes viewed as a *method* of translation, sometimes as a process that is *more than* translation, and sometimes it is viewed as *no* translation at all (Błaszowska 2022: 199–212). Drawing on their professional experience as transcreators, some practitioners believe that transcreation is a strategic-creative processing of a translated marketing text, and hence they treat translation as something based on literal interpretation and as a process devoid of creativity (Sattler-Hovdar 2016). Other practitioners define transcreation as “writing advertising or marketing copy for a

2 On transcreation in literary translation see de Campos (1992), Lal (1996), Spinzi *et al.* (2018), Dybiec-Gajer *et al.* (2020). On transcreation in South-Slavic languages see Đorđević (2020) and Petrović (2023) who discuss transcreation in media discourse.

3 “Generally, transcreation in this context seeks to perform all the adjustments necessary to make a campaign work in all target markets, while at the same time staying loyal to the original creative intent of the campaign” (Pedersen 2014: 58).

4 Pedersen (2014: 58) writes about “the transcreation industry,” which indicates not a passing trend, but a (firmly) established position for transcreation in the language services sector. This position is also evidenced by the inclusion of transcreation in the international translation standard ISO 17100: 2015 (AENOR, 2016) as an added-value translation service among terminology management, transcription *etc.*

specific market, starting from copy written in a source language, as if the target text had originated in the target language and culture” (Benetello 2016: 259), or as an “interlinguistic adaptation of advertising and marketing copy” (Benetello 2018: 42). It has to be stressed that creativity is not the only element that defines transcreation, and it is misleading to distinguish translation from transcreation on this basis and as Bentello (2008) argues (referring to Gaballo 2022) “translation is never and has never been a word-for-word rendition of a text from one language to another [...], and it is a creative act indeed” (Benetello 2018: 29).

Similar definitional divergences also apply to academia, as some researchers see transcreation as a *holistic translation strategy* (Gaballo 2012), as a *new area of translation activities* (Katan 2014, 2015), while others see it as nothing more than *creative translation*, as known from functional translation theories (Siever 2021). In their definitions, scholars place great emphasis on the importance of cross-cultural transfer in transcreation and functionality of the final product, paying less attention than practitioners to the creative element of writing, “which makes transcreation a hybrid practice/service halfway between translation and copywriting” (Benetello 2018: 29). These divergences point to the need for better communication and exchange of knowledge between practitioners and researchers, as well as empirical research, the results of which will further clarify the scope of transcreation as a service, but also its place in translation studies and its importance in translator training.

For instance, in her empirical study, Rike (2013) focused on the applications of transcreation in marketing and advertising, and examined Norwegian and international (bilingual) corporate websites. These websites serve as an examples of how the core content of a multimodal text can be presented on a website through the process of transcreation. Based on the assumption that the work of the translator today is moving towards the convergence of translation and text production, Rike (2013) argues that the concept of transcreation can help to broaden the scope of the translator’s role in the communication process. It can affect the way translation is perceived and taught in educational institutions, as well as the way both translators and clients view the services that translators can provide to facilitate intercultural communication.

Pedersen (2016, 219: 145ff.) conducted an empirical ethnographic study in an advertising agency in London and goes on to describe transcreation as a process consisting of various work steps in which many players, such as companies and advertising agencies, country offices, clients, transcreation managers, copywriters and translators, *etc.* are involved. Pedersen’s study shows that clients often fail to recognise the increased effort involved in transferring an advertising campaign to a new, different-language market. To illustrate the complexity of the process, the term transcreation seems more appropriate than translation. This also better explains the increased time and effort required for international adaptation of a campaign. The term translation is not compatible with the complex process and should therefore be avoided in transcreation projects (Pedersen 194ff., 228ff.). Hence, both of these studies point to the complex nature of transcreation, requiring the involvement of many stakeholders, as well as the expansion of the competence of translators who want to specialise in this field, which is also of great importance in the educational process regarding curriculum design and course content.

Trying to take into account the views of transcreators, translators and linguists, as practitioners who carry out the process every day, Carreira (2020) warned that translation companies and academics have contributed to defining the transcreation phenomenon, and no one has asked the opinions of its direct practitioners. Moreover, he set out to find out the perceptions of professionals who work in transcreation

projects to determine whether the currently known definitions of the phenomenon are complete. After interviewing a varied sample of members of the industry in a qualitative study, Carreira's (2020) results suggest that professionals share the current definitions of transcreation. In this sense transcreation would have been considered exclusively as a service carried out in the commercial/advertising scope until now. But there is also a second perception of the phenomenon as a multidisciplinary strategy that can be applied in other areas than marketing, in which it would overlap with other modalities of a traditionally creative nature, such as audiovisual translation or part of localisation.

In view of this study, transcreation seems to have a dual nature, both as a service and a strategy. The second nature would be that transcreation exclusively consists of a service, while the practices corresponding to its perception as a strategy would not be included in this denomination. Further empirical research seems necessary to dispel doubts related to this position and distinguish between them.

More recently, researchers have focused on transcreation training and creativity as an added value in translators' training, facing changing working conditions in the translation industry (Morón Martín 2020, 2022), and on transcreation skills in translators' training (Calvo, Morón Martín 2018, Díaz-Millón 2023). For instance, Morón Martín (2020) describes the experience of trainee participants in a transcreation project developed at the University Pablo de Olavide in Seville (Spain). The project was an attempt to introduce transcreation as a service defined by the LSP industry, and initiate students in inventiveness and creative translation, while creatively enhancing translation graduates' employability. Despite the assumed role of universities as providers of employability skills, this initiative also aimed to add value to translator training, adopting an open, creative and boundless approach when dealing with employability issues in translators' training. Problems in the translation profession, resulting from the great variety of professional translation-related services and practices, were to be solved through the simulation of professional practice and self-reflection of students. A qualitative and analytical approach was adopted as the methodological framework in this exploratory study, resulting in the final evaluation of trainees in the first phase of the project, as well as authentic testimonies obtained from graduates and professionals, who reflect on the impact of the initiative on the employability of trainees.

So far, only some preliminary conclusions can be drawn from the exploratory study. For example, the researchers identified some specific competencies and skills required in the market and reflecting the specific added value of transcreation. In the light of the results of the study, the added value of transcreation can be defined as the need for greater degree of creativity in the performance of translation tasks, which requires a strategic approach to certain elements of translation in terms of problem identification and resolution. Cultural awareness also plays a key role, which was limited in the case of these respondents due to their low cultural immersion. Technical and professional skills, such as teamwork or decision-making, are also necessary to cope with a process that seems to be different from the usual translation process.

All these components of the competence profile are highlighted as an explanation of the added value attributed to transcreation, but they do not differ much from the components of the PACTE (2014) or EMT (2017) competency models. However, the transcreation process can be very different from the translation process, and this differential effort required for each of these components to ensure good quality transcreation execution would require in-depth research in the future. While completing transcreation tasks, students were able to experience specific translation skills tailored to the practice of

transcreation. Examples of the major elements to be considered, as compared to traditional translation-specific processes are the effects of directionality in some transcreation project stages, revision processes, the justification of transcreation decisions and quality assessment. The closer look at the actual practice of transcreation enables a more in-depth approach to translator training, from the point of view of the researcher.

One of the last elements of added value represents teaching creativity. Trainers have tried to make most of the resources available, including expert collaboration in order to produce innovative teaching experiences for trainees, who were very satisfied with the opportunity to face innovative, creative and original training challenges, judging by the results of the study. However, in order to respond to changes in the market, translator trainers need to respond creatively and innovatively, especially in academic contexts in which mechanisms cannot be easily modified and market changes require some time to be accommodated.

All these studies indicate that there is a growing interest in introducing transcreation training in translation studies, possibly as a result of its increasing popularity in the professional translation field. This interest is also shared by the present study.

2.1. Practitioner's and Researcher's Models of Transcreation Competency

There are several models of the competencies needed for transcreation put forward by practitioners and researchers. Below we will focus on four selected ones. The practitioners base their models on their experience in transcreation. The translator and transcreator Sattler-Hovdar (2016: 163) outlines the ideal profile of a transcreator with certain characteristics such as curiosity for new things, enjoyment of formulating and designing, willingness to experiment, courage, intelligence, intuition, conceptual strength, perfectionism, discipline and self-criticism. These qualities are rounded off by skills such as factual, cultural and linguistic competence, which ensure confident “feeling for the language”, stylistic confidence, a creative and concise style of language and the ability to “juggle” with language and images (ibid. 163). In addition, developed research skills are required in order to collect, structure, combine, rearrange, sort out and brainstorm ideas as staged, inspired improvisation (Sattler-Hovdar 2016: 40). A transcreator must be able to feel and think like the recipient of the message in both the source and the target language. Therefore, a transcreator must have “a high degree of intercultural sensitivity” (Sattler-Hovdar 2016: 20), an “intercultural instinct” (Sattler-Hovdar 2016: 126), a “pronounced empathy for the culture of the source as well as for that of the target language” (Sattler-Hovdar 2016: 82). Familiarization with the corporate culture and customer terminology as well as marketing knowledge, knowledge of aspects of brand positioning and consumer psychology are also relevant in order to understand the market mechanisms (Sattler-Hovdar 2016: 43) and “to think strategically about the brand and from the consumer’s perspective” (Sattler-Hovdar 2016: 13). If a person possesses these qualities and competencies, they have the core competence of a transcreator – namely knowing when to translate a text and when to create a new text based on the original and briefing conversations with their client (Benetello 2018⁵, Sattler-Hovdar 2021).

5 “Transcreation expertise lies precisely in the ability to determine whether a close rendition of the source text will have an impact on the target audience, or whether a more creative approach should be taken” (Benetello 2018: 42).

According to Benetello (2018), transcreation is a different, but not an alternative service as translation, and the only way to produce marketing and advertising texts “that can truly resonate with the target audience” Benetello (2018: 28)⁶. Creating target-language copy requires specific skills “which make the transcreation professional a fully-fledged consultant” (*ibidem*). Based on her own professional practice as copywriter and transcreator, Benetello (2018: 41) presents a specific set of four different skills required of the professionals involved in transcreation. These include the language skills needed to decode a message in the source language and encode it in the target language, which makes the transcreator a 1/4 translator. Next, copywriting skills are needed, because the target text must be as expressive as the original and just as consistent with the respective advertising strategy. This means that the transcreator is also a copywriter in 1/4. Cultural sensitivity is also important, because the target text must fit into the culture of the addressees. For this reason, the transcreator is also a sort of anthropologist - someone who knows what is and is not acceptable in their own culture. And finally, understanding the local market, since a professional dealing with transcreation must know the language and images used by the brand’s competitors in order to avoid them and create the most unique and exceptional text possible; hence the transcreator is also 1/4 a marketer. “If transcreation professionals are all of the above, they are not language service providers, but consultants for all intents and purposes” (Benetello 2018: 41). “The transcreation professional as a translator + copywriter + “cultural anthropologist” + marketer knows exactly what works for the target market and culture and is able to use the right words to create the desired effect on the readers” (Benetello 2018: 42).

Both Benetello and Sattler-Hovdar emphasizes the interdisciplinary nature of transcreational activity which can, however, be carried out by translators. This interdisciplinarity of transcreation rises even more significantly in the models of translation scholars. The researchers draw on their own experience as linguists in the industry and on the knowledge of practitioners gathered through surveys and interviews. Along these lines, Rupcic (2020: 311) defines transcreation as the text-transformative practice of interlingual advertising copywriting, in which, on the basis of a creative concept and in orientation to the target cultural audience, a functionally culturally appropriate target language text is created. The researcher presents six main features of a translation competence profile for dealing with advertising texts, with a particular focus on transcreation. However, as their relevance and activation varies depending on the text, they must always be considered in the context of the specific project requirements. The uniqueness of this profile lies in the interplay of the specific sub-competencies and their respective weighting. The theoretical framework is based on a survey and some examples of language mediation in the advertising industry, which are embedded in a practical context. In order to make the research as practical as possible, Rupcic used examples from her own experience as a project manager at a translation agency specializing in marketing texts and conducted a non-representative international survey of marketing translators. As expected, language and cultural competence, the cornerstones of any translation competence model, are at the heart of the competence profile. Marketing translators differ from other translators in their dual knowledge, which is why industry-specific knowledge, *i.e.* specialisation in a field and/or product, comes third in the model. As the fourth most important component, Rupcic mentions consistency competence, *i.e.* the consistent embedding of the translation in the company’s previous communication with its customers. On the one hand, the target text must interact with other

⁶ The ability of international brands to fit seamlessly into local lifestyles is ultimately the prerequisite for their success (de Mooij 1998: 20).

elements of advertising, such as visuals, and on the other hand, it must be part of a large mosaic of texts that a company uses to address consumers. If one understands the advertising translator or transcreator as an interface between cultures, lifestyles and ideal ones, the necessity of ethical competence becomes apparent. Ethical competence means the awareness of the ethical responsibility that goes hand in hand with the interlingual transmission of an advertising text and the effort to avoid negative influences on the target culture – whether by drawing the client’s attention to potential problems, weakening the message of the target text or rejecting a critical assignment.

In addition to ethics, there is also the advertising legislation of the target country, which serves as a framework for the translator or transcreator. It is understood as a sensitivity to possible legal problems in the source text and the ability to make appropriate adjustments during the production of the target text. This competence model results in a picture of the marketing translator as a problem solver on several levels, someone who advises, steers, evaluates, weighs up interests and critically questions them. The skills profile of linguists, translators and transcreators in marketing is therefore multifaceted and far-reaching. The prototypical competencies – language and cultural competence – are also essential and indispensable for transcreation. Consistency competence seems to be of considerable importance, which is granted to transcreators if they receive enough support and reference material from the client to be able to produce consistent translations. According to Rupcic (2020: 323), transcreation could accelerate this development, in that the increasing relevance of transcreation processes could make clients aware of the indispensability of detailed creative briefs in the long term. Indeed, transcreators can make the most of their diverse skills if they are more involved in the overall development of international marketing campaigns.

The latest competency model developed in an extensive empirical study with an transcreation experts was designed for teaching transcreation in higher education (Díaz-Millón 2023). The study underpinning this model first sought the opinion of transcreation experts on the need for a competency model for transcreation and on competencies that should be part of the model; through the use of the Delphi method, a consensus was agreed among transcreation experts on the competencies required to perform this professional activity. The data was analysed using the NVIVO qualitative method and the SPSS statistical package. After three rounds of consultations, a model of the competencies required to perform transcreation services was developed, which can significantly contribute to education and training in this field within university didactics.

In this model, Díaz-Millón (2023) separates out four cross-curricular competence areas and one specific competence area, to which she assigns certain sub-competencies. The first area of cross-curricular instrumental competencies includes language competence in the mother tongue and foreign language, as well as creative writing competence and the skills of analysis and synthesis, managing of documentation sources, the ability to make and justify decisions and solve problems. The second area of cross-curricular personal competencies partly coincides with cultural competence and includes recognition of diversity and multiculturalism, intercultural skills. Personal sub-competencies also include critical reasoning and the ability to work individually and in interdisciplinary teams. The area of cross-curricular systemic competencies include creativity, motivation for quality, self-study, knowledge of other cultures and cultural knowledge already focused on customs and expertise in transcultural studies. The other cross-curricular competence is the ability to apply knowledge in practice. In addition to these competence areas and sub-competencies, which also apply to other subjects, the researcher also distinguishes specific

competencies that only apply to transcreation. These include specific knowledge of: target audience culture, consumer habits in different cultures, specific professional languages, communication in persuasive contexts, communicative and persuasive strategies from an intercultural perspective, as well as background knowledge about the world in general. In addition, the last area also includes expertise in marketing and advertising expertise and a versatile profile, with characteristics of other professions like: copywriting, copyediting, advertisement, communication, marketing, and translation.

Table 1. Final model of competencies needed for transcreation (taken from Díaz-Millón 2023: 14)

Competences needed for transcreation	
Cross-curricular instrumental competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral and written communication in their own language • Knowledge of a 2nd language • Ability to analyse and synthesise • Decision-making • Ability to justify their own decisions • Knowledge and management of documentation sources and ICT domain • Ability to solve problems • Writing and copywriting skills
Cross-curricular personal competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical reasoning • Recognition of diversity and multiculturalism • Intercultural skills • Ability to work in an interdisciplinary team • Teamwork skills • Ability to work individually
Cross-curricular systemic competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity and creative thinking • Motivation for quality • Self-study • Knowledge of other cultures and customs • Expertise in transcultural studies
Other cross-curricular competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to apply knowledge to practise
Specific competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target audience cultural knowledge • Knowledge of consumer habits in different cultures • Background knowledge about the world in general • Marketing expertise • Advertising expertise • Versatile profile, with characteristics of other professions like: copywriting, copyediting, advertisement, communication, marketing, and translation • Knowledge of specific professional languages • Knowledge of communication in persuasive contexts • Knowledge of communicative and persuasive strategies from an intercultural perspective

The model thus suggests that the foundation of specific transcreation competencies, focused on knowledge of the marketing and advertising field, the market, and the target audience, as well as requiring a broad professional profile, consists of extensive linguistic and cultural competencies, along with essential personality traits and skills that enable specialisation in this area.

The study confirmed the need for transcreation training in higher education. The model was developed through expert consensus and highlights the most significant aspects of transcreation training. It may play a crucial role in advancing translator education in the field of transcreation within higher education, potentially contributing to the development of curricula that emphasise the growth of skills in translation and transcreation. As such, it could be valuable for translation and transcreation trainers, as well as for professionals and future translators. This model may also serve as a starting point for further research, *e.g.* in terms of transcreation teaching methods or performance evaluation, also as conducting similar studies among experts in other countries, for another languages and cultures. The study presented in this paper will aim to confirm or expand the transcreation competencies identified so far and relate them to the current higher educational frameworks for translator training in the studied countries.

3. Methodology and Data Collection

As it was mentioned above, our study was based on the aim of getting a new insight into practitioners' perspective to transcreation and specific competencies needed for this process, so that these findings can be used to adjust and modify the existing educational and training programmes at the tertiary level, or create some new ones that would fill the gap. In addition to that, we wanted to examine potential differences and similarities related to the practice of transcreation in two different countries, in which this service is offered in various foreign languages by adopting an exploratory research methodology.

The research was based on the interpretative qualitative analysis of data obtained in a survey. Following some similar studies in related fields (Pastor Corpas 2015, Gutiérrez 2016, Risku *et al.* 2017, Dvojčoš *et al.* 2021), this research was grounded on the premise that the findings of this contrastive analysis may contribute to the identification of potential challenges work-related transcreators face in these countries, as well as to providing a solid foundation for future research by establishing a baseline understanding of the topic, applicable to different and diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

The survey used in the study was created and shared online, through the Microsoft Teams application, linked through Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań in three languages, Polish, English and Serbian. More than fifty language service providers in total were selected in Poland and Serbia, on the basis of the services they offer, *i.e.* specifically transcreation, and contacted with an invitation to participate in the study. The link was sent to transcreation agencies, particularly project managers and transcreators. The participants gave consent to take part in the research and it was anonymous. Also, the participants were informed in the beginning that the results of the survey will be used solely for academic purposes. In the end, there were seventeen participants who took part in the survey ($\dot{N}=17$), eight ($\dot{N}=8$) in Poland and nine ($\dot{N}=9$) in Serbia. It has to be mentioned that despite the initial willingness to participate, potential participants were reluctant to take part in the study, for several reasons, some of which were mentioned in email correspondence that followed the invitation. These reasons will be discussed in more details in the next chapter, as they are closely related to the discussion of the obtained results. Due to the relatively small number of participants, we did not rely on statistical or quantitative analysis of the obtained data, but rather focused on a qualitative analysis.

The survey contained three groups of questions. The first group of questions was centered on demographics and basic background information, the second on the previous education and work

experience of the participants, while the last section dealt with five competency areas for translators as defined by the European Master's in Translation (EMT) Qualification Framework (2022) and the ways these relate to the participants' view of competencies needed for transcreation. Notably, EMT updated the existing competence framework in 2022, modifying and profiling the key competencies and skills required to improve employability prospects of future translation graduates (EMT 2022, 2), which was then adopted as the EMT competence framework for 2023-2028.

4. Results and Discussion

In the following sections we will present and discuss data obtained in the survey. The results of this study show that the participants in the study agreed unanimously that transcreation is essential for businesses looking to build a strong global presence and connect with customers on a deeper level and that it is closely related to specific requirements and skills. Before we focus on specific competencies needed to achieve this, we will discuss the demographics of our study participants and their views on this topic.

4.1. The Study Participants

In both countries, all study participants were involved with transcreation, and countries, they were mostly women with a bachelor's degree, with some differences considering their education profile. Namely, while in Poland only three participants had a BA degree in Translation and/or Language Studies, and the others graduated from non-language-related disciplines, in Serbia, the majority of participants had a BA degree Translation and/or Language Studies. When asked to provide information related to additional trainings/courses they had, the participants listed courses of different kinds, starting from some specialised courses in interpretation/translation to Google courses on social media management, digital marketing and SEO. All this points to the fact that transcreation is a specific service that inevitably requires knowledge and experience gained in diverse disciplines and focus on transversal skills that need to be applied in the very process.

It is also interesting to mention that in Serbia, most of the participants were below 35 years, whereas in Poland the great majority were in fact above 35 or even 45, which corresponds to their professional experience in the field of translation (in the Polish sample more than 5 to 10 years as opposed to the Serbian sample, in which the participants stated 3 to 5 years of experience in the field). As for the description of the current position they hold, Polish participants were almost evenly distributed along the options: translator (3), translator/transcreator (2), copywriter (3), manager of transcreation projects (4) and other positions that were not specified (3). In the Serbian sample this distribution is to some extent different, since most of the participants hold the position of a translator (7), and translator/transcreator (4), with only two copywriters and none of the project managers in the field of transcreation. This is closely related to the information gathered in the survey with regard to the participants' experience related specifically to transcreation, and the period their respective employers are involved with offering transcreation services. Namely, in both samples, the participants stated that on average their employers (or they themselves as freelancers) offer the service of transcreation in the last 3-5 years, and most of the respondents work in translation agencies in both countries, with the exception of two freelancers and one employer in the digital marketing agency. Nevertheless, according to the respondents, they have

on average around five, in some cases more than five years of experience in the respective field, which probably indicates that the practitioners themselves have a different view on the very process.

4.2. Transcreation Practice in Poland and Serbia

The study findings revealed that in both countries, transcreation is offered as a specific value added service, and all participants in the study indicated the fact that they clearly delineate it and differentiate from translation proper. Also, the results corroborated scholarly views on transcreation practices which were discussed above in the Section 2. Namely, according to the participants' responses, transcreation represents modification and adaptation of content that is adjusted to the needs of the target content, which is in line with scholarly definitions of transcreation given above (*cf.* Díaz-Millón and Olvera-Lobo 2021). Moreover, the participants also stressed creativity, transfer of the emotional tone of the original and the function of the text as the key concepts related to transcreation. According to them, they mainly work with marketing and advertising text types, and sometimes with content related to the domain of tourism. English was the predominant language used in transcreation, with German, French, and Lithuanian also mentioned, when it comes to language combinations, beside Polish and Serbian that were present in each sample respectively.

What has to be mentioned here are some comments that were given freely in the survey, which shed more light on this issue. Namely, the participants in the Polish sample said that despite the fact that translation agencies or language service providers offer this service, there is actually little demand for it in Poland, since it is more expensive than regular translation service. Also, as much as the owners of translation agencies are reluctant to disclose any information regarding their business activities, including transcreation, so are the clients, who do not want to provide a detailed brief in which they would give clear guidelines to practitioners. This is in line with findings discussed in Risku *et al* (2017: 71), who also noted that the briefing the transcreators get is rather inadequate in comparison to the final expectations. In that context, the whole process of transcreation is to some extent mystified and opaque, which limits and affects the final outcome.

When in need of this service, clients usually require three versions of the text to choose from, (which is offered as standard translation service). These versions already include translation, adaptation, proofreading and editing services; hence transcreation is not charged as such, per hour, but rather as translation proper. In that way, clients are bypassing this specific service, and pay less. The participants in the study claim that this is one of the reasons why transcreation is not that widespread in none of these countries, contrary to the expectations that there is a growing demand in Poland and Serbia for this service.

4.3. Transcreation Competence

Starting from the participants' views on the existing EMT Qualification Framework (2022), most of them stated that they consider it adequate and fitting their work practice, as it reflects and resonates with their work-related tasks. Some of them highlighted the fact that the knowledge of the mother tongue and culture (in this case the participant referred to Polish) should be even more emphasised in translation education, as it tends to be overlooked and assumed to be default in the attempts to become more proficient in the foreign language. Another Polish participant stressed the importance of relying first on the ISO standards

in the process of translation education, as they represent the most up-to-date and authoritative source of industry information. As such, they can serve as guidelines related to course and curriculum design. What was mentioned as missing in the EMT Qualification Framework was business competence and the ability to analyse business- and industry-related elements in the context of decision-making and making the output relevant and adequate for the given market and target customers and clients. This comment is certainly in line with the participants' practice and experience related to language industry, and the need to rely more on multidisciplinary approaches to education and work practice. From the educators' perspective, this can indicate the need to include more business- or technology-oriented courses in the curricula offered in Translation or Language Studies, so that graduates learn how to understand client-centric approach, market research skills, consumer behaviour, and knowledge of industry trends. Also in terms of market analysis, a grasp of business concepts like market segmentation, competitor analysis, and pricing strategies can help language professionals tailor their work to specific markets.

Furthermore, in reference to the competencies that are grouped in the domain of translation, most participants agreed with the suggested list, yet some of them outlined some specific ones, such as learning, expanding and applying specific domain-related knowledge and revision of texts before and after the use of machine translation (MT). Overall, this call to develop some skills that would differentiate between output created by AI or that was entirely machine translated was indicated as essential. It seems that this reflects the omnipresent fear of language professionals to be replaced by AI that has a faster turnover. Most of their comments expressed their need to learn how to differentiate between human and output created by AI, in order to improve and perfect quality control and accuracy.

In addition to that, some of them stressed literacy in general, alongside with digital literacy, as an important prerequisite to any further development. As language professionals they are well aware that good quality transcreation depends heavily on the unique perspectives, cultural nuances, and creativity that human language professionals bring to their work, despite the growing demand by the industry to rely more on AI-generated content and MT and expand and expedite knowledge sharing the speed of knowledge turnover. It is evident that as AI technology continues to evolve, language professionals who can adapt to these changes will be better positioned to succeed in the future, but at the same time, educators need to focus more on developing critical thinking, analysis, and evaluation skills in teaching, so as to empower graduates to keep and preserve their niche.

This overall apprehension related to the future of language industry and specifically, translation and transcreation was also reflected in the comments shared in email correspondence with potential participants who did not want to complete the survey, explaining this with a statement that both translation, transcreation and copy writing will soon cease to exist due to AI, which will write and create original marketing texts in the target language or translate from the source language. In that way view, language professionals will become supervisors of automated processes done by AI and any specialised trainings seem to be pointless and irrelevant according to these views.

When asked to suggest three most important technological competencies in their opinion, all participants in both countries mentioned CAT tools as indispensable, adding to them a whole range of additional ones. These additional tools are either those related to assessing quality control (for example, the participants in Serbia listed Xbench and XTRF), or those that enable working with cloud-based translation management system to manage projects and processes more efficiently. They also mentioned skills related to using Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and video and sound editing skills, which are needed in

multimodal transcreation projects. This whole range of specific technology-related competencies suggested here indicates that the participants are finding ways to become more flexible and knowledgeably in the digital era.

Finally, with regard to interpersonal skills, almost all respondents agreed that they are essential and highlighted time management, work-life balance and stress-management as top three. Following behind, there are team work skills, self-assessment and commitment to life-long learning.

Judging by the results of this study, apart from core competencies needed for translators, it seems that those needed for successful transcreation represent some steps further in the direction of creative and original work. While translators do need to have an excellent command of both source and target language, including cultural awareness, and theoretical knowledge of translation strategies and techniques, almost all participants stressed that transcreators need to know how to operate on the level of the interplay of language and culture, and be able to employ cultural adaptation. In that context literacy plays a crucial role as literacy is a fundamental skill that enables full understanding of the source content, and then achieving specific goals related to the given commission at hand to transcreate it in the target language and cultural framework, using analysis and synthesis and knowledge transfer as some fundamental features of human cognition.

Despite the limitations of this study, it is interesting that none of the participants mentioned or referred to creativity, as the ability to generate new ideas, or solutions that are innovative and original. Rather, they focused on elements of practical knowledge and its application, especially related to technology, trending, market analysis and market strategies. In that sense, there were no significant differences regarding the participants' views in Poland and Serbia. Another common ground for all participants is rather time management and work load management, since it seems that healthy life-work balance inevitably leads to fostering creativity in all aspects.

In light of suggesting some preliminary guidelines related to integrating transcreator training in the existing translation programmes at the tertiary level, it should be mentioned that the results of our exploratory study suggest the following. Even though the core skills for transcreation and translation are similar, the transcreation process itself may require a different approach and emphasis on transversal soft skills. Key areas to focus on are definitely cultural awareness and technical skills that include data analysis and digital marketing. By incorporating these elements into translation programs, we can equip students with the skills they need to succeed in the evolving field of transcreation.

Moreover, following Kiraly (2012: 212), it appears that prospective transcreators would benefit most from experiencing the competence to foster its emergence. In other words, being immersed in intercultural contexts and being challenged with specific practical tasks and assignments certainly will benefit students' needs to resort to knowledge transfer, self-assess and evaluate and look for information that can assist them in problem-solving and decision-making processes. This would probably lead to creativity and more collaboration. By changing the approach and focusing on these competencies, transcreator training programs can equip students and set them on the path of life-long learning which is necessary to excel in the field and deliver high-quality, culturally relevant content.

5. Concluding Remarks

As the field of transcreation continues to evolve, understanding its practice in diverse cultural contexts is key to its development. The insights gained from an exploratory study in Poland and Serbia can contribute to refining transcreation techniques and adapting them to different cultural environments, thereby advancing the field as a whole. This paper aimed to bridge the gap between industry practices and academic discourse on transcreation. By conducting a survey among transcreation experts in Poland and Serbia, we sought to identify specific competencies required for this specialised field and integrate them into tertiary-level translation education.

This study was meant to be contrastive in order to help uncover some specific cultural nuances and patterns that influence how transcreation is practiced and perceived in Poland and Serbia. Despite being geographically close, these two countries have distinct cultural, and historical backgrounds. There is limited research on transcreation practices specifically in Central and South-East European contexts, particularly in Poland and Serbia. Conducting an exploratory case study will fill this gap by providing detailed insights into how transcreation is managed in these countries, contributing to the broader academic discourse on the subject.

Our findings suggest that while the core skills for transcreation and traditional translation overlap, there are unique competencies that distinguish transcreators. These include enhanced creativity, cultural awareness, and a strategic approach to problem-solving. Additionally, the ability to work effectively in interdisciplinary teams and possess strong communication skills is essential. To incorporate transcreation training into existing translation programs, it is recommended to emphasise creativity and cultural awareness by fostering these skills through project-based learning and exposure to diverse cultural contexts. Also, it would be very useful to integrate industry-specific knowledge by providing students with practical experience and insights into the marketing and advertising industries. This can also be done by developing interdisciplinary skills thorough collaboration with professionals from other fields, such as marketing and design. Also, students need to have an option to take specialised courses dedicated specifically to transcreation theory and practice, so that translation programs can better equip students with the skills needed to succeed in the evolving landscape of transcreation services and meet the growing demand for qualified professionals in this field.

References

- Benetello, Claudia (2016) "Transcreation as Creation of a New Original: A Norton™ Case Study." [In:] Mariagrazia De Meo, Emilia Di Martino, Joanna Thornborrow (eds.) *Creativity in Translation/ Interpretation and Interpreter/Translator Training*. Rome: Aracne; 249–281.
- Benetello, Claudia (2018) "When Translation is not Enough: Transcreation as a Convention Defying Practice. A Practitioner's Perspective." [In:] *The Journal of Specialised Translation* 29; 28–43.
- Błaszowska, Hanka (2022) *Marketingtexte aus translationswissenschaftlicher Sicht: Untersuchung einer Kundenzeitschrift der Automobilbranche im Sprachenpaar Deutsch-Polnisch*. Göttingen: V&R Unipress.
- Campos, de Haroldo (1992) *Metalinguagem e outras metas*. Brasil: Perspectiva.
- Calvo, Elisa, Marian Morón Martín (2018) "Introducing Transcreation Skills in Translator Training Contexts: A Situated Project-Based Approach." [In:] *The Journal of Specialized Translation* 29; 126–148.

- Carreira, Oliver (2020) "Defining Transcreation from the Practitioners Perspective: an Interview-Based Study." [In:] Carla Botella Tejera, Javier Franco Aixelá, Catalina Iliescu Gheorghiu (eds.) *Translatum Nostrum. La traducción y la interpretación en el ámbito humanístico*. Granada: Editorial Comares; 191–204.
- Díaz-Millón, Mar (2023) "What do Experts Think about Transcreation Training? A Delphi Method Approach." [In:] *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer* 17(4); 566–584. [At:] <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2023.2207132> [date of access: February 6, 2025].
- Díaz-Millón, Mar, Maria Dolores Olvera-Lobo (2021) "Towards a Definition of Transcreation: a Systematic Literature Review." [In:] *Translating the Queer Popular. Special Issue of Perspectives. Studies in Translation Theory and Practice* 31(2); 347–364. [At:] <https://benjamins.com/online/etsb/publications/45291> [date of access: February 6, 2025].
- Dordević, Jasmina (2019) "Translation in Serbian Media Discourse: the Discursive Strategy of Argumentation as an Adaptation Technique." [In:] *Perspectives* 28(3); 454–468. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2019.1595068> [date of access: February 6, 2025].
- Dvojčoš, Martin, Pavol Šveda, Emilia Perez (eds.) (2021) *Translation and Interpreting Training in Slovakia*. Bratislava: Comenius University in Bratislava.
- Dybiec-Gajer, Joanna, Riitta Oittinen, Małgorzata Kodura (2020) *Negotiating Translation and Transcreation of Children's Literature*. New York City: Springer.
- Firat, Gökhan, Joanna Gough, Joss Moorkens (2024) "Translators in the Platform Economy: a Decent Work Perspective." [In:] *Perspectives* 32(3); 422–440. [At:] <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2024.2323213> [date of access: February 6, 2025].
- Gaballo, Viviana (2012) "Exploring the Boundaries of Transcreation in Specialized Translation." [In:] *ESP Across Cultures* 9; 95–113.
- Katan, David (2014) "Uncertainty in the Translation Professions: Time to Transcreate?" [In:] *Cultus* 7; 10–18. [At:] https://iris.unipa.it/retrieve/handle/10447/130535/197987/cultus%20_7_2014.pdf [date of access: February 6, 2025].
- Katan, David (2016) "Translation at the Cross-roads: Time for the Transcreational Turn?" [In:] *Perspectives* 24(3); 365–381. [At:] <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2015.1016049> [date of access: February 6, 2025].
- Kiraly, Don (2012) "Towards a View of Translator Competence as an Emergent Phenomenon: Thinking Outside the Box(es) in Translator Education." [In:] Don Kiraly, Silvia Hansen-Schirra, Karin Maksymski (eds.) *New Prospects and Perspectives for Educating Language Mediator*. Tübingen: Narr Verlag; 197–224.
- Lal, Purushottama (1996) *Transcreation: Seven Essays on the Art of Transcreation*. Calcutta: Writers Workshop Publication.
- Mastela, Olga, Agnieszka Seweryn (2021) "Transkreacja – nowy obszar czy nowa nazwa?" [In:] Maria Piotrowska (ed.) *Perspektywy na przekład*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.
- Mooij, de Marieke (1998) *Global Marketing and Advertising. Understanding Cultural Paradoxes*. New York: Sage Publications.
- Morón-Martín, Marián (2020) "Transcreation as a Way to Promote Employability in Translation Training: Adding Value to Translation Training." [In:] *Hermes* 60; 125–139.
- Morón Martín, Marián (2022) "Creativity as an Added Value in Translators' Training: Learning through Transcreation." [In:] Gary Massey, Elsa Huertas-Barros (eds.) *The Human Translator in the 2020s*. New York: Routledge.
- Morón Marián, Óliver Carreira (2024) "The Extraordinary Nature of Transcreation Problems: The Apple Corpus". [In:] Elisa Calvo, Elena de la Cova (eds.) *A Qualitative Approach to Translation Studies: Spotlighting Translation Studies*. New York: Routledge; 214–227.

- Munday, Jeremy, Yves Gambier (2014) "A Conversation between Yves Gambier and Jeremy Munday about Transcreation and the Future of the Professions." [In:] *Cultus* 7; 20–36.
- Pastor, Gloria Corpas (2015) "Translators' Requirements for Translation Technologies: Results of a User Survey." [In:] Gloria Corpas Pastor, Míriam Seghiri Domínguez, Rut Gutiérrez Florido, Míriam Urbano Mendaña (eds.) *Proceedings of the AIETI7Conference New Horizons in Translation and Interpreting Studies*. Geneva: Editions Tradulex; n.pag.
- Pedersen, Daniel (2014) "Exploring the Concept of Transcreation-Transcreation as 'More Than Translation'?" [In:] *Cultus* 7; 57–71.
- Pedersen, Daniel (2016) *Transcreation in Marketing and Advertising: An Ethnographic Study*. Aarhus: Institut for Erhvervskommunikation, Aarhus Universitet. [At:] http://pure.au.dk/portal/files/99715430/Transcreation_in_Marketing_and_Advertising_An_Ethnographic_Study1.pdf [date of access: February 6, 2025].
- Pedersen, Daniel (2019) "Managing Transcreation Projects: an Ethnographic Study." [In:] Hanna Risku, Regina Rogl, Jelena Milosevic (eds.) *Translation Practice in the Field: Current Research on Socio-Cognitive Processes*. Amsterdam: Benjamins Current Topics; 43–59.
- Petrović, Katarina (2023) "Journalistic Transcreation of News Agency Articles from English into Serbian: Associated Press and Reuters Articles in Blic and N1 Online Portals." [In:] *ELOPE: Special Issue* 20(1); 67–88.
- Ray, Rebecca, Natalie Kelly (2010) *Reaching New Markets through Transcreation*. Lowell: Common Sense Advisory.
- Rike, Sissel Marie (2013) "Bilingual Corporate Websites – from Translation to Transcreation?" [In:] *The Journal of Specialised Translation* 20; 68–85.
- Risku, Hanna, Theresa Pichler, Vanessa Wieser (2017) "Transcreation as a Translation Service: Process Requirements and Client Expectations." [In:] *Across Languages and Cultures* 18(1); 53–77.
- Rupcic, Kerstin (2020) "Eine Idee weiter – Überlegungen zum Translationskompetenzmodell im Kontext transkreativer Textübertragungsprozesse." [In:] Barbara Ahrens, Morven Beaton-Thome, Monika Krein-Kühle, Ralph Krüger, Lisa Link, Ursula Wienen (eds.) *Interdependenzen und Innovationen in Translation und Fachkommunikation*. Berlin: Frank & Timme Verlag für wissenschaftliche Literatur; 305–329.
- Sattler-Hovdar, Nina (2016) *Translation – Transkreation. Vom Über-Setzen zum Über-Texten*. Berlin: BDÜ Fachverlag.
- Sattler-Hovdar, Nina (2021) *The Transcreation Continuum*. [At:] <https://www.transcreationexperts.com/transcreation-continuum/> [date of access: August 28, 2024].
- Schäffner, Christine (2012) "Rethinking Transediting." [In:] *Meta* 57(4); 866–883.
- Siever, Holger (2021) *Komplexe Translationstheorie. Übersetzen im 21. Jahrhundert*. München: AVM.
- Spinzi, Cinzia, Alessandra Rizzo, Marianna Lya Zummo (2018) *Translation or Transcreation? Discourses, Texts and Visuals*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

