Non-Formal Aspects in Academic Translator Education.
Selected Ideas for Research and Practical Application[1]

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Abstract: A number of researchers in the field of education theory promote the view that education is based primarily on the student(s) – teacher interaction, rather than being dependent on the teacher's realization of educational procedures that expand the student's knowledge. Some researchers in translator education share the view. This paper gives insight into a selection of these holistic and humanistic theories of education and translator education. The underlying idea is that the translator education curriculum should no longer be contained within the translation classroom. Instead, the idea of opening it to new educational perspectives, such as non-formal extracurricular initiatives, is proposed. However, it is not enough to just include the non-formal educational components in the formal programme. The pivotal idea expressed here is to allow for washback from non-formal learning to enhance the formal curriculum.

Keywords: formal, informal and non-formal learning, empowerment in translator education, autonomous learning, heutagogy.

Introduction

Until the year 2000, the debate on translator education was predominated by the attempts to define the concepts of translation competence and to develop models of its acquisition and evaluation (cf. Schaeffner and Adab 2000 or numerous works by the PACTE group – the most recent being PACTE 2011). This approach to translation training still occupies a vital position in the literature of the subject. However, in 2000 Donald Kiraly introduced yet another perspective on translator education: the one in which the focus is only partly on a positivistic competence model, but more on the student-teacher interaction as the main source of growth for

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[1] This paper is a modified version of the text presented during the conference *Łódź-Maastricht Duo Colloquium*, during the Łódź session in 16-19 September 2010.

students and teachers. Kiraly's views are difficult to summarize in brief. Nevertheless, the author pinpoints four main observations made by Kiraly (2000), since they constitute the basis for the arguments and proposals made in the main part of this paper.

Drawing upon Nord's (1996) description of the traditional translation classroom methodology, Kiraly (2000: 23nn) exposes all the grave consequences of the so-called *transmissionist* approach to (translator) education. Firstly, it relies on the central role of the teacher in the classroom organization and conduct. It is exclusively the teacher's job to choose the content and the methods of instruction. Moreover, under the transmissionist model, it is the teacher's duty to know and produce "the best and true" answers to translation problems. The educational problem this methodology brings about is the degree of the teacher's control over the classroom dynamics. It is natural to assume that the teacher is in control of the general organization of the educational surroundings, on condition he is open to the needs and constructive voices expressed by the students. In Kiraly's (2000) judgment, the transmissionist teacher is too powerful, since he is in full control of the key aspect of the translation classroom: the translation process and product. Students' performance is thwarted, since the central position of the teacher renders it utterly impossible for students to realize the translation task. The consequences of this approach for the development of students' translation competence are, according to Kiraly (2000), more than obvious: cognitive skills cannot develop well in the transmissionist context, let alone students' self-esteem, motivation and interests. The main, strategic didactic problem that Kiraly (2000) points out in his criticism of the transmissionist approach is that teachers believe too much in the false metaphor of teaching,[1] rather than concentrating on helping students to learn.

There are two remedies that Kiraly (2000) proposes. Firstly, to overcome the drawbacks of the transmissionist approach, teachers should realize the potential of the social constructivist[2] perspective on education. It has it that knowledge or skills are not transferred or taught. They can only be learned or developed by each person individually. Nevertheless, the growth of an individual is fostered when people learn in groups and teams. This is why Kiraly favours an educational model where learners collaborate in a shared environment in the classroom. This point coincides

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[1] A belief that one person can pass knowledge on another person directly.
[2] For a survey of social constructivist approaches in education, see e.g. Kiraly (2000). An interesting review of Kiraly's social constructivist appeal, along with the criticism against social constructivism in education is to be found in Varney (2009).

strongly with the anthropocentric epistemology developed by Franciszek Grucza.[1] Grucza (1997: 15) calls for a very clear definition of knowledge and learning as always related to the concrete human being involved in the process:

Knowledge is a human attribute that is impossible to be transferred directly to no one else. No human being is capable of assimilating any kind of knowledge in the precise sense of this expression, either. People do not pass knowledge on one another in a way they do with artefacts, nor do they assimilate knowledge in a way they do with food or air for breathing. [...] Each of us has to construct or reconstruct their knowledge. [translation mine – K.K.]

Without going into the details of an in-depth interpretation of the quote above, we only want to focus on the fact that Kiraly (2000) and Grucza (1997) seem to be convergent in their thinking of what it means to learn. If learning is a matter of the experiences gathered by concrete people, rather than being a result of employing transfer procedures, we need to rethink the classical educational "triad" (teacher – method – student), in which teaching is what the teacher does (procedures and content) to make students learn (see e.g. Brzezińska 2000: 59). The social constructivist revision of the educational triad is built on the strategic nature of the student-teacher and student-student classroom interaction as a basic tool in "negotiating" knowledge when seeking solutions to (translation) problems. Seen in this way, knowledge both a process and a result, and the teaching method, or the instruction procedure, is substituted with the translation task that helps assign the roles to be played by the teacher and the students. In this way, Kiraly (2000) makes the point that the student-teacher interaction is pivotal for the success of any translation curriculum. This interaction provides grounds for the development of students' declarative and procedural knowledge as well as their educational and professional attitudes. Kiraly's (2000) empowerment approach results in a holistic curriculum, where the student is seen as a person and not just a client of an educational institution.

In fact, the holistic nature of Kiraly's educational empowerment is emphasised by yet another aspect of his approach, namely the *transformative* view of education.[2] This

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[1] Among numerous contributions by Grucza, the most vital in the context of this paper are Grucza (1997) and Grucza (in print). The former text is perhaps the first formulation of the relationship between Grucza's anthropocentric stand on language(s), while the latter is an overt formulation of an epistemological approach on its own rights, inspired by Grucza's earlier linguistic investigations. For an attempt to introduce an anthropocentric conception of translator education, see e.g. Żmudzki (2009) or Klimkowski (2011).

[2] Kiraly's makes a direct reference to Miller and Seller (1985), who belong to a large group of advocates of the Transformative Theory of Learning. Jack Mezirow is widely recognized

view is inspired by an educational theory known as the Transformative Theory of Learning. This theory has it that learning is not about acquiring or accumulating knowledge, but that the main sense and result of learning is the change, the transformation of the learner into someone 'new'. Most researchers accept the holistic understanding of the transformation: the change concerns the emotional and the axiological facets of human functioning, along with the cognitive domain. Miller and Seller (1985), referred to by Kiraly (2000), claim that the transformation also takes place in the classroom when a constructivist teacher creates an exploratory environment for their students. In this case, the student-teacher interaction enables the transformation of all the protagonists of the educational process: the students and the teacher.

Donald Kiraly makes a strong appeal to teachers and curriculum designers to introduce empowerment into the formal academic curriculum. The author of this paper fully supports this view, and admits that Kiraly's (2000) model has been inspirational for his own educational practice and research. Nonetheless, the author ventures a claim that reforming the formal curriculum in accordance with Kiraly's (2000) suggestions is only a first step on the way to make it a source of knowledge, competence and motivation that the translation students need to become professionals.

Autonomous learning

González Davies (2004: 14) enumerates "three main approaches to the learning process": the transmissionist, transactional and transformational educational styles. Since the first and the last approach have been discussed above, the author confines himself to a short presentation of the transactional model, which is defined by González Davies (ibid.) as "based on cooperative learning, there is group work and interaction, but the teacher still has the final answer to the problems set in the activities." In González Davies' view, this approach marks a transition stage between the transmissionist and the transformative position.

Grow (1991: 129ff.) also maintains that learning cannot be governed by only one educational strategy and that learning styles change in time. The stages that a learner can go through are presented below:

as the theory's proponent, however other researchers have also contributed to the definition of educational transformation, including Robert Boyd, Gordon Myers or Edmund O'Sullivan. See e.g. Boyd and Myers (1988), Mezirow (2000) or O'Sullivan, Morrell and O'Connor (2002).

Stage	Student	Teacher
Dependence	Relies on teacher for the choice of content and methods	Chooses content, elicits results, evaluates
Interest	Seeks answers	Motivates, inspires, leads to enthusiastic excitement with learning
Engagement	Learns through own work	Encourages and supports students' work, they both seek knowledge in cooperation
Autonomy	Learns mostly through organizing and realizing objectives that they planned for themselves	Consults, shows direction, gives advice

Table 1. Four stages of learning by Grow (1991)

Although González Davies (2004) presents the three approaches as "teaching styles", and Grow (1991) talks about "learning styles", one could observe obvious parallels between these two perspectives. Firstly, they accept the fact that learning and teaching must adapt to a given stage in the learner's development. Secondly, both authors stress the transition that the learner and the teacher can experience in the classroom (and beyond). It is true that the transactional approach in González Davies (2004) and the interest stage in Grow (1991) do not necessarily match in a one-to-one fashion. At the same time, the assumption that there can be a reasonable degree of overlap between the two is viable. However, the main point that makes González Davies' continuum distinct from Grow's is the stage of autonomy, which is proposed only by the latter author. This difference is obvious in view of the fact that autonomy concerns learning rather than teaching. In fact, autonomy as a learning style is a necessary prerequisite for the engaged or transformative stage in learning or teaching.

However, Grow's proposal may have a more radical reading, under which learning with the help of a teacher is only part of learning understood as a holistic, life-long process. In other words, at some stage learners abandon the formal framework and develop their own self-directed learning skills. In this paper, the author discusses the

concept of *heutagogy*, as proposed and advocated by Hase and Kenyon (2000), since it illustrates well a radical approach to deschooling education.

Heutagogy

The concept of heutagogy is easier to explain when presented in juxtaposition to the notion of andragogy. The latter was proposed by one of the most prominent American researchers in the field of education, Malcolm Knowles. The concept of andragogy, that is "pedagogy of the adult" or adult education, relies on Knowles' claim that adults and young adults require educational strategies that are substantially different from those applicable for children or teenagers.[1] In fact, the transition stages suggested by Grow (1991) and González Davies (2004) – as discussed above – go hand in hand with the idea of change from the pedagogical towards the andragogical approach to learning and teaching.

On the one hand, Hase and Kenyon (2000) accept the fact that human learning changes with age. On the other hand, they seem far more critical of the formal, teacher-dependent educational formats than Knowles, Grow or González Davies are, as evidenced by the following quote (Hase and Kenyon 2000: 2):

While andragogy […] provided many useful approaches for improving educational methodology, and indeed has been accepted almost universally, it still has connotations of a teacher-learner relationship. It may be argued that the rapid rate of change in society, and the so-called information explosion, suggest that we should now be looking at an educational approach where it is the learner himself who determines what and how learning should take place.

The above quote from Hase and Kenyon betrays their distrust of present-day educational practice, and – in the author's opinion – is to be understood as a call for a review of the formal curriculum as such. What Hase and Kenyon propose instead is a radical vision of the learner whose autonomy reaches far beyond organizing their own deliberate practice with the use of material assigned by the tutor. In Hase and Kenyon's conception of heutagogy, the learner becomes self-directed: they

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[1] Although Knowles presented the concept of andragogy already in the 1970s, the author refers the reader to one of the later works by Knowles and his collaborators, that is (Knowles, Holton and Swanson 2005). The notion of andragogy is most extensively discussed in chapter 4 of the book (p.35 ff.)

choose their own learning goals and methods.[1] Thus, in the work of Hase and Kenyon (2000), learners' autonomy reaches its extreme meaning. The authors formulate explicitly the claim that at some stage the learner must transcend the formal curriculum if they intend to successfully meet their individual and social educational needs. Hase and Kenyon's critique is rooted in their recognition of the changing context in which the educational process takes place (Hase and Kenyon 2000: 2):

There is, however, another revolution taking place in educational circles that appears to go one step beyond andragogy, to a new set of principles and practices that may have application across the whole spectrum of the education and learning lifespan. This revolution recognises the changed world in which we live. A world in which: information is readily and easily accessible; where change is so rapid that traditional methods of training and education are totally inadequate; discipline based knowledge is inappropriate to prepare for living in modern communities and workplaces; learning is increasingly aligned with what we do; modern organisational structures require flexible learning practices; and there is a need for immediacy of learning. In response to this environment there have emerged some innovative approaches that address the deficiencies of the pedagogical and andragogical methods.

In other words, if education is to help the learner meet the demands of the contemporary world, it must seek paths towards heutagogy. There is yet another distinction between the andragogical and the heutagogical approach that Hase and Kenyon (2000: 5) reveal:

Knowles' definition [of self-directed learning – KK] provides a linear approach to learning and sounds a little like the chapters of a train the trainer guide. Heutagogy takes account of intuition and concepts such as 'double loop learning' that are not linear and not necessarily planned. It may well be that a person does not identify a learning need at all but identifies the potential to learn from a novel experience as a matter of course and recognises that opportunity to reflect on what has happened and see how it challenges, disconfirms or supports existing values and assumptions.

Hence, learning cannot be limited to the formal educational context, as a lot of

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[1] The concept of self-directed learning is another important notion discussed in the literature of the field. For reasons of clarity, the author abstains from further defining the notion. More details to be found in e.g. Knowles, Holton and Swanson (2005), Hase and Kenyon (2000) or Song and Hill (2007).

learning happens out of that context, even if it is inspired by what goes on in the formal curriculum. In this way, our debate on students' autonomy and ways of understanding it leads us to the distinction between the formal and non-formal education and styles of learning.

Informal and non-formal education

The concepts of formal, informal and non-formal education require some preliminary comments. Coombs, Prosser and Ahmed (1973) defined the three concepts as distinct but related. The relation may be presented graphically in the following way:

FORMAL LEARNING
-institutionalized
-hierarchical
-chronologically ordered

INFORMAL LEARNING
-lifelong process
-individual acquires attitudes, skills and knowledge
-based on daily experience, educative influences and social environment (family, work, media)

NON-FORMAL LEARNING
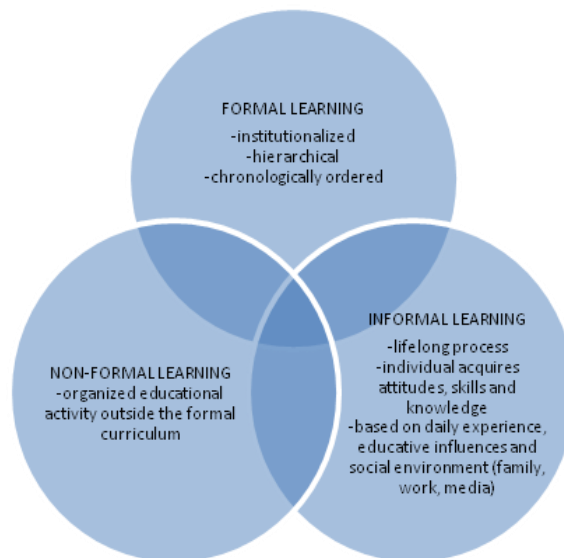-organized educational activity outside the formal curriculum

Figure 1. Formal, informal and non-formal learning

(on the basis of Coombs, Prosser and Ahmed 1973)

As may be inferred from Figure 3, formal and non-formal learning share the characteristics of being organized and planned, although with a different extent of institutionalization. Informal learning, in contrast, is devoid of direct institutional

influences, although they can also be used to facilitate informal learning, listed among a cornucopia of experiences that make people construct knowledge, skills and attitudes. While the adjectives *formal* and *non-formal* are used to name forms of education, informal learning is perhaps best understood as a learning style. This latter concept concentrates on the learning individual, rather than describing the educational process. This is why, for the purposes of this paper, the author reduces the tripartite division presented above to the dichotomy between the formal and the non-formal educational frameworks, assuming that the informal aspect will always be present within the two approaches to education.

An analysis of research in the field[1] made the author adopt the following criteria to distinguish between the formal and non-formal education:

formal education	informal/non-formal education
organized content	incidental learning
planned and evaluated results	open-ended
taught	self-taught

Table 2. Principles of formal and informal/non-formal education

The criteria in the table above represent the extremes on the scale of contrasts between the formal and the non-formal educational frameworks. One of the most prominent researchers to adopt this contrastive view on formal and non-formal learning and education is Eraut (2000). In his opinion, learning takes place almost exclusively in a non-formal context. In this way, Eraut (2000) falls within the group of researchers of education who find non-formal education superior to the formal one, especially as regards adults and their professional development. It stands to reason to claim that his views would also be compatible with the stance of Hase and Kenyon (2000), as discussed above, or with Leadbeater (2000), who claims that "more learning needs to be done at home, in offices and kitchens, in contexts where knowledge is deployed to solve problems and add value to people's lives." (ibid.: 112)

However, the formal v. non-formal dichotomy can be approached in a less radical way. While formal education always relies on organized content, it is also capable of recognizing the importance of those aspects of knowledge that are difficult to

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[1] The author mostly relied on Livingstone (2001), Livingstone *et al.* (2006) and also on Eraut (2000).

include within the curriculum. Internships and student practice are a way of admitting that the formal curriculum needs support from extra-curricular educational initiatives. Alternatively, not all sorts of non-formal education need to depend on unplanned, incidental learning exclusively. Garrison (1997) observes that self-directed learning, which the non-formal framework promotes, depends on conscious effort on the part of the learners in providing themselves with an adequate educational environment. Finally, there comes the problem of results and evaluation. Formal education is close-ended in that it expects measurable effects from the educational process. Non-formal education is said to be open-ended in that it does not rely on planned results. Again, these extreme positions can be seen as an abstraction, while educational practice calls a compromise between the two. The author finds questionable a claim that the formal curriculum can develop tools for precise measuring of all the effects of the educational process. Unlike e.g. Shreve (1995: xiv), who stated that "to build the competence we want in our students we have to design precise pedagogical tools – tools for particular purposes that will yield specific desired effects," is not an advocate of a radically linear, effect-driven, behavioural concept of translator education. Take the above-mentioned idea of transformative learning for example: is it feasible to assume that the effects of such a transformation can be measured? Consequently, the formal curriculum must allow for "unplanned" results.[1] At the same time, the non-formal approach to education is flexible enough to employ planned problem-based learning, tuition or facilitation and project work leading to material results (publication). Also, the non-formal framework can also make a good use of collaborative learning.

The above arguments are meant to demonstrate that, apart from the radical, contrastive stance that sees non-formal education as superior to the formal one, an integrated view is possible under which the formal and the non-formal approaches merge. This view is represented in the literature of the subject e.g. by Billett (2001), who claims that the distinction between formal and non-formal learning is, in fact, false. On the one hand, Billett confirms Eraut's claim that learning takes place predominantly in a non-formal environment. On the other hand, Billet asserts that learning always takes places in some form of formal (social) context: school, work, home or church. Thus, the formal and non-formal coincide and they must be seen as the two faces of one coin.

Concluding this section, the author states that a number of researchers express their

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[1] See the concept of the 'double loop learning', as quoted above from Hase and Kenyon (2000:5).

awareness that the formal curriculum on its own does not do the justice to the educational needs of the present-day adult learner. Some of the researchers argue that the sooner the curriculum becomes less formal, non-formal or self-directed (informal), the better for the learners, educators and the society at large (Eraut 2000; Hase and Kenyon 2000). Others opt for merging the formal and the non-formal aspects of learning and education (Billett 2001). Both these approaches serve as the basis for the proposals made by the author in what follows.

Non-formal elements in support of the formal curriculum

With all the observations made so far in this paper, the author wishes to proceed to his own theoretical and practical proposals concerning the introduction of non-formal elements into the formal framework of translator education. Drawing upon the research reported above, the author proposes that curriculum designers should plan a non-formal 'programme' of initiatives running parallel to the formal academic curriculum. These initiatives are not only to accompany the curriculum, but also to be an element of it. The proposal put here is that they should be integrated with the formal curriculum more closely and more purposefully. They can influence the way the formal curriculum is planned and realized (some formal content may be moved to the non-formal area), or may serve as a 'testing ground' for certain educational solutions that the teachers may need to observe in a non-formal context before implementing them in the classroom.

Table 3 below sums up the major areas in which the formal curriculum can gain support from the non-formal programme.

Formal curriculum	Non-formal programme
1. Limited flexibility of curriculum design	1. Flexibility of choice (topics, methods, etc.)
2. Limited degree of professional simulation	2. Greater degree of professional simulation
3. Limited degree of teamwork and collaboration	3. Increased teamwork and collaboration
4. Limited functionality of the	4. Increased use of evaluation as a source

grade system	of feedback
5. Limited levels of intrinsic motivation/self-determination	5. Increased boost to intrinsic motivation/self-determination
6. Constrained involvement of students and teachers	6. Greater involvement of students and teachers

Table 3. Formal and non-formal translator education in contrast

As with Table 2, contrasts that are shown in Table 3 represent extreme opposites. And also in this case the author reads these contrasts in a less radical way. Hence, the author does not claim that no flexibility in the formal curriculum is possible at all, but that it is reduced in contrast to the non-formal context. One reason for the reduced flexibility of formal education is that it serves the goal of certification: to be able to award certificates of education, universities must rely on a stable and transparent curriculum. Unfortunately, this often leads to the inadequacies remarked above in the quote from Hase and Kenyon (2000: 2). Non-formal initiatives, on the other hand, can cater for redefinitions of the scope of interest in accordance with the needs of the students or the market.

It is also easier to extend the educational arena in the non-formal context by inviting experts or practicing translators. This invitation of real-life players enhances the simulation of the daily translator's routine. And so, it has its projection onto the real engagement of students and teachers in teamwork over a translation project like the one described below.

A case study

As a way of demonstrating how the theses put forward in this paper can be put into practice, the author wants to present a report on a student translation project, in which students of Applied Linguistics at the UMCS (Maria Curie Sklodowska University) translated selected components of the Lublin City Office's website into English. The project was realized in the years 2008-2010, with over a hundred students involved in three yearly cycles. The team members and some team managers were recruited from the second year students of the BA course in translation. There were also teams managed by MA course students. Students volunteered for the 2008 edition, while the 2009 and the 2010 editions were realized

within the framework of regular students' practice. In the 2010 edition, a number of students who were not obliged to participate in the practice joined in by forming two teams of eight members. MA students who were team managers were all volunteers. Each team, consisting of about seven members plus two managers, worked for a week on a commission from the Lublin City Office. There were two 'working weeks' per team each semester (4 texts per academic year). The 'working week' started on Friday, when the team manager contacted the City Office representative and was emailed the commissioned texts. Texts were in translation until late Monday, then they were peer-proofread. On Tuesday, the texts were finally checked through by the managers, whose role was either to send texts to the client, or launch the second cycle in the process in order to improve either the translators' or the proof-readers' work. On Wednesday or Thursday, the texts were sent to the reviewer in the City Office, and on Friday they were submitted to the City Office representative for publication. In most cases the City Office representatives were able to prepare texts in advance, so as to allow a week for the translation process and to avoid delay in the publication of the English language version of the service. When a given week was over, a feedback meeting was held for students, at which the City Office reviewer discussed the project with the students.

The main reason for the author's referring to the project in question is that it was originally devised as a test of how the reduced formality of the context in which a translation project was realized could influence the students' performance. One of the crucial elements that the author wanted to achieve was to redirect students' motivation from focus on grades towards focus on quality. To achieve this goal, the author needed to reframe the formal grading system into the system of feedback information on performance quality. For this purpose, the author decided to employ a double system of assessment.

The first type of assessment was product-oriented: the text was accepted for publication by the City Office, or rejected. The other type of assessment concerned the particular team members and their individual performance. A special evaluation sheet was devised for that purpose, employing a number of criteria, such as original text analysis, language correctness, textual coherence and the communicative effectiveness of the target text. It also included points on terminology management and proof-reading done by the translators themselves. Although this latter assessment system used points, it was mostly employed to monitor progress in performance. So it happened that the same statistic score of e.g. 145 points (max. 200) could mean something different for a translator who showed progress than for

the one whose performance worsened. Students were informed of their points and were given feedback on their progress. They were asked to comment on the data, the potential reasons behind the status quo, and also asked what they planned to do next as regards skill development.

Expanding the curriculum

The conclusion that the author wishes to draw here is that it is perhaps no longer enough to provide students of translation with a considerable amount of student practice as a form of completion of the formal curriculum. The point here is that our conception of the curriculum should evolve towards one in which the two areas are inseparably intertwined: the formal and the non-formal. From this viewpoint, the purpose of the non-formal component is not only to provide students with professional practice, but also to inform the curriculum of the changes it can undergo in order to empower translator education. This supportive function of the non-formal component concerns both content and methodology. One of the main methodological problems it can help to solve is how to adapt academic assessment to the requirements of professional quality management.[1] High quality in a professional's work depends predominantly on their motivation and accountability, which are hard to develop and monitor by means of standard academic grading procedures. The final point to make here brings us back to Donald Kiraly's seminal work. It is the author's strong conviction, based on his educational experience, that the non-formal component of the extended curriculum can help students and teachers develop new ways of defining their in-class interaction as a method in their collaborative search for knowledge and personal development.

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[1] A good example of the debate how extra-curricular content should influence the formal curriculum is that on how to use industry standards such as EN 15038 to shape translator education. See e.g. Biel (2011) or Greere (2012).

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