

TRADUÇÃO E ENSINO DE LÍNGUA ESTRANGEIRA, UM PONTO DE VISTA TEÓRICO E PRÁTICO: O CENÁRIO ITALIANO

TRADUCCIÓN Y ENSEÑANZA DE LENGUA EXTRANJERA, UN PUNTO DE VISTA TEÓRICO Y PRÁCTICO: EL ESCENARIO ITALIANO

TRANSLATION AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING, A THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL POINT OF VIEW: THE ITALIAN SCENARIO¹

Bruna DI SABATO²
Bronwen HUGHES³

RESUMO: Durante o último século, a tradução empregada como uma ferramenta para a aquisição de língua estrangeira passou por diferentes proposições. Depois de ser a abordagem por excelência, habitualmente utilizada nos tempos da metodologia lexicogramática-tradução, ela logo entrou em desuso (e desgraça) com a chegada das teorias educacionais comunicativas progressistas. Embora nunca tenha estado completamente ausente da prática atual em sala de aula e sempre esteja presente no trabalho de alguns pesquisadores de destaque, ela foi recentemente reintegrada à onda dos estudos relacionados ao uso da língua dos aprendizes em sala de aula, considerando o pano de fundo teórico da pesquisa no campo do ensino translíngue, translanguismo e intercompreensão; atividades que reconhecem o papel fundamental do componente interlinguístico e intercultural na aprendizagem de línguas. Este artigo aborda o cenário italiano, traçando o papel que a tradução ocupou e ocupa atualmente nos currículos universitários italianos no ensino de língua estrangeira e esboça as muitas vantagens que podem se originar de seu uso inclusivo como uma técnica de aprendizagem, à luz de metodologias didáticas contemporâneas.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Tradução. Aprendizagem de língua estrangeira. Aprender fazendo. Competência transcultural. Currículos universitários italianos.

RESUMO: *A lo largo del último siglo, la traducción usada como una herramienta para la adquisición de lengua extranjera pasó por diferentes proposiciones. Tras haber sido el abordaje por excelencia, habitualmente usado en los tiempos de la metodología*

¹ Although the two authors have researched and worked on this paper together, Bruna Di Sabato is the author of the introduction and the section denominated ‘Translation and Communicative Language Teaching, friends or foes?’, Bronwen Hughes is the author of ‘The locus of translation in the Italian foreign language university curricula’, ‘Bringing it back: translation as a learning tool in the foreign language classroom’, and the conclusion.

² Università di Napoli, Suor Orsola Benincasa – Naples – Italy. Dottore di ricerca in Lingua inglese per scopi speciali, Università di Napoli, Federico II. E-mail: bdisabato.unisob@gmail.com.

³ Università di Napoli, Suor Orsola Benincasa – Naples – Italy. Dottore di ricerca in Linguistica e Letterature moderne e comparate, Scuola Europea di Studi Avanzati. E-mail: bronwenhughes@yahoo.it.

lexicogramática-traducción, ella luego entró en desuso (y desgracia) con la llegada de las teorías educacionales comunicativas progresistas. Aunque nunca haya estado completamente ausente de la práctica actual en sala de clases y siempre haya estado presente en el trabajo de algunos investigadores de relieve, ella/la traducción está siendo recientemente reitegrada a la ola de estudios relacionados al uso de la lengua de los aprendices en sala de clases, y siendo considerada un telón de fondo teórico de la investigación en el campo de la enseñanza translingue, translinguismo e intercomprensión; actividades que reconocen el papel fundamental del componente interlinguístico e intercultural en el aprendizaje de lenguas. En este artículo se aborda el escenario italiano, delineando el papel que la traducción ocupó y ocupa actualmente en los currículos universitarios italianos en la enseñanza de lengua extranjera y esboza las muchas ventajas que pueden originarse de su uso inclusivo como una técnica de aprendizaje, a la luz de metodologías didácticas contemporáneas.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Traducción. Aprendizaje de lengua extranjera. Aprender haciendo. Competencia transcultural. Currículos universitarios italianos.

ABSTRACT: *In the course of the last century, translation employed as a tool for foreign language acquisition has suffered alternate fates. From being the approach, par excellence, employed in rote learning in the days of lexicogrammatical-translation methodology, it soon slipped into disuse (and disgrace) with the advent of progressive communicative educational theories. Though never wholly absent in actual classroom practice and always present in the work of some bold scholars, it has recently been rehabilitated on the wave of studies regarding the use of the learners' own language within the classroom, against the theoretical backdrop of research in the field of cross-lingual teaching, translanguaging and intercomprehension; all activities which recognize the fundamental role of the interlinguistic and intercultural component in language learning. This paper focuses on the Italian scenario, it traces the role translation has played and currently plays in the Italian foreign language university curricula and outlines the many benefits which can derive from its inclusive use as a learning technique in the light of contemporary didactic methodologies.*

KEYWORDS: Translation. Foreign language learning. Learning by doing. Cross-cultural competence. Italian university curricula.

Introduction

Translation, in the most general use of the term, can perhaps be said to be one of the primary activities at the heart of all human interaction. Indeed, most patterns of human interactive behaviour, be it verbal or non-verbal, are based on a mechanism of recognition/non-recognition, acceptance/rejection. We effectively recognize and accept or refute what comes to us from others only after we have 'translated' it into our sphere of known behavioural or verbal patterns. This recurrent mechanism is present in our

daily interactions and casual conversations, in our relationships, and clearly also in the educational sphere which occupies a considerable part of our life span.

The interconnections between foreign language teaching and translation are lengthy and consolidated, born of the time when the learning of a foreign language was based on the so-called grammar-translation approach, whose application (direct method) consisted in students apprehending the lexical, syntactical and grammatical features of a language through the translation of de-contextualized sentences from their mother tongue (L1) to the required second or foreign language (L2). In the English Language learning context, such sentences could rarely be re-employed in an interactive communicative setting of the kind language learners were likely to encounter in their daily lives.

The aim of this paper is to retrieve translation from the ‘disgrace’ into which it has fallen in the course of the last century and to further rehabilitate this skill in the light of recent developments in the field of theoretical and applied research pertaining to the learning/teaching of foreign languages.

We will concentrate mainly on the Italian academic literature on the subject for the benefit of the reader who will doubtless have been exposed to the many studies which focus on the translation/language learning binomial in Anglophone countries, but may be less aware of the state of the art in Italy. A further point of interest lies in the fact that the Italian context resembles that of several other nations, where the teaching and learning of foreign languages still lags behind more advanced reflection in the field of English as a Foreign Language. Focus will be placed on the use of translation as a language learning tool and a number of practical proposals will be put forward in order to attest to the true benefit that can be drawn from the coupling of translation and communicative language learning in the current (Italian) language teaching scenario.

Translation and Communicative Language Teaching, friends or foes?

Ever since the grammar/translation approach to language learning was banished from the classroom in the early eighties, the two terms have travelled separate roads. Grammar is still regularly investigated even if as part of a more complex scenario where it does not play a central role: in terms of its place in the progressive acquisition of a foreign language; the degree to which it plays a role in communicative language

competence; and the inquiry into new methods and techniques to ensure that a necessary grammatical grounding is effectively transmitted in the language classroom. Translation, conversely, is more often than not seen as a ‘traditional’ methodological practice which teachers tend to shy away from for fear of resorting to the students’ L1 and, in so doing, losing the advantages gained from the full-immersive techniques which were generally associated with what is recognized as communicative language teaching/learning as a consequence of the different approaches developed and experimented throughout the last century.

And yet, anybody with practical teaching experience, especially at secondary school and university level, is well aware that above and beyond mere statements of principle, translation and translatory practices are often firmly rooted within ordinary, everyday classroom activities. Though such practices are frequently employed in a ‘covert’ manner, without clear explicitation, they are indeed present, and their persistence may well be due to the fact that the teachers themselves were trained within the grammar/translation binomial framework or, perhaps more encouragingly, because translation as a language learning/teaching method does in fact occasionally emerge in the framework of more recent educational approaches and methods.

Though infrequent, a number of studies located within the humanistic-affective framework have, around the turn of the century, investigated the use of translatory techniques within foreign language learning paths (see for instance PORCELLI, 2004). Other studies focusing on the binomial translation + language learning, of undisputed scholarly value, hark back to the early and mid-eighties (ARCAINI, 1991; CIGADA, 1984), and are particularly worthy of note, seeing as at the time the progressive trend in education was forcing educational scholars to embrace communicative language teaching methods with translation viewed as somewhat ‘passé’.

And it is wholly evident by now that, from a theoretical point of view, several works published over the last fifteen years or so (COOK, 2010; DELLER; RINVOLUCRI, 2002; LAVIOSA, 2000, 2011, 2014; ROMANELLI; SOARES GUIMARÃES, 2016; WITTE; HARDEN; RAMOS DE OLIVEIRA HARDEN, 2009) testify to the ‘rediscovery’ of translation in the FL class by the English-speaking community of researchers.

On the whole, in recent years Italian scholarly research in the field of foreign language teaching has shown little interest in developing translation as a study tool. Whenever it is mentioned, it is either in the light of diachronic methodological progress – i.e. the ‘old’ versus the ‘new’ with an emphasis on more progressive didactic frameworks – or it is restricted to the field of translation pedagogy (BERNARDINI; ZANETTIN, 2000; OSIMO, 2000; PIERINI, 2001) as opposed to being considered a tool to be exploited in the foreign language classroom.

However, though not focusing specifically on translation as a language learning tool, at the turn of the century two authoritative Italian scholars working in the field of language education, Paolo Balboni (1998) and Giovanni Freddi (1999), offered some interesting perspectives which weave together the two distinct, yet interconnected, ambits of translation and foreign language teaching and help us to trace the presence and status of translation in foreign language teaching in Italy over the last 20 years.

The first significant point which Balboni (1998) focuses upon is that at the initial stages of foreign language learning, translation should not be used as an educational tool for the simple reason that it could lead students to believe that speaking a foreign language is merely a case of transferring *in toto*, by means of a word-for-word mechanism, one’s thoughts and utterances into the foreign language; or, conversely, the words of a foreign language text back into one’s native language. Freddi (1999) too warns of the risk of this misleading mechanistic process, especially when teaching primary school pupils, and yet he underlines the utility of providing young learners with the translation of common L2 words, slogans, expressions, which they regularly encounter in their everyday lives. Indeed, the fact that a young learner’s, or an adult beginner’s curiosity can be aroused by catchy slogans or taglines glimpsed on street hoardings, video games or other familiar *loci*, serves to provide initial motivation which can then be channelled into more specific language-learning activities.

Salmon (2005), though dealing specifically with the didactics of translation, claims that beginners often possess greater translation competence because the fear of making mistakes is set off against the fact that errors are viewed in a positive light. Both Salmon and Freddi, therefore, appear to recognize the usefulness of translation techniques even at the very early stages of language learning.

To support such arguments, one must recall a relatively new trend of studies which acknowledges that keeping L1 and translation as separate issues when dealing with Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) is neither simple nor productive. The movement to rehabilitate students' L1 consequently brings about the use of translation activities, and vice versa (CREESE et al, 2010; RINVOLUCRI, 2001; TURNBULL; ARNETT, 2002; TURNBULL; DAILEY-O'CAIN, 2009; GASS; SELINKER, 2008 for a historical overview). Language co-existence in FL teaching – namely translation – is no longer considered to be a historical phenomenon: we are now in the era of so-called “cross-lingual teaching” (COOK, 2010; see also the issue of translanguaging in bilingual learning contexts: CREESE et al., 2010); and the European Union is observing the studies being carried out in the field of intercomprehension with great interest, though this does not necessarily mean a return to translation. Along with Cook (2010), it may be claimed that if the presence of the L1 does not necessarily imply a translation activity, the latter is of course one of the practical applications of language coexistence. Indeed, for many among those involved in the field of FLT, it is much more acceptable to speak of students' own-language use than to speak of translation (in the foreign language classroom), so as to avoid those “pejorative overtones” (COOK, 2010) frequently associated with translation stemming from the historical reasons delineated in the previous paragraph:

One has the feeling that for many commentators, while some smattering of translation here and there might be accommodated within a bilingual classroom, a substantial translation component would mark a much more significant break with the past, and still attract the old direct-method witch hunts (COOK, 2010, p. 53).

Having acknowledged this covert presence of translation in the English academic literature, let's turn once again to the Italian scenario, where translation would seem to play a significant role in the foreign language syllabus when dealing with more advanced students whose knowledge of the L2 is already consolidated. Aside from the grammar/translation approach, through which students mechanically elaborate a final product to be subsequently evaluated, now considered ‘old hat’ and of little didactic value as previously mentioned, Balboni (2006) appears to promote the use of translation

as a process to foster interlinguistic and intercultural text analysis activities. It is when learners are faced with ‘problematic translations’ in which re-wording and re-modelling of the original L2 text is required that they become aware of the language, culture and value systems which differentiate their language from others. Balboni (2007) also fosters the use of translation in the acquisition of Language for Specific Purposes (DI SABATO 2011a,b).

Whereas both Freddi and Balboni agree that translation activities of the product-based kind do not generate a communicative use of lexemes and syntactical structures and therefore should not be employed as exercises for assessment, Freddi does emphasize the essential nature of translation within a language learning itinerary, going so far as to call it the ‘fifth ability’ which flanks the cornerstone competences of understanding, speaking, reading and writing (FREDDI, 1999). As for Balboni, he also considers translation to be an interlinguistic skill which serves to distinguish the teaching/learning patterns of the students’ L1 from that of the chosen L2. The successful inter-play between the two languages helps to accrue learners’ flexibility, inter-cultural awareness, recognition of the diverse/other and of the lack of facile, overlapping solutions. Hence translation should stand as a language learning competence rather than technique and can only yield benefits if solid language skills have already been attained.

The fact that translation is, in fact, a language competence is also recognized by the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment* (COUNCIL OF EUROPE, 1990), still the major reference document for those operating in the field of foreign language teaching and assessment. Patrizia Mazzotta (2002), when commenting the *Framework*, underlines that translation, together with interpreting, are seen as strategies which foster mediated communication. The activity of translating (or interpreting) can be subdivided into three different interrelated stages: planning, implementing and checking; and each stage develops and consolidates a number of, again, interrelated skills: the selection and organization of available resources encourages discernment and decision-making competences, the subdivision of the text to be translated into logically connected chunks fosters logical and analytical skills, the translation process itself encourages the student to consider aspects such as lexical and meaning flux, untranslatability, the need for

register appropriacy etc., and finally the ‘checking’ stage enables the student to review aspects such as congruency, connectivity and error redress. The need to work progressively through these different stages, leads the language learner to feel in control of his/her actions and consequently to acquire a sense of autonomy.

The locus of translation in the Italian foreign language university curricula

If one were to scroll through the websites of the many language degree courses taught at universities here in Italy, it would soon become evident that most of them bear the label ‘Lingua e Traduzione’, i.e. ‘Language and Translation’. This could, of course, merely be an ‘echo’ of the official ministerial denomination for this disciplinary area, but a closer look reveals that translation is in fact an integral part of the language teaching syllabus and is often assessed as a final exam, albeit at advanced levels. The focus here is on English language degree courses, but research findings can be extended to other languages.

The binomial Language and Translation can be interpreted in two possible manners: on the one hand, translation is taught as a separate competence to be acquired on a par with, yet distinct from, communicative language skills; on the other, translation is seen as an integral part of language learning, as the previously mentioned ‘fifth skill’. In much the same way, as a language course does not distinguish between language and reading or language and listening, no distinction should be made between language and translation. Rather than the static, rote activity of bygone days, from this viewpoint, translation should serve to activate and consolidate all previously acquired language skills.

Inevitably, however, the bringing together of language teaching and translation as a methodological approach, gives rise to a certain degree of ambiguity between learning objectives and didactic techniques. Despite the leap of faith from archaic grammar-translation approaches to new communicative methodologies, the presence of translation in the English language classroom may well bring about a recrudescence of traditional teaching methods which are best left behind. The ambiguity lies in the fact that translation is seen as both a language-learning tool and as a means to gain professional competences. This latter aspect and the discrepancy which underlies the teaching of a foreign language versus the teaching of translation skills would appear to

be something foreign language teachers are aware of hence the fact that modules in which translation is actively employed as a methodological tool are usually located at the end of the course of studies in the last year of the undergraduate degree and throughout the two years of postgraduate studies. And even at this later stage, the teaching of translation competences is often left somewhat to chance, although it figures as a functional component of the teaching syllabus, it is more often than not employed as a learning tool alongside the canonical activities which regularly take place in the language classroom.

This casual matching up of language and translation cannot, however, produce satisfactory results for a number of reasons: the teaching of translation skills requires epistemological knowledge and a specific methodological skill-set, the average language teacher whose competence lies in the linguistic-communicative field does not necessarily possess such abilities. Furthermore, in order to learn how to translate proficiently, students must already possess a high level of competence both in their mother tongue and in the foreign language, together with an awareness of the manifold facets of culture and (inter)culture. Such is not always the case in the Italian university scenario today.

Bringing it back: translation as a learning tool in the foreign language classroom

Having outlined the discrepancies and ambiguities which characterize the relationship between the teaching/learning of English, and other foreign languages, and the teaching/learning of translation skills, we now wish to focus on the benefits which can derive from an inclusive use of translation as a learning technique in the light of contemporary didactic methodologies, new technologies to be used in and out of the classroom, and the content and language integrated approach which has gained popularity in recent years (surveys and critical analyses of teaching a FL through translation can be found in DI MARTINO, 2012a; DI MARTINO; DI SABATO, 2012a,b; DI SABATO, 2007, 2010, 2011a,b).

A useful guide to essential learner prerequisites in order to ensure the success of translation activities in the language classroom has been drawn up by Gnutzmann (2009):

- Their interest in class should go beyond instrumental proficiency in the spoken language;
- They should possess a natural curiosity about languages;
- They should be willing to experiment and search for ‘best solutions’;
- They should be prepared to discuss the quality of their translations and translation-related work with others;
- Consequently, they need to be linguistically aware; conscious language learners and not self-conscious language learners (GNUTZMANN, 2009, p. 73).

It appears evident that the use of translation techniques in the language class will bring the inherent link between the students’ L1 and the L2, object of study, to the fore. Whereas communicative language teaching can situate students in a fully immersive context in which little or no call is made upon their native language, translation acts upon an ‘overlapping’ mechanism and issues such as equivalence, adaptation, modulation etc. must be considered. For this reason, as previously mentioned, it is best employed at advanced levels or, if at lower levels, merely during those brief moments in which students spontaneously and often unknowingly focus upon the interlinguistic relationship between the two languages.

The leading educational trend in the field of contemporary didactics (whether in the language class or elsewhere) focuses on the idea of learning by doing, an inductive approach which allows students to hone their curiosity, research and team-work skills, and autonomous development. The process which enables learners to produce a finished translation product comprises a number of staged activities all of which belong to the learning-by-doing framework and all of which are considered useful in the framework of current methodology. The fact that language learners need to understand and contextualise the L1 text, subdivide it into significant chunks, negotiate the meaning, ensure pragmatic equivalence between the source and target texts and so on, means that they are activating their previously acquired language skills and knowledge. Furthermore, these activities can all be carried out on a team-based, dialogical level as pair or group work, thus enhancing the dynamic aspect of language learning.

The inter- or cross-cultural competence, which stands as one of the linchpins of modern didactics can be reinforced by translation activities providing such activities are not located within the framework of ‘learning to translate’, but rather as a learning

technique enabling students to acquire new and variegated competences. Inter-cultural competence does not stem merely from the translation of the written or spoken word but also from the gradual acquisition of other sign systems. By translating a brief oral interaction from the L2 into their native language, students become aware of the importance and essential nature of other, non-verbal semiotic systems: gestures, proxemics, pauses, silences, turn-taking dynamics etc. The inter-cultural competence is honed by the growing awareness that certain words, expressions, concepts or even gestures differ in the two languages and may require students to activate extra-linguistic techniques such as trans-semiotic re-formulation, hedging, or register switch. Think for example of certain Italian gestures which are considered unacceptable or incomprehensible in an English speaking context and which need to be ‘unpacked’ in order to become intelligible, or of the difference between personal, social and public space which varies from culture to culture. Likewise, requesting that students ‘translate’ a verbal interaction from the L2 into their mother tongue will make them aware of speaker identity and role, communicative context and intentions, etc.

A further activity, this time in the written sphere, consists in presenting learners with an L1 text and its ‘equivalent’ L2 translation, or better still more than one L2 translation. By observing the translation choices which have been implemented, students become aware of the cultural differences which have brought about such choices and, in the case of multiple translations of the same text, of the register switches or diachronic/diastratic/diatopic varieties inherent to a given language.

By carrying out such activities, students move away from the often mechanistic exercise of finding overlapping or quasi-overlapping terms when moving from one language to the other and begin to embrace language and culture as a whole.

In this view of translation the opportunities offered by Tymoczko’s (2007) notion of ‘holistic cultural translation’ in helping young adults to construct and acquire awareness of their identity (see also LAVIOSA, 2011, 2014) are of great interest. Being the most visible manifestation of a culture or sub-culture, cultural practices play a major role in constructing personal and social identities and achieving social cohesion. Since these vary from culture to culture, activities involving the source text are useful in guiding learners towards acquiring awareness of their set of cultural practices. The subsequent reflection on the translated text(s) helps to analyse them on a contrastive

basis thereby recognising the distinguishing traits of another culture (which should not necessarily be perceived as ‘different’). Similarly, learners may benefit from being taught to recognise those aspects of diaphasic and diastratic variation typical of dialectal layers of language, registers, genres, etc., which fall under the concept of ‘overcoding’ drawn upon by Tymoczko (2007): more specifically, overcoding stands for those linguistic patterns that indicate a higher order set of distinctive traits in language practices, such as what is peculiar/distinctive of a particular genre (poem, novel, essay, report, etc), mode of communication (oral or written; printed or digital; synchronous or asynchronous etc.), style and register (determined by communicative purposes - formal, informal, dialectal, academic, professional, etc.).

A further exploitation of translation in the language learning class brings to bear the approach to language segmentation fostered by corpus linguistics. The ability to chunk words together on the basis of their semantic properties rather than on the formal properties of the individual signifier, to recognize lexico-grammatical units or units of translation as “the smallest segment of the utterance whose signs are linked in such a way that they should not be translated individually” (VINAY; DARBELNET, 1958/1995, p. 21), enables learners to move away from mere word for word equivalence (or non equivalence) and to contemplate wider perspectives such as syntactic structures, linking devices, referencing, idiomatic phrases, set formulas etc. The search for appropriate chunks in the target language i.e. units of translation - which, may correspond to a word, a phrase, a sentence, a paragraph, even to the entire text according to Hatim and Munday (2004) - serves as a challenging, motivational activity and again leads to a move away from small analytic units to an appreciation of the language and culture as a whole.

As regards the implementation of new technologies in the language class, basic concordancing activities of the type carried out using any of the most common concordancers such as AntConc or WordSmith Tools, through which students can identify keywords, word frequencies or common collocates, can be used to identify generic features and contents, topic fields, repetitions, synonymy etc., and lay the ground work for the translation activity to be carried out.

Returning briefly to the CEF, as Vedovelli (2006) notes, the three text typologies mentioned therein, i.e. narrative, descriptive and argumentative, belong to a universally

shared patrimony which leads learners, when possible, to ascribe newly encountered L2 texts to one of these three categories. In the case of texts which, for social, cultural or historical reasons fall outside these three canonical genres, the learner must acquire the necessary linguistic and cultural tools to ‘unpack’ the non-canonical text and recognize the constitutive features of text genre. This operation can only be performed by means of comparative text analysis whereby the L2 text structure is compared/assimilated/adapted to a similar text typology in the students’ L1. This is clearly a further occasion to blend translation skills and language learning techniques.

Despite the global nature of the text types generated today by different forms of electronic communication and made possible through the use of computer technology – the so-called New Media texts which include websites, blogs, emails, social media and web advertising – such texts offer interesting opportunities for interlinguistic/intercultural analysis (DI SABATO, 2011a) and, though diverse and varied, present a number of recurrent textual features which learners need to identify in both the L1 and L2 before attempting translation activities. As New Media texts belong to most students’ sphere of interest, motivational levels for this kind of activity are usually high and interesting communicative activities can be developed in order to bring together language learning *per se* and translation activities. The topic area of localization which entails the transposition of media texts from the L1 to a multiplicity of L2s with an eye not only to the lexico-grammatical or syntactic features of a given text but also to the cultural specificities of the country of arrival is particularly stimulating as it opens up the opportunity for numerous oral and written activities which contemplate both intercultural and interlinguistic characteristics. All the data-driven, inductive activities mentioned this far rely on the acquisition of consolidated text analysis skills and enable students to face new forms of textuality with competences that embrace aspects such as pragmatics, locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary force, turn-taking devices, besides the more commonplace lexical, grammatical and syntactical features which characterized the lexicogrammatical-translation approach of yore.

A further educational ambit in which translation can enhance language learning is that in which the study of academic content is combined with the use and learning of a foreign language. The combination and ‘coupling’ of the foreign language teacher and the disciplinary subject teacher in a single curricular setting allows the students to

benefit from the knowledge and knowhow of both educators. The competences acquired, neither wholly linguistic nor wholly cultural, enable learners to go beyond the generic communicative use of a language and to enter specific domains connected to educational or future professional needs. The CLIL (*Content and Language Integrated Learning*) environment enables the language teacher (and disciplinary subject teacher) to exploit the disciplinary competences of the learners by means of texts and study materials that would not normally be employed in the language classroom, it is often by exploiting their previously acquired knowledge of the subject matter that students can come up with interesting translation solutions in the L2 and engage in stimulating language activities.

Conclusion

Returning to the initial point we made in the opening of this paper, it would seem that all human interaction is based on some form of recognition-translation process. Contemporary language teaching methodologies emphasise the fact that for learning to take place, attention must be put on the interrelation and contact between the students' native language and culture and the language and culture of the designated L2. In Italy, literature in the field of foreign language teaching appears never to have abandoned reflection on translation as a language learning tool, and in much the same way teachers seem to have, more or less consciously, never abandoned its practice, though a well-grounded and consistent use of translation in the language classroom is more recent and depends on a, hopefully definitive, conceptual separation of this human form of mediation and communication at large from the grammar-translation approach.

Once reunited, language and translation teaching methods generate a learning path 'paved' with challenging activities aimed at developing awareness and critical thinking while enhancing both interlinguistic and intercultural competence (LAVIOSA, 2011): we have here attempted to combine theoretical outcomes with practical examples of tasks that could be used to this end. Translation is the quintessentially interlinguistic activity to be carried out in the language classroom and concepts such as universal grammar, interlanguage and interculture all bear relevance to the dynamic transitional flow which leads students to embrace alterity while carrying out their language learning activities.

In order to promote a successful integration of translation within the foreign language syllabus, the role and objectives of translation activities must, however, be well defined and, as previously mentioned, students should be introduced to the pragmatic and cultural aspects inherent to the translatory process rather than required to produce *verbum pro verbo* texts to be evaluated as self-contained, water-tight products.

REFERENCES

- ARCAINI, Enrico. **Analisi linguistica e traduzione**. 2° edizione, Bologna: Patron, 1991.
- BALBONI, Paolo E. **Tecniche didattiche per l'educazione linguistica**. Torino: UTET Libreria, 1998.
- BALBONI, Paolo E. **Le sfide di Babele**. Torino: UTET Università, 2006.
- BALBONI, Paolo E. Didattica delle microlingue e uso veicolare della lingua: il ruolo della traduzione. In: MAZZOTTA, Patrizia; SALMON, Laura (eds.). **Tradurre le microlingue scientifico-professionali**. Torino: Utet, 2007, 49-63.
- BERNARDINI, Silvia; ZANETTIN, Federico (a cura di). **I corpora nella didattica della traduzione**. Bologna: CLUEB, 2000.
- CIGADA, Sergio (a cura di). **La traduzione nell'insegnamento delle lingue straniere**. Brescia: La Scuola, 1984.
- COOK, Guy. **Translation in Language Teaching: An Argument for Reassessment**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- COUNCIL OF EUROPE. **A Common European Framework of reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- CREESE, Angela; BLACKLEDGE, Adrian. Translanguaging in the bilingual classroom: A pedagogy for learning and teaching?, **The Modern Language Journal**, 94, 103-115, 2010.
- DELLER, Sheelagh; RINVOLUCRI, Mario. **Using the Moher Tongue: Making the Most of the Learner's Language**. London: Delta Publishing, 2002.
- DI MARTINO, Emilia. La traduzione come strumento per l'apprendimento delle lingue. In: DI SABATO, Bruna; MAZZOTTA, Patrizia; DI MARTINO, Emilia; PERGOLA, Ruggiero. **Apprendere a tradurre. Tradurre per apprendere**. Pensa: Lecce, 2012, 307-339.

DI MARTINO, Emilia; DI SABATO, Bruna. Exploring the Role of Translation in SLA. **Academic Exchange Quarterly**, 16, 167-172, 2012a.

DI MARTINO, Emilia; DI SABATO, Bruna. Il ruolo della traduzione nella didattica dell'inglese (e non solo) nella scuola primaria. In: SANTIPOLO, Matteo (ed.). **Educare i bambini alla lingua inglese. Teoria e pratica dell'insegnamento dell'inglese nella scuola primaria e dell'infanzia**, Lecce: Pensa, 2012b, 319-360.

DI SABATO, Bruna. La traduzione e l'apprendimento/insegnamento delle lingue. **Studi di Glottodidattica**, 1, 2007, 47-57.

DI SABATO, Bruna. La traduzione come strumento di facilitazione dell'apprendimento linguistico. In: CAON, Fabio (ed.). **Facilitare l'apprendimento dell'italiano L2 e delle lingue straniere**. Torino: Utet Università, 2010, 39-46.

DI SABATO, Bruna. Apprendere a mediare. Per un nuovo ruolo della traduzione nella classe di lingue. In: VALLINI, Cristina; DE MEIO, Anna; CARUSO, Valeria (eds). **Traduttori e Traduzioni**, Napoli: Liguori, 2011a, 227-243.

DI SABATO, Bruna. La traduzione in contesti di apprendimento a livello accademico: come costruire una competenza pragmatica sulla consapevolezza delle diversità interlinguistiche e interculturali. In: DESIDERI, Paola; TESSUTO, Jerome (eds). **Il discorso accademico. Lingue e pratiche disciplinari**. Urbino: QuattroVenti, 2011b, 215-248.

FREDDI, Giovanni. **Psicolinguistica, sociolinguistica, glottodidattica**. Torino: UTET, 1999.

GASS, Susan; SELINKER, Larry. **Second Language Acquisition: An Introductory Course**, 3rd edition, New York: Routledge, 2008[2001].

GNUTZMANN, Claus. Translation as Language Awareness: Overburdening or Enriching the Foreign Language Classroom?. In: WITTE, Arnd, HARDEN, Theo and RAMOS DE OLIVEIRA HARDEN, Alessandra (eds), **Translation in Second Language Learning and Teaching**, Peter Lang, Oxford, 2009, 53-78.

HATIM, Basil; MUNDAY Jeremy. **Translation**. An Advanced Resource Book. London and NY: Routledge, 2004.

LAVIOSA, Sara. Translation to Assess Language Competence: Present and Future. In: HÜBNER, Anke; IBARZ, Toni; LAVIOSA, Sara (eds). **Assessment and Accreditation for Languages**. The Emerging Consensus?, London: CILT, 2000, 60-68.

LAVIOSA, Sara. Towards a Transcultural Pedagogy for Language and Translation Education. In: DI MARTINO, Gabriella; LOMBARDO, Linda; NUCCORINI, Stefania (eds). **Papers from the 24th AIA Conference: Challenges for**

the 21st Century: Dilemmas, Ambiguities, Directions. Volume II (Language Studies), Roma: Edizioni Q, 2011, 547-554.

LAVIOSA, Sara. **Translation and Language Education. Pedagogic Approaches Explored.** London and New York: Routledge, 2014.

MAZZOTTA, Patrizia. Le direttive della Comunità Europea per l'insegnamento delle lingue. In: MAZZOTTA, Patrizia (a cura di). **Europa, lingue e istruzione primari.** Torino: UTET, 2002, 3-29.

OSIMO, Bruno. **Corso di traduzione.** vol. 1, Modena: Guaraldi, 2000.

PIERINI, Patrizia (a cura di). **Lo sviluppo della competenza traduttiva. Orientamenti, problemi e proposte,** Roma: Bulzoni, 2001.

PORCELLI, Gianfranco. **Comunicare in lingua straniera.** Il lessico. Torino: UTET, 2004.

RINVOLUCRI, MARIO. Mother tongue in the foreign language classroom. *MET Modern English Teacher*, 10/2, 2001. Retrievable form: <<https://www.modernenglishteacher.com>>. Last access: 4 January 2017.

ROMANELLI, Sergio; SOARES GUIMARÃES, Noemia. (Ri)discutere la pratica dell'insegnamento/apprendimento di LS attraverso l'uso della traduzione. **Rassegna Italiana di Linguistica Applicata.** 2/3, 61-74, 2016.

SALMON, Laura. Osservazioni controintuitive sulla didattica di "lingua e traduzione" nell'università riformata. In: MARRAS, Gianna Carla; MORELLI, Mara (eds.). **Quale mediazione? Lingue, traduzione interpretazione e professione.** Cagliari: CUEC, 2005, 31-44.

TURNBULL, Miles; ARNETT, Katy. Teachers' uses of the target and first languages in second and foreign language classrooms. **Annual Review of Applied Linguistics**, 22, 204-218, 2002.

TURNBULL, Miles; DAILEY-O'CAIN, Jennifer (eds). **First Language Use in Second and Foreign Language Learning,** Bristol, Buffalo, Toronto: Multilingual Matters, 2009.

TYMOCZKO, Maria. **Enlarging Translation, Empowering Translators.** Manchester: St Jerome, 2007.

VEDOVELLI, Massimo. Il testo nel Quadro Comune Europeo per le lingue. In: MEZZADRI, Marco (eds). **Integrazione linguistica in Europa.** Il Quadro comune di riferimento per le lingue. Torino: UTET, 2006, 120-142.

VINAY, Jean-Paul; Darbelnet, Jean. **Comparative Stylistics of French and English: A Methodology for Translation,** Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1995.

Translated and edited by Juan C. Sager and M.J. Hamel. Original edition 1958.

WITTE, Arnd; HARDEN, Theo; RAMOS DE OLIVEIRA HARDEN, Alessandra (eds). *Translation in Second Language Learning and Teaching*. Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009.

How to cite this text

DI SABATO, Bruna.; HUGHES, Bronwen. Translation and foreign language teaching, a theoretical and practical point of view: the italian scenario. **Rev. EntreLínguas**, Araraquara, v. 3, n. 2, p. 300-317, jul./dez. 2017. Disponível em: <<https://doi.org/10.29051/rel.v3.n2.2017.10013>>. E-ISSN: 2447-3529.

Submetido em: 27/06/2017

Aprovado em: 10/11/2017