

**Bangor University**

## **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

### **Translation and L2 Teaching: Tracing an Invisible Relationship in the Monolingual and Post-monolingual Teaching Context**

Bazani, Antigoni

*Award date:*  
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**Translation and L2 Teaching:  
Tracing an Invisible Relationship  
in the Monolingual and Post-monolingual  
Teaching Context**

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Yr wyf drwy hyn yn datgan mai canlyniad fy ymchwil fy hun yw'r thesis hwn, ac eithrio lle nodir yn wahanol. Caiff ffynonellau eraill eu cydnabod gan droednodiadau yn rhoi cyfeiriadau eglur. Nid yw sylwedd y gwaith hwn wedi cael ei dderbyn o'r blaen ar gyfer unrhyw radd, ac nid yw'n cael ei gyflwyno ar yr un pryd mewn ymgeisiaeth am unrhyw radd oni bai ei fod, fel y cytunwyd gan y Brifysgol, am gymwysterau deuol cymeradwy.

I hereby declare that this thesis is the results of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. All other sources are acknowledged by bibliographic references. This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree unless, as agreed by the University, for approved dual awards.

I hereby declare that the candidate is submitting the work with their Supervisor(s) agreement.

## Abstract

The thesis offers a critical exploration of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching. It aims to raise awareness of the fact that throughout the years, translation's "visibility" as an L2 teaching tool has been compromised, in spite of its continuous presence in the L2 teaching field. In discussing this argument, the thesis sets out to explore three questions: how has the relationship between translation and L2 teaching evolved; what have been the major contributing factors to its invisible status, especially in the L2 teaching field; and, finally, has the dispute between translation and L2 teaching been settled?

The thesis sets out to answer these questions by integrating insights from the fields of SLA, Bilingualism, Sociolinguistics and Translation Studies, and bringing them into critical conversation. In so doing, it first questions the fact that the Grammar-Translation Method is traditionally regarded as the beginning of translation and L2 teaching. The thesis calls for a different approach that portrays the relationship between them as a continuum. It considers translation as a diachronic L2 teaching approach which, in spite of being constantly present in the teaching field, has not always been visible. The thesis examines, next, the progress of translation and L2 teaching from a pedagogical and socio-political perspective. To that end, it holds a critical discussion on how monolingualism has been a catalytic force for translation's invisibility in the L2 teaching field, despite efforts by the scholarship to expose this invisible status.

On that ground, the thesis discusses, further, the assumption that recent challenges of the monolingual teaching bias, and the subsequent development of post-monolingual teaching approaches, could effectively resolve the long-standing controversial relationship between translation and L2 teaching. Amid this theoretically positive shift for translation and L2 teaching, the thesis still identifies traces of the relationship's "invisibility". It is ultimately argued that the recent negative criticism towards translation in L2 teaching does not currently represent an issue of redefining pedagogical translation. Instead, it has primarily turned into a matter of defining the concept of translation per se within the field of L2 teaching. Consequently, this calls for the discipline of Translation Studies to contest the current criticism, and to help create a portrait of translation and L2 teaching based on a newly defined basis.

**This thesis is dedicated to my husband Stamatis  
and my children Stelios and Konstantina**

## **Acknowledgements**

I am extremely grateful to my supervisor, Dr Helena Miguelez-Carballeira, for her continuous support, guidance and patience throughout my research and writing of my thesis. She has truly been an inspiration for me and I feel so honoured to have met her and worked with her.

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## Introduction

The thesis looks at the historical relationship between translation and L2 in order to argue that this relationship has been marked by tensions that remain unresolved. As a result, translation either remains explicitly at the periphery of the L2 teaching field or occupies a more central, yet “invisible” place in it, both as a means to an end and as an end in itself. The “invisible” status of translation in the L2 education rests upon the idea that criticism against the use of translation in the teaching context has shifted from questioning its pedagogical value to currently questioning the concept of translation itself. This recent criticism not only sustains translation’s “invisibility” in the L2 teaching field, but may potentially push translation out of it. The thesis will argue that, currently, this notion of invisibility is shaped by the silenced instances of translation practices in the new bilingual teaching approaches (e.g. plurilingualism, translanguaging, translingualism, language mediation). Secondly, it is shaped by the adoption of some specific and restricted views on translation (e.g. translation as a professional activity) and the lack of familiarity or rejection of others, such as the view of translation as a cultural, communicative-mediated activity.

The thesis, therefore, argues that the L2 teaching context of the twenty-first century, which is built upon the premise of L1 use and is realised in a series of “post-monolingual” approaches (Horner and Tetreault 2016), includes the benefits of using translation as an L2 teaching strategy but without necessarily referring to translation as such. More specifically, several L2 teaching strategies and concepts such as “language contrast”, “parallel reading”, “dual writing”, “conceptual transfer”, “metalinguistic awareness”, “language awareness”, “intercultural competence” and “communicative strategies” have long supported both the use of L1 in the L2 teaching, and the use of translation as a bilingual teaching tool. However, recently, in the L2 teaching field, there seems to be a tendency to differentiate between the use of L1 and use of translation in this context. Although the above terms are still utilised to support L1 and several bilingual/plurilingual teaching approaches, the explicit association of these concepts with translation as a bilingual teaching strategy is highlighted less frequently. In practical terms, it appears that the word translation is often absent from a series of L2 teaching tasks which, nevertheless, include the practice of translation to a smaller or a larger degree. These are instead described as bilingual practices, plurilingual, translingual, mediation activities, and/or translanguaging strategies which benefit from the implicit incorporation of

translation in the classroom. As a result, translation's central role in these approaches becomes "invisible".

In addition to the above, the thesis observes a growing interest by the field of L2 education in a number of emerging views influenced by socio-political changes (globalisation, immigration), which have been taking place worldwide, predominately in the last two decades. These include "moving across languages and cultures" (House 2016), "language as negotiation of meaning and differences" (Horner 2017), "use of all languages as a social right" (Coste et al. 2009), "challenging the "ideal" of native speaker" (Coste et al. 2009; Pennycook 2012), "building new experiences via the L1" (Cummins 2007), "mixing of all languages (L1, L2, L3 etc.) into unique linguistic repertoires for each L2 learner" (Kivinen 2011), and "mediation amongst plurilinguals in non-professional scenarios" (CEFR 2001, Companion Volume 2018). The aforementioned views, currently gaining traction in the L2 teaching context, can also be – and have been to an extent – associated with the nature, concept and process of translation. However, discussion on the links between translation and these concepts is often held outside the L2 teaching field, and typically relates to the discipline of Translation Studies. Paradoxically, several attempts (in the form of books, articles, case studies, policy documents) for a stronger connection of translation with L2 teaching via these common paths still raise mixed feelings amongst teachers and experts, and have yet to shift the attitude towards a more clearly unreserved inclusion of translation as a L2 teaching tool.

By exploring the reasons that may sustain the dispute between translation and L2 teaching, the thesis identifies the lack of a common understanding of the concept of translation between the two fields of Translation Studies and L2 teaching as the most significant factor. The idea of defining "translation" in the teaching context has been challenging. Translation has been often understood as a means to an end or an end in itself. In other words, view of translation as a strictly linguistic device employed to enhance L2 acquisition has been opposed to a view of it as a profession and a competence that language learners should develop to a professional level. These two views have led to two different directions: use of translation for L2 learners and the purpose of teaching an L2, and use of translation for translation trainees and the purpose of teaching professional translation. In the latter case, translation has been, therefore, the research object of Translation Studies, and considered as a highly valuable process and product amongst translation students and teachers. In the former case, however, translation has been regarded as a less valuable process and product by language students and teaching practitioners, since the rejection of the Grammar-Translation Method. Despite considerable efforts made towards recognition of translation as a useful L2 teaching tool (Duff

1989, Lavault 1985, Atkinson 1987, House 1997, Konigs 1994, Malmkjaer 1998), this direction has been struggling to remain a focal point within the L2 teaching field. Nevertheless, over the last two decades there are signs of translation re-emerging itself in the L2 teaching, and voices that argue for pushing the boundaries between these distinctions. Guy Cook highlights a view of translation as a means, as an end and as a “measure of success” in his *Translation in Language Teaching* (2010). Carreres (2014) suggests reassessing the divide and argues for both translation as a means and an end, while Pintado-Gutiérrez envisages *Translation in Language Teaching and Learning* (TILT) (2018) as a holistic approach of language pedagogy which includes pedagogical translation.

Their voices are part of a larger attempt to portray translation as a plurilingual, translingual and language mediation activity, rightfully defending its place within the contemporary post-monolingual pedagogy. Interestingly enough, these attempts endorse a more functional and communicative view of translation, visualising it as a real-life activity. Such a visualisation also echoes more recent developments and theories in the discipline of Translation Studies, signalling in theory a re-connection between the two fields. However, surveying the criticism that these attempts have evoked during the last two decades reveals that L2 education is still “lost in translation”. In other words, views of translation as a separate and different skill, constrained by a high degree of linguistic equivalence, stripped of the cultural element, and preferably suitable for professionals and specially trained individuals continue to present challenges for translation in the L2 teaching field.

As previously mentioned, these views are not entirely new but partly echo historically held opinions against the use of translation in L2 teaching, prevailing mostly in the monolingual teaching context of the twentieth century (Malmkjaer 1998). What is new, however, is the different L2 teaching context in which these views are now cultivated. That is, the teaching context is currently defined by the emergence of a series of post-monolingual approaches that embrace the use and mixing of all languages by the plurilingual learners; a view that is justified from both a social and a pedagogical perspective. Defining the concept of post-monolingualism, Yasemin Yildiz refers to it “as our current “post-monolingual condition”” (Horner and Tetreault 2016: 14–15). Yildiz identifies “a loosening of the monolingual paradigm due to the ongoing renegotiation of the status of state”, however, she does not interpret that as the end of monolingualism (ibid). Instead, what she describes as a “post-monolingual condition” is the monolingual principle which remains in force despite the ongoing changes, and “thus creates a range of tensions between multilingual linguistic realities and monolingual ideologies” (ibid). As Piller (2013) concludes, using the post-monolingual

paradigm to view language in society, means to “engage with the significance of multilingualism and monolingualism, and even more crucially, their intersection” (ibid). In line with Yildiz’ post-monolingual condition, Singh (2017) understands post-monolingual education. He describes it as “the ways in which translanguaging educational practices deal with the dominating forces of monolingual literacy theory” (2017: 219). These ways do not refer to the complete erasure of monolingual practices, but to the acknowledgement of “the tensions between monolingual pedagogies and the multilingual shadow work that persists among multilingual[s]” (2017: 219). Taking these tensions into account, post-monolingual education “extends the authorised intellectual spaces for translanguaging practices in co-existence with monolingual structures” (2017: 219).

In light of this context, the thesis examines the implications of such a shift for the relationship between L2 teaching and translation. It upholds that, in the L2 teaching settings, the growing need for interlingual and intercultural communication amongst plurilinguals is now being acknowledged and successfully covered by the practice of contemporary approaches, e.g. translanguaging, plurilingualism, translingualism, mediation, but not necessarily or explicitly translation. Henceforth, the focus of the L2 education has now shifted onto how best to further develop and implement these plurilingual pedagogies, whilst the concept of translation, has been understood as something different, and quite recently (2018) as a small part of it.

It is this differentiation that leaves translation in a uniquely difficult position, although advocates of translation have been continuously defending its relevance for the contemporary L2 teaching (Colina 2002; Cook 2010; Gonzalez-Davies 2014; Carreres and Noriega-Sánchez 2011; Colina and Lafford 2017). Being that this is simply a matter of unconscious “invisibility”, due to what Anthony Pym (2014) describes as a lack of familiarity with the evolvement of translation within the discipline of Translation Studies, it could easily be rectified, by rebuilding the bridges between the two fields, and by defining, or redefining, translation in the L2 teaching, based on an interdisciplinary approach. However, if this is a case of deliberate “invisibility”, it could bear different consequences for the future relationship between translation and L2 teaching. In other words, if, despite knowledge of scientific research and empirical evidence in support of translation, its role in the plurilingual teaching remains undermined or overshadowed, then the dispute between translation and L2 teaching could be far from over.

## 1.1 Research context

The interdisciplinary and historical nature of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching means that the thesis draws mainly on two vast fields of scholarship: Applied Linguistics and Translation Studies. More specifically, it draws critical insights from L2 acquisition, bilingualism, L2 education, sociolinguistics and cultural studies since research on these fields has contributed significantly, both positively and negatively, to the progress of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching.

The level of critical interest that this relationship has attracted from scholars over the centuries varies considerably. Although the connection between the two elements has been constantly present for thousands of years, the idea of establishing the relationship between them has been generating strong reactions (Stern 1969). These can be described as a vicious circle of arguments which have either condemned translation's use in the field of L2 teaching, or attempted to defend it. Nevertheless, despite the heavy opposition or passionate advocacy of translation as a teaching tool, some researchers (Guy Cook 2007; Pym et al. 2013) feel that critical discussion on this topic as a whole has not been particularly sufficient in the literature. Indeed, G. Cook (2007) claims that "the topic either does not appear at all in standard introductions [...] or is dealt with as a historical curiosity [...] (2007: 2). He goes on to point out that, even when this topic is examined, this is "often only to be rejected out of hand as self-evidently retrograde and useless" (2007: 2) and claims that translation "has long been glibly dismissed in the inner-circle academic literature" (2007: 2). In the introduction of his book *Translation in Language Teaching* (2010), he further states that translation has been treated as "a pariah in almost all the fashionable high-profile language teaching theories of the 20th century" (2010: xv), and that by the end of that century, "other than at university level, it was no longer discussed in the academic literature as a serious candidate for aiding the learning of a new language" (2010: xv). His view has been also taken upon by Pym et al. (2013) took the same view in a recent case study regarding the role of translation in the Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) in ten different countries. One of the included statistics considers the "historical distribution of eighty-nine articles, books and theses" dealing directly with the role of translation in L2 teaching since the sixties (2013: 14). The findings indicate that it is only in the 1980s that a significant number of publications on the specific topic appear, compared to only a minor number of earlier published articles. During the 1990s the number of published books falls to a half, but a small number of theses also appear that research this topic. A more positive shift is observed in the first decade of the twenty-first century when the publication of articles, books and theses increases significantly. As Pym et al. comment, this growth is an



indication of “the development of a general concern that was mostly absent in previous decades” (2013: 14), highlighting the levels of translation’s “invisibility” in the L2 teaching thus far.

Indeed, one of the implications of the above statement is that, exploring the very early phase of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching, one would probably have to rely on a number of relatively dated resources, such as the early studies of Titone (1968), Kelly (1969) Mackey (1965), and later, Stern (1983). Although their valuable contributions shed light on the relationship between translation and L2 teaching at that initial chronological stage – before the Grammar-Translation era – it should also be noted that none of these works was dedicated to the investigation of this particular topic. On the contrary, as G. Cook (2007) has previously commented, most information on the role of translation as an L2 teaching tool is extracted from looking at the language teaching histories during and after this period.

Notwithstanding this earlier lack of interest in the academic literature, and looking for a more explicit and direct approach of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching, it appears that the role of translation in the L2 teaching has been progressively analysed from various perspectives. Researchers have attempted to make this topic more visible, either as a whole, or focusing on a series of specific aspects of it. From a theoretical point of view, confronting the arguments against use of translation in order to explain and support its role in the L2 teaching has, for years, been an underlying concern for a number of academics and researchers (Widdowson 1978, Titford 1985, Duff 1989, Malmkjaer 1998, Carreres 2006, Witte et al. 2009, G. Cook 2010, Leonardi 2010, and Laviosa 2014, etc.). At the same time, empirical research on translation and L2 teaching has shown a great interest in matters of L1 use, and its possible relation to the L2, both in the learner’s mind (“mental translation”, “lateralisation” in bilingual’s brain), as well as practically in the L2 classroom (extent, reasons, effects of L1 use) (V. Cook 2001, Butzkamm and Caldwell 2009 and Kerr 2014, etc.). Since L1 use in the classroom and its relation to the L2 are main research foci of the fields of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and Bilingualism, it becomes apparent why researchers have been attempting to (implicitly and explicitly) support translation in the L2 teaching via relevant findings coming from these two research areas.

On the other hand, G. Cook (2007), who also acknowledges the connection between translation and several concepts developed in SLA, criticises the fact that “almost all SLA research is on monolingual teaching situations in which English (and occasionally another language) is both the medium and the object of instruction” (2007: 3). His comments highlight monolingualism as a politically motivated approach rather than as a pedagogical one, and call

for a different route to understanding and supporting translation in the L2 teaching, that is, as a “post-monolingual” approach with socio-political dimensions within the globalised education context of the twenty-first century. At the same time, Laviosa (2014) throws caution at a series of “unexplored areas” in the research of translation and L2 teaching that could offer valuable insight and further exemplify the relationship between them. These include the history of translation in foreign language pedagogy, the revival of translation with regards to language policy and planning, the relationship between creativity and translation in language education, use of translation as a motivational factor, and translation as a fifth skill (2014: 144).

Within this research context, the thesis does not directly contribute new theories, evidence and data on the discussion of this topic. Its contribution is instead based on a different, and more cautious, interpretation of the ones that already exist. In other words, it wishes, first, to highlight the fact that there have already been several significant attempts that support the relationship between translation and L2 teaching, to various degrees and from different perspectives; and secondly, to ponder why after thousands of years since the appearance of this relationship, this is still an unresolved and controversial issue. Alongside a more general enthusiasm that this controversy is now a thing of the past, the thesis points out different meanings and understandings that the concept of “translation in the L2 teaching” evokes. Notwithstanding the different directions, limitations and restrictions that affect its application in a L2 classroom (diversity, multicultural backgrounds, levels of bilingual competence, place(s) of L2 acquisition, age, levels of education, different institutional policies, aims and motivational factors, etc.), the thesis wonders if there is a common understanding of translation that underlines all these different but interconnected areas. In other words, it wishes to explore what (and how many) views have fuelled the attempts to either criticise or defend the place of translation in the L2 teaching over the years, assuming and suggesting that, perhaps, at the core of this controversial relationship lies, first and foremost, a problem of definition of translation.

To that end, the thesis seeks to explore a number of questions. The first one examines whether and how the beginning of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching, and the sequence of attempts to condemn it and support it, have influenced the “invisibility” of this relationship from a historical point of view. The second question seeks to gain a deeper understanding of how this relationship was shaped in the monolingual teaching context of the twentieth century. More precisely, the thesis explores to what degree the arguments that developed in that monolingual context with regards to the pedagogical use of translation have reinforced its “invisible” status in the L2 classroom. The next question to be set is whether the recent shift from the monolingual teaching mentality towards the concept of a new bilingual

education has started to create new opportunities for translation to acquire a central and more visible place in the L2 teaching context. Therefore, in the course of the twenty-first century, the thesis aims to carefully examine the socio-political circumstances, as well as the theoretical and pedagogical framework that could potentially endorse translation in the post-monolingual teaching context. The thesis finally questions, whether this recent positive shift has effectively removed the “invisible” status of translation as a contemporary L2 teaching approach.

## **1.2 Methodology**

The thesis discusses the aforementioned research questions via two main approaches: a historical approach and a critical approach. A historical perspective means that the overall progression of the work follows a chronological order. Examining the relationship between translation and L2 teaching progressively is thought to better correspond to the individual research questions of this work, as well as its general scope, which is to uncover translation’s current “invisibility” in the L2 teaching. On the more analytical plane, situating the relationship in a consecutive time line allows for a coherent overview of its development, from the first recorded times of its appearance up to the recent present. Examining the sequence of the responses towards translation as a L2 teaching tool, as well as its contextualisation against the backdrop of different historical circumstances, the thesis aims to demonstrate why the meaningful continuity of this relationship has not always been apparent. It also aims to investigate the very early period of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching – prior to the Grammar-Translation Method – and shed light on the fact that this was initially off to a positive, rather than a negative start. One of the thesis’ central critical arguments is, therefore, that this less recorded but quite significant fact could – by attracting the proper amount of focus and research – become a turning point in the way this whole relationship is perceived and evaluated.

Furthermore, the historical approach serves as a backdrop for what the thesis regards as the “past” and the “present” of this relationship. In other words, comparing the earlier criticism of translation in the L2 teaching with the more recent one, and following how earlier and recent attempts to defend it have been unfolding, the thesis aims to provide a coherent overview of all the shifts that have been taking place on this matter since the rejection of the Grammar-Translation Method and the sporadic attempts to defend it afterwards. More importantly, this overview aims to explore the originality of current criticism against translation, or whether it is stepping into previous patterns, perpetuating, thus, a vicious circle of accusations and defence, and further maintaining translation’s “invisibility” in the L2 teaching.

This reveals, at the same time, the thesis' cautious tone towards the current status of this relationship. In order for this cautious stand to be further explained, the thesis endorses a critical approach to this topic. To that end, it engages with critical scholarship from the two core fields of Translation Studies and L2 teaching. With a view to understanding the debates on this topic, it focuses, first, on language theories and approaches that had a noticeable negative impact on the relationship between translation and L2 teaching, and secondly on the ones that theoretically and practically support this relationship. Based on their analysis, the thesis critically engages with the voices that both directly and indirectly condemn or advocate the role of translation as a L2 teaching tool.

The thesis also looks at how scholarship from fellow disciplines and fields (bilingualism, SLA, L2 education, sociolinguistics) may have contributed to the discussion of this topic. Although initially, the connections between these fields and the discussed relationship may not always be explicit, the thesis argues that relevant research and findings in these fields can relate to different aspects of this relationship, potentially influencing the course of it. On that account, the thesis considers concepts such as “bilingual competence”, “super-diversity”, “plurilingual learner”, and “bilingual educational policies” to be amongst those that can defend, widen and exemplify the role of translation in the L2 teaching. It, therefore, analyses the most relevant contributions from these fields, regarding them as implicit attempts on translation' support as a L2 teaching tool.

Moreover, approaching this topic from a critical perspective involves not only a critical review of the theoretical background that supports or condemns it, but also a careful examination of its implementation. To this end, the thesis reads through some official documents (e.g. *Common European Framework for Languages* 2001; *Developing Illustrative Descriptors of Aspects of Mediation for the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)* 2016; *CEFR Companion Volume With New Descriptors* 2018), as well as case studies, policies, national curricula and recommendations with the scope to contemplate recent educational practices on the use of translation. Specifically, the critical approach aims to extract and interpret recent attitudes towards translation as an L2 teaching tool, and towards translation's practical implementation in the L2 teaching field (e.g. as an example of language mediation). Engaging critically with the commentary these recommendations have received, the thesis reveals a predominately negative attitude towards the links between translation to contemporary L2 teaching concepts in the context of L2 education, especially in the level of school education. A slightly more positive attitude can be detected at the higher level of education, within some academic language, writing, translation etc. departments, where efforts

are made towards a reconceptualisation of translation in the L2 teaching according to current developments in the discipline of TS. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the distinctive differences between the levels of education (primary, secondary, higher), the thesis does not examine translation from any specific one. Rather than focusing on how translation is or could be applied in each level, this thesis is primarily interested in the processes that take place before the application. In other words, the thesis aims at understanding and analysing the mentality that shapes and dictates the design of tasks for each level. The underlying idea is that this mentality affects the visibility of translation in this context, either pushing it forwards, minimising it, removing or replacing it. Therefore, if translation is not in a “grey area” but occupies instead a clear and positive place in the thinking process, this can inevitably lead to the design of explicit translation tasks, to be applied according to all ages and levels. Turning, next, to the perspective of TS, the thesis engages critically with the most relevant translation theories and approaches that can influence the process of considering and trusting translation, for the designing of translation tasks in the L2 teaching. Returning, then, to its main argument, the thesis, finally, questions why the existence of these translation theories does not yet seem to have provided sufficient answers to resolve the problem. It echoes Pym’s indication on the disconnection between the two disciplines (TS and FLT), and finally, reflects on a different approach to the issue, which prioritises both translation and the discipline of TS.

### **1.3 Structure**

The thesis consists of four chapters. The first chapter, which focusses on the first research question, offers a historical overview of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching. It specifically focuses on the chronological order of its evolution since the first recorded times that translation appeared in the L2 teaching. The chapter argues that the sequence of translation’s appearance in the different language teaching settings over the centuries is a matter that has attracted limited attention in the discipline of Applied Linguistics. The chapter, however, regards this lack of interest as a major factor influencing the “invisibility” of this relationship up until now, and claims for a different mindset on the history of translation in the L2 teaching. More precisely, it argues that the consideration of the negatively reviewed Grammar-Translation Method as the typical example of translation’s introduction in the L2 teaching has created an unnecessarily negative association between translation and L2 teaching for the years to follow. Alternatively, Chapter 1 regards the relationship between translation and L2 teaching as a “continuum”, and consequently, the Grammar-Translation Method (seventeenth-eighteenth century) as only a part of it, occupying a specific period of time within

this relationship; therefore, the chapter deems it necessary to locate the origins of the relationship. Relying on existing histories of second/foreign language teaching, it aims to gather information and rebuild a picture of the earlier stage of this relationship, which from a historical point of view, had a rather positive start. More specifically, Chapter 1 seeks to understand when translation was originally introduced in the L2 teaching, how it was initially practiced and viewed, which circumstances led to the development of the Grammar-Translation Method and what the aftermath of its rejection meant for the place of translation in the consecutive L2 teaching methodologies of the twentieth century.

Having considered the historical context of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching until the end of the twentieth century, Chapter 2 focuses on the second research question; the pedagogical context that shaped the development of the relationship up to that period. Wishing to understand the pedagogical motivation that prodded the renouncement of the translation practice in the L2 classroom, as well as the limited level of support for its use as a teaching tool, the chapter focuses on three influential language theories that developed in the twentieth century and influenced the predominately monolingual teaching mentality of the time. These are the Contrastive Analysis, the Error Analysis and Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis. Each has significantly contributed to the prevalence of a monolingual teaching approach and therefore, the rejection, or severe restriction of the L1 use in the L2 classroom during the twentieth century. They have also provided the theoretical framework for the development of a series of arguments that condemned the use of translation as an L2 teaching tool, sustaining, therefore, the invisible status of this relationship. Despite the initial interpretation of these hypotheses as supporters of monolingualism, the thesis examines how a few advocates of translation attempted to turn things around. Based on different interpretations of the same theories, and by conducting several case studies on the practical benefits of translation use, they tried to overturn the "official" negative attitude towards translation and prove its benefits; they even threw caution at its "invisibility" in the L2 classroom, based on the argument that translation is a natural process occurring in the learner's mind, even if it is "officially" rejected. The chapter argues that these attempts to embrace translation, although they are pedagogically justified, remained isolated practices in the L2 teaching settings. It took the emergence of some non-pedagogical phenomena (globalisation, immigration, diversity) at the end of that century and the beginning of the twenty-first for these attempts to gain a louder voice and obtain a different status.

The next two chapters (3 and 4) deal with the last two research questions. Chapter 3 examines the progress of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching in the course of

the twenty-first century, when attempts to defend translation have evolved and expanded, including currently theoretical and practical support from other fields alongside L2 teaching, such as sociolinguistics, bilingual studies and SLA. The chapter, first, argues that the pedagogical arguments that rejected translation in the L2 teaching were embedded in a wider monolingual approach which was sustained by socio-political reasons favouring a view of language as a vehicle of national identity, security and expansion. Nevertheless, amid recent circumstances caused by wide-spread phenomena such as globalisation and immigration, the view of language as a “stable notion” is being seriously challenged. Further, the chapter examines current views of language communication embracing the notion of language fluidity and flexibility, and urged by the immigrants’ communicative practices in the emerged multilingual and diverse societies. The acknowledgment of these practises by the field of L2 education translates into a shift away from monolingual approaches and the accompanying concepts of a “standard language” and an “ideal native speaker”. L2 pedagogy has turned into the development of post-monolingual teaching approaches, which embrace the L1 use and the mixing of different linguistic repertoires, resulting in the creation of unique ones for each plurilingual learner. Since advocates of translation consider this new bilingual teaching context to offer the “perfect” and rightful opportunity for a reconceptualisation of translation as a teaching tool, Chapter 3 looks at those areas where attempts to achieve that aim have been mostly taking place (Bilingualism, SLA, L2 education). It, therefore, examines how theories, concepts and research findings from these fields can be utilised in order to support – implicitly or explicitly – use of translation in the contemporary bilingual education, such as: “bilingual competences”, “bilinguals as translators”, “interdependence hypothesis”, “heritage learners”, “plurilingual learners”, amongst others. Chapter 3, then, focuses on three prominent contemporary languaging practises (plurilingualism, translanguaging, translingualism) and examines their different attitudes towards translation. These vary from positive attempts to reconceptualise translation as a bilingual/plurilingual approach to a lurking criticism against it. The latter is based, either on the explicit differentiation of the concept of translation from the other plurilingual techniques, or in the “silencing” of the translation practice in several bilingual activities. As a result, the chapter remarks that, although translation as a bilingual activity could unreservedly occupy a central role in the current L2 teaching, it continues to be practically “invisible” in this context, further fuelling the dispute between the two elements.

Chapter 4 also focuses on the relationship between translation and L2 teaching in the first two decades of the twenty-first century, and more specifically, on a further attempt to reconcile translation with the L2 teaching: its explicit connection with the concept of language

mediation, first introduced in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) (2001), and recently in the expanded *CEFR Companion Volume With New Descriptors* (CV) (2018). Looking at the impact of what can be regarded as a positive development for translation, the chapter argues that, once again, this has been less straightforward than one would anticipate. The slightly cautious attitude expounded in this chapter does not relate to the suggestion of linking translation to mediation, but to the way this suggestion has been received and interpreted in the field of L2 education. To this end, the chapter examines, first, the ambiguous relation between the concepts of mediation and translation in a wider context, before it turns into the L2 teaching education and looks at how this relation has been advancing in the teaching context. With this scope, it first analyses the relation from the perspective of the CEFR and then, from the perspective of the CV, identifying some main differences with regards to mediation and translation. Next to the addition of descriptor scales for the skill of mediation, the new CV reaffirms the value of the concept for the L2 education, by providing a wider scope for mediation and clarifying that this involves both intralingual and interlingual mediation. Admittedly, translation is granted a more dynamic and flexible character compared to the one in the CEFR (in 2001), but it is still included as an optional, cross-lingual mediating activity, amongst others. At a more practical level, the chapter examines whether the more official, yet only descriptive suggestions have any practical implementations in the L2 education, by briefly examining three L2 national curricula (Germany, UK and Greece) with quite different approaches to the matter.

Bearing in mind that the aim of the thesis is to explore older and contemporary instances of “invisibility” regarding the relationship between translation and the L2 teaching, Chapter 4 remains focused on the concepts of language mediation and translation. It provides a critical analysis of how their relationship has been interpreted in the last two decades, and how the concepts are individually portrayed in the L2 teaching field. This is considered to demonstrate the complexity of the relationship in this context. This complexity, according to the thesis, has a more negative impact on translation’s visibility in the L2 teaching rather than a positive one. In support of the latter, the chapter turns, next, to the discipline of Translation Studies (TS). It illustrates the discrepancies between specific restrictive views of translation in the L2 teaching and relevant translation theories, approaches and further academic scholarship on the topics.

The chapter, which may indicate a slightly negative tone, pays admittedly more attention to the gaps the documents have created rather than to the merits of mediation in the L2 teaching, or to an analysis of existing models and tasks to implement it. Notwithstanding the valuable contribution of academics and researchers on this matter, the thesis feels that a more detailed



study of their proposals, at this point, would go beyond the scope of this chapter. It does not wish, however, to question their existence. On the contrary, Chapter 4, as the whole thesis does, accepts and underlines that in every historical period of this relationship there have been positive voices advocating translation and L2 teaching, both theoretically as well as practically. The thesis does not adhere to the current criticism regarding translation. The reason why it chooses to thoroughly analyse it, is because it believes that every single criticism considering a contemporary and comprehensible conceptualisation of translation in the L2 teaching, no matter to what extent it exists, should be not taken lightly. It should not be regarded as insignificant to undermine translation's invisibility, since, as the history has shown, translation has long been fighting to prove its relationship to the L2 teaching, even when this could be considered as "self-evident". To that end, Chapter 4 concludes with a different conceptualisation of translation and mediation in the L2 teaching, in the hope that that could reverse, or reduce, translation's "invisibility" in the current L2 classrooms.

## Chapter 1

### Translation and L2 Teaching: A Historical Overview

#### Introduction

The present chapter provides a historical overview of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching in the European context. More specifically, it attempts to trace what places translation acquired in the language-teaching contexts throughout the centuries, its various forms and how frequently it appeared in the L2 teaching scene, as well as the historical and social circumstances that supported its inclusion and/or exclusion from it. The time span to be covered begins in the third century, when indications of translation use as an L2 teaching aid seem to be recorded for the first time. The chapter extends up to the end of the twentieth century and the dawn of the twenty-first, when the relationship between translation and L2 teaching enters its contemporary phase.

Since the present historical overview of translation draws upon ones on foreign language teaching, it should be kept in mind, that “from an historical point of view, there are different strands of development according to countries, languages, and institutions. Nevertheless, there are common features [...]” amongst them (Stern 1983: 97). Therefore, the chapter looks at academic scholars, language teachers and their work, as well as various schools of thought and teaching methods that have developed for the purpose of teaching a foreign language, even at the earlier chronological stages, such as the antiquity and the Middle Ages. It is argued that each of these has contributed to the establishment of the contemporary field of language teaching. That being said, acknowledging each contribution facilitates a better understanding not only of the history of language teaching but also of the evolution of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching.

#### 1.1 Origins of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching

A quick foray through the main scholarship on the role of translation in the FLT often reveals a shorter time span on this matter than the one discussed in this chapter. It appears that the end of the eighteenth century, with the implementation of the Grammar-Translation Method, is typically the cutting-edge point in the history of translation with the L2 teaching. Remarks on the role of translation in the L2 teaching prior to that time are either rare, referring briefly to the teaching of the ancient classical languages (Greek-Latin) (Kerr 2014: 8–9), or are

completely absent from the bibliography (Kerr 2015: 1). Referring to a general lack of interest in the role of translation in Applied Linguistics and English language teaching theory, Guy Cook mentions that “the topic either does not appear at all in standard introductions (Ellis 1994, 1997; Lightbown and Spada 2006; Mitchell and Myles 2004) or is dealt with historical curiosity (Johnson 2001: 163–70, Richards and Rodgers 2001: 4–10)” (G. Cook 2007: 2). Kerr comments specifically on the lack of interest in translation in the training of language teachers. He observes the absence of the topic in the “early editions of the most widely used teacher training manuals (e.g. Harmer, 1983; Scrivener, 1994)”, in the “syllabus of pre-service training courses such as CELTA (the Cambridge Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)”, and in “ELT conference presentations” (Kerr 2015: 1). Discussing translation specifically in the Spanish teaching context, Colina and Lafford comment that the “Antón’s (2011) state-of-art article on applied linguistics and language teaching (with specific reference to L2 Spanish) includes no reference to “translation” per se” (2017: 112). Echoing these concerns, Laviosa also regards the history of translation in the L2 teaching as a “largely unexplored [area]” (2014: 144) that needs further investigation. However, in order to invest in researching this area and establishing it as a subject worth of teaching to prospect L2 teachers, one needs to first comprehend the implications of its absence.

To start with, confirming a lack of interest in the history of translation in the L2 teaching field, indicates the different understandings that the concept of translation has acquired and its consequences. It, thus, appears that considering translation exclusively from a language teaching perspective and, focusing on its pedagogical role as an L2 teaching tool, has been an isolated field, with a limited historical background and not particularly favourable, neither in TS nor in Applied Linguistics. Moreover, attention should be drawn to the fact that, even in the “fairly well rehearsed” history of language-teaching methods in the literature, what has been mostly recorded is the movement from the Grammar-Translation Method to other prominent L2 teaching methods of the twentieth century (Pym and Ayzvazyan 2016: 1). Pym and Ayzvazyan (2016) note that the implications of this movement for translation activities can “best be approached from a few representative coursebooks, whose introductions and exercises tell a rather more varied story” (ibid). Effectively, that reveals a lost connection between the two disciplines of TS and Applied Linguistics. In other words, it underlines the missed opportunities to see translation as “a whole”, and understand it as an old and contemporary human act that has been taking place inside and outside educational settings for thousands of years. Therefore, in order to re-approach long-established and restrictive beliefs on that matter, the thesis aims to clarify whether and for how long translation and L2 teaching have been in a

separate and isolated relationship, starting, thus, with stretching the historical boundaries far beyond the Grammar-Translation method.

Indeed, despite what Cook has described as “little attention [...] to the role of translation as either a means or an end of learning [a L2]” (Cook 2007: 2), translation has proved to be one of the oldest contestants for teaching a foreign language, at least as old as foreign language teaching itself. Bell (1981) reports traces of a relationship between these two elements back to Hellenistic times, “when, in order to help L2 learners, accents were added to Greek words for the first time” (Bell 1981: 79). In his historiography of language teaching, Titone (1968) cites even earlier cases of L2 teaching and use of translation in this context. He refers to the last quarter of the third millennium B.C. when “the Sumerian teachers had to teach their own language to their new lords [the Akkadian Semites], and they compiled the oldest known ‘dictionaries’, [...], in which Sumerian words and expressions would appear in Akkadian translation” (1968: 5). These dictionaries were facilitated by the Akkadians as a learning tool of Sumerian. Brunner (1958, cited in Titone 1968) also makes a reference to the Egyptians, who “at least during the empire of the 18th-20th Dynasties” (1968: 6) were familiar with the concept of foreign language teaching and the use of “multilingual tablets” (1968: 6). However, according to Brunner, it is not yet clear how these languages were taught and hence, the precise role of translation in it (1968: 6). Louis G. Kelly (1969) seems to pick it up from that point, and agrees that:

[t]ranslation did not originate as a school exercise, but as an administrative necessity in the multilingual empires of 3,000 years ago. As a scholarly exercise, it was developed during the third and second centuries B.C. by the first Roman poets, Livius Andronicus, Naevius, and Ennius, who adapted the Greek conventions. (1969: 171–72)

The Greek students’ need to learn Latin in order to participate in the life of the Roman community, alongside the fact that the Greeks were mature students and literate enough in their L1, meant that the delicate exercise of “manipulating the two languages together” (ibid) was appropriate for the aim of communication, and as a result translation entered the elementary class in the Greek communities of the Roman Empire in the third century. In Kelly’s book *Twenty-five Centuries of Language Teaching* (1969), use of translation can be first traced in “the schools of Bordeaux and Alexandria” (1969: 217–18), in the form of Greek-Latin glossaries (ibid, 24) as well as in a grammar drill exercise called cycle, which was used as part of a vocabulary in order to teach Latin to Greek boys (ibid, 115). Titone also cites a series of

bilingual manuals (Latin-Greek) which included, apart from vocabularies, “an elementary handbook of mythology [...], a summary history of the War of Troy and, more interestingly, a manual of daily conversation, [...], consisting of easy dialogues of a pleasant nature” (1968: 6–7). What is perhaps striking at this point, is that these manuals were used by Greek and Latin teachers to teach the young Romans both languages at the same time, which could imply that translation had a clear role in the official bilingual education of the time, an idea which was gradually rejected in the later centuries.

Moving from antiquity to the Middle Ages, Kelly argues that it is “the only period from which it [translation] is largely absent” (1969: 171). According to William Rutherford (1988), the Middle Ages was a period which endorsed the academic branches of law, theology, philosophy and medicine, with blurry boundaries amongst them. In terms of language teaching and learning, Latin was still used for social interaction, whereas the purpose of language teaching was the development of rhetorical skill. That involved a close relationship to grammar study, which was also applied to all the other medieval disciplines. Study of contemporary languages was still considered for literary purposes only (1988: 16).

However, at the time, “Alfred the Great’s efforts to make Anglo-Saxon a literary language” (Kelly 1969: 171) involved use of translation as a learning tool. More precisely, Aelfric’s Grammar, written in the eleventh century, is claimed to be “a grammar of Latin that equips its English readers with a full set of Latin-based grammatical terminology which they can use to study their own language, the first step toward a self-conscious and independent grammar of English” (Hall 2009: 202). The Grammar was accompanied by Aelfric’s Glossary, described by Thompson (1981: 155–57) as “the first attempt at a bilingual dictionary of English”. The Glossary contained bilingual word-lists (Latin – Old English), organised not alphabetically, but according to topics, and can be partly traced to the *Hermeneumata Pseudo-Dositheana*, a bilingual (Latin – Greek) lexicon from the third century. In fact, Hüllen (2006) praises Aelfric’s efforts to combine a grammar with a universal word-list, arguing that “word-lists and grammars were the means of using the foreign language productively”, whereas “translation combined both ways of teaching and learning in order to ensure correct semanticization” (2006: 66). However, Kelly (1969) appears to be more dubious regarding the exact role of translation at the time, arguing that “the first clear indication that translation was used as a teaching method comes from fourteenth-century England” (1969: 137), when English and other vernaculars around Europe started to gain more value both in public life, as well as inside the classroom.

Since the fourteenth century and during the Renaissance period there was a noticeable change with regards to language teaching. The antiquity and the Middle Ages were times when

Latin (and Greek) were the international languages of the Western world, the languages of all academic learning, as well as the sole purpose of language teaching. The following centuries were associated with the introduction of modern languages in the curriculum, alongside the classical ones (Mackey 1965: 141). Even though the list was quite restricted, including only French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, German and English (Kelly 1969: 382), Rutherford highlights the “increased interest in the European vernaculars as cultural vehicles and as languages worth studying in their own right” (1988: 16). Both Titone and Bell, when referring to the aim of language teaching at the time, make use of the same adverb to describe it: practical. The shift of interest to the real, ordinary circumstances of daily life, and to face-to-face interaction with the native speakers of the languages, meant that language teaching should focus on functionality and oral communication instead of literature study and formalities. Bell argues that “in the Renaissance even Latin and Greek were taught to be spoken and only secondarily written” (1981: 80) whereas Titone describes the logic behind it and the methodology to implement it. Foreign languages at the time were regarded as living languages, and “were to be absorbed in a living way, through direct contact with foreign people” (1968: 9). That had a number of implications for teaching, all revolving around the key phrase “direct”. In other words, language teachers would have to be native speakers, explanations were to be provided in the foreign language (or by using mimic) and students were primarily concerned with oral production, whereas in cases of shyness, memorising particular texts regarding daily situations would have helped them to tackle it (ibid). Another element in accordance with that method was the avoidance of the student’s mother tongue, both from textbooks and classrooms, which further highlights the striking resemblance between the language methodology of that time and the more recent Direct Approach of the twentieth century.

Despite the aforementioned similarities, during the Renaissance period, and up until the end of the eighteenth century, translation was not simply rejected as it has been in the modern direct methodology.<sup>1</sup> The direct contact and the approach of avoiding the student’s L1 seemed to apply only to the teaching of the foreign languages, where the aim was primarily to acquire the skills for oral communication. At the same time, the teaching of the classical languages, which remained part of the official curriculum, involved a great deal of translation, whereas “ML [modern languages] enter[ed] translation teaching for literary purposes” (Stern 1983: 82). Stern cites the grammar works of two French tutors from that period, Duwes (1534) and

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<sup>1</sup> I am referring here to the Direct Method, which developed as a response to Grammar-Translation Method and rejected use of learners’ L1 and translation as a teaching tool. (see 1.3)

Palsgrave (1530), who were both occupied with teaching the French language as a second language in England, albeit advocating different approaches. Whereas Duwes emphasised the importance of practising transformations and reducing the rules to be learnt with the use of substitution tables and interlinear translation (situated between the lines) into French, Palsgrave embraced the power of analytical learning, through grammar rules, vocabulary, and use of interlinear translations. Referring to the diversity of the texts used for that purpose, Lambley says that translations could be found:

in the form of ‘letters missive in prose and in rime, also diverse communications by way of dialogue, to receive a messenger from the emperor, the French King or any other prince, also other communications of the propriety of meat, of love, of peace, of wars, of the exposition of the mass, and what man’s soul is, with the division of time and other conceits. (Lambley 1920: 90, cited in Stern 1983)

Hoadly (1683), on the other hand, in his Latin grammar *The Natural Method of Teaching*, abandoned substitution tables for pattern drills, an exercise where the pupil was presented with simple phrases in Latin in the left column to translate them in English in the right side. His choices regarding the name of his grammar, and the fact that he avoided using the term “translation”, replacing it with the term “imitation”, despite the fact that it was clearly a translation exercise of grammar, could be perhaps interpreted as early signs of later developments in language teaching featuring in the twentieth century (Kelly 1969: 105).

Nevertheless, despite the popularity of the direct approaches, the model upon which the introduction of the foreign languages was based, originated from the way Latin was taught in the best schools of that period. Inevitably, that involved the task of translation. Kelly refers to the “vulgar”, as the form in which translation appeared in England during the Renaissance (1969: 173). He describes it as “a group of sentences describing the daily life of that period. The English is natural, but obviously with an eye to translation” (ibid). The student was expected to construe the English sentence into grammatically faultless Latin and then learn and recite their own Latin in class (ibid). Translation for teaching purposes was incorporated in the works of several writers during the Renaissance and the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Roger Ascham (1515–68), for instance, in his method for teaching Latin, favoured both translation from Latin into the foreign language, as well as back translation, or double translation (Titone 1968: 10). According to Kelly, double translation was typical of the Renaissance period. It was first suggested by Dubois in 1306, albeit with no evidence of use,

but it was commonly used later, in the late fifteenth (in the school of Guarino) and sixteenth centuries (Kelly 1969: 177–78).

However, it is Ascham's name that is typically associated with this type of exercise. This would require from a child, first, to construe the Latin text (a letter of Cicero) into English carefully, up until they were certain of the result. Then, they would have to translate their former Latin lesson into English, and at the end, their own English into Latin again, which the teacher would compare with "Tully's Latin", and judge it as sufficient enough to praise the child (Ascham 1570, cited in Kelly *ibid*). In 1612, Brinsley altered the back translation, by adding "3 columns; in the first to write the English, in the Second the Latin verbatim, in the third to write in composition, to try who can come nearest to the author" (Brinsley 1612, cited in Kelly 179), whereas Cleland suggested the introduction of other languages into the cycle, as well, especially French (*ibid*). Ratke (1571–1635) and Locke (1632–1704) were both influenced by Ascham's use of double translation – the aim of which was the approximation to the original style rather than structure – however, Locke replaced the lateral arrangement by interlinear arrangement in his method. As Kelly points out, the interlinear or parallel translation were the traditional types of reading support, especially during the Renaissance, with the interlinear translation being first specified by Bacon (1272):

On the first line the teacher writes the Latin, below it the Greek in Latin characters, and on the third, the Greek in Greek letters. Then, by looking at the Latin, one will be able to read the Greek in its turn. This was easy to do without mistakes by the help of the Greek transcribed in the Latin alphabet. (cited in Kelly 1969: 142)

It appears that interlinear translation was been common since the medieval period, when, in Spain, for instance, service and other spiritual texts would include this type of translation in Spanish, and even Basque, and were probably used for classroom purposes as well (*ibid*, 143). Into the Renaissance period, interlinear translation was used by Holt (1500) and Duwes (1534) to illustrate grammar, whereas Dumarsais (1722) used a combination of interlinear and double translation. During the same period, Weitenauer in Germany used it alongside a comparative approach in his *Hexaglotton* (1762), a book that extended to twelve other languages beyond Latin, and was intended for students who wanted to learn a foreign language in a short period of time. Lysarde de Radonvilliers (1768) in France at that time, also using interlinear translation, shared Weitenauer's interest in other languages, such as Greek, German, English, Spanish and Italian, and moved from the word-for-word comparison and translation to the



contextualised meaning. Following Radonvilliers' ideas and the trends of his time, Luneau de Boisgermain also maintained the learning of a language through less emphasis on grammar and teacher's support in his textbooks (1783, 1798, 1784–87), but giving priority to the direct practice (ibid, 16-21). According to Titone, Boisgermain was “the first to define so concretely the idea of the ‘natural method’” (1968: 21). However, it should be pointed out that, early understandings of the “natural method” such as Boisgermain's did not necessarily reject the use of translation for teaching purposes.

This latter combination of a “natural method” with use of translation became even more distinctive in ‘Hamilton's method’, and his book *Essay on the Usual Mode of Teaching Language* (1816). James Hamilton, who allegedly learned German from a French immigrant who would translate German texts word-for-word, without any support of grammar, adopted this idea of ‘practical’ and ‘direct’ language teaching via interlinear translation for his pupils. Based on his method and ideas it could be argued that Hamilton treated translation as “an inductive method of sorts, as the pupil was expected to make the connection himself between the translation and the original” (Kelly 1969: 147). Ironically, although the inductive teaching method was highly praised by the Communicative Approach of the twentieth century, it was not associated with the use of translation at that time.

Following his precedents, Jacotot (1823), seemed to embrace all the modern trends of his time in his “analytic-synthetic method of concentration” (Geerts and Missinne 1964, cited in Titone, 23). Although his method was supposed to be applicable to the teaching of any subject, it is particularly interesting from the perspective of foreign language teaching and use of translation. The learning process would commence with the pupil memorising a long passage of a literally translated text and repeating it until the meaning of the text became clear to them. Apart from the grasp of vocabulary, literal translation would help them deduce implicit grammar rules, whereas, at the same time, pupils were expected to find similarities and differences between the old and new, and build new knowledge based upon the existing one (Titone 1968: 21–23). Jacotot's principal theory, that “nothing is entirely new; everything pre-exists in certain basic nuclei of knowledge that need only be made explicit through induction and deduction” (Titone 1968: 23), seems to be reflected on Cummins' theories of “transfer of knowledge and language skills amongst languages” (2007), developed and affecting foreign language teaching almost two centuries later. Ironically enough, though, translation was evidently and widely used to achieve that goal in the past, before it was later rejected and tries now to fight its way back in.

With regard to interlinear translation specifically, it should be mentioned that during the Renaissance, and until the end of the eighteenth century, not all teachers favoured its use. The teaching of the vernaculars, with the use of modern-language dialogues, designed as conversation manuals, especially, was thought to be best served by parallel translation. It appears that interlinear translation was particularly hateful amongst teachers, with Lemare denouncing it as “contrary to nature”, “harmful to any teaching aim” and “typographically grotesque” (Kelly 1969: 145), and Brinsley (1627) arguing that:

[w]hen both are joynd together, as in the interlinear translation, the eie is as soone upon the one as the other: [...]. So that the booke, instead of being a master to helpe onely where it should, where the mind cannot study it, it becometh a continuall prompter, & maketh the mind a truant, that it will not take pains which it should. (cited in Kelly 1969: 144)

Thus, it would appear that parallel translation was perceived as a significantly more practical and favourable arrangement, especially in teaching, since it was at the reader’s disposal to make use of it, but only when they wished to. By the end of the seventeenth century, use of parallel versions of texts became common fashion for both classical languages and in modern language textbooks, mainly with the aim of assisting formal composition. At the same time, interlinear props (translation of new words between the lines) continued to appear in some textbooks to enrich the vocabulary, exemplify the differences between structures and vocabulary, and generally enhance learning (Kelly 1969: 146).

Summarising the years of Renaissance, and up until the end of the eighteenth century, in terms of language teaching and learning, as well as use of translation, Bell (1981) is astonished by how contemporary the teaching mentality of that time appears to be, especially with regards to the teaching of modern languages. Elements such as emphasis on speaking skills, natural contact with the language, reduction of grammar, and students deducing L2 rules by the texts rather than explicitly being taught, resemble in a great degree recent language teaching methodology (1981: 80). Rutherford (1988) focuses on the induction aspect, and elaborates on how the introduction of the vernaculars became associated with “the growing belief that the study of another language was best accomplished via knowledge of one’s own” (1988: 16–17), which gradually led to “the recognition of Latin grammar as the model for studying the grammar of any language” (ibid). He makes a reference to Port-Royal, a grammar school in the seventeenth century, showing more interest to the vernaculars rather than Latin and Greek,

and developing an early concept of “Universal Grammar” – a belief that all languages share similarities and common characteristics – which meant that classical languages could be used as a basis for teaching one’s own language. Translation, in particular, appeared to be an unavoidable part of the teaching of the classical languages, either partly (for vocabulary, reading or writing), or of the teaching of the whole language via it, but it was not a standard feature in the teaching of the modern languages (Kelly 1969: 138).

Considering the early stages of the relationship between translation and language teaching, one could infer that translation had a clear, unambiguous and continuous presence in what could be described as primarily bilingual teaching techniques. Surprisingly enough, it appears that, since the first L2 teaching attempts and until the end of the eighteenth century, all three dimensions – use of the L1, use of translation, and focus on the L2 use – gradually entered the process of L2 teaching and learning and coexisted harmonically. However, the adoption of the Grammar-Translation Method from that time onwards reshuffled that balance, by forming a very strong and peculiar bond between translation and grammar, in particular. This shift, which dominated the relationship between foreign language teaching and translation in the following decades, will be examined in the next section.

## **1.2 Grammar-Translation Method: A misleading start**

At the dawn of the nineteenth century, the use and teaching of classical languages in Europe had lost their significance as a means of communication, and were gradually replaced by the use of vernaculars. Nevertheless, they did not disappear from the language teaching scene altogether; on the contrary, they were still considered highly valuable, and so “the study of the ancient languages [was] preserved” (Hegel 1809). The reason was quite simple. The study of Latin and Greek had retained its status as an intellectual discipline (Hegel 1809), an exercise for the mind and for the better understanding of life. The determination that the ancient languages should continue to be part of the current educational content, alongside the modern ones, is obvious in a speech delivered by Hegel (1809) as rector of the Gymnasium at Nüremberg, at the end of the school year:

To complain about the trouble we have to undergo in learning [Greek and Latin], and to regret or to fear that we have thus to neglect the learning of other things and the training of other abilities means to find fault with fate because it has not given us this collection of classical works in our own language. Only if we possessed them in our

own tongue would we possess a substitute for antiquity and be spared the laborious journey thither. ([www.marxists.org](http://www.marxists.org))

Nevertheless, it was not the parallel study of the ancient and the modern languages that prompted the Grammar-Translation Method. This was due to the belief that since the classical languages “succeeded triumphantly for the times in their objective” (Titone 1968: 26), as soon as teaching of modern languages entered the curriculum, it would be “natural, right and proper that it should be taught along these patterned lines that had proven their worth” (Mallinson 1957, cited *ibid*). For William Francis Mackey (1965) that explanation was not enough. In his *Language Teaching Analysis*, he goes deeper into his search for the path that led to the development of the Grammar-Translation Method. He starts by shedding a light onto how the classical languages ended up being considered “dead” languages, besides the profound introduction of the vernaculars. He believed that the source of the problem dates back to the time of the invention of printing, (around 1440), since that was the time when classical works in Greek and Latin were reproduced, distributed and taught around the world. However – as he maintains – Latin had evolved by that time, so the spoken language in academic Europe around the Renaissance period did not correspond to the “ancient” Latin the classics were written in, centuries ago. Nevertheless, it was this “ancient” form of language that was regarded as the correct and original Latin, a model to follow, to teach and to base everything onto. As a consequence, the new “Latin grammars based on the classics gradually became longer and more complicated, until the study of them, instead of being a preparation for the reading of the classics, became an end in itself” (1965: 141).

There were, apparently, a few attempts during the Renaissance and until the eighteenth century to teach Latin while keeping grammar to a minimum. Mackey (1965) cites the opposition of figures such as Luther, Melanchthon, Montaigne and Ratichius to the excessive teaching of grammar rules, as well as the use of the brief grammar (67 pages) by Di Marinis (1532), who wished to “make Latinists and not grammarians out of the students” (cited *ibid*). Comenius (1631), Locke (1693) and Basedow (1763) were equally against grammar formalities and endless rules, and fond of the induction principle and a more natural approach to language learning. However, these efforts were not strong enough at the time to shift the current trends, so

by the end of the [eighteenth] century, the teaching of Latin grammar had become an end in itself. Latin had ceased to become the medium of instruction and the teaching

and application of its rules had become formalized into a sort of intellectual exercise. It was not surprising that the few modern languages which had been introduced into some of the schools of the time were taught with the same methods as Latin and justified by the same arguments of mental discipline. (Mackey 1965: 143)

Examining the argument of “mental discipline”, Titone argues that “Latin has no unique value for mental discipline” (1968: 26–7), and regards the “traditional belief about the formative value of Latin as such and of the grammatical method as a means of mental training” as a “double fallacy” (1968: 26). Titone’s criticism should not be perceived as an attack against grammar teaching in general, but only against the language teachers’ poor mental judgment at the time, who had an uncritical obsession with the meticulous teaching of Latin grammar. Indeed, although Hegel (1809), when he referred in his speech to the study of grammar terminology as a “preliminary instruction in philosophy”, included both the study of the Latin and the German grammar, it is the “grammatical learning of an ancient language” that he mostly distinguished. Not only was the studying of the Latin grammar still considered as a necessity, but also as “something very easy for youth to grasp; in fact, nothing in the world of mind can be grasped more easily” (Hegel 1809). Apart from the degree of difficulty, Titone (1968) offers another explanation for the teachers’ obsession with the Latin grammar teaching. This – according to his opinion – laid in the grammar books the teachers had to rely on, and the fact that these were,

mainly determined to codify the foreign language into frozen rules of morphology and syntax to be explained and eventually memorized. Oral work was reduced to an absolute minimum, while a handful of written exercises, constructed at random, came as a sort of appendix to the rules. (1968: 27)

A very similar approach to language learning is referred to by Mackey (1965) as the “Grammar Method”, where teaching of grammar was accompanied by teaching of words, mainly to assist with the application of the grammar rules. Thus, “knowledge of the rule, [...], [was] more important than its applications” (1965: 153). He describes it as a very easy method to apply and to test, even by non-fluent teachers. A similarly easy method, according to Mackey, was the “Translation Method”, where the main exercise was the translation of texts from one language into another with different degrees of difficulty. In fact, Mackey has recognised the interlinear type of translation, which was very popular during the Renaissance years and up

until the seventeenth century, as a variant of this method. The “Interlinear Translation Method” consisted of both an interlinear word-for-word translation and an idiomatic one of a story, divided into sections, and accompanied by questions and two-way translation exercises (ibid).

Mackey’s distinction between the Grammar Method and the Translation Method was in accordance with the attitudes of the time towards the two main activities in language teaching. As previously mentioned (see 2.1), a majority of writers during the Renaissance and until the end of the eighteenth century used the Translation Method in their works for the teaching of vocabulary, and the skills of reading and writing, or as Kelly puts it, “reading came to be identified with translation into the first language and composition with translation in the opposite direction” (1969: 218). Nevertheless, despite the (almost) constant presence of translation as a tool in language teaching for centuries, “there was little use of translation in grammar learning until the [...] end of the eighteenth century” (1969: 51–52), when the study of grammar became an end in itself. Kelly admits that there were some examples of translation use that were preparing “the climate for translation methods in grammar learning by postulating that there was one basic system for all” (ibid). Amongst them he lists first, the “vulgar” as an aid to grammar learning, secondly, the idea of one general grammar and grammatical transfer between languages, portrayed by the Port-Royal, and thirdly, Meidinger’s *Praktische französische Grammatik* (1783), which favoured translation into the second language by applying grammar rules. However, as Stern points out that “no full and carefully documented history of grammar-translation exists”, and that, despite the evidence that both grammar and translation formed part of the language teaching and learning for centuries, “the regular combination of grammar rules with translation into the target language as the principal practice technique became popular only in the late eighteenth century” (1983: 453).

By that time, and until the beginning of the nineteenth century, Grammar-Translation appears to dominate the language teaching scene in Europe. The basic theoretical assumption underlining this method was the view of language learning as an intellectual activity, “an educationally valid mental discipline in its own right” (1969: 454). Observation and memorisation of a whole system of grammar rules, as well as relation of the first language to the second one through the medium of translation were the absolute priorities of this method, with the objective of enabling students to study literary works and translate texts on their own. The medium of instruction was the student’s native language, which was used to explain new items and to enable comparisons to be made between the foreign language and the student’s native language. The development of oral skills in the language was not seen as a priority and oral practice was limited to students reading aloud the sentences they had translated. These

sentences were constructed to illustrate the grammatical system of the language and consequently bore no relation to the language of real communication (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 1-3). Grammar was, thus, taught deductively – as opposed to Renaissance – that is, by presentation and study of the rules, which were then practised through translation exercises. Great emphasis was also placed on accuracy. Students were expected to attain high standards in translation, because of “the high priority attached to meticulous standards of accuracy, which [...] was a prerequisite for passing the increasing number of formal written examinations that grew up during the century” (Howatt 1984: 132).

All these principles and characteristics that became typical of the Grammar-Translation Method, have been best illustrated in some of the most influential textbooks of that period. These grammars not only provide us with a clear idea of the current mind-set, but, as Titone maintained earlier, they were also responsible for the perpetuating of the grammar obsession in the following years. The first work, hence, to be mentioned by Titone is the *Elementarbuch zur Erlernung der französischen Sprache* (1811) by Johann Heinrich Seidenstücker. The author’s intention to supply only the simple material to his students was satisfied through disconnected sentences to illustrate specific rules. The arrangement of his book was typical of the time: one part of the text would provide the rules and the paradigms, and the other part sentences for translation (both French to German and vice versa) in order to apply the given rules (1968: 27).

Moving on further, during the mid-nineteenth century, a practice developed in the Prussian school system which seems to have also contributed to the development of the Grammar-Translation Method, to the degree of being called the “Prussian Method”. In fact, the Grammar-Translation Method was first known in the United States as the Prussian Method, due to an American classics teacher, B. Sears (Richards and Rodgers 2014: 6). In 1845, Sears published a method based on the Prussian system, which involved learning of rules and practising them by translating parts of Cicero. “Composition and reading were excluded, as those did not encourage a word-for-word knowledge of the rules” (Kelly 1969: 53). Around the same time, in Europe, Ollendorf published his first grammar editions (in the 1840s), named by Kelly as the “best known Grammar-Translation texts” (1969: 52). His order of lessons began with the statement of the rule, followed by a list of vocabulary and translation exercises, whereas every course would end with the attempt to translate some connected prose passages. Kelly asserts that, although the “content of the course was not unreasonable” for the time, it was the extensive focus on the exceptions of the rules that classified Ollendorf’s grammar amongst the most typical of this period (1969: 52–53). Stern, on the other hand, argues that the

fault with Ollendorf's work lay with the deliberate construction of sentences for the illustration of grammar rules, such as:

The cat of my aunt is more treacherous than the dog of your uncle.

We speak about your cousin, and your cousin Amelia is loved by her uncle and her aunt. My sons have bought the mirrors of the duke.

Horses are taller than tigers. (Stern 1983: 28)

Stern also cites Sweet, who criticises the loss of naturally producing idiomatic expressions, and calls such examples "insipid, colourless combinations, which do not stamp themselves on the memory, [and] many of which, indeed, could hardly occur in real life" (1983: 28). Last but not least, Plötz' name also became inextricably connected to the Grammar-Translation Method during the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1881, Plötz, who "dominated the schools of Germany even after his death" (Byram and Hu 2004: 302), adapted, apparently, Seidenstücker's French textbook, by keeping the same lesson structure and using mechanical translation as his sole form of instruction. Bahlsen (1905), a student of Plötz, reportedly attacked his method as "a barren of insipid sentence translation" (cited in Titone 1968: 28), offering nothing more than endless memorising, drilling and repeating, and no chance for any comprehension or real conversation, while Kelly (1969) commenting on Plötz' method, argues that "[l]anguage skill was equated with ability to conjugate and decline" (1969: 53). Nevertheless, Plötz' French textbook was used in German schools, hence, establishing Grammar-Translation as the principal method of teaching languages in schools at that time.

Moving further into the mid-nineteenth century, amid endless grammar learning, translation of incomprehensible sentences and a limited focus on the oral aspect in the foreign language teaching, criticism started pouring against the Grammar-Translation Method. Rouse (1925) called the method "the offspring of the German scholarship, which seeks to know everything about something rather than the thing itself" (cited in Kelly 1969: 53), Rambeau (1893) doubted that even examiners would be skilful enough "to comply with such a requirement in a satisfactory manner" (ibid, 54), whereas Jespersen distinguished between the ability to "feel at home in a language and skill in translation" (ibid, 53). In the aftermath of the Grammar-Translation Method, the so-called direct-methodists could no longer identify the comparison between the L1 and the L2 as beneficial for the learning of a foreign language, hence, gradually diminishing the value of translation as a teaching tool, up to its total ban from the classroom. Later, during the twentieth century, the importance of some Gr.-Tr. arguments,



such as contrasting/comparing the languages, reference on the student's L1, significance of grammar knowledge and awareness, and use of translation as a cross-linguistic practice between languages (Stern 1983: 456) has been either restored, or at least brought back to attention within the field of language teaching. Nevertheless, at that moment of speaking, the excessiveness of the traditional method had caused irreversible damage to both its pillars, grammar and translation, manipulating future thinking and affecting, amongst other factors, the development of new language teaching methodologies.

Indeed, a series of language teaching methods developing from the mid nineteenth century till the end of the twentieth portrayed this generally negative shift towards use of translation in the L2 teaching. At the same time, some positive exceptions during the second half of the twentieth century did not prove efficient enough to revoke what the Grammar-Translation Method had – unwittingly – established for the years to follow: a rather questionable model for the relationship between translation and L2 teaching, typically considered as the de facto beginning of this relationship, and negatively influencing its future course.

### **1.3 Reform Movement/Direct Method: Initial response to the rejection of the Grammar-Translation Method**

The years that followed the peak of the Grammar-Translation Method were years of reform. Academic scholars and language teachers in the Western world voiced their criticism on the existing beliefs of language teaching methods and practices, and shared their pathos for change and reform that evolved around not only the teaching of languages but the establishment of the modern languages as a school subject in the curriculum per se. However, despite the explicit consensus for change, not everybody shared the same degree of pathos or the exact same views on what this 'reform' should entail (Stern 1983: 98). This had an ambiguous effect, and resulted in a series of 'similar' methods, with different combinations of skills and practices, also affecting the use of translation and native language, or in Kelly's words:

The only period in which the priorities of the various skills were clear-cut was the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, where written skills, in the form of translation, dominated the classroom. In every other period teachers have adopted contradictory approaches, each group finding valid arguments to defend its position. (1969: 218)

More precisely, the first major attempt to react against the Grammar-Translation Method came in the second half of the nineteenth century when individual voices finally developed into a movement. The main principle of this Reform Movement was a more natural approach to language teaching. Titone asserts that this was not only a revival of the natural approaches advocated during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries but also “the emergence of new ideas within the ranks of such newly born sciences as linguistics and psychology” (1968: 31). Henceforth, a group of practically minded linguists with a keen interest in language teaching formed a society with the express aim of reforming FL teaching practice. The society was called “Quousque Tandem”, a Latin phrase meaning literally “how long is all this going to go on for?” (Johnson 2001: 166). Critics of the Grammar-Translation Method and reformers in the late nineteenth century shared their beliefs about the principles on which new approaches to teaching foreign languages should be based; one of them was the importance of connected text in teaching and learning (Howatt 1984: 171–2), as opposed to the Grammar-Translation Method.

The principle was influenced by the emerging science of psychology and its interest in association (Malmkjaer 1998: 3-4). It was considered, that unless learners were presented with whole texts in which the linguistic elements were correctly assembled, they would be unable to form appropriate associations in the new language. The use of isolated sentences for any purposes was therefore discouraged, and their use in translation exercises especially so, since translation was taught to lead to “cross associations” between the two languages. The idea which was thought to actively hinder the development of the foreign language at that time (Malmkjaer 1998: 3–4), consequently led to the avoidance or rejection of translation as a language learning tool, in the following decades.

Marcel (1867), Sauveur (1874), and Heness (1866) were amongst the pioneers of the Reform Movement, or “Natural Method” as it is also known, all advocating similar ideas about the significance of context, the priority of the receptive skills (listening and speaking) and the following of the productive ones (speaking and writing). The role of grammar training was degraded and use of translation was either avoided by Marcel, or according to Sauveur, should only be used “when the learners were able to understand the language” (Mackey 1965: 143). A complete rejection of any use of translation or the mother tongue came from another advocate of the Natural Method, the German Maximilian Berlitz, who in 1878 opened his first school in the USA. His influential method, also known as the “Berlitz Method”, was to be applied only by native speakers of the language, and aspired to oral drills, visual demonstrations and

constant use of the foreign language up to the point where the student would be able to “think in the foreign language” (Berlitz, cited in Titone 1968: 100).

Around the same time, another influential European reformer, Francois Gouin (1800), developed his own method, which was to prove a great success in Germany, “took England and America by storm and proved a happy source of inspiration for the later work of the ‘direct-methodists’” (Titone 1968: 33). In his work, known as the “Gouin Series”, he embraced the principles of association of ideas, visualisation and learning through the senses, play and mimicry, by developing a logical sequence of simple events for school use, which he enacted repeatedly in the classroom. Contradictory to his coeval, Gouin did not appear to be fanatically against translation, although its use this time served the purpose of explanation. According to Mackey (1965: 34), explanations of the content of the scene or topic in the mother tongue was the first step in the Gouin’s class procedure, whereas in Kelly’s view, translation of the Gouin’s lesson was utilised whenever imitation was not possible (1969: 114).

Vietör (1882), on the other hand, was not fond of any of the Grammar-Translation ideas. The man, who produced the pamphlet under the pseudonym “Quousque Tandem”, was determined to approximate the natural way a child learned their mother tongue – which was through the ear – hence, students of a foreign language should follow the same path in order to be successful in L2 learning. The practical application of his ideas meant that grammar should be taught inductively, sentences should evoke real meaning, and translation, which was considered as a difficult exercise and not appropriate for vocabulary learning, albeit not banned, it was excluded as “an art that requires considerable maturity of knowledge of the foreign tongue before it can profitably be indulged” (Mallinson, cited in Titone 1968: 38).

This vague role of translation in language teaching at that time was supported by another development in the field, which was gathering momentum since the mid nineteenth century: descriptive phonetics. The emphasis put by the reformers on the priority of speech, oral drills, and imitation of the teacher’s pronunciation by the students acquired a more official status with the foundation of the International Phonetic Association in 1886, and its journal, *Le Maitre Phonétique*. The six articles (or the IPA articles), introduced by the Association, were not applied as a description of aims and levels to be reached by the students. They were seen more as principles that expressed the general ideas on language teaching during the reform period, whilst the recommendations towards the teachers constituted a compromise of what was already praxis in their classrooms. Despite the prominence of the speech and phonetics though, translation and use of the mother tongue were not completely rejected, but rather regarded as

“a last resort”, left for explanation reasons (Stern 1983: 92). Moreover, according to the sixth article regarding the teaching procedures of L2 writing,

the standard technique of the period, translation of unconnected sentences, is completely rejected; but the translation of connected passages from and into the foreign language (theme and version) is not abandoned; it is treated as an exercise appropriate only for the most advanced learners. (Stern 1983: 92)

The above reveals, first, the continuous presence of translation in the L2 teaching field, and also the tendencies of the time with regards to the type of translation exercises and the appropriate age learner, which do not fall far from some contemporary beliefs on this matter. Stern highlights the IPA articles as an historical document, whose features, such as “less emphasis on translation as the principal or only language technique [...] stood the test of time” (1983: 93). At the same time, Titone identifies a different pattern at the end of the nineteenth century, when the ideas of the Reform Movement (also known as Phonetic Method or Natural Method) were pushed to the extreme. Making “mastery of the spoken language the chief objective” of language teaching meant that translation into either language was totally forbidden, whereas teachers were either physically and intellectually exhausted by the requirements of this method or not properly qualified for such an ideal lesson (Titone 1968: 38–39). The end of the century is characterised as a “compromise” by Mackey, where different ideas and principles found supporters in different countries, prompting the rise of the Direct Method (1965: 144–45). Titone’s description of that period moves along the same lines, when he identifies two types of reactions to the extreme of the Reform Movement; either return to the Plötz method, or a compromise between “the oral approach and the use of reading and grammar. It was a ‘tamed’ direct method” (1968: 39).

The initial blur caused by the demands of the strict Natural Method seemed to settle down by the spread of the Direct Method, which in 1902 became the only officially approved language teaching method in France, as well as in Germany, alongside Vietör’s phonetics. The textbooks of the Direct Method were written according to a certain pattern, however, the main features of the method were very similar to the ones of the Natural Method. Avoidance of translation and the learner’s language remained amongst the main principles of the Direct Method – in fact, the Natural Method was the one later called the Direct Method by the methodologists at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century (Titone 1968: 41) – the reason why the names of the methods (or the methods per se) of that period are

so often considered interchangeable across bibliography. Consequently, despite the official status the Direct Method obtained in some countries, the same problems prevailed and revolved once again around “compromise”. More precisely:

As the principles of the Direct Method spread there was more and more compromise with them in order to meet the growing demands for measurable standards of accuracy. Vocabulary exercises and systematic grammar drills were added. At a more advanced level, translation was included. And at all levels certain standards of correctness were required. In practice, each country made its compromise with the Direct Method. (Mackey 1965: 146–47)

Stern seems to be in accordance with Mackey’s views. Especially with regards to the role of translation in that period, apart from the initial enthusiasm for natural approaches and constant use of the L2, the general recommendation seems to have been mainly avoidance of and less emphasis on, rather than complete rejection of translation and the L1. Stern specifically highlights the interwar years in Britain, where the recommended policy of adopting the Direct Method included use of translation and grammatical explanations in the first language (1983: 457-58). Sweet, an English philologist and one of the most influential supporters of this method, played a major role in that, by stressing the importance of awareness of interference caused by cross-linguistic problems, and by defending translation, at least from the foreign language into the learner’s language, arguing that this “is at the same time the most obvious and convenient way of explaining its meaning” (Sweet 1964, cited in Titone 1968: 47). At the same time, Palmer, an English teacher and “one of the greatest methodologists of the first half of the [twentieth] century” (Titone 1968: 72), advocated use of translation as a means of semanticising. He argued that “[t]ranslation is a more direct mode of conveying the meaning of a unit than Definition, and, a fortiori, more direct than context” (cited in Titone 1968: 69). As he further explained,

[w]hen the foreign word to be demonstrated is known to be a doubtful equivalent or when the value of the equivalence is unknown, it is more prudent to confirm the translation by definition or by context; when the word to be demonstrated is known to have no equivalent whatever in the native tongue, then we must have recourse to definition or to context. (ibid)

According to Titone, what Palmer implied at this point is that even explanations (such as definition and context) should preferably be given in the learner's language, thus ensuring a high degree of unambiguity with regards to the L2 comprehension. Palmer further suggested that "the exclusion of translation as a regular means of conveying the meaning of units is an uneconomical and unnatural principle" (Titone 1968: 69). Hinting also at the matter of time and convenience, Passy (1899) had already commented earlier that "[i]n exceptional circumstances it could happen that one might be too much in a hurry to use gestures and explanations in the foreign language" (Kelly 1969: 25). However, Palmer did not consider translation only as an unavoidable process, but he also believed in its benefits, speaking of how "use of translated equivalents was a necessary preventative for mistakes" (ibid, 26). At the same time, his warnings against building equivalences between isolated items in two languages resembled Sweet's view that "word-for-word transfer cannot be considered as genuine translation of the language as a structured system" (Titone 1968: 47, 69). These positive attempts to utilise translation in the L2 teaching and, even further, move its concept beyond the narrow scope of the word element into the sentence level have been quite provocative for a time that translation was generally negatively associated with the L2 teaching.

According to Kelly, negative reactions towards translation during the years of the Direct Method stemmed both from the enthusiasm for the new ideas and from "misinterpreting the recommendations of the pioneers of the method" (1969: 176). More specifically, even Vietör and Jespersen, two crucial advocates of the method and constant use of the foreign language in the L2 classroom, still included use of translation in the advanced stages of the course. Their views were firmly supported by Hovelaque, a French inspector, who maintained that "translation shows the pupil where the genius of the two languages differs. For this reason, seeing that it presupposes a certain maturity, all translation exercises were to be left until the end of the course" (cited in Kelly 1969: 139). The statement was endorsed by his suggestion for teachers to prepare translation assignments based on Direct Method lessons. In Kelly's perspective, the importance of translation as a means of language examination contributed to its survival through the next decades (1969: 176), when after the beginning of the twentieth century and "after a temporary eclipse of translation in progressive circles, the situation did not change" (ibid, 139), and translation remained in the L2 teaching field, either in the beginning or at the end of a teaching course.

All in all, as we can see from the above historical outline, during the first half of the twentieth century, translation continued to have a presence, albeit an ambiguous one, in the L2 teaching settings of the time. This was mainly due to the impact of the Grammar-Translation

Method, which saw the development of three main trends in the L2 teaching field: scholars and language teachers who were pure advocates of the new Direct Method, the traditionalists who still followed the old Grammar-Translation Method, and the supporters of a comprising practice between the two “extremes”. In other words, not only was translation not immediately rejected or abandoned as a teaching tool, but there were already some early voices echoing a refined adjustment of this technique in order to fit the current main L2 teaching principles. Their impact in the second half of the twentieth century is examined in the next section.

#### **1.4 The place of translation in the L2 teaching methodology of the 20th century**

The end of the nineteenth century, as well as the twentieth century, have signalled significant changes for the field of L2 teaching. Howatt and Smith (2002) describe the Reform Movement as “instrumental in establishing international guidelines for the teaching of modern languages” (Howatt and Smith 2002). During the course of the twentieth century, the introduction of phonology and psychology in the L2 teaching field are believed to have contributed to the establishment of an “applied linguistic approach” and the theory of second language acquisition respectively (ibid). The second half of the twentieth century, in particular, was very affluent with regards to the development of progressive language theories and innovative teaching methods, the legacy of which, the Communicative Approach for instance, carried on for decades. Conversely, the pace of advance for translation as a teaching tool in that dynamic L2 teaching and learning environment was significantly slower, ranging from “controversial” and “subjective” to “negative”.

That progress in the establishment of the field of foreign language teaching in the post-war years was prompted by external factors, as much as by factors within the language scientific field. As Stern comments, “while the principal methods of the first half of the century, the grammar-translation and direct methods, had largely developed in the European school systems” (1983: 462), in the decade of World War II, the light was being shed on the USA and the wartime language programmes developed at that time, known as the “Army Specialized Training Program” (ASTP) (Titone 1968: 106). Titone asserts that the Army Method which was used in these programmes was a more scientific version of the Intensive Method, which was adapted in order to quickly produce fluent speakers of a number of languages around the world. However, the profound need for immediate and intense contact with the natural languages did not exclude use of translation both as one of the initial steps during the lesson presentation as well as one of the lesson exercises (ibid, 106–107).

Although, as Stern points out, it is difficult to assess the real success of the Army Method, it is also hard to deny the impact of the post war years on the language learning field itself. This was due to a number of phenomena either directly linked to language learning or not – which also resemble some of the greatest challenges of the twenty-first century – such as language diversity, a large number of languages obtaining official status after the end of the Second World War, and democratisation of schooling which made language learning available to all students apart from the elite, as well as “travel, trade, scientific, and cultural exchange on a world scale, and, above all, migration” (1983: 102–103).

The attempts made in the fifties and sixties to confront these phenomena and to tackle the language problems stemming from the recent circumstances involved a series of innovative ideas. Amongst them were the use of current technological developments (language laboratory, tape recorders, television), current organisational patterns (immersion courses, bilingual schooling, individualised instruction) and methodological innovations (Audiolingual Method, Audiovisual Method) (ibid). The Audiolingual Method in particular, which is an American method in origin, was established in the late 1950s, but became quite predominant in other parts of the world, as well. It established a linguistic and psychological theory as a basis for teaching languages, influenced by structuralism and behaviourism respectively, and supported mainly the primacy of speech, habit formation through repetition, inductive learning and contrastive linguistics.

The role of translation within the scope of this method is not easily identifiable. According to Stern (1983), audiolingualism “does not emphasize a presentation of grammatical knowledge or information as grammar-translation does [...] it does not taboo it completely. It does reject the intellectual, problem-solving approach of grammar-translation [...]” (1983: 464). Nevertheless, any use of the student’s native language is “not as severely restricted in the audiolingual method as it was in the direct method” (1983: 464). Apart from Stern’s vague comparison of the two methodologies, with no specific mention of translation per se, more recently Johnson (2001), elaborating on audiolingualism, argued that according to the behaviourists’ view of habits, negative transfer or interference could occur from one language to another, and this could prove troublesome for the learner. At the same time, heavy reliance was placed on contrastive linguistics to identify trouble spots. It was, thus, believed that the elimination of the mother tongue from the learning environment, combined with the predictive power of contrastive analysis, would facilitate rapid and easy second language acquisition (Johnson 2001: 173-5). As a result of the behaviourists’ and structuralists’ firm stand on the negative role of the student’s first language in second language acquisition, one could perhaps



assume that translation, which involves both the first and the second language, was amongst the least favourite teaching methods in the audiolingual language classrooms.

Nevertheless, translation maintained its role as a teaching tool during the 1950s and 1960s, in a number of other, less widespread methods. Apart from the Eclectic Method in France, in the early years of World War II, which was a compromise between the Direct Method and “the more formal methods based on grammar rules and translation” (Mackey 1965: 154), and clearly used translation as one of its learning activities, Mackey includes in his own analysis of language methods a few others, the majority of whom were positive towards translation. One of them, the Unit Method, would see a class of students choose a unit of interest, prepare a dialogue in their native language and the teacher translate the dialogue focusing on one grammatical point, whereas at the end of the lesson a list of words would be studied for free composition, translation, filling-in exercises or reading. The Cognate Method, on the other hand, introduced the learner to a vocabulary made up of similarities between the two languages, whereas the similar Dual-Language Method would make use of the first language to explain similarities and differences between the grammar, vocabulary and phonetics of the two languages (ibid 155). Stern (1983) also refers to the Cognitive Theory or Method, which some have interpreted as “a modified, up-to-date grammar-translation theory” (Carroll 1966, cited in Stern 1983: 469) and some as “a modified, up-to-date direct method approach” (Hester 1970; Diller 1971, 1975, 1978, cited *ibid*). In his own words, the effectiveness of the Cognitive Theory was assessed by its capacity to relax the tightness of the Audiolingual Method and “remove[d] the stigma that had been placed on grammar-translation and direct method approaches” (*ibid*), but with no further explicit information on use of translation.

Stern asserts that the development of Cognitive Theory in the mid-1960s was essentially an acknowledgement of the criticism against the Audiolingual Method. The linguist Noam Chomsky (1966) rejected both the language theory (structural linguistics) and the learning theory (behaviourism) in his transformational grammar as “being unsound” (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 58). On a practical level, audiolingualism was discredited as ineffective, for the students were “often found to be unable to transfer skills acquired through Audiolingualism to real communication outside the classroom, and many found the experience of studying through audiolingual procedures to be boring and unsatisfying” (*ibid*).

The void caused by the rejection of the generally approved Audiolingual Method left a sense of disorientation in the language teaching field in the 1970s (Stern 1983: 109) which was apparently filled by the development of several new methods, some even referred to as

“innovative” approaches or methodologies to language teaching (Blair 1982, Larsen-Freeman 1987). Their description as such can be explained both against their historical background up to that time as well as the new trends, directions and goals set in the last decades of the twentieth century. Emphasis was shifted from pursuing the ‘right’ language method and was currently placed on the design of materials and curricula, on human relations and individualisation in the class, and on language learning research (first/second language acquisition, error analysis, interlanguage studies, child/adult learning) (Stern 1983: 109–110).

Silent Way, Suggestopedia, Community Language Learning, Comprehension Language Approach (Total Physical Response, Natural Approach), and the Communicative Approach were the methodologies which have achieved prominence in the twentieth century (Larsen-Freeman 1987: 52). Perhaps, the most common feature amongst them was their goal to enable all students to communicate in the foreign language – more or less successfully, and via different teaching processes. Language learning was perceived as a natural, personal and meaningful experience. It was facilitated by the teacher, who assumed predominately the role of a guide and an informant, alongside the more traditional functions, but also by their peers, often in the form of small groups. Materials strived to be authentic, all four skills were practised (albeit in different orders), whilst accuracy received a second place next to the importance of carrying the meaning across and using appropriate language for every situation. Use of translation and the student’s native language differed from method to method (1987: 64-66).

However, despite the fact that translation and use of the L1 was not a common feature in all of the aforementioned methodologies, its presence assumed a clearer status in contrast to its limited and ambiguous role in the FLT during the 1950s and 1960s. This became particularly obvious in the case of Suggestopedia and Community Language Learning, which made extensive use of translation and L1. It should be noted that in both methods translation was not one of the goals, but rather belonged in the first steps of the teaching/learning process. In the former one, students were given handouts with lengthy dialogues in two columns. On the right side the dialogue was presented in the foreign language and on the left, in the student’s native language, a type of translation which resembles the popular parallel mode used during the end of the seventeenth century. The dialogues were also accompanied by notes in the L1 focusing on the critical vocabulary and grammar points used in the dialogues. During the first, receptive, phase, the teacher would read the dialogue “synchronizing the cadence of the language with the rhythm and pitch of the music” (Larsen-Freeman 1987: 57), hoping to engage their students’ whole brain, while they would follow by reading the dialogue and its translation along

with the teacher's rendition. Thus, translation was used primarily to convey meaning while L1 was also utilised when it was necessary in the class (ibid 57–58).

Translation assumed a similar, if not an even more active role in the Community Language Learning. While Lozanov (1978), the originator of Suggestopedia, was preoccupied with the principles of “joy, absence of tension, and consecutive psychorelaxation; unity of the conscious-paraconscious and integral brain activation; and suggestive relationship on the level of the reserve complex” (Blair 1982: 155), Curran (1972) also focused on the psychological aspect of alleviating tension and anxiety during the process of language learning, albeit via the route of personal or group counselling. In his own words:

[T]he problems a person faces and overcomes in the process of learning a foreign language were conceived as similar to the problems one faces and overcomes in a personal counselling process. Consequently the learner was not conceived as a student but as a client; and the native instructors were not considered as teachers but rather were trained in counselling skills adapted to their roles as language counsellors. (1972: 119)

Building a relationship of trust between the client and their counsellor, and growing the confidence to move from the stage of “dependency, insecurity and inadequacy to an increasingly independent, self-directed, and responsible use of one or more foreign languages” (1972: 122) highlighted the methodology of this approach. The role of translation in the building of confidence, providing a feeling of security and removing any sense of threat and anxiety had been vital in this case. In the first stage of this language counselling relationship (or else teaching/learning process) the client (learner) would express their thoughts to the counsellor (language instructor) in their native language, who in turn would translate it, or actually “reflect[s] these ideas back to the client in the foreign language in a warm, accepting tone, in simple language in phrases of five or six words” (1972: 123). The client would then turn to the rest of the group and begin to speak these ideas directly in the foreign language with the help and support of the counsellor. The same sequence would be repeated by every client-counsellor pair in the same group in other languages as well, until all the clients would become linguistically independent. Curran stressed how a client “could also understand with increasing accuracy everything being said in the four languages, since he already knew the words in English from overhearing the prior client-counsellor communication” (1972: 127). It would appear, therefore, that the counsellor, besides providing psychological support, would also play the role of the language mediator between their client's own thoughts/ideas and the actual

words. In fact, the whole idea was built around the counsellor's language ability and capacity to reflect immediately, accurately and in a very warm and positive way, by using simple phrases at the beginning, and gradually more complex ones, what the client wished to express.

This positive attitude towards use of translation and L1 was also evident in the Natural Approach, one of the methods illustrating the Comprehension Approach (Larsen-Freeman 1987: 60). Terrell's Natural Approach (1982) should not be confused with the Direct Method in the thirties and forties. Although his concept of 'natural' "stems from observations and studies of second language acquisition in natural, i.e., non-academic contexts" (Blair 1982: 160), there was a sharp difference between his Natural Approach developed in the eighties and the older one, with regards to the use of L1. Despite the fact that the older Natural Approach, at its extreme form, categorically rejected any use of L1, Terrell incorporated it as a general guideline of his approach. In other words, in order to achieve his goal, which was to facilitate L2 acquisition for communicative competence, "1) all classroom activities should be devoted to communication with focus on content, 2) no speech errors should be corrected, and 3) students should feel free to respond in L1, L2 or any mixture of the two" (ibid 166). Allowing students to respond in their native language had both linguistic merits, since they "could concentrate entirely" and "rapidly expand [their] listening comprehension abilities" (ibid 166), as well as psychological ones, because it could dramatically reduce the degree of embarrassment, at least in the initial stages when students had no prior knowledge of the foreign language. In fact, Terrell claimed that students should "be encouraged to respond in any way they wish to the stimuli of the teacher" (ibid 169), by deciding if, when, and how they wish to respond, including short or longer answers, use of L1 or L2, or any mixture of the two: "By using both languages, communication can take place even on the first day without resorting to interchanges of the most inane variety which by necessity must occur if the student is forced to respond "correctly" in L2" (Blair 1982: 169).

Terrell's approach was part of what Blair called "the evolution of Comprehension Approach" (1982: 31), which included a number of methodologies adopting the common basic principle of a delayed speaking period (Larsen-Freeman 1987: 60). This same principle, as well as the involvement of L1 in the L2 classroom, formed also the basis of another method, rather "unconventional" or "strange enough" (Blair 1982: 77) as it has been described by its own contractor, Burling (1978). The premise of his methodology was built upon his rejection of a few "popular assumptions about language pedagogy" (Blair 1982: 77). More specifically, Burling expressed his doubts on the primacy of oral skills over reading or writing, on whether languages should be studied as an integral unit, and on whether students should be expected to

exercise all four skills from the very beginning. Most importantly though, he made his own assumptions on how the close boundaries between different languages could be distinguished, simply by listening to someone “communicate with the grammar and vocabulary of one language but with the phonology of another” (ibid 79). In fact, Burling’s thoughts on this last point resemble quite recent concepts on code-switching and code-mixing both as natural ways of communicating in multilingual societies as well as language teaching tools. Indeed, he drew his ideas on the examples of Indians and Burmese with knowledge of English, on immigrants to the United States, and on “every schoolchild who ever studied a foreign language [...] [and] have made up sentences of mixed antecedents” (ibid 79). He pointed out that instead of regarding these elaborations as “frivolous games of schoolchildren”, they should be taken seriously, “for we might be able to build upon this skill when we try to help our students learn a new language” (Blair 1982: 79).

The way Burling proposed to achieve that was by offering his students a reading passage which was an almost literal translation from French into English. It was a text that English-speaking students could understand, since it contained English words but given in French order, to convey a sense of the French language patterns. He would gradually replace English words with their French equivalents, and introduce common French words until, in the end, the text would be written in French. Burling admitted that his method was “not right for every student”, since it merely facilitated reading comprehension, but he believed that by consciously focusing student’s attention on understanding the meaning, and reducing grammar to a means to an end, his students made rapid progress at the beginning and they could always continue later with the skills of speaking and writing if they wished to (ibid, 77, 93).

Whether it was considered innovative or old-fashioned, Burling’s method did not achieve widespread currency across the L2 teaching field. In fact, the same applies to all the aforementioned methods, which were developed in the seventies and eighties and until the end of the twentieth century. The main reason they were chosen to be discussed here in detail was not their huge success or popularity as teaching methods but merely the fact that they all assumed a positive attitude towards the use of translation and the L1 in the foreign language classroom. Nevertheless, that positive attitude has not been representative of its time. Perhaps, the main contributor to this negativity has been the fact that the mainstream, most popular method developed during that time held its distance from translation as a teaching device. The widely accepted Communicative Approach and the concept of ‘communicative competence’ (Hymes 1972) that it supported and embraced have had a huge impact around the world; and even though the approach did not utterly reject the use of translation and the native language

but suggested a judicious use of it only if needed (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 66, 83), there has been a fierce polemic against the pedagogical value and the beneficial role of translation in the L2 teaching throughout the twentieth century (further examined in Chapter 2).

All in all, however, examining the relationship between translation and L2 teaching historically, from its very early stages, it appears that the negativity that was attributed to it by the end of the twentieth century is, in reality, only one side of the story. The chapter has held the view that this negativity is deeply associated with the Grammar-Translation period, and more specifically, with the predominant, but incorrect, portraying of that period of time as the beginning of this relationship in the L2 teaching field. Bonilla Carvajal (2013) holds a, perhaps, more radical view when he claims that “there was no Grammar-Translation method in the history of foreign language teaching because Grammar-Translation is a historic invention” (2013: 258). His argument is that despite the use of translation and extensive use of dictionaries in the L2 teaching during the eighteenth century, the actual name of “Grammar-Translation” is a “historical tag invented by scholars [...]” (2013: 254). Bonilla Carvajal takes a rather critical stand against the “uninformed writers” such as Kelly (1969), Kumaravadivelu (2006), Larsen-Freeman (2000), Richards and Rodgers (2001), Stern (1983) and Titone (1968) (cited in 2013: 252), who perpetuate in their works “the myth [of Grammar-Translation Method], as it has been introduced by popular common notions” (2013: 252). He believes that the name Grammar Dictionary (Taylor 1829: 14) is a more accurate description of the language teaching technique which was used at that time, whereas the name Grammar-Translation “only creates a prejudice against the use of translation in the classroom” (2013: 258).

His, admittedly, extreme view, partly reaffirms the main argument of this chapter. A more careful, extensive and critical approach of the Grammar-Translation period could shift the current perception of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching, revealing another side to this story, that involves the positive start and development of this relationship for hundreds of years and the consideration of translation as a valuable and dependable teaching tool, either to a larger extent (a method on its own) or to a smaller degree (only a teaching device). It also involves the constant presence of translation in L2 teaching throughout the centuries, which despite moving gradually from the role of a protagonist to lesser known and invisible roles, it never ceased to occupy a place in the L2 teaching scene. In fact, commenting the memorisation of spoken dialogues alongside use of translation in the L2 teaching in the 1960s in Eastern Europe, Pym and Ayzvazyan (2016) argue that “[i]n that part of the world, it seems that translation never actually went away” (2016: 9). Therefore, the next chapter turns to the possible pedagogical reasons that explain why the negative side of this story appears to

have been promoted more than the positive one, challenging, at times, the very existence of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching.

## Chapter 2

### **Translation and L2 Teaching: Invisibility and Challenges in a Monolingual Teaching Context**

#### **Introduction**

The first chapter's historical overview of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching made apparent that translation's role as a language teaching/learning device has undergone major transformations throughout the centuries. Being one of the oldest language teaching/learning tools, from the third century BC and up until before the end of the nineteenth century, translation has been almost consistently applied in language teaching. However, the lack of any theoretical basis to support its practice, and the remedying of this fact in the early twentieth century, which saw the beginning of modern linguistics, marked an important turning point. After the decline of the Grammar-Translation Method and under the influence of numerous language theories developed in the second half of the twentieth century, the role of translation for pedagogical reasons took a rather negative turn.

During the course of the twentieth century, translation was heavily criticised, as an “inappropriate” and “old-fashioned” teaching device, predominantly associated with the Grammar-Translation Method (Cook 2010). It had been disapproved of, or totally rejected, by the most prominent L2 teaching methodologies of the twentieth century, such as the Audiolingual and the Communicative Method, which are based on the principle that “use of the mother tongue was counter-productive in the process of acquiring a new language, and that, therefore, the use of translation in the classroom could do more damage than good” (Carreres 2006: 2). In fact, in some places, including France in 1950, translation was “quite literally, banned by legislation [–] from the languages curriculum in secondary schools and in specialist language schools” (ibid). As Harvey pointed out, although this move was condemned back in 1987 by the association of language teachers, it only highlighted “the gap between teachers and policy-makers” with regard to language learning and teaching reforms in the contemporary period (Harvey 1996: 46).

Following the above, and within the broader scope of re-evaluating and arguing for the contemporary role of translation in the L2 teaching, the current chapter seeks to provide a clearer understanding of the reasons that undermined its significance as a L2 teaching tool up to its total rejection. To this end, it turns to those language theories that were not only highly



influential with regards to second language teaching, but also served as a basis upon which the most serious and frequently mentioned arguments against translation were built. These include the Contrastive Analysis, the Error Analysis, Krashen's Second Language Acquisition Theory and the Communicative Competence. A brief analysis of each theory will offer a better insight into its main concepts and goals, how these affected L2 teaching, and effectively the impact on the role of translation in it. Each theory is followed by a discussion of the negative arguments influenced by these concepts, alongside the criticism they have received over the years. Chapter 2, therefore, examines how the same research and language theories that have long fought against translation as a teaching tool have also paradoxically defended the pedagogical role of translation, based on their different analysis and interpretation. The chapter, finally, suggests that this pedagogical justification alone has not been sufficient in re-evaluating the relationship and restoring translation's "visibility" in it, until further developments in the L2 teaching in the twenty-first century.

## **2.1 Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis**

### **2.1.1 Contrastive Analysis (CA)**

Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) is a language learning hypothesis mainly concerned with the relationship between the learner's native language (L1) and the language to be learned (L2). Its main tenet is that the structure of the first language affects the acquisition of the second language (Lado 1957). Fries (1945) had already stressed the idea of a systematic comparison between the L1 and the L2 structures in order to predict difficulties, by stating that "[t]he most efficient materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner" (1945: 9). However, CAH is firmly associated with Lado (1957) and his book *Linguistics across Cultures*. Lado explains his thoughts at the very beginning of the book:

The plan of the book rests on the assumption that we can predict and describe the patterns that will cause difficulty in learning, and those that will not cause difficulty, by comparing systematically the language and the culture to be learned with the native language and culture of the student. (1957: vii)

Although Lado explicitly stressed the importance of cultural differences between languages, his view on comparing them in language teaching were not adopted at the time, so the comparison remained a "surface comparison of languages" (Lennon 2008: 51), which focused

on the contrastive analysis of phonetics, grammar and semantics. Further, in the first chapter of his book, Lado lays the theoretical foundations of what became known as the CAH:

In the comparison between native and foreign language lies the key to ease or difficulty in foreign language learning... Those elements that are similar to [the learner's] native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult.  
(1957: 1–2)

The emphasis placed on comparing and contrasting two language systems for teaching purposes reflected the focus of linguistics at the time, which embraced a structuralist approach to language. The approach originated from the work of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1916) and had a great impact on linguistics, both in Europe and in the USA. In the latter, the linguist Leonard Bloomfield (1933), particularly influenced by Saussure, led the development of American structural linguistics. His main view of language was a linear system of rules and structures which could be further separated into hierarchically arranged sub-systems, starting with phonology, morphology and then syntax. Structuralism, as a learning theory, had a great impact on the language teaching methodology of the time. It became the linguistic model of Audiolingualism (also known as Audiolingual Approach or Method). Originally conceived for the communicative needs of the American military, Audiolingualism influenced the development of teaching courses and material, which all became concerned with the drilling of structural patterns, gradually progressing from the simple to more complex ones, and at the same time drawing attention to the correct pronunciation. As Lennon comments, the comparison of two languages on that basis of analysis and contrast in order to predict difficulties was expected to lead to the production of material and syllabuses tailored to the specific needs of each L1 student (2008: 51).

In parallel to structural linguistics, another central issue at the time was the emergence of behaviourist psychology, associated with Burrhus Frederic Skinner and his Stimulus-Response Theory (1938). Behaviourism, which, like structuralism “is another antimentalist, empirically based approach to the study of human behaviour” (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 56), regards learning as habit formation established by repeated patterns of stimulus, response and reinforcement. Applied within the scope of language teaching, behaviourism became the basis of the Audiolingual Method, under the main principle that “foreign language learning is basically a process of mechanical habit formation” (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 57). Students are stimulated by questions or exercises, to which they respond, either correctly or not. Correct

answers are reinforced and drilled in order to become a habit. Mistakes are immediately corrected in order to be avoided and, eventually, it is expected, they stop occurring.

The S-R theory became the psychological basis of CAH (James 1985), under the general assumption that L2 language learners tend to transfer into the target language features found in the native language (L1). As Lado claims, “individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture” (1957: 2). By the word “transfer” Corder understands the process of “carrying over the habits of his mother-tongue into the second-language” (1971: 158). The transfer may be positive or negative. According to the predictions of the CAH, when the patterns in the L2 are similar to the ones in the L1, positive transfer takes place, and acquisition of the new patterns is facilitated. However, differences between the patterns are expected to cause difficulties for the learner, and hinder acquisition, hence negative transfer or interference occurs, which leads to the production of errors.

The concept of interlingual errors and that of language interference became central in audiolingual approaches in the 1950s and 1960s. Based on Weinreich’s book *Languages in Contact* (1953) the term language interference referred to the way languages influence each other when they come into contact, and the way “speakers of two or more languages are engaged in a process of making ‘interlingual identifications’” (Weinreich 1953: 7 cited in Lennon 2008). As Lennon maintains, Weinreich’s views were then simplistically applied to language teaching, especially by the neurologist Eric Lenneberg (1967), whose “unsupported insights into language learning, based on clinical results”, became “mysteriously enough, highly influential on language teaching theory and served to strengthen the already prevalent emphasis on error prevention and eradication” (Lennon 2008: 52).

In a similar way, although Lado’s views aimed originally at identifying learning difficulties between languages, in practice CAH has been used to predict learner’s errors. According to this view of predictability, two main versions of it have been suggested: the strong hypothesis and the weak hypothesis. Wardhaugh (1970) who proposed the distinction between them, asserts that in the strong version a systematic analysis and comparison of the linguistic difficulties assists with the a priori prediction of those, whereas the weak version deals with the a posteriori explanation of the errors’ sources. In other words, in contrast to the predictive power of the strong version, the weak one has been utilised to provide explanations for the errors learners have already produced (Lennon 2008).

Stressing the pedagogical applications of CA, Zaki (2015) focused on the role of theory in the design of courses as well as language testing material. In the case of course design, CA

has been utilised in the process of “selecting the items to be included in a course and for their grading” (2015: 5), starting from the easiest (easy items or similarities which were expected to cause positive transfer) and gradually moving up to the most difficult (differences which would lead to negative transfer/interference). Confirming similarities or learning difficulties between L1 and L2 would also affect the material choices. According to Zaki, while “translation exercises were used in confirming similarities with L1 [...] audiolingual drills were better applied with new or difficult features to avoid the stage of mediation by L1” (ibid), indicating a rather negative relationship between the concept of translation and that of interference. As far as the design of tests was concerned, CA has been praised for bringing the attribute of validity in them (James 1980), for example in the form of multiple choice questions. As Harris explained, “CA can guide the teacher in designing the distracters since the best distracters are those that evoke the use of L1” (Harris 1968, cited in Zaki 2015: 4).

In the subsequent years, and despite its merits, CAH was confronted with significant criticism amongst researchers due to its various limitations (Briere et al. 1968; Lance 1969; Whitman and Jackson 1972; Corder 1978; Brown 1987). In fact, Wardhaugh himself believed that the strong version of CAH was idealistic and impractical for expecting from linguists to constantly have “available to [them] an overall contrastive system within which [they] can relate the two languages in terms of mergers, splits, zeroes, [...]” (1970: 126). Hughes (1980), on the other hand, pinpointed CAH’s predictive power as the main source of the theory’s problems. More precisely, he criticised the fact that predicting learning difficulties between languages became equal with predicting errors. He argued that this claim ignored the active role of L2 learners who may be aware of the difficulties, and consciously adopt strategies to deal with them and avoid producing errors. Furthermore, CAH has been accused of being unable to predict all errors, since not all of them can be attributed to transfer between L1 and L2 (Selinker 1972), as well as for the fact that even predicted errors do not always occur similarly and equally in both directions (James 1980).

### **2.1.2 Error Analysis Hypothesis (EAH)**

By the late 1960s the limitations and failures of the CA method led to a reconfiguration of the approach of learners’ errors. The new slightly different direction did not reject the main idea of L1 influences on the L2 learning, but instead of focusing on the prediction of errors through the comparison of linguistic systems, it focused on observing learners’ errors and seeking explanations for them. The idea was quite similar to what the weak hypothesis of CA had

suggested, which has, in fact, been regarded as the beginning of the Error Analysis ([www.academia.edu/](http://www.academia.edu/)).

Pit Corder (1967) was amongst the founders of the Error Analysis (Corder 1967; Selinker 1972, Brown 2007). His vision was originally laid out in his published paper “The Significance of Learner’s Errors” (1967). As a cognitive linguist, Corder believed that in the process of learning to communicate in the foreign language, learners form hypotheses about the second language and then test those in the production of language. Seen in that context, errors are then a matter of wrong hypotheses about or lack of knowledge of the linguistic and sociolinguistic rules and norms of the language which arise from the learner’s imperfect competence in the foreign language (Papaefthymiou-Lytra 1987: 51). These wrong hypotheses are at the same time inevitable and necessary features of the learner’s dynamic and evolving language system, which Corder termed as “transitional competence”. In other words, errors, “represent the discrepancy between the transitional competence of that learner and the target language” (Lennon 2008: 54).

Corder essentially drew a parallel between children acquiring their first and second language in the sense of language processing. He argued that in the same way L1 acquisition occurs through developmental stages and steps, or in a “more or less fixed pattern” (Lennon 2008), so the L2 learner may possess an internal language system, or “inbuilt syllabus”, which “determines the order in which the language system is acquired” (Zaki 2015: 8). Based on this theory, errors could be regarded as indications of development in the learner’s internal language system, and observing them could provide the researcher with hints about the inbuilt order of acquisition (*ibid*). According to Corder, errors should also be distinguished from mistakes, lapses and slips of the tongue or pen, whereas differences in such external factors as linguistic and sociolinguistic input, teacher language education, time availability, syllabus design, materials, methodology etc. do not prevent foreign language learners from making similar errors in the process of learning (Papaefthymiou-Lytra 1987: 51).

Building on Corder’s hypothesis of the L2 transitional competence and inbuilt syllabus, Selinker (1972) presented the Interlanguage Hypothesis, in his paper “Interlanguage”, published first for adult learners (Selinker 1972) and later for child learners (Selinker/Swain/Dumas 1975). According to this theory, L2 learners, who are in the process of acquiring a foreign language, develop a linguistic system independent of either L1 or L2, although influenced by both. The term “interlanguage” refers to that linguistic system or language intermediate between the native and the target language. In 1974 Selinker defined interlanguage as a “hybrid” of learner’s L1 and of the target language, where both the L1 and

the L2 are composite elements of the interlanguage. Other terms used to describe this intermediate linguistic system have been “idiosyncratic dialect” (Corder 1971), “approximative systems” (Nemser 1974), or “language continua” (Corder 1981), whereas a currently preferable term is “language learner language” (Saville-Troike 2006: 40).

According to Selinker (1974) interlanguage is both systematic and dynamic. The first refers to the fact that differences between learner production and target norms are not random; on the contrary, interlanguage exposes common traits across learners who are passing through the same proficiency level, whereas cases confirm that learners’ errors may, indeed, be a developmental phenomenon rather than an influence of L1 transfer (Lightbown and Spada 2006). Furthermore, the attribute of dynamic refers to the fact that interlanguage moves eventually in the direction of the target language, even though fossilization of some errors may occur for shorter or longer periods of time, hindering the acquisition of new terms and structures. The main belief is that the studying of all these errors (fossilized or not) during language production will lead to an understanding of the mental processes that underlie it, and essentially an understanding of foreign language acquisition.

Nevertheless, the applicability of the EAH came with its own limitations and obstacles. Being constantly aware of the learner’s intentions in order to explain their errors has been only one of them, whereas correctly identifying and classifying the errors has proved a bigger challenge for researchers and teachers. Nancy Stenson (1983), in her article “Induced Errors”, presented sets of errors which appear with some frequency in the classroom but do not fall into the categories error analysis developed.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, Schachter and Celce-Murcia (1983) took a critical look at the fact that 1) EA did not deal with avoidance, and 2) it focused exclusively on the reasons that caused learners to fail and not to succeed, hence to learn. Notwithstanding the criticism, James (1980) argues that both Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis, which can be complementary, have contributed in the analysis of learners’ errors and consequently, in understanding and facilitating the process of second language acquisition (Zaki 2015: 11).

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<sup>2</sup> For the classification of sources of errors, see Richards (1974) and Brown (1981). For a different classification of errors (surface vs. linguistic classification), see Dulay, Burt, C. Krashen (1982) and Ellis (1997).

## **2.2 Implications of CA and EA for the relationship between translation and L2 teaching**

Both language theories of Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis have underpinned the polemic that has developed in the second half of the twentieth century against the use of translation in the L2 teaching. More accurately, misinterpretations and/or ignorance with regards to the main theoretical concepts, such as language transfer, interference and interlanguage, have given shape, perhaps unconsciously, to two of the most frequent arguments against translation as a language teaching tool, namely that translation causes 1) interference between L1 and L2, and 2) one-to-one correspondence between L1 and L2. These beliefs have been incorporated by several researchers listing negative arguments or reasons to avoid translation in the FLT. Newson, in his conference paper “Making the Best of a Bad Job: The Teaching and Testing of Translation” (1988), claimed that two of the disadvantages of using translation as a teaching tool are that “it encourages thinking within one language which is then transferred into another, with accompanying interference”, and that “it gives false credence to the naïve view that there is such a thing as perfect one-to-one equivalence between languages” (1988: 6). The views were echoed by Malmkjaer (1998), who summarising the objections to the use of translation in L2 classes, wrote that “translation misleads students into thinking that expressions in two languages correspond one-to-one”; “translation prevents students from thinking in the foreign language” and “translation produces interference” (1998:6). Carreres (2006), listing her own arguments on this subject, argued that forcing learners to encounter L2 acquisition via L1 “causes interferences and a dependence on L1 that inhibits free expression in L2” (2006: 5).

### **2.2.1 Translation and the issue of *interference***

As previously discussed, the main hypothesis of the Contrastive Analysis theory was that interlingual transfer of similar and different elements occurring during the L2 acquisition consequently leads to production of errors. That has been interpreted in many cases as a negative result of involving the learner’s L1 in the L2 teaching and learning. Viewed from this perspective, eliminating the native language from the L2 teaching process was believed to overcome the negative transfer of L1 into the L2, and prevent the source of learner’s errors. Accordingly, use of translation in L2 teaching was treated as harmful practice which would constantly facilitate not only negative influence and production of errors but also dependence from the L1 for any L2 production. Supporting the above view, Gatenby summarises what he sees as “the reasons why translation cannot be expected to produce good results when employed in the classroom” (1967b: 66). The summary consists largely of a comparison

between the way in which a child learns her first language or several languages naturally, and the way in which a foreign language is learnt in the classroom. In the natural course of events, he claims, “there is, of course, no translation” (ibid, 87). Gatenby (1967b) goes on to recommend the direct or oral method, echoing the kinds of objection raised by Lado (1964):

We as teachers are trying to bring our pupils to use English without translating in their own minds, to say without hesitation the right thing on the right occasion [...] Our aim is to get our pupils [...] to the stage where they can use English without having to think. Abruptly to interrupt this process and to ask a pupil to put an English sentence into his own tongue when our whole endeavour is to train him to dissociate the two languages is to give ourselves a Sisyphean labour. (1964: 53–54)

As shown above, Gatenby and Lado make no specific references to grammatical or syntactical influence between the languages, but highlight the aspect of thinking in the foreign language, and how badly this is affected by interference. This point was also sustained by the work of Boris V. Belyayev. In his book *The Psychology of Teaching Foreign Languages* (1963), Belyayev, who is also concerned with the interdependence of the two languages (L1 and L2) in terms of thinking, argues that in order to possess theoretical knowledge about language there is no need at all to combine the forms of the foreign language directly with thought; however, the practical knowledge of a language is impossible unless real unity is established between the forms of the language and thought. Thus, the main principle of language teaching should involve not only the teaching of the foreign language but also how to think in it (1963: 37). He approaches this issue from a psychological point of view and tries to examine – through a small experiment – whether the connection between a foreign language and thought can be direct or can only take place through an intermediary (1963: 57).

His conclusions are detrimental to the role of translation in FLT. He maintains not only that the link between a foreign language and thought does not necessarily have to be through an intermediary – it can also be direct – but also that thinking in a foreign language has its own peculiarities from the point of view of its content. Therefore, the onus remains on the teacher to assist their students not only to acquire foreign forms, but also to learn to think in the language of their study. According to Belyayev, true knowledge of a foreign language is only possible if students acquire a somewhat different way of thinking, in other words, if they learn to think in the foreign language. Henceforth, combining thinking in the native language with the use of foreign words and sentences which almost always have a different subjective content,



is to attempt the impossible, since such a combination is contrary to nature and therefore under no circumstances attainable. In pursuit of all this, one must “do everything to avoid translation” (1963: 66–7).

The sentiment expressed in the above quotations embodies the view that successful L2 acquisition depends on keeping the L2 separate from the L1. This rationale towards the mid-twentieth-century, which was built on transfer theories such as Contrastive Analysis, was further evident in the compartmentalisation of the two languages in the human brain. As Vivian Cook (2001) explains, researchers in the twentieth century have argued that the two languages form distinct systems in the mind, rather than a single compound system. In effect, L2 learning should happen solely through the L2 rather than being linked to the L1, in order to avoid the major problems deriving from the L1. As a result, teachers have been employing a variety of “direct method techniques” (e.g. explain the L2 word in the L2, define or mime its meaning, show pictures, and so on, without translating), in the long-term hope that this builds up the L2 as a separate system (Cook 2001: 407).

Further research, however, has provided evidence counter to the above arguments. Cook (2001) cites several researchers arguing that the two languages (L1 and L2) are currently considered interwoven in the L2 user’s mind in vocabulary (Beauvillain and Grainger 1987), in syntax (Cook 1994), in phonology (Obler 1982) and in pragmatics (Locastro 1987; de Arriba García 1996). L2 users are more flexible in their ways of thinking and are less governed by cultural stereotypes. The L2 meanings do not exist separately from the L1 meanings in the learner’s mind, regardless of whether they are part of the same vocabulary store or parts of different stores mediated by a single conceptual system (ibid). Supporting use of translation in this context, Carreres (2006) argues that L2 learners will inevitably refer to their L1 to assist the process of L2 acquisition, echoing what Titford calls “translate silently” (1985: 78). She asserts that “in light of this, translation into L2 can help [L2 learners] systematize and rationalize a learning mechanism that is taking place anyway” (2006: 6). Rivers (1979: 71) had already spoken of “mental translation” which gives a “feeling of security”. Danchev (1982) refers to the natural and unconscious process of translation, which teachers should try to “capture, channel and exploit” (1982: 40), whereas Swan (1985) claims that “students are always translating into and out of their own languages - and teachers are always telling them not to” (1985: 80). This confirms not only that translation is unavoidable, but that, consequently, avoiding native language interference while learning a foreign language is almost impossible (Shiyab and Abdullateef 2001: 4).

Schjoldager (2004: 135–136) supports the belief that L1 is bound to influence the learning of L2 and that some degree of L1 interference is inevitable. However, she asserts that the objective of any language class is to enable students to perform in that language with as little interference as possible. In her discussion about the best way to achieve this aim – and the role of translation in this – she cites some scholars who think that translating is actually necessary to counteract L1 interference – at least at the advanced level – such as Sørensen (1990) and Snell-Hornby (1985). Similarly, Titford (1985: 82) argues that L2 translation not only allows teachers to correct L1-induced errors, but also “gives us a context within which to explain them with a minimum of metalinguistic apparatus”. Harvey (1996: 56) points out to the usefulness of translation as a way of making learners “aware of how errors in L2 can result from the unconscious superimposing of L1 structures”, whereas for Malakoff and Hakuta (1991: 163) “translation provides an easy avenue to enhance linguistic awareness and pride in bilingualism”. The indicated strong relationship between translation and linguistic awareness is further highlighted, as a response to another argument against translation, namely that it leads to one-to-one correspondence.

### **2.2.2 Translation and the issue of *one-to-one correspondence***

Turning to the second accusation against translation in the FLT, and remaining within the context of Contrastive and Error Analysis, it appears that some of the criticism against use of translation related to specific areas of contrasting the L1 and the L2 systems, such as grammar and syntax. As Widdowson has pointed out, “[t]he basic objection to the use of translation in foreign language teaching is that it encourages the learner to think that structurally and lexically similar sentences in two languages mean the same [...]” (1975: 91). In a later paper, his objection relates explicitly to the concept of translation equivalence:

The objections to the use of translation seem to [...] involve establishing structural equivalence. It is said, that translation leads the learner to suppose that there is a direct one-to-one correspondence of meaning between the sentences in the TL and those in the SL. (1979: 67)

His view on the topic draws on the concept of “formal equivalence”, developed within the discipline of Translation Studies. However, within the language teaching context he echoes researchers’ fears of returning to the “old-fashioned” practices of the Grammar-Translation Method. As Lado (1964) supported earlier:

Translation is not a substitute for language practice. Arguments supporting this principle are (1) that few words if any are fully equivalent in any two languages, (2) that the student thinking that the words are equivalent, erroneously assumes that his translation can be extended to the same situations as the original and as a result makes mistakes, and (3) that word-for-word translations produce incorrect constructions. (1964: 53–4)

Indeed, the aforementioned views can hardly be dismissed as erroneous. Under the practice of the “Grammar-Translation” Method, translation is predominately treated as a grammar exercise and as a means of producing and testing word-lists. L2 learners are not sensitised to the fact that every lexical item carries with it a set of culture-bound connotations which makes the process of translating one meaning into another very challenging. Being unaware of these connotations, and thinking that every L2 expression is fully equivalent to an L1 term, leaves scope for serious misunderstandings, or, in extreme cases, even offence. The case of “false friends” is a very specific example of how interference and word-for-word correspondence may affect L2 learners’ thinking and production. The term is used to describe lexical items which have the same or similar external form in L1 and L2, but do not share exactly the same meaning, or meanings, e.g. the Greek word “sympathia” (liking, attraction) and the English one “sympathy” (feeling sorry for). Attempting to translate these lexical pairs word-for-word, it becomes instantly clear how they can become a repetitive source of interlingual interference, and inevitably lead to errors.

Other language areas which pose similar danger for errors and test the limits of translatability are the areas of “culture-specific” items. One such example is the formal correspondence between L1 and L2 items, which albeit infrequent, does not exclude the finding of translation equivalents, as in, for example, the word “Geschwister” in German, and its translation into English as “brothers and sisters”. At the same time, formal linguistic differences normally only lead to untranslatability when the L1 item has a range of meaning which is not possible to match in L2. Of particular interest to the student, however, are those L1 items which express concepts that are completely absent from the L2 culture, such as the culture-specific area of “idioms” (Perkins 1985: 58). The term embraces a multitude of word-groups and collocations, and it usually refers to a number of words whose meaning as a whole cannot easily be deduced from the individual meanings of the constituent parts. (Perkins 1985: 59). L1 idioms require special treatment because of the difficulty in finding L2 equivalents. As

Liontas (2001) explains, “to attempt a syntactic decomposition of a phrasal idiom generally means to lose its idiomatic meaning” (2001: 2). For some culture-specific items there is no equivalent in L2, and such items have to be quasi-defined in L2 rather than strictly translated. For other L1 idioms, equivalents can be found in L2, but the L2 idiom will have to rely on very different lexical material and the metaphor will, therefore, differ accordingly (Perkins 1985: 60).

Nevertheless, what some researchers list as “pitfalls” of translation, others regard as “usefulness” of translation in FLT, which lies precisely in comparing and contrasting different aspects of the L1 and L2 (grammar, vocabulary, word order, etc.) (Dagiliene 2012: 125). Lavault (1985) who believed that “even after reaching or overtaking the stage of ‘communication’ students must perfect their linguistic knowledge by means of a personal effort” (1985: 23) suggests translation as an efficient way to achieve it. Echoing Lavault, Lederer (2003), in her *Interpretive Model*, makes a very interesting approach to the issue of “one-to-one correspondence”. She claims that the “first thing monolingual beginners notice is the strange appearance of the forms of a foreign language, without being completely aware that the meanings behind these forms are not strictly identical in both languages” (2003: 135). Lederer distinguishes between use of translation as an L2 teaching tool, or what she calls linguistic translation, and teaching of translation proper, or interpretive translation (2003: 134). She attributes the confusion between the two of them “largely [...] to the mind-set of monolingual individuals when they begin to learn a foreign language” (2003: 135). By that, she refers to the natural tendency of L2 learners to ask how to translate words, and to their need to establish correspondences between words in L1 and L2. The difficulty, as she further explains, is that even advanced L2 learners can be easily tricked by the identical or similar forms in different languages, and believe that they carry identical meanings (2003: 135).

Thus, what Lederer implies at this point, is that interference, and the errors produced because of it, are simply signs of how students use the filter of their own language to understand the foreign language. Consequently, not only does translation in the L2 teaching not mislead students into thinking that words in two languages correspond one-to-one, but it actually has “a double role right from the start: to bring out signifiers which correspond with signifiers in the learners’ native language and to make students understand that the signifiers to which they refer do not completely overlap” (2003: 136). Lederer accounts this type of linguistic translation as extremely beneficial for the L2 teaching, but asserts that it “must remain at a stage that precedes translation by equivalence” (ibid, 136).

Maerlein (2009) takes the issue of L1-L2 correspondence one step further. She examines linguistic equivalence from the point of view of “word-for-word translations”, a technique used by phrase books (such as tourist guides) for communicative purposes. Kabel (2004) asserts that this type of translation, as opposed to “proper” translation, is used to “make the foreign word order visible in the readers’ mother tongue in order to make it possible for them to create new sentences from the given ones by exchanging or combining parts of the sentences” (2004, cited in Witte et al. 2009: 138). In the same line of thought, Maerlein argues that within the field of linguistics, literal translation is not only beneficial for the purpose of exemplifying L2 sentence structures and assisting understanding in the L2, but it could also enhance L2 acquisition. In her study, she practically reverses the question of mother tongue’s influence on the L2, and strives to see if using word-for-word translations to make L2 word order visible in the learners’ native language would improve their L2 word order usage. The responses do not yield any significant results, however, they are all positive, indicating towards utilising word-for-word translation exercises to make word order visible in the L1 (2009: 140–150).

Moving on further, although the relationship between literal translation and L2 acquisition would certainly warrant further research, the relationship between translation and linguistic awareness has gained significantly more consensus amongst researchers in both fields of Translation Studies and L2 Teaching. Perkins (1985) argues that an important initial step toward the goal of sensitising students to the problems of L1-L2 translation is to draw their attention to what he calls “the typical learner’s failing”, namely “the habit of literal translation” (1985: 56). According to the level of their linguistic ability the learner decides what kind of hypothesis to set up about the nature of L2. He claims that, the lower L2 level a student has, the higher the possibility is to transfer items and patterns from L1 to L2 and set up simple “equal-rank” equivalence (Catford 1965:76), i.e. translation equivalences between L1 and L2 sentences, or between clauses, groups, or words. The student can, however, be discouraged from word-for-word translation and encouraged to think in units of meaning by a variety of cross-linguistic exercises, in which for example, the student is asked to underline those L2 units that correspond to the L1 units that have already been underlined (Perkins 1985: 56–7).

Stoddart (2000) also believes that translation helps students notice non-equivalent linguistic, semantic and pragmatic features of the foreign language. Students are usually unaware of the implications of decoding and recoding a message, or of any of the problems such as equivalence, or loss and gain of meaning. Making them more aware of these concepts will sensitise them to the pitfalls of word-for-word translation which frequently occur in their writing. According to Stoddart, students need to be focused on the pragmatic functions of

language, rather than on the linguistic features it displays, and, in his view, translation fulfils this objective well (Stoddart 2000).

On the other hand, Chellapan (1982) argues that it is exactly these particular aspects of language, such as polysemy, grammatical rules and syntactic structures, with which students have difficulties, that translation can help explain. He explains that through translation, because it involves a conscious process of learning, a learner can be aware of the distinctiveness of similar structures in the two languages, and also of the different processes used in conveying the same message. “Deliberate translation”, as he calls it, focuses on lexical items, where the contrasts in the two languages vary, but it should be done in a larger context. These items should not be treated individually as in the traditional Grammar-Translation method. Doing so will not only help the students learn the different distributions in the two languages, but it will also show that the meaning of any item is part of the total environment of the text in the two languages ([www.britisgcouncil.org](http://www.britisgcouncil.org)).

Also highlighting the issue of interlingual influence and transfer, but within the field of Translation Studies, Toury (1979: 225) refers to translation as “one of the purest and most common situations” in which interlanguage forms are most likely to occur, simply because of the fact that different languages come into contact. She recalls Selinker by arguing that the translated text serves as a source of interlingual phenomena, when a L2 student “attempts to express meanings, which he already has, in a language which he is in the process of learning” (1972, cited in Toury 1979: 224). According to Toury, this is a “near-paraphrase of a common definition of translation, though translation is carried out in unfavourable conditions” (ibid). However, she criticises claims that the phenomenon of interlanguage is exclusively related to lack of mastery of TL, claiming that although this is a contributing factor, it is “by no means [...] either a principal or necessary condition for the production of interlanguage” (ibid). As she explains, interlanguage forms can equally prevail in translations which are carried out under “favourable conditions”, namely by competent translators in both languages (L1-L2). Not only do these interlanguage forms not comply with the “typical” list of error analysis, but are sometimes or to a degree “preferred to “pure” TL forms”, because they are

a clear indication of the concept of translation and translation equivalence underlying the corpus under study and governed by the position of translation as a sociocultural linguistic activity and of its products, the translated texts, in the target social, cultural and linguistic systems. (Toury 1979: 225)

Although her remarks delve into certain more complex debates within the field of Translation Studies, her view on interlanguage could be positively interpreted within the scope of language teaching as well. The fact that the relationship between interlanguage and translation moves beyond the factor of linguistic interference, and includes elements other than L1 influence, challenges the initial argument against translation (namely that translation causes interference) to its very core. In other words, without denying influence between languages in contact, it adds another perspective into the errors attributed to interlanguage. This aspect should be seriously considered by language teachers, whether translations are produced by competent L2 learners or less competent learners.

Following Toury, other researchers have also focused on the effects of interlanguage in translations, albeit mostly from the perspective of language contrasting. Gellerstam (1986) was the first to coin the colloquial term “translationese”, i.e. as a non-standard version of the L2 which has been more or less affected by the L1. In a comparative study of vocabulary used in Swedish novels, and in novels translated from English into Swedish, Gellerstam (1985) discusses some characteristics of this so-called “translationese”. Amongst his findings is the overuse of certain words in translated texts which normally occur with low frequency in texts originally written in the SL (Anderman 1998: 45). Santos (1999) extended the application of this notion to the identification of translationese from a grammatical point of view between Portuguese and English translations. Hopkinson (2014) on the other hand, reflects on the concept of interlanguage in researching L1-L2 translations, based on her research between Czech and English translations. She concludes that differences between the two languages indicate into a relatively stable Czech-English Interlanguage, whereas the major “usefulness” of the interlanguage approach is its emphasis on the systemic nature of errors (2014: 14).

### **2.3 Krashen’s Second Language Acquisition Theory: the Input Hypothesis**

As has been previously discussed (see 2.1), the 1950s and 1960s oversaw the development of language learning theories that aimed to provide a theoretical underpinning of issues of second language acquisition. One of the earliest and most influential theories was behaviourist learning theory, which then became a dominant school in psychology. It highlighted the different processes of acquiring the first and second language, which Lado supported from a behaviourist point of view, and explained in his Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis. Chomsky’s challenge of the behaviourist view (1959) was followed by criticism of the Contrastive Analysis by a number of researchers with regards to the degree and the importance of L1 influence on L2 learning. For Newmark and Reibel (1968) L1 interference accounted for ignorance (1968: 159),

whereas Dulay and Burt (1974) preferred the concept of “general processing strategies” to highlight different types of L2 learners’ errors (1974: 314). As a result of this “minimalist position” (Ellis 1994), opponents of behaviourism argued that L2 acquisition was in fact similar to L1 acquisition, meaning that L2 learners should acquire the second language in the same way L1 learners acquire their L1. Thus, according to the minimalist view the best way to acquire a second language is via the L2, and not via the L1. Amongst the other researchers, Krashen has also endorsed this belief on the role of the L1, influencing a particularly negative attitude towards use of L1 in the L2 learning.

Krashen analysed his views in his “Second Language Acquisition Theory” (1982/2009), which consists of five hypotheses: 1) The acquisition-learning hypothesis, 2) The natural order hypothesis, 3) The monitor hypothesis, 4) The input hypothesis, and 5) The affective filter hypothesis. According to Krashen, from all five hypotheses,

the input hypothesis, may be the single most important concept in second language acquisition theory today. It is important because it attempts to answer the crucial theoretical question of how we acquire language. It is also important because it may hold the answer to many of our everyday problems in second language instruction at all levels. (1982/2009: 9)

As Krashen explains, the goal of teaching should be “acquisition” (understood as the subconscious process of “naturally” acquiring language), and not learning (understood as the process of developing “formal knowledge” of language). The way learners achieve this goal and progress from one level to the next is by receiving “comprehensible input”. That means that moving from stage  $i$  to stage  $i+1$  presupposes one necessary, albeit not sufficient, condition: that learners understand input which is a little beyond their current level of competence, where “understand” is perceived as focus on the meaning and not on the form of the message. Krashen posits that this level of understanding can be achieved with the help of context, knowledge of the world around us, and other extra-linguistic information. He further adds that enough comprehensible input will automatically result in stage  $i+1$ , whereas speaking fluency usually takes time and emerges on its own, when the learner is ready for it (1982/2009: 20–22).

Krashen drew his evidence supporting input hypothesis from the field of both first and second language acquisition. He maintains that like the roughly-modified speech caretakers use with their children, the foreign-talk/teacher-talk in the L2 classroom should aim to



communicate messages and not at grammar accuracy, and predicts that only natural, communicative, roughly-tuned comprehensible input can lead to acquisition (ibid 20–29). Referring specifically to the L1 influence, and the role of the L1 in L2 learning, Krashen argues that “the child is building up competence in the second language via listening, by understanding the language around him” (ibid, 27). Thus, falling back on the L1 could be used as a short-term solution for the purpose of L2 communication, however, the disadvantages of using the L1 “outweighed the advantages in the long run” (Du 2016: 18).

The implications of the input hypothesis were outlined as “exciting” and “interested in second language acquisition” (Krashen 1982/2009: 30), although Mitchell and Myles (2004) consider comprehensible input as inadequate in more recent theories. Swain (1985) also highlights the importance of comprehensible output as a key element in L2 development. However, the implications for the role of translation and the L1 in the FLT were clearly more dramatic. Despite the fact that the input hypothesis never categorically rejected use of the L1, it has majorly influenced negative attitudes towards it. As Al-Nofaie (2010) puts it, within the context of Krashen’s comprehensible input “the superiority of foreign language may indicate prohibiting L1 in the classroom” (2010: 66), whereas for Cook, Krashen is considered “the pioneer of the monolingual approach” (2001).

## **2.4 Implications of the Input Hypothesis for the relationship between translation and L2 teaching**

### **2.4.1 The role of L1 in the L2 learning**

The monolingual approach initially gained widespread acceptance more than 100 years ago in the context of the Direct Method. According to Yu (2000: 176), “the direct method imitated the way that children learn their first language, emphasizing the avoidance of translation and the direct use of the foreign language as the medium of instruction in all situations”. Cook V. summarises the support for the Monolingual Approach in the literature around three major claims:

- 1) The learning of an L2 should model the learning of an L1 (through major exposure to the L2).
- 2) Successful learning involves the separation and distinction of L1 and L2.
- 3) Students should be shown the importance of the L2 through its continual use. (V. Cook 2001: 412)

These clearly echo Krashen's theories (1981), arguing that learners acquire the L2 following the same path as learning their L1. The rationale behind it, as previously discussed, is that L1 acquisition does not rely on another language; thus, if the only successful method of acquiring a language is that used by L1 children, then teaching should be based on the characteristics of L1 acquisition (V. Cook 2001). Following this assumption, the use of L1 in the classroom should be minimised and constant exposure to the target language becomes a determining factor (Lewis 1993: 54). Sharma (2006: 80) accords to the view that "the more students are exposed to English, [or any other FL], the more quickly they will learn; as they hear and use English, they will internalize it to begin to think in English; the only way they will learn it is if they are forced to use it". Littlewood (1991) believes that it would be impossible to convince students to use the L2 if teachers abandon it first (1991:45), and Cook confirms that use of L1 for classroom interaction means "depriving the students of the only true experience of the L2 that they may ever encounter" (2001: 409). Kharma and Hajjaj (1989) also concluded that the L1 should not usually be used in FL classrooms, since the aim of FL teaching is to approximate near-native competence (cited in Jadallah and Hasan 2011: 2). According to Macdonald (1993), (cited in Sharma 2006), switching to the L1 to explain what the teacher has said to learners is unnecessary and undermines the learning process, whereas use of the L2 only in the classroom is likely to demonstrate the L2's importance and portray the usage of the language being studied (Pachler and Field 2001: 86).

The general assumption that L2 ought to be learnt through the foreign language, and not by the use of the L1, is also sustained by professionals' fears that once the door to the L1 is opened, it will remain widely and uncontrollably open, leading students, and quite often teachers as well, to rely on its use more than it would be perhaps beneficial, since they will resort to it whenever a difficulty is encountered. Turnbull (2001) points out that, although under some circumstances use of the L1 may be efficient, "it is crucial for teachers to use the target language (TL) as much as possible in contexts in which students spend only short periods of time in class on a daily basis, and when they have little contact with the TL outside the classroom" (2001, 535). In fact, many ELT professionals even wonder how students can truly appreciate target language exchanges if they are continually relying on their L1 (Bouangeune 2009: 186).

Another fundamental argument against the use of L1 is what Cummins terms as the "no translation" assumption (2007: 222). As he explains, in the context of FLT/SLA, the use of translation is "typically identified with the discredited grammar/translation method that sought to teach languages primarily by means of translation of texts and learning of grammatical rules"

(2007: 222). Traditionally, the prevalence of the Grammar-Translation Method was responsible for the students' inability to use the foreign language fluently after having studied it for a long time (Jadallah and Hasan 2011: 2). Consequently, the use of L1 in the L2 classroom started to be seen as uncommunicative, boring, pointless and irrelevant (Harmer 2001) or, in other words, this method was challenged for doing "virtually nothing to enhance students' communication ability in the language" (Brown 2000: 16). Atkinson (1987), commenting on the association of the L1 with the old-fashioned Grammar-Translation Method, maintains that the latter is nowadays often treated as a "joke" or as "the whipping boy of EFL" (1987: 242). However, he feels, that the "worst excesses of the direct method in its 1960s form should serve as a reminder that its total rejection of translation and all that it implied was clearly a case in which the baby was indeed thrown out with the bathwater" (1987: 242–43). His views, which are a clear attempt to support use of translation in the L2 teaching, are also indicative of the generally negative climate against translation as a teaching tool during the twentieth century. At the same time, such thoughts appear to contribute to the thesis' argument that, since the end of the eighteenth century and up to the end of the twentieth century, the relationship between translation and L2 teaching was almost defined by the contrast between Grammar-Translation Method and the Reform or Direct Method.

#### **2.4.2 Empirical support for L1 use in the L2 classroom**

Despite the fact that predominant, if not exclusive, use of the L2 has long been considered an important principle of second language instruction, there has always been an opposing attitude to this belief. This approach has been criticised by researchers, teachers and learners who hold the view that L1 use is beneficial in L2 teaching classes at more than one level. They generally argue that the use of the L1 is looked at as a common feature in L2 teaching, and is a natural act which seems to make a positive contribution to the learning process if used judiciously.

The positive role of the L1 in the L2 classroom has been supported by a plethora of empirical studies conducted by researchers in different parts of the world and at different times (Atkinson 1993; Swain and Lapkin 2000; Macaro 2001; Cook V. 2001; Deller and Rinvolucri 2002; Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie 2002; Widdowson 2003; Auerbach 1993 and Harbord 1992). In the 1960s, C. J. Dodson's book *Language Teaching and the Bilingual Method* (1967) was considered an attack on the ban on the mother tongue at the time. (Butzkamm and Caldwell 2009: 21–22). Bilingual techniques were found to be superior to their monolingual counterparts in studies by Sastri (1970) and Walatara (1973). Meijer's research (1974) of two classes, one bilingual and one monolingual and audiovisual, is "albeit limited, too weighty to be

disregarded” (Butzkamm 2009: 21). Kharma and Hajjaj (1989) carried out an experiment based on both surveys and class observations where the use of L1 in several activities helped students in their learning.

Ellis (1994) considering the L1 influence on L2 learning, and in an attempt to understand language transfer as a cognitive process, proposed a different framework than Selinker’s interlanguage. Rather than viewing language transfer separately from L2 learning and communication strategies, he suggested the use of L1 in both L2 communication and learning. That means that the L1 system is used not only by language comprehension and production mechanisms, but also in the hypothesis construction responsible for interlanguage development (1994: 337–338). Moreover, the L1 system can assist with making L2 input and output comprehensible (*ibid*, 339). For Ellis, this is all evidence that the cognitive turn of L2 learning theories (as opposed to behaviourist learning theories) has led to a positive shift of the L1 role in the L2 learning (*ibid*, 343). Positive effects of L1 transfer on L2 learning have also been observed by Odlin (1989), Kroll (1993), Jiang (2002; 2004) and De Groot (2002) (cited in Du 2016: 22–23).

From a different perspective, other studies have examined students’ views on their teachers’ L1 use. Schweers (1999), surveying teachers at the Puerto Rican university with regards to using their mother tongue (i.e. Spanish) within their English classes, concludes that the employment of L1 promotes dynamicity in the classroom, provides a sense of security and activates learner’s experience. Anton and DiCamilla (1999) also provide a more “psychological” explanation of the use of L1 in FL classes claiming that this teaching approach could support students in helping each other in class activities, establishing and maintaining common goals and externalising their inner speech (Leonardi 2010: 62).

Prodromou (2000) surveyed 300 Greek students at three levels (beginner, intermediate and advanced) in order to elicit their views towards the use of L1 in FL classes. The results showed that L1’s presence/role in class depended on the students’ level (beginners and intermediate were more positive, advanced were more sceptical) whereas the majority of the students opted for bilingual/bicultural teachers. Aqel’s (2006) results on a study involving the use of Arabic in teaching EFL at the University of Qatar also indicate a relation between how much the L1 is used and the level of the students, but in reverse, the higher the student’s level the higher the request for L1 in class, whereas the majority of native and non-native instructors felt it was acceptable to use Arabic in EFL teaching.

Sharma (2006), observing an EFL classroom setting of Chitwan Higher Secondary School in Nepal, draws the conclusion that judicious use of L1 helps students learn English

more effectively, saves time and makes students feel at ease and comfortable, whilst Cianflone (2009), in his research on L1 use in English courses at the University of Messina in Italy came to the same conclusions. Edstrom (2006) conducted a different kind of study, where she kept a detailed analysis of her own language use during one semester of a university-level Spanish course. Although “the findings of this self-centred study are very personal”, Edstrom maintains that L1 use is, in fact, a subjective issue, and “instead of trying to influence teachers’ behaviour by mandating L2 use, [...], it may be more appropriate to create opportunities for teachers to study their own contexts and reach realistic, local conclusions” (2006: 288). Her view that “judicious L1 use will likely look different in different classrooms” (ibid), suggests this is not only a realistic but also a flexible L2 teaching approach.

Also exploring L2 teachers’ practices and understanding of L1 use in the L2 teaching are Mowla et al. (2017). Based on interviews and recorded sessions they tried to measure the amount of L1 use of 10 Iranian teachers of English as an L2. However, the authors’ motivation was not the influence of the local L2 teaching context on the L2 teachers, but instead the influence of “a teacher education program (TEP) rested upon the tenets of critical pedagogy” (2017: 58). According to the results of their study, the negative attitudes that the teachers held towards L1 use before the TEP were overturned. More precisely, “after the TEP, it was found that they reconsidered their cognitive-oriented views, incorporated affective factors into their decision-making processes, and expressed more positive attitudes to L1 use” (2017: 58). The study, which is clearly in support of L1 use in the L2 classroom, indicates the influence of more recent trends in this topic, such as that of critical pedagogy (further discussed in Chapter 3).

It should be noted at this point, that one of the questions that has often stirred the debate on the use of L1 is whether the L2 teachers could speak the students’ L1 and most importantly, if they have to. Consequently, that led to another discussion within the L2 teaching field, which contrasts native speaker teachers with non-native speaker teachers, presumably looking for the “ideal model” or, as Rajagopalan (2005) puts it, for the “reliable model[...] for all those wishing to acquire it as a second or a foreign language” (2005: 284). Looking at how the L2 teachers’ “nativeness” has been perceived thus far in the field – and at its possible impact on the use of translation in the L2 classroom – there seems to have been some clear defining lines which have favoured native-speakers as L2 teachers. Based simply on the fact that one of the key elements of “nativeness” is childhood acquisition (Davies 2004), native speakers are viewed as “the ultimate arbiters of what is correct or acceptable language” (Braine 1999, in Walkinshaw and Hoang Oanh 2014: 2). Other justifications that have “idealised” the native-speaker teachers include their oral proficiency skills, command of vocabulary and cultural

competence (Lasagabaster and Sierra 2005), as well as acting as models of pronunciation (Wu and Ke 2009). Alongside that, students often report less stressful classes (Liu and Zhang's (2007), where the friendlier and more informal type of native-speaker teachers (Wu and Ke 2009) appears to be more appealing for engagement to oral conversations (Benke and Medgyes 2005).

Nevertheless, research on the value of non-native speaking teachers disputes the "ideal" native teacher and reveals some positive results from the perspective of students. Interestingly enough, case studies report that what is highly rated in non-native speaking teachers is precisely the "teaching" aspect or, in other words, "the teacher's personality, not nationality" (Pacek 2005: 254). More specifically, non-native teachers are generally valued for adhering to the methodology (Mahboob's 2003), their pedagogical expertise and metalinguistic awareness (Pacek 2005), as well as for their lesson's planning and exam's preparation (Benke and Medgyes 2005). Speaking and understanding the students' L1 enable teachers to better explain complex grammatical items (Cook 2005) and also to be more patient and empathetic towards the L2 learning difficulties (Cortazzi and Jin 1996). The latter relates to the fact that non-native speaking teachers are valued as successful models of L2 learning themselves, who can better understand the challenges imposed by problems such as L1 interference and can, therefore, be more eager to use effective bilingual strategies, such as code-switching and translation, compared to their monolingual teaching colleagues. However, despite the positive outcomes which indicate that there is no clear students' preference for native teachers only, and that L2 learners would rather be taught by a mix of native and non-native teachers (Lasagabaster and Sierra 2005; Kula 2011), the hiring ratio of native speaking teachers is disproportionately larger than that of the non-native ones (Clark and Paran's 2007). Canagarajah (2005) maintains that "the motivations for this marginalization" (Walkinshaw and Hoang Oanh 2014: 2) – and effectively for a negative impact on bilingual strategies and approaches – go beyond the linguistic and pedagogical arguments and are merely justified by economic and political reasons (discussed in detail in Chapter 3).

### **2.4.3 Pedagogical applications of the L1 in the L2 classroom**

The majority of studies analysing the use of L1 in FLT focus primarily on two points, the quantity of L1 use and its functions in the class. Interestingly enough, results indicate widespread consensus with regards to both the quantity of L1 use in the L2 classroom (Duff and Polio 1990, Polio and Duff 1994, Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie 2002) as well as its functions. In other words, the judicious and not exclusive use of L1, which is suggested in most cases,

revolves around one major function in L2 teaching, namely the issue of comprehension, with multiple applications.

The first application to be discussed is the utility of L1 for presenting grammar. In this case, however, the L1 choice is not supported by linguistic criteria. Next to the value of contrastive analysis where different grammar systems are being compared and contrasted for acquisition purposes, (as it has been previously explored) comes the role for presenting and explaining new material, difficult rules, complex phenomena, etc. in the learner's L1. Whether the L1 or the L2 is best for explaining grammar could be a practical issue, depending on each individual classroom setting. However, V. Cook (2001: 414) reports that most studies of cognitive processing suggest that even advanced L2 users are less efficient at absorbing information from the L2 than from the L1. This is supported by eighty-eight percent of Scottish teachers who used the L1 in Franklin's study (1990), and by all six teachers in Polio and Duff's study (1994), whilst eighty-three percent of the pupils questioned by Zimmermann (1984) wanted grammatical explanations in their mother tongue (Butzkamm and Caldwell 2009: 102). Even Turnbull (2001: 535), who maintains that teachers already use the L1, and if anything, they need encouragement to increase their L2 use, points out that under some circumstances, such as explanation of a difficult grammatical concept, use of the L1 may be efficient, coinciding with Cook's (2001:415) view that "efficiency of understanding by the students" is the main argument for using L1 for grammar.

Underlying, further, the importance of "understanding" in the L2 classroom, research has associated L1 use mostly with inferring meaning in the L2. This can be inferred from several cases. One of the most common L1 uses teachers and researchers identify is the fact that it saves learners from a feeling of frustration they might have within their L2 learning. Frustration usually emerges when students fail to understand and follow what the teacher says, and/or they cannot express what they would like to in the L2. Cook (2001) cites questions like "how do you say X in English?" or "what does Autobahn mean in English?" (2001: 414) which are most likely to rise in every L2 classroom. The strategies and techniques language teachers employ in order to explain words and phrases and convey meaning has been one of the core elements in many language teaching methodologies.

However, Cook criticises the fact that the underlying principle of all those techniques (gestures and mime, textbook illustrations, blackboard work, and careful selection and grading of words and structures) is to convey L2 meaning, avoiding at the same time, if possible totally, the L1 (Cook 2001: 414). Some researchers (Mohamed and Acklam 1992; Terrell et al. 1993; Atkinson 1987; Thornton 1999) have already claimed feelings of frustration to these

monolingual techniques, arguing that instead of helping students to understand, they lead to misunderstandings and confusion. Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009) have even depicted the use of pictures as means of explanation of abstract concepts as highly problematic, maintaining that “pictures are notoriously ambiguous and may leave pupils mystified as to the intended meaning” (ibid, 76). They also cite Dodson’s (1967) theory that pictures were to be used principally as an aid to recall rather than supplier of meaning. Folse (2008: 68) provides experimental evidence that word retention scores were significantly higher for the students who worked with translations than for those who had pictures.

Another common monolingual technique for inferring meaning is challenging students to guess the unknown vocabulary based on the context. Although it is a useful and highly “communicative” technique, it is not always reliable, and the results can be surprisingly poor, even with what would seem the easiest vocabulary to assume, such as loanwords (Jarvis and Jensen 1982: 23). Nation (2003) suggests, that although the various ways of conveying the meaning of an unknown word are equal in terms of accuracy (depending on the word), in terms of effectiveness, translation comes first (also citing Lado et al. 1967; Mishima 1967; Laufer and Schmueli 1997). The reasons lie with the fact that L1 translations are “usually clear, short and familiar, qualities which are very important in effective definitions (McKeown 1993: 25). Bouangeune (2009) study’s results coincide with Nation regarding the effectiveness of using L1 in teaching vocabulary through translation exercises and dictation.

Speeding up vocabulary growth via translation is also supported by studies of dictionary use. Surveys on dictionary preference (Laufer and Kimmel 1997; Atkins and Varantola 1997) and learner use (Baxter 1980) indicate bilingual dictionaries as learners’ favourite choice. The results should not come as a surprise, since effective use of monolingual dictionaries presupposes knowledge of a large amount of vocabulary (at least 2000 words), as well as interpretation of definitions. However, as Nation further explains, most learners of English need at least five to six years to achieve this condition (2003: 4).

Another significant study that contributes to the body of research on the effects of vocabulary learning as a result of dictionary work in L2 classroom and collaborative EFL translational writing is that of Bruton (2007). The study suggests that the use of dictionary support in L2 collaborative writing-translational tasks can lead to “significant vocabulary knowledge gains” (2007: 362), and potentially foster contextualised bilingual dictionary use, which can further enhance language writing. Last but not least, such challenging translational tasks may lead to “prompt extended oral interactions and language processing in the target language”, eventually resulting in integrated language teaching/learning (ibid). In the same



vein, next to writing and speaking activities, some researchers demonstrate the connection between the receptive activities and use of dictionaries as a pedagogical tool for vocabulary learning. The latter occurs through retention of words that have been “picked up” during listening and reading activities (Hummel 2010; Macizo and Bajo 2006; Bruton 2007). Fageeh and Mekheimer (2011) report the results of their own study, concluding that “bilingualised dictionaries are more effective than monolingual and bilingual dictionaries” (2011: 918).

In view of all of the above, Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009), who strongly advocate that precision of meaning is important, reject the argument that providing the students with the L1 equivalent right away, as opposed to encouraging them to find it themselves, is less effective for meaning retention. They argue that, although for some students “solving the puzzle might be an exciting intellectual challenge, for others it may constitute a frustration brick wall obstructing language learning altogether”, and conclude that “failure to afford help is an offence” (2010: 78–9).

Surprisingly enough, and “contrary to semi-popular opinion” (Krashen 2006: 1), the Comprehension Hypothesis does not forbid use of L1 in the L2 teaching, however, it does provide guidelines to ensure that use of the L1 only takes place if it facilitates more comprehensible input. With that goal, Krashen sees providing background knowledge through discussion or reading in the L1, offering quick explanations and even the translation of a problematic word, as ways to make some difficult topics more transparent and the entire discussion more comprehensible (ibid). Nation (2003) refers to similar situations as “meaning focused input and output”, where students have to be conscious of what to say and how to say it (2003: 3). He cites Lameta-Tufuga (1994) who defends the role of L1 in such meaning focused tasks, in terms of fully understanding the context in advance of the task, actively involving all students in discussion of ideas, and providing relevant L2 vocabulary. Knight (1996) came to similar conclusions when L2 learners performed better in their writing tasks after a preparatory L1 discussion. Villamil and de Guerrero’s study (1996) on Spanish students learning to write in English confirmed that “the L1 was an essential tool for making meaning of text, retrieving language from memory, exploring and expanding content, guiding their action through the task, and maintaining dialogue” (1996: 60).

Last but not least, when discussing how use of L1 and translation facilitate the function of comprehension in the L2 classroom, some researchers have also focused on the socio-affective aspect of it. Liao (2006) refers to three specific functions of L1 use: a) L1 as a memory strategy enhancing vocabulary and grammar learning, 2) L1 as an effective strategy which reduces learning anxiety and increases learning motivation and 3) L1 as a social strategy, used

by teachers to create a friendlier and more “human” class environment, and assist students to better interact and work with each other. Katchen (1990) has already spoken of “how communication in L1 may create rapport amongst students and teacher” (Mahboob 2003: 58) whereas Harbord (1992) “has acknowledg[ed] “humanistic” reasons for L1 use” (ibid). Yi-chun Pan and Yi-ching Pan (2010) identify three major categories for teacher code-switching, which apart from curriculum access, include classroom management and interpersonal relations. They cite Edstrom (2006) who recommends student praising in the L1 to make it sound more real, and argues that “concern about communicating respect and creating a positive environment overrides the desire to maximize TL use” (in 2010: 93). They also agree with Cook (2001) who suggests that L2 teachers who attempt to integrate L1 in their classrooms should consider alongside efficiency and learning, the factors of naturalness and external relevance. They conclude that these four guidelines can facilitate “students’ foreign language learning in ways that the use of the TL most likely never could” (in 2010: 91). At the same time, Boakye and Southey (2011) have been interested in the impact of the socio-affective factors of motivation, attitude, self-efficacy and engagement, specifically on reading comprehension by L1 and L2 English speakers. The results showed lack of these factors for a large number of students in the particular L2 English group and prompted the authors to highlight not only the importance of these factors but the potential implications for L2 teaching and materials. When it comes to motivation, they suggest that “[i]f texts are too difficult to comprehend, students, especially L2 students, tend to adopt surface strategies such as guessing and memorising. If these texts are predominant, students become demotivated and lose interest in reading and in academic tasks” (2011: 50). As for the reading engagement, Boakye and Southey stress the significance of authentic texts, which reflect the interests and personal experiences of the students, as well as the necessity to apply prior knowledge (as a reading strategy) (ibid 51), which for the L2 students comes via the L1.

Therefore, and under all these circumstances, there seems to be hardly any effective reason to insist on a strictly monolingual approach, or to deny the positive influence of the L1 as a pedagogical, cognitive and socio-affective tool in the L2 teaching.

## **2.5 Communicative Approach: the notion of Communicative Competence**

Whereas Second Language Acquisition Theory was first introduced in the USA by Stephen Krashen, as criticism to structuralist and behaviourist theories embodied in the audio-linguistics, a parallel reaction was taking place in the UK. This came against the Situational Language Teaching, which was based on practicing basic structures in meaningful situation-

based activities. British applied linguists turned against the view of language as a set of structures and emphasised another fundamental dimension of language that was not adequately addressed in current language approaches at the time, namely the functional and communicative potential of language. This reaction crystallised itself into the “Communicative Approach”, also called “Communicative Language Teaching” (CLT).

The Communicative Approach in language teaching derives from a theory of language as communication, where the goal of teaching is to develop what Hymes (1971) referred to as “communicative competence”. In his article paper “On Communicative Competence” (1971), Hymes condemns Chomsky’s theory of linguistic competence, which is concerned with the “ideal speaker-listener” operating within “a completely homogenous speech community”, who knows their language perfectly, and remains unaffected by grammatically irrelevant conditions (Chomsky 1965: 3–4). Such an idealisation is regarded by Hymes as sterile. In his article he strives to reinstate the importance of a communicative view of language. He outlines the way in which a linguistic theory could provide a more constitutive role for sociocultural factors. The term Hymes has suggested for a knowledge of the rules for understanding and producing both the referential and the social meaning of language is communicative competence. He sees grammar as just one of the several sectors of communicative competence and also stretches the importance of feasibility, appropriateness to context, and that of accepted usage, which concerns whether or not something is in fact done (Brumfit and Johnson 1979: 4).

In a similar path, Halliday (1970) has pointed out, that “[w]e use language to represent our experience of the processes, persons, objects, abstractions, qualities, states, and relations of the world around us and inside us” (1970: 145–6). His functional account of language use has been elaborated in a powerful theory of the functions of language, which complements Hymes’ view of communicative competence (Brumfit and Johnson 1979; Savignon 2003). Paulston (1974), in her paper “Linguistic and Communicative Competence” argues that communicative competence is not “simply a term but a concept basic to understanding social interaction”. She uses the term in Hymes’ sense to refer to the social rules of language use, and then argues that there are important implications for language teaching in using such a concept of communicative competence rather than taking it to mean simply linguistic interaction in the target language. Therefore, communicative competence seems to incorporate intuitive functional knowledge and control of the principles of language usage.

Speaking in terms of learning an L2 in the L2 classroom, it simply means that the L2 learner needs to learn how to use the language both correctly and appropriately. This has translated into different models of language proficiency or communicative competence.

Discussing the necessity to clearly define the content specifications and the guidelines for a pedagogical framework for communicative competence, Celce-Murcia et al. (1993) argue that “the first comprehensive model of communicative competence that was intended to serve educational purposes is that of Canale and Swain (1980), further elaborated in Canale (1983)” (1993: 15). That consisted of four basic components: 1) linguistic competence, referring to knowledge of grammar, syntax and semantics 2) sociolinguistic competence, referring to language use according to socio-cultural rules 3) strategic competence, which involves use of strategies in case of communication breakdown and 4) discourse competence, concerning the cohesion and coherence of utterances/sentences (ibid). Although discourse competence appears here as a separate subcategory of communicative competence, Stubbs (1983) and Brown (1987) consider it as a complement of grammatical competence, whereas Schachter (1990) believes that it is the same with socio-linguistic competence. Regardless of the criticisms, and despite the fact that Canale and Swain’s model is not the only one existing, “it has been extremely influential in defining major facets of communicative language use, and has been used as a starting point for most subsequent studies on the issue” (Celce-Murcia et al. (1993: 15).

With regards to the learning theory underlying CLT, three main principles are suggested, which can be inferred from CLT practices. These include a) the communicative principle: activities that involve real communication, b) the task principle: activities in which language is used to carry out meaningful tasks, and c) the meaningfulness principle: language that is meaningful to the learner (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 66). The principles address the conditions needed to promote the process of L2 learning rather than L2 acquisition, whereas Krashen has been more concerned with acquisition, as the basic process in developing language proficiency. Around the same time, Johnson (1982) and Littlewood (1984) developed an alternative learning theory, according to which the acquisition of communicative competence in a language is an example of skill development. From a more contemporary perspective, Chang (2011) argues that both American and British researchers see CLT currently as an approach which aims at communicative competence being the goal of L2 teaching, and developing procedures for the teaching of the four skills (Chang 2011: 16).

To sum up, Guochen (2008) regards the Communicative Approach as a set of principles about teaching, including recommendations about method and syllabus, where the focus is on meaningful communication not structure, use not usage. In this approach, students are given tasks to accomplish using language instead of studying the language. The syllabus is based primarily on functional, not structural development. There is also less emphasis on error

correction as fluency and communication become more important than accuracy. Authentic and meaningful language input becomes more important as well. The class becomes more student-centred as students accomplish their tasks with other students, while the teacher plays more of an observer role (Guo Chen 2008: 82).

However, even such an innovative and contemporary approach with the support of enthusiastic proponents around the world, did not come with its own criticism. As early as 1978, Widdowson argued that a purely functional approach to language and language use did not do justice to the “whole complex business of communication” and called for the “consideration of the nature of discourse and of the abilities that are engaged in creating it” (1978: ix). He noted, however, that the “present state of knowledge about language and language learning is such that it would be irresponsible to be anything but tentative” (1978: ix–x). Indeed, in the early and mid-1970s, when the principles of CLT were being developed, theoretical and applied linguistics had not produced a clear enough description of communicative competence for methodologies to apply in tackling the complexity of communicative language use. There was no coherent and explicitly formulated pragmatic and sociolinguistic model available to draw upon; nor had discourse analysis reached sufficient development and recognition (Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei and Thurrell 1997: 143).

The lack of firm linguistic guidelines led to a diversity of communicative approaches that shared only a general common objective, namely, to prepare learners for real-life communication rather than emphasising structural accuracy. In Dubin and Olshtain’s (1986) words, as “with the tale about the five blind men who touched separate parts of an elephant and so each described something else, the word ‘communicative’ has been applied so broadly that it has come to have different meanings for different people” (1986: 69).

Even though the aforementioned metaphor is not necessarily negative, in his article “The Myth of the Communicative Approach” (2003) Javier Díaz voices stronger criticism against the use of the term “communicative”, by comparing different textbooks that claim to be “communicative”. He claims the term “communicative” appears to refer to a number of different things; there also appear to be some contradictions between the intentions claimed by their authors and their actual contents. Díaz summarises the different uses of the term “communicative” into five categories: 1) as “talking” 2) as “application of grammar” 3) as “goal” 4) as “interaction” and 5) as “skill”. As he notes, these different meanings for the term “communicative” often coexist in the same textbook, whereas in many cases, the term is applied in a different way when referred to in the foreword, in the instructor’s manual and in practice, when applied in the student’s book ([www.ehlt.flinders.edu.au](http://www.ehlt.flinders.edu.au)).

Majid Al-Humaidi (2001) criticises the use of the Communicative Approach outside the European context, originating the problem with this kind of language teaching in the fact that it is an approach and not a method. The difference between an approach and a method is that methods are fixed teaching systems whereas approaches form the theory and leave the teaching system to the creativity and innovation of the teacher. According to Al-Humaidi, this fact, although it may be regarded as advantageous by imaginative teachers, creates a problem in the Saudi context, because teachers in such contexts “opt for clearly designed material and procedures for they do not prefer to shoulder the burdens of looking on their own for ways and techniques of teaching, if they have the ability to do so” (www.faculty.ksu.edu.sa).

Sandra Savignon (2003) on the other hand, adopts a slightly different critical stance. She too agrees that the enthusiasm for the theories supporting the Communicative Approach has resulted in an array of activities increasingly labelled communicative on one hand, but also in much uncertainty over what constitutes the essential features of CLT, on the other. However, she argues that teachers’ confusion stems from their (wrong) beliefs that CLT dismisses concepts and practices such as knowledge of rules of syntax, traditional teaching techniques (repetition, translation), concern with reading and writing activities, etc. whereas in fact CLT does not reject any of these teaching techniques (Savignon 2003: 22).

Furthermore, Hammerly, in his book *Fluency and Accuracy: Toward Balance in Language Teaching and Learning* (1991), makes some very interesting observations regarding the emphasis on communication in CLT. As he points out, “great harm has been done to SL learners by emphasizing communicative survival at the expense of language control: millions of students have mislearned languages” (1991: 126). His argument is that in remote SL situations students do not have any immediate outside communication needs, so there is no reason to encourage them to survive communicatively as soon as possible. Moreover, when the ability to communicate freely is given primacy in the SL program from the start, students do not normally develop their linguistic competence beyond the minimum required to communicate with their classroom peers. Something that particularly suffers as a result of this communicative instruction is the communicative redundant features of the SL, which are never mastered, because they are not necessary to convey messages. Unfortunately, according to Hammerly, such features are primarily what makes e.g. English English and French French (ibid 127). Interestingly enough, concepts such as “standardised features and languages” which were more typical of the twentieth century come under scrutiny in the next century. The relationship between language and communication as known thus far is being challenged,

causing the relationship between translation and L2 teaching to enter a new phase (discussed in Chapters 3 and 4).

## **2.6 Implications of the Communicative Approach for the relationship between translation and L2 teaching**

It is precisely within this context of criticism that Anthony Phillip Reid Howatt (1988) argues that despite the theoretical innovations and practical changes to L2 classrooms, the Communicative Approach, or else Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), has retained some characteristics of the Direct Method. Referring to what he sees as connections between the two methods, he claims that:

CLT has adopted all the major principles of 19th century reform: the primacy of the spoken language, for instance, the inductive teaching of grammar, the belief in connected texts and, most significant of all, the monolingual (direct method) principle that languages should be taught in the target language, not in the pupils' mother tongue. (1988: 25)

Indeed, with regards to the role of translation and the L1 in the L2 learning, CLT appears to hold a predominately negative view towards it, despite the fact that – as sharply captured by Savignon (2003) – in principle, neither is completely rejected but suggested only in exceptional circumstances (Richards and Rodgers 2001). Whether it has been the result of a misunderstanding or not, the consensus amongst most language teachers and researchers is that avoiding any form of L1 use can be only beneficial (Larsen-Freeman 2000: 135), echoing at the same time, Krashen's impetus that the more L2 input in the classroom, the better it is for the L2 learner.

Bearing this in mind, and from the point of view of CLT, translation has been accused of not complying with the notion of communicative competence, and more precisely with all four elements of linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence. Apart from the views on translation's negative influence on the acquisition of L2 grammar, syntax and vocabulary, translation has also been regarded as an activity with "no place in a communicative methodology" (Carreres 2006: 5), and which is also independent from the other four skills (Malmkjaer 1998; Zojer 2009: 33–34). Having previously discussed the relationship between translation and linguistic competence, the remainder of the present chapter deals with translation as discourse competence, and more precisely, a view of translation from the

perspective of a process and a task-based activity which practices all four skills. Translation's relationship with sociolinguistic and strategic competence is analysed in depth in the next two chapters (Chapter 3 and 4), which focus on the recent developments of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching, in the last two decades. In fact, it is argued that both those elements highlight the two most contemporary aspects of translation, within, albeit not only, the context of L2 teaching.

### **2.6.1 Translation as a process-oriented L2 learning activity**

Lado (1964) has presented a series of arguments explaining that translation exercises should not be used in foreign language teaching. Amongst others, he claims (1964: 53–54) that: “Psychologically, the process of translation is more complex than, different from, and unnecessary for speaking, listening, reading and writing”. In her list of arguments “anti-translation” (Zojer 2009: 33), Zojer mentions translation as a separate fifth skill, not directly related to the other four skills, and thus not an appropriate teaching tool for them (ibid). In a, perhaps, more moderate version of the argument, translation is accused of practicing only two skills (reading and writing) (Carreres 2006: 5), and being time-inefficient for practicing the skills of listening, and particularly of speaking (Zojer 2009: 33).

In order to address this argument, and examine if translation as a L2 tool is in fact so independent of, and irrelevant for, the four skills that make up for language proficiency, different approaches to the issue have been examined. Nord (1997) for instance, supports translation not as an isolated activity, but as a “functionalist” and interpersonal one. Her analysis is based on the different competences acquired through translation, namely linguistic competence in both languages, cultural competence in the TL, technical competence in research, etc. On the other hand, Duff (1989) has demonstrated that translation activities can be beneficial for the development of the four skills, if the spontaneous translation exercises are replaced with main translation tasks, based on careful preparatory activities on reading, listening, writing and speaking (1989: 7). The above, thus, indicate a shift amongst scholars and researchers away from the traditional isolated translation exercise towards a view of translation as a complete task, which involves and practices all four skills of discourse competence, and is currently highlighted as a process, as opposed to a product.

In this same line of thought, and bearing in mind the associations between translation with the Grammar-Translation Method, some researchers have drawn comparisons between the translator training setting and the language teaching setting. Malmkjaer (1998) criticises the type of translation with which many translation trainees and L2 learners were accustomed



in various education institutions and language courses until the late 1970s and early 1980s. She condemns the familiar picture of handing out texts (or even passages from texts) to be translated, without any further information on the source, the type and the author of the ST. She also takes a stance with the fact that for years, it has been unanimously accepted that the reason for translating within the educational environment was the teacher's wish to test or train a specific area of the student's language competence, and perhaps – in further education – their ability to translate (1998: 6). After the completion of the translation exercise followed what Zojer calls “who will take the next sentence?” approach, in her attempt to clarify the full impact of translation's use (or misuse) in that context (2009: 45).

Defending the role of translation in the FLT, Wills (1996) argues that the aforementioned conception of translation is no longer shared by researchers involved in translator training. Translation is no longer seen as a product-focused activity, which gives students no scope for discussing meaning. Since the late 1970s, translation has come to be seen increasingly as a complex process involving a variety of behaviours and skills together with and/or based on “a variety of cognitive components which are the building blocks of translator intelligence” (Wills 1996: 161). These behaviours, skills and cognitive components are brought into operation in a text-production process. Malmkjaer (1998) has analysed the steps that such a training process should follow, in the hope to exemplify its relevance for the L2 teaching, as well.

According to her description, the translator has a set amount of time in which to produce in a target language (TL) a target text (TT), based on a source text (ST) which is produced in a source language (SL). The target text must fulfil a specific purpose for a specific readership. At the same time, the ST has also a specific purpose to fulfil for a specific readership, but the purposes and readerships for the two texts are never quite the same. To complete the process, the translator engages in at least five activities that all subsume other activities, which are commonly considered wholly acceptable language learning activities. These five activities are: Anticipation, Resource Exploitation, Co-operation, Revision and Translating (Malmkjaer 1998: 7). During Anticipation translators establish the context for both ST and TT. They gather resources such as dictionaries and parallel texts in the TL, which are researched for terminology, phrasing, structure and layout. They define the TT and make plans for possible cooperation with other translators and other kinds of experts. The texts collected during Anticipation are analysed during the Resource Exploitation phase, which involves appropriate use of dictionaries and terminology banks. Translating, which begins around the same time as Resource Exploitation, tends to give rise to a number of problems, some of which can be pinpointed and often solved during the phase of Cooperation between translators and other

experts. Any problems which have arisen are documented so that reports on them and on the solutions adopted, and the reasons for adopting them, can be submitted to the client along with the first version of the TT (Malmkjaer 1998: 8). Therefore, what Malmkjaer aims to underline at this point, is that the process of translation as a training activity, which is impossible without the involvement of all four reading, writing, speaking and listening skills, should in fact serve as a model for the translation activity in the L2 classroom.

Following the same path, other researchers have analysed translation as a process rather than a product. From this perspective, translation is highlighted merely as a language learning contextualised activity. It is analysed more as a means to an end which is addressed to language teachers, rather than the goal of the process, which is addressed to target language readers (Vermes 2010: 83). Therefore, Gile (1995) has distinguished between “school translation” and “professional translation” (1995: 22), Schäffner (1998) has distinguished between “market translation” and “classroom translation” (1998: 131–2), and Klaudy (2003) refers to “pedagogical translation” as opposed to “real translation” (2003: 133).<sup>3</sup> Pintado-Gutiérrez (2018) on the other hand, does not distinguish between terms. On the contrary, in an effort to indicate the problematic with terminology when it comes to the uses and roles of translation and L1 in the L2 teaching, she highlights “the singularity of pedagogical translation as a category of translation in language pedagogy with an intrinsic value in itself” (2018: 15). According to Pintado-Gutiérrez, “pedagogical translation” is one of the categories, alongside “code-switching” and “interior translation”, in her all-inclusive approach of “translation in language teaching and learning”, expanding on Guy Cook’s (2010) original term TILT (2019: 16).

Within this spirit of “pedagogical translation” can be understood Bleyhesh Al-Amri’ and Abdul-Raof’s (2014) mechanism of an “L2-learning-based translation” (2014: 5). The latter involves all learners language skills, highlights the structural differences and similarities between L1 and L2, underlines the contextualisation of vocabulary items, and enhances L2 cultural awareness (2014: 5). Whyatt (2009) argues that, “although the aim of translating is to produce a translation, the educational value for the L2 learner comes in fact from being

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<sup>3</sup> Vermes (2010) appears to be confused when discussing Klaudy’s translation types. Whereas “pedagogical translation” is clearly understood as a “tool of improving the language learner’s foreign language proficiency” (2010: 83), therefore translation in L2 teaching, “real translation” aims at developing translation skills (Klaudy 2003: 133). Nevertheless, “pedagogical translation” could also include translation for translation trainees, if one considers that the addressee of the latter translations are mostly the teacher and not a real-world target audience (Vermes 2010: 84).

involved in the process of translating” (2009: 195). In this context, translation is a cognitive task for the L2 learner, which involves various benefits, requirements and challenges. Amongst them, Whyatt emphasises two aspects of translation as a cognitive activity: creative interpretation and analytical inference. Viewing translation as an intellectual act, he compares it to a game, “where the player (translator, L2 learner) employs various strategies in order to succeed and accomplish the task. Similar to a game of skill, translation involves problem-solving and decision-making. It, therefore, stimulates creative thinking and flexibility of expression” (ibid, 198 –99).

In another attempt to apply this concept of translation in the L2 classroom, Siepmann (1996) suggests that for the “designing [of] translation exercises, all areas of the translational learning process are relevant” (1996: 113–14), and adds that they should all aim at promoting translational awareness (ibid). Whereas Siepmann offers a plethora of exercise-examples, Konigs (1994) has offered a more specific model of how translation can be introduced in the L2 classroom. His model entails two sessions, which he describes as “problem-oriented” and “self-reflective” (cited in Zojer 2009: 43). According to his model, translating is complemented with group work, and self-reflective processes which students use in order to think what they have to do and also comment on their thinking process, echoing the approach of Think-aloud Protocols (TAPs), which have been used extensively since the 1990s in Translation Studies (Bernardini 2001: 241). As Konigs further argues, this holistic approach towards translation involves the practice of all four “traditionally taught” skills in the L2 teaching, in what he describes as a “comprehensive and very practical translation exercise” (cited in Zojer 2009: 44). In the same vein, Siregar (2018) researches implementation of translation in the L2 teaching but primarily from the students’ perspectives. In a survey which was conducted to “explore the students’ perceptions on current English subject learning, motivation and interest in translation learning” (2018: 92) students responded that although task-based learning was valued as a learning method, cooperative learning was slightly more favourable. Students felt that working on the translation task in groups helped them to solve it better than individually. It also prompted them to participate and contribute more to the discussion of ideas with their peers, as well as remaining motivated throughout what they perceived to be a difficult task. All in all, Siregar concludes that integration of translation in the L2 teaching should also take into account the socio-affective aspect of the process, that is the students’ perceptions for the most suitable design of a translation task.

On the other hand, Bleyhesh Al-Amri and Abdul-Raof’s view (2014) on how to integrate translation into the L2 teaching, focuses more on the content of the process, which involves the

practice of all four skills. Their model is based on the careful selection of L2 real-life texts (preferably journalistic discourse), the translation of which incorporates a series of listening, speaking and writing activities. However, great emphasis is put on the reading comprehension of the text, especially in the development of the critical reading skills. Correct analysis of the source text is a necessary pre-condition for the production of translation; in fact, “if done properly”, they see “no discernible difference between the reading activities normally found in FL classes and those approached from a translation point of view” (2014: 9–10). Indeed, their focus of attention on the reading part of the translation process has been already shared by other researchers, who stress the significant role of reading skills. According to Mitchell (1996), this is one element that has been overlooked in the translation process:

Any translation task requires many different skills, all of which are important. One skill in particular plays a vital role when a translator first encounters a text, and yet it is usually glossed over in translation studies. This is the reading skill. (1996: 89)

His comments sound surprising in the L2 teaching field, considering that translation as a L2 tool has been accused of having exclusive relation to the skill(s) of reading (and writing). Nevertheless, whether more needs to be done on this issue or not, the importance of the relationship between translation and reading is hardly one to dismiss. In her article “Translation as a Language Teaching Technique”, Malikamas, (2008) also sees reading comprehension as closely related to translation. She regards “textual analysis as the first step in the translation process”, since before one can do any translation work, one must read the text and thoroughly analyse it for features such as sentence structure, context and register, which further improves the reading skills of the students ([www.e4inl.com](http://www.e4inl.com)). Adopting a similar view, Tzu-Yi Lee (2013) has applied professional translation assessment instead of the commonly-applied traditional word-by-word grading in the studies of Chang (2006) and Itto (2004) to investigate whether use of translation influences L2 reading comprehension. The results indicate that using translation after reading enhances both reading comprehension competence as well as translation accuracy and expression (2013: 4, 17). Echoing the others, Colina (2015) clearly identifies reading as a pre-translation activity, which helps students “understand the process of reading comprehension and how it affects translation”, teaches them “the importance of and role of world knowledge and background knowledge and schemata in reading and in translation”, as well as helps “to undo the influence of traditional approaches to reading in the language classroom (approaches that viewed reading as the decoding and replacement of

linguistic units)” (2017: 49). Her sample activities focus on the pragmatic factors of the ST and the TT and discussion of the translation decisions, such as analysis of the ST and TT, text types, genres, comparison of the text functions, use of previous knowledge and experiences as well as parallel text analysis (2017: 53).

Belyayev (1963) has earlier expressed another interesting approach to translation and reading comprehension, which on closer inspection, is reminiscent of the process of translation as described by Malmkjaer. He, as well, relates the process of translation to the involvement of all four skills and, in this process, he defines two basic aspects: 1) comprehension of thoughts expressed by means of one language, and 2) expression of these thoughts by means of another language. As he remarks, however, in some schools the process of translation is turned “upside down”. This simply means, that instead of expressing thoughts apprehended in the foreign language by means of the native language, translation is used in order to understand the text and grasp the thoughts expressed in the foreign language. He opposes the rule “first translate and then understand”, as it is suggested in this educational context, with another rule - “first understand and then translate”. In other words, it is not translation which must precede comprehension, but comprehension which must precede translation. Reading without understanding is not true reading, just as translation made to achieve comprehension will never be adequate translation because in such a case it will be determined, not by ideas, but by the mechanical juxtaposition of lexical and grammatical formations. For a foreign text to be well translated it must first be understood without translation. It is only then that “the finished translation [will] conform completely with the basic educational principle of consciousness in teaching” (1963: 167–8).

Rossa O’Muireartaigh (2009), in her approach of using “terminology as an aid to enhancing reading skills” (2009: 215), also deals with the genuine difficulty of comprehending a text in a foreign language without the “help” of translation. Her view does not defy Belyayev’s principle that translation should not be utilised as a comprehension L2 tool. Rather, it is concerned with what Coady (1997a) calls “something of a beginner’s paradox” (1997a: 229), in order to describe the genuine situation where learners without enough lexical knowledge themselves are expected to acquire new vocabulary based on extensive reading. O’Muireartaigh agrees with Lewis (2002) and Ulijn and Strother (1990) that in the process of understanding a text, grammar and syntax are supplementary elements to lexis (O’Muireartaigh 2009: 216). Therefore, his approach to textual comprehension is based on 1) isolating words from the syntactical structures in which they are embedded, 2) working specifically with terminology, and 3) making the connections between the terms the starting point of

understanding the text.<sup>4</sup> By following this process, “we have managed to make a highly technical text dealing with an unfamiliar specialized knowledge area comprehensible. In effect, we have inverted the reading process” (ibid: 223). He concludes that this exercise can have various applications in the L2 teaching, not only for special and technical purposes, but even for the more general L2 learner. He cites the benefit of having key concepts and the relations between them thoroughly explained in advance (Herman et al. 1987: 263), as well as the benefit of moving around the text when reading in a non-linear fashion, and thus “overcoming the processing overload that can occur from linear syntax” (O’Muireartaigh 2009: 224).

In conjunction with translation and reading comprehension, some researchers have focused their investigations on the “special bond” between translation and writing, on the simple basis that when translating into the L2, the translator aims to produce a foreign text, that is a text different to their native language. Hence, the translator runs into the problem of synthesis – a process of reconstruction and production. The text to be reconstructed or produced should express all aspects of the intricate meanings (explicit and implicit) manifested in the original. The effect of translation on both languages is summed up by Barhouarov:

Translation into the mother tongue appears, in the first place, to be one of the means in developing skills of understanding, perception of foreign speech (oral, in case of translation by ear, and written, if translation of a foreign text is meant). As far as translation into a foreign language is concerned, it is, first of all, a means of developing speech habits, that is a synthesis of foreign speech (again, of oral and written speech respectively). (1983: 15)

Although Barhouarov does not appear here to be dismissive of translating into the L2, this has not been a common response in literature when it came to the issue of directionality in translation. In fact, it has been a far cry from it, with Newmark stating that “translat(ing) into your language of habitual use [...] is the only way you can translate naturally, accurately and with maximum effectiveness” (1988: 3). Grosman has further argued that “translation theory holds that ideally all translations must be done by native speakers of the language of the target culture” (2000: 17) whilst Campbell states that “translating into a second language is very different from translating into the first language” (1998: 57). Indeed, translating in the L2 has

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<sup>4</sup> For further explanation of how terminology can enhance reading skills, see O’Muireartaigh, R. (2009).

long been a neglected or ignored notion in the traditional Translation Studies (Pavlović 2013; Ferreira and Schwieter 2016). At the same time, the assumption that it can only serve a pedagogical purpose, such as practising grammar, is “still widely present in Europe, [... and] can be supported by the fact that international organizations accept only the translation into the mother tongue” (Pavlović 2013: 150).

Despite criticism in the literature (Kelly 2003; Pokorn 2005) against translation in L2 or, “inverse translation (IT)” (Ferreira and Schwieter 2016), there has been an increasing interest in understanding and analysing both the process and the product of IT, as well as in comparing the cognitive perspectives of inverse and direct translation (Ferreira and Schwieter 2016: 91). Ferreira (2014) understands both types of translation as “any other writing task”, that is “a recursive task by nature, in the sense that it is a process successively built upon itself” (ibid, 92). Moreover, a study conducted by Pavlović (2013) concluded that the problems involved in L1 and L2 translation “are largely of the same types and frequencies. This shows that fundamentally there is no difference in the difficulty of the L1 and L2 translation, both involve the same problems, and in equal measure” (2013: 163). According to the study, the most significant variable was the translator and how quickly and successfully they coped with the problems, leaving the author to conclude that more training and practice into that direction could yield equally positive results.

Without directly addressing the issue of directionality, Kirsten Hummel also advocates inverse translation, when she compares translation with an L2 writing course (1995). She claims that while composing directly in the L2 certainly has a necessary and valuable role in the L2 curriculum, it can be suggested that a translation course provides a valuable supplement to the standard L2 writing course. Her main argument is that translation exercises involving isolated sentences or short texts oblige the learner to focus on accurately expressing concepts that they are capable of understanding, but might otherwise avoid attempting to express in the second language (1995: 446).

What she regards as an added advantage over writing and composing directly in the L2, has been also considered as a means to hinder or restrict the learner’s free mode and choice of expression, or a way to stagger their learning progression by overloading them with unknown lexis and structures (Zojer 2009: 33–34). Nevertheless, forcing the learner to exploit second language structures that they might otherwise circumvent can be also beneficial. Requiring students to reformulate their L1 sentences into the L2 means that their attention is focused on specific syntactic and lexical constructions that the L2 employs to convey ideas conveyed by other linguistic means in their L1, thus, making them aware of the issue of equivalence between

languages. Moreover, composing directly in the L2 would not explicitly reveal such systemic differences between the two languages and the learner might fail to benefit from the contrastive analysis issues. According to Hummel, translation exercises allow these differences to become salient for the learner. They also address the problem or fear of taking risks, since as she explains, once they reach a certain level of linguistic development learners may stagnate and refuse to stretch themselves (1995: 446–7).

Robert Tuck (1998) also advocates for the use of translation into L2 as an exercise in guided writing. Parallel to the linguistic awareness and the cognitive aspect of translation/writing exercises, he underlines the writing correction scheme used by the teacher as an important part of the exercise. Familiarity with it can allow the students to correct themselves, whilst it is ideal for peer correction, for pair work, and it can also be incorporated into a broader classroom task. In the same article, Tuck also attacks the argument of translation being a product-focused activity, with mere emphasis on its final versions. As he explains, there has recently been a general drift away from a product-focused approach to writing towards a process one. That means that instead of emphasising the imitation of different kinds of model texts, where students are required to expand on them, or make minor changes and substitutions to them, a process-focused approach is currently preferable. The latter emphasises the composing processes writers make use of in writing, such as planning, drafting and revising, and seeks to improve students' writing skills by developing their use of composing processes. The process approach concentrates more on the means rather than the end. Students are free to construct their own compositions and are encouraged to use all the cognitive processes that are naturally required in order to do so (Tuck 1998).

Stoddart (2000) also understands translation within this context of writing as a process. He argues that students see it as a mechanical, dull activity because they are not aware of the benefits of translation as a process. However, making it more process-focused provides learners with a more holistic view of the L2. Translation can be made a truly integrative activity, practicing all four skills, and encouraging students to manipulate the target language together, through drafting, editing and reviewing, which makes translation less mechanical and product-focused (Stoddart 2000).

Zojer (2009) underlines another significant aspect stemming from an approach to translation as a discourse competence, namely the motivation factor. In fact, her reasoning derives mostly from the pre-translation phase, which involves a great deal of listening and speaking opportunities. Through group discussions with peers, learners develop not only social skills, but also a high level of autonomy and self-confidence, in order to defend their decisions-



making and arrive at an end-product process, as opposed to the end-product itself. In other words, she emphasises the importance of breaking down the myth of the “one perfect” or “ultimate translation”, and highlighting it from the perspective of a process, leading to multiple outcomes. Therefore, by constantly observing some degree of progress, the learner’s motivation will remain high, and feelings of anxiety and frustration will be reduced to a minimum, if any at all (2009: 47).

Another interesting view of how translation reduces feelings of anxiety is offered by Sewell (2004), who establishes some connections amongst the Communicative Approach, translation and the concept of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA).<sup>5</sup> Discussing why translation activities in the L2 classroom are less likely to cause feelings of anxiety, compared to other communicative activities (mostly speaking and interacting ones), highlights translation from a different perspective than the ones discussed so far. Sewell argues against the Communicative Method and favours the activity of translation, judging it from five, rather psychological angles, which include 1) the need for confidence and self-esteem, 2) the need “not to lose face”, 3) the need to be rewarded, 4) the need for certainty, closure, autonomy, and 5) the needs arising from any introversion in our personalities (Sewell 2004: 153). At first, her views appear to almost contradict translation as a communicative activity. However, her intentions are different. By comparing translation to other activities of Communicative Approach she wishes to draw attention to the fact that presenting students with a whole task of translation is not only a rewarding and satisfying activity but puts them in control of their own learning. Being autonomous means that learners can pace themselves, predict what is required, make decisions about how best to learn, and to what degree they wish to interact with others. Most importantly, this latter aspect favours not only the risk-taking, extraverted personalities, as discussed before, but the introverted personalities, as well (Sewell 2004: 154–161), making translation a suitable task for all L2 learners.

All in all, drawing a general conclusion to everything that has been discussed so far with regards to the development of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching in the twentieth century, Chapter 2 deals with the views that translation as an L2 teaching tool attracted during that time, and the arguments that sustained those views. The chapter argues

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<sup>5</sup> For many years, scholars have considered the anxiety-provoking potential of learning a foreign language, trying to establish a relationship between anxiety and foreign language achievement. They conceive foreign language anxiety as a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986: 125,127–8).

that translation maintained a mostly negative, low and, at times, even “invisible” profile in the L2 classrooms. This was due to the fact that prominent language theories during the second half of the twentieth century (Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis, Krashen’s Input Hypothesis, as well as the notion of Communicative Competence) seemed to develop on the premise of the L2’ superior role in the L2 classroom. Consequently, that supported the implementation of monolingual teaching methodologies, and justified the rejection of translation as a bilingual teaching tool, as well as of the L1 use, for causing interference, one-to-one correspondence between languages, and being generally counter-productive. Amid the monolingual teaching influence, not all academics, researchers and language practitioners, were convinced of the need to abandon translation and the L1. Motivated either by the failures of the strict monolingual approaches, or by a genuine belief in the value of translation as a teaching tool, or even by the inevitable presence of translation in the L2 classrooms, supporters of translation and L1 use attempted to defend its pedagogical value in the L2 classroom. They also attempted to raise awareness of the fact that translation and L1 are part of the thinking process of the L2 learners, and therefore ignoring this fact or treating it as an invisible element of the L2 learning process would negatively influence the acquisition of L2. As a result, case studies set to explore the benefits of translation and the L1 in various L2 settings, and arguments against its usage were periodically addressed in the academic literature, citing translation as an equally beneficial alternative to the other L2 teaching tools. However, within a predominantly monolingual pedagogical context, such as the one of the twentieth century, voices defending the presence and the role of the L1 in the L2 classroom and suggesting bilingual teaching techniques, including use of translation, remained scattered, leaving translation at the periphery of L2 teaching field.

The existing discrepancy amongst policy-makers, theorists and practitioners has been pointed out by Schjoldager (2002: 200) as well. Additionally, Kelly and Brown (2015) have highlighted the significance of a principled theoretical framework as a necessary condition for moving from the “simplistic question” of should translation be used in L2 teaching or not, to how translation can be effectively incorporated into contemporary language teaching methodologies. According to their views, translation as an L2 tool should “ideally be embedded in a language learning theory from the field of second language acquisition that accepts that [...], fundamentally, a difference exists between L1 and L2 acquisition processes” (2015: 165). That would mean that developing a different mind-set considering the L2 learning process, informed by the advanced progress of fellow research fields (bilingual studies), and enhanced

by socio-political changes taking place globally in the last two decades, should theoretically foster translation's rightful and visible place in the L2 teaching.

The next two chapters of the thesis discuss how the most relevant changes and developments in fields adjacent to linguistics and Second Language Acquisition (sociolinguistics, bilingualism, cultural studies, translation studies) currently affect the relationship between L2 teaching and translation. They both remark on an undoubtedly positive impact on the L2 teaching part of this relationship, but on a still rather questionable outcome for the translation's part, perpetuating, thus, its "invisibility" in the language teaching scene instead of erasing it.

## Chapter 3

### **Tracing Translation and L2 Teaching in the Post-Monolingual Context of the Twenty-First Century**

#### **Introduction**

The previous chapter focused on the reasons why translation may have carried a bad reputation as an L2 teaching tool up to the very recent past. Negative attitudes towards translation in language teaching theory ranged from pure negativism to scepticism with regards to its pedagogical role, with only a few positive exceptions. The current chapter turns to the first decades of the twenty-first century to investigate the role of translation in the contemporary L2 education. More specifically, it aims to investigate whether the previously discussed discrepancy between the opponents and the advocates of translation as an L2 pedagogical tool has been, or can be resolved. The chapter shows how a series of recent shifts in perspectives have led to the reconceptualization of the role of translation in L2 teaching – at least in theory – through the (re-)establishment of older and newer connections between the use of translation and current L2 teaching approaches. The chapter, however, argues that even in this newly developing context, practice does not necessarily follow theory. In other words, the connections between translation and current teaching approaches are either being silenced, maintaining translation’s “invisibility” in this context, or are openly challenged and criticised. Consequently, the relationship between translation and L2 teaching continues to remain disputable in practice, despite the fact that the theoretical background is largely supportive of it.

On an analytical plane, Chapter 3 addresses, first, a socio-political shift that has been taking place globally, and predominantly in the European context, and has been considerably noticeable in the last two decades. The chapter discusses this shift – shaped by phenomena such as globalisation, human mobility, immigration, and super-diversity – in terms of its impact on the power relationships between languages and, effectively, on the field of L2 teaching. It argues that this socio-political shift accounts for a recent change in L2 teaching attitudes, which is reflected in the context of post-monolingual education. The latter is understood here as challenging the hierarchy of the Monolingual Approach, endorsing the learner’s linguistic capacities and creating space for the dynamic languaging practices of bi-/plurilinguals. In this recently emerging L2 teaching context, the chapter looks, further, at how the relationship

between translation and L2 teaching currently evolves, and at the mechanisms that could theoretically support it. To that end, and based on recent insights from the respective fields of Bilingualism and SLA, Chapter 3 explores how concepts such as bilingualism, levels and types of bilingual learners, plurilingualism and plurilingual learners, theoretically shape the contemporary L2 education and relate to translation, before delving into specific “post-monolingual” teaching approaches. The chapter, finally, focuses on translanguaging, plurilingualism and translingualism, as three of the most prominent contemporary L2 teaching approaches, examining how these hold not only a positive reconceptualised view of translation but also a strikingly critical attitude towards it.

### **3.1 Deconstructing the influence of the Monolingual Approach**

#### **3.1.1 Language-power relationships in super-diverse societies**

Over the last three decades, a number of factors such as communication technologies, human mobility and migration activity, related to major geopolitical changes that have altered the demographic, socio-political, cultural and linguistic face of societies worldwide. Immigration in particular, has been a major political factor in many European countries, changing the face of some of its urban centres and generating a heightened awareness of politicised identities, of ethnolinguistic nationalism and of national chauvinism (Blommaert 2010). Hobsbawm (2007) claimed that the “impact of this globalization is felt most by those who benefit from it least” (2007: 4), and that “[...] while the actual scale of globalization remains modest...its political and cultural impact is disproportionately large” (2007: 4).

Blommaert and Rampton (2011) argue that this widespread nature of migration since the early 1990s has gradually replaced the multiculturalism of an earlier era with what Vertovec (2007) calls “super-diversity”. According to Arnaut and Spotti (2014), when Vertovec coined the term, he tried to grasp the new condition of transnationality, in which global flows of people are changing profoundly, both quantitatively and qualitatively. While the amount of people migrating keeps rising at a steadily growing pace, Vertovec (2007) believes that the migration flows are also radically diversifying. This diversification not only applies to the range of migrant-sending and migrant-receiving countries, but also to the socio-economic, cultural, religious and linguistic profiles of the migrants, as well as to their civil status, their educational or training background, and their migration trajectories, networks and diasporic links (Arnaut and Spotti 2014: 1). As Blommaert and Rampton (2011) continue to argue, this notion of “mobility, mixing, political dynamics and historical embedding are now central concerns in the study of languages, language groups and communication” (2011: 3), where super-diversity

intensifies the relevance of these ideas by displacing other notions such as homogeneity, stability and boundedness (ibid). As a consequence, within sociolinguistics, the more traditional concept of “speech community”, which referred to a body of people that would regularly interact and have common attitudes and rules of language use, has now been replaced by terms such as “communities of practice”, “institutions” and “networks”, which are used to represent greater mobility and flexibility of several groups emerging and circulating (2011: 4).

Further observing how super-diversity impacts on the relations of languages, a more pragmatic point of view reveals that many people still find their languages to be of very low value in globalised environments (Blommaert 2010: 3). Even if one’s linguistic and communicative resources are mobile, managing to make sense across such diverse environments is quite challenging because moving across space is never a move across empty spaces. The spaces are always filled with someone’s norms and expectations, conceptions of what counts as proper and normal language use and what does not. Therefore, the extreme linguistic diversity in such places generates complex multilingual repertoires in which often several (fragments of) “migrant languages” and lingua francas are combined. Language tasks often involve collaborative work, namely people may call on others, or others may volunteer to translate and assist in communication in all sorts of environments and situations (Blommaert 2010: 3–9).

At the same time, Blommaert observes how variation in language repertoires (adults have different repertoires from children; fellow migrants from the same region now living elsewhere have different repertoires again) impacts on the mobility of languages. That means that a language variety that is good enough in one situation may not be valid in another. From this point of view, only some resources allow mobility across situations and scale-levels. Thus, although prestige varieties of language have currency across a wide range of situations, since they are high-mobility resources, others have very little potential in the way of mobility and are only used in some particular situations (between family members) (Blommaert 2010: 10–12).

Blommaert’s observations on the mobility of languages bring to the surface several thoughts, worries and predictions with regards to the future existence, the management and the sustainability of this “unprecedented” linguistic diversity with which Europe is, at present, confronted (Le Pichon 2016: 2). Discussing, at first, the question of compatibility between the idea of globalisation and linguistic diversity, Pool (2010) asserts that “the complex relationship between [them] makes it difficult to predict the changes in the distribution of languages that will accompany future advances in world social integration” (2010: 142). He firmly believes

that globalisation can both promote and eliminate linguistic diversity, whereas the decisive criterion for which direction it may follow, is the human motivation. He proposes four strategies for pursuing what he calls “panlingual globalization” instead of a unilingual one. These include a cultural strategy (or “marketing multilingualism”), an economic strategy (or “ecolinguistic compensation”), a political strategy (or “linguistic subsidiarity”) and a technological one (or “panlingual transparency”) (2010: 144–47). Pool seems to believe that a combination of all four strategies would prove to be the most effective approach to panlingual globalisation. Nevertheless, he clearly favours the technological strategy, considering it as the “stage of engineering it” (2010: 147). To demonstrate, he uses the Pan-Lex project, a project for panlingual lexical translation, multilingual and rapidly extensible to cover all languages (both high and low-density) but designed to translate lexemes, and not whole sentences, paragraphs or texts (2010: 149).

Despite Pool’s optimistic vision of a co-existent relationship between globalisation and linguistic diversity relying heavily on technology, others feel that the idea of globalisation could only be sustained by the existence of a “lingua franca”. Originally, the idea referred to a hybrid, contact language, which was more or less neutral and was not representative of any national language, and only later were some lingua francas (Latin and later French) based on specific territories (House 2013: 280). In recent years, the idea of a lingua franca is often translated into “English as a lingua franca”, “international English”, or “world English”. Reactions to the dominant role of English as a lingua franca (ELF), and to its position towards linguistic diversity and multilingualism, include enthusiastic proponents of the English language as the only lingua franca (Crystal 1997; Graddol 2006), fears that English is threatening the vitality of the other languages, leading the way to world-wide monolingualism (Philipson 2003) and attempts to define terms such as “global English” (Mufwene 2010).

Parallel to these views, however, there have been other attempts to redefine the concept of English as a lingua franca (ELF). These are encapsulated in Horner’s (2017) words that:

[a]t the very least, “English” is more aptly understood in pluralized form as Englishes, including Chinese English, Australian English, Nigerian English, etc., as scholarship on world Englishes has amply demonstrated (see for example (Brutt-Griffler 2002; Kachru 1990)). However, further, English in its practice as a global lingua franca is not merely plural but in constant flux. (Horner 2017)

That means that English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) is no longer identified as a particular variety of English but as a function (Friedrich and Matsuda 2010) “whose formal characteristics are under continuous revision, contingent on its specific occasions of use” (cited in Horner 2017). In a similar tone, Canagarajah (2013) challenges the supreme role of English by questioning the concept that “national languages” are the products of “national states”, and opts for a translingual approach to English as a lingua franca (ELF), seeing it as “a form of communicative practice, not a stable variety” (2013: 69). Accordingly, Shiyab et al. (2010) point out that this concept of “English as a global lingua franca” is different to English as a standard, national language, in terms of its functional flexibility, linguistic, geographical and cultural spread, and openness to foreign forms, as well as in numbers of speakers of ELF, which are considerably higher compared to the number of English native speakers. She regards ELF as:

a special type of intercultural communication where there is no consistency of form that goes beyond the participant level, i.e. where each combination of interactants seem to negotiate and govern their own variety of lingua franca use in terms of proficiency level, uses of code-mixing, degree of pidginization etc. (2010: 12)

The views have also been supported by Widdowson (2003) who seems to regard ELF as a type of “register”, “a virtual language”, which “employed in different contexts of use, for different purposes, by different people, fulfils different functions and is changed accordingly” (cited in Shiyab et al. 2010: 13). Ammon (2010) understands this non-native language for all its users as a “hybrid language”, and even suggests that a new independent name, such as “Globalish”, would sound fairer to non-Anglophones compared with the terms “global English”, “international English”, or “world English” (2010:118). The aforementioned views are not shared by everyone. Maurais (2003), for instance, rejects the idea of wide spread of the English language as a way to resolve communication problems across the globe, alongside other proposals, such as use of the Esperanto (an artificial language), recourse to technology and teaching of foreign languages, describing them all as inefficient solutions (2003: 30–33). Nevertheless, (re)defining ELF as a language “changing rather than static” and not just “context-appropriate but context-transforming” (Canagarajah 2006b: 211), with an orientation to issues of “process” rather than “product” (Canagarajah 2006b: 204–5) and an understanding that “variation from the norm [...] is itself likely to be ‘the norm’” (Rubdy and Saraceni 2006: 12, cited in Horner 2017) indicates a departure from a monolingual mentality. Although it could



be argued that this recent conceptualisation of ELF still revolves around one language (English), it arguably contains characteristics from a plurilingual way of thinking, expressing oneself, communicating with each other and learning within super-diverse societies, communities and classrooms.

The idea that monolingualism is, perhaps, no longer the most viable, realistic and sustainable way of living has already been noted by other researchers. Fettes (2003) admits that the future evolution of this “dynamic world system of languages” depends, in part, on the means used to transmit information and ideas across language borders, which include mediation by human or electronic translators, widespread plurilingualism and the spread of lingua francas – either languages with a powerful political and economic base, such as English, or “planned” international languages, such as Esperanto. Although Fettes is not as pessimistic as Maurais, and discusses both pros and cons of all possible scenarios, he recognises the ideal solution in a concept termed “language ecology”, designed not to impose one particular language or language type over another – as in politico-strategic approaches – but to ensure their coexistence. Fettes predicts that although, at first sight, the linguistic mosaic it seeks to sustain will resemble that of the present, including both majority and minority languages – it is the relationships among these language communities that will change, through the impact of plurilingual schooling, and the wider use of Esperanto, not as a substitute for world English, but as a global vernacular that can flourish alongside languages at any level of the world language system (2003: 37–45).

Tonkin (2003) has also discussed the problem of language choice, an issue not necessarily of choice of one language over another, but choice of a language environment that may involve the coexistence of several languages. He has argued that in the formulation of a geostrategy of languages, the fundamental question is whether such a choice can be influenced through policy and planning and, if it can, whether there is any basis for preferring one outcome over another. In considering the issue of geostrategy, the question of what one wants out of a world language regime arises. Given the pressure exerted on cultural diversity by a single world language such as English, and given the rather widespread feeling that cultural diversity is worth preserving, Tonkin believes that planning for some kind of linguistic diversity is inevitably required (2003: 324). Tonkin predicts the development of individual bilingualism and multilingualism as the only option, which in turn would require “massive realignment of educational systems [...], as well as the development of incentives for language learning” (2003: 325–6), linking the issue of linguistic diversity and multilingualism with the field of language education.

Considering the future of linguistic diversity, Skutnabb-Kangas (2002) agrees that its preservation rests upon language education policies pursuing plurilingualism and keeping English as only one of the languages individuals should learn and use, or as he predicts the “future belongs to multilinguals. They are an important part of the linguistic diversity which is necessary if the planet is to have a future” (2002: 17). His words establish the important link between languages in society and language education, and the continuous impact they have on each other.

In the next section this is used as a framework to show that superdiverse communities create equally super-diverse school environments, which can no longer be served by the monolingual teaching practices which have been shaping L2 policies in Europe for over a century. The chapter, further, discusses how the rejection of translation from the L2 classroom was not only the result of such monolingual teaching practices but also the means to sustain them, proving that the issue of translation in L2 teaching has always had deeper socio-political roots, and should be first and foremost embedded in the wider picture of language and educational policies. In other words, the chapter, next, takes a look at how use of translation and the L1, although they appear to be pedagogical choices, their implementation in the L2 classrooms has been long subjected to the socio-political views of each state-nation and the relationships between them. The chapter, thus, examines the fact that the monolingual educational policies which were put in place in the previous century – both in the European and postcolonial context – did not necessarily reflect the multilingual identities of individuals but mainly the particular political ideologies of the time. Moving further into the twenty-first century, the socio-political and cultural phenomena of globalisation and super-diversity appear to be having a strong impact on the dynamic relationship between national policies and language policies, questioning strictly monolingual approaches and pushing for more flexible, plurilingual ones, creating, thus, an opportunity for translation as one of them.

### **3.1.2 Criticism of the socio-political rejection of L1 and translation in L2 education**

Speaking from a socio-political perspective, Blommaert and Rampton (2011) refer to the fact that globalisation has contributed to the “deconstruction of the idea of distinct ‘languages’ [following] the critical analysis of ‘nation’ and ‘a people’ in the humanities and social sciences” (2011: 4). As they explain, named languages – like English, German or French – are ideological constructions historically tied to the emergence of the nation-state in the 19th century. By linking a “language” with “a people”, linguistic scholarship itself is partly responsible for the development of the European nation-state as well as the expansion and organisation of empires.

Even despite sociolinguistics challenging the nation-state monolingualism, languages are sometimes still conceptualised as bounded systems linked with bounded communities (2011: 4). This inseparable connection between “nation” and “language” has been one of the socio-political and ideological arguments supporting the perseverance of monolingualism specifically in the context of language education. In fact, G. Cook (2007) suggests a direct link between this argument and the rejection of the L1 and translation from the L2 teaching. As he claims, one of the reasons the L1 tends to be abandoned is the belief that “national unity is attained through linguistic (or, more sinisterly, ethnic) unity, and the solution to communication problems between two languages is for one of them simply to be abandoned in favour of the other” (2007: 400). He shifts the focus from the pedagogical context of rejecting the L1 to what can be accounted as “overtly political” reasons, when he argues that:

It is no coincidence that the initial banning of translation in language teaching in favour of the Direct Method was promulgated in the heyday of European nationalism by scholars from two of Europe’s most belligerently nationalist states – England and Germany – and has been continued in post-colonial times by scholars from ‘English-speaking’ nations. They have made the classroom a microcosm of the monolingual state, often legislating within its boundaries against any use of students’ L1, and therefore de facto against translation. (2007: 400–1)

Cook’s strong views on political and ideological agendas supporting such educational policies are neither unique nor recent. Similar views on monolingualism within the educational context, as a result of the power of hegemonic languages (mostly English) over the other languages, have been suggested by other researchers as well. West (1962: 48) had already argued that “one cannot but suspect that this theory of rigid avoidance of the mother tongue may be in part motivated by the fact that the teacher of English does perhaps not know the learner’s mother tongue”, whereas Canagarajah (1999) and Auerbach (1993:13) classify this “English-only” policy as “oppressive” and “neocolonialistic”. Walatara (1973), referring to postcolonial strategies used in East Asia, reports that direct method techniques “favoured by the British Council [...] have led to frustration, failure and financial waste. They have made rural masses shy away from English and reserved English as a preserve for few” (1973:100). Walatara’s remark is a hint to the “elite bilinguals” (de Meija 2002: 41), people who usually come from higher socio-economic groups, and “often regard bilingualism as a way of preserving family status and educational and employment advantage” (Baker and Jones 1998: 15), underlying the

powerful interconnections between language education and socio-political status in postcolonial settings.

Even in more recent times, the view shared amongst proponents of the English language (Schlesinger 1992; Barry 2001, 2005; Pogge 2003; De Swan 2001; Archibugi 2005), that “monolingualism is the norm to which all should aspire” (cited in May 2012: 211) reveals the high degree of connection between socio-economic mobility and language choices. Furthermore, the belief that “if minority language speakers are ‘sensible’ they will opt for mobility and modernity via English” (2012: 211) is an example of “folk” or “subtractive” bilingualism, terms which discuss the status and prestige of the majority language against the minority, albeit with a different point of focus (Baker 1998: 15–16). Pogge (2003), in his discussion on the language rights attributable to Latinos in the United States, takes these arguments one step further, and suggests that those parents who opt for bilingual education may well be “perpetuating a cultural community irrespective of whether this benefits the children concerned” (2003). For him, the choice of bilingual education not only engages the children to an educational approach that wilfully delimits their longer term mobility in US society, but it is a choice that “could possibly warrant the same constraints applied to parents as other child protection laws; equating bilingual education, in effect, with child abuse” (cited in May 2012: 210) – and, accordingly, use of L1 and translation in the L2 teaching with a “crime weapon”. Kibbee holds a less extreme view, by observing a difference between “wish for” and “reality of” linguistic diversity. As he admits, linguistic heritage cannot be sustained unless it takes true facts and numbers into account, regarding the existence and functionality of languages around the world (2003: 55–56). Although he attempts a more pragmatic approach to the issue, his comments fail to acknowledge the responsibility of the institutional forces hiding behind such suppressive monolingual policies.

May (2012), echoing Walatara (1978), regards the British Council as an example of an institution that prescribes monolingual teaching policies. He criticises its “pivotal role in the widespread promotion of English for economic and political purposes, particularly via its central role in English foreign language teaching” (2012: 213). For him, the ideology standing behind the British Council is far from neutral, agreeing with what Ndebele observed quite a long time ago that “the British Council continues to be untiring in its efforts to keep the world speaking English. In this regard, teaching English as a second or foreign language is not only good business ... it is [also] good politics” (1987: 63), which provides a clear explanation for the pursuit of monolingual L2 teaching approaches and justifies the exclusion of translation from them. In fact, the development of English Language Teaching (ELT) as a profession was

itself regarded as a direct response to a political imperative (Philipson 1992). English was seen as a key component of the infrastructure required for the spread of British neo-colonial control and, as such, there was a vast infusion of funding to support the development of ELT in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Indeed, Philipson (1992) sees the Makerere report (1961) – the result of the Commonwealth Conference on the Teaching of English as a Second Language – as the beginning of the “monolingual fallacy” (Ismail 2012: 145). The reasons include the suggestion that L1 should be the teacher’s last resort, as well as proposals on the physical and psychological punishment of learners who would make any use of their L1 (Ismail 2012: 145). In fact, according to this scholar, the unofficial and unchallenged doctrine underlying much ELT work consists of five tenets: English is best taught monolingually; the ideal teacher of English is a native speaker; the earlier English is taught, the better the results; the more English is taught, the better the results; and if other languages are used too much, standards of English will drop (1992: 185). Philipson’s list reveals that even what has been mostly portrayed as pedagogical arguments in support of monolingual L2 teaching (e.g. “native language teachers”, “the earlier the start, the better”, etc.) was deeply politically rooted. Echoing Philipson (1992) and Canagarajah (1999), Pennycook (2012) also hints towards political interests hiding behind these ideas. He argues that “through a range of ELT dogmas” such views have been reinforced and “proscribed translation, emphasised the use of only English in the classroom, and maintained the idea that the goal of learning English was somehow to emulate this mythologized native speaker” (Pennycook 2012: 77).

In the same context, Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009), referring to another major colonial power, France, also discuss the political impetus behind the development of monolingual teaching approaches for the French colonies. As these scholars explain, the largely monolingual expatriate teachers resorted, of necessity, to a direct-method approach. This fact, in conjunction with the government-sponsored production of visual materials designed to allow direct-method approaches with diverse language groups, was developed into a teaching approach, which not only proved very successful under the existing colonial circumstances, but was also promoted and supported by government institutions back in Europe as well (Butzkamm and Caldwell 2009: 22–23). In fact, according to the *Cambridge Handbook of Language Policy* (Spolsky 2012: 284), “[a]t independence, most nation-states with colonial histories chose to maintain the status quo in terms of official languages in public administration and schooling”. Ismail (2012) criticises the “clear cut linkage” between colonialism and rejection of the L1, citing that India

and Hong Kong at times supported the native languages (Pennycook 1998, in Ismail 2012: 146).

However, these seem to be the exceptions that confirm the general rule. According to Alidou (2004), the reasons in favour of the retention of European languages as dominant ones were basically the fear that multilingualism would destabilise fragile new states, the view of European languages as “neutral” in these contexts, the lack of corpus-planning in indigenous languages and the need for “international” languages to communicate all around the world. This indicates that language policies in postcolonial settings perpetuated, to an extent, a neo-colonial status quo. Wolff (2017), analysing specifically “the so-called European mind-set regarding multilingualism in the African post-colonies”, argues that this continues to affect language policies in those areas which value monolingual teaching instructions through the “superior languages” more than multilingual approaches and the inclusion of the mother-tongue languages. As she explains in her own words:

it has become current thinking that all official communication, formal education, sociocultural modernisation and economic development in the African post-colonies must be conducted through such ‘superior’ languages. These, of course, are the European standard languages, i.e. those of the former colonial masters. The ‘inferior’ indigenous African languages may then either be given some symbolic value as co-official and/or national languages in constitutional documents, or be used temporarily as assisting media of instruction in lower primary education within the framework of subtractive bilingualism; this means that usually they are phased out as medium of instruction after two or maximally three years (‘early exit’ models). (Wolff 2017: 8–9)

In fact, concerns on the effects the issue of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) has in postcolonial contexts have been echoed by researchers who argue that “almost all low- and middle-income, postcolonial countries now use English or another ‘global’ language as the medium of instruction at the secondary and tertiary level” (Milligan and Tikly 2016: 277). More crucially, researchers highlight that this approach is being increasingly implemented at the earlier stages of primary and pre-school education, with students whose L1 is not English and neither do they speak English outside the classroom, and with little or no provision made for supporting language development (ibid). Despite the fact that there are also voices advocating balanced bilingual approaches, with inclusion of the students’ L1 in the teaching process, the monolingual “dominant, instrumentalist view held by many policy-makers” is also

shared by many parents who “perceive early immersion in English as essential for success in the labour market (Tembe and Norton 2011)” (ibid). The latter indicates that perpetuating monolingual teaching approaches in the postcolonial contexts is not simply based on the colonial teaching mindset but also on current, widespread views on globalisation as well as links between “power” languages and economic growth and social mobility. Anderson and Lightfoot (2018) echo similar sentiments and realities. As they report, “[b]y default, classrooms across India are multilingual in nature”, and policy documentation strives to recognise and preserve the multilingual nature of India. Nevertheless, “the majority of state governments are struggling to make decisions to retain students whose parents are considering opting for low-cost private school education – often ‘English medium’, on paper, if not in practice” (2018: 2). Their study also reveals a feeling of “guilty translanguaging” amongst teachers in India, with very few of them encouraging translanguaging practices in their classrooms although they admit to the translingual practices of their students outside the classroom. Providing with reasons for their monolingual practices, they refer to “the pressure to (pretend to) teach only in English [...], [and] disdain for hybrid languaging practices”, alongside “conservative curricula and assessment criteria that lead many Indian teachers to force their learners to use English in ways that contrast with their own behaviour, even in the classroom” (2018: 16).

Be that as it may, Gramling (2016) regards monolingualism and its role in imperial projects from a rather critical perspective. He argues that:

Not initially prone toward domination or purification, the monolingual imagination in the seventeenth century did little more or less violent than to perceive a global grid of discrete, nameable, rationally extensive languages [...]. Monolingualism manages other languages; it does not oppose them. (2016, cited in Bacon 2018: 91)

Speaking about *The Invention of Monolingualism*, Gramling addresses the fact that this notion has little representation in the academic literature, compared to bi-, multi- and translingualism. However, he takes a different stand on the issue than Ellis (2006; 2008, cited in Bacon 2018: 89), holding that monolingualism is not a disadvantage for the individual speaker nor a dangerous ideological force that undermines bi-/multilinguals (Bacon 2018: 89). Rather, he frames it as a view of “language as enumerable, translatable, and tied to nationhood” (Bacon 2018: 91), arguing further that, being an underexplored area, monolingualism negatively affects “our understanding of language use and its societal implications” (Bacon 2018: 90).

Such implications relate to influenced policies dictating that each nation-state should have a single unifying language. Commonality of language has been regarded as one of the most frequently heard criteria for the formation of a nation and/or state. Hobsbawm (1990: 21) demonstrates that “in nineteenth-century Europe, language was regarded as the only adequate indicator of nationality”. Billig (1995) argues that the creation of a national hegemony often involves hegemony of a language, with the “resulting corollary that a common sense understanding of the relationship between language and nation ignores the diversity and variety of the languages spoken within many states” (1995: 29). Based on this belief, colonised countries have indeed suppressed their own linguistic diversity, as well as that of their colonies for years, the school being considered a major force in doing so (Spolsky 2012: 286).

In more recent times, it appears that the fear of linguistic diversity and the belief of a single nationally unifying language are not a thing of the past; on the contrary, these views are still quite active in debates about languages, nations and identity, and are still being reflected in some language educational policies. Wiley (2005: 600), speaking of the United States, argues that “monolingualism is the real linguistic deficiency in this country”. Confirming this view is the oath that applicants for the U.S. citizenship must take. Having to “renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty, of whom or which [they] have heretofore been a subject or citizen” (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services 2016, cited in Bacon 2018: 91) evokes the complex connections between language and belonging to a nation. In fact, as Gándara and Hopkins (2010) comment in this case, “monolingualism and nationalism intersect to inform a monolingual ideology which questions the national loyalty of an individual using what is framed as a forbidden language” (cited in Bacon 2018: 91). Gramling (2016) seemingly agrees, when he claims that monolingualism and nationhood are currently interconnected in the notion of citizenship. As he explains, it is not as much “blood- and territorial rights” as it is a certain degree of “linguistic competence” that will bring a citizenship applicant closer to their goal (Bacon 2018: 91). He, therefore, hints at the irony that super-diversity, instead of reducing monolingualism, might also be reinforcing it, as “a vehicle for symbolic allegiance and purported social cohesion” (Bacon 2018: 91–92).

In a similar tone, at the beginning of the twenty-first century politicians in the United Kingdom have been suggesting that there are casual links between social disorder and people failing to learn or speak English, arguing that linguistic minority people should speak English at home amongst their families because “speaking English helps overcome the schizophrenia which bedevils generational relationships” (cited in Blackledge and Creese 2010: 8–10). According to their beliefs – and against theories of multicultural social cohesion – speaking



the same language is a key issue that keeps the nation united, creates a common, shared identity and provides people with a “passport to real integration into British society” (ibid). That would explain why Smith et al. (2017: 4) appear dubious towards the level of support for the immigrants’ L1 in the UK. It would also justify Leedham’s (2016) arguments, that EAL (English as an additional language) learners specifically in England, currently representing one sixth of young people at school, “remain invisible in the national conversation about education” (Leedham 2016).

The above particular views on the prevalence of monolingualism seem to have had a double negative impact on English language education. This is described by Lanvers (2011: 63) as “the paradox of multilingualism and monolingualism”. Referring to the United Kingdom Lanvers compares, on the one hand, the plethora of minorities which are strongly advised by the official policies to learn and use the English language on a daily basis, and, on the other hand, the steadily declining numbers of English speakers who are encouraged to acquire language competence in languages other than English. As a reaction to that phenomenon, two large public inquiries were launched, the Nuffield Inquiry (2000) and the Dearing Report (2007), whose aims were to review policies and make future recommendations regarding language learning in schools. Despite the suggestions made by the reports and some efforts to implement them, Lanvers highlights a bigger picture of incoherence amongst language education policies and the state of language education in the UK over the last decade (2000–2010). Adding to that picture of incoherence is the “reality-check”, pointed out by Professor Ayres-Bennet (2015). In a policy workshop aiming to break the “vicious circle of monolingualism” in the UK, she claimed that:

despite the reduction in the number of those becoming multilingual through formal education, multilingualism is very strongly present in the UK schools. Department for Education statistics show that nearly one in five primary school pupils have a first language other than English. The range of languages spoken by these “heritage” and minority language speakers is much broader than those traditionally taught, and could represent a significant skill-set for the UK. ([www.publicpolicy.cam.ac.uk](http://www.publicpolicy.cam.ac.uk))

Her comments, although specifically describing the British reality, could easily paint the picture for numerous educational settings currently situated in Europe. Bak (2017) portrays the linguistic landscape in Europe as one that has always been diverse and complex. Referring to more recent statistics, however, he reveals that an increasing number of young people with a

potentially rich linguistic background enter (monolingual or bilingual) school systems in the European context. More precisely, he reports that:

[i]n 2015 and 2016 alone, more than 2.5 million asylum applications were made in European Member States, of which close to 550,000 were by children under the age of 15. More than one in ten 15-year old learners in European schools were first or second generation migrants. ([www.publications.europa.eu](http://www.publications.europa.eu))

The above means that several European countries currently have, alongside their official language(s), large populations of speakers of minority languages (that may be labelled “minority”, “regional” or “migrant” languages depending on the context) (ibid). Le Pichon (2016) disputes arguments that this is not the first time that Europe has been confronted with such high numbers of migrants. On the contrary, she posits that this an “unprecedented situation” in Europe, and as such, it requires “a revision of our current strategies” (2016: 2). Indeed, notwithstanding the imposing figures coming from the statistics, the main focus, here, is not the comparison of immigration levels in Europe. In fact, Hüning et al. (2012) argue that “the gap between prestigious multilingualism [...] and plebeian multilingualism [...] is a timeless phenomenon” in Europe (2012: 7), indicating, amongst other issues, a constant presence of different language communities within states. Thus, the underlying message at this point, is to expose not the *reality* of multilingual societies but rather their *treatment*, which under the political ideology of “one nation-one language” of the previous century has remained suppressed. As Hüning et al. explain, “societal multilingualism is a much more controversial issue within EU policy and has remained an issue of national policy” (2012: 3). Having earlier discussed how national language policies majorly affect and dictate educational policies, what Le Pichon implies here, is that the thus far “official” monolingual approach – majorly imposed by socio-political criteria – can no longer respond to the current needs and realities of these “new” language learners, calling, therefore, for the adoption of “post-monolingual” approaches.

Whereas Le Pichon refers mainly to the needs and rights of immigrant people in the European context, García et al. (2008) have already been discussing similar situations in the US. In fact, moving one step further, they bring together all English language learners in the US under the name of “emergent bilinguals”, including all those with limited English proficiency. In their own words, that means children who, “through school and through acquiring English, [...] become “bilingual”, able to continue to function in their home language

as well as in English, their new language and that of school” (2008: 6). The employment of the term “emergent bilinguals”, seems to highlight the acquisition of an L2 as a constantly developing process, and the L1 as a significant and inevitable part of this process. In fact, García calls the educators “to view these students as a national resource, not as a deficit” ([www.tc.columbia.edu](http://www.tc.columbia.edu)). Discussing comprehension strategies amongst emergent bilinguals, García and Kleifgen (2010) refer explicitly to how “acts of translation” are significant practices for making meaning and fostering the learners’ English literacy development (2010: 64, cited in Lewis et al 2012: 658). These acts are part of “a preview-view-review pedagogy that is common in some bilingual classrooms” (ibid), and may include a gist of the lesson in the learners’ L1, a written synopsis of the lesson, as well as annotated written materials in L1 or containing translations in L1 (ibid).

Therefore, García’s view of “emergent bilinguals” – a term that could also be used as a reconceptualisation of all L2 learners – deliberately attempts to stress the impact of research on bilingualism and on language education, both in terms of equity in the teaching, as well as efficiency and proliferation from actively incorporating L1 in the L2 acquisition. At the same time, the term “acts of translation” highlights the explicit link of translation to this context. Adding to all this Le Pichon’s (2017) remark that “in the scientific field, nobody at present denies the advantages of using one’s own languages in the educational context” (2017: 2), the next section turns to the field of bilingualism. In so doing, it seeks to explore the various forms of bilingualism and expands on why the interrelation of languages benefits all bilinguals. It also discusses the integral role of translation in bilingualism, and the ways that influences the relationship between L2 teaching and translation.

### **3.2 Bilingualism and translation**

#### **3.2.1 Bilingualism: Recent views and levels of competence**

Defining an individual as bilingual has remained a difficult task for contemporary linguistics. The term bilingual is widely and most commonly used to refer to individuals who have obtained the ability to use more than one language (Oxford Dictionary, Cambridge English Dictionary). However, what is the exact “starting point” of bilingualism, whether it equals “native-like control of two languages” (Bloomfield 1933: 56), or fluency in one language and the ability to “produce complete meaningful utterances in the other language” (Haugen 1953: 7) have long been challenging issues.

The narrowness and limitations deriving from the above definitions have led many researchers to adopt either a broader, more contemporary, definition of bilingualism, including

“those people who need and use two or more languages (or dialects) in their everyday lives” (Grosjean 2010: 5), or a more conventional one, referring to “an individual [who] possesses more than one language competence” (Valdes and Figueroa 1994: 8). Baker (2001) summarises some of the most common classifications of bilingualism, each one of which focuses on different dimensions of the concept. Although he maintains that there seems to be no standardized use of these terms (2001: 3), they all portray different beliefs, trends and research of their time, significantly affecting language policies. Therefore, whereas terms such as “receptive vs. productive”, “simultaneous vs. sequenced” or “compound vs. coordinate” bilingualism would add different perspectives to the development of language learning and teaching approaches, other terms (“elite/elective vs. folk”, “additive vs. subtractive”) would “measure” bilingualism from a socio-political and ideological aspect. At the same time, the difference between “balanced vs. dominant” bilingualism is a further indication of the concept’s evolution and variations through time, since the term “balanced bilingualism” was initially used to describe native-like competence in both languages (Haugen 1973). In fact, already in the first century AD, in ancient Rome, Marcus Fabius Quintilianus argued that:

[t]he study of Latin ought therefore to follow at no great distance and in a short time proceed side by side with Greek. The result will be that, as soon as we begin to give equal attention to both languages, neither will prove a hindrance to the other”. (Institutio Oratoria I, i, 12–14, cited in Harris and Taylor 1997: 63)

Interestingly enough, he seemed to believe that the sooner a student would start acquiring their second language (Latin), the less problems they would encounter during the process. Contrary, a prolonged period of learning only the Greek language could “give[...] rise to many faults of language and accent” regarding the acquisition of Latin (ibid). As he indicated, an almost parallel acquisition of the two languages was a better approach for avoiding interference between languages and successfully achieving balanced bilingualism, a view that was later challenged, as it will be further discussed. More frequently, however, the term balanced bilingual is used to refer to an individual who has roughly equal ability in both languages. Thus, someone whose performance was imperfect in both languages would still be considered a balanced bilingual, or “sometimes pejoratively” termed as semilingual or double semilingual, a label which, as suggested by Baker (2001), is “more politically motivated than genuine or accurate” (2001: 9).

Additional to Baker's socio-political perspective, Skuttnabb-Kangas (2000) describes semilingualism in terms of deficiencies in bilinguals when they are compared to monolinguals. These might refer to negative consequences regarding their cognitive processing (such as display of small vocabulary and incorrect grammar) because of the potential confusion between what monolinguals perceive as two underdeveloped languages. There might also be negative psychological effects, e.g. difficulty expressing their emotions in either language (Skuttnabb-Kangas 2000, cited in Kivinen 2011), feelings of shyness and embarrassment when using one of their languages in public among monolinguals, apologising for not speaking it so well, even avoiding opportunities to use it at all (Baker and Jones 1998: 9–11).

Another distinction relates to an argument advanced by François Grosjean (1985/1994) that there are two contrasting views of bilinguals. The first one is a fractional view, which evaluates the bilingual as “two monolinguals in one person”. The second one, the holistic view, argues that the bilingual is not the sum of two complete or incomplete monolinguals, but has a unique linguistic profile. Each point of view has its own implications. One consequence deriving from the first view is that the definition of a bilingual is restricted to those who are equally fluent in both languages, with proficiency comparable to that of a monolingual. If that competence or proficiency does not exist in both languages, especially in the majority language, then bilinguals may be described as “semilinguals”. Ironically, this particular view of bilingualism could foster monolingual teaching approaches, such as the “side-by-side model” used in dual language programmes, as part of bilingual education ([www.cal.org](http://www.cal.org)). According to Baker (2011) bilingual education is “a simplistic label for a complex phenomenon”. In fact, although bilingual education would be generally expected to involve teaching of two languages and/or via two languages, there are several bilingual teaching models depending on the aim of the teaching process. Surprisingly or not, mixing of the languages and translation are not necessarily fostered, or even encouraged, in all bilingual programmes. In fact, the two-way immersion or dual immersion model is prescribed by the idea of language separation and compartmentalisation. The class is instructed in both languages and the time is roughly equally divided between them, but only one language is used in each period of instruction. In this model, it is thought that “[s]ustained periods of monolingual instruction promotes linguistic development better than mixing languages within the same lesson” (Pütz et al. 2006: 162), whereas “the simultaneous use of both languages for translation of academic content is clearly not recommended” ([www.cal.org](http://www.cal.org)). Baker (2011) also describes another type of bilingual education, that of submersion, or mainstream education, for minority language children who are placed in mainstream schools. They are taught in the majority language and

are expected to use it exclusively in the classroom, prompting Baker to comment that although this is a type of bilingual education, the aim is monolingualism (2011: 480).

An alternative view presented by Grosjean, argues that taking as a point of reference the language proficiency of monolinguals and comparing it with a bilingual's proficiency is highly unjust – and similar to comparing “a hurdler with a sprinter and a high jumper”. He stresses that the emphasis should be put on the bilingual's general communicative competence, and the totality of the bilingual's usage in all domains, whether this involves the choice of one language in one particular domain, or a mixing of the two languages (Baker 2001: 7–9). This latter type of usage of an individual's languages and dialects, regardless of the context of the use, and the level of ability, echoes Giussani et al.'s (2007) description of bilingualism, who further add that this definition turns more than half of the world's population into bilinguals. Along with the fact that “balanced bilinguals with equal and strong competence in their two languages are rare” (Kivinen 2011: 10), it appears that these more recent views of bilingual competence resemble to a great extent the notion of plurilingualism, which is gradually gaining more ground amongst language teachers, with researchers arguing for its paramount role and effect on the language education.

Be that as it may, parallel to the complexity surrounding the different levels of bilingual competence emerges the question of the number of languages included in the concept, linking bilingualism to the current notions of multilingualism and plurilingualism. Etymologically, the term “bi” implies a pair of languages. These have been typically referred to as “mother tongue” and “foreign/second language” depending on the environment of language acquisition, whereas in more recent times they are usually replaced by the terms L1 and L2 (referring to a non-native language, quite often with no distinction between second or foreign language). However, the vast mobility around the globe, which has perplexed the power relations and hierarchy of the coexisting languages, currently challenges the definition of concepts such as L1 and L2. As Le Pichon (2017) further explains, in relation to immigrant children:

[i]n our data, the nationality of children often corresponds to their country of birth, which does not match the country of provenance of parents. Children may be born in different refugee camps along the way their parents travelled, [...], from their country of origin to their current country. This of course may also exert effects on the pupils' linguistic repertoire and cultural experiences. From a purely linguistic perspective, it can be quite difficult to identify what language can be considered the first language of these pupils. (2017: 3)

Adding to that the fact that these children are often confronted with further transitions within different EU countries, or even regions and cities within one country, before they finally settle down, Le Pichon implies that a rethinking of the entire language education system is in order. At the same time, Woll (2014), without specifically referring to immigrants, suggests that even terms such as L3, L4 etc. are not clear enough, since they are indicative of the order of multilingual acquisition but not of the competence in each language (Woll 2014: 13). Pointing to that direction, researchers have already started to question whether the concept of bilingualism could be further extended to describe the process of acquiring more than two foreign languages, with some of them claiming that the terms bilingualism and multilingualism can be used interchangeably, broadly referring to a sufficient command of two or more languages (Hoffmann 1991; Romaine 1989, cited in Hackett-Jones 2015: 22).

Growing evidence from research, however, seems to point to the existence of qualitative and quantitative differences between acquiring a third or more language (Cenoz 2000; Pittman 2008; Llama et al. 2010, cited in Woll 2014: 12–13) since L3 acquisition might already be based on bilingual competence. That is, L3 acquisition is not only based on adding the two previous languages (L1 to L2) but on the mixing of the two (L1 and L2), as well. Initially, research into tri- and multilingualism, or plurilingualism, was based on models of bilingualism, which were taken as a starting point and were successfully adapted to multilingual contexts (Woll 2014: 12–13). This recently developed field of research has been trying to differentiate itself under various terminology, including Multiple Language Acquisition, Multilingual Acquisition, Third Language Acquisition and Third or Additional Language Acquisition (Woll 2014: 13). However, De Angelis (2007) states that none of these terms has managed to successfully launch itself, probably “due to the weaknesses that each of them hold” (2007: 10). This prompts Woll to conclude that the so far established terminology of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is still widely used to “refer to the acquisition and use of two or more languages (Doughty/Long 2005), thus being a *synonym for foreign language acquisition* in general and a *cover term for both SLA and TLA* [Third or Additional Language Acquisition]” [my emphasis] (2014: 14).

Considering the above, this chapter treats bilingualism and the field of SLA as the prominent fields that can provide useful insights and theoretical principles when seeking to understand the mechanisms of an L2 (and consequently an L3, L4 etc.) acquisition. The chapter argues that contemplating the ways, the strategies and the steps bilinguals (and plurilinguals) follow in order to acquire their languages reveals whether, and to what extent, L1 and

translation have a role to play in this process. To that end, the next part discusses different levels of translation competence in bilingualism, starting from the perspective of “natural” or L1 bilinguals, under the premise that translating is a natural and an inevitable part of the L2 acquisition, whether the latter takes place in a classroom setting or not.<sup>6</sup>

### **3.2.2 Translation competence in bilinguals**

Bilingualism has been a field of great relevance to both disciplines of Translation Studies (TS) and L2 Teaching. Perhaps the most common feature the three domains share is the involvement of two languages, albeit in different degrees and ways. Regarding their differences, at first sight it could be argued that bilingualism appears to often be the goal of the L2 teaching. Even in classrooms with bilingual children, bilingual education focuses on achieving different levels of bilingual competence, via several combinations of teaching the languages involved. On the other hand, bilingualism is often regarded as a prerequisite within TS. Professional translators are typically required to command high levels of language proficiency in all of their languages, and translation students are traditionally expected to enter their training with sufficient levels of language competence.<sup>7</sup> Translation training, thus, focuses on the acquisition of translation competence at a professional level. However, such a – perhaps simplistic – categorisation could prompt a few questions. Does it imply that translation has no place in the bilingual education? Could a degree of translation competence be achieved in an L2 teaching classroom of students with lower levels of bilingual competence? What level of language competence would suffice for translating? Last but not least, what is the place of translation amongst bilinguals outside the teaching settings, in everyday life? Although some researchers (Krings 1986, 1992; Darwish 2000) view translation only in an academic context, others have been more open towards the idea of a flexible relationship between bilinguals (with any sort of language competence) and translation (either as a natural skill, a communication strategy or an acquired competence). As Lörscher puts it, the “ultimate reason” why Translation Studies are interested

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<sup>6</sup> The term “L1 bilinguals” is adopted from Álvarez de la Fuente and Fernández Fuertes’ (2015) article, in which it is used to refer to simultaneous acquisition of the two languages and in a natural context, otherwise known as “early” or “infant” bilingualism. It is contrasted to L2 bilinguals, or sequential bilingualism, referring to acquisition of the L2 at a later stage in life, and usually in an institutional context (2015: 56).

<sup>7</sup> Referring to this matter, Kelly (2005) “denounces the myth that would-be translators already possess adequate knowledge of their working languages by the time they embark on training”, and urges the training programmes to be realistic and take this into account (Carreres 2014).



in bilingualism is “the fact that translation – together with code switching and code mixing – occurs frequently among bilinguals” (2012: 5).

Setting to provide with some answers, and in order to discuss the significant role translation plays in bilingualism, the thesis argues that it is crucial to start with understanding how the bilingual mind works, and whether the two languages are interrelated in the bilingual mind. One of the commonest beliefs amongst the “myths of bilingualism” (Grosjean 2010) was that if children were raised with two languages spoken to them from a very early stage they would be confused and end up with little proficiency in each language. The older Unitary Language System Hypothesis (Volterra and Taeschner 1978) claimed that children until the age of two years old were unable to differentiate between their languages, giving support to the long-lasting argument of language mixing, and to a strict “one-person one language approach” as a tackling method (De Howver 1990). The view that early bilingualism negatively affects the cognitive development of the children has also been taken up by L2 education, feeding arguments to bilingual approaches and programmes that continue to insist on keeping the two languages separate from each other, and thus excluding use of translation from the teaching plans. That occurs despite the fact that later research has revealed either no significant effects on some aspects, and clear advantages on some other aspects of the young bilinguals’ development (Bialystock 2008).

Indeed, in contrast to the former hypothesis, the Dual Language System Hypothesis (Genesee 1989) has already suggested that young bilinguals build two separate linguistic systems (L1 and L2) for the same concept from the start. This view, which has been documented in a plethora of studies, also indicates that some translation occurrences can be manifested in the bilingual mind from a very early stage, although translation at this point should be better understood as “transcoding” (translating between language structures) rather as “interpreting” (apprehending and translating the message) (Harris 1980: 6). In fact, Ronjat (1913) had already noticed how his bilingual son was able to repeat pairs of synonymous words of which one word is in one language and the other word in the other language before the age of 2 years old (in Harris 1980: 8). As Harris comments:

In itself it is not translation, because there is no intent to convey information. But it is as though the child is rehearsing a bilingual lexicon, and so it is perhaps a preliminary exercise for translation. In any event, natural transcoding requires an internalized bilingual lexicon. (ibid)

Discussing the results of a study, conducted by Swain, on a three years old bilingual boy and his simultaneous development of his separate skills in his two languages, Harris expressed his surprise to find “several hundred instances of translation produced by him” (1980: 1). As he further explains, the boy’s “translating tactics” consist mainly of transcoding (word-pairing, lexical translation, lexical selection, lexical collocation, lexical incorporation, etc.), although they also show some “clear evidence of interpretation” (reduction, addition, adaptation, etc.) (Harris 1980: 8).

Similar evidence can be further found in research. Very young bilingual children have been recorded to acquire translation equivalents (TEs)<sup>8</sup> by the middle of their second year of life (Genesee and Nicoladis 2007; Schelleter 2002; Nicoladis and Secco 2000), with the proportion of TEs being lower around eighteen months old and increasing steadily by the end of the second year (David and Wei 2008; Lanvers 1999). Consequently, young children, instead of mixing their languages, can easily switch between and differentiate them, “in terms of phonology, lexicon, and syntax”, as well as pragmatically (Nicoladis 1998: 106), although there is much individual variation. A study by Vihman et al. (2007, cited in Poulin-Dubois et al. 2013: 60) shows that bilinguals, as young as ten-month old infants, were able to recognize familiar words in each of their languages. This ability to recognize familiar words occurred at the same age as reported for monolingual infants. Producing their two languages differentially from very early in development, and being able at the same time to associate the appropriate language with a particular person (e.g. one parent speaks English to a child, and the other speaks German), indicates their understanding that words belong to two different and distinct languages. Social awareness of the one-parent one-language routine seems to have encouraged this awareness of translation equivalents and two separate language systems. As De Houwer et al. (2005) pinpoint, dependency (or not) of the vocabularies learned in each language is an important issue in early bilingualism research. The fact that young bilinguals have been found to know TEs between their languages, as well as their “understanding of the appropriate social use of their two languages” (Nicoladis 1998: 105) works against the “hypothesis of a fused or unitary linguistic system in bilinguals and is consistent with the idea that bilinguals have two distinct lexical systems, making it necessary to switch across the two systems” (Genesee and Nicoladis 2007; Patterson and Pearson 2004, cited in Poulin-Dubois et al. 2013: 59).

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<sup>8</sup> “Translation equivalents (TEs) characterize the lexicon of bilinguals from the early stages of acquisition, as reported in studies involving English and other languages in which most cross-language synonyms are dissimilar in phonological form” (Bosch & Ramon-Casas 2014: 317).

Supporting evidence on how translation and code-switching start to build up in the bilingual mind can be found in an earlier study by De Houwer (1990). She had already suggested that many bilingual children tend not to mix their languages when addressing monolinguals, but are aware enough of bilinguals to move between both languages when addressing them. She also believed that “the bilingual child has more options than the monolingual one: [...] at a very young age bilingual children are skilled conversationalists who easily switch languages” (1990: 248). Baker (2001) notes that apart from what is culturally appropriate and the norm of the community, parents’ attitude towards code-switching is a highly influential factor, e.g. the more positive their attitude the more the children will imitate. Nicoladis and Secco (2000) found that about 90% of very young children’s code-mixing could be accounted for by lexical gaps in one language. Gaps in vocabulary are filled by appropriate elements from the other language. If a translation equivalent is missing, the accessible equivalent in the other language will be used (Baker 2001: 88–92). Moreover, as Poulin-Dubois et al. conclude in their research on the “Lexical Access and Vocabulary Development in Very Young Bilinguals”, “TEs facilitate and do not inhibit lexical retrieval in bilingual toddlers” (2013: 67). This result contrasts with the view that translation causes interference. According to their findings, bilingual infants with a large proportion of TEs had a smaller reaction time on the CCT (Computerized Comprehension Task) – a facilitation already well-documented in adult bilinguals (Finkbeiner et al. 2006, cited in Poulin-Dubois et al. 2013: 68) but, as Poulin-Dubois et al. comment, quite “impressive” in such young bilinguals (2013: 68).<sup>9</sup>

Also looking at occurrences of translation in young bilinguals’ mind and discourse practices, Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009) focus on a more cognitive aspect. They discuss the widely acclaimed argument of the Direct Method that “since a child learns a first language without reference to any other, we should teach a second language accordingly” (2009: 217). They take as point of reference the “only obvious natural model”, the child who is raised bilingually, and wish to find out if natural bilinguals tend to avoid using their stronger language when developing another, or if they use their skills in one language to help themselves progress in the other, thus relating use of translation in bilingualism with L2 teaching. Based on a number of studies and reports (Leopold 1949; Porsche 1983; Saunders 1988; Döpke 1992, cited in Butzkamm and Caldwell 2009: 217) they argue that the two (or more) languages young

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<sup>9</sup> CCT (Computerized Comprehension Task), which was used as an assessment tool, is a “standardized task [that] requires infants to touch images on a screen in response to auditory prompts from an experimenter and has been found to be successful in testing infants as young as 16 months” (Poulin-Dubois et al. 2013: 68).

bilinguals acquire constantly support and compete with each other. Most interestingly, they take a closer look at the strategies young “natural” bilinguals develop in order to successfully extend their linguistic competence, implying that since these strategies are proved to be successful, or simply the natural way bilinguals acquire their two languages, they should, therefore, become part of the learning strategies L2 learners develop as well. Effectively, if translation is one of the strategies L1 bilinguals use, then it should “rightly” have a place in the L2 learning and teaching.

Moving towards that assumption, the first strategy L1 bilingual children use is simply asking words out of curiosity (Butzkamm and Caldwell 2009: 218). This occurs at the very beginning, when children are not aware that they are learning two different languages but they soon know intuitively that they speak one way with one parent and a different way with the other. Their second strategy is developed later, around the age of two, when they start comparing their parents’ languages, and they deliberately start building up a bilingual lexicon. They practise bilingual word-pairs or doublets all by themselves, still out of curiosity and fun. A child may echo a new word they learn along with the equivalent which is already available (2009: 219). According to Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009: 219), Leopold (1949) reported about his two bilingual daughters that “translating words from one language into the other is becoming a habit”. As already mentioned earlier, Harris (1980) admitted that especially at so young ages, “word-twinning” and “bilingual response” can be considered the earliest stages of pre-translation, where responses in another language are not necessarily intended as translations and may not even sound like one (1980: 20). Nevertheless, he also concluded that according to plenty of evidence, “internalized bilingual lexicons [...] are not very different in structure from the printed glossaries”, whereas “all bilinguals can translate isolated sentences as well as isolated words, without any context and just as a language exercise” (ibid). Moreover, Saunders (1988) agreed with Dodson (1985a), who believed that parents should encourage such “bilingual language play at other times as well, as it serves as an important mechanism which helps developing bilinguals to separate their languages, reduce cross-language interference, and to switch easily and effectively from one language to the other whenever required” (1988, cited in Butzkamm and Caldwell 2009: 219–220).

Their third strategy involves vocabulary elicitation, but this time for communicative purposes (Butzkamm and Caldwell 2009: 221). Children request a translation from someone they know, as the easiest possible way to solve their vocabulary problem, confirming arguments that use of translation in the L2 lesson is a quick and efficient way to fix communication problems (also discussed in Chapter 2). Hatch (1978, cited ibid) notes that this

strategy certainly drives forward the development of the weaker language. The other language functions only as a momentary support and is abandoned as soon as it has done its job. It is an efficient strategy which does not disturb the flow of communication but, on the contrary, smooths its progress. Within the same context of using translation as a means to facilitate comprehension, the fourth strategy is what they call “seeking verification” or “re-affirming”, referring to children who are constantly looking to associate the new expressions with the ones already available to them in order to ensure full understanding. According to Taeschner (1983) “the child’s need to know the equivalent at any cost is part of his job of arranging the two languages. The meanings and functions which exist in both languages, thus enabling the child to make comparisons, are reinforced” (1983, cited *ibid*). Butzkamm and Caldwell also take a critical look towards the view of “one person, one language”, which can often be observed in mixed marriages, but not exclusively. As they remark, what prevents parents from giving their children the L1 equivalents is mostly their fear that providing them with the translations would reinforce their stronger language. In contrast to that, the authors strongly believe that withholding bilingual information from the children is not only counterproductive, it actually “reminds us of those orthodox direct-method teachers who as a matter of principle refuse to give a MT equivalent” (2009: 222). Their thoughts highlight use of translation as a meaningful L2 teaching tool but, at the same time, hint towards the role of translation as a social right to understanding and communication, where refusing information in the other language could be almost regarded as unethical.

Further commenting on the “one person, one language approach”, Grosjean (2010) specifies “need” as the critical factor for children growing up as bilinguals. As he explains, children quickly realise which and how many languages they need to use in everyday life and, even unconsciously, make their decisions. This need justifies their choice to opt for the stronger language, and often abandon the weaker one, even with the family members, once they realise that they are being perfectly understood using the strong one. Children, however, will use the weak (or any other) language to hold the communication with those who do not speak the strong language (or any other one), e.g. grandparents being monolingual. Therefore, Grosjean warns against any “pretend situations”, and believes that only by creating a natural monolingual environment, children will be urged to use just one language. He further suggests the “one family, one language” approach as, perhaps, a more successful way to maximise the input of the home language for the young bilinguals (Grosjean 2010). Having said that, his views should definitely not be construed as a return to monolingualism, but rather as support to the reality and truth of plurilingualism, as well as use of everyday translation and code-mixing as

legitimate and natural ways of communication within these environments. His views on the failure of bilinguals pretending to be monolinguals could also be applied to the L2 classroom settings, where bilingual teachers often “pretend” to be monolinguals, instead of acknowledging the true plurilingual identities of themselves and their students, and accordingly behave in the classroom as they would outside of it.

Not surprisingly, then, the fifth strategy that all bilinguals appear to employ as a communicative strategy is code-switching (Butzkamm and Caldwell 2009: 222). According to Crystal (1987: 15), “[c]ode, or language, switching occurs when an individual who is bilingual alternates between two languages during his/her speech with another bilingual person”. This type of alteration, or code-switching, between languages occurs commonly amongst bilinguals and may take a number of different forms, including alteration of sentences, phrases from both languages succeeding each other and switching in a long narrative. Grosjean (2010, cited in Corcoll López and González-Davies 2015: 68) considers this change of language within the same text as “typical of a bilingual mode of communication, and therefore, a bilingual language skill”. Similarly, embedding the same definition of code-switching in the current plurilingual climate, Corcoll López and González-Davies define code-switching as “the ability of *plurilingual* speakers to switch within or between sentences from and to the codes in their repertoire [...]” (2015: 69) [my emphasis], whilst the aim of the strategy remains successful communication amongst the involved parties.

However, code-switching does not always trigger positive reactions. On the contrary, different attitudes to the above attribute code-switching to laziness or carelessness, stemming predominately from a deeply rooted monolingual teaching ideology. Corcoll López and González-Davies (2015: 68) mention especially the discouraging of its use amongst children, as it is perceived as an “absence of linguistic differentiation” and an “unconscious and unintentional activity”. However, as previously mentioned, research on bilingualism demonstrates that code-switching is not a random phenomenon, but happens due to a variety of purposes and aims. Research has been examining these changes from two perspectives. On the one hand, code-switching is seen as rule governed, meaning a linguistic phenomenon where language alternations may occur in order to substitute a word or phrase in another language, express a concept that has no equivalent, or in the form of translation to clarify a point. Gafaranga (2009) cites researchers (Scotton 1993; Sebba 1998; Myers-Muysken 2000) who argue that, at this level, language alternation is very orderly even though its orderliness may be different from that of the languages involved (2009: 279).

On the other hand, factors such as topic, participants and context of conversation, competition among language groups and power relationships between the languages, alongside the norms of the community and inter-group relations in a community have a major effect on the use of code-switching, suggesting that it should also be considered from a socio-functional perspective (Corcoll López et al. 2015: 68). Researchers (Gumperz 1982; Auer 1984; Heller 1992; Myers-Scotton 1993, cited *ibid*) who have indeed investigated language alternation from a socio-functional perspective, argue that, rather than being a random phenomenon, the use of two languages in the same conversation serves specific interactional tasks for participants. Thus, code-switching is a conversational strategy, or one of the “discourse strategies” (Gumperz 1982). Within the same context, Grosjean (2010) regards code-switching as a “communicative resource that comprises a two-stage decision process, where first, bilinguals decide which base language they are going to use, and, second, decide whether to deploy code-switching” (Corcoll López et al. 2015: 69). Cook (1999) also highlights this skilled activity from a social and psychological perspective, adding that code-switching “shows the intricate links between the two language systems in multi-competence: in the mind, the L1 is not insulated from the L2” (Cook 1999: 193). Beller (2008) agrees that code-switching and language mixing are learning strategies and should not be condemned as a linguistic impairment, and she recommends that caregivers who learn a few important words in the L2 learners’ primary language “may send a positive sign to the child that his or her language is welcomed and even fruitful for communicating” (2008: 36). Her remarks, which simply acknowledge the discursive practices of bilinguals, also indicate the use of translation as one of them, further suggesting its implementation in plurilingual classrooms. Nevertheless, whereas the role of L1 is currently so positively reviewed in the L2 education, the role of translation in it seems to be becoming a separate issue, which still requires lots of consideration and further evidence in order to be equally implemented in the L2 settings.

Towards that direction, further evidence could be provided by the discipline that looks specifically at translation and translation-related phenomena, that is TS. The discipline does not question (or overlook) the existence of translation occurrences in bilinguals’ mind and discourse – as often seems to be the case in the L2 teaching (further discussed in this chapter). On the contrary, TS has been more interested in the interpretations of all these findings for their field, or in other words, with the various levels of translation competence in L1 bilinguals, a question with further implications for the L2 teaching as well. The starting point of the discussion typically refers to the concept of “natural translation” (Harris 1976; Harris and Sherwood 1978), defined as “the translation done by bilinguals in everyday circumstances and

without special training for it” (Harris 1976: 99). Harris comments that “[all] translators have to be bilingual and [...] all bilinguals can translate”. As he further explains, parallel to the development of two language competences (L1 and L2) comes the development of a third competence, that of translating. Therefore, “bilingualism is [...] a triple, not a double, competence: and the third competence is bi-directional” (Harris 1976: 99). Lörcher (2012) cautions that viewing translation competence (in the sense of natural translation) as an aspect of bilingual competence should not be confused with professional translation competence, but it could theoretically be applied in other domains of life by non-professional bilinguals, including the field of L2 teaching/learning (2012: 5).

However, the concept, as was originally defined by Harris, has been disputed within the field of bilingualism, based on the argument that such an unconditional assumption involving all bilinguals could not be validated (Grosjean 2001, cited in Lörcher 2012: 5). Within the discipline of TS, Toury (1986) has proposed instead the concept of “translation transfer”. Similar to Harris, Toury has based his concept on an innate predisposition to translate, which coexists with bilingualism. However, Toury does not accept bilingual competence as a sufficient condition for the development of translation competence, but considers the latter to be “the sum of bilingual competence and interlingual transfer competence”. The build-up of the latter equips the bilingual person with the ability to transfer texts equivalently, by making choices according to the functions, aim, style, text type, register, etc. of the texts (Lörcher 2012: 6). Lörcher himself, on the other hand, proposes his own third concept on the bilingual’s ability to translate, defined as a “rudimentary ability to mediate” (Lörcher 1991a, b). His view of translation competence comprises both L1 and L2 competence (even partial) which is “endowed with an [interlingual] rudimentary ability to mediate information between these languages”, and with the addition of translation training/experience (Lörcher 2012: 6). Most importantly, this rudimentary ability to mediate “realises itself in performance products which are to be called translations, even though they are imperfect or restricted” and can also “function irrespective of the genuine nature of the mediating situation and irrespective of the naturalness of its communication” (Lörcher 2012: 6).

In connection to L2 teaching, this third conceptualisation of a bilingual’s translation competence can have major implications on the relationship between translation and L2 approaches. Lörcher, first, explicitly regards translation as an act of mediation between languages, a concept which is currently of great significance in the field of L2 teaching but also a cause of dispute, as will be extensively analysed in the last chapter of this thesis. Parallel to that, by accepting even partial language competence of two or more languages, he applies



the concept not only to L1 bilinguals with equal mastery in both languages, but to all bilinguals with different levels of competence and combinations of languages, therefore including plurilingual learners. Moreover, by extending the function of this rudimentary ability to mediate even in “unnatural” communicative situations, he involves in his concept not only L1 bilinguals (simultaneously bilingual children) but also L2 bilinguals (sequentially bilingual learners, including foreign language learners). Lörscher refers to the latter as non-bilinguals (people with a native language and an interlanguage), and postulates that the translation processes between bilinguals and non-bilinguals may differ, but not in principle, only by degree. With regards to use of translation specifically in the context of Foreign Language Teaching (FLT), Lörscher’s arguments can be both positively and negatively interpreted. He clearly believes that all bilingual children possess the rudimentary ability to mediate. However, he distinguishes between the ones who acquire their L2 in a natural environment (coordinate bilingual children), and the ones who acquire it in an artificial learning environment (compound bilingual children), claiming that:

[t]he rudimentary mediating competence in its largely sense-oriented forms manifests itself in coordinate bilingual children’s natural translation. In the foreign language classroom, in which translation is taken out of its communicative dimension and functionalised for the training and testing of foreign language skills, this rudimentary ability to mediate undergoes a decisive deformation. It is largely reduced to the levels of the signs. [...]. [However], [t]he professionals [...] approach translations in a primarily sense-oriented way and thus adopt procedures used by coordinate bilingual children. (Lörscher 2012: 14)

The above quote could potentially be interpreted as support for the rejection of translation from the L2 classrooms, as a non-communicative activity with very little to offer. However, that does not seem to be Lörscher’s intention here. Conversely, he believes that, although at first, L1 bilingual children and professional translators have more similar approaches towards translation than the L2 bilingual learners, it is an “urgent task” for the schools to counteract this situation and create the opportunities for the L2 learners to turn their rudimentary mediating competence into an elaborated translation competence. By abandoning “an apparently inadequate concept and view of translation” (Lörscher 2012: 14), which has far too often hindered this process, L2 teachers can employ translation as a purposeful communicative strategy and task, implemented in authentic situations.

The latter echoes Colina's understanding of translation competence as "a special type of communicative competence in addition to separate communicative competences in L1 and L2" (2003a: 30), based on the current SLA definition of communicative competence as the ability to interpret, express and negotiate meaning (Carreres 2014: 126). Carreres draws parallels between translation competence and language competence by assessing whether the acquisition of translation skills could be relevant to the L2 learner. To that direction, she takes a look at both the PACTE translation model (2008) and the report of the Modern Language Association of America (MLA). She concludes that the skills expected from the graduate language students significantly overlap with the skills translation students are expected to acquire, according to Kelly's account of translation competence (Kelly 2005, cited in Carreres 2014: 126). Moreover, according to the MLA report, achieving the "competence of an educated native speaker" is a "goal that postadolescent learners rarely reach" (2007: 3 3–4). Carreres agrees that similarly only a "tiny fraction of graduates in modern languages, and [...] in other fields, will end up earning their living as translators", whereas "many others will have to carry out translation tasks in the course of their professional and /or personal lives" (2014: 126). Her views are in accordance with the discussion that has already taken place in this chapter, on how non-professional translation competence is evident on bilinguals with various degrees of language competence. Carreres assents with the authors of the MLA report who consider translation and interpretation "as an integral part of the translingual and transcultural competence that all language graduates need to acquire" (2014: 127). Although she concludes that this conceptualisation can support the inclusion of translation, as a means and as an end, in higher education, the thesis will, further, argue that this could also be the case for lower levels of L2 education (primary, secondary), providing a scaffolding of tasks and expectations according to the students' language levels.

Taking all this into account, and having established the relationship between translation and bilingualism from a "natural" perspective, the next part focuses on the theoretical framework which underpins this relationship within the educational context.

### **3.2.3 A theoretical framework for implementing translation in bilingual education**

The study of the sequential acquisition of bilingualism refers to the situation where a child becomes proficient in the second language after acquiring the first one. This study belongs to the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Such acquisition differs from the simultaneous one in that the individual may acquire the language informally through neighbourhood, nursery school and community, and formally through school, adult classes and

language courses. This is usually – but not necessarily – the case of minority language speakers, where there is a mismatch between the language of the home and the language of the school, and it certainly applies to the thousands of immigrant children currently settling down around Europe (and globally), and entering different educational systems. The issue of the home language has long been at the core of bilingual studies, not only due to the challenges imposed on its definition (as previously discussed), but mainly as a factor prohibiting or facilitating the acquisition of the L2. After discussing the question from a linguistic, as well as a socio-political perspective, the thesis now examines the theoretical foundations of engaging both the L1 and translation in the wider context of bilingual education.

A theoretical framework that directly relates to language educational policies, provision and practice with children, in particular those whose L1 is not the medium of instruction in their school, has been developed by Cummins. The first basic idea was the “Threshold Hypothesis”, originally postulated by Toukomaa and Skutnabb-Kangas (1977) and Cummins (1976). The critical point of the theory is the idea of two levels of bilingual development, the lower threshold and the upper threshold. Each one is a level of language competence that has consequences for a child. Reaching the first level, the child avoids the negative consequences of bilingualism, whereas in order for a child to enjoy “additive bilingualism” with positive cognitive effects they would have to reach the upper threshold (Jørgensen and Quist 2009: 155–56). The implications of this hypothesis for education mean simply that teaching children through their L1 usually leads to the satisfactory development of the L2. If a child has not developed their L1 competence to the lower threshold, teaching on L2 will have negative effects on the child’s bilingualism and cognitive development. The hypothesis had a major impact on the development of bilingual education programmes (e.g. Maintenance Bilingual Education Programs), that allow children to operate in their more developed L1. However, the hypothesis has been also criticized for being primitive and deficient, since defining the exact level of language proficiency a child must reach in order to avoid the negative and obtain the positive advantages of bilingualism can prove to be quite problematic (Edelsky 1983, 1990, cited in Baker 2001: 169).

A more refined theory of bilingualism which considered the relationship between a bilingual’s languages has been the “Developmental Interdependence Hypothesis” (Cummins 1978, 1981, 1986b, 2000b). It was formally expressed as follows: “To the extent that instruction in Lx is effective in promoting proficiency in Lx, transfer of this proficiency to Ly will occur provided there is adequate exposure to Ly (either in school or environment) and adequate motivation to learn Ly” (Cummins 1981: 29). What this means in simpler terms is

that skills and knowledge acquired in one language are easily transferred to another. Despite the differences on surface aspects (e.g. pronunciation, fluency, etc.) of languages, Cummins (2007) argues that there is a common underlying cognitive-academic proficiency across languages, which makes possible the transfer of cognitive-academic or literacy-related proficiency from one language to another. According to Liddicoat (1991: 16), it is possible that this transfer across languages could occur either on a specific skill-by-skill or concept-by-concept basis, or it could involve the transfer of an entire structure of skills or concepts in a domain. Cummins (2007) cites a great deal of research that supports this notion (Ramírez 1992; Verhoeven 1994; Thomas and Collier 1997), as well as reviews of extensive empirical research on this (Baker 2001; Cummins 2001; Genesse et al. 2006). Thomas and Collier (1997), when comparing the effects of various kinds of intervention on children entering school with no English at the age of five, found out that the children with the least exposure to English are those who ultimately perform best, thus providing convincing backing for the notion of the interdependence of languages and the transfer of skills (cited in Edwards 1998: 4).

This theoretical connection between a bilingual's two languages also triggers support from the science of neurobiology, based on the belief that in a bilingual brain a common neural system mediates semantic processes for both languages. Earlier research has found that both early and late bilinguals' L1 and L2 seem to have no separation in Wernicke's area, the language processing centre for understanding speech (Kim et al. 1997). All languages seem to tap into a common conceptual system, or as Illes et al. (1999) put it: "These results demonstrate a shared frontal lobe system for semantic analysis of the languages and are consistent with cognitive research on bilingualism indicating that the two languages of a bilingual person access a common semantic system" (1999: 347). In the same line of thought, Proverbio et al. (2006: 25) claim that "it appears that the linguistic systems (L1, L2, L3, etc.) are not independent but rather are based on a common conceptual system". In fact, according to Fabbro:

[...] all verbal functions that are present in a bilingual individual have their homolog in a monolingual speaker. Bilinguals switch and mix languages, while monolinguals switch and mix registers; bilinguals translate from one language into another, while monolinguals may paraphrase from one register to another (i.e. they can address the same concept addressing their own little child or an audience of experts) (Paradis 1993,1998). This is another reason why it is no longer reasonable to postulate the

existence of neural mechanisms specific to bilinguals, as maintained by several neurologists in the past. (Fabbro 2001: 213)

Bialystok et al. (2012) who discuss the consequences of bilingualism for the mind and behaviour, explain that there is plenty of evidence coming from psycholinguistic studies, patient studies and imaging studies “indicating involvement of the non-target language [in bilinguals] while performing a linguistic task in the selected language” (Bialystok et al. 2012). This joint activation of languages is currently further investigated by studies who focus on the neural correlates of bilingual processing in the behavioural research. Bialystok et al. (2012) explain that the majority of this research makes use of fMRI for the study of bilinguals while performing a linguistic task in their two languages (ibid). This task requires from participants to “name pictures or generate words in response to a cue signaling the required language” while “performance is compared for single language and mixed language conditions” (ibid). Discussing initial fMRI research on bilingual language switching, the authors discuss that:

[it] has implicated distributed cortical activation that converges in the frontal regions. Intriguingly, the brain regions related to bilingual switching are also critical for general attention and cognitive control [...]. This overlap in brain regions activated for bilingual switching and cognitive control implies that the same mechanisms may be involved in both activities, and that these shared processes might help to explain the superior performance of bilinguals on nonverbal conflict tasks. (Bialystok et al. 2012)

García-Pentón et al. (2015) throw caution to the fact that although the neuroanatomical bases of bilingualism attract at the moment intensive attention, “current findings on how the brain structure changes due to bilingual experience” are variable (2015: 303). Nevertheless, this does not undermine the weight of research on neuroplasticity and its implications on bilingualism as well as second L2 learning. García and Laviosa (2020) argue how evidence that “[s]ynaptic changes are not occurring in one place, but rather throughout all the connecting neurons in the brain circuit from any source possible” (Lieff 2013, Parareda 2017 in García and Laviosa 2020) can currently support implementation of a plurilingual teaching approach in an L2 classroom. Bialystok et al. (2012) refer to “the weight of scientific evidence [that] supports the promise of “mental flexibility”” (Bialystok et al. 2012). They uphold that “[i]t should not be surprising that intense and sustained experience leaves its mark on our minds and brain” and that that response to experience is “precisely what we mean by neuroplasticity” (ibid). Relating these

findings specifically to L2 acquisition, Thierry and Wu (2007) studied how the “the brain potentials reveal unconscious translation during foreign-language comprehension” (2007: 12530). They conclude that “native-language activation operates in everyday second-language use, in the absence of awareness on the part of the bilingual speaker” whereas “future studies will determine how proficiency in a second language affects implicit native-language activation and the extent to which interactions between first and second languages are asymmetrical” (2007: 12534).

All the aforementioned findings translate into the simple but crucial idea that incoming information in a bilingual brain must be matched up against prior knowledge, which is used as a basis in order to understand and learn more. Bransford et al. (2000, 2005) who researched how learning occurs and the optimal conditions to foster it, have already highlighted three major conditions for its effectiveness: engaging prior understandings; integrating factual knowledge with conceptual frameworks; and taking active control over the learning process through meta-cognitive strategies. The reason why prior knowledge is particularly relevant to the teaching for cross-linguistic transfer is because, if prior knowledge is encoded in students’ L1, then the engagement of prior knowledge is inevitably mediated through L1, thus making it extremely hard to dismiss use of translation in the L2 teaching as an inefficient tool or a harmful impediment (Bransford et al. 2000, 2005, cited in Cummins 2007).

Cummins (2007) points out that the implications of this principle for students’ education through a second language (he makes no distinction between second/foreign language instruction and bilingual/immersion programmes) is that instruction should explicitly attempt to activate students’ prior knowledge and build relevant background knowledge as necessary. He also draws attention to the inconsistency between this fundamental principle of learning and the monolingual instructional approaches which regard students’ L1 – and all the knowledge encoded therein – as an obstacle to the L2 learning. Consequently, he condemns the fact that even in cases where monolingual approaches acknowledge the role of prior knowledge, they are likely to limit its expression to what students can articulate through their L2 (2007: 8–9). Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009), who also criticise monolingual teaching approaches for denying students their right to translation and to use of their L1 in classrooms, prompt the necessity of building on prior knowledge, since “we all see the new in terms of the familiar” (2009: 73). They move further to support that teachers should do anything to utilise this natural tendency, not because nothing can be done to prevent it, but because it is a vital stage for the beginner. They conclude by arguing that successful learners capitalise on the vast

amount of linguistic skills and world knowledge they have accumulated via the L1, whether the teachers support this or not (2009: 73–75).

Concluding from the above, the discussed framework is based on the conscious and deliberate drawing on the L1 linguistic and cultural background to acquire an L2, as well as the mixing of the two languages. As such, this theoretical framework seems to underpin the implementation of bilingual activities in the current L2 teaching, including the use of translation. At this point, however, it should be pointed out that concerns have been raised on the benefits of this framework for bilinguals, related to the place of their L2 acquisition. More specifically, Ringbom (1980), referring to second language acquisition and foreign language learning, considers them as two distinct language learning processes based on “the individual’s internal processes of learning and the degree of consciousness brought to the learning task” (1980: 37). Learning a language in an SL context has been argued to be rather beneficial since the language is spoken in the immediate environment of the learner, who has good opportunities to use the language by participating in natural communication situations (Diller and Markert 1983; Spada 1986; Freed 1990; Lennon 1995, cited in Sadeghi and Procedia 2012: 985). On the other hand, learning a language in an FL environment implies by definition a number of restrictions on opportunities to use the language in natural communication situations, prompting Baker to comment that the “evidence of bilingualism through foreign language learning is not always so positive” (2001: 93). This comment, however, could evoke previously discussed arguments (Chapter 2) on the significance of the L2 input amount for the L2 learners, and could provide once again, a “legitimate excuse” for the restriction of the L1 and the dismissal of translation from specific L2 learning environments.

In an attempt to address these concerns, some researchers draw a comparison between foreign learners (FL) and heritage language learners and maintain that the role of the L1, the mixing of languages and use of translation are equally significant and evident in all bilingual scenarios, regardless of the L2 acquisition place. The latter typically refers to immigrants (and generally second language learners) who after hours or at weekends attend “heritage language schools” (Hornberger 2005a), as these are called in the United States and Canada,<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> “A heritage language learner is a person studying a language who has some proficiency in or a cultural connection to that language through family, community, or country of origin. Heritage language learners have widely diverse levels of proficiency in the language (in terms of oral proficiency and literacy) and of connections to the language and culture” (Valdés 2001). For the foreign language educators, “the heritage language student is also different [...] from the traditional foreign language student. This difference, however, has to do with developed functional proficiencies in the heritage languages” (Valdés 2001: 38).

“community language schools” or “ethnic schools” in Australia and “supplementary schools” in the UK. In fact, García (2005) argues that “in the United States the growth of the term ‘heritage languages’ has been complicit in the silencing of the world ‘bilingual’” (2005: 47).

According to Montrul (2011), FL learners and heritage language learners, despite their very different language learning experiences, share some similarities, the most profound one being that their target language is a secondary language, since they both acquire it in an FL context, and with less opportunities to practise it outside the L2 classroom. Research, however, indicates the striking need of heritage language learners to be able to rely on the language they speak and understand better, as well as their wish to use and mix both languages in the classroom (Li Wei 2010). Their language preferences are a further statement of how blurry and problematic the typical dichotomies between L1 and L2, or mother tongue and target language, or even FL and SL can be. Moreover, Hornberger (2005b), who also agrees with Cummins’ theory on interdependence of languages and transfer of skills, argues that these programmes maximize bilingual learning, since they enable the heritage learners to draw on their existing knowledge and language skills, rather than being constrained by monolingual instructional practices.

Discussing specifically the role of translation in these environments, Creese and Blackledge (2011) refer to the practice of “bilingual label quests” used in complementary school settings in England (Creese and Blackledge 2011: 17, cited in Lewis et al. 2012: 658). As they explain, “[t]he ‘translation’ performs a pedagogic strategy of accomplishing the task of new vocabulary teaching, keeping the lesson moving forward” (ibid). These bilingual quests, which are found in many variations and are common in the bilingual pedagogy of complementary schools, suggest that translation in these bilingual teaching settings has a strong presence, even if the chosen terminology does not explicitly highlight the act of translation, but rather focuses on the bilingual aspect of the strategy. Baker classifies heritage schools as an example of “maintenance bilingual education”, which aim at preserving the heritage (minority) language and culture of students living in a majority language society. The schools utilise the students’ home or heritage language as a medium of instruction, where the expected outcome is full bilingualism (2000: 218). Adopting a similar view, May (2008: 23) suggests that heritage language programmes “can be regarded as an additive and strong bilingual approach”, whereas Blackledge and Creese (2009) argue that these schools provide their students with “important multilingual environments in which to examine the interplay of linguistic practices, ideologies and identities in urban settings at the beginning of the twenty-first century” (2009: 57).



Taking this one step further, it is considering these bilingual schools as multilingual environments which invite and support the “interplay of linguistic practices and ideologies” the key concept standing behind the “new” bilingual education, which has been gaining momentum in the L2 education since the beginning of the twenty-first century. In other words, next to the transitional models of bilingual education (immersion bilingual teaching) and to the maintenance models (heritage schools) stands the enrichment model (de Mejía 2002), which aims at developing cultural pluralism and linguistic diversity. Similarly, stands the model of “dynamic bilingualism” (García 2008) which underlines multiple language practices and multimodality (Cenoz 2009: 27); Hornberger’s “Continua of Biliteracy” which Hornberger and Skilton-Sylvester believe to “account for real life situations from different perspectives and for multiple voices instead of adopting a traditional Western perspective” (ibid); or the “plurilingual communicative competence” (PCC) (González-Davies 2018), defined “as an appropriate use of natural plurilingual practices (e.g. translation, code-switching or an informed use of the L1) (2018: 125). Such models not only consider the benefits of acknowledging and maintaining all of the student’s languages but they put at the front the naturally occurring interplay of an individual’s languages in everyday life, as well as the right of an individual to this flexible and hybrid form of communication, and they draw their approaches based on that. This kind of ideology underlines what the thesis understands as “new” bilingual education which materialises in the current plurilingual approach, as discussed next. This kind of ideology, according to the thesis, best supports translation in the bilingual education, not only as a means of conceptual transferring and linguistic comparison, but also as a natural phenomenon and a undoubtful right of an individual.

All in all, this chapter has so far focused on exploring how the declining emphasis on monolingual teaching approaches and, subsequently, how a renewed interest in a bilingual teaching mentality at the beginning of this century have affected the relationship between translation and L2 teaching. The chapter has argued that an explicit relationship between translation and bilingualism was already in place at that time, with research in the field exploring the extent of translation’s presence in the bilingual mind and the use of translation as a strategy by bilinguals. The field of SLA has also been showing an explicit interest in the role of the L1 in the L2 acquisition, and potentially in translation as well. As discussed so far, researchers have long been working on the theoretical framework and principles that support the inevitable role and clear benefits of the L1 in the L2 acquisition process. That fact could theoretically, in turn, support the implementation of individual bilingual activities (including

use of translation), as well as the implementation of a more general bilingual teaching approach, encompassing all types of L2 teaching (SLA, FLL or Heritage Language Learning).

Moving to the next section of the present chapter, the focus will now shift to how the relationship between translation and L2 teaching is being practically affected by this new bilingual education. Since the latter is built on the theoretical foundations of bilingualism and SLA, and since the findings coming from these fields are quite supportive for the role of the L1 and translation in the contemporary L2 teaching, one would expect positive attitudes towards the incorporation of both of them in the “post-monolingual approaches” (Horner and Tetreault 2016: 13) of the twenty-first century.

Horner and Tetreault refer to translanguaging, plurilingualism, translinguaging and transcultural literacy as the most prominent approaches that challenge the hierarchy of monolingual teaching. Marshall and Moore (2016) speak of “an array of lingualisms” (bilingualism, multilingualism, plurilingualism, metrolingualism, translinguaging, etc.) (2016: 19) in the current literature on L2 teaching techniques and approaches, whereas another perspective considers plurilingualism, in particular, as “the opposite of monolingualism” (www.coe.int). Adopting the last view, this chapter considers plurilingualism as a wider educational context which fosters a number of pedagogies and approaches, (e.g. translinguaging and translanguaging). In the next section the chapter, first, examines the concept of plurilingualism, and briefly sets the context of a contemporary plurilingual education. It aims to argue that, similarly to bilingualism, use of translation in the plurilingual teaching context is, in theory, perfectly compatible with the conceptual frames of the currently developing plurilingual approaches. It then seeks to investigate, in praxis, whether and how supportive these contemporary approaches are towards the role of translation in this plurilingual educational context. It concludes that there is an inexplicably high degree of “invisibility” of the role of translation in some of them, a fact that does not seem to settle the long-standing dispute in the relationship between translation and L2 teaching.

### **3.3 Plurilingualism and translation**

#### **3.3.1 Plurilingualism: Origins of the concept in the European L2 education**

The most commonly associated document with the introduction of plurilingualism in the wider European L2 educational context has been the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (CEFR) (CoE 2001). According to North, the CEFR is “a language policy document to a large extent, covering many aspects of the learning, teaching and assessment of language in a sociocultural context” (North 2014: x), however, it

cannot be imposed on any state or authority following the Council of Europe's lack of legislative authority on these matters. In fact, North praises the organization which "charged with the protection of human rights, it identified early in its history that language, access to it and freedom to use it is an important human right" (2014: x). Indeed, the CEFR, despite its relatively recent impact on L2 education, has a background of over forty years of work on modern languages in various projects spearheaded by the Council of Europe (CoE). In an additional note to the published rationale for the development of the CEFR, "the official political impetus of the Committee of Ministers of the COE was to encourage mobility, to promote understanding and cooperation and to overcome prejudice and discrimination (CoE 1996, 2001)" (Fulcher 2004: 256). In fact, the first draft of the CEFR was subtitled "Language Learning for European Citizenship" (ibid, 257).

Byram (2008), also highlighting a socio-ideological perspective to the CEFR's background, postulates that one of the consequences of tourism, migration and the mobility of people in general in the European Union searching for better jobs, was "the plethora of 'survival' language courses" ([www.vigdis.hi.is/](http://www.vigdis.hi.is/)). These were developed from travelling phrase books, and intended for adults, in order to help them "survive" in the new foreign societies. The notion of "survival" developed in accordance with the philosophy of the communicative method, which dictated that the students who acquire a foreign language are successful when they manage to communicate their needs, ideas and thoughts to the other person, regardless of the level of their grammatical and lexical competence. The linguistic needs of immigrants, and the emphasis on language learning for practical reasons, "led to a reassessment of all language teaching, where success could be achieved before perfection, and competences at different levels could be recognised and rewarded" (ibid). According to Byram, this kind of language teaching and learning philosophy was eventually presented in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in 2001 by the Council of Europe (ibid).

Ironically, although in its genesis the CEFR emphasized the question of mobility, it appears to have also become a tool for social segregation and immigration policies, since several European countries (e.g. Austria, Germany and the Netherlands) have passed laws concerning the status of migrants that include language-specific obligations. Krumm criticizes the fact that "in most cases, mastery of a specific CEFR level has to be demonstrated on the test to obtain a permit of residence or to gain citizenship", asserting that "in this case language no longer acts as a means for understanding and integration but as a wedge for segregation, demotivating the very group that is to benefit from undertaking such a risk" (2007: 668). He further criticises that the language functions of the CEFR frequently reflect situations in which

the language learner has to “survive”. Krumm (2007) observes that this is not the case for using the minority language, noting that “the descriptors of the CEFR do not recognize the special situation of multilingual speakers, with their ability to code-switch between languages despite the fact that this specific competence is described in chapter 6.1.3.2 of the CEFR” (2007: 669).

Notwithstanding the criticism, from a pedagogical point of view, the CEFR was intended to provide a common basis for language learning, teaching and assessment across Europe. Although it is praised as a prescriptive document that does not wish to “recommend a particular method but to present options” (2001a: xiv), it is not neutral, since it aims to “promote methods of modern language teaching which will strengthen independence of thought, judgement and action, combined with social skills and responsibility” (2001: 4). However, as it is not related to any specific language, it is understood as a valuable tool for the comparison of language proficiency levels, which can also facilitate communication about language learning and teaching in the different languages that are used in Europe ([www.citeseerx.ist.psu.edu](http://www.citeseerx.ist.psu.edu)). Within this context and in that format, the CEFR was intended to be “work in progress” rather than a conclusive last word on the subject ([www.englishprofile.org](http://www.englishprofile.org)).

The CEFR has not been the first European document to refer to the idea of plurilingualism. In fact, extensive research on bilingual/multilingual education had already been manifested in a number of declarations from European – as well as international – institutions, that attempted to set the principles for plurilingualism back in the 1990s ([www.observatoireplurilinguisme.eu](http://www.observatoireplurilinguisme.eu)). However, the inclusion of the concept in the CEFR in 2001 has majorly contributed to the raising of the L2 teachers’ awareness of the idea of plurilingualism in the L2 education. It should be noted at this point, that the initial engagement of L2 teachers with the CEFR was primarily due to the Framework’s widely acknowledged “descriptive levels” and “Can-Do” statements (Byram and Parmenter 2012: 263), and not due to the limited mention of the way CEFR has conceptualized language learning, or its emphasis on the notion of plurilingualism (North 2014: 2). However, the gradual acceptance and general treatment of the CEFR as “the standard point of reference” (Valax 2011: 83) for the L2 teaching/learning means that its proposed language learning objective of “the mother tongue plus two”, has been broadly taken into account by L2 policymakers and teachers. In fact, amid recent societal changes such as new immigration, globalization, economic and technological change, one wonders if it is now the time, “fifteen years on, [...] to question if these definitions and recommendations are still appropriate”, including the relevance of the “‘mother tongue plus two’ recommendation for those young people whose mother tongue is different from the language of schooling” ([www.publications.europa.eu](http://www.publications.europa.eu)). The next part, therefore, focuses on the

notions of plurilingualism and the plurilingual learner as they have been evolving in the last two decades, in order to set and analyse the plurilingual educational context within which the role of translation is being reconceptualised.

### **3.3.2 The plurilingual learner in the contemporary L2 education**

Bernaus et al. (2007) observe that plurilingualism and pluriculturalism do not constitute new concepts since “we all use different ‘registers’ of the same language in different situations just as we use different cultural repertoires in different situations” (2007: 12). Moreover, in current literature the terms mono-, bi- and multilingualism already appear to cover in pairs all linguistic usages, referring respectively to knowledge of one, two or more than two languages (Kemp 2009). The innovative element of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism, however, lies in the idea of developing this concept “as the result of a process of language learning” (Bernaus et al. 2007: 12). Indeed, plurilingual and pluricultural competence have been described as:

[the a]bility to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social actor has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures. This is not seen as the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the social actor may draw. (Coste et al. 2009: 11)

As Bernaus et al. (2007) explain, the above description of plurilingualism in CEFR currently underlines the scope of cultural studies, which nowadays includes the three concepts of self, group and communicative situation, referring respectively to the terms of pluri-, multi-, and inter-. In order for this to become better understood, one must first take into consideration the definitions of and the difference between multilingualism and plurilingualism, as explained in CEFR:

Plurilingualism differs from multilingualism, which is the knowledge of a number of languages, or the coexistence of different languages in a given society. Multilingualism may be attained by simply diversifying the languages on offer in a particular school or educational system, or by encouraging pupils to learn more than one foreign language, or reducing the dominant position of English in international communication. Beyond this, the plurilingual approach emphasises the fact that as an individual person’s

experience of language in its cultural contexts expands, from the language of the home to that of society at large and then to the language of other people [...], he or she does not keep these languages and cultures in strictly separated mental compartments, but rather builds up a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact. (2001: 4)

Therefore, according to the CEFR, multilingualism includes both societal multilingualism, or the linguistic diversity found in specific social and educational contexts, as well as individual multilingualism, which refers to “a person’s ability in languages other than mother tongue” (Maher 2017: 61). The latter could be a very inclusive definition, including matters of bilingualism and diglossia, code-switching, matters of language and identity, or language loss and maintenance (ibid). Therefore, multilingualism includes bilingualism but also extends to any number of languages, considering how languages coexist alongside each other, within societies and individuals, however, plurilingualism refers only to an individual repertoire of linguistic competence (CoE 2007a: 17). This linguistic competence can be acquired throughout life, and cannot be considered as “the privilege of a ‘gifted’ elite” (Kivinen 2011: 16), resembling the view of “folk bilingualism”. In that respect, plurilingualism is regarded as a “changing repertoire over time”, which does not include mastering languages to a high level of proficiency, but rather “the ability to use more than one linguistic variety to degrees for different purposes” (Kivinen 2011: 16). This also echoes Beacco’s (2005: 19) definition of plurilingualism as a “complex but unique competence, in social communication, us[ing] different languages for different purposes with different levels of command”.

One common factor underlying the above definitions is what Coste et al. call “ordinary imbalance” (2009: 11). The term, which perhaps resembles some types of bilingualism (semilingualism, sequenced bilingualism, receptive/productive bilingualism), is indicative of the unbalanced or uneven character of plurilingual competence in various ways. These could refer to how “general proficiency may vary according to the language, or the possibility that the profile of the language ability may be different from one language to another [...], or even the fact the pluricultural profile may differ from the plurilingual profile” (2009: 11).

In a further elaboration on plurilingual competence, and its comparison to bilingualism, Coste et al. (2009) explain that it is, initially, research on ordinary bilingualism and its construction which has majorly contributed to the field of more than one language competence in the school domain. Nevertheless, as they claim, bilingualism currently includes and is included in plurilingual competence, which as a concept adds other dimensions to it (2009:16)

– whereas other researchers feel that bilingualism is only one of the possible forms of multilingualism (Aronin and Hufeisen 2009; Aronin and Singleton 2012, cited in Woll 2016: 11). To put it differently, “bilingualism appears to be only a particular case of competence in multiple languages” (ibid), whereas at the same time concepts such as semilingualism, imbalanced, or partial competence are now viewed positively, under the spectrum of plurilingual competence. Moreover, this imbalance does not equal a celebration of limited mastery in foreign languages. Partial, but at the same time functional, competence is rather an indication of a mastery which, although “imperfect at a given moment”, should be considered “part of a multiple plurilingual competence which it enriches” (Coste et al. 2009: 12).

This shift of perspective is incorporated in the goal of plurilingualism – and plurilingual education – which, according to the CoE (2007), is “not the simultaneous teaching of as many languages as possible through comparison and contrast”, but “rather the development of plurilingual competence and intercultural education, as a way of living together” (CoE 2007a: 18). Embedded in the aforementioned context of plurilingualism, the plurilingual learner should, therefore, develop both a linguistic and a cultural identity that goes beyond the simple adding of monolingual competences in several languages, to allow for combinations of several kinds, including switching between languages and other bilingual forms of speech (Coste et al. 2009: 11). In other words, plurilingualism as a “single, richer repertoire of language varieties and available options [...] allows choices based on this interlinguistic variation when circumstances permit” (Coste et al. 2009: 11). Under this scope of plurilingual education the language learner is expected to develop not only linguistic and intercultural awareness, but also the concepts of metalinguistic awareness, as well as language awareness – development of the knowledge of how to learn and the skills to apply it in new situations.

Moving the shift of focus from the individual’s aspect of plurilingualism and the plurilingual learner to plurilingual education and the current school settings, the school reality does not always look positive towards the concept of plurilingualism. Coste et al. (2009) in their study on *Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence* (2009) are initially concerned with the question of how open schools in Europe are to plurilingualism and –culturalism. They note that schools are resistant to pluralism, since the “traditional” concept of school is still defined as a place of national socialization, a “market relatively closed to the recognition of any form of frontier-crossing” (2009: 23). As they elaborate, school in both historical and institutional terms “is not a place that is open to plurilingualism and –culturalism, [and a]ny illusion on this point would be counter-productive” (ibid). Not only is the development of plurilingual identity

not identified with the school education but, in some cases, the school has been the place where such identities are suppressed and may even remain hidden (ibid).

Specifically in terms of language teaching and curricula, school education does provide opportunities for contact with foreign languages, however, (currently in most cases) each L2 is taught separately from the others. Moreover, it is approached through the same communicative methods, and sets the same aim of native-speaker competence, “missing out on possible multiplicity of educational opportunities”, and “remaining faithful to the bilingual ideal” (2009: 24). Adding to this context are missed occasions by the school to acknowledge learners’ “manifestations of transitional systems of interlanguage”, “successive adjustments in [their] grammar, but also mixed systems, forms of code switching and occurrences of bilingual speech” (Coste et al. 2009: 24) not as “faulty” productions, but as successful and legitimate attempts to integrate and communicate (Coste et al. 2009: 24). Effectively, these terms of L2 teaching reality, allow no room for plurilingual learners to apply the full range of their bilingual communicative strategies, keeping use of translation still “out of question”.

The picture of resistance to pluralism, hinted by Coste et al. as “a reality that is absent from official political discourse” (2009: 23), is further exploited by Le Pichon (2016). Deeply rooted in ideological and political beliefs, he still observes a difference between the existence of an advantageous bilingualism and a disadvantageous plurilingualism, which as an incomplete competence, is still perceived as a deficit and not a skill (2016: 5). Referring to immigrant children entering the educational systems around Europe, he cautions that it is not their plurilingualism which negatively affects their learning potential but the educational approach that counts them as “true” illiterates, when in reality they are only differently alphabetized. Placing them in the same classrooms with students with no reading and writing abilities, and instructing them in the exact same methods, deprives them of their advantage of already being literate (with a different alphabet), as well as being “conscious of the phonetic aspects of the words, competence that is developed consequently to the learning of reading and writing” (2016: 5).

The question that naturally emerges, therefore, is how a school setting can become a place that not only fosters the needs and rights of immigrant learners, but will indeed ensure that all pupils develop plurilingual and pluricultural competence on an individual level, as well as the capacity to interact in a multilingual environment. Following this question, a variety of plurilingual pedagogies, strategies and projects, drawing on the theoretical background of bilingualism, exemplify how inclusion and mixing of all linguistic resources can translate into practice for each learner individually, as well as for L2 classrooms as a whole. In this



plurilingual setting, it would be reasonable for translation, as a cognitive and communicative bilingual strategy, to assume a significant role and have a clear and strong presence in the contemporary L2 education. The chapter next argues that, in praxis, the phenomenon of translation is evident in the discursive practices of plurilinguals, in and out of the school context. However, the degree of translation's "visibility" in the plurilingual teaching approaches is up for discussion, ranging from its complete reconceptualization as a translingual approach up to cautious and even negative attitudes towards its relationship with translanguaging practices.

### **3.3.3 The role of translation in a plurilingual educational context: Translation as a plurilingual, a translanguaging and a translingual approach**

Perhaps the most significant condition for the implementation of a plurilingual approach is to acknowledge the right to it or, more specifically, the right to language education, in the form of plurilingual and intercultural education. Reference to language rights has been documented in several published documents thus far, however, the study on *Plurilingual and Intercultural Education as a Right* (CoE 2009) focused on two significant points. The first one concerns "the right to language education as a change of perspective", underlying the importance of adopting a "user's" rights perspective to education systems, which should become an explicit element of any education system (2009: 4). The second point begins with the fact that language is a vital aspect of every human's personality, thus transforming language education to a fundamental element of schooling, before carrying on to state that, from a language rights perspective, the languages to be accounted for schooling are all the languages (and varieties) to be found in a school. In other words, language education entails each learner's own repertoire, official main language(s), minority/regional and immigrant languages, and foreign languages, all of them regarded as both subjects to be taught and/or medium of instruction for others (2009: 5). As further explained:

This complex whole, whose components vary according to context, constitutes what might be termed the "languages of education", understood to mean languages in education and languages for education. Language education, which is necessarily plurilingual and intercultural, is therefore that component of education which, having regard to the stated aims of education generally and the rights of learners, puts languages at the service of quality education. (2009: 5)

Taking into account the above quote, it appears that foreign language teaching is currently situated in the wider context of language education, where all schooling languages are regarded as a means to an end and an end in itself, testing the “traditional” boundaries between fields such as SLA and FLT. Indeed, when focusing on actual L2 classroom settings, and on individual attempts by language teachers to implement this sort of thinking in their school environments, the first thing to notice is that, from a teaching methodology point of view, plurilingual education does not construe a new concept, but rather a change in perspective, by integrating, next to the foreign languages, all the other schooling languages as well (CoE 2009: 7). L2 practitioners have been facing for years the reality of plurilingual learners in multilingual classrooms. Describing this sort of climate, Levine postulates that:

[a] foreign language classroom that is “multilingual” is one in which all the languages known by learners and the instructor come into play and are acknowledged as important and useful in different contexts. Obviously, all language use in the language class should have as its goal the maximization of opportunities to hear and use the foreign language. Yet often, and perhaps ironically, this may be accomplished by using English (or another language) in certain ways and at certain times. The class’s job (teacher and students) is to determine together when and how those other languages (English, Spanish, Chinese) can or should be used. (2011: 140)

Within this context, both L1 and translation have long been employed as communicative strategies towards creating a multilingual atmosphere in schools. Creating this environment often started with finding out more about students’ personal histories and language repertoires (naming systems, place of birth, language background, reasons for migration, culture and religion, literacy), in order to develop a deeper understanding of the wider linguistic and cultural context within which children operate outside school. A great emphasis has also been given to establishing good relations between home and school, by organizing home visits and parents’ evenings, having an open classroom policy and ensuring efficient communication between school and parents by translating some or all written communication (Edwards 1998: 22–32).

Furthermore, during the end of the twentieth century and the course of the twenty-first one, a wide range of bilingual strategies, activities and useful resources have been added in the literature (Houlton 1985; Edwards 1998; Conteh 2003; Schechter and Cummins 2003) for teachers who value their students’ L1 and want to involve all languages in their classrooms.

The activities range from simply displaying names of colours, days, numbers, etc. in different languages and scripts, children discussing their favourite stories, poems, bringing their favourite games into the classroom, to bilingual activities which are specifically developed to promote all four skills. Research projects, such as the “Schools Council Mother Tongue Project” (1985), “The Multilingual Resources for Children Project” (1995), the “The Dual Language Showcase” ([www.thornwood.peelschools.org](http://www.thornwood.peelschools.org)) (2003) and the “Multiliteracy Project” ([www.multiliteracies.ca](http://www.multiliteracies.ca)) are a few amongst others which have been specifically developed over the years, aiming to identify and discuss educational policy issues related to linguistic diversity. They all attempt to establish a framework that focuses more closely on classroom practise, by recording students’ and teachers’ cases. Bi- and/or multilingual approaches and strategies, including translation, are suggested and implemented based on the learners’ prior experiences and taking into account their personal preferences. More recently, another similar project targets specifically multilingual teaching and learning for very young children. The “Glitterlings and Interlingual Classrooms” (2015–16) programme is aligned to the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS), originating in the UK, and is an “Interlingual story and play-based English Language course which is the first of its kind” (Gallagher 2015: 4). It takes place in the so-called Glitterlings Interlingual Classrooms, building upon prior learning experiences, the concept of transfer of skills and strategies (Cummins 2007), the concept of “inspirational pedagogy” (Cummins and Early 2015), and on the effective involvement of carers/parents in the programme. Its main goal is the development of young polyglots by teaching them through a multilingual lens (cited in Gallagher 2015: 4–6).

Within the same category of projects promoting intercultural awareness and plurilingual competence, but with a clearer focus on translation, one could also encounter the “Translation Nation Project” (whereby translation workshops were held in primary and secondary schools across the United Kingdom between 2010–2014), the “Translators in Schools” (inspired by the Nation Project and launched in 2013), the “Juvenes Translatores” (a European annual translation contest for schools in EU member states), the e-book “Once Upon a Time in Europe” (a selection of 35 fairy tales translated into English by 35 different schools in Europe), the Clipfair project (an FL learning project through interactive revoicing and captioning of clips), FluentU (subtitled, translated, and annotated authentic videos in several languages) ([www.fluentu.com/](http://www.fluentu.com/)) as well as “Duolingo” (an online program to learn FLs). All these projects are explicit examples of how translation can be also implemented as a bilingual teaching/learning approach on its own, rather than being only part of an approach.

Similar examples by Witte et al. (2009), Cook (2010) and Leonardi (2010) refer exclusively and directly to the practical application of translation in the classroom, whereas others regard translation as an own-language activity (Butzkamm and Caldwell 2009; Kerr 2014). More specifically, translation is explicitly mentioned in a number of bi-/multilingual activities, taking place in multilingual classroom settings, in terms of using bilingual phrase books and audiovisual resources, reading, contrasting and producing bilingual stories, poems, drama, e-mails and webpages (Conteh 2003). In the same line of thought, Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009: 184–6) suggest various bilingual activities which involve translation, such as “bilingual readers”, “simultaneous bilingual reading”, “bilingual writing”, “testing the teacher”, “reading to the class and story-telling”, “stories mixing language”, etc. They even move one step forward, by suggesting an old-fashioned technique, “re-translation”, as a bilingual activity, calling it “mastery learning at its best: a high-quality text is manipulated back and forth as often as is necessary for the pupil to internalize it completely” (2009: 187).

At the same time, use of translation as a bilingual technique in the language education context can even take the form of a bilingual “friend” – a bilingual teacher assistant, or usually a bilingual child playing the role of the interpreter. Baker (2001) refers to these children as “language brokers” (2001: 104), echoing Lörcher’s “rudimentary ability to mediate”. She argues that “rather than just transmit information, children act as information and communication brokers, [...], often ensuring the messages are ‘culturally translated’” (ibid). She further argues that the cognitive outcomes for these children can be quite positive, referring to the metalinguistic awareness they will develop by realising early on the problems and possibilities of translation of words, figures of speech and ideas (2001: 104–6). More recently, Antonini et al. (2017) have acknowledged child language brokering as a non-professional interpreting and translation practise. They devoted the third part of their book *Non-professional Interpreting and Translation: State of the Art and Future of an Emerging Field of Research* in the exploration of its significance.

Another area which gradually gains prominence amongst bi- and plurilinguals, and also involves the explicit presence of translation, is the dual picture books. Book Trust, Language Lizard, Amazon, Little-Linguist, Alien-Languages, etc. are only a few of the resources currently offering a great variety in dual children’s literature, in several languages. The stories include either traditional tales or newer ones, complemented with vivid pictures and sometimes audio download in both languages. The role of translation in these books is fundamental. The texts are typically written in one language with the translation featuring in the page next to it. However, there are also examples when the “dual text switches between languages every few

lines, making reading easier for beginning students” (www.fluentu.com). Ironically enough, the basic idea and format of these current books seems to resemble much older times, when parallel and interlinear translation were extensively used for L2 teaching purposes, before translation was rejected as an efficient L2 teaching tool at the beginning of the twentieth century. Referring to multilingual picture books, Kümmerling-Meibauer (2013) explains that these are:

translations with two or up to four languages printed on the same or alternate pages. But there are also inter-lingual picture-books that combine different languages, thus inviting readers to switch between two to four languages under the condition that they have at least a basic knowledge of these languages (Eder 2009). Generally, the major part of these texts is written in one language—often the native language, while the remaining text is written in another language, sometimes even in different languages. (2013: iv)

Translations of unknown notions and vocabulary in the non-native language may be included, either in brackets right next to them, or in glossaries attached to the main text. Either dual, interlingual or multilingual, these picture-books are not specifically developed as part of a curriculum. Nevertheless, they are increasingly targeted at pre-school and primary school children for fostering SLA and supporting intercultural understanding (2013: v), bringing, indeed, translation back into the L2 education.

Interestingly enough, all the above bi-/multilingual activities and projects – from simple bilingual teaching activities to more complex translation tasks – are outlined here as applications of translation in the L2 teaching, as they are understood to include a certain degree of translating. However, the general term of bi-/multilingual activities may not unanimously or instantly evoke use of translation in this context. Understanding the implications of this observation from the point of view of the thesis, means that the establishment of links between theories and concepts from different fields, such as bilingualism and SLA, is necessary in order to view, and theoretically underpin, translation as a bilingual activity and strategy. However, it also means that lack of a theoretical ground, or lack of reference to it, potentially reinforces the invisible status of translation in the contemporary L2 teaching context.

The latter is evidently apparent in a case study conducted by Kelly and Bruen (2015) in an Irish Higher Education Institution. The researchers report that the documentation relating to five out of seven first and second year module descriptors lack reference to translation,

although “translation is covered to some extent in all of these modules and features as part of the examination process” (2015: 164). Additionally, one of the participant lecturers admitted that, although he/she favours use of translation as an effective and highly motivating L2 teaching activity, he/she consciously avoids use of the term translation/translate in the classroom. Instead, there is a preference for more descriptive and neutral expressions that highlight translation as a communicative activity, and carry no negative associations with Grammar-Translation Method. Interestingly enough, despite the fact that the translation activity is regarded here as beneficial, avoiding references to the term is thought to help the students move “beyond rewriting the L2 task in the L1, and approach [...] it from an angle that considered L1 register, style and expression” (2015: 164). In other words, although the practice remains the same, replacing the name in the instructions/explanations of a task can shift the learners’ attitude from taking a strictly rewriting approach (under the name of translation) to a bilingual one (under a different name). This view reveals that translation’s invisibility in this case is related not only to the avoidance of the word translation, but also to a certain conceptualisation of translation in L2 teaching that is being recently challenged.

Indeed, translation is currently being reconceptualised within the framework of plurilingual education. Surprisingly or not, the presence of translation in this plurilingual teaching context is hard to dismiss. This is a fact that raises enthusiasm amongst its supporters but it also yields critical reactions against it, echoing previous times of uncertainty and controversy regarding its role in the L2 teaching. Speaking strictly from a practical perspective, the types of translation tasks and activities currently found in the L2 education have not dramatically changed compared to the ones developed a couple of decades ago, nor has the phenomenon of translation. One thing that has been changing, however, as already discussed in this chapter, is the view of language within L2 education, advancing from something which “traditionally belongs to a particular environment, locked into local meanings and interactional dynamics, into something also translocal, moving along with people across space and time, revealing the trans-local histories of the speaker’s resources” (Blommaert & Dong 2010: 382). It is the view of language as a tool for mobility what deeply affects the discursive practices of individuals and learners, and what is currently shaping various pedagogical frameworks with the aim of plurilingual competence, such as the notions of “translanguaging” and “translingualism”. Despite their conceptual similarities and their prominence in the plurilingual teaching, it is the differences in the reconceptualization of translation within each one of these notions that makes them really relevant for the scope of this thesis.

Starting with translanguaging, García (2009) defines it as “the act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximize communicative potential” (2009: 140). In the context of plurilingual education, the concept is often viewed as the mixing of languages, or code-switching, in bilingual educational settings. Whereas the latter describes the interactional changes between languages in various contexts, translanguaging is a process in which code-switching is seen as a tool in a pedagogical approach to negotiate meaning in classroom settings, particularly multilingual ones (Adamson and Fujimoto-Adamson 2012: 60). García (2009: 5) highlights the interconnection between bilingualism and plurilingualism, when she argues for an integrated and plural vision for bilingual education, which “depends upon the reconceptualization of understanding about language and bilingualism”. She, thus, prefers the term “translanguaging” to code-switching, to describe the usual and normal practice of “bilingualism without diglossic functional separation” (2007: xii). The term translanguaging was originally created by Cen Williams, a well-known Welsh educationalist in the 1980s, for the planned and systematic use of two languages for teaching and learning inside the same lesson (Williams 1996; Baker 2003, 2011). He conceived it as a pedagogic theory but recognised that it is also a cognitive process involving a two language interchange. Describing the process from the student’s perspective, “the learners internalise new input, assign their own understanding to the message/concept, and simultaneously utilise it in their other language(s). Thus, they augment and supplement it through dual language processing” (Baker, Jones and Lewis 2012: 642). García (2009) extends the term beyond education, and views translanguaging as a “strategy bilinguals use to make meaning, shape their experiences, gain understanding and knowledge, and make sense of their bilingual words through the everyday use of two languages” (Baker 2011: 288). Within L2 education it takes place between the teacher and students in four ways:

to mediate understanding (e.g. children’s translations and interpretations to mediate with others and oneself); to construct meaning (when children make use of the language not being used in instruction); to include (being responsive to perceived interlocutor’s dominant language); to exclude (e.g. other children from interaction) and show knowledge (e.g. by trying out the words they know). (García and Sylvan 2011: 389)

Based on the notion of translanguaging, Corcoll López and González-Davies (2016) appear to be positive towards its relation to translation. They describe and compare “two specific

plurilingual learning strategies”, as a means to advance communicative development through language in action (2016: 67). Pedagogically Based Code-switching, or PBCS (Corcoll 2013) and Translation for Other Learning Contexts, or TOLC (González-Davies 2014) are considered as learning and communicative strategies which can both be implemented in a long-term plurilingual approach aimed to train plurilingual speakers (cited in 2016: 67). Although the researchers insist on the importance of distinguishing between them – code-switching involves moving between languages within the same text, with no primary source to be reproduced, whereas translation involves the relationship between two languages and two separate texts – they also dwell on how both activities are beneficial for, and can form part of, the language learning process. Their study, which presents the rationale stressing the connections between them, as well as tasks to be included in an L2 syllabus, reports positive results on incorporating both strategies within a plurilingual approach (2016: 70–71, 76). Expanding on the use of translation in other learning contexts, González-Davies argues that it is translation “not directly related to professional translation training, [but] [...] seeking relevant connections between Translator Training and Additional Language (AL) learning” (González-Davies 2018). More recently, describing her visualisation of TOLC, González-Davies (2020) explains that it can provide the link between native translators and experts. In fact, she borrows Harris’ (2017) continuum of various levels of translation competence, starting with natural translators, to native translators, moving, then, to expert ones and to professional translators (2020: 445). Identifying the “need for explicit scaffolding instruction to lead the way from one stage to another” (ibid), González-Davies situates TOLC speakers right in the middle, and describes them as “language users who can apply natural plurilingual practices in an informed way after acquiring translanguaging skills and strategies in formal contexts” (ibid). Most importantly, however, and from the perspective of this thesis, she does not underline translation here as a possible strategy or an unavoidable step within the languaging approaches. She rather places translation right at the top of plurilingualism, and builds her approach around a view of translation which “goes far beyond its use to check on-the-spot comprehension or syntactic and lexical points in tests, to become a key translanguaging scaffolding activity to develop plurilingual competence” (2020: 445).

However, the reconceptualisation of translation within the translanguaging pedagogy has not always been straightforward. In fact, quite often research appears to side-step the connections between the two notions and focus extremely on their differentiation. This may restrain, and even denote the role of translation within plurilingual teaching. One possible explanation for envisaging the two concepts apart could be detected in García’s point that



“translanguaging takes as its starting point the language practices of bilingual people as the norm, and not the language of the monolinguals, as described by traditional usage books and grammars” (2012: 1). Opposite to this conception – and although there is no direct reference to it – her words could be construed as a hint to certain views of translation. These could refer to translation as a mechanical process of contrasting two separate language systems and establishing linguistic equivalence between two different texts, omitting, however, theories of cultural translation as the space in-between languages.

One could also ponder on whether translating belongs to the communication norms of bilinguals. Lewis et al. (2012) argue that “[i]n classrooms with children of different dominant languages, a teacher may translate from one language to another so that children understand content in their stronger language” (2012: 660). However, “[w]hile translanguaging is the concurrent use of two languages, translation is more about language separation, scaffolding, and working mainly in the stronger language” (ibid). Although they admit that “in practice in classrooms, the two approaches may often be used contemporaneously” (ibid), they seem to understand translation more as a simple means to explain content and check comprehension. Nevertheless, their approach, at this point, fails to acknowledge the issue of directionality, and the role of translating in the students’ less dominant languages, or in their heritage languages. Looking precisely at “how the translation of children’s literature can be highly beneficial in a context where heritage languages coexist” (Sugranyes and Gonzalez-Davies 2014: 2), Gonzalez-Davies and Sugranyes conclude in their study that “translation can be used to promote intercultural and plurilingual competences among pupils, as the heritage of each child-author is highlighted through the stories they create [and translate]” (ibid). Williams (1996), referring to the differences between translation and translanguaging, has already argued that the latter requires “a deeper understanding than just translating as it moves from finding parallel words to processing and relaying meaning and understanding”, a definition which also restricts the concept of translation into a mere process of linguistic transfer. More recently, Williams (2002) reaffirmed his view that translanguaging may include translation occurrences, but also expanded on the differences between the two processes. As he explains, “translation tends to separate languages [...]. In contrast, translanguaging attempts to utilise and strengthen both languages” (cited in Lewis et al. 2012: 660).

Providing a different perspective to the above, Li Wei introduces the concept of “translanguaging space” and argues that it is “a space for the act of translanguaging as well as a space created through translanguaging. It is a space where the process of what Bhabha calls ‘cultural translation’ between traditions takes place” (for a detailed analysis of the concept of

cultural translation see Chapter 4). Additionally, Al-Hassnawi (2010) turns to both fields of Translation Studies and L2 teaching and draws a comparison between “translanguage” and “interlanguage” in order to explain translanguaging. He argues that if “learning strategies and the communicative competence of the FL learners generates Interlanguage [...] translation strategies and translation competence generate Translanguage” (2010: 7). He sees interlanguage as the product of FLL and translanguage as the product of translation, or more precisely as “an approximate form of translation product, which falls midway between SL and TL with various degrees of approximation to either language” (2010: 3). This particular interpretation does not only detect a connection between translanguage and translation, it also supports a view of translation as an act of mediation.

Interestingly enough, Baynham et al. (2015) also detect a relationship between translation, translanguaging and mediation. In fact, in the fourth working paper of the project “Translation and Translanguaging” (2015), “[t]he systematic shifting between languages in the mediated interpreting event [...]” is understood “as a special type of translanguaging” (2015: 43). According to the researchers, all the repeated interpreting events that they observed had “a very similar structure” (ibid). This is described as “the familiar three participant structure of mediated interaction” amongst the client, the interpreter and the advocate, with the interpreter translating the questions and answers between the two other parties (2015: 44). These interactions that “involve both English-Czech translanguaging and Czech-Slovak translanguaging” are termed by the researchers “*interlingual* translanguaging” (2015: 50) [emphasis on the original].

However, further controversy on the relationship between translation and translanguaging has restricted the unconditional remapping of translation in the plurilingual education. García and Sylvan (2011) admit that translanguaging includes translation, but explain that translanguaging differs from translation “in that it refers to the process in which bilingual students make sense and perform bilingually in the myriad ways of the classroom – reading, writing, taking notes, discussing, signing, and so on” (2011: 389). At first sight, the definition does not deny the occurrence of translation during the translanguaging practice, but this appears to be a very cautious step towards the acknowledgement of a connection between the two concepts. Indeed, in a presentation on “Translanguaging Pedagogy” ([www.research.ncl.ac.uk](http://www.research.ncl.ac.uk)), García refers to what she describes as many “recent ‘2nd turn’ attempts to capture and conceptualise the multiple discursive practice of bilinguals”, including terms such as “dynamic multilingualism” (García 2010), “flexible multilingualism” (Blackledge and Creese 2010), “polylinguaging/polylingualism” (Jorgensen 2008),

“syncretism” (Gregory et al. 2013), “heteroglossia” (Bakhtin 1934/1981; Bailey 2007; Creese and Blackledge 2014) and “metrolingualism” (Pennycook and Otsuji 2015) (all cited in [www.research.ncl.ac.uk](http://www.research.ncl.ac.uk)). However, García does not conceptualise translation as such an attempt, and therefore “translating” does not explicitly feature in the above list. On the other side, use of translation is evident when it comes to practice, proving its role in such an attempt as translanguaging. In the videos which accompany her presentation on translanguaging practices, the featured students make explicit use of translation between their languages. Moreover, when specifying the principles of translanguaging practice, García states that: “If the process of translation is a natural consequence of mixed languages and is supportive of learning then thinking about who to work together in a group remains crucial”, referring to the significance of translation in the organisation of the classroom in groups.

A similar case of explicit use of translation within the translanguaging pedagogy is provided by the TESS-India resources (Teacher Education through School-based Support). “Translating between languages” is involved in the classroom activities in the form of looking for equivalent words and phrases between the students’ languages, making lists and keeping notes, discussing a topic in one language and reporting about it in another, reading, comparing and analysing parallel stories, as well as careful and monitored pairing/grouping of the students to ensure that “if there is someone in the group who does not speak the shared home language, [...] my students translate what they are discussing into the school language” ([www.tess-india.edu.in](http://www.tess-india.edu.in)). Within the same spirit, the research project ROMtels (Roma Translanguaging Enquiry Learning Space) – a project across the UK, France, Finland and Romania aiming to improve the education of Eastern European Traveller children and Roma children in particular – utilizes the translanguaging pedagogy to achieve this aim. The ROMtels Handbook 2 provides guidance to teacher educators who want to support and implement translanguaging pedagogy, and is based on evidence (video materials, questions, web-links, parent/children sessions, etc.) put together to describe the principles and suggest practices of translanguaging pedagogy. Since translation appears to have a place as a translanguaging strategy in the interaction between pupils and pupils/teachers featuring in the videos, teachers are explicitly requested to reflect on “how [...] the act of translating support[s] learning” ([www.research.ncl.ac.uk](http://www.research.ncl.ac.uk)).

Equally interesting is the attempt by Creese, Blackledge and Hu to document the role of both translation and translanguaging in “the construction of social difference in the interactions of a couple as they communicate at home and work, with one another, their colleagues, and strangers in a superdiverse English city” (2017: 1). Although technically not situated within

the educational context, the research is more than valuable since it provides constructive evidence from various authentic situations set outside the classroom. It deliberates how in the same physical place (a market place in Birmingham) “translation and translanguaging [...] mediate ‘communicative blocks’ (Rymes 2014: 3) as people negotiate potential misunderstandings” (Creese et al. 2017: 5). By deploying translanguaging practices the participants were found to create common ground for communication whereas both translation and translanguaging were “not merely tolerated, but [...] commonplace, everyday practices” (Creese et al. 2017: 10) that helped them make sense of their plurilingual identities, and proved how translation can “naturally” work both parallel to and embedded in the translanguaging process.

Returning to the context of plurilingual teaching, the above “exonerated” view of translation within the translanguaging pedagogy is further contrasted not to a dubious recognition of their relationship, but to a sense of translation being a “necessary evil” – and in cases an invisible one – in the process of translanguaging. That becomes more evident when taking a closer look at several practical suggestions on implementing the translanguaging theory in the classroom. Parallel to the cautious, albeit explicit, reference to the role of translation during translanguaging, as previously discussed, there are also some cases of omitting the word “translation” from the lists of translanguaging strategies. Whether the concept of translation still remains amongst them or not, depends on the interpretation of phrases such as: “bilingual reading/writing partners”; “multilingual books and language tools”; “practice writing for a bilingual audience”; “make connections between words”; “brainstorm using different languages”; “pre-write using all their languages, then ask them to select one language in which to publish”; as well as use of translanguaging “to check comprehension, to ensure understanding, to make language connections” (Gunnarsson 2014), all suggested as translanguaging strategies. The additional phrase “use [of] translation when appropriate”, found at the very end of this list with strategies, seems to reaffirm the assumption of a negative view of translation within this context. In other words, this particular explicit reference to translation resembles an analogous suggestion during the twentieth century when the phenomenon of translation, despite being evident in the students’ minds and learning, should only be acknowledged when it was necessary.

In a similar spirit, Celic’s (2012) practical presentation on translanguaging differentiates between strategies for a bilingual classroom and strategies for an ESL classroom. As instruction languages in the classrooms, she suggests use of both languages in the first case, and use of English in the second case, including use of home languages when possible. The variety of

strategies presented is very similar between the two cases, ranging from reading bilingual stories, books, comparing websites, developing multilingual word/phrases walls, reading/comparing multilingual editions of books, bilingual picture dictionaries and choosing “turn and talk partners”, to listening to translations and using Google Translate. Ironically, in the final summary of the central points of translanguaging classroom practices, no explicit use of translation is being mentioned, despite the fact that the suggested activities not only entail the concept of translating but other researchers, as previously mentioned, have been describing them as bilingual/multilingual translation exercises. Proving the same argument, Witt, who describes translanguaging strategies developed by the International High School teachers, devalues translation as the option of the less proficient students who, in their attempt to discuss content on one language and report it in another, may “*just translat[e]* one idea from each column and [...] present that to the class” [my emphasis] ([www.nysieb.ws.gc.cuny.edu](http://www.nysieb.ws.gc.cuny.edu)). Furthermore, Witt (2012) contests the view of translation tasks as bilingual projects, arguing that the latter “work best when there is an authentic reason to have students working in both languages as opposed to setting up a mere translation exercise” ([www.nysieb.ws.gc.cuny.edu](http://www.nysieb.ws.gc.cuny.edu)). Intriguingly, a proposed example of such meaningful bilingual projects is for the students to create “an election campaign advertisement for your community and one for a US-born group of people”. In achieving that, students should study parallel background texts, design a bilingual brochure educating people in both languages, as well as compare and contrast the context and the grammatical and phonetical differences in both languages. However, the view of this task merely as a translanguaging activity and not a purposeful and contextualized translation task could be open to debate.

The negative bias towards the (explicit) connection between translation and translanguaging – but most importantly the consequences of it – are profound in Fallas Escobar and Dillard-Paltrineri’s case study (2015), where they set out to investigate the beliefs of teachers and students about use of translanguaging in the L2 classroom. Their interview findings indicate a general rejection of translanguaging due to the fact that “L1 use in the classroom too closely resembles translation and would detract from the methods of communicative language teaching” (2015: 312), but acceptance of translanguaging as a natural form of communication for multilinguals. In effect, the thought that students could reject a contemporary and meaningful concept such as translanguaging due to its link to a harmful “old-fashioned” strategy such as translation could provide opponents of translation with a substantive excuse to either eliminate the concept of translating from the current plurilingual education or, at least, hide its role in other contemporary terminology.

Nevertheless, if the history of translation in the L2 teaching has proven one thing, that is that translation is a tough opponent to suppress, if anything because not in everybody's mind is it registered as an opponent. To put it differently, one possible explanation for the aforementioned negative view on translation and its relationship to translanguaging is that it comes from a professors' and undergraduates' perspective within a university language department, with both parts being perhaps exposed to years of language instruction according to certain methodologies and language theories, such as the Communicative Approach. Contrary to that, when pupils within the Welsh-English school education – where “translanguaging” was born – were asked to express their thoughts about translanguaging, they replied that “it's so natural” and that it “is translating to make sense” ([www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk](http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk)). This last definition of translanguaging from a pupils' perspective, which is short and simple (or even simplistic), exposes a significant truth that is often sidestepped. It is a possible indication that prior to complex conceptual theories and the positive or negative connections between them spreading in the students' minds, translation is registered primarily as the way to communicate, to make sense and understand the world. This would further point to the role of lower education in the representation of the translation concept in the young learners' minds, arguing that it is responsible for enhancing this “primer” concept of translation and relating it to the contemporary languaging practices instead of debating or rejecting it as something “harmful” and “irrelevant”.

Taking into account the significance of the students' and teachers' voices in the primary/secondary education, Esteve et al. (2015) have developed a research project which aims “to provide guidance to Spanish schools for adopting a new approach in teaching additional languages from a plurilingual, communicative and conceptual perspective (Cummins 2007; Neguerruela 2008, 2013)” (2015: 1). The didactic model, called “The Integrated Plurilingual Approach (IPA)”, is inspired by the overall acceptance of the CEFR in the country and is aimed at teachers rather than students (2015: 2). After being informed about the scientific concepts of the new model, the teachers find themselves confronted with their own conceptions about plurilingualism and additional language teaching, before they are able to acknowledge the benefits of the approach, and design their own methodological proposal in accordance with the context of their own class (2015: 2).

Specifically referring to “plurilingual thinking”, teachers appear to view languages in terms of intercultural awareness, as a means to understand the world by breaking the cultural boundaries (negative attitudes, prejudices etc.) between them. Surprisingly (or not) they advocate the use of pedagogically based translation, as a “not literal, but contextualised, i.e.

communicative and meaning-driven” activity, which can promote plurilingual thinking. The practical applications they suggest, such as use of online dictionaries in class, or setting homework research questions on analysing and contrasting linguistic aspects of the languages, are based on the fact that pedagogically based translation is defined within the IPA as a translinguistic practise. This relates both to the IPA’s translinguistic conceptualisation, as well as to “the IPA’s holistic conception of language as a means to interculturality” (2015: 16).

The view of translation as a translinguistic practice can be further analysed through the spectrum of translanguaging, and not just of translanguaging. Indeed, whereas translation and translanguaging are regarded as “*natural* and *complementary* phenomena that occur in multilingual societies” [my emphasis] ([www.benjamins.com](http://www.benjamins.com)), translanguaging currently conceptualizes translation as a translanguaging approach, providing it with an alternative “entry” into the field of plurilingual education. The concept of translanguaging is essentially epitomised in the belief that differences in language should not be simply acknowledged, they should be challenged, redefined and utterly embraced. It has been reportedly developing in US, as a response to the “growing numbers of teachers and scholars of writing [who] recognize that traditional ways of understanding and responding to language differences are inadequate to the facts of the ground” (Horner et al. 2011: 303). The traditional ways refer here specifically to the monolingual teaching approaches that treat all English speakers as homogenous learners who are expected to use Standard English or Edited American English when entering writing courses in US university departments, excluding other languages and language varieties. A translanguaging approach, without denying the dominant political reality that stands behind this terminology, “directly addresses the gap between actual language practices and myths about language spread through the industry’s political work in order to combat the political realities those myths perpetrate” (Horner et al. 2011: 305). Therefore, by challenging the myths of “unchanging, universal standards for language”, and taking “the variety, fluidity, intermingling and changeability of languages as statistically demonstrable norms around the globe”, a translanguaging approach objects to the superiority of monolingual approaches and denounces their very existence. Parallel to the goals of plurilingual education, a translanguaging approach further calls for the negotiation of fixed, uniform “standards” and the redefinition of notions such as fluency, proficiency and language competence (2011: 307). Moreover, according to Horner et al. (2011: 308), a translanguaging approach applies to both speakers of other languages who wish to learn English as well as to English monolingual speakers aiming at acquiring additional languages.

Putting things into perspective, Donahue's (2016) understanding of a translingual model in relation to L2 writing research and teaching models is closer to a "rhetorical model important to the work of composition broadly speaking, rather than a model destined to supersede L2 writing" (2016: 148). Aligning with that, Canagarajah regards it as an "orientation, a set of attitudes and perspectives" (cited in 2016: 148) and a struggle to negotiate language difference, pointing to Pratt's (1991) view of linguistic negotiation as "always part of the construction of meaning, regardless of language[s] [...]" (cited in 2016: 148). Negotiation of language difference and ideologies of language difference in order to construct meaning is what brings translation into a composition classroom, as one of the most appropriate frameworks that ultimately serves the goals of a translingual approach (Horner and Tetreault 2016: 17). In order to explain "why translation", Horner and Tetreault set off then to analyse the dynamic relationship between translating and writing, stepping onto Pennycook's (2008) ideological view of an "activist translation". Pennycook regards translation as always involved within "the traffic in meaning, a passing to and from ideas, concepts, symbols, discourses" (2008, cited in Horner and Tetreault 2016: 18). He develops his approach of "activist translation" based on Venuti's concept of domestication, as well as Venuti's quote that such an approach views translation:

neither in terms of the reductive and pejorative role it has been given within language teaching ...nor only as the activity conducted by those who work to translate a text into one language or another...[but] as part of a much broader traffic in meaning. (Venuti, cited in Horner and Tetreault 2016: 18)

Further elaborating on what a "composition pedagogy of translation" should address, Horner and Tetreault argue that it should focus on a view of translation as a production, in the sense that translation, like all writing, explores and negotiates conflicting ideologies and expectations, and reworks language and meaning, instead of reproducing, or directly recoding between languages, criticizing equivalence strictly as a mechanism of transfer (2016: 19). Referring to their proposal of a translation framework for writing, they explain that:

[it] views terms as always up for questioning, considers what slippage of meaning and perception occur in the spaces where one usage is substituted for another, and explores how these slips and transfers – intentionally or not – operate in relation to larger narratives and ideologies. (2016: 19)



Most importantly, they postulate that using translation as a general framework to examine negotiation in all writing should step away from the view of translation as a metaphor for writing which only investigates differences on a surface level, across languages and texts without delving into “translation as a form of writing itself” (2016: 20). Instead it should be used as an “analytical tool by which to bring such contradictions to visibility (cf. Wagner 98): as point of departure rather than endpoint. For, as Birgit Wagner observes regarding ‘cultural translation’, ‘everything depends on the use you make of it (99)’” (2016: 20). Effectively, in order to teach writing as translation, they argue for teaching of translation as writing. Focusing, then on the implementation of such a theoretical model in the classroom, Horner and Tetreault suggest that students could translate their own written texts and others’ as well, they could read different translations of a text, and even use translations to produce multiple and multidirectional translations, or could use translation as an analytic framework, all of which would see the students challenge and being challenged, discuss, interpret and eventually translate in the sense of re-writing (2016: 19–21).

A similar translingual orientation to literacy and communication is applied in Dewilde’s (2017) research destined to contemplate the ways a young person develops into a translingual writer of poetry in the less researched out-of-school spaces (2017: 1). Based on personal interviews and situated in a linguistic ethnographic framework, Dewilde investigates how Neda – a teenage immigrant in Norway coming from an Afghanistan and Pakistan background who never learnt to write in her L1 (Turkmen) – draws on translation and translingual mixing as discursive strategies to develop her own voice in Norwegian, influenced by her entire linguistic repertoire, including learning English at school (2017: 1–2). Neda is reported to write her poems in Norwegian by remixing words and phrases from other resources (in Norwegian and English), and then translating it in Turkmen in her mind, in order to feel the words (in the “language of her heart”), connect it with her life experiences and find a deeper meaning to it (2017: 7–8). Therefore, in this case the teenage “draws on a language she is unable to write in order to think, and perhaps [...], to read and write using linguistic resources that are still relatively new to her, a process that may not necessarily be transparent for teachers” (2017: 7). Dewilde observes how Neda, by translating her own poems, turns into a “translating translingual writer”, who moves between several languages, between her own texts, and across different modalities in order to make sense and express herself (2017: 8). As she remarks, it is precisely the remixing of linguistic repertoires and the movement in-between to negotiate meaning which underlines translingual theory and communication, and in Neda’s case, it is the

translation strategy that makes this aim achievable, further establishing the role of translation as a translingual approach.

In support of the latter, one more research project has been contracted by Kierman, Meier and Wang (2017). In contrast to Dewilde's research, this is typically situated within the educational environment (writing department of a US university), where the recently increasing number of international students prompted a number of instructors to experiment with new translingual approaches that pay tribute to the students' whole linguistic repertoires and regard the remixing of "language(s) and culture(s) as assets and resources in the practices of reading and writing" (Kierman et al. 2017: 5). The developed translation assignment aims to invite students to "engage in social conversations that surface thoughts, and 'give voice to [the student's] own readings of the [cultural] world through writing'" (Morrow 1997, cited in Kierman et al. 2017: 4), exposing the planning of the assignment merely from the student's perspective on their own understanding of their practices, through individual/group translation and reflection activities. To that end, parallel to the exposure of the interconnection between reading and writing, the study places great emphasis on "translingual inquiry", as an essential part of the translation discussion and process. This is the element which, initiated and achieved through reflection activities in translating, can lead to the "recognition and normalization of the fluidity of languages and its movement away from dominant ideologies of Standard Written English" (Canagarajah 2012, cited in Kierman et al. 2017: 4). As the authors have elsewhere explained:

By positioning translation as entry to translingual and transnational writing practices, we aim to fill a pedagogical gap as we rethink and reimagine the intersections between languages [...], [by] adding to research accounts of how bilingual students draw on their cultural and linguistic knowledge to derive meaning and use information from translating and reading texts [...]. (2016: 90)

One last intriguing point in the discussion of this chapter, is that the authors explicitly distinguish their translingual approach from the (previously discussed) translanguaging pedagogy, framed by García, Creese and Blackledge, and Hornberger and Link as the alteration from one language to another within the educational context (Kierman et al. 2016: 90). Nevertheless, Kierman et al argue that the translation assignment they developed approaches translation as the ability to move between, across and within languages – a cognitive benefit to students also acknowledged by most of the aforementioned translanguaging theorists. That

means that they “[s]ee the practice of translanguaging within the translation assignment as a pedagogical tool offering a ‘possibility for teachers and learners to access academic content through the communicative repertoires they bring to the classroom while simultaneously acquiring new ones’” (Hornberger and Link 245, cited in Kierman et al. 2016: 91). It could be, thus, concluded that their remark effectively communicates the interconnection between translation, translanguaging and translingualism as plurilingual practices, and places them rightfully at the disposal of the L2 teachers. It could also stress that the focus does not lie on distinguishing between translation as part of translanguaging, translation as a reconceptualised translingual activity, or as an activity in a plurilingual approach. Although perhaps, it could be argued, that their remark exposes a degree of complexity of these theories, it also highlights the vitality of translation in a comprehensive concept such as plurilingualism and the unlimited possibilities this entails. However, another possible conclusion, following from what has been discussed thus far, might simply point to the fact that, despite theoretical and empirical research supporting translation in a bi-/plurilingual teaching framework, its implementation is still subject to interpretation, widening the ambiguity surrounding its role and wider acceptance in the contemporary plurilingual education.

The last chapter of the thesis argues that ambiguity has turned into challenging and – in some cases – even rejection when it comes to the relationship between translation and another plurilingual practice, that of language mediation.

## Chapter 4

### **Translation, L2 Teaching and Language Mediation: A Complex Relationship**

#### **Introduction**

The final chapter follows from the discussion developed in Chapter 3 about the rising of post-monolingual teaching approaches in the twenty-first century and their ambiguous effect on the place of translation in the L2 teaching. In particular, Chapter 4 focuses on one such approach, language mediation and its relationship to translation in the L2 teaching. It argues that of all the post-monolingual approaches developed in the last two decades, language mediation has been the first one to be directly and explicitly connected with use of translation as a teaching tool in the European L2 teaching context. As such, this connection appeared to be the most promising for the support of translation in this context and, at the same time, according to the chapter, the most challenged of all.

In order to determine why, thus far, the view of translation as language mediation in the L2 teaching context has raised so many questions, Chapter 4 places the entire relationship between translation and mediation under critical scrutiny. It will do so by, first, exploring whether the two concepts are connected outside the context of L2 teaching, in the areas of academic training (in the fields of mediation and translation), job descriptions and professional expectations from mediators and translators, arguing in favour of blurriness and confusion amongst a variety of definitions. Further, the relationship between translation and mediation is embedded on the context of L2 teaching. It begins with a short analysis of the CEFR's (2001) initial suggestion to introduce translation/interpreting as practical examples of language mediation, and the CV's (2018) additional provision of the illustrative descriptor scales for the skill of mediation. It carries on exploring the practical implementation of language mediation in the L2 education. The latter is examined mainly through a brief analysis of three European National Curricula (Germany, the United Kingdom and Greece) based on their different approaches of the topic. The chapter, then, focuses on the various interpretations this relationship has triggered. It observes a degree of surprisingly negative comments and responses towards it, and attempts a critical analysis of them.

Finally, Chapter 4 remarks that the objections against translation as language mediation in the L2 teaching may sound reasonable to the L2 teaching community, but they might come,

partly, as a surprise to the Translation Studies community. That is simply because the restricted interpretations of translation in the L2 teaching do not accurately reflect on theories, approaches and current trends from the TS discipline. To that end, the last part of the chapter explores only those aspects of translation that have been specifically targeted by critical arguments in the last two decades, aiming to provide a more informed and comprehensive understanding of translation in the L2 education. That, admittedly, excludes several other aspects which can also support the role of translation in the contemporary L2 teaching, but their analysis would go beyond the aim of this chapter. All in all, the chapter concludes that there are, once again, several voices that defend the pedagogical role of translation in the L2 teaching context and practically link the above reconceptualization of translation to the current L2 teaching. Without discussing these examples in details, or proposing a new one, the chapter suggests that in order to enhance their visibility in this context, a different understanding of translation should prevail in the L2 teaching, one that would put translation above mediation, giving it its own distinctive and explicit place in the L2 education.

#### **4.1 Mediation: Concepts and definitions**

In its original conception, mediation implies the solving of a conflict or dispute due to the intervention of a third person or party. Della Noce et al. (2002), who define it as a “social process in which a third party helps people in conflict understand their situation and decide for themselves what, if anything, to do about it” (2002: 39), believe that it has a long history and roots in many cultures. Similarly, Antonello Miranda (2014), claims that the authorship of mediation is attributed to various countries and ancient civilizations, from the ancient Greece and Rome to “non-Western” ones, such as China and India (2014: 10). Studying the concept from a sociological and political perspective, Lloyd Jones (2000) considers the meaning of mediation to be “traditionally complex” (2000: 647), echoing Raymond Williams’ view that “the term ‘mediation’ has long been a relatively complex word in English” (1988: 204, cited in Lloyd Jones 2000: 647). Seth (2000), on the other hand, holds that it is only in the “past two decades [that] the concept of mediation has become an increasingly common form of dispute resolution” (Seth 2000).

Mediation is currently considered to be a contemporary problem-solving tool applied in various fields such as politics, law, economic, diplomatic and other domains of societal interaction. Rhian Williams (2003), however, who explores use of mediation in cross-cultural contexts, takes a critical stand against placing the “settlement of the dispute” at the heart of the mediation process (Moore 2003; Folberg and Taylor 1984, cited in 2003: 6). He believes that

mediation is not a culturally neutral process, but that it “is shaped by the cultural contexts it emerges from” (2003: 1). He, therefore, suggests that the mediation process should primarily focus on “assist[ing] [the parties] to fundamentally renegotiate their relationships with one another, and in so doing transform their understanding and the nature of ‘their dispute’” (2003: 6).

In order to view mediation as a process to renegotiate and rebuild relationships, and as a means to preserve local identities in a diverse society, mediators should also be able to uncover and overcome some of their own cultural biases within the process (Williams 2003: 8). Acknowledgment that this kind of mediation process could benefit from professional skills and training, has led to a number of programmes focusing precisely on the problems or conflicts that arise due to linguistic and cultural differences, and on bridging the gap between them. This skills training is provided through a variety of academic-based education, vocational training and continuing professional development programmes across Europe. They all take, in essence, the same interest on the community needs and the need for language and culture mediation skills training in an interdisciplinary context (Atabekova et al. 2012: 5). However, the variety of different curricula components, as well as graduates’ qualifications, indicates the ambiguity and confusion which relate to the role of mediator, especially when it comes to interlingual mediation (mediation between two different languages).

In 2012 a *Comparative Study on Language and Culture Mediation* was conducted by the EU in order to provide an insight into the current situation of language and culture mediation in various European countries. In this research, which involved six European countries, the role of language/cultural mediator has been investigated in terms of commonly used definitions, training, existing needs and possible application areas of cultural mediators, job descriptions, placements and financial aspects. According to the study, language and cultural mediation is a:

very complex and multifaceted field that has been subject to little scientific research. In Germany as well as in some of the other countries examined the job description and/or role and benefits of language and cultural mediators in practice are controversial and have not yet been developed significantly. ([www.transkom.info](http://www.transkom.info))

The study highlights the fact that “there are different definitions, concepts and historical developments on this topic [language and cultural mediation] in various countries” (ibid). This seems to imply that the encountered difficulty to define the role of a language/cultural mediator

is based on the fact that each country uses its own definitions to refer to the same concept. Terms such as “intercultural translation”, “intercultural mediation”, “community interpreting”, “public service interpreting”, “liaison interpreting”, “language and integration mediation” and/or “language and cultural mediation” are all used to refer to the same, or almost the same, context (2012: 5). The differences appear to be subtle, and do not usually relate to the language aspect. In all six countries comprised of the study, intercultural mediation entails intercultural translation/interpreting but, at the same time, encompasses more extensive functions such as: “providing educational family support and assistance” (in Switzerland); “acting as an advocate in the event of racism and discrimination” (in Belgium); “deal with conflicts where ethnicity, nationality, religion play a role” (in Spain); and “support encounters between residents of different ethnic or cultural backgrounds” (in Italy). In Germany, the language and integration mediators’ job description combines the functions of community interpreters, language and cultural mediators and integration assistants, whereas in Austria it is the community interpreters who carry the task of translating and interpreting “in the service of the community for individuals or small groups, mostly for immigrants or refugees, in talks with authorities and welfare agencies, at school and health care institutions” (ibid).

From the above study, it could be argued that the concept of interlingual and -cultural mediation is not unanimously defined. As it has already been indicated, this stems from the fact that – to a smaller or larger extent – part of the tasks and responsibilities currently prescribed to the mediator’s role have been already carried out for years (and still are) by intercultural and community translators/interpreters. Even in those countries, where the role of linguistic and cultural mediators is differentiated from the intercultural translator/interpreter’s, both roles are still mostly associated with assisting immigrants dealing with public services. Hence, bilingualism, translating/interpreting skills, as well as intercultural competence, sensitiveness and awareness appear to be common professional requirements for translators and mediators. Highlighting the above, the Italian website on immigration and hospitality policies defines the role of a linguistic cultural mediator as the following:

A Cultural Linguistic Mediator is a professional representative with the task to facilitating communication and understanding, both on linguistic and cultural level, between service seekers of ethnic minorities and functionaries in agencies or public service offices, self-presenting in an equidistant and neutral way between the interested parts.

A mediator is called to carry out the activity of facilitation with impartiality and must guarantee confidentiality on the contents of a conversation. A mediator collaborates to the definition of strategies of information diffusion considering its impact upon specific cultural areas. ([www.immiweb.org](http://www.immiweb.org))

Moreover, the duties of a cultural linguistic mediator include, amongst others, to “[c]lear cultural presumptions and stereotypes of confronting cultures” and to “[h]ave both parts constantly informed on what it is happening, *translating everything accurately*” [my emphasis] (ibid), posing the inevitable question of whether a linguistic and cultural mediator is simply the equivalent of an intercultural translator/interpreter or not.

Alongside the ambiguous job descriptions of the role, a closer look at the training courses for becoming a mediator provides the candidates with even less clarity. The first thing to be noticed is that the role of the language and cultural mediator has emerged recently as a separate title in several university degrees. However, a careful examination of the contents of these degrees reveals interesting combinations of academic modules, which could be further categorized into three groups: a) mediation is treated as an expanding sector of a Translation/Interpreting Studies degree ([www.ssmlto.it/percorsi-didattici](http://www.ssmlto.it/percorsi-didattici)); b) translation and interpreting skills constitute necessary skills for cultural mediation, and are therefore practised during the degree course ([www.upf.edu](http://www.upf.edu); [www.ssmlto.it/percorsi-didattici/](http://www.ssmlto.it/percorsi-didattici/)); and c) mediation is an entirely separate field, associated with conflict resolution applied to legal sector, health sector, workplace, family and schools ([www.mastersportal.eu](http://www.mastersportal.eu); [www.strath.ac.uk](http://www.strath.ac.uk); [www.bond.edu.au](http://www.bond.edu.au)).

Further research on Master’s Degrees in the UK reveals that out of the 47 MAs currently offered (2019) on “Language and Mediation” only twelve are directly related to “Translation and Mediation” ([www.findamasters.com/masters-degrees](http://www.findamasters.com/masters-degrees)). Moreover, eight out of these twelve degrees relate explicitly to Translation/Interpreting Studies, whereas the other four relate to international/intercultural communication and do not necessarily require a bilingual capacity (Anglia Ruskin University, University of Leicester). Ironically enough, the term “mediation” appears in none of these course titles, whereas in their contents translation and interpreting are both treated as the practical means of mediating between languages. Even more interesting is the search for MAs on “Interlingual or Cross-lingual Mediation”, with no results coming up (last accessed in February 2019).

The above results, which are by no means extensive, could be used as an observation of the high degree of variability that underlines the precise roles that a translator/mediator is



expected to exhibit with regards to skills, qualifications and job descriptions. Moreover, they could be seen as an indication that, at least within this training/descriptive framework, the term “language mediation” appears to trigger more associations with the resolution of cultural differences, whereas translation/interpreting is considered the solution to the language-related problems. Taking this last observation as a basis, the next two sections (4.2 and 4.3) move deeper and exclusively into the field of L2 teaching and explore the context this relationship is embedded on from the perspective of L2 education, and more precisely, from the perspective of the CEFR (in 4.2) and the CV (in 4.3).

#### **4.2 Translation and mediation in the L2 teaching context: The case of the *CEFR* (2001)**

As was discussed in Chapter 3, the phenomenon of immigration, that has been transforming countries into multilingual and multicultural societies, has caused several European countries to adopt overall political choices in order to accommodate the integration of the immigrated population. Effectively, that has put the concept of linguistic and cultural mediation at the centre of attention. More specifically, in language education, the European Union has not only acknowledged the learners’ fundamental right to the development of their L1, but it has practically shifted from language isolation policies towards more holistic approaches that promote the use of the learners’ linguistic repertoire. One such holistic approach which facilitates bilingual education is language mediation (Olmedo 2003).

The document that has first introduced language mediation in the context of language education is CEFR (2001). Since then, CEFR’s suggestion on learners practising language mediation has attracted the attention of teachers and researchers, and stirred some serious conversation amongst them with regards not only to this innovative idea, but most importantly with regard to the direct link between mediation and translation/interpreting, as described in the Framework. More specifically, the terms “mediation” and “translation” are both introduced for the first time in the second chapter of the CEFR, in section 2.1.3, which states that in order for the language users/learners to develop communicative competence, they need to engage in various language activities, including the activity of mediation (in particular interpreting or translating). More precisely, it is argued, that:

in both the receptive and productive modes, the written and/or oral activities of mediation make communication possible between persons who are unable, for whatever reason, to communicate with each other directly. Translation or interpretation, a paraphrase, summary or record, provides for a third party a (re)formulation of a source

text to which this third party does not have direct access. Mediating language activities – (re)processing an existing text – occupy an important place in the normal linguistic functioning of our societies. (Council of Europe 2001: 14)

In the fourth chapter of the Framework, the writers discuss their views on the communicative activity of mediation in further detail. They argue that students in a classroom can be asked “to mediate, whether as an educational activity or in order to assist another pupil” (ibid: 57), thus, acknowledging the reality of modern linguistically heterogeneous classrooms, where students very often assume the role of mediator/interpreter themselves. In section 4.4.4, a definition of “mediating activities” is offered – both oral and written mediation – explaining that “[i]n mediating activities, the language user is not concerned to express his/her own meanings, but simply to act as an intermediary between interlocutors who are unable to understand each other directly – normally (but not exclusively) speakers of different languages” (ibid: 87–88). Concrete examples of “oral mediation activities” include the acts of simultaneous and consecutive interpretation, as well as informal interpretation “in social and transactional situations for friends, family, clients, foreign guests, etc.” (ibid: 87–88). Examples of “written mediation activities” refer explicitly to use of “exact translation (e.g. of contracts, legal and scientific texts, etc.)” and literary translation, alongside use of “summarising gist (newspaper and magazine articles, etc.)” and “paraphrasing (specialised texts for lay persons, etc.) within L2 or between L1 and L2” (ibid: 87–88).

Therefore, based on the aforementioned examples, mediation appears to cover both activities of translation and interpretation. According to the authors of the CEFR, in the case of translation, “[t]he user/learner receives a text from a speaker or writer, who is not present, in one language or code (L<sub>x</sub>) and produces a parallel text in a different language or code (L<sub>y</sub>) to be received by another person as listener or reader at a distance”. In the case of interpreting, “[t]he user/learner acts as an intermediary in a face-to-face interaction between two interlocutors who do not share the same language or code, receiving a text in one language (L<sub>x</sub>) and producing a corresponding text in the other (L<sub>y</sub>) (ibid: 99). In section 4.6.3 it is further suggested that:

[i]n addition to interaction and mediation activities as defined above (=interpretation and translation), there are many activities in which the user/learner is required to produce a textual response to a textual stimulus. The textual stimulus may be an oral question, a set of written instructions (e.g. an examination rubric), a discursive text,

authentic or composed, etc. or some combination of these. The required textual response may be anything from a single word to a three-hour essay. Both input and output texts may be spoken or written and in L1 or L2. (CEFR 2001: 99)

In discussing the profiling of abilities in ELPs, CEFR section 8.4.2 concludes:

(But) it would be helpful if the ability to cope with several languages or cultures could also be taken into account and registered. Translating (or summarising) a second foreign language into a first foreign language, participating in an oral discussion involving several languages, interpreting a cultural phenomenon in relation to another culture, are examples of mediation (as defined in this document) which have their place to play in assessing and rewarding the ability to manage a plurilingual and pluricultural repertoire. (2001: 175)

In other words, if one of the innovating features of the CEFR – in order to account for personal plurilingualism – is its introduction of ways of communicating in the presence of more than one language at the same time, then the activity of mediation, as defined above, seems to meet the standards. According to Lenz and Berthele (2010), mediation would, in fact, be more relevant in schools that “favour plurilingual and intercultural scenarios supporting exchange activities and CLIL, and do not implement distinct boundaries between different language classes, or language and ‘content classes’” (2010: 17–18). This might explain why Krumm claims that, generally, less attention has been given to mediation compared to the activities of reception, production and interaction in the CEFR. Moreover, up until 2016, CEFR did not include illustrative scales with can-do statements for mediation (Little 2007: 646; North 2007: 657; Alderson 2007: 662), whereas the outlining of mediation strategies has been described as “done in brief and with the language and resources focus only” (Atabekova et al. 2012: 6). North and Piccardo (2016) “rectified” this absence in the *Developing Illustrative Descriptors of Aspects of Mediation for the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)*, which was followed by the official and long-anticipated *Companion Volume with New Descriptors* (2018), published by the CoE. A detailed analysis of both documents follows in the next section of this chapter.

### **4.3 Translation and language mediation in the L2 teaching context: The case of the *Companion Volume with New Descriptors* (2018)**

Acknowledging that there was a level of confusion amongst teachers and researchers created by the initial lack of illustrative descriptors for the activity of mediation, and responding to the criticism against it, North and Piccardo (2016) published the report *Developing Illustrative Descriptors of Aspects of Mediation for the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)*. In a rather apologetic tone, the authors admit from the outset that “unfortunately, as mentioned above, the concepts of interaction and mediation were not greatly developed in the CEFR” (2016: 5). As a result of this, “in interpretation of the CEFR, mediation has tended to be reduced to interpretation and translation”, whereas the focus of the new document is to provide “a wider view of mediation” (ibid). More precisely, the authors criticise the fact that “many people appear to associate mediation in the CEFR solely as cross-linguistic mediation – usually conveying the information given in a text, and to reduce it to some form of (more or less professional) translation and interpretation” (2016: 6). Hypothesizing the reasons behind this prevailing view, the authors mention, first, the initial bullet-pointed examples that have been used in the CEFR (2001) to explain mediation and, second, the fact that this view can implement a concept of plurilingualism which is reduced to information gap communication. In the last instance, they also refer to the fact that “perhaps [...] this interpretation provides an ‘up-to-date,’ communicative version of a traditional translation test task” (2016: 7).

Notwithstanding the initial lack of illustrative descriptors in the CEFR, the authors defend the place and the definitions of the concept of mediation in the Framework, as “a constant movement between the social and individual levels during the process of language learning” (ibid). In other words, the CEFR stresses how in mediation the mental processes are influenced by factors such as memory, prior knowledge and imagination whereas the external context is constrained by the individual relevant interpretations of the user/learner, or to put it differently, “the social agent and his/her interlocutor share the same situational context but may well maintain different perceptions and interpretations” (ibid). Referring specifically to what has previously been perceived as a close relationship between mediation and translation in the CEFR, the authors of the descriptors feel that it is “reductionist to see mediation as solely interpretation and translation”, as well as limit it to information transfer from one language to another (2016: 8), a view which has been also shared by the critics of the relationship between translation and mediation, further discussed in the chapter.

Contrary to the above, and based on the concept of mediation as outlined in the CEFR (2001), the authors acknowledge four types of mediation: linguistic mediation; cultural

mediation; social mediation; and pedagogic mediation. According to North and Piccardo (2016: 8), it is the first type that has already been explicitly considered in the CEFR, and the one that comes closer to the activity of translation and interpretation (more or less formal) since it comprises, without being restricted to, the interlinguistic dimension. Even within the type of linguistic mediation, summarizing or transforming a text could be an act of intralinguistic mediation – between the same languages – or between various languages, or even an act of comprising language, gestures and drawings. However, it seems that:

as soon as one goes further than the simple transfer of the simple, propositional sense of the message, [...], as soon as one takes account of the cultural implications of the words (Byram 2008) and their sometimes quasi-untranslatability, one enters into the second type of mediation: cultural mediation. (North and Piccardo 2016: 8)

According to the authors, cultural mediation highlights the role of cultural awareness within a language and across languages and cultures, as well as related sub-cultures (2016: 9), thus bringing to the table the notion of social mediation. The third type of social mediation, which concerns “the facilitation of the communication itself and/or the (re)formulation of a text, the (re)construction of the meaning of a message” (ibid) capitalises on Zarate’s conception of mediation (2004). It also draws on Kramersch’s (1993) notion of “third space”, as “understanding someone from another culture requires an effort of translation from one perspective to the other, that manages to keep both in the same field of vision” (1993: 237, cited in 2016: 10). This is extremely relevant to Byram’s skill of critical cultural awareness/political education, as “an ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products in one’s own and other cultures and countries” (1997: 53, 63, cited in 2016: 10), whereas for Stathopoulou (2019), social mediation “tends to refer to the resolution of personal, commercial or international disputes”. Last but not least, pedagogic mediation, in the sense of “essentially successful teaching [being] a form of mediation” (2016:10), encompasses cognitive mediation (scaffolded), cognitive mediation (collaborative) and relational mediation (ibid). Nevertheless, Coste and Cavalli (2015) explain how the boundaries between the two categories, cognitive and relational mediation, remain somewhat blurry, with the two of them being normally combined, since they both seem to involve language as a means of mediation (cited in North & Piccardo 2016: 21).

With regards to the question of directionality in mediation across languages, and the languages involved in the process of mediation, the authors explicitly underline the

significance of both interlingual and intralingual mediation. The view of intralingual dimension is not entirely new, as in the CEFR, the mediator is already expected to act as an intermediary “often, but not necessarily, in different languages” (2001: 57), and between interlocutors who are “normally (but not exclusively) speakers of different languages” (2001: 87). However, the two short phrases indicating the possibility of intralingual mediation in the CEFR have turned into a more elaborated and transparent view on the topic, in the new descriptors:

[a] version offering descriptors for three variants (in one language; L1 to L2; L2 to L1) produced immense repetition, some 1,500 descriptors and created more problems than it solved: [...]. The solution finally adopted was to recommend that users, in the process of adapting a descriptor to their context, specify the actual languages concerned. For example the following B1 descriptor: *Can relay the content of public announcements and messages spoken in standard language at normal speed*, might be elaborated as follows: *Can relay in French the content of public announcements and messages spoken in standard German at normal speed*. [my emphasis] (2016: 21–22)

Thus, it can be safely concluded that the concept of mediation is currently not restricted to interlingual mediation; on the contrary, mediation is viewed as a general, wider concept, which can be intralingual and applies to different fields. It is only when communication needs to take place between different languages that the concept of interlingual mediation comes into play.

This statement has been reaffirmed in the most recent publication related to the CEFR, the *Companion Volume with New Descriptors* (CoE 2018). As North and Piccardo (2017) have explained, the aforementioned development of descriptor scales for the activity of mediation was only part of a larger project, aiming to “provide an extended version of the illustrative descriptors that would complement the original set contained in the body of the CEFR text” (2017: 1). The end result of that project, which is the CEFR Companion Volume, “is intended as a complement to the CEFR, which was published as a book in 2001[...].” (2018: 23). The present document, which is the product of a project of the Education Policy Division (Language Policy Programme) of the Council of Europe, “does not change the status of that 2001 publication” but focuses on updating the existing illustrative descriptor scales as well as introducing newly developed ones (2018: 23).

With specific regards to the concept of mediation, the authors of the Companion Volume (North, Goodier and Piccardo) refer only briefly to the fact that:

[a]lthough the 2001 CEFR text does not develop the concept of mediation to its full potential, it emphasises the two key notions of co-construction of meaning in interaction and constant movement between the individual and social level in language learning, mainly through its vision of the user/learner as a social agent. (2018: 33)

Defining mediation in the new context, the user/learner is reaffirmed as a social agent “who creates bridges and helps to construct or convey meaning, sometimes within the same language, sometimes from one language to another (cross- linguistic mediation)” (2018: 103). Effectively, the focus is on “the role of language in processes like creating the space and conditions for communicating and/or learning, collaborating to construct new meaning, encouraging others to construct or understand new meaning, and passing on new information in an appropriate form” (ibid).

The Companion Volume reaffirms that the approach taken to mediation is wider than cross-linguistic mediation, encompassing “mediation related to communication, and learning, as well as social and cultural mediation” (2018: 34), a view which, as already discussed, is not newly introduced but it is explicitly elaborated in the recent document. As the authors further explain, they have steered away from terms such as “first language”, “mother tongue” or “language of schooling”, and opted for a reference to Language A and Language B, as broad terms for mediated communication sources and outputs respectively. Most importantly, as it was also indicated in 2016, in the Companion Volume of 2018:

it is stated in notes that mediation may be within one language or across languages, varieties or registers (or any combination of these) and that the user may wish to state the specific languages concerned. Equally the user may wish to provide examples relevant to their context, perhaps inspired by those presented in Appendix 6 for the four domains of language use: public, personal, occupational and educational. (2018: 52)

In practical terms, that means that almost all of the descriptors included in the category “Mediating a text” (2018: 104) could refer to either intralingual or interlingual mediation, depending on the user’s choice of language(s), or language varieties or registers of the same variety. As the authors indicate, all of those descriptors “involve a mixture of reception and production. [...] When the reception and the production are in different languages, then the

level represented by the descriptor is that needed to process and articulate the source message in the target language(s)” (2018: 52).

Moving further, before examining what stands under the general umbrella of “Mediation Activities” in the Companion Volume – and what is the place of translation/interpreting in the new document – one should first highlight a couple of interesting introductory instances, such as the fact that cross-linguistic mediation involves social, cultural and plurilingual competence. The importance of this, according to the authors, lies with the fact that “one cannot in practice completely separate types of mediation from each other. In adapting descriptors to their context, therefore, users should feel free to mix and match categories to suit their own perspective” (2018: 106). More analytically, the Companion Volume includes sixteen scales for mediation activities in total, which are categorised in the three groups of “mediating a text”, “mediating concepts” and “mediating communication”:

#### Mediating a text

- ▶ Relaying specific information – in speech and in writing
- ▶ Explaining data (e.g. in graphs, diagrams, charts etc.) – in speech and in writing
- ▶ Processing text – in speech and in writing
- ▶ Translating a written text – in speech and in writing
- ▶ Note-taking (lectures, seminars, meetings, etc.)
- ▶ Expressing a personal response to creative texts (including literature)
- ▶ Analysis and criticism of creative texts (including literature)

#### Mediating concepts

- ▶ Collaborating in a group
- ▶ Facilitating collaborative interaction with peers
- ▶ Collaborating to construct meaning
- ▶ Leading group work
- ▶ Managing interaction
- ▶ Encouraging conceptual talk

#### Mediating communication

- ▶ Facilitating pluricultural space
- ▶ Acting as intermediary in informal situations (with friends and colleagues)
- ▶ Facilitating communication in delicate situations and disagreements (2018: 106)



As seen from the above, the first category comes really close to the sense of mediation as it was mainly perceived in 2001, namely as cross-linguistic mediation. According to Stathopoulou (2019), mediating a text “involves passing on to another person the content of a text to which they do not have access, often because of linguistic, cultural, semantic or technical barriers” (Stathopoulou 2019). The CV authors also stress the difference between the translator/interpreter’s professional competence, which usually exceeds the CEFR Level C2, and the intention of the Companion’s scales, which is different to abiding to the professional standards. The latter can be seen as an attempt to distinguish from a view of mediation closely related to professional translation, as it has often been interpreted in the CEFR. It is clearly stated that “the descriptors focus on language competences, thinking of what a user/learner can do in this area in informal, everyday situations” (2018: 107). Therefore, translation is described as a more flexible, communicative activity, which could be implemented in various teaching scenarios and at different levels. That also resembles Pym et al.’s (2013) view on the role of translation, when they argue that it can be introduced “as scaffolding in initial L2 learning and as a complex multi-skill communicative activity at higher levels” (2013: 135).

Another interesting point in the new document involves the descriptor “processing text”. The authors state that “the outcome represents a condensing and/or reformulating of the original information and arguments, focusing on the main points and ideas in the source text. The key word of the processing information scales in both speaking and writing is ‘summarising’” (2018: 110). It is pointed out that “[w]hereas in Relaying specific information the user/learner will almost certainly not read the whole text [...], in Processing text, he/she has first to fully understand all the main points in the source text” (2018: 110). Moreover, “[t]he user/learner may then choose to present the information to the recipient in a *completely different order, depending on the goal* of the communicative encounter” [my emphasis] (2018: 110).

Moving into the only descriptor scale that relates mediation explicitly to translation, the opening sentences of “translating a written text” state that:

Translating a written text in speech is a largely informal activity that is by no means uncommon in everyday personal and professional life. It is the process of spontaneously giving a spoken translation of a written text, often a notice, letter, email or other communication. Key concepts operationalised in the scale include the following:

- ▶ providing a rough, approximate translation;
- ▶ capturing the essential information;

- ▶ capturing nuances (higher levels). (2018: 113)

Looking closer at the content and sense of this descriptor scale, the authors maintain their view that “this CEFR descriptor scale is not intended to relate to the activities of professional translators or to their training. Indeed, translating competences are not addressed in the scale” (2018: 113). As they repeat at this point, the levels of competence for professional translators and professional interpreters are well above the C2 level. Having clarified that, they argue that plurilingual learners/users might be required under certain circumstances in everyday life to provide a written translation of a text. What they are expected to do, according to these new scales, is “to reproduce the substantive message of the source text, rather than necessarily interpret the style and tone of the original into an appropriate style and tone in the translation, as a professional translator would be expected to do” (2018: 113).

Further elaborating on their views on professional and non-professional translation, the authors of the Companion Volume stress that in the new document, translating a written text in writing is considered “by its very nature a more formal process than providing a spoken translation” (2018: 113). Implications of that involve, in general, progressively more complex texts and an increasing level of accuracy and reflection of the original (2018: 113). Examining the translating scales in detail, however, reveals that terms such as fluency and accuracy, which have been traditionally associated with the translating process, do not appear very often here. Conversely, “fluent spoken translation in Language B” of texts written in Language A are expected only at the end top level (C2). Similarly, accuracy is stressed as a factor in translating a written text in writing, but only in terms of checking “subject matter accuracy” at C2 level, and “conveying the main points of the source text accurately” at level B2 (2018: 113). At the same level (B2), the user is expected to produce a translation that only “closely follow[s] the sentence and paragraph structure of the original text in (Language A)”, fully aware that the end result “may read awkwardly” (2018: 113). Indeed, although the majority of the scales stress that the translation in Language B should be comprehensible, they also acknowledge factors such as errors that may occur, use of simple language in the translations, producing of approximate translations, as well as translation products that “may be over-influenced by the order, paragraphing, punctuation and particular formulations of the original” (2018: 113).

Equally interesting is the choice of vocabulary that describes the translating scale of a written text in speech. Especially with regards to the beginners level (A1 and A2), the user is expected to provide a “*simple, rough* spoken translation into (Language B) of either short, simple words and routine information on everyday subjects, or of short, simple everyday texts

written in (Language A)” [my emphasis] (2018: 113). Moving to the intermediate levels (B1 and B2), the expectation of producing a rough translation becomes simply producing “a spoken translation into (Language A)” (2018: 113). Although some details are provided considering the structure, the complexity and the content of the texts in Language A, no details are provided with regards to the expectations of such translations as end products or of the translating process per se. As far as the next scale of mediating a text is concerned, “note-taking” involves mediating a text for oneself, whereas the last two scales, “expressing a personal response to creative texts” and “analysis and criticism of creative texts”, involve the learner’s reaction to a text. The last scales in this group, which do not include, at this point, any reference to cross-linguistic mediation (Language A and Language B), also highlight the intralingual direction of mediation, that did not prevail in the CEFR.

Further expanding the Framework’s mediation concept is the next group of scales under the name “mediating concepts”. It involves two main scales, “collaborating in a group” and “leading group work”, and each one of them includes two sub-scales. Although none of the scales refers explicitly to cross-linguistic mediation, they seem to occupy a central place in the elaborated concept of mediation, which, again, underlines the authors’ intention to steer away from a close association of mediation to the interlinguistic aspect. Stathopoulou (2019) asserts that this particular part is a “fundamental aspect of parenting, mentoring, teaching and training” and involves two aspects: “constructing and elaborating meaning [and] facilitating and stimulating conditions that are conducive to conceptual exchange and development” (Stathopoulou 2019).

Emphasizing the values of co-operation and collaborative learning in this language teaching context could echo Kiraly’s (2000) *Socio-Constructivist Approach to Translator Education*. Kiraly supports the idea that “people have no choice but to create or construct meanings and knowledge through participation in [...] interpersonal, intersubjective interaction” (2000: 4). He rejects the teaching process as a simple transmission of knowledge and information and turns the focus on the development of “natural critical learning environments [which] provide an archetypal transformationist framework where the trainees are invited to shape and create their own learning environment and experience with collaborative assistance from the instructor” (Szymczak 2013: 62). Effectively, Kiraly’s approach gives the student control and responsibility for their learning and gives the teacher the role of facilitating learning, by providing “just enough guidance to hold the student in his or her ZPD [zones of proximal development]”, through scaffolding (Malena 2003: 596). Although Kiraly developed his approach for the translator trainees in his translation

classrooms, the thesis regards that his views could be well fit in the context of the CV, for two reasons. Firstly, his approach highlights that translation as a professional and translation in the L2 teaching are not incompatible; on the contrary, models developed for professional translation can offer L2 learners and teachers adequate insight into the translation process, which can then be adjusted for the needs of L2 teaching. Secondly, Kiraly's view, that "with adequate scaffolding, there is no need to reduce the complexity of a translation situation at any level" (Malena 2003: 597), not only is in align with the concept of descriptor scales in the CV but it also exemplifies how any mediation task (including translation) can be introduced and practised at different levels of the L2 education (primary-secondary-higher education) and with different levels of language competence in the same classroom.

Returning to the context of the CV and mediation activities, the third group of descriptor scales refers to "Mediating communication". Describing the aim of this third category, Stathopoulou (2019) explains that it "facilitate[s] understanding and shape[s] successful communication between users/learners who may have individual, sociocultural, sociolinguistic or intellectual differences in standpoint". She further acknowledges that the acquired skills are applicable not only to "everyday social and/or workplace interactions" but cover also areas such as "diplomacy, negotiation, pedagogy and dispute resolution" (Stathopoulou 2019). According to Stathopoulou, since this last category of mediating activities is "primarily concerned with personal encounters, [...] descriptor scales are only provided for spoken communicative activities" (ibid). It involves three different scales. Amongst them, only the second one includes a specification of different languages (A and B), and is defined as "acting as intermediary in informal situations (with friends and colleagues)" (2018: 124). Looking at its general description, this scale "is intended for situations in which the user/learner as a plurilingual individual mediates across languages and cultures to the best of his/her ability in an informal situation in the public, private, occupational or educational domain" (2018: 124).

Perhaps surprisingly, nowhere in this scale features the term interpreter, apart from the authors' claim, that this scale "is therefore not concerned with the activities of professional interpreters" (2018: 124). Reading through the entire description of the scale, it becomes transparent that a cross-linguistic mediator is expected to mediate and communicate in Language B the main point (level A2), the overall sense, the main sense, or detailed information (level B2) of what is said in Language A. Additionally, the mediator can provide explanations and ask for clarifications, if necessary. At the top of their ability (level C2), they can "communicate in clear, fluent, well-structured (Language B) the sense of what is said in (Language A) on a wide range of general and specialised topics, maintaining appropriate style

and register, conveying finer shades of meaning and elaborating on sociocultural implications” (2018: 124). It should also be noted that the focus of this scale in the new document – as opposed to the CEFR 2001 – does not seem to involve the mediator’s “invisibility”, but revolves mostly around the informal character of the everyday case scenarios and the non-professional aspect of mediating.

The new CV includes also a category devoted to “mediation strategies”, in order to “exploit a new concept” and to “simplify a text”. It comprises five new scales in total, according to which the L2 learner can make use of “linking to previous knowledge”, “breaking down complicated information”, “adapting language”, as well as “amplifying dense text” and “streamlining a text” (2018: 126–129). Last but not least, the CV expanding on its original introduction of plurilingual competence in CEFR 2001 and taking into consideration current scholarship, has included an additional part in connection to mediation: “plurilingual and pluricultural competence”. An analysis of the concept is found under the three new scales of “building on pluricultural repertoire”, “plurilingual comprehension”, and “building on plurilingual repertoire” (2018: 158). In accordance to recent literature, these underline that the aim of language education is to move from the “ideal native speaker” and compartmentalisation of one’s different languages and cultures into “develop[ing] a linguistic repertory, in which all linguistic abilities have a place” (2018:157).

All in all, discussing the merits and the pitfalls of the Companion Volume, Deygers (2019) argues that mediation “has become such a crucial concept” in the recent document, it “fit[s] the CEFR’s communicative approach, links with the CoE’s values, and may lead to more communicative language teaching and testing” (2019: 3–4). Nevertheless, he criticises “the theoretical and conceptual shakiness of mediation” (2019: 3) in the Companion Volume and claims that “operationalising it as a rating criterion will present substantial challenges for test developers” (ibid). Deygers appears to welcome the “more than 20 subscales” of mediation introduced by a brief definition (2019: 4). However, he remains critical to the “sometimes hermetic writing style” and the “sometimes vague and impressionistic language” used in both the CEFR and the Companion Volume (ibid). It should also be noted, that in his article there is no reference to the relationship between mediation and translation, neither positive nor negative.

Nevertheless, since the aim of this chapter is to examine this specific relationship and its impact on the L2 teaching context, after discussing the suggestions by the two policy documents, the next part examines its practical implementation in the field of L2 education. To that end, it exploits whether, and to what extent, L2 education has taken upon the CEFR/CV’s

suggestions, and has implemented translation as a mediating activity. Amongst the various attempts, the next part focuses particularly on three cases (Germany, UK, Greece). The selection is based on their approach to the concept of mediation, as well as its relation to translation, highlighting the divergence in the interpretations.

#### **4.4 Cases of implementing language mediation activities in the L2 teaching context**

Notwithstanding the initial limited space both concepts – mediation and translation – have occupied in the CEFR and in the L2 teaching in general, their introduction in such a widely-known document on language education was deemed worthy of consideration. Despite its limitations, it has triggered the interest of a number of researchers and language teachers who, despite the initial lack of descriptive illustrative scales, have attempted to implement the idea in their L2 classrooms, according to their understanding. The HarmoS project in Switzerland (development of educational standards) is referred to as “a first attempt [...] to include mediation” in the L2 teaching context based on the CEFR 2001 (Lenz and Berthele 2010: 18). In that project seven different types of language mediation activities have been described and classified according to three different criteria. The suggested seven types of mediation activities are as follows:

- a) two-way oral mediation: alternating between one foreign language and the main language of schooling (informal interpretation);
  - b) two-way oral mediation: alternating between two foreign languages (informal interpretation);
  - c) one way oral mediation: from the main language of schooling to a foreign language;
  - d) oral to written mediation: from the main language of schooling to a foreign language;
  - e) oral to oral/written mediation: from a foreign language to the main language of schooling;
  - f) written to oral/written mediation: from a foreign language to the main language of schooling;
  - g) two-way written mediation: from a foreign language to a different foreign language.
- (Lenz and Berthele 2010: 19)

The above activities, which are merely based on the languages used, the channels involved and the communication setting, refer only to informal interpreting as a way to mediate, whereas translation is not mentioned anywhere. Adding to that their personal view, Lenz and Berthele

(2010) define mediation as an activity which includes reception, production and the “specific mediation skill” which makes the link between them (2010: 18). Exact translation and interpreting are regarded as “very specific examples of mediation”, with no further explanations as to whether there are other types of translation, as well. It is stressed, however, that “[s]pecific courses of study for professional translators and interpreters show that the skills involved in these activities of mediation are complex and demanding” (ibid). Although the phrase is added to clarify the difference between translation and mediation, it could also be used to highlight the link between them, referring to similar skills required from translators and mediators. As is further explained, translation is seen at one end of the spectrum, synonymous to professionalism, whereas mediation is at the other end, where plurilingual settings are less demanding (2010: 18).

Furthermore, reviewing the impact of the CEFR’s mediation on the official curricula in the region of Murcia, Marqués-Aguado and Solís-Becerra observe that the role translation plays “across the curricula examined [...] varies depending on the language scrutinised, since there is a significant difference between modern languages like English and classical ones [Greek and Latin]” (2013: 46). Their analysis concludes that, although mediation skills are promoted from the beginning in the curricula for the teaching of modern foreign languages, “translation is seen as a means to infer the rules underlying both languages by comparing and contrasting” (ibid). It is therefore associated with the teaching of the classical languages, and is “particularly highlighted in the last stages” of the examined curricula (ibid) which, all in all, indicates a more traditional view of translation compared to mediation as L2 teaching activities.

Concerned with mediation rather than translation are the curricula for modern languages taught in upper secondary education in Romania. These were revised in 2006 according to the new approaches proposed in the CEFR, and include the development of mediation activities mainly in the form of summarizing a text (Neagu 2007: 351–355). The same aspect is highlighted by Dévény (2013: 311) referring to the examination system of the Budapest Business School (BBS), which by the time of their research project included in its B2 level exam a written mediation test from Hungarian to the TL, and an oral mediation task (mediation of a newspaper article into Hungarian) (ibid). Although the B2 examination has now been changed and the mediation task has been removed, it is worth mentioning that whilst included:

the examinee had to mediate a written text in Hungarian of approximately 150 words, with an output of approximately 100 words in the target language. The requirement was

not a word-for-word translation of the text but it involved a summarising element. Candidates were not allowed to use a dictionary. (2013: 311)

In the same spirit of mediation being equal to summarizing and counting the number of words, a selection of mediation activities is found in the German Exam Training (Klett 2007) regarding the preparation for the Englisch Abitur. These concern written mediation activities from both English to German and vice versa, and vary from summarizing texts, communicating main ideas, and answering questions in the other language, to the exact translation of a text. Most interesting is a short exercise, where the left-side column includes short texts in English and the right-side columns offer the solutions of a “mediation” and a “translation” example in German. This is intended as an example to help learners clarify the difference between how to translate and to mediate. According to the authors, “the receptive task description in this case is getting the message across” ([www.2.klett.de](http://www.2.klett.de)). Based on the solutions proposed by the authors, mediation seems to be achieved through summarizing and paraphrasing a text, thus leaving some apparently irrelevant information or details outside, whereas translation is perceived as a longer and more detailed task. However, since there is no explicit definition, or other guidelines offered with regard to the suggested solutions, it seems that the onus remains on the learners to acquire the differences between translating and mediating, and interpret the reasons behind these choices on their own.

Furthermore, in the recommendations ([www.kmk-format.de](http://www.kmk-format.de)) handed out to language teachers in 2006 in Berlin, with regards to the inclusion of, and preparation for, the “new type of mediation task” (ibid) (my translation) included in the German school exams, mediation is also kept separate from translation, in the sense that mediation is considered as a “freier” (freer) concept than translation. This definition, however, seems to support a more restrictive view of translation, regarded only as a strictly linguistic task, where the target text is supposed to maintain the exact same structures, style and tone as the original. Having said that, an explicit reference to the use of translation is made in the above recommendations, explaining that utilizing translation depends on the formulation of the task. More specifically, in those cases where transfer of exact details and information are required by the type of the task, the use of translation (alongside mediation) is also being recommended. Therefore, although translation is understood as a longer and more detailed version compared to mediation, the authors seem to at least acknowledge the fact that a number of real-life scenarios demand use of translation as well (as defined in the recommendations) in order for the activity of mediation to be successful.



Remaining in the German language teaching context, the competence of language mediation (or Sprachmittlung) has evidently become a significant aspect in teaching curricula across Germany, with handbooks now emphasizing its central role in the development of students' communicative competence in real-life situations outside school (Senkbeil and Engbers 2011: 41). Accordingly, the Hamburger Institut für Berufliche Bildung (HIBB) (Hamburg Institute for Vocational Education and Training (my translation)) has developed a document with the title "Sprachmittlung (Mediation)" (2010) in order to clarify and exemplify the concept of mediation for educational purposes ([www.hibb.hamburg.de](http://www.hibb.hamburg.de)). It clearly states that the concept of "Sprachmittlung" should not be confused with the concept of translation/interpreting, since the latter is perceived as a professional activity. Caspari ([www.hibb.hamburg.de](http://www.hibb.hamburg.de)) distinguishes between the "professional types of mediation", namely translation and interpreting, and the "types of mediation used in school and everyday-life", and Kolb (2009) has drafted a categorization of mediation tasks which are roughly similar to Caspari's. This comparison, which echoes Lenz and Berthele's arguments (2010), does not preclude the use of translation as a mediation activity, but it does restrict their relationship on the grounds of professionalism, thus, creating some sort of hierarchy in which language mediation becomes the wider concept which includes translation. This interpretation, however, is only partly in line with CEFR's definition, since it acknowledges translation as a mediation activity, but it fails to acknowledge translation as a non-professional mediation activity.

As the authors of the document admit, there is currently no consensus amongst the various German framework curricula and teaching materials with regards to the definition and the particular types of mediation. The Bavarian Abitur (Germany's higher education entrance qualification) includes a task of literal translation into the German language as a mediation task, whereas in Berlin (constituent state of Berlin) mediation is perceived as simply conveying the meaning between languages ([www.hibb.hamburg.de](http://www.hibb.hamburg.de)). According to Pym (2013) in the state of Rheinland-Pfalz "mediation is condoned and refers to exercises in which students must grasp the gist of a source text in a given situation and then communicate that gist to a speaker of the other language [...]", whereas "[t]ranslation has long been absent from the Abitur exams [...]" (2013: 63). In Baden-Württemberg however, the adopted language policy "puts translation (i.e. word-for-word translation) and mediation (i.e. summing up of main points, from the first language into the second language) on an equal footing" (Pym 2013: 65).

On the other hand, in Niedersachsen, mediation is treated as a fifth skill in the secondary education curricula, although according to Hallet (2008: 3) the other skills should be integrated in mediation as well. Hallet (2008: 4) does not share the view that transferring of context

between languages can take place either via (written) translation or (oral) interpreting, as argued by the authors of the CEFR. In fact, Ehlerding (2010), citing Hallet's (2008) views, argues that although "translation has a long history at the German Gymnasien", it is "increasingly becoming an exception in teaching because the skill as such is not valued highly any more, as it seems to be quite useless in everyday business" (2010: 26). On Hallet's account, translation and interpreting are different skills from mediation/"Sprachmittlung" on the basis of their high demand for equivalence (deviations from the source text are considered unacceptable), as well as demand for excellent language skills and special training. Consequently, the concept of translation should only be applied to professionals and not the language learners in the school context, who should acquire mediation competence as a personal life skill (Hallet 2008: 4–5). Ironically, mediation comes second in place when it comes to its treatment as the "fifth skill" in language education, since Newmark (1990) had already granted the title to translation, defining it as a fifth skill, distinct from, or alongside the other four skills. Conceptualisation of translation as a fifth skill has often been considered as a support of translation in the professional context, namely as a separate skill that is relevant only for professional translators. Nevertheless, it has also been used to support use of translation in the L2 teaching context, either as a useful learning tool (Naimushin 2002), "as a means to an end" (Laviosa 2014: 81–82) or as "the sum of those skills, an interactive skill" (Pellatt 2009: 345). Indeed, Naimushin (2002), already answering more recent arguments on translation and mediation, maintains that use of translation helps L2 students to realise that "there is always a way of finding a synonym, trying a paraphrase or even a longer explanation to fulfil the communicative objective". Moreover, students will realise that

translation as a whole and adaptive transcoding in particular is not about word-by-word rendering of the structure of the original message in the target language but is communication-oriented, and that the equivalence of the entire message is supreme to the equivalence of its segments. (Naimushin 2002: 49)

Moving on from the case of Germany, where the notion of "Sprachmittlung" (mediation) has a definite place in the general map of language education, but its relation to translation varies amongst the curricula and the interpretations of its federal states, it appears that no similar debate on the concept and use of mediation in FLT exists, thus far, in the UK, a multilingual country with admittedly less interest in foreign language learning. Nevertheless, and in an attempt perhaps to deal with and overcome

this deficiency, since September 2014 the new statutory National Curriculum came in force, introducing changes – among others – in the subject of modern languages. The aim, according to the Department of Education, is to “enable pupils to express their ideas and thoughts in another language and to understand and respond to its speakers, both in speech and in writing” ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)). The changes include teaching of foreign languages in primary schools at KS2, new content on translation at KS3, literature at KS3 with more explicit reference to reading literary texts, and a focus on grammar and vocabulary at KS3 ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)).

More specifically, foreign language teaching at Key Stage 2 does not involve actual tasks of translation between languages, nor does it explicitly refer to any specific bilingual approaches. Nevertheless, it includes a few indicators that could be interpreted as laying the foundations towards bilingualism, such as expanding the vocabulary by (also) using a dictionary, as well as comparing and contrasting key features and patterns of the new language with English. Other points, such as “present ideas and information orally to a range of audiences”, and “read carefully and show understanding of words, phrases and simple writing” ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) are vague enough to provide teachers with flexibility should they wish to incorporate some basic bilingual-mediating activities in their teaching plans.

Use of translation (but not mediation) becomes an explicit requirement for students at Key Stage 3 (ages 11–14), when they should be able to “read and show comprehension of original and adapted materials from a range of different sources, understanding the purpose, important ideas and details, and provide an accurate English translation of short, suitable material” ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)). They should also be able to “write prose using an increasingly wide range of grammar and vocabulary, write creatively to express their own ideas and opinions, and translate short written text accurately into the foreign language” (*ibid*). Both directions of translation (from and into English) are now included in the new GCSE exams (effective since 2016), when students with GCSE specifications in modern languages will have to “translate a short passage from the assessed language into English” ([www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)), as well as “translate sentences and short texts from English into the assessed language to convey key messages accurately and to apply grammatical knowledge of language and structures in context” ([www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)). Indeed, according to a summary of GCSE Reforms, content changes in the subject of modern languages place great emphasis on the component of “translation of sentences and short texts from English into the language” ([www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)). However, translation in this context, appears to be utilised more as a means of understanding meaning and L2 grammar structures, rather than as a purely communicative-mediated activity, since nowhere in the curriculum are the students expected to act as mediators between English and the L2. Possibly reaffirming this

view is a private conversation between Pym and the Department for Education (April 2013) prior to the launch of the new curriculum. As the Department explained, the reason why translation is being introduced into the National Curriculum is because “the Secretary of State for Education is keen to instil rigour in language learning”, but without focusing on “translating chunks of texts” (2013: 88). Pym further adds, that “the Department told us that there was a difference between translation, which it regards as an academic subject, and being able to communicate” (ibid). However, since there is no further explanation offered on this distinction, and based on the complete absence of the word “mediation” from the new curriculum, one might wonder if, and to what extent, a more contemporary aspect of translation as a plurilingual activity and communicative strategy will be also exploited and appreciated in the UK L2 teaching classrooms.

As perhaps anticipated, the reactions to the planned reforms have varied from supportive attitudes to downright scepticism. The element of translation (both from and into English) in conjunction with an emphasis on grammatical structures and vocabulary, phonetics and intonation, as well as on transcription of words and sentences raise concerns about a possible return to the “old-fashioned” Grammar-Translation Method. Some teachers have expressed their worries about the “damaging effect that the prescriptive inclusion of translation may have upon methodology” ([www.tes.co.uk](http://www.tes.co.uk)), arguing that use of translation sounds “daunting” and “looks ideological and anachronistic” (ibid). Others share more positive views, ideas and materials with regards to including translation in their current teaching plans (ibid). The latter view is also confirmed by the EU Studies on the Translation and Multilingualism (2013), and more specifically on the *Role of Translation in the Teaching of Languages in the European Union*, which indicates that 63 per cent of the respondent teachers in the UK admitted of using translation exercises in their classes in the mid-to-high frequency (Pym et al. 2013: 91). In the same study, when Pym seeks the opinion of experts (separately for each country) regarding the role of translation in L2 learning, respondents in the UK simply provided a number of translation-related activities for the secondary school. Nevertheless, Pym sharply comments that:

Only one of the expert respondents was able to cite research on the positive or negative effect of translation activities. This suggests that most teachers view translation in terms of their own experience and preferred teaching methods, rather than in light of research findings. (Pym et al. 2013: 94)

Hawkes (2013), being one of the UK respondents in the above study, gives an account of the reasoning behind teachers' reluctance to include translation in their plans, and asserts that it would be better if they interpret translation as a "task" rather than as a "methodology", in order to avoid confusion and associations with the Grammar-Translation Method. Summarizing some of the main arguments for using translation in the FLT, she stresses the importance of linguistic awareness as a result of implementing translation, as well as the need to teach students about online translation tools and how to use them. Hawkes also supports all three kinds of translation into the foreign language (word level, sentence and short text translation), as well as adapted "parallel translation" (an FL text and an English text with corresponding gaps). At the same time, she argues for less "straightforward word-for-word 'accurate English translation' of FL material" ([www.tes.com](http://www.tes.com)) and leans towards "summary translation", and the idea of students synthesizing different FL source texts into an English translation. Despite the fact that this idea resembles the notion of mediation as it is exemplified in the CEFR, Hawkes apparently does not see the need to differentiate between the two of them, thus applying the general term of "translation" to cover all possible types and combinations of activities, whereas the term mediation does not feature in her comments.

The Greek national curriculum provides a significant contrast to the case of the UK curriculum, for its extremely positive outlook towards the activity of mediation in the FLT. Moreover, as opposed to both the UK curriculum and, at least some of the regional curricula in Germany, the Greek one appears extremely hostile towards any use of translation as well as its link to mediation. The Greek National Curriculum for foreign languages has embraced the notion of "mediation", not only by incorporating it in the teaching material for foreign languages, but also by testing and assessing candidates' mediation performance in the "Kratiko Pistopiitiko Glossomathias" – KPG exams (a national certificate of foreign language learning). In fact, Stathopoulou (2015) has first published a book on the "[i]nventory of [m]ediation [s]trategies and the attempt to develop level-appropriate descriptors" (cited in Anastasiadou 2017: 181), which was based on tasks included in the Greek KPG. More precisely, Stathopoulou (2013) asserts, that for completing the mediation task in the Greek KPG,

candidates are required to produce a text in the target language by using only the relevant source information on the basis of the required context of situation (i.e. what the purpose of the text is, who the addressor and the addressee are, in what discourse environment the text to be produced is to appear, etc.). They are, actually, expected to compose a socially-meaningful text in the target language which may convey the main

idea of the Greek text, make a summary of it or relay only some messages contained in the Greek text. (2013: 352)

In other words, according to the authors of the Greek curriculum, mediation – based on the description in the CEFR 2001 – should be construed as an everyday social practice enabling interlingual communication in multilingual societies. The role of the mediator is perceived as the person “in-between”, whose aim is to facilitate understanding, fill information gaps and explain what may have not been understood between people who do not speak or partly speak the same language. Students should be able to read texts in the foreign language, selectively extract information from the source text(s) and successfully transfer meanings in the other language according to the communicative purpose of the target text ([www.rcel2.enl.uoa.gr](http://www.rcel2.enl.uoa.gr)).

Following the aforementioned line of reasoning, the Greek National Curriculum (2016) has attempted to develop its own descriptors for the mediation skills required at each level (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1), long before these were provided by the European Framework. According to the Greek can-do statements for the highest level (C1), students are expected to be able to extract selected information, interpret meanings, summarize a long text, and/or synthesize texts based on one or more foreign language (multimodal) source texts ([www.rcel2.enl.uoa.gr](http://www.rcel2.enl.uoa.gr)). More specifically, students at level C1 are required to “use information from a source text in Greek in order to produce a target text in the foreign language, including at the same time additional information” ([www.rcel.enl2.uoa.gr](http://www.rcel.enl2.uoa.gr)) (my translation). Students at a lower level (B1) should be able to “synthesize a written text in the foreign language which either summarizes or simplifies or adjusts information from a source text in Greek, according to the communicative situation” (ibid) (my translation). However, again, no added explanation is provided as to why e.g. adding information in order to explain culture-specific aspects of the ST, or adjusting the TT to meet the agent’s requirements and the audience’s needs are merely characteristics of mediation but not of translation.

Further adding to the “dispute” between mediation and translation, the descriptor level C1 refers to the ability of the students to “reformulate in the foreign language a message(s) written in Greek, using advanced grammatical structures and vocabulary” ([www.rcel2.enl.uoa.gr](http://www.rcel2.enl.uoa.gr)) (my translation). The Greek curriculum clearly states that in mediating activities students should not “reproduce” messages, hence translate, from one language to another, but they are instructed to “reformulate” them; there is, however, no clear justification as to why “reproduce” describes translation and “reformulate” describes mediation. Ironically, this contrasts Zarate et al.’s (2004) comment that translation is a “reformulating activity that obscures all the

challenges to intercultural communication” (2004: 12), and puts under the lens not only the relationship between translation and mediation, but also and foremost views of translation as an activity on its own.

Both the concept of mediation, and its relationship to translation, as this has been initially introduced in the CEFR, seem to also have an appeal outside the European context. Whereas the Australian Curriculum for Languages has included translation and interpretation as “forms of intercultural mediation that involve the analysis and understanding of language and culture” (Laviosa in Baker and Saldanha 2019), Howell (2017), in an attempt to raise awareness of the benefits of incorporating cross-language mediation in the EFL curricula in Japan, looks at the German and Greek FLT context. A brief analysis and comparison of mediation tasks – all drawing on German and Greek examples – lead Howell to conclude that mediation “offers a way of adapting the traditional means of translation to a more task-oriented and communicative style of teaching” (2017: 152). Therefore, he believes that L2 education in Japan would benefit from a regulated inclusion of the concept of cross-language mediation in the L2 material and classrooms. By embracing a replacement of Grammar-Translation approaches, already being used in Japan, with mediation tasks, which “both embed translational processes in a realistic context and emphasize adequacy of communication more than accuracy of code” (ibid), Howell welcomes “mediation” in the L2 teaching context, however, not as a different concept or opposite to “translation”, but rather as translation being a communicative focused activity.

In a much more recent presentation following the publication of the CV 2018, Stathopoulou (2019) agrees with the CV’s view, that the concept of mediation includes translation, but it should not be reduced to that. Explaining how mediation is incorporated in the National Foreign Language Exams (KPG) exams in Greece, she provides an example of mediation tasks from the KPG exams. In this task, the learners have to explain “how Greece has managed to achieve Blue Flag status for many of its beaches”, by processing the text and relaying specific information in a report of 180-200 words. In a similar presentation of the new CV 2018, and the concept of mediation in it, Camerer (2019) also includes an example of mediation, extracting it from a Final Secondary-School Examination in Germany, in 2014. In this case, the learners are requested to write a text/e-mail of 250 words, summarising an interview on a given topic. It could be noted at this point, that both the Greek and the German examples, which are provided in order to illustrate the new mediation concept, do not include any reference to translation, or to any further descriptor scales.

Comparing translation and mediation in this context are also Hutanu and Jieanu (2019). Discussing the place of mediation activities for teaching Romanian as a foreign language, they

argue that the initial lack of descriptors in the CEFR has resulted in researchers and practitioners either overlooking mediation or “assimilat[ing] [it] to translation” (2019: 175). Their analysis of the three most recent textbooks for teaching Romanian as a foreign language revealed “very few mediation activities” (ibid). They attribute this result, first to the development of this kind of textbooks without a particular audience in mind and, secondly, to an understanding of mediation almost exclusively in terms of translation and interpretation (ibid). Most of the mediation tasks included in the textbooks “involve translating words, sentences, idioms, grammatical structures from Romanian into students’ L1 and are negatively reviewed as “decontextualized” and “lack[ing] a clear purpose or meaning” (ibid). The authors, apparently, condemn the way translation has been interpreted in the CEFR, and offer their own variety of mediating tasks, which they believe to correspond more to the mediation description in the CV, and “can be done at any level, depending on the length and complexity of the text to be translated” (ibid). Since the third descriptor scale in the CV’s mediating activities explicitly features “translating a written text”, the authors offer their own understanding of what translating tasks should involve. Interestingly enough, the suggested examples require from the learners to “translate”, “translate and explain”, or to produce a “contrastive analysis of parallel texts”, which is understood by the authors, as professional translation (Hutanu and Jieanu (2019: 178–179).

Continuing from the above, even more intriguing is the translation task where learners are called to explain in Romanian “stereotypes Americans/Serbs/French etc. have of other nations, as seen in the map” which is provided online. According to the task developers, this is both a linguistic and a cultural mediation activity that is, here, categorised as an example of translating. The thesis, therefore, wonders how clear and definite the boundaries are between the different scales, and accordingly, the various tasks. In other words, this particular task could also be interpreted as “processing a text”, which is described as “understanding the information or the arguments in a given text [...] and then transferring these, usually in a condensed form, to another text” (Hutanu and Jieanu 2019: 178). Similarly, the aforementioned example of mediation from the German exams could, potentially, be understood as “translating a text”, since the latter is described as “the process of providing a rough, on-the-spot translation of a written text, usually of a communicative nature (letter, email etc.)” (ibid).

From a different perspective, if one broadens the boundaries between the descriptors, then the above German and Greek mediation examples could also be approached as general mediation activities, merging different scales under one task. However, that would, effectively, imply that translation will be primarily regarded as a technical step, included in the process of



mediation, and used by learners with the aim of summarising or paraphrasing a text, rather than as an activity standing on its own. That is not to say that the latter imposes a problem per se. Translation can be also understood as a strategy amongst bilinguals in order to achieve communication; in other words, translation is used as a means to an end. What the thesis, however, wishes to point out, is that lack of clarity, as well as lack of an explicit reference to every required step in the process of completing a mediation task, could lead to confusion. In other words, failure to recognise the presence of translation and, most importantly, to make learners aware of even instances of translation in a mediation task, especially when the latter is not labelled as translation, could (consciously or not) impair translation's visibility in the current teaching climate.

In the same line is the development of mediating activities for a new teaching training course for the new assessments of the EOLs Escuela Oficial de Idiomas, Royal Decree RD in Spain. These have recently incorporated the skill of mediation according to the CV's descriptions since the beginning of 2019 (Pedregosa 2019). Outlining the content of the new training course which aims at getting language teachers acquainted with the recent conceptualisation of mediation, Pedregosa provides some sample activities for each scale. It is worth noting that, although an interpreting task is explicitly suggested for "mediating a text", an implicit task on translation is labelled as "explaining a saying in another language", under the scale of "mediating communication". Moreover, when it comes to explaining how a mediation activity can be designed, it is suggested to start with choosing "the type of mediation", "the type of text and the domain", and "the languages or language varieties", followed by identifying "the mediation strategies", before moving onto designing and piloting the activity (Pedregosa 2019). Therefore, although in this case, instances of translation are indeed incorporated in several mediation activities, an explicit designated translating activity – or view of translation as an end – remains a matter of choice.

In order to comprehend what influences these choices, the next part moves from a descriptive aspect of mediation and translation in the L2 teaching to a more critical one. This involves personal views, interpretations and criticisms with regards to whether a relationship between mediation and translation can exist in the L2 teaching field.

#### **4.5 Translation and language mediation in the L2 teaching – Critical reactions and possible implications**

Since the launch of the Framework in 2001, views of translation in the L2 teaching context have been often accompanied by its comparison and contrast to mediation. The biggest testament, perhaps, to that is one of North and Piccardo's (2016) opening lines in the pilot document on mediation descriptor scales, prior to the CV 2018. As already mentioned, the authors admit that "many people appear to associate mediation in the CEFR solely as cross-linguistic mediation – usually conveying the information given in a text, and to reduce it to some form of (more or less professional) translation and interpretation" (2016: 6). This statement, however, should not be construed as an indication that this was, indeed, the Framework's intention, since neither the CEFR nor the new CV confirm it. As the thesis understands, the authors very discreetly explain that this has been *only the prevailing interpretation* of the CEFR, without explicitly stating that this was *not necessarily* the only correct and accurate understanding of it. To better analyse this prevailing interpretation of the CEFR, this section turns the spotlight on the reactions that the conceptualisation of translation as a language mediation strategy has triggered thus far.

The first argument concerns the definitions of mediation and translation as these are described in the CEFR. Mader and Urkun (2010), when they discuss the "ability to mediate between conflicting interpretations of phenomena" (2010: 18) in the context of the Framework, argue that:

some of what is said in the CEFR about mediation seems inconsistent. This poses a dilemma, as in some places in the CEFR mediation is taken to mean translation / interpretation, in others the central meaning is that of mediation in intercultural contexts, which broadens and changes its significance and may lead to a different interpretation. (2010: 18)

Their views offer a first indication of how translation has been distinguished from mediation. It appears that mediation in the CEFR was already understood as a broader concept, leaning towards two different directions; one is translation, which is more concerned with the accurate transfer of the linguistic features, and the other is intercultural communication, which apparently is not part of the translating process.

Commenting on the CEFR's definition of mediation, Atabekova et al. (2012), state that "[it] draws on the four competences in its reliance upon the distinction oral/written, limits

various social communication activities to school exercises, simplifies the circulation of meaning in an exchange, and idealizes the transparency of communication” (2012: 6). Even sharper are their comments on the link between mediation and translation, arguing that the fact that the Framework considers the concept of mediation from the “angle of translation and interpretation”, actually “restrict[s] the activity under study to the language usage field, thus shadowing those challenges that emerge in the course of intercultural communication due to partner’s different values, beliefs, social practices, etc.” (2012: 6). However, it does not seem transparent which aspects the “language usage field” entails, and why mediation would be “restricted to it”, nor the reasons why mediation through translation “shadows” intercultural communication. Fasting forward to the 2018, it can be argued that their reservations have been partly taken into account. The new CV has, indeed, rectified the previously restricted concept of mediation, which has been expanded to include “in addition to bilingual (translation) skills, monolingual (sociocultural, interpretive and interactive) skills in the cultural mediator’s tools” (Meshkova et al 2019: 1326). However, although the concept of mediation has been recently amended to include more than translation, one might still question Atabekova et al.’ s restricted understanding of translation as an intercultural activity, and argue that their quote fails to acknowledge the relationship between translation and intercultural competence/awareness.

Whereas Atabekova et al.’s aforementioned views regard the general concept of translation, Byram (2008) comments on the particular definition of translation, as described in the CEFR. In the same line of thought, he believes that “there is a hint of the focus on form and on literal translation [...] [in] the CEFR” (Byram 2008). The reason for that can be traced in the Frameworks’ definition of translation, more precisely “in the references to translation being a matter of finding a ‘corresponding’ or ‘parallel’ text” (ibid), as well as in other phrases throughout the CEFR, such as “translation of example sentences” and “translation equivalence”. Byram acknowledges the fact that these phrases would be considered rather “simplistic” by translators and, in a cautious attempt not to offend the intentions of the CEFR’s authors, he assumes that the reason why these activities remain underemphasized in the CEFR, is due to the authors’ wish to:

[A]void any suggestion that a “grammar-translation” method of teaching languages is acceptable. A “communicative” approach is dominant and is an implicit rejection of the grammar translation method which was and is widely castigated as an unsuccessful and undesirable method in language teaching. (Byram 2008)

The fear that any hint of translation in the CEFR would stir confusion amongst teachers, and trick them into believing that the “old-fashioned” Grammar-Translation Method has returned, also seems deeply embedded in a comment of one of the Framework’s authors. As Alderson (2007) criticizes:

There are other cases of unfortunate use. The fact that there are (brief) mentions in the CEFR's Descriptive Scheme of the skill of mediation has encouraged the more traditional examination boards, particularly in Central Europe, to continue a very outdated form of the testing of translation as part of language proficiency examinations, despite the lack of any scales for mediation in the CEFR. (2007: 662)

One thing that stands out, is that mediation has been immediately associated with an old-fashioned understanding and implementation in the language teaching, as opposed to a more modern, communicative one, but with no obvious reasons why the L2 teaching did not grasp the opportunity to reassess translation in the twenty-first century teaching climate. Byram (2008) takes this even further. Without supporting the official come back of the Grammar-Translation Method, does not accept the comments against it uncritically either. As a teacher himself, who from the 1950s to 1980s taught languages according to this method, he claims that not only was it “fit for purpose”, since the purpose of the method was to “train the faculties of the mind” (Byram 2008) but also that it was always combined with communicative methods. These were introduced alongside the Grammar-Translation Method, and “as time passed the compromise became stronger and the intellectual challenge perhaps became weaker whilst the communicative skills became stronger” (ibid). Thus, what really confuses and alarms teachers today stems partly from a wrong – or at least unjustified – legacy of the Grammar-Translation Method, which at the same time shapes their thinking about the whole concept of translation itself, or in Bellos’ words “[t]ranslation-based language teaching is no longer in fashion, but its ghost still inhabits a number of misconceptions about what translation is or should be” (2011: 115).

Based on the aforementioned discussion, it becomes evident that a substantial amount of criticism has evolved from the definition of translation as a “word-for-word” exercise and its association with the Grammar-Translation Method. Byram, in his above outlined argument, implies that this particular view of translation is regarded only from the teachers’ point of view and not from the translators’, hinting – probably – towards a number of academic theories and approaches within the discipline of TS which provide different definitions and perspectives (as

it will be further discussed). However, the teachers' community seems to have paradoxically ignored that, and focused on translation as an exclusively professional activity, intended for and practised only by professional translators, at least until the recent publication of the CV in 2018.

Bohle (2013), based on the CEFR's suggestions, states clearly that the concept of mediation is entirely different to professional translation/interpreting, and that the goal of L2 teaching does not entail achievement of translation competence. She tries to entertain the idea that "Sprachmittlung sei einfach "gutes" Übersetzen" ("mediation could be simply regarded as "good" translating", my translation) (2013: 52), and to clarify "this misunderstanding" by listing the differences between them. Bohle understands that translation/interpreting are activities defined by full correspondence between the two texts, complete absence of deviations, terminological consistence, high degree of grammatical and syntactical coherence, and professionalism. The latter is ideally delivered by translators/interpreters working into their L1s, and with an outstanding command of both languages (2013: 52). On the contrary, mediation is a common everyday situation, concerned only with communicative equivalence and transfer of the relevant content to the sender (ibid). Whereas translation is a sophisticated and demanding professional activity, mediation is highly relevant for the L2 teaching context, as a communicative activity opposed to the traditional translation (ibid). Thus, Bohle's views, based on the CEFR's interpretation, illuminate the contrast between translation and mediation as being two different activities.

In fact, as Stathopoulou (2013) asserts, one of the reasons why the view of mediation in the Greek KPG is sharply distinguished from the concept of translation, is precisely because she considers translation as a "highly specialized activity which concerns professionals whose main goal is to transfer as closely as possible meanings included in a text of a given language to another" (2013: 352). Dendrinou (2006) claims that, from the CEFR's perspective, the concept of mediation is, "in part at least, synonymous with professional translation and interpretation" (2006: 16). She supports her argument on the basis that "exact translation of legal and scientific texts", as well as "simultaneous and consecutive interpreting" are "specialised activities which are not included in a general foreign language programme for general purposes", whereas "exact discipline-oriented translation" and literary translation are two very different kinds of translation, which still both "require special expertise and knowledge" (ibid). Bearing in mind that the CEFR is not a prescriptive educational document, this cannot justify why language teachers who want to include these activities in their L2 classroom cannot adjust the context of the situations, by choosing the appropriate materials and

scaffolding at every level of their students, as is the case with other “professional specialized activities”. Screenplay writing and acting (Lopez-Mayhew 1998), documentary filming and video making (Terantino 2011), design and editing of web pages (Warschauer and Meskill 2000), subtitling activities (Micol Beseghi 2014), writing and editing of newspaper and online articles, as well as simply creative writing, poetry, novels and stories, are only a few examples of professional specialised activities on one hand, and “authentic” communicative tasks, activities and projects simulated in the communicative L2 classrooms, on the other hand. More importantly, however, the implementation of these activities in the L2 teaching field seems to be positively reviewed, without triggering the explicit need to differentiate between professional and non-professional activities.

Further in her article, Dendrinis (2006) distinguishes between the professional activities of translation/interpreting and the “informal interpretation” which takes place between family members and friends, and can be accomplished through paraphrasing and summarizing. Her view on mediation as “a form of everyday social practice” is indeed “altogether different from professional translation and mediation” (ibid), and appears to pay more attention to the communicative aspect of the activity rather than the intercultural character of it. The comments, however, seem to dismiss the communicative aspect embedded in the activity of translation, and the significance it has assumed in a number of prominent translation theories in the last decades, such the functional approaches, Skopos theory, etc. (see 4.6). Additionally, Philip Kerr, apparently not sharing such a dichotomy between translation activities and mediation activities, has included informal activities such as “note taking and summarising” (2014: 102), “mixed language listening” (2014: 109), “text expansion” (2014: 110–112) and “bilingual role plays” (2014: 115–116) under the title of *Translation and Own-language Activities* (2014). A variation of the latter activity, which practises “functional language [...] or ‘survival English’” (2014: 115) is also included in Gonzalez Davies’ *Multiple Voices in the Translation Classroom* (2004). These facts could further question the necessity and validity of considering language mediation and translation as two separate and entirely different L2 activities, practiced either in or outside the L2 classroom.

Conversely, Byram (2008) locates the difference between mediation and translation in the key phrase of “intercultural speaker”. This phrase was coined by Zarate and Byram in a working paper written for a group preparing the CEFR (1994 and 1997), as a “deliberate attempt to distance the notion of intercultural competence from the cultural competences of a native speaker” (Byram 2008). Byram understands intercultural competence as an educational aim and objective of foreign language teaching where learners, in order to be able to act as

successful mediators, should acquire two kinds of competence, “a communicative competence in the foreign language” and “intercultural competence, that is an ability to analyse and reflect upon the relationship between two ways of doing things in two different countries”. Thus, mediation, from his point of view, requires a) language skills, or else the ability to translate/interpret; and b) intercultural competence. Nevertheless, his definition of mediation perpetuates a vicious circle, in which the term “translation” apparently covers only the aspect of linguistic transfer, and “intercultural competence” accounts for everything translation does not. Consequently, this raises the question of why “intercultural competence” is viewed as a separate component, standing next to “translation”, instead of belonging in the list with the translators’ competence requirements.

Moving further into this mediation-translation comparison, Tocatlidou remarks that one of the things translators (should) do – as opposed to mediators – is remain totally “invisible”. She argues that “translators, like interpreters, appear nowhere in the discourse produced; they do not express their personal take on an issue or their opinion and they are not interlocutors in a communicative exchange” (cited in Dendrinos 2006: 17). Furthermore, she holds the view that translators (should) “remain true to the original text which they are required to respect. They do not have the ‘right’ to change the discourse, genre or register of the text they are producing [...] nor resort to reported speech” (ibid). This very particular and prescriptive aspect of translation strategy and ethics corresponds more to the CEFR’s original description of a mediator, which states that “the language user is not concerned to express his/her own meanings, but simply to act as an intermediary between interlocutors” (Council of Europe 2001: 87). The aforementioned claims reaffirm Howell’s (2017: 150) conclusions on cross-language mediation, namely that in “this type of translational activity [...] the source and the target text do not express the same meanings, and that the mediator, unlike most professional interpreters, is a visible and active participant in the interaction”. Howell’s comment, although generally supportive towards a conceptualisation of translation as a mediated activity, fails to acknowledge here the recent debate on the “visibility” of the interpreter and its role as a mediator (Martin and Phelan 2009; Nakane 2009; Valero-Garcés 2013; Nilsen 2013; Van De Mierop 2016; Wang 2017). Equally surprising, from a translator’s point of view, is Tocatlidou’s belief about the invisible part of the translator. This remark appears dismissive of translation as a process of mediation, and of the translator as a facilitator of communication, who moves across languages and cultures, and highlights the differences instead of suppressing them. Her views are, deliberately or not, inattentive to one of the most important critical concepts to come out of TS in the last century, the “invisibility” of the translator (Venuti 1995).

Such views also dismiss Wadensjö's remarks that "a strong division between 'translation' and 'mediation' is partly an academic construct, intimately tied to conventional preconceptions of language, mind and communication", concluding that whereas "in theory, translating and mediating may be distinguishable activities, [...] in practice they are intimately intertwined" (1998: 8).

Responding to the above interpretations of the CEFR's mediation concept, the new CV appears to be less concerned with the translator's, or the mediator's visibility in the recently elaborated content of mediation. Another significant change that takes place in the CV is the reference to non-professional translation. Projecting a view of translation as an informal activity that occurs frequently in non-professional situations is a transparent attempt to still include translation in the mediation concept, and to highlight its relevance for the plurilingual learner. Whether this is sufficient to restore translation's invisibility in the L2 teaching, remains to be seen. One could feel optimistic that this view might inspire teaching practitioners to broaden their search for materials which explicitly utilise translation as a mediation activity. Once again, the fact that this suggestion stems from a widely accepted and influential document such as the CEFR/CV could be, in theory, a significant factor weighing in favour of translation.

The thesis, however, holds a more reserved stand to this matter. Although it is arguably early to draw definite conclusions, a few first comments to the matter indicate that the previous interpretations regarding a more conservative understanding of translation in the field are still evident. More specifically, Reimann (2018), in the Goethe Institute's online magazine, refers to mediation as a "generic term [for] any activity in which a text is conveyed from one language into another" (Reimann 2018). As he claims, since the publication of the CEFR in 2001, language mediation in the L2 teaching has "moved away from the goal of equivalence – in the sense of "as free as necessary but as literal as possible" – and towards that of appropriateness" (ibid). That implies that mediation is "more than conventional translation and interpreting" (ibid). It is a highly relevant concept which materialises via a fairly free summary, paraphrase or informal interpreting of the main points from one language to another. Contrary to decontextualized activities of translating and interpreting, Reimann's implementation of mediation involves the design of activities "relevant to the situation and the addressees while ideally engaging at the same time with an (inter-)cultural issue" (ibid). Although the latter could also describe current activities and tasks on translation as a plurilingual approach, Reimann believes that this is what "distinguishes successful language mediation activities from translation exercises or other similar tasks for their own sake" (ibid).



Also attending current recommendations in the field of L2 teaching and using a rather colourful way to describe mediation, are teachers who provide teacher training for the Escuelas Oficiales de Idiomas (EOIs) in Spain. They argue that mediation is the “buzz word” at the moment, in this context, following the CV’s revised definition in 2018 which places it “in a central post as the essential and synthetic linguistic activity that encompasses all the others” (Engquist 2019). Discussing specifically mediation and translation, del Rio and Pose argue that “the definition of mediation in the CEFR did tend to conflate these three areas, making translation and interpretation sub-fields of the more general mediation” (ibid). They refer to the CV’s clarifications on this matter, based on a few key ideas that resemble the already discussed arguments against translation and mediation. The first one is that the act of mediation is prescribed by the need for a third party and the perceived needs of the speaker, whereas translation is prescribed by a higher degree of fidelity to the source text. The second one refers to mediation as “a complex linguistic act, [...] [which] any speaker of any level of a language is expected to be able to produce” (ibid). On the contrary, translation and interpreting are professional activities, requiring academic training and expertise. The last one understands mediation as a process focused on the “negotiation and co-construction of meanings, and on the crossing of linguistic borders” (ibid), whereas translation is apparently not.

Drawing a more definite conclusion from the above, it can be argued that the new CV appears to be even more successful in the concept of mediation than the CEFR. However, notwithstanding the powerful effect of the CV, the values it brings in the L2 teaching, alongside the merits of developing mediation skills for the plurilingual learner, it remains a descriptive document aiming attention at mediation, not translation. The thesis believes that, despite the best of the intentions, its particular portrayal of translation in connection to mediation, is designed to keep a fine balance amongst various factors: the previous criticism against it, the decision to project mediation as a contemporary approach in the L2 teaching context, and the decision to still include translation as a part of it.

Although this may be eligible from the perspective of the CV, and correspond to the current post-monolingual turn in the L2 teaching, it is less understandable from the perspective of this thesis. Arguing throughout that translation has an inextricably interwoven and research based relationship with the L2 teaching, the thesis believes that this relationship deserves now its own unreserved recognition and undivided attention. The thesis holds a different visualisation of the act of translating, as the ultimate term for understanding and describing all interlingual and intercultural communication which materialises on the premise of mediation. It does not imply that this is a unique position, since a view of translation as a communicative-

mediated activity underlines the vast majority of individual attempts to support it in the L2 teaching. In fact, Pintando-Gutiérrez (2018) notes that she uses “translation in language teaching and learning [as] an all-embracing term that comprises the inclusion of translation in the language classroom according to the different terms and their nature” (2018: 15). Regarding to mediation, she asserts that “the concept of ‘mediation’ is not included explicitly in [her] approach, for purposes of clarity, even though it is in line with the inclusive term of TILT” (ibid). The thesis, however, suggests, that this sort of visualisation should, ideally, be transparent and dominant in a widely accepted and influential document such as the CV. To that end, the thesis regards that, by shifting the hierarchy between translation and mediation, the CV – or any other educational policy document – could provide the fastest, most unambiguous and widely accessible route to existing theoretical and practical frameworks – as well as an “unconditional excuse” for implementing translation in the L2 teaching, either as a fifth skill, TOLC, or TILT, amongst others (Carreres, Gonzalez-Davies, G. Cook, Pintando-Gutiérrez). It could, therefore, act as a practical bridge between L2 teachers and the relevant research on the topic.

The thesis argues that the visibility of such proposals could be impaired if translation continues to be entangled in a contrast to mediation. This comparison, effectively, leaves translation with an understanding of it being different, or a subcategory of mediation. That is, translation is still seen as only one of the many examples of mediation activities, defined mainly as a linguistic and not a cultural activity, constrained by equivalence and accuracy, and still demanding special training and expertise, according to previous and current interpretations of the CEFR/CV. Shifting this perspective and putting translation above all, in an official manner, in educational policy documents, could put an end to this perceived contrast. Viewing the same matter from a different angle, mediation is, indeed, a wide concept, which is applicable across the spectrum of the educational system, including all levels (primary, secondary or higher) and benefiting all subjects. This would also apply to the L2 teaching, and the development of translation skills for the plurilingual learner, in this particular L2 teaching context, where interlingual and intercultural mediation is naturally expected to take place during all types of translating/interpreting activities. The thesis however, understands that such a broad view of translating in the L2 teaching field could not be reached and sustained without the support of an adequate theoretical background on the art and science of translation.

To that end, the thesis turns to the discipline of Translation Studies (TS). The reasoning behind this echoes Pym’s (2014) sentiment, that following theories and approaches that have been developing in TS in the last forty to fifty years could have already provided the L2

teaching with a different and more realistic image of what translation is, what translators do, and what translating entails, either professionally or not. Effectively, the thesis believes that current criticism against translation could have been prevented, and the outcome of the perceived contrast between mediation and translation could have been different. The thesis will focus then, on exploring only those theories and approaches from the TS which can address the specific negative perceptions of translation in the L2 teaching field, as these were previously discussed. However, expanding on other translation theories which can also sustain the role of translation in the L2 teaching, would go here beyond the scope of the chapter.

#### **4.6 Translation as language mediation within the discipline of Translation Studies:**

##### **Theories, dichotomies, approaches**

Translation as a human activity has a century-old tradition. However, it was only in the second half of the twentieth century that the concept and activity of translation began to attract the kind of sustained theoretical reflection that could lay the foundation of the current discipline of Translation Studies. Exploring the development of Translation Studies since its emergence, different approaches reveal some of the discipline's central research questions, as well as the various schools of thought on them. One of the most prevalent historical approaches is the concept of turns, which as Mary Snell-Hornby (2006) indicates, aims to discuss ideas and theories in the field by contrasting the new paradigms with the shifting viewpoints. Snell-Hornby used the idea of turns to highlight a shift of focus in the discipline, from the linguistic-oriented theories and the general impact of linguistics on the study of translation, to a growing interest in the cultural aspects of translation. The impact of cultural studies in the 1980s on TS is evident in views of translation as a “cross-cultural event” (Snell-Hornby 1987), views of the translator as “pluricultural” (Vermeer 1989) and views of translating as “translating cultures, not languages” (Ivir 1987) (cited in El-dali 2010: 36–37). The cultural turn in the 1980s was followed by a number of turns in the 1990s (post-colonial studies, gender issues, empirical turn, globalisation turn), and the translational turn in the millennium. They all gradually signify the emphasis on social, cultural and communicative practices, “on the external politics of translation, [and] on the relationship between translation behaviour and socio-cultural factors” (ibid). As El-dali (2010) puts it, “the object of research of translation studies is thus not language(s), as traditionally seen, but human activity in different cultural contexts” (2010: 37). Exploring this object of research from various perspectives (process, product, aims, agents) and taking them all into account, prompts Shamma (2009) to insist on the need for a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach for describing and explaining translation (cited in

El-dali 2010: 37). In fact, the idea of TS as an interdiscipline (Snell-Hornby et al. 1992) has been widely supported by academics in the field. Gentzler (2014) highlights the contributions of other fields in TS by dividing its history into four sections: Pre-Discipline, Discipline, Interdiscipline and Post-Discipline, whereas Hatim, also referring to TS as an interdiscipline, describes it as “a house of many rooms” (2001: 8).

At the same time, however, Jixing Long (2012) explores the concept of turns in TS from a different perspective, that of the changing definition of translation. He argues that “[a] new [translation] definition that is widely accepted always generates a new turn and the new turn tends to breed a next new definition, [...], hence the development of translation studies” (2012: 35). Therefore, a rather simplistic, albeit valid, conclusion at this point is that throughout the history of TS, not only one, but various definitions of translation have emerged. Another conclusion that can also be extracted from the above quote is that translation definitions illustrate mostly (but not necessarily) prevailing theories at the time within the discipline of TS, as well as the influence by other fields outside the discipline. No matter how challenging (and even problematic) the process of defining translation is, it would be reasonable, however, to assume that academics within TS are totally aware of the continuous debates and recent research findings that each time contribute to the making of a new turn, and hence a new translation definition. Nevertheless, applying the same assumption to researchers outside the discipline of TS is not self-evident. Although this may be understandable to an extent, it is also surprising when this lack of knowledge of the development of Translation Studies affects the neighbouring field of L2 teaching, especially if one considers the recent special interest of the latter on interlingual mediation.

To put all this in the context of the current chapter, it is obvious that the relationship between translation and mediation in the field of L2 teaching has been reduced to a very specific form, which, as previously discussed, does not necessarily advocate use of translation as an L2 teaching tool, on the contrary, it heavily criticises it. Mediation is clearly chosen in the L2 teaching as an overarching term, which could potentially include the act of translating, as only one of the options of cross-lingual communication. The reason for these choices, however, is not apparent. The next section of the chapter, therefore, challenges this limited view, by arguing and exposing a different dynamic in the relationship between mediation and translation. Examining this from the perspective of TS, it puts at the centre of the focus translation as a broader, hybrid and dynamic notion, which has been questioning the traditional binary opposites (SL vs TL, literal vs free translation), and currently occupies the space-in-between cultures, emphasizing, thus, translation as mediation.

To that end, and in order to challenge the argumentation that appears to shape the concept of translation in the current L2 teaching, the following three parts of this chapter will focus on the role that equivalence, communication and intercultural mediation have been playing in the process of defining translation within the discipline of TS. The main argument that underlies this last part of the chapter is that translation theories and approaches related to these three aspects provide the insight to review the contemporary negative attitude towards translation in the L2 teaching, and add to the theoretical background that supports and restores translation's visible status in this relationship.

#### **4.6.1 Translation from the perspective of equivalence**

In the attempt to implement mediation in the L2 teaching after the suggestions of CEFR in 2001, and in order to draw some specific lines between a mediation task and a translation task in this context, a defining factor has been the comparison of the end products in terms of length and word count. In other words, as previously analysed in this chapter, mediation activity should result in a shorter text than the original, often specified by a number of words. In the case of translation, the length of the target text has to be at least the same as the one of the source text. These task instructions relate to the amount of information that should be included in the end product of a task. A translation answer is regarded as accurate, faithful, and a lot more focused on rendering all the details and the exact meaning of the source, compared with a mediation answer, which only renders relevant information and meaning. Therefore, the degree of equivalence between a source text and a target text appears to differentiate mediation from translation in the L2 teaching, assuming, evidently, a defining role in this context.

Interestingly enough, the notion of equivalence has also preoccupied theorists of translation, sparking debates and dichotomies, and posing similar questions in the field of translation as the ones raised in the field of L2 teaching, but providing, however, different answers. In fact, from whatever angle one embarks upon describing the phenomenon of translation, at the centre of the debate stood for many years what Cook portrays as one of the “perennial preoccupations” of translation theory (2012: 245), namely the nature of equivalence between an original and its translation. Describing translation as a form of equivalence, Koller (1995: 196) asserts that “between the resultant text in L2 [...] and the source text in L1 [...] there exists a relationship, which can be designated as a translational, or equivalence relation”. More recently, and referring to the role of translator, Koller (2011: 85) argues that they find themselves in the paradoxical position of formulating their own utterance through the translation, but at the same time not, since the translator has no autonomy on themselves but is

rather “bound in a particular way to the autonomy of the source text” (cited in House 2016: 9). House (2016) also speaks highly of the concept of equivalence, arguing that creating equivalence is what distinguishes translation from other text-processing activities, whereas “basing translation on the criterion of equivalence makes it possible to arrive at an understanding of what translation is” (2016: 9). Pym (2014: 28) agrees with House, that the term “equivalent” is what distinguishes translation from other forms of interlingual mediation. However, his comment refers only to those definitions that describe translation based on the concept of equivalence, implying that there are other definitions of translation which do not put equivalence at the centre of their description.

Approaching translation through the concept of equivalence has often been defined as a form of antithesis. Whether it consisted of two ends, such as the “word for word” translation against the “sense for sense” by Cicero and Horace (first century BC), or of various degrees/types, such as Dryden’s typology of metaphrase, paraphrase and imitation (1680), the principle remained the same, underlining the relative gain and/or loss at the end result, depending on the degree of “closeness” to, or departure, from the original.<sup>11</sup> Vinay and Darbelnet (1958) hold the view that translation is an equivalence-oriented process, which “replicates the same situation as in the original, whilst using completely different wording”. Jakobson (1959) agrees that in the case of interlingual translation, the process “involves two equivalent messages in two different codes” (1959: 233), whereas it is the translator’s role to find translation equivalents by choosing an appropriate translation strategy, making the translation always possible. Catford’s (1965) definition of translation was also based on equivalence, since he regarded it as “the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL) (1965: 20), whereas, as House remarks, his “classic definition” has left us with the legacy of the abbreviations SL and TL, used in the TS ever since (2016: 9).

Nida’s (1964) semiotic distinction between formal equivalence – or formal correspondence (Nida and Taber 1982) – and dynamic equivalence has been another linguistic theory of translation capitalising on the concept of equivalence. Stemming from an interest in Bible translation, and responding to the dilemma of adapting the message for his recipients but remaining faithful to the original as well, Nida distinguished between formal equivalence, where a TL item is chosen as the closest equivalent of an SL word or phrase, and dynamic equivalence, which is a more sociolinguistic approach to translation. Nida and Taber underline

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<sup>11</sup> The three types of translation were outlined by John Dryden in his Preface to *Ovid’s Epistles*, in 1680.

the limitations of formal equivalence, claiming that there are not always equivalents between language pairs, and that insisting on this approach might lead to distortion of TL grammatical/syntactical features and misunderstandings. Nida favours dynamic equivalence as a more effective translation procedure, since he is more interested “in the message of the text, or in other words, in its semantic quality” (Leonardi 2000). Along the same lines moves Newmark’s (1988) dichotomy between “semantic” and “communicative” translation, with the former kind favouring preserving the values of the ST, and the latter the adapting to the needs of the new target audience. Newmark (1988) himself, as opposed to Nida, preferred the semantic type (cited in Pym 2014: 31), but as Pym puts it, at least in theory, it is open to the translators to choose which aspect they will render, since in Newmark’s theory there are no “natural” equivalents between languages (ibid). As a result, both Nida and Newmark are found amongst the first well-known translation theorists who approached the communicative dimension of translation within the equivalence paradigm.

Similar supporters of the notion of equivalence, seeing it not as a static equivalent to lexical/grammatical replacement between languages, but rather as a range of possibilities which may start from the strictest adherence to every ST feature before it moves towards “bolder” and more flexible choices, were also various scholars of the Leipzig school. Amongst them is Kade (1968), who considered translation as an act of bilingual communication, “consisting of three phases, with the translator being the man or woman in the middle mediating between a sender and a receiver who do not speak the same concept” (House 2016: 14). Kade (1968) distinguished four types of equivalence: Total Equivalence; Facultative Equivalence; Approximative Equivalence; and Zero Equivalence. Pym (2014) proposed his own terminology for these four types, raising the question of whether equivalence should move one way or two ways: 1) one-to-one; 2) one-to-several or several-to-one; 3) one-to-part; or 4) one-to-none (Pym 2014: 29). Jäger (1975), another Leipzig scholar, stressed the importance of “communicative equivalence”, which exists whenever the communicative value can be maintained in a translation (1975: 36), and also talked about the role of “functional equivalence” (cited in House 2016: 14). Further stressing the significance of functional equivalence was Neubert (1973), who believed that the text type plays a major role in the translator’s decision to be “faithful to the original” or “appropriately adapted to the conventionalized text types in the target language community”, which was a modern and, at the time, “truly innovative view”, according to House (2016: 15).

In later years Pym has separated the theories of “natural” equivalence from the theories of “directional equivalence”. In what he calls a list of “polarities of directional equivalence”

(2014: 32), Pym includes Levy (1963/2011) who distinguishes between “illusory” translation – a translation so well adapted to the target culture it could be regarded as a new text – and “anti-illusory” translation as the one which maintains features of the ST. Also in Pym’s list belongs House (1997) and her “overt” translation (being aware that the TT is a translation) as opposed to “covert” translation. Further in the same list features Nord (1997) and her terms “documentary” vs. “instrumental” translation, depending on whether a translation works as an explicit representation (a document) of the previous text or “re-enact the communicative function (as an instrument)” (Pym 2014: 32). Toury (1980, 1995/2012) has used instead the terms “adequate” (to the ST) and “acceptable” (by the receptive culture). Venuti (1995), influenced by Scleiermacher’s distinction, proposes “fluent” for the domesticating type of translation and “resistant” for the foreignizing translations.

As Pym further comments, all these terms and dichotomies, which work within the paradigm of equivalence, model a choice made by the translator, and it is “a choice not necessarily determined by the text translated” (2014: 32). Assuming that one admits the limitations of the “natural” equivalence in translating, and discussing the potential of the “directional” equivalence, Pym raises the same question coming from the L2 teaching field as well, namely how far the translator can stretch the line between the two poles, and still claim the result as a translation. He wonders if, and up to which degree, cultural explanations and additions in the TT, resulting in an obviously longer version, can be still claimed in the various types of directional equivalence. Pym, however, does not reach the same conclusion as some researchers and teachers earlier in the chapter did, namely that a longer version in the target language is the resulting product of a mediation – not a translation process. On the contrary, in his opinion, there is no consensus or “clear agreement” on this issue, it is not even a “question that the equivalence paradigm was never really designed to address – it merely assumed an answer” (2014: 33).

Not only is there no clear answer with regards to “measuring” equivalence in terms of language comparison and counting of words and phrases, but Pym also takes the equivalence paradigm to another level, by referring to Gutt’s Relevance Theory, which “shows equivalence to be something that operates more on the level of beliefs, of fictions, or of interpretative processes activated when people receive a translation” (Pym 2014: 37). In 1991 Gutt was referring to the Relevance Theory to explain the numerous possible answers that occur in a well-known and everyday scenario, when someone prompts the question “What did he say?”, either because they were absent at the time or they did not speak the same language. He goes on to say that the answer to that question is determined “by considerations of relevance, and



specifically by my assumptions about what my communication partner might find optimally relevant” (1991: 377). The quote resembles what proponents of the mediation language activity call “selection of the right ST information” and “the relevant meaning for the target audience”, associating it exclusively with mediation and not with translation in the L2 teaching. Gutt has been influenced by Grice (1975), who believes that the success of communication depends on the relation between language and context, and who developed four maxims accordingly: 1) maxim of quantity (provide no more or less information than one needs to understand the message); 2) maxim of quality (no misinforming the audience); 3) maxim of relevance (avoid anything irrelevant to the conversation); and 4) maxim of manner (avoid any ambiguity and unnecessary wordiness) (Pym 2014: 35–36).

Hence, the necessary element for a successful communication is awareness of the context and the maxims, or to put it in other words, Relevance Theory is based on the assumption that successful communication depends on the ability to infer relevant meaning. Receptors expect to be able to extract the relevant information from an utterance or text in order to understand what the sender intended to say or write, and they should be able to do this with minimal difficulty. Senders, thus, should formulate their messages in such a way that the intended message is easily understood (Williams 2013: 65–66). By breaking these maxims (e.g. offering more explanations, adding information, etc.) the sender creates what is called an “implicature” (Pym 2014: 35).

Moreover, Relevance Theory distinguishes between two modes of language use: a) the “descriptive” use which refers to “the use of language to convey a sender’s thoughts which intend to represent reality” (Williams 2013: 66); and b) the “interpretive” use where “the sender is conveying the thoughts of someone else” (ibid). Applying this distinction to translation, Gutt renders that “true translation is a case of interpretive use” (Hatim 2014: 47) because a translator always speaks on behalf of someone else, representing the sender’s thoughts and not their own. On the contrary, in descriptive use the ST is regarded only as “a convenient help for composing a TT” (Gutt 2000, cited in Williams 2013: 66), such as in the case of adapting or rewriting an advertisement, tourist guide information or a set of instructions instead of translating them, and similar to the mediation tasks suggested within the FLT context. However, Gutt’s views that the term “translation” should be applied only when the translator is reproducing the thoughts of the source author (interpretive use) and not in cases of adapting or rewriting (descriptive use), which he does not consider as proper translations, are criticized by Williams (2013) as too narrow, since it excludes from the concept of translation many tasks currently carried out by translators. He concludes that “the *dividing line* between translation, as conceived by Gutt,

and rewriting, adaptation and so on [perhaps including mediation] is often *a very fuzzy one*”, [my emphasis] (2013: 66).

Additionally, Gutt’s preference for the “direct” translation, as opposed to the “indirect” type, has been criticized by Pym (2014). According to Gutt, in the first case the translator “has to somehow stick to the explicit contents of the original” (Hatim 2014: 46), whereas in the latter the translator “is free to elaborate or summarize” (ibid), or in Hatim’s words “in indirect translation [...] the decision is in favour of ‘natural’ communication” (ibid). For Gutt, though, this latter scenario, in which the translator is free to make the implicature explicit to the target audience, does not account for translation. It is only interpretation in terms of the start text (direct translation), that “creates a presumption of complete interpretative resemblance” (1991/2000: 196). Moreover, it is the audience’s responsibility to work and infer the meaning and the context of the message, and only in extreme situations of misunderstandings should the translator interfere by adding or explaining (Pym 2014: 36–37).

Although, at first sight, Gutt’s application of the Relevance Theory on translation appears to reaffirm the distinction between translation and mediation as described within the FLT, it also causes a stir. Not only because it is described as “idiosyncratic” by Pym (2014: 36), who criticizes Gutt for “effectively discount[ing]” much of Nida’s concept of “dynamic equivalence” (ibid), but also due to several interpretations of Gutt’s beliefs. An example is provided in his article “Translation as Interlingual Interpretive Use” (1991). There he argues that the principle of relevance constrains both the context of the intended interpretation of translation, since the resemblance to the original should be adequately relevant to the audience, as well as the way it is expressed, in the sense that it should not pose unnecessary difficulties to understand (1991: 377–78). In the same article Gutt cites a number of researchers whose translation principles relate or involve the principle of relevance, such as Levy’s guideline that the translator “[...] has to decide which qualities of the original are the most important and which ones he can miss out” (1969: 103, cited in Gutt 1991: 387), offering, indeed, a different perspective to the notion of equivalence.

The principle of relevance has also been applied to simultaneous interpreting, where according to Namy, a good oral translator “must take as much liberty with the original as is necessary in order to convey to his audience the intended meaning [...] of the speaker” (1978: 27 cited in Gutt 1991: 390), whereas in more recent times it provides a theoretical model in audiovisual translation. Gambier’s belief that “the greater the viewers’ processing effort, the lower the relevance of the translation” (2003: 185), takes an immediate effect on the context and length of sub- and surtitles, as well as audio description, meaning that usually – an

exception has been recorded by Caffrey (2009) – viewers and listeners want to expend minimum cognitive effort to achieve maximum cognitive effect (cited in Williams 2013: 87).

It is from this perspective when Williams concludes that Gutt has moved the debate in TS “beyond considerations of language and text and presented a holistic view of translation as an act of communication” (2013: 67). At the same time, it is Gutt’s persistence on translating by creating a “presumption of complete interpretative resemblance” which makes Pym argue that “[e]quivalence is always ‘presumed’ equivalence, and nothing more” (2014: 37), and alongside Toury, to conclude that “equivalence is *a belief structure*” (ibid, effect in the original). However, accepting equivalence as no more than a belief can, paradoxically, put an end to this concept as a central issue in TS (ibid).

This could also put an end to the concept of equivalence being one of the determinate factors in the distinction between mediation and translation in the L2 teaching. The thesis, therefore, understands that equivalence could be seen more as a made-up criterion for a specific (teaching) context rather than a differentiating factor between translation and other mediating activities, such as summarising, taking notes, processing a text and relaying information from one text to another. That is not to say, generally speaking, that a summary should not result in a shorter text than its original. How much shorter, though, appears to be here the decision of the teacher, of the material developer or the curriculum planner. Moreover, there seems to be no further underpinning as to why summarising the main points is not be viewed as an act of translation; or why taking notes in another language is understood as mediation but not translation. More interestingly, a key concept which underlines the scale of “note taking” in the CV is the accuracy of notes. It progresses “from notes precise enough for own use (B1) through accurate notes on meetings in his/her field (B2) to accurate capture of abstract concepts, relationships between ideas, implications and allusions” (CV 2018: 115) at higher levels. Accuracy plays a similarly significant role within the scale of “translating a text”. Although translation in the CV is described also as an everyday, informal activity – in contrast to the CEFR’s more formal interpretation of translation – the scale progresses “from rough translation of routine, everyday information in simple texts at the lower levels to translation with increasing fluency and accuracy of texts that become increasingly more complex” (CV 2018: 113). At the higher levels, the learner is expected “to fluently translate a complex text on a wide range of general and specialised subjects, capturing nuances and implications” (ibid). Effectively, that prompts the thesis to conclude that equivalence between two languages (or in the same one) would be a more relevant factor for describing and assessing the progress from one level to another within each scale, rather than distinguishing translation from mediation.

#### **4.6.2 Translation from the perspective of communication**

Alongside equivalence, another determining factor for the differences that stand between mediation and translation in the L2 teaching has been the element of communication. As already analysed, the CEFR (2001) has introduced the activity of mediation as an ultimate act of interlingual or cross-lingual communication. The primary role of a mediator, in the Framework, is seen as bridging communication between speakers of different languages. To that end, the message that has to be rendered to the other language again plays a very significant role but, this time, not in terms of accuracy and faithfulness, as in the case of equivalence, but rather in terms of the purpose. In other words, the aim of a mediating act is to render only a certain, smaller amount of information determined by the purpose of the activity each time. It should be noted again at this point, that the new CV does not specify language(s) or directionality. It indicates (any two) languages as A and B and involves mediation between them (interlingual mediation) as well as mediation in one language (intra-lingual mediation) (CV 2018: 109). In other words, the recently added and specified skill of “mediating communication” in the CV entails more than playing the role of an intermediary between interlocutors who speak different languages. The L2 learner, alongside teachers, trainers and professionals (CV 2018: 122), is now expected to develop the skills to intervene and alleviate “delicate situations, tensions or even disagreements that need to be faced in order to create the conditions for any understanding and hence any communication” (CV 2018: 122). Highlighting this view from the perspective of intra-lingual mediation can also refer to resolving conflicts and cultural misunderstandings, which is, indeed, a wide and valuable concept, not only in the L2 teaching but in every educational context.

Notwithstanding the merits of this broader conceptualisation, the original “acting as an intermediary in informal situations” (2018: 124), is still explicitly stated as part of a mediator’s role. Maria Stathopoulou who, as previously discussed in the chapter, firmly differentiates between translation and mediation, asserts that interlingual mediation has two dimensions, “the interaction between languages and the communicative process whereby the mediator selects information from a written text in one language in an attempt to relay it in another language by means of the target text” (Anastasiadou 2017: 175). This process of transformation, or “recontextualization” (Fairclough 2003), “differentiates mediation from translation, in that certain parts of the text and source meanings (rather than the whole text itself) are transformed” (cited in Anastasiadou 2017: 175). Furthermore, Stathopoulou determines that mediators, in order to “bring into the end product their own voice” (Dedrinis 2014: 152), have to select “only those pieces of information from the source text that serve the communicative purpose

determined by the task” (Anastasiadou 2017: 177). A similar tone is conveyed by the authors of the CV, who stress that the goal of mediating communication is to mediate across important information and the sense of a conversation, presentation, etc. in non-professional situations (2018: 124). Interestingly enough, at the higher levels, the learner is expected to “convey the meaning of the speaker faithfully, reflecting the style, register, and cultural context” (ibid). That could also confirm that equivalence, seen in terms of accuracy and faithfulness, indicates here, progress from the lower level to the higher, and not a contrast between mediation and translation. Furthermore, Stathopoulou’s above statement raises some more questions than it attempts to answer. If, for instance, the communicative purpose of a task determines the type and the amount of information that should be transferred, who is, then, responsible for making this decision in the L2 teaching context? Would that be the agent who carries this task (the L2 learner) or the one who sets the task (the L2 teacher)? Effectively, could a mediation task designed for L2 learners in a controlled teaching context differ to the task of non-professional translators under real-life circumstances, in a natural environment? Moreover, if by default a mediation task pre-determines a shorter target text, perhaps in the same sense that a paraphrasing or a summarizing task does, could it, perhaps, be considered as a different type of translating instead of a different task to translation?

Looking at the translation process, and whether and what kind of role the communicative purpose has been playing in it, one inevitably turns to the discipline of TS. From the 1970s, the relocation of the emphasis on the communication part of translation has been evident in the development of various diverse perspectives and different approaches to translation. Factors such as the limitations of narrow linguistic approaches, moving the text into the centre of attention and acknowledging the fact that it comes with a specific communicative function, as well as adopting insights from other disciplines such as pragmatics, sociolinguistics and communication studies, contributed to reflecting and defining translation as text production (El-dali 2011: 37). The main idea that the way one translates depends on the function of the text one translates inspired several theorists, who became known for their functional approaches. Pym (2014: 44) speaks of “a paradigm shift in translation theory [which] can be dated from 1984, at least as a symbolic point”. This shift was mainly prompted by Reiss and Vermeer’s *Foundation for a General Theory of Translation* (1984), as well as Holz-Manttari’s *Translational Action* (1984). Referring to the same period of time, Munday (2001) agrees that there has been a gradual shift from “static linguistic typologies towards a more functionalist and communicative approach to the analysis of translation which has been mainly manifested

in the work on text type and language function, the theory of translational action, and the skopos theory” (2001: 73).

Taking as a starting point the concept of functional equivalence, the German scholar Reiss (1976) proposed a methodical text typology, a practical approach to text examination and a functional viewpoint regarding translation. Considering the text, and not the level of word or sentence as the level of communication, she links the functional characteristics of text types to translation methods. Translation, or in her terms a written form of communication, requires the classification of certain text types which she distinguishes as the informative text, the expressive text, the operative text and the multi-medial text. Reiss also expounds on the notion of appropriate translational methods for each text category (2000: 16–46).

In the same book in which Reiss developed her text typology, Vermeer published his prominent skopos theory (Reiss & Vermeer 1984), which also reflected “a general shift from the predominantly linguistic and rather formal translation theories to a more functionally and socioculturally oriented concept of translation” (Baker 1998: 235). Vermeer's theory opposes the mainstream notion of regarding translation as a mere matter of language and “places the focus on the prospective function or skopos of the target text, which is largely constrained by the target text user, their needs and their cultural background” (Baker 1998: 236). According to Vermeer, the skopos of the text (Greek word for purpose) is the purpose for which a translator designs a translation, in agreement with their commissioner. The fact that skopos theory focuses above all on the purpose of the translation “expands the possibilities of translation, increases the range of possible translation strategies, and releases the translator from the corset of an enforced – and often meaningless – literalness” (Vermeer 1989: 42). In other words, the translator is free and obliged to use any translation strategies that are most appropriate to achieve the purpose for which the target text is intended, which accordingly allows the possibility of the same text being translated in many different ways, according to the purpose of the target text (Munday 2001: 80). Although skopos theory is a translation approach, and one of the most acclaimed ones within TS, paradoxically, it corresponds a lot more to the concept of language mediation – and not of translation – as defined within the contemporary L2 teaching context, since in mediation the needs of the target group determine the skopos of the mediation activity each time, and accordingly the mediation strategies that best serve the purpose of the task. A parallel could be also drawn between skopos theory and the Communicative Language Approach, developed in the field of L2 teaching. Pursuing the same ultimate goal, namely communication, both approaches face similar implications: these relate to how the aim of communication affects both the translating and the L2 teaching

process, or in other words, which translating and teaching strategies would better serve the goal of communication. It is thus implied, that similarly to the communicative aim of an L2 teaching task being better achieved by a focus on meaning vs. focus on form, and acceptance of grammatical/syntactical mistakes in order not to distort the communication progress, the skopos of a translation task could be better achieved by prioritising functionality and flexibility vs. fidelity.

Despite the fact that both Reiss and Vermeer co-authored the *Foundation for a General Theory of Translation* (1984), Pym asserts that Reiss's text-typology was a "less radical paradigm" (2014: 45) than the skopos theory. Pym's critique (2014) of this type of functionalism, which echoes House's critique (2016), is based on the fact that Reiss's analysis, as well as other's (Nord 1988/1991; Snell-Hornby 1988) still "tend to fall on the start side" (cited in Pym 2014: 48); however, "[s]tart-text functionalism cannot really discuss the reasons why a translator might want to change the function of the text. But Vermeer's concept of Skopos can" (ibid). In fact, what Pym pertains is that, although some functionalist approaches claimed to be opposed to the notion of equivalence, they did fall into the equivalence paradigm, as this was defined by Nida and Koller, whose approaches could be also called functionalist. For Pym, thus, the key factor was shifting the focus from the start text to the target text, and more precisely to the effect the text is supposed to have on the target reader. It has been these "more radical versions of target-side functionalism" which "justified the creation of a new academic discipline" (Pym 2014: 49), involving applied sociology, ethics of communication, cultural studies, etc., and also accounted for the dichotomy between equivalence and functionalism, "even when, as theories, they were basically compatible" (ibid).

Gentzler (2001) at the same time, also following the principles of functionalism, asserts that this functional approach puts an end to the dichotomy "faithful versus free axis" (2001: 71) since "both can be combined depending on the purpose of the text. The only condition for this to happen is that the translation has 'to be coherent and fluent', as Nida expressed in his 'dynamic equivalence'" (Pardo 2013: 18). Earlier, Van de Broeck (1978) also supported the allowance of multiple translations as a result of throwing attention on what makes a good translation given certain purposes in a specific context, and not in any absolute terms. He re-evaluated the concept of "correspondence", and legitimated the existence of several versions ("additional instances") of an original ("prime instance"), shifting the focus of Translation Studies from a "one to one" to a "many to one" notion of correspondence (1978, cited in Gentzler 2001: 97).

Whilst Vermeer was challenging traditional equivalence-based definitions of translation, another influential target-side functional approach was proposed by Holz-Mantarrri (1984). The “translational action” theory views translation as a purpose-driven, action-oriented human interaction, a definition which adds to the dispute between translation and language mediation in the L2 teaching. It is described as a communicative process which involves a series of roles and players, including the initiator, the commissioner, the ST producer, the TT producer, the TT user and the TT receiver (Munday 2001: 77). The theory stresses the importance of producing a target text that is functionally communicative for the receiver whereas, as Schäffner mentions, the ST is viewed as “a mere tool for the realization of the communication functions”, and “may undergo radical modification in the interest of the target reader, by the translator who should enable a functionally adequate intercultural transfer” (cited in Baker 1998: 3). Ironically, this description appears to also reflect the main principle which underlines the development of the current mediation tasks in the L2 teaching.

By putting the translator in the position of an expert of cross-cultural communication, and by effectively arguing that a translator “could actually write a new text and still be called a translator” (Pym 2014: 50), Holz-Manttari has persuasively stretched definitions of the term “translator”, challenging, at the same time, arguments against use of translation as mediation within the L2 teaching context. Nevertheless, according to Pym (ibid), her developed hierarchy of communication (cited in Nord 1997: 18) has only criticised the traditional role of linguistics in the translator’s training, by describing the “translational action” (the role of a translator) as “mediated cross-cultural communication”. This is further categorised into “translational action” with respect to the ST, and “non-translational action” referring to actions like drafting, consulting, post-editing, etc., whereas even within “translational action”, translators are allowed to carry out new functions as well, which highlights the multi-tasking nature of translation. Although it might be argued that the above model was developed with the view of translation as a profession, it does not imply, however, that translation is only meant as a “formal” professional activity, it does not exclude “informal” types of translation, nor does it justify defining the latter as “mediation”.

More recently, Nord (2006), still drawing on skopos theory, adopts “a modern approach in the framework of what is called functionalism in the translation studies” (2006: 132), and maintains that translation is a purposeful communicative activity, and a form of human interaction between different cultural and linguistic groups in specific situations with the translator playing the role of the intermediary between them (2006: 134). Snell-Hornby (1988), has also defined the concept of translation as an interaction process between the author, the



translator and the reader, stressing that “translation is a complex act of communication in which the SL-author, the reader as translator, and the translator as TL-author and the TL-reader interact” (1988: 81). Following the same line of thought, Zabalbeascoa (1996) defines the term translation as a communication act, and a human and social activity (cited in Kupske 2015: 53). Carbonell (2006), whose work is also influenced by skopos theory, defines translation as a form of communication and “a means of achieving things. However, in translation the original communicative act is relocated to a different setting, where different actors perform for different purposes: there is a mediation mechanics which qualifies the whole act at different levels” (cited *ibid*). His view, amid the others above, of translation as a human and purposeful act of communication raises, at least, the question of how and under what circumstances in the L2 teaching scene translation appears to have “lost” these capacities, which have been nevertheless “found” in the concept of language mediation.

Moreover, Nord takes a stand against some of the criticism on skopos theory, namely that “the translation purpose determines the choice of translation method and strategy” (2007: 1), which she calls the “functionality” principle, and which could be further interpreted as “the means justifies the end” (2007: 2). In her article “Function plus Loyalty: Ethics in Professional Translation” (2007) Nord attempts to surpass that criticism, and practically set “an end to the otherwise unlimited range of possible skopoi for the translation of one particular source text” (*ibid*), when she argues that the functional translational approach should be complemented by the “loyalty” principle. The latter describes her personal view on the role of the translator towards both the ST and culture and the TT and culture. According to it:

translators, in their role as mediators between two cultures, have a special responsibility, both with regard to their partners [...], and towards themselves, precisely in those cases, where there are different views as to what a “good” translation is or should be. (2007: 3)

By being loyal, however, translators are not expected to be faithful to the source text and the target text, but rather respect “the intentions and expectations of all the partners in the communicative interaction called translation” (*ibid*). In other words, Nord claims that there is no right or wrong approach as long as the translators explain and justify their translation choices. She further argues that “mediation [between the two cultures] can never mean the imposition of the concept of one culture to the members of the other” (2007: 3), thus, not only highlighting the communicative-functional aspect of translation, but also bringing forward the

implications of cultural studies in translation, as well as the role of translator as a mediator in-between (further discussed in 4.6.3).

Most importantly, however – in the context of this chapter – Nord’s views, as well as the previously discussed approaches, provide the L2 teaching field with a better insight on what translation as a decision-making process entails. The dynamic and flexible relationship between the translator, the parties involved in the translation process and the communicative aim (or *skopos*) of the translation task highlight a different concept of translation than the one currently prevailing in the L2 teaching classroom, restricting its visibility. The thesis ultimately believes, that the above discussed theories do not constitute a defining line between translation as a profession and mediation as a non-profession act. Conversely, they relate to the act of translating in general, either in a professional or non-professional scenario, with mediation taking place in both scenarios.

#### **4.6.3 Translation from the perspective of intercultural mediation**

Moving to the third type of criticism of the relationship between translation and mediation, as this has been interpreted within the L2 teaching context, it seems to closely relate to the aspect of culture. More specifically, based on previously analysed arguments in the chapter, the notion of culture appears to be deeply interwoven with the concept of mediation, but not necessarily to form a part of the concept of translation. The CEFR has tried to establish the links between intercultural competence and cross-lingual mediation, whereas the CV appears to have upgraded this relationship, by insisting on a view of mediation from both an intra- and an interlingual aspect. As already mentioned earlier (in 4.6.2), learners, teachers and professionals playing currently the role of a mediator in communication, are not simply expected to assist with overcoming the problems arisen from different languages, but are also expected to intervene and resolve problems and conflicts due to misunderstandings within the same language, be this the L1 or the L2. Although intralingual mediation is undoubtedly associated with cultural mediation, interlingual mediation seems to be in a more “vulnerable” position, mainly due to its close association to translation. This assumption is based on various discussed interpretations, that interlingual mediation in the CEFR resembles translation. This has prompted criticsers to convey their understanding of translation as a mere practice of language transfer, constrained by the challenge of establishing linguistic equivalence, a concept which they consider to be different to interlingual mediation. Taking into account such severe criticism and expressing their own concerns about it, Pym et al. provide an answer to Zarate et al.’s exclusion of translation as part of the cultural mediation concept. They argue that:

Not by chance, this extremely reductive view of translation comes in a 251-page report that includes no bibliographical reference to Translation Studies of any kind – the opinion that translation is a simple, neutral, technical, culture-free activity is based on no more than assumption and a lack of interdisciplinarity. (Pym et al. 2013: 29)

Pym et al.'s counter-criticism is profoundly entrenched on a long-established research within TS, considering the bidirectional relationship between culture and translation. Christiane Nord has not been the first scholar to acknowledge translation as intercultural mediation based on the view that “it is the task of a translator to mediate between the two cultures” (2007: 3). In recent decades, a number of academics have offered their views on the question of whether and under which circumstances a translator should assume the role of a language and cultural mediator, assuming effectively the significance of the “cultural” aspect in the process of translating. However, the denigration of linguistic models and linguistically-oriented approaches since the 1980s, followed by a shift towards the culturally-oriented ones, has also provoked some criticism, with Manfredi (2008) maintaining that “taking account of culture does not necessarily mean having to dismiss any kind of linguistic approach to translation” (cited in El-dali 2011: 37). Robinson (2005) remarks that translators were always aware of the problems and difficulties posed by cultural differences (at least since ancient Rome), and “long before theorists articulate them” (cited in El-dali 2011: 37). He is joined by House's critique, that since language and culture are inextricably connected, “we can tackle translation from both a linguistic and cultural perspective” (2002: 93). This leads to the view that linguistically-oriented and culturally-oriented approaches to translation “are not necessarily mutually exclusive alternatives” (Manfredi 2007, cited in El-dali 2011: 37). On the contrary, as Buhrig et al. (2009) stress, “intercultural misunderstanding can be regarded as simply a failure to realize functional equivalence” (Buhrig, House & ten Thije 2009: 1). Therefore, calls for a perhaps more “equal” or balanced approach to translation have not diminished the powerful effects cultural studies represented – and still do – on the development of the discipline.

In fact, referring to Cultural Studies and its close association with the discipline of TS, Pym describes it as “[a] diffuse set of academic studies that adopt a critical and theorizing approach to cultural phenomena in general, emphasizing heterogeneity, hybridity, and the critique power” (2014: 144). Next to Cultural Studies, and the cultural turn, Pym lists translation culture, first as it has been used by the Gottingen group to “describe the cultural norms governing translations within a target system” (2014: 143), and then translation culture,

defined by Erich Prunc as a “variable set of norms, conventions and expectations which frame the behaviour of all interactants in the field of translation” (Prunc 2000: 59, cited in Pym 2014: 144). Furthermore, the concept of cultural translation brings a more compelling idea, specifically into the discussion of translation as language mediation. It is a term which according to Buden and Nowotny (2009) is currently being used within a range of disciplines, including TS, and its precise use and impact remain unclear and controversial (2009: 196).

Pym seems to understand cultural translation as a fluid process where “there is no start text and usually no fixed target text [and] [t]he focus is on cultural processes rather than products” (Pym 2014: 138). The concept is close to what Simon (2006) described as “writing that is inspired by the encounter with other tongues, including the effects of creative interference”, referring to translation (2006, cited in Gentzler 2017: 6). The origins stem first from Benjamin’s idea (1923/1992) – analysed in his essay “The Task of Translator” (1923/1992) – that neither the original nor the translation are “fixed and enduring categories. They do not have an essential quality and are constantly transformed in space and time” (Buden & Nowotny 2009: 200). Benjamin’s enthusiastic critique of an essential origin was later followed by postcolonial theorist Bhabha (1994/2004), and “the need to think about culture and cultural relations beyond the essentialist notion of unique cultural identities and communities originating within these identities” (ibid). He rejects multiculturalist ideology and the concept of inter-cultural translation – or else the concept of cultural translation within multiculturalism (Miscovic 2002) – as one of the main reasons causing cultural diversity (Buden and Nowotny 2009: 201).

Bhabha proposes instead the concept of the “third space” in translation, resembling Byram’s notion of “critical cultural awareness” (1997) and Kramersch’s idea of “third space” (1993/2009) which are currently adopted in L2 teaching to support an elaborative view of social mediation (cited in Piccardo and North 2016: 10). Kramersch understands “third space” as a “heterogeneous, indeed contradictory and ambivalent space in which third perspectives can grow in the margins of dominant ways of seeing” (2009, cited ibid). The idea has inspired Zarate et al.’s (2003) view of mediation as “instilling specific dynamics into third areas as alternatives to linguistic and cultural confrontation. In this plural area difference is pinpointed, negotiated and adapted” (Piccardo and North 2016: 10). Nevertheless, the notion of culture as a non-fixed entity and as “an individual’s subject position that changes according to the situation and to the way he/she chooses to belong rather than to the place she belongs” (Kramersch 2009: 245) can similarly support the notion of cultural translation. Bhabha conceptualises his “third space” as a space for hybridity, a working space between polarities

and dichotomies, where the aim is not reaching definite answers towards side one or another, but the “idea of negotiation or cultural translation, which he [Bhabha] believes to be in itself politically subversive” (ibid). As Pym further explains, this conceptualisation of cultural translation moves beyond “the hermeneutics of texts” to a “way of talking about the world” (2014: 142), since translation accumulates a wider sense than the texts described as translations. More importantly, this view of translation comes “from the perspective of a (figurative) translator, not translations” (ibid). In tune with skopos theory, cultural translation positions the translator in the space between at least two languages and cultures, which effectively grants them the role of a language mediator. Moving down this line of thought, both translation, and the translator as a mediator, could possibly affect cultures themselves, by opening them to other cultures. In other words, as Pym (2014) points out, Bhabha’s cultural translation does not imply that translations are hybrid, but “locates a translatory discourse that enacts hybridity” (2014: 142–143), therefore possibly justifying a new paradigm in TS.

In fact, Pym (2010), alongside Trivedi (2007), have criticised an emphasis on the idea of hybridity in cultural translation. Opting for a more balanced approach in TS, the latter cautions that the utopian potential of hybridity can drive scholars away from the study of literary translation (Conway 2012: 270). He warns that “if literary translation is allowed to wither away in the age of cultural translation, we shall sooner than later end up with a wholly translated, monolingual, monocultural, monolithic world” (Trivedi 2007: 286). Kyle Conway (2012) cites this criticism in the context of a Translation Studies forum discussing critical approaches to cultural translation, in which Pym refused to take part, attacking Buden and Nowotny for their inability to “break ‘cultural translation’ down in terms of appropriate distinctions” (Pym 2010, cited in Conway 2012: 270–271). Without adopting a particular side, Conway sees the ambiguity surrounding the object of cultural translation as the result of “a frequently messy collection of ideas” (2012: 264). His own critical approach entails an analysis of the six modes of cultural translation that come from pairing meanings of culture with translation as rewriting and translation as transposition. As he admits, the distinctions between the modes are not clear-cut, thus, suggesting that the different conceptions are viewed as complementary tools. Moreover, he suggests that cultural translation is “not so simple as utopian notions of it might suggest” (2012: 17), urging the need to acknowledge the potentials and limitations of its applicability (2012: 15).

Katan (2012), in a similar line of thought to Conway, claims that the numerous cultural approaches to translation derive from the numerous definitions of the notions of “culture” and “translation”. Taking the idea of difference as the common denominator of the two notions of

“culture” and “translation”, he distinguishes the different approaches to cultural translation by how translation should manage difference between self and other. In his own simple words, “translating from cultures” implies explanation of the differences, “translating for cultures” entails the dilemma of domestication vs. foreignisation. A third, final approach, which is “translating between cultures”, “gauges the likely tolerance for difference and attempts to mediate or reconcile differences, creating an interspace”.

Next to the concept of cultural translation, other theorists have also expanded on the notion of a translator being in-between languages and cultures. Brodzki (2007) argued that “translation is no longer seen to involve only narrowly circumscribed technical procedures of specialized or local interest, but rather to underwrite all cultural transactions” (Brodzki 2007, cited in Bassnet 2012: 6). Chesterman (2006) also rejects the dichotomy between linguistic and cultural studies, and argues for the mediating role of the translator. Along the same lines, Pym queries Schleiermacher’s famous conclusion that the translator either brings the text to the reader (domestication) or the reader to the text (foreignizing), calling this view a basic “binarism” which has always divided translation theory (cited in Chesterman 1997: 55). Chesterman (1997) takes as his point of reference Aristotle’s law of the excluded middle, which, as he critically points out, has presumably influenced arguments about avoiding the L1 in the L2 classroom, and also about the alleged impossibility of translation. Throughout history, according to Chesterman, “translators have been living proof of the middle, that Aristotle excluded” (1997: 54).

They have been people living astride cultures and languages, refusing to be categorised, imprisoned, within just one. They have been people of “both-and”, not those of “either-or”. They have lived and worked on the borders, on the peripheries, with loyalties on both sides. (1997: 54)

Chesterman’s insight that translators, by their very existence, occupy a middle space between Aristotle and postmodernism, they live between and they rewrite and mediate between languages and cultures, highlights the ethical aspects of such communication – across linguistic or cultural boundaries. Pym (2000) is also inspired by that, when he argues that the goal of cross-cultural communication is the mutual benefit deriving from it, thus, the ethical goal of translation is to further intercultural cooperation between parties who are “other” to each other (Chesterman 2001: 141). An ethical translator’s primary loyalty, in his view, is to the translator’s profession, situated in an intercultural space, and hence to the whole system that

makes cross-cultural communication possible, rather than to source text or culture, or to target readers or culture. So, from the point of view of communication, the ethical translator, according to Pym, is “a mediator working to achieve cross-cultural understanding of each other” (cited in Chesterman 2001: 141). Pym’s proposals for an ethics of translation built upon the concept of “mediation” align with Federici’s belief on mediation as a title, or a “metaphor for the translator’s activity today” (2007: 4) who also underlines that translators must be very skilled to handle the discrepancy between languages and cultures. Bassnet (1999) has also utilised

the metaphor of translation as a bridge between two linguistic and cultural contexts in order to envision translation as an act of mediation. Metaphors of hybridity and territorial crossing have long depicted the complex work of the translator as “someone who occupies the liminal space in between cultures” (Bassnet 1999), or works in a “contact zone” (Simon 1996). (Federici 2007: 5)

Similarly, Federici cites Dingwaney and Maier (1995) whose ethnographical definition of “transculturation” has been utilised “to define the space of colonial encounters and interactions, and to problematise the translation of intercultural elements” (2007: 5). Wolf (1995) has also used the term “intercultural mediator”, drawing on the parallel tasks of translators and ethnographers, whose “role is growing increasingly important” as they are practically the “first readers” of the other culture as it is presented in the foreign culture/language text (Wolf 1995: 128). Castro Paniagua (2000) also views the translator as an ethnographer, whose “responsibility is to interpret correctly the semantic information and the inherent cultural codes” (Martinez-Sierra 2010: 120). In order to be successful, they “need to have a deep knowledge of the cultural frames [they] will be handling”, underlying the reason why, together with their bilingual ability, a bicultural vision is crucial to the translator (ibid).

On the same line of thought, Hatim and Mason (1990) suggest that “the notion of mediation is a useful way of looking at translator’s decisions regarding the transfer of intertextual reference” (1990: 128), arguing for two specific ways in which a translator is a mediator – bi-cultural vision and critical reader:

The translator is first and foremost a mediator between two parties for whom mutual communication might otherwise be problematic and this is true of the translator of

patents, contracts, verse or fiction just as much as it is of the simultaneous interpreter, who can be seen to be mediating in a very direct way. (1990: 223–224)

Moreover, analysing the role of the translator as a cultural mediator, Santamaria (2001a) proposes that “when the references to be translated do not exist in the target culture, the translator must provide them with some symbolic value” (Martínez-Sierra 2010: 120), whereas Neubert and Shreve (1992) had already suggested that translations should serve as “knowledge breakers between the members of disjunct communities” (1992: 54).

Katan (2004), who also discusses the role of translator as a mediator, argues that both translators and interpreters will have to be fluent in cross-cultural communication, otherwise, “that role will be given to the writing consultant, and the translator may well truly become a technical word copier” (2004: 22). His argument seems to reflect on Toury’s beliefs that “being a translator cannot be reduced to the mere generation of utterances which could be considered ‘translations’ within any of these disciplines” (2000: 198), referring to disciplines such as Linguistics, Text-Linguistics, Contrastive Textology, Pragmatics – and evidently the field of L2 teaching as well. Toury continues that “translation activities should rather be regarded as having cultural significance”, and concludes that “‘translatorship’ amounts first and foremost to being able to play a social role” (ibid), an apparently different view of the role of translator than the one currently assumed within the L2 teaching. In a similar sense, translation has been also described as a “creative, human activity [which] is at the heart of languaging and being cultural” (Phipps and Gonzalez 2004: 149). The view underlines not only the significance of translation as an act of inter-cultural communication, but also its possible performance amongst non-professional bi-/plurilinguals who can nevertheless act as cultural mediators.

It must be also pointed out that the term “cultural mediator”, first introduced in Stephen Bochner’s book *The Mediating Person and Cultural Identity* (1981) does not necessarily and/or exclusively apply to translators/interpreters. Taft (1981), in his contribution to Bochner’s volume on the subject, defines the role as follows:

A cultural mediator is a person who facilitates communication, understanding, and action between persons or groups who differ with respect to language and culture. The role of the mediator is performed by interpreting the expressions, intentions, perceptions, and expectations of each cultural group to the other, that is by establishing and balancing the communication between them. In order to serve as a link in this sense,



the mediator must be able to participate to some extent in both cultures. Thus a mediator must be to a certain extent bicultural. (1981: 53)

According to Taft, a mediator must possess the following competencies in both cultures: knowledge about society; communication skills; technical skills; and social skills (1981: 73), and “in order to play the role of mediator an individual has to be flexible in switching his cultural orientation” (1981: 53). In his own question, whether a mediator is a translator, Taft answers that “translating is one of the skills, but that a mediator is more than a translator” (1981: 58).

It would appear that the key in this debate lies in the interpretation of these last words. Taft firstly reaffirms the relationship between cultural mediation and translation, by clearly stating that the latter is a definite component of the mediating process. He then takes the issue one step further, and argues that a mediator is more than a translator, a point that has also been argued by the opponents of translation’s link to mediation in L2 teaching. In fact, Stathopoulou who considers translation and mediation to be dissimilar, agrees that “translators are allowed to make some cultural adaptation to the sentence level” (Anastasiadou 2017: 177). However, Taft does not seem to imply that a mediator and a translator are two separate roles, but rather that a cultural mediator is, or could be a translator operating from a cultural communicative perspective. His point stretches, further, the importance and necessity of changing the spectrum from which the role of translator is considered, especially in the L2 teaching context.

Stathopoulou, who agrees in her book that the terms of translation and mediation are often being used interchangeably in the existing literature of Translation Studies, opposes this view. In fact, she regards this as the reason why “[i]mportant as mediation may be in the CEFR (2001), it is considered as synonymous to translation” (Anastasiadou 2017: 177) in the L2 teaching field. Ironically, her opposition, instead of closing the door to the TS, it may open it wide and prompt a further exploration of what “synonymous” could mean in the TS. Making a critical observation at this point, the thesis maintains that in order to determine whether the two terms are opposite or synonymous, one should first define what is being compared. From that point of view, Stathopoulou could be right. If the L2 teaching, based on the CEFR’S interpretations, understands mediation as a non-professional activity with a cultural and social character, and translation as a mostly professional activity, then the two of them are opposite. If the L2 teaching understands recently mediation as a non-professional activity, with a pedagogical, cultural, social and linguistic character, and translation as an everyday activity which does not require professional standards, then the two terms are not opposite but they

could be quite different. What the thesis, however, questions, is the reason why these particular perspectives has been adopted in the L2 teaching, when the TS admittedly holds a different one. It focuses on and analyses the relationship between mediation and translation primarily as a concept and a process, without necessarily specifying a professional or non-professional context, drawing a different – and perhaps slightly fairer – comparison.

In a further attempt, hence, to comprehend in what ways “synonymous” is interpreted in the TS, Katan defines intercultural mediation as “a form of translatorial intervention which takes account of the impact of cultural distance when translating or interpreting. The aim is to improve access, and involves ‘re-writing’ [...] ‘recreating’ or ‘transcreating’” (2013: 84), hinting also at translation as an act of creativity. Liddicoat (2016), who “interrogates the idea of mediation as it applies to translation”, maintains that intercultural mediation is

not only an interpersonal activity in which the meanings that translators see in the text are rearticulated into another language for another audience but that it is also an intrapersonal activity, as translators make sense of meanings for themselves. Thus translators mediate for themselves as well as for others, and these processes together are central to the act of translating. (Liddicoat 2016)

Liddicoat, further, sharply comments, that in order for translation to be viewed as an act of intercultural communication, both translation and the translator’s work need to be understood in “more elaborated ways” than simply re-linguaging of texts and rewriting from one language to another. As he point out, “in emphasizing intercultural communication as an element of translator’s work, however, the act of mediation has sometimes been conceptualised not as an activity *inherent* in translation but as something *additional*” (ibid, my emphasis). His observation is crucial, as it seems to better reflect on the way translation is situated towards mediation in the L2 teaching. In order to exemplify what he means, Liddicoat cites, next, Clouet (2008), who argues that:

[I]t is the translator and the interpreter’s role to reformulate a message, to communicate ideas and information from one cultural context to another without altering what is expressed in the original text or speech through the language of the writer or speaker. This is the main reason why translators and interpreters *actually mediate rather than merely translate*, as their task is to facilitate the process of intercultural communication. (cited in Liddicoat 2016, emphasis on the original)

Interestingly, whilst one could infer a statement of confirmation regarding the role of translator as a mediator, Liddicoat does not extract this from the above. Conversely, he stresses it as a reason for creating “a dichotomy between translation, which presumably in this context is a linguistic act of rewording, and mediation, which is a culturally based action of meaning making” (ibid). A first remark to be made, at this point, is that identifying the existence of a dichotomisation and considering it to be “potentially problematic” (ibid), echoes the discussion that has taken place thus far in this chapter, regarding the relationship between translation and mediation in the L2 teaching. A second interesting remark is that this particular view of dichotomisation is developed from the perspective of TS this time, and not from the L2 teaching’s. Effectively, that could prove Stathopoulou partly wrong; even within the TS, translation and mediation do not always appear to be considered as “synonymous”. However, it is vital to acknowledge the critical voices coming from inside the discipline, condemning this dichotomy and arguing for this conceptualisation. One such voice is Katan (2004) who maintains that:

rather than separating mediation from translation, or seeing it as some additional activity beyond translation *strictu sensu*, it is much more important to see mediation as a constitutive element of the meaning-making process in which the translator makes sense of meanings and them to be understood by others. (cited in Liddicoat 2016).

Another critical voice supporting a different conceptualisation between translation and mediation, comes from Pym (2014). Pym’s astonishing observation on the historical relationship between translation and mediation provides both fields (namely translation and L2 teaching) with a rather compelling argument. As he pinpoints, from 1940 and onwards:

the term *Sprachmittler* (language mediator) has been used with reference to translation and interpreting, and the concept of *Sprachmittlung* (language mediation) was then used as a general term for crosslingual communication in the Leipzig school of Translation Studies in the 1970s (cf. Kade 1968, 1977), as a superordinate that explicitly included translation and interpreting (which were grouped together as Translation, as a German term). (2014: 193)

Indeed, as Valero Garcés and Martin (2008) also observed, it was Kade (1968) who used the term *Sprachmittlung* ('language mediation', or linguistic mediation) "as the most comprehensive designation of his object of study, and defined translation and interpreting as the principal conceptual subdivisions thereof. For either form of translational activity, this foregrounds 'linguistic mediation' as a paraphrase of almost definitional force" (2008: 11). As they further explain, the "broadening of the concept of translation to include the cultural dimension", as well as the "widening of the scope of translation studies" (ibid) led to the safe assumption that the "association between 'translation' and 'culture' is at least as strong as that between 'translation' and 'mediation' (and by default, 'language')" (2008: 12). Interestingly enough, Valero Garcés and Martin point that the term *Sprachmittler* is "in fact a twentieth-century neologism" which "was proposed in 1940 by the head of the translators and interpreters association in the German Reich as a catch-all term for what in English might be called 'professional linguists'" (2008: 17). The term was later introduced in East Germany by Kade, "despite its origins in the Nazi era" (ibid), who used it to "denote the activity as such, or rather, any concrete activity involving mediation between languages" (ibid).

It was only in the 1980s when, as Pym further observes, the term "mediation" became synonymous with any act of interlingual communication, whereas "translation" and "interpreting" were construed as specific forms of mediation, constrained by equivalence. As he explains, "this fact coincided with a slight diversion of the use of "mediation" within the field of research on bilingualism" (Pym 2014: 193). Knapp and Knapp-Potthoff (1986) proposed the term *Sprachmitteln* ('linguistic mediating') to describe interlingual communicative acts of interpreting between lay bilinguals, as well as acts of "natural translation" (Harris 1977). According to Valero Garcés and Martin (2008), Knapp-Potthoff and Knapp (1986) defined *Sprachmittler* in contradistinction to professional interpreting, where the interpreter is supposedly invisible [...] and can be considered 'a non-party in the interaction' (cited in Valero Garcés and Martin 2008: 17). Knapp-Potthoff and Knapp acknowledge that a "categorical distinction is difficult to maintain", whereas "mediation [...] cannot be considered an exclusive domain of non-professional interpreting, not even when comparing untrained bilinguals and conference interpreters" (2008: 17–18). Therefore, Knapp-Potthoff and Knapp (1986) regard the role of mediator as "located somewhere on a continuum between that of a mere medium of transmission and that of a true third party" (cited in Valero Garcés and Martin 2008: 18). Valero Garcés and Martin (2008) apply the same notion on a professional dialogue interpreter, concluding that the "distinction between a (non-professional) *Sprachmittler* and a

(professional) interpreter, at least with regard to the ‘defining feature’ of the mediating function, proves to be of limited use” (2008: 19).

That leads Pym to the conclusion, that whereas translation has become “virtually synonymous with ‘mediation’ in German-language Translation Studies” (2014: 193), the language-learning experts clearly prefer the term “mediation” these days (2014: 193), not only in the German but in other language teaching settings around Europe, as previously discussed. His conclusion explains why Stathopoulou would earlier argue that mediation is considered synonymous to translation in TS; however, it does not explain why it is not synonymous to translation in the L2 teaching. Pym’s comments sum up a rather paradoxical situation, which, based on the above, is prompted by the inconsistent use of the terms “translation” and “mediation” in the educational language context. It may also have been sustained by “the teachers’ and policy makers’ lack of awareness regarding the development of the discipline of translation studies for the past thirty years” (Pym 2014: 192).

Whereas Pym underlines the gap between the two fields and the need for an interdisciplinary approach, Pérez-González and Susam-Saraeva (2012) hint towards a slightly different direction, looking at possible explanations exclusively from the perspective of TS. As they argue, “the co-existence of trained and untrained *professional translators and interpreters* has tended to be regarded by translation scholars as a disruptive source of tension” (2012: 151, emphasis on the original). However, they believe that it is:

*non-professional translators and interpreters*, i.e. individuals not only without formal training in linguistic mediation but also working for free, who have always represented the biggest threat to labour market structures, as well as to the identity and livelihood of translation professionals. (2012: 151, emphasis on the original)

Nevertheless, Pérez-González and Susam-Saraeva do not adopt the dichotomisation between mediators and translators as a solution to the problem. Instead, they start their analysis by citing Pym (2000) on the significant role non-professional translators have played in facilitating economic, commercial, cultural and religious exchanges throughout history (2012: 151). They, next, set out to explore the widening scope of non-professional translation and interpreting in today’s post-industrial, informational society, which includes, amongst others:

Consolidation of new paradigms of linguistic, cultural and religious mediation in new sites of cross-cultural contact and interaction – resulting from voluntary migration

flows as well as the involuntary displacement and resettlement of population affected by armed conflict or humanitarian tragedies. (2012: 152)

However, what the thesis considers to be most intriguing is the implications this reconceptualization of non-professional translation could have for the discipline of TS. Pérez-González and Susam-Saraeva explicitly oppose the general understanding and presentation of the discipline as largely concerned with professional translation. On the contrary, they picture TS as a “potentially much larger conceptual and discursive area” (2012: 157). Moreover, their understanding of non-professional translation as “translation in a wider context” (ibid), essentially echoes this thesis’ sentiment. In this wider context, “professional translation is an exception”, and becomes “merely one sub-type of translation, rather than the norm-setting, prototypical form” (ibid). Referring, subsequently, to the role of non-professional translators vis-à-vis professionals, the authors describe the first ones as “more prepared to ‘innovate’, play around with the material in hand, [and] retell it in a way that is likely to be more interesting and intelligible for the audience” (2012: 158). This notion of non-professional practices which, in fact, appears to be quite old, “dat[ing] back to the origins of the human communication” (Antonini et al. 2017: 2), can also challenge contemporary arguments on mediation and translation in the L2 teaching. In other words, defining non-professional translators – or translators in general – in TS by “their sense of initiative, authority, and agency in reformulating the material as part of a clear project that they share with the audience” (ibid), brings them a lot closer to the definition of language mediators in the L2 teaching, than it is currently assumed.

The above views support the gradually establishing notion of “Non-professional Interpreting and Translation” (NPIT) (Antonini et al. 2017). According to the editors of the book *Non-professional Interpreting and Translation: State of the Art and Future of an Emerging Field of Research* (Antonini et al. 2017)<sup>12</sup>, TS “have long strived to achieve the academic recognition and independent standing that they enjoy today [...]” (ibid, 2). However, “the largely hidden world of non-professionalism remained [...] under-researched or even avoided” and was “long considered ‘the poor relative’ of the TS” (ibid, 2). The editors believe that phenomena such as globalisation and the increased need for communication across linguistic and cultural barriers have urged a number of academic studies to “shed light on a

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<sup>12</sup> The book is based mostly, but not exclusively, on papers presented originally in the two conferences NPIT1 (2012) and NPIT2 (2014) (Antonini et al. 2017: 3).

variety of largely *invisible*, yet widespread, NPIT practices” [my emphasis] (Antonini et al. 2017: 1).

In consideration of the above, taking note of the relationship between non-professional translation and mediation in the context of L2 teaching, as in the case of the CV, could be only reviewed as a positive development in the L2 education, and in line with current and emerging trends in the discipline of TS. On the other hand, the thesis understands that framing mediation as a superior concept which includes, but should not be reduced to non-professional translation, enhances an already perceived dichotomisation between mediation and (non-)translation and diminishes translation’s wider visibility in the L2 education. It is further understood, that the recent attempt to clarify the matter by explicitly distinguishing between intra- and interlingual mediation may not be adequate in this context. Notwithstanding the significance of intralingual mediation, the dichotomy remains between translation and interlingual/intercultural mediation. To that end, the thesis, ideally, envisages an alternative hierarchy of the terms. It is one that places translation as a wider context at the top of the pyramid in the L2 teaching and assumes that concepts such as non-professional translation, translation for other learning contexts, or translation in the language teaching have an equally significant role to play in this plurilingual teaching context. Without comparing them – or proposing a new one – the thesis, lastly, identifies that what all these conceptualisations have in common is that they all explicitly illuminate *translation* in the post-monolingual education as an activity of interlingual and intercultural mediation.

## Conclusion

This thesis has looked at the relationship between translation and L2 teaching both diachronically and from a contemporary standpoint. Its main focus has been the perceived dispute between these two elements and the different attempts to tackle it historically until the recent present. Discussing the interaction that has taken place between critiques of translation and defendants of its place in the L2 teaching, the thesis holds a rather sceptical stand towards the current optimistic climate, arguing that the dispute has not yet been resolved. Despite the significant steps taken recently in that direction – in terms of shifting monolingual teaching policies – as well as the significant contribution of different research communities supporting translation’s pedagogical value, it appears that accepting the benefits of this relationship is not a unanimous vision. Interestingly enough, the thesis argues that it is more the concept of translation that currently fuels the dispute with the L2 teaching, rather than the actual practice of translation. In other words, whereas the activity of translation continues to be present in the L2 teaching settings, it is not necessarily, or always, recognised as such, remaining, thus, “invisible” to a large degree. This, effectively, shifts the perspective of the debate, from the role of translation in the L2 teaching into the definition of the concept in the L2 teaching field.

This observation, which has been central to the thesis’ overall critical argument, is based on discrepancies that occur in the contemporary L2 teaching context. The latter, mainly due to socio-political changes that have been taking place in the last two decades (globalisation, immigration, cultural and linguistic super-diversity), has started questioning the monolingual orientation that dominated its aims and mentality. It now strives to be regarded as a post-monolingual pedagogical context (Soto and Kharem 2006; Singh 2017) which challenges practices of language domination and cultural hegemony, and finally fosters children’s linguistic rights as human rights (LHR’s) (Phillipson et al. 1995), by actively supporting the role and learning of their L1. In other words, “in a post monolingual society, educational rights begin with linguistic rights. Children have the linguistic human right to learn their home language and it is in the best interest of all at a national/international level to be multilingual” (Soto and Kharem 2006: 21). In this context, the focus has now turned towards the concept of “linguaging” within the post-monolingual education. This has materialised in a series of new teaching approaches and strategies, which all respect, acknowledge and incorporate the use of diverse linguistic backgrounds in the process of L2 teaching. Within this context, advocates of translation have attempted to identify common paths between translation and some of the



recent languaging theories (plurilingualism, translanguaging, translingualism, mediation) (Pym 2014; Laviosa 2014; Corcoll López and González-Davies 2016; Kierman et al 2017). The thesis, however, detects a sense of reluctance towards acceptance of translation as a languaging approach, either on its own or as a part of the other approaches. This negative attitude is projected in the ways translation is often discussed in relation to contemporary language teaching approaches. The failure to acknowledge its presence, as well as the explicit efforts to differentiate between the concept of translation and the current L2 teaching concepts contribute to what the thesis regards as the “invisibility” of translation in the L2 teaching.

Instead of focusing on the role of translation as an L2 teaching tool, the aforementioned assumption has motivated the thesis to consider the topic mainly from the perspective of a relationship which has developed between two separate but relevant elements: translation and L2 teaching. Following the evolution and the impact of each element in this relationship has led to a number of conclusions. The first one to consider is the significant issue of translation’s “invisibility” in the L2 teaching. As Chapters 1 and 2 of the thesis have maintained, this is not only a contemporary issue. It has always been – in different ways – a point of discussion and argument in the history of L2 teaching. Looking at this less explored area of the relationship between translation and L2 teaching, the thesis considers the argument that the only period of time that translation was absent from the L2 teaching was during the Middle Ages – and even back then, a few examples of “pedagogical” use of translation have been recorded (Kelly 1969). Based on existing references in historical bibliographies of L2 teaching, the thesis reveals that, at the beginning of this relationship (around 3000BC) and for thousands of years after, translation enjoyed quite a visible and positive role in the earlier forms of L2 teaching, alongside grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, translation’s natural presence in the L2 teaching gradually developed into a widespread language teaching method – the Grammar-Translation Method. That particular time, which was a turning point in the relationship between translation and L2 teaching, was later considered an official “starting” point in the history of translation with the L2 teaching. According to the thesis, this traditional view (or decision), that the relationship between translation and L2 teaching commences with the development of the Grammar-Translation Method, has had a negative and lasting impact on it: it has significantly and profoundly reduced the degree of translation’s “visibility” in the field of L2 teaching for the centuries to follow.

The Grammar-Translation Method regarded translation and grammar as the two major pillars of the language teaching and learning process. It combined them in ways that did not always take into consideration the learner’s perspective. Ironically, the role of translation in

this method has been explicit and visible. However, the view that translation was overused as a teaching tool in that method has been often overlooked. Even the development of the method is often being analysed out of the historical context which underlined its aims and mentality, and it is mainly recalled for the meaningless constructed sentences and students' frustration with endless lists of vocabulary and grammar rules for memorisation. In spite of the fierce criticism against it, both its core pillars (grammar and translation) survived the collapse of the method, a fact which is, perhaps, a testimony to the partly unfair judgment of the Grammar-Translation Method. In the years that followed, grammar remained one of the most significant components in almost every succeeding language teaching method. Yet, translation appears to have never fully recovered the damage caused by its role in the Grammar-Translation Method. From that point onwards (end of the nineteenth century) it has been forced to keep a lower, less visible profile in the L2 teaching field, with glimpses of its presence evident in alternative, less prominent teaching approaches (Suggestopedia, Community Learning, Natural Approach).

However, as Chapter 2 further discusses, a less visible profile of translation in the L2 teaching field was not always tantamount to a total absence from it. During the course of the twentieth century, monolingualism was almost an unquestionable tenet, dictating the majority of the L2 teaching mentality. Amid these monolingual teaching settings, a part of the academic scholarship and language teaching community, who also still believed in the value of translation, did not share the absolute views of the monolingual principle. Their polemic did not necessarily reject language theories and concepts of the time (Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis, Comprehensible Input Hypothesis) but considered different interpretations of those. Therefore, without denying, for instance, the factor of interference when comparing two languages, or moving from one language to another, it has been argued that translation was a natural part of the learner's thinking process. Hence, it could be positively incorporated in the L2 lesson plans in order to exemplify and highlight the differences between the languages. In a similar way, scholars from the fields of language teaching and translation have taken on a series of argumentative points with regards to use of the L1 and translation as teaching tools. They have debated the reasons and degree of existence of L1 use and translation in the L2 classroom, and argued that the bilingual act of translation is naturally present, even if teachers and policy makers opt to ignore or downplay it.

Following the above discussion of the individual attempts to make translation's role more visible within the L2 teaching, Chapter 3 focused on a historical attempt in the field, that is the launch of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) in 2001. Paradoxically, the document, today considered a milestone in the relationship between

translation and the L2 teaching, makes only a very small reference to the use of translation in the teaching context. Its significance, however, cannot be overstated. The first reason for that relates directly to the introduction of translation and interpreting as L2 teaching activities, and to the fact that the document contains not only implicit but also explicit references and examples of their use. The second reason, however, relates to the prominence of the document in the field of L2 education.

The CEFR was not originally intended as a text in prescriptive language policy, but rather as an attempt to design “a comprehensive reference tool to promote educational transparency and to allow movement between countries for work or study within the European Union” ([www.englishprofile.org](http://www.englishprofile.org)). It has gradually grown to be considered as an international standard for describing and assessing language ability ([www.cambridgeenglish.org](http://www.cambridgeenglish.org)) through the development of illustrative descriptors for a six-level scale. These have been widely acknowledged and practically incorporated by several national curricula, exam boards, institutions, etc. predominately within and outside of the European setting. At the same time, the prominent place that the CEFR has gained in the L2 education field shed light on other less known aspects discussed in the Framework, such as the suggested connection between language mediation and translation. Effectively, the CEFR has been acting as a bridge of communication, bringing policy planners, material developers and language teachers from all levels of education into contact with ideas and views analysed by academics and researchers in academic papers, conferences and individual university departments, addressing a, perhaps, a less wide audience. From this perspective, the CEFR, without being dedicated to the specific aim, appears to have been a more collective and wider-accessed attempt to highlight translation’s “visibility” in the L2 teaching.

Moving forward, in order to discuss more recent attempts that either support or obscure translation’s visibility in the L2 teaching, Chapter 3 has first explored the L2 teaching context in which these attempts (including the CEFR) have been taking place. As previously mentioned, the twentieth century has been dominated by the strict adherence to the monolingual teaching principle. Language theories and approaches were developed on the premise that the second/foreign language should have a superior place in the L2 acquisition process, therefore, promoting the necessity to minimise the role of the L1 – and subsequently of any bilingual activity in the classroom. Attempts to support translation in this context were developed on the basis of the pedagogical benefits derived by its application in the L2 lesson, such as linguistic, language and cultural awareness. This line of thought provided straightforward support for translation, addressing specifically and explicitly its pedagogical

role in the L2 teaching. Even handling translation's "invisible" presence in the learner's way of thinking in the L2 classroom placed translation in a still obvious, albeit peripheral and controversial, place in the L2 teaching field. More recent attempts to tackle the controversy and establish a better and more central place for translation in the L2 teaching differ in respect to their approach. The main reason that has prompted the change is the challenging of monolingualism, not only in terms of a classroom approach but as a more general language policy in the field of L2 education.

As Chapter 3 initially observed, mainstream language teaching methodologies have been regularly connected to language policies in education, which in turn are subject to national language policies. However, in the course of the last two decades, phenomena such as globalisation and immigration have challenged several aspects of the concept of "nation", including the issue of language and communication. Processing the phenomenon of super-diversity and looking for sustainable and effective solutions to the communication difficulties endured by the multilingual individuals in their every-day life, researchers have not only acknowledged the existence of the multilinguals but have been turning to them for answers. In other words, observations of their everyday, common discourse practices and communicative strategies – inside and outside of educational premises – have been recorded for the purpose of developing new language teaching approaches, which can effectively cope with the new challenges. Notwithstanding the subtle differences amongst these approaches, the common denominator has been the practical acknowledgement and use of L1 in the L2 teaching and learning process.

Referring to the urge to incorporate the L1 in the L2 acquisition was another reason why the CEFR was received as an innovative policy document in its time. The Framework's suggestion that every L2 learner should acquire two foreign languages in addition to their L1, has been in line with the concept of plurilingualism, also introduced in the CEFR at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Almost twenty years later, the notion of plurilingualism has been expanding and currently provides the theoretical underpinning for the social right of all learners to use and refer to their linguistic backgrounds. Interestingly enough, the notion of plurilingualism has also been associated with use of translation in the post-monolingual teaching context. Effectively, the form of support for translation in the L2 teaching has been shifting from a straightforward critical engagement with isolated pedagogical arguments to a more holistic, yet often implicit and indirect, defensive approach.

In other words, a reconceptualisation of translation as a bilingual/plurilingual activity indicates that the recent attempts to defend translation in the L2 teaching come via the new

plurilingual education, and the association with the emerging languaging theories. Paradoxically, this line of thought, on the one hand, appears to provide quite a clear and reasonable route of support which places translation directly at the centre of the contemporary L2 teaching mentality. From another perspective, however, it is considered a false and misleading expectation, which heightens translation's "invisibility", or potentially pushes it completely out of the L2 teaching field. Discussing, first, the positive view, the thesis engaged with advocates of translation who have also turned to other research fields, such as bilingualism, sociolinguistics and SLA (Chapter 3), as well as Translation Studies (Chapter 4) in order to currently support use of translation in the L2 teaching. Their attempts are based on establishing links between concepts developed in these fields, contemporary prominent language approaches (plurilingualism, translanguaging, translanguaging, language mediation) and the concept and use of translation, in order to build compelling cases that justify and exemplify the contemporary relationship between translation and L2 teaching.

What might be more difficult to argue, however, is whether these attempts have successfully restored the "visibility" of translation in this relationship. It is, at this point, that the thesis holds a more sceptical stand towards this question, arguing that the place of translation has never been blurrier and clearer at the same time in the L2 teaching context. Examining current views on use of translation in the L2 teaching field, the thesis revealed that the connections between translation and some post-monolingual teaching approaches are not unanimously well received (Chapter 3 and 4). In fact, critical comments and practical reactions to these connections have uncovered, according to the thesis, a much deeper problem than the earlier negative arguments regarding its pedagogical value. More specifically, contemporary opposition to translation is apparently based on a few particular and restricted definitions of the concept, according to which translation is not so much harmful for the L2 teaching, as it is simply different to the conceptualisation and realisation of the bilingual education. As Pym's (2014: 193) view on mediation explicitly criticises, nowadays, language teachers prefer the term "language mediation" to "translation", despite the fact that the terms are often used almost interchangeably in the field of Translation Studies, as the thesis has aimed to demonstrate.

Following on from the above, a redefinition of translation in the L2 teaching in accordance to views of the TS discipline could, indeed, provide alternative perspectives to this topic. As Chapter 4 discussed, for the last fifty years translation has been evolving as a concept, a product and a process, with theories and approaches transforming it from a relatively static concept defined by the notion of "equivalence" to a more hybrid, fluid, dynamic and complex concept, influenced by the impact of other disciplines as well. Echoing Pym, the thesis agrees

that an interdisciplinary approach between TS and L2 Teaching would be a vital solution to their problematic relationship. The idea of a redefinition of pedagogical translation informed by the developments in the TS discipline in order to bridge the gap between them seems to have already started developing in the academic field of translation, with researchers (Lavault, Kramersch, Colina, Pym, G. Cook, Laviosa, Carreres, Gonzalez-Davies, Pintado-Gutiérrez) and conferences (TLT 2017; PluriTAV 2019; The translation turn: current debates on the role of translation in language teaching and learning 2019) devoted to the idea.

Notwithstanding the significance of such recent attempts to (re)connect translation to L2 teaching, the thesis observes that a greater interest in this topic is developing from the translation's point of view rather than the L2 teaching's. It is perhaps understandable why translation academics, researchers and scholars would be mostly interested in, motivated and better equipped to engage with translation theories, adjust them and apply them in their university language departments to mature L2 students who could arguably handle complex notions. Nevertheless, although such attempts appear to be successful for implementing translation in L2 education, they also run the risk of remaining isolated at the higher levels of education. Taking a look, then, at the wider spectrum of L2 education (including primary/secondary level), regardless of age and levels of language competence, the thesis observes a lower case of visibility of translation in the current plurilingual teaching context. At the same time, a focus on translanguaging practices and on mediation appears to monopolise the discussion on interlingual communication approaches.

Ironically, mediation has also been the languaging approach mostly associated with translation. As mentioned earlier, the CEFR in 2001 was the first official educational document to introduce it as an example of practicing mediation. More recently, the Companion Volume in 2018 is the second document, or rather the extension to the CEFR, to explicitly feature translation as an example of mediating activities. Given the prominence of the original Framework, and the long anticipation of its recent addition, Chapter 4 has turned to the way translation has been officially suggested in the L2 teaching. It examines, effectively, its relationship to mediation, based on the analysis of the two documents, on attempts to implement the suggestions in the L2 education, as well as on the critical comments this relationship has received thus far. The thesis analyses the way mediation and translation have been perceived in the L2 teaching field, alongside its own interpretation of this relationship.

Drawing a few positive conclusions, it should be argued that both documents are innovative and “bold” in their approach to introduce an “old-fashioned” activity with negative associations in the L2 education. In that sense, they will always be credited with essentially

and officially moving translation one step closer to the contemporary L2 teaching in the twenty-first century. They will also be credited with introducing mediation in the L2 teaching, a concept which is unanimously regarded as highly valuable for the plurilingual learner and almost imperative in the current super-diverse societies. Another point to remark is that both documents are descriptive in nature. Reading their content from that perspective implies that the suggestions are clearly open to interpretations, critical analysis and adjustments. Notwithstanding the right, in theory, to adopt or reject the CEFR/CV, it is extremely difficult at this point to overpass the magnitude of the documents and to overlook its wide-spread influence in the L2 education.

The only gap that the thesis identifies stems from a combination of the above four factors. It refers to the relationship between the two concepts, as it has been portrayed in the well-established documents and has been interpreted on the outside. As Chapter 4 has discussed in detail, the Framework did never exclude intralingual mediation, nor did it state that interlingual mediation includes only translation. Nevertheless, when it comes to reviewing the original publication of 2001, what seems to have been a *common interpretation* within the L2 teaching field, is that the CEFR has simply introduced interlingual mediation to be practiced via translation/interpreting. Despite the fact that this interpretation has not been entirely accurate, the thesis has observed that it became quite dominant, to the extent that North and Piccardo felt the need to acknowledge this *interpretation* at the beginning of the new CV. What prompted this acknowledgement, as the thesis further observed, was the severe criticism against the initial *interpretation*.

One could, perhaps, assume that, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, when countries and societies had only started to contemplate the size and implications of globalisation, immigration and super-diversity, concepts such as “plurilingual learner” and “mediation skills” were quite fresh, modern and innovative ideas to respond to the emerging educational needs. Translation, however, was not such an idea (yet). Whilst L2 teaching started moving slowly from a monolingual mentality into a post-monolingual one, the majority of it was not apparently ready for abandoning the idea of translation as an old-fashioned, archaist idea, or simply an irrelevant one. The reasons why translation has been considered as different or irrelevant to contemporary languaging approaches, seem to originate, partly, from its association to the old Grammar-Translation method, which maintains an idea of translation as a school word-for-word exercise to teach and test grammar, syntax and lexis. The other part relates, ironically, to the emergence of the discipline of TS, and to the scholars’ attempt to

protect translation as a profession and to build professional standards as well as a working ethos for the translators against the bilingual laymen.

Based on the observed criticism which has argued for a distinction between translation and mediation, the thesis has concluded that the current problematic status of translation in the L2 teaching relates to a definitional ground rather than a pedagogical one. As Chapter 4 has extensively discussed, although the understanding of translation in the L2 teaching has been reflecting the image of a profession, it has not been adequately reflecting an understanding of translation as a non-professional activity. More importantly, it has not been sufficiently engaging with the theories and approaches from the TS discipline that examine the role of equivalence, of communication and of intercultural mediation in translation, on the basis of which this distinction has been articulated.

Almost twenty years after the CEFR's initial interpretation and the restrictive understanding of translation in the L2 teaching, it appears that the new CV is trying to amend both. First, the extended concept of mediation does not indicate languages and directionality, thus, covering explicitly both intra- and interlingual mediation. Secondly, it still includes translation as a mediation activity which does not require professional language competence. Translation remains as one of the few exemptions that the CV specifies as an example of *interlingual* mediation (taking place between different languages, or dialects). The new CV has explicitly highlighted that the wider concept of intra- and interlingual mediation currently incorporated in the L2 teaching should not be reduced to the practice of translation. Considering the latter only as a descriptive suggestion, open to all kinds of interpretation, it does not necessarily carry any negative implications for translation. However, taking into account the powerful influence of the CEFR/CV, and putting it in the current L2 teaching context, what the thesis reads between the lines is an attempt to promote interlingual mediation as a wider concept in the L2 teaching which includes translation as an example.

The thesis however, holds a different view. It does not reject mediation; on the contrary, it understands *intralingual* mediation as a valuable and relevant concept which can be applied in all aspects of L2 teaching, be that reading, listening, speaking, writing, interaction, etc. It further understands *interlingual* and *intercultural* mediation as a concept which is integral in translation, defines its nature and underlines all translation and interpreting activities, whether professional or not. It is a conceptualisation of translation which stems from contemporary theories and approaches within TS. It also supports the theoretical frameworks of several individual attempts and practical suggestions which have been continuously arguing for the role of translation in the L2 teaching. The thesis, finally, concludes that shifting current



interpretations and promoting instead a different conceptualisation in well-established and wide-spread language policy documents (such as the CEFR and the CV), could act as a more official bridge between the L2 teaching and current research on translation from various fields, restoring and reinforcing this way translation's visibility in the post-monolingual education.

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