The why and how of an on-line symposium

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More people than ever are being trained as translators and interpreters. The global expansion of the field since the late 1980s means that there are now some 350 specialized university-level training programs world-wide, plus countless courses given in private institutions and as components of Modern Language programs.

This massive expansion may be a sign of success. Yet it also risks incurring a fragmentation of the field, leading to a situation in which there are so many different scenarios involved that it is difficult to find consensus on the fundamental questions of what should be taught, to whom, by whom, and how.

In January 2000 the Intercultural Studies Group at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili thus organized an on-line symposium on translator training. The main aim of the symposium was to help create some kind of consensus through dialogue on several key issues. The symposium was primarily addressed to practising translator-trainers, although participation was also welcome from linguists, educationalists, translators, interpreters and students.

The basic philosophy behind the symposium was that changing labour markets mean it is no longer sufficient to maintain traditional standards. The focus was thus on the search for innovation rather than the preservation of established orthodoxy.

Unless otherwise stated, the term 'translation' was assumed to cover all forms of translation and interpreting.

The symposium was conducted in the following way:

- A set of basic questions was drawn up, reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of current teaching practice.

- Five translator trainers, with four quite different cultural backgrounds, were invited to respond to those questions in whatever way they wanted. This then gave us five basic 'position papers'. The replies by Roberto Mayoral (Spain) and Daniel Gouadec (France), reproduced below, followed the questions quite closely. The responses from Christiane Nord (Germany), Brian Mossop (Canada), and Don Kiraly (working in Germany, with an American background) focused on more specific points, notably Skopostheorie, responses to technology, and social constructivism.

- Yves Gambier (Finland, with a French background) wrote a general response to the five position papers, locating what he felt were the main issues to be addressed.

- All these texts were made available on the internet, and participants were invited to send e-mail messages on any of the points raised. All messages were circulated to all participants, without checking or mediation (i.e. the base was an unmoderated list). This relatively free structure followed the format of the first On-line Translation Colloquium organized by Seán Golden at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona in 1997. Although the initial documents for the symposium were in English, all languages could be used.

No official translations were supplied, but participants were free to translate for each other (as it happened, only one message was sent in a language other than English, and that message, in Spanish, was read and responded to).

- Messages were received and distributed from 17 to 26 January, in many cases using subject headings that enabled them to be read as referring to each other (thus forming topic-based 'threads'). A total of 605 messages were received over the ten days, giving an average of 60.5 messages per day. This was more than most people were able to read. Participants were nevertheless generally able to follow the threads that were of interest to them, and discussion was for the most part lively without ever becoming heated.

- Given the difficulty of following all the discussions, it was decided to close the list (i.e. stop the open exchanges) for a fortnight or so. During this time, summaries were written of the main threads. Those summaries, reproduced below, were then put on the website. From 9 to 11 February the list was then opened again for a discussion of the summaries, which are reproduced below. There was also brief discussion (25 messages) of a few concluding points and ways in which the symposium could have been improved.

In all, the symposium could be considered to have achieved many of the aims of a large 'live' conference. It also had at least three further advantages: 1) it was entirely free, 2) it reached many people who would otherwise not have been able to attend a conference, and 3) every word of it is publicly available.

Of course, there were also several disadvantages. Many of us still have to learn the dynamics of virtual communication, particularly with respect to the art of writing short messages under very specific heads (i.e. using the thread system), and the art of copious deletion. It was thus sometimes difficult to keep up with what was being said, and not always easy to bear in mind the specific context within which a participate was speaking. Further, many of the people who could most benefit from such discussions either do not have access to the internet or are reluctant to use electronic resources in this way.

It thus seems fairly clear that such on-line events should be used to complement face-to-face contact (live conferences will not become things of the past) and should extend into more conventional media, where different kinds of participants can be reached. Such are the reasons why the following paper-based version has been prepared.

The organizers extend their sincere thanks to the many people who participated in the symposium, especially the authors of the position papers and the summaries. The fact that co-operation was possible between so many people in so many different places and situations is surely the best possible proof that technology and teamwork can work together, and that the result may even be educational.

Anyone interested in organizing further events of this kind is invited to contact Anthony Pym. The 330 participants are currently on a dormant list that can be activated, like a volcano, in the future.

Notes on Translator-Training
(replies to a questionnaire)

Roberto Mayoral
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Who should be trained?

I believe universities should deal with all the demands our societies associate with the training of translators and interpreters. This concerns:

- Students coming straight from secondary school
- Students coming from first-cycle training (usually the first two years of university) in another program
- Students coming from second-cycle training (usually the second two or three years of university) in another program
- Self-taught professionals who are looking for a university qualification
- University graduates and professionals who are looking for further specialized training
- University graduates undertaking a doctorate in translation and interpreting.

Spain currently has a wide range of courses and programs:

- The undergraduate degree program (licenciaturas) in translation and interpreting
- Bridging mechanisms that allow students to enter the second cycle of the degree program once they have completed a degree in some other area
- Masters and PhD courses
- Independent courses (offered by individual universities and not regulated by the national education authorities).

With respect to the training of translators (rather than interpreters), I believe our efforts should be concentrated on the degree programs and the independent courses that provide specialized training and 'in-service' courses (i.e. for people who are already working).

The Masters programs are designed for students who have completed a first degree in an area other than translation; their function overlaps with that of the 'bridging mechanism' mentioned above.

To make the most of our limited resources, I would reduce the efforts currently put into the Masters programs and concentrate on the degree courses (*licenciatura*).

Not enough attention is currently paid to in-service training. This is one of the main challenges for the future, particularly with respect to distance learning and self-learning programs.

The training of interpreters may be undertaken either within the degree program (concentrated in the second cycle) or in postgraduate certificate or Masters courses. None of these possible locations should be rejected out of hand. The training of interpreting techniques within the degree program is useful to society, although it cannot guarantee sufficient quality for the needs of conference interpreting.

There should really be two distinct degree programs, one in translation and the other in interpreting. The unified degree currently given in Spain, whereby all graduates are qualified as 'translators and interpreters', is misleading with respect to both the expectations of students and the interests of professionals.

I believe that the students we accept into our courses should be those with the most ability, regardless of their capacity to pay fees. However, in Spain, the only students who really have the required levels of competence in foreign languages are the ones who have spent considerable time abroad. This means we find a kind of natural selection working in favour of students from well-off backgrounds, since their families have been able to pay for courses abroad and they thus have the required linguistic competencies.

A certain personal maturity is also required if a student is to become a professional translator (the same could be said of all the liberal professions). This maturity does not come automatically with age. Further, since there is a big difference between the student's personal situation at the beginning and at the end of a four or five-year period of study, I can't see any way that we can really demand such maturity of students when they enter our degree programs.

What markets should we be training for?

The labour market is undergoing change at an exponential rate. Spanish universities are finding it practically impossible to adapt to the new needs.

I believe the most important change is the fact that almost all communication (entertainment, culture, software, publicity, learning materials, and so on) has started to be produced in multimedia forms. This means there are few sectors where the translator can do without basic training in multimedia localization skills (including audio, video and editing).

We should also be training students in 'teletranslation' (translation at a distance), since the professional market has been globalized to the extent that a translator can work for a client in any part of the world. This requires competence in the use of the internet and ability to work in teams across distance.

Spanish training programs have mainly been focused on translation into our home languages (Spanish, Catalan, Galician and Basque). This should now be changed, since clients now require translations into foreign languages and they expect the one professional to work in both directions. We are also seeing a lot of translating from translations, in the sense that a company may translate its product into a pivot language (usually English, French or German) and then have it translated from that version into a wide range of languages.

It is useful for a translator to be highly specialized in a particular field, although training in the general techniques of specialized translation can help people work on texts in fields such as science, technology, law or economics. The professional of the future must be open to all possibilities. We increasingly find 'multi-professional' translators: people are no longer just translators in one of the traditional fields, since they usually carry out at least one additional activity (text production, administration,

sales, quality control, audiovisual production, web-page production, editing, etc.).

Traditional barriers are thus breaking down. This also affects deceptively clear distinctions such as the one between oral interpreting and written translation, since many professionals nowadays require both kinds of skill, even if only on an irregular basis.

Students must be trained for teamwork, sharing translation tasks not only with other translators but also with professionals in other fields (actors, producers, multimedia technicians, editors, etc.).

Community interpreting is a further area in which new approaches are required. The special courses and training programs to be designed should include studies in areas such as social work and legal translation. Sworn translation should also be taught under this rubric.

We should also be integrating training in sign-language interpreting and the production of subtitles for the deaf (courses in these areas are starting in Granada this year). The labour market is promising in these areas, and students with a degree in translation and interpreting are ideal candidates for such courses.

I don't think our current courses are really suited to the training of literary translators. Students interested in this field should probably take a first degree in Modern Languages or Literary Theory and Criticism, and then start their training as translators.

Who should be teaching?

The people teaching should be good teachers, from whatever background. Professional experience as a translator is no guarantee that one is a good teacher. By the same token, it is difficult to imagine how one can teach translation without professional experience as a translator.

In Spain we have nevertheless found it extremely difficult to combine professional activities and teaching responsibilities. We thus generally assume that people gain their professional experience before starting to teach. Personally I feel that the best teachers are likely to be those who have a degree in translation, who have carried out other studies, and who have some professional experience as translators.

How should teachers be trained?

I think the best way to learn how to teach translation is to study the way good teachers teach, and then enrich that with one's own innovations. As things stand at present, our knowledge of translation pedagogy is not sufficiently established, consistent or agreed-upon for it to become the basis for a training program.

Should we train specialized translators and interpreters, or specialists in general cross-cultural communication?

Given the kinds of students that we have and the demands of the market, both these options should be available within the one curriculum. Only some of our students will become professional translators or interpreters, and practically all those that do reach this stage will require skills and competencies that go beyond the field of translation

and interpreting. The necessary skills concern professional activities in the field of general communication, particularly in linguistics.

What kinds of translation should be taught in Modern-Language programs?

Literary translation and translation as a pedagogical exercise within second-language acquisition.

How should translators be qualified?

An official qualification is necessary for sworn translation (*traducción oficial*), but it should not be issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as is currently the case in Spain. It should instead be issued by the Ministry of Education. Of course, the situation would be quite different if we had a recognized institute or society of professional translators (*colegio profesional*).

I do not think there should be any kind of restriction on people carrying out other kinds of translation (e.g. literary or specialized translation), no matter what their (lack of) qualifications.

Are the older training institutions the best ones?

Age is not a factor here. Quality must be sought on a day-to-day basis. A certain amount of experience brings advantages, but there are also advantages involved in being a new institution. The challenge is to combine experience and innovation.

Do we need supra-national organizations?

Relations between training centres may be based on elitism and competition (as might be the case of the CIUTI) or on co-operation. In Spain we have opted for the latter, notably by creating the Conferencia de Centros y Departamentos Universitarios de Traducción del Estado Español (Conference of University-Level Translation Departments and Centres in Spain). This body does not exclude any university or degree program. Its aim is to assist in the setting up of new centres and to act as a lobby, co-ordinating actions with respect to the government. It would be good to have some supranational organization, if and when it could be based on co-operation rather than exclusion.

How many students should be in a translation/interpreting class?

The question doesn't make much sense in the Spanish context, since we really have no choice: our class-groups are extremely large and there is nothing we can do about it. In principle, of course, class sizes should be as small as possible. However, experience tells me that this is not the main factor influencing the success or failure of a learning group. More importance might be attached to factors such as the quality and attitude of the students and the teacher, and the working atmosphere that has been created for the group.

What do you actually do in class?

I basically present the problems to be solved. I look for texts that provide suitable illustrations of the problems. Students present their translations, then we discuss and assess them in class. I also deal with topics in specialized area studies.

What ideas can you suggest for in-class activities?

I believe we should do away with the idea that there is only one optimal translation for each text. We should show that the one source text can be translated in many different ways, and that this is legitimate not only from the academic and professional perspectives but also in view of the translator's creativity.

We should ensure that professional criteria apply in class: cost-effectiveness, speed, respect for the client's brief, and so on.

Students should be asked to revise their translations following the in-class discussions.

We should encourage group-work.

Once we have analyzed a certain kind of text, we can ask students to translate simpler texts of the same type. This should help them build up confidence in their ability to translate prototypical texts. Students may then be asked to do sight translations of 'follow-up' texts.

We should evaluate not only the result of a student's work but the process as well. Assessment should be based not only on binary errors (right vs wrong) but also on non-binary errors (where we say 'right, but...', or 'wrong, but...'). (This idea was first put forward by Anthony Pym in a paper in 1992.)[1]

Our use of the teacher as a model or 'master' translator should be only one of many teaching models.

Solutions should not depend on theoretical principles, but on common sense.

Should we separate theory and practice classes?

Although these classes are currently separated in our curriculum, it is clearly impossible to stop the two sides mixing with each other. I think it is good to have students complete a certain amount of practice before they are introduced to theoretical concepts.

Should interpreting be taught before or after written translations?

After. Our experience in Granada tells us that written translation is the best preparation for the training of interpreters.

Should textbooks be used in class?

I think some readings can be suggested in the practical translation class, but we should not oblige students to apply them. Teaching translation is nowadays too personal an activity for textbooks. Further, there is currently not enough consensus on the nature of theoretical problems, and those problems have not been sufficiently elaborated in ways that can inform all the practical problems. I find that working with other peoples' texts or methods is a real torture.

Of course, the specialized translation classes (in legal or financial translation) require manuals that introduce the required area-study concepts.

With respect to the translation process, it would be good to have clear repertoires of translation strategies.

Should specialized vocabularies and area knowledge be taught in translation programs?

The teaching of such areas cannot be avoided, even if all we do is give a guideline introduction without any attempt to specialize in a given field. Such teaching is necessary even when students are able to attend courses in other university programs (i.e. in the faculty of law or economics), since what is taught in those programs is not always at a level suitable for our students and is not adjusted to the specific needs of translator training.

Can distance-learning techniques be used in the training of translators?

Yes, they can be used. In fact, this is an area that we cannot avoid. We are already using distance-learning techniques, albeit in a limited way, mainly by using the internet to ensure some aspects of our students' training while they are away on exchange programs.

Are students being taught to work with the available electronic tools?

Not enough. But considerable efforts are being made and we are only limited by our lack of resources. In the field of software localization, we are held back by a lack of know-how and outdated information.

Do high attrition rates matter? Where do drop-outs go?

In principle, we try to adjust the number of our graduates to the needs of the market. However, the large class-sizes tolerated by our universities, coupled with the saturation of the professional labour market, suggest that many of our graduates are simply not going to find jobs. This encourages a certain lowering of the standards we require.

The rate of student failure is very high, despite the best efforts of our university administrations. In Spain, students who do not pass a subject normally keep sitting the exams until they reach the maximum number of times a student can sit the one exam, and then they are expelled.

The presence of a number of weaker students affects the operation of our classes (slowing down the learning rate) and can strain relations between teachers and students.

Students who are obliged to drop their studies in one university normally try to take up the same program in a less demanding university. The same thing happens when students fail our entrance exams.

Do teachers talk to each other about what they do in the translation class?

Yes. There is a lot of co-operation and collaboration. At conferences and in journals a great deal of attention is being paid to the teaching of translation and interpreting, and the teaching projects that teachers present in the public exams (*oposiciones*) they have to pass provide a good occasion for the discussion of pedagogical problems.

Are there enough exchanges between the various national models?

I think the EU exchange programs are a tremendous help. They have done much to reduce the differences that once existed between the various national models.

Do different theories of translation determine the way translation is taught?

Not much. I think the teacher's professional experience (or lack of it) as a translator and as a teacher is the main determining factor. Common sense and practical experience prevail over the various theoretical models.

Should we be producing technicians or humanists?

We should be training humanists in the traditional sense of the word, that is, as people who are open to all kinds of knowledge. The omnipresence of computers means that our training must have a technical side, and the need to carry out creative work requires studies in the humanities.

What are the major success areas in current translator-training?

In the case of Granada, the training of translators for software and multimedia localization, and in legal-economic translation.

What are the major shortcomings in current translator-training?

- We are unable to provide the degree of specialization that some market sectors require. Our graduates come out with a lot of academic training, which makes it difficult for them to adjust to work practices in companies.
- The university system makes it very difficult to teach people how to work in groups.
- We do not have enough equipment and our information is outdated.
- Universities are very slow to respond to changes and to adapt to market needs.
- We do not have enough equipment or know-how to carry out applied research.
- The teaching of translation is still too marked by approaches involving comparative linguistics and equivalence theory.

- In the Spanish university system, the translation program is categorized as a degree in the Humanities, which is inexact and institutionally detrimental to our interests. We should come under Communication Studies.

- Some teachers are not ideal.

- Translation studies is approached in terms that are too theoretical and scientistic.

- The lack of resources in our universities means that we are unable to offer sufficient specialization.

- Class-sizes are too large.

- Too small a proportion of our program actually trains students in translation and interpreting.

- Students have too many class-hours and too little time in which to do translations outside of class.

- The contents of our courses are not deduced from the problems of translation but from distinctions that are obsolete or scarcely relevant. This concerns divisions such as those between general and specialized translation, translation into the home or foreign language, and classifications of texts according to their content.

What innovations should be expected?

- Teletranslation
- Work in teams
- Distance learning
- On-going or in-service training
- Internet and intranet
- Generalization of multimedia
- More professional approaches
- Extensive use of technological resources among the translator's tools
- Globalization of the translation market
- Globalization of training
- Saturation of the professional labour market
- Reduction in the number of students
- The need to train multi-professionals

(*Translated from Spanish by Anthony Pym*)

Notes on Translator Training
(replies to a questionnaire)

Daniel Gouadec

Director, Centre de Formation de Traducteurs, terminologues et rédacteurs, Université de Rennes 2, France

What kind of training program should be offered?

Three types of program may be considered:

1. A standard translator program spanning a period of three to five years within a university context

2. A short accelerated program covering a period of just over one year and concerning people either with a highly developed linguistic background (and ability to tackle anything technical in a broad sense) or with a serious technical or specialist background (and tested abilities to cope with anything linguistic in a broad sense)

3. A specialized program for people with a significant amount of practice in translating but with no formal references, no academic degree, and not the kind of money a translator might claim.

At Rennes we currently offer all these programs, which each raise different questions even though some of the answers might be quite similar.

Who should be trained?

The above already addresses the questions of who should be trained. Obviously, if we are to cater for the needs of society at large, we should strive to train qualified translators (better and better qualified translators if not more and more qualified translators), whether we decide they should be linguists or technicians (in the broader sense) at origin. The whole architecture of the program - or at least the emphasis - varies according to the population we enrol, with a common core made up of translator strategies, translating technologies, job-oriented training, and project management. The point is that choice does not apply unless those in charge of the program have a right to choose whom they enrol.

Basically, most of us train students who originally enrolled for language courses in order to become translators. Yet we hope that:

1. They do not work under the illusion that they will all become conference interpreters,

2. Their linguistic competence is just about fair,

3. They chose the translator training program because they actually fancy becoming translators and not because they are running away from the horrors of things such as accounting or some other repellent profession on the other side of applied languages.

One question then remains, though: Do we want to give some kind of a positive answer to the many who have lost their jobs, who fear they might lose their jobs, or who have no idea what kind of a job they might get but have gone through some language-training and technical tuition and have decided that translation is just the thing for them? Most university programs have no choice.

We all know, of course, that we would like to train the best students, preferably mature, with degrees in other disciplines and in languages. That would mean training them to become translators and not 'wasting time' on language courses, reviews of grammar, spelling rules, and so on.

What markets should we be training for?

Whatever the public, there are a variety of markets we could train for:

- the global multilingual publishing and editing market (the big players who hire the top guns with so many skills)
- the translation service or firm
- the market for freelancers (who tend to lose much of their freedom by becoming the virtual employees of as few clients as possible).

These three markets form a collection of niches, organized by domain (e.g. computing, telecommunications, mobile phones) by type of translation (i.e. localization), by type of document (e.g. contracts) and even, today, by type of technical aids (e.g. translation memory management systems). But students reach niches by accident, usually in the course of practicums and work assignments.

What should be avoided is the training of students to become translators on the non-market: namely, the jungle of small jobs, with an infinite variety of subjects, and a daily struggle for life. Basically, that means NOT training them for a specific market and NOT creating a collective image of efficiency and competence for the program and thus for the students who graduate.

How has the labour market changed?

What has changed is that an overwhelming variety of markets exist today (as opposed to 20 years ago). This is reflected in the contents of translator-training programs with courses on legal translation, commercial translation, financial translation, subtitling, multimedia translation, localization, translating using voice recognition systems, etc. The issue seems to be how to offer the students most of the above skills, at least at some decent level of specialization since:

- we do not know what 'niche' they will eventually fit into

- we do know that any of the markets they will fit into require them, one way or other, to actually localize, subtitle, translate, rewrite, revise, and so on.

And that is another point. Today we do not simply have to train people to become translators: we also have to train them so that they can become, in part (within a broader context dominated by translation) or in full (within organizations driven by the bigger markets) terminologists, technical writers (or co-writers), language engineers, and much more.

Who should train translators?

As to who should teach, the answer seems to be: whoever is willing to do so. Training translators (as distinct from teaching translation) and, what is more (or worse), training technical translators does not carry the kind of glamour associated with teaching more 'intellectual' courses and, basically, training teachers of languages. Anyone who writes a thesis on such subjects may not expect to get excessively fast promotion. No wonder there is such a dearth of trained teachers.

The answer to who should train translators is quite straightforward: both professionals with a talent for teaching and teachers with a good knowledge of the job (not a collection of subject matters) that they are supposed to train people for. That answer has one implication: Translators should be trained at university, not simply taught at university and then trained on the job. This is because the university is the only place where people have the time and willingness to insist on proper methodologies and strategies whereas on-the-job activities are much too sensitive to the pressures of time-to-market, productivity, and economic survival. It is essential that anyone entering the job market be properly armed to withstand unreasonable influences.

How should trainers be trained?

Another simple answer to a simple question: Teachers on a translator-training program should spend one month in all three of the following situations:

1. Working in a translation firm (either as a translator or a reviser or a terminologist)
2. Working in an in-house translation service (same as above)
3. Being a freelance professional.

That should be enough for a start. And that should clearly decide on their teaching approaches.

How should a program be structured?

As for the structure and extent of the program, the answer depends on who enrols and what kind of market is the ultimate horizon.

Universities should be allowed to start translator-training programs from year one, with an introduction to professional aspects of translation, and then build up through the second, third, and fourth years. Within the context of universities, that

means the whole system turns into some kind of 'translation school' in the second cycle. It also means provisions must be made to integrate whoever decides to join in from any other university in the same country or abroad, unless there is agreement on standards to be taught at the various levels of university training.

Masters programs are okay for institutions that have a strong reputation and can afford to be choosy - which, incidentally, is on the way out since:

1.   Students tend to stay close to their nest and would rather choose a subject matter that is taught locally rather than a job that you are trained for hundreds of miles away;

2.   There are so many programs that no miracle (short of a pedagogical earthquake) could be expected to produce enough 'good students' for all - which means that everyone will end up with 'less good' students and, in turn, with more complicated programs consuming more time and resources (since more time and energy will have to be spent bringing those students up to linguistic and other standards).

What kinds of translation should be taught in Modern-Language programs?

I have no idea what kind of translation should be taught in Modern-Language programs and I do not care. I think any kind of translation can be taught in any manner in any program that does not purport to put translators or would-be translators on the market.

How should translators be qualified?

I have a rather personal view of how translators should be qualified. They should be qualified:

1.   Through a university exam that actually checks all the abilities and skills that are necessary for all translators in any kind of professional set-up,

2.   Through a public exam set up by the profession (whoever that might be and however it might be done) to make sure that the university exam performs its functions.

What is a good training institution?

I do not know what a good training institution is in a general way. I would say the only yardstick for a student would be the chances of getting a job in line with the real or supposed qualification that goes with the degree. I do not think teachers are entitled to an opinion on what a good training institution is unless they take the students' point of view.

It is nevertheless easier for older institutions to be good if only by virtue of the fact that they normally attract the students with the most potential. But even that is being questioned.

Anyway, any teacher in a translator-training program has to think that the program is at least 'rather good' or 'fairly good'.

Today, I would venture to say that the best training institutions are, or will be, the ones with a lot of technology (students' workbenches by the hundreds, software packages of all kinds, specialist teachers, maintenance crews, etc.), since students' future employment (in services, firms or organizations) and indeed survival (as freelancers) is closely linked to technology.

Supranational organizations?

We probably need a supranational organization of translator trainers more than anything else.

We might also need an organization of students who are undertaking translator-training programs.

How many students?

[Note: all of the following applies to translator training and not to translation classes in a language degree course.] The number of students in a translation class can be:

- Anything up to a hundred if the class is one in which theory or strategy is being taught (since students are then expected to listen and learn),
- As few as possible if the class is about actually translating (I would say about twenty would then be reasonable),
- One or two or at most three if the class is one in which revision is carried out.

The latter is important since:

- Revision is probably the most critical teacher activity when it comes to translation and it should be carried out only with people who have direct stakes in what is being revised (with no one around not being interested)
- there are simple ways to make everyone benefit from the effect of revision without their being physically present if they have not done the job being revised.

Basically, there is no simple answer. One fact remains: there is an optimum number of students for any kind of activity the teacher of translation undertakes or supervises. That optimum number is overridden in any case by the rule that says that anyone who is not going to do the job or who has not done the job should stay out. But the assumption here is, of course, that translation classes are not classes where teachers simply show off how good a teacher they are and not classes where teachers ask the students to say how they translated. I am convinced that a translation program should be modeled on professional practice, with preliminary presentations of QA procedures and strategies.

What is a translation class?

We have two kinds of translation classes:

- The first kind addresses the needs of students who are not yet quite able to tackle translation because they do not know the basics. So those classes address basic skills through a system of progressive sub-types of translations (*traduction signalétique, synoptique, documentaire*).
- The second kind addresses the needs of students who have mastered all basic skills and attend translation classes proper.

Basically, a translation class (in my own practice) spans a full academic year. We set out to make a professional-standard translation of a document of about 200 pages (including graphics, tables, etc.) which is a full-blown document - usually one that includes promotional material, technical data, user directions, etc.

We then have a series of 'classes' on how to carry out the task of translating (our model is a quality assurance model which is made up of 65 steps or so). The full model is presented, explained, and discussed. Those classes take place at fixed periods on the timetable at the rate of six hours per week.

Once the model is okay (that means theoretically accepted and understood) we go on to actually doing the job as a real-life simulation. Which means:

1. We set up a project management system with students having clearly identified responsibilities (there is a project manager, co-ordinators for each area of competence, group leaders, and what we call 'operators').

2. The students tackle the different tasks in QA order. The co-ordinators write out the specifications, the group leaders have their operators do the job according to specifications, check the results, pass them on to the co-ordinators, who check them again before passing them on to the teacher.

3. We move on to the next task after an analysis of the procedures and the results and, naturally enough, a very close quality check on the results.

The teacher checks that the specifications are okay, supervises task execution, can be called on for advice by anyone involved, and does the analyses and the debriefing.

We move on in the same way until the translation is done.

In the course of the different tasks, there are special classes on any of the topics that raise problems for whatever reason. So, for instance, at any point in time, it may prove necessary to give a special lecture on how to cope with 'informants' or what the reviser should strive to do, or even a workshop on how to deal with graphics (even though that has, naturally enough, been taken into account in the presentation of the model but, as all teachers know, what has been understood in theory is not automatically implemented when it comes to actually getting the job done).

At that point, the nature of the class as well as its setting on the timetable are completely dependent on the 'needs' of the students (project manager, co-ordinators, group leaders or translators).

The above model would give anyone lots of ideas for in-class activity and there is no fear of monotony or students' interest lagging.

The answers several questions are already inherent in the model:

- Yes, terminology and area knowledge must be taught in translation programs, at least up to the point where students all know how to deal with the terminology in documents to be translated and how to find the information and knowledge that will help them understand whatever they must translate.

- Yes, students must be taught to work with all available electronic tools (their 'workbench' should be the same as that of the average professional translator, if only because there are fewer and fewer translators who actually 'just translate' and because such tools as translation memories certainly have a very strong impact on how people translate and on how we should teach translators to be wary of the fact that most existing tools do lead to various degrees of degradation of quality).

- Yes, students must be prepared for the wild outside and coached on how to get clients and contracts, to set up business, to get a job, to write out an estimate, and so on.

- We should definitely separate theoretical and practical classes. In fact, I think we should separate (in order of chronology) srategic classes (how to do the job a translator has to do + how to translate, the latter being a bit of the former), practical classes (actually doing the job), and theoretical classes (debriefing and theory).

N.B. The teacher has to start with a theory (or multiple theories) but students should not be encumbered with those theories: they should be introduced to theory just before leaving the university as a translator (so they can look beyond their practice, uphold their future decisions, etc.).

Conference interpreting should be taught after translation, but all translators could do with a little training in consecutive interpreting and with a heavier dose of liaison interpreting.

Should textbooks be used in class?

Yes, textbooks should be used in class. Especially mine. (No, that is a joke, though I have in fact a number of textbooks for a number of courses). The thing is, anyway, that textbooks are basically 'local' since they only cater for one pair of languages, one way. A textbook catering for all languages both ways is, at best, a theoretical treatise.

Can distance-learning techniques be used?

Yes, distance-learning can be used in the training of translators. We use it for a Translator's Diploma. The problems are just about the same as with any other type of distance-learning on any kind of subject or skill. I wouldn't say distance teaching is satisfactory: it is just an answer to extreme situations.

Do high attrition rates matter? Where do drop-outs go?

We do not have high attrition rates because:

- Our translator training program starts in year 1 (second semester) at university, so any drop-outs have lots of alternatives.
- Students are immediately acquainted with what being a translator is like, so we do not have people dropping out after a few years when the finally find out translation is not their cup of tea.
- The syllabus is highly specialised and we make no mystery about the fact that we mean business and that we expect those who enrol to be serious about what they are looking for.
- Students have hands-on experience from day one of various kinds of electronic devices that make up the surroundings of translators. That means anyone with an allergy to technology can quit (the drop-out rate for such reasons is only 2%).

What we do get, on the other hand, is quite a number of 'drop-ins': students who, after the first semester in the applied languages department decide they would rather choose translation than anything to do with international trade or business. We are perfectly aware that they have joined us for a semester just to keep warm and try and get all they can before moving on to various kinds of vocational programs or schools. We give them adequate mastery of not so ambitious types of translation, of the basics in terminology, of file management, word processing, data base creation and management, organisers, the internet, documentation techniques at large, etc. and we part very good friends. About 10% of those who just dropped in stay on for four more years.

This raises a fundamental question. It is important that translator training should start early, if only as some kind of introductory option in a broader structure. That gives students an opportunity to test their degree of commitment and also gives would-be teachers of translation as a professional activity an opportunity to come round to different practices in a rather progressive way. The programs should build strength over a year and a half to two years, before they get going full tilt (from BA level). But then, of course, that is personal opinion based on circumstances that usually prevail in French universities.

Do teachers talk to each other about what they do in the translation class?

I do not think teachers talk much to each other about what they do in the translation class, unless one of them is using a textbook written by the other.

What is for sure is that students talk a lot about what different teachers do in their respective translation classes, usually to complain that Mr. X is not up to the mark.

Are there enough exchanges between the various national models?

I do not think there are national or international models. And that is no real problem. I do not believe in exporting or importing models. Any 'model' is the result of a group of people taking particular options at one particular time in a particular set of circumstances (to my knowledge, there are only three universities in Europe where you can decide to devote one full week to a real-life simulation, so how could you have any training practices in which you would get rid of the 'model' of the once, twice, or thrice-weekly 50 minute-session in which to teach translation using a 250-word text?). Existing models are mostly adapted to that kind of class system, preferably with 'objectives' that can fit within the 50 minutes (cf. Delisle) with a time for explanation, a time for practice and repetition, and a time for summing up. Fair enough.

Should we be producing technicians or humanists?

Theories of translation simply determine the way theories of translation are taught. What determines the way teachers are trained (and translation is taught) is the program's objectives in general, the reality principle, and the degree of responsibility teachers are prepared to assume in making students fit for their future jobs.

Basically, we may assume that both technicians and language students can be made into decent translators. However, we would have to make serious changes to our programs if we started enrolling technicians in great numbers.

What are the major success areas in current translator-training?

We have an employment rate of 100% if that means anything.

What are the major shortcomings in current translator-training?

Major shortcomings: Too many people setting up courses and programs with not the faintest idea what a non-literary translator is expected to do or simply to save their jobs (which makes plenty of room for the teaching of theory or a fair amount of translation studies).

What innovations should be expected?

Innovations in the coming years: quite a few, inevitably, but mostly unpredictable since innovations are fed by technology and we do not know what the technology will look like in three years' time.

Still, to be predicted with some amount of certainty:

- courses on how to dictate translations (voice-recognition technology)
- courses on translating multimedia materials
- 'teach yourself translation' via the internet
- growing interest in professionally-oriented courses.

What should be taught at translation school?

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What should be taught at translation school? The answer depends on how we see the whole process by which a person becomes a practising professional translator. In my view, translation schools, professional organizations of translators, and employers of translators should be working toward a multi-step preparation process. Translation school should be just one of three types of formal learning, the other two being practicums and professional development workshops. (I leave aside the informal, on-the-job training that occurs when junior translators are revised by seniors.)

I should mention at the outset that in speaking of translation schools, I mean schools that prepare undergraduate students who have no previous degrees or translation experience. I am not talking about graduate programs aimed at those who already have job experience as translators, or those who have education and experience in other fields and are now switching to translation.

In my view, the function of a translation school is not to train students for specific existing slots in the language industry, but to give them certain general abilities that they will then be able to apply to whatever slots may exist 5, 10, 15 or 25 years from now. In other words, I think university-based translation schools must uphold the traditional distinction between education and training. They must resist the insistent demands of industry for graduates ready to produce top-notch translations in this or that specialized field at high speed using the latest computer tools.

The place for training is the practicum and the professional development workshop. Ideally, every student would have three practicums over a 3-4 year full-time program: one in a corporate or government translation department, one working with a freelance (a one-person business), and one working for a translation company. Professional development workshops for practising translators, run by professional associations (or possibly large employers of translators), would introduce participants to new software, provide a forum for discussion of marketing problems, or discuss issues that are too advanced for university students (revising the work of others; quality control procedures).

Of course, this ideal will never come into being if translation schools bow to industry and turn themselves into training schools. Schools must not take this path; they must insist (hopefully with support from government) that professional associations and translation businesses make their contribution to preparing future translators by sponsoring practicums and workshops.

So what are the general abilities to be taught at school? They are the abilities which take a very long time to learn: text interpretation, composition of a coherent, readable and audience-tailored draft translation, research, and checking/correcting. But nowadays one constantly hears that what students really need are skills in document management, software localization, desktop publishing and the like. I say, nonsense. If you can't translate with pencil and paper, then you can't translate with the latest information technology.

Let's look at one example: research. Research, like all the abilities required of a translator, has been computerized, but it has certainly not been automated. All the research abilities that were needed in the days of libraries with card catalogues are still needed to search the Internet. The only thing computers do is speed up the search process: there is much less need to put on your hat and coat and trundle over to a library. Intelligence is still required to select keywords for searching, and to assess the documents at the Web sites identified by the search engine. The procedure for writing in the key words for a Boolean search is simple and requires little thought or intelligence to learn; it can be acquired in half an hour. What cannot be learned in half an hour, or even half a year, is deciding which words to enter, and how to assess the results.

At translation school, future translators need to find out what the problems of translation are, and reflect on these problems. The purpose of practice in translation (and of non-translational exercises such as summarizing, paraphrasing or dictionary look-up exercises), is to make students aware of these problems and make them think about the issues. The purpose is not to achieve industrial production standards. There is simply no time for the practice that would be required to meet these industries' production standards. Producing satisfactory translations of specialized texts in good time takes about five years of full-time practice.

Because students have such crowded timetables, and should be taking non-translation courses too (in order to improve their general and specialized knowledge in various fields), the time they do have should be devoted mainly to the general abilities I have mentioned. They will get more out of a few extra hours learning close reading of texts than they will from learning the mechanical procedures for using translational memory software. The existence of such things can and should be mentioned, but the ability to actually use them can be acquired later, after graduation, at a workshop.

Information technology instruction can be an expensive waste of time. There is no point learning something like HTML unless you are immediately (the next day or week) going to start translating webpages on a fairly regular basis. If you don't, you will forget the mechanical procedures involved within days of the instruction. Will students have such opportunities on campus? Also, one has to ask whether purchasing expensive site licenses for translation memory software, or hiring a system administrator for a translation school network, is really the best use of a university's limited funds. I would rather use the money to hire more teachers and reduce class size.

Students should certainly be working on computers, but all they need is basic Windows, basic Internet, basic e-mail, basic Word or WordPerfect, and perhaps basic database for simple terminology management. More advanced software and functions can be learned later.

One final point on what is taught: it is important that students have an opportunity to reflect on the position of translators in society. To be able to situate themselves ('what will my role be as a translator?'), they need points of comparison—how translators have functioned in different societies at different times. A course in translation history is therefore not a frill. It will help make the difference between a thinking translator and a mere word engineer.

What I have said so far about training versus education also has implications for classroom methodology. The very last thing a translation classroom should be is a pale simulacrum of the workplace. When I teach, I do not create scenarios in which I pretend that I am a client, or a subject-matter expert. I have never been a translator's client and I am not a subject-matter expert. Instead, I wait for the students to arrive at my

workplace (a government ministry) for a practicum. Then I make them telephone or e-mail real clients and real subject-matter experts. In my classes, students certainly learn about such beings as clients and experts, and I often tell anecdotes about my contacts with them. Sometimes students report, in diaries they write about the translations they have done, that they tried contacting a subject-matter expert. That's fine, but the time to actually learn how to contact an expert (e.g. how to ask the right questions) is a practicum.

Finally, on the subject of who will do the teaching at translation schools, one thing that must certainly be abandoned is teaching by language and literature professors who are not really interested in non-literary translation, and have no experience of it. On the other hand, practising translators who take up teaching on a part-time basis need to adopt an educator's rather than a trainer's outlook. Perhaps something could be learned from looking at who teaches at the undergraduate level in other professions.

To summarize: it's thought that counts (as Einstein apparently once said). It can't be emphasized enough that practice without a foundation of thought (about general translational issues and problems) will not create the future generation of translators which we should be aiming at, namely, a generation in which the average translator is as good as the better translator of today. Translation school is the time to create such a foundation. Everyone will benefit: the students, the profession, employers, and users of translations.

Translating as a text-production activity

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Translating (and interpretating as a specific form of translating) means producing a functional text in a linguaculture T (= target text) that is needed for specific communicative purposes by processing the information given in a previous text produced in a different linguaculture S (= source text). A translation can be considered functional when it fulfils the intended communicative purpose as defined by the client or commissioner in the translation brief. This means that translating always implies some kind of (functional) text production using a "source" of information that usually has the form of a text, although expert translators know that they often need more than just the information explicitly present in the source text (background information, dictionaries, glossaries, their own knowledge of the subject matter, the cultural implications of textual references, etc.). Professional technical writing, for example, is similar to translation in that it can also be defined as a production of functional texts needed for specific communicative purposes, that it also consists in processing information derived from a "source". It is different from translation in that the "source" usually does not consist of one text (plus additional information provided by the text producer), although it may certainly be presented in texts of some kind (including oral information by technicians or engineers). And it may be different from translation in that the source does not belong to another linguaculture (although, of course, part of the material may be written in another language than the one of text production).

The two main requirements shared by translation and (intracultural) text production are, therefore, (a) the ability to retrieve information from some sort of source, and (b) the ability to process a given amount of information in such a way as to produce a functional text that is apt to fulfil the requirements of the brief. In professional practice, translators often have to produce texts using various kinds of sources, and clients or commissioners very rarely care about strict definitions of what is a translation or a non-translational text production.

Therefore, it seems logical to make prospective translators "fit" for a wide range of text-producing activities, providing them with a solid text competence.

Translational text competence: what translators should know about texts

Before we ask how, when and where (i.e., by which methods, and at which point of translator training) this text competence should be taught, we have to take a closer look at the kind of text competence a translator needs. In order to be able to produce functional texts, any text producer needs:

- a profound knowledge of the way in which textual communication works (textual meta-competence), and

- a good text-production proficiency in the linguaculture where the text will be used as a means of communication (text-production competence in linguaculture T).

In addition to these general, not translation-specific, requirements, a translator needs:

- a good text-analytical proficiency in the linguaculture where the source text was produced and/or used for specific communicative purposes (text-analytical competence in linguaculture S), and
- the ability to compare the norms and conventions of textuality of the source and the target linguaculture (contrastive text competence).

Translational text competence, therefore, consists of meta-competence, text-production competence, text-analytical competence, and contrastive text competence. In this paper, I will focus on the three aspects that are vital in translational text production, namely: textual meta-competence, text-production competence, and contrastive text competence.

How to train translational text-production competence: methodological considerations

We have all heard (or even uttered!) the complaint that our students lack text competence even in their native linguaculture when they take up translator training. Therefore, in a first phase, textual skills (both analytical and productive) should be developed using the native language and culture (A-language in the terminology of the profession) as a natural playground. Later on, the acquired knowledge and skills can be transferred to the student's foreign language(s) (B-language, C-language):

1. Textual meta-competence includes the following general aspects of textual communication: text production as a purposeful, culture-bound activity, texts as means of communication used for specific purposes and addressees, methods of text analysis, the importance of cultural and world knowledge in text reception and text production, strategies and techniques of information retrieval, pragmatic conditions of text production (e.g., legal norms, corporate language, marketing policies), fundamental aspects of LSP and terminology, among others. It can be developed by analysing texts of a variety of text types, comparing texts on the same or similar topics written for different audiences or transmitted by different media, at different times or in different places (e.g. cultural differences within a language area) revising faulty or unfunctional texts, looking at the ways background information is presented in texts dealing with "foreign" cultures, finding arguments for or against the use of particular text strategies, evaluation of text functionality, and the like. The main aim of the development of textual meta-competence is to sensitize students to the specificity of communicative behaviour, particularly with regard to their own linguaculture, and to provide them with the theoretical and methodical "tools" which they will need both in translation and non-translational text production.

2. Text-production competence includes the ability to use rhetorical devices in order to achieve specific communicative purposes, re-write or re-phrase texts for other audiences, purposes, media, places etc. (= "intralingual translation"), summarize texts or produce abstracts, convert figures, tables, schematic representations into text (or vice versa), produce written texts on the basis of oral information (or vice versa), revise deficient texts (quality management), and the like. It can be developed and trained in the native language (using different varieties, if possible) in a first phase and then transferred to the foreign language(s) in a second phase. It is important, though, that the training of productive skills in the native and the foreign language(s) should be kept strictly apart at first, leaving comparison and contrast to a later stage.

3. Contrastive text competence consists of the ability to analyse the culture-specificities of textual and other communicative conventions in both linguacultures, identify (culture-bound) function markers in texts of various text types (with a particular focus on practice-oriented text types, such as business communication, computer manuals, product documentation, contracts, business and market reports, patents, image brochures, etc.), compare parallel texts, analyse and compare existing translations with each other and with the corresponding source text, evaluate and revise translations, and the like. Where students take two foreign languages, contrastive text competence should be developed for each of them with regard to the native linguaculture in parallel courses.
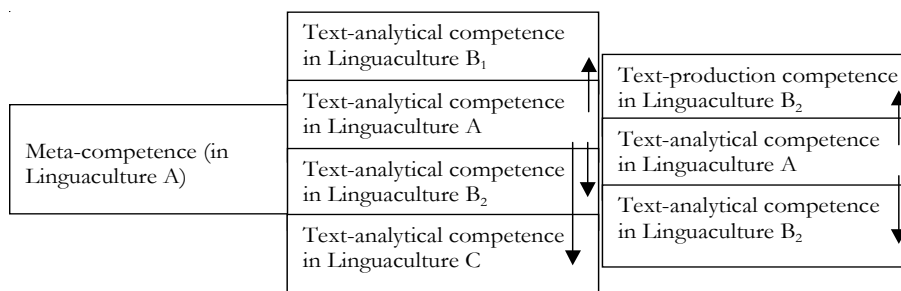
Where and when to teach translational text competence: curricular considerations

Entrance qualifications

Most training institutions define one (or, e.g. in case of Catalan universities two) language as A-language, although it may not be the students native language. An entrance test should ensure that the students have a good passive and active proficiency in the A-language. With regard to B languages, the entrance qualifications defined by the institutions have to be tested in order to prevent translator training from turning into some kind of foreign-language teaching in disguise.

Didactic progression

The development and training of the skills and abilities described above might be structured in the following way: After a general introduction to meta-competence, which is presented in the A-language and using A-language textual material, text-analytical skills are introduced in both A-language and B- (and/or C-) language(s) separately and in contrast. In a third phase, text-production skills are taught in A and B languages (in C-languages, no text-production skills are needed), as depicted in the following diagram:

Text-analytical competence in Linguaculture B$_1$	
Text-analytical competence in Linguaculture A	Text-production competence in Linguaculture B$_2$
Text-analytical competence in Linguaculture B$_2$	Text-analytical competence in Linguaculture A
Text-analytical competence in Linguaculture C	Text-analytical competence in Linguaculture B$_2$

Meta-competence (in Linguaculture A)

It is important to note that the components of text competence in one linguaculture (text analysis, text production, text comparison) need not be taught in lineal succession but can be combined to strengthen motivation and learning success. Depending on the structural characteristics and aims of the study program, they can be given different "weight" (expressed in hours of study or credits). In any case, since the A language is involved in each translation task (either as a source or as a target language), target-language skills should be considered fundamental. The same applies to textual meta-competence: teachers should take care that the meta-competence acquired in the first phase is practised and used in the development of all other competences in later phases.

Modularity

The development of translational text competence, as presented above, has been designed as a module in translator and/or interpreter training. Thanks to its modular structure, however, the A-language part of it can also be used as a compulsory module in the training of technical writers or as an optional course for students of other disciplines where the ability to produce functional texts is a useful additional qualification, which makes it a useful and "multifunctional" element for many a university.

(The original version of this paper was presented as a talk at the Universitat de Vic, Catalonia, Spain, in 1999.)

From teacher-centred to learning-centred classrooms in translator education: Control, chaos or collaboration?

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Voices within the translator-training establishment calling for a major change in translator education pedagogy are being heard more and more frequently these days. There seems to be an increasing perception that the conventional teacher-centred classroom alone cannot equip translators-in-training with the wide range of professional and interpersonal skills, knowledge and competencies they will need to meet the requirements of an ever more-demanding language mediation market. Many of the voices calling for innovation suggest that, at the very least, conventional instruction should be supplemented with authentic, practice-oriented work through which students can come to grips with the types of constraints and expectations they can expect to face once they graduate as language mediation experts. What to me seem to be lacking are attempts to justify such a change on the fundamental level of educational philosophy.

In this brief essay I will sketch alternative ways of understanding the function of the teaching/learning process and outline some of the implications one might draw for what I see as a much-needed paradigm shift in translator education. I do not want to suggest that the first of these two viewpoints depicts an actual educational philosophy or policy at any particular institution. In fact, I would claim that it is precisely the failure of translation educational institutions to explicitly define the principles underlying their teaching methodologies that has allowed the translator education profession to fall into a lethargic perpetuation of 'do unto your students as was done unto you.' The picture I would like to paint first, that of a conventional translation practice classroom, is a caricature, one that exaggerates fundamental characteristics that have been taken for granted for too long.

The teacher-centred approach: an objectivist educational epistemology and its practical applications

In a prototypical teacher-centred environment, the instructor assumes responsibility for virtually everything that goes on in the classroom - except for learning itself. She stands or sits at the front of the class, facing rows of generally passive students who are (hopefully) hanging on to every word and in some sense ingesting knowledge about how to translate. The teacher prepares the syllabus, chooses the texts to be translated, organizes all of the in-class activities and homework, decides who will speak and when, and personally dominates the classroom discourse. This is the teacher's class, which the students attend. The teacher's teaching agenda is designed to become the students' agenda for learning. The assessment of student performance and learning is also the teacher's responsibility; she establishes the marking criteria and designs the

assessment tasks, which are designed to determine whether or not the students have learned what has been taught. We are all familiar with this type of instruction, not only from our experience as teachers and students at universities, but also from secondary and primary school. But how often do we question the viability of such an approach for effective teaching and its relationship to learning?

I would argue that the conventional teacher-centred classroom is grounded in a positivist epistemology, the dominant, 'scientific' perspective that is pervasive in the social sciences and that acknowledges a universal reality that we can come to know objectively. Truth, from such a perspective, is what is verifiable as corresponding to that objective reality. From such a perspective, learning, or coming to know, logically entails the reproduction of objective truth in the mind of the individual learner. The teacher, having acquired expert knowledge through training, education and experience, is expected to 'transmit' that knowledge to students. One might portray the learning process from this perspective as follows:
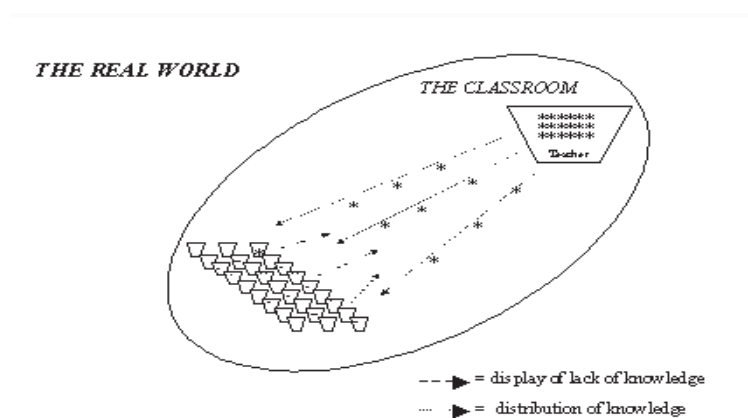
Figure 1: A transmissionist approach to teaching and learning

I have depicted the teacher as a large vessel filled with knowledge that is doled out to the students — the relatively empty vessels. The solid line around the classroom activities reflects the way teacher and students come into the classroom and close the door behind them, leaving the 'real world' outside. They produce sample translations in a social vacuum, translations that have no intended audience other than the teacher, that were commissioned by the teacher and that will be assessed and corrected by no one other than the teacher. The active participation of students in this process might be seen as disruptive or even counter-productive, as it interferes with the efficient transmission of knowledge from the more knowledgeable teacher to the less knowledgeable students. The students' role is restricted essentially to absorbing the wisdom proffered by the teacher. The teacher, on the other hand, is the controlling factor in the learning situation, packaging knowledge as neatly as possible to make it digestible for the students and ensuring that disruptions to the efficient transmission of knowledge are kept to a minimum.

If we as teachers can look at this depiction of a conventional classroom and agree that it captures the essence of it, and indeed corresponds to how we understand the teaching/learning process, then we may see no need for significant change in our teaching practice. Little can—or needs to be—done to improve the learning environment. The onus is on teachers to be knowledgeable about the subject at hand and to be efficient transmitters of that knowledge.

If, however, we see learning as a different sort of process altogether, I suggest that we must confront that alternative understanding and re-evaluate the implications that it has for what should go on in the classroom. The antithesis of the teacher-centred classroom one might describe as a 'learner centred' classroom. As embodied in pedagogical approaches like 'discovery learning', a learner centred classroom is a venue for personal discovery, where the teacher, who knows the answers, does not try to feed them to the students, but instead allows them to work cooperatively to discover truth for themselves. While the role of the teacher here may change with respect to the conventional classroom, the underlying view of the objective nature of knowledge may well be the same. Instead of ingesting truth and knowledge from the teacher, students are expected to discover it for themselves. A major criticism of the learner-centred classroom is that it can easily result in great inefficiency and even chaos, as students work essentially on their own with little more than encouragement from the teacher.

Shifting the focus from teacher and learner to learning

I would like to propose here a different approach to classroom interaction, an approach that might best be described as 'learning centred'. Based on the 'constructivist' theories of such scholars as Vygotsky, Dewey and Bruffee, this perspective sees learning as an interactive, socio-personal process. From such a viewpoint, rather than being verifiably objective (students learn what the teacher knows) or solipsistically subjective (each learner is an independent learning system), truth is viewed essentially as a social construction, and the learning process is a matter of collaboratively acquiring (and co-creating) the language and behavior of a social group— in our case, that of professional translators. The key implication of this basic principle for translator education, as I interpret it, is that learning to be a professional translator means learning to act like one. Seen this way, the teacher has no knowledge that the students must or even can acquire—the students will instead have to construct their own knowledge of the profession and their own understandings of their responsibilities and rights as professionals through experience, by collaboratively participating in the authentic activities of professional translators. From such a perspective, the teacher must step down from the distribution pedestal. Rather than sending students off to discover truth for themselves, she will assume the role of a guide or assistant who helps the students move from the periphery of the community of professional translators into a position of full membership in that community. The following figure illustrates some key features of this social-constructivist viewpoint as I have applied it to translator education:
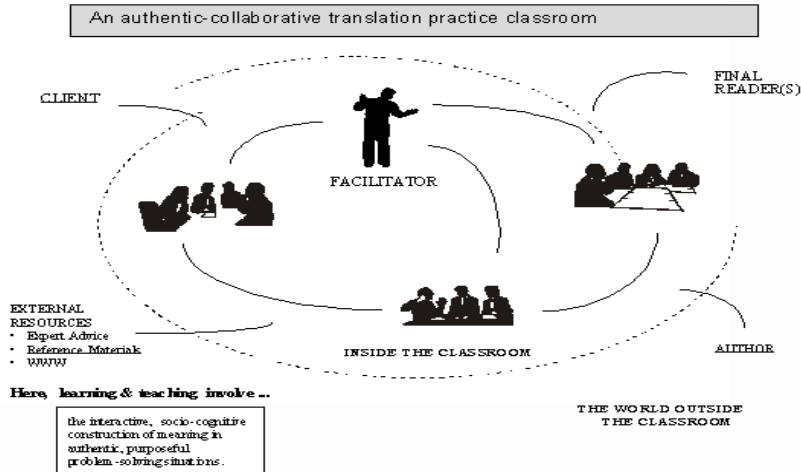
Figure II: A social-constructivist classroom

Here the classroom is seen as embedded in the real world, not cut off from it. Students might work on authentic translation assignments, interacting with authors, clients and potential readers, and drawing on the expertise of the teacher as well as other human resources to provide needed information or suggest possible modes of action. Essential features of social-constructivist educational experiences will include authentic practice in actual professional activities, a collaborative learning environment including not only interaction among students but also the extensive involvement of the students in every aspect of the teaching/learning process, including syllabus and curriculum design, task selection, sub-task identification and assessment of their own performance and learning, as well as program effectiveness. Providing students with multiple perspectives will help them construct viable (rather than correct) strategies and attitudes toward their professional work.

Rather than assuming roles of knowers and learners respectively, teachers and students become partners, members of a mutually supportive learning team. The teacher's role will be very different from that of a conventional teacher, but no less clearly defined. It will be up to the constructivist teacher to create learning situations within the institution that can provide students with authentic experience. It will also be her responsibility to identify students' difficulties and weaknesses and provide them with tactical assistance and the benefit of her professional experience to help them move into the inner community of professional translators. She will also be responsible for learning from and along with her students, so that her educational environment continues to evolve with the profession over time. Assessment, from such a perspective, is not likely to involve one-shot tests taken under exam conditions, but a panoply of opportunities to demonstrate competence and flexibility, with students working individually and collaboratively to show the achievement of competent levels of professional performance. Teachers can draw on the multiple perspectives of colleagues and professionals in the community to assess the quality of students' work, and the final

product of assessment might well be a portfolio of work accomplished over an academic program rather than a set of marks on a transcript that reflect little more than teachers' personal and highly subjective opinions of individual, isolated translations.

Through such an approach, students can acquire a sense of responsibility toward their work and toward learning itself; they can emancipate themselves from the teacher, and learn to make their own way along the highly individualistic career path of the language professional. This they must do, I contend, if they are to emerge from the educational situation as self-confident translation experts, prepared to think for themselves, to work as members of a team, to assume responsibility for their own work, to assess the quality of their own performance and to continue learning once they leave the institution. The underlying epistemology may be social constructivism, but the overriding goal is empowerment.

The benefits of such a change in educational perspective could be extraordinary for the translator's profession, which has for too long struggled for social acceptance. Just 'translating what's on the page' is rapidly becoming an insignificant part of the translator's task. Rather than producing graduates with no professional experience, with hundreds of hours of 'contact hours' spent following teachers' agendas and meeting teacher's expectations, prepared to slavishly perform as dictated by their teachers, students having participated actively in extensive learning-centred classrooms can be expected to emerge from the educational experience as experienced semi-professionals whose attitudes toward their professional work will surely stand them in good stead in the language mediation market that is sure to become even more demanding and multi-facetted in the coming years.

Epistemology need not be an arcane, abstract field of thought relegated to the lecture hall of the philosophy department. It can also help provide a theoretical basis for effective education. While the applications of different interpretations of constructivist thought are sure to be as multifarious as the teachers and educational environments that create them, the common understanding of learning as a collaborative social process can, in my view, lead to significant innovation in the education of professional translators.

General Response

Yves Gambier
Centre for Translation and Interpreting
University of Turku, Finland

A few notes upon reading the five texts:

The topic of the symposium is clearly pertinent. We should bear in mind, however, that the training of translators and interpreters is never just a matter of ideas, principles or speculations. At one point or another, actual training programs have to be drawn up and put into practice, that is, they must be applied to contextual parameters that are institutional, financial, technological, and so on.

Each of the five papers offers a series of stimulating suggestions, questions and partial responses... all well reasoned. They reflect strongly held convictions, sometimes based on different premises, sometimes heading in different directions. The five writers obviously do not have the same view of the way markets and universities are developing.

At first sight, Brian Mossop and Daniel Gouadec would appear to have two quite different - even antagonistic - perspectives on what universities should be doing. One approach would privilege criteria of short-term performance, namely the production of students who are able to work once they have finished their studies. The other would put more emphasis on 'education' (*education*, as opposed to *formation* or 'training'), in the sense of continuing a humanist tradition. Indeed, for Gouadec, no program of studies would be purely instrumental, responding to no more than current market forces. If the market were all that counted, we should probably just 'train' (in a few months, and not three or four years) temp translators, people who are able to carry out a given task, who have few further ideas, and who would thus be infinitely flexible and indeed subservient to whatever employers they may find. To give no more than this training would involve proletarizing the profession. Gouadec instead proposes a highly demanding program, aiming for a clear form of professionalization that gives students a chance not only of finding good jobs but also of influencing the future of the profession itself.

Brian Mossop is more interested in the way a basic training program can be complemented by further training. He considers how these training programs might bring together various partners, including universities, professional associations and translation agencies. He thus excludes the idea of a university program disconnected from its surrounding realities.

The two approaches converge more than they diverge. I believe they reflect the different speeds (in France and Canada) with which universities are developing in relation to their social and technological environment. The approaches are no doubt the result of two different kinds of professional environment or experience.

Gouadec and Mossop do diverge, however, with respect to modes of training, that is, on the pedagogy to be used... and thus indirectly, with respect to the roles and qualifications of the teachers or instructors. I believe this is a key point. On this level, Mossop's positions on teaching methods, teacher roles and the future use of technology in professional training are similar to those expressed by Roberto Mayoral, who gives clear indication of where he is speaking from, and Christiane Nord, who appears to be

open to neither doubt nor technology.

But can we really claim that the computer age involves no transformation of our teaching practices? Does it have no effect on the way we teach the interdisciplinarity that is at the base of translator training?

There is a strange and important silence on one issue: Only Roberto Mayoral raises the problem of our working languages (translation from and into what languages, or through which pivot or intermediary languages). The status of our various languages is far from neutral with respect to training issues (concerning not only translation but also revision, drafting, and so on). To reduce everything to pairs such as German-English or French-English is to risk several misunderstandings. When one works or teaches with languages like Russian, Finnish, Hebrew, Polish or Catalan, one does not have the same tools as in the case with English, French or German; one does not have the same expectations. (Indeed, English is perhaps no longer a working language specific to translators, given that everyone and anyone who knows just a bit of the language has something to say in it and about it.) The symposium should not ignore these problems.

Who should be trained? There seems to be a certain uneasiness on this question. We have no problem with the idea of people selecting the students who are to become our future medical doctors, engineers, architects or pilots, but apparently everyone can become a translator; the profession would be open to all, or at least to anyone with the necessary language competencies (cf. Nord). Gouadec and Mayoral both refer to 'maturity', which might be a polite way of saying that young students are sometimes out of their depth.

If translation is a demanding profession, if it requires multipurpose high-level qualifications, why this timidity on the question of selecting our students?

Should our training begin straight after the students' final secondary-school exam? Should we not envisage prerequisites such as a long stay abroad, or a degree or diploma in another discipline? Why do we have aptitude tests—which students must pass—for conference interpreting but not for written translation?

How should we conceptualize the 'progression' of studies over 3 to 5 years? Christiane Nord is the only one to deal with this problem, at least in terms of developing competencies and aptitudes. But 'progression' also involves training people over a period of several years, integrating specialized skills (localization, documentation, translation of legal documents, translation theory, etc.).

Could it be that modernist discourse, so well versed in the manipulation of technologies, remains blind to the (changing) speeds with which students learn? Is that discourse not avoiding the problems of group dynamics, which must surely be taking new forms as our computer screens multiply?

(Translated from French by Anthony Pym)

Summary of discussion on
Accreditation

Birgitta Englund Dimitrova
Institute for Interpretation and Translation Studies
Stockholm University

The question of accreditation was raised by Anthony Pym, who distinguished the following subtopics:

1. Should training institutions provide professional accreditation, so that people without such an accreditation would not be able to work professionally as translators/interpreters?
2. Should the training institutions be officially accredited, to allow them in their turn to accredit translators/interpreters?

Generally the discussants agreed on the importance of accreditation/ certification. Gregory Shreve, of Kent State University, pointed out that accreditation often accompanies the professionalization of a discipline, as for instance doctors and lawyers. Ksenija Leban described the situation in Slovenia, where no accreditation exists, and said that accreditation is important to make the clients of translators/ interpreters aware of issues of quality. Jorge Almeida e Pinho stated that training institutions, as well as professional organizations, should be involved in promoting the idea of an official accreditation in order to make the profession more recognized, but that the accreditation itself should be granted through a separate examining body. Accreditation is important in enhancing the status of translators/interpreters in society and improving their working conditions. Among the countries which are currently in the process of developing systems for accreditation are Switzerland and Portugal.

The first topic grew into a discussion of who should accredit translators/ interpreters, where the main options available seem to be:

1. training institutions
2. external examining bodies
3. translators'/interpreters' professional organizations.

There was some agreement that accreditation should preferrably be separate from the degree, and thus be granted from another authority than the training institution. Birgitta Englund Dimitrova, of Stockholm University, and Daniel Gouadec pointed out that it should be possible to take an accreditation test without having attended a training program, and that any graduate from a training program should be free not to ask for accreditation. Thus, it is not necessary or desirable to have a one-to-one-match between degree and accreditation, since not all who follow a program want to be accredited, and there are always people who will want to, and be perfectly able to,

pass an accreditation test without having attended a program. However, a degree from a training program with a good reputation can actually function as a kind of "accreditation" in the eyes of a future employer, as pointed out by Daniel Gouadec.

Daniel Gouadec considered that translators should have the option of being accredited on two levels: a. for general translators; b. for specialist translators. There was also some discussion regarding accreditation of literary translators. The ATA in the United States does include a literary text in its accreditation test, but Doug Robinson pointed out that the assessment criteria do not seem to fit that kind of text, so the reason for the inclusion of this text in the test is not quite clear.

The issue of the exact nature of the testing for accreditation became another subtopic of the discussion. What kinds of aids should be allowed during testing - only dictionaries, or full access to various on-line resources, as in real-life translation tasks? Doug Robinson discussed, within the framework of Freire, Derrida and Barthes, professional translating as an activity which today usually involves a group of people, not just one translator, and concluded that, depending on the test procedure, accreditation of translators might not really say much about the way they will function in an actual work situation. With interpreters, the matter is different, however, so accreditation might be more motivated in their case.

As for the accreditation of the training institutions, one problem seems to be to find the right authority to do this accreditation. Anthony Pym suggested as one option CIUTI. Andrew Dawrant pointed out that in conference interpreter training, the professional organization of the conference interpreters, AIIC, actually acts as such an unofficial international accrediting body. It is voluntary for training institutions to participate in the accreditation scheme, and assessment is carried out primarily on the basis of a questionnaire that the institution itself completes. Gregory Shreve called for national criteria or recommended guidelines for institutions wishing to start new programs in translation and interpreting, since they do not always know what is entailed in terms of cost, faculty, etc.

A few words in conclusion: accreditation is certainly an important topic. It seems, however, that there is not always a clear line drawn in the discussions between official accreditation/certification of translators/interpreters on the one hand, and the recognition of the professions on the other. Obviously, there is a link between them, in the sense that the possibility of accreditation/certification by some official body of authority is an important step in the procedure of recognizing an activity as a profession. But there seems to be an inherent opposition between, on the one hand, the strict assessment criteria in an accreditation test and, on the other hand, the dynamic nature of much of the translating done today. A further problem is what the purpose of an accreditation of translators/interpreters is, and what its worth is in the relevant society. The criteria for accrediting/certifying translators and/or interpreters are not universally given, but to a large extent depend upon who does the accrediting and what its purpose is held to be.

Summary of discussion on
Class Size

Eva Hung
Research Centre for Translation, Chinese University of Hong Kong,
Shatin, N.T. Hong Kong

Eva Hung, a researcher in Hong Kong, raised the question of optimum class size for professional translator training programs. In view of the fact that translation classes are also a standard component of foreign language degrees, she offered some survey results obtained in mainland China in 1999 on courses of the latter type:

100%	42 teacher respondents
9%	11-20 students / class
61%	21-30 students / class
16%	31-40 students / class
12%	41-50 students / class
2%	+50 students / class

Francis Aubert, of the USP in Brazil, suggested that class size may vary depending on the nature of the subject. Theory-centred classes of a reasonably homogeneous group work well with up to 70 students; practical training sessions for written translation work best with 15-25 students, to ensure variety and active group participation.

Noeleen Hargan, who teaches at La Sapienza University in Rome, used her experience in teaching a large class to illustrate that learning is not circumscribed by class size. She holds translation workshops that are part of a modern-language degree course dealing mainly with literary texts and working mainly into the mother tongue. The class starts with 120-150 people and dwindles to around 80. This, however, is not a professional training course.

David Ashworth, who teaches in Hawaii, suggested that an effective way to deal with a large class is to set up group projects, in which (1) the group works on assigned problems anonymously, and the teacher may or may not then review their work, and (2) then the teacher shares the groups' work with the entire class for critique and discussion, which can be complemented by further e-mail discussions or a bulletin board system. As Ashworth pointed out, assignment marking will be a heavy burden on the teacher if the class is really large.

Summary of discussion on
The question of cultural difference

Peter J Carroll
Bible Society of Australia

Peter Carroll sought comment on an issue that had been referred to indirectly in the Symposium material. It is how to equip translators to deal with the cultural differences between the source and target languages.

The issue was clarified by the helpful definition of translation given by M. Constanza de la Vega, an English-Spanish Translator in Argentina: "A good translation is the one that conveys the meaning of the source text accurately and reads well in the target language. Anyone proficient in both languages can translate generic texts. However, for texts in specialized fields, one needs an understanding of the subject to do a good job." As a linguistic anthropologist, I believe that proficiency in a language requires a knowledge and understanding of the culture of the speakers of the language. In addition an understanding of 'the subject' requires and understanding of its cultural context.

The following summary gives the responses received and relevant comments in other messages:

In a discussion of the teaching/learning process of translation, Wolfgang Frick, a translator since 1950, spoke of the advantage of the discussion of translation projects by mixed groups of students. He commented that "similar projects are given to language groups as well, who then take their findings back to a mixed group and are surprised to discover, during class discussion, aspects of which they did not think of, because of their being trapped in the source language culture. The whole group analyses translated texts and identifies source language interference, inappropriate semantic choice". An analytical approach that involves "a decoding of the inherent meaning of the source language text, its cultural inferences (if any) and then looks at the linguistic structures of the source language text and what difficulties a transfer might present".

Veronika Hon, a teacher of English and Hungarian for translators, took an analogy from music. She commented that translators need to know "the theory of translation" and "the instruments of it".

Sheryl Curtis, a professional translator for 20 years and a part-time teacher for 18 years, described the polarization of two groups of students in her classes that involved "cultural intolerance". She gave an example of a card game that involved modified role-play that helped overcome the problem. She described the game and its outcome in two of the classes:

Basically, you divide the class into two groups. One group belongs to an easy-going culture; the other belongs to a more rigid culture. The two groups have to learn their culture. They also determine a "punishment" to be meted out to those who offend them, culturally speaking, by breaking various taboos or whatever. They also have to

*learn a card game. In addition to being punished, offenders are
generally kicked out of the card game for a while. The cards are
stacked so that each group needs to obtain cards from the other
group in order to win. First they watch the other group and try to
figure out how to deal with them. Then they send emissaries in to
trade, namely to get the cards they need.*

*The first class I tried it on had a blast. The people in the one group,
adopted a methodical approach to noting down everything the other
group liked or didn't like, picked up on their sensitivities right away
and proceeded to whip their butts in the card game. After initially
claiming that those in the first group were "just plain weird" which
sort of proved the point about cultural insensitivity, those in the second
group figured out that they were being offensive to the first group, but
never figured out what they were doing wrong.*

*Another class found it really opened their eyes (this had been my most
polarized group to date). The two groups in this class had decided that
they would punish offenders by making them stand out in the hall
facing the wall. Within ten minutes everyone in both groups had
managed to offend someone in the other group (one person even
offended someone in their own group) and the entire class was
standing out in the hallway. Well, after we all came back into the
classroom, they had a very open discussion.*

Moustafa Gabr, writing from Egypt, focused on the bilingual aspect of translation,
defining a translator as "an accurate bilingual speaker, with the word accurate heavily
underlined". For Moustafa an 'accurate' bilingual speaker understands both cultures
and examples are given from Arabic and English. "The Arabic language is rich in
vocabulary and images that do not have equivalents in the English language." Three
areas of translation are given: translating Arabic novels into English; technical translation
into languages of less developed countries; and religious translation. Examples are
given in relation to the first two.

*Many orientalists who are supposed to be proficient Arabic speakers
translated various works of the Egyptian Nobel Prize winner Naguib
Mahfouz. ... those holy orientalists, though proficient in Arabic,
failed totally to grasp the correct meanings of most cultural
references in the texts.*

*Another example can be seen in technical translation. Modern
technologies have been the product of the West (Europe, US, and
definitely Japan). New discoveries and innovations in all fields of
science and technology are being made everyday. Such discoveries
and innovations get original names in SL. Due to the fact that these
developments are new to the less developed, and of course the
developing countries, the languages of such countries have no*

equivalents for them because the concepts or ideas associated to them are non-existent in such cultures. Even professional translators find it very difficult to handle a text of this type.

Jesús Torres del Rey, writing from Spain, raised the question of equivalence and referred to "changing the way translation is perceived, by stressing difference yet aiming to work through it". He commented: "let's rescue equivalence because clients do believe in it, so let's say we know, internally, equivalence is socially, linguistically, politically and culturally constructed but we also know our society (at least Western society) believe in the existence of pure equivalence, the possibility of conveying exactly the same material from one language/culture to another, where the message can be left intact." He called for us to "integrate in our translating some sort of (external, be it functional, dynamic, cultural) equivalence".

He recommended a positive approach to translator training with "a dynamic perspective that acknowledges the intercultural role of the translator, the hybrid, changing nature of languages and its history". In relation to 'naturalized' translations he commented, "the mark of the translation is erased - thus giving the idea that it should only be interpreted from the target culture/language framework. I am not saying it should never be so, only it doesn't always have to be like that. If we want to make cultures understand each other are we really achieving that by suppressing difference?"

The positive approach to translation was described as one

that would try to situate each translation job in a translation situation (even in context-less agency-like situations) and aim at really thinking the translator's role in intercultural rather than idealistic, purist bi-cultural terms. ... I am not saying linguistic aspects can be neglected (that would be suicide), but these can be set against a broader context that would both allow translators' creativity to jump in, as well as stress and assert their responsibility towards the translation they have decided (or have no choice but to) take on as well as towards the intercultural role of translators.

The question of creativity came up in a comment from Paul Perry when he talked about "something uniquely creative in the translation talent". He said, "Perhaps there is something truly innate in the translation talent that is different from knowledge or information - and different also from just the ability to know two languages. Perhaps it is not possible to make someone a top-level translator simply by filling this person's head with knowledge and information. There has to be some innate talent there to begin with."

Some of the contributions restated and clarified the problems faced in translating into languages of very different cultures. Both Wolfgang Frick and Sheryl Curtis told how they used class discussion and games with mixed classes to develop an understanding of cultural difference.

During the symposium Peter Carroll posed a second question: Do any of your colleges provide programs designed to meet the need for communication between dominant languages and indigenous languages? Cultural difference is a major factor in such programs. Several responses were received:

- Holly Mikkelson: "In the U.S. we have recently seen large numbers of immigrants from Mexico and Guatemala who speak indigenous languages, and the need for interpreters in those languages is growing."
- Marco Fiola: " there is a program aimed at training Translators/Interpreters in English/Inuktitut in Iqaluit, the capital of the newly formed Nunavut Territory, in Northern Canada."
- Diana Abraham: "there is in Kenora, Ontario, one community-based interpreter service that recruits and trains Ojibway and Ojicree interpreters."

With the increasing globalization of the world and the growing pressures on indigenous languages this is an area that needs greater attention from the translation community.

Summary of discussion on
Interpreting

Carlo Marzocchi
Scuola Superiore di Lingue Moderne per Interpreti e Traduttori
Trieste, Italy

The symposium's preliminary statement made it quite clear that the forum was meant to address "translation" as a cover term for "all forms of translation and interpreting". Questions such as the markets we should be training for, choosing teachers from the profession or from academia, class size or the grading of texts were all as relevant to interpreting as to written translation, just as were subsequent threads on for example translating into the foreign language or accreditation.

Of the four position papers, interpreting was specifically mentioned by Daniel Gouadec and Roberto Mayoral. Gouadec anticipated the consensus that was to emerge from a specific thread when he stated that "conference [possibly meaning simultaneous] interpreting should be taught after translation, but all translators could do with a little bit of training in consecutive interpreting and with a heavier dose of liaison interpreting". This was echoed by Mayoral, who argued that interpreting should be taught after translation, since "our experience in Granada tells us that written translation is the best preparation for the training of interpreters". Mayoral also reiterated the need for separate training programs for translators and interpreters, contrary to current practice in Spain; for him, qualifying all graduates as 'translators and interpreters' is "misleading with respect to both the expectations of students and the interests of professionals". He also noted, somehow anticipating the 'oral vs. written' thread, that "the professional of the future must be open to all possibilities" and that present markets blur the "deceptively clear distinction" between oral interpreting and written translation. Community interpreting, later a major symposium subject, was also mentioned by Mayoral as an area in need of development, together with sign-language interpreting.

However, interpreting as a specific practice and object of training did not emerge very often in the discussion. In a thread sparked off by Holly Mikkelson, several participants proposed to set up a forum specifically devoted to interpreter training. Whereas this might reflect an ingrained perception of interpreting as "a separate land", as Pym later put it, it also testifies how interpreter trainers feel the need to liaise with colleagues to fill the pedagogical void they have long been working in. The latter is more likely the case if one looks at reasons given in support of a separate forum for interpreting by for example K. Leban from Slovenia, who complained that trainers often have only their "gut feeling" to rely on. The idea of splitting the symposium into specialized areas (which did not happen anyway) was opposed by Gouadec, who feared that this would reduce fertilization across different practices.

The relation between translation and interpreting within training institutions was also discussed in the "oral vs. written" thread, which originated from an apparently innocent question by Birgitta Englund Dimitrova from Sweden: "How common is it among us to be teaching both interpreting and translation?" Several colleagues (Munday, Krouglov, Feder) answered confirming that in many institutions students are offered courses in translation and interpreting (at least consecutive and liaison, as Gouadec reported), or that faculty members teach and practice both activities - and enjoy it (Kochabi, Mikkelson). In the meanwhile, the issue had been taken up again by Pym, who questioned the usefulness of interpreting skills appearing in the translator curriculum only after written translation. Some participants confirmed that more training in interpreting at an early stage could help students avoid source-text fixation and give them a stronger sense of translation as communication. As Paul Perry put it, "translators are primarily communicators, and they do so through tongues; [...] speech is the primary object of translation". Furthermore, Gouadec noted that oral skills in translator training may be increasingly needed as voice-recognition tools become a standard part of a translator's equipment. The absence of oral-skill training in translator education was attributed to a general fixation on writing in language teaching (Kiraly) and to an illusion of perfectly distinguishable professional practices between translators and interpreters, writing and speech. This distinction is contradicted for example by emerging fields of translation such as screen translation or by the pervasiveness of writing in organizations employing conference interpreters (Marzocchi).

Although the traditional setup of translation/interpreting schools (with interpreting as the point of arrival rather than departure) was questioned in this thread, conference interpreting is still perceived as a market which can absorb relatively few students: Pym guessed that no more than 50 students were being professionally trained as conference interpreters in Spain at the moment. Gouadec related the position of interrepting at the end of the curriculum to the limited demand for conference interpreters, whereas Pym had noted earlier that "there is a lot of market demand for oral mediation at levels quite different to those of AIIC".

Much of this demand for oral mediation may be located in community or social service settings, in short it is a demand for community interpreting (which I assume to include sign language interpreting), another major symposium subject. The issues at stake in community interpreting were aptly summarized by Nathan Garber from Canada:

> *The community interpreter must work in both languages and often must overcome cultural barriers that block communication. Usually, the environment is one of high emotion where misunderstanding will expose the parties to some serious risk. For example, it may result in improper diagnosis, unneeded tests, loss of income, criminal charges being wrongfully laid or the failure to lay criminal charges when warranted. Unfortunately, most community interpreting is done by volunteers, often family members, who have had no training, whose competence is unknown, and who have had no exposure to the ethical issues inherent in this type of interpreting.*

The tone for much of the discussion of community interpreting had already been given by Jemina Napier, who reported the problems Australian sign language interpreters have in gaining professional recognition and access to training at academic level, owing in part to the small size, fragmentation and isolation of the sign language users community. Replying to Gouadec's opening paper, Napier saw the emergence of an international model for training as a way to promote institutionalization of sign language interpreter training.

The lack of academic recognition and training also applies to community interpreting of spoken languages, including indigenous ones. Training is therefore often organized by the same (local) agencies that will then be using the interpreters. Participants mentioned programs organized by publicly funded specialized agencies (Garber), the Northwest Territories Department of Justice (Fiola) or Ontario's Violence against Women Prevention Initiatives (Abraham). Training of community interpreters was also reported within Folkhögskola, the Swedish system of adult education (Schmidt). Holly Mikkelson from Monterey also mentioned the use of and training in relay interpreting through Spanish to cover combinations with English and indigenous languages spoken by new immigrants from Mexico and Guatemala.

This variety of training initiatives scattered over the world and having to cover scores of different languages (Abraham reported 50 "language/cultural groups" in Ontario alone) explains the legitimate calls for networking. Most participants in the community-interpreting threads asked for and provided information rather than take stance on issues. Some theorizing may also be beneficial: one participant joined the symposium looking for "any theories which might underlie the practice of community interpreting".

Concerning the contents of training programs, Abraham reported a 60-hour crash program aimed at providing the trainees "with an understanding of consecutive interpreting, sight translation and whispered simultaneous interpretation". Ethical issues are also seen as a necessary component of training: the Ontario program reported by Abraham includes a "statement of competencies" and a definition of the interpreter's "role and responsibilities". This may be due to the fact that emotionally and culturally loaded settings like the ones where community interpreters operate make the issue (the risk?) of advocacy much more relevant. Those settings make it more difficult for the profession to resort to the abstract ideal of neutrality that informs the practice and training of conference interpreting (this notion also underlies prescriptivism in training and was later criticized by Ebru Diriker from Istanbul in a thought-provoking message that would deserve a summary of its own). Training for community interpreters in Sweden as reported by Schmidt also comprises an "ethics of interpreting" part, where interpreters are taught "how to approach the client and how to deal with clients who misunderstand the role of the interpreter".

The issue of user education or "negotiating with clients", as Gouadec put it, soon became a popular thread when Peter Carroll from Australia asked whether

> *institutions provide seminars or workshops for people (for example doctors, lawyers or others) who work with interpreters in consecutive interpreting? Objectives of such workshops will be to help the clients better understand the process, to obtain the maximum benefit, and to achieve their objectives.*

All participants in this thread concurred that users of community interpreting services, both institutional representative or client, need to be informed of how to conduct an interpreter-mediated interview and what can or cannot be expected from an interpreter. Existing codes of ethics were found unable to "encompass the complexity of the interpreting situations or the ethical dilemmas [...] frequently encountered" (Chesher, quoting from the proceedings of the FIT 1999 congress). Two of the 15 "tips" for users provided by an Ontario agency (Garber) succinctly situate the issue:

> *Encourage the interpreter to let you know when she/he senses*
> *that some cultural misunderstanding is impairing the*
> *communication process.*

> *Maintain responsibility for the interview. The interpreter's role*
> *is to accurately convey the message, not to direct the interview.*

To finish with the summary of a summary, I would venture to say that the discussion of interpreting showed that we interpreter trainers need to - and do - reflect on which interpreting skills our societies need. Do we focus on high-end conference interpreting or on widespread community interpreting skills? How do we institutionalize public service interpreting where it has not yet been institutionalized? Where do interpreting skills belong in training? Are they a basic component for all students or an add-on for the happy few? And what can or cannot our societies do with the skills we impart (the issue of user education)? Enough work to do for all of us, it would seem.

Summary of discussion on
Teaching Literary Translation

James St. André
Department of Chinese Studies, National University of Singapore

The discussion of training in literary translation came up only in the later days of the symposium. It was first raised by Werner Richter, a member of the Austrian Literary Translators' Association:

> *Now this field is being explicitly excluded in one or two of the five position papers, the others just don't mention it. I realize that literary language with its considerably higher emphasis on form over content doesn't lend itself easily to teaching, decisions being even more subjectively motivated than for technical language usages.*

> *Still, I'd be very interested in the forum's opinions on—and possibly, actual experience with—teaching literary translation. I know that there are several academic (and also extramural) institutions who do teach LitXl: a DESS in Paris, CETL in Belgium, one in Düsseldorf etc. Here as well, my question would be the same as Professor Pym's: What do they actually do?*

In response, two people described courses which they had taught/were teaching:

James St. André of the National University of Singapore outlined the goals and methodologies for a course on both the theory and the practice of literary translation:

> *The course aims to teach students:*

> 1. *How literary translation is different from most other commercial translation, precisely because of the importance of formal characteristics;*

> 2. *That there are basically two extremes to literary translation:*

> • *One exemplified by theorists such as Walter Benjamin, who wish to transform the target language and culture through translations which insist upon trying to maintain formal characteristics*

> • *One exemplified by theorists such as Eugene Nida, who aim at dynamic equivalence which, in the literary world, means that your target language prose must read as if written by a native speaker and retain no trace of the foreign language's peculiarities.*

For exercises, I start them off with two different translations of a short story by Lu Xun, one by Yang Xianyi and his wife Gladys Yang, and the other by an American, Lyell. We go through the story sentence by sentence, picking out differences between the translations and discussing how they relate to the (simplistic) dichotomy in b. above, and also to other factors (temporal—Lyell's translation is 30 years after the Yangs's; cultural—Lyell is American, Gladys Yang is English and her husband Chinese). This section is very technical in the sense of dealing with differences between Chinese and English grammar, syntax, names, etc.

Then they are given a passage from a short story and told to translate it twice, once into as 'smooth' or 'native' an English as possible, and in the other attempting to bring over important formal features from the source language. (I'm sure that many list members are cringing at the thought of encouraging students to do anything that smacks of "literal" translation, but in literary translation there is certainly justification for wanting to preserve formal features, since they are an integral part of the what the text "means").

The course also deals with problems specific to translating literary texts from earlier time periods, and the difference between academic and mass-market translation of literature.

Claudia Valeria Letizia, an Italian translator, described her experience thus:

Along with revising, I also tried my hand at teaching literary translation, at a very very modest level, in a series of workshops held at a publishing house in Rome. Due to limited time (12 sessions, 2 hours each) and the heterogeneous groups of participants, I chose to work on five or six short texts per workshop, usually medium-difficulty (if I may say so) short stories, essays or diary excerpts 4 to 6 pages in length, as I believed translating complete texts would be more satisfactory to the class (by the way, class size varied from 10 to 20). Bearing in mind what I missed most in a translation class when I was a student (first at the Scuola Superiore per Interpreti e Traduttori in Trieste, then at Rome University) and what I learnt best from when still a student and when I eventually entered the trade, I would revise all papers individually at home. Then I would write down for each paragraph those solutions (both "right" and "wrong") which I thought interesting for some reason, and finally I'd go over them all in class, offering if needed my own personal solutions.

This gave me the opportunity to tackle different issues, inherent to the job of translating a text (grammar, syntax, vocabulary, semantics, text analysis, etc.) and also regarding the many joys and sorrows of being a translator.

Thanks to the publisher, who financed the project, a collection of

short stories was published as the result of the work carried out in our last workshop. About ten people who had already attended one or more workshops took part in the project. This time each one of the participants—who, it should be noted, were more or less on the same level concerning general competence—contributed both as a translator and as a reviser, because revision seemed and still seems to me an important part of a translator's training. I have always learnt a lot from revising other people's translations, as well as from being revised. This project was a great experience for all people involved, as it enriched each one of us both professionally and humanly.

Werner Richter responded by noting that he liked their "very practical examples which try to extract general conclusions from individual exercise", and also noted literature's ability to promote the translation student's sense of play with the target language. He brought in the discussion of IT (one of the most lively in the symposium), suggesting:

a sort of creative writing workshop, where one would have students play around with all sorts of styles, forms, target-audience orientations (as in James's example: translate for a literary readership or for an academic audience that is primarily interested in the original) , restricted-code limitations (describe something in rhymes or in dialogue or in words without R), exercises of "staying within an image" (like saying the opposite by using the same metaphorical element) etc.

Riccardo Duranti, who translates English literature into Italian and teaches at the University of Rome, expressed frustration over an earlier attempt to organize a post-graduate course in literary translation "because the resources allocated were insufficient and designing the syllabus proved beyond our abilities. There was a polarization between theory and practice, instead of an integration, and consequently lack of co-ordination between us teachers." He noted that team-work and improving TL competence were vital. Deciding that it was impossible to teach literary translation gradually, Riccardo said:

I had to develop what I call a 'deep end' approach to teaching literary translation, inviting my students to dive into pretty deep and wild waters and learn to swim the hard way. If you learn to swim in those waters (and if you don't sink in the attempt!) you can swim in any situation. So I set them a series of tasks, called "impossible translations", designing a series of practice texts dealing with pretty hard reaches of literary translation in various combinations: poetry, dialect, experimental fiction, nonsense. Much to my amazement, it worked. Nobody really drowned, we learned quite a few tricks, and we had fun. Of course this was integrated with individual and small group projects and even with some theory sessions.

Jeremy Munday from the University of Bradford, UK, mentioned that they encourage students to contact the author of the ST when doing literary translation, and that literary exercises give lesser-known authors a chance to see their work translated into English.

Linking this thread to that concerning accreditation, Claudia Letizia raised the question of how literary translators should be evaluated. Werner Richter replied that he felt there was no need for this at the moment, and reiterated that what was really needed was "valuable and interesting courses in literary translation that go beyond the occasional outing into the strange world of the Essay." He ended by calling on literary translators "to try and set up a training programs in our respective countries—and discuss them while doing so."

Veronika Hon raised the question of self-translation (e.g. Nabokov) and felt that the translator of literature "becomes not just translator but a writer, poet etc.". Neither of these issues was picked up in the following discussion, unfortunately.

Summary of discussion on
Media Translation

Elena Di Giovanni
University of Bologna
Italy

From the very first messages that crossed the symposium channels, the idea was shared that the most important common thread to be systematically applied to translation and interpreting training is the use of up-to-date technologies as everyday resources, from the internet as a search tool to electronic databases and specialized discussion groups - provided they are coupled with a solid foundation in translation skills. Training institutions, at least a large portion of them, are said to have been slow in integrating new technological tools into their programs and shaping them according to the latest market demands for translation, such as software localization and adaptation for dubbing or subtitling.

A few references were made to institutions and countries providing specific training for script translators. The first case to be brought to attention refers to Argentina, where, according to Marcela Caressa, translation for the cinema or television is a minor field of activity, with a very small number of literary translators 'adapting themselves' to work as script translators, without any specific training. In Monica Scheer's experience in Sweden, however, the restricted circle of TV and cinema translators is the result of a very strict training, by which would-be script translators are rigidly selected and prepared for immediate work by being involved in group training and practical experiences. In Italy, as Elena Di Giovanni reports, there are very few courses devoted to media translation, only one of them being a post-graduate professional course. That course provides workshops on script translation, theoretical insights and a short internship experience, although the chances of making a career in the dubbing business are still rare and often reserved for unprofessional translators.

According to Seta Setinc, Courtney Bernal and other experts in this field, the essential features of good script translators are a very strong feeling for the nuances of the language, an innate talent and a sense of rhythm allowing them to create subtitles which have to work as self-sustaining texts. In dubbing, as Jussara Simoes observes, translation gets intermingled with oral communication, having to transfer spoken discourse from SL to TL by means of written translation. Having agreed on the highly specific attributes of a script translator, the point has been made about the difficulty of selecting possibly talented students who might become successful practitioners. On the other hand, reporting on the experience of a course for TV/cinema subtitlers at James Madison University, USA, Christophe Réthoré shifted the emphasis to the essential need to adapt to the market demands for the training of such specialized translators. Echoed by a number of other participants, Réthoré raised the question of the selection of skills to be taught to would-be script translators, "assuming that," as he says, "we know how to 'spot' potential candidates who have the artistic fiber that the job seems to require." In Réthoré's words, in order to draw up effective programs for the teaching of script translation, it is essential to obtain preliminary information from various channels, including the market operators ? e.g. film distributors ? and people who are

currently working as TV/film subtitlers.

Agreeing that script translation is a highly demanding activity, both for dubbing and subtitling, Stefanie Wichmann drew attention to the poor quality of many such works, which are still often done by non-professionals. She stressed the contradiction between the need for highly talented students, for specific training programs and the uneven qualities of the current professional world.

On the whole, the discussion on the requirements and personal experiences in translation and interpreting teaching has called for a shift from teacher-centred courses to more global, communicative job-centred activities, as Daniel Gouadec defines them, involving both students and teacher in the simulation of real working situations. Such criteria can be directly applied to the training of script translators, where real-life experiences are mostly required as an essential part of the curriculum.

The question of how to set up innovative and successful training programs has repeatedly emphasized team-work as a precious resource. In Doug Robinson's description of a translator's current working conditions,

> *almost no translators 'work alone' these days in the more modern*
> *sense: they seek research help from friends and colleagues, experts on-*
> *line and over the phone, their work is edited by project managers,*
> *rewritten by local dealers, etc. Translated texts get sent here and there*
> *and people change them: it is a collaborative effort.*

Relating the idea of teamwork to the field of script translation, it is clear from the words of a 'real' practitioner that collaboration is a basic issue, to be learnt and applied right from the training period. "When I translate," says Marcela Caressa, "I get under the skin of each character as the scriptwriter does. I get great feedback from my colleagues who work for the media. We co-operate in research issues, we support each other. And I could tell you which person translated every single piece of work."

The application of new technologies to the interpreter and translator training programs increasingly requires active collaboration and simulation of real-life working experiences. Only thus might we account for the various demands of the market and the specific requirements of new, specialized fields such as script translation for the cinema or television.

Summary of discussion on
Collaboration, Teamwork and Group Work

Don Kiraly and students in the Innovation in Translator Training seminar
FASK ,
Germersheim, Germany

The concept of collaboration in translator education was first addressed by Don Kiraly's initial contribution calling for a change from a teacher-centred, not to a learner-centred but to a learning centred classroom based on a social constructivist epistemology:

> *Essential features of social-constructivist educational experiences*
> *would include authentic practice in actual professional activities and*
> *a collaborative learning environment including not only interaction*
> *among students but also the extensive involvement of the students in*
> *every aspect of the teaching/learning process.*

Various terms were used by participants in the symposium to characterize learning activities in which students work in co-operation with each other rather than being taught by a teacher through frontal instruction. The three most commonly used terms in this domain were teamwork, group work and collaboration. Most of those who mentioned one or more of these concepts were very much in favour of incorporating collaborative practices in the training process.

There were a few dissenting voices. Monika Scheer, for example, said:

> *Personally I have always stayed away from working groups and I*
> *wonder what happens to the cleverest student in the group. I should*
> *think he finds that kind of work boring, the others profit from his talent*
> *but he doesn't get much in return.*

Jane Helen Johnson recounted her negative impressions of group work in the classroom:

> *It seemed that in the end it was the group dynamics that determined the*
> *final version: the more confident students getting "their" bits in rather*
> *than the less confident ones.*

During the first days of the symposium, the discussion on collaboration was focused on a dialogue between Paul Perry and Li-Shih Huang on the merits of a social constructivist educational philosophy and the benefits as well as the drawbacks of using collaborative work as a mode of educational interaction instead of, or addition to,

conventional teacher-centred instruction.

Li-Shih Huang staunchly defended social constructivism in general and collaboration in particular:

Learning and development occur as an integral aspect of participating in the sociocultural activities that make up our daily experiences as members of the family, school, local community, and so on [...] Future professional translators develop into competent practitioners by socializing themselves into constructing their own learning through interactions and dialogues with self, peers, instructors, practitioners, subject matter experts.

She said it is important that "individual learners become active agents of transformation rather than passive recipients of inputs and this can only be reached by teamwork".

Having initially construed Don Kiraly's position paper as recommending a rejection of teacher-centred as well as learner-centred instruction, Paul Perry stressed that there should be a balance between the three:

The transmission of established knowledge should be teacher-centered [...]; development of technical skills should be learning-centered; and attention to individual development should be learner-centered.

Li Shih Huang, echoing the intended spirit of Kiraly's commentary, said that teachers should ask themselves: How can we effectively mediate or facilitate the process of the learner's development? Whether teacher-centered direct learning is effective or not depends on the context. It should be considered at what stage that method might be most effective, and how it should be carried out to make it more than the mere transmission of encapsulated knowledge and strategies.

Li Shih Huang confirmed her strong belief in a collaborative environment in the classroom situation:

I think our job as teaching professionals is to pay continuously whole-hearted and detailed attention to the totality of learners' learning process and to our classroom that is coming into being. Speaking for myself, I know that I believe in creating a classroom community that shares a commitment to caring, collaboration, and a dialogic mode of meaningful 'knowledge' building.

Paul Perry supported the concept of group work, but believed it should follow individual work and teacher-centred instruction. This point of view was also taken by other participants in the symposium. For example, Celina Cavalcante stated:

[...] students must practice but before that, teacher-centered classes will be very useful [...] students need real world practice, yes, but they are taking a course for a reason, and that reason is that some

experienced professionals have had some hard-earned experiences before them, and they want to learn about it. [...] So, teacher-centered classes have the objective of showing students some things experience has taught to the teachers, it's a fast way to learn things that were learned through years of hard work, and are now being shown by the teachers, in an easy way, for students to use them when they work.

Similarly, Wolfgang Frick, writing from Perth, Australia, stated:

Basic training must always be teacher-centered, but with advanced students, learning can become student-centered. The teacher should become a facilitator/catalyst to help students get away from their dependency upon the teacher.

Doug Robinson's contributions, on the other hand, stressed the epistemological opposition inherent in the teacher- vs. learning-centred classroom, in effect questioning the appropriateness of a progression from the former to the latter:

In pedagogical terms, this is a distinction between a hegemonic conception of learning based on the funneling of discrete facts and skills into individuals in isolation from real-world social contexts and an older, nowadays marginalized, conception of learning based on pragmatic group performance. In the former, the learner is imagined as a little world, cut off from all other worlds; what knowledge exists in that world, the learner has assimilated and retained. Knowledge is this learner's possession, his [...] private property.[...] In the latter, learning is imagined as a natural byproduct of social life, of living and interacting with other people. People working and playing together learn together. And while learning is enormously important, it is most naturally a means to another end: the successful performance of an action.

Robinson went on to demonstrate, through his extended concept of "agency," that today the work of professional translators is based on collaborative teamwork:

[...] translators are not autonomous individuals producing translations like omnipotent gods out of the fullness of their (textual, cultural, economic, psychosocial) world-mastery but parts of larger translation or translatorial agencies [...]

Several comments revealed that some participants who had had negative experiences with group work themselves were still in favour of incorporating it into their instruction practices. For example, Jesús Torres del Rey wrote:

Then there is the question of group work: I have to admit I always hated it. But then I have grown up in an individualistic society under individualistic notions of originality and objective value. Translation questions those principles.[...] The problem is I was never helped to learn to work collaboratively, through collaboration. I see collaborative group work to be one of the main fields of development for translator training in the future. It doesn't just mean translating something in groups (narrow sense) but working in teams to achieve something, which can be materially summarised in a translation / interpreting job / product.[...] There is little known about teaching students to profit from each others' work, about thinking outside their own world.

Some participants who had had successful experiences with some kind of team work in their professional lives showed an interest in adapting it to their teaching: For example, Amit Kochabi, from Israel, wrote:

I have enjoyed cooperating as one of a pair in translating Classical Arabic poetry [...] into Hebrew. In one instance I translated myself and asked for feedback from a colleague who was both an academic expert of classical Arabic poetry and a contemporary Arabic poet. [...] In the other instance I cooperated with a young and wild Hebrew poet with no knowledge of Arabic but with a good background in Greek classical poetry in order to freely experiment with the various possibilities of recreating the poems in Hebrew. I thoroughly enjoyed both [approaches] and recommend the process. I have not introduced this practice into my classes - the discussion makes me think I will next semester.

Several students at the University of Mainz who had participated in both teacher-centred and collaborative classes contributed their thoughts on group work. Stefanie Wichmann pointed out that it is sometimes hard to rely on the other members of one's group as some students prefer to work on their own, are not as motivated as others, or simply want to get a free ride. Uncomfortable interpersonal situations can arise, and a few group members may end up doing almost all of the work for the entire group. Sabine Rau, on the other hand, mentioned that there are many students who are indeed willing to participate in collaborative work and who even prefer it to the traditional teacher-centred approach. In her view, collaborative work provides students with skills they will need after graduation. They will have to be able to work in teams, to ask other people for assistance and to provide assistance to others. "People will have to learn to work together and not against each other." She added that one positive aspect of tackling real tasks is that students will be aware of the fact that "someone really needs their translation", and that they will thus put much more effort into it than as if it were the usual newspaper article to be translated for homework.

Karin Feger, also a student at Mainz, said:

Social interaction with other group members enhances the learning process and consequently the skills required for translation [...] a much higher level of quality is achieved (as a result of motivation). In addition, the students are happy to have gained useful experience regarding problems that "real world" translators have to face on a daily basis: time pressure, research, contacting the client etc.

There were several contributions dealing with collaboration in the training of translators outside of a university environment. Terry Chesher, for example, reported on the use of collaborative working methods by a government service in Australia:

We paid two translators, one to translate, the other to check. The aim was to try to reduce the chance of translator mistakes in published health information, and to avoid back translation, which has its own problems.

This quality review system required two translators to collaborate, as the checker was asked to contact the translator about proposed changes, and when agreement was reached, the resulting team effort was returned to me, the client, and then published. This was applied in about 20 languages, and translators told us at workshops that they liked this teamwork approach where they were collaborating rather than competing with their peers.

One of the last contributions to the symposium was a resounding vote of support for collaboration and the incorporation of authentic work in training. Bob Feron reported on the translation apprenticeship program he runs as Head of Language Services at the American Embassy in Brazil:

The translation apprentices in our program learn the many techniques and methods required to produce completely reliable and accurate translations 100% of the time. [...] Everything they learn is done in a team environment, through a collaborative methodology.

Feron was of the opinion that collaborative skills "are best taught and learned in a working environment, rather than a teaching environment." He also says, "I'm now convinced that teamwork is definitely the best available method, both from an instructional perspective and from the standpoint of attaining high quality translations".

Some participants teaching at universities have had experience getting students to work collaboratively even in classes with 80 or more students. Noeleen Hargan, who teaches in Rome, wrote:

I present texts and tasks, drawing attention to a few possible linguistic and translation problems, or eliciting comments from students... Students get down to hands-on work individually, in pairs or in small groups, as they prefer. I go around the lecture hall, answering students' questions, taking notes on points to raise at the discussion stage. [...] Translation dilemmas and theoretical questions crop up frequently, as do discussions on source and target languages and cultures. [...]Time never drags in these lessons from my point of view.[...] Students repeatedly say that what they appreciate most is the opportunity for hands-on practice [...]

David Ashworth, writing from Hawaii, also suggested using group projects as a way to leverage the students in the class, with one result being that the teacher does not have to correct assignments for the students on an individual basis.

Daniel Gouadec said that three levels of teamwork are involved in translator training at his institution:

Level one: All trainers involved must work as a team, more especially if the team has to integrate teachers of various disciplines called on to contribute to the making of translators and accommodate professionals as trainers.

Level two: Teamwork is also something that students must practice, and for two reasons:

> *a. Teamwork improves learning conditions (peer-teaching, confrontation of ideas, and everything that has been better said by others); and*

> *b. The job of a translator tends to become more and more of a team job.*

Level three: Teamwork is also a matter of getting trainers and trainees to work together, not in a teacher-student relationship, but in situations that do reflect, or copy, the real world of translating. This means the trainer has to take on the functions of adviser, reviser, and others. It also means that trainers and trainees would probably benefit a lot from deciding that they are jointly involved in producing the best possible translation.

Gouadec went on to say:

Group work is the very basis of teaching [...]: it is highly efficient and it is the only way for teachers not to be overwhelmed with revision. We reckon that what our students learn comes, to the tune of 50% at least, from peer-learning in group-work. Incidentally, what our students know about technologies and how to use them comes in equal fractions

from the teachers and fellow-students.

In his concluding statement, Don Kiraly noted the eminently collaborative nature of this symposium, which can serve as a model for the appropriation of ideas and for the perpetuation of innovation in translator education. He also emphasized the role that collaborative work can play in helping to expand individual students' (and teachers') horizons beyond their narrow personal goals.

Summary of discussion on
Translation and Technology

Yves Gambier
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Turku, Finland

In a symposium on "Innovation in training" we might have expected more discussion on technology. There were only about 30 (quite short) e-mails out of more than 350 messages, with more than 320 participants. In the preliminary position papers, technology was strongly mentioned, for different reasons and for different purposes. Relevant questions were asked in the preliminary statement. However, technology did not emerge as a 'hot' topic.

The statements were sometimes very strong, sometimes less so but very often without demonstration, without arguments, without empirical evidence. We find quite a lot of "In my opinion", "I agree with", "I think", "I am sure/I am not sure that", "we must", "it is very clear that", "I believe", "I am convinced", "I still feel", etc.

On the other hand, we find hardly any discussion on the use of new tools in the training process. For most of us, translation and technology meant tools for professional translators (requirements from the job market, today and tomorrow) and not pedagogical challenges for would-be translators (impacts on our way of teaching and new opportunities to interact with students).

Why technology?

"Innovations are fed by technology"; "newer institutions are better equipped with computers" (Wichman). "In the long run technology will have a tremendous impact" (Perry). "Technology is not a magic bullet" (Mac Dougall). "The market asks translators to send messages by fax, by email, etc." (Jolán). "Our students may work, of course, as translators, but also as project managers, terminologists, linguistic information specialists, multilingual desktop publishers, and so on" (Shreve). "New generations will be technological generations of students" (Torres del Rey). "Concerning jobs and job opportunities for our graduates (if you have a strong background in language technologies: terminology management, localization tools, project management, CAT and MT, etc.)" (Wright).

When speaking of training translators and the possible use of technology, we seem to have forgotten where we were talking from, the backgrounds of the trainees and the trainers, the type of market we are aiming at, the level of our (human and financial) resources. It is as if general statements were enough and were always relevant.

What for and how?

On-line dictionaries, the internet, email, electronic terminology sources and other types of data banks, translation memory software, word-processors, desktop publishing, electronic text corpora (on-line and on CD-ROM), spelling and grammar checkers...

have all been given as examples of tools used to retrieve information, to do research, to process and organize the translator's work "faster and more efficiently" (Maia). But does this mean that what is useful for individual translators is clearly useful in a class? Do we limit the use of the internet "to search [...] for jobs"? (Kochabi). To what extent does the introduction of computers increase the efficiency of translation and the marketability of would-be translators?

Parallel reading, seeking help from different forums dealing with translating/ interpreting, editing texts or multimedia documents, compiling terminologies, etc. (cf. Frick): do all these tasks require the same kind of training? Can they be/must they be integrated into the curriculum and every class?

If a school or an institute decides to open their training to technology, very quickly one has to ask two simple questions:

1. Who is going to do it?: "Lecturers from the university's information technology sections" (Frick), "most qualified to give instructions on new technology are often not in translation departments" (Hung). Are these pessimistic predictions true everywhere? "The students (in translation) are often there because they are not attracted to technology" (Maia). Really? In certain cases they are there because they do not want to become teachers...but they are fans of technology.

2. What to offer?: "Universities should not merely teach translation technology, instead they should provide a series of criteria for evaluating these tools" (Dutz). "Ignore the ephemeral aspects of the technology. Don't teach the tool, teach the principles..." (Shreve). "One who excels in technological skills but lacks those fundamental abilities (= text interpretation, composition of a coherent, readable and audience-tailored draft translation, research, and checking/correcting) will flounder" (Perry, Cavalcante).

Teaching and training

Surprisingly, nobody questioned the impact of technology on the ways teaching and training are organized. Would they help to develop student-centered classes? Some changes will be inevitable: for instance teaching how to get information, how to cope with translation memory, how to use voice-recognition technology (which will affect the relation between written and oral, as well as concepts like language standard, readability, acceptability, text/discourse). The multidimensionality of language(s) and the multimedia will change the way we access, understand and translate documents of all kinds.

Distance-learning and on-line translator training are still largely ignored in our field, although the number of initiatives is growing. Little has been learned from the experience accrued in our neighbouring fields, even when there would appear to be lucrative prizes at stake. But as suggested by Pym, why not start by simple e-mail exchanges between students from parallel programs? In many schools, languages are taught by exchanging video recordings made by the students and by using e-mail between "pen friends".

Yes, technology can be a stimulating challenge but we need to deepen and test our ideas, to develop experiments, to confront our projects. An excellent opportunity perhaps to face and question the ways we are teaching translation and training translators.

Summary of discussion on
Terminology (Neologisms)

Francis Henrik Aubert
Centre for Translation and Terminology
University of São Paulo, Brazil

The symposium's opening statement and the position papers, bound to the actual theme of translator and interpreter training, did not bring up matters related to terminology and lexical and/or phraseological creation. Nevertheless, the place and the role of terminological skills in the training of professional translators and the rather intricate (and at times contradictory) relationship between translation and terminology soon proved to be a matter of some importance for the discussion.

The topic of neologisms was initially suggested by Jorge Pais (Portugal). He proposed three main issues: (1) in the absence of sufficient output by terminologists and language specialists, translators constantly create new terms in the target language; (2) the creation of new terms in the target language takes most often the form of a direct loan from English; and (3) this procedure may represent a danger for the identity of the target languages and, in the long term, for the their very survival.

In the ensuing debate, these main issues reappeared in a number of different guises. Terminological creation by translators was clearly accepted as a fact of (translational) life, but seen in different lights: (i) as acceptable after sufficient care has been taken to check whether an accepted equivalent has already been determined (Margaret Rogers); (ii) as possibly originating from an insufficient command of one's mother tongue, in the case of technologists, and from an insufficient command of the TL, in the case of translators (Jussara Simões). [This last point, in turn, led to another topic in the debate: the often insufficient training provided by the translation courses in the mother tongue.]

One of the main presuppositions was that whenever a neologism appears as a loan, it will usually stem from (North-American) English (Jorge Pais). This is to a large extent true, although other mainstream languages will also appear on the scene (Krouglov). This is indeed the case of European Portuguese, in which at least part of the terminology of electronic data processing stems directly from the French solutions (logicial from logiciel i.e. 'software', *ficheiro* from *fichier*, i.e. 'file', etc.). As Margaret Rogers and Krouglov pointed out, however, loan terms will often undergo semantic shifts and, despite surface identity, will often end up as being only partially equivalent to the originally "borrowed" term.

Overall, in the specific case of loan-words (with or without phono-graphological and/or morphological adaptations) as opposed to the establishment of vernacular equivalents, the participants seemed uncomfortable with what they often felt as ludicrous creations in the TL, and, at the same time, uneasy about the conceivable loss of linguacultural identity. Here, the differences in political, cultural, linguistic, demographic and historical settings clearly came to surface. In certain countries, official bodies legislate on terminological usage. In others, no such entity exists or has sufficient political status to impose a specific vernacular usage. Different countries using the same language often have different policies, attitudes, etc. in relation to loan words

(Paul Perry). Speakers (and, of course, translators) of languages that are in a minority position (demographically speaking) will tend to see their linguaculture frankly imperilled by the overwhelming onslaught of foreign (mainly English) terms, while those operating within other major languages will, as a rule, take a more relaxed attitude, despite occasional "purist" outbursts.

To sum up, neology and neologisms are definitely issues of concern for teachers, researchers and professional translators. Few if any direct contributions, however, focused on the problems posed by neology in the training of future translators. As suggested by several of the participants, this is a matter of such complexity that it could well do with an on-line seminar of its own.

TRANSLATOR TRAINING
AND E-LEARNING

Report on an online symposium

Notes on Translator Training
(replies to a questionnaire)

Debbie Folaron
Adjunct Assistant Professor, Translation Studies Certificate Program,
New York University; Language and Technology Manager at Eriksen
Translations; former Associate Instructor in the synchronous-based
training program at NYUonline

What direct experience of distance teaching do you have in the translator-training field?

I have been teaching Introduction to Translation Studies in the online Translation Studies program at New York University (School of Continuing and Professional Studies). In this program we currently use Prometheus, a learning-management platform designed basically for asynchronous delivery of learning content. We will be changing platforms in the Spring in accordance with NYU's Virtual College specifications.

Most students in the program are adult working professionals, and the range of translation experience varies from those who have none to those who occasionally work as translators or interpreters. This presents certain challenges to the instructor, but also provides great opportunities for drawing on various types of professional expertise and experience in order to create an engaging learning environment. I also have training experience on the Interwise learning management system, designed for 'live' synchronous delivery of learning content. We have not yet implemented a synchronous-based course in the Translation Studies program.

What kind of training are these media most appropriate for?

I will address this question in two parts: 1) online vs. on-site classroom environments, and 2) online classes specifically designed for translator training.

In the first, I believe that we cannot view an online classroom as a virtual 'place' in which to simply deposit our traditional on-site learning materials and techniques. Online and on-site learning environments are inherently different mediums when it comes to the design and delivery of the course content. Both can be extremely effective and even complementary. In fact, many programs today are opting for the 'blended' ('hybrid') approach in order to give students the best of both worlds. Some of the issues that I have found to be particularly relevant to online learning environments include:

- understanding human interactions with computers and software applications, within the overall context of learning (likewise, understanding 'learning' in the context of an electronic environment)
- incorporating response mechanisms for people's diverse learning styles within the instructional design and delivery of a course

- organizing and articulating clearly the objectives and content of the course (everything has to be spelled out!)

- accommodating for the lack of human visual cues that we all rely on in an on-site classroom (hence, everything must be articulated and made explicit)

- managing the online learning environment in terms of a 'facilitator'

- creating and promoting interactivity (the term 'interactivity' encompasses many levels)

- facilitating feedback from the students so you assess where they are in terms of understanding the course material

- facilitating conversation so you can understand student backgrounds and integrate their experiences and skills into the classroom learning environment (relevance and motivation)

- creating and maintaining a dynamic and communicative environment online so that participants do not feel that the class is based solely on downloading required materials and working alone.

In other words, what do we want 'anytime, anywhere' learning to mean for our students?

As for the second part, I believe that an online environment is very conducive to translator training. To begin with, most professional translators today deal with digital and electronic medium in the course of their daily work. Honing the necessary electronic skills inevitably becomes part and parcel of the course itself. As course developer and instructor, I have tried to keep in mind the nature of an online learning environment when creating class activities. I have also been keen on soliciting feedback from the students in order to more effectively gauge what works for them and what doesn't. Since online learning is a relatively new experience for everyone, this information is valuable for developing and refining courses in the future. Basically, my 10-week Intro course in Prometheus has been developed as follows:

- Each week students are allowed access to a new session. In the Intro course, these sessions are designed around translating for diverse areas, for example translating personal and academic documents, consumer-oriented texts, scientific and technical documents, translating for legal firms and the medical profession, translating for the web. I use documents that are 'specialized' yet common to our life experiences, such as: an academic program application, credit card information, employment contract, printer manual, medical insert for allergy medication, etc. The course is designed so that students can get a feel for different types of translation work, and the challenges inherent to particular fields and text types. It also gives them an opportunity to discover (if they don't already know!) what areas they might wish to pursue for specialization. In this regard, choosing the texts for the online course is not unlike choosing the texts for the on-site course, except that each document must be prepared (as Word DOCs or PDFs in my case) and uploaded to Prometheus on the server, from where they will be downloaded by the students.

- Weekly assignments include participation in chat and discussion threads, reading and research, translation, and working in revision mode with a class partner. Due to the different time zones and countries, we currently have three 1-hour chat sessions scheduled per week, so that each chat group is small enough and everyone has a chance to participate. Students love the global feel of the class and are very aware of the fact that, were it not for the internet, they would not be participating in this class together! Given that not all students everywhere have free, unlimited internet time, I try to moderate the chat sessions productively so that there is a balance between spontaneous discussion (for example, the hurricane that hit the Caribbean) and regulated discussion about the week's session assignment. The discussion threads are also very active. We have categories created for assignment-specific comments and suggestions, general professional translation practices, suggested readings, a parallel document-sharing board, and a board for the weekly assignment 'follow-up'. This semester, the students are working in revision mode, which has proven to be very instructive. They post their pre-revised and post-revised translations on the discussion board. Some students are now devising their own short glossaries with suggested translations and submitting them to their revision mode partners in an Excel file along with their translation. I download the translations and mark them up electronically with further suggestions and comments and send them back. In addition to submitting the weekly translation, students also submit the following: a parallel document that was useful for them; a paragraph on their translation strategy and envisioned target audience; an invoice for the job; and a commentary on the readings for the week. I have found that by asking them to think about their own processes and procedures while translating they have been eager to read short essays and articles by various translation scholars (including 'theory'). This has been a pleasant experience!

What 'online' objectives are met through these activities?

Starting with the first chat session, a collaborative environment needs to be created under the guidance of the instructor who is the 'facilitator' (a term encompassing several roles, including those of tutor, lecturer, and consultant). Students may not be accustomed to learning in this kind of environment, so that daunting feeling of being overwhelmed by technology must be dealt with first. In addition, an extra effort is needed to articulate thoughts and goals clearly, otherwise students will soon feel lost and disoriented. Finally, students cannot see you 'live', nor may they ever know you or each other face-to-face, so it is helpful to attain a certain 'comfort level' that facilitates a sense of teamwork and collaboration (i.e. 'interactivity') in order to compensate for the lack of physical presence. Even in the online environment and virtual classroom, learning is a very human activity!

Interactivity is the key to a successful online course, perhaps even to all learning. In my experience, an elaborate platform or implementation of lots of bells and whistles is not a prerequisite for achieving this goal. At NYU, we are able to use Prometheus as a virtual space, the interface through which all of our activities can take place. This facilitates things to a certain degree because all emailing, file posting, uploading and downloading, tracking, and information can be managed through a single interface.

One way to create interactivity is to create diverse categories for discussion. This allows students an opportunity to express themselves in matters that are relevant to the class experience as well as the translation field. A 'Class chat' category, for example, provides a place to get to know each other as colleagues and classmates, post pictures, wish 'happy birthday', etc. Other categories provide a place to voice their opinions, thoughts and suggestions. In terms of the translation class, I find that they all have ready-to-be-voiced opinions on:

- running internet searches for good background sources, parallel documents, and glossaries
- comprehending the source-language document, including passages where the author may be unclear or ambiguous
- searching for appropriate terminology
- describing their own strategies and decision-making processes
- writing effectively in the target language
- establishing criteria for evaluating a translation when working in revision mode with each other
- dealing with deadlines between each other and the instructor
- specializing in certain fields of translation.

By creating a collaborative and interactive environment that is professional yet non-threatening (the luxury of the classroom!), the instructor can facilitate sharing and learning. In a way, this emulates the way many traditional translators have learned their profession: by consulting, talking, reading, writing and researching.

Many electronic skills needed for professional translation work can be learned and refined throughout an online course:

- working with standard file formats (Word DOCs, PDFs, etc.)
- working with HTML
- trying out standard CAT tools by downloading evaluation versions
- creating and maintaining glossaries in Excel
- working with the 'track changes' feature in revision mode
- downloading and uploading files
- running useful internet searches
- evaluating internet sites and determining which ones are useful
- compiling online resources that can serve as the basis for their translation libraries
- scanning documents from paper to digital format and working with the electronic files
- participating in translators' discussion lists.

In the future, I would like to initiate an electronic library for online students and instructors. I believe this would be very beneficial.

Finally, developing and delivering an online course requires a lot of time in order to maintain the interactivity and cohesiveness of the group, and this needs to be taken into consideration by an institution's administration.

Which aspects of translation cannot be taught via distance teaching techniques?

I think that all the fundamental aspects of translation can be dealt with in an online environment. Professional translators in today's marketplace are often working in some kind of online environment. I imagine it would be a bit more challenging for interpreting classes!

Are you aware of any empirical research comparing distance learning and face-to-face learning in the field of translator training?

I am not aware of any research of this kind. However, there is a great deal of research comparing distance and face-to-face learning in other fields.

Notes on Translator Training
(replies to a questionnaire)

Daniel Gouadec
Head of the Translator training program at the University of Rennes 2, France. Teacher of professional translation.

What direct experience of distance teaching do you have in the field of translator training?

I have taught :

1. A complete translation course using booklets, exercise books, the telephone
2. A complete translator-training program using a mail server and the internet at large; corresponding to a full-blown translator's degree (Diplôme d'Université de traducteur généraliste) that has been running for four years.

What kind of training are these media most appropriate for?

I would say most can be done using a mail server, provided that the server allows you to post the course files and documents for students to download and also allows the students to upload their homework for you to check. Setting up a dedicated website would be a plus (but can be dispensed with if the students are prepared to download the files - which they would want to do if you set up a website). The advantage of a file server is that no one is going to get the directories wrong since these are already built into the server.

Chat is generally for the students (teachers being excluded) so they can discuss the contents, objectives, problems and whatnot. One of the students will inevitably inform the teacher(s) about what the group thinks is advisable or required.

Personal contact between teacher(s) and students can be maintained though private email correspondence. It is very important that people can correspond both at large via the (discussion) list (for matters of general interest) and also more restrictively (privately) with the teacher(s) - who may opt to answer via the list if the point is of general concern. This does not completely rule out the telephone, which is the ultimate means of getting things straight - whether the problem has to do with the course or anything else.

What aspects of translation cannot be taught via distance teaching techniques?

None. The limitations are on budgets. Literally 'showing' things (animation) is out of the question, since videos cost a lot of money. Webcams (notably for video-conferencing with the students) may make a difference here. We are just in the process of buying the camera, so we do not actually know how it will be integrated into our teaching system.

Are you aware of any empirical research comparing distance learning and face-to-face learning in the field of translator training?

No. I assumed there would be none, but every day there is more empirical research. IT has changed distance teaching by making the teacher(s) directly and (almost) immediately accessible (instantly available) to the students. This means that the course itself can be driven by the demand of the students and must be adapted, at all times and at very short notice, to that demand. The teachers' responses can be required and, when required, must be immediate: the result of technology is that students cannot wait. In fact, we are giving lots of empirical answers to problems that have not even been formulated.

The point is, you do not seem to require much research. It is a matter of the students expressing their demands, progressively getting things clear, and the teachers giving their answers, up to the point where everyone is satisfied. This is because demands can be individual, or rather, because every individual as such can claim access to the teacher(s) and the teacher cannot run away (not for long, anyway).

Again, this applies to all forms of distance teaching, since the paradox is that, given the proper media and tools, distance brings teachers and students closer. Our greatest advantage is that we have introduced all the techniques and effects of distance teaching as a part of our on-site translator training program. We use the intranet as a (distance) teaching medium within the same buildings. There is not even a difference in scale between distance-teaching at close range (same building) and distance teaching at considerable distances. The difference is that you also meet the on-site students and can use demonstration and animation if needed. For the rest, I would say we have built all the advantages of distance-teaching (availability of teaching material, immediacy of exchanges...) into (on top of) face-to-face teaching.

Notes on translator training
(replies to a questionnaire)

Margarita Rodríguez
Former translation teacher for the Universidad Metropolitana in
Caracas, Venezuela.

What direct experience of distance teaching do you have in the field of translator training?

I have designed a few and taught two online courses on a mixed face-to-face / distance mode, namely Revision Techniques and Electronic Tools for Translators. These courses are offered in a Bachelor's degree program for translator training. We used Learning Space (a distance learning platform) and hosted the online course on the university's server, including email messages, text retrieval, links to documentation sites, online dictionaries, glossaries, databases, style guides, e-zines, and disuscussion lists.

One of the online courses was 'Technology Resources for Translators', taught at the Universidad Metropolitana in Caracas, Venezuela. It was a practical subject, designed to make the student familiar with the variety of new resources available for translators, mainly via the internet. These resources would help the student achieve higher productivity and quality in their performance as future translators. The course was taught on a 75-25% basis. That is, 25% of the class (one week a month) a face-to-face class was delivered, while 75% of the class (three weeks a month) distance learning was carried out by students alone, under teacher supervision. Face-to-face classes were held in a laboratory equipped with computers and internet access, and distance learning could be undertaken from either the student's home PC or from a PC at the university campus.

The course was divided into three modules, namely Computer Translation, Online Resources, and Translation Memories, plus a Getting Started Unit. In working through the course modules, the students chose three texts to translate, one for each module. As they did so, students became familiar with computer translation programs, online dictionaries, glossaries, terminology databases, translation magazines, translator's discussion lists, and computer-aided translation software, also known as translation memories. Afterwards, students had to take part in a debate and submit a report, one for each module, on their assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of the resources plus the original text, a draft translation, a final translation, and any attachments.

We found the hybrid model provided us with unique new opportunities like 'to teach and not to see', or 'to allow them to try by themselves'. Most students reported being satisfied with getting the teacher's help without attending classes on a rainy day, when sick, on a trip or at work. Additionally, they found it very useful to arrive at their own conclusions and find new ways of doing 'old' things. This was the result of real hands-on activities.

This type of teaching/learning offers higher levels of flexibility, independence, sophistication, and productivity. We intended to provide the professional market not only with efficient translators but also with technology-literate ones. Our course proved beneficial for the teachers as it gave us the opportunity to monitor students' work continuously. We saw how, in class, students expressed their opinion on the subject not as if they were naively talking about something they didn't know, that only the teacher knows. Instead, they were capable of holding a tête-à-tête discussion on something they knew very well. We must not forget that there were some restrictions on good course performance, such as some students' low interest in technology, or the quality of telecom and internet service providers in the country, as well as the capacity of servers and platforms at the university campus, which gave us a hard time once in a while.

Teachers, in this and other subjects, are now able to use their working hours to trace their students' progress and prepare their courses better. This also frees the teachers from repeating the same information every time, or having extra copies for students who didn't get their assignments on time.

What kind of training are these media most appropriate for?

I think they are best suited for graduate or final year courses, and subjects with a higher level of practical application, i.e., translation, revision, writing practices, terminology and documentation, teamwork.

What aspects of translation cannot be taught via distance teaching techniques?

If any, that would be the insights of an experienced and communicative translator (teacher) that are difficult to achieve, and useful to imitate.

The Vicenza-CETRA Project

Giuliana Schiavi
Coordinator of the Scuola Superiore Interpreti Traduttori in Vicenza,
Italy; teacher of translation from English into Italian, and Translation
Theory

What direct experience of distance teaching do you have in the field of translator training?

The Vicenza-CETRA Project involved:

- On-site translation classes integrating email and the internet; shared translation project (via email and the internet) with Don Kiraly at School of Applied Linguistics and Cultural Studies (FASK), Germersheim;
- Translation Theory classes integrating email, the internet and video-conferences. We are currently working on a project with Professor José Lambert to 'have him' in my translation theory classes. We will use the equipment set up for interpreter training;
- Interpreter training: Linguists' Lab is a simulator software package for teaching, self-teaching and practising the techniques of simultaneous and consecutive interpreting, and sight translation, to and from any language. Students have the option to work at home and send their audio files to the teacher to be corrected. All students are connected to their teachers via audio systems and webcams.

In 1998, with the supervision of Jose Lambert and the co-ordination of Salvatore Mele (professor of Translation from Italian into English) and myself, our school started up a project for the exchange of linguistic and translation competence with other European institutes by using computer and internet-related resources.

The general project was driven by several needs:

- To foster global linguistic interaction with peers in the external classroom in order to enhance language production in the target language and also to reassess the concept of text. Within the course, language contacts with native speakers tend to be limited to the native-speaker teacher, or to occasional stays abroad. Moreover, the workload to which the student is submitted tends to make language acquisition secondary. Finally the same workload tends to transform each subject into a closed class whose aim, generally speaking, seems to be to pass the final exam;
- To revise the structure of the traditional translation class into a foreign language, with the aim of toning down the naturally normative and authoritative features of the teacher (very often seen as arbitrary by students);

- To promote exchanges gradually for all languages taught at our institute with similar institutes abroad and eventually to involve our classes with their peer classes abroad via computer and internet technologies, after a monitoring period with restricted groups.

Teaching staff from the Institut Libre Marie Haps at Brussels, from the Hoger Instituut voor Vertalers & Tolken at Antwerp, and from the Institut für Übersetzer- und Dolmetscherausbildung at Graz participated in a brainstorming session with the Vicenza students at the beginning of the 1998-99 academic year. These institutes and their classes appeared to share quite a few pedagogical, institutional and scholarly features with ours. Aside from the common ground shared in terms of linguistic specialization (Graz, Brussels and Antwerp focus heavily on Italian, and their students and teaching staff bring in a professional level of expertise in German and French), the partners nonetheless presented differences in pedagogical traditions which were viewed as potentially stimulating for future interaction. The activities to be carried out in common were identified in terms of a gradually extended co-operation. For example, Italian students could submit their foreign-language translations to their French-Belgian or Austrian native-speaking partners, and vice versa, or terminological and conceptual problems could be solved in conjunction with the students' peers, as in the case of the Antwerp-Vicenza interaction. Given the obvious workload for teachers, it was accepted from the beginning that the number of exchanges - i.e. the number of documents to be discussed from a distance - as well as their goals had to be clearly limited.

The exchange took place via email and required enormous organizational effort. First of all our computer lab had to be revamped. Each student and teacher was given a personal email account at the school. Each exchange group had a special email account for sending and receiving material concerning the specific exchange. Each teacher appointed a student who was then responsible for the email account and would collect the texts, process them and send them, check for answers and bring them to their class. Periodically, there would be supervisors' briefings (Mele, Schiavi, Lambert).

The initial texts were chosen by the teachers involved during the November meeting, after which we proceeded as follows (the example given below is taken from the Italian-French exchange, but can be generalised to other language pairs):

- the Italian group individually translated the text within a traditional class structure and then sent their partner group a few versions of the text (usually three), which were the end result of a collective class discussion;
- the French group did the same translation, and also sent their texts to the Italian group;
- each group then analysed the (translated) texts in class and sent their comments and feedback to their partners.

This last step was the most interesting because, in the case of translation from French into Italian, the Italian students received translations done by non-native speakers of Italian, and consequently had an opportunity to critically and productively analyse texts written in Italian by non-native speakers. They were thus forced first to think about their native language and devise ways of expressing themselves metalinguistically.

Secondly, the students had to think about, propose, and justify possible alternatives. These two aspects had a special impact on the students' ability to analyse and self-edit their own translations. (One of the things I personally find most difficult, as a trainer, is to make my students aware of their translations as independent texts which have to work properly - whatever we mean by that - in the target system, and not only within the limited boundaries established by the classroom environment with its pedagogical requirements and impositions.) The students also acted as 'clients' in that they were given an opportunity to assess a translation product into their language and decide if and how the text was fulfilling their expectations as native speakers.

The exchange worked, and still works, in both directions. When Vicenza students translated texts from Italian into French, they received exactly what is described above. Moreover, they had a chance to submit translations into what is for them a foreign language to native speakers of that language and receive feedback (different in quality and aims from the feedback received from teachers) which normally no one ever receives, not even in professional life. Very rarely does a translator have a complete, overall idea of the effect their product has on the recipient, unless they are working within the country where the target language is spoken. I am thinking of translations commissioned by Italian clients and aimed at functioning in a 'another' country - as the Jew of Malta would say - but which, since they are delivered to the Italian client, tend to satisfy their personal needs and meet their expectations of what a translation is or should look like. It is not rare for a client to check specifically for corresponding paragraphs in the two texts, or the occasional word (for some reasons very important for them), and quite often a client will feel uneasy if the translated text is visibly 'reworded'.

As a sort of accumulation effect, this also encouraged teachers and students to actively make their own contributions to a discussion concerning translating into a non-native language, with the related facts and fictions.

In this respect, a further step was introduced in the second year of the experiment. Students from Graz sent our students a long 'real life' translation into Italian, without providing the source text. Our students did the same thing, but into German using a different text. Comments were mutually exchanged from the point of view of a 'client' who has no access to the source text (as is often the case in real life).

At the end of the first-year pilot project, word spread about the project and the idea appealed to other institutions who decided to participate. For the 1999-2000 academic year, the Italian Department at Salford University, UK, actively took part in exchanging translated texts on the same basis. In 2000-2001 the University of Málaga joined in, and this is currently an active part of our school life.

The pilot year was also a trial period during which the supervisors could assess the validity of the initial propositions . The positive aspects are listed above. There were also drawbacks, or aspects which no one had taken into consideration.

We noticed the need for strong, central organization, at least at the beginning. For instance the organisers took for granted that everyone involved had a general understanding of the project; we underestimated the need for constant monitoring of the activities undertaken by all parties involved.

Other problems were: differences in the institutes' academic calendars; differences in the technical equipment of the institutes involved; problems related to the combinations of student groups (e.g. there is a distinction between a final-year student of a three-year course and their peers in a four-year course, both in competence and

expectations). In this respect, it is important to take into consideration the direction of the translation (e.g. a third-year Italian student of translation into Italian is probably better than a foreign fourth-year student working in the same direction).

There were also problems in keeping track of the email exchanges between groups. There were psychological aspects, neglected at first, but which nonetheless had a huge impact. The project meant that the traditional classroom was totally opened up, and the teacher was no longer the sole repository of authority and truth. In some cases, this brought about a sort of defensive attitude, deriving most likely from a natural fear of being judged. This in turn led to over-zealousness in checking the students' translations before they were sent to the peer group. These translations were consequently 'perfect' and failed to provide strong pedagogical elements for analysis. In fact, they were no different from the model translations that can be obtained from any general translation handbook.

One way out of this problem is to have partner students directly integrated into the host class activity. The two teachers involved, for example, should be aware that their role within the classroom is merely as consultants. Apart from pointing out the most glaring problems, they should in some way guide the students to formulate questions about the text or language, and encourage them to refer to teachers just as they would any other source. In other words, what the teachers should be doing is to raise the students' awareness of their work as an authentic text tthat has to survive or flounder within a broader context and not just within the economy of a traditionally structured and closed academic system of abstract evaluation.

In terms of teaching staff involved, there were other positive aspects:

- The project offered all teachers an occasion for lively discussions, both within their own institution and with their foreign partners: concepts broached with new enthusiasm included translation, interpreting, training and didactic materials.
- A knock-on effect: the more you work with new technologies, the more you become acquainted with them and come up with further creative uses for them.

Aware of the absolute importance of not limiting the use of information technology to translation classes, we have introduced the concept of cross-national classroom links for our language-acquisition program. Our L2 translation courses depend heavily on improving the students' competence in their L2, without which any L2 translation class would be unfulfilling and limited in scope for both students and teachers. In this way, our students use IT in the translation classroom and also have direct links with their L2 counterparts in other countries. We have ongoing links with Salford, Málaga, Marie-Haps, etc., and have had links with an American university in the past.

Notes on Translator Training
(replies to a questionnaire)

Ubaldo Stecconi
European Commission Translation Service, Brussels

What direct experience of distance teaching do you have in the field of translator training?

During the Fall 2000 semester I taught Introduction to Translation Studies at American University, Washington D.C. The coursework was carried out in collaboration with students at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili in Tarragona, Spain, and with Frank Austermühl at Germersheim, Germany.

I had already used similar techniques in the previous two semesters, but that was for teaching Italian. Cooperation ranged from having remote native speakers revise translations and clarify originals for local students, to bibliographical help and other research assistance. The basic idea was to have students on one side discuss their projects with students on the other. The exchange was planned to be a two-way affair, but it turned out to be mostly the European side working for the American side. We were grateful, of course, but it was a pity. It taught me that distance learning is a delicate balancing act whose success in one locale is proportional to the resources and political will that can be generated in that locale. In other words, the benefits of distance learning cannot be pushed towards the remote side, but must be pulled from it. Distance cooperation works only when it is made compulsory. Activities that imply remote contributions should be included among local course requirements. This, however, may not be the case outside of US colleges.

We mainly used email messages and attachments. Attempts to use an electronic forum called BlackBoard turned out to be frustrating. BlackBoard was useful only on the US side to manage class activities and communication in between meetings. It was a waste of time for transatlantic communication. I strongly discourage non-US teachers from adopting software designed for a typical US college course. Email was vital because the two groups were six time-zones apart. Connections were good on both sides and large amounts of data could be transferred as attachments, thus allowing each side to show the full outcome of its work to the other. One chat session was also carried out, which ended up as a mere test of the channel. I do not believe much juice was squeezed out of it. It was important, however, because it gave each side the feeling that someone was actually tuned in on the other side of the Atlantic.

In order to talk about the skills involved, I have to tell you a story. The course was an addition to the existing Certificate Program in Translation offered by the Department of Language and Foreign Studies. The program had been going on for years with little coordination between languages and no theoretical component. I proposed this course to help fix both problems. The course, open to both graduate and undergraduate students, introduced participants to Translation Studies and invited them to work on theoretical, political, historical, and sociological aspects of translation.

What kind of training are these media most appropriate for?

Some comments from Spain helped the US students lose their innocence about translation. Local projects became increasingly bold as their authors saw they were receiving remote acceptance. In the end, about half of the final projects were not about reproducing the verbal content of some message. Traditional projects also benefited from the presence of a remote audience. If the quality of class exercise depends on simulating real-life conditions, the Spanish participants provided a very close approximation to a translation's typical receivers. The Spanish group was fairly large, almost faceless, and lay on the other side of a significant semiotic fold. At the same time, it was very tangible and ready to provide feedback. Above all, the remote contact helped US students get out of the American box. This had to do with the notorious parochialism of their cultural environment, i.e., too large and powerful to care about things foreign. This is important for anyone in higher education; it is essential for students of foreign languages and translation.

What aspects of translation cannot be taught via distance teaching techniques?

I take this question to mean 'what aspects of translation suffer most from distance teaching techniques'. In principle, all courses can be taught remotely, so the interesting question is what you gain and what you lose. The biggest loss in my experience was a certain kind of teamwork which escaped the learning experience altogether. I found it difficult to train future translators, to 'weld' their minds over certain problems, when they were not in the same room. This welding is crucial to translator training (but not specific to it). In the past, translators were trained like musicians: everyone aimed at becoming the first violin (I thank Stefano Arduini for this simile). Today, translation jobs increasingly involve large teams, information networks, and coordinators. I will give you the example of a localization project. Few people involved in a typical localization project actually translate; there are salespeople who promise the moon, computer engineers who separate code from characters, desktop publishing (DTP) specialists who bring the text together again, project managers who typically translate very little, etc. The ability to deal with large teams is vital if the translator wants to survive. If translators do not know how to manage, they will be crunched into a mulch.

Are you aware of any empirical research comparing distance learning and face-to-face learning in the field of translator training?

I was and still am not aware of research on the topic. Most of my ideas about distance learning are the product of endless telephone conversations with Giuliana Schiavi from the Vicenza school for translators and interpreters.

Summary of discussion on:
What else has been done with e-learning in the field of translator training?

This question was raised by Anthony Pym, who wanted some input on the online courses available for translator training. Giulana Schiavi, a teacher of translation in Italy, gave a brief description of the projects she knew of and the courses offered:

- Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning - High Level Translation (French-English) Distance Learning Course This course is specifically designed to prepare candidates for the Diploma in Translation at the Institute of Linguists. The course consists of three modules running each year from March to the first week of November, when the Diploma examination takes place.

- University of Hawaii at Manoa, Center for Interpretation and Translation Studies - Online Translation Courses. The courses are IT411M Translation Techniques (English-Mandarin) and IT411J Translation Techniques (English-Japanese). The Mandarin and Japanese courses are taught together. The course is 12 weeks long and anyone who passes the screening exam is eligible to sign up. There were around 20 students when the course began, but that number dropped by perhaps one-third.

    The course description is as follows:

    > *This Web-based course is designed with professional non-literary translation in mind. Class assignments focus on the process and quality of translation. Students will work on solving stylistic, syntactic, cultural, terminological, and technical problems encountered in the translation process. Students will acquire translation skills and develop a sense of responsibility that professional translators should possess when accepting a translation assignment. Through translation practice with different types of texts, the focus will be on increasing students' ability to: (1) recognize translation problems and their solutions, (2) use web translation skills,and transmit translations via the internet (3) practice translation quality control and know where to find help, (4) identify good/bad translations with specific reasons for the assessment, (5) work as a team, and (6) conduct oneself professionally.*

- New York University - School of Continuing and Professional Studies
    The Virtual college offers:
    Online Certificates:
    English to Spanish Translation Studies

German to English Certificate Online

    English to Portuguese Translation Studies

    Spanish to English Translation Certificate Online

    French to English Translation Certificate Online

Non-Credit Courses:

    Translation

    French to English Translating Computer-Related Material: Online

    French to English Introduction to Translation Studies Online

    Spanish to English Introduction to Translation Studies: Online

    English to Spanish Introduction to Translation Studies: Online

    English to Spanish Commercial I Online

    Spanish to English Technical Translation: Online

    English to Portuguese Commercial Translation I: Online

    German to English Introduction to Translation Studies: Online

    English to Portuguese Introduction to Translation Studies: Online

    German to English Commercial Translation I: Online

    German to English Legal Translation II: Online

- University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies - Workplace Translation Courses: Chinese Cantonese, Chinese Mandarin, French, German, Italian, Korean, Spanish. Distance Learning.

  The courses are described as follows:

  In our high intermediate, advanced and post-advanced Workplace Translation Distance Learning courses, you learn translation skills and practice translation tasks for use in the workplace.

  In each course you learn to overcome difficulties in translating language structures and syntax from one language to another.

  You concentrate on developing fluency in the language you have chosen and in English as they are spoken and written for business.

  Each course is intended for those with native or near-native fluency in both the languages of choice and English.

- The Words Language Services (WLS) translation courses in Dublin.
  The courses are described as follows:

  Translation Language Option: French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese into English; English into French,

German, Italian and Spanish; Other language combinations are currently under development. Entry Requirements: Linguistic competence in the source language to university standard or equivalent, i.e. residence in source language country or use in work/business. WLS Certificate in Translation: Suitable for novice translators; focuses on practical translation training and on subject areas typical to commercial translation; uses a wide range of document types; allows specialization in specific subject areas; certification awarded on the basis of continuous assessment:

IOL Diploma in Translation: Suitable for working or experienced translators; focuses on practical and theoretical training; subject areas wide-ranging but choice restricted by examination structure; document types mainly drawn from journalistic sources, and includes literature and humanities options; diplomas awarded on passing three examination papers; examination held once each year in November.

Distance Learning Structure: Notes covering course syllabus as outlined in brochure; information on assessment or examination procedures; 8 or 16 practice assignments to be completed at home and sent for correction (by email or post) to a tutor. Course Duration: From 12 to 40 weeks depending on course type and whether conducted by email or 'snail-mail'.

- The Online Translation Course from English into Hebrew atSnunit - The Center for the Advance of Web Based Learning, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, http://www.snunit.k12.il/. You have to subscribe. So far there are 18 units on the web.

- The Online Translation Courses of Logos

    http://www.logos.it/pls/dictionary/ linguistic_resources .traduzione_en? lang=en

    They are:

    Translation course by Bruno Osimo

    Online versions in Italian, English, German and Spanish

    Literary Translation Course by A. Zignani

    Online versions in Italian and English.

Carmen Millan, a teacher of translation studies in the UK, added a new course to the list provided by Giuliana Schiavi:

- Open Distance Learning MA Translation Studies, run at the Centre for English Language Studies, University of Birmingham, UK. You can access information on this course at: http://www.bham.ac.uk/cels.

This course started in April 2000, following the success of the ODL/TEFL/TESL MA. There are currently twenty-five students from various backgrounds (Argentina, Brazil, China, Greece, UK, US) and living in various parts of the world. The course is delivered by distance only. They also run a summer seminar where students can meet the staff and receive face-to-face teaching. However, attendance is not compulsory. The main characteristic of this distance MA is that it is mainly addressed to practising translators, i.e. people who already have some experience working as translators but would like to gain further insights into linguistic and translation theories. The course is therefore strongly biased towards theory and the development of a 'reflective practice'. Our team has produced the course materials which are sent to students by post (paper format and soon in CD format). Students work on their own, commenting on their doubts with their personal tutor (email contact) and with other fellow students (email discussion list).

In a later conversation, Samuel López Alcalá, a translator and scholar in Spain, added notes on the following:

- A Postgraduate Translation Diploma through Distance or Independent Learning offered by the Division of Languages at London City University (see http://www.city.ac.uk/languages/dtuni.htm).

- The Department of Modern Languages at Florida International University offers a fully online course called Practica in Medical Translation using the WebCT platform (see http://w3.fiu.edu/translation/Courses/SPT4809Web.htm). The objectives for the course, as stated by Steven Weinreb MD, the course instructor, are to:

  Provide an overview of the field of medical translation via a wide range of selected materials, including clinical reports, patient informational material, medical journal articles, and medico-legal documents.

  Focus on particular problem areas in medical translation: false cognates, specialized terminology and abbreviations, proper register.

  Provide information regarding sources available to medical translators in book form and on the internet.

Improve computer skills related to document manipulation and formatting, including placement of accent marks, file uploading, participation in bulletin board forum discussions.

In his research paper currently online at http://www.ice.urv.es/trans/future/cttt/research.html, López tells of how he searched 121 translation schools on the web (as if he were a prospective student) and only found a handful of online programs in translation.

Final mention should be made of the online course in Tarragona:

- The Universitat Rovira i Virgili offers 10-week postgraduate certificate courses in technical translation and localization between English and Spanish. The courses are in 100% online mode but are integrated with the face-to-face MA course in Translation and Localization (students are invited to attend on-site classes whenever possible). Information at: http://www.ice.urv.es/trans/future/.

On the topic of available e-learning platforms, David Ashworth said that they use WebCT for their distance courses. Carmen Millan explained that WebCT is a course management system, a virtual learning environment which offers facilities to include course contents, student resources, chat, etc. and that it has been adopted by many universities worldwide. She thought that the main advantage of WebCT is that it incorporates an interactive element, which makes it appealing to both distance and more traditional learning environments. For more information, check their website at http://www.webct.com. Daniel Gouadec later added that he had not used WebCT 'simply because I think this is too complicated for computer-illiterate students to use. And I also think it is too complicated in a way.'

Summary of discussion on:
How students react to e-learning

The question of what students think of e-learning arrangements was raised by Anthony Pym, who pointed out that all position papers had been written from the perspective of teachers and thus showed fairly positive assessments, while literature on e-learning contains studies of 'student distress'.

Advantages

Seán Golden, Director of the Center for International and Intercultural Studies at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, said that there are also studies about the advantages of web-based learning from the student's point of view. According to these studies, e-learning tends to enhance the communicative ability of students who do not normally participate in class. It tends to motivate students in a new and different way because their audience is not the teacher but rather fellow students. Also, it promotes collaborative learning among students in the absence of real-time interactivity with the teacher. He added that 'This all depends on the pedagogical approach adopted by the teacher. The internet is basically a communications medium which can reproduce traditional means of communication (the Gutenberg effect) or can evolve new ways of communicating.'

Golden went on to talk about his experience with an electronic forum, which allows students to participate asynchronically and allows everyone to see everyone else's contributions. It can become a very lively forum for debate and exchange of information that does not necessarily require the teacher's intervention. He felt that it can substitute and, in some ways, be better than the classroom (because students can return to the information at their leisure), if the syllabus and the supporting teaching material have been well designed for asynchronous distance learning. He added that they are now beginning to experiment with video streaming of pre-recorded face-to-face classes, complemented (via split-screens) with additional, interactive teaching material. The support system allows students to stop, rewind, fast-forward, etc.

Golden suggested that that a combination of face-to-face teaching with Web-based teaching is the best mix ('bimodal' teaching). He believed that 100% Web-based teaching is not as rich as the combination of 'bimodal' teaching and that Web-based teaching enhances face-to-face teaching.

Student drop-out rate

According to Seán Golden, the problems of students abandoning purely Web-based teaching are not different from the problems found in traditional distance learning/ teaching. He believed that any form of distance learning requires a great deal of self-discipline on the part of the student. Otherwise the student falls behind and cannot catch up. In his own case, he includes strict calendars for handing in written work, with a penalization for late work, in order to ensure that students keep up with the syllabus (and with each other). He teaches one class for the Open University of Catalonia, which is an entirely online university. Over the past four years he has observed that less than half of those students ever do any of the written work. Further, some of those who did

not do the written work re-enroll because they really are interested in the subject matter, but the circumstances of their lives do not allow them to follow through with their original intentions.

Debbie Folaron made reference to some of the recent literature on e-learning, which discusses the problem of student retention and completion of any course delivered online. Some of this literature deals specifically with training or continuing education for employees of various organizations, while some of it focuses on a purely academic environment. She quoted Karen Frankola's article 'The E-learning Taboo - High Dropout Rates: Best Practices for Increasing Online Course Completion Rates' listing the main problems students may have with e-learning courses:

- lack of time
- lack of management oversight
- lack of motivation
- problems with technology
- lack of student support; technical, administrative, academic
- individual learning preferences (i.e. learning styles)
- poorly designed course
- inexperienced instructors

Debbie Folaron pointed out that the difficulty of creating a 'checklist' that ultimately guarantees an online program's success comes from the fact that e-learning programs are developed under very different scenarios and contexts. She thought that technology, technical and administrative support are very important because without them the online experience can feel lonely and/or frustrating. However, she also believed that instructors also play an important role in the success of an online course and has found that instructors are able to find creative solutions to make the online learning experience more positive.

Daniel Gouadec said that the student's reaction depends on their degree of computer literacy. At the Université de Rennes he has been running a fully developed e-course on translation using just email for three years. These are groups of 20 adults taking a translator-training course as a way of getting a job or improving their skills if already in the trade. He explained that most people had their first contact with computers when they started the course. All of them overcame their problems simply because 'all they had to do was switch on the computer, go to the mailbox, get the course material, read whatever had to be read, read the instructions, do the jobs, send in their translations and terminology and whatnot.' He added that 'Then, progressively, they came around, sending their translations into a specific server, using unzip functions, organizing their hard disk, and so on - all under guidance through step-by-step instructions that were sent to them according to a very careful timetable.'

Brian Mossop, a professional translator and trainer with the Canadian Government's Translation Bureau, reported an e-learning experience in which he participated as the instructor. Four of his students were at a university in a city 800 km north off him. He therefore had no choice but to communicate with them by email. The problems he experienced in attempting to discuss the trainees' translations via email were as follows:

First, and most seriously, in face-to-face discussion, body language and tone of voice may indicate resistance to revision which the trainee is not expressing verbally. These types of resistance are not visible in email exchanges. In face-to-face dialogue, I can encourage trainees (through my own tone of voice, laughter etc.) to defend their translations, voice queries about what I am saying, etc. A smiley face will never be able to substitute for a smile.

Second, the trainee can ask questions about or challenge a revision immediately, while a point is being discussed. There is no need for several email exchanges extending over a long period of time.

Third, it is much less time-consuming for me to give oral comments than to compose written comments for insertion via the Comment function in the revised electronic version. In preparing written comments, I have to anticipate objections, whereas in live conversations, I can simply answer an objection when it is made.

Fourth, it is difficult to write comments on issues like coherence, focus and consistency that require reference to previous sentences or previous pages. In live discussion, I can simply use my finger to point out the relationsunder discussion. In writing, I have to give complicated directions ('look at the fourth word in the second sentence in the third paragraph on page x').

Fifth, in live conversation I can immediately demonstrate to the trainee, at the computer we are both sitting in front of, where he or she went wrong in searching a terminology base or a website. (And once again, I can use my finger to point to areas of the screen.)

Sixth, the physical form of electronic revision (black draft translation with coloured revisions on the same line of print as the draft) is not as visually effective as revisions handwritten in ink above the relevant passage of a printout of the draft. The contrast between print and superscripted handwriting is much easier to work with than the contrast between black and coloured type on a single line of writing. (Does anyone know a software solution to this problem?)

Brian Mossop added that despite all these problems, the students were pleased with their e-learning experience. They all seemed to have benefited greatly from the placement because, at their school, they had never been taught by a currently practising professional translator and thus found his revisions and commentaries quite different from the ones their teachers gave them.

Mary Fons i Fleming, an interpreter trainer in Barcelona, said she had tried rather unsuccessfully to get students to work at home on speeches that are available online. The problem is that students have to occupy their family phone line and pay the charges (the most common home internet connection in Spain is by modem through the phone line, and connection time is not free) while they wait for Real Audio to go

through a 20-minute streamed speech.

José Ramón Biau Gil, a translator and teacher in Tarragona, pointed out that some students are not very computer literate. In such cases, the electronic format is not an advantage, but an extra difficulty. This applies to both 'bimodal' and face-to-face courses where electronic material is used.

Tanja Muelhauser, a translation student (traditional face-to-face method) in Germany, commented that the main difficulty she found was the need to have good computer skills in order to participate in online courses successfully.

Paul Merriam replied that computer skills are a basic element of professional translation and that translators without them have a significant disadvantage in the market.

Vicky Biernacki, translator and localizer in the US, raised another point: the quality and recognition of online courses. She said that online courses are considered an inferior alternative, at least in the US and probably in Chile, too. She explained that some administrators of online courses may be tempted to accept as many students as possible, since there are no physical limitations of space in a virtual course. This would lead to overworked teachers who are unable to give personalized feedback to each student, thus losing one advantage of online teaching: individualized attention.

Summary of discussion on:
Should students do real translations?

Conrad Toft, a translator trainer in Slovakia, said that he was in favour of giving commercial translations to be done by students but there were practical problems involved: both bureaucratic and personal (he needed translations for himself). Daniel Gouadec pointed out that, from his point of view, this is a common but mistaken position:

> *In fact, what everyone needs in any country (especially Conrad's) is a structured market for translators. So, anyone getting out there to fish out translations is increasing the market potential for everyone else. This I found out when we started doing contracts with the students. We unquestionably brought home to quite a few people the realities of translation and the importance of using translation.*

Chris Durban, a translator working in Paris, replied that there is, or should be, a difference between professional translations and student translations, but that potential employers are not usually aware of this. Translator trainers should make this distinction clear when selling student work to non-linguists, or at the very least consider the consequences of selling such work on the translation market. She added that professional translators must pay tax and social security levies, and asked what kind of taxes (if any) applies to student work. She suggested that students could do glossary-building tasks and set up translation memory systems.

Helge Niska, an interpreter trainer in Stockholm, suggested that students can translate material from their own universities, information that would remain untranslated otherwise, and then try to get money from the institution for that work.

Chris Durban added the possibility of translating promotional materials for humanitarian and non-profit organizations - texts that would otherwise remain untranslated. Students develop a portfolio of previous translations to facilitate getting real clients, they would not undercut the professional activity, and they might have a warm, comforting feeling inside.

Along the same lines, Vicki Biernacki mentioned the website www.netaid.org, where agencies recruit volunteers for translation, writing and revising assignments online. Hannelore Lee-Jahnke, a translator trainer in Geneva said that even if students are not paid for their work, the published text bearing their names is an incentive for them.

Chris Durban said that some things are difficult to teach online, such as client interaction, and that this lack of interaction leads to poor translation practice.

Debbie Folaron added:

> *Another interesting trend I have seen in discussions on e-learning is the frequent division between 'online training' and 'online education' (the latter used more frequently with regard to strictly academic environments). A point that has often been brought up is*

that online courses designed to train (for example, employees in corporate settings) are much more successful when the online course simulates the actual work processes. In other words, if course participants are putting into practice the actual skills they use in the professional workplace, the course takes on a higher degree of relevance, and the motivation to complete the course remains high. It becomes a matter of not only learning about something but actually doing while learning. This particular point has inspired me with regard to translator training in an online course environment. There are many skills (many of them technological) that students can develop and refine throughout the duration of the course, and which simulate the everyday work of a professional freelance translator.

Regarding 'teamwork', Daniel Gouadec said that 'there is no technical obstacle to having students work as a team. This can be done with project-management techniques similar to those used in the Tradutech program (video in French available at Institut Libre Marie Haps). It can also be done through new software programs that make it possible to have collective (cooperative) hypotheses.'

Summary of discussion on:
Interpreting and e-learning

David Ashworth, a translator trainer in Hawaii, mentioned a voicemail program called PureVoice from QualComm that might have some value for interpreter training as well as addressing some of the problems with commenting on students' written translations (http://www.cdmatech.com/solutions/products/purevoice.html). It allows one not only to record and send messages, but to comment on voice messages one has received, and insert voice into the received text.

Miriam Shlesinger listed the materials commonly used in her face-to-face courses:

- prepared or impromptu talks by the teacher
- prepared or impromptu talks by other students
- audio tapes read expressly for classroom use
- audio tapes from actual conferences
- audio tapes of talks or interviews given on the radio
- video tapes read expressly for classroom use
- video tapes from actual conferences
- video tapes of talks or interviews given on TV.

She took for granted that audio files available on the internet did not have enough quality for use as class material, but she said that she might be wrong. As for non-teacher-based materials, the university technicians record lectures given on campus, and such materials are authentic and varied.

David Ashworth said that he did not find it very useful to conduct traditional interpreter training on the web due to the lack of spontaneity of the materials. He would rather focus on new communications options provided by the internet, making reference to a project on the simultaneous translation of chat messages and the project by a Japanese company to translate Lotus Notes interactions. He concluded that 'the internet, shaky and spotty as it is, is becoming a major medium for multilingual communication, and some of our training efforts using the web need to address the needs and procedures required by that medium'.

Mary Fons i Fleming asked if there was a cheap and easy way for interpreting students to work at home with speeches posted on the internet, to which Kay Alesic proposed downloading the speeches and copying them onto CDs to be distributed to the students. Fons i Fleming raised the question of copyright limitations. Also, technicians had told her that the resulting files have low-quality sound, and are thus not useful for pedagogical purposes.

Summary of discussion on:
The limits of techonology

Brian Mossop started this thread of discussion by asking everyone to think about why most messages dealt with technological details, and there were so few related to pedagogical issues.

Helge Niska was not very interested in discussing e-learning platforms at this stage, and said that he was much more interested in discussing contents of the training programs, i.e. whether students should be trained in the use of CAT and other trade tools.

Daniel Gouadec added, 'Point one in setting up a profitable e-learning course is to have the students gain technological ability and lots of computer literacy in the process. This builds up self-esteem and gives positive approaches to the actual learning parts.' Moreover, discussing pedagogy would take ages, and the symposium was only one-week long.

With respect to actual course content, Chris Durban asked if e-trainers put students in a situation where they have to interact with text originators, and Helge Niska replied that this is usually neglected in traditional translation courses.

Louise Brunette, a translator trainer in Canada, said that online revising takes too long and is inefficient because it excludes nuances and explanations with lots of examples. Daniel Gouadec replied as follows:

> I was inoculated with the virus of revision in Canada in 1977 (where else?) and have gone though the whole system of symbols and whatnot. But I would not trade the revision functions of the word processor for anything in the world. Especially if I consider that my students are absolutely unable to use pen and paper. Whenever the intranet or internet is down, they just sit there waiting and drooping. This also explains much of the above: my students are cripples when they have no access to computers, and maybe that is for the best if we consider the kind of environment they will work in, though I tend to think too much technology is too much. So, those people want their translations revised electronically. And it takes little imagination to get the following out of the word processor: a) revisions b) comments (as many as you like) c) comments and revisions indexed by reviewer (if you decide that there is going to be one reviewer for linguistic quality, i.e. the language teacher, one reviewer for terminology, the terminology teacher, and one reviewer for translation) d) a system of 'fault analysis' but in that case, it takes a little bit of designing (five minutes). So, the translator can get a full picture of what went wrong, how to improve it, what the reviewers think, and why it went wrong (presumably).

Anthony Pym agreed with Daniel Gouadec that contemporary revision tools enable a lot of work to be done quite efficiently, as this is how professional revising is done. Also, all the student's work can be put on a website, so the teacher can see

exactly what they have done and find their work easily. Louise Brunette replied that while professional revising is done this way, the student needs different feedback from the teacher than a translator from the reviser, because the former requires training. Mary Fons proposed the possibility of recording voice comments in Word, taking into account that sound files occupy lots of memory. Daniel Gouadec added that any amount of comments is possible using a word-processor, and with a macro, you may even compile a list of errors and comments from all of the translations that have been revised.

Conrad Toft raised the financial issue of setting up a computer lab with limited resources. His first option was to use a Windows environment and then try to have as much free software as possible (free demo versions, full versions for teaching purposes) and asked if there were any other applications useful for teaching translation apart from MS Office, Star Transit, Déjà Vu, or Trados. Daniel Gouadec suggested that he contact Star to learn more about Transit's offers for universities.

Maria Rodríguez suggested installing Wordfast, a translation memory available at www.champollion.net. Helge Niska added WordFisher (http://www.wordfisher.com) to the list. It works with Word for Windows only, and the license costs only 30 USD.

Wolfgang Frick, translator and trainer in Perth, Australia, suggested that one possibility is to share a computer lab with other departments in order to make the most of the investment. Another alternative is to accept commercial work to be translated by the students on behalf of the university in order to raise the funding needed for the computer lab.

Anthony Pym pointed out that one of the reasons for setting up an online course is that students use computers at home and not at the university. Conrad Toft replied that in Central Europe, where he teaches, most students could not afford such an investment, and that very few people have internet connection at home. Moreover, there are bureaucratic time limitations on setting up that sort of activity.

Fred Roy III added that if he were using an 'offsite' system, his budget would be limited to buying machines that allow access.

David Ashworth added: 'I wonder if this refers to Active Service Pages (ASPs). One company, I think, is LionBridge, and perhaps also Trados provides this service. That's the good news, if you can afford it. The bad news is that any work done on their server becomes their property (i.e. glossaries, parallel texts etc.).' He also pointed out that 'StarOffice 6.0 beta version supports Japanese, Chinese and Korean. However, if you have WIN98, apparently you must have the operating system of the language you want.'

On the general issue of technology and teaching, Daniel Gouadec offered the following points:

I would say that any teaching calls for resources at five levels (or resources of five different kinds and functions):

a) Reference material: This can be aired on the intranet or the internet and stored any place for anyone to consult (albeit under supervision by the teacher who decides who should read what, at what time, and at what pace).

b) Course material: This is a little more difficult to put into suitable form for distance teaching/learning. Given a bit of animation (video) and voice documents, it is possible to

pretend that there is a rather acceptable substitute to a flesh-and-blood teacher.

c) Tutorial material: Here is probably where the internet and intranet fare best. It is in fact possible to devise systems that give the students the right specifications as they move down the flow of translating and point to the various tools that are available. Using the computer can work wonders and is probably much more effective than having a teacher repeat the same things over and over again.

d) Exchanges: Exchanges can be highly developed (after all, e-teaching uses devices that go by the name of communication). This can be achieved quite easily through email (teacher to student and student to teacher, students to students, teachers to teachers, etc.). If we want mutual exchange, a disuscussion list will do. And if we want it hot, the chat-box can be colonized for instant communication (or nearly so).

e) Archives: If we want to benefit from the accumulation of skills that have been taught, of examples and tricky cases that have been studied, of advice given, and so on and so forth, there is nothing better than disuscussion list servers, internet sites, and the like. If only because everything of interest can be immediately restored, reworked if need be, and recirculated. I am quite conscious that everything above applies to normal teaching in university settings where there is a pedagogical intranet (an intranet that teachers have decided to make their own for teaching purposes).

Summary of discussion on:
How much effort is required for e-learning?

It was generally recognized that creating and delivering an effective online course takes a lot of time and dedication. Daniel Gouadec noted that it is nevertheless possible to start gradually:

> *I would say that the first step towards e-teaching is local teaching using the intranet and internet (the best of both worlds since you can also have any amount of face-to-face teaching and probably a lot more since much of the uninteresting, unrewarding parts are taken care of by the 'network and machines').*

> *Starting from there, it is not so complicated to create a site to replace the good old intranet. This is when the intricacies and complexities of devising a course to float on the internet become clear. It is also a good idea to get the students involved, if only as testers and, if possible, as designers of part of the site (not of the course).*

> *If the e-product is satisfactory locally, with lots of feedback from users you meet everyday, chances are that it will be good enough for e-teaching. This smooth extension from the inside of the teaching institution to the outside would appear to me to be a wise step, except that everyone wants to rush out there to have visibility! It would probably takes years to set up a full training course for translators - a course in translation understandably requires much less time.*

Debbie Folaron thought that considerable work at the level of instructional design of the course is required in order to create and maintain a real (human) sense of 'community' in the online environment. She added that in order to accomplish this and respond to different learning styles, activities that promote interactivity should ideally be used as tools to bring about a sense of community online. She pointed out that 'a community-oriented approach also implies that the instructor will often take on the role of a 'facilitator' who participates in a collaborative learning environment [...] In order for an online course to meet pedagogical aims, it needs to plan for the distance element and the lack of immediate presence we are used to. I think this is why many blended approaches (online and on-site) have been so successful thus far. In a blended course it is possible to work in part with the traditional teaching and learning environment.'

She felt that when a course is 100% online, it becomes immediately apparent that in order for it to maintain its pedagogical objectives, various learning styles have to be accounted for in the design and delivery of the course.

Debbie Folaron recently attended an e-learning conference given by Nancy Maresh and Judith Blair, who have been studying and researching learning styles (concerning 'multiple intelligences') for many years. Their research now deals with the online learning environment, indicating that it is important to incorporate various activities into the instructional design and delivery of online courses in order to give as

many students as possible an opportunity to 'respond'. Among the examples, they implement components such as:

- lectures
- word games
- problem-solving exercises
- paired work or small group projects (i.e. team work)
- writing activities
- defined objectives serving as a 'road map'
- opportunities for comments and feedback
- suggestions for extra reference material
- debate through discussion threads
- individual work
- audio / audiovisual features
- use of charts and diagrams
- 'simulation' exercises
- conversations.

Debbie Folaron added:

> In other words, when an individual is given an opportunity to 'respond', in at least one way, through a component that has been previously designed for a learning style similar to one's own, there is a greater chance that the online class will take on that community spirit it needs in order for it to succeed. What is the measure of its success? We should look for evidence that the students are feeling motivated and comfortable about interacting with fellow participants and the instructor; frequent feedback emerging from the various types of activities; constancy in submitting homework assignments, etc.

Although Folaron has not developed much in the way of audio or graphics, Folaron has incorporated different types and formats of activities into the course in order to engage as many students as possible:

> I see it as diverse formats and activities all reinforcing the major theme of 'translation studies'. Given the interdisciplinary nature of translation studies, and the diverse skills that are used in translating and working as a professional translator. There are multiple options open to creative instructors.

Après coup

The use of e-learning in translator training has developed considerably, even in the short time since our online symposium was held. News on programs sometimes appears on the Innovation in Translator Training list at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/itit/ (the archive is now searchable), and interesting research papers are at the site of the Consortium for the Training of Translation Teachers (CTTT) at http://www.ice.urv.es/trans/future/cttt/cttt.html. The CTTT, founded in 2000, holds regular seminars on translator training, and the use of electronic tools is an important discussion point in all those seminars.

The best way to stay abreast of this rapidly developing field is nevertheless by searching the internet. Any attempt to give news in print form is necessarily condemned to quick desuetude.

If we have thus erred in producing this paper-based book, let the product nevertheless stand as a fleeting monument to collective efforts. Many people contributed to the above pages; their words came free; the symposia enjoyed no subsidies were thus liberated from various official constraints. Money for this book actually came from another activity, the face-to-face Training Seminar for Translation Teachers organized in Tarragona in 2001. By pleasing irony, the funding of presence here gives body to our virtual relations. May both forms of contact continue in the future.

Anthony Pym
January 2003

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