The revival of translation as a means of learning and teaching a foreign language and as a skill in its own right is occurring at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels in universities.

In this book, Sara Laviosa proposes a translation-based pedagogy that is grounded in theory and has been applied in real educational contexts. Drawing on the convergence between the view of language and translation embraced by ecologically oriented educationalists and the theoretical underpinnings of the holistic approach to translating culture, this volume puts forward a holistic pedagogy that harmonizes the teaching of language and translation in the same learning environment.

The author examines the changing nature of the role of pedagogic translation starting with the Grammar Translation Method and concluding with the more recent ecological approaches to Foreign Language Education.

Translation and Language Education analyses current research into the revival of translation in language teaching and is vital reading for translators, language teachers and postgraduate students working in the areas of Translation Studies and Applied Linguistics.

Sara Laviosa is Senior Lecturer in English Language and Translation at the University of Bari Aldo Moro, Italy. Her recent publications include Linking Wor(l)ds: Contrastive Analysis and Translation with Richard D. G. Braithwaite (2014).
Translation Theories Explored
Series Editor: Theo Hermans, UCL, UK

Translation Theories Explored is a series designed to engage with the range and diversity of contemporary translation studies. Translation itself is as vital and as charged as ever. If anything, it has become more plural, more varied and more complex in today’s world. The study of translation has responded to these challenges with vigour. In recent decades the field has gained in depth, its scope continues to expand and it is increasingly interacting with other disciplines. The series sets out to reflect and foster these developments. It aims to keep track of theoretical developments, to explore new areas, approaches and issues, and generally to extend and enrich the intellectual horizon of translation studies. Special attention is paid to innovative ideas that may not as yet be widely known but deserve wider currency.

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Kate Sturge
In loving memory of my mother
Volumnia Eulalia Ester Di Leonardo
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‘Laviosa provides us with a comprehensive, rigorous and challenging book at the interface of translation and language pedagogy. She reviews the past to lead us into present and future ecological, holistic grounds. She discusses some of the most exciting research voices and puts their theories to work. Indeed, this book is a must to empower translation/language teachers and students.’

María Calzada Pérez, Universitat Jaume I, Spain

‘This book is an exciting and welcome addition to the emerging pedagogical field of translation in language education. A far cry from the original grammar translation method in language teaching, Laviosa takes as her starting point that translation as an integral part of language teaching does not only benefit a new generation of translators, but is a crucial part of developing linguistic skills as well as being “a means of getting a look into another culture’s head”, as one of her students put it.

In this authoritative and readable account Laviosa develops an interdisciplinary theoretical framework drawing on the concepts of “holistic cultural translation” and “symbolic competence” embedded in recent thinking in the fields of translation and language pedagogy theory. Theory and practice merge seamlessly as she illustrates her framework with case studies of translated texts and pedagogical examples. This book is an indispensable contribution for the development of the language professionals of the future.’

Dr Gerdi Quist, University College London, UK

‘Sara Laviosa has opened a dialogue between translation and foreign language education. Drawing on the insights from Kramsch’s ecological approach to foreign language teaching and from Tymoczko’s holistic approach to translation studies, Sara proposes a holistic pedagogy which aims to harmonize these theories in the same learning environment. This book is a praiseworthy attempt to bring together scholars who are working with both languages and cultures.’

Zhang Meifang, University of Macau, China
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Sara Laviosa
10 November 2013
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INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades there has been an increasing interest in (re)defining the place and role of translation in foreign language teaching, particularly as regards higher education.

This general trend is reflected in the recommendations made in the report of the MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages (MLA 2007), a programmatic document which advocates translation as a tool in language learning:

In the course of acquiring functional language abilities, students are taught critical language awareness, interpretation and translation, historical political consciousness, social sensibility, and aesthetic perception.

(MLA 2007: 4)

The report also supports the teaching of translation as a skill in its own right, in the section on ‘Continuing Priorities’:

Develop programs in translation and interpretation. There is a great unmet demand for translators and interpreters, and translation is an ideal context for developing translingual and transcultural abilities as an organizing principle of the language curriculum.

(MLA 2007: 9)

Moreover, ‘[t]he idea of translingual and transcultural competence, in contrast [to seeking to replicate the competence of an educated native speaker], places value on the ability to operate between languages’ and entails the capacity to reflect on the world and on ourselves through the lens of another language and culture (MLA 2007: 3–4).

The recent concern for translation as a learning and testing tool as well as a professional skill has given rise to a substantial body of research into pedagogic
translation, particularly in undergraduate degree programmes. We can identify three main domains within this new niche: (a) theoretical considerations in favour of using various forms of translation for language teaching purposes; (b) Second Language Acquisition studies on the effectiveness of translation as part of form-focused instruction; (c) the elaboration of translation-based language teaching methodologies.

Against this backdrop, the aim of the present volume is to open a dialogue between language and translation educators about the role of translation in the development of communicative, metalinguistic and transcultural competences, which are deemed crucially important in the formation of the language professionals of the future. Engaging in this dialogue is, we believe, a prerequisite for elaborating pedagogic approaches that are firmly grounded in theory, are supported by empirical evidence and are realized within a multilingual learning environment where translation fosters and is fostered by linguistic proficiency.

As a contribution to the realization of this desideratum, the book puts forward an approach to language and translation teaching that is framed within the ecological perspective on language education and is informed by convergent and interrelated principles elaborated in second language education and translation studies respectively, i.e. ‘symbolic competence’ (Kramsch 2006, 2009, 2010) and ‘holistic cultural translation’ (Tymoczko 2007). Developed by Claire Kramsch (2002b), Leo van Lier (2004, 2010) and Glenn S. Levine (2011), the ecological approach to language education draws principally on sociocultural theory, ecology and semiotics and is in unison with Tymoczko’s holistic approach to translating culture. The proposed pedagogy is intended particularly for the graduate and undergraduate language classroom and, since we place equal emphasis on theory and practice, it is illustrated by sample activities undertaken in real-life educational contexts. Translation proved to be beneficial in the monolingual as in the multilingual class and at pre-intermediate, intermediate and advanced levels of linguistic competence.

The book is organized into nine chapters and is targeted at prospective and practising language and translation educators in modern languages degree programmes as well as teacher trainers and researchers in second language teaching and translation pedagogy.

Chapter 1 provides a historical overview of the place and role of translation in second language education starting from the Grammar-Translation Method till the advent of Communicative Language Teaching (Howatt 2004; Cook 2010). It deals with the ebb and flow of various forms of translation as a language learning and teaching activity in various approaches devised for different educational contexts: from secondary school (e.g. the Grammar-Translation Method) to higher education.

Chapter 2 focuses mainly on higher education. It first surveys the theoretical considerations underpinning the reappraisal of pedagogic translation during the last two decades. Then it examines experimental Second Language Acquisition studies on the effectiveness of translation as a means of enhancing L2 proficiency.
Finally, it analyses novel pedagogic practices adopted or recommended at various levels of linguistic competence, using the three-level model elaborated by Jack C. Richards and Theodore S. Rodgers (2001) for the analysis of approaches and methods in language teaching.

Chapter 3 gives an overview of the ecological perspective on language and language pedagogy, which has become a major focus of interest in second language learning and teaching (Kramsch 2002b; van Lier 2004, 2010; Levine 2011) as well as in education in general (Robinson 2011).

Chapter 4 analyses the multilingual and ecologically oriented language pedagogy put forward by Claire Kramsch (2006, 2009, 2010). This legitimates interlinguistic, intralinguistic and intersemiotic translation as a practice that brings out the cultural differences in the relationship between language and thought, and contributes to the development of what she calls ‘symbolic competence’, a crucial dimension in the formation of multilingual subjects.

Chapter 5 examines the holistic approach to translating culture elaborated by Maria Tymoczko (2007) and illustrates how the author applies it to the teaching of literary translation at graduate level. The chapter ends with an analysis of the convergence between ‘holistic cultural translation’ and ‘symbolic competence’ as principles of good pedagogic practice that aim to empower translators on the one hand and multilingual language users on the other.

Chapter 6 starts from the premise that symbolic competence enhances and is enhanced by holistic cultural translation. Next, it examines a lived experience of language learning, literary translation and creative writing that supports this hypothesis. On the basis of the empirical evidence provided by this case study, we propose a holistic pedagogy that harmonizes the ecological perspective adopted by Kramsch and the holistic approach to cultural translation developed by Tymoczko.

Chapters 7 and 8 describe three examples of language and translation teaching that was informed by the pedagogy envisioned in Chapter 6. The activities described here were undertaken in Italian and English undergraduate and graduate language classes in the US and Italy respectively. The book ends with a summary of the main achievements of current research into educational translation and considers possible avenues for further development in this burgeoning area of scholarly enquiry and practice.
This chapter provides a brief history of the place and role of translation in second language education starting with the Grammar-Translation Method and concluding with the advent of Communicative Language Teaching. The ebb and flow of various forms of translation is examined in relation to the ways in which the purpose and process of learning are conceptualized in pedagogical approaches. As defined by Henry Widdowson, purpose refers to ‘what kind of language knowledge or ability constitutes the goals that learners are to achieve at the end of the course’ (Howatt 2004: 353). Process, defined here from the point of view of the course provider, refers to ‘what kind of student activity is most effective as the means to that end’ (Howatt 2004: 353). Purpose determines the aspects of language that the method focuses on and is generally informed by linguistic theories. Process designs the most appropriate teaching techniques and is normally underpinned by Second Language Acquisition theories. The admission or exclusion of translation as a language learning exercise depends on how process is conceived; this in turn is influenced by how purpose is defined in a given methodology.

1.1 The Grammar-Translation Method

The Grammar-Translation Method began in Prussia at the end of the eighteenth century with the publication of a French coursebook and an English coursebook for secondary school pupils, authored by Johann Valentin Meidinger in 1783 and Johann Christian Fick in 1793 respectively (both cited in Howatt 2004: 152). The method was developed during the nineteenth century and became the dominant method of teaching foreign languages in European schools from the 1840s to the 1940s. The aim of Grammar Translation was to enable learners to read literary classics and ‘to benefit from the mental discipline and intellectual development that result from foreign language study’ (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 5). Grammar
rules were presented in the learner’s first language one by one and in an intuitively graded sequence. Each grammar point was exemplified with a set of sentences created ad hoc in the L2 alongside their literal translation in the L1. Vocabulary was learnt by memorizing bilingual lists of lexical items and phrases.

For example, Franz Ahn’s *New Practical and Easy Method of Learning the German Language* (1869) started with the declensions of German nouns, specimens of handwriting and the pronunciation of simple and double vowels, diphthongs, consonants and syllables. Then, in Part I, it introduced singular and plural subject personal pronouns with the present simple tense of the verb *sein* (to be) in the affirmative and interrogative forms (Ahn 1869: 1-12).

PART I.

1.

*Singular.*

ich bin, I am; 
du bist, thou art; 
er ist, he is; 
sie ist, she is;

*Plural.*

wir sind, we are; 
ihre sind, you are; 
sie sind, they are.

Gut, good; groß, great, large, big; klein, little, small; reich, rich; arm, poor; jung, young; alt, old; müde, tired; krank, ill, sick.


2.

I am little. Thou art young. We are tired. They are rich. Art thou sick? You are poor. Is she old? Are you sick? Are they good? He is tall (groß). Am I poor?

Knowledge of lexis and grammar was applied in exercises involving mainly the accurate translation of invented sentences and texts into and out of the mother tongue ‘either *viva-voce* or in writing or in both – and this from the very beginning’ (Sweet 1900: 203). Reading and writing were the major focus of language teaching. Speaking involved rehearsing a series of questions and answers to be translated from the L1 and then used in conversations between teacher and student, as in the so-called Ollendorff Method (Howatt 2004: 161–5). The medium of instruction was the student’s native language, which was used to explain new items and make comparisons between the L1 and the L2.
Two basic principles informed the process of learning expounded in Grammar-Translation textbooks. The first is that a language course can be based on a sequence of linguistic categories, most notably parts of speech. The second is that these categories can be exemplified in sample sentences and then practised by constructing new sentences on a word-for-word basis. It was also assumed that all that was required for translating into a foreign language was a knowledge of the grammar and the possession of a good dictionary. This belief was based on the ‘arithmetical fallacy’ that ‘sentences could be constructed a priori by combining words according to certain definite rules’ (Sweet 1900: 202). In more recent times, Grammar Translation was adopted in self-study guides like *The Penguin Russian Course* in 1961 (Fennel in Cook 2010: 11), which remained in print till 1996. Today the method continues to be used in situations where the primary focus of foreign language study is understanding literary texts (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 6–7). So, Grammar Translation has stood the test of time and proved to be remarkably resilient to the innovations that have been introduced in language teaching from 1830 till the present day, as will be shown in the following sections.

### 1.2 The pre-Reform approaches

In the mid-nineteenth century, the early reformers Jean Joseph Jacotot, Claude Marcel, Thomas Prendergast and François Gouin elaborated very detailed individual techniques that differed significantly from the traditional Grammar-Translation Method. Jacotot’s (1830) approach to teaching French to Flemish-speaking university students in Belgium was one of the earliest examples of monolingual instruction by a non-native speaker of the students’ mother tongue (Howatt 2004: 169–70). It consisted in studying a literary text in French alongside a Flemish translation. The teacher read the first sentence and repeated the opening phrase, asking students to look for other examples of those words in the remaining text. Then the teacher returned to the initial sentence adding the next phrase and so on till the whole text had been learnt by heart. These searches were complemented by comprehension questions and other exercises whose aim was to enable learners to discover how the foreign language works through hypothesis formation, observation and generalization. Explanations were considered not just unnecessary but wrong, since the instructor’s role was to respond to the learner, rather than directing and controlling him by explaining things in advance. Jacotot’s pedagogy was inspired by his egalitarian educational doctrine (*enseignement universel*) that believed in the individual’s ability to achieve all his or her aspirations if he or she could marshal sufficient strength and determination.

Claude Marcel’s Rational Method in 1853 (Howatt 2004: 170–4) was articulated in 20 ‘axiomatic truths’ elaborated from two principled distinctions. The first one is between ‘impression’ and ‘expression’. Impression refers to the process whereby the mind is impressed with the idea before it comprehends the sign that represents it. Expression is the process whereby we use language knowing the meaning as well as the form of the words we utter. It follows that
understanding meaning should precede knowledge of form; hence reading and listening should come before writing and speaking. The second distinction is between ‘analytical’ and ‘synthetical’ methods of instruction. The analytical method is inductive; it presents the learner with examples to decompose and imitate through practice. The synthetical method draws the learner’s attention to principles and rules that enable him or her to understand deductively how the foreign language works. The way in which these techniques are implemented pedagogically depends on the characteristics of the learner and the relationship between the learning task and the goals of education. An emphasis on analysis was thought to be beneficial for young students up to the age of 12. For them the teacher’s frequent repetition of the same foreign expressions that are explained through looks, tones, gestures and actions is preferable to translation, which would be confusing. For older students, on the other hand, meaning is to be derived from the translation into the mother tongue. This should be as literal as possible in order to associate the foreign word with the native one so that each new encounter of the former will promptly recall the latter, thus expediting reading comprehension, which takes priority over the other language skills, in keeping with the educational aims of the 1850s.

The Mastery System devised by Thomas Prendergast in 1864 (Howatt 2004: 175–8) derives from his observation of how children learn their mother tongue. He noticed that young children infer the meaning of language using clues derived from non-verbal communication such as the way people look at you, their gestures and facial expressions. Also, children memorize, through imitation, prefabricated chunks of language and they use them convincingly and fluently even without understanding either the meaning or the grammar. In contrast, self-generated utterances are tentative and ill-formed. These considerations led Prendergast to posit that an effective way of learning a foreign language would consist in memorizing model sentences rather than producing them anew. These so-called ‘mastery sentences’ would contain the most frequently used items of the language and as many of its basic syntactic rules as possible. So he first drew up a list of high-frequency English words, and then he created sentences that exemplified English syntax and provided the learner with a model for generating variations from the original structure. Prendergast’s Mastery System is organized in seven steps. Step 1 consists in learning by heart five or six model sentences of about 20 words each, uttered by the teacher and repeated by the learner to achieve fluency and accurate pronunciation. Meaning is taught by translation into the native language, but grammar is not explained, since it is to be mastered unconsciously. In Step 2, the focus is on written language. Steps 3 and 4 involve the formation of variants of the model sentences and the acquisition of additional ones. The remaining steps concern the development of reading and oral skills. In these stages translation is used extensively, not to investigate the two language systems, but to help the learner to become accustomed to the foreign language through rapid renderings of L2 sentences.

Like Prendergast’s system, the Series Method elaborated by François Gouin in 1880 (Howatt 2004: 178–85) is based on personal observations of the way young
children use their mother tongue. By listening to his nephew reliving a visit to a corn mill in Normandy, Gouin realized that language reflects the structure of the experience it describes, and experience is primarily understood and organized sequentially. From this insight, he formed the idea that all events can be described as series of smaller ones. Gouin’s language teaching method consisted in presenting learners with a series of sentences, each expressing a component action of an event such as *The Maid Chops a Log of Wood*, which was described in 16 sentences. It was believed that the repetitive use of the same subjects and complements would facilitate memorization and accurate pronunciation as well as enabling the mind to focus on each different action and the verb expressing it, this being considered the most important element of the sentence and the most difficult to master. The system was taught in Geneva, where Gouin founded his own school, and enjoyed considerable fame for a time. In contrast with the prevailing paradigm, the methods adopted by the early reformers laid emphasis on monolingual versus bilingual instruction, meaning versus form, oral versus written skills and inductive versus deductive learning. They were the forerunners of the Reform Movement, a new orientation in language teaching that vigorously shook the very foundation of the Grammar-Translation Method.

1.3 The Reform Movement

In 1882 the publication of Wilhelm Viętor’s pamphlet *Der Sprachunterricht muss umkehren!* (Language teaching must start afresh!) marks the beginning of the Reform Movement, initiated by a group of phoneticians from different European countries: Wilhelm Viętor in Germany, Paul Passy in France, Otto Jespersen in Denmark and Henry Sweet in England (Howatt 2004: 187–209). The movement soon began to influence secondary school language teaching and continued to expand till 1904, when Jespersen summarized its pedagogic implications in *How to Teach a Foreign Language*. The principles advocated by the reformers emphasized the primacy of oral communication skills; hence the importance of phonetics in teacher training, because knowing how sounds are produced is essential for achieving accurate pronunciation,³ use of coherent, interesting, natural texts containing examples of the grammar points that need to be taught and the use of the foreign language in class.

There was agreement among reformers that exercises and translations into the foreign language should be replaced by ‘free composition in the foreign language on subjects taken from the texts already studied’ (Sweet 1900: 206). However, they also had divergent views. Translation into the mother tongue was excluded by associationist psychologists such as Felix Franke. He proposed teaching the vocabulary of a language by means of pictures to enable learners to establish a direct association between the word and the idea, so as to avoid the complicated psychological process of associating the foreign word first with the L1 equivalent (e.g. French *chapeau* = German *Hut*) and then with the concept (i.e. ‘hat’). For his part, Henry Sweet argued that the psychological process involved is not necessarily
difficult because ‘[t]he fact is that to a German the word Hut and the idea “hat” are so intimately connected that the one suggests the other instantaneously and without effort’ (Sweet 1900: 199). Besides, pictures may in some cases be ‘either inadequate or useless, or absolutely impracticable, as in dealing with abstract ideas’ (Sweet 1900: 200). Sweet also rejected the idea that translation was the cause of inaccurate associations across languages and proposed four stages in the use of translation:

In the first stage translation is used only as a way of conveying information to the learner: we translate the foreign words and phrases into our language simply because this is the most convenient and at the same time the most efficient guide to their meaning. In the second stage translation is reduced to a minimum, the meaning being gathered mainly from the context – with, perhaps, occasional explanations in the foreign language itself. In the third stage the divergences between the two languages will be brought face to face by means of free idiomatic translation. To these we may perhaps add a fourth stage, in which the student has so complete and methodical a knowledge of the relations between his own and the foreign language that he can translate from the one to the other with ease and accuracy.

(Sweet 1900: 202)

An example of the beneficial use of translation into L1 is demonstrated in Hermann Klinghardt’s experiment, which he conducted in his Realgymnasium in Reichenbach in Silesia in the 1880s (Howatt 2004: 192–4). Klinghardt’s elementary English course began with an introduction to English pronunciation, for which he used Sweet’s phonetic notation and practical listening and speech exercises. After a few weeks he moved on to text, which was studied at a rate of one complex sentence a week. Each sentence was first transcribed phonetically on the blackboard, and then read aloud twice by the teacher and repeated by the students until it was spoken accurately and fluently. Students copied the transcribed sentence from the blackboard and the teacher glossed the meaning with an interlinear translation that was inserted between word boundaries. Once they were familiar with the whole sentence, the teacher selected one grammar point to be taught in detail, for example the difference between the definite and the indefinite article before vowels. He then continued to the next sentence until the entire text was fully understood. Grammar was therefore taught inductively, as Sweet had intended. This meant drawing grammar and vocabulary items that were appropriately graded by the teacher according to the student’s linguistic ability out of closely studied natural sentences.

After the first month, students were taught a variety of oral communication skills such as asking questions about the text and topics concerning their life experiences, taking part in a discussion, or retelling a story. Writing activities followed in the second semester. They involved copying, writing answers to comprehension questions, and simple retelling exercises. Longer narrative texts
were used such as *The Story of Robin Hood*, rather than descriptive ones as in the earlier stage. The course produced good results, as, at the end of the year, students showed not only a good knowledge of grammar but also confidence in the use of spoken language. Klinghardt’s experiment aptly illustrated the relationship between approach and method in language teaching. ‘Approach’ here refers to a set of theoretical principles for teaching a language that are not prescriptive but open to a variety of interpretations as to how they can be applied. ‘Method’ refers to a body of classroom practices that derive from approach and are diversely applied in different educational contexts (Richard and Rodgers 2001). Klinghardt accurately interpreted the reformers’ pedagogic principles on the basis of linguistics and psychology. He applied them with the knowledge and insight of an experienced schoolteacher who focuses his care and attention on the class and responds to its particular needs promptly and flexibly.

### 1.4 The Direct Method

While reformers in Europe were developing an applied linguistic approach to language teaching, immigrant schoolteachers in America were developing ‘natural language teaching methods’, underpinned by the pedagogic ideas put forward by Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi in Switzerland (Howatt 2004: 210–28). His work was inspired by Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s eighteenth-century educational philosophy. Rousseau believed that the child, endowed by nature with the capacity to apprehend the world, learns the deep meaning of the natural universe directly through the experience of the senses and through spoken communication with his tutor, who uses a restricted vocabulary because ‘granted that the first law of speech is to make oneself understood, the greatest mistake one can make is to speak without being understood’ (Rousseau 1762/1979: 72). Hence ‘[t]he child who wants to speak should hear only words he can understand and say only those he can articulate’ (Rousseau 1762/1979: 73). The tutor observes the child’s individual nature, becomes aware of the latter’s readiness to learn so that he can teach what is useful for the child’s age, stimulates his individuality by enabling him to learn to know and love himself, and works together with him in discovering and creating knowledge.

> The tutor’s responsibility is, in the first place, to let the senses develop in relation to their proper objects; and, secondly, to encourage the learning of the sciences as the almost natural outcome of the use of the senses.  
>  
> *(Bloom 1979: 9)*

In the early nineteenth century Pestalozzi, inspired by Rousseau, maintained that the teacher must be capable of deeply understanding human nature in order to guide it properly. ‘It is man’, he affirmed, ‘whom the educator must understand – man in his full scope and power – as a gardener wisely tends the rarest plants, from their first sprouting to the maturing of their fruit’ (Pestalozzi 1951: 32). Pestalozzi’s pedagogy was based on the principle ‘Life educates’, whereby ‘the
natural development of the sensory activities in infancy’ is stimulated so as ‘to bring to the child’s notice in a striking and commanding way the sensory objects of home life, and in this way to make them educative in the best sense of the word’ (Pestalozzi 1826/1912: 291, 292). He believed, moreover, that this method of training sense-experience also stimulated the development of the powers of speech and that the faculty of speech had the capacity to link sensory experience to the faculty of thought. Hence the natural development of the mother tongue involved first experience, then language and then thought (Pestalozzi 1826/1912: 306–7). This constituted the prototype for all language teaching. Pestalozzi’s procedure involved helping children to explore the properties of everyday objects such as their size, number and form. The aim was to let the child carefully observe the sense in which the words were used to name, describe and finally define the objects, so he would adopt them when he was sure of them, in line with Rousseau’s belief that ‘[i]t is a very great disadvantage for him to have more words than ideas, for him to know how to say more things than he can think’ (Rousseau 1762/1979: 74).

Gottlieb Heness successfully applied Pestalozzi’s method to the teaching of standard German to his dialect-speaking schoolchildren in south Germany. Then, in 1865, he extended his techniques to German as a foreign language in America, where he opened a private language school (the Sauveur–Heness School of Modern Languages) together with Lambert Sauveur, who ran the French courses. Described in Sauveur’s manual for teacher trainees, their Natural Method consisted in intensive oral instruction based on causeries (conversations). During these dialogues, the teacher talked in the foreign language, describing, for example, the parts of the body. He used a well-connected text containing no more than 120–30 words and carefully structured sentences made up of statements which would be followed by questions and answers. The principles guiding these teacher-led interactions were ‘earnest questions’ and ‘coherence’, which facilitated comprehension and enabled students to predict the questions that would be put to them. The Natural Method was not adopted in secondary education in the US, but became popular in private language schools for adult learners, where in a few months beginner-level students were able to acquire basic oral skills.

Twelve years later, Maximilian D. Berlitz opened his first language school in Providence, Rhode Island, where he developed the ‘Berlitz Method of Teaching Languages’, also known as the ‘Direct Method’. Initially designed for teaching German and French to English speakers, it aimed at providing beginners with everyday dialogue skills, like the Natural Method. The coursebooks written by Berlitz contained clear instructions for teachers (Berlitz in Howatt 2004: 224):

- no translation under any circumstances;
- a strong emphasis on oral work;
- avoidance of grammatical explanations until late in the course;
- maximum use of question-and-answer techniques.
Translation was uncompromisingly excluded, for three reasons (Berlitz in Howatt 2004: 224):

- Translation wastes valuable language learning time which should be devoted entirely to the foreign language.
- Translation encourages mother-tongue interference.
- All languages have their own peculiarities that cannot be rendered by translation.

By 1914, Berlitz had opened 200 schools in America and Europe. They employed native-speaking teachers and were able to offer most European languages as well as Japanese. The largest group attending Berlitz courses were adult learners. This is because, as the Coleman Report (authored by Algernon Coleman in 1929) stated, the Direct Method, though employed successfully by some teachers, was not suited to general use in secondary schools given that: (a) the supply of sufficiently trained teachers was too small, (b) the time devoted to foreign language teaching was limited, and (c) conversation skills were regarded as irrelevant for the average American college student (Coleman 1929: 238). Instead, the report emphasized the importance of reading.

> The goal must be to read the foreign language directly with a degree of understanding comparable to that possessed in reading the vernacular. In order that students may attain this goal, reading experience must be adequate and the results of all other types of class exercise must converge toward the same end.  
> (Coleman 1929: 170)

> The texts read must be informing and illustrative of the foreign country, must suggest to students the kind of ideals, qualities and characteristics that best represent the people and are of interest to the student reader.  
> (Coleman 1929: 101)

After the publication of the Coleman Report, reading became the aim of most foreign language teaching programmes in the United States till World War II (Richards and Rodgers 2001). In Europe the Direct Method was also regarded as unsuitable for public secondary school education since it required native-speaking teachers and banned the use of the students’ mother tongue, which in Europe was considered useful as an aid to comprehension. Instead, it was the Oral Method that modernized secondary foreign language education in Britain, as we shall see in the next section.

### 1.5 The Oral Method

In the early 1920s, Harold E. Palmer combined the Direct Method with the applied linguistic approach of the Reform Movement and devised the Oral Method. Palmer’s methodology was inspired by insights gained in teaching English abroad
and was addressed to secondary schoolteachers of foreign languages in Britain. It envisaged a four-year curriculum organized in three stages. The ‘Introductory Stage’ would last one school term and aimed to provide learners with a good grounding in pronunciation. The ‘Intermediate’ stage involved first the accurate memorization and assimilation of primary speech patterns through oral exercises, drills and question-and-answer interactions. Then, from these core sentence patterns, learners would derive further examples based on the same models. The ‘Advanced’ stage focused on reading, composition and conversation. Literature was introduced at this point and students were to progress from phonetic transcription to writing. The Oral Method excluded the teaching of grammar in the students’ native language because grammatical rules were to be acquired through ‘habit formation’, which entailed ‘accuracy’, ‘interest’ and ‘initial preparation’. As in Sweet’s approach, the use of the foreign language as a medium of instruction did not exclude translation. ‘Let us recognize frankly’, Palmer affirmed, ‘that the withholding of an “official” or authentic translation does not prevent the students from forming faulty associations, but that, on the contrary, such withholding may often engender them’ (Palmer in Howatt 2004: 273).

Palmer created his own categories to describe the grammatical structure of the sentence in terms of form and function. The new word classes were: ‘miologs’ (corresponding to morphemes), ‘monologs’ (word forms) and ‘polylogs’ (collocations or phrases). They formed functional relationships with each other called ‘ergons’. In Palmer’s system the ‘ergonic’ relationship between linguistic units gave rise to all types of sentences. In later years, Palmer’s focus on sentence patterns and spoken language shifted to a text-based approach, whereby a coherent text provided the material for acquiring oral skills through activities such as pronunciation practice, comprehension questions and retelling. This change renewed Palmer’s research interests in the selection and control of vocabulary for pedagogic purposes (Howatt 2004: 268). His work on high-frequency words, which produced a 3,000-word list that accounted for 95 per cent of running text, led, in 1932, to the publication, with Albert S. Hornby, of *The IRET Standard 600-word Vocabulary*. It was used two years later for the preparation of the *Interim Report on Vocabulary Selection for English as a Foreign Language* published in 1936 and co-authored with Michael P. West and Lawrence W. Faucett with the consultancy of the behaviourist psychologist Edward L. Thorndike. The aim of the report was to draw up word lists for the creation of reading materials in English as a foreign language, in an attempt to establish scientifically based criteria for syllabus design (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 37; Howatt 2004: 289–90). Palmer’s distinguished research and applied work laid the foundations of the British approach to the teaching of English as a Foreign Language, to which I now turn.

### 1.6 Situational Language Teaching

In the early 1950s Albert S. Hornby systematized the techniques of Palmer’s Oral Method and put forward a methodology that gave equal emphasis to the meaning
and the form of the grammatical patterns of the English language. He named it the ‘Situational Approach in Language Teaching’ (Howatt 2004: 297). According to Hornby, the most effective way of teaching the meaning of sentence patterns was to demonstrate it in simple situations that could either be acted out by the teacher and the learners or illustrated through visual aids such as pictures, realia, wallcharts, flash cards and stick figures. This principle guided the way in which patterns were taught in class and the way they were graded in the design of coursebooks, which adopted the same replicable framework for the presentation of grammar. So, for instance, the present progressive and the present perfect simple were taught before the present and the past simple tenses because the former could be easily acted out, while the latter could be grasped at a later stage through reading exercises.

Drawing on François Gouin’s Series Method, discussed above in section 1.2, Hornby proposed that at beginner level patterns be taught one by one and be organized in sequences that created simple storylines. For example, the sequence ‘I am going to open the window’, an intention announced to the whole class before acting out the storyline, is made up of three patterns (Howatt 2004: 298):

- I am walking to the window (uttered while moving towards the window).
- I am opening the window (spoken while the action was in progress).
- I have opened the window (pronounced before moving away, maybe with one hand on the open window).

The idea of teaching grammar inductively by introducing and practising new structures situationally became a key concept of the British tradition in English language teaching for the following two decades. It influenced the French Audio-Visual Method adopted in two courses, Voix et images de France (1961) for adults and Bonjour Line (1963) for children, which prompted the British Council to commission a course designed along the same lines, The Turners (1969) (Howatt 2004: 316–17). Other complementary principles informing situational language pedagogy were:

1. All four language skills should be taught but speaking should be given priority.
2. Courses of instruction should be built round a graded syllabus of structural patterns.
3. Vocabulary should be carefully selected and presented along with new grammatical patterns in specially written connected texts.
4. Wherever possible, meaning should be taught through ostensive procedures and/or linguistic context.
5. Error should be avoided through adequate practice and rehearsal (Howatt 2004: 299–300).

Point 4 in the above list leaves open the question of the use of the students’ mother tongue to facilitate comprehension. In an article addressed to teacher trainees, Hornby clarified his position as follows:
The British teacher who goes to India, Egypt or China, or any area where the language of his pupils is unknown to him, will teach English, often successfully, without using the language of his pupils. The Indian, Egyptian or Chinese teacher working with him will almost certainly make a considerable use of the vernacular. But he may well be following the Direct Method. If he is competent and if he uses the method wisely, he will almost certainly obtain better and quicker results than his British colleague who is unable to use the vernacular.

(Hornby in Howatt 2004: 313)

In line with the view expressed by most scholars from Sweet onwards, Hornby recognized the advantages of a sensible bilingual methodology and distanced himself from the total exclusion of translation advocated by some proponents of the Direct Method, most notably Berlitz. The principles underpinning Situational Language Teaching and the techniques applied in the Audio-Visual Method were adopted, at least in its early stages, by a large-scale project set up in the UK in 1963, the Nuffield Foreign Languages Teaching Materials Project, which produced a French course for primary schools called En Avant (Howatt 2004: 324).

1.7 Structural Language Teaching

Hornby’s Situational Approach represented the British version of Structural Language Teaching, a methodology that began in the US during World War II and gained considerable institutional support there throughout the 1940s and 1950s. The theoretical foundations were provided by the descriptivist linguist Leonard Bloomfield and the applied linguist Charles C. Fries. They belonged to the American tradition of structural linguistics, which sought to identify and describe the formal patterns of language through empirical observations. Bloomfield’s Outline Guide for the Practical Study of Foreign Languages, published in 1942 (Howatt 2004: 303–4), described in detail the techniques used by fieldworkers to elicit, record and transcribe indigenous Amerindian languages with the assistance of native informants. It also gave some general advice on language learning and became one of the main manuals used in the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) set up in December 1942 to teach over 30 languages to selected US army officers. The programme ran from April 1943 to February 1944. The method used in the ASTP, which became known as the Army Method, was subsequently adopted in a large number of intensive courses run in American universities. Its goal was to develop ‘a command of the colloquial spoken form of the language’ (Agard et al., original emphasis in Velleman 2008: 388).

Instruction was carried out by a ‘scientific linguist’, who provided language descriptions in the areas of phonology, morphology and syntax and created the teaching material, and a ‘guide’, a native informant whose task was to teach aural–oral skills through mimicry–memorization, pattern drilling and question-and-answer
Historical overview

techniques. The guide never used English. The meaning of the sentences he modelled was explained by a ‘group leader’, a student who had been selected to read the English translations of the original sentences. Phonograph records were provided for those groups which did not have a native-speaker guide and for further listening practice. Trainees were also introduced to the anthropological culture of the language they were learning in the so-called ‘area study’ (Velleman 2008: 389–90). The project led to the publication of self-study manuals for 22 languages, the Spoken Language series. Exemplary is Spoken Spanish, organized in five parts made up of six units each. The five parts progress from survival situations to general themes such as ‘government’, ‘the military’, ‘industry’ and ‘culture’. Activities include transformational drills, oral translations, question-and-answer interactions, multiple-choice and matching exercises, aural practice with instant translations and ‘Conversation’, which continues the translations in role plays. Each unit ends with a vocabulary list with the English equivalents (Velleman 2008: 390–1).

Meanwhile, at the English Language Institute (ELI) founded in 1941 at the University of Michigan, Fries was developing the Michigan Oral Approach. The novelty of this methodology was the introduction of contrastive analysis for designing language-specific teaching materials that focused on the early stages of language learning.

The most efficient materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner.

(Fries 1945: 9)

The aim of the Oral Approach was to build up ‘a set of habits for the oral production of a language and for the receptive understanding of the language when it is spoken’ (Fries 1945: 8). To achieve this goal within a reasonable time, Fries devised intensive language courses for adult learners, with drilling exercises containing enough vocabulary to make the sound system and the structural system work so as to create automatic and unconscious habits (Fries 1945: 3). For example, for Spanish-speaking learners, Fries proposed isolating ‘the most similar sounds in Spanish words, as “perro” for [ɾ] or “mismo” for [z] or “dedo” for [θ]’ (Fries 1945: 25). As regards word-order patterns, Spanish speakers had to ‘develop a habit of placing single word modifiers of substantives before the words they modify’ (Fries 1945: 33).

Fries also observed crucial differences between languages at the level of lexis:

The struggle with new words through a two language dictionary which seeks to give word equivalents in the two languages is exceedingly laborious and ineffective. Practically never do two words (except possibly highly technical words) in different languages cover precisely the same areas of meaning.

(Fries 1945: 7)
An example of a lexical mismatch between English and Spanish is offered by the word *mesa*, which is not used in many of the situations in which *table* is used, e.g. *table of figures*, *table of contents* and *timetable*. Conversely, *mesa* occurs in many expressions in which *table* is not used (Fries 1945: 40).

Also, Fries devised a ‘slot-filler’ grammar in which English sentences were described in terms of fundamental ‘patterns’ containing slots that could be filled by four ‘form-classes’ (corresponding to nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs) and 15 ‘function words’.

First there are the ‘function words’, those words which, although some of them may have also full-word meaning content, primarily or largely operate as means of expressing relations of grammatical structures. These include the so-called auxiliaries, prepositions, conjunctions, interrogative particles, and a miscellaneous group consisting of the words for degree, for generalizing, the articles, etc. (Fries 1945: 44)

For example, the sentence *The boys do not do their work promptly* falls in the following pattern (Fries 1952/1957: 97):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The knowledge of fundamental patterns provided the teacher with a model for constructing a variety of sentences using different fillers in the prescribed slots. For instance, the above pattern could be practised in drilling exercises by replacing different Class 1, 2 and 4 fillers.

Practice and repetition are crucially important for the development of ‘the new set of habits that constitute the foreign language’ (Fries 1948: 16).

Structural patterns can be pointed out and described, but a study of the statements of the pattern, making them matters of conscious knowledge, must never be allowed to become a substitute for constant practice and accurate repetition of the sentences themselves.

(Fries 1948: 16)

Assuming that structural differences between the L1 and the L2 were a major source of difficulty in language learning, Fries recommended the use of contrastive analysis for organizing teaching materials. For this reason he believed that

the teachers, to be most effective, must know, linguistically (not necessarily *practically* but ‘descriptively’) the native language of the students they teach.
Such knowledge is not for the sake of practically using that language in the classroom but for the sake of understanding the precise nature of the difficulties with which the students are struggling.

(Fries 1945: 14, original emphasis)

The point made by Fries in connection with the linguistic knowledge that teachers need to acquire reveals his opposition to the use of the students’ first language in the classroom, the consequence of a strict interpretation of the principle of habit formation in second language acquisition. Also, Fries’ statement carries the implication, made explicit by Robert Lado (1957/1981), that dissimilarities between languages cause difficulty in learning because of language transfer.

Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture – both productively and when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and culture as practiced by natives.

(Lado 1957/1981: 2)

This thought underlies the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, which posits that contrastive analysis can predict and describe the patterns that will cause difficulty in language learning. Lado’s assumption gave rise to a large body of empirical research that compared native and foreign language systems in order to discover the sources of learning difficulties and errors so as to create effective teaching materials. Lado’s seminal work in Contrastive Analysis contributed significantly to understanding language transfer phenomena in language learning. These insights influenced the development of the notion of Interlanguage put forward by Larry Selinker (1972, 1992). The Interlanguage Hypothesis holds that learners create a (partly) separate linguistic system in which interlingual identifications and language transfer are generated, as will be discussed in section 2.1 in connection with L2 translation.

1.8 The Audiolingual Method

Following the launching of the first Russian satellite on 4 October 1957, the US government recognized the crucial need for expanding foreign language education. A year later President Eisenhower signed the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) into law. Funds were provided for conferences, the study and analysis of modern languages, the development of teaching materials and teacher training in summer institutes, which were designed to enhance language proficiency and the knowledge of contemporary methods. Drawing on the Structural Approach and behaviourist learning theory, applied linguists elaborated a methodology suitable for teaching languages in US colleges and universities, where the goal was to enable learners to use ‘the new language as its native speakers use it’ (Brooks 1964: xii).
The new method recognized the ‘significance of language as communication’ and ‘stressed the importance of the audio-lingual aspects of language learning’ (Brooks 1964: 228–9), i.e. ‘hearing-speaking activities’ (Brooks 1964: 263). It became widely employed not only in secondary and higher education, but also in Foreign Language in the Elementary Schools programmes that were set up throughout the United States in the 1950s. Audiolingualism formed the basis of numerous coursebooks such as Lado English Series (Lado 1977) and English 900 (English Language Services 1964).

The theory of language informing the Audiolingual Method was the same as the one adopted by the American Structural Approach, while its principles of language learning drew mainly from B. F. Skinner’s model of human behaviour. This consists of three observables: responses, reinforcement and environment. Responses can be either elicited by a stimulus or emitted freely without the application of an obvious stimulus. The two main types of reinforcement are positive, which means that reinforcement occurs by the gain of something (e.g. food), and negative, which refers to something that is reinforcing by virtue of its termination (e.g. a loud noise). Both positive and negative types of reinforcement lead to an increase in the frequency of performing a given behaviour, while no reinforcement leads to its extinction. Behaviour is shaped and maintained through operant conditioning, which involves learning to give a response that has been positively reinforced by a reward (Roth 1990: 268–78).

Audiolingualism espoused Skinner’s general definition of verbal behaviour as ‘behaviour reinforced through the mediation of other persons’ (1957: 14) and of ‘instruction’ as ‘[t]he change which is . . . brought about in the behaviour of the listener’ (Skinner 1957: 362).

The student comes to emit certain kinds of responses, both verbal and non-verbal, because of verbal stimuli occurring under certain circumstances. Lectures, demonstrations, texts, and experiments all increase the verbal and nonverbal repertoires of the listener or observer through processes of this sort. In the field of history, the effect is almost exclusively a modification of the student’s verbal behaviour, and he carries much of this change in his behaviour as a speaker in the form of intraverbal sequences. In the practical sciences, a more important effect may be to establish nonverbal modes of response.

(Skinner 1957: 362–3, original emphasis)

Importantly, the proponents of the new method put forward the following principles of language learning:

1. Foreign language is the same as any other kind of learning and can be explained by the same laws and principles.
2. All learning is the result of experience and is evident in changes in behaviour.
Both first and foreign language learning consist of developing the correct behavioural responses. However, the former is achieved with relative ease, while the latter is a special accomplishment that requires setting up optimal classroom conditions that imitate L1 acquisition as far as possible.

Foreign language learning is a mechanical process of habit formation. Language learning proceeds by means of analogy rather than analysis. Errors are the result of L1 interference and are to be avoided or corrected if they occur.

(A Ellis 1990: 21–5)

Audiolingual learning theory formed the background to a set of basic tenets of language teaching.

The primary goal of foreign language learning is oral proficiency. Dialogues and drills form the basis of classroom practice in the early stages. Reading and writing are introduced later in the syllabus. To begin with writing consists of copying practised sentences. Then students write out variations of grammar patterns or write short essays with the help of framing questions. Dialogues are used for repetition and memorization to achieve correct pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation. After a dialogue has been memorized, grammatical patterns in the dialogue are selected by the teacher and practised in various types of drill exercises in which the students repeat an utterance aloud as soon as they hear it (read by the teacher or on tape in a language laboratory).

(Richards and Rodgers 2001: 58–65)

More specifically, Nelson Brooks (1964: 156–61) listed 12 kinds of drills: repetition, inflection, replacement, restatement, completion, transposition, expansion, contraction, transformation, integration, rejoinder and restoration. As regards the role played by the learners' L1 and translation in the procedures that the teacher should adopt, Brooks recommended ‘[t]he subordination of the mother tongue to the second language by rendering English inactive while the new language is being learned’ (Brooks 1964: 142). Practice in translation was admitted ‘only as a literary exercise at an advanced level’ (Brooks 1964: 142). Starting from the premise that ‘[n]o translation is worthy of the name so long as it bears the slightest trace of the language from which it comes’ (Brooks 1964: 255), Brooks argued that only when they were sufficiently advanced should students be coached in this useful skill, in the following way:

A paragraph is read and reread a number of times until all its significance has been absorbed and is clearly held in mind. Then the original is put aside and the paragraph is written in the other language. Once this is done, a comparison may be made for the clarification or addition of details.

(Brooks 1964: 256)
Brooks’ position is in line with Lado’s, who stated that ‘translation cannot be achieved without mastery of the second language. We, therefore, teach the language first, and then we may teach translation as a separate skill, if that is considered desirable’ (Lado in Malmkjær 1998a: 5). Moreover, Brooks recommended the teacher’s literal translation into the L1 only as a means of comparing one language with another ‘in terms of their vocabularies, item by item’ as bilingual dictionaries do (Brooks 1964: 184). However, the literal translation of a message, statement or sequence of utterances was considered deleterious.

It is quite possible to use English to identify the meaning of single, isolated words, without involving translation at the propositional level at all. The reason for this is that the transfer of meaning at the word level is essentially a matter of lexical meaning only, while the matching of whole utterances always involves structural patterns as well, and these often interfere with and are harmful to the internalized behavior patterns of the student in the target language.

(Brooks 1964: 185)

Towards the end of the 1960s, Audiolingualism came to be considered an inadequate methodology in the light of the new emphasis that was placed on the functional and communicative potential of language. Nevertheless, its stance on translation as a means of facilitating comprehension remained unchallenged, as will be discussed below.

1.9 Communicative Language Teaching

The origins of the Communicative Approach (or Communicative Language Teaching) date back to the late 1960s, when language education expanded significantly in Britain to meet both the needs of the children of permanent residents from Commonwealth countries and those of a growing number of overseas students who required either general-purpose or specialized pre-college instruction in English. In this climate of innovation and expansion in language teaching, the British government supported four major research projects (Howatt 2004: 248):

- the ‘Survey of English Usage’ directed by Randolph Quirk at London University in 1960, which produced A Grammar of Contemporary English (1972) and is ongoing at University College London;
- the ‘Programme in Linguistics and English Teaching’ (1964–71) directed by M. A. K. Halliday whose aim was to create innovative mother-tongue teaching materials for schools;
- the Scope project (1966–72) directed by John Ridge and June Derrick at the University of Leeds, which created teaching materials for English as a second language in primary schools;
• ‘Primary French’ (1963–74), which comprised a Pilot Scheme to evaluate the proposal to introduce French into primary schools, as well as the Nuffield Foreign Languages Teaching Materials Project that was mentioned in section 1.6.

It became clear that that the situational settings created by teachers to explain the meanings of new grammar patterns were no longer suitable for equipping learners with the knowledge and skills that were relevant to their specific linguistic, academic and professional exigencies. ‘What was needed’, Howatt observes, ‘was a more analytical approach which accepted that “situations” were made up from smaller events: asking for things, expressing likes and dislikes, making suggestions, and so on’ (Howatt 2004: 249–50). This new analytical approach was developed in the 1970s by the proponents of Communicative Language Teaching, which provided a framework for syllabus design based on functional categories rather than language structures as proposed by Situational Language Teaching. Crucially, it was considered ‘a radical mistake to suppose that a knowledge of how sentences are put to use in communication follows automatically from a knowledge of how sentences are composed and what signification they have as linguistic units’ (Widdowson 1972: 17). Therefore, learners had to be taught what values sentences may have in text and discourse as ‘predictions, qualifications, reports, descriptions, and so on’ (Widdowson 1972: 17).

The theoretical foundations of the communicative movement lie in the work not only of British linguists such as John Rupert Firth and M. A. K. Halliday, who brought about a shift in linguistic enquiry from a structural to a functional perspective, but also of the philosophers J. L. Austin and John R. Searle, who developed speech-act theory, and of the sociolinguists John Gumperz, Dell Hymes and William Labov, who demonstrated the importance of social context in determining verbal behaviour.

The new approach was launched during a Conference on ‘The Communicative Teaching of English’ held at Lancaster University in 1973. On the basis of the insight that language is a system for the expression of meaning, the goal set for language teaching was to develop ‘communicative competence’, which consists of the ‘knowledge’ and ‘ability for use’ of four parameters of communication, i.e. whether (and to what degree) something is (a) formally possible, (b) feasible, (c) appropriate and (d) done (Hymes 1972).

The distinctive features of the new pedagogic paradigm, which was further developed in the 1980s and 1990s and is now well established worldwide, are summarized by Johnson and Johnson (1998b) as follows:

• appropriateness (language use must be appropriate to the contextual situation);
• message focus (learners need to be able to create and understand real meanings);
• psycholinguistic processing (learners engage in activities involving cognitive and other second language acquisition processes);
• risk taking (students are encouraged to learn by trial and error);
• free practice (simultaneous use of various skills).
Central to the Communicative Approach is the notion of ‘activities’ designed to engage learners in cooperative work in groups or in pairs, which stimulates the ‘genuine use of language for communicative purposes’ (Howatt 2004: 258, 345). The concept of activities was elaborated and applied in the Communicational Teaching Project (or the Bangalore Project) directed by N. S. Prabhu in India from 1979 to 1984. It was run with groups of schoolchildren in Madras, Bangalore and Cuddalore and started from the premise that ‘successful language acquisition was the outcome of cognitive processes engendered by the effort to communicate’ in order to complete a task successfully (Howatt 2004: 347). The syllabus was based on graded ‘reasoning-gap activities’ such as mental arithmetic, map reading, solving puzzles and so on, which were familiar to the children and had clear answers. The children who took part in the project apparently enjoyed the course and acquired better listening comprehension skills compared with their peers who had attended conventional programmes (Prabhu in Howatt 2004: 349).

As for translation, the Communicative Approach recommends adopting it merely ‘to make sure that the learners understand what they are doing’ (Howatt 2004: 259). Translation is therefore included as a teaching strategy that facilitates the learning process, a position taken, to varying degrees, by most of the approaches and methods surveyed in this brief history of language teaching methodologies. However, translation as a classroom activity alongside other meaning-focused tasks that involve reading, writing, listening and speaking has, so far, been largely excluded from the range of skills to be developed as part of learning a foreign language. ‘Perhaps’, as Howatt tentatively predicts, ‘this is set to change’ (Howatt 2004: 259). Since the late 1980s, this prophecy has gradually been fulfilled, as will be demonstrated in the remainder of this book.

Notes
1 The review presented in this chapter draws extensively on the second edition of *A History of English Language Teaching*, authored by A. P. R. Howatt with a chapter by H. G. Widdowson.
2 The Phonetic Teachers’ Association, renamed the International Phonetic Association in 1897, was founded in Paris in 1886. Its International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) was designed to enable the sounds of any language to be accurately transcribed (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 9; Howatt 2004: 196).
3 *An Introduction to the Teaching of Living Languages without Grammar or Dictionary* (Sauveur in Howatt 2004: 218–21).
4 The other manual was *Outline of Linguistic Analysis* (Bloch and Trager in Velleman 2008: 389).
5 The ELI was founded with the support of the US State Department as part of a larger linguistic and cultural policy aimed at promoting the spread of English in Latin America. The goal of the ELI, under the direction of Charles C. Fries and later Robert Lado, was to research how best to teach English as a foreign language in order to deliver intensive English training courses at the University of Michigan and create English teaching and testing manuals worldwide (Kramsch 2007: 241–2).
6 The term ‘audio-lingual’ was coined by Nelson Brooks (1964): ‘[s]ince the words aural and oral cannot be dependable distinguished in spoken English, the term audio-lingual is proposed instead when they must be used together’ (Brooks 1964: 263, original emphasis).
In the language laboratory, introduced in American secondary schools, colleges and universities in the 1950s, students could carry out further dialogue and drill work. By 1958, in the United States there were 64 language labs in secondary schools and 240 in colleges and universities (Johnston and Seerley in Roby 2004: 525). By the mid-1960s, the number of language labs had grown exponentially: 10,000 labs had been installed in secondary schools and 14,000 in higher education institutions (Keck and Smith in Roby 2004: 525).
Over the past two decades there has been renewed interest in translation as part of language learning and teaching. This chapter first traces the development of the main theoretical considerations in favour of using various forms of translating in foreign language education. Then it examines experimental and survey studies into the effectiveness of translation in foreign language pedagogy. Finally, it analyses the relationship between the approaches adopted in recent translation-based teaching methods and the way in which they can be realized in design and procedure. The progression of this survey is chronological and its aim is twofold: to appraise the advancements made in the study of pedagogic translation and to identify some of the gaps that still need to be bridged.

2.1 Theoretical considerations

The beginnings of a reappraisal of translation in Communicative Language Teaching can be traced back to the late 1980s, when Alan Duff, lecturer and author-translator, wrote the Duke of Edinburgh Award winning volume *Translation:*

> a resource book for teachers who wish to use translation [from English into the students’ mother tongue] as a language learning activity, just as they might use literature, drama, project work, conversation, role play, writing, or class readers for language practice and improvement.

*(Duff 1989: 8, original emphasis)*

As Alan Maley pointed out in the ‘Foreword’, the originality of this work ‘lies in having shifted the emphasis from learning translation as a set of discrete skills to using translation as a resource for the promotion of language learning’ (Maley 1989: 3, original emphasis). Crucially, translation develops the ability to search for
the most appropriate words in order to convey accurately the meaning of the original text, thus enhancing flexibility, accuracy and clarity. ‘This combination of freedom and constraint’, as Duff claims, ‘allows the students to contribute their own thoughts to a discussion, which has a clear focus – the text’ (Duff 1989: 7). Moreover, translation enables learners to become aware of the influence of the L1 on the L2, so they can deal with problems arising from interference. In this regard, Duff suggests that ‘[a] good way of shaking off the source language (SL) influence is to set the text aside and translate a few sentences aloud, from memory’ (Duff 1989: 11). Duff also points out that, in the wider world, translation is a natural and necessary communicative activity; hence it is legitimate to reinstate it in the language classroom. It follows that learning to translate a broad range of text types, registers and styles, in both written and spoken language, enhances a variety of skills that are essential in second language acquisition and in the multilingual work environment (Duff 1989: 6–7).

Duff advocates the readmission of translation in the language classroom both as an effective means of achieving linguistic proficiency and as a skill in its own right. A similar inclusive stance is adopted in Penelope Sewell and Ian Higgins’ edited volume, Teaching Translation in Universities (1996a), which consists of articles about translation as an L2 teaching device and as an end in itself. The point of departure for the editors of this book is the recognition of the importance of opening up academic training to new ideas from the world of real-life translation (Sewell and Higgins 1996b: 9). The contributors to the volume are either language lecturers or translator trainers working in English, French and German universities. They share the view that drawing on the insights offered by translation theory and successful professional practice can improve significantly the way translation is taught in universities, particularly at a high level of proficiency in the foreign language (Frazer 1996; Klein-Braley 1996; Sewell 1996). Translation is therefore legitimated as a professional activity and as a specific pedagogic exercise, carried out alongside other language-learning tasks. Indeed, Cristine Klein-Braley argues that the aim of modern languages degree courses ‘must be to enable all-round language professionals to tackle translations themselves for in-house and informal purposes, and also – and importantly – to supervise the translation of texts for public and formal purposes’ (Klein-Braley 1996: 24). So, at graduate level, students will be able to master basic translation techniques. Should they wish to pursue a career as translators or interpreters, they would need to undertake further training at postgraduate level. Within this rapprochement perspective, translation is considered a distinct form of communication (Frazer 1996: 121–2).

The essays in the collection suggest that, when it is learnt through properly devised activities that are supported by research into real-life practice, while taking into account the students’ linguistic competence and needs, translation develops a variety of abilities. It widens and deepens the students’ knowledge of vocabulary and specialized terminology, making them aware of language-specific collocations, false cognates and single words or multi-word units that have several
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possible renderings in the target language. Translation helps students to recognize errors deriving from L1 interference and, in so doing, enables them to enhance their knowledge of the mother tongue (Harvey 1996). Also, as they search for an appropriate equivalent, learners reflect on the different ways in which the L1 and the L2 achieve the same communicative purpose. And, like written L2 production, translation requires that students read a wide range of text types and styles and teachers reinforce those styles (Frazer 1996).

A line of thought complementary to that pursued in Teaching Translation in Universities is presented in Kirsten Malmkjær’s (1998a) edited volume Translation and Language Teaching. Language Teaching and Translation. Malmkjær (1997, 1998b) argues that, if translation is properly understood, the traditional objections to its reinstatement in language teaching fall away. She further argues that translation involves a good deal of reading, writing, speaking and listening in the foreign language. Therefore, contrary to traditional wisdom, translation is not separate from and independent of the four skills which define communicative competence. Translation can be used as a reliable and valid test of foreign language ability, providing, of course, students have had sufficient preparation on selected text types and are allowed to consult relevant resources (Malmkjær 1998b; Newson 1998).

Also, Malmkjær (1998b) contends that the search for the most appropriate translation equivalents develops the ability to relate the source language to the target language and to think in both the L1 and the L2. When translating, in fact, students become aware of positive and negative interference between languages and develop the ability to control it. They also realize that ‘expressions in the two languages do not necessarily correspond one-to-one . . . , and that even when they do, the contexts for the two texts may differ so radically that the TL expression which is usually considered the closest “equivalent” of the SL expression is in fact unsuitable for TT’ (Malmkjær 1998b: 8). Malmkjær also affirms, from a pragmatic viewpoint, that introducing language learners to translation at undergraduate level will equip them early on with some of the basic skills they may develop later in specialized translator training programmes. It follows that, if translating in the second language classroom resembles real-life translation sufficiently closely, it ‘might profitably be used as one among several methods of actually teaching language, rather than as mere preparation for an examination’ (Malmkjær 1998b: 9, original emphasis). Guy Cook (1998) further argues that an exclusive focus on foreign language use in the classroom may encourage avoidance strategies, thus leading to formal inaccuracy. Translation develops accuracy because it forces learners to confront difficulties in the use of the L2.

Furthermore, Stuart Campbell (1998) regards the Interlanguage Hypothesis (Selinker 1992) as offering an apt framework for developing a model of translation competence that deals with translation into the L2. On the basis of the notion that a translator working into a second language is on a developmental path with respect to that language, Campbell proposes a model consisting of three components that are intended for teaching and assessing L2 translation:
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Since the turn of the century, the debate about the merits of translation as a method of language learning, teaching and testing has been enriched by critical reflections on the value of educational translation as an aid to second language acquisition, as a means of developing metalinguistic competence, as a motivational factor, as an essential skill in today’s multicultural societies and globalized world and as an ecological practice that not only recognizes the value and relevance of students’ first languages but also facilitates the creation of multilingual identities as well as cultural diversity. These claims have been put forward in bilingual and foreign language education (e.g. Butzkamm 2003; Manyak 2004; Cummins 2007) as well as in translation studies (e.g. House 2009).

Moreover, from the viewpoint of learning styles, Penelope Sewell (2004) suggests that the attraction of translation lies in its ability to satisfy the exigencies of many language learners who shy away from communicative tasks, such as open-ended and unpredictable role play, because these activities challenge their self-image. In particular, translation is perceived to be a task that meets the need for confidence and self-esteem as well as the need not to lose face. In fact, as they work mainly at home, students have the luxury of being able to improve the target text at will; hence they feel in charge. Also, translation fulfils the need to be personally rewarded, since it is accomplished as a result of one’s own efforts and abilities. The need for certainty, closure and autonomy is also satisfied, because translating is regarded as a closed-ended activity that produces a target text that can be evaluated vis-à-vis the source text, without relying solely on the teacher’s judgement. Finally, while role-play situations seem to suit risk-taking and extrovert personalities, translation seems to favour reflection and introverted personality traits, since it involves low levels of interaction.

Sewell’s considerations are consistent with the findings of Amir Farzad Ashouri and Zahara Fotovatnia’s (2010) research on personality traits and learners’ beliefs about translation. The study was carried out with a sample of 120 Iranian EFL learners at intermediate level, whose age ranged between 15 and 25 years. The aim was ‘to recognize whether groups of risk-takers and risk-averse learners along with those with high and low tolerance to ambiguity had different beliefs about translation or not’ (Ashouri and Fotovatnia 2010: 232). The results showed that most respondents (73.7 per cent) had a positive belief about using translation strategies in their EFL learning, that is, they considered translation to be helpful for their learning. Also, while high risk-takers had a negative belief about translation,
risk-averse learners had a positive one. Tolerance to ambiguity had no impact on the learners’ beliefs about translation.

As regards the relationship between translation as a means and an end, Guy Cook argues that these two roles ‘need not be kept apart, as they have been traditionally’; hence ‘translation theory and translation studies are far from irrelevant to language learning, and should not be kept separate from it’ (Cook 2010: 55). This inclusive stance is implicit in the recommendations made in the Ad Hoc Committee Report on Foreign Languages issued by the Modern Language Association of America (MLA 2007). One of the priorities identified in the report is, in fact, the development of programmes in translation and interpretation because ‘[t]here is a great unmet demand for educated translators and interpreters, and translation is an ideal context for developing translingual and transcultural abilities as an organizing principle of the language curriculum’ (MLA 2007: 3). In sharp contrast with this groundbreaking proposal is the stern distinction upheld in the volume edited by Witte et al. (2009), which contains 24 papers presented at a conference on ‘Translation and Second Language Teaching and Learning’ hosted by the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, in March 2008. The contributors to the volume largely share the editors’ view that

\[
\text{[t]ranslation in language teaching has by no means the objective of educating translators; rather it is an activity which might stimulate the cognitive potential of an adult or adolescent learner and is thus supposed to complement other activities, not to replace them.}
\]

\[(\text{Witte et al., 2009: 2)}\]

This clear orientation towards translation as a means to an end rather than an end in itself goes against the growing trend towards opening up foreign language education to new ideas from the world of real-life translation, as Sewell and Higgins (1996b: 9) envisaged. Also, Witte et al.’s strong emphasis on translation as a means to achieve language proficiency explains why the design and procedure of the teaching methods illustrated or recommended in their volume draw mainly on the insights provided by psycholinguistic studies of bilingualism, second language acquisition studies and foreign language education theory. The specific contribution of translation studies is rather sparse. In fairness, Claus Gnutzmann acknowledges that ‘[t]ranslation science has shed light on the complexity of translation by developing new theories and models of translations and also by researching translation processes as well as the quality of translation products’ (Gnutzmann 2009: 56).

However, he maintains that the achievements of translation studies scholarship are particularly relevant and influential in translator training (Gnutzmann 2009: 56). They are believed to be less important in a language learning context, where, as Theo Harden argues, ‘the product, the finished translation, is of only secondary interest’; hence ‘the debates about audience, authority of the source text etc., which still form the basis of a lively debate in Translation Theory and Translation Studies’ are not the main concerns (Harden 2009: 126).
To sum up, apart from a few dissenting voices, translation is now widely legitimated as an additional means of teaching and testing L2 proficiency and as a skill in its own right. However, two key questions still remain unanswered: Which forms of translation are best suited to fulfilling these interrelated, but different functions? What is the place of translation in the language curriculum? Malmkjær’s (2010) partial answer to these questions is that undergraduate students of modern languages can benefit from undertaking properly situated translation and interpreting tasks, that is to say properly briefed, functional translation assignments undertaken for a clearly stated purpose. Cook (2010) provides a more articulated, but still partial solution. He suggests ‘keeping beginners’ attention focused mainly upon semantic equivalence . . . , leaving attention to issues such as functional and discoursal equivalence to increase through the intermediate stages, becoming a major focus of attention for advanced students’ (Cook 2010: 73). This principle is further elaborated in his proposed translation-oriented pedagogy, of which more later in section 2.3.2. Let us keep these two unanswered questions in mind. We will return to them time and again in the remainder of the present book, aiming to explore and offer a convincing long-term answer that can reconcile language and translation pedagogy on firmer ground and for the years to come.

2.2 Empirical research

Some of the theoretical pronouncements concerning the beneficial effects of pedagogic translation have recently been investigated in experimental and survey-based studies in second language acquisition. Experimental research has focused on the effectiveness of L2 translation either as a means of assessing language proficiency or as a teaching tool. As regards the former area of enquiry, two separate studies were carried out with L1 Swedish and L1 Danish students of English in 1995 and 2000 respectively. The first study was conducted by Marie Källkvist at the English Department of Lund University in Sweden. The second was undertaken by Anne Schjoldager with two groups of students in Denmark, i.e. final-year secondary-level students specializing in languages at Risskov Amtsgymnasium and third-year students of English taking the compulsory translation course at the University of Aarhus. The findings of both experiments revealed the occurrence of more lexical and grammatical errors in translation tests compared with free composition (Källkvist 1998) or picture verbalization (Schjoldager 2004). Källkvist’s investigation, in particular, shows that errors in meaning and use of non-existent words were more frequent in translation, while collocational errors and overuse of general words were more numerous in writing. ‘It seems’, she observes, ‘that when students are deprived of the avoidance strategy, this leads to more lexical errors in translations, and to more errors of category 1, i.e., non-existent English words’ and these are coined by relying on the source text (Källkvist 1998: 85). An example of word-coining as a strategy used by students when they did not know the appropriate L2 equivalent, is workraft, which was offered as a translation of arbetskraft, the Swedish equivalent of labour or manpower (Källkvist 1998: 83).
Källkvist gives a very tentative and somewhat circular explanation for the occurrence of fewer instances of collocational errors and overuse of general words in translation.

Perhaps this is a reflection of the kind of Interlanguage that results from tasks where students set out from a writing version of their mother tongue. They are less free to generate their own, sometimes infelicitous, collocational patterns, and they may attempt to find appropriate translation equivalents word by word rather than over-use certain common and general words to express the same meaning.

(Källkvist 1998: 85)

Moreover, Källkvist does not discuss the possibility that the greater proportion of lexical errors in translation may be due to interference. She therefore recommends that

translation should be used in conjunction with other production tests in order to assess general proficiency. Students who have wide vocabularies may do better in a translation than students with poorer vocabulary. This difference in performance may not manifest itself in free composition in that students with poorer vocabulary can hide behind avoidance strategies.

(Källkvist 1998: 85–6)

In contrast, Schjoldager’s findings do lend some support to the interference hypothesis, but only for the group of secondary-level students who took part in the experiment, while ‘the evidence is somewhat inconclusive for the university students and actually points in the opposite direction’ (Schjoldager 2004: 145). Hence, at least for the latter group of learners, the different performance in translation versus picture verbalization is attributed to the fact that, owing to the presence of a source text, learners cannot resort to avoidance strategies and are forced to ‘venture into unknown areas of the L2 system’ (Schjoldager 2004: 139).

Schjoldager’s and Källkvist’s studies are complemented by Andrew Cohen and Amanda Brooks-Carson’s (2001) research. On the basis of experimental results and the analysis of students’ reflections, they make a similar recommendation to that given by Källkvist. In a carefully designed investigation carried out in a simulated assessment context,1 a group of 39 learners of French (25 native speakers of English, 10 Spanish-English bilinguals and 4 speakers of other languages) were asked to do two tests during the third semester in 1999. The first test involved writing an essay directly in French; the second consisted in writing an essay draft in the L1 or dominant language and translating it into French. At the end of each of the three writing sessions, the students filled in a questionnaire where they gave a score from 1 to 5 to a series of questions about the strategies adopted when writing directly in French, writing in the L1 and translated writing respectively. The three strategies checklists were based both on techniques described in
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previous empirical findings in the research literature and on results from pilot data obtained in the same study. The essays were assessed using rating scales that focused on four aspects of L2 writing: expression (freedom from translation effect, variety of vocabulary and sense of the language), transitions (organizational structure, clarity of point and smoothness of connectors), clauses (subordination and relative pronouns) and grammar (prepositions/partitive articles, noun/adjective agreement and verbs) (Brooks-Carson 2001: 176–7).

Twenty-five students performed significantly better in the direct writing mode, 13 students did better in the translation mode and one did equally well in both. Grammar ratings were not significantly different across modes. Interestingly, 80 per cent of the students reported thinking often or always in English when writing directly in French. This suggests that ‘while for the translated writing task they were engaged with written translation on paper, they were nonetheless engaged in mental translation during the direct writing task’; hence the two tasks ‘were not necessarily distinct in nature, but rather overlapping’ (Brooks-Carson 2001: 181). The authors therefore recommend using different tools to assess writing skills so as to avoid biased results. For example, essay writing could be preceded by a preparation task involving ‘writing the essay in the L1 or the dominant language of instruction’ (Brooks-Carson 2001: 182).

Besides language assessment, Källkvist (2008) investigated the effectiveness of contrastive analysis and L2 translation exercises vis-à-vis other types of form-focused instruction and practice. She carried out a longitudinal 13-week study involving two experimental groups of L1 Swedish learners of English at an advanced level within an authentic educational programme offered at Halmstad University in Sweden. Both groups were taught English grammar in a traditional way through presentation of the target structure, followed by exercises carried out in pairs or small groups and classroom discussion led by the teacher. The morphosyntactic structures covered in the 13-week period were selected on the basis of their attested difficulty for Swedish university-level students owing to contrastive differences between L1 and L2. The translation (T) group translated complete sentences or parts of a sentence. The no-translation (NoT) group practised the same target structure through gap-filling exercises or by manipulating the word order of English sentences. Only the T group was taught grammar by means of contrastive analysis during the presentation and correction stages. All students completed a battery of tests before and after the instruction period. These included a multiple-choice test, an L2 translation test, and a written retelling task.

Both the T and NoT groups had statistically significant pre-test to post-test gains on the multiple-choice and translation tests. The T group students experienced a greater accuracy gain in both tasks; this difference approached significance only for the translation test. The gain in relative accuracy scores on the written retelling test was greater for the NoT group. The hypothesis that the two groups would have similar gains was therefore supported. Moreover, the majority of students showed a greater gain when the test condition was the same as the exercise condition. But ‘33 percent of the NoT informants had gains on the
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translation test that were equal to or above the mean gain for the T informants, and 73 percent of the T group informants performed very well in the retelling task’ (Källkvist 2008: 198). This shows that some learners can do equally well in both form-focused tests, regardless of exercise type. On the basis of these findings, Källkvist affirms that, as a form-focused activity, L2 translation ‘has a place, albeit limited, in advanced-level courses when students share the same L1’ (Källkvist 2008: 199). She also claims that

[i]f we expect and aim for our learners to be able to use the L2 well when communicating in situations in which they are required to translate and in situations in which they need to express themselves directly in L2, it seems fully reasonable that we provide them with exercises and rich, varied, and enhanced input of either kind.

(Källkvist 2008: 199)

Another investigation concerning the impact of L2 translation on the acquisition of grammar was undertaken by Shahin Vaezi and Mehdi Mirzaei (2007). Two groups of L1 Persian students of English were taught four target structures over 16 sessions: the passive voice, indirect reported speech, second conditional and wish followed by the simple past. After being introduced to each structure, the experimental group translated 24 sentences individually in class (six per session), while the control group carried out an equal number of grammar exercises based on the coursebook. At the end of every session the teacher provided the correct answers, giving further grammatical explanations. The result of the post-treatment test, which included 20 form-focused exercises selected from the textbook New Interchange, revealed a significantly higher mean score for the translation group.

Following on from research which shows that cross-linguistic information is effective not only in the teaching of grammar but also in the acquisition of new vocabulary, Batia Laufer and Nany Girsai (2008) hypothesized that contrastive form-focused instruction (henceforth FFI), is at least as beneficial as, if not more than, other forms of FFI for the learning of new vocabulary. Contrastive FFI means a type of instruction ‘which leads to learners’ understanding of the similarities and differences between their L1 and L2 in terms of individual words and the overall lexical system’ (Laufer and Girsai 2008: 696) and provides practice in the areas of L1–L2 differences through form-focused translation and contrastive analysis.

Two research questions were investigated in Laufer and Girsai’s study:

1. Will contrastive form-focused tasks lead to the acquisition of a significantly larger number of lexical items than non-contrastive form-focused tasks and than message-focused tasks (a) in the case of single word and (b) in the case of collocations?
2. Will the above differences (if any) be retained on a delayed test taken one week after performing the first post-test?

(Laufer and Girsai 2008: 701)
The participants in the experiment were 75 tenth-graders (aged 15–16), native speakers of Hebrew learning English as a foreign language at intermediate level. They were randomly assigned to three learning conditions: message-focused instruction (MFI), non-contrastive form-focused instruction (FFI) and contrastive analysis and translation (CAT), combining translation with contrastive form-focused instruction. The target items consisted of ten unfamiliar single words and ten verb–noun collocations that were embedded in a reading passage based on Bill Clinton's book *My Life*. The first stage of the treatment was identical in the three groups. Students carried out a reading comprehension task involving answering 13 true-or-false statements without dictionaries or glossaries. The teacher provided the meaning of unknown words if necessary.

The next stage was conducted on the following day. The MFI group received two communicative tasks based on the same text: reading comprehension with open questions and gap-filling exercises followed by pair and group discussion on issues addressed in the text. The FFI group received two form-focused tasks: meaning recognition of the target vocabulary through a multiple-choice exercise and a text gap-filling activity with the target words provided at the end of the text. The CAT group received sentence-based translation tasks from L2 into L1 and from L1 into L2, followed by brief explicit contrastive analysis of the target items and their L1 translation options. The following day and a week later the students were tested on their active and passive recall of the target vocabulary. Active retention was assessed in terms of the ability to provide the target items in response to their Hebrew translations. Passive retention was indicated by the ability to translate the target items into Hebrew or to explain them in English.

The CAT group significantly outperformed the other two groups on all the tests. The authors explain these superior results in terms of three hypotheses that account for effective L2 learning in general: ‘noticing’, ‘pushed output’ and ‘task-induced involvement load’ as well as the positive influence of the L1 on the acquisition of L2 lexis. Cross-linguistic information makes learners notice the target vocabulary by associating it with the corresponding L1 item. Translation requires stretching learners’ linguistic resources, since they cannot avoid problematic words. Also, translation tasks present a high involvement load since they combine ‘need’ (there can be no avoidance strategies), ‘search for meaning’ (in L1 translation), ‘search for form’ (in L2 translation) and ‘evaluation’ of several alternatives before making the final choice (Laufer and Girsai 2008: 711–12).

In accordance with many of the theoretical arguments put forward in favour of pedagogic translation, the empirical studies reviewed so far have produced convergent results that lend considerable support to the reappraisal of translation as a cognitive aid to second language acquisition and as a means of testing linguistic competence. It can reasonably be argued that translation is a useful addition to the language teacher toolkit, as it enhances grammatical accuracy and diversifies the range of skills developed through language learning. For the future, it would be beneficial to extend experimental research to other language
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pairs and other forms of translation-based teaching over and above focus-on-forms instruction.

A parallel line of enquiry, which explores the claim that translation motivates students (e.g. Sewell 2004; Cook 2010), is the investigation of students’ beliefs about translation as an aid to second language acquisition. One example is Angeles Carreres’ (2006) survey, which she conducted in October 2006 with 31 second- and third-year undergraduate learners of Spanish at the University of Cambridge, UK. In this educational setting ‘the texts are almost exclusively literary or essayistic in nature’ (Carreres 2006: 8). Translation, which is taught into and out of the mother tongue, is an integral part of the language curriculum and its role is threefold: to equip students with the necessary close reading skills to tackle challenging literary or philosophical texts in a foreign language, to sensitize students to questions of style both in English and in the foreign language as well as to improve their linguistic skills in the foreign language (Carreres 2006: 8). All the respondents stated that translation should be taught as part of a modern languages degree course. Translation into the L2, in particular, was consistently regarded as a useful means of learning vocabulary, grammar, writing and register. The majority of students (54 per cent) thought they could not ‘make faster progress in the aforementioned areas through different means (e.g. in a more general language class, in a literature seminar, through reading, watching films, etc.)’. However, the response to the question ‘Do you enjoy translation classes?’ varied from a maximum score of 5 to a minimum score of 2 and these scores were evenly distributed. Only some students believed the course had equipped them with some professional translation skills, although two of them pointed out that a more varied range of texts should be used for that purpose (Carreres 2006: 9–10). Here is one of the comments:

To prepare for ‘real’ professional translation I think we should do a wide variety of texts. At the moment all we seem to do is literature (+ poetry). It would be nice to study/attempt journalistic, legal, advertising texts, etc.

(Carreres 2006: 12)

At the end of the first semester in the 2010–11 academic year, we replicated Carreres’ study with 30 second-year Italian students of English, attending a two-year Masters Degree in Modern Languages and Literatures at the University of Bari, Italy. On the whole, translation into L1 and L2, undertaken with a good variety of text types, was considered useful for learning vocabulary, grammar, writing, register and culture alongside other activities, such as reading, watching films or exchanging emails with native speakers of the foreign language. Translating texts as homework, followed by discussion in class, was the favourite way of acquiring translator skills. Using comparable texts, reading in the target language and using Internet resources were also considered valuable activities. The vast majority of respondents enjoyed translating and thought they had acquired professional competence during their degree course.
Here are some examples of students’ comments:

Translation is a useful exercise to understand the differences and similarities between two different cultures and improve the knowledge of both languages.

A text is a world, it communicates the culture of a foreign language. So translation is important because we can understand how a foreign language is organized by different and special grammar structures.

I think translation is an important part of our degree course because in this way we have the possibility to work on language structures in order to know their different functions. Our life is a constant translation! Translation can be considered as a way to understand the world around us. Translation allows us to get in touch with two different cultures. Translation is the experience of the ‘other’.

These responses are complemented by the findings of two surveys undertaken at the School of English, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland (Whyatt 2009a,b). The first study was carried out with 65 second-year undergraduate students who had completed a translation module that was part of a course on practical English. The majority of respondents (72 per cent) said that translation had helped them to become more confident in the use of English (Whyatt 2009a: 373–4). The second study was undertaken with 33 second-year undergraduate students halfway through the same translation module. After translating a tourist text from Polish, the students completed a questionnaire that elicited their attitudes towards translation as a language learning task.9 The vast majority of the respondents (over 85 per cent) gave a positive reply to the following questions:

- Do you enjoy doing translation tasks?
- Do you think that translating is an intellectually challenging activity?
- Do you often question your knowledge of vocabulary when you translate?
- Do you have a clear sense of achievement when you finish translating a text?

Moreover, 94 per cent said they had benefitted from the translation experience particularly as regards vocabulary usage, and 98 per cent said they would attend translation classes even if they were optional (Whyatt 2009b: 192–4). It is evident from these recent investigations that the translation class is now quite popular among language students.

It is interesting to note that earlier research showed a different picture. In 1996 a sample survey of 20 universities (19 in the UK and one in France) revealed the following students’ evaluations of the use of translation in the teaching of French:

1 The content of the texts is important, the translation problems do not capture students’ imagination.
2 Non-native speakers of either English or French question the value of translation into English and summary in English, saying they wish to learn French, not English.

3 Year 2 Honours students like the stylistic challenges and can see their relevance in their literary studies.

4 Requests to introduce translation in Year 1.

5 A blip this year. Complaints centre on translation into English which required more sophistication than some were expecting.

6 Translation into French is seen as a necessary evil, although the structure and variety of the course was appreciated.

(Sewell 1996: 152–3)

Sewell’s (2004) and Cook’s (2010) recent claim that translation is a motivational factor in language learning appears to be amply supported by the surveys reviewed in this section. In addition to their learning styles, the reasons why, metaphorically speaking, students buzz round the translation class like bees round the honeypot (Sewell 2004) can reasonably be inferred from the learners’ perception of the value of this type of activity, i.e. the intellectual challenge it poses, the linguistic confidence it instils, the improvement in L2 use it brings about, the awareness about cultural differences it raises and the feeling of achievement it gives. In conclusion, we can affirm that many of the arguments put forward in favour of the revival of translation have been supported by empirical research. The time is ripe, I think, to assess the extent to which theoretical insights and research findings are reflected in novel pedagogies that clearly recognize ‘the bilingualization process which learners necessarily engage in when they draw on the language they know as a resource for learning the language they do not’ (Widdowson 2003: 159). We will address this topic in the following section.

2.3 Pedagogic proposals

In order to describe, analyse and compare the approaches and methods put forward recently in translation-based language teaching, we will use the three-level descriptive framework elaborated by Jack Richards and Theodore Rodgers (2001). Their model comprises three key concepts: approach, design and procedure. Approach is a set of pedagogic principles which are inspired by theories of language and language learning. Design links approach with specific teaching procedure and is concerned with (a) the method’s general and specific objectives, (b) the syllabus model, (c) the types of learning activities advocated by the method, (d) the role of learners, (e) the role of teachers and (f) the role of instructional material. Finally, procedure describes how approach and design can be realized in actual classroom techniques, practices and behaviours. The present analysis concerns the methodologies proposed in two volumes published in Europe, where EU policies support and promote translation as ‘an important part of multilingualism policy’ and as ‘a major way of accessing other cultures’ (Commission 2008: 13).
2.3.1 Translation and Community Language Learning

The methodology exposed by Sheelagh Deller and Mario Rinvolucri (2002) in *Using the Mother Tongue* finds its inspiration in Community Language Learning. This is a method developed in the 1970s by the American theologian, counsellor and psychologist Charles A. Curran and his associates. It combines Counselling-Learning theory, humanistic techniques and bilingual education practices. Counselling-Learning draws on Carl Rogers’ theory of personality and client-centred therapy that focus on the idea of personal growth, i.e. our lifelong need to strive to become a person and realize our potential. The most important condition for personal growth is to become aware of our real feelings. Rogers’ person-centred method is to provide unconditional regard, that is, a warmth and respect for each client regardless of what he or she thinks or does (Rogers 1951, 1959). Humanistic techniques engage the whole person in the learning process, blending feelings, thoughts and knowledge in the pursuit of self-actualization and self-esteem (Moskowitz 1978). The bilingual pedagogic practices used in Community Language Learning involve ‘language alternation’, whereby a message is presented first in the L1 by the learner and then translated into the L2 by the teacher so as to foster a holistic understanding. The learner then repeats the message in the L2 to another learner (Mackey 1972). Since it involves the whole person, successful learning requires security (learners need to feel secure), attention and aggression (keeping focused and demonstrating one’s knowledge), retention and reflection (internalizing knowledge and assessing one’s current stage of development) and discrimination (the ability to see how one thing relates to another and use language for communicative purposes outside the classroom) (Curran; La Forge both cited in Richards and Rodgers 2001: 93).

The techniques presented in Deller and Rinvolucri’s teacher resource book aim ‘to develop linguistic awareness of the metaphorical, grammatical, phonological, prosodic, lexical and collocational aspects’ of English and mother tongue (MT) in the multilingual as in the monolingual class (Deller and Rinvolucri 2002: 10). Learning activities are topic-based and graded from beginner to advanced level. Classroom management tasks are intended to create a safe and cooperative working environment. Living language exercises aim to enhance the students’ awareness of how English and mother tongue work in different areas of language use. What is distinctive about this approach is that learners are seen as members of a community made up of their fellow students and the teacher. The teacher’s role is to develop student autonomy and enable learners to gradually and willingly reduce their dependence on the mother tongue by using it in a sensible way and regarding it as ‘the womb from which the second language is born’ (Deller and Rinvolucri 2002: 4). As for the materials, the book provides many ready-made activities, while others require some preparation related to the students’ own language.

As regards procedure, each activity is designed for a particular category of teacher (with zero, working, advanced, or native-speaker knowledge of the students’
The revival of translation

mother tongue), a particular type of class (monolingual or multilingual), a particular level (beginner and lower-intermediate to advanced) and a particular purpose (such as to enhance cross-cultural awareness). Innovative tasks are combined with traditional ones and include literal translation and dictation, grammar exploration via translation, writing aided by L2 translation as well as imaginative written and oral translation exercises. The latter are intended to attract and interest those students ‘who don’t get much joy out of learning a language’ (Deller and Rinvolucri 2002: 77), and can also be of direct use to those who teach a translation class and want to vary their methodology (Deller and Rinvolucri 2002: 77). ‘To bring back imaginative translation exercises into language teaching’, the authors affirm, ‘redresses forty years of imbalance’ (Deller and Rinvolucri 2002: 77).

Here is an example of a traditional activity taken from ‘Section 5: Using Translation’ (Deller and Rinvolucri 2002: 86). Dating back to Roger Ascham (1515–68), its aim is to introduce students to the style of a writer and help them to ‘absorb a piece of English text’ (Deller and Rinvolucri 2002: 86) without any input from the teacher. This is in line with the principles underlying Community Language Learning that aim to gradually render the learner autonomous as a parent does (or should do) with his or her child.

Delayed Translation

Teacher: zero knowledge of students’ MT
Class: monolingual/multilingual
Level: lower intermediate/multilingual
Purpose: to help the student absorb a piece of English text
Materials: copies of the text (see Preparation below); sheets of paper

Preparation
Choose a short, well-written text in English and make copies.

1. Ask the students to work on their own or in pairs (their choice) and give out copies of the text.
2. Ask them to translate it into their MT.
3. Take in both the original and the translations at the end of the class.
4. Some days later, give them back their MT texts and ask them to use their translations to recover the original English text as accurately as they can.
5. Give them back the original text so they can compare it with their reconstruction.

Here is an example of an innovative use of translation taken from ‘Section 4: Skills – Output’ (Deller and Rinvolucri 2002: 65). The objective is to enhance writing skills by adopting the ‘natural process of preparing for the less familiar by
The revival of translation

calling on the support of the familiar’, thus enabling students to gain confidence and fluency (Deller and Rinvolucriri 2002: 64).

Translating What You Wrote Me

Teacher working knowledge of students’ MT
Class monolingual/multilingual (at least two students per language)
Level elementary to advanced
Purpose to provide in-depth reading of another person’s text supported by a translation task, leading into writing in English
Materials sheets of paper

1 Put the students into pairs. In multilingual classes, put them into monolingual pairs. Tell the partners to sit away from each other.
2 Ask each student to write a one-page letter in MT to their partner (or less at elementary level) on whatever topic they wish.
3 Ask the pairs to exchange their letters. They should then translate the letter received into English and write a reply in English.
4 Tell the students to sit with a partner and read the replies and compare notes on the translation.
5 In a monolingual class, ask the students to put the phrases that were hard to translate into English up on the board. Work on these difficulties with the whole class.
6 Invite comments on the process the students have been through.

NOTE: The point of writing in MT first is to allow the students, especially at low levels, to really express themselves fully.

The methodology elaborated by Deller and Rinvolucrri is framed within a general bilingual perspective that regards the mother tongue as a ‘real living and vital resource’ that offers ‘a more lively experience of the language classroom’, compared with a strictly monolingual approach (Deller and Rinvolucrri 2002: 3–4). Translation is incorporated in this method as an activity that exploits the relationship between the L1 and the L2. The benefits of this orientation are considered from the student’s as well as the teacher’s perspective. First of all, the use of the mother tongue creates a safe, enjoyable learning environment and, particularly at beginner level, it accelerates progress. The use of the first language enables students to better understand grammar by looking into the mother tongue grammar mirror (Deller and Rinvolucrri 2002: 10). Also, vocabulary can be defined in a much clearer way, with students learning where a word is the same or different in their mother tongue (Deller and Rinvolucrri 2002: 10). From the teacher’s viewpoint, the use of the native language as a resource frees him or her from the constraint imposed by a rigid interpretation of monolingual instruction, which has so far prevented the diversifying of activities in a creative and effective manner.
2.3.2 Translation in Language Teaching

In his scholarly book *Translation in Language Teaching*, Guy Cook (2010: xv) argues in favour of rehabilitating translation as ‘a major aim and means of language learning, and a major measure of success’ particularly in single-language classes taught by bilingual teachers. He creates the phrase ‘Translation in Language Teaching’ (or TILT for short) to refer to the use of translation as ‘an integral part of the teaching and learning process as a whole’ and as ‘a part of the general revival of bilingual teaching’ (Cook 2010: xx). Cook’s translation-oriented pedagogy is framed within a perspective on curriculum theory for language teaching that draws on the principles of four major educational philosophies: technological, social reformist, humanistic and academic. He explains the principal tenets of these philosophies as follows:

1. Education should serve practical purposes, providing individuals and society with necessary skills, both general (numeracy, literacy, IT, etc.) and specialized (for example, medical training).
2. Education is a means of bringing about desirable social change, developing certain values, beliefs, and behaviours. It might be used, for example, to inculcate good citizenship, a particular religious faith, or a political credo.
3. Education should provide personal fulfilment and development for the individual, not only for practical or social reasons, but also as an intrinsic good.
4. Education should preserve, develop, and transmit knowledge and understanding of an academic discipline.

(Cook 2010: 105)

From a technological educational perspective, Cook (2010: 109–12) contends that in today’s increasingly multilingual and multicultural society translation is a much needed skill for many reasons: personal (e.g. mixed marriages), educational (e.g. to pass a language exam), social (e.g. with immigrant communities) and professional (e.g. international communication). From a social reformist perspective, translation can promote liberal, humanist and democratic values, because it facilitates language and cultural encounters together with an understanding and awareness of difference. Also, because it maintains the presence of the L1 in the foreign language learning process, translation can help in ‘preserving the identities of the speakers of threatened languages and promoting awareness among speakers of powerful languages of the nature and predicament of others’ (Cook 2010: 116).

From a humanistic educational perspective, Cook claims that translation as a form of bilingual instruction is looked upon favourably by students. Finally, from an academic perspective, ‘instruction in translation is likely to involve an academic element, in that it necessarily involves explicit declarative knowledge about language and languages, and a metalanguage for their formal description’ (Cook 2010: 121). Hence translation fosters the study of linguistics (Cook 2010: 121).
Also, Cook addresses a number of issues related to the implementation of translation in language teaching and makes suggestions for different types of practical activities. His point of departure is that ‘the type, quantity, and function of translation activity must vary with the stage which learners have reached, with their ages, and with their own preferences, learning styles, and experience’ (Cook 2010: 129). With adult beginners the function of translation is mainly to enhance explanation and resolve difficulties, but it can also be a specific activity in itself. With intermediate learners ‘the amount of TILT for explanation may decrease, while the amount of TILT for developing translation skills and explicit knowledge may increase’ (Cook 2010: 132). Advanced learners can develop the ability to translate as a skill in its own right; they can also use it to understand culture-specific meanings and problematic language forms as well as deepen their declarative knowledge of the relationship between their own language and the new one. He contends that: ‘As learning progresses, translation as a means with its early focus on the literal can transform into translation as end with its focus on discourse’ (Cook 2010: 74). Hence, the proposed activities have traditional and communicative focuses, these being regarded as complementary rather than alternatives.

Cook recommends form-focused translation, which adheres closely to the original, as a means of drawing students’ and teachers’ attention to difficult aspects of the new language as well as problem areas relating to knowledge gaps or lexical, grammatical or pragmatic misunderstandings. This teaching technique is reminiscent of Grammar Translation and endorses the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, which holds that

\[\text{the most efficient materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner.}\]

*(Fries in Cook 2010: 25)*

Word-for-word translation, which strictly maintains the word order of the original, often producing a grammatically inaccurate utterance, draws students’ attention to each component of the whole expression so they can better understand the mechanics of the whole unit of meaning. Translation is also advocated as an effective means of introducing new vocabulary, since it raises awareness of the existence of different equivalents of a source-language lexical item. Also, translation is a way of developing metalinguistic abilities, since it stimulates discussion on a variety of problems such as mistranslations, the critical assessment of film subtitling, translation dilemmas (e.g. the use of sexist or racist language in the source text) and untranslatable expressions such as puns or wordplay.

Besides its traditional uses in honing declarative knowledge of the two languages, translation can be used as a communicative, meaning-focused task that simulates real-life situations. Communicative translation enhances procedural knowledge and learner autonomy, and ‘its success is measured in terms of achieving a communicative goal, rather than formal accuracy for its own sake’ (Cook 2010: 149). These different
types of translation are considered to be most appropriate for single-language classes taught by bilingual instructors who are native speakers of the students’ own language and former learners of the language they are teaching. In mixed-language classes these activities ‘cannot form a staple part of procedures’ (Cook 2010: 152). Instead, the role of translation is to help to establish the presence and relevance of the student’s native language, and the importance of translation in real-world bilingual language use’ (Cook 2010: 152).

Cook’s envisaged methodology promotes reconciliation between traditional, form-focused language teaching approaches and communicative, functional ones. Crucially, he harmonizes translation as a means and end in the language classroom by grading translation activities according to the different notions of equivalence elaborated in translation studies and, in so doing, opens up the world of language pedagogy to the still unexplored world of the theory, description and praxis of translation. Cook’s important work has the merit of having provided a valid rationale for reappraising educational translation not only as an activity among other forms of bilingual instruction, as Deller and Rinvolucri stress in their teacher book, not only as a skill in its own right, as recommended by a growing number of language and translation educators, but, most importantly, as a long-term research project in language pedagogy that is fully committed to rehabilitating and developing translation ‘in the way that it deserves’ (Cook 2010: 156). This endeavour would have the beneficial effect of initiating ‘activity and innovation in many areas beyond classroom practice itself. New materials would need to be written, new tests designed, and new elements introduced into teacher education’ (Cook 2010: 156). To achieve this goal it is crucially important that we create the right synergy between theory, research and practice. In the following chapters, we will contribute to the realization of this desideratum by putting forward a holistic pedagogy that is framed within an ecological perspective and harmonizes language and translation teaching in the same multilingual learning environment.

Notes

1 The study was conducted at the University of Miami, Coral Gables, in Florida (www.miami.edu). Dr. Brooks-Carson was director of French and Spanish studies there at the time, which made it possible to have a large number of Spanish native-language participants. The data analysis was carried out at Dr. Cohen’s university, the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis (Cohen, personal communication via email, 27 September 2012).

2 The three strategies checklists are reproduced in Brooks-Carson 2001: 186–7. They concern a number of techniques adopted in writing (e.g. essay planning, attempting to use a wide vocabulary, thinking in the native or dominant language, checking for grammatical accuracy) and translating (e.g. changing the text structure, avoiding translating word for word, having difficulty in finding suitable equivalents in the target language, using simpler structures).

3 ‘Translation effect’ has the same meaning as ‘interference’.

4 The study was extended to a third non-experimental group made up of students with the same level of linguistic competence who received no grammar instruction, but read fiction in English, discussed works read in class and wrote essays which were handed
in for marking. The accuracy gain of this group was significantly lower than the other two groups. However, as the author herself recognizes, this result generates further hypotheses rather than conclusions because the subjects belonging to the no-grammar group were students in their final year of senior high school (Per Brahe Upper Secondary School in Jönköping, Sweden), rather than undergraduates. Moreover, they were taught by a different teacher, were not randomized and were taking other subjects beside English (Källkvist 2008: 189).

5 Because of the nature of the test, it was not possible to compute group means and perform inferential statistics (Källkvist 2008: 194).

6 The students included in the experimental design were Iranian pre-intermediate learners of English between the ages of 13 to 24 studying at the Paniz Language Institute, Eshragh Cultural Center and Parsiyin Language Institute, Iran.

7 As Laufer and Girsai explain (2008: 702), the students had learnt English for six years before the experiment. Within the framework of the Israeli school curriculum, such students are in the last stages of intermediate level.

8 The full questionnaire is reproduced in Appendix I by kind permission of Angeles Carreres; it is not available in Carreres 2006.

9 The full questionnaire is reproduced in Appendix II by kind permission of Bogustawa Whyatt.
3
ECOLOGICAL APPROACHES

The metaphor of ‘ecology’, introduced in the 1960s in various fields of scholarship, has been adopted recently as a general framework for understanding ‘the dynamic interaction between language users and the environment as between parts of a living organism’ (Kramsch 2002b: 3). Ecological approaches presuppose that: ‘Each of us is a unique moment in history: a distinctive blend of our genetic inheritance, of our experiences and of the thoughts and feelings that have woven through them and constitute our unique consciousness’ (Robinson 2011: 122). This new orientation has emerged from globalization, which has engendered the increased ethnic, social and cultural diversity of late-modern societies, and multicultural education, the focus of which is difference and variation itself, rather than individual variety against the backdrop of a universal learner (Kramsch 2002b: 4). This chapter examines the symbiotic, ecological interpretations of the relationship between language and culture that inform the multilingual pedagogy elaborated by Claire Kramsch in foreign language education and the holistic approach to translating culture put forward by Maria Tymoczko in translation studies.

3.1 Language as an ecosystem

At the base of an ecological understanding of language for pedagogic purposes is the idea that language is a semiotic ecosystem that cooperates with other meaning-making processes.

Language is always a meaning-making activity that takes place in a complex network of complex systems that are interwoven amongst themselves as well as with all aspects of physical, social, and symbolic worlds.

(van Lier 2004: 53)
Hence, the concern of educational linguistics is to make sense of what language is, what it does to whom, by whom and for whom this is done, and how it is to be taught and learned (van Lier 2002). This is not to deny that language is also a structural system made up of linguistic units bound by rules, but it means ‘that its ecological study focuses on the way individuals relate to the world and to each other by means of linguistic and other sign systems’ (van Lier 2002: 147).

An ecological perspective is relational, in that it aims to unveil the connections that teachers and learners entertain with their environment, and reflexive, since it scrutinizes traditional assumptions such as the dichotomy between teachers’ and learners’ everyday knowledge of and about language and that required for academic work (van Lier 2002: 144).

Other polarities are ‘learning by doing versus learning by thinking’, ‘grammar versus communication’, ‘reading to learn versus learning to read’, ‘language versus literature’, ‘language versus culture’, ‘native speaker versus non-native speaker’ (Kramsch 1993: 3–9). Deriving from the ideas of the educational theorist John Dewey, an ecological approach does not formulate its beliefs in terms of Either-Ors, but seeks to develop its principles positively and constructively, taking its cue in practice from the development of its own philosophy instead of from that which is rejected. Crucially, an ecological orientation recognizes that ‘all principles by themselves are abstract. They become concrete only in the consequences which result from their application’ (Dewey 1938: 20). Hence, ‘the WORK of teaching and learning incorporates practice, research and teaching in equal measure’ (van Lier 2010: 1, author’s capitalization).

The key concepts underlying an ecological–semiotic approach to educational linguistics are: emergence, affordance, triadic interaction and quality. Emergence refers to the principle that language use is ‘a part of a context of meaning-producing actions, interlocutors, objects, and relations among all these’ and emerges from semiotic activity. So, words operate only in combination with gestures, gaze and the physical surroundings (van Lier 2002: 146). Affordance means that language is not merely a sequence of sentences strung together in a coherent and cohesive text, but ‘is brought forth and carried along by a complex process involving physical, cognitive and social actions’ that offer the participants in a speech event an array of opportunities for action and interaction (van Lier 2002: 147). Triadic interaction is intended as an evolving collaborative process whereby meanings are continually co-constructed in monological as in dialogical speech events, rather than being merely transferred from person to person to fill in an information gap (van Lier 2002: 146–8).

Moreover, the quality of the linguistic experience is seen as crucially different from educational standards. The latter are measured by exam results and centre on the products of learning, while the former places value on the learners’ engagement in the educational experience as a whole and on the development of abilities that go beyond the teaching objectives, e.g. patience, cooperation with fellow students, giving and asking for help, or dealing with the unexpected. ‘A valid ecological aim’, as van Lier contends (2004: 5), ‘is to harmonize
quality and standards, by investigating both how they are different and how they
are related.’

Ecological linguistics focuses on the study of ‘language as relations (of thought,
action, power), rather than as objects (words, sentences, rules). It also relates
verbal utterances to other aspects of meaning making, such as gestures, drawings,
artefacts, etc.’ (van Lier 2000: 251). ‘Any utterance’, as van Lier affirms, ‘carries
multiple sources of potential information that are present all at once.Arriving at
an interpretation requires that we “scan” the utterance – and utterer – for particular
meaning clues’ (van Lier 2004: 43).

Consistent with van Lier’s ecological model of language description, Claire
Kramsch (2009) espouses the notion of language as a symbolic system:

[Language use is symbolic [1] because it mediates our existence through
symbolic forms that are conventional and represent objective realities, and
[2] because symbolic forms construct subjective realities such as perceptions,
emotions, attitudes, and values.

(Kramsch 2009: 7)

According to Kramsch, linguistic signs such as letters, sounds and words are both
‘systematic’ and ‘schematic’ symbols. The former, as Ken Robinson explains, have
conventional meanings and rules that affect how they can be used and
divide sense from nonsense. The latter have meanings that are uniquely expressed
in the forms they take, and we respond to them as a whole as we do with a
poem, a play, or a novel (Robinson 2011: 148–51). Similarly, drawing on
Paulhan, the developmental psychologist Lev Semenovich Vygotsky (1962) dis-
tinguished the ‘sense’ of a word from its ‘meaning’. The ‘dictionary meaning
of a word is no more than a stone in the edifice of sense, no more than a
potentiality that finds diversified realization in speech’ (Vygotsky 1962: 146).
Whereas,

[the sense of a word … changes in different minds and situations and is
almost unlimited. A word derives its sense from the sentence, which in turn
gets its sense from the paragraph, the paragraph from the book, the book
from all the works of the author.

(Vygotsky 1962: 146)

Heinrich Heine’s poem ‘Der Fichtenbaum und die Palme’, which is about a fir
tree that dreams of a palm, illustrates how the meaning of a word is definite and
constant while its sense is acquired in context. The word *Fichtenbaum* (fir tree) in
German is masculine, *Palme* (palm) is feminine and the poem in which they ap-
pear suggests, according to Vygotsky, the love of a man for a woman (Vygotsky
1962: 128).¹ The same example can be analysed from a semiotic perspective
whereby meanings are created by interpreting signs in three different ways (Peirce
in Kramsch 2009: 41):
as symbols of reality that associate a sign to its culturally defined meaning;

as icons of reality that resemble their immediate objects of reference or other symbols;

as indices of reality that associate or correlate a sign to more distant and diffuse entities.

In Heine’s poem, the linguistic symbol fir tree (whose meaning is ‘an evergreen coniferous tree with upright cones and flat needle-shaped leaves’) acquires a creative metaphoric sense, based on an indexical relationship to ‘man’. The linguistic symbol palm (meaning ‘an unbranched evergreen tree with a crown of long feathered or fan-shaped leaves’) is enriched by the subjective metaphoric sense of ‘woman’, based on a similar indexical relationship to reality. An example of a visual icon in the English language is the utterance I love you SOOOOO much, where the capitalization of the word so and the repetition of the vowel o are intended to represent greater intensity of feeling (Everett 2012: 122–3). Sound icons include onomatopoeic words such as cock-a-doodle-doo in English or chicchirichi in Italian, which resemble the calling sound that a cockerel makes. An interesting example of a sound icon in Amazonian Pirahã is the use of high-pitched voice when the Pirahãs speak about little babies, which thus resembles a baby’s own high-pitched voice (Everett 2012: 122). So, ‘[i]ndex, icon, and symbol are all ways of integrating and gleaning meaning from the world’ (Everett 2012: 124), meaning that is created by a particular cultural history, is semantically encoded in language, is cognitively apprehended and stored in the human brain and is expressed in contexts of communication.

As Kramsch (2000: 139) observes, ‘for both Vygotsky and Peirce, meaning emerges by an interpretive process that consists in putting a sign in relation with other signs’. This stance is complemented by Mikhail Bakhtin’s notion of ‘dialogism’, which emphasizes the fact that every utterance is characterized by ‘addressivity’, i.e. ‘the quality of turning to someone’ and responding to other, prior or potential utterances (Bakhtin in Kramsch 2000: 139). Language in discourse is therefore characterized by a multiplicity of voices, what Bakhtin calls ‘heteroglossia’.

As a living, socio-ideological concrete thing, a heteroglot opinion, language, for the individual consciousness, lies on the borderline between oneself and the other. The word in language is half someone else’s. It becomes ‘one’s own’ only when the speaker populates it with his own intentions, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention.

(Bakhtin in Kramsch 2009: 115)

It follows that in dialogic situations, when two or more individuals communicate with each other, signs are emitted, received and exchanged, and meanings proliferate in socially and historically situated environments (Kramsch 2000: 152). The
use of symbolic forms to represent people and objects in the world as well as construct perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, aspirations and values engenders symbolic power that enables us ‘to shape the very context that shapes us’ (Kramsch 2000: 139), of which more later.

The symbolic power enshrined in the dialogic, relational nature of language brings to mind the notion of ‘praxis’, understood by the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1970) as the interaction between the two constitutive dimensions of the word: ‘action’ and ‘reflection’. The interaction is so radical, Freire affirms, that if ‘one [dimension] is sacrificed – even in part – the other immediately suffers’, so that when a word is deprived of action it turns into idle chatter (verbalism). It becomes an empty word, one which cannot name, denounce, change, transform the world or nourish human existence. Conversely, when a word is deprived of reflection, it is changed into action for action’s sake (activism) which makes dialogue impossible. ‘Either dichotomy, by creating unauthentic forms of existence, creates also unauthentic forms of thought’. It follows that ‘the word is more than just an instrument which makes dialogue possible’: it is ‘the essence of dialogue itself’, because ‘to speak a true word is to transform the world’ (Freire 1970: 75–6). Dialogue is therefore an existential necessity, an act of creation, which

cannot exist unless the dialoguers engage in critical thinking – thinking which discerns an invisible solidarity between the world and men and admits of no dichotomy between them – thinking which perceives reality as process, as transformation, rather than as a static entity.

(Freire 1970: 80–1)

The similarity between Freire’s and Kramsch’s conceptualization of the power of language is taken up in Chapter 4, where we discuss how Kramsch’s reflexive, critical foreign language pedagogy aligns itself with Freire’s theory of conscientização (critical consciousness) for literacy education.

### 3.2 Language and culture

From an ecological and Hallidayan social semiotic perspective, language is ‘the principal means whereby we conduct our social lives’ (Kramsch 1998: 3). It expresses cultural reality when we convey facts, ideas or events that refer to knowledge about the world that we share with other people. It embodies cultural reality when we give meaning to our experiences through the medium we choose to communicate with one another. It symbolizes cultural reality when we identify ourselves and others through the use of language (Kramsch 1998: 3). Language is viewed ‘as the intersection of culture, cognition, and communication’ (Everett 2012: 35), a tool for thinking and communicating which is based on human psychology and is crucially shaped from human cultures (Everett 2012: 20). As Vygotsky put it:
Like tool systems, sign systems (language, writing, number systems) are created by societies over the course of human history and change with the form of society and the level of its cultural development.

*(Vygotsky in Everett 2012: 227)*

The patterned way in which the meaning sets of words evolve, as recorded by the historical lexicographer, testifies to the principle that words arise to meet society’s needs. John Simpson, Chief Editor of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, clearly illustrates how words are part of a society’s network of communicative tools. The word *cell*, which at present has 34 different denotations in English, offers a good example. The earliest meanings of *cell* are religious and date from the Old English period. As the word moves into the eighteenth century, when early prison reformers were creating large prisons, the monastic cell is associated with the small room for an inmate in a prison. Earlier, in the Middle Ages, people had associated the solitary room of the monk within a monastery to the brain cells, the organic structures they were discovering or hypothesizing in the human body. Similarly, in an agricultural society, *cell* was considered suitable to describe the hexagonal wax compartments in a honeycomb. In the technological age, *cell* denotes the unit of memory in a computer, or any of the restricted areas in which short-range signals can be sent to and from mobile phones. ‘So’, as Simpson observes, ‘when speakers of English use the word *cell* they are calling on a vast palimpsest of meanings, all united semantically in some way, with a progression which moves hand in hand with the cultural concerns of the day’ (Simpson 2011: 36–7).

So, language is inextricably related to general human cognition, the need to communicate and culture. Since ‘language is a tool shaped by societies to bring coherence to community lives’ (Everett 2012: 236), culture is anchored in ‘the very grammar we use, the very vocabulary we choose, the very metaphors we live by’ (Kramsch 1993: 8). This crucial link is posited by Kramsch for the historic, the social and the imagined dimensions of culture. The historical dimension ‘focuses on the way in which a social group represents itself and others through its material productions over time – its technological achievements, its monuments, its works of art, its popular culture – that punctuate the development of its historical identity’ (Kramsch 1998: 7–8). The social view of culture ‘focuses on the ways of thinking, behaving, and valuing currently shared by members of the same discourse community’ (Kramsch 1998: 7). Imagination is also an aspect of culture. It refers to the way in which discourse communities identify themselves through ‘their common dreams, fulfilled and unfulfilled imaginings’ that are mediated through language (Kramsch 1998: 8).

If language conveys not only cultural knowledge, but also expresses, embodies and symbolizes cultural reality, the teaching of culture can no longer be seen as a separate learning objective but becomes the very core of foreign language education and ‘[c]ultural awareness must then be viewed both as enabling language proficiency and as being the outcome of reflection on language proficiency’
(Kramsch 1993: 8). This principle is endorsed by intercultural approaches to language pedagogy, which encourage teachers to cross disciplinary boundaries and familiarize themselves with the works of anthropologists and sociolinguists written about their society and the societies that speak the languages they are teaching. The aim of this inclusive perspective is to enable learners to reflect both on the foreign and on their native culture and to become aware of the many aspects of a person’s culture such as age, gender, regional origin, ethnic background and social class besides national traits (Kramsch 1993: 205–6).

As we have seen, ecological approaches view language as a code and a meaning-making system that creates the very reality it represents. This principle is upheld by the translation studies scholar Maria Tymoczko, who regards languages ‘as formal systems that actually construct meaning rather than as structures that merely reflect external, language-free meaning’ (Tymoczko 2010a: 224, original emphasis). In turn, meanings created through language are inextricably related to the wider social and historical context, which shapes and is shaped by them. They therefore reside in text as well as in context and intertexts; they are always in flux and open to change (Tymoczko 2007). Cultures, like languages, are open and heterogeneous systems; they are dynamic and evolving. Indeed, ‘any culture is composed of varied and diverse – even contradictory and inconsistent – competing viewpoints, discourses, and textures’ (Tymoczko 2010a: 226). That is the reason why cultures ‘are the sites of struggle for power and recognition’ (Kramsch 1998: 10). Also, cultures ‘are ideational entities; as such they are permeable, susceptible to influence from other cultures’ (Fay 2010: 70). Hence, the human world is not a medley of ‘independent, encapsulated, free-floating cultures; rather it is one of constant interplay and exchange’ (Fay 2010: 70). This is as much a characteristic of large cultures, national, subnational and supranational, as of the small cultures of family, age groups, occupation or other factors linked to the biographies and life experiences of those who identify with the same community. Hence, ‘wherever exchange among humans occurs, the possibility exists of the influence of one culture by another’ (Fay 2010: 70).

Because of its symbiotic relationship with culture, language plays an important mediating role in the exchange among people belonging to different cultural groups in a given society or between nationalities. Examples of cross-lingual and cross-cultural exchanges are academic mobility programmes that are established as part of the internationalization of higher education. As the Temcu study of training needs for university teaching staff working in multicultural classrooms as a result of increasing student mobility has shown (Kelly 2008: 71), teachers, administrative staff and students agree that these projects are culturally enriching, promote interaction among students, promote multicultural learning, promote language learning, project favourable images of the host institution and the host country, promote further student mobility and contribute to new approaches to teaching, learning and tutorial support.
Another form of exchange across national boundaries is translation, which transforms receptor languages and cultures. A typical example is the case of the Republic of Turkey in the early twentieth century, as has been discussed by Saliha Paker (2009: 557–8):

The revolutionary move made by Hasan Âli Yücel, Minister of Education, in setting up a Translation Committee in 1939 and a Translation Office in 1940 was intended to reinforce the new language policies [most notably, the state-sponsored radical language reform of the Republic in the 1930s, whereby Turkish was also to be ‘purified’ of Arabic and Persian influence] and to organize a programme for cultural revival. The Office, composed largely of academics and prominent men of letters, was to select and translate ‘world classics’, beginning with Ancient Greek philosophy and literature. Such key texts were also essential for instruction in the new Humanities departments of the universities of Istanbul and Ankara. The general aim was to ‘generate’ the spirit of humanism by cultivating and assimilating foreign literatures through translation; this, it was felt, would bring about a renaissance and contribute to the development of the Turkish language and culture.

Cultural exchanges occur also within the same speech community. In *The Mind’s Eye*, the neurologist Oliver Sacks (2010: 202–40) shows how language enables blind and sighted people to mutually understand and enhance their respective imagery, be it visual and/or mental. An example is offered by Arlene Gordon, who, after becoming blind in her forties, found that language and description stimulated her powers of visual imagery as never before. She vividly illustrates how the verbal descriptions of people, objects and events can ‘stand in for direct experience or acquaintance’ (Sacks 2010: 239) and enable blind and sighted people to enrich and vary their perceptual experiences through interactive communication.

Sighted people enjoy travelling with me. I ask them questions, then they look and see things they wouldn’t otherwise. Too often people with sight don’t see anything! It’s a reciprocal process – we enrich each other’s worlds.

*(Gordon in Sacks 2010: 240)*

Sacks’ comment at the end of his book is a recognition of the symbolic power enshrined and wielded in language use. ‘Language, that most human invention’, he observes, ‘can enable what, in principle, should not be possible. It can allow all of us, even the congenitally blind, to see with another person’s eyes’ (Sacks 2010: 240).

The film *At First Sight* (Irwin Winkler 1999) gives an interesting insight into the way language can indeed reconcile ‘the difference between experience and
description, between direct and mediated knowledge of the world’ (Sacks 2010: 240), thus permitting the exchange of differently constructed meanings arising from diverse perceptions of the same reality. Based on the real-life experience of Shirl Jennings (Sacks 1993), *At First Sight* is the story of a blind man, Virgil, a masseur who works at the Bear Mountain Inn and Spa, and Amy, an architect from New York.

Virgil and Amy share the same linguistic system but have different personal histories and these are reflected in language use. Being completely blind since the age of three, Virgil lives in ‘an authentic and autonomous world, a place of its own’, as John Hull describes deep blindness in *Touching the Rock* (Hull in Sacks 2010: 203–4). Virgil, who impersonates Shirl Jennings, is a ‘whole-body seer’: he experiences reality through the heightened senses of touch, hearing and smell. Like Hull, for whom the visual concepts expressed by the words *here*, *there* and *facing* seemed to lose meaning when he became blind at the age of 48, Virgil cannot grasp the culturally defined meaning of *horizon*, because he cannot construct a visual image of the reality it symbolizes. ‘Horizon. That’s a tough one,’ Virgil says in the ‘Cloudy Memories’ scene, ‘I can’t feel it. I don’t know what it is.’ Hence, the lexicographic visual definition given by Amy, ‘it’s the line where the sky meets the earth’, does not make any sense to him. It is only when Amy recalls the subjective meaning that horizon conveyed to her as a child, that he is able to comprehend it metaphorically by associating it to a concrete object.

Amy: When I was a kid, I – I used to think that if I walked far enough, I could actually reach it. I thought that if I could, if I could stand on it and just look out over the edge, that I would be able to see something more beautiful than anything I had ever known.

Virgil: No-one’s ever explained horizon to me before so I could understand it.

Emblematic of language as the intersection of culture, cognition and communication is also the ‘Rhythm of the Rain’ scene, which portrays the two main characters taking shelter in an old rundown building after having been for a walk in the small town where Virgil lives.

*AT FIRST SIGHT*  
*RHYTHM OF THE RAIN*  
*INT. FIREHOUSE – LATE AFTERNOON*  
They run in laughing – Amy closing the door behind them as Virgil moves his way into the center of the room. Water runs down the outside glass, causing the light to ripple across him. The room is empty – almost surreal.
AMY
I can’t believe how fast
that happens...
(she sees Virgil
- his head cocked
towards the
ceiling)

VIRGIL
Oh, do you like the rain
or not?

AMY
(moving to him)
Well, sometimes.

Virgil slowly moves his head about,
sensing the room. We see slow moving
cuts of the building as Virgil describes
what he hears.

VIRGIL
I love the rain. Oh, I
feel everything at once.
It’s the best way for me
to understand dimension
in a room. Do you hear
it? Coming down off the
ceiling, all the walls?
Do you hear that? It’s
hitting a puddle. It’s
echoing the sound across.
There’s no walls. What’s
that? Oh, a drainpipe.
You hear that? That’s
high up. Rafters?

AMY
Yeah.

VIRGIL
It’s got its own rhythm.
You hear that? Ping,
ping, ping, ping, ping.
And that... that sound way
up.
AMY
Uh, well, it looks like there’s...

VIRGIL
No, no, just listen. No, come here. Close your eyes. Listen with your whole body. Feel it? Right in your chest?

Amy strains to listen - closes her eyes.

AMY
Oh, that’s beautiful, that, uh, that little sound like a... whisper.

VIRGIL
Mm. It’s the wind blowing a branch across the windows. I can feel everything when it rains. I wish it would rain inside. Rain all around us.

AMY
(smile)

AMY
(musing)
‘Einfuehlung.’

VIRGIL
What’s that?

AMY
It’s an architectural term. It means...to share a feeling. I-I don’t think I’ve ever felt like this before.
Amy smiles at him – then quietly realizes he can’t see it. She moves close, her hand reaching out and taking his, gently bringing it close to her cheek.

AMY
I wanted you to know I was smiling.

He puts both his hands on the side of her face.

We hold a beat – enjoying the symphony of rain – The scene ends with the image of the rain falling outside on the window pane. Water rushing through the drainpipe.

First of all, the experience of the sound of rain depicted in this scene makes us appreciate the richness that the sense of hearing assumes for Virgil, as for Hull.

Rain has a way of bringing out the contours of everything; it throws a coloured blanket over previously invisible things; instead of an intermittent and thus fragmented world, the steadily falling rain creates continuity of acoustic experience…presents the fullness of an entire situation all at once …gives a sense of perspective and of the actual relationships of one part of the world to another.

(Hull in Sacks 2010: 204)

In contrast, Amy belongs to the world of sight; she has a visual perception of the shape and size of space and the people and objects in it. Virgil’s detailed verbal description of his auditory perception of space, enhanced by the sound of the rain, enables Amy to see reality through the eyes of Virgil’s mind and she is filled with wonder. When Virgil invites Amy to enter his world, asking her to close her eyes and listen with her whole body, her attention shifts from visual to auditory perception, the sound is metaphorically perceived as a whisper and the sensation is lyrically rendered in the form of a simile, ‘that little sound like a…like a whisper’. Virgil, who feels space through his acute sense of hearing, accurately perceives the same sound as ‘the wind blowing a branch across the windows’. In Virgil’s world, Amy discovers a new, intimate way of seeing things and relating to nature. The German architectural term Einfühlung comes to her mind and she translates it freely as ‘to share a feeling’ to express the sense of harmony she is experiencing for the first time in her life. In silence, Virgil and Amy reach for each other, sharing the same emotions that need no words.

Then, having empathized and identified with Virgil’s sensory world, Amy spontaneously begins to communicate with him in a novel way that reveals a deep
understanding of his way of experiencing reality. As Virgil explores her face by gentle touch, Amy describes the emotional meaning of her facial expression: ‘I want you to know I was smiling.’ As for Arlene Gordon and her travelling companions, language as a cognitive, communicative and cultural tool has enabled Virgil and Amy to enhance and vary their perceptions of reality. These human experiences exemplify the multifarious mediating role of language, which, as a means of understanding, representing and communicating reality, shapes and is shaped by the variegated cultural milieu that engenders it. From an ecological perspective, it can be affirmed that the mutually enriched way of seeing reality testified by the memoirs of blind and sighted people has been afforded by the dynamic interaction between individuals and the environment ‘as between parts of a living organism’ (Kramsch 2002b: 3).

3.3 Culture in language teaching

Since languages emerge from and are embedded in cultures, ‘teaching language is teaching culture’ (Kramsch 1993: 177, original emphasis). This is germane to pedagogies as varied as those adopted in Language for General Purposes (LGP), Language for Special Purposes (LSP), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), foreign languages and literatures, languages on translation programmes and bilingual literacy. Within an ecological perspective, teaching language as culture presupposes a set of key concepts, i.e. action/perception, interaction, relation and environment (van Lier 2004: 221). Direct perception, that is, the learner noticing certain features of language in interactional contexts, establishes an initial relationship with the environment and creates affordances that initiate a process of action, interaction and cognition. The teacher has to create a learning environment that contextualizes language in a wide variety of interrelated meaning-making systems such as gestures, intonation, and social and cultural knowledge.

The learner is seen as a whole person who is engaged in project-based activities, where he or she takes control of the learning process and cooperates with the other members of the team. The instructor’s role is to provide ‘assistance, but only just enough and just in time (in the form of pedagogical scaffolding), taking the learner’s developing skills and interests as the true driving force of the curriculum’ (van Lier 2004: 223–4). An ecological pedagogy aims to create learning environments that engender and foster agency by giving learners choices and voices and promoting control, a sense of initiative, autonomy and motivation. In pursuit of this goal, teachers will have high expectations of their students and will present them with real challenges. In this collaborative learning environment, the use of the L1 is seen as a valuable resource for achieving proficiency in the L2, and authentic forms of assessment that place value on the quality of the learning experience (as it was defined earlier in section 3.1) are introduced alongside conventional testing procedures (van Lier 2010).

Moreover, a pedagogy conceived within an ecological perspective is a self-engaging, self-reflective and critical pedagogy which asserts the belief that
learning a language is learning to exercise both a social and a personal voice, it is both a process of socialization into a given speech community and the acquisition of literacy as a means of expressing personal meanings that may put into question those of the speech community.

(Kramsch 1993: 233)

Within this critical perspective, the text is not viewed as something to be deciphered on the page and open to only one interpretation that can be easily shared in the classroom. Instead, the text is something to be explored for its meaning potential that emerges out of subjective encounters with it. Each learner with his or her biography, interests and strivings is regarded not as a deficient monoglossic native speaker but as a uniquely heteroglossic author, crafting new worlds of meaning in his or her dialogic encounters with the foreign text. In reading as in writing the multilingual student contributes to the construction of multiple meanings by virtue both of the cultural knowledge enshrined in the native language and of previous encounters with similar texts in the foreign language. The teacher can encourage the exploration of the interpersonal relationship with text, context and intertexts by asking questions such as ‘How do the words the author chose affect you, the reader?’ and ‘Why do they have this effect on you and not on me?’ (Kramsch 1994: 13).

An example of the type of group discussion ensuing from this type of approach is provided by Kramsch (1994). As a native French speaker and teacher of German in the US, she recounts the different readings of Rainer Maria Rilke’s poem ‘Der Panther’10 in her multicultural American class. In contrast with her own interpretation that ‘the ultimate freedom is the freedom of poems to say the world, not to transform it’ (Kramsch 1994: 12), students strongly identified with the panther’s desire for freedom, each of them for a different reason, thus evidencing their subject position in their personal encounter with the text.11

The American students, who had just broken away from home to go to college, had other reasons than did the Iranian student who was planning to go back to his country to take part in the revolution. One Japanese student insisted that the panther died in the end and that death freed it from bondage.

(Kramsch 1994: 12)

Another example of critical interactional discourse in the classroom is reported by Barry Kampil (in Kramsch 1993: 244). In an ESL class the Egyptian teacher used a short story by Frank R. Stockton entitled ‘The Lady or the Tiger?’12 not only to teach vocabulary and grammar, but also to generate discussion about individual experiences. The story is about a princess torn by despair and jealousy who must make a fateful decision: let her lover marry her rival or let him die devoured by the tiger. The teacher first recounted her personal history as an immigrant to the US and then encouraged small-group discussion on individual
differences in each student’s life, thus unearthing implicit assumptions, beliefs and world views and developing cultural and social awareness.

There can be many ways of enabling students to express others’ linguistic and cultural meanings as well as their own. Some suggestions are memorizing and performing prose and verse, playing with language, writing multilingual poetry, carrying out exercises in translation and comparative stylistics (Kramsch 1997: 368). The aim of such pedagogy is to foster an understanding of language as a system that reflects, constructs and transforms culture. This is crucially important for the formation of the multilingual individual who needs to develop translilingual and transcultural competence, which places value on the ability to operate between languages and entails the capacity to reflect on the world and on ourselves through the lens of another language and culture (MLA 2007: 3–4). Developing critical thinking about the interdependence of language and culture is at the core of ecologically oriented pedagogies such as those proposed by Claire Kramsch and Maria Tymoczko. It is to these pedagogies that we turn in the next two chapters.

Notes
2 National characteristics are not intended by Kramsch in an essentialist manner as stereotypical traits that are attributed to a given nationality. Instead, they are constitutive of who a person perceives him/herself to be as a member of a national community. In other words, from a non-essentialist perspective, they are regarded as cultural resources which a person draws on to convey what it means for him or her to be American, Italian, Vietnamese, etc.
3 The Temcu project was funded by Action 6.1 ‘Observation, analysis and innovation’ of the Socrates Programme from 2003 to 2006. The main aims of the Socrates Programme (Phase II), as defined by the European Commission in its communication ‘Towards a Europe of Knowledge’, are the promotion of lifelong learning and the development of a Europe of knowledge (http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/general_framework/c11043_en.htm (accessed 7 March 2014)).
4 Hull’s and Virgil’s linguistic experiences arise from a similar non-visual perception of space. They evidence the distinction between the meaning and sense of words posited by Vygotsky (1962) as well as their symbolic [1] and their symbolic [2] senses, as defined by Kramsch (2009) (see section 3.1 above).
5 At First Sight, DVD Chapter 8.
6 At First Sight, DVD Chapter 7.
7 The screenplay reproduced here is a revised version of the one retrieved from the website of At First Sight Script at IMSDb (www.imsdb.com/scripts/At-First-Sight.html (accessed 7 March 2014)). It corresponds to the actual dialogue in the movie and adheres to the typographical and layout conventions adopted in the United States (see Toriano 1996: 107–109).
8 The key idea expressed by the term Einfühlung, as elaborated by the psychologist Theodor Lipps (between 1839 and 1897), is a form of empathy that links physical, felt bodily states to the intense feelings that can arise in response to the perception and experience of forms of art (Shoul 2003). This idea was developed by Vernon Lee (pen-name Violet Paget, 1856–1935), who applied it especially to studies of Renaissance architecture (from Oxford Companion to the Mind, reproduced in www.answers.com/topic/empathy (accessed 7 March 2014)).
9 From a sociocultural and ecological perspective that draws on the work of Vygotsky and van Lier, Glenn S. Levine (2011) elaborates ‘a curricular architecture based on multiple code use in the language classroom’ (Levine 2011: 125ff.). The goal of this multilingual approach to classroom code choice is to create affordances for optimal L2 use, that is to say, ‘L2 use informed by an understanding of multilingual norms in and outside the classroom’ (Levine 2011: 125).

10 A reading of the poem by Dana Andreea Nigrim with English subtitles is available online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=e58I1Vzj1Vg (accessed 7 March 2014). The original poem and T. J. Reed’s translation ‘The Panther’ are reproduced in Kramsch (1994: 12, 14).

11 The experience of teaching Rilke’s ‘Der Panther’ dates from teaching a third-semester German class at M.I.T. (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) in the 1980s. ‘I was struck’, Kramsch observes, ‘by the extent to which my American students unquestioningly projected on to Rilke’s panther the dominant American ideology of freedom that they had been inculcated since their early childhood’ (personal communication with the author via email, 31 January 2013).

12 The printable version is available online at www.eastoftheweb.com/short-stories/UBooks/LadyTige.shtml (accessed 7 March 2014). You can hear the story narrated by Anne Sheldon at www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4z-a8IJ99g (accessed 7 March 2014).
KRAMSCH’S MULTILINGUAL LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY

Ecological perspectives on second language acquisition share the view that ‘learning is a nonlinear, relational human activity, co-constructed between humans and their environment, contingent upon their position in space and history, and a site of struggle for the control of social power and cultural memory’ (Kramsch 2002b: 5). Given this premise, an ecological language pedagogy aims to foster a critical understanding of the multiple worlds of discourse that coexist in any language classroom and arise from the interaction between teacher and students and among students as members of a community. This chapter analyses and illustrates an eminent example of such a pedagogy, i.e. Claire Kramsch’s (2006, 2009, 2010) multilingual approach to foreign language learning and teaching in higher education, an approach which presumes the symbolic power of language and centres on the notion of symbolic competence as a crucial dimension in the formation of multilingual individuals in late-modern societies.

4.1 The symbolic self

As we saw in the Chapter 4, Kramsch (2009) embraces the idea that language is a system of potent symbols that enable us to represent objective realities and make sense of subjective experiences. Language is one symbolic system among many through which we apprehend the world around us and develop our sense of self, i.e. our individual experience of being a person. The self is understood here, from the holistic viewpoint of humanistic psychology (Kelly, Maslow and Rogers in Stevens 1990: 419ff.) and somatic theory (Damasio in Kramsch 2009: 66–70), as a unity of feelings, emotions, thoughts and bodily awareness. Also, from a symbolic interactionist perspective, the self is something which has a development; it is not initially there, at birth, but arises in the process of social experience and activity, that is,
Kramsch’s multilingual language pedagogy

develops in a given individual as a result of his relations to that process as a whole and to other individuals within that process.

(Mead in Miell 1990: 45)

Hence, the self is not a physical reality, but a symbolic entity that is constructed by engaging in what George Herbert Mead named a ‘symbolic dialogue’ (Miell 1990: 50). This involves interacting with other people around us, taking the role of the other, anticipating their responses, imagining how we appear to them and then adjusting our responses to come into line with theirs. As Charles Horton Cooley put it: ‘We always imagine, and in imagining, share the judgements of the other mind’ (Cooley in Miell 1990: 47). Moreover, it is through symbolic dialogue that symbols, like words and gestures, acquire shared meanings that enable us to see ourselves through the perspective of another person. So, the symbolic self is holistic (being regarded as the relation of body and mind), social (it develops through social interaction mediated by shared symbols such as language) and self-reflexive (we reflect and act towards ourselves in the same way as other people are reflected on and acted towards).

The ecologically oriented psychological theory elaborated from the late 1980s to the late 1990s by Ulrich Neisser and his collaborators encompasses all these aspects of the self (Kramsch 2009: 70–3). It posits that the way we know ourselves is related to the way we know others in our environment, and this knowledge is acquired in various ways. More specifically:

- the ecological self emerges from perceptual experience and from the responses of the body to external and internal stimuli;
- the interpersonal self comes into existence when the body responds to the response of another body engaging in personal interaction;
- the extended self is based on memory and anticipation, it is constituted of the things we remember doing in the past and the things we think of ourselves doing regularly;
- the reflexive self is conscious of the other three, i.e. conscious of the outside world and of the self’s experience of the outside world;
- the conceptual self uses theories, concepts, categories and symbolic systems to apprehend reality and relate to others.

(Kramsch 2009: 70–2)

This conceptualization of the self is complemented by Kramsch’s notion of ‘narratorial self’ (Kramsch 2009: 73–4), which artistically constructs itself through narratives such as memoirs. The narratorial self brings into focus the role of language in giving meaning to ourselves, our perceptions, reactions and thoughts and in orienting our relationships with others. Indeed, language constitutes and maintains the symbolic self, which Kramsch calls the ‘subject’ (Kramsch 2009: 17ff.). Therefore, language intersects culture, cognition and communication as well as consciousness of self, which ‘implicitly includes consciousness of other selves’ (Deacon in Kramsch 2009: 44). As
Kramsch puts it: ‘We only learn who we are through the mirror of others, and, in turn, we only understand others by understanding ourselves as Other’ (Kramsch 2009: 18).

Various examples of the construction of the narratorial self can be found in the diaries of the so-called Freedom Writers1 (Freedom Writers with Erin Gruwell 1999). Inspired by Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl and Zlata’s Diary: A Child’s Life in Sarajevo, 150 students at Woodrow Wilson High School in Long Beach, California, decided to start writing their own diaries and compiling them into a collaborative book together with their teacher, Erin Gruwell, who taught them English from Freshman Year (autumn 1994) to Senior Year (spring 1998). The Freedom Writers discovered that writing was a powerful form of self-expression that could help them deal with their past and move forward. Their classroom, Room 203, was perceived to be like Anne’s attic or Zlata’s basement, a place where they could cry, laugh and share their stories without being judged. I have reproduced below ‘Diary 36’ (Freedom Writers with Erin Gruwell 1999: 71), in which the author shows how an individual’s sense of self can develop by learning to see, in and through reading and writing, the parallels between his or her own life and the life of another person.

Sophomore Year. Fall 1995

Diary 36

Dear Diary,

At first I asked Ms. G, ‘Why should I read books about people that don’t look like me? People that I don’t even know and that I am not going to understand because they don’t understand me!’ I thought I was smart-ass for asking her this question. I thought to myself, ‘She’s not going to give me an answer because this time I am right.’ She looked up and said very calmly, ‘How can you say that? You haven’t even bothered to open the front cover. Try it, you never know. The book may come to life before your eyes.’ So I started to read this book called Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl because I wanted to prove Ms. G wrong. I wanted to show her that what she said was bullshit, and that her little technique was not going to work for me. I hate reading, and I hate her, for that matter.

To my surprise, I proved myself wrong because the book indeed came to life. At the end of the book, I was so mad that Anne died, because as she was dying, a part of me was dying with her. I cried when she cried, and just like her I wanted to know why the Germans were killing her people. Just like her, I knew the feeling of discrimination and to be looked down upon based on the way you look. Just like her, ‘I sometimes feel like a bird in a cage and just want to fly away.’ The first thing that came to my mind when I finished reading the book was the fact that Ms. G was right. I did find myself within the pages of the book, like she said I would.
If language is intertwined with culture, cognition, communication and consciousness, then learning a foreign language entails enriching our sense of self with ‘alternative ways of perceiving, thinking, remembering the past, and imagining the future’ (Kramsch 2009: 188). Indeed, as Kramsch contends, L2 learners are strongly inclined to go beyond the referential dimension of language and draw on its subjective potential (Kramsch 2009: 13). This is because in second language acquisition symbolic forms are dislocated from their natural context of occurrence and the gap between the form of the language and its meaning is exposed; hence ‘connotations multiply across codes and additional meanings thrive in the interstices of different linguistic systems’ (Kramsch 2009: 12–13). Learners, like poets, can wield the power of the word to inflect the language and make it their own by giving it meanings other than the conventional ones and, in so doing, they foster an important dimension of their growing multilingual subjectivity, namely a symbolic self that is ‘aware of the subjective realities indexed by various languages, including his or her own’ (Kramsch 2009: 189).

Kramsch reports on several linguistic autobiographies written by Asian-American undergraduates, in which the authors reflect on their multilingual sense of self, prompted by the following assignment given as part of a course on ‘American Cultures’ (Hinton in Kramsch 2009: 85–8):

Write a 2–5 page essay about your own linguistic experiences and heritage. You might want to write about your home language(s), other languages you learned as a child, foreign languages, ancestral language(s), dialects of English, family trees, linguistic adventures and misadventures.

What follows is an excerpt taken from a Vietnamese student’s composition. It reveals two important aspects that characterize a growing multilingual subjectivity, namely one’s awareness of the relationship between multiple selves and the ability to give meaning to this relationship through a narrative that draws on transcultural resources.

As for English, I do speak the language but I don’t think I’ll ever talk it. English is the language that flows from the mind to the tongue and then to the pages of books. It is like a box of Plato blocks which allows you to make anything. But a Plato house cannot shelter human lives and a Plato robot cannot feel! I only talk Vietnamese. I talk it with all my senses. Vietnamese does not stop on my tongue, but it flows with the warm, soothing lotus tea down my throat like a river, giving life to the landscape in her path. It rises to my mind along with the vivid images of my grandmother’s house and of my grandmother. It enters my ears in the poetry of The Tale of Kieu, singing in the voice of my Northern Vietnamese grandmother. It appears before my eyes in the faces of my aunt and cousins as they smile with such palpable joy. And it saturates my every nerve with healing warmth like effect of a piece of sugared ginger in a cold night. And that is how I only talk Vietnamese.
In this passage the author expresses the tension between the English-speaking self and the Vietnamese-speaking self by using a variety of rhetorical devices. The verbs *speak* and *talk* are given personal connotative meanings. *Speak* indexes the relationship between language and thought. *Talk* indexes the relationship between language and sensory perceptions, feelings and emotions as well as memories. Also, the English language is imbued with creative similes inspired by the memory of pleasant experiences shared with the members of an extended family in the native language and culture. There is also one example of transcultural intertextuality, the reference to *Truyện Kiều* (傳韋, lit. ‘Kiều Story’) by Nguyen Du (1766–1820), the classic epic poem best known and loved by Vietnamese people, an heirloom from their literary past.\(^3\) In this narrative of the self, the author simultaneously positions him/herself emotionally with the Vietnamese heritage language and cognitively with the English language.

The process of becoming a multilingual subject involves developing a symbolic self that, as the above linguistic autobiography illustrates, is ‘less intent on decoding than on interpreting words and their indexicalities’ (Kramsch 2009: 189) in order to find appropriate subject positions within and between languages. Furthermore, a multilingual subject’s symbolic self is

less focused on the standard monolingual use of one language than on the ability to use one language or the other, less keen on explaining and judging one national culture versus another than on understanding their own and others’ historical trajectories and values.

(Kramsch 2009: 189)

It follows that becoming a multilingual subject means exercising a symbolic power that derives not only from the ability to master the language of the Other, but also, and more importantly, from the capacity to expand one’s own symbolic self. This entails understanding what others and we ourselves remember from the past, imagine and project onto the future as well as being aware of our own and others’ subject positioning in the present. In order to foster a multilingual subjectivity it is important that language learners develop what Kramsch calls ‘symbolic competence’, an essential dimension of (intercultural) communicative competence (Kramsch 2010), as will be explained in the remainder of this chapter.

### 4.2 Symbolic competence

Kramsch maintains that in our increasingly global migratory world, learners of modern languages need to grow into multilingual subjects. In order to achieve this goal, it is essential for them to develop a cluster of abilities that constitute symbolic competence:

- an ability to understand the symbolic value of symbolic forms and the different cultural memories evoked by different symbolic systems;
Kramsch’s multilingual language pedagogy

- an ability to draw on the semiotic diversity afforded by multiple languages to reframe ways of seeing familiar events, create alternative realities, and find an appropriate subject position ‘between languages’;
- an ability to look both at and through language and to understand the challenges to the autonomy and integrity of the subject that come from unitary ideologies and a totalizing networked culture.

(Kramsch 2009: 200–1)

Conceived within an ecological and multilingual perspective, the notion of symbolic competence is intended to enrich communicative competence (Hymes 1972), intercultural communicative competence (Byram 1997, 2000, 2008) and semiotic competence (van Lier 2004). Let me explain how.

As we saw in Chapter 1, communicative competence is based on a functional understanding of language and a theory of competence whose goal is ‘to show the ways in which the systematically possible, the feasible, and the appropriate are linked to produce and interpret actually occurring cultural behavior’ (Hymes 1972: 286, original emphasis). Communicative competence enables the L2 speaker to exchange information, solve problems and complete conversational tasks accurately, effectively and appropriately in the sociocultural context of the foreign language. Its aim is ‘to facilitate access and inclusion of non-native speakers into communities of native speakers’ (Kramsch 2006: 249).

Intercultural communicative competence starts from the premise that the language learner inhabits an in-between space across native and non-native cultures and entails:

- being curious, open and ready to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one’s own (savoir être);
- acquiring knowledge of social groups and their products and practices in one’s own and in one’s interlocutor’s country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction (savoirs);
- being able to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one’s own (savoir comprendre);
- being able to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction (savoir apprendre/faire);
- being able to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products in one’s own and other cultures and countries (savoir s’engager).

(Byram 2008: 69)

To sum up, intercultural communicative competence aims to form ‘intercultural speakers’ who are able to see similarities and differences between languages and cultures and act as mediators between people who are part of them. Being an intercultural speaker also means being able ‘to take an “external” perspective on oneself as one interacts with others and to analyse and, where desirable, adapt
one’s behavior and underlying values and beliefs’ (Byram 2008: 68). Moreover, an intercultural speaker is someone who is conscious of the way in which people’s thinking, understanding and perspective are culturally determined (Byram 2000).

To move on now to semiotic competence, which was discussed in Chapter 2, Leo van Lier’s (2004) ecological–semiotic approach to language learning advocates that educators understand language as a meaning-making system that surrounds the L2 speaker in all its complexity and variety, is embedded in the physical and social world, and is part of other meaning-making systems (van Lier 2004: 55). Given this insight into language as a whole ecology, van Lier advises teachers to create a learning environment that offers students physical and social opportunities for participating in a variety of open-ended, unpredictable activities aimed at creating a multitude of meanings individually or in groups (van Lier 2004: 62). In such an environment, language learning and language use are indistinguishable from each other and both form part of activity and interaction (van Lier 2004: 56). Developing semiotic competence means understanding that ‘[s]igns are not objects out there, nor thoughts in here, but relationships of relevance between the person and the world, physical, social and symbolic’ (van Lier 2004: 63). Moreover, the ability to understand and use language as a sign-system enables the L2 speaker to gain access to the physical world of space, time and objects and to the social world of people, events and societies that the linguistic ecosystem constructs through semiosis (van Lier 2004: 66).

Symbolic competence goes further than the above three concepts put forward in language learning in that it empowers the multilingual individual ‘to see him/herself through his/her own embodied history and subjectivity and through the history and subjectivity of others’ (Kramsch and Whiteside 2008: 668). In so doing, symbolic competence nurtures a critical, self-reflexive mentality that affords us the possibility of transforming ourselves as well as questioning and challenging established meanings and social conventions. Also, symbolic competence empowers the growing multilingual subject

- to choose to belong to different communities of sign users;
- to respond to events differently when expressed through different semiotic systems;
- to position itself differently in different languages;
- to have the words to reflect on this experience and to cast it into an appropriate symbolic form.

(Kramsch 2009: 201)

Symbolic competence underscores the importance of the subjective and holistic experience of language learning and its potential for personal growth and social change. In order to foster symbolic competence, learners must be able to interpret meanings from discourse features, paying attention to form, genre, style, register and social semiotics. They need to understand how linguistic form shapes mental representations and to appreciate that symbolic forms are not just items
of vocabulary or communication strategies but embodied experiences, emotional resonances and moral imaginings (Kramsch 2006: 251).

Imagination plays an important role in the development of symbolic competence, but what type of imagination? Not a fanciful one, but one which gives a voice to the multilingual experience of language use. Kramsch calls it ‘a multilingual imagination’ and defines it as ‘the capacity to envision alternative ways of remembering an event, of telling a story, of participating in a discussion, of empathizing with others, of imagining their future and ours, and ultimately of defining and measuring success and failure’ (Kramsch 2009: 201). This is the reason why

[s]ymbolic competence has to be nourished by literary imagination at all levels of the language curriculum, for it is through literature that learners can communicate not only with living others, but also with imagined others and with the other selves they might want to become.

(Kramsch 2006: 251)

This is amply shown by the success of the Freedom Writers Method. As illustrated in the book authored by Freedom Writers with Erin Gruwell (1999), this methodology teaches writing in a way that enables learners to change their personal lives and the world around them by appreciating that art mirrors life. Indeed, as Kramsch observes, art gives learners ‘the cognitive and emotional maturity to imagine future scenarios of possibility that might, eventually, change the social order’ (Kramsch 2009: 199).

More specifically, what literature can bring to the development of symbolic competence, argues Kramsch (2006), is first of all a sense of the ‘production of complexity’ in human communication, where participants do not simply exchange factual information, but construct and negotiate meanings as well as personal and social identities in ways that may differ between languages and cultures. Another way in which literature nourishes symbolic competence is by openly discussing the ambiguity between myths and realities, what Kramsch calls ‘tolerance of ambiguity’. A third way in which the teaching of literature can contribute to the achievement of symbolic competence is by appreciating ‘form as meaning’ in its various manifestations: linguistic, textual, visual, acoustic or poetic (Kramsch 2006: 251–2).

These principles of good pedagogic practice engendered by the notion of symbolic competence are in line with the recommendations made in the MLA Ad Hoc Committee Report on Foreign Languages, which advocates that the goal of foreign language education is to form ‘educated speakers who have deep translingual and transcultural competence’ (MLA 2007: 2). To this end, the report envisages that learners be taught differences in meaning, mentality and world view as expressed in their native and foreign languages. This kind of education encourages the use of literature, film and other media to challenge students’ imaginations and help them consider alternative ways of seeing, feeling and understanding things (MLA 2007: 4). The report also recommends that students be taught ‘critical
language awareness, interpretation and translation, historical political consciousness, social sensibility, and aesthetic perception’ (MLA 2007: 4). As will be illustrated in Section 4.3, Kramsch’s language teaching methodology shares the MLA’s vision of a critical, self-engaging and multilingual pedagogy, which she considers to be vitally important for the formation of the interculturally competent language user of the future.

4.3 Teaching the multilingual subject

In the previous section we saw how Kramsch’s pedagogy adopts a critical, reflexive and self-engaging model of foreign language education. This pursues the development of a way of thinking that, as Christopher Candlin puts it, enables learners, through their engagement with the Other, to experience the nature of their membership of their own society and hold its practices and beliefs up to critical observation and evaluation while at the same time accommodating the social and cultural diversity of a multilingual world and deriving advantage from it (Candlin in Kramsch 2009: 191–2). The mutual understanding that critical educators such as Kramsch endeavour to achieve, by encouraging students to apprehend the world of others and observe themselves as ‘other’, is reminiscent of Paulo Freire’s concept of the ‘virtue of tolerance’ that we have to create in ourselves in order to understand others.

It is through the exercise of tolerance that I discover the rich possibility of doing things and learning different things with different people. Being tolerant is not a question of being naive. On the contrary, it is a duty to be tolerant, an ethical duty, an historical duty, a political duty, but it does not demand from me to lose my personality.

(Freire 1996)

Indeed, Kramsch’s perspective on language teaching finds its place within a broader critical pedagogy. This is a pedagogy inspired by such educational philosophies as Freire’s theory of conscientização – a process whereby the learner strives to acquire a critical knowledge of the obstacles impeding a transformation of the world (Freire in Zatti 2007) – and ‘critical’ or ‘political’ applied linguistics, whose goal is to help learners to use assimilation into the mainstream culture as a social and political tool to transform consciousness by bringing into focus the similarities within differences (Kanpol in Kramsch 1993: 243). More specifically, a critical language pedagogy raises awareness of the global context of language use, is sensitive to individual learning and conversational styles, values listening as well as talking, participation as well as silence, uses metatalk to analyse and reflect on behaviours and language, teaches how to be resourceful and imaginative, aims to balance autonomy and control, and recognizes that the relationship between what is taught and learnt is indirect and becomes evident in unexpected ways (Kramsch 1993: 244–7).
To sum up, teaching languages with a view to forming the multilingual subject of the future involves enabling students to find for themselves, and in a conscious way, their subject positioning in the multicultural landscape of late-modern societies. This pedagogic objective rests on the assumption that ‘speaking in a foreign language means not just activating a standard national linguistic system but experiencing a new way of seeing themselves as symbolic selves’ (Kramsch 2009: 202). On the practical level of day-to-day classroom teaching, this stance does not necessarily involve the creation of new types of activities, but it means presenting, guiding and completing communicative tasks in a way that engages the learner and wields the symbolic power inherent in language learning. In the remainder of this section we summarize the suggestions made by Kramsch (2009: 201–11) on how to implement her proposed pedagogy as regards the content of the lesson as well as the students’ and teachers’ roles.

Given that the learning experience engages the whole person, the pace of the lesson should not be fast, but gentle so as to give students sufficient time to absorb the teaching content cognitively and emotionally. Therefore, quick reading aimed at collecting essential information from a text can be usefully complemented by moments of intensive reading, which stimulates the analysis of particular paragraphs or sentences that have been chosen to create an opportunity for group discussions and collaborative work. The variety of activities normally undertaken in one lesson can be narrowed down in order to have time to focus on one or two main themes that can be expanded in unpredictable ways so as to arouse curiosity and interest.

Teaching materials should combine spoken and written texts with other modes of communication, such as gestures, sounds and images, and with other media besides print and audio CDs such as radio, television, cinema, DVDs and the Internet. The employment of a wide range of symbolic forms in the language classroom permits the unveiling of the multiple meanings created by different sign systems on the same theme and the transformation of meaning in various kinds of semiotic transpositions such as film and theatrical adaptations, audiobooks, audio descriptions for the blind and the visually impaired as well as audiovisual translation. Crucially, Kramsch regards all forms of translation (intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic) as having an important role to play in the advanced language class. This is because translation is an effective means of exploring the relationship between different sign systems and the associations they evoke in the minds of hearers and readers (Kramsch 2009: 204).

\[A\]s a practice that brings out the cultural differences in the relation of language and thought, translation should be rehabilitated, not only from L1 to L2 or L2 to L1, but across the languages shared by students in the class, or across modalities, textual, visual, musical.

\(\text{Kramsch 2009: 211, fn. 6}\)

So, the reappraisal of pedagogic translation is absolutely in line with the notion of symbolic competence. ‘However’, as Kramsch clarifies, ‘we are not talking here
of translation as transfer from text to text, but as a rethinking of one context in
terms of another.' And context is intended as 'a whole ecology of which text is
only a part' (personal communication via email, 29 March 2009). I will take this
point up later in my conclusion.

As for the students' role, the key words are engagement, desire, transgression
and pleasure. I will explain each of these in turn. The notion of engagement has
been discussed by such language educators as Leo van Lier (see Chapter 3), Alistair
Pennycook and Michael Byram (in Kramsch 2009: 205–6). They all agree that
‘learning is a participatory activity that is very much affected by how the parti-
cipants perceive each other, based on their visible and audible identity character-
istics’ (Kramsch 2009: 206). Hence, in a pedagogy of engagement students are
given the opportunity to develop their identities by learning to negotiate mean-
ings between languages and cultures. To draw on Julia Kristeva (in Kramsch 2009:
14–16), desire in language is the need to identify with a symbolic Other and find
new ways of self-expression beyond the boundaries of one linguistic system and
culture. Students should therefore be allowed to express themselves in different
modes of communication and be sensitized to the aesthetic characteristics of
a language such as the beauty of its prosodic features, tropes, lexis and grammar.
Transgression means letting students discover unexpected meanings in a text
and voice them. It also means allowing them to subvert the normal routine of a
carefully planned lesson by asking them to choose the topic for the day as well
as organize appropriate activities and assessment tests. Pleasure is the sense of
fulfilment that comes from being in harmony with the language of the text that
is being studied together with the sense of serenity and gratification one feels
when active participation in dialogues and exchanges creates a bond with the
whole group.

As multilingual subjects themselves, teachers should be aware of their subjectivity
and feel confident in expressing it through their choice of instructional materials
as well as their personal way of interacting with students and managing the classroom.
Teachers should bear in mind that learning takes place through direct teaching
and indirect modelling, so reflecting on our own learning experiences in the past
can help us to be in touch with the students’ needs, fears and desires so they can
learn ‘as much from who we show ourselves to be and what we do, as from what
we say in class’ (Kramsch 2009: 209). Finally, repetition, recitation and choral
responses should be reintroduced not just as aids to memorization but as ways
of yielding new meanings and evoking different associations from the written
text. The value of silence should also be recognized. Silence encourages reflection,
concentration and intimacy towards the text that is being read or written. More-
over, it is an important feature of language use and conveys different meanings
across cultures. Silence can even be fostered ‘as a way of letting the students reflect
on what they are right now experiencing’ (Kramsch 2009: 210).

In conclusion, here are some final considerations about the role attributed by
Kramsch to pedagogic translation. My view is that, enlarged and important as it
is, translation is still regarded as a means to an end, the end being the development
of symbolic competence, which entails a deep understanding of the referential and subjective senses of language. The former refers to language as a representation of objective realities; the latter refers to language as a meaning-making system that constructs ‘subjective realities such as perceptions, emotions, attitudes, and values’ (Kramsch 2009: 7). Arguably, focusing on translation as a means of bringing to light the ‘semiotic relations between words, between linguistic codes, between texts’ and unearthing the relation between the diverse associations that different symbolic forms evoke in our minds (Kramsch 2009: 204) overlooks recent developments in language teaching methodology. These, in fact, legitimate the use of translation both as a learning and testing tool and a skill in its own right, for the reasons discussed in Chapter 2. We therefore contend that, in order for translation to realize its full potential in the multilingual pedagogy put forward by Kramsch, it is vitally important that we explore in more detail the nature of translation qua translation and accommodate these insights into the ecological framework she proposes. To this end, the next two chapters will first examine Maria Tymoczko’s notion of holistic cultural translation and then posit that symbolic competence is a valuable asset to translation and that translation is a valuable tool for achieving symbolic competence.

Notes
1 The name ‘Freedom Writers’ was chosen to pay homage to the Civil Rights leaders, the Freedom Riders (www.freedomwritersfoundation.org (accessed 7 March 2014)).
2 With the sole exception of Erin Gruwell’s, each diary entry in the book is identified by a number rather than a name in order to protect the students’ anonymity and illustrate the universality of their experiences (Freedom Writers with Erin Gruwell 1999: 6).
3 See the website dedicated to The Tale of Kieu, www.deanza.edu/faculty/swensson/kieu.html (accessed 7 March 2014).
So far we have argued that a major revival of pedagogic translation is conditional upon its legitimation not only as an effective learning tool, but also as a worthy educational goal, on theoretical and empirical grounds. We have also asserted that, in order to meet this condition, it is crucially important that the world of foreign language education open up to that of translation studies scholarship to begin a constructive dialogue aimed at establishing interdisciplinary theoretical principles that are able to enrich current research and project it into the future. In pursuit of this long-term goal, the present chapter explores the holistic approach to translating cultural difference elaborated by Maria Tymoczko (2007). First, I will examine the superordinate concepts of representation, transmission and transculturation used by Tymoczko as interconnected and complementary frameworks for investigating translations within an international and cross-cultural perspective. Next, I will explore the theoretical underpinnings of the notion of holistic cultural translation. Finally, I will illustrate how a holistic approach to translation can be fostered pedagogically.

5.1 The cross-cultural concept *translation

This section first surveys the etymologies of the word translation in a sample of languages worldwide, together with a critical assessment of the transfer metaphor embodied in some of these etymologies. The second and third parts are devoted to the three modes of cultural interface that Tymoczko adopts as frames of reference to elaborate the concept *translation in her attempt to move towards a deeper understanding of the transcultural nature of translation.¹

5.1.1 Translation across the world

Tymoczko (2007) advocates that the discipline of translation studies move towards a cross-lingual, cross-temporal and cross-cultural understanding of the practices
Tymoczko’s holistic cultural translation and products of translation throughout the world. She argues that the notion of translation as the process of transferring a text from a source language to a target language and the product, or target text, which results from this process cannot be adopted as the basis for a global discipline of translation studies. Instead, we need a cross-cultural concept: *translation, or translation with an asterisk (Tymoczko 2007: 59). One of the reasons is that the metaphor ‘translation is transfer’ is specific to a particular group of languages. In English, for example, it is associated with the etymology of the word translation, which derives from the Latin feminine noun transitio(nis) (transporting), itself coming from transit(us/a/um), the past participle of the compound verb transferre, formed from the preposition trans (across/beyond/over) and the infinitive ferre (carry). The Italian equivalent traduzione has a similar etymological meaning, since it derives from the Latin noun truductio(nis) (transporting), which comes from truduct(us/a/um), the past participle of the compound verb truducere (transport), formed from trans and the verb ducere (lead). Traducere is also the Romanian noun, which has preserved its Latin etymon. Traduction in French, traduçção in Portuguese and traducción in Spanish have the same etymology as traduzione in Italian. The Russian equivalent is перевод (perevod), which derives from the verb перево́дить (perevodit), meaning ‘to transport’, which itself is a calque of the French etymon traduire.

In other languages we find different images, as the following small inventory will show. Used as both a noun and a verb, the Swahili equivalent of translation is tafsiri. It derives from the Arabic word fasiri, which literally means ‘interpreting’. The word for translation in many north Indian (Indo-Aryan) languages is bhaashhaantar. Derived from Sanskrit, it is a compound noun made up of bhaashaa (language) and antar, meaning ‘in the middle’ or ‘inside’, so bhaashaantar literally means ‘in the middle or inside two languages’. The Old English words denoting the act of translation were wenden (turning) and awenden (turning (in)to) (Wakabayashi 2009: 179). Other European languages retained verbs meaning ‘to turn’ till the modern area: German wenden, Swedish vända, Finnish kääntää (Robinson 1997: 83). Also, according to Vicente L. Rafael (in Robinson 1997: 83), in the sixteenth century the Spanish verb convertir (to turn) was still used to denote ‘translation’.

Different meanings can also be found within the same language, as the etymological studies carried out by Martha P.Y. Cheung (2005) and Judy Wakabayashi (2009) in Chinese and Japanese have evidenced. In modern Chinese the most common term for translation is 翻译 fānyì. It is formed by two characters, 翻 fān and 註 yì, and means ‘using one spoken or written language to express the meaning conveyed by another spoken or written language’ (Hanyu Daidian 1990, in Cheung 2005: 36). Another current definition is ‘to reproduce accurately and completely in one language the contents of a text written in another language’ (A Companion for Chinese Translators 1997, in Cheung 2005: 36).

The formation of fānyì goes back to the Eastern Han Dynasty (c.25–225 AD), when the first translations of Buddhist sutras from Sanskrit into Chinese were undertaken and the character 翻 fān (to turn over) was added in front of 註 yì,
the collective term for ‘translation’. Originally, during the early Western Han Dynasty (206 BC–9 AD), 譯 yi (translators/interpreters) was the title of government officials responsible for communicating and maintaining relations with the neighbouring tribes of Di in the north of China (Cheung 2005: 29–30). Later, during the Sui (c.580–618) and T’Ang (c.618–907) dynasties, the term fānyì came to be used only for Buddhist sutra translation (Wakabayashi 2009: 185). The notion of translation that stemmed from rendering Sanskrit into the language of China was metaphorically expressed by two sayings contained in the Sung Version of the Biographies of Eminent Monks compiled during the Sung Dynasty (c.960–1279).

Translating is like turning over a piece of brocade – on both sides the patterns are the same, only they face opposite directions. Translating means exchanging, that is, exchanging what you have for what you do not have.

(FA in Cheung 2005: 35)

Cheung argues that the special relationship between the word fānyì and Buddhist sutra translation, forged and evoked by vivid images such as that of a piece of turned-over brocade, was an attempt to set sutra translation apart from yì, which denoted diplomatic translation. She further argues that the description of translation as something concrete, tangible and aesthetically pleasing was ‘quite clearly a rhetorical move to elevate Buddhist sutra translations to the status of literary texts and an effort to, as it were, canonize the translated sutras’ (Cheung 2005: 35). Today,  yì means ‘to change [a text/a speech] from one language into another’ (Hanyu Dacidian 1990 in Cheung 2005: 36).

As for Japanese, Wakabayashi’s (2009) study of the semantic domain of translation over the centuries shows that the shared meaning of a selection of indigenous, i.e. non Chinese-derived, terms in early modern Japan is that of making a text easy to understand. The words and phrases examined are yawarageru (to soften), kotoba no yawarage and kuchi yawarage (both meaning ‘language softening’) and kudaku (to break something down). Another indigenous term she considers is hirugaesu, meaning ‘to turn’, ‘to flip over’ or ‘to change suddenly’. Wakabayashi also reports that the authoritative Köjien monolingual Japanese dictionary defines hirugaesu as ‘causing the inner side/aspect to manifest’ (Jackson in Wakabayashi 2009: 180). According to Earl Jackson:

This imagistic base for the metaphoric extension of the word to mean ‘translate’ divides its object into inner and outer, not present and absent (concrete and abstract, sign and meaning), maintaining a horizontal, unidimensional schema for the act of translation, an immanence-oriented structure, in contrast to the vertical, transcendence-based schema of translation in European thought.

(Jackson in Wakabayashi 2009: 180)

In contrast, the standard contemporary Japanese term for translation is hon’yaku 翻訳. It was derived from the Chinese word fānyì 翻譯 and occurred in some
Heian period (795–1192) texts. It was rarely used in ancient Japan and became more common from the latter half of the eighteenth century onwards. During the early Meiji era (1868–1912) it became widely used as a generic term to denote translation activities. ‘The notion underlying hon’yaku’, suggests Wakabayashi, ‘is one of change (including intralingual change) rather than interlingual transfer or carrying across identical meaning’ (Wakabayashi 2009: 183). Moreover, the dominance of this term can be explained, at least partly, by growing contacts with European works, which became progressively more important than Chinese texts (Wakabayashi 2009: 184).

5.1.2 A critique of the transfer metaphor

To return to the view of translation as transfer, Andrew Chesterman and Rosemary Arrojo point out that the concept embodied in this metaphor ‘implies that something is indeed transferred, something that presumably remains constant throughout the process and is thus objectively “there”. This something is often thought to be the meaning (or the message, or the sense, or the vouloir dire, or . . .)’ (Chesterman and Arrojo 2000: 153). The limitation of this notion becomes immediately apparent when we consider renderings of one language into another that were successful precisely because they did not conform to the transference idea and renderings that adhered to it and, for that very reason, failed to convey the intended message.

A clear illustration of the former type of translation is Laura Bohannan’s adaptation of *Hamlet* in the language spoken by the Tiv tribe in West Africa. The American anthropologist told the story narrated in the Shakespearian tragedy during a traditional party attended by the elders and the younger men of the homestead, who asked her to explain what they did not understand just as they did when they told her their stories. Not only did Bohannan spontaneously adapt the text to the Tiv’s social and material culture and textual conventions, but, prompted by the elders’ questions, comments and interventions during the story-telling session, she had to recreate the plot and reshape the relationship between characters so as to render the tale comprehensible and enjoyable. In the end, the story was appreciated by the audience and Bohannan was invited by the elders to tell them more stories of her country. ‘We, who are elders,’ said one of the old men, ‘will instruct you in their true meaning, so that when you return to your own land the elders will see that you have not been sitting in the bush, but among those who know things and who have taught you wisdom’ (Bohannan 1966: 33). Humbled by this experience, Bohannan had to reconsider her presumption that, since human nature is much the same all over the world, ‘at least the general plot and motivation of the greater tragedies would always be clear – everywhere – although some detail of custom might have to be explained and difficulties of translation might produce other slight changes’ (Bohannan 1966: 1).

On the other side of the coin, the American anthropologist Daniel L. Everett gives a detailed account of his literal translation of the gospel of Mark into Pirahã from Koine Greek, which he carried out when he was a Christian missionary.
His rendering had hardly any effect because it was incomprehensible owing, above all, to the large distance between Mark’s first-century Middle Eastern culture and the Pirahã’s Amazonian culture, a difference which Everett had overlooked at the time. I have reproduced below the opening passage of Mark’s gospel in Pirahã and its back-translation in English. It is followed by Everett’s critical analysis of his translation techniques and underlying view of translation (Everett 2012: 199 –200).


xahoaisoogabagaí. Hisó hi goó kaipi.
‘I want to tell you [literally: ‘I pretty marks want to tell’] what Jesus did.’

Everett used common Pirahã words that conformed to the rules of word formation in Pirahã, yet the text was incomprehensible for two reasons connected to cultural differences. First of all, the Pirahãs could not understand who Hisó5 was because, when they asked about him, naturally, Everett said he had never seen him nor had he ever known anyone who had seen him. So, to the Pirahãs it made no sense for him to talk about Jesus. The other reason why Everett failed to get the message across was that, following the syntax of written English, he had created embedded sentences without realizing that the oral Pirahã language does not allow two juxtaposed oral sentences to be combined into a single written one. Everett openly admits he had believed that, over time, the Pirahãs would have adapted to his translation of Mark since ‘that was the best way to communicate these complex and foreign thoughts in their language’. But the Pirahãs proved him to be wrong because they ‘had no interest in a translation that violated their grammar and culture’ (Everett 2012: 200).

Another example of the limits of transfer when translating biblical texts is given by Harriet Hill. In a paper addressing the challenges posed by contextual differences when rendering an ancient and geographically distant document for audiences today, she recounts her experience in southern Côte d’Ivoire, where she translated, together with Jacques Essis, the Gospels, Acts and Revelation (Hill 2008: 100).

As we worked on communicating the New Testament in Adioukrou to the Adioukrou, I realized that there was a lot about Jewish and Greek cultures they needed to learn for the Bible to make sense to them. Our translation passed the consultants’ exegetical test as well as the audience’s tests for naturalness, but still much of the original meaning went missing. . . . They understood what the words were saying, but so much of what the biblical authors intended to communicate was not in the text.

Having recognized the relevance of the role of both text and context in communication, Hill began to add the missing background information in footnotes and ‘[a] lot of passages began to make sense’ (Hill 2008: 100). Crucially, she argues, ‘[a]ny new information needs to be presented in such a way that it is linked to
what the audience already knows, so that they can connect the new to the known’ (Hill 2008: 107).

As the above sample of definitions and practices demonstrates, the conceptualization of translation embodied in the transfer metaphor is not able to accommodate ‘the varied semiosis associated with and the wide-ranging set of meanings indicated by all the words used internationally for the practice and products of translation’ (Tymoczko 2007: 60). Also, as Tymoczko argues, the idea that transfer is the necessary and sufficient feature of translation has been shown to be inadequate in encompassing the huge array of renderings that have been and are being constantly documented worldwide (Tymoczko 2007: 60–8). It is therefore quite evident that the notion of transference is too narrow to form a sound conceptual basis for understanding the nature of translation as a cross-cultural phenomenon.

### 5.1.3 *Translation as a cluster concept*

In order to advance towards a transtemporal and transcultural understanding of translation, Tymoczko draws on Ludwig Wittgenstein’s approach to concepts and categories and proposes that *translation be conceived as an open, cluster concept with blurred edges, whose members cluster in groups and each group has features overlapping with other groups. As Tymoczko explains, the exemplars of the transcultural cluster category *translation are not determined on the basis of the necessary and sufficient features of translations worldwide, but according to their observed similarities (i.e. their family resemblances) within and across cultures synchronically and diachronically (Tymoczko 2007: 83–100). ‘Thinking of *translation as a cluster concept’, argues Tymoczko, ‘allows for self-definition of translation as a central form of cultural practice in each society, and it accommodates the incommensurability of terms for *translation in the world’s languages’ (Tymoczko 2007: 98).

But how can we demarcate the blurred edges of a cluster concept in order to decide whether a text is or is not a translation without imposing closure on the concept itself? Tymoczko suggests a strategy that delineates the permeable boundaries of *translation as a limit from within and without conceptual structure. Such a strategy involves using as frames of reference superordinate categories that have characteristics similar to or shared with many or even most (though not necessarily all) translations (Tymoczko 2007: 110). The categories she proposes as frames of reference are three different forms of cultural interface, namely representation, transmission (or transfer) and transculturation (Tymoczko 2007: 111). They are so broad that most individual translation processes and products fall within each of them, but the concept *translation as a whole is not subsumed under any one of them. So, the permeable boundaries of *translation overlap but do not coincide with any of these larger concepts.

Besides helping to determine the category membership of texts regarded as translation, these three modes ‘illuminate the nature of specific clusters or types of translation’ and ‘show the relationships that different clusters of translation have with each other within the larger category *translation and the ways specific
translations are linked through partial and overlapping correspondences related to these modes’ (Tymoczko 2007: 111). In the remainder of this section we will first define and exemplify the properties of representation, transmission and transculturation. We will then show how they help to delineate the category membership of pedagogic translation and to illuminate some of its salient features that to date have remained largely unexplored.

As a form of representation, translation can create an image that resembles a thing or reproduces it in some tangible manner. It is symbolic. It formally and clearly states a particular idea, viewpoint, fact or argument in order to influence opinions and behaviours, and thus bring about change in society. It stands in place of another thing or person and has a right or authority to act on their account. Almost all translations are forms of representation, though not all of them have all the above characteristics (Tymoczko 2007: 111–12). As a form of transmission, translation involves different kinds of conveyance from one language and culture to another. Translations typically relay the content, language, function or form of the source text. The variability of methods adopted by translations that privilege transfer is very wide. It ranges from close textual fidelity to various degrees of manipulation of the linguistic features of the original. Many factors influence the vast array of transmission procedures adopted in translation practices, e.g. linguistic asymmetries, translation technologies, literacy practices, economic conditions, cultural sufficiency or enclosure, receptiveness to difference, aesthetic norms, taboos about certain types of content, asymmetries in power and cultural prestige as well as ideology (Tymoczko 2007: 119).

Transculturation is the exchange of a broad range of cultural characteristics from one cultural group to another. It includes such elements as verbal materials, religious beliefs and practices, social and political organization, artistic forms as well as aspects of material culture including technology and tools, agricultural and industrial practices, clothing, food, housing, transport and media (Tymoczko 2007: 120). The distinctive feature of this mode of cultural interface is that it requires the transmission, appropriation, performance and integration of the borrowed cultural forms in the receptor environment and the consequent creation of new cultural phenomena, which Fernando Ortiz, who first coined the term transculturación in 1939, calls ‘neoculturation’ (in Tymoczko 2007: 121), of which more below. In textual domains, as Tymoczko explains, transculturation often entails transposing elements of a literary system, e.g. poetics, genres and tale types. It also involves the uptake of such textual technologies as literacy, printing and electronic media and of the elements expressed in or carried by language such as discourses and world views (Tymoczko 2007: 121).

5.1.4 Illustrating representation, transmission and transculturation

As we pointed out above, these three modes of cultural exchange are related to one another. This relationship becomes evident when we trace the steps taken during the process of naturalization of the Spanish term transculturación in the English receptor
culture, where it was literally rendered as *transculturation*. As Tymoczko (2007: 120–3) recounts in detail, *transculturación* was coined by the Cuban ethnologist Fernando Ortiz in 1939. It first appeared in his book *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar*, published in 1940. Ortiz explained that he had created the neologism to signify the difference between the one-way process of acquiring another culture, denoted by the English word *acculturation*, and his posited three-phase process that characterizes the transition from one culture to another. The three phases involved in *transculturación* are the acquisition of a new culture (acculturation), the loss or uprooting of a previous culture (deculturation) and the creation of a new cultural phenomenon (neoculturation) (Ortiz in Tymoczko 2007: 123). In his work, Ortiz used the newly coined term to denote the interchange between Europe and Latin America, especially in Cuba. He demonstrated that, as a result of *transculturación*, Cuban culture was a palimpsest of many cultural contributions from the Americas, Europe, Africa and beyond (Tymoczko 2007: 122). In 1939, a year before the publication of his volume, Ortiz told the Polish-born British-naturalized anthropologist Bronisław Malinowski that he intended to introduce ‘the term *transculturation* to replace various expressions in use such as “cultural exchange”, “acculturation”, “diffusion”, “migration or osmosis of culture”, and similar ones that he considered inadequate’ (Malinowski in Tymoczko 2007: 122, fn. 18). Malinowski responded enthusiastically to this idea.

> My instant response was the enthusiastic acceptance of this neologism. I promised its author that I would appropriate the new expression for my own use, acknowledging its paternity, and use it constantly and loyally whenever I had occasion to do so.

*(Malinowski in Tymoczko 2007: 122, fn. 18)*

This affirmation is documented in an essay composed in July 1940 and published posthumously in 1947 as the ‘Introduction’ to the English translation of Ortiz’s book, undertaken by Harriet de Onís (*Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*). Significantly, in the same piece, Malinowski, inspired by Ortiz, critically exposes the moral, normative and evaluative concepts enshrined in the English term *acculturation*, which, in his view, disfigured the real meaning of the phenomenon and construed it as ‘passive adaptation to a clear and determined standard of culture’. Then, he fully incorporated the literal translation of Ortiz’s term in his repertoire of technical terms and, on the basis of his own understanding, explained its meaning as a two-way process of interchange between cultures.

> Every change of culture, or, as I shall say from now on, every transculturation, is a process in which something is always given in return for what one receives, a system of give and take. It is a process in which both parts of the equation are modified, a process from which a new reality emerges, transformed and complex, a reality that is not a mechanical agglomeration of traits, nor even a mosaic, but a new phenomenon, original and independent.

*(Malinowski in Tymoczko 2007: 123)*
In 1941, one year after writing the above piece, Malinowski used *transculturation* in an essay that was published posthumously three years later as part of a collection of writings titled *A Scientific Theory of Culture and Other Essays*. In that essay, he made no reference to Ortiz (Tymoczko 2007: 122, fn. 18). Subsequently, the word passed into English and was eventually included in the second edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* in 1989, where its first attribution refers to the 1941 text ‘Scientific Theory of Culture’ (in Tymoczko 2007: 122). In the 1989 edition of the *OED*, *transculturation* is defined as ‘acculturation’. In the 1974 edition of *Encyclopedia Britannica*, it is defined as ‘the transmission of cultural characteristics from one cultural group to another’ (in Tymoczko 2007: 120).

It is worth pausing to reflect on how the literal translation produced by Malinowski from Spanish to English can be usefully framed as a form of representation, transmission and transculturation. When *transculturation* first appeared in the essay dated 1940, it was presented as a reproduction and a clear statement of the original idea put forward by Ortiz. This form of representation had the symbolic power to challenge and transform the meaning conveyed by the English native word *acculturation*. Also, the new term relayed, through a process of maximal transference, the form, meaning and function of its Spanish etymon. At the same time, the translated term was integrated in the receiving culture to denote a new reality and world view with deep awareness that it had come from another cultural context. In Malinowski’s essay dated 1941, the dimension of representation of his rendering is virtually nil since the creator of the original word is no longer mentioned. Arguably, we may say that this writing, officially acknowledged by the 1989 edition of the *OED* (in Tymoczko 2007: 120) as the primary source of the English term, marks the moment when *transculturation* was naturalized in the English language and culture.

If the three frames of references proposed by Tymoczko are able to delineate the boundaries of the cluster concept *translation and throw light on the properties of specific types of translation, then they can also help identify the category membership of pedagogic translation with a view to gaining a clearer understanding of its nature. As we saw in Chapter 2, educationalists are currently reappraising translation not only as an instructional and testing tool but also as a skill in its own right. However, its rightful role and place in language teaching methodology is still being defined. The cluster concept approach adopted by Tymoczko can help define the form and function of translation in the language classroom more precisely. Crucially, it enables us to locate pedagogic translation in the category of language learning activities on the basis of family resemblances with reading comprehension, writing and form-focused exercises, as we examined in Chapter 2. Moreover, depending on the level of proficiency in the L2, translation in language teaching involves the transfer of morphosyntactic structures, semantic meanings and pragmatic functions (Cook 2010). Also, at an advanced level of linguistic and intercultural competence, as a rethinking of a context in terms of another and a means of exploring the relationship between the associations that different sign systems evoke in our minds (as we discussed in Chapter 4), translation constructs
a cultural image of a source and is, therefore, a form of representation. On the basis of these considerations, we can plausibly argue that pedagogic translation is as much a concern of foreign language education as it is of translation studies and that the synergy between these fields of scholarship will bring about a major revival of translation in language teaching. I will take this point up at the end of the chapter. I now turn to Tymoczko’s holistic approach to cultural translation and its application in translator education.

5.2 A holistic approach to translating culture

As Tymoczko points out: ‘Culture is the domain where human differences are most manifest’ and representations of those differences are ‘second in importance only to the performance and practice of cultural forms for identity formation and group solidarity, as well as for claims pertaining to consideration and recognition in cultural interactions’ (Tymoczko 2007: 221). Hence, translating culture involves representing, transmitting and transculturating not only material cultural elements, but also signs, symbols, codes, beliefs, values, ideas, ideals and ideologies (Tymoczko 2007: 226). It follows that translators undertaking cultural translation exercise ethical, ideological and political agency. In order to explore how translators can engage in the translation of culture, Tymoczko turns to Pierre Bourdieu’s early theories that centre on the concept of the ‘habitus’. The term stands for ‘a system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks’ (Bourdieu in Tymoczko 2007: 226, original emphasis).

The habitus produces and is reproduced by cultural practices that are embodied in the members of a culture, who are to a large extent unconscious of them. It follows that, in order to communicate across cultural differences,

[a] translator must not only unpack the embodied and situated knowledge related to cultural configurations and practices in the source text, the source culture, the author or speaker, and so forth, but be able to interpret the embodied and situated cultural practices and dispositions of the translator’s own culture and the culture of the receiving audience.

(Tymoczko 2007: 227)

Here lies the specific challenge posed by cultural translation and the power of the translator, who not only must contend with cultural gaps, but also with the constraints of a pre-existing text (Tymoczko 2007: 230). In order to accomplish such a complex task, it is not sufficient, argues Tymoczko, to approach the representation of culture in a linear, piecemeal fashion and resolve the cultural problems incorporated in surface elements of the text one by one, sentence by sentence until the translation is complete (Tymoczko 2007: 233). What is needed, instead, is a holistic approach to cultural translation. This pays attention to a broader field
of less tangible cultural elements in addition to specific ones that are more noticeable on a physical level such as historical and geographical references, food, clothing and various kinds of behaviour. A holistic approach involves considering the cultural underpinnings of the source text that need to be negotiated because they may present difficulties for the target audience, so as to enable ‘greater cultural interchange and more effective cultural assertion in translation, allowing more newness to enter the world’ (Tymoczko 2007: 233). As Tymoczko explains,

a holistic approach to translating culture will begin with the largest elements of cultural difference that separate the source culture and the target culture as a framework for coordinating the particular decisions about culture that occur as the text is actually transposed into the target language.

(Tymoczko 2007: 235)

In order to help translators, Tymoczko offers a partial repertory of cultural elements that might be taken into account as a guide for interpreting the source text and for determining the overall representations of culture in the target text. This inventory comprises the signature concepts of a culture, key words, conceptual metaphors, discourses, cultural practices, cultural paradigms, overcodings and symbols (Tymoczko 2007: 238–44). I will now define each of these cultural elements in turn and illustrate them with examples from various languages and genres.

Signature concepts are ‘central to a culture’s universe of discourse and to the horizon of expectation shared by its members’ (Tymoczko 2007: 238). They are key to the social and economic organization of a culture, they express values and the words denoting them are highly connoted and rich in cultural associations. In early medieval Irish texts, for instance, words pertaining to heroism, including honour, shame and taboo, fall under the category of signature concepts (Tymoczko 2007: 239). Those of contemporary American society can be equated to the values that Americans cherish and are encouraged to promote, namely ‘hard work and honesty, courage and fair play, tolerance and curiosity, loyalty and patriotism’, as we read in the letter that the President of the United States of America sends to every new American citizen.6

Key words are words that may point either to the signature concepts of a culture or to more idiosyncratic or thematic cultural elements chosen by an author or speaker to structure a given text (Tymoczko 2007: 241). In Henry James’ literary production, which is deeply embedded in the visual culture of Victorian age, the key words picture, screen, frame, portrait are framing devices through which the author organizes the narrative space in a way that brings into focus what is accessible and inaccessible to the viewer’s gaze and gives voice to the invisible universe of human consciousness (Squeo 2009: 163).

To draw on George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980), conceptual metaphors shape the mental representations of a given source group as well as its perspectives on the world. An example of variation in conceptual metaphors across languages is offered by Yan Ding et al. (2010). Their corpus-based analysis of the metaphorical
representations of fear and kōngjù in English and Chinese respectively reveals that Chinese does not have the English conceptual metaphors FEAR IS A SUPERNATURAL BEING/A DISEASE/A SHARP OBJECT/A POISON/A LEGACY/A MACHINE. Moreover, the shared metaphor FEAR IS AN OPPONENT tends to be used in English to conceptualize the state of falling victim to fear, whereas in Chinese it is usually used to conceptualize an attempt to control it (Ding et al. 2010: 49–50).

Discourses too, being representations and visions of the social world, are related to cultural dispositions and as such they motivate action and practice. Examples include the discourse of ‘imperiled privacy’ in women’s biographical and autobiographical writing in nineteenth-century America (Adams 2009) and the political discourse of the ‘Third Way’ in Tony Blair’s speeches from 1998 to early 1999, which was built upon the notion of ‘the new global economy’ accepted ‘as an inevitable and unquestionable fact of life upon which politics and governments are to be premised’ (Fairclough 2000: 15).

Cultural paradigms, which pertain to humour, argumentation, logical sequencing in a text, or the use of tropes tend to vary from culture to culture and within single cultures over time. Argumentative prose in Arabic, for instance, is characterized by repetition of both form and content so that the same information is reiterated in a variety of ways so as to persuade by assertion (Baker 2011: 247). Also, while English tends to prefer the pattern of ‘counter-argumentation’, Arabic shows a preference for ‘through argumentation’. The former has the format ‘thesis to be opposed, opposition, substantiation of counter-claim, conclusion’, whereas the latter has the format ‘thesis to be supported, substantiation, conclusion’ (Hatim 1991: 192–4). Another culture-specific rhetorical convention is the Japanese ‘dot-type’ pattern in which anecdotes are strung together without an explicit link or conclusion. This often leads western readers to miss the point being made and to consider the presentation to be shallow (Loveday in Baker 2011: 247).

Cultural practices, such as naming practices, the use of forms of address and titles, the naming of kinship relationships, which play an important role in constructing personal and social identities and achieving social cohesion, are also varied. In English, for example, the word grandfather means ‘father of one’s father or mother’ and the word grandmother means ‘mother of one’s father or mother’, but in Thai the word po means ‘father of one’s father’, the word ta means ‘father of one’s mother’, the word ya means ‘mother of one’s father’, and the word yay means ‘mother of one’s mother’. In Swedish farfar = father’s father, morfar = mother’s father, mormor = mother’s mother and farmor = father’s mother. In Chinese there are five equivalents of the English word uncle, i.e. shushu, bobo, jiujiu, guzhang and yizhang, each referring to a specific family relationship. As anthropologists have shown, kinship systems always serve to identify and establish relationships that are valued culturally and kinship terms do not merely classify biological and non-biological relationships, but play a regulatory role in societies affecting the way we talk and think about someone we call ‘brother’, ‘sister’, ‘cousin’ and so forth (Everett 2012: 243–50).
Overcodings are ‘linguistic patterns that are superimposed on the ordinary ranks of language to indicate a higher-order set of distinctions in language practices’ (Tymoczko 2007: 243). They signal specific literary genres (e.g. poetry or narrative) and modes of communication (e.g. spoken or written). They also comprise rhetorical devices such as intertextuality, quotation and allusion. Within the category of overcodings we find forms of textual structuring pertaining to aspects of register, dialects and languages for special purposes. Textual multilingualism, which in literary poetics stands for the use of two or more languages within the same text (Grutman 2009), is an example of overcoding in diasporic literature. This stylistic device emphasizes the cross-cultural nature of the text and asserts cultural difference, as evidenced by Tina Steiner’s study of the contemporary African women writers Leila Aboulela, Jamal Mahjoub, Abdulrazak Gurnah and Moyez G. Vassanji (Steiner 2009).

Finally, symbols can also help think about the habitus of a source culture as they are related to the identity of an individual, family, class, nation or deity (Tymoczko 2007: 145, fn. 28). Indeed, flower symbolism varies from language to language. Lilacs stand for light and early summer in Sweden but in Italy they represent envy. In some English villages a lilac branch may signify a broken engagement (Anderman 2007b: 3). Folklore provides many other symbols and icons. In Indian mythology the word naga describes any kind of semi-divine serpent associated with water and fluid energy. Nagas are ambivalent deities: they are believed to bestow wealth and assure abundant crops but revoke these blessings if offended. In Trinidadian mythology the half-woman, half-serpent water deity Mama Glo is both a malevolent, fearsome goddess, who traps mortal men who commit crimes against forests and waterways, and a benevolent, nurturing maternal figure. In the poem ‘Mama Glo’ by the Indo-Trinidadian-Canadian poet Ramabai Espinet, the water goddess symbolizes a return to the rhythms and images of the Caribbean landscape. She tells the stories of Afro-Caribbean and Indo-Caribbean women who had to endure the suffering inflicted as much by the men of their communities as by the colonial masters and she feels a sense of sisterly solidarity towards them. As Christine Vogt-William observes: ‘The deep waters [Mama Glo] dwell in, though still, harbor the dreams and thoughts of generations of Caribbean women connected to Trinidadian soil, delicate and fragile-seeming as gossamer, but ever-present, tough, and resilient as diamonds’ (Vogt-William 2009: 158).

As Tymoczko maintains, considering the above cultural parameters helps translators to compare the elements of their own culture with those of the source culture as they are reflected in the text they are translating. In order to be able to make these cross-cultural comparisons, translators must have self-awareness of their own habitus. Indeed, it is through self-reflexivity that they will be able to identify those aspects of cultural difference that need to be mediated ‘in some way (for instance, in paratextual materials) for the receptor audience so that readers can make appropriate inferences about meaning’ (Tymoczko 2007: 238). So, how can prospective translators develop self-reflexivity so as to be able to
understand and acknowledge their own cultural predispositions and engage with their own culture as well as the cultures of others? This question, which is at the core of the holistic mode of cultural translation, which in turn facilitates the choice of a purposeful strategy for each particular project, is one of the main concerns of Tymoczko’s pedagogy. It will be addressed in the next section.

5.3 Teaching holistic translation methods

As we have seen, the holistic approach to translating culture is informed by two fundamental principles. The first is that translation is a form of representation, transmission and transculturation. The second is that language and culture are closely intertwined. It follows that translators can be creators rather than merely carriers of meaning, and meaning resides as much in text as in context and intertexts. To raise students’ awareness about the complex nature of meaning, which is fundamental in holistic translation methods, Tymoczko suggests using a brainstorming technique whose aim is to generate as many ideas as possible about where meaning resides (Tymoczko 2007: 276). Students are first prompted to reflect on the question ‘Where does meaning reside in a text to be translated?’. Next, they examine and discuss the responses they have given individually, in pairs or in groups. Interestingly, the brainstorming sessions that Tymoczko herself conducts with her graduate translation students at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, have elicited many categories and dimensions of meaning, i.e. linguistic, sociolinguistic, socioeconomic, historical and cultural context, ideological significance, textual technology, intertextuality, textual or literary practices and structures, narrative elements, implied reader and reader responses.

This composite list suggests that meaning is generated by more than just the text itself. ‘This’, as Tymoczko points out, ‘includes meaning that the translator as reader brings to the process of translation, including any contextual, material, or functional meaning presupposed’ (Tymoczko 2007: 283–4). Moreover, it is important to take into consideration the meanings that emerge when the translator becomes the writer of the translated text (Tymoczko 2007: 285). As Tymoczko contends, liberating meaning by problematizing simplistic conceptualizations that focus on semantics fosters a deep understanding of the constructivist nature of meaning in translation and of the translator’s power, responsibility and agency (Tymoczko 2007: 265). In order for students to become aware of their role as meaning makers, Tymoczko proposes to engage them in the translation of a short text into whatever language they wish, using whatever strategy they consider best.

The task may be undertaken in class or it may be assigned as homework to be prepared for the next class, where the translations are shared with the rest of the group. Some background information about the language and culture of the source text may be given beforehand. Details about the rhyme scheme or the use of tropes may be provided in the case of a poem. After translating the text, the students make notes about their decision-making procedure, prompted by questions such as
In the final part of the teaching session, students compare and discuss their renderings. Tymoczko illustrates her methodology by examining a multilingual sample of students’ translations of a very short poem in medieval Irish, probably dating from the ninth century. The poem was taken from Gerard Murphy’s *Early Irish Lyrics* (Murphy in Tymoczko 2007: 266). It was translated indirectly via English by graduate translation students at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. The following text reproduces Tymoczko’s own gloss translation, which gives the lexical meanings of the individual words in the Irish syntactical order (Tymoczko 2007: 267).

the bird little
has loosed whistle
from point of beak
pure-yellow
it throws cry
over Loch Laig
blackbird from branch
piled-yellow

Students received information about the linguistic, cultural and literary background of the poem, which was composed at a time when Irish society was in transition (Tymoczko 2007: 267–9). The five translations examined by Tymoczko were carried out into three languages, i.e. English, Spanish and Dholuo, a Nilo-Saharan language spoken by the Luo people in western Kenya, northern Uganda and southern Sudan. On the basis of Tymoczko’s extratextual commentary on the practice of bird augury in Early Irish culture, some renderings identified the themes of prophecy, warning cries and the return of the season of war. In another version, the bird was associated with a religious representation, without specifying the type of signal it was sending. The translation into Dholuo relocated the poem to Kenya and the blackbird was replaced by the woodpecker, which is believed to have the ability to foretell ominous events. Thanks to the knowledge about the Old Irish syllabic metre and rhyme scheme provided by Tymoczko’s commentary, another translation privileged the sounds and metre of the poem disregarding almost completely the semantic meaning. To produce a phonetic translation the translator chose monosyllabic English words whose sounds correspond with those of the Irish words (Tymoczko 2007: 270–4).
The teaching technique detailed above, which draws on the North American workshop approach (see Gentzler 2001: 5–36), is deemed most appropriate for raising awareness about the nature of meaning, which, as Tymoczko argues, ‘is far more complex than the semantic meaning privileged in translation pedagogy’ (Tymoczko 2007: 275). It also shows the variability of meaning and how it is determined, constructed and created during the process of translation (Tymoczko 2007: 276). Other suggested activities are the translation of the same piece of writing for different audiences, different registers or genres, followed by a group discussion about the practical implications of such a brief together with a reflection on cross-linguistic and cross-cultural problems and solutions. Within this pedagogic perspective, translation theory is learnt subliminally and students develop an experiential understanding of theoretical principles, not just a cognitive one (Tymoczko 2010b).

There is a striking similarity between the teaching techniques devised by Tymoczko in translation pedagogy and those envisaged by Kramsch (2009) for pedagogic translation, outlined above in Chapter 4. Both procedures aim to empower the translator on the one hand and the multilingual subject on the other as responsible meaning makers who are able to bring about social change. Moreover, they envision a similar way of engaging with the text, which involves undertaking cultural analysis that requires and nourishes self-reflexivity. Indeed, as both scholars contend, seemingly echoing each other,

one cannot attempt to perceive or analyze cultural difference without renewed attempts to be aware of the culture of the self, the way history has become nature in the case of the self.

(Tymoczko 2007: 236)

In order to understand others we have to understand what they remember from the past, what they imagine and project onto the future, and how they position themselves in the present. And we have to understand the same things of ourselves.

(Kramsch 2006: 251)

Basing my view on the convergence between the theoretical frameworks espoused by the two scholars, I recommend that holistic cultural translation be integrated in an ecologically oriented and multilingual pedagogy. How exactly? First of all, Tymoczko’s approach offers a notion of translation as representation, transmission and transculturation that complements Kramsch’s view of translation as a rethinking of one context in terms of another and as a process that unearths the cultural differences in the relationship between language and thought. Moreover, Tymoczko’s pedagogy offers sound techniques that engage language learners and would-be translators alike in rendering cultural asymmetries, not only at the level of material culture but also in terms of social practices and dispositions.

I further argue that, thanks to this integration, it is possible to fully define, from an ecological perspective, the form and function of translation in the language
curriculum and to resolve the dichotomy between translation as a means and an end in foreign language education. In Chapter 6 we will demonstrate how the notion of symbolic competence and that of holistic cultural translation are related to one another in just one example of literary translation and creative writing. The aim of the case study is to provide empirical evidence supporting the idea proposed above of combining Kramsch’s and Tymoczko’s principles of good pedagogic practice in one learning environment where language teaching and translation education are conceived as intertwined and mutually enriching forms of transcultural practice.

Notes

1 The notation \textit{\text{*translation}} indicates the cross-cultural concept of translation, in contradistinction to the English-language word ‘translation’; according to Tymoczko, \textit{\text{*translation}} must be at the heart of the international discipline of translation studies (Tymoczko 2007: 59).


3 Bohannan’s rendering of \textit{Hamlet} is included in Tymoczko’s discussion of a variety of translation types whose differences from their sources are so radical that they ‘are not currently tolerated in mainstream definitions of translation’ (Tymoczko 2007: 60) and which embody the metaphor ‘translation is carrying across’.


5 Hisó is the Pirahã transliteration of the Greek transliteration Yesous of the Hebrew name Yeshua (Everett 2012: 199).

6 I thank Flavia Laviosa for sharing with me the letter she personally received from the 44th President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, at the Official Ceremony of Naturalization during which she was admitted as a citizen of the United States, after taking the oath of allegiance at the ceremony conducted by the US District Court of Massachusetts in Boston, on 18 November 2010.

7 My thanks to Thanaporn Lamaiphan, Theo Hermans and Ting-Hui Wen for drawing my attention to cultural practices regarding the naming of family relations in Thai, Swedish and Chinese respectively.
6

HOLISTIC PEDAGOGIC TRANSLATION

This chapter first examines the convergent underpinnings of symbolic competence and holistic cultural translation and posits that these two principles are interconnected in theory as in practice. Next, it provides empirical evidence supporting this hypothesis by analysing a lived experience of language learning, literary translation and creative writing. Finally, drawing on the insights provided by theory and research, we propose to develop a holistic pedagogy that harmonizes in the same learning environment the ecological perspective adopted by Kramsch in foreign language education and the holistic approach to cultural translation developed by Tymoczko in translation studies.

6.1 Theoretical framework

As we saw in previous chapters, symbolic competence and holistic cultural translation are framed within a broad ecological perspective which theorizes language ‘as a symbolic system that constructs the very reality it refers to, and that acts upon this reality through the categories it imposes upon it, thereby affecting the relation between speakers and the reality as they perceive it’ (Kramsch 2009: 2). More specifically, language is conceived as a means of symbolic representation, symbolic action and symbolic power. As symbolic representation, language denotes, connotes and reflects the way our minds understand reality. As symbolic action, language enables us to do things and unveil our intentions. As symbolic power, language is a relational human activity, whereby we co-construct and negotiate personal and social identities, while becoming aware of our own and of other people’s subjectivity, historicity, values, individual and collective memories, emotions and aspirations (Kramsch 2010).

The meanings that language constructs reside in the text as much as in the wider social and historical context in which it is embedded. They are also conveyed
by intertexts, that is, the discursive relations established with other texts. These are the reasons why meanings are open and always in flux. Moreover, ‘the openness of meaning is woven into the texture of our bodies, our experience, our lives’ (Tymoczko 2007: 309); hence language is a lived embodied reality, ‘the potential medium for the expression of [our] innermost aspirations, awarenesses, and conflicts’ (Kramsch 2009: 4). Developing an appreciation of the symbolic dimensions of language is as important to the multilingual language user as it is to the translator. This is because they both engage with languages and cultures, thereby creating meanings, values and symbolic realities that travel across the world and transform it. Indeed, all human beings can be considered latent translators, since they are able to learn new words, concepts, cultural patterns from other languages and construct hybridities (Tymoczko 2007: 231). By acquiring a foreign language, they can discover ‘unexpected meanings, alternative truths that broaden the scope of the sayable and the imaginable’ (Kramsch 2009: 15).

Conversely, translators can be regarded as lifelong learners of the source and the target language and culture, as the testimonies of literary translators reveal. ‘I had never realized how much you can learn about your own culture through translation’, Elizabeth Szász writes, after 30 years spent in Hungary (Szász 1996: 188 in Skutnabb-Kangas 2000: 122). In a similar vein, while reflecting on his six-year experience as a literary translator, the Spanish novelist Javier Marías states:

> And this is how I really learned to write. Because no expression has an unambiguous meaning in every language: in order to translate it you must choose every single word and recreate the same feelings in a different culture.

(My translation from Italian) (Barina 2005: 110)

It follows that multilingual individuals and translators alike need to be interculturally competent, self-reflective and responsible creators of meaning. Language learners, as Kramsch maintains, need to acquire ‘a symbolic mentality that grants as much importance to subjectivity and the historicity of experience as to the social conventions and the cultural expectations of any one stable community of speakers’ (Kramsch 2010: 12). Moreover, a symbolic mentality is evidence of having developed symbolic competence, a crucial dimension of intercultural competence. As we discussed in Chapter 4, symbolic competence is nourished by a variety of self-engaging activities, translation being one of them. Undoubtedly, symbolic competence is a valuable asset to the prospective cultural translator, who needs to develop multiple capacities in order to be able to communicate across cultural differences. As Tymoczko suggests, these abilities include:

- awareness of the culture of the self, the way history has become nature in the case of the self;
- an interest in and sensitivity to cultural difference;
- the ability to perceive and negotiate cultural difference;
the ability to appreciate that cultures like languages are open, heterogeneous, and marked by generativity and performativity.

(Tymoczko 2007: 235–6)

These skills, which are fostered by symbolic competence, empower the cultural translator ‘to adjudicate difficulties caused by disparities and asymmetries in cultural understandings and cultural presuppositions’, thereby introducing new ideas, broadening experiential realms and enriching mental domains (Tymoczko 2007: 231). Conversely, it can safely be affirmed that a holistic approach to translating culture enhances symbolic competence because ‘experience in dealing with more than one language and more than one culture in interface elicits implicit and explicit comparison, hones skills in comparison, and inculcates a sense of self-reflection’ (Tymoczko 2007: 236).

For Kramsch (2009: 199) self-reflexivity is essential for the development of a multilingual person’s sense of symbolic self, which evidences a symbolic mentality that is aware of the cross-cultural context in which language unfolds and sees the self as being ‘constituted by symbolic systems like language, music and art that shape and are shaped by others’ (Kramsch 2010: 13). For Tymoczko (2007: 228) cultural translation highlights the need for self-reflexivity together with geopolitical responsibility on the part of the translator. On the basis of these considerations, I hypothesize that a translator who has developed symbolic competence through the study of one or more foreign languages will be inclined to adopt holistic translation procedures. Moreover, I assume that practising holistic cultural translation will heighten symbolic competence. In the remainder of this chapter, I report on a case study that lends support to both hypotheses.

6.2 Evidence from the real world

In this section we explore how symbolic competence and holistic cultural translation are intimately interrelated and mutually enriching experiences in the work of Isabella Vaj, the Italian translator of Khaled Hosseini’s novels The Kite Runner (2003), A Thousand Splendid Suns (2007), And the Mountains Echoed (2013) and author of Il cacciatore di storie [The Hunter of Stories] (2009a).

6.2.1 The author–translator’s profile

Formerly an English schoolteacher and author of several successful textbooks published by Lattes, Turin, Isabella Vaj resumed her studies in the mid-1980s and specialized in archaeology. Her intention was to give a scientific basis to the practical skills gained in particular at the archaeological excavations of the ancient Roman city of Luni (La Spezia). For a long time she worked at the Istituto di Archeologia, Università Cattolica, Milan and contributed to the journal Quaderni del Centro Studi Lunensi. In 1994, she obtained a diploma in Arabic language and Islamic culture from the Istituto Italiano per l’Africa e l’Oriente (formerly ISMEO),
Milan. Almost 15 years ago, she met an editor at the Piemme publishing house, Milan, who asked her to translate English or American narrative.

After translating Hosseini’s first novel, Vaj wrote *Desiderata* (2006), a book that narrates the story of the unnamed daughter of the Lombard King Desiderius who became the wife of the King of the Franks, Charles, who was later to become Charlemagne. In this narration, the Western and Islamic worlds are interwoven in art, culture and love. In 2007, Vaj was awarded the Premio Procida – Elsa Morante for her translation of *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Her book, *Il cacciatore di storie* [The Hunter of Stories], was published in 2009 by Piemme, Milan. It is a captivating journey into the Afghan culture and traditions represented in Hosseini’s literary fiction and it also reveals various facets of the author-translator’s life and her varied interests.

### 6.2.2 The data

The analysis is based on textual and metatextual data collected from two sources, namely Isabella Vaj’s literary production and her self-reflexive comments on language learning, translation and writing.

The textual data include Vaj’s translations of the first two novels by Khaled Hosseini, *Il cacciatore di aquiloni* (The Kite Runner) (Hosseini 2004) and *Mille splendidi soli* (A Thousand Splendid Suns) (Hosseini 2007), and Vaj’s book *Il cacciatore di storie* [The Hunter of Stories] (Vaj 2009a). Vaj’s testimonies were gathered from an article she authored, ‘Khaled Hosseini e il traduttore come controfigura’ (Khaled Hosseini and the translator as a stand-in) (Vaj 2009b), an interview I conducted via email on 15 February 2010 (Laviosa 2011, 2012) and several email messages we exchanged from 1 to 16 February 2010.

### 6.2.3 Achieving symbolic competence

I became interested in the work of Isabella Vaj after watching the film adaptation¹ of Khaled Hosseini’s novel *The Kite Runner* (2003), which tells the story of the friendship between two children belonging to different ethnic groups. Amir is the son of one of the wealthiest and most charitable Pashtun men in Kabul and Hassan is his young Hazara servant. In the author’s own words the novel,

> is a human story set in Afghanistan, which talks about friendship, love, forgiveness, regret, nostalgia. It is a universal human story that could have been set in Kabul as in Teheran, Rome or Madrid, and with which we can all identify. These qualities have been translated in the screenplay: the film is truly moving. (Bogliolo 2008)²

*The Kite Runner* develops universal themes. It also tells the world an Afghan story that is embedded in 30 years of history that covers the fall of the monarchy, the Soviet invasion, the mass exodus to Pakistan, the advent of the Taliban regime and
its elimination after the Twin Towers explosion on 11 September 2001. It is a representation of the author's culture of origin. ‘As an Afghan,’ Hosseini declares, ‘I am honoured when people tell me that reading this novel has helped them give Afghanistan a more humane face, that they now see my homeland as something more than yet another sad place, perpetually tormented and afflicted’ (Hosseini 2004: 10). Hosseini’s narrative symbolizes at one time the author’s native culture, i.e. that of ‘an Afghan in exile’ (Hosseini 2009: 7) and the universality of human feelings such as ‘shame, guilt, regret, love, friendship, forgiveness, and atonement’ (Hosseini 2004: 10). This narrative offers, in my view, an excellent example of how meanings are enshrined in text and intertexts, as in the historical and cultural context.

Vaj’s companion book to Hosseini’s literary works, Il cacciatore di storie (2009a), has the artistic merit of revealing the remote world – ‘but not another world’ (Vaj 2009b: 30) – that is inhabited by the characters of Hosseini’s stories. Indeed, her desire to demonstrate that ‘dialogue and understanding between cultures is a source of enrichment for all’ (Vaj 2009a: 11) prompted her to reconstruct Hosseini’s native world. In her book, Vaj reveals the beauty of an ancient civilization largely unknown to Western readers, thereby enabling them to discover and appreciate the cultural milieu embodied in Hosseini’s fictional world. She revives a distant past, which is still very much alive in Afghanistan, i.e. the ethnic complexity of the population, the fragmentation of power, the pervasive, but not univocal presence of Islam, the love of classic Persian poetry, the richness of the traditional cuisine, the irresistible humour of the popular figure of the Mullah Nasruddin. Vaj’s goal is to show the fascinating interweaving of civilizations, the inevitable hybridization of any culture (Vaj 2009a: 12).

The potential cultural impact of Il cacciatore di storie is highlighted by Hosseini himself in the ‘Introduction’ to the volume:

I hope the readers of this book, which brings them close to the habits, customs, poetry and art of Afghanistan, will appreciate the great, noble and ancient Afghan culture, and feel the desire to discover the soul of a people that hasn’t stopped suffering, but hasn’t stopped hoping.

(Hosseini 2009: 9)

This is echoed by Vaj’s authorial intent:

SARA LAVIOSA: What is the meaning of the title Il cacciatore di storie?

ISABELLA VAJ: There’s an obvious formal reference to Il cacciatore di aquiloni, but it doesn’t refer to Hassan as in the title of the novel. It refers to Khaled Hosseini himself, the Afghan poet. It is the recognition of his talent as a narrator, which is nourished by the oral tradition of his country. I was very impressed by Carlo Ginsburg’s theory about the origins of narration: the first ever stories would have been told by prehistoric hunters, describing
the series of tracks left by animals. The story was like a chain joining foot-
prints and giving a sense to their following one another. My ambition is
to have written a companion book, similar to those which accompanied
the literature of both ancient and modern authors, from Homer to Joyce.
I’d like this companion book to enhance the pleasure of reading Hosseini,
offering fragments of knowledge of the world where his stories take place.
(Laviosa 2011: 70)

After the author’s ‘Preface’, the book provides a geographical map of Afghani-
stan, an annotated list of the main characters featured in The Kite Runner and in
A Thousand Splendid Suns and the biographical details of the political figures from
contemporary Afghan history mentioned in Hosseini’s novels. Starting with a short
excerpt from each novel in turn, the book unveils the different facets of the
habitus of the Afghan-American author, whereas the opening of the final chapter
is a quotation from the film Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures. This is the starting point
for an overview of the travelling exhibition, ‘Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures from
the National Museum, Kabul’, which was held in Turin from May to September
2007. At the end of each chapter, gracefully announced by a motif taken from
a modern embroidery made in Herat, Vaj carves out a little niche for herself.
Here, inspired by Hosseini’s nostalgia for his country of origin, she narrates her
own stories as they are remembered afresh from her childhood and adolescence
and, in so doing, she (re)discovers her own world through Hosseini’s world, bring-
ing the reader close to both of them.

The first chapter offers a representative example of the author’s personal dis-
cursive presence throughout the book. It is titled ‘In altre parole’ [In other words]
and deals with various linguistic and stylistic aspects of Hosseini’s narrative such
as the register of orality, textual multilingualism and literary allusions. Vaj explains
how the use of the mother tongue enables the author to convey emotions and
aspects of his cultural heritage that would be lost or distorted in English. Farsi is,
in fact, the language Hosseini speaks at home both in the accent of Herat and
Kabul. It is the guardian of the world he has lost (Vaj 2009a: 31–2).

Indeed, as Vaj observes, a word transmits a world which another language cannot
 evoke, even though it possesses a perfect equivalent. As an example, she chooses
the word bread, universal and yet imbued with intimate meanings. So, naan is
a type of bread, but this translation demeans, in her view, the reality of naan
baked in the tandoor, the ancient oven made of clay similar to a large jar, different
from any other bread in the world. The words of the mother tongue, as Vaj writes,
express a unique material and affective reality; they preserve the flavours, smells
and colours of the world of childhood. The word naan evokes the colour of honey
and the smell of clay and charcoal, which render Afghan bread unique.

Also, Vaj (2009a: 32–5) reveals the Arabic origins of some of the Persian words
and expressions used by Hosseini in his fiction such as Salaam alaykum (Peace be
with you), kursi (a low table covered with a thick, quilted blanket and with a small
electric heater positioned underneath it), sharab (wine), harami (illegitimate child).
She explains the meaning of the technical term *kite runner* in the context of Afghan kite-fighting tournaments and the importance of the verb *run* in the novel in its double sense of ‘run’ and ‘escape’ (Vaj 2009a: 37). In the section devoted to Farsi literature, Vaj unveils the origin of the title *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, which derives from a verse of Saeb-e Tabrizi, the greatest Persian poet of the seventeenth century. Hosseini’s love of poetry, as Vaj points out, is as vital as the oral tradition that pervades Afghan culture. In order to render it in Italian, she had to strip her prose of any solemnity so as to recover the naturalness of the spoken idiom (2009a: 39).

Then, after touring Hosseini’s world, which she describes as an Ithaca of remembrance (Vaj 2009b: 29), Vaj returns home and describes an endearing family scene set in Milan, her native town. She was in her teens at the time and remembers those special occasions when her mother used to slip into Milanese dialect, sharing magical moments filled with enchanting candour and intimate understanding with her. She tries to translate the full meaning of one of those memorable expressions into Italian, but all she can do is relay sense, rhythm and rhyme, but not its dazzling beauty. ‘Some people claim’, she writes, ‘that one can say anything in any language. It may be so, but I do not believe it’ (Vaj 2009a: 40). Thanks to her knowledge of the Arabic language, Farsi and Islamic culture, Vaj is able ‘to enter the imaginary world of Hosseini and discover readings of his characters that would have remained obscure otherwise’ (Vaj 2009b: 30).

Vaj shares these and other insights with the readers of *Il cacciatore di storie*, who are enticed to embark on a journey into Hosseini’s nostalgic world. During their journey, the audience will:

- discover the traces of Afghan history, art, poetry and culture left by Hosseini’s nostalgic memories in his novels;
- appreciate Hosseini’s passion for classic Persian poetry, which he shares with many of his fictional characters;
- value the great oral tradition of Afghan culture reflected in Hosseini’s talent for enchanting the reader through a narrative that ‘preserves the magic of the oral word’ (Vaj 2009a: 39);
- comprehend the symbolic value of names that stir evocative images unknown to those who are unfamiliar with Islamic culture;
- understand the cultural and emotive nuances of meaning expressed by Farsi, Hosseini’s mother tongue, which he uses in his narrative as a form of representation of his Afghan-American identity;
- read the stories hidden behind the writer’s literary allusions;
- unearth the symbolic meanings expressed by the verb *run* (i.e. ‘guilt’, ‘redemption’, ‘joy’) and the value of this polysemic verb as a key word in the novel, where it conveys two senses, ‘run’ and ‘escape’;
- become aware of some of the challenges faced during the translation process and the reasons underlying the translator’s choices;
- get closer to the habitus of the author and that of the translator.
Vaj’s in-depth reading of the original novels, which is infused with her multi-lingual subjectivity and enriched by her profound knowledge of languages and cultures, clearly demonstrates the importance of self-reflexivity when engaging with a foreign language. Her experience of translating literature shows the relevance of the following assertions that are at the core of holistic cultural translation and symbolic competence respectively:

One cannot attempt to perceive or analyze cultural difference without renewed attempts to be aware of the culture of the self, the way history has become nature in the case of the self.

(Tymoczko 2007: 236)

In order to understand others we have to understand what they remember from the past, what they imagine and project onto the future, and how they position themselves in the present. And we have to understand the same things of ourselves.

(Kramsch 2006: 251)

Also, Vaj’s detailed consideration of the denotative, connotative, performative and relational aspects enshrined in language use shows her awareness that language is a symbolic system, as defined by Kramsch (2009). She has, in fact, developed ‘the ability to wield several symbolic systems, each with a different social and historical ecology and different subjective resonances’ (Kramsch 2009: 201).

A question arises at this point: how did Vaj achieve the symbolic competence that is clearly demonstrated in her critical reflections? I think the answer can be found in her experience of language learning, as described below. Her testimony demonstrates that the development of symbolic competence was fostered by an approach to the study of Italian, English and Arabic that is underpinned by a vision of language as a complex reality inextricably related to history, culture and individuality. In the following excerpt (Laviosa 2011: 67–8), Vaj also shows a fascination with language, a clear understanding of the linguistic symbolic system that mediates our knowledge and experience of the world as well as a humble, open-minded reconsideration of the familiar through the experience of the ‘mythical’ Other, with whom she creates a bond through language (cf. Kramsch 2009: 85).

SARA LAVIOSA: The ‘Preface’ to Il cacciatore di storie and the stories you enjoyed narrating in this book reveal various aspects of your life and your varied interests. What else can you tell us about yourself and your passion for writing in its many forms, including of course, translation?

ISABELLA VAJ: After High School I don’t think I learnt many essential things. My literature teacher, the linguist Carla Schick, author of Il linguaggio. Natura, struttura, storicità del fatto linguistico (1960), instilled in me a passion
Holistic pedagogic translation for language in its various aspects of individual freedom and norm established by tradition as well as a focus on historicity. As far as my character goes, I am the victim of a glaring contradiction between the desire to know one subject in depth, the Italian language, and an insatiable curiosity for many subjects: English, archaeology, Islamic art and Arabic.

My curiosity was aroused in the early 1990s by the desire to learn Semitic languages, which I perceived to be as something mysteriously other. So I graduated in Arabic language and Islamic culture at the ISMEO in Milan. I discovered that what we call nominal predicate is defined as complement of state in Arabic and takes the accusative! I discovered that the paratactic construction doesn’t presuppose the simplification of thoughts, but gives order and rhythm. I discovered that repetition is not considered to be annoying, it is regarded as an elegant stylistic feature. As always, the other makes us aware of our limits.

6.2.4 Translating cultural difference

Vaj’s professional experience in literary translation began later in life.

The last turning point of my career took place about ten years ago when I had the good fortune to meet, by pure chance, an editor of the Piemme publishing house who offered me to translate English or American narrative. This chance happily took me back to my roots. As Woody Allen tells us in Whatever Works, life is meaningless but fate may be lucky. That’s how it was for me.

(Laviosa 2011: 68)

Regarding her role as a translator, ‘I am an artisan’, Vaj declares, ‘not a translation theorist and the little I know has been poured into Il cacciatore di storie’ (Vaj, email message, 1 February 2010). In fact, in the bibliography, which contains historical, artistic, literary and cultural references, we find two important works on translation theory: Dire quasi la stessa cosa [Saying Almost the Same Thing] (Eco 2003) and Per una filosofia della traduzione [For a Philosophy of Translation] (Jervolino 2008). Indeed, Vaj is an artisan whose professional talent, as Lanna Castellano (1988: 133) would say, is the result of a long apprenticeship, during which valuable time was devoted to investing in herself so as to acquire knowledge and experience of life. Vaj is an artisan whose theoretical knowledge about the nature of language and translation lives in harmony with her experience of language learning, translating and writing. The way she conceives of translation, in theory as in practice, is the fruit of deep reflection on what she does, how she does it and why she does it in one way rather than another (cf. Baker 2011: 1).

Vaj reveals the principles guiding her translation procedures through metaphors that are illustrated with vivid examples. When Vaj met Hosseini at the Italian screen
release of \textit{Il cacciatore di aquiloni}, which was held in Rome on 28 March 2008, she introduced herself by saying: ‘I am your Italian stand-in.’ After a moment of uncertainty, Hosseini replied with a smile: ‘You have lent your voice to mine’ (Vaj 2009b: 28). She is slightly puzzled. Does he mean that his voice is the authentic one, while hers is on loan, so that it can be returned at any time? Could this be a recognition that her voice has enabled him to project his voice to hundreds of thousands of Italian readers? Of course, she prefers the latter interpretation, thereby supporting, unawares, Theo Hermans’ claim that ‘translated narrative discourse always contains a “second voice”’ (Hermans 2010: 198). A further question arises, which can be expressed in terms of Hermans’ concepts that are matched by Vaj’s images. Does her voice ‘remain entirely hidden behind that of the Narrator’ (Hermans 2010: 198) – like a stand-in who takes the place of an actor in dangerous scenes keeping his identity secret (Vaj 2009b: 29) – or does it break ‘through the surface of the text speaking for itself, in its own name’ (Hermans 2010: 198) – like ‘a Gengis Khan running at a mad gallop wearing a wristwatch’? (Vaj 2009b: 29).

I think the answer lies somewhere in between these two extremes. Vaj believes strongly in the idea of the translator as a stand-in and does her utmost to fulfil this role by taking into account ‘the largest elements of cultural difference that separate the source culture and the target culture’ (Tymoczko 2007: 235). A notable example is offered by the way she contends with the divergence between the orality of Hosseini’s narrative, which he transposes from Afghan culture, and the exquisitely literary tradition of the Italian language. As Vaj (2009b: 31) testifies, perhaps this was the real challenge posed by the translation task, and she endeavoured to find a suitable register that respected this key stylistic feature. This holistic procedure, whereby a formal literary element is transposed from the source into the receptor culture, is also mentioned in my interview, where Vaj recognizes the importance of this strategy for the success of the Italian translation (Laviosa 2011: 68):

SARA LAVIOSA: How was the project of translating Khaled Hosseini’s novels conceived?

ISABELLA VAJ: I don’t believe it was a project, at least not my project. Maybe I was asked to translate Khaled Hosseini’s first novel because of my knowledge of Islamic culture, but I wouldn’t swear by it. In 2002, nobody in Italy knew Hosseini, but when I was given the manuscript, I immediately felt I was dealing with a great narrator if not a great writer. His novels give you the pure pleasure of reading, they have the charm of fairytales. This is what I wished to preserve in the translation and readers have appreciated it. I guess I had a sort of pre-emptive right for the translation of the second novel.

In the following extracts, Vaj describes two more procedures whereby she lends her voice to the author so as to relay accurately the textual and contextual meanings expressed in the original. In pursuing this goal, Vaj illustrates the importance of
considering the habitus of the source culture 'as it relates to the text to be translated and to the translation project' (Tymoczko 2007: 236, original emphasis).

ISABELLA VAJ: Thanks to my knowledge of archeology, I’ve avoided making mistakes on numerous occasions. For example, I find that mud brick is invariably translated as mattone di fango (brick of mud), an expression which to me doesn’t make any sense. I’ve established that even well-educated native English speakers don’t have a clear idea of what a mud brick is. They associate it with primitive African huts. In reality these are mattoni crudi (sun-dried-bricks): that’s how the kolba on the hills of Herat is built, where Mariam, the main character of A Thousand Splendid Suns, is segregated with her mother. The clay mixed with straw is poured into wooden moulds and left to dry in the sun. In countries where there’s no good freestone, the technique of building with mud bricks is widespread. It is not necessarily indicative of a poor or primitive building technique. On the contrary, it is very widespread from North Africa to the Middle East, from Iran to India and of course in Central Asia. Compared with modern materials, mud brick is cheaper, it can be easily produced on site, it guarantees better insulation, and doesn’t cause environmental damage such as quarrying or deforestation.

SARA LAVIOSA: ‘Translation teaches you to be tolerant of your own inadequacy and to feel happy for a felicitous solution’ (Vaj 2009a: 37). When did translation teach you to be tolerant of your inadequacy?

ISABELLA VAJ: A linguistic equivalent that is far from the cultural equivalent always poses a problem of inadequacy. I’m thinking of tea house. An Afghan tea house is a dark, noisy, smoky place, especially outside the big cities, frequented only by men, they squat on carpets around low tables where regular customers place their Kalashnikovs and play chess, backgammon or dice. They discuss, argue and shout. Sometimes there are shootings. It smells of dust and hashish. In Italy we don’t have tea houses, we have tea rooms in a few elegant bars or cake shops where smartly dressed people like to sit in a quiet, cake scented place. How can tea house be translated? Someone even used the word osteria (tavern), which expresses the idea of a rough, working class place, but an osteria would smell of wine in Italy, in Islamic countries alcohol is harâm (forbidden).

Moreover, osteria is now an obsolete term in Italian, as is the social reality to which it refers. I chose to give up searching for an Italian equivalent and paid homage to Farsi, Hosseini’s mother tongue, which he uses when he experiences the inadequacy of the English language. By using the word chaikhana (literally ‘tea house’), I wanted to renounce domestication, thus preserving a foreign sound that evokes a foreign place. I thought of the saloons in Western films; though the dictionary gives the translation bar del West (western bar), I personally would never use it. A saloon is a saloon, not a bar (in turn this was a foreign term which acquired a new meaning
in Italian). The same applies to chaikhana, which can never be likened to a western tea room. Is this a winning defeat?

Besides accurate renderings of culture-specific terms (e.g. mattone crudo for mud brick) and evocative lexical borrowings (e.g. chaikhana for tea house), which transpose elements of the material source culture into the receiving culture, there are also creative solutions that relay the semantic meaning of the original, but not the form. This is the case with the title The Kite Runner, translated as Il cacciatore di aquiloni [The Hunter of Kites], thus maintaining the reference to Hassan, who plays the role of Amir's assistant during the winter kite-fighting tournaments. Vaj (2009a: 35–7) explains that, owing to linguistic asymmetries between English and Romance languages, it is not possible to translate literally the term kite runner. This is the reason why the French and Spanish translations have opted for poetic renderings, namely Les cerfs-volants de Kaboul [The Kites of Kabul] and Cometas en el cielo [Kites in the Sky]. Instead, the Catalan and Rumanian translators have appreciated the evocative value of Vaj's translation and have used a calque of the Italian title, i.e. El Caçador d’estels and Vânatorii de zmeie respectively.

Vaj’s version of Hosseini’s novel also shows how the translator, being the chief reader in the translation process and in some ways one of the most perceptive readers, contributes meanings of his or her own, as Tymoczko (2007: 285) contends. During the interview, Vaj describes, in fact, a fine example of intergeneric intertextuality inspired by cross-cultural associations. In Kramsch’s terms, Vaj’s creative rhetorical figure can be regarded as the manifestation of a rethinking of one context in terms of another, rather than an instance of transfer from text to text, as we discussed earlier in Chapter 4.

SARA LAVIOSA: In your book, Il cacciatore di storie, you reveal with a metaphor the concept of translation that inspires your renderings: ‘We know that in ferrying a text from one language and culture to another something often gets lost at the bottom of the boat: when two Italian verbs are used to translate one English verb, a leitmotif which is clearly important to the author is destroyed, but sometimes something is gained too. The title Il cacciatore di aquiloni seems to be more evocative than the technical term The Kite Runner. Maybe. In any case translation teaches you to be tolerant of your own inadequacy and to feel happy for a felicitous solution’ (Vaj 2009a: 37). What other felicitous solutions do you remember? What other joys did you feel while translating?

ISABELLA VAJ: It has been affirmed that a translator is a solitary person who is eccentric to the point of maladjustment. I fit in with this description and maybe I indulge in a myth. In translation, personality, culture and lifestyle merge. I can’t remember other felicitous solutions, even though I was pleased with the title Il cacciatore di aquiloni, but I remember emotional solutions. I couldn’t resist introducing a literary reference that was important to me but so delicate that it may go unnoticed.
In *The Kite Runner*, a Russian drunkard barks an ancient Afghan wedding song:

*Ahesta boro, Mah-e-man, ahesta boro.*

Hosseini translates:

*Go slowly, my lovely moon, go slowly.*

I knew perfectly well that I was taking the liberty of translating the original verse with:

*Cammina lenta, mia graziosa luna, cammina lenta.*

But I couldn’t talk about a wandering moon without borrowing the voice of Giacomo Leopardi. I’m well aware that in the Italian poem *graziosa* means ‘benign’ and doesn’t allude to the beauty of the moon. Maybe *lovely* could have been translated more accurately, but I thought that the Leopardian adjective would make the Italian reader think of clear skies on a windless night, making the barking, drunk Russian soldier seem even more disgusting.

(Laviosa 2011: 68–9)

We can say that Vaj’s affective rendering described above enables the translator to express her own voice in gentle whispers and with quiet pleasure. The real joy Vaj feels, however, is when she identifies with the Other and experiences language as ‘a lived embodied reality’ (Kramsch 2009: 4), ‘a living form, experienced and remembered bodily, with a relation to an Other that is mediated by symbolic forms’ such as art and literature (Kramsch 2009: 191).

My greatest pleasure was to talk about things belonging to a culture I knew and loved. Things that echoed inside me and made me feel close to the author: from the classic Persian poets to the greatest artists in XV century Herat. I also derived great pleasure from finding a delicate register to translate pages which are deeply emotional such as the part of *The Kite Runner* in which Amir offers his father forgiveness for his betrayal, and the part of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* where Mariam is shot dead.

(Laviosa 2011: 69)

Interestingly, the principles at the basis of Vaj’s decision-making process can be accommodated within a holistic perspective on cultural translation. Consistent with Tymoczko’s vision, Vaj’s procedures are underpinned by a notion of translation as a form of representation, transmission and transculturation. Indeed, Vaj endeavours to represent the source text to the best of her abilities, which are nourished by her multilingual and multicultural sensitivity. The Italian versions of the original texts are forms of transmission, the result of a complex creative process involving ‘ferrying a text from one language and culture to another’ (Vaj 2009a: 37), as when she relays episodes that are deeply poignant. Vaj’s translations are also forms of transculturation, as is evidenced by the transposition of Farsi (textually and
Holistic pedagogic translation

paratextually in a bilingual glossary) and of various aspects of Afghan material culture as well as the author’s distinctive register of orality.

While balancing these three dimensions of translation, Vaj exercises a very important skill in cultural translation, that is, the capacity to induce the target audience ‘to be willing to learn, to receive difference, to experience newness’ (Tymoczko 2007: 232). In dealing with the linguistic asymmetries and cultural gaps between the source and the target text, she reconciles the generally assumed dichotomy between loyalty to authorial intent and the creative desire for interpretation. In this respect, her way of approaching translation bears a strong similarity to that of Arthur L. Goldhammer, who does not believe there is ‘opposition between freedom and slavish fidelity to the text’ (Goldhammer in Rinehart 2011: 15). ‘Translating’, he says, ‘is like taking a musical composition and playing it on an instrument different from the one on which it was composed. A good player will try to get to the essence of the composition and use the resources of the instrument’ (Goldhammer in Rinehart 2011: 15).

6.2.5 Enhancing symbolic competence

*Il cacciatore di storie* provides an interesting example of how symbolic competence is heightened by adopting a holistic approach to translating cultural difference. In this book, which discloses a world (re)discovered through the experience of translation, Vaj opens an imaginary intimate dialogue with Hosseini and the target audience. Consistent with the approach adopted in her translations, she positions herself not ‘in between’ two languages and cultures, not in a ‘free space that exists outside systems altogether, separate from an encompassing system’ (Tymoczko 2010a: 223), but within ‘an international cultural framework that includes both source and receptor societies’ (Tymoczko 2010a: 226).

From her place of enunciation, Vaj provides ‘cultural explanation and background in order to compensate for the cultural ignorance and difference in perspective of an audience unfamiliar with the cultural context of the subject matter’ (Tymoczko 2007: 228–9). At the same time, she demonstrates the ability ‘to look both at and through language and to understand the challenges to the autonomy and integrity of the subject that come from unitary ideologies and a totalizing networked culture’ (Kramsch 2009: 201). If the translator’s voice is soft, subliminal and penetrating, the author’s voice is booming. It eloquently expresses Vaj’s multilingual subjectivity enriched by the holistic experience of communicating across cultural difference by translating.

*Il cacciatore di storie* is tangible proof that moving from one language and culture system into another fires the creative imagination. This, in turn, has given voice to Vaj’s multilingual experience of language use, making it possible for her ‘to envision alternative ways of remembering an event, of telling a story, of participating in a discussion, of empathizing with others, of imagining their future and ours, and ultimately of defining and measuring success and failure’ (Kramsch 2009: 201). Furthermore, in answering my last question regarding her cherished hopes for the future of *Il cacciatore di storie*, Vaj clearly demonstrates how the author-translator
identifies with the Other at a deep, emotional level, thereby defining and asserting her belonging to a new transcultural world.

SARA LAVIOSA: In the Introduction we learn that *Il cacciatore di storie* is a book inspired by Khaled Hosseini’s novels, in which the author aims to explore the culture and traditions of Hosseini’s homeland. It is also a book which ‘encourages the reader to examine more closely the customs, poetry and art of Afghanistan’ (Hosseini 2009: 9). For the author ‘*Il cacciatore di storie* is not intended to be a history of Afghanistan, and certainly not a history of the Persian literature that Hosseini’s characters read; it simply aims to give the reader a glimpse of Afghan culture starting with the traces that Hosseini disseminates in his novels; it seeks to reconstruct, albeit in a sporadic way, the world that the author comes from, because, if the themes of his novels are universal, the lives of the characters are embedded in the millenary central Asian tradition’ (Vaj 2009a: 11). As you say, the book originates from evoked nostalgia. What is the seed that gave rise to *Il cacciatore di storie*, what did it feed on and what fruit will it bear?

ISABELLA VAJ: The seed was my curiosity and that of my friends who read Hosseini’s novels. When they asked me about the Afghan culture, I told them the stories hidden behind Hosseini’s allusions such as the duel between Rostam and Sorhab. My friends encouraged me to write these stories, and when I began to write the book everything became relatively easy. After all, for the previous seven or eight years my readings had focused on Afghan culture. Hosseini’s nostalgia for his lost country aroused my nostalgia for the world of my childhood and adolescence, which is ignored, if not despised, by today’s dominant culture, here in Italy, but similar, in a brotherly way, to the ancient and remote world of Afghanistan.

Reminiscing about that past has been my way of testifying my rejection of the present, dominated by loud noise, vulgarity, shameless distortion of the meaning of words. A homage to the power of love and affection. I don’t know whether my book will ever bear any fruit. If it arouses curiosity for a very rich culture unknown in the West and compassion for the tormented Afghan people; if it make us feel the absolute necessity for peace in a country that has been living in a state of war day after day for the past thirty years, perhaps my book will have not been fruitless.

*(Laviosa 2011: 70)*

### 6.3 Towards a holistic pedagogy

The evidence provided by the above concrete example from the real world testifies to the power enshrined in language as a whole ecology and exercised responsibly in language learning, translating and creative writing. What can we, as language educators, learn from the theoretical convergence between symbolic competence
and holistic cultural translation and the insights provided by the multilingual experience of an author-translator such as Isabella Vaj? I think we can envision transforming the multilingual language classroom into a cooperative learning environment where developing symbolic competence and adopting holistic translation methods are essential interrelated processes in the education of the language professional of the future, who needs to grow into a self-reflective, interculturally competent and responsible meaning maker in our increasingly multilingual world. The holistic pedagogy we propose adopts an ecological approach to educational linguistics and translation. Its aim is to develop symbolic competence, which enhances and is enhanced by holistic cultural translation. In Chapters 7 and 8 we will illustrate how a holistic approach to translation in language learning has been applied to the teaching of Italian and English at university level.

Notes

1 Movie’s director Marc Forster (2007).
2 All Khaled Hosseini’s and Isabella Vaj’s quotations have been translated from Italian by Richard D. G. Braithwaite.
3 Narrated by Khaled Hosseini, the 28-minute documentary features footage of the 2004 recovery of collections from the National Museum, Kabul, that had been hidden in the vaults of the Central Bank in the presidential palace. The film also includes interviews with National Geographic archaeologist and exhibition curator Fredrik Hiebert and director of the museum in Kabul,Omara Massoudi. It was produced by the National Geographic Society in 2008. It is available online at http://shop.nationalgeographic.com/html/catalog/videoclips/VC_afghanistan_hidden_treasures.htm (accessed 3 June 2011).
4 This travelling exhibition features some 228 objects ranging in date from the Bronze Age to the second century AD and drawn on four archaeological sites. It also features more than 100 gold ornaments from the Bactrian Hoard, found by the Russian archaeologist Viktor Sarianidi in 1978 in Tillya Tepe, the site of six y̱u̯e-che nomad graves that reveal a synthesis of Greek, Roman, Persian, Indian, Chinese and Siberian styles.
5 Romance languages are not as flexible as Germanic languages in the creation of compounds in which the head is premodified by a noun with an adjectival function as in kite runner, kite fighter, kite fighting.
6 The two Italian verbs Vaj refers to are: correre (meaning ‘run’) and scappare (meaning ‘escape’); they are used as equivalents of the verb run.
7 The episode takes place at the checkpoint at Mahipar, where the truck that was taking Amir and his father to safety in Pakistan was stopped by an Afghan and a Russian soldier.
8 Count Giacomo Leopardi (Recanati 1798 – Napoli 1837) is a lyric, melancholic poet. Composed in 1820, the poem Alla luna reads:

O graziosa luna, io mi rammento che, or volge l’anno, sopra questo colle io venia pien d’angoscia a riminarti: e tu pendevi allor su quella selva siccome or fai, che tutta la rischiari. Ma nebuloso e tremulo dal pianto che mi sorgea sul ciglio, alle mie luci, il tuo volto apparìa, che travagliosa
ra mia vita: ed è, né cangia stile,
o mia dilettà luna. E pur mi giovu
la ricordanza, e il noverar l’etate
del mio dolore. Oh come grato occorre
nel tempo giovanil, quando ancor lungo
la speme e breve ha la memoria il corso,
il rimembrar delle passate cose,
ancor che triste, e che l’affanno duri!

9 A bilingual Farsi-Italian glossary is included at the end of Il cacciatore di aquiloni, but not in Mille splendidi soli. It contains a total of 164 entries.

10 Arthur L. Goldhammer is an affiliate at the Minda da Gunzburg Center for European Studies and the translator of more than 100 French works of history, philosophy, economics, literature and criticism into English (Rinehart 2011: 15).
This chapter illustrates the pedagogy proposed in Chapter 6. It uses two examples of language and translation teaching undertaken with intermediate and pre-intermediate students of Italian in an American university.

7.1 Example I

7.1.1 Students’ profiles

This section reports on the activities carried out during a two-hour seminar on Competenza Simbolica e Traduzione Culturale attended by 18 Anglophone intermediate learners of Italian in the fourth semester of their degree course. Before the session, the students filled in a language biography, whose format was adapted from one of the three components of the European Language Portfolio (see Appendix V). In the language biographies, the students gave an overview of their most important learning experiences with other languages and cultures in order to reflect on their own linguistic identities. Also, the information they provided allowed me to familiarize myself with their linguistic and cultural backgrounds before meeting them in the classroom.

All the students were native speakers of English and, in addition to Italian, they had some knowledge of one or more modern languages, mostly Spanish, but also French or German. Six students had learnt Latin at school. Two students were bilingual, one in English and Spanish, the other in English and Korean. Spanish was used with grandparents and some friends. Korean was spoken with grandparents and sometimes with parents too. Four students were raised in homes where English was spoken together with one other language. They therefore had acquired a heritage language, which was generally used with specific members of the family. So, Russian was spoken with parents, grandparents and siblings and sometimes also with close friends; Urdu was used with the father and grandparents; Appalachian
dialect with the mother and grandparents; French was spoken occasionally with
the mother.
At the beginning of the lesson, after thanking the students for filling in the
language biographies, I asked whether any of them had ever translated or inter-
preted either professionally as part of their language education or for sheer pleasure.
Some of them had translated from Latin at school; others had translated excerpts
of Spanish novels in their language courses. One student, raised bilingually in
English and Spanish, had experience of community interpreting, while another,
raised bilingually in English and Korean, used interpreting with her Korean friends.
I acknowledged the importance and usefulness of the students’ multilingual back-
grounds and familiarity with translation in the context of the seminar, which
focused on language learning through translation.

7.1.2 Learning objectives and activities
I then moved on to presenting the learning objective set for the lesson, namely to
explore the creation of meaning through the interplay of different forms of com-
munication, including translation. The group activities I prepared for the session
involved reflecting on the meanings expressed by a multimodal message composed
of music, images and words and translating the verbal message from Italian to
English. The multimodal text I chose for this teaching session is entitled *Le Due
Ali dell’Umanità.* The soundtrack is a Celtic air, *When the Snow Melts* (see music
sheet in Appendix VI). The images are photographs of women captured in different
situations in their daily lives (Figures 1–10 and Figure 12). The written text is
composed of a series of assertions. Most of them are superimposed on the images
(Figures 2–10 and Figure 12). The presentation was shown in two consecutive
phases. First, the students viewed the pictures while listening to the soundtrack.
Next, they viewed the entire presentation.

The photo portrays a woman wearing a light brown burka. She is carrying a small birdcage
on top of her head. The cage contains two small birds.

FIGURE 1

A Native American camp with a woman sitting
on a horse in the foreground. Both the woman
and the horse are wearing typical Native American
clothing. There are white tepees and another
horse in the background. The sky is dark and it
looks as if there is going to be a thunderstorm.

Per ogni donna forte,
ma stanca di sembrare
debole, c’è un uomo
debole e stanco di
apparire forte.

FIGURE 2
Two people, a woman in the foreground and a man in the background, are walking along a path which has many circular rock pools on each side of it. They are wearing traditional Bedouin clothing. The woman is carrying a large bowl on top of her head. There are mountains in the background and the landscape looks dry and arid. To judge by the light, it is probably early evening.

**FIGURE 3**

This woman is wearing a navy-blue veil, which she is holding up with her right hand, and a light-blue shirt. She is also wearing a necklace with white seashells attached to it, and rings on the fingers of her right hand. She has a serious, solemn look on her face.

**FIGURE 4**

Here there are three women who are participating in an athletics event. They are wearing athletics clothing which displays the event’s sponsor, Seiko. They are running in front of each other in a diagonal formation. The woman at the front has short brown hair, the one in the middle has long black hair tied up in a ponytail and the one at the back has long blonde hair.

**FIGURE 5**

Here we can see the profile of an elderly woman having plaits put in her hair. Her eyes are closed and she is wearing an earring.

**FIGURE 6**
Here we can see a teenage girl and a woman at the edge of a lake. The girl is kneeling down in the water and cleaning a fish. The woman is standing up and we can only see her legs. The top half of her is out of the picture. There is a small bucket full of water with some fish in it and there are some other fish on the ground by the water’s edge.

Per ogni donna che non può ottenere un lavoro o uno stipendio soddisfacente, c’è un uomo che deve assumersi la responsabilità economica di un altro essere umano.

A woman in a light-brown dress with white spots on it is fixing the engine of her car. She has her back to us. The car bonnet is open and the car is red and very old, probably from the 1960s or 70s. There is grass growing around the car and there are snow-covered mountains in the background.

Per ogni donna che non conosce i meccanismi delle automobili, c’è un uomo che non ha imparato i segreti dell’arte di cucinare.

This photo probably shows a country occupied by Western troops. There is a soldier carrying a machine gun in the foreground. He has his back to the camera. Women wearing black veils are carrying metal containers filled with water.

L’umanità possiede due ali: una è la donna, l’altra è l’uomo.
Fino a quando le due ali non saranno ugualmente sviluppate, L’UMANITÀ NON POTRÀ VOLARE.
In the Italian language classroom

7.1.3 Exploring the audiovisual message

Before the viewing of the audiovisual text, I invited the students to reflect on the symbolic nature of images and music as well as their interrelationship in conveying meanings and evoking feelings and emotions. After the viewing, I drew the students’ attention to Steve McCurry’s observation about the significance of photographs: ‘Photographers work in metaphors trying to distill experience in pictures’ (www.stevemccurry.com).

I then elicited the students’ own reflections on the audiovisual message through a series of open questions (see Appendix VII):

1. Who are the main subjects portrayed in the pictures?
2. In what contexts are they depicted?
3. How are they represented?
4. What type of music accompanies the images?
5. What feelings does the background music evoke?
6. What meanings are expressed through the interplay between music and pictures?
7. What is the theme that runs through the images and that may be developed in the written text?

The background music was perceived as melodious and soft. It symbolized rebirth, the end of darkness, new life, hope. One student accurately identified the
soundtrack as a typical Celtic melody with a bittersweet quality that evokes tradition and nostalgia. Also, the repetitive rhythm reminded her of a lullaby and this brought to her mind the image of mother and child. For her, the music signified embrace and affection.

The pictures were seen as representations of women of different ages coming from various regions in the world, most of them being depicted doing various day-to-day activities. Some women seemed to have a regular job; others carried out everyday tasks. Portraits, in particular, captured the essence of womanhood, since they focused on women themselves, rather than the surrounding environment. One portrait was recognized as *The Afghan Girl* (Figure 9). She was first photographed in 1984 in a refugee camp in Pakistan by National Geographic photographer Steve McCurry. Eighteen years later, a team from National Geographic Television and Film’s EXPLORER brought McCurry back to the Afghan–Pakistan border and her identity was finally revealed. Her name is Sharbat Gula, she lives in a remote part of Afghanistan and her remarkable story is told in an article by Cathy Newman, published in the *National Geographic* magazine (April 2002).  

Once she had been identified, the juvenile portrait of Sharbat Gula took centre stage and generated a lively group discussion about its symbolic meaning. This was variedly expressed as fear, courage, perseverance and hope. When we came to identify the theme underlying the visual text, the poignant story of the *Afghan Girl* inspired one student to propose ‘hope for humanity’ as a topic that might have been addressed in the written text. Interestingly, some students had perceived the music as a symbol of hope too. Other suggested themes were ‘poverty’ and ‘the values cherished in various parts of the world’. Before moving on to the next phase, I revealed the title of the soundtrack, *When the Snow Melts*, which was felt to be in perfect harmony with the atmosphere created by the music.

### 7.1.4 Exploring the multimodal message

The students first viewed the entire presentation and then read aloud the text reproduced in a handout that presented the same layout as the original, but was printed in black and white and had no images. The text was read in pairs, slide by slide and line by line so as to feel the tone, pace and mood created by the use of punctuation, length of words and sentences as well as the repetition of words, phrases or syntactic patterns. Next, they responded to a series of questions intended to guide their exploration of the written text as a whole and the way that it interacts with images and music (see Appendix VII):

1. Who are the subjects the written text talks about?
2. Are they the same as the ones portrayed in the pictures?
3. In what contexts are the subjects described?
4. Are they the same as the ones represented in the pictures?
5. Who are the addressees of the multimodal message?
6. What is the theme of the multimodal message?
How is the theme developed in the multimodal text? The last slide shows a quote by Boutros Boutros-Ghali. Who is Boutros Boutros-Ghali? Suggest a suitable title for the whole message.

The piece of writing seemed to move quite slowly as it was read, and this contributed to creating a reflective mood. Some in the group thought the tone was rather condescending and betrayed a feeling of pity for women. Then, prompted by the leading questions, they recalled, for the first time, that there were two images in the presentation where men appeared together with women. Although barely visible, men were portrayed in a position of considerable power over women. A very large part of the written text was thought to reveal the inner feelings of men and women, who inhabit a world that denies them the right to be their true selves and enjoy a fulfilling life. It was also noted that the text presumes gender stereotypes and the existence of equal difficulties for men and women. Therefore, as we all agreed, the multimodal message as a whole is about men and women and is addressed to both of them so as to raise awareness of the compelling need for a new free humanity. Moreover, the students revealed the identity of Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General of the United Nations from 1992 to 1996. I then provided the context of the original citation to highlight its historical and international significance:

The struggle for women’s rights, and the task of creating a new United Nations, able to promote peace and the values which nurture and sustain it, are one and the same. Today – more than ever – the cause of women is the cause of all humanity.

The quote is taken from the statement issued on 8 March 1993 on the occasion of International Women’s Day. In this message, the UN Secretary-General preannounced the adoption of Resolution 48/104 entitled The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women. It was adopted without vote by the UN General Assembly on 20 December 1993.

Finally, everybody regarded the common theme running through music, images and words as universal. In the light of all the above considerations, the students gave the presentation the title Hope for Humanity.

7.1.5 Translating the verbal message

In preparation for the translation task, the students engaged in a careful reading of the written text. The aim was to unveil the interrelationship between form and meaning so as to relay it in the target text. It was at this point that I told them the title of the entire message: Le Due Ali dell’Umanità. After reading the text, in silence this time, I asked the students to reflect on its structure. Besides the title, they identified three main parts, each of them having specific linguistic and typographical features.
Part I is made up of the first eight lines of the body of the text (Figures 2–9). They have a regular syntactic structure, i.e. a complex sentence that comprises a subordinate clause in the initial position, separated from the main clause by a comma. The subordinate clause always begins with the prepositional phrase *per ogni donna* (for every woman), whose head noun is modified by either a finite or a non-finite verb phrase. The main clause is an existential clause, whose displaced subject, *un uomo* (a man), is also modified by either a finite or a non-finite verb phrase. This controlled structure – characterized by the same punctuation and layout, regular sentence length and the repetition of the key words (*uomo* and *donna*) and the phrases (*per ogni donna* and *c'è un uomo*) – has two noticeable effects. It maintains an even pace, which contributes to creating a reflective mood and a measured tone, and reinforces the main idea that is put across, i.e. the need for women and men to recognize and express their own individuality freely. Also, a parallel was drawn between the repetitive melody of the Celtic air and the repetition of lexis and syntax in this part of the text.

Part II contains the text displayed in Figure 10 and Figure 11. The key words *donna* and *uomo* establish a cohesive link with Part I. Unlike the previous section, Part II consists of four relatively short declarative sentences. This syntactic structure, the use of capital letters, the repetition of *umanità* (humanity), *volare* (to fly) and *abbiamo bisogno* (we need) quicken the pace, create an urgent tone and reflect an optimistic mood.

In Part III, there is the citation from Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s statement. This is linked with the previous sections by the key words *donna* and *umanità*. With one incisive declarative sentence, the famous quote expresses the theme of the whole message in a highly authoritative tone which lifts the mood and exhorts all of us to recognize that women’s rights are human rights.

The translation was carried out individually in class. During this phase, I assumed a consultative role and explained the contextual meaning of particular words and expressions such as the modal verb *dovere* or the lexical verbs *conoscere* and *imparare* as well as the abstract nouns *liberazione* and *libertà* and the use of the present perfect in Italian.

I also opened up a group discussion as to the possible options available to the translator, whenever linguistic or cultural asymmetries were noted. For example, a student asked me: ‘Is it more important to preserve meaning or structure?’ We agreed on the general principle that, since structure contributes significantly to meaning, it is advisable to try and preserve both of them. I also pointed out there may be times when there is no direct equivalence between source and target languages. This is when translators, I explained, have the opportunity to privilege one or the other aspect of the original message, thus contributing meanings of their own to the target text.

The students completed the translation in time and handed it in at the end of the session.

What follows is an analysis of their final versions and notes, which record the main points discussed in class and give an insight into the decision-making procedures adopted. Table 7.1 reproduces the source text and some representative
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Le Due Ali dell’Umanità</td>
<td>The Two Wings of Humanity</td>
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| 2. | Per ogni donna forte, ma stanca di sembrare debole, c’è un uomo debole e stanco di apparire forte. | a. For every strong woman tired of seeming weak, there is a weak man tired of appearing strong.  
    b. For every strong woman, but (who is) tired of seeming weak, there is a weak man (who is) tired of appearing strong.  
    c. For every woman who is strong but tired of seeming weak, there is a weak man (and) tired of appearing strong.  
    d. For every strong woman, tired of seeming weak, there is a man too weak and tired to act strong. |
| 3. | Per ogni donna stanca di doversi comportare come una stupida, c’è un uomo stanco di dover fare finta di sapere tutto. | a. For every woman tired of having to act stupid, there is a man tired of having to pretend to know everything.  
    b. For every woman tired of having to behave as if she were stupid, there is a man tired to pretend that he knows everything.  
    c. For every woman tired of being required to act stupid, there is a man tired of having to pretend to know everything.  
    d. For every woman tired of needing to act like she's stupid, there is a man tired of needing to pretend he knows everything. |
| 4. | Per ogni donna stanca di essere considerata ‘troppo emotiva’, c’è un uomo al quale è negato il diritto di piangere e di essere ‘tenero’. | a. For every woman tired of being considered ‘too emotional’, there is a man who is denied the right to cry and (to) be ‘tender’.  
    b. For every woman tired of being considered ‘too emotional’, there is a man for whom the right to cry and to be ‘tender’ is denied. |
| 5. | Per ogni donna considerata poco femminile quando entra in gara, c’è un uomo obbligato a gareggiare perché non si dubiti della sua mascolinità. | a. For every woman considered unfeminine when entering into competition, there is a man obligated to compete so that no one doubts his masculinity.  
    b. For every woman considered not feminine enough/less feminine when in a race/she enters a race, there is a man obligated to race so that no one doubts his masculinity. |
| 6. | Per ogni donna stanca di essere un oggetto sessuale, c’è un uomo preoccupato per la sua potenza sessuale. | a. For every woman tired of being a sexual object, there is a man (who is) preoccupied with/ worried about/for his sexual power/prowess/potency. |
| 7. | Per ogni donna che non può ottenere un lavoro o uno stipendio soddisfacente, c’è un uomo che deve assumersi la responsabilità economica di un altro essere umano. | a. For every woman who is not able to/can’t/ cannot obtain work/a job or a satisfactory salary/sufficient stipend, there is a man who must/has to assume the financial/economic responsibility of another human being. |
TABLE 7.1 (cont’d)

8. Per ogni donna che non conosce i meccanismi delle automobili, c’è un uomo che non ha imparato i segreti dell’arte di cucinare.

   a. For every woman that doesn’t know how an automobile works, there is a man who never learned the secrets of the art of cooking.

   b. For every woman that doesn’t know/is not familiar with the mechanics of cars, there is a man who did not learn/has not learned the secrets of the art of cooking.

9. Per ogni donna che fa un passo avanti verso la propria liberazione, c’è un uomo che riscopre il cammino verso la libertà.

   a. For every woman who takes a step towards her (own) liberation, there is a man who rediscovers the way/road/path to/toward liberty/freedom.

10. L’umanità possiede due ali: una è la donna, l’altra è l’uomo. Fino a quando le due ali non saranno ugualmente sviluppate, L’UMANITÀ NON POTRÀ VOLARE.

   a. Humanity has/possesses two wings: one is the woman, the other is the man. Until/for as long as the two wings aren’t/will not be equally developed/evolved, humanity will not/won’t be able to fly.

   b. Humanity possesses two wings: one is the woman, the other is the man. Until the two wings will not develop equally, humanity will not be able to fly.


   a. We need a new humanity. We need to fly.

12. Oggi, più che mai, la causa della donna è la causa di tutta l’umanità.

   a. Today, more than ever, the cause of women is the cause of all humanity.

examples of different renderings. Words that were sometimes added to the basic structure of the target text are enclosed in brackets. Alternative words or expressions that have similar meanings are separated by a forward slash.

On the whole, the students adhered to the principle that relaying the semantic meaning is as important as relaying the formal aspects of the source text. Even when there was some variation in the choice of words or expressions (e.g. need or have to or be required to; can or be able to), the meanings conveyed by the original message were generally preserved.

Moreover, the students’ annotations revealed the procedures adopted and the reasoning behind them. In the handout, one student carefully considered the difference between developed and evolved in order to explain her translation: until the two wings will not develop equally (see example 10b in Table 7.1). She contends that the expression are not equally evolved ‘is problematic because it makes patriarchy a problem FOR the woman. It implies that women’s lack of evolution is a fault to fix. For men to fix.’
Another student experimented with different choices and produced a translation that privileges lexical repetition without altering the syntactic structure. So, lines 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 were rendered as:

2 For every strong woman tired of seeming weak, there is a weak man tired of seeming strong.
3 For every woman tired of having to behave as though she knows nothing, there is a man tired of having to behave as though he knows everything.
4 For every woman, tired of being considered ‘too emotional’, there is a man who is denied the right to be emotional.
5 For every woman considered less feminine when she competes, there is a man obligated to compete to confirm his masculinity.
7 For every woman who hasn’t learned the mechanics of cars, there is a man who hasn’t learned the secrets of cooking.

These consistent optional semantic shifts create a text that is more cohesive than the original. Through constant lexical repetition, this version firmly states that men and women are equally undeveloped, notwithstanding their differences.

7.2 Example II

7.2.1 Students’ profiles

A second teaching session took place during two consecutive lessons of two hours each and one academic lecture on Enhancing Symbolic Competence by Translating Culture. They were attended by 18 Anglophone pre-intermediate learners of Italian in the second semester of their degree course. The language biographies revealed that 17 students were raised monolingually in English. Most of them (15) knew one foreign language besides Italian, that is, French (7) or Spanish (8). One student knew both French and Spanish. Five students learnt Latin at school and one of them was studying it at upper-level as part of her degree; they therefore had experience of the Grammar-Translation Method. One student was raised bilingually in English and Korean. She spoke English with her father and siblings and Korean with her mother and grandparents. She also watched TV shows in Korean and listened to Korean music. She had learnt French in junior and high school. All students had experience of translanguaging, a technique used by their Italian teacher. This involves introducing a new grammatical structure in Italian and then asking students to translate it into English so as to clarify the semantic, syntactical and cultural aspects of the new form.

7.2.2 Lesson 1

The learning objective of the first lesson was to discover how meaning is expressed through different communicative modes, namely music, images and words. As in
In the Italian language classroom

the previous example, I chose *Le Due Ali dell’Umanità* as a suitable multimodal
text. But, since I was teaching pre-intermediate students, the activities were slightly
different, the leading questions were simpler and the pace was slower. First, the
students listened to the music. Then they viewed the pictures and listened to the
soundtrack. Finally, they viewed the entire presentation.

7.2.2.1 Exploring the music

I asked the students to make a mental note of the emotions, feelings and thoughts
aroused while listening to the music (see Appendix VIII). The words *emozioni, sensazioni* and *pensieri* were written on the blackboard as a reminder. The students
listened to the music, and then spent a few moments writing down their responses.
Most of them said the soundtrack evoked a sense of tranquillity, happiness and
hope. One student imagined a mountain landscape. Others thought the music
conveyed a feeling of nostalgia, melancholy and sadness. All responses were written
on the blackboard.

7.2.2.2 Exploring music and images

Before viewing of the audiovisual text, I invited the students to reflect on the
relationship between images and music in conveying meanings and evoking
feelings and emotions.

I then elicited their reflections through a series of open questions (see
Appendix VIII):

1. Who are the people in the pictures?
2. In what contexts are these people represented?
3. What is the message that the authors of the audiovisual text intend to convey?
4. What is the relationship between music and images?
5. What do you think the theme of the written text will be?

The people portrayed in the pictures were identified as women from all over
the world, captured in difficult situations that require courage and commitment.
One student noticed the presence of a soldier in one of the slides. The intended
message was thought to be ‘le donne sono forti e superano i problemi’ (women
are strong and overcome problems). The students commented that the images
influenced the perception of music by bringing to the surface the subdued
sense of sadness and melancholy that was timidly evoked earlier. One student
vividly described the new imagery of music with an apt metaphor: ‘la musica è
la voce delle donne’ (the music is the women’s voice). The anticipated themes
addressed in the verbal message were: ‘women’s problems’ and ‘women’s strength’. 
7.2.2.3 Exploring the multimodal message

The students first viewed the entire presentation, and then read the text in pairs. Their reflections on the meaning-making process involved in the creation and interpretation of the multimodal message were elicited by the following questions (see Appendix VIII):

1. Who are the people the text talks about?
2. How are these people described?
3. What is the message that the authors intend to convey?
4. What is the relationship between music, images and words?
5. What do you think the title of the multimodal message will be?

According to the students, the written text is not only about women, but also men. Women do things that men do not. Also, women appear to be living on the margins of society. Consistent with the images, the text talks about the problems that women face with courage and strength in their daily lives. Moreover, the verbal message warns us against the danger lying in gender roles as well as in male and female stereotypes. So, the text contributes significantly to the overall meaning of the multimodal message by making it more specific. These are the titles the students suggested for the presentation as a whole:

- Women's Strength
- The State of Humanity
- Women's Rights
- Women Today
- The Problems of Women
- The Humanity of Women

At the end of the lesson, I revealed the title of the entire message: Le Due Ali dell'Umanità. In preparation for the translation task, which was done individually as homework, I invited the students to reflect on the interrelationship between form and meaning so as to relay it in the target text.

7.2.3 Lesson 2

The learning objective of the second lesson was to experience the creation of meaning through translation. The group activity I devised consisted in comparing and contrasting the various renderings of the original text, line by line. At the end of the lesson, I collected the students' translations with their self-corrections and annotations. What follows is a report on the topics addressed during the group discussion together with my analysis of the students' renderings.

When comparing the different renderings, we discussed a number of problems concerning lexical and syntactic accuracy. The subordinate clause introduced by
the purpose conjunction perché + subjunctive (sentence 5) was translated by many students as because instead of so that. In the same sentence, the use of the impersonal si was sometimes translated as he. Understanding the correct use of modality in Italian was also difficult. In fact, in sentence 7, deve was mostly rendered as should, rather than must or has to.

The revised translations tend to adhere to the general principle of preserving meaning and structure in the target text, as this representative example illustrates:

1 The Two Wings of Humanity
2 For every strong woman, tired of appearing weak, there is a weak man tired of appearing strong.
3 For every woman tired of having to act like an idiot/fool, there is a man tired of having to pretend to know everything.
4 For every woman tired of being considered ‘too emotional’, there is a man who is denied the right to cry and be ‘tender’.
5 For every woman considered less feminine/unfeminine when she enters a race, there is a man who is obligated to compete so that no one doubts his masculinity.
6 For every woman tired of being a sex object, there is a man preoccupied with his sexual potency/power.
7 For every woman who cannot get a job or a satisfactory salary, there is a man who must assume financial responsibility of another human being.
8 For every woman who doesn’t know the mechanics of a car, there is a man who has not learned the secrets of the art of cooking.
9 For every woman who takes a step towards her liberation, there is a man who rediscovers the path to freedom.
10 Humanity has/possesses two wings: one is the woman, the other is the man. Until the two wings are equally developed, humanity cannot fly.
11 We need a new humanity. We need to fly.
12 Today, more than ever, the cause of women is the cause of all humanity/humankind.

Alternative renderings contain optional shifts regarding either the form or the content of the text. For example, one student decided to translate sentence 2 by using postpositive adjectives preceded by a colon:

2 For every woman: strong, but tired of seeming weak, there is a man: weak, and tired of appearing strong.

Also, in sentence 12, the initial letter of the word woman was capitalized:

12 Today, more than ever, the cause of Woman is the cause of all humanity.

The combination of these choices, together with the careful reproduction of capitalization in sentence 10, HUMANITY IS NOT ABLE TO FLY, have the
effect of creating a firm tone. In another version, capitalization was used every
time it occurred in the source text, i.e. in lines 10, 11, 12. This procedure was
accompanied by two examples of amplification, which aim to express the intended
meaning clearly:

5 For every woman who is considered less feminine because she participates
in a sport, there is a man obligated to participate because he does not want
others to doubt his masculinity.
1 For every woman tired of being a sexual object, or considered property, there
is a man worried for his sexual potency.

One student used a variety of procedures that have a discernible cumulative effect
on the tone, pace and mood of the target text, so that the message is put across
very strongly. Here is the whole version, followed by the analysis.

1 The Two Wings of Humanity
2 For every strong woman tired of faking weakness, there is a weak man tired
of faking strength.
3 For every woman tired of faking ‘foolishness’, there is a man tired of having
to pretend to know everything.
4 For every woman tired of being labeled as an emotional female, there is a
man who is being denied the right to cry and be sensitive.
5 For every sports woman whose femininity is questioned, there is a man forced
to compete in order to give testimony to his virility.
6 For every woman tired of being considered a sexual object, there is a man
concerned about his sexual performance.
7 For every woman who cannot get a job or has not had access to a dignified
salary, there is a man forced to bear the economic responsibility of another
human being.
8 For every woman who doesn’t know the mechanics of an automobile, there
is a man who doesn’t know the secrets of cooking.
9 For every woman that steps toward her road to freedom, there is a man who
redisCOVERs the road to liberty.
10 The human race has two wings. One is woman, the other is man. Unless the
two wings are fully developed, the human race will not be able to fly.
11 We need a new humanity. We need to fly.
12 Now, more than ever, the cause of women is the cause of mankind.

There is a preference for lexical repetition: faking, forced, doesn’t know, road. This
procedure is combined with the transposition of adjectives into abstract nouns:
weak → weakness, strong → strength, fool → foolishness. There are also optional semantic
shifts involving changes in the denotative and connotative meaning of a number
of lexical items and expressions. So the direct equivalents of the verbs sembrare
and apparire, i.e. seem, appear, or act like are replaced by fake. Similarly,
Moreover, the key word umanità, which is repeated four times in the body of the source text, is translated with three synonymous equivalents: humanity, human race, mankind. This breaks the distinctive pattern of lexical repetition established in the previous sections, liberates the text from its controlled structure and slows down its brisk pace. The overall effect of these choices is the creation of a text that projects the translator’s voice and expresses an overwhelming need for a true humanity.

At the end of the lesson, I asked the students what they thought about the use of translation in language learning. The question I put to them was: Have you found translating easy or difficult, useful or pointless, pleasant or unpleasant? They all appreciated the choice of text, which they had enjoyed relaying into English. Translating was considered to be a challenging and useful activity because it encouraged them to think carefully about the specific meaning of words and expressions in the source and in the target language.

7.2.4 The lecture

The lecture I gave is entitled Enhancing Symbolic Competence by Translating Culture: An Ecological Approach to Language and Translation Pedagogy. The abstract reads:

On the basis of the convergence between symbolic competence (Kramsch 2009, 2010) and holistic cultural translation (Tymoczko 2007), this lecture proposes to transform the multilingual language classroom into a cooperative learning environment, where second language learning and translating are essential processes in the formation of the self-reflective, interculturally competent and responsible language professional of the future.

In the course of the lecture I illustrated how the interrelationship between symbolic competence and holistic cultural translation is evidenced by the study of the Italian translation of The Kite Runner (Khaled Hosseini, 2003) by Isabella Vaj together with her companion book to Hosseini’s novels, Il cacciatore di storie (2009a). I also outlined the main features of an envisaged ecologically oriented pedagogy where symbolic competence facilitates holistic cultural translation and holistic cultural translation enhances symbolic competence. The questions put to me at the end of the lecture concerned the role played by holistic cultural translation and symbolic competence in pursuing the goal of foreign language education today, namely translilingual and transcultural competence. This gave me the opportunity
to exchange my views with lecturers and students and explain in more detail the principles underlying the pedagogy adopted in class.

After the lecture, the students who had attended my lessons had the option of writing a 100-word English summary of my presentation, as part of their weekly language assignment. Twelve students produced an accurate résumé of the principal ideas expounded in the lecture. Four summaries also offered an interesting insight into how pedagogic theory is linked either with the students’ knowledge of other related subjects or with their previous or recent experience of language learning and translation.

Here is an extract of a summary where a student sees a close connection between Sapir-Whorf theory and symbolic competence. Interestingly, this new understanding of anthropology motivates her to further study of languages.

Student 1 I found the lecture on symbolic competence and translating culture very interesting after completing the translation activity in class. . . . Professor Laviosa asserted that knowing more than one language allows one to have a wider view and understanding of one’s world. This concept echoes the Sapir-Whorf theory of language in anthropology that claims language defines one’s reality because one cannot think beyond the words they have to express their ideas. If both theories are thought to be true, then the more languages one knows the more ways they have to express themselves. Each new language provides a new layer of understanding of the world as a whole, not just the particular culture that speaks the language. Such a concept makes me hope to study many languages throughout my life.

In the following extracts, the students explain how the pedagogic principles presented in the lecture enhanced their understanding of what language learning entails, while providing them with a broader perspective on the role of translation in fostering linguistic and cultural competences.

Student 2 At first, I thought the lecture may be too advanced for my understanding. But, suddenly, I understood the significance of what Sara Laviosa was saying, and how it related to our activity with the music and images in class. Translating isn’t simply looking up each word in a dictionary so you know what something is saying, but also in translation, a sense of culture and other connotations are held in those words. With our activity, we first listened to the music and described how that made us feel. Then, we paired the music to the images, which immediately changed some of our minds. The images evoked different connotations and experiences. The words finally solidified our translation into a theme; the two wings of humanity, and the problems men and women face.

Student 3 I really enjoyed Sara Laviosa’s lecture. It introduced a concept about language and learning a foreign language that I had not considered.
The idea of the holistic cultural translation...seemed like an ideal way to learn a language. It makes sense that by the transposing of literary elements to poems or different genres of literature, language students could see between cultures and begin to integrate them. Although Laviosa stated that this type of language learning would be good for a more advanced class, I find it helpful in our 102 classroom. I felt that our exercise in translation in class helped convey the feelings and emotions behind the Italian words and lend themselves to the same ideas in English. The power of the metaphor of the two wings of humanity made more sense in both languages after we translated it.

In the following unabridged summary, one student clearly shows how the theory and the research findings presented in the lecture enabled her to reflect and build on the competences developed through her valuable experience of translation in language learning.

Student 4  I thought that Sara Laviosa’s lecture on the benefits and methodologies of translation was very interesting, especially because I am taking upper-level Latin, which is a language course that deals almost exclusively with translation as a means of studying the language and gaining an understanding of the ancient Roman culture. When I’m translating Latin for homework, I almost never take the literal meaning of the translation because it does not make sense in English. As a more experienced learner I can understand that different words have certain connotations and meanings within the context of the society, and so I can recognize what Sara called the ‘habitus’ of the original text in relation to the habitus of the language into which the text will be translated. I was reminded of my experience translating Latin into English when Sara talked about The Kite Runner and its many different non-English translated titles, like ‘Il cacciatore di storie’. I find it incredibly interesting that the translator chose to not use the literal translation of the English title, and, instead, capture the symbolic nature of the title in a phrase that would have more meaning than the literal translation. Overall, I really enjoyed Sara’s lecture because she reaffirmed a fact that I had already experienced somewhat, that translation is a means of getting a look into another culture’s head.

To conclude, the examples above demonstrate the feasibility of adopting a holistic language and translation pedagogy with intermediate and pre-intermediate learners. Students’ familiarity with translation as a language learning tool is undoubtedly useful, but not a prerequisite for using the methodology effectively. The second example in particular shows how the interplay of theory, research and practice in the classroom fosters self-reflection and critical thinking, while motivating students to learn languages within a broad intercultural and interdisciplinary perspective. This topic is taken up in Chapter 8, which describes two English language classes taught at postgraduate level.
Notes

1 Conceived as a tool for promoting plurilingualism and pluriculturalism, the European Language Portfolio is a personal document that was designed in 2001 for the European Year of Languages by the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe within the Common European Framework of References for Languages. In addition to the language biography, the ELP comprises the language passport, which describes the learner's intercultural learning experiences, and the dossier, which includes documents selected by the learner to illustrate his or her intercultural competence (Little and Simpson 2003). See also the website of the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe: www.coe.int/t/dg4/portfolio/default.asp?l=e&m=/main_pages/welcome.html (accessed 23 May 2011).

2 The text has been adapted from a presentation uploaded on 8 March 2010 via SlideShare (www.slideshare.net/) as Microsoft PowerPoint. The presentation is available online at www.slideshare.net/ghisaman/le-due-ali-della-libert (accessed 29 January 2014). The description of the images in Figures 1–8, 10 and 12 is by Richard D. G. Braithwaite.

3 Composed and produced by Phil Cunningham (tin whistle, piano, keyboards) and Mánus Lunny (guitar, bouzouki, vocals). The version published by Windham Hill Records on the Audio CD Sampler '96 is available online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPXOcxDdL4s (accessed 15 January 2013). You can play this Celtic air by using the sheet music written by Osvaldo Laviosa and reproduced in Appendix VI. ‘When the Snow Melts’ is also published on the audio CD Celtic Christmas, a Windham Hill Collection that can be purchased online.

4 The image appears in the presentation with a resized frame and for this reason it cannot be reproduced. The full picture of The Afghan Girl, taken by Steve McCurry in 1984, can be viewed online at www.tuttartpitturaeraculturapoesiamusica.com/2010/09/la-vera-storia-di-sharbat-gula-la.html (accessed 29 April 2013).


8 It was held at Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA, on 6 April 2011. I gratefully acknowledge the Provost’s Office and the Department of Italian Studies for sponsoring and organizing the event.

9 I thank Dr Flavia Laviosa, Department of Italian Studies at Wellesley College for inviting me to give the lecture. I am also grateful to her students of Italian for their comments.
This chapter continues to illustrate the pedagogy proposed in Chapter 6. It gives one example of language and translation teaching that was undertaken with advanced postgraduate learners of English at an Italian university. The activities described here were carried out during three seminars lasting two hours each. They formed part of a seven-credit module on English Language and Translation. They were attended by 15 advanced learners of English in the last semester of a Master’s degree in Modern Languages and Literatures that was taught at the University of Bari ‘Aldo Moro’ from 2010 to 2012.

8.1 Example III

8.1.1 Teacher’s and students’ profiles

Before asking my students to fill in a language biography, I introduced myself, giving a few salient details about my bilingual identity. I was born in Italy to Italian parents. At the age of 20 I moved to Great Britain, where I got married, raised a family, completed my studies and embarked on an academic career in language and translation teaching. In 2002 I returned to my home country and since then I have lectured in English and translation principally at the University of Bari ‘Aldo Moro’ but also at the universities of Foggia, Macerata and Rome Tor Vergata. Italian is my native language and English is my language of habitual use. Also, I am a freelance professional translator normally working from Italian into English in the specialized fields of business, finance and economics.

As for the students’ profiles, except for one Turkish student, the rest of the classroom was made up of native Italians. In addition to their mother tongue, they all knew two or more European languages. One student had moved to the US at the age of six and had returned to Italy after 14 years. She had been raised bilingually and spoke
English with her parents, English and Italian with her brothers and sisters and Italian with her grandparents. All students had some experience in translating, mainly as part of their language education. A few of them had also translated for professional purposes.

8.1.2 Learning objectives and activities

I presented the learning objectives in a handout that was distributed at the beginning of the first seminar:

The aim of the module is twofold: to enable you to appreciate ‘form as meaning’ (Kramsch 2006) in its various manifestations: linguistic, textual, visual, acoustic or poetic and to develop the capacity to communicate across cultural difference by adopting a holistic approach to translating poetry (Tymoczko 2007). By the end of this module you will have an understanding of poetry as a type of discourse where the form of the message (i.e. sound patterns, rhythm and imagery) is intertwined with its meaning and force. You will also appreciate that a thorough stylistic analysis of the text as a whole is a prerequisite in poetry translation and ‘just as there is no single way of reading a poem, there is no one interpretation and translation of it’ (Connolly 1998: 173).

References and reading list


In order to find a suitable text, I did some research into the multimodal presentation I used for the Italian lessons illustrated in Chapter 7. I discovered that, in addition to Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s quote from a message he delivered on 8 March 1993, Le Due Ali dell’Umanità contains the translations of two more English texts, that is, the poem ‘For Every Woman’, composed in 1973 by ordained United Methodist Deacon Nancy R. Smith, and a citation from a sacred text that forms part of the Bahá’í Scriptures. It is ‘The Promulgation of Universal Peace’, a talk that was given at Hotel Sacramento, Sacramento, California on 25 October

Having retrieved all three original texts represented in the Italian translation, I created a multimodal presentation entitled The Two Wings of Humanity. The soundtrack and images are the same as in Le Due Ali dell’Umanità. But, as can be seen in Figures 2–13 below, the verbal message differs in three respects. It contains the entire body of the original poem ‘For Every Woman’, a longer citation from ‘The Promulgation of Universal Peace’ and clear references to facilitate the interpretation of textual, contextual and intertextual meanings.

FIGURE 1

The photo portrays a woman wearing a light brown burka. She is carrying a small birdcage on top of her head. The cage contains two small birds.

A Native American camp with a woman sitting on a horse in the foreground. Both the woman and the horse are wearing typical Native American clothing. There are white tepees and another horse in the background. The sky is dark and it looks as if there is going to be a thunderstorm.

For every woman who is tired of acting weak when she knows she is strong, there is a man who is tired of appearing strong when he feels vulnerable.

FIGURE 2

Two people, a woman in the foreground and a man in the background, are walking along a path which has many circular rock pools on each side of it. They are wearing traditional Bedouin clothing. The woman is carrying a large bowl on top of her head. There are mountains in the background and the landscape looks dry and arid. To judge by the light, it is probably early evening.

For every woman who is tired of acting dumb, there is a man who is burdened with the constant expectation of ‘knowing everything’.

FIGURE 3
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURE 4</th>
<th>FIGURE 5</th>
<th>FIGURE 6</th>
<th>FIGURE 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This woman is wearing a navy-blue veil, which she is holding up with her right hand, and a light-blue shirt. She is also wearing a necklace with white seashells attached to it, and rings on the fingers of her right hand. She has a serious, solemn look on her face.</td>
<td>For every woman who is tired of being called ‘an emotional female,’ there is a man who is denied the right to weep and to be gentle.</td>
<td>Here there are three women who are participating in an athletics event. They are wearing athletics clothing which displays the event’s sponsor, Seiko. They are running in front of each other in a diagonal formation. The woman at the front has short brown hair, the one in the middle has long black hair tied up in a ponytail and the one at the back has long blonde hair.</td>
<td>For every woman who is called unfeminine when she competes, there is a man for whom competition is the only way to prove his masculinity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Here we can see the profile of an elderly woman having plaits put in her hair. Her eyes are closed and she is wearing an earring.</td>
<td>For every woman who is tired of being a sex object, there is a man who must worry about his potency.</td>
<td>For every woman who feels ‘tied down’ by her children, there is a man who is denied the full pleasures of shared parenthood.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here we can see a teenage girl and a woman at the edge of a lake. The girl is kneeling down in the water and cleaning a fish. The woman is standing up and we can only see her legs. The top half of her is out of the picture. There is a small bucket full of water with some fish in it and there are some other fish on the ground by the water’s edge.

**FIGURE 8**

A woman in a light-brown dress with white spots on it is fixing the engine of her car. She has her back to us. The car bonnet is open and the car is red and very old, probably from the 1960s or 70s. There is grass growing around the car and there are snow-covered mountains in the background.

**FIGURE 9**

For every woman who is denied meaningful employment or equal pay, there is a man who must bear full financial responsibility for another human being.

For every woman who was not taught the intricacies of an automobile, there is a man who was not taught the satisfactions of cooking.

**FIGURE 10**

For every woman who takes a step toward her own liberation, there is a man who finds the way to freedom has been made a little easier.

‘For Every Woman’ by Nancy R. Smith, copyright 1973

**FIGURE 11**

This photo probably shows a country occupied by Western troops. There is a soldier carrying a machine gun in the foreground. He has his back to the camera. Women wearing black veils are carrying metal containers filled with water.

The world of humanity is possessed of two wings: the male and the female. So long as these two wings are not equivalent in strength, the bird will not fly. Until womankind reaches the same degree as man, until she enjoys the same arena of activity, extraordinary attainment for humanity will not be realized.

8.1.2.1 Exploring the multimodal message

The presentation was analysed in three consecutive phases as in Example II, which is discussed in section 7.2 above. I first asked the students to reflect on the emotions, feelings and thoughts evoked by the soundtrack. The music brought to mind images of beautiful, enchanting natural settings by the sea or in the mountains. These landscapes were located in different regions of the world and inspired peace, tranquillity, freedom, harmony, calm and relaxation. The melody also struck a melancholic, nostalgic note and the male singing voice reminded one student of medieval religious chants. Here are the comments made by one student who captured the prevailing mood of the whole group:

This music made me feel like waking up on a sunny morning. The sun was shining and everywhere was green. I could even feel the fresh air gently blowing in the countryside. And because of that, I felt really relaxed while I was listening.

Next, I invited everybody to reflect on the meanings, feelings and emotions that the music and images together conveyed to them. The pictures signified women’s emotional world as well as their cultural differences. Also, women appeared to be
imprisoned by the strong traditions prevailing in their faraway countries. One student made a connection between the melancholic tone of the music and the melancholy expressed by the images:

On the faces of people there are no smiles and no tears, but a very subtle suffering, the inner refusal of their situation but the implicit sense of resignation. Again, the melancholic tone of life emerges. The prevalence of women depicted in their work activities and their private sphere makes me think that women are the main characters of an uneasy performance in the world and that, in spite of being deprived of some rights, they are sometimes asked to carry out greater tasks than men.

To another student the audiovisual message conveyed the inner beauty of women:

A beautiful portrait of every kind of woman on earth. The song underlines their gentle faces and accompanies the idea of connection between women. In every part of the world, in every single nation and place this music is a sort of anthem for all the ladies. No matter how different we are, we are all beautiful for being women.

A third student noticed a shift in the creation of meanings as we perceive music and images together:

I think that the relationship between images and music is perfect, but I feel that the message is not of peace but of justice and the human spirit, and that everything we need in life is given to us by what is natural and simple, but sadly enough, in the end humans have themselves taken away from each other.

In the end, the group suggested four key words to express the main themes of the audiovisual message, namely women's conditions, courage, freedom and desire to win. Next, we viewed the complete multimodal presentation and I distributed a handout with the entire text so that students could read it aloud in pairs slide by slide to perceive the rhythm, voice and tone of the free verses and quotes. Soon after, I guided the exploration of the multimodal message through a set of open questions that encouraged reflection on 'form as meaning', the interplay between music, images and words as well as the creation of meaning in text, context and intertexts:

1. Who are the people represented in the text?
2. How are they portrayed?
3. What is the message the text conveys to you?
4. Reflect on the relationship between form and meaning in the verbal message.
5 Reflect on how meaning is constructed through the interaction between text, context and intertexts.
6 Reflect on the interplay between music, images and words in the creation of meaning.

What follows is a synthesis of the main considerations shared by all participants in the classroom discussion. They have been selected from the essays that the students wrote at home as part of their continuous assessment and in preparation for the translation task that was carried out during the third seminar session, as reported in section 8.1.2.2 below.

‘The Two Wings of Humanity’ is a sort of puzzle composed of different pieces: the poem ‘For Every Woman’ written by Nancy R. Smith in 1973, which was disseminated by word of mouth as part of the Women’s Movement, a passage from ‘The Promulgation of Universal Peace’, a religious text of the Bahá’í faith, composed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, dated 25 October 1912, and a quote from a statement issued by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali on 8 March 1993 on the protection and promotion of the rights of women.

The metaphorical title, which introduces the concept HUMANITY IS A BIRD, summarizes the theme running through the whole presentation, that is, the absolute necessity of asserting the individuality and complementarity of men and women to set humanity free. Nancy R. Smith’s poem is divided into eight stanzas made up of free verses. Each stanza has a binary A–B structure, starts with the prepositional phrase For every woman postmodified by a relative clause and is completed by the existential clause there is a man postmodified by a relative clause. The subordinate relative clause and the independent existential clause are separated by a comma. Punctuation does not only signal a separation between men and women but also complementarity, since each sentence would be incomplete without one of its two parts. The poem’s binary structure, prefigured by the title of the presentation, reflects the existence of two realities that are both opposite and similar to each other like the two wings of a bird. It also creates a close rhythm like a refrain and emphasizes the idea that both women and men are necessary, the one unable to exist without the other.

The controlled syntax coupled with the anaphora conveys the notion that men and women live their daily lives like prisoners of gender conventions. Their plight, visually represented by the image of two birds trapped in a cage carried by a woman wearing a burka, is vividly expressed semantically through words that either have negative connotations (tired, burdened, denied, worry, tied down, bear, not taught) or convey obligation (must). Most of these words are repeated to underscore men’s and women’s unhappy existence, while antonymy highlights the opposition between the need to be who we really are and the harsh reality of gender roles (weak/strong, strong/vulnerable, dumb/knowing everything, sex object/potency). Moreover, alliteration of the dentals ‘t’ and ‘d’ as in tired, acting, strong conveys a sense of oppression felt by men and women alike. The present tense portrays women’s and men’s condition as a general truth and the use of the agentless passive underlines the agent’s anonymity.
Maybe politics is responsible for the current state of affairs. The tone is assertive but not polemical. It encourages the reader to reflect on the social and cultural models that are imposed upon us regardless of whether we are men or women.

In sum, each stanza represents a sort of detailed picture of a couple (and marriage too), and together the verses seem to create a wide fresco of contemporary society, that is, a society where men and women share similar feelings of frustration and dissatisfaction at the impossibility of being true to themselves. So, equality is identified with the right to affirm one’s own identity beyond stereotypes. Who is, then, the speaker of the poem? As the images also highlight, it is women who ask for equality, which is conceived of not as uniformity but acceptance of differences. It is women who lead the way towards freedom. Each step they take towards their own liberation paves the way for the liberation of men too. Women’s voice is the voice of humanity.

The principles of complementarity of males and females and the importance of women achieving equality for the fulfilment of humanity, which the poem upholds, are central to the Bahá’í faith, as the passage from ‘The Promulgation of Universal Peace’ states. Here the conceptual metaphor HUMANITY IS A BIRD creates a cohesive link with the title of the presentation and expresses the compelling need for a better future, when humanity will be fully fledged and able to achieve great things. This need is reiterated in the two statements that follow: We need a new humanity. We need to fly. The presentation ends with a quote from a speech delivered by Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who, in harmony with the music, images and text, identifies the fight for women’s rights with the promotion of a free, peaceful humanity.

At the end of the session, I invited the students to find an image that represented the sixth stanza of the poem so as to complete Figure 7 above. These were their suggestions:

3. Father and son riding bikes: www.visualphotos.com/photo/2x1901715/father_and_son_riding_bikes_in_a_field_FAN1003733.
Consistent with the scenery evoked by the soundtrack, most of the images were set in natural surroundings. They represented two perspectives, the male and the female separately. One group of students decided to select photos that portrayed a father and son enjoying leisure activities such as fishing by the lake, riding a bicycle in the woods, walking on the beach or in the mountains. Another group chose images that captured the burden of childcare that women have to shoulder day by day.

8.1.2.2 Translating the verbal message

The objective of the third seminar was to experience the creation of meaning through translation. Each student decided on the target language and carried out the translation at home. Subsequently, we compared and contrasted 14 Italian renderings and one Turkish translation in class. Most Italian versions were fairly similar and tended to adhere to the general principle of preserving the meaning, syntactic structure and lexical cohesion of the source text. There were also some variations, which I have indicated below with forward slashes.

1 Le due ali dell’umanità.
2 Per ogni donna stanca di apparire/mostrarsi/fingersi debole/fingere di essere debole quando sa di essere forte, c’è un uomo stanco di apparire forte quando sa di essere vulnerabile.
3 Per ogni donna stanca di apparire stupida/ingenua/fingere di non capire, c’è un uomo che porta il peso di dover sempre ‘sapere tutto’/c’è un uomo gravato/oppresso dalla costante aspettativa di ‘sapere tutto’.
4 Per ogni donna stanca di essere definita/’emotiva’/’femmina emotiva’, c’è un uomo a cui è negato il diritto di piangere ed essere dolce/tenero/sensibile.
5 Per ogni donna stanca di essere definita/etichettata mascolina/poco femminile quando gareggia/compete, c’è un uomo per cui gareggiare/la competizione è l’unico modo di dimostrare/comprovare la sua mascolinità.
6 Per ogni donna stanca di essere un oggetto sessuale, c’è un uomo che deve preoccuparsi della sua virilità.
7 Per ogni donna che si sente ‘legata’ ai figli/’legata’ per via dei figli/’vincolata’ dai figli, c’è un uomo a cui è negato il piacere di essere genitore/c’è un uomo a cui è negata la soddisfazione di condividere la gioia di essere genitore/c’è un uomo a cui viene negata la possibilità di godere a pieno della propria famiglia.
8 Per ogni donna privata di un’occupazione soddisfacente e di una degna paga/un pari compenso/un equo stipendio/Per ogni donna a cui è negato un lavoro dignitoso/gratificante o uno stipendio equo, c’è un uomo che deve assumersi la responsabilità di mantenere un altro essere umano/c’è un uomo che deve essere finanziariamente responsabile per un altro essere umano.

9 Per ogni donna che non è mai stata iniziata ai misteri di un’automobile, c’è un uomo che non è mai stato iniziato ai piaceri della cucina/dell’arte culinaria./Per ogni donna a cui non è stata insegnata la complessità di un’automobile, c’è un uomo a cui non è stato insegnato il piacere di cucinare./Per ogni donna a cui non sono stati rivelati i misteri dell’automobile/i segreti delle automobili, c’è un uomo a cui non sono state rivelate le soddisfazioni del cucinare.

10 Per ogni donna che fa un passo avanti nel cammino verso la sua liberazione/emancipazione/libertà, c’è un uomo il quale scopre che la via verso la libertà è stata resa più facile/c’è un uomo per il quale la strada verso la libertà è più spianata/agevole.

11 L’umanità ha due ali: l’uomo e la donna. Finché queste due ali non saranno pari/non avranno la stessa forza, l’umanità non spiccherà il volo/volare sarà impossibile. Solo quando la donna sarà allo stesso livello dell’uomo, solo quando condividerà le stesse attività, l’umanità raggiungerà un grande traguardo/realizzerà grandi opere/cose.

12 Abbiamo bisogno di una nuova umanità. Abbiamo bisogno di volare.

13 Oggi – più che mai – la causa delle donne è la causa dell’intera umanità.

The majority of semantic shifts were optional rather than being motivated by systemic differences between the source and the target language. One of the guiding principles adopted by a number of students was to privilege lexical repetition. For example, in the first and second stanzas the verb act is repeated twice and reiterated once with the verb appear. In the translation the verb apparire is used as the equivalent of both verbs and is repeated three times. Similarly, in the first stanza the verbs know and feel are translated with sapere, thus giving more importance to repetition than semantic equivalence. In a few cases, however, a semantic shift was used to express the original meaning more strongly. An example is offered by the verb called in the third and fourth stanzas, which was translated with the equivalent definita and the negatively connoted etichettata (labelled). Also, in one case, burdened was rendered as oppresso instead of the direct equivalent gravato in order to relay the perceived feeling of subjugation expressed by the word burdened. One student decided to render the full pleasures of shared parenthood with il piacere di essere genitore (the pleasure of being parent). She explained that, in her view, the original phrase evokes the idea of a family where the man is deprived of the joy of sharing the care of their children with his wife. But, nowadays many parents are separated or divorced. Her translation, she argued, was intended to be more inclusive, in light of the changing physiognomy of family life.

There are also some creative renderings inspired by cultural differences. In the eighth stanza the collocation the satisfactions of cooking was regarded as very unusual
in Italian, so it was translated with *i piaceri della cucina*. This choice triggered two more shifts that made the target text sound more natural, i.e. *taught* was translated with *iniziato a* and *intricacies* with *misteri*. In addition to these semantic variations, two students argued that the literal translation of *For every woman . . . there is a man* that was favoured by the majority of native Italians, conjures up the vision of a couple who are either married or engaged. They did not want to communicate this, because they thought it was distracting, so they decided to replace *Per ogni donna . . . c’è un uomo* with *Ad ogni donna . . . corrisponde un uomo*. In so doing, they intended to relay the existence of two parallel realities that share a similar condition but are not sentimentally related.

Also, a lively debate took place when we compared the translations of *liberation* and *freedom* in the last stanza of the poem. Some students rendered both of them with *libertà* (freedom), thus creating a stronger cohesive link through repetition. This, they thought, was an important rhetorical device that produced a close rhythm and emphasized similarity between men and women. Other students, however, pointed out that while *liberation* is a process which requires effort and engagement to free oneself from something or somebody, *freedom* is a more general goal, a state of being which results from having freed (or liberated) oneself from inhibiting or subjecting forces. They therefore privileged semantic invariance and translated *liberation* with *liberazione* and *freedom* with *libertà*.

A third group argued that, since the poem is authored by a member of the Women’s Liberation Movement in the 1970s, it is appropriate to translate *liberation* with *emancipazione*. This term, they affirmed, is often associated with women, as in the expression *emancipazione della donna*, which means ‘liberazione dalla condizione di inferiorità giuridica, sociale e culturale rispetto agli uomini’, according to the definition provided by *Lo Zingarelli 2004. Vocabolario della lingua italiana*. But the supporters of *liberazione* counter-argued that the poem talks about a woman’s own liberation, that is, the act of liberating herself from any kind of injustice, tie or impediment that prevents her from making free, responsible choices in her life.

To this observation, the advocates of *emancipazione* replied that the cause of all women’s injustices, ties or impediments is, indeed, their inferior status compared with that of men. Hence, the liberation of women and a woman’s own liberation are one and the same thing, because they both depend on the achievement of equality. The term *emancipazione*, they claimed, is more appropriate in this context because it conveys an important additional layer of meaning, that is, the interdependence between liberation and equality. This principle, they added, is implied in the poem and asserted in the quote from ‘The Promulgation of Universal Peace’. The supporters of *liberazione* continued to defend their choice on the grounds that being treated as second-class citizens, and hence not enjoying ‘the same arena of activity’ as men, is undoubtedly a major cause of a woman’s feeling of being imprisoned, but it is not the only one. In fact, a woman’s own liberation may well entail the reappraisal of traditional female roles such as those associated with family relations, e.g. daughter, wife and mother. The discussion ended with each group adhering to their initial views. Of course, uniformity was not our goal.
What we all learnt from this mutual exchange was to understand, appreciate and respect each other’s insights and beliefs.

We find other interesting optional shifts in the Turkish version. This is reproduced below, together with the English back translation:

The Two Wings of Humanity

As there are a lot of women who are tired of acting weak although they know they are strong, there is always a man who is acting strong although he feels vulnerable.

As there are a lot of women who are tired of acting dumb, there is always a man who is forced to play the role that he knows everything.
As there are a lot of women who are always called ‘emotional’, there is always a man who is denied the right to weep and to be kind.

As there are a lot of women who are called ‘unfeminine’ although they struggle a lot, there is always a man for whom the only way to prove his masculinity is to compete.

As there are a lot of women who are tired of being seen as a sex object, there is always a man who must worry about his potency.

As there are a lot of women who feel tied down by their children, there is always a man who is denied the full pleasures of partner parenthood.

As there are a lot of women who are not able to find a fair job and wage, there is always a man who must bear the full financial responsibility of another person.

As there are a lot of women who are not taught the complexity of an automobile, there is always a man who is not taught the irresistible satisfaction of cooking.

As there are a lot of women who take a step for their freedom, there is always a man who discovers that the way to his freedom has been made a bit easier.

There are two wings of humanity: the male and the female. As long as these two wings are not equally powerful, the bird will not fly. Until the women reach the same level as the men, and until the women reach the same field of activity, an extraordinary achievement for humanity will not be realized.

WE NEED A NEW HUMANITY. WE NEED TO FLY.

Today – more than ever – the problem of women is the problem of all humanity.

The anaphoric For every woman . . . there is a man is rendered with As there are a lot of women . . . there is always a man. This choice was motivated by the intention of emphasizing women’s collective awareness of their condition of inequality as well as their leading role in making men aware of their condition of subjugation to gender conventions. Moreover, the past participle burdened was translated with the equivalent of forced to underscore the sense of oppression men experience when they have to adhere to restrictive social and cultural models of behaviour. Also, although this student clearly understood the senses conveyed by liberation and freedom, he could not relay them with two direct equivalents because, as he explained, ‘in Turkish we use just one word, özgürlük, for both liberation and freedom. The meaning becomes clear in the context’. Finally, the expression equivalent in strength, in the quote from ‘The Promulgation of Universal Peace’, was rendered with the equivalent of equally powerful to assert strongly the principle that the empowerment of women is a vital prerequisite for achieving gender equality and human freedom.

In conclusion, teaching this module revealed to me, a humanist educator who is ‘a partner of the students’ (Freire 1970: 62), the merits of a holistic language
and translation pedagogy particularly with advanced learners who are familiar with educational and professional translation. Thanks to their linguistic knowledge and sensitivity, the students were, in fact, keen and able to engage in group discussions aimed at enriching their individual interpretations and renderings across languages and cultures. Also, they were open-minded and eager to air their views and opinions on hotly debated issues such as gender discrimination, cultural stereotypes and parent-child relationships. Crucially, translation brought to light many interesting and subtle differences and similarities in the construction of meaning besides those evidenced during the exploration of the multimodal message. By experiencing the constraints of the target language and the need to delve deeper into the nuances of the meaning of a text, context and intertexts in order to relay them in the mother tongue, the students became aware of the real possibility of expressing their own voices through cultural translation.

Notes

1 I thank all the students who regularly attended my seminars and actively participated in the lively group discussions that ensued.


From the Grammar-Translation Method to the present day, translation has always played a role in foreign language learning and teaching. The sole exception to this general trend is the Berlitz Method, which banned translation in theory as in practice. What has changed significantly over time, though, is the function translation has fulfilled in the language classroom, i.e. either as a means of achieving linguistic proficiency or as a skill in its own right. Today pedagogic translation is becoming increasingly important, particularly at undergraduate level, where students usually acquire translator and/or interpreter skills either in dedicated translation modules that are not primarily aimed at forming professional translators or in language modules where translation is used as a learning and assessment tool alongside other written and oral tasks. In this educational context, translation is being increasingly undertaken more and more as both a means and an end; it is carried out into and out of the mother tongue; it takes various forms (written, oral, audiovisual, meaning-focused, form-focused) and is an integral part of teaching procedures as well as testing at all levels of the language curriculum.

We advocate translation in language teaching on the grounds that ‘[t]here is a great unmet demand for educated translators and interpreters, and translation is an ideal context for developing translingual and transcultural abilities as an organizing principle of the language curriculum’ (MLA 2007: 3). This is not only in line with recent trends in Applied Linguistics, but also encourages translation scholars and language educationalists to work together with a view to developing and adopting interdisciplinary pedagogic approaches and methods. The methodologies explored in this volume are good examples of how the synergy between interdisciplinary theory, research and practice can engender novel pedagogic techniques that fully rehabilitate translation in the language classroom within a multilingual perspective, as the MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages (MLA 2007) envisaged. Arguably, these pedagogies are still being developed. In order to have
a positive impact on teaching practices and teacher training, they need to be applied and tested in a broader variety of educational contexts worldwide and with different language combinations.

If we look to the future, it is reasonable to envision an increasing number of partnerships created between scholars and practitioners working within different disciplinary fields across the world. Several examples of such collaborative research have appeared just as the present monograph goes to print. They have been collected for a special issue of *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer* guest-edited by me and entitled *Translation in the Language Classroom: Theory, Research and Practice* (Laviosa 2014). The seven papers selected for this volume reaffirm the main reasons for readmitting translation in the undergraduate language classroom and put forward translation-based pedagogies that are conceived within interdisciplinary theoretical frameworks and have proved effective in developing interlinguistic and intercultural competences. What follows is a brief summary of each paper.

In the opening article Maria Gonzàles Davies proposes incorporating the study of translation in Additional Language Learning (ALL) under the broader field of Translation in Other Learning Contexts (TOLC). She makes a distinction between translation teaching aimed at translator trainees and TOLC, where translation is used in other learning contexts that involve languages and cultures in contact. Within this perspective, Maria Gonzàles Davies reports on a study that investigated the use of translation in ALL at undergraduate level in Spain. The questions were: (a) when, why and how students make use of translation, (b) how the use of translation relates to cognitive, meta-cognitive and socio-affective learning strategies, and (c) the extent to which students regard translation as a means of aiding or improving the acquisition of an additional language. The approach adopted in this study is plurilingual, humanistic and socioconstructivist, and statistical analyses were used to corroborate the results obtained from the investigation of students’ and teachers’ beliefs and perceptions about translation as a skill and a learning strategy.

Besides Additional Language Learning in the undergraduate classroom, Maria Sidiropoulou and Efpraxia Tsapaki provide another concrete example of TOLC. They expound a corpus-based methodology that has successfully been adopted in the ‘Interlingual and Intercultural Communication’ postgraduate course of the MA Programme in ‘English Studies’ at the University of Athens. Their method of analysis involves the teacher–student collaborative investigation of metaphor variation as manifested by the collocational shifts occurring in a bilingual English–Greek parallel corpus of press articles. Drawing on their corpus-based findings, the authors put forward a series of graded activities designed for advanced L1 Greek students of English, particularly in tertiary education.

Still within a cognitive perspective, Junfeng Zhang and Yingping Pang elaborate a pedagogy that includes literal and functional translation as a complement to well-established reading and writing tasks devised within the Communicative Language Teaching approach. The objective of their techniques is to enhance accuracy and appropriateness in the use of the L2 through the examination of the constraints that characterize the mother tongue vis-à-vis those of the foreign
language. The method they propose consists of three phases: L1 mirroring, L1 reformulation and functional translation back into the L2. This tripartite model for language learning and teaching has been adopted with third- and fourth-year L1 Chinese students specializing in English at the Central China Normal University. The students’ feedback is encouraging. It shows their appreciation of translation as an activity that helps them become aware of formal and functional differences between languages and fosters accurate and appropriate communication in the foreign language.

Other novel methodologies draw on the insights provided by research into Audiovisual Translation (AVT). The departure point of the AVT-based methodology elaborated by Laura Incalcaterra McLoughlin and Jennifer Lertola is that subtitling allows for the simultaneous activation of verbal and non-verbal cognitive processes in the deconstruction of the source text and reconstruction of the target text. Therefore, subtitling helps memorize speech acts and lexical items and facilitates the analysis of the L1 vis-à-vis the L2. This, in turn, helps to raise awareness of cultural and intercultural issues and pragmatic aspects of communication. The techniques illustrated in this paper require that learners first decode the linguistic, paralinguistic and extralinguistic elements present in the source audiovisual text. Next, they translate the verbal audio element of the source audiovisual text into the L1 and finally they produce a written target text which is appropriately added to the source audiovisual text. The methodology has been utilized since September 2008 in the teaching of a subtitling module designed as an integral part of the Italian language course in the second year of the undergraduate Bachelor of Arts Degree and undergraduate Bachelor of Commerce Degree at the National University of Ireland. The students’ responses were positive. The majority of them had enjoyed subtitling from Italian to English and felt it had enhanced their L2 listening and reading skills. Moreover, it had enlarged their L2 vocabulary and improved their ability to write in the native language.

Still from an AVT perspective, Noa Talaván and Pilar Rodríguez-Arancón discuss the findings of an investigation aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of a teaching method that involved the use of reverse subtitling (from the L1 audiovisual text to the written text in the L2) in an online collaborative learning environment. The authors put forward the hypothesis that reverse subtitling, which is carried out collaboratively and through distance learning by (mostly) L1 Spanish undergraduate students of English at intermediate level, enhances L1 translation skills and writing skills in the L2. The results of the translation and written test scores before and after their experiment supported their hypothesis. The teachers’ observations as well as the students’ responses to the post-test questionnaire also revealed that collaborative reverse subtitling was perceived to be beneficial to vocabulary learning, the acquisition of confidence in the use of the L2 and the learning of grammar.

Interpreting is still a minor research area in language pedagogy. Interestingly, Taehyung Lee illustrates a set of computer-assisted interpreting exercises that have been used over the last 14 years in advanced undergraduate EFL classes at
Hanyang University. These activities include sight translation and consecutive interpretation between English and Korean as well as shadowing. The main learning objective is to enhance speaking and listening skills in the L2. Interpreting is also used to develop logical thinking and the accurate use of the mother tongue. Students’ evaluation of the activities carried out in the interpretation classes was largely positive. Interpreting was viewed as a challenging task that enhanced their listening and speaking abilities in the foreign language.

In the final paper, Angeles Carreres argues that the divide between translation as a means of enhancing language proficiency and translation as an end in itself is at the core of the alleged lack of synergy between Translation Studies and Foreign Language Education. By examining the components of translation competence, she demonstrates that they largely overlap with the skills that language graduates are expected to acquire. This convergence, she argues, can contribute to bridging the gulf between the two disciplines and raise the status of translation in language education.

These articles complement the studies examined in the present volume and contribute to the development of educational translation as an emerging area of scholarly research and practice. They have explored some of the themes that were proposed in the call for papers in order to fill significant gaps in current applied linguistic research, namely corpora and contrastive analysis in translation-based language learning, translation as a cognitive aid in second language acquisition, audiovisual translation and language pedagogy, interpreting exercises to enhance language learning and translation as a learning strategy.

Other areas that remain, to date, largely unexplored are the history of translation in foreign language pedagogy, translation as a motivational factor in language learning, translation and language testing, learning styles and translation, language policy and planning and the revival of translation, Language for Special Purposes (LSP) and pedagogic translation, creativity and translation in language education, translation as a fifth skill that draws on and enhances all other language skills and translation and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). The last two themes have been suggested by Pym et al. (2013: 139) in their final report on Translation and Language Learning: An Analysis of Translation as a Method of Language Learning (DGT-2012-TLL). This is a research project for the Directorate General for Translation of the European Commission, carried out by the Intercultural Studies Group, the European Society for Translation Studies and the University of Leicester.

The above themes could be the starting points of further studies in the field. Their goal would be to widen and strengthen current interdisciplinary research on the theory, practice and effect of translation in language teaching and learning. I believe this scholarly endeavour would contribute to fulfilling the confident prediction made by Guy Cook in the concluding chapter of his timely monograph. He envisions that if the beneficial effects of translation in language education were to be recognized as much in theory as in practice, ‘it would have positive repercussions, and would initiate activity and innovation in many areas beyond
classroom practice itself. New materials would need to be written, new tests designed, and new elements introduced into teacher education’ (Cook 2010: 156).

I think the time is ripe for engaging with the systematic investigation of translation and language education. In order to bear fruit, this long-term project has to be conceived within an international perspective and have solid interdisciplinary foundations.
Appendix 1

QUESTIONNAIRE: TRANSLATION TEACHING IN THE MODERN LANGUAGES DEGREE

In completing this questionnaire, please bear in mind that it is not intended to reflect your feedback on a particular teacher or translation class, but rather as an overall reflection about the role of translation in the Modern Languages degree. Your answers will remain anonymous.

1. Should translation be taught as part of a modern languages undergraduate degree? Please delete as appropriate.
   yes  no

2. How useful is translation from a foreign language into English as a means of learning the foreign language? Please circle the appropriate number.
   not at all useful  1  2  3  4  5  very useful

3. How useful is translation from English into a foreign language as a means of learning the foreign language? Please circle the appropriate number.
   not at all useful  1  2  3  4  5  very useful

4. How useful in itself (i.e. not as a language learning method) is the teaching of translation from a foreign language into English? Please circle the appropriate number.
   not at all useful  1  2  3  4  5  very useful

5. How useful in itself (i.e. not as a language learning method) is the teaching of translation from English into the foreign language?
   not at all useful  1  2  3  4  5  very useful
6 Please tick the areas in which translating from a foreign language into English can help you make progress:

- English grammar
- Grammar of the foreign language
- English vocabulary
- Vocabulary in the foreign language
- Writing in English
- Writing in the foreign language
- Register in English
- Register in the foreign language
- Knowledge of the source text culture
- Knowledge of the target text culture
- Other (please specify):
  
  _____________________________________________________________________

7 Please tick the areas in which translating from English into a foreign language can help you make progress:

- English grammar
- Grammar of the foreign language
- English vocabulary
- Vocabulary in the foreign language
- Writing in English
- Writing in the foreign language
- Register in English
- Register in the foreign language
- Knowledge of the source text culture
- Knowledge of the target text culture
- Other: ____________________________

8 Do you think you could make faster progress in the aforementioned areas through different means (e.g. in a more general language class, in a literature seminar, through reading, watching films, etc.)?

yes no

If yes, please say which areas and how:

_________________________________________________________________________
9 Which of the following exercises/activities do you consider useful in learning to translate? Please tick as appropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation into English</th>
<th>Translation into the foreign language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Translating texts as homework</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Translating texts in the class in pairs/groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussing the translated text/s in the class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Using parallel texts*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Comparing your version with published translations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysing translations produced by other students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Using Internet resources</td>
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<td>Doing grammatical exercises</td>
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<td>Doing vocabulary exercises</td>
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<td>Reading in English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading in the foreign language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify):</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Parallel texts are authentic (i.e. non-translated) texts in the target language which share certain features with the source text (e.g. in terms of topic, purpose, intended audience) and hence might be a useful aid when translating.

10 To what extent do you feel the translation classes you have attended in the course of your degree have prepared you for the professional practice of translation?

They have not prepared me at all  1  2  3  4  5 They have offered excellent preparation
11 Do you enjoy translation classes?
not at all 1 2 3 4 5 very much

12 Is English your mother tongue/do you have a native command of English?
yes no
If the answer is no, please specify your mother tongue:

_________________________________________________________________________

13 What part of the Tripos are you currently studying? Please circle as appropriate.
PIA  PIB  PII

14 Your marks in language papers examinations in your previous year in MML were in the range of (please circle as appropriate):
15–40  40–49  50–59  60–64  65–69  70–79  80–85

15 What languages are you studying here in MML?

_________________________________________________________________________

16 Do you have knowledge of any other languages?
yes no
If yes, please specify: _____________________________________________________

17 Are you female or male? Please tick or delete as appropriate:
F       M

18 Please add any further comments you may have in relation to translation teaching and/or the use of translation as a means of teaching/learning a foreign language.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.
Appendix II
TRANSLATION QUESTIONNAIRE

You have had one semester experience with translation and you have just finished translating a text. Please complete this questionnaire expressing your personal opinion.

1. Do you enjoy doing translation tasks?
   a) yes  b) no

2. Is translating texts more difficult than you expected?
   a) yes  b) no

3. Do you think that translating is an intellectually challenging activity?
   a) yes  b) no

4. Is it more challenging than writing or speaking in English?
   a) yes  b) no

5. Is doing translation tasks a good way to improve your language skills?
   a) yes  b) no  c) I don’t know

6. Do you think your attitude towards your knowledge of the English language has changed because of your experience with translation?
   a) yes  b) no

7. Have you become more aware of cross-cultural differences reflected in both languages because of translation practice?
   a) yes  b) no  c) I don’t know

8. In which areas do you think you have benefited the most because of the translation experience?
   a) grammar  b) vocabulary usage

9. Did translation make you more sensitive to nuances of word usage?
   a) yes  b) no
10 Do you have problems recalling from memory words that you know?  
   a) yes  b) no  c) sometimes  d) rarely

11 How confident do you feel about the following aspects of your English vocabulary? Mark on a rating scale 1 to 5:  
   a) meaning: 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5  
   b) contextual appropriateness: 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5  
   c) style/register: 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

12 Do you often question your knowledge of vocabulary when you translate?  
   a) yes  b) no

13 Do you use dictionaries to confirm your knowledge about word usage?  
   a) yes  b) no

14 Does translating make you use dictionaries more frequently?  
   a) yes  b) no

15 Do you learn more about word usage because of the frequent need to consult dictionaries?  
   a) yes  b) no

16 Do you sometimes consciously translate from Polish into English when you speak or write in English?  

17 Do you have a clear sense of achievement when you finish translating a text?  
   a) yes  b) no  c) I don’t know

18 Has the practice of translation changed your view of what it means to know a foreign language?  
   a) yes  b) no  c) I don’t know

19 If you had a choice would you not attend translation classes?  
   a) yes  b) no
### QUESTIONARIO SULL’USO DELLA TRADUZIONE NELL’INSEGNAMENTO DELL’ITALIANO COME LINGUA STRANIERA A LIVELLO ELEMENTARE/ NON-ELEMENTARE

Lei usa esercizi di traduzione scritta nelle sue classi?

- [ ] No
- [ ] Sì

Se ha risposto “No”, spieghi brevemente perché:
Se ha risposto “Sì”, legga oltre.

Quali tipi di esercizi adotta?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Esercizi</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frasi da tradurre dall’inglese in italiano</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frasi da tradurre dall’italiano in inglese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragrafi da tradurre dall’inglese in italiano</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragrafi da tradurre dall’italiano in inglese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testi completi da tradurre dall’inglese in italiano</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testi completi da tradurre dall’italiano in inglese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altri tipi di esercizi:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Da dove attinge il materiale didattico indicato sopra?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fonti</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Libri di testo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testi scritti da Lei stesso/a?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altre fonti:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

La prego di citare quelli più usati:
Se usa testi autentici, qual è il genere più frequente?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genere</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letteratura</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pubblicità</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articoli di giornale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altri:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Qual è, a Suo avviso, la funzione che gli esercizi di traduzione svolgono nell’apprendimento della lingua italiana?

Grazie per la Sua collaborazione.
Appendix IV

QUESTIONNAIRE ON LANGUAGE AND TRANSLATION EDUCATION IN ITALIAN UNIVERSITIES

1. At what level(s) do you teach English language and translation?
   - beginner
   - post-beginner
   - pre-intermediate
   - intermediate
   - upper intermediate
   - advanced

2. What type(s) of translation exercises do you create for your students at each level of competence?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Translating sentences from English to Italian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translating sentences from Italian to English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translating paragraphs from English to Italian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translating paragraphs from Italian to English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translating whole texts from English to Italian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translating whole texts from Italian to English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. What source material do you use to select suitable texts for your translation exercises?

   ........................................................................................................................................
   ........................................................................................................................................
   ........................................................................................................................................
   ........................................................................................................................................
   ........................................................................................................................................
   ........................................................................................................................................
4 Describe the teaching and/or assessment methods that you adopt when you use translation activities.
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

5 What aims, transferable skills or learning outcomes do you intend to achieve through translation?
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

Thank you for your cooperation.
Appendix V

LANGUAGE BIOGRAPHY

In the language biography you will compile an overview of your most important learning experiences with other languages and cultures. This will enable you to reflect on your own linguistic identity.

Name:

........................................................................................................................................

Year of birth:

........................................................................................................................................

At home we speak:

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

* You can fill in one or more languages or dialects.
WITH WHOM DO I SPEAK WHICH LANGUAGE OR WHICH DIALECT?

In different situations you sometimes use different languages: at home or for example in talking to friends in the street or on holiday.

**Example**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I speak</th>
<th>Limburger dialect with close relatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I speak</td>
<td>English with some friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I speak</td>
<td>Dutch with most other people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand</td>
<td>TV programmes in Turkish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I speak .......... with my mother.
I speak .......... with my father.
I speak .......... with my brother(s) and sister(s).
I speak .......... with my grandparents.
I speak .......... with my best friends.
I speak .................... with .........................
I speak .................... with .........................

*Indicate what other things you can do in a language.*

**Example**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I understand</th>
<th>TV programmes in Turkish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I read</td>
<td>magazines in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I write</td>
<td>letters in Spanish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I .................................................................
.................................................................
I .................................................................
.................................................................
I .................................................................
.................................................................

*Underline  I was raised monolingual / bilingual / multilingual.*
**MY LANGUAGE**

*Write down how long you have been learning the language.*

**Example**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Where</th>
<th>From ...... until ......</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>Primary education</td>
<td>1994–1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Junior general secondary education</td>
<td>1996–1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>Junior general secondary education</td>
<td>1996–1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Senior secondary vocational education, technology</td>
<td>1999–2001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Write down where: At home / at school / in a language course etc.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Where?</th>
<th>From?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
WHICH SCHOOLS/UNIVERSITIES DID I ATTEND?

Under country fill in the country sign, for example NL or D. Also indicate when you attended a school there.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School type</th>
<th>Town/Country</th>
<th>When?</th>
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<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

CERTIFICATES AWARDED

Indicate which certificates you obtained. (For example at school, university or in language courses).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which ones?</th>
<th>Where?</th>
<th>When/what age?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
I LEARNED AT SCHOOL AND/OR UNIVERSITY

Indicate here in which classes/groups you were taught Dutch, English, Arabic, Turkish, German, French or even another language.

**Example**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Group or class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>1999–2000</td>
<td>7 and 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Class 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Class 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>1997–2000</td>
<td>5, 6, 7 and 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Group or class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>
Appendix VI

When the snow melts
Phil Cunningham - Mánus Lunny

transcribed by Osvaldo Laviosa
Appendix VII

RIFLESSIONI SUL TESTO MULTIMODALE

Riflessioni sul testo audiovisivo
1. Chi sono i soggetti principali ritratti nelle immagini fotografiche?
2. In quali contesti sono rappresentati questi soggetti?
3. Che tipo di musica accompagna le immagini?
4. Quali emozioni evoca la musica di sottofondo?
5. Quali significati sono espressi attraverso l’interazione tra musica e immagini?
6. Qual è il tema che pervade le immagini e che forse sarà sviluppato nel testo scritto?

Riflessioni sull’intera presentazione
1. Chi sono i soggetti di cui parla il testo scritto?
2. Sono gli stessi soggetti ritratti nelle immagini fotografiche?
3. In quali contesti sono descritti i soggetti?
4. Sono gli stessi contesti rappresentati nelle immagini?
5. Chi sono i destinatari del messaggio multimodale?
6. Qual è il tema del messaggio multimodale?
7. Come viene sviluppato questo tema nel testo multimodale?
8. L’ultima diapositiva mostra una citazione di Boutros Boutros-Ghali. Chi è Boutros Boutros-Ghali?
Appendix VIII

RIFLESSIONI SUL MESSAGGIO MULTIMODALE

Riflessioni sul testo musicale
1 Mentre ascoltate il brano musicale, notate le emozioni, sensazioni e pensieri che la musica ispira.

Riflessioni sul testo audiovisivo
1 Chi sono le persone nelle fotografie?
2 In quali contesti sono rappresentate queste persone?
3 Qual è il messaggio che gli autori di questo testo audiovisivo vogliono comunicare?
4 Che rapporto c’è tra musica e immagini?
5 Quale pensi sarà il tema del testo scritto?

Riflessioni sul testo multimodale
1 Chi sono le persone di cui parla il testo scritto?
2 Come sono descritte queste persone?
3 Qual è il messaggio che gli autori vogliono comunicare?
4 Che rapporto c’è tra musica, immagini e parole?
5 Quale pensi sarà il titolo di questo messaggio multimodale?
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