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Towards a Transgressionist Approach: Critical-Reflexive Translator Education

Abstract: After briefly introducing relevant language pedagogies and translation studies approaches, this paper explores the possibilities offered by Kiraly's (2000) theory of empowerment-oriented translation pedagogy. First, some theoretical investigations into Kiraly's social constructivist model are presented. The model is then expanded to include the concept of transgressionism. Such a concept is employed in order to make Kiraly's notion of scaffolding more dynamic and also to clarify some uncertainties surrounding the transformationist approach. We then proceed to illustrate these theoretical concepts with practical examples of how empowerment-oriented solutions have been applied in multicultural settings.

Keywords: translation pedagogy; Translation Studies; social constructivism; scaffolding.

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1 Introduction

This paper encompasses a collaborative effort to take a further step toward empowerment in translator education. After giving a brief outline of translation pedagogy and acknowledging its relevance, we attempt to overcome some of the limitations of even the most radical didactic approaches such as social constructivism. With the help of theoretical notions from the Polish psychologist Józef Kozielecki and

from the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, we question the notion of a pedagogical 'transformation' and develop it further into the notion of intellectual and professional transgression. We will argue that it might be a useful theoretical move to replace a *hierarchical* pedagogy—which even social constructivism still tends to be based on—with a *systemic* one in order to move practical task application and intellectual empowerment into the centre of the pedagogical 'arena.' A transgressive pedagogy has yet to be tested, however, and since our ultimate aim is to encourage all participants within the pedagogical field to become *collaborators*, we will describe specific projects from three different cultural contexts. It is our hope that these projects will serve not simply as practical models for others in the translation field but as invitations to further fine-tune our pedagogical practice.

2 Pedagogical Theory in Translation Studies

Translation pedagogy is a relatively new field, based as it is on a combination of pedagogical approaches and translation studies approaches. Certain pedagogical approaches stand out as particularly relevant to contemporary translator education. The following table should serve to clarify the range of these approaches and to specify the terminology that will be drawn upon throughout the paper. The terminology used here to describe interactional dynamics is meant to signal the evolving relationship between teacher and student as the pedagogical philosophy progresses from transmission to transgression.

Translation was traditionally taught as a way to test and improve grammar and language skills (Kiraly and González Davies 2006: 81). In such a transmissionist classroom, instructors were at the center of the learning process and students were expected to give the correct answers to the teacher's questions. This philosophy left little room for real interaction between instructor and novice or for a novice's personal skill development. Its purpose, instead, was to transfer knowledge from instructor to novice. In contrast, many contemporary educators have taken advantage of the movement in pedagogy towards a more transactionist classroom environment. For example, the *communicative approach* in foreign language instruction emphasizes the exchange of meaning over the mere acquisition of grammatical rules (Colina 2003: 41). It allows translation trainers to

add their students' insights to the sum total of knowledge exchanged in the classroom and privileges language production and skill acquisition. For its part, the *cooperative approach* applies communicative principles to the classroom so that apprentices can learn from their interaction (Bowker 2003: 200). This is based on the idea that students learn best when encouraged by their classmates in an open environment where everyone is held responsible and each person has something to add. In the *social constructivist* approach, cooperative learning helps to achieve a transformative experience in translator training. This pedagogical approach maintains that apprentices can build up collective knowledge through common experience as they engage in investigation and practice (Kiraly 2000: 4). In this case, the teacher becomes a facilitator who serves as a source of information, and a project manager.

Pedagogical Philosophy	Transmission	Transaction	Transformation	Transgression
Interactional Dynamics	Instructor-Novice*	Trainer-Apprentice*	Facilitator-Apprentice*	Facilitator-Collaborator
Didactic Approach	Knowledge-transfer	Communicative-cooperative	Social-constructivist	Critical-reflexive

Table 1: Pedagogical Progression[1]

In seeking to develop a pedagogy of translation, the contemporary translation educator has the opportunity to lean on the pedagogical approaches mentioned above as well as existing translation studies theories. The *linguistics approach*, for example, concerns itself with the differences between languages on various levels such as semiotics and semantics. This approach can be used even in a transmissionist classroom to help students draw upon what they already know about language and its functions (Hervey et al. 1995: 61). The *cognitive approach* looks behind the specifics of language production to examine the thought processes that go on in translation. Studies such as those using Think-Aloud Protocols (TAP) help translation instructors to better guide their students as to what skills will be most valuable to them as translators (Wakabayashi 2003: 61).

[1] The terms marked with an asterisk (*) have been borrowed from Kiraly's "Dimensions of Development Toward Translator Competence" (2000: 58).

The *functionalist approach* takes the text (i.e. the assignment) as its point of departure. It allows the translation trainer to emphasize real world challenges and limitations in a classroom context (Nord 1997: 39). Any classroom, from a transactionist to a transgressionist one, may draw upon this approach to simulate or engage in real-world practice. Meanwhile, the *cultural studies approach* takes a step back from the text itself to examine the cultural contexts associated with text and translation. Such an approach reminds the instructor and students that the translation process is full of hidden cultural agendas and intentions that must be reflected on in order to translate consciously (Venuti 2000: 469). This approach helps to encourage the development of the critical-reflexive skills necessary in a transgressionist classroom. In other words, students are most directly sensitized to the significance of intellectual developments, how these affect translation practice, and how these in turn help them to become reflective practitioners in a 'postmodern' world. The social implications of transgression will be further discussed in section 3.

As indicated in Table 1, the terminology used for participants in the pedagogical process will change depending upon the relationship between participants and the goals of their process. The approaches from pedagogy and translation studies mentioned above, while not an exhaustive list, have been chosen because they prove the most relevant to contemporary translation students and educators. Each educator will apply or combine approaches based upon his or her own philosophy about how learning takes place.

The traditional learning style in both the language and translation classroom is the *transmissionist* philosophy. In such a style, the instructor is seen as the repository of all knowledge. To impart such wisdom to novices, the instructor engages in a "performance magistrale" (Kiraly and González Davies 2006: 82) where he or she becomes the center of attention. In a transmissionist classroom, the 'teacher's'[2] voice predominates, and learning is passed on in a rather prescriptive manner. What's more, the content of instruction has been decided beforehand and there is little room for either improvisation or growth. The purpose, after all, is not interaction but rather knowledge transfer.

[2] Socrates (unsourced): "I cannot teach anybody anything, I can only make them think."

A *transactional* classroom takes a small step away from the trainer. The apprentices become vital to the acquisition of knowledge because they will learn through group work and by processing the ideas offered by the trainer. Such a didactic approach will adopt the techniques of communicative pedagogy. It may include functional practices as well when practice texts are assigned according to real world criteria. Still, though, the trainer is the center of the classroom and the ultimate repository of knowledge since ideas and activities come to the apprentices via him or her (González Davies 2004: 14).

Transformationist practice shakes up traditional classroom models and relies instead upon a social constructivist approach. Here, the apprentices are not mere receivers of knowledge but the creators of their own learning experience (Kiraly 2000: 23). The cognitive approach is vital here because apprentices must reflect upon the skills that they employ as they translate and consciously hone them for future application. The functionalist approach is also well-suited to the transformational classroom since apprentices initiate real world assignments that require them to find resources, meet deadlines, and construct a viable product. In the transformationist classroom, the facilitator recedes into the background, and provides a flexible 'scaffolding' so that apprentices can perform tasks that they could not manage on their own. As Kiraly explains, scaffolding is a kind of "dynamic support" that facilitators provide to their apprentices (2000: 57). Facilitators provide a range of supports such as modeling group cooperation, helping to establish goals, providing theoretical background and assisting in project preparation (2000: 97). But the goal of scaffolding is to gradually remove it, to relinquish control so that apprentices can eventually complete the project without outside help (2000: 47). Another viable approach in a transformational classroom is cultural studies, which becomes a natural backdrop as apprentices debate different versions of their translations and try to place their work in an ideological context.

Transgression moves the learning process out of the traditional classroom and further away from the teacher figure. This is because in transgressionist philosophy the student motivates his or her own learning process. Far from the transmissionist school, now the facilitator is no longer the repository of knowledge or the motivator for learning (e.g. Kozielecki 2001: 23). Instead, the collaborators pursue their own interests and questions. Such a process depends upon a dissolving of the traditional educational hierarchy and the development of the collaborators' critical-reflexive abilities. This may be considered

a radical pedagogy since it is predicated on the idea that both facilitator and collaborator will undergo change. Ultimately, this philosophy is the most flexible as well since the student collaborator can take knowledge as well as practical and intellectual skills into the real world and apply them to life. Despite certain similarities in the learning processes engaged for both transformation and transgression, these practices differ significantly in the way they seek to model educator-student relationships. Such differences will be elaborated upon in the remainder of this paper.

3 A Critique of Transformationism

3.1 Transgressionism

Kiraly's (2000) model of translation education is not only confined to the area of competence-based professional training, as depicted above. A great advantage this model offers is its holistic outlook on the prospective translator as a human being, who needs to be considered a subject rather than an object of the educational process, as an agent in the construction of knowledge rather than a mere recipient of ready-made truths. This vision is present in the student-centered approach to translation education proposed in Kiraly (2000), and it is manifest in the notion of transformation that Kiraly (2000: 20ff.) adopts following Miller and Seller (1986). In this view, the transmissionist approach to education is confronted by the transformationist one, where the apprentices—guided by the facilitator—constructs or transforms their knowledge in the educational process. In this approach, facilitators become proactive transformers themselves, as their own knowledge evolves or changes as well. It is thus not merely knowledge that is subject to the above-mentioned transformations, but also the apprentice and the facilitator themselves. This follows from the assumption that a transformationist perspective acknowledges that "knowledge is private" (Kiraly 2000: 22). Consequently, the notion of transformation, as used by Kiraly (2000), leads up to a radical pedagogical postulate that the interrelation between the apprentice and the facilitator be defined as a transformation of the two protagonists of the educational process.

As we have stated above, Kiraly's (2000) holistic approach to translation education should be seen advantageous, especially in view of the practical implications this model has for the educational curriculum. Nevertheless, the notion of the transformationist

approach needs further clarification. This clarification is mainly to prevent a risk of applying the 'transformation principle' in a stimulus-response fashion: if we assume that transformation is a central objective of the educational process, we expect it to take place in a quite programmatic way. However, understood in this way, the concept of transformation goes against one of the key assumptions of empowered pedagogy (less "programming" by the educator, more space for students' development). Moreover, the concept of "programmed transformation" raises a theoretical objection. It represents a behavioral principle that it is possible for one person to influence directly the behavior of another person—a stance of which we are critical.

In our opinion, problems triggered by an undifferentiated treatment of the notion of transformation can be avoided in three ways. One is to get rid of the mechanistic stimulus-response connotations by clarifying further the processes that take place between the apprentice and the facilitator on their way towards new knowledge. The second is to say that the above-mentioned change that the apprentice and the facilitator undergo is not the central objective of the educational process, but belongs to a more extensive system of educational objectives. A third option is to further anchor the notion of transformation within the 'postmodern' intellectual climate in which modern translator education is embedded. The first two possibilities are discussed in the following sub-section, whilst the third option is discussed in section three.

3.2 Towards a Systemic Approach in Translation Pedagogy

The first solution consists in explaining the way in which educator and student influence each other in the educational process. One way of defining these influences is the deterministic behavioral view expressed above. The one we propose here draws upon the concept of *transgression* put forward by the Polish psychologist Józef Kozielecki in the 1980s,[3] and developed later into a broader psychological theory. Transgressions are defined by Kozielecki (2001: 18) as "all these actions and mental acts—in most cases conscious and intentional—which lead to crossing the borderlines of what has been

[3] More details about the key assumptions of Kozielecki's theory may be found in two texts in English: Kozielecki (1986) and (1989).

impossible until the present in terms of mental, material, symbolic or social achievements of an individual" [translation ours].

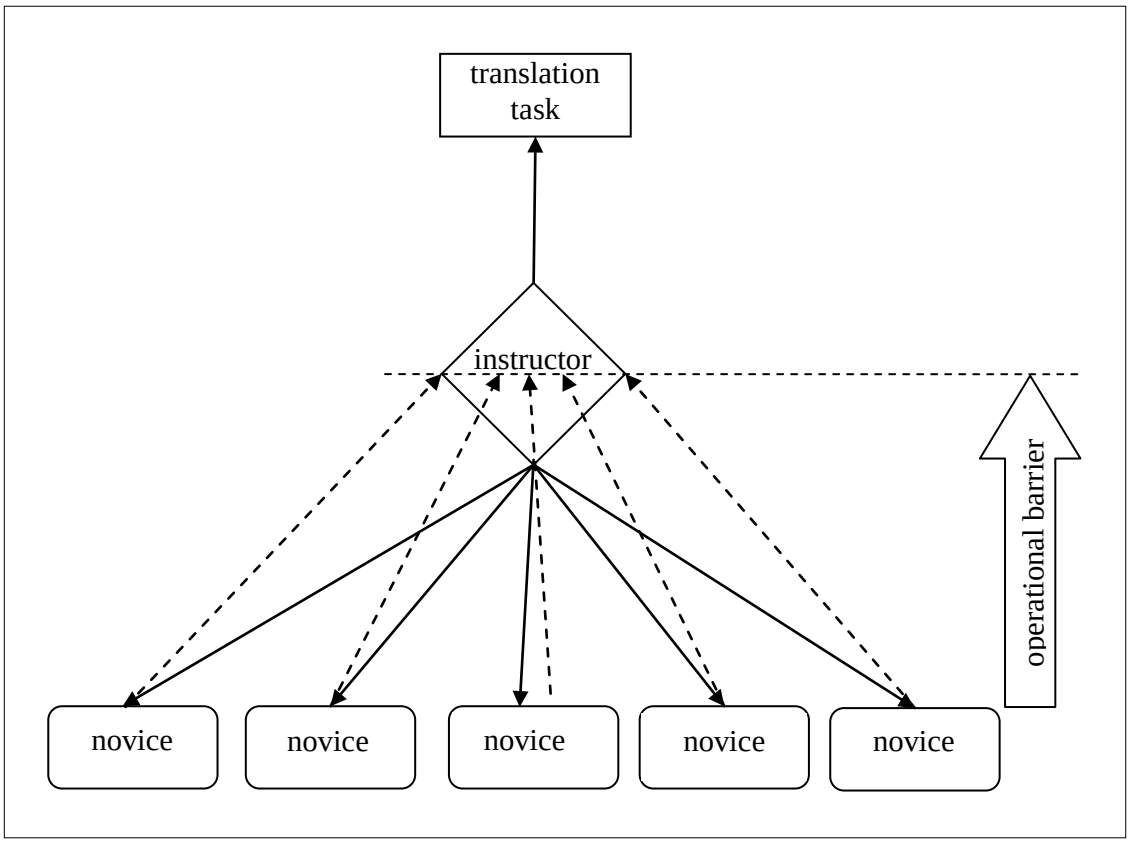


Figure 1: Transmissionist Hierarchical Classroom

In other words, transgression is a change that a person undertakes as a conscious action in order to develop in any aspect of their humanity. The very term "conscious action" presupposes lack of determinism, and in fact Kozielecki (2001: 22f.) openly rejects both the behavioral and the psychoanalytic versions of psychological determinism. Thus, if the notion of transformation is defined and understood in a way similar to Kozielecki's concept of transgression, the potential deterministic reading will be avoided. It must also be remembered that under the deterministic paradigm development is only possible when conditioned by the student-educator interaction. Consequently, when students leave the classroom, they are no longer driven towards development by the educators . It is only this kind of interaction that can empower students and teachers.

To take full advantage of the notion of transformation we need to remove it from its position as the *main objective* of translator education. To do that, we need to shift the perspective we have on the educational process from hierarchical to systemic; a shift which is also signaled by a slight terminological adjustments concerning the participants in the process (see Table 1 and the preceding discussion). A hierarchical conception of the educational process is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1 illustrates a hierarchical transmissionist, and partly also transactional, conception of translation classroom dynamics. The concept of the transmissionist and transactional approaches has already been presented, so we will confine ourselves to only a brief description of the figure. The process depicted above corresponds directly to what González Davies (2004) names the "read and translate" approach: the instructor selects novices to read passages or sentences and translate them.[4] Then s/he comments on the translations, giving out what s/he has prepared as the "correct version." The centrality of the instructor is typical of this approach. It blocks student development by allowing them little or no contribution. As a consequence, they do not really proceed beyond the stage of a novice during the entire educational process. Figure 1 does not only cover the relation between the student and the instructor,[5] but it introduces another important element of the educational process: the translation task.[6] The centrality of the instructor blocks the possibility of task realization for the students—as signaled by the concept of *operational barrier*—and in this way hinders empowerment.[7] Thus, an empowerment-based class calls for different principles of organization. A graphical representation for these is proposed below.

Figure 2 illustrates classroom organization in accordance with the principles of empowerment. The educator is no longer the central figure of the process, and this allows the realization of the translation task by all the students in the group—who by now have become collaborators—without an operational barrier. In this way, we arrive

[4] Nord (1996) uses the expression "Who will take the first sentence" to name this kind of approach to translation classroom dynamics.
[5] See Figure 2 in Kiraly (2000: 25).
[6] A number of writers include the translation task as a key factor in effective translation education. Apart from Kiraly (2000) and González Davies (2004), also see e.g. Hurtado Albir (1999, 2007) and particularly Kenny (2008: 139), where, commenting on Dewey (1938: 43), she quotes his idea that "learning occurs as a teacher-student, student-student, and student-content interaction."
[7] An interesting and convincing argument about how a teacher-centered classroom blocks student activity may be found in Pagano (1994). Particularly worth noticing is her focus on the loss of students' motivation.

at the idea of the system as a mode of classroom arrangement: equivalent functional components arranged towards an end, i.e. the translation task. Consequently, we get rid of the hierarchical notion of "centrality," seeking instead balance between all three components of the system. Thus the geometrical centrality of the translation task in Figure 2 should only be considered from the systemic perspective: a number of people collaborate upon a common objective, and this collaboration empowers them.

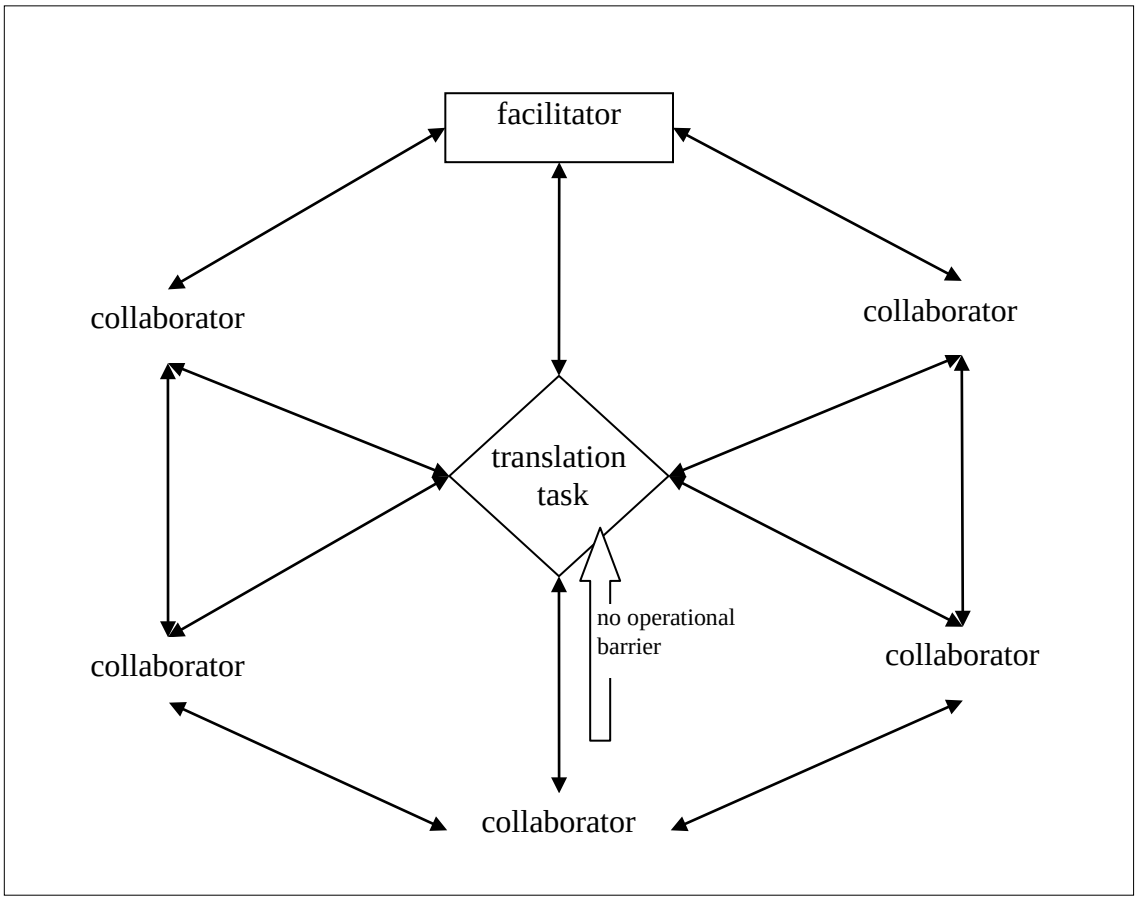


Figure 2: Translation Classroom as a System

The main reason for postulating the systemic approach to translation education is the benefits it offers. Let us mention briefly only some of these. Firstly, it allows the facilitator to construct a more effective scaffolding: allowing for constant growth of students in the key areas listed by Kiraly (2000: 58ff.): autonomy, authenticity and expertise. This is illustrated in case study 1 below (section 4.1).

Secondly, the systemic model of the translation classroom offers a more effective use of assessment as a didactic tool. Understood in this way, assessment is conducted with the aim of opening paths to students' and educators' further growth, rather than producing the statistical figures required by the formal framework of academic education. A number of researchers [8] show that assessment is a key element of empowerment-oriented education, as it influences crucial aspects of future translators' work. For instance, it is easy to see how empowered assessment could help develop translators' quality management skills.

Thirdly, the transgressions that occur within the system also cover the significance of developing students' interpersonal skills crucial for the translation profession. [9] The student-educator interactions during the process of translation task realization encourage the development of a variety of sub-competences, both personal (creativity, self-esteem, student as agent/subject and decision-making) and interpersonal (communicative effectiveness, negotiating, collaborative problem and conflict solving).

Last but not least, there is the socio-cultural benefit. It must be borne in mind that translation education is to equip students with an intellectual awareness that ultimately endorses a critical attitude towards existing power relations and ideologies. As will be shown, the systemic model of the translation classroom can help considerably to improve this aspect of the educational process.

3.3 Towards an 'Ideal' Classroom Interaction

"Education is as much about collective social change, as about individual enlightenment" (Terry 1997: 276).

A third condition to be met for a truly transgressionist approach to translator education concerns the development of heightened social awareness amongst translation students. Kiraly's transformationist approach (as all other suggestions for empowerment-based

[8] See the proposals by González Davies (2004: 31 ff.) as regards students' assessment. Note specifically the distinction she makes between pedagogical and professional marking styles. Also see e.g. Kelly (2005: 130 ff.) and Kiraly (2000: 142ff.) for other details on assessment. The most direct reference to quality control as a necessary element of translation training is to be found in Nord (2005: 219 ff.).

[9] The term interpersonal skills is taken from the model of translation competence proposed in González and Wagenaar (2003: 72f.). These correspond to PACTE's *psychophysiological subcompetence*. See e.g. PACTE (2003).

learning) has not yet sufficiently considered this precondition for modern translator education. It may thus be argued that only the nurturing of critical social awareness may justify a realistically holistic approach to translator education. After all, how can learners be truly transformed without a notion of the society, indeed of the global intellectual climate, they live in?

Apart from clarifying the processes of educational interactions and the recognition that transformation is only one of many goals in these interactions, it seems imperative to emphasize the social relevance of our pedagogical practices. Fairclough (1992: 6) argues for 'critical language awareness,' as according to him power relations are increasingly only *implicitly* inscribed in language use. This certainly relates to the fact that in today's postmodern reality, power relations and interpersonal conflicts tend to be mediated through linguistic negotiations. If we intend to provide translation students with the opportunity for intellectual empowerment, we thus need to foster critical social and linguistic awareness that not only transgresses the operational barrier (see Figure 1) but also critically assesses the very normative presuppositions upon which the foundations of our societies rest.

Some of the ideas of Jürgen Habermas, one of the most prolific and widely-read social philosophers of the modern age, have been adopted by education scholars. It is these ideas that, at least from a theoretical point of view, are briefly outlined below in order to show their potential for pedagogical advancement in translator education and to demonstrate their validity for the transgressionist approach. Directly applicable to a transgressionist translation pedagogy are Habermas' (1981) concepts of *communicative action* and one of its effects, the realization of an *ideal speech situation*.

Summarizing Habermas' ideological position, Englund (2006a: 499) asserts that his work constitutes "a critical view of the characteristics of classical modernity with its technological rationality and colonization of the life-world." Habermas himself theorizes all forms of human interaction as 'social action,' which he further subdivides into 'strategic action' and 'communicative action' (Outhwaite 1996: 130). While some forms of strategic action may involve deliberate manipulation, communicative action is marked by the gradual move towards a consensus where only the strongest and most rational argument wins. Being less openly manipulative, education is for Habermas a

form of 'openly strategic action.' Habermas, like Kiraly (2000: 18), bases his discussion of knowledge acquisition on Piaget's developmental psychology, yet Habermas more strongly emphasizes the interaction of individuals within their social contexts (Terry 1997: 272; also Brookfield 2005).[10]

It is a commonplace that classroom facilitators are more knowledgeable about the subject taught than their students, though it can be argued that in the transgressionist classroom agreements arise not only through force of the most rational argument but also against the backdrop of a critical-reflexive debate, which Englund (2006b: 504ff.), for instance, frames as a form of 'deliberative communication.' Similarly, Terry (1997: 278) argues for a critical-reflexive approach towards learning and life in general, while also being convinced that communicative action is crucial to maintaining social cohesion. In fact, he urges that positive social changes through education "can only be accomplished by utilizing the concept of discourse ethics and of communicative action outlined by Habermas" (ibid.). In a similar vein, Roth (2006: 578) suggests:

> If education does not embrace criticality as a valuable goal, the young are deceived; they do not become autonomous and selfsufficient (critical thinking). They do not realize that power is intrinsically related to knowledge, that elites use education to reproduce and maintain existing social, economic, and political conditions favourable to themselves (critical pedagogy), and they do not develop an emancipatory ignorance of matters which cannot be foreseen and predictable (revolutionary pedagogy).

One underlying strand in the establishment of a transgressionist translation pedagogy is indeed the evolution from critical thinking and pedagogy towards, ideally, a kind of revolutionary practice. Although this seems a quite utopian and perhaps even preposterous suggestion, its underlying principle relates to Habermas' idea that any society built on sound moral principles has the potential to proceed towards an era when a kind of hierarchy-free communication—the ideal speech situation—would be the norm rather than the exception.

At this stage it certainly needs to be asked how these theoretical observations could actually trickle down into pedagogical practice. As stated above, the transgressionist

[10] Brookfield (2005) is a particularly useful and ambitious attempt to integrate critical theory with adult learning. He also provides an extensive discussion of Habermas' theory of communicative action and how it relates to an educational setting. In addition, a recent special edition of the *Journal of Curriculum Studies* is entirely devoted to, as Englund (2006a: 500) puts it, Habermas' "social philosophy that may be seen as a general theory of education."

approach to translator education integrates Kozielecki's psychological theory with Habermas' critical-reflexive approach in order to achieve a truly holistic learning experience.

Much more than transformationalism, a transgressionist approach to translator education is overtly critical of hidden power relations, and also attempts to illuminate, if not transgress, the hierarchies implied in educational interactions. It is our conviction that only via heightened awareness of social power relations and educational hierarchies can translation students attain intellectual enlightenment and in turn practical empowerment. In fact, it is one thing to make learners transform by virtue of intrinsic motivation, as emphatically proposed by Kiraly (2000), yet another to encourage the establishment of a critical social consciousness.

4 Simulating Professional Reality: A Cross-cultural Comparison

This section of the paper brings together three different educational initiatives that we have undertaken and participated in. The three cases we present illustrate how we thought the ideas of empowerment and transgression could be implemented in our translation classrooms.

4.1 Poland: An Applied Linguistics Project in the Lublin City Office

4.1.1 Operational Framework

The first case is a translation project organized by the Department of Applied Linguistics at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin and Lublin City Office. Students were asked to translate selected extracts from the City Office website. The texts belonged to the section 'Newsroom' containing packages of useful information that the City officials wanted to be published in foreign languages. This type of information services depend on the quick response of translators, otherwise the information easily gets outdated. Hence, our student translators had a limited amount of time for task realization: they collected the necessary source texts from the City Office website at 3 p.m. to provide the proofreaders with their target texts at 6 a.m. the next morning at the latest.

Students worked in teams. Most group members were recruited from 3rd-year BA and 1st-year MA courses. Team leaders were 2nd-year MA students.[11] The students were divided into language groups, working from Polish into English, German, French, or Russian. The facilitators delivering the relevant language combinations functioned as proofreaders. There was no additional quality assessment on the part of the City Office. The project was to be conducted for the whole academic year, with breaks for holidays.

4.1.2 Theoretical Assumptions

From the theoretical point of view, the project attempted to test the general assumptions of empowered translator education by bringing into action. Particularly the following two areas of empowered education were key to the project:

a). students were involved in a real-life translation project that contained the complete translation cycle: from specifying the client's needs to text publication.

b). facilitators collaborated with students as proofreaders, but they also collaborated with one another in general project management and assessment.

The need for finding ways of relating education with professional practice is a key notion in empowerment-oriented pedagogy. Also representatives of the situational approach (see Kelly 2004: 16) stress that developing translation competence cannot be seen as an objective, abstract process, but that it happens in a real-life environment. Creating an appropriate (that is, as close to practice as possible) environment is a crucial challenge for translator education (see e.g. Gouadec 2003, 2008, and Vienne 1994, 2000).

The notion of transgression follows suit from the above assumptions: various types of collaborative interactions were expected to bring benefits to all the participants of the project. One of the area in which the participants benefited mostly was the creation of their critical-reflexive attitudes and their engagement in communicative actions.

[11] Although the BA and MA courses are separate institutionally, the extracurricular nature of the project allowed it to engage students from both levels. Both groups were volunteers.

4.1.3 Project Realization

The operational framework and theoretical assumptions were successfully carried forward into practice, while other aspects required reconsideration in subsequent versions. As this brief report is meant to provide rough guidelines for anyone wishing to implement their own projects in translator education, it will be presented as a list of recommendations:

Start the project—however ambitious in its assumptions—first on the smallest scale possible, and develop it later. As mentioned above, the Department of Applied Linguistics offers training in four foreign languages, and ultimately we wish our project to be held in these four languages. It must be kept in mind that starting a big project and failing to provide means for its completion can be quite disheartening, while project expansion will always be perceived as positive.

Remember that your translators are students, and not professional translators. In quest for professional practice for our students we often tend to forget that they are students after all, which means that the expectations of the facilitators, who in this scenario act as project managers, must match certain facts of students' life. Parameters worth considering here include the following:

How often and for how long can I expect my students to work on a project? It is preferable to start with a more lenient deadline policy, and change it according to needs, rather than face project failure due to an unrealistic overambitious approach.

Is my project in tune with the academic calendar and are the key dates known to the client? It is highly unrealistic to engage in projects whose realization will require students' participation during periods of intensive study, like the end of the semester.

Does my project allow for the fact that students make mistakes? However trivial this statement seems, project managers must realize that inexperienced collaborators are prone to making mistakes, which, after all, makes it even more worthwhile to launch such a project! Allowing them to participate, we in fact expect them to make mistakes, as this is the only way to their empowerment.

Is my project equipped with flexible and comprehensive assessment tools?

These tools should help facilitators to use students' mistakes as a source of empowerment in contrast to the frequent practice of using marks to disempower students. Project assessment was carried out by facilitators with the help of a comprehensive set of parameters ranging from lexical accuracy to collaboration skills and reliability. This system of assessment may indeed appear strictly transmissionist, yet only marking seen as an end in itself fosters disempowerment. Assessment in a systemic perspective, by contrast, serves as the departure point for further practice. Hence in the Lublin City Office project students received continuous feedback, and they were asked for their own opinions on whether they perceived the assessment process to be helpful for their own intellectual and professional development.

Make sure all project participants know their responsibilities.

This is another aspect of project management that potentially sounds obvious. Nevertheless, it is the authors' advice to take great care when thinking about assigning roles in the project (the scaffolding), and to find ways to explain these responsibilities to the project participants effectively. Worth pointing out is that this sphere of project management should also be arranged with the view to empowering all the collaborators. For example, in the Lublin project the role of proofreaders was originally bestowed on the facilitators. In this years' version it has been passed on to the representative of our client (working in cooperation with us as regards feedback and assessment). In this way, the whole project has come closer to a professional translator's job. In fact, this modification resembles very much the change from Figure 1 to Figure 2 above: the facilitator ceases to be the central figure in the process, a change which offers a wider space for students' development. Nonetheless, the role of the facilitator in the project is far from marginal, as this situation is perhaps a perfect illustration of what creating a scaffolding can look like. That is to say, the facilitator's main scaffolding tasks in the project include:

- helping students (translators and team leaders) as well as facilitators understand their roles by briefing them about critical situations and coping strategies at critical junctions,
- helping students and facilitators to communicate effectively,

- helping students and facilitators assess the work of the others,
- helping translators understand the assessment: discussing feedback from facilitators, team leaders and the client representative (weekly meetings are held for that purpose),
- helping students and facilitators develop their improvement strategies.

Apart from the ideas of empowerment and transgressionism, this case study broadly tallies with the theory of communicative action (see section 3 above). The project is designed to encapsulate a more or less hierarchy-free and systemic approach with a strong focus on collaboration and mutual assessment. This can be seen to—however utopian this might sound—approximate an 'ideal speech situation' in which assessment is not passed down from above: rather, agreements arise through force of the most rational arguments. This close relation between a philosophical stance and pedagogical practice is another asset that the project displays.

4.2 United States: Community Translation at Luther Luckett Correctional Center

4.2.1 Operational Framework

The instructor of a graduate level translation seminar received a request from a local non-profit organization, the Luther Luckett Correctional Center, to translate a series of documents that outlined the procedures for such matters as inmate dress code and possessions to Spanish. The instructor asked her students to undertake said translation as the culminating project of a semester class on the theory and practice of translation. This course is the only translation course offered as part of an M.A. in Spanish at the University of Louisville. The students were roughly split between native speakers of Spanish and native speakers of English. Class met weekly for two hours and forty-five minutes.

4.2.2 Theoretical Assumptions

This project began as a transmissionist one. The instructor accepted the translation before the semester began without consulting her students. She then divided the documents according to length and perceived difficulty for execution in groups of various sizes within the class. She arranged a schedule to conform to the semester system and assigned a value to the project according to the grading criteria.

However, once the project was presented to the students a move towards transactionist pedagogy began. Students formed their own groups and picked a document or group of documents to complete. They decided how to divide up their document(s) among group members and set a deadline for completion of a first draft. Of course, the teacher was still taking the lead at this point. She suggested that each group appoint an editor who would not be responsible for translating a text but would rather edit each part of the text and combine them into an acceptable whole. She suggested further that the editors from each section meet as a group to discuss common concerns. Still, cooperation among students was the central feature at this stage in the project. Students communicated through meetings on campus or via Internet discussion boards. They set smaller deadlines within the larger semester framework.

4.2.3 Project Realization

Once the trainer handed the project off to her students, a genuine transformation was initiated. Students were responsible for obtaining knowledge and for examining it critically. For example, they used dictionaries on the Web and in the law library. They also found parallel texts that served as models. At this stage in the project, the teacher moved to the background and became a facilitator. Students asked her at times about resources and deadlines, but more often they consulted each other about such information. In other words, students were responsible for building up a bank of knowledge that they would use to execute and test their translation.

When each group had finished an initial draft, the groups started to communicate among themselves. This began as a meeting of representative editors (as the instructor had suggested) but turned into a heated classroom discussion on terminology and its cultural implications. Such lively interchanges completely altered the original role of student

and teacher in a traditionally transmissionist classroom. The teacher became a listener as the participants debated such fundamental terms as "prisoner," based upon their research and personal experience. Since about half the students were native Spanish speakers, they weighed in on how penal concepts were translated in their particular region. One student had worked at a correctional facility in Spain and another had studied law so they each had personal experiences to apply. This step in the process involved not only the collection of information or even the construction of knowledge, but moreover collaborators debated how choosing one term over another might affect the treatment of individuals within the institution they were serving.

At this point in the pedagogical experience, the students commandeered the project and became co-collaborators in the process of critically evaluating and perfecting their documents. An important difference came to light here in comparison to other exercises within the graduate seminar. Students took ownership of the Luther Luckett project. Partly because they knew of its critical application in real world circumstances and partly because of their pride in their own work, they fought for a particular way of defining an offence or phrasing a policy.

After completing the translation project, the students became experts in their own right. No one else in the Commonwealth of Kentucky had translated a document for this correctional center before. When Luther Luckett asked us to continue with more documents, the graduate students became facilitators for the next phase of the project. Since there was no graduate translation seminar that semester, the project was assigned to an undergraduate class of Spanish majors. The class, a capstone course for Spanish majors, is meant to provide a culminating experience of linguistic review, skills assessment and career exploration. The instructor designed that semester's course to use translation to examine those three areas.

Because the skill level of the undergraduate learners was far ranging and the graduate facilitators only visited periodically, there was a slight regression from transgression to transformation. Graduate students and the professor facilitated completion of the project. They guided undergraduate apprentices in how to organize tasks and find information. Still, the undergraduates did their own research and produced a translation that was acceptable to the client. The Luther Luckett Correctional Center translation project

accomplished pedagogical goals that reached beyond the semester. First of all, graduate students became facilitators in an undergraduate classroom where they were required to test and deepen their knowledge of translation by sharing it. In addition, several of the students from both cohorts have gone on to use their translation skills in the real world. One graduate student recently started his own local translation business. The graduate seminar was his first exposure to the field and built up his confidence in his skills enough that he now uses them to make a living. An undergraduate student was so impressed by the impact of her in-class work that she went on to translate a website for a Guatemalan business owner. Another graduate student uses her organizational and linguistic skills that were honed in class as the Interpretation Coordinator for a local translation and interpretation firm. Perhaps this exemplifies transgression in the boldest sense, crossing from the classroom into the real world and leaving the instructor-novice roles behind.

4.3 Great Britain: Translation Theory in the Talkarena

4.3.1 Operational Framework

The final case study moves away from the realm of practical translator education. This part elaborates on how intellectual empowerment through transgression might be achieved by using the classroom as a kind of pedagogical 'arena:' learners discuss individual aspects of translation theory within a *Talkarena*. Unlike in the previous case studies, empowerment here has less clear-cut real-life effects, as the aim of this educational initiative is rather geared towards conversation-based transgression.

The 12-week final-year module Contemporary Translation Theories is part of the Translation Studies undergraduate curriculum at Aston University in Birmingham. The module forms part of a three-year curricular cycle moving from raising awareness of theoretical issues in line with practical training towards further consolidation of theoretical knowledge in the final year (Schäffner 2004: 123).[12]

[12] See also Nord's (2005: 215) suggestion to proceed via a 'pigtail method' in a four-year course, where a curriculum may begin "with a small portion of theory, which is then applied to practice, where the need of more theory becomes obvious, which is then satisfied by another portion of theory, and so on."

The critical-reflexive debate, the Talkarena, is an obligatory 'presentation' to pass the module and is thus the most important element of the conversational interaction in the classroom. As preparation, each week a group of students need to study the work of one influential translation theorist, whilst the 'school of thought' within which this theorist may be located constitutes the topic of the lecture as a whole. For example, when discussing functionalist translation theories, one group of students is asked to prepare a public discussion on Christiane Nord's ideas.

4.3.2 Theoretical Assumptions

The introduction of an assessed interactive debate was motivated by the common practice in many other modules requiring students to give an assessed presentation. In contrast to the rather static presentation format, a Talkarena offers the chance to move further into the transformationist realm, as not only do students receive immediate feedback from the educator, but also increasingly from the student audience. In pedagogic-theoretical terms, such a class debate indeed moves further along the continuum from social-constructivist principles to critical reflection, as students emerge as co-collaborators in the debate: the educator *and* the students 'erect' the scaffolding and normally tend to come to a common conclusion (see Table 1).

Despite a broadly social-constructivist pedagogy practiced at our department, such an approach still requires a good deal of awareness raising. Students still tend to bring in a rather passive attitude into the classroom, which is not least due to decades of transmissionist conditioning manifested in a predominance of monologic classroom interaction. Therefore, before the actual realization of the Talkarena, students are sensitized towards its key pedagogical—critical-reflexive—assumptions and are also given some general practical guidelines.

4.3.3 Project Realization

The practical guidelines are to provide students with an outline of the Talkarena's conventions, to give them some practical instructions, and to sensitize them to the notion of intellectual evolution.

Firstly, they are encouraged to always prepare with an eye to the real world, to the provision of examples, and to foresee a 'theory-light' debate. That is to say, they are told that during the Talkarena they need to make an effort to rephrase sometimes rather complex theories, such as for instance Toury's theory of norms, into a register which would also make sense to laypeople (the proverbial 'man in the street'). Propagating the Talkarena as collaboration amongst 'equals' further helps to alleviate anxieties, and also, at least in theory, simulates Habermas' ideal speech situation. Furthermore, by taking the edge off of heavy theoretical armor, students might 'transgress' towards an even more profound understanding and awareness of the wider political, cultural and ethical context of translation.

Secondly, after having chosen a particular translation theorist as a 'topic' in collaboration with the lecturer, each group is given some guiding questions in which they are asked to investigate the respective scholar's ideas, academic influences, and in turn his/her influence by the dominant intellectual climate of the time.

This last point then relates to the fact that a course on contemporary translation theories obviously needs, at least in a rudimentary fashion, to assist students in placing these theories into *context*. And probably the biggest challenge for any educator, especially concerning the teaching of undergraduates at British universities, is indeed to contextualise translation theories within the respective intellectual climate within which they emerged and by which they are shaped. For this reason, we undertake a small 'tour de force' on 'grand theories' (see Wodak 2001: 69 about this notion) such as structuralism, post-structuralism, or postmodernism in the first two seminars. Although these paradigm changes (see Kuhn 1970) are only treated in a very general fashion, at least some knowledge of them helps to broadly contextualize the translation theories explored during the module.

In this respect, and apart from the more practical professional transgressions outlined in the previous two case studies, intellectual transgression can simply be achieved by discussing postmodernism as a paradigm which 'deconstructs' fixed assumptions about questions of meaning, which, rather than being 'transferred' between languages, can be seen as 'negotiated' during the translation process. Consequently, any presumed stabilities such as rigid binarisms (e.g. good vs. bad translations, etc.) are being

questioned, just as the notion that there is a 'core' of meaning that must remain intact during the translation process. Here, Peter Newmark's essentialism (there is a core of meaning to be preserved) can be easily contrasted with for example the non-essentialist theories by Lawrence Venuti or Rosemary Arrojo.

The debate itself is staged like the classical 'fish-bowl' exercise (Race 2007: 135-136), as the debaters are encircled by the entire class. Classes normally include between 15 and 30 students, and the debaters are on average a group of three to four students including the educator. This setting in fact further substantiates the systemic approach: the educator, although in real terms being located in the inner circle, moves to the sidelines, while the operational barrier exemplified by the theoretical complexity regarding the notions to be discussed, is done away with through conversational classroom interaction (see Figures 1 and 2).

The student debaters always prepare a one-page handout for all to share. The Talkarena needs quite conscientious preparation, considering that students are forced to 'talk about' rather than 'present' their topic. This has interesting practical implications for at least at the beginning some students tend to slip back into the habit of simply reading aloud their notes. This is of course closely related to how well students are prepared, and bad preparation mostly prevents a lively and interesting debate from happening.

Hence, although a simulated debate is a welcome diversion from the rigid presentation format, the discussion sometimes regresses into monologic form, which however can sometimes, though not always, be remedied by encouraging the audience to jump in; although the audience does not have the same detailed knowledge on the respective theorist, they also read relevant articles beforehand. The Talkarena is an on-going project, and it is clear that there are still many ways of improvement. But increased dialogic interaction certainly is the way forward to critical-reflexive practice, even though transmissionist conditioning and sometimes simply bad preparation on the part of the students, may come in the way. But ultimately enhanced awareness of paradigms of knowledge in connection with 'down to earth' reflection on complex theoretical concepts may indeed lead to intellectual empowerment through transgression.

5 Some Conclusions

As we have attempted to show, there is room in translation pedagogy for a new assessment of the roles of teacher and learner. For example, Habermas' project outlines a critical-moral framework for life in late modernity, and his concept of communicative action in particular has been adopted by education theorists. When the instructor becomes a facilitator, and perhaps eventually even a fellow collaborator with students to create and execute projects, life-long and intrinsically-motivated learning can take place. Such a model reduces some of the constraints typically found in a classroom by moving the learning process into the real world where challenges abound and success or failure happens independently of any grading procedures. By encouraging students to think critically about both theory and practice, the facilitator prepares learners for real-life situations that will be both unpredictable and unique. At the same time, collaborators practice skills that can be applicable to future situations.

Of course, in attempting to move from a more transmissionist classroom to a transgressionist one, the facilitator may fall back on old techniques. For example, in both the case of the Lublin City Office project and the Luther Luckett Correctional Center, the instructors set up the exchange and made any initial arrangements. However, progress through the pedagogical philosophies described above can take place in the course of one class module or project. For example, in the case of Luther Luckett, students in an initially transmissionist environment became collaborators while the facilitator simply observed.

The Lublin City Office project demonstrates how using real world assessment can boost skill acquisition. When the original deadlines did not work because tutors could not manage the unrealistic workload, city officials stepped up and offered their own translation quality control. An individual's decision to accept or reject a document based on the quality of work could prove much more effective than a grade arbitrarily assigned by an instructor according to standard criteria. Students learned about time management and editing and built confidence in their own abilities.

Perhaps more than any other, the case of Talkarenas to introduce translation theory as an alternative to the more rigid class presentations shows how the traditional notion of a translation classroom can be transformed. When facilitators trust students enough to

give up their central role and allow them instead to become collaborators, individuals get a better chance to digest complex information and in turn make it their own. The process of explaining and debating (as we saw in the Luther Luckett project as well) empowers students to use knowledge in practical situations. As collaborators, students mold stodgy theoretical concepts into their own emerging understanding and in doing so create a philosophy about translation theory and how it can be useful to them. Most importantly, they greet this new information and debating experience with a new critical-reflexive attitude.

Such leaps in translation pedagogy and practice require a great deal of faith. Faith into the own abilities, capabilities and competences as a translation educator, faith that the learner will indeed take the learning process into his or her own hands, and ultimately, faith that when our collaborators eventually cross the threshold into the real world his or her skills and critical-reflexive aptitudes will prevail.

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