WestminsterResearch

http://www.westminster.ac.uk/westminsterresearch

Teaching Intercultural Competence in Translator Training

Tomozeiu, D., Koskinen, K. and D'Arcangelo, A.

Teaching Intercultural Competence in Translator Training

Daniel Tomozeiu*, Kaisa Koskinen** and Adele D'Arcangelo***

* University of Westminster, London, UK

** University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu, Finland

*** University of Bologna, Forlì Campus, Italy

ABSTRACT

In this position paper we define an interculturally competent translator as one that demonstrates a high level of intercultural knowledge, skills, attitude and flexibility throughout his or her professional engagements. We argue that to attain this goal in translator training intercultural competence needs to be introduced into the curriculum explicitly and in a conceptually clear manner. In this article we provide an overview of earlier attempts at discussing the role of intercultural communication in translator training curricula and we discuss the various pedagogical and practical challenges involved. We also look at some future challenges, identifying increasing societal diversity as both a source of added urgency into intercultural training and a challenge for traditional biculturally based notions of translators' intercultural competence and we argue for the central role of empathy. Finally, and importantly, we introduce the contributions to the special issue.

Keywords: intercultural competence, translator training, pedagogical development, competence models

1. Introduction

In 2010, the guest editors and their colleagues from six European Universities involved in translator training set out to develop a proposal for a coherent framework for teaching intercultural competence to future translators. The project was titled Promoting Intercultural Competence in Translators (PICT), and it resulted in a framework document, proposed curriculum and some suggested materials for teaching and assessment (http://www.pictllp.eu; see also Cranmer 2015). In this special issue we build on our experiences in the PICT project, and search further answers to the question of how intercultural competence (IC) can be taught, learned and assessed in translator training. In this introductory article we approach the question in a global manner: we aim to define what intercultural competence is in general, and more importantly, what we can understand it to be for translators in particular; we

1

provide an overview of earlier attempts at discussing the role of intercultural communication in translator training curricula; we discuss the various pedagogical and practical challenges involved, and, importantly, we introduce the contributions to this issue.

Intercultural studies and translator and interpreter training are both among the most popular themes in Translation Studies (TS) publications. According to a recent bibliometric analysis (Zanettin, Saldanha & Harding 2015, 168), they ranked 3rd and 4th respectively[1] in terms of popularity among the 27 different topics listed in the TS abstracts database (TSA). In putting them together, we are thus tapping into a potentially rich and relevant area of research. The analysis (ibid, 171–174), however, also shows that while the number of publications on training has longitudinally remained fairly constant, those identified as being on intercultural studies witnessed a dramatic rise from less than 5% in 1997 to almost 20% in 2005, indicating an unparalleled growth of interest (see also fig. 10 on p. 174). In contrast, since 2005 the numbers are in decline (at 11 % in 2011, the end point of the analysis) although intercultural studies still ranks as the 4th.[2] These figures can be interpreted as a steady interest in both training issues and intercultural studies, but they also indicate that in Translation Studies literature views that were prevalent in intercultural communication research pre-2005 are likely to be more prominent than later approaches (see e.g. Piller 2011 for an overview of recent developments).

The numerical analysis of Zanettin et al. does not allow us to assess the prevalence of intercultural competence in research publications concerning training issues in particular, i.e. research situated in the spaces of overlap between the two above mentioned popular fields of study. Our literature surveys indicate that there is room for both updated conceptual and theoretical work and for reports on empirical studies in different training contexts. Competences required for successful translating have been listed by several scholars and institutions, but actual empirical research on how these competences are acquired during training is quite rare. It is thus no wonder that research-based training proposals addressing intercultural competence in particular are even rarer (for an exception see Yarosh 2015). Some well-known competence models and the role of intercultural competence in them will be addressed in section 3 below.

---

[1] The only categories that outnumber these two are 'literary translation' and 'translation theory'.

[2] Overcome by historical research.

Although research into how translators' intercultural competence is learned has so far been scarce, its relevance has been identified in actual training contexts, as stated for example in the EMT chart produced by the EMT expert group in 2009, or by the CIUTI profile (see section 3 for further details). In the PICT project, we conducted a situational survey on intercultural competence among translation teachers and students in seven European countries (PICT 2012b). Generally, the results showed high levels of awareness of intercultural issues both among teachers and students. A vast majority of respondents – among both students and teachers – considered intercultural competence to be crucially important for translators. A closer look at the survey results, however, reveals a mismatch between the level and content of IC reported by the teachers as being taught in translation classes and the level and content reported by students. This difference can partially be explained by the lack of a clear and comprehensive definition of intercultural competence for translators. If, as some of our contributors in this special issue mention, the debates around the exact definition and dimensions of the concept are beginning to settle, then this particular challenge would be overcome (see Kumpulainen and Tomozeiu's article in this volume). However, the survey findings could also point to a much more practical aspect: implicit rather than explicit IC teaching on translation modules. The large number of teachers who mentioned that they teach IC competences by using translation texts, and the comparatively lower level of students reporting IC teaching could indicate a prevalence of implicit teaching that may go unnoticed by the students. Moreover, only a small minority of the PICT respondents reported offering separate intercultural communication modules on their programmes. This embeddedness within other courses could be another indication of the implicit nature of the current approach. The authors recognize the value of discussing intercultural communication also implicitly, but would argue in favour of an approach that incorporates also explicit intercultural communication engagement.

Another potential area of misunderstanding concerns what intercultural competence is seen to consist of. The most important area was in many responses considered to be "general knowledge of 'Culture' (–e.g. institutions, politics, current affairs, religion, geography and the arts)."(PICT 2012b, 12) This emphasis on cultural knowledge is a traditional stronghold in many translator training institutions, and it is undoubtedly an essential building block also for cultural competence. However, it does not really tackle the element of 'inter', i.e. the idea of moving between two entities or residing in a hybrid space in-between or being able to adapt fluently to situations with coexisting cultural influences from various directions. It is

thus debatable whether and to what extent cultural competence and intercultural competence can be successfully merged conceptually. Overlap between cultural, cross-cultural and intercultural competence can also be found in many theoretical contributions (e.g. Kelly 2005, Katan 2009), but it might be advantageous, theoretically and for training purposes alike, to keep these elements analytically separate. This is true of intercultural studies in general, but one can argue that it is particularly relevant for translators, whose task is precisely to mediate between cultures. It has even been further argued that this mediating function also differentiates translators' intercultural competence from a general intercultural competence (Yarosh 2015, 161). It seems clear that in order to progress we also need to acquire improved conceptual consistency, so that researchers, teachers and students are clear about what is being taught, assessed and researched. In the hope of arriving at a more solid and widely acceptable definition of translators' intercultural competence, we devote one section (2) below to a conceptual discussion.

Conceptual clarity will have the added benefit of making intercultural competence more explicit and thus also more teachable than before (Cranmer 2015, 157). The better we understand what the competence entails and which sub-competences we can discern in it, the better we are able to address them in various learning environments. The core motivation for the PICT project was to support translation teachers by providing ready-made lesson plans and assessment tasks, and to base these materials on a solid theoretical framework (PICT 2012a; Cranmer 2015). In this issue we continue from where PICT left off, now with a more explicit research orientation. The PICT group was collectively able to come up with a varied set of lesson plans and tasks, and teachers from other institutions will undoubtedly innovate and develop many more adaptations. Although the project was based on a solid theoretical framework, the actual lesson plans largely built on practical experience and intuition. The contributions to this volume allow us to solidify the validity of our teaching efforts through additional research-based perspectives provided by the authors.

As a field, we are still in the process of identifying how and what the students learn and how that learning could be assessed. The complexity of what represents intercultural competence makes it particularly hard to assess. In the classroom, for example, teachers may confidently assess students' repertoires of particular politeness strategies. Teachers may also test student skills in using the strategies in various genres and communicative contexts, but they often have limited possibilities of assessing their skills at adapting to unique real-life situations.

Understanding and defining what exactly should be assessed still needs to be properly discussed to avoid, for instance, assessing curiosity and adaptability as personality traits rather than as potential individual competences to be developed and on which to build an intercultural approach to translation practice. More on the teaching of curiosity and adaptability in a translation context will be discussed in section 4.

2. Theoretical Perspectives on Intercultural Competence for Translators and its Components

Before addressing the issue of best practice in teaching and assessing IC for translators, we think it would be useful to briefly refer to some relevant theoretical considerations on how translation and intercultural communication are strongly interconnected and can be reciprocally understood. From a functionalist and communicative approach, translation is seen "as a process of intercultural communication, whose end product is a text which is capable of functioning appropriately in specific situations and contexts of use" (Schäffner 1996, 118). The communicative approach proposed by Schäffner, and the stress on the importance of the situations and context of use is also underlined by Heidrun Witte who expresses the need to relate and contrast cultures while aiming at producing appropriate behaviours, according to the needs and circumstances of a communicative situation to make communication between two parties possible. Witte also defines IC as the ability to consciously assimilate notions about one's own culture and other's cultures. Witte's approach highlights the significant cognitive experience students go through, which enables them to acquire this consciousness during the learning process. Enhancing this experience and fostering the development of this specific awareness and consciousness is the challenge that training for intercultural competence needs to master (Witte 2008, 143).

The awareness component is an element that Kelly (2005) also deems as crucial in the Intercultural Communication process. This process starts from cultural elements in the source-culture that can be represented in texts, but stress is also placed on the importance of students getting more acquainted with their own culture, an element often overlooked and implicit in translator training curricula. The importance of stressing the need for experts in the language sector to be competent in their own culture has often been highlighted by scholars training students in B Language classes, but we might expand this observation even more emphatically to the translation class where trainees are getting prepared to be

intercultural mediators between a B language and culture and their own A language and culture, so as to:

> raise students' awareness that knowledge of their own culture is always limited and that intercultural communication may require them to get a much broader and deeper knowledge base of their own culture than they would normally need within their "domestic" discourses. (Olk 2009, 9)

The IC that translators need to possess as well as the exchange process between the two cultures involved in the translation has been described, for example, by David Katan (2004) who introduces the concept of communication based on cultural frames. Katan's analysis defines each culture as a frame from/through which other cultures need to be interpreted, hence his concept of the translator as a cultural mediator. The approach a cultural mediator needs to demonstrate is further developed in Katan's more recent research in the field of translator's training:

> Intercultural competence addresses the motivation, the values and the beliefs involved when participating in another community. Hence it is the intercultural skills which will constrain or promote the imminent communicative abilities (Katan, 2009, 284).

Katan's pragmatic definition of intercultural communication for translators is also well condensed in the following statement: "In short, intercultural competence means being able to perceive and handle difference" (Katan, 2009, 284). Katan's approach to teaching intercultural communication in translators' training also stresses the different stages students go through, and how some specific abilities related to intercultural communication are to be taught especially at MA level, namely learning to be flexible and especially "the need to acquire competence in 'uncertainty management'" (Katan 2009, 295).

The role of translators as cultural mediators, capable of looking through the double perspectives of ST and TT and choosing how to translate challenging passages makes their IC essential for successful mediation during the communication process between the cultures involved. How to make this process happen in an effective way is underlined by Yarosh and Muies who point out the importance of "making students 'see behind words'" and suggest

that to achieve this in the classroom practicing skills as those of "comparing and relating cultures or verbalising cultural models" becomes crucial (2011, 45).

The necessity of building on a mediating competence is highlighted as the main difference between translators' IC and IC in general. Referring to Witte, Yarosh (2015, 163) states that "the essence of the competence – is the capacity to foresee the consequences of different translation strategies and choose the most appropriate one," thus stressing the translator's awareness of his/her role in the intercultural communication process. The delicate position of the translator is also considered from the perspective of the interpersonal competences as a necessary element of IC, that is, as stressed by Witte (2005, 54; as quoted in Yarosh), the mediators's task of compensating for the client's lack of IC. The essential focus on the interpersonal component of translators' IC has been well defined and detailed by the PICT research group: "What sets the PICT model apart from the others is its focus. While the TC models seem to conceptualize IC competence as a **translation** skill, the proposed model is built around the IC needs of the **translator**." (Tomozeiu & Kumpulainen in this volume; emphasis in the original). This shift from the skill to the human component of that skill is essential to define new trends in translators' training and pedagogical theory.

What scholars such as Katan, Kelly, Witte and Yarosh all seem to point out as essential is the idea of a three-step process for students: first they need to develop their ability to identify differences and nuances between the cultures involved in the translation process; this will require a high degree of reflection and self-analysis also. Second, they also need to develop conscious strategies for handling such differences; and third, learn to face and manage the consequences their choices might have in the process of transferring a ST to a target culture. To be able to identify and understand these differences, students need to develop a professional awareness and curiosity towards their own cultural background and the other cultures they operate with and to learn to 'professionalize' their skills and attitude. This will allow them to also function as professional mediators supporting their clients where needed.

In translator training the translator's IC consciousness needs to be enhanced considering all the steps a translation process involves:

- the initial interpersonal engagement with a potential client, when a translation commission/job is accepted,

- the contrastive and comparative textual analysis which will be based on translators' intercultural knowledge, awareness and self-awareness,
- the flexible negotiating of the translation decisions and strategies to be applied on a textual level, while being aware of theoretical considerations and of the consequences of the decisions made,
- the interpersonal engagement with the end users (through the translated text or direct contact) and the need to show adaptability as well as a clear consciousness towards the mediating activity and intercultural communication that is taking place.

To sum up, in the view of the authors **an interculturally competent translator is one who demonstrates a high level of intercultural knowledge, skills, attitude and flexibility throughout his or her professional engagements.**

The topic of IC training for translators is occupying a central position on the agenda of various translation research groups across Europe and beyond. One only has to look at prolific research groups such as PACTE, to see the evolution of this highly complex topic. Tomozeiu and Kumpulainen in their article for this special issue point to a number of different approaches and competence models that have been developed in this area. In the article they identify a potential "settling phase" for this research agenda. Whether we have reached this phase or not is open to discussion, but in any case the following theoretical considerations need to be present in future developments:

- Which IC sub-competences are relevant for professional translators?
- What is the optimal balance between IC as a textual competence and IC as an interpersonal competence?
- Given the practical nature of the translation, what is the appropriate theoretical basis on which to conceptualize IC sub-competences?

In the European context, the European Master of Translation (EMT) is a significant structuring and institutionalizing element of translator training, as European training providers need to fulfil its overt and covert expectations and ideologies to qualify for its stamp of approval. It is thus not insignificant how translator competences are being defined in the EMT framework. In their diagram of competences, intercultural competence is subdivided into two competences, sociocultural and textual, and a clear emphasis is placed on

the knowledge component in both (Gambier 2009). While there is no denying that textual skills are fundamental to translation as a text-based and socioculturally embedded activity, one can argue that this traditional understanding overlooks both a theoretical or meta-level knowledge and, importantly, interpersonal and reflexive elements.

In our view, intercultural competence consists of not only knowledge but also skills and attitudes (PICT 2012a), and as such it also cuts across the various sub-competences of professional translation. We agree with Yarosh (2015, 161) that it is difficult to separate intercultural competence from other competences. One reason for the difficulty may be that it is embedded into several if not all of them (which may explain why it tends to be taught implicitly and blended with other course contents). Returning to the EMT model, it could be argued that the diagram should actually be redrawn, putting intercultural competence in the middle, as it is a necessary ingredient for all others: successful translation requires that bilingual linguistic competence in A and B is complemented with an ability to perform crosslinguistic comparisons and to mediate between two language systems; information literacy presupposes an awareness of cultural conventions and an ability to perform crosscultural comparisons; technological competence requires translators to cross the divide between hard and soft sciences (we agree that we may be stretching the point here); thematic competence necessarily entails an understanding of professions and fields as communities of practice, with their professional cultures, and finally and importantly, in translation service provision – the core component of the EMT model –   intercultural skills are crucially important in terms of crossborder and multicultural work relations typical for the translation industry.

3. Pedagogical and Operational Considerations

If we accept the claim of the omnipresence of the intercultural competence in all translation-related tasks, the question of how to teach this all-encompassing competence becomes all the more pressing. For the time being, IC's knowledge-based and skills-based elements appear to be better addressed in the classroom than the interpersonal dimension (PICT 2012b). However there are several significant areas that in the view of the authors require more attention:

- reflexivity towards one's own culture
- attitudes: how to teach and how to assess as IC sub-competences
- the shift from translation competence to translator's competence

- integration of translation theory and IC theoretical approaches
- the level of explicitness of IC teaching in the classroom
- integration of classroom and out-of-the-classroom IC activities
- fostering curiosity and adaptability as translator competences

The teaching of intercultural competence on translation programmes has been mainly done through text-based activities. The results of the PICT survey (PICT 2012b) indicate a clear reliance on text-based approaches in teaching IC. These approaches are certainly valuable to translation students as they increase the awareness of the strong links between translation and intercultural communication. However, these text-based approaches are, in the view of the authors, far from sufficient. In order to ensure not only an enhanced level of IC understanding but the development of the full range of IC sub-competences, a range of pedagogical approaches and activities are needed. The competence levels developed within different competence models (see, for example PICT 2012a or Yarosh 2015) clearly indicate the need for activities going beyond text-based approaches.

While the area of IC for translators teaching has been moving up the agenda, with the number of research and pedagogical projects increasing in recent years, not the same can be said about IC testing and assessment in translation programmes. This conclusion was also supported by the finding of the PICT survey (PICT 2012b). Further discussion of what to test and how to test it will have to follow as part of the pedagogical development.

The centrality of the learner, the future professional, in designing and delivering educational programmes has been acknowledged both by the policy community (eg. Institute of Education, 2013) and the academic community (eg. Entwistle 2010). It was due to this shift of emphasis that the PICT consortium argued in 2012 (PICT, 2012a) that the focus of competence models also needs to shift from intercultural communication translation competence to intercultural communication translator competences. A similar approach has been taken by Yarosh (2015) who has included two specific learning dimensions focussing on the translator (learning dimensions 5 and 6) in her competence model.

Despite the fact that translation is a practical endeavour and the importance of IC sub-competences, that is, skills and performance, therefore crucially important, the relevance of the theoretical underpinning should not be underestimated. Translation theory and

intercultural communication theory can reinforce each other in a classroom setting. However, until now, theoretical cross-breeding has been fairly limited, and although translating is within translation studies generally understood as a practice related to intercultural communication, approaches directly linking TS theories with intercultural communication theories have been scarce. The same can be said of intercultural communication literature which has not traditionally engaged extensively with translation issues. The development of appropriate pedagogical materials for this theoretical cross-over, providing students with a solid theoretical underpinning for their professional development, is therefore another important research direction.

The extensive culturally oriented TS research tradition, with its numerous case studies from different cultural and historical contexts (for an overview see, e.g., Tymoczko 2007, Part II) offers a wealth of material for interculturally oriented readings, but the links to intercultural communication theories often remain implicit and need to be made transparent to aid students' learning processes. To use the terminology of second language acquisition: learning, as opposed to acquisition, requires explicit engagement with concepts and processes (Krashen 1988). We would like to advocate for an approach that makes learning outcomes explicit and that encourages the students to reflect on what they are learning and how this will serve them in their professional life. This should be done not only in order to encourage self-reflection and autonomous learning, but it should also be seen as a step towards encouraging students to become reflective practitioners in the future.

Finally, an important finding of the PICT survey was the belief among translation students that they are enhancing their IC outside class through activities such as reading foreign authors, travelling, watching foreign movies and reading websites in other languages. Globalization and digitalization have made these activities more accessible than before. Given the new challenges to translation training due to superdiversity on one hand (see section 5 below) and education budget cuts on the other, teachers should be encouraged to take advantage of the IC enhancing activities students undertake outside class and to potentially incorporate some of these activities in their learning activities. The development of curricula and pedagogical materials that encourage the "blending" of in class and out of class activities can, in the view of the authors, lead to positive learning outcomes.

Indeed, the development of curriculum structures as well as teaching and assessment materials should consider learning as it takes place both in class and out of class, both in structured contexts and in more informal ones (see eg. Werquin 2007). Given the high number of students that have identified IC sub-competences as an area that they are actively developing outside their translation classes, and the increasing opportunities for them to do so, it becomes important for translation teachers to reflect upon the opportunities and challenges that non-formal and informal learning in this area can bring. In an ideal education context the formal curriculum and educational experience in the classroom will dove-tail the non-formal and informal learning that occurs outside classroom. This is currently widely accepted in relation to work-related skills, and students' job placements and internships are currently being promoted as best practice by institutions such as the EMT. These placements will also provide opportunities for reflexion on intercultural skills and attitudes, but we also argue for a more conscious engagement with students' informal intercultural experiences. Besides the immediate obvious learning advantages, such an approach that acknowledges learning opportunities beyond the structured classroom environment can stimulate both a reflective approach to learning, which in turn conducts to the development of reflective professionals, and an inclination towards continuous learning whether it is Continuing Professional Development (CPD) or in a less structured format.

Curiosity and adaptability are extremely important for both IC and translation, and should be dedicated a significant amount of time in the classroom. Both competencies are recognized in intercultural communication literature. Curiosity is a complex instinctual concept, but it is also a competency that can be identified and developed. Humphrey (2007) applies the model developed by Byram et al (1997) and defines curiosity and openness as "a willingness to relativise one's own values, beliefs and behaviours, not to assume that they are the only possible and naturally correct ones" (Humphrey 2007, 27). While this competence can be applied directly to language acquisition and verbal exchanges, it is no less relevant for translators. Curiosity about understanding the environment in which the source text has been created or the environment in which the target text will be engaged, are just some of the skills that need honing during translation classes. It can be argued that a high level of curiosity about the cultural and linguistic dimensions of a specific environment becomes even more crucial in the case of languages with a wide circulation and geographical spread, as well as in the case of historical text translation.

Teaching and assessment activities can be designed in translation classes in order to support the development of this IC sub-competence. For example, students can be encouraged to consider different sources for better understanding a particular cultural context. The ability to engage appropriately with both classical research sources (i.e. libraries and printed sources) as well as with more modern ones (i.e. specialized research engines and information in digital format) is an important skill which all translators need to develop and constantly maintain. At the same time teachers might want to include activities such as audience visualization techniques as part of their pedagogical approach. This will encourage students to develop their capacity to decentre, their ability to consider and understand a different perspective (for more on the capacity to decentre, see eg. Byram 1997, 38). Recent work in the area of user-centred translation has demonstrated the importance of audience visualization techniques (Suojanen et al 2015). A high level of engagement with the cultural context in which the source text and the target text exist can be fostered through activities that acknowledge curiosity as a characteristic going beyond instinct and recognize it as a constantly evolving competence.

Indeed, as discussed by Katan, intercultural communication should be considered as a "metacognitive ability" for which being bicultural is not sufficient: "Students need to know 'why', and justify translation decisions" (Katan 2009, 289). Referring to Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive domains (1957), Katan underlines the necessity for students at postgraduate level to handle their competencies knowing "how" they will be approaching a translation in a specific way and "why", hence constantly reconsidering and negotiating their perceptual position and mediation competencies. Katan also gives examples of teaching techniques that can be used to develop students' creative options when dealing with translating the message of a text, taking into consideration the target reader's "toleration cline" (Katan 2008, 294). The intercultural skills will be developed as the trainee becomes more able to mindshift from the source text and culture into the context of the target culture (Katan 2008, 294).

The deeper understanding of the cultural context in which the texts function has to be utilized by the translator for the purposes of their translation process. This is why adaptability has been recognized, under different names, as a crucial IC sub-competence. The WorldWork model calls it "Flexibility" and defines three of its components (WorldWork 2008); the advantages and disadvantages of this particular approach have been discussed in detail by Spencer-Oatey (2009, 76-79). Other authors chose to call the concept Tolerance for

ambiguity (Lustig et al 2008, 76) and consider it as one of the eight dimensions needed in order to become culturally competent. Without disregarding the different understandings of the concept as seen by different theorists, the current paper argues that flexibility and adaptability are indeed key intercultural competences and as such they are relevant for translators.

In the classroom the lecturer can design a number of teaching and assessment activities that can help the development of this particular competence. A number of PICT materials were developed to address this need (PICT 2012c). For example, activities around requesting the same text translated for different audiences can help with developing adaptability. At the same time, asking the students to consider what other forms of communication besides text could be suitable in order to render the message of the source text appropriate for the target audience (i.e. drawings, short videos) can encourage them to reflect on the available options and to adapt their approach to best suit a particular translation project.

4. New Challenges
Recent global developments have added a layer of new expectations, as intercultural language work – translation included – often becomes more complex due to what has recently been discussed under the title of superdiversity, that is, the increased linguistic, ethnic and cultural hybridity of our societies and also of the individuals inhabiting them (Blommaert 2010, 2013; Blommaert and Rampton 2011). Translators have long been identified as a hybrid professional group, characterized by bicultural (or multicultural) identities and diverse cultural affinities, but in an increasingly transnational world also source-text writers and target readers are more often than not similarly hybrid with fluid identities. This also bears on how they write and on what they wish to read. To function competently in increasingly superdiverse contemporary contexts, translators need to be trained to approach their professional practice reflexively and to adapt their behaviour in an agile manner (see also Koskinen 2015).

To cater for this new challenge of superdiversity, translation pedagogy needs to move away from ideas of distributing know-how and should be developed into directions that enhance students' abilities for continuous intercultural learning, i.e. to developing their "ability to gain, adjust and apply cultural and linguistic knowledge in real-time communication" (Messelink & ten Thije 2012, 81). In addition to tapping in on their existing cultural

knowledge, the students also need to enhance their sensitivity and flexibility to adjust and to adapt to new and unexpected situations, as well as do develop their creativity in finding new solutions to unforeseen communicative situations. To foster this sensibility and flexibility, teachers can create opportunities for practicing empathy, that is, the ability to identify, understand and relate to the emotions of others. The crucial importance of empathy has been best recognized in the field of community interpreting (e.g., Merlini, 2015), but we argue that it is a necessary and teachable skill in written translation as well. There are a number of methods to achieve this. For example, literary translation which is often a well-liked genre for students, can be employed for this purpose by selecting source texts which force students to step into worlds alien to them: translating a monologue by an elderly character, for example, will allow young students to internalize a glimpse of the ways of thinking of a representative of a different generation.

Empathy is, perhaps somewhat counter-intuitively, becoming even more relevant than before due to recent rapid developments in translation technology. Computers are becoming more and more apt in tackling routine translation tasks and will eventually take over those where the stakes on emotional dissonance are low, but artificial intelligence is not yet able to deal with the sensitivity and empathy required for successful multilingual communication in superdiverse and emotionally charged contexts. This is an area where human translators will still be needed for the foreseeable future as also stated by Katan who discusses how the role of machine translation and of web translator communities will grow and become more and more accepted in the future. The role of the translator will then need to be reconsidered as that of a "transcreator" that is, a professional in the translation industry who will need to show the very "human ability to mediate, to account for the implicit, the cultural distance, and all the other factors that are involved in communication" (Katan, 2016 forthcoming). In the final analysis, translators who are aware of their role in risk-taking and capable of considering "the impact of cultural distance when translating" will necessarily have been trained to develop their IC for being prepared to negotiate all the challenges of a globalized society and market, in which showing empathy for Otherness is ever more crucial. Emphasizing empathy, we also return to a perennial question in translation: power. No-one working across interlingual and intercultural relations can ignore the issues of hierarchy, hegemony and cultural, political or economic status of both entire lingua-cultures and their individual users. Translating and interpreting enter – or as it may be for those with low status

and limited resources, fail to enter – a scene of existing power differentials, and it may sometimes be the translators' explicit task to either highlight or alleviate these differences. The received professional understanding of translation tends to paint a positive picture of translators as harmonious bridge builders, but we also know that translation can create or exacerbate hierarchies. As Yajima and Toyosaki (2015, 101) summarize, translation is a participant in the global hegemony of languages. Issues of power have long been discussed in translation studies; Yajima and Toyosaki argue for linking this tradition to critical intercultural studies. They identify reflexive selfhood as the vocal element of critical intercultural studies that we need to integrate into our thinking of translation (103):

> Translators who (1) narrate their cultural identity, (2) situate their cultural identity in history, and (3) see their cultural identity as a site of possible transformation, can no longer see their professions as merely replacing text in one language with the text of another. [---] Reflexive translators come to know how their cultural identities are implicated in the process of translating and world-making; that is, participating in the global hegemony of languages, global economy, global circulation of knowledge. In narrating their coming to know, reflexive translators can identify both the good and the bad and that which sits between.

The reflexive translators that Yajima and Toyosaki foresee as the outcome of an engagement with critical intercultural studies may well be the direction of future translator training as well. Constantly shifting professional and intercultural terrains will require translators to develop a flexible and adaptable character, and they will need to enhance their skills of constant critical re-evaluation. Importantly, Yajima and Toyosaki (ibid, 104–105) emphasize that this reflexivity is not a solipsistic endeavour but inherently dialogical and intersubjective, and is based on collaboratively negotiating realities through relating with others. It may well be that our most important pedagogical aim is to foster this reflexivity, and that it should be fostered in teachers and students alike.

5. Conclusion

The articles included in this special issue highlight a variety of aspects on developing intercultural competence in translators. Their particular take on the current debates in this lively research area, as well as their contribution is discussed later in this section. For the guest editors of this special issue this introductory article provides a space to develop a

position paper on some core issues. First, the guest editors are firm believers in the importance of teaching IC to translators using a solid conceptual/theoretical approach. Both translation studies and intercultural communication studies have rich, and sometimes complex, theoretical traditions. Translation students can really benefit from being made aware of the connections between these two traditions. Translation is a practical profession that draws upon a large and multi-dimensional body of theory. At the same time intercultural communication, too, has grown to include a large number of different theoretical perspectives. Some of these perspectives are highly relevant for translators, as mentioned above and as discussed in detail by authors such as Katan (both 2004 and 2008). By showing students how the theory of translation studies and the theory of intercultural communication are dove-tailing one another and together create a solid theoretical platform for translation practice, they can be encouraged to become more knowledgeable, more reflexive professionals.

As the issue of IC for translators has moved up the research and pedagogical agenda, a number of competence models have been put forward. These were elaborated either by professional bodies such as the European Masters in Translation (EMT) committee of experts or by interested research groups (PACTE, PICT, etc.). It is the firm belief of the guest editors that each of these competence models has a positive contribution to make to this unfolding research and pedagogical agenda. Due to the different academic cultures and professional contexts within which they were created, each of these models will inevitably have a particular focus and perspective. On a very basic level, all these models have further pushed the development of a dynamic debate on IC in translation. They also highlight the variety of dimensions of this debate. Furthermore, they offer the opportunity to the interested teacher and student to reflect on their teaching and learning practices and to amend them accordingly. Whether one or a number of competence models will become predominant in the field is still to be seen. However, if that happens, it will now be after a healthy theoretical, practical and pedagogical debate.

Pedagogical aspects are very much at the core of this research agenda and have often grounded and guided it. In our view this is a healthy approach as the developments in this area must reflect best practice in classrooms across the globe. Classroom interactions, as well as market requirements, have to inform the development of competence models as much as the competence models have to inform and influence classroom interactions. It is through this

symbiotic relationship that this research and pedagogical agenda will continue to develop. Pedagogical issues should be discussed and addressed openly within the context of this research agenda. Some of these issues might be culture-specific, others might be more generic, while others still might be triggered by the latest developments in teaching and learning (for example the ever increasing use of CAT tools in translation training) or in professional practice. It is important to acknowledge that this symbiotic relation should continue to inform future developments of the research agenda.

Finally, we would like to signal our attachment to a translator rather than to translation. In line with some recent vocal proposals to "humanize" translation studies research (Pym 2009) or even to develop a human-centered branch of translator studies (Chesterman 2009), we argue for a similar emphasis in the area of intercultural competence. Given the centrality of pedagogy as detailed above, the focus of any developments in this area, competence models included, has to be on the translator/translator student. Only a translator-focussed approach will ensure the suitability of the competence models and the respective teaching and assessment materials developed to teach the sub-competences. As best pedagogical practice suggests a student-centred approach, a focus on the (future) translator rather than on the translation process or product is, in the view of the guest editors, the best way forward.

Introduction to the Articles

In the article authored by Daniel Tomozeiu and Minna Kumpulainen the focus rests on the operationalization of IC for the translation course. The strength of the article is its solid and critical reflection on translation competence models, reflecting specifically on how intercultural competence is addressed (or not) in these models. Two of the more recent models, PICT and Yarosh, are compared and contrasted. The authors highlight the different, yet equally positive, contribution each of these competence models makes. Moving from models and learning objectives to pedagogical practice the article uses two PICT-produced pedagogical materials as examples in order to illustrate the type of classroom IC-developing activities that can be built around them. The tasks of these two sets of materials and their desired impact are discussed in detail in order to provide the reader with a clear sense of how operationalization would work in a translation classroom context. Given the fast-moving research agenda in IC for translators, taking stock and comparing existing competence models, as well as reflecting on the type of materials and activities that can be developed

18

based on these models, are both worthwhile activities.

Xiangdong Li's contribution to this volume provides an interesting example of how to concretely include intercultural communication components in translation courses. The author describes a project that involves the use of students' needs analysis obtained through an online survey. The 2 questionnaires distributed to 54 students were elaborated following the example of the PICT EU-based macro level survey as a possible starting point for academic course design. In analysing results the author shows that some of the elements suggested by PICT as fundamental are to be considered universal, while other elements need to be considered according to specific cultural and pedagogical contexts. The most interesting aspect of this theoretical approach is highlighting the importance of local needs in the elaboration of pedagogical models for promoting IC in translators' training.

The article by Erik Angelone describes how intercultural competence in translation can be empirically documented and assessed using a process-oriented methodology consisting of juxtaposed screen recording and think-aloud data. Basing his research on Byram's intercultural communicative competence model (1997), Angelone presents the results of a small-scale pilot study exemplifying how various facets of intercultural competence are manifested in contexts involving M.A.-level student translation of a German text into U.S. English. The author's research belongs to the empirical approach in documenting intercultural communication in translation. The strength of this article lies in elaborating a process oriented approach to translator training, able to underline how empirical observation data can help a critical development towards a more structured progress of pedagogical guidelines in the field of teaching IC for translators. The article is very useful in describing how juxtaposing screen recording methodology and the results obtained in checking students weaknesses can help the trainers in identifying which elements to address, and which aspects, modules and courses can result as more effective in fostering IC in translator training.

In their article, Amparo Hurtado Albir and Christian Olalla-Soler engage with the complex issue of assessing the acquisition of cultural competence in translator training. More specifically they propose a number of procedures that would help teachers in achieving this. The authors first define cultural competence and based on the definition they point to the role

of translator training as enabling students "to use appropriate documentation sources effectively, and to have sufficient knowledge to identify cultural references corresponding to the source culture and the necessary abilities to transfer them to the target culture in line with a translation brief." Based on this approach they develop a number of assessment procedures that enable the teacher to check and measure student progress. The paper contains a number of rich and systematically described assessment methods. Sample texts containing cultural references, translations, translation reports and cultural knowledge questionnaires are just some of the several assessment options discussed here. The paper concludes with a synoptic table that identifies assessment tasks and indicators for the different IC sub-competences.

Sara Castagnoli's article provides a theoretical link between translation studies and intercultural studies. Her article addresses the textual dimensions of intercultural competence as it analyses the frequency and nature of the use of connectives (interclausal linkage) and the way they contribute to providing text-coherence in different languages. Using English and Italian as the language pair she demonstrates the different use of these connectives. Her argument that the use of connectives is one of the linguistic-cultural aspects that should be explicitly taught on translation courses supports the arguments about explicitness made by several authors in this special issue. Knowledge of pragmalinguistic conventions and the ability to adapt text structure to fit the target culture is one of the skills to be developed on translation programmes.

References

Blommaert, Jan. 2010. *The Socioliguistics of Globalization.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Blommaert, Jan. 2013. *Ethnography, Superdiversity and Linguistic Landscapes. Chronicles of Complexity*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Blommaert, Jan and Ben Rampton 2011. "Language and Superdiversity." *Diversities* 13(2): 1–22. www.unesco.org/shs/diversities/vol13/issue2/art1 (29.7.2015).

Bloom, B., Englehart, M. Furst, E., Hill, W., & Krathwohl, D. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals. Handbook I: Cognitive*

Domain. New York, Toronto: Longmans, Green.

Byram, M. 1997. *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence.*
Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Chesterman, Andrew. 2009. "The Name and Nature of Translator Studies," *Hermes – Journal of Language and Communication Studies* no 42: 13–22.

Cranmer, Robin 2015. "Introducing Intercultural Communication into the Teaching of Translation." *Russian Journal of Linguistics*, 23(4): 155–174.

Entwistle, N, J Christensen Hughes J. and J Mighty. 2010. "Taking Stock: An Overview of Research Findings." *Research on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 15-51.
http://www.research.ed.ac.uk/portal/en/publications/taking-stock-an-overview-of-research-findings%288314ceb7-86dd-4c32-8e3f-ea5955df2ae8%29.html (accessed 25.04.2016)

Gambier, Yves. 2009. "Competences for Professional Translators, Experts in Multilingual and Multimedia Communication", EMT Group.
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/programmes/emt/index_en.htm (accessed 27.04.2016)

Humphrey, Donna. 2007. *Intercultural Communicative Competence.* CILT.
https://www.llas.ac.uk/resources/paper/1303 (accessed 14 March 2016)

Institute of Education. 2013. *Effective Learning and Teaching in UK Higher Education.*
http://www.tlrp.org/pub/documents/UKHEfinal.pdf (accessed 22.01.2016)

Koskinen, Kaisa. 2015. "Training Translators for a Superdiverse World. Translators' Intercultural Competence and Translation as Affective Work." *Russian Journal of Linguistics* 23(4): 175–184.

Katan, David (2004) Translating Cultures. St. Jerome Publishing, Manchester, 2nd edition.

Katan, David. 2008. "Translation as Intercultural Communication." In *The Routledge Companion to Translation Studies*, edited by Jeremy Munday, London and New York:

Routledge.

Katan, David. 2009. "Translator Training and Intercultural Competence." In *La ricerca nella communicazione interlinguistica. Modelli teorici e metodologici,* edited by Stefania Cavagnoli, Elena Di Giovanni and Raffaela Merlini, 282–301. Milan: Franco Angeli.

Katan, David. (to appear). "Translation at the Cross-roads: Time for the Transcreational turn?", Forthcoming in *Perspectives*
Krashen, Stephen D. 1988. *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*. New-Jersey: Prentice-Hall International.

Messelink, Annelies and Jan D. ten Thije. 2012. "Unity in Super-diversity: European Capacity and Intercultural Inquisitiveness of the Erasmus Generation 2.0." *Dutch Journal of Applied Linguistics* 1(1). DOI: 10.1075/dujal.1.1.07mes (accessed 25.9.2015).

Lustig, Myron W. and Koester, Jolene. 2010. *Intercultural Competence*. 6th ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Merlini, Raffaela. 2015. "Empathy: A 'Zone of Uncertainty' in Mediated Healthcare Practice." *Cultus – The Journal of Intercultural Mediation and Communication.* Issue 8. http://cultusjournal.com/files/Archives/Merlini_Cultus_8.pdf (accessed 9.06.2016)

Olk, Harald Martin. 2009. "Translation, Cultural Knowledge and Intercultural Competence." *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, 20, May 2009. http://www.immi.se/intercultural/nr20/olk.htm (accessed 25.04.2016)

PICT - Promoting Intercultural Competence in Translators. 2012a. Intercultural Competence Curriculum Framework. http://www.pictllp.eu/en/curriculum-framework (accessed 12.12.2015)

PICT- Promoting Intercultural Competence in Translators. 2012b. Situational Survey Report. http://www.pictllp.eu/download/PICT_SURVEY_REPORT.pdf (accessed 01.12.2015)

PICT- Promoting Intercultural Competence in Translators. 2012c. Teaching Materials.
http://www.pictllp.eu/en/teaching-material (accessed 14.03.2016)

Pym, Anthony. 2009. "Humanizing Translation History." *Hermes – Journal of Language and Communication Studies* n:o 42: 23–48.

Piller, Ingrid. 2011. *Intercultural Communication. A Critical Introduction.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Schäffner, Christina. 1996. "Functionalist Approach" in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, edited by Mona Baker and Gabriela Saldanha 115-121. London: Routledge.

Spencer-Oatey Helen and Peter Franklin. 2009. *Intercultural Interaction. A Multidisciplinary Approach to Intercultural Communication*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Suojanen, Tytti, Kaisa Koskinen and Tiina Tuominen. 2015. *User-Centred Translation*. London, Routledge.

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

Werquin, Patrick. 2007. Recognising Non-Formal and Informal Learning; Outcomes, Policies and Practices. http://www.eucen.eu/sites/default/files/OECD_RNFIFL2010_Werquin.pdf (accessed 14.03.2016)

WorldWork. 2008. *Competencies.* http://www.worldwork.biz/legacy/www/docs3/competencies.html (accessed 14 March 2016)

Yajima, Yusaku and Satoshi Toyosaki. 2015. "Bridging for a Critical Turn in Translation Studies. Power, Hegemony, Empowerment." *connexions – international professional communication journal* 3(2): 91–125.

Yarosh Maria and Larry Muies. 2011. "Developing Translators' Intercultural Competence: a

Cognitive Approach." *Redit,* 6: 38-56.

Yarosh, Maria. 2015. "Translator Intercultural Competence: A Model, Learning Objectives and Level Indicators." In *Handbook of Research on Teaching Methods in Language Translation and Interpretation* edited by Ying Cui and Wei Zhao, 160─178. Hershey, Pennsylvania: IGI Global.

Witte, H. 2008. *Traducción y percepción intercultural*, Granada: Comares.

Zanettin Federico, Gabriela Saldanha and Sue-Ann Harding. 2015. "Sketching Landscapes in Translation Studies: A Bibliographic Study." *Perspectives* 23(2):161-182. DOI: 10.1080/0907676X.2015.1010551