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Facets of translation in foreign language education: a tentative classification of forms and uses

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Abstract

The paper provides an overview of the forms in which translation is used in foreign language education. A tentative classification is suggested which differentiates between facilitative translation as a supporting process that helps to overcome learning constraints, deliberate translation as an independent task with a predetermined objective that targets learners' foreign language competence and skills, and simulated translation as an activity from which additional pedagogical benefits regarding learners' foreign language proficiency can be derived. From the side of the learner, facilitative translation constitutes a complex learning strategy that can be applied for a variety of strategic purposes (memory-related, cognitive, compensatory, metacognitive, affective, and social), while from the side of the teacher it represents a scaffolding tool that can be consolidated into a fully-fledged teaching technique. Deliberate translation can further be differentiated according to the specifics of pedagogical focus. Language-focused translation, targeting learners' grammatical accuracy or vocabulary range and control, and skill-focused translation, targeting one of the four basic communicative language skills, can be used for both instruction-related and diagnostic purposes. The focus on the holistic use of the available linguistic repertoire results in the two complex uses of translation as an incentive for communication and as a communicative activity aimed at developing the skill of cross-language mediation. A particular type of simulated translation which appears to be particularly suited for the purposes of foreign language education is audiovisual translation.

Keywords: pedagogical translation, FLT, language diagnostics, cross-language mediation, audiovisual translation

Introduction

The legitimacy of the presence of translation in a foreign language class has been demonstrated by both language teaching scholars, such as Cook (2010) and translation scholars, such as Malmkjaer (1998). In relation to educational environment, Klaudy (2003) outlines the two broad types of translation, coined "pedagogical translation" and "real translation". The former is limited to the classroom application of translation activity with the focus on learners' level of

foreign language proficiency. The latter refers to the activity of professional translators in their respective occupational fields, and can thus be referred to more aptly as "professional translation" (Gile, 1995). An intermediate position in this general framework is occupied by translation done by trainee translators, which takes place in educational environment but is targeted at the development of a wide range of skills required from a professional translator on top of excellent L2 performance. Albert Vermes proposes the term "simulated translation" (2010, p. 84) to refer to the activity of trainee translators, which captures the essence of their preparation for the field of professional translation as they in fact rehearse all the processes that they will need to carry out when presented with a real-life order for translation.

An attempt to localise pedagogical translation within the boundaries of a FL classroom has led to the emergence of the term TILT, which was proposed by Cook (2010) as an abbreviation of Translation in Language Teaching and has taken root in modern educational research (see e.g. Fernández-Guerra, 2014; Kelly & Bruen, 2015; Ramsden, 2018). Since the referential scope of both terms, "pedagogical translation" and "TILT", embraces the specific application of translation activities for the purposes of foreign language education with primary interest in targeting learners' language proficiency, I will use them as synonyms conveying the meaning specified above.

The variety of empirical and theoretical research evidence from different national contexts leads us to realise that the term TILT embraces a number of heterogeneous ways in which translation features in an FL classroom. This, in turn, underlies the need for a more precise identification of the manifold uses of translation in relation to FLT. Thus, the aim of the present study is to synthesise the methodological premises found in contemporary research into TILT with a view to create a tentative classification of the forms in which translation enters and affects foreign language education.

The first factor of interest in the proposed framework is the intentionality of translation activity. In this regard, it is necessary to differentiate between (1) translation as a deliberate activity and (2) translation as a facilitation tool. The first category includes all instances when learners are required to transfer meanings and structures of various linguistic levels (i.e. individual words, phrases, syntactic constructions, sentences, sequences of sentences, paragraphs and texts) from one language to the other. The requirement to translate is explicitly stated in the task that has been assigned and translation as product is expected to emerge at one of the stages of the actual performance of the task. The second category embraces the cases when translation activity does not proceed from clearly-spelled external requirements, but takes place incidentally due to constraints and impediments that emerge while a learning or teaching task is being carried out. In this case translation works as a mechanism through which the given constraints and

impediment can be overcome. For the purposes of expedient reference, the two categories can be coined **deliberate translation** and **facilitative translation**, respectively.

1. Facilitative translation

The incidental application of translation to facilitate FL learning falls within a broader research topic of the use of L1 in FLT. In relation to an FL learner, facilitation through translation in an FL classroom might be initiated both internally, when learners naturally resort to translation to come to terms with learning challenges, and externally, when a teacher uses translation to aid the learning process. Thus, facilitative translation as a process that takes place on occasional basis in cases of necessity can be considered as a learning strategy, from the side of a learner, and as a scaffolding technique, from the side of a teacher.

1.1 Translation as a learning strategy

Rebecca Oxford defines learning strategies as "steps taken by students to enhance their own learning" (1990, p. 1) by making it "easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferrable to new situations" (1990, p. 8). In her taxonomy of learning strategies, translation is features as a cognitive strategy of analyzing and reasoning.

Being largely an internalised process, the application of translation as a learning strategy most typically takes the form of ***mental translation***. Mental translation can be defined as "a mental reprocessing of L2 . . . words, phrases, or sentences in L1 . . . forms while reading L2 . . . texts" (Kern, 1994, p. 442). The essential difference between translation proper and mental translation lies in the specifics of translation product, which in the case of mental translation takes the form of "a mental representation of L1 forms" rather than a coherent spoken or written text (ibid., p. 442-443). The strategic use of mental translation has been most extensively studied within research into reading comprehension ability of FL learners. It has been demonstrated that the habit of referring to one's L1 through mental translation while reading in L2 is present in all learners, but the increase in L2 proficiency leads to its gradual substitution by reliance on L2 only. The two main strategic purposes of the low- and intermediate-proficiency learners' use of mental translation in L2 reading are (a) identification and memorisation of contents, (b) retrieval of the meaning of unknown words, and (c) meta-cognitive monitoring of comprehension (see e.g. Kern, 1994; Upton & Lee-Thompson, 2001).

Apart from the use of translation as a cognitive strategy of analyzing and reasoning, applied to achieve comprehension, other forms of the strategic use of translation have been identified (Calis & Dikilitas, 2012; Karimian & Talebinejad, 2013; Aktekin & Uysal Gliniecki, 2015). Based on the taxonomy of learning

strategies proposed by Oxford (1990), these can be summed up to form the following synthetic view of translation as:

(1) memory strategy of creating mental linkages (between an L2 and L1 lexical equivalent) and of applying images and sound (retrieval of an L2 lexical form through an L1 concept and/or its formal representation);
(2) compensation strategy of overcoming limitations in speaking and writing (gathering information in L1 and translating it to perform a writing task);
(3) metacognitive strategy of evaluating your learning (checking comprehension);
(4) affective strategy of lowering your anxiety and of encouraging yourself;
(5) social strategy of cooperating with others (soliciting or providing translation to facilitate the performance of activity).

1.2 Translation as a scaffolding technique

Overall, it can be said that facilitative use of translation for scaffolding purposes has received marginal research attention. This might have to do with the explicit ban on L1 use prescribed by the communicative language teaching paradigm, or with the arbitrary character of scaffolding translation. Indeed, scaffolding translation on the side of a teacher is more of a choice rather than a naturally and universally occurring process, and this choice is, among other things, conditioned by learners' proficiency level, customary educational practices in the given national context as well as the degree of proximity between L1 and L2.

Thus, in the national context of Jordan with Arabic as L1, Samardali and Ismael (2017) report a number of frequent and highly frequent uses of translation for scaffolding purposes by university instructors of English. The uses identified by the scholars can be additionally grouped according to the following purposes:

- facilitation of L2 knowledge: teaching idiomatic and culture-specific items, clarifying new vocabulary, explaining grammatical issues;
- increasing awareness of the contrastive features of L1 and L2: comparing and contrasting, dealing with interferential errors;
- facilitating and monitoring reading and listening comprehension;
- ensuring easier orientation in a task: explaining classroom activities, giving instructions.

All of the above-mentioned uses of translation fall within the category of cognitive scaffolding. The use of L1 translation by the teacher also appears to play an important affective scaffolding function from the perspective of learners: it increases their sense of security as it mitigates their worries about correct comprehension and the overall anxiety at being exposed to the new, strange and unfamiliar (Karimian & Talebinejad, 2013).

The scaffolding use of translation is not limited to the nominal role of a teacher but can be put in practice by all individuals who find themselves in a tutoring position, as are more proficient learners in relation to their less proficient classmates. For example, Yaghobian, Samuel and Mahmoudi (2017) report that during collaborative L2 reading practice high proficiency learners used scaffolding translation to facilitate low proficiency learners' production of an English definition of a target vocabulary item by encouraging them to formulate it in Persian (L1) first and then render it into English in a chunk-for-chunk manner, or to facilitate their comprehension of an English definition by translating it into Persian in chunks.

Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009) furnish strong arguments for upgrading the occasional scaffolding use of L1 translation into a systematic instructional technique to be applied by a foreign language teacher in a pre-planned purposeful manner. To make their case, the scholars draw attention to the largely overlooked segment of language, recently exposed by corpus-based linguists, which occupies the intermediary position between the lexicon and grammar. This segment consists of "more or less idiomatic, ready-made phrases, which fill a vast middle ground between arbitrary words and neat and orderly, law-abiding, predictable constructions of the grammatical core" (Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2009, p. 28). Approaching this segment from the didactic perspective, the scholars advocate for the use of "idiomatic translation" of the target phrase into L1 for the purpose of clarifying its functional properties in the given context. The authors further extend the application of "idiomatic translation" to the learning of rule-governed grammar, where the need to provide learners with a rule in its conventional, meta-linguistic form can, in their opinion, be successfully substituted with a practical example in L2 paired with its functional equivalent in L1. In the cognitive perspective, Butzkamm and Caldwell highlight the innate connection of idiomatic translation to the goal of fostering the linguistic transparency: through the act of translation the meaning of a target item is separated from its form and "the underlying mental concept" transpires more clearly from the unfamiliar wording (ibid., 2009, p. 105-106).

2. Deliberate translation

According to the teaching objectives, deliberate translation can be tentatively divided into language-focused translation, skill-focused translation and communication-focused translation.

2.1 Language-focused translation

In language-focused translation, the performance of translation on the side of a learner and its evaluation on the side of a teacher is characterised by a distinct micro-focus on a selected aspect or aspects of linguistic competence. Campbell

(2002) lists the use of translation for vocabulary work and for focus-on-form grammatical practice as the first two areas of relevant and efficient application of translation-based teaching techniques. In relation to vocabulary work, the benefit of translation, in his view, lies in the fact that it convinces learners that one can always find a way of rendering source meanings in a target language and simultaneously warns them against the pitfalls of one-to-one correspondence. Regarding grammatical accuracy, translation approaches the grammatical form in a context-bound manner, where the actual learning object is a unity of a grammatical form and its functional use.

Here a reservation should be made that translation as a process is normally based on the systemic use of language. The specifics of language-focused TILT lie in the artificial emphasis it places on a targeted L2 linguistic phenomenon (i.e. on linguistic form), which is typically quite conspicuous in the very design of language-focused translation activities. In particular, the translation is usually directed from L1 to L2 and the two linguistic systems might be simultaneously present and juxtaposed in the task layout. Language-focused translation tasks might also include a compensatory mechanism to make up for leaners' possible deficiency in linguistic resources that are not directly connected to the targeted item. Evaluation of such tasks does not take into consideration mistakes and inconsistencies which are not related to the targeted linguistic phenomena.

For example, Scheffler (2013) attempted to foster secondary school learners' awareness of selected L2 grammatical phenomena (tense and aspect) by means of a form-focused L1 to L2 grammar-translation task consisting of sets of disconnected sentences. The compensatory mechanism consisted of L1 (Polish) equivalents of the challenging vocabulary items and the assisting role of the teacher in the choice of a more accurate lexical equivalent.

Källkvist (2004) targeted L2 (English) morphosyntactic accuracy of advanced Swedish (L1) learners by presenting them with translation tasks that consisted of full short texts, full sentences or parts of a sentence. The targeted grammatical phenomena were limited to the two uses of the zero article versus the definite article, namely in uncountable nouns and plural countable nouns with generic reference. The translation task design, however, did not include any compensatory mechanism. In this regard it is interesting that the experiment showed no difference in post-test performance between the translation group and the no-translation group that was exposed to L2 gap-filling tasks, while highly motivated learners from the no-translation group were able to outperform highly motivated learners from the translation group in translation tasks. The scholar seems to recognise the significance of a compensatory mechanism in relation to the desired outcome of language-focused translation tasks. In particular, she hypothesises that "students working with full sentences to be translated are faced with a greater cognitive load in that they need to deal with more potential difficulties

simultaneously than do students who are asked to consider gaps within sentences in L2" and essentially supports an assumption that language-focused translation tasks should be designed with the closest possible focus on the targeted phenomena to fend off distracting factors (Källkvist, 2004, p. 178).

Ebbert-Hübner and Maas (2018) specifically advocate the need for the use of translation tasks focusing on the contrastive analysis of L1 and L2 at the grammatical level. In their study, the experimental group that received treatment in the form of L1 (German) to L2 (English) translation tasks exhibited the highest statistically significant improvement in grammatical accuracy as compared to a regular grammar class and an essay-writing class. Their translation treatment appears to demonstrate particular effectiveness regarding learners' accuracy in the use of prepositions and tenses as two of the most common sources of interlinguistic interference. Other grammatical phenomena (modal constructions and false friends) that were targeted in the given research were associated with moderate improvement, with the only exception being articles. The improvement in the accurate use of article was achieved in a group that has undergone both translation-based and regular grammatical training.

Apart from grammatical accuracy, i.e. "the user/learner's ability to recall 'prefabricated' expressions correctly and the capacity to focus on grammatical forms" (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 133), language-focused translation can be used to increase learners' vocabulary range, i.e. "the breadth and variety of words and expressions used" by learners (p. 132), and vocabulary control, i.e. "the user/learner's ability to choose an appropriate expression from their repertoire" (p. 134). In particular, research by Barcroft (2015) detected significantly higher effectiveness of vocabulary learning for students who were provided with an L1 translation of each target vocabulary item only at its first appearance in the text in contrast to those students who saw the respective L1 translation equivalent next to all three appearance of a given item. The students in the experimental group had to apply their newly-acquired passive (receptive) knowledge of translation equivalents in practice as they had to fill in two gaps further on in the text according to an L1 equivalent provided. In the given activity, translation features not as a skill in its own right but as a means of stimulating target word retrieval which demonstrably enhances vocabulary learning.

To measure the effect of translation from L2 and into L1 on incidental acquisition of meaning of selected vocabulary items, Chenlu (2013) designed a translation task where two paragraphs from a coherent text had to be translated and the target words were provided with their L2 (English) equivalents in L1 (Chinese) source text or with the L1 glossing of their meaning in L2 (English) source text. The compensatory mechanism involved the use of dictionary for other unfamiliar vocabulary. The results of the study demonstrated that L1 to L2 translation was more effective than L2 to L1 translation in terms of both

immediate and delayed vocabulary acquisition, with the difference being statistically significant. Two issues of interest can be outlined regarding the given results in view of the specifics of post-testing. First, in both the immediate and delayed post-test learners had to provide an L1 translation of an L2 word, which essentially evaluates their passive vocabulary knowledge and does not answer the question about the degree of their active command of a given lexical item. Second, the group that was in fact practising the same direction of translation as was tested in post-tests (L2 to L1) was consequently outperformed. This allows making an inference that the factor of importance might have not been just the direction of translation process but also the specifics of the bilingual contextualised presentation of target items. In the given study we can hypothesise the presence of a tighter retrieval link between an L2 form and its contextualised L1 meaning than between a contextualised L2 form and its free-standing L1 meaning.

Within the micro-focus on the selected aspects of language, three specifications of teaching objectives can be outlined:

(a) to foster learners' knowledge and command of a specific aspect of L2
(b) to raise learners' awareness of the contrastive specifics, most notably instances of the lack of formal one-to-one correspondence, between L1 and L2
(c) to foster learners' knowledge and command of both L1 and L2

It should be noted that we can currently detect a growing effort to rectify the ban on the L1 use in an FL classroom by gathering theoretical and empirical evidence for the potential of L1 to be a conductive factor rather than an impediment to efficient L2 mastery. This effort, apparently, has to do with the tendency to reconsider the very objectives of FL/L2 education on more egalitarian premises of ***plurilingualism***. The updated version of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) introduces plurilingualism as a competence that "involves the ability to call flexibly upon an inter-related, uneven, plurilinguistic repertoire", i.e. to make efficient and purposeful use of resources from all languages that are at a learner's disposal (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 28). In view of an FL classroom, one of the preconditions for the flexible plurilignual use of L1 and L2 resource is the awareness of their comparative and contrastive specifics as well as the possibilities and limitations of the transfer of meaning between L1 and L2. In this respect, translation can be considered one of the most effective tools for fostering high-quality plurilingualism: it develops awareness of language transfer by highlighting interlinguistic connections (Quiñones-Guerra, 2016), draws attention to false friends on multiple linguistic levels (Kerr, 2016), and warns learners of interlinguistic interference while simultaneously showing them the ways of mitigating L1 interference into L2 (Mateo, 2015; Skopečková, 2018).

The recognition of the benefits of expanding the boundaries of an FL classroom on plurilinguistic premises can also be linked to the reconsideration of the relation between L2 and L1 teaching. On the one hand, the scope of L1 that has already been acquired by learners is viewed as a source of general and specific linguistic knowledge, whereby the awareness of similarities might save the time spent teaching them as a new item of knowledge and the contrasting of difference might help clarify the specifics of a given L2 item. On the other hand, the process of L2 learning can provide a complementary learning opportunity to consolidate L1 use and broaden L1 knowledge. For instance, learners' L1 vocabulary can be expanded as a by-product of L2 instruction when they come across L2 verbalisation of concepts that they have not yet come across through their L1 (Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2009; Quiñones-Guerra, 2016).

2.2 Skills-focused translation

In skill-focused translation, translation is employed to target a given communicative skill or sub-skill. The main research object in this area is the impact of translation on learners' reading comprehension (Lee, 2013; Fatollahi, 2016; Davaribina & Asl, 2017). It was established that the introduction of sight translation tasks into regular reading comprehension practice results in a more significant increase in reading comprehension ability of Iranian sophomore students (Fatollahi, 2016). In a study by Davaribina and Asl (2017), translation of selected passages into L1 before completing a reading comprehension task improves reading comprehension ability of Iranian learners of English, demonstrating statistically significant difference from the performance of a control group. An additional issue to consider in this case is the fact that learners received explicit instruction on the basics of the translation strategies of equation, substitution, divergence, convergence, amplification, reduction, diffusion, condensation, and reordering. In this way, they were cognitively equipped to overcome the inclination to word-for-word translation. Translation in a word-for-word manner creates the impression that by achieving formal equivalence the learner also has transferred the meaning successfully. Consequently, once a literal translation is produced a learner might not feel the need to dig deeper into the meaning of the source text due to the illusion of comprehension that can mask actual deficiencies in it.

The above-mentioned examples belong to the use of translation for the purpose of instruction. In FLT, deliberate translation can also be employed for diagnostic purposes and can be referred to as ***diagnostic translation***.

The diagnostic potential of L2 to L1 translation activity regarding reading comprehension skills unfolds in two directions: firstly, inconsistencies in the target text which are not directly related to the quality and level of L1 command can be used to detect learners' reading comprehension difficulties, and secondly,

the L1 wording in the hotspot and the adjacent context can provide insights into the receptive processes that were at work in a learner's mind and thus lead to the root of these difficulties. In this regard, Mahmoud draws attention to the fact that "the final [translation] product informs the teacher as to which lexical items, structures, and ideas are problematic", while "[u]nacceptable renditions also give clues to particular features of interlanguage that may be at work" (2006, p. 31).

Apart from reading comprehension, another sphere where the diagnostic power of translation can be put into practice is learners' productive linguistic competence as manifested through vocabulary range, vocabulary control and grammatical accuracy. In other words, diagnostic translation can be either language-focused or skill-focused.

The results of research conducted by Källkvist (1998), for instance, allow an inference about a higher potential of translation tasks to reveal gaps in learners' mastery of vocabulary in contrast to free writing tasks. Higher efficiency of translation tasks in this respect is accounted for by the bound nature of translation activity: learners have to take into consideration the formal requirements of a source text and are thus prevented from using avoidance strategies when looking for an appropriate lexical equivalent for the target meaning. In free writing tasks, such avoidance strategies as the choice of a simpler or a more general equivalent or avoiding the expression of an idea which is perceived as too difficult to verbalise consequently conceal the deficiencies in independent vocabulary and grammar use.

The diagnostic application of translation for routine monitoring purposes appears to be a viable teaching practice in certain national contexts. Thus, some Irish university lecturers of Japanese and German as FL, who participated in a study by Kelly and Bruen (2015), use translation to check the accuracy of comprehension and one of them mentioned that it can be used to raise learners' awareness of their gaps in linguistic knowledge, namely in their mastery of vocabulary.

2.3 Communication-focused translation

In communication-focused translation, learners are supposed to make efficient holistic use of the linguistic competence and communicative skills acquired up to the point in order to communicate meanings between L1 and L2. Two key uses of TILT can be attributed to this category, namely (1) the use of translation process and product as an incentive for communication, and (2) the use of translation process and product as a means of communication.

2.3.1 Translation as an incentive for communication (interactive translation)

Translation as an incentive for communication puts emphasis on the process of translating, including the external back-up factors and conditions for its implementation. This use of translation is characterised by the following distinctive features:

- learners are required to create a functional equivalent for a given textual input in the target language (typically L2);
- learners are expected to put into practice all resources available to them in order to achieve the highest possible degree of linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic equivalence between the source text and the target text;
- learners' level of proficiency in L2 influences the choice of the source text, which should present a manageable challenge to them; and
- learners work in teams and communicate actively within their group, with the instructor and with all available translation aids (dictionaries, Internet search engines, encyclopaedias, etc.)

Translation as an incentive for communication is closely linked to the skills-focused use of translation targeting speaking skills. For instance, Mahmoud (2018) approaches translation tasks as an instrument for the development of learners' speaking skills through the language activity of interaction, i.e. "participat[ion] in an oral . . . exchange in which production and reception alternate and may in fact overlap in communication" (Council of Europe, 2011, p. 14). In my view, the reference to this form of translation use as communication-focused rather than skill-focused is more accurate as it has a holistic target where learners are supposed to make the most out of their speaking skills and sub-skills to fulfil their communicative intention, which is to confirm the correctness of their translation or to find ways of its improvement with the help of the teacher and peers. Since interpersonal interaction is the main pillar of the given FLT activity, this form of translation can also be referred to as ***interactive translation***.

Action research by Källkvist (2013) clearly demonstrates the beneficial impact of effectively-delivered translation tasks on fostering student-teacher interaction, which consequently leads to the increase in intensity and quality of classroom communication. In the experimental group of this action research, students translated a short text from L1 (Swedish) into L2 (English) individually, in pairs or in small groups; then two translations were presented to the whole class and were collectively assessed by students in terms of their accuracy and stylistic variation. In the second translation group, the task completion procedure resembled the simplest simulated translation routine: one student read his/her translation while their groupmates were asked to comment on correctness, ask questions or make

comments. The results indicate the higher intensity and overall quality of classroom communication in the experimental group, where it lasted almost twice longer (59 minutes vs. 34 minutes) and had lower frequency of the cases where students were prompted to contribute to discussion (0.46 vs. 0.5 prompts per minute). Both translation tasks revealed higher potential to foster communication than composition tasks delivered through a similar procedure.

In the activity described above, the fact that students raised more questions and made shorter pauses while discussing translation might be linked to the inherent possibility for comparison vested in translation activity: learners do not only compare the source text with a given translation, but also compare their own translation with the one presented to them as an object of analysis. The common referential basis seems to motivate students to interact as through interaction they confirm the viability and the accuracy of their own translation product. The given effect is largely absent from composition tasks as learners do not have any other tangible referential point than the topic assigned and thus commenting on others' production does not provide a direct opportunity to enhance one's own written output.

2.3.2 Translation as a means of communication (mediation)

Translation as a means of communication aims to mediate the content of a given textual input for a prospective external receiver using the available linguistic instruments. In this case, the requirement of accurate functional alignment of L1 and L2 resources is downplayed by the focus on the transmission of meaning: the formal properties of the translation product are primarily assessed in terms of the overall comprehensibility of the output, where a certain degree of violation of the conventions of target language culture and of source language interference is tolerated. This approach to translation, where the importance of the knowledge of contrastive features of L1 and L2 and of functional correspondence between them is purposefully diminished to give more prominence to the re-production of source meaning for the target receiver in a comprehensible form has found its way to the updated version of CEFR (Council of Europe, 2018) and is vested in the concept of ***mediation***.

Mediation is defined as a language activity based on the ability of a learner to assume the role of "a social agent who creates bridges and helps to construct or convey meaning" (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 103). In this framework, translation is approached as a cross-linguistic mediation activity concerned with mediating a text, i.e. "passing on to another person the content of a text to which they do not have access, often because of linguistic, cultural, semantic or technical barriers" (p. 106). Howell (2017) emphasises the functional and formal difference between professional translation and translation as "cross-language" mediation by stating that the former "aim[s] at achieving as close as possible equivalence between

source texts and target texts" while the latter "aims to offer information to the audience that is contextually optimal and relevant, usually in common 'everyday' situations where the stakes are lower than they would be in high-stakes exchanges such as diplomatic negotiations, trade contracts, or courtroom proceedings" (Howell, 2017, p. 148). We can expand the meaning of "high-stakes exchanges" to include all situations where the completeness, accuracy and high quality of translation is unequivocally required by the sender of the source text and/or the receiver of the target text.

In the methodological outline provided by CEFR, there is one more mediation activity that is closely-related to translation, namely the activity of "processing a text". "Processing a text" is defined as "understanding the information and/or arguments included in the source text and then transferring these to another text, usually in a more condensed form, in a way that is appropriate to the context of situation" (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 110). In the perspective of translation studies, what is meant in CEFR under "processing a text" constitutes a sub-form of translation called "summary translation". In relation to an FL classroom, the given mediation activity can be considered as simulated translation practice since the focus on key ideas results from the nature of the task rather than from the proficiency level of a learner.

Howell provides a comprehensive overview of the ways of developing and assessing learners' skills of cross-language mediation, put in practice in the national contexts of Germany and Greece which are characterised by growing multilingual and multicultural diversity. On the basis of his overview of recent studies (Kolb, 2009; Bohle, 2012; Caspari, 2013; Reimann, 2013; Stathopoulou, 2015), the following state-of-the-art specifics of cross-language mediation in an FL classroom can be formulated:

- a mediation task is designed to take place in a simulated social context which is relatable to learners' social needs and experience outside the classroom;
- a learner is one of the participants of a communicative situation, which might also include an active presence of another communicant as the receiver of a mediated text, or two and more receivers as is the case in the mediation of interpersonal interaction;
- mediation might take place in the direction of L1 or L2, or between L1 and L2;
- the form of the input and output might be homogeneous (either written or oral) or transposed (i.e. written input to oral output, oral input to written output);
- the preparatory stage for a mediation task might focus on pre-teaching vocabulary while the post-mediation stage might focus on both the evaluation of mediation challenges (focus on mediation skills) and the evaluation of learners' lexical, grammatical and pragmatic choices to deal with these issues (focus on communicative language competence) (see Kolb, 2009);

- mediation output is assessed according to the key criteria of (a) completeness of the range of meanings and intentions that were supposed to be mediated, (b) interactional ability in terms of reaction, non-verbal communication, explanations, circumlocutions, and corrections; (c) situational and receiver-oriented appropriateness, while an additional criterion of (d) intercultural performance in the explanation of culture-specific issues might also be taken in consideration (see Gregorzewski in Bohle, 2012; Reimann, 2013).

Even though CEFR contains an explicit disclaimer that its "scale is not intended to relate to the activities of professional translators or to their training" (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 113), the C2-level descriptors for the mediating activity of "translating a written text in speech" and "translating a written text in writing" are formulated in such a way as to allow inferring their close proximity to simulated translation.

3. Simulated translation in ELT

The idea of introducing simulated translation activities, i.e. activities that target learners' translation skills and translation competence, has been gaining support among scholars and teaching practitioners, but mostly those at the level of tertiary education. It should be noted though that the exact pedagogical benefits of a simulated translation task are not pre-planned but are rather derived from it after the task has been completed. In other words, it is arguably hard to plan in advance the precise aspects of communicative language competence which are to be fostered purposefully by a given simulated translation task since its positive impact could be detected retrospectively.

Various proposals have been made to introduce either systemic or partial elements of translation process into foreign language teaching. For example, Skopečková (2018) proposes a didactic framework based on the functionalist approach to the act of translation, which includes the simulation of partial components of translation process, namely the identification of the purpose and function of the target text, the analysis of a source text, the detection of the contrastive features of L1 and L2 and the cyclic selection of translation equivalents based on the gradual confirmation or correction of original choices as the translation process progresses. An important role in this framework is assigned to textual transformation, which is approached broadly as the necessary adjustment of the linguistic form of the text with the change in its function and/or target audience. Thus, the framework evidently transcends the boundaries of L1 to L2 translation and reaches into the sphere of adaptation.

Ramsden (2018) justifies the need to introduce low-intermediate learners of English as an FL to the concept of dynamic equivalence, which in translation

proper refers to the awareness of the existence of multiple ways of rendering the source meaning in the target language, and the ability to choose the most contextually appropriate way. The role of a teacher in her proposed activities is that of a facilitator who provides ideas to help learners overcome the word-for-word approach. This implies the need for a teacher to have at least a basic training in the specifics of translation proper to make sure he/she is able to react to "unprepared questions" students might come up with in their search for dynamic equivalence and to "to accept the different translation examples which the learners [come] up with" (Ramsden, 2018, p. 267).

If the potential of a simulated translation task is to be used to the fullest, it seems reasonable to introduce students to specific translation procedures and transformation that will help them overcome the innate difficulties of cross-linguistic rendering of texts, as can be seen on the example of translation activities implemented by Pavan (2013), Mateo (2015), Davaribina and Asl (2017) or Mahmoud (2018).

It is also necessary to realise that not all texts that professional translators deal with are suited to the conditions of foreign language teaching. In general, a foreign language classroom appears to be more readily open to simulated translation tasks that are compatible with the learners' level of FL proficiency, are closely related to their needs outside the classroom and are not too time-consuming. A particular form of professional translation that is related to consistently positive empirical classroom results is ***audiovisual translation***, and more specifically subtitling as its subtype. A detailed overview of current research in the use of subtitling in foreign language education is provided in a publication by Lertola (2019). Based on it, a number of practical observations can be made. Firstly, standard interlingual subtitling (L2 to L1) appears to be the most frequently used subtype of audiovisual translation, followed by reverse subtitling (L1 to L2). The use of dubbing as a simulated translation task is rare but still present, and it is associated with increase in learners' speaking and listening skills (Danan, 2010). Standard subtitling has been demonstrated to result in improvements in incidental vocabulary acquisition and syntactical competence (Incalterra McLoughlin, 2009) and increased pragmatic awareness due to the simultaneous exposure to textual and visual input (Lopriore & Ceruti, 2015), and to enhance intercultural language education (Borghetti & Lertola, 2014). The positive impact of reverse subtitling concerns improvements in learners' writing skills (Talaván et al., 2016), particularly in terms of grammatical and orthographic accuracy and vocabulary range and control (Talaván & Rodríguez-Arancón, 2014).

Secondly, subtitling appears to be more motivating for learners than regular written translation mainly due to its challenging but entertaining character as perceived by students (Incalcaterra McLoughlin, 2009; Incalcaterra McLoughlin & Lertola, 2014). It can be assumed that the precondition of being enjoyable for

learners is of particular importance as far as simulated translation tasks in FLT are concerned as it notably influences their effectiveness with regard to fostering learners' communicative competence.

Conclusion

The tentative classificatory framework proposed in the present paper can be instrumental in designing FL teaching and learning tasks that involve translation process and are based on a judicious use of its specifics, benefits and pedagogical potential. As demonstrated here, the uses of translation in FLT are manifold. Hence, any attempt to introduce it as a task should start with a clear identification of the exact pedagogical objective regarding learners' FL proficiency, which will inform the subsequent decisions about the choice of a source text and its possible adjustments, such as the need to introduce a compensatory mechanism to shield learners from distracting influences of a variety of linguistic and extra-linguistic phenomena found in a text as a unit of communication. The skill of translating for common, everyday purposes, which constitutes the essence of cross-language mediation, is increasingly gaining weight as an independent communicative language skill that is indispensable in intercultural environment. This motivates the need to teach mediation in an FL class, which, in turn, requires both teachers and learners to realise that the scope of cross-language mediation reaches beyond the linguistic repertoire of an FL into the sphere of plurilingualism and that it equally involves a set of non-linguistic skills that also need to be developed. An attempt to introduce learners to the practice of simulated translation in an FL class calls for particularly careful planning in terms of the compatibility of the source text with learners' level of FL proficiency. Taking into consideration the challenging nature of translation activity as such, an important prerequisite to be met here is the need for translation activity to be entertaining and challenging to a manageable degree.

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