Translation and intercultural communication : similarities and differences

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TRANSLATION AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

Despite increasing attention in the last decade, both Intercultural Communication Studies (ICS) and Translation Studies (TS) seem to have reached a stage where some of the key concepts and assumptions are being challenged. This paper looks at similarities and differences in the use of shared concepts, especially the concept of intercultural communicative competence. It begins with a brief sketch of the development of the discipline of Translation Studies and goes on to present some assumptions which TS shares with ICS. However, the two disciplines operate with a different concept of communication and intercultural communicative competence: ICS is researching natural communication for independent acting, whereas TS is concerned with a specific kind of professionally enabled communication. The paper then presents a definition of a translationspecific cultural competence (based on Witte 2000) and illustrates the development of translation competence in the context of translator training at universities.

Key Words: mediated communication, translation studies, translatorial action, transcultural text production, translation competence, translation-specific cultural competence.

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1. Translation Studies: Where are we?

Both intercultural communication and translation have seen increasing attention in the last decade. This huge interest does not mean, however, that we are faced with new phenomena. On the contrary, direct and mediated communication between people speaking different mother tongues and belonging to different cultural groups has existed for many centuries as a fact of life. The contributions of translators to the development of alphabets and national languages, to the development of national literatures, to the dissemination of knowledge, to the advancement of, and to the transmission of cultural values throughout history are well documented (cf. Delisle and Woodsworth 1995).

There has been a long tradition of thought and an enormous body of opinion about translation, and in the second half of the 20th century Translation Studies developed as an academic discipline in its own right. Intercultural Communication, too, is regarded as an academic field with its own specific concepts and analytical methods. But despite a considerable amount of research output, both disciplines seem to have reached a stage where some of the key concepts and assumptions are being challenged, and the object of research is being looked at from a new perspective. Moreover, some of the key concepts employed in Translation Studies and in Intercultural Communication also play an important role in related disciplines. This can be illustrated with reference to announcements of some international conferences to be held in 2003 and 2004.

From 23-24 May 2003, a conference on "The Consequences of Mobility: Linguistic and Sociocultural Contact Zones" will be held at Roskilde University, organised by the research group on Sociolinguistics, Language Pedagogy and Sociocultural issues in the university's Department of Language and Culture. The announcement defines the conference aim as investigating the "different kinds of linguistic and sociocultural contacts brought about by transnational migrations in the contemporary world", with the focus on "studies of cultural and social identities, of multiculturality, cultural hybridity and identity politics in complex societies."

From 7-12 July 2004, the 8th Congress of the International Association for Semiotic Studies (AIS/IASS) will be held in Lyon, with the main title "Signs of the World: Interculturality and Globalisation". Its call for papers refers to the role of signs in a "world whose recent evolution implies a change in the nature of geopolitical and intercultural relations."

The congress will consider the contribution of semioticians to the debate on "how world cultures can be made more intelligible to each other within the framework of their own differences."

From 12-14 August 2004, a conference on "Translation and the Construction of Identity" will be held at Sookmyung Women's University, in Seoul. The following are listed as themes in the Call for Papers: "Construction and maintenance of national, religious and ethnic identity; Power, diplomacy and culture in international relations; The intellectual effects of globalisation; Negotiating identities across cultures: migration, gender, asylum; Self and other in crosscultural encounters; The impact of institutional identities on translation and crosscultural research." This conference is to see the launch of the International Association for Translation and Intercultural Studies (IATIS) as a "global forum designed to enable scholars from different regional and disciplinary backgrounds to debate issues relating to translation and other forms of intercultural communication."

From 26-29 September 2004, the European Society for Translation Studies (EST) will hold its 4th Congress in Lisbon under the main title "Translation Studies: Doubts and Directions". The aim is to appraise and update the concepts and analytical tools used within the discipline. It is intended for the Congress to be "a platform for critical debate and an opportunity to discuss current relevant problems and possible future developments in Translation Studies."

What we can see in these few announcements is a relatively large amount of shared interest and overlapping concerns. Practically all of them make use of the same (or similar) key concepts, especially the following ones: culture, world culture, social networks, globalised communication, space, intercultural relations, exchange, encounters, translation, intercultural communication, representation, crosscultural representation, identity, difference, power.

These key concepts also show up in promotional leaflets for new journals and book series. For example, a new book series on language and diversity is called *Encounters*, and its aims are described as follows: "Encounters sets out to explore diversity in language, diversity through language and diversity about language." This exploration includes exploring "the way in which language and linguistic behaviour can contribute to the construction or negotiation of sociocultural and political differences". 2003 sees the launch of the transdisciplinary *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* which will "critically examin[e] the relationships, tensions,

representations, conflicts and possibilities that exist between tourism/travel and culture/cultures in a rapidly changing and increasingly complex global context"; and it will also embrace the "powerful creative dimension to tourism and cultural change that emerges in literature, travel writing, translation, the learning of other languages, film, art and varieties of performance."

In view of such a considerable overlap in aims and content, one could ask whether there is indeed a need for new journals and new associations. There already are a number of journals devoted to intercultural communication and translation, e.g. *Target* (subtitle: International Journal of Translation Studies); *The Translator* (subtitle: Studies in Intercultural Communication); *Across Languages and Cultures* (subtitle: A Multidisciplinary Journal for Translation and Interpreting Studies); *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology; Language and Intercultural Communication; Journal of Multilingual & Multicultural Development*, etc. Among existing associations is the International Association for Languages and Intercultural Communication (IALIC), whose 5th annual cross-cultural capability conference, held from 2-3 December 2000 in Leeds, was devoted to discussing "Revolutions in Consciousness: Local identities, global concerns in languages and intercultural communication", i.e. topics that are still on the agenda in 2003 and 2004. From a different angle, we can say that the huge interest in aspects of intercultural encounters, exchanges, and representation reflects an increasing awareness of the relevance of direct and/or mediated communication in practically all spheres of social life, and thus in a large number of disciplines in the arts and humanities. This development is accompanied by at least two main trends: (i) an explicit focus on interdisciplinarity, multidisciplinarity, or transdisciplinarity in approaching the objects of research, and (ii) a questioning of traditional concepts.

Reference to interdisciplinarity is made in almost all the conference announcements mentioned above, and also in the description of a number of journals. The disciplines that particularly share an interest in intercultural communication and translation, in addition to Translation Studies and Intercultural Communication Studies, are linguistics, semiotics, psychology, sociology, anthropology, ethnography, cultural studies, media studies, literary theory, gender studies, postcolonial studies. A questioning of existing concepts is announced both for the 2004 EST congress and the 2004 AIS/IASS congress, both refering to the need to appraise and update concepts and analytic tools. The 2004 Seoul conference an-

nounces a panel on "Redefining Translation in the 21st century"; and another panel on "Translation and Ethnography" envisages a broad understanding of the concept of translation which includes a view of ethnographic writing as a translation practice.

Questioning whether traditional definitions still fit the current context or whether a new definition or a new concept is required, can also signal a kind of crisis, or transition, or a potential paradigm shift in a discipline. Such shifts within a discipline are related to (changes in) social processes. Taking again the conference announcements, we see another feature they have in common: the need for interdisciplinarity and for rethinking existing concepts is motivated by the changing world of the 21st century. Recurring key concepts are, for example, change, globalisation, global context, shifting contexts, increasing complexity. The awareness of the increasing complexity of their traditional objects of research has led disciplines to reflect more closely on their own status and their contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the new era. As we read in the announcement of the 2004 AIS/IASS congress: "The congress will allow for clarification of the specific contributions of semiotics to world comprehension and to political, economic, cultural, aesthetic and anthropological debate."

Translation Studies (TS) and Intercultural Communication Studies (ICS) can also provide valuable contributions to the current debates. In the following sections, I will (i) briefly sketch the development of the discipline of TS, (ii) comment on similarities and differences between TS and ICS with special reference to the concept of (inter)cultural competence, and (iii) illustrate the development of translation competence in the context of translator training.

2. Translation Studies: Where do we come from?

Translation Studies, although still a young discipline, has undergone considerable development. When a more systematic reflection on translation in the West set in after the end of the Second World War, it was within the discipline of (applied) linguistics. Linguistics-based concepts and analytic methods were used to develop a linguistic theory of translation (e.g. Catford 1965, Nida 1964). Translation is described above all as a process of linguistic transcoding, resulting in a target-language text which is (to be) equivalent to its source-language text.

Since translation involves texts with a specific communicative func-

tion, the limitations of a narrow linguistic approach soon became obvious. Thus, from the 1970s, insights and approaches from textlinguistics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics and communication studies were adopted into Translation Studies. The text moved into the centre of attention, and notions such as textuality, context, culture, communicative intention, function, text type, genre, and genre conventions have had an impact on reflecting about translation (e.g. Reiss 1971, Neubert and Shreve 1992, Hatim and Mason 1990, 1997). Texts are produced and received with a specific purpose, or function, in mind. This is the main argument underlying functionalist approaches to translation, initiated by Vermeer (1978) with his *Skopos theory* (derived from the Greek word *skopós*, which means purpose, aim, goal, objective). The basic assumptions are as follows: translation is a specific kind of communicative action; each action has a specific purpose, and therefore the most decisive criterion for any translation is its purpose (Skopos). Translation is a purposeful activity (Nord 1997), initiated by a translation commission and resulting in a target text which is appropriately structured for its specified purpose. The purpose of the source text and that of the target text may be identical or different. Language and culture are interdependent, and translation is therefore transfer between cultures, it is a specific kind of culture-determined text production (cf. Vermeer 1996, Reiss and Vermeer 1991). This complex translatorial action (Holz-Mänttäri 1984) is realised by a translator, an expert in transcultural text production.

Functionalist approaches thus see equivalence no longer as a constitutive feature of (any) translation, as has been the traditional view in linguistics-based approaches. The notion of equivalence has equally, and even more forcefully, been challenged by Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS), which came into focus in the early 1980s, and more recently by postmodern translation theories. Holmes (1988) saw the two main objectives of the discipline of Translation Studies (this term has become widely accepted) as (i) describing the phenomena of translating and translation(s) as they manifest themselves in the world of our experience, and (ii) establishing general principles by means of which these phenomena can be explained and predicted. In describing authentic translations it soon became evident that they were not the faithful and equivalent replicas of their source texts. These findings opened up the discipline by bringing in new perspectives and concepts. Translations as products (i.e. as facts of target systems) were related to the socio-historical contexts in which translators operated. In these contexts, translators' behaviour is

subject to specific socio-ideological conditions and constraints, in short, it is governed by norms (Toury 1995). Translational norms are understood as internalised behavioural constraints which embody the values shared by a community. Toury's introduction of the norms concept into the study of translation redirected the focus of interest to the factors governing the choices that determine the relation between source and target texts. As a result, aspects of manipulation, dislocation, displacement, as well as the status of translations in the target polysystem came into the foreground (cf. Even-Zohar 1978, Hermans 1985, 1999a).

In the early 1990s, empirical descriptive studies became increasingly criticised for not giving due attention to the power relations that lie behind the norms in a society. Subsequently, ideas and concepts from Cultural Studies, anthropology, and postcolonial theories were introduced to explaining translation and have become a major inspiration to the discipline of TS (Bassnett and Lefevere [1990: 12] speak of the *cultural turn* in TS). Postmodern theories have made it possible to show that translation often involves asymmetrical cultural exchanges (e.g. Tymoczko 1999, Niranjana 1992). They explain translation as a form of regulated transformation, as a socio-political practice (Venuti 1995). They show how translators have been actively engaged in shaping communicative processes, by applying either *foreignization or domestication* as a translation method, and thus contributing to the way in which *the Other* is represented and/or constructed. Venuti argues in favour of foreignisation as a translation method which allows translators to signify difference, and thus allows the reader to discover and appreciate the cultural other. Seeing translation as a form of political action and engagement also means that the traditional conception of the translator as an invisible transporter of meanings has been replaced by that of a visible interventionist.

Postmodern translation theories have opened up new fertile areas for research, for example, the study of translation and power (e.g. Álvarez and Vidal 1996, Tymoczko 2000), translation and identity (e.g. Venuti 1994), translation and gender (e.g. Simon 1996), translation and ideology (e.g. Baumgarten 2001, the contributions in Caldaza Pérez 2003), translation and ethics (e.g. the special issue of *The Translator* 7:2/2001).

At the same time, think-aloud protocol studies have provided glimpses into the translator's mind, mapping translating as a cognitive activity (cf. Krings 1986, Kussmaul 2000, and the contributions in Danks et al. 1997 and in Tirkkonen-Condit and Jääskeläinen 2000). Corpus studies allow to find out whether translations are characterized by

specific features (universals) which set them apart from independently produced texts, as well as provide answers to other questions which require processing huge amounts of data (cf. Baker 1995, Bowker and Pearson 2002). Challenges of globalization for translation theory and practice are also increasingly reflected upon (e.g. Snell-Hornby 1999, Cronin 2003).

Modern Translation Studies is thus concerned with a wide variety of topics, such as analyses of translation products, translation processes as cognitive acts, translation practices in socio-political settings, the functions and effects of translations (as products) in the receiving cultures, and the status of translation and translators in socio-historical contexts. In other words, the focus is on social, cultural, and communicative practices, on the cultural and ideological significance of translating and of translations, on the external politics of translation, on the relationship between translation behaviour and socio-cultural factors. There is a general recognition of the complexity of the phenomenon of translation, an increased concentration on social causation and human agency, and a focus on effects rather than on internal structures.

The recognition of the complexity of the phenomenon of translation means that it is widely accepted nowadays that TS is an independent discipline in its own right (and not a subdiscipline of applied linguistics, or of comparative literature, as often argued in the past). It is a discipline, however, which makes use of insights, concepts, and methods from various other disciplines. A related consequence of the expansion of the questions being addressed in the field of TS is that the borderlines with neighbouring disciplines are becoming blurred and the object of study itself, translation, is being borrowed for other disciplines. For example, in anthropology, ethnographic encounters are described as processes of cultural translation; within postcolonial studies, texts written by the ex-colonized in the language of the ex-colonizer have been labeled *compositional translations* (Adejunmobi 1998). In view of these developments, Prunc (2002: 267) warns that a broad concept of translation, which includes almost any kind of cultural transformation, could lead to the dissolution of TS as an independent discipline since it would lose its genuine object of research. A similar concern can be seen in the call for the 2004 EST Congress, which states: "Perhaps the time has come to challenge some of the widely held assumptions, biases, and other presuppositions borrowed from other disciplines or based on beliefs and claims that are taken for granted."

It is not to be expected that a reappraisal of concepts and tools will re-

sult in a return to a rather narrow understanding of translation as being defined by equivalence. But any reappraisal of one concept will have to be linked to a reconsideration of other concepts as well, such as the concepts of communication and culture.

3. Translation and Intercultural Communication: Are they the same?

The call for the 2004 Seoul conference refers to "translation and other forms of intercultural communication", and to "translation and other forms of crosscultural mediation". Within TS, translation has often been defined with reference to (intercultural) communication, often in an explicit way, cf.:

> In pursuing intended goals, translators (as a special category of text receivers and producers) seek to relay to a target reader what has already been communicated by a text producer and presented with varying degrees of explicitness in the text. (Hatim and Mason 1997: 20)

> das definiens für translation ist das kulturüberschreitende moment der kommunikation. translation ist 'transkulturelle' kommunikation mit Sprachwechsel (Vermeer 1986: 173 - spelling as in original)

Even if translation is not explicitly defined as communication, aspects of communication can be inferred from the definitions, especially in references to functions of texts, text receivers, and their use of texts for communicative acts, cf.:

> Translation is a communicative service, and normally a service for a target language receiver or receivers. The normal function of a translation service is to include a new (target language) readership in a communicative act which was originally restricted to the source language community. (Reiss 1989: 107)

> Translational action is the process of producing a message transmitter of a certain kind, designed to be employed in superordinate action systems in order to coordinate actional and communicative cooperation. (Holz-Mänttäri 1984, quoted in Nord 1997: 13)

There is a long tradition in TS to link translation to aspects of communication. The texts that are involved in translation are used by people in

specific communicative settings for particular purposes. Source text and target text function in different communicative contexts, that is, they are received by their respective addressees in different situations, at different places and times, with the addressees belonging to different cultures and speaking different languages. Texts fulfil communicative functions for their addressees, for example, they are meant to inform, instruct, persuade, or entertain them. The new context in which a target text is used may mean that it fulfils a different function than the source text did in its own context. Texts are exemplars of particular text types, or genres, which have developed specific characteristic features, i.e. genre conventions. Some genres are highly conventionalised in their structure, others less so. Readers usually expect text exemplars to conform to the genre conventions, and this applies equally to translations (although tests have shown that if told that the text is a translation, readers more readily tolerate deviations from genre conventions).

Models of translation that were developed primarily within linguistics-based theories quite explicitly applied concepts of traditional communication theory, especially the concepts of sender, receiver, message transfer, decoding and encoding. Translation was modelled as an act of bilingual mediated, or relayed, communication, consisting of two phases (cf. Kade 1968). In phase one, the sender and the translator (in the role as receiver) communicate in the code of the sender (the source language); and in phase two, the translator (in the role as sender) and the intended receiver (the addressee) communicate in the code of the receiver (i.e. the target language). The condition for the second phase to take place successfully is a process of transcoding which the translator has to perform in order to be able to act as a sender. In this model, attention has to be given to the smooth operation of the message transfer, i.e. the translator acts as an enabler, a conduit, who relays an essentially intact message after having transformed the code. Familiar metaphors of translation as crossing a river or sea (cf. Jakob Grimm's "über*setzen* ist *über*setzen") with the translator as a navigator who takes the word-freight on board on one side of the shore and transports it to a destination on the other side of the shore, thereby defying elementary dangers, neatly reflect this image.

However, such models have been called into question by norm-based and postmodern theories of translation. They argue very forcefully that models which see translation as exchange and essentially as a two-way process, suggest fairness and equal value (cf. the debate on equivalence) and thus obscure translation's one-directionality and the fact that rela-

tions between cultures are never relations between equals. As Hermans (1999b: 61) comments, "it is the aspect of non-equivalence which constantly reminds us that the whole process of cultural contact and transmission of which translation forms part is governed by norms and values, and by what lies behind them: power, hierarchy, non-equality." It would require a lot of effort therefore, to detect aspects of communication in definitions which focus on difference and power, like the following one:

> A translated text should be the site where a different culture emerges, where a reader gets a glimpse of a cultural other, [...] (Venuti 1995: 306)

Functionalist approaches to translation, too, argue that translation cannot be equated with intact message transfer, but nevertheless they operate primarily within a general framework of communication. That is, they focus on the role of the translator in mediating communication, or more precisely: in enabling communication and interaction across linguistic and cultural barriers. Hönig (1995) illustrates this role by the metaphor of the translator as a bridge-builder for communication. In order to fulfil this role, translators need to be competent mediators, and their translation competence includes a cultural competence. In this respect, then, functionalist approaches share concepts and concerns with studies in intercultural communication. In fact, Skopos theory (Vermeer 1996) and the theory of translatorial action (Holz-Mänttäri 1984), the two most prominent functionalist approaches, are based on action theory and cultural theory. This theoretical foundation is reflected in Vermeer's definition of translation (see above). Translation is characterised as a specific kind of transcultural interaction ("Translation ist Sondersorte interaktionalen Handelns"), and also as a specific kind of intercultural communication ("Sondersorte interkultureller Kommunikation"). Although these characterisations are often shortened to "translation as intercultural communication", the *as* is not meant to signify identity between the two concepts (cf. Witte 2000: 23).

The origin of functionalist approaches on the European continent can be seen in the context of a continuously increasing demand for translation (especially as regards non-literary translation) and the related need for translator training. Functionalist approaches are therefore also characterised by a predominently *prospective* orientation, i.e. they concentrate on the factors that need to be taken into account in producing a target text, with the purpose which the text-to-be-produced will have to fulfil in

its target setting for target addressees as the main criterion. The translator is conceptualised as an expert in text production for transcultural communication. As Witte (2000: 26) argues, the object of research of TS is not language(s), as traditionally seen, but human activity in different cultural contexts. It is due to this prospective orientation of functionalist approaches that issues of difference, power, resistance, hybridity, etc. - key notions in postmodern theories - are hardly addressed in a forceful way. The central argument is that it is the purpose of the target text that determines the appropriate translation strategy - and this may as well call for a strategy of resistance. For functionalists, all types of translation are thus equally legitimate.

4. (Inter)cultural competence: For whom?

Acting and interacting, purposefully and in specific cultural contexts, are also central issues in Intercultural Communication Studies. The discussion here has focused on needs-oriented foreign language training for members of a number of professions whose professional activities involve acting in intercultural settings. Such training for international business communication, business negotiation, intercultural management, presentation skills etc., increasingly combines language learning with cultural awareness. In this respect, both disciplines operate on the basis of shared assumptions, especially the following:

* communication is not a straightforward process of undisturbed message transfer;
* communication across linguistic and cultural borders needs to recognise different cultural foundations of languages (reflected in genre conventions and communicative patterns);
* language and culture are not stable concepts or closed systems, but rather dynamic, flexible, open systems;
* languages and cultures cannot be equated with nation states, the boundaries of nations and cultures are becoming more and more blurred;
* speakers engage in communicative interaction as members of speech communities which themselves are characterised by multiple identities, and speakers bring their own cultural identity to each interchange;
* cultural barriers, i.e. culture-specific behavioural differences, are often more relevant than linguistic barriers in intercultural communication;
* successful interaction demands communicative competence.

Such a communicative competence includes knowledge and skills, i.e. knowledge of regularities, patterns, and conventions of interaction (in spoken and written form). It is relevant for translators and interpreters (although I will focus only on translation in this paper) and also for foreign language learners who will engage in intercultural communication. The main difference in applying these basic assumptions to a training situation, and subsequently to an actual situation in real life, is the following (see Witte 2000 for an elaborate discussion): intercultural communication as direct communication requires an intercultural communicative competence for independent acting, i.e. communicators act in their own role. They require a competence to accompany and support their main aim of interaction (e.g. business negotiation, diplomatic contacts). In other words, the intercultural communicative competence is in the service of their primary professional goals. Translators, however, produce texts which are used by others for communication. Translators require a (translation-specific) intercultural competence in order to enable communication between others, to ensure access to intercultural interaction. ICS and TS, thus, operate with a different concept of communication: ICS is researching evolutionarily natural communication ("evolutionär-natürliche Kommunikation"), whereas TS is concerned with a specific kind of artificially and professionally enabled communication ("artifiziell-professionell ermöglichte Kommunikation", Holz-Mänttäri 1984, Witte 2000).

In the following section, I will comment on translational action as artificial-professional action to serve the needs of others with special reference to a translation-specific cultural competence. This discussion is based on Witte (2000) and will be illustrated with examples from translator-training situations in a university context.

5. Translational (inter)cultural competence: What is specific?

If the professional task of a translator is defined as enabling communication between members of different cultures, this means that translators need to have a bicultural competence. The notion of culture is therefore a key concept for the discipline of TS. The different arguments we encounter in TS, as I have shown above, are also based on different understandings of culture. Various definitions of culture coexist in the literature of social sciences, arts, humanities, sociology, anthropology, ethnography etc. With reference to translation, Gercken (1992) presents defi-

nitions of culture as cognitive systems, as structural systems, and as symbolic systems. Katan (1999) lists four approaches to the study of culture: behaviourist, functionalist, cognitive, and dynamic approaches. Postmodern translation theories focus on cultures as systems of power, with dominant and oppressed groups, majority and minority groups, groups at centres and at peripheries. In other words, TS has *imported* various definitions of *culture* from other disciplines into its own discourse.

Witte (2000:17) argues that TS needs to have a definition of culture which fulfils specific translatological purposes. In their professional activity, translators are confronted with forms of behaviour and their products (e.g. texts, in the widest sense). They must be able to relate behaviour itself and the results of behaviour to the culture-specific knowledge of the members of that culture. In this way, they will be able to identify the function, relevance and value of such behaviour and/or of its results in and for a culture. As Witte argues, a definition of culture should therefore combine the meta-level of the conditions of behaviour, the object-level of behaviour, and the results and products of behaviour. Vermeer's definition, which builds on arguments by Goodenough (1964, based on ethnographic field work) and Göhring (1978, second language acquisition) combines the various levels with specific reference to translation, cf.:

> Culture [...] the open system of norms and conventions and their results which govern the behaviour of whoever wants to be taken as a member of a certain society. (Vermeer, 1996: 3)

Such a relative concept of culture can equally be applied to paracultures (e.g. a nation, a tribe, the European community), diacultures (e.g. a family, a professional circle, also beyond the borders of a specific paraculture), and idiocultures (individuals). Para-, dia- and idiocultures do not exist per se, but they are defined for the specific purposes of analysis (cf. multiple identities).

Following on from these considerations, Witte sets out to develop a concept of cultural competence as specific for translatorial action, thereby synthesising insights from modern TS (especially functionalist theories) and from ICS. A translation-specific cultural competence ('translatorische Kulturkompetenz'), as an integral component of a competence of translational action, is characterised as follows (my translation, format as in the original):

Translation-specific cultural competence is
the ability to become aware of and check what is unconsciously known
the ability of consciously learning something which is not yet known
in both one's own and the other (foreign) culture, and
the ability to relate both cultures to each other, to compare them
with the aim of
purposeful and situation-adequate reception and production of behaviour
for the needs of at least two interacting partners from two different cultures
in order to achieve communication between these interacting partners (cf.
Witte 2000: 163)

Readiness to learn, and an ability of critical evaluation are also high-lighted in definitions of intercultural competence in ICS (e.g. Byram 1997). There is general agreement within the discipline of TS, that trans-lation competence, as a professional competence of acting, is a complex notion, comprising linguistic, cultural, textual, subject-specific, research, social, and transfer competences (cf. Neubert 2000). Cultural compe-tence thus needs to be developed in conjunction with the other compo-nents of translation competence in a specific translator-training pro-gramme. This claim is in contrast to arguments that linguistic and cul-tural competence (acquired in language-training programmes and/or by living abroad) are preconditions for the development of translation com-petence in a more narrow sense (this philosophy underlies arguments for offering translator-training programmes only at postgraduate level; for the United Kingdom see e.g. Anderman, 1998, and Schäffner, 2000 as a response). It needs to be recognised that specific translational demands are associated with all components of translation competence.

How can such a complex translation competence be developed in the translator-training process? I will discuss this question in the next section on the basis of some examples.

6. Translation competence: How can it be developed?

It goes without saying that translator training programmes will have to consist of modules which account for all sub-competences of translation competence, and in an increasingly integrated way in the progression of the programme. Translation competence cannot be developed solely by practising translating (*learning by doing*), but it needs to be embedded in a theoretical framework in order to allow trainee translators to make in-

formed decisions. This also means that a programme needs to include a module on translation theories, to familiarise students with various definitions of translation, various approaches and controversial concepts, and thus encourage critical reflection. In a wider sense, then, translation competence also includes a meta-level, i.e. knowledge about translation, about the (development of the) discipline of TS, and its disciplinary discourse.

I have commented elsewhere on the development of textual competence (Schäffner 2002), subject-specific competence (Schäffner in press a), and cultural competence (Schäffner in press b). In this paper, I will concentrate on the integrated aspects in discussing translation in a classroom setting with reference to the following exercises and activities: (i) producing target texts, (ii) reflecting on the reception of translations, (iii) reflecting on lay attitudes to translation.

6.1. Producing target texts

When students are faced with a translation task, it is necessary for them to reflect consciously on all the factors that are relevant to the production of a target text that appropriately fulfils its specified purpose for its target addressees. This means awareness of the skopos, reflecting on the required target text profile, analysing the source text against the background of the translation brief, deciding on the translation strategies with which the purpose can best be achieved, and reflecting on the research that needs to be carried out in completing the task (e.g. checking parallel texts for genre conventions in the target culture, doing an Internet search to find information about historical events). In this way, students experience translation as a complex decision-making process.

Learning about cultures takes place in a process of a conscious, reflective comparison, comparing the *foreign* target culture to one's own culture, comparing behaviour and products of behaviour. Texts as products of contextualised behaviour show traces of socio-textual practices in a culture in a more or less explicit way in their surface structure. For example, the following textual segment demands reflection on a familiar phenomenon: cricket. In this article, Gerry Adams, President of Sein Fein, comments on the peace process in Northern Ireland:

> What is clearly needed is a negotiated peace settlement. [...] How do we
> achieve that goal? In his submission to the Forum for Peace and Reconcilia-

tion in Dublin just before Christmas, FW De Klerk recommended that a peace process should be played like a one-day, and not a three-day, game of cricket. (*The Guardian*, 12 February 1996)

When translating this text into German (translation brief: for publication in the German weekly newspaper *Die Zeit* in late February 1996), a translator has to know that cricket is not a specially popular game in Germany, and that the rules as well as the length of a game are not widely known. As a result of a translation-oriented source text analysis, British students become aware, or reflect anew, about a phenomenon which they usually take for granted (this is what Witte means by "the ability to become aware of and check what is unconsciously known", see above). In a German target text, any reference to cricket can safely be avoided in favour of a more general formulation (such as *plädierte F W de Klerk für zügige Verhandlungen* - cf. Schäffner 2001).

In another text from an in-flight magazine, we find references to characteristic meals (*Früchtequark, Gulasch nach Hausfrauenart*):

Auch das Frühstück ist gewöhnungsbedürftig: dehydriertes (entwässertes) Nahrungsgranulat. Mit etwas warmem Wasser versetzt, verwandelt es sich nach wenigen Minuten aber doch noch in Früchtequark, Kaffee oder Gulasch nach Hausfrauenart.

In deciding on an appropriate solution for the target text, the skopos needs to be related to the content, the genre, and the function of the text. This text is a popular-scientific text in an in-flight magazine. Its main purpose is to provide entertainment for the travellers, who want to sit back and relax. The text provides information as well (about the daily life of astronauts on board the International Space Station), but the entertainment aspect is the dominant one (i.e. the text reports about the daily routine, not about scientific experiments carried out). The source text is written in an informal style (due to its purpose), by an author who is an astronaut himself (Thomas Reiter), reporting on the basis of his own experience and showing empathy with the current astronauts on board. This informal style is also reflected in puns (e.g. the title *All-Tägliches*), a deliberate exploitation of polysemy, and allusions.

The target text is meant to serve the same function as the source text (both texts will be published side by side in the magazine). It will thus have to reflect equally an informal style, making use of puns, alliteration,

allusion, wherever possible (i.e. an instrumental, equifunctional, translation is required, Nord 1997). All these aspects need to be taken into account for deciding how to deal with *Früchtequark and Gulasch nach Hausfrauenart* (most of my UK students had to find out first what Früchtequark is, cf. "the ability of consciously learning something which is not yet known" in Witte, above). These concepts are to be interpreted as examples of the author choosing meals which are typical German ones, and as such easily recognisable to German readers. That is, they do not describe actual facts. Any adaptation to typical meals in the target culture would therefore be most appropriate (e.g. yoghurt, stew just as mother used to make it), allowing readers to see that daily life in a space station is not at all too different from their own daily life when it comes to delicious meals.

These examples reflect the relevance of a specific phenomenon (*cricket, Früchtequark*) in a specific culture (UK, Germany), its status, and how it is evaluated in a culture (diaculture or paraculture). A translator has to decide, in accordance with the skopos, whether in choosing a corresponding target culture phenomenon, preference is given to a comparable form, function, or value (cf. "relate both cultures to each other, with the aim of purposeful and situation-adequate production of behaviour" in Witte, above). In reflecting about these cases, students also realise that a given cultural phenomenon is not in itself culture-specific, but it is constituted as being culture-specific in the process of and as a result of a comparison. In this way, trainee translators can be sensitised to the possibility that there may be differences in behaviour and in products of behaviour, and that these may be relevant to a given translation task, or in evaluating a translation.

In reflecting about potential solutions it is important to bear in mind that the target text is produced for the needs and purposes of others, i.e. in producing a target text, the translator will enable transcultural communication. Holz-Mänttäri (1986: 363) and Witte (2000: 145) point out that a translator him- or herself is not a participant in such an act of communication, but an outsider. A translator's action is not a communicative action in a direct sense, but it is a translatorial action. A translator acts in his or her own role as a translator in his or her own situation, producing a text which is then used by others in a situation of intercultural communication. The translator is usually not immediately present when his or her product is received; this also means that he or she is not in a position to check any feedback. This is different for people who act in their own role in contexts of intercultural communication (e.g. business negotiators).

6.2. Reflecting on the reception of target texts

In intercultural communication which comes about through translator-ial action, it is the translator who has to negotiate at least two models of reality and make them logically and culturally compatible for the specified purpose of the target text. A comparison of source text and target text can serve as an exercise to identify translation decisions and reflect about their potential causes and effects. For example, in the case of the novel *Crazy* by Benjamin Lebert (published in 1999) and its English translation *Crazy* (published in 2000 in the USA), the strategies chosen by the translator (Carol Brown Janeway) were not consistent, the two models of reality thus not made culturally compatible. The story is situated in Germany, but at the micro-level of the linguistic surface structures, the references to the German way of life (school system, expectations of school performance, youth culture, forms of address, etc.) have often been done away with. This can be seen in the following examples:

> Hier soll ich also bleiben. Wenn möglich *bis zum Abitur*. [...] endlich schaffen, aus meinem verfluchten Mathematik-Sechser einen Fünfer zu machen. (italics are mine - CS)

> So this is where I'm supposed to stay. *Until I graduate, if possible.* [...] finally supposed to raise my damn math score from 6 to a 5.

Abitur is the name of the examination at the end of the secondary school in the German school system, a prerequisite for admission to university; marking is frequently between 1 and 6, with 1 being the best mark. School levels have been changed in the target text according to the age of the students to correspond to the system in the USA, cf.: *Klasse 9, Klasse 8 -10th grade, 9th grade*. Forms of address have been adapted to the target culture conventions, cf.: *Herr Richter, Frau Lerch, Fräulein Bachmann - Mr Richter, Mrs Lerch, Ms Bachmann.*

> Er sei sehr geizig, *Schwabengeiz* eben
> Apparently he's mean - mean *as a Scot*

In Germany it is the Swabians who are the proverbially mean group (dia-culture). In this case, a similar evaluation was the main criterion for

choosing a referent for the target text. In other cases, culture-specific references were omitted, for example proper names for products (*eine Dose Warsteiner Bier - a can of beer; Chappi-Dose - a can of dog food*).

An exercise that can be linked to such a comparative analysis is researching the reception of translations. This is admittedly more difficult in the case of, for example, translated software manuals or business reports. Literary texts, however, are usually reviewed, and it is such reviews which allow insights into the reception, evaluation, and expectations of a text. One reviewer of *Crazy*, for example, commented:

> Unfortunately, neither the irreverent sarcasm nor the naive philosophizing of the original comes across as successfully in Carol Brown Janeway's translation, which would have benefited from a more idiomatic, less literal approach. (Internet)

In a review of *The Reader* (the English translation of Bernhard Schlink's 1995 novel *Der Vorleser*, translated by Carol Brown Janeway, 1997) on the Internet we read:

> I found the characters, settings, and events to be quite distant. I am wondering if the translation had anything to do with this observation. Michael and Hanna's affair seemed cold and unemotional to me. The trial's contents were matter-of-fact, instead of sorrowful and tragic. [...] Could the character's feelings and emotional growth have been lost in the translation?

Reflecting on such comments as they were made in the receiving (target) culture, not necessarily by linking them to a detailed comparison of the linguistic make-up of source text and target text, is also a valuable exercise. It allows students to become aware of the cultural, historical, ideological or political circumstances in which a translation has been received, and they can equally try to research the circumstances in which it was produced. Evaluations may also change when the ideological circumstances change. For example, in 2002, *The Reader* saw a kind of critical reevaluation as trash (*Schundroman*) in view of a number of new German books that deal in literary form with the once taboo topics of Germans as victims in the Second World War.

Including discussions of the reception of translations in the training context can thus contribute to an understanding of the social role and responsibility of translators. In this respect, it is also illuminating for

trainee translators to see what effects laypeople's attitudes to translation can have.

6.3. Laypeople's attitudes to translation

The following example shows how a naive attitude towards translation produced a target language result that could - innocently (?) - be used for a highly critical comment. Here is the beginning of an article by Alan Coren, published under the title "A sad story of German stamps, disappearing nurses and the end of tinned salmon" in *The Times* on 20 March 2002, as a commentary on current affairs on the regular comments page:

> They say bad things come in threes, [...]
> The first bad thing was Saturday's report that the German post office was celebrating this year's World Cup by issuing six commemorative stamps, each in honour of six previous winners, and each to be sold not only in Germany, but also in the country commemorated. The six previous winners are Brazil, Germany, Uruguay, Italy, Argentina, and France. Hang about, you murmur, wasn't there a seventh previous winner? You are not wrong. So where is its stamp? It is nowhere: Germany is not issuing anything to commemorate its being hammered into 1966 oblivion by England. Sour grapes? Sour krauts? Not so, they protest, it is solely because the English stamp would have to bear the head of the Queen, and this could not be incorporated into a soccer scene. Oh, really? Is there in all Germany not a single designer ingenious enough to depict, say, a Bobby Moore inch-perfect cross sailing into the goal-mouth to meet our gracious sovereign's head rising above the stranded defenders and nodding a belter past Tikouski's helpless glove? Bordered, perhaps, by a titchy Gothic script recording: "Sie denken das alles ist uber - es ist jetzt!" Apparently not. Instead, it is *Deutschland uber alles*. I cannot tell you how far that lowered me, on Saturday night.

Although the whole article is meant to be slightly ironic, it perpetuates deep-seated clichés and stereotypes (e.g. the pun on the stereotypical label for Germans, *(Krauts - Sour krauts)*. From the point of view of translation, we can see a layman's operation in practice. The German sentence used (*Sie denken das alles ist uber - es ist jetzt!*) is a literal rendering of a famous catchphrase (*They think it's all over - it is now*; a statement used by the BBC reporter Kenneth Wolstenholme in the TV live coverage of the 1966 World Cup final match). This phrase is known in the UK owing to

endless repetitions of the scene, and it is also the title of a TV sports quiz show. Only a reader who knows both English and German will be able to make sense of the author's argument. To German readers (who are implicit addressees of the text), this German sentence does not mean anything at all: they would not be able to relate it to the original context, and the sentence is grammatically inaccurate as well. Also the name of the German goal-keeper in the preceding sentence is wrong: it should be Tilkowski and not Tikouski. The author, who is obviously not competent in the German language, produced a word-for-word rendering of the English catchphrase, probably relying on a bilingual dictionary (or on one of the freely available machine translation systems on the Internet. My own tests with Babelfish, FreeTranslation and Systran produced the following results: *Sie denken es sein ganz rüber, Sie denken, daß es alle über ist; Sie denken, daß es ganz rüber sein*). This does not only reflect a naive view of translation as nothing more than the reproduction of words, but the appearance of the word *uber* (correct spelling should be *über*) allowed the author to bring in another well-known reference to Nazi Germany: *Deutschland uber alles* - the first line of the German national anthem as sung during the Third Reich (and relatively well-known also to English readers who otherwise do not know German). The reference to *Gothic script* also contributes to this anti-German image. A more appropriate translation of the catchphrase would have been *Sie glauben wohl, es [das Spiel] ist schon aus,* or *Sie denken es ist schon Schluß,* - but none of these solutions would have allowed for the link to the political argument which we find in the text.

A rather naive understanding of translation as an operation of linguistic transformation can, unfortunately, also be detected in the literature on intercultural communication. For example, in a 900-odd pages book on intercultural communication, Jandt (1995) devotes approximately 14 pages to translation in a chapter entitled "Language as a Barrier". He gives examples of translation mistakes that have resulted in unsuccessful intercultural communication. His examples are mainly public notices, such as the inscription on a ticket: *The indicated return time must be strictly adhered to. A later return is determined by the disposable bus seats.* His proposal for avoiding such mistakes (here the misuse of *disposable*) is using back translation as a means of checking accuracy, i.e. equivalence (Jandt 1995: 111f).

Critically reflecting on such cases as well in a training process should have at least two consequences: (i) an understanding of (and pride in) the

role of the professional translator as an expert in text production, and (ii) an awareness of the social role played by professional translators and of the professional ethics related to it. Ethical competence, as a reflection of an awareness of the fact that translators are working in a complex socio-political context, could therefore be added as another component of translation competence.

7. Translation and Intercultural Communication: Where are we going?

As should have become obvious, TS and ICS share a number of concerns and concepts, especially concepts such as (inter)cultural communicative competence, cultural awareness, cross-cultural encounters. Both disciplines see language and culture as interdependent, and subsequently, training contexts aim at achieving intercultural awareness. This means sensitising trainees to the linguistic and cultural characteristics of communicative behaviour and products of this behaviour. The 2000 IALIC conference referred to debates on "the way in which encounters with the other and the crossing of linguistic, geographic and political spaces is leading to new modes of thinking, feeling, and experiencing the world." This is relevant for both disciplines, but with a different focus, as already said above. In foreign language and intercultural training, the aim is the development of linguistic and (inter)cultural competence for the purpose of acting in one's own role, i.e. for behaving appropriately in intercultural situations. In translator training, however, the aim is the development of translation competence (with intercultural competence as one of its components) for the purpose of professional acting for the needs of others.

Despite the common concerns of the two disciplines, there also seems to be a lack of awareness of each other's literature. As said above, translation has often been described as intercultural communication, and insights from other disciplines have fruitfully been applied to the discipline of TS (e.g. Witte's translation-specific definition of cultural competence is built on ICS). However, in the field of Intercultural Communication itself (and in the social sciences in general), translation, if mentioned at all, is mainly understood as a linguistic phenomenon (cf. also Witte 2000: 95). This ignorance (?) may be due to the status (or crisis?) of the disciplines mentioned at the beginning of this paper. In the call for papers for the 2004 Seoul conference we read: "Translation Studies is now an established discipline in many parts of the world. Intercultural Studies is emerging as an area of study in its own right."

Translation Studies as an independent discipline is nevertheless generally characterised as interdisciplinary by nature (cf. also the debate on "shared ground", Chesterman and Arrojo 2000, and responses in the subsequent issues of the journal *Target*). The call for the 2004 EST congress refers to this interdisciplinarity as "both a necessity and an asset." The *necessity* is due to the complexity of translation as being a crossroads of processes, products, functions, and agents, in socio-cultural contexts. The *asset* refers to the need to be aware that concepts and methods which have entered TS from other disciplines have their own definition and history in their original disciplines and (may) have been modified for the new disciplinary purposes of TS. The main title of the 2004 EST con-gress, "Translation Studies: Doubts and Directions", can thus also be seen as programmatic for clarifying the status of the discipline.

As said at the beginning, the 2004 Seoul conference is to see the launch of a new International Association for Translation and Intercultural Studies (IATIS). The aim of this association is described as debating issues relating to translation and other forms of intercultural communication. This characterisation of translation as being subordinated to intercultural communication also allows the implication that Translation Studies is a sub-discipline of Intercultural Communication Studies. Taking into account that other associations too (such as IASS, IALIC) study forms of intercultural communication, the question becomes: will all these associations become part of IATIS? Or will they all eventually merge to an umbrella association which combines TS, ICS, and other disciplines as branches of a superordinate discipline (maybe epistemology, or memetics, cf. Chesterman 1997)?

At the moment, as we have seen, various disciplines highlight the need for interdisciplinarity. Even though several different disciplines show an interest in researching intercultural communication and/or translation, they do it by approaching the object of research in their own disciplinary way, with their own interests and their own methods. So far I have not yet mentioned the interest shown in translation by information technology, although this field too has an increasing impact on the future of translation. With the growing demand for getting translations as quickly as possible, developments in machine translation, machine-assisted translation, translation memory systems, localisation software, etc. call for interaction between translation studies, intercultural studies, and language technology.

The German news magazine *Der Spiegel* reported last year (6 May 2002), that American soldiers stationed in Afghanistan used a so-called

"phraselator", a device that translates pre-set standard phrases on the basis of voice recognition. That is, spoken English is orally reproduced by the device in Pashtu, Urdu, Dari (the local languages spoken in Afghanistan). Examples of the pre-set standard phrases are the following: *Zeig Deinen Ausweis; Lass das Messer fallen; Der Arzt kommt; Die Suppe ist kalt* (Show me your passport; Drop the knife; The doctor is on his way; The soup is cold). The choice of these phrases reveals quite a lot about assumed communicative *needs* in the specific context (and a similar device was used in Iraq in spring 2003). However, as *Der Spiegel* reports, the phraselator is unable to translate the replies from the local people back into English. That is, despite all the technological innovation, such *translation* results only in extremely limited intercultural communication.

It is through interdisciplinary cooperation that the complexity of both translation and intercultural communication can be studied. In this way, and by building on the commonalities and differences in focus, methods, and concepts, both Translation Studies and Intercultural Communication Studies can prosper as disciplines.

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