

Teaching for knowledge or competence? Translator education at Institutions of Higher Education

A B S T R A C T In this paper, I suggest that the notion of a “wise translator” ought to summarise the outcome of translator education. The suggestion is that demands for both pure disciplinary education and pure technical skill should be subsumed under the notion of wisdom. The article explores the role that choices in curriculum play at the level of higher education. It also conceptualises the outcome of translator education. It then makes a number of choices for such a curriculum to be aligned with wisdom as outcome.

Key words: wisdom, translator education, translation studies, higher education, teaching and learning.

1. Introduction

In this paper, I suggest that the notion of a “wise translator” ought to summarise the outcome of translator education. Unfortunately, it may be the case that higher education has been so infused by notions of skill, competence, what the market need, and global economic competition that “wise” does not appeal as an outcome of education anymore. As educators at institutions of higher education, we want our students to be competent translators when they leave our classrooms; we want them to be able to choose the “correct” words, meanings, sentences, and even text types when they translate. The question is, however, on what should they base their choices? We teach the students strategies, techniques and computer skills, but how would they know when and how to use which? To my mind, it is common knowledge that language is ideologically and culturally loaded. It is common sense these days that intercultural communication is fraught

with possibilities of imposing empires or robbing identities. If this is true, it holds that educating wise translators, translators who are competent to exercise professional judgement in an ethically responsible way, should be the aim of the translator educator.

Implicit in my argument in the previous paragraph is a contrast between the academic and professional domains of translation. Academics would be interested in knowledge concerning translations and the translation process. Professionals would be interested in the skills needed to be an effective translator. At institutions of higher education, where professionals are prepared at a particular level for their jobs, this contrast results in a focus on either knowledge or skill. Universities teaching translation studies with the aim of providing professional translators for the market are challenged to operate within this contrast.

Most people have an intuitive, though highly idiosyncratic, grasp of wisdom. However, I use it here as expounded by Baltes (2004: 17). He indicates that wisdom cannot be defined, but mentions some of the features of wisdom, of which I here highlight three:

1. Wisdom includes knowledge about the limits of knowledge and the uncertainties of the world.
2. Wisdom represents a truly superior level of knowledge, judgement, and advice.
3. Wisdom constitutes knowledge with extraordinary scope, depth and balance.

I am of the opinion that the three aspects of wisdom listed above apply to translators, or what I believe a translator should be. Wisdom, to my mind, affords one the opportunity to propose an outcome of education that is more in line with the educational needs of the twenty-first century, i.e. knowledge produced in the context of application, transdisciplinarity, social accountability and reflexivity, and quality control (Gibbons *et al.*, 1997: 3-8). It stands in opposition to both rational disciplinary knowledge, as has been criticised in various circles (e.g. Barnett, 1994, Schön, 1987: 4) and technician skill, as it has been criticised by other (e.g. Barnett, 1994, Bennett *et al.*, 2001: 1-6).

Scholars have varying definitions and conceptualisations for skill and competence. I do not wish to enter into this debate here and thus follow the basic conceptualisation of Barnett (1994: 55-82). This does not mean, to me, that skill or competence should not feature in translation education, but that I propose that it be afforded a particular position within a larger curricular concern.

Against this background, and by further expounding the views of scholars such as Kevar (2005: 50) and, in translation studies itself, Kiraly (2000), Kelly (2005), the Malmkjaer (2004) and others, I wish to put forward the view that translator education should be precisely this: educating students to be wise professionals in a complex world. I shall go about my argument by, first, making use of theory of curriculum to indicate that neither knowledge nor skill and competence are enough when educating translators. I shall also motivate why I choose for translator education when speaking about what is usually known as translator training. Then I shall use current translation theory to point out why judgement is an inherent part of translation practice. By means of this exposition, I shall argue that wisdom provides a useful notion to describe the type of translator that society currently needs and that this notion should inform translator education. Lastly, I shall provide examples of how these theoretical issues inform practical choices in the curriculum of a particular course in translator education.

2. Curriculum in higher education

Up to now, discussions on translator education have not, to my mind, drawn on the debates in higher education sufficiently, if at all. This paper is an endeavour to stimulate a debate between theorists of higher education, in particular curriculum studies, and translator educators. My aim is to take translator education to the same level as, for instance education in mathematics or law, where each discipline has its own unique pedagogy developed for that subject field. In this article, my main aim is not an exploration of pedagogy, but an exploration of the implications of theory of curriculum in higher education for translator education. This means that my aim is not a discussion on teaching methods, i.e. techne in education, but a discussion on curriculum, i.e. the basic considerations and motivations behind the choices we make in curricula, which inform teaching and learning. Choices of curriculum themselves hold ideological implications for translator education.

I take as point of departure Barnett's definition of curriculum as a set of educational experiences organized more or less deliberately (2004: 5). I am aware of the fact that there are a wide variety of views on the topic (Neary, 2002). Seeing that I am not discussing curriculum studies as such, but making use of the notion of curriculum to inform translation studies, I shall not go into the detail of the differences. I then view pedagogy as being concerned with the acts of teaching that bring off that curriculum (Barnett, 2004: 5).

Together with Barnett, I wish to maintain that curriculum asks questions about values, the nature of the human being, the relationships between individuals and society, and the challenges facing society (2004: 16). Curriculum is then a set of experiences that a student inhabits by interacting with a learning environment (2004: 44). Barnett indicates that curriculum is both the organised set of processes and materials set before the student and the intentional purposes and strategies related to lecturers' intentions (2004: 44). He argues that a curriculum is not delivered, but enacted (2004: 45). It is something planned for, but eventually it is something done. I understand curriculum as entailing the most basic and value-laden choices educators have to make. Merely changing or innovating methods of teaching and learning, as has for the most part been going on in translation studies, amounts to attending to symptoms, not the disease. I thus wish to stimulate further debate within translation studies, and between translation studies and curriculum studies, as to how the content of a curriculum for translator education should be conceptualised.

Barnett argued more than a decade ago (1994: 1) that higher education does not produce knowledge as such, but knowledge competence, i.e. the ability to be competent in knowledge. The main argument of his book was that academic competence is being replaced by operational competence (1994: 1). He further argues that favouring one type of knowledge to others is nothing new in higher education; the favour has just now changed. His argument is not that this change is necessarily undesirable, though he would not agree with everything contained in it. He rather suggests that this change is brought about without a curricular discussion, i.e. a discussion of the values underlying the change, the values that inform the change. I contend that translation studies also lack a robust discussion on curriculum.

In the same vein, Bennet *et al.* claimed in 2000 that over the past decade or two, the focus in higher education has moved from liberal educational objectives to instrumental objectives (2000: 1). He is of the opinion that the ideology of academic competence is being displaced by

another – the ideology of operational competence (2000: 6). It is not only employers who feel that students are not aptly qualified for the world of work; students themselves experience a culture shock when entering the world of work. According to Bennet et al., this can only be overcome by the integration of academic and work-based learning (2000: 18). Manns (2003: 79) adds some more insight into the issues that the current society poses to higher education. He argues that professional practice is not merely a technical exercise, but involves complex, new, and uncertain situations (2003: 79). The implication is that technical skill, on its own, does not prepare students for the complex situations they will experience in the world of work.

According to Barnett (1994: 22), a shift is occurring in higher education from an approach based on knowledge competence to an approach based on performance competence. He conceptualises the relationship between higher education, knowledge and society in the former approach as follows:

Higher education → knowledge → society (Barnett, 1994: 22).

In this model, higher education created knowledge that was, as it were, forced upon society. In the new approach, the order has changed to:

Society → knowledge → higher education (Barnett 1994: 22).

In this latter model, society creates knowledge or determines what type of knowledge is needed. This refers to what is known as the knowledge society in which society produces its own knowledge and has its own views on what counts as knowledge. The implication is that it tells higher education what type of knowledge it wants and higher education has no choice but to oblige. The further implication is that knowledge is in the process of becoming distinct from higher education. I base this assertion on the work of, amongst others, Gibbons (1997: 1-6), who has claimed that much of the knowledge currently being produced in the world is not being produced at universities. As we are moving into a knowledge society, society is forming its own definitions of knowing and these definitions are begin presented to higher education (Barnett, 2004: 22). This means that the typical disciplinary knowledge produced at universities are now competing with other forms of knowledge produced in society. The university does not have a monopoly on knowledge anymore – if it ever had.

Now obviously, one has to ask why this would be a bad thing? Previous interests were also sectional. With this Barnett totally agrees; in their previous conceptualisations of knowledge and its relationship to society, universities had had too narrow a definition of knowledge (Barnett, 1994: 24). He proposes that this narrow definition be expanded, but that it should not be dominated by what the market wants. Later more about this.

It is further argued that the professionalisation of the academic community is tipping the scale towards a skills, standards and outcomes model of curriculum rather than a reflexive, collective, developmental, and process-oriented model (Barnett, 2004: 18). In the current view of professionalism in teaching, aims are reduced to outcomes, processes are reduced to skills, and systematic reflection and even critique are reduced to knowledge or what is already known (Barnett, 2004: 19). Barnett (2004: 19) severely criticises the current leaning towards uncritical, performative professionalism that is merely fulfilling a set of roles already set out

for it. Although he (Barnett, 2004: 20) would agree that the disciplinary structure of academic knowledge negatively implies that knowledge is focused on problems of its own making, not that of society, Barnett (2004: 21) also argues that higher education can act to widen society's rationality. That is, higher education can contribute to society's rationality if it can prevent being totally caught up in society's concepts of rationality. He proposes a relationship between the academe and society that is dialectic (2004: 21). He proposes that knowledge-higher-education-society form a nexus, that is, an intertwined configuration of institutional forces. He indicates, on the one hand, that there is an overlap of interests between knowledge and society; the academe does not exist purely for itself. Higher education has to place itself within society, not against society. On the other hand, higher education cannot be merely of service to society. It has to maintain a critical distance.

In the UK, higher education has been seen as a cultural good in a post-rural society up to the 1960s (Barnett, 1994: 4). Thereafter, it becomes an economic good within a modern society (Barnett, 1994: 4). Barnett argues that this shift in approach in higher education is representative of a shift to modernity, not postmodernity (Barnett, 1994: 4). This means that one could view this shift as representing an impoverished view of humanity, dominated by instrumental rationality (Barnett, 1994: 4). I agree with Barnett on this point and will argue later that this impoverished view also plays a role in translation, which is seen as mere technique. This view does not measure up to the requirements that their professions put to translators.

Barnett (1994: 12) conceptualises a triangular relationship between knowledge, higher education and society in which each should reciprocally influence the other and in which no one should dominate, as in the conceptualisations schematically represented above. The implication of the influence society currently has on knowledge is that higher education is less a place of broad educational and personal development and more a place where knowledge is technical knowledge viewed as commodity (Barnett, 1994: 13). Knowing as contemplation is being replaced by knowing as operation (Barnett, 1994: 15). Insight, understanding, reflection, wisdom and critique are begin replaced by skill, competence, outcome, information, technique and flexibility (Barnett, 1994: 16). Barnett (1994: 17) does not argue that these competing perspectives are either compatible or logically contradictory. He rather starts from the descriptive observation that both forces are at work in society (Barnett, 1994: 18). He would not argue that all of this is lamentable, merely that not all of it is laudable. Work cannot offer a universal category with which to structure curricula (Barnett, 1994: 57). He argues, to my mind convincingly, that being human is more basic than being a human at work. Thus for Barnett (1994: 60), the main focus is on the personal factor, the human factor: "knowing is a knowing person – knowing is a personal relationship". To him, the immediate personal encounter is important (Barnett, 1994: 60). Knowing entails personal relationships and always has a personal character, a human character. To my mind, he then takes the important step of maintaining that content and skill are brought together in understanding (Barnett, 1994: 57-58, 99-102), in other words, personally relating knowledge into a system of meaning. He does not argue against competence or the economic requirements of knowledge, but he argues against that view dominating and overriding understanding. To him, understanding should subsume both mere knowledge and mere technology, or pure knowledge and pure technology.

Against this background, he proposes that issues of curricula are intertwined with the historical and social context in which they are used (Barnett, 2004: 28). He operates within a cultural framework which leads him to ask whether workplace success is all there is to education and life (Barnett, 2004: 46-47). In addition to that, he holds that practical and personal forms of knowledge have to be reconsidered. To him, what matters is engagement with knowledge (Barnett, 2004: 48), in other words, the person, the human being has to be personally involved and engaged in constructing knowledge, and for that matter competence. I would like to take his argument further. Education is more than the mere communication of knowledge, which is decoded by students and applied to their unique situations. Education is at heart an interpretative endeavour. Students have to interpret into their own unique system of meaning the learning material, including lecturers' views, with which they are confronted. This process is subject to all barriers and relativities of the process of interpretation.

Action is a necessary component of curriculum (Barnett, 2004: 61). Acquiring critical thought and understanding cannot be done without acting; this means that acting out the practices of a discipline is learning (Barnett, 2004: 62). The implication is that one should not focus on skill only, because it may neglect the personal involvement in learning (Barnett, 2004: 62). It further means that a proper development of skills calls for agency from the individual concerned (Barnett, 2004: 62). Skills require a sense of appropriateness, context, respect of persons, own self, roles, responsibilities, rightness (Barnett, 2004: 62). Barnett (2004: 63) openly suggests that we should "beware of performativity in which skills are shorn of reflection, due care and empathy for the particularity of the situation". I shall draw particularly on this notion of appropriateness to inform translator education.

Up to now, my argument has basically been that if higher education allows itself to become dominated by notions of employability and skill, it may be cooperating in a modernist agenda of reducing humanity to being labour. This makes one case for choosing a curriculum that informs a liberal education of humanities rather than mere training or competence. I now wish to present a second argument in favour of my case. This argument relates to the contingent nature of life and working life in particular.

It is often argued that because of uncertainty and contingency, knowledge and skill may be found redundant. The change from academic knowledge to useful knowledge is an important aspect in the change in knowledge production. Thus, Barnett (2004: 83) argues that the Humboldtian ideal of truth and purity of knowledge is changing. These days, there is less exclusivity to knowledge, more of what the world (market) wants, and more knowledge is produced outside of the university (Barnett, 2004: 83). In order to solve this issue, Barnett views education as an interplay between knowing, doing and being. By being, Barnett (2004: 63) means a solid inner self amidst an ever-changing world. In other words, education which enhances a student's being will allow the student to survive the contingency by being able to adapt to varying situations. Thus Barnett (2004: 92) argues in favour of teaching for a form of knowing in which formal knowledge is brought to bear on problems of the world. The implication is that being competent and being skilled will not survive contingency. Only education, and a human-oriented education at that, will achieve this.

Various other authors have also addressed issues similar to the abovementioned. Some of the main points which they add to the debate will now be discussed briefly. To illustrate the debate

further, Scott *et al.* (2004: 9) name five attributes of the late-modern world:

- Acceleration
- Simultaneity
- Increasing risk
- Non-linearity
- Reflexivity

He (Scott, 2004: 9) then adds another five, namely power strategies, the reallocation of power bases in society, control is exercised at a distance by governing elites, compartmentalisation and commodification. He (Scott, 2004: 13) also indicates that the university is being drawn away from its enclosed space by the knowledge-based economy, i.e. the university cannot produce knowledge in isolation from society anymore, but has to engage society in the production of knowledge. He further point to the learning organisation, globalisation and life-long learning as features that render the distinction between university and society less stringent. Without going into detail of each of these facets, which can be perused in the original, the whole argues for the same type of shift Barnett has indicated, as indicated above.

All of these factors contribute to the complicated and contingent nature of work in the current society. The argument is that mere technical skill will not prepare students to cope with society, especially not in the field of humanities.

Gravett (2004: 26) argues that discerning is the key to learning, i.e. seeing a situation against the background of similar or contrastive situations. Discernment arises from the experience of variation (Gravett, 2004: 28). Parker (2002: 376) adds another voice by claiming that wisdom is something totally different from *techne*, i.e. mere technical ability or skill. For instance, if translators are trained in a purely technical way, they may be given lists of words or phrases which commonly occur as translation problems in their language combination. However, when they find translation problems other than these, they are not able to solve them. Furthermore, when more complex translation problems occur, e.g. at the level of culture or ideology, their technical ability will be of little or no help.

Against the background of this critique of current trends in curriculum, I argue with Kevar (2005: 50) that wisdom should be the aim of teaching. He argues that, since theories of knowledge and knowledge production have changed, as argued above, learning should also change to foster the required new types of knowledge. Because emotion plays a large part in learning (Király, 2000; Schön, 1987), intuitive learning is becoming increasingly important (Kevar, 2005: 53). This means that pure rational, disciplinary knowledge has been proven not to be able to solve all problems (Robinson, 2003: 86-95). Some problems in life need intuition and creativity to be solved (Schön, 1987). A wise society expands its view on information and knowledge to include creativity, intuition, interpersonal skills and knowledge (Kevar, 2005: 54). This type of society fosters multiple types of learning (Kevar, 2005: 55) and, I would argue, is closer to a postmodern society than a modern one. Moreover, in discussing curriculum, one has to ask what kind of judgement constitutes proper practice. The implication is that one has to look at reflection as a meta-critical tool which aims at understanding. The notion of reflection focuses on understanding as a meta-function, something which can be lost in teaching for mere skill and technique. The implication here is precisely what I want to argue

for translation. Students cannot merely be taught skill. They should be taught to be wise, reflective citizens in order to exercise their judgement in complex social situations.

3. Judgement as a fundamental trait of translators

Translation is a millennium-old activity. However, translation studies as a discipline is but decades old and still trying to find its feet. This means that theorists of translation studies are still fleshing out what this discipline is about. It implies that translator educators do not necessarily have a clear or similar picture in their minds regarding the outcome of a translation course. More importantly, translator education as a theoretical endeavour is but years old, suffering much of the same fate as translation theorists, only to a larger extent. Cronin (2005: 250), for instance, argues that, for many years, much of translator training has been teacher-centred, source-text oriented and grammatically obsessive. He therefore argues for the alignment of theory of translation and pedagogy (Cronin, 2005: 250), i.e. translation pedagogy should be tailor-made to fit the subject it wants to teach, namely translation studies. One thus has to obtain clarity on what tasks a translator should be able to perform and then to devise a pedagogy to attain that goal.

For the sake of talking about curriculum in translation studies, I contend that in translation studies there are two main approaches. The first pertains to seeing translation as a more or less purely linguistic activity in which the code of a text is switched from one language to another. In this view, the translator more or less disappears from the equation and the focus is on switching codes or comparing issues of language. Grammatical issues decide themselves in terms of rules of grammar and style. The other position would hold that translation in all instances implies agency. This approach holds that the translator is an agent fostering communication in complex new situations where translated texts have to operate. Now obviously, these would be two points on a continuum, and in each of these positions, there would be further finer differences. In translation theory, very few theorists would still hold to a purely linguistic notion of translation, although I am not sure what the situation amongst practising translators is. I am also not sure by which model translator education is being informed. That is why I shall be arguing for a specific model to inform choices of curriculum.

If one reads the publications on translation theory over the past five to ten years, one thing stands out. One finds it when reading Mona Baker (2006) on translation as re-narration or Theo Hermans (2007, in print) on translation as reported speech or Christiane Nord (2005) on functional translation. It is in the work of Lawrence Venuti (2007, in print) on translation as interpretation and in Moigglie on ethics. It is visible in Jan Blommaert's work on interpreting or Luis Pérez González's on audiovisual translation or James St Andre's on the history of translation. It is found in current discussions on power relationships between languages and the effect that it has on translators (Sarajeva, 2002). The common denominator is that the translator is in a powerful social position in which s/he has to make choices on a daily basis. These choices, usually choices of language, are based on judgements pertaining to social, political and ethical considerations. The judgements are, for their part, based on values that the translator must have considered. They are thus, inherently, ethical and moral. I argue that it has been proven to the point of being obvious that the translator cannot disappear behind a translation. The only neutral translation is the choice not to translate – and that choice also

holds ideological implications. Every day, translators have to make choices of being cooperative in communication situations or being subversive, and to which degree. For instance, when a translator has to translate AIDS material into Sesotho, how do you deal with translating overt references to genitals, something that is not acceptable in Sesotho? Now this question implies a choice, amongst others, a choice of the power relationships between Sesotho and the source language. The choice asks for a decision based on a judgement.

Andrew Chesterman (2005) worked out a model of cause and effect as a basic model that should, according to him, explain translation studies with the aim of informing translator education. His model will be discussed in more detail in the following section, but the mere fact that he had to do so, argues that somehow translator education is not yet seen in this way. Batrina (2005: 178) also suggests that any decision in a translation is taken against the background of what a translator views translation to be. My position builds on Chesterman's by confirming that there is a cause and effect to everything translators do. And that brings us to agency and being responsible for what we cause and what the effects of our causation are. With this, I do not want to claim that everything that happens to a translator or a translation is to be conceptualised in purely individual, personal terms. But in educating translators, we are working with human beings and the role of decision-making should thus be our starting point.

And that is precisely the point I wish to make. The judgement has to be based on something. And judgement takes us into the ethical or moral realm. From an education perspective, I thus ask: How can one educate translators to prepare them for the judgements they have to make each day?

4. Curriculum in translation studies: Options

Except for perhaps Kelly (2005), the notion of curriculum is totally absent from publications on translation studies. Publications on the topic are full of references to pedagogy and teaching and learning. Even when a leading theorist in the field, Donald Kiraly (2000), chooses socio-constructivism as an approach to translator training, he merely defines it in terms of teaching and learning, not in terms of choices relating to the role translators play in society or the values that should underlie translators' education. Except for Chesterman, I have not yet read a study on translator education that places the focus on the social and ethical/moral responsibility of the translator. In this section, I shall provide an overview of the literature on translator education in order, in the next section, to put forward my own views on the issue.

According to Chesterman (2005: 191), contemporary translation theory makes use of three models:

- 1) A static model of the relationship between source and target text
- 2) A dynamic model that maps out differing stages in the translation process
- 3) A causal model which shows the various causes and effects of translations

In Chesterman's (2005: 194) causal model, translations are seen as effects (of (a) previous cause(s)) and as causes, i.e. translations are not only products, but also agents. It is caused by something or somebody, hence it is an effect, but it also causes, hence having an effect. The source text is one cause of a translation (Chesterman, 2005: 195) – there can also be others. Nord's functionalist theory of translation has shown that there are many more forces effecting translations than merely the source text. Chesterman (2005: 191) proposes that one follows a

causal approach in translation training because it would show how various models explain or make use of causality in translation. Within this framework, one would then be able to ask what the effects of choices in translation are.

Chesterman's (2005: 201) causal model groups together wide-ranging theories for pedagogical purposes. Cause and effect helps one to see your role as translator within a wider historical dimension than merely that of a textual, linguistic or communication dimension (Chesterman, 2005: 201). Chesterman (2005: 201) convincingly argues that different schools in translation studies focus on different sections of the causal chain. There are different causes and effects, or different views on cause and effect. Thus, the model provides for the effects of translations to be tested in reader-response type of research. (Chesterman, 2005: 202). It is further extremely important, especially for my case, that Chesterman (2005: 202) argues that ethics are important. As I have argued above, once one concedes that the translator has a role as an agent in a social context, the choices that translators make are choices with ethical or moral import. In this regard, I am not merely talking about professional ethics, but of social ethics. The choices translators make as to whether to translate or not, on how to view the power relationships between the cultures involved in the translation, on how to read the balance of power in which the translation takes place, on which strategies to use when translating, on which words to choose when translating are all somehow related to value judgements, which will rest on an ethical evaluation or judgement of the social context.

Although Tennant (2005: xxii) does not have the same overt approach to causality, she does argue in a similar fashion that the aim of translation theory should be to enable translator trainees to evaluate their decision-making, to raise their level of consciousness about their practice, and to create awareness with them that translation is a linguistic, social and cultural practice which takes place in history and which has a historical impact. Gonzales-Davies (2004: 1) adds her voice to this position by indicating that there is a lack of pedagogy in translator training. Unfortunately, she limits her discussion to issues of pedagogy, not curriculum. However, without referring to the notion of curriculum, she does argue that translator training, as she calls it, has to decide on the type of knowledge a student needs to become a competent translator. She herself chooses for social constructivism (2004: 13), as does Kiraly (2000), and she argues that students need to learn how to learn and how to understand the fact that they understand, as well as what they understand (Gonzales-Davies, 2004: 13). This focus on what I would call meta-knowledge or meta-competence in knowledge, coming from a variety of scholars, calls for a specific type of curriculum. It calls for a reflective curriculum which enhances the ability of students to think critically about their own work.

Willss (2004: 9) contributes to this discussion by arguing that we need to discover the principles which guide the translator in accomplishing more or less intricate translation tasks and understand translational task-specifications. He uses the phrase "contours of reality" to argue that the intentions of the source text writer and the expectations of the target text reader cannot be easily or universally defined (Willss, 2004: 11). The context within which translations operate has to be conceptualised for each translation job with "the courage of enormous incompleteness" (Willss, 2004: 11). The factors influencing a translation and the decisions a translator has to make are part of the reality influencing the process; however, they are not clear

cut, but mere contours. He then draws the conclusion that each text that is translated asks for an act of judgement in terms of the context of translation (Willis, 2004: 11). Bernadini (2004: 19) also holds in the same vein that mere knowledge or mere competence or skill is not enough. She does this by questioning whether the main aim of educators should be passing on to their students a number of competencies and specific skills in order to satisfy market requirements. According to her (Bernadini, 2004: 19), education rather means that someone would be able to learn what needs to be learned and she goes on to argue that education fosters the care of the individual, enabling him/her to cope with the most varying (professional) situations (Bernadini, 2004: 19). She (Bernadini, 2004: 19-20) indicates the following differences between training and educating: training prepares the student for problems that can be identified in advance, it focuses on acquired procedures, and it is a cumulative process. In contrast, teaching focuses on the growth of the individual, it helps the student to cope with varying situations, it is a generative process which employs available knowledge to solve new problems and gain new knowledge, and it uses finite resources indefinitely.

As theoreticians of higher education have argued, translation problems cannot be pre-determined and set; they are indeterminate, chaotic, complex, infinite. This implies that they require more than mere skill or *techne* to solve. They require educated professionals schooled in the human sciences and reflective of the ethical dilemmas underlying their choices. Bernadini (2004: 20) argues that professional translators need awareness, reflectiveness and resourcefulness. She (Bernadini, 2004: 21) thus opts for a focus on capacity rather than competence, that is, the potential to solve infinite possible issues rather than the competence to solve a few known ones. An authentic learning activity is one that exploits the social potential of the classroom and the current concerns of learners rather than their potential future problems (Bernadini, 2004: 23). The ultimate aim is not to memorise fossilised procedures. She goes as far as saying that training starts when education is completed (Bernadini, 2004: 24). With this she implies that translators definitely need skills, but those skills are built on a broader education. She argues for a balance of education and training in which time and reason play a role and in which the focus is on process not merely on outcomes (Bernadini, 2004: 27)

Ulrych (2005: 3) makes the point often voiced that translation theory does not prepare for real-life translation in a vocational context. Teachers usually choose between a professionally oriented translation course and a language-based translation course. My point is that, in light of the argument above, this choice is neither necessary nor expedient. It is not necessary to define translation competence in only one way. Sometimes translation competence favours a combination of skills and knowledge (Kiraly, 1995: 6). Ulrych (2005: 18) argues that competence encompasses skill and expertise and is based on knowledge. Two types of knowledge apply: operative or procedural knowledge by which we know how to translate and a declarative or factual knowledge which shapes and models the procedural activity (2005: 18). She distinguishes between theory of translating and theory of translation. The first is operative/procedural knowledge and the second declarative knowledge (2005: 18-19). She argues for courses that would include both theory and practice, but space for reflection to relate the two (2005: 20). Especially in South Africa, and this is a presupposition, translation will entail multiple forms of communication, e.g. rewriting, etc. Only a formative approach will allow future translators to survive the multiple and changing expectations (2005: 22). Thus,

real-world criteria are important; metacognitive skills i.e. theory, are important. The reason why this is important is for developing competence, monitoring performance and adapting to flexible work situations (2005: 22).

Not speaking about curriculum probably indicates how far translator education has already moved to be skill-driven. For many translator educators, it has become a matter of merely choosing the best instruments for teaching/or approaches to teaching. For many educators the only questions are which software to teach, which technical registers to teach, which approach to language learning to take. Translator educators are not really discussing what they want to achieve with courses in translation studies. I propose a debate on curriculum that would inform translator educators on the broader implications of curricular choices.

5. Curriculum in translation studies: Choices

Up to now, books on translator training has argued in the following fashion: They first defined what translation is. Then they defined how to train students in order to produce the set outcome. I am proposing a different road. I suggest one first asks what higher education and learning should be, what it is for, and what it strives for. Only then should one ask the question: How does that influence the education of translators? I perceive the advantages of this approach to be the following: only part of pedagogy is determined by the subject itself. The rest is determined by theories of teaching and learning, or informed by views on curricula. It is precisely because of the fact that translator educators are usually not trained educators that I suggest asking the experts on curriculum and teaching and learning. I thus suggest an interdisciplinary discussion between translation studies and curriculum studies in higher education.

My conclusion would be to propose a curriculum for translator education that would expose students to translation studies within a social-ideological, human context. Simultaneously, translation cannot be acquired in theory. It needs to be acquired by means of reflective practice. To me, reflexivity, i.e. the ability to think about thinking, understanding, interpretation, or wisdom enables one to link education with practice. I shall now illustrate how I view the practical implications of this position. I propose a particular choice regarding theory, making use of community service learning as a learning strategy to implement the curricular choices, and implementing a virtual practice to provide students with the opportunity of obtaining entrepreneurial skills (Olohan, 2007 independently advocates the same entrepreneurial approach, which I have been practising since 2006).

In the programme I am involved in, each year group has one theoretical module and one practical module which run concurrently, mostly in the same semester. In the theoretical modules, I choose reading that expounds the views on translators as I have argued above. For first-year students, I choose an introductory book that places translators within a social context and that views translator behaviour as socially acquired. This should already start shaping their thinking on their own social position. In the second year, students have a module in creative translation, which allows for ample practice, but is accompanied by a solid theoretical foundation in descriptive theories of the power relationships between canons of literature. In the third year, students are exposed to an overview of theoretical approaches to translation studies. The aim is to expound the implications of particular theoretical positions for translation research and

translation practice. At postgraduate level, the reading in a number of courses, whether purely theoretical or a combination of theory and practice, focuses on theory of translation; it has a specific focus on the social agency of translators, cultural issues and ideology in translation. A current lack is that there is yet no specific room for theory on the ethical issues in translation studies and translator practice.

Secondly, in both the first and third years, the practical modules are presented as community service learning (CSL) modules. This allows ample opportunity to combine education and practice in an endeavour to bridge the gap between the university and the work place. This approach is built upon the notion of a reflective practicum, expounded by Schön (1987). Without going into too much detail, the aim is to provide students with the type of complex, real-life experience that they might encounter in the world of work. It takes the form of project-based learning and has a significant reflective component. Third-year students, for instance, works with the NGO, Age-in-Action, translating into Afrikaans and Sesotho documents used for Luncheon Clubs, which are development groups for the aged. The project will include a visit to the NGO to discuss the project, a field-trip to the community to do preliminary research on the project, and a second field-trip to test the translations empirically (as Chesterman has suggested). A last trip will be utilised for handing the translation to the community and reflecting on the project with the community. This work is fully part of the curriculum and is assessed as part of the module.

Lastly, I have devised a virtual practice, analogous to what MBA students would utilise, in which students would gain entrepreneurial experience. Against the South African background of unemployment and a developing economy, I regard it as essential to assist language practice students from an entrepreneurial point of view. The aim is to assist students to compile material that is necessary for a language practice. This virtual practice is also theoretically grounded in Schön's reflective practicum. One of the requirements for the virtual practice is that students should do real translation work. I try to offer them as much work as possible under my supervision. The virtual practice contributes 20% to the semester mark and it is divided into categories, which each carry a particular weight (I have included in Addendum 1 an example of how the fourth year's practice is weighted). Furthermore, the practice is staggered, so that each year builds on the previous year's work. Consequently, at the end of five years, a student would have acquired all the material and a good deal of practical know-how for a language practice. For the current requirements of the virtual practice, see Addendum 1.

6. Conclusion

My argument has been that translation studies should make use of the insights in curriculum studies to inform its approach to translator education. This interface between translation studies and curriculum studies should inform the choices translator educators make regarding curricula in translation studies.

I propose that institutions of higher education that educate professional translators opt neither for pure disciplinary knowledge nor for mere skill, but for wisdom as the outcome of their curricula. I am currently exploring various facets of wisdom as the ability to make judgements in complex situations as a concept that may help translation studies in overcoming the impasse in the

power struggle between source and target text (Marais, 2007).

I have argued for enhancing an interdisciplinary discussion between curriculum studies and translation studies, as well as a re-evaluation or a conceptual clarification of the curriculum in translation studies.

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ADDENDUM 1

FIRST YEAR

- Name, email address and phone number of enterprise.
- Provide proof of membership of SATI.
- Provide proof of membership of Zalang. Attach Q&A list. Attach five examples of questions you have asked.
- Attach the names of two dictionaries you have bought. Attach invoice.
- Do CSL as part of course.
- Hand in assignments on time.
- Attach terminology list.
- Attach budget for the year.
- Provide proof of at least 2 000 real words translated, including community service.
- Create portfolio and attach best three texts.

SECOND YEAR

- Name, email address and phone number of enterprise.
- Provide proof of membership of SATI.
- Provide proof of membership of Zalang. Attach Q&A list. Attach seven examples of questions you have asked.
- Attach the names of four dictionaries you have bought. Attach invoice.
- Do CSL as part of course.
- Hand in assignments on time.
- Attach terminology list.
- Attach budget for the year.
- Provide proof of at least 4 000 real words translated, including community service.
- Create portfolio and attach best three texts.
- Design letterhead and attach.
- Design business card and attach.
- List the name of at least five websites/electronic word lists that you found useful.
- Provide proof of competence in MS Word and Wordfast.

THIRD YEAR

- Name, email address and phone number of enterprise.
- Provide proof of membership of SATI.
- Provide proof of membership of Zalang. Attach Q&A list. Attach ten examples of questions you have asked.
- Attach the names of six dictionaries you have bought. Attach invoice.
- Do CSL as part of course.
- Hand in assignments on time.
- Attach terminology list.
- Attach budget for the year.
- Provide proof of at least 6 000 real words translated, including community service.
- Create portfolio and attach best three texts.
- Design letterhead and attach.
- Design business card and attach.
- List the name of at least seven websites/electronic word lists that you found useful.
- Provide proof of competence in MS Word and Wordfast.
- Design quotation form and attach.
- Design invoice and attach.
- Design receipt and attach.
- You will receive at least one text in which you will be expected to negotiate with the client about the translation. Attach this negotiation and its outcome.

FOURTH YEAR

Administration (30%)

- Name, email address and phone number of your establishment.
- Provide proof of membership of SATI. Attach SATI's ethical code.
- Provide proof of membership of Zalang or any other chat group for language practitioners. Attach the group's Q&A list. Attach 15 examples of enquiries.
- Attach your establishment's budget for the year.
- Design letterhead and attach.
- Design business card and attach.
- Design quotation form and attach.
- Design invoice and attach.
- Design receipt and attach.

Information and technology (30%)

- List 10 dictionaries that you have bought
- Attach terminology list.
- List the names of at least 10 websites/electronic word lists that you found useful.
- Provide proof of competence in MS Word and Wordfast.
- Attach the phone numbers of at least five experts. Indicate their fields of specialisation.

Professional conduct (40%)

- Provide proof of at least 10 000 real words translated.
- Attach a quotation, invoice and receipt for all work done.
- Create a portfolio with your three best texts.
- Submit assignments on time.

FIFTH YEAR

- Name, email address and phone number of enterprise.
- Provide proof of membership of SATI.
- Provide proof of membership of Zalang. Attach Q&A list. Attach twenty examples of questions you have asked.
- Attach the names of 15 dictionaries you have bought. Attach invoice(s).
- Do CSL as part of course.
- Hand in assignments on time.
- Attach terminology list.
- Attach budget for the year.
- Provide proof of at least 15 000 real words translated, including community service.
- Create portfolio and attach best three texts.
- Design letterhead and attach.
- Design business card and attach.
- List the name of at least 15 websites/electronic word lists that you found useful.
- Provide proof of competence in MS Word and Wordfast.
- Design quotation form and attach.
- Design invoice and attach.
- Design receipt and attach.
- You will receive at least one text in which you will be expected to negotiate with the client about the translation. Attach this negotiation and its outcome.
- Attach the telephone numbers of at least eight experts. Name their fields of expertise.
- Attach a photograph of your office/work station.
- Attach one example of a completed quotation, invoice and receipt.