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## USING TRANSLATION AS A PEDAGOGICAL TOOL IN TEACHING ENGLISH FOR MUSICIANS AND MUSICOLOGISTS

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### **Abstract**

*This article explores the role of translation in courses prepared for and taught to musicology students at a French university, with the author's dual experience as a professional musician and translator, which allows her to serve as an "intercultural mediator" (Valero-Garcés, n.p.) between French and British musical culture, as well as between languages. The students are all musicians rather than aspiring linguists, so this article explores the validity of using translation as a learning tool within a non-linguistic discipline: first to promote fluency in interlingual and intercultural communication for undergraduates, and subsequently to extend this into "traditional principles of fidelity and adequacy" (Valero-Garcés, n.p.) for the purposes of postgraduate research.*

*While use of the mother tongue has traditionally been eschewed in second language teaching (SLT) because it reduces valuable second-language exposure time, its "liberating role" has latterly been recognized (e.g. Deller and Rinvolutri, 2002; Laviosa, 2014).*

*Likewise, the role of translation in SLT has now been defined and explored in Alderete-Diez et al. (2012) and in Laviosa (2014), and is increasingly being recognized as a valuable teaching tool.*

**Keywords:** *Pedagogical translation, translation in language teaching, musical culture, musicological research, English for musicians.*

### **KEY TO ACRONYMS USED THROUGHOUT THIS ARTICLE**

<b>CEFR</b>	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
<b>CLT</b>	Communicative Language Teaching (method)
<b>EAP</b>	English for Academic Purposes
<b>EOP</b>	English for Occupational Purposes
<b>ESP</b>	English for Specific Purposes
<b>L1</b>	Student's first language (mother tongue)
<b>L2</b>	Student's second (target) language, in this case English
<b>SLT</b>	Second language teaching
<b>TILT</b>	Translation in language teaching



## INTRODUCTION

*Translation trains the reader to search (flexibility)  
for the most appropriate words (accuracy)  
to convey what is meant (clarity).*

Alan Duff (1996, p. 7)

This article explores the role of pedagogical translation—i.e., using translation into the students' first language (L1) as a means of facilitating foreign language learning—in teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to undergraduate and postgraduate music students at a French university.

Translation as a pedagogical tool has long been frowned upon, for two reasons. First, its association with the now-outdated grammar-translation method, which fell out of favor because "the unstated assumption" was that "it was *the act of translation itself* which lay at the root of the problem" (Weschler 1997, 88; emphasis in the original). The second reason translation is no longer widely used in teaching is that subsequent methodologies have eschewed the use of students' L1 in SLT, because it reduces valuable exposure time in the second language (L2), (Hall & Cook 2012) and interferes with language learning "in almost all aspects" (Denizer, 2017).

However, the tide has turned since the late twentieth century, with scholars such as Chirobocea (2018) and Leonardi (2009) making the case for translation as a teaching tool. This controlled use of students' L1 in the language classroom, and the bilingual activity of translation in language teaching (TILT) has been promoted by scholars such as Guy Cook (2010), who considers TILT "an integral part of the teaching and learning process as a whole" (2010, p. xx). The case for the inclusion of pedagogical translation in SLT is also clearly argued by Kerr (2014, 2015, 2016), Deller and Rinvolucris (2002), Leonardi (2010), Pintado Gutiérrez (2012), Petrocchi (2014) and Laviosa (2014).

Several universities and conservatoires in the United States and Europe offer language courses to enable non-Anglophone students to follow a music degree course in an English-speaking environment. However, the literature on this specialization is sparse, and focuses on access courses designed to ensure that students have the necessary fluency in English to begin studying for degrees conducted in English. The literature on these access courses includes Jocelyne Wolfe's 2006 study of the challenges facing international music students in Australia; Laura Wakeland's 2013 article on her collaboration with subject specialists to develop an EAP course for music students in Hong Kong; and Elżbieta Lesiak-Bielawska's 2014 account of the development of a course in English for Instrumentalists at the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in Warsaw, Poland. The use of translation in these courses is not discussed; the dearth of literature on TILT for musicians may be for reasons identified in the European Union study on translation in language teaching (Pym, Malmkjaer and Gutierrez-Colon Plana, 2013), which reveals that many teachers are reluctant because they "have never considered it seriously," "do not feel qualified," or consider it "detrimental to language learning" (Pym et al. 2013, p. 123).

There is also the issue of courses being constructed in collaboration with, rather than by, subject specialists: "Subject specialists often have ambivalent attitudes . . . in particular, concerns that English teachers . . . may not know enough content to teach writing in the subject" (Wakeland 2013, p. 45). Indeed, Lesiak-Bielawska states in her 2014 article "English for Instrumentalists: Designing and Evaluating an ESP Course" that although the course developer had "some musical background and training," she "continually checked her understanding . . . with domain experts and students" (p. 27). The materials described for this course mention translation only tangentially, for example in the context of "translating parts of the sentences" of a text into English (p. 18).

My own experience as a professional musician and French-English translator provides deep technical knowledge that is essential for ESP teachers, as it offers both expertise and cultural understanding. Such a background allows an ESP teacher to serve as an "intercultural mediator" (Valero-Garcés n.d., n.p.) between the French and British



musical and linguistic traditions. In presenting a case study of translation use in English courses for musicians and musicologists, my hope is that those who focus on translation in ESP language teaching will find useful applications. At the undergraduate level, communication purposes are apt, and at the postgraduate level research purposes apply. I argue that this use of TILT allows students to use their L1 to work multidirectionally and creatively to improve their cultural and linguistic understanding and fluency.

#### UNDERGRADUATE COURSES: ENGLISH FOR OCCUPATIONAL PURPOSES

At my university, all undergraduate music students were required to take one of the modules in *langues musicologiques* (musicological languages) each year. They could choose English, German or Italian, the latter two being particularly useful for singers. These courses aimed to prepare students for a professional life in music. The intention was to improve their communication skills within the context of their studies: English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). Given that far more have learned English than the other languages offered, the majority (more than 90 percent) enrolled for English as a Musicological Language,<sup>1</sup> with the students taking German or Italian consistently in single figures. The students' first language was French, and their level of competence in English ranged from level A2 to C1, with most at around B2 according to levels established by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe. 2001). As evaluated against the proficiency standards of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, these levels equate to a range of intermediate low to advanced low in English, with a predominance of intermediate mid.

#### TEACHING METHODOLOGY

My teaching methodology lies within the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, with grammar teaching and correction as well as functions and notions included where relevant to the topic.<sup>2</sup> It is, obviously, very important to enhance lexical and semantic competence for students to communicate effectively with their Anglophone peers. As Gajšt says, technical terminology acquisition "presents a major part in tertiary-level ESP courses," because despite being considered "independent users of a foreign language [they] may not be as proficient in the vocabulary of their occupational domain" (Gajšt 2012, p. 442).

In theory, each of my classes is taught entirely in English, to maximize second-language (L2) exposure. However, students are monitored constantly when working alone or in pairs, and as they often address questions in French, I provide explanations in their first language (L1) when necessary. However, I then switch to L2 when addressing the group, while providing key terms in L1 by "sandwiching" (Kerr 2015, p. 5), i.e. inserting a translation into the students' language of a key word or phrase that may be difficult for them to understand in L2. In this way I use as much L1 as necessary to identify comprehension issues and L1 interference.<sup>3</sup>

My decision to include pedagogical translation was grounded in practice-based observation of own-language use in the classroom. As well as resorting to L1 when discussing the language work, students annotate their worksheets in L1, so I decided to integrate translation. My belief was that its use would build on the students' efforts to relate

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<sup>1</sup> Average numbers for English as a Musicological Language 2016-2018: Year 1 n=67 ; Year 2 n=46 ; Year 3 n=32. The reduction in numbers reflects the overall student numbers on the course. This is because, due to the lack of selection at entry, French university courses fail/lose 50% of the students by the end of Year 1, and another 50% after Year 2, so typically only 25% of the original intake will graduate.

<sup>2</sup> The CLT approach goes beyond teaching grammar and lexis, and uses "the target language in a meaningful way so that learners will develop communicative competence. By making the language relevant to the world rather than the classroom, learners can acquire the desired skills rapidly and agreeably." Simhachalam Thamarana (2014), "A Critical Overview of Communicative Language Teaching." *Proceedings of the 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference on English Language and Literature, Hyderabad, India, June 28-29*: 63-70. p. 64.

<sup>3</sup> Language interference or language transfer describes the application of linguistic features from one language to another, e.g. translating "*la baguette du chef d'orchestre*" as "the baton of the conductor" rather than "the conductor's baton" as French does not have the possessive form "'s".



their English language learning to their L1. The benefits, as identified by Deller and Rinvolutri, include students feeling "safe and grounded," a better understanding of English grammar "by looking into the L1 grammar mirror," the "clear and defined" way of introducing new lexis" (vocabulary), and allowing them "to fully enjoy the exercise of their linguistic intelligence" (Deller and Rinvolutri 2002, p. 10). Far from being a dry exercise, judicious choice of translation texts assures that students see the relevance of the task to the discipline. It allows them to play with the two languages. The teaching goals, thus, were to consolidate the technical lexis, grammatical, and semantic forms that had already been learned, in a specifically musical context. The benefits of this approach have been codified as "a positive form of interference aimed at enriching rather than harming learners' competence and performance skills" (Malmkjaer 1998 cited in Leonardi 2009, p. 143).

#### TRANSLATION AS A PEDAGOGICAL TOOL

It is important to note that this use of translation does not require any understanding of translation theory, so it remains a purely practical and relevant activity. However, although the use of L1 as a safe place is comforting, translation is a complex process. As noted by Mažeikienė (2018, p. 513):

"Kavaliauskienė and Kaminskienė (2009, p. 171) believe that building knowledge of a specialized domain in a foreign language implies demanding tasks in the ESP classroom. In the ESP context, it implies that L2 may cause considerable tensions for the ESP learner. This is why the use of L1 and translation activities may be needed by the ESP learner and why the use of mother tongue and translation may facilitate comprehension of specialized texts (Kic-Drgas (2014, p. 259). Moreover, translation of stimulating materials involving multi-modal texts (for instance photographs and other visual representations of reality), as it is further noted by Kic-Drgas (2014, p. 260), inspires learners' creativity."

In the undergraduate courses in question, translation into L1 was introduced toward the end of the first year. As preparation, students were given a selection of musical "false friends"—and there are many. Figure 1 shows a selection of the dictionary definitions supplied (Harraps 2010) many of which can lead well away from the field of music if not well chosen.

Fig. 1

ENGLISH	FRENCH
<b>baton</b>	(conductor's) <i>baguette</i> , (policeman's) <i>baton</i> , (in riots) <i>matraque</i> , (in sport) <i>témoïn</i> .
<b>conductor</b>	<i>chef de train</i> , <i>chef d'orchestre</i> , (on bus) <i>receveur</i> , [Elec. et Phys.] (corps) <i>conducteur</i> .
<b>crotchet</b>	<i>noire</i>
<b>part</b>	<i>morceau</i> , <i>partie</i> ; [Mus.] <i>partition</i>
<b>partition</b>	<i>cloison</i>
<b>recorder</b>	<i>enregistreur</i> , <i>flûte à bec</i> , <i>archiviste</i> , <i>greffier</i>
<b>score</b> [noun]	<i>note</i> , <i>résultat</i> , <i>conducteur</i>
<b>score</b> [verb]	<i>marquer un but</i> , <i>marquer un point</i> ; <i>noter qqn/qqch</i> .



ENGLISH	FRENCH
<b>French loaf, stick, baton, chopstick drumstick</b>	<i>baguette</i> <i>baguette de tambour</i> [Mus.] <i>pilon de poulet</i> [chicken drumstick]
<b>conductive [elec.], guiding [principle].</b>	<i>conducteur</i> [adj.]
<b>driver, conductor [elec.], operator, lead sheet, full score.</b>	<i>conducteur</i> [noun]
<b>quaver (Br.), eighth note (Am.).</b>	<i>croche</i>
<b>partition, separation, sheet music.</b>	<i>partition</i>

As Kerr points out, "the best and most effective way of drawing learners' attention to false friends (both lexical and grammatical) is through contrastive analysis" (2015, p. 3) so I initiate a discussion of the definitions and pitfalls involved. For example, "conductor"—the orchestra director—is never translated as *conducteur* but rather as *chef d'orchestre*. Working in the opposite direction, the most familiar general meaning of *conducteur* is that of the driver of a vehicle, whereas for French musicians it is the full score.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, the Baroque instrument known as a recorder in English is a *flûte* in French,<sup>5</sup> whereas in English a flute always refers to the transverse instrument (*flûte traversière*), which is very different. The French options for translating "recorder" equate to a device for recording sound (*enregistreur*), an archivist (*archiviste*), or a clerk (*greffier*), as well as the correct *flûte à bec*. There is also notably the false association between *croche* and "crotchet," both musical notes and thus essential lexis; however, the French *croche* equates to an English "quaver" (British English) or an "eighth note" (American English), and is thus half the duration of the English crotchet.<sup>6</sup> Such mistranslations of an instrument or of note durations would of course be disastrous in terms of performance or in research.

Following the inevitably lively discussion as students negotiate options, I then produce some phrases for translation which are littered with false friends (Fig. 2). Here the problem translation areas are highlighted in bold type: as can be seen, the last phrase is particularly tricky, because there are two distinct meanings of "conductor."<sup>7</sup>

Fig. 2

- 1) The orchestra was playing under the young **conductor's baton**.
- 2) She prefers playing baroque music on the **recorder** rather than the **flute**.
- 3) The **conductor** placed his **score** carefully on the **music stand**.
- 4) We improvise a lot, so we just use a **lead sheet** rather than everyone having their own **part** written out.<sup>8</sup>
- 5) The **conductor** was studying a symphonic **score** on the bus when the **conductor** asked for his ticket.

The students are then given a very questionable translation, and together we examine the text closely to identify issues and produce a better translation. Figure 3(a) shows a well-meaning effort by an English choir on tour in France in 2002. But the entire translation, shown in Figure 3(b), is full of errors (it has been

<sup>4</sup> The sheet music used by the conductor which gives all the instrumental parts.

<sup>5</sup> Full name *flûte à bec* to signify the fipple mouthpiece.

<sup>6</sup> These two note names originated from their early forms, which both resembled a hook, or *crochet* in Old French.

<sup>7</sup> It will be evident that the sentences have been constructed in order to utilize not only technical lexis but also several different tenses, modal verbs, -ing form, collocations, etc .

<sup>8</sup> A lead sheet, mainly used by jazz musicians, has the melody written on a single staff, under which are the chord symbols.





redacted in order to anonymize the source). Again, selected problem areas are highlighted for the purposes of this discussion.

Fig. 3(a) Extract from original text

***"Entente Musicale"***

*Axton Choral Society was founded in 1922 by Sir Henry Smith, to give his son Robert, a composer, experience as conductor by taking part in the Axton Musical Festival. In 1934 Smith was succeeded as conductor by Walter Brown, and was the Society's President until his death in 1997. . . . Their next conductor was Rupert King. Born in Milan, King studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London. He was an organ scholar at Oxford University and was later appointed organist at the Sheldonian, a post which he still holds today, playing for degree ceremonies. He has a varied and diverse career as a conductor, soloist and continuo player.*

Fig. 3(b) Translation effected for the choir by a non-native speaker

**"Entente musicale"**

Axton Choral Society a été fondée en 1922 par Sir Henry Smith, pour **permettre** son fils Robert, un compositeur, **pour** acquérir l'expérience comme **conducteur** en participant au **Festival de Axton musicale**. En 1934, Smith a été **réussi** comme **conducteur** par Walter Brown, et été le président de la Chorale jusqu'à sa mort en 1997. . . . Leur prochain **conducteur** était Rupert King. **Soutenu** à Milan, King a étudié à l'**Academie Royale de la Musique** de Londres. Il a été boursier d'**organe** à l'Université d'Oxford et a été nommé **organiste** chez le **Sheldonian**, un **poteau qu'il se tient** toujours, jouant pour les **cérémonies de degré**. Il a une carrière variée et diversifiée comme **conducteur, récitaliste et continuo**.

The students are soon faced with grammatical issues in the translation, which, because they are working in L1, they can readily identify and correct. These include incorrect prepositions (should be *permettre à*), articles (*pour acquérir de l'expérience*) and choice of tenses, but also those with which they struggle. Examples of the latter are false friends such as conductor/*conducteur*, and mistranslated terms such as organ/organe: *organe* refers to an organ as either a part of the body such as heart or kidneys, or as an authority (*organe de contrôle* is a supervisory body), whereas the musical instrument is an *orgue*. There are also some catastrophically bad translation choices which completely distort the meaning, and students must refer to the source text and work out what has gone wrong, giving them a graphic example of the need to make informed and intelligent translation choices. Prime examples are the mistranslation of "succeed" as *réussir* (make a success of) rather than *succéder* (come after); and *soutenu*, a mistranslation which requires an excellent understanding of English to unpack. As the source phrase was "born in Milan," for which the only logical verb is *né* from the infinitive *naître* (to be born), the use of *soutenir* (to support, maintain, or bear) is puzzling, to say the least—unless one knows that the participle of "to bear" is "borne." Thirdly, mistranslating "post" as *un poteau* (a fence post) rather than a professional post creates an enduring image of this talented musician standing in a field eternally holding a fence post rather than *un poste qu'il occupe toujours* (a post he still holds).

Offering this faulty translation also serves to highlight issues which face all translators, such as when to translate, and when to add a gloss: *Entente musicale* can remain, as the pun on *Entente cordiale* between England and France is clear, whereas the issue of whether to translate "Royal Academy of Music" leads to animated discussion of the



pros and cons. Lastly, there are the cultural references. The reference to "the Sheldonian" as the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford is likely to be understood only by the British, and even then probably by only a minority, so expansion is in order. Likewise, *cérémonies de degré* does not at all convey the meaning of "degree ceremonies." Quite apart from the fact that *degré* (degree in the sense of level or extent) is not a university degree (*diplôme*, or specifically *licence* or *master*), with a few notable exceptions, the *remise des diplômes* in France has traditionally been a very casual affair—the degree certificate is often simply posted—with nothing of the pomp and ceremony of the British tradition.

This strategy of effectively showing students how not to translate provides a framework—and much hilarity—within which to introduce the serious business of translation. Regular translation tasks are then provided throughout the semester, always within the context of a task-based approach. The text is taken from the comprehension they have just studied, so the translation is understood in context. Although short, it often, as in the following example, contains a false friend, or a musical idiom, which they will have learned from the resources provided during lessons. The 100-word example below, to be translated into L1, is selected from a 400-word text about the life and career of the British conductor Neville Marriner (1924–2016) and contains one of the learned musical idioms ("A self-effacing man, Marriner never *blew his own trumpet*," emphasis added), as well as lexis and grammar covered during the course.

Sir Neville Marriner, who has died aged ninety-two, was a rare example of a great conductor known for his likeability. While many of his peers had reputations as tyrants on the podium, musicians knew that Marriner was one of them: a talented violinist who had founded the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields chamber orchestra precisely in order to escape the control of bullies and egotists. A self-effacing man, Marriner never blew his own trumpet, and yet was regarded as one of the world's most influential conductors. He continued to conduct into his nineties, and gave his last performance only two days before his death. (Redacted from *The Week*, 2015).

Inaccuracy of meaning is penalized—as musicians, students should be able to identify closely with the scenario—as are grammatical mistakes and literal translation of idioms. Translation is, thus, used not only as a test of comprehension, but also to engage in cultural translation—which, as Laviosa notes, entails exercising "ethical, ideological and political agency" (2014, p. 82). Such cultural translation also allows the classroom to be "a space open for teaching and learning through discussion and debate" (Pintado Gutiérrez 2012, p. 182) and affords agency to the student as they learn, through translation, "to deal with different realities" (p. 192).

#### POSTGRADUATE COURSES: ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES (EAP)

At the postgraduate level, students are offered a course titled "*Comment survivre en milieu musicologique non-francophone ? Essayer de mieux comprendre, de mieux lire, et de mieux s'exprimer en anglais dans le cadre de vos recherches* [Surviving in a non-Francophone musicological world: How to better understand, read and express yourself in English for the purposes of your research]. the second half of this focuses entirely on translation as a research tool. The aim here is to convey the essentials of the translation process: discerning meaning through good use of resources and sound working practices, as well as the essentials of formatting for academic work. Through texts related to students' own research fields where possible, as problems arise during translation they work on decisions about glossing and expanding and how to recognize and deal with metaphor, unintentionally pejorative terms, and of course differences in grammar, register, and style. Targeting the texts to their research leads to increased engagement, and the intercultural fluency promoted at the undergraduate level is now extended into "traditional principles of fidelity and adequacy" (Valero-Garcés, n.p.) for the purposes of research.

To teach translation in both directions, I provide pairs of texts on a similar topic, such as these two excerpts about Haitian poet Oswald Durand, who wrote in Creole and whose most celebrated work was set to music. The first text,



redacted from an article by Maximilien Laroche, is to be translated from French into English, and focuses on Durand's life and work, with reference to "Choucounè," his most famous poem.

*Oswald Durand est le premier grand poète de la littérature haïtienne. . . . Comme la plupart des écrivains haïtiens, qui ne peuvent vivre de leur plume, Durand a exercé différentes professions, allant de celle de ferblantier à celle de haut fonctionnaire. . . . Il a été aussi journaliste mais avant tout il fut poète. . . . Il connut la prison où il composa les paroles de « Choucounè », le plus célèbre de ses poèmes. Parmi les thèmes qu'il aborde dans sa poésie, on peut distinguer quelques thèmes universels.* (Redacted from Laroche, n.d.)

(Oswald Durand is the first great poet of Haitian literature. . . . In common with the majority of Haitian writers, who are unable to earn their living solely through their writing, Durand had a variety of professions, from tinsmith to senior civil servant. . . . He was also a journalist, but he was above all a poet. . . . He spent time in prison where he composed the words of "Choucounè," his most famous poem. Among the themes he tackled in his poetry, several universal ones can be discerned..."), my translation.

The second text, to be translated from English into French, is about "Choucounè" itself. There is typically a certain duplication of facts between two related texts, providing additional context; in this case, the poet's background and life experience, which impact on issues addressed in his poetry.

Oswald Durand (1840–1906) was arguably Haiti's most prolific nineteenth-century poet. Although his numerous personal and political poems are largely forgotten, Durand is routinely remembered by scholars for "Choucounè" (ca. 1880), one of only two poems in Haitian Creole to be published in *Rires et pleurs*, and set to music by Michel Mauléart Monton. . . . "Choucounè" has been read rather consistently in terms of poetic failure. . . . Another reading focuses on the poem's likeness to the European *pastourelle*, concluding that it "marked a noteworthy moment in literary self-consciousness. [Redacted from Lynelle, 2015]

As well as their differing focus, these texts demonstrate different registers, with the French written more colloquially and idiomatically, and the English at the higher register typical of academic writing. This bitextual method of working allows the students to immerse themselves in one area while working on translating bidirectionally. The translation is set as a homework assignment over one week, so that they can draw on all available written and online resources. There is a certain amount of crossover information, and the resulting cross-referencing helps confirm and consolidate linguistic choices made during the translation process.

#### TRANSLATION AS A TEACHING TOOL

The discipline of music-making covers many technical, expressive, and practical aspects. As teaching time is at a premium, the focus is on the key terminology common to most musicians: topics may include orchestration, conducting/musical direction and improvising, as well as comparisons between Anglophone and Francophone musical cultures. Translation is always used within the context of these topics, so the specialist vocabulary will already have been learned, and relevant grammatical forms, such as the active or passive voice, will have been revised and discussed. Translation therefore provides controlled practice of learned lexis and grammar, and as well as a comprehension check. It also offers students a chance to express themselves in L1, and they produce many creative—but still accurate—translations of the source text (ST). The translation element also provides a very useful guide to their linguistic competence: not infrequently their French has to be corrected, as basic grammatical errors, incorrect use of homophones, and so on are encountered. Assumptions of total fluency in written L1 may, thus, be misplaced. If L1 understanding is faulty, how can we expect accurate reproduction of L2?



For the undergraduate courses, the focus is on communicating meaning rather than grammar or form. This CLT approach is often at odds with the rigidity of the French educational system, because the focus on communicative fluency means tolerating errors in grammatical form; the aim is for students to understand written instructions on a score, or engage in spoken L2 dialogue with other musicians so as to arrive at a mutual understanding. This also encourages the more capable students to act as language brokers for others, which complements my role as mediator and facilitator in their language learning process, rather than the autocratic role of the teacher, and the rule-based, fault-driven approach which still prevails in France. However, translation provides a valuable highly controlled written task in which accuracy is important and is valued by the students, meaning they gladly accept the correction of faulty grammar in this medium.

Not surprisingly, when translating into their L1, these students produce a wide variety of solutions, so this also provides a valuable teaching tool in that translation is used as an additional opportunity for oral practice. They are asked to read their translations to the class, usually taking turns phrase by phrase. They give the sentence from the source text first, followed by their translation, allowing errors of L2 pronunciation to be corrected. By the time the second or third student has read the source phrase, the correct pronunciation has been automatized without the need for parroting. The ensuing group discussion (in L1/L2) provides an effective means for students to elaborate on their responses. During this stage, their very worldview can be challenged. In this way, translation is useful not only for practicing all four modalities of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, but also for dramatically enhancing intercultural understanding.

## DISCUSSION

There are certainly several issues at stake in incorporating translation activities into the ESP classroom, one of which is the balancing act of differentiating specialist courses from General English for Academic Purposes (GEAP) courses "while at the same time being careful not to 'cross over' into teaching music content" (Wakeland, 2013, p. 45). The use of translation requires a high level of motivation among students, as tasks require preparation and the anticipation of possible problems. Teachers need to have a sophisticated knowledge of the language and culture of both L1 and L2, and to be confident that their translation skills exceed those of the students. This way they can guide them through the process by means of discussing the pros and cons of various options that students will propose.

In terms of communicative competence, Duff states: "Translation develops three qualities essential to all language learning: flexibility, accuracy, and clarity. It trains the learner to search (flexibility) for the most appropriate words (accuracy) to convey what is meant (clarity)" (1996, p. 7). To this end, the necessary discussion of possible translation solutions lifts the act of translation out of the realm of a purely text-based activity (exercising only the skills of reading and writing) by providing valuable practice in speaking and listening.

In the courses discussed in this article, translation is used only within the musical context; the introduction of regular small tasks, maintaining the element of a communication gap, demonstrates to the students the value of translation. It also encourages open discussion from the very beginning, and this has been shown to reap benefits as students progress from an undergraduate (communicative) agenda to the research focus of postgraduate studies.

Translation can be used to focus on highly specific learning aims, such as the practice of vocabulary, grammar points, styles, and registers. It can and should be integrated with other skills-based activities. As Petrocchi argues, "The competence acquired through translation is the first step that enables the student to master both source text and target text, and to keep the two language structures on separate levels but manage them simultaneously . . . by learning to switch from one language to the other continuously and seamlessly" (2014, p. 98).

Establishing confidence in this bidirectionality is, as Petrocchi notes, "fundamental in enhancing foreign language skills and cross-cultural communication" (2014, p. 98). While Hall and Cook (2012) maintain that such use of L1 is



counterproductive because it reduces valuable L2 exposure time, this discussion contends that a policy of using translation for 20 percent of the communicative course content is valid, especially given that students do often use translation as a learning strategy and indeed find translation activities very motivating.

In this article I have argued in favor of using translation as a learning tool at these two very different levels of EOP and EAP within a non-linguistic discipline: first in promoting fluency and confidence in interlingual and intercultural communication, with the teacher as a cultural linguistic mediator; and subsequently extending this into "traditional principles of fidelity and adequacy" (Valero-Garcés, n.p.) for the purposes of research. Evidence of the value of translation in these courses has been provided on two fronts: student reception and perception of the content, and learner output.

Students' comments on the translation content of the course have included the following: "enriching course content which consolidates our knowledge and skills"; "an excellent musicological exchange around a foreign language"; and "focused on music and very practical for learning how to write and talk about music."<sup>9</sup> In terms of learner output, not only did students' translation efforts improve throughout the course, but they also showed a marked and continuing willingness to engage with and tackle intelligently the challenges presented in the chosen texts, using L1 for clarification, but then switching back to L2 rather than continuing to rely on L1. The benefits of such own-language use are clear, and indeed the position is summarized by Kerr when he speaks of the "emerging critical consensus" which confirms teachers' "practice-driven understanding" of their language classrooms (2016), which "may be summarized as English mainly, rather than English-only" (2015, p. 6). Students have commented that they appreciate the process of translation as a means of consolidating their lexical competence in different musical contexts, that they find it liberating to find there may be several acceptable solutions in translation, and that the juxtaposition of L1 and L2 has increased their linguistic and cultural awareness and widened their perspective on the international musical world.

## CONCLUSIONS

In this paper I have sought to demonstrate the usefulness of translation in promoting fluency and confidence in students' L2. This student body is composed of musicians, not linguists, but it is crucial for these budding performing musicians, sound technicians, and event organizers to learn to function effectively in a world where colleagues are more likely to speak English than French. Although the sample groups are small, the qualitative data have shown that students' translation efforts improved throughout the courses, and that their willingness to engage with the texts, and the use of L1 for clarification, strengthened the output in L2. Positive reception by students, along with concrete results demonstrating the efficacy of translation in their academic work, together suggest that of appropriately used, translation is the course component that most clearly opens paths toward the manifold possibilities involved in language use. Given that the teacher has a firm grasp of the terminology and concepts in the specific field in both source and target languages, pedagogical translation provides a focus on understanding and accuracy, and it increases cultural understanding and knowledge. Even though translation is a controlled task, the validation of several solutions—and thus the creative use of language by music students—leads to a productive learning outcome and an increase in confidence. It also provides an excellent opportunity to improve language learning abilities, including study skills and heuristic skills, leading to increased learner autonomy. This gives students valuable tools with which to pursue their professional lives and research activities in an Anglophone musical environment.

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<sup>9</sup> ["*un contenu enrichissant qui consolide nos acquis et nos connaissances*"; "*un bel échange musicologique autour d'une langue étrangère*" and "*axées sur la musique et très pratiques pour apprendre de s'exprimer sur la musique, par écrit et oralement*".] Source: written student feedback 2017-18.



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