

Translation in the World Language Classroom

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Overview

1. Historical Background

2. Why translation:
Justification and roles

3. How?

4. Model activity

Historical Background

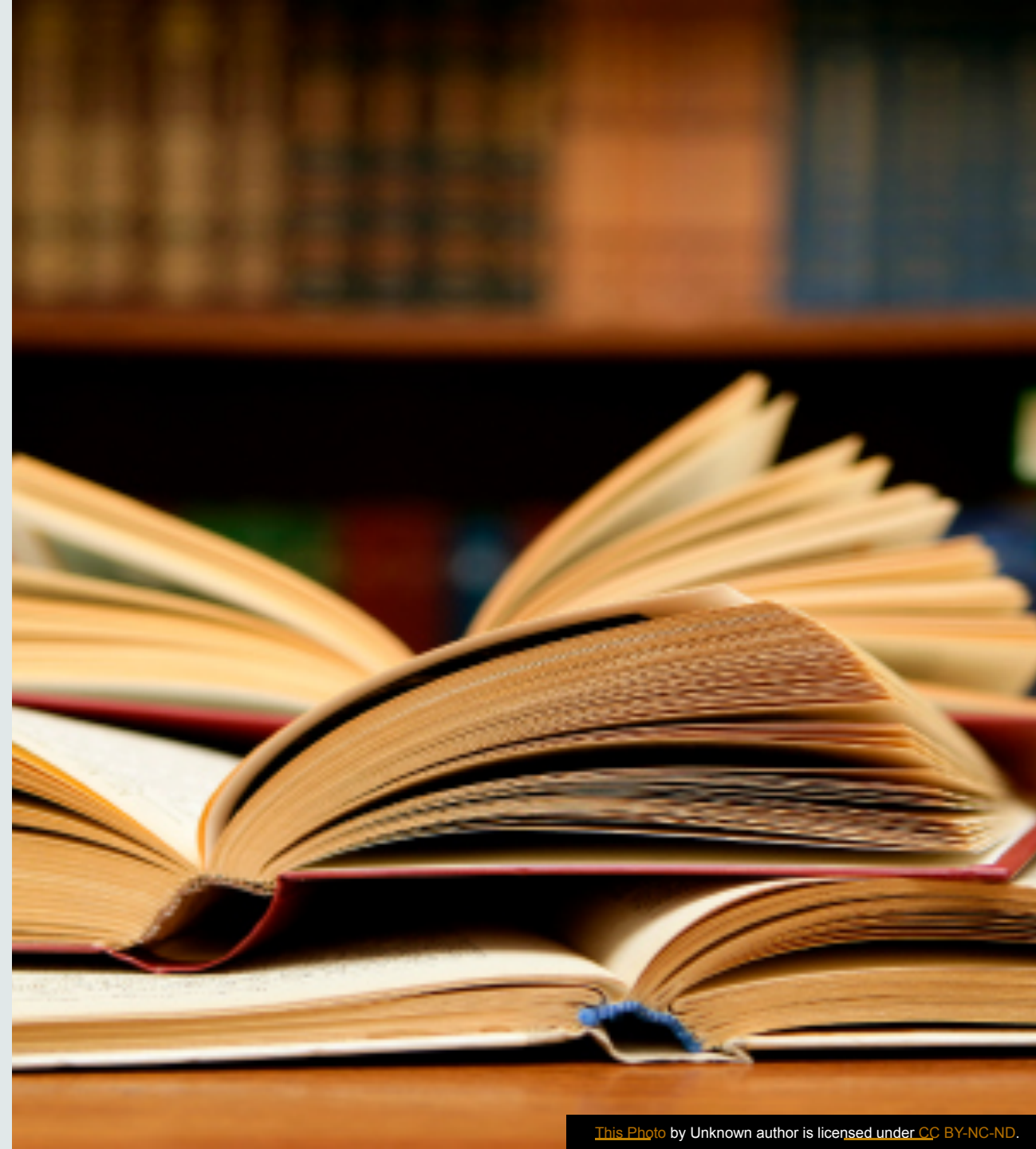
- Grammar Translation
- Direct Method (only the L2 is used) Communicative language Teaching
- Using the L1 and the L2:
Multiliteracies, critical literacies,
cultural and symbolic competence



Historical Background

Reasons for using only the L2:

- L1 and L2: two separate systems
- L2 said to be acquired like the L1
- More L2 input





Do you use L1
in your
classroom?

Historical Background

Reasons for using the L1:

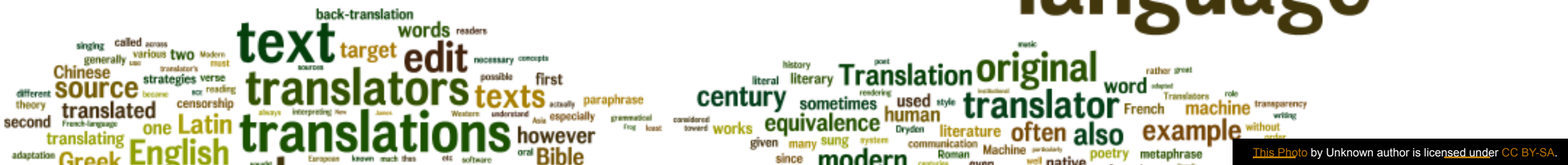
- Replace under-the-table use with informed use of translation
- Linking two languages in students' minds
- A bilingual is not the sum of two monolinguals: two languages as an integrated entity
- Translanguaging skills for life



Why use translation?

- Multilingual and Cultural Benefits
- Literacy Benefits
- Linguistic Benefits
- Benefits for heritage speakers

translation language



Multilingual and Multicultural benefits

- The goal of language teaching should be, not native-speakerism, but the ability to move comfortably between languages (Cook 2010). Translation helps with this.
- Translation allows for border crossing and border dissolving, for working with more than one culture, noticing similarities and differences.



Literacy benefits

- Reading comprehension of the source text (Colina 2002).
- Writing: translation can be seen as an aided writing activity; it helps with organization and decision making (Colina 2002).
- Translation is useful in the transformed practice component of the multiliteracies model (apply knowledge in real-world situations, making new meaning and transforming prior knowledge) (Kern 2000)



Linguistic benefits

- Metalinguistic awareness
- Linguistic system seen as a whole (vs. discrete parts, Rivera Mills & Gant 1999)
- Vocabulary (Laufer & Girsai 2008): through noticing, pushed-output and greater involvement in student tasks





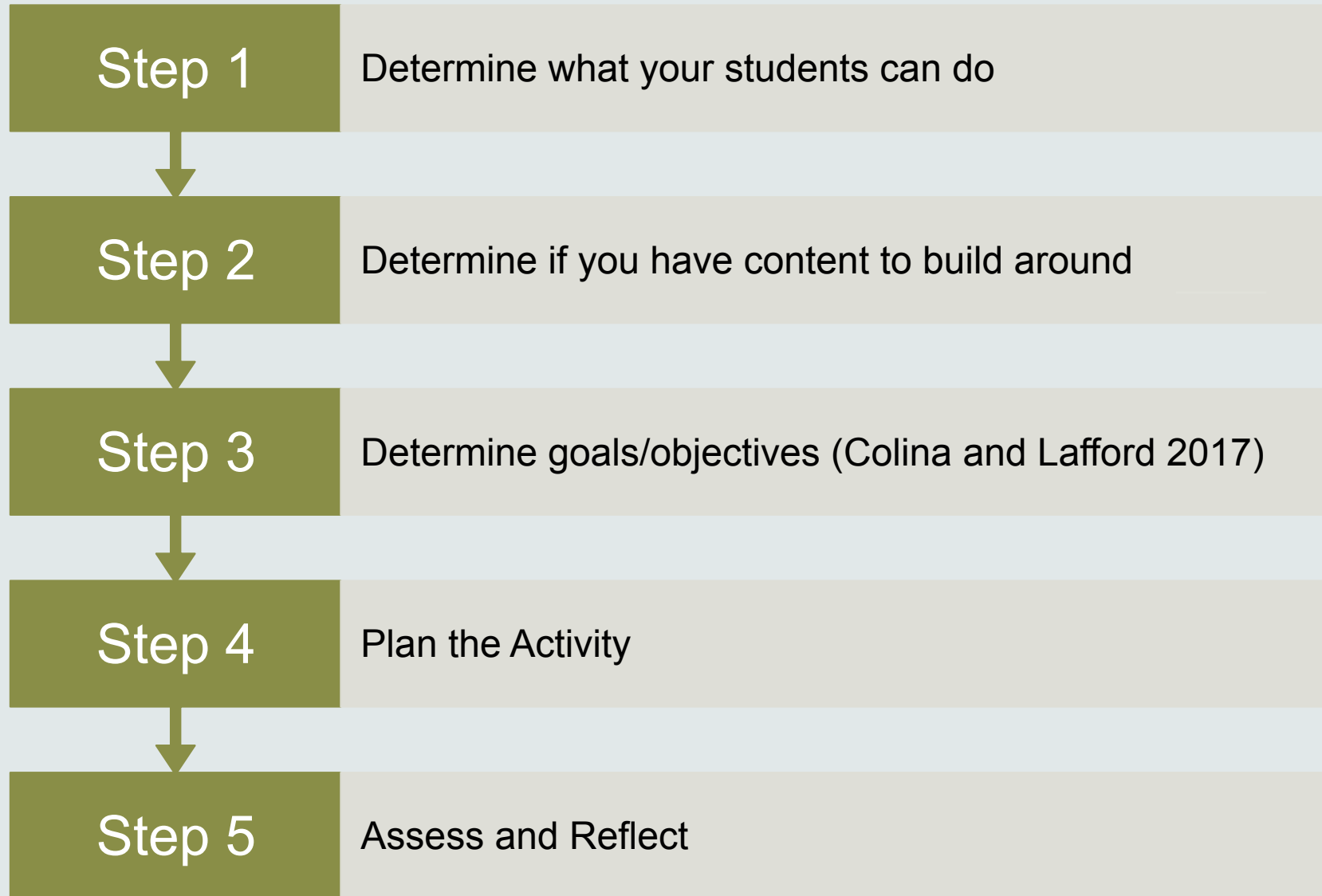
Benefits for heritage speakers

- Connection with personal experiences
- Critical language awareness, understanding of sociolinguistic and sociopolitical goals, linguistic skills
- Acquire additional dialects, switch registers, normalize practices of HLs (Mellinger and Gasca-Jiménez 2019)

How?

Steps for implementing translation activities in your classroom





Step 1

Determine what your students can do:

Determine what type of activity is best for your students' level. Adaptation is possible.

Step 2

Determine if you have content to build around

In a multiliteracies framework, the transformed practice prong would come as a follow-up activity (translating a text after reading it—transformed practice)

Step 3

Determine goals/objectives (Colina and Lafford 2017)

Linguistic

Cultural

Literacy: including reading comprehension, writing, critical thinking, long-term memory, and organizing and deciding skills

Translanguaging, or moving fluidly between two languages

Negotiation of meaning

Heritage language learning; appreciation of heritage language and culture for heritage speakers

ACTFL can-do statements can be helpful to narrow down objectives

Step 4

Plan the Activity

If this is your first or one of your first translation activities, you may want to take as your point of departure one the examples in published works (e.g. Colina and Lafford, González-Davies, Carreres) and modify it according to your needs.

Most translation activities can be modified according to your learners' levels.

Step 5

Assess and Reflect

Translation products can serve as learning assessments.

Reflect on students' learning and on logistics of implementation.

Include students in reflection process.

Lesson Plan

Your Way

Your ideas?

<https://bit.ly/3dJm79E>



Model Lesson Plan 1: Proverbs



Summary:

Provide a list of proverbs in English and in the second language; design a match activity in which students find either the English or the L2 proverb corresponding to the one provided; then have students comment on the differences, in particular cultural differences.



Step 1

Determine what your students can do

No major modifications should be needed for intermediate high school students in the US. Modifications may be necessary for other students and context.

Step 2

Determine if you have content that you can build around

Easy to incorporate in many lessons with linguistic or cultural content, ex. a fable unit.



Step 3

Determine your goals or objectives

Translation roles and ACTFL proficiency standards:

Cultural Awareness

Step 3

Determine your goals or objectives

Objectives:

Students will use translation to be able to

- Identify the underlying message in Spanish proverbs

- Explain how proverbs are related to cultural perspectives

- Use proverbs in English and Spanish to make cultural comparisons

Standards:

- I can identify the underlying message in Spanish proverbs.

- In my own and other cultures, I can explain how proverbs are related to cultural perspectives.

- I can use proverbs in English and Spanish to make cultural comparisons.



Step 3

Determine your goals or objectives

Other objectives:

Linguistic awareness
(comparing linguistic forms
of proverbs)

Literacy (what genres use
proverbs, what situations)



Step 3

Determine your goals or objectives

Modifications: provide less advanced students with vocab. lists. More advanced students could be asked for alternative forms of the same proverb or to come up with their own lists.

Step 4

Step 4: Plan the activity

Materials: Two lists of proverbs, one in English, one in Spanish, cut each list apart and provide one set of each to each group.

Worksheet (list of proverbs, literal translation, English equivalent, cultural comparison).



Don't count your chickens before they're hatched

Everything that glitters is not gold

What's done is done

A bird in hand is worth two in the bush

Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise

Jack of all trades, master of none

Choose your friends wisely.

A lo hecho, pecho

Más vale pájaro en mano que ciento volando

A quien madruga, Dios le ayuda

Aprendiz de todo y oficial de nada

Al nopal lo van a ver sólo cuando tiene tunas

No todo lo que brilla es oro

Hijo no tenemos, y nombre le ponemos

Proverb	Translation	Meaning	Cultural Comparison
A lo hecho, pecho			
Más vale pájaro en mano que cien volando			
A quien madruga, Dios le ayuda			
Aprendiz de todo y oficial de nada			
Al nopal lo van a ver sólo cuando tiene tunas			
No todo lo que brilla es oro			
Hijo no tenemos, y nombre le ponemos			

Step 4

Step 4: Plan the activity

Classroom procedure

1. Activate prior knowledge: What do you think of when you hear the word, “proverb”?
2. Think of 2-3 proverbs in English. What do they mean? How often do you use them in everyday life?
3. Tell students they will be doing a translation activity in which they compare a set of proverbs in Spanish with a set of proverbs in English and list the objectives of the activity



Step 4

Step 4: Plan the activity

Classroom procedure

4. Give students the worksheet with the list of proverbs in Spanish and have them do the following:

Skim the proverbs (they can ask about words they do not know).

In groups of 3-4, directly translate the proverbs and write the translations in the middle column.

In the last column, write down in English what you think the proverb means.



Proverb	Translation	Meaning	Cultural Comparison
A lo hecho, pecho			
Más vale pájaro en mano que cien volando			
A quien madruga, Dios le ayuda			
Aprendiz de todo y oficial de nada			
Al nopal lo van a ver sólo cuando tiene tunas			
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Step 4

Step 4: Plan the activity

Classroom procedure

5. Give each group a cut-up list of the English proverbs and Spanish proverbs and have them match them. (The matching could be made into a competition too).



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Step 4

Step 4: Plan the activity

Classroom procedure

6. Introduce the idea of literal and functional translations to the class, then ask the following:

Which translations are literal and which are functional?

What does this say to you about different types of translations?

7. Have students write the English proverb next to the Spanish proverb on the cultural comparison sheet. In their groups, they should discuss the following:

What are cultural similarities and differences between the proverbs? Take notes on the worksheet.



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A lo hecho, pecho			
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Hijo no tenemos, y nombre le ponemos			

Step 4

Step 4: Plan the activity

Classroom procedure

8. Discuss cultural comparisons as a class.

9. Closure: Think, then discuss (whole class):
How do proverbs represent cultural perspectives?



Step 5

Step 5: Assess

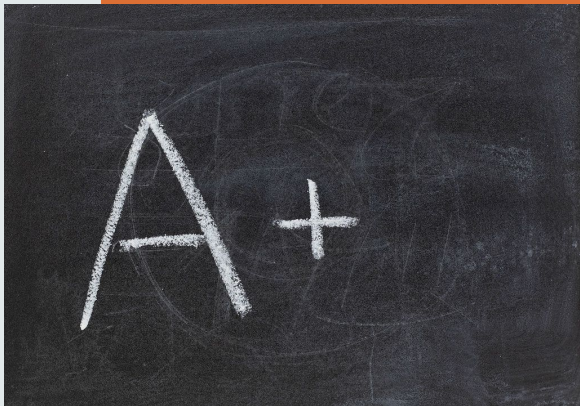
Check for understanding by circulating around the classroom and listening to students' conversations.

Formal assessment: Assess the objectives of cultural learning:

- Identify the underlying message in Spanish proverbs
- Explain how proverbs are related to cultural perspectives
- Use proverbs in English and Spanish to make cultural comparisons

Have students choose a matching set of proverbs in English and Spanish:

1. Write out and illustrate the proverbs on a poster
2. In Spanish or English, explain cultural similarities and differences between the proverbs. This could be done on the front or back of the same poster or in a different submission.



Step 5

Step 5: Reflect

How did your directions and explanations go? Were they clear?

How was your timing?

Did you meet your objectives? Why or why not?

Example: Objectives were met. Students translated the proverbs without difficulty and made interesting insights and comparisons on both language and culture.

What went well? What could you have done differently?

Example: The matching activity could have been more challenging.

Did you accomplish anything through translation that you might not have otherwise?

Example: The activity prompted interesting discussions between heritage and non-heritage speakers, especially on the cultural level.





Conclusion

Translation can be highly beneficial for language learning if used in an informed manner. We have provided some guidelines and examples on how to incorporate translation in the world language classroom.

More activities and information can be found in the Teacher's Guide.

Let's talk about your ideas:

<https://bit.ly/3dJm79E> (See chat)

Thank you!



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