From comment to assessment! Students are given a glimpse into how a researcher works with translation - they question and discuss translation of a specific passage with the researcher

Who is the author?
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Subject, course/other learning context, level of study, ECTS points and number of students
Classical Greek Propedeutics, 1st and 2nd semesters, BA level. Duration: 30 ECTS points in total, exam in 2nd semester. One class with approx. 25 students. Material from the activity was also used in teaching a class via distance learning at Aarhus University.

The motivation behind the activity
Classical Greek Propedeutics is a demanding course module with a steep learning curve. The idea was to invite an author to talk about his or her own research so as to give the students a glimpse into research methods and the content of the course, and in this way motivate their learning by showing them that they are already working with the core of the subject.

Key learning outcomes, focusing on the way in which the activity is research-based
Translation is a central element of students’ day-to-day work on the Classical Greek Propedeutics module, and throughout the course, alongside the Greek text, students have a Danish translation of the source text to hand.

The intention in using a research-based educational approach is to support the work of students with their own translations and with professional translations, and to cultivate an awareness of the demands of the discipline, such as the various levels of consciousness at play when commenting and assessing translations. This also entails learning to discuss translations and offer constructive criticism.

Motivation is a central element of this method of education since, via a dialogue with the researcher, the students learn from very early on in their studies that they are already working with the core of the subject. The specific texts presented are thus used as the point of departure for a dialogue on the subject of translation between students and researcher.

Description of the activity
Format: Book fair interview (presentation by the author followed by questions from students)
Topic: Translation (as academic communication)
The visiting researcher takes part in two classes.

In preparation for these classes, students go through an excerpt from a text in Greek, the researcher’s translation of the text, and the researcher’s introduction to the translation, which includes an explication of the principles in which the work of translation is grounded. Students and the lecturer discuss what questions one might put to the researcher, so as to
provide them with a framework for the researcher’s visit. Here, it is important that the lecturer makes explicit how the visit relates to the students’ research.

The students are divided into groups and analyse the Greek text and compare it with the researcher’s Danish translation, with respect to which each group formulates two questions. This work is in Padlet so that each group’s analyses and questions are accessible to the other groups. After this, all of the groups take part in a plenary discussion in which they present arguments for their proposed questions. The researcher is then presented with the questions in advance of the sessions.

The preliminary work is supplemented by a selection of short videos (screencasts) filmed at a presentation by a research librarian at the Royal Library in Copenhagen, in which he presented manuscripts and materials of relevance to the transmission of the works of classical authors. The students watch these videos in class together with their lecturer.

During the visit, the researcher begins with a presentation of the classical author of the text and the work to translate the text, after which the groups put their questions to the researcher and the researcher and the students take part in a discussion.

Later in the course, the visit and the work the students have done with translation theory are incorporated into the teaching process so as to reinforce the students’ awareness of these matters. This topic is an element in the curriculum and is central to the students’ philological work, for which reason it forms a part of the students’ regular coursework from early on in the module.

The central areas of focus here are:
- Awareness of the history of transmission of classical texts
- Translation theory
- From comment on to assessment of translations

Potential for expanding the activity
As a conclusion to the visit, the researcher and the students together formulate 3-5 good working principles of translation which the students can then continue to work with and refer back to.

Interplay between teaching and exams
The exam, which is oral, consists of translating a passage of a Greek text. Comments on professional translations do not, however, form part of the exam.

The outcome of the activity for the students (aims/results):
The students were highly active participants in the discussion with the researcher, Adam Schwartz, who together with his research colleague, David Bloch, is the author of a translation of Xenophon’s work; “Anabasis”.

His account of the background to, and content of, Xenophon’s work made clear how the context and analysis of the literary work are closely bound up with the translation principles applied by the translator in carrying out the translation.
It was clear that the students’ day-to-day work on translating texts, which involves them being asked to comment upon professional Danish translations of Greek texts, was supplemented by new knowledge about the work of professional translators in terms of transmitting the Greek texts, and about modern audiences for these texts. This is the background for our slogan: From comment to assessment.

**The outcome as regards future research**
The focus of the activity has been to investigate whether, and in what ways, research can be made more relevant to the teaching process. Conversely, it is fair to say that the activity has no direct relevance for research or the researcher because students’ work with translation is on a quite different level from that of researchers.

Nonetheless, the dialogue between researchers and students, which has only recently begun to address the subject’s methodological aspects, can certainly have a generally positive effect on research and teaching of the subject. For instance, some students have found that taking part in a dialogue with researchers has led to an interest in research and researchers at an early stage in their studies.

The activity has in any case stimulated a common dialogue on, and articulation of, the central principles of the subject area, which benefits both students and researchers. The researchers who took part in the activity praised the students for their formulation of questions on the text, which demonstrates that there is potential for research in this area and for students who have recently embarked on a course of study to exchange ideas in connection with work on translation.

**Strengths and weaknesses of the activity**
The course itself was not overly demanding, but took longer than originally expected, which placed something of a time pressure on the remainder of the semester.

Over the course of the researcher’s visit, the students received many practical tips on the day-to-day work of translation, and this will serve them well in years to come. The grounding of the group work in specific texts also served as a starting point for a discussion of more fundamental considerations - both on a practical and on a more theoretical level. For instance, throughout the students’ work with the text excerpt there was an ongoing discussion on the need to find a balance between rendering a close and faithful representation of the writer’s style on the one hand, and on the other achieving a fluid rendition of the text that a Danish reader would want to read. There were a number of suggestions as to what makes for a good translation.

A key factor in the meeting between researcher and students is an awareness of the fact that research requires a critical, discursive approach. There is therefore every reason for students to be made conscious of and to practice this awareness at an early stage in their studies. While skills-oriented subjects consist of a range of elements which are not open to discussion, contact between students and researchers demonstrates that a scholarly discussion must be based upon a clear understanding of this “undiscussable” methodological foundation. During
the visit students worked with specific text excerpts, serving to pinpoint aspects of the field which can in fact be discussed, interpreted and, on that basis, researched.

**Further information regarding the activity, links or other materials:**
Link to the Padlet digital tool, including the students’ questions to the researcher: https://padlet.com/susannebramming/se2qubt3kqr4

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**Xenophon - Anabasis 3, bog 1.4-12**
Hver gruppe finder 2-3 seder/samlinger, som I fraver i 'arbejdsoversættelse' af. Citer derefter samme passage i Bloch og Schwartz' oversættelse.

**Gruppe 1**
Afsnit 4-5

**Gruppe 2**
Afsnit 6-7

**Gruppe 3**
Afsnit 8-10

**Gruppe 4**
Afsnit 11-12

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**Gruppe 1**
Afsnit 4: **Tekst:**
αφ' αυτούς...πατρίδος.

**Arbejdsoversættelse:**
Proxenos mente, at han ville være mere nyttig for ham selv end fødrelandet ville?

**Oversættelse:**
Og Kyros mente Proxenos personlig at han skulle være mere nyttig for dem end det fødreland ville?

**Spørgsmål:**
Hvorfor denne grammaticisk kongede oversættelse samt stor mulighed for misforståelse af hvem, der mener hvad.

Afsnit 5: **Ord:** προθυμως

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**Gruppe 2**
Afsnit 6: **Tekst:**
...κάλλιστα και ἄριστα ἐλθὼν τῇ Ὑβρίᾳ...

**Arbejdsoversættelse:**
...for at kunne komme smukkest og bedst på vejen, som han planlægger.

Adam & co.:...

**Oversættelse:**
...for at den planlagte rejse kunne ende så godt som muligt.

Begrundelse for hele sætning, både stavet i subjekt samt 'en' end godt'.

**Spørgsmål:**
Hvordan oversættes det typiske, grekiske udtryk κάλλιστον og ἄριστον og andre bedst muligt?

Afsnit 7: **Ord:** προθυμως κρίνεις ἐτός εὔπνηντο...προθυμως...

**Arbejdsoversættelse:**
...for at kunne komme smukkest og bedst på vejen, som han planlægger.

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**Gruppe 3**
Afsnit 8

**Gruppe 4**
Afsnit 11

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Short, informal instruction videos of presentations given by Anders Toftgaard, research librarian at the Royal Library in Copenhagen, filmed on an iPad using the Explain Everything app:

1) Introduction to the Catalogue of Greek Manuscripts
https://ku.23video.com/v.ihtml/player.html?source=embed&photo_id=13845324&token=8e342a7d80887e5bf3db3dd3b620fd83

2) Introduction to the Editions published by Oxford University Press (Oxford Classical Texts)
https://ku.23video.com/v.ihtml/player.html?source=embed&photo_id=13845379&token=26377d769268700e20dd23255daf6396

3) Introduction to Manuscripts I
Keywords: Motivation, reflection, critical approach, conscious method.