Foreign Language Education and the Environment.
Considerations from the Perspective of Translation Studies

Carmen Valero-Garcés
University of Alcalá / Instituto Franklin-GIECO

Introduction: Reflections on environment, SLA and translation

I will begin by posing some basic questions. Are SLA and translation teachers and students aware of the importance that the environment has on our lives and on those of future generations? How can their consciousness be raised?

In order to provide some insights to these general questions, first I will add some comments I consider fundamental to understand my approach to Ecocriticism from Translation Studies (TS) and Second Language Acquisition (SLA). I will briefly talk about:

- The importance of language in our configuration of reality.
- The existence of empty spaces between language, which prevent direct translation and add difficulties to the learning of second /foreign languages
- The rise of new areas of study accompanied by new linguistic terms in a globalized world.

My experience as a teacher and researcher in TS shows that in the educational arena, we are still in the process of awakening our still-sleeping consciousness to ecological issues, and, in turn, of setting out upon a yet unexplored path. This exploration will lead us to speak of new fields and areas of specialization such as: ecocriticism, environmental literary studies, nature writing, environmental literature, ecological criticism, literary ecology, environmental or ecopoetic literary criticism, and new concepts that are introduced into our vocabulary such as "ecology," "human materiality," "transcorporality," "eco-humanism," "ecophobia," "environmental justice," "ecological holism," "cultural criticism," "planetarity," "biosemiotic," or "dark ecology," to name but a few.

Knowledge has no borders, but languages are not mirrors that can be superimposed. Frequently, we see how the above concepts are translated and introduced into other languages and cultures. Such new concepts are constantly being created, often in the majority or dominant languages (English, for example), which are directly adopted or copied in other languages. This phenomenon/policy can bring minority languages close to the verge of extinction – at least in some areas - because of this influence, while the dominant ones gain more power. We also know that minority languages exert some influence – albeit a lesser one – on the dominant languages (for example, the native languages of South America in Spanish; or Spanish in English). That

245

is, languages and their speakers are in constant contact with one another and this linguistic diversity is just as real and necessary as biological diversity is.

Along these lines, David Crystal, author of *Language Death*, and a great defender of multilingualism, lists five reasons why one should fight for this diversity: "because we need diversity and because languages express this identity, because languages are repositories of history, because languages contribute to the sum of human knowledge and because languages are interesting in themselves" ("An Interview") For these reasons – just as there is a call for biological ecology in other arenas - David Crystal calls for linguistic ecology. In his own words:

> (…) linguistic diversity is a basic human good. Every language expresses a unique vision of the universe and of what it means to be human, and each language loss implies the loss of one of these ways of seeing the world. The arguments are identical to those used in the field of plant and animal conservation, except that in this case we are talking about intellectual diversity. ("An Interview")

When it comes to biological diversity, all languages bear the mark of the bioregional context in which they are used; a context which brings together diverse biological, social, geographical, and geopolitical criteria (Lynch 31). One could say that the landscape influences the development and use of language. Thus, when its speakers immigrate to new places, a contrast is produced between the new setting and the original language. This contrast can signify disconnection or even a break, and will be all the greater depending on how great the difference is between the old landscape and setting and the new one. It is then that we come to realize that we do not have the words, or that we don't know how to express a concept, and thus, we search for the words that come close to the meaning of the original text. Or, we use other linguistic strategies such as explanations, metaphors, or images.

All of this can be done explicitly, but, by contrasting, consciously or unconsciously the old territory the new one, it is often something we do implicitly. In the words of Lynch: "Sometimes in explicit ways, but more insidiously in implicit linguistic ones, the new country is continuously contrasted with the old home territory, which serves as the normative terrain" (31).

And this is precisely the linguistic aspect which interests us. In this sense, Mary Austin, in the preface of *The Land of Journeys' Ending* writes:

> The topography of the country between the Colorado River and the Rio Grande cannot be expressed in terms invented for such purposes in a low green island by the North Sea. A *barranca* is terrifyingly more than an English bank on which wild thyme grows; an *arroyo* resembles a gully only in being likewise a water gouge in the earth's surface, and we have no word at all for *cañada*, half way between an arroyo and a cañon, which – though, naturally, you have been accenting the syllable that best expresses the trail of the white man across the Southwest – is really pronounced can-yon.

246

> There are also terms for *abra, playa, encerro*, which cannot be Englished at all except by the use of more words than you have time for when you attempt to inquire your way about the country. (qtd. in Lynch 31)

Lynch, in turn, comments on Austin's quote. Her use of words of Spanish origin in English texts, explaining how the Spanish language is more appropriate than English when describing the arid bioregions of the American Southwest, and he adds:

> To begin with, Spain is a more arid country and so a language that evolved there would necessarily be more suited to describing another, even a distant, arid region. Second, the Spanish language is heavily influenced by Arabic, a language that evolved in even more arid circumstances (32).

Whether or not we completely agree with these comments, they, at the very least, demonstrate the influence of landscape on language. Austin goes even further, explaining the different sensations produced, for example, by the term "desert," something which is also reflected in the definitions we find in dictionaries. We find that the term "desert" generally designates a place that is lacking in something, indicates the absence of something or its lack of presence. However, this is not always the case from a biological standpoint. Steven J. Phillips and Patricia Wentworth Comus, in their work entitled *A Natural History of the Sonoran Desert*, modify this negative view of the desert for a more positive alternative, which they define in the following way: "A desert is a biological community in which most of the indigenous plants and animals are adapted to chronic aridity and periodic, extreme droughts, and in which these conditions are necessary to maintain the community's structure" (9-10).

Terry Tempest William writes in *Red*: "The relationship between language and landscape is a marriage of sound and form, an oral geography, a sensual topography, what draws us to place and keeps us there. Where we live is the center of how we speak" (136). However, as previously stated, languages are not mirrors that can be superimposed. There exist gaps and empty spaces, as well as areas overloaded with similar terms. The debate which surfaced during the mid-nineties in English around the terms "literary ecology," "environmental literature," and "ecocriticism;" and the more recent debate about the translation of these terms into Spanish may illustrate this point[1].

Another example of the lack of correspondence between languages and the importance of being sensitive to this point is provided by Spivak, in her introduction to her English translation of the book *Imaginary Maps* by Mahasweta Devi. The original book was written in Bengali. In the first pages of book, Spivak calls attention to the relationship between the translator as a language and culture specialist, and his/her audience, remarking that the book *Imaginary Maps* was to be simultaneously published

---

[1] For more information on this topic see Valero-Garcés, "Reflexiones" 121-134; and Valero Garcés and Flys 371-377.

in English in India and the United States. She then points out that, as she was aware that the project involved two different communities, it was necessary to consider both of them when translating or including comments. This was no easy task, given that there are varying degrees of commitment and, often, few guidelines defining how far the translator can or should go with respect to this commitment. The outcome appears to depend entirely on the decisions made by the translator, who must create an "ecological setting" that will cause the reader to "enjoy" the translated text.

A remark made by Spivak towards the end of her preface to *Imaginary Maps* perfectly illustrates this debate:

> Sujit Mukherjee has also complained, and this is particularly important for US readers who are looking for either local flavour or Indian endorsement, that the English of my translation is not "sufficiently accessible to readers in this country [India]". This may indeed be true, but may not be sufficient grounds for complaint. I am aware the English of my translations belongs more to the rootless American-based academic prose than the more subcontinental idiom of my youth. This is an interesting question, unique to India: should Indian texts be translated into the English of the subcontinent? I think Sujit Mukherjee is begging rather than considering this question. (xviii)

In other words, as we face this linguistic diversity, there is no doubt that translation is also a necessary activity. In fact, Western culture is a culture which is translated, and the translator, like a privileged reader, is the first person that needs to become familiar with, organize, and properly manage the flow of information. To do this, the translator must know how to locate information. He/she must learn how to move about in this information age in order to become a critical thinker who questions him/herself and comes up with his/her own answers, who knows how to manage information in a broad sense, and who finds, accesses, analyzes, evaluates, synthesizes, stores and shares information in order to create knowledge.

Kelly (28-33) offers a good summary of what some authors in TS have said about translation competence. The main conclusion is that the art of translation is not simply about changing words from one language to another just as knowing a foreign language is not like going around with a dictionary under one's arm and looking up the words.

Something similar happens when one learns a second language. The second language learner must understand concepts, knowing that languages are not always comparable, that there are terminological voids and that the wealth of expressiveness can vary between one language and another. It is also important to understand that, when we speak, we refer to concepts which we express using linguistic terms. If these concepts are new and especially if they are concepts belonging to a specific field such as the emergent ecocriticism, they should reflect certain characteristics associated with scientific language: logical structure, accuracy, and clarity. In addition, if the trend we

248

are dealing with is one which has essentially arisen from within the English-speaking world, we must assume, as we do in many other areas of scientific-technical knowledge and development, that both translation and terminology will play a fundamental role.

Consider for a moment the signing of the first international environmental protection agreement, known as the Kyoto Protocol, by 36 industrialized countries in 1977. This summit provided one of the first proofs of the movement in the defense of "primitive nature," that nature in which the native tribes lived before the arrival of the "whites" to USA, as referred by Tuan in *Topofilia* (2007). The environmental summit held in Copenhagen in December of 2009, and its resounding failure when it came down to the signing of an official international pledge to protect the natural environment, also reveals the resurgence of a discourse which is plagued with different meanings and connotations. These connotations can change depending if they are used/translated in an industrialized country (the United States, for example) or in a developing country, which has a high probability of experiencing the degradation of its natural resources (Brazil or Guatemala, for example). Therefore, the images projected by the terms "survival of humanity," "contamination," "natural disasters," "loss of biodiversity," or "environmental consciousness" may not be the same. Such expressions are born in one language and find their way into others.

As teachers, these comments lead us to the consideration of the need to train future translators and SLA teachers in this ecological awareness and, as researchers, we also need to be aware of the emergence of and work in the development of new areas of specialization in Linguistics, Language Planning and Translation Studies related to environment such as Ecolinguistics or Eco-Translatology[2], explained in activity 10.

Ways to develop ecological consciousness in SLA class and translator's training

In order to build the future language or translation professional's awareness in regards to these realities, teachers and researchers must go about showing students how to handle these specialized terms and acquainting them with the difficulty of expressing the same concept in different languages. The translator also must be given resources and strategies for adding certain terms to his/her vocabulary and building ecological awareness among future students and/or clients.

With the objective of contributing to the SLA student and translator's ecological development, I will present different activities, some of which have been put into practice with my students in the course *Introduction to Translation* during the academic

---

[2] Due to space restrictions I am just dealing with Ecotranslatology. For an introduction to Ecolinguistics, and Language Planning, see Diaz Fouces´s "(Eco) Linguistics planning and language-exchange management."

year 2009-2010, and others which will hopefully be used with more advanced students in coming years.

The activities are focused on foreign language instruction and translation, two elements which I consider to be fundamental in language learning, and in the use of languages in the professional environment. The emphasis will be placed in two main topics:

1. The importance of specialized vocabulary and terminology (activities 1 to 4)

2. The development of critical thinking when transferring information from one language to another (activities 5 to 10).

Within the curricular design of the course, these topics make up content units that are then practised with respect to different areas of specialization (health, media, sports, technological advances, politics…). Thus, the introduction of vocabulary or of certain aspects related to the environment is perfectly suited as an area of possible specialization to be practised in class over the course of several sessions. In terms of the assessment of these activities, since this assessment is continuous, the professor may assign a relative grade depending on how much time is devoted to the block during the course. With respect to student profiles, the first activities – specialized vocabulary and technology – are meant for intermediate level SLA students or beginning translators, while the final activities are better directed at advanced SLA and translation students. In terms of methodology, the model followed is that proposed by specialists in translator and interpreter training from the project financed by the European Union – a project in which I have been an active member – *Building Mutual Trust, Framework project for Implementing EU Common standards in Legal Interpreting and Translation* (JLS/2007/JLS/219) (www.lr.mdx.ac.uk/mutual-trust/mtdocs/antwerp-report.pdf).

As in this project, the structure for each activity is the following: Aim – Context – Task – Outcome. 'Aim' contains the overall objective intended for the whole activity. 'Context' is used to contextualize the activity but also to introduce new content, and includes bibliographic references for those who want to continue exploring. 'Task' contains the exercise(s) to be completed by the student. 'Outcome' refers to the specific objective to be achieved by completing the specific activity.

ACTIVITY 1

Aim: Raising awareness about the importance of proper source selection.

Context: Attention called to the fact that younger generations have been raised on images and the Internet. The Internet has permitted us to go from having only one repository of information to multiple repositories – which can seem nearly infinite – with different sources of information and ways of acquiring, processing, archiving and disseminating data. Such potential can at first be dazzling and, a priori, can cause us to believe we can find anything we need. There are, however, great inconveniences: the

huge sprawl of information, unstable content, questionable reliability of information, and the web's labyrinthine structure, all of which can result in inefficacy (Cerezo, Corpas and Leiva, 149; and Palomares, 179). For these reasons, it is fundamental that we know how to recognize and consult trustworthy sources when in the process of finding and using ecology-related terms in our source and target languages, as the above authors among many other researchers and practitioners insist on.

Outcome:

By completing this activity students will be able to assess the quality of web resources according to some criteria and to identify and locate useful resources.

Task 1:

Find and analyze a set of websites featuring bilingual resources which are generally related to ecology and write a commentary on each one focusing, where possible, on the following elements:

- number of entries / terms contained in the data base;
- comparison of the equivalents given by each database for 2 or 3 terms of your choosing (e.g. nature, landscape; environments)
- analysis of the strategies used to provide an equivalent in the other language (equivalent terms, definitions, phrases in context, synonyms, etc.)

Task 2: Write general conclusions based on the comparison of the quality of the aforementioned resources.

Task 3: Look up five more specialized websites to complete the list and provide a written commentary following the guidelines in the previous section. Once you have finished, exchange – if possible- the information with other classmates and compile a list as a group.

ACTIVITY 2

Aim: Raising awareness about the importance of specialised vocabulary and terminology.

Context: Attention is called to the importance of terminology in differentiating similar terms. It is not difficult to find several translations for the same term; terms which are apparently synonymous. It is also common that when we learn a language, we discover terms that share the same meaning and are interchangeable or that can take on several meanings depending on the context in which they are used. These terms, however, do not refer to one identical concept nor are they one hundred percent interchangeable. In theory, scientific language should be void of both synonyms and polysemous words, which – as Navarro points out (191) – would be ideal not only for the scientists themselves, but also, and quite likely to a greater extent, for specialized translators, researchers, second-language learners, and readers. However, this is not reality.

Terminology turns out to be a helpful tool for language specialists. They know that terms in one language do not always find their equivalent in another language, as there may be variations, approximations or terminological voids for which the speaker or translator must find a solution. It is necessary, as the expert in terminology Teresa Cabré points out (124), to create proper terminological materials, both for the translators and the readers themselves. It is equally important for the language and/or translator learner to be made aware of role of terminology, especially if the language is not his or her mother tongue.

Terminology is also a key part of establishing a new specialty area or discipline, as it is the case of Ecocriticism. Developing specific terminological sources will help to the standardization of terms and to distinguish this field in its own right. This standardization requires time and effort from a team of players: the researcher, the critic, the scientist, the terminologist, and the translator or language user. Each one of these individuals can help to create the tools needed to equip this new specialization with its own scientific language. Each one can help to account for the semantic, cognitive, and pragmatic nuances, which reveal the terminological variation (see Irizazábal 255).

One contribution that can be made as part of this effort to establish these terminological tools is the creation of specific glossaries or term indexes as well as the analysis of already existing resources.

Outcome: By completing the activities students will be able to recognise the importance of terminological resources as a good practice tool and will be able to identify difficulties involved in the creation of terminological tools.

Task 1: Analyze the following examples in Table 1 taken from a bilingual English-Spanish glossary in the field of ecocriticism and in its related areas that the research group GIECO[3] is developing (See Valero-Garcés and Flys 371-378).

TABLE 1

English Term	Proposed Spanish Term	Spanish Definition/*English Translation of Definition*
Anthropomorphism	Antropomorfismo	1. m. Conjunto de creencias o de doctrinas que atribuyen a la divinidad la figura o las cualidades del hombre. (*A group of beliefs or doctrines which attribute the form or qualities of the human being to God*) 2. m. Tendencia a atribuir rasgos y cualidades humanos a las cosas. (RAE) en este contexto a animales y seres no humanos (*The tendency to attribute human features or qualities to things. In*

---

[3] For more information about GIECO visit: http://www.institutofranklin.net/en/research/research-areas/ecocriticism

252

English Term	Spanish Term	Definition
		this context to animals and non-human beings)
Androcentrism	Androcentrismo	1. m. Visión del mundo y de las relaciones sociales centrada en el punto de vista masculino. (*View of the world and social relationships as centered from the masculine point of view*)
Biocentrism	Biocentrismo	1. m. Teoría <u>moral</u> que reivindica el respeto hacia todo ser vivo.(*Moral theory which demands respect towards every living being*) 2. m. Modo de pensar que se contrapone al <u>teocentrismo</u> y al <u>antropocentrismo</u> y que considera el hombre como un ser mas entre todos los seres bióticos (vivos) y físicos (*A way of thinking which is counterpoint to teocentrism and anthropocentrism and where man is considerend to be one being more among all biotic (living), physical beings.*)
Bioregionalism	Bioregionalismo	1. m. Sistema que delimita áreas denominadas bioregiones, que son territorios definidos por la combinación de criterios biológicos, sociales y geográficos, no por criterios geopolíticos. (*System which delineates areas called bioregions, which are territories defined by a combination of biological, social and geographical criteria and not by geopolitical criteria*)
Ethics of care	Ética del cuidar	1. f. Ética fundamentada en cuidar, nutrir, alimentar física y emocionalmente a los demás—tradicionalmente asociada a las mujeres. (*Ethic based on caring, nourishing and feeding others, both physically and emotionally*) – *traditionally associated to women*)

Task 2. Complete Table 2, which also contains a new column in which you must indicate the sources of documentation which you have consulted; for example, the Internet, glossaries, translated texts, original Spanish texts, etc.

Task 3. Choose the term you consider more appropriate or translate the term, justifying your choice. You could, for example, show that there are several translations and that you have chosen the most frequently used term, or that there is only one translation which you accept or that, in the case of Spanish, the translated term is in the Royal Academy Dictionary. If you propose a new definition, explain the strategy you have chosen: calque, adaptation, literal translation etc.

Task 4. Provide a definition of the term exactly as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 2

English Term	Proposed Spanish Term	Sources / documentary file.	Definition
Ecopoetics			

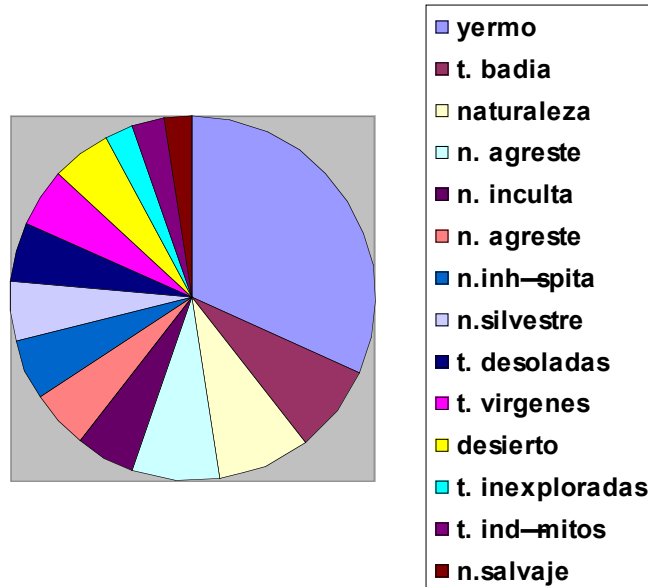|			
Empowerment			
Environmental justice			
Feminization of nature			
Literary ecology			
Urban ecology			
Wilderness			

ACTIVITY 3

Aim: Raising awareness about the importance of possessing well-defined tools.

Context: Attention is called to the presence and use of synonymic and polysemic words. Both types of words, due to their advantages as well as the problems they may represent, are well-known to second-language acquisition students and translators. The following example serves to illustrate and to increase our awareness around this topic.

In his book *Topofilia*, Tuan dedicates a four-page chapter to the term "wilderness" (109-112). In the English text, this term is repeated 34 times in 4 pages. In the Spanish translation, however, it appears in the form of thirteen different translations, all of which are depicted in the following chart (Chart 1) (See Valero – Garcés, "Reflexiones" 121-134):

Spanish Translations of
'Wilderness'

Legend:
- yermo
- t. badia
- naturaleza
- n. agreste
- n. inculta
- n. agreste
- n.inh—spita
- n.silvestre
- t. desoladas
- t. virgenes
- desierto
- t. inexploradas
- t. ind—mitos
- n.salvaje

As Chart 1 illustrates, the most frequently used words are "yermo," followed by "naturaleza," "tierras," "territorios," and "desiertos." Roughly, these words in English might signify "barren or unfertile land," "nature," "land," "territory," and "uninhabited lands." Clearly, the images that these concepts bring to mind are not necessarily the same. This is the case even when referring strictly to their literal definitions. The Spanish Royal Academy Dictionary provides the following definitions for some of the terms:

The term 'Yermo' contains three entries: 1. Uninhabited; 2. Uncultivated; 3. Uninhabited terrain.

The term 'Naturaleza' contains up to eighteen entries. The first defines the term as "the essence and characteristic properties of each being" and the third as "the collection, order, and distribution of all things which make up the universe."

The term 'Territorio' contains four entries: 1. Any part of the earth's surface belonging to a nation, region, province etc. 2. Terrain (area or sphere of action). 3. A defined parcel of land which serves as a jurisdiction or fulfills an official objective or analogous function 4. A specific place or land area such as a cave, a tree or an anthill

which is inhabited by a specific animal or group of animals within the same family and which is defended against invasion by other animals of the same species.

The term 'Tierra,' on the other hand, produces over ten entries which range from 'the planet which we inhabit' to designating it as 'a territory or district founded by historic or current interests.'

The term 'Desierto,' in turn, includes three entries, the third of which can be applied to the present context, which defines it as an "uninhabited place."

Outcome: By completing this exercise, students will be able to identify the importance of synonyms and polysemic words. The student will increase awareness about the difficulties in translating specific words.

Task 1. Analyze the images which come to mind when you hear compound terms such as "naturaleza agreste" (*rugged wilderness*) or "naturaleza inhóspita" (*hostile wilderness*) and respond to the following questions:

a. Are they equivalents?

b. What makes them different?

c. Exchange your responses with those of other students and analyze in writing the differences and similarities between the images brought to mind.

d. Ask three or four people you know outside of class and analyze their responses in relation to your own and those of your fellow classmates.

ACTIVITY 4

Aim: Raising awareness about the lack of one-to-one correspondence when translating and the importance of the translator's decisions.

Context: Attention is called to the translation of flora and fauna. Passages containing names of animals and plants, some of which do not exist or are not common to other countries, is an area of special concern for translators. When comparing passages containing these words, it is common to observe that different translators provide different solutions, as in the following examples taken from the Spanish translations of the masterpiece *Walden* by Thoreau, a central author in the field of ecocriticism (See Valero-Garcés, "Walden" 455-555).

1. Birds

ST	A	B	C	D
Bluebird	Azulejo	Pájaro azul	Ruiseñor azul	Azulejo
Song sparrow	Gorrión cantor	Gorrión cantarín	Pinzón cantarín	Gorrión cantarín
Red-wing	Malvis	Malviz	Turpial de dorso rojo	Mirlo
Bittern	Bitor	Acavarán	Alcavarán	Avetor
Meadow-hen lurl	Gallineta	Sora	Rascón	Gallineta

256

Outcome: Students will be able to recognise difficulties in translating term related to birds and plants, as well as some other factors affecting translation.

Task 1. Look up the definition or description of these different names for birds and plants and determine if they really refer to the same bird or plant, or if there are differences between them. In the latter case, decide why this might be (for example, because of geographic reasons, the translator's origin, the location where the translation was published, etc.) and provide written commentary.

Task 2. Look up a definition for the following plant-related terms in specialized sources: *pinweed; wood grasses; cotton grass; cat tails; mulleins; johnswort; hard-hack; meadow-sweet; weeds.*

Task 3. Translate the above terms, in pairs or groups. If you find more than one term, copy them, and comment (for example, explain if there are different names in different regions, countries or continents, or if it is due to technical versus colloquial usage, or if depends on the translator's decisions or origin influence, etc.).

ACTIVITY 5

Aim: Developing critical thinking through the use of parallel texts or multiple translations

Context: Same as for activity 4

Outcome: Students will be able to investigate and evaluate different translations of a same term. Students will be able to incorporate new words into their vocabulary as well as justify their decisions.

Task 1: Compare your translations with those given in the table below, which were taken from different translated versions of Thoreau´s *Walden* (See Valero-Garcés, "Walden" 455-555).

Pinweed	Pinweed	Pinweeds	Junquillos	Jaras
Wood grasses	Hierbas salvajes	Hierbas silvestres	Gramineas salvajes	Hierbas silvestres
Cotton grass	Cotton grass	Hierba de algodón	Planta de algodón	Planta de algodón
Cat tails	Tototras	Espadañas	Espadaña	Espadañas
Weeds	Yuyos	Hierbas	Plantas discretas	Un velo discreto

Task 2. Write about which option you feel would be the best choice if you were translating the text for a Spanish audience. Exchange your comments with other class mates or explain it to the whole class.

ACTIVITY 6.

Aim: When translating, becoming aware of the significance of words and their nuances.

Context: Attention is called to the specific landscapes which represent typical scenarios. A typical Spanish landscape is that depicted by the poet Antonio Machado in *Campos de Castilla,* his masterpiece and a landmark in universal literature. There are three available translations into English. Each one has a different title: *Lands of Castile and Other Poems* (2002)*,* translated by Burns and Ortiz-Carboneres; *The Landscape of Castile: Poems by Antonio Machado*, translated by Berg and Maloney (2004); and *Fields of Castile / Campos de Castilla,* translated by Appelbaum (2007).

Outcome: Students will be able to analyse translations from different perspectives: that of the native reader's perspective, and that of the foreign reader's.

Task 1: Analyse this Spanish masterpiece from a dual perspective by answering the following questions about the landscape and the translator's job.

1. Look up the definition of these three terms in a dictionary: land, fields, landscape. Are they synonyms?

2. Do you think the three different words suggest the same landscape?

3. Assuming that you have read the work by Machado and that you are Spanish and are familiar with the Castilian landscape, imagine that you are a foreign spectator reading the translated book: Does the reader of the original text picture the same landscape as the reader of the translated one?

4. How do you think the translator has intervened?

5. Which option would you choose? Why?

6. Do you think that there are any external factors that may have influenced the translation process (e.g. time, space, politics, historical trends)?

ACTIVITY 7

Aim: Developing critical thinking about the transfer of content when comparing source text and translated text according to the criteria of 'covert' and 'overt' translation These terms were coined by Juliane House in *Translation Quality Assessment: A Model Revisited* in 1997. House proposed two methods of translation: 'covert' and 'overt,' and developed a model designed to compare an ST-TT pair of situational variables, genre, function, and language to identify both the translation method employed ('covert' or 'overt') and the translation 'errors.' 'Overt translation' method is used when a TT that does not purport to be an original, e.g. translation of works of literature, which are tied to their source culture. The equivalence has to be sought at the level of language/text register and genre; and 'covert translation' is a translation which enjoys the status of an original source text in the target culture;' e.g. a tourist information booklet. The function of a 'covert translation' is to recreate,

258

reproduce, or represent in the TT the function the original has in its linguistic cultural framework and discourse world.

Context: Attention is called to Translation Criticism as a specific area in *Translation Studies* and as a way to avoid subjective, individual judgements about translated texts. For this purpose two methods of translating in *Translation Studies* are introduced: 'covert' or 'overt' translation.

Outcome: The students will be able to **a**nalyse the difficulties in transferring the content and style (of a poem) from one language to another. The student will be able to assess translated texts using specific criteria.

Task 1. Review the context for Activity 6. Then, read the poem "A orillas del Duero," Poem XCVIII in *Campos de Castilla*, and the translation by Burns & Ortiz-Carboneres:

A orillas del Duero	On the Banks of the Duero
Mediaba el mes de julio. Era un hermoso día.	It was mid-July and a beautiful day.
Yo, solo, por las quiebras del pedregal subía,	Alone, I climbed gullies in the rocky scree,
buscando los recodos de sombra, lentamente.	moving slowly, seeking folds of shade.
A trechos me paraba para enjugar mi frente	From time to time I paused to mop my row
y dar algún respiro al pecho jadeante;	and find some respite for my heaving chest;
o bien, ahincando el paso, el cuerpo hacia adelante	then hurried on, my body bending forward
y hacia la mano diestra vencido y apoyado	and t my right, spent but supported
en un bastón, a guisa de pastoril cayado,	on my stick, like a shepherd on his crook.
trepaba por los cerros que habitan las rapaces	So I climbed to the heights where great birds
aves de altura, hollando las hierbas montaraces	of prey live, treading the strong-scented
de fuerte olor -romero, tomillo, salvia, espliego-.	highlands herbs-rosemary, thyme, lavender and sage.
Sobre los agrios campos caía un sol de fuego	A fiery sun blazed down on the sour fields.

Task 2. After reading the poem and its translation, read the following comments. Do you agree?

> These lines correspond to the first verses of the poem. When reading the source text in Spanish, the reader is quickly struck by the use of a selective and cultivated vocabulary: one which may be considered even old-fashioned, which is highly literary, completely balanced, and uncommon for non-educated people: "quiebras del pedregal," "ahincando el paso," "A guisa de pastoral cayado," "hollando las hierbas montaraces".
>
> On the other hand, the TT reveals the use of more common words: "gullies in the rock scree," "hurried on," "like a shepherd on his crook," "treading the strong-scented highland herbs."
>
> The name of animals and plants also pose a challenge for the translator: "romero," "tomillo," "salvia," "espliego," "verdes álamos," "robles y encinas," buitre" and "comadrejas" become "rosemary," "thyme," "lavender" "sage" "green poplars" "holm oaks and scrub" "vulture and "weasels". (Valero- Garcés, "Walden" 550)

259

Task 3. Write your own comment.

Task 4. Propose a different translation or write your opinion on the adequacy and acceptability in the target language of the translation by Burns & Ortiz-Carboneres.

ACTIVITY 8

Aim: Evaluating translations by comparing different translations of the same original text.

Context: Attention is called again to Translation Criticism as a research area in Translation Studies, presenting specific guidelines for evaluating translated texts. Wills, Nord, Toury, or Valero-Garcés are some of the researchers who have produced models of analysis (see Valero-Garcés, *Modelo de Evaluación*). Comparing the Source Text (ST) and the Translated Text (TT) at the different linguistic levels (phonological, lexical, syntactic, and discursive level) is a common practise at early levels in translator's training.

Outcome: Students will be introduced to some basic concepts in Translation Criticism and use them in the evaluation of translations as well as propose new solutions justifying their decisions.

Task 1. Compare both translations of this poem by Antonio Machado: The first one (A) is by Burns & Ortiz-Carboneres (2002) and the second one (B) is by Applebaum (2007) paying attention to phonological and lexical characteristics of the vocabulary used in both ST and TT. Write a short comment about which TT or specific decision taken by the translator you consider more adequate to ST and / or acceptable to TT:

ST	A	B
Mediaba el mes de julio. Era un hermoso día.	It was mid-July and a beautiful day.	It was mid-July. It was a lovely day.
Yo, solo, por <u>las quiebras del pedregal</u> subía,	Alone, <u>I climbed gullies in the rocky scree,</u>	Alone, <u>I was ascending through the fissures of the stony ground,</u>
buscando los recodos de sombra, lentamente.	moving slowly, seeking folds of shade.	Seeking the shady nooks, slowly.
A trechos me paraba para <u>enjugar mi frente</u>	From time to time I paused to mop my row	Every so often I halted to wipe my brow
y dar algún respiro al pecho jadeante;	and find some respite for my heaving chest;	And let my panting bosom draw a breath;
o bien, <u>ahincando el paso</u>, el cuerpo hacia adelante	then <u>hurried on,</u> my body bending forward	Or else, <u>hastening my steps</u>, my body bent forward
y hacia la mano diestra vencido y apoyado	and to my right, spent but supported	And to the right, as I leaned
en un bastón, a <u>guisa de pastoril cayado</u>,	on my stick, <u>like a shepherd on his crook.</u>	On a stick <u>like a shepherd´s staff,</u>
trepaba por los cerros que habitan <u>las rapaces</u>	So I climbed to the heights where <u>great birds</u>	I climbed the hills inhabited by the <u>rapacious</u>
<u>aves de altura</u>, hollando las <u>hierbas</u>	<u>of prey live,</u> treading the <u>strong-</u>	<u>Birds of the heights</u>, <u>treading the wild grasses</u>
		<u>Of strong aroma</u>- rosemay, thyme, sage, lavender.

montaraces de fuerte olor -romero, tomillo, salvia, espliego-. Sobre los <u>agrios campos</u> caía un sol de fuego.	scented <u>highlands herbs</u>-rosemary, thyme, lavender and sage. A fiery sun blazed down on the <u>sour fields.</u>	Upon the <u>rugged fields</u> of a Fiery sun was falling.

<u>Task 2:</u> Write your opinion on both translations, paying special attention to the underlined words or phrases.

<u>Task 3.</u> (Optional task): Taking into consideration the following comment by Burns and Ortiz about Machado´s style, propose a different translation for some terms or parts of the poem:

 The language of his [Machado] poems is spare, relying strongly on nouns and adjectives, asserting more than describing,… Adjectives are usually for definition, not for decoration. He [Machado] doesn't rely extensively on metaphors (8).

ACTIVITY 9

<u>Aim</u>: Getting familiar with ecocritical discourse

<u>Context</u>: The debate about the main objective of Ecocriticism in the mid-nineties.

<u>Outcome:</u> The students will become familiar with some concepts and definitions central to Ecocritiscm as well as to some authors and main ideas.

<u>Task 1.</u> Read and comment upon the debate which surfaced around the terms "literary ecology,"environmental literature," and "ecocriticism" during the mid-nineties.

"Ecocriticism' is here understood as "the study of the relations between literature and the environment" from the point of view of the "I and the environment" conjunction, following the now classic definition by Cheryll Glotfelty, co-editor of *The Ecocriticism Reader* (1996)*,* a widely used introductory textbook. Glotfelty, in her article "Introduction: Literary Studies in an Age of Environmental Crisis," clearly set out the main objective of Ecocriticism: the interconnectedness between nature and culture, specifically the cultural artifacts of language and literature.

Branch and Slovic, in their introduction to the special number to celebrate the prestigious *ISLE* journal tenth anniversary, *The ISE Reader,* established the ecocritical interests in three main areas: 1) re-evaluations of authors; of themes, including population and wilderness; and of genres; 2) interdisciplinary studies of consumerism, gender, Romanticism, environmental education, films, and 3) theoretical essays on activism and bioregionalism, ecocriticism, reading, urban studies, feminism, and postcolonial theory.

Cohen, in "Blues in the Green: Ecocriticism Under Critique," adds: "Clearly, ecocriticism can become a hot and contested topic in the world of literary studies. But do ecocritics read, manipulate, and use texts in a unique manner?" His quick answer is

261

that they are like other literary critics "examining textuality, not just summarizing textual content."

Then, Cohen asks open questions, inside and outside of ecocriticism, such as if "literature and environment" is a sub-discipline of literary studies, or an extension out of literary studies into environmental sciences, or a practice largely within the paradigms of the humanities and social sciences. Thus, he admits the interdisciplinarity of Ecocriticsm. He continues asking questions like: "can literary critics historicize and theorize ecology while keeping their own vision and agenda from becoming discordant? How can they practice relation—putting together history, ecology, literary theory—in the study of literature?" Finally, Cohen provides a few examples of authors who practice different ecocritical methods on different genres and subgenres: fiction, pastoral, feminism, and a wide variety of approaches. As for the working method, the two of them – ecocritics, and literary critics - follow the same pattern: practice close reading - pay attention to language, its genealogy, complexity, ambiguity, the way it carries intended and unintended meaning, and creates expectations on the part of the reader, being the first condition to understand the text as a reader, and the ability/mastery in using language "a must."

Cohen (35) gives us some reasons for such an approach: First, literary critics believe the mode of articulation matters. It is a part, if not the central part, of how texts mean. Style is a part of the cultural work. Ecocritics believe that part of the problems of or trouble with the wilderness, is a result of language and rhetoric. There may or may not be such a thing as wilderness, but it is certainly constructed with words in essays. Second, literary critics remind us that we are part of a tradition of discourse that itself has a history. Third, and not least, literary critics remind us that we should write well and with good effect, while knowing as writers that our language reveals our times.

He concludes with an imperative assessment, "Of one thing I am certain: Good writing is more effective and important for these purposes than bad writing, but what is good is not such a simple matter. Books are tools for seeing the world: Which tools help perception is a question to be answered partly by those who specialize in the literary structure of books" (qtd. In Valero-Garcés "New perspectives").

Task 2. Translate the terms "literary ecology," "environmental literature," and "ecocriticism" into Spanish, and look for references of their uses. Have you found other similar translations?

ACTIVITY 10:

Aim: Introduce the student to a new specialization in Translation Studies: Eco-Translatology.

262

Context: Attention is focused in the presentation of a possibly new branch in *Translation Studies*: Ecotranslatology.

Outcome: Students will become familiar with specific discourse about ecocriticism. They will also be introduced to a new area of research in Translation Studies.

Task: Read and summarize the above comments and look for the authors articles mentioned as well as for some more references related to Eco-translatology.

Hu, in his article "Translation as adaptation and selection," writes about 'Eco-Translatology' or 'An Ecological Approach to Translation Studies,' and provides the following attempt of a definition:

> Eco-translatology is viewed as an ecological approach to Translation Studies with an interdisciplinary orientation. In the light of the affinity and isomorphism between translational ecosystems and natural ecosystems. Eco-translatology regards the scene of translation as a holistic translational eco-system, and focuses on the relationship between the translator and the translational eco-environment. (289)

Hu bases his approach on the following explanation:

> There is agreement that translation is a language activity, that language is an activity as part of culture, that culture is a result of human activity, and that human activity is part of the natural world. There is therefore a meaningful chain:
> translation > language > culture > human activity > natural world
> This chain can be reversed:
> natural world > human activity > culture > language > translation
> The mutual relevance and interconnection between the links is also obvious:
> translation <-> language <-> culture <-> human activity <-> natural world
> This mutual and interactive relationship is important (…) because it is clear that principles applicable in the natural world are also pertinent to studies in the humanities, including translation. (289)

In order to understand the birth of this new approach to Translation Studies, some history may be relevant. As Hu points out, since the 1960s, human societies have slowly been transformed from industrial into ecological civilizations. We might mention just a few representative documents. The first is *Silent Spring* by the marine biologist, Rachel Carson. Carson warned that the human species is endangering animal life on Earth. Her work alerted the international community to environmental issues and paved the way for modern environmental movements. Another is the *Declaration of Human Environment* which, in a United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in 1972, called attention to the protection of the natural environment. *Our Common Future,* another UN document released in 1987, which called for sustainable development in order not to imperil future generations. Since then, more and more documents, books, declarations, and initiatives are being created all around the world; all of which serve to raise awareness as to environmental problems and to help protect

263

our world by means of sustainable development policies and a scientific and balanced attitude toward development.

This awareness is permeating all spheres of our life: job, entertainment, daily life, etc. At a professional level, an ecological dimension is being added, which favors interdisciplinarity and gives rise to new specializations, concepts, and neologisms. Everything now is "returning to nature." Many people prefer organic food, environment-friendly houses, ecological clothes, and green travels. In academic circles, we see "environmentalism's overdue move beyond science, geography and social science into 'the humanities'" (Kerridge 5). In the ecological disciplines, new branches of learning are rapidly growing. Within the humanities, we could mention disciplines (or areas of specialization) such as are Eco-criticism, Eco-politics, Eco-linguistics, the last of which is comprised of Environmental linguistics and ecology of language acquisition (Gabbard; Fill; Mühlhäusler), and new ones are appearing, such as Eco-translatology (Hu, Gengshen 244).

In conclusion, overall and from a theoretical angle, Eco-translatology moves from emphasizing the text to translating the environment, and from 'source text-centredness' and 'target text-centredness' to 'translator-centredness' (Hu Gongze 2006.) From the viewpoint of research methods, more attention is paid to profoundly rational inference and empirical studies as opposed to impressionistic practices (Zheng); and as for the binary opposites of "direct vs. free translation," "loyalty vs. betrayal," "domestication vs. foreign-ization," and the like, they are turned into "translational environments," namely, "to the overall consideration of its translation essence, subjectivity, process, and many other related aspects in social and cultural environments" (Xu and Liu 43).

Conclusions

In the process of awakening consciousness to ecological issues in SLA and Translation Studies curricula, I have tried to give insights into ways of raising ecological awareness by introducing some topics and comments that I consider fundamental to understanding my interdisciplinary approach to the disciplines of ecocriticism, SLA and Translation Studies. The three main points discussed were: the importance of language in our configuration of reality; the existence of empty spaces between languages which prevent direct translation and add difficulties to the learning of second /foreign languages; and the rise of new areas of study accompanied by new linguistics terms in a globalized world.

The discussion was followed by the design of activities centered upon two main topics: the importance of specialized vocabulary and terminology (activities 1 to 4) and the development of critical thinking when transferring information from one language to

264

another (activities 5 to 10). More research is needed on this topic, but I hope this article will serve at least as an introduction to future researchers in SLA and Translation Studies related to environment.

Works Cited

Austin, Mary. *The Land of Journey's Ending*. New York: AMS Press [1924], 1969: viii-ix. Print.

Branch, Michael P. and Scott Slovic. "Introduction." *The ISLE Reader*. Eds. Michael P. Branch and Scott Slovic. University of Georgia Press, 2003. xiii-xxiii. Print.

Cabré, Teresa. "La terminología en la traducción especializada." *Manual de Documentación y terminología para la traducción especializada*. Eds. Consuelo Gonzalo García and Valentín García Yebra. Madrid: Arco Libros, 2004. 89-162. Print.

Carson, Rachel. *Silent Spring*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962. Print.

Cerezo, Luis, Gloria Corpas and Jorge Leiva "Aplicaciones didácticas y profesionales de los sistemas hipertextuales para la traducción". *TRANS* 6 (2002): 145-159. Print.

Cohen, Michael P. "Blues in the Green: Ecocriticism Under Critique". *Environmental History*, 9.1 (2004): 9-36. Print.

Crystal, David. "An interview with David Crystal". *Diario Público*, 27 January 27, 2008. Available at: http://www.publico.es/ciencia/043205/david/crsytal/filologia, 2008. Web. 20 Sept 2010.

---. *Language Death*. Cambridge: CUP, 2001. Print.

Diaz Fouces, O. "(Eco) Linguistics planning and language-exchange management." *MonTI* 2 (2010). Trans. Web. 4 November 2011.

Fill, Alwin. "Ecolinguistics – State of the Art 1998." *The Ecolinguistics Reader: Language, Ecology and Environment*. Eds. Alwin Fill and Peter Mühlhaüsler. London: Continuum, 2001. 43-43. Print.

Gabbard, R. *Ecolinguistics: the future of linguistics*. 2000. Web. 16 August 2007. <http://ecoling.net>.

Glotfelty, Cheryll. "Introduction: Literary Studies in an Age of Environmental Crisis". *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*. Eds. Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm, Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1996. xv-xxxvii. Print.

House, Juliane. *Translation Quality Assessment: A Model Revisited*. Tübingen: Narr, 1997. Print.

Hu, Gongze. "A theory of 'translator's turn' - Introducing an Approach to Translation as Adaptation and Selection". *Journal of Book- Reviews* 2 (2006): 39-42. Print.

Hu, Gengshen. "Translation as Adaptation and Selection." *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology* 11.4 (2003): 283-291. Print.

Irizazábal, Amelia de. "El CINDOC del CESIC y la terminología en lengua española." *Panorama actual de la terminología.* Eds. Gloria Guerrero and Manuel Pérez Lagos Granada: Comares, 2002. 147-158. Print.

Kelly, Dorothy. *A Handbook for Translators Trainers*. Manchester: St. Jerome, 2005. Print.

Kerridge, Richard. "Introduction." *Writing the Environment: Ecocriticism and Literature*, Eds. Richard Kerridge and Neill Sammells. London: Zed Books, 1998. Print.

Lynch, Tom. *Xerophilia. Ecocritical Explotarions in Southwestern Literature.* Texas: Tech University Press, 2008. Print.

Machado, Antonio. *Fields of Castile/Campos de Castilla*. Trans. Stanley Appelbaum. Mineola, NY: Dover Publ., 2007. Print.

---. *Lands of Castile and Other Poems*. Trans. Paul Burns and Salvador Ortiz-Carboneres. New York: Aris & Phillips Ltd, 2002. Print.

---. *The Landscape of Castile: Poems*. Trans. Mary G. Berg and Dennis Maloney. New York: White Pine Press, 2004. Print.

Mühlhaüsler, Peter. *Language of Environment, Environment of Language: A Course in Ecolinguistics*. London and New York: Paul & Co, 2003. Print.

Navarro, Fernando. "Las nomenclaturas normalizadas en medicina y farmacología: una de cal y otra de arena." *Manual de Documentación y terminología para la traducción especializada.* Eds. Consuelo Gonzalo García and Valentín García Yebra. Madrid: Arco Libros, 2004. 191-221. Print.

Palomares, Rocío. *Recursos documentales para el estudio de la traducción*. Málaga: Universidad de Málaga, 2000. Print.

Phillips, Steven J. and Patricia Wentworth Comus, eds. *A Natural History of the Sonoran Desert.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999. Print.

Spivak, Gayatri C., trans "Translator's Note." *Three Stories. Imaginary Maps.* By Mahasweta Devi. Nueva York: Routledge, 1995. xxv-xxix. Print.

Thoreau, Henry D. *Walden, Life in the Woods*. Trans. Antonio Saldaña. Madrid: Premia, 1977. Print.

Tuan, Yi-Fu. *Topofilia*. Madrid: Melusina, 2007. Print.

Valero-Garcés, Carmen. *Modelo de evaluación de obras literarias traducidas. The Scarlet Letter/La Letra Escarlata de Nathaniel Hawthorne.* Viena: Peter Lang, 2007. Print.

---. "New perspectives in Translation Studies: Eco-Translation: Ecocriticsm and Translation Quality Assessment". *Odisea,* 2011(forthcoming). Print.

266

---. "Reflexiones en torno a la ecocrítica, traducción y terminología". *Ecocríticas. Literatura y medio ambiente*. Eds. Carmen Flys, José Manuel Marrero and Julia Barella. Madrid: Iberoamericana/ Vervuert, 2010. 121-134. Print.

---. "Walden & Campos de Castilla. Translated. Landscapes and 'eco-translation'? " *Proceedings of the 3rd EASCLE Conference "Cultural Landscapes: Heritage and Conservation".* Eds. Carmen Flys, et al. Alcalá de Henares: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad, 2009. 545-555. Print.

Valero-Garcés, Carmen and Carmen Flys. "Glosario básico multilingüe". *Ecocríticas. Literatura y medio ambiente.* " Eds. C. Flys, J. M. Marrero and J. Barella, Madrid: Iberoamerica/ Vervuert, 2010. 371-378. Print.

Williams, Terry T. *Red. Passion and Patience in the Desert*. New York: Pantheon Books: 2001. Print.

Xu, Jun and H. Liu. "A new monograph of translation studies with strong exploratory power. A commentary on an Approach to Translation as Adaptation and Selection". *Chinese Translators Journal* 6 (2004): 40-43. Print.

Zheng, Zen. "A monograph of translation theory with significance of methodology- A Commentary on Professor Hu Gengshen's new monograph an Approach to Translation as Adaptation and Selection." *Studies in Language and Culture*. Eds. Q. Feng and X. Yao. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2006. 463-470. Print.