

Focus on Grades – Embedded Formative Assessment
**Report from a STINT teaching experience during
summer and fall term 2015 at the Department of
Comparative Literature, UCLA**

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”The students are ignorant, but very smart. They will remember everything you say in class.”

1. Introduction

This report accounts my recently gained experiences teaching the course *Introduction to Translation Studies* at the Department of Comparative Literature at UCLA summer and fall term 2015; both on the undergraduate level in the form of tutorials and on the graduate level giving regular lectures and seminars.

The report takes you through the background for my wish to teach at UCLA, the preparing phase of the two classes, the actual teaching of the classes with the pedagogic thoughts behind power point presentations and lectures, student presentations, assignments, preparation of the midterm exam and the outlining of the final paper. I compare the two different teaching experiences with special focus on so called embedded formative assessment (Wiliam 2011).

The main source for this approach is the book *Embedded Formative Assessment* by Dylan Wiliam, published by Solution Tree Press in 2011, which has been translated to Swedish by Birgitta Önnarfält and published at Studentlitteratur under the title *Att följa lärande – formative bedömning i praktiken* 2013. Although the book is not primarily focused on university pedagogy I found it very useful when planning the course at UCLA and later when I tried to cope with the Americans students constant preoccupation for their grades during class. Since this constant and outspoken preoccupation is one of the most striking differences between American and Swedish master students, I decided to work in the spirit of transparent

formative assessment rather than employing a summative assessment model to grade these American students. My interpretation and adaption of the formative assessment model for grading university students states in short that assessment functions formatively when proofs of the student's accomplishments are retrieved, interpreted and used by the professor, the student and co-students alike to improve the learning and teaching process in class. A summative assessment is on the other hand product based.

I'm a product of the Swedish education system and a former member of the Student Union (Elevförbundet). In this discourse grades in high school and college used to be considered almost as a "necessary evil". In the beginning of my career as lecturer I cherished the courses at the university that only employed approved (G) or non-approved (IG) and I felt very skeptical when implementing the Bologna Process at my Department. Today I work actively with The Bologna Process in constantly creating new courses and have come to appreciate the tools offered within that system; the description of the course goals and the differentiated grades from A-F to give two short examples. The Bologna methodology have many similarities with the formative assessment way of working in class especially concerning the explicitness of the learning goals. But the Bologna process does not give the teacher the practical knowledge how to attain the goals in class. According to my view the formative assessment model does. Most research that I know about supports that assessment is necessary to improve student's learning, but grading still remains a very difficult task. It was a surprise to me that it was so difficult – despite more than 20 years teaching experience – to *exactly* pin down what constituted the difference between an C+ and an B- when commenting on the student's assignments. The American students required these exact explanations each week. That's why I was inspired by formative assessment when giving this course.

Before concluding the report I relate some of the other activities that I participated in or conducted during my two terms at UCLA, for instance Academic Conferences, PhD students seminars and a Public Lecture. To conclude I discuss the five key strategies of formative assessment and how they were applied in my teaching. I also present how my experiences can be implemented as two new courses within a future international master program and in the new planned literary translation master class at my home department – Department for Swedish and Multilingualism; The Institute for Interpretation and Translation Studies at Stockholm University.

2. Background

I'm Yvonne Lindqvist – an Associate Professor at the Institute for Translation and Interpreting Studies at The Department of Swedish and Multilingualism, Stockholm University. The department is today the leading institute for research and teaching in Translation and Interpreting in Sweden. I am the Vice Director of the Institute and the head of The Master Program in Translation, where I plan new courses and teach translation, textual analysis and translation methodology as well as theory. I run the master's methodology seminars and supervise B.A. and M.A. theses and take active part in planning and executing the newly established (2014) Ph.D. Program in Translation Studies – the only of its kind in Sweden. The Ph.D. student course *Methodology in Translation Studies Research* (10 credits), which I planned and gave during the spring term 2014 within the program proved very popular and attracted Ph.D. students from the French and Slavic Languages Departments at Stockholm University as well as a student from Uppsala University. The activities of the Institute are constantly growing. We are expanding on all levels. Our bachelor program Language and Translation was the most searched program at Stockholm University last year. We accepted two Ph.D. students our first year of the Ph.D.-program and two more this past fall. I currently (2016) supervise three Ph.D. students within our Ph.D.-program. I also function as deputy supervisor to one other Ph.D. student at Uppsala University.

However Translation and Interpreting Studies as an independent academic discipline is fairly new in Sweden – a strange fact considering the unquestionable needs of translation and interpreting for such a “small” language as Swedish to function in the world of today. All the more strange considering the long tradition of language studies and translation education at Swedish universities and the crucial role translation has played over time in standardizing the Swedish language. Sweden can be considered a relatively open culture when it comes to translations. Approximately 25% of all published literature within the Swedish culture consists of translations from primarily English (70%) (Lindqvist 2010 & 2015).

The first Swedish Professor in Translation was appointed as late as in 2006 at Stockholm University and the first Professor in Interpretation in 2009. The first time a student could chose to major in Translation Studies at Master level in Sweden was in 2007. The Institute for Translation and Interpreting Studies at Stockholm University was created in 1986 and has

ever since been working for the “academization” of the empirical field, today covering studies up to Ph.D. level.

I have and have had a substantial impact in establishing the research field of Translation Studies in Sweden. I’ve been working as a lecturer within the field since 1995 and has held numerous lectures both within and outside Academia about for instance translation techniques, the professional conditions of translators in society and the impact of translated texts on the Swedish language, literature and culture. I have written 2 academic monographs, edited one anthology, published approximately 20 peer-reviewed papers within the field and about 15 popular science articles (cf. CV). My intention coming back to the Institute is to continue to develop and consolidate the research field and our translation programs.

3. Short presentation of UCLA

The University of California was founded in 1919. It is a public university, today headed by the Dean Gene D. Block. In 2007 the number of employed faculty exceeded 4000 persons, the staff members counted 2600 persons and the number of students approximately 40 000. UCLA – where I was stationed during summer and fall term in 2015 – was during the years 1919–1927 named University of California Southern Branch. Today the official name is University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). The university is situated in Westwood at the western part of Los Angeles. UCLA is one of nine universities forming University of California. The central administration is placed at Berkley, but each university has a great deal of autonomy and works in many ways as an independent university.

UCLA is considered one of the best universities in the United States. It’s ranked as a top-25 university within the United States and internationally. This reputation has given UCLA and its students high prestige. It is very hard to be accepted as a student here, which means that you have to be a top student to acquire a place. UCLA’s home page proudly counts 13 Nobel Laureates among its alumni and underlines the success story of the University in sports. It is stated that UCLA sports men and women alone have succeeded in gaining 250 Olympic medals, which is probably more medals than many a nation. More than 140 companies have also been created from technology developed at UCLA. UCLA offers more than 3800 different courses within 109 academic disciplines. More than 70% of the courses have less

than 30 students in each class in order to increase the both the academic and personal contacts between professors and students.

Despite the fact that UCLA is a public university it is not inexpensive to study there. A normal budget for a year of study amounts to approximately 60 000 dollars including university fees, insurances, living costs and housing. About 40 % of the students receive some kind of economic aid and do not pay the full fee for the university. UCLA have very good finances, since many alumni turn into grateful donators and donations are exempted from taxes in the USA.

UCLA is a research university investing more than a billion dollars a year in research, which creates unique opportunities for Professors and PhDs to spend time researching their specialities. A full professor at this kind of research university has the obligation to teach four courses a year in a four semester system. The Professor also has access to teaching assistants (TAs) leading the seminars and discussions in class and grading student papers and exams. The professor only leads the lectures. This means that a professor can chose to teach 2 courses per semester and then have two semesters reserved for research. These are very good working conditions that promote the excellent research performed at UCLA.

3. 1 Short presentation of the Department of Comparative Literature at UCLA

The Department of Comparative Literature at UCLA presents itself at their web site as offering pioneering work in defining literary paradigms and fostering new directions for exploration in literary studies, including areas such as:

- The relationship between translation and transnationalism
- Literary theory and emerging media
- The future of national literatures in an era of globalization
- Gender and sexuality studies
- East-West cultural encounters
- Human rights and global censorship
- Postcolonial and diaspora studies
- Experimental approaches to literature and culture

It also states that as a discipline it requires from students and professors alike exceptional linguistic ability, theoretical knowledge and high intellectual caliber. Important for my choice of the Department of Comparative Literature (a discipline which has no correspondence within the Swedish academic system) was the prime interest in Translation and Translation Studies. The majority of the faculty members had listed Translation Studies as one of their main research interests on their personal web sites.

The former chair of the Comparative Literature Department was Professor Michael Henry Heim. He translated more than sixty works from more than eight different languages, including books by Milan Kundera, Dubravka Ugresic, Hugo Claus, and Anton Chekov (cf. Allen et.al: 2014). Heim was one of the most respected translators of his generation. His classes at UCLA on translation inspired a new generation of translators, and his work altering the way translation is viewed will impact the livelihood of translators for decades to come. Heim was the anonymous donor responsible for the largest fund in America supporting up-and-coming translators. Another distinguished Translation Studies scholar working at UCLA with Heim and the actual host Professor Efraín Kristal was Emily Apter – today at Columbia University, New York. They created an edge cutting scholarly challenging group working with Translation and Translation Studies. Nonetheless no prior course under the label of Translation Studies had been included in the curriculum of the department before my arrival and proposition to give such a course on master or post-graduate level.

Comparative Literature also cooperates with the foreign language departments at a regular basis giving great opportunities for me to approach and be in contact with both the French and Spanish departments – very important contacts in my research on translation of Caribbean literature.

3. 2 Short presentation of the host Professor

Professor Efraín Kristal specializes in Latin American literature in comparative contexts, translation studies, and aesthetics. He is author of over eighty scholarly articles and prologues as well as the following books:

- *The Andes Viewed from the City. Literary and Political Discourse on the Indian in Peru* (1987)
- *Temptation of the Word. The Novels of Mario Vargas Llosa* (1998)
- *Invisible Work. Borges and Translation* (2002)

He has edited *The Cambridge Companion to the Latin American Novel* (2005) and the Penguin edition of Jorge Luis Borges' *Poems of the Night* (2010). He is also one of three associate editors of *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of the Novel* (2010). His forthcoming publications include "Peter Sloterdijk and Literature" for *Sloterdijk Now*, edited by Stuart Elden for the Polity Press; "Art and Literature in the Liquid Modern Age" for *The Blackwell Companion to Comparative Literature* edited by Ali Behdad and Dominic Thomas, an essay on Nicolas Poussin and Philosophy, the essay on translation theory for the *Blackwell Companion to Translation Studies*, an essay on Yves Bonnefoy's Shakespeare translations, and *The Cambridge Companion to Mario Vargas Llosa* co-edited with John King.

Kristal received his Ph.D. from Stanford University (1985), studied philosophy as a visiting foreign student at the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Paris (rue d'Ulm), is a Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation; and held the Julio Cortázar chair at the University of Guadalajara. He has been a visiting professor at Vanderbilt University, the University of Göttingen, and the Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris (Science Po). He was a fellow of the Institute for Advanced Studies at La Trobe University in Australia, a fellow at the Centre for Philosophy, Literature and the Arts at the University of Warwick, and a visiting scholar at the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa.

3. 3 The reception at the host Department during planning week

The planning week compulsory to the STINT Teaching Sabbatical Program was scheduled to the month of April in 2015, the 11th until the 18th. This was a rather late date in the planning, but it was the only opportunity to leave master and PhD students at Stockholm University working with their theses. I had frequent e-mail contact with professor Kristal before arriving to UCLA.

I spent a very rewarding week in Los Angeles and at UCLA. I was impressed of the beautiful campus and its lively student activities. Especially the Powell Library building and Royce Hall were overwhelming. I met Professor Efraín Kristal in person and we connected very well. We had lunch together at several occasions and discussed my course for the summer and fall term. Professor Efraín Kristal also kept me occupied scheduling meetings with the professors at the French, Spanish and Swedish Departments of UCLA and with other professors at the Department of Comparative Literature, for example Professor Ross Schidler, an expert in Scandinavian Literature and the Research Professor of the Department. It was a busy week and I only once for two hours had the time to take the bus down to Santa Monica to see the sunset at Santa Monica beach. I also had several meetings with PhD students at the different departments. The week gave me the opportunity to examine the general atmosphere and academic spirit of UCLA in general and the Department of Comparative Literature in particular. Before leaving I was encouraged to write the course description, which was needed for the advertising of the course in the catalogue and at the web. The course description reads as follows:

The course Introduction to Translations Studies – which requires no previous knowledge on the topic – is an introduction to the theory and practice of translation. It will explore both the practical challenges that arise in the translation process, and the cultural, social, and political implications of translation in dominant languages, but also in “smaller” languages. The course will be an opportunity to discuss key concepts and major theories that offer insights into what translation is, how translations are made, and why translation matters to our understanding of literary and non-literary texts alike. Beginning with basic ideas the course will move on to some linguistic, cultural, ideological, (sociological and philosophical)¹ dimensions to translation (Syllabus

¹ The summer course did not cover the dimensions in parenthesis.

2015:1)

Before leaving I went down to the UCLA bookstore to stroll through the Translation Studies section. But when I asked about the section at the information desk, they answered that there were no section by that name and that they in fact never had heard of that academic research field.

4. Preparing the courses for UCLA

At the end of the planning week I also had to decide which literature to use for the courses. I choose to use the new edition of a textbook that I have been working with at the Bachelor courses at the Stockholm University. It's a rather comprehensive textbook by the name of *Introducing Translation Studies* written by Jeremy Munday. The new edition has been completely revised and put up to date. Some chapters had disappeared from the second edition to the new third edition. So in many ways the content of the textbook was new to me. The decision to work with this textbook was based on the prior trust in the author from the second edition and the availability on line of the book. It's sold on Kindle. To accompany the textbook I did choose a reader entitled *The Translation Studies Reader* edited by Lawrence Venuti. This reader was also put up to date in a new edition and it contains the majority of the canonical texts written about translation from St Jerome and his thought on Bible translation of the Vulgate over the Romantics and especially Schleiermacher's conception of translation to the beginnings of Post Colonial Translation Theory. These two books would be the bulk of the course quite enough for the summer course, which only lasts for 6 weeks. Some other article from my own hand would also be included in the summer as well as in the fall course.

For the master course I also included another reader entitled *Critical Readings in Translation Studies* edited by Mona Baker and introducing the latest contemporary research within Translation and Interpreting Studies. With this choice of literature I had a vast pool of articles to choose from and could adapt my choices to the level of the students. These choices also permitted to give the course a more linguistic profile, which was the case with the summer course, or a more literary profile, which was the case with the course during fall. All books were available on Kindle.

4.1 Writing the Syllabus/ special requirements for Comparative Literature courses at UCLA

Before leaving UCLA in April I was also asked to prepare a Syllabus for both the summer and fall course as soon as possible. Unfortunately there was no time coming back to Stockholm University doing so, since I was supervising 5 masters theses and 2 PhD students and also functioned as examiner at the bachelor level for 3 bachelor theses. A trip to Japan to lecture at Osaka University was scheduled for a week at the end of June. I decided to go to Los Angeles in the beginning of July in order to have a month of preparation before classes started August 4. It was a busy time, but I'm very glad that I took this decision to prepare the classes one month ahead. It was absolutely necessary. Just to produce the 10 power point presentations in English for the lectures and read through the course literature left no spare time in July.

While at UCLA in April I had asked for an example of a syllabus of a course in order to have something to compare my own efforts to. In July working with the syllabus I discovered that the examples I was given didn't help much, since they were all pure literary overview courses. However some general indications of the expectations of the department was still discernible.

For example:

GUIDELINES FOR INSTRUCTORS (GENERAL):

The courses have a two-fold goal: we teach good writing through good reading.

Students spend four hours a week in the classroom: two two-hour sessions taught by an advanced graduate student Teaching Fellow or a Lecturer. This class time includes both lecture and discussion concerning primary works of literature and composition. Students will need to spend eleven hours a week outside the classroom, reading assigned works and writing both short and long essays.

At least 75% of your assigned texts must have been originally written in a language other than English. That is, they will be read in translation.

Attempt to cover as many genres as possible within your period. Three genres should be your minimum. Be sure to include poetry as well as prose, drama as well as novels.

Do not assign more than 150 pages a week. 100 pages is probably better, and if the material is very difficult perhaps even less.

Syllabus should include both poetry and prose, epic and drama, and cover both classical and medieval works written in at least three different languages.

And there were useful information about attendance and participation as well as grading system, classroom etiquette and UCLA Policy on Academic Integrity concerning academic stealing and plagiarism.

I started to write the syllabus for the summer term and planned 5 weeks with 5 lectures, 5 seminars, 3 assignments and one week for the students to prepare a final paper. I showed the syllabus to my hosting Professor Kristal and asked for comments and we discussed my plan and schedule and I published the syllabus with the schedule on line for the students to read in advance. At this moment I could not imagine that I was to rewrite the syllabus 3 times during the next two weeks. But that was exactly what happened.

5. The special challenges of the summer term course

Summer courses are very special at UCLA. It's the term of the year when students try to make up for lost grades during the other terms. This has as a consequence that students tend to "shop" around and attend several classes during the two first weeks to find out where to stay and make up for earlier mistakes without too much effort. This had the consequence that I went to my lecture on the first day and only one student came to the class. The second lecture no one came (and I felt like a failure). I then decided to write an ad for the course in an as appealing way as possible to attract students (see appendix 1).

The subject Translation Studies seemed to be too specialized or too unknown to the American undergraduate students. However at the *end* of the second week two students showed up. I had then been replanning and replacing the syllabus and the schedule 3 times and I decided, together with Professor Kristal, to make the class a tutorial instead of a normal class (see appendix 2).

The tutorial class with 2 students met once a week for 2 hours during the last 4 weeks, prepared 3 written assignments, had 3 paper presentations and wrote a final paper. I also had

individual meetings with the students during my office hours once a week. These two students got a thorough introduction to Translation Studies and we had very rewarding discussions during the class and privately. The course was too short though to share experiences of the later developments within the research field. I focused on the history of Bible translation and the Linguistic and Cultural turn of Translation Studies. However their assignments and final papers had a very high quality. After each assignment I had a meeting with the student at Office Hours discussing the findings of the assignment and how they could improve their writings. My class was surely an eye opener for these two students, whom had never reflected on translation and the impact of translated texts in society before. The tutorial class was an unexpected positive experience both for me and for the students given the circumstances. The course was short and very intensive in away that promoted the formative assessment model for grading. The form of the course gave me an opportunity to prepare and practice my lectures and discussions in a slower mode than otherwise would have been possible. It also gave me the opportunity to really get to know the students, since we were in constant contact during the weeks of the course.

6. The fall term course

The fall term started September 21 and I gave my first lecture September 24. This time there were 15 graduate students enrolled and they all showed up on the first day. These conditions were more normal than they were during the summer term.

The technical support and the electronic teaching platform function extremely well at UCLA. You have a Class Roster with the name and a personal photo of each student. The Roster also gives you information of the field in which the student is majoring. The roster keeps the information on the students updated and you can follow students dropping or changing class on line with a two hour delay. The photos are very useful since you recognize and remember the students already after 2 meetings. The course site also includes a grading book with a special system to grade the students. The teaching platform where you can communicate with the students and post teaching material such as weekly assignments, power

point presentations, articles to read or instructions for the student presentations, is easy to handle and works without problems. You also have access to 2 mail addresses.

Planning this course I originally set up the class with a two-hour-two-times-a-week-structure. I later found out that you were not supposed to have more than 2 X 45 minutes or one hour and 15 minutes per class. I then revised the syllabus and had some troubles with covering the whole material of the course. This was then reflected during the whole course, since we were constantly short of time and this was also the most weak point of my class in the students evaluations later on; the working load were according to the students to heavy (see appendix 3).

The course rested on three pillars (See Syllabus 2015 appendix 4):

1. Power point presentation during the lectures
2. Weekly Assignments
3. Student presentations of central articles from the Translation Studies canon during seminars

The purpose of this structure was to activate the students to be responsible for their own learning and to participate in the discussions in class – two important strategies in working with formative assessment.

6. 1 The Power Point Presentations and Lectures

The power point presentations during my lectures once a week were produced in strong connection with the textbook and the assigned theme for that week. It gave the students the highlights of the content of the weekly assigned texts to read and work with. When lecturing I tried to talk myself through the presentation and to underline that anyone could interrupt me anytime to contribute to the discussion. This created a very friendly and relaxed atmosphere in class and stimulated the lectures in a positive way. I never stopped to be surprised of the depth of the student's experiences and how much they were contributing to place the content of the course in an American context.

I usually also handed back the weekly assignments during the last 15 minutes of the Tuesday lecture and discussed them in class. Unfortunately there was not enough time for these discussions, which was also reflected in the student evaluations of the course (see appendix 3).

6. 2 The Weekly Assignments

During the course the students were expected to work with weekly assignments. In all the class contained nine weekly assignments. The pedagogical thought behind these exercises was 1) to make the students aware of the outcome of the complexity of the translation process and 2) to raise the student's consciousness about the importance of translated texts and the conditions of working translators in society, what could be paraphrased as ideological and sociological dimensions of Translation Studies.

Concerning the weekly assignments they constituted quite a challenge when planned and prepared, since I could not – despite the declarations on the Department's homepage – count on that students would have the knowledge of a foreign language. All texts to work with had to be written in English. Usually in Sweden students have knowledge of at least 2 foreign languages and you can highlight the complexity of the translation process and its repercussions on texts in society by performing translation exercises and commenting on them. During this class this could not be done in the same way.

Instead I worked with raising the awareness of the students about translation by creating an assignment where they for instance worked with Google translate and had to figure out and explain why the texts they chosen to translate in that CAT (computer aided translation) tool did not turn out the way they expected. The instructions for the Assignment were rather elaborated in order for the students to know exactly what was expected of them.

Un example from Instructions for Assignment 3 October 15 when we worked with the concepts we discussed in class and translated poems by Tomas Tranströmer with the Robert Bly translations as a base for creating a formal or a dynamic equivalent (Nida 2012;1967) poem in English can be found below:

Instructions for Assignment 3 October 15

- 1) *Read the article from New York Times about the Swedish poet Tomas Tranströmer.*
- 2) *Read the gloss translation of the poem Allegro and the translation by Robert Bly.*
- 3) *According to your reading of the poem, what is it about?*
- 4) *How would you characterize the style of Tranströmer?*
- 5) *Can you find any metaphors or other tropes in the poem?*
- 6) *On a scale from formal equivalence to dynamic equivalence (Nida) where would you place the Robert Bly translation?*
- 7) *Why there?*
- 8) *On the basis of the gloss and Bly translation produce a dynamic equivalent (DE) version of the poem.*
- 9) *Comment on 3 choices that you did in your DE translation, which differs from Bly's Translation.*

Another exercise was to examine how literary reviews of translations in the cultural section of the big American Newspapers worked.

Some of the assignments more towards the end of the course consisted of small but more demanding research tasks where the students were asked to map out the different organizations for translators in the American society, the most important literary translation awards or the most translated languages in the USA in literary translation for instance. The assignment was formulated as such:

Instructions for Assignment 7 November 19

This week's assignment is a minor research project where you should find out some examples of how the market for literary translators works in the US.

- 1) *Start with a general description of the position of the translated literature within the American literary culture.*
- 2) *Then look up and describe if there are any organizations for translators in the US (unions, literary societies, important blogs, discussion sites etc.).*
- 3) *Which are these organizations? Try to name at least 3 organizations.*

- 4) *Look up the membership criteria of the organizations, their goals and aims and write them down. Compare them.*
- 5) *Investigate if there are any prizes, rewards or special honors for distinguished literary translators. Try to name at least 3 such rewards.*
- 6) *Can you make out which of the prizes or rewards that are the most important on the literary field?*
- 7) *Is there a discernible difference of prizes you found when it comes to cultural or economical capital, in other words do the sum of money awarded correspond to the prestige of the prize?*
- 8) *Is it possible to follow a translator's different steps in acquiring a position on the literary translation field, in other words can you construct a consecration scale in the same vein as Lindqvist (2006) did?*

The assignments were commented on, discussed in class and graded every week. Thus forming a solid ground for formative assessment of the student's learning during the course.

6. 3 The Student's presentations

The second class each week was dedicated to student presentations of central academic articles about translations from the course literature readers. Three students presented three different papers each time. The instructions for this exercise were posted on the class site after the first lecture. They were very detailed in order for the student to have a solid structure in the presentation. Students were also expected to prepare handouts for the audience and to prepare a discussion point at the end of the presentation. The instructions read as follows:

Instruction for presentations

Your presentation of the paper should be 10 (-15 max) minutes long with 5 min discussion. Some points to consider in the presentation:

*Start out with presenting the title of the article and the author.
Where was it originally published?
What kind of paper is it?
Where would you place the paper on the research field?
Is it easy to place on the research field or difficult? Why?
Can you see any connections – thematically or otherwise – with the general topic of the week?
Is there a specific theoretical framework in the paper?
Are there any specific methods accounted for?
Is the paper based on empirical material or is it purely theoretical?
Bring up the highlights of the content, i.e. make a brief summary.
Discuss 3 interesting things with the paper.
What did you learn reading it?
Discuss 1 not so interesting thing with the paper.
Can it be improved?
In what way?
Close your presentation with an opening question for discussion.*

*Prepare handouts (1 page) for your fellow students and the professor with the most important points for discussion. Your name(s) should be listed on top of the handout.
Hand in your handout to the professor.*

The pedagogical intention behind this exercise was to help the student to organize the learning and to talk in class in an engaged way by starting discussions about the presented articles and the topic of the week. It also gave me good insights into the learning process of the students and the way that they internalized the structure of the Translation Studies research field. I also found out about their oral capacity and their willingness to participate in discussion. During class I took notes and made remarks on each handout for my own use in the later grading process.

This way of working in class was very appreciated by the students, whom made great efforts when preparing the handouts and with working on the presentations. Their accomplishments had very high standard and contributed to the friendly discussion climate in the classroom. They were all in "the hot chair" two times during the course.

7. Formative and summative assessment of student learning

"In the graduate courses we **basically** just give A and B to the students. B for those students that have studied and know what is written in the course book and A for the students that adopt a critical perspective and are creative in their writings and oral presentations during the course."

The quotation above came up in a conversation at a lunch table during the preparation phase of the UCLA course. I was very intrigued by this statement then, but understand it better after my own teaching experience. I will come back to this statement in the closing part of this section of the report. For now it will serve as an introduction to the following chapter.

7.1 The American student's focus on grades

One of the big differences between Swedish and American master students according to my new experiences are the latter's outspoken focus on grades. This can have many different explanations. One is that it is very expensive to study at UCLA. Parents probably therefore have very high expectations on their sons and daughters. Secondly the studies are extremely competitive; if you do not get straight As, you will not get into Law School or School of Medicine, if that is your choice of career. This is even more important for so called transfer students, i.e. student that have gotten the privilege to study at UCLA with a reduced university fee, because they are excellent straight A students at some close by college. I had three transfer students from Santa Monica College in my class. UCLA master students are not surprisingly nearly obsessed by their grades for those reasons.

The first question I got in class when I presented the first assignment was "How will you grade this?" Which is a very pertinent question, but I hadn't really thought that through in the beginning of the course. This led to the decision to be very transparent in my grading process, to have detailed instructions for each assignment so that the purpose of the exercise would be clear to everyone (including myself) and to constantly work with feedback in order for the student to be able to improve their work on a regular basis. These are the most important corner stones in the formative assessment process (William 2011:58) on which I based my grading in this course as opposed to so called summative assessment. The decision to work formatively lead to the production of a document explaining how I graded the assignments:

The syllabus states that 20% of your grade will be based on the work that you put into the weekly assignments. When grading I consider:

- 1) Punctuality*
- 2) Accuracy*
- 3) Creativity*

Punctuality means that you should turn in your assignments on Thursdays every week. If you are late with your assignment it will affect your grade negatively.

Accuracy means that I consider whether you have followed the instructions of the assignments and if you show that you have understood the basic concepts we are working with and can problematize and discuss them.

Creativity means that I encourage you to draw upon your own experience and find examples to illuminate your discussion in the assignments. Critical analysis is also a part of the creative process.

I experienced that the majority of the students were more calm after this explanation and they did not hesitate to come to Office Hours to discuss their assignments if they felt that they did not understand my comments or why they had not got an A as a grade for the assignment. I experienced these calls at Office Hours as rather threatening in the beginning – as if the students were complaining about my grading – but later on I understood that these meetings were extremely valuable in the sense that I got the opportunity to personally explain how the student could work to improve the grade next time – a true formative way of working. The grading of the weekly assignments and oral presentations created a lot of work on my part, but considering the course outcome I am very happy to have adopted this way of working. I hardly had any time left over though for my own planned research.

7. 2 The ”grade value” of the work in class

In the syllabus there is a section describing the "grade value" of each part of the exercises and exams constituting the course:

Students are expected to prepare the weekly readings and assignments – according to the schedule – ahead of the lectures and seminars. During lectures and seminars readings and assignments will be discussed. Students are as well expected to turn in the assignments in written form on a weekly basis (max. 3 pages) and the handouts produced for and used in the presentations of the scientific papers for the seminar discussion (max. 2 pages). Discussions and assignments will correspond to 40% of the grade, the midterm exam 20 % and the final exam 40%.

<i>Assignments</i>	<i>20%</i>
<i>Discussion input</i>	<i>20%</i>
<i>Midterm exam</i>	<i>20%</i>
<i>Final Exam</i>	<i>40%</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>

The final exam consists of a 10-page paper on a topic covered in the course. A list of topics will be provided. Plagiarism of any kind in the assignments and final paper is not tolerated. If you cannot make it for the midterm exam or final exam please do not take the class, since it will not be repeated.

The summer course had other percentages reflecting the tutorial situation, where the final paper had more weight:

Students are expected to prepare the weekly readings and assignments ahead of the meetings. During the meetings the weekly readings and assignments will be discussed. Discussions and assignments will correspond to 50% of the grade and the final exam 50%.

<i>Assignments</i>	<i>25%</i>
<i>Discussion input</i>	<i>25%</i>
<i>Final Exam</i>	<i>50%</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>

The final exam is a 6–10 page paper on a topic covered in the course. The topic is chosen with consent from the professor. A list of possible topics will be provided.

The formative work with the tutorial students were more concentrated than with the graduate students, but the intensity compensated for the short amount of time in this class.

7.3 The midterm exam

A common structure of a course at UCLA is to have a midterm exam and some kind of final exam consisting in a written paper on a subject related to the course. The midterm exam takes place as the name states in the middle of the term more or less after five weeks of course of ten in total. When constructing the midterm exam I decided that the exam should test the student's capacity in having internalized the textbook material of the course, their ability of using the discussed concepts and their capability of synthesizing the research they had studied. I constructed an exam with some rather simple controls questions of the type what-does-this-term-mean and some more complicated who-did-what-and-why-questions, use-this-concept-question and a closing more argumentative question.

To my mind the exam was fairly easy, but the students complained about the difficulty. I think that the experienced difficulty could be explained by the heterogeneity of the course literature and the wide span of methods employed. But this is the way Translation Studies is built and has developed.

Some of the students fell through completely – for whatever reason – getting a very low score as result, and some that were earlier awarded with As. They were really upset as a consequence and we had long meetings during Office Hours the weeks after the exam discussing the reasons for their failure. Generally though the majority of the students scored a B and 4 students got an A. I dedicated one hour before the lecture the following week to go through the exam and discuss the answers to the questions. This discussion was a very rewarding exercise for the students to understand and improve their learning process, some of them told me afterwards. It can be compared with a formative use of a mostly summative exam (William 2013:54).

7.4 The final paper

While the midterm exam had the intention of creating proofs for the student's ability to assimilate the course literature, the final paper had quite a different purpose – to test the student's ability to critical and creative thinking when working with the course literature. I discovered in class that many of the students wanted to write a research based paper using

literature that they had looked up in the library. Since they only had one week to produce the final paper (but many had already started to write after midterm exam), I had to explain – both in class and in writing the instructions of how to write the paper after the list of proposed themes – that the purpose of the paper was to show that you could write an academic paper according to normal standards working with the literature from our course. This was not according to the student's surprised reactions a usual way of working. To me the final paper would constitute the final confirmation of the assessment of the students learning over the term. This is also reflected in "the grade value" of the final paper of 40% . Below you find the listed themes for the fall final paper and the instructions.

Yvonne Lindqvist

12112015

Introduction to Translation Studies

Fall 2015

THEMES FOR THE FINAL PAPER

- 1. What is Translation Studies?*
- 2. Why translators don't opt for visibility in translated texts.*
- 3. What is a translation?*
- 4. Why it's important to study translated texts in today's society.*
- 5. Bible translation through history.*
- 6. A comparison of different models for reconstructing norms from translated texts.*
- 7. The Translation Studies historiography from the Romans until today.*
- 8. The Translation Profession yesterday and today – a brief comparison.*
- 9. Translators in "open" literary systems versus "closed" literary systems.*
- 10. The changing focus of Translation Studies over time.*
- 11. The turns of Translation Studies.*
- 12. The importance of the refraction concept in modern Translation Studies.*
- 13. Power relations on the global translation field.*
- 14. Definitions of translation over time.*
- 15. A comparison of 'open' and 'closed' literary systems.*
- 16. The equivalence concept. Why it doesn't need to be a dirty word.*
- 17. The development of the equivalence concept.*
- 18. Post colonial Translation Studies in work today.*

19. *How the norm concept changed Translation Studies.*
20. *The norm concept as a tool for investigating translated texts.*
21. *Why translations are facts of the target culture only – why not?*
22. *Comparisons of different models of translation in Translation Studies.*
23. *A critical overview of the equivalence concept.*
24. *The importance of metatexts in the study of translations.*
25. *The relation of Polysystem theory and Descriptive Translation Studies.*
26. *How the rewriting concept predicts Post Colonial Translation Studies.*
27. *Feminist Translation Studies – betrayal or faithfulness?*
28. *The importance of interventionist translators in society.*
29. *What is the Sociology of Translations?*
30. *The impact of foreignizing translation strategies on the introduction of literature in translation.*
31. *The future of Translation Studies.*

The list above proposes themes you can choose from for the final paper (10 pages) written in regular academic standard (MLA reference system) in space 1,5, 12 points Times New Roman. The paper is due December 9, 20015, 12 pm. You should bring a hard copy to the Comparative Literature Office and give it to the secretary Jessika Herrera. If she is not in the office, you can stick your final paper under the door. You should also mail your paper to vonna@gmail.ucla.edu.

The final paper will correspond to 40% of your grade. Please, pick a theme and let me know which one you selected. If you do not find a theme that interest you, feel free to propose one, but we should agree on the theme before you start writing.

Note ! I do not expect you to carry out your own research in writing the paper. You are supposed to work with the readings we had in class. If however you find a source, which you deem indispensable to your work, you can include it, but that should rather be an exception than a rule.

As is evident from the document the themes were abundant to guarantee that there would be a theme of interest for each student. The majority of the themes also embraced a diachronic perspective, since this was the way that the course was constructed.

7. 5 The formative grading process and the final grades

The results of the final paper were overwhelming. The academic quality was very high indeed. These students really know how to write a paper and there were several papers that without too much effort could have been turned into publishable articles. The Bible translation theme, the development of the equivalence concept and a comparison of open and closed literary systems were three of the most chosen themes for the paper. Other interesting topics were *Retaining the meaning of the source text?*, *Spivak's Postcolonial Hermeneutics in Translation Studies*, *Domestication and Foreignization and the search of Equivalence*.

In grading the students I compiled the information from the matrix created at the beginning of the year containing comments and grades of assignments, presentations, midterm exams and the final paper. A number of 11 students out of 15 completed the whole course and the results were very good (4 As, 3A-s and 4 Bs). To my surprise the statement "We basically give As and Bs to graduate students" turned out to be confirmed.

I now understand this statement in its context. Four students in all dropped the class; one fell ill, one just attended one class and two performed very poorly preparing the assignments and at the midterm exam. They then told me that they went to see their personal student counsellor, whom advised them to drop the class, since the expectation of a good grade were very low – a fact that pinpoints the competitiveness of the classes and the possibility to future careers. This was a great deception for me since I put lots of energy and time in working formatively with these students and they were making progress. However they decided not to proceed with the class. There was a strong correlation with the grade C in the assignments and the dropping out of class. Probably these students suffered a lack of motivation – a lack of internal motivation (which can be compared to personal interest) to meet up external motivation (which could be compared to parent's expectations) (Ryan & Deci 2000). This could be one of the explanations to the grade statement that chocked me in the beginning at my stay at UCLA. Another explanation is that the majority of the students are extremely motivated, capable and dedicated.

8. Other Academic Activities during fall semester at UCLA

Despite of the fact that teaching consumed almost all of my time during the summer and fall semester I could still manage to engage in some other academic activities. They were the results of my contacts and meetings during the planning week and also of my own efforts to reach out to the other colleges in the departments of my interest. There are no natural meeting points for faculty at the department itself such as a coffee machine or a lunch room as in Sweden. Therefore it's more complicated to contact and discuss with people naturally in the corridor. You have to take initiatives yourself and approach the people you would like to associate with. This was intimidating in the beginning of the stay.

8. 1 The Annual Welcoming Ceremony at UCLA, September 22

Each year UCLA Humanities organizes an annual welcoming ceremony for freshmen students in the beginning of September. As a Visiting Professor you are invited and expected to mingle with the students and talk about your courses and research interests during a reception afterwards. There is a speech by The Dean and an academic program with lectures. This was a very good opportunity to get "the feel" of the academic atmosphere and to get to know some of your colleagues (see appendix 5).

8. 2 The National Graduate Student Conference in French Language and Culture Studies, October 1–2

In the beginning of the fall semester I was invited by the French Department to participate in a round table talk about the concept of transparency (opacité) of the Caribbean philosopher Edouard Glissant. The round table was the finish of a two day conference and you were supposed to speak French in your presentation. I prepared my contribution well and participated in the debate. The invitation and the program and is place here below (see appendix 6):

***“L'empire du voyage”*: Travels of Mind, Body, Soul**

UCLA's 20th annual French and Francophone Studies Graduate Student Conference Round-table:

Moderator: Professor Sara Melzer

Participants: Professor Madeleine Dobie, Professor Zrinka Stahuljak, Professor Yvonne Lindqvist, Professor Ileana Chirila

I. Viewing of the clip of Glissant and his concept of opacité:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c64wYEWnWEU>

II. Questions for discussion:

Are there changing themes of voyage across the centuries? Is there a particular theorist that you believe presents a way of seeing the world through voyages and contacts? In reference to Glissant's concept of opacity, what does it mean for different modes of contact to occur as a result of voyage? In your area of specialty, do you see examples of opacity occurring in the literature of that time period? Within the thematic framework of "voyage" proposed in this conference, how do we consider Glissant's theoretical lens of viewing the world? In your area of specialization, is "voyage" a means of creating Relation and forging a Tout-Monde? How does opacité function within the process and production of "voyage"? In other words, how does the metaphor or representation of voyage within your field negate or affirm opacité? Could we speak of a "l'empire du voyage," a continuous process of contact amongst humans throughout history as represented in literature?

III. Breakdown of time: 3:15-4:45

3:15-3:20 Opening remarks

3:20-3:30 Professor introductions

3:30-3:35 Glissant clip

3:35-3:45 Professor Dobie

3:45-3:55 Professor Stahuljak

3:55-4:05 Professor Lindqvist

4:05-4:15 Professor Chirila

4:15-4:45 Q & A

The participation gave me a unique possibility to be part of this conference and to associate with the Professors, PhD students and graduates of the French Department. I was quite nervous speaking French but it worked out fairly well at the end. The conference dinner was organized in a French LA restaurant.

8. 3 One Day Conference at the Department of Spanish and Portuguese Language and Culture Studies about the authorship of Clarice Lispector and the new translation into English of her collected stories, October 14

In this conference I made several contributions to the discussion of translation strategies. I also made acquaintance with the professor of Portuguese Jose Luis Passos, the PhD student in Spanish Isabel Gomez and the Lispector translator Katrina Dodson. I also made acquaintance with several members of the so called Translation Studies Group consisting of PhD students from different language departments (see appendix 7).

8. 4 The Michael Henry Heim Annual Memorial Lecture, November 5

Each year The Department of Comparative literature celebrates the former chair of the department Michael Henry Heim. The celebration consists of a lecture by a distinguished scholar or a writer and the topic is always translation. The lecture is followed by a reception and a celebration dinner. This year the lecturer was the Croatian writer and professor Dubravca Ugresic speaking about a subject very relevant to my research *Transnational vs. National literature*. I experienced many fascinating encounters during the reception and dinner (see appendix 8).

8. 5 Public lecture, November 18

November 18 was the big day for me at the department of Comparative Literature. It was the day of my public lecture about my Caribbean Translation Studies Project. Below is the text on the flyer with the invitation to the lecture:

The UCLA Department of Comparative Literature invites you to a special lecture by visiting professor Yvonne Lindqvist, Institute for Interpretation and Translation Studies (Tolk- och översättarinstitutet), Department of Swedish and Multilingualism, Stockholm University.

***Bibliomigrancy on the Global Translation Field: Contemporary French Caribbean Literature
Translated into Swedish***

Wednesday, November 18, 2015 | 4:30pm - 6:30pm | Humanities Building 348

More than 71% of all translated literature in Sweden today uses English as the source language. In her talk “Bibliomigrancy on the Global Translation Field: Contemporary French Caribbean Literature Translated into Swedish”, Professor Lindqvist will address whether commercial interests alone govern literary publishing in general (and translation in particular), or if it is possible to discern other mechanisms or processes that determine what literature in translation reaches Swedish readers. Building on the concept of a global literary translation field and its central versus peripheral positions, Professor Lindqvist will examine the translation relations, i.e. the bibliomigrancy patterns between one local periphery (French Caribbean literature) and another (Swedish literature).

The lecture went very well. We had an interesting discussion after the lecture and I got very thought provoking comments regarding my work. I was very pleased with the fact that four of my students voluntarily attended the lecture. PhD students from The Translation Studies Group at UCLA were also present and several professors and lecturers from the Department. Professor Efraín Kristal was the chair of the session (see appendix 9).

8. 6 The PhD student seminar, December 8

At the end of the fall semester I organized – together with the PhD student Isabel Gomez – a seminar with 4 other PhD students, whom I also met for coffee and discussion several times during the term. I proposed a reading list for discussion and prepared a lecture about my Own PhD project *Translation as a Social Practice - Toni Morrison and the Harlequin Series Desire in Swedish*. The reading list contained 3 articles:

- Casanova, Pascale (2005). Literature as a World. *New Left Review*. Nr. 31. Jan – feb. S. 71–90. <http://newleftreview.org/II/31/pascale-casanova-literature-as-world>
- Heilbron, Johan (2008). Responding to Globalization. The Development of Booktranslations in France and the Netherlands. I: *Beyond Descriptive Translation Studies. Investigations in Homage to Gideon Toury* (red. Anthony Pym, Miriam Shlesinger, Daniel Simeoni). Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: Benjamins Translation Library. S. 187–199.
- Sapiro, Gisèle (2015) Translation and symbolic Capital in the Era of Globalization: French Literature in the United States.
<http://cus.sagepub.com/content/early/2015/06/12/1749975515584080.full.pdf+html>

This seminar was extremely rewarding with interesting discussions and insights to the student's PhD work. The seminar was supposed to last two hours, but we discussed and exchanged experiences for more than three hours. It constituted a very pleasant closure of the semester research activities for me.

9. Conclusions

There are five key strategies for the functioning of formative assessment (Wiliam 2011:61) worth commenting on in the conclusions of this report. I will conclude the report by going through them in relation to my teaching experience and then eventually discuss how to implement the newly gained knowledge at my department at Stockholm University. The five key strategies are:

1. Clearly formulate the goals of the course/assignment etc.
2. Accomplish effective discussions and assignments that generate proof of learning
3. Give feed back to improve learning
4. Activate the students to become resources for each other
5. Activate the students to own their learning

I worked hard with clearly formulating the goals of the course as whole and also for each assignment and exercise in class. I think that this approach was beneficiary both for students and myself during the classes. The students got more confident in their teacher and in themselves when they knew what to expect in class and how to work to achieve the goals. My power point presentations and the student presentations stimulated very effective discussions and the assignments generated thorough proofs of learning as well. The improvement of the majority of the students was progressive and – I think – secured by the painstaking feed back both on oral presentations and written assignments.

The fourth key strategy was the most difficult to work with due to the strong competitiveness in the class. American students are not accustomed to work in a group. I tried to encourage this way of working especially in the student presentations, but it did not work out. There was a strong opposition against my proposals that students should meet and prepare the presentations together or to study in a group. I discovered though that the students without their knowledge still turned in to resources for each other in the lively discussions we had during the seminars.

The fifth key strategy was the least problematic way to work. The vast majority of the students are highly motivated as well internally as externally and they are used to owning their own learning. The American school system prioritizes such students and we cannot forget that only the elite make it to the university. The formative assessment way of working

when grading the students, the close contact between professor and student and the relatively small size of the class makes the statement "we only give As and Bs to our graduate students" understandable when looking at the teaching experience with hindsight.

The teaching experiences at UCLA will most definitely be of great importance at many levels for the further development of my Institution in Sweden. The present day profile of the majority of the translation courses at the Institute is focused on non-fiction translation. There are however advanced plans for creating a literary translation profile. Two of the colleagues at the Institute are established well renowned literary translators that have recently started a publishing house named Aspect. Their intension is to start a master class in literary translation with Aspects as a natural first publishing house for the accomplished student translators. The model is taken from the successful master class at the University College of Södertörn, where one of the colleagues had an earlier engagement and where I have lectured at several occasions in the past. In the case that these plans are realized a course in Translation Studies with focus on World Literature in translation would have a given place in the curriculum. Such a course would be very similar to the course that I developed during the fall term at UCLA. There are also discussions about creating an International Master's Program at the Institute in which the education would be taught in English. The course Introduction to Translation Studies would in that case be of great value and could serve as an introduction for master students without prior experiences in the field.

The discussions of the new literary profile at the institute was also a source for my wishes to teach at the Department of Comparative Literature at UCLA. My interest was to expand my so called "comfort zone" in academia since I'm originally a linguist. I have always been interested in literary translation though and literary scholarship. Nevertheless I have had few opportunities to develop courses with that profile, although basically all my research deals with literary translation in different forms. I'm also at this moment working on a research project financed by The Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet) studying contemporary Caribbean literature in Swedish translation and in October last year The Swedish Foundation for Humaniteies and social Sciences (Riksbankens Jubileumsfond) announced that an interdisciplinary research program called *Vernacular and Cosmopolitan in World Literature* of which I am a researcher will receive funding for the next 6 years. There will consequently be more room for and time to plan literary studies, courses and profiles within the Translation

Studies field at the Institute for Interpretation and Translation Studies at Stockholm University.

The two semesters at UCLA will also be of great importance to my own research. I have been able to make invaluable contacts with many researchers not only in the Department of Comparative Literature but also in the Departments of French and Spanish/Portuguese Language and Culture Studies. My hosting Professor Efraín Kristal will make an excellent plenary speaker at coming conferences within our research program *Vernacular and Cosmopolitan in World Literature*. Other professors with whom I associated, for instance José Luis Passos, Zrinka Stahuljack and Laure Murat will be good candidates for speeches at the upcoming planned conferences at the Institute at Stockholm University. The PhD students with whom I connected can also contribute to our PhD-program by being invited to the Institute to talk about their projects.

Thank you STINT for this very rewarding experience!

Santa Monica, California, January 11, 2016

Yvonne Lindqvist

List of Appendix

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- Appendix 8 Michael Henry Heim's Annual Memorial Lecture
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