
Translation Pedagogy - a New Sub-Discipline of Translation Studies

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Abstract & Keywords

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Exploring seminal ideas that contribute to the development of a given field of knowledge should be the top priority for every researcher whose intention is to inquire into that field, particularly if it is new and unexplored. Labelling the present volume 'Challenges in Translation Pedagogy' highlights the need for such an exploration because translation in its educational dimension constitutes a relatively new sub-field within the discipline of Translation Studies. Of course, arguments about the age of a discipline and the period of time that would mark its maturity could continue endlessly; however, in the case of Translation Pedagogy, the last two decades of the 20th century may be taken as its approximate beginning, with leading journals on translator training appearing within a comparable time period. Thus, with an awareness of this recent significant expansion of translation teaching methodologies, materials, curricula and activities, it is definitely worthwhile to study translation and how it is taught.

It should be noted that Translation Pedagogy has undergone recent paradigm shifts, in that it has moved from conventional transmissionist teacher-centred approaches to experiential and professionally-oriented learning models. The epistemological changes that have taken place within this rather unnoticed and barely appreciated sub-discipline of Translation Studies have been marked by a corresponding terminological evolution: teaching translation as a subject within the scope of foreign language skills acquisition has given way to more technically-oriented translator training, which, in turn, has expanded into the wider area of translator education, and still more recently, translation pedagogy, which incorporates practical methods of teaching translation as a humanistic subject, the use of technology in translator training and also the philosophical and psychological underpinnings of translation as an academic subject. Translator education institutions proliferate, and there is a definite need for an improvement in the teaching methods, and hence a growth of research into the pedagogy.

Such great methodological challenges for contemporary translator educators are the result of the specifics of translation per se, but are also the outcome of the sensitive nature of translation which reacts dynamically to all kinds of social changes, as well as changes in educational patterns and translation services.

The topics that are the concern of contemporary translator educators, among others, include the following: the competencies of professional translator trainees and trainers (profiles of trainees and trainers); the specific demands of specialisation in teaching (e.g. AVT, translation of legal, medical and other specialised types of texts, community interpreting, etc.); teaching curricula and courses (curricula in response to market demands, course content, pedagogical progression, directionality in teaching, translation assessment); methodologies for teaching translation and the professionalisation of translator education.

The purpose of this Special Issue is to consolidate Translation Pedagogy, as well as provide information regarding the directions of recent research within it. We hope that the diverse subjects covered by the articles will inspire the reader to further investigate particular pedagogical and didactic phenomena. What is presented in this issue is state-of-the-art research by scholars within the areas of translator education and methodology for translator training. Although the use of English as a lingua franca in translation discourse is widely accepted, articles in Polish have also been included in the issue as a metalanguage in which research can be reported, so as not to confine international discussion within the boundaries of one language.

The issue is divided into four sections:

Part 1: Courses and Curricula

Part 2: Translator Competences

Part 3: Theoretical and Methodological Approaches to Translator Education

Part 4: Professionalisation and Qualifications Frameworks.

Part 1 includes five articles. The first is by Joanna Albin and Elzbieta Gajewska and analyses specialised translation training in French, Spanish and Italian within the translation curricula of the most important universities in Poland. In the second article, Marta Chodkiewicz discusses the challenges posed by an elementary course in translating general texts, in which the functionalist approach is implemented. Her study also treats the issue of assessment, information mining and communication with the client in such a course. The third article in this section is by Slavka Janigová and sums up the differences and common features of legal English courses conducted at the Law Faculty of P.J.Šafárik University Košice, Slovakia, in contrast to teaching legal English translation students at the Faculty of Arts of the same university. The article by Daniel Sax deals with the problem of Polish-English L2 translation, offering some descriptive, corpus-driven, as well as prescriptive recommendations. Giovanna Scocchera's paper presents a discussion on the virtually non-existent training for literary revisers, which relies on a survey of the revision practice in Italy of editorial/literary translations.

Part 2 is dedicated to studies on the multicomponential nature of translator competence. It includes three articles by Leonid Chernovaty, Wolfgang Lörcher, and Iwona Sikora. In the first, Chernovaty argues that an understanding of the translation process is a necessary part of a translator trainer's competence and provides the results of an experiment on a bilingual child and his natural translation capacity, the degree of the Russian-English lexical interrelations in his brain and the strategies of translation he used and their dependence on

directionality. In Wolfgang Lörcher's article the concept of competence is also linked with bilingualism, and the questions that are posed in it are of validity for the description and improvement of bilingual translation processes and also for a theory of the development of translation competence. In the last paper in this section, Iwona Sikora attempts to demonstrate that acquiring technological competence is a must for general translation courses students if they are to meet the standards of the contemporary translation market. She approaches the issue of technological training in the curricula of Polish institutions and offers some teaching suggestions.

Part 3 examines and explores theoretical and methodological approaches to translator education with an range of articles representing diverse epistemological standpoints. There are seven articles here, and the section opens with an investigation into Stanley Fish's anti-essentialist reader-response theory, which relies on social constructivism and American neo-pragmatism. In it Piotr Czajka shows that Fish's theoretical observations can constitute a consistent philosophical framework for teaching translation. Data-Bukowska's article demonstrates how collaboration can be useful in beginner translator education and presents a research procedure called the Choice Network Analysis. Monika Jazowy-Jarmul's paper presents an attempt to establish whether Contrastive Grammar offers relevant feedback with regard to formal and semantic adequacy in translation. The Author highlights the importance of pragmalinguistic analysis, which is illustrated with examples from the works of famous Swedish writers and their Polish translations. The next paper by Marta Kajzer-Wietrzny and Maria Tymczyńska focuses on Computer Assisted Interpreter Training (CAIT) solutions in support of learning and teaching experience. The section continues with an article by an author whose seminal writings on translation pedagogy are widely read. In this article Don Kiraly puts forward a claim to establish a dialogue between translation education and educational epistemology in order to enhance pedagogical approaches. To start this dialogue, the Kiraly provides a brief overview of three major epistemological trends: empirico-rationalism, constructivism, and emergentism. The next article, written by Paulina Pietrzak, focuses on the issue of giving feedback in translation education, and it presents what is arguably the most learning-conducive method of evaluation for translation students by advocating a purposeful approach to group work and possible ways of engaging students in group feedback exchange. Section three closes with an article by Elżbieta Tabakowska, an influential Polish scholar, who reflects on Langacker's cognitive linguistics theory as a theoretical framework for translation pedagogy.

Three articles by Joanna Dybiec-Gajer, Anna Kuznik and one co-authored by Betül Parlak and Cüneyt Bildik form a thematic whole centred on the issues of professionalisation and qualifications frameworks and constitute Part four of this issue. The first paper discusses professionalisation and its models in the context of translation, as well as certification programmes and their categorization with the goal of considering the impact of certification on translator education in the Polish system. Anna Kuznik argues for translation activity to be a paradigmatic, universal, post-industrial, knowledge-based and innovative service. Betül Parlak and Cüneyt Bildik investigate the Turkish implementation of the qualifications frameworks proposed by the Bologna process and the European Commission.

Studying the recent theoretical and methodological trends in teaching translation presented in this issue will, hopefully, assist in building a research repository in Translation Pedagogy. By providing such a broad thematic scope of topics, which offer a range of different perspectives, 'Challenges in Translation Pedagogy' aspires to make a significant contribution to Translation Studies.

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