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Teaching Translation and Interpreting: Training, Talent and
***Experience*, Amsterdam, Philadelphia, John Benjamins**
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[See table of contents](#)

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■ DOLLERUP, Cay and Anne LODDEGAARD (Eds.) (1992): *Teaching Translation and Interpreting: Training, Talent and Experience*, Amsterdam, Philadelphia, John Benjamins Publishing Company, 343 p.

Translation is no more an activity of literacy scholars, free-lancers or part-time amateurs; it is a distinct autonomous profession, an academic discipline, demanding more respect and recognition. It is basic to social equilibrium in several bilingual/multilingual countries (such as Canada, Belgium, Finland, Romania, countries of the erstwhile Yugoslavia (Bosnia, Croatia), South Africa and in bodies like the UN, EEC, SAARC, Commonwealth etc.) where interlinguistic communication is not possible without adequate translation and interpretation. Even if English is the lingua franca in a great part of the world, translation and interpreting are indispensable for integrating and preserving multilingual societies, for developing understanding and peace between individuals, groups and nations, for exchanging ideas and knowledge, for technology transfer and international trade and commerce, and for cultural cooperation and aids.

However, despite understanding the importance of translation and interpretation, and some improvement here and there, I suspect people in India have not been forward-looking in their approach to developing facilities for translators and interpreters' education and training. Nor have many scholars shown serious interest in examining their problems empirically or in reflecting on their profession with an awareness of the perspective of cross-cultural communication. Obviously, not enough research has been done even to

develop a viable translation theory (based on grammatical, lexical, cultural and discourse structures) for use in Indian contexts.

Understanding the professional problems of word workers is the *raison d'être* of Cay Dollerup and Anne Loddegaard's book: the editors are aware of the importance of academic training programmes for professional translators and interpreters in Europe. Organizing 36 articles into nine sections, they deal with certain central issues in translation and interpretation ranging from culture-specific problems to the internationalization of the profession. The contributors examine various problems related to teaching translation for general and specific purposes, knowledge of translation theories, technical and literary translations, dubbing and sub-titling, consecutive and simultaneous interpretation, evaluation etc.

Teaching Translation and Interpreting, the book-version of the papers presented in the first *Language International* conference held at Elsimore, Denmark (31 May to 2 June 1991), provides a broader state-of-the-art view of interest to common readers and language professionals concerned with teaching translation and training interpreters. It is rich in teaching ideas and approaches just as it explains without many jargons and acronyms the intricacies of the translator and interpreter's job as specialists across the world. The editors, leaders in Copenhagen studies in Translation, rightly call the book an "enduring monument" of international debate and shop-talk with "descriptions of the present and visions of the future."

The book opens with three articles that provide a general but significant perspective to translation as a profession. Mary Snell-Hornby (Vienna) explains *à la* Alexander Fraser Tytler (1791) that though a good translator must demonstrate mastery of both the source and target languages, knowledge of the material concerned, ease of style and understanding of the author's message, to be effective today he must also be proficient in the source and target cultures: translation, according to her, is not a mere bilingual activity but a bicultural activity and therefore, a professional translator must be an interdisciplinary specialist with expertise in language, culture and communication. Delineating an advanced training programme for the professional translator at the Institute of Translation and Interpreting in Vienna, she emphasizes that academic institutions should develop a flexible modular system allowing for different types of combination (p. 15) rather than a narrow-minded specialization, so that the translator of the future could be an intellectual polymath and polyglot.

Brian D. Smith, providing an overview of translation activities in Brunei, albeit poor, furthers the argument of Mary Snell-Hornby and notes that there is not only a conflict between language users and language policy planners but also a lack of commitment from the government, with the result that there is a high degree of *artificiality* about the role of translators and their training in modernising the country.

Anne-Marie Beukes reflects on changes in translation activities in the post-apartheid democratic South Africa, a polyglot society where most people habitually use two or more languages on a daily basis. It is expected that English will continue to remain a major language in the future co-linguistic configuration of South Africa *vis-à-vis* the ANC's declared policy for expression of the "full humanity of all our people."

The second section (seven articles) focuses on *teaching* translation. Christiane Nord (Germany) deals with translation-oriented text analysis based on a functional approach (*Scopos theory*). In her concept, the translator is called upon to produce a "fonctional target text" which conforms to the requirements of "translation scopos", *i.e.* the intended target function determined by the addressees of the translation. Her model of translation training addresses itself to four specific translation problems: pragmatic, cultural, linguistic and text-specific.

Rune Ingo (Finland) draws attention to four fundamental aspects of translation theory: grammatical structure, linguistic variety (style), semantics and pragmatics (*i.e.* functional and situational determinants). Ingo's concern is: "The translated text must function pragmatically in its new cultural context, and it must generally also semantically convey the right information."

The next three articles deal with ways, means and perspectives in teaching and classroom work. Patricia Hörmann (Chile) presents her case study of introducing theory in a translation course: she discovers that theoretical concepts are better grasped when preceded by practice. Gabriella Mauriello (Italy) offers certain practical suggestions for teaching translation based on text linguistics, emphasizing syntactic structure, semantic aspects and style, LSP and terminology. María Julia Sainz (Uruguay) reports a few interesting techniques that can be followed for developing translation skills at university level. Riitta Ottinen (Finland) describes some special courses developed for teaching the translation of fiction with a dialogic point of view. She particularly mentions her experience of translating Anita Desai and Lee Kingman in the class, combining theory and practice on the one hand, and closely collaborating with publishers on the other. The section ends with Brian Mossop's (Canada) suggestion for a course in Revision training with orientation at three levels: (i) professional preparation for work as a translator, (ii) professional preparation for target-language editing work, and (iii) the theory of re-writing.

Several scholars consider translation as an interdisciplinary practice. Hannah Amit-Kochavi (Israel) reports a Hebrew University case study of moving translator training from the Humanities to Social Sciences department while Gustav Winkler (Germany) presents an unorthodox course in Flensburg Polytechnic, combining engineering with translation.

In the fourth section (four articles), J. C. Sager's (Manchester) expert article deals with teaching terminology as part of degree courses in translation as he believes translation is a decision making process and knowledge of terminology can help a translator in deciding "whether to create a neologism or whether to provide a paraphrase of the not-found word or term." Mirium Shlesinger's (Israel) empirical study deals with the process of lexicalization *vis-à-vis* the eradication of certain features of 'translationese', whereas Arnt Lykke Jakobsen's (Denmark) article explores possibilities of teaching the translation of technical compounds in Danish and English as compounds are difficult in Germanic languages. Seyed-Ali Miremadi (Iran) suggests that native speakers' linguistic ability to produce words can be used when one needs equivalents for new foreign words or concepts.

The fifth section, "New Media and Teaching", opens up the possibility of teaching translation at a distance (a Spanish case study), of using computers in translation training, even if it is expensive (Germany), and of teaching television subtitling, a new university discipline in Denmark. Henric Gottlieb's article is important in that there is a surprising shortage of scholarly studies of dubbing (covert translation) and subtitling (overt translation), in spite of the fact that these have come to be increasingly used with development of TV broadcasting all over the world. I believe serious scholarly discussion of sound track translation and subtitles should go a long way in improving the quality of TV programmes and in raising the status of subtitlers everywhere. It should make a good study to examine, for example, the semiotic impact of screen translation on the total message and the effect on audience of dubbing *versus* subtitling.

The four contributors in the next section address themselves to interpretation and translation training activities in Switzerland, France, Spain and the UK, examining, in the main, the similarities and differences between the two modes, possible models for their teaching and learning, usefulness of theoretical input in developing appropriate professional skills, and the common ground provided by discourse analysis in the pedagogics of interlingual transmission and intercultural exchange.

The authors make several valid observations besides presenting the rationale behind the curricula developed in their respective institutions. They are all guided by the readers and listeners' expectations and requirements just as they understand the need for translators and interpreters' ability to render the flavour of the original and the original author's intention. Since it is common to find practising professionals, freelancers and self-made translators often questioning the relevance of translation theory in teaching courses, they effectively explain communicative aspects of translation and interpretation, clarifying the very concepts of language, interpretation, and communication. They analyse translation and interpretation as a language process, as a communicative activity, as a discourse and dynamic system. The teaching courses they propose are built upon the general competence of learners to meet the job-specific requirements in varying contexts.

The seventh section with seven articles highlights simultaneous and consecutive interpreting exclusively: Franz Pöchhacker (Austria) argues in favour of a general theory of translation and interpretation which can be integrated in the training programmes for conference interpreters. Bistra Alexieva (Bulgaria) discusses textual combinations which create difficulties in simultaneous interpreting: the author pleads for using language and culture-specific application of cognitive and experimental models in a workshop to train interpreters. Kambiz Mahmoodzadeh (Iran) reflects on the characteristics of a good interpreter, "an anonymous middleman in meetings," whose consecutive presentation in the target language is a creative exercise. Ana Ballester and Catalina Jiménez deal with teaching analytic and mnemonic strategies to the first year students of interpreting at the University of Granada (Spain). Ingrid Kurz (Austria), who stresses consideration of the findings of neuropsychological research on the psychological structure of speech processes, presents a critique of the use of "shadowing" exercises in interpreter training. But shadowing, howsoever necessary, is a controversial issue. Sylvia Kalina (Germany), who believes a text or discourse is processed in a strategic manner, pleads for a "differentiated approach" to the teaching of consecutive and simultaneous interpretation, as different strategies are adopted in monolingual and bilingual discourse processing. The last article in the section describes the methods tried to generate interpretational competence through participation in *real* conference situation in Canada, where French and English coexist as official languages.

The two articles in the 'Assessment' section deal with testing learners' achievement in translation classes (an Iranian case) and exploitation of the concept of error analysis in translation and foreign language teaching (a Spanish case).

The last but one section with three articles focuses on a world for the student translator beyond school. Gerard McAlester discusses from a Finnish angle the possibility of including a course in translation into the Foreign language teaching programme, using the concept of needs analysis. Giovanni Pontiero (UK) points to the practical realities of literary translation, revealing how ivory tower attitudes can be self-defeating.

I agree with the view that an exceptionnally good knowledge of the target language rather than the original language is essential for a literary translator to be effective. A literary translator should be able to use his art and craft with responsibility to capture the spirit of the original: one can avoid both undertranslation and overtranslation with recourse to appropriate dictionaries, reference works on synonyms, idiomatic phrases and proverbs, encyclopedia articles, and above all, constant touch with the native speakers/users of the target language. The problems of translating metaphors, alliteration, collocations, puns, word-play, proper names, neologism, cultural words, eponyms (like Gandhism, Thatcherism), no-equivalent words (like *jaunty*), acronyms, imagery, symbols, and even problems of timbre, register, rhythm and tone of given text are genuine just as finding an exact 'communicative equivalence' across different languages is challenging.

Academically trained and university based translators can respond to these problems, if they are not 'obsessive' about what they call, close textual renderings. Giovanni Pontiero decries inflexible attitudes of certain literary translators and quotes the Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges to drive home his contention: "Don't translate what I've written but what I wanted to say."

The section ends with Sergio Viagio's (UN) argument for training interpreters in such a way that they are able to understand well, analyze intelligently and write or talk with a reasonable degree of competence.

The editors close the book with an impressive list of 'works cited' which should help teachers, researchers and policy planners to move in the right direction.

I wish there had been some study on translation in advertising for products meant for global consumption, since translation of advertisements often involve more than just language: sight, sound, and other non-linguistic features, symbols and cultural artefacts, or iconic elements of advertising are interpretable in terms of cultural codes in a given context. Translation of advertisements on TV and cinema screens as also cross-cultural print advertising (which are complex social events as Marshall McLuhan noted once) seems to be a potential area of deeper study. I expect in the next *Language International* conference, Cay Dollerup will also try to include a paper on translation of legal texts, an important area of LSP practices.

All the same, despite the European bias, which is understandable as translation and interpretation have been not only re-discovered in Europe for several utilitarian reasons but also for European geopolitical and historical facts, the informed views and opinions of the contributors to the book of Cay Dollerup and Anne Loddegaard should help translators and interpreters gain the recognized status of an expert.

Teaching Translation and Interpreting is a significant record of the current concerns of translation and interpretation as a discipline. The book, tastefully produced and got-up, provides an essential overview of the broad issues of concern to all those professionals and practitioners involved with language and translation teaching, training and research. The articles in the volume with their diverse but complementary perspectives not only add to the growing corpus of empirical studies in Translation and Interpretation in the West but also clear the cobwebs that undervalue the profession. It is indispensable both for practising translators and interpreters and all those supporting staff — librarians and reference workers, language data banks, policy planners, terminologists and editors — who assist them.

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