Reviews

Review by

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In the papers presented at the first conference on *Teaching Translating and Interpreting,* held in
Elsinore, Denmark in 1991, there was some divergence of views, particularly as regards the nature
and objectives of translation theory. At the second conference in 1993 on the same therne, again
held in Elsinore, there is, however, a shift towards an insistent acceptance of the so-called *skopos*
theory of Reiss and Verrneer, which designates as translation the production of a 'target text'
meeting the requirements of a client.

Christiane Nord, of the University of Heidelberg, who had vigourously upheld this concept at
the 1991 conference, presented a paper revealingly entitled 'Translation as a Process of Linguistic
and Cultural Adaptation' with the object of "elaborating on the relationship between translation and
adaptation from a functional point of view in order to show that a strict delimitation of translation
proper as against adaptation does not lead us anywhere. For this elaboration Nord chose "brief
examples, particularly book titles… which are particularly apt for classroom discussion of
functional translation problems". The few examples cited include *Remembrance of Things Past* for
Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu,* A *Very Easy Death* and *Ein sanfer Tod* for Simone de Beauvoir's
Une morte trés douce as proof that such titles "are 'untranslatable' within the framework of a strict
equivalence model" whereas "a functional approach would solve these (and other) problems
both in terms of theory and translator training". A "functional approach': Nord explains, "would
allow any transfer procedure which leads to a functional target text, that is, cultural adaptation,
paraphrase, expansion, reduction, modulation, transposition, substitution, loanword, calque, literal
translation, or even omission".

Nord's exposition in the first place disregards the fact that the target language rendering of any
book title is formulated not on the basis of lexical equivalations, but in concordance with the form
and content characteristics of the given book, and the validity or inadequacy) of the rendering of a
title can only be demonstrated by reference to these characteristics. Moreover, in the case of
complete texts (including titles and possibly subtitles) a translation in the real sense of an implicit or
explicit projection into a target language of the function in the source language culture of the
form/content relation manifested in the source text, is clearly distinguishable from an adaptation,

which involves necessarily realignment, even distortion. of the source text synthesis of form and content.

The distinction becomes particularly clear from comparison of similarly oriented advertisements in different languages for the same product as discussed in the paper by Gabriele Becher (Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria). As Becher notes "cross-cultural transmission" of advertisements "implies adaptation to the socio-cultural background of the target culture, including, possibly, the production of a new text in the target language", Whilst Becher cites Nord's 'Model for ranslation-Oriented Text Analysis' as a guideline, the actual analysis as described is procedurally independent of Nord's directives,

But the confusion on translation and adaptation is again apparent in the paper by Sergio Viaggio (of the United Nations), who asserts that "we understand now that there are as many possible valid translations of a given text as there are different uses for the target-language versions" and then, rather paradoxically, finds that "advances in translatology (sic), the refinement and specification of the concept of translation itself, its progressive delimitation from neighbouring phenomena such as adaptation have been the result of a deeper understanding of language, discourse, and communication" Nevertheless, Viaggio concludes that a translator's "chance s of succeeding will basically depend on the fact that, besides providing a communicatively competent text (the idiomatic and accurate product of a correctly assessed skopos, whereby descriptive use prevails over interpretive use in order to ensure the reader's participative status), he can verbalise the rationale for it, that is, explain the *theory* behind it".

The Reiss and Vermeer/Nord approach is also approved of by Heidrun Witte (Universidad de Las Palmas) in her discussion of "some of the problems arising from intercultural communication" from the standpoint of "modem functional translation theory [which] has defined translation and interpreting as complex communicative action, the main aim of which is to establish communication between members of different cultures in accordance with a previously determined communicative target purpose or *skopos"*. Claiming that "the vast majority of literary texts today are translated according to what Christiane Nord calls 'exoticising' translation strategies', Witte asserts that "these translations … forget about the target text receptor and his culture-specific background", and, moreover, "foster existing stereotypes and prejudices among the target public".

This contention is re-echoed in the paper by Lykke Jakobsen (Copenhagen Business School) who, deploring as "the least satisfactory element in the old method [of teaching translation] ... the implied assumption that a translation starts from a source text only", reaches the conclusion that "translation starts with the target text". In claiming that "by starting with the target text, we improve translation", Jakobsen illustrates the ultimate consequences of the Vermeer and Reiss/Nord insistence on recognising any form of adaptation as translation.

The *skopas* concept is further embroidered on as a source of terminological inspiration in the paper by Hasnah Ibrahim (Universiti Utara Malaysia) with the proposal for an innovative categorisation derived from an envisioned 'translation spectrum'. According to Ibrahim "the fact that a text can be translated in several defensible ways" means that "the translation spectrum can be compared to the iridescent spectrum obtained from the *refractton* of white light" In this "new nomenclature, which", it is claimed, "avoids the problems inherent in having conflicting definitions and uses, *each term representing the translation process* will *be prefixed 'trans':* The process in which the translator tries to

preserve the tone and style of the original could, Ibrahim suggests, "be labelled trans-emulation" whilst "the translation of classies for children, or of technical texts for lay readers, could be labeIled *trans-elucidation"*. Other examples of this 'new nomenclature' are: *trans-metamorphosis* (covering the "intricate changes that occur when one verse form is translated into another one"), *trans-vivification* (for the enlivening of dialogue in the interlingual rendering of a stage play), and *trans-derivation* (for "the translation of a translation ... of a translation").

Other papers, not dealing specifically with the issue of translation and adaptation, cover a range of subjects, with varying degrees of effectiveness, There are two philosophicaIly tinted papers: one, by Alexis Nouss' (Université de Montreal) consists largely of quotes from and references to publications by Umberto Eco, with accompanying ruminations but no definite conclusion on the problems of text interpretation. In the second of these two papers, Andrew Chesterman (University of Helsinki) adopts Karl Popper's postulate that the "objective knowledge of science does not start with data ... but with problems" as a basis for teaching translation. Taking the source text as a problem (P1), Chesterman then evolves a provisional target language rendering (a Tentative Theory), then a phase of Error Elimination, and finally the corrected target language rendering, referred to as P2, because "like theories a translation is never 'finished'".

A more coherent approach is presented in the paper by Cay Dollerup (University of Copenhagen), which is the only the paper to raise the question of "the large interface ... between foreign language learning and translation". By linking the two facets, Dollerup establishes an assessment scale for rating primarily the linguistic correctness of students' translations. Though centred on lexical and syntactic features the scale does pinpoint recurrent errors in translating between closely related languages such as Danish and English.

In a similar perspective M.K.C. Uwajeh (University of Benin) advocates the integration of linguistics and translation theory, suggesting that this objective could be achieved with his 'Four Level Model', which incorporates lexical, literal, free, and figurative renderings. The 'Four Level Model' is illustrated with the renderings of the sentence *lt's raining cats and dogs* lexically as *il-est pleut-ant chat-s et chien-s,* literally as *il est pleuvant des chats et des chiens*, freely *il pleut des chats et des chiens* and, figuratively as *il pleut de cordes.* first two levels are said to be of particular interest to linguists by reason of emphasising source language text peculiarities.

Two papers, less concerned with theoretical possibilities, discuss the application of computer technology in translating and translation teaching. The software editor of *Language International,* Robert Clark, whilst pointing out that "Machine Translation developers have not broken the linguistic equivalent of the sound barrier - Fully Automatic High Quality Translation" - emphasized that there has been significant progress "with the ever-growing supply of tools that are being produced to assist the translation process". An example of practical training application of Machine Translation Systems is described by Dieter Wälterman (Carnegie Mellon University) in an outline of the translation curriculum at the Carnegie Mellon which incorporates both machine-aided human translation and human-aided machine translation and also includes a project carried out jointly with two sponsoring translation agencies.

Practical orientation in training is also foregrounded in the various papers on interpreting and subtitling. This is evident both in the two papers on training for community interpreting as a supplementary element in the provision of social services, and in the more theoretically based

contributions. A "multi-parameter for description and analysis" of interpreting performance is described by Franz Pöchhacker (University of Vienna), with the cautionary comment that "the method outlined is only a modest first step towards product inspection in simultaneous interpreting".

Methodological problems in analysing interpreters' performance are also examined in the paper by Sylvia Kalina (University of Heidelberg), particularly the lack of more than one example of each interpreting performance to allow of comparison and difficulties in transcription. Kalina further emphasizes the necessity of incorporating real-life conditions in training.

A "'tentative 'extended-linguistic' model showing seven degrees of liberty - or error - in Chinese-English interpreting" in which "features of the two languages as source (input) and tool (output) respectively can be seen as resources or as hazards" is presented by Robert Setton (Fu jen University, Taipeh) in an approach involving "the application of discourse studies to interpreter training".

The need for ability to improvise in interpreting is stressed by Viera Makarová (University of Warwick, UK), who includes distorted texts in her programme as a means of preparing students for the difficulties of real-life situations. Methods of note-taking in consecutive interpreting are examined by Bistra Alexieva (University of Sofia) with reference to the choice of codes and layout of notes to meet the requirements of economy of effort and maximum semantic load.

The issue of adaptation, which is not raised in the papers on interpreting, - perhaps because the circumstances do not permit of any marked departure from the content of the spoken source text - is re-evoked in a paper on subtitling by Henrik Gottlieb (University of Copenhagen), who regrets that "in the rapidly expanding literature on subtitling, many authors - be they practitioners or theorists - refrain from defining subtitling as translation": Gottlieb espouses the *skopos* vision of translating as encompassing "such diverse activities as film subtitling and dubbing, simultaneous interpreting, cartoon translating, abstracting, and summarising, etc.". However, Gottlieb considers that subtitling differs from other types of verbal transmission by virtue of its *additive* nature, that is "the addition of written text to speech" by which "subtitling earns its diasemiotic nature".

This assertion is contradicted by Irena Kovačič (University of Ljubljana) who points out that "reductions are a typical feature of subtitling ... dictated by the extralingual requirements of the media", "the deletions ranging from words to whole sentences and suprasentential elements". However, the main concern of Kovacic's paper is the possible application of relevance theory - interactive contextual relationship of lingual and extralingual elements of a communication - in subtitling both as a guide-line and as an explanatory framework.

From a comparison of the various papers collected in this volume, it becomes apparent that there is a more open and more reasoned approach to questions of theory and application of theory in articles dealing with interpreting and subtitling than in those dealing with translation and adaptation. Possibly the imbalance might have been corrected by inclusion of reports on the discussions which no doubt took place on the papers presented. If there are to be further conferences on Teaching Translation and Interpreting, it is to be hoped that the organisers will ensure a more balanced participation than in this second conference.

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Review by

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CAY DOLLERUP and ANNE LODDEGAARD (eds): Teaching Translation and Interpreting:
Training, Talent and Experience.
Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins 1992. vii + 343 pp. ISBN 90-272-2097-2
Price: 60 HFI (Henceforth: V 1);
CAY DOLLERUP and ANNETTE LINDEGAARD (eds): Teaching Translation and Interpreting 2:
Insights, Aims. Visions.
Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins. 1994. vii + 356 pp.
ISBN 90-272-1601-0 Price: 65 USD, 130 HFI (Henceforth: V 2).

The two volumes are the fruit of the debates of two conferences which took place in Elsinore,
Denmark, in 1991 and 1993, respectively. They have become a tradition and the proceedings of the
third conference organized in 1995 are in preparation.

The authors of the papers come from four continents; the majority are Europeans but there are
also scholars from Asia, Africa and the Americas.
The proceedings cover a very wide range of topics related more or less directly to teaching
translation and interpreting. The sign of the times are large sections in both volumes devoted to
interpreting. Research on interpreting is relatively new: while serious work during the period of
1950 - 1990 was not ample, there has been a veritable explosion in the 1990s: Interpreting takes
about one fourth of each of the volumes.

Both volumes set the scene with more general topics. V 1 reviews national perspectives in
various regions: underlying assumptions of a new curriculum at the Institute of Translation and
Interpreting in Vienna (M.Snell-Hornby); the status of translators in Brunei (B.D.Smith); the
language situation in the post-apartheid South Africa (A.M.Beukes). V 2 focuses on translation and
interpreting across cultures: teaching interpreting at the European Commission (C.Heynold); the
delicate balance between English (the official language) and the indigenous languages in Nigeria
(E.O.Anyaehie); translation as a symbiotic cultural relation, i.e. enriching both cultures involved (N.
Mohanty). V 2 also takes up literary translation in Africa (M.N. Nintai) and Iran (M. Haghighi). C.
Nord (Germany & Austria) and H. Witte (Spain) discuss translation as intercultural communication
in terms of the functional (skopos) theory of Vermeer and Reiss and G. Becher (Spain) gives a
specific example of such treatment of texts.
The leading theme - teaching - is richly represented in both volumes and cannot possibly be
described in full detail. I shall mention some of the recurring topics: the role of theory in teaching
translation and interpreting (V 1: R. Ingo, P. Hörmann, D. Gile, F. Pöchhacker; V 2: A.
Chesterman, S. Viaggio); discourse analysis in teaching (V 1: C. Nord, M. Lang, B. Alexieva, S.
Kalina; V 2: A.L. Jakobsen, R. Setton); process-oriented approach to teaching (V 2: D. Gile,J.
Dancette); error analysis and assessment (V 1: F. Farahzad, A. Pym; V 2: H. Ibrahim, M J. Sainz);
curricula and teaching systems (V 1: M. Snell-Hornby, H. Amit-Kochavi, G. Winkler, B. Mossop,

C. Renfer, B. Harris, G. McAlester; V 2: C. Heynold, D. Bowen, N. Schweda Nicholson, M.K.C. Uwajeh).

As I have said above, both volumes contain sizable sections on interpreting. Some of the aspects discussed are similar to the above, viz.: discourse analysis and the importance of theory in teaching (authors above). As a comparatively new branch it is seeking its identity in the form of a comprehensive theory. One such interesting proposal is by F. Pöchhacker, who treats its object of study as a multi-channel, intersemiotic hypertext consisting of verbal, paraverbal and non-verbal elements (see V 1 & V 2). The other articles discuss: differences between translation and interpreting (V 1: P. Padilla & A. Martin); shadowing (V 1: I. Kurz); consecutive interpreting and its techniques (V 1: K. Mahmoodzadeh); V 2: B. Alexieva); quality (V 2: S. Kalina, F.Pöchhacker): improvisation and intervention (V 2: V. Makarova, L. Zimman).

V 1 contains a separate section on terminology specifying its role in translation (J. E. Sager), describing an experiment on lexicalisation (M. Shlesinger) and discussing word-formation (S.A. Miremadi) and translation of compounds (A.L. Jakobsen).

A very interesting part of V 2 is devoted to screen translation, especially subtitling, which is treated from an intersemiotic point of view (Y. Gambier, H. Gottlieb, see also V 1). The other articles of the section discuss reduction in subtitling (I. Kovačič) and a teaching programme (I. Roffe & D. Thorne). Subtitling is a relatively new endeavour and, due to its complexity and multi-channel character, it can make a fascinating object of study.

What emerges from the reading of the two volumes can be recapitulated as follows.
* The dominant theory on which pedagogy rests is functional, target audience-oriented intercultural communication rather than an equivalence-based rendition of the source text.
* Translation and interpreting is viewed as text-to-text, discourse-to-discourse processing in compliance with recent developments in intercultural and interlingual communication.
* Translation is conceived as a multichannel, intersemiotic event (especially interpreting and screen translation.
* In the field of pedagogy, we can see at least two approaches: product-oriented teaching and a newer process-oriented one. It seems that both merit attention.
* The translator and interpreter is viewed as a competent intercultural and interlingual communicator via one or multiple media. But s/he is also viewed as an expert capable of producing numerous versions of the same source text and of choosing the best version under given conditions. The latter is a reflection of Karl Popper's philosophy and it deftly connects theory with practice.

The staggering variety of topics presented in the two volumes is their strength and weakness. Strength - because a world conference, of which each volume is a report, must be sufficiently general to bring various ideas and ways of thinking together. Weakness - because a narrower theme might bring more in-depth detail to the fore. But one certain thing can be said: the two volumes contain a wealth of information for anyone who wants to know about translation and interpreting and their teaching.