

de Pedro Ricoy, R. (2007). Martha Tennent (ed.) Training for the New Millennium. Pedagogies for Translation and Interpreting.. *The Journal of Specialised Translation*, 7, 220-222.

<https://doi.org/10.26034/cm.jostrans.2007.732>

This article is publish under a *Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International* (CC BY):
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>



© Raquel de Pedro Ricoy, 2007

Tennent, Martha (ed.) *Training for the New Millennium. Pedagogies for Translation and Interpreting*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company. Pp xxvi, 276 US\$ 126.00 ISBN 1 58811 609 3 / 105.00 € ISBN 90 272 1666 5

The twelve essays in this volume were inspired by the issues discussed at the 1999 Forum on translation pedagogy organised by the University of Vic's School of Translation and Interpreting. Eugene A. Nida contributed the foreword and Martha Tennent, the editor, provided a critical introduction. The pedagogy of both interpreting and translation is discussed, but there is a clear bias towards the latter: only three of the chapters deal with the training of interpreters, and no issues specifically related to this area are tackled in the section devoted to the interface of theory and practice.

The first section of the book, "Training programmes: The current situation and future prospects", comprises two accounts of the practices in tertiary-level institutions that offer courses in Translation and Interpreting. Margherita Ulrych presents the results of a survey conducted among such institutions from all around the world, with a specific focus on translator training. She concludes by emphasising that the shift in the perceptions of translation both among professionals and academics will have an impact in future training programmes. Helge Niska reviews various approaches to the training of interpreters and looks at the European Master in Conference Interpreting as an example of different methodological issues to be considered. She also outlines the impact that new technologies and increased international mobility will have on the profession, for conference, public-service and business interpreters alike.

The first three chapters in the second section, "Pedagogical strategies", describe the approaches applied to the training of translators at the University of Vic. María González Davies proposes "a communicative and interactive approach" in the translation classroom; Francesca Bartrina and Eva Espasa explore the intricacies of audiovisual translation and explain their model for dubbing and subtitling seminars; finally, Richard Samson makes proposals as to the provision of training that incorporates CAT tools and links with commercial partners. These authors include examples of exercises and projects that they have used in their classes. As in the case of the material included in the previous section, these samples are interesting and provide ample possibilities for discussion, which, regrettably, the written medium cannot afford. The unquestionable value of drawing upon personal experience could have been enhanced by in-depth analysis of the pedagogical constructs that underpin the models propounded and the consideration of a wider framework that takes into account variables across learning environments.

The eminently practical focus of these chapters is continued in Daniel Gile's and Ann Corsellis' contributions. Gile offers valuable insights into the basic principles of conference interpreter training, and summarises alternatives. His evaluation of the different methodologies is never prescriptive, because, as he states, it is not possible to suggest a "universal training model": on the one hand, the findings of research in the field are inconclusive as to the desirability of one method over another; on the other, the "variability in environmental parameters" requires flexibility vis-à-vis training approaches. As well as a comprehensive overview of the different learning stages, materials and procedures for training students and evaluating their performance, Gile alludes to the role that theory has in the classroom, highlighting the importance of making theoretical tenets suit the practical needs of the future professionals. Corsellis provides an overview of a relatively new area, the training of public service interpreters, which has, thus far, received comparatively little attention from pedagogues and theoreticians. This chapter should be of interest to trainers, agencies and public-services professionals, as it deals not only with curricular issues, but also with the various techniques and methods relevant to this area, as well as with ethics, good practice and quality-assurance mechanisms.

The final section in the book comprises four chapters on "The relevance of theory to training". Francesca Bartrina takes Levý's question "Will translation theory be of use to translators?" as the starting point for her argumentation. She states that this question will continue to be valid "until everyone involved in the translation chain is convinced that there is no translation practice without translation theory", and goes on to propose that translation theory should be incorporated into all translator-training university courses. She does not, however, explain *who* is opposed to the integration of theory and practice, nor, more importantly, *why*. Her paper includes a curriculum and gives examples of assignments designed to make students reflect upon the relationship between different theories and the practice of translation, but Bartrina does not specify whether they are aimed at undergraduate or postgraduate students, or elaborate on the applicability of her model, which brings to mind Gile's cautionary words as to the importance of taking into account different learning environments. Andrew Chesterman points at interesting links between theory and practice and eloquently argues for the application of a causal model to translator training: being able to understand "what one is doing, how to do it, and why one is doing it in that way" empowers translators, both professionally and as human beings. Christiane Nord brings to the fore the importance of training translator trainers, who need a solid grounding in both theory and practice, and of taking into account the ever-changing learning environment. She argues that, in order to train functional translators, there needs to be a circular movement that goes "[f]rom theory to practice and back to theory". Her guidelines as to how to teach intercultural competence and how to design tasks and set up group project-work provide useful suggestions that are relevant to current

market requirements and expectations. Finally, Rosemary Arrojo also maintains that we have to move away from models that divorce theory from practice and rebukes the claims of professionals who perceive no use for the former. She articulates the need for ethics and ideology to be incorporated into translator training, in a move away from essentialist approaches, in order to make students aware of their responsibility and of the power relations that rule translation. Arrojo is no stranger to controversy, and her contribution to this book is likely to be contentious, as she points at certain inconsistencies and shortcomings in the theories of such well-known scholars as Baker, Kussmaul and Hatim and Mason, and claims that some of the notions they put forth are, in spite of the authors' claims, essentialist in nature.

In his epilogue, Michael Cronin supports Arrojo's plea for the social identity of the translator to be recognised and echoes Kiraly's call for data-based research into translation pedagogy. Against many claims that theory and practice simply *must* be integrated in the curriculum, he underscores the problems that trainees encounter in the face of the metalanguage of translation theory. Among the many thought-provoking ideas that he introduces in his essay, perhaps the most note-worthy are his stance against reductionism (we cannot ignore the "geopolitics of pedagogy") and his commentary on the changes in the profile of the student population in an "era of generalised orality".

This collection of essays provides a welcome overview of some of the main concerns in the pedagogy of translation. Some of the more descriptive chapters, whilst containing interesting data, are let down by their narrow focus. The chapters that have a stronger analytical approach make for stimulating, sometimes controversial, reading and provide the basis for much-needed discussion on the approaches and methodologies that are applied to the training of translators and interpreters in a fast-changing academic and professional environment.

Dr Raquel de Pedro Ricoy, Heriot Watt University
R.De_Pedro@hw.ac.uk