Preface

While translation has become “a full-fledged craft and profession” (Király, 2003, p. 3), the research on translation pedagogy has been relatively new and largely dominated by “anecdotal evidence and case studies” (Colina, 2003, p. 29). Translation teachers and scholars are faced with various problems and challenges, such as the modes of teaching and the proper evaluation methods. It was in consideration of the problems and challenges that we started this book project to provide a platform for translation teachers and scholars around the world to share their studies, thoughts, experience, and practice.

There was a time when translation teaching was undervalued, and it was believed that “translators are born, not made, or that translation is something that is learned on the job, not in the classroom” (Baer & Koby, 2003, p. vii). This view is reflected in such concepts as natural translation where translation is seen as a skill inherent in bilinguals (Harris, 1977). For this reason, translation pedagogy is confused with foreign language acquisition, and translator trainers have referred to methodologies developed for teaching foreign languages (Király, 1995, p. 7). However, the teaching of translation is not equal to that of a language, for translation or cross-cultural communication is a much more sophisticated process than the re-coding of linguistic structures (Olshanskaya, 2003, p. 173). It demands a wide range of analytical and creative skills and expertise, which requires a teaching methodology that is considerably different from traditional language training (Olshanskaya, 2003, p. 173). Trainers need both practical experience and theoretical knowledge in order to train functional translators. In addition to knowing the skills and abilities required in the profession of translation, trainers also need to know how to identify and recognize patterns of behavior and guide students to discover the underlying regularities (Nord, 2010, p. 214). In one word, there are many factors to be investigated and many challenges to be dealt with in translation pedagogy today.

MAJOR CHALLENGES AND SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS

Among the major challenges in translation pedagogy are the systematic theorization of translation pedagogy, the teaching of translation theories, the proper standards and methods of evaluation, and the enhancement of connections between the translation classroom and the real world.

As mentioned earlier, translation pedagogy today is in need of systematic theorizing and research. With more and more translation programs established at universities and colleges around the world, many institutions face the problem of lacking a “sound, consistent pedagogical and methodological criteria on how to approach the issues of translation teaching” (Colina, 2009, p. 1). Without a solid theoretical basis, translation pedagogy will be “blind,” because it will fail to set reasonable objectives, create and apply
methods appropriate to the learning task, measure and evaluate results, or train the effective translators the society demands (Király, 1995, p. x). Therefore, systematic and theoretical investigation of translation teaching is essential, which includes such issues as curriculum design, strategies and models of teaching, application of teaching tools, and evaluation criteria and methods. The studies in this book are in part an effort to enrich and enhance the development of this field.

A big challenge in the translation classroom is the teaching of theories. The role of translation theories is often questioned and downplayed by students and practitioners. Theories are “notorious among students as dull and impractical” (Li, 2012, p. 14), and practitioners of translation tend to “see little value in academic theorizing on translation” (Baer & Koby, 2003, p. vii). However, an important goal of teaching is to make students independent of their teachers and able to continue to learn after they leave the classroom (Manning, 1996, p. 546), and the inclusion of theories is helpful for realizing this goal by equipping students with the necessary strategies and tactics. Suggestions have been provided by translation scholars in terms of what theories to teach and how to teach them. For illustration, it is emphasized that the selection of what theories to teach is up to students’ needs (Li, 2012, p. 18), and teachers should guide students to transform the learned theory into acquired theory via continual practice and reflection (Li, 2012, p. 21). Still, more specific research is needed regarding the ways to properly combine theories and practice in translation teaching.

The incorporation of theories and practice is an issue in the translation classroom, and it is more so in the training of interpretation. Although the momentum driving interpreter training has gathered force, “interpretation pedagogy has led an existence in the shadows of academe since its inception” (Sawyer, 2011, p. 2). Many studies on interpretation are primarily based upon the “personal experience and insight of professional interpreters,” which is indicative of the fact that theoretical reflection on interpreter education is “in an exploratory phase” (Sawyer, 2011, p. 37). Views about the contribution of theory in the interpreting classroom differ. Although there are claims that interpretation is basically a matter of action and theories cannot improve the training or practice of interpreting, “it seems reasonable to expect a modest amount of theory in the classroom to be helpful” (Gile, 2010, p. 140). Actually, it is an inevitable fact that “there cannot be practice without some kind of ‘guiding principles’” in all areas of translation studies (Ulrych, 2010, p. 19), which also includes the teaching of interpretation. In addition, interpretation entails other extra-linguistic factors such as interpreters’ emotional status, attention, and memory (Darò, 1994, 1995; Seleskovitch, 2002). All these aspects are worth exploring. It is claimed that there is no “fixed canon” of translation teaching methods (Wilss, 2010, p. 11), which is exactly the case with the training of interpreting.

Apart from the incorporation of theories in the teaching of translation and interpretation, the proper methods and criteria of evaluation is another issue. The importance of appropriate and meaningful assessment has been recognized for over half a century (Sawyer, 2011, p. 5). “High quality education is based upon sound assessment” that provides evidence as to whether the curriculum goals and objectives are met (Sawyer, 2011, p. 5). However, as far as translation pedagogy is concerned, inadequacy of assessment practices has been repeatedly pointed out (Sawyer, 2011, p. 8). It has remained an underdeveloped field where subjectivity constitutes “the most salient criterion” (Arango-Keeth & Koby, 2003, p. 117). Translation teaching is intended to facilitate “the acquisition of communicative translational competence” and to develop proper methods (Colina, 2003, p. 30), and criteria of assessment entails the investigation of translation competence. The lack of a consensus regarding what translation competence involves poses a problem for evaluation (Arango-Keeth & Koby, 2003, p. 119). In one word, a consistent and
workable framework for proper translation assessment needs to be established, and it involves systematic exploration and further clarification of translation competence.

Lastly, translation teaching takes place in the classroom, but it keeps a link with the real world and the professional market of translation. As the translation profession evolves with advances in technology, globalization, and changes in lifestyle and business practices, translation pedagogy also needs perpetual innovation (Király, 2003, p. 25). New technologies and teaching tools may be introduced to the translation classroom, such as the use of corpus and machine-aided teaching methods in the translation classroom (see Zhu & Wang, 2011). In addition, translation teaching prepares some, if not all, of the students to be translators, and it needs to take into account the professional job market. There have been accusations from the job market that university courses are “too rigid, detached from the real world, academic and unprofessionalising” (Bernardini, 2010, p. 23). Although synchronizing the translation classroom and the professional world is hard (Mackenzie, 2010, p. 33) and the learning environment has its own advantages for students (Bernardini, 2010, p. 23), the translation classroom can be related to the professional market, and feedback from the professional translators can be referred to in designing the translation courses and curriculums. In order to help students to be better adjusted to the professional practice after graduation, it is proposed that translation teaching be based on authentic situated action (Király, 2000, p. 3) and provide students with opportunities to participate in the activities of the profession (Király, 2003, p. 18). Still, more explorations are needed regarding the specific teaching concepts, methods, and strategies to enhance the link between the translation classroom and the professional market.

AIMS AND TARGET AUDIENCE OF THE BOOK

This publication is intended to bring together the studies and practices of scholars and teachers working in the field of translation and to widen recent enquiries to include more interdisciplinary theories and a greater variety of linguistic, cultural, and educational contexts worldwide. The book is expected to be utilized by scholars and teachers interested in translation and translation pedagogy. It is also of value to graduate students who plan to become teachers or do further studies on translation teaching. It is intended to deepen their understanding of the theories, models, processes, principles, new options, and other matters related to translation teaching. In face of the challenges described above and in the light of the explorations that have already been done, authors contributing to this book have investigated various aspects of translation pedagogy, including competition and collaboration in the translation classroom, team-based learning, the application of stylistic methods and strategies to translation teaching, the use of discourse analysis in translation teaching, corpus-based tools and methods of translation teaching, the role of pedagogical translation in the foreign-language classroom, curricular design of specialized translation, translation competence in multilateral international and interprofessional collaborative learning, intercultural translator competence, translation competence for didactic purposes, the significance of contrastive cross-cultural pragmatics for translation competence, differentiated error-marking scale in translation evaluation, evaluation in specialized translation teaching, critical and creative thinking in translation teaching, metacognition and translation education, students’ views on the role of translation theories, self-reflection in process-oriented translator training, emotional stability as a predictor of interpreter aptitude, and the connection between the translation classroom and the real world including the job market.
ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

This book is divided into three sections. Section 1, which covers Chapter 1 to Chapter 8, elaborates on the modes and methods of teaching in the translation classroom. Section 2, which covers Chapter 9 to Chapter 14, focuses on the issue of translation competence and evaluation. Section 3, which covers Chapter 15 to Chapter 21, provides theoretical reflections on translation pedagogy.

Chapter 1 describes and discusses the findings of a project that was intended to test a contest format applicable to translation teaching. To be more specific, the project was designed to test the value and methods of integrating contests into translation teaching and investigate the contentious issue of competitiveness in education.

Chapter 2 makes a case for the effectiveness of a collaborative learning methodology that fosters accountability, cohesion, and solidarity among fixed work teams in introductory-level translation studies courses. It describes a variety of empowerment-building assignments, analyzes the application and implementation of Team-Based Learning (TBL), and discusses the results of a survey in which students revealed their perceptions of the efficacy of TBL and the extent to which it may have contributed to a high-impact learning experience.

Chapter 3 attempts to point out the advantages of stylistics in teaching translation and interpretation. It emphasizes the elements in stylistic methodologies that may be particularly effective in teaching and shows how these elements are extremely relevant to the teaching of translation and interpretation in that they can improve trainees’ motivation and performance.

Chapter 4 illustrates the importance of introducing critical discourse analysis as a powerful tool for ideological analysis in the translation classroom. In the teaching process, students were shown how to analyze advertising slogans with emphasis on the ways in which information is structured as well as on “unpacking” ideologically influenced constraints and cultural influences, and then the students were assigned to use the discourse analysis tools to analyze Slovene translations of the same ads.

Chapter 5 probes into the way an in-depth annotated parallel corpus is integrated into the translation classroom. With a 90-minute lecture as a demo, it is designed to show how the combined unity of teaching materials and the platform and the teaching method and the annotation mode of the corpus can be achieved. It also discusses users’ perceptions of the platform and classroom teaching as shown in a recent survey.

Chapter 6 centers on the nuisance caused by passive voices and attributive clauses in student translations. The aim of this study was to correct learners’ under-use, over-use, and misuse of specific terms and linguistic structures. By examining student translations with learner corpus, this study contributes in providing student translators with an autonomous learning environment and translation improvement opportunities.

Chapter 7 investigates curricular design in financial translation based on previous empirical data that demonstrate the importance of financial translation in different countries. The study identifies social and market needs through the analysis of job offers for financial translators, reviews the literature discussing the profession in this area of specialization, and applies Kelly’s model of translation competence to financial translation.

Chapter 8 explores translation in the foreign-language classroom, which has been a contentious topic for several decades but is now re-emerging as an acceptable and useful supporting resource for language learning. By examining student performance in problem-solving tasks at the Autonomous University of Zacatecas, this study demonstrates the validity of “pedagogical translation” in ELT in Mexico, both
as a means to perfecting reading skills in a foreign language and as an aid for consolidating writing and communication skills in students’ first language.

Chapter 9 describes the collaborative forms of learning at different stages in the translation process of students participating in the Trans-Atlantic and Pacific Project. It explores and analyzes empirical data that the project may provide for future research into learning translation, in particular with regard to competences needed for translation decisions, intercultural and interpersonal communication, usability testing and translation service provision, as well as self-reflection.

Chapter 10 discusses student translator intercultural competence development. It introduces an eight-factor model of the competence based on empirical data, delineates associated learning objectives, and presents primarily validated developmental level indicators for each objective. A pedagogical sequence based on the findings is proposed at the end.

Chapter 11 proposes the development of a product-based definition of translation competence for didactic purposes based on the provisional findings of an empirical longitudinal product-oriented research project that aims to map some specific textual and procedural features on the subjects’ presumed level of translation competence. A product-oriented definition could assist translator trainers and trainees in defining specific learning goals and serve as a predictive developmental hypothesis in translator training.

Chapter 12 investigates the significance of intercultural pragmatics for translation competence and translation teaching on the basis of the text type “obituary” and the language pair Greek/German. It provides an overview of contemporary translation theory on the teaching of translation from a culture-sensitive and pragmatic-functional point of view. The chapter concludes by demonstrating the significance of language pair-specific text prototypologies for the development of the translational competence of translation students and of its implementation in translation teaching.

Chapter 13 focuses on the issue of translation evaluation, specifically error marking. The Flowchart for Error Point Decisions and the Framework for Standardized Error Marking developed by the American Translators Association (ATA) are used to describe errors and severities in German>English translation graduate student papers vs. examination papers marked by ATA graders. The predominant categories where errors occur and trends in error severities are discussed for each group and subgroup and compared across the groups.

Chapter 14 presents a new scale for evaluating Scientific and Technical Translation compulsory activities in consideration of the need to create and implement fair and precise evaluation scales in Specialized Translation subjects. The scale takes into account most aspects discussed by teachers and scholars to offer an exact, easy-to-use, and fast tool to evaluate these activities. The scale could also be applied to other specialized translation subjects such as Sworn Translation or Literary Translation.

Chapter 15 studies translation as a sequence of three stages: source text pre-translation analysis, translation itself, and self-assessment and editing. As the first and the third stages of the translation process are based on critical thinking, the second stage rests upon creative thinking; the study proposes that critical thinking must be a necessary part of translator professional training, because it enables translators-to-be to acquire mature creative thinking, crucial for translation problem-solving.

Chapter 16 treats of the role of metacognition in translation teaching. Translation training overlooks some crucial aspects when it focuses exclusively on disciplinary knowledge. Metacognition could help translation students to become responsible for their own learning. A study of translation internship reports identifies some metacognitive factors that help students become agents of their own learning.

Chapter 17 addresses the commonplace belief that students have a rather reticent attitude towards theoretical modules and presents the results obtained in an empirical study aimed at analysing the views of
mainly undergraduate as well as some postgraduate translation students at Spanish universities regarding the role and relevance of Translation Theory as part of their degree courses. The research provides new, unexpected, and valuable insights into both curriculum design and the improvement of the teaching of theoretical modules within translation programmes.

Chapter 18 takes a corpus-based approach in the comparative analysis of student discourse when using translation logs and screen recordings for self-reflecting on the problems they encounter and their correlating problem-solving tendencies. Preliminary findings demonstrate that the type of self-reflection modality used has an impact on how students discuss problem solving, potentially suggesting a different problem solving approach and scope of reflection. When reflection was carried out using Integrated Problem and Decision Reporting logs, discourse tended to focus primarily on textual level alone, whereas when screen recordings were used, discourse was more multidimensional, focusing not only on textual level but also various stages (comprehension, transfer, production) as well as concrete information retrieval strategies, suggesting a more holistic, multi-layered approach to problem-solving when using screen recordings.

Chapter 19 proposes that variance in interpreter performance is dependent on factors of both general cognitive ability and personality. It reports a study of 110 MTI students in China in the hope of finding out what traits play the most important role and to what extent these variables impact learning and achievement. Psychological constructs of self-efficacy, goal orientation, and negative affectivity were measured. The most significant finding revealed the dimension of emotional stability as a predictor of interpreters’ self-perceived competence. Based on these findings, recommendations for admission testing and interpreter education curricula are discussed.

Chapter 20 focuses on three basic questions: why, what, and how to teach translation and interpreting students to meet the demand for language professionals by global businesses, government organizations, and public services under the impact of globalization. It believes that our training programmes will be more cost-efficient and accountable if we have a clear vision, well-designed and structured curricula, and right teaching methodology. The chapter advocates that those teaching projects based on the principles of cognitive apprenticeship advanced by Király are the most feasible, because they help students effectively acquire translating and interpreting skills through practice.

Chapter 21 explores two intertwined aspects of translation training: on the one hand, the study of the quality of communication in multilingual societies and of the role of interpreters and translators as language mediators across various settings and, on the other hand, the development of training programs to prepare efficient translators and interpreters for these societies.

Ying Cui  
Shandong University, Weihai, China

Wei Zhao  
Shandong University, Weihai, China
REFERENCES


