



**HERZEN STATE PEDAGOGICAL
UNIVERSITY OF RUSSIA**

**ST. PETERSBURG SCHOOL OF
CONFERENCE INTERPRETING AND
TRANSLATION**



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**Fighting the Fog in Multilingualism:
the Importance of Clear Writing and Speaking
in Intercultural Relations**

SUMMARIES

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Irina Alekseeva

(Russia, Herzen University)

LINGUISTIC MEDIATION AS A MIND GAME

Throughout the long history of translation studies, the understanding of linguistic mediation (LM) as a process, a product, and a practice has advanced by means of either symbolic or analytical exploration of this phenomenon. The symbolic tradition opened up the cultural dimension of LM, highlighting some of its critical aspects and positioning it among the building blocks of culture and civilization. The analytical tradition, which mostly evolved over the last two centuries, successively regarded LM first as a systemic linguistic phenomenon, then as a vehicle of 'cultural transfer' and, quite recently and most productively, as a professional practice. Today, the following avenues for exploring LM can be identified: LM as an information strategy, as a by-product born out of a chaos of interpretations and, finally, as an intellectual game or play. Arguably, LM does meet all the criteria of games established by Nash's mathematical game theory. The scripts that govern situations of interpreting suggest that this activity follows the principles of an harmonic intellectual game. Three promising research options can be derived from this game approach: (1) study of the procedural aspects of LM; (2) study of LM within the matrix of social play scenarios; and (3) development of didactic principles and strategic models for training LM practitioners. Further important insights into the role of linguistic mediation and that of the linguistic mediator can be gained from Johan Huizinga's interpretation of play as a cultural phenomenon.

Aleksei Astvatsaturov

(Russia, Institute of Foreign Languages)

MOZART'S WORDS AND IDEAS SOUNDING RUSSIAN

The Russian translation of the *Complete Collection of Letters by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*, led by Irina Alekseeva and published by International Relations Publishers, invites the reader to adopt a holistic perspective on the celebrated composer's prolific legacy. Mozart's music and correspondence position him as one of the brightest personalities in the 'macro-era' of Modernism. One uncontested feature of Mozart's compositional language is his profoundly introspective and reflection-rich musical imagery. His writings, relying significantly on the aesthetic dimension of linguistic expression, are also rife with typically Modernist reflexivity. They reveal a whole range of Modernist textualities and elements of play which, in combination with reflection, suggest structural complexity.

Vera Bischitzky

(Berlin)

WESTWARD. CONCERNING THE VENTURE AND THE PLEASURE OF BRINGING THE SHY AND LETHARGIC ILYA ILYICH OBLOMOV OUT OF HIS SHELL. ON OCCASION OF THE NEW TRANSLATION OF OBLOMOV INTO GERMAN

In my presentation I will share a few lessons learnt from my quest to move Ilya Ilyich Oblomov across languages, national borders, and eras. Without these efforts, the slothful and apathetic Oblomov would never have ventured anywhere from his bed, let alone to a foreign land. Mention will be made of the fact that the author, Ivan Goncharov, criticized and even condemned translations of his own works. I will revisit Virgil's maxim about *rerum cognoscere causas* (knowing the causes of things) and review the fundamental requirements of literary

translation: the power of appreciation, excellence in and critical evaluation of one's mother tongue, empathy, the desire to embrace the writer's world, and the passion for historical, cultural and personal detail.

Tatiana Bodrova

(France, University Paris-3, New Sorbonne)

TEACHING EXPRESSION SKILLS IN INTERPRETING CLASSES AT ESIT

Acquiring oral expression skills is an important part of conference interpreters' curriculum at ESIT. This school uses the Interpretative Theory of Translation (ITT) as methodological basis for its teaching.

The ITT focuses on the process of translation which comprises several steps: understanding (i.e. extracting the meaning of a text), deverbalisation and re-expression of the meaning in the target language. It takes monolingual communication as a model and posits that the same mechanisms govern understanding, deverbalisation and expression in a monolingual setting as in translation.

Therefore, to achieve optimal expression skills, ESIT strives to match monolingual communication conditions: preparatory exercises for consecutive interpreting include speech analysis, «active listening», «brainstorming» sessions, giving the main ideas and the structure of the original text, «on-sight summary», etc. These methods are used to place students in a communication setting, regardless of the grammatical and lexical structures of the original language.

Short speeches on a given subject, prepared by the students in advance, develop and enrich their vocabulary in the target language and familiarize them with different «discourse genres». «Sight translation» exercises in class, in small groups or

individually, are used to acquire the deverbalsation and spontaneous re-expression automatisms. They constitute a useful preparation for learning simultaneous interpreting (with or without text).

Before starting to learn simultaneous interpreting as such, students continue to work on their oral expression skills, with exercises like the «reportage», «post-booth summary», speeches and presentations on a given subject prepared in advance. The main objective in all these practical exercises is to achieve the “dissociation” between original and target languages in order to develop a creative approach to expression during consecutive and simultaneous interpretation.

Alexandra Borisenko, Victor Sonkin

(Russia, Moscow State University)

MURDER AS A TEACHING DEVICE: CRIME STORY ANTHOLOGIES AS TESTING GROUND FOR TRANSLATION AND RESEARCH. A CASE STUDY

The Borisenko-Sonkin seminar has been active at the Philology department of Moscow State University since 1997, and throughout this time it was teaching students to prepare their translations for publication. This process started innocuously with a University-funded small booklet of select translations with a tiny print run and went through a number of commissions from publishers for translations of short stories and similar material.

Crime story turned out to be a great testing ground for studying the *zeitgeist*, the mores, the rituals, the everyday life of a bygone era. In searching for the details of the authors’ lives and the intricacies of house planning and gastronomic preferences of the Victorians, the students working on the project of Victorian crime fiction “Not Just Holmes” had no choice other than become investigators and researchers. The anthology was published in

2009 to the readers' and critics' acclaim and received the "Book of the Year" award from the Federal Agency for Press and Mass Communications in "Debut" nomination.

The next project, an anthology "Not the Butler!", devoted to British crime fiction between the world wars, was even more ambitious in scope and research. A classic short story was attributed for the first time in specialized literature, a number of previously unpublished portraits of the authors were uncovered, and the book grew an annex of period commentary forming a major and indispensable part of the project. A third installment on American crime fiction is in the works.

Our presentation will outline the basics of our teaching strategy and showcase the compilation of an anthology from scratch to publication and post-publication events as a teaching device for involving young translators in editing, online and offline research, using new scientific tools, cooperation between themselves and with other professionals in the book business, economic transactions and other tricks of the trade.

Konstantin Ivanov

(Switzerland, Geneva University)

TEACHING SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION WITH TEXT

This presentation is, to a large extent, based on the findings of a Simultaneous Interpretation with Text (SI+T) research carried out by a group of graduates of 2008/2009 FTI (former ETI) Master of Advanced Studies (MAS) in Interpreter Training that include Ms. Rawdha Cammoun, a Geneva-based freelance interpreter and teacher at FTI, Ms. Kate Davies, a staff interpreter and trainer at the European Commission, Mr. Boris Naimushin, Ph.D., a Sofia-based freelance interpreter and Associate Professor of Translation and Interpretation at the New Bulgarian University, and Mr. Konstantin Ivanov, a Geneva-based

freelance interpreter and teacher at FTI. That is why R. Cammoun, K. Davis and B. Naimushin are considered co-authors of this presentation together with K. Ivanov.

Proceeding from the ever-growing use of simultaneous interpretation with text (SI+T) at international conferences and on the private market and the need to teach it to the future interpreters, the presentation touches upon the following issues: what is SI+T; types of SI+T (running texts vs. Power Point slides vs. real-time captioning, etc.); theoretical foundation of SI+T study; four time-related scenarios in SI+T, i.e. (1) ideal (text given to interpreter well in advance), (2) normal (text given 10-20 minutes in advance), (3) rush (text given just before the speaker starts), and (4) crisis (text given after the speaker starts); SI with or without text: which is easier? - Cognitive constraints and benefits in SI+T (e.g., dual input vs. increased precision); interpreting strategies in dealing with text in SI under four time-related scenarios, including (1) strategic decision on whether or not to use the text and (2) text preparation strategies and techniques; current and recommended approaches to teaching SI+T; cognitive foundation for teaching SI+T with selected methodological recommendations; and possible progression scale in teaching SI+T.

Victor Kabakchi

(Russia, Herzen University)

TRANSLATORS FIGHTING THE FOG IN THE IDEOLOGICAL CONFRONTATION 'RUSSIA VS THE WEST'

Foreign-Culture-Oriented English (FCOE) is a specialized variety of this language with certain specific features of it in various spheres of Russian culture. Politics presents particular problems to translators. In the first place it is necessary to find suitable names for specific elements of Russia's political life (Duma, Bolshevik, NEP, 'shock therapy'). But far greater

difficulties are presented by the ideological confrontation 'Russia vs the West'. Ideologists of the opposing sides put different meaning in such political terms as 'democracy', 'freedom', 'human rights'. Translators often have to supply these political duplicates by special comment. Quotation marks and phrases like 'so-called' have to be used, and implicit connotations (frequently negative) require explanation.

Viacheslav Kashkin

(Russia, Voronezh State University)

FROM ANALYSIS TO TRANSLATION: A ROUNDTRIP JOURNEY?

Text analysis for translation should include both the elemental, and the holistic aspect in a dialogical and situational interaction. Like in a roundtrip journey, in analysis we start from text as a unity and go down to its elements, taking into consideration their function within the whole, which in its turn has to be reproduced in translation as a unity. Factors which influence text creation and recreation in translation form a hierarchy: 1) Text type and text genre, 2) communication sphere, 3) communicative act parameters (sender/recipient relations), 4) microparameters of discourse (cohesion, temporal relations, conceptual hierarchy, grammar and vocabulary, etc.), 5) macroparameters of discourse (coherence, modality, presupposition, intertextuality, etc.), 6) social factors (authority of sender/recipient; social status, cross-cultural adaptation, etc.). The list actually features two intertwined layers: classification parameters that define the status and the potential of the text, and parameters directly relevant for understanding the text and interpreting it.

Tamara Kazakova

(Russia, St. Petersburg State University)

THE ACCURACY AND DIVERSITY OF TRANSLATION

Unlike other functional styles, literary text may have many translation versions and they co-exist in the target culture, each having an individuality and literary fate of its own. If such versions of the same author or text are many then, logically, the reader should surely prefer the most accurate, i.e. most correct of them. In fact this logical approach exists only in theory, while practice demonstrates that such preferences are based on emotional rather than rational grounds. Take ten published Russian versions of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* – and nine of ten Russian readers will vote for Marshak's translation, although it is very far from being accurate, while more accurate versions are not so popular and often regarded as 'academic experiments'. To consider the opposite direction, there are nine English versions of *Master and Margarita*, and Michael Glanny's version is the least accurate of them, nevertheless Harvard students and professors preferred his translation to all the rest, much more accurate and informative. On the other side, some poems and novels translated once and forever live quite happily in the target culture, although the translation may be far from being accurate, for instance, Bunin's translation of the *Song of Haiawatha* (1896) is still in use, and, for all its inaccuracies, is unlikely to be re-translated. Quite a number of such examples exist, and this phenomenon is not sufficiently studied. Here I shall try to trace out some regularities in the way translated texts are adopted by the target culture.

Barbara Moser

(Switzerland, Geneva University)

INTERPRETER TRAINING AND ADAPTIVE EXPERTISE - LEARNING FROM AND WITH OUR BRAIN

Real-time human communication across language barriers relies on consecutive and simultaneous interpretation, a complex cognitive skill that can be acquired only over a certain period of time. Interpreting novices differ from interpreting experts in terms of their knowledge and knowledge organization, their analytical strategies, their use of memory processes, and the smoothness and speed with which they execute the interpreting task. In order to be able to move from comprehending a speech in one language and simultaneously interpreting that speech into another, the learner needs to make considerable adaptations to component processes of tasks already mastered, for the most part, before even being admitted to an interpreter training program. These adaptations concern mostly language comprehension and knowledge organization, component skills non-interpreters need in order to communicate. One must thus assume that significant changes occur in brain activity (functional plasticity) and brain structure (structural plasticity) during the acquisition of interpreting skills that are the result of learning, knowledge re-organization, strategy acquisition, and task monitoring.

Noel Muylle

(Belgium)

CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT AND THE ART OF LINGUISTIC MEDIATION

Language mediation, transferring facts, meaning, intentions, mood, and tone is like painting: using words instead of colours with the ultimate aim: to attract, to convince, to deliver a

message, a piece of conviction: strict when it comes to law and order, spontaneous when it comes to oral persuasion.

Yet, cultural environment as well as words influence and prepare the language communicator in delivering the final product, written or spoken: the rigor of details like in Canaletto's paintings, the blurred brushstrokes of Picasso, the normative setting of Malevich.

All involved in language transfers use their pencils and tempera hopefully to perfection: their mother tongue, one of the 6000 in the world, all different but equal in value and importance, and reflecting cultural divergences. To transpose concepts from one idiom into another presupposes knowledge but not only that, intelligence.

In a multilingual environment, but also in his own language, the mediator is often confronted with foggy texts and jargon, obscure reasoning, too many words, repetition; all this produced by non-native speakers, and presented without any quality control or editing.

Agility in wording and extended linguistic register, a broad horizontal approach will allow the translator and the interpreter to master the poetic beauty of Novalis but also to keep in pace with new economic and societal concepts, which should not come as a disturbing surprise.

Combining precision with elegance, taking on board 'the House style' of the client, clear writing and clear speaking is the key in communication. It cannot be left in the hands of dilettantes. This approach, this basic attitude should be at the heart of training programmes; the rest is lifelong learning.

Supported by new language ICT tools, the language artist will add value to text and speech and find his place in what is called the Language Industry with an annual turnover of EUR 8.7 billion in 2009 in Europe, the proof that multilingualism exists and that the language professions should be taken seriously and be properly rewarded.

Magdalena Olivera Tovar-Espada

(Switzerland, Geneva University)

PEER SUPERVISED TRAINING

At FTI's Interpreting Department, Peer supervised training (PST) is a learning environment in which students practice with their peers, sometimes on their own and sometimes supervised by assistant teachers. PST is different from general courses (designed for all students) and from specific language-pair interpretation courses (designed for a specific language combination). In PST, students work together in small multilingual groups, without teachers and without being evaluated. 8 hours/week of SPT are required in the MA programme. The following issues will be explained during the presentation: preparation of speeches, structure of a PST session, peer feedback, journal (tracking one's progress). A special emphasis will be given to deliberate practice.

Ekaterina Shutova

(Russia, Herzen University)

QUALITY IN INTERPRETING: AN ON-GOING DEBATE

This presentation is an attempt to analyze the various approaches that different stakeholders use to assess the quality of interpreting services. Special emphasis is made on the relative significance of non-linguistic aspects of the interpreter's work (responsibility, collaborative problem-solving, etc.) in comparison to purely linguistic performance (faithfulness, delivery, and grammatical-syntactical correctness). The author looks at the expectations of different parties and explores how these findings can be applied in the classroom.

Victor Sonkin

(Russia, Moscow State University)

CLASSICS, LITERALISM AND EXPERIMENTAL TRANSLATIONS: THE CASE AND QUEST OF MIKHAIL GASPAROV

Mikhail L. Gasparov (1935 – 2005) was a Renaissance figure in the field of Russian humanities of the later 20th century: classicist, verse scholar, historian of literature, textual scholar, memoirist, popularizer. Translation, in both its practical and theoretical aspects, was one of the persistent themes of his creative career.

1. The Classics: several approaches.

Gasparov's approaches to translating Greek and Latin classics, which formed the bulk of his translation output, ranged from measured exactness (as exemplified by Aesop's fables, where he counted the number of 'classical' and dialect words and then opted for different ways to translate them) to 'Russianized' translations of Euripides and Greek myths. In certain cases, such as translating Aristotle's cryptic treatises, Diogenes Laertius's *Lives of Philosophers* or Ausonius's *Cento*, certain extreme translation strategies were called for and successfully applied.

2. The Aeneid: the case of Valery Bryusov.

One of Gasparov's major contributions to translation studies was an article "Brjusov i bukvalizm" (Bryusov and Literalism), mostly devoted to the analysis of Bryusov's translation of *The Aeneid*. It was one of the first attempts of introducing literalism as a valid translation strategy, which did not amuse the literary establishment of the time.

3. The Marshak controversy.

Gasparov's article (written jointly with N. Avtonomova) on the classical Russian translations of Shakespeare's sonnets by Samuil Marshak turned out to be so divisive as to cost the co-authors the pursuit of a number of career venues. It was not published until much later. Such was the status of 'translation classics' in Soviet

reality: they could never be questioned or analyzed, even sympathetically.

4. Ariosto: A Classic Poem in Free Verse.

One of Gasparov's most voluminous achievements in translation was the Russian version of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, which he translated in free verse. That was an innovative attempt, especially given Gasparov's unyielding attention to verse form in his other fields of work.

5. Experimental translations.

Gasparov produced a range of 'experimental' translations from classics and lesser known authors across a broad range of world poetry. His method was transforming their various idioms into free verse and stripping down the text to the bare minimum of content. Sadly, these experiments were either reviled or ignored. It is hoped that Gasparov's contribution to the humanities, including the practice and theory of translation, will be more broadly acknowledged both in Russia and elsewhere.

Oxana Yakimenko

(Russia, Herzen University)

CROWDSOURCING IN TRANSLATION: GLOBAL TRENDS AND THE WAY IT WORKS IN RUSSIAN

This paper covers the main features of the crowdsourcing principle in translation. Alongside a summary of crowdsourcing strengths and weaknesses, the author provides a brief classification of the texts that are often translated using more or less professional 'crowds' of translators, and discusses the possible future of translation in relation to crowdsourcing, with reference to world practices and Russian examples.

Aleksei Zherebin

(Russia, Herzen University)

**FUSION OF HORIZONS: LITERARY TRANSLATION AS A
HERMENEUTIC PROBLEM**

This presentation is based on a study of Russian translations of Goethe, Nietzsche, and Freud, and expands on the idea that the act of translation serves as a fundamental driver underlying the development of meanings and the creation of culture. Reflection and translation exist in a conceptual dyad: in many ways reflection works as translation and translation becomes the practice of embodying a hermeneutic act of reflection. Hermeneutic reflection does not erase the boundaries between two autonomous texts (the text created by another and one's own text) but, rather, creates a boundary area of convergence where new meaning is produced through the 'fusion of horizons' (Gadamer): the range of vision embedded in the original text and that of the translator interpreting the text.

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