**Trial, Error and Experimentation in the Training of Translation Teachers**

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**Abstract**: In 2001 different programs for training translation teachers took place in Tarragona (Spain), Rennes (France) and Montery (US). They responded to a diversified international demand stemming from the creation of new translator-training programs in many countries in recent years. All three might be described as experimental to one degree or another; all three met with significant degrees of success. Here we shall outline the projects that preceded these programs, the individual specificities of the programs, and the results of the seminar developed at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili in Tarragona, Spain. We shall finally assess the possibilities for cooperation as well as competition in the future development of such training.

**The demand**

The number of university-level programs in the training of translators and interpreters has increased spectacularly since the beginning of the 1990s. There are now more than 300 such programs worldwide (cf. Pym 2001), not counting the courses in translation given in virtually all Modern Languages programs. This growth responds directly to the increase in cross-cultural exchanges at all levels, and thus to the general economic process known as globalization. Yet it is also a result of the progressive breaking down of the distinction between academic and vocational tertiary institutions. As the polytechnics have become universities, the training of translators has entered the academic realm. This process has occurred at different speeds in different countries. For example, Spain has seen the creation of some 23 translation programs since 1991; in Portugal the same expansion has begun in the past few years; in Italy it is only starting to take off now that the smaller private institutions can attain university status. Further afield, translator-training programs are being created in countries like Argentina, Brazil, China, Indonesia, Kampuchea, Korea, to name just a few. The numerous tensions involved in this long-term process may be summarized as follows:

- The entry of vocational concerns into the university environment has led to the demand for Translation Studies as an academic discipline, largely as a means of creating institutional legitimacy.
- The same process has forced traditional pedagogical concepts to adjust to the rapidly changing technologies of professional translation and localization, occasionally in conflict with the concerns of established Translation Studies.
- Many teachers have been required to move into the field of translation, even though their background is in language teaching at various levels; these teachers create a demand for specific training of trainers in this field.
- At the same time, many institutions have recruited professional translators to give classes, often for contents requiring technical competencies that the language

teachers do not have; this creates a demand for training in the teaching techniques appropriate to such contents.
- As all of this happens, the more established translation schools are facing challenges from the many younger institutions, resulting in numerous efforts to establish or confirm prestige in this field. This might explain, for example, why there are so many international conferences in Translation Studies, organized by both the older and the younger institutions.

**Initial attempts to meet the demand**

There have been various attempts to respond to this complex of tensions and demands:
- Daniel Gouadec ran a teacher training program at the Centre Jacques Amyot in Paris from 1986 until 1991, when the program was moved to Rennes, France, following the death of Antoine Berman and the subsequent closure of the Paris centre. Special one-month sessions for translation teachers have since been held in Rennes for the past eight years.
- In Sweden, Birgitta Englund Dimitrova organized a 10-week program for translator trainers in 1996, and that course has been repeated intermittently since then. It is currently being expanded to address the training of interpreters of all kinds (see Englund Dimitrova 2001a, forthcoming).
- There are also more limited forays into the field, such as the unit in "Dadactics of Translator Training" that is part of the MA program in Translation and Interpretation at the University of Ottawa, Canada.

Parallel to these isolated initiatives there have been several programmatic attempts to foster international cooperation in this field. Perhaps the longest-standing is the POSI project (Praxisorientierte Studienhalte in der Dolmetscher- und Übersetzerausbildung), which dates from October 1981. In 1986 this project drew up a "desired professional profile of the professional translator/interpreter" and a list of "central issues to be addressed in any course of training leading to the academic qualification of interpreter or translator". Ten years later, that memorandum was revised in view of "the invasion of the working sphere by computers and data processing tools", including "terminology efforts" (POSI 1996). Various forms of collaboration were sought with the FIT (Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs), the CIUTI (Conférence Internationale Permanente des Instituts Universitaires de Traducteurs et Interprètes) and the European Translation Platform, basically with a view to establishing a "professional profile" for translators and interpreters in Europe. In institutional terms, the POSI project brought together representatives of the well-established translation schools in Europe and tried to make them aware that the traditional concepts of translation needed to be updated. In this, it was conceptually aided by the precepts of German-language *Skopostheorie*, which seriously challenged traditional linguistic approaches to translation. The project has undoubtedly had some influence on the curricula of the established schools in Europe. However, after some 20 years of meetings and reports, it has not given rise to any permanent institutional structure, and it has not directly addressed the need to train teachers in terms of its guidelines.

In 1996 the specific demand to train trainers was addressed by the Thematic Network Project "Formation européenne transfrontière de formateurs en traduction et de formateurs en interprétation" (SOCRATES/ERASMUS/IB TNP 26022), under the aegis of the European Language Council. This was a three-year project (1996-1999)

that once again brought together representatives of the more established translation schools in Europe, many of them CIUTI institutions. The project worked in two parts, one on written translation, the other on interpreting. Both parts conducted surveys of what was being done in the institutions represented; they then developed profiles of ideal teachers and the various modules that a training program should include. In the case of written translation, those modules were: the changing nature of translation, theory, tools, process of professional translation, translation management, classroom interaction, curriculum development, and evaluation. The list would indicate informed awareness of the need to bring traditional teaching practices closer to market demands, in tune with the concepts underlying the POSI project. The project eventually gave rise to a biannual program in the training of teachers of interpreting, based in Geneva and addressed to professional interpreters who want to teach their skills (the program includes 12 days of intensive instruction, classroom observation, and a written project, all at a cost of some 3000 CHF). The side of the project dealing with written translation has not produced any such program.

      As we have noted, both the POSI project and the Thematic Network were structured in such a way that they brought together representatives of the more established translation schools in Europe. They were thus structurally given to working on the practices obtaining in just a small sector of the global training of translators, and implicitly in bolstering the prestige of that sector. The real successes of those projects must thus be sought within the institutions represented. With the exception of the Geneva program in interpreting, those projects were not structured in a way that could address the wider tensions we have outlined above.

      The next chapter in the story would open with a two-day seminar in Rennes, France, in 2000. That seminar was designed to discuss the need to train trainers in technical translation (not interpreting, and not literary translation), building on the many years of experience that Rennes had in training translators in this field. That meeting brought together interested individuals rather than representatives of institutions; it included teachers from countries such as Egypt, Slovakia and Romania. The general feeling was that, after so many years spent in meetings and reports without tangible results, it was essential that actual training programs be established. Future planning would thus be based on actual experience. One result of that seminar was the formation of a Consortium for the Training of Translation Teachers (CTTT). Another was the planning of the seminars that took place in Rennes and Tarragona in 2001.

**The 2001 programs**

The programs organized in Rennes and Tarragona in 2001 thus drew indirectly on a fairly long history of organization and planning. The program in Monterey had its roots in quite a different context, given that most of the above planning concerned Europe rather than the United States. The three programs in 2001 were linked in informal but significant ways. One of the course leaders in Tarragona (Don Kiraly) was also a key figure in Monterey; another course leader in Tarragona (Daniel Gouadec) was director of the Rennes program; and the director of the Tarragona program (myself) participated in the planning seminar in Rennes in 2000. All three programs were given some measure of publicity by the Consortium for the Training of Translation Teachers (CTTT), formed as a result of that meeting in Rennes. Further, two foundation members of the Consortium (Hugo Marquant and Yves Gambier) had been key participants in the Thematic Network Project. These links

were at the interpersonal rather than institutional level, allowing each individual program scope to adapt to its respective context.

These points are directly related to recent critiques (in Gabr 2001) that the Tarragona and Rennes programs suffered from a lack of planning, that the three programs encountered the same problems, and that they might all be cured by the same solutions. Some of these critiques are justified; others, as we have seen, fall very wide of the mark.

The aims and nature of the programs were broadly as follows:

**Tarragona** was a four-day intensive seminar in English, costing $257 (48,000 pesetas) per participant. The course leaders were authors of books in the field (Gouadec, Kiraly, Austermühl, Beeby, Pym). It was followed up by a six-month Certificate program in which participants are required to complete a research project, to be evaluated by a committee of experts (for details see the CTTT website). The focus of the program was broadly on the interaction between technology and pedagogy. There were 56 participants, from a total of 13 countries (from Korea to Venezuela), 18 of whom undertook to complete the supplementary Certificate program. There was no subsidy for the participants, but no fees were sought from candidates from Turkey, Slovakia and Nigeria (who then failed to turn up).

**Rennes** was a four-day intensive seminar in French, costing $250 (1800 FF) per participant. The course leaders were French-speaking experts in technical translation (Gouadec, Toudic, Gambier, Marquant), with years of experience in training translators. There was no follow-up program, although participants were welcome to attend a one-week course in computer literacy, a conference on translator training, and the regular Rennes summer/autumn school on terminology, translation and technical writing. There were 20 participants, from 14 countries, none of whom were from France. There were numerous subsidies for the organization of the seminar, and all the participants had received grants either from their home institutions or from agencies of the French government. The prime target audience was teachers in French sections of institutions in many different situations, although there were also three participants from Ministries of Education intending to set up programs in translator training.

**Monterey** was a four-week seminar (120 hours of instruction) in English, costing $3,000 tuition fees per participant. The course leaders were all Americans, most of them teaching in the US. There were 10 participants. The entry requirements were that participants be professional translators or interpreters with interest and/or experience in teaching. The result was a mixed group, ranging from people with no teaching experience through to one with 13 years experience. The languages represented included Japanese, French, Spanish, Korean, Catalan and Chinese. Some participants train (or will train) interpreters, others translators, and still others both.

Although they overlap in their aims and methods, the three programs clearly differ with respect to their institutional contexts, target audiences, and budgets. For as much as the planning in the European context had a long history and was informally coordinated in the cases of Rennes and Tarragona, the evaluation of each program should clearly be framed in terms of the specific local and institutional contexts.

**Contents**

The actual contents presented in the three programs differed remarkably. All, however, might be regarded as loosely in accordance with the modules outlined by the Thematic Network Project (to recall: the nature of translation, theory, tools, process of professional translation, translation management, classroom interaction, curriculum development, and evaluation). The outline of the contents, drawn from the publicity for the three programs, is as follows:

| Tarragona | |
|---|---|
| Day 1<br>Theory and research | Contemporary theories of professional translation<br>Investigating translation competence<br>Translation competence acquisition for curriculum design<br>Syllabus design: A-B, B-A, specialized translation<br>Group practice on syllabus design |
| Day 2<br>Working and teaching with computers (in parallel with demonstrations of CAT tools) | Electronic tools for translators - typologies and evaluation criteria<br>Terminology databases<br>Teaching electronic tools for translators - integrating ICT into the Translation Classroom<br>Round table: Integrating e-learning |
| Day 3<br>The teaching process | Social constructivism and classroom dynamics<br>Group practice sessions on ways of introducing teamwork and alternative tasks<br>Assessment and evaluation techniques<br>Round table on evaluation techniques, professional standards and quality as a variable |
| Day 4<br>The translation process and its implications for training | Strategies for translation: pre-transfer.<br>Transfer<br>Post-transfer<br>Round table on the future of translator training and ways of training trainers |
| Three-month period | Completion of research projects |

Each day was mostly organized around just one course leader: Austermühl, Kiraly and Gouadec for the last three days, Pym for the introductory module of the first day, and Beeby and Orozco for the rest of the first day. This enabled the sessions to go into the personal vision and experience of each leader in some depth. The overall organization was generally well evaluated in the participants' feedback reports (on which, more below), although there was a slighter lower evaluation of the attempt to integrate the methods and findings of research ("investigating translation competence", on the first day). Note that research on translator training was not included in the Thematic Network's outline of modules, nor did it appear explicitly in the Rennes and Monterey programs. As a gamble, it would appear not to have paid off.

| Rennes | |
|---|---|
| Day 1 | Training background required by translation employment markets<br>Sources: job offers and translation employment observatory<br>General organization of translation courses<br>Optimizing curriculum contents<br>Evolving learning patterns and procedures |
| Day 2 | A quality assurance model for professional translation<br>Material and technical conditions required for translator training courses<br>Case studies<br>Quality assurance-based learning models<br>Knowledge of student profiles |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Common teaching practices<br>Lesson contents and organization: teaching theory and practice in the classroom<br>Translation typology and learning objectives<br>Project-based learning and team work<br>Case studies |
| Day 3 | Know-how based learning: Pre-translation<br>• Source languages and translation<br>• Comprehension, documentation and translation<br>• Technical studies and domain exploration<br>• Terminology and translation<br>• Phraseology and translation<br>Using specifications and dedicated software<br>Know-how based learning: Translation and post-translation<br>• Transfer strategies<br>• Target language and translation<br>• IT and translation<br>• Checking/revision and translation<br>Using specifications and dedicated software |
| Day 4 | Specific problems:<br>• Choice of source materials and learning phases<br>• Gradual learning procedures<br>• Translation assessment<br>• Revision<br>• Student team management<br>• Emulating and simulating<br>Case studies<br>• Teaching staff team management<br>• Implementing professionally oriented training programs<br>• Conclusions |

The Rennes program was more clearly focused on the current market for technical translation, benefiting from many years of experience in this field and gaining considerable coherence from the central organizing role of Daniel Gouadec.

| Monterey | |
|---|---|
| Week One<br>Principals of Pedagogy | Principals and Methods<br>Classroom Management<br>Educational Theory<br>Needs Analysis<br>Curriculum Design<br>Lesson Planning |
| Week Two<br>Assessment and Evaluation | Assessment Types<br>Testing Options<br>Diagnostic Testing<br>Entrance/Exit Testing<br>Classroom Feedback<br>Certification<br>Peer Feedback<br>Learner Training<br>Academic Advising |
| Week Three<br>Materials Development | Technology<br>Resources<br>Computer Labs<br>Professional Workstations<br>Translation Software<br>Interpretation Technology<br>Speech Banks<br>Distance Learning |

| | Localization |
|---|---|
| Week Four<br>Practicum | Topic Specific Teaching<br>Guest Speakers<br>Demonstration Classes<br>Practical Training<br>Course Integration |

The Monterey program was clearly far more focused on teaching practices as such, without elaborating the constraints of specific markets or types of translation (its scope included interpreting as well). In this sense, its philosophy might be regarded as more or less the opposite of the underlying thought at Rennes. The French program would seem to have assumed that participants already knew what teaching was all about, and that they needed to know more on the specific pedagogical consequences of just one kind of translation; the Americans, on the other hand, more readily assumed that knowledge of translation was already in place and participants required the specifics of teaching practices. And Tarragona perhaps wanted it both ways.

The key to these differences lies in the various strategies used to construct and address the learning communities.

**A homogenous learning community?**

The textbooks state that a training program requires a body of students who are ideally all at the same level, with similar backgrounds. The adequate screening of candidates should ensure the constitution of such a group. If this relative homogeneity is not attained, there is a high risk that "participants will easily lose motivation", "learning will not occur", and in extreme cases the disparities will "'sabotage' training" (Gabr 2001). These traditional arguments concord with quite obvious common sense: if a given content is hard for some and boring for others, the instructor-student relation cannot function well. Anyone consciously seeking heterogeneity in a student body must thus either be ignorant or masochistic.

This is an important point, since our three learning communities were all far from homogeneous. Despite all the initial planning of "ideal profiles", people from many different cultural and professional backgrounds were placed side-by-side. Strangely enough, the textbook predictions of calamity seem not to have been fulfilled in any of the three courses. Even more strangely, the decision to seek a highly controlled *heterogeneity* was made collectively at the preliminary seminar in Rennes in 2000 (which Gabr, a prophet of calamities, actually attended). The reasoning formulated at that time runs roughly as follows:

The technological changes that have radically changed the labour market for technical translators mean that traditional teaching practices are no longer adequate (on this we are all in agreement). Translation schools thus have to 1) train new instructors who have backgrounds in language teaching, 2) retrain established translation instructors who do not know about the new technology and its consequences, and 3) increasingly recruit professional technical translators, who need training in translation pedagogy. That is, there are theoretically three complementary strategies, and thus at least three target audiences requiring different kinds of training. However, much of this training is of a very practical, hands-on nature. Further, the skills involved should already exist within these segments: some know the pedagogy but not the technology, others know the technology but not the pedagogy, still others need both and are going to be struggling, and anyone who already knows both does not really need our training. This means there should be great potential for participants (no longer 'students') to learn through exchanges with other participants,

such that our course leaders become 'learning facilitators', in the great liberal tradition. All we have to do, in theory, is to create an environment, a learning community, in which these exchanges can take place.

Such was the reasoning explicitly behind the Tarragona seminar, and perhaps implicitly in Rennes and Monterey as well. Of course, in all three cases there were also budget constraints, since we are now in the field of commercial experiment rather than subsidized planning. This pushed organizers to accept as many participants as possible (the limit of 50 external participants was nevertheless maintained in the case of Tarragona). Yet the rationale for controlled interaction was there, and it might fairly be regarded as an experiment whose results demand to be assessed in more than commercial terms.

The fact of heterogeneity could be managed by the organizers on two levels: in the stipulation of entry requirements, and in the organization of the actual instruction process. At this point we will deal only with Tarragona, which is the case for which we have detailed information and feedback from the participants.

*Entry requirements*

The entry requirements for all three programs were minimal, being based on individual dossiers and generally insisting on little more than a first degree, in whatever field. However, given the fees involved, there was a significant financial screening: all participants either had funding from their home institutions or were professionally involved in translation or translator training at a level that justified their investment. In practice, this meant that all participants had first degrees plus significant experience either in teaching or professional translation. In Tarragona, there were no cases where a candidate's qualifications appeared inadequate to the aims of the program. Indeed, the target group fell rather neatly into two basic categories: experienced teachers on the one hand, experienced translators on the other.

*Organization of activities*

Given the intensive nature of the seminar, interactions were organized on the basis of lectures plus group activities. The problem of heterogeneity was handled in a more or less spontaneous way on the first day, when the working groups of four to six formed themselves according to shared languages-other-than-English rather than in terms of professional backgrounds. That is, one group did work using the English-Italian combination, another was English-Korean, still another was English-Spanish, and so on. This meant that there were sometimes both experienced teachers and professional translators within the one group. It also meant that individual groups tended to share cultural parameters on the nature of course design, instructor-student relationships, acceptable limits of translation, etc. Those very significant differences became very apparent when group leaders reported back to the whole learning community. We thus discovered that the most problematic heterogeneity lay in cultural backgrounds, rather than professional qualifications or interests. This is an informal finding that should have consequences for further programs in this field.

*Evaluation by participants*

The participants in Tarragona were asked to respond to an evaluation questionnaire distributed by email about two months after the actual seminar. A total of 27 replies

were received. One of the questions in the questionnaire directly concerned the perceived problem of heterogeneity, framed in terms of a basic alternative to what we had done: "Should there be separate seminars for people with a background in professional translation?".

The answers gave 66% positive mentions concerning controlled heterogeneity (i.e. in favour of what we did) and 34% negative mentions (suggesting a range of possible alternatives). Positive mentions included replies such as:

I feel I benefited enormously from being exposed to the ideas, contributions etc of people more experienced than me.

Getting both worlds together could only contribute to restructure current programs and re-evaluate professional goals.

Negative mentions included:

Some sessions were difficult because the "teachers" felt unduly basic "teaching technique" was being dealt with, while the "professional translators" felt they were missing basic pedagogical information. However, there has to be a meeting point with shared information if the idea is to prepare professionals for teaching translators.

We could have special sessions for people with a background in professional translation and translation teaching.

We can thus claim no clear-cut victory on this issue, no matter how comforting a result of 66% might be in electoral terms. Some of the negative mentions did indeed indicate the risk of a twin-track program with no meeting point. And some of the proposed solutions should bear fruits in future, notably with respect for special sessions for specific target groups. Yet there is a certain irony here. One of the mornings in the Tarragona seminar was split into parallel sessions, with precisely this aim in mind. We assumed that participants with no direct knowledge of translation-memory software would attend demonstration sessions (given by distributors of DejaVu, Star Transit and Trados Workbench). Those who knew about the software, ostensibly the professional translators, could instead attend an "advanced" workshop on electronic tools, given by Frank Austermühl. A preliminary survey indicated that about half the participants would indeed attend the demonstrations, the other half would attend the workshop. Yet that experiment was a clear failure: almost everyone went to the workshop, and those who attended the demonstrations complained that they should have been given the chance to attend the workshop as well. The reasons for this are obscure. One might surmise that the wider group, once formed, wanted first and foremost to remain a group, following like sheep. It could also be that Austermühl, as the author of a freshly published book, had a certain prestige that attracted participants. And the software demos and tutorials could be downloaded from the web anyway.

Whatever the case, our one attempt to split the learning community was admirably resisted. Our future experiments (in Vicenza, Italy, in 2002) will thus continue to work on the basis of a controlled heterogeneity, attempting to promote active exchange between participants rather than rigidly parallel activities.

**Duration of the programs**

A related point is the length of the three programs. It might be argued that four days is too little time for any real skills to be developed at a professional level. In theory, attempts to cram too much content into too little time will result in saturation and non-learning (as is argued in Gabr 2001). From this perspective, the only truly effective training program would be the one in Monterey, which allowed itself four weeks in which to cover a lot of ground. Better still, our collective efforts would perhaps be better spent on long-term Masters-level programs lasting a year, allowing for a more substantial qualification to be issued.

The basic question here is whether the short-term format can make any significant difference in this field. Four points need to be made:

- We are entering a domain in which virtually nothing is being done to meet the very real international demand. That is, the phrase "better than nothing" is of some real import.
- The four-day programs at Rennes and Tarragona were complemented by other activities. In the case of Rennes, most of the participants also attended a seminar on technical translation. In Tarragona, the four days of contact were backed up by a series of textbooks that participants were invited to read either before or after the seminar. There was also a Certificate program requiring a research project to be completed over a six-month period. One might thus regard the four contact days as just one point in an extended training program.
- Many of the participants, from a wide range of countries, were also engaged in various Masters or doctoral programs in translation or were gaining direct experience by teaching translation. That is, the four-day seminar was part of ongoing learning processes that were taking place in the home contexts. This was the case, by the way, for six of my own students doing a Masters in Technical Translation: they sat in on the seminar (in addition to the 50 external participants) and had the credits count as part of their Masters.
- The evaluation questionnaire giving feedback on Tarragona was also illustrative on this point. Asked "Would you have enrolled if the seminar had been for two weeks, at twice the price?", only 5 respondents (18.5%) answered with an unqualified 'yes'. Of the rest, 59% of the mentions indicated that the participant would not have found enough time (away from work and/or family), and only 22% indicated that the money would have been a problem. In the case of the professional translators, all of them indicated that the time constraints would be more significant than paying the fees. We might thus imagine that, had the Tarragona program lasted for two weeks, the 50 participants would have been reduced to about 10 (as was the case in Monterey), and they would have been almost all teachers rather than professional translators.

Were the Rennes and Tarragona programs long enough? They probably were, when combined with other training activities. More importantly, it seems that any program seeking to bring together both teachers and professional translators would have to be limited to about a week.

**Authority and expertise**

The final aspect that we shall comment on here is the wider problem of gaining, borrowing or maintaining some degree of authority in this field. If these training programs are to be at all effective, there must be some general agreement about the

validity of the skills they are promoting. That kind of agreement is not always easy to find.

One approach to this problem is to determine beforehand a profile of the "ideal teacher", backed up by a catalogue of recognized "best practices", as indeed was the general approach adopted by the long-term planning projects that preceded our three training programs. Yet those projects did not bear fruit in the field of technical translation, and that approach was generally not adopted at Rennes or Tarragona. The reasons for this only make sense in terms of the global picture of translator training.

Of the 300 or so translation schools in the world, less than 10% are members of the CIUTI, an organization designed to maintain the authority and prestige of its member institutions. The key players in the POSI and Thematic Network projects were CIUTI members; Monterey, with its four-week course, is a CIUTI member, as is Geneva, which runs the course for training teachers of interpreting. Given this institutional structure, one might well imagine a scenario where the best knowledge is retained by the top 10%, and teacher training should help that knowledge radiate out to the rest of the world. It is a pretty picture, and not altogether unfounded.

Rennes and Tarragona, however, are not CIUTI members. As such, they are very likely to be seen as upstarts seeking to usurp established authority in this field, particularly in a situation where the CIUTI itself has recently established an "academy" offering specialized short-term courses to the world. If the CIUTI Academy starts offering courses in the training of trainers, as it probably should, we might be facing a conflict of significant proportions.

Note that an approach based on ideal "profiles" and established "best practices" is well suited to the institutional situation of the CIUTI. That approach relies on the values of established tradition, on the accrued experience of schools that, in some cases, have been training translators and interpreters for more than 50 years. At the same time, however, the weight of tradition makes it difficult for well established institutions to respond to the changes brought about by the technologies of technical translation. Such was the tension underlying the POSI project. CIUTI schools are mainly large institutions, with conference interpreting as their flagship. Their authority is by no means established in field like the growing market in localization. Indeed, the very values that bring prestige in areas like conference interpreting, literary translation or linguistics-based evaluation are more likely to be drawbacks in the field of contemporary technical translation.

This might explain why there is no deep conflict of authority here, as there might be if two different kinds of institution were attempting to do exactly the same thing. From outside the CIUTI, a training program must strategically define a new area, then focus precisely on what is most new in that area. In the case of Rennes, this has meant working within the frame of Daniel Gouadec's elaborate process-model of technical translation. In the case of Tarragona, the focus was more on the relation between electronic tools and the teaching situation (an emphasis that well be further stressed in the program in Vicenza in 2002). The authority of such programs must thus lie first and foremost in their close relation to changing market demands. And since those very demands are new and dynamic, our approach cannot rely exclusively on models of tried-and-true profiles and practices.

In the case of Tarragona, the logical consequence of this strategy was to allow for a plurality of possible models (of translation, of the learning process) and to encourage exchanges and debates between them. This is precisely the opposite of transferring a set of fixed "best practices". It meant inviting course leaders with quite

different ideas; it lay behind the search for a controlled heterogeneity within the learning community; it led to extensive group work with strong input from participants; it involved the planning of round tables where discord as well as agreement could come to light. Indeed, almost all our organizational decisions ensued from the one underlying bet on plurality, and that strategy was a logical consequence of our status as a non-CIUTI institution.

One should not, however, think of established tradition as some kind of enemy (two of our course leaders in Tarragona were from a CIUTI institution, and few would even care to remark the fact). This is because there is at least one major alternative source of authority in this field: publications, notably books. All the course leaders in Tarragona were authors of books on translator training (all participants had a 20% reduction on purchases of books from one of the major publishers in the field). People who had never heard of the CIUTI came to the seminar precisely to speak with "the author of...". As public knowledge, books travel further than bricks-and-mortar institutions; they create a wider form of prestige; and they stand or fall on their own individual merits. As a source of authority, books were our second strategic bet, alongside the decision to focus on a plurality of approaches to a new field.

## Results of the experiment

Have those strategies worked? Only time (and money) will tell. So far, yes, the experiments seem worth continuing. The minor adjustments that will take place between Tarragona 2001 and Vicenza 2002 concern a greater emphasis on the relation between technology and pedagogy, some special sessions for specific target groups, more round tables, and aspects that we have not dealt with here (notably less emphasis on theory and research, which did not sell well to the professional translators)

Clearly, the experiment cannot be offered as a blueprint for other activities in this field. It is the result of a calculated set of strategies. If, for example, one were working from within the long-established institutions, the logical procedure would be to focus on conference interpreting, to stress the prestige of institutional environments, to transmit relatively stable knowledge such as curriculum-development, syllabus design and evaluation guidelines, and to seek a long-term training program. This would appear to be more or less what those institutions have done, and there is certainly nothing wrong with that. Together, working from various points in the institutional spectrum, these initiatives should all help to train teachers to meet the new demands.

If there is to be cooperation as well as competition, certain minimal symbols are required. The Certificate program following on from the Tarragona seminar is currently governed by a committee comprising people from the Consortium for Training Translation Teachers (CTTT), the Training and Evaluation Committee of the Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs (FIT), the Training Committee of the European Society for Translation Studies (EST), the CIUTI, and industry representatives. It is not hard to bring all those sigla together, since those people are all genuinely committed to improving the training of translation teachers. Will that committee actually do anything (other than assess the research projects from the Tarragona seminar)? Perhaps not, given the lack of subsidies for large face-to-face meetings. Then again, hopefully it will help promote dialogue across the current string of individual initiatives in this field. Authority and prestige, if they come, should then

be a result of successful experiments, rather than automatic sanction from established tradition.

**Note**

The author would like to thank Daniel Gouadec, Donald Kiraly and Birgitta Englund Dimitrova for information on the programs in Rennes, Monterey and Sweden respectively.

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