

REPORT:

**The TILS 2008 Conference
“Translation, Interpreting and LSP.
Research in cross-lingual communication:
theories and methodologies”,
Macerata, Italy, February 1-2, 2008**

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TILS 2008

Traduzione, Interpretazione e Linguaggi Specialistici. La ricerca nella comunicazione interlinguistica: modelli teorici e metodologici

Translation, Interpreting and LSP. Research in cross-lingual communication: theories and methodologies

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<http://zope.unimc.it/tils2008/home>

This two day conference, organised by the Department of Linguistic, Literary, and Philological Research and the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Macerata was co-ordinated by Stefania Cavagnoli, Elena Di Giovanni, Raffaella Merlini, and Diego Poli. The rich programme of TILS, with 54 papers and three plenary lectures, hinders an exhaustive account of the conference. More details and the abstracts are available on the conference website at <http://zope.unimc.it/tils2008/home>.

The title of the conference signals the width of the programme, where different theoretical and applicative aspects of cross-lingual communication were analysed from the perspectives of translation, interpreting, and languages for special purposes. These three focal areas and their mutual

connections found extensive treatment in the plenary lectures given by Jeremy Munday of the University of Leeds, Klaus-Dieter Baumann of the University of Leipzig, and Franz Pöchhacker of the University of Vienna.

The Conference opened with Jeremy Munday's lecture *What do we really mean by 'translation'? A reflection on (inter)disciplinary status, methodologies and practice*, which discussed the emergence of translation studies/translation theory delineated as an interdiscipline, particularly related to applied linguistics and cultural studies as well as to literary/language studies, IT applications, and philosophy. The evolution of translation studies since the 1960's has undergone a process of identity definition where its interdisciplinary character delineates, with the increasing emergence in the last years of contributions made by non-Western theories, historical material, the consideration of cognitive processes, relevance theory, and the role of sociology as well as new technologies which intervene both in the theoretical and practical side of translation. Munday particularly stressed the close relation between translation studies and neighbouring disciplines such as interpreting and LSP, and the ensuing potentialities for these complementary areas of an increasing collaboration in the perspective of research as well as of translation courses.

The plenary lecture given by Klaus-Dieter Baumann on February 2nd, *A Cognitive-communicative Analysis of the Information Transfer in English and German LSP texts*, analysed the transfer of information in LSP texts carried out in the framework of a wider interdisciplinary project which is centred on a consideration of specialised communication as one among the cognitive activities. Hence, specialised communication is analysed also by taking into account the "extra-linguistic" cognitive components with which it interacts. In Baumann's investigation emotion in LSP communication plays a central role. According to the analyses he has made in the last years fifteen different dimensions determining emotions in LSP texts can be identified; these are correlated with the various facets of emotional factors, such as culture, social and situational characteristics, cognitive aspects, etc. The inductive-empirical analyses were based, in a first stage, on corpora of German and English specialised texts, and of German, English, and Russian texts in a following stage. The approach to the LSP text corpus is based on diverse methods, including the descriptive, functional, structural, comparative, and statistic ones.

Franz Pöchhacker's lecture, *Interpreting for Special Purposes*, highlighted the interrelation of interpreting and LSP in the framework of cross-lingual communication. His discussion started from a theoretical stance centred on the possible interrelation of LSP research and interpreting studies. These are two disciplinary areas which are acquiring a growing autonomy. In particular,

Pöchhacker's analysis focused on the different natures of conference and community interpreting. The former displays a stronger connection with LSP through lexical and terminographic data, while discourse-analytical approaches have a greater relevance for the latter – hence minor implications are displayed with LSP studies. Yet, a common ground – both theoretical and applicative – for LSP and interpreting studies was identified, and the necessity for further research on this interrelation was highlighted. Pöchhacker's theoretical points were exemplified by the analysis of expert–layperson communication in the specific setting of interpreting in asylum hearings.

The various sections of the three parallel sessions in which the Conference was structured reflect the multifaceted dimension of cross-lingual communication in relation to translation, interpreting, and LSP. The scrutiny of this articulate inter-disciplinary field gives rise to different theoretical and applicative approaches.

The morning sessions of February 1st were devoted respectively to the discussion of different theoretical perspectives of translation issues (*Theoretical paradigms revisited*), the analysis of translation questions as related to different text typologies (*Textual Approaches*), and extra-linguistic factors relevant in interpreting activities (*Interactional and sociolinguistic paradigms*).

In the lectures of the afternoon sessions the main themes of the conference (translation, interpreting and LSP) were considered in regard to different aspects of *Empirical investigations* – with a special focus on LSP translation, and terminological definition and representation–, and of *Theoretical approaches to teaching and training* strategies aimed at translators and interpreters. Furthermore, cross-cultural and inter-lingual communication was analysed in the framework of multimedia (specialised) communication (*Investigations into multimedia communication*), with particular attention to cultural facets, and with the consideration of impaired receivers as well.

The parallel sessions held on February 2nd were centred on studies devoted to communication in different contextual typologies, intercultural aspects of specialised communication, and terminology. Numerous contributions were presented in the section centred on *Communication in institutional contexts*; special interest was aroused by the legal context, as regards both textual and terminological aspects. Communication questions in literary translation were examined also in relation to cultural and ideological issues (*Communication in literary contexts*). Cross-cultural aspects in text translation and in teaching practices were analysed in the papers of the session *Investigations into*

intercultural aspects. Technical and specialised communication, and LSP translation and teaching were the core subjects of *Communication in specialized contexts*. The section *Metalanguage and the representation of knowledge* was centred on terminological issues focused on translation and knowledge representation.

The goal of the conference organisers was achieved as the contributions presented have confirmed that translation, interpreting and LSP are ready to open to a profitable mutual enrichment in both theoretical and empirical perspectives. In fact an interdisciplinary framework for these branches seems to be even a necessity for their further development. The success of the conference is an encouragement for the specialists in these fields to consider holding analogous events in the future. As a follow up to TILS 2008 the organisers will publish the contributions in printed proceedings.
