



Editorial

Professional communication between experts becomes more and more demanding in terms of vocabulary, precision, and consistency irrespective of the language used for this communication. Although English is considered to be the global lingua franca in most professional and academic contexts, the precision and consistency holds true for professional communication in any other language. Contracts, technical reports, legal documents, multi-national company sites and a lot more tend to be required in more than one language, English will only in rare circumstances be sufficient, therefore the smoothest possible transition between languages – be it traditional translation or another form of rendering – must be ensured. That is why LSP must be constantly analyzed, developed, enhanced, disseminated, and even popularized, and specialists must be educated to handle these processes which are vital to ensuring knowledge transfer across all sorts of boundaries and growth in general.

Wrong beliefs that global English will be usable for all types of cross-cultural professional communication, that any non mother tongue speaker masters English at a sufficient level after leaving high school, and that machine translation can deal with what humans cannot, have various negative effects. One is the apparent low status of the translation industry and of knowledge work in general, and the lack of interest that students in various countries show in acquiring language and culture skills at a high level. Many seem to believe that if they study a subject, be it engineering, international marketing, legal affairs, or whatever, the skills to communicate in a foreign language, typically English, about the details of their domain, will develop gradually and all by itself. This attitude takes away focus from the real challenges of specialized communication and the need for data collection and dissemination, for multi-lingual and multi-cultural ontology building, as well as for research in these areas. The worst scenario is a generation of youngsters where very few realize the importance of making the serious effort it takes to become educated for efficient professional communication and all its aspects.

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