

**María Amparo Jiménez Ivars and María Jesús Blasco Mayor (eds) (2012). *Interpreting Brian Harris. Recent Developments in Translatology*. Bern et al.: Peter Lang, VIII, pp. 243, 53.80€. ISBN: 978-3-0343-0589-1.**

This volume offers a selection of papers from the conference *Interpreting...Naturally*, held at the University Jaume I of Castellón in November 2009<sup>1</sup>. Both the conference and the book were born out of a desire to pay homage to Brian Harris, and no better tribute could be paid to him than to present new findings which attempt to follow his pioneering footsteps in the field of Natural Translation. The editors of this volume should be congratulated, since all the papers collected in this volume fulfil the condition of being related to Brian Harris' fields of research, a fact which reflects efforts to give coherence and cohesion to this book, despite the thematic diversity of the papers.

In the introduction the editors set out the reasons for publishing this volume, and explain why these articles were selected. The reader is given a panoramic overview of the compilation and can see how the different contributions map out the various research lines covered by Natural Translation: i.e., bilingualism and translator competence, language and cultural brokering, language learning and interpreter training syllabus design, interpreting paradigms and training, norms in interpreting, interpreting quality, community interpreting, postgraduate interpreter training and professional issues (1).

The first article provides a review of the literature concerning the topic of the initial translator, both in the fields of Translation Studies and Bilingualism Studies. Álvarez de la Fuente and Fernández Fuertes provide a detailed overview of previous studies on specific issues: language brokering, translation competence emergence and natural vs. professional translation. Without losing sight of their main focus – research into natural translation – the authors succeed in linking different trends in theories and research, while pinpointing the need for further research into the figure of the initial translator, which could provide useful information for the study of translation competence acquisition. The review of the literature is extensive: it includes 146 cited references, making this article an excellent resource for those starting research in this field.

In the second contribution, Hall and Guo present a study on "Child Language and Cultural Brokering." Working from an interdisciplinary perspective, the authors examine different cases of Chinese children brokering language in the UK and classify them according to three categories: assimilative, appropriative and accommodative. They demonstrate how children's mediation is often implicit and rather than being restricted to language, also negotiates cultural codes, beliefs and attitudes. The reader is provided with a combination of intercultural theories, psychology and sociology applied to the study of child language

brokering; this is possibly one of the most interesting aspects of their article.

In the third article, Pan and Wang present a case study on semi-natural interpretation, which is described as the kind of interpreting competence that could be attributed to L2 students. The article begins with a review of the literature, an explanation of the origin of the term “semi-natural interpretation,” discussion of what it means and refers to, and then moves on to their case study, which looks at a student interpreter’s performance. Working from different sources of information (the student’s learning habits and performance, interview data with both student and teacher, and the analysis of some interpreting tasks), the authors triangulate the data and observe that semi-natural interpretation already reflects some kind of sense-orientation in the student’s understanding of interpreting. Allowing for the limitations of an analysis based on one case study, Pan and Wang’s conclusions must be considered an initial insight into this field of research.

The fourth article is the second contribution by Álvarez de la Fuente and Fernández Fuertes. While in the first they provide a theoretical framework for studies of Natural Translation, in “How Two English/Spanish Bilingual Children Translate: in Search for Bilingual Competence Through Natural Interpretation,” they show how these theories can be applied in a specific research project. Using a corpus of 31 hours of recordings of a set of bilingual English-Spanish twins, the authors classify and analyse examples of interpreting tasks performed by the twins between the ages of two and six years old. In the presentation of this study, the authors combine real examples and graphs which illustrate the children’s progression. The result is a very balanced article which gives clear accounts of and interesting conclusions concerning Natural Translation in the case of bilingual children.

In the next contribution, Boéri presents a critical review of the notions of natural, professional, novice and expert interpreting, and then uses these categories to describe the kind of *ad hoc* interpreting that took place in the Nuremberg Trials. Boéri relies on Baigorri Jalón’s (2000) data to illustrate specific examples of *ad hoc* interpreting and, by analysing these data from a new perspective, she revives the issue of interpreting at the Nuremberg Trials while establishing parallels with current situations (e.g. volunteer interpreting or interpreting in conflicts). This becomes one of the strong points of the article. In the conclusion, Boéri challenges the current division between community and conference interpreting and advocates widening the scope of research into interpreting.

Brander de la Iglesia also discusses the dichotomies of natural vs. professional interpreting and volunteer vs. *ad hoc* to shed light on what is understood by interpreting for development. After explaining and illustrating these concepts with diagrams, Brander de la Iglesia presents the preliminary results of a research project in which different groups of students and *ad hoc* trainees were asked to interpret a speech from a

video and evaluate the activity according to its usefulness and interest or difficulty, amongst other parameters. These preliminary results lead the author to highlight the advantages of collaborative learning and its potential from the point of view of interpreting for development.

In the next article, Duflou shares some reflections on the 'first person norm' hypothesis, departing from Harris' belief that the use of the first person is an example of norm-governed interpreter behaviour. She bases her arguments on formal and informal interviews with interpreters and on observational data in order to examine to what extent the use of the first person can be considered a norm. Duflou's results include deviations from the first person, often related to facework/politeness strategies. The author's holistic approach to the study of the 'first person norm' is of great value, since the combination of data from different collection methods broadens the overview of the object of study.

Opdenhoff's article is based on an experimental study in which interpreting students were asked to complete different short-term retention and processing tasks in two language versions. The purpose of this study was to find out whether there is an empirically detectable difference in memory capacity between A or B language input as a first step to studying directionality in conference interpreting. The results of Opdenhoff's experiment are presented in several tables and, even though the author only points out a few tendencies, the project itself underlines the need for more empirical research on the issue of directionality in conference interpreting.

García Becerra presents a study that intertwines three strands of research: psychology, nonverbal communication and interpreting quality. Its objectives are to analyse the influence of first impressions on users' assessment of interpreting and to determine sub-parameters for first impressions (181). The article briefly discusses the results from two different studies developed for these purposes and even though, according to the author, replications of these studies are needed in order to draw more definite conclusions, it is clear that first impressions and nonverbal communication do play a role in interpreting quality assessment. Again, an interdisciplinary approach is one of the assets of this article.

Rodríguez Gómez proposes analysing conference interpreting using community interpreting as a resource. As the author demonstrates, this approach can be very useful in examining issues such as interpreters' neutrality and invisibility, their role in mediation, the relevance of context and socio-discursive identities. Rodríguez Gómez provides examples extracted from opening and closing sequences, where clear connections with community interpreting ideas can be established. Rodríguez Gómez's paper is not the only one to advocate a more global approach to the study of interpreting regardless of its setting, as seen in the aforementioned article by Boéri.

In the following paper, Valero Garcés offers a detailed presentation of the

FITISPos (Formación e Investigación en Traducción e Interpretación en los Servicios Públicos)<sup>2</sup> research group, their aims, the projects they have developed, their main publications and conferences and their experience in the pioneering Master's Degree in Intercultural Communication, Public Service Interpreting and Translation. This broad overview shows how, in the words of the author, "FITISPos activities are circular and complementary in nature: Research – Training – Practice – Service Provider" (222). Such a comprehensive description of all the tasks the group engages in is particularly enlightening and inspiring.

In the final contribution, Renau Michavila and Morillo Castellanos present a summary of a round table under the title of "Conference Interpreting: Future Perspectives for Apprentice Interpreters in Spain." In short it considers different experiences and viewpoints, undergraduate and postgraduate training opportunities, whilst remembering that most Translation and Interpreting degrees in Spain place less emphasis on interpreting training than translation training. Employment options are discussed, both in institutions and in the private sector and, finally, volunteer interpreting is also taken into account as a possible way of improving through practice while helping others. Advantages and drawbacks of each of these options are examined and the result is an extremely useful resource for fourth-year students of translation and interpreting in need of further information to help make decisions about their future.

The organisation and style of most of the articles included in this book make for easy reading. All the studies presented give prime importance to hypotheses, objectives and methodology, with coherent and consistent conclusions, even if these are only preliminary results or tendencies. This book could prove to be an excellent resource for all those starting research in interpreting, since it covers a range of methodological approaches and also underlines the links between theoretical frameworks from different disciplines. The interdisciplinary dimension in this book reflects a wide range of approaches, characteristic of current interpreting research.

Another of the assets of this book is the importance given to contributions by young researchers –authors of nine of the twelve papers. This book comes as a breath of fresh air, and given that some of the contributions are on-going PhD dissertations, it may also prove to be a prelude to future research.

Last but not least, the essence of Brian Harris runs through all the articles: replicated, complemented or even challenged. Readers will certainly find themselves interpreting Brian Harris' work mirrored in recent developments in translatology.

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<sup>2</sup> Training and Research on Translation and Interpreting in the Public Services.