

Institutional Translator Training

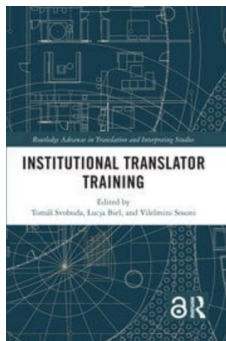
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How do institutions train their interpreters and translators? Lifting the veil of the training of interpreters and translators in institutions, this edited volume examines the topic of translation-related training in institutional settings from a global perspective. It consists of 15 chapters,

clustered into three sections, authored by 20 contributors with extensive experience and subject knowledge in various aspects of the work and training of the institutional translator. The context of the collaborative volume is international organisations (e.g. the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Court of Justice of the European Union, the United Nations Headquarters in New York, the World Intellectual Property Organisation) with operations across various geographic locations (e.g. Argentina, Canada and China) and different working languages (e.g. English, Bulgarian, Chinese, Danish, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Russian, and Spanish). There are several previous publications on the subject of institutional translation from the perspective of human agency (e.g. Koskinen 2014), translation quality (see Svoboda *et al.* 2017), and management (see Prieto Ramos 2020). However,

little has been known about the training aspect of institutional translation, as this topic has been under-explored. The collaborative volume bridges the existing gap and contributes to the growing knowledge of pedagogical, regulatory, and professional activities involved in translator training and institutional translation work.

The book adopts the conceptualisation of institutional translation in broad and narrow terms. In the wider sense, it refers to “any translation that occurs in institutional settings” (1), whereas in the narrow sense, it is “translating in or for specific organisations, particularly within supranational and/or international institutions that have translation capacities” (2). In institutional translations, collaboration, anonymity, and standardisation have become the defining features, as reflected in the existence of iterative style guides, rigid revision procedures, tailored mentoring, and structured training arrangements (see Schäffner *et al.*, 2014, p. 494). Notably, the growing interest in the translation practice and policy within institutions is intricately linked to the rigid requirements and high expectations for the quality of institutional translation (see ISO 20771: 2020 Legal Translation Standard). The high standard for institutional translation justifies the need for effective translation training programmes to meet institutional expectations.

The editors have three stakeholders in mind: institutions that recruit translators, translators who would like to work in institutional settings, and training providers, either universities or specialised agencies. The edited volume adopts a clear three-part structure, with the first mapping out the competence required of institutional translators (Chapters 1 to 6), the second canvassing training practices at the university (Chapters 7 to 9), and the last (Chapters 10 to 15) touching on training for practitioners in their

312 continuous professional development (CPD) across a range of settings supported by practical takeaways from case studies and survey data.

Part 1, which serves as the foundation for further discussions in the book, elucidates the competences required for institutional translators. In the first chapter, Nicolas Froeliger and his colleagues present the competence sections of the European Master's in Translation (EMT)¹ Competence Framework 2017 as a foundation for the development of the Competence Awareness in Translation (CATO) academic survey that examines the alignment between the university-level translator training and the institutional employers' expectations or satisfactions of the graduate translation service. The findings from 412 respondents from 26 countries indicated that the translator training programme could be "a good investment" (p. 24) in general. Yet, efforts would still be needed to improve students' competence in advertising their skill offerings and know-how to clients for better interprofessional understanding. In Chapter 2, Anne Lafeber probes the type of changes in specific skills, knowledge, and abilities required in machine translation by institutional employers. She surveys over 1,000 translators and revisers working at over 40 member organizations of the International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications (IAMLADP) in 2021. She compares the results with those from a similar survey undertaken in 2010. She uses survey data to establish a hierarchy of skills,

knowledge, and abilities. Noticeably, compared with the 2010 survey, she underscores the high-impact and often-lacking skills, including but not limited to meaning-decoding of obscure source texts, logic clarity and consistency in terminology, the lexical choice for linguistic nuances, on-time delivery with quality in natural-sounding language, equivalence in style (e.g. genre, tone, and register) and effect, and compliance with institutional style. The results are intended to (1) help institutional managers to make informed decisions about service-specific recruitment and training priorities and (2) inspire trainers to align their pedagogies with the institutional hiring needs.

Using a different approach, Fernando Prieto Ramos and Diego Guzmán conduct a micro-diachronic study of institutional expectations in job descriptions and requirements for institutional translators (Chapter 3). Their thorough analysis of a corpus of 224 vacancy notices for institutional translators and revisers reveals three hiring tendencies: (1) elevated dependence on the use of extensive competitive tests in the screening process for EU and UN bodies, (2) differences in preferred profiles for legal translators (e.g. lawyer-linguist, translators with specialised knowledge in law, and a mixture of both) in the Court of Justice of the European Union, the International Court of Justice, and the International Criminal Court, and (3) the raised bar for academic credentials (e.g. postgraduate degree for revisers) and prior service experience in medium-size international organizations (e.g. World Trade Organization and World Intellectual Property Organization). The authors also highlight the need for specialised knowledge (e.g. political, legal, economic, financial, scientific, technical), intercultural communication, and computer-related duties (e.g. use of CAT tools). Focusing on the European Commission's Directorate-General

¹ The EMT Framework consists of four competence sections: translation (strategic, methodological and thematic competence), technology (tools and applications), personal and interpersonal, and service provision. It is worth noting that the 2017 version has been superseded by EMT (2022), but the changes are not so major as to invalidate this survey or the results.

for Translation (DGT) in Chapter 4, Svoboda and Sosoni evaluate new language professional roles and their IT- and training-related requirements. Based on 412 respondents from 26 countries, findings highlight the expectations for institutional translators to use CAT tools and the institutional translators' preferences for technology-related CPD courses, such as pre-editing and post-editing and machine translation (MT) evaluation.

In Chapter 5 Kristian Tangsgaard Hvelplund adopts a process-oriented approach and conducts a controlled experiment on Zoom to monitor the translators' distribution of cognitive resources. Using the eye-tracker device, the author identifies five categories of recurring activities (e.g. orientation, translation, drafting, resource consultation and revision) in the translation process in which reviewing and evaluating machine-generated output are more cognitively taxing than translating from scratch. The author also recognises the importance of training to equip institutional translators with technical skills in conducting translation and post-editing. In Chapter 6 Vilelmini Sosoni presents the findings from two interviews: one with a training and quality manager who is responsible for EU contracts, the other with a Greece-based contractor agency. It is revealed that the selection of external translation service providers is becoming increasingly strict and competitive, signalling a clear quality-over-price stance. On the institutional front, measures such as continuous evaluation of translation assignments, imposition of penalties, detailed specifications in the calls for tenders, and the utilisation of standardised documents (e.g. templates, quality guidelines, and style guides) are adopted. On the contractor front, the onus of systematically training their translators falls on their shoulders to boost the translator's

productivity and meet the institutional quality standards.

Part II shifts the attention from hiring to training and investigates the university-level training programmes for future translators. In Chapter 7 Catherine Way and Anna Jopek-Bosiacka use Boolean web searches to scour for undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in institutional translation offered in different geographic locations and language combinations. The results reveal a general gap between university training and the industry associated with fast-changing industry demands and education policy restrictions. The industry and policy-related trends have led many universities towards more general undergraduate training and systematised modules in postgraduate programmes. These systematised modules have titles such as "Translation Practice", "Translation Workshop", "Multicultural Communication", and "Professional Translation" and are provided in the official languages of international organisations. In the next chapter, Bieland Martín Ruano examine the various forms of support (e.g., collaborative networks, internships, authentic projects, visiting/lecture/workshop schemes, seminars, train-the-trainer, and CPD activities) and participation of institutions in university-level training under UN and EU outreach programmes. The authors emphasise the advantages of regular, systematised, and not merely bidirectional outreach programmes for market actors, international organisations, and universities. In the third and last contribution in Part II (Chapter 9), Lorena Baudo analyses the benefits of a collaborative project between the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) and the National University of Córdoba (UNC) in Argentina. The terminology translation project was designed for second-year students,

314 and findings suggest that it enabled them to work collaboratively in a friendly learning environment with peers and experts. Through this WIPO-UNC collaborative programme, the students could resolve real-life terminology translation difficulties, acquire specialised knowledge, and develop in-demand skills in simulated institutional working environments.

Part III discusses institutional translation training practices. In Chapter 10, Brian Mossop describes a one-day revision workshop based on her work in the Canadian Government's Translation Bureau. He details the functions, logistics, topics, types of activities, pedagogical approach, and problems. In Chapter 11 Tao Li discusses an interview with a translation team leader at the China Foreign Languages Publishing Administration. In Chapter 12 Valter Mavrič illustrates a clear language training programme at the Directorate-General for Translation (DG TRAD) at the European Parliament and highlights the importance of multilingual awareness for institutional translators to fulfil their job responsibilities. In Chapter 13 Merit- Ene Ilja acknowledges the need for diverse in-house translation profiles (e.g. specialised translators, linguistic data curators, and computational linguists) and highlights the European Commission's learning and development priorities. In Chapter 14 Madis Vunder and Claude-Oliver Lacroix provide a brief overview of shifting roles and priorities for training lawyer linguists at the Court of Justice of the European Union, stressing the need for a machine translation component in institutional induction and CPD programmes. In Chapter 15 Lafeber demonstrates the translator training programme at the Documentation Division of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, the United Nations Headquarters in New York,

illuminating the use of various learning technologies and multilingual web-based knowledge management tools for both self-paced and collaborative online training formats, accompanied by lecture series and funded sabbatical programmes with further support from communities of practice.

The entire volume unveils a shared concern for institutional translator training institutions (e.g. universities, schools, and agencies) to adapt to the shifting translator role profiles and institutional hiring demands and expectations. Through the discussions in the book, these changes are evidenced by heightened requirements on academic qualifications, specialised knowledge, prior service experience, re-skilling and up-skilling priorities that highlight soft skills (e.g. time and project management, compliance with institutional style guides) and technical components relating to work on machine-translated texts. Therefore, it is imperative for universities and training institutions to reflect these changes in the development of tailored training programmes and address any mismatch between the supply and demand for translators in institutional settings.

The book is written with a broad scope of audiences in mind, including but not limited to educators, trainers, instructors, scholars, and practitioners. It is recommended for two main reasons. The first is its up-to-date, systematic, and holistic approach to the hiring and training of institutional translators in the context of rapid advances in technological development. There are several previous publications on the topic that only examine university-level training or institutional translation quality management. However, differing from one-side-only approach, this book sheds light on both sides of the avenue: supply and demand, hiring

and training. Indeed, from a human resources development perspective, training and hiring, as well as retaining and retraining, should go hand in hand. The approach adopted by this book is particularly relevant to today's technology-empowered language professionals. The second reason is its emphasis on the role of technology in today's translator training. Many chapters in the book highlight the need for translators to work on machine-generated or translated texts in institutional roles.

Given the trends of globalisation and mass migration, the right to an interpreter has been examined in public administration, human rights, migration, and discourse studies (Yi 2023a, 2023b and 2024). Therefore, translation and interpreting studies students should be aware of the imminent changes in the professional realm and prioritise their learning and skill practices at universities and beyond. However, one minor limitation of the volume leaves space for further studies. The book is centred around European contexts, with some chapters on North American experiences. Much remains to be explored in non-Eurocentric institutional contexts, particularly in non-European languages in the larger scope of the Global South countries. Considering the merits and limitations, this book can be a helpful resource for students, trainers, and institutional managers to make informed decisions on their study, pedagogies, and hiring.

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