

Book Review

Interdisciplinarity in Translation and Interpreting Process Research, by Maureen Ehrensberger-Dow, Susanne Göpferich, and Sharon O'Brien, Amsterdam, Philadelphia, John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2015, 159 pp., ISBN 978 90 272 4260 0 (HB), ISBN 978 90 272 6848 8 (E-BOOK)

As translation activities prosper amid increasing global interactions in different domains, translation studies have become a field nurtured by diverse thinking and disciplines. As a result, a growing number of researchers are engaged in a discussion of the interdisciplinarity in translation studies. As a reflection of serious scholarly attention in that direction, *Interdisciplinarity in Translation and Interpreting Process Research* explicates and explores the influences of several other disciplines on translation studies.

As a collection of papers on translation and interpreting process research, the book consists of an introduction (p. 1-3), ten chapters (p. 5-155), and a subject index (p. 157-159). Throughout the book, the breadth of borrowing by researchers in translation studies can be easily discerned. In the first chapter, Sharon O'Brien gives a broad sketch of the interdisciplinary interaction of research on the cognitive aspects of translation. She states that while most researchers acknowledge the influences of other domains on research in cognitive translology, "the range of influence from translation studies on those domains and sub-domains appears to be very limited at the present time" (ch.1, p.12). By reviewing the progress in translation studies, she predicts that further development in the field could be inspired through borrowing from even more disciplines.

As one of the major characteristics of translation studies, interdisciplinarity may be invariant, but the orientation of translation research can change over time. At the present, many a research is socially and culturally oriented both in and around translation studies. In order to complement current researches, Juliane House calls for a new linguistic-cognitive orientation, illustrates its rationale, and after reviewing introspective and retrospective studies and behavioral experiments, assesses the value of bilingual neuro-linguistic studies, which confirms their promising potentialities in translation studies despite some drawbacks.

Apart from a general description of the interdisciplinarity and an illustration of the new orientation, the book also investigates how methods from other disciplines, including cognitive science, news writing research, history and literary studies, and metaphor studies, can be applied in translation and interpreting process research.

Kilian G. Seeber exemplifies four categories of methods commonly used to assess cognitive load (analytical methods, subjective methods, performance methods and psycho-physiological methods), examines their respective advantages and disadvantages, and highlights pupillometry, a psycho-physiological method, as one of “the most promising approaches to objectively measure cognitive load during simultaneous interpreting in real time” (ch.2, p.19).

As another group of language professionals, journalists are also included in some research that aims to investigate the situated activity of translation. By introducing parallels between writing and translation process research methods along with methodology within disciplines, Maureen Ehrensberger-Dow and Daniel Perrin demonstrate the relevance of newswriting research to translation studies through a progression analysis in newswriting research and subsequent explanation of how it can be and has been applied in translation studies. Favoring a mixed-method approach that combines keystroke logging, screen recordings, eye-tracking, and cue-based retrospective verbalization, they conclude the paper by predicting that “the next step will be to apply the results of progression analysis towards optimizing work processes and conditions at the translation workplace”(ch.6, p.91).

Although the process-oriented methodology based on such primary sources as literary archive and manuscripts is frequently employed in historical and literary studies, it has long been overlooked in translation studies. In respond to the neglect, Jeremy Mundy explores the possibilities offered by detailed textual study of literary drafts, evaluates previous work in this area and discusses their academic value via a case study.

Drawing upon metaphor studies, Christina Schäffner and Mark Shuttleworth look at some possible suggestions for new directions of research into metaphor in translation (MiT), with the belief that “a closer interaction between translation process studies and metaphor studies can moreover lead to deeper insights and added value”(ch.7, p.106).

In addition, the book also incorporates theories and technologies from other domains, including actor-network theory (ANT) and activity theory (AT), Dynamic Systems Theory (DST), Relevance theory (RT), and speech recognition (SR) software.

In a retrospective analysis of their case study, Hanna Risku and Florian Windhager highlight some methodological findings related to two strongly resonant theoretical approaches in sociology and psychology, namely actor-network theory (ANT) and activity theory (AT), and present, after a detailed description of ANT and AT, an empirical case study of changes in translation management.

Susanne Göpferich makes a detailed introduction of Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) and (re-)interprets some of the results of the longitudinal study TransComp in the light of DST, showing that adopting the DST paradigm in translation studies can be a

promising endeavor.

Following the pragmatic line of translation studies by E. A. Gutt who introduced relevance Theory (RT) by Sperber and Wilson to translation studies, Fabio Alves and José Luiz Gonçalves give a brief overview of the application of RT to translation, introduce some key relevance-theoretic concepts, and examine the theoretical problem of tackling the conceptual-procedural distinction in a larger study, which is investigated experimentally.

Starting from three scenarios, Inger M. Mees, Barbara Dragsted, Inge Gorm Hansen and Arnt Lykke Jakobsen stress the benefits of adopting an interdisciplinary approach in translator training and investigate the use of speech recognition (SR) technology to help translation-major students with the accuracy of their pronunciation, as both the speed and the standard of SR translation are improvable.

As a comprehensive and objective documentation of the current situation of and the developments in translation studies, the book aims to put forward constructive ideas about interdisciplinarity in translation and interpreting process research. While a number of the applications from other domains already exist, such as metaphor in translation (chapter 7), some are innovative, for example, studies on the use of SR technology in translator training (chapter 10). These thought-provoking ideas not only manifest the intensifying interdisciplinarity in translation studies but also open up more possibilities for the discipline. Equally thought-provoking is the disagreements with the established theories. One of these disagreements is that Jeremy Mundy considers Toury's dismissal of extratextual sources in research as "unjustified" (chapter 9).

The book, being an excellent example of combining theory and practice together, is of high academic value. It contributes to both the available theories in translation studies and theories from other disciplines and used in translation. For instance, among the authors of the book, some explain established experiments or studies from new standing points, using theories borrowed from other domains, some assess the existing studies within translation process studies, pointing out unresolved questions or generalizing difficulties in application. As for some of the unresolved problems, corresponding possible ways of resolutions are raised.

Nowadays, the integration of translation teaching and translation studies is much closer. Researchers' exploration of the cognitive mechanisms of translators will help improve training curriculum for translation major students. In this sense, the book is also valuable for future translator training since some chapters attempt to provide new insights in this area. The investigation into translation competence development of translators overturns some expectations, and the analysis of established researches based on other theories reveals the ways to improve strategies for translator training.

The book also envisions and maps the future orientations in translation studies. For instance, Jeremy Munday, after discussing the application of research methodologies in historical and literary studies to the translation process analysis, predicts that in the near future collections of author and translator papers “will predominantly, or even completely, comprise digital communications and will be widely available online”(ch.9,p.137)

The influences mentioned in the book are, sadly, all unidirectional, meaning that translation studies borrow heavily from other disciplines while exerting very few influences on them. But as the field is witnessing multidimensional and continuous development, more intellectual efforts of researches will not only further the discipline itself but also contribute to its increasing influences on other domains, a message echoing Sharon O’Brien’s statement that “gradually, we will move towards reciprocal interdisciplinarity, in which translation study is not only a borrower but also a lender” (ch.1, p.13) at the end of chapter one.

Overall, *Interdisciplinarity in Translation and Interpreting Process Research* is an up-to-date documentation of current developments and possible future trends in translation process research under the umbrella term “interdisciplinarity”. It takes into consideration the new research findings in different disciplines, as well as supplements the achieved developments in translation process studies. As a collection of different brilliant ideas, this book will encourage more intellectual endeavors in translation and interpreting process research.

References :

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