Book Review: Juan José Martínez Sierra (Ed.) (2021). *Multilingualism, Translation and Language Teaching. The PluriTAV Project.* Tirant lo Blanch

Eloisa Monteoliva[1] ·   https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3971-3847

Heriot-Watt University

Henry Prais Building 2.06, Edinburgh EH14 4AS, United Kingdom

The book *Multilingualism, Translation and Language Teaching, The PluriTAV Projec,* edited by Juan José Martínez Sierra stems from the PluriTav Project funded by the Spanish Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación and led by researchers at the Universitat de València, Universitat Jaume I, University College London, and the University of Roehampton. The book is divided into 13 chapters within two distinct parts. Part 1 consists of 5 chapters and presents the project rationale, the research and teaching context in which it emerged, its findings, and learning and teaching materials created by project members. Part 2 comprises 8 chapters, each of them featuring a research paper amongst the papers presented at the *PluriTAV International Conference Multilingualism, Translation, and Language Teaching,* which was held in Valencia, Spain, in 2019. The book is prefaced by an introductory chapter written by the editor and concludes with some final remarks.

Before reviewing each individual chapter, it is worth highlighting the aspects that make this book a very valuable contribution bringing together fields that interact in practice but usually tend to be explored and considered in isolation. Firstly, it explores and embraces with a critical eye the changing understanding of languages and *languaging*, as we speak. Secondly, it repeatedly tackles the tension between political agendas, societal assumptions and beliefs around language acquisition, language learning and language teaching, many of which stem from a monolingual norm. This book presents a project and related research bringing together translation in its most widespread form nowadays, i.e., AVT, and language learning. This task on its own is already a big endeavour, mostly for the pervading assumptions around the types of materials and activities that constitute 'proper' educational materials, and for the pervading monolingual and bilingual views around language learning and teaching, as well as around the notions of translation and interpreting. Nevertheless, the challenging task was tackled thanks to the capability and knowledge of the principal investigator and the creation of an excellent team.

Chapter 1 by Frederic Chaume and Jorge Díaz-Cintas provides a comprehensive, and skilfully written contextualisation of the main topic, namely the relationship between Audiovisual Translation (AVT), its potentialities and its adoption in the development of linguistic skills in plurilingual classrooms. The authors review the changing role of translation in the specific context of language learning, with specific emphasis on subtitles, which have changed from something considered a hindrance for the development of language skills in the foreign language classroom under the lens communicative approach, to something with an acknowledged and proven pedagogical value. The chapter closes with a review of projects that have focused on and/or

---

[1]   **Corresponding author** · Email: eloisa.monteoliva@hw.ac.uk

Eloisa Monteoliva · Book Review: Juan José Martínez Sierra (Ed.) (2021). Multilingualism, Translation and Language Teaching. The PluriTAV Project. Tirant lo Blanch

283

culminated in the development of educational materials for language learning and teaching that integrate dubbing, subtitling and other AVT practices.

Chapter 2 presents the PluriTAV Project. The project stems from the boom in audiovisual materials and the potential of AVT, understood as part of the audiovisual boom, as a tool in the development of not only skills in "the" foreign language, but also plurilingual skills. It is based on an approach to learning and teaching foreign languages that considers the linguistic landscape in the classroom as a whole in the planning, design, implementation and assessment of learning and teaching. In the case of the PluriTAV platform, three languages are acknowledged in teaching units and materials, and their mobilisation, use and enhancement in the class promoted: English as the 'foreign' language being learned, and both Catalan and Spanish as languages that students and educators bring with them and use in the classroom. Throughout the life of the PluriTAV project, teaching units, activities and materials were designed, tested, and made available in the PluriTAV platform.

In Chapter 3, Beatriz Reverter Oliver, Beatriz Cerezo Merchán and Imma Pedregosa discuss the features of didactic sequences that form the basis of teaching units in the PluriTAV platform. Audiodescription, subtitling, dubbing and free commentary are the four activities included in the PluriTAV platform. Two strengths stand out while reading this chapter. The first one is the careful design of the didactic sequences having both educators and students in mind, with authentic and engaging materials, and with guidance around assessment. The second one is the integration of two frameworks when considering the set of skills that were to be developed through the didactic units. The two selected frameworks are the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to Languages and Cultures (FREPA), encompassing pluricultural, plurilingual and communicative competences. By the end of the chapter, the reader has been not only informed about the rationale behind the didactic sequences, their design, implementation and evaluation, but has also been provided with very clear guidelines that can be applied in the adaptation or design of didactic sequences with other language combinations or for a specific course or educational context.

Chapters 4 and 5 focus on the design of assessment tools in the PluriTAV Project. In Chapter 4, Ana Muñoz-Miquel and Betlem Soler Pardo explain how the language tests for assessment of linguistic competences in students' language repertoires were designed. The five didactic sequences in the project were designed for CEFR levels B1 to C1. Two tests were designed for each sequence, a diagnostic test and a test at the end of the sequence. Given the plurilingual approach adopted in the project, linguistic competence was assessed both in the language being learned (English), and in the two languages labelled as 'native' assessment, although more prominently in English and focused primarily on grammar and vocabulary, something that could be completed in a follow-up project to encompass skills such as listening or speaking. The chapter includes details and examples of the different tests focusing on different AVT modalities. Chapter 5 addresses the complex and delicate task of assessing plurilingual competence. Anna Marzà, Gloria Torralba and Rocío Baños explain in detail how the Test for the Assessment of Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence (TAPPC) was designed and tested, as well as the intricacies of assessing that plurilingual and pluricultural competences, understood as stemming from the interdependence of the different languages and cultures in an individual's repertoires and related to assessment approaches that require a high degree of flexibility. The authors discuss existing instruments and three different trends, namely the multilingual approach towards comprehension in assessment; multilingual scoring; and translanguaging, a key section in this chapter, before presenting the TAPPC and its rubric in detail. Given its relative novelty and that it has received less attention, several research avenues are presented to the reader, whether implicitly or explicitly.

Chapter 6 is the first of eight selected papers that were presented at the PluriTAV conference. This chapter offers a powerful and insightful start of Part 2 with a review of the use and place of translation in L2 teaching under the influence of societal factors, namely the prevalence of a monolingual lens, a bilingual lens or a post-monolingual lens over time when exploring translation and L2 teaching as sociolinguistic phenomena. In this interesting contribution, Antigoni Bazani puts on the table in a very informed and critical way the value of translation as an essential act of communication, and the external factors that shape when, how and in what form translation is used or banned from L2 teaching.

Eva Seidl (Chapter 7) presents an approach to encouraging and promoting, or rather empowering, transcultural communication among undergraduate students at the Department for Translation Studies at the University of Graz. The chapter explores the multicompetence-based approach to language learning as one that is founded on two tenets. The first one is embracing language learning as a lifelong phenomenon regardless of the level of proficiency in the language repertoire of each individual. The second one relates to the multimodal, multisensory and situated nature of language learning. This approach is presented as an opportunity to stress the multiple competences of translation students as language users and language learners while shifting away from approaches that tend to reinforce a sense of failure resulting from considering native command of individual languages as the ideal. Following the previous considerations, the author presents different activities that illustrate the application of translation-oriented language teaching or TOLT in the BA Transcultural Communication at the University of Graz and evidence of its potential for promoting not only linguistic competence but, more importantly, student self-regulation and metacognition in the language classroom.

Katerina Sinclair's chapter (Chapter 8) presents a case study of the perceptions and experiences of the high proportion of trained translators and interpreters who work as language teachers in Austria, a chapter that explores an interesting link between translation and interpreting and language learning that differs from all the considerations presented in previous chapters. The chapter provides a detailed description of the study design and its findings. Of particular interest to the themes of the book are the teachers' perceptions of their fitness to teach as ranking very high for teaching experience and language proficiency, but less so when it comes to teaching skills and aspects related to assessment. Very importantly, two areas that also stood out as strengths among participants were intercultural competence and language awareness, something that would be interesting to compare with perceptions of language graduates with no translation and interpreter training. One of the main contributions of the study is that it identifies language teaching skills as a gap that is probably not unique at the Translation and Interpreting programme at the University of Vienna.

Chapter 9 by Maria González-Davies and Jaclyn Wilson explores the Integrated Plurilingual Approach and presents the outcomes of a study exploring the following issues: whether languages can be used through languages; the role of AVT in language learning; and ways of optimising individual and team skills and strategies in language learning. Starting from the tenet that the classroom can be a translanguaging space and that translanguaging practices play a role in the language learning process, the authors designed and validated an instrument to observe IPA-based instruction which encompasses observation of approach, design, and procedures. In the chapter, the authors illustrate how translanguaging practices such as code-switching and aspects of translator training such as the use of AVT (vlogs, dubbing and subtitling) can be integrated in the language classroom to promote plurilingual and pluricultural competences, and present didactic sequences for the AVT practices mentioned above.

Transmedia storytelling lies at the heart of the case study in Chapter 10. Featuring multimodal storytelling and an interdisciplinary design for teaching English for Translators, transmedia storytelling is presented as a powerful teaching practice for engaging students in developing plurilingual and pluricultural competences. The

Eloisa Monteoliva · Book Review: Juan José Martínez Sierra (Ed.) (2021). Multilingualism, Translation and Language Teaching. The PluriTAV Project. Tirant lo Blanch

285

case study led by Núria Molines Galarza and Laura Mejías-Climent was designed for a first-year English language course in a Translation and Interpreting undergraduate degree at the Universitat Jaume I. *The Handmaid's Tale* was chosen for the transmedia storytelling sessions, in which students engaged with the work directly but also with the series, its translation and adaptation, and related written, media and audiovisual materials (interviews, news) activities. This rich approach enabled motivated students to mobilise their linguistic resources to explore and discuss the literary text and the various anthropological, philosophical, social themes stemming from it while boosting core learning skills and their plurilingual competence.

Chapter 11 by Elizabete Manterola and Ana Tamayo features another example of the use of AVT in the translation classroom. In this case, the translation classroom is a space of translation between Basque and Spanish, two A or first languages for them. The authors contextualise the unique circumstances in which Basque and Spanish are used in social and institutional settings, and the translation and interpreting industry between these languages. The course selected for implementation of the didactic sequence presented is unique in that it is the only one to date in which Basque to Spanish translation is taught. Students in the course have a heterogeneous profile in that they have a different language learning and use background in relation to Basque and Spanish. The proposed didactic sequence fits within a year-4 translation course at an advanced level but takes into account the particularities of the cohort described above. It integrates AVT for both pedagogical reasons and market-related reasons, namely because production of audiovisual materials in Basque has increased in recent years and translation of AVT materials in this language combination prevails over translation of written materials. This is a very interesting example of the integration of AVT in the teaching of translation within a programme and a course that have unique features.

Alenka Kocbek's chapter 12 revolves around the notion of culturemes understood as patterns of communicative behaviour shaped by both verbal, para-verbal and non-verbal choices, and extra-linguistic factors. Kocbek proposes drawing on the Cultureme Paradigm and using culturemes in language learning and teaching practices with written and spoken texts in such a way that translation strategies are developed in a situated way through in-depth analysis of texts, comparative approaches between the main languages in the student's repertoire, and mobilisation of resources in all the languages in their linguistic repertoire. The chapter discusses the different dimensions (verbal, para-verbal, non-verbal, extra-verbal) and how they manifest in texts, as well as different translation strategies related to each dimension.

The last chapter of the book addresses an until then unchartered setting in the book, namely language learning and language use in refugee settings. Chapter 13 presents a research project, the Rebuild project, which was aimed at creating ICT tools for refugees, a target group that, for reasons dissimilar to those discussed in other chapters (see Chapter 11), is highly heterogeneous. Blanca Arias-Badia and María Jiménez-Andrés discuss a range of multilingual and multimodal strategies used by language teachers working with refugees and local service providers (NGOs, social workers, local businesses) who serve as the main point of contact of refugees. Data were collected through classroom observations, interviews and focus groups and several external factors that do not apply in other settings explored in the book, mostly formal secondary or tertiary education, emerged. The main ones are 1) practices that result from patchy service provision, including inconsistent availability of trained interpreters and translators; 2) changing demographics among the refugee population; and 3) limited financial and material resources. These factors result in a combination of ad hoc solutions with more established solutions. Given the scope of the book, one of the most interesting findings observed are practices such as cultural mediation, interpreting and translation and how they are used in a more regulated way in interaction and natural strategies in the context of the classroom as translanguaging spaces. The findings of the study highlight some very important facts surrounding language learning and language use in a complex and delicate setting.

286

Eloisa Monteoliva · Book Review: Juan José Martínez Sierra (Ed.) (2021). Multilingualism, Translation and Language Teaching. The PluriTAV Project. Tirant lo Blanch

All in all, the book brings together strong voices that are leading on the adoption and research-informed implementation of learning and teaching practices that are embracing key advances in the fields of language learning and teaching, and translation. It is not a coincidence that the Companion Volume to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages published in 2018 is cited in virtually every chapter due to its emphasis on practices that fall under the umbrella of mediation. The strong voices alluded to above challenge established practices stemming from the monolingual norm and advocate strongly not only for acknowledging translanguaging, transculturing and related practices, but for using them in language learning with different target groups. The links between language learning and teaching and translation are explored through diverse lenses, and the use of AVT in diverse ways and to different extents is the red thread that brings the thirteen chapters together. The reader will find masterfully written and insightful reviews of the literature and trends in language and learning teaching, as well as rich examples of how different approaches that embrace plurality can be designed, implemented, and assessed in different contexts. Most of them are set in the Spanish context, but the detailed descriptions allow readers with different profiles to adopt them and adapt them to other contexts.

Declaration of conflicting interests

Funding

About the author

Eloísa Monteoliva is Assistant Professor in Spanish and Director of Postgraduate Taught Programmes at the Languages & Intercultural Studies Department at Heriot-Watt University. She obtained her PhD in Police Interpreting in 2017 and has combined academia with translation and interpreting practice since she graduated in Translation and Interpreting in 2007 (University of Granada, Spain), where she also obtained a Master's degree in Translation and Interpreting (2009). Eloísa also holds a Master's degree in Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language (2011, CIESE Comillas) and has extensive teaching experience in areas such as interpreting and teaching Spanish as a foreign language. Her research explores interpreter-mediated communication in police and legal settings, collaboration between interpreters and police practitioners, interpreter-mediated discourse and translator and interpreter education.