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Translation and Interpreting**

**Huertas Barros, E., Vandepitte, S. and Iglesias-Fernández, E.**

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# Quality Assurance and Assessment Practices in Translation and Interpreting

Elsa Huertas-Barros  
*University of Westminster, UK*

Sonia Vandepitte  
*Universiteit Gent, Belgium*

Emilia Iglesias-Fernández  
*Universidad de Granada, Spain*

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## Preface

Since translation and interpreting established themselves as professions and as academic disciplines, both the industry and the academic settings have evolved swiftly as a consequence of the significant changes affecting the field (Drugan, 2013, pp. 185; Saldanha & O'Brien, 2014, pp. 95) and the innovative approaches and concepts linked to the disciplines in recent decades (e.g., Romero-Trillo, 2015). In the workplace, the development of translation memories and machine translation have led to new translation quality assurance practices where translators have found themselves checking not only human translation, but also machine translation outputs. And in training settings, the new developments have inevitably resulted in new forms of feedback and assessment that are replacing more traditional ways to judge students' performance in translation and interpreting training (Huertas Barros & Vine, 2018). They include, for instance: diagnostic, summative and formative assessment, self-assessment, reflective diaries, translation commentaries and formative feedback by means of peer and self-assessment tasks. In this context, the notions of revision and interpersonal competences have gained great importance, with international projects such as OPTIMALE recognizing them as high priorities in the labor market, and many translation scholars calling upon revision training and the introduction of collaborative learning in translation education and training (e.g., Hurtado Albir, 1999/2003, 2007, 2015; Kiraly, 2000; González Davies, 2004; Kelly, 2005; Klimkowski, 2006; Way, 2008, 2014, 2016; Huertas Barros, 2011, 2013; Galán Mañas & Hurtado Albir, 2015; Lisaité et al., 2016).

Recent translation studies are exploring the notion of the peer feedback as a form of collaboration and its positive impact on translation competences (Lisaité et al., 2016; Vandepitte & Lisaité, 2016; Flanagan & Heine, 2015, 2017). From this perspective, providing effective peer feedback means incorporating Translation Quality Assessment into teaching, where practices of revision can be linked to a feedback process in the industry (i.e. students are introduced to professional quality standards, quality control criteria and benchmarks recognized at international level). The ongoing research project "Establishing competence levels in translation competence acquisition (written translation)" carried out by PACTE can also be seen as a first but solid step in this direction, as it will serve as a guide towards the establishment of criteria for professional quality control. Quality assessment plays, therefore, an essential role in both professional and academic settings. In the industry context, it is mainly linked to the quality of the translation and interpreting products and services. In education and training, quality assessment has two main roles, i.e. focusing on the translation and interpreting processes and on trainees' learning needs (formative function) and evaluating the knowledge acquired or grading students' achievements (summative function).

Quality is also a central notion in interpreter education, and Interpreting Quality Assessment is one of the most robust and prosperous fields in Interpreting Studies. From its outset, Interpreting Quality As-

assessment has been concerned with identifying a set of verbal and nonverbal criteria (e.g., Bühler, 1986; Kurz, 1993/2002) and determining their weight in the evaluation of both conference interpretation and interpreters. The importance that different groups of interpreting users attach to certain criteria (Gile, 1991; Kurz & Pöchhacker, 1995; Chiaro & Nocella, 2004; Collados Aís, Pradas Macías, Stévaux, & García Becerra, 2007; Zwischenberger & Pöchhacker, 2010; Collados Aís, Iglesias Fernández, Pradas Macías, & Stévaux, 2011) is useful in informing the design and development of consistent criteria. But findings show that rating criteria are difficult to separate (Collados Aís, 1998/2002; Pradas Macías, 2006; Collados Aís et al., 2007; Iglesias Fernández, 2013), since some are correlated constructs (Clifford, 2005; Yeh & Liu, 2008). The lack of consistent rating criteria (Collados Aís & García Becerra, 2015), however, precludes attempts at their operationalization, and, consequently, assessment in interpreting still lacks test reliability (Sawyer, 2004; Angelelli & Jacobson, 2009). Nevertheless, interpreting assessment has experienced great progress in terms of tools and resources. The use of rubrics, portfolios, reflective, deliberate and collaborative practice through technology-enhanced interpreting training platforms offers a myriad ways of interpreting practice (see, e.g., ORCIT, Speechpool, Interpreters in Brussels Practice Group), feedback (InterpretimeBank) and online training. However, the need still exists for a better understanding of the construct underlying the criteria as well as reliable measurements, which inform the design of tests, tools and resources used to assess students and provide them with feedback from trainers or their own peers.

Empirical research in interpreting testing and assessment grounded on testing theory (Angelelli & Jacobson, 2009) is being conducted to fill in this gap, with studies addressing interpreter competence and performance, and assessing processes and products for different purposes (i.e. training, industry). This allows for a more robust construct definition, operationalization of the notion of interpreting competence, skills and attributes (Skaaden & Wadensjö, 2014; Giambruno, 2014; Hlavac & Orlando, 2015), aptitude, admission tests and screening (Bontempo & Napier 2009; Shlesinger & Pöchhacker 2011; Russo, 2011) as well as advances in standards and codes (Angelelli, 2006), and professional certification (Liu, 2013; Feuerle, 2013; Wallace, 2013; Hlavac & Orlando 2013; Han & Slatyer 2016). Different types of assessment formats, from rubrics (Angelelli, 2009; Jacobson, 2009) to portfolios (Sawyer 2004; Arumí Ribas, 2010) and different types of scales (Lee, 2008; Lee 2014, 2015; Tiselius 2009) are widely used in the interpreting classroom.

The benefits of formative assessment, in its various configurations: self-, peer and teacher assessment have been acknowledged, as it promotes students' better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses (Lee, 2005; Choi, 2006; Lee, 2016) and fosters metacognitive awareness (Witter-Merithew et al., 2001). Research on self-assessment in its various forms has proved to promote self-reflection and self-regulation (Russo 1995; Postigo Pinazo, 2008; Iaroslavski, 2011, Sandrelli, 2015). Peer feedback is now provided in many interpreting courses (Lim, 2013; Lee, 2016). Instructors train students in conceptualizing assessment criteria to avoid the present lack of systematic criteria (Orsmond et al., 2010; Lee, 2016) while avoiding inter-rater variability in self- and peer assessment (Schjoldager, 1996; William & Thomson, 2007).

Equally, attempts have been made to avoid the lack of raters' understanding of scoring criteria (Collados Aís et al., 2007; Iglesias Fernández, 2006, 2013) and judgement consistency (Wu, 2013). In the realm of court interpreting, inroads into empirical research on testing models have been made by Wallace (2013), Giambruno (2014), Hlavac and Orlando (2015), and Vigier Moreno and Valdés Garcés (2017), amongst others. Identifying competences and attributes for court interpreters has been at the heart of much research (the QUALITAS project; Giambruno, 2014; Hlavac & Orlando, 2015).

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Providing both translation and interpreting students with valuable feedback and implementing effective forms of assessment and practices are therefore essential not only for maximizing the teaching process, but also for enhancing students' learning experience. Translation/interpreting trainees expect information about industry assessment and revision practices and will need training to become future assessors themselves in their roles as revisers and reviewers, for instance (as provided in the European norm EN-15038, 2006, and in the new international standard ISO 17100, 2015). In other words, trainees need to practice how to observe translation/interpreting performances and translated/interpreted texts/discourses and how to tactfully communicate to a peer how the process or the end result could be improved (feedback). In addition, they need to be trained to assign a certain mark out of a scale to a translation/interpreting performance (assessment).

Observing, revising, giving feedback and assessing are issues where many of the debates on translation and interpreting training and practice intersect. This volume includes empirical contributions about competence assessment and quality, and the role of revision competence both in translation and interpreting training and in the industry. It presents ground-breaking methods of introducing the issue of translation quality assessment into training and reflects on innovative practices. Its findings explore and often support existing theoretical frameworks, but also point at refinements of the present scholarly work on translation quality assessment. However, in spite of the editors' efforts to include contributions directly from the industry, the latter unfortunately remain absent. Nevertheless, various chapters call out for collaboration between the industry and academia in order to enhance the validity of the theoretical constructs on the basis of empirical input from the professional domain.

## **AIMS AND TARGET AUDIENCE OF THE BOOK**

This volume will serve as a guide for translation and interpreting researchers, academics, students and practitioners around the world to overcome the challenge of how translation and interpreting performances and results should be observed, given feedback to and assessed. By examining the changing role and function of revision, feedback and assessment, this book can inform the design of new ways of evaluating students as well as suggesting criteria for professional quality control. This ground-breaking contribution aims to provide a platform for researchers, scholars and professionals to incorporate into the classroom the changes that are presently affecting the translation and interpreting industries, such as new revision practices like post-editing and forms of translation (e.g., audiovisual translation and audiodescription), which lack academic training and call for further research. The descriptions of collaborative quality assurance practice initiatives, employing both general and revision/translation/interpreting-specific tools and resources, may complement professionals' goals with the innovative methods of feedback and assessment and turn their efforts into more comprehensive and effective sources of reflective and deliberate practice.

With its emerging approaches to Translation Quality Assessment, its discussions of how effective feedback can impact the acquisition of translation competence, its explorations of ways to incorporate Translation Quality Assessment into teaching through 21<sup>st</sup>-century methods such as peer feedback, and its connection of practices of revision to a feedback process in the industry by introducing students to professional quality standards, quality control criteria and benchmarks recognized at international level, this publication brings together ground-breaking areas of research. It provides comprehensive insight into up-to-date research on assessment practices in academic settings, and may thus inform training institutions of the way translation and interpreting trainees can be trained to become employable graduates. It

also offers trainees information about industry assessment practices. The recommendations offered in the book will address those translation educators with an interest in pedagogical research to introduce the new trends in assessment practices and feedback into their programmes, to enhance students' learning and to maximize teaching and learning methodologies and practices. This publication will notably contribute to the development of both fields of translation and interpreting, with a wide range of empirical case studies demonstrating innovation, experimental rigour and practical ideas and solutions to Translation and Interpreting scholars, educators and practitioners. The book also intends to play an essential role in proposing practical and empirically-based ways for universities and the industry to overcome traditional barriers to learning by promoting student and competence-centered training and effective ways to assess translation and interpreting quality.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK**

The book is divided into four sections and organized into 15 chapters. Section 1 (Chapter 1 to Chapter 3) provides an introduction to the field of translation quality assessment. Section 2 (Chapter 4 to Chapter 7) focuses on translation quality assessment in interpreting and audiovisual translation. Section 3 (Chapter 8 to Chapter 10) is devoted to process-oriented translation quality assessment, and Section 4 (Chapter 11 to Chapter 15) sheds some light into the learning process of students acquiring translation quality assessment competences. A brief description of each of the chapters follows:

Marcel Thelen introduces the reader to the domain of translation quality assessment with a survey of some conceptualizations of translation quality in both the translation industry, organizations and translator training programmes in Chapter 1. While various perspectives are described, this chapter mainly adopts the economic market-oriented perspective of translation as a provision of a service as outlined in the translation services standards EN 15038 and ISO 17100. He argues that translation quality assessment as it is performed in the industry should also be implemented in translation training curricula in such a way that students are made aware that translation as service provision also includes quality management and quality assurance. The ideal environment for such training is a so-called skills lab, he further suggests, explaining that it allows for the introduction of practicing both knowledge and skills that are essential in translation quality assurance and management. Applying the principles of validity and reliability to skills tests, the chapter further offers suggestions to translator educators for assessing students' activities in such skills labs in the areas of quality assurance, HR, client liaising, office management, team management and translation. He also argues that the last item - assessing the quality of the text-related translation activities - can both be performed top-down by translation trainers and bottom-up by students themselves.

Reliability and validity are also at the core of Chapter 2 by Gys-Walt van Egdome, Heidi Verplaetse, Iris Schrijver, Hendrik Kockaert, Winibert Segers, Jasper Pauwels, Bert Wylin and Henri Bloemen. While recognizing the complexities of the measurement of translation quality in all its ramifications, this chapter solely addresses the issue of quality evaluation of translation as a product. After introducing readers to translation evaluation methods, the authors illustrate and argue for the preselected items evaluation method (PIE method) by means of a case study. Taking recourse to the field of the exact sciences, they show that PIE has perturbative qualities, since it allows quality assessors to approximate the quality of a translation reliably and validly: preferably more than one assessor selects the items for evaluation, collects acceptable item translations and evaluates students' translations in more than one round, keeping a



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critical eye on both the items selected and the translations accepted. Amongst other means, the authors put the test to the test by calculating the degree of difficulty of each item based on the students' results.

In Chapter 3, Gary Massey and Regine Weider approach translation quality assurance by exploring the unexploited potential that exists between translation and corporate communications. In the light of the rapid changes in the nature of translators' work as a result of technologization and other factors, the authors argue that the intercultural component intrinsic to translators could give them the opportunity to play an essential role in assuring quality in international corporate communications. By means of a pilot study at the interface between translation and corporate communications in Switzerland, the authors present and discuss the findings from a survey of translation and communications professionals. The chapter offers valuable insight into the current interplay between translation and corporate communications, and explores its implications for quality assurance and translator education.

Section 2 explores translation quality assessment in interpreting, dubbing and audiodescription settings. In Chapter 4, Chao Han argues that despite the increasing value attached to formative assessment, there is still the need for a longitudinally designed formative assessment model that harnesses the potential of self-, peer and teacher assessment. Han trialled this model in a case study in the consecutive English-Chinese interpreting classroom, involving self-, peer and trainer assessment. Grounded in testing theory, Han's model proposes a step by step approach to operationalizing a formative assessment model. The author further elicits students' and the teacher's perceptions of the assessment model. Based on the students' evaluations and the teacher's reflections, the chapter highlights potential contributions to effective formative assessment, discusses potential problems, proposes possible solutions, and suggests future trends in implementing and researching formative assessment in interpreter training.

In Chapter 5, Melissa Wallace questions the reliability and validity of the most extended oral assessment in interpreting certification tests for court interpreting in the United States and compares examinations conducted at state-level with those used in the federal courts. The oral exams are grounded in performance-based assessment and do not seem to draw from testing theory. The author proposes a model that brings together both a competence-based and a performance-based testing assessment model for this type of accreditation test. This requires a shift from the traditional single high-stakes examination to the assessment of a series of competence components involving skills and traits currently overlooked, such as soft skills and dispositional aptitudes, which are considered crucial for court interpreters.

Focusing on the field of audiovisual translation, Tomás Conde Ruano presents an approximation to the evaluation of quality in dubbing in Chapter 6. The author reports on the findings of a case study on how important different types of dischronies and the absence of image are for the evaluation of dubbing quality. Taking recourse to the field of translation expertise, the chapter discusses the differences in the data between two subgroups of subjects with different level of expertise (i.e. second-year undergraduate students and fourth-year undergraduate students). The results highlight how aspects such as the tone, the actors' elocution and the soundtrack may disguise possible translation or adjusting errors made when translating. The chapter concludes by addressing the implications of the results in audiovisual translation training.

Chapter 7 attempts to counteract the paucity of research into testing and assessment in audiodescription (AD), wherein Louise Fryer proposes a set of potential competences for AD student assessment with a view to guide the production of AD products. Acknowledging that AD users' priorities are not necessarily aligned with the competences materialized in AD scripts, her contribution draws on commonalities with simultaneous interpreting, as they share a common ground: They both are oral forms of translation of live events, and in spite of their own idiosyncrasies, many of the skills in AD and in



simultaneous interpreting overlap. The particularities of AD skills and competences are further discussed in the context of research by the ADLAB PRO Project. The author delves into assessment criteria in interpreting as compared to studies in AD with the aim to design an assessment sheet oriented to AD assessment to be used in AD quality assessment.

Section 3 of this volume is devoted to process-oriented translation quality assessment. While clients of translations are first and foremost interested in having quality translation products, translation service providers also need quality translation processes in order for their services to be profitable. Empirical studies of the translation process are often based on either Think Aloud Protocols, interviews, or other observational methods. In Chapter 8, Erik Angelone, however, explores the text-related processes by means of screen recording, which has already been used efficaciously to train translators. For assessment purposes, too, however, the protocols from screen recordings can be used by translation educators to reverse engineer the origins of errors found in translation products. Those protocols are argued to be useful for diagnosing triggers of errors in the translation process, because they contain observable indicators such as pauses, mouse hoverings, or deviations from established routines. They assist the assessor in identifying the locus of an error (whether it has been committed during comprehension, transfer or production activities), its phase (whether the error appeared at a drafting or a revision phase) and its information retrieval type (whether the translator accessed internal or external resources). Relying on screen recordings is further shown to increase inter-rater consistency and to enable the translation trainees themselves to self-assess their own processes, enhancing self-regulated learning.

In Chapter 9, Si Cheng introduces a problem-solving perspective to conceptualize the development of translation competence as part translation process assessment and sheds some light into the interrelation between the different subcompetences during the translation process. The translation problem-solving cycle proposed by the author involves the following steps: translation problem-identifying, translation problem-representing, translation solution-proposing, translation solution-evaluating, and translation decision-making sub-activities. The author's conceptualization is supported by an empirical longitudinal study conducted with translation trainees and involving the use of translation task-based interviews, two questionnaires and one focus group. The study reveals the need for process-oriented assessment to be able to gain information on students' progress and competence development, and suggests a more effective use of process-oriented pedagogical tools in translation education and training. Si Cheng's research thus offers not only a theoretical framework but also empirical evidence and practical suggestions to enhance process-oriented assessment.

The third contribution to process-oriented research of translation quality assessment focuses on revision behavior and applies both eye tracking and keylogging methods. In Chapter 10, Moritz Schaeffer, Anke Tardel, Sascha Hofmann and Silvia Hansen-Schirra study the eye movement and typing behavior during self-revision, which they define as the phase in the translation process which follows a first complete draft. The authors investigate the relative duration of the time that translators spend to revise the first complete draft of their source text and how that time is affected by various behavior characteristics during the drafting phase. Their study is based on a database of eye tracking and keylogging data from more than 300 translation sessions of 164 participants (about two thirds of students and one third of professionals) in total, translating English source texts into Spanish, Japanese, Danish, Hindi, Chinese or German. They obtain the result that the most efficient process involves a drafting phase with a large degree of concurrent reading and writing, and only few deletions. Although translators may go through a shorter revision stage if they avoid discontinuous typing, for example, the gains in total task time may be larger if they do the exact opposite.

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While the last decade has seen a proliferation of assessment instruments which aimed at enhancing students' learning by prioritizing the development of translation competences and processes, it is yet unclear how translation trainees actually learn translation quality assessment. This aspect is dealt with in the book's final section. With their case study of a current MA Translation course, Elsa Huertas-Barros and Juliet Vine seek to provide a clearer insight into the current understandings of translation and assessment practices in Chapter 11. By taking a two-pronged approach, the authors survey the assessment practices in translation education, not only among the educators themselves but also among the students. Their contribution uses the framework of the six tenets of good assessment practice set out by the Higher Education Academy in the United Kingdom, including, for instance, the development of assessment fit for purpose, the recognition that assessment lacks precision and the need for a shared understanding of assessment and mutual trust. The authors also introduce the notion of assessment literacy and offer their study as an informed suggestion for a best practice of integrating assessment literacy into a course design.

Mari Pakkala-Weckström follows on from Elsa Huertas-Barros and Vine in encouraging students to become assessors and being involved in the assessment process. To this effect, Chapter 12 introduces a student self-evaluation grid providing a structured framework to evaluate both students' translation processes and products. Two different versions of the grid which were developed and tested with second- and third-year students are presented and supported by means of a pilot study. To enhance the proposed self-evaluation tool, students were asked to submit an end-of-course reflective commentary for each translation assignment, together with a portfolio including a reflective end-of-course self-evaluation. According to students' feedback, the enhanced version of the self-evaluation tool has proven to be a valuable instrument for self-monitoring and quality control, allowing students to conduct detailed retrospective analysis of their strengths and weaknesses.

Students' reflective and autonomous learning is also addressed by Ya-Yun Chen in Chapter 13. In the light of an empirical study conducted with MA students and involving both quantitative and qualitative methods, the author reports on students' level of reflection in different learning modes (i.e. use of diaries, think-aloud and small group discussion). A grounded theory-based qualitative analysis revealed that students generally adopted a reportive style in the diary and think-aloud modes, but a predominantly reflective style in small group discussions. The results also suggest that factors such as students' prior learning experience (including their cultural and educational background), their motivation and the characteristics, design and implementation of a reflective method should also be considered when implementing educational environments that promote students' reflective and autonomous learning.

In Chapter 14, Sonia Vandepitte and Joleen Hanson elaborate on the pedagogical effectiveness of collaborative projects in translation training, with a focus on the combination of revision with peer collaboration. It involves three studies addressing the effectiveness of peer comments and its relation to perceptions of expertise. It first discusses the role of translator's perceptions of reviewer expertise. It then inquires into the number and type of peer feedback comments in relation to whether the target language to be reviewed is the reviewer's L1 or L2 (native and non-native reviewers' feedback). In addition, translation direction is brought into the study by analysing the comments written by trainees in two situations: direct and inverse translation. Professional, methodological and theoretical research implications for translation and revision competence models are suggested.

The final chapter, Chapter 15, also sheds light on students' peer feedback performance: by means of questionnaires and focus groups, Carmen Heine investigates students' perceptions of feedback tasks and compares those with multiple peer feedback data. In fact, she also examines whether these methods can be operationalized as future peer activities in a translation didactics that implements a scaffolding

approach. The data derives from peer feedback related to a web-text localization and translation commentary task that was implemented in a double peer feedback loop that involved both students and teachers. The author analyzed both the wording of student feedback, the revisions suggested and the implementation by students of their peers' suggestions. She calls out for information about feedback and quality assurance practices to be provided by the profession, so that it can be incorporated into future student peer feedback practice, and enumerates various aspects of translation quality assessment that remain under-researched in the didactics of translation training.

Summarizing, the book presents a clear picture of some foremost principles and practices related to translation and interpreting quality assessment in the industry, translation education and translation studies today. It hopes to inspire colleagues in these areas to continue their efforts and collaborate further so as to enhance our insights into translation and interpreting practices and their reception in communities.

*Elsa Huertas-Barros*  
*University of Westminster, UK*

*Sonia Vandepitte*  
*Ghent University, Belgium*

*Emilia Iglesias-Fernández*  
*Universidad de Granada, Spain*

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