Editorial: Interpreter Education Within and Outside of the Classroom

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Editorial: Interpreter Education Within and Outside of the Classroom

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Interpreting is "a living, evolving, and changing entity" which does not take place in a vacuum (Napier, 2005, p. 135). As interpreter educators, we should constantly be seeking new and innovative ways to expose students to situations that are as close as possible to real-life interpreting scenarios, with all of the contextual and discursive challenges that entails. In this second issue of Volume 9 of the *International Journal of Interpreter Education*, we explore the theme of situated learning, with a focus on the interpreting classroom.

Researchers across the education sector have been calling for less reliance on content transmission from lecturer to student, and more student-led learning opportunities that replicate real-life scenarios both within and outside of the classroom (Metzger, 2000; Roberts & Sayer 2017). Interpreters in their everyday work are akin to discourse analysts, who need sophisticated skills to assess context (language, participants, relationships, etc.) in order to guide their decision-making process (Major, Napier, & Stubbe, 2012).

In their 2016 specially themed issue of the *Interpreter and Translator Trainer* dedicated to situated learning approaches, María González Davies and Vanessa Enríquez Raído write: "Situated learning is generally understood as a context-dependent approach to translator and interpreter training under which learners are exposed to real-life and/or highly simulated work environments and tasks, both inside and outside the classroom" (p. 1). Similarly, Sawyer (2004, p. 60) includes "knowledge of the profession/professional identity" among four basic categories of skills to be included in interpreter education curricula. This fits the framework of situated cognition (Sawyer, 2004), which reflects the view that "all knowledge is fundamentally situated in the environment in which it was acquired" (Derry & Lesgold, 1996, p. 791). Arjona (1984, p. 4, as cited in Sawyer, 2004, p. 57) agrees and includes an "understanding by the student of issues and problems he/she is called upon to address in real life situations" as the first of four professional objectives of a course of study.

In our experience, many interpreter education programs already value learning in the community, for example through participation in community events, and practicum placements where student interpreters learn alongside professional interpreters, using and reflecting on their skills in a new environment. González Davies (2004) has long been a strong advocate of situated learning approaches in translator education, with students working on real life projects. Chouc and Conde (2016) reported on students responding to the experience of being placed in the interpreting booth during a live session of the Scottish parliament. Metzger (2000) outlines the use of role-plays in the interpreting classroom as a valuable approach to learning dynamic aspects of interpreter role, such as interactional management. Replicating real-life interactional and interpreting demands for student learning

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is not exactly a new idea, but interpreter education researchers (such as those with contributions in this volume) certainly suggest it could be explored more, and in new creative ways.

This issue contains several contributions describing a form of situated learning. We begin with articles describing opportunities for interpreting students to experience placements in the community, and to reflect on their role as future practitioners.

In our first research article, Carmen Valero-Garcés presents a case study on the internships undertaken by translation and interpreting students in the office of the Oficina de Asilo y Refugio (OAR) or Asylum and Refugee Office in Spain. She describes 125-hour internships completed by students in the OAR supervised by an academic and an institutional adviser. This form of situated learning allows students to gain first-hand experience of the type of professional activities and tasks translators and interpreters working at the OAR are involved in. Such internships may be organized in a range of work settings for interpreting students, such as educational settings, social work settings or specialized health settings, for example, with speech pathologists (cf. Crezee, 2015).

In the second research article, "Conquering the Interpreter's Operational Space: Sign Language Interpreting Students and their Acculturation to Deafblind Clients," Gro Hege Saltnes Urdal describes a form of situated learning involving undergraduate signed language interpreting students in Norway. Her artcle outlines focus group discussions during which students discussed how they felt working with deafblind clients influenced their evidence-based practice. This article supports the importance of reflective practice as discussed by Schön (1987), Dangerfield and Napier (2015), and Crezee and Burn (forthcoming). Placements of this nature, which combine situated cognition and reflective practice, require thorough preparation, university ethics committee and institutional review board approval, and consultation and collaboration with all concerned, but students benefit enormously from such approaches.

The Open Forum section contains two interviews and a book review. Phyllis Perrin Wilcox, professor emerita at the University of New Mexico (UNM), was instrumental in establishing a Baccalaureate degree program in signed language interpreting at UNM. In an interview with Anita Nelson-Julander, she describes her experiences in seeking to attain Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education (CCIE) accreditation for the program at UNM, the impact of accreditation, and advice she has for other interpreter educators who may be considering this goal. Our second interview in this issue focuses on the work of experienced conference interpreter and interpreter trainer Maya de Witt, particularly at an international level. Maya is based in the Netherlands and was interviewed by Esther de Boe. Maya shares her journey to becoming an interpreter and interpreter trainer, as well as her experience working in international sign and her role in curriculum development in Europe.

Debra Russell presents a review of the book *Consecutive Notetaking and Interpreter Training,* edited by Yasumasa Someya and published by Routledge. The book collects papers from a 2015 symposium dedicated to the theory and pedagogy of note-taking. The book includes Michaela Albl-Mikasa's cognitive-linguistic model of consecutive interpreting, which was previously published only in German and is now accessible to a more international audience.

The Dissertation Abstracts section includes summaries of theses on topics of interest to both signed and spoken language interpreters/translators and educators. Marina Sánchez-Torrón's PhD thesis reports on two empirical studies involving professional English to Spanish translators. Rachel Mapson's PhD thesis explores the way in which im/politeness is interpreted from British Sign Language into spoken English, and how contextual considerations influence interpreters' decision making. Finally, Delys Magill's MA thesis examines New Zealand Sign Language interpreters' perspectives on the challenges of healthcare interpreting.

This issue of the *International Journal of Interpreter Education* brings together the work of interpreter educators, scholars, and practitioners, with a focus on exploring new ways for situated learning in interpreter education and furthering "learners' capacity to think and act like professionals" (González Davies & Enríquez Raído, 2016, p. 1).

Thinking ahead to our two volumes planned for 2018, we would like to remind our readers that IJIE has a rolling call for manuscripts. We welcome contributions any theme relevant to interpreter education, so the journal can continue to provide a platform for sharing insights with colleagues globally. We invite a range of contributions for research articles and commentary, dissertation abstracts, book reviews, interviews, and teaching reflections. Please also alert your research students to the possibility of submitting a manuscript to the student work section of *IJIE*.

Emma Roberts and Karen Sayer (2017) encourage us to rethink our approaches to university teaching, so as to enable students to develop the skills to resolve new problems in an increasingly unpredictable world, while at the

same time allowing them to be in greater control of their own learning. While their comments apply to education in general, we feel they are extremely relevant to interpreting students' preparation for the dynamic realities of professional interpreting practice:

> Higher education in the 21st century needs to prepare students for solving new problems in an unpredictable world rather than simply acquiring knowledge" (Roberts & Sayer, 2017, p. 298).

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