

## Introduction

*‘Es ist mit Meinungen, die man wagt, wie mit Steinen, die man voran im Brette bewegt: Sie können geschlagen werden, aber sie haben ein Spiel eingeleitet, das gewonnen wird’*  
(Daring ideas are like chessmen moved forward. They may be beaten, but they may start a winning game.)

-Johann Wolfgang von Goethe-

Maximen und Reflexionen: *Kunst und Altertum*, 1821

The discipline of Translation and Interpreting Studies is by its very nature multi-lingual, multi-national, and possesses a unique diversity among researchers and researched topics. This very diversity can be perceived both as a chance to prosper and as a challenge. Given the sheer multitude of current research avenues, it can be hard at times to become aware of relevant new approaches, and for new lines of enquiry to be heard. We are very happy to be able to present this special issue of *New Voices in Translation Studies*, as it offers fresh ideas and a platform for early-career researchers to communicate their research.

*New Voices* is continually growing, exploring more topics and engaging an increasing number of young scholars with the ongoing discourse in our discipline. A telling example of the encouragement and engagement that *New Voices* offers to scholars new to the field of academic writing, publishing and editing is the ongoing collaboration with the *International Postgraduate Conference in Translation and Interpreting (IPCITI)*, which was the impetus for the establishment of the journal in 2004. Last year saw the publication of a Special Issue in collaboration with the University of Manchester, and *New Voices* is already working towards further publications with *IPCITI* organisers.

The collection of papers in this current issue is a selection of proceedings from the 7<sup>th</sup> *IPCITI*, held in 2011 and hosted by the University of Edinburgh. The *IPCITI* conference series truly is a success story: now in its ninth year, it is organised entirely by postgraduate students of the hosting universities, alternating between the University of Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt University, Dublin City University and the University of Manchester. The series gives the organising team of each host university the chance to gain invaluable experience in a vast range of issues, from the academic evaluation of abstracts to the technical and logistical support required for each and every participant. Mostly, however, the *IPCITI* series provides emerging scholars with a space for discussion and the opportunity to present their research in the presence of an international audience consisting of both peers and senior researchers. We are especially glad to have been able to encourage a great number of fellow researchers to pursue and refine their work, to engage in mutual confidence-building, and to strengthen international network-exchange relations between researchers.

The 7<sup>th</sup> *IPCITI* 2011 was attended by participants from across the world, thereby giving the conference a distinct - and refreshing - “non-Eurocentric” feel, as well as allowing for discussion of research approaches that varied greatly in their perspectives. Collective learning and the mutual sharing of resources and knowledge were central themes, and we are very happy that this collective, cross-border learning did not end when the conference drew to a close. The guest editors for this current issue have worked very closely with the authors of the contributions, providing guidance and support where needed, as well as receiving help and advice from the senior editors of *New Voices in Translation Studies*.

Just as the geographical and thematic range of the 7<sup>th</sup> *IPCITI* was inspiring and refreshing - panel topics included Interpreting Training and Practice, Media Translation, Far Eastern Perspectives, Translation Teaching, Systems of Beliefs, Intersemiotics, Language Change, Audiovisual Translation, Multilingualism, Drama and Fiction - we are pleased to have a reflection of that diversity in the contributions presented in this issue. They mark not only personal journeys – from idea to research, from research to presentation, from presentation to article – but also allow for a glimpse of perceptual journeys through highly diverse cultures. Both the conference organisers and the participants benefitted from a mutual and collective learning process, which was continued between the guest editors of this issue and the contributing authors, and which reaches its – preliminary – conclusion with the successful publication of the current special issue of *New Voices in Translation Studies*.

This issue (9) of *New Voices* presents five papers written by early-career scholars and guest-edited by five research students from the University of Edinburgh. Contrary to popular belief, the editing process entails much more than sitting hunched in front of a computer, buried under dictionaries and papers, typing silently and solitarily. The process which the guest-editors of this issue experienced also provided plentiful chances to develop communication and teamwork skills, reliability and forward planning, and the ability to make decisions, such as to when to get a second opinion on an issue, while also taking charge in critical moments, and still sticking meticulously to the schedule. All these skills, and many more, are becoming increasingly important for doctoral students, and therefore *New Voices* has much to offer both sides: young authors have a chance to improve and fine-tune their academic writing skills; while the guest-editors have a chance to expand their knowledge and practical experience of academic text production and publishing.

Because these processes of learning, trying, and occasionally erring, are largely hidden from our readers, we would like to make a quick excursus. Not all the authors who were initially invited to submit an abstract from their *IPCITI 2011* proceedings ended up having a contribution published in this issue, and not even all the papers which were submitted to the guest-editors made the final cut. Nevertheless, a lot of very hard work and long hours went into these papers, and the decision to exclude some from this current issue was an extremely difficult one to make, particularly since *New Voices* always strives for inclusiveness and supports a variety of backgrounds, approaches and contexts. While we believe in the facilitation of making original research ideas by early-career scholars heard in the world of Translation and Interpreting Studies, we want to uphold international standards of excellent academic writing and high quality of the papers. In some cases, this might have been reached had our schedule allowed more time, but we sincerely hope, nevertheless, that our input was constructive to everyone, and that we were able to encourage all the authors concerned to continue their research.

One of the most exciting features of the research work of early-career scholars is the freshness, and in some cases boldness, of the thoughts and arguments expressed. It may be that we take issue with some of the points made, or feel that they might need more development. Nonetheless, this original research may have already sparked new ideas and thought processes, and this is why we believe that the publication of such insights into new research avenues is crucial to the progress of Translation and Interpreting Studies, as indeed it is to any discipline. As Goethe suggests, new and daring ideas may well be put down in the present (perhaps due to unfortunate timing or insufficient data to support the argument), but when they are ‘out there’ they may well have kick-started a game that will be won in the long

run. Every game starts with one opening move, and we are very glad to present those of our five contributing authors.

The papers included in this special edition are presented in geographical order, beginning in the Asia-Pacific region in Taiwan and stretching across to the western edge of Europe. By presenting them in this way, we hope to highlight some of the cultural and ideational backdrops of their respective authors, and to hint at the vast geographical, linguistic and cultural differences that all too often tend to be taken for granted or overlooked in a globalized world. This diversity, which is an inherent feature of Translation and Interpreting Studies and which was also visible in the 7<sup>th</sup> *IPCITI*, is now once again, in ‘distilled form’, reflected in this current issue. We are very pleased to have had the opportunity to assist and support these five young researchers and authors in what has been for some of them their first publishing experience, and for us guest editors a first step into the world of editing.

In the opening paper, **Todd Klaiman** (National Taiwan Normal University) looks at a masterpiece of modern Chinese literature which captures for the first time the struggles of the Chinese nation in vernacular language, thereby exemplifying the conflict between tradition and modernity. The paper investigates the (un-)translatability of linguistic variation in the literary translation of diglossia, and goes on to address questions of necessity and viability of linguistic variation. The author’s investigation into two English-language translations of Lu Xun’s *The True Story of Ah Q* argues for the necessity of linguistic variation. As the translator of works on Tibetan Buddhism, Taiwanese civil law and medicine, among other subject areas, Lu Xun’s sensitivity for linguistic nuances is complemented with well-founded theoretical embedding. Klaiman’s thorough discussion of existing literature reveals that the translation of dialect has often been treated from a monolingual perspective, neglecting diglossic and heteroglossic aspects, and his analysis well demonstrates that the non-representation of linguistic variety in target texts can indeed lead to a loss of important textual functions.

About seventy meridians further west, the research idea for the second contribution was born: **Nestori Siponkoski**’s contribution (University of Vaasa) provides the reader with rare insights into the largely invisible editorial work behind published translations. This kind of material is very difficult to obtain, and Siponkoski presents us with a compelling account of interactions between translators and other agents. This paper makes a case for the status of editors to be raised, exposing translation as a collaborative, collective, interactive and negotiated activity, and confuting the often held assumption of that there can only be one author/translator exerting his/her authorship and influence on the product. Readers from disciplines other than TS, or those in interdisciplinary projects or general editing work, may also take a strong interest in this paper, since its arguments and methods of analysis could be usefully applied to a very broad range of publications that do not exclusively need to be restricted to translations.

With **Marta Kajzer-Wietrzny**’s paper (Adam Mickiewicz University), the journey takes us to Central Europe. Kajzer-Wietrzny explores the issue of interpreting style, adapting and broadening methods from corpus linguistics and stylometry, and arguing for their wider application in the field of Interpreting Studies. This contribution probes into the influence of individual interpreting styles on the interpreting output, and effectively conceptualizes interpreting style as a specific form of text authorship. Kajzer-Wietrzny’s article sets out to open up further investigation, encourages discussion, and ultimately points towards further avenues of research. With her awareness for the needs of interpreter training gained through

participating in an ‘Interpreting in Virtual Reality’ project, the author is keen to raise awareness for and contribute to further development of the phenomenon of interpreting style.

The trope of style is picked up again a little further to the south-west, by Swiss-based translator **Claudia Walder** (University of Edinburgh) in her contribution on translator style, which sets out to determine whether there is such a thing as “a timbre of its own”, and if it can be tracked empirically through corpora-based research. As a translator, editor and writer of literary texts, Walder’s discussion benefits from varied insights into the multiple intricate aspects of literary translation and text production. Her paper addresses the question of whether there are discernible stylistic similarities, and/or differences, in the two types of texts produced by the same writer, thus aiming to improve the understanding of the translation process and demonstrate the connection between translation and original writing as two creative-writing activities. She draws on material by one contemporary translator-author, comparing stylistic features in samples of his translations and his original writing. The contemporaneity of the examined materials and the issue of linguistic variety produce a compelling case study on determining the translator’s voice.

**Marie Biscio** provides the final paper of the current issue, and her discussion of polyglot films and their subtitling closes the circle by engaging with the trope of multi-lingual and multi-cultural diversity. Biscio, who is herself affiliated with institutions in two countries, the Université de Nice and the National University of Ireland, approaches polyglot films from the innovative viewpoint of audience perception. The main aim of her paper is to investigate the impact of subtitles, or their absence, on the representation of other cultures on French cinema, as well as contextualizing accented cinema by analysing films directed by immigrants living and working in France. The paper concludes that subtitles can be considered both an alienating force as well as a rapprochement tool, and suggests an urgent need to consider the aesthetic representation of subtitles to differentiate between languages in polyglot films.

This special issue can be appreciated as the result of a truly international collaboration between young researchers, and marks the end of more than two years of continuous team work. The organisation of a large scale conference and the editing process of an academic journal are experiences which have irrevocably shaped the professional lives of the guest editorial team, and also, hopefully, will have made a significant positive impact to the career paths of the contributing authors. The on-going discussion and engagement with new and current research issues has altered our perception of methodology, enquiry, and debates in our discipline. Finding a personal voice, whether it is termed *style* or *timbre*, using Walder’s terminology, requires firstly an awareness of other surrounding voices, and secondly an awareness of the voice itself, stripped of any background noises. This requires a sharpening of focus, an open mind, a keen eye for currents and developments in the field, a will to keep asking questions, and last but not least, a strong sense of self-discipline. Our research may not always lead us to the goal we anticipated. Corrections, alterations, or a change of path may be necessary – we might need to embrace research as a process of constant self-editing. All the above-mentioned requirements are essential prerequisites for successful research that does not stagnate, but keeps moving forward. The insights, discussions and outlooks presented in these papers all share the will to progress and move on, thus furthering the scope of research by their creativity and diversity. We hope that this willingness to ask new questions comes across in the articles presented in the current issue, that it might evoke the spirit of research as a questioning journey, and that it might inspire further research paths for present and future researchers in Translation and Interpreting Studies.

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