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Special Issue on

Communities of Practice and Translation

Guest Editors:

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Presentation of the Topic:

Individuals in a community of practice share a common interest, concern, or activity, interact with each other frequently as a result, and develop competences, knowledge, and learning through these interactions; learning happens because of the shared activity, but is not necessarily the reason for the activity (Lave and Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998). The concept has been used as an analytical tool since the 1990s across a variety of disciplines to examine not only the situated learning that occurs through the experience of a particular activity but also issues relating to participation, social interaction, negotiation, identity, power, or trust (Roberts 2006).

Researchers in Translation Studies have already found the concept of communities of practice to be valuable. It has been used by them to examine situated learning in relation to translator and interpreter training (e.g., González-Davies and Enríquez-Raído 2018), to investigate knowledge sharing and collaboration among (especially) online networks of professional translators, fansubbers, or translation activists (e.g., Risku and Dickinson 2017; Pérez-González 2012; House 2018; Taronna 2016), and to examine ideology, culture, positioning, and discourse among groups of like-minded translators and interpreters (e.g., Mason 2014; D'Hayer 2012).

While these studies examine how translators and interpreters (or those who see themselves as translators and interpreters) learn by doing and form communities around a shared practice, we can also imagine a variety of settings in which individuals who may not identify themselves as translators share tasks that require them to develop competences and knowledge about translation. For instance, we can think of workers in local government who are regularly tasked with producing texts in multiple languages for the public, staff in humanitarian organisations who collaborate to translate aid-related information, journalists who join with others to create news in more than one language, or migrants with rare languages who group together to translate information in languages relevant to their communities.

The motivation behind this special issue, therefore, is to continue to investigate communities of practice of translators, while at the same time broadening the focus to include *any* community of practice that engages in translation. In short, we wish to learn more about communities for whom the production of translations may not be their main interest or occupation but for whom translation is a key activity to achieve their aims. This will allow us to map the communities of practice that engage in translation, their organisation, dynamics, artefacts, and knowledge about translation in order to learn about specialised translation from them and to share knowledge with them.

For this reason, we envisage two main streams of contributions to the issue. We hope for further studies of situated learning and coordinated knowledge management carried out by professional translators, proto-professional or student translators, fan communities of translators, or activists. We also hope for novel studies of those who do not identify themselves as translators but who nonetheless engage in translation and learn about it collaboratively (e.g., those working in governmental, non-governmental, or non-for-profit organisations, in for-profit businesses, or as volunteers in civil society, etc.).

We invite contributors to consider and engage with (but not to limit themselves to) the following questions:

- Who are the communities of practice that engage in translation—their situational context, composition, size, scope, location, and histories?
- What do these communities of practice know about the phenomenon of translation?
- Are they working with any discernible theories of translation, explicitly or implicitly?
- How do they know what they know about translation?
- How do they solve problems, share ideas, discuss and improve what they know, coordinate what they do, or resolve conflict?
- How do they build and sustain trust and collaboration?
- How do they organise and negotiate power relations, their identities, or change?
- What are their views, values, tools, routines, terms, or concepts in relation to translation?
- What can Translation Studies learn about specialised translation from these diverse communities of practice?
- What can Translation Studies contribute to these diverse communities of practice about specialised translation?
- How do translator trainers and trainees in higher education interact with communities of practice?

As our goal is to map translation activities by diverse communities of practice broadly in society, we are particularly interested in studies that have been carried out in an engaged research framework, where research has been carried out *with* partners in society, especially to investigate an issue of public interest. We also encourage those who have adopted embedded research, ethnographic methodologies, or other forms of in-depth qualitative research of communities of practice involved in translation to contribute.

We welcome contributions of full-length papers of between 7,000 and 8,000 words (including endnotes and references). All accepted contributions will be double blind peer-reviewed.

Indicative Publication Timeline:

31 March 2020: Deadline for submission of proposals (500-word abstract + biographical notice) to guest editors

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30 September 2020: Deadline for submission of first versions of full articles (between 7,000 and 8,000 words, incl. endnotes and references) to guest editors

1 October 2020 to 31 May 2021: Peer review process

1 June 2021: Deadline for submission of final versions of full articles to guest editors

January 2022: Publication

Stylesheet: http://jostrans.org/stylesheet.pdf

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