

MARIA PIOTROWSKA



# TRANSLATION

Inspirations  
We Live by



# **Translation**

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Maria Piotrowska

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Kraków 2022

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*“Ideas don’t come out of thin air.”*

(Lakoff and Johnson 1980: xi)

*My ideas haven’t either.*

*Many thanks to all those people who have inspired  
my scholarly journey in translation over the years*





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# List of Acronyms

AI	= Artificial Intelligence
ATA	= American Translators' Association
AVT	= Audiovisual Translation
CAT	= Computer Assisted Translation
CTER	= Consortium for Translation Education Research
CI	= Consecutive Interpreting
CSTS	= Contemporary Schools of Translation Studies
DGT	= Directorate General for Translation
EMT	= European Master's in Translation
EST	= European Society for Translation Studies
IATIS	= International Association for Translation and Intercultural Studies
IS	= Interpreting Studies
LLD	= Language of Low/Lesser/Limited Diffusion
LSP	= Language Service Provision
MT	= Machine Translation
PACTE	= <i>Procés d'Adquisició de la Competència Traductora i Avaluació</i> [Process in the Acquisition of Translation Competence and Evaluation]
SI	= Simultaneous Interpreting
SL	= Source Language
ST	= Source Text
TC	= Translator Competence
TEF	= Translating Europe Forum
TEPIS	= Polish Association of Sworn and Specialised Translators
TEW	= Translating Europe Workshop
TIS	= Translation and Interpreting Studies
TL	= Target Language
TPR	= Translation Process Research
TQA	= Translation Quality Assessment
TS	= Translation Studies
TSP	= Translation Service Provision
TT	= Target Text



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# Introduction

*When we undertake a research project, we develop a complicated relationship with our data. We collect it, check the ethics of using it, manipulate it, store it, share it with others, find new ways to squeeze more knowledge from it, and often worry about it because it is the wrong kind, or there isn't enough of it, or it isn't telling us what we thought it would. Sometimes people even make it up or quietly discard the bits that don't fit. Getting the relationship right can make a project or break it.*

(Stuart Campbell from the University of Western Sydney at a lecture delivered at the University of Manchester on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2005 and entitled “Data: Making the Right Choices.”)

## Playing with Data



## Contents:

- 0.1. Translation in the Spotlight of Scholarly Interest – the Approach and Scope of Research
- 0.2. Terms
- 0.3. Playing with Data
- 0.4. Structure of the Book Based on Seven Reflections
- 0.5. Conclusion

## 0.1. Translation in the Spotlight of Scholarly Interest – the Approach and Scope of Research

The main purpose of this book is to put translation in the spotlight of scholarly interest and provide a state-of-the-art thematic overview of research in the chosen areas of reflection. The book offers a wide panorama of translation issues by synthesising views and ideas in those fields. The broad focus – a bird’s eye view on seven themes, with the occasional honing in on a detail or an interesting example, is a characteristic feature of qualitative, conceptual and descriptive translation research. Arguments for a situated approach to translation are given in the book: the translator is embedded in their environment and translation acts are embodied historically, socially and culturally. The research perspective adopted may be synthesised in the motto *cogito ergo translatio*; translation is perceived in many ways, but foremost, following Hervey and Higgins’s inspiration encoded in the title of their coursebook series *Thinking Translation* (1992)<sup>1</sup>, as a cognitive filter and a manner of thinking.

Each of the themes researched is complex and cannot be dealt with exhaustively within the confines of a book chapter without inevitable shortcuts and omissions at times. A personal perspective somehow dictates the mode of presentation – the researcher-participant at play with her own data.

## 0.2. Terms

For brevity, “translation” is used as an umbrella term to denote both oral and written modalities. Similarly, a widespread acronym TS (Translation Studies) often covers them both, unless a clear distinction is needed and

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1 Their first volume of *A Course in Translation Method*, as the subtitle announces, was written on the basis of practicals in the French-English pair, and the series started in 1992 (Hervey and Higgins). Subsequent volumes inspired *Thinking German Translation* (1995), *Thinking Spanish Translation* (1995), *Thinking Italian Translation* (2000), *Thinking Chinese Translation* (2010) and *Thinking Arabic Translation* (2016). Each part includes the core of general translation knowledge and practical material in the given linguistic contrast between English and another language announced in the volume title.

then IS (Interpreting Studies) is specified separately as a split branch. Another acronym TIS (Translation and Interpreting Studies) also appears to use inclusive language for translation and interpreting studies jointly. Such a duality within the discipline, however, is not accurate nowadays because of translation multimodality, as will be explained in the final chapter of the book. Intentional capitalization in the name of the field of Translation Studies is used to raise the status of the discipline. All acronyms occurring in the book are listed separately for easy reference.

### 0.3. Playing with Data

It is true that translation offers an abundance of different kinds of data: from eye-tracking scripts, to literary corpora and terminological bases. The data is versatile, there are various methods to compile and investigate it, and diverse analytical approaches to the studied phenomena. In all of this abundance, it is important to apply individual perspective to the topics investigated and find an approach that will be most fitting to what we want to investigate. An element of motivation is highly pertinent, too, as it is precisely affective factors that increase the level of our involvement, and help us build the self-assurance that sustains research. Nowadays, we are flooded by data but the point is, upon Stuart Campbell's suggestion in the motto, to make good use of it.

Differing from the three basic research models presented by Chesterman (2000) and Williams and Chesterman (2002/2007): comparative, process and causal; this book proposes a model of synergic and impressionistic presentation of data; a kind of a "practisearcher's palimpsest biography"<sup>2</sup>, which will, subsequently, be clarified. Rather than statistically valid significant data sets, qualitative data is used with examples that demonstrate and illustrate.

The gathered data I play with in the book comes from my many years of practising translation, teaching the subject and making scholarly endeavours to study it and write about it. The research is based on the English-Polish and Polish-English language pair. Frequent references to Polish sources highlight Polish translation ideas, as there is relatively little

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2 The term "practisearcher" was first used by Daniel Gile (1995) with reference to a reflective translator who is simultaneously a researcher.

about them in the international translation discourse and global scholarly communication, whereas in fact, Polish translation thought has a long and rich tradition, particularly in the literary domain. Thus, purposefully Polish bias in the choice of bibliographical references in some chapters serves the goal of promoting research from a Language of Limited Diffusion (LLD)<sup>3</sup> background where TS has flourished for many years.

## 0.4. Structure of the Book Based on Seven Reflections

Pondering on the conceptual framework of this monograph led to the selection of a trajectory of seven strands of enquiry or reflections into the landscape of translation. The enquiries combine traditional views with explorations into less studied ground. First, is a study into metaphor and metaphoric discourse of translation. Second comes a chapter that observes translation from a historical perspective. Thirdly, a plethora of cultural issues are presented with a focus on cultural immersion and a situated enquiry into the ethnography of translation. Then disambiguation of the perception of the key concept of competence is provided. In the subsequent two reflective studies *ratio* and “feeling” play their parts, with the rational translator’s decision-making process in Chapter Five and a discussion on intuition in Chapter Six. The seventh reflection is a summary of what the discipline of TS is constituted of and an attempt at mapping its territory.

## 0.5. Conclusion

When the idea of putting together the contents of this monograph was considered, many different approaches to translation were pondered on, many different avenues that could have been taken to comment on things that matter for the translator and the translation scholar, that the author, or other researchers may enquire into; many serious scholarly topics we could engage in. The seven chapters that have ultimately emerged grew out of a concern for how we understand translation. The author’s holistic vision

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<sup>3</sup> Three terms are used in parallel for this concept: a language of low, limited or lesser diffusion.

of translation is that there is no one theory, no single truth about it. Instead, we both live translation and in translation. The world of translation is rich and abundant; translation presence – not peripheral but pervasive and strong.

With the following quotation, I invite the Reader to start reflecting on translation by looking at the presented landmarks in the translation landscape: metaphor, history, culture, competence, decision-making, intuition and TS map.

*Translation. It's everywhere you look, but seldom seen. [...] Worth an estimated \$33 billion, translation is the biggest industry that you never knew existed. [...] Why should you care? Because translation affects every aspect of your life – and we are not just talking about obvious things like world politics and global business. Translation affects you personally, too. The books you read. The movies you watch. The food you eat. Your favourite sports team. The opinions you hold dear. The religion you practise. Even your looks and, yes, your love life. Right this very minute, translation is saving lives, perhaps even yours.*

(Kelly, N. and Zetzsche, J. 2012. *Found in Translation. How Language Shapes Our Lives and Transforms the World.* New York: Penguin Books.)

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# Abstract

The main aim of the book is not only a historical and contemporary overview of translation research models and methods but also the author's critical analysis of the state of the art in Translation Studies and a commentary of the progress of the discipline; as indicated in the chapter titles, which are called "Reflections." The monograph is structured around seven major areas of reflection upon translation and the field of multi-dimensional translation research, and its particular chapters concern chronologically: translation metaphors, historical perspectives on translation, translation – culture interrelations, with particular focus on ethnography of translation; translator competence, translator's decision-making and intuition. The last chapter offers "a map of Translation Studies", which demonstrates its dynamism, diversity, complexity, inter- and multidisciplinary. The palimpsest metaphor that concludes translation reflections and refers back to the first chapter, defines translation as a complex sequence of experiential layers and inspirations "we live by", as indicated in the title of the classic of cognitive linguistics by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), which the monograph title alludes to.

**Key words:** ethnography of translation, history of translation, intuition, metaphor, palimpsest, translator competence, translator's decision-making, translation research, Translation Studies



# Streszczenie

Celem książki jest nie tylko przegląd historycznych i aktualnych badań przekładoznawczych, lecz także autorska krytyczna analiza ich stanu i rozwoju, co sugeruje określenie rozdziałów „refleksjami”. Struktura treściowa książki opiera się na siedmiu głównych obszarach rozważań nad przekładem i dziedziną wielowymiarowych studiów przekładoznawczych, a jej poszczególne rozdziały dotyczą kolejno: metafor przekładu, historycznych kontekstów przekładowych, relacji między tłumaczeniem a kulturą, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem badań etnograficznych; kompetencji tłumacza, procesu decyzyjnego oraz intuicji. Siódma refleksja jest „mapą przekładoznawstwa”, która pokazuje, jak dynamicznym, zróżnicowanym, kompleksowym, inter-, trans- i multidyscyplinarnym obszarem wiedzy jest ta stosunkowo młoda dziedzina. Metafora palimpsestu wieńcząca rozważania przekładoznawcze w książce i kłamrowo nawiązująca do rozdziału pierwszego definiuje przekład w kategoriach warstwowego nakładania się doświadczeń i konstruuje jego rozumienie jako sekwencję kolejnych inspiracji, „którymi żyjemy” – *inspirations we live by*, jak podaje tytuł książki w odniesieniu do kanonicznej publikacji językoznawstwa kognitywnego autorstwa Lakoffa i Johnsona z 1980 roku.

**Słowa klucze:** badania przekładoznawcze, etnografia przekładu, historia przekładu, intuicja, kompetencja tłumacza, metafora, palimpsest, proces decyzyjny tłumacza, przekładoznawstwo

*Translation: Inspirations We Live by* outlines the scope of Translation Studies as a discipline and presents a synthetic approach to the conceptual research in seven areas of inspiration, called “reflections.” It demonstrates a self-reflective and contemporary approach to mapping translation, with an innovative coverage of the topic of intuition, among others. The monograph is not a textbook although certain passages may be used for broadening translation students’ knowledge and horizons. It is addressed to translation scholars and teachers, translators and advanced students of translation. The book’s rationale is a metaphor for palimpsest translation experience and a journey of the mind.



**Maria Piotrowska** is a translation researcher and teacher; sworn translator of English/Polish; author and editor of translation articles and books; Head of the Chair for Translation Studies and Postgraduate Studies for Translators and Interpreters at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow; member of the European Society for Translation Studies EST, member and co-founder of Cracow Society for the Promotion of Language Studies TERTIUM, President of the Consortium for Translation Education Research CTER.



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