



## Book Review

**Cirillo, L. & Niemants, N. (Eds.) (2017).  
*Teaching Dialogue Interpreting*. Amsterdam/  
Philadelphia: John Benjamins. 393pp.  
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In 1999, Mason introduced the notion of ‘Dialogue Interpreting’ (DI), a term that covers liaison, bilateral interpreting that takes place in settings as diverse as healthcare, court, education, business meetings or television, among others. As opposed to other terms, such as ‘community interpreting’, ‘court interpreting’ or ‘public service interpreting’, the emphasis of ‘dialogue interpreting’ is on the interpreting modality, not on the setting. DI as a broad discipline has been further researched in subsequent publications: see, for instance, Mason (2001), Baraldi and Gavioli (2012), or Tipton and Furmanek (2016), among others. Leticia Cirillo and Natacha Niemants’ (2017) *Teaching Dialogue Interpreting* follows this trend and reflects the healthy development of research in DI: after some years of general, descriptive contributions, the time has come for studies that focus on more specific aspects of DI, such as teaching methods.

DI-related courses have been included in many Translation and Interpreting degrees for some years now, and they are also frequently offered as continuing education or adult courses. In this respect, *Teaching Dialogue Interpreting* is a timely and very welcome contribution that brings fresh air and inspiring ideas, especially for trainers and educators in DI-related courses. The volume reflects the experience in teaching practices of some of the pioneering educators in the field, but also new voices who present innovative methods that may contribute to shaping the practices of the future. What makes the volume distinctive is the explicit emphasis on “research-based proposals for interpreter education” (Niemants & Cirillo, p. 10), i.e. the desire to bridge the gap between research findings and classroom activities. The final goal is to make DI educationally relevant and meaningful for students.

The volume is divided into three parts, which are explained by the editors in the introduction: theoretical and methodological issues; specialized modules for specialized professional settings; and latest trends in dialogue interpreter education. This structure provides a logical progression of ideas, from chapters that cover broad aspects of dialogue interpreter education as a whole, to chapters that focus on specialised courses and, finally, chapters about very specific teaching methods and activities. In this respect, the volume is well-balanced and might be relevant for a wide range of educators: from those who are preparing DI courses from the ground up, to experienced educators who are seeking different methods and activities to use in their classes.

Contributors from Italian universities are somewhat predominant in the volume, and while this might be seen as a slight bias, it also reflects the expansion and healthy state of various kinds of DI courses in that country. All in all, the experiences presented by young voices in DI research are a sign of the dynamism of the field.

The book starts with Gavioli's foreword, where she poses some key questions that will be approached later in the volume. The emphasis on "authenticity" is especially relevant: from the learner's perspective, "what makes a task or activity authentic?" (p. XII). The general impression after reading the volume is that perhaps the key to approaching this authenticity is to go beyond exercises that merely focus on accuracy or the linguistic dimension of interpreting, and instead stress other aspects such as social and interpersonal relationships among the participants in the interaction, power management, ethical dilemmas or emotional impact, among others.

In their introduction, Niemants and Cirillo present the background and motivations for the volume, as well as a brief overview of the major advances in DI research and theories over the past twenty years. They also explain the book's structure and comment on its various chapters. It is indeed a valuable introduction, wherein the reader will find interesting references and ideas about the (not always obvious) links between research, education and practice.

The first part ("Setting the Stage: Theoretical and Methodological Issues") contains five chapters that address general aspects of DI-related courses. In the first chapter, Angelelli reflects upon the "critical areas" in programme design of DI courses, mainly based on her previous experience and research in the field. One of the most interesting aspects of this chapter is the discussion of the differences between interpreter education, professional development, and training. Angelelli's definition of these concepts is clear and certainly necessary if we want to use terminology accurately.

In the second chapter, Ozolins draws attention to the interpersonal dynamics of DI practice. DI performance requires linguistic competence, but its success also depends on the social factors that intervene in the interaction. In other words, primary participants' "institutional status, discourse styles and communicative intent" have a clear impact in the development of the interpreter-mediated interaction. However, this is not always reflected in the activities and approaches used in DI-related courses, which is what Ozolins seeks to redress. In tune with this, Hammer and van den Bogaerde present a detailed description of a course in sign language education where the main feature is the introduction of interpersonal skills. Lewellyn-Jones and Lee's (2014) theory of role space is used for that purpose.

In a similar vein, Mara Morelli presents a description of "community mediation" courses at the University of Genova, ranging from the general context of these courses to specific examples of teaching materials (e.g. role-plays), as in the previous chapter. The distinctive feature in Morelli's contribution is her concern about finding the balance between market demands and the education of translators and interpreters. In her view, "cross-fertilisation" of techniques and strategies in the fields of translation, interpreting and community mediation will result in much more versatile professionals who will better adapt to job opportunities.

The last chapter of the first part is Peter Mead's contribution on the use of notes and visual prompts in DI classes. The author advocates for the inclusion of note-taking techniques in DI courses and then presents examples of exercises he uses for that purpose.

The second part of the book ("Specialized Interpreting Modules for Specialized Professional Settings") focuses on the organisation of specific modules that are part of broader training programmes or university degrees. From this second part onward, role-plays become prominent in most contributions. Role-plays are undoubtedly a leading and recurring teaching

method in DI courses, extensively used by educators and trainers around the world. However, one of the assets of the book is that, in most contributions, role-plays are not only presented, but also critically revisited and sometimes even reinvented by incorporating new methods and approaches (see, for instance, the chapters by Kadrić or Niemants and Stokoe).

The chapters in this part cover a wide range of topics: interpreting in business negotiations (Cirillo & Radicioni); interpreting in film festivals (Merlini); interpreting in television (Dal Fovo & Falbo); interpreting in educational settings (Valero-Garcés & Tan); and finally, legal interpreting (Hale & González; Preziosi & Garwood). Despite the variety of topics, there is always a common denominator – dialogue interpreting as a modality – that makes most contributions relevant for readers from diverse backgrounds. Thus, a reader who is not an expert in interpreting in film festivals will discover that – as Merlini explains in chapter 7 – interpreters may often become active participants in the interpreted events, and thus extensively use non-renditions in order to accommodate the “ethics of entertainment”. In this specific case, analysis of real interactional data prior to role-playing is especially useful for students, and is one of the strengths of Merlini’s proposed methodology.

Cirillo and Radicioni also focus on role-plays to practise interpreting in business meetings, but they suggest using “structured role-play”, where special attention is paid to what is done before and after its enactment: i.e., defining the objectives and setting the stage (before), and giving feedback and facilitating discussion (after). In Valero-Garcés and Tan’s contribution, role-plays are framed inside the study of the specificities of a certain community (the Chinese) in Spain.

In Dal Fovo and Falbo’s chapter, the emphasis is less on role-plays and more on raising students’ awareness of how DI on television actually works. To do so, they suggest the analysis of real life materials (TV interpreters’ performance) to complement traditional role-plays and thus compensate for their lack of authenticity.

Concerning the two last contributions of the second part, Hale and González (chapter 10) present a detailed description of a module on legal interpreting, while Preziosi and Garwood (chapter 11) analyse the challenges of providing courses on legal interpreting in Italy. While the link between research and DI teaching methods and approaches is not as clear as in other chapters of the volume, these two chapters certainly benefit from the authors’ experience as educators in this field.

The third part of the book (“Latest Trends in Dialogue Interpreter Education”) is the most innovative and original, and a real source of inspiration for DI educators and trainers with some prior experience in DI courses. The contributions by Krystallidou, Kadrić, and Niemants and Stokoe are excellent examples that demonstrate how DI teaching methods can benefit from other disciplines. Krystallidou introduces the notion of “visual literacy” to raise DI students’ awareness of the importance of non-verbal communication in any kind of face-to-face interaction. Kadrić applies Boal’s (2008) “Forum Theatre” concept (which is part of the latter’s *Theatre of the Oppressed*) to role-plays, thus showing the tensions and “oppressions” an interpreter may suffer in a given situation. Niemants and Stokoe adapt the conversation analytic role-play method (CARM) developed by Stokoe (2011), and use it for the analysis of authentic French-Italian interpreter-mediated healthcare data. All these contributions share a similar goal: to propose activities that become stimulating for students, either because they can feel they are placed at the centre of a given experience (as in Kadrić’s adaptation of Boal’s techniques) or because the use of authentic video-materials makes them feel closer to real-life practice.

Finally, new technologies are also reflected in the volume: González Rodríguez and Spinolo present a teaching module on telephone dialogue

interpreting; while Skaaden shows how text-only chats are used in a one-year course on interpreting in Norway. Other chapters also mention blended approaches (e.g. Hammer & van den Bogaerde), even though the bias towards in-class activities is evident.

Overall, although some chapters are more experience-related than research-based, *Teaching Dialogue Interpreting* is an important contribution that reflects the advances of DI teaching methods. Therefore, it is highly recommended for educators and trainers in this field.

## References

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