

Preface

This volume provides a state-of-the-art view of research into interdisciplinarity, language and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), with an overview of teaching proposals within a university context. Interdisciplinarity is understood here as how language expresses the discourse and lexis of specialised knowledge in science, technology and the professions. Language helps in the creation of these different fields and constitutes a strategic tool that, if harnessed correctly, will facilitate competitiveness on an international level, in order to boost technological, scientific, economic and educational growth. Interdisciplinarity, together with language and ICTs, constitute our focus here. Teachers, translators and other experts in the field of linguistics in educational institutions need to take into account all three when dealing with the real needs of industry, commerce and the professions. The contributions deal with themes that are crucial to the demands of modern society: intercultural business communications, one of the most challenging areas of specialised discourse and commerce; ICT and specialised translation, a current issue of utmost relevance; terminology applied to translation; language acquisition and communication in virtual environments; training interpreters through ICT; exploring the commercial needs of language industries; corpus-based research and ICT applications in specialised dictionaries; university e-learning courses; and, finally, the state of research on specialised languages in Latin America.

In their chapter, 'Development and Assessment of an Aptitude Test for Interpreters: Using Labs for Interpreting Training', Carmen Valero-Garcés and Denis Socarrás-Estrada give a detailed account of an assessment instrument they have created for interpreters. They detail the scales and grading method that should be applied, the reliability and validity of the test, and the kinds of exercises to be used in the test. They state that, on the basis of their results, the tests constitute a useful instrument to measure the ability of students to develop the skills and knowledge needed.

In her contribution, 'The Use of ICT in the European Higher Education Area: Acting upon the Evidence', María Luisa Pérez-Cañado describes three pedagogical innovation projects developed at the University of Jaén from both a quantitative and qualitative perspective. Within the new higher education landscape that has come about due to the move toward European Convergence in higher education, she suggests that ICTs should have an increasingly significant role in teaching at tertiary level.

Chelo Vargas-Sierra describes, in her chapter, 'Translation-oriented Terminology Management and ICTs: Present and Future', different aspects of terminology management and a computerised workbench, all with regard to translation-oriented terminology. Future developments with regard to translators' workstations and their relation to terminology work are put forward.

In his chapter, 'Relevance Equations of Effective Internet Communication', Francisco Yus analyses user-to-user internet communication from a Relevance Theory point of view. He analyses nine sample relevance equations and claims that any relevance equation that we apply to internet communication should include an analysis of aspects that generate alterations in the eventual validity of such an equation.

Beatriz Gallardo-Paúl and Verónica Moreno-Campos revise, in 'Linguistic Models in Learning Innovation Theories: Linear Approaches versus Interactive Practices', what the teaching and learning dimension that university educational innovation based on ICTs has to offer. They focus on the dominant linguistic model associated with teaching in higher education and the need to choose a model that is compatible with truly interactive teaching practices.

Françoise Salager-Meyer, in 'Interdisciplinarity and Languages for Specific Purposes in Latin America', looks at the genesis of the ESP movement in Latin America and provides a state-of-the-art revision of the research and teaching problems that have been and still are of concern to most LSP practitioners throughout Latin American. Her chapter concludes with a description of an ongoing project between the Latin American and Caribbean countries, on the one hand, and the European Union, on the other.

Through 'Investigating Professional Languages through Genres', Isabel García-Izquierdo, from the Gentt Group, reflects on the research currently being conducted on specialised languages, with particular attention

being given to the needs of interlinguistic communication. She proposes a genre-based approach (as redefined in recent studies carried out in the fields of linguistics, rhetoric and translation studies) to carry out research in this field.

In 'Computer-assisted Translation and Terminology Management: Tools and Resources', Miguel Ángel Candel-Mora proposes the use of several tools and resources that are essential for professional translators. He describes the rebirth of machine translation, new advances in statistical machine translation and provides an overview of computer-assisted translation (CAT tools) and translation-oriented terminology management in the last ten to fifteen years. He analyses why they have become important resources in both research and professional practice alike.

In 'Developing Intercultural Communicative Competence through Video-web Communication in the NIFLAR Project', José Ramón Gómez-Molina gives an account of the e-learning of Spanish as a Foreign Language in which students from the MA in Hispanic Studies (pre-service teachers) from the University of Valencia and students of Spanish as a Foreign Language from the University of Utrecht (Holland) have participated using a video-web communication virtual environment. He discusses the role of telecollaboration, the design of interactive tasks, interaction among participants, and the research that is being performed using quantitative and qualitative criteria, in order to analyse the learning outcomes and the problems and advantages that one might encounter in this and similar communicative environments.

Finally, in her chapter, 'When Humanities and Information and Communications Technology Merge', Victoria Guillén-Nieto gives an account of the interdisciplinary COMINTER-SIMULNEG project, in which the insights of applied linguistics are synthesised with those of social anthropology and ICT with a practical agenda in mind: (a) designing a pragmatic model for the analysis of intercultural communication between Spaniards and Britons in business settings and (b) constructing a graphic adventure for the purpose of developing intercultural communicative competence in business settings.