Wu, LQ. (2024). [Review of the book Translator and interpreter education research: Areas, methods and trends, by M.M.M. Abdel Latif]. *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E, 11*. 11, 11, https://doi.org/10.51287/cttl202475

Book Review

Abdel Latif, M. M. M. (2020). *Translator and interpreter education research: Areas, methods and trends.* Springer Singapore. pp. xiii+163. ISBN 978-981-15-8550-0. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-8550-0

This book provides a comprehensive overview of research in translator and interpreter education. As part of Springer's *New Frontiers in Translation Studies* series, this 163-page work maps key research areas and offers methodological guidance for this evolving field. Abdel Latif identifies six main areas in translation and interpreter education research: training experimentation, learning and teaching practices, assessment, processes, products, and professional experiences and roles. He argues that although this field is growing, it remains in the developmental stage, with many gaps to address. Through an extensive literature review, he demonstrates uneven progress across these areas. The book's eight chapters begin with definitions and historical context, followed by in-depth explorations of each research area, and conclude with suggestions for future lines of research. This structure facilitates comparisons between translation and interpreting education research. Abdel Latif's work is differentiated by its broad scope, covering all six of the abovementioned areas for both translation and interpreting. It focuses on describing research areas and methodologies rather than merely reviewing the findings of previous studies. By critically evaluating current research methodologies and suggesting future directions, this book provides a valuable roadmap for researchers, educators, and program administrators to advance both research and practice in translator and interpreter education.

Chapter 1 comprehensively introduces translator and interpreter education

research, defining key terminology and tracing the field's historical trajectory. The author proposes an innovative framework of the six main research areas, expanding on previous classifications such as Holmes' (1972) work. This typology includes both direct and indirect education-related areas, though the rationale for categorizing certain topics can be considered as "indirect" which could benefit from further elaboration. The chapter offers a detailed historical overview, highlighting pivotal studies from the 1950s onwards and acknowledging contemporary scholars' contributions. Abdel Latif discusses the role of academic journals in the field's growth and notes the impact of technological advancements on research. The chapter concludes by outlining the book's structure, emphasizing its comprehensive coverage of all six research areas for both translation and interpretation. This ambitious scope promises valuable contributions to the field but may face challenges in maintaining analytical depth across such a broad range of topics (pp. 1–7).

Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive analysis of translator and interpreter training experimentation studies, categorizing them into six main types: technology-based, process-based, corpus-based, profession-oriented, project-based, and research-oriented training. Abdel Latif examines methodological approaches, including post-training assessment, action research, and pre-post-training designs (pp. 13–15). The chapter offers critical insights into each training type's implementation and effectiveness, exemplified by various studies. The author identifies research gaps, noting limited studies in dialogue interpretation and a lack of process-based and project-based learning, as well as research-oriented training specifically for interpreting (p. 31). Additionally, Abdel Latif discusses prescriptive training models as an additional category (pp. 29–31). He concludes by calling for

more diverse studies and rigorous research designs to advance the field (p. 32).

Chapter 3 provides a thorough overview of research on translation and interpreting learning and teaching practices. Abdel Latif categorizes this research into six main areas: education policy reports, program evaluation, needs analysis, learner performance variables, classroom practices, and trainer education (pp. 39–40). The author analyzes methodological approaches, highlighting the prevalence of mixed-method designs and data triangulation in most areas (p. 40). Common data sources include questionnaires, interviews, and document analyses. The chapter examines country-specific policy reports (pp. 41–42), program evaluation studies (pp. 42–45), needs analysis research (pp. 45–49), and learner performance variables (pp. 49–51). The author identifies the scarcity of research on classroom practices (pp. 51–53) and trainer education (pp. 53–54). The chapter concludes by suggesting future research directions, including exploring education policies in different regions and adopting micro-approaches to investigate classroom practices (pp. 55–56).

Chapter 4 analyzes translation and interpreting assessment research across seven key areas. Abdel Latif highlights the field's quantitative nature, noting prevalent data sources such as questionnaires and tests (p. 62). The chapter examines survey assessment practices (pp. 62–63), test validation research (pp. 64–65), source text difficulty studies (pp. 67–68), development of performance rubrics (pp. 68–69), research on rating practices and testing conditions (pp. 70–72), limited work on motivational scales (pp. 73–74), and user evaluation/reception research (pp. 74–78). The author reviews influential studies in each area, noting more extensive research in interpreting as compared to translation assessment. The chapter concludes that the field is still evolving, calling for specialized journals and research centers to

advance translation and interpreting assessment studies (p. 78).

Chapter 5 examines cognitive processes in translation and interpreting, outlining macro studies of overall processes and micro investigations of specific components. It analyzes translation process research methodologies, including think-aloud protocols, keystroke logging, eye-tracking, and retrospective interviews (pp. 86–87). The chapter categorizes translation process research into macro approach studies, research on resource use (pp. 92–95), revision processes (pp. 94–96), and problem-solving strategies (pp. 95–97). It notes a growing interest in post-editing machine translation (pp. 94–95). For interpreting process research, the chapter reviews macro studies profiling overall strategies (pp. 97–101) and micro research on specific strategies such as note-taking, self-repair, anticipation, and explicitation (pp. 101–104). The author emphasizes the complexity of studying cognitive processes in translation and interpreting, critically analyzing data collection methods and analytical challenges. He concludes that the field is still evolving, calling for more effective data triangulation and micro-perspective studies (p. 105).

Chapter 6 examines research on translation and interpreting products, categorizing it into three main areas: quality assessment, linguistic and pragmatic features, and prosodic features in interpreting. The quality assessment section (pp. 112–117) focuses predominantly on interpreting accuracy, particularly in legal and medical contexts, noting the scarcity of translation quality research. Studies on linguistic and pragmatic features (pp. 117–119) analyze elements such as cohesion devices and lexical choices, primarily using professional corpora. The prosodic features section (pp. 119–120) highlights methodological challenges in studying aspects such as speech rate and intonation in interpretation. Abdel Latif concludes that this field has seen fewer developments compared to other areas of translator

and interpreter education research, suggesting potential for growth by drawing on applied linguistics research ideas.

Chapter 7 examines research on professional translators' and interpreters' experiences and roles. Abdel Latif organizes the research into four main areas: technology use, competence correlates, and profiling translator and interpreter practices. Most studies are survey-based, using questionnaires and interviews. The author provides a comprehensive review of research across various interpreting fields (pp. 133–144), while noting limited studies on translator practices (pp. 131–133). The analysis traces the evolution of technology use research (pp. 126–130) and highlights differences between the objectives of translation and interpreting. Research on competence correlates covers sociodemographic characteristics, psychological dimensions, and job satisfaction (pp. 130–131). The chapter concludes by identifying research gaps, particularly in translator practices and competence correlates, and calls for more country-specific and cross-cultural surveys (pp. 145–146).

Chapter 8 provides an overview and analysis of translator and interpreter education research, along with suggestions for advancement. Abdel Latif summarizes six main research areas and their subareas in Table 8.1 (p. 152) and characterizes the current status of the field as "developing" or "maturing," noting the progress made in the last 15 years but highlighting remaining gaps and methodological shortcomings (pp. 152–153). The author provides three primary suggestions for advancing the field, with the first being addressing research gaps: Abdel Latif emphasizes the need for exploring understudied areas within main research types and borrowing ideas from related fields. He notes language- and genre-specific gaps, calling for additional research on less-studied languages (e.g.,

Arabic, Indian, Russian, and African languages) and genres (e.g., literary and scientific translation/interpreting) (p. 153). The second suggestion is developing research practices and adopting methodological borrowing: The author highlights methodological shortcomings in existing studies, particularly in training experimentation, learning/teaching practices, assessment, and professional experience subareas. He advocates for more standardized and rigorous designs, suggesting methodological borrowing from related fields as a key strategy (pp. 153–154). The third suggestion is establishing specialized research journals and centers: Abdel Latif stresses creating dedicated platforms for advancing research, suggesting specialized journals and research centers focused on specific areas such as translation/interpreting assessment, classroom practices, community interpreting, or professional translator practices (p. 154). The author also emphasizes the need to balance research efforts between translation and interpreting studies, noting that there has been further research on interpretation in the assessment and professional experience areas, whereas translation has received more attention in the process and learning/teaching practice areas (p. 153). Abdel Latif concludes that addressing these suggestions will "definitely bring about important developments in translator and interpreter education research, and help in disseminating its more mature culture" (p. 154), contributing significantly to advancing the field, filling gaps, and improving overall study quality and rigor.

Abdel Latif's *Translator and interpreter education research* provides a comprehensive synthesis of the field, methodically examining six main areas of research: training experimentation, learning and teaching practices, assessment, cognitive processes, product analysis, and professional experiences. The book offers valuable insights into current research practices and methodologies, while

suggesting opportunities for cross-pollination with related fields such as language education and applied linguistics to advance future research (pp. 151–154). Covering six main research areas from the 1950s to 2019 (p. 7), the book reveals an imbalance in research focus, with a concentration on Chinese, English, and Western European languages, while Arabic, Indian, Russian, and African languages remain understudied (p. 153). It contextualizes translator and interpreter education within the broader development of translation studies and technological advancements (pp. 1–3, 127). The author engages in scholarly debates on research definitions, training approaches, and the role of technology (pp. 1–5, 126–130). Practical implications include suggestions for improving training programs, developing assessment methods, and enhancing professional development (pp. 7, 61, 144). Theoretical advancements contribute to understanding cognitive processes, refining competence models, and analyzing interpreter roles (pp. 85, 130, 137). The book's review of existing methodologies (think-aloud protocols, eye-tracking, keystroke logging, discourse analysis, and survey methods) provides researchers with a valuable toolkit of approaches while emphasizing the importance of data triangulation to overcome individual method limitations (pp. 87–89, 111, 126, 137). The author also identifies research gaps in audiovisual translation practices, less-represented languages such as Arabic, Indian, Russian, and African languages, and certain genres such as literary and scientific translation/interpreting, calling for more balanced research across translation and interpreting fields (pp. 146, 153). Although Abdel Latif's book *Translator and interpreter education research* offers a comprehensive overview of the field, it has several limitations. The coverage of research areas is uneven, with some chapters receiving more attention than others. For instance, Chapter 6 (on product research) is notably shorter and less detailed

than other chapters, potentially underselling its importance. The author's heavy reliance on English-language sources and acknowledgement of focus on certain languages (p. 153) restricts the book's global perspective. Additionally, it lacks quantitative meta-analyses of research findings, which could have provided additional insights into the overall effectiveness of different approaches in translator and interpreter education. Despite these limitations, Abdel Latif's book represents a valuable contribution to the field, serving as an essential starting point for understanding the current state of translator and interpreter education research as well as identifying promising areas for future study.

Building on Abdel Latif's comprehensive overview of translator and interpreter education research, future studies should explore emerging technological approaches. This includes neuroimaging techniques such as functional near-infrared spectroscopy and functional magnetic resonance imaging, to gain deeper insights into the cognitive processes involved in translation and interpreting. Investigating computational models of post-editing machine translation can advance our understanding of this increasingly important area. Due to the growing shift toward online education, research into effective methods of developing and assessing virtual courses in translation and interpreting is timely and relevant. Expanding research to include a broader range of languages, such as Arabic, Russian, the languages of India, and those spoken across the African continent, and less-studied genres, such as literary and scientific translation and interpreting, can enrich the global perspective in the field. Additionally, quantitative meta-analyses of existing research findings could provide valuable insights into the overall effectiveness of various educational approaches and offer guidelines on best practices for educators and program developers in translator and interpreter training.

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