

Call for Contributions – Special Issue

‘The Effect of Plurality in Translation’

Exchanges: The Interdisciplinary Research Journal

Guest edited by Melissa Pawelski (IAS Early Career Fellow)

This special issue of the *Exchanges* journal seeks contributions from students at master’s and doctoral level as well as from early career academics, who prioritise an interdisciplinary perspective in their research projects. With the desire to make space for reflections on plurilingual diversity and the challenges arising therefrom for translation, this special issue is intended to constitute a collection of articles in which knowledge and ideas are shared for the purpose of improving practices of reading, writing, teaching, and translating.

In his commentary to Walter Benjamin’s seminal text ‘The Task of the Translator’, Jacques Derrida comments on the limits of translation theories and philosophies, declaring that they too often remain committed to a bilingual conceptualisation of interlingual translation. Derrida asks how the ‘effect of plurality’ in translation may be fruitfully accounted for, especially in texts using *more than two* languages:

...Let us note one of the limits of theories of translation: all too often they treat the passing from one language to another and do not sufficiently consider the possibility for languages to be implicated *more than two* in a text. How is a text written in several languages at a time to be translated? How is the effect of plurality to be ‘rendered’?¹

In the original French of this passage, Derrida formulates this question using the verb *rendre*, which may be translated into English as ‘to render’, meaning ‘to provide/give a service’, ‘to represent’, ‘to perform’, and even ‘to translate’. However, the French language reveals another important meaning: *rendre* also means to return something that is duly expected or owed. This type of critical reflection and research on translation, therefore, is understood as a work of righteous restoration, accounting for the plurilingual reality in which we live. In scholarship, the concept of multilingualism has been beneficial to describe and explain cultural products and phenomena of language in more than *one* language. Yet Derrida’s notion of plurality affirms the multiple, going beyond the binary. Derrida’s plurilingual approach to translation favours a position of (political) responsibility, eager to mediate between the languages of writers, translators, and readers. This endeavour honours the inclusion of works of *more than two* languages.

For this special issue we aim to incorporate thought-provoking contributions addressing the possible effects of plurality in linguistic, conceptual, and cultural translation. Suggested areas of focus might include, but not be limited to, the following aspects:

- Choices and strategies to translate plurilingual texts
- Philosophical and theoretical approaches for translating the effects of *more than two* languages
- Plurilingual writers, thinkers, and translators, their histories and identities
- Teaching bilingual texts in a plurilingual classroom
- Teaching plurilingual text in a bilingual classroom
- Translating one concept into multiple languages

Abstract submissions

To be considered as a contributor for this issue, please submit a 300-word abstract, accompanied by your name and institutional affiliation via email to Melissa Pawelski, melissa.pawelski@warwick.ac.uk **by Monday 1st November 2021**. Please make sure to include ‘Exchanges Special Issue’ in the subject line. Should your contribution be accepted, you will be asked to submit your full paper by Monday, 14th March 2022. Articles should be written in English.

For more information on article formats and meeting author requirements, please visit:

><https://exchanges.warwick.ac.uk/>

Or contact Dr Gareth J Johnson, Managing Editor-in-Chief (exchangesjournal@warwick.ac.uk)

¹ Jacques Derrida, ‘From Des Tours de Babel’, transl. Joseph F. Graham, in *Theories of Translation. An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida*, eds. R. Schulze and J. Biguenet (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992), p. 223 (original emphasis).