**ESLT 2023**

*From 5 to 8 September 2023, the ELV joined forces with the British Centre for Literary Translation (BCLT), the San Pellegrino Foundation and the PETRA-E Network to organise the seventh edition of the ESLT Summer School. Course participant Tine Poesen reports.*

In recent years, I’d seen the invitation for the ESLT Summer School a number of times and fellow translators had been enthusiastic about their own experiences. So, I was very curious to see exactly what the summer course involved and whether I would be just as enthusiastic as my colleagues had been (spoiler alert: I am).

The workshops, discussions and lectures for the seventh edition of the ESLT Summer School took place online again and not live in Rome like the first two editions had. The Indian-summer heatwave was certainly making me feel like I was in Italy. Admittedly, my office lacked the atmosphere you could expect of a market square in Rome. It might sound crazy, but I actually really liked the idea of doing the course online. Having taught the basic course at the Vertalersvakschool for two years in a row, I was hoping to get some tips on how to add more variety to my online classes and hold my students’ attention in an online environment. This year’s theme really appealed to me as well: ‘Teaching Translation as an Ethical Practice’. After the introduction on Day 1, I soon found that I wasn’t alone because some course participants were doing the Summer Course for the second or third time. I also learnt that course participants were attending from countries throughout the world (ranging from France to Mexico) and from different professional backgrounds. Some had been teaching for years, while others had never taught before or hardly ever. Duncan Large, Academic Director of the BCLT, welcomed everyone warmly and immediately put us at ease. He knew from experience that the diversity of professional backgrounds would make for interesting discussions and workshops.

The speaker giving the opening lecture spoke about the subject of diverse backgrounds too. Anthony Pym, who currently lives in Melbourne (a city in which more than 270 different languages are spoken), spoke passionately about how to approach translation education in such a super-diverse city. He encouraged lecturers to change the way they view stories and texts and to look beyond the written word. For example, in translation classes, teachers can add in audiovisual material, podcasts, reading clubs and online reviews, etc. Watch Pym’s inspiring opening lecture again [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FXxpMRqUfko).

After digesting the first lecture and lunch, we split up into smaller groups to use the practical tips and tricks all of us have picked up over the years (as students and/or lecturers) to create a ‘perfect class’. It was fascinating to hear how colleagues structure their classes and the different approaches I heard about gave me a lot of concrete, new ideas.

On Day 2 – the temperature inside had now risen another few degrees – the programme included three lectures. Although some were more interactive than others, all three looked at the overarching theme from a different angle.

Kristina Taivalkoski-Shilov, from the University of Turku, Finland, started the day with a lecture on the ethical aspect to be considered when using translation technology. There were a surprising number of layers. Firstly, for the translator: why and in which circumstances will you decide (not to) use translation technology? Other ethical issues were raised as well. For example, the rights of readers and the rights of nature because the increased use of technology has a greater impact on the environment too.
        In the more interactive lecture by Haidee Kotze (Utrecht University), the different aspects of translation ethics were highlighted in line with the views of various translation scholars. Kotze discussed the fascinating idea that three forms of ethics come together in a translator’s ethical position. Firstly, professional ethics, which have been discussed in detail often before, involvements elements like deadlines and accuracy, etc. Secondly, with translators now increasingly coming to the fore and playing a more active role in the promotion of translations and the translation profession in general – which Pym also mentioned in his opening lecture – translators’ personal ethics are becoming increasingly relevant as well. Thirdly, social ethics. Should translators take a stance in social discussions too? To what extents are translators activists too? These questions ultimately led to the following question: who is allowed to translate a text? This question played a crucial role in the fierce discussion that arose (in the Netherlands and elsewhere) after the translation of ‘The Hill We Climb’ by Amanda Gorman. It’s an important question that also needs to be addressed in an education context because, as I know from experience, this is a subject about which students are concerned.
         In his lecture, Paul Bandia (Concordia University Montreal) urged for the decolonised interpretation of non-Western texts. Equality, diversity and inclusion should be self-evident in any modern classroom and the same applies for the authors and texts discussed in classes. Bandia explained his position on the basis of several concrete examples of texts translated from French, which could spark a fascinating discussion among students about word choice and context.

True to tradition, Day 3 was dedicated to the PETRA-E Framework for Literary Translation, which is added to and updated on an ongoing basis. Duncan Large explained the most recent addition on the morning of Day 3. Next, Henri Bloemen (KU Leuven) turned our attention to the translation of sensitive texts in his lecture, which was based on the German concept of Echtheit. When is a text loaded? Exactly what does that mean? And which role does a translator play when a text is loaded?
        After this lecture, we returned to a more practical talk by Kasia Tryczyńska (University of Wrocław) and Vanda Mikšić (University of Zadar). They gave us some refreshing examples of how they had applied the PETRA-E Framework in their classes. For example, they ask their students to develop and pitch an extensive proposal to a publisher. Anthony Pym had floated this idea before and it was great to hear that students and publishers had been enthusiastic and that the exercise had even resulted in a joint publication. It was then over to us to split up into smaller groups to develop a class plan in which various competencies were implemented. We in the Spanish group set to work on a poem by a female Mexican poet. Although already familiar with the Framework, I was surprised how well the different aspects can be applied in practice when developing a class; it proved to be a particularly useful guideline.

By the last day of the course, the temperature in my house had risen to tropical heights and I was on the verge of screen fatigue. And yet the concluding round-table discussion (with panel members including Fannah Palmer (literary translator EN-NL)) about mentorships still managed to hold my attention. As I learnt, there are a surprising number of mentorships formats and the positive stories from novice translators proved that one-on-one guidance, in whatever format, is always a very useful addition to formal training.
        On Friday afternoon, everyone was given the opportunity to reflect briefly on the week behind us. Personally, I enjoyed the alternation between theory and practice. It was both instructive and fun to brainstorm in smaller groups in the break-out rooms, even though the group as a whole was actually small enough for everyone to have a say in the plenary discussions. Not all lecture topics didn’t appeal to me initially, but all the speakers were passionate and have motivated me to delve deeper into the subjects covered. In other words, my reading list is now longer, thanks in part to my fellow course participants. Their ideas, experiences and viewpoints have been hugely inspiring and interesting articles and tips were shared in the chat and the shared Dropbox. At the very least, I have gained the inspiration to introduce more variety and diversity into my classes and discuss the ethical aspects of the translation process in detail and with more confidence.