

WORKSHOP ON THE CARTOGRAPHY OF TRANSLATION

On June 18th and 19th, Rostock University's Department of Romance Studies hosted an interdisciplinary workshop on the cartography of translation. Organised by Prof Albrecht Buschmann (Department of Romance Studies, chair of French and Spanish literary studies and cultural studies) and Profesora Belén Santana (Faculty of Documentation and Translation Studies at the University of Salamanca, Spain) the workshop dealt with the "(in)visibility" of translation which has been a key phenomenon in cultural studies and translation studies for a while. So far, the main focus of translation studies had been on the political dimension of translations, on power relations during performative cultural encounters, or on the cultural and historic background of the "invisibility" of the translated subject.

In this area of research a group of scholars of both Rostock's and Salamanca's universities try to determine how one could improve the aforementioned visibility by using bibliometric technology and how to adequately represent it by using cartography.

The meeting in Rostock was the second workshop on the matter. It took place after a workshop at the University of Salamanca (2nd–4th November 2014). Participants had the opportunity to further discuss on data processing in Spain and in Germany as well as on cartographic models to represent that data.

Profesora Belén Sanatana's public lecture on "Javier Marías: ese autor español que escribe en inglés y triunfa en alemán" constituted the starting point of the comunal work. It dealt with the Spanish writer Javier Marías and it used him as an example to show as to how the media and divergent transnational receptions of translations influence the reception of literature.

The actual workshop was opened by a presentation conducted by Ms Susanne Gürth (Department of Romance Studies, Rostock) on the visibility of the translator in German library catalogues and bibliographies. Ms Gürth introduced the participants to the subject matter by elaborating on the difficulties to identify translations and translators in German library catalogues and bibliographies. In the discussion which ensued, participants were able to evaluate possibilities and options regarding the technical analysis of the data as well as means to visually represent the data.

The second day of the workshop was opened by a presentation given by Dr Anette Hey (Geodesy and Geoinformatics) on different ways to represent data using charts, graphs and diagrams. Ms Hey's cartographic expertise was most valuable in helping the participants to better understand the nexus between data processing and cartographic representation.

Profesora Belén Santana followed with her presentation on the visibility of the translator in Spanish library catalogues. It was soon noticed, that the data provided by Spain's "Biblioteca Nacional" provides different and incoherent numbers regarding translations into Spanish than Germany's "Deutsche Nationalbibliothek" does regarding translations into German. It seems necessary to take into account other data bases and catalogues.

Prof Albrecht Buschmann attempted in his presentation titled "Topology and Translation" to summarise the first results of the data processing and to connect them with the various options of cartographic representation.

The workshop's last presentation was delivered by Dr Thomas Mundt (Department of Computer Science). Dr Mundt talked about ways of improving the technical process of data analysis. The improvement of the software used in data analysis will be of high importance in the weeks to come. Dr. Mundt's expertise in the field was highly appreciated by all participants and allowed for further insight into the technological aspects of the project.

Scientists and students alike were able to realise how fruitful and at the same time demanding such an interdisciplinary approach can be. All participants had to learn and will have to learn to translate the language of their respective fields into the language of their colleagues.

Henning Preuß ((Institut für Romanistik)

Prof. Dr. Albrecht Buschmann
Lehrstuhl für spanische u. französische Literaturwissenschaft
Institut für Romanistik
Universität Rostock
August-Bebel-Straße 28
18051 Rostock
Tel.: +49 (0)381 498 2830 / 2835