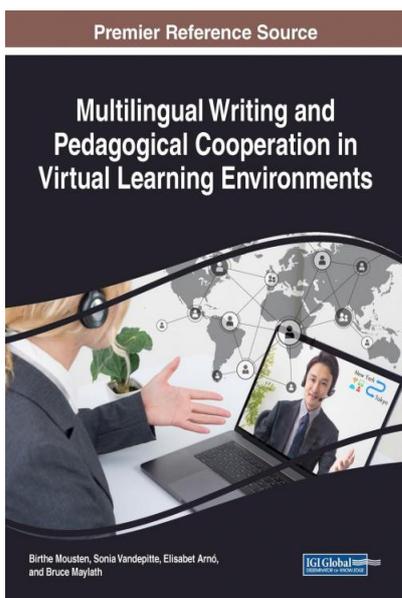


BOOK REVIEW



ONLINE MULTILINGUAL WRITING AND PEDAGOGICAL COOPERATION: LESSONS LEARNED AND GUIDELINES

**Birthe Mousten, Sonia Vandepitte,
Elisabet Arnó and Bruce Maylath
(Eds.).** MULTILINGUAL WRITING AND
PEDAGOGICAL COOPERATION IN VIRTUAL
LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS (2018),
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The field of telecollaboration and online collaborative learning has become increasingly relevant in recent years, as it corresponds to the characteristics of the 21st century digital and globalised world and workplace. This is due to the fact that, nowadays, interdisciplinary, multilingual and cross-cultural aspects are fundamental to the university curriculum, especially in the fields of translation and foreign language learning. Competency-based learning, which is open to the outside world, should be based on social and culturally appropriate action, and linked to the real-life practice of the companies and organisations where students hope to work in the future. As this book shows, the research and implementation of projects based on online networks between international students is crucial.

This volume collects the varied experiences from the Trans-Atlantic & Pacific Project (TAPP) and provides a wide range of diverse, representative and balanced examples of how best to incorporate virtual learning methods in educational projects in multilingual writing and pedagogical cooperation around the globe. It contains four sections and 15 chapters, all of them providing thoroughly investigated and insightful case studies of different online learning and practical methods of writing, translation, and usability testing. Group dynamics, cultural

sensitivity and cooperation, course formation, professional skills development, and technical best practice of multilingual writing, translation and editing are core issues in the book. Moreover, invaluable guidance is given to tutors on how to avoid certain risks and how to prioritise the most useful skills for the workplace.

The book begins with a sound preface that clearly describes the structure, contents and the audience, thus allowing the reader to identify the most relevant sections for their own purposes. The first section, *Pedagogical Cooperation in Online Collaborative Writing*, demonstrates how to develop an effective cross-cultural real-world experience of collaborative writing projects by forming cross-cultural and multilingual learning teams between students from the USA (native English speakers) and other countries such as Italy, Russia and France (non-native English speakers). All three chapters in this section are co-writing projects mediated by technology and focused on three different English for Specific Purposes fields – namely, Tourism, Academic Purposes, and Professional and Technical Communication.

Chapter 1 deals with a project with Italian university students, who wrote a tourist brochure, and American students, who became the test audience, and provided feedback on it. The iterative co-writing process, using the Google Docs collaborative tool, enabled self-evaluation by the Italians; highlighted the importance of intercultural aspects for both parties; and focused on adapting the form of writing to the needs of the target audience to achieve professional and effective communication.

Chapter 2 describes an experiment with undergraduate-level students at a US university, and graduate-level students at a Russian university, who worked together to write instructions for simple tasks and test their usability for Academic Purposes. Again, they used Google Docs, but this time as a real actor of the experiment. The case study showed the effectiveness of the experiential learning methodology and the importance of considering students' reflections and conclusions.

Finally in this section, Chapter 3 details a case study where students from the USA and France used project-based and experiential learning pedagogies for English for Technical Communication. They challenged students to write in lesser known genres, which increased their understanding of intercultural technical communication. This again emphasised the benefit of actively involving students in the learning process.

The three projects used different learning methodologies, but they all focused on experiential learning, in which the process is more important than the result, and where students' reflections on the learning experience are crucial. Each project showed an improvement in linguistic competence in real life written expression-interaction plus a greater awareness of the importance of effective cross-cultural communication. For this reason, this first section of the volume will be useful for those language teachers or instructors who aim at implementing co-

writing experiments in order to develop intercultural communication and autonomous learning.

The second section, *Student Competence Enhancement through Online Learning Networks*, focuses on the experience of using online collaboration tools, and critically evaluates the key competences that are necessary in a group working environment. The first three chapters of this section highlight workplace skills including analysis, communication and interpersonal relationships, whereas the last two chapters consider intercultural understanding and engagement.

Chapter 4 uses self-reflective blog writing as a tool for gathering experience about how Parisian students collaborated online in a translation project for technical purposes with North American students. The former translated a user manual from English to French, which had been designed by the latter. A blog was used to perform an overarching analysis of the collaboration process so that students could develop key skills of reflective analysis, effective professional communication and knowledge sharing.

In Chapter 5 the instructors focused on the students' experience of their Personal Learning Network (PLN) using North American and Italian students' online translation collaboration. The aim of focusing on PLNs development and exchange was to develop intercultural competence and to improve working relationships within Global Virtual Teams.

In Chapter 6 the authors asked the students to critically assess their interpersonal relationships within a group translation project. The aim is to develop key professional relationships skills using project-based, cooperative and collaborative learning. The report analyses the student perceptions of their friendships with their colleagues, alongside final grades, and lays down that strong social networks lead to improved team working and greater achievement.

Chapter 7 focuses on the theoretical and practical assessment of interculturality and intercultural competency, using a group of students from a Danish and French language exchange. This time, the challenge is to see how to set in motion the most effective intercultural online interaction to build these key interpersonal competencies for those communicating interculturally and virtually in a non-native language.

In Chapter 8 the goal is to learn how effective online forums could be in enhancing not only cross-cultural dialogue, but also engagement and understanding. Spanish and American students studying each other's language and culture participated in online discussions focusing on several controversial topics, and sensitively shared their differing opinions in both their own and non-native languages.

Chapters 4-8 emphasise the essential but complex nature of online collaboration tools, and determine that these tools can improve key student competencies, and engage language learners in a global professional and multicultural environment. As such, this second section will suit language

instructors using online tools for language and cultural exchange to develop students' skills.

The third section, *Translator Training by Online Network Negotiation*, brings together practical guidance and recommendations on how to embed simulations of real-world virtual-working practices into translation course curricula so as to develop the most effective professional experience.

Chapter 9 collects and evaluates the most deliverable best practice suggestions for implementing effective project based learning translation activities that reflect the real world professional environment. Suggestions were gathered from a large study of the European Master's in Translation (EMT) network members, advising translation trainers on how to create, instigate and share collaborative translation projects.

Chapter 10 gathers knowledge acquired from three virtual translator training projects in Latvia, focused on the increasingly important position that translation holds in a global environment, and the importance of developing successful projects using the community-based model. This chapter gives insightful advice for those trainers implementing similar projects, recommending the use of the Translation Edit Proof method in a community-based network.

Chapter 11 summarises Spanish student experiences using online crowdsourcing translation platforms, and provides guidance and recommendations for incorporating this method into a higher education syllabus. The key outcome here is the importance of using global collaboration technology in the classroom in order to ensure best practice in the localisation of translation.

Chapter 12 covers two examples of contrasting coworking groups of translation students from the Netherlands and Belgium by using the Simulated Translation Bureau (STB) format to most accurately reflect the real world challenges. The aims are to enhance student professionalism and employability, to determine how to deliver STBs in learning environments, and to investigate the viability of working with international STBs across academia.

This third section focuses on using collaborative tools in an online networked community with a view to fostering broader cultural communication, and concludes that these online tools significantly improve the translation experience. This would be beneficial for those language teachers or instructors who wish to provide their students with the most effective professional experience before entering the workplace.

The fourth and final section, *Multilingual Methodologies in Online Writing and Translation*, collates three different methods to critically evaluate and enhance the training process for translation students: direct student feedback, usability evaluation and code-glossing analysis. Together, these chapters provide several beneficial methods which aim to give students practical insight and useful tools when working cross-culturally in translation collaboration.

Chapter 13 uses student feedback in order to build not only language skills and communication styles, but also a deeper cultural understanding. Thanks to this

virtual translation reviewing/editing project, US and Greek students learn how to carry out work that is suitable for the international marketplace in the fields of journalism and technical writing.

Chapter 14 summarises guidance on using virtual coworking groups for collaborative writing, translation, and usability evaluation training. The aim was to prepare students, who took part in a technical communication course in the higher education context, to communicate effectively in the professional and international world. This chapter presents the challenges and advantages of using usability evaluation and provides useful guidelines for those who want to implement this method by setting an international collaborative project.

Finally, Chapter 15 illustrates a digital corpus analysis research of texts in four languages (English, Portuguese, Spanish and Danish) and explores if the use of code-glossing methodology would help students in their writing and translation tasks in multilingual and cross-cultural contexts. The authors suggest various tools and solutions, including code-glossing, to further facilitate multilingual writing. These tools could be incorporated by trainers into class projects as part of collaborative translation exercises, enabling the students to have further transferable skills and experience and be ready for the global workplace.

Multilingual Writing and Pedagogical Cooperation in Virtual Learning Environments provides an extremely effective theoretical and practical guide for those teachers in higher education who want to implement international virtual network-related experiments with their students in order to foster intercultural and professional competencies and prepare them for the real workplace. In particular, it would benefit teachers and instructors working in the fields of translation and foreign languages who wish to develop their students' communication skills by placing emphasis on writing ability. Furthermore, this book could also be valuable for teachers, researchers, professionals, graduate students, institutions or corporations who are interested in the latest research, methodologies, practices and examples of applying online cooperation learning in the fields of writing, editing, translating and usability testing. Overall, the principal strength of this volume is its highly practical approach and its comprehensive vision for the current use and the potential applications of telecollaborative learning.

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