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Editorial

Following two special issues of papers published so far in this volume of LAIC, this first open issue brings you a small collection of papers, each of which appear to echo the theme of cultural translation which underlay the meeting of our association held in Valencia last November. As María José Coperías & Juan José Martínez Sierra set out in their 2019 conference call, some element of cultural translation underwrites much intercultural communication. For translation is carried out not just between one language system and another, but also between individuals and groups who inhabit specific contexts and social *milieu*, which imbue their interactions with particular meanings and personal resonances. Thus, the aspects of cultural translation which inform the four papers which I am compiling for you here perhaps appositely foreshadow the papers which will be selected from the Valencia conference in a special issue planned for early in 2021.

Many of my most memorable conversations have taken place during walks with friends through agreeable rural landscapes. In the first paper in this issue, Badwan and Hall's congenial notion of (an admittedly rather more urban) 'walk-along' combines intercultural dialogue with the bang-up-to-date theme of post-humanism, by exploring the resonance that the material conditions which we inhabit have upon ourselves and our communicative practices. This paper, drawn from a larger research project, recounts the details of how two participants, one a UK citizen and one an international student, engage in a reflective stroll along a multicultural space known as the 'Curry Mile' in Manchester, UK. It melds this theme with a rich strand of research which has built on the metaphors of cultural 'threads' and 'blocks' previously presented in these pages (Holliday, 2016; Holliday and Amadasi, 2019; for a review see Ganassin, 2019). On their walk-along, the two protagonists not only play out their material engagement with the heterogenous semiotic spaces with which they are engaged but, through their dialogic exchanges, they also take part in enquiring into, and constituting, their own intersubjective experience. The paper sets out the way in which particular 'sticky' places and objects which they pass evoke different, charged, memories and emotions for each participant. In a series of localised and highly personal acts of cultural translation, both participants not only end up with a slightly different sense of themselves, but their mutual engagement with these 'critical spaces' enables them to come closer to each other through the decentring of their monological selves and their absorption into these manifold micro-acts of intercultural communication.

The *Pear Stories* was the eponymous name given to a series of experiments which were carried out in the early 1970s in order to investigate the way in which participants recreated the narrative of the story of a short silent movie. Speakers of at least 18 different languages were studied in order to explore the relationship between the way story telling is carried out by narrators from different languages and 'cultures' and the apparently differing world-views of participants. While most readers of this journal would in all probability reject a one-to-one correspondence between language, culture, and *Weltanschauungen*, this experiment has been 'reverse-engineered' as *The Pear Tree Project* in order to investigate what aspects of visual narrative are highlighted in their retelling to participants who are visually impaired. While this had already been carried out in 12 European languages, Dávila-Montes and Rathbun report how they have rerun this project, now dubbed the '*La Pera* Stories', with an intriguing group of participants: simultaneous Spanish and English bilinguals living on the Mexican-American borderlands. The ostensible aim of this version of this project was to map the narratives of these *transfronterizo* students onto the categories of high context and low context communication, first set out by Edward Hall (1976). However, as many of you will know, IALIC emerged in the late 1990s explicitly to challenge and contest such homogenising views of language and culture. One interesting thing therefore about this study is the way in which the stylistic hybridity of the students' narratives which emerge from the *La Pera* experiment belies the uniform mapping of low context or high context features onto the texts which they produce. Rather the participants appeared to combine different aspects of low context and high context communication styles which 'are not consistent with the alignment of "traditional" speakers of either English or Spanish'. While the authors draw some useful pedagogical implications from the study, it strikes me that these results also remind us that Hall's homogenising conceptualisations of language and culture are no longer adequate to describe the plethoric hybridisation of language use which we saw emerge in the twentieth century, and has now become the norm in the twenty-first.

How many of you rushed out to see Quentin Tarantino's last film, *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*, when it was released last year? One of my secret pleasures while watching this movie was interpreting the manifold intertextual references which it made to other movies and in particular to historical events which unfolded in the late 1960s, when the infamous Hollywood murders of Sharon Tate and her guests by Charles Manson took place. Our next paper continues a specialised, but rich, seam of research which has surfaced recently in these pages: viz. the intriguing issue of cultural translation in movies produced in one language and culture and received in another (see also Khoshsaligheh, Ameri & Mehdizadkhani, 2018; Valdeón, 2018). However, rendering the often profane cultural allusions which are a distinctive feature of Tarantino's films for consumption within the highly regulated ethos of Iranian popular culture presents a special challenge for translators who are tasked with dubbing the films into Persian. Our third offering for you, again from Masood Khoshsaligheh, this time writing with Fatemeh Delnavaz – herself a freelance audio-visual translator, explores a comprehensive corpus of all the films with Tarantino as *auteur* in order to analyse the way in which allusions to Anglophone culture are translated into Persian during dubbing. The authors find that, just as in previous studies, Literal Translation and Direct Transfer were the strategies used most frequently, while a good number of allusions were simply omitted in order to avoid censorship. These source-oriented strategies have been viewed somewhat uncritically by previous research as being in keeping with the processes of globalisation, which maintains that movie-goers worldwide are becoming more familiar with Anglophone cultures. However, the authors argue that this does not pay sufficient regard to the cultural contexts such as that of Iran, which might not be so thoroughly penetrated by the much-vaunted processes of 'globalisation'. In such contexts, they maintain that more source-oriented strategies are rightly adopted in order to capture the full intercultural nuance of allusions in films originally with dialogue in English.

It is often said that mobility amongst certain classes of people is characteristic of the current mode of living worldwide. And, arguably, this is one of the principal drivers of people who speak different languages encountering each other, not least for work and for education. Broadly speaking, these are the two of the most common contexts in which people are likely to need to learn another language when they move from one country to another in search of employment, or to take up a place in a college or university. However in order to learn a language successfully it is necessary to actually use it; and this can vary greatly depending on a person's experience of and attitudes towards the society in which they find themselves. In the concluding paper in this issue, Gertrud Tarp explores the experience of both international students and international workers together under the generic label of expatriates (or 'expats') in order to investigate their 'willingness to communicate' in a language other than English, and particularly in Danish while they were living in Denmark. While the Council of Europe (2008) famously invokes people from different backgrounds to engage in mutual exchange of views and expression, this might be easier said than done for newcomers to a country who actually lack the linguistic ability either to express themselves or to listen to what other people are saying. In her paper, Tarp uses a theoretical framework drawn from motivation studies known as 'willingness to communicate' (referred to as 'WTC' in this paper) to investigate which factors impacted on the quality of their stay in Denmark and what actually influenced these relatively young, mobile, expatriates' willingness to use Danish while studying and working in Denmark. IALIC members have been declaiming 'culturist' stereotyping and essentialism for twenty years. Nevertheless, a prominent aspect of these expats' experience of living in Denmark still appeared to be either they gained a positive or negative impression of Danes and Danish culture, or whether the Danes gained a positive or negative impression of the expats themselves. Considerations such as personal friendship and openness were seen as salient factors in expats' preparedness to communicate in Danish; while the pervasiveness of English and the perception that Danish was a 'difficult' language appeared as inhibiting factors. Inter alia, this small-scale study provides important evidence to suggest that the picture of intercultural dialogue which is painted in policy documents such as the Council of Europe's is somewhat idealised and decontextualized; and that for and teachers and practitioners on the ground it is necessary to take into account very specific contextual features in order to enable successful intercultural dialogue to take place.

The first book review in this issue by Nadia Abid brings us *Interculturality, interaction and language learning: Insights from tandem partnerships*, a radical interrogation of the complexities of language, learning, ownership and meaning written by Jane Woodin. Then, Meike Wernicke previews Robert Aman's challenging monograph *Decolonising intercultural education: Colonial differences, the geopolitics of knowledge, and inter-epistemic dialogue*. With its focus on decolonisation Aman seems to both echo Phipps's most recent monograph which was reviewed at the end of the last volume (Zotzman, 2019) and, with Aman's concept of *interculturalidad*, perhaps also nods towards our association's planned outing to Bogotá, Columbia, which hopefully will take place later in the year.

As I conclude this editorial to a close, I want to thank Ron Barnett for drawing my attention to an inaccuracy in the editorial I wrote with Prue Holmes for the Helsinki special issue. Here my citations suggested that Professor Barnett had 'advocated' 'skills-based models of competence' (Holmes and MacDonald, 2020, p. 3). However, nothing could be further from the truth. Not only has Professor Barnett not contributed in any way to the promotion of skills-based approaches to competences, but he has in fact forcefully argued against competence-based approaches to education in his 1994 book *The Limits of Competence*, and through his successive work. I apologise if my ambiguous citation caused any misrepresentation of his work here; and I thank Professor Barnett for pointing this out so graciously.

By the time you read this the call for papers for the IALIC 2020 will just have closed. However, it might still be worth looking out for a second call if you still want to submit a paper. Ending on an upbeat note, our next conference is to be hosted by the Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia from 25 to 27 November, 2020 (https://lenguas.uniandes. edu.co/index.php/ agenda/ialic-2020/conference). The conference theme will be *Language, culture and* *interculturality: Global debates, local challenges*. As usual, selected papers from this conference will be published at the beginning of the following year in an eponymous special issue (LAIC 22.1) edited by Beatriz Peña Dix, with John Corbett. This is an exciting opportunity for our Association to meet for the first time in South America, and I hope that I will be able to meet up with more readers and authors there.

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