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# Opinion on teaching translation: theory, practice and technological innovations

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## KEYWORDS

teaching translation, translation pedagogy, translation competence, translation tools, AI in translation, translation assessment

[Nabil Al-Awawdeh's \(2024\) \*Teaching Translation: Theory, Practice and Technological Innovations\*](#) is a comprehensive and forward-thinking exploration of translation pedagogy. Published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing, this book offers a strategic guide for translation educators and students, navigating the intricate balance between translation theory, practical applications, and technological advancements. With an emphasis on the ever-evolving translation landscape, the book aims to bridge the gap between academia and professional practice by integrating modern teaching methodologies and digital tools into the translation classroom.

Al-Awawdeh's book strikes an effective balance between translation theory and practical application, which is a crucial aspect of translation pedagogy ([Kiraly, 2015](#)). He successfully bridges abstract theoretical concepts with real-world classroom strategies. However, the book could benefit from more case studies illustrating the impact of these theories in professional settings. For instance, [Pym \(2014\)](#) argues that translation training should focus on producing problem-solving professionals rather than solely emphasizing theoretical models. While Al-Awawdeh does address this issue, a comparative analysis with existing professional training models would further enrich the discussion.

As the author states, the book “provides teachers with a strategic guide through the complex domains of translation studies, illustrating a broad and transformative voyage. By extensively exploring the theoretical complexities associated with cognitive processes, overarching frameworks, and cultural sensitivity, the initial chapters lay a strong groundwork for the development of effective translation pedagogy” ([Nabil Al-Awawdeh, 2024](#)). The author attempted to apply a student-centric approach and make the content in line with the demands of the contemporary market. “The book's chapters devoted to innovations in translation education not only provide an in-depth discussion of current developments like gamification, project-based methodologies, and online learning, but also assess their direct impact on student achievement in a critical manner” ([Nabil Al-Awawdeh, 2024](#)).

The book rightly acknowledges the transformative role of AI and CAT tools in translation education, aligning with the perspectives of [Kornacki \(2018\)](#), who advocates for integrating digital tools into translator training. Al-Awawdeh effectively emphasizes the necessity of digital literacy but does not critically address the ethical and accuracy-related challenges posed by machine translation (MT). For example, [Moorkens \(2020\)](#) highlights the dangers of over-reliance on MT, particularly in contexts requiring high linguistic and cultural sensitivity, such as legal and medical translation. While Al-Awawdeh supports the adoption of MT, a more nuanced discussion of its limitations and biases could enhance this section.

The book is divided into 10 well-organized chapters that are presented in a clear order, which cover the most important aspects of translation education. It begins with a detailed

analysis of the basic principles of translation pedagogy, the historical background of the subject, as well as the basic concepts. Subsequent chapters examine different translation theories, such as the functionalist and communicative approaches, and shows how these theories can be incorporated into the classroom. The book also pays much attention to the development of translation competence that includes linguistic, cultural and technical knowledge and skills that a professional translator needs.

Chapter 1: *Foundations of Translation Pedagogy*. This chapter provides a historical overview of translation teaching, defining key concepts and terminologies. It discusses the importance of translation pedagogy in today's globalized world, emphasizing the need for structured educational approaches.

Chapter 2: *Translation Theories and Teaching Approaches* introduces various translation theories, such as functionalist and communicative approaches, and explores their pedagogical applications. The chapter provides guidance on adapting theory to practice in the classroom.

Chapter 3: *Developing Translation Competence*. The focus here is on linguistic, cultural, and technical competence. Strategies for improving students' language proficiency, cultural awareness, and critical thinking skills in translation are explored.

Chapter 4: *Translation Curriculum Development*. Al-Awawdeh provides insights into designing a translation curriculum, including course planning, syllabus structuring, and integrating real-world translation projects. The impact of technological advancements on curriculum design is also discussed.

Chapter 5: *Teaching Specialized Translation* covers domain-specific translation, such as legal, medical, technical, and literary translation. It offers strategies to develop expertise and integrate internships and guest lectures into the learning process.

Chapter 6: *Translation Tools and Technology* is a key section of the book, this chapter examines the role of computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools, AI, and machine translation in translation education. It emphasizes the necessity of digital literacy for translators.

Chapter 7: *Professional Development for Translation Teachers* discusses continuous improvement strategies for educators, the importance of staying updated with industry standards, and the role of mentoring and networking in professional growth.

Chapter 8: *Innovations in Translation Teaching* explores pedagogies, including online and blended learning, gamification, and project-based learning. It also examines their impact on students' academic performance.

Chapter 9: *Translation Assessment and Feedback* covers assessment methods for translation projects, the importance of constructive feedback, and the development of evaluation rubrics with a focus on technological tools for assessment.

Chapter 10: *Emerging Trends in Translation Education*. The last chapter discusses the future of translation education, highlighting the impact of AI, digital collaboration, and online translation communities. It provides a forward-looking perspective on the profession.

Al-Awawdeh's focus on designing translation curricula that align with industry needs is commendable and echoes Gouadec's (2007) argument that translation training must prepare students for real-world professional environments. The inclusion of real-world translation projects is particularly effective, aligning with

Kiraly's (2000) project-based learning approach. However, Biel (2011) argues that academic translation programs often lag behind industry developments, and Al-Awawdeh could have further explored how academia can keep pace with evolving market demands. Concrete examples of successful academia-industry collaborations, such as the European Master's in Translation (EMT) framework (EMT Expert Group, 2017), would strengthen this discussion.

One of the book's most commendable aspects is its balance between theory and practice. Al-Awawdeh does not merely present abstract concepts but demonstrates their direct application in the classroom. The book is written in an accessible yet scholarly style, making it suitable for both experienced educators and those new to the field.

Another significant strength is the book's forward-looking perspective. By incorporating discussions on AI, digital tools, and online learning platforms, it acknowledges the rapid changes in the translation profession and prepares educators to adapt their teaching methods accordingly. The inclusion of professional development strategies for translation teachers is also notable, as it underscores the need for continuous learning in a field that is constantly evolving. In overall, the book is highly comprehensive: it highlights the advantages of CAT tools and AI and discusses industry-academia collaboration.

Al-Awawdeh's discussion on specialized translation—covering legal, medical, technical, and literary translation—is a significant strength of the book. This aligns with the views of Incalcaterra McLoughlin and González Davies (2019), who emphasize the need for domain-specific expertise in translator education. However, the book could have explored whether different specializations require distinct pedagogical strategies. As pointed out by Gamal (2019), legal and medical translation require a strong emphasis on terminological precision and ethics, whereas literary translation often involves a more creative and interpretive approach.

The book provides valuable insights into translation assessment methods, emphasizing constructive feedback and rubric-based evaluation. Al-Awawdeh's recommendations align with those of Angelelli (2009), who stresses the importance of formative assessment in improving translation skills. However, the book does not deeply engage with alternative assessment models, such as self-assessment and peer feedback, which have been highlighted by Kelly (2005) as essential for fostering independent learning in translation education.

Moreover, the author's discussion on innovative teaching methods, such as gamification and project-based learning, reflects the growing trend in translation pedagogy toward interactive and student-centered approaches (O'Hagan and Ashworth, 2016). While he successfully argues for their adoption, there is little empirical data provided to assess their effectiveness compared to traditional methods. As Gambier and Van Doorslaer (2016) point out, while new pedagogical approaches can enhance student engagement, they must be rigorously assessed to determine their impact on learning outcomes.

The book rightly emphasizes continuous professional development for translation teachers, a point also stressed by Pöschhacker (2016).

Overall, *Teaching Translation: Theory, Practice and Technological Innovations* is a valuable resource for translation

educators, students, and researchers. Al-Awawdeh successfully bridges theoretical foundations with practical applications, offering a well-rounded perspective on contemporary translation pedagogy. With its emphasis on technology and professional development, the book positions itself as a timely and essential guide for anyone involved in translation education. It provides a well-rounded perspective on translation pedagogy, integrating theoretical and practical dimensions effectively.

For educators looking to modernize their teaching strategies and equip students with the skills necessary for today's translation industry, this book serves as a crucial reference. Despite minor areas for expansion, it stands as a significant contribution to the field of translation studies and pedagogy.

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