

Foreword & Acknowledgements

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Missionary Linguistics V / Lingüística Misionera V. Selected papers from the Seventh International Conference on Missionary Linguistics, Bremen, 28 February - 2 March 2012 : Translation theories and practices

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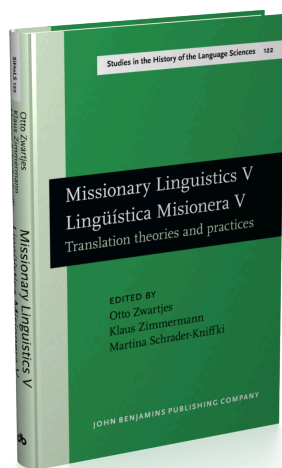
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Foreword and acknowledgements

Before the so-called Oslo Project on Missionary Linguistics (OsProMiL) conferences was initiated, other conferences on missionary linguistics had taken place in Paris, Oslo and Berlin. The international meeting in Paris was held in September 1993 and focused mainly but not exclusively on the description of Amerindian languages. Most papers were devoted to Spanish and Portuguese sources, although some of them were dedicated to the languages of North America (Troiani, ed. 1995). One year later, in September 1994, the Oslo meeting took place. The resulting volume of selected papers (Hovdhaugen, ed. 1996) contains mainly articles related to North America. The Berlin conference was held in October 1995, its focus being the description of Amerindian languages from the Spanish and Portuguese territories in Latin America (Zimmermann, ed. 1997).

The conferences initiated by the OsProMil project from 2003 onwards aimed at bringing together studies devoted to the historiography of missionary linguistics worldwide. As to the scope of this subject, a restriction regarding time but not place has been established: Studies on contemporary activities of linguistic inquiry by missionaries are being excluded and most contributions have concentrated on the colonial period. We are aware that the period of colonialism in different Spanish and Portuguese colonies ended at different dates (e.g. Mexico in 1820, Cuba and the Philippines in 1898, and Equatorial Guinea and Western Sahara only in the second half of the 20th century); the former English, French, Dutch, Belgian and German colonies became independent, for the most part, in the twentieth century. Contributions to the OsProMil conferences have tended to address the period before about 1850.

The First International Conference on Missionary Linguistics of the OsProMil project was held in Oslo in March 2003, and had a more general, stock-taking character than the three conferences of the 1990s. From the second until the fifth conference, special topics were selected, starting with Phonology and Orthography (São Paulo in 2004), and moving on to Morphology (Macao and Hong Kong in 2005), Syntax (Valladolid in 2006) and Lexicography (Mérida, Yucatán, in 2007). From these conferences, five volumes have appeared, four in the series in which the present volume also appears (as volumes 106, 109, 111, and 114), and one as a special issue of *Historiographia Linguistica* (36: 2/3,

2009).¹ The sixth conference, held in Tokyo in 2010, was focused on comparative aspects, Asian sources, and digitalization projects.

The seventh conference was organized at the University of Bremen and focused on two different but related topics: colonialism in language description and translation in Missionary Linguistics. On the basis of these two topics two separate volumes have been prepared: Zimmermann and Kellermeier-Rehbein (2014, forthcoming) on colonialism, and the present volume, which is dedicated to the subject of translation.

Within the context of missionary linguistics translation is considered as a transcultural and a translingual activity. As such it is based on intercultural encounters between European missionaries and the speakers of the various indigenous languages and cultures of America, Asia and Africa. It entails the cognitive appropriation of the indigenous languages and cultures and the practical aim to colonize or, at least, influence the culture of the (indigenous) 'other'.

In a wider sense, the appropriation, documentation and translation of the indigenous languages by the missionaries are results of interlinguistic perception, i.e., the perception of one language through the vision of another, and a cognitive process which encompasses (auditory) sensation of new linguistic information and its cognitive interpretation on the (contrastive) basis of old information, i.e., the more general or even specialized theoretical and language knowledge of the missionaries. Concrete results of this process such as missionary grammars, bilingual dictionaries, translations of catechisms and other texts are hybrids of established knowledge and new knowledge: in this case, of known linguistic structures applied to hitherto unknown languages. Thus, even the studies, notes, descriptions and analysis of the indigenous languages can be considered translations in a wider sense of the term. They are 'transmissions' of unknown into known conceptualizations of language structures. Regarded inversely, the known linguistic paradigms and concepts were 'translated' into the conceptualizations of indigenous languages, an activity that often contributed to the transcendence of traditional European concepts of language and linguistic categories. This topic has been discussed in previous volumes on missionary linguistics, but not always from this intercultural perspective.

In a more narrow interpretation (as in the topic of this volume), missionary translation becomes especially manifest in bilingual ethnographic descriptions, in (bilingual) catechisms and in the missionaries' lexicographic condensation of bilingual dictionaries. The study of these instances permits the analysis and

1. In Zimmermann & Zwartjes (2009) a main topic is missionary linguistics. For an overview of recent publications, see Zwartjes (2011 and 2012).

interpretation of their guiding norms, namely translation practice and theory, and of semantic change which originates in missionary translation.

Within the general field of Translation Studies not much attention has hitherto been paid to missionary sources. The same holds for translation studies and practices as a subfield within missionary linguistics (for exceptions, see Durston 2007, Hanks 2010). Although there are monographs that concentrate on translation policy, particularly as established by the Church in the context of colonialism (for studies related to the Third Council of Lima, see Rafael 1993) there is hardly any study that focuses on translation in missionary sources generally, combining different traditions from America, and Asia.² This book attempts to fill this gap, addressing the following subjects:

- The ancient legacy (represented notably by St. Jerome and St. Augustine) in missionary translation practices and theories
- The role of translation in education, conversion, and evangelization
- Translation in the context of colonialism
- Translation strategies, such as the creation of neologisms (loans from Spanish or Latin) or paraphrases in the indigenous languages
- Relations between target and source text
- Endogenous versus exogenous translation
- Translation and bilingual editions
- Translation and construction of equivalents in dictionaries
- The awareness of ‘otherness’
- Identities and acculturation/ transculturation (the imposition of a European religious system and the linguistic strategies involved)

Grammars produced by missionaries typically contain examples with the original source text and translations. Translations mostly referred to Christian religious texts, but also to native texts and culture. Dictionaries (most of which are bilingual, and some are also bidirectional) mostly consist of alphabetical lists of words in the colonizer’s language with equivalents in the indigenous language or attempts at paraphrasal semantic approximations. Phraseological material is also included. Sermons, catechisms, confession books, and the like are religious texts in which

2. The main objective of the Missionary Linguistics conferences still holds, since in this volume studies related to Asian and Amerindian languages are included. As often happens when international conferences are organized, one never achieves the ideal balance and one depends on what the participants present and what they submit. This explains why some regions are under-represented at these conferences, such as Africa, North America, and Oceania. In spite of attempts to attract more scholarly participation from other fields, studies related to the Spanish tradition are over-represented here and we hope that this will change in the future.

translation continuously figures as a prominent part of the missionaries' activities. Here, the main problem was finding or constructing equivalents of Christian religious terms and other culturally specific terms in the indigenous languages. These translated works are characterized by bilingual presentation in parallel columns.

In this volume, it will also be demonstrated that some missionaries' texts have contributed significantly (or could have contributed if they had been known at their time in Europe) to the history of translation studies. They ought to be included in manuals related to this topic. In this context, it must be realized that translation in a colonial context and for missionary goals produced specific translation strategies.

The book opens with a general article by Otto Zwartjes about translation theories and practices in the Spanish territories, with particular attention to the *mise en page* (see also Klaus Zimmermann's article), a typology of *mise en page* and the role of translation in language instruction. The articles are then arranged according to continents, starting with New Spain, covering Nahuatl, treating especially the eminent cultural mediator Bernardino de Sahagún (Victoria Ríos Castaño, Klaus Zimmermann), Tarascan (P'urépecha) (Cristina Monzón, Frida Villavicencio Zarza), and Zapotec (Martina Schrader-Kniffki and Yanna Yannakakis), followed by a section devoted to Asia with papers related to Philippine languages (Rebeca Fernández Rodríguez, Joaquín Sueiro Justel), Chinese (Mariarosaria Gianninoto), Japanese (Emi Kishimoto), and a Dravidian language of India, Tamil (Cristina Muru).

This volume is mainly derived from papers presented at the Bremen conference. There are four exceptions. Emi Kishimoto's contribution was presented at the Sixth Conference (Tokyo). Victoria Ríos Castaño's was invited by the editors. Otto Zwartjes' is an elaborated version of a paper which was originally presented at the conference "Trans/Misión europeo-indígena: Estrategias de traducción en América Latina en la época colonial" (Lateinamerika-Institut, Freie Universität, Berlin, 2011). Klaus Zimmermann's is a shortened, reelaborated and translated version of a paper which was originally presented at the conference "El universo de Sahagún: pasado y presente" at Cholula (Mexico), 6–7 October 2011.³

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3. To be published as "Traducción y edición bilingüe en el marco de la colonización y evangelización: El caso de Bernardino de Sahagún", in: Máñez, Pilar & José Rubén Romero. eds. 2013. *El universo de Sahagún, pasado y presente – Tercer coloquio*. México: UNAM/Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas.

conference) and Karl-Heinz Wagner (in the technical website configuration of the conference). We would also like to thank the general editor of the series in which this volume appears, John Considine for his valuable corrections and suggestions and the professional assistance of the editorial staff at John Benjamins, in particular Anke de Looper.

The Editors

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