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Title of panel	Crossing into practice – dealing creatively with the conceptual and methodological boundaries of translation studies
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For centuries, scholars interested in translation have concentrated on the text as the product of translation. Methodological considerations took into account a comparison between a source text and a target text at best. With the hermeneutical school as a forerunner, one of the first scholars to introduce us to the concept of *translational action* was Holz-Mänttäri (1984), after whose book we started to pay attention to the situated process leading from the source text to the target text. At the same time, Reiß and Vermeer made it clear, with their *skopos theory*, that the relationship between the source text and the target text was not quite as straightforward as our discipline had long considered it to be.

Translation practice yields yet another picture. It is obvious that translation is not only an *inner process* of individual decision-making but also a work process made up of externally observable steps. We need to add to this the observation that hardly any translation, text or other medium meant for communication is the outcome of a single person's work. What is more, the group of persons thus conceptualised need not be translators only, but may include technical writers, technicians, sales people and almost anyone else involved in the production of a document or utterance meant for professional use.

As a first step, therefore, we would like to discard the limitation to the single profession of the translator. Instead, we suggest including *all types of technical and professional communication* that share the objective of making a document or (non-permanent) utterance understandable for an audience that is different from the one it was originally intended for. Technical writing and interpreting are, of course, long-standing examples of such practices, but contributions relating to other professional communicative activities are also welcome.

Besides the professional focus, we would like to carry the discussion across three more boundaries:

Secondly, we would like to explore more deeply the *external work process* of professional communication. We direct attention to the fact that this process not only consists of a number of observable steps (activities), but that it also takes place in a specific context, where specific artefacts – physical and medial – play a pivotal role. Key concepts here are reference to *context and situatedness* (Risku 2000; 2004). The latter concept seems

particularly promising, as its wider, psychologically founded readings provide a bridge between what people perceive and what they are able to think and produce at any given moment.

Thirdly, work processes all have an *interactive element* to them. This is often overlooked when communication is being conceptualised, probably due to the difficulty of distinguishing between communication as the product and communication as the process leading to that product. In practice, more often than not, two individuals in different professional roles cooperate. In doing so, they may cross organisational boundaries, involving institutions with quite different logics. Knowledge communication in all its different readings may be a good framework for working this out, but other approaches are equally welcome.

Fourthly, the conceptual extensions outlined above call for methodological innovation. Here, present boundaries are marked by the upheld focus on products, and little attention is paid to the influences which an interactive and contextualised work process has on documents and utterances.

Crossing the above boundaries will give a broader, much more encompassing picture of what "professional communication" means. The proposed panel aims at exploring its (theoretical) central concepts and its (practical) core ingredients in greater depth. We invite research that crosses at least one of the boundaries described above, i.e. focuses on professional communication rather than translation, embraces context and/or the work process or has co-operation in professional communication as its topic. Presentations of new methods are particularly welcome, as well as approaches that integrate one or more extensions into a sound theoretical framework. Questions that can be addressed during the panel may include, but are not limited to:

- How can we conceptualise professional communication? What is the place of translation within this broader concept?
- Can we find approaches that cater well for the reality of professional communication practice?
- What methods or combinations of methods yield a clearer or more encompassing picture of professional communication?
- How can we cross the border between translation studies and the advanced, interactive and media-driven practices that mark the translation and technical communication industry?