

Bertuccelli Papi, M., Cappelli, G. e Masi, S. (eds.) (in print), *Lexical complexity: theoretical assessment and translational perspectives*, Pisa: Plus Pisa University Press.

The papers collected in this volume focus on complexity as a central feature in the study of lexical meaning. The issue is addressed both theoretically and empirically.

The theoretically oriented contributions share the assumption that languages are complex dynamic systems within which different types of structures act as organizers in order to make it possible for cognition to handle the immense amount of information involved in the communicative process. Within this view, in which words act at the same time as cues of mental representations, triggers of ad hoc conceptual constructions, and anchors which hinder meanings from verging on the border of chaos, it is claimed that lexical complexity is a function of the parameters which differently organize the conceptual material in the task at stake.

Translation has been selected as a privileged vantage point for empirical observation of the dynamics of meaning construal. Indeed, translation is a powerful heuristic tool in the investigation of lexical complexity, since it brings to the fore not only the non-linear mapping between words and concepts in different text types, and the complex mapping between words belonging to different lexical systems, but also and above all the complex interplay between functions and meanings under the constraints imposed by culture-specificity to text-recontextualization. In this respect, literary translation is especially suggestive of the power of words to dynamically recreate meanings and, at the same time, of the limits imposed by text-internal and external conventions. Papers in this section highlight the intersemiotic complexities raised by the translation of dramatic as well as narrative texts.

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