This issue of RITT is divided into two sections. The first section includes a series of contributions that originated in a one-day workshop held in Trieste, Italy, on December 3, 2015, and organised by the master’s degree programme in Specialised Translation and Conference Interpreting of the University of Trieste in collaboration with the European Master’s in Translation (EMT) network and the Directorate-General for Translation at the European Commission. The title of the workshop was “Foreign-language competence for future language professionals: Reassessing market needs and training programmes”. Its aim was to discuss the issues connected to the development of foreign-language competence in translation trainees and to relate these both to market needs and to the increased availability of resources and tools meant to assist professional translators in their job.

The workshop organisers’ original idea was to discuss the wider implications of developing the foreign-language competence of translation trainees, seen as a way to widen the scope of their professional expertise in a world in which translation is seen as a “utility” (TAUS, 2013) that is increasingly taken care of through automated processes. The idea, in other words, was to start exploring the ways in which training programmes could aspire to create all-round language “experts” or “professionals”, i.e. people whose job description includes translation both in the more restricted sense of language transfer and in the wider sense of cross-cultural communication. In the course of the workshop, however, it soon became
apparent that participants were particularly keen to discuss one specific aspect of foreign-language competence: translation into a foreign language.

This is probably not surprising. The direction of translation in terms of the two languages involved, referred to in the literature as “directionality”, has long been a controversial issue. A distinction is usually made between translation from a foreign language into one’s mother tongue, or “direct” translation, and translation from one’s native language into a foreign language – variously referred to in the literature as “translation into a non-native language”, “translation into a non-mother tongue”, “inverse translation”, “translation into the second language”, or “L2 translation” (which is the label that will be used in the following).

Professional translators are normally expected to translate from the foreign language (the language they have consciously learned) into their own native language (the language they have inductively acquired). This is considered an ideal arrangement for various reasons, mainly having to do with the translators’ native-speaker language competence, their familiarity with the cognitive mapping of conceptual referents in the native language and their ability to establish inter-textual references as acquired through repeated exposure to native-language texts (Adab, 2005).

In the last few years this idea has come under increasing scrutiny. Adab (2005: 227), for instance, sees an exclusive insistence on translation into the translator’s first language as “unenforceable and impracticable” on account of various factors. In an era of globalised communications, the number of people using English as a lingua franca has increased and their expectations as addressees of translated texts in English may be different from those of native speakers, meaning that they may accept translations that are informatively adequate but not completely native-like from a stylistic point of view. At a professional level, L2 translation has long been a reality in some countries for reasons linked to the requirements of the local translation market, i.e. in those countries where the demand for translation into a given language outweighs the supply of translators who have the local language as their L2. Also, the quality of L2 translation can today be enhanced by the use of already available technologies for translators (e.g. translation memories, corpora and the internet) and by arranging translation workflows so that specific support is provided to L2 translators (e.g. through a system of ad hoc revision). At a more general level, some translation studies scholars (e.g., Pokorn, 2005) propose that the prominence of translation into the first language is a construct of Western translation theory and stress that no convincing empirical results show that translation into a non-mother tongue is systematically of inferior quality.

Mistrust of L2 translation is, at any rate, no longer a generalised attitude. Even in the largest national markets, where L1 translation is still largely the norm, L2 translation ends up being the only option available for certain language pairs – a frequent outcome, for instance, in public service translation. In the same markets, L2 translation is at the order of the day for many translation graduates who
find jobs as language professionals in businesses (especially small and medium enterprises) and government institutions. In many such cases, the job description involves tasks that rely heavily on foreign-language communication skills, written translation being only one of such tasks.

Participants in the Trieste 2015 workshop agreed on the fact that translation into L2 cannot be ignored, and that in terms of directionality the overriding need is that of providing “fit-for-purpose” quality. During the workshop, it was also stressed that translator training programmes should teach and encourage foreign-language competence, so that graduates are in a position to make their own choices once they are on the market. This was linked to the more general issue of equipping young translators with the necessary marketing skills to successfully advertise their professional expertise. Two specific aspects that emerged during the round-table discussion are the need for professional translators to develop excellent subject-matter expertise, regardless of the translation direction, and the often perceived lack of source-text comprehension skills in many specialised domains – an area in which translators working into the L2 might be at an advantage compared to translators working into the L1. More generally, during the round table a consensus could be seen to emerge on the need to re-evaluate the role of foreign language competence while at the same focussing the training of would-be translators on the specific transfer skills requested by any translation job, regardless of the direction of translation.

The contributions included in section 1 of the present issue all stem from the discussion that took place in the 2015 workshop. Addressing the need for reliable data on the significance of L2 translation in the translation industry, Attila Piroth reports on the results of a survey conducted by the International Association of Professional and Translators and Interpreters. Asked whether they translated into any non-native language, around half the respondents to the survey (all professional translators) responded that they did, and a proportion of those indicated that they translated into two or more non-native languages. While this result may be considered significant in itself, Piroth shows that considerable differences emerge among respondents when factors such as the translators’ native languages and their certification status are taken into consideration. English native speakers, for instance, never translate into another language, whereas L2 translation can represent over one third of the workload of Hungarian translators. Moving to the translator training setting, in her article Nike Pokorn investigates two issues: first, whether the argument that teaching staff should only teach translation into their native language is valid and supported by factual evidence; and second, whether there is any correlation between student performances when they translate into their L1 and when they translate into an L2 or even an L3. On the basis of empirical data, Pokorn concludes that teachers who are non-native speakers of the target language can effectively contribute to the teaching process in L2 translation classes. As regards the second issue, and again looking at empirical evidence, Pokorn finds that while on average students tend
to perform slightly better when translating into L1, directionality is still not the single, defining factor influencing their performance and the acceptability of their output. In the subsequent paper, Karen Rücker, a practising legal translator, reviews some of the traditional arguments against translating into the non-native language and then touches on some changing market requirements (more specifically, the emergence of a “global” variety of English and the need for both speed and an efficient organisation of services) that often make L2 translation a viable option for both clients and translators. The article by Carla Serpentini and Cinzia Iaboni is an extensive overview of the translation work carried out in institutional context, that of the Italian Ministry of the Interior. This overview is interesting for at least two reasons. First, it provides a first-hand account of an institutional setting in which translation into a foreign language (in this case English) is exclusively in the hands of Italian native speakers. Second, it refers to translation work that is likely to have a very tangible effect on people's lives, as is the case for documents that are translated for asylum-seekers. The article is also likely to be of particular interest for terminologists and researchers of English as a Lingua Franca, as it provides several examples of how translators go about solving problems due, on the one hand, to the conceptual mismatch between terms in the languages involved and, on the other, to the need to address an international readership for whom English is not the native language. The next article in this section is by Lorenza Rega, who proposes some reflections on the difficulties linked to source text comprehension, a largely neglected aspect of translation quality evaluation and one area in which L2 translators may be at an advantage over L1 translators. The final article in section 1 marks a departure from the focus on directionality explicitly or implicitly adopted in all the preceding contributions; in this article Valter Mavrič provides an overview of the translation services in the context of the European Parliament, focussing on the ways in which the massive adoption of computerised resources has had an impact on the profile and skills required of translators.

The second section of this issue of RITT includes a series of diverse contributions, in line with the journal's tradition of presenting research that explores a wide array of questions relating to language and translation. In her article, Silvia Campanini draws on cognitive stylistics for an in-depth analysis of three different published translations of a passage from Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher*. By combining a target-oriented, non-normative approach with a more-traditional source-oriented analysis, Campanini elucidates the extreme variability of choices by individual translators and proposes useful insights into the specificities of literary translation criticism. The article by Luis Luque Toro and José Francisco Medina Montero investigates false friends in two languages where they represent a particularly insidious aspect, i.e. Spanish and Italian. Employing a cognitive perspective, the authors show how some specific false friends have evolved and, in particular, how differences between false friends can be explained with reference to pragmatic usage. José Francisco Medina Montero is
also the author of an individual contribution in which he looks at the first Italian translation of Cervantes’ *Don Quijote*, published in 1622 by the grammarian and lexicographer Lorenzo Franciosini. The analysis, focused on one chapter of the translated text, confirms one recurrent difficulty in translations from Spanish into Italian, that is, the rendering of colloquialisms and vocabulary items relating to everyday situations. The next article is a joint contribution by Silvia Campanini and Stefano Ondelli in which two different published Italian translations of J. D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye* are examined using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The analysis by Campanini and Ondelli elucidates the differences between the two texts at the morpho-syntactic and lexical levels. More specifically, the more recent translation by Matteo Colombo – published in 2014 – is shown to be more loyal to the source text in terms of register, although the authors acknowledge the difficulties faced by Adriana Motti, the author of the first landmark translation of Salinger’s book in 1961, i.e. at a time in which the socio-linguistic evolution of Italian provided no models for an attempt at reproducing the language of teen-agers. Finally, the contribution by Luciano Rocchi is an overview of the strategies used in Turkish, an agglutinative synthetic language, to mark definiteness and indefiniteness in noun phrases, a feature that other languages realise through the use of articles.
