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*Diplomatic and Political Interpreting Explained*. London/New  
York: Routledge, 191 p.**

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[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

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con las alcanzadas ya en otras áreas, como la idea de traducción como «acción social» propuesta en el ámbito de la sociología o antropología); 2) la utilidad de estos encuentros transdisciplinares es recíproca (también los traductólogos nos beneficiamos de las aportaciones que nos llegan desde estas otras disciplinas); y 3) este nuevo paradigma se concretiza en métodos de traducción aplicables en la práctica profesional de los traductores.

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KADRIĆ, Mira, RENNERT, Sylvi and SCHÄFFNER, Christina (2022): *Diplomatic and Political Interpreting Explained*. London/New York: Routledge, 191 p.

Diplomatic interpreting is a field that often takes the spotlight as it involves high-profile officials and diplomats in their communication of national policies to foreign audiences. Interpreting in a diplomatic context, which is different from political interpreting in a domestic context, is characterised by the difficulty of rendering allusions, euphemisms, sensitive information and cultural idioms, which are typical of diplomatic language. However, scant attention has been paid to diplomatic interpreting in Translation Studies due to its ephemeral nature and the confidentiality of diplomatic communication. Fortunately, *Diplomatic and Political Interpreting Explained* by Mira Kadrić, Sylvi Rennert and Christina Schäffner provides further insights into the nature, characteristic features and situated practice of diplomatic interpreting.

This book systematically investigates language as a tool of diplomatic communication, the role of interpreting in diplomacy, as well as behaviours of interpreters in various diplomatic contexts. Drawing on insiders' perspectives by means of interviews with interpreters, diplomats and politicians, this book focuses on their use of language and their interpreting strategies in different communication

settings. The findings shed new light on theoretical modelling of interpreting in a diplomatic context, as well as empirical implications on practices of diplomatic interpreting. With key concepts, definitions and examples offered in each chapter, the book serves as a useful textbook for students and teachers in training programs for diplomatic interpreting in different cultures.

The first chapter overviews the historical development of diplomacy and describes the current situation of international politics and diplomacy from the perspective of an Austrian diplomat. This diplomat begins with the history of diplomacy, international law and international organisations and then explains how major diplomatic events in world history have contributed to the current international order. The 21st century has been a witness to new challenges and opportunities for world peace as globalisation has gained momentum. Diplomacy has also taken on more forms of soft power in the areas of culture, sports and even religion, to promote mutual understanding and cooperation. This imposes increasing responsibilities on the part of diplomats, the most essential of which is to facilitate inter-state communication and agreement on important matters (p. 13).

Chapter 2 deals with the important role interpreting plays in global politics and diplomacy. Historical evidence demonstrates that interpreters' tasks go far beyond language mediation itself given that interpreting is strongly shaped by interpreters' ideology and the stance taken by the institutions they work for, and it exercises important influence on diplomatic communication. The authors also explain different types of interpreting in corresponding contexts of communication, including consecutive and simultaneous interpreting, dialogue interpreting, conference interpreting and so on. Compared with other forms of political communication, diplomatic language is usually more tactful, sensitive and circumspect (p. 30) since the ultimate goal of diplomatic communication is to reach an agreement. Interpreters need to coordinate communication implicitly or explicitly in a fair way so as to construct alignment between the different parties. They are supposed to achieve "multipartiality" by acting in the interests of all parties and equally presenting every party's view point without personal involvement (p. 37).

Chapter 3 is centred on the crucial features of diplomatic communication, including the choice of language, functions of diplomatic speeches and the interpreter's role in diplomatic communication. Language choice in a diplomatic context is always political and symbolic (p. 43). Although speaking in one's mother tongue, which is then interpreted, is a way to show the superiority of one's own language or country, using the language

of the listeners is also preferred by many diplomats as a sign of goodwill and respect. Diplomatic speeches are usually a combined type of genres realising informative, expressive, appellative and phatic functions of language at the same time. So interpreters should not only convey the intentions and language style of the speakers, but also cater to the needs of the audience in terms of language norm, culture and mindset, so as to elicit the same reaction from them as the source speech would have, even with the same nuances, obliqueness and directness (p. 63). Rather than being a conduit in diplomatic settings, interpreters usually reword or modify original statements to prevent face-threatening acts and to ensure successful communication. The authors further distinguish two types of interpreting, namely, preserved interpreting and customised interpreting, the choice of which depends on communicative settings in a diplomatic context. Preserved interpreting represents the content, cultural specifics and linguistic nuances of the source texts, while customised interpreting emphasises the context, recipient and target language (p. 63). The following two chapters elaborate on the strategies interpreters use when intervening in different diplomatic contexts.

Chapter 4 explores how interpreters manage information to convey meaning while interpreting, which involves strategies such as explicitation, reduction, modification and interposition. Explicitation refers to adding extra information that is not verbalised or that is implicitly conveyed in the original utterance. It is often used when institutions, culturally-loaded words, historical events, social or religious customs and even non-linguistic behaviours come up. In contrast, reduction is employed to summarise original utterances or to leave out any utterance which is potentially offensive due to cultural or political misunderstandings. However, when speakers make mistakes in an original utterance, interpreters usually adopt modifications to correct them and convey information more accurately, such as rephrasing, correcting factual mistakes, changing culturally-related expressions and toning down risky statements. The above strategies usually occur without the speakers' knowledge, but there are circumstances where interpreters have to stand out and pause the rendition to ask their own questions that are necessary to ensure successful communication. This is called interposition and is often caused by slips of the tongue, a high speech rate, inappropriate expressions and sometimes the interpreter's ignorance. To sum up, any form of intervention carries with it the risk of misinterpreting the speaker's intention and causing misunderstandings for the audience. The degree of an interpreter's involvement depends on the situation and their political, historical and

cultural knowledge of the concerned parties in communication.

Chapter 5 looks at the ways interpreters regulate expressiveness and interaction to represent or modify the speaker's attitude, style and rhetoric. These strategies include expression, moderation, coordination and mediation. Expression refers to effective ways of rendering expressive language, such as culturally-loaded idioms, metaphors, ironies and puns, to reproduce the style and expressiveness of the speakers. Moderation is a strategy of organising the speaker's speech to ensure it flows well, such as summarising the speaker's utterance, highlighting the main messages and guiding the speaker to move on (p. 128). Similarly, coordination also involves the interpreter's efforts to steer the discussion, but it deals with complicated communicative situations, such as unexpected changes of speakers, interruptions, too fast or too long a speech and multiple simultaneous speeches. However, when an offensive or risky speech occurs, mediation is usually adopted to settle existing or emerging conflicts in interpreting. In the above strategies, except for the first one, interpreters always distance themselves, implicitly or explicitly, from the voice of the speaker (for example, by using reported speech) to avoid confusion and appear neutral without inserting any personal opinions. No matter what strategies interpreters use, they always meet the communicative needs of the participants by adapting their behaviours to the context.

Chapter 6 and 7 investigate diplomatic interpreting as a situated practice, covering the interpreter's competency and responsibilities, conditions for interpreting and any preparation work. Apart from excellent language skills, diplomatic interpreters should have a good knowledge of the subject matters as well as the countries and cultures concerned in interpreting. They are also required to stay calm, fluent and confident but unobtrusive, even when under pressure or faced with a large audience. As for their working conditions, interpreters should not be kept too far from the speakers and listeners so as to receive and convey messages clearly. It is also important for them to be regarded as a part of the team they serve so that they can acquire any necessary documents, speech manuscripts and relevant information about the speakers, even if only in the form of a briefing if possible. These two chapters also mention professional codes of ethics and standards for interpreters, among which confidentiality is the most important. In return, interpreters should also be trusted by the parties they serve, in terms of professional skills and loyalty. Although multipartiality is required for interpreters to act in the interest of every party and to facilitate communication, it often comes into

conflict with the interpreter's own identity, their life history or their ideological positions (p. 167). Therefore, interpreters have to find a balance between the ethics of responsibility and the ethics of conviction. The former advocates following rules and principles of interpreting strictly without considering outcome, while the latter encourages interpreters to weigh the consequences and adapt the interpreting approach to reach a better outcome (p. 168).

This book offers many valuable insights into interpreting in diplomatic contexts from the perspectives of diplomats, politicians and professional interpreters. Nevertheless, some minor limitations in the book should also be noted. Chapter 4 and 5 are devoted to how interpreters manage information and expressiveness in interpreting respectively. But there are, perhaps, some overlaps between the categories of translation strategies in these two aspects. For example, explicitation can regulate the explicitness of the speaker's attitudes while reduction is employed to filter expletives or abusive language, which is expressive in nature. As far as I am concerned, information management is about interpreters' intervention in construing experience, involving human actions and the logical relations between them, while regulation of expressiveness and interaction focuses on approaches to negotiating social relations, attitudes and identities. These two aspects can draw insights from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) in which ideational and interpersonal metafunctions are distinguished (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004/2014: 29-30), corresponding to information and expressiveness respectively. It is, perhaps, more appropriate to categorise strategies of interpreters' intervention by the shifts of ideational and interpersonal meaning in interpreting. For example, ideational shifts may concern changes of process type, circumstance, logical connectives and so on in SFL terms, while interpersonal shifts involve changes of mood, modality, attitude, etc. These functional features may help provide a more systemic classification of strategies under SFL frameworks.

As for research methodology, the whole book draws upon interviews of practitioners for research material. Although these talks are highly authentic and the authors make every dedicated effort to show what real diplomatic interpreting is like in various communicative contexts, it may be difficult for readers to generalise rules for or regular behaviours for diplomatic interpreters from these talks. As the interviews come from 14 diplomats, politicians and interpreters of different cultures, their opinions on interpreting vary greatly within diplomatic settings. This may cause confusion for those learning interpreting and may hardly help

with their decision-making in interpreting strategies, though it is claimed that different opinions are intended so that readers engage critically with interpreting in politics and diplomacy (p. x). It is suggested that interviews be complemented with evidence from corpus data, where large numbers of bilingual interpreting examples can be used as reference. Bilingual concordances in a corpus are more straightforward and easier to be understood when concrete interpreting strategies are concerned. The authors introduce in this book authentic interpreting examples and data concerning two or more languages from specialised diplomatic corpora, by which those learning interpreting can compare the strengths of the different strategies in various contexts shown in the concordances. It is also easier to identify any regular use of interpreting strategies and patterns of professional interpreters' choices in corpora, from which experiences can be drawn as guidance for these learners.

Multipartiality as a characteristic feature of diplomatic interpreting is advocated throughout the book. This requires interpreters to align themselves equally with everyone and act in the interests of all parties to achieve successful communication. However, this ideal principle is often in conflict with an interpreter's ideology and the interests of the institution they serve while interpreting. Interpreters tend to intervene in the process of interpreting to protect the interests of their side (Wang and Feng 2018), or even manipulate the evaluation of *Us* vs. *Them*, as evidenced by recent corpus-based studies on interpreting (Li and Hu 2021; Li and Zhang 2021; Gao 2021). Agreement in politics and diplomacy is, more often than not, built on power relations and shared interests between the different parties, which arouses a series of interesting questions when interpreting is caught in conflicts of stance and ideologies. For example, in diplomatic contexts, how do interpreters mediate between professional ethics and accountability to their party? How is the discourse practice of diplomatic interpreting influenced by power relations between the ideologies of different sides? How does mediation in diplomatic interpreting relate to other social practices and contribute to change in diplomatic policies? These are probably pivotal issues which may stimulate critical thinking from interpreting professionals and scholars.

In sum, this book enhances our understanding of diplomatic interpreting theory and practice. The authors not only give a systemic account of diplomatic language and interpreting practice, but also look at the relevance of interpreting in politics and diplomacy and the ways these aspects interact and work together. The precious experiences gained from interviews with diplomats, politicians

and professional interpreters will surely provide useful reference for those learning interpreting. The present book can further benefit from corpus evidence and linguistic frameworks such as SFL. Future studies are also suggested, ones which pay more attention to the relations between ideology, international relationships and diplomatic interpreting.

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DIAGNE, Souleymane Bachir (2022): *De langue à langue: l'hospitalité de la traduction*. Paris: Albin Michel, 180 p.

Quel est le rapport entre la traduction et l'humanité? Comment peut-on définir la relation entre les langues et les positions qu'elles prennent l'une à l'égard de l'autre? Comment peut-on définir les notions de domination et de colonisation par rapport à la traduction?

Ce sont les questions auxquelles tente de répondre le dernier livre du philosophe sénégalais Souleymane Bachir Diagne qui, en 2022, a publié chez Albin Michel un livre qui est intitulé ainsi: *De langue à langue: l'hospitalité de la traduction*. L'auteur de ce livre est qualifié selon *Le Monde*, dans sa version anglaise du 20 août 2022<sup>1</sup>, comme «one of the most important philosophers of our time». Le titre de ce dernier ouvrage de Diagne nous semble en même temps révélateur et énigmatique; bien

qu'il se concentre sur les questions de traduction, le mot «hospitalité» soulève les débats à cause d'un sens ironique qu'il peut introduire dans le discours. L'hospitalité étant un état amical à l'égard des autres, le sous-titre nous évoque l'idée que la traduction entraîne des relations amicales basées sur le respect mutuel, même si le texte de cet ouvrage n'approuve pas forcément cette bienveillance.

Le livre dans sa forme structurelle est composé de cinq chapitres précédés d'une introduction et suivis d'une conclusion. Non seulement les chapitres mais aussi l'introduction et la conclusion portent des titres et c'est pourquoi on a l'impression que le livre se divise en sept chapitres. «La traduction contre la domination», tel est le titre de l'introduction qui montre la position de l'auteur sur l'humanisme de la traduction et les rapports entre les cultures et les nations. Dès les premières pages de l'introduction, Diagne révèle ses tendances universalistes et méprise la domination et la suprématie d'une langue sur les autres (p. 14). Il cite plusieurs fois Pascale Casanova (2015) selon laquelle chaque langue se range dans une catégorie qui représente son importance par rapport aux autres. Les langues de moindre importance meurent et cèdent leur place à une autre plus «prestigieuse». La disparition de l'une entraîne les locuteurs vers une *lingua franca* qui absorbe peu à peu toutes les autres langues. Cela montre qu'il existe une asymétrie des langues dans la traduction. Selon l'auteur, qui cite encore Casanova, le seul moyen de «lutter contre une langue dominante, c'est d'adopter une position "athée" et, donc de ne pas croire au prestige de cette langue» (p. 17), car la traduction peut être source de dialogue et d'échanges; elle est capable de créer la réciprocité et de faciliter la rencontre entre les humains, dissipant ainsi «l'asymétrie coloniale».

Le premier chapitre est intitulé «Le linguiste, l'indigène et l'extraterrestre»; le titre semble un peu extravagant pour un ouvrage traductologique. Pourtant, l'auteur fait implicitement allusion au contenu de ce chapitre où il se réfère, à maintes reprises, à Willard Van Orman Quine (2010) qui a mis de l'avant l'idée de la «traduction radicale». Cette idée se présente, selon Diagne, «comme une situation d'asymétrie coloniale» (p. 21). Pour connaître cette traduction radicale, il faut savoir ce qui nous lie les uns aux autres; ainsi doit-on imaginer un État avant la société, comme dit Rousseau. De même, pour comprendre un langage, il faut imaginer un État, une situation qui précède le langage pour qu'on puisse «examiner les raisons, ou plutôt, dit Rousseau, les émotions qui nous ont poussés à chanter nos phrases avant de prononcer nos mots» (p. 22). Selon Diagne, un manuel de traduction a un caractère provisoire, c'est un livre toujours ouvert «à l'épreuve des réactions que son usage provoque chez les indigènes» (p. 27). Ainsi,