

TTR : traduction, terminologie, rédaction

**Hanneke Bot. *Dialogue Interpreting in Mental Health.*
Amsterdam/New York, Rodopi, 2005, 293 p.**

Andrew Clifford

Traduction engagée
Volume 18, numéro 2, 2e semestre 2005

URI : id.erudit.org/iderudit/015773ar
DOI : [10.7202/015773ar](https://doi.org/10.7202/015773ar)

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Association canadienne de traductologie

ISSN 0835-8443 (imprimé)
1708-2188 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer cet article

Clifford, A. (2005). Hanneke Bot. *Dialogue Interpreting in Mental Health.* Amsterdam/New York, Rodopi, 2005, 293 p..
TTR : traduction, terminologie, rédaction, 18(2), 249–251.
doi:10.7202/015773ar

Tous droits réservés © TTR: traduction, terminologie, rédaction — Les auteurs, 2007

Ce document est protégé par la loi sur le droit d'auteur. L'utilisation des services d'Érudit (y compris la reproduction) est assujettie à sa politique d'utilisation que vous pouvez consulter en ligne. [<https://apropos.erudit.org/fr/usagers/politique-dutilisation/>]

Érudit

Cet article est diffusé et préservé par Érudit.

Érudit est un consortium interuniversitaire sans but lucratif composé de l'Université de Montréal, l'Université Laval et l'Université du Québec à Montréal. Il a pour mission la promotion et la valorisation de la recherche. www.erudit.org

COMPTEs RENDUS

Hanneke Bot. *Dialogue Interpreting in Mental Health.* Amsterdam/New York, Rodopi, 2005, 293 p.

This book may lead some readers into unfamiliar territory. The author has chosen to investigate issues of translation as they apply to a very specific instance of interpreting. She takes her readers not into the conference hall, as many interpreting scholars have done, nor even into the broader community, as a growing number of researchers are now doing. Instead, she takes us into the healthcare sector, more precisely into the consultation rooms of practitioners who work with interpreters in the area of mental health. In the face of such a highly specific topic, some readers may feel disconcerted. Yet Bot has an important contribution to make to discussions that are currently taking place in Translation Studies as a whole, namely those that revolve around the issues of power, visibility, and the role of the translation professional.

Bot's book presents the material that originally formed the basis of her doctoral research, a study of six interpreted sessions between Dutch psychotherapists and Persian-speaking asylum seekers. In the opening pages of her volume, she explains that her own experience as a therapist who works with refugees led her to wonder both whether interventions in an interpreted session are rendered as carefully and as precisely as therapy requires, and whether there were strategies that could be used to enhance collaboration between therapists and interpreters. To generate answers to these questions, she set out to systematically observe and analyze models of communication behaviour at work in interpreter-mediated therapy.

The study is divided into four sections. In Part I, Bot briefly reviews the relevant literature, both in community interpreting generally and then more specifically in mental health interpreting, before outlining in broad strokes the overall design of her study. In Part II, she looks at her methods in more detail. She begins by describing the preliminary interviews she conducted with patients, interpreters, and therapists. The results of these interviews indicated that there are several competing ideas about what constitutes effective interpreting in mental health. Bot uses these ideas to guide her observation of actual therapy sessions, and her methodology for observing the sessions is also provided. In Part III, she analyzes her data by examining how participants managed the therapy sessions, by determining to what

degree interpreter's renditions were equivalent or divergent, and by describing instances in the sessions where communication broke down. Finally, in Part IV, the author provides in-depth discussion on the relative merits of different models of interpreting, and she draws conclusions about the effects of these models.

While the four sections offer interesting content, readers may at times find their progress through the book slow-going, for three reasons. First, there are places in the text where grammar and layout need more attention. On occasion, punctuation is incorrect, definite and indefinite articles are problematic, count nouns take the wrong modifiers, and line breaks are inconsistently used to separate paragraphs. Second, explanation is at times in short supply. When the author analyzes her data she presents excerpts of the patients' utterances in Farsi or Dari, of the therapists' utterances in Dutch, and of the English glosses of both. However the glosses do not provide enough context for English readers to understand the conversation, and Bot's clarifications are all too brief. When she draws conclusions about the excerpts, she runs the risk of seeming unjustified to readers. Finally, the transition from doctoral thesis to book is only a partial success. The study is divided into sections, sub-sections, and sub-sub-sections—all presenting discrete and isolated bits of information. What is needed is a more authoritative stance towards the material, so that it is better contextualized and presented to readers as a cohesive whole. Some empathy needs to be extended to Bot here, as it is notoriously difficult to gain critical distance from doctoral work. However, book readers differ from thesis committee members in that they expect authors to take a higher pass. Overall, the three obstacles mentioned here do not detract from the quality of the message, and the author's command of English as a second language is impressive. Nevertheless, readers may from time to time be unnecessarily distracted.

Still, if readers are willing to look past these relatively minor points, they will see a great deal of value in this book. Two examples spring to mind. First, Bot makes a very exciting connection between the models of interpreting and different approaches within psychotherapy. She notes that the therapists in the study carried out their work with differing ideas about how many of the people present are actually a part of the therapeutic process. Similarly, the interpreters differed in the degree to which they seemed to regard themselves as participants in the session. The two sets of attitudes seemed to gel to produce three different models of interpreting during the sessions. This clear

description of model production through interaction is an obvious contribution to the field. Also, throughout the book, Bot underscores how interpreters consciously and unconsciously filter patients' and therapists' output through their own values, identity and understanding, and how this filtering cannot be erased. In doing so, she adroitly identifies the factors in interpreted encounters that make them unlike other communicative events.

The implications of these two contributions may potentially capture the interest of a wider audience in Translation Studies. Recently, Michael Cronin called for a "cultural turn" in research on interpreting, so that it would parallel developments in translation that have led researchers to address the issues of power and marginalization. Bot's work might be seen as a step in this new direction, as it raises pertinent questions. How do therapists, as educated and privileged representatives of the dominant culture, affect communication? What part do patients, as refugees fleeing from crisis yet still bearing the brunt of physical and emotional trauma, play in this setting? And to what extent is the interpreter a visible participant in the interpreted encounter?

In short, specialists in community interpreting will want to read this book, and other translation scholars should also consider making the effort to delve into its pages. Bot's study makes evident the power dynamics at work in the roles of the participants in a particular instance of translation, and it sets the stage for work that will doubtless inform Translation Studies in the years to come.

Andrew Clifford
University of Toronto

Gunilla Anderman et Margaret Rogers (dirs). *In and Out of English: For Better, For Worse?* Toronto, Multilingual Matters, coll. « Translating Europe », 2005.

L'Europe est le sujet de nombreux ouvrages de référence internationaux, or elle reste mystérieuse à bien des égards : ses langues, ses cultures, ses peuples s'entremêlent plus facilement qu'auparavant et s'enrichissent les uns les autres produisant des résultats insoupçonnés. Dans un tel contexte de métissage culturel et linguistique, le livre dirigé par Gunilla Anderman et Margaret Rogers intéressera autant les traducteurs que les terminologues, les rédacteurs, les réviseurs et les