TTR
Traduction, terminologie, rédaction

Presentation

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Presentation

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In its broadest sense, politics is "the ability of a society (a political community) to ask questions, to formulate short-lived responses, and to invent a series of unsatisfactory connections to bind together its diverse segments" (Houle and Thériault, 2001, p. 66; our trans.). Binding together different political ideas is, of course, about power struggles, which are at the heart of politics, but it also relates to mediation, a concept fruitful in both political science (Kydd, 2003; Böhmelt, 2011; Ramirez, 2017) and translation studies (Bedeker and Feinauer, 2009; Bassnett, 2011; Liddicoat, 2016). In translation studies more particularly, the mediation of diverse cultural or ideological perspectives has been approached from various angles. For instance, Basil Hatim and Ian Mason, in their classic *The Translator as Communicator*, have used mediation from a discursive and textual point of view, where translators "intervene in the transfer process, feeding their own knowledge and beliefs into the processing of text" (1997, p. 147). For them, the translation of ideologies becomes a matter of mediation, in greater or lesser degrees. Other translation scholars have used the concept of mediation from a broader and more global position, such as Maria Tymoczko, who posits that translators are among "the chief meditators between cultures" (2009, p. 184). In any case, the role of translation and the role of translators is never neutral, and the relation between translation and politics is multifaceted and of great interest to professionals, scholars, politicians, and the general public.

Policies, like politics, are wide-ranging: as María Sierra Córdoba Serrano and Oscar Diaz Fouces note, public institutions develop policies—or public interventions and decision-making responses—to

social issues that have become problematic (2018, pp. 5-6). Language policies can preserve languages and promote the learning of other languages (Sadek, 2012, p. 92), but as argued by Reine Meylaerts, language policies cannot exist without translation policies (2011, p. 744). According to Christina Schäffner, translation policies can help governments promote knowledge of a nation's culture abroad (2007, p. 138). Moreover, Gaafar Sadek maintains that translation policies are the only way to ensure that information, conclusions, discoveries, comparisons and critiques circulate, which leads to new perspectives, and eventually, to human progress (2012, p. 91). Ultimately, policies and politics are closely intertwined, since governments determine policies, and thereby make political decisions that "encourage, allow, promote, hinder or prevent" translation from taking place (Schäffner, 2007, p. 136).

Several language- and translation-related policies are examined in this issue of *TTR*. Government funding policies can influence which works are selected for translation, what forms these translations will take, who will produce them, and which languages and viewpoints are represented at home and abroad. Such policies are discussed by Sylvia I. C. Madueke, Alexandra Hillinger and Jack McMartin. Digital translation policies govern the planning and management of translation technologies so that they are deployed and used in a coordinated manner (Sandrini, 2016, p. 55). Brian Mossop discusses how such policies can influence whether translators enjoy using translation memories.

Sociopolitical Contexts and Translation

The first part of this issue explores the sociopolitical contexts in which translation takes place, including the government policies that affect whether and how translations are produced and disseminated.

Marie-Alice Belle applies André Lefevere's manipulation framework to study the paratextual material included with a 1625 partial translation of the *Odes of Horace* by Thomas Hawkins. As Belle argues, England's early modern period was a time when literary, cultural and ideological exchanges with Europe were intense; thus, the paratextual material in works such as Hawkins' translation aptly illustrates England's attempts to identify itself in relation to its past and to the rest of Europe—in other words, textual, ideological, social and material manipulation. In these paratexts, Belle identifies instances in which Hawkins draws upon Horace's work and authority to promote

Hawkins' political, religious and cultural views on the role and influence of poets and translators in the English court at that time.

Like Belle, **Abigail E. Celis** studies the cultural context in which translation takes place; however, Celis uses translation as a lens through which to examine the collection of African objects displayed at the Musée du quai Branly—Jacques Chirac in Paris. As she argues, the museum engages in visual, textual and spatial translation practices by arranging material objects, visual elements and textual material in a way that allows visitors to extract meaning from the experience. Politics is foregrounded in this study, since Celis' contribution considers whether the objects in the museum are displayed in a way that creates a visual and textual translation of African material culture, one that requires museum-goers and the objects to "speak through" the language of the museum, rather than in a way that emphasizes the linguistic and cultural differences between the objects and the visitors. In her conclusions, Celis suggests that the museum's translational gestures could go further to help visitors experience African culture in a way that more closely echoes the original contexts in which the objects were originally used.

The cultural contexts that interest **Sylvia I. C. Madueke** are translations of Nigerian literature published in France and the cultural policies and diplomacy initiatives that may have led to the production of these translations. Relying on sources such as Nigerian cultural policy documents, the website of the Nigerian embassy in France, and a catalogue of Nigerian novels published in English, Yoruba and Igbo translated and published in France between 1953 and 2017, Madueke argues that the Nigerian government seems to prioritize certain cultural products, such as eco-tourism initiatives, as well as art, crafts, performances and sports, rather than translation and other literary activities; thus there are no government initiatives or programs aimed to support Nigerian literature and translation. In the absence of such programs, Madueke suggests, trends in the anglophone literary sphere have influenced the selection of works for translation: receiving recognition in the Anglophone world—by winning international prizes or by being originally published in the US or UK, for instance—led Nigerian works to be published in French translation. While none of the translated novels were funded by Nigerian cultural programs or institutions, some were subsidized by French institutions such as the Centre national du livre. Interestingly, despite the lack of Nigerian cultural policies and programs promoting the translation of

literature, Nigerian literature accounts for the second-highest number of translations of African literature in France; however, as Madueke notes, the lack of Nigerian policies means that foreign agents, factors and standards determine which works are selected for translation and, by extension, what image of Nigeria is presented to French readers.

Alexandra Hillinger's contribution also examines the sociocultural conditions under which translations are produced, but her study focuses on a Canadian context and the 20th century English translations of three novels originally published in the 19th century: *Angéline de Montbrun*, translated in 1974, *L'Influence d'un livre*, translated in 1993, and *Les Anciens Canadiens,* retranslated in 1996. In contrast to the situation in Nigeria, the Canadian government does subsidize the translation of literature, and Hillinger notes that all three translations received some sort of funding to help support publication costs and/or to pay the translator. Hillinger argues that although the translation projects were initiated by people committed to disseminating the works in English, the granting agencies undoubtedly facilitated and accelerated the translation process.

Like Madueke and Hillinger, **Jack McMartin** studies funding policies, but in the context of a sub-sovereign state: the Flemmish community. Both politics and policies are at the forefront of his study of the Flemish Literature Fund's outgoing translation and international promotion efforts. McMartin begins by describing how the political, cultural and linguistic elements of Flanders, Belgium, and the Dutch-language literary field have shaped the Flemish Literature Fund, noting that Flanders has struggled for cultural autonomy within Belgium, and that the Netherlands exerts a considerable influence on Flemish authors, due to uneven power relations between the varieties of Dutch spoken in each region. In terms of policy, the outgoing policy tools implemented by the Flemish Literature Fund, including translation grants, are targeted largely at foreign publishers. Because the Fund reviews the foreign rights and must approve both the translator and the translator's contract, McMartin argues that it acts as a quality control mechanism that adds value to a title, investing Flemish works with as much social, symbolic and economic transnational capital as possible. To better maximize the capital of translated works, the Flemish literature Fund also prioritizes translations in German, French and English, three languages with significant literary capital.

The last contribution in this section examines not literary translation, but legal contracts. However, the issues that arise when these

contracts are translated echo those discussed by Celis and McMartin: these include uneven power relations between linguistic groups and the effects that translation decisions have on different linguistic and political communities. **Arnaud Tellier-Marcil** argues that while legal translation has helped to preserve Quebec's linguistic specificity, it has not helped preserve the province's legal specificity. To help highlight the cultural dimensions of legal translation, Tellier-Mercil studies the translation of contracts, focusing on the translational, pragmatic, cultural and political aspects that arise during the translation process. These include the fact that *droit civil* is in a minority position vis-à-vis common law and the tendency to translate contracts by using French common law terms rather than to substitute equivalent terms from *droit civil*. Tellier-Mercil argues that when translators adopt a source-oriented approach where French common law terms—rather than *droit civil* terms—are used, translators will ultimately politically erode Quebec's legal system. Only by adopting a target-oriented approach, where English common law terms are replaced by equivalents in the droit civil system will translators help protect Quebec's unique legal culture.

The Politics of Translation Studies

All human activity can have political implications, and any topic can become political (Newmark, 1991; Schäffner, 2007); translation studies is no exception. Anthony Pym argues that to act politically in an intercultural field like translation studies could mean siding with one culture (or one aspect of a culture) over another, to varying degrees (2006, p. 752); he urges translation studies researchers to reflect upon their cultural configuration as a research community (*ibid.*, p. 757). The papers in this section do this by exploring how the research approaches within translation studies can be influenced by government authorities (Dmitrienko), considering what terms should be used to refer to translations undertaken by minoritized communities as an act of political resistance (Cox), and suggesting ways that translation studies research approaches could be decolonized (Chagnon).

 Gleb Dmitrienko's contribution studies the historical role of translation in the Soviet Union in the early- to mid-twentieth century in order to better understand the evolution of translation studies in Russia, and more particularly, the clash between two approaches to translation studies, namely the linguistic and the literary. Dmitrienko

contends that both proponents of both approaches manipulated the official state ideology in an effort to gain recognition. Thus, 1948 saw the development of a linguistic-based translation theory compatible with the paradigm of Scientific Communism, while the early 1950s saw the elaboration of a new theory for literary translation modelled after Socialist Realism. Ultimately, the linguistic approach was deemed more appropriate by Soviet authorities than the literary approach and became the dominant theoretical framework for translation studies in the Soviet Union.

Questions about the terminology used to refer to translation phenomena and the theoretical frameworks that inform discussions about translations are also raised by **Amanda Leigh Cox** in her article about (re)translation for the purpose of political resistance. Cox proposes the term "redressive translation" to refer to acts of minority or minoritized cultures translating (or retranslating) texts for political purposes. An important criterion distinguishing redressive translation from other types of translation activities is that the source text is often in fact an oral text from a minoritized, oppressed culture that has been "translated" into a written form for colonial consumption (see Chagnon, this volume, for examples). Redressive translation can take two forms. In passive redressive translation, which is carried out when an oppressive authority is still in power, translators appear to "faithfully" translate the words and form of the source text, while subtly critiquing imperialist narratives; in active redressive translation, which takes place in formerly colonized nations, translators assert their right to have a voice and to overtly refute and/or critique the narratives of imperial or oppressive authorities. Active redressive translations do not need to follow an imperial source text format or structure.

Finally, **Karim Chagnon** argues that throughout its history, translation in Canada has been based on political, Eurocentric premises that have become widespread and normalized. Aiming to decolonize translation studies, Chagnon therefore proposes drawing inspiration from indigenous practices to reconceptualize translation studies in a non-Western way. Using a framework based on Tymoczko's arguments in favour of developing a non-Western view of translation, Chagnon highlights how these language and translation premises apply in the context of the First Nations in Canada. Researchers should however pay particular attention to how they take a postcolonial approach, as doing so risks reinserting marginalized cultures into a new imperial archive.

Politics, Policies and Translation Technology

The final two papers explore the links between technology, political translation and translation policies: the first discusses how technology can be used to study political translation, and the second, how translation policies shape the way translators use technology.

Arguing that political speeches are particularly challenging texts to translate due to their ideological and cultural markers, **Éric André Poirier** uses a parallel corpus composed of speeches by John F. Kennedy and Theresa May and their French translations to test an algorithm that assesses translation accuracy by comparing the number of lexical words in the source and target texts. While the speeches did pose some problems for the algorithm where cultural elements were concerned, the method shows promise as a way to systematically identify translation shifts and could be improved by incorporating a lexical and grammatical analysis into the automation process.

Brian Mossop explores the policy side of technology, using two surveys. Forty French-to-English translators certified in Ontario, Canada responded to the first survey in 2011, while 39 responded to the second one in 2017. Mossop's analysis of the survey results reveals that policy did affect whether the respondents enjoyed working with translation memory, since fewer translators who were required to use a translation memory system reported liking it, compared with translators who were not required to a translation memory. Mossop's approach, however, is not focused on quantitative results: instead, he analyzes the responses qualitatively to better assess how translators feel about the technical, economic and professional benefits and drawbacks of translation memory software. Although Mossop is not able to confirm whether a translator's sense of control over translation memory is the main factor behind their attitude toward translation memory, his survey results do point to many areas that could be explored in future studies. Given that well-designed policies can help ensure that translation technology is adopted, used and applied in a careful and balanced way to better increase productivity, improve terminological consistency, make translation processes more efficient and enable translation data to be exchanged (Sandrini, 2016, p. 56), it is important, as Mossop suggests, to understand why translators like or dislike certain technological tools, since this would help stakeholders develop policies that will minimize the negative aspects of translation memory use.

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