



## Book Reviews

# Language, power and intercultural communication: The policies and politics of translation (a review)

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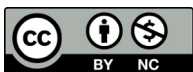
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Are language translators merely invisible professional service providers in today's global market? Or cultural mediators with creative talents and social responsibilities in today's institutional social practices? Given the rapid adoption of AI algorithm technologies, what are the best ways to teach languages at universities to prepare our students for the fast-changing professional world? *Language, Power and Intercultural Communication: The Policies and Politics of Translation* seeks to reveal these answers through the lens of language, intercultural communication, and translation.

This 214-page monograph offers a refreshing perspective on the postmodern cultural, ideological, and political role assumed by Romanian-English translators when (re)presenting cultural identities and (re)constructing artistic and sociopolitical realities through multimedia-empowered and power-informed multimodal discourses at the intersection of culture, films, media, communication, social, political, semiotics, information technology, and translation studies in the twenty-first century. Drawing on the synergy of the pure theoretical and the applied aspects of language translation, the author transcends the traditional interpretative lens of social and political changes developed by the German philosopher Karl Marx and demonstrates the innovative analytical potential of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in the postmodern understanding of translation as an evolving social practice marked by diversity and mobility entrenched in the collective memory that keeps shaping and being shaped by the politics of manipulation.

The monograph reveals a clear stance on the postmodern turn. A sure strength of this monograph is the multifaceted incursion into the empowering role of language (and translation

by extension) itself as a social practice that informs cultural, ideological, and political changes in the contemporary era. By emphasising how different standpoints may affect the interpretative lens engaged by the translator in the (re-/de-)construction and (re)presentation of cultural, ideological, political, philosophical, artistic, and linguistic realities, the author looks beyond the policy framework and delves into the inter-determinacy between language, power, intercultural communication and policies and politics of translation in broader social and cultural contexts. The author's positionality compasses future pedagogies towards the solid development of the translator's meta-knowledge and intercultural sensitivity as a supra-cultural mediator.

Another merit of this book is the Romanian-English corpus used in this book. The two corpora of multimodal film artistic and political discourses, the Romanian politician Mircea Geoană's and Traian Băsescu's 2009 televised presidential election discourses and the Romanian 2008 film *Nunta Mută* (Silent Wedding), directed by Horațiu Mălăele, are fruits of the author's meticulous considerations, strategising and prioritising norms, policies, the use of subtitling aids, and the carefully instrumented approach to criticism under a broader European Union institutional framework.

There is a growing awareness of the omnipresent yet less visible role of language translators and interpreters through their discursive practices in a wide range of justice-critical scenarios under the institutional framework from a global perspective. However, the conventionally held utilitarian view on the intricate role of language translators in the multi-/intercultural and political discourses under the broader context of globalisation has seemingly remained unchallenged in the interconnected

fields of culture, film, media, communication, socio-political, and translation studies, particularly in a European country characterised by its predominantly socialist ideology under the European Union framework.

Overall, the innovative monograph contributes to the growing knowledge of the translator's challenges and responsibilities when moving from local to global cultural audiences and engaging with cultural mediation and social practices. The contribution of this monograph is mainly three-fold: (1) an integrative approach to translation studies marked by its clear interdisciplinarity stance in postmodern social practices; (2) a new frontier in the analytical utility of the CDA method in the technology-enabled subtitling practice using culturally and politically responsive multimedia corpus; and (3) in-trend polysystemic mapping of cultural and political pulses (re)represented by fluid cultural identities in the inter-semiotic web of intersecting systems.

On a practical note, the author essentially destigmatises the culturally nuanced and politically sensitive role of translators. More often than not, translation is never a one-on-one match between the source culture and the target culture. There are layers of intricate filters, techniques, and devices that may manipulate political interests, financial benefits, cultural identities, public integrity, and professional ethics through the communicative channel. In today's technical advances fuelled by algorithm intelligence applications such as ChatGPT, expecting a mechanic role of translators working with creative texts on budget and on time

is unrealistic. For professional users in public relations and human resources departments of commercial organisations, simply applying a universal service-level agreement (SLA) framework in outsourcing business-critical localisation documents to a pool of agencies is equivalent to treating translation as an inhuman mechanic product. For language education institutions, this book makes a sobering recommendation to renovate the way languages are taught at schools, universities, and training institutions.

As highlighted by the author, a holistic and poly-systematic approach to language education can be helpful in preparing language students for the future professional world. For creative artists and journalists in the cultural industry and news media, this book provides a deeper dive into the level of creativity, complexity, agency, and human ingenuity involved when co-creating a culturally intelligent product in the market. This monograph can be a valuable reference to the inner working of cultural and creative representation of the original work to improve meaningful interprofessional collaboration built on shared understanding and mutual purpose.

Considering the points raised above, *Language, Power and Intercultural Communication: The Policies and Politics of Translation* is recommended for managers, hiring and outsourcing decision-makers, as well as other types of users of translation services, including but not limited to filmmakers, marketers, and journalists who work with translators and interpreters.