

Compte rendu

Agnieszka Biernacka, Wojciech Figiel (eds), *New Insights into Interpreting Studies: Technology, Society, and Access*, Berlin, Peter Lang, 2024, 302 p.

New Insights into Interpreting Studies: Technology, Society, and Access provides a examination of recent developments in the field of interpreting. Edited by Biernacka and Figiel, it explores a range of topics, from ethical issues, interpreter training, and community interpreting to the integration of new technologies and the challenges interpreters face today. Written by a broad spectrum of scholars, the contributions are relevant and engaging not only in their exploration of existing issues, but also in their attention to emerging trends and challenges—particularly those related to technological advances, ethical dilemmas, and training.

The volume opens with a historical overview by Pöchhacker, who traces the development of the field from its academic origins to its expansion. Readers gain insight into how interpreting has adapted to shifting social and technological landscapes. The chapter follows a chronological approach—starting with the Paris School of the 1970s—complemented by key milestones that shaped the evolution of the field. It also includes a thematic investigation of how the objects of study have diversified over time. The idea that interpreting is inherently linked to managing linguistic diversity is effectively presented, supported by references to groundbreaking studies that established interpreting as an independent field worthy of scientific inquiry.

This engagement with history transitions smoothly into the second chapter, where Wolf shifts the focus from academic history to interpreting in dire contexts, particularly under extreme duress in Nazi concentration camps. Wolf's examination of the role of interpreters in concentration camps—framed through the concept of *non-places*—evokes a profound ethical dimension. By combining survivor testimonies and sociological theory, the chapter enriches our understanding of interpreting as both a deeply humanizing and ethically fraught endeavor. It successfully illustrates the ethical complexity of interpreting in extreme conditions.

Next, Tyulenev's third chapter examines interpreting in military intelligence interrogations. Arguing that military intelligence interpreting "must be different from other types of interpreting" (p. 57), he begins with the hypothesis that its primary goal in this context is the effective, quick, complete and accurate acquisition of intelligence. He supports this claim under the aegis of a macro-sociological view that sees states as social systems and interpreting as a social structure. Further evidence comes from instances of military intelligence interpretation, analyzed with particular focus on inter-cultural mediation, psychological pressure, ethics and the cleavage between ectohomorous and endohomorous agency.

The question of ethics resurfaces in Tiselius's contribution, which examines ethical expectations across different interpreting settings. She highlights the volatility of ethical standards and illustrates this by presenting scholars' views on concepts like confidentiality and accuracy. Ultimately, she argues that codes of ethics cannot anticipate the range of professional situations where interpreting is needed, leading to potential clashes between ethical principles and real-world practices. References to the AIIC's code of ethics—the "universal document of professional ethics for conference interpreters" (p. 80)—enrich the discussion. Additionally, informed comparisons between conference interpreting, public service settings and sign language interpreting add depth and relevance.

The ensuing chapters examine other interpreting settings. Biernacka addresses the particularities of court interpreting in Poland, exploring the professional status of court interpreters and the competences required in this context. She argues that the unique power dynamics in courtrooms create a "trilogue in which all participants have a role to play" and where the interpreter can influence other parties involved (p. 101). Biernacka's analysis of courtroom interpreting is particularly insightful with respect to the ethical challenges faced by interpreters, who must navigate legal terminology, cultural nuances and power dynamics.

Turning to the experience of signed language interpreters in TV settings, Kalata-Zawłocka offers an analysis of interpreter preparation. She highlights the importance of preparatory processes, especially in the context of television, which presents challenges such as unidirectional communication and a lack of immediate feedback. The chapter provides a structured approach to the three stages of preparation (pre-, on- and post-assignment) thereby contributing to a growing body of literature on the topic. The author reveals that strategies differ depending on their object, namely content-, context-, language-, self- and venue-related strategies. Among the factors that impact interpreting quality, fluency, experience and preparation, emerge as the most significant, demonstrating the central role of preparation in ensuring successful interpreting.

Following this, the chapter by Salaets and Balogh shifts the focus to vulnerable groups in society, specifically minors in Belgium. The authors use this case study to explore the broader implications of interpreter-mediated questioning in sensitive contexts, emphasizing the importance of trust and emotional engagement when working with vulnerable individuals. They highlight how the interpreter plays a crucial role in maintaining the integrity of the questioning process, particularly when minors are involved. While underlining the interdependencies between time, trust, teamwork and training, the authors also delve into more complex ethical-professional matters such as positioning, deontological behavior and accuracy.

Another socially vulnerable group addressed in the next chapter is migrants, specifically Afghan refugees in Spain, with Valero Garcés presenting a project aimed at their integration. Through an in-depth analysis of multilingual settings in

humanitarian actions, the author demonstrates the vital role of communication, particularly when dealing with languages of lesser diffusion. Starting with the objectives of the project and explaining its development, the author highlights the challenges of building linguistic and cultural bridges, emphasizing the crucial interplay between organizations, mediators and interpreters.

In a more pedagogical vein, Riccardi delves into the broader issue of interpreter training. While it is a well-researched topic, training still eludes researchers seeking universal conclusions. Using historic events, Riccardi demonstrates “how interpreters may operate inside a particular ideological and cultural system and consequently be loyal to the forces employing them” (p. 178). The author specifically focuses on preparation, drawing on historical accounts to explain the birth of simultaneous interpreting as we know it today. At the same time, Riccardi views the COVID-19 pandemic as another revolution in how we provide interpreting services. She argues in favor of including the work of interpreting pioneers in the training of students.

The second part of the volume offers a forward-thinking look at technology’s impact on interpreting. One aspect of training explored is the use of mock conferences, which D’Hayer discusses in chapter ten. D’Hayer initiates a promising pedagogical conversation, suggesting that a collaborative approach should replace the traditional competitive model and that modern technology (along with the pandemic) could have served as a catalyst for change in the education of interpreters. This innovative context may enhance inter-professional cooperation, and mock conferences could foster inclusive pedagogical approaches. Moreover, D’Hayer proposes concrete frameworks for promoting collaborative teaching through mock conferences.

In the context of thriving artificial intelligence, an examination of AI’s potential for interpreting is particularly relevant. Čeňková reviews perspectives from 77 students, trainers and interpreters on this topic. Based on a questionnaire, Čeňková finds that AI is perceived as best suited for simultaneous interpreting. However, opinions differ when it comes to the purpose of AI, with respondents almost equally divided between those who see AI as useful before interpreting and those who believe it can assist during interpreting. Drawing on the growth of computer-assisted interpreting tools, Čeňková concludes that AI “will soon be able to assist interpreters and make their jobs easier” (p. 237).

The twelfth chapter examines note-taking in consecutive interpreting. Since teaching note-taking may follow several approaches and monitoring progress is difficult, analyzing differences in students’ note-taking can provide insights. Jelec et al. collected data on 49 students, including scanned notes illustrating different aspects related to the use of space, text density, structure, page usage, etc. Methodologically, this chapter proposes a “scalable method for the automatic analysis of notes for CI” (p. 263). By tracking how features evolve over a cycle of

training, progress becomes measurable, making the study a promising methodological contribution to an under-researched interpreting area.

Korybski's study examines perceptions of hybrid simultaneous interpreter training, combining on-site and online delivery. Results show that online training is valued for its flexibility and alignment with market trends, while on-site sessions are valued for hands-on engagement and access to equipment. The study highlights the need for technological integration in interpreter training and underscores the increased workload for instructors, who must balance pedagogical and technical demands. This signals a need for institutional support in implementing such changes.

In the closing chapter, Figiel draws on his experience as a trainer to underscore the importance of external networks in overcoming technical challenges in interpreting. While different resources helped facilitate the transition to online teaching in the presented case, student resistance revealed disparities in technological readiness. The shift to synchronous online classes highlighted the transfer of cultural capital from the author's expertise to the students. However, mixed student feedback suggests a need for greater flexibility in teaching to better accommodate diverse learning preferences and levels of technological access.

In conclusion, *New Insights into Interpreting Studies: Technology, Society, and Access* provides a thought-provoking contribution to interpreting research. It excels in its nuanced examination of ethics, technological advancements and the challenges of training interpreters in a rapidly evolving world. The volume provides both scholars and practitioners alike with a rich tapestry of ideas to consider in their contemporary practice. Ultimately, anyone familiar with interpreting research should also recognize the name and legacy of Małgorzata Tryuk. This book honors her seminal work in "shaping and extending the field of translation and interpreting studies" (p. 27). It serves both as an exploration of modern research avenues and developments that have shaped interpreting and a thorough normative investigation of the field's evolving needs.

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