Wang, C. & Zheng, B. (Eds.). (2021). *Empirical Studies of Translation and Interpreting: The Post-Structuralist Approach*. **Routledge. (pp. 285)**
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The 1990s witnessed an empirical turn in translation and interpreting (T&I) studies (Snell-Hornby, 2006: 115) as scholars increasingly abandoned traditional subjective assertions and embraced more rigorous and positivist approaches. Drawing on the recent advances in research technologies, this trend is still gaining momentum in Translation Studies now, but focuses more on the empirical findings of social, cultural and communicative practices and their relations with translators' behaviors. *Empirical Studies of Translation and Interpreting: The Post-Structuralist Approach* edited by Caiwen Wang and Binghan Zheng showcases the latest developments of empirical studies on T&I from the post-structuralist perspective. It provides useful references for academics, postgraduate research students, and professional translators and interpreters.

This collection features advances of empirical methodologies in Translation Studies, such as cognitive experiment, corpus analysis, ethnographic methods and Natural Language Processing (NLP), offering insightful guidance in conducting empirical translation studies. Moreover, these studies are also characterized by a common feature, that is, post-structuralist approach. The studies situate translators and their translation practices in socio-cultural contexts and investigate the ways they are influenced by these contexts, centering on social causation and human agency. The whole collection is organized into five sections covering some of the most interesting themes in T&I studies.

The first section, consisting of Chapter 1 and 2, touches upon intervention in T&I and looks at social and political aspects of interpreting service for vulnerable groups. Chapter 1 by Rebecca Tipton discusses the development of guidance for interpreters working in domestic abuse support services. It is shown that interpreters are faced with challenges to internalize and apply the guidance in domestic abuse setting. The guidance for interpreters will benefit from contextualized in-person training which may mitigate misreadings of prescriptivism (p. 25). In clinical mental health care settings, Chapter 2 examines how interpreters abide by the core principles of Person-Centred Care (PCC) in consultation dialogue interpreting. This chapter finds that interpreters' rendition influences participants' talk and has a direct bearing on the accomplishment of PCC. Interpreters' better knowledge of speakers' goals and PCC values may increase their agency in helping patients with multilingual healthcare encounters.

The second section concerns the process of T&I and comprises Chapter 3 and 4, which focus on the behaviors of professional and student translators respectively. Yixiao Cui and Binghan Zheng explore student translators' allocation of time and cognitive resources to translation and consultation during the translation process. Eye-tracking and screen-recording data show that as perceived translation difficulty increases, students spend longer time on consultation, and use more online and general-purpose resources, with more transitions between translating and consultation (pp. 68-69). As a step furthering T&I studies by eye-tracking, Claire Y. Shih investigates professional translators' web search behaviors and

demonstrates that qualitative methodology of eye-tracking is also effective in eliciting inference and reflective data in the translation process.

The third section, including four chapters, presents an illuminating account of product of T&I with emphasis on the interplay between translation and socio-cultural contexts. In Chapter 5, Fei Gao and Binhua Wang, integrating Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Corpus Linguistics (CL), look into how Chinese government officials' speeches are rendered by conference interpreters in diplomatic settings. Results reveal that the increased first person plurals and their possessives create a stronger sense of China's solidarity, while the added obligation modal verbs highlight the duty of China to unite with other countries (p. 111). Chapter 6 and 7 both combine corpus methodology and questionnaire survey to investigate translation product in specific cultural contexts. María del Mar Ogea Pozo demonstrates that creative translation produces the best outcomes when humorous language in American political comedies is translated into Spanish in subtitling. A new typology for humor and its translation strategies is proposed in this study, offering helpful guidance for studies on the translation of humor in political comedies. Caiwen Wang concentrates on optional pragmatic explicitation in the out-of-mother-tongue translation of political texts. She discovers that the high-frequency explicitation can be attributed to the translator's conscious efforts to produce an easy target text that is culturally and linguistically appropriate for target readers (p. 152). Explicitation also appears to be related to the translator's competence in dealing with cultural and pragmatic issues. Bing Zou and Binhua Wang in Chapter 8 employ the multi-dimensional approach proposed by Biber (1988), and conduct a corpus-driven research on typical linguistic features of interpreted political discourse. Three factors are identified to be able to distinguish interpreted political discourse from other types of political discourse, namely, "oral vs. literate", "interpreted vs. non-interpreted", and "planned vs. unplanned" dimensions. A comparison of the present findings with Biber's (1988) indicates that the linguistic features of interpreted political discourse are more similar to those of professional letters rather than oral speeches.

The fourth section revolves around the topic of technology and T&I, involving Chapter 9 and 10. Elisabetta Pisani and Claudio Fantinuoli assess how automatic speech recognition (ASR) aids interpreters in rendering numbers in simultaneous interpreting. The ASR tool is found to be very helpful in the interpreting of a speech dense in numbers, especially in the reduction of error rate. Although interpreters reported feelings of distraction caused by the added visual stimulus, it could be mitigated by specific training in the use of the ASR tool (p. 195). Xiaojun Zhang puts forward two complementary approaches to integrate cross-sentence context into Neural Machine Translation (NMT). He demonstrates that the proposed models significantly outperform a strong attention-based NMT baseline system and work excellently with larger contexts.

The final section of this collection addresses the issue of education in T&I based on various experimental researches. Chapter 11 explores the possible interpreters' advantage in emotional regulation and shows that interpreting training benefits emotional regulation in domain-general settings. These findings are monumental as the study represents the first empirical effort that extends the interpreter advantage studies to the psycho-emotional

dimension (p. 235). Piero Toto in Chapter 12 shares with us the experience of flipped classroom of translation technology in London Metropolitan University. The flipped approach is allowed to develop more tailored approaches to cater for the needs of each student. Students are highly satisfied with the module, and feel accountable for their own learning, which occurs at their own pace with immediate personalised feedback (p. 253). Also on T&I training, Chapter 13 probes into how Distance Interpreter Training (DIT) is perceived by interpreting trainers and trainees as an innovative method for interpreting teaching in China. Questionnaire surveys and semi-structured interviews reveal that although the usefulness of DIT is admitted, DIT is faced with grave challenges in its implementation, such as teachers' lack of motivation, insufficient DIT courses, lack of integrated DIT resources, etc. These findings may serve as a useful reference for policymakers of DIT in China.

This collection presents the state of the art of empirical studies in Translation Studies, but it is not without regrets. Although the first section is informed by multiple approaches, the two studies seem to reply too much on qualitative analysis. The results would be more convincing if the authors could introduce statistical means in sampling of participants, analyzing linguistic features and presenting the outcome of interviews. Besides, this section is titled "Intervention in T&I", but the two chapters in it emphasize interpreters' behaviors situated in socio-cultural contexts and the influence of their behaviors on community services. It is, perhaps, more appropriate to change the theme into "Function of T&I", which corresponds to the themes of "Process of T&I" and "Product of T&I" of the following two sections. In this way, the new themes echo Holmes's categorization of descriptive translation studies (2000), which may better capture the internal logic among these chapters.

It is also worth noting that different methodologies in Translation Studies should be further integrated to produce reliable results through triangulation. Although this collection has seen several studies based on integrated approaches, most chapters still rely on a single methodology. It is suggested that product-oriented studies, especially for corpus-based ones, should be combined with process-oriented studies to facilitate multiple validity checks of hypotheses. For example, the CDA-and-CL-informed method suggested in Chapter 5 enables us to take a comprehensive perspective from linguistic description, discourse practice and social practice (Fairclough, 1992). But this method cannot be only approached by linguistic and corpus means. Ethnographic or even cognitive methodologies are also needed to explore the production, distribution and comprehension of T&I, involving not only surveys based on field work, interviews and questionnaires, but also experiments by eye-tracker, Translog, fMRI, etc.

In sum, this collection sheds light on empirical studies of T&I from a post-structuralist perspective. The most outstanding merit of it lies in the various feasible methodologies employed to conduct empirically-based translation studies. The tools introduced in some chapters have also proven to be useful in obtaining empirical data for T&I researches. Moreover, the individual studies in this collection will contribute to our understanding of post-structuralist approach to T&I in terms of theory as well as practice, including but not limited to ideological significance of translation, politics of translation and the relations

between translators' behaviors and socio-cultural contexts. Future studies are suggested to further refine empirical studies of T&I by triangulation and bring in more language pairs for comparison in cross-cultural contexts.

References

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