MEDIÁLNÍ STUDIA

MEDIA STUDIES

Journalism and Translation in the Era of Convergence
Darren Ingram

2/2019

JOURNALISM AND TRANSLATION IN THE ERA OF CONVERGENCE

DARREN INGRAM

Journalism and Translation in the Era of Convergence (Benjamins Translation Library 146). Edited by Davier, L & Conway, K (2019). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company. ISBN: 9789027203151 (hbk) 9789027262554 (ebk) vi, 217 pages.

Translation in the context of journalism is not just the art or practice of 'converting' material from one language to another in an almost mechanical fashion. In today's converged, multimedia and much 'smaller' world, it is more integrated, nuanced and definite. That is the core message of this collection of essays, edited by Lucile Davier and Kyle Conway, which focusses on how media organizations are operating in monolingual, bilingual or multilingual environments, and often over multiple platforms and cultures.

Translation is interpreted (*sic*) broadly, covering the 're-expression of bits of speech or text in a different language to the explanation of how members of a foreign cultural community interpret an object or event.' (p.2). The meaning of convergence, another key term of the book, is similarly wide-open, taking 'both economic and organizational forms such as partnerships between media producers (e.g. between a newspaper and a television channel), cross-promotion of the partnered products with competition among journalists, simple exchange of content from one platform to another, and the creation of a pool of content disseminated in different formats.' (p.3) Different formats can be viewed as being different languages and cultures too, each having a slightly different method of communication or need for a mode of production.

There are three themes central to this book: the platform – the relationship between content and its hosting venue, the event – the coverage of specific news events, and practices – the professional practices of translation and convergence. The authors of the book, scholars affiliated with departments of applied linguistics, communication, languages, and translation, pose and investigate thoughtful questions using a case study approach. These questions include how to produce news content for minority language communities, how to adapt content for new audiences, how to service different audiences within a common brand, and how the so-called traditional content is packaged for social networks.

For example, Lauri Haapanen and Daniel Perrin consider strategies deployed by journalists when quoting someone speaking a different language. They notice that traditional adaption, such as a voice-over that summarises the original language quotation, can be more difficult in a convergent context where the same quotations are reused for various platforms with different requirements. This translingual quoting is described as a 'complex and dynamic activity in which journalists' individual and collective (e.g. institutional)

language awareness, knowledge, and practices interact with multi-layered contexts of text production' (p. 15). It goes one step further than traditional journalism, e.g. editing an interview to fit space, since it requires a translational activity with an understanding of the subject, language, and culture.

In the same vein, comparing the real-time coverage of Donald J. Trump's Presidential inauguration speech on Italian online news sites to printed newspaper coverage the following day, Maria Cristina demonstrates 'the ongoing blurring of the lines separating translation and interpreting where news media are concerned' (p. 42). This raises an interesting question as to whether the media consumers notice or care about a difference, as long as their news consumption needs are met. Philippe Gendron, Kyle Conway, and Lucile Davier examine the visibility of news translation on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's English and French websites. The authors analysed journalists' practices, structural differences and the asymmetrical relationships between anglophones and francophones in Ottawa-Gatineau in national political news and capital region news, and highlighted the language imbalance that may exist between the majority and minority language coverage and platform needs. They also noted how specific outlets believed their audiences would react to hearing languages they did not speak (or chose not to favour). One CBC reporter in Ottawa (a bilingual area) explained: 'Honestly, I think some people become resentful if you try and put French clips on English radio' (p. 76). This impression of cultural distance went both ways,

with a Radio Canada reporter noting that francophone audiences were less interested in majority-anglophone parts of Ottawa.

Whether there are different perspectives on immigration between the content displayed on news websites and social media postings by the same media organization was studied by Kasper Welbers and Michael Opgenhaffen through the lenses of cultural translation and framing. Using qualitative interpretation with computational text analysis to study the news coverage of immigration of five Dutch newspapers over two years, the authors suggest that social media editors must 'remediate news - selecting and possibly re-interpreting content - to accommodate a different audience and format' (p. 85). News about migrants that was perceptually 'closer to home' yielded greater prominence on social media than the broader coverage-at-large in the newspapers. Rayya Roumanos and Arnaud Noblet examined how a global news brand's content can be 'refashioned' contextually dependent on local journalists. They focused on how a January 2017 terrorist attack in Istanbul was framed and presented within the U.S., French and Arab editions of the HuffPost website. Roumanos and Noblet demonstrated variance in local practices. Each outlet had a different conceptualization of terrorism, along with different journalistic practices. While the researchers noted that there were no 'radical differences between the various editions', there was a 'series of subtle disparities [that] tell a single story that caters to a specific audience.' (p. 126). As a consequence, while the Western newsrooms discussed

the incident, the Middle Eastern one described it. 'The former questioned the causes and repercussions of the shooting by integrating commentary and analysis to their coverage while the latter focused on factual elements and human interest stories to recount a detailed yet disconnected tragedy.' (p. 126).

The multidisciplinary richness of the research means that the book goes in its target group well beyond a typical reader profile. The book can be also helpful for media professionals, who can consider and implement many subtle elements of translation described in the book within their professional practice, even if, at first glance, these elements may not be obvious or may not seem necessary. There can be small, petty disagreements over the elements of editing and the writing style, but nothing that makes the book less attractive or otherwise too onerous to consume.

ZÁPAS O IDEJE A NÁRODNÍ ZÁJMY Z POHLEDU NOVINÁŘE RUDOLFA KOPECKÉHO

MONIKA KRATOCHVÍLOVÁ

Kopecký, R., & Nekola, M. (Eds.). (2018). *Rudolf Kopecký: vzpomínky starého novináře: „proti Benešovi, nacistům a komunistům"*. Beroun: Machart, 2018. ISBN 978-80-87938-65-2, 512 stran.

Vydavatelství Machart vydalo koncem roku 2018 více jak pětisetstránkovou publikaci s provokativním podnázvem *Rudolf Kopecký: vzpomínky starého novináře: „proti Benešovi, nacistům a komunistům"*. V úvodu se dočítáme, proč se v roce 1960 rozhodl začít psát paměti. Ačkoli si byl vědom, že „vzpomínky jsou nutně subjektivní" (s. 9), nostalgicky na stejném místě podotýká, že minulost „při všech svých chybách a nedostatcích byla mnohem lepší žalostné dnešní přítomnosti a, jak se obávám, na dlouho i budoucnosti našeho národa". Sám sebe přitom označuje za typického příslušníka své generace vyrůstajícího z určité společenské třídy a postižené stejným osudem, pokud hovoří o sobě, oslovuje se „moje národnědemokratická maličkost" (s. 9).

V původní nezkrácené podobě tyto osmidílné vzpomínky obsahují až 454 kapitol a 2 350 stran strojopisu. Jejich redakční výběr k vydání připravil politolog a historik Martin Nekola. Inspirací pro název díla se stalo označení tří archivních krabic Kopeckého pamětí