

**STONE, Christopher and LEESON, Lorraine, eds. (2017):**  
*Interpreting and the Politics of Recognition*. London/New York:  
Routledge, 162 p.

Fei Gao

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[See table of contents](#)

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des images. Le tout a été publié sous le titre *In & Out*<sup>14</sup>, un recueil qui n'est ni une histoire exotique ni un témoignage. D'où la référence in fine à Walter Benjamin : toute traduction a son propre parcours et est davantage que la fidélité à un original.

Je ne conclurai pas sur les relations subtiles entre poésie, traduction et cinéma. Les boules continuent de s'entrechoquer et c'est peut-être bien ainsi, plutôt que de les figer dans un espace-temps absolu. Par contre, la boule traduction paraît toujours légère. On a vu pourtant que les traductions suivent souvent un parcours sinueux, qu'entre le supposé original et le produit final il y a bien des rencontres, que des questions autour et sur la traduction intersémiotique se posent et peut-être mon compte-rendu en donne un aperçu disproportionné car ces références et allusions sont finalement peu nombreuses, peu étayées. Dans tout ce volume, la traduction est souvent et implicitement considérée comme recherche d'équivalence, d'exactitude – conception que la traductologie a depuis quatre décennies foncièrement bousculée. L'ouvrage aborde ainsi nombre de productions où images, texte, sons interagissent mais n'approfondit pas le concept-clé de traduction : que différents systèmes de signes se combinent en des formats, des réseaux complexes, ce n'est pas nouveau, et le livre nous le rappelle ; par contre, peut-on dire qu'on a toujours affaire à une « traduction » dès qu'on réfère à des signes linguistiques et non linguistiques, qu'on les interprète ? L'enjeu est magistral puisqu'il s'agit de redéfinir l'objet même de la traductologie.

YVES GAMBIER

*Turun Yliopisto, Turku, Finlande*

#### NOTES

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2. MURAKAMI, Haruki (1979) : 風の歌を聴け (Kaze no uta o kike) [Écoute le chant du vent]. Tokyo : Kodansha.
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STONE, Christopher and LEESON, Lorraine, eds. (2017) : *Interpreting and the Politics of Recognition*. London/New York : Routledge, 162 p.

In our increasingly globalised world driven strongly by homogenising forces, the diversity and significance of “non-literary translation in cultures are drastically underestimated” (Cronin 2003: 2). Published between two triennial conferences of the International Association for Translation and Intercultural Studies (IATIS) focusing on multilingual and multimodal interaction and cultural-mobility, the IATIS Yearbook *Interpreting and the Politics of Recognition* is a timely contribution that attaches due importance to some “peripheral” interpreting practices, not least, to sign language interpreting, spoken interpreting for ethnic minorities, and non-professional interpreting in historical events as well as in multicultural and political contexts.

The collection is the first IATIS volume to focus on interpreting. Championing an inclusive view towards interpreting practices, the two editors unequivocally devote the collection to both spoken and signed modalities of interpreting, with thematic emphases on the historical, ethical and professional aspects of non-mainstream forms of interpreting practices. Their prioritised “minority perspective” is epitomised by the wording of the title – *Politics of Recognition* – that is, recognition of all forms of interpreting practices, particularly for the deaf and ethnic minority groups, in the “political ecology of translation” (p. xi). The centrality of politics is also seen throughout the chapters where authors investigate the “politics” of interpreting (stakeholder power-relations) and the political consequences of interpreting activities.

Unified by the tenet of “inclusiveness” for the realm of interpreting studies, the volume seeks to cover a wide array of topics, reflected in the titles of the parts that comprise it: *Political Contexts and Colonialism* (Part I), *Politics of Ethics and Power* (Part II), and *Politics of Practice and Representation* (Part III).

Michael Cronin, in the foreword, foregrounds the significance of this collection by positioning it in a global context of translation ecology, where local particularisms and global uniformity compete, and also mutually reinforce each other, in terms of providing or denying interpreting services. Cronin is vehement in antagonising governmental and political forces for monolingualism, where stringent language policies have been enacted to exclude migrants and minority groups, or to deny them linguistic access, so as to achieve a “hegemonic and unitary notion of identity” (p. x). Against this backdrop, Cronin advances arguments for an inclusive language politics, recognising, primarily, the full significance of sign language interpreting for the deaf community and spoken interpreting for minority groups. The inclusive politics of recognition, for Cronin, emanates from the provision of interpreting services “for all,” to connect with “multiple forms of language, textual and culture practice” (p. xi) and the contextual and situational importance of “translating in situ” (p. xiii). Although the volume lacks an editor’s introduction, Cronin’s foreword offers a penetrating lead-in to the diverse grounds to be covered in the ensuing eight chapters.

Binhua Wang and Fang Tang open Part I with Chapter 1 (*Interpreting and its politics: Interpreters in the early Sino-British contacts in the eighteenth and nineteenth century*). Their historiographical study incisively unearths many little-known facts regarding the roles and functions of a neglected group of “quasi”-interpreters (non-professionals) during this colonial period. Despite the immense obstacles in collecting historical documents that capture the evanescent interpreting practices in the distant past, the authors managed to gain access to rare historical documents from various archives, complemented by the findings of historians. With a focus on four interpreter-mediated events that happened at critical historical points of early Sino-British contact, this chapter depicts the ins-and-outs of the political contexts and of those non-professionals who undertook interpreting tasks, as interpreters on the one hand, and on the other hand, who performed multiple roles or functions, such as, among others, military advisors, messengers, negotiators, magistrates, and even perceived traitors (p. 15). Given the complicated roles these non-professionals had, the authors insightfully pin-down two issues: the consequence of inadequate interpreting in major historical events and the perception of mediating interpreters as traitors. The authors conclude the chapter by arguing for the pivotal role of these “quasi”-interpreters in shaping or breaking major historical events, which may point to promising research avenues, not only for interpreting and translation scholars, but also for historians.

In Chapter 2, with a provocative title (*Deaf Stirrings in Surinam*), Bepie van den Bogaerde and Adde Woest throw their enthusiasm at the political consequences of language policy on an unnamed and unknown minority sign variety in Surinam, a former Dutch colony. This chapter systematically offers a comprehensive report, with substantial details, on the joint governmental, institutional, and societal efforts to “emancipate” Surinam’s deaf community. After presenting the political and historical contexts, the authors elaborate on the collaborative engagement of the Dutch with the local deaf community and education institutions. The Dutch aimed to provide Surinam sign language training, to improve communication between the deaf minority and the hearing majority, and ultimately to support Surinam’s deaf community in securing linguistic rights and security. In conclusion, the authors emphasise the enabling role of the language policy for Surinam’s deaf ethnic minority so that this community could participate in their own country’s affairs. Though lacking in analytical cogency, the thickness of details presented allows readers to see the worthiness of such ‘stirring’ endeavours, and more crucially, point to future actions and research directions.

In Chapter 3 (“*A President for all of the Irish: Performing Irishness in an interpreted inaugural presidential speech*”), Lorraine Leeson, Miranda Stewart, Casey Ferrara, Ivy Bostock, Peter Nilsson and Marlon Cooper collectively explore, in a controlled simulation study, how Irish Sign Language (ISL) interpreters deal with culturally embedded meanings in presidential speeches. Performing Irishness is, in the source language, achieved by the President’s code-switching (from English to Irish) to enact a shared Irish identity and foster a sense of solidarity. The authors, based on textual data and think-aloud results, insightfully point out that code-switching poses challenges for simultaneous ISL interpreters to equally perform Irishness in the target language, given the high cognitive demand and dense cultural connotations. This study demonstrates methodological rigour by deftly integrating key concepts of Effort Code and in-group and out-group identity, as guiding principles, with forensic analysis of interpreting strategies and think-aloud-protocol implemented in parallel.

Part II begins with Mary Phelan’s Chapter 4 (*Interpreter provision, medical training and ethics*). The topical focus shifts from sign language interpreting to medical interpreting for migrant minorities. Predominantly in the form of a review study, Phelan covers a vast ground by wading across both medical journals and reports and interpreting publications. Such a wide horizon enables the author to bring to the fore three critical facets – medical training, medical ethics, and

medical interpreting provision – that matter dearly in terms of healthcare and language services for migrant minorities. The author potently advances her argument regarding the limitations of viewing medical interpreting only in terms of ethics. In concluding the chapter, Phelan appeals for reciprocal engagement and cooperation between healthcare and interpreting professionals on a regular basis.

In Chapter 5 (*The application of ethics within situated action*), Ilana Rozanes offers a conceptually inspiring paper that discusses codes of ethics applied in, not least, medical interpreting situations. Codes of ethics are summarised by the author as “a set of guidelines for how one should act” (p. 89). However, as the author observes, situated actions of medical interpreting do not always follow planned ethics. In other words, there is a distance between deontology (code of ethics) and teleology (contextualised purposes). Viewing this phenomenon not as a binary, but rather as a continuum loop, Rozanes ingeniously theorises a framework for a “code of ethics from conception to situated action” (p. 91). This chapter is the most theory-laden in this volume, containing several formidable concepts. Yet, it provides guiding principles and instrumental frameworks for future empirical studies. Nonetheless, the explanations of abstract concepts could benefit from using more examples or case studies, rather than relying on limited anecdotal data.

In the last chapter of Part II, Chapter 6, Jeremy Brunson explores power relations between sign language interpreters and various stakeholders (*Consumers, colleagues, and certification: Exploring the politics of interpreting*). Brunson conceptually foregrounds the notion of “the politics of interpreting,” which is concerned with how interpreters exercise professional power and knowledge in negotiating relationships with various stakeholders – consumers, colleagues, and certifying bodies. Through a qualitative study that focuses on interviews with 30 sign language interpreters, the author reports a contradictory result to the “professional autonomy” argument found in previous literature – interpreter behaviours are strongly influenced by these stakeholders, to such an extent that they “become docile – controlled” (p. 113). By viewing interpreters in relation to other stakeholders, this study provides a revealing lens to investigate the real-life complexity of power relations, negotiations, and struggles on the part of sign language interpreters.

In Part III, Stephanie Feyne addresses sign language interpreting with a reception study in Chapter 7 (*Variation in perception of the identity of interpreted deaf lecturers*). Through a theoretical prism of “interactional identity construction”

(p. 122), the author presents a rather fine-grained picture of how interpreted discourse, by sign language interpreters, affects the audience’s perception and assessment of Deaf Docents (deaf professional educators in a museum). In a controlled experiment, “identity attributes” of Deaf Docents are examined through evaluator assessments on four dimensions: knowledge, communication style, use of language, and museum calibre. Though these dimensions are far from exhaustive, the author uncovers a practical conundrum – interpreters cannot accurately represent the knowledge and competence of the deaf museum professional, yet the interpreted discourse exerts a *de facto* impact on how deaf educators are perceived (p. 134). This study stops at answering the “what” question, though a more meaningful question could be begged regarding “to-what extent,” where researchers can examine the perception gap between the genuine discourse by Deaf Docents and the interpreted discourse.

Chapter 8 (*Deaf/non-deaf interpreter teams: Canadian insights on the complexity of professional practice*) concludes this volume by presenting a complex landscape and crucial questions for future actions and research. Situating this study in Canada’s culturally diverse context, Debra Russell conducts in-depth interviews with eight deaf/non-deaf interpreters who come from different cities and engage closely with migrant communities. The author masterfully reveals Canadian complications in terms of different entailments of interpreting strategies, the complex nature of interpreting work, limitations of ethics, the perceived role as a “language specialist,” and gaps in training. The arguments are convincingly advanced by the author linking qualitative interpretations with existing literature. The author is explicit about the limitation of a small pool of informants, through whom, still, vital themes are highlighted, issues are raised, challenges are identified, and recommendations are offered. Such all-embracing discussions are not only a justifiable call for action from relevant stakeholders, but an insightful positioning of the complicated Canadian context as profitable and worthy research grounds.

Against an exuberantly covered panorama across eight chapters, two points stand out. First, this book is an invaluable rarity that systematically pools together, by the unifying theme of “politics of recognition,” studies in sign language interpreting, spoken interpreting with ethnic minorities, and non-professional interpreting in historical events. These forms of interpreting are also examined through a kaleidoscope of interpreting-related politics, particularly political contexts, political effects, and the politics of stakeholder relations. Second, and more significant, the methodological

variety is remarkable – ranging from historiography, textual analysis of authentic data, controlled experiments, to interview-based research, all of which greatly enrich the methodological inventory of previously ethnography-dominated community interpreting research.

Nonetheless, the first word in the title for the volume – *Interpreting* – seems overarching, unnecessarily calling up expectations of all types of interpreting. Scholars with a keen interest in sign language interpreting, or community interpreting for minority groups, are likely to miss such a valuable book in their literature search due to this ambiguity. Probably, a book title with sufficient precision would improve the visibility of this contribution.

Overall, this collected volume is a significant contribution to interpreting studies, particularly to the burgeoning research avenues of interpreting for deaf and ethnic minority groups. Many emerging themes from this book, germane to political contexts, ethics, interpreter functions, language policies, and power relations, have become increasingly relevant in today's multilingual and multicultural world due to the flow of migrants. High in scholarly rigour and practical value, this volume will be of interest not only to practising interpreters, but also to researchers and advanced students in the areas of interpreting and translation studies, cultural studies, and socio-political studies.

FEI GAO

University of Leeds, Leeds, United Kingdom  
Chongqing Youdian University, Chongqing, China

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MENG, Ji and OAKES, Michael, eds. (2019): *Advances in Empirical Translation Studies: Developing Translation Resources and Technologies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 270 p.

Let me begin by laying my cards on the table, briefly informing readers of my background and the biases that inevitably come with it. Trained as a linguist in the old Chomskyan school of generative linguistics, I joined the machine translation project at the Université de Montréal in 1977. From that point on, almost my entire professional life has been spent in research and development, both in MT and machine-aided translation (MAT), except for the few years when I earned my living as a French-to-English translator at the Canadian federal Translation Bureau. Today, I work as an independent consultant in machine translation,

while continuing to translate, both for pay and for pleasure.

Hence, readers will not be too surprised to learn that the chapters that I found most interesting in this collection of articles are those that deal with MT and MAT. Chief among these are two articles by Mark Seligman, one on the evolving treatment of semantics in MT, the other, co-authored with Alex Waibel, on speech-to-speech translation. The first article is a lengthy and impressive historical overview of the role that semantics has (and has not) played in MT. Seligman opens on a philosophical note, picking up John Searle's well-known Chinese room argument in which Searle contends that no computer program (not just MT) can ever operate with anything like a human understanding of the language it processes; all it can do is manipulate symbols. Seligman grudgingly accepts Searle's general point, but only for those programs that operate without any explicit meaning representations. He then goes on to trace the role of semantics throughout MT's long 70-year history, from which we learn that the great majority of MT systems have eschewed explicit semantics. Only at the end of his article does Seligman allude to a form of semantics that could potentially refute Searle's argument: a perceptually grounded semantics in which the classes and categories employed by an MT system would be learned through artificial perception of the real world.

This is indeed an intriguing possibility, and given AI's remarkable progress in recent years, it doesn't appear entirely outlandish or far-fetched. My problem with Seligman's position lies not so much in the feasibility of such an autonomous machine-learned semantics; rather, it has to do with its necessity. Simply put, neural machine translation (NMT) systems have become so good of late that one can't help wonder how much of a difference a perceptually grounded explicit semantics could possibly make to these systems' output quality.

As it turns out, there are several articles dealing with MT and MAT in this collection which, one might argue, appear to have been overtaken by the stunning progress made of late by neural MT<sup>1</sup>. The reordering techniques described by Masaaki Nagata in chapter 9 for MT between Japanese and English apply to the syntactic intermediate structures produced by *statistical* MT systems. As he himself recognizes at the end of his article, neural MT systems make no use of this kind of intermediate structure and have largely resolved the reordering problem that formerly plagued MT between these two very different languages. Even the pertinence of the EXPERT Project (described in Chapter 11), which set out to develop new hybrid data-driven approaches to translation, may need