

Bielsa, E. (ed.) (2022) *The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Media*. Abingdon/New York: Routledge. 550 pp.
ISBN 9780367029166

Review

Shiqing Liang
University College London

Received: 11/07/2022
Accepted: 15/10/2022



In the 21st century, new modes of information, digitalisation and globalisation are constantly challenging and reshaping traditional patterns and paradigms of translation and the media, offering growing intersections for the two disciplines to communicate and cooperate both in academia and in practice. The past two decades have seen a dramatic surge in publications concerning translation and the media, such as *(Multi)Media Translation: Concepts, Practices, and Research* (Gambier and Gottlieb, 2001), *Political Discourse, Media and Translation* (Schäffner and Bassnett, 2010), *Audiovisual Translation and Media Accessibility at the Crossroad: Media for All* (Remael et al., 2012), *Media and Translation: An Interdisciplinary Approach* (Abend-David, 2014), and *Subtitling: Concepts and Practices* (Díaz-Cintas and Remael, 2021), to name but a few. Though different definitions of ‘media’ have been delineated by scholars from Translation Studies (TS) and other areas, research topics and fundamental theories remain to be chartered (Abend-David, 2014). Esperança Bielsa edited *The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Media* (2022) in order to ascertain the possibilities that translation and media studies bring together in terms of novel synergies and theoretical applications. The book’s timely arrival sparks new insights into the pressing questions revolving around translation and the media.

Following the editor’s introductory chapter, this collective volume of 33 chapters is divided into four parts: Part 1. General theoretical and methodological perspectives; Part 2. Translation and journalism; Part 3.

Multimedia translation; and Part 4. Translation in alternative and social media. Each part encompasses a wide range of themes on the role of translation and, in and of the media. O'Connor opens up the discussion by providing a historical overview of the industrial and theoretical development of translation and media, highlighting their previous engagement and the role of translation's materiality, mediality and technicity in meaning-making, cultural production and societal transfer (Chapter 1). Part I then gives a sketch of the radical impacts of the global turn and internationalised cultural engagement on people's means of communication, and the increasing entanglement between translation and the media. More importantly, Gambier revisits long-standing theoretical concepts in TS through the perspective of media practices, offering readers a refreshing and up-to-date rethinking of how concepts and notions from traditional text-to-text translation practices can rejuvenate in this digital era to cope with new challenges (Chapter 6).

Part I introduces current and useful notions and concepts for translation researchers to suggest further theorisation in TS. Kang suggests the notion of 'collaboration' can facilitate researchers to rethink media translation in today's context, where large-scale online collaboration and social participation are made possible by the development of digital technologies. This is because the traditional notion of authorship may be a distractive force to acknowledge the non-representational practice and translators' broader role as social and political factors in media translation (Chapter 7). In Chapter 8, Batchelor analyses multiple ways in which translation can be enriched from more integrated engagement with the concept of 'paratext'. She claims that 'accessible paratexts' support the integrated inclusiveness of theatrical productions, improving media accessibility for audiences with different needs.

When it comes to translation and journalism, Part II reveals that media professionals could consider translation beyond its understanding as a simple interlinguistic transformation. Translation is invisible and under-discussed in news-related practices and research, and yet it affects the circulation of news and readers' engagement with international news. This part highlights the ubiquity and significance of news translation, which deserves more visibility and has to be reconstructed by professionals. Van Doorslaer argues that translators' work should be credited and duly recognised in rewritings, adaptations and recontextualisations, but translation and the media are both filled with inequalities in political, economic, cultural and linguistic power relations (Chapter 11). Hernández Guerrero identifies the four most common strategies in news translation: omission, addition, substitution and reorganisation. She

argues that translating news means transforming and manipulating the original story to create a new text that suits the target readers' needs (Chapter 15).

Part III revolves around multimedia translation, discussing interactions and convergences of translation and media in light of technological advancement. This part begins with a historical overview of audiovisual translation since the 19th century by Gambier and Jin (Chapter 18). The chapters provide an overview of new translation and media modes in today's digital era. Kapsaskis and Branson call upon a broader notion of 'intervention' to include both material and linguistic elements of translation supplements when examining the relations between cinema and translation. They offer a novel way to investigate film translation not only as a type of linguistic transfer but also as an instrument of commerce, ideology and politics that shapes cinema as an institution (Chapter 19). At the intersection of interpreting, sociolinguistics and media, Castillo Ortiz (Chapter 21) argues that 'media interpreting' has the potential to become an additional accessibility service is substantiated by the rapid development of technologies. As for media accessibility, Orero (Chapter 24) discusses biases regarding age, gender and race in artificial intelligence and machine translation services in media accessibility, and she argues that accessible materials improve communication not just for minorities, but for all. In Part III's closing chapter, di Giovanni examines the definitional changes of the complicated notion of 'audience' through the historical development of media reception studies (Chapter 25).

Finally, Part IV tackles an under-explored, albeit increasingly important, topic: the role(s) translation plays in alternative and social media. In addition to established and dominant types of media, this part reports on the interactions between translation and alternative and social media that have brought revolutionary changes to the translators' roles, including working patterns and user-generated knowledge-sharing online platforms with the help of digital technology. This part is particularly useful as it elucidates the role translation plays in social media. Desjardins demonstrates that translation can gain significant power to promote or hold back the circulation of information and knowledge on social platforms such as Facebook, where translation can serve as a gatekeeping mechanism (Chapter 26). According to Tesseur, the role of language and media remains low-profile but can impact inclusion and diversity negatively in international non-governmental organisations (Chapter 30). Van Rooyen posits that, in alternative journalism, translations can be produced or used unethically, causing misinformation (and thus a potential public threat); however, if translations are produced properly, they can contribute to a more

inclusive and equal society by assisting less-visible communities to have their voices heard (Chapter 28). Wang discusses some emerging concepts revolving around user-generated translation, communication-based intercultural engagement and collaborative meaning-making to be fully explored and understood (Chapter 32).

Tremendous efforts have been made in the present edited volume to strengthen the bonds between translation and media. This book brings together a number of academic fields and sub-areas that were once researched separately, thus offering a more cohesive picture of the interdisciplinary research that is being carried out on translation and media. Nevertheless, there is still room for future improvement; for instance, I would have welcomed more recent instantiations of translation and interactive media, such as danmaku or danmu (i.e., bullet comments flowing through translated videos in streaming media, translated e-books with shared in-text comments). The same goes for immersive live performances with surtitles, subtitled audiovisual productions circulating on international social media, online meeting platforms with live captions, virtual reality game localisation, and interactive museums for global tourists, among others. These new perspectives would be a valuable addition to this book. Since mediascapes and translation conventions vary from region to region, the use of region-specific research (e.g. case studies) might be a future research avenue worth exploring. Lastly, the use of subsections (e.g. the (in)visibility of translation, media accessibility, and authorship) across the different chapters would be highly recommended as it would help readers navigate this book.

This handbook is a comprehensive and inspiring collection of cutting-edge research contributions. The different parts and chapters therein shed light on a myriad of concepts, approaches and methodologies concerning the study of translation and media. The book as a whole manages to raise awareness of the increasingly paramount role(s) translation plays in the media industries and in society in general. By presenting readers with an abundance of new research avenues, this handbook can serve as an insightful reference for translation researchers who would like to conduct interdisciplinary research and learn about crucial directions. It is also an informative guide for researchers in media, communication, film, journalism and sociology who want to gain a better understanding of the ubiquitous impact translation has on professionals from all walks of life.

References

- Abend-David, D. (ed.) (2014) *Media and Translation: An Interdisciplinary Approach*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Díaz-Cintas, J. and Remael, A. (2021) *Subtitling: Concepts and Practices*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Gambier, H. and Gottlieb, Y. (2001) *(Multi) Media Translation: Concepts, Practices and Research*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Remael, A. Orero, P. and Carroll, M. (2012) *Audiovisual Translation and Media Accessibility at the Crossroads: Media for All 3*. New York: Brill.
- Schäffner, C. and Bassnett, S. (eds.) (2010) *Political Discourse, Media and Translation*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.