

--> See the **erratum** for this article

PIETRO RAMOS, Fernando (2018): *Institutional Translation for International Governance. Enhancing Quality in Multilingual Legal Communication*. London/New York: Bloomsbury, 228 p.

Oumarou Mal Mazou

Volume 64, Number 3, December 2019

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1070544ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1070544ar>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal

ISSN

0026-0452 (print)

1492-1421 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this review

Mal Mazou, O. (2019). Review of [PIETRO RAMOS, Fernando (2018): *Institutional Translation for International Governance. Enhancing Quality in Multilingual Legal Communication*. London/New York: Bloomsbury, 228 p.] *Meta*, 64(3), 828–830. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1070544ar>

of the history of the ideas, concepts, methods, and interdisciplinary exchanges that have shaped the field of modern TS (p. 12). Hopefully, this volume will spur more interests in the study of a history of modern translation knowledge.

LIJUAN DU
Shanghai International Studies University,
Shanghai, China
Fuyang Normal University, Fuyang, China

NOTES

- * This work was supported by Department of Education of Anhui Province (A Corpus-based CDA Study of the Chinese Political Discourse Translation, SK2019A0816), Department of Education of Anhui Province (2019jyxm0903) and Fuyang Normal University Project (2018FXJY01).

PIETRO RAMOS, Fernando (2018): *Institutional Translation for International Governance. Enhancing Quality in Multilingual Legal Communication*. London/New York: Bloomsbury, 228 p.

Institutional translation has been garnering much interest in the field of translation studies, especially given the increasing number of publications since the 1970s, despite most research being carried out within national settings (Covacs 1979). In fact, translation studies in intergovernmental organizations remain limited and, in this regard, the book under review contributes to filling this gap.

Edited by Fernando Prieto Ramos, a leading scholar in the field of legal translation and international organizations, this book gathers the findings of a project funded by the European Research Council under the coordination of the editor. It consists of 13 interrelated chapters divided into three parts.

Part 1, entitled *Contemporary Issues and Methods* contains three chapters. In the first chapter, Susan Šarčević (p. 9-24) focusses on the challenges that the institutional translators face and their role as transnational multilingual communicators. The author takes examples from the production of multilingual texts within the European Commission to highlight the main task of translators, which is: “to preserve the unity of the single instrument with the ultimate aim of promoting its uniform interpretation and application in practice” (p. 13). We can thus say that the challenge translators of legal texts face in institutional settings is to ensure consistency in terminology, i.e. internal harmonization of multilingual texts: “the greatest challenge to institutional legal translators is learning to go beyond surface-level similarity” (p. 23).

To overcome the above-stated challenge, the translator must have interdisciplinary skills and mastery of the subject matter. In this regard, Šarčević encourages translation schools all over the world to provide the necessary interdisciplinary training so that translators are equipped with the necessary skills to enable them to become transnational communicators and bring quality to institutional multilingualism.

In the same regard, the second chapter (p. 25-36), authored by Lucja Biel, investigates corpora in institutional legal translation. She highlights the evolution and importance of using corpus and technological tools in legal translation, for both practitioners and scholars, to generate resourceful terminological data. For practitioners, “corpus tool can improve the efficiency of the translation process thanks to fast information retrieval, precision of searches and contextualization of information with usage preferences” (p. 34).

Nonetheless, the author deplores the slow uptake of corpus tools by practicing translators, as illustrated in the different surveys she presents. The chapter equally highlights some of the new corpus tools that can be used by legal translators (especially JodGENTT, TermWise) and whose efficiency has already been tested and proven.

The last chapter in the first part of the book focuses on comparative law and legal translation. The author Jan Engberg considers the two disciplines to be complimentary when it comes to transferring knowledge. Based on frame semantics as an analytical framework, this last chapter attempts to describe and evaluate the terminological decisions the translator has to make when dealing with legal translation.

The second part of the book, entitled *Translation Quality Assessment in Law-and Policy-making and Implementation*, which is the longest part – and actually the core – of the book, is divided into six chapters, all dealing with translation quality as explicitly stated in the title.

In the first chapter of this second part, Ingemar Strandvic takes a ‘journey’ into the Directorate General for Translation (DGT) of the European Commission. As an insider and quality manager in this institution, the seasoned legal translator calls for a “more structured approach to quality assurance” so that the EU “speaks with one consistent institutional voice in each of the EU’s official languages” (p. 51). In a ‘six-stop’ journey, the author maps out a thorough landscape of the institution, its mission as concerns translation strategies (in-house and outsourcing) for quality assessment in relation to the ever fast-growing field of technology and machine-translation as well as the challenges that an institution like the EU faces.

After raising many questions with some proposed answers, Strandvic comes to the conclusion that “the translation industry and the translation profession at large are confronted with the same challenges, useful insights can be provided by the international standards on translation service provision” (p. 61-62).

For quality assessment to be more efficient in institutional translation, Anne Lafeber examines, in Chapter 5, the skills of translators and revisers at the EU and the United Nations (UN). In a questionnaire-driven survey, she identifies the various skills that are required of new recruits. She concludes that the “skills required for achieving quality are more than just language skills; they include analytical and research skills, as well as procedural knowledge” (p. 79).

In Chapter 6, Prieto Ramos and Diego Guzmán Bourdelle-Casals advocate that legal terminology consistency and adequacy should be quality indicators of institutional translation. Their comparative method of analysis focuses on translation patterns into Spanish over a period of fifteen years (2000-2015) within the framework of the LETRINT project. The corpus-based, holistic analysis (combination of lexicometric, that is quantitative and qualitative, methods) and the research question allow them to show how the term *due process* is translated into Spanish over the aforementioned interval of time.

The findings of the survey reveal that the use of a mixed-method, corpus-based research approach can be useful in highlighting textual patterns and skills in an international organization like the EU and the UN. Agnieszka Doczekalaska explores multilingual practices by comparing the EU and the Canadian legal systems through a comparative analysis in Chapter 7.

The chapter focuses on the similarities and differences of legislative multilingualism and drafting processes in Canada and the EU in terms of terminological choices.

Chapter 8 is authored by Colin Robertson, whose main interest is in legal-linguistic profiling as a translation aid. He aims to provide a “method for analysing multilingual and multicultural legal environment in which a text to be translated forms part” (p. 113). Like most of the previous contributors to the book, Robertson delves into one of the numerous EU agencies, namely the European Aviation Agency to carry out his research.

The last chapter of this second part (Chapter 9) is authored by Mathilde Fontanet. Here, the author discusses the translation of hybrid legal texts within the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) where she worked for more than two decades before switching to academics.

After a presentation of some taxonomic considerations on specialized and legal discourse, Fontanet uses parallel corpora made of hybrid legal-technical texts (agreements, safety rules and contracts adjudication) that she compiled from the CERN. According to the author, the results of analysing these texts reveal two possible situations: either one domain prevails, or both cohabit. She therefore concluded that “translators should ensure that there is absolute consistency between sub-technical vocabulary and terminology” (p. 138).

The third and last part of the book entitled *Translation and Multilingual Case Law*, brings together three chapters dealing with European Union Courts, namely the European Court of Justice and the European Court on Human Rights.

In Chapter 10, Suzan Wright presents the multilingual system in which the EU judiciary functions and the impact that this multilingual system has on the judgements rendered. In keeping with the same judiciary system within the EU, Aleksandar Trklja investigates the corpus of translation-generated diversity in Chapter 11. She operates under the assumption that “although EU law exists in different linguistic versions because of the ‘meta principle’ of uniformity (...), it is considered that all these linguistic versions have the same meaning” (p. 156). Therefore, according to Trklja, quality translation in the EU Court of Justice has been achieved.

The above analysis is based on all the decisions of the Court published in the following three languages until 2011: French, English and German. The results of this analysis leads to several important proposals.

James Brannan, in Chapter 12, is interested in the different characteristics of translation within the European Court of Human Rights. He specifically examines the balance between the Court’s policy and its practice showing that the European Court of Human Right (ECHR) has adopted its relevant policies which have advantages and difficulties related to having only two official languages (English and French).

The 13th and last chapter is written by Prieto Ramos and Lucie Pachó Aljanti, and in this chapter, the two scholars examine the interpretation of multilingual law in international courts in a comparative view and its patterns and implications for translation. They start with the assumption that “the existence of authentic texts in two or more languages can either complicate or facilitate the interpretation of a multilingual instrument” (p. 181). This comes from the comparative analysis that law interpretation problems cannot be totally solved in a multilingual context of text production, but translation can reduce divergences between different language versions “by ensuring accuracy

and inter-linguistic concordance in the processes of multilingual text production" (p. 201).

The well-crafted structure and the variety of institutional translation aspects discussed in this book make it worth reading for scholars and professionals who are interested in how translation is carried out in supranational institutions. To sum up, this book definitely discusses and extends key issues on quality institutional translation developed in a previous collective book entitled *Quality Aspects of Institutional Translation*, edited by Svoboda, Biel, and Łoboda (2017), and the two are major contributions to terminology and quality assessment as far as multilingualism and translation are concerned in leading international organizations like the EU and its various bodies.

OUMAROU MAL MAZOU
Université de Liège, Liège, Belgique

REFERENCES

- COVACS, Alexandre (1979): Bilinguisme officiel et double version des lois. Un pis-aller: la traduction. Une solution d'avenir: la corédaction. *Meta*. 24(1):103-108
- SVOBODA, Thomas, BIEL, Lucja, and LOBODA, Krzysztof (2017): *Quality Aspects of Institutional Translation*. Berlin: Language Science Press.

PECMAN, Mojca (2018): *Langue et construction de connaissances. Énergie lexico-discursive et potentiel sémiotique des sciences*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 265 p.

Le présent ouvrage est paru en septembre 2018. Il est divisé en quatre chapitres intitulés respectivement: 1) «Langue, sens et connaissances face à la linguistique» (p. 23-47); 2) «De la dynamique lexicale à la dynamique cognitive: termes et néologismes ou va-et-vient entre stabilité et variation» (p. 49-92); 3) «La quête du sens et des connaissances: définitions, collocations, bases et représentations de connaissances» (p. 93-168); et 4) «De l'analyse lexicale à une grammaire du discours de l'innovation» (p. 169-228). Sont attachées à ces chapitres: une introduction (6 pages), une conclusion (4 pages), une préface de Marie-Claude L'Homme (2 pages), une généreuse bibliographie (28 pages) et des représentations iconographiques: 44 figures, 4 tableaux, 3 images et un index rerum.

La science est de nature lexico-discursive. Tel est le socle sur lequel repose l'ouvrage de Mojca Pecman. Partant de ce principe, et dans le cadre de ses réflexions sur la langue comme outil de construction du sens, mais également en tant que vecteur de connaissances, l'auteure procède à une étude terminologique et phraséologique

du discours scientifique. Pour ce faire, elle invite son lecteur à entreprendre un voyage en quatre temps représentant les différents chapitres de son ouvrage.

Dans le premier chapitre, l'auteure pose le cadre de son étude en rappelant tout d'abord le fait suivant: face à la complexité de la langue, les chercheurs sont amenés à l'analyser au niveau de «son microcosme» (p. 24) en sélectionnant quelques éléments, ceux faisant l'objet de leur étude (lexique, syntaxe, morphologie...). Cependant, une telle simplification de la langue rend sa complexité encore moins intelligible. Les différents courants, approches et modèles proposés aux xx^e et xxx^e siècles depuis Saussure témoignent de la volonté d'aboutir à une approche plus globale qui prend en considération les contextes et les différentes situations de communication. L'auteure les parcourt rapidement, tout en mettant l'accent sur le modèle énonciativiste de Culioli et le modèle lexico-grammatical de Michael Halliday et John Sinclair (2000).

Mais la linguistique de corpus voit le jour au cours de la deuxième moitié du xx^e siècle avec le développement des nouvelles technologies. L'émergence de ce nouveau paradigme change la donne pour les chercheurs en sciences du langage, lesquels peuvent désormais exploiter des corpus volumineux afin de comprendre et de décrire les «faits de langue attestés» (p. 29). Mojca Pecman procède à une présentation des grands corpus en ligne, des corpus monolingues, bi-langues et de traduction, ainsi que des outils permettant de les compiler et de les interroger (concordanciers, plateformes, logiciels d'analyse de données textuelles...).

Mettant en exergue la science de la linguistique et l'ampleur qu'elle avait prise avec l'émergence du traitement automatique des langues (TAL), l'auteure s'attelle à démontrer le rôle remarquable que joue cette science dans la construction et la reconstruction des connaissances (p. 34-40). Afin de faire la lumière sur les processus de construction du sens et des connaissances spécialisés, ne faut-il pas interroger les sciences du langage? Alors que la sémantique, la sémiotique et la pragmatique se préoccupent de la construction du sens, la linguistique cognitive, les sciences de l'éducation et la didactique traitent quant à elles de la construction des connaissances. Mais ce sont surtout les travaux épistémologiques qui réaffirment «la nature discursive de la science» (p. 40-47).

Le deuxième chapitre est, lui, dédié à la question de la stabilité et la variation terminologique. Après avoir soulevé la difficulté de définir les trois notions contiguës de *mot*, *terme* et *néologisme*, l'auteure propose une étude des variants à travers l'analyse de certaines matrices lexicales, plus par-