

Daria Dayter, Miriam A. Locher, and Thomas C. Messerli, *Pragmatics in Translation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023.

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Quite counterintuitively, the fields of translation and pragmatics research have been developing separately, having little influence on each other (p. 8). Insufficient attention has been given to scholarly study of contextual phenomena involved in translation, which naturally proves to be highly context-sensitive; likewise, translation has occupied a peripheral place in linguopragmatic research. *Pragmatics in Translation* is a welcome attempt to encourage the study of translation as situated discourse and raise scholars' awareness of the importance of adopting an interpersonal pragmatics methodology, which is much more adequate for the study of the newest types of translation data emerging rapidly in our digitised, fast-paced world.

The underlying claim of this work is that the translation of pragmatic aspects of language, i.e. highly context-dependent meanings, has to be informed by linguistic theory. The book positions itself as a manual for scholars willing to undertake research on translation within a contemporary interpersonal pragmatics framework. Tangible suggestions pointing at so far unaddressed research objectives and novel data types to be explored are built upon a comprehensive overview of the existing literature in the field.

The volume is composed of seven sections. The first four provide theoretical background and present the most prominent achievements in the research on translation, interpretation, and audiovisual translation (AVT), highlighting the scholarly gaps in these areas, which provide opportunities for promising research undertakings. Sections 5 and 6 exemplify the application of interpersonal pragmatics to the analyses of non-prototypical interpreting and translation data, based on the empirical studies of Dayter (2021b) and Locher and Messerli (Locher 2020; Locher and Messerli 2020; Messerli and Locher 2021), respectively. The book finishes with abundant suggestions for future study projects presented in Section 7. As the authors indicate, each section constitutes a self-standing reference to a particular issue and thus can be read in isolation, although all the sections together form a unified narrative.

In the introductory chapter to this volume, the authors debunk the idea that translating pragmatic phenomena consists in establishing a straightforward source-to-target equivalence, and provide the rationale for embracing a more inclusive perspective on translation and interpretation. They advocate for accommodating a wide range of translation endeavours, such as oral simultaneous interpreting, subtitling, and signing, into research on translation. The methodological approach promoted by the authors rests on three pillars – *participation framework*, *relational work*, and *mediality*. The first two are characterised as important theoretical tenets, while the third one is an important aspect of translation data to be taken into consideration by the analyst. Mediality refers to modes of text perception, such as visual, audible, and kinesthetic (gesture in sign interpreting), as well as the interplay of different modalities which inevitably affects translation output. Participation framework is defined as a differentiation of the statuses and roles among the persons involved in interaction (e.g. speakers, bystanders, overhearers), which allows for insight into “participants’ alignment and orientation to the talk in progress” (p. 5). One of the cornerstone concepts is relational work, a term coined by Locher and Watts (2005) to propose a new approach to (im)politeness, which reflects the negotiation of relationships between communicators. Within this framework, language is taken to “acquire [...] meaning in context through negotiation of societal norms” (p. 5). The authors claim that adopting interpersonal pragmatics and relational work theories in translation studies promote higher descriptive accuracy in the analysis of fuzzy communicative phenomena such as politeness, although at the cost of simplicity and straightforwardness of application (compared to the classic Brown and Levinson’s (1987) strategic model still prevalent in translation studies). The goal of this work is to demonstrate the application of interpersonal pragmatics paradigm to translation research. The chapter rounds off with very practical indications on who each subsequent section is aimed at and which issues are tackled there.

Upon a brief scrutiny on the notion of translation together with the challenges of its definition, and a statement that Continental-European pragmatic tradition focusing on situated language use is going to be followed, Section 2 zooms in on written text translation. The first part of this chapter offers a concise overview of the existing pragmatic research in written translation and consists of the discussion of the main achievements in chronological order. The reader gets a glimpse at the selected works of importance, such as Hatim and Mason (1997), crucial for being the first positioning of translation as a communicative practice; and House (2006, 2015 among others), significant for the systematic study of context and its role in translation, as well as for the introduction of the notions of overt and covert translation. Morini’s (2013) focus on translation as a process is endorsed by the authors of the volume. Building upon

the current findings, the chapter unfolds with the discussion of participation framework and relational work issues massively neglected in the research on written translation. Thus, scholars are encouraged to turn their attention to participation structures and relevant contexts, embracing a target-audience-centred perspective informed by relevance-theoretic approach (e.g. Gutt 1998). In addition, the authors note that the issue of discursive construction of the relationship between the translators, readers, writers and texts (like, for instance, translator-reader politeness norms) has received virtually no scholarly attention, exceptions being the works of Sidiropoulou (2021) and Morini (2019), as well as several papers in *Pragmatics of Translation* (Locher and Sidiropoulou 2021), an issue heralding the expansion of contemporary politeness research in translation.

In the third section, the authors discuss the pragmatics of interpreting. The chapter is organised in the same fashion as Section 2, starting off with the overview of approaches to pragmatic research in interpreting and then focusing on the possibilities of adopting a participation-framework-oriented perspective. Such aspects as mediality, physical co-presence of speakers and interpreters, as well as temporal limitations put interpreting in need of a special attention of pragmatologists. Relevance-theoretic “interpretive resemblance” model (Gutt 1998) is described as one of the most influential, accommodated by Setton (2006) to simultaneous interpreting and applied by Mišković-Luković and Dedać (2012) in an empirical study. Deixis, reported speech, common ground, and politeness considerations reveal interesting observations in the selected studies presented in the chapter. The areas identified as underexplored are facework and mitigating politeness in simultaneous interpreting. Two of the few interpreting studies relying on relational work are reportedly Mapson (2015) and Mapson and Major (2021), based on Spencer-Oatey’s (2000) rapport-management model. Their findings reinforce the claim about the importance of adopting a contextually aware politeness approach.

Following the same structure, Section 4 deals with the studies of pragmatic phenomena in audiovisual translation (AVT). The scarce existing research on dubbing and subtitling allegedly lacks incorporation of context and recontextualisation considerations of the target text. A research trajectory suggested is the multidisciplinary investigation of the influence of a particular viewing situation and surrounding communicative settings on meaning making – an example of such a participation framework-based study is presented in Section 6. The chapter presents characteristic features of dubbing and subtitling and discusses politeness research done with respect to these types of translation, encouraging scholars to shift their approach from traditional focus on utterance tokens and incorporate interpersonal pragmatics, as well as

discursive frameworks, which would allow to investigate politeness phenomena in their dynamic nature.

Sections 5 and 6 report on two case studies which exemplify the application of interpersonal pragmatics framework to translation research. Section 5 presents a study on simultaneous interpreting of self-praise in international political discourse (Dayter 2021b). Among other practical aspects, it provides useful resources that can be used by researchers in the field, like the references for and even links to the existing corpora of simultaneous interpreting data available for analysis. Research questions and study design, theoretical foundation, data collection and analysis methods, as well as the discussion of findings are thoroughly explicated. A special focus is put on the considerations of mediality, participation structure, and relational work addressed in study questions.

The penultimate chapter demonstrates research on relational work in Korean drama translation (Locher 2020; Locher and Messerli 2020; Messerli and Locher 2021). In this study, the authors delve into the complex nature of Korean dramas fan subtitling and the challenges faced by translators in conveying culture-specific relational work and politeness nuances accurately. Interesting insights are revealed into how live comments contribute to the construction of meaning and interpretation, inviting the revision of the traditional understanding of translation.

Section 7, the concluding chapter, invites the adoption of a prototype-theoretic (Rosch 1973) conceptualization of translation and emphasises the need for further exploration in the field to address the evolving complexities of novel discourse translation. The authors offer an abundance of potential future directions for the study of pragmatics in translation, exemplifying them by concrete research questions with matching data types to be analysed. Thus, not only are the readers given practical advice on an interpersonal-pragmatic study design, but they are also equipped with ready-made research projects proposals.

The volume is well conceived in terms of its coherent structure, as well as innovative content. Some understanding of the basic concepts in linguistic pragmatics is presupposed by the authors, although the text should be accessible to the reader with an undergraduate-student level of expertise. I believe that the book under review will not only “encourage young scholars to tackle the research questions posed in Section 7” (p.3) but also promote a discussion about methodological implications of applying interpersonal pragmatics in translation studies, as well as inspire the search for new perspectives on and approaches to the analyses of state-of-the-art types of translation data among seasoned researchers alike.

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