

I-LanD Journal

Identity, Language and Diversity

Chief Editors: Giuditta Caliendo & Maria Cristina Nisco

Constructing Institutional Identity: Issues and Perspectives

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80128 Napoli - Italy
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R.E.A. NA 931959
+39 3248382362
www.loffredoeditore.com
paololoffredoeditore@gmail.com

- 3 Introduction. Constructing Institutional Identity: Issues and Perspectives
[Girolamo Tessuto - Jan Engberg]
- 8 Institutional Identity as Discourse: Explaining What We Are Made of
[Poul Erik Flyvholm Jørgensen]
- 25 Constructing Institutional Identity in Professional Practice: A Discourse Analysis of China's In-house Interpreters' Practice
[Yi Chen - Zhongwei Song]
- 52 The Web Construction of European Identities among Young People: The EU Teachers' Corner
[Sole Alba Zollo]
- 71 Political Identities Constructed on a Social Network: The Labour Party on Facebook Boards
[Marianna Lya Zummo]

Director: **Elisabetta Donadono**

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Introduction: Constructing Institutional Identity: Issues and Perspectives

Girolamo Tessuto

University of Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli"
girolamo.tessuto@unicampania.it

Jan Engberg

Aarhus University
je@cc.au.dk

The central concept envisaged by the guest editors of this thematic issue is identity construction activity performed within institutions.

As a socially and historically constructed concept that continues to have its uses, identity has been increasingly dealt with as a feature that is actively accomplished in discourse, reflecting on the issues of power, value systems and ideology that are inextricably linked to social and cultural identity, as well as on the extent to which the interaction between agency and social structure is defined by the context in which individuals find themselves. In our constantly changing world, different institutions (educational, business, legal, medical, media, etc.) of the modern day are now helping individuals 'to get things done' in identity-marking schemes, tying in with mechanisms of social life where institutional and complementary professional identities for their part are dynamically constructed, maintained and negotiated in discourse contexts of interpersonal communication.

Institutional Identity as Discourse: Explaining What We Are Made of

Poul Erik Flyvholm Jørgensen

Aarhus University

pj@cc.au.dk

Abstract

This conceptual paper explains how institutions can communicate desired images, and how analysts may analyse them, by proposing a distinct system for instantiating identity-driven discourse. The paper specifically illustrates how human values serve as contextual imperatives in an organisational identification process and thus facilitate the construction of narratives about institutional character in an effort to build credibility, strong reputation, legitimacy, and trust. The paper offers a detailed rhetorical model which allows organisational identity to be shaped into discrete forms of values discourse. The model takes inspiration from different approaches to identity and discourse from across research traditions to arrive at a blend of dimensions helpful in operationalising how organisations may verbalise what they are both made of and strive to achieve. In its current form, the model is a refinement of previous versions that were applied to a series of empirical studies to analyse and exemplify the real-life identity discourse of organisations from different sectors and genres.

Keywords

operational model, identity discourse, values, ethos, organisational identification

Constructing Institutional Identity in Professional Practice: A Discourse Analysis of China's In-house Interpreters' Practice

Yi Chen

Macquarie University
yichen@siit.nsw.edu.au

Zhongwei Song

Macquarie University
zhongwei.song@mq.edu.au

Abstract

This study investigates the institutional identity of Chinese government inhouse interpreters at work. Using systemic functional linguistics (SFL) to analyze the data of five interpreters collected from seven interpreting sessions of China's Two-Session Press Conference (CTSPC), it examines translational shifts associated with the interpersonal meaning between the source speech and target rendition, but with a focus on the attitudinal resources.

The findings indicate that the interpreters chose to position themselves in different interpersonal relationships. They consistently aligned themselves with the Chinese Premier, keeping the positivity of his speech by rendering its meaning more explicitly while neutralizing negative comments by overseas journalists on some damning issues. Despite reprimanding overtones of some overseas journalists, their interpretations are found somehow agreeable to Chinese audience and the Premier. The interpreters' institutional identity is indeed constructed by exercising social and professional roles in practice. Because of the need to travel between the two, they must balance themselves all the time in the tug of war. To this end, the best strategy, as discovered in this study, is to manipulate attitudinal resources.

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The Web Construction of European Identities among Young People: The EU Teachers' Corner

Sole Alba Zollo

University of Naples Federico II

solealba.zollo@unina.it

Abstract

One of the European Union's (EU) main challenges is how to bridge the knowledge gap between institutions and citizens. By using different media, in particular, the Internet, the EU has been designing a lot of informativematerial addressed to laypeople in order to promote interaction to construct European identities. By browsing the EU's website, you can find the Teachers' Corner, a webpage that contains a wide range of teaching resources aimed at explaining the European Union's main objectives and actions to students of different age groups. The analysis was conducted on a corpus collected from the Teachers' Corner website, which includes different text types – booklets, comics, and brochures – targeted to both teachers and students. By following a Multimodal Discourse Analysis approach, this study aims at exploring the different discursive strategies used to develop European consciousness among the young and promote the development of a shared sense of European identity.

Keywords

EU and young people, web construction of European identities, multimodal, discourse analysis

Political Identities Constructed on a Social Network: The Labour Party on Facebook Boards

Marianna Lya Zummo

University of Palermo

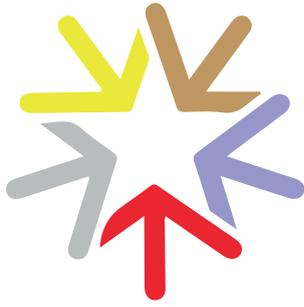
mariannalya.zummo@unipa.it

Abstract

This paper is concerned with how an (institutional) political identity is constructed on a Social Network (SN) wall, which represents the political identity of the party as designed in digital interactive contexts, and where political image constructions are eventually accepted or negotiated by the digital audience. Like other political parties, the Labour Party resorts to online platforms for official accounts and political message dissemination (Gerbaudo 2014; Boyd 2014) and constructs its (online) identity. Since interaction is seen (Baumann 2000; De Fina 2011) as the most important locus for the production of identities, this study looks at Facebook boards as interactional sites where the Party (the Opening Posts, OPs, Smithson et al. 2011) and the citizens (the threads resulting from comments and replies to OPs) produce political identities in discourse. The discursive constructions (Wodak 1996; Bamberg/ De Fina/Schiffrin 2011) are used by voters to identify with and respond to the political institution, mirroring or rejecting the political group identity. Posts, comments and replies posted in July 2018 on the page of the Labour Party are taken as examples of (group) identity construction and analysed quantitatively and qualitatively (Partington 2003; Reisigl/Wodak 2009), to find discursive practices and to show how group identities are negotiated.

Keywords:

discourse, identity, left-wing, online media, social networks.



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Translating and Interpreting Linguistic and Cultural Differences
in a Migrant Era

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- 3** Introduction: Translating and Interpreting Linguistic and Cultural Differences in a Migrant Era
[Eleonora Federici - María del Rosario Martín Ruano -
María del Carmen África Vidal Claramonte]
- 11** Fighting Inferiority: Negotiating Identity and Otherness
through (Self-)Translation
[Vanessa Leonardi]
- 23** Intercultural Cohesion in the Japanese-Italian *Netflix*
Subtitles: The Failure of Cultural Mediation
[Francesco Vitucci]
- 38** Censorship and Manipulation in the Italian Dubbing
of LGBT-Themed Series: An Analysis of *Will & Grace*
and *Modern Family*
[Giulia Magazzù]
- 52** Global(ised) Sexualities in the Mass Media: The Rewriting
of LGBT+ Identities in *Gaycation*
[Antonio J. Martínez Pleguezuelos]
- 65** Defining and Translating LGBT Identities: The EU Legal
and Institutional 'Viewpoint'
[Stefania D'Avanzo]
- 77** The *New Migration* Discourse: How Migrants Are Depicted
on the Web
[Rosita Maglie - Paolo Orrù]
- 94** Translating Migration in the Visual Arts: *Calais Children* and
Project#RefugeeCameras as Collaborative Counter Narratives
[Alessandra Rizzo]
- 117** The Role of Non-Professional Translators and Interpreters
in Emergency Migratory Settings: A Southern Translocal
Perspective
[Annarita Taronna]
- 133** Migration and Translation: Changing Concepts, Critical
Approaches. An Interview with Doris Bachmann-Medick
[Doris Bachmann-Medick - Eleonora Federici]

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Introduction: Translating and Interpreting Linguistic and Cultural Differences in a Migrant Era

Eleonora Federici

University of Ferrara, Italy
eleonora.federici@unife.it

María del Rosario Martín Ruano

University of Salamanca, Spain
mrmr@usal.es

María del Carmen África Vidal Claramonte

University of Salamanca, Spain
africa@usal.es

In Metamorphoses (2002), Rosi Braidotti argues that those who do not like complexities cannot possibly feel at home in the third millennium; and in Transpositions (2006) she expands this idea with the notion of

“transposition”, a term which indicates (Braidotti 2006: 7): An intertextual, cross-boundary or transversal transfer, in the sense of a leap from one code, field or axis into another, not merely in the quantitative mode of plural multiplications, but rather in the qualitative sense of complex multiplicities. It is not just a matter of weaving together different strands, variations on a theme [...], but rather of playing the positivity of difference as a specific theme of its own.

Transpositions are in-between spaces “of zigzagging and of crossing: nonlinear, but not chaotic; nomadic, yet accountable and committed; creative but also cognitively valid; discursive and also materially embedded – it is coherent without falling into instrumental rationality” (Braidotti 2006: 7). “Trans-” implies translation, movement, a nonunitary, complex, paradoxical and contradictory vision of life.

This is, one could say, the main aim of this monographic issue

Fighting Inferiority: Negotiating Identity and Otherness through (Self-)Translation

Vanessa Leonardi

University of Ferrara, Italy

vanessa.leonardi@unife.it

Abstract

In an increasingly multilingual and multicultural world, more and more people live in-between cultures and languages. Migrant literature is a means through which people can express their feelings of loss and gain, exile and belonging and, more specifically, people can find their own true identity.

*Some immigrant writers may decide to write in a different language from their mother tongue for several different reasons. Eva Hoffman, for example, is a case of self-translation where the writer, who is a native Polish, decides to write in English, her adopted language. This shift from one language to another and from a culture to another serves the purpose of building a new identity, an identity which strives to fight her inferior status of immigrant and makes her more suitable for the new environment in which she is living. The aim of this work is to explore the deep connections between language, culture and individual identity. Firstly, the connection between translation and migration will be investigated to show how these two phenomena are linked through the practice of self-translation. Secondly, this paper will attempt to explore how language(s) and culture(s) shape identities through a text analysis of Eva Hoffman's novel *Lost in Translation*.*

Keywords

(self-)translation, immigration, identity, self, otherness

Intercultural Cohesion in the Japanese-Italian Netflix Subtitles: The Failure of Cultural Mediation

Francesco Vitucci

University of Bologna, Italy
francesco.vitucci@unibo.it

Abstract

This study presents a preliminary survey carried out on Netflix in 2018 with a special focus on six Japanese TV series subtitled in Italian. The survey has identified some common categories of intercultural impasses and shows how the lack of intercultural cohesion observed in Italian subtitles is primarily due to underestimating both the mono- and micro-cultural elements present in the source texts. The observations produced by this study lead to in-depth reflections on the qualitative characteristics of current Japanese-Italian interlinguistic subtitling. Considering that the skopos of the translations on paid streaming platforms such as Netflix is the ability to meet the requirements of a general audience, one not necessarily familiar with the Japanese culture, then high-quality translations together with adequate semantic coherence able to ensure a clear use of the translated texts should always be the prerequisites of any interlinguistic audio-visual subtitling. This is important to prevent intercultural inconsistencies that risk corroborating and validating stereotypes or being denied the pleasure of discovery that underlies the audio-visual experience.

Keywords

intercultural cohesion, interlinguistic subtitling, loan word, ethnocentrism

Censorship and Manipulation in the Italian Dubbing of LGBT-Themed Series: An Analysis of Will & Grace and Modern Family

Giulia Magazzù

“Gabriele d’Annunzio” University of Chieti-Pescara, Italy

giulia.magazzu1@gmail.com

giulia.magazzu@unich.it

Abstract

The manipulation and censorship of sensitive materials in audiovisual translation studies have attracted the interest of a number of scholars over the last few years. It has been argued that the presence of LGBT characters is still rather rare in Italian TV series and films; gay issues are less mainstream on Italian TV than in the UK and USA, and the gay lexicon is not shared by the general population (Ranzato 2012). Thus, the aim of this paper is to analyse the Italian dubbing of two American TV series, Will & Grace and Modern Family, chosen because they treat homosexuality without having only a gayoriented target. After a brief overview of the available literature on the dubbing of potentially disturbing items, including references to sex and homosexuality, the series will be presented along with the corpus used for our analysis. Then, the Italian dubbed dialogues will be analysed, in order to detect instances of actual censorship and cases of manipulation in the translation of references to sexual orientation or roles. The analysis will also try to demonstrate whether the lexical imbalance between English and Italian plays a role in the translation of sexual orientation terms and of expressions of dysphemism for homosexuality. Overall, our analysis aims at exploring whether the Italian dubbed versions have the potential to promote a change in the stereotypes of homosexuality.

Keywords

dubbing, LGBT, manipulation

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Global(ised) Sexualities in the Mass Media: The Rewriting of LGBT+Identities in Gaycation

Antonio J. Martínez Pleguezuelos

Complutense University of Madrid, Spain
antmar17@ucm.es

Abstract

This paper analyses how global LGBT+ identities have been translated in the documentary series Gaycation. Firstly, we will examine the influence of international information flows on the shaping of sexual minorities and their exposure as a community to different degrees of homogenisation and uniformity on a global scale. Based on the conclusions obtained, we will approach translation as an ideal way to observe the discourse mechanisms at play in the building of sexual identities in the linguistic and cultural transfer that takes place during the rewriting of texts produced in mass media. We will look at specific examples in the case of the documentary series Gaycation, comparing the information shown in the original version in English and in the version dubbed into Spanish.

Keywords:

translation, globalisation, mass media, LGBT+, gaycation

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Defining and Translating LGBT Identities: The EU Legal and Institutional 'Viewpoint'

Stefania D'Avanzo

University of Campania Luigi Vanvitelli, Italy

stefania.davanzo@unicampania.it

Abstract

The aim of the study is to analyse discourse and translation practices concerning transgender issues from a legal perspective. In particular, attention will be focused on the lexical choices adopted by the EU to define LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) identities. Definitions, alongside with adjectives and adverbials, are functional to the expression of evaluations of reality. In the study, the main goal will be to focus on the ideological EU 'viewpoint' concerning the promotion of LGBT rights. In a corpus including some legal provisions in the time span 2010–2017, the adoption of different phrases applied to LGBT people and some different co-textual lexical choices will be taken into account in the English and Italian versions with the final aim to investigate European ideologies when promoting LGBT rights.

Keywords

transgender rights, EU ideologies, translation procedures, standardization

The New Migration Discourse: How Migrants Are Depicted on the Web

Rosita Maglie

University of Bari Aldo Moro, Italy

rosita.maglie@uniba.it

Paolo Orrù

University of Debrecen, Hungary

paolo.orrù1@gmail.com

Abstract

This study addresses the United Nations Migration Agency's online platform 'I am a migrant' (IAAM) to investigate the discursive and multimodal representation of migrants. The corpus analysed consists of migrants' narratives in English and Italian, as well as of their pictures found on IAAM. The written representation of migrants is investigated through a cross-linguistic corpus-assisted discourse studies approach (Baker et al. 2008). In addition, pictures are analysed using multimodal discourse analysis, based on the work of Machin and Mayr (2012) and Ledin and Machin (2018). The discourse on migration taken from this platform counters the dominant discourse of politics and the media, which attaches migrants labels such as violent, desperate and illiterate. By contrast, IAAM proves to be a major resource to support the promotion of accurate and human terminology which goes beyond the excessively general, unfair and incorrect categorisation of migration as a threat, a plague or a plight in order to recognise, respect and re-humanise the subjectivities of individual migrants. A new discourse emerges from the IAAM platform, which is free from the constraints of ordinary discourse, where other people (e.g., politicians, journalists, etc.) usually speak on behalf of migrants. Instead, the platform gives voice to individual migrants who are finally able to show their own face and give their own side of the story.

Keywords

biographies, pictures, corpus-assisted discourse studies, critical multimodal, discourse analysis, English, Italian

Translating Migration in the Visual Arts: Calais Children and Project#RefugeeCameras as Collaborative Counter Narratives

Alessandra Rizzo

Università degli Studi di Palermo, Italy
alessandra.rizzo@unipa.it

Abstract

This study investigates the modalities through which the migrant crisis is portrayed in the creative artistic sector while accelerating the spread of political participatory and activist movements in the areas of subtitling and amateur translation. Participation and activism have stimulated the sphere of translation that has been acting as an important stimulus for the international mushrooming of artistic creativities on public spaces and digital platforms, and also for a different political and cultural reframing of the migrant crisis. 21st-century mobility has made translation a crucial device for the negotiation of linguacultural transactions within cultural institutions, public spaces and digital contexts through a variety of media, genres and discourses. While acquiring an increasingly metaphorical significance within and across domains, translation has become the instrument by means of which knowledge is produced, shared and put into practice. Meanwhile, collaborative communities are contributing to the spread of non-professional translation practices within digital frameworks that function through crowdsourcing platforms (Jiménez-Crespo 2017). Drawing on recent research on narrative theory in translating dissent (Baker 2016) and issues of (re) narration in translation studies (Baker 2014), this study is based on the analysis of Sue Clayton's documentary Calais Children: A Case to Answer (2016) and Kevin McElvaney's exhibition Project#RefugeeCameras (2015) from the perspective of Michael Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics, as well as according to audiovisual translation strategies. These works are looked at as artistic counter narratives, where most attention is given to the ideological and structural diversities between misleading news reporting and the narrative modalities employed in the visual arts as digital audiovisual interventions for the construction of migration, which can potentially give rise to discourses of translation for dissent and protest, where migrant repertoires can emerge with a greater sense of authenticity.

Keywords

crowdsourcing, amateur translation, collaboration, migration, systemic functional linguistics, the visual arts

The Role of Non-Professional Translators and Interpreters in Emergency Migratory Settings: A Southern Translocal Perspective

Annarita Taronna

University of Bari Aldo Moro

annarita.taronna@uniba.it

Abstract

Migration involves the intense circulation of peoples, goods and cultures as well as, less explicitly, hierarchical and hegemonic power relations between territories and their inhabitants. Languages, and the borders they establish, are essential to such movements and relations. But no language is innocent or neutral, because it reflects and structures our ideology and worldviews.

This is particularly easy to observe when taking into consideration the practice of language mediation across the Mediterranean routes, where migration flows and transnational interests are leading to new models of contacts between people with different linguistic and cultural heritages thus problematising our traditional understanding of language as a social projection of territorial unity held together by shared behavioural norms, beliefs and values. More specifically, the main theoretical goal here is to challenge the boundaries of translation and interpreting theory and practice and move beyond the traditional concepts and forms of professional practices, ethics, and language ideologies. Against this background, this paper reports on a research project that involved conducting interviews with several volunteer interpreters, translators and language mediators who have worked with newly-arrived migrants in Southern Italy, and attempts to explore the intersections between the language mediator's role and agency, local practices, and politics and ethics of hospitality. To this end, interview questions addressed a range of issues concerning trust, empathy, solidarity, hospitality, conflict, denial, testimony, and communitarian objectivity that simultaneously focused on how the politics and ethics of hospitality is contingent upon local practices and how the language mediator acts in vulnerable situations (e.g., ferries, camps, conflict zones, reception and detention centres).

Keywords

translation, migration, activism, community

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Migration and Translation: Changing Concepts, Critical Approaches. An Interview with Doris Bachmann-Medick

Doris Bachmann-Medick

International Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture (GCSC)
Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany
doris.bachmann-medick@qcsc.uni-giessen.de

Eleonora Federici

University of Ferrara, Italy
eleonora.federici@unife.it

Introduction

Migration and translation are two major issues of contemporary life and are recurrent themes in theoretical and critical thought across many disciplines. Language practices in migratory times go beyond the level of linguistic and communicative activity and make us aware of the power of language, translation, mutual understanding and social/political/cultural practices. In order to better understand the challenges and potentials facing us as interpreters, translators or scholars in Translation Studies we need to move beyond our disciplinary borders and open the discipline up to new perspectives and methodologies. Starting from these premises we believe that Doris Bachmann-Medick's work on migration and translation is central for a critical rethinking of the role of translation, translators, interpreters and cultural mediators in a period of massive migrations towards Western Europe. The interview proposes a new approach for studying, researching and working with linguistic/cultural translation in an era of transnational movements and displacements.

Keywords

translation, self-translation, migration, framing, Actor-Network theory