



# I-LanD Journal

## Identity, Language and Diversity

Chief Editors: Giuditta Caliendo & Maria Cristina Nisco

Translating and Interpreting Linguistic and Cultural Differences  
in a Migrant Era

**I-LanD Journal**  
peer-reviewed  
bi-annual journal  
n. 2/2019 - December 2019

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R.E.A. NA 931959  
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Authorisation n. 60 issued by the Court of Naples on 20/12/2016

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

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*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

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### 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

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### 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

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### 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

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

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### 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'

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### 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

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### 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

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### 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. 21<sup>st</sup>-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

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### 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

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### 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*