

---

*Translation in the Global Village.* Christina Schäffner (ed.). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 2000, 69 pp.

---

*Translation in the Global Village* is a collection of articles edited by Christina Schäffner. It attempts to draw attention to the recent advancements in technology in communication as well as to the 'buzz word', Globalisation, present in most social sciences debates and in the media today.

The book has a special organisation, opening with an introduction by Schäffner, the editor: "Globalisation, Communication, Translation". In this introduction, she contributes stimulating and provocative ideas to further debates concerning the matter. Following that, there comes a paper by Snell-Hornby, "Communicating in the Global Village: On Language, Translation and Cultural Identity", putting forward her expert views on the topic under discussion, namely the effects of modernity in political, social and economic aspects of society and the role of Internet and globalisation. This is the central

chapter of the book in that the remaining sections are developed in response to it. Around those ideas, a debate is held, with each of the contributors presenting their different perspectives.

The debate is organised around topics dealing with language, the way cultural identities are constructed, hybrid texts as products of new developments, international English, and the changing profession of translation and translator training. After the debate, there are six responses to Snell-Hornby's chapter. Finally, Snell-Hornby makes her concluding comments on the responses to her paper. Such topics are extensively discussed, in a thought provoking manner. The common concern of the contributors in this volume is with the implications and consequences of the so called McEnglish, that is, this new hybrid language resulting from global relationships, having the American culture as the central referent.

The six responses to Snell-Hornby's article are presented in sequence, each constituting a separate chapter. In general, they are concerned with the role of translators in this new 'McWorld' and also with the need to be

stylistically conscious of the variety of English for translation nowadays. Anderman's contribution is particularly interesting in the sense that this author makes a distinction between the use of a McEnglish for specific purposes and its use for literary purposes. While Anderman claims legitimacy for the former, for example, for technology, the use of McEnglish is refuted for the latter, because 'English is not only at the forefront of scientific and technological knowledge but also leads consumer culture' (p. 48). On the other hand, 'English shows signs of resistance to literature in translation' (p. 49). Hale's article focuses on the communicative aspect of language and the threat English has suffered in the modern world. The author also points out the paradox of living in a world which is falling apart and is coming together at the same moment. Hale refers here to the danger of technology, which serves to marginalise 'millions in lesser developed countries' and also to the danger of constructing cultural stereotypes. Munday's contribution focuses on the practical implications of the matters raised in Snell-Hornby's paper for the translator. He

'endorses' her view of the translator as a 'homo-communicator' in today's world and favours the idea that translators seem to live in a world which is hybrid by virtue of linguistic and cultural 'in-betweenness' and also by the 'ever-shifting role translators play in their contact with others' (p. 59). Newmark's article focuses on two issues of Snell-Honby's paper: the nature of translation and the role of universities in translator training and Salama-Carr's paper focuses on the discussion of cultural identity in relation to the concepts of globalisation and tribalism when applied to Translation Studies.

Among the contributions in the book, Zlateva's stands out in that, taking a wider perspective on the issue, she goes beyond the idea of globalisation and tribalism affecting the English language and the role of the translator. She states the importance of the translator as a mediator in this process of globalisation. She also points out the need to reflect upon existing cultural and political types and stereotypes so as to cast a new look upon such categories and promote their disappearance. To my view, this is the most relevant comment concerning the translation process

and its political implication in the globalisation era.

In general terms, *Translation in the Global Village* is a good introduction on the topic of globalisation and translation for translation scholars, graduate students and professional translators, in the sense that it helps to reflect upon the complexities of this phenomenon and 'its subtle interweaving of power politics, ideology and identities' (as Snell-Hornby puts it in her concluding response) and what all this involves for the translator. It constitutes a stimulating supplementary reading.

However, there are some points I would like to have seen discussed, mainly related to the political consequences of translation and to ideology in translation. Ideology is here taken in terms of discourse, as Chauy (1980, in Coulthard & Caldas-Coulthard, *Tradução: Teoria e Prática*, p. 48) defines it, as 'the intention of erasing differences in thinking, saying and being'. In other words, I would like to have seen a clearer interest in the political impact of globalisation upon Translation Studies as well as a discussion of the inequality of languages and the asymmetrical

power relations between cultures in the global village. Another topic I missed was a discussion of the flux of translation in the global context: as Cheyftz (1991, p.112) has pointed out, 'from its beginnings the imperialist mission is, in short, one of translation: the translation of the "other" into the terms of the empire', this "empire" here understood as the USA. It seems to me that my expectations are legitimate in view of the purposes clearly stated in the introduction to the book. By no means am I saying that close attention to linguistic detail in an attempt to explain political agendas is unimportant. In fact, as pointed out by France (2000, p. 24), "the kind of close attention to linguistic detail that we find in the work of writers such as Mason [and I would add of the writers in this book] becomes a prerequisite to any successful promotion of a cultural agenda." The point is that the emphasis on the linguistic aspects of translation and the role of the translator and translation training end up pushing the wider political issues to a peripheral position, which has left this reader somewhat frustrated.

Sinara de Oliveira Branco  
UFSC