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Editorial

Issues relating to minorities have long been a theme of interest to *JoSTrans*. Issue 10 (July 2008), for instance, devoted a full section to translation in Slovenia and translation matters relating to languages of limited diffusion are present in virtually every issue. Debbie Folaron, with this issue entitled “Translation and minority: lesser-used and lesser-translated languages and cultures,” brings it fully to the fore. She has selected an extensive array of papers, contrasting not only in respect of the languages and cultures that they introduce, but also wide-ranging from the point of view of the fields they encompass: audiovisual translation (Deckert, Fernández Torné and Matamala), technology and translation (Mikhailov; Wandera), translation training (Dilāns), political translation (Sanatifar), community and dialect translation (DePaula and Filgueiras; Hall) and postcolonial translation (Caño). To close this diverse display, an article of the localisation of birds (Weisshaupt) offers to extend the principles of localisation to bird songs, which is certainly a lesser-translated language. Three interviews are also presented: one, in written form, relates directly to the theme of this special issue: Julie Brittain and Marguerite MacKenzie discuss the role of language and translation in ethnically endangered communities from diverse backgrounds. The other two, in video form, highlight the challenges of legal translation in a European context (Agnès Charbin interviewed by Aleksandra Čavoški) and the fast-developing world of audiovisual translation (Daniel Pigeon interviewed by Lucile Desblache).

The choice of articles mentioned above shows the crucial and multifaceted function of translation as gatekeeper of linguistic and cultural diversity in the 21st century. Debbie Folaron does not just highlight through her selection of papers what is lost when a language goes silent, but the role that translation can play in relation to multilingualism, or loss of it, to visibility of the lesser-used languages, to technologies and to community building. As we know, languages are not the only species that is endangered on our planet and the correlation between loss of wild life habitat and decrease in language diversity is strongly evidenced (Loh and Harmon 2014). Both relate to domination. The haemorrhaging of non-human life forms is mirroring the impoverishment of cultural diversity. As global companies make decisions that ensure a more permanent and often destructive human domination, we often feel powerless. Yet as linguists, and more specifically, as mediators, interpreters and translators, we have the power to ensure that the mutual intelligibility that defines language is nurtured through translation in all its forms.

Lucile Desblache

Reference

Loh, Jonathan and David Harmon (2014) *Biocultural Diversity. Threatened Species, Endangered Languages*. Report commissioned by the WWF Netherlands, http://d2ouvy59p0dg6k.cloudfront.net/downloads/biocultural_report_june_2014.pdf (consulted 15.04.2015).