

Teng, M. & Zhang, X. (2023). [Review of the book *Exploring the Translatability of Emotions: Cross-Cultural and Transdisciplinary Encounters*, by S. Petrilli & M. Ji]. *Linguistica Antverpiensia, New Series: Themes in Translation Studies*, 22, 184–187

Petrilli, S., & Ji, M. (Eds.). (2022). *Exploring the Translatability of Emotions: Cross-Cultural and Transdisciplinary Encounters*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-91748-7> (pp.518)

With an ever-growing flood of multimodal ensembles in the multimedia era, translation studies embrace more possibilities, and new approaches expand our understanding of translation concepts and practices (Chen, 2022: 90). In this context, translation studies from the perspective of semiotics, which originated from Jacobson's notion of intersemiotic translation and Peircean semiotics, have garnered burgeoning scholarly attention. *Exploring the Translatability of Emotions: Cross-Cultural and Transdisciplinary Encounters* co-edited by Susan Petrilli and Meng Ji, aims to offer insightful studies investigating relationship between emotions and translation from a semiotic perspective. The contributors to this book expound upon Peirce's sign triads and typologies, melding their contributions with realms as diverse as pragmatist philosophy, logic, and phenomenology. This endeavor is resolute in its exploration of novel dimensions within the domains of semiotics and translation studies, ushering in intellectual horizons heretofore uncharted.

The book begins with an introduction by Susan Petrilli as Chapter 1, which offers an overview of the theoretical basis, overall architecture, general sense and topics addressed in each chapter to acquaints its readers with the key themes and viewpoints of the book. Then the book is divided into four parts. Part 1 encompasses four illuminating articles (Chapters 2 to 5) which discuss topics relating to the translatability of emotions. Chapter 2 by Susan Petrilli and Augusto Ponzio attempts to address the problem of whether emotions are private or can be rendered public. Investigating the question from the perspective of the relation between emotion, interpretation and translation, philosophers of language and semioticians interrogate the prejudice that emotions are private and affirm their translatability. Chapter 3 by Winfried Nöth extends the exploration by categorizing emotions as legisigns, rendering them translatable, while sensations and feelings are assigned to sinsigns and qualisigns respectively, implying their inherent resistance to translation. However, feelings too are signs in spite of their “untranslatability”. In Chapter 4, Lucia Santaella examines “feeling” more closely under the guidance of Perniola’s theory of feeling and develops the logical argument that instead of being a monolith, feelings break up into a multitude of variations all intertwined with distinct emotions. Thus, this chapter underscores the need for meticulous conceptual scrutiny to prevent analytical and practical misinterpretations. Then, Jacques Fontanille, in Chapter 5, employs Greimasian semiotics to prove the translatability of emotions, hinging on the interplay between emotion, passion, action, and the semiotic theory of narrativity. A series of informative diagrams are presented in this chapter to illuminate the relationship between translation and four primary action regimes, which include (1) decryption and intersubjective/social communication; (2) sensorimotor burying and rhythmic coordination/synchronization of body actions; (3) deictic identification, distribution, and hierarchies of relative positions in the semiosphere (Me/you/he; us/them,

Teng, M. & Zhang, X. (2023). [Review of the book *Exploring the Translatability of Emotions: Cross-Cultural and Transdisciplinary Encounters*, by S. Petrilli & M. Ji]. *Linguistica Antverpiensia, New Series: Themes in Translation Studies*, 22, 184–187

he/that); (4) scene representation which opens to the question of interaction, thematization, and distribution of roles on a shared scenario.

Part 2, entitled “Speaking Emotions Listening to the Body and to Others”, consists of three chapters and delves into exploring the dialogical relation of social emotions to the body and to others. Chapter 6 by Alphonso Lingis regards social emotions not only as responses to others, but also a form of discourse, amplifying their significance as pivotal cultural phenomena. This chapter examines the relation of emotions to language and expatiates the viewpoint of the emotions as cultural-linguistic constructions, while Elise Bisanz in Chapter 7 embarks on an exploration of social emotions' interconnectedness with the body, viewing them as cultural artifacts from a biological perspective. After investigating the role of sensation, feeling, and emotion in the modeling of human reasoning processes, Chapter 7 establishes parallels between the Default Mode Network and Pierce’s concepts of Musement and Pure Play. Subsequently, in Chapter 8, Wayne Cristaudo presents an account of two contrastive philosophical ways and criticizes the belief that we know the laws that govern a given totality, or, in other words, the “know-all” position of “idea-ism”, advocating for a dialogical philosophy that assumes the interplay between emotional, cultural and historical realities.

Part 3, “Becoming Conscious of Emotions and Social Conditioning”, comprises three chapters (9 to 11), moves into the investigation of specific types of social emotions underlining social interactions at both the community and individual levels. Chapter 9 by Vincent M. Colapietro explores how feelings of self-regard, a special range of social emotions, are illuminated by Pierce’s approach. This chapter underscores the political significance of self-regard, drawing insights from John Dewey and Stanley Cavell. Specifically, this chapter emphasizes the detrimental consequences of disregarded selves for fostering robust democratic deliberation and debate. Several basic concepts related to impoliteness, another special subset of social emotions, including speech act, non-verbal communication, emotion and cross-cultural impoliteness, are discussed in Chapter 10 by Frank Nuessel, which points out that impolite behavior, whether intentional or unintentional, may cause long-lasting effects and abiding emotional harm. Richard L. Lanigan in Chapter 11 analyzes facially expressed human emotions through the lenses of communicology, phenomenology, and semiotics, highlighting the central position of “face recognition software” in today’s global digital world and pondering the ethical and political ramifications in contemporary communication frameworks.

The last part, “Expressing Emotions Between Mass-Medial and Rhetorical Figures”, comprising Chapters 12, 13 and 14, touches upon the expressibility of emotions from the perspective of translation and mass-medial. As the concluding part, these three chapters bring the theme back to translation and semiotics, which are centered on translation of emojis, transmedial translation of emotions and economic approach to the rhetoric of translation respectively. In Chapter 12, Marcel Danesi demonstrates the emotive functions of

Teng, M. & Zhang, X. (2023). [Review of the book *Exploring the Translatability of Emotions: Cross-Cultural and Transdisciplinary Encounters*, by S. Petrilli & M. Ji]. *Linguistica Antverpiensia, New Series: Themes in Translation Studies*, 22, 184–187

emoji with a special focus on emoji's theoretical and practical meaning. Peeter Torop in Chapter 13 navigates emotional translation within the realm of transmediality, categorizing it into three types, i.e. general transmediality, database transmediality and target-oriented transmediality. Douglas Robinson in Chapter 14, bridges language and economics, examining social emotions' role in behavioral economics and their unifying influence on translation and rhetoric.

The major strongpoint of this book lies in its enthusiastic adoption of interdisciplinary perspectives, which collectively cast a comprehensive gaze upon emotional translation from myriad angles. Embracing contributions from scholars across diverse disciplines including semiotics, linguistics, sociology, the book assumes an expansive interdisciplinary vantage, fostering a rich tapestry of insights. Second, the studies in this book meticulously employ various semiotic branches, including interpretive semiotics, philosophical semiotics, cultural semiotics, biological semiotics, and global semiotics to enrich and develop “semiotics of translation”. In addition, studies in this book explore the symbolic relationship between verbal and nonverbal symbols, as well as the features of transmodal and intermedial semiosis from the perspective of semiotics, which are conducive to promoting the in-depth interdisciplinary development of translation and semiotics.

However, there is still a long way to go for interdisciplinary translation studies, including studies related to “semiotics of translation” in this book, which are mainly theoretical reflections rather than providing solutions to specific translation problems. It could be regarded as a point for departure for scholars interested in this area and it is hoped there will be more in-depth studies in the near future. Furthermore, there is a lack of uniformity in the formatting of the front matter. Notably, Part 2 is the only part featuring an illustrative image on its front matter, whereas the remaining three parts lack such visual aids. To establish coherence and facilitate readers' grasp of each new part, it could be advantageous to incorporate illustrative images consistently throughout. Moreover, there is a disparity in citation formatting, as evidenced by instances on pages 74 and 434.

In a nutshell, as part of the Palgrave Studies in Translating and Interpreting series, the book is a valuable contribution to the study of emotions and translation in today's multicultural and mediocratic world. Its intrinsic value transcends disciplinary boundaries, resonating with scholars and students vested in translation, interpreting, semiotics, and diverse fields. This thought-provoking book provides a fruitful discussion on translatability of emotions from multifarious standpoints, prompting contemplation of the ethical and political implications of emotional translation.

Teng, M. & Zhang, X. (2023). [Review of the book *Exploring the Translatability of Emotions: Cross-Cultural and Transdisciplinary Encounters*, by S. Petrilli & M. Ji]. *Linguistica Antverpiensia, New Series: Themes in Translation Studies*, 22, 184–187

References

Chen, X. (2022). Exploring the Translation–development Interactions from an Emergent Semiotic Perspective: A Case Study of the Greater Bay Area. *Linguistica Antverpiensia, New Series: Themes in Translation Studies*, 21, 85-105.

Mei Teng

Ocean University of China, China

tmei@ouc.edu.cn

Xiaoyi Zhang

Ocean University of China, China

m15902918176@163.com