Introduction

Crisis Translation beyond Words into Action

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INTRODUCTION

Translating in and for crisis settings presents considerable challenges. First, crisis translation happens in contexts where words are only partial signifiers since the message may be multimodal in composition and delivery. Second, perception of risks, cultural and societal norms, and education levels increase the obstacles to receiving, accepting and acting on information. Third, during the response phase of a crisis, communicators themselves – including translators and interpreters – may be living through the crisis and are therefore potentially operating at physical, emotional and cognitive breaking points. Fourth, embedded systemic inequalities in access to information and infrastructure widen the distance between senders and receivers of messages.

The ambiguous title of this volume, *Translating Crises*, captures the chaotic and challenging context of crisis communication in multilingual contexts. As a title, it shows how the subject of study, translating in crisis contexts, also happens to become the object of study, attempting to understand how crises overturn any standard conceptualizations of translation itself. In this chapter, we wrangle with these pulls in multiple directions with the primary aim of emphasizing that accommodating language needs in crises must be better understood and implemented. The field deserves more studies – quantitative and qualitative – needs more interdisciplinary research and is expected to go through trial and error before finding common ground among research communities and professional communities. The chapters in this volume contribute, through multiple lenses, to our increasing understanding of how translation really matters in crisis communication.

We are convinced that crisis translation is a risk reduction tool (Federici and O'Brien, 2020), and this is a theme that we seek to push home in our Introduction. In five sections, we expand on our previous operational definition of 'crisis translation… as any form of linguistic and cultural transmission of messages that enable access to information during an emergency, regardless of the medium' (Federici et al., 2019a: 247) to foreground the role of translation and interpreting in other phases of crises. In the first section of our Introduction, we will reflect on the critical gaps in accommodating the language needs of multilingual communities. In the second section, we will focus on current crisis translation practices and procedures; these will be discussed in terms of risk communication as connected to policies and principles of emergency management. In the third section,

we will reflect on the contexts, actors, experiences and studies presented in the volume. We then move to advocating for change now and in the future. Our concluding remarks will focus on the urgent need for radical, diverse and extensive studies on translation in cascading crises in the hope that such studies will lead to concrete and positive change.

CRISIS TRANSLATION: CRITICAL GAPS

This book builds on our previous work (O'Brien and Federici, 2020; Federici and O'Brien, 2020) and that of others (Alexander and Pescaroli, 2019; Federici and Declercq, 2020; Piller, Zhang and Li, 2020; Pyle, 2018). The umbrella term 'crisis translation' aims to intensify discussion and debate on the essential role of translation and interpreting in the broader fields of crisis communication (Coombs and Holladay, 2012; Reynolds and Seeger, 2005; Schwarz, Seeger and Auer, 2016), crisis and emergency risk communication (Reynolds and Lutfy, 2018), and crisis/disaster management sectors (see Coppola, 2020). The volume itself can be differentiated from previous work according to several dimensions – temporal, in relation to the phases of a crisis, or the life cycle of a disaster that is considered; geographical, in relation to the local, regional, national, international or global scale of the crises discussed; and modal, taking into account additional modes of communication. Our initial motivation for this work remains, however, as before: to improve the situation from both a practical and scholarly perspective.

We return to our previous statement that 'crisis translation considers language barriers in the context of multi-dimensional cascading effects that widen existing vulnerabilities or engender new ones by means of miscommunication' (O'Brien and Federici, 2020: 131). We want to amend the reference to 'language barriers' – we should only talk about 'languages'. As languages are merely a natural state of humankind, the barriers are artificial, social constructs. Undeniably, forms of prejudice that affect phonic and non-phonic languages (e.g. sign languages, Makaton) differ. Nevertheless, these prejudices all create impediments to engaging with speakers of *other* languages, of *multiple* or *rare* languages, or different sign systems (in the case of sign languages and Makaton). These socially constructed barriers risk becoming systematic paradigms of exclusion in humanitarian operations, risk reduction campaigns and, as the COVID-19 pandemic showed, global disasters – aptly termed disaster linguicism (Uekusa, 2019). The perception of languages as barriers emerges from viewing 'both language and culture in monolithic and reifying terms' (Ndhlovu, 2016: 141), generating what is known as the monolingual mindset (Clyne, 2008; Gogolin, 1997): people (should) speak one main language. This mindset is widespread, pervasive and often financially driven (language services are expensive), thus affecting perception of one's own language (it is not 'useful'), language learning (it is difficult) and multilingualism (it is costly, unnecessary; life would be simpler without it). In other words, the monolingual mindset poses limitless threats to disaster management in increasingly multicultural societies, in traditionally multilingual regions and in dealing with people displacement.

The monolingual mindset means that the need for translators and interpreters is regularly not recognized until the moment when it becomes apparent that it was a failure to not engage with multilingualism. The solution to this frequently involves ad hoc plans for recruiting local bilinguals to provide translation and interpreting services, but it is coupled with a general misunderstanding of what translators and interpreters do or what they should be expected to do. Talented bilinguals may be recruited, but they may have

to work without any glossary, terminological resources, dictionaries or even written text with a standardized graphic representation. They (including professional translators or interpreters) may not be afforded physical protection when working in hazardous environments. They will most likely not have access to trauma counselling, despite the fact that they are often expected to listen to and reproduce the horrific traumas that others have experienced. In a world where natural, biochemical and technological hazards are evolving, and risk is often increasing, leading to increasing numbers of displaced people, the monolingual mindset that involves last minute, ad hoc arrangements for language access amounts to reductivism that must be strongly opposed.

At the time of publication, the world will have experienced a global crisis of unprecedented scale for at least twenty-four months. Strangely, we cannot yet predict when, or if, this crisis will end. Our collective experience means that we are now much more alert to, and much better informed about, the importance of translation and interpreting in crisis risk communication, preparedness and response. Although this book is not about the COVID-19 pandemic, many of the chapters touch on the topic and present learning and observations based on the experience of this global crisis. The pandemic experience made us reconsider our conceptualization of crisis translation. Future proofing our societies against the ever-changing hazards of the twenty-first century, while attempting to reverse, or slow down, climate change and its human-caused cascading effects, ought to be a priority (Dominelli, 2021). The collective experience of the pandemic should be put to immediate use to connect effective and trustworthy risk communication strategies across languages. The increase in frequency, unpredictability, reach and scale of disasters and crises suggests that we should be doing everything possible to act against the effects of climate change, while at the same time preparing for some of its inevitable fallouts in the coming decade in terms of disasters of unrivalled magnitude (Coaffee, 2019), which will be followed by mass displacements of people across country and continental borders (Oliver-Smith, 2012; 2018). There are calls to be radical and bold and to move beyond lessons learnt from the past, exactly because we do not know how the increase in magnitude of the impact of natural hazards can create new vulnerabilities, how long the effects will last and what level of unprecedented cascading effects will result. From the perspective of translation, this means concrete future planning is required for agile language solutions.

In this chapter, we suggest that it is important to reassess the position of translation, interpreting, signing and all models of cross-language communication in risk communication and emergency management. The magnitude of the hazards is somewhat unpredictable, but multilingual and multicultural societies are real, both in extensively multilingual countries in Asia, Africa or South America and in the increasingly multilingual and multicultural conurbations worldwide. Accommodating language needs in risk communication is relevant when planning public health campaigns, as much as when designing global warning systems. Accommodating language needs in risk reduction activities is a radical way to future proof. In the next sections of this chapter, we appraise the chameleonic relationship between communication as part of emergency management and translation – intended very broadly – as any attempt to communicate risks across languages with the purpose of showing how small changes in this area will have a positive impact in reducing the cascading effects of crises. The shift must start at a high level, which is why we need to consider next the relationship between risk communication principles and policy.

RISK COMMUNICATION: CRISIS TRANSLATION AND POLICY

Risk communication follows the temporal dimensions of emergency planning as it engages with designing communication strategies that monitor and control effective, timely and essential communication before, during and after a crisis erupts (Reynolds and Lufty, 2018). Many processes in emergency management depend on efficient risk communication. We summarize how this interdependency is significant in terms of crisis translation practices and scholarship, to move on to offering a synoptic view of how the interdependency underpins the organization and contributions selected for this volume.

Crisis and emergency risk communication: Principles and respect

In the context of emergency management, many (English-language) practical approaches to communication build on the six principles of effective emergency and risk communication put forward in the *Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) Manual* (Reynolds and Lufty, 2018). Used as a training manual for managers of the US Centres for Disease Prevention and Control and US Disaster Managers, the manual is highly influential by proxy (how US disaster managers contribute to international operations) and by direct use in the humanitarian sector (e.g. together with The Sphere Project principles 2018; see Miller et al., 2021). The six principles are as follows:

1. Be First: Crises are time-sensitive. Communicating information quickly is crucial. For members of the public, the first source of information often becomes the preferred source.

2. Be Right: Accuracy establishes credibility. Information can include what is known, what is not known and what is being done to fill in the gaps.

3. Be Credible: Honesty and truthfulness should not be compromised during crises.

4. Express Empathy: Crises create harm, and the suffering should be acknowledged. Addressing what people are feeling, and the challenges they face, builds trust and rapport.

5. Promote Action: Giving people meaningful things to do calms anxiety, helps restore order and promotes some sense of control.

6. Show Respect: Respectful communication is particularly important when people feel vulnerable. Respectful communication promotes cooperation and rapport.

Each principle is a distillation of best practices and experience-driven suggestions, collected from communication practices in emergency medicine, as much as in disaster management practices; also, each principle represents collective knowledge gained in national and international operations. The sixth principle, in particular, is inextricably linked with multilingual communication. It must be read alongside WHO's guidance that 'Accurate information provided early, often, and in languages and channels that people understand, trust and use, enables individuals to make choices and take actions to protect themselves, their families and communities from threatening health hazard' (WHO, 2017: ix). Accommodating language needs is not a luxury;

it can be seen as part of the human-rights-based approaches to crisis communication in multilingual settings (O'Brien et al., 2018; Greenwood et al., 2017). 'Promoting cooperation and rapport' entails much more than providing translation, or a degree of interpreting, or some language brokering of some sort by whomsoever might be available. It could be argued that the sixth principle requires systematic assessment and planning of language needs. There are multiple ways of accommodating predictable language needs (mapping local languages, referring to census of preferred languages locally spoken, etc.) though it is more difficult to predict the language of tourists and business travellers. However, emergency plans, policies and guidelines precisely work on accommodating what is known and expected to be needed within flexible parameters to accommodate what may be an emerging and unexpected need. To achieve the respectful communication envisaged in the CERC principles, there needs to be high-level commitment and willingness to accommodate language needs; that is why these principles are intrinsically connected with emergency management, as we briefly explain next.

Emergency management: Planning and policies to reduce risks

Beginning with policy, we discuss an intricate terrain, which is impossible to cover in detail but must be considered. Risk communication strategies normally feed into emergency plans and policies, which are typically connected with legal frameworks and emergency management activities. Emergency management aims to offer a logical, structured, learnable framework which is flexible yet organized (Enander, 2018) and engages with all the unexpected problems created by any crisis. The statutory legal frameworks enshrine in law some of the expectations for the protection of civil society. The frameworks, however, need to be accompanied by clear policies and, even more, by clear, regularly revised and tested (with training and scenario role play) emergency plans. These plans facilitate cooperation among emergency responders, coordination of institutional resources, collaboration and proactive involvement of communities and individuals at risk; they are frameworks designed to help anybody affected to recover from the impact of emergencies. From the point of view of risk and emergency communication, they rely on linguistic clarity, accessibility, availability, adaptability and acceptability (O'Brien et al., 2018). In short, their effectiveness depends on trained personnel, instruments, technologies, plans, coordination and logistics as much as on communicative efficiency.

The UK Institute of Civil Protection and Emergency Management, one of the earliest bodies organized by and for professional emergency planners and managers, defines emergency planning as consisting of the coordination and management of resources and responsibilities relating to the phases of the integrated emergency and disaster management cycles:

- Anticipation – horizon scanning.
- Assessment – assessing the risks and threats.
- Prevention – actions taken to eliminate, isolate or reduce risks.
- Preparation – actions taken prior to an emergency to promote readiness and facilitate response.

- Response – coordinate actions during an emergency to save lives and livelihoods, property and the environment.
- Recovery – actions taken after an incident to restore and resume operations. (ICPEM, 2021: n.p.)

It may be argued that these principles are not representative of all the practices adopted worldwide. Despite this limitation, this practice-based definition reveals an important subtext for us: The responsibilities listed above can never be met one hundred per cent if there is only monolingual communication in a multilingual environment.

The contributions to this volume were selected to engage with as many aspects of this broad spectrum of emergency management activities and risk communication as possible. A common denominator across all of the chapters is the overlap between risk and emergency communication which infallibly posits an excessive emphasis on 'emergency', thus predominantly leaving considerations of language needs outside most efforts to increase preparedness (creation of mitigating measures) and readiness (ability to deploy mitigation measures promptly) to engage with crises. Language needs and, unfortunately, advocacy to plan for accommodating language needs predominantly remain absent from the most ambitious plans that aim to deal with twenty-first-century risks. The fallible solution continues to be a resolve to find *some ways* of communicating across languages at the last minute, in the response phase.

Hence, if best practice in emergency management dictates that plans are regularly revised, we reiterate here the call for a radical revision of crisis communication practices when designing those plans. Crisis communication policies can be useful instruments to project the CERC paradigm via crisis translation on to the practice-focused activities of emergency management in multilingual contexts. The regular revision of emergency plans makes them 'living documents', which can then take into account (possibly evolving) local linguistic diversity. To this end, in September 2019, we put forward ten cost-effective, workable and actionable (INTERACT) recommendations to support crisis communication in multilingual settings (see Federici et al., 2019b).

We take the opportunity to re-emphasize those recommendations in this chapter, as a crucial yardstick of what needs to be done to guarantee that multilingual communication is supported in all phases of a disaster with an emphasis on ensuring translation, interpreting, signing and multimodal cross-cultural communication is firmly integrated in crisis communication strategies. The two years of the COVID-19 pandemic have only confirmed how it is necessary and urgent to act. Multilingual communication in cascading crises does not need to be one of the stressor factors but rather can be seen as a way of mitigating risks. With the growing risks from the climate emergency, it is time to produce, revisit or revise policies on multilingual crisis communication that can be readily implemented. Selected as EU Innovation Radar 34508, the ten most crucial recommendations presented in Figure I.1 have circulated widely among the International Humanitarian Sector.

They work alongside standard practices in emergency management and do not require the sector to rethink its approaches (though there are calls for doing this too). These recommendations challenge the monolingual mindset and its corollary ideology that remains influential in many operational contexts in which crisis translation takes place. We share Auer and Wei's (2007) opinion that the Western monolingual ideology has falsely and unnecessarily construed linguistic diversity predominantly as a problem to solve. Other perspectives are possible, as we will discuss in the next section where we explore the themes emerging from the chapters of this volume.

1. Emergency management communication policies should include provision for translation and interpreting and should be regularly reviewed and revised.

2. A specific owner of the policy on translation and interpreting should be identified and assigned within organizations responsible for emergency communication policy and implementation.

3. Emergency management communication policies should be developed in consultation with relevant multilingual and multicultural communities.

4. Emergency management communication policies should cover all phases of crisis and disaster management (mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery).

5. Emergency management communication policies should consider languages spoken by affected communities (including sign language), levels of literacy, and cultural appropriateness.

6. Alternative formats and channels for dissemination of translated information should be considered – not just traditional written or spoken formats.

7. Emergency management communication policies should allow for two-way communication between responders and affected communities.

8. Ensure training is provided for professional and volunteer translators and interpreters so that they can effectively operate in crisis and disaster settings. Also ensure training for users and managers of translation and interpreting services.

9. Establish direct lines of communication between emergency responders and professional associations of translators and interpreters for the purposes of collaboration.

10. Recruit into multilingual organizations who are responsible for aid or emergency response in such a way as to avoid reliance on international lingua franca and ad hoc or convenience translation and interpreting.

FIGURE 1 INTERACT Crisis Communication Policy Recommendations © Federico M. Federici, Sharon O'Brien, Patrick Caldwell, Jay Marlowe, Brian Gerber and Olga Davis 2019, International Network in Crisis Translation Policy Report, Dublin City University (https://www.innoradar.eu/innovation/34508).

CONTEXTS AND ACTORS IN STUDIES AND FIELD EXPERIENCES

The volume provides us with insights on crisis contexts that have thus far received little attention. There are themes that cut across all chapters (timeliness and urgency of message, language needs and resourcing issues). There are also themes that weave through multiple chapters. The contributors focus on children's experience of crisis (Chapter 9), military personnel and interpreters (Chapter 5) and homelessness contexts (Chapter 24). Commentaries are provided from regions that had not received much prior coverage (e.g. Belgium in Chapter 8; the Mexican-US border in Chapter 12; India in Chapter 17), and there is inclusion of novel content types (e.g. graphic novels in Chapter 4 and wordless picture books in Chapter 18). Not least, we are very proud of the contributions to this volume from frontline organizations (Chapters 20–25), which provide us with confirmation (as if it were necessary) of the need for translation and interpreting in crisis settings and add a welcome practice-based voice alongside the academic contributions.

Furthermore, the evidence from organizations and institutions operating in crises, summarized and presented in the chapters of this volume (Chapters 8 and 10), show how ignoring language needs at any level, phase or interaction in relation to crises affects relationships that rely on respect. To earn trust and establish credible ecosystems of communication, showing respect through information in languages and formats that people understand and can access is inescapable (Chapter 25). Clear and effective communication that is thought through to achieve behaviour change and risk reduction works better for everybody when it is designed to reach everybody (Chapter 2). It has better reach if it is designed to include different levels of literacy, non-dominant neurotypes and people with disabilities (Chapter 16). Detail and nuance can always be added, but missing

the opportunity of showing respect makes communication less trusted and its suggestions and recommendations less impactful, which proves to be detrimental to prolonged crises. Again, COVID-19 communication strategies by a number of governments have shown how the problem with trustworthy communication starts with the formulation of the message itself. If the very source text is of poor quality, as is often the case in the demands and time pressures of the response phase of a crisis, then any translation, signing and interpretation are made more difficult. The speed of communication nowadays also provides a considerable challenge when problematic concepts in one dominant language (often English) are subsumed into other languages with confusing effect (Chapter 3).

The role of translation technologies is addressed directly in this volume in Chapter 15, and this topic has also been treated elsewhere (see, for example, O'Brien, 2019; Cadwell, O'Brien, de Luca, 2019). Chapters 13, 15 and 16 add a welcome perspective on technologies for accessibility, which has received relatively little attention in translation studies in general. Drawing again on the COVID-19 pandemic, we now have an even greater understanding of the need for accessibility of multilingual content in general, but especially for crisis management. Linking to the topic of policy, practices for creating accessible content need to be called out in policy and considered as part of the crisis communication practice from the start of any cycle. Chapter 6, while not about accessibility in a strict sense, considers intersemiotic translation as accessible practice. This is also an under-researched topic in crisis translation; often seen as universal, non-language-specific, effective and economic solutions, pictograms, signs and other non-textual ways of communicating are sometimes considered sufficient to provide and share information. However, Chapters 17 and 25 in this collection also show that they do not suffice as standalone solutions.

Several of the chapters in this book address the topic of translator/interpreter training (Chapters 5, 11 and 19) for or during crises, of who is responsible for producing translation for crisis preparedness and response, their need for and level of training and the ethical challenges that come with these questions (see also Chapters 1 and 12). It is important to highlight that a crisis is, by its very nature, exceptional. Normal standard practices cannot, therefore, be expected in all stages of crisis translation. For instance, where a life-or-death situation exists, there will be little or no time to validate the credentials of a volunteer interpreter. Or, if a patient needs emergency surgery but has to wait for the translation of a consent form, they could very well be dead if normal translation practices are followed. On the other hand, with robust translation policies in place, a hospital would have pre-translated their consent forms into all of the main languages of the communities they typically serve in advance of such a requirement, and this could easily be done by a professional translator. The debates on these topics tend to focus on two main concerns: (1) the organizations that produce the translation, and their status and motives; (2) the individuals, their training and their status as 'professionals' or otherwise. Questions and discussion on these issues are welcome because they encourage essential debate on what is at stake: access to potentially life-saving information on the one hand – a human right, as has been argued by Greenwood et al. (2017) – and potentially incorrect (and life-threatening) or no information on the other hand. By allowing for conceptual and practical recognition of citizen crisis translators, there is a perceived undermining of what is understood to represent the commercial profession of translation and interpreting.

These difficult debates will, no doubt, go on for quite some time and will not be solved in this volume. Nonetheless, we take the opportunity to summarize our own

perspectives on these issues. Requirements in a crisis are often sudden and cannot be predicted, or at least not with exactitude. The 'profession' of translating and interpreting is not a global construct, nor is training available in all countries of the world. Therefore, there is little to be gained from imposing top-down, commercial and ethical codes of practice on an area that is typified by chaos and uncertainty. Natural translators and interpreters exist or are forced into operation by virtue of the fact that they understand and speak multiple languages. Wikipedia, the practice of fansubbing, translation in INGOs (Tesseur, 2018) and ad hoc interpreting in the military (see Chapter 5, this volume), health and police settings (e.g. Drugan, 2019) give us an indication of how extensive this phenomenon is. Critically analysing the reasons for existence, the work and its impact (which is not all negative) is important and should not be done from the standpoint that those who carry out such work do not have a right to do so. We could consider the argument that such actors are being exploited, but this latter point is linked with the concept of 'volunteering', which is a known asset in disaster studies and emergency management (see the extensive review in Whittaker, McLennan and Handmer, 2015). As outlined in the document *Volunteer Coordination in Civil Defence Emergency Management* (CDEM, 2013), for example, volunteers in emergency settings need to be treated with respect, as well as being 'guided'. They do not, however, need to be 'educated' or 'turned into' professional translators or interpreters. Rather, the professions, where they exist, should consider how they can support this activity that will not simply go away (see Federici et al., 2021, for a good example of professional and non-professional collaboration). Finally, it is completely legitimate for translation studies scholars to actively research and collaborate in the domain of crisis management without having to serve the 'betterment of the profession and only the profession' (Pym, 2012: 81). Researchers must investigate phenomena that exist; ignoring phenomena will not diminish the professional risks associated with them and will only endanger the possibility of improving awareness around how translation and interpreting can contribute towards diminishing risks. Researchers cannot ignore phenomena because of their personal or professional disagreement with what the phenomena entail. They seek instead to understand challenging contexts through systematic, critical and rigorous methods.

ADVOCATING CHANGE

We have seen how CERC relies on communication systems borne out of experiences, communication theories (such as those discussed in Chapter 2) and approaches used in public health campaigns, as much as lessons learnt from communication needs experienced during previous disasters in the response, recovery and reconstruction phases.

For emergency planners, hard evidence from over forty different scientific fields (Alexander, 2021: 5) has proven that successful emergency management hinges on in-depth knowledge of local needs. Yet, how can the COVID-19 vaccination campaign intending to reach Spanish-speaking Indo-American residents in Southwark, London, not consider the use of Spanish or Portuguese? How can recent, exposed and fearful migrants know that they are entitled, in their interest and that of all UK residents, to health services and vaccination if they are not told so in their own languages? How can this be true also in the diverse linguistic and ethnic communities in Sierra Leone? How can this be the same for Korean-speaking communities in Wuhan at the outset of the pandemic? These are not rhetorical questions. The multilingual composition of local communities

matters irrespective of whether multilingualism is part of the historical make-up of the country (as in Sierra Leone), a recent phenomenon dictated by socio-economic factors (as in London), created through business-related travel (in Wuhan) or through combinations of these and multiple other factors. These three examples draw on our direct experience of work in crisis translation settings. However, all the contributors in this volume show crisis and emergency risk communication matters in a wide variety of contexts. It matters regardless of the scale of the emergency, its locale, its nature, its duration or its impact on the local society.

A cascading crisis, such as COVID-19, has also shown how the complexity of current disasters is 'the rule, not the exception' (Alexander, 2021: 5), and language has been described as a visible vulnerability very early in the pandemic (Piller, Zhang and Li, 2020). In extremely simplified but unfortunately valid terms, in the Global North, ethnic and language minorities have had less detailed or no information (even if it was shambolic in the source language, as is the case in the UK and the USA). This has corresponded with more widespread contagion and higher hesitancy towards mitigating measures and vaccination (for a global scale early assessment, see Lazarus et al., 2020). Indeed, ignorant campaigns such as those of the Anti-Vaxxers or No-Maskers are also to blame for the lack of trust in information, but the disproportionate vaccination hesitancy and trust in preventative measures predates these phenomena. In the Global South, the social disparities and inequalities in accessing vaccines at affordable prices and the inequalities in having access to information with the consequences of mistrusting the public health campaign will need to be investigated in detail.

Climate change is altering all the parameters that have affected disasters and crises so far, making the impact of natural hazards more unpredictable, sustained and violent. What is becoming apparent is that emergency planning for the climate crisis cannot rely on the lessons learnt from the past. Looking at past cascading crises to create emergency plans for the future is no longer enough (Alexander, 2021). Now is the time then to accept that translation and interpreting have a phenomenally important role to play in mitigating the outcomes of future crises. Emergency management and its related communication plans should draw upon 'openness, transparency, participation, collaboration, and coordination' (Alexander, 2021: 6). To achieve these principles, multilingual communication is crucial. To test ideas, listen to, learn from, respect and acknowledge diverse experiences and requirements, translation is essential. As the examples in Chapter 17 of this volume show, language variety and dialectal variety play an important role in interacting with communities in effective ways. Processes to rebalance communication are crucial (Chapters 21 and 22 offer examples of this). However, the types of communications considered here are never only about sharing information from a large international, or regional, lingua franca, but need to include two-way communication from hitherto less heard voices and communities whose specific needs and requirements dictate the success of any response and recovery.

CONCLUSIONS

Each chapter in this book deserves an in-depth reading in its own right, and we did not want to reduce them to a summary in our Introduction. Instead, we opted for highlighting themes and topics that have emerged. The chapters remind us that, while conducting studies in crisis translation, we are never far away from ethical and deontological questions: Who can produce the best translations, signed renderings and

interpretations in the limited and constrained contexts of a response? Who should decide which languages are needed and which ones can be ignored? Who should be responsible for changing policies and embedding the INTERACT recommendations into current crisis communication practices? Who should engage with crisis and disaster managers to encourage small changes in perspective in order to increase resilience and preparedness across all communities, including language and ethnic minorities?

The fact that translation and interpreting in crises are not regulated by professional practices, and maybe they could never be, forces us to analyse, test, challenge, examine, assess, revise, debate and engage with the phenomenon ever more than before. Dismissing uncomfortable phenomena – use of children as language brokers, asking bilinguals to interpret in a military hospital or calling on citizen translators to complete a project in languages not available on the local or regional professional market – means accepting defeat. Researchers are bound by the integrity of their professional code of conduct to engage with phenomena, at least to understand their full impact. Furthermore, focusing only on the phase of crisis response does not offer a complete perspective. Much can be gained from opening other crisis phases to the empowering impact of translation and interpreting.

We believe that translation matters for social dignity, for equality and inclusion, not to mention for safety. The chapters of this volume show how broad-ranging the contexts are that can be positively impacted if we treat translation as a risk reduction tool. T&I professionals, NGO officers, language communities and researchers must all advocate for these changes.

Our hope is that the collective efforts presented in the chapters that follow will act as inspiration to encourage readers to put forward daring new planning approaches for the (un)expected crises of the future, which will need to reckon with the previously unfaced hazards caused by climate change.

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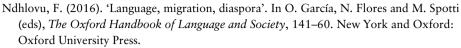
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