

Research ethics in translation studies

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Ethics has become a much-debated topic in translation studies. It is generally discussed against the backdrop of the translation profession, not least as a result of the interest in the sociocultural contexts in which translators operate. Chesterman's (1997/2006) theoretical work on translation ethics and the ethical dilemmas that face translators and his proposal for a Hieronymic oath have been seminal in this regard. If professional ethics has gained increased attention in translation studies, the same does not apply to research ethics. Very few publications deal with the issue (see, however, Mellinger & Hanson, 2017, chap. 1.2; Saldanha & O'Brien, 2013, chap. 2.11).

Research ethics is often associated with ensuring the psychological, physical and social welfare of research participants. Hekkanen (2007), however, convincingly argues that translation research must not only consider the direct impact it may have on research participants, but also its indirect impact in other types of research. In research that deals with style and texts, for instance, it is not uncommon that literary translations are criticized and, hence indirectly, the translators too. If ethical concerns are not given appropriate consideration during the research design phase, translation research may undermine translators' trust in academia and thus compromise their willingness for cooperation. Research ethics also concerns the researcher's responsibility towards the public and the scientific community. This is where ethics meets integrity. Whereas ethics is often thought of as part of the initial phases of research design and data collection, integrity is generally associated with accurate data analysis and reporting (Israel, 2015).

The present panel aims to bring together scholars, trainers, university officials and editors/publishers who face translation research-related ethical questions as part of their job. Given the paucity of published reflection, both theoretical papers and empirical investigations as well as experience reports are welcome.

Contributions are invited on the following and other relevant topics:

- **Research:** What ethical concerns do scholars encounter when designing and conducting translation research? What is the effect of expanding ethical regulation on research in our field? What are the implications of the shift to client-centred research agendas for researchers and academic freedom?
- **Training:** How are trainee translators and PhD candidates in translation studies alerted to potential ethical dilemmas in conducting empirical research? To what extent is research ethics and integrity included in the curricula of translation training institutions?
- **Institutions:** What are typical problems that ethics committees identify in research projects submitted to them for approval? What are the ethical principles and theories for their decision-making? Have translation departments set up own ethics committees? If so, how and why have they emerged? Do members receive formal ethics training?
- **Publishing sector:** Which aspects of research ethics are regulated in ethical statements published by journals and book series in the field of translation studies? What sources are these statements based on? What are typical concerns that editors/publishers encounter regarding research ethics and integrity during the evaluation and publication processes (e.g., plagiarism, authorship attribution, conflicts of interest between authors, referees and editors, piecemeal publication, misrepresentation of authors' views, willful neglect of important works) and how are these handled?

References

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