

# Exploring indirect translation in unchartered areas: The case of community radio news in South Africa

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Community radio in South Africa aims to provide for the specific language and cultural needs of the community (Govender, 2010:184), emphasising the relevance of news content in local languages. In some community radio stations, news is broadcast in up to five languages. The effect of such multilingualism implies some form of translation activity, although journalists do not necessarily recognise the importance of translation in news production (Bielsa and Bassnett, 2009:1). Furthermore, it is often difficult to reproduce “the [news] translation process, as journalistic environments are characteristically complex, multi-source situations” (Gambier, 2016:900). In some instances it is impossible to determine which part of a news item has been edited or translated (van Doorslaer, 2009:85). Davier explains that this multiple-source reality is realised through “a patchwork of many different sources, many of which were originally in a different language” (2014:58). The complex and multi-source reality of news translation resonates with the complex nature of indirect translation (ITr), in which it is also often impossible to identify an ultimate source language or ultimate source text (Assis Rosa, Pięta and Maia, 2017:119).

Considering the above, the aim of this paper is to problematise the everyday news production processes and products in terms of ITr. Furthermore, the paper wants to provide an explorative description of the workflow and production chain of ITr, possible source text(s) and mediating languages in community radio news.

Latour’s (2005) actor-network theory provides a methodological framework to unearth the relevant data from community radio stations in the Free State province of South Africa. The data collection methods include observations, informal interviews and the collection of textual data (whether in written or oral format).

**Keywords:** Indirect translation; news translation; community radio; South Africa; actor-network theory

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