

Online ethnography of activist networks of interpreters: an “ethnonarrative” methodology for socio-political change

Julie Boéri 

College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Doha, Qatar

ABSTRACT

Narrative theory in translation studies has been mostly used to examine how translators mediate and refract meaning as they contribute to circulating political agendas across contexts and audiences. Building on this heritage but extending narrative theory beyond cross-language analysis, this paper proposes an ethnonarrative methodology to enquire and write about contemporary activist networks. It provides an epistemological-theoretical framework to explore identity, action and space in prefigurative transnational social movements, and a set of narrative methods and analytical techniques to conduct an ethnography of communication. Drawing on my on-site and online ethnography of Babels, the international network of volunteer interpreters, the paper first discusses the ethical and political questions raised by my practice in, and by my writing about Babels, in the interdisciplinary context of social movement studies and interpreting studies in the first decade of the 21st century. It then exposes the ethnonarrative methodology developed in this context and illustrates its use through a detailed narrative account of how Babels constructed and negotiated its financial structure in and out of Babels.org. Finally, it discusses the extension of the methodology beyond 2.0 (so called participatory) web, as activist networks increasingly communicate through social media and videoconferencing platforms.

ARTICLE HISTORY



Received 20 January 2022
Accepted 12 December 2022

KEYWORDS

Activist networks; Babels; interpreting; narrative; online ethnography; social forums

Introduction

The paradigm of neutrality which has long prevailed in the conceptualisation of translation and interpreting has been largely questioned by translation scholars in the 1990s. Like fieldwork anthropologists in the 1950/1960s, they recognised that neither knowledge transfer nor intercultural/linguistic mediation can ever take place objectively (Buzelin 2004); a change in perspective which only took root in interpreting studies at the turn of the century, because of adherence to the principle of impartiality inherited from the profession. With this epistemological shift, scholars have challenged neutrality and objectivity in the interpreting performance and in research, and increasingly focused on actual practices and policies

CONTACT Julie Boéri  jboeri@hbku.edu.qa  College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Doha, Qatar

© 2023 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

across contexts, including asylum and community settings, the humanitarian field, social movements, etc. Concomitantly, postmodern ethnography has invited to act upon power asymmetries underpinning the fieldwork and the very nexus between the socio-cultural context under study and society at large. While ethnography is recognised as a genre shaped by the ethnographer's authority over the culture s/he reports on, the subsequent postcolonial crisis in fieldwork anthropology should not cripple the ethnographer who ought to address issues of power and authority from a renewed, reflexive perspective. In this light, socio-political commitment has become a key site of intersection between interpreting studies and ethnography.

Adopting this interdisciplinary angle, this paper proposes an ethnonarrative methodology which equips the researchers to act upon one's political engagement. The concept of narrative has been a traditional prism through which anthropology and ethnography have apprehended language and context, ever since Malinowsky. This is not surprising given the triple Maussian question 'qui sont ces gens, que font-ils et qu'en pensent-ils ?' (who are these people, what do they do and what do they think about it?) (Pastinelli 2011, 45), which invites the ethnographer to reconstitute their experience in the field. Narration is also a privileged mode of communication between the ethnographer and subjects in the field. However, it has largely been understood as a specific *genre* to enquire and write about culture (Clifford 1988), that is, as a privileged mode of communication to immerse oneself in the socio-cultural world of the subjects (Perrino 2021) and to reconstitute the ethnographic experience to a larger audience.

In contrast, the ethnonarrative approach proposed in this paper considers narrative as an inescapable prism through which the ethnographer co-constructs a culture of engagement and change with the subjects-actors. It builds on Baker's narrative model (Baker 2006), applied to translation and interpreting (Boéri 2008; Harding 2012; Pérez-González 2010; Hermans et al. 2022), and its understanding of narrative as an archetype of communicative action (Fisher 1997), as a prism through which we construct identity, orient our behaviour, construct the world in which we live (Somers and Gibson 1994) and in so doing moralise reality (Bruner 1991). Rather than applying narrative theory to translated speeches and texts, this paper develops the potential of this theory for an online ethnography of activist networks of interpreters. This involves enquiring and writing about a contemporary activist culture emerging at the margins of the interpreting community and contributing to a socio-political change in and beyond this community.

These complex ethical and political questions raised by this endeavour will be addressed by revisiting my offline and online ethnography of Babels, the international network of volunteer translators and interpreters. This is because my longitudinal study of Babels in the first decade of the 21st century, blurs the line between texts and practices, literacy and orality, human actors and technologies, resistance and dominance, logistics and politics, participation and representation, researchers and subjects. These complexities will inductively inform the ethnonarrative methodology put forward in this paper. The proposed methodology will then be illustrated through actual analysis of online interactions on Babels.org. The paper will end with a reflection on the implications of the inactivity of this online space since the mid-2010s, not only for activist interpreting per se but also for its continuing ethnographic exploration.

Crossing pathways with Babels: a personal and collective journey

I became involved as a volunteer interpreter in Babels in the 3rd European Social Forum (ESF) in 2003. This was a pivotal moment that granted political significance to my previous trajectory and to my activist and academic engagement with Babels in the following years.

At the time, I was enrolled in the BA in translation and interpreting at the University of Granada (Spain). Those of us majoring in interpreting, participated in a socio-critical pedagogical project, led by Dr. Jesús de Manuel Jerez, using action research to prepare students beyond labour market needs.¹ In this framework, we were exposed to authentic speeches used in the interpreter-mediated communication events of the major private and public employers of the industry, as well as social movements and civil society organisations. It was a unique opportunity to interpret voices which were not readily available in mainstream media, in these ‘pre-social media times’. I remember the profound impact it had on me and my peers to process and convey the voices of activist intellectuals who disrupted the ideological apparatus of the so-called ‘neoliberal consensus’ or ‘pensée unique’. Exposure to counter-hegemonic discourse (exposing the increased militarisation to secure control over markets, the democratic deficit of global policies and the impact on environment; advocating for food sovereignty and human rights), prompted affective connections with the Alter-Globalisation Movement, and a reorientation of my professional training and career goals towards a larger political and societal contribution.

Our desire to engage both as aspiring interpreters, and as citizens aspiring to justice, gained momentum in March 2003, with US-led coalition’s massive air strikes in Iraq. Many of us became involved in ECOS, the association of translators and interpreters for solidarity, hosted by the University, organising multilingual events with interpretation. It is around that time that ECOS was contacted by Babels, to volunteer for the 2nd European Social Forum in the Paris suburbs. Many of us with interpreting training joined the network and provided volunteer interpretation at the Forum.

Being a Babels volunteer at the ESF meant immersing myself and contributing to the ongoing global, mass-based, process of socio-political change across languages and cultures, that had emerged in the 1990s in different parts of the world. It also exposed me to the shortcomings of the volunteer organisation of interpretation for such a large scale event: the languages needed were not the ones usually covered by training institutions; there were not enough qualified interpreters willing to volunteer; we were barely given advance documentation as the program had been finalised overnight. All in all, the quality (which we had learnt to place at the heart of our practice) was uneven, but the political experience was mind blowing.

I did not know at the time that a year later, I would find myself at the heart of the tensions between the politics and the logistics of volunteer, activist interpreting. Indeed, in 2004, as I was finishing my degree, I applied for one of the three Babels Interpreting Project Manager positions advertised for the delivery of the 3rd ESF in London. I was motivated to contribute to Babels/the Forum with my knowledge as a recently trained and committed interpreter; a profile that, judging from ECOS observations in the Paris ESF, was lacking among the coordinators of the network at the time.² However, I was not aware of the controversies I was stepping in and which were to have an imprint on my

subsequent work in and on Babels: the organisational process of the London ESF was contentious because of the financial support of the Greater London Authority (GLA), because of the weight of traditional leftwing groups on the decisions, at the expense of women, the youth and the grassroots, in the organisational meetings and working groups. Babels national coordination (Babels-UK), together with other informal activist groups, had witnessed and opposed these practices for months before I was hired.

Within this context, me being hired by the ESF company (set up by the organising committee with funds from the GLA) raised suspicion in the network that I could be piloted by these structures to coopt Babels, a very strategic partner whom the Forum could not do without, given the stakes of interpretation to make the Forum truly European. My involvement in ECOS and in the Paris ESF, quickly mitigated these fears but not the tension of the remunerated nature of the jobs.³

Upon accepting the job offer, I came to embody the political tensions that underpinned the forum/Babels endeavours from the outset: between the economy/labour market and the non-profit/volunteer sector; between autonomy of Babels-UK and accountability to Babels-International. However, the gradual development of trust with my peers made me quickly move away from an in-between position (the feeling of being split by contradictory forces of a political movement which was struggling to organise global gatherings in a way that would embody its values) to a third position: one from which I could harness my conference interpreting background to address these tensions in innovative ways.

In collaboration with ECOS, and building on the pedagogical project of the University of Granada, we launched the 'situational preparation' (sitprep) project, turning the office in London into a hub for prospective volunteers to try simultaneous interpreting with the speeches of previous social forums (see SitPrep didactic DVDs 2004).⁴ With two volunteer IT developers, we also developed Baboo, a computer-assisted booth planning tool, which was subsequently used in the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre (Brazil) in 2005 (Booth Planning 2005). These sociotechnological innovations involved coordinators and volunteers in a transformative space, pushing the movement to address the challenge of cross-language simultaneous skills, without which there can be no communication, and thus no inclusion, in the forum.

This collective endeavour was as politically inspiring as it was emotionally draining. While the experience within Babels was generally very cooperative at a local level, the relationship with the ESF organisers deteriorated as the event drew closer, because of ongoing exclusion of the self-named 'horizontalists' (youth, new social movements, informal networks breaking from mainstream leftwing politics), largely documented during and after the event (De Angelis 2005; Boéri and Hodkinson 2004; Dowling 2005; Sullivan 2005). Additionally, the online interaction with the Babels network was conflictual. Babels.org, concomitantly developed by Babels-tech (Babels team of teckies), gradually providing mailing lists, an online forum, and a portal for publishing and editing documents, pressured the on-site team to seek consensus at European level on every decision to be taken in London or in the UK. This principle of participatory democracy proved increasingly difficult to honour as the event dates drew closer, due to time pressures, and to the constant battles with the ESF organisers to obtain the promised accommodation, transport, and program needs for the volunteer interpreters. Internal and external tensions culminated at the event. As Babels coordinators, we issued a public communiqué,

delivered at the plenary against racism and fascism where the Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, was scheduled to speak. The communiqué denounced the exclusionary organisational practices at play in the London ESF, as well as the co-option of the forum by the ruling labour party, whose immigration policies prevented entry into the UK of interpreters (and other participants) from many non-European countries. Drafted collectively a few minutes before its release, the communiqué, signed by ‘Coordinators of Babels International Network of Volunteer Interpreters and Translators’ (see ESF Babels Coordinators’ Statement 2004), raised a controversy in the network as regards the problematic patterns of representation of such communiqués, and how to ensure internal, participatory democracy in Babels at large.

Involving more than 500 interpreters in 15 languages, the Babels team navigated through the multiple tensions, which shaped my dynamic positionality in Babels, in and beyond the London ESF.

Framing the interdisciplinary contribution: positionality in academic and activist practice

I left the London ESF with the conviction that radical change dwelled in Babels, both for the movement (where the politics of language was still an afterthought) and for my field of knowledge (where interpreting was largely rooted in the service economy). This prompted me to stay involved as a volunteer coordinator and interpreter for the World, Mediterranean and European, Social Forums – Porto Alegre (2005), Barcelona (2005), Athens (2006) and Malmö (2008) – and to undertake a longitudinal study of Babels throughout the 2000s.

But doing so had ethical, political and epistemological ramifications that had to be given careful consideration. Writing about Babels in an academic environment was not without risks of alienating the network, given Babels’ disruption of both expertise and representation, particularly bearing in mind that harnessing the insights gained from the Babels’ unfolding experience to the humanities and the social sciences was constrained by prevailing paradigms of interpreting and social movements studies.

Interpreting studies, my home discipline was (and to a certain extent still is) dominated by expert-led descriptive empiricism. Accounting for Babels through the lenses of professionalism and the service economy would have misrepresented a group which emerged and developed in organicity to a social movement that reconfigured power and knowledge to usher an alternative society from the bottom-up. An illustrative example of expert-led, oppressive reviews of Babels, can be found in Naumann (2005) well-known and hotly debated critique of the network, published by AIIC, the International Association of Conference Interpreters. Like my peers in Babels, I was aware of the uneven quality of interpreting at the Social Forum but felt that if such a study was to be eventually undertaken, it would have to do justice to its unconventional political and logistical framework, which interpreting studies was hardly equipped to account for. Notwithstanding the growing interest in interpreters’ positioning, visibility and power, the so-called social turn in interpreting studies was largely focused on institutionalised contexts. Because of Babels’ structurelessness and heterogeneity and given that the Social Forum itself constituted an unconventional interpreting setting, the Babels experiment posed an added analytical challenge. As a horizontal network, Babels

had no elected members, entrusted with a clear mandate over their constituencies, but a pool of members with varying backgrounds in activism and/or interpreting contributing to the degree they desired, on the site of Social Forums and/or online. Interpreting was thus differently organised from one Social Forum to another and contingent upon the particular cultural and political context of each organisational process. Because poor interpreting ultimately jeopardises participation and diversity, Babels was pressured by members to address quality within the particular constraints of the Social Forum. Analysing quality empirically would have merely reinforced the mainstream discourse of professionalisation, and eschewed Babels' capacity to address and act upon (however imperfectly) the tensions arisen by its endeavour. My involvement in (and beyond) the London ESF placed me in a unique position to provide a detailed account of the disruptive sociopolitical Babels experiment and its political, scientific and societal stakes in contemporary activism.

Social movement studies, by contrast, had traditionally placed social change at the heart of its enquiry. However, the question of language and cultural diversity in transnational and interconnected movements like the alter-globalisation movement, remained (and still is) marginal. Nevertheless, important paradigmatic changes were opening up possibilities for attending such a pressing question. The rise of identity politics in the 1970s and the 1980s movements, the explosion of feminist consciousness and the collapse of communism prompted a shift of focus from fairly formalised social movements structures' instrumental goals of gaining leverage in mainstream society, towards so-called 'new social movements' and their expressive and self-realisation goals: what it is to be black, a woman, deaf, homosexual, etc. These movements also stressed 'prefigurative goals', i.e. resisting *within* the movement, to white, middle class, straight, able-bodied biases in the very ways in which we relate to each other (Polletta 2002), but this aspect only started to receive scholarly attention with the emergence of the alter-globalisation movement (Maackelbergh 2007). Because of its interconnected nature, its heritage of feminist consensus decision-making and its departure from identity politics (ibid), the alter-globalisation movement reframed activism and social change as performative, relational, and intersectional, hence raising the key question of cross-language communication.

On the grounds of activist practice, the politics of language and interpreting championed by Babels and its allies at the margins of the London ESF, claimed that interpretation was central to the inclusion of participants from many different language, cultural, educational, and political backgrounds in the very process of organising the forum. In this view, language diversity and interpretation at the Forum was key to prefigure the other world the Forum calls for. This framing of the politics of language and interpreting led me to centre my practice in, and my writing about Babels around the reconciliation of principles of radical democracy (participation, inclusion, deliberation and consensus) and organisational praxis. It also provided me with a landmark to undertake an activist ethnography of activist interpreting. Indeed, the research itself (not only its object) had to prefigure the change that we called for in the Social Forum. With this in mind, I had to reflect on the relation between the subjects and the author of the research, between multiple voices and individual writing, participation and representation, grassroots and disciplinary knowledge. Such a reflexive approach required the research to break away from expertise and representation, in order to account for and to encompass the

complexities, the subjectivities and the knowledge of the margins (Maeckelbergh 2007). Challenging expertise goes hand in hand with challenging the top-down and centripetal exercise of power of an elite (political, intellectual or otherwise) over the grassroots, the oppressed and the marginalised.

As attested to by the London ESF experience, it is through an alternative approach to knowledge and power that Babels prefigured a cross-language, inclusive and participatory open space. Babels coordinators were pressured to exercise power *with* (and not *over*) other members of the network through (online) deliberation and consensus. Similarly, professional interpreters had to team up in the booth with non-professionals (aspiring interpreters, bilingual activists). The sitprep initiative addressed the needs of both professionals and non-professionals to familiarise themselves with the discourses of the Social Forums and/or the simultaneous interpreting skills required to volunteer. Last but not least, the lessons learnt in London were deemed contextual and subjective, and the knowledge gained was meant to be appropriated by the subsequent teams working in other social forums, according to their cultural and political context.

Prefigurative politics, thus, became the overarching ethical and political aspiration of my research about, and of my practice within Babels. It allowed for a critical engagement with the risks of a disconnect between the values of an alternative society and interpreting organisational practice. It allowed to account for and to contribute to new practices and knowledge production capable of transforming how we relate to each other as we seek to embody the change we want to see. Such an endeavour was operationalised with an ethnonarrative methodology, as I now turn to expose.

Ethnonarrative methodology

Narrative is not only a theoretical and analytical tool for critical empirical analysis. It can be extended to a methodology that encompasses a theoretical framework, an epistemological approach, methods and research techniques. Narrative research is not limited to the ethnography method and its specific techniques (participant observation, interviews), but can equip the researcher to address ethnographic questions of power, authority, representation, engagement and change. Hence, the term ‘ethnonarrative methodology’, a) to deploy a methodology to make sense of one’s practice in and writing about a community (or interconnected communities), and of the stories they subscribe to and construct in their daily practices (textual and otherwise), b) to understand their social reality from their perspective, and c) to write about it for a larger audience which tends to subscribe to competing perspectives. In what follows, I use the ethnography of the Babels network to illustrate the ‘ethnonarrative methodology’ I propose in this paper, looking into its theoretical and epistemological approach, its methods and techniques, and their application in an analysis of a sample of data.

Epistemological and theoretical approach

With the reframing of narrativity in the social sciences, narratives are considered as constitutive of reality (Somers and Gibson 1994, 40). They become ‘an ontological and epistemological condition of social life’, and thus a prism through which we grant meaning to our social world, construct our social identity, and orient our behaviour (Somers

1992, 606). Knowledge, life and self are narratively constructed (Somers and Gibson 1994, 41).

A narrative approach questions the normative and rational approach to knowledge as validated by logical reasoning and as empirically verified (Somers and Gibson 1994, 40). It seeks to account for the processes of meaning negotiation at play when the human mind attempts to make sense of the world, of themselves and of the reality they inhabit (Bruner 1991). Harking back to James (1896/1912) pragmatist philosophy, the understanding of knowledge as meaning negotiation in time and space frames research as a performative space whereby researchers usher the world to which they commit, at the intersection between the world as it is and the world to be made. This requires a predisposition to learn from and engage with those who inhabit the Babels culture(s), and to co-construct the meaning of Babels' collective identity, action and space within the network and, more largely, within society.

Narrative theory is a robust framework to do so. Identity is viewed as negotiable, relational and processual, thus overcoming the limitations of ahistorical and representational category-based definitions of identity (Somers and Gibson 1994, 40–41). In this light, narrative allows us to rethink individual and collective action not as a mere product of people's gender, race, colour, age or any other static category to which we might assign them but as an integral component of the stories they construct about themselves and the world around them, as they engage in joint practice. This is important in the context of studying activist communities, since the assumption here is that individuals and communities can and often do re-negotiate their identities when they become exposed to narratives that disclose previously unimagined possibilities, thus challenging their beliefs and experience, and ultimately leading them to re-orient their actions. This dynamic understanding of narratives also entails that no narrative, be it individual or collective, can be understood as a static construct since it evolves in time and space out of a process of negotiation among actors of the same or different communities. This is all the more important when approaching contemporary transnational activist networks like Babels, since their emphasis on participation, deliberation, and horizontality means that it *intentionally* lends itself to a permanent process of negotiation and re-construction that social actors are exhorted to contribute to and that ultimately shape their form of engagement (Boéri 2012).

The relation between (storied) identity and (storied) action is not deterministic but remains one of agency (Bruner 1991). It is precisely this leeway that constitutes moral responsibility (Kirkwood 1992, 44). Babels' collective identity as a 'political actor and not a service provider', frames collective action as the organisation of volunteer, activist interpreting in ways that horizontalises the open space of the forum (Babels Charter 2004). At the same time, Babels is pressured to enact this change (inclusive, participatory democracy) within its own network of tens of thousands of members. The capacity to disclose new possibilities through action is precisely what distinguishes participation from representation. Participation emerges as a way of experiencing politics, of enabling someone to be an actor in the story of, say, the Alter-Globalisation Movement, and thus of exposing participants' minds to new possibilities of socio-political change. This cannot be done – at least with the same impact – through representation. The participative character of Babels and the Social Forum initiatives allows people to reshape their view of politics, and of interpreting therein.

These processes of identity formation are tied to their context and to the social spaces where identity is practiced, re-negotiated and reshaped. As Somers argues, ‘narratives are not incorporated into the self in any direct way; rather they are mediated through the enormous spectrum of social and political institutions and practices that constitute our social world’ (Somers 1992, 625). Thus, ‘our’ stories are mediated by and composed of interpersonal and institutional accounts and practices, but these practices are variable and open to challenge and reassessment (Somers and Gibson 1994, 625). This means that the study of activism cannot draw on static definitions of communities and people – of Babels as a group of activists and the professional community as a group of non-activists – but requires locating actors in the shifting and processual nature of their spatial and temporal configuration, where they become exposed to narratives and actively construct their narratives about themselves and the world around them, and (re)orient their behaviour.

This is where the notion of ‘relational setting’ proves particularly significant to conceptualise the Babels network. Defined as a ‘pattern of relationships among institutions, public narratives and social practices’ (Somers and Gibson 1994, 70) that lends shape to identity formation and significance to action (Somers 1992, 626), ‘relational setting’ situates individual actions as well as communities in temporal and spatial configurations of relationships:

[...] social action can only be intelligible if we recognise that people are guided to act by the structural and cultural relationships in which they are embedded and by the stories through which they constitute their identities (624).

While people are guided to act by the space in which they participate, space is also configured by actors’ participatory practices. This means that spaces are not a mere medium of narratives but are constituted by and constitutive of them. Thus, not only actors’ self/collective identities and political agendas but also the spatial configurations in which they are embedded, become a central locus of tensions among actors.

If processes of identity formation and activism shape and are shaped by ambivalent, contested and constantly evolving spatial configurations, it follows that we can no longer approach the social world as an integral whole but that ‘these systemic typologies must be broken apart and their parts disaggregated and reassembled on the basis of relational clusters’ (Somers and Gibson 1994, 70). By doing so, we re-position all kinds of societal contexts within a ‘network’ or a ‘relational matrix’ (Somers 1992, 626). ‘Relational setting’, in Somers and Gibson’s (1994) terms, allows the re-conceptualisation of society as fractal, open-ended and relational, and in this sense is not a mere analytical tool, but an inescapable storied construction of our social world, one that should be extended to all units of analysis: institutional structures, communities and individual actors. Conceptualising Babels as a group of people, a set of practices and as a space, i.e. as a relational setting, allows to account for the ways in which the network as a whole is constructed and negotiated by its own members, and by the other communities it is related to, such as the Social Forum and the professional conference interpreting community.

Conceptualising society as a relational setting challenges the view of social change as a shift from one single system to another. A relational setting like the Social Forum and Babels, and the processes of identity formation within them, must be explored over time

and space and the change they embody ought to be approached as relational, communicational and contentious. This invites the researcher to locate change in people's and community modes of being, of behaving in relation to one another within relational settings. This approach is particularly attuned to prefigurative movements:

The Alter-Globalisation Movement is attempting, every day, to prefigure radical social change. The prefiguration is not impatiently utopian, it is patiently realistic. There seems to be an awareness that they do not have all the skills needed to replace capitalism or the nation-state or both or neither with *another world*, but they are convinced they can learn. Part of that learning process is the creation of other worlds in the here and now (Maeckelbergh 2007, 149).

Methods and techniques

Socio-narrative theory provides analytical tools. Baker draws on Somers and Gibson's typology of narratives, and the features of narrativity of Bruner and of Somers and Gibson, to provide a model of analysis of translation. The model equips the analyst to examine how translators (and translation agents), not only contribute to the circulation of narratives but also mediate them and refract them as they translate across contexts, audiences and political agendas.

In my own work, I have used the typology and the features to look at identity, action, space and change in the Babels community, but I have not focused on how Babels interpreters reframe narratives when they are in the booth. The ethnonarrative methodology proposed here certainly encompasses this possibility, but I will not delve into it here, given the limits of this paper and because Baker's and Harding's models provide a robust framework to do so. In the remainder of this paper, I briefly present the types and features I have retained and refined for the ethnography of Babels. My aim is to illustrate how narrative theory provides appropriate methods and techniques for an ethnography of contemporary, translational, activist communities, increasingly mediated by online technologies.

Somers and Gibson's (1994, 44–61) typology breaks down the abstract notion of narrative into different dimensions that are all interconnected: *ontological (personal) narratives*, the stories we elaborate about ourselves and about other individuals to make sense of our social life, and through which we process events into episodes; *public narratives*, the stories shared by formations larger than the individuals – family, media, government agencies, organisations and networks, and to which we adhere or oppose according to what resonates or dissonates with our experience; *conceptual narratives*, the stories that researchers construct about knowledge in the human and social sciences; *professional narratives* (which I added to the typology), the 'stories and explanations that professionals elaborate for themselves and others about the nature and ethos of their activity' (Boéri 2008, 26); meta-narratives, the narratives 'in which we are embedded as contemporary actors in history' (Somers and Gibson 1994, 61), built on homogenising and streamlining a complex reality into broad abstractions, and often enjoying the support of dominant communities (Baker 2006, 45).

For the purpose of ethnographing activist networks, I streamline these different types into two broad conceptual categories, namely, 'narrative location' and 'narrative position'.

Narrative locations consist of the dynamic intersection of various types of narratives larger than the individual converging into one's personal narrative and mediating one's experience of the world, and sense of identity. Configuring a prism for the various stances we may take as an individual on various aspects of the world around us, our narrative location is subject to internal and continuous negotiation among the various narratives we consider subscribing to at any moment in time. The constant negotiation and power struggle among the narrative locations of different social actors shape *narrative positions* of their groups. 'narrative position', thus, refers to the collective, public position of a community of individuals, which (selectively) streamlines the narrative locations of its members. They emerge out of a tension between diversity (through processes of deliberation, participation and inclusion) and uniformity (through processes of representation, alienation and exclusion) and are key to develop a sense of collective identity, action and space of our communities, but also of the larger societal fabric within which we and they are embedded.

Narrative locations and *narrative positions* overlap with Harding's notions of 'personal' and 'shared' narratives, since she defines personal narratives as 'those that individuals construct about the self' and narrative positions as 'constructed collectively about the collective [...] through processes of collaboration, consensus and coercion' (Harding 2012, 292). However, they differ in scope since narrative locations do not only encompass self-referentiality (the construction of the self, be it individual or collective), but also extra-referentiality (how individuals construct others and the world around them). A cross-analysis of narrative locations and positions allows to explore 'processes of collaboration, consensus and coercion' (ibid), but the concepts I put forward more specifically include within their breadth the different types of narratives which individuals and collectives draw on when locating/positioning themselves at a given moment in time, on a given matter of concern of their community. They equip the ethnonarrator to examine the multiple narrative locations that are constructed in the community with which they engage and to identify which ones make their way into the community narrative position in time and space.

The four narrativity features identified by Somers (Somers 1992, 1997), and Somers and Gibson's (1994), provide tools to gain granularity in the cross-examination of narrative locations and positions. Those are *temporality* (the sequencing of events in time and space), *selective appropriation* (selecting or weighting particular events at the expense of others), and *causal emplotment* (gearing the plot towards a particular moral outcome). It is through patterns of narrativity that the network and its members make sense of who they are (narrative identity), of the spaces they participate in or reject (relational settings), and how and why they behave as they do in this world (narrative action).

The selection and development of these theoretical tools is indissociable of my concomitant participation in Babels. After the London ESF, my participation in the network moved online, except for the week during which a Social Forum was taking place. I was thus involved in the deliberations on the mailing lists and the online forum on many different topics that mattered to me and the members, and witnessed the socio-technical deployment of Babels.org as well as the emergence of key institutional texts projecting Babels' narrative position to the outside world.

The narratives tools were thus shaped by, and applied to, an online ethnography of Babels. Online ethnography was the natural method to use, as Babels.org provided me

with a site for ‘complete participation’ (Spradley 1980, 59–62) and selective observations (33), of a living fabric of texts, images and relational settings being woven under my eyes. While the raw materials of narrative analysis are individual and collective text productions in their authentic context (like in an ‘ethnography of speaking’, cf. Hymes 1962), my interest in the power-embedded construction of narrative locations and positions in a horizontal network like Babels, necessarily enlarges the lenses to the hypertextual architecture of Babels.org within which these productions take place. Such emphasis on the cooperative and conflictive nature of the ethnographic situation extends the focus from ‘text’ to ‘discourse’ (Tyler 1986, 126; in Chuan 2020, 170), which underpins the materiality of Babels.org.

An ethnographic account of Babels’ complex, heterogenous and dynamic environment raised the technical and political question of delimiting the analysis, selecting the data which are key features of the narrative constructed by the participant researcher. I selected the themes that mattered most to the network (what is referred to in ethnography as an ‘emic’ perspective; see Sonuga-Barke 2014, 301–303), judging from their recurrency in the discussions from one social forum to another: Babels’ scope of involvement (Boéri 2014), decision-making processes (Boéri 2015a), and financial structure, covered below. I undertook a longitudinal study of Babels’ narrative position on these three themes (from 2002 to 2010), cross-examined with the narrative locations constructed by contributors to online discussion in Babels’ deliberative arena. This entailed that I selected individual contributions (in the mailing lists and in the online forum) and institutional texts (minutes of meetings, the Charter of Principles and other key collective texts) and sequenced them according to a diachronic logic. This ‘ethnography of speaking’ (Hymes 1962) extends to what Hymes himself referred to as an ‘ethnography of communication’ (Hymes 1964), in the sense that beyond utterances and texts, the analysis retraced the continuous flows of information. In so doing, my narrative as a researcher tells the story of Babels’ development as an ‘online community of practice’ (Boéri 2015a), mediated by the Babels.org web 2.0 device. From an etic perspective, I then extended the analysis to the ways in which the profession has re-narrated Babels, by examining Peter Naumann’s letter. Finally, I combined an emic and etic perspective in my analysis of Babels.org and Aiic.net (the website of the two organisations at the time) and examined how both were used in an interorganisational conflict over the (re)narration of Babels and the profession, following the publication of Naumann’s letter (see Boéri 2023).

Analysis of data: Babels financial structure

In this section, I show how the ethnonarrative methodology equipped me to construct a narrative of Babels, focusing on the theme of its financial structure. As we shall see, my narrative of Babels, is a plurivocal narrative that draws on participants’ personal and collective narratives, constructed in time and space in Babels.org.

At the time of its emergence in 2002 in Florence, Babels public narrative did not engage with financial issues; a pattern of selective (dis)appropriation closely connected to its collective identity of a political actor *born out of* the communication needs of the forum (About us 2004). Indeed, positioning itself as organic to the social forum, rather than a mere adjunct service provider, entrusted the Social Forum with fundraising and coverage of the costs of interpreters’ accommodation, transport, visa, per diem, etc.

However, financial issues became the subject of a discussion after the Mumbai World Social Forum (WSF) in 2004, thanks to the opening of the Babels e-forum on the website at the time (see WSF Budget 2004). The scarcity of resources, combined with the very large scale of the Social Forum, led to the following scenario in Endriu's personal narrative: participants buy their interpreting radios at a prohibitive price, interpreters have to function in extremely poor working conditions, panellists have to speak in English. This depiction of the scene is weaved into a moral lesson for Babels (causal emplotment), i.e. to adopt a formalised independent financial structure. Endriu's narrative location on the matter of finances weaves a personal narrative of the events in Mumbai (the dream of 'another world is possible' turned into a 'nightmare'), a public narrative of progress and efficiency (achieving the logistical means for effective political change on the ground, to open up a space for communication among movements from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds).

This narrative location overlaps with and differ from those constructed by other members on the same thread. Steph retells the financial experience of the Paris ESF (2003), and the setting up of a non-profit association, suggesting to keep this formalised entity for Babels to have autonomy over (and thus more efficiency) in the financial management. Formalising the organic loose network into an independent entity intersected with Brandelune's narrative location, who in a previous discussion (Invitation a prendre des décisions ensemble 2004), suggested to set up a Babels cooperative. It differed, nevertheless, in the sense that such cooperative was meant to raise funds through paid interpreting. Brandelune's narrative location never made its way in Babels' narrative position, given that independence from the interpreting market has remained throughout the years of this ethnographic work a tenet of Babels' collective identity, action and space since its emergence (cf. Babels Charter 2004).

The proposed shifts towards financial autonomy are strongly contested by several members, like Emma, for instance, who projects a public narrative of Babels as a political actor within the Social Forum and the movement: 'In my opinion Babels simply MUST be part and parcel of the organisation of the WSF and not sit alongside it with its specific and private budget. It is part of the political movement and NOT a separate entity'. Germán selects and quotes individual contributions he opposes (Steph and Emma), under a new thread (Babels Budget and Structure 2004), to develop a counter-narrative:

There is no such thing as "Babels". [...] Say you want to interpret in the WSF. You claim there is an organisation called Babels that will do it, you contact people who are willing to engage themselves in that particular project, you get to work. [...]. That's one key word that some of us use. Project. There is not one "Babels", but as many as projects any of us is willing to work on. [...] This vision excludes rigid organisation. [...] Let each project define its own needs, and together we'll find a way to finance them. But Babels with membership fees, EU subsidies, annual budgets... makes me want to run away screaming.

Germán's narrative location overlaps with Emma's as they both oppose turning Babels into an independent entity, but slightly differ in their public and conceptual narratives of how social movements operate. While Emma considers the Social Forum and Babels as one entity, Germán frames the network as evolving out of a multiplicity of bottom-up projects, with a view to granting Babels' coordinators considerable – indeed unlimited – agency. Germán's narrative location is constructed at the intersection of a conceptual

narrative of bottom-up knowledge production and a public narrative of Babels as a horizontal, decentralised network fully organic to the Social Forums or any other projects with which it engages. Steph's response to Germán highlights how his narrative location eschews (deselects) the practical consequences on the ground, which had prompted Endriu to initiate the discussion in the first place:

What is a contradiction, is the desire to improve things, get better and decent working conditions, creating projects, without really grasping the means to do so. Organization DOES NOT mean hierarchy.

A hybrid narrative position emerged in the London ESF preparatory meeting in Brussels (Brussels Meeting Archives: Workshop on Participation and Decision-Making 2004). It discarded an independent self-funded structure for the network but incorporated the need to have the financial means to function from one project to another. It was decided that each forum should allocate 5% of the interpreting budget to a Knowledge Transmission Fund (KTF), for Babels to have the financial means to meet in order to report on experience, transfer knowledge, and for the team in charge of the following project to have some cashflow until the next forum would raise a budget. Babels thus positions its projects (and their interpreting finances) as organic to the Social Forum organisational processes, but at the same time it positions itself as a long-term entity and partner of the Social Forum, operating between forums. However, after London, the KTF was not raised because of the endemic financial difficulties of the Social Forum. Thus, Babels experienced recurrent lack of cash flow to operate between projects, posing organisational difficulties, and contradicting Babels' public narrative of full organicity to the forum. As reported by Leda, in the Quito Foro Social de las Americas (Leda 2004), the uneasy division between management of money (dealt with by forum organisers), and interpreting organisation (dealt with by Babels), placed the coordination team in an in-between position that left them accountable for the logistical guarantees given to volunteer interpreters, while remaining 'powerless' over the budget that would secure those guarantees.

In addition to the lack of a cash flow, the money eventually raised by Social Forum organisers was limited, meaning that Babels had to negotiate the means to fulfil its political role of increasing participation at the Forum. For instance, in Porto Alegre WSF (2005), Babels rejected the organisers' suggestion to reduce the number of rooms with interpretation by half, favouring plenary sessions where famous intellectuals were scheduled to speak (November Meetings in Porto Alegre 2004). In so doing, they enacted Babels' narrative position as a political actor in the organisational process, which contributes 'to the definition of the project itself with [its] ideas and demands' and 'experiments in linguistic activism and horizontal organisation' (About us 2004) rather than one that acts as a service provider willing to forego its prefigurative principles when faced with financial constraints.

At the same time, as a political actor, Babels has to find innovative ways of dealing with the great financial pressures on the Social Forum organisers. In Bamako WSF (2006), for instance, Babels team reported the following story:

When the most experienced of us arrived, 4 days before the opening of the Forum, we jointly decided to work on the basis of our human and material means and not on the needs of the programme. This allowed us to focus on providing a real presence of interpretation and the best quality possible where possible, rather than acting according to where we should be,

thus resisting potential pressures. When we arrived, we, the African Social Forum and the Organising Committee of Bamako 2006, identified 14 politically central conferences for the Forum, spread across different sites and taking place on different dates, where interpreting was indispensable. For the rest, we did what we could. (*Rapport final – Projet Bamako 2006 – FSM polycentré, 2006, my translation from French*).

The means at disposal on D-Day (the number of interpreters, their languages and the equipment available) are a clear limitation to Babels' capacity to cover all the needs of the Social Forum. The plot constructed above is guided by and geared towards *qualitative* participation wherever the political stakes of interpreting are high. This narrative position clearly frames Babels as organic to the Social Forum in terms of financial constraints and organisational levers, as an actor entrusted with key political decisions. At the same time, a qualitative, conceptual narrative incorporates the professional narratives of expertise and efficiency that justified the call for Babels' financial independence among some narrative locations (Endriu, Leda, Steph, to name just a few).

This scenario of on-site fixing of the problems has been recurrent in all Social Forums to different degrees and has led Babels coordinators to be increasingly upfront as regards financial needs ahead of the forum. In the case of Nairobi WSF (2007), the Babels' team decided to pull out, a crisis which invited Gregoire to reflect on Babels' structural relationship with the Social Forum:

If Babels is a bona fide member of the IC [International Council], why has it not become a practice for the IC to deliberate and decide on how best to support Babels as an ongoing partnership, rather than leave it to the transient event organisations . . . (Gregoire, in *Edward Oyugi's reply to the Babels letter to the Nairobi IC, 2008*)

This narrative location overlaps with Emma's and, to a certain extent, with the narrative position achieved in Brussels: Babels' organic relation to the long-term Social Forum process (activated here through the reference to the IC),⁵ beyond 'transient event organisations', should dotate Babels with the necessary means between particular events.

The Social Forum, like Babels, are underpinned by a tension between a conceptual, and public narrative of the social movement space as project-based, decentralised, horizontal, or as a formalised entity entrusted with fundraising, budget management, and top-down overseeing of the organisation of each event. As we have seen, both Babels and the Social Forum players navigate between these two conflicting narrative positions. Failure to obtain the required means in the preparatory phase has led Babels to pull out from several events (Tunis WSF, 2015 and then Montreal WSF, 2016) after which the Babels community has been mostly inactive on Babels.org.

Conclusion

The ethnonarrative methodology proposed in this paper empowers researchers to construct a narrative about the community they contribute to in ways that do justice to the internal dynamics of narrative construction within contemporary, prefigurative networks. Narrative methods and techniques of analysis allow researchers to produce a 'primary text' for an academic audience. Bal defines a primary text as 'a finite, structured whole composed of language signs [. . .] in which an agent relates ("tells") a story in a particular medium' (Bal 1985/1977:5, in Harding 2012, 296), and within which the agent/narrator

[here the researcher] embeds personal and collective voices produced elsewhere. This process is underpinned by the patterns of selective appropriation (what event/voice to select), temporality (their sequencing in time and space) and causal emplotment (steering the narrative towards a moral outcome). It is indissociable from my narrative location, as a volunteer interpreter and coordinator, and translation and interpreting scholar, and from my attempt to contribute to change the mainstream narrative position in interpreting studies. The field's descriptive-empirical tradition has sidelined politically engaged approaches (contrary to, say, literary translation, for instance). Its uncritical ties with the conference interpreting elites (see Boéri 2015b) has marginalised the communities of professionals and/or activists at the margins of the field and of the polity, and in so doing, their views, their practical difficulties in enacting them, and the experiential knowledge they construct across languages, cultures, and contexts, about interpreting politics and logistics. This ethnonarrative account of Babels (finances) contributes to show that contrary to mainstream narratives of interpreting in the field and, to a certain extent, in some activist circles (see Boéri and Delgado Luchner 2021), interpreting is not a mere adjunct service provided according to demand and supply, and a priori rules of expertise and quality, but a promising political lever for a bottom up, multilingual transformation of knowledge, power and society.

The relative inactivity of Babels.org since the mid-2010s demands to extend the ethnonarrative account of the network beyond this web 2.0 platform which Babels-tech developed in the mid-2000s. A Facebook group was created in 2011 under the name 'Solidarity Interpreting – Volunteer interpreters/translators for Social Mov', with 5543 members at the time of writing this paper. According to its 'A Propos' tab, it explicitly adheres to the Babels Charter, but with the following disclaimer:

This hang out is not an "official" Babels forum (whatever that might be, since there are no Babels 'officials') It is a "friendly get together" of interpreters - many of them being more or less involved with Babels and the Social Forums/Movements - who are interested in donating some time and expertise to assist and support social movements in their work. There are no leaders or opinion-makers. And it is not restricted to Babels "members" (if there is such a thing).⁶

This framing of the Facebook group positions it as aligned to Babels spirit but as a non-official Babels space. This contrasts with Babels.org whose URL name and overall contents and activity leaves no doubt about its 'official' status. But the latter is immediately followed by the downplaying of this very possibility in a network meant to be horizontal. Paradoxically then, the two sites are equated in the process: the official space (babels.org) is no more official than the one disclaiming officiality (Facebook group). However, it is worth noting that the dynamics of communication in a Facebook group differ from those of a participatory web: discussions are occasional and are not meant to be deliberative or to lead to consensus on a particular matter; decisions over where and how to be involved are devolved to individuals and generally not the object of a collective discussion; there is thus no apparent attempt to develop a sense of a community beyond working (as a volunteer or otherwise) for the political causes one wishes to support at any moment in time.

Be it in or outside Babels, in or beyond the Facebook group, many activist interpreters have continued to develop alternative interpreting projects across social movements

contexts, with varying degrees of online visibility. La Via Campesina, a transnational movement of peasants to advance food sovereignty, is a case in point (Froidevaux and Müller 2018). In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, transnational social movements are increasingly communicating through online platforms (Zoom, in particular), disclosing new challenges and levers for the politics and logistics of interpreting. Online participant observation of actual interpreting (including cross-language analysis of interpreting) seems now much more accessible than it used to be. The ethnographic methodology includes methods and techniques of analysis for on-site, online and hybrid participant-observation, and can extend to interviews and cross-language examination of interpreting performance.

However, technological hypes (be it the participatory web in the 2000s, social media in the 2010s or online videoconferencing platforms in the 2020s) should not eschew the importance of putting into perspective the effect of technical devices on narratives of activist interpreting. In this sense, the inclusion of interviews in narrative analysis of interpreting (organisational) practice (see Boéri and Giustini *in press*) has the potential to go beyond what is made visible and accessible online, and to decentre analyses to reach the other side of the digital divide that is still very present in social movements and society at large.

Notes

1. See De Manuel Jerez (2002), followed by his PhD Thesis (2006).
2. See De Manuel Jerez, Cortés, and de la Iglesia (2004), Balsalobre et al. (2010).
3. Indeed, there were tensions between Babels-UK and the wider network because of the former's decision to negotiate three job positions, for three months before the forum, to assist and support the Babels network. While it conflicted with the volunteer identity of Babels, it was in line with previous practice in the Paris ESF. The difference was that by contrast with poorly paid internships, the positions in London were paid at market rate for qualified labour. The unease in the network was also due to the lack of consultation outside of Babels-UK, which was not systematic given the lack of clear decision-making mechanisms at the time.
4. For an action research approach to the sit-prep, see Boéri (2010), Boéri and De Manuel Jerez (2011).
5. The IC was set up after the first WSF in Porto Alegre, to ensure international continuity of the initiative (see *IC – Nature, responsibilities, composition and functioning*, 2002).
6. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/babelistas/about> (last accessed 15 January 2022).

Acknowledgments

I am indebted to two anonymous reviewers of this paper for their valuable and supportive feedback. I also feel beholden for the contributions Babels members have made to the cause in and beyond Babels over the years. Last but not least, I hope this paper pays tribute to Jesús de Manuel Jerez and Mona Baker for their teaching, mentoring and companionship as I was doing this ethnographic work, and for the indelible mark they have left on my political, professional, and academic aspirations.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

Open Access funding provided by Qatar National Library.

Notes on contributor

Julie Boéri is Associate Professor in Translation, Interpreting and Intercultural Communication at Hamad Bin Khalifa University. She holds a PhD in Translation and Intercultural Studies from the University of Manchester, a Master's degree in Translation and Interpreting from the University of Granada (Spain). As a member of ECOS and Babels, she has interpreted and/or coordinated interpreting in many social justice initiatives in Europe and Latin America. Her work focuses on the translational nature of contemporary social movements and civil society, and on the ethics of translation and interpreting. She co-edited (with Carol Maier, Kent State University, USA) the bilingual English and Spanish book *Compromiso Social y Traducción/Interpretación – Translation/Interpreting and Social Activism*. She has published her work in varying outlets in English, French and Spanish: *Qualitative Research* (Sage Publishing), *The Translator* (Taylor & Francis), *Translation and Interpreting Studies* (John Benjamins), *Quaderns, Puentes, The Translator and Interpreter Trainer, Meta: journal des traducteurs, Hermès, Language and Communication, Revues des Sciences de l'Information et de la Communication*, among others. She has regularly contributed to Routledge Handbooks and Encyclopaediae (on citizen media, translation, interpreting, ethics and activism). She is co-Vice-President of IATIS, the International Association of Translation and Intercultural Studies.

ORCID

Julie Boéri  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1013-4806>

References

Primary sources

- About us, in <https://www.babels.org/spip.php?article272>, 15 June 2004, accessed 15 September 2022.
- Babels Budget and Structure, in <http://www.babels.org/forum/viewtopic.php?f=14&t=59>, 2 February 2004, no longer accessible [personal archive].
- Babels Charter, in <https://www.babels.org/spip.php?article1>, 15 June 2004, accessed 15 September 2022.
- Booth Planning, in <https://www.babels.org/spip.php?article162>, 7 March 2005, accessed 15 September 2022.
- Brussels Meeting Archives: Workshop on Participation and Decision-Making, in <http://www.babels.org/wiki/BrusselsReportParticipation>, 30 July 2004, no longer accessible [personal archive].
- Edward Oyugi's reply to the Babels letter to the Nairobi IC, in <http://www.babels.org/forum/viewtopic.php?f=41&t=801>, 22 October 2008, no longer accessible [personal archive].
- ESF Babels Coordinators' Statement, in <http://www.babels.org/article88.html>, 21 October 2004, accessed 15 September 2022.
- IC – Nature, responsibilities, composition and functioning, in http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/main.php?id_menu=4_2_2_1&cd_language=2, 28 August 2002, no longer accessible [personal archive].
- Invitation à Prendre des Décisions Ensemble, in <http://www.babels.org/forum/viewtopic.php?f=10&t=79>, 17 February 2004, no longer accessible [personal archive].
- Leda, "FSA Report: a logistics point of view." in <https://www.babels.org/spip.php?article12>, 27 October 2004, accessed 15 September 2022.

November Meetings in Porto Alegre, in <https://www.babels.org/spip.php?article18>, 23 November 2004, accessed 15 September 2022.

SitPrep didactic DVDs, <https://www.babels.org/spip.php?rubrique27>, 2004, accessed 15 September 2022.

WSF Budget, in <http://www.babels.org/forum/viewtopic.php?f=23&t=58>, 1 February 2004, no longer accessible [personal archive].

Secondary references

Baker, M. 2006. *Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account*. London & New York: Routledge.

Bal, M. 1985/1997. *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Boéri, J. 2008. "A Narrative Account of the Babels Vs. Naumann Controversy." *The Translator* 14 (1): 21–50. doi:10.1080/13556509.2008.10799248.

Boéri, J. 2010. "Emerging Narratives of Conference Interpreters' Training: A Case Study of Ad Hoc Training in Babels and the Social Forum." *Puentes* 9: 61–70. <https://www.ugr.es/~greti/puentes/puentes9/08-Julie-Boeri.pdf>.

Boéri, J. 2012. "Translation/Interpreting Politics and Praxis." *The Translator* 18 (2): 269–290. doi:10.1080/13556509.2012.10799511.

Boéri, J. 2014. "Vers Une Approche Communicationnelle de l'engagement: Les Récits Des Traducteurs-Interprètes Du Réseau Babels Dans Le Mouvement Altermondialiste." *Revue française des sciences de l'information et de la communication* 5 (5). <http://rfsic.revues.org/1172>

Boéri, J. 2015a. "Émergence d'une Communauté Virtuelle de Pratique: Regards Croisés Sur Les Dispositifs et Les Récits." In *Communications Organisationnelles, Management et Numérique*, edited by S. Parrini-Alemanno, 309–319. Paris: L'Harmattan.

Boéri, J. 2015b. "Key Players in the Development of the Interpreting Profession." In *Routledge Encyclopedia of Interpreting Studies*, edited by H. Mikkelsen and R. Jourdenais, 29–44. London, UK: Routledge.

Boéri, J. 2023. "Interorganizational Conflict in the Participatory Web: (Re)narrating the Interpreting and (re)imagining the Community". In *Translation in Society, 2(1); Special Issue: Translation and the Formation of Collectivities*, edited by D. Dizdar and T. Rozmyslowicz, 71–95. doi: 10.1075/tris.22003.boe.

Boéri, J., and S. Hodkinson. 2004. *Babels and the Politics of Language at the Heart of the Social Forum*. Redpepper December.

Boéri, J., and J. De Manuel Jerez. 2011. "From Training Skilled Conference Interpreters to Educating Reflective Citizens." *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer* 5(1): 27–50. doi: 10.1080/13556509.2011.1079881.

Boéri, J., and C. Delgado Luchner. 2021. "The Ethics of Activist Translation and Interpreting." In *The Routledge Handbook on Translation and Ethics*, edited by K. Koskinen and N. K. Pokorn, 261–265. London & New York: Routledge.

Boéri, J., and D. Giustini. in Press. "Qualitative Research in Crisis: A Narrative-Practice Methodology to delve into the discourse and action of the unheard in the Covid-19 Pandemic." *Qualitative Research*. doi:10.1177/14687941231155620.

Bruner, J. 1991. "The Narrative Construction of Reality." *Critical Inquiry* 18 (1): 1–21. doi:10.1086/448619.

Buzelin, H. 2004. "La Traductologie, l'Éthnographie et La Production Des Connaissances." *Meta: Translators' Journal* 49 (4): 729–746. doi:10.7202/009778ar.

Clifford, J. 1988. *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

De Angelis, M. 2005. "PR like Process! Strategies from the Bottom-Up." *Ephemera* 5 (2): 193–204.

De Manuel Jerez, J. 2002. "Cómo Formar Intérpretes Contando Con Los Estudiantes." *Puentes* 3 (11): 11–18.

- De Manuel Jerez, J. 2006. *La Incorporación de La Realidad Profesional a La Formación de Intérpretes de Conferencias Mediante Las Nuevas Tecnologías y La Investigación-Acción*. Universidad de Granada. <http://hera.ugr.es/tesisugr/15891574.pdf>
- De Manuel Jerez, J., J. López Cortés, and M. Brander de la Iglesia. 2004. "Traducción e Interpretación, Voluntariado y Compromiso Social." *Puentes* 4: 65–72.
- Dowling, E. 2005. "The Ethics of Engagement Revisited: Remembering the ESF 2004." *Ephemera* 5 (2): 205–215.
- Fisher, W. 1997. "Narration, Reason, and Community." In *Memory, Identity, Community: The Idea of Narrative in the Human Sciences*, edited by S. Hinchman, 307–327. New York: Albany State University of New York Press.
- Froidevaux, A., and E. Müller. 2018. *Without Translation, No Hay Revolución!: The Importance of Interpretation, Translation and Language Justice in Building Global Counter-Power*. TNI Longreads (State Power). <https://longreads.tni.org/stateofpower/without-translation-no-hay-revolucion>
- Harding, S.-A. 2012. "How Do I Apply Narrative Theory?: Socio-Narrative Theory in Translation Studies." *Target* 24 (2): 286–309. doi:10.1075/target.24.2.04har.
- Hermans, T. S., A. Harding, and J. Boéri. 2022. "A Conversation about Narrative and Translation *Cultus*". *The Journal of Intercultural Mediation and Communication* 15: 16–39. <https://www.cultusjournal.com/index.php/>
- Hymes, D. 1962. "The Ethnography of Speaking." In *Anthropology and Human Behavior*, edited by T. Gladwin and W. Sturtevant, 13–53. Washington, D.C: Anthropology Society of Washington.
- Hymes, D. 1964. "Introduction: Toward Ethnographies of Communication." *American Anthropologist* 66 (6): 1–34. doi:10.1525/aa.1964.66.suppl_3.02a00010.
- James, W. 1896/1912. *The Will to Believe*. 2nd ed. London: Longman.
- Kirkwood, W. 1992. "Narrative and the Rhetoric of Possibility." *Communication Monographs* 59 (1): 30–47. doi:10.1080/03637759209376247.
- Maeckelbergh, M. 2007. *Decentralized Network Democracy: Prefiguring Horizontality and Diversity in the Alterglobalization Movement*. University of Sussex.
- Naumann, P. 2005. "Babels and Nomad – Observations on the Barbarising of Communication at the 2005 World Social Forum." *Communicate!* <http://aiic.net/page/1800/babels-and-nomad-observations-on-the-barbarising-of-communication-at-the-2005-world-social-forum/lang/1>
- Pastinelli, M. 2011. "Pour En Finir Avec l'ethnographie Du Virtuel !" *Anthropologie et Sociétés* 35 (1–2): 35. doi:10.7202/1006367ar.
- Pérez-González, L. 2010. "'Ad-Hocracies' of Translation Activism in the Blogosphere: A Genealogical Case Study." In *Text and Context Essays on Translation and Interpreting in Honour of Ian Mason*, edited by M. Baker, M. Olohan, and M. C. Pérez, 259–287. Manchester: St Jerome Publishing.
- Perrino, S. 2021. "Narratives as Discursive Practices in Interviews." *Narrative Inquiry* 31 (1): 72–96. doi:10.1075/ni.20086.per.
- Polletta, F. 2002. *Freedom Is an Endless Meeting*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Sánchez Balsalobre, L., E. Monteoliva García, J. De Manuel Jerez, and E. Romero Gutiérrez. 2010. "ECOS: 12 Years Breaking down the Barriers of Silence and Languages." In *Compromiso Social y Traducción/Interpretación – Translation/Interpreting and Social Activism*, edited by J. Boéri and C. Maier, 7–18. Granada: ECOS.
- Somers, M. 1992. "Narrativity, Narrative Identity, and Social Action: Rethinking English Working Class Formation." *Social Science History* 16 (4): 591–630. doi:10.2307/1171314.
- Somers, M. 1997. *Deconstructing and Reconstructing Class Formation Theory: Narrativity, Relational Analysis, and Social Theory*, R. Class and H. John. 73–106. New York: Cornell University Press.
- Somers, M., and G. Gloria. 1994. "Reclaiming the Epistemological 'Other': Narrative and the Social Constitution of Identity." In *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity*, edited by C. J. Calhoun, 37–99. Oxford UK / Cambridge USA: Blackwell.

- Sonuga-Barke, E. 2014. "Editorial: Building Global Science Capacity in Child Psychology and Psychiatry - between the Etic and Emic of Cross-Cultural Enquiry." *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 55 (4): 301–303. doi:10.1111/jcpp.12234.
- Spradley, J. 1980. *Participant Observation*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Sullivan, L. L. 2005. "Activism, Affect and Abuse: Emotional Contexts and Consequences of the ESF 2004 Organising Process." *Ephemera* 5 (2): 344–369.
- Tyler, S. A. 1986. "Post-Modern Ethnography: From Document of the Occult to Occult Document." In *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, edited by J. Clifford and G. Marcus, 122–140. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Yu, Chuan. 2020. "Ethnography." In *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, edited by Mona Baker and Gabriela Saldanha, 167–71. London and New York: Routledge.