

Translation, War and Humanitarian Action: A Case Study of the Kindertransporte to Switzerland

Authors : Lisa Mockli, Chelsea Sambells

Abstract : By combining the methodologies of history and translation studies, this study will explore the interplay between humanitarian action, politics, and translation within the advertising for a lesser-known Swiss child evacuation project of some 60.000 Belgium and French children to Switzerland for three month periods from 1940 to 1945. Inspired by Descriptive-Explanatory Translation Studies, this project compares Swiss speeches published between May and September 1942 (the termination of the evacuations). Radio broadcasts, leaflets and newspapers will triangulate the data. First, linguistic and content-related differences will be identified and described. Second, based on findings from the Swiss Federal Archives, the evidence from the comparative textual analysis will then be evaluated in order to explore how the speeches were modified, for what purpose, and which key issues were raised during their modification. By exploring these questions, this paper provides new insights into (I) Switzerland's understanding of Swiss neutrality and humanitarianism during the Second World War, (II) the role of children in war and (III) the role of translation in shaping political discourse and humanitarian action. Moreover, this interdisciplinary approach also demonstrates how scholarly collaboration may help to make some elements of humanitarian action more self-reflexive and effective.

Keywords : children, history, humanitarianism, politics, translation

Conference Title : ICRCRC 2016 : International Conference on the Red Cross and Red Crescent

Conference Location : London, United Kingdom

Conference Dates : November 24-25, 2016