PHELAN, Mary; RUDVIN, Mette; SKAADEN, Hanne; and KERMIT, Patrick Stefan. Ethics in Public Service Interpreting. London & New York, Routledge, 2020, 206 pp., ISBN 978-1-138-88615-5

Ethics in Public Service Interpreting (2020) focuses entirely on ethics in public service interpreting settings. This book presents a comprehensive analysis of ethical theories, codes of ethics and professional ethics in public service interpreting. Despite often being referred to as an edited volume, this is in fact a four-author book that brings together the expertise of four scholars who together explore a fundamental yet controversial aspect of public service interpreting: ethics.

In the Introduction, Patrick Stefan Kermit, a Norwegian Sign Language interpreter, delves into ethical theories and their potential uses and applications for public service interpreters. In this section, Kermit discusses utilitarian and deontological ethics. The former considers that an action is ethical as long as the effect is favourable regardless of the action being right or wrong whereas the latter views an action as ethical based on the good intention behind it and not on the effect of the action. In his discussion, the author analyses how moral principles from utilitarian and deontological ethics have been relevant to the practice of sign-language interpreters in Norway. He examines interpreters' ethics in the pre-professional era of Norwegian Sign Language (NSL) interpreters in the 1970s, and how their ethics gradually evolved as interpreter training began to be offered in the late 1970s and early 1980s, giving birth to the professional era of sign language interpreters in Norway. Kermit exemplifies utilitarianism being carried out by pre-professional interpreters when lending support to the Deaf and trying to create a favourable impression of them during the interpreter-mediated encounter. On the other hand, deontological ethics are linked to the development of training courses for NSL interpreters. This early professional era of sign language interpreters in Norway led to the creation of ethical codes of conduct in the 1980s and 1990s. The first code of ethics for NSL interpreters was created in 1983 stemming from the cooperation between the Norwegian Deaf Association and the Association for Sign Language Interpreters. Interpreting ethics gradually evolved since an awareness was developed by NSL interpreters that their task was not to secure desirable outcomes for the Deaf, but to interpret and promote their autonomy. The author highlights that both the utilitarian and deontological approaches to the ethics of NSL interpreters had merits yet were problematic at the same time. On the one hand, while the deontological

approach had sought to promote the Deaf people's autonomy, it also caused some interpreters to conduct themselves in a rule-based fashion rather than professionally and ethically. Although the author asserts that modern-day NSL interpreters' practice has continued to evolve to consider the complexities of the interpreter-mediated encounter and that the interpreter's conduct is not only influenced by professional ethics, the author does not discuss the extent to which (if any) the utilitarian and deontological moral principles are still in effect or if there are any other ethical theories behind the practice of NSL interpreters today.

Mette Rudvin's chapter (Part 1) is dedicated to ethical theories. She discusses how ethics has been approached by macro-disciplines such as theology and philosophy, and specifically by moral philosophy. An in-depth overview is presented on issues, philosophers and historical periods relevant to the philosophy of ethics. The author offers an analysis of the four macro-areas of moral philosophy 1) virtue and 'the good'; 2) duty and responsibility; 3) consequences of actions and utility; and 4) justice and equality. Rudvin links these macro-areas to core ethical tenets in public service interpreting: accuracy (virtue and 'the good' and duty and responsibility); and impartiality and confidentiality (justice and equality). A differentiation is made regarding personal/private and public/professional regulatory principles, the former being related to morals or morality and the latter to a code of conduct or ethics. The author emphasises that life-changing decisions and ethical conduct are at the core of professions such as medicine and law. Therefore, since medical and legal professionals often rely on interpreters to provide service to users, the interpreter needs to have acquired interpreting skills through training in order to reflect the care and responsibility that medical and legal professionals are expected to exercise with service users. In this chapter, the author overviews ethical theories such as virtue ethics, deontology, consequentialism, existentialism, relativism and evolutionary ethics. She examines the historical context and philosophers involved in the conception of these theories and explores ethical tenets applicable to public service interpreting. Although an effort has been made to link the philosophy of ethics to the development of professional ethics in public service interpreting, the discussion is kept to an abstract and general level without delving deeply into ethical issues in the public service interpreter's day-to-day practice. Despite this, the insightfulness of the analysis of the ethical theories covered is remarkable and serves as a robust foundation for further exploration of interpreter ethics from a philosophical point of view. A future edition of this chapter could include analyses of the ethical theories covered drawing on contemporary historical accounts of interpreters' practice, to be found in sources such as Morris (1999) and Giambruno (2008).

In Part 2, Mary Phelan overviews interpreter associations and company-specific codes of ethics around the world. This chapter is introduced with a brief discussion of historical examples of court interpreter ethics and a chronological overview of the establishment of translator and interpreter associations. Interpreter association codes of ethics were produced by associations to regulate the interpreting profession which in many countries is, still today, heavily unregulated. However, the fact that many of those associations do not have the power to take disciplinary action on serious breaches renders those codes of ethics meaningless. The author argues that the evolving nature and increasing number of specialised interpreting settings make it difficult for interpreters to join interpreter associations unless they can prove through experience or examination that they are eligible to join those associations where qualification or training is not available. Drawing on Schweda-Nicholson's (1994) seven key ethical principles (i.e. role, competence and required skills, impartiality, completeness and accuracy, conflicts of interest, confidentiality and continuing professional development), this section offers a relevant analysis of commonalities and divergences of twenty interpreter association codes of ethics around the world, expanding on Hale's (2007) study. Phelan's analysis shows that not all codes of ethics include the same key ethics principles as one would expect and some, maybe due to questionable practice, go as far as to cover interpreters' compliance of tax obligations, poaching of clients, criticism of colleagues, and corruption and bribery, among other issues. The second part of this chapter offers a much-needed practical discussion on real-life cases where interpreter ethics has been compromised in terms of quality, impartiality, neutrality, role and public comment. These real-life examples of interpreter practice showcase how training, testing and a code of ethics need to be at the core of the interpreting practice.

In Part 3, Hanne Skaaden focuses on professionalisation as a key component to the interpreter's conduct and ethics. As regards the process of professionalisation of ethics and the activity of public service interpreting, Skaaden overviews the concepts of profession, exercise of discretion, trust, virtue and quality. Drawing on Parsons's (1968) criteria for an activity to develop into a profession, the author argues that for the interpreting activity to ensure quality, elements such as clear role definition, emotional neutrality, training and authorisation are essential. Also, in light of sociologists Molander and Terum's (2008) list of performative aspects for an activity to be labelled a *profession*, the author concludes that the interpreting practice is a professional activity. Skaaden argues that although codes of ethics represent norms and values to guide the interpreters' practice, the interpreter needs to exercise discretion to tackle issues not covered in said codes of ethics. However, if an interpreter lacks training and interpreting skills, there is no guarantee that this

exercise of discretion will result in ethical practice. Trust is a factor this chapter links to the concepts of profession and exercise of discretion. End users of professional services trust that the training, certificate or licence and mandate professionals have to make them trustworthy. However, if end users are not often trained in how to work with an interpreter and interpreter training accreditations are neither universally required nor offered, professional ethics and virtue or quality in the interpreters' performance are bound to be problematic.

This book is a valuable contribution to interpreting studies. It provides sound foundations for further study into interpreter ethics from a historical, philosophical or professional point of view. The four authors link interpreter ethics to training and posit that as long as no interpreter training is offered or required, questionable behaviour on the part of interpreters will continue to be a reality. Although the book as a whole aims to target students, interpreter trainees, professional interpreters and users of interpreter services, due to their complexity and philosophical nature, the Introduction and Part 1 will most likely appeal to academics, researchers, or interpreting studies/ethics theorists, whereas Part 2 and Part 3, which are more practice-oriented, will probably fulfil the book's intended purpose. In the interest of cohesion, I consider the book would have benefitted from the authors meaningfully engaging with and making reference to each other's points.

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