

Institution: University College London		
Unit of Assessment: 26 Modern Languages and Linguistics		
Title of case study: Crisis Translation Training as Risk Reduction: improving practice in New Zealand Red Cross, international organizations, and municipal government in Wuhan, China.		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2016 – 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Federico M. Federici	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Professor of Intercultural Crisis Communication	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: 18 September 2014 – present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: August 2017 – August 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words) <p>Professional translators and interpreters working in crisis-affected regions do not necessarily cover all local language needs. When a crisis starts, finding suitable interpreters and translators is difficult and causes logistic and communication delays increasing risks. The INTERACT Crisis Translation project, of which Federici was Co-I, designed training materials to aid translation of crucial information in crises. The project team trained 195 translators from culturally and linguistically diverse communities in New Zealand supporting and building capacity in the local Red Cross. International health network Cochrane used these training materials to support 1,180 medical professionals who volunteer as translators and non-professional volunteers joining Translators without Borders to translate into rare language combinations. This training provided essential support to meet the urgent needs for multilingual communication of the Municipal Government of Wuhan, Hubei Province, China during the early phase of the COVID-19 outbreak (26 January 2020). Additionally, it has underpinned Translators without Borders' onboarding training to enhance COVID-19 communication from February 2020.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words) <p>Federici's research within the INTERACT project (2017-2020) focused on identifying gaps in planning that affect multidirectional communication with multilingual populations, and the role of translator training to fill such gaps. The project united international partners from academia, industry and NGOs and as Co-I, Federici led work packages 2 and 5 that focused on policies research and citizen translator training. In times of humanitarian crises and health epidemics, or in the aftermath of terrorist attacks or disasters, professional translators and interpreters working in crisis-affected regions do not necessarily cover all local language needs (R1). When a crisis erupts, finding suitable interpreters and translators is difficult and causes problems with logistics and communication delays, increasing risks (R2, R3). Sampling national policies of emergency management and international practices of crisis communication (R4) revealed that language support for culturally and linguistically diverse communities is rarely a priority despite the evidence-based increase of risks and strains to healthcare resources when communication fails.</p> <p>Federici coordinated a qualitative analysis of the concerns in the international humanitarian sector through interviews with crisis communication officers of WHO, OCHA, Red Cross, and NGOs (e.g. Oxfam, Harvard Humanitarian Initiative) (R5). Federici also coordinated a survey of translators working in crisis and those who commission their services to establish core training needs to operate in crises. The communication strategies of the international humanitarian sector and the translator survey reflect the state of play described in the specialist literature on crisis communication (R1, R2, R3). The humanitarian sector knows that public health and disaster responses are more effective when using languages that crisis-affected communities understand, yet rarely is there a budget and a clear lead in coordinating language support (R5). Language support tends to be considered only during the most acute phases of emergency response. Federici and O'Brien (R2, R3) call for inclusion of language support during training and simulation exercises to implement emergency plans. Collaboration between crisis and disaster managers and local associations of professional translators and interpreters need to be established when developing plans to support language needs of local populations (R4-R7). Drawing on Federici's individual (R1) and collaborative analysis (R3, R4) of emergency plans</p>		

and needs, the INTERACT Crisis Translation Training (**R6, R7**) emerged as a risk reduction tool to mitigate the impact of the gaps in language support (**R1, R2**) among culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- R1. Federici, F.M.** 2016. Introduction: A state of emergency for crisis communication. In F. M. Federici (ed.), *Mediating Emergencies and Conflicts. Frontline Translating and Interpreting* (1-29). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. [Chapter in peer-reviewed book].
- R2. O'Brien, S. & Federici, F.M.** 2020. Crisis Translation: Making Language Translation Visible in Disaster Prevention and Management. *Disaster Prevention and Management*, 29(1): 129-143. doi:10.1108/DPM-11-2018-0373. [Peer-reviewed journal article].
- R3. Federici, F.M. & O'Brien, S.** 2020. Cascading Crises: translation as risk reduction. In F. M. Federici and S. O'Brien (eds), *Translation in Cascading Crises* (1-22). Abingdon and New York, NY: Routledge. doi: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429341052>. [Chapter in book].
- R4. O'Brien, S., Federici, F.M., Cadwell, P., Marlowe, J., & Gerber, B.** (2018). Language Translation During Disaster. *International Journal of Risk Disaster Reduction*, 31, 627-636. doi: [10.1016/j.ijdrr.2018.07.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdrr.2018.07.006). [Peer-reviewed journal article; submitted to REF2021].
- R5. Federici, F.M., Gerber, B. J., O'Brien, S., & Cadwell, P.** (2019). *The International Humanitarian Sector and Language Translation in Crisis Situations. Assessment of Current Practices and Future Needs*. Report. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/INTERACT-INGO>.
- R6. Federici, F.M., O'Hagan, M., Cadwell, P., O'Brien, S.** 2019. Crisis Translation Training Challenges Arising from New Contexts of Translation. *Training mediators: the future*. Special issue of *Cultus*, 12: 246-279. Open Access. Available at: https://www.cultusjournal.com/files/Archives/Cultus_2019_12_013_Federici_et-al.pdf. [Peer-reviewed open-access journal article].
- R7. Federici, F.M., & Cadwell, P.** 2018. Training Citizen Translators: Red Cross translation needs and the delivery of a bespoke training on the fundamentals of translation. *Translation in non-governmental organisations*. Special issue of *Translation Spaces*, 7(1), 20-43. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1075/ts.00002.fed>. [Peer-reviewed journal article; submitted to REF2021].

Key Research Grants

- 'The International Crisis Translation Network (INTERACT)' (April 2017-March 2020), funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 734211. PI: Prof. Sharon O'Brien (Dublin City University/UCL Visiting Senior Lecturer), Co-I: Prof. Federici. Funder Evaluation Result: 96.40%. Value: EUR279,000 [GBP240,000].
- 'Dislocation in an age of connection: Mapping refugee settlement trajectories within an increasingly mobile world' (March 2019-February 2024), funded by a Rutherford Discovery Fellowship from the Royal Society Te Apārangi of New Zealand. PI: Assoc. Prof. Dr Jay Marlowe. Co-I: Prof. Federici, community translation training strand. Value: NZD800,000 [GBP405,416].

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Multilingual and cross-cultural communication in crises is complex yet crucial (**R1, R2**). Crisis-affected populations may speak only one of the main local languages or be temporary residents (tourism, research, and business travellers) so information provided solely in the main language of the affected area is not enough. Emergency services response is hindered, trust is diminished, and unfounded rumours spread when communication fails. Federici's research has helped to keep people safe in crisis situations, by improving access to reliable information for communities who speak minority languages. In the collaborative INTERACT Crisis Translation project, the co-investigator Federici coordinated work on designing training materials to aid translation of crucial information in crises and on policy-focused work to put forward recommendations to enhance crisis communication strategies in multilingual contexts. With the project team, he designed crisis translation training materials to enhance communication in

language combinations that are not supported by the translation market of the affected region (or not at all).

In 2017, Federici and fellow INTERACT member Patrick Cadwell (Dublin City University) collaborated with New Zealand Red Cross (**NZRC**) and Wellington Region Emergency Management Office (**WREMO**) to provide introductory training to complete a community translation project in 15 different languages (**R7**). According to the 2020 final analysis of the national census, over 260 languages are spoken in New Zealand, where a key lesson after the 2011 Christchurch earthquakes, as NZRC's Disaster Readiness and Resilience Manager puts it, 'was that linguistically diverse communities weren't receiving the safety messages, like the fact that it wasn't safe to drink the tap water' (**A**). Federici and Caldwell designed and delivered the first INTERACT Crisis Translation Training to 15 bilingual citizens in Wellington in 2017 (an updated version is available on their YouTube Channel (<https://bit.ly/3jYwGbl>)). The training introduces fundamental concepts to achieve culture and language-appropriate equivalences, to carry out terminological research, to monitor quality in the language transfer, to revise translated texts, and to use translation technologies. The materials were designed so that training could be delivered by NZRC officers, who trained a further 30 volunteers the following year. Through INTERACT's Citizen Training NZRC managed to increase preparedness by communicating risks in languages that reach all New Zealanders. The 45 volunteers translated WREMO's Earthquake Preparedness Guide, designed for use by households, into 15 languages including several (locally) rare language combinations – such as Amharic, Somali, Khmer, and Tamil (**A**). On 4 August 2018 the Minister of Civil Defence launched the guides translated through the project. The Minister attested to the political significance and impact of the project, stating that 'Our diversity is our strength, and these translated guides will make us even stronger by helping to keep Wellington's diverse communities safe and resilient' (**B**). The Disaster Readiness and Resilience Manager (NZRC) explains that the crisis translators 'have become ambassadors for emergency preparedness in their own communities' (**C**) indicating the community's increased 'capacity to translate life-saving messages' (**B**).

This training built NZRC's capacity to provide information to vulnerable multilingual groups and as the Disaster Readiness and Resilience Manager explains, 'help[ed] advance our mission of promoting community resilience and disaster preparedness across New Zealand' (**A**). The 'impact of the training on our work has been significant – particularly considering the terrorist attacks in Christchurch affecting the Muslim community throughout NZ', stated the Disaster Readiness and Resilience Manager (**A**). It also 'helped us develop a new type of Red Cross volunteer – volunteer translators – which is highly valued in attracting people with diverse skillsets into Red Cross'. The NZRC saw the training as 'a powerful way to establish initial links into the community and instigate discussion and feedback about emergency preparedness' (**A**). The initial cohort of volunteers has gone on to translate materials for other projects (**A**). NZRC subsequently sought INTERACT training in 2019 and 2020 to reach multilingual communities nation-wide via its regional offices, calling the training 'a great way to reach our target communities' (**A**). In 3 years, a total of **195** citizen translators have been trained; Federici trained 165 of them in different locations: Auckland, Palmerston North, and twice in Wellington; the INTERACT team trained 30. The training created a pool of translators who operated in the aftermath of 2019 Christchurch attack and during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic response.

The training also fed into national policy. It enabled NZRC to 'buil[d] capacity to provide technical advice to the Ministry of Civil Defence on the inclusion of CALD [culturally and linguistically diverse] communities in their policies relating to disaster risk management in their recently developed NZ Disaster Resilience Strategy' (**A**). The strategy states that 'It is imperative that the vulnerability – and resilience – of CALD communities are specifically considered across all 4Rs [risk reduction, readiness, response, and recovery]'. In 2019 INTERACT worked with the Language Assistance Services of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and a board member of the New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters to seek long-term solutions to deliver the Citizen Translator Training disseminating the ethical values of professional translators and interpreters. INTERACT's findings indicate that crisis communication policies play an important role in risk reduction. Federici led the publication of the

International Network in Crisis translation – Recommendations on policies (September 2019) that highlight cost-effective solutions to embed translation and interpreting in disaster prevention and management so as to reduce risks. In November 2019 it was published on *PreventionWeb*, which is managed by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and in January 2020 on the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) site *ReliefWeb*, which in the first six months of 2020 had 7,500,000 users. Both are leading online sources for reliable and timely humanitarian information (D).

INTERACT's open-access Citizen Translation Training is available on Crisis Translation's YouTube Channel and has been used by organizations in the UK, Ireland, Portugal and by an international NGO to increase capacity and improve professional development. The channel saw **897** views in its first 4 weeks online (28 Feb-28 Mar 2020); by November 2020 it had acquired **1,852** views. Cochrane is a UK-based international organization that disseminates findings of medical research and systematic reviews of data to support evidence-based decision-making in healthcare. Their remit includes translation of systematic reviews of evidence into multiple languages. They rely on highly educated volunteer translators with a medical background and no professional translation experience. Cochrane UK and Ireland tested the Crisis Translation Training with their post-editors (those who revise translations generated by automated translation systems) and translators from 2018 (E). The materials increased capacity at Cochrane. The Multi-language Programme Manager at Cochrane explained that 'the INTERACT training materials are a hugely beneficial resource for our organisation [...] that we wouldn't have had the resources to compile ourselves'. She specifies how the 'research-based citizen translator training (Federici and Cadwell) and post-editing training (O'Brien) have been distributed and recommended as an introduction for our volunteer translators.' Given these volunteers rarely have translation training, it is particularly valuable and important that INTERACT training 'offers a tangible, easily accessible and efficient training option for our human translators and post-editors' (E). The materials have been shared 'with the translation project managers of our translation teams and included into our online translation knowledge base, where it is accessible to our community of [...] up to **1,180** translators'. The INTERACT team studied Cochrane's processes and their findings showed the importance of supporting Cochrane's translation project managers. This has changed organisational practice at Cochrane. She confirms that INTERACT 'helped guide our thinking, approaches and prioritisation' (E). Changes include: 'more continuous, equal and overall increased funding for our translation teams' (approved by the Governing Board in October 2019); the introduction of new methods to communicate with their translation project managers and to facilitate peer-to-peer communication; and the 'simplif[ication of] some of the workflow management tasks'. Cochrane also conducted a webinar sharing INTERACT's findings which was shared 'with the translation project managers and the entire Cochrane community to support the management and motivation of volunteers in our organisation'. It has been added to Cochrane's training website 'where it is available to Cochrane's 11,000 members and over 68,000 supporters from more than 130 countries' (E).

INTERACT collaborated with Unbabel, a Portuguese company who work with not-for-profit projects involved in crisis translation. Unbabel utilised INTERACT's training material to 'address quality assurance concerns that are central to our operations' and called the material 'a tangible and efficient training option to support our crowdsourced human post-editors'. The Citizen Training materials are integrated alongside Unbabel's post-editor training (F), with a potential reach to **50,000** post-editors. The collaboration 'made [Unbabel] aware of the potential to deploy some of our expertise in human editing of automated translations in cases where time is extremely limited, languages are rare and poorly resourced, and financial resources are not available' (F). The training materials are also used as an initial training reference for new members (up to 2,000 in 2020) of NGO Translators without Borders (G), who recognized Federici's work with a 2020 Impact Award (G).

INTERACT training focused on training volunteer citizen translators but also on integrating the work of translators with that of crisis managers. In January 2020, the INTERACT team were contacted by the Crisis Manager of the Municipal Government of Wuhan, Hubei Province, China.

The Crisis Manager was coordinating the crisis communication strategy of the early phase of the COVID-19 outbreak in collaboration with the World Health Organization and sought INTERACT's advice on how to establish collaboration between emergency managers, crisis communicators, translators and non-Chinese speaking communities in Wuhan (there were over 19,000 foreign nationals residing in Hubei province in 2018) (R3). He used INTERACT training materials and research (R1, R3, R7) in his crisis communication strategy to inform non-Chinese speakers of public health risks related to COVID-19 (H). For example, he and colleagues subtitled their audio-visual outputs and collaborated with local language service providers to produce a multilingual terminology list for use by translators and to use in subtitled audio-visual output. They also provided additional training for volunteer translators. He states that 'thanks to INTERACT members (Federici, O'Brien, O'Hagan) who provided advice about crisis translation and particularly insisted on the need to train volunteer translators, [he] provided 120 minutes of online training for all volunteer translators on 26 January 2020' (H).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- A. Testimonial from Disaster Readiness and Resilience Manager, New Zealand Red Cross. New Zealand Red Cross: letter attesting to the delivery of bespoke training course and evidence of use independently of researchers (2019).
- B. "Multilingual resources help keep communities safe in emergencies" Hon. Kris Faafoi, Minister of Civil Defence, New Zealand. Press Release.
- C. New Zealand Red Cross. 2018. *Preparing multilingual communities for emergencies*. Press Release. <https://www.redcross.org.nz/stories/new-zealand/preparing-multilingual-communities-emergencies/>.
- D. Federici, F.M., O'Brien, S., Cadwell, P., Marlowe, J., Gerber, B., & Davis, O. (2019). *International Network in Crisis translation – Recommendations on policies*. OCHA ReliefWeb <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/international-network-crisis-translation-recommendations-policies> & UNDRR Knowledge Base <https://www.preventionweb.net/news/view/69079>.
- E. Testimonial from the Multi-language Programme Manager, Knowledge Translation Department, Cochrane Central Executive, and the Business and Programme Manager, Cochrane Letter detailing the impact of INTERACT translation training.
- F. Testimonial from the CEO and Founder, Unbabel
- G. Testimonial from the Head of Crisis Response, Translators without Borders. Impact Award. <https://translatorswithoutborders.org/access-to-knowledge-awards-2020/>
- H. Peng Wang, Crisis Manager of the Office of Foreigner Affairs, Municipal Government of Wuhan, 2020. "Translation in the COVID-19 health emergency in Wuhan: A crisis manager's perspective." *The Journal of Internationalization and Localization*, 6(2): 86-107. <https://doi.org/10.1075/jial.00014.wan> available upon request.