

Dutch literary translators' use of and attitude towards technology

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Although literary translation has been called the "last bastion of human translation" (Toral and Way, 2015a), literary translators could benefit from technology support. Professional translator Rafa Lombardino (2015) mentions that translation memory (TM) systems and glossaries can be useful, as literary works often contain repetitions or flashbacks, and certain characters use specific terminology. However, this positive attitude towards translation technology is not universally shared. In a pilot study, Ruffo (2018) found that literary translators dismissed the use of CAT tools and machine translation (MT).

The question is whether this dismissal is caused by accurate knowledge of the limitations of the technology, or by prejudices and lack of information. Reflecting O'Brien's (2012) claim that we need "efforts to promote symbiosis, rather than friction", modern translation tools engage with their users in new ways, offering, for example, interactive typing functionalities and a combination of TM and MT. They further allow users to upload their TMs, which are then used to customise the internal MT system before the user starts working on the translation. In addition, some tools offer adaptive MT, where the system learns from the changes a translator makes "on the fly", while they are translating. With the introduction of neural MT around 2016, the output is no longer the same as the MT output the translators might be used to. Toral and Way (2018) argue that its increased quality and the fact that NMT can handle lexically rich texts make it better suited for literary translation than earlier systems.

A survey will be conducted among Dutch literary translators to: i) learn about Dutch literary translators' current use of and attitude towards translation technology, and ii) raise literary translators' awareness of advances in translation technology to discuss the potential relevance or limitations of such tools for their work.

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