

International survey on the use of technology by creative translators

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This presentation will introduce the results of a survey that maps the current use of tools by professional translators working with creative texts (henceforth “creative translators”). This will bring relevant data to the field and is complementary to incipient research being done on the use and perception of technology by literary translators (Ruffo 2018). Filling this knowledge gap is important in face of recent reports that indicate that pay and working conditions for literary translators are deteriorating (Slator 2018), since electronic tools have the potential of increasing productivity and improving earnings. The current survey includes questions that will allow to identify which electronic tools are currently used by professional creative translators, how those tools are used, and what problems and gaps are there. The underlying assumption is that translation technology can be made more useful for creative translators by integrating existing or new technologies into more usable interfaces, which take into account the existing workflows while at the same time providing the benefits reaped by translators in more specialised domains. Those benefits include: storing and retrieving past translations, automatically providing suggestions for expressions that tend to be searched for in external tools, terminology management and quality assurance. Based on an exhaustive list of possible existing tools (e.g. Zetzsche 2017), the results from the survey will indicate which tools are missing from the typical creative translator’s repertoire and which new tools could be developed or adapted to benefit creative translators in terms of productivity, usability, quality and enjoyability. This will inform the next stage of a project that aims to design and test an advanced tool to cater for this specific cohort, with a view to increasing their productivity and job satisfaction.

References

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Zetzsche, Jost. 2017. *The Translator’s Tool Box: A Computer Primer for Translators*. Electronic book, version 13.0. International Writers’ Group, LLC.