Creative skills development: writing fiction in translation training

Ana Guerberof Arenas

University of Groningen

Since the integration of personal computers and computer aided translation (CAT) tools to the translation profession, scholars have reflected on how technology should be included in translation training (e.g. Bowker 2002, Kiraly et al. 2018, O'Brien 2012, Pym 2014). Although in a varying degree, mainly dependant on countries and translation schools, these tools are now part of the curricula and they are generally considered essential for an up-to-date and rounded training.

In the last fifteen years, the commercialization of machine translation (MT) and its addition to the localisation industry workflow have created the need to also include in translators' training modules dealing with MT technology (in different paradigms such as ruled-based, statistical or, most recently, neural MT) as well as post-editing practice (Doherty and Moorkens 2013, Kenny and Doherty 2014, Guerberof and Moorkens 2019).

The recent developments of NMT technology and the increased quality of its output, the claims of human parity (Hassan et al. 2018), and even the refutation of this parity (Toral et al. 2018) oblige translation trainers to ponder about the future skills required for the next generation of translators. Regardless of assurances that machines are not going to replace translators any time soon (Way 2019), there is a perception in the classrooms that the "raise of the machine" is inevitable, and the fear that training might become irrelevant once fully automation replaces the translator.

Moreover, if machines show such effectiveness for standard and simple texts (mainly technical at present) that require, in turn, less human intervention, then translators will need to focus on more unusual and complex texts (King 2019); in other words, translators need to become more creative in order to show their "advantage" par rapport to machines. But how can creativity be taught in this context? For anybody embarking on a translation degree, and for translation trainers, it isbecoming increasingly clear that different approaches are necessary.

This presentation offers a proposal of a module that teaches creativity to translators through exercises that focus on writing fiction and non-fictional texts with a focus to develop divergent thinking, and hence creativity. This presentation aims to open avenues for discussion and innovation that have creativity and technology as a focus.

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