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A WEB-BASED TRANSLATION PLATFORM AS AN INTEGRATED TRANSLATION MODEL

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Abstract

Technology and collaborative work play a crucial role in the translation industry and in a translator's professional life. Translator platforms, as a translation technology, can effectively facilitate the translator's work. However, they have received scant attention in the recent research literature. In this paper, we propose an explanatory model of the web-based translation resource platform TranSource as an effective solution to optimize the work of the translator within the ambit of translation projects. By analysing the specifics of the interaction of the translator and information technologies within the context of modern integration processes based on web-based platform use, we argue that the combination of certain basic online tools and formats (including translation resources, automated translation, the translation corpus, receiving expert reviews, collaborative translation) can ensure the integrity and efficiency of the translation process, as well as specify new possibilities for improving the quality of translation. The challenge is to make sense both theoretically and practically of the all-encompassing scope of the problem of the translator's integrated reality and to identify the correlational dynamic of the work and organization of the web-based technical interaction and collaboration. Thus, a few major principles of the web-based translator translation platform are proposed: connectivity, integration, mentorship, unity in diversity and objectivity in learning.

Keywords: Web-based platform, integration, online translation tools, connected translation, translation technology.

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1. Introduction

The past few years have seen a certain change in the dynamics of developing automated translation systems, as reflected in the dialectical goal of synthesis and combined joint actions within a new theoretical construct: connectivity. Alongside the active development of cognitivism, connectionism presupposes the important transition from a functional and activity-based approach, which allows the transfer, construction or creation of networks of cognitive resources whereby skills are accumulated and structured, to a systematic and activity-based approach that predetermines the construction of a network of cognitive resources intended to more effectively adapt to translation technologies.

1.1. The synthesis dynamic in translation activity

At a recent foresight session as part of the International Translation Forum Russia (TFR) conference, according to Nechaeva, (2017) it was noted that "as one of the trends in the modern translation industry, the importance and relevance of which were highlighted in the 'Translator's Professional Standard' round table, the ever increasing role of the technological aspect is becoming key." (p. 170). In particular, Maxim Berendiaev (the translation firm AKM-VEST) observed that today the translator and translation agencies are expected to be ready to adapt to a client's technologies that are more important than the translator's own linguistic skills. The structure of the technical element of translation activity includes the following:

- Planning and coordinating the work of large groups of translators and related professions.
- Knowledge of and ability to use CAT tools (nobody needs 'simply Word' any more).
- Ability to compile and quality control translation memory (TM) and terminology bases (TB), which are becoming significantly more important than dictionaries and the translator's individual style (even a good one).
- Ability to work with non-standard formats (illustrations, technical drawings, presentations, etc.).
- Ability to perform post-editorial work in machine translation.

The hybridization of translation activity as attributed to medium-term trends has its origins in hybrid computer systems used in translation by leading companies. The shift from transfer systems based on rules and regulations to static systems, and from static to hybrid systems reflects the development dialectic of translation content and the progress achieved in automated systems.

Within the field of translation activity there is an expanding area known as 'connected translation' that assumes joint work in a team using combined human and technical resources based on a single platform. In the information age of the development of the translation industry the demands of the user-consumer with regard to information access that should be quick, of high quality and effective are becoming increasingly more insistent. Because of the growing volumes of information the connection of new technologies and effective management in translation activity is of the utmost necessity (Figure 01). Thus, in the words of the developers of Smartcat "the 21st-century customer" wants "a simplified workflow", "collaboration made easy", "high-quality automation" with the help of "AI and machine learning software", "immediate access to translators and editors" and, most importantly, "the ability to hire freelancers, keep an eye on job progress, manage their projects and pay vendors in one place, at the touch of a few buttons". All these, mentioned above, can be defined as "connected translation" (Connected Translation, 2019).

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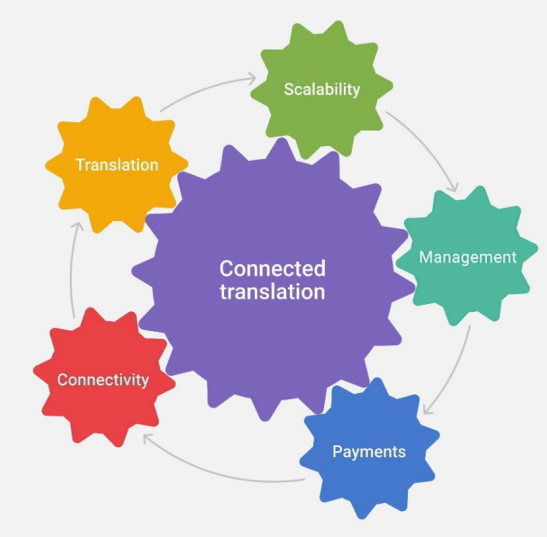

Figure 01. The connected translation model (SmartCat, 2016)

1.2. Managing the translation process. Synthesis of cognition and industry

The use of various technologies in translating technical texts is a topic of much academic research that draws attention to the increasing global interest not only in automated translation systems but also in neural systems in translation (Garcia, 2011; Moorkens, Brien, da Silva Fonseca, & Alves, 2015; Popović et al., 2014). Such a tendency proves the validity of Brien's assertion that modern translation is "a form of human-computer interaction" (Brien, 2012, p. 103).

In the context of the act of translation, a translation assumes the process as both cognitive operations of the human brain and managing the client's request to perform the translation of a text. The former assumes studying translation as part of translation studies (Kushnina, 2016; Mordovskaya, 2006; Zlobin, 2017). Nefedova and Remkhe, (2014) consider cognitive aspect of translation through "frame structures" that "represent syntactic and semantic structures of the ST [source text] as a means of organizing the translator's linguistic and nonlinguistic knowledge" and thus "can predetermine the choice of a cognitive strategy and enhance the translator's competence" (p. 240). In the first instance, research is subjected to both the translator's thought processes and his/her working environment, which Krüger (2016) designates by the term "translational ecosystem". This environment includes artefacts such as "information technology" (p. 312). The latter requires the translation process to be the management structure of the translation industry. According to modern international industry standards of quality systems ISO 17100, translation services must include three stages: pre-production processes and activities, the production process and post-production process (ISO 17100, 2015). Pre-translation procedures include the client's order, the technical and economic feasibility of the project, calculation of the cost of the work, signing the contract with the service provider, and preparation of the translation project. The translation project includes the translation proper, editing of the translation, reviewing the translation, proof-reading and its final approval. The post-translation process presupposes the client's response and the administrative measures that bring the project to its culmination.

The translation process in both these aspects is distinguished by the integration of the integration of the skills that the translator needs to successfully complete the translation task.

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2. Problem Statement

The major hypothesis of our work is drawn from a set of observations with the focus on the relationship between translation technology and integration in the translation industry. In this research we argue that the web-based platform TranSource, designed as an online technological system with basic functionalities such as a collaborative translation and terminology database, can facilitate and customize the work of translators by providing integration of translation related resources and aids. The key principles of the web-based platform have a certain methodological value for application in Translation Studies.

3. Research Questions

The research questions for this study were:

1. How to define the terms “translation platform” and “translator platform”?
2. What are the main principles and functionalities of the web-based platform TranSource?

4. Purpose of the Study

This study was conducted as part of a research project on an integrated approach to the translation process. The aim of this paper is to correlate the relevance of the study of the translation process with resource platforms and translation technology by presenting the principles and functionalities of a web-based platform for translators titled TranSource.

5. Research Methods

The methodology for this study has been developed with the focus on conceptual as well as engineering aspects of the web-based platform and is positioned as the method of integrated modelling. The basic idea behind the proposed method is to solve problems of optimizing translation resources within the context of the professional or didactic use of the platform. Depending on the area where the translation platform will be implemented (private, corporate or for training purposes), we propose an adaptive scheme for combining elements of an integrated translation model and solutions for optimizing the use of resources and the translator’s cognitive strategies against the backdrop of using the Transource web platform.

The integrational nature lies in combining the following components:

- Quality control by means of the functions ‘questions to the specialist’, ‘review’ (commentaries, specialist recommendations).
- Access to external resources (translation forums, social network groups, specialist subject-specific translation sites).

Technical elements of system support in translation, including automatic translation with the use of Google Translate, automated search for terminological units from an individualized translation corpus, a technical dictionary with illustrations, the possibility of joint work online, group chat.

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6. Findings

The idea of a translation platform expresses a minimum of two concepts, depending on where the focus of a given system is shifted to: towards the translation process or towards the translator. According to the Techopedia (n.d.), "[Translation platform] is a group of technologies that are used as a base upon which other applications, processes or technologies are developed".

A translation platform 'for the translation process' (translation process) is, as a rule, used in two formats: web-based translation management and a system for performing translation tasks with a corresponding translation editing interface. Thus, the totality of both systems create the conditions for managing the translation project, beginning with the client's order and ending with the completion of stages of the translation task.

A vivid example is the SmartCat platform (SmartCat, 2016). This platform enables work to be done on a translation through the combined efforts of freelance translators who can connect to the project with remote access. The work is done in real time through remote access with the discussion function, common translation memory, current statistical data, an updated project glossary and other modules that allow the resulting quality and effective performance of the translation project to be enhanced.

In addition, there are platforms that ensure the automation of the translation task and the optimization of management processes by searching for the necessary resources and instruments and their integration with the translated content. These include primarily SDL WorldServer (2019), MemoQ server (2019), and Plunet (2019).

Among translators actively involved in translation tasks there is a huge body of freelancers for whom platform support has a somewhat different functionality. Thus, for instance, the format of joint work is not of significance in itself, but the collaborative effect to a greater degree is expressed in the exchange of information and data through translation forums. The organizational function of a translator platform manifests itself in the automatic management of orders and the search for clients. Among such platforms can be listed ProZ.com (2019) and TranslatorsCafe (2019). As a general rule, both translators and their clients, including translation agencies have an interest in using such online platforms.In our research the translation platform TranSource has been created for translators just starting out on their careers and is of an integrational nature, combining separate functions of both platform types. The basic features of TranSource are as follows:

- The functionality of connectedness. The possibility of joint working in a team using combined human and technical resources based on a single platform.
- The functionality of integration. The integration of primary technical and online resources embedded in the system to improve the efficiency of the translation process.
- The functionality of mentoring. Expert support from experienced translators and native speakers in editing and reviewing the translation.
- The functionality of unity and diversity. The provision of a set of technical and resource possibilities intended to achieve a single goal: the successful performance of the translation task.
- The functionality of knowledge acquisition in the context of data objectivity. Automated translation and the provision of online resources are optional and based on a strategy of choice in the process of translation thinking. The translator him/herself decides the kind of support required given the

final objective evaluation of an expert. The translation skill of searching for a solution and adapting the final text is thereby developed.

7. Conclusion

Modern translation studies are undergoing a period of conceptual change. This is associated, on the one hand, with the globalization and internationalization of the translation industry and, on the other, with the development of cognitive translation studies, whose task is to reveal the functional mechanisms of the translator's cognitive systems. Accordingly, the role of the translator is defined through an integrated examination of the problem allowing for internal and external factors and their dynamic interaction.

With the web-based translator platform presented in this study the translation process can be viewed as an open dynamic system based on principles of connectivity, non-linearity and web-based interaction with the role of the translator integrated in the web-based translation space, which will enable us to go beyond the traditional view of the procedure and schematization of the translation process.

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