READERS' NARRATIVE ENGAGEMENT IN TEXTS TRANSLATED USING DIFFERENT MODALITIES (MACHINE TRANSLATION, HUMAN TRANSLATION)

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Abstract

Thanks to the latest achievements of AI and neural machine translation (MT) technologies, machine support in translation has been used every day in many fields of work and life. Today, MT can increase productivity in technical texts translated by people without influencing the final quality of the product given certain conditions. However, it is commonly believed that MT cannot compete with human translation of literary or more creative texts precisely because of the machine has lack of creativity. In this article we exlore readers' narrative engagement in texts translated using different modalities such as machine translation, human translation.

Keywords: creativity, literary translation, narrative engagement, machine translation post-editing, translation, modalities.

Introduction

Artificial Intelligence and Machine Translation (MT) are at the forefront of technological advances and are becoming crucial in society [1]. In the media we read time and again that MT will soon substitute for professional translators. In this bare future landscape, creativity is constantly referred to as the characteristic that differ from humans from machines. The reality of MT for more creative texts might not be as propitious as first appears. Research in Natural Language Processing (NLP) has tested the level of usability of MT for literary text [2], showing that MT post-editing might help literary translators, for example when it comes to productivity rates. At the same time, however, the perception of translators is that the more creative the literary text, the less useful MT post-editing is [3]. In the opinion of many professional translators, MT output needs to be enough for its purpose and this might not be the case when creativity is considered [4]. However, there has been no attempt to quantify creativity in different translation modalities involving . Further, and since the main aim of the translation of a literary text is presumably to maintain the reading experience of the original, we deem it relevant to investigate the reader's experience when come across literary texts translated by or with the aid of MT, a topic that has not been studied to date. Against this background, we present the results of a study that tests a methodology designed for exploring creativity in different translation modalities, and to capture aspects of the user experience when reading in these modalities. Below we first present work related to our study, before outlining our novel methodology and presenting our results. Narrative

engagement refers to the degree to which a reader becomes absorbed in a story, and involves emotional involvement, cognitive engagement, and attentional focus. Narrative engagement is important to both the reader and the writer, as it determines the effectiveness of the communication and the degree. In recent years, the improvement of machine translation has led to a rise in the number of texts translated using computer algorithms, as opposed to human translators. This has raised questions about the effect of translation modality on narrative engagement.

Several recent studies have investigated readers' engagement with texts translated using different modalities such as machine translation (MT) and human translation (HT). One study conducted by Anabela Barros and colleagues [6] found that readers prefer HT to MT, as they perceive the former to be of higher quality and more engaging. Another study by Jing Peng and colleagues [7] also reported that readers had a more positive attitude towards texts translated by humans, including increased narrative engagement and enjoyment.

Moreover, a recent study by Song and colleagues [8] examined the impact of translation modality on readers' narrative engagement and cognitive processing. They found that HT produced higher levels of engagement and created stronger emotional connections with readers compared to MT. However, they also noted that readers' engagement was influenced by their prior knowledge and attitudes towards MT and HT. Research suggests that readers tend to have a more positive response to texts translated by humans compared to those translated using MT, with HT producing higher levels of engagement.

Creativity is an area that has received limited attention in Translation Studies (TS). One reason for this could be that creativity is a complex concept to define and quantify, but it is also the case that translators are not usually regarded as creators and translation is perceived as uncreative, thus its derivative copyright status. Perhaps, this is also because creativity has traditionally been associated with a talent that one is born with and that cannot be learnt, understood or quantified; therefore, as an innate characteristic, only a chosen few can instinctively put it into practice without being able to explain it, let alone understand it themselves. However, this pre-conceived notion is receding and creativity is increasingly regarded as an ability that is inherent to all humans, and not limited to those working in the arts, and one that can be trained and applied in a variety of domains including translation [5].

As technology advances, machine translation (MT) has become more widely used in the translation industry. However, the quality of machine-translated texts has been a subject of debate among translators and researchers.

Differences between human translation and machine translation.

On the one hand, human translation refers to the process of translating text from one language to another by a human translator. Human translators are trained professionals who understand the nuances of language and culture, and they use their knowledge to ensure that the translated text accurately conveys the meaning and intent of the original text. Several studies have investigated the impact of human translation on narrative engagement. For example, a study by O'Brien and Cook [9] found that readers were more engaged with a story that had been translated by a human translator than with the same story translated by a machine translator. The researchers suggest that this may be because human translators are better able to convey the cultural nuances of the original text, which are essential to narrative engagement.

On the other hand, machine translation refers to the process of translating text from one language to another language by using computer algorithms. Machine translation is typically faster and less

expensive than human translation, but it is also more tend to errors. There is concern that machine translation may lead to a decrease in narrative engagement due to these errors and the lack of cultural understanding on the part of computers. However, some studies have found that narrative engagement is not affected by the modality of translation. For example, a study by Lau and Baldwin [10] found that readers were equally engaged with stories translated by humans or machines. Research on readers' narrative engagement in texts translated using different modalities is still limited. However, the available evidence suggests that human translation may be more effective at promoting narrative engagement than machine translation. This may be because human translators are better able to convey the cultural nuances of the original text. Nevertheless, it is important to continue to study the impact of translation modality on narrative engagement, as machine translation technology continues to develop and advance.

For example, future studies could investigate how different types of texts and genres which are affected by translation. They could also explore how different types of errors or quality levels in machine translation impact narrative engagement. Moreover, future studies could examine the role of individual differences such as cognitive abilities, language proficiency, and cultural background in the perception of narrative engagement in translated texts.

In addition, advances in machine learning and artificial intelligence are likely to change the landscape of machine translation in the future. This could lead to improvements in the quality of machine-translated texts, which in turn could lead to increased narrative engagement. It is important to continue monitoring these developments and their impact on narrative engagement.

The findings from this research have important implications for translation practice. Translation services companies need to be aware of the potential impact of translation modality on narrative engagement and take appropriate measures to ensure high-quality translations are produced. This might involve developing better training and quality control measures for human translators or investing in the development of advanced machine translation systems.

Conclusion

Narrative engagement is a vital aspect of reading, and the modality of translation can have a significant impact on it. While there is some evidence to suggest that human translation is more effective at promoting narrative engagement than machine translation, the relationship is complex and requires further investigation. Future research should continue to explore the impact of translation modality on narrative engagement, while translation practitioners should be aware of the potential impact and carefully consider the choice of translation modality in their work.

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