

Next Generation Translation Tools
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*Attempt at speaking the same language across
disciplinary boundaries : the Tralogy and
TAO-CAT conferences so far*

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Pardon my French

- Living in the second world is fine with me
- But what is the second world (according to Karl Popper)?
- The (subjective) world of mental objects and events, as opposed to
- Physical objects and events (world 1), and
- Objective knowledge (aka science, world 3).

What is to be understood by that?

- Translation studies that make the connection between the professional realm (world 1), and
- Science, in the Popperian sense (= objective, testable science: world 3)
- And that may therefore be used in translator training
- For the benefit of all: translators, buyers of translation, society at large
- That is why we need a strong link between training, professional life and research
- That's what Tralogy and TAO-CAT are about



The Tralogy Conferences, then

I. The Tralogy conferences (2011, 2013)

- Tralogy : Translation & Technology
- The idea: changing an old paradigm: « *Le périmètre sociologique de la traductologie explique que les chercheurs en traduction automatique, par exemple, ne soient perçus ni par eux-mêmes ni par le reste de la communauté traductologique comme des traductologues : ils sont en partie linguistes, en partie informaticiens, et ne cherchent pas l'interaction avec les traductologues.* » (Gile, 2005, p. 242)
- True of science (at the time), but not of the professional world: think of CAT tools (even then)...

Bringing together four types of stakeholders

- Professional translators, represented by Caroline Subra-Itsutji, vice-president of SFT (*Société française des traducteurs*), and then Dominique Durand-Fleischer
- Users of translations, represented by Alain Wallon, head of the French DGT desk, and then Mikaël Meunier
- ALP scholars, with Joseph Mariani, head of LIMSI/CNRS
- Translator trainers, with Nicolas Froeliger, head of master pro ILTS, and representing AFFUMT (the French association of translation training programmes)
- With the logistical blessing and support of INIST/CNRS, through Jean-François Nominé
- And they all deserve mentioning!

The two conferences so far

2011: Translation Careers and Technologies: Convergence Points for the Future, with Canada as invited country

2013: Finding Sense: Where are our weak points and what do we need?, with a particular focus on the Baltic region

A few hallmarks

- Large attendance (some 250), mixing academics, translation professionals and students
- Some 40 presentations in two days (an all-inclusive conference, with no parallel workshops)
- A lot of space for debate
- A truly international attendance and participation
- A live-streaming event (still on-line)
- A genuinely democratic organisation (with discussions a-plenty...). What for?
- Creating ownership in all those involved

Some critiques, though

- From the professional translator side: this is too research-oriented (not enough practical aspects) – too third-world, if you want
 - From the same: we are not scholars, so do not expect us to present scholarly papers
- From some of the academics involved: « my paper was not research, just information and communication », so I won't publish it...
- Hence the insistence on debate, sound task-allocation and genuine contact between the various universes involved
- And notably the focus, not on what we, separately, are able to do, but on what we cannot do on our own...

Why is the world still awaiting Tralogy III?

- The usual reasons: retirement, promotion, turnover of responsibilities, but more symptomatically
- A shift in the balance of ownership: doubts in the professional realm, in the face of
- *What is 'fit for purpose'? Towards an Adequation*
- A great call for papers (never disseminated), but not for this conference: too off-center

So what is the situation today?

- The world still needs such events (as evidenced by recurrent queries)
- We should avoid multiplication of related events
- We have obtained new commitments from all four types of stakeholders considered
- Coordination is key (including with you, here)
- That is why we are here...



The TAO-CAT conference

TAO-CAT 2015

- A tentative to gather :
 - Everyday professional translators: SFT (Société Française des Traducteurs)
 - Translation trainers: AFFUMT (the French association of translation training programmes) + Students
 - CAT tool editors (SDL Trados, Kilgray MemoQ, ..)
 - Researchers dealing with CAT tools

TAO-CAT key features

- 75 attendants
- Mostly French (80%), except for researchers mostly foreigners
- Two days of very practical information
 - CAT tool presentations by editors
 - Computer-room based training in CAT
 - Best practices
- A morning of research about CAT tools

Organizers, support

- Initiated by two individuals
 - Benjamin Phister (an American translator in Paris, SFT)
 - Emmanuel Planas (CAT tool teacher, NLP researcher)
- Support
 - SFT (Société Française des Traducteurs): Miranda Joubioux, Laurence Cuzzolin, Carmelo Cancio, Eric Le Carre
 - UCO (Univ. Angers), LINA (Univ. Nantes)
 - AFFUMT (the French association of translation training programmes)
 - Research committee: scholars from UK, RO, JP, FR, DK, CA, BE : ex. : Michael Carl, Kyo Kageura, Michel Simard

Feedback

- Overwhelming positive feedback from translators
- Researchers getting to know details about everyday translator's work
 - A new contact between World 1 and World 3 ...

Tralogy & TAO-CAT an ongoing common plan

- Tralogy and TAO-CAT share a lot of common aims and actors
- We are in the process of joining our efforts
- From now on, we speak with the same voice as TraCAT

Some thoughts about TraCAT so far

- What practitioners really need?
- Recent trends:
 - Corpora
 - Post-edition
 - Ergonomics
- With mixed reactions from translators and translation programs
- Hence the need for exchange and informed communication
- Tools and Translators: the bottom-up approach?
 - Translators chairing, tentative answers by academia?

Our intuition

- There is a very good fit with NGTT project
- How to work together? Several options
- Invitation by TraCAT to present NGTT outcomes?
- Using the TraCAT format for a wider conference?
- Using TraCAT professional participants to test NGTT prototypes?
- Maybe more...