

EDITORIAL

Artificial intelligence (AI) is all the rage in Translation Studies these days; it would appear that no other topic is worth a conference or publication any more. The general public has been quick to employ AI in all sorts of tasks, including translation and language use in general, and there seems to be widespread optimism surrounding AI output. The refrain in popular articles and social media posts goes: “This is the end of human translators.”

So, are these really the locust years for the translation profession?

Artificial intelligence and technology is here to stay, in translation and everywhere else. Resisting technological innovation is not an option for translators and their teachers; rather, we all need to embrace the new developments *critically*, and never stop reflecting on their strengths as well as weaknesses. Those strong and weak aspects need to be explored properly, and that will take academia some time, no doubt. And it is translation scholars, alongside translation professionals, who are responsible for making clients and the public understand that while AI, like machine translation, is indeed a useful tool, it is not a panacea; only when complemented with human expertise and judgement does it result in truly professional translation. Despite popular belief, it is not far-fetched to say that human translation is here to stay.

The present volume, in fact the first *AUC Philologica* issue dedicated almost exclusively to AI in language and translation, aspires to make a modest contribution to the current debate by presenting fresh research findings, sharing innovative classroom practice and raising important questions as to the position of AI (and technology in general) on the map of translation studies, practice and training, and – perhaps most importantly – the future role and responsibilities of human translators.

The opening article is written by Gary Massey, one of the most cited and renowned translation scholars of recent years. Massey puts forward a number of thought-provoking ideas, but his general message – and one that can be taken as a framework for the present issue as a whole – seems to be clear: with generative artificial intelligence demonstrating increasing degrees of agency, our thinking concerning translators’ and other language specialists’ interaction with technology needs to be revised significantly. The author’s arguments draw upon an impressive bibliography, only testifying to the complexity of the human-GenAI relationship.

Csilla Szabó reviews several competence models designed for professional translators from the past decade, discussing how well the technological component integrated in

them reflects current market needs, as recent international and national industry surveys report a shift towards the use of MT and AI tools. Szabó argues that universities need to adapt their translator training curricula (which is already happening) and offers her own suggestions as to what training institutions can do to develop technological competence in the graduates of tomorrow.

A similarly vehement call for the integration of AI tools into translator training is made by Michał Kornacki, who – nevertheless – warns against losing sight of human expertise. Strong linguistic, cultural, and critical thinking skills are essential for effective post-editing, and effective collaboration with AI does certainly not mean blind overreliance. Training needs to trigger students' lifelong learning processes that will help them maintain problem-solving abilities, foster a sense of empowerment, and mitigate feelings of inferiority.

In his very classroom-oriented paper, Ondřej Molnár reflects upon the changes in L2 translation classes in light of the technological developments. He argues that the changing landscape requires trainees to acquire new skills, which will enable them to work with AI and MT effectively, but at the same time critically. Molnár suggests a number of specific classroom activities, which constitute a step-by-step approach to teaching L2 translation in the AI era. He explains the rationale of each activity as well as its classroom application. The value of his paper lies in the versatility of the activities that may be easily used, or adapted if need be, for different training contexts.

Taking the translation of legal texts between English and Czech as a case in point, Vladimíra Kvasničková attempts to show where available AI tools (DeepL and ChatGPT) have deficiencies and thus leave room for the added value of human legal translators. It is mainly the comparative legal analysis where the AI tools fail. Kvasničková also paints the panorama where many legal translations are done by trainee or junior lawyers, who may overrely on the AI tools. This poses a risk of (serious) errors passing unnoticed.

The five articles are ordered in a way which allows the reader to follow the theme of AI and technology from broader, philosophical perspectives, to curricular concerns, to specific problems and domains.

And just to remind ourselves that there is life beyond AI, the present issue closes with two reviews featuring topics seemingly outside our primary scope, but ones where technology is certainly present. One, in English, discusses Esther De Boe's recent monograph on remote interpreting in healthcare; the other, in Czech, reviews a ground-breaking book by a promising Slovak scholar, Mária Koscelníková, presenting results of her long-overdue comprehensive research into video game localisation.

We extend our deepest gratitude to all our contributors, whose insights, expertise and fresh ideas will no doubt help drive the conversation surrounding technology and its impact on the translating profession and translator training forward. Finally, our wholehearted thanks go to the reviewers – we warmly thank you for your cooperation, understanding, and helpful opinions.

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