Translation and Disruption: Global and Local Perspectives, **3-4 Nov 2017, University of Portsmouth**

Recent advancements of translation technologies, particularly machine translation (MT), are changing the use of language in society drastically. The conference concerned two aspects of this development: 1) technical advancement and application of technologies in the economic, social and educational communities (i.e. translation interpreted as being a 'disruptor'); and 2) subsequent ethical issues raised by this development such as deteriorated working condition and copyright infringement (i.e. translation practice being 'disrupted').

Due to the multi-dimensional nature of the topic, it was our intention to encourage dialogues in the scholarship between both in science (Computational Linguistics, AI, Natural Language Processing) and humanities (translation studies) surrounding translation technologies.

Involvement of Japanese researchers was particularly significant in this context as Japan has been developing and adapting MT in very original and unique ways. This includes the use of MT by municipal bodies for post-earthquake risk management and the plan of extended use of MT in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics games. In addition, in contrast to the UK, Japan is traditionally a translation-rich country, having imported a large volume of scholarship and culture through translation. As a result, Japan has a very distinctive translation culture. These Japan-specific aspects brought by the Japanese researchers was expected to greatly contribute to make the event truly international, intercultural and interdisciplinary.

Day 1 (3rd November)

Day 1 hosted a pre-conference seminar, which was a free event targeting both academics and industry stakeholders. The attendees were made of an even mixture of academics and industry stakeholders (translation company representatives, freelance and in-house translators and project managers).

After the opening remarks by Chris Chang, University of Portsmouth's Pro Vice-Chancellor of Global Engagement, the first part the seminar held a panel discussion titled **"Who should become machine translation post-editors"** with four researchers from four countries who are all active in research related to this burning question in the industry about the emerging profession (machine translation post-editors). There ensued a lively debate between the panel and the audience, which enabled academics and industry stakeholders to exchange views and seek consensus.

The second part of the seminar hosted a public lecture by Dr Eiichiro Sumita from the National Institute of Information and Communications Technology (NICT), entitled "**The Game Changer! Use of Speech-to-speech (S2S) Translation in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics Games**". The topic attracted a wide range of audience and the Japan's cutting-edge S2S machine translation technology was introduced. The lecture included intriguing historical video footage of MT development and lively footage of the current use of in modern Japanese society. It was a thoroughly entertaining and informative lecture for both academics, industry stakeholders and users of machine translation.

Day 1 ended with a reception where attendees networked in a relaxed atmosphere.

Day 2 (4th November)

The day formed the 17th Portsmouth Annual Translation Conference, which was opened by Prof Nobuo Ueno, Director of JSPS London. This year the support from the JSPS has enabled us to add a strong Japanese dimension to this long-standing, already strongly international conference (this year's speakers came from 10 different countries). The conference included 2 keynote speeches, 16 paper presentations and 2 workshops, including a keynote speech by Prof Kayoko Takeda and 3 presentations and 2 workshops by invited Japanese speakers. The conference raised the exposure of Japanese researchers to the international translation studies circle. Prof Takeda's keynote speech introduced to the international audience the leading educational projects related to translation technology being held in Japan. The workshops (about Minna no Hon'yaku, a web-based translation assistance system, by Prof Kageura, and Minna no Jido Hon'yaku, a web-based machine translation system and MT Web API, by Dr Sumita) demonstrated the Japan-made digital translation technologies to the international audience. Prof Yamada (Japanese scientific lead), Dr Kageura and Dr Miyata presented their current research related to translation technology including machine translation.

The 2-day event generated the following impacts:

Academic impacts

- Exchange of knowledge and shifting and extension of ideas: unique and original made-in-Japan research was showcased to the international audience where Japan has been underrepresented so far. For example, Prof Dorothy Kenny from DCU (one of the keynote speakers) appreciated to have a chance to learn directly from the actual MT system developer (Dr Sumita) about the difference in the architecture of the Japanese system.
- The workshops (Prof Kageura and Dr Sumita) attracted attention of potential users of their systems, which can lead to development of new datasets for further development of the systems.
- Researchers from different countries recognised the similarity and differences of their research and discussed future path of research (e.g. Prof Yamada and Dr Moorkens from DCU's session on Neural Machine Translation in the educational setting)
- As many of the attendees were from the translation industry, researchers had a chance to solicit the users' opinions about translation technology. The Japanese delegates particularly commented that this mixed presence of academia/industry is rare at translation studies conferences in Japan. Dr Sumita, for example, commented "翻訳者の方に MT を気に入ってもらうために必要な新しい技術のヒントが得られました。MT の受容については欧州が進んでいると思っていましたが、NMT の出現で、日本と同じような状況になっていることが分かりました。"

Societal and economic impacts

The high-quality academic presentations provided industry stakeholders with evidence-based insights about best practice of technology use in translation. This can contribute to dispelling the hype and myth of machine translation and other

technologies and to promoting new thinking about healthy, productive and sustainable use of technology in the industry.

The following collaborations have resulted from the event.

- Sakamoto and Yamada (two scientific leads) are developing their collaboration plan. Sakamoto has already submitted a bid for BA/Leverhulme Small Grant to conduct a collaborative research project in Japan in 2019. Yamada will submit a bid for future collaborative activities in his application for Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (Kakenhi) application in Japan for his 2019-2022 research programme titled (provisionally) "Holistic analysis of interaction between technology and translation".
- Jonathan Evans from the University of Portsmouth is preparing a bid for Leverhulme Visiting Professorship grant to invite a Japanese scholar to Portsmouth (planning to contact Prof Takeda for the first instance).
- Ms Begoña Rodríguez de Céspedes from the University of Portsmouth is in discussion with Dr Olga Torres-Hostench from Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and her colleagues about collaborative research between the UK and Spain.

Sakamoto, Evans and Torres-Hostench will co-edit the special dossier section of the journal *Revista Tradumàtica* with the conference theme "Translation and Disruption" (to be published in November 2018).

-Dr Akiko Sakamoto, School of Languages and Area Studies, Portsmouth University

Conference Participants