The advent of Neural Machine Translation (NMT) with improved quality and (sometimes deceptive) fluency has pushed MT, with or without post-editing, into use cases for which it had previously been considered inappropriate. However, predictions that “post-editing will dominate translation production” (Lommel & DePalma 2016, 20) do not seem to have materialised, with CSA Research (2019) subsequently reporting post-editing as representing under 4% of translation income year-on-year. Beyond full or light post-editing, there are various other modes of interaction with NMT in translation processes, such as its use as ‘just another input’ (Cadwell et al. 2016), for fuzzy match repair, and for interactive MT. There is no evidence as yet of flexibility for translators to move between these modes, as recommended in contemporary literature on human factors (e.g. Calhoun 2021). As suggested by these various modes of interaction, automation is not ‘all or nothing’, but rather allows different levels of control for users and is intended for different purposes, such as to replace or to atomise work (Moorkens 2020), but also to augment or to empower (Schatsky and Schwartz 2015). In a dynamic industry, MT is not the only form of automation in translation workflows - for example, error identification and correction, quality evaluation, terminology consistency checks, project management and billing/invoicing functions are often automated.

In this special issue, we want to investigate the variety of novel implementations of (full or partial) automation in translation and their effects on stakeholders in the translation process, particularly in relation to the economic and social sustainability of the translation business and profession in addition to the ecological sustainability. Stakeholders might include translators, target text end users, institutions and citizens, trainers and educators, members and representatives of professional associations/bodies, shareholders, company owners, project managers, localization and workers in all areas of translation. In particular, we welcome article proposals, including for position papers, in any area of translation, regardless of the language combination(s), with strong and innovative theoretical and methodological contributions. Topics of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Changing implementation of automation in translation
- Flexible or adaptive automation in translation
- Automation and sustainable business models
- Interaction with MT, artificial intelligence and big data
- Characteristics of fully automated translations (i.e. raw MT) and semi-automated translations (e.g. post-edited MT)
- ‘Good enough’ or ‘fit for purpose’ translation and the impact of light post-editing
- Automation and well-being in translation
- Automation and the status of translators
- Automation and the commodification of translation and language services today and in the future
- Ethical aspects of translation automation and sustainability
- Quality in translation automation, including evaluation, metrics, QA processes, tools and procedures, etc.
- Innovative teaching and training experiences in translation automation and/or sustainability
- The role of automation and sustainability in professional accreditation and lifelong learning/training for practising translators

Indicative Publication Timeline:

1 June 2022: Deadline for submission of proposals (500-word abstract not including references + biographical notice of 50-70 words for each author) to guest editors

30 June 2022: Proposal response from guest editors

20 December 2022: Deadline for submission of first versions of full articles (between 7,000 and 8,000 words, including endnotes and references) to guest editors

2 January 2023 to 31 July 2023: Peer review and revision period

1 September 2023: Deadline for submission of final versions of full articles to guest editors

January 2024: Publication

Submissions: Abstracts should be sent to sheila.castilho@adaptcentre.ie with the subject line JoSTrans Issue 41 + Author(s) surname(s) (e.g. JoSTrans Issue 41 - Smith et al.)

Stylesheet: http://jostrans.org/stylesheet.pdf

References:


