

CEATL's Click List

Links to the world of translation

Whole books to be translated by machines

As we highlighted in [Counterpoint #4](#), machine translation and CAT tools in various forms are on the rise in the translation industry, for better and worse. So far, though, no publisher has openly stated that they intend to use AI translation, i.e. the tool DeepL, to get whole books translated, leaving real live translators to do the post-editing.

This changed when the science publisher [Springer Nature](#) in October declared that they henceforth planned to do exactly that. CEATL's secretary and member of the French translators' association [ATLF](#), Valérie Le Plouhinec, commented on this decision to the French book-market magazine *ActuaLitté*. Read the interview [here](#).

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Translator shortage in the streaming business?

With all the streaming of TV and films from all over the world going on these days, one might think that AV translators – the people doing the subtitles – were having a field day. Unfortunately, and maybe not surprisingly, this is not the case, as bad working conditions (i.e. underpayment and bad or non-existent contracts) have simultaneously become more and more common, forcing the most experienced translators to leave the business. Despite the huge demand for their services, it is almost impossible to make ends meet in a sustainable way.

The initial result is poorer work being done by less qualified translators, who quickly leave the business again – leading to what is now turning out to be a world-wide shortage of translators, [as reported by](#) the investigative tech site *Rest of World*. It is a vicious circle, that, in the end, leads to still worse quality of subtitles – one of the universally most read text genres in fiction today, especially among children and young people. AV translators' associations have been trying to get this message

through for years – and recently they managed to garner the attention of the more general public, when criticism was raised about the bad quality subtitling of the hit series *Squid Game* on Netflix.

In response to the large amount of media coverage, the American Translator Association (ATA) sent out an open letter calling for fair working conditions for translators in the entertainment industry – underlining that the lack of qualified AV translators is not the real problem. As they put it: “The professionals who work painstakingly to craft the multilingual versions of our favorite movies and shows should be able to share in the revenue generated thanks to their work.”

Petra-E Conference in Dublin

The Petra-E Conference, entitled *Literary Translation Studies – Today and Tomorrow*, was held at Trinity College, Dublin from 4-6 November. Its aim was to take stock of the current state of the art of literary translation and to look down the line and see what the future might hold. Of the many themes covered, those relating to the keynote topic *Machine-Aided literary translation: State of Affairs in the early 2020s* raised great interest. CEATL Honorary member, Françoise Wuilmart (Belgium), gave a paper on the first day of the conference and CEATL delegate for the Bulgarian Translators' Union, Teodora Tzankova, was a member of a Framework working group who also gave a talk.

Arun Viswanath on translating Harry Potter into Yiddish

Last year, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, the first volume of J.K. Rowling's famous series, available in over 80 languages, was translated into Yiddish. The translation met the demand – the first 2,000 copies were sold out within two weeks. In this video Viswanath explains how he went about challenges of finding Yiddish equivalents for famous names from the Potter universe, such as Slytherin, Voldemort, The Mirror of Erised and quidditch. Along the way, he gives some background information about Yiddish and its connection with Jewish culture, and explains what this translation means to him and his readership.



Cover of the Yiddish translation of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*