CONTRA
CONCURRENT TRANSLATION ON COLLABORATIVE PLATFORMS

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Introduction

Concurrent Translation (CT)

"Translation production activity carried out for commercial reasons, by multiple, predominantly trained translation professionals, using technologies that enable horizontal and vertical collaboration, but only in a synchronous way, i.e., working on one text concurrently" (Gough et al. 2023)

Features	Concurrent Translation	
Commissioning Agent	Self-commissioned	Externally commissioned
Sector	Commercial	Non-commercial
Motivation	Monetary	Non-monetary
Type of Worker	Professional	Non-professional
Collaboration Configuration	Horizontal	Vertical
Time Configuration	Synchronous	Asynchronous

CT Workflow

TRANSLATORS   **EDITOR/PROOFREADER**   CLIENT

work **collaboratively** and **concurrently** on a translation task on a cloud-based platform

Commercial Discourse

- Efficiency gains in terms of speed & cost
- Quality could be maintained

But:

- How sustainable is CT?
- How does it affect the translation process, product, and the translator?

Aims of the study

- To investigate the profile & experiences of translators working with CT
- To investigate the perceived impact of CT on the translation process and product
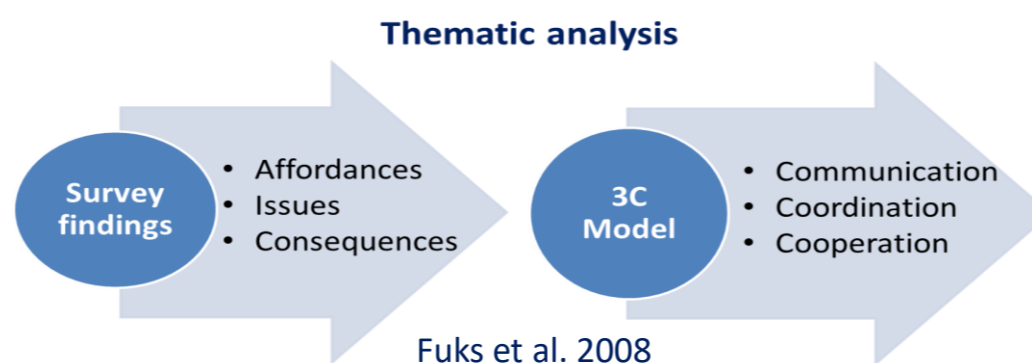
References:
- Fuks, et al. (2008) The 3C Collaboration Model. In: Ned Kock, Encyclopedia of E-Collaboration, Information Science Reference, IGI Global: Hershey and New York
- Gough, J. et al. (2023) "Concurrent Translation on Collaborative Platforms". *Translation Spaces*. John Benjamins. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1075/ts

Methodology

- Survey questionnaire (Qualtrics)
  - 25 questions
  - n=804 translators
- Quantitative & qualitative analysis

Thematic analysis

Survey findings
- Affordances
- Issues
- Consequences

3C Model
- Communication
- Coordination
- Cooperation

Fuks et al. 2008

Findings

General Findings

- CT - not a mainstream workflow
  - 70% spend ≤20% time in CT
  - 23% spend 21-60% time in CT
- Two types of workflows
  - Split and assign: PM involved
  - First come first served: no/limited PM, more automated
- 48% do not prefer CT, 35% neutral, 17% prefer CT
- Insufficient remuneration
- Some benefits but, translators largely experience its drawbacks.

Translators' Experiences

1- Communication

Affordances:
- Peer support (resolving issues in real-time)

Issues:
- Not well supported by built-in communication tools
- Unawareness of features & functionality
- Lack of training in tools/features

Consequences:
- Ineffective use of available tools
- Use of external tools
- Conflict between individuals
- Tasks may take longer

Translators' Experiences

2- Coordination

Affordances:
- Flexibility - volume and time
- Reduced responsibility
- Reduced stress

Issues:
- Management of people
  - Disparity across competency & styles
  - Lack of training/briefing on the features
- Management of workflows
  - Time pressure (prominent)
  - Random, non-linear segment-level translation
- Management of resources
  - No resources/very poorly populated ones
  - Reluctance to add terms - time reasons

Consequences:
- Extra mental stress
  - "horse race", "shark tank", "Hunger Games"
- Less revision, less research
  - self-revision skipped & superficial revision
  - reduced time & effort on research while translating
- Failure to consider the context
- Lack of control over the workflow and the final quality
- Lack of satisfaction & ownership of the task
- Devaluation of translation

3- Cooperation

Affordances:
- Peer learning (62%)
- Feeling of a community (only a few free-text responses)
- Speed (as perceived by participants)

Issues:
- CT – increases competition (63%)
  - "first come first served" (75%) vs "split and assign" (45%)
- No feeling of working towards a common goal

Consequences:
- Competition - higher-quality products
- Speed - motivation to work faster
- Competition - increased mental pressure, stress, dislike of the workflow, quality issues