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Translation technology adoption: evidence from a postgraduate programme for student translators in China

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ABSTRACT
The ability to use translation technology is considered a key component of a translator’s translation competence. However, few studies have investigated the extent of use of translation technology, especially among student translators. This paper reports on a survey of translation technology adoption among 441 students enrolled on a Master-level Programme in Translation and Interpreting. A questionnaire was used to measure student knowledge and frequency of use for six common types of translation technology tools and resources: electronic dictionaries, search engines, online encyclopaedias, corpora, machine translation and computer-aided translation tools. The results show that there is a strong, positive correlation between student knowledge and their use of translation technology. More specifically, the second-year students generally used translation technology more frequently than the first-year students. This paper provides a baseline for future comparisons of translation technology use, which has implications for teaching translation technology in China and similar contexts elsewhere.

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Translation technology; technology adoption; student translators; Master of Translation and Interpreting

1. Introduction

Research into the use of translation technology has attracted considerable attention in recent years (Burchardt, Lommel, Bywood, Harris, & Popović, 2016; Cadwell, O’Brien, & Teixeira, 2017; Rico, 2017). Studies have focused on how translation technology can assist the language services industry (Alonso, 2015; Gallego-Hernández, 2015; Gaspari, Almaghout, & Doherty, 2015), and the extent to which translation education programmes around the world can benefit from it (Doherty & Kenny, 2014; Rico, 2017; Rodríguez-Inés, 2013; Wang, 2013). As one of the basic components of translator competence, the ability to use technological tools has a crucial role to play in the translation process (EMT, 2017; PACTE, 2018). Conceptual research has been done to develop pedagogy and curriculum to teach translation technology in educational contexts (Alcina, Soler, & Granell, 2007;