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## Collaborative Translation and Cases of *Translator Plus*

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### *Abstract*

*Evidence of collaboration can be noticed in all areas of translation, both professional and non-professional, and “across the whole process of translation, from authors, to publishers, to translation agencies and to translators” (O’Brien 2013, 17).*

*This paper will only focus on professional collaborative translation. Early examples of collaboration work can be seen in literary translations, even if these no longer dominate the field of collaborative translation. Nowadays, in translation agencies, translators routinely collaborate on work using a vertical collaborative approach. But it is the horizontal collaborative approach that is becoming increasingly popular because it helps optimize productivity and accuracy.*

*In this paper, recent case studies of collaborative translation in specific areas (filmmaking, tourism, marketing, banking) will also be included. The practical examples will show just how essential it is for collaboration to take place between the translator and authors/commissioners/directors or other actors in the translation process in order to improve the quality of the final product.*

*Clearly, when translators work collaboratively and offer a variety of services apart from translation work, they can be considered as translators plus in the premium market.*

### **1. Definitions of Collaborative Translation**

In recent years, when defining *collaborative translation* scholars have focused on one or at least very few specific aspects of the process. The most inclusive definition has been given by O’Brien (*ibid.*):

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A general definition of collaborative translation (...) is when two or more agents cooperate in some way to produce a translation. Collaborative translation can also have a narrower meaning, referring to the situation where two or more translators work together to produce one translated product.

According to O'Brien's definition, *collaborative* refers to the activity of working together to produce a translation. This can be done between any agents whether human or not. It should also be noted that the locution "in some way" may be applied to the cooperative work required by a translator when performing non-translation tasks, such as "client contact, negotiating with client, administrative preparation, checking, "aftercare"; in other words, the whole service provision cycle recommended and described in EN 15038/ISO 17100" (Thelen 2016, 255). The European Union's EMT competence framework (2017) also includes cooperation as part of the skills and competences needed to meet the requirements of the translator profession. These include, for example, service provision and personal and interpersonal skills. So, O'Brien's definition may include collaboration between all parties involved in translation (not just translators themselves, but also authors, publishers, filmmakers and translation agencies) when producing a translated text.

The definitions of *collaborative translation* provided by other scholars vary considerably with discussions focusing mainly on recent technological advancements. For example, Désilets and Van der Meer (2011) state that the term can be used to refer to a wide range of software tools that enable collaboration in translation ("agile translation teamware", "collaborative terminology resources", "translation memory sharing", "online translation marketplaces", "post-editing by the crowd" and "translation crowdsourcing") but they do not refer to the activity of working together to produce a translation.

More specifically, a large number of researchers from various disciplines have drawn their attention to the emerging phenomenon of *crowdsourcing*. Howe (2006) and Pym (2011, 2014) have used the term *collaborative translation* as a synonym for "crowdsourcing", "community translation" and "user-generated translation", hence a kind of "volunteer translation". Yet, they admitted that volunteering does not always mean collaborating nor vice versa. O'Hagan (2011: 14) defines *crowdsourcing* as the production of volunteer or community translations in some form of collaboration by a group of internet users forming an online community. Volunteer translations can be 'solicited' or 'unsolicited' depending on whether they are initiated through a proposal to the 'crowd' or not (O'Hagan 2013).

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Meanwhile, McDonough Dolmaya (2012: 169) sees *crowdsourcing* as “collaborative efforts to translate content ... either by enthusiastic amateurs ... or by professional translators” and mainly stressed the potential for professionals to participate in volunteer initiatives. Munday (2012: 282) considers *collaborative translation* and *crowdsourcing* to be the same and described it as “a collaboration often among large groups of non-professional translators”. More recently, quality of translated products in crowdsourcing has been the focus of a number of studies. By using a corpus-based approach to analyse translation crowdsourcing, Jiménez-Crespo (2017: 205), for example, argues that crowdsourcing has contributed to a more flexible and dynamic understanding of translation quality, moving from a maximum quality model to the ‘fit for purpose’ one, in which initiators, translators and end users select whichever process and quality matches the ‘purposes intended’.

Other synonyms for *collaborative translation* mentioned in Translation Studies – also used by O’Brien as subordinate terms – are *amateur translation* (Brabham 2008), *fansubbing* (O’Brien 2013), *fan translation* (O’Brien 2013, Pym 2011), *participative translation* (Pym 2011), *social translation* (Desjardins 2011; O’Brien 2013); *open translation* (Cronin 2010). Of all the definitions which have been mentioned here, it is evident that only O’Brien describes *collaborative translation* both as the activity directly pertaining to the translation process and to the other steps in the translation provision cycle.

Also, recently, closer attention has been paid to *collaborative translation* practices with the aim of conceptualizing translation as a collaborative phenomenon (Alfer 2017a; Cordingley and Frigau Manning 2017; Jansen and Wegener 2013). Within the professional area of translation, in 2015, the term *translaboration* (Alfer 2017b) was coined by a group of transdisciplinary researchers at the University of Westminster, London. This emerging concept brings translation and collaboration together both in theory and in practice to develop a more acute transdisciplinary awareness of the profession. More specifically, the experimental group allows individuals who are interested in the fusion between translation and collaboration as well as scholars, including both those who work in the field of Translation Studies and those who do not, “to explore, articulate, and put to the test connections, comparisons, and contact zones between translation and collaboration” in a wide range of fields (Alfer 2017a, 275).

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## 2. *Collaborative literary Translation*

Alfer (2017a: 276) states that “collaboration not just between multiple translators but also between translators, authors, clients, project managers, editors, and myriad other (both human and textual) stakeholders in the translation process is anything but a recent, let alone new phenomenon”. There is, indeed, evidence to believe that *collaborative translation* was very common in the past, especially in literary translation. From Antiquity to the Renaissance, translation was often practised by groups of specialists from a variety of languages and by people with varied skills, who all worked together to find solutions to translation problems (Cordingley and Frigau Manning 2017). For example, legend holds that the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek by a team of seventy-two translators who worked on it collaboratively (O’Brien 2013). Charles Haskins (1960) discovered an early case of *collaborative translation* of the *Almagest*, dating back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century, which was translated from Greek into Latin. In the preface, the Latin translator stated that he did not know Greek well enough to do the translation by himself entirely, so he had to ask for the help of another translator, called Eugenius, who was fluent in Latin, Greek and Arabic. Nevertheless, throughout the Renaissance, translators tended to hide the fact that any collaboration had taken place, preferring instead to claim that the work had been carried out individually. According to Cordingley and Frigau Manning (2017: 4) and Trzeciak Huss (2018: 389), the “myth of singularity” or myth of “sole authorship of the literary text” has obscured the centrality of collaboration in the production of a translated text, and as a result has made collaboration with editors, publishers or other people involved invisible.

Recent studies, however, have prompted reappraisals of *collaborative translation*. Trzeciak Huss (*ibid.*) investigates the approach to collaborative literary translation by examining who is collaborating with whom and the kind of collaboration according to relationship between the collaborators. She argues that *collaborative translation* is often automatically associated with particular relationships – author-translator, for instance. Yet, her actor-network theory also takes into account the network of relations between human and non-human participants (authors, texts, translators, institutions, editors, publishers, scholars, readers) and allows for the identification of other roles for various participants in the translation process: two or more translators working together on the same translation or a translator working closely with a playwright, director, actors or editors.

In literature, a number of scholars have examined cases of collaboration between translators and authors of literary works. For example, the translator Levine (1991: 47) called her close and active collaboration with the author Guillermo Cabrera Infante *closecollaboration*. In her book she talks about how working closely with her authors affected her translations, as we also see, for example from Yao's contribution in this issue of *Cultus*. Levine argues that playfulness and transcreation were made possible by the authors she was working with. She also shared with them her own interest in the manipulation of language.

Apart from Infante, another author with whom Levine experienced *closecollaboration* was Julio Cortázar. She worked on the translation of his book "Todos los fuegos el fuego" (1966), a collection of eight short stories that Levine translated under the supervision of the author, who was open to suggestions she made about the work. As one of the first readers of his work, Levine was asked to render Cortázar's ambiguous texts into English. She was, in her own words, not merely a 'scribe', but also a critical reader whose first aim was to interpret the story (Castaño-Roldán and Correa 2021).

*Closecollaboration* depends on a number of key factors: above all, the creativity of both the author and the translator, and their will to collaborate (Trzeciak Huss 2018). Collaboration generally implies that the author takes part in the translation process, but there have been other – rare – cases of an original text being modified according to its translations. Hersant (2017) found that the translator Gregory Rabassa, an American literary translator who translated from Spanish and Portuguese into English, stated that Cortázar, his first author, liked the way he translated his work to the point that he sometimes altered his original texts to better fit the English version. Similarly, the Italian translator Fabio Pusterla mentioned that some Italian-speaking authors he was working with, took part in the translation process, and one of them actually preferred the translation over the original and even modified some of the lines of his own original poem according to Pusterla's recommendations. Katan (2022) also reports his own experience of a museum panel translation from Italian, where his additions in English giving extra background about medieval Italy were subsequently incorporated into the 'original' Italian panel. In these cases, the original authors modified their own texts as a result of the translation due to the fact that the translators had managed to establish a collaborative relationship and were able to earn the trust of their primary authors. This does not happen very frequently, but when it does, as Hersant (2017) underlines, the collaboration has a positive

effect on the creative process, as it helps authors to improve their own work.

There are also other examples of collaborative translation where the translators' creativity and recommendations were welcomed and appreciated. Ivančić (2011), for instance, explored Italian writer Claudio Magris's correspondence with his translators, and described their interaction as a *dialogue* rather than an imposition from the author. However, Ivančić (*ibid.*: 10) points out that "very few translators actually follow the author's suggestions", and take "liberties with the original text". Ivančić also underlines the fact that the whole translation process gives authors the chance to reconsider their work. Peter Bush (2007: 28) had a similar opinion and suggested that authors who are willing to listen to their translators often modify the original according to their new translational vision (Zanotti 2011).

Another striking example of *collaborative translation* is that of Umberto Eco's collaboration with William Weaver, mainly because Weaver was highly visible as a translator (Trzeciak Huss 2018). Eco's instructions to all of his translators constitute a different category of collaboration. It was "a mode of authorial participation which aims at assisting the translator while at the same time limiting his or her space of freedom" (Bollettieri and Zanotti 2017, 269). Eco's aid in the translation process resulted in an informative and interventionist modality of collaboration (*ibid.*).

Interesting examples of poet-translator collaboration are those of Langston Hughes (2015), who, on a journey to Central Asia in 1932, collaborated with Uzbek poets to produce English translations of their poems, and Young's collaboration with Czech poet Miroslav Holub whose translation solutions often prompted Holub to go back and change the source language (David Young, email communication with Trzeciak Huss, 26 December 2017). Nadia Georgiou (this issue of *Cultus*) reports similar collaboration between the translator Kimon Friar and Greek poets.

### **3. Collaborative Translation in the modern age: what happens in translation agencies**

The Internet, computer technology advancements and the rise of cloud computing have changed the perception and activity of *collaborative translation* in the modern age. Web-based platforms have enabled new modes of literary translation such as crowdsourcing and online collaborative

translation (Jiménez-Crespo 2017). New modes of *collaborative translation* are also becoming increasingly common in other areas of translation and translation agencies are exploring their benefits in the translation process. Over the last few decades, most translation agencies use what we can define as a *vertical collaborative approach*: translation work is done by applying the three step translate-edit-proofread (TEP) model (Kockaert *et al.* 2008). The translation part is usually carried out by a single translator, whose work is then revised by a senior translator or “editor”. After that, a third person checks the translation to make sure that it is accurate, and that no information has been omitted.

According to Kelly *et al.* (2011), this traditional model may have various disadvantages in terms of translation quality and efficiency. Firstly, those who are located at the bottom of the chain may receive less information or instructions than those who are located at the top. If editors and proofreaders do not know much about the topic or do not have enough information on the source text, they are likely to introduce mistakes, rather than correct them. Secondly, we need to consider it from the point of view of time. This model implies that individuals must work on the task on their own before handing it to the next person in the line. Consequently, translators, editors and reviewers need to wait for the previous person to finish before starting to work on their task, which can be time-consuming. According to Kelly and Stewart (2011) the TEP model still seems to be the most widely used in translation agencies, mainly because customers do not make agreements with freelance translators directly. Rather, they hire translation agencies that manage the whole translation process, including the people who carry out the TEP steps (*ibid.*). However, the client may also take steps to ensure quality. For instance, it is common for clients, especially for large organizations, to employ someone to review the translation to assure its accuracy and provide feedback. This is a process that Bass (2006) called “end client review”. This step is usually performed by someone on the client’s staff, generally located in the target language country, or by a partner organization, and takes place at the end of the project once the translation has already been completed. If errors are detected at the end, fixing them can be expensive, take a long time and require a considerable investment in human resources (Williams 2004).

The growing presence of online communities can help overcome these challenges by adapting what we can define as a *horizontal collaborative approach*. In her comparative analysis of 100 community translation environments and interviews with stakeholders, Kelly *et al.* (2011) found that translation



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industry participants were already moving away from the traditional collaborative translation process toward a model which she called *community-based*. This is happening because of “the pressure to provide more local products, services, and content at a faster rate” (*ibid.*: 91). Through this collaborative translation process, for example, 20 translators can work asynchronously on a project for five days instead of having five translators work for 20 days. Therefore, translations can be done much faster than by using traditional TEP models (Kelly *et al.* 2011). Most importantly, using the *horizontal collaborative approach*, any discussion about possible mistakes happens at an early stage of the translation process with quality improvements made while the translation is in progress.

The *horizontal collaborative approach* brings about a change in the role of translators, who are no longer individuals working on their own, but become members of a community. Individuals with subject-matter expertise may also be invited to join the community to check the translation and make suggestions. As a result, the collaborative method brings translators and experts into a virtual work environment where real-time interaction with their colleagues may have a positive impact on the final product. For example, when translators have doubts, they can ask specific questions on online forums to receive more precise information, gain additional insights or obtain feedback. They can also add, share and review other people’s translation memories, thus having greater access to shared knowledge depositories. Consequently, this system tends to encourage error prevention rather than error correction.

Moreover, this model introduces a change in the role of project managers (PMs). They are no longer only responsible for the distribution of files and tasks, but they play an active role in the creation of the community, and they bring the necessary resources into it. In other words, PMs first organize the project for the community and, if necessary, they may pre-translate documents with machine translation and translation memory. Later, PMs upload the material and check vendor databases to find the resources that they need and then invite vendor databases to join the community, which will probably include translators, editors, proofreaders and other subject-matter experts. Finally, PMs monitor the translation process to make sure that it goes forward smoothly. PMs working with the TEP model often make use of translation management system tools (TMS) to carry out general management tasks. However, according to Kelly *et al.* (2011), this is not always the case with the collaborative model. This is because some tasks

become automatised through community translation tools, such as CrowdIn, CrowdSight, GetLocalization, GlotPress, LingoTek, Transifex. Finally, it is important to point out that the role of editors also shifts significantly. Reviewers do not need to wait until the end of the process to correct mistakes and give their feedback, but rather, they are available for consultation throughout the entire process for translators to ask questions. However, what needs to be underlined is the fact that, with the collaborative approach, some tasks usually performed by editors may be made by technological and authoring tools (such as Acrocheck and AuthorAssistant), which are developed in-house in most cases (Kelly *et al.* 2011, 85).

It is important to underline that the *horizontal collaborative approach* can be considered as a natural consequence of the increased presence of virtual environments. If this model implies communities of translators, subject-matter experts and editors cooperating simultaneously on the same project, benefits can be noticed in terms of productivity and accuracy.

#### **4. Collaborative translation in specific translation areas and examples of *translators plus***

So far, we have explored, albeit briefly, cases of *collaborative translation* in the field of literary and commercial translation and publishing. In addition, we have described what *collaborative translation* implies in translation agencies. In this part of the paper the focus will be on specific areas in which *collaborative translation* is or has been applied and practical examples of cases where translators or interpreters have been essential collaborators working with the authors, commissioners, directors or other actors in the process. In other words, specific examples where the translator (in the widest sense of the term) has not been “just” the translator contributing to the language transfer of the text/product but a translator *plus* who made suggestions to improve the source text/product based on their experience and expertise, and handled a variety of tasks not strictly related to translation. In the cases mentioned below, a *horizontal collaborative approach* has been employed, similarly to what happens in translation agencies: the translator works together with the source-text author or other specialists/actors during the translation process in order to increase linguistic accessibility and enhance effective communication.

Good examples of translation being integrated in the production process come from the audiovisual world - with collaboration taking place between

filmmakers and translators during the filmmaking process. This is the ambit of what Romero-Fresco calls “accessible filmmaking” (2013; 2019; 2021). Udo and Fels (2000) were the first to point out the problems associated with accessible filmmaking and translation as a post-production activity. Traditionally, subtitling for the deaf and for the hard-of-hearing (SDH), and audio description for the blind and the partially sighted (AD), was only added after the completion of the film, which impacted negatively on the audience’s enjoyment and understanding of the film as well as the director’s intentions. This was mainly because audio describers and captionists did not have the chance to collaborate with the creative team. In order to tackle this problem, they put forward a collaborative model:

We assert that audio describers and captionists should operate under a similar system [to the rest of the filmmaking crew], reporting to or, at least, consulting with a director of accessibility services. This team would then meet with the production’s director to develop an accessibility strategy that re-interprets the “look and feel” of the production. The captioning and description team would then work together to develop prototypes that would, in turn, be approved by the director before being produced. The final product should receive similar attention. (Udo and Fels 2000, 24)

In their opinion, film directors should work alongside the director of access services or the subtitler/audio describer just as they work together with the lighting director or the director of photography.

The collaborative model proposed by Udo and Fels was then applied by the British filmmaker Raina Haig (2002) in the film *Drive* (1997). It included audio description as part of the production process. She thought that “the AD needs to be constructed in consultation or even collaboration with the filmmaker thus regarding the job of audio description as a part of the film industry” (Romero-Fresco 2013, 206). By integrating audiovisual translation and accessibility as part of the filmmaking process, filmmakers try to make their films accessible not only to visually-impaired audiences, but also to viewers in other languages so that film production is successful, cost-effective and wide-reaching. This falls within the principles of the “universal design” theory, a term coined by the architect Ronald Mace and applied to buildings, products and environments to promote accessibility for those both with and without disabilities (Mace 1976).

According to the architect, the design of a product should include as many potential users and uses as possible, starting from its earliest design. In SDH and AD, this concept is being applied to suggest that the designer

of the (audiovisual) product should from the outset be involved in helping audio describers and captionists develop an accessibility strategy.

While accessible filmmaking is still more of an ideal than a reality, the product designer involvement in the process is easier to find in part-subtitling, which can be viewed as another example of accessible filmmaking. O'Sullivan (2008: 81) describes partial subtitles or part-subtitling as follows:

Part-subtitling is understood here simply as a strategy for making a film shot in two or more languages accessible to viewers. Unlike conventional subtitles, part-subtitles are appended to part of the dialogue only, are planned from an early stage in the film's production, and are aimed at the film's primary language audience. Such films will have no 'original', unsubtitled version, but will be partially subtitled for all audiences. (O' Sullivan 2008, 81)

Part-subtitling can be found in many films such as *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008), *Avatar* (2009), *Mystery Train* (1989) or *Night on Earth* (1991) where "the non-English dialogue is created in collaboration with the actors, but not necessarily as a translation of a script originally written in English" (Romero-Fresco 2013, 207); or where translations "are considered at the pre-production stage, when the script is being developed, and they are made during the post-production stage by the scriptwriters and the filmmakers often in collaboration with translators" (*ibid.*).

There are different degrees of involvement and collaboration between filmmakers and translators. McClarty (2012) and Romero-Fresco (2013; 2019; 2021) point out the case of creative subtitling in which the translator gained closer working access to the entire film production team and influenced the pacing and emotional content of a film through the language and visual aesthetics. According to McClarty (2012: 139) a creative subtitler fully responds to the communicative needs of each and every frame and "must keep a trilateral gaze: backwards to the source culture and the aesthetic qualities and semiotic codes of the source text; sideways to the influences to be gained from related disciplines; and forwards to the target culture and the aesthetic qualities and semiotic codes of the subtitles". This means that the translator is a creative collaborator rather than a mere rule-obeying machine bound by standard font types, sizes and positions. The creative subtitler is, therefore, given the freedom to create a product that matches the aesthetic and linguistic function of the film.

The film-translation scholar, Romero-Fresco directed and edited *Joining the Dots* (2012), a 12-minute documentary about blindness and audio

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description to better understand collaboration between the creative team and the translators. In the event, he worked in collaboration with the director of photography, camera operator, sound recording and editing, research and production, the translation team in eight languages as well as in English SDH and AD. After this personal experience, he created a list of pre-production, production and post-production practices to follow when a collaboration between filmmakers and translators is needed to make a film accessible to the deaf and blind and to viewers in other languages (Romero-Fresco 2013). The list is not exhaustive but it is a starting point to start bridging the gap that exists in teaching subtitling. In fact, translation postgraduate programmes rarely pay attention to filmmaking, and filmmaking courses do not usually teach translation and accessibility issues. Romero-Fresco (2019: 5-6) underlines that accessible filmmaking aims to integrate translation and accessibility into the production process of audiovisual media “(normally through the collaboration between the creative team and the translator) in order to provide access to content for people who cannot access or who have difficulty accessing it in its original form”. This would avoid regarding translation and accessibility as “an afterthought, which results in translators being isolated from the creative team and working in conditions that hamper their attempts to maintain the filmmaker’s original vision” (Romero-Fresco 2021, 325).

In the filmmaking industry, there have been cases of filmmakers who supervised the translation of subtitles closely. Zanotti (2018) discovered that the British director Stanley Kubrick had his own particular approach towards translation and subtitling, based on a close collaboration with the team of translators. He spoke with translators before they started working to discuss potential problems and to guide their work by giving them important annotations. Kubrick did not hire dubbing directors, audiovisual translators and dubbing actors. Rather, he hired film directors, literary translators or writers, professional actors and language consultants (*ibid.*). This approach led to close collaboration with translation teams and language consultants on major films such as *Dr. Strangelove* (Kubrick 1964) and *Barry Lyndon* (Kubrick 1975).

Unlike audiovisual translation, *collaborative translation* was already common in the videogame industry at the beginning of the century. Significant strides towards the integration of translation into the pre-production process have been made thanks to technology, which is even more pivotal in videogames than in the filmmaking industry. Videogame developers feel that it is essential for localization to be included when the game is in its development

phase (Christou *et al.* 2011). Engineers organize all the assets in computer programmes. This necessitates close collaboration between game developers and translators/localisers. Game files and metadata (pronunciation guides, glossaries, Q&A documents, etc.) are sent to localisation departments and to translation agencies to help them prepare videogame translations (Romero-Fresco 2013).

Another interesting case of *collaborative translation* worth mentioning again is the translation of a tourist guide from Italian into English for the Jewish Museum in Lecce. The guide was translated by Katan in collaboration with the writers and the commissioner (the Museum curator). Katan's previous experience as a translator/transcreator and his role as a full professor at the University of Salento meant that he could persuade the Museum to invest in a guide that would "equip the new readers with some of the local context" (Katan 2022, 7), which was not described in the original. Working alongside the source text writers and the Museum, the translator redesigned the guide, which resulted in a much longer and consequently more expensive book.

A further case of translator *plus* is David Jemieliy (see also the interview in this issue of *Cultus*). At the Translating Europe Workshop Jemieliy talked about his experience as head of the in-house translation team at the Banque Cantonale Vaudoise (BCV) in Lausanne, Switzerland and of his involvement in the editorial committee of the bank, a group focused on brand-level communications policies across all languages. He explained how, since his arrival, the bank has continually increased the number of translators in the team, thus raising the profile of the bank's translation department. He also became actively involved in creating the brand identity campaign. As the head of multilingual content at the bank, he was able to transform the Bank's understanding of translation, from "Is this a good translation?" to "Is this effective communication?", and was given free reign to reach that aim. Again, according to Jemieliy, premium market service providers in general are shifting their focus on communication rather than translation; are improving the degree and level of engagement translators have with their customers, and are having more regular interactions with their CEOs regarding multilingual communication. This means that translators can also influence the way new and future content is created once the reputation of the translators as expert service providers is established.

During the same Workshop other translators working in the premium market talked about their collaborative work experience. There was general agreement that translators must have technical expertise in a particular domain field and a set of transferable, soft skills, such as communication,

flexibility, and critical thinking, if they want to be a translator *plus*. Robert Capurro, for example, is a translator working in international corporate insurance broking. He describes himself as the trusted advisor of businesses and not just a translator because he is competent first of all in the subject matter (insurance). Jane Martens is a court translator and works for a major German law firm. She is a translator *plus* thanks to her legal specialization which she obtained after gaining a diploma in translating. This was key to establishing a relationship of trust with commissioners and clients. However, it is also clear that a translator *plus* will need the ability to relate and negotiate besides the ability to translate. According to Jemielity (2018), at its most basic level, *collaborative translation* is a dialogue-based process between translators and text owners designed to negotiate differences that exist between languages. Yao talks about a similar process in her cooperation-competition-compromise-collaboration model (see this issue of *Cultus*). In the end, “value-added translating involves constant interaction” (Williamson in this issue of *Cultus*) and the translator provides, as Benetello suggests (in this issue of *Cultus*) “a consulting service rather than a language service”.

## 5. Conclusions

Research into *collaborative translation* is well documented in the literary field, while in all other areas of translation it is still in its early stages. Yet, thanks to technology, collaboration is “gradually becoming the norm in translation companies and is also becoming more widespread among freelance translator networks” (Gouadec 2007, 106). Understanding the complex interactions involved in the translation process is evolving as new cases of *collaborative translation* are explored or new needs arise. Recent research is focusing on the skills and competences – outside the isolated act of translating – that a translator should master when working collaboratively. General translator competence frameworks, such as that formulated by the European Union (EMT 2017), have already incorporated a number of the non-translating soft skills that now are deemed necessary for a professional translator.

Ten years ago, O'Brien (2011: 20) pointed out that “the ability to translate in a collaborative way is a skill that professional translators will need in the future”. Working collaboratively in translation means being able to engage with a wide variety of actors. The *horizontal collaborative translation*

approach may be seen as an opportunity for translators to concentrate not only on routine translation tasks but also on the more creative tasks by, for example, giving cultural advice, supporting localization, marketing objectives or company branding image, and negotiating with clients.

It would appear to be a fact that collaborative translators are a feature of the literary, the commercial - in particular, the premium market (Durban 2010, Jemielity 2018) - as well the filmmaking and publishing fields. O'Brien and Rossetti (2020) argue that translation companies have moved away from selling *pure* translation to selling expertise and services that have a perceived higher value. As a result, translators are increasingly expected to demonstrate their added value by showing their ability with more creative tasks (such as transcreation and copywriting, see Benetello, this issue) and with a set of transferable, soft skills, such as communication, flexibility, and critical thinking.

As shown in this paper, a number of professional translators have already exploited their specialist domain knowledge and their cooperative, technological, interpersonal and intercultural skills to become translators *plus* and work in a number of areas as well as in the premium market. Yet, collaboration with translators is still seen “as a source of expense” (Jemielity 2018, 536), an unnecessary cost rather than a core value of firms or organizations. To conclude, it would seem that it is time to pay much more attention to the collaborative aspect of translation and place it centre stage since *collaborative translation* is clearly part of the future of translation.

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