

Navigating complexity of narrative engagement research: exploring the challenges of conducting a multi-method study of literary translation reception

Key words: Translation, Reception, Eye-tracking, Multi-method approach

Literary translation reception studies explore a complex phenomenon of reading and engaging with translated texts. To capture the full picture of how a text is processed by its recipients, a multi-method approach is taken, making reception studies an interdisciplinary field combining psycholinguistic, reading research, cognitive translation studies, and psychology. By drawing from each of these disciplines, we can better assess the processes involved in narrative engagement in translated literature. However, the combination of all these disciplines results in a considerable pool of data that may be difficult to navigate and analyse. This poster explores the methodological perspective and challenges of dealing with multiple sets of data from a study in which 60 participants were asked to read excerpts from translated literature and rate their narrative engagement using the Transportation Scale – Short Form (Appel et al., 2015) while their eye movements were recorded with an eye-tracker. After the experiment retrospective interviews were conducted to get an understanding of the participants' subjective feelings about the texts, and later participants were asked to fill in questionnaires aimed at assessing their individual language background, reading preferences and levels of empathy. This way, the study provided both objective data, subjective data, and a considerable amount of participant information, which all help to account for different factors influencing the reader experience. Drawing on this research design, the poster aims to explore the key choices researchers must make in designing a translation reception study that will both be ecologically valid, comfortable for the participants, and elicit reliable data open to theoretically driven interpretation of results. The poster contributes to the ongoing methodological discussions by identifying the areas that require special attention in conducting studies in the field of literary translation reception, as well as proposing certain good practices that may help increase the transparency and replicability of future research.

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