Translators' Adoption and Non-Adoption of MT:
A Comparison of Two Case Studies

Patrick Cadwell, Sharon O'Brien, Carlos Teixeira
ADAPT Research Centre, Dublin City University

DGT Case

DG Translation
17 Focus Groups
70 Translators
Luxembourg, Brussels
September 2015

Alpha Case

Alpha CRC
4 Focus Groups
20 Translators
Cambridge (UK)
February 2016

1. Do participants use MT in their work?
2. What reasons do they advance for this adoption or non-adoption of MT?
3. What could account for the reasons put forward by these translators?

Demographic profiles compared

	DGT (n=70)	Alpha (n=20)
Languages	24	10
Gender	Female (33) Male (37)	Female (15) Male (5)
Age	Majority 30-59 years	Majority 20-39 years
Years working at employer	10 (mean)	5 (mean)
Formal TS qualification?	Yes (38) No (32)	Yes (16) No (4)

The coding picture in this project

DGT Case	Alpha Case	
Coder 1	Coder 1	Coder2
Attention	Consistency	Communication with colleagues
Control	Context	Communication with customers
Differences between language departments	Job satisfaction	Ethics (containing subcode of trust)
Human and machine	Quality in translation acts	Job satisfaction
MT as a tool	Reasons to use or not use MT	Metadata (containing subcode of trust)
Personality or temperament influencing MT use	Trust	MT & Post-editing (containing subcode of trust)
Quality influencing MT use		Other
Reasons to use or not use MT		Quality of the source text
Special position of DGT translators		TM vs. MT (containing subcode of trust)
That which cannot be automated		Training
Trust		Translation tools (containing subcode of trust)
Type of text and MT use		
Working style influencing MT use		

Final codes selected

DGT Case	Alpha Case	
Coder 1	Coder 1	Coder2
Attention	Consistency	Communication with colleagues
Control	Context	Communication with customers
Differences between language departments	Job satisfaction	Ethics (containing subcode of trust)
Human and machine	Quality in translation acts	Job satisfaction
MT as a tool	Reasons to use or not use MT	Metadata (containing subcode of trust)
Personality or temperament influencing MT use	Trust	MT & Post-editing (containing subcode of trust)
Quality influencing MT use		Other
Reasons to use or not use MT		Quality of the source text
Special position of DGT translators		TM vs. MT (containing subcode of trust)
That which cannot be automated		Training
Trust		Translation tools (containing subcode of trust)
Type of text and MT use		
Working style influencing MT use		

Reasons to use MT
Reasons to not use MT
Quality
Trust

- Because PE can lead to speed or productivity gains (DGT & Alpha)
- Because MT can be effective for certain types of text (DGT & Alpha)
- Because MT can produce output of good quality for certain language pairs (DGT & Alpha)
- Because MT can provide inspiration, new ideas, or kick-start the translation process (DGT & Alpha)
- Because using MT can reduce typing or clicking (DGT)
- Because greater MT adoption is inevitable (Alpha)
- Because a translator is required to use MT (Alpha)

- Because MT can be ineffective for certain types of text (DGT & Alpha)
- Because MT produces output of poor quality for certain language pairs (DGT & Alpha)
- Because of MT's negative influence on a translator's abilities (DGT & Alpha)
- Because of fear (DGT & Alpha)
- Because PE is slower than other methods (Alpha)
- Because human interaction or understanding is lacking (Alpha)
- Because PE is not an enjoyable task (Alpha)

- Participants' MT adoption decisions seem to depend strongly on text type and language pair

- Many participants acknowledge that speed or productivity gains are a reason to use MT

- But, surprisingly, some also find inspiration in using MT

- However, the emotional/affective dimension of MT and PE needs to be considered: patterns of fear, fatalism, and concern for translators' abilities

Topics of discussion relating to quality
Quality of MT output
Communication about quality
Quality of STs
Quality translators feel they should produce
Quality defined in the brief
Quality of TMs
Quality of TTs

Topics of discussion relating to trust
Trust in people and trust in technology
Trust translations coming from a human colleague more than from a machine
Trust output from TMs more than output from MT
Trust in human revision process to ensure final target text quality
Mixed opinions of confidence estimation scores for MT

DGT Case

- More positively disposed to MT
- Physical ergonomic benefit as reason to use MT
- Inspiration as reason to use MT
- Participants more appreciated and empowered when communicating with text production partners
- Trust in human revision to mitigate quality fears when using MT

Alpha Case

- More fatalistic about MT
- Concern for the lack of humanity and lower levels of enjoyment
- Perception that PE slower and requires more concentration
- Fit-for-purpose quality briefs largely standard
- Frustration that text production partners appear less concerned about quality
- Terminological assistance a reason to use MT

- Currently exploring theoretical frameworks to explain our findings

- Agency formulated as the "willingness and ability to act" (Kinnunen and Koskinen 2010: 6)

- Similar willingness between cases, but differing social structures for the two groups of participants determine the freedom of their actions

- Reasons to use MT or not extended beyond speed or productivity

- Affective or emotional factors had a role to play

- Quality and trust were also central

- Two cohorts agreed on much but also differed

  - DGT participants: rather positive

  - Alpha participants: more fatalistic

- Explain this difference by the greater agency enjoyed by the DGT participants???

- Foster translator agency as a way to improve MT adoption/disposition???

Dr Patrick Cadwell	Dr Sharon O'Brien	Dr Carlos Teixeira
patrick.cadwell@adaptcentre.ie	sharon.obrien@adaptcentre.ie	carlos.teixeira@dcu.ie