

# **Focus on the Context in Translation as Post- editing: The case of EU Parliamentary Translation**

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Working  
conditions

Particular  
Parliamentary  
discourse

**Parliamentary  
translation**

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graph TD; A[Working conditions] --> C((Parliamentary translation)); B[Particular Parliamentary discourse] --> C;
```

# Context (in translation)

- **Working conditions** (extra-linguistic)
- **Discourse**
- **Communicational situation** (conditions)  
communicational situation No 1 → translation → communicational situation No 2  
the function and the type of speech act changes
- **Cultural-linguistic context** (embodied in the discourse /language /text)  
a cultural-linguistic and sociocultural context does not coincide in the Comm Sit 1 and in the situation of translation (Comm Sit 2)
- **Internal context:** Text, paragraph, sentence / clause (translation unit)

# Working conditions / requirements

- Speed + deadlines
- Work load
- Certain days with bigger work load (parliamentary schedule)
- Types of documents
  
- Confidentiality
  
- Translation Memory System (specifics) / integrated MT
- Post-editing
  
- Matching the discourse
- Collaboration on putting together the legislative acts (in terms of choosing the terminology, formulating the statements, being responsible for proper locution of the documents which in turn bears the responsibility of the proper reception)

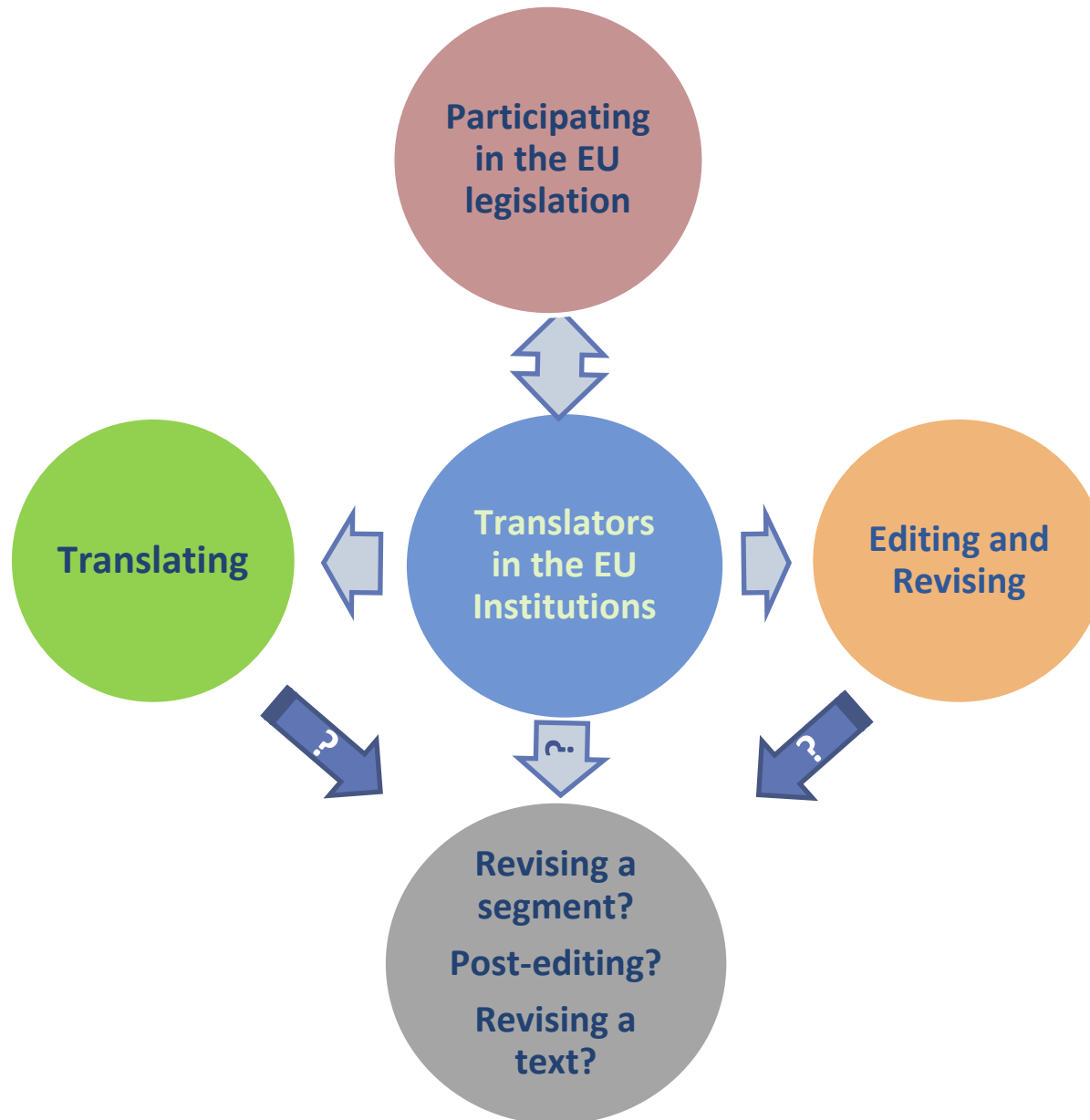
***How does the need for post-editing correspond with other conditions and requirements?***

# Particularities of the Parliamentary discourse

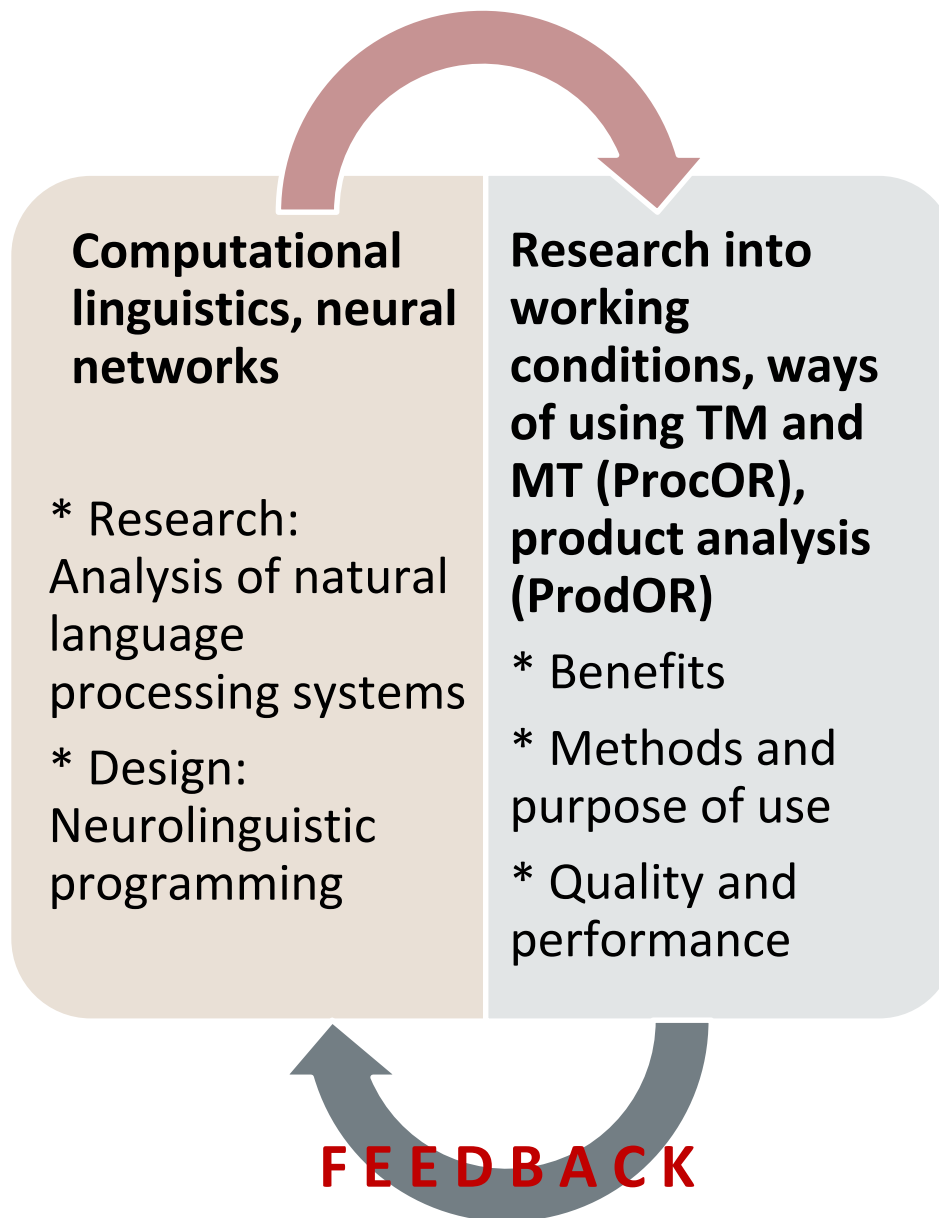
- Legal language
- Political, ideological and demagogical language
- Types of documents
- Parliamentary schedule
- Different system from the national Parliaments
- Focus on interest groups rather than political parties
- Multilingualism
- Complicated audience
  
- *How and to what extent is the context important? Which 'context' is important? How important is a personal input of a translator in terms of knowing, adjusting to, rendering and situating the translation within the context?*
  
- *What are rhetorical implications?*

# Translators in the EU Institutions:

## The State In Between



# Research in TM and MT



# Research related problems:

## How to research into Parliamentary translation

- **Process-oriented research** (safety, confidentiality, limited access, slot of time / hindering)
- **Product-oriented research**
- **(ProcOR) Research in the work place** (safety, confidentiality, limited access, slot of time / hindering): Think-aloud protocols, eye-tracking, etc.
- **Experiment**
- **(ProdOR) Analysis / Case study**
- **Retrospective protocols**

# Problems: *Heraclitus and Machine Translation*

## Problems

- Segmentation
- Translation unit
- Context
- Database domains
- Quality
- Reliability
  
- Ethics

## Research into working conditions

- Segmentation
- Productivity and performance
- Timing and deadlines
- Need for editing
- Quality
- Perception of one own's role (translator or editor)
- Psychological wellbeing
- Work satisfaction
- Stress levels
- Speed
- Purpose and ways of using TT
- Particularities of usage by professionals and novices
- Profit

# Existing research into MT/TM (Working conditions)

- **Segmentation** changes the way we think; secondary usage of language; fragmentation; the context is ignored; natural segmentation is different; clauses are ignored.
- MT/TM increases the **quality** of translation → only when translation is heavily post-edited → professionals edit a lot.
- **Popularity** of MT/TM within the industry: Does everybody really use it?
- **Productivity** increases: Only if there is a job satisfaction when MT/TM is used and a role satisfaction when translators become post-editors.
- **Benefits and profit**: EU institutions have been using MT since 2013, the cost of translation does not decrease.
- **Perception** in the market: Means for control (of terminology).
- **Different ways of using** MT/TM: Professionals use as glossaries, novices as means to learn, etc.
- **Speed** of decision and **amount of post-editing**.
- **Reliability** of MT/TM: Tendency to accept TM even when it is obviously a direct translation; more interference, more mistakes omitted (collocations, idioms, verb/noun constructions, predication, punctuation); distrust of MT.
- **Levels of stress**: Stress increases around 60-69 per cent match.
- **Speed of work**: When using MT faster than with TM.

# Not an Experiment

- The seminar for Lithuanian translators from the EU Parliament and other institutions, November 2017, the EU Parliament, Luxembourg
- The practical part of the seminar:
  - Homework: Translation and post-editing
  - Questions (TM and MT)
  - Comments (T and MT/post-editing)
  - Other examples

# Translation Technology: Functionality and the Role

CAT / TM	MT (AT) -	AI NMT (AT neural)
<p>Status of a translation unit (from full-stop to full-stop):</p> <p>NM</p> <p>FM</p> <p>100 per cent</p> <p>Rep.</p> <p>CM</p> <p>Normative</p> <p>HT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AT of a previously untranslated segment (25 per cent threshold )</li> <li>• Light post-editing</li> <li>• Full post-edinting</li> <li>• Accept</li> <li>• Dismiss</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is a correct sentence true? (Accuracy)</li> </ul>
<p>Whether it is a translation or editing depends on the match.</p>	<p>Decision making in 2-3 s based on the need for 'editing.'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How much time do we need to decide that there are no mistakes in meaning, and that it is equivalent to the ST?</li> </ul>

# The Seminar with the Parliamentary Translators

## The Document: **Quaestors'** minutes

Homework	<b>Translation</b> (Full document in SL, with an Exc. marked + the working document containing the Exc. and questions+comments section) I Exc. – I gr. II Exc. – II gr.	<b>Post-editing</b> (Full document in SL with an Exc. marked + the working document with the Exc. of the MT into TL and comments section) I Exc. – II gr. II Exc. – I gr.
Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. In case you use MT, do you consider your consequent work on the machine translated text being translation or post-editing?</li><li>2. When using TM, do you: a) work on it segment by segment; b) first work on 'low' / no match segments, then on 'high' match segments?</li></ol>	
Comments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) What were the biggest difficulties and most problematic issues?</li><li>b) Which decisions were most time- and effort-consuming?</li><li>c) Provide the questions that were raised when making specific decisions. Indicate what evoked the most negative or positive emotions.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) What were the biggest difficulties and most problematic issues?</li><li>b) Which decisions were most time- and effort-consuming?</li><li>c) Are you 'editing' the MT or do you rather translate the excerpt from scratch?</li><li>d) Provide the questions that were raised when making specific decisions. Indicate what evoked the most negative or positive emotions.</li></ol>

# Response by Translators

- **15 participants** (both from the Commission and the Parliament) of the seminar submitted their homework (some incomplete); most of them answered questions and/or wrote comments.
- **All of them translate segment by segment disregarding the match percentage.** Some emphasize that this is the way to ensure consistency / correct logical stress. 2 made exceptions (*excerpt for some very rare cases, when we need to discuss it or to look up to a translation into another language*).
- **Working with MT is perceived as:**
  - a) **editing** by 5 participants;
  - b) **translation** by 3 participants (2 added emotions and emphasized that it is '*by all means*' or '*absolutely*' translation);
  - c) 4 participants say that **whether it is translation or post-editing depends** on the *quality of MT / result / how much they need to change in MT / type of the text*. These participants implied that in a case of full-editing, their work on a segment becomes translation or **re-translation**. They tended to perceive it as editing because they accepted some of MT suggestions, even though they stressed that *when translating they would have searched for other solutions*.
- **Participants deemed MT as one of (supplementary) tools.**

# Response by Translators

- **Homework**

- Participants were prone to accept MT and work on it; edit sentences, retranslate some segments, etc., even when they had to change a lot.
- Some said they *edited* the MT.
- Some of them noted that they **translated it from scratch** but at times '*took a look at MT*'.
- Many participants tended to *retranslate* MT segments. Some said, they **accepted the suggestions even though they did not like them**.
- One participant noted that it is hard to imagine translating the whole paragraph from scratch in the work place since they work with the STUDIO.

# Response by Translators

- **Emotions**

- a) **Positive**: When MT suggestions are '*interesting*'; MT '*inspires*', even if consequently they re-translated the segment; they saw '*beautiful*' segments, but nevertheless changed a lot in the segment; some noted that *all the challenges cause positive emotions*;
- b) **Negative**: Some participants indicated that they did not trust MT, even when it looked good; They also said it *caused stress / irritated* them. Some said they felt very negative about MT and dismissed it or had this function switched off. Some said negative emotions were caused by the need to search for **initials**, abbreviations and exact headings because it was extremely time consuming (**external context**).

# Response by Translators

- **MT benefits** It speeds up the process of translation because translators do not have to invest time into thinking **how to translate a certain phrase** / do not have to **type**; most of the participants tend to accept the MT **when** they see that the proposed **term is correct** (matches my observations).
- **MT drawbacks, problems** Mostly linguistic: Word order, cases and gender, endings and inflection, long sentences, abbreviations, initials, capitalisation. General MT-related problem, as it is marked by participants, is a lack of **context**. Participants also marked such an **MT-related problem as a time span and distribution of efforts**: It takes a lot of time to check gender, context, headings, titles and names (of institutions), re-formulate sentences, '**swap elements**' of the sentence. **The question of accuracy of meaning**: Some participants were cautious about the sentences that sounded well because they had experience of being misled by MT and took more time to check on whether the meaning of MT corresponded the one of ST. Difficulty of keeping a critical distance. A lot of editing can cause an omission or distrust of MT.
- **Common problems when working with MT and when translating** Context; explicitation (e. g., which **Court?**; '<responsibility> **concerning** the implementation of these rules' → /'užtikrinti, kad būtų **laikomasi** taisyklių'/ ['**comply with**']' / 'su taisyklių **įgyvendinimu** susijusi'); additions; background knowledge, industry- or sector-related knowledge.

# Excerpt I: ST and MT

A. thank Mr GUTMANN for the excellent cooperation with the Quaestors and for his work in Parliament, **conveying to him**, on behalf of the Quaestors, **her best wishes for his retirement**.

B. MT [padėkojo F. GUTMANNUI už puikų bendradarbiavimą su kvestoriais ir jo darbą Parlamente ir kvestorių vardu **perdavė jam nuoširdžiausius linkėjimus išėjimo į pensiją proga.**]

/and passed on to him sincerest regards on the occasion of retiring/

- One can send someone sincerest regards */linkėjimai/* (does not collocate with the rest of the sentence)
- One can wish */linkėti/* something to someone on any occasion
- Culture-specific context: Retirement is not a happy occasion in Lithuania

# Excerpt I: T (7), PE (3/8)

C. T 1. [Ji padėkojo F. GUTMANN už puikų bendradarbiavimą ir jo darbą Europos Parlamente ir visų kvestorių vardu **jam palinkėjo kuo geriausios kloties ateityje.**]

/wished him the best of luck in the future/

C. T 2. [... **bei** kvestorių vardu **palinkėjo jam kuo geriausios kloties išėjus / išeinant į pensiją.**] (2+1)

/wished him the best of luck when retired/ when retiring/

C. T 3. [ir kvestorių vardu **palinkėjo jam viso ko geriausio išėjus į pensiją.**]

/wished him all the best when retired/

C. T 4. [ir kvestorių vardu **palinkėjo gražaus pensijinio laikotarpio**]

/wished him a beautiful retirement period/

C. T 5. [**bei** kvestorių vardu (**nuošidžiai**) **palinkėjo jam (visokeriopos) sėkmės išėjus į pensiją.**] (1) (PE 1+1+1)

/sincerely wished him (all the) luck when retired/

# Excerpt II: ST and MT

A. note that the draft committee report was adopted in committee the previous evening **and publicly names and shames the companies concerned;**

B. MT [pažymi, kad komiteto pranešimo projektas buvo patvirtintas komitete posėdžio išvakarėse **ir viešai įvardijamos ir sugėdijamos atitinkamos bendrovės;**]

Direct translation

# Excerpt II: T (8), PE (0/7)

- C. T 1. [atitinkamos bendrovės viešai išvardytos ir sugėdytos;] (4)  
direct translation
- C. T 2. [... viešai įvardytos susijusios bendrovės;]  
/publicly named concerned companies/  
contained a comment: '*ir sugėdintos?*'
- C. T 3. [viešai įvardytos ir pasmerktos atitinkamos įmonės;]  
/publicly named and condemned concerned companies/
- C. T 4. [viešai įvardijamos ir kritikuojamos atitinkamos bendrovės;]  
/concerned companies are publicly named and criticised /
- C. T 5. [nurodomos atitinkamos (taisyklių nesilaikančios) bendrovės]  
/points out concerned companies (that do not comply with  
the rules)/

# Rhetorical implications

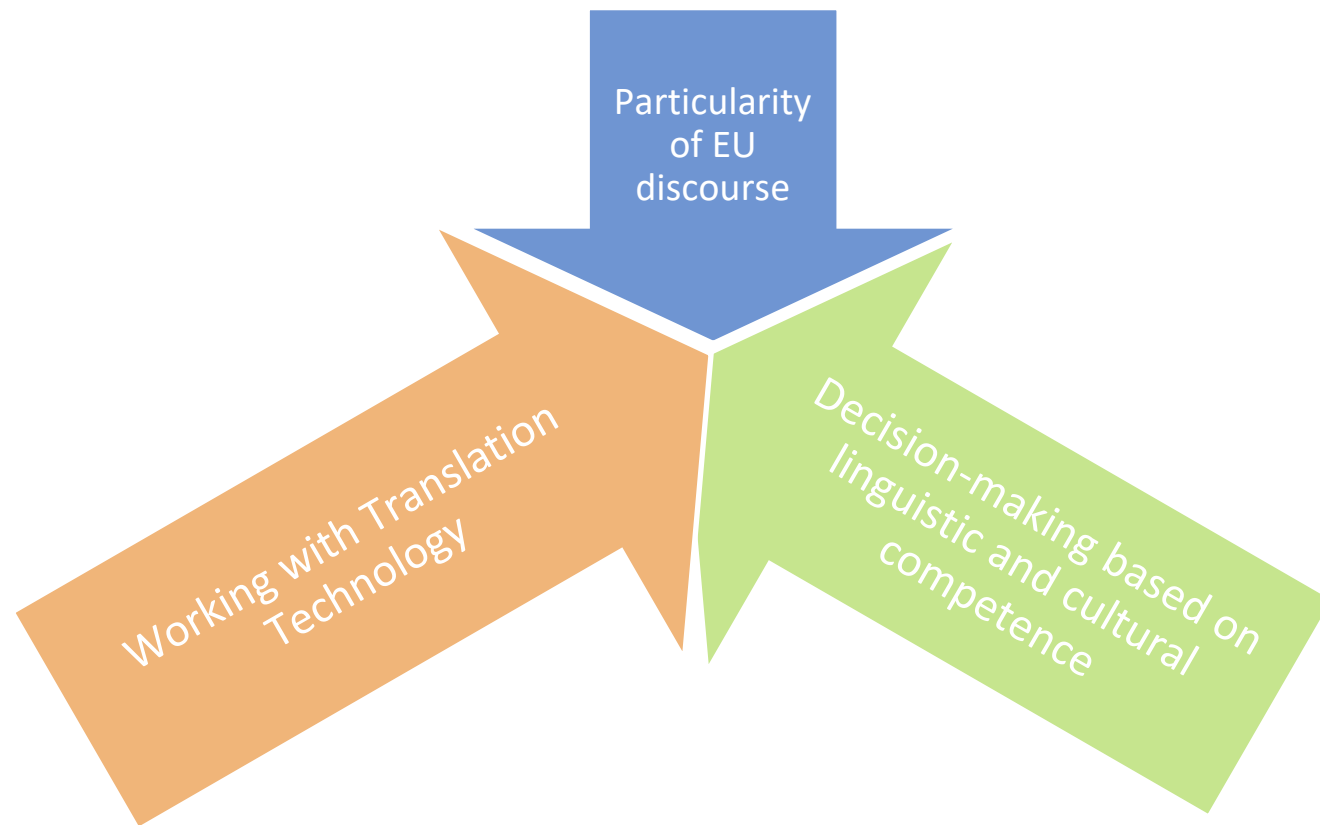
- Changes the Ethos and Pathos of a speaker
- Changes the Ethos and Pathos of the communicational situation

# The lack of context as a problem

- **Internal context (MT)**: backing against the previous segment / paragraph; syntactical context; clauses;
- **Communicational situation / discourse**:
  - Background / sector-related knowledge: Which institution, which document, which title, which term
  - Participants of the communication / of the entire Parliament (e. g. Which *'members'*?)
  - Lack of specification (can they explicitate?)
  - The question of Initials (**Working conditions, external context**)
- **Cultural-linguistic context**:
  - Registering emotion
  - Registering character
  - Do we say so?

*When post-editing, sensitivity to cultural-linguistic context decreases. Translators tend to accept MT suggestions even though they would have searched for better solutions when translating such excerpts. They registered all the context-related problems except cultural-linguistic.*

# Is post-editing any different from editing?



# Observations

*If we don't train for it, perhaps it will go away?*

*(Colin Haynes *Breaking down the language barriers: Machine translation, technology that can no longer be denied*, 1998)*

- Assignments for students that include TM and MT
- Training in (post)-editing
- The issue of a Translation Unit
- Registering the emotional and psychological wellbeing
- Feedback to the industry
- Focus on the context (training and practice)

## Reference

Lynne Bowker, *Computer-Aided Translation Technology: A Practical Introduction*, University of Ottawa Press, 2008.

**The material of the Seminar is used and presented with the official permission of the EU Parliament.**

MT

*/Dėkoju už jūsu dėmesį/*

*/Dziękuję za uwagę/*

Thank you for your attention