

Mapping paid translation crowdsourcing platforms

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Abstract

The Web 2.0 brought about wide-ranging changes in the translation industry, among them the increased participation of everyday internet users in the form of crowdsourcing, that has since turned from unpaid tasks distributed to volunteers and novice translators to an established practice in the translation industry (Jiménez-Crespo 2021). This talk aims to resolve the ambiguity surrounding paid crowdsourcing platforms and give an overview of their main characteristics. I will show that translation platforms use paid translation crowdsourcing to send jobs to a large pool of translators. They offer translation on-demand, use technology to automate outsourcing processes, and let customers choose between different quality tiers for their translation needs. Hybrid platforms also offer technological solutions to translation agencies and other companies.

Despite the growing research interest in translation platforms that use paid crowdsourcing, there is very little consensus as to what constitutes such platforms. Firat (2021), for example, includes bidding marketplaces such as ProZ in his analysis; Gough *et al.* (2023) list CAT tools among their concurrent translation platforms; and Heinisch and Iacono (2019) distinguish between translator platforms and translation platforms depending on their purpose, with the former including paid translation crowdsourcing platforms, bidding marketplaces and translation forums, and the latter being focused on technology. These inconsistent approaches show a lack of a clear definition and classification of translation platforms. Delimiting platforms as research object is necessary to ultimately allow for a more thorough investigation into their role in the translation industry and possible ethical implications.

Biography

Ms. Leandra CUKUR holds a BA in Transcultural Communication and an MA in Translation from the University of Vienna and is currently working as a research assistant at the Centre for Translation Studies at the University. Her research interests include the impact of online collaborative translation on the translation profession, especially the use of translation crowdsourcing in professional settings and its ethical implications. In her PhD thesis, she aims to shed light on the design and role of translation platforms and to explore their usefulness and drawbacks for translators.