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THE ROLE OF GENERATIVE AI IN THE FUTURE OF TRANSLATING LITERATURE

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Abstract:

GenAI, or Generative Artificial Intelligence, is transforming a lot of fields. One of these areas is translating literature. Translating literature is a creative task. It aims to maintain the original text's meaning, style, and cultural sentiments. This study talks about how GenAI techniques, including big language models, are changing the way literary translation is done today. It also talks about how they might change the future. The paper talks about the issues and chances that GenAI brings. It also talks about how GenAI is changing things for translators, publishers, and the world of literature. The study says that GenAI is strong, but human translators are still needed. Literature requires creativity, emotional depth, and cultural knowledge-characteristics uniquely possessed by humans.

Keyword: *Generative AI, Literary Translation, AI-Assisted Writing, Digital translation, Human–AI Collaboration.*

Introduction:

Translating literature is more than merely translating words from one language to another. It is a cultural and creative activity. It takes a lot of imagination, sensitivity, and knowledge of the original material. A literary translation aims to maintain the author's tone, feelings, and cultural feel. The translator also makes the text sound natural in the other language at the same time. GenAI tools, such big language models that have been trained on a lot of text, can now make translations that are seamless and natural. They can create whole paragraphs, copy writing styles, and fix simple translation errors quite rapidly. This fast progress has raised fresh questions and concerns.

Will AI take over the jobs of human translators? Can AI preserve the emotional complexity, cultural significance, and aesthetic beauty of literature? How will translation theory and practice change when people start working with smart machines?

This study examines these enquiries. It says that GenAI is incredibly powerful and useful, but human translators will still be needed. Literature demands imagination, feeling, and an understanding of other cultures. These are things that AI still can't perform completely.

In the last seventy years, machine translation has changed a lot. At first, translation systems employed rules for grammar that didn't change. Their translations often sounded rigid and not like real speech. Later, statistical models employed probability to pick the most plausible translations. These were better, but they still didn't really get it. Neural Machine Translation (NMT) made a tremendous difference. NMT lets tools like Google Translate and DeepL understand full sentences at once instead of one word at a time. But even NMT has trouble with poetry, metaphorical language, and texts that are full with culture.

GenAI is the newest stage. It can learn from billions of words and use that knowledge to translate and write new material. Studies show that the form and rhythm of GPT-4's translations may be similar to those of human translations. But that doesn't mean their writing is very excellent. Abdelhalim's 2025 study found that students liked using AI for speed and vocabulary, but

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the translations didn't have enough cultural detail, emotional depth, or lyrical tone. These studies show that GenAI is good, but not the best for writing.

It's easier to understand the problems with GenAI when we think about how literature works. There are a lot of hidden meanings, symbolism, jokes, and cultural references in literary writing. A simple sentence can include feelings, history, or irony that only a person can truly understand. AI might get the fundamental concept but not the deeper feeling. AI doesn't get why jokes are amusing, thus they often lose their humour. AI follows patterns instead of creative intention, which might make poetry lose its rhythm. Cultural references might turn into weird literal explanations. Abdelhalim's research indicated that pupils perceived AI as incapable of demonstrating creativity or emotion. This shows that AI can speed up translation, but it can't replace human creativity or intuition.

There are also concerns of morality. When AI does most of the translation and a person simply edits it, who is the translator? Should the person get all the credit? CEATL, an organisation of European translators, claims that publishers don't always make it apparent when AI is involved. AI is also trained on big databases that might have copyrighted texts in them. This makes me wonder if AI uses outdated translations without consent. Another worry is workers' rights. If publishers utilise AI to make drafts and pay people less to revise them, translators may not have a fair deal. A survey by the Society of Authors in 2024 found that 35% of translators had already lost job because to AI, and 40% had decreased pay. This illustrates that AI is transforming both the way translation is done and the way those who do it are valued. At the same time, GenAI opens up new doors. One big plus is how fast it is. AI can swiftly make a draft, which gives translators more time to work on style, emotion, and cultural meaning. AI also makes things easier to get by letting more books from languages that aren't as well known be translated. This allows readers from all over the world more different voices. GenAI may help you find new words, propose different ways to say things, clarify cultural terminology, and break up big sentences. Abdelhalim's research revealed that pupils perceived AI as enhancing their vocabulary and fostering their inventiveness. This suggests that AI can be a useful tool, not a replacement.

GenAI is also making new jobs for translators. In the future, translators may spend much of their time correcting AI drafts, making sure they are culturally accurate, and making the style match the voice of the original author. It might be time to modify how we teach translation. Students will learn how to use AI, evaluate what it produces, and fix its flaws. GenAI also lets you try new things, such digital books in more than one language, interactive editions, and tools that enable readers evaluate different methods of translation. These new ideas can help students, professors, and regular readers look at literature in new ways.

The emergence of GenAI also influences translation theory. Old theories look at how people are creative and how they understand culture. But AI makes translation largely automatic. This means that researchers need to reflect about what translation really entails. Translators can become rewriters or editors of culture. Standards for quality also need to alter. BLEU and METEOR are two examples of machine metrics that quantify accuracy but not emotion, tone, or creative flair. These human traits are very important in literature. Yao et al.'s research indicates that AI can replicate human form but not human emotion. There is also a risk to culture. AI generally uses terminology that is not biassed. This could make the way people write more similar and take away some of the cultural differences. Human translators keep cultural distinctions alive, but technology might make them less important.

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The business of translation is likewise changing. Publishers are using AI because they want translations to be faster and cheaper. This could save money, but it could also hurt translators' pay. Translators may need to focus on poetry, theatre, or experimental fiction, which are areas where AI still doesn't do well. This can help translators stay essential, but it also means they need to learn new things.

There are a number of things that could happen in the future. One possible future involves people and AI working together. AI makes rough drafts, and people polish them. A different option is a split market, where AI takes care of simple books and people take care of more complicated ones. A third option is that certain simple books may be totally mechanised, but novels with passion and culture will still need people. To ensure a healthy future, translation training must encompass AI competencies, emerging quality benchmarks should prioritise style and culture, and regulations on authorship and copyright must be unequivocal. Translators should be treated with respect and paid appropriately. We also need to safeguard cultural variety since literature shows who diverse groups are.

In the future, literary translation might be a team effort between people and AI. Advanced techniques might assist translators recognise emotional patterns, cultural connections, and style choices as they happen. Even then, human translators will still be important as people who make decisions about culture.

In conclusion, Generative AI is transforming literary translation by making it faster, giving creative help, and making it easier for people all around the world to read. But it also has disadvantages, such as losing nuance, ethical issues, translators making less money, and cultural flattening. People and AI will probably work together in the future. AI can help with structure and speed, but human translators are still needed for creativity, emotion, and cultural meaning. Literature is based on human experience, and no machine can totally replace the translator's understanding and sensitivity. World literature will stay rich and alive in the digital age if we regard both AI and human skills equally.

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