

# **New Frontiers in Translation Studies**

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# Textual and Contextual Analysis in Empirical Translation Studies

 Springer

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# Introduction

*Textual and Contextual Analysis in Empirical Translation Studies* is a volume co-authored by world's leading scholars of empirical translation studies. Since the early 1990s, corpus translation research has acted as a stimulus to empirical studies of translation. With the rapid development of large-scale databases and computational tools for natural language processing, corpus translation research has become mainstream in theoretical- and practical-oriented translation studies. As with many new disciplines characterized by the use of digital resources and technologies, there have been heated debates over the distinction between specific sets of research methodologies that have come to diversify corpus translation research, such as corpus-based, corpus-assisted, corpus-oriented or corpus-driven. A central aim of this book was therefore to explore the viability and productivity of integrating distinct yet interrelated research methods in recent empirical translation studies. The papers in this book demonstrate how the collection, quantitative processing and qualitative analysis of corpus data yield valuable insights into the dynamics of translation activities and products in particular social and cultural backgrounds.

From the translation of well-established English loanwords in Italy and the translation of foreign literature in Brazilian's Golden Age in the 1940s to the translation of political history in Finland during the Soviet Era and, more recently, the translation and adaptation of English environmental news on climate change in mainland China, this book covers latest empirical findings of the translation studies in Europe, Latin America and the Asia-Pacific. Our joint efforts are geared towards bridging the long-existing gap in corpus translation research, i.e. the gap between corpus-based textual analysis and the analysis of the social and cultural context which gives rise to particular intellectual products such as translations. The case studies show the divide between textual and contextual analyses in current corpus research can be closed by exploring the potential of existing and novel quantitative methods adapted from related fields of enquiry.

The central argument made in this book by four world's leading translation scholars is that current translation studies especially the corpus-orientated branch represent a mixed use of qualitative and quantitative analysis (Chaps. 1–3), and an important feature of latest research developments is the exploration of the

relationship between detected translational features and contextual variables to fill a critical gap in current quantitative translation studies. To be specific, the opening chapter by Laviosa gives an overview of the growth of empirical translation studies since the 1990s. This is followed by detailed review and discussion in Chaps. 2 and 3 by Kemppanen of important analytical concepts developed in early empirical translation studies such as keyword analysis. Chapter 4 (Pagano) and Chap. 5 (Ji) focus on the introduction and use of exploratory statistics in quantitative translation studies. These include descriptive analysis such as keyword list generation and multivariate analyses (MVA) such as cluster analysis, principal component analysis and confirmatory MVA. There is no doubt, in our view, that the establishment of these new analytical techniques for the empirical investigation of translation will receive some criticism and become the object of scholarly debate, as was the case with the development of corpus translation studies since the 1990s and, indeed, the growth of translation studies as a broad interdisciplinary and increasingly empirical field of study in its own right.