



FACULTY OF ARTS
Comenius University
Bratislava



Translation, Interpreting, & Culture 2023.

Virality and Isolation in the Era of Deepening Divides

Bratislava, Slovakia 20 – 22 September 2023 - www.tic-conference.eu



Organized by:

- Faculty of Arts, Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia
- Faculty of Arts, Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia
- Faculty of Arts, Constantine the Philosopher University, Nitra, Slovakia
- Institute of Slovak Literature, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava, Slovakia
- Institute of World Literature, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava, Slovakia

Aims and purpose:

TIC 2023 as the third event in the series wishes to provide a platform for (trans/post)disciplinary discussions of translation and interpreting as both tools and critical and activist practices that shape global and local contemporaneity in an age of digital colonisation.

Tracing a trajectory of any object over time often surprises one by the distance it has travelled, paths it has taken and influence it had on the new locales. Research within translation and interpreting studies (TIS), especially when oriented sociologically, has often focused on investigating such trajectories.¹ The speed with which news reaches audiences nowadays, however, is so unprecedented that the phenomenon called for a new meaning of “viral” in 1999. Two decades later, due to the pandemic that has shaken the world, the lexeme reclaimed some of its original sense in general use. The renewed confluence of the two meanings of “viral” in our cognitive space vaguely gestures towards the common

¹ Cf., e.g., Gentzler, E. 2017. *Translation and Rewriting in the Age of Post-Translation Studies*. Oxon: Routledge; Gouanvic, J.-M. 1999. *Sociologie de la traduction*. Arras: Artois Presses Université; Leffler, Y., ed. 2019. *Swedish Women’s Writing on Export*. Kållerød: LIR.skrifter.

denominator behind both: the aggressive spread of information-as-virus and the spread of a microbe. Global interconnectedness fiercely amplifies the influence of any physical and virtual impulse that for one reason or other manages to gain initial momentum. In moments of crises, quick access to information and securing communication for all is doubtless a top priority and modern technologies play crucial – and positive – role in this process. However, digital colonisation is accompanied with a host of yet unresolved issues. The lack of measures that would lead to effective implementation of ethical conduct regarding both human – non-human interaction and the predatory and pestilent behaviour found in online environments became globally visible due to such events and processes as 2016 US elections, COVID-19 anti-vaccine movements, and information warfare using large online communication platforms.

Key role in these manipulative practices has been played by advanced digital technologies, especially the rapidly evolving artificial intelligence (AI) drawing on large sets of data. One of the areas in which AI has seen enormous progress in the past few years is natural language processing which is nowadays capable of generating synthetic texts often indistinguishable from human-produced outcomes. Algorithms that govern what contents and ideologies we encounter online greatly shape our understanding of the world. The lightning-speed spread of information, also as a result of bots and machine translation, does not, however, lead to a creation of a common reality shared by all. AI-propelled online experience has been shown to lead to ideological isolation through what is known as “echo chambers,” and “filter bubbles” and a copying and deepening of offline social and economic divides.²

As the digital is rapidly colonising all spheres of life, it is indispensable that actors who create knowledge and facilitate exchange of information – TIS researchers, educators, and practicing translators and interpreters including – take these circumstances into consideration. One of such areas is the rising proportion of machine translation which not only requires of the training institutions to adjust their courses, but also calls for critical reflection and participation of TIS researchers and professionals on the ethical improvement of the tools, since the language that AI produces is known for being both biased and non-inclusive.³

TIC 2023 wishes to make the growing social, economic, and ideological differences accompanied and facilitated by the ways information travel the basis for event’s critical and academic discussions. We will welcome papers addressing any aspects of translation and interpreting in an age when such matters as algorithm awareness divide or the inability of digital assistants to account for diverse accents are not issues solely reserved for investigation in specialised fields, but are part of our everyday experience.⁴

² Yuxuan H. et al. 2022. “AI Facilitated Isolations?” *Proceedings of the Thirty-First International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence AI for Good*, 5080-5086. <https://doi.org/10.24963/ijcai.2022/705>; van Deursen, A. JAM and J. AGM van Dijk. 2014. “The digital divide shifts to differences in usage.” *New media & society* 16 (3): 507-526.

³ Bender, E. M. et al. 2021. “On the dangers of stochastic parrots: can language models be too big?” In: *Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency*. ACM, New York, USA, 610-623; Tomalin, M. et al. 2021. The practical ethics of bias reduction in machine translation. *Ethics in Information Technology* 23, 419-433.

⁴ Gran, A.-B. et al. 2022. “To be or not to be algorithm aware: a question of a new digital divide?” *Information, Communication & Society* 24 (12): 1779-1796.

Special topics TIC 2023 wishes to host:

- *Translation and interpreting building borders and bridges*
- *Virality – opportunity and challenge for translating and interpreting world*
- *Access and inclusion – communication designs for all*
- *Creativity in human-machine cooperation in the context of current developments in technologies, experimental literature, and translation and interpreting*
- *Negotiating translation/interpreting zones*
- *Activism and manipulation: towards objective methods for knowledge-based action in TIS*
- *Political motivation for setting initial norm in translation/interpreting projects*
- *Language hostility and hospitality as a decisive factor in integration of refugees in new societies*
- *Social representation theory as a tool for measuring translators' status and public image*
- *Translators' and interpreters' visibility and social responsibility*
- *Isolation and remoteness – future for a new generation of translators and interpreters?*
- *Historical justice in narrating translation histories*
- *Generational and technological turn in TIS*
- *Translator and interpreter training in post-pandemic world*

Keynote speakers:

- **Anthony Pym (Universitat Rovira i Virgili / University of Melbourne)**
- **Paola Gentile (Università degli Studi di Trieste)**
- **David Orrego-Carmona (University of Warwick)**

Organizing committee:

- Pavol Šveda (Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia)
- Emilia Perez (Constantine the Philosopher University, Nitra, Slovakia)
- Ivana Hostová (Institute of Slovak Literature, SAS, Slovakia)
- Martin Djovčoš (Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia)

Call for Papers and Language Policy:

The conference languages are **English and Slovak**. If you wish to present the paper in German, Spanish, French or Russian, please indicate it in the abstract. However, in view of the later publication we strongly recommend the use of English. All abstracts are to be submitted in English.

Deadline for submission is 30 March 2023. Please send your abstract (200 – 300 words in English) to registration@tic-conference.eu. All abstracts will be double-blind peer-reviewed by the members of the scientific board.

Notification of acceptance: 15 May 2023.

Regular Fees: early bird fee EUR 100.00 (available till May 31, 2022) standard fee EUR 150.00

Doctoral Students: early bird fee EUR 80.00 (available till May 31, 2022) standard fee EUR 100.00

Conference website: www.tic-conference.eu

Contact email: registration@tic-conference.eu