

## ***How hard can it be?* A closer look at how human translators and machine translation software handle metaphor in translation.**

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Although research in Translation Studies often mentions metaphor, it rarely includes the state of the art in Metaphor Studies – such as the three-dimensional model of metaphor (Steen, 2008), systematic attention to genre and register variation (Deignan et al., 2013) or the use of reliable identification methods like MIPVU (Steen et al., 2010). There is still a tendency among both scholars and practitioners of translation to treat metaphor as a predominantly linguistic phenomenon with a primarily aesthetic function. As a result, discussions often remain restricted to the “translatability of metaphor” and preferred “methods of metaphor translation” (Schäffner, 2017). Studies aim to determine “equivalent” linguistic expressions, or suggest standardized translation procedures for specific types of linguistic metaphor, such as Newmark’s (1988) procedures for “dead, stock, cliché, recent and original metaphors”.

In this talk I will take a closer look at how human translators and machine translation software handle metaphor in translation. Using samples from a range of different genres – including novels, news texts, political speeches – I will determine which metaphors are difficult to translate when and for whom. This will shed new light on how the different levels at which metaphor operates – i.e. linguistic, conceptual, communicative – influence the translation process and potentially lead to translation errors. Understanding when and where metaphor translation “goes wrong” will provide a useful starting point for a reconceptualization of our methods and models for metaphor translation.