New technologies and the end of translation as we know it

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These four seminars will deal with problems in basic research design, adopting an interactive and experimental approach. It is fundamentally concerned with how we produce knowledge and what the social effects of that knowledge should be. We take as our initial question the possibility that generative AI will put an end to translation as we know it – since our future careers may depend on how that question will be resolved, we should be interested in answers to it. We then consider various ways in which one can try to answer the question, identifying competing epistemologies as we go and assessing their advantages and disadvantages. Participants will then be invited to evaluate critically a handful of research reports that purport to answer the question, locating their shortcomings and sketching out the ways they could be developed. The aim of the sessions is to not to answer the question once and for all – history will do that – but to sharpen the participants' critical skills in the identification of bullshit, and thereby to strengthen and defend their own research designs.

Since the seminars will proceed in an interactive way, responding to participants questions and interests, the following titles should be considered provisional.

1. What is really new in generative AI?
2. How have technologies shaped the history of translation?
3. How do technologies affect trust in mediation?
4. What are the possible futures for translation as we don't know it?

Readings (not all of them good)

Briva-Iglesias, V. & O'Brien, S. (2022). The Language Engineer: A Transversal, Emerging Role for the Automation Age. *Quaderns de Filologia - Estudis Lingüístics 27*, 17-48. 10.7203/qf.0.24622

O'Brien, S. (2023). Human-Centered augmented translation: against antagonistic dualisms. *Perspectives*, https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2023.2247423

Pym, A. & Torres-Simón, E, (2021). Is automation changing the translation profession? *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 270*, 39-57.

Van der Meer, J. (2016). The Future Does Not Need Translators. https://www.taus.net/resources/blog/the-future-does-not-need-translators

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