Michał ORGAN

University of Rzeszow, Poland
morgan@ur.edu.pl

CATING THE WAY: POLISH TRANSLATORS AND COMPUTER-ASSISTED TRANSLATION TOOLS

Abstract: This paper aims to establish a profile of Polish translators who apply CAT tools in their professional practice. The investigation identifies six primary categories, shedding light on the translators themselves, their experience, and interactions with specialised software. The first category delves into demographic data, analysing age groups and gender distribution among the users. The second category focuses on basic data encompassing the translators' experience with programs and their preferred foreign languages. The paper also explores the link between higher education and CAT tool proficiency, examining fields of study, educational institutions, specialised training, and opinions on the integration of this technology into academic curricula. In order to assess the non-academic aspects of learning and applying such software, it investigates the translators' engagement in training courses, certifications, and sources of qualifications improvement. Various methods for acquiring skills in CAT tools are also explored, such as online webinars and practical translation practice. The results reveal that the translators are rather experienced users of the software, they rely heavily on such programs, employing them in various types of translations, mostly non-literary texts. Translators perceive them positively, acknowledging their contribution to accelerating work processes and improving competitiveness in the translation market. The use of CAT tools is expected to increase, emphasising the need to incorporate these tools into translator training programs and adapt study plans to accommodate their further popularisation. The data was collected through an anonymous survey and provides insights into the preferences, habits, and perspectives of Polish translators using CAT tools. This paper serves as a foundation for further research and comparison with other translator groups, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the translator's profession in the context of translation technology utilisation.

Key words: CAT tools, computer assisted translation, translator, translation technology.

1. Introduction

The process of technologisation is increasingly affecting almost all professional occupations, and the translation profession is no exception as technological advancements have produced fundamental tools for translators' work (Moorkens,

2017). While the use of computers, office suites, dictionaries, and internet resources may not distinctly differentiate the translators' work from other professions, the adoption of specialised tools dedicated to translators is one of the indications of the distinctiveness of the translation profession compared to other specialisations related to foreign language work (Alonso & Vieira, 2021, p. 398). Pioneering attempts to introduce such solutions began with the emergence of the first computers, but it was not until the 1990s that the first commercial software supporting translators' work was successfully created (Sin-wai, 2017, p. 6; Austermuehl et al., 2023, p. 3-6). The relatively rapid development of successive programs has led to a certain terminological chaos, resulting in a plethora of terms used to describe translations performed using specialised software. For instance, terms such as computer-assisted translation, computer-aided translation, computer-aided human translation, computer-assisted human translation, machine-aided translation, machine-aided human translation, machine-assisted translation, and machine-assisted human translation have been distinguished (Sin-wai, 2004, p. 39). However, currently, the most commonly employed terms are 'computer-assisted translation' and 'computer-aided translation' (CAT), and these programs are referred to as CAT tools (CATT) (Organ, 2021a, p. 17; Bogucki, 2009, p. 25-26). This term stands for the use of software designed to enhance the efficiency and consistency of human translators, leading to decreased translation project expenses, and make it possible that translators' remuneration is maintained and a satisfactory quality level is provided (Garcia, 2015, p. 68). Translators find various electronic tools and resources valuable for performing different translation-related tasks. Among them, CAT tools stand out as they are specifically tailored to support the translation process itself, as opposed to general applications such as word processors, spelling checkers, email, workflow, and project management tools. Therefore, CAT tools embrace different translation memory systems, terminology management systems, term extractors, concordancers, localisation tools, and even machine translation systems (Bowker, 2021, pp. 263-264; Bowker & Pastor, 2022, p. 872). Some of the most notable features of modern CATT include the incorporation of translation memory, possibilities of applying term bases, user-friendly translation editors in which the text is divided into individual segments, and the possibility of translating numerous files saved in different formats and exchanging them with clients, proof-readers, or other members of a translation team (Sin-wai, 2015; Mitchell-Schuitevoerder, 2020, pp. 12-13; Organ, 2019).

Despite their wide range of capabilities, CAT tools do not occupy a central position in the translation process. The human translator still remains at the core, as the term 'computer-assisted translation' itself suggests that translation is merely facilitated by various functions of specialised software, while all decisions, the 'burden' of translation, and the responsibility for the final result rest on the translator's shoulders. The assistance provided comes from the translator's full control over the tool, which is why CATT should not be confused with machine translation, a fully automated translation process where the 'human element' is

minimised, limited only to basic tasks like selecting the file and indicating the target language (Kenny, 2022; Organ, 2021a, p. 18).

The central role of the human translator as a user of CATT is also a focal point in contemporary translation studies. However, the significance of translators has not always been fully appreciated, and they have not received the necessary scholarly attention. This lack of recognition is evident in major dictionaries and encyclopaedias covering fundamental concepts and issues in translation studies, where there is no separate entry for a key term, namely, the *translator* (for example, Cowie & Shuttleworth, 2014; Baker & Saldanha, 2020; Palumbo, 2009). The translator, as a central figure in the translation process, serves as both a potential recipient of the text and the mediator bridging languages, cultures, and, ultimately, the texts themselves. Nevertheless, the translator is not a mere reproducer of the source text, nor does he or she possess unrestricted freedom (Dąmbska-Prokop, 2010, pp. 248-251). This constraint on freedom also applies to working with CATT, which may or may not be required by clients. This issue extends to other aspects relating to translation practice, such as using specific terminology databases, translation memory resources, or particular software. As operators of CATT, translators make a series of decisions informed by their knowledge, skills, as well as developed preferences and opinions. These decisions can determine the frequency of selecting certain functions and the approach to translating various types of translation projects. The manner in which translators utilise CATT is influenced by a variety of factors, and their exploration offers a broader perspective on the translator's work and potentially impacts the final outcomes (Doherty et al., 2018, pp. 97-98).

This gap, both in terms of the work carried out and the state of previous research, has drawn the attention of translation scholars who have recognised the need to place greater emphasis on research dedicated to translators, particularly focusing on their habitus (see Vorderobermeier, 2014). Sapiro (2014, p. 83) also stressed this, stating that investigating translators as a professional group is '[…] an emerging research domain which opens up to comparative approaches between countries and between different translational activities.' Therefore, the research presented here focuses on a specific group of translators defined by geographical and competency criteria. By conducting preliminary research on smaller groups of translators specialised in specific domains, it will be possible to create a broader picture of the profession and compare it in prospective future studies with other groups of translators. This comparative approach may lead us closer to a more precise delineation of translators' profiles and their working practices.

The research focused on CATT users provides a voice to translators who go beyond the commonly used office packages in their translation practice. The research concentrated on the Polish translation market provides ample scope for further comparative research, both in relation to other native translator communities and foreign translator communities (see Declerq, 2015, p. 364; Moorkens, 2021, pp. 327-328). Furthermore, it allows us to capture a certain picture of translators

and the scope of technology used in a spatial-temporal context, while also serving as a reference point for further analyses that may be of particular significance for the profession and image of translators in the rapidly approaching era of the popularisation and commercialisation of artificial intelligence (Kalla and Smith, 2023, p. 829). This matter seems particularly crucial, as artificial intelligence will likely be widely integrated into CATT in the coming years, potentially significantly impacting the translator profession (see Zheng and Zhu, 2020, pp. 1-3). The opinions of professional translators can also serve as material for other research focusing on translator education (e.g., present a certain career path that translators have followed in their professional work) and as indicators for specialists involved in translation didactics (e.g., inform about the need for education in the context of using new technologies) (see Bowker, 2015, pp. 88-90; Kenny, 2020, pp. 498-499; O'Brien & Rodríguez Vázquez, 2020, pp. 268-269; Organ, 2021b, pp. 8-9). Beyond its scientific importance, the analysis of translators also holds practical value, as it provides specific guidance and patterns for translation apprentices, informing them about current trends and market dominants in translation (see Schmitt 2019). Additionally, it allows them to trace the steps and stages of the professional careers of other translators, which can further guide their professional development (Kornacki & Pietrzak, 2021, pp. 3-11). Finally, the study of translators may contribute to the continued development of the CATT themselves, their improvement, and adaptation to the main directions of activity demonstrated by their users (see Vela et al., 2019, pp. 3-5).

2. Purposes & Methodology

The main objective of the paper is to establish a profile[1] of Polish CATT users who apply CATT in their professional work. Data for analysis were collected through a fully anonymous survey consisting of 22 forced-choice questions. Potential respondents were asked to familiarise themselves with introductory information describing the research purpose and its target audience, i.e., Polish translators applying CATT in their professional work. The questionnaire was made available in digital form through popular social media, specifically targeted at Polish translators and CATT users, including discussion groups. It was published at the beginning of 2023, and responses were collected during the first half of the year.

The link to the questionnaire was opened 172 times. In total, 103 translators completed the survey, resulting in a completion rate of approximately 60%. This data demonstrates a willingness to participate in the research, and the number of respondents who decided to complete the survey was arguably influenced by

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[1] The profile is a generalised representation of translators in terms of observed tendencies based on the statistical data acquired during the conducted survey.

several factors. Firstly, the information specifying that the survey was exclusively directed at translators who extensively employ CATT in their professional practice limited the number of visits to the survey. The programs are not yet very popular with translators in Poland, thus the potential pool of respondents was significantly narrowed. Moreover, not everyone who works with a computer on a daily basis is eager to complete online surveys.

In the questionnaire six primary categories were selected, namely: 1) demographic data, 2) basic information, 3) higher education and CATT, 4) training[2] in CATT, 5) translators' preferences and 6) the impact of CATT and their further popularisation. Demographic data includes information on the dominant age groups and gender of the CATT users. Basic information boils down to elementary aspects of the work of the surveyed group of translators, such as their experience with the software and the foreign languages with which they mostly work. Higher education and CATT labels the main fields of study pursued by the translators, the type of higher education institution where they studied, the type of specialisation, whether they took separate classes in CATT as part of their studies, and the translators' opinions regarding the inclusion of this subject in higher education curricula. Training in CATT focuses on the translators' non-academic improvement in using and translating with such programs. They were asked about the availability of training courses, if they have completed such courses, if they possess certifications confirming their competence in using the programs, and if such certifications are considered requirements in the contemporary translation market. Additionally, this category encompassed questions regarding the main methods by which translators learnt to translate using the software and their ways of improving in this area. The translators' preferences category, on the other hand, emphasises the main reasons for starting to work with CATT, the scope and frequency of their utilisation, and the predominant types of translations in which such tools are employed. The last of the categories mentioned addresses the impact of CATT on the translators' work and their own opinions on the usefulness of these tools and their further popularisation.

The collected data was presented in the form of percentage distributions to better illustrate observed trends, and they were also depicted using graphs for visualisation.

3. Demographic Data

Among the most fundamental data describing the translators, demographic information, notably encompassing details regarding their gender and age, constitutes a pivotal aspect.

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[2] As the text examines all Polish CATT users, including such groups as freelance and sworn translators, it does not differentiate between translators' training and teaching of translation, treating both notions as synonymous terms.

Out of the total of 103 participants of the research, more than two-thirds (70.9%) were women, while men constituted slightly less than one-third (29.1%) of the surveyed.
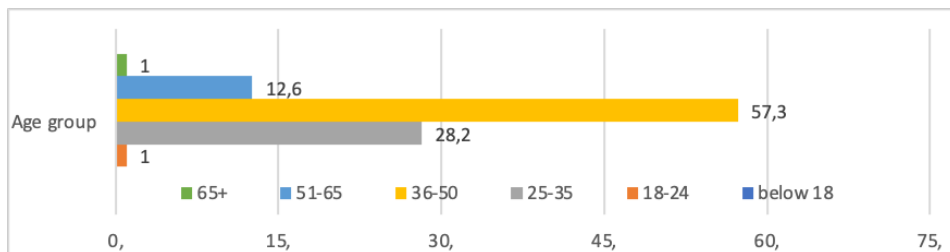

Fig. 1. Age distribution

In the context of age categories, the translators represent all groups except individuals under the age of 18. Translators between the ages of 36 and 50 constitute more than half (57.3%) of the surveyed population, almost twice as many as the next most numerous group; translators between the ages of 25 and 35, which comprises about a quarter (28.2%) of all respondents. Together, these two age categories represent more than four-fifths (85.5%) of all participants (see Fig. 1). Moreover, the data suggest that the majority of CATT users are not the youngest translators, but rather their slightly older colleagues between 36 and 50 years of age. This somewhat contradicts the prevalent belief that younger generations tend to adopt technological advancements more frequently. In this particular case, it may be attributed to the relatively high cost of certain programs and the lack of proper training in their operation, which might somewhat "shift" the age threshold at which translators can afford the additional expense and achieve a sufficient level of proficiency in using these tools. Furthermore, the relatively low representation of translators over the age of 50 may result from their reluctance to abandon their established habits and professional practices in favour of newer solutions.

4. Basic Information

Two fundamental determinants included in the study of translators are essential aspects related to their professional activity: experience in using CATT and the languages they translate applying specialised software.

The respondents predominantly belong to the category of fairly experienced users of CATT. More than one-third (35%) of them have been working with such software for over 10 years. A similar proportion of the translators (32%) have been utilising the programs in their work for a period ranging from 5 to 10 years. Together, these two highly experienced groups, in the context of CATT

employment, constitute two-thirds (67%) of all individuals surveyed (see Fig. 2). The considerable experience of the majority of the translators may emphasise the development of a habit concerning working with software and their conviction regarding the benefits derived from the use of CATT.
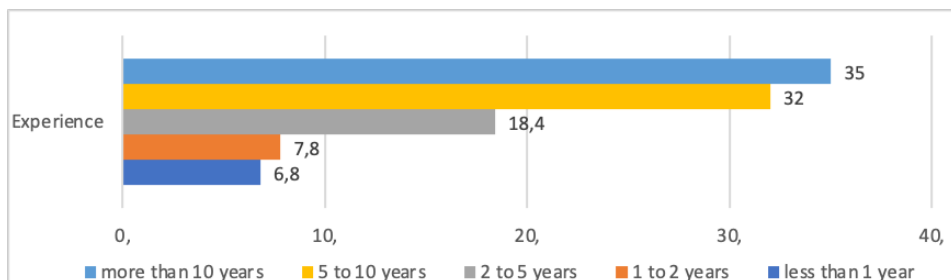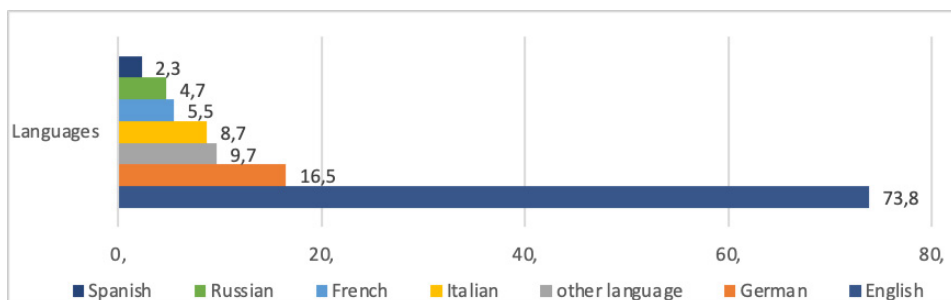

Fig. 2. Experience with CATT

Fig. 3. Languages translated from and into Polish with the use of CATT

The acquired data allowed us to delineate the spectrum of languages translated using CATT (see Fig. 3). Undoubtedly, the most frequently translated language is English, indicated by nearly three-quarters (73.8%) of the translators. Significantly fewer respondents declared that they translate German, accounting for 16.5% of the total. The high proportion of English language is caused by its general dominance and role in modern business, scientific and social contexts. The relatively high share of German language may be determined by social factors, primarily close Polish-German business contacts, as well as social ties - many Poles have moved to work in Germany and often have families and relatives there. Other languages did not exceed the 10% threshold; all of them belong to the family of European languages, except one - Chinese. Its presence is likely also conditioned by market factors resulting from the increasing economic importance of China and its associated trade exchange.

5. Higher Education and CATT

CAT tools constitute a significant component of contemporary translation practice, thus it is important to investigate the educational pathway of translators utilising such software within the higher education system. Key factors in this regard include the chosen fields of study, types of institutions, specialisations, and above all, the presence of CATT training within the undertaken higher education programs.
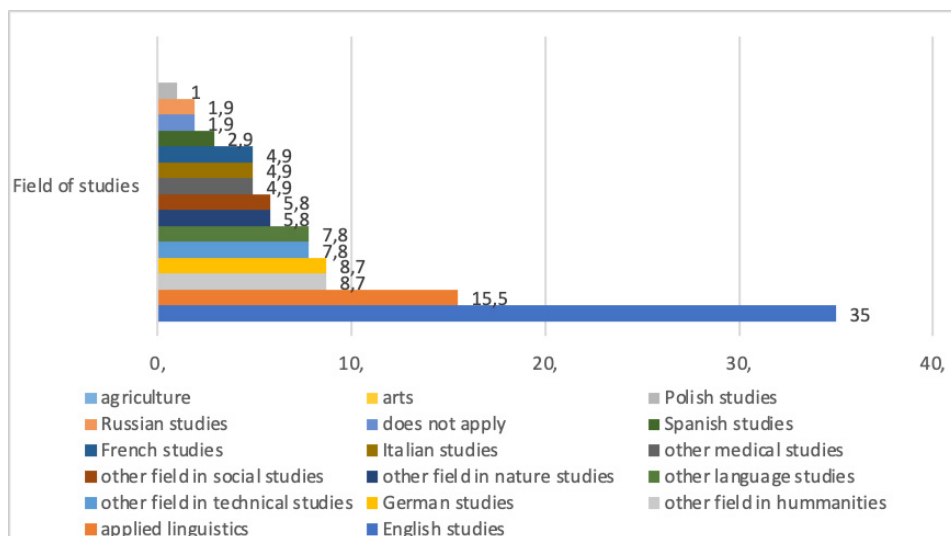

Fig. 4. Field of studies

Almost all of the translators have completed or are currently pursuing higher education, with only just under 2% of them having not undertaken or quit education at this level (see Fig. 4). A vast majority of the translators (91.3%) have pursued education related to foreign languages and humanities. On the contrary, approximately a quarter (24.3%) of them have educational backgrounds not related to language studies. The most popular field of study, chosen by one-third (35%) of the translators, is English studies. Significantly fewer translators (15.5%) have opted for applied linguistics. Other fields of study were indicated by less than 10% of the respondents in each category. Although the translators have different educational backgrounds in their chosen studies, the vast majority of them opted for studies related to foreign languages, primarily the English language. Its mastery is presumably linked to English studies and applied linguistics, which partially corresponds to the indications concerning the most commonly translated languages. It is worth noting that in Poland, within the framework of applied linguistics studies, the learning of two foreign languages is often combined, typically English and German.
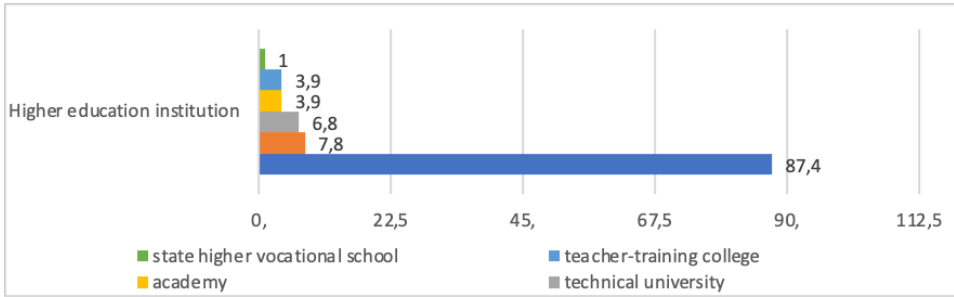
Fig. 5. Higher education institution

The indicated fields of study are largely associated with the type of higher education institution in which the translators have completed or are pursuing their education. The prominent dominance of language and humanities-related fields is reflected in the type of institution most commonly associated with these disciplines, namely university, which was selected by a significant majority of the translators (87.4%) (see Fig. 5). Other types of higher education institutions were not selected as commonly by the respondents, as their portfolio of study offerings usually does not correspond to the profile of studies pursued by the translators.
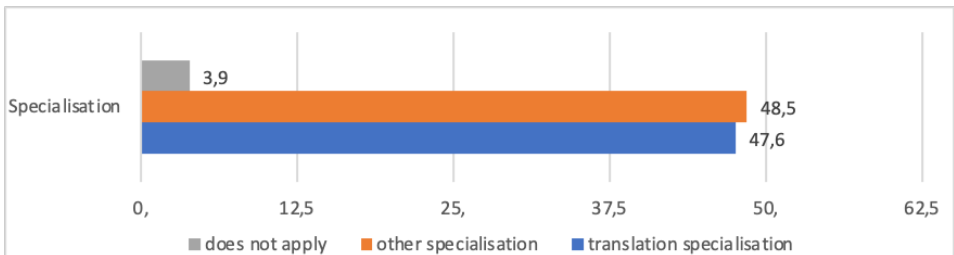

Fig. 6. Specialisation

As indicated previously, preparation for the profession of a translator is typically associated with studying language and humanities-related fields, albeit encompassing various areas of expertise, including translation. Declared specialisations show an even distribution, with a slight majority (48.5%) of respondents focusing on aspects other than translation. Slightly fewer translators (47.6%) declared pursuing education within the realm of translation, while 3.9% of respondents either did not study or were not offered specialisations in their studies (see Fig. 6). The selection of a translation specialisation during studies might be naturally linked to younger translators, given that such study programs have only been introduced relatively recently. As a result, many older respondents did not have access to these opportunities during their own time in higher education.

CATT as a specialised component of translators' education represents a relatively recent achievement in programming that merges technological advancements with translation practice. Consequently, their inclusion in academic curricula is not obvious even for translation specialisations, especially if respondents graduated before or during the early years of their popularisation. As indicated by the data, barely one in five of the translators (21.4%) had the opportunity to work with such programs during their studies, while nearly four-fifths (78.6%) of them became acquainted with the software outside the higher education system.
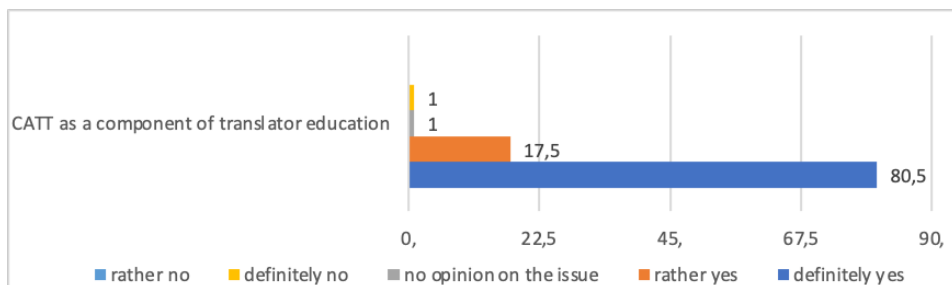

Fig. 7. CATT as a component of translator education

Similarly, when asked about the justification for integrating CATT-based translation training into the translator education system, almost all (98%) of the respondents expressed their support for such an approach. Positive responses are only differentiated by the level of certainty, with a significant four-fifths (80.5%) firmly endorsing the inclusion of CATT training in preparing translators for their profession, while nearly a fifth (17.5%) expressed a rather positive approach toward this matter (see Fig. 7). These data indicate that, from the perspective of translation practitioners, learning how to use the software should be included in study programs aimed at training translators, and the software represents a crucial aspect of a translator's workshop. The opinions of professional translators, who have the most direct experience with the demands of the translation market, serve as valuable indicators for the direction that aspiring translation education programs should take.

6. Training in CATT

Beyond the activities organised within the framework of higher education, the educational market also provides alternative methods for learning the operation of CATT, including specialised training courses and more individual, translator-dependent forms of professional development.
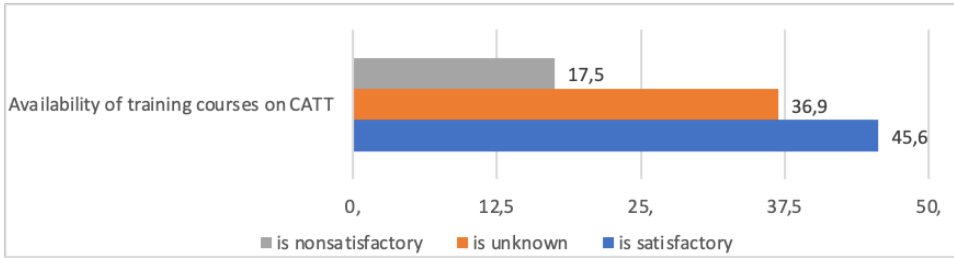
Fig. 8. Availability of training courses on CATT

The availability of training courses is one of the indicators of translators' interest in their professional development, the popularity of CAT tools themselves equally illustrates the metrics representing demand and supply for such training. The translators were surveyed regarding the accessibility of such courses, and according to the data collected, slightly less than half (45.6%) of them consider the training offerings in this area satisfactory. In contrast, less than one-fifth (17.5%) of the translators hold the opposing view, while nearly one-third (36.9%) of them lack awareness on this matter. These findings demonstrate that most of the respondents find the training options available satisfactory. However, the proportion of informed translators, those who consider accessibility to be sufficient or inadequate, indicates an interest in additional training opportunities. In this context, almost two-thirds (63.1%) of the translators surveyed were knowledgeable about the availability of CATT operation training courses (see Fig. 8). This also demonstrates that this group experiences, or experienced at some point in their career, a desire for additional training in translation utilising software tools, as evidenced by their information-seeking behaviour. This observation can also serve as an informative insight for individuals or organisations involved in organising such training, revealing the ongoing market demands.

Training courses focused on CATT can be offered by software manufacturers, distributors, as well as private companies and individuals. The data indicate that such courses garner moderate interest, with slightly more than one-third (35%) of the translators having participated in such courses, while the remaining majority (65%) have not taken part in them.
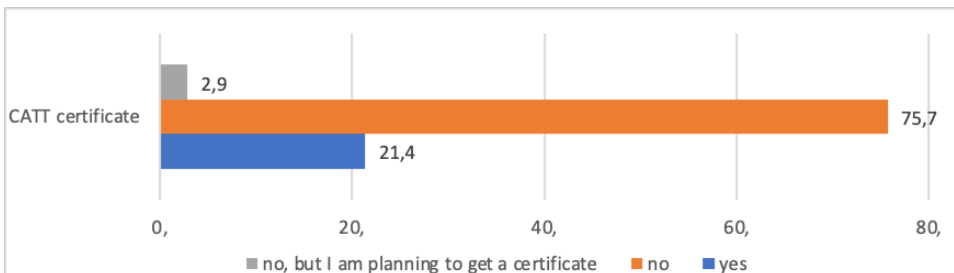

Fig. 9. CATT certificate

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Training sessions and courses on CATT operation, as well as producer-organised courses, may culminate in the acquisition of an appropriate certificate, confirming the mastery of the material, while also attesting to the translator's proficiency in utilising a given program. Approximately three-quarters of the translators (75.7%) do not possess such a certificate, and an additional 2.9% currently lack it but plan to undergo relevant training in the future to obtain it. Slightly more than one-fifth (21.4%) can boast of holding such a certificate (see Fig. 9).

The possession of a certificate confirming proficiency in a specific CATT is not a prevalent trend among translators, and this observation aligns with data concerning employers' requirements for translators. The respondents were asked if they had ever been required to have a relevant certificate of proficiency in a given program to be assigned a translation project. Only a marginal proportion of the respondents (2.9%) confirmed that they had to provide evidence of having the appropriate certificate before receiving a translation assignment, while nearly all of the translators (97.1%) have never encountered such a requirement.
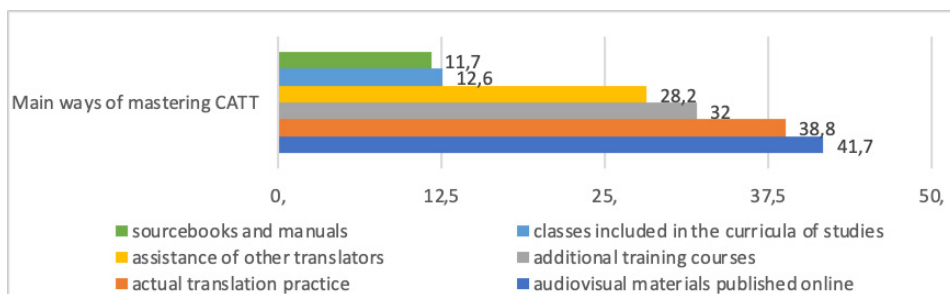

Fig. 10 Main ways of mastering CATT

The acquisition of CATT proficiency does not necessarily have to follow an institutionalised approach; it can encompass various methods tailored to individual preferences and may be influenced by one's educational background. Consequently, the translators were asked about their primary methods of mastering the use of these programs. The method chosen most frequently, selected by 41.7% of the respondents, involved the use of diverse audiovisual materials focusing on translating with software available on the Internet. Slightly fewer respondents (38.8%) indicated that they learnt through practical translation experience and on-the-job learning, progressively discovering and mastering new features with each translation task and encountering related challenges. One third of the participants (32%) achieved proficiency in the operation of the programs through additional specialised courses, while a little more than a quarter (28.2%) acquired competence with help and guidance provided by other translators. Significantly fewer translators mentioned attending courses during their academic studies (12.6%), and relying on specialised books and user manuals for CATT (7.1%) as

their chosen methods of learning (see Fig. 10). Relatively many translators have learnt to translate using software through formalised means of education (such as studies and courses); however, it is mainly self-directed learning that has enabled the translators to acquire the skills necessary to work with such programs. This data also demonstrates that a translator can proficiently master the operation of these programs independently, without the need to participate in specialised courses, by adapting their learning approach to their own needs and capabilities. Thanks to audiovisual materials, such as webinars in the form of videos published on social media platforms, translators can repeatedly review content that interests them at any time and subsequently apply the acquired knowledge and skills in practice on their own. Autonomy is a crucial characteristic of the translators; many of them have chosen individual learning of CATT, attempting to familiarise themselves with them during practical translation tasks, or seeking assistance from other translators in this aspect.
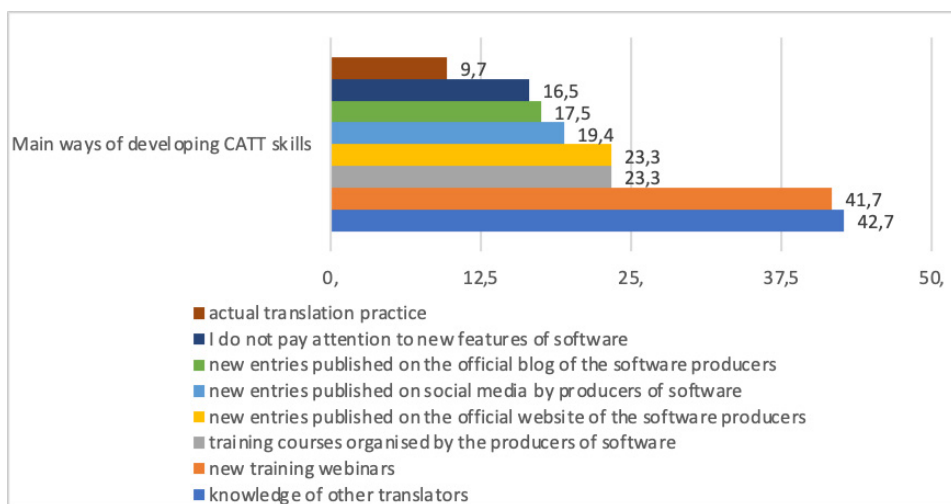

Fig. 11. Main ways of developing CATT skills and learning new features

Translators, along with learning how to use the programs, have opportunities for further development in terms of professionalising their usage and gaining insights into new features added in subsequent software versions by manufacturers. Similar to fundamental CATT training, proficiency improvement can be pursued either through institutionalised means or through a multifaceted process tailored to individual needs and preferences. Among all the methods, two options enjoy the highest popularity: information obtained from other translators (42.7%) and new webinars showcasing the programs' latest capabilities (41.7%). The next two options were selected equally by just under a quarter (23.3%) of the translators, comprising producer-organised training courses and new posts published on

official websites related to the respective software tools or their manufacturers. Furthermore, nearly a fifth (19.4%) of the respondents follow social media channels of software manufacturers to stay up to date on new versions and program features. Slightly fewer translators (17.5%) read official blogs of CATT manufacturers for the same purpose, while less than one-tenth of them focus solely on translation practice to further develop their translation skills using the software and, in turn, independently discover and refine the utilisation of new functionalities. A significantly different perspective was taken by 16.5% of surveyed translators, who find all new options irrelevant and pay no attention to them (see Fig. 11). It is worth noting that the methods of further improving translation skills using CATT largely correspond to the methods of learning how to operate the basic functions of these programs. Once again, informal learning methods play a significantly larger role for translators, whether it is individual work and utilising information found online or seeking assistance from fellow translators. On the other hand, structured training courses are not as widely chosen by translators. The Internet plays a crucial role in this process, as translators gain knowledge through social media, websites, blogs and training webinars. These platforms provide information about new features of the programs or their latest versions. Interestingly, this data also emphasises the importance of networking for translators and the associated mutual support they provide to each other.

7. Translators' Preferences

The application of CATT in the translation process may also be driven by translators' personal preferences. These same reasons can be influenced by such factors as the initial decision to work with such programs, the types of assignments in which they are primarily employed, and the projects in which translators most commonly employ them.
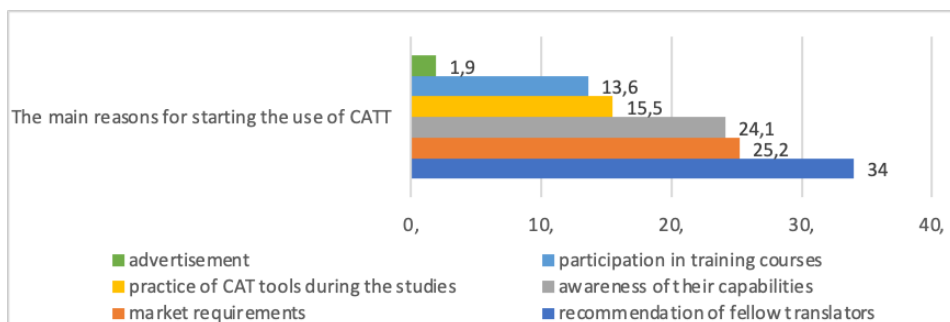

Fig. 12. The main reasons for starting the use of CATT

However, mere awareness of the existence of the discussed programs and their potential learning during studies or courses does not necessarily determine their automatic application in professional work. Consequently, the translators were questioned about the main reasons for starting their professional work using these tools. The largest group of respondents, specifically one-third (34%), indicated recommendations and advice from fellow translators as the primary motivation. Two other factors influenced a quarter of the translators each: market demands, including the desire to remain competitive in the translation industry, and client requests that necessitate working with CATT, motivated 25.2% of the translators surveyed; awareness of the software's capabilities prompted a further 24.1% of the translators to adopt these tools in their professional practice. The responses related to educational motivations constituted a smaller proportion. Specifically, 15.5% of the respondents started using the programs in their translation work due to training received during their academic studies, and a slightly lower percentage of 13.6% attributed their adoption to participation in specialised courses. Only a small proportion of the translators (1.9%) reported being influenced by software advertisements to employ these tools, indicating their limited effectiveness in impacting the translator community (see Fig. 12). Once again, contacts with other translators play a crucial role; it is through these contacts that translators decide to start using CATT. Therefore, the role of translators and their communities, particularly the opinions expressed by other translators, proved to be the most persuasive for the respondents. This highlights the importance of the translator community in shaping tendencies regarding the translation process, especially in terms of the translators' workshop.
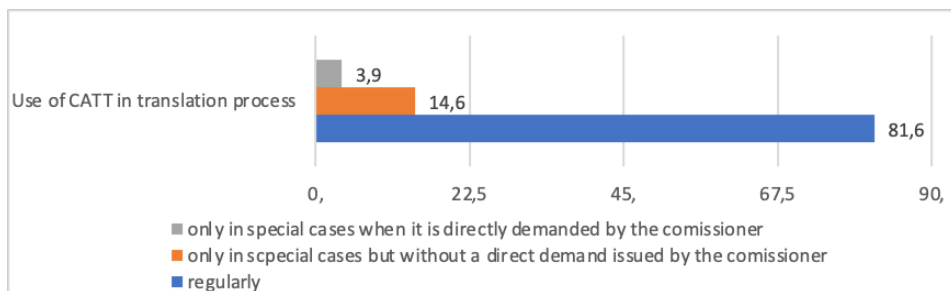

Fig. 13. Use of CATT in the translation process

Proficiency in operating CATT does not necessarily imply the automatic application of these programs in every translation assignment received by translators. Therefore, respondents were asked about the frequency of using software tools in their translation work. A significant majority of them, specifically four-fifths (81.6%), regularly use such software in each subsequent translation project. In contrast, a much smaller proportion (14.6%) of respondents employ

these programs only in specific assignments, doing so voluntarily and not due to any obligation from the clients. A mere 3.9% of the survey participants declared using CATT when undertaking specific projects in which the clients explicitly demand the use of such software (see Fig. 13). This data suggests that the use of the tools is highly engaging and becomes an essential aspect of translators' work. Simultaneously, it demonstrates that once translators overcome the initial barrier of starting to work with these programs, they perceive them as sufficiently useful and beneficial in their translation practice, leading to their integration into a regular professional routine. As a result, investing in the software proves to be profitable and leads to further practical applications.
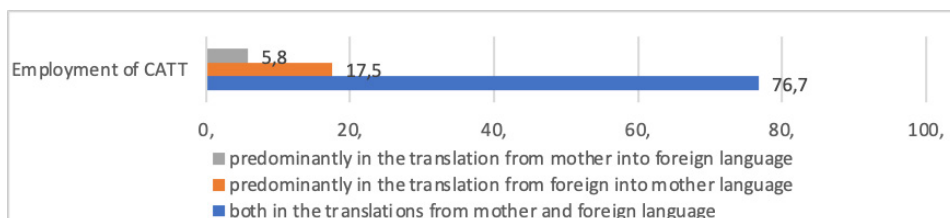

Fig. 14 Employment of CATT

Translation preferences concerning the application of CATT may also encompass the translators' favoured language direction for translation. As a result, the translators were asked if they exhibit certain tendencies in this aspect. A significant majority of them, over three-quarters (76.7%) of the respondents, employ the tools in all types of translation tasks, regardless of whether they are translating from their native language to a foreign language or in the opposite direction. A considerably smaller proportion, just under one-fifth (17.5%), usually use such software when the assignment involves translating text from a foreign language to their native language. In contrast, the smallest proportion of the translators (5.8%) indicated the reverse language direction, i.e., translating from their native language to a foreign language (see Fig. 14). The tendency to use CATT across all language directions confirms the previously noted observation regarding the consistency of their application. This implies that translators who have already opted for working with such programs continue to do so regardless of the nature of the translation project, in other words, they develop a habit of utilising these software solutions.

Considering the types of projects translated using CAT, the translators exhibit significant diversity in this regard. Among them, a markedly dominant position is held by those focusing on the translation of non-literary texts, as indicated by more than four-fifths (84.5%) of all surveyed translators. Approximately one-third (32%) of the respondents utilise CATT for website translation, while 15.5% of them use these tools for software and computer game localisation. Comparatively,

fewer translators (6.8%) employ the tools in literary translation, and even fewer (4.9%) use them for audiovisual material translation (see Fig. 15). These findings not only shed light on the types of texts translated using the discussed software but also provide some insights into the landscape of the translation market, including prevalent translation projects. Furthermore, this corroborates the primary areas of utility for CATT, particularly in the context of translating non-literary texts, in which translators typically receive the greatest assistance by employing appropriate translation memory resources and terminology databases tailored to the specific subject matter of the rendered texts.
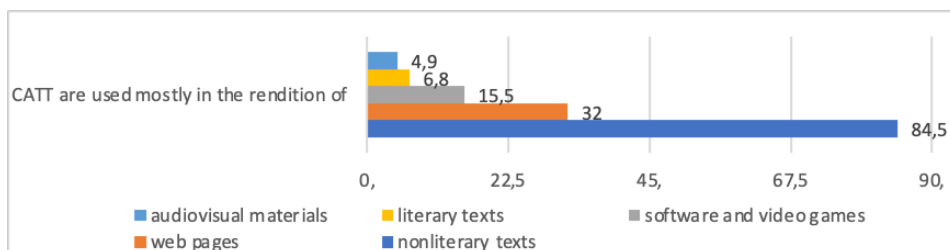

Fig. 15. Most commonly translated types of translation projects with the use of CATT

8. The Impact of CATT and Their Further Popularisation

CAT tools, present on the global translation market for more than 30 years, have also become firmly established in Poland, as evidenced by data reflecting the experience of Polish translators. With the advantage of time and experience, it has become possible to assess the impact of such software on translators' work and to form opinions regarding the role of CATT in the education of translation adepts and their further popularisation.

Each decision made by a translator during the translation process affects the quality of the target text. Additionally, the utilisation of supplementary tools may also impact the translator's comfort and capabilities. Thus, the translators were questioned about the influence of CATT on their work. An overwhelming majority of the respondents (92.2%) indicated that the use of the programs resulted in an acceleration in completing successive projects due to the capabilities of the software used. Compared to the previous effect, the following results were noted to a lesser extent, but still significantly acknowledged by the respondents. Each of the next two categories was mentioned by one-third of the respondents, as they believed that the CAT software facilitated better proofreading of the target text (33%) and allowed them to handle various types of projects (32%). Slightly more than a quarter of the translators indicated that the implementation of the tools allowed them to compete for additional assignments with other translators (27.2%), and also

improved communication with their clients and stakeholders (25.2%). Significantly fewer translators (8.7%) classified the impact of the software as rather neutral or cited alternative consequences of their usage. Notably, none of the translators identified any negative consequences for themselves or their work resulting from the influence of the programs (see Fig. 16). This observation suggests a widespread and fairly unanimous recognition of the role of CAT tools and their influence on translators' work. According to the translators, the most significant positive impact of working with these programs is the reduction of time devoted to translation projects, which, of course, affects their further earning potential and the ability to undertake additional assignments.
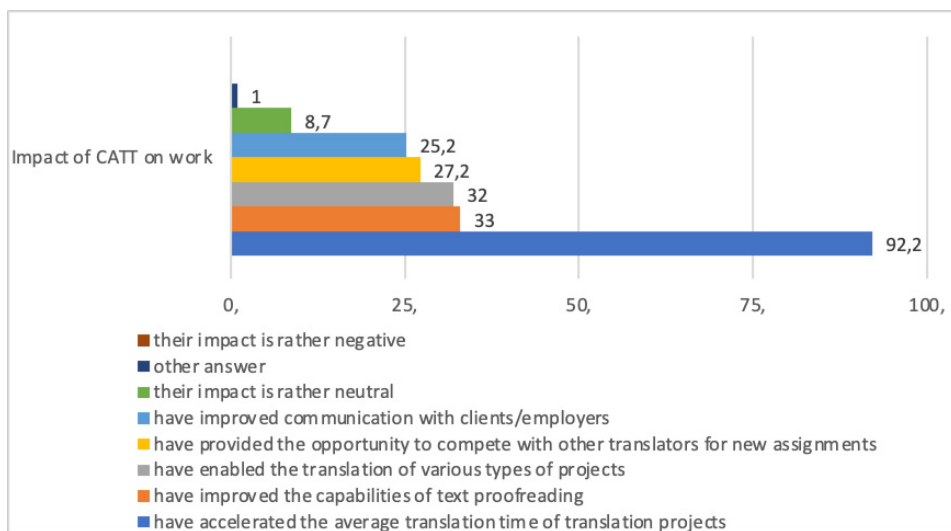

Fig. 16. Impact of CATT on translators' work

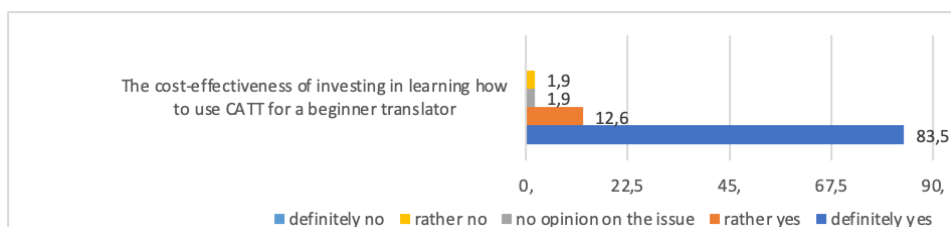Fig. 17. The cost-effectiveness of investing in learning how to use CATT for a beginner translator

Taking into account the effects of using CATT on translators' work, particularly their positive impact, the translators were also asked about their opinion on whether novice translators should invest their time and financial resources in learning to use such programs. Overwhelmingly, positive voices gained prominence in this

aspect (96.1%), with more than four-fifths (83.5%) of the translators expressing strong approval for such an investment, and 12.6% of them were rather convinced of directing their professional career in this direction. Only a small proportion of the translators had no definite opinion on this matter (1.9%), or were somewhat opposed to it (1.9%). It is also noteworthy that none of the translators were strongly against focusing on mastering CATT at the beginning of their translation careers (see Fig. 17). Only 2 out of 103 translators do not see the validity of learning how to use the tools at an early stage of translators' professional careers. However, it is worth noting that these respondents have been using the programs for a period of less than 1 year and, as relatively novice users, they may not have fully explored the capabilities, functions and wide range of applications of the tools. Consequently, their opinion on this matter may be subject to change over time and with further experience.
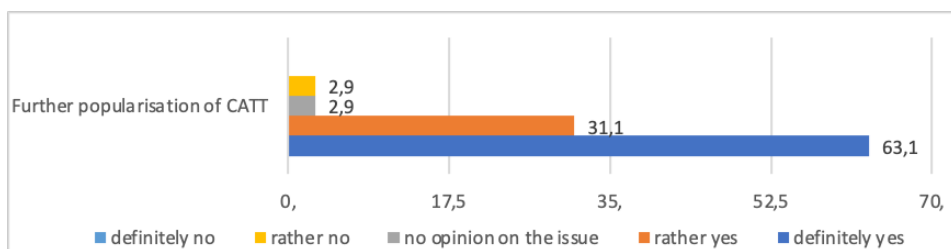

Fig. 18. Further popularisation of CATT

Bearing in mind the positive aspects in working with CATT, as well as the opinions of the translators regarding the learning of translation with such programs by novice translators, the survey participants were asked about their views on further popularisation of this type of software. Similarly to previous questions, a significant majority of the translators (94.2%) believe that the programs will be more commonly used by translators. Just under two-thirds (63.1%) of the respondents expressed a decisive opinion on this matter, while nearly one-third (31.1%) of them are rather certain about this direction of development in the translation market. A small proportion of the translators (2.9%) did not provide an opinion on this issue, and an equal share (2.9%) of respondents considered that the tools are unlikely to become more widely adopted by translators (see Fig. 18). This opinion was shared by 3 of the 103 translators and it is worth mentioning that these were translators of the Russian language. Their evaluation might have been influenced by the perceived popularity of translations in the context of the language they translate. Overall, translators believe that CATT will become more widely used, which is likely related to the continuous advancement of technology, greater accessibility of the programs, and increasing opportunities for learning how to use them.

9. Discussion & Conclusion

The analysis allowed for the establishment of a profile of Polish CATT users according to which the majority of them are formed by women, further confirming their overall dominance in the translation profession, and studies focusing on mastering foreign languages. The largest group of software users falls within two age categories: translators between 36 and 50 years old and those between 25 and 35 years old. This is associated with the period of increased availability and partial popularisation of the programs over the past 20 years in Poland. Professional translators who began or continued their work during this period had a greater opportunity to familiarise themselves with such software.

This view is supported by statements from translators regarding their experience in using CATT, as the majority of them have been actively working with such technological advancements for at least 5 years. In comparison to other languages, English holds a decidedly dominant position. Arguably, due to its geographic proximity, extensive business contacts, and established family ties, the second most commonly translated foreign language by Polish translators is German.

The vast majority of the translators have a higher education degree or are still pursuing education at this level. In the context of academic disciplines, those related to foreign language studies and the humanities hold a dominant position. However, the declared fields of study include those largely associated with the languages most frequently translated, namely, English studies, applied linguistics, and German studies. It is worth noting the participation of graduates in Polish philology, who also form an important part of CATT users. Regarding the type of higher education institutions, the translators overwhelmingly university educated. This choice is not surprising, as language and humanities disciplines are often associated with university studies. The translators are almost evenly divided between those who completed specialised training dedicated to translation or pursued other fields not strictly related to translation. Nonetheless, the vast majority of the translators were not taught CAT during their studies, even though close to half of them chose to use a translation program. Simultaneously, almost all of the translators emphasise that the software should be included in the curricula of translator training programs.

The translators attempt to compensate for a lack of training in CATT at the university level through various means. Many of the translators are aware of the availability of additional courses that enable them to master such software, and according to slightly less than half of them, the current training offerings are sufficient for the needs of a standard translator. However, only one-third of the translators have participated in such courses, and the majority of them have expressed no interest in attending such training. Since most of the translators have not taken part in formal training courses, including those organised by software manufacturers or other institutions, they do not hold special certifications attesting to their level of skill and proficiency in handling specific tools. At the same time, the translators do not

feel an urgent need to acquire such certification, especially as they have hardly ever encountered any requirement to present a certificate in their translation practice in order to secure a particular assignment. To acquire the necessary skills in using the programs, translators turn to various educational methods and information sources. The most commonly utilised resources are audiovisual materials published on the Internet, often in the form of webinars organised by software manufacturers or other experienced translators. These webinars are readily available on different platforms and websites, such as various YouTube channels. According to the translators, engaging in translation practice itself is an essential means of learning CATT. Through trial and error, translators acquire the necessary knowledge and skills or seek advice from more experienced colleagues on this aspect. Similar methods of expanding and refining their skills are mentioned by the translators who wish to further excel in handling CAT software, particularly among those who want to familiarise themselves with new functions added during software updates or with the emergence of newer versions of the programs. The wide availability of training resources, particularly online webinars, allows translators to easily access and replay them at their convenience, thus enabling them to adjust the pace and timing of their learning to suit their individual needs and capabilities. It is worth noting that a significant proportion of the translators demonstrate a keen interest in continuous training, and the diversity of solutions used largely aligns with translators' needs and preferences. These include both institutionalised forms of learning and independent learning, mainly facilitated by information available on the Internet or assistance obtained from fellow translators.

Similarly to the development of translation skills using CATT, the role of fellow translators in undertaking the decision to start using a particular program cannot be underestimated. The influence of other translators largely determines the decision to begin working with a specific tool, even more so than awareness of its capabilities or contemporary market requirements. Taking this into account, translators rely on recommendations from other familiar practitioners who themselves use the given software. Their evaluation of the usefulness of the programs appears to be more persuasive than other incentives and motives. Upon commencing work with specialised software and mastering its basic operation, translators use these tools quite regularly. This indicates that investing their time and often resources in purchasing licences is reciprocated by increased capabilities and improved work comfort. It is worth emphasising that the decision to continue using specific programs is not a top-down necessity imposed by the client but rather a manifestation of translators' preferences shaped by their prior experiences. The regularity of software usage is further supported by the types of translation assignments undertaken in the context of language directions. The vast majority of the translators employ the tools in all translation projects, regardless of whether they involve translating from their native language to a foreign language or vice versa. The prevalence of using these programs is not solely due to the utility of

the offered solutions, but also a result of programmers' work, which is based on translators' preferences, opinions and requirements, often collected and monitored through feedback and support functions. As a result, the programs themselves are adapted to translators' needs and preferences, with translators influencing the development of the software, rather than the other way around. This adaptability is also evident in the translation of various types of projects, often with very different specificities. CAT tools have enabled translators to efficiently translate not only standard non-literary and literary texts but also audiovisual projects, software and computer game localisation and website translation. The collected data confirms these possibilities, with translators using these programs to render all types of texts. However, certain types are translated more frequently than others. Apart from illustrating translators' preferences in this aspect, the predominance of projects related to the translation of non-literary texts and websites also reflects the current demand for specific types of translations and provides some guidance for translators' individual orientations. Although some have argued that the software tools are not particularly suited for literary translation, their presence, although limited, confirms that translators consistently use them according to their preferences, regardless of the type of translated text.

The perception of the impact of CATT on translators' work is almost uniformly positive, but users emphasise various aspects that they attribute to the application of these programs. Nearly all of the translators have noted an acceleration of their work due to the capabilities of the software they have chosen, which may result from utilising pre-existing resources and features that streamline work in the translation editor, recognise formatting tags, or even include pre-translation functions. It is worth underlining that none of the translators perceive any negative effects of the programs on their work, and only a small minority express a neutral opinion on the matter. This contributes to a highly positive sentiment regarding the investment of time and resources in learning how to operate the tools, particularly among novice translators. Almost all of the translators, with a significant majority holding firm views, believe that working with CAT programs at an early stage in their career is a good solution. This can not only enhance and expedite their work, but also provide them with new opportunities, including increasing their competitiveness in the translation market. In the opinion of the translators, further popularisation of CATT will continue, offering new possibilities in the educational market and providing a basis for adapting study plans and courses designed for translator preparation.

The profile of Polish CATT users presented provides insight into the described group of translators, while also offering a glimpse into the specifics of their work with specialised computer programs designed for translation. The profile and its individual elements can serve as a starting point for other studies focusing on translators, primarily as a comparative reference. Simultaneously, it may function as a source for other translators, educational market specialists and software developers themselves.

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