PERSONAL RESOURCES
IN AI-ASSISTED TRANSLATION

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Abstract

Translation has been fundamentally reshaped by artificial intelligence (AI) technology, which increasingly dictates workflows that boost human efficiency but diminish human agency. While these tools may indeed enhance efficiency, they simultaneously erode the cognitive and reflective dimensions of translator practice and education. This article highlights personal resources as essential for sustaining judgment and professional autonomy. AI-assisted tools have indeed transformed the ways translators work and learn, but they cannot replace the uniquely human capacity for purposeful self-development, which is the central focus of this article. The article emphasises how fostering personal resources in translator education can empower future professionals to not only adapt to technological change but to shape it consciously and ethically. The underlying assumption is idealistic, perhaps, yet essential for preserving translation quality and the evolving identity of translators. Translator education should nurture individuals who are not only competent but also human, humane and fully engaged in their professional and personal growth.

Keywords: translation, translator training, augmentation, metacognition, reflective practice

1. The human(e) dimension of translation

As Muñoz Martín (2022) insightfully reflects, the evolution of translation from the analogue to the digital era illustrates a broader transition from material, context-sensitive practices to technologically driven, efficiency-oriented workflows. While digital tools and machine translation have revolutionised access to information and enhanced productivity, they have simultaneously weakened critical reflection, shared cultural frameworks and professional agency, also revealing the urgent need to reaffirm the human core of translation within the emerging language service reality.

AI technologies maximize human abilities, helping to minimize the constraints of cognitive load in what may be called augmentation, i.e. "the use of technologies to help overcome limitations in human cognition" (O'Brien 2023: 396).

Within the translation industry, the profession has progressively evolved into an augmented practice through the pervasive adoption of digital technologies and tool ecosystems (Jiménez-Crespo 2023). Lommel (2020) describes the gradual integration of advanced technologies for linguists, which has enhanced efficiency by automating repetitive tasks and minimizing disruptions, with key components of augmented translation including adaptive neural machine translation, project management, the integration of translation memory with machine translation, terminology management and automated content enrichment; all of which collectively redefine the translation profession as it has traditionally been known.

The impact of technological augmentation extends deeply, redefining the translator's role and translation workflows. AI technology has reshaped the translator's role, which now focuses mainly on maintaining quality while meeting increasing demands for faster and larger-scale translation output (Gurov 2023). However, translation cannot be reduced to a problem-solving activity (Muñoz Martín and Olalla-Soler, 2022). A creative process that negotiates meaning across linguistic and cultural boundaries, translation is a deeply human and interpretive act that reflects the translator's agency and uniquely human judgement. Still, as Muñoz Martín (2025: 91) observes, "the reduction of human thought to rational, conscious, self-contained problem-solving persists across disciplines and in the media". It must be emphasised that, regardless of how efficiently human–machine collaboration operates, control over the text and deliberate engagement with its content inevitably decline in such processes.

Although automation is often viewed as a positive development that frees translators from repetitive tasks, translation and language services are not merely about the efficient mechanical production of text, but – above all – about the deeply human act of engaging thoughtfully with meaning. Herbert et al. (2023: 29) point out that professionals may, in some cases, actually value taking on greater responsibility, as it contributes to their sense of control and job satisfaction. Therefore, amid the growing complexity and chaos of the current paradigm of AI-assisted translation, translators need the very human capacity to manage and maintain control over the often unruly dynamics of AI. Only in this way can we ensure that translations consistently meet the highest standards of linguistic accuracy and cultural relevance (Haque and Li 2024).

2. Personal resources as a component of translator competence

Personal (and interpersonal) skills are recognised as a component of translator competence, contributing to adaptability and employability (EMT 2022). In translation psychology, personal resources are increasingly recognised as critical for translation and communicative competence. Translation psychology, described as a new emerging area of translation studies (Núñez and Bolaños-Medina 2018), focuses on translators' mental and behavioural characteristics within their professional activity (Bolaños-Medina 2016). Personal resources, including self-efficacy, emotional intelligence or intrinsic motivation, shape

translators' decision-making, coping strategies and task outcomes (Hubscher-Davidson 2009, 2013, 2017, 2020, Haro-Soler 2017, Atkinson 2012).

When translation education is approached holistically, with a focus on the learner's overall development rather than isolated skills (González-Davies 2004; Klimkowski 2015), learning is conceived as a process of reshaping fixed assumptions and perspectives to become more reflective and adaptive. Central to this process are personal resources that can be conceptualised as aspects of the self that encompass psychological, social and skill-based assets (Hobfoll 2002, 2003, Hobfoll et al. 2018, Lin 2017). In the context of translation, personal resources are aspects of the self that constitute the translator's psychological capital (Pietrzak 2022: 3). These are aspects of the translator's self that reflect not only existing knowledge but, more importantly, the capacity to develop their potential and shape their professional identity. In technologically assisted workflows, these resources seem indispensable, as they allow translators to address complex challenges directly and responsibly.

Personal resources encompass the cognitive and metacognitive capacities that allow translators to reflect on their work, regulate their strategies and respond thoughtfully to complex tasks (Hobfoll 2002; Luthans et al. 2006). They encompass such metacognitive capacities as regulation and self-regulation or reflection and self-reflection. They enable translators not only to engage with the translation process but also to draw from it. In turn, this engagement drives professional growth, allowing translators to refine their skills, enhance their competence and evolve through the insights gained along the way.

3. Metacognition that builds resilience, resilience that boosts metacognition

Metacognition, while often invoked in translation studies as a catchy yet abstract term, carries concrete and far-reaching implications for translator development. Pietrzak's (2022) findings show that metacognition is not only valuable in its own right, shaping translators' professional development, but also instrumental in fostering other desirable educational outcomes, including academic achievement, job satisfaction and career success. In this sense, they are not optional extras but essential tools for translators and language service providers; especially in their interactions with AI technology, metacognitive awareness emerges as a crucial instrument for asserting thoughtful human control.

In a deliberative reflective approach to translation, which involves engaging with technological innovations in a highly critical manner, translator–AI interaction must encompass metacognitive processes that, notably, gradually accumulate and contribute to the formation of greater digital resilience (Kornacki and Pietrzak 2024: 60). Such resilience can be understood not only as the ability to endure pressure and complete tasks efficiently, but also in a broader, more comprehensive sense.

Translators who resist AI overinfluence and actively engage metacognitive processes maintain their professional judgment, anticipate challenges and make informed, responsible decisions. In fact, resilience is enacted specifically through intentional, reflective practice rather than being assumed or innate. This resilience

can, in turn, further benefit the translator as it involves and allows for further active engagement of further, even more elaborate metacognitive processes to manage challenges and learn from experience (Schraw and Dennison 1994, Mezirow 2003), thereby sustaining a continuous cycle of professional growth.

4. Controversies around AI use in translator training

Given the unavoidable proliferation of technology in professional contexts, incorporating AI tools into education may also to be necessary to equip students for future contexts where such technologies are standard (Hayes, 2023). Indeed, the integration of generative AI (GenAI) in translator education has gained popularity (e.g. Chiu et al. 2023, Martin et al. 2023, Sun et al. 2025) and some scholars advocate its inclusion, for example by incorporating AI-assisted translation exercises into teaching (Chen 2025, Jiang 2025). Yet, the incorporation of generative AI into translation curricula raises questions regarding its instructional validity and attendant ethical considerations. The potential impact on the evolving professional role of human translators remains uncertain. Do we really want to reduce our students to the role of machine-assisted operators; or worse, to mere assistants of the machine itself?

The prospect of reducing translation students to operators or even assistants of AI technologies raises important pedagogical and ethical questions regarding personal and professional agency. Translation student agency must remain central to the development of translation expertise if we are to ensure that translation is preserved as a fundamentally human activity. This concern is reflected in early research on AI in translator training (Kornacki and Pietrzak 2024), where, although 54% of respondents supported integrating GenAI into teaching, professional translators and students expressed more cautious stances than teachers, highlighting the challenge of balancing technological adoption with the preservation of human agency. Additionally, translators rated GenAI as a translation tool less positively than teachers, who generally provided moderate assessments of its utility. In optional comments, some respondents acknowledged that AI tools could support educational tasks but emphasized that their effectiveness depends on how they are used rather than on the tools themselves. Others expressed explicit reservations, including strong recommendations against the use of AI in academic settings, stressing the importance of teaching students "how to use their brains rather than how to use tools" (Kornacki and Pietrzak 2024: 109). These observations highlight the relevance of metacognitive processes in translation education: encouraging students to think, or, more precisely, to monitor, evaluate and regulate their own thinking. Engaging in these metacognitive processes can provide a structured framework for translator-AI interaction, supporting reflective decision-making without attributing inherent value to the technology itself.

The integration of AI in translation education clearly requires a balanced approach that strengthens rather than replaces human expertise. Central concerns include authorship and plagiarism (Barnett 2023; Longoni et al. 2023) as well as the potential

overreliance on AI tools (Amato and Schoettle 2023). These challenges create a pressing need for ethical and pedagogical vigilance and emphasize the importance of responsible action in translation education. Regrettably, although ethical considerations are continuously invoked as a significant concern, their actual substance remains elusive and poorly articulated. It is therefore vital to underscore the limitations of AI tools, address emerging practical challenges and try to translate ethical concerns into concrete pedagogical action. A holistic perspective, addressing cognitive, metacognitive and professional aspects simultaneously can potentially allow for a reflective and responsible engagement with AI, ensuring that its use supports professional competence without compromising standards of practice.

5. Personal resources in the AI-invaded translation classroom

In the translation classroom, where AI's pervasive presence has both infiltrated and unsettled traditional practices, developing students' personal resources is more urgent than ever. Exposing learners to training situations that foster reflection and adaptability is central to this process. Reflection lies at the heart of experiential approaches to translator education. As Schön (1983: 31) describes, reflection is "a dialogue of thinking and doing through which I become more skilful," enabling learners to connect their practical experiences with critical self-awareness and professional growth. In translation studies, reflection has been recognised as a key component of professional competence (Kelly 2005, Haro-Soler and Kiraly 2019, Pietrzak 2019, Haro-Soler 2021). Heine (2025, this volume) offers a timely and insightful conceptual framework that further reinforces the role of reflection in translator education and practice in the age of AI.

When interacting with AI, reflective practice becomes essential. Reflective approaches necessitate encouraging students to engage in both reflection and self-reflection (Kußmaul 1995, Hansen 2006, Norberg 2014). For translation trainees, reflective regulation of the entire interaction demands sustained alertness and critical awareness. Such awareness enables them to further distinguish between meaningful assistance and misleading output, ensuring that technology supports rather than dictates the translation process. Thus, the new paradigm of translation education is to cultivate a mindset of constructive doubt; not to believe or trust blindly, but to question, verify and reflect.

The key challenge, then, is how to develop such skills effectively. As Heine (2020) suggests, learners benefit from manipulated or simulated scenarios in which they must act reflectively and respond to changing conditions to determine appropriate strategies independently. Steps such as fostering metacognitive awareness, promoting reflective engagement (especially, but not only with AI outputs) and implementing self-regulation strategies contribute to the development of resilience, so increasingly relevant in any translation and communication practice (see section 3).

Moreover, reflection should extend beyond interaction with AI to include not only reflection on the task and process, but also reflection on the 'self' within the process. Students can be encouraged to engage in self-feedback, which "involves self-inquiry,

which takes students from questions, through observations, to conclusions" (Pietrzak 2022: 191). The ability that presupposes reflective engagement, self-awareness is essential for students. They must be able to identify their own limitations, so when engaging with AI, they should be encouraged to evaluate not only the assisting tool but also themselves in the process: their own performance, their reasoning processes, their choices and their own limitations. Such critical engagement deepens awareness of one's cognitive and metacognitive processes and encourages a more self-directed approach to learning and professional development (Knowles 1975).

Helping students develop reflection on their own metacognitive processes can therefore involve asking them to identify gaps in their skills or reasoning and to examine the underlying causes (Kornacki and Pietrzak 2024: 132). The focus of this process lies in recognising areas for growth rather than assigning blame to either the learner or the AI tool. Structured reflection of this kind enables learners to transform identified weaknesses into targeted plans, thereby supporting both the development of practical skills and the cultivation of professional judgment. It can potentially contribute to the development of personal autonomy and clearly supports the continuous acquisition of identified, yet missing, competencies essential for translation and communication. Such classroom practices help students become more active and responsible participants in the process of translation and translation training.

Reflection is not limited to students but also involves teachers and researchers. Borg et al. (2025: 108–132) distinguish between researcher and participant reflective practices, showing that reflective tools, such as for example diaries, can serve not only to document learners' spontaneous or guided reflections, but also, when used by teachers or researchers, to capture observations and interpretive insights concerning students' actions or their own processes.

Other forms of reflection related to AI-interactions can also take place in group or collaborative settings, extending beyond individual practice. In these contexts, teacher feedback and peer feedback provide students with diverse perspectives on their strategic approaches, thereby strengthening the development of autonomous strategic learning (González-Davies 2021). Collaborative activities help ensure that, even in AI-assisted workflows, the educational process remains fundamentally human. Teamwork highlights the continued centrality of professional expertise, critical thinking and judgment in translation, demonstrating that technological tools, while valuable, cannot replace the cognitive processes inherent to human translators. This approach not only supports skill acquisition but also situates AI as a complement to, rather than a substitute for, the reflective and analytical capacities that define professional translation practice.

4. Aims and scope of the special issue

Given the ongoing transformation of translation practices and the evolving interaction between human translators and AI, translation students need targeted support to adapt effectively to these changes. Educational programs must be

adjusted accordingly to provide structured opportunities for developing relevant skills and competencies. A key component involves guiding students to critically assess their own knowledge and performance, identify gaps and transform areas of weakness into targeted plans for growth, fostering both professional judgment and adaptive capacity.

This special issue aims to examine diverse approaches to translator training, with particular attention to how educational practices can respond to the demands of translation in transition and prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of AI-mediated workflows. This collection brings together a selection of research-based and practice-oriented perspectives on the topic area. The issue opens with an article by Carmen Heine (Aarhus University, Denmark), which examines the role of reflection as both a pedagogical and epistemological foundation in translation training. Drawing on interdisciplinary research, it reviews existing and new reflective methods and calls for a coherent theoretical model of reflection in translation.

In the second article, Łukasz Bogucki (University of Łódź, Poland) shows the rise of microcredentials in language and translation education, emphasising their flexibility in developing specific subcompetencies outside traditional university programs. The article also notes that, despite their potential, microcredentials are not yet widely recognised by employers or the translation industry.

The third article by Ondřej Klabal and Michal Kubanek (Palacký University Olomouc, Czech Republic) addresses the challenges posed by complex noun phrases in specialised English texts, emphasising how cross-linguistic differences can lead to ambiguity. It identifies the types of nominal chains most susceptible to misinterpretation and proposes classroom strategies and activities to enhance students' understanding and accurate translation of such structures.

The authors of the fourth article, Soňa Hodáková and Lívia Kodajová (Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia) examine the importance of mental health in interpreter training, emphasising the cognitive and emotional stressors interpreters face. Based on surveys of Slovak interpreting students and teachers, it highlights the need to integrate emotion regulation and psychological resilience into curricula and recommends incorporating personality-based training in practical interpreting education.

The fifth article by Andrej Birčák (Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia), aims to demonstrate how Slovak universities prepare future interpreters for remote interpreting. Based on interviews with interpreting teachers, it finds that training still lacks systematic integration of remote interpreting, highlighting both effective practices and ongoing challenges.

The sixth article by Agnieszka Kałużna (University of Zielona Góra, Poland) examines the role of AI and machine translation in translator training, emphasising the growing need for students to develop versatile skills beyond language competence, including IT proficiency, proofreading and post-editing. Based on a translation project comparing AI-powered and non-AI machine translation tools, as well as student interviews, the study analyses both quantitative and qualitative data to assess how AI can support the teaching and learning of translation.

The contributions in this special issue explore the transformation of translator education in diverse contexts, providing both theoretical insights and practical guidance. It provides stakeholders with a resource to critically assess and strategically shape translator training programs, ensuring they remain responsive to the demands of the profession and the impact of technological innovation.

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