

Miguel A. Jiménez-Crespo, *Crowdsourcing and Online Collaborative Translations: Expanding the Limits of Translation Studies*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, John Benjamins, 2017, 304 págs.

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Crowdsourcing and Online Collaborative Translations Expanding the limits of Translation Studies, authored by Miguel A. Jiménez-Jiménez-Crespo, introduces and discusses the effect of crowdsourcing on different areas of translation studies (TS). The book consists of ten chapters, and within each chapter, one specific topic regarding crowdsourcing effects is elaborated. These topics include technological, linguistic, cognitive, sociological, pedagogical, audiovisual, or industry-oriented approaches (Jiménez-Crespo, 2017).

In the “Introduction” section (pp. 1-9), the author starts out by discussing how new technologies have emerged and altered public perceptions of translation practices. Then he introduces collaborative translation practices as one of the latest phenomena that have been given rise by Web 2.0. He goes on to discuss how these modifications have caused the TS limits to expand and how future research in this field will require the development of new theories. The book systematically elaborates on different aspects of collaborative translation, specifically crowdsourcing.

In Chapter 1, Jiménez-Crespo (pp. 11-36) attempts to define and delimitate the notions of ‘crowdsourcing’ and ‘online collaborative translations.’ The focus of this chapter is first directed at the nature of CT and, then, on collaborative translations in the translation paradigm, as well as on the epistemological and terminological problems related to it. To achieve this, the author tries to elaborate the CT relations to some of the areas that are already present in ts, such as “volunteer,” “collaborative,” “social,” “non-professional,” or “community” translation (Jiménez-Crespo, 2017, pp. 11); furthermore, he analyzes the terminological confusions found when trying to clarify them in different publications.

Chapter 2 (pp. 37-60) delves into the origins of CT through the history of TS. In other words, the author digs into the evolution of TS for traces of

collaborative translation works to make a comparison between the new and old procedures. This comparison sheds light on the fact that new types of CTs are different from the practices that were performed before the advent of the Internet. Due to this difference, and to have a clear understanding of the present-day state of CT, one must study the effect of the previous works and the influence of digital technologies, especially Web 2.0, on their evolution. The author divides the evolution of CT into five stages. The first stage addresses collaboration in translation dating back to the 1980s and 1990s and its consolidation with personal computers when the emergence of the internet took place. The second stage involves the emergence of “participatory cultures” and the “fandom movement” (Jenkins, 1992, 2006b; Delwiche, 2012), in other words, when networking and means for collaboration in translation were available and the communities extended their translational activities. In the third stage, the author presents the first attempts in ‘machine translation’ (MT), using online crowdsourcing and volunteer translators on the web (Shimohata et al., 2001; Utiyama and Isahara, 2003). The fourth stage is when crowdsourcing is widely used by websites such as Facebook. The last stage is the analysis and cultivation of new models such as paid crowdsourcing workflows, models, and initiatives (García, 2015, p. 18).

Chapter 3 (pp. 61-95) deals with descriptive perspectives on crowdsourcing in the industry. The workflows and technological solutions used by different initiatives are explained and elaborated. The author also points out that the constant evolving nature of the phenomenon and its flexibility to new models and methods are due to the changeable nature of technology. To sum up, this chapter shows the implementation of crowdsourcing in today’s world.

In Chapter 4 (pp. 97-120), Jiménez-Crespo explains all about the possibility of investigating crowdsourcing in cognitive TS. From a cognitive point of view, two pivotal issues are addressed. The first one is the role played by expertise and competence, and the second one deals with the introduction of situated, extended, and distributed approaches. This chapter also brings up the notion of translation quality in this newly introduced area in TS.

Chapter 5 of this volume (pp. 121-155) addresses one of the most pivotal issues in TS, which is “quality.” Quality assessment has always been and will be a notion under debate from two important points of view: TS’s point of view and the industrial perspective. The former insists on a theoretical foundation, while the latter seeks a dynamic approach in which

all participants connected to the act of translation can be involved and eventually come to an agreement on the quality of the translation. With the advent of collaborative translation, especially associated with crowdsourcing, the notion of quality needs to be re-conceptualized. This chapter describes how quality is achieved through crowdsourced translation. It also analyzes the impact of crowdsourcing on the conceptualization of quality by those involved in the industry, both translation scholars and translation experts. To make a long story short, this chapter explores the attempts to connect TS and the industry.

Chapter 6 (pp. 157-177) critically investigates the textual and linguistic approaches in TS. The very first subject brought up in this chapter is the relationship between crowdsourcing and the segmentation of source texts. One of the basic elements of crowdsourcing is that rather big tasks must be broken down into smaller ones, and then distributed among a crowd for completion in a shorter amount of time and with a better outcome. This segmentation process has raised controversies over the cohesiveness of the translation products. The chapter is closed with categorizations of the texts in crowdsourcing based on process- or product-based parameters.

Chapter 7 (pp. 179-194) explores collaborative translation in an audiovisual context. It also describes how the process of fansubbing and the creativity of fansubbers have influenced translation norms. Fansubbers of audiovisual translation have highly challenged professional norms and rules. The findings of the research on collaborative translation of audiovisual texts indicate that fans who participate in the translation process are ignorant of social conventions and accepted norms and standards. In other words, the fansubbers seek their own needs to be fulfilled and satisfied.

Chapter 8 (pp. 195-225) of the book analyzes the combination of the “technological turn” (O’Hagan, 2013) with the “sociological turn” (Wolf, 2007). This intersection has provided fertile ground for TS research projects to start cultivating crowdsourcing and online collaborative translation. It must be mentioned that the focus of CT has been mostly on social issues, such as volunteers’ motivations as well as ethics and socio-economic implications.

In Chapter 9 (pp. 227-254), which is the last chapter of the book, the collaborative online platforms are introduced as a potential tool for translator training. The chapter also suggests that these platforms may turn into “accidental training environments” if they are categorized according to their effect on the enhancement of translation competence. The chapter is closed

with statements on how involvement in various crowdsourcing projects might lead to an improvement in professional translation competence.

Chapter 10 (pp. 255-263) is the conclusion chapter that summarizes the main points discussed in the book and provides a concise and insightful reflection on the overall topic.

What captured our attention the most in this volume were the topics mentioned in chapters 5 and 8, in other words, the two controversial issues of quality and motivation in crowdsourcing projects. The studies done on these two subjects encourage researchers to cultivate these areas more than before, since there is a multifaceted potential for research in crowdsourcing, especially in quality assessment and motivation.

Another interesting topic mentioned in Chapter 8 was the introduction of netnography and crowdsourcing data collection methods and their contribution to translation research. For us, crowdsourced data collection methods, as well as netnography, seem to be a very practical way to lessen the difficulties of existing methods, such as the ease of access to a large crowd in a short amount of time.

One specific topic that we expected the book to elaborate more on was the section on crowdsourcing platforms in Chapter 3, particularly on smartphone app solutions. Since the world is substituting desktop applications for cloud environments related to smartphones, translation crowdsourcing, therefore, has undeniably introduced new ever-present platforms. The social media applications, although not designed for crowdsourcing purposes in the first place, have huge potential for translation crowdsourcing as well as language learning. Azari, Khalilizadeh Ganjalikhani, and Amirshojai (2020) in their study “Crowdsourcing Translation: An Experience of Cloud-based Messaging App” focus on a new platform called Telegram and its technical features and have shown that, as a general platform that has not been designed for crowdsourcing and Crowdsourcing Translation (CT), the Telegram app involves essential features to be used as a CT platform. As a matter of fact, it has already been used as a CT platform in the Iranian “TS channel.” They have elaborated on the CT workflow in this channel as well as its serious potential as a platform in restricted situations.

It's additionally significant to consider that with the further development of artificial intelligence (AI), crowdsourcing will almost certainly be used as a post-editing technique in the future (Khalilizadeh Ganjalikhani, Hesabi, and Ketabi, 2023). With the advent of AI technology, crowdsourcing may be a promising tool for human post-editing to refine and improve machine-

generated translations, such as machine translation systems. AI and crowdsourcing together have the power to completely transform the translation market and push the limits of cooperative translation techniques. This issue might also be important if the author intends to have an update on this book.

To sum up, the book has provided us with numerous valuable insights and has drawn our attention toward several questions, which will hopefully be addressed in further investigation. Most of all, it is a subject that we have truly become interested in working on and investigating the notion of motivation in audiovisual crowdsourced translations by using the netnography of translator profiles. Furthermore, the book has already become part of our course on literature for our future reference. We highly recommend it to students and colleagues interested in the CT.

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