The Centre for Translation Technology at The Chinese University of Hong Kong Presents a one-day Workshop on:

Translation Studies and/in the Digital Humanities

Digital Scholarship Lab, G/F, University Library, CUHK 12 June 2017 (Monday) 9:00am-5:30pm



Presentation Details

Title: A Cost-benefit Analysis of Using Online Corpora for Translation Research

Speaker: Prof. James George ST. ANDRÉ (The Chinese University of Hong Kong)

Abstract:

Libraries increasingly subscribe to electronic databases that contain large corpora, for example Early English Books Online, Eighteenth Century Collections Online, Proquest Newspapers, Apabi Reader and Siku Quanshu. There are also free online collections, beginning with Project Gutenberg, but including a host of others, notably the Internet Archive, HathiTrust, and Googlebooks. The search function on these is typically designed to help people locating works by a particular author, title, or subject, as well as some limited searching by topic. In other words, first and foremost these are elaborate card catalogs, but with better cross-indexing. They also allow a certain amount of searching within the texts, but not every text has been converted to a text file, and even when they have, it is unclear how much "cleaning up" has been done afterwards.

This study seeks to answer the following questions about such databases in English:

How useful are such databases for other types of searches, for example corpus studies (word frequency, sentence length, etc)?

To what extent are privately compiled corpora re-inventing the wheel? Can we do a cost-benefit analysis of these sites?

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Biography

James St. André is Director of the Centre for Translation Technology and Associate Professor in the Department of Translation at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, where he teaches courses on the history, theory and practice of translation between Chinese and English. Research interests include the history of Chinese-English translation, metaphors of translation, translation theory, and queer theory. He has published articles in various journals, including *META*, *TTR*, *The Translator*, *Translation and*

Interpreting Studies, The Journal of Pragmatics, and Target. Book projects include Thinking through Translation with Metaphors (2010) and with Peng Hsiao-yen China and Its Others: Knowledge Transfer through Translation, 1829-2010; his book Translating China as Cross-identity Performance, which develops the queer metaphor of translation as cross-identity performance, is due out from Hawai'i University Press in 2017. His latest project, Conceptualizing China through Translation, examines how certain key concepts used to understand Chinese culture and society have developed interlingually between English and Chinese from the eighteenth through the 21st century.